

Båtsfjord town and surrounding area



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Båtsfjord town is one of the most important fishing harbours in Finnmark, and has long been known as the place in Europe where one can take the best photos of the two eider species, Steller's Eider and King Eider. For exceptional bird observations, winter is therefore the best time.

Båtsfjord harbour is an industrial fishing harbour, and here there is great activity during the fishing season. Båtsfjord town lies on the north side of the Varanger peninsula. The town has a harsh climate with much wind, though this does not hinder people and birds from having a fine life here. The attractive diving ducks, Steller's Eider and King Eider, are easy to observe in large numbers, together with Common Eider and Long-tailed Duck.

Best time to visit

The Steller's Eiders and King Eiders arrive at Båtsfjord during the polar night. The King Eiders stay until late April, while the Steller's Eiders can be seen until the

middle of May. The best time for good observation conditions is from February until mid-April. In December and January it is too dark for photography. However, Båtsfjord is exciting also in spring and summer, and can well be combined with a visit to Syltefjord.

Habitat and observation species

In winter the harbour is the most exciting place to see birds. Steller's Eiders, King Eiders, Common Eiders and Long-tailed Ducks are usually present in hundreds in the inner harbour. Flocks and single birds come right to the quaysides in order to search for fish offal from the fishing companies. Flocks of ducks may also remain some way out in the fjord, or rest on the ice edge near



The outer harbour in Båtsfjord



Common Terns nest in several harbours in Finnmark

the stream outlet behind the petrol station (Statoil). A search with a binocular will show you where the birds are now gathered.

Previously it was normal to photograph these fine ducks from the quays, but during the last few years a commercial attraction has become established in the form of a floating photo hide. Here one can pay a fee in order to get good photos of King Eiders and Steller's Eiders. After a stay in the photo hide, one is taken on a boat trip around the harbour to see the flocks of ducks. Some of the best winter photos that have been taken of King Eider, Common Eider, Steller's Eider and Long-tailed Duck have been taken from this floating hide.

Gulls are common the whole year, and Iceland Gull and Glaucous Gull can be seen throughout the winter. Sometimes these two species are also common in summer, though in smaller numbers. Common Terns nest on the tussocks of grass along the quays. In spring and summer in Båtsfjord, you will see all the species of ducks that are normally to be seen in Varanger.

Shortly before reaching Båtsfjord you have the lake Straumsnesvatnet on the right. When the lake is not ice-covered, there are often ducks to be seen here. With a car or cycle it is easy to move around the whole harbour to look for seabirds. Kittiwakes nest on buildings at several places in Båtsfjord.

In both spring and summer it can be worthwhile to take a trip to the lush willow forest where the river Båtsfjordelva flows out into Straumsnesvatnet.

When you pass Straumsnesvatnet in the direction of Båtsfjord, you turn right when you come down to the fjord. After 200 metres you turn right towards the riding centre. From there you can go into the willow forest. In such northerly lush forests, in an otherwise treeless landscape, one can find several exciting and scarce species. The commonest are Arctic Redpoll, Brambling and Bluethroat. In autumn 2013, Long-tailed Tits appeared at many places in Finnmark, including this willow forest.

Among the housing areas, willow, birch and rowan have been planted. Waxwings and Fieldfares can be seen throughout the winter, feeding on rowanberries. Many people feed the birds. Tree Sparrows sometimes appear among the flocks of House Sparrows. The Snow Bunting can be seen on migration in autumn (October) and spring (April).

Access

There are three alternatives for coming to Båtsfjord. Those who are bird-watching on Varanger usually come by car northwards along Tanadalen on road no. 890. In the centre of Varangerhalvøya one continues straight on at the Gednje road junction along road no. 891,



Satellite senders have been operated into some King Eiders during their winter stay in Båtsfjord. These birds fly to the north coast of Russia to breed, several time zones further east.



The Steller's Eiders gather in large and smaller flocks, alone or together with the two other eider species, Common Eider and King Eider.

which ends in Båtsfjord town. You can also turn off to Syltefjord some kilometres before arriving at Båtsfjord town.

In winter one must reckon that the road may be periodically closed due to bad weather. During such conditions, cars drive in columns, several times daily. This is an unusual and exciting experience for those who have never previously driven a car under such conditions. For those who live here this is quite normal. The shipping line "Hurtigruten" calls into Båtsfjord daily while on route both southwards and northwards, and takes passengers both with and without cars. If Båtsfjord is your destination for the trip, you can also arrive by plane, which calls in daily. Hired cars are available.

Further information

When you drive or walk around in Båtsfjord while bird-watching, show consideration for the local inhabitants. You will often be moving on private property.

This fact sheet is prepared by Bjørn Frantzen

Photos: © Bjørn Frantzen



In winter it is not unusual that one has to drive in a column in order to come to or from Båtsfjord due to bad visibility or that the road is snow-covered. This is a normal occurrence for the residents, but more of a challenge for those who experience this for the first time.



In Båtsfjord a floating photo hide has been built which is available for visitors. Here one can come close to the eider flocks that lie in the harbour.



Kittiwakes are opportunists in finding nest sites in Båtsfjord harbour, for example on top of outdoor lamps, on window sills (right), or as here, in holes in a factory wall (above).



Berlevåg and Kjølnes



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

The way westwards from Kongsfjorden is spectacular. Here the road winds its way along the coast, through rugged landscape and fine delta areas. The whole coast is excellent for observing migrating and resting seabirds, divers and ducks. Here there are exciting areas for birds of prey and passerines. The harbour in Berlevåg is especially fine for gulls and ducks. There are also a couple of good localities for waders.

Berlevåg lies at the north-western part of the Varanger peninsula, and borders on the large and resource-rich Barents Sea. Both marine and high-alpine species thrive here in close proximity to each other.

The best time to visit

Along the coast there are interesting areas throughout the year. The period from April to August is particularly good.

Habitat and observation species

The vegetation in the areas around Berlevåg and Kjølnes is sparse. Only along the rivers and in the delta areas are there any small birches and willow scrub. The coast is varied, from cliffs to beaches of stone and sand. Along the road one passes several good bird localities, and there are many places to stop. It can be rewarding to

carefully study the fjords and the sea, and to investigate the deltas and the harbour area in Berlevåg.

Kjølnes lighthouse is one of the best places to see seabirds in Finnmark, and can be compared to the more famous Slettnes lighthouse. Here one can stand in the lee of the lighthouse or watch birds from the car if the weather is bad. During migration in May one can see hundreds of Pomarine Skuas and Yellow-billed Divers, as well as large numbers of Fulmars, Arctic Skuas, Kittiwakes and auks. All four species of divers and skuas may be found here. The birds often pass by close to land.

Along the whole coast one can see large flocks of Common Scoters, Long-tailed Ducks and Common Eiders, as well as several other duck species. Risfjorden and Sandfjorden are particularly favourable localities. Here the birds often lie near land and in calmer water than out at sea. It is usual to see the White-tailed Eagle



© Anders Faugstad Mæland

The areas west of Berlevåg are good for passerines. Skånvik is the best locality for waders along the whole stretch of coast.



The harbour in Berlevåg is a superb place for gulls and diving ducks

along this whole stretch of road, and it often sits right beside the road. There are also good possibilities of seeing Rough-legged Buzzard and Gyr Falcon.

It is possible to find otters along the coast. They can most often be seen at night. By studying the sea one can observe several species of mammals. Common and grey seals are relatively common. Whales such as porpoise and killer whale can also be seen when one searches for seabirds out on the sea. In summer one can have the good fortune to see flocks of white whales. These often come very close to land and are a fantastic sight!

The busy fishing harbour in Berlevåg attracts many birds. This place is a paradise for gull enthusiasts. Here there are almost always large numbers to be seen. Glaucous and Iceland Gulls are not uncommon here, also in summer. From September to April these are quite common, and the Glaucous Gull especially can appear in large numbers. The long breakwater around Berlevåg forms a calm and nutritious environment. Flocks of Steller's Eiders and King Eiders overwinter here. In recent years the Steller's Eider has become scarce in summer, but it is quite possible to find the King Eider in summer. Immediately before entering the town one drives over the outflow of a river, and here the gulls gather to wash themselves in fresh water. This spot also attracts some ducks and waders.

Around the airport and Skånsvika there are good

localities. Here there are open areas of farmland and coastal fields. Among the breeding birds here are Red-throated Pipit, Lapland Bunting, Twite, Shorelark and the locally scarce Skylark. In spring and autumn one can see large flocks of Snow Buntings. In the small pools between the road and the sea one can find Red-necked Phalaropes and various dabbling ducks. The beach innermost in Skånsvika is a favourable place for gulls and waders. The Purple Sandpiper can be seen here in mid-summer, and from August until June the species is common along the whole coastline.

The road continues into Skånvikdalen down to Store Molvik. The valley floor is quite fertile with willow scrub and small wetlands. The Common Snipe can be seen displaying, and one can find the Willow Ptarmigan by the road. Store Molvik lies down by the fjord. Here there are small trees and a river outflow that forms a small lake.

Access

At the road junction on Båtsfjordfjellet one turns left along road nr 890 towards Berlevåg. After passing Kongsfjord, it is about 30 km further to Berlevåg. The road first follows Risfjorden and then Sandfjorden. Five kilometres before Berlevåg lies Kjølnes lighthouse. One can also reach Berlevåg by plane or by boat (Hurtigruta). Here there are cafés and overnight accommodation.

In order to gain a view over the harbour area in Berlevåg, one can use several vantage points. Drive out to both breakwaters at Revenes in the south and Langmannsnes in the north. Take time at the river outflow and in the inner harbour area.

Continue out of Berlevåg and drive three to four kilometres to Skånsvika. Here the road is closed during winter, but from mid-May until the snow comes, one can follow the gravel road a further 17 kilometres to Store Molvik. Here the road ends, so one must return the same way and enjoy it once more!

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Mæland



Kjølnes lighthouse is one of the best places to look for seabirds in Finnmark



Many gull species may be found in Berlevåg harbour. The photo shows Glaucous Gull (left) and Iceland Gull (right).



The Purple Sandpiper is common along the whole coast from August to April. The species can also be observed in summer along the coast.



The landscape around Berlevåg is spectacular and beautiful



© Bjørn Frantzen

På vei fra Kongsfjord til Berlevåg passerer den vakre Sandfjorden. Landskapet har store likheter med Svalbard. Veien følger kysten, og det er sjøfugler på vannet hele året.



© Bjørn Frantzen

De vanligste artene langs fjorden er ærfugl, laksand, siland og havelle, samt begge skarveartene og teist. Både stellerand og praktærfugl kan også observeres, spesielt i overgangen mellom vår og vinter.

Børselvosen Nature Reserve and the offshore sea



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Børselvosen Nature Reserve lies, as its Norwegian name indicates, at the outflow of the river Børselv. The reserve has been established both to preserve the area as a staging site for large numbers of waders, and to protect characteristic plants and the special forms of landscape at the river delta. The plant life is special due to the dolomite that surrounds the whole reserve.

Børselvosen Nature Reserve has a total area of ca. 3.5 km², of this ca. 2.2 km² sea area. The eastern border of the reserve is ca. 300 m downstream from Børselv bridge.

The river delta is a classic brackish water delta with large sandbanks that become dry at low tide. The river continually carries with it large amounts of sand and gravel, the banks change, and the river must find new outflows. The sea offshore from the outflow also becomes shallower as the river transports deposits steadily further out.

Best time to visit

Common Eider and Long-tailed Duck can be found throughout the winter if the area remains ice-free. As

early as April more duck species arrive, and in mid-May the waders arrive, the commonest being Knots, Dunlins and Bar-tailed Godwits. Throughout early summer other migrants arrive, then following a calmer nesting period, there is again greater migration activity during the autumn. This means that the period from April until mid-September is the best time to visit, but in the autumn and winter months one can also make interesting observations. It is a special and moving experience to hear the song of several hundred Long-tailed Ducks through the frosty mist in winter!

Habitat and observation species

One reaches the south end of the reserve most easily by taking a turning marked "Vækker" about 6 km south



© Almar Paulsen

The outflow of the river Børselv at high tide. The photo is taken towards the southeast.



© Almar Paulsen

From the edge of the forested area north of the river. The photo is taken towards the east.

of Børselv. At the end of the road one comes to some boathouses. From here one has a good view over the offshore sea and the sandbanks in Børselven. From here one can also go northwards in order to come nearer to the outflow of the river. Common seabirds here are Common Eider, Red-breasted Merganser, Black Guillemot, Arctic Tern, Shag, Common Gull and Arctic Skua. Early in spring, Velvet Scoter, Common Scoter and Long-tailed Duck are also common.

About 100 m south of Børselv bridge, a gravel road leads westwards towards Svartkollen. The road mainly follows the border of the reserve, and goes over the dry moraine ground with a sprinkling of birch, willow scrub and false tamarisk. Part of the reserve is, or has been, cultivated. On these old farming areas one may find, on spring migration, both Grey-lag Goose and Bean Goose, and from time to time also Pink-footed Goose and Brent Goose.

At the end of the road one can continue some hundred metres down to an ox-bow lake which lies within the reserve. Here there is interesting vegetation, and one can meet with species such as Red-necked Phalarope and dabbling ducks. Down by the outflow one should look

for birds at high tide. As the sea flows in, the waders move in to the shoreline. Here one is entirely dependent on a telescope, and perhaps also a hide if one wishes to come nearer the birds.

An area on the north side of the reserve consists of rich mixed forest with tall alder and birch. Here one can find the commonest forest species, such as Willow Warbler, Brambling, Common Redpoll, several thrush species and Bluethroat. The easiest way to reach here is by driving about 1 km from the road junction by the bridge, along main road 183 towards Veidnesklubben. Here a tractor road goes down towards the reserve. In parts of the area the groundwater can be rather high, so be sure to use suitable footwear.

If one drives about 1.5 km further, one comes to a ridge where a lean-to has been erected with an information board. From here one has a good view over the whole delta, part of the offshore sea, and a damp coastal meadow. These lie beside the road towards Hestnes, and the lush vegetation and mud pools make the area a small eldorado for dabbling ducks and geese, especially during spring migration.

The Knots, that often move between the different

shallow water and tidal areas in Indre Porsanger, may also appear in Børselvosen in flocks of more than 30,000 birds. With luck one can come upon these large flocks while they are resting on land during high tide.

In addition to the Knots, Dunlins appear in large flocks, and small groups of Bar-tailed Godwits are also common. Ringed Plover, Oyster Catcher, Little Stint and Temminck's Stint can be observed over the whole delta. Further inland one may also meet with Whimbrel, Golden Plover, Redshank, and all the commonest dabbling ducks.

Among gulls and terns, the Arctic Tern and Common Gull are the commonest. If one sees these, one can be sure that the Arctic Skua is not far away. On one of the offshore islands there has, in some years, been a small colony of nesting Lesser Black-backed Gulls.

At such big gatherings of birds, birds of prey can suddenly appear, the White-tailed Eagle being the commonest. In rodent years, Rough-legged Buzzard and owls can turn up, especially Short-eared and Hawk Owl.

Access

In Lakselv, the administrative centre of Porsanger, there is a large airport with many daily flight departures. Here there are many food stores, sports shops, a bus station, car hire firms, medical centre, hotels, simpler overnight accommodation, camping site and car repair firms. There is a bus route between Lakselv and Børselv.

Børselv lies about 42 km from Lakselv. About 36



The best lookout point is from the lean-to with an information placard. A dolomite rock in the background. The photo is taken towards the west.

km from Lakselv the previously mentioned road leads westwards, about 2 km down towards Vækker.

About 100 m before the bridge over Børselva, a road goes westwards towards Svartkollen. Here one can visit lake Krovann, mentioned above, and the river outflow and the nearby sandbanks. Immediately over Børselv bridge lies the turning where the roads to Tana (road no. 98) and Veidnesklubben (road no. 183) diverge. By following road 183, one comes to the above-mentioned lookout points after 1 and 2.5 km respectively.

Further information

There are no access restrictions in the reserve, but due to the great distance to the birds, one is entirely dependent



Knots

on having a telescope or a good binocular in order to gain full benefit of the visit.

Børselv has a company with a café and overnight accommodation, but due to the large number of visitors in the summer months, one must reckon on having to book accommodation in advance.

The village has a shop with postal service and also a school. The Kven Institute, which aims to preserve the Kven language and culture, lies in the centre of the village and is worth visiting. The river Børselv is protected by law from being utilized for hydroelectric power. In the river there are salmon, arctic char and sea trout.

This fact sheet is prepared by Almar Paulsen

Ekkerøy and Salttjern



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Ekkerøy is a bird reserve with a very easily accessible bird cliff, best known for tens of thousands of Kittiwakes. Both the sand beaches and the tideline in the area, as well as the fjord offshore, give excellent conditions for many species of birds and sea mammals. Salttjern is a village with good habitats for ducks, waders and gulls. Here one finds sheltered bays, rich in bird life, which provide good protection in stormy weather.

Ekkerøy

Best time to visit

The Kittiwakes come back to Ekkerøy in March, or sometimes as early as February. At this time of year the weather can change quickly between storm and rain, icicles hanging from the cliffs, moonlight and the Northern lights, so these first weeks can give really spectacular sights of nature. The species diversity, both on Ekkerøy itself and the surrounding areas, is however entirely different from mid-May, when most bird watchers choose to come.

Habitat and observation species

Ekkerøy has grassy plains, heather, freshwater, steep cliffs, sandy beaches, tideline with rotting seaweed and

sheltered sea areas. This variation leads to a rich and varied birdlife in a rather limited area. A walk over the peninsula gives a fine view over the fjord, all the way to



The bird cliffs are already full of life in March



Displaying Kittiwakes



The White-tailed Eagle can be seen around Ekkerøy the whole year, with greatest numbers in early summer.

Russia on a fine day, and is very popular, also among visitors without any special interest in birds.

There is a marked path through the reserve with information about plants, birds, and also about events of the last war. On both sides of the road into the reserve the sea is somewhat sheltered from stormy weather. Here Great Northern Diver and Yellow-billed Diver can be seen annually. Common Scoter, Long-tailed Duck and Common Eider are often numerous, depending on time of year. The Steller's Eider occurs here in winter and through most of spring, when Goosander and Red-breasted Merganser become commoner. Black-throated Diver, Red-throated Diver and Cormorant appear regularly in the bay on the east side. The population of Arctic Tern varies somewhat, but it sometimes nests in large numbers.

Along the beaches there are often large numbers of waders, including Little Stint. Ekkerøy is a good locality for the Sanderling in May-June. Purple Sandpiper, Dunlin, Red-necked Phalarope, Ringed Plover, Oystercatcher and Bar-tailed Godwit are common species, sometimes very numerous during migration. The Temminck's Stint is less common, while the Ruff, here also, is becoming steadily scarcer. The Knot rests here in May in flocks of 2000-3000 or even more.

The Red-throated Pipit and Horned Lark are among the most sought-after of the passerines. Wheatear and Meadow Pipit nest over most of the peninsula, while the Rock Pipit is scarcer.

The White-tailed Eagle can be seen regularly, and in good rodent years Rough-legged Buzzard and Short-eared Owl hunt out here. The Gyr Falcon preys on Kittiwakes in the bird cliff, while the Peregrine may also be seen hunting larger waders along the shore.

