

Bolevec ponds

The pond network near Pilsen was created in the mid 15th century. From a technical and landscaping perspective, it is a unique late Gothic work, older than the more famous network in Třeboň. At the time, fish farming and brewing were among the most profitable businesses.

In 1460 the city of Pilsen bought the then village Volevec (today's Bolevec) and a year later began construction of the largest pond (Velký bolevecký). By the end of the century, the system had grown to a total of eleven ponds (Šídlovský, Kamenný, Vydymáček, Beroun, Borek Vorlík, Klenovec, Nad Klenovcem, Volšinka, Nový and Barchan), some of which disappeared in later centuries. At the turn of the 18th century three more ponds (Košíň, Senecký and Třemošenský) were created.

Currently, the majority of ponds are used for recreation. A very popular place for city residents and visitors is the Ostende swimming area at Velký Bolevecký.

The area combines a dense network of marked and unmarked paths and thus offers countless options for walks and exploration around the ponds.

You can walk along the Sigmond nature trail, climb to the top of the observation tower on the hill Krkavec, find Sofronka Arboretum and the Nature Reserve Doubí. And be sure not to leave out Kamenný Rybník (Stone Pond), which is part of a nature reserve with a bog covering 12 ha.

Bolevák (Large Bolevec pond) is one of the oldest ponds in the region. Among other things, it was used as a source of ice for breweries in the 19th century.

Pilsner Urquell leased space at the Big Pond dam for winter ice production in the 1870s. Icemen were mostly local farmers who had little work over the winter. From the nearby railway line no. 160 to Žatec, a special siding was built to transport the "frozen assets" to the brewery cellars. To give an idea of the scale of operations, in 1920, 600 wagonloads were extracted and delivered to the brewery from Bolevecký rybník. The efficiency of ice mining increased and to facilitate the work, an iron conveyor was built on the dam in 1942. It was able to extract 100 tons of ice per hour and was in use until 1987. In the mid 1990s the conveyor was dismantled.

How do we get to the ponds?

This recreation area can be reached from several directions and there are various trails throughout the area.

Starting point – Bílá Hora:

- **From the Central Bus Station (CAN)**

- Bus 20

From the central bus station, go through the underpass and cross the four-lane road, go right, then left at the traffic light. You will see Kalikovský mlýn (Kalikovský mill). Bus 20 stops there at "Kalikova". The bus goes in the direction of Bílá Hora. Get off at the stop "U Kondrů".

- Bus 39

You will go through the underpass to tram No. 2 Světovar direction and go following means of transport to the station "Main Railway Station, Sirkova. Use the underpass and shopping center Tesco get on bus 39 in the direction Zruč - Senec. Get off at the stop - "U Kondrů".

- **From the main train station**

- Bus 20

Go through the underpass to tram 2 and to the station "náměstí Republiky" (Republic Square). Cross the street and go left at the square. The bus stop is there in front of the café Fellini. Take bus 20 in the direction of Bílá Hora and get off at the station "U Kondrů".

- Bus 39

From the train station, go through the underpass and back upstairs and you will see the stop in front of the Tesco department store. The bus will be marked Zruč – Senec, and this bus also goes to the station "U Kondrů".

From the station U Kondrů descend the stairs by the cottage and you will be by Bolevec Pond.

Starting point Bolevec (final tram No. 1 or 4):

- **From the Central Bus Station (CAN)**

- Tram 2 direction Světovar - go 2 stops and get off at the stop "sady Pětatřicátníků" and then change to tram No. 4 in the direction of Košutka. Get off at the end and go straight on through the park to the pond Šídlovák.
 - Tram 2 in the direction of Světovar - go 2 stops and get off. You will be standing at the stop sady Pětatřicátníků. Cross the street to your left and on the corner you will see the main post office (hlavní pošta). There is a stop for tram 1, which will take you to the final stop in Bolevec. After a short walk along the main road you will reach the pond Nováček, and if you go cross the railway, you'll get to Senecký pond and Sofronka arboretum.

- **From the main train station**

- Tram 1 in the direction of Bolevec. Get off at the last stop and walk to the Nováček pond or go across the railroad tracks and you will be at Senecký pond and Sofronka arboretum.

Study question

All ages

Say what route and around which ponds you went.

What special can you see above the surface of the pond Košinář and what is just below the pond's dam?