

International hay making camp in Gyimesbükk Transylvania, Romania

Date: 9-16 August 2015.

Location: Gyimesbükk, Áldomáspataka (Ghimeș-Făget, Aldămaș [on the map](#)).

Organizers: Sáríg Attila and Pogány-havas Association

Supporters: Barbara Knowles Fund and Naturvernforbundet i Buskerud from Norway



The Csángó people living in the Gyimes Valley possess a knowledge that represents an exceptional value for the whole of Europe. The ancient Csángós settled in a wild, remote valley in the Eastern Carpathians and in order to survive they had to develop a special life and land use style that was in harmony with nature.

Hay making is the most important activity in the Gyimes Valley because people here are mainly occupied with animal husbandry. Through decades of work they created some of the most biodiverse mountain hay meadows in the world.

The hay making camp in 2015 would like to introduce participants into this type of landscape-creating, nature-respecting lifestyle.

Nearly all the food served at the camp is organic because the ingredients are grown and produced by the Sáríg family on their own farm by Csángó traditions. The family uses mainly human and animal power to produce food which means that machine usage is kept to a minimum. We hope that these are good reasons for our guests to spend a whole week in “Csánglia” with pleasure.

Participants at the hay making camp can contribute to the survival of this beautiful landscape that became so magical mainly because of traditional hay making. During the seven days of the event participants are also invited to get a personal insight into the world and lifestyle of the Csángós.

Everybody is warmly welcome!

Planned programme

The programme is subject to change according to weather conditions!

9 August, Sunday: in the evening everybody shall meet at the Áldomás Guesthouse in Áldomáspataka village, Gyimesbükk municipality for welcome and dinner.

10 August, Monday: mowing starts early in the morning, breakfast at 9 AM, continue mowing from 10 AM, 1 PM lunch followed by a walk in the meadow to learn about meadow biodiversity with the help of a specialist, 6 PM dinner.

11 August, Tuesday: breakfast at 8 AM, 9 AM – 1 PM a visit to uncle Viktor the tool maker (learn how to make scythes and rakes), 1-3 PM lunch and siesta followed by gathering the hay and making small hay stacks, 7 PM dinner.

12 August, Wednesday: 6 AM good morning, 7 AM visiting the kaliba (a shelter not too far from the house where locals keep the animals during summer), cheese making, breakfast and picking mushrooms; lunch at 2 PM after which guests from abroad are given the possibility to make a short presentation about themselves and to highlight what makes traditional lifestyle valuable; after presentations dinner will be served which will be followed by an evening party with local traditional music and dances.

13 August, Thursday: 9 AM breakfast after which everybody shall prepare for a hike up to the mountain hay meadow; lunch on the mountain at around 1 PM after which a walk will be held on the meadow to learn about meadow biodiversity with the help of a specialist, comparison with those seen 700 meters lower; mowing 'til dinner time; after sundown sleeping in the hay barns in sleeping bags.

14 August, Friday: 6 AM mowing early in the morning; 9 AM breakfast followed by more mowing; 1 PM lunch; 2 PM more mowing for those who have energy and turning the hay that has been cut in the morning; 6 PM dinner.

15 August, Saturday: breakfast at 8 AM; most of the day will be spent with gathering the hay, making hay stacks and pulling them to the barns, loading the hay into the barn; in the late afternoon the team leaves the mountain and will have dinner back at the guesthouse.

16 August, Sunday: breakfast at around 8 AM, followed by a short evaluation of the week, after which farewell and everybody shall head home.

Participation fee: 35 EUR/person/day. The fee includes simple village accommodation, breakfast, lunch, dinner and participation in the activities and programmes. Children welcome.

Registration deadline: 31 July 2015. The number of participants is limited to a maximum of 30. A 15 EUR deposit is kindly requested upon registration.

Practical information: this is a Hungarian ethnic region, bring a Hungarian phrasebook. Be prepared for any weather – it changes quickly in the mountains, wear layers, working clothes, sturdy shoes. Gardening gloves and a sun hat are recommended. Nearest airports: Tirgu Mures, Sibiu, Bucharest; railway stations: Miercurea Ciuc, Ghimes.

Maps and more information:

- <http://goo.gl/maps/xOVjV> ,
- <http://mountainhaymeadows.eu/region.html#location>

Please visit these websites to learn more about our projects and efforts related to nature conservation and agriculture:

- Pogány-havas Association: www.poganyhavas.ro
- Hay meadow conservation project: www.mountainhaymeadows.eu
- Barbara Knowles Fund: www.treasuresoftransylvania.org

“Hay meadows provide an immense range of benefits to farming communities and wider society. They create some of Europe’s most spectacular scenery and cultural landscapes. Simply to watch this natural, environmental and cultural heritage disappear before our eyes is, surely, not an option we can consider,” said HRH the Prince of Wales in a message to our policy seminar at the European Parliament, Brussels, 2012. Watch the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGhHtbF6zKk>

Contact: For registration, transportation possibilities, optional tours before or after the event or any other detail please contact Barbara Knowles (barbara.knowles@yahoo.co.uk) or Robert Biro (biro.robert@poganyhavas.ro).