A Satellite Spots Autumn in Poland's Mountains

NASA's Landsat 9 saw red, gold, and tan hills as fall changed a national park in southern Poland.

Autumn colors cover mountain forests and meadows while a satellite observes from above.

A NASA satellite photographed bright **autumn** colors in southern Poland this month. According to NASA Earth Observatory, Landsat 9 took the picture on October 8. The image shows Bieszczady National Park, a **mountain** park near Poland's borders with Slovakia and Ukraine. Forested hills look red and gold. High meadows look tan, like grass at the end of summer.

A satellite is a machine that travels around Earth. Landsat 9 looks down from space and records light from the land below. That lets people compare far-away forests without walking every hill.

The picture matters because it shows a change many people know from their own neighborhoods. **Leaves** do not turn color by magic. Cooler air and shorter days tell many trees to slow down making chlorophyll. Chlorophyll is the green stuff plants use to make food from sunlight. When there is less chlorophyll, other colors in the leaves can show.

In this park, many of the trees are European beech trees. Beech trees can live in cool, mountain places. NASA says beech forests helped cover parts of Europe again after ice-age glaciers melted. Glaciers are huge, slow-moving sheets of ice. Some very old beech forests in this area are part of a protected network shared by 18 countries.

The satellite also spotted open mountain meadows called polonina. A **meadow** is a wide grassy place. These meadows sit above many of the trees. By October, their summer green had faded to tan. From the ground, a hiker might see hills, cold air, and leaves underfoot. From space, the same **season** becomes a pattern of colors across mountains.

The park is also home to wild animals. Brown bears feed more in autumn before winter sleep, called hibernation. European bison live there too. They once disappeared from the wild, but people brought them back to this area in the 1960s. Now they roam the hills by the hundreds, NASA says.

A satellite photo cannot tell every story. It cannot show the crunch of leaves or the smell of wet woods. But it can help people see big changes at once. That is useful for learning how forests, weather, seasons, and animals fit together.

Written from reporting by NASA.

THINK IT THROUGH

1. **Which view teaches more about autumn: walking in the woods or seeing a satellite image from space? Defend your choice.**

> **A strong answer:** A strong answer weighs close-up sensory details against the big-picture view of patterns across a large place.

2. **Should people work hard to protect very old forests, even if they are far away from where they live? Why or why not?**

> **A strong answer:** A strong answer considers shared nature, history, wildlife, and the idea that distant places can still matter.

3. **If your town had a satellite picture taken each season, what question would you want it to help answer?**

> **A strong answer:** A strong answer applies the idea of satellite observation to a local change, such as trees, water, farms, or parks.

