



Educational programmes

The Centre is part of the Network of Environmental Education Centres of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth of the Republic of Cyprus. One-day and multi-day programmes are offered starting at 9:00 and ending at 13:00 or 16:00 respectively. Programmes are offered for all educational levels through interactive learning. The environmental education programmes offered include: Forest biodiversity, soil and water management, culture and biodiversity, city and suburban forest management, energy, farm animal's management, wetlands biodiversity, desertification and art in the forest.

Other facilities

The Centre has free parking, sanitary areas, a canteen, a small outdoor library and board games.

Entrance fees - Opening hours

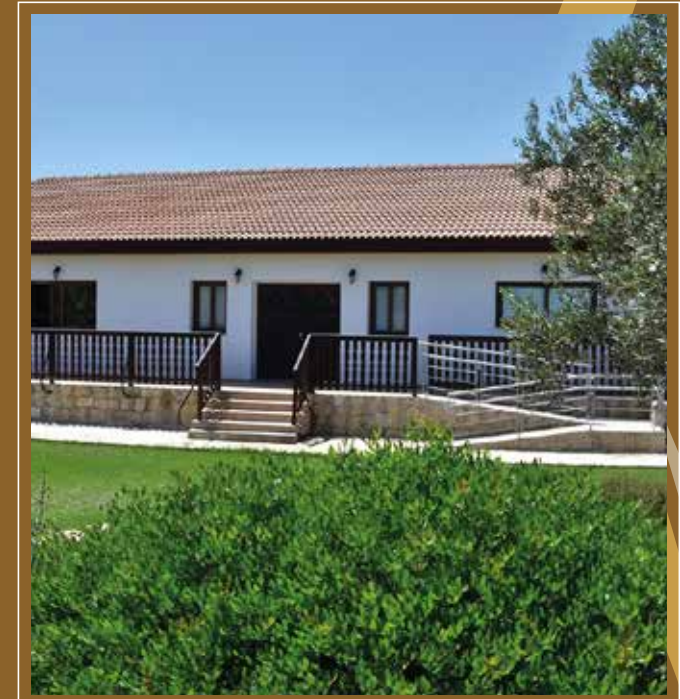
The Centre's museum facilities are open from Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 14:00, with €1 entrance fee for persons aged 6 and above. The theme park with domestic animals and the botanical garden are open to the public all week round from morning to evening, free of charge.

Address

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Athalassa Visitor Centre



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The **Athalassa Visitor Centre** is located on the northeastern edge of the Agios Georgios Park, within the Athalassa National Forest Park, on the corner of the Kyreneia and Athalassa avenues, in Aqlantzia, Lefkosia.

The buildings of the Centre are restored government buildings of 1930s, part of the Government Mansion of Athalassa, mainly used as stables suitable for selected breeds of horses until 1963. The restoration began in 1996 and was completed in 2004, with national funds, by the Department of Forests.

The Centre opened to the public in May 2004 under the management of the Department of Forests, as a Visitor Centre. By 2008, the Centre joined the Network of Environmental Education of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth.

Mission of the Centre

The Centre's mission is to promote the environmental features of the Athalassa Park, to provide information about the Park's values and recreational opportunities offered, to educate and raise awareness among the public and especially students on environmental issues, both at local and international level.

Personnel

The Centre is staffed and managed by the Department of Forests staff. It is also staffed by teachers with studies and professional experience in Environmental Education and Sustainable Development.



Infrastructure

The Centre is comprised by especially designed areas, which can be used for educational programmes, welcoming other visitors at the same time.

It includes exhibition areas, a laboratory, a conference and screening room, a botanical garden and a playground located in the Forest Park. The exhibition venue features several exhibits and resources such as dioramas that host characteristic flora and fauna specimens of both Athalassa National Forest Park, Larnaka's salt lake and Mesaoria plain. Cave ecosystems are included too, as well as geological exhibits (fossils, rocks) and a fire protection awareness room, microscopes, computers etc. It also includes an aquarium with fish and freshwater turtles and a theme park with domestic animals.

The botanical garden is an 'ark', hosting important species both from the region and from all over Cyprus as well as representative rock samples. The garden hosts more than 80 local plant species, some of



which are facing extinction, with the aim of protecting, conserving and reproducing rare species of Cypriot flora. Moreover, there is a small pond with native turtles found in the wetlands of Cyprus, and a bee motel, i.e. a construction that houses several bee species.

Also, the outdoor theme park of domesticated traditional animals enlightens the visitor, since 2012, about the biology and importance of the animals hosted to the life of the Cypriot farmer.

Screening room

In this room a 20-minute film is shown to visitors, about the general environment of the Athalassa Park, Mesaoria Plain, Larnaka Salt Lake and Kavogkreko area. There is also a 15-minute film dedicated exclusively to the Athalassa Park. A film on the geology and rocks of Cyprus is also available in the Geology Room. In the fire protection awareness and flora and fauna rooms relevant digital material is provided on the above issues.