



THE FINNISH FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE (METLA) AT PUNKAHARJU

Punkaharju crown park became METLA's responsibility in 1924. The Punkaharju Experimental Area was simultaneously established.

Punkaharju Research Station is specialised in studies on forest genetics, including biotechnology, resistance breeding, seed production, and research into the effect of climatic change on forests. The station accommodates some 50 researchers and their assistants. Research facilities include modern laboratories, greenhouses and 1900 hectares of research forest, of which 236 ha is protected.



Traditional crossing breeding and modern biotechnology

FURTHER INFORMATION

- The Finnish Forest Research Institute – METLA
- Punkaharju Research Station, tel. (957) 644 241
- The Department of Forest Production, nature conservation, tel. (90) 857 051

LUSTO

Lusto, the Finnish Forest Museum, is a national exhibition and information centre specialised in forest ecosystems, the importance of forests, and the interaction between man and the forest in the past, the present and the future.

At Lusto there is an extensive basic exhibition and a special exhibition. The museum collections - archives, photographic collections and a library - serve as an information system which is at the disposal of researchers and other interested parties by arrangement. A guide to the exhibitions or forest areas can be booked in advance. An auditorium and classroom are available for congresses and training purposes. There are also a cafe and small shop attached to the exhibition area.

Lusto is open to the public daily all year round. Information can be obtained by phoning (957) 345 100 or faxing (957) 345 1050.

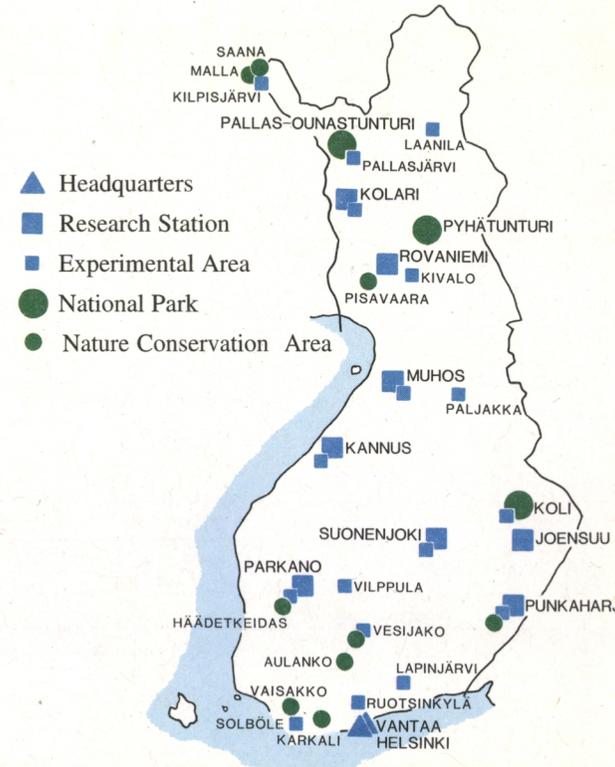


Museum pieces at Lusto

THE FINNISH FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE – METLA

METLA is a State research institute established in 1917 whose function is to produce data on the bases of sustainable forest management, Finland's forest reserves, forest vitality, and various forms of forest use.