In the bird cliff itself the Kittiwake is completely dominant. The population was estimated at 20,000 breeding pairs in 1979, but has probably increased somewhat and then mainly decreased since then. There is also a smaller Kittiwake colony in a western-faced cliff within the inhabited area. The Black Guillemot has become established as a breeding species with a few pairs in recent years, while Guillemot and Razorbill seem to be only sporadic visitors.

The Raven nests in the immediate vicinity of the colony and regularly plunders the nests of the Kittiwakes. Early in the season, roseroot decorates the bird cliffs. Towards the end of the breeding season, large amounts of sea mayweed (subspecies *phaeocephalum*), together with rosebay willowherb at the top of the cliffs, can form a frame around the birds and provide fine subjects for the camera.

For those interested in geology, there are unusually fine ripple marks on the outermost part of Skagodden.

When on Ekkerøy, you ought to check the freshwater pools and the tideline below road E75 – from the turning to Ekkerøy and further north-eastwards towards Krampenes. Here you find many of the same species. Lillelveset is a fine locality for the Temminck's Stint.



The sheltered bay at Salttjern attracts waders, ducks and passerines.

Access

The turning to Ekkerøy lies about 13 km east of Vadsø along main road E75.

Salttjern

The village of Salttjern is an underrated little pearl along E75. It is always worthwhile to check the small harbour at the west side of the village, but there are most birds in the bay with rotting seaweed on the east side, also on the nearby rocks. The bay is sheltered, and can have many birds when there are poorer conditions elsewhere. If the water level is not too low, you gain a view from all sides of the bay, and can therefore choose to stand with the sun behind you for most of the day.

Habitat and observation species

Large numbers of Knot, often several thousands, gather here in the latter half of May. A few Ruff may



The Red-throated Pipit prefers open areas with some bushes



The population of Arctic Tern is declining, but the species still breeds on Ekkerøy



The Common Eider is numerous throughout the year

also forage here, but the commonest are Bar-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Ringed Plover, Dunlin, Red-necked Phalarope, Oystercatcher and Turnstone. The Little Stint can be quite common on autumn migration, the Spotted Redshank is often to be seen at the same time, and Purple Sandpiper mainly from winter to early summer. The Broad-billed Sandpiper has also been recorded here.

The flocks of gulls on the rocks should also be checked for rarer species such as Sabine's Gull. In some years the Arctic Tern nests here.

There are good possibilities of seeing Pintail on spring migration, and late Steller's Eiders sometimes appear in June. In addition, Common Eider, Mallard, Wigeon, Teal, Tufted Duck, Goosander and Red-breasted Merganser may often be seen.

House Sparrow, Yellow Wagtail, Wheatear and Pipits forage on small life along the tideline. On the upper side of the road, Red-throated Pipits often nest, and Twite may be seen here. Keep a lookout also for hunting Merlin.



The Knots arrive in thousands in late May and early June

Access

Saltjern village lies along road E75, about 9 km east of Vadsø and 4 km west of Ekkerøy. There is a large parking site a couple of hundred metres east of the village.

Faktaarket er laget av Knut-Sverre Horn

Alle foto: © Knut-Sverre Horn



Unfortunately the population of the Ruff is declining rapidly, but the species can still be seen on the tideline at Saltjern and Ekkerøy.

Elvenes - Storskog



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

At Elvenes in Sør-Varanger Norway is at its narrowest. From the bridge innermost in Bøkfjorden it is barely 1600 metres as the crow flies to the Russian border. This border area has a varied nature and is an area worth stopping at for bird-watchers who are on their way between Kirkenes and Grense Jakobselv. The best places are Skafferhullet, Elvenes bridge and the birch woods between Storskog and Jarfjordbotn.

The lush forest areas on the east side of the river at Elvenes were discovered by forestry administrator Arthur Klerck about 100 years ago. He secured right of ownership and formed a whole small park consisting of several hundred kinds of trees that normally should not be found so far north. Siberian larch and several different kinds of spruce still characterize this area which is called Elvenes Park.

Skafferhullet by Boris Gleb was originally a sand and gravel quarry, where there previously was a border crossing to the Soviet Union. Today the border crossing has been moved to Storskog some kilometres further east.

Best time to visit

Elvenes-Storskog has most to offer bird-watchers during the summer period (April-September). The Arctic Warbler is a possibility from mid-June to mid-July.

Habitat and observation species

The area between Elvenes and Jarfjordbotn offers small lakes, bogs and various mountain ridges. Most interesting, however, are the areas of lush birch forest, where one can find species such as Woodcock, Dunnock, Wren, Song Thrush, Blackcap, Arctic Warbler and Chiffchaff.

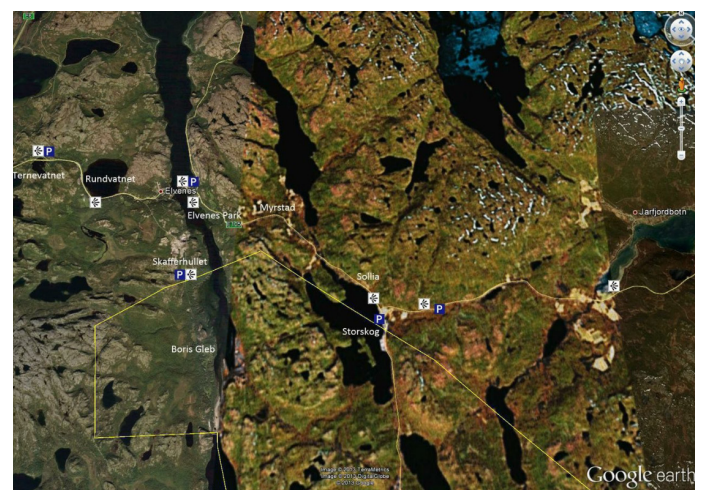
The mouth of Pasvikelva and the inner part of Bøkfjorden are locally important sites for resting duck

species. Flocks of up to 380 Goosanders have been recorded here in August-September. The Red-throated Diver uses the area as a fishing site, and here one can also see Black-headed Gull and Little Gull.

Access

Follow the roads E6/E105 eastwards from Kirkenes/Hesseng towards Elvenes. Check the small lakes along the way (Abborvatnet, Ternevatnet and Rundvatnet) for nesting Red-throated Diver and Arctic Tern.

Take to the right towards Skafferhullet just past Rundvatnet. A gravel road leads to the south-east past Elvenes border station, a gravel quarry and a small motor-



The area Elvenes - Storskog

cross track. The Little Bunting has been found nesting by this road. At the fence at the Russian border (after 2 km) one has a good view of the Boris Gleb hydroelectric station and the lower part of the Pasvik river. Check the sandbanks for ducks, waders and resting common seals. Rough-legged Buzzard and Kestrel are often seen here. Other possible species are Little Gull, Woodcock, Sand Martin, Bluethroat, Arctic Redpoll and Little Bunting. A telescope is recommended.

At Elvenes bridge it is worthwhile checking both the sea side and the river side for resting birds. Red-throated Diver, Common Eider, Velvet Scoter, Goldeneye, Goosander and Red-breasted Merganser are all common here. King Eider and Smew may appear, and Surf Scoter has once been seen in the summer. Of mammals, Common Seal, Grey Seal and Bearded Seal have been recorded. Parking is easiest on the north side of the bridge. From here one can follow a path along the river bank southward through Elvenes Park. This is a fertile area that can have passerine species such as Dunnock, Chiffchaff, Song Thrush, Pied Wagtail and Greenfinch. Both Little Bunting and Red-flanked Bluetail have also been reported in this area.

Remember to check bird feeding sites in the housing areas for uncommon species in winter and spring.

At Storskog border station road no. 886 turns off eastward towards Grense Jakobselv. For the first 500 metres the road goes slightly upwards with lush bird forest on both sides. In recent years this has been one of the best localities for singing Arctic Warblers in Sør-Varanger. A good strategy can be to park at the top of the hill and walk down again. The species has also been heard singing by Jarfjordbotn and Myrstad (nearer Elvenes).

Further information

In winter it may be worthwhile to make a detour northwards from Elvenes to Jakobsnes, Ropelv and Reinøysund (20 km). The road runs along the east side of Bøkfjorden and gives possibilities of observing ducks and other seabirds that rest in the fjord. The King Eider occurs regularly. Golden Eagle, Rough-legged Buzzard and Gyr Falcon can in some years nest in the area.

Conduct at the border

Remember that there are special regulations concerning movements along the Norwegian-Russian border:

It is forbidden to

- *Cross the border on land, on water or in the air*
- *Have any form for contact with, or behave offensively to persons across the borderline*
- *Throw objects over the borderline*



At the mouth of Pasvikelva and in the inner part of Bøkfjorden the Little Gull can be observed

This fact sheet is prepared by Morten Günther

Færdesmyra Nature Reserve and the bogs along E6



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Along the road E6 between Neiden and Bugøyfjorden there are many bogs. The largest and best of these for bird observations is Færdesmyra. This is the first large wetland area one comes to on the way westwards from Kirkenes, 40 km from the airport. This impressive large area of bogs stretches to the south and west from the road and over to the Finnish border. With its many small lakes and pools, it forms an important breeding area for many bird species. Many visiting bird watchers gain here their first acquaintance with northern species of waders, ducks, birds of prey and passerines.

Bogs and wetlands are important breeding and stopover sites for many bird species. Færdesmyra is also a «palsa bog» which is a scarce natural feature in Norway. A palsa is peat or earth with a kernel of ice that forms elevations in the bog. Due to climate changes these are unfortunately now disappearing.

Best time to visit

From the time the first bare patches of ground appear in spring, until the snow returns, it is worthwhile stopping here. The best time of all is from the end of May until the end of July. The area is especially important as a breeding site, but numbers of resting birds may also be seen.

Habitat and observation species

The bird life in the bogs is rich, both as regards numbers and species. There are especially many species of waders.

The different species are found in different parts of the bogs. Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit and Golden Plover prefer the driest areas, while Greenshank and Wood Sandpiper prefer wet areas with some trees. Out on the open and damp flats one finds Common Redshank, Spotted Redshank, Ruff, Common Snipe and Dunlin. The Red-necked Phalarope can be found in small pools and tarns. One can also have the good fortune to find Jack Snipe and the scarce Broad-billed Sandpiper. These prefer the wettest parts of the bog. The best time to find these species is at the turn of June/July.



© Bjørn Frantzen

By walking a bit higher from the rest area you get a good view over the bogs



© Anders Faugstad Møland

The Broad-billed Sandpiper is a rare species which it is possible to see in Færdesmyra. It prefers the wettest parts of the bog and is difficult to find.

In order to experience the males' song and display flight, it is best to be out at dawn or during the night. The number and diversity of waders varies however from year to year.

Red-throated Diver, Eurasian Teal and Long-tailed Duck breed around the larger tarns. The Bluethroat is common in the birch woods around the bog and along the road, and often reveals itself by its fine song. One can also often hear the Cuckoo. On the tussocks in the bog such species as Lapland Bunting and Yellow Wagtail nest. If one moves along the edges of the bog, one can flush the Willow Ptarmigan. One can see Common Crane, Whooper Swan and Bean Goose resting, while birds of prey use the area a great deal for hunting. Rough-legged Buzzard, Merlin, Hen Harrier and Short-eared Owl can all be seen if one spends some time here.

The elk or moose can often be seen along the perimeters of the bog. They are easiest to find on the bogs that stretch along the road northwards towards Bugøyfjorden.

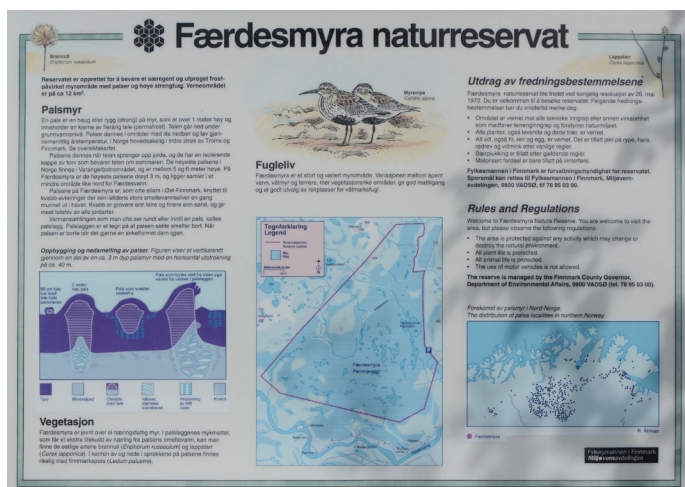
Access

The stretches of bog lie conveniently right by the road E6. There are several places to stop along the road. At Færdesmyra there is a large parking place on the north side of the road. Here one has a fine view over the bogs and the larger lakes, and it is worth while spending some time with a telescope. It is possible to go along the edge of the bogs on the lower side of the road. Then one comes closer to the birds and there is less disturbance from the traffic. If one wishes to explore the bogs more closely, one can drive round to the south side. Then one turns off along a gravel road about one kilometre north of Neiden. The road ends after about 7 kilometres. From this road one can go out along the driest parts of the bog, and through the birch woods that surround it.

Further information

Færdesmyra is a nature reserve. In order not to disturb the breeding birds, it is recommended not to go far out over the bogs. It is also very wet here, and not entirely safe to move around!

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland



Gjesværstappan seabird reserve



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Gjesværstappan competes with Røst in being the largest seabird colony in Norway. The Puffin is the most numerous, with about 400,000 pairs, but other important species are Kittiwake, Common Guillemot, Razorbill and Gannet. In some years, in fact, more Puffins nest here than in the whole of Røst. Gjesværstappan is protected as a seabird reserve and consists of the islands Storstappen, Staurspira, Kjerkestappen and Bukkstappen.

Most of the Puffins nest on Storstappen, the largest of the islands. Staurspira is connected to Storstappen by a small strip of land. Here we have one of the largest Gannet colonies in Norway. On Kjerkestappen there is a colony of Cormorants, as well as smaller numbers of Puffins, Razorbills and Common Guillemots. Bukkstappen houses species such as Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Common Eider and Grey-lag Goose. The bird cliffs are like a magnet for the White-tailed Eagle, and dozens of young eagles often soar over the colony. Gjesværstappan can be seen well from a boat.

The best time to visit

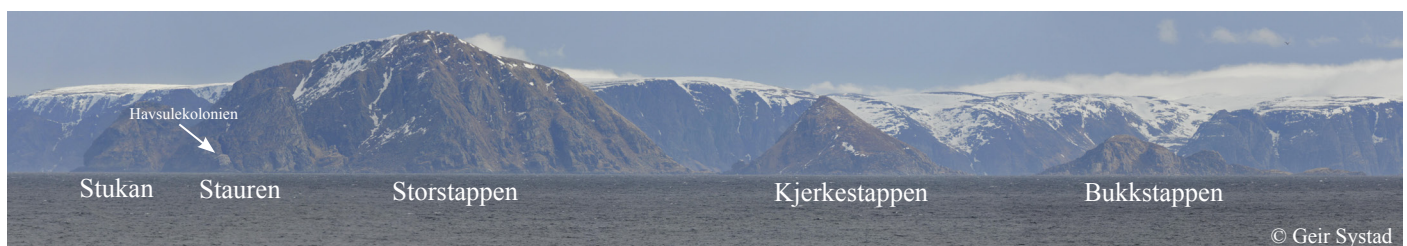
Gjesværstappan may be visited throughout the breeding season, and at any time will be a great experience. The

weather is unpredictable, and early in the season can soon change from sun and springtime to full winter. The most stable period is July-August, but this is the time when most tourists visit the area.

Gjesvær and Gjesværstappan are also worth visiting in winter. Then one can see large flocks of Long-tailed Ducks, King Eiders and Common Eiders, as well as arctic gulls such as Glaucous and Iceland Gulls. The Steller's Eider can also occur in Gjesvær. The King Eiders mostly leave the area in early April.

Habitat and species to observe

Storstappen is a typical Puffin cliff with steep and richly fertilized grassy slopes, with hanging gardens of common scurvygrass, rocky screes, escarpments and precipices. The steep slopes are unstable and exposed to landslides when the frozen ground thaws in spring. The shoreline shows features of great exposure, with



Gjesværstappan seen from the west with Magerøya in the background. Storstappen with Stukan and Stauren on the left, Kjerkestappen and then Bukkstappen on the right. One has a glimpse of the Gannet colony far to the left, immediately above the sea



© Geir Systad

There has become too little space in the Gannet colony, so some pairs have begun to nest above the crag where they have remained since 1987.

beaches of large boulders, smooth rocks, and cliffs that plunge straight down into the sea. The bird-fertilized pastures of angelica are especially to be found on the southern part of the island. Staurspira is connected to Storstappen by a low land strip that the sea flows over in stormy weather. Up on Storstappen there is a flat, lichen and moss covered plateau. The bird manure is not so marked on Kjerkestappen and Bukkstappen, even though these islands are greener than the terrain on the inland of Magerøya. The vegetation here is dominated by crowberry and heather. The north side of Kjerkestappen is more like Storstappen.

The key species on Gjesvær are Gannet, Kittiwake, Puffin, Common Guillemot and Razorbill. The Gannet colony lies at the north-west on Staurspira and can only be seen from a boat. The first pair of Gannets was found here in 1987. The Gannet colony here is now one of Norway's largest with about 1400 pairs in 2011.

The Puffins nest in holes in the ground, in rock crevices and in screes almost everywhere on Staurspira, Storstappen and the north slope of Kjerkestappen. If one is lucky enough to witness the swarming of the birds one can hear the rushing sound of many tens of

thousands of birds together in the air. The birds often lie on the sea in dense flocks. The Fulmar nests sporadically on the southern cliff of Staurspira and at a few places on the south-west of Storstappen.

The Razorbills and Common Guillemots nest concealed on Gjesværstappen. On a boat trip round the islands, one can see the guillemots fly in to the nesting ledges in crevices at the north of Stukan. One can also see these species on the sea and on so-called auk rocks off the shore. Common and Brünnich's Guillemots once nested on open ledges in the cliff on the south side of Staurspira, but have now abandoned this site due to predation and disturbance by White-tailed Eagles. The Brünnich's Guillemot can still be seen on the sea below the cliffs, but this arctic species is no longer a breeding bird on Gjesværstappen. The Kittiwake has also become scarcer on Gjesværstappen, but there is still a good population on Krykkjesjåen, where they are not so accessible to the eagles. About 1000 pairs nested here in 2011. The Razorbill breeds sparsely on Storstappen, on Staurspira and the north slope of Kjerkestappen. The Arctic Skua, which previously nested on several of the islands, has now disappeared as a breeding bird.

Other breeding species are Fulmar, Cormorant, Shag, Black Guillemot, Great Black-backed Gull and Herring Gull. The Fulmar breeds on Storstappen and Staurspira, but numbers less than 10 pairs, and in recent years has not nested regularly. The Cormorant has long bred on a ridge on the north side of Kjerkestappen. Within the Cormorant colony some pairs of Common Guillemots and Razorbills have become established, and these gain the protection of the Cormorants against the White-tailed Eagles and other predators. The Shag nests sparsely in rocky screes on Storstappen. The Great Black-backed and Herring Gulls are found on Kjerkestappen and Bukkstappen.

