

## Obverse

The obverse depicts a European tree frog and dragonfly among water reeds. At the bottom right of the design is the Slovak coat of arms, with the year of issuance '2023' positioned directly above it. The name of the issuing country 'SLOVENSKO' is inscribed along the upper right. At the bottom edge is the mint mark of the Kremnica Mint (Mincovňa Kremnica), consisting of the letters 'MK' placed between two dies, and to the left of it are the stylised letters 'RL', referring to the coin's designer Roman Lugár.

## Reverse

The reverse shows a deer drinking at Morské oko lake and the resulting ripples on the water's surface, all set against a mountain backdrop framed within a semicircular line. The coin's denomination and currency '20 EURO' are inscribed above the mountains. The words CHRÁNENÁ KRAJINNÁ OBLASŤ VIHORLAT (Vihorlat Protected Landscape Area) appear along the edge of the upper half of the coin, above the semicircular line.

## Coin details

Denomination:	€20
Composition:	.925 silver, .75 copper
Weight:	33.63 g
Diameter:	40 mm
Edge lettering:	OCHRANA PRÍRODY A KRAJINY (Nature and countryside conservation); a stylised flower separates the start and end of the text
Issuing volume:	limited to a maximum of 15,000 coins in either brilliant uncirculated or proof quality
Designer:	Roman Lugár
Engraver:	Dalibor Schmidt
Producer:	Kremnica Mint (Slovakia)



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## Vihorlat Protected Landscape Area

SILVER COLLECTOR EURO COIN



Short-toed snake eagle



The Vihorlat Protected Landscape Area (PLA) was created in 1973. The Vihorlat Mountains (Slovak: Vihorlatské vrchy) are impressive despite not being large in terms of area and height above sea level. They are the easternmost of Slovakia's volcanically formed mountains. Volcanic activity began here approximately 15 to 16 million years ago, characterised by the formation and evolution of andesitic volcanoes and stratovolcanoes (built up by many different layers). The dominant rock is andesite, and in many places there are rock cliffs formed by ancient lava flows. The largest and most beautiful such cliff is Sninský kameň ('Snina Stone').

The Vihorlat Mountains are one of the most forested mountain ranges in Slovakia, with 80% of their area covered by forest ecosystems, mainly beech and fir-beech forests. Stands of silver birch and Norway spruce, the tree species that originally populated this area, grow only in the locality of Jedlinka village. Here we also find areas of primeval forest that are largely untouched by human activity.



Carpathian spring snowflake



Alpine longhorn beetle

A highlight of the mountains is Morské oko lake, one of the largest non-karst lakes in the Carpathians. When viewed from Snina Stone, it has the shape of an irregular five-pointed star. Not far from Morské oko is the second best preserved Vihorlat lake - Malé Morské oko.

The Vihorlat PLA occupies a unique and interesting location in Slovakia. Straddling the border between the Pannonian and Carpathian bioregions, it features around 400 species of fungi, 60 lichens, 110 bryophytes and 600 species of higher plants. Of particular note are the oak-hornbeam stands in the south-western part of the PLA, where the protected Carpathian spring snowflake flourishes in abundance.

One of the rarest plants endemic to the PLA is a sheep fescue that grows only on Snina Stone. Other rare flora found in the area include *Euphorbia sojakii*, *Cyanus mollis*, *Dentaria glandulosa*, and *Symphytum cordatum*.

The PLA features peat bogs that evolved from past lakes. After rapidly becoming overgrown with aquatic vegetation, these lakes gradually filled up with decaying plant debris and transformed into peat bogs. Here we now find rare plant species such as the round-leaved sundew, the northern bog-clubmoss, the hare's-tail cottongrass, and others.

The local fauna is also diverse. Notable species of beetles include the Alpine longhorn beetle, the great capricorn beetle, *Carabus coriaceus*, the violet ground beetle, and the European stag beetle. Among the approximately 100 species of birds that nest in the area are the grey wagtail, woodpeckers, the black stork, and the Ural owl. Local birds of prey include the common buzzard, the European honey buzzard, the short-toed snake eagle, and the lesser-spotted eagle. The dense forests of the Vihorlat Mountains are also home to carnivorous mammals, including the wolf, the wildcat, the Eurasian lynx, and the European pine marten, as well as the occasional stray brown bear.



Ural owl