

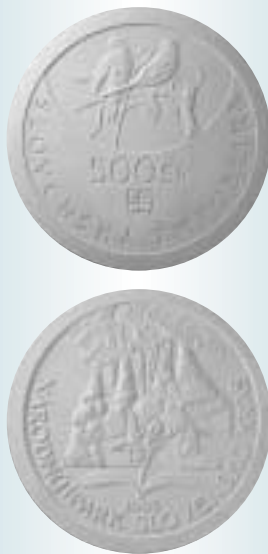
COMMEMORATIVE SILVER COIN PROTECTION OF NATURE AND THE LANDSCAPE SLOVENSKÝ KRAS NATIONAL PARK

Apart from important personalities, historic events and cultural treasures, the National Bank of Slovakia also propagates the beauty of Slovak nature by issuing commemorative coins with the theme of national parks. Commemorative coins were already issued for Slovenský Raj National Park in 1994, Pieniny National Park in 1997, Tatry National Park in 1998 and Malá Fatra National Park in 2001. The issue of the fifth commemorative coin with this theme was prepared in March 2005. It is devoted to the Slovenský Kras (Slovak Karst) National Park.

The Slovenský Kras National Park is situated in the south-western part of eastern Slovakia. It was declared in 2002, has an area of 34,611 ha and is the largest area of karst in Slovakia. It has a multitude of karst forms, the canyon like valleys of the river Slaná and Štítnický brook, caves and potholes. The Zádielska and Hájska gorges are characteristic of the area, as are the famous and much visited Gombasecká, Jasovská and Domica caves. The Silická ľadnica, a chasm with permanent ice decoration, is a rarity. In variety of flora it is one of the richest areas of Central Europe. Especially the rare *Erythronium dens-canis* (dog's tooth violet) is notable. From the botanical point of view, the most important are the endemic species, for example *Onosma tornense* and *Draba lasiocarpa*. The national park is one of the ornithologically most important territories of Slovakia, and other fauna is richly represented in it. It is remarkable that all 24 species of bats found in Slovakia live there.

A public anonymous competition was declared to find a design for the commemorative coin, and ten artists

First Prize:
Mária Poldaufová



Third Prize:
PhDr. Kliment Mitura



submitted twelve designs. After evaluation of the entries, the expert commission recommended production of the design of the Kremnica medallist Mária Poldaufová, who gained first prize. The commission appreciated her design as the best expression of the given theme. The artist placed on the obverse two typical representatives of the bird fauna of the national park. For the reverse, she chose a characteristic part of the water deposited decoration of the Jasovská cave, with the flower *Erythronium dens-canis* placed in the foreground, as a typical representative of the flora of the national park. She supplemented the relief parts with interestingly designed and well chosen letters.

No second prize was awarded in the competition. The third prize went to PhDr. Kliment Mitura, whose design attracted the commission by its united composition, its harmony of obverse and reverse sides, and especially by the high quality depiction of *Erythronium dens-canis* on the obverse.

The commemorative 500 Sk coin with a diameter of 40 mm and weight of 33.63 g is struck from silver with a fineness of 925/1000 at the Bižutérie Czech Mint at Jablonec nad Nisou in the number of 8,500 pieces of standard quality and 3,600 pieces of proof quality. A maximum limit of 10,000 standard pieces and 5,000 proof pieces has been set for the

issue. The edge of the coin bears the inscription „OCHRANA PRÍRODY A KRAJINY“ (Protection of Nature and the Landscape) preceded by a dividing mark in the form of a stylized flower.

Ing. Dagmar Flaché, photo: Ing. Štefan Fröhlich