One can see several tens of White-tailed Eagles over the islands throughout the breeding season. The great majority of these are young birds, but also adults that nest in other localities use the bird cliffs as a source of food. One pair has been found breeding here.

In late summer the Storm Petrels arrive at the coast and start nesting. Their young fly out during November. The Storm Petrel was found breeding in 1988, and its relative the Leach's Petrel has also been recorded in the reserve. As they breed late in the year, and come to land almost only in darkness, we know little about these species. But they are worth looking for.

At Gjesvær it is worthwhile taking a trip to Leirpollen which lies westwards from the road within Gjesvær. Here one can find species such as Rock Ptarmigan, Willow Ptarmigan, Red-throated Pipit, Little Stint and Temminck's Stint. On the way over from Honningsvåg to Gjesvær one should look out for exciting species such as Snowy Owl, Gyr Falcon, Dotterel and various other wader species.

Access

In order to come out to the seabird reserve Gjesværstappen one must take a boat, usually from Gjesvær. Gjesvær is accessed via E-road E69 from Honningsvåg towards Nordkapp, about 14 km from where minor road 156 turns off to Gjesvær, about 21 km from the road junction. The reserve consists of Storstappen (max. 282 m asl.), with Stauren (165 m asl.), Kjerkestappen (166 m asl.) and Bukstappen (92 m asl.), also some smaller islets and skerries.

The nearest airport is Honningsvåg airport. A car can be rented in Honningsvåg, but there is also a bus route to Gjesvær. The Hurtigrute arranges trips to Gjesvær with a stop at Honningsvåg in the summer.

During the most hectic summer season it can be an advantage to contact Birdsafari (+4741613983), Nordkappferie (+4794058675) or Stappan Sjøprodukter (+4795037722) in advance, with regard both to guiding and staying overnight.

Birdsafari has regular trips round Storstappen from 1st May to 31st August (www.birdsafari.com). Trips with Stappan Sjøprodukter in the period 14th April to 15th September can be booked via Internet (www.stappan.no). Nordkappferie also has possibilities of transport (www.nordkappferie.no). It is possible to have a day trip to Gjesværstappen and to stay the night at Honningsvåg.

It is forbidden to go ashore on Storstappen, or to put up a tent in the reserve, but there should be good possibilities for this out on Leirpollen, and Gammelvær within Gjesvær.

Further information

Gjesværstappen nature reserve received protection on 28th January 1983, and comprises Storstappen with Stauren, Kjerkestappen and Bukkstappen. Protection had the aim of preserving an important area of bird cliffs together with its plant community, bird life and other forms of animal life that are native to the area.

Access to Storstappen is forbidden from 15th June to 15th August, but when on land one should tread carefully both before and after these dates. There is a



Puffins on a foggy sea

proposal to extent the period of forbidden access from 1st March to 15th August.

On Kjerkestappen and Bukkstappen there are no access restrictions, but one must remain at a good distance from the cormorant colony. It is difficult to land on Storstappen and to move around on this island. The normal route to the top is a large groove on the

south-western side. Access otherwise is difficult due to the steep terrain and the many holes in the grass slopes. At Kjerkestappen it is easiest to land on the south side. It is relatively easy to reach the top of this island, where one has a view over large parts of Storstappen and the sea around. Bukkstappen is a lower island and access here is not difficult.

This fact sheet is prepared by Geir Systad

Grense Jakobselv



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Grense Jakobselv or "Grensen" as local people call it, is a now deserted small village furthest east in Sør-Varanger, at the Russian border. From a starting point in Kirkenes this is the most accessible seabird locality on the Varangerfjord, but here there are also birds of prey and several exciting species of passerines.

Best time to visit

Grense Jakobselv may well have many exciting bird species the whole year, but because the road no. 886 is closed in winter over Jarfjordfjellet (at Vintervollen), the locality is only accessible during the summer months (May-October). The area is not very well investigated, so there can be surprises. The Arctic Warbler is a possibility from mid-June to mid-July.

Habitat and bird species

As a seabird locality Grense Jakobselv does not have the same potential as the best localities on the north side of the Varanger peninsula. This is because most of the passage movements go across the outer of the Varanger fjord to Fiskarhalvøya on the Russian side. Most visible seabird activity probably occurs on days with a north wind.

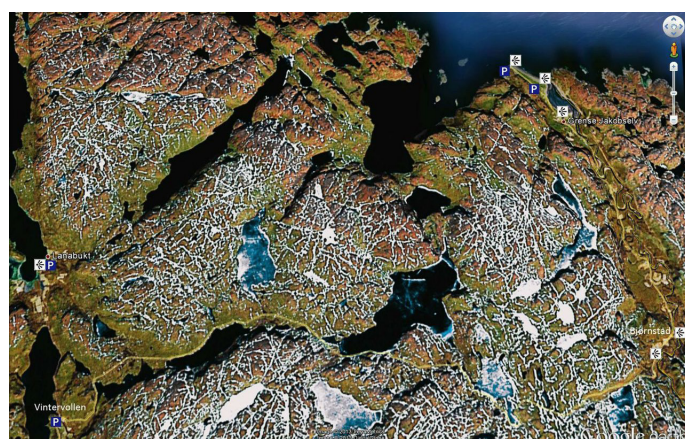
Nevertheless, the nearness to Kirkenes makes Grense Jakobselv a popular bird locality, especially for visitors to Pasvikdalen who have not planned to move further to the Varanger peninsula. Here we also find many interesting cultural relics.

Grense Jakobselv can usually offer a good mixture of resting and migrating divers, ducks, cormorants, gulls and auks. Among characteristic species are also White-tailed Eagle, Arctic Skua and Arctic Tern. In the fertile birch scrub along the river one finds nesting passerines such as Bluethroat, Fieldfare, Redwing, Common Redpoll and Brambling.

On the way down from the mountain Jarfjordfjell the road passes lake Gardsjø and Grense Jakobselv border station. Check the fertile birch forest on the south side of the road immediately after the border



Grense Jakobselv at border post no. 386



Map of Grense Jakobselv



Kong Oscar II's chapel

station for Bluethroat, Arctic Redpoll and singing Arctic Warbler (June-July). Just past Bjørnstad the river is at its narrowest, and Russia is only a few metres away. Here one may find Common Sandpiper and Dipper. Keep an eye on the mountain peaks for soaring birds of prey.

North of Finngamneset there is a wide shallow bay that often attracts large numbers of gulls. Check these flocks for Glaucous Gulls and other unusual species. Several wader species may also appear in this area. It can be worthwhile to check the beach and the bushes northwards from the chapel for resting migrants. These areas can have Meadow Pipit, Red-throated Pipit, Arctic Redpoll and Snow Bunting.

The small hill on the north side of the turning point for cars (Skjergardsneset) is usually the best place to watch for passing seabirds. Here one also has a good view over most of Storsanden, the bay and the offshore rocks. Alternatively, one can stand on the jetty right by the turning point, but from here one has a more restricted view.

At the river mouth by Storsanden there are often Black-throated Diver, Long-tailed Duck, Common Eider, Common Scoter, Velvet Scoter, Goosander and Merganser on the sea. Outside the jetty Black Guillemot may often be seen, and Cormorant and Shag dry their wings on the rocks a little further out.



Storsanden seen from Skjergardsneset

Access

In the summer season Grense Jakobselv is easily accessible via the main roads E6 and E105 and minor road 886 from Kirkenes/Hesseng. The road goes through varied nature along the east side of Jarfjorden, and further over the barren Jarfjordfjellet. The final kilometres along the border between Bjørnstad and Jakobselv still have the gravel surface as this is of value with respect to the National Conservation Plan for roads and bridges. To drive from Kirkenes to Grense Jakobselv takes about one hour each way (57 km). There are no petrol stations or other facilities on the way. You must therefore take with you everything necessary for the trip.

Parking is possible at several places along the way at Grense Jakobselv, but the best place is at Oskar II's chapel, or at the turning place furthest out by the sea. Here there is also a toilet for visitors. In bad weather it is possible to watch for seabirds from the car.

Further information

In summer one can often see white whales, also called belugas, at the outflow of Grense Jakobselv. These can however be difficult to spot, especially in windy conditions. Look for yellowish-white "wave crests" and check especially the shallow areas off Storsanden and Lillesanden.

When the road is closed for the winter, an alternative can be to turn left at Vintervollen and continue the four kilometres north to Lanabukt on the east side of Jarfjorden. Here there is usually open water, and small flocks of both King and Steller's Eider have been seen several times in winter.

Conduct at the border

Remember that there are special regulations concerning movements along the Norwegian-Russian border:

It is forbidden to

- *Cross the border on land, on water or in the air*
- *Have any form for contact with, or behave offensively to persons across the borderline*
- *Throw objects over the borderline*

This fact sheet is prepared Morten Günther

Hamningberg and Sandfjorden



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Hamningberg and Sandfjorden are localities that are well known among bird watchers. Their location is the reason why these are superb areas for watching seabirds and finding rare birds. Here there are also fine areas for waders, ducks, birds of prey and passerines. The landscape on the way out to Hamningberg is spectacular, rugged and beautiful.

The old fishing village at Hamningberg became deserted in 1965, but here there are still intact wooden houses from the 19th century. This is exceptional in Finnmark where most habitations were burnt and destroyed during the Second World War.

Best time to visit

As long as the road is open one will always find exciting bird life. The road normally opens in mid-May and closes when the snow comes in autumn.

Habitats and observation species

Hamningberg is a fine locality for seabird watching, especially during migration in May. Some tens, and

sometimes hundreds, of Yellow-billed Divers and Pomarine Skuas may be observed migrating eastwards. Fulmars and auks can be seen in thousands. Black-throated and Red-throated Divers, Arctic Skuas and Long-tailed Skuas can be seen in large numbers on migration, but also during the breeding season. July and August is the time to look for rarer seabirds such as Manx Shearwater, Sooty Shearwater and Leach's Storm Petrel.

The vegetation at Hamningberg is low, and only a couple of gardens have some bushes. These form a magnet for passerines, and one should check these with a view to finding rarities. Locally rare birds such as Robin, Chiffchaff and Tree Sparrow are frequent visitors, and the Tree Sparrow has nested here in recent years. Arctic



© Morten Günther

The handsome Sandfjorden has a rich bird life



© Morten Günther

Hamningberg has old wooden houses from around 1880

Redpoll and Redwing are also breeding species here. On the grassy areas several pairs of Red-throated Pipits nest. From the housing area the valley leads westwards almost a kilometre to Sjøvika.

At Sjøvika, coastal fields lead down to a small pebble beach. This is a fine place for rare small waders. Among these, the White-rumped Sandpiper has been observed on a couple of occasions. When there is a strong west wind, large numbers of gulls and terns often gather. Looking westwards, one can see the great bird cliff Syltefjordstauran with its large Gannet colony. This is a species one can expect to see from Hamningberg.

The mountain Hardbakken lies on the north side, and protects Hamningberg from the north wind. A gravel track leads upward through the stony landscape. This is a good locality to find the Snow Bunting. On the mountain plateau that stretches southwards, one comes to an area for several montane species such as Scaup, Golden Plover, Red-necked Phalarope, Dunlin, Willow Ptarmigan, Rock Ptarmigan and Lapland Bunting.

Five kilometres before Hamningberg lies the fine Sandfjorden that contrasts with the stony landscape. Here there is a long sandy beach, with wind-eroded sand dunes and an extensive delta area. Along the riverbanks there is lush willow scrub and coastal fields. Here, Bluethroat, Mealy Redpoll, Arctic Redpoll and Temminck's Stint all nest. Along the river one may see resting Ruffs and Spotted Redshanks. White-tailed

Eagle and Rough-legged Buzzard often hunt here. The delta area is a good place to see resting dabbling ducks and geese, while on the beach, large flocks of Kittiwakes and big gulls often gather. This is one of the best places in Finnmark to see Glaucous and Iceland Gulls in summer, and the same is true of Yellow-billed Diver and King Eider out in the fjord. Around the river outlet and out in the fjord large flocks of Goosander, Red-breasted Merganser and Long-tailed Duck gather.

Finnvika is a small bay lying by the road, two kilometres east of Sandfjorden. Here, gulls and ducks often gather, and Ring Ouzels can be seen in the mountainside.

Many rare bird species have been observed in these areas, some of the most special being Bridled Tern, Little Curlew and Laughing Gull.

Hamningberg and Sandfjorden are also good localities for seeing sea mammals. If one has luck, and spends time sea-watching, one may see white whale, porpoise, killer whale and minke whale.

Access

From highway no. E75, one turns off along road no. 341, immediately before the undersea tunnel out to Vardø. Hamningberg lies at the end of the road, 40 kilometres after this turning. Here one comes to a crossing where the roads continue about a kilometre in each direction, westwards to Sjøvika and eastwards past the houses.



© Anders Faugstad Møland

In May, hundreds of Pomarine Skuas can be seen migrating eastwards



© Anders Faugstad Møland

The Red-throated Pipit is a common breeding bird at Hamningberg and Sandfjorden

Five kilometres before Hamningberg one reaches Sandfjorden. After passing the river on the way outwards, the road goes to the right towards Hamningberg. If one takes to the left along a gravel road, one can follow the river five kilometres along the valley. From here one can wander into Varangerhalvøya National Park.

Further information

In summer, many tourists stop for the night in a dormobile, car or tent. In order to avoid wear and tear of the grassy fields, one should preferably use the parking site that lies by the road down to Sjøvika. Note that off-road driving is forbidden in Norway. The road from Vardø to Hamningberg is relatively narrow, winding and busy, so here one must drive carefully.

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland



© Morten Günther

The Hamningberg road stretches 43 kilometres westwards from Vardø via Persfjorden to Hamningberg in Båtsfjord municipality. The road passes through a fantastic rugged landscape, of many described as a moon landscape.

Hornøya and Reinøya Nature Reserve



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

East of Istanbul and at the same longitude as Cairo lies one of mainland Europe's northernmost nature reserves. The Hornøya/Reinøya Nature Reserve is one of 14 seabird colonies in Finnmark that were protected in 1983, and is the easternmost locality in Norway. Hornøya and Reinøya are two islands off the town of Vardø with views across the southern Barents Sea to the west coast of the Kola Peninsula. Within an area of 2 km², of which 1.5 km² are land is a rich and populous seabird community and a lush vegetation, like a green oasis in an otherwise near barren Varanger landscape.

Habitat

The rocks of both islands are sandstones and shales that dip southeastwards at an angle of ca 25°. The strata outcrop along the west sides of the islands along steep cliff faces and form excellent nesting ledges for seabirds. Compared to many classic seabird colonies, the cliffs are low, only 20-30 m high, and the tops of the islands are only 60-65 m a.s.l.

Access

Reinøya is closed to the public, but visitors are allowed on Hornøya to which access is easy with a 10-minute boat trip from the harbour in Vardø. The boat ferries visitors across the sound several times a day. Once on

the island, public access during the birds' breeding season is limited to a large area under the cliffs, a path across the island to the boat houses and onwards up to the lighthouse where there is a limited area in which to roam. To avoid disturbing the nesting birds unnecessarily, movement within the remainder of the reserve is only allowed by permit holders. The best time to visit Hornøya is at the height of the breeding season in May to July.

Key species

The seabird colony on Hornøya is very diverse with relatively large numbers of many species breeding on



© Rob Barrett

the island. The main cliff is dominated by black-legged kittiwakes, common guillemots and Atlantic puffins, interspersed by European shags, Brünnich's guillemots, razorbills and a few black guillemots. All are easy to see, hear and smell(!) from the areas open to the public. On the vegetated areas below the cliff and covering the island as a whole breed large numbers of herring gulls and great black-backed gulls, plus a few common eider.

Due to the lack of tree cover and the overall exposure of the island to the elements, very few passerines breed on Hornøya. Apart from several pairs of white wagtail, rock-pipit and raven, one highlight is a small population of red-throated pipits, representatives of which willingly pose for photographs on the fence or electric wire that stretches up to the lighthouse. Other favourites are king eiders and Steller's eiders that are common in the late winter and of which a few stragglers are often seen throughout the summer in the bay on the southeast side of Hornøya. From the lighthouse, there are excellent opportunities for seawatching with good views of fulmars, gannets etc. and sometimes shearwaters, minke whales and seals. If you are really lucky, you might see

white whales or beluga as they pass round the island in June or July.

Seabird numbers on Hornøya (and Reinøya) have fluctuated greatly through the years, with declines in some species and increases in others. Annual counts have been made since 1980, and the colony is now one of several key-sites on which annual monitoring of seabird populations and their breeding success continues, in addition to several basic seabird research projects that address what factors regulate the populations. Much of this activity is coordinated by the national SEAPOP programme, about which you can read more at www.seapop.no. Among some of the largest changes recorded since 1980 have been a 90% collapse in the common guillemot population in 1986/87 followed by an unprecedented increase to present numbers above the pre-collapse numbers, a near doubling of the puffin population and a near halving of kittiwake numbers. The populations of the herring gull and great black-backed gull have also decreased over the years, while that of the shag has increased about 10-fold since 1990 (see table).



Approximate population size and trends of seabirds on Hornøya in 2015

	Population (pairs)	Population trend
European Shag	1300	Increasing
Herring Gull	530	Decreasing
Great black-backed gull	31	Decreasing
Black-legged kittiwake	7500	Decreasing
Razorbill	500	Stable
Common guillemot	15 000	Increasing
Brünnich's guillemot	500	Stable
Atlantic puffin	7800	Decreasing



Public area below the cliff



Brünnich's guillemot



Atlantic puffin



Red-throated pipit

*This fact sheet is prepared by Rob Barrett,
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Igeldasfjæra – a great place for bird watching



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Igeldasfjæra is a part of an extensive tidal and shallow water area in the western parts of the inner Porsangerfjord. It stretches almost continuously from the southernmost parts of Stabbursnes Nature Reserve and all the way out to Igeldas. The area is especially attractive to waders and ducks, both as regards numbers and different species.

Igeldasfjæra is easily accessible, lying adjacent to road E6. The foreshore consists of areas of both clay and gravel, with scattered large rocks. The best observation point is at some small crags just south of the enclosed grazing area. Here one comes close to the birds. From here one can also search with binoculars, or preferably with a telescope, over the whole tidal area.

There are two small farms between the road and the foreshore. Those living at the nearest farm have put out several nest boxes for the Common Gulls, both on land and out on the shore. Show consideration to the local inhabitants when one moves around in the area.

Best time to visit

Many of the waders arrive at Igeldasfjæra in mid-May, and move on to their breeding grounds two or three weeks later. The last half of May is the best time if one wishes to see the large wader flocks. It is, however, possible to observe wetland birds the whole summer, and during autumn migration. The best time to visit is therefore from mid-May to mid-September.

Habitat and observation species

At Igeldasfjæra large numbers of wetland birds land to forage for food, especially during spring migration.



The tidal zone offshore from the old grazing grounds, with nest boxes for Common Gulls and Oyster Catchers. The island in the background is Ytre Akkøy seen from the south-west.



Igeldasfjæra seen from the north-west. On the right, not in the photo, a small stream flows out, which creates brackish water in the inner parts of the bay. Here waders and dabbling ducks often stop.

