

## IMPORTANCE OF THE BÜKK DARK SKY PARK AND ITS EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

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**Introduction:** International Dark Sky Park award is given by the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) and can only be established in a protected, state-owned area. It can only be in a low light pollution area, and it is also important to involve those who are interested in the nightlife, astronomy, solar system objects and the wonders of the sky. They play a very important role in science promotion. The Bükk Dark Sky Park is the 49<sup>th</sup> in the world, and 3rd Hungarian dark sky park, which not only guarantees the undisturbed longevity of the nightlife, but also helps astronomical observations. The park covers the area of the Bükk National Park. There was a complete lighting reconstruction in the village of Répáshuta (the only protected village in the NP), which is a tangible and demonstrable step forward in the fight against light pollution. From here you can see curiosities with naked eye such as zodiac light, as well as the milky way. These phenomena are not visible at all from light polluted cities and habited areas. It also creates great opportunities for astronomical observations.

During the half year, visitors take part in a number of stargazing nights with telescopes. These evenings are organized by the Bükk National Park Directorate, the local association (Hive Stone Conservation and Culture Association). Eszterházy Károly University, the national park directorate, and the association's several years of work, surveys, data collection had to be done in order to prepare the submission material. After three years of work we received the international dark sky award which was given in June, 2017.

Our short and medium-term plans include the establishment of an astronomical visitor center, which helps to spread knowledge, and can be integrated into international research programs.