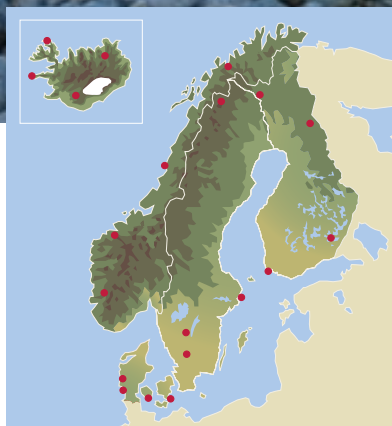




Welcome to 20 Natural Areas in Norden

TIPS FROM THE NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS



There are thousands of natural areas in the Nordic region that are protected as national parks and nature reserves. They have been established to preserve the flora, fauna and geology of those areas, and also to provide visitors with interesting and stimulating experiences of nature.

The purpose of this booklet is to awake interest in the natural and cultural heritage values of protected natural areas, and to demonstrate their suitability for purposes of nature tourism and outdoor recreation. The twenty areas presented here represent a cross-section of Norden's natural splendours, and they are already popular tourist attractions.

It is to be hoped that tour arrangers will be inspired to take advantage of the many other superb national parks and nature reserves in Norden, as well, and that all tourists in the region will discover the many pearls of Nordic nature.

Welcome to 20 Natural Areas in Norden

Tips from the Nordic Council of Ministers

DENMARK

- **Møns Klint**—Denmark's white face to the east
- **Skjern Enge**—a new bird paradise on the west coast of Jutland
- **The Wadden Sea**—where the plains meet the sea
- **The South Fyn Archipelago**—green islands enrobed in blue

FINLAND

- **South-western Archipelago**—luxuriant traditional landscape and rocky islets
- **Linnansaari**—Finnish lakeland at its best
- **Oulanka**—Lush river landscape and impressive views
- **Pallas-Yllästunturi**—Legendary fells and primeval forests

ICELAND

- **Jökulsárgljúfur**—majestic canyon, powerful glacial river, waterfalls and geological formations
- **Snaefellsjökull**—renowned volcano, glacier, prominent lava fields, birdcliffs and cultural remains
- **Hornstrandir**—remote, rugged landscape, derelict settlements, enormous birdcliffs and interesting wildlife
- **Fjallabak**—multicoloured mountains and valleys, wilderness, volcanic formations and geothermal activity

NORWAY

- **Folgefonna National Park**—from fjord to glacier
- **Geiranger-Herdalen**—world-class fjord landscape
- **Vegaøyan**—a coastal community and listed world heritage site
- **Lyngsalpan**—an area of outstanding natural beauty in the Land of the Midnight Sun

SWEDEN

- **Abisko**—national park since 1909
- **Bullerön**—the jewel of the archipelago
- **Store mosse**—primeval landscape in the present day
- **Hornborgasjön**—exciting wildfowl lake in a rich cultural landscape



HORNSTRANDIR

JÖKULSÁRGLJÚFUR
NATIONAL PARK

SNAEFELLSJÖKULL
NATIONAL PARK

FJALLABAK

LYNGSALPAN

ABISKO
NATIONAL PARK

PALLAS-YLLÄSTUNTURI

OULANKA

VEGAØYAN

GEIRANGER-HERDALEN

FOLGEFONNA
NATIONAL PARK

LINNANSAARI

SOUTH-WESTERN
ARCHIPELAGO

BULLERÖN

HORNBORGASJÖN

STORE MOSSE

SKJERN ENGE

THE WADDEN SEA

THE SOUTH FYN
ARCHIPELAGO

MØNS KLINT

NORDIC CO-OPERATION

Co-operation among the Nordic countries is one of the oldest and most wide-ranging regional partnerships on earth. It includes Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, as well as three autonomous areas: the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands. Co-operation among the Nordic countries strengthens the bonds between them, while engendering respect for national differences and similarities. It also provides increased opportunities to uphold Nordic interests in the world, and to promote good neighbourly relations.

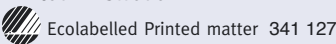
The co-operation was formalized in 1952, when the *Nordic Council* was established as a forum for Nordic governments and parliamentarians. In 1962, the Nordic countries signed the Helsinki Treaty, which since then has provided the basic framework for Nordic co-operation. The *Nordic Council of Ministers* was established in 1971 as a formal arena for co-operation between the governments of the Nordic countries and the political leaderships of the autonomous areas—the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands.

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Nordic nature is the greatest attraction for tourists who visit the region

The attractions of Denmark include the broad expanses of the Vadehavet tidal ecosystem, newly-created wetlands teeming with birdlife, the sea and the lengthy coastlines of the islands with their dunes, cliffs and sandy beaches. Among the many natural phenomena that attract tourists to Norway are glaciers, mountains and fjords. Highlands, volcanoes and other geological phenomena attract tourists to Iceland. They visit Sweden for its mountains, forests and vast wilderness areas, while Finland is well-known as the land with thousands of lakes and the exotic Lapland region.

Among the various activities pursued in nature are fishing, dog-sledding, canoeing and kayaking, climbing, horseback riding, walking, cycling, and diving. Many businesses have been established throughout the Nordic region in response to the growing interest in such activities.

The global expansion of "green tourism" has provided the Nordic countries with a great opportunity to further develop their tourist industries. There is likely to be an increase in demand for holidays that provide a wealth of nature and cultural experiences, along with activities in nature. The growing interest in environmental conservation can also be expected to play an increasingly significant role in tourists' choice of destination.

This booklet highlights some of the protected natural areas in the Nordic region that are of the greatest interest for tourism. Its purpose is to stimulate interest in and convey knowledge of the valuable features of those areas. The booklet also provides information about the locations of and travelling directions to the protected areas, their characteristics, and what visitors can do and experience there. In addition, there are details on overnight accommodation, dining facilities, other attractions in nearby areas, and useful descriptions of adjacent communities.

This booklet is also available in PDF format on the website of the Nordic Council of Ministers: www.norden.org. It may be downloaded and distributed free of charge. For additional information on protected areas in the individual Nordic countries, see the following websites:

Denmark	www.skovognatur.dk
Finland	www.luontoon.fi and www.utinaturen.fi
Iceland	www.ust.is
Norway	www.dirnat.no
Sweden	www.naturvardsverket.se

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Møns Klint is the steep cliff on the eastern coast of the island of Møn, south east of Zealand.

How do I get there?

Drive east from Stege—the largest town on Møn—through Keldby, Borre and Magleby, and from there, the road continues straight to the parking area at Store Klint. There are other car parks in the area, including at Jydelejet and Liselund. Cars may only be parked in designated parking areas (see the brochure from the Danish Forest and Nature Agency for more info).

Addresses

Møns Klint and Klintholm
Brochure published by the Danish Forest and Nature Agency
www.sns.dk/Falster/vandrefl/53moenskl.htm

Ulvshale Naturcenter (Ulvshale Nature Centre)
Ulvshalevej 283.
4780 Stege
+45 5581 1853

Naturstigar, Møn
(Nature Trails on Møn)
Stig Nøhr
Grønssundvej 275.
4792 Askeby
+45 5581 7172

Kutteren Discovery
(the Discovery cutter)
+45 2140 4181
www.sejlkutteren-discovery.dk
Møn Tourist Information Office
www.moen-touristbureau.dk

More information

Search by subject on:
www.skovognatur.dk

Stig Bachmann Nielsen/Naturplan



Møns klint.

Møns klint—Denmark's white face to the east

Along the east coast of Møn, the cliffs of Møns klint are reflected in the Baltic Sea. The white chalk cliffs, the highest in Denmark, blend beautifully with the green beech forests and the varying colours of pasture land, creating a spectacular natural landscape with something for everyone—regardless of whether you are a geologist, a botanist or a tourist. Every year, around 300,000 people visit the cliffs.

Møns klint makes up more than 7 km of the east coast of the island of Møn, reaching its highest point—128 m—at Dronningstolen. Along the entire stretch, the cliffs are crowned with green forests, where many of the slopes and ravines—the so-called “falls”—reach almost all the way down to the coast. In the northern part of the forest, Jydelejet, there are long stretches of pasture land, and south of the forest lies Høvblege, home to large areas of pasture. A total of 2100 hectares of cliffs, forest and pasture lie within this protected area.

Cliffs: The limestone in Møns klint was deposited by microscopic animals and plants which lived in a tropical sea around 75 million years ago. If you look at the thinly layered flint strata,

you can see how the limestone was pushed up by the ice. If you're lucky, you might find fossils in the limestone. Look closely and you may see sea-urchins, octopus or mussels.



Andis Liepa/Naturplan

Peregrine falcon nests on Møns klint again.



View over south east Møn and the Baltic Sea from Høvblege.



Møns klint at Store Klint.

Plants and animals: The high chalk content in the soil creates the perfect conditions for a thriving plant life. Some of Denmark's most unusual orchids, such as pyramidal orchids and heath-spotted orchids, grow in the forest and pastures here. These pastures are also home to a rare butterfly, the large blue. The sandy soil and warm, open fields provide the perfect environment for this butterfly, with thyme and marjoram plants where it can lay its eggs. The butterfly was threatened with extinction due to plant overgrowth, but through extensive clearance work, both the butterfly and several rare plants in the area have been saved. Most of the cliff is inaccessible. That is doubtless something which influenced the peregrine falcon when choosing a nesting place. The falcon disappeared in 1970 due to egg-stealing, but since 2001, birds have begun to nest on the cliff again, and so far this is the falcon's only nesting place in Denmark.

Cliff-top forest: The chalky soil here makes the beech trees grow slowly, and means that their light green leaves last all summer. Part of the forest is "natural forest", where the forest takes care of itself, and this area is home to a wide variety of animals and plants.

Jydelejet and Høvblege: Jydelejet is an open

pasture which cuts across the landscape behind the cliffs. Clusters of trees and juniper bushes alternate with barren stretches of grass. Livestock graze here, and unwanted trees and bushes are cleared. South of the cliff-top forest, there is another wide, hilly area of pasture land—Høvblege. Several walking trails pass through this area, and the view over south east Møn and the Baltic Sea is spectacular.

Liselund: The little castle of Liselund with its thatched roof, in the northern part of the forest, is a splendid example of 18th century garden art.

Outdoor activities: You can walk right along the ridge of the cliff. You can also walk along the beach, but some parts may be difficult to access, and sometimes the beach may be closed off because of the risk of falling rocks. There are steps down to the beach in several places. This is not a suitable place for bathing, as the beach is stony and the water has strong currents. Instead, why not try your luck at fishing—especially if you'd like to fish for sea trout. At Store Klint, there is a natural play area for children. From Klintholm harbour, you can take a boat trip to see the view of Møns klint from the water. The combination of spectacular landscape and relatively short distances make Møn an ideal destination for a cycling holiday.

Nature Centre: Geocenter Møns klint, the new centre for nature and geology at Store Klint, is expected to open in 2007. The centre will feature exhibitions about the cliffs, how they were created, and what their importance is for the landscape and ecosystem around them.

All year round: Møns klint is an exciting destination all year round, but it is probably at its most beautiful between May and October, when the forest is in full bloom. If you're hoping to see some of the unusual orchids, you should come in May or June. During the winter months, when the weather is wetter, there is a greater risk of falling soil and rocks and as a result many areas below the cliffs may be inaccessible.



Pasture land at Jydelejet.



ACCOMMODATION

If you want to stay on the island of Møn, you can choose between campsites, summer cottages, and private bed & breakfasts. The island also has a hostel, situated near the cliffs. Or you could stay in a "kro"—a traditional country inn—for example, at Liselund New Castle, situated close to Møns klint. More information is available from the Møn Tourist Information Office.



EATING

There are many exciting restaurants on Møn. The options include Præstekilde Hotel in Keldby, Damme Kro in Askeby with its traditional Danish cuisine, or Liselund New Castle, where you can choose to eat organic fare.



OTHER SIGHTS

In the northern part of Møn lies Ulvshale, an area where stunning natural forests and heaths spread as far as the eye can see. In the forest beside the campsite is Ulvshale Naturcenter, which arranges excursions and activities all over Møn. You can get to the little island of Nyord by a bridge from Ulvshale. Nyord's meadows are real paradise for birds, and the island is also home to a charming village. Several of the churches on Møn such as Keldby, Elmelunde and Faneffjord have limestone pictures dating back to the Middle Ages.



Skjern Enges meadow is in west Jutland, along the banks of the Skjern Å river, towards Ringkøbing Fjord.

How do I get there?

The area is easy to reach by car. You can take a train or a bus to Skjern or Tarm. From the bus station in Tarm, you can take the Nebel bus which stops in Lønborg. From here, you can enter the meadow area by foot or on bicycle. There are several parking areas on the outskirts of the nature reserve.

Addresses

Skjern-Egvad Museum—West Jutland's eco-museum
Bundsback mølle
www.skjern-egvad-museum.dk
Skjern Tourist Information Office
www.visitvest.dk
Tarm Tourist Information Office
www.visittarm.dk

More information

Search by subject on:
www.skovoggnatur.dk

Skjern Enges—a new bird paradise on the west coast of Jutland

In the 1960s, the stretch of Skjern Å river leading to Ringkøbing Fjord was cleared, and around 4,000 hectares of flood delta, meadows and marshland were drained. In one fell swoop, a fantastic nesting area for waterfowl disappeared. The new ground was to be put to agricultural use. Today, this development in Denmark is being turned back. New marshlands have appeared, and the Skjern Å river meanders through marshy meadows and lush clumps of reeds.

In 1987, the Folketing Danish parliament decided to restore the waterway and restore 2,200 hectares of wetlands along 19km of the lowest part of the Skjern Å. The work began in 1999, with funding from the EU's LIFE programme, and was completed in 2002.

The aims were to restore a large, thriving nature reserve for wild flora and fauna, to improve the environment around Ringkøbing Fjord and to promote outdoor activities here.

Only a few years later, thousands of birds have found their way back here again—and the project is also expected to benefit otters and salmon in the Skjern Å. Hunting is regulated here, and the area has been recognised as a European conservation area (Natura 2000).

Experience nature: The parking places along Skjernåvej road between Skjern and Lønborg are almost at the water's edge, just a few metres

from the birds. Many geese, ducks, wader birds and grebes nest on the meadows, and a large number of birds—such as pink-footed geese and whooper swans—stop here during their migration. Spoonbills have also begun to find their way to Skjern Enges for nesting time. Seeing these beautiful birds is an awesome experience.

Cultural history: People have lived in the Skjern Å valley since prehistoric times. Remains of burial areas and houses from the Iron Age have been found here. Salmon stocks and rich pasture land have been important features of the area. Around the 12th century, there was a state residence to the west of Lønborg church, and Lønborggård was originally an episcopal residence, erected by the Bishop of Ribe in the 15th century. Wading areas have been created in several places along the banks of the river, including in Lønborg and Skjern. A new suspension bridge, Kong Hans bridge, has been built in the same position where

On ice skates, across the coastal meadows in January.





Jens Muff Hansen/Naturplan

Black-necked grebes live a family life beside one of the parking spots in the area.

Lønborg church looks out over the watery meadows along the banks of the Skjern Å river. In the background you can see Ringkøbing Fjord.

the oldest bridge over the Skjern once was.

Information: Naturcenter Skjern Enge, a nature centre which lies in the south west of the area, (north of Vostrup) features a fascinating exhibition on meadow birds. Construction of the Naturcenter Skjern Å is underway in the eastern part of the conservation area. This centre will feature exhibits on the history of the river and the plant and animal life in the area. There are plenty of signs and information boards, including one at the Nord petrol station and one at Skjern harbour, which tell the story of the river, the valley surrounding it, and the flora and fauna of the area.

Facilities: There are over 20 km of paths with footbridges and parking areas, so it is easy to walk, cycle or ride in the area. In total there

are 26 car parks along the paths, and several of these also have public toilets and barbecue areas. Bird-watching towers and hides have also been built in several spots. In the largest tower (beside Skjernåvej road) there are ramps for wheelchairs and for visitors who have difficulty walking. Some trails and rest areas have been reinforced to make them suitable for wheelchair access. Simple camping areas, where you can sleep under the stars, can be found beside the Nord petrol station and east of Borris.

Outdoor activities: Between 16 June and 28–29 February, canoeing from Borris to the fjord is allowed. The area is also perfect for cycling and horse-riding. Information on where you can hire a bicycle or a horse is available from the Skjern Tourist Information Office. There are plenty of fish in Skjern Å.

Here you can fish for real west Jutland salmon, and if you're lucky you might catch one weighing up to 26 kg. There are several places where you can buy fishing permits for the river, including the tourist information offices in Skjern och Tarm. The fishing season lasts from 16 April until 15 September. The area also offers excellent waterfowl hunting.

Special activities: Oxbøl Statsskovdistrikt organises a variety of trips with nature guides, for both children and adults, in Skjern Enge. You can learn to recognise different types of waterfowl on these excursions. There are also many other activities where you can learn about the natural and cultural history of the area. The best way of finding out is to get in touch with Oxbøl Statsskovdistrikt and Skjern Egvad Museum, or with the tourist information offices in Skjern and Tarm.



ACCOMMODATION

There are several camping areas near Skjern Enge, including sites in Skjern and Tarm. You can also rent cottages or apartments. Hotels in the area include Hotel Vestjyden in Skjern, Hotel Smedegården in Lem, Bechs Hotel in Tarm, and Skaven Hus och Bundsgård Hotel in Borris. There are also apartments, summer cottages and bed & breakfast establishments in several areas, especially along the Ringkøbing Fjord. More information is available from the tourist information offices in Skjern and Tarm. There is also a hostel, run by Skjern Egvad Museum, situated to the north of Skjern, at Bundsbæk Mølle.



EATING

There are plenty of options for eating out in the area, particularly in Skjern and Tarm. The hotels mentioned above are home to pizzerias, grill restaurants and other types of eateries. Fahl Kro, an inn situated on Ringkøbing Fjord south of Bork Havn, is well worth a visit. In the summer, afternoon coffee is served in the old bar area, and on Thursday evenings you can enjoy the famous “äggkaka”—a light, fluffy omelette which is a Danish speciality. To book a table call +45 7528 0143. If you're looking for a fabulous view over Ringkøbing Fjord to accompany your meal, head for the restaurant in Skaven Hus, on Skaven beach.