The large flocks of waders, especially of Knots, move around among the different tidal areas in the inner parts of the Porsangerfjord, and Igeldasfjæra is one of those most visited. The waders appear to prefer the clay areas immediately south of the enclosed grazing areas, while the dabbling ducks often prefer the small pools by the stream outflow innermost in the bay. In the winter, Mallards sometimes overwinter provided it is ice-free. In February 2013, a flock of 1175 foraging Purple Sandpipers was recorded here.

Species that may be seen here are Knot, Dunlin, Little Stint, Spotted Redshank, Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwit, Ringed Plover, Purple Sandpiper, Turnstone, Oyster Catcher and Common Gull. The two last-named of these nest in nest boxes that have been erected in the area. Teal, Pintail and Wigeon are often recorded by the stream outflow innermost in the bay. In the tidal current offshore one can observe flocks of Common Eider and Red-breasted Merganser. Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Goosander and Velvet Scoter can also be seen in some numbers in autumn. At low tide, looking for a meal, White-tailed Eagles often sit on rocks further out on the shore.

Access

Igeldasfjæra lies by road E6, about 23 km north of Lakselv. The easiest way to come here is by car, but parking is rather difficult. By agreement with the inhabitants, one can park by the houses, but there is



Bar-tailed Godwits and Knots resting at high tide in Igeldasfjæra

also a small side road innermost in the bay, 300-400 metres further north. About 100 metres still further there is a small side road at the beginning of the slope. At these two last stopping places it is possible to watch birds from the car.

Further information

The nearest overnight accommodation and café is a camping site at Stabbursnes, about 15 km north of Lakselv. Otherwise one can buy provisions either in Indre Billefjord or Lakselv.

At Lakselv District centre there are food stores, sports shops, car hire, medical centre, police, overnight accommodation, bus terminus, airport and so on.

This fact sheet is prepared by Almar Paulsen

All photos: © Almar Paulsen

Karigasniemi - Näätamö



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

One of the most important traffic routes between West and East Finnmark goes through Finland. For many this is only an area to pass through, but for visiting bird watchers it can be worthwhile to allow time for some stops on the way. Below we present some of the bird localities along the stretch Karigasniemi – Näätamö.

Beste time to visit

With regard to birds, it is most profitable to visit North Finland in May or June. At this time of year it is light almost both day and night, and it can be advantageous to vary one's active hours in order to make use of late hours in the evening and early hours of night. Many bird species are especially active in the hours before and after midnight. At this time there are greater possibilities of meeting brown bears and other mammals.

Most migrants arrive during May, and from the middle of the month one can hear singing passerines and displaying waders almost everywhere. Insects are usually no problem before midsummer, but in July and early August, swarms of mosquitos can make it unpleasant to be out in the field. Remember insect repellent!

Habitat and observation species

Finland is famous for its many lakes and wetlands, and the stretch from Karigasniemi to Näätamö is no exception. Everywhere there are small and large lakes, tarns, rivers, streams and bogs, which form the habitat for large numbers of birds such as waders and ducks. Northeast from Kaamanen the road follows the west side of the vast Enare Lake – Finland's third largest lake and the sixth largest in Europe.

Much of this stretch of road goes through dwarf pine forest, but there are also more open areas here.

More than 247 bird species have been recorded in Inari District, and 144 of these have been found breeding. The great majority of birds are migrants, and

a winter visit seldom gives many species. Among those that remain through the winter are Willow Ptarmigan, Capercaillie, Raven, Siberian Jay, Siberian Tit, Three-toed Woodpecker, Hawk Owl and Common or Mealy Redpoll.

Access and localities

The shortest way between Karasjok and Kirkenes goes through Finland (265 km). From Karasjok follow road no. 92 on the south side of the Tana River to Karigasniemi (18 km). Cross the border and follow the road a further 65 km eastward towards Kaamanen. Turn left on road E75 towards Ivalo. After 7.5 km, turn left



Karigasniemi seen from the east



The Siberian Jay is a relatively common species in the forests of North Finland. It is, however, not always easy to find.



The Little Gull can often be seen near Kaamanen

along road 971, and follow this 120 km northwards along the Enare Lake via the Skolte Sami village of Sevettijärvi to Näätamö by the Norwegian border. From here it is 54 km to Kirkenes.

Ailigas

About 4.6 km east of Karigasniemi, a narrow road turns off to the left towards the radio mast on the holy mountain Ailigas (69°25'41"N 25°59'13"E). It is not possible to drive all the way up, but those willing to walk can observe characteristic species such as Rock Ptarmigan, Snow Bunting, Dotterel, Golden Plover, Meadow Pipit and Whimbrel. The surrounding montane birch forest houses species such as Willow Ptarmigan, Bluethroat, Siberian Tit, Arctic Redpoll and Lapland Longspur. With a little luck it is also possible to see Gyrfalcon, Horned Lark, Long-tailed Skua and Rough-legged Buzzard.

Piesjätkä

About 4 km further east, another road turns off to the left, to Ailigasjärgäntie. After 4 km along this, one comes to a gathering site for reindeer with possibility of parking (69°25'27"N 26°05'50"E). From here one can follow the valley further on foot. After another kilometre one comes to the edge of a large boggy area where one can find such species as Long-tailed Skua, Lapland Longspur, Red-throated Pipit, Jack Snipe, Temminck's Stint, Spotted Redshank, Bean Goose and Willow Ptarmigan. More than 50 species have been recorded breeding. Long-tailed Duck and Common Scoter nest by Piesjärvi – the small lake in the centre of the area.

Sulaoja

11 km east of Karigasniemi lies Sulaoja. The parking site by the main road (69°23'36"N 26°06'42"E) is the starting point of a 2 km long nature trail to the holy spring Sulaoja. From here one can also take longer walks into Kevo Strict Nature Reserve. The clear spring water at Sulaoja remains ice-free throughout the winter, and Mallard have overwintered in the area. The Red-necked Phalarope is often seen in the pools at the parking site at the end of May.

Kaamanen

Kaamanen is a good starting point for bird watching in the area. Here there is a shop, a petrol station and several possibilities for overnight accommodation.

At Jokitörmä (69°05'33"N 27°11'06"E) there is a small wetland area right beside E75. Several pairs of



A couple of useful Finnish terms: Lintutorni = observation tower, Luontopolku = nature trail.



A view over the Kaamasjoki river delta



Watch out for reindeer along the roads in North Finland



The observation tower by the Kaamasjoki river delta

Arctic Terns nest here, and one can often see such species as Little Gull and Red-necked Phalarope in spring.

Kaamasjoki river delta

Almost beside the main road lies Kaamasjoki river delta. A fantastic bird locality, especially when the ice melts during spring migration in May. In this hectic period almost all wetland species in northern Finland can appear here. Flocks of Common and Velvet Scoters

are not uncommon. Osprey and Little Gull are often seen foraging. The Curlew has here its most northerly nesting site in Finland.

Follow E75 4.7 km southwards from the Kaamanen crossroads, then turn right along road 9710 towards Toivoniemi. One gets the best view from the 12 metre high observation tower (69°04'14"N 27°05'59"E), situated on the right hand side of the road after a further 3.8 km, just before the bridge over Kaamasjoki (which is also a good vantage point). An alternative is to take the narrow road that swings southwards towards Valpurinniemi (69°04'09"N 27°04'17"E), just west of the bridge. By continuing northwards along road 9710, one drives through open forested terrain with small bogs and varied birdlife. After about 12 km one comes out on road 92 just northwest of Kaamanen.

Road 971: Kaamanen – Näätämö

The road northwards from Kaamanen to the Norwegian border at Näätämö goes partly along the west side of the vast Enare Lake. One gets the best view of the lake from Väylä, Hietajoensuu and Partakko. Capercaillie and Willow Ptarmigan can often be seen beside the road, especially early in the morning. The Smew is common on some of the small lakes and tarns along the road. Look out for birds of prey such as Rough-legged Buzzard, Merlin, Short-eared Owl and Hawk Owl. It is difficult to gain a view over the area due to the great distances, but one can make bird observations almost everywhere.

Some detours on the way south

If one has some time to spare it can be worthwhile to make an extra detour southwards from Kaamanen to Ivalo (67 km) and/or Saariselkä (98 km). On the way



Dotterel at Kaunispää near Saariselkä



The observation tower at Mielikköjärvi east of Ivalo

one can also visit “Siida” in Inari – a modern museum that presents both Sami culture and natural history in Lapland (www.siida.fi).

Immediately east of Ivalo, along the road to Veskonieni, lies Ivalojoki river delta. Here two observation towers have been built with a view over the river plains at the outflow of the Ivalo river. The first (68°44'07"N 27°42'09"E) gives a view over the lake Mielikköjärvi and the surrounding areas of bogs. From here one can see such species as Common Crane, Short-eared Owl, Smew, Black-throated and Red-throated Diver and various waders. Spotted Redshank, Broad-billed Sandpiper and Jack Snipe all nest in this area. The other tower (68°46'09"N 27°39'05"E) is situated at the end of a 1.2 km long nature trail and gives a view over the delta area itself. From here one can see Short-eared Owl,

Common Crane, Little Gull and various duck species. Follow road 969 eastwards from Ivalo towards Nellim and turn to the left at Akujärvi towards Veskonieni.

The lake Akujärvi can be worth visiting. It is situated beside road 969, about 7.5 km east of Ivalo. A small observation tower has been erected on the east side of the lake, and from here there is a good view. Both Little Gull and Smew can be seen here, in addition to many commoner species. The Muskrat is common, and the Little Bunting nests sparsely in the area.

The ski centre Saariselkä lies 30 km south of Ivalo. At the top of the slalom slope lies the mountain Kaunispää (438 m asl) (68°26'00"N 27°26'33"E). This is one of the most accessible high mountain areas in Finland. Here one finds characteristic species such as Meadow Pipit, Golden Plover and Whimbrel. Dotterel nest here



Characteristic landscape in North Finland

almost annually, often almost beside the road that leads all the way to the summit. Rock Ptarmigan, Willow Ptarmigan and Snow Bunting sometimes appear at the mountaintops in this area.

Further information

Look out for reindeer on or by the road. Fill up with fuel before starting, as it is a long way between petrol stations in northern Finland. In winter the temperature can creep down to colder than -30°C. It is therefore

important to take with you extra warm clothing and sleeping bag in case you need to stay the night in the car.

Groceries and petrol can be bought in Karigasniemi, Kaamanen, Sevettijärvi and Näätamö. Remember that there is a time difference of one hour between Norway and Finland.

This fact sheet is prepared by Morten Günther

All photos: © Morten Günther



Mielikköjärvi and the surrounding bogs

Kiberg and Domen



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Kiberg and Domen are exciting areas that are well worth exploring. In the harbour area and in the bays there are good localities for gulls, ducks and waders. In the mountains by the road out to Vardø one can find many species of passerines, birds of prey and waders. From the top of Domen there is a fantastic view over Vardø and the Barents Sea.

In Indre Kiberg only a few residents live. This area consists of a wide bay and a long sandy beach, with several flat rocks offshore. Ytre Kiberg has an active fishing harbour and several residents. Here there is also a broad bay with a sandy beach and a river outflow. From here the road goes over the mountain towards Vardø.

Best time to visit

Along the coast it is worthwhile looking for birds from February to October, while in the mountains the best time is from May to August.

Habitat and observation species

The high-alpine landscape goes right down to the coast. The only vegetation is some willow along the lower part of the river Kibergselva and in the inhabited areas. Ytre

Kiberg is a well-known site for Steller's Eider. From January until the end of April, one can often find flocks of over a hundred of this species within the harbour area. This gives fine possibilities for observation and photographing. The harbour and the river outflow are good places for finding Glaucous Gull, also in summer. All gulls should be examined carefully with the possibility of finding rarer species. Norway's first Glaucous-winged Gull was discovered in this harbour. During strong winds from the north and east, it is worthwhile looking for seabirds from the jetty. The sandy beach is fine for resting gulls and waders. Black-throated, Red-throated and Yellow-billed Diver are often seen in the bays.

Around the rocks off Indre Kiberg, large numbers of eiders gather, and this is one of the best places to see King Eider in summer. From February until April there



Ytre Kiberg is an active fishing harbour and a fine place to observe Steller's Eider



Kiberg is one of the best places to see the Glaucous Gull in summer. The bird on the left is an adult, while that on the right is a young bird in its first year.

are flocks of several thousand here. Eiders and Long-tailed Ducks also gather in thousands, and the flocks sometimes move between Kiberg and Vardø.

From Indre Kiberg, a gravel road leads up into the mountains. By following this, one arrives at farmland where there may be Bean Goose and Short-eared Owl. Immediately after one has passed Ytre Kiberg, another gravel road goes up to the top of Kibergsfjellet. Here one can find Rock Ptarmigan and Snow Bunting.

The mountain pass over towards Vardø is a fine tour, where one can see many interesting species. The Red-necked Phalarope nests in the small pools beside the road. Long-tailed Skua, Arctic Skua, Willow Ptarmigan, Lapland Longspur and Horned Lark may also be seen right by the road. A gravel road goes up to the top of Domen, and in some years the Dotterel nests here. One can also have the luck to see Gyr Falcon and Ring Ouzel here.

In the mountains on the west side of the road there are fine areas of bogs and lakes, and it is worthwhile to wander for some days in these areas. One will then have good possibilities of seeing most of the mountain species in Finnmark. Whooper Swan, Scaup, Rough-legged Buzzard, Purple Sandpiper and Ruff are some of the species that one can expect to see. The Little Stint is a scarce breeding bird that it is possible to find in these areas.

Many of the best bird localities along the coast of Varanger lie right beside the road. One of them is Kramvik, which lies three kilometres west of Indre Kiberg. This is one of the better sites along the coast for seeing waders, and is also an exciting site for passerines. Here, Bluethroat, Red-throated Pipit and Arctic Redpoll all nest, and here Norway's first White-winged Lark was observed.

Access

Less than 60 kilometres from Vadsø, in the direction of Vardø, one comes first to Indre Kiberg, and immediately after to Ytre Kiberg. These areas are easily accessible from road E75 which leads along the Varangerfjord and further over the mountain to Vardø.

The gravel roads are only open after the snow has melted in May.

Further information

The bogs stretch almost continuously down to the large Barvikmyra which is a protected area. Such coastal wetlands are especially rich and vulnerable. One must avoid all unnecessary disturbance to the nesting birds.

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland

All photos: © Anders Faugstad Møland



Kiberg is a fine place for photographing Steller's Eider

Kolvikvannet - Vest Porsanger



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Kolvikvannet – the Kolvik Lake - is situated in agricultural country on the west side of the Porsanger fjord. The lake is shallow with much vegetation and a rich insect life. The intermediate zones between pasture, arable land and water make the locality an important resting and breeding site for many species that normally are restricted to agricultural landscape. Kolvikvannet is itself an important resting site for ducks, grebes and some wader species.

Best time to visit

The best period to visit Kolvikvannet/Sarvvesjåvri is from about 15th May until about 1st September. Before the ice melts in spring, Slavonian Grebes and other species rest on the fjord and wait until there are open channels in the ice. The best period at Kolvikvannet is shortly after the ice melts, from the beginning of May until the end of June.

Habitat and observation species

Kolvikvannet is a non-nutritious (dystrophic) lake, but the whole lake is shallow and produces abundant aquatic plants and insects. There are no fish in the lake, but has a rich insect life. The horse-leech has been recorded here, its only locality in Finnmark.

Species that are observed regularly at Kolvikvannet are Slavonian Grebe, Tufted Duck, Wigeon, Pintail, Mallard, Teal, Long-tailed Duck, Velvet Scoter, Greylag Goose, Common Gull, Common Snipe, Redshank, Wood Sandpiper, Common Sandpiper, Sedge Warbler, Reed Bunting and Yellow Wagtail.

Access

From Lakselv you follow main road E6 about 30 km towards Nordkapp (the North Cape) on the west side of the Porsanger fjord. A road sign there points to Kolvik. Kolvikvannet lies at this crossroad. By following the sign one comes to Kolvik, which is a shallow sheltered bay and which the road goes round. The lake was divided



© Torkjell Morset

Kolvikbukta – the Kolvik Bay – looking southwards

into two when the Germans built the road during the last world war. One can park on the two stretches of the old road beside today's motorway, just past the turning off to Kolvik.

Here there are several fine places to study the birds. Especially early in May, before the ice melts on the lakes, this is a fine locality. From the end of the road there is a marked tourist path to Trollholmsund, which

is a popular site for tourists. Here one finds several fine formations of dolomite which at high tide stand like statues out in the lake – the “trolls” of Trollholmsund. The area out here is also fine for observing seabirds in the bay. Especially at low tide, the area is very suitable for looking for waders.

This fact sheet is prepared by Steve Aslaksen and Torkjell Morset



The road entrance (right) to the parking site at Kolvikvannet and the road down to Kolvik Bay and Trollholmsund.



A pair of Slavonian Grebes in Kolvikvann



Kolvikvann looking southwards

Kongsfjorden and Kongsfjordfjellet



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

The beautiful Kongsfjorden reveals itself when one descends from Kongsfjordfjellet. Down by the fjord lies the small and idyllic fishing harbour with the same name, and a little further out lies Veidnes. Here the promontory Veidneset sticks out into the fjord and separates Kongsfjorden from Risfjorden. From the mountain and down to the coast one can find high-alpine species and seabirds quite near each other. This stretch of road offers fine bird observations right by the road. The magnificent landscape and the rich bird life make this an exciting area for bird watchers.

Best time to visit

The coastline is fine the whole year, but best of all in the period May-July. In the mountains the best time is May until mid-July. The mountains are important breeding localities, as also are the islands in the fjord. Large numbers of birds gather in the fjords during migration.

Habitat and observation species

On the mountain Kongsfjordfjellet and down towards Kongsfjorden one can see most of the mountain species. It is worthwhile to wander around in the mountain, up onto one of the higher ridges near the road. There are then good possibilities of finding Dotterel, Rock Ptarmigan and Snow Bunting. Horned Lark and

Lapland Bunting are common here, and may be found by the road side. The same is true of Long-tailed Skua and Rough-legged Buzzard. Scaup and Long-tailed Duck can often be seen in the lake just after the turning to Berlevåg on Båtsfjordfjellet.

Other species that one can see are Short-eared Owl, Ruff, Bar-tailed Godwit, Purple Sandpiper, Temminck's Stint and Red-necked Phalarope. There are several lay-byes and places to park along this stretch of road, and it is worthwhile spending some time here. Red-throated Divers nest in the small lakes by the road! Displaying Rock and Willow Ptarmigan can also be observed from the car window. Then one should be out during the night in the first half of May. Long stretches of the road



© Anders Faugstad Mæland

Veidnes is idyllically situated between Kongsfjorden and Risfjorden



© Ulrich Welsch

Ptarmigan are common in the Kongsfjord area. They can in fact often be observed from the car window! The Rock Ptarmigan (photo) is found in the higher-lying areas, whereas the Willow Ptarmigan is found nearer the coast.

go by a river. Here there is much willow scrub where one can find Bluethroat and Arctic Redpoll. Otherwise there is only low vegetation both in the mountains and out by the coast.

It is worthwhile to take a walk around the houses in Kongsfjorden and at Veidnes. From Veidnes one has a view over both arms of the fjord. Here there are often large numbers of Black Guillemots and Atlantic Puffins. During migration in May one can see dozens of Yellow-billed Divers and hundreds of Long-tailed Ducks, Red-breasted Mergansers, Goosanders and Common Scoters.

