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## **The “Bartek” Oak - Polish kings rested there**

**According to the records the “Bartek” oak is over 700 years old. It is 30 metres high and 10 meters thick. The tree is tremendous and unique.**

The legend says that Polish kings, e.g. Bolesław Krzywousty (Bolesław III the Wrymouth),

Kazimierz Wielki (Casimir III the Great) or Jan III Sobieski, who were passing through the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, often stopped to rest in its shade. The last of them is even said to have hidden treasure in the hollow of this huge tree.

In 1829 the oak had 14 main and 16 side branches, but now it has only 8 main branches left. In 1906 the tree was damaged by a fire of nearby buildings. In the 20s of the 20th century, dead parts of the trunk were strengthened with concrete fillings. On the 3rd of June 1991 Bartek was hit by a thunderbolt, which destroyed one of the branches and caused an inflammation of the trunk's part. Nowadays, its branches are held by hydraulic reinforcements, unfortunately, they can still snap at any moment. Certain actions are also undertaken to eliminate pests, which feed on it. Nevertheless, in spite of many dramatic incidents, Bartek is still alive and became a habitat for numerous organisms. It is legally protected as a nature monument, just as the nearby alley of lime, maple and ash trees and a 300 years old larch.

There is "Bartek's son" in the vicinity, which has been planted during the 1000th anniversary of Poland's existence.