

Natural history of the Koźle Region



Mamut wg paleolitycznych rysunków naskalnych. "Men of the old stone age" by Henry Fairfield Osborn, New York 1915. Ryc. Charles R. Knight.

The Koźle Region lies in the Upper Odra Ice-Marginal Valley, in the so-called Koźle-Racibórz Depression. The geological structure of this area is determined by the Holocene basins of the valleys of the Odra and Kłodnica rivers, rich in filling sands and postglacial moraine uplands featuring dunes and places of the accumulation of moraine material. Holocene is the latest geological epoch, the beginning of which dates back to 10.2 thousand years before Christ, that is, the end of the last glacial period.



Nosorożec włochaty. Charles R. Knight - H. Osborn, "Men of the Old Stone Age"

The geological structure of the soil cover and sedimentary layers situated below and related to the river activity shows that about 500 million years ago, the Koźle Region, like the entire Silesia, was located at the bottom of the primordial ocean in the equatorial zone. Circa 318 million years ago, at the turn of the Devonian and Carboniferous periods, tectonic movements took place, leading to the elevation of the Eurasian Plate and its movement northward to its current location. The ocean gave way to the rise of the Sudetes, creating numerous large and shallow lakes during the transitional period, of which there remained many sand and gravel sediments. Over time, the lakes dried up, and their place was taken by forests.

The proximity of St. Anne's Mountain and the Głubczyce Plateau, as well as the high hydrologic activity within the terrain (rivers, meanders, floods), resulted in the creation of a fertile cover, consisting of the loess soils beneficial for arable farming, across many places. Prior to the beginning of the human agricultural activity, the fertility of the local soils fostered the expansion of forests, which covered the entire area of the region during the preglacial period and after the glacial retreat. Furthermore, in the period when the nomadic lifestyle of humans was transitioning into a more settled form, the same soil fertility made the terrain of the current Koźle Region attractive to inhabit.



Jeleń olbrzymi. Charles R. Knight - H. Osborn, "Men of the Old Stone Age"

Like entire Poland, the Koźle Region is situated in the temperate climate zone, in the range of temperate oceanic influences. The average temperature in January is $-2\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$, whereas in July - $18\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$. Due to the location in the river valley, the temperature amplitude is lower than the average one in Poland. According to the statistical findings, on the basis of the observations conducted during the last 200 years, the winter in our region lasts 70 days on average, whereas the summer - 90 days. On average, 55 sunny, 115 cloudy, and 64 days with a snow cover are recorded in the Koźle Region. The average precipitation in the Koźle Region amounts to 650 mm/m^2 per year. The plant growth season begins at the end of March and lasts about 220 days.