Out in the water at Veidneset stands the remains of an old jetty. This serves as an ideal nest site for Common and Arctic terns. These are species that are undergoing a dramatic decline along the whole Norwegian coast. Predation by mink and fox is a particularly serious problem in Finnmark. Here however they remain in peace, and one can photograph and study the two species together. There are also good possibilities of photographing Red-throated Divers, which often nest in the small lake between Kongsfjord and Veidnes.

To walk out over Veidneset is a fine trip. Here one comes up onto a plateau with a fantastic view over the sea and the rugged and rocky coast. If one stays some time in this area, one has the chance of seeing hunting Merlins, Rough-legged Buzzards and Gyrfalcon. One almost always sees the White-tailed Eagle here. Twites nest in this area, and can usually be found in the fields along the coast and around the houses. The Ring Ouzel nests in the slopes down towards Kongsfjorden, and can

be heard singing in May-June. Along the coast one can find some waders, and the Purple Sandpiper is common from the end of August until late May.

Out in the fjord lie the small islands Helløya, Kongsøya, Skarholmen and Grønnøya. Here there nest many Kittiwakes, Shags, Cormorants and auks.

Within Kongsfjord two headlands stick out, one from each side of the fjord. These form a narrow sound. Within the sound the fjord opens out again, and forms the inner basin of Kongsfjorden (Strømmen). Furthest in there is a large delta area with much willow scrub. In order to reach the innermost part of the fjord, one must walk some distance.

Access

These places are very easy to find. At the road junction on Båtsfjordfjellet take the road no. 890 towards Berlevåg. Here one drives through fine bird localities the whole way. Down by the fjord the road goes through Kongsfjord, and immediately after one can take the road out to Veidnes. From here one can go along the old road up onto the ridge as far as the road goes, and then continue along a path all the way to the lighthouse. It is best to park the car by the houses.

Innermost in Kongsfjorden there are two exciting areas, (1) Strømmen, which is the narrow sound where the tide flows in, and (2) Vesterbotn and Austerbotn innermost in the threshold fjord. In order to come to Strømmen the car can be driven in along the old road towards the sea when you come from the mountain and the fjord in Djupvik. Follow the road, cross the river and

follow the terrain towards Strømmen. An alternative is to walk along a path on the north side of the lake Kobbkrokvann and follow this path by a series of small lakes to Strømmen.

Access to Vesterbotn and Austerbotn has two routes. One is to go in from the road immediately west of Grønneset. The other possibility is to walk along a path just east of Vesterdalshaugen and on the south side of Stormyra. The path leads right out to the river mouth. New parking places have been made along road no. 890 where the car can be parked.

Further information

Egg collecting unfortunately is still a problem in Norway. Birds of prey are particularly threatened. If one finds the nest of a bird of prey, be very careful not to spread information about it.

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland



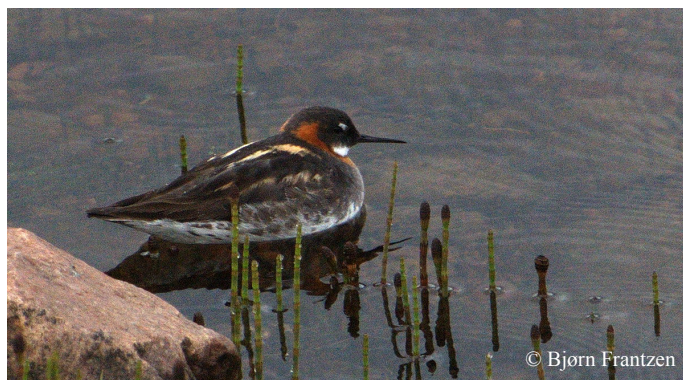
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Just above the lake Buvann, the Kongsfjord river flows in gentle curves. In early summer Whooper Swans and several duck species stay here.



© Bjørn Frantzen

A guide with visitors watching a Horned Lark at the Gednje crossing



© Bjørn Frantzen

A Red-necked Phalarope photographed from a car at one of the small lakes by the road.

The islands in Kongsfjorden and Risfjorden



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

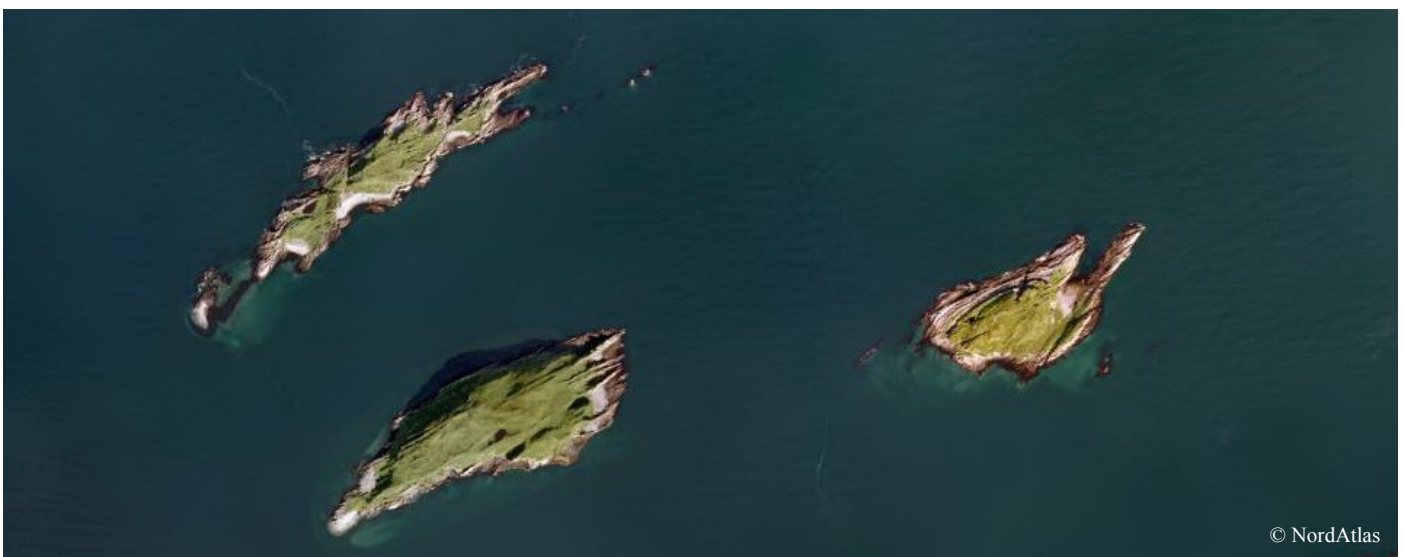
In the centre of Kongsfjorden lie the three islands Kongsøya, Helløya and Skarholmen, which together form a nature reserve for seabirds. On the left side of Veines in Risfjorden lie the islands Grønnøya, Rundholmen, Langskjæran and Hattholmen, together with several islets and skerries. Together these islands form an important seabird area that has had considerable importance for the local inhabitants as a source for harvesting natural resources, especially the seabirds' eggs and cloudberry. The peninsula Veines, which separates Risfjorden and Kongsfjorden, is in itself worth visiting, with regard both to birds and cultural relicts, but also due to the tour terrain, dry and easy to walk around.

Best time to visit

The seabirds usually come to the islands in March, and already in April the first species begin to breed. The breeding season extends to late July, and replacement clutches can be found as late as August. Moulting and foraging flocks of Common Eiders and Goosanders can be seen throughout the summer and until the end of September.

Habitat and observation species

The islands are classic seabird islands, with a few willow bushes and very lush ground vegetation due to the fertilisation by all the bird droppings. Around the Cormorant colonies the ground is barren due to the extreme fertilisation. There are no reliable estimates of seabird numbers in the colonies in recent years. Of the



© NordAtlas

From the left one sees Helløya, Kongsøya in the centre and Skarholmen on the right. Together these islands form a nature reserve for seabirds.



Rundholmen (photo) and Hattholmen are two islands in the Risfjord which in recent years have been dominated by Cormorants. The Cormorants occupy the highest parts of the islands.



In the foreground we see one of the Kittiwake colonies on Kongsøya. In recent years the White-tailed Eagle has begun to take some Kittiwakes, both adults and young, in the bird cliffs. Skarholmen is seen in the background.



Kittiwake on its nest

gulls, the Kittiwake is dominant, and there are probably several thousand breeding pairs on Kongsøya, Helløya and Skarholmen.

The Herring Gull population is mainly declining, but several thousand pairs remain on the islands in both Kongsfjorden and Risfjorden. The Great Black-backed Gull is less common, and has about a hundred pairs distributed among the islands. The Common Gull nests only in small numbers on the islands. The Cormorant population has increased greatly during the last 30 years, and between 500 and 1000 pairs are assumed to nest on Rundholmen, Hattholmen, Skarholmen, Helløya and Kongsøya. The Shag is less common, but more than 100 pairs nest on the islands. Of the auks, the Black Guillemot is the most numerous, and is commonly seen around the islands. On Kongsøya some Puffins and Razorbills also nest, and the Common Guillemot has been seen here.

Many Common Eiders breed on the islands, and large flocks of moulting Common Eiders and Goosanders may also be seen. Of passerines one finds White Wagtail, Meadow Pipit, Rock Pipit, Twite, Wheatear and Willow Warbler. White-tailed Eagles may be seen on the islands throughout the breeding season, and they are assumed to take some seabirds. At some seabird colonies these eagles make large inroads in the populations. The Grey-lag Goose has become established on Grønøya in recent years.

Access

Most arrive by car along road no. 890 from Tana over the Varanger peninsula, or from Berlevåg where the main



Big gulls (Herring and Great Black-backed) soar in hundreds over the islands when people or the White-tailed Eagles come too near.



A classic Herring Gull nest. A nest hollow made of grass, with three eggs when the clutch is complete.



When the young of big gulls have hatched and dried, they quickly leave the nest. In early summer one can see many young gulls that run around in the vegetation. In time the vegetation becomes so high that the young are well hidden among the green plants.

road ends. One can take the plane to Berlevåg or arrive by the shipping line Hurtigruta, and from there travel by car or bus to Veines and Kongsfjord. One can only come to the islands by boat. To go on land is forbidden on Skarholmen, Helløya and Kongsøya in the period 1st May to 15th August. Check in Kongsfjord for the possibilities of a boat trip to the islands or a guided tour.

Seabirds' eggs and cloudberry

Gathering the eggs of seabirds is a tradition that goes back more than a hundred years, and takes place on the islands in Kongsfjord and Risfjord. The authorities determine the right to take eggs. Right up to the beginning of the present century the gathering and sale of seabirds' eggs was an important extra income for the local inhabitants. In the period when a family had the right to take eggs on all the islands, about 30,000 eggs could be gathered in one season (Åse Winsents, pers. comm.). Helløya alone could at its best give about 13,000 eggs in one season, whereas a poor year gave about 2,000 eggs (Fred N. Larsen, pers. comm.). In earlier times the eggs were sold to the food industry. Later much went to private customers, shops and restaurants in northern Norway. At the time when arctic hunting of seals was still important, the coming of spring was celebrated when the inhabitants bought seal flippers and gulls' eggs for a feast.

The eggs of wild birds can be kept fresh by placing them in a water glass (can be bought from a chemist). In the water glass, a kind of preserving, the eggs are stored dark and cold, and they remain fresh the whole winter. The yolk of gull eggs has a more intense colour than that

of hen eggs, and gives fine colour to bakery. Today one stirs (not whisks) the gull eggs, before freezing them. Stirred gull eggs are suitable for omelettes, pancakes and waffles.

On the islands in Kongsfjord and on Grønnøya there are cloudberry that also were an important source of income. The volume of cloudberry was measured in "barrels", which indicates that large amounts of berries were picked. Now not so large amounts are gathered as in earlier years.



The Cormorant has colonies on five of the islands. The adults are easily frightened away from the nest when people come too near. Then big gulls, Ravens and Crows are ready to take their eggs and young.



The female Common Eider often disappears against the background when she sits on the nest. The female broods continuously for about 30 days before the eggs hatch.



Further information

Rundholmen and Hattholmen have large Cormorant colonies. Nesting Cormorants do not tolerate much disturbance near the colony before they leave their nests. The nests then lie unprotected, and can be predated by big gulls, Crows and Ravens. One should therefore move very cautiously near Cormorant colonies.

Protective regulations

To land on Kongsøya, Helløya and Skarholmen is forbidden in the period 1st May to 15th August. The administrative plan is now being revised, and it is expected that the protection period will be changed so that it begins and ends earlier than at present. One can move by boat around the islands.

Gathering of eggs can take place from 1st May to 14th June by the tenants who have such a permit on the islands in Kongsfjorden. The eggs of Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Common Gull and Kittiwake can be gathered provided the species are named in the tenancy contract. Anyone may gather the eggs of big gulls on the islands in Risfjorden.

This fact sheet is prepared by Bjørn Frantzen



The utilization of gulls' eggs was important for many in northern Norway until a few years ago. Fresh eggs were boiled, fried as omelettes and fried eggs, and used in bakery. When fresh eggs were placed in a water glass (bought at a chemist's) and stored dark and cool, one had fresh eggs throughout most of the winter.

Egg gathering is finished for the day. Now the eggs are loaded onto the boat and brought to land. There they are candled and packed, before finally being sent to the market.

Lille Porsangerelva's outflow



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Lille Porsangen is a short fjord arm on the west side of Laksefjorden, in Lebesby District. The fjord arm stretches from Veidnesklubben in a south-westerly direction towards Porsangerfjorden. The river Lille Porsangerelva has its outflow in the shallow bay innermost in the fjord. The delta at the river outlet and the shallow fjord offshore are the most attractive areas for bird watchers.

From the lake Kjæsvannet, Lille Porsangerelva flows in a north-easterly direction, in peaceful meanders and small waterfalls, through a landscape of forested moorland and flat bogs, out into Lille Porsangen. In the river there are trout, arctic char and some salmon. The forest in this area consists mainly of birch, but also has elements of sallow and willow scrub. There are a few cabins in the lower parts of the river valley, otherwise the area is little affected by human activity.

Best time to visit

Many of the seabirds have already arrived during April, but most of the dabbling ducks, geese and waders first arrive in mid-May. The river delta can be worth visiting right up to the end of August.

Habitat and observation species

On the south side of the river delta there are extensive bogs with some shallow pools and streamlets from



© Almar Paulsen

Part of Stormyra with a view towards the broad tidal areas and the innermost part of Lille Porsangen



© Almar Paulsen

The shallow delta looking north by the outflow of Lille Porsanger

these. The bogs are mainly covered with various species of grass and sedge, with some willow scrub along the perimeters. Here one can find such nesting species as Reed Bunting, Lapland Longspur, Bluethroat, Common Snipe, Common Redshank and Whimbrel.

Nearer the river delta the bog goes over to drier coastal fields with different vegetation, such as creeping alkali grass and sea arrowgrass. Here the migrating geese stop, mainly Bean Geese and Grey-lag Geese, but also individuals of Pink-footed Goose and rarely Barnacle Goose.

Lille Porsangerelva meanders peacefully from the forests in the south-west, and further out to the brackish water stream at the fjord outlet. The river delta itself is very shallow, and is defined as a bog delta. On the beach zone and on the mudflats around the outlet we find large numbers of waders, with Knots and Dunlins

as the most numerous. These are in place in mid-May. Later other waders arrive. Nearer the birch forest we find both Wood Sandpiper and Common Sandpiper, and dabbling ducks thrive in the lower parts of the river and in the delta itself. The commonest dabbling ducks are Shelduck, Wigeon, Teal, Mallard and Pintail, but also rarer species such as Gadwall, Garganey and Shoveler have also been recorded.

The Knots, which can appear in flocks of 20,000-30,000, often vary their foraging grounds between Lille Porsangen and Veidnesklubben.

In the woods along the river we find the commoner passerines, with Willow Warbler and Common Redpoll as the commonest. Others occurring here are Fieldfare, Redwing, Red-throated Pipit and Meadow Pipit.

Out in the shallow bay and the rest of the fjord we can observe all the common gull species, with Common Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull and Arctic Tern as the commonest. Of the diving ducks, Tufted Duck and Scaup are quite common innermost in the delta and in the belt of brackish water. Especially during spring migration, one can also see Common and Velvet Scoter further out. The Common Eider is common, and together with the Long-tailed Duck, one can also meet with these at Lille Porsangen in winter. Steller's Eider, King Eider and Yellow-billed Diver are occasionally recorded during the winter months, while Red-throated Diver and Red-breasted Merganser are common.

Of birds of prey, the White-tailed Eagle is the commonest. One can meet with this throughout the year, but most often during the summer months. Many other birds of prey have been recorded in the area, and



© Terje Kolaas

Dunlin in summer plumage

in small rodent years, Rough-legged Buzzard, Short-eared Owl and Hawk Owl are common.

Access

The Kven village of Børselv lies on the east side of the Porsanger fjord, about 40 km from Lakselv District centre. From Børselv one takes road no. 183 which leads all the way to Veidnesklubben. The distance to Lille Porsangen is about 63 km, and Børselv is the last place where one can fill fuel. The road, which has a surface of asphalt or oil gravel, is in a poor condition in some places.

The road follows the Porsanger fjord all the way out to Kjæs. Here the road swings towards the north-east and follows the forested Kjæsdalen all the way over to Lille Porsangen. From a ridge, before one comes down

to the sea, one has a good view over the forested areas, the bogs and the innermost parts of Lille Porsangen with the river delta. At the north end of Stormyra there are a couple of small lay-byes where one gains the best view towards the delta area.

There is a bus route between Lakselv and Lille Porsangen several days in the week, and at Veidnesklubben overnight accommodation can be booked.

Further information

In order to gain full benefit of bird watching in this area, one is entirely dependent on having a good binocular and/or telescope. The delta area is completely open, and therefore gives few possibilities of coming near the birds without disturbing them. The diving ducks often stay far from land.

This fact sheet is prepared by Almar Paulsen



Knots on spring passage

Loppa island and Loppa county



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Loppa island has a rich and varied bird life. The bird cliffs with Razorbills, Common Guillemots and Puffins are an experience in themselves, and Great Skuas attacking on the plateau are a rather frightening bonus. The Bluethroat thrives between the houses and in the boggy mountain birch forest, and the Kestrel hunts small rodents on the hill slopes. The Lesser Black-backed Gulls in various shades of grey nest at Marmorstuva. And outside we have the sea – the renowned LoppHAVET.

Loppa island lies about 3 kilometres out to sea, north-west of Loppa municipality on the mainland, just north of the border between the counties of Troms and Finnmark. Only one inhabitant remains on the island the whole year, but in summer the population increases to more than 30. The eastern parts of the island were once cultivated with grazing land and fields with a splendid flora. Loppasanden is a long sandy beach on the south of the island with large sand dunes behind. The beach attracts gulls and waders, and here one can see Dunlins, Little Stints, Turnstones and other waders in July-August. The area above the beach consists of sand dunes and shore vegetation.

The best time to visit

The best time to visit Loppa is in summer and early autumn, from May to September. The breeding season is over around the end of July for most species, but the Puffin and Lesser Black-backed Gull remain for a few weeks. Both May and September are good months for migration that can give many interesting observations.

