



# A Meadow Turns into a Pristine Underwater World Grüner See

*Pastoral Green Lake Park expands during spring between mid-May and June when snowmelt floods the surrounding area and begins receding in July as winter progresses.*

(Source: Wikimedia.org)

**T**HE Grüner See (Green Lake) located in a village called Tragöb, in the state of Styria, Austria. This is known for its bright, emerald-green hue and most interestingly for its fluctuating depth round the year, at times, leaving the park completely submerged in crystal clear water from the surrounding mountains, transforming the pastoral scene into an icy underwater view.

The lake is surrounded by forest and the Hochschwab massif, which is part of the Northern Limestone Alps in Austria. The Hochschwab region has a rich fauna comprising alpine marmots (*Marmota monax*), chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*), alpine ibex (*Capra ibex*), capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*), salamander (*Salamandra atra*) and common viper (*Vipera berus*).

The flora of the region is particularly varied including auricle (*Primula auricular*), lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus*), orchids (*Nigritella*), edelweiss (*Leontopodium nivale* subsp. *alpinum*) and different parts of gentian (*Gentiana amarella*) can also be found in the region.

The Hochschwab mountain ranges reach high enough to form snowcaps. The marine park is created every year when both lake and mountains form an unusual cycle with the water turned into snow in winters and receding to a lake in summers. The temperature of crystal clear water from snowmelt is said to be around between 6-7°C.



The natural phenomenon behind this transformation is the rising of temperature in summers when the snow melts and fills the basin of land below the mountains with ice-cold crystal water and gets its distinctive emerald-green hue from the grass and foliage beneath. The lake is usually 1m deep in winters, however, in spring when the temperature rises and snow melts the lake reaches a maximum depth of around 12 m. The water is free from impurities, fresh and crystal clear, as it comes from snowcaps and gives a spectacular view of the natural park submerged underneath,



(Source: 9gag.com)



(Source: [www.flickr.com/photos/stephan\\_mittas/4392697965/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/stephan_mittas/4392697965/))



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fully adorned with tree trunks, branches, trails, paths, park benches and big rocks, etc.

The fauna of the "Grüner See" consists of many small animals like snails, water fleas (*Daphnia pulex*), small crabs and fly larvae and different species of trout (*Salmo*). However, the lake supports a very few variety of plant species as the bottom surface of the lake is slightly rocky. However, it has a mild grassy meadow, and an abundant flora around that is part of the Hochschwab forest. Besides, green flowering

meadows in the edge zone of the lake can also be observed. This is how flora and fauna thrive in the freshly filled lake and enjoy the warmth of the spring.

Green grass, flowers, paths, rocks, trees, etc. make the Green Lake a perfect picturesque which is one of the favoured destinations for visitors to explore the mesmerising natural spot which is a park in winters and a lake in spring.