



ΦΙΛΟΔΑΣΙΚΗ  PHILODASSIKI
Ένωση Αθηνών Enossi Athinon
Αισθητικό Δάσος Υμηττού Mt Hymettus Aesthetic Forest

Surface: 440 ha

Number of municipalities involved: (privat forest - Philodassiki Enossi Athinon)

Population: 400.000 habitants

Address: Mt Hymettus (near Kaissari Monastery)

Telephone number: +30 2107231769

Fax: +30 2107231029

email: aestheticforest@philodassiki.org

web: www.philodassiki.org



Philodassiki Enossi Athinon was founded in 1899 in Athens with the purpose of reforesting derelict land, the encouragement of forest-lovers and the protection of the natural environment. The result of the reforestation efforts was the greening of the hills, in and around Athens and the protection of the historical landscape. In 1945 Philodassiki undertook the initiative for the reforestation of the area around the Byzantine Monastery of Kaissariani in the NW degraded slopes of Mt. Hymettus. These efforts resulted in the planting of more than three million trees within an area of approximately 600 ha. Old quarries were planted with trees from a nursery which was created, forest roads were opened and rest and recreation areas were organized. The whole reforested area was declared an "Aesthetic Forest" and has won several awards and honorary recognitions. In 1964 a small botanical garden was created with a collection of Greek wild plants. The forest management aims at the protection, conservation and amelioration of the forest ecosystem, at the maintenance of an attractive landscape for outdoor recreation and at the provision of environmental education opportunities.



Natural environment

The reforestation efforts resulted in the creation of a characteristic mosaic physiognomy of plant formations in which pines are dominant, in unmixed clusters mainly with cypress, judas and carob trees. In the rocky areas there are pine trees together with kermes oak and wild olive tree. This plant variety has been enriched by the existence of an olive grove, a group of eucalyptus and the presence of water loving plants next to the streams, creating a unique landscape.

Historical character of the landscape

Because of new landscaping, the surrounding area has become once more a peaceful refuge of natural beauty with the historical monuments is a perfect example of civilization and nature. In 1993, the area surrounding the monastery which comprises the olive-grove, the nurseries, the botanical garden, the squares and scattered monuments, was designated a "Historical Garden of Europe" by the EU. It is included amongst the fifty-eight Historical Gardens of Europe.



Main activities

The area of the Aesthetic Forest is ideal for leisure and recreational activities such as walking on the roads and paths of the whole area, sport activities, resting in properly developed areas, enjoying the view from various outlooks, cycling, visiting the local historical sites, educational activities regarding the natural environment and specifically the flora and fauna of Mt. Hymettus and organized guided tours at the Botanical Garden of Philodassiki.