A Satellite Spots Autumn in Poland's Mountains

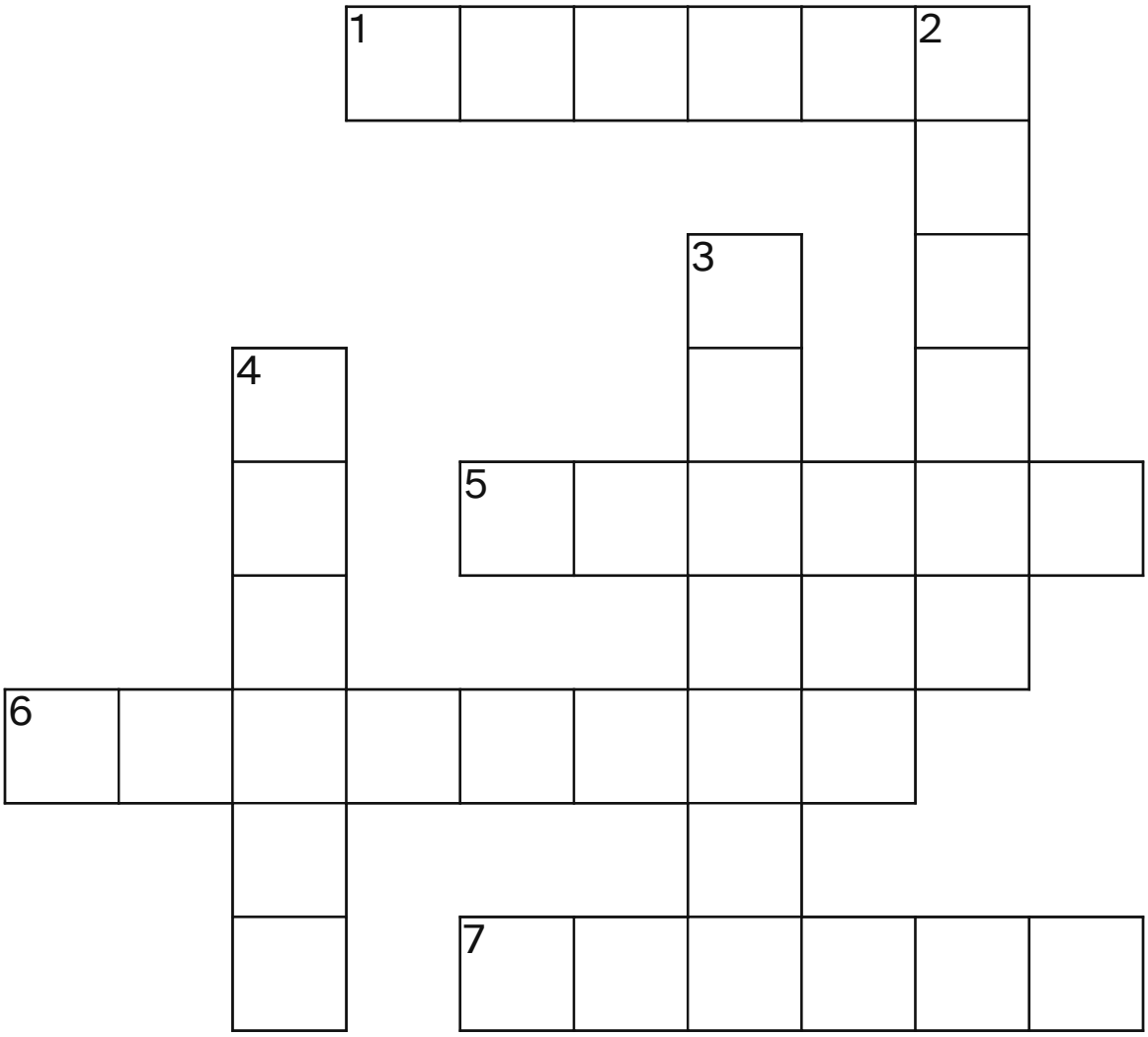
D	S	D	E	M	I	O	A	H	E
M	E	A	D	O	W	E	H	N	M
A	A	A	A	U	T	U	M	N	V
S	S	G	A	N	L	S	L	L	R
E	O	N	L	T	A	E	T	E	U
N	N	T	K	A	A	R	N	A	A
A	O	A	O	I	C	I	O	V	T
L	S	V	O	N	M	I	U	E	R
M	T	I	R	F	O	R	E	S	T
I	T	L	E	S	E	T	G	R	M

AUTUMN FOREST GLACIER LEAVES MEADOW

MOUNTAIN SEASON

Elementary · Monday, October 19, 2026 · Teacher copy · © 2026 3andB Inc.

A Satellite Spots Autumn in Poland's Mountains



ACROSS

1 Flat green plant parts on branches that use sunlight

5 Wide open area covered with grass

6 Very tall, steep area of land

7 Large area full of trees

DOWN

2 Yearly weather period, such as winter or spring

3 Huge mass of ice that moves very slowly

4 Cool time after summer when tree colors change

Elementary · Monday, October 19, 2026 · Teacher copy · © 2026 3andB Inc.

A Satellite Spots Autumn in Poland's Mountains

— answer key

D	S	D	E	M	I	O	A	H	E
M	E	A	D	O	W	E	H	N	M
A	A	A	A	U	T	U	M	N	V
S	S	G	A	N	L	S	L	L	R
E	O	N	L	T	A	E	T	E	U
N	N	T	K	A	A	R	N	A	A
A	O	A	O	I	C	I	O	V	T
L	S	V	O	N	M	I	U	E	R
M	T	I	R	F	O	R	E	S	T
I	T	L	E	S	E	T	G	R	M

