



Danube Day 2009 in the Czech Republic

Morava instils a sense of love and wonder

The final stages of the Danube Art Master competition combined with a river safari made for a great Danube Day in the Czech Republic. 2009 events focussed on increasing understanding of the value of *natural* rivers for people and wildlife.

Litovelské Pomoraví Protected Landscape Area provided the stunning background for the 2009 celebrations and the culmination of the **Danube Art Master** competition. Part of a basin-wide competition taking place in each of the 14 countries and overseen by the Danube Environmental Forum, the competition invites pupils to let their creativity run wild and make a piece of art inspired by their river. Organised in the Czech Republic by the Union for the Morava River and with a theme of "I Love Danube", 560 children entered 314 artworks in the national competition. The excited participants gathered in the Slunakov Ecological Centre in Horka nad Moravou near Olomouc to hear who had won this year's top prize. The Art Master crown went to Zuzana Keslarová, Aneta Leštinská and Tereza Tichá for their "Love by the Danube" sculpture made of natural materials. Following the crowning ceremony, everyone celebrated with Danube songs and performances by children.

In the afternoon, the young artists were treated to a **Morava river safari** and 10km hike through the floodplain forest north of Olomouc. They were rewarded with a real adventure, having a great time messing about in the boats and exploring the magnificent surroundings and wildlife.

Once again, the sound of ship horns reverberated across the Danube Basin at 14:00 on Danube Day, as Danube workers paid a very special tribute to their river. The annual **Greet the Danube horn blast**, organised by the Global Water Partnership (GWP), saw ships along the Danube rivers from Germany to Ukraine simultaneously sound their horns in a salute to the rivers.

"We must thank water for the beginnings of life on Earth. We should not forget water and we must respect it: its unique nature in streams and rivers, in the Morava River, in the Danube River, in the sea..."

František Ondráš, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic

Danube Day Partners

Union for the Morava River with support from the Ministry of the Environment. Other partners include the Olomouc Centre for Ecological Studies; Ministry of Agriculture; Litovelské Pomoraví Protected Landscape Area; Delfin Olomouc boating association; Loštice primary school and the Vetrnik choir; Štěpánov primary school and the Global Water Partnership (GWP).

Shared Waters – Joint Responsibilities

For general information about the 14-country Danube Day celebrations, view www.danubeday.org or email the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR): jasmine.bachmann@unvienna.org.