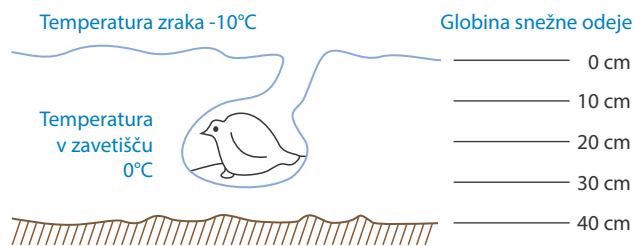


4 Make sure to keep to established routes when skiing through larch forests, which is often where black grouse make their snow holes. If you get too close to their hideaway, the birds are likely to dart away. This is an extremely stressful experience for the animals, as they have to build a new hole and replenish the energy they lost.



5 Try to be as quiet as possible and avoid shouting, screaming, and playing loud music. There are other, less intrusive ways to express our joy and excitement.

6 Dogs should be kept on a leash at all times.

By following these simple guidelines, we can enjoy safe and fulfilling experiences without disturbing the animals that make the mountains their home.

More information about quiet zones is available on the Triglav National Park website (www.tnp.si) and Alpine Association Slovenia (www.en.pzs.si).

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Authors: Tanja Menegalija, Andrej Arih, Tomaž Mihelič, Martin Šolar

Translated by: Gorazd Pipenbaher

Photo credits: Tanja Menegalija, Tomaž Mihelič, Martin Šolar

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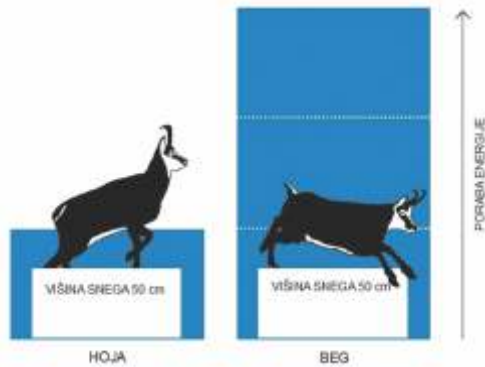
RESPECTFUL AND RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR IN WINTERTIME MOUNTAINS



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Towards the end of the summer, nature puts on its autumn clothes and starts to prepare for winter. The flowers have long since faded and their seeds and roots are waiting for the springtime sun to warm them back into life. The animals are also getting ready for their winter rest. While some of them are still looking for the last bits of food, other are already searching for a warm and safe place to spend the winter. The harshest time of the year, when food and warmth are scarce, is fast approaching. In the mountains, this lack of food is even more pronounced and any extra energy the animals lose may prove to be fatal.



Throughout the summer, the marmots have been working hard on getting as fat as possible before going into hibernation. Chamois and ibex are also stouter than usual and their fur is thicker. The mountain hares, stoats, and rock ptarmigans have put on their white camouflage to evade predators. Although snowy winter landscapes appear abandoned, the animals are still there, tucked safely in their winter hideaways.

Rock ptarmigans and black grouse are hiding in holes just a few centimeters below the surface of the snow, mountain hares and stoats prefer the leeward side of rocks, while chamois stick to pine trees and sunny slopes. Although the animals are hidden, we can see their tracks in the deep snow. They are here and this is their home.



Winter used to be a time of peace and rest and it was rare for people to venture into the mountains. But lifestyles are changing and equipment is getting better and better, which brings more people to snow-covered mountains. Social media posts encourage and beckon individuals who, not long ago, looked to the mountains with fear and respect. Wintertime peace is now a thing of the past and more and more animals are being disturbed during their winter rest. We must realize that we are merely visitors in these landscapes and as such we should act accordingly and follow the rules. The main principle is simple: to cause as little distraction as possible. And to do so we should follow some simple guidelines.

1 Each outing should be carefully planned. You should study the snow and weather conditions, prepare your equipment, and plan a route that is safe and avoids quiet zones where wintertime travel is not allowed. Inexperienced individuals should hire a guide with a valid license for wintertime guiding.



2 Stick to marked and established trails, especially in the forest and along the forest edge. In some areas, animals may get used to people and slowly move to quiet zones.



3 Avoid areas where animals rest and feed, such as sunny rocks and places with no snow cover.