Habitat and species to observe

The bird cliffs consist of green grassy slopes in the south, but further on are steep and inaccessible. The bedrock here is of shale, which provides good nesting sites for species which nest concealed. The Puffin nests in grassy slopes, rock crevices and screes with the greatest



© Geir Systad

The church and adjacent houses at Solberg, seen from the Hurtigruta ship



A Puffin with varied diet to its young. The Puffins catch young herring, sand eels, coalfish and various other species for their young, and can hold dozens of fish simultaneously.

numbers from Sfingsodden to Storskardet. The Common Guillemot and Razorbill nest most densely in the cliffs from Svarthellaren to Storskardet. The bird cliffs end at Kobbekila. The Kittiwake colony that was once found in Krykkjeberget at the north-west of the island is now deserted.

The Puffin, Razorbill and Common Guillemot are characteristic species of the bird cliffs. It is estimated that about 3000 pairs of Puffins, 1000 pairs of Razorbills and 500 pairs of Guillemots nest on the island. The Storm Petrel and Leach's Petrel have been recorded during the breeding season on Loppa, but we know very little about the populations of these.

The Lesser Black-backed Gull is an important species on Loppa. Earlier the northern subspecies fuscus dominated here, but during the 1990's the numbers of greyer birds increased, most probably the subspecies intermedius. About 50 pairs still nest on the island. The Herring

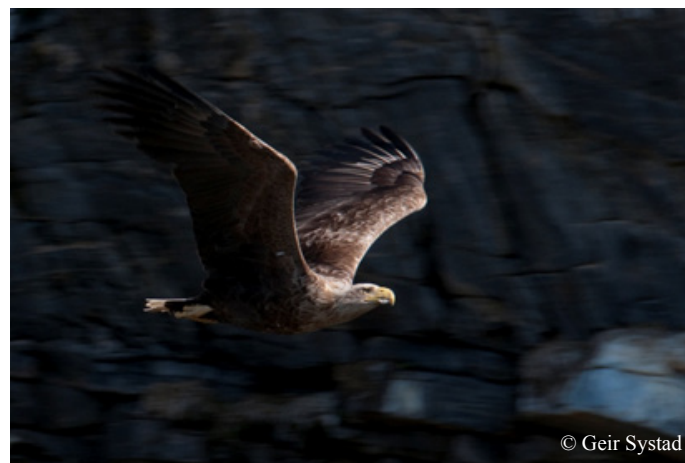
Gull and Great Black-backed Gull are more numerous, and there are colonies of these at the north end of the island. The bird fauna up on the plateau is dominated by Arctic Skuas, Great Skuas, Common and Great Black-backed Gulls and one or two Whimbrel. In some years there are large colonies of Arctic Terns here, while in other years these are only to be found along the shoreline. Loppa was the first place in Norway where the Great Skua was proved to breed, and now more than 20 pairs breed annually. In good years about 100 pairs of Arctic Skuas breed.

Several pairs of Rough-legged Buzzards and Kestrels nest on the bird cliffs in good rodent years. The White-tailed Eagle also breeds on the island, and with luck one may see Golden Eagle, Gyr Falcon and Peregrine hunting in the bird cliffs.

The Cormorant breeds on Marholmen, an islet between Loppa and the mainland. The colony can be seen from Solberg, and can easily be seen as a white patch on the north side of the islet.

In the cultivated landscape on the east side there are species such as Grey-lag Goose, Common Eider, Redshank, Wheatear and Fieldfare. The Bluethroat is common, and even exceeds the Sedge Warbler in the variation and intensity of its song.

More than 100 species have been seen on Loppa island, many of these from further south such as Barn Swallow and Wren. In good rodent years the Short-eared Owl hunts in the



The White-tailed Eagle is one of several species of birds of prey that can be seen daily on Loppa.



© Geir Systad

The geology is varied on Loppa. Here we have the view from Fjellavløysingen to the islet Loppakalven.

fields. At Solberg the Black-tailed Godwit has been recorded, and the Spotted Redshank is a common visitor in late summer. Turnstone, Ringed Plover and Dunlin are common, and a number of other species can be seen during the latter part of summer.

Loppa lies far out to sea, and should be a suitable place to see passing migrants. The Yellow-billed Diver can probably be seen when it migrates northwards in April-May. Arctic geese, shearwaters and skuas are other possibilities.



© Geir Systad

The Great Skua was found nesting on Loppa in 1975, the first time in Norway.



© Geir Systad

Mevær on the right and the church settlement Solberg on the left. Loppasanden stretches southwards from Solberg.

Access

Loppa can be reached by passenger boat from Øksfjord, or possibly from Hammerfest via Øksfjord. The nearest airports are Hasvik, Hammerfest and Alta. Earlier it was possible to stop the Hurtigruta boat in the sound between Loppa and the mainland, and be fetched by a small boat.

Loppa island has a fine terrain for walking, with easy access. There is a road from the passenger boat quay in Mevær south to Solberg and Loppasanden, and north to Yttervær. There is a path from Mevær to Solberg round Mønes. Walking trips can be many and varied, and here a couple of possibilities are described.

In order to come up onto the plateau, one can go up from Meværbukta immediately north of the point where the roads divide. One can either walk along the edge of the bird cliffs from Sauhallen towards Pipersberget and beyond, or take the path between Stormyra and Marmorstuva. The ground is flat and walking is easy on the plateau, and one can go northwards and then down by Yttervær, and then follow the road back. The trip will be shorter by going down north of Krakelva and down to Krakodden. The

ground, being of shale, is loose, and one must be careful not to go too near the cliff edge.

Another fine trip is over Loppasanden from Solberg southwards to Fjellavløysingsodden. Between Solberg and Fjellavløysingsodden there is an area with fine potholes ground out by the sea. Further south one goes over an area of ancient beach terraces of pebbles. This is not the most bird-rich area, but one can see species such as Twite, Rough-legged Buzzard and other species characteristic of the birch belt. On the way back one can go over Fjellavløysingen and down to Rossmolvika. Species to see here are White-tailed Eagle, Rough-legged Buzzard, Ring Ouzel and Arctic Redpoll.

Further information

The area from Rekskardet in the south to Skagsodden in the north together with parts of the plateau form a nature reserve. It is forbidden to set up a tent, camouflage hide or anything similar, but there are no restrictions regarding access in the reserve, though one must be careful to avoid unnecessary disturbance to the bird life.

This fact sheet is prepared by Geir Systad

Masjokdalen



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

*M*asjokdalen leads westwards from the Tana River. This fine valley is an excellent tour area. It is characterised by lush birch forest around the river Máskejohka that winds its way along the lower part of the valley. Higher up in the valley there are large and small bogs. In Masjok you will find many species of passerines, birds of prey, ducks and waders.

Best time to visit

Masjokdalen is worth visiting from mid-March until the end of July. One will find most species in the period June – July.

Habitat and observation species

Along the road inland there are many farms with thriving agriculture and cultural landscape. Extensive areas of bogs stretch northwards from the parking site. A tractor road leads southwards far up into Masjokdalen.

A bird watcher in good form can visit a great variety of biotopes by visiting Masjokdalen and its adjacent attractions.

In the lush birch forest such species as Bluethroat, Brambling, Redstart, Pied Flycatcher, Woodcock and Cuckoo all nest. Willow Tit and Common Redpoll are common breeding birds, while both Hoary Redpoll and Siberian Tit may also be found in this area. For several species this is the northernmost limit of their distribution. Among these are Wren, Dunnock,



The river Máskejohka winds its way southwards in Masjokdalen in lush birch forest, where several of our passerine species have here their northernmost distribution.



In rodent years the Hawk Owl is a common species in the birch forest.



At the parking site innermost in Masjokdalen, track no. 5 begins towards Guorgajávri / Tranevann.

Chiffchaff, Blue Tit, Chaffinch and Garden Warbler.

This is a fine area for seeing Hawk Owls. In good rodent years, several pairs may nest in the area. The Hawk Owl often sits exposed on the top of a tree or on a pole along the road. On the bogs and in the farming areas one can see hunting Short-eared Owls. The Yellow Wagtail is common in the farming areas.

The Snow Bunting is common during migration in April-May, and may often be seen in large flocks on snow-free areas on farmland, especially at feeding sites and at farms. Along the river one can find Goosander, Goldeneye, Dipper and Sand Martin, and it is also possible to see Lesser Spotted and Three-toed Woodpecker. The Arctic Warbler is also a species to be aware of. Even though this is not a known breeding locality, the dense deciduous forest along the river is well suited to this eastern species.

On the boggy areas many species of waders nest, among these Spotted Redshank, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruff, Golden Plover and Dunlin. The Lapland Longspur also occurs in this area. Along the banks of the rivers Tanaelv and Máskejohka, Sedge Warblers, Temminck's Stints and Common Sandpipers nest, and here one often sees Goldeneye and Goosander. Rough-legged Buzzard, Peregrine, Merlin and Kestrel may often be

seen hunting in the area. The Great Grey Shrike is also a species that one can have the luck to find.

Willow Ptarmigan are regularly seen on the bogs and in the birch forest, while the Rock Ptarmigan and other mountain species may be seen if one wanders higher up into the mountains. Elk (Moose), Red Fox and Mountain Hare are common in this area. Máskejohka is a fine river for fishing, for salmon, brown trout, sea trout, arctic char and grayling.

Access

Masjokdalen lies almost 11 kilometres northwards from Tana Bru, along road nr. 98 on the west side of the Tana river. The road into the valley turns off just after one has crossed the river Máskejohka. At the end of the road there is a parking place. From here a marked track leads down towards the river. It may also be worthwhile to go out over the bog areas to the north and west, inwards along the valley.

Further information

The road is open throughout the year.

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland

Photos: © Bjørn Frantzen

Neiden, Munkefjorden and Mikkelsnes



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

This is the first good bird area one comes to on the way westwards from Kirkenes. The outflow of the river Neidenelva forms a wide delta of brackish water. At low water extensive mud flats are uncovered that stretch out over the fjord. Around Neiden there is much birch forest, and along the rivers Neidenelva and Munkelva there are luxuriant river banks. The species diversity is great, from passerines and waders to ducks and divers.

Best time to visit

From the mouth of Neidenelva and further out in the fjord there are interesting observation areas the whole year. These areas are important both as stopover sites and overwintering areas. Around Munkelva and Neiden the breeding birds are the most exciting. The period from mid June to mid July is recommended.

Habitat and observation species

Neiden is well known among bird watchers. It is first and foremost the Arctic Warbler that has made this place famous. The area around Neiden church is a regular locality for this eastern species. The Arctic Warbler is often found on the lower side of the church, where there is an old cart track that one can follow. It can also sit at several other spots in this area. The characteristic song is

easy to hear even at long range, but note that the Wood Warbler may also sing here.

Also around Munkefjorden there are good possibilities of hearing the Arctic Warbler. The Little Bunting is another scarce species that one can find here. It is well worth taking a walk up along the river or out towards the outflow. In the innermost of Munkefjorden some waders may also gather.

The Dipper can also be found along both rivers. Other species to be found in the woods around Munkefjord and Neiden are Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Cuckoo, Woodcock and Waxwing.

The delta area at Mikkelsnes is a particularly fine area for resting ducks and divers. Hundreds of Goosanders, Mergansers, Long-tailed Ducks, Common and Velvet Scoters and Common Eiders gather here before and



At low tide almost the whole of the mouth of the Neiden river becomes dry. From the road E6 there is a fine parking site at the large sand quarry, but be aware when you cross the road that cars may come at great speed.



The Arctic Warbler is a characteristic species for the Neiden area. The area around Neiden church is one of the best places to find it.

after the breeding season. Black-throated Divers use the area a great deal, and more than a hundred can be seen at one time. May is a very fine time, when the birds wait until the ice has gone from their breeding grounds.

Waders are attracted to the large expanses of mud. Bar-tailed Godwit, “tringa-waders”, and especially the Red Knot can appear in great numbers on spring migration. The White-tailed Eagle is often to be seen hunting in the area or resting on the sandbanks. This is also a good place for resting gulls and dabbling ducks.

On the shore fields at Mikkelsnes many passerines rest during migration in May, June and August. Snow Buntings, Lapland Buntings and Red-throated Pipits are some of the species to be met with. Numbers of geese graze here in spring and late summer. Both subspecies of Bean Goose (rossicus and fabalis) can be observed.

In winter Munkefjorden freezes, but from the mouth of Neidenelva and out in Neidenfjord there is always open water. Here thousands of Common Eiders gather, and there are also good possibilities of finding King Eider.

Access

From road E6 one has a good view over the fjord and the delta area at the mouth of Neidenelva. It is worthwhile stopping at a large sand quarry by Sandneset. Here one sees right over to the delta area. The distance to the river mouth is almost too far, and if there are many birds to see, it is better to drive to Mikkelsnes. Just north of Neidenelva and the turning towards Finland, one turns off towards Neiden church and Mikkelsnes (road 352). After 1.6 km you see the side road to Neiden church on the left side. Mikkelsnes lies almost at the end of the

road, and here there is a parking place. From here it is a fine walk out over the shore fields. Out on the headland one has a fine view over the delta area and in over Munkefjord. By driving some hundred metres further, to the end of the road, one sees out over Neidenfjorden.

Further information

Munkefjorden comprises the innermost part of Neidenfjorden. Together with the lower part of Neidenelva and Mikkelsnes, it forms Neiden and Munkefjord nature reserve.

Show respect for other visitors when you move around in the cemetery at Neiden church. The time to hear the Arctic Warbler is from about 20 June and about three weeks on. In this period there are always many birders in the area. Disturbance of the breeding birds is a potential problem, so be careful with the use of playback bird song.



The Little Bunting can be met with around Munkefjorden

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland



At the mouth of Neidenfjorden there are often flocks of Common Eider in winter



When you turn off from road E6 towards Mikkelsnes you see Neiden chapel on the left side. In June and July you will often see bird watchers here.



Bird watchers listening to the song of three different Arctic Warblers singing just outside the fence.

Nesseby Nature Reserve



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

The nature reserve at Nesseby is one of the best and most famous of the bird localities in Finnmark. Here there are many different biotopes that attract a wide variety of species. There is scarcely any other place in Finnmark where one can find as many species in one area. Nesseby is an excellent place to watch seabirds and waders. It is also a good locality for birds of prey, ducks and passerines.

Best time to visit

Nesseby is a fine place for bird watching the whole year, but especially from May to September. The area is very important as a resting and feeding site, and also as a breeding locality. Its position makes it favourable for watching bird migration.

Habitat and observation species

The vegetation is varied, with damp birch and willow scrub, hayfields, heather and bogs. The extensive mudflats and the varied coastline make the area ideal

for waders. Out on the headland and around the church there are bare rocks and small sandy beaches, and in places much seaweed washed ashore. Along the fjord below road E75 there is more vegetation and a couple of fertile stream outflows.

The varied coastline means that most waders thrive here. Especially Bar-tailed Godwit, Red Knot, Dunlin and Ringed Plover can be seen in flocks of hundreds during migration. Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper and Turnstone may be seen in smaller flocks.



© Anders Faugstad Møland

From Nesseby one can see many exciting species of seabirds



Bar-tailed Godwits in their fine summer plumage

Ducks, geese and gulls often gather in large flocks in the shallow water areas and at the stream outflows. Several species of birds of prey use this area as a hunting ground. The White-tailed Eagle is common here, and there are good possibilities of seeing the rare Gyr Falcon. One can often see the Short-eared Owl hunting over the hayfields.

Nesseby is one of the most exciting places in Finnmark for seabird watching. With an easterly wind the seabirds are pressed far into the Varanger fjord. When they reach the innermost parts, they must work their way out again against the wind. They then often make some circuits round the fjord off Nesseby. Outermost on the headland beyond the church one can sit on natural benches in the lee of the wind. Here the birds often pass at very close range. Gulls, Fulmars and auks as well as Gannets, skuas and divers can pass in large numbers. The Leach's Storm Petrel is also not uncommon to see during such conditions. The species may almost be called a speciality for the area as it is very rarely seen from other parts of Norway's mainland. Here one can also see such unusual species as Manx Shearwater, Little Gull and Sabine's Gull, as well as other rarer species. An example is a Soft-plumaged Petrel which was well documented in 2009. This was the first occurrence in Europe. With different wind conditions there are fewer seabirds to see, but in a period following strong wind from the east, there will

often be some seabirds remaining in the fjord. Many birds use the fjord for foraging and resting, so it is worthwhile spending time here regardless of weather and wind. There is a small pool out on the headland where one often finds Red-necked Phalaropes and Temminck's Stints. This also attracts many passerines and ducks.

The area on the lower side of road E75 is fine for passerines. The damp area of bogs and woodland is a good habitat for many species. Among these Bluethroat, Sedge Warbler and Red-throated Pipit breed. Ringing projects have proved that this is an area that attracts many birds during migration in late summer. One has especially good possibilities of finding Lapland Bunting, Arctic Redpoll and Yellow Wagtail in this period.

The harbour in Nesseby is a good place for finding Steller's Eider. This has become less common in summer during recent years, but from December until mid-May there are often small flocks here. From the harbour area there is also a fine view over the fjord. Here it can be worthwhile to sit in the car and watch out for seabirds if you do not want to go out onto the headland. Immediately on the east side of the built-up area, Bergeby river runs out and forms a fine delta. Here there is a large parking place where one has a good view. Gulls make good use of this area. It is also fine for duck species and "tringa-waders".



Nesseby church and the reserve seen from road E75

Access

The Nesseby area is easily surveyed and easy to find along road E75, 12 km from Varangerbotn. When you reach the built-up area, turn down to the church. Here there is a large parking place. It is also possible to stop along E75 in order to get an overview of the western part of the reserve.

Other information

In the nature reserve, hunting, loose dogs and open fires are forbidden the whole year.

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland

Øvre Pasvik



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Every year visitors interested in nature come from home and abroad in order to experience the unique nature of Øvre Pasvik. There are now a number of interesting protected areas in this border region – including Øvre Pasvik National Park and the Norwegian-Russian Pasvik nature reserve.

The first Norwegian to settle in Øvre Pasvik was the ornithologist Hans Thomas Lange Schaanning. He came to Pasvik in the year 1900 together with his friend Johan Koren. The two tried to make a living by hunting, as well as collecting birds' eggs and other natural history material. Schaanning also carried out research, and in the course of the 12 years he lived in Pasvik he made the area well known in scientific circles.

Best time to visit

With regard to birds the months May and June are the most profitable when visiting Øvre Pasvik. At this time of year there is daylight almost round the clock, and it can be worthwhile to make use of late evening hours and early hours of the night. Many bird species are especially active in the hours before and after midnight. At this time there are also greater chances of meeting brown bears and other mammals.

Most migrants arrive during May, and from the middle of this month one can hear singing passerines and displaying waders almost everywhere. A late spring thaw can however cause some areas to be inaccessible as late as mid-June. Insects are not usually a problem before Midsummer Day, but in July and early August the great numbers of mosquitoes can make it unpleasant to be out in the field. Remember insect repellent!

