

## Unit 8. Tourism

### Aulanko Nature Reserve



#### Description

Aulanko has been a popular destination with visitors for more than a hundred years. Nowadays, there is a lot to see in Aulanko Nature Reserve in the city of Hämeenlinna, in addition to the beautiful scenery. The forest park of Aulanko, its sights, and the view from the scenic lookout tower of Aulangonvuori Hill over the national landscape attract more than 400 000 visitors every year. The area is best suitable for day trips.

The English-style park, which forms a part of the nature reserve, was constructed in 1883 - 1938 and, with its buildings and cultural history, it is a nationally valuable site. To maintain the spacious park landscape, the forest park is actively managed. The nature reserve also includes forest landscape in its natural state.

The region of Häme has been inhabited for over 10 000 years. In Aulanko, people have shaped the landscape almost everywhere in the nature reserve. Already about 2000 years ago, there was a religious site and a fortress on Aulangonvuori Hill. The top of the hill was probably cut treeless at the time. Since the Middle Ages, the area has also been used for cattle pasturing, so the forest has not been in its natural state for a long time. The fortification was destroyed in the mid 1200s, when the Swedish started building Häme Castle a couple of

kilometres away, along the waterway of Vanajavesi.

The forest park was constructed by colonel Hugo Richard Standerstskjöld who wanted to establish a park open for all visitors. Hämeenlinna town acquired the area in 1926, and it became protected four years later, by a decision of the county governor of Häme. Due to this, a management plan was made for the area, and more foreign trees were planted to grow in groups and to form small forests. Most of the trees in the park originate from these plantings in the 1930s, but a few individual trees from the colonel's time still also survive.

The government acquired the land in 1963. It was not until 1991 that the area became protected by the law, and the 0,5 sq.km landscape forest next to it was included in the nature reserve.

#### Activities

- Walk on Marked Trails
- Go Bird Watching
- See the Sights and Scenery
- Walk on Nature Trail
- Ski Cross-Country on Maintained Trails
- Go Fishing
- Go Cycling
- Go Horseback Riding
- Go on Guided Group Tour Outdoors



#### Impact

The forest park of Aulanko has had a significant impact on the Finnish park culture. Nowadays, Aulanko area belongs to the first National Urban Park in Finland

#### Source

Metsähallitus (Finnish Forest and Park Service)  
<https://www.nationalparks.fi/aulanko>