

The Gyr Falcon at Veines

The Gyr Falcon's nest site at Veines has long been known among local people and visiting bird watchers. The Gyr Falcons have nested in this area almost annually and have alternated between a series of different nest sites (old Raven nests) from Storvika in the west and about a kilometre eastward along the cliffs out towards Veinesodden.

The Gyr Falcon begins the breeding season while it is still mid-winter. As early as January the males can begin carrying food to the waiting female. In the period forth to egg-laying, which in the earliest pairs takes place at the end of March, activity at the nest site increases and the pair perform display flight, transfer of prey and mating, accompanied by loud screaming. The 3-4 reddish-brown eggs are usually laid in an old Raven nest. The female does most of the incubating while the male provides the food. After 34-36 days the eggs hatch, and 42-45 days later the young are on the wing. From the time the young are about 2 weeks old the female also begins to hunt. Then the diversity of prey brought to the young increases, and at this time the Gyr Falcon has a varied diet, even though grouse and ptarmigan are still the main prey. The majority of the Gyr Falcon clutches in Finnmark leave the nest at the end of June. They are still cared for by the parents until they become independent a month's time after first taking flight. The adult falcons mainly remain by the nest site throughout the winter.

Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus*

The Gyr Falcon is the world's largest falcon. The female, which is largest, can be up to 65 cm long and weigh 2 kg. The Gyr Falcon has a circumpolar distribution, and is the only species of falcon that regularly overwinters in the arctic. In order to survive the long and cold winters in the north, it has developed a series of adaptations, among these a specially insulating plumage. The Gyr Falcon is distributed in mountain areas throughout most of Norway, but is most numerous in the northernmost counties. Even here it is a scarce breeding species that is seldom seen away from the breeding localities.

Conduct in the area

The Gyr Falcon locality at Veines is easily accessible, with both roads and paths that go near several of the alternative nest sites. Traffic here can easily lead to disturbance of the nesting falcons. All vehicles should be parked at Veineshalsen (at the barrier).

The Gyr Falcon is very susceptible to disturbance during the breeding period, especially before the young hatch. There are therefore **access restrictions** in the period **15th March to 15th July** within a zone marked red on the map. Movement at this time to the observation cabin and the lookout point must follow the marked path (yellow/blue).

It is important that one keeps as calm and quiet as possible, both while going to these points and while one is there.



THE GYR FALCON at Veines

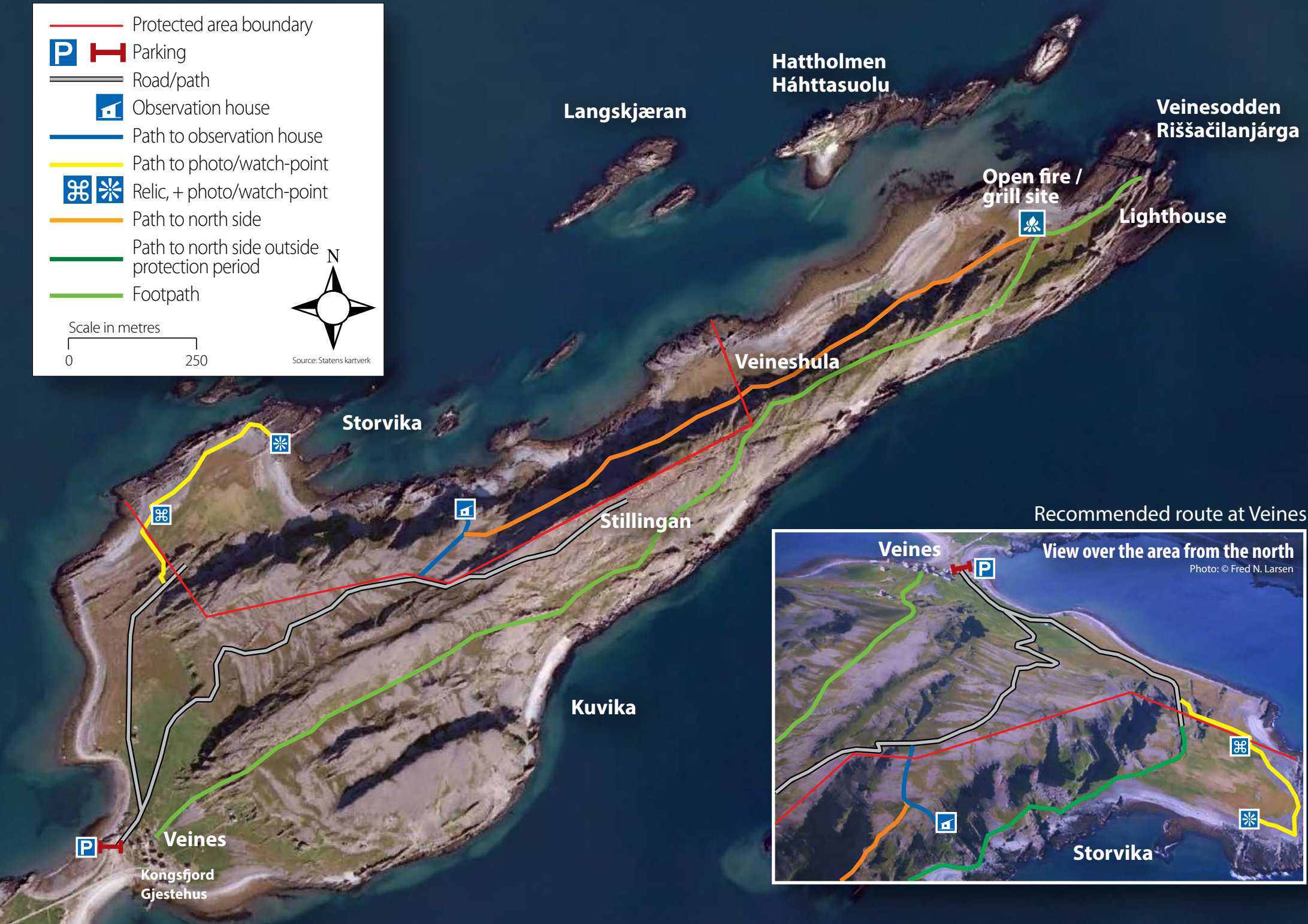


- Protected area boundary
- P H Parking
- Road/path
- 🏠 Observation house
- Path to observation house
- Path to photo/watch-point
- ☸ ☼ Relic, + photo/watch-point
- Path to north side
- Path to north side outside protection period
- Footpath

Scale in metres
0 250



Source: Statens kartverk



Recommended route at Veines