The transition August-September is also a fine time in Øvre Pasvik. The weather is often good and there are plenty of berries and edible fungus. In winter there are few birds in the area, but in some years one can find

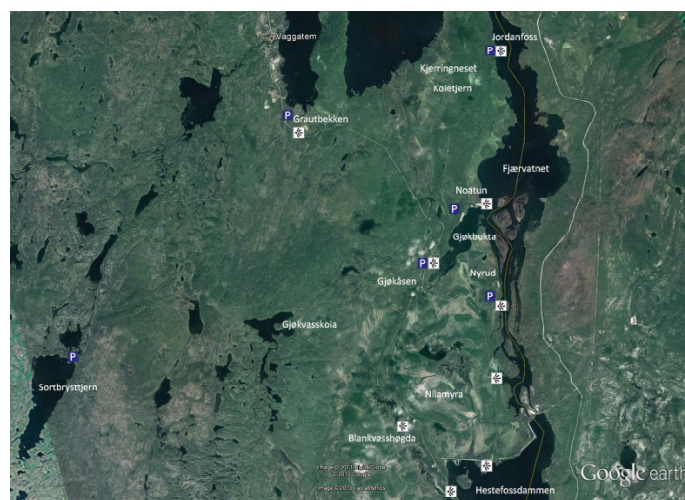
resident Great Grey Owls and/or Hawk Owls hunting over open ground by the roads.

The Pasvik river is usually ice-free from May to October, and the first migrants appear as soon as there are open channels in the ice around mid-April.

Habitat and bird species

The shallow parts of the Pasvik river are important bird areas. The lake Fjærvannet is a particularly important stopover site for ducks and waders in both spring and autumn. Whooper Swans and Bean Geese occur in considerable numbers. Other common species are Common Teal, Wigeon, Pintail, Mallard, Tufted Duck, Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser and Goosander.

Øvre Pasvik also offers large areas of tall pristine pine



Map of the areas around Noatun and Nyrud



Many lakes and wetlands characterize nature in Øvre Pasvik

forest. The forest in the Pasvik valley is a western outpost of the Siberian taiga. Here one finds several species of plants and animals that are not common in other parts of the country. Trees that are hundreds of years old provide nest sites for birds of prey, woodpeckers and hole-nesting ducks and owls.

The fauna in the National Park is not particularly rich, neither as regards number of species nor number of birds. Nevertheless the area can offer a unique feeling of wilderness, both summer and winter. Characteristic species of the pine forest are Siberian Jay, Siberian Tit, Redstart and Brambling. The Three-toed Woodpecker is the commonest of the woodpeckers. Birds of the grouse family such as Capercaillie, Willow Ptarmigan and Hazel Grouse lay their eggs among moss and lichen

on the forest floor. The Crane and Whooper Swan greet the coming of spring from bogs and wetlands. At some sites one can also hear displaying Jack Snipe and Broad-billed Sandpiper. Smew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Spotted Redshank, Waxwing and Pine Grosbeak are all eastern species that have a strong appeal to visiting bird enthusiasts.

These nest annually in Øvre Pasvik. Arctic Warbler and Little Bunting occur sparsely, but their numbers can vary greatly from year to year. The Great Grey Owl and Hawk Owl are mainly seen in years when there are large numbers of small rodents.

A long series of extremely rare bird species have been recorded from time to time in Øvre Pasvik. Examples of these are Ruddy Shelduck, Pacific Golden Plover, Long-billed Dowitcher, Calandra Lark, Red-rumped Swallow and Black-headed Bunting. Terek Sandpiper, Red-flanked Bluetail and Yellow-breasted Bunting have all been found breeding in this area.

Øvre Pasvik is a core area for the brown bear, and these may be met with in the period April to October. The Pasvik valley also has a good population of the musk rat, and one of the northernmost populations in the world of elk, or moose as it is often called.

Access and localities

Øvre Pasvik is easily accessible by car via the main road no. 885 southwards from Kirkenes/Hesseng. From Kirkenes to Nyrud is about 105 km. One should allow at least one whole day to investigate the most important



A young Siberian Tit which has recently left the nest



An information sign in Øvre Pasvik

localities. However, to find all the characteristic species of the area, one should spend at least 2-3 days. In the National Park in particular it can be far between the birds.

One kilometre south of the shop at Skogfoss the road crosses a small bay in lake Langvatnet. Check this for ducks and waders, especially shortly after the ice has gone. At Elgryggen (15 km south of Skogfoss) the road follows a dry moraine ridge with young pine forest. Siberian Jay, Pine Grosbeak and Cuckoo are often seen in this area. Check the grassy plains by Bjørkåsen common pasture (17 km) for Bean Geese and for singing Bluethroats in the willow scrub. The small bay innermost in Nordvestbukta may also be worth checking, especially in spring. Make a detour to the left along a gravel road after 19 km.

Further south the road follows the west side of lake Vaggatemvann. Check especially the mouth of the streams Emanuelbekken (23 km) and Spurbekken (23.5 km).

The Black-throated Diver is often seen on Vaggatemvannet. Hawk Owl and Short-eared Owl are seen regularly near the houses at Vaggatem (35.5 km). Bean Geese often forage in the fields. The Little Bunting has been observed several times near the turning to Øvre Pasvik National Park (37.3 km). Park at this road junction and check the area around the mouth of the stream Grautbekken on the east side of the road. Whinchat and Arctic Warbler have also been recorded in this area.

“Peisestua” that was Schaanning’s home from 1907 to 1911, still stands on the promontory at Noatun. Here at Lake Fjærvannet there are often great numbers of

ducks and several species of waders. Flocks of up to 150 Smew have been seen here in September. Whitetailed Eagle and Waxwing are seen regularly. The private farm Noatun may be visited only by prior arrangement.

Jordanfoss furthest north in Fjærvannet can be worth visiting. Little Gull and Arctic Tern are often seen in the rapids here, and both Merganser and Goosander are common. The Red-necked Grebe was recorded here in 2012. Turn off from road 885 as though you would go to Noatun. Keep to the left after 250 metres, and follow the forest road northward along Kjerringneset to Jordanfoss (6.5 km). The Red-flanked Bluetail was found nesting at Koietjern (3.7 km) in 2011. In summer there are often brown bears with young at Kjerringneset.

You get the best view over the innermost part of Gjokbukta from the observation hide on the west side of the bay. Park along road 885 by the sign “Fuglebu” (bird hut) just north of Gjokåsen border station, and follow the marked path to the hut. A telescope is recommended.

Road no. 885 ends at the police station at Nyrud. Park along the road 300 metres before the farm and follow the path southwards to border post 46. From here there is a good view over the Pasvik river and the island Varlamasaarli on the Russian side. This is a fine area for Little Bunting. Here there are also good possibilities of meeting Hazel Grouse and Waxwing.

Further south from Nyrud one can follow the old “tyskerveien” (German road) 3.6 km to the lake Hestefosdammen. Little Bunting can often be heard along the road and several species of wader nest on the surrounding bogs. From the lake embankment at Hestefosdammen there is a good view, and both Little Gull and Black-throated Diver are seen here regularly. Displaying Jack Snipe can be heard in the light summer nights. Follow the forest road westwards along the embankment to the small bog at Birrivara. Check this area for Whooper Swan, Bean Goose and displaying waders. From here you can follow the forest road southwards to Grensefoss (13 km), or return northwards to Gjokåsen border station (5 km) and road 885. Barely a kilometre north of Hestefosdammen lies the hill Blankvassåsen with a perfect view over Nilamyra. From here one can, with a little luck, see both brown bear and elk.

Øvre Pasvik National Park

Øvre Pasvik National Park can offer a variety of walks in one of Norway’s finest wildernesses. It is easy to get lost in the forest and scrub, so remember to take map

and compass, and GPS to find the way back to one's starting point. The forest roads are not always open, and not always easily passable. Here however are some suggestions for trips:

Grensefoss to Treriksrøysa: Turn off from road 885 at Gjøkåsen border station (8.7 km south of Vaggatem). Follow the forest road southwards via Hestefosssdammen (5.2 km) to the parking place at Grensefoss (18.5 km). From here there is a marked path up to Treriksrøysa (5 km) at the border between Norway, Finland and Russia.

Sortbrysttjern to Ellenkoia: Turn off from road 885 about 2 km south of Vaggatem (sign "Øvre Pasvik nasjonalpark"). Follow the forest road 9 km westwards to the parking place at Sortbrysttjern. From here there is a 4.4 km marked path to Ellenkoia and Ellenvatnet, and a further 6 km to Piilolahytta at the Finnish border. Both Ellenkoia and Piilolahytta are open for staying overnight.

Fiskervatn to Revsaksskaret: Turn off from road 885 about 7 km south of Vaggatem. Follow the forest road westwards via Gjøkvasskoia (4.6 km) and Tommamoen (10 km) to Fiskevatnet (13.5 km). From here it is a walk of only about two kilometres to Ødevasskoia and Revsaksskaret. By starting at Tommamoen one can explore the enormous bog Tommamyra where for example the Broad-billed Sandpiper nests.

Further information

Bioforsk Svanhovd is a natural starting point for bird trips in Pasvikdalen. Here one can gain information about the different protected areas and study the displays about nature and conservation. Here one can also stay overnight.

BIRK Husky at Melkefoss can also offer food and overnight stay. Here there is also a bird feeding site, a family path with nest boxes and an observation hide. Øvre Pasvik Café and Camping offers boat hire and camping cabins at Vaggatem.

Remember that Pasvikdalen is bear country. Be careful if you meet a bear, especially if it has young or has found a carcass.



Russian and Norwegian (yellow) border posts near Grensefoss

Conduct at the border

Remember that there are special regulations concerning movements along the Norwegian-Russian border:

It is forbidden to

- *Cross the border on land, on water or in the air*
- *Have any form for contact with, or behave offensively to persons across the borderline*
- *Throw objects over the borderline*

Groceries and petrol can be bought at Svanvik and Skogfoss. There are no shops or petrol stations in Øvre Pasvik. Remember to take with you all you need before you drive southwards.

Øvre Pasvik National Park was established in 1970 and today covers 119 km². Pasvik nature reserve was established in 1992 and covers 19 km². Together with adjacent protected areas in Finland and Russia they form the Pasvik-Inari Trilateral Park.

This fact sheet is prepared by Morten Günther

Persfjorden - an unique locality for diving ducks



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

The majestic Persfjorden offers a spectacular landscape and exciting bird watching. Among the most interesting are the large flocks of diving ducks that gather here. This is also a very fine place to see divers, gulls and birds of prey. On both sides of the fjord there is the special and barren moon-like landscape that continues out to Hamningberg.

Bukkemoltangen projects out into Persfjorden and divides into two the inner part of the fjord. Here there are sandy beaches, coastal fields and grazing ground. This is one of the best places in Varanger to observe sea mammals.

Best time to visit

As long as the road is open it is worthwhile to take a trip out here. The fjord is exciting throughout the year. The best time to visit the inland valleys is from late May until mid-July.

Habitat and observation species

Persfjorden is one of the very best fjords in Varanger for bird watching. The flocks of staging and summering

ducks and seabirds are especially interesting. Single birds or small flocks of King Eider, Common Scoter and Velvet Scoter can be observed the whole summer. The same applies to Yellow-billed Diver, Black-throated Diver and Red-throated Diver. During migration in May and in late summer the numbers are greater. The Long-tailed Duck can appear in thousands, and the same applies to Red-breasted Mergansers and Goosanders. Persfjorden has also proved to be a site where one may meet with very rare species. Both Harlequin Duck and White-winged Scoter have been recorded here. The fjord should therefore be observed from all sides.

At the river outflows, large numbers of gulls gather, especially when there is an onshore wind. One should always study these thoroughly. The scarce Sabine's Gull



Persfjorden is a beautiful and bird-rich fjord



The Rough-legged Buzzard is often seen hunting at Persfjorden



Persfjorden is one of the surest places in Finnmark to see the King Eider in summer. Most of these are females and juvenile males.

is a species that one may meet during such conditions. When there is much fish in the fjord, there is a teeming bird life. Then the Gannet often comes into the innermost parts of the fjord, as also do auks, divers, skuas and gulls. The White-tailed Eagle and Rough-legged Buzzard often hunt along the fjord, and Peregrine, Gyr Falcon and Merlin also occur in the area. The Temminck's Stint nests along the rivers, and Sanderlings often rest along the bare sand beaches.

There is little vegetation around Persfjorden, partly due to the stony terrain, but also due to the amount of grazing by sheep and reindeer. As a result there are not many species of breeding passerines. Nevertheless, there are good possibilities of seeing Red-throated Pipit, Horned Lark, Bluethroat and Arctic Redpoll. The Ring Ouzel nests in the mountain slopes along the fjord. Further into the valleys and in the mountains, one may find Willow Ptarmigan and Rock Ptarmigan.

By the road, three kilometres east of Persfjorden, lies the bay Prestnæringsbukta. Here large flocks of ducks and gulls often gather.

Access

Take off from road E75 immediately before the tunnel out to Vardø and into road no. 341. After 30 km you come to Persfjorden. There are many fine places to stop on the way, and it is worthwhile to stop at these in order to gain a good view over the different parts of the fjord. One should go out on Bukkemoltangen in order to come nearer the birds out on the sea. It can also be worthwhile to walk along the rivers further in the valleys. The road is closed in winter, normally from October to early May.

Further information

The road is narrow and winding along the fjord, and in summer there is also much traffic. Many grazing sheep and reindeer in the area make it necessary to drive carefully.

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland

All photos: © Anders Faugstad Møland

Prestøya in Kirkenes



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Prestøya in Kirkenes is a fine locality for visiting bird watchers who have limited time, or who do not have a car at their disposal. The island lies at walking distance from both Kirkenes centre and the terminal of the shipping line Hurtigruta. Here one can gain a first acquaintance with several of the characteristic species of the area. A nature trail has been laid out with information posters along the whole of the south side of the island.

The small island, Prestøya, is about two kilometres east of the centre of Kirkenes. During the Second World War a landfill was made over the shallow sound to Prestøya. Later a large shallow area on both sides was filled in and taken into use as a harbour, shopping and industrial area. The Hurtigruta ships stop here daily before setting course southwards towards Bergen.

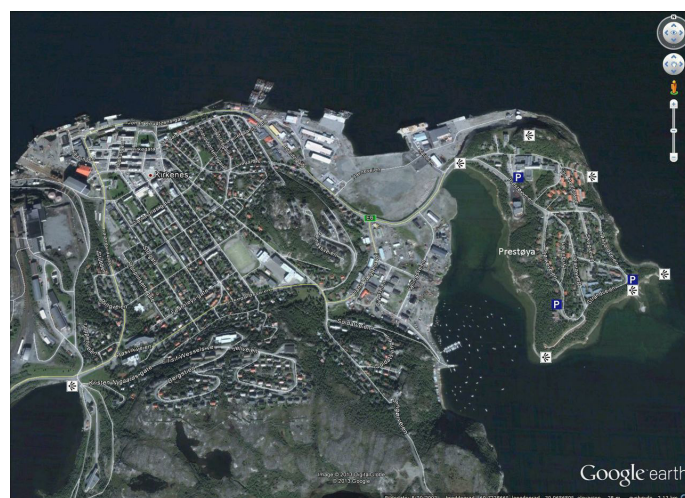
Prestøya is about one kilometre long and 400 metres wide. The central parts of the island are occupied by a housing estate. The Kirkenes hospital, Prestøya old people's home and two kindergartens are also situated on the island. Even though there are many who live and work on Prestøya, the area can also offer a rich and

varied diversity of birds and mammals. The southern part of the island consists of birch woods with rich herb vegetation. Furthest north, behind the hospital, there is a 50 metre high cliff with lichen and cloudberryes. During the last war there was a German cannon battery on top of the cliff.

In the bay Prestebukta and on the south side of Prestøya the fjord is shallow, and at low tide extensive mudflats are uncovered. This is an important stopover site for ducks and waders on migration in spring and autumn. Here there are also fine beaches and small grass meadows. From Fugleneset in the south-east a shallow threshold stretches right across the fjord to Svartaksla by



Prestebukta and Kirkenes hospital



Prestøya on the right in the photo



The tidal zone on the south side of Prestøya



Prestøya seen from the west

Jakobsnes. The local currents make this a particularly important foraging area both for fish and seabirds.

Habitat and observation species

A total of 120 bird species have been recorded on Prestøya. Most species visit the island on migration in spring and autumn, but there are also some species that forage in the fjord in winter.

Among the commonest species in the area are Red-throated Diver, Cormorant, Mallard, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Velvet Scoter, Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Goosander, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Purple Sandpiper, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Arctic Skua, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Arctic Tern, Domestic Pigeon, White Wagtail, Willow Warbler, Great Tit, Magpie, Hooded Crow, Raven, House Sparrow and Mealy Redpoll.

The King Eider can usually be seen at Prestøya from the end of December to the end of April. Up to 345 have been seen in the area. In winter the King Eiders prefer to stay out in the middle of the fjord between Prestøya and Jakobsnes, or in the area between Stangskjæret and Svartaksla – either together with Common Eiders or in dense flocks of only their own species. They forage

mainly on sea urchins, mussels, crevice brittlestar, crabs and common starfish which they find at depths of 20-40 metres.

The Steller's Eider is mainly seen at Prestøya on spring migration in April-May. Up to 250 have been recorded in the area, but in recent years the species has unfortunately become scarcer.

A few pairs of Kittiwakes still nest in Kjerringstupet immediately west of Prestøya. Glaucous and Iceland Gull appear from time to time in winter.

A large colony of Arctic Terns nested until a few years ago on the landfill area, but development and increased traffic has reduced the population to a minimum. Of more uncommon species that have been recorded on Prestøya may be mentioned Great Northern Diver, Bar-headed Goose, Garganey, Surf Scoter, Black-tailed Godwit, Snowy Owl, Hawk Owl and Long-tailed Tit.

Access

Prestøya is an easily accessed area that can offer a diversity of birds throughout most of the year, especially from January until August. The locality is particularly convenient for visitors who have newly arrived at Kirkenes by air or by Hurtigruta. Many of the commonest species can be seen here, and rarer species may appear from time to time.

Follow the sign from Kirkenes centre to Prestøya (about two kilometres). On arrival one can park at the hospital or along one of the roads in the area. One has the best view of the shallow areas by parking in Strandveien and walking cautiously through the birch woods down to the shore. A telescope is recommended. There is a nature trail along the whole of the south side of the island.

The inner parts of the bay Prestebukta can best be seen from Prestøyveien in the north. It is also possible to climb up onto the crag north of the hospital. From



Bøkfjorden and Sabelskjæret seen from Prestøya

here one has a good view northwards to Sabelskjæret and eastwards to Jakobsnes.

Further information

Five species of seal have been recorded in the inner part of Bøkfjorden: grey seal and common seal appear regularly in the fjord, while bearded seal, ringed seal and harp seal occur more sporadically. Walrus was observed

for the first time in Bøkfjorden in March 2013. Red fox and hare are seen regularly on the island, and domestic reindeer can appear during the summer.

In common with the rest of the Kirkenes peninsula, all animal and birdlife on Prestøya is protected.

This fact sheet is prepared by Morten Günther

Sandmelen and Leppäruto – bird song site with exotic alder forest



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Sandmelen is a south-facing sand hill by the river Lakselv in Porsanger District. In a small area, all vegetation has been blown away, and some of the fine-grained sand has been moved into the forest, where large sand dunes have been formed that have buried some trees. Below the sand hill lies a lush and tall-grown alder forest, Leppäruto, surrounded by south and west facing birch-covered hillsides. The area lies east of the river Lakselv.