OTHER SIGHTS

In Skjern, you can visit the exhibition on the draining and subsequent restoration of Skjern Å river, called “Alle tiders Å”. Skjern Egvad Museum consists of 15 places of historical interest situated along the Ringkøbing Fjord, including an Iron Age village in Bundsbæk Mølle and a Viking museum in Bork Havn. The places of interest are linked by a 33 km cycle path, called the “Drivvejen”. The southern part of Ringkøbing Fjord, particularly the coastline along Holmslands Klit (which separates the fjord from the sea) and the Tipperne peninsula with its bird reserve are well worth a visit. Note that the Tipperne bird reserve has limited opening times.



The Wadden Sea (Vadehavet) is in south west Jutland and leads out into the North Sea

How do I get there?

National cycle route 1 (the West Coast route) goes through the Wadden Sea area, near the dikes. You can take your car to the island of Fanø, but it's also easy to get around on the island's buses. There is a road to Rømø for cars and bicycles, which passes along the dike. You can also get to Mandø from Vester Vedsted a few kilometres south of Ribe, via Vadehavsbussen (the Wadden Sea bus), a bus which takes the form of a tractor-pulled convoy.

Addresses

Vadehavscentret (the Wadden Sea Centre)
www.vadehavscentret.dk

Naturcenter Tønninggård
 (Tønninggård Nature Centre)
tonnisaard@romo.dk

Natur & Kulturformidlingscentret Myrthuegård (Myrthuegård Nature and Culture centre)
www.myrthuegaard.dk

Blåvand Naturcenter
 (Blåvand Nature Centre)
www.blaavand-naturcenter.dk

Sort Safari
www.sortsafari.dk

Vadehavets Net Nyt (Wadden Sea Net News) www.vnn.dk

Tourist Information Offices

Blåvandshuk: www.bte.dk
 Esbjerg: www.visitesbjerg.com
 Fanø: www.fanoeturistbureau.dk
 Ribe: www.ribetourist.dk
 Tønder: www.visitonder.dk

More information

Search by subject on:
www.skovognatur.dk

Lars Maltha Rasmussen/Naturplan



Every year, 10-12 million waterfowl visit the Wadden Sea area during the migration period.

The Wadden Sea—where the plains meet the sea

Harsh and mild: such seemingly contradictory descriptions of the marshes and the Wadden Sea are not uncommon. The fresh wind rarely stops sweeping across the open expanses. Some days, terrific storms rage in from the west, giving a fright to the people who live here. On other days, the sun shines from a cloudless summer sky, auguring well for a spectacular day at the seaside.

The Wadden Sea and marshes stretch along the south west coast of Jutland and out towards the North Sea. This is the place to find a fascinating sea bed and spectacular sand dunes, heaths and coastal meadows. Most of the area is protected, either as a nature reserve or according to international conservation rules (Natura 2000).

The Wadden Sea, with its tidal waters which come in and go out twice in a 24-hour period, is Denmark's largest area of water, covering a total area of 1,350 km². Magnificent flocks of birds gather here en route from north to south, and many of the fish in the Baltic Sea start off as eggs

and spawn in these nutrient-rich waters.

Some tourists head for this idyllic destination to relax on the white beaches and the island sand dunes. Others unwind by taking long walks across the island heaths, or wandering around Ribe and the other historic towns in the marsh area.

Nature Centres: An ideal way to begin a trip to the Wadden Sea is to visit one of the nature centres. This is the place for more information on the area's natural surroundings and cultural history, not to mention on everyday life around the Wadden Sea. These centres organise excursions

such as seal safaris, fishing trips and nature walks in search of small creatures on the sea bed.

Experience nature: Whatever the weather and time of year—be it stormy or balmy—a walk along the seashore is always spectacular. You can while away many happy hours here, and when the wind blows from the east you might even be lucky and find some amber! You can enjoy exploring the wide, shallow sea bed in various places. Large flocks of wader birds and wild ducks stop in the area of the Rømø dike during the migration period. If you're visiting in late summer or autumn, look out for the impressive sight of the starlings gathering for the night, for example on Tønder Marsh.

The Wadden Sea islands: From the little island of Mandø, you can get a good view of the Wadden Sea. The island is protected by high dikes, and connected to the mainland via a road over the seabed, which can only be used at low tide. Stormy weather can cause the island to be isolated for several days. Rømø and Fanø are more accessible, and are also home to large nature reserves. The road to Rømø is along the length of a 10 km dike. You can get to Fanø by ferry from Esbjerg.

Locks: Almost all outlets into the Wadden Sea are regulated with locks and dikes, in order to protect the ground and the people living behind the dikes when the sea advances. The difference between low tide and high tide can be up to two metres. In storm conditions, the sea level can rise by up to 5-6 metres above the average.

Varde Ådal Valley: Varde Å river, north of Esbjerg, is the only river where the water from the Wadden Sea moves in and out of the river valley unregulated. In storms, the water can fill the river valley all the way to Varde. Varde Å river is highly prized internationally, and the environment here is protected by agreement with farmers in the area.

Sun and bathing: You'll find the best beaches for bathing on Rømø, Fanø and the Skallingen peninsula, which juts out into the North Sea and



Guðrún Rishede/Naturplan

Cycle trip from Ribe to the Wadden Sea through the marshes. Ribe Cathedral in the background.

borders the northern part of Ho Bay. In some areas you can drive a car along the beach. Other areas are closed to traffic in order to protect rare nesting birds like the fairy tern and the common ringed plover. The beaches area also well-known for their playful winds. The conditions are ideal for windsurfing, and in some places you can even try out a kite buggy. Other alternatives including horse riding, playing golf and playing tennis.

City tours: Ribe is the oldest market town in Denmark, and is home to well-preserved buildings and narrow cobbled alleyways. The Ribe Tourist Information Office organises guided tours which share some of the history of the city. Why not take an atmospheric evening walk with the nightwatchman? Other towns in the Wadden Sea area which shouldn't be missed are Løgumkloster, Tønder, and the busy harbour town of Esbjerg.

Other activities: The flat landscape makes the area perfect for cycling holidays. The western sides of the islands are perfect for hobby fishing—especially towards the strong currents, where you can catch flatfish with lugworms as bait. The Nature Centre adapts its events to suit the season. The best way of finding out about local activities is to get in touch with any of the Tourist Information Offices along the Wadden Sea.



Guðrún Rishede/Naturplan

Crabs spotted on an outing to the Wadden Sea.



Lars Maltha Rasmussen/Naturplan

On the road with the Mandø bus.



ACCOMMODATION

There are plenty of campsites, cottages and private bed & breakfasts along the Wadden Sea. To find out how to book, get in touch with the tourist information offices. You can also choose to spend your holiday staying at one of the fine hotels or inns in the area. There is something for everyone here—both in the towns and in the countryside. In Ribe, you can even stay behind the heavy iron doors of the old prison beside the cathedral.



EATING

The towns in the area are home to a wealth of good eateries, including cafés, restaurants and hotels. You can also sample some traditional cuisine at a local inn. Why not try plaice with parsley sauce, cooked the old-fashioned way? Who better to cook up a dish like this than the chefs at the Wadden Sea?



OTHER SIGHTS

There are plenty of activities for both adults and children at the Viking centre south of Ribe. For example, you can watch riding displays, falconry, or food preparation Viking-style. The cathedral and Viking museum in Ribe are also well worth a visit. The Fisheries and Maritime Museum, northwest of Esbjerg fishing harbour, is an experience for the whole family. The seals attract many visitors every day.



The South Fyn archipelago is made up of the coast, the shallow sea and the myriad of small islands along the coast of South Fyn.

How do I get there?

You can easily reach Tåsinge and Langeland via the system of roads and bridges which link the islands. To get to Ærø, you can take a ferry from Svendborg, Fåborg or Rudkøbing. Most of the smaller, inhabited islands also have ferry connections. The easiest way to get to the small, uninhabited islands and islets is to sail there. Many of the small islands are in fact bird reserves, and access to these areas is only allowed between 1 March and 15 July.

Addresses

You can find ideas for excursions on foot, by boat or by bicycle at:
www.sydfynskeohav.dk
www.fyntour.dk
www.maritim-center.dk

Several museums have information about the archipelago and its coastal culture. For example, Langelands museum, which you can find online at:
www.langelandsmuseum.dk

Tourist Information Offices

www.arre.dk
www.infolangeland.dk
[/Turistkontor.html](http://Turistkontor.html)
www.faaborg.dk
www.svendborg.dk

More information

Search by subject on:
www.skovognatur.dk

The South Fyn Archipelago— green islands enrobed in blue

Small, lush green islands peeking out from the blue sea—that's the South Fyn archipelago. Here, you'll find small villages and old towns, well-protected and restored. The landscape is characterised by coastal meadows, cliffs, narrow sounds, waterways and green bushes. The nature reserves are mostly small, but the area as a whole is a unique and spectacular landscape.



Stig Bachmann Nielsen/Naturplan

Voderup Klint on the island of Ærø.

The South Fyn archipelago is composed of the areas along the southern coast of Fyn. Around 50 islands make up the archipelago, the largest of which are Langeland, Ærø and Tåsinge. The archipelago covers a total area of almost 500 square kilometres.

This is the place for beautiful scenery, coastal areas and fjords rich in animal life, exciting excursions and old towns with narrow atmospheric streets.

The entire South Fyn archipelago is a registered European conservation area (Natura 2000). Many areas are protected, and some parts of the archipelago are designated game reserves.

like small islands. The many islands, bays and sounds blend together to create a long coastal area of beaches, coastal meadows and cliffs. You can often spot seals and porpoises between the islands. The rare European fire-bellied toad can be found on some of the islands, and many of the uninhabited islands are nesting places for gulls and terns, including the fairy tern. The larger islands are also home to excellent bird reserves, such as Tryggelev Nor, Tåsinge, Bøjden Nor and Helnæs. In the autumn, Synlangeland is an important stop for birds of prey and sparrows on the route south for the winter. In fact, in the winter, over 70,000 birds stop in the archipelago.

Experience nature: The archipelago is a moraine area, where hills stick up out of the sea

Culture on the small islands: Lyø is one of



Restored nature reserve at Nakkebølle Fjord.



Coastal meadows along the South Fyn coast.



Old houses in Ærøskøbing.

the most beautiful islands, with its lovely farm-houses, thatched cottages and little church. On several of these islands, ancient traditions have been preserved which have disappeared from the rest of Denmark. On Avernakø for example, the tradition of dancing around the maypole has been preserved. And if you go to church on Lyø, it might be good to remember that the women always sit on the north side and the men on the south!

Old towns: Ærøskøbing is perhaps Denmark's best preserved 18th century town, with its cobbled streets, narrow alleyways and many old buildings. The "capital" of Langeland, Rudkøbing, is also well worth a visit for those who want to experience the atmosphere of an old market town. In Fåborg, you can often hear the traditional night watchman's song in the summer months. There are many well-preserved houses and old merchants' estates here. Along the coast of South Fyn, there are also

many villages with half-timbered houses, such as Falsled and Nørre Broby.

Outdoor activities: At the end of 2006, a new 200km hiking trail around the archipelago will open. Svanninge Bakker is home to Denmark's largest natural play area, Troldeand. The archipelago is perfect for sailing. There are plenty of harbours and places to drop anchor. You can also venture out in a canoe, go diving, and much more. In some places you can take a boat tour, either in an old timber boat or on a ferry. Both Ærø and Langeland are excellent destinations for cyclists. There is good fishing right along the coast, especially for sea trout. From Fåborg, you can board a cutter and take a sea fishing trip, and perhaps catch some cod.

Regeneration and care of the landscape: On several of the islands, for example Skarø och Strynø Kalv, the grass is cut in order to protect the birdlife and the plants which fare

best in low vegetation. The natural surroundings around Nakkebølle Fjord on the South Fyn coast have been restored. There are plenty of comfortable bird-watching spots in this area. Horses graze all year round at Klise-sundet in Sydlangeland.

Museums: Naturama in Svendborg is a modern zoological museum featuring exhibitions on whales, mammals and birds from Northern Europe and Greenland. There are also several cultural history museums, such as Langelands museum. Smakkecenter on Strynø is a maritime museum where you can also hire a boat. Marstal Maritime Museum has a large collection of model boats and objects which local fishermen have gathered from the sea.

Other activities: The local Tourist Information Offices can tell you about local activities and events all year round.



ACCOMMODATION

There are plenty of campsites, cottages and private bed & breakfasts in the South Fyn archipelago. To find out how to book, get in touch with the tourist information offices. You can also choose to spend your holiday staying at one of the fine hotels or inns in the area. There is something for everyone here—both in the towns and in the countryside. On the smaller islands, you can investigate the accommodation options by asking at the local tourist information offices.



EATING

On Sydfyn, Tåsinge, Langeland and Ærø there are plenty of good places to eat: restaurants, inns and hotels. In some of these places, like Falsled Kro, you can enjoy internationally renowned cuisine. In Tranekær on Langeland, you can drink a coffee in the exciting surroundings of the old manor house.



OTHER SIGHTS

A trip to Arreskov Sø and Brændegård, by car or by bicycle, is the ideal way to see the hilly landscape of South Fyn. At Brændegård Sø there is a large cormorant colony, and during the summer months these birds are preyed on by the sea eagles from Arreskov Sø.



The South-western Archipelago National Park is in the Turku Archipelago in south-western Finland

How do I get there?

The best way to get to know the National Park is in your own boat. But you can also reach the populated islands by ferry. There are also taxi boats to the islands. Ferry boats sail to the National Park from places like Dragsfjärd and Nagu.

Timetables and routes:
www.liikkujat.com

A good starting-point is the Blåmusslan Visitor Centre is at the southernmost tip of Dragsfjärds municipality, at the end of road 1830.

Addresses

Forestry Board
Blåmusslan Visitor Centre
Meripuistontie
25930 Kasnäs
Tel: +358 0205 644620
sinisimpukka@metsa.fi
www.luontoon.fi/skargårdshavet

The South-western Archipelago —flourishing traditional landscape and rocky islets

The South-western Archipelago, with its thousand islands, rocky islets scoured smooth during the Ice Age, and traditional forest meadows, is part of Finland's diverse landscapes. The South-western Archipelago National Park protects the local nature and culture, ensures traditional ways of cultivating nature, and keeps the Archipelago alive. The National Park is part of the Archipelago's more extensive partnership areas and Unesco's Biosphere Reserve.

The South-western Archipelago National Park shows clearly how the landscape changes—from the rocky islets furthest out to sea, to the forested islands of the inner archipelago. The interaction between man and nature is part of the National Park's diversity. Protective biotopes shaped by settlements and pasturage as well as enclosed pastureland and forest meadows are kept open thanks to mowing and hay-making. There may also be cows and sheep grazing on the islands. The magnificent sea eagle is a distinctive inhabitant of the National Park. Thanks to purposeful management, a sharp-eyed seafarer can catch sight of sea eagles almost any day.

Service: Islands and stretches of water within the National Park are ideal for boating and canoeing. As well as natural harbours, there are buoys and jetties. On some of the islands, camping places and fireplaces have been set up, with outhouses. On Konungskär in Korpo there is an overnight cabin available for use. On



Seppo Keränen

Berghamn.



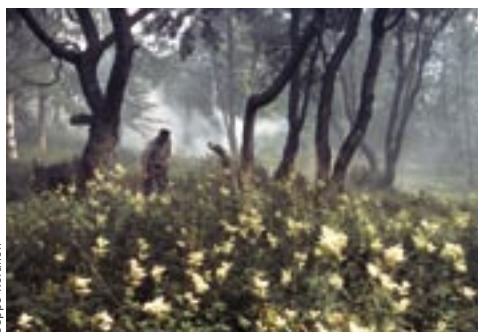
Forest meadow in Boskär.



Hanna Ylitalo

Adam and Eve.

many islands there are nature paths of varying length. Along these nature paths you can get to know the archipelago's varied nature, and man's impact on the archipelago. The exhibitions at the Berghamn visitors' cottage in Nagu give a picture of the traditional fishing industry. In Jurmo there is a visitors' cottage that illustrates the island's nature and history.



Seppo Keränen

Looking after forest meadows.

Visitor Centre: The Blåmusslan Visitor Centre makes a good starting-point for exploring the National Park. The exhibitions at Blåmusslan display the archipelago's nature—both above and below water level. In the Visitor Centre you can also see short films about nature in the archipelago. Guided tours should be booked in advance by telephone.

Things to see: The National Park includes several idyllically beautiful islands.

The island of Jurmo is the final extension above ground of Stängselåsen, a glacial formation left behind after the last Ice Age that stretches right across Finland. The island consists of an almost entirely bare moraine heath covered in heather that provides a resting place for some rare migratory birds. If you follow Stängselåsen further into the archipelago, you reach Sandö where there are enough trees to merit being called a forest.

At Jungfruskär there are luxuriant forest groves and meadows with unusual plant species such as what the Finns call “Adam and Eve” (the elder-flowered orchid) as well as dwarf milkwort, and also a large lagoon with a lookout tower.

The Ice Age has left its traces all over the South-western Archipelago. The National Park's largest giant's kettle is on Jungfruholmen. By following a nature trail in the surroundings of the Blåmusslan Visitor Centre in Kasnäs you can get to understand the geology of the archipelago.



Seppo Keränen

Sandö.



Hanna Ylitalo

Meadow in Berghamn.



EATING AND ACCOMMODATION

Within the National Park partnership area and its immediate vicinity there are several places to eat plus overnight accommodation to suit different wallets, and also companies that provide programmes and excursions. There is more information at www.suomensaaristovaraus.com and at the Turku region and Archipelago tourist information at www.saaristo.org



OTHER SIGHTS

You can get to know about the archipelago's many-sided history at the Rosala Viking Centre (www.rosala-viking-centre.com), at the Bengtskär (www.bengtskar.fi) and Utö lighthouse islands. The Korpoström Archipelago Centre tells the story of the archipelago's culture and history (www.saaristokeskus.fi). The archipelago's circular route (the Ringväg or Rengastie) provides an easy way for people in cars to get to know part of the archipelago in summer (www.saaristo.org).



The Linnansaari National Park lies in eastern Finland in the heart of the Saimaa Lake District.

How do I get there?

The Linnansaari National Park is reached by water. Porosalmi or Mustalahti in Rantasalmi or Oravi are good starting-points. It is also possible to get to Linnansaari along a marked-out road from the centre of Rantasalmi via the Ketvele canal. From the Mustalahti visitor jetty (3.5 km from Rantasalmi) it is easy to reach the National Park in your own boat. The boat route from Savonlinna to Varkaus goes through this area.

During the summer there is a daily boat service Oravi—Linnansaari—Oravi and Porosalmi—Linnansaari—Porosalmi. An alternative is the taxi boat in Oravi and Porosalmi (1 – 6 passengers) when there is no ice. There are also a number of excursion organisers who can provide cruises to order.