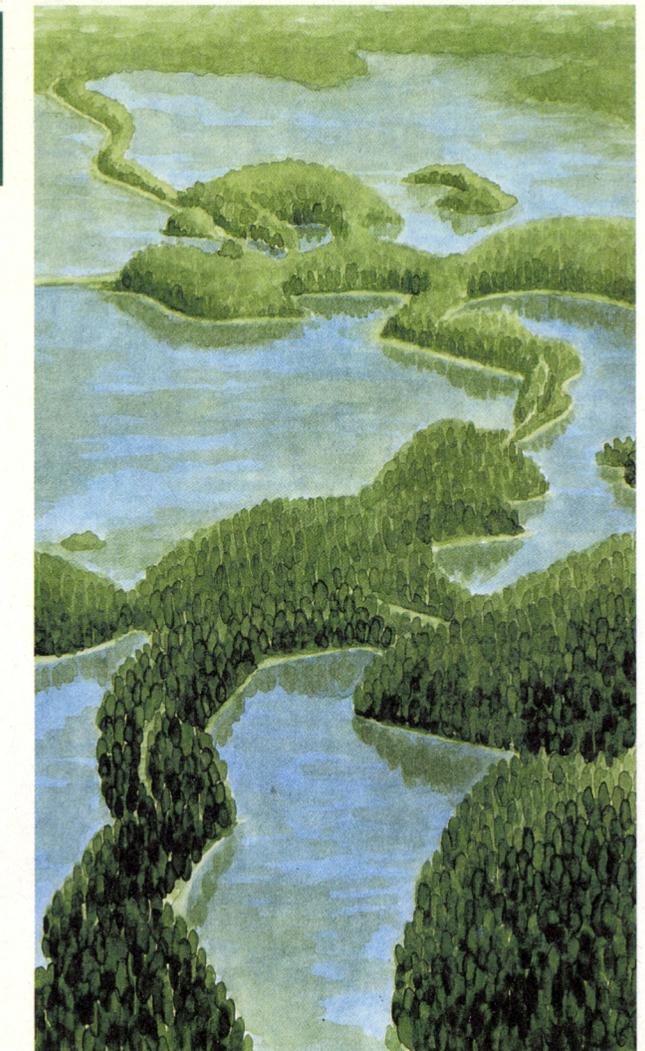
METLA's central unit is based in Helsinki and Vantaa, with eight research stations, responsible for research and experimentation in their own areas, distributed round the country. To safeguard the continuation of long term research METLA cares for some 140,000 hectares of research forests. Of these, around 60,000 hectares are protected areas.



METLA ks/lis 1994

ENGLISH

PUNKAHARJU NATURE CONSERVATION AREA AND RESEARCH PARK



PUNKAHARJU NATURE CONSERVATION AREA

Punkaharju was formed over 10,000 years ago at the end of the latest Ice Age as material brought by the melt water from the glaciers accumulated against a crevasse in the ice. It is believed that its formation took thirty years.

Lying close to major waterways, Punkaharju has provided an important thoroughfare for centuries. Relics from various periods of human history indicate the strategic importance of the esker in ancient times, during the Stone Age, and more recently. The area's oldest military defences date from the 1700s, the most recent from the Second World War.

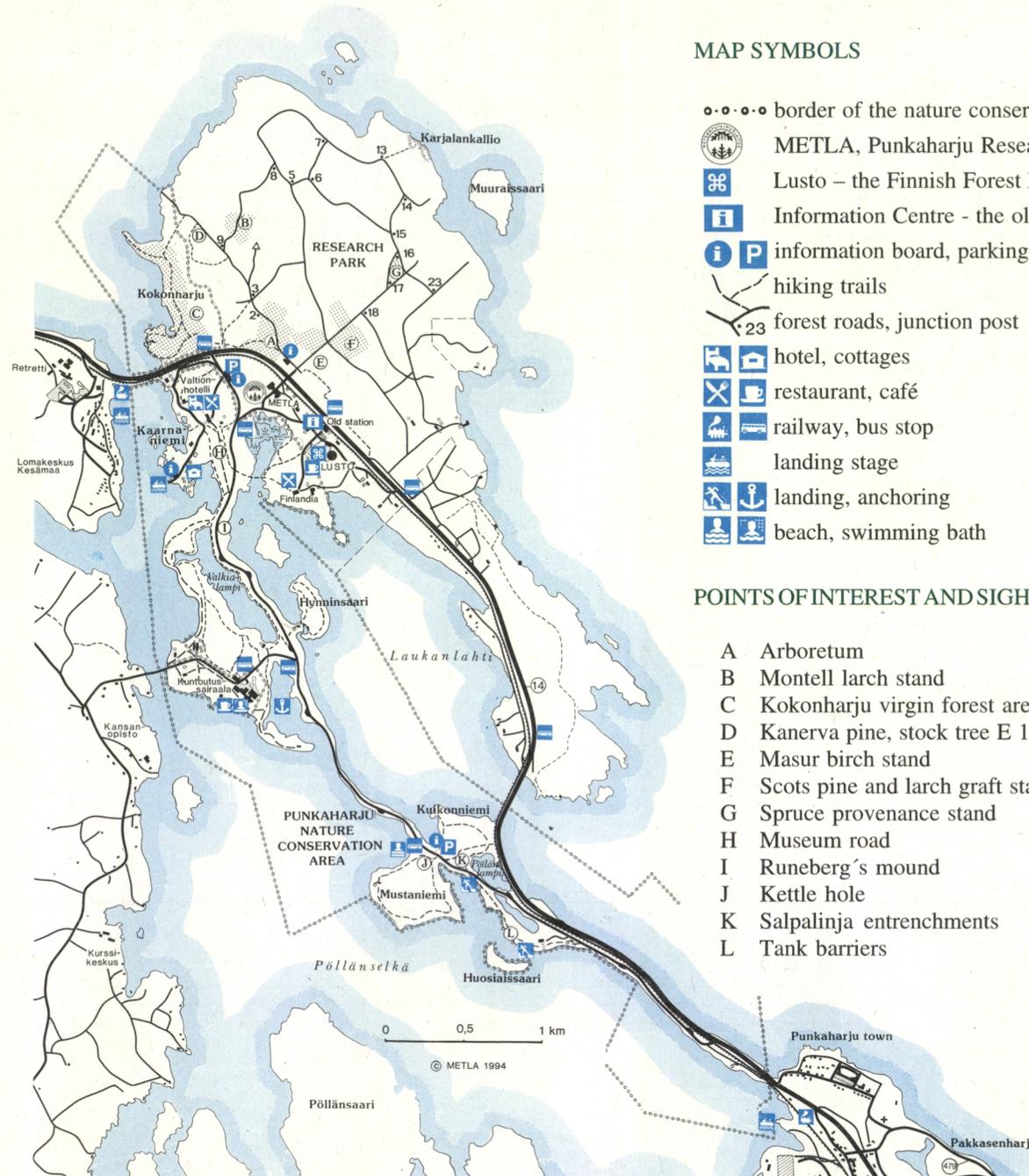
Punkaharju's beauty value was appreciated early on. Visiting the area in 1803, czar Alexander I urged the protection of the esker scenery, at that time suffering from slashing and burning of the forest, domestic animal grazing, and military activities. By decree of the Finnish senate, the esker became State property in 1840, since when the landscape has been managed, deservedly, as one of Finland's landscape heritage areas.

Punkaharju was protected in 1991, the reserve covering a total of 679 hectares, of which 192 hectares is land. The Act safeguards the esker and the landscape, while permitting research, education and nature study.

THE RESEARCH PARK

The oldest exotic tree specimens in an extensive collection in METLA's scientific research park were planted as long ago as the 1870s. Research continues unabated. Cultivation trials enable researchers to determine whether exotic species from equivalent climatic zones can survive in Finland. In the arboretum there are almost 50 coniferous and 20 broadleaf species in a small area.

Aspects of the Research Park are described in more detail in separate leaflets.



MAP SYMBOLS

- border of the nature conservation area
- METLA, Punkaharju Research Station
- Lusto – the Finnish Forest Museum
- Information Centre - the old railway station
- information board, parking
- hiking trails
- forest roads, junction post
- hotel, cottages
- restaurant, café
- railway, bus stop
- landing stage
- landing, anchoring
- beach, swimming bath

POINTS OF INTEREST AND SIGHTS IN THE FOREST

- A Arboretum
- B Montell larch stand
- C Kokonharju virgin forest area
- D Kanerva pine, stock tree E 1101
- E Masur birch stand
- F Scots pine and larch graft stands
- G Spruce provenance stand
- H Museum road
- I Runeberg's mound
- J Kettle hole
- K Salpalinja entrenchments
- L Tank barriers

PUBLIC TRANSPORT CONNECTIONS TO PUNKAHARJU

The nearest train stops are Retretti halt and the railway station in the centre of Punkaharju town. For summer season train connections to the old railway station, consult the State Railways timetables. Long distance coaches from both Savonlinna and Parikkala stop at Punkaharju. In summer both regular service and bookable water transport to the area's harbours is available.

INFORMATION SERVICE AND GUIDES

The Information Centre at the old railway station, provides an introduction to the Research Park and conservation area, as well as to the esker's history.

Brochures are available from the information centre, Lusto and the information desk at the research station. It is also possible to book a guide (in advance) from Lusto to locations of interest in the forest.

Visitors can easily explore Punkaharju on foot or by bicycle. The routes, information board locations, places of interest in the forest, and other sights are marked on the map.

RULES FOR VISITORS

Permitted

- exploring on foot, by ski, by boat, or by bicycle along the bicycle tracks
- berry and mushroom picking
- fishing (permit required).

Prohibited

- damaging the soil or vegetation, disturbing animals
- discarding litter and any other activity likely to affect or disturb wildlife
- camping and fire lighting.

The complete set of nature conservation regulations can be inquired at the Information Centre.