Sandmelen is mainly visited by local ornithologists who know the area. In calm weather this is a fine point to stop and hear bird sounds from the alder forest and birch slopes below. The grey alder forest is in places a floodwater forest all the way down to the Lakselv river, and which stretches almost a kilometre southwards.

Best time to visit

The first songbirds arrive in the last half of May. The best time to visit will therefore be from mid-May to early September.

Habitat and observation species

The topography in the area makes the grey alder forest at the bottom of the valley both warm and calm. The alder forest is dense and lush in places, with thick ground vegetation. Along the river, bushes of downy currant grow. There are some dried out riverbeds through the area, in places with very soft clay. Small ox-bow lakes that remain following the spring flood, lead to good reproductive conditions for insects. These are fine food for the birds, but can be a plague for humans.



© Almar Paulsen

The view from Sandmelen up along Lakselvdalen. Leppäruto is on the west side of the photo.



© Almar Paulsen

Sandmelen seen from the south. The forest in front is a part of Leppäruto

Of birds that have been recorded in the area, Icterine Warbler and Little Bunting are perhaps the rarest. In addition, one may hear/see Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Wood Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher, Willow Tit, Great Tit, Siberian Tit, Fieldfare, Redwing, Common Sandpiper and Wood Pigeon. Along the river one can often meet with Red-breasted Merganser and Goldeneye.

Access

The area stretches southwards by road E6, about 3 km from Lakselv centre, where the pedestrian and cycle paths end. On the west side of the road there is a small side road where one can park. An old road leads westwards into the area, and several side roads lead in to the left. Take the first, which is used by cyclists, motorcyclists and four-wheel drive vehicles. By following this road one arrives at the top of the slope, where one can choose between going into Sandmelen itself, or choose to follow a path down towards the river and the alder forest. This is an “angler’s path” which continues along the river some way southwards, but it is also possible to turn left and into the alder forest.

Further information

In Lakselv one can find most of what is needed for a fine outdoor life: food shops, sports shops, car hire, medical centre, police, overnight accommodation, bus station, airport and so on.

This fact sheet is prepared by Almar Paulsen



© Almar Paulsen

The alder forest in Leppäruto. (Leppä = alder, Ruto = forest)



© Terje Kolaas

The Little Bunting can occur in the alder forest

The Skrøytnes area



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Chance observations and recording through several years have proved that the Skrøytnes area has a great potential as a bird locality, with regard to both number of birds and number of species. There are probably few, if any, places in Pasvik that can show a greater diversity of birds than this area in the centre of the valley. Here there are many different types of habitat within a relatively limited area.

The Skrøytnes area lies well outside the Pasvik nature reserve, and has today no special protection regarding future development. This is despite the fact that the area is probably one of the most interesting in the whole of Pasvikdalen. Here one finds several rare breeding species, such as Bean Goose, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Little Gull and Common Crane.

Recording in the area has shown that this is an extremely important resting and breeding ground for a number of wetland birds. So far more than 130 species of birds have been recorded in the area, and several of these are on the national red list of threatened species in Norway.

The area gives the impression in many ways of being a cross-section of Pasvikdalen. Here one can find most of the valley's special bird species. Many mammal species have also been recorded, such as brown bear, lynx, elk (moose) and musk-rat.

The best time to visit

The Skrøytnes area is easily accessible the whole year, but there are most birds to see from May to October when the Pasvik river is ice-free.

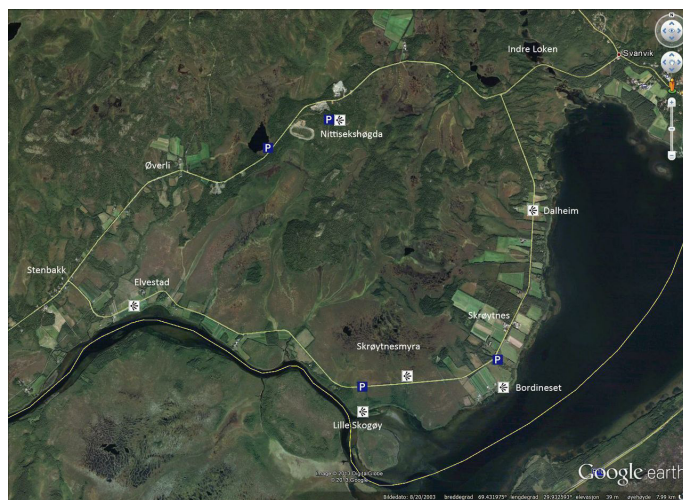
On the river there is great activity immediately after the ice has gone, usually from the transition April-May. Whooper Swans, Bean Geese and various duck species gather here as soon as channels in the ice are accessible. The Little Gull usually appears in mid-May. Displaying waders are most active in the transition May-June. Little

Bunting and Arctic Warbler usually sing most actively from Midsummer Day and the following two weeks.

A visit in a night in June in the midnight sun can be highly recommended! Many bird species are more active at night. In addition there is then a greater chance of seeing mammals such as brown bear and elk.

Habitat and bird species

The Pasvik valley is broad and forested with a character of wilderness and with many areas of wetland. Here we find a number of exotic species which are not found breeding at many other localities in Norway: Bean Goose, Smew, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Jack Snipe, Spotted Redshank, Great Grey Owl, Arctic Warbler and



Map of the Skrøytnes area

Little Bunting.

Whooper Swan, Common Crane and Short-eared Owl nest on several of the extensive bogs, and in the coniferous forest one can find species such as Hazel Grouse, Hawk Owl, Three-toed Woodpecker, Waxwing, Siberian Tit and Siberian Jay. The Little Gull became established as a breeding species in this area in 1999.

The lush river banks along Svanvannet (Salmijärvi) are an important stopover site for ducks in both spring and autumn. Rare visitors such as Grey Heron, Pink-footed Goose, Barnacle Goose, Bar-headed Goose, Red-necked Grebe, Pomarine Skua, Ivory Gull, Common Swift and Red-backed Shrike have all been observed in the Skrøytnes area.

Access and localities

The Skrøytnes area is easily accessible by car. One gets the best view over the area by driving along the so-called Skrøytnes round and stopping at chosen sites on the way. The Skrøytnes round is about 18 km, and takes only about half an hour. One should however allow at least half a day (or night) if one wishes to investigate the different localities.

The road along Skrøytnes can be a fine detour also for bird watchers who are on the way to or from Øvre Pasvik. This road is about 3 km further than following road no. 885, but offers more birds, more varied nature and a view over to the Russian mining town of Nikel.

The Skrøytnes round starts at the road junction 2 km west of Svanvik. Turn left at the sign "Skrøytnes" and follow the road along the Pasvik river. On returning to road 885 at Stenbakk, turn right at the sign "Kirkenes" in order to return to the starting point.

Dalheim

After 1 km with forest on both sides of the road the terrain opens out. Check the open areas towards Skrøytnes for resting geese, waders, hunting Short-eared Owls and singing Sedge Warblers. The Lesser Spotted Woodpecker occurs in the birch woods down by the river. Chaffinch and Yellowhammer have occasionally been found singing at the forest edges, and this is a possible area for Little Bunting.

Bordineset

After passing Skrøytnes the road curves to the right (3.9 km). Park on the left site just before the bend, and follow the gravel track 400 metres down to Bordineset and border post no. 144. From here there is a good

view over the southern part of Svanvannet. Dabbling ducks may often be hidden in the bank vegetation. It can therefore be a good strategy not to go the whole way down to the water. Check the surface for Black-throated Diver, Little Gull and flocks of ducks, including Smew. Both Osprey and White-tailed Eagle fish in this area, and Short-eared Owl and Sedge Warbler are common. A telescope is recommended.

Skrøytnesmyra

After 4.5 km the landscape opens where the road crosses the large bog Skrøytnesmyra.

This area of bog is extensive and difficult to get a view over. The easiest is to scan the area from the road using a telescope. Common Crane, Little Gull, Wood Sandpiper and Whimbrel have all been found breeding on Skrøytnesmyra. Other interesting species seen regularly are White-tailed Eagle, Rough-legged Buzzard, Hen Harrier, Willow Ptarmigan, Short-eared Owl, Bar-tailed Godwit and Spotted Redshank.

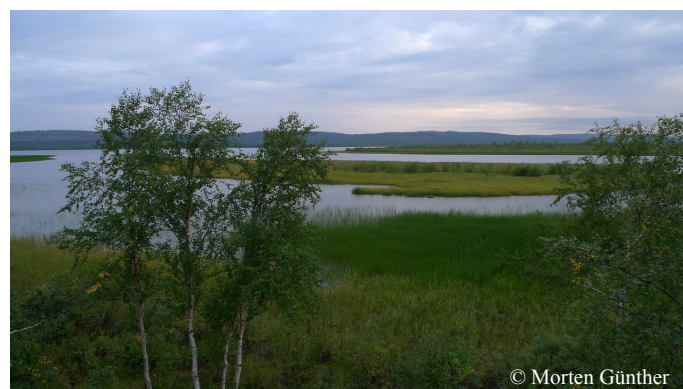
With a little luck one may have the chance of seeing one of the large mammals such as elk and brown bear on Skrøytnesmyra.

The observation tower at Lille Skogøy

In the centre of Skrøytnesmyra (5.8 km) there is a small parking place on the left side of the road. From here there is a path, partly of narrow foot bridges, about 350 m to an observation tower by the water's edge. The tower gives a fine view over parts of Svanvannet and Lille Skogøy (also called Mennikaholmen). From May to August this is an important area for both ducks and waders. Check the mud banks, the bank vegetation and the lush Mennikabukta on the Russian side to the south-east. Here one can often see species such as Shoveler, Smew, Bar-tailed Godwit and Little Gull. The Jack Snipe may be heard displaying over the tower. Watch also for birds flying overhead such as Bean Goose, White-tailed Eagle, Osprey, Common Crane and owls. A telescope and rubber boots are recommended.

Elvestad

Shortly before Elvestad (9.2 km) the road makes a 90° turn before opening out into an area of grass fields on both sides of the road. Whinchat has several times been seen along the road, and the Short-eared Owl often hunts over the open areas. This part of the river is good for birds and Smew are seen relatively often.



The bird observation tower at Lille Skogøy gives a fine view over the southern part of Svanvannet

Melkefoss

After 10 km the road divides where it turns away from the river. If you wish to continue the round you should drive straight on. Alternatively you can make an extra detour by turning left towards Melkefoss. On the way you pass Pasvik Taiga, where there is a feeding site that attracts exciting species such as Siberian Tit, Siberian Jay and Pine Grosbeak. The Blue Tit, still a rare bird in Pasvik, was found nesting here as recently as 2012.

Stenbakk

Just before Stenbakk (10.5 km) some fields are cultivated on the right side of the road. These should be checked for resting Bean Geese. Goldeneye and Smew have been found nesting in nest-boxes in this area.

Øverli

After 12.8 km a forest road takes off to the left. This continues 16 km through the forest to a parking place at Lille Sameti. The road goes through a varied landscape of forest and bogs, and there are good possibilities of seeing species typical of the coniferous forest. At Myrbekkoia

(10.5 km from Øverli) there is a bird feeding site and several nest-boxes.

Nittisekshøgda

The road to Nittisekshøgda takes off to the right at Pasvik racecourse (14.6 km). From the top there is a view over to the Russian mining town Nikel and the expanses of bogs to the south and east. Siberian Jay, Redstart and Three-toed Woodpecker are often seen in this area. Siberian Tit has nested in the wall of the tower. Check the areas of bogs with a telescope for resting geese and cranes.

Further information

Bioforsk Svanhovd is a natural starting point for bird trips in the Skrøytnes area. Here you can get information about the protected areas in the Pasvik valley, and study the displays about nature and the environment. One can also stay the night here.

Pasvik Taiga offers food and overnight stay at Melkefoss. Remember that Pasvik is bear country. Be careful if you meet a bear, especially if it has young or has found a carcass.

Conduct at the border

Remember that there are special regulations concerning movements along the Norwegian-Russian border:

It is forbidden to

- *Cross the border on land, on water or in the air*
- *Have any form for contact with, or behave offensively to persons across the borderline*
- *Throw objects over the borderline*

Slettnes Nature Reserve



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Slettnes Nature Reserve is a unique protected area, with regard to both Finnmark and the whole of Scandinavia. It is also Norway's most northerly mainland reserve. The comparatively unspoilt coastal plain houses an enormous concentration of birds. The average temperature throughout the year is less than 10°C, so this is an exposed place. Here there are up to 370 pairs of breeding Arctic Skuas, making this the largest «colony» in Norway. In spring and autumn hundreds of thousands of seabirds migrate past the coast of Slettnes.

In summer the Arctic Skuas are the most eye-catching feature when visitors arrive at Slettnes. They have become a characteristic species for this treeless tundra area. They also function here as guardians (umbrella species) for many of the other breeding birds.

The name Slettnes indicates that this is a flat landscape. All has been formed through thousands of years by changes in sea level, ice, weather and wind. Here you find bogs, water, streams, and small tussocks lifted by the frost. Slettnes has Ramsar status, and received protection as a nature reserve in 1996. It is easy to wander about in the reserve. Unfortunately there are no facilities for handicapped persons away from the road. Over 180 different bird species have been recorded at Slettnes.

Best time to visit

Slettnes can be visited at all times of year. Even though the days are short in winter, the surrounding Barents Sea houses several exciting bird species. One finds the largest numbers in spring and autumn, and in the breeding season June/July.

The seabird migration in April/May attracts bird watchers from Norway and abroad every year. Experience shows that bird migration is at its best in the period 10-20 May. The same occurs in September-



Slettnes lighthouse is the world's most northerly on the mainland, and is protected as a cultural monument. In summer there is a café and guided tours of the lighthouse and one can also stay over for the night.



In spring thousands of Pomarine Skuas pass Slettnes on their way to breeding grounds in Russia. The best period for migration is mid and late May.

October when many of the seabirds move towards their winter quarters.

In June and July you can experience the breeding birds at close range. More than 50 species nest within the borders of the reserve, and they can be observed from the road as well as from prepared nature and cultural trails.

Habitat and observation species

The reserve of 12 km² is surrounded by treeless tundra. At first site it can therefore appear barren and deserted, consisting of rock formations of sandstone and phyllite. The many beach terraces show that the sea was once much higher. A series of small streams and rivers drain out into the many bogs, lakes and the sea. The tussocks lifted by the frost form small “camel backs” in the landscape. Crowberry and dwarf birch are characteristic. In the bogs, water horsetail and water sedge dominate. The whole reserve borders on the open Barents Sea which never freezes due to the Gulf Stream that brings warm salt water northwards along the coast. The sea is rich in nutrients and is

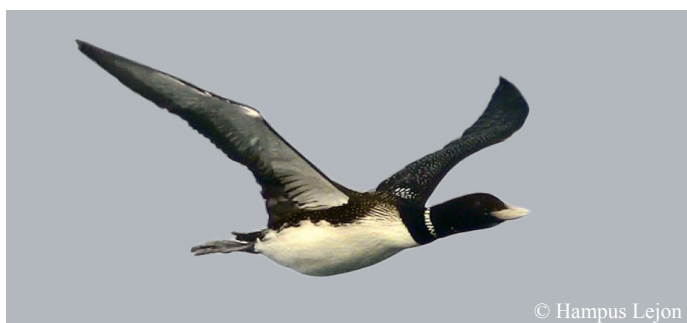
an important food source for both migratory and breeding birds.

In the breeding season it is just this that gives good conditions for many of the hardy species that Slettnes can offer. The first bird one will probably meet when one arrives at Slettnes in summer is the Arctic Skua. Up to 370 pairs make this species one of the most important in the whole area. Other significant species in summer are Red-throated Diver, Long-tailed Duck, Arctic Tern, Purple Sandpiper, Turnstone, Dunlin, Little Stint, Whimbrel, Red-throated Pipit, Snow Bunting and Lapland Bunting. In the migration season, important species are Yellow-billed Diver, Sooty Shearwater, Pomarine Skua (you can in fact find all the European skuas at Slettnes), auks, Glaucous Gull, King Eider and Steller's Eider. In winter Yellow-billed Diver, Glaucous Gull, Iceland Gull, Rock Ptarmigan and Arctic Redpoll are the most important.

The Arctic Skuas are spread around in the whole reserve. Their eggs are placed right on the ground in a small hollow. Some of the Arctic Skuas can be very aggressive, and it is advisable to follow the road and the marked tracks.

The waders in the reserve choose many different habitats. Dunlin and Little Stint prefer the damp areas, while the Purple Sandpiper likes streamlets. The Turnstone and Whimbrel often choose rather drier ridges. Common to all the waders is that they like to move out to the river mouths to seek food. To sit near such a river mouth can be a good observation point. If the Arctic Skua is excluded, the waders form the most important group of birds at Slettnes with a total of 25 breeding species.

The many beach embankments that were formed during the last ice age are the home of the Arctic Terns.



The Yellow-billed Diver is a common species at Slettnes in the winter and during the migration period. In one day more than 400 have been recorded.

This is a species which often has its breeding season spoilt due to disturbance and predation. It is fascinating to see them trying to avoid Arctic Skuas that try to steal fish from them in the air.

We must not forget the small passerine species. The Snow Bunting is the commonest in the stony screes innermost in the reserve. The Lapland Bunting prefers areas with some low scrub, and also road edges. The Red-throated Pipit has its home around Slettnes lighthouse. All these passerine species nest on the ground at Slettnes. Their nests are filled with grass and feathers, giving good insulation in the harsh climate.

Few birds of prey nest regularly in the reserve. In some years the Short-eared Owl can breed, only to be gone the next season. One can, however, have the luck to experience the occasional White-tailed Eagle, Gyr Falcon or Peregrine. Today the Snowy Owl is only a scarce visitor to Slettnes.

Spring and autumn migration has gained much publicity in ornithological circles, also outside Norway. Enormous flocks of seabirds fly past in April/May and September/October. Slettnes has several ornithological records for both Yellow-billed Divers and Pomarine Skuas. Daily numbers of over 1000 Pomarine Skuas and 400 Yellow-billed Divers are not unusual. These are greater than any passage numbers that have been recorded for these species anywhere else in Europe. During spring migration several tens of thousands of seabirds migrate past Slettnes, and this is one of the most spectacular features that Slettnes can offer.

In winter one should particularly look for gulls. Resting Glaucous and Iceland Gulls are always a fine sight.

Access

Immediately before arriving at Mehamn centre, on road no. 888, you will find a sign to Gamvik. From Mehamn to Gamvik is 20 km. In the centre of Gamvik (just after the food store) you see a sign that points to the left towards Slettnes. After two kilometres you are in Slettnes Nature Reserve.

Widerøe makes daily flights to Mehamn, and the shipping line Hurtigruta comes into Mehamn daily. At Mehamn a car can be hired at the airport, or you can take a bus to Gamvik.

If you drive along road E6 you take off northwards in Lakselv. Here there is a sign to Ifjord, and now you



At Slettnes there are good possibilities of seeing several different gull species such as Glaucous Gull (above) and Kittiwake.

should be on road no. 98. After 120 kilometres you will be at Ifjord, and then turn left to Mehamn/Kjøllefjord along road no. 888. From Ