

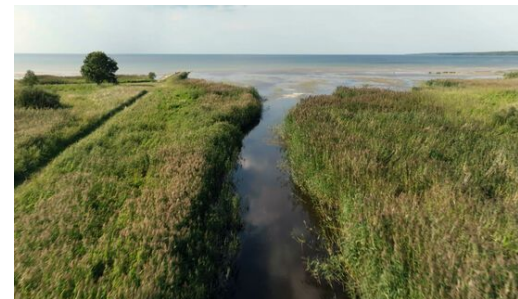
## NATURE . WILDLIFE

# BALTIC NATIONAL PARKS

4 x 52' (ENG, GER)

**Unspoilt nature, unique forests, lakes and marshland landscapes, and habitats for dozens of endangered animal and plant species - the national parks in the Baltic States have it all.**

The journey from the deep forests and large boulders of Estonia to the hot sulphur springs and vast moors of Latvia and the picturesque high dunes of Lithuania takes in some of the most beautiful intact natural spaces in the world. The documentary series explores four of the region's most important national parks. These are protected areas for nature, where flora and fauna can develop wildly and freely. Human intervention in the ecosystem is strictly regulated here. A national park is a landscape that is particularly valuable ecologically and requires the protection of the state. The focus is on the characteristics of the individual parks' flora and fauna and illustrates the species richness, but also the fragility of the various ecosystems.



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Produced by:	Kinescope Film
Partners:	arte, Radio Bremen

### **1. Soomaa National Park, Estonia**

Soomaa National Park is wild, almost deserted, and above all wet. A wilderness area almost unique in Europe. Huge moors bordered by forests, species-rich swampy grasslands and blooming meadows. The national park is famous for the floods that occur after the snow melts, the so-called fifth season. During this time, all the low-lying forests and roads are under water and the only usable means of transportation are canoes or paddleboats, especially the traditional dugout canoes made of aspen wood, which are on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

### **2. Gauja National Park, Latvia**

Unparalleled biodiversity, picturesque landscapes and unique natural monuments characterize the Gauja National Park. It is home to over 200 animal species and 900 plant species. The heart of the National Park is the Gauja River, which meanders through the landscape, lined with ancient forests and red sandstone cliffs. Medieval castles and archaeological sites bear witness to the long history of settlement. Gentle tourism is allowed in the national park. Hiking, biking and especially canoeing on the Gauja River offer a breathtaking nature experience.

### **3. Lahemaa National Park, Estonia**

On the Estonian Baltic coast, in the very north of the country, not far from the capital Tallinn, lies a large nature reserve: Lahemaa National Park. The whole region has been protected since 1971, making Lahemaa the first national park in the entire Soviet Union. Lahemaa means "land of bays" in Estonian. Along the coast, there are four peninsulas, seven rivers, and a huge primeval forest area. The park is sparsely populated, so nature can unfold completely untouched.

### **4. Curonian Spit, Lithuania**

The Curonian Spit, a narrow peninsula in western Lithuania, is a living example of the interplay between man and nature. After the landscape was deforested, the sand buried entire villages; only reforestation made life on the coast possible. Today, the UNESCO World Heritage landscape is protected as a national park and the "Sahara of the Baltic Sea" is home to sea eagles, cormorants and numerous endemic plants spread throughout the mosaic of the Curonian Spit's extraordinary ecosystems - from giant dunes to the "Dancing Forest".