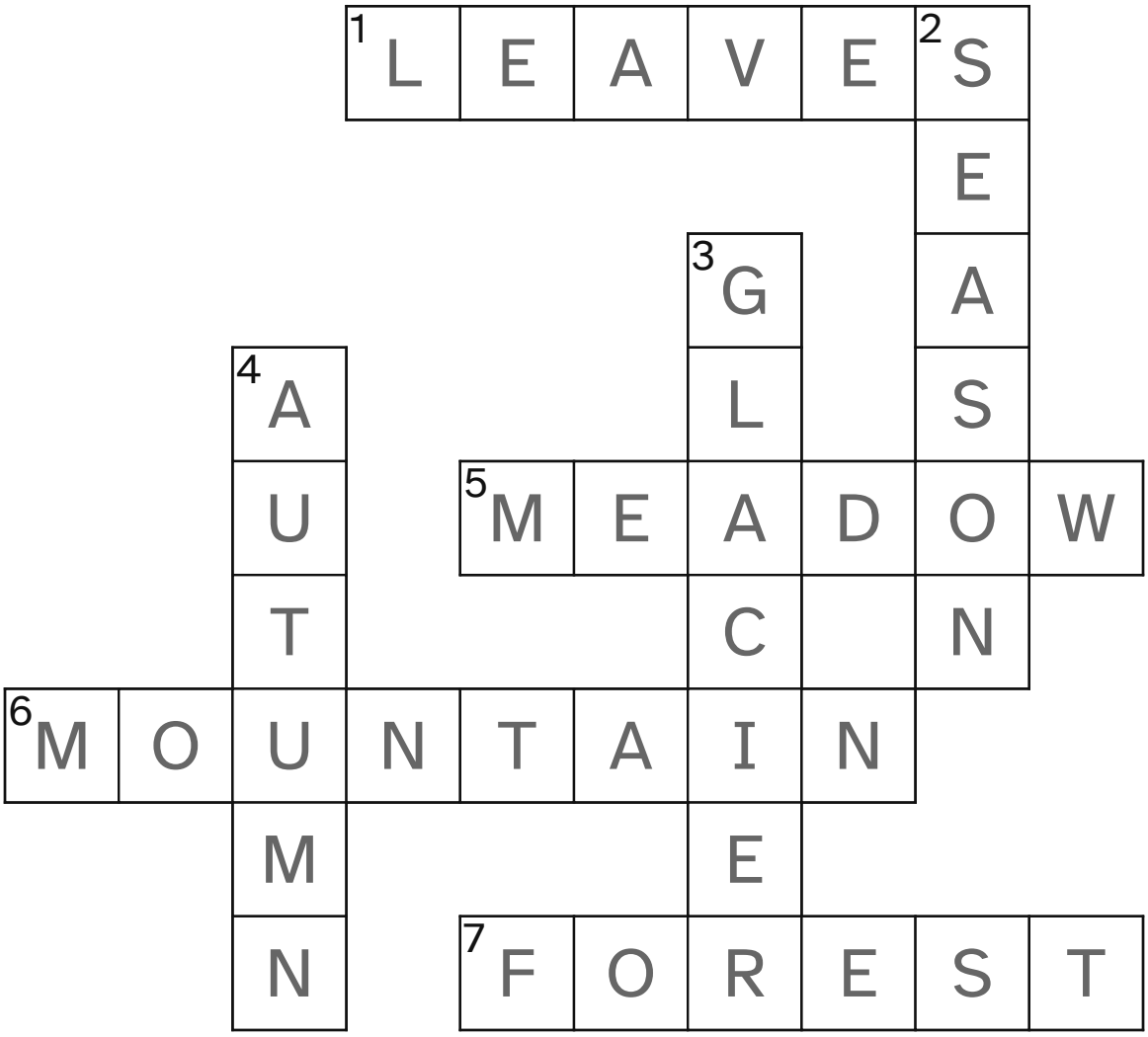
AUTUMN FOREST GLACIER LEAVES MEADOW

MOUNTAIN SEASON

Elementary · Monday, October 19, 2026 · Teacher copy · © 2026 3andB Inc.

A Satellite Spots Autumn in Poland's Mountains

— answer key



ACROSS

1 Flat green plant parts on branches that use sunlight

5 Wide open area covered with grass

6 Very tall, steep area of land

7 Large area full of trees

DOWN

2 Yearly weather period, such as winter or spring

3 Huge mass of ice that moves very slowly

4 Cool time after summer when tree colors change

Elementary · Monday, October 19, 2026 · Teacher copy · © 2026 3andB Inc.

Where this came from

This article was written for 3andB from the reporting below. It is not a reprint — the wording is ours and the facts are theirs.

NASA

"Autumn Paints Poland's Bieszczady Mountains"

Published	Monday, October 19, 2026
Read by us on	Monday, October 19, 2026

https://science.nasa.gov/earth/earth-observatory/autumn-paints-polands-bieszczady-mountains/

WHAT IS IN THIS PACKET

The article with a note on each question, a word search, a crossword, and the answer key to both.

COPYING AND REUSE

Free to print, copy and hand out for classroom use. Please keep this page with the packet, so the next teacher can see where the story came from.

More where this came from

If this short lesson worked for your class, our full workbooks go further with the same care:

- Complete units with student and teacher editions
- Worked solutions for every exercise
- Standards-aligned, classroom-tested, print-ready

See the full lessons at 3andB.com

© 2026 3andB Inc.