

**NATURAL AREAS PROTECTED BY THE STATE WITHIN THE  
FRAMEWORK OF THE CRIULENI FOREST ENVIRONMENT,  
CHISINAU STATE FORESTRY ENTERPRISE**

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The activity of organization, management and management of natural monuments is carried out according to a strict protection regime that will later ensure the preservation of specific natural features. Depending on their degree of vulnerability, the population's access may be limited or prohibited. In accordance with the Law on the fund of natural areas protected by the state (no. 1538-XIII of 25.02.1998), there are 6 natural areas protected by the state within Criuleni Silvific Bypass. These are: 5 natural monuments - one of which is paleontological, two geological and two sectors with centuries-old trees, and a forest nature reserve - „Zoloceni”. The total area of these reservations according to the current layout (2022) is 139.72 ha, and the difference according to the law is an additional 5.3 ha. The natural monuments, namely those in the Geological and Paleontological category, are the Goian Paleontological Outcrop, the „La Humărie” Valley. The Goian Paleontological Outcrop is divided both in the Forest Fund with the area of 0.3 ha and in the territory of the Hrușova town hall - 0.7 ha of the rest of the area. This reserve is located 0.5 km from the intersection of the Leușeni-Chișinău-Criuleni highways, plot 72 subplot S (besides Hrușova town hall).

The „La Humărie” Valley covers an area of 66.6 ha, being larger by 2.6 ha (the development of 2012), this due to the limit of the corrected border of the forest body. It is located west of the village of Ustia and Răculești on the left slope of the Răut river. The Cave of Surprises is located 2 km northeast of Criuleni town, Zoloceni forest nature reserve, plot 23, subplot D, occupying an area of 0.4147 ha. This monument stretches over a length of 1,700 m, thus being the second longest cave in the country after the Emil Racoviță Cave. The cave, with a relative age of 11-13 million years, was accidentally discovered in 1970. Secular trees in the number of 10 specimens are found in the Halocea forest unit, plot 81, subplot V1 - 1 specimen, and another 9 specimens in the Stroi-Stînca forest unit, plot 47, subplot B, these trees are between 220-230 years.

The Zoloceni forest nature reserve, which covers an area of 71.8 ha, being larger by 2.8 ha (the arrangement from 2012), this is due to the corrected border limit of the forest body. The accessed reserve has in its composition forest species important both for scenery and for a rich biodiversity such as oak, ash, palinum, acacia, etc., aged between 128 years - landscaping unit 21 H on an area of 0.5 ha, 122 years – UA 21 W (18.60 ha) and 2-5-year forest crops.

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