Addresses

Oskari—the Linnansaari Visitor Centre

Ohitustie 7

58900 Rantasalmi

Tel: +358 0205 645916

Nestori—the Saimaa nature house

Aino Acktén puistotie 4

57130 Savonlinna

Tel: +358 0205 645929

saimaa@metsa.fi

www.luontoon.fi/linnansaari

Linnansaari— Finnish lakeland at its best

The Linnansaari National Park at Haukivesi, part of the Saimaa Lake District with hundreds of islands and large bays, is a paradise for canoeists. The National Park is ideal both for one-day excursions and tours with overnight stops. Linnansaari's best-known inhabitant, the endangered Saimaa ringed seal, survives protected by the islands.



Markus Sirkka

Canoers at Linnansaari.

Those who go out on the lake may, with a little bit of luck, catch sight of one of the fifty or so Saimaa ringed seals living in the National Park. Thanks to a successful rescue operations there are now at least 280 seals in Lake Saimaa. Behind the island's bare coast cliffs are hidden luxuriant forest groves. The endangered white-backed woodpecker also has its home among Linnansaari's ancient deciduous forests. The forests and meadows are the result of slash-and-burn agriculture. The last such slash and burn areas in Linnansaari were burned during the 1930s—and this was resumed in the sum-

mer of 1993. In that way, the landscape from that slash and burn era is preserved—and endangered species dependent on the biotope are thus protected.

Service: There are 20 excursion harbours within the National Park, with camping places and fireplaces where you can cook your own food. Most of the visitor harbours are only suitable for small boats.

The Sammakkonien camp site has huts where you can stay overnight (at a charge), there is a sauna you can hire, a cookhouse, toi-

Timo Kilpeläinen



Winter in Linnansaari.

lets, a recycling station, an information hut and a jetty for ten small boats (at a charge). The camp site is on the main island. The harbour is also suitable for boats with keels. At the camp site, you can buy fishing permits and maps of the area, book a guided tour or hire equipment.

Hiking trails: On Linnansaari's main island there are, as well as Linnonpolku (2 km, two short circular paths (5.5 km and 7 km). The hilly paths lead to Linnansaari's crofter's cottage and former slash-and-burn areas, or to the island's vantage point. The paths start from the information point at the Sammakkonien camp site.

Activities: The National Park is ideal for boat trips. The best way to get to know nature is by rowing or canoeing. The Park forms part of an extensive canoeing route. The Norppareitti stage includes the canoeing boat yard at Kolovesi and the National Park (7-10 days).

The National Park's symbol, the osprey, is one of its 70 different bird species. The Park is an excellent place for bird watching. You can also fish in the area, but in order to protect the Saimaa ringed seal and the bird life, there are some restrictions. Several excursion organisers can arrange seal-watching and nature excursions to order.

Visitor Centre: Oskari—the Linnansaari Visitor Centre lies in the centre of Rantasalmi. The exhibition gives a vivid insight into the distinct-

tive features of the Linnansaari National Park. Oskari's Customer Service provide up-to-date information about the National Park and activities there, tips about excursions, fishing permits and guiding in the Visitor Centre.

Nestori—the Saimaa Visitor Centre in Savonlinna is about 40 km from Linnansaari's main island. In Nestori's idyllic wooden houses you can get to know all about the Saimaa Lake District and the Saimaa ringed seal.

Things to see: The Linnansaari crofter's cottage and its surroundings are a precious traditional landscape where visitors can get to know what life was like at the start of the last century. The slash-and-burn farm has been restored for excursions, and is open to the pub-



Laura Lehtonen

The crofter's cottage in Linnansaari.



Laura Lehtonen

Linnavuori's vantage point.

lic. Linnavuori's vantage point is a high cliff in the northwest part of the island. It provides a panoramic view over one of the most beautiful lakelands in Finland.



EATING AND ACCOMMODATION

The Sammakkonien camp site provides overnight accommodation in cabins, and there is a coffee shop. Groups can book mealtimes. The Sammakkonien camp site in Linnansaari; Saimaa Holiday (www.saimaaholiday.net) Tel: +358 0500 275458. In Oravi (about 5 km from the main island) there is a village shop, a restaurant and hostel. In Porosalmi (Rantasalmi) (about 12 km from the main island) is the holiday village Järvisydämen kauppa and a restaurant. The best overnight stays and meals service can be found in the centre of Rantasalmi about 15 km from the Park. See Rantasalmen matkailu (www.rantasalmi.fi).



OTHER SIGHTS

In Oravi there is an old canal which was built starting in 1859. Via Joutenvesi, people in boats can reach the peace and quiet of the Kolovesi National Park. From there you can continue via the Kerma canal to beautiful Lake Kerma. Savonlinna is the gateway to Pihlajavesi's relaxing lakeland. Savonlinna has the historically interesting Olofsborg and other sights worth seeing. Tourist information in Savonlinna; www.savonlinna.fi.



The Oulanka National Park lies in the municipalities of Kuusamo and Salla in the County of Lapland.

How do I get there?

The starting-points for the excursion trails in Oulanka are in the Park or at the service points and villages nearby, and are best reached by car.

During the summer there is a daily bus service to the Karhunkierros (the Bear trail) long-distance foot-path, and during the winter you can reach the starting points in the school bus.

The airport bus follows a route through the villages near Oulanka towards Salla.

By train you can reach Oulu (280 km), Kemijärvi (90 km) and Rovaniemi (180 km). From there a bus service goes via Kuusamo (50 km) and Salla (40 km) to the service points in Oulanka.

The nearest airport is at Kuusamo (50 km). During the winter there is a daily flight, but less frequent during the summer.

Addresses

Oulanka Visitor Centre
Liikasenvaarantie 132
93999 Kuusamo
Tel: +358 0205 646850
oulanka@metsa.fi

Karhuntassu service point
Torangintaival 2
93600 Kuusamo
Tel: +358 0205 646804
karhuntassu@metsa.fi

Hautajärvi Visitor Centre
98995 Hautajärvi
Tel: +358 0205 646870
hautajarvi@metsa.fi

www.luontoon.fi/oulanka



Kari Lahti

Jyrävä Rapids.

Oulanka—lush river landscape and impressive views

The natural conditions in the Oulanka National Park, with its 27,000 hectares, form a southerly, easterly and northerly unity, with wonderful and diverse nature. The Oulanka river's natural and cultural landscape has been chosen to be one of Finland's national landscapes. The sheer diversity of forests, river valleys, fells, northern forests, groves and wetlands make Oulanka an excellent place for excursions.

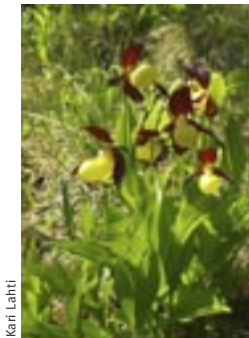
Oulanka is within the coniferous forest zone, the taiga. With its variations in height and changing ground conditions, it is a rich area for all living organisms. There are some rarities among the Park's hundreds of vascular plants and species of moss. Oulanka's innumerable flooded meadows are maintained each year by mowing, thus offering favourable places to grow for many species. In fact the name Oulanka means 'flooded'.

The Calypso orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*) which has been chosen as the symbol of the Park, is found everywhere in the area. Among Oulan-

Kuusamo's largest rapids Kiutaköngäs are Oulanka's most famous sights.

Minna Koramo





Kari Lahti

Lady's Slipper orchid
(*Cypripedium calceolus*).



Kari Lahti

Calypso orchid
(*Calypso bulbosa*).



Minna Koramo

There are many long-distance hiking trails and paths in Oulanka.

ka's other orchids are, for example, the Lady's Slipper orchid (*Cypripedium calceolus*) and the Dark red helleborine (*Epipactis atrorubens*).

Service: In the Oulanka National Park there are plenty of summer and winter hiking trails. For meal breaks, fires and resting there are more than 35 fireplaces along the trails, plus a number of wind shelters and Lapp cots. There are also cabins along the trails open all year round.

Hiking trails: The best way to see Oulanka's views is on foot. Karhunkierros is a popular

excursion and hiking trail 80 km long through the National Park. It takes a couple of days to get round Karhunkierros. Pieni karhunkierros (the Little Bear trail) in Juuma is a 12 km long circular route. In Oulanka there are also six nature trails that you can easily get to know with help from the information sheets that the service points provide.

Canoeing is best done on the lower reaches of the Oulanka river, particularly if you are a beginner. The river's upper reaches and the Kitka river's lower reaches are more challenging canoeing routes.

Around Oulanka there are several excursion organisers who offer guided tours of the Park plus canoeing, bird watching and white-water rafting. Travel companies also hire out excursion equipment. The service points in the National Park can provide further details about excursion programmes.

Visitor Centre: It is worth going on excursions and sightseeing via the Visitor Centres who can provide up-to-date information about the National Park and various events. As well as excursion tips, the service points also sell maps, fishing permits, profile collections for the Park, and can provide information about the Forestry Board.

The Oulanka Visitor Centre is right in the middle of the Park, by the Kiutaköngä trail and Karhunkierros. The Visitor Centre has exhibitions, an auditorium, video and DVD shows, a library of nature guides and a café. The Hautajärvi nature house in northern Oulanka is the start of Björnrunidan—on the Arctic circle. The Karhunkierros service point in the centre of Kuusamo provides information and sells fishing permits and maps.

Things to see: Most of the sights are in the Oulanka and Kitkajoki river valleys. These in-



Hannu Hautala

Koivumutka.

clude the Oulanka canyon, Rupakivi, Taivalköngas, Myllykoski and the Jyrävä rapids. From the Visitor Centre it is only a 1 km walk to the red cliffs of the Kiutaköngä rapids.



ACCOMMODATION

There are plenty of places for overnight stays around Oulanka, in holiday villages, camp sites and hotels. There are also camping places in the Park, along the trails.

For more information about places to eat and stay, plus tourist services for Kuusamo and Ruka are available at the following addresses: www.kuusamo.fi and www.ruka.fi, and for Salla municipality at www.salla.fi and also from the service points in Oulanka.



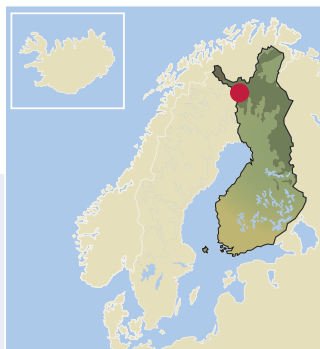
EATING

There are several restaurants around the Oulanka National Park. They offer local specialties and traditional dishes, at prices to suit all wallets. Groups can order in advance to have their meals out in nature.



OTHER SIGHTS

Near Oulanka there are several places worth seeing, such as the Ruka tourist centre. For those who enjoy being out in the open, there are the popular bird-watching area Valtavaara near Ruka, and the impressive hanging bogs at Riisitunturi in Posio. In southern Kuusamo in Näränkä are some of Finland's most typical ancient forests. The wilderness farm in Näränkä, and the Julma Ölkky canyon lake are also popular destinations in the area.



The Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park lies in western Lapland and stretches across the municipalities of Enontekiö, Kittilä, Kolari and Muonio.

How do I get there?

You can reach the starting-points of the trails by car. They are in the villages and tourist centres surrounding the Park. The most popular trails start near the National Park's three Visitor Centres.

There is a daily train service from Helsinki to Rovaniemi and to Kolari during the season. Buses go from Rovaniemi to Kittilä, Muonio and Hetta. From Kolari there is a bus service to Ylläs.

The nearest airports are at Kittilä and Enontekiö. There is a daily flight to Kittilä all year round, and to Enontekiö during the tourist season.

Addresses

Kelloka Visitor Centre
Tunturintie 54,
95970 Äkäslompolo, Ylläs
Tel: +358 0205 647039
kellokas@metso.fi

Pallastunturi Visitor Centre
99330 Pallastunturi
Tel: +358 0205 647930
pallastunturi@metso.fi

Tunturi-Lappi Visitor Centre
Peuratie 15
99400 Enontekiö
Tel: +358 0205 647950
tunturi-lappi@metso.fi
www.luonto.fi/pallas-yllastunturi

Sauli Koski

Pallasjärvi.

Pallas-Yllästunturi— Legendary fells and primeval forests

The landscape of the Pallas—Yllästunturi National Park is dominated by fells, and surrounded by untouched forests and wetlands. The area is unique and the very varied terrain offers excellent opportunities for life in the open air. The strikingly beautiful Pallastunturi fell has been chosen to be one of Finland's national landscapes.

The Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park has an area of 1,020 km² and is the third largest National Park in Finland. The conservation area is bordered by three geographic areas, which guarantees great diversity. In the area, southern and northern species bump into each other, and the flora reveal the forests and marshes of Lapland at their best. Besides all the species that need chalky soil, the fell flora includes almost all the species present in northern Lapland.

The fell world has always fascinated researchers and people who love life in the open air. As early as the 1930s, the Pallas—Ounastunturi area had become a popular

destination. In 1938 a hotel was opened in Pallastunturi. A few years before that, a 55 km long-distance footpath had been staked out from Pallastunturi to Hetta in Enontekiö.

Service: In the Pallas—Yllästunturi National Park there are plenty of summer and winter trails with fireplaces, wind shelters, huts, deserted crofers' cottages, and cottages to let. Outside the nature conservation area there is a good network of tourist services.

Hiking trails: The Pallas—Yllästunturi National Park offers many alternatives for the



Sauli Koski

Lommoltunturit.



Sauli Koski

Leaf-burning time.

open-air life. In all there are 350 km of sign-posted hiking trails. There are five long-distance hiking trails. There are also 15 nature trails that are easy to walk, and which provide information about the surrounding natural and cultural features. There are 500 km of marked ski trails. Most of these are tracked by machines. Some of the ski trails between Pallas and Ounastunturi are wilderness trails that are not regularly maintained. Guided tours are offered both by private guides and by Visitor Centres.



Sauli Koski

Hikers on Pallastunturi.

Visitor Centres: The Forestry Board's Visitor Centre enables travellers to get to know the natural and cultural features of Lapland. A road known as the fell road takes travellers from the foot of Yllästunturi past the Äkä and Jeris lakes, to Pallastunturi. From there you follow the road eastwards along the Ounasjoki to its source near Ounasjärvi in Hetta, Enontekiö.

The Kellokas Visitor Centre is a good starting-point for southern Yllästunturi. From that you can make a detour to the Pallastunturi Visitor Centre and conclude the excursion in Hetta at the Tunturi-Lappi Visitor Centre. At the top is the Kilpisjärvi Visitor Centre where the exhibition tells the story of the background to the Yliperä fells, the natural life there, and the colourful history of its people. The various nature centres also provide up-to-date information about events in the National Park.

Things to see: The view in the Pallas-Ylläs-

tunturi National Park is everything that travellers hope for: The tops of the fells rise up from the ocean-like forests, and their appearance changes with the seasons and the time of day. The vantage points are easily reached.

The area has a living local culture, and local businesses provide opportunities to get to know the place. There are many relics of ancient culture in the park and in the vicinity.



Sauli Koski

Lapland cornel (*Cornus suecica*).

EATING AND ACCOMMODATION

Your experience of nature in the National Park is enhanced by the surrounding hotels, restaurants, cottages and other tourist services. There is up-to-date information on www.yllas.fi for the Ylläs area, on www.enontekio.fi for Enontekiö, on www.kittila.fi for Kittilä, on www.kolari.fi for Kolari and on www.muonio.fi for Muonio.



OTHER SIGHTS

The chain of fells in western Lapland and the large rivers on both sides offer both natural and cultural experiences for the traveller. The area also offers other things such as art galleries and open air activities.



Jökulsárgljúfur National Park is in northeast Iceland, about 150 km from Akureyri.

How do I get there?

The main access to the park is from Road No. 85 in Kelduhverfi. It is also possible to approach the park along Road No. 864 on the eastern side of the river Jökulsá á Fjöllum or road nr. 862 from Mývatn. Scheduled bus trips to Ásbyrgi through Akureyri and Húsavík (www.sba.is, tel. +354 550 0700), and flights are scheduled to the nearest domestic airport at Akureyri (155 km), www.flugfelag.is, tel. +354 570 3030.

Addresses

Jökulsárgljúfur nationalpark
Ásbyrgi
671 Kópasker
Tel: +354 465 2359
<http://english.ust.is>
[/jokulsargljufurnationalpark](http://jokulsargljufurnationalpark)
E-mail: jokulsargljufur@ust.is
Gljúfrastofa Naturrum
Ásbyrgi
671 Kópasker
Tel: +354 465 2195

Useful websites

www.kelduhverfi.is
www.nordurland.is
visiticeland.com

More information

Brochure about Jökulsárgljúfur National Park, published by Environment and Food Agency, available at the Agency (www.ust.is), and in the tourists visitor reception in Ásbyrgi and Vesturdalur.

Jóhann Óli Hilmarsson

Jökulsárgljúfur canyon.

Jökulsárgljúfur—Majestic canyon, powerful glacial river, waterfalls and geological formations

Jökulsárgljúfur National Park is located on the west bank of the glacial river Jökulsá á Fjöllum which originates from beneath Vatnajökull icecap, the biggest glacier in Europe. The turbulent river flows through one of the largest and most impressive river canyons in Iceland and on its way it forms several huge waterfalls. Diverse nature and majestic landscape attract about 100.000 visitors every year.

Jökulsárgljúfur National Park, covers an area of 120 km², which is more or less formed by catastrophic floods that left imprints along the glacial river Jökulsá á Fjöllum. The Park was established to protect the canyon formed by the immense glacier river and to help safeguard the surrounding area, its wildlife and history. At the same time, the Park provides an easier access for visitors as well as improved op-

portunities to get to know the area.

Service: Parking, campsites, toilettes, handicapped toilettes, tourist information and signs. Outside the Park there are shops, accommodation and variety of entertainment abilities.

Visitor centre: The park's visitor centre, Gljúfrastofa in Ásbyrgi, will be opened in 2007. Its main interpretative theme will be Jökulsá á Fjöllum glacier river and its effects on land and people. It will focus on the area's uniqueness, the park's objectives and visitor's expectations.

Jóhann Óli Hilmarsson



A red-throated diver.

Routes: The only way to fully experience Jökulsárgljúfur National Park is by foot and the park is an ideal hiking area. There are many hiking trails within the Park to suit all tastes and abilities (75 km). None of the trails are marked as trails for handicapped but few of them are manageable, as for the trail in Ásbyrgi, the good part of the trail at Hljóðaklettur and the trail at Dettifoss (on the western site of the river).

Deep canyon and waterfalls: The upper part of the canyon, from Dettifoss to Syðra-Þórunnarfjall, is the deepest and most spectacular section of Jökulsárgljúfur canyon. Dettifoss is often considered the most powerful waterfall in Europe, and together with Hafragilsfoss and Selfoss it forms a spectacle unrivalled in Europe. Be careful by the waterfalls because their surroundings can be dangerous.

Luxuriant vegetation and spring-fed streams: Hólmatur, an area with luxuriant vegetation and many spring-fed streams and rivers and Vesturdalur valley with its sheer walls and grassy meadows, a contrast to the deep canyon and the turbulent river, are typical for the middle section of the Park.

Old volcano craters: Hljóðaklettur, a maze of castle-like cliffs with many caves of varying sizes are cores of an old crater row with



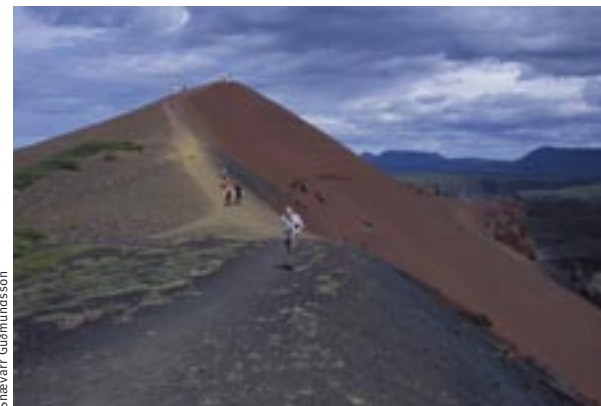
Spring-fed streams in Hólmatur.

all the loose materials having been eroded by Jökulsá river.

Ásbyrgi—the horse shoe shaped canyon: Ásbyrgi is a huge depression ringed by cliff walls, probably caused by catastrophic floods. There are several easy and interesting routes in Ásbyrgi.

Guidning: During the summertime Park Rangers organize guided walks and have a special programme for children.

Special activities: The Park and its surroundings is ideal for bird watching since it



Rauðhólar formations, a part of an old row of craters.

provides a range of habitats for birds. Also there are a wide range of plants growing in the shelter afforded by the rocks and cliffs. In many places you are able to see historical relics, remains of structures from various periods.

Every summer during the high season (July-August) there is a diverse programme for visitors, like guided walks, evening entertainments and childrens activities. The programme is free of charge. If wished the National Park Manager (tel. +354 465 2359) can provisionally organize walks or another programme for groups.



ACCOMMODATION

In the Park:
Campsite Ásbyrgi with shower and wc facilities, washing machine and

drying facilities. Outdoor barbecue, outdoor tables, playground etc. Details: www.ust.is. Tel. +354 465 2195.

Campsite Vesturdalur. A beautiful campsite made by the nature itself, primarily for tents. Wc facilities, cold water and outdoor tables. Details: www.ust.is. Tel. +354 465 2195.

Outside the Park:

Lundur, Öxarfjörður. Bed and breakfast. Details www.dettifoss.is. Tel. +354 465 2247.

Icelandic farm holidays: Höll, Kelduhverfi (tel. +354 465 2270), Keldunes, Kelduhverfi (tel. +354 465 2275), Skúlagarður, Kelduhverfi (tel. +354 465 2280). Details www.kelduhverfi.is. Youth hostel, Kópasker. Details www.dettifoss.is. Tel. +354 465 2314. Kópasker, campsite.

Tel. +354 465 2150. Hótel Norðurljós, Raufarhöfn. A nice hotel by the Raufarhöfn's harbour. Details www.raufarhofn.is.

Tel. +354 465 1233. For more accommodation abilities contact the North Iceland travel office in Akureyri (www.nordurland.is, tel. +354 462 3300).



EATING

In the National Park there are no coffee shops or restaurants but there are some in the vicinity:

Verslunin Ásbyrgi. A shop and restaurant just outside the park. Tel. +354 465 2260.

Skúlagarður, Kelduhverfi. Icelandic farm holidays. Restaurant and bar. Details www.kelduhverfi.is. Tel. +354 465 2280.

Lundur, Öxarfjörður. Restaurant and bar during summer. Details www.dettifoss.is. Tel. +354 465 2247.

Hótel Norðurljós, Raufarhöfn. Restaurant. Details www.raufarhofn.is. Tel. +354 465 1233.

Húsavík (60 km). Some nice restaurants are in the centre of Húsavík, e.g. Salka restaurant, Gamli Baukur restaurant and Fosshótel Húsavík. Details www.husavik.is.

Mývatn (100 km). By lake Mývatn there are some nice restaurants. Details www.myv.is.



OTHER SIGHTS

There are many things to do in the surroundings of the Park. If you like bird watching you can go to Kelduhverfi, Öxarfjörður and Melrakkaslétta. Lake Mvatn, a Ramsar Site, is 100 km away, world famous for its bird life and the geological formations around the lake (www.myv.is). From Húsavík you can go whale watching, daily tours from May to September, further details on www.husavik.is. In the area there are some interesting museums, further details on www.nordurland.is.



Dettifoss, a powerful waterfall.



Snæfellsjökull National Park is on the most western part of Snæfellsnes peninsula, West Iceland, 200 km northwest from Reykjavík capital.

How do I get there?

To get around to the National Park you can either drive your own car or take a bus from Reykjavík to Ólafsvík or Hellissandur. National Road 574, Útnesvegur, follows a course through the National Park and can be used as a northern or southern approach. Information on scheduled bus trips on www.bsi.is.

Addresses

Þjóðgarðurinn Snæfellsjökull
Klettsbúð 7
360 Hellissandur
Tel: +354 436 6860
www.english.ust.is
E-post: snaefellsjokull@ust.is
Snæfellsjökull Natúrrum
Hellnar
356 Snæfellsbær
Tel: +354 436 6888

Useful websites

www.west.is
www.west.is
snaefellsnes.com
visiticeland.com
saeferdir.is

More information

Brochure about Snæfellsjökull National Park, published by Environment and Food Agency, available at the Agency www.ust.is is” www.ust.is and the Park visitor centre.

Snæfellsjökull—Renowned volcano, glacier, prominent lava fields, birdcliffs and cultural remains

Snæfellsjökull National Park, Iceland’s only National Park to extend to the seashore. The park’s heart is one of the most majestic and best known mountains in Iceland, Snæfellsjökull, an active volcano with an ice cap. Lava formations characterize the coastline and the coast is varied and alive with birdlife during the breeding season. Important historical and cultural relics can be found in many places.

Snæfellsjökull National Park covers an area of 170 km². The Park’s purpose is to protect and conserve the area’s unique landscape, indigenous plant and animal life as well as important historical relics. It is also meant to allow visitors easier access as well as improved opportunities to get to know the area. About 100.000 people visit the Park every year.

Service: All services, including visitor centre, tourist information, accommodation, shops and restaurants, are based outside the Park. Inside the Park there are several parkings, toilettes at Djúpalónssandur, footpaths and information signs.

Visitor centre: The Park’s visitor centre is at Hellnar. There you can find interesting information about nature and daily life of the area where emphasis is placed on peoples experience, e.g by touching, smelling, examining and experimenting.

rience, e.g by touching, smelling, examining and experimenting.

Routes: There are many trails in the Park’s diverse nature to suit all tastes and abilities. Most trails are easy to follow and visitors can move from one to another to make for varied and interesting walks. Please note that there is very little drinking water in the area, so take along something to drink.

Snæfellsjökull: It is popular to reach the peak of the glacier by foot or ski, and the best time to do that is in spring or early in the summer. Organized skidoo and snow-tractor trips on to the glacier are seasonably available (www.snjofell.is).

Fishing industry: The oldest known relics of fishing industry in Scandinavia are near Gufuskálar, a number of presumed fish-drying stone structures. From Írskrabbunnur (Irish well) on the opposite side of the road,



Snævarr Guðmundsson

Prospecting Snæfellsjökull glacier.



Snævarr Guðmundsson

Snæfellsjökull glacier seen from Djúpalónssandur.



The sandy beach of Skarðsvík.

is a clearly marked path which leads to Guðfuskálavör landing, where trails remain from the keels of boats dragged up onto land after fishing.

By the sea: The path from Djúpalónssandur to Dritvík is easy and popular. On Djúpalónssandur there are some large boulders fishermen lifted to show off their strength and Dritvík was a bustling community during fishing season.

Animal life: The birdlife is diverse and dominated by seabirds. Þúfubjarg and Saxhólsbjarg are accessible bird cliffs, but be careful. During a walk along the coast you can expect to see seals, although not in large numbers, and at Öndverðarnes you might see killer whales.

Guidning: During the summertime Park Rangers organize regular guided walks and have a special programme for children.

Snæfellsjökull and geological relics: Snæfellsjökull glacier towers majestically over the Park, with trails of lava and signs of volcanic activity clearly visible on its flanks. The lava formations are varied and fascinating, and there is a wealth of caves in the area. Visitors are advised not to enter caves unless accompanied by an experienced guide. The glacier is considered to be one of the world's most potent energy sources, it has been a never ending source of inspiration for poets and artists from around the world and the area is important for volcanological studies.

Lighthouses: In the Park there are three interesting lighthouses: At Malarrið (1917), at Svörtuloft (1930) and at Öndverðarnes (1973).

Special activities: Every summer during the high season (July–August) there is a diverse programme for visitors, like guided walks, nightwalk at summer solstice, and children's activities. The programme is free of charge. If wished the National Park Manager (tel. +354 436 6860) can provisionally organize walks or another programme for groups.



ACCOMMODATION

Snjófell, Arnarstapi. Guesthouse, campsite. Shower and wc facilities. Details on www.snjofell.is

Tel. +354 435 6783, +354 854 5150 and +354 852 9078. Hótel Búðir, Búðir. A new and elegant hotel. Details on www.budir.is Tel. +354 435 6700. Hótel Hellissandur, Hellissandur. A 3-star hotel, open during high season. Details on www.hoteledda.is Tel. +354 430 8600. Hótel Hellnar, Hellnar. Guesthouse certified by GREEN GLOBE 21 (since 2002), and Environmental Award from Icelandic Tourist Board (2000 and 2004). Details on www.hellnar.is Tel. +354 435 6820. H-Hús Láruvík, Ólafsvík. Tel. +354 436 6924 and +354 894 9284. H-Hús Vesturvör, Arnarstapi. Summer house. Tel. +354 436 6924 and +354 894 9284. Hótel Ólafsvík, Ólafsvík. A 3-star year-round hotel. Details on www.hotelolafsvik.is Tel. +354 436 1650. Campingsite, Hellissandi with wc facilities, no showers. Campingsite, Ólafsvík with shower and wc facilities. Hrúni, Hellissandur. Sommer house for rent year-round. Tel. +354 436 6644 and +354 896 3644.



EATING

In the National Park there are no cafés or restaurants but there are many in the vicinity:

Arnarbær, Arnarstapi where you can have various food, both meat and fish. On Sundays during the summer there are a great variety of pastries available. Tel. +354 435 6783. Hótel Búðir, Búðir. Café and restaurant. In the café you can have light dishes and pastries. The restaurant is renowned for its unique fish dishes, original starters and heavenly desserts. Further details on www.budir.is Tel. +354 435 6700. Fjöruhúsið, Hellnar. Small and nice restaurant on the coast. There you can have a delicious fish soup, small courses and pastries. Tel. +354 435 6844. Pakkhúsið, Ólafsvík. Café. Further details on www.snb.is/pakkhuis. Tel. +354 436 1543. Hótel Ólafsvík, Ólafsvík. Café and restaurant. Further details on www.hotelolafsvik.is Tel. +354 436 1650. Hótel Hellissandur, Hellissandur. Café and restaurant. For details see www.hoteledda.is Tel. +354 430 8600.



OTHER SIGHTS

Check out nearby natural reserves and monuments www.ust.is, and it is also interesting to go

whale watching www.saeferdir.is There is a variety of entertainment possibilities in the surroundings of the Park and nearby towns, like museums and swimming pools, and we recommend that you contact tourists information to get further details. You can also visit www.west.is, www.snb.is, www.stykkisholmur.is and www.grundarfjordur.is.



Jóhann Óli Hilmarsson

Razorbills.



Hornstrandir Nature Reserve

in on the northernmost part of the Westfjord peninsula, about 400 km north of Reykjavík.

How do I get there?

The easiest way to approach the Nature Reserve is by boat from Bolungarvík, Ísafjörður, Norðurfjörður or Hólmavík, see www.vesturferdir.is. The main route to Hólmavík, Ísafjörður and Bolungarvík is by road no. 61, branching off from road no. 1. Road nr. 643, branching off from road no. 61, goes to Norðfjörður. Scheduled bus trips to Ísafjörður and Hólmavík are from Reykjavík during high season, www.bsi.is and there are regular scheduled flights to Ísafjörður, www.flugfelag.is tel. +354 570 3030.

Addresses

Hornstrandir natur reservat
Ísafjarðarbær
Stjórnsýsluhúsið
P.O.Box 56
400 Ísafjörður
Tel: +354 450 8000
Fax: +354 450 8008
www.ust.is
E-post: info@isafjordur.is

Useful websites

www.vesturferdir.is
www.vestfiridir.is
www.westfjords.is

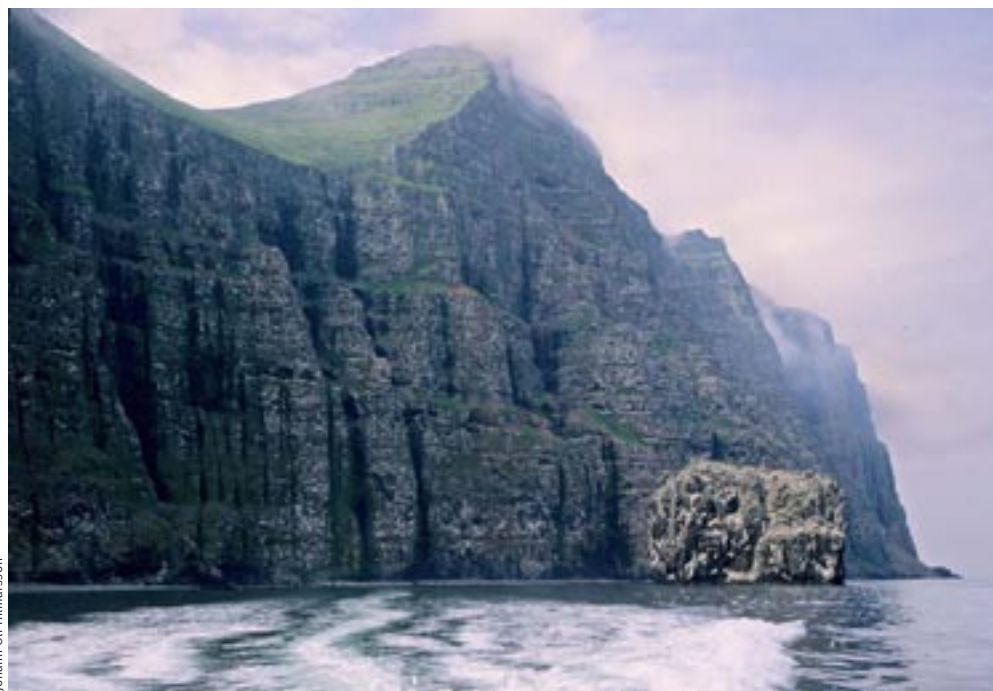
More information

Brochure about Hornstrandir Nature Reserve, published by Environment and Food Agency, available at the Agency (www.ust.is).

Maps for hikers: Hornstrandir hiking map published by Landmælingar Íslands (www.lmi.is).

The arctic foxes of Hornstrandir, a book by Páll Hersteinsson, and Arctic fox: the monarch of Hornstrandir nature reserve, article by Páll Hersteinsson in Icelandic geographic 2002, 1st issue: s. 28–43.

Hornstrandir—Remote, rugged landscape, derelict settlements, enormous birdcliffs and interesting wildlife



Jóhann Óli Hilmarsson

Hælavíkurbjarg bird-cliff.

Hornstrandir Nature Reserve is a remote area, characterized by deep blue fjords, majestic mountains, huge bird cliffs, millions of birds, and most of all, solitude. It is a paradise for nature enthusiasts, hikers, birdwatchers and those who simply want to enjoy peacefulness. Only about 4.000 people visit the reserve every summer, including landowners who dwell in their summer houses.

In Hornstrandir, nature and human life were closely interwoven through the ages, and in earlier days the area was relatively densely populated. Socioeconomic changes resulted in abandonment of all farms during World War II and the post-war period. The land is still mostly private property and landowners are

entitled to traditional utilisation. A few dozen houses are located within the area, old renovated farmsteads and new summer cottages.

Service: In the reserve services are on a very small scale and visitors must be prepared for that.



Hornbjarg bird-cliff, the highest peak is 534 m.

Remote area: The area possesses a charm of remoteness there being no roads, electricity, telephones or mobile phone facilities. In such a situation it is easy to imagine the harsh conditions people had to cope with when living in the area.

Abandoned farms and hamlets: In earlier days people lived in almost every fjord and cove in the region and cultural relics can be found in many places.

Hesteyri is a beautiful old hamlet which has maintained its characteristic. A whaling station was built there in 1894 and the hamlet developed in connection with those activities. Later the factory was changed for

herring processing. The herring fisheries abruptly ended in 1940 and then the inhabitants started to seek livelihood elsewhere. The ruins of the factory are still very prominent.

It is also interesting to examine the old hamlets at Sæból and Látrar. The residents there practiced traditional farming but fishing was more important as elsewhere in the region. Today there is quite a concentration of holiday houses in these places.

The deserted fjords and coves Fljótavík, Hlöðuvík, Hornvík, Bolungarvík, Furufjörður, Hrafnfjörður and Veðileysufjörður are also common stops.

Routes: The Reserve is a paradise for hikers, who enjoy their hiking experience in this remote district where they use their skills and senses to the utmost, as hiking is the only way to experience the Reserve on land. There are hiking routes between settlements but they are not always visible in the land. In some cases, especially where the paths are in slopes, they are hidden by rocks or screes. Several routes are marked with cairns or stakes. Bear in mind that hiking in Hornstrandir can be difficult and strenuous and therefore not recommended to be on ones own, but rather in groups. It is essential to have good maps of the area. Keep also in mind that the weather

can be very changeable in the area, e.g. winter temperatures in July and fog is quite common.

Nature: The region has been totally free of grazing for decades. Examples of beautiful plants in the reserve are sea pea and sea lungwort, which can be seen on the beaches. Because of heavy snows, the land is in the process of shedding its cover of snow throughout the summer. The vegetation is therefore extremely sensitive and must be approached with great care.

Foxes are the prevailing mammals in the area, and seals are a common sight on the beach. The most interesting points for bird-watching are the bird cliffs, Hornbjarg, Hælavíkurbjarg and Riturinn, with their superabundance of sea birds.

Guidning: There is a great variety of guided hiking tours available in the area, usually for 4–8 days, see www.fi.is, www.utivist.is, www.vesturferdir.is which also offers day tours and boat trips into the area. You could also take a nine day kayaking tour in the uninhabited fjords of Jökulfirðir (details on www.ute.is). Get further information on guided tours at the Tourist Information Center, located on the Vesturferðir office.



ACCOMMODATION

In the reserve: Hesteyri. Sleeping bag accommodation. Tel. +354 456 7183.

Hornbjargsviti (Hornbjarg lighthouse). Sleeping bag accommodation. Campsite. Details on www.islandia.is/ovissuferdir. Tel. +354 566 6752, +354 892 5219 and +354 852 5219. Bolungarvík. Sleeping bag accommodation. Campsite. Tel. +354 456 7192 and +354 852 8267. Primitive campsites are at Hesteyri, Sæból, Látrar, Fljótavík, Hlöðuvík, Hornvík, Bolungarvík and Furufjörður.

In the surroundings:

Grunnavík. Sleeping bag accommodation. Campsite. Details on www.grunnavik.is. Tel. +354 456 4664 and +354 848 0511. Dalbær in Snæfjallaströnd. Sleeping bag accommodation/made-up beds. Campsite. Road connection. Tel. +354 897 6872 and +354 456 2660. Reykjafjörður. Sleeping bag accommodation. Campsite. Swimming pool. Tel. +354 456 7215 and +354 853 1615.

The tourist information centers in Ísafjörður (www.vesturferdir.is) and Hólmavík (www.holmavik.is/info) provide more information on accommodation possibilities in the region.



EATING

In the nature reserve there are no restaurants or permanent shops so it is very important that you bring everything you need with you. During the summer months there is a coffee shop operated at Hesteyri.

In Ísafjörður, Hólmavík and other surrounding towns there are some nice restaurants. The tourist information centers in Ísafjörður (www.vesturferdir.is) and Hólmavík (www.holmavik.is/info) provide more information.



An arctic fox, the monarch of Hornstrandir.



OTHER SIGHTS

The Westfjords have a lot to offer. For example there is an outdoor festival, Outdoor Creatures, in Ísafjörður in July (www.utilifveran.is). We recommend that you contact tourists centers to get the best available information, you can also visit www.vesturferdir.is and www.holmavik.is/info.



Walking on the beach in Aðalvík.



Fjallabak Nature Reserve is in the southern highlands of Iceland, about 180 km east of Reykjavík.

How do I get there?

The main access to the Reserve is on road F208 from the highland road through Sprengisandur (F26). The reserve is also accessible from Landvegur (F225) and from the ring road (no 1) east of Vík on mountain road F208. See information on mountain road condition on www.vegagerdin.is, and look at the weather forecast on www.vedur.is. Scheduled bus trips to Landmannalaugar are from Reykjavík, Skaftafell National Park and Lake Mývatn (www.bsi.is).

Addresses

Fjallabak Nature Reserve
Umhverfisstofnun
Suðurlandsbraut 24
108 Reykjavík
Tel: +354 591 2000
www.ust.is
E-post: ust@ust.is

Useful websites

www.southiceland.com
www.sudurland.net/info
www.fi.is
www.landmannalaugar.info
www.visiticeland.com

More information

Brochure about Fjallabak Nature Reserve, published by Environment and Food Agency, available at the Agency (www.ust.is).

Maps for hikers: Þórsmörk-Landmannalaugar, special map published by Landmælingar Íslands (www.lmi.is) and Fjallabak, Hekla, Laki: Special map published by Mál og menning edition (www.malogmenning.is).

Fjallabak, Hekla, Landmannalaugar & Eldgjá: Landmannalaugar-Þórsmörk: guide for hikers and mountaineers/Wander- und Bergführer by Ari Trausti Guðmundsson and Helmut Hinrichsen.



Jóhann Óli Hilmarsson

Colorful nature.

Fjallabak— Multicoloured mountains and valleys, wilderness, volcanic formations and geothermal activity

Fjallabak Nature Reserve is about 500 m above sea level, characterized by numerous wild and rugged mountains, deeply incised valleys, volcanoes, geothermal activity such as, fumaroles, hot springs and beautiful color variations. Other noticeable formations are lavaflows, enormous sands, rivers and lakes. The region is the largest rhyolite area in Iceland and one of the largest geothermal area.

Fjallabak Nature Reserve was established in order to preserve valuable geological formations, wildlife and vegetation. Furthermore, it was established for the recreation and enjoyment of those who seek peace and the challenge of untamed nature.

Service: Parking, campsites, accommodation in huts, BBQ, toilettes also for handicapped visitors, tourist information, trail

signs, information signs, horse rental, angling licenses available.

Routes: The Fjallabak Nature Reserve is well suited for walking. There are numerous opportunities for short and long hikes. The most popular hikes are to the summit of the Bláhnúkur 940 m (1–2 hours) and to the fumaroles by Brennisteinsalda 855m (1–2 hours), both characteristic formations in the

area. Other interesting hikes include Háal-da 1089m (4–6 hours), around lake Frostastaðavatn (2–3 hours), Suðurnámur 951m (1 hour) and Brandsgil (1–2 hours). Good map is essential for hiking and keep to the footpaths, as it is easy to get lost. Good footwear is essential and even in summer warm clothes are necessary on the hilltops as weather can change dramatically very quickly. Always leave word of where you are going and if in trouble contact the rangers at Landmannalaugar.

Guidning: The Iceland Touring Association (www.fi.is) and Útivist travel association (www.utivist.is) offer varied guided hiking tours in Fjallabak area. One of the most popular route is “Laugavegurinn”, the hot spring route, a five-day trip from Landmannalaugar, through one of the most colourful rhyolite mountain area in the country, to Þórsmörk which is a magical place, situated between three glaciers.

Bathing: The hot springs at Landmannalaugar are suitable for bathing.

Fishing: The lakes in the Nature Reserve are known for their trout and popular for angling. Fishing permits can be bought at the farm

Skarð in the Holta and Landsveit parish, in the shop in Landmannalaugar or from the wardens at Landmannalaugar and Landmannahellir.

Horse riding: For those who are interested in Icelandic horses, Hraunhestar horse rental is operated in Landmannalaugar from 1st of July, during high season. Guided tours of various lengths are available to some of the most impressive areas in Landmannalaugar region. Tel. +354 854 775 and +354 487 5340.

Running: In July every summer there is a mountain marathon (Ultra Marathon) between Landmannalaugar and Þórsmörk. The total distance is about 55 km. The terrain is mostly sand, gravel, grass, snow, ice and streams or rivers to wade. More than one hundred runners take part every year. See www.marathon.is.

Special activities: People who come to the reserve with their own car have the possibility to drive in the area. It is known for aesthetic and colorful landscape and as such an ideal area for hobby or professional photographers. The area is of interest for bird watchers as one might see species on the lakes like the great northern diver that has its nesting grounds by Frostastaðavatn and



An ice cave in Hraftinnusker.



Hiking in Landmannalaugar.

Kirkjufellsvatn. The areas close to the hot springs are of interest for botanists because of the plant diversity and about 150 plant species have been registered in the reserve.



ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation in Fjallabak nature reserve: Landmannalaugar, mountain hut and campsite, facilities: Wc and shower. Details on www.fi.is Tel. +354 568 2533. Hraftinnusker, mountain hut. Details on www.fi.is Tel. +354 568 2533. Landmannahellir, mountain huts and campsite. Facilities: Wc and shower. Details on www.landmannahellir.is. Tel. +354 853 8407 and +354 893 8407. Accommodation outside Fjallabak nature reserve: The highland center at Hrauneyjar, Hotel Highland. Details on www.hrauneyjar.is. Tel. +354 487 7782. Hólaskógur, mountain hut. Also a campsite with wc facilities. Tel. +354 820 8784. Áfangagil, mountain hut. Details on www.afangagil.info. Tel. +354 845 9500. Hólaskjól, mountain huts. Also a campsite with wc facilities. Tel. +354 854 9977 and +354 894 9977. The South Iceland tourist info (www.sudurland.net/info) provides more information on accommodation possibilities in the region.



EATING

In the Nature reserve there are no restaurants or permanent shop. During the summer months a small shop is operated in Landmannalaugar in two old school busses that are driven there for the summer. The shop provides first and foremost essential all food and often you can find there equipment that you may have forgotten to bring with you. Details on www.landmannalaugar.info. The closest restaurant and kiosk outside the reserve is the highland center at Hrauneyjar, Hotel Highland, located at the crossroads of Sprengisandur road F 26 and Landmannalaugar road F 208. Details on www.hrauneyjar.is Tel. +354 487 7782.



A Great northern diver shows off.



OTHER SIGHTS

The Nature Reserve is a highland region and recreation possibilities in the tract correspond to that. Among places which are worth to visit are: Þórsmörk, which is a beautiful area of rugged mountains, glaciers, glacial rivers, and small birch woods; Eldgjá which is a 40 km long, 600 m wide and very deep “fire fissure”, a natural phenomenon, which was created during a eruption around the year 900, and Hekla, an active volcano for centuries, one of the most famous mountains in the world. Scheduled trips are available to all those places. Contact tourist information offices to get informations on other entertainment abilities in the surroundings of the Reserve.



Ljótípollur is a beautiful crater.



Folgefonna National Park is situated in the County of Hordaland on the south-west coast of Norway, next to four areas of outstanding natural beauty.

How do I get there?

You can reach the Folgefonn Peninsula by car, bus or high-speed ferry. When approaching from Oslo and the east, follow the E134 across Haukelifjell. From Kristiansand and the south, follow National Route 9 through the Setesdalen valley to Haukeli, then take the E134 west. From Stavanger/Haugesund, follow National Route 134 from Skånevik or Odda. From Bergen and the west, follow National Route 7 towards Hardanger. From Voss and the north, follow National Route 13, and from the north-east, follow National Route 7 across Hardangervidda. To travel from east to west on the Folgefonn Peninsula, use the Folgefonn tunnel between Eitrem and Gjerde.

Addresses

Reisemål Hardangerfjord,
Tel. +47 56 55 38 70,
www.hardangerfjord.com

Reisemål Folgefonn,
Tel. +47 53 48 00 40,
www.folgefonna.net

Folgefonna National Park Centre
(May-Sept), Tel. +47 53 48 42 80,
www.folgefonna.info

Jondal Tourist Office,
Tel. +47 53 66 85 31/
53 66 95 00, www.jondal.no

The Ullensvang Tourist Information
Centre,
Tel. +47 53 66 18 22 (in summer
Utne), +47 53 66 31 12,
www.visitullensvang.no

The Odda Tourist Information Centre,
Tel. +47 53 65 40 00,
www.visitodda.com

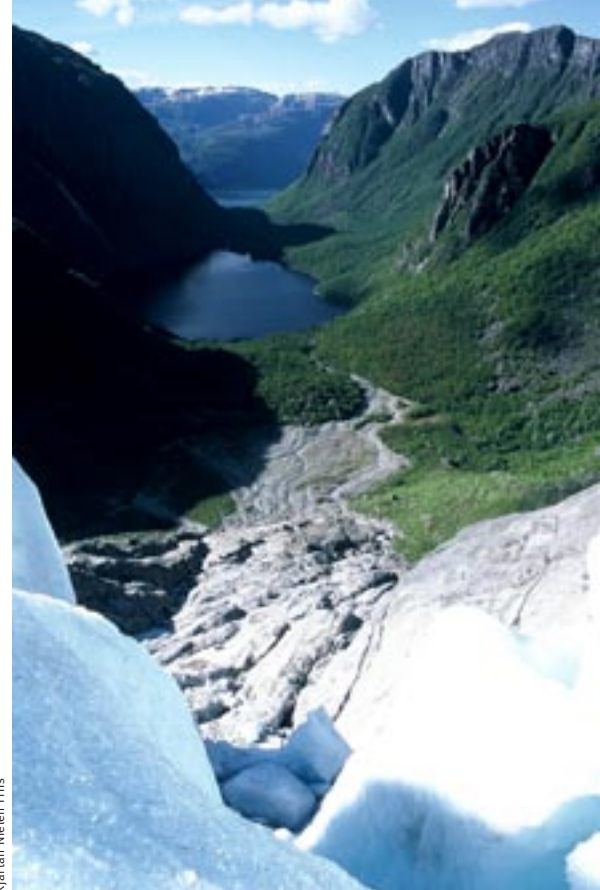
The Etne Tourist Information Centre
Tel. +47 53 75 80 00,
www.etne.kommune.no

The Folgefonna National Park— from fjord to glacier

The Folgefonna National Park includes the third largest glacier in Norway, which is also the one nearest the coast. This is an area of beautiful, dramatic countryside with fjords, mountains, emerald rivers, streams, lakes and glacial falls. The Folgefonn Peninsula, with its beautiful traditional costumes, folk music and flowering fruit trees, is one of the most popular visitor attractions in Norway. This is an area of great contrasts, outstanding countryside and rich heritage.

The Folgefonna National Park covers almost 550 km² of the County of Hordaland on the south-west coast of Norway. The glacier, with its beautiful, dramatic falls, makes up almost half of the national park. The surrounded area features mountains, rivers, lakes, fjords and verdant mountain sides. Fruit has been grown here since the 13th Century. The flowering fruit trees of Hardanger have become a popular tourist attraction. In early summer, the view from the glacier is one of green slopes and fruit trees in full bloom—a beautiful sight, rich in contrasts. This is an area with a proud heritage, where Hardanger embroidery, folk dancing and Hardanger fiddle music still maintains a strong position. The 17th Century Rosendal Manor is also part of the heritage landscape.

Flora and fauna: The national park is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna, even though most of area consists of apparently barren and unproductive countryside. Plants such as the Pyramidal Saxifrage (Saxifrage cotyledon) and Red Gentian (*Gentiana Purpurea*) grow in many valleys, and lynx and wolverine roam the area. The Folgefonna Peninsula is home to Norway's largest deer herd, as well as birds such as ptarmigan and the golden eagle.



Kjartan Nielsen Fris

View from the Bondhus glacier.

Trails: The National Park is crisscrossed by various age-old trails and mountain paths. To spend the night, either bring a tent or use one of the four self-catering cottages situated in the National Park. Fonnabu, Bredablikk, Holmaskjer and Sauabrehytta are open all year round. Carefully prepared and waymarked routes include the Ridestien Trail, which has been used for centuries, from Odda to Holmaskjer in the east, and the Keiserstien Trail from Bondhusdalen to Bredablikk in the west. For crossing the glacier, a glacier guide is obligatory. A walk from Odda



Kjartan Nielsen Fris

to Holmaskjer and from Bondhusdalen to Breidablikk takes about 5 to 6 hours each way.

The Pilgrim Trail and the cross-mountain trail between Krossdalen and Reisetser are excellent routes which take you round the glacier. The full distance takes about 7 to 8 hours.

Special activities in the area: Springtime skiing trips on the glacier, glacier walks and ice-climbing in the company of a glacier guide are extremely popular activities, and are offered by many companies. Other activities include guided walks, horseback riding, climbing, orienteering and various winter snow activities. Canoes are also available for hire. For more details, please contact the tourist information centres. If you are the kind of person who never grows tired of snow and skiing, you must visit the Folgefonn Summer Ski Centre, tel. +47 53 66 80 28, www.folgefonn.no.

There are also many cultural and traditional activities, including visits to orchards where you can take part in the production of cider. You can find art exhibitions out in the countryside. Some farms offer accommodation and refreshments, and you can also learn something of the operation of the farm and the history of the local area. For more details, please contact the tourist information centres. They can also provide details of farm shops, as well as art and handicraft workshops and galleries.

The National Park Centre: The Folgefonna National park Centre is situated in Rosendal, and offers information on the countryside, geology and heritage of the National Park. Admission to the exhibitions is free, with the exception of the ship building museum. The Centre also offers tourist information and Internet café facilities. Tel. +47 53 48 42 80, www.folgefonna.info.

Other visitor attractions in the area: The Stenparken rock park is situated at the centre of Rosendal. Various types of rock have been collected from the Folgefonna National Park and ground to show clearly the different structures and beautiful colours of the stone. This is an exciting journey in art and geology for both adults and children.

Rosendal Manor is situated just outside the National Park. The manor dates from the 17th Century, and is the only baronial estate Norway has ever had. With its beautiful rose garden, Rosendal is a unique heritage site and one of Norway's greatest tourist attractions. Kvinnherad church, a stone church built in 1250, forms part of the estate.

The Hardanger Folkemuseum local history

museum at Utne at the northern end of the Folgefonn Peninsula has exhibitions on the commerce and heritage of the whole Hardanger district. Tel. +47 53 67 00 40, www.hardanger.museum.no.

The Norwegian Hydropower and Industrial Museum in Tyssedal features exciting exhibitions where you can learn more about the early days of electrical power in Norway. The power station is a listed building, tel. +47 53 65 00 50, www.nvim.no.

Ullensvang church and Ænes church are two 13th Century stone churches which are well worth a visit.

Agatunet is the largest enclosed farming village in Norway, an historic jewel with a judge's house more than 750 year old, the only one of its kind in Norway. It is a 'cluster village', originally with 80–90 buildings, dating from the late 13th century. Tel. +47 53 66 22 14, www.agatunet.no.

At the Ænes lakseparken salmon park, you can hire equipment to catch your fish and then cook your catch. You are almost guaranteed to catch something! The park also features an aquarium and exhibitions. Tel. +47 53 48 45 71, www.lakseparken.no.

Låtefossen, to the south of Odda, and Langfoss, to the south of Åkrafjorden, are only two of many beautiful rapids in the area.

Visitor attractions: Every municipality has selected local visitor attractions, using criteria such as the countryside, heritage, recreation facilities, leisure, and commercial and development opportunities. Please contact the Tourist Office for more information.

Fishing: There are many different fishing waters and rivers with salmon trout, both in the



Knut Strand/Bergens Tidende

Buer in Odda.



Bjørn Moe

Pyramidal Saxifrage at Bondhusvatnet.

mountains and lowland areas. There are plenty of lakes and rivers on the Folgefonn Peninsula, as well as fishing for salmon in rivers and the sea. Fishing permits are available locally, including from convenience stores. Fishing in the fjord is free. If you are a hunter, you can enjoy the excitement of the local deer shoot.

ACCOMMODATION



There are plenty of places to stay on the Folgefonn Peninsula. Prices and facilities vary, but there is something to suit everyone and every pocket. There are old and venerable hotels, traditional boarding houses, camping sites and self-catering cottages. Baroniet Avlsgård and Fruehus offer overnight accommodation with a traditional flair, in buildings dating from the 1850s. For more information on accommodation on the Folgefonn Peninsula, please contact the local tourist offices, or visit www.hardangerfjord.com and www.folgefonna.net.



EATING

Many farms which offer tourist facilities also provide catering. They often prefer to use local ingredients and traditional recipes. At farm shops and eating places, krotakaka, a type of soft, thin bread, is among the best-sellers. Other specialities include hakkesteik (a type of burger) or brudesteik, which is made from barley and chopped, smoked meat, as well as åkrafjordpølse, a special sausage with goat meat as one of its main ingredients. Good food should also be accompanied by good drink—such as cider. As well as private eating places, there are cafés, roadside inns and excellent restaurants all around the Folgefonn Peninsula. Many accommodation providers also offer meals. Please contact the tourist office or visit www.hardangerfjord.com and www.folgefonna.net for more information.



Geiranger-Herdalen is an area of outstanding natural beauty, and part of the Vestnorsk fjordlandskap world heritage area.

The area of outstanding natural beauty covers part of the West-Norwegian fjord landscape in the County of Møre and Romsdal.

How do I get there?

When travelling from Østlandet, follow National Route 15 through the Ottadalen valley. When you reach high ground, turn off towards Geiranger and follow National Route 63 down towards Geiranger. In winter, when National Route 63 from the mountains to Geiranger is closed, you must travel via Stryn. You can also fly to Vigra airport in Ålesund and then take either the high-speed sightseeing boat, the Nordic Queen, or the Hurtigruten coastal passenger and cargo service, or travel by car/bus and ferry from Linge to Eidsdal. In summer, ferries also sail from Hellesylt to Geiranger and from Geiranger to Valldal.

Addresses

Destinasjon Geirangerfjord
Trollstigen,
www.visitgeirangerfjorden.com

Geiranger Tourist Office,
tel. +47 70 26 30 99,
www.geiranger.no

The Hellesylt Tourist Information Centre,
tel. +47 70 26 38 80,
www.hellesylt.no

The Stranda Tourist Information Centre,
tel. +47 70 26 14 50

Norddal reiselivslag,
tel. +47 70 25 77 67,
www.visitnorddal.com



Per Eide

Flydalsjuvet.

Geiranger-Herdalen— a world-class fjord landscape

Narrow, deep fjords, cliffs rising 800-900 metres straight up from sea level, majestic mountains rearing 1,600 metres above sea level, sharp mountain ridges and beautiful rivers are just some of the reasons why Geiranger-Herdalen is part of the UNESCO world heritage site of Vestnorsk fjordlandskap. Old farms and summer pastures along the shores of the fjord and in the mountains are living witnesses to life in the fjord community only a few decades ago.

The fjord landscape around Geiranger is one of the most famous and popular tourist attractions in Norway. The world heritage area covers just under 500 km² of the fjord landscape of western Norway. The fjords are surrounded by steep cliffs which, at

a height of around 800 to 900 metres, level off before rising again into mountains standing 1,500 to 1,600 metres above sea level. Waterfalls up to 1000 metres high tumble into the fjord. “The Seven Sisters”, “The Bride’s Veil” and the “The Suitor” are

some of the most famous. The fjord and mountain landscape features great topographical and biological diversity within a relatively small area, and is the home of rich and varied flora and fauna.

Heritage: The relationship between nature and heritage gives the area a unique atmosphere, with lots of things to see and do. A strong contributing factor is the old agricultural landscape, with farms lining the fjords, and summer pastures in the mountains. Many of the farms along the fjords are now empty. Some are situated down by the shore, while others sit high up on the edge of the mountains, where they seem to cling to the rock-ledges. In many places, the buildings and some of the infields are maintained and act as a reminder of traditional communities and farming methods. Some of these fjord and mountain farms are open to visitors, as is the Herdalssætern mountain pasture which is still used throughout the summer. For more information, please contact the tourist information centre.

By car, bus or boat: In good weather conditions, anyone driving from the mountain pass will be met by astonishing views of the fjord and the surrounding countryside. This is not, however, a route which should be attempted by anyone suffering from vertigo, since the road winds its way downwards in a most astounding way. In summer, the fjord is an important sea route. Cruise ships, the Hurtigruten coastal passenger and cargo service and ferries, as well as leisure craft, sail up and down the fjord.

Urban areas: There are several towns and villages around the world heritage area, which form ideal bases for excursions and activities. To the south, there are Geiranger and Hellesylt, and to the north Tafjord, Norddal and Eidsdal. There is something unique about each and every one of these locations, but they all have some things in common: a welcoming and helpful population, overnight accommodation, excursions and activities guaranteed to suit you.

Trails: There are trails leading away from all the locations mentioned above. The tourist offices will be able to help you find one to suit your needs. Many of the trails are waymarked, and the degree of difficulty varies from gentle strolls to

strenuous hikes which should really be undertaken in the company of a local guide.

Fishing: The area is famous for its salmon fishing, but other fishing trips along rivers, on lakes and the fjord are also popular.

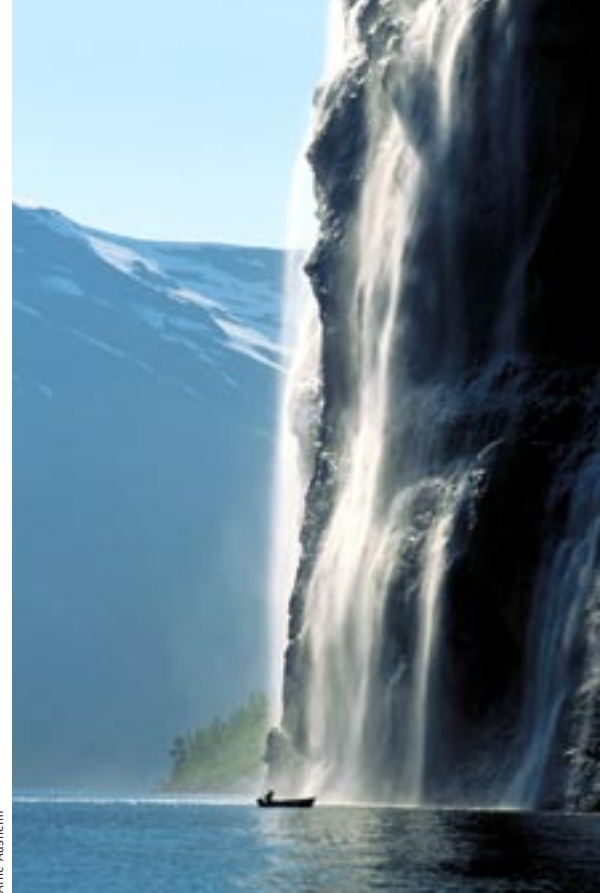
Local activities: There is a wide variety of activities in the area, both with and without guides. Most of the activities are aimed at exploring the countryside and learning more about the local heritage.

A ravine walk takes you through narrow gorges, frequently following a roaring river. For those who want to explore the area on foot, there is much to choose from, either with or without a guide. You can walk along the shores of the fjord, and maybe visit one of the mountain farms, or take a hike to the top of a mountain. There is also whitewater rafting, glacier walks, climbing and kayaking. Or horseback riding and bathing in a swimming pool. For people with a head for heights, there is an activity trail where a good sense of balance, a climbing harness and strong nerves are essential. There are also many ways to explore the fjord by water, including kayaking and fjord sightseeing trips. You can even hire a boat! For those who prefer to stay on dry land, hiring a bicycle is a great alternative.

Please contact the tourist information centre for detailed information about the companies which provide activities and their products.

Attractions, museums and view points: The Tafjord power station museum is housed in the oldest of the area's seven power stations. Tafjord 1 was commissioned in 1923, and was turned into a museum in 1989. The museum is open from 12.00 to 17.00 between 20 June and 10 August. Tel. +47 70 17 56 00, www.tafjord.net/museum.

The Geiranger Fjord Centre is an interactive centre where you can find out what life in the fjord community was like 100 years ago. You



Arne Aasheim

Brudesløret.

will get an idea of what everyday life was like, what challenges the local people faced and how the unforgiving countryside gave and took life. Tel. +47 70 26 18 00, www.fjordsenter.info.

Sylte church, built in 1863, Norddal church, built in 1782 and Geiranger church, built in 1842 are all well worth a visit. They are open from 15 June to 15 August.

View points: Dalsnibba (1,500 above sea level), Ørnesvingen, which is part of the National Tourist Route, and Flydalsjuvet all offer great photo opportunities.

ACCOMMODATION



The area around Geiranger fjord also offers a wide variety of accommodation. The Union Hotel in Geiranger is more than 100 years old, while another unique hotel, Villa Utsikten, is beautifully situated on the mountainside above Geiranger, with fantastic views of the fjord and mountains. For the more adventurous, we recommend a stay on a farm or in a mountain cottage for a taste of life at the summer pastures. The area also features a wide range of camping sites and self-catering cottages available for hire. There is something for everyone and every pocket. Please contact the Tourist Office for more information, or visit www.visitgeirangerfjorden.com.

EATING



The local culinary traditions vary as much as the landscape, with ingredients prepared in the traditional manner or in new, exciting ways. Petrines Gjestgiveri in the small town of Norddal, you can enjoy locally-produced goat-kid meat and home-made apple squash. Herdalssætra is situated up in the mountains, and visitors can enjoy the summer-pasture way of life and traditional summer-pasture fare. In addition to these local specialties, the area provides visitors with access to a wide range of eating places, including coffee shops, cafeterias, pizzerias and top-class restaurants. For more information, please contact the local Tourist Office or visit www.visitgeirangerfjorten.com.



Lars Lefaldt

Herdalssætra.



The world heritage area of Vegaøyen

(including the protected areas of Lånan/Skjærvær, Lånan/Flovær and Skjærvær, Hysvær/Søla, Muddværet, Eidemslie, Holandsen and Kjellerhaugvatnet)

Vegaøyen is situated in the municipality of Vega on the Helgeland coast, at the southern end of the county of Nordland.

How do I get there?

First, you must travel to Brønnøysund, either by bus or car on National Route 17, by domestic flight or by the north- or south-bound Hurtigruten coastal passenger and cargo service. From Brønnøysund or Sandnessjøen, you can take the high-speed boat or ferry. Call tel. +47177 for information on time tables.

Addresses

The Vega Tourist Information Centre, Gladstad.

Tel. +47 75 03 53 88/

+47 47 90 71 32,

E-mail: post@visitvega.no,

www.visitvega.no.

Vegaøyen—a coastal community and listed world heritage site

Vegaøyen has an open landscape, with a multitude of islands, islets and skerries. Hunting and fishing have been important activities for the past ten thousand years. The landscape has been created by man and nature. The successful and sustainable teamwork between humans and eider ducks, for example, is one of the foremost reasons that UNESCO has included Vegaøyen on its list of world nature and heritage sites.

Vegaøyen covers an area of 1037 km² on the Helgeland coast in the County of Nordland. The flat coastline of Vegaøyen features a large number of low-lying islands, with isolated mountains up to 800 metres high acting as distinctive landmarks. This type of coastal landscape is rarely found in the rest of the world.

In 2004, Vegaøyen was included on UNESCO's list of world nature and heritage sites. The committee had the following to say about the area: "Vegaøyen is proof of how, over the past 1500 years, generations of fishermen have maintained a sustainable way of life in an inhospitable archipelago close to the Arctic Circle. The now unique

eider industry, run by women, has played a central part in the community. The inclusion on the list should, therefore, also be regarded as a recognition of the efforts of women."

The shallow waters around Vegaøyen are particularly well suited to eider ducks. Since the Middle Ages, the eider has been a valuable "domestic" bird on Vegaøyen, as well as along the rest of the coast of northern Norway. "E-houses" were built to provide secure, warm nesting places for several pairs of eiders. When the eider and ducklings left the nest, the down could be collected and sold. The laborious task of cleaning the down was left to the women. The traditional collecting of down for the mattress industry still continues on several islands in the world heritage area. The work is

Vikasjøen.

Lars Løfaldli



carried out in the traditional manner, but the industry is not as extensive as it once was.

Birds: Many species other than the eider nest on Vegaøyen. The bird-life is enormously rich and varied. In total, 222 different bird species have been recorded here, and this makes Vegaøyen one of the most important winter grounds for waterfowl in the Nordic region. A significant part of Svalbard's population of barnacle geese rest on Vegaøyen as they migrate northwards. The world's largest colony of cormorants nest on one of the outermost skerries to the west. To protect the birds, several nature reserves have been set up in the area. Landing at these reserves is prohibited during the nesting season.

Trails: There are 15 sites of interest on Vegaøyen, identified by red-bordered walking trail signs. There is also a relics trail, which lets walkers explore 10,000 years of history. For more details, please contact the tourist information centre.

Fishing: Vegaøyen offers visitors excellent opportunities for fishing and hunting. Grouse, hare and deer shooting is extremely popular, as is fishing at Holmvatnet and Fersetvassdraget, and many other waters. Hunting and fishing permits are available from the "Sport og Fritidsstua" shop in Gladstad, tel. +47 75 03 60 60.

Local activities: The Tourist Office organises botanical walks and archipelago cruises, and also provides kayak and bicycle hire facilities. The staff can also tailor activities to suit your needs.

There are several companies providing tours, equipment hire and similar services.

Havfiske og båtturer. Join a group of peo-



A ship's hull converted into an "e-house".



Vallsjøen at sunset.

ple for sea fishing from a fishing boat, or hire a boat yourself. Please contact Sverre Nilsen or Bjørn Hansen on tel. +47 41 56 98 59, or through the tourist information centre.

Vega Havsport, Opplevelser og Guiding offers most types of water sports, experiences and guide services. Please contact the company on tel. +47 47 25 22 28.

Tore Hansen skyssbåter. Larger groups of people travelling together can hire a boat and skipper for a guided tour around the islands. Contact the owner on tel. +47 75 03 51 33. Another popular activity is "island hopping" for cyclists, starting from Brønnøysund. For more information, please contact the tourist information centre.

Other visitor attractions in the area: E-huset is an old trading quay at the fishing harbour at Nes. It now acts as a museum, documenting the tradition of keeping eider ducks as domestic animals. There is also a shop selling hand-made souvenirs.

The Bygdemuseet local history museum shows how Vegaøyen's heritage has developed over many hundreds of years. Find out how a fishing family lived at sea and on land. The museum also provides an introduction to the

world heritage area and Stone Age remains.

The Coastal Society has a museum in Vegstein with exhibition of objects from Vegaøyen's past, with the emphasis on the shop, fishery and boat engines.

The small museum features an exhibition of old objects which could be found in the house when it was built at the end of the 19th Century, including clothes, furniture and old banknotes.

Sculptures are displayed in various locations on Vegaøyen.



Female eider at an "e-house".



ACCOMMODATION

The Vega Havhotell on Viksås, lays great weight on comfort, the environment and excellent food. Tel.

+47 75 03 64 00, www.havhotellene.no
Karistua on Kjul. Accommodation in a former school room, converted into a summer cottage. Ideal for two families sharing. Rowing boat available. Tel. +47 75 03 61 67.

At Nes Bryggeferie, you can rent a well-equipped apartment on an old quay. Access to a small boat, with the sea on your doorstep. Tel. +47 75 03 52 47.

Andersnesset Rorbu og feriesenter on Holand.

Tel. +47 75 03 50 73/41 61 50 08.

Kirkøy overnatting, Kirkøy.

Tel. +47 75 03 55 08.

Vega Camping on Floa. Tel. +47 94 35 00 80.

Privaten B&B on Nes is part of Vega Kulinariske Forundringshus. There are four permanent beds, but, with spare mattresses, there is room for ten. Tel. +47 75 03 60 77.

Vega Vertshus på Gladstad offers accommodation, with access to a café and fast-food outlet. Tel. +47 75 03 54 00.

Gardsøya Rorbuferie. Tel. +47 95 76 80 28, www.gardsoyarorbuer.no

Vega brygga. Contact DinTur on tel.

+47 74 07 30 00, www.dintur.no

Vega opplevelsesferie, tel. +47 75 03 53 25, www.vegaopplevelsesferie.no

Pederbu, Jørgenbu, Toppenbue and Bjønnlibu are three fishing cottages and one weekend cottage available for hire. Boats may be available. For more information, please contact the tourist information centre.



EATING

Vega Kulinariske Forundringshus, Nes, tel. +47 75 03 67 70, www.vega-kulinariske.no. Food is

a main feature, in the form of excellent, home-cooked dishes based on local culinary traditions, but visitors can also enjoy music and a large helping of culture.

Gåkkå Mathus in Hysvær. You will be served a meal based on local produce (reservations essential) accompanied by the wonderful stories told by your host. Accommodation also available. Tel. +47 95 08 52 21, <http://home.c2i.net/mathus/gakka/index.htm>. Vega Vertshus at Gladstad offers accommodation, café and fast-food outlet, tel. +47 75 03 54 00.

The pub at Gladstad, tel. +47 47 61 19 01.



The Lyngsalpan area of outstanding natural beauty/ Ittugáissáid Suodjemeahcci

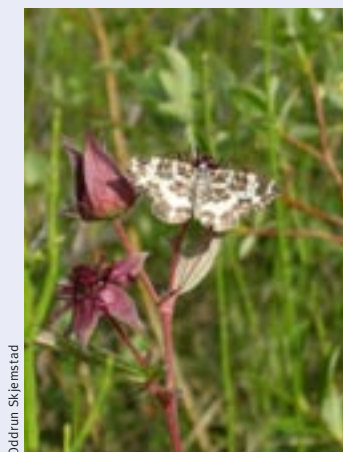
Lyngsalpan is situated on the Lyngen Peninsula, at the northern end of the County of Troms.

How do I get there?

If you are travelling from the south on the E6, or on the E8 from Finland, drive to Oteren and join National Route 868. If you are travelling from the north on the E6, you can take the ferry from Olderdalen to Lyngseidet. From Tromsø, follow the E8, turn off at Fagernes, follow National Route 91 and take the ferry from Breivikeidet.

Addresses

Svensby Tursenter,
Tel. +47 77 71 22 25
Destinasjon Tromsø,
Tel. +47 77 61 00 00,
www.destinasjontromso.no/lyngen,
e-mail: info@destinasjontromso.no



Oddrun Skjennestad



Jan R. Olsen

Telemark skier looking out over Lyngsalpan.

The Lyngsalpan area of outstanding natural beauty— in the land of the midnight sun

Some distance north of the Arctic Circle, not far from Tromsø, you will find Lyngsalpan, one of the most spectacular and wild mountain areas in Norway. This striking upland area, which is a famous landscape monument, is dominated by sharp peaks and ridges, glaciers and moraines. It is situated between two fjords, and rises 1,800 metres above sea level—the ideal place for those who enjoy strenuous exercise. The area is internationally famous for the mountain climbing it offers, and a haven for powder snow-loving Telemark skiers.

Lyngsalpan is an area of outstanding natural beauty, which covers just under 1 000 km² of the 1 500 km² Lyngen Peninsula at the northern end of the County of Troms. The protected area includes the mountains and the surrounding valleys. The purpose of making the Lyngsalpan an area of outstanding natural beauty is to preserve this very special mountain area with its glaciers, moraines, narrow-carved valleys and unique geology. It is also important to protect the biological diversity, historic monuments and cultural landscape characteristic of the area.

Early accounts of journeys from Troms describe the Alpine character, flora and fauna of the mountains. You would have to travel to the south of Europe to find similarly wild, majestic and glacier-covered mountain areas. Like the rest of the region, Lyngsalpan features a mixture of Sami, Finnish and Norwegian heritage sites.

Outdoor activities: Lyngsalpan offers particularly good opportunities for a wide variety of outdoor activities. Activities involving walking, skiing, horses or dogs are particularly plentiful. Visitors can



Jan R. Olsen

Steindalstinden.

also enjoy hunting and fishing, and pick wild berries and fungi. Much of the mountain area consists of sharp peaks and numerous small glaciers, which are pretty inaccessible to the average person. The lakes are often used for fishing and recreation.

Trails and open shelters: There are a number of trails in Lyngsalpan. Some are located on the outskirts of the protected area, but others run across the whole massif, usually making use of valleys running from east to west. Only a few trails are waymarked, so visitors should ensure that they are carrying suitable equipment and have sufficient map-reading skills and knowledge of how to use a compass before setting out on a hike. There are open shelters suitable for overnight stays in various locations in the mountains.

Activity companies: There are several companies which offer outdoor activities.

Midnight Sun Mountain guides offer tours to the mountain peaks and glaciers, as well as glacier courses. The company also organises avalanche courses, “sail and ski” events, snowmobile trips etc. It can be contacted on tel. +47 91 11 91 73, www.msmsg.org.



Jan R. Olsen

Northern lights over Rørnestind and Kjostind.

SunAlps Mountain guides will take you on a wide variety of trips, both in the mountains and on the glacier. Contact the company on tel. +47 90 93 48 84, www.sunalp.no.

Svensby Tursenter and Solvik gård offer a combination of overnight accommodation and various activities.

Solvik gård is a fishing centre and smallholding, which attempts to preserve the old farming setting. They offer accommodation and serve home-cooked food in pleasant surroundings. The farm has a wide range of animals which you can look after. The farm is also an ideal starting point for various mountain trips. Tel. +47 77 71 38 90, www.solvik.no.

At Svensby Tursenter, you can stay in a family-friendly, well-equipped cottage with wheelchair access. There are also caravan pitches. They offer fishing boat and bicycle hire, and arrange dog-sled or walking trips, farm visits and glacier walks. There is also a tourist information point, and the Lyngens bygdemuseum local history museum is situated nearby. Contact the company on tel. +47 77 71 22 25, www.destinasjon troms.no/svensby.

“Din Tur” helps you find all the smaller, private

operators, many of whom offer accommodation and activities. Tel. +47 74 07 30 00, www.dintur.no.

Fishing: Lyngsalpan has many excellent fishing waters and rivers, and hunting is another popular pastime. If you want to hunt or fish, you must buy a hunting and/or fishing permit for the relevant area. It is important to disinfect all fishing tackle after use, since two of the fishing sites in the area carry gyro infection. This also applies to those fishing in river mouths. For more information, please contact the tourist information centre.



Jan R. Olsen

Nordland boat on Jægervatnet.



ACCOMMODATION

There is a wide choice of accommodation around Lyngsalpan. They all have one thing in common—they are on the doorstep of some extraordinary countryside. In addition to Lyngseide Gjestegård, Solvik Gård, Svensby tursenter, Vollans gjæststuga and the camping facilities in Hatteng, there is plenty of private accommodation on offer, with access to a whole range of activities. To find out more about these, please contact “Din Tur” on tel. +47 74 07 30 00, www.dintur.no, or “Destinasjon Tromsø” on tel. +47 77 61 00 00, www.destinasjon troms.no/overnatting_privat.html.



EATING

Lyngseidet Gjestegård sells coffee and cakes, and has an à la carte restaurant. It is open from 12.00 to 18.00 (open in the evenings to groups booked in advance). Accommodation is also available. Tel. +47 77 71 04 00. Solvik gård serves home-cooked meals based on local culinary traditions. Tel. +47 77 71 39 80, www.solvik.no. Vollans gjæststuga is situated at Nordkjosbotn. They sell coffee, cakes and dinners, and offer overnight accommodation. Tel. +47 77 72 23 00,

www.vollan-gjestestue.no. Prixkafén at Støa sells coffee, cakes and light meals. The café is open throughout the day. Tel. +47 77 71 01 01. Jonny's Bistro Vollan—fast-food outlet. Tel. +47 77 72 12 00. Nordkjosbotn grill—fast-food outlet. Tel. +47 77 72 83 74. Hatteng grillbar and kiosk offers fast food, coffee, waffles and the usual range of kiosk goods. In addition, there are cottage lets and camping facilities. Tel. +47 77 71 49 99.



Abisko National Park is situated just south of Torne-träsk in the Municipality of Kiruna in Norrbotten County.

How do I get there?

Abisko is situated along the E10 between Kiruna and Narvik, and has its own railway station and bus stop. There are daily services to Kiruna (98 km) and Narvik (75 km).

The journey time from 18 hours from Stockholm, 25 from Göteborg and 27 hours from Malmö.

By air, the journey from Stockholm to Kiruna takes around 1.5 hours. There are parking facilities at the naturum.

Traffic information is available on the website www.lappland.se

Addresses

Manager: The County Administrative Board of Norrbotten County
www.bd.lst.se/naturvard
www.abiskonaturum.nu

More information

Vandra Kungsleden,
 Claes Grundsten
 Sweden's National Parks,
 Naturvårdsverkets förlag [The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency]



Peter Rosen

Abisko tourist centre at Lappporten.

Abisko— national park since 1909

Abisko National Park is the most visited and explored national park in Sweden. The valley of Abiskojåkk, with its impressive canyon, dominates the park. The flora is one of the most diverse in the mountains, and includes Lapland rhododendron, white campion and orchids like the elusive ghost orchid and blunt-leaf orchid. There is a wide variety of wildlife, including the rare Arctic warbler, forest-dwelling species such as elk and capercaillie, as well as lemming and ptarmigan. All major predators, excluding the wolf, live in the park.

Abisko is the cradle of mountain tourism in Sweden, where tourists and nature have co-existed for more than a century. Njulla is the most famous peak, and can be reached by ski lift. In Abisko, nature is easily accessible. The mountain world has much to offer everyone, whether you are just making a brief stop or want to explore nature in depth. The staff at the naturum will be happy to provide details of visitor attractions or any other information which will let you enjoy nature to the full.

History: The hunter-gatherers of the area gradually became domestic reindeer herders. The nomadic lifestyle of the Sami continued into the



Peter Rosen

Reading in the flower meadow.

early part of the 20th century, after which they set up permanent dwellings. Today, the area is the home of a modern reindeer industry.

The park has never been the home of settlers or farmers. Farming has, however, been carried out in the eastern part of the Torneträsk area. Industrialisation has left its track on the landscape. The railway brought tourists, who today provide a livelihood for a large number of people.

Facilities: Parking areas, toilet facilities, accommodation, guided tours and naturum information centre. Naturum features an exhibition about Abisko National Park and its nature and history. The naturum information centre also organises guided tours and lectures, with the emphasis on the flora, fauna, history and geology of the mountains. You, too, can watch the slide show, take part in guided tours or listen to the lectures. Inside the naturum building, you can buy maps, books, postcards, handicrafts etc. If you have any questions, the guides at the naturum information centre will be happy to provide you with information on flowers and leaves, rocks and minerals. Website www.abiskonaturum.nu

Trails: The Kungsleden trail starts (or ends, whichever way you look at it) in Abisko. There are numerous waymarked trails ideal for summer hikes or winter trips. A network of nature trails criss-crosses the park.

Cross-country driving: snowmobile riders can use a waymarked track through Abisko National Park.

Visitor attractions: The easiest way to access the views from Njulla across the famous U-shaped Lappporten valley, the most reproduced mountain motif in Sweden, is by ski

lift. Many visitors choose to use the ski lift on the way up, enjoy some refreshments at the café and then follow the Rihtunjira nature trail back down again.

The midnight sun shines at Abisko between 12/6 and 4/7. At the top of Njulla, the midnight sun season lasts even longer, from 27/5 to 18/7. In winter, visitors can enjoy the northern lights. Other attractions include the Abiskojaikka canyon, the flora of the canyon and the mountain, the bird-life and Abisko naturum information centre.

Special activities: Abisko is a unique area in the Swedish mountains. Not only does it offer great natural diversity, but it is also highly accessible. If you want to enjoy the special character of the mountains, you can join guided day-trips. The day-trips usually last the full day and include some form of transport.

STF (the Swedish Touring Club) organises special week-long courses for anyone interested in a specific area of nature or in the local history.

Details of all events are available on www.abisko.nu

Sami handicrafts: modern reindeer herding is a balancing act between tradition and modern life. In the past, the Sami made everything they needed themselves, including household articles, skis, sleds, lassos and clothing. Knowledge of handicraft techniques and natural materials was passed down through the generations. Even today, there is a great deal of interest in handicrafts, perhaps because it is an ingrained part of the history and identity of the Sami. Many Sami who do not own reindeer make a living as artisans. Handicrafts also provide an important additional income for many reindeer herders, and are highly treasured by collectors the world over.



Peter Rosen

▲ A walk through the park. ▼ The Abisko canyon.



Peter Rosen



ACCOMMODATION:

Abisko offers a wide variety of accommodation, including mountain hotels, holiday home villages and youth hostels. For up-to-date information, please contact the tourist office in Kiruna, 981 22 Kiruna, Tel +46 (0)980 18880, Fax +46 (0)980 18286. info@lappland.se www.lappland.se, or the Swedish Touring Club, www.abisko.nu



EATING

There are a large number of restaurants and eating places in Abisko and the surrounding area. For details, visit www.lappland.se and click on "Restaurants".



OTHER SIGHTS

Kiruna: church, town hall, Hjalmar Lundbohmshäagen, the Måttaráhkka handicraft collective, tourist mine, mining museum, Same-gården, Kiruna Science Center, Björkliden with one of the world's northernmost and most spectacular golf courses: visit www.bjorkliden.com
Riksgränsen: Ateljé Sven Hörmell: slide show, handicraft for sale. www.riksgransen.nu
Jukkasjärvi: Jukkasjärvi church—the oldest church in Lapland, Jukkasjärvi fair, and the Icehotel. For more information, please visit www.lappland.se



Bullerön is situated in the outskirts of the archipelago, to the east of Nämö.

How do I get there?

If you do not have a boat of your own, you can get to Bullerön by ferry from Stavnäs or Björkvik on Ingarö throughout the summer. Information on timetables is available from the supervisor.

Bus routes 433 or 434 to Stavnäs or bus routes 428 or 429 to Björkvik from Slussen. For information on timetables, contact SL, tel +46 (0)8 6001 000.

The M/S Waxholm III, which operates on the “Thousand island cruise” hosted by Strömma Kanalbolaget calls in at Bullerö and other islands. For timetables, call +46 (0)8 5871 4000.

Private boat: see boat leisure chart (“båtspörkort”) 8144.

Addresses

Conservation management: the Stockholm County Administrative Board +46 (0)8 7854 000.

Maintenance: Skärgårdsstiftelsen (the Archipelago Foundation) tel +46 (0)8 4405 600. E-mail: kansliet@skargardsstiftelsen.se

Supervisors:

tel +46 (0)8 5715 9092,
Jan Olsén +46 (0)70 6223 137,
Ingegerd Rydberg
+46 (0)70 3773 920.

More information

Bulleröboken, Skärgårdsstiftelsen.

Fiskartorpet Rågskär, Skärgårdsstiftelsen.

Torparna på Rågskär, Skärgårdsstiftelsen.



The rocks of Bullerön.

Bullerön—the archipelago jewel

Bullerön is situated in the outskirts of the archipelago, to the east of Nämö. It is surrounded by 900 islands, skerries and islets. Bullerön, a name which means “stony island” is the largest island in the archipelago. Fierce winds, harsh winters and dry summers have created a flora similar to that found in the Swedish mountains. The island offers great natural diversity, with barren rock as well as deciduous woodland with birch and alder. The rolling terrain with flat rock and hollows still bears the traces of the fields and hay-meadows of past settlers. On Bullerön, visitors can enjoy great bathing, the beautiful countryside and the island’s exciting history.

People first inhabited Bullerön at the end of the 17th century. Around 1830, a maximum of twelve people made a living here. Potatoes and root-crops were grown in small fields in the valleys. In summer, livestock grazed on crowberry and heather on the surrounding islands. Fishing was, however, the main occupation. Hunting for seabirds and seal provided important additional food for the self-subsistence households. The inhabitants of Bullerön would sail boats loaded with salted fish in barrels into Lake Mälaren, and trade these for grain.

In 1908, the island was depopulated when the artist Bruno Liljefors bought the island. He built a hunting lodge on the island, which today has been converted into a naturum information centre. In 1967, the Swedish state bought the Bullerö archipelago through the

National Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. A supervisor and his family moved to the island in 1984, and once again, Bullerön was populated.



The hunting lodge, now a naturum information centre.



Arriving in Paradise.

Today, the hay fields are being restored to demonstrate the historical use of land and its flowers. Inshore on the island, a large stand of yew trees has been established.

The island is home to a great variety of birds—eider is the most common, but there are also tufted duck, velvet scoter, red-breasted merganser and greylag, as well as numerous gulls and terns.

Local facilities: Bullerön has an exhibition hall, jetty, natural anchorages and a guest-house, tent pitches, a rest house and sauna.

The rest house is situated in the village, and there is access to a limited amount of fresh water when available. The jetty is also in the village, and is intended for touring, taxi and charter boats. Those who arrive by private boat should moor in the natural anchorages. The sauna is situated at Hemviken and bookings can be made by putting your name on the list posted in the sauna.

Bathing sites: The shores are mostly rocky and stony, but there is a small sandy beach.

Open fires: Open fires must only be lit as directed in prepared fireplaces.

Fishing: Fishing from the shore is permitted using hand-held tackle.



Even in winter, Bullerön attracts visitors—skaters.

Trails and guided tours: There is a 600 metre long, prepared nature trail, as well as a heritage trail which is slightly longer and a bit rougher. Guided tours before and after the peak season can be ordered through the supervisor, tel + 46 (0)8 5715 9092.

Naturum information centre: Exhibition on the nature and history of archipelago, and reproductions of the works of the artist Bruno Liljefors. Open: 15 April to 14 June, weekends 9–19, 15 May to 15 August, daily 9–19, 16 August to 30 September, weekends 9–19.

Special activities: The annual Bullerö Haymaking Festival and some other special activities. For more information, please visit the Archipelago Foundation's website www.skargardsstiftelsen.se.



Nature and culture go hand in hand on Bullerön.

ACCOMMODATION



Bullerö guest-house provides basic, self-catering accommodation (8 beds). Bookings are made through the supervisor between 1 April and 30 September. Tent pitches: at the southern end of Bullerön you must pitch your tent as directed by the supervisor. In all other locations, you may stay for only two nights in the same location.



EATING

You must bring your own food with you to Bullerön. There is a shop at Solvik on Nämdö, tel +46 (0)8 5715 6017, as well as a fuel station, fresh water and restaurant.



OTHER SIGHTS

If you are cruising on your own boat, there are plenty of exciting islands to visit, including Rågskärr and Långviksskärr. On the mainland, there is an Archipelago Museum at Stavsån summer harbour, as well as the Archipelago Museum-Nämdö Exhibition at Sand on Nämdö.



Store mosse is situated around 15 km north-west of the town of Värnamo.

How do I get there?

By car or bicycle: the park is easily accessible from all directions. Suitable access roads are sign-posted with the sights symbol. The naturum information centre and the main bird-watching tower at Lake Kävsjön can be reached via county route 151 between Värnamo and Hillerstorp.

Train: From the north or south, travel via the southern mainline to Alvesta. Change to the east-to-west Kalmar-Värnamo-Göteborg line which runs straight through the park. Alight at Värnamo, Hillerstorp or Gnosjö.

Bus: connections include Värnamo and Hillerstorp on service 242, to the bus stop called "Fågeltornet" [the bird-watching tower] (for information on bus services, call +46 (0)771 4443 33).

Addresses

Store Mosse National Park
Box 18,
SE-330 33 Hillerstorp
Sweden
www.f.lst.se/storemosse

Contact persons: the supervisor for the national park, Arne Andersson

The manager of the Store Mosse naturum information centre, Martha Wägéus

Telephone: +46 (0)370 23792.

E-mail: storemosse@f.lst.se

More information

The brochure "Nationalpark i Jönköpings län – Store Mosse", published by the county council

Sweden's National Parks, published by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.



Torbjörn Skogedal

Wetland trail.

Store mosse—primeval landscape in the present day

The national park is the largest wetland area in Sweden south of Lapland—"A primeval landscape from before the time of man". The large, open wetlands, the rich bird-life of Lake Kävsjön, the wooded shifting sand dunes, and the heritage landscapes of Svänö and Lövö are what makes the national park unique. A visit is a wonderful experience, even for those who are not particularly familiar with plants and birds.

The purpose of the national park is to protect biological diversity as well as the valuable countryside and heritage landscape.

In the south of Sweden, there is no other place which is as original and on which humans have had less impact than these large wetland areas. Today, the main features of the landscape were determined as by the inland ice as it receded around 15,000 years ago. The bird-life at Lake Kävsjön is rich and varied. The composition of species cannot be found

in any other Swedish wild-fowl lake. It is the nesting site for some typical Nordic species, such as the jacksnipe, whimbrel and green-shank, as well as more southern species, including the spotted crake, shoveler and yellow wagtail.

Local facilities: The national park features bird-watching towers, walking trail, wheelchair trails and naturum visitor centre. There are also cabins and a youth hostel.



Marsh helleborine.

Trails: There are around 40 kilometres of walking trails. Two of the trails are suitable for wheelchair users. The trails take walkers across pine-clad sand dunes, open wetland areas and through an heritage landscape covered in deciduous trees and plants. In wet areas, the trails run along footbridges.

Towers: There are 7 bird-watching/viewing towers in the park.

Naturum visitor centre: information on the countryside and the valuable nature of the national park, information on Swedish national parks in general and on other protected nature areas in the vicinity of Stora Mosse. Reference library, microscopes and magnifying lenses, reading chairs, bear winter lair and picture

window overlooking quagmire at Lake Kävsjön. Naturum visitor centre acts as a source of inspiration and a meeting place for all those interested in nature. Free admission.

Open every Saturday and Sunday in May 10–16. From 1 June to 31 August, open daily 10–16. September – April open every Sunday 10–16. Other dates and times by arrangement with the staff.

Lövö and Svänö: Two farmed moraine hills situated in the wetland area. Buildings first appeared on Lövö in the 17th century, and in 1912, four farming families lived here. Here, as well as on Svanö, a residential house still remains. These are ideal for anyone who wants to experience the national park at really close range. The landscape still carries the traces of cultivation, and the flora is similar to that of forest meadows.

Local activities: At the end of May every year, the National Park Day is celebrated through a wide variety of activities, exhibitions, combined walking and quiz competitions and the sale of local handicrafts etc. At the same time, the naturum visitor centre opens its doors to all.

Public lectures and temporary exhibitions on current themes are held in the naturum visitor centre. School parties, companies, associations and others can book guided tours of the naturum visitor centre and the park.

The Store Mosse Association is an organisation for anyone interested in the nature and history of the national park and the surrounding area. The Association holds monthly meetings and arranges exciting and informative excursions and trips. For details, please e-mail lennart.fritz@f.lrf.se



Jonas Forsberg/N

Jordugglan vakar.



ACCOMMODATION

If you want to wake up to the singing of the birds, you can stay within the boundaries of the national park, either at a youth hostel/Kittlakull or in more basic accommodation without the luxury of flush toilets or running water on Lövö or Svänö. Whichever type of accommodation you choose, the nature experience will always be the same! For bookings, please contact Värnamo Turism. Värnamo Turism: telephone: +46 (0)370 18899. Fax: +46 (0)370 15711

E-mail: info@visit-varnamo.com

The municipalities around the national park offer a wide range of accommodation, including hotels, bed & breakfast, boarding houses, affordable youth hostels or farm holidays. For more information, visit the tourism pages of the municipalities' websites: www.varnamo.se, www.gnosjo.se, www.vaggeryd.se



EATING

There is plenty of opportunity to enjoy food and refreshments at the national park. For more information on opening hours, directions etc., visit the municipalities' websites www.varnamo.se, www.gnosjo.se, www.vaggeryd.se. Some companies can deliver lunches, dinners or whatever else you would like for you to enjoy at the naturum visitor centre or in the countryside.



Leif Gustavsson

Whooper swans pay an early-morning visit to the wetland area.



OTHER SIGHTS

Lake Draven at Reftele in the Municipality of Gislaved is another wonderful wildfowl lake some 20 km south-west of Store Mosse. It offers a great opportunity to observe wild birds from any of several bird-watching towers. The Marieholmsskogen forest, 12 km north of Store Mosse, is one of southern Sweden's most natural coniferous forests with truly wild nature, varied bird-life and, just maybe, a chance of spotting a lynx. In the municipalities of Värnamo, Gnosjö and Vaggeryd, there are many small factories with factory outlet shopping facilities. At one of Sweden's most popular family visitor attractions, High Chaparral, visitors can enjoy the atmosphere of the Wild West. There are several golf courses and a large number of other exciting nature sites in the surrounding area. More information is available on www.visit-smaland.com



Lake Hornborgarsjön is situated in the south of Sweden, 150 km north-east of Göteborg.

How do I get there?

To find the lake, you must travel to one of the three major towns in the Västergötland region: Skara, Falköping or Skövde. All of these are situated about 20 km from Lake Hornborgarsjön.

You will probably be travelling by car, but there are also excellent bus services to Skara, Falköping or Skövde. Trains stop at Falköping and Skövde. For details on bus and train timetables, see www.vasttrafik.se

Addresses

The County Administrative Board for Västra Götaland Hornborgarsjön, 521 98 Broddetorp.

Tel +46 (0)500 4911 90.
www.hornborga.com

Tourist information:
www.fagelvagen.nu

The Västsvenska Turistrådet tourist council, www.vastsverige.com, and the three municipalities concerned www.skara.se, www.skovde.se, www.falkoping.nu

If you do not have access to the Internet, please write to Hornborga Naturum, Hornborgarsjön, SE-521 98 Broddetorp, Sweden
Tel +46 (0)500 4914 50.

E-mail:
hornborga.naturum@o.lst.se
or call the municipalities' tourist information service.

More information

Hornborgarsjön – från vasshav till fågelrike by Hertzman & Larsson

Hornborgarsjön by Stefan Edman, Tore Hagman, Jan Towé.

Lake Hornborgarsjön —a wildfowl lake in an historic area

Lake Hornborgarsjön is situated in the majestic, heritage landscape of the Västergötland plateau. The famous wildfowl lake, which was affected by a lowering of the water level, has undergone extensive and unique restoration to reclaim its position as one of Sweden's most important area for resting and nesting wetland birds. The vigorous mating dance of the cranes attract hundreds of thousands of visitors every spring.

Lake Hornborgarsjön is a nature reserve which covers just over 4,000 hectares. This includes primarily the lake and the lakeside meadows, but also parts of the agricultural landscape to the east of the lake.

The purpose of the reserve is to encourage nesting and resting wetland wildfowl. The landscape around the lake, which is the result of small-scale farming operations, includes numerous ancient remains and stone walls which should also be preserved. You do not have to be a dedicated bird-watcher to enjoy

a visit to the lake. Although the birds are of significant importance to the natural treasure which is Lake Hornborgarsjön, the site also features a teeming wetland area with all forms of flora and fauna, a beautiful landscape, exciting history and signs of early human habitation.

Facilities: the nature reserve offers car parking facilities, toilets, walking trails, bird-watching towers, hides, information rooms and a cafeteria.

Naturum information centre: A naturum information centre is situated at Fågeludden. It offers an exhibition about the lake, cafeteria,

The magic atmosphere of the wetlands.

Jan Towé





Tore Hagman

Naturum information centre, housed in a peculiar pagoda.



Jan Töve

Flocks of cranes announce the arrival of spring.

bird-watching tower with lift, slide-show etc.

The naturum information centre is at the south-western end of the lake. It is open for the crane mating season from the middle of March to the end of April. Crane-watching has been a popular event since the early 1950s, with at least 150,000 visitors every spring. Everyone wants to watch the vigorous mating dance of the cranes and listen to their trumpeting calls which herald the arrival of spring.

Bird-watching towers: From the tower at Hornborga naturum visitor centre, you can see, among other things, Sweden's largest colony of

black-headed gulls, grebes, ducks and a large number of coots. There are a number of other sites with parking facilities around the lake, all of which offer excellent views of the lake.

Trails and guided tours: 6 different trails with a total length of 16 km offer a great opportunity to explore the varied nature of the lake on your own. You can also join one of the guided tours.

Hides: There are a number of different hides which allow visitors to watch and photograph birds at very close range. Visits to some of these must be booked through the Naturum visitor centre.

Special activities: Special evening walks are held in May, June and September, and you can book a place on one of these by phoning Hornborga naturum visitor centre by phoning +46 (0)500 4914 50 or +46 (0)31 6052 20. In January and February, you can watch the eagles, while special wildfowl-themed guided tours are held in March and April. During the crane season, a Spring Fair and art circuit are held, and in autumn, the Mekelsmäss Fair is a popular attraction.

For more details of all events, please visit www.fagelvagen.nu, www.hornborga.com and www.vastsverige.com



ACCOMMODATION

Various types of accommodation, including youth hostels, holiday home villages, bed & breakfast, boarding houses and hotels are available in the vicinity of Lake Hornborgasjön. For more information, bookings etc., visit the tourism pages on the websites of the municipalities of Falköping, Skara and Skövde, as well as www.fagelvagen.nu and www.hornborga.com



EATING

Food and refreshments are available in various locations around Lake Hornborgasjön. In some places, home-cooked meals are available on farms, using organic vegetables grown on the farm itself. For more information, directions etc. please visit www.fagelvagen.nu and the municipalities' websites www.skara.se, www.skovde.se, www.falkoping.nu. At Fågeludden, you can enjoy waffles, hot drinks, sandwiches and cakes while watching the birds and the lake.



OTHER SIGHTS

There is a lot to see and do in the area around Lake Hornborgasjön. The Varnhem abbey church and ruined monastery, the Ekornavallen burial site and the Gudhem ruined monastery, Axevalla moor and harness-racing track, Skara Cathedral and the holiday recreation centre, and the Billingen and Mösseberg plateaux. Numerous local nature reserves. Lake Östen is another outstanding wildfowl lake in the area. The nearby towns of Skara, Skövde and Falköping offer plenty of entertainment. For more information, please visit www.fagelvagen.nu and www.vastsverige.com



25 Picture Press / Ina Agency

The coot, a species which typifies Lake Hornborgarsjön



Torbjörn Arvidsson / TIOFOTO

▲ Black-headed gull .

Jan Töve



Cranes. ►

Nature conservation in the Nordic region



DENMARK

Denmark's first conservation law was brought in in 1917. Since then, many areas have become protected, in order to keep the landscape beautiful, and to preserve valuable cultural heritage sites and protect the wild plants and animals of Denmark.

The Protection of Nature Law and the Landscape Planning Law are the two most important laws in Denmark today in terms of protecting and helping to restore the landscape of Denmark. New areas can be protected under the Protection of Nature Law, and the law also helps to prevent more of the countryside from being cultivated for agricultural use. These laws also protect open countryside and particular zones, such as forest rims, coastal stretches and prehistoric remains, against new construction.

Many shallow stretches of sea, coastal areas, river valleys, heaths and forests are Natura 2000 sites. Natura 2000 sites are protected by international law and this is becoming ever more significant in protecting Denmark's countryside.

Over the last 15 years, Denmark has also invested in restoring its countryside, with particular focus on waterways, lakes and marshlands.

Two of the largest and most well-known projects, which are also supported by the EU, are Veststadil Fjord and Skjerne Enge on West Jutland. The new protected sites are valuable recreation areas and have provided an ideal environment for many plants and animals which are disappearing from other parts of Denmark.

Marshlands are being restored continually at the moment, partly in order to reduce the pollution caused by agriculture.

Unlike other Nordic countries, Denmark has no national parks. But since 2002, the Danish parliament has discussed the possibility of creating national parks in Denmark.



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FINLAND

Nature conservation area help to preserve the diversity of nature. Conservation areas in Finland can consist of land in either public or private ownership. Most of the conservation areas in Finland are on land owned by the State. Nature conservation areas can consist of National Parks, nature parks and other nature conservation areas. They are established by laws or regulations. The Forestry Board looks after the nature conservation areas and other land owned by the State, and is also responsible for ensuring that endangered species are preserved for future generations. People who enjoy the open air are also offered various recreational services in these areas.

The nature conservation areas, wildernesses and excursion areas form the core of the network of protected areas established on land owned by the State. Wilderness areas have been established on land owned by the State in Lapland, under the Act for the Protection of Wilderness Reserves. The Life in the Open Air Act stands behind the publicly-owned excursion areas all over Finland. Almost all these areas are included in the European Union's Natura 2000 network. The national nature conservation network is supplemented by the nature conservation areas on privately owned land. Nature conservation is promoted by agreements and cooperation on nature conservation areas and the nation's boundaries.

The network service Luontoon.fi provides information about all National Parks, state-owned excursion places, northern wildernesses, Visitor Centres and other service points for the public. The network-based service is published in Finnish, Swedish, the Sami language and English.



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NORWAY

Most of the protected areas in Norway are either nature reserves, national parks or areas of outstanding natural beauty.

The nature reserves enjoy the most stringent protection, but are also the smallest areas. National parks have been set up to protect large areas of importance to the flora and fauna, to prevent a deterioration in biological diversity, and to preserve specific landscapes. This is in contrast to some other countries, such as Sweden, where nature reserves are set up for both large and small areas, and where the focus of the preservation work is the quality of the countryside. In addition to nature reserves and national parks, Norway has several areas of outstanding natural beauty. These often cover large areas of land, but are less stringently protected than the national parks. All three types of areas may be made up of private and state-owned land. Norway also has areas listed as world heritage sites by UNESCO, and internationally-protected wetland areas, "Ramsar areas".

Established in 1962, the Rondane national park was the first national park in Norway. Today, in the spring of 2006 (updated in January 2006), there are 25 national parks which cover almost 7% of Norway. In comparison, there are

1,756 nature reserves, but they cover only just over 1% of the country, while areas of outstanding natural beauty make up almost 4.5 %. In addition, there are 29 protected areas on Svalbard. Seven of these are national parks and six are large nature reserves. In total, 65% of Svalbard is protected!

The Directorate for Nature Management has overall responsibility for all the protected areas. For more information, visit www.norgesnasjonalparker.no. Most of the protected areas in Norway are managed by county governors. A few nature reserves and areas of outstanding natural beauty are managed by the municipalities. All protected areas in Norway have been set up by the Norwegian government, following an exhaustive process.



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ISLAND

In Iceland, protection of sites of natural interests begun about 75 years ago, i.e. when special legislation for Þingvellir National Park came into force in 1930. The next site was preserved in 1940, and after 1960 the number of protected areas increased substantially following the new legislation on nature conservation in 1956. Currently there are almost 100 protected areas in Iceland, thereof four National Parks. Most of the sites fall in the categories Nature Reserves and Natural Monuments but there are also Country Parks and habitat protection. Three areas are protected by special legislation at Parliament, including Þingvellir National Park. All these areas serve various purposes, depending on natural features and objectives of the protection. Today protected areas cover approximately 8.5% of Iceland.

In 1999 the Nature Conservation Act was revised and introducing for the first time a nature conservation strategy. The Minister for the Environment shall, no less frequently than at five-year intervals, have a Nature Conservation Strategy drawn up for the entire country and submitted to the Parliament. The Nature Conservation Strategy shall include the most relevant information possible on sites of natural interest, which there is deemed reason to protect. The plan shall describe the unique characteristics of the sites and their significance for the country's natural environment.

The first Nature Conservation Strategy, 2004–2008 was submitted in the Parliament in 2004 and adopted there. According to the Strategy there are

14 areas that will hopefully be protected within that timeframe. These areas comprise some of the most important bird areas of the country and important sites for a number of rare and threatened plant species along with some important geological areas.

Environment and Food Agency carries out the preparation for declaring an area protected, and when an agreement is reached the matter shall be referred to the Minister for the Environment for further decision.



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SWEDEN

Natura 2000 is the EU network of protected nature areas. In Sweden, there are almost 4,000 Natura 2000 areas, covering an area almost 20 times the size of the Baltic island of Gotland. The Swedish network includes rare gems like the bare limestone landscape on the island of Öland, the fjords of the Bohuslän region, the verdant steep hillsides of Västergötland, the primeval forests of Tiveden and the expanses of the Sarek massif. Several of the areas have been selected since they are important habitats for threatened species. This includes the hermit beetle which lives in the oak meadows of the Östergötland region, the fairy slipper orchid which flowers in the coniferous forest of northern Sweden, and the bittern which calls in the reeds of the province of Skåne.

Around 60 percent of Sweden's Natura 2000 areas have already been given protection as nature reserves or national parks.

The national park designation is the best a nature area can receive, and the national parks are made up of distinct types of landscape which will be preserved in their natural state, as well as unique locations of outstanding natural beauty which ensure that nature can be experienced to the full. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency makes decisions on the management of Sweden's national parks and makes proposals for new parks. Sweden's first nine National parks were set up in 1909, and were the first of their kind in Europe. The nature reserve title is the most widely-used form of protection.

Nature reserves may cover private land as well as publicly-owned land. Protective regulations are "tailored" to suit each individual reserve, and vary greatly from one site to another, depending on the purpose of the reserve.

Decisions on the formation of nature reserves are taken by the county administrative board or the municipality.

A heritage reserve is a type of protection adopted to preserve valuable heritage landscapes.

In Sweden, 11.5 % of the land is protected. There are currently 28 national parks and 2,700 nature reserves in the country.

For more information on nature conservation, open-air recreation and protected countryside, visit the website of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency www.naturvardsverket.se, or visit the websites of the county administrative boards to find out more about the nature reserves in your area.



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Nordic nature is the greatest attraction for tourists who visit the region

The attractions of Denmark include the broad expanses of the Vadehavet tidal ecosystem, newly-created wetlands teeming with birdlife, the sea, and the lengthy coastlines of the islands with their dunes, cliffs and sandy beaches. Among the many natural phenomena that attract tourists to Norway are glaciers, mountains and fjords. Highlands, volcanoes and other geological phenomena attract tourists to Iceland. They visit Sweden for its mountains, forests and vast wilderness areas, while Finland is well-known as the land with thousands of lakes and the exotic Lapland region.

There are a great many national parks and nature reserves throughout the Nordic region which are legally protected in order to preserve their flora, fauna and geology, but also to provide visitors with opportunities to experience Nordic nature at its best.

This booklet presents a selection of the finest areas for nature tourism in Norden, all of which are protected in accordance with nature conservation legislation. The purpose of the booklet is to stimulate interest in and convey knowledge of the valuable features of those areas. It also provides information about the locations of and travelling directions to the protected areas, their characteristics, and what visitors can do and experience there. In addition, there are details on overnight accommodation, dining facilities, other attractions in nearby areas, and useful descriptions of adjacent communities.

Printed copies of the booklet in English and the Nordic languages can be ordered via the website of the Nordic Council of Ministers: www.norden.org. It is also available in PDF format at the same website, and may be downloaded and distributed free of charge.

To learn more about protected areas in the individual Nordic countries, see the following websites:

Denmark www.skovognatur.dk
Finland www.luontoon.fi and www.utinaturen.fi
Iceland www.ust.is
Norway www.dirnat.no
Sweden www.naturvardsverket.se

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The Nordic Council of Ministers is the principal agency for co-operation among Nordic governments and parliamentarians. It includes Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, as well as three autonomous areas: the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands. Within the region, there are some 24 million inhabitants and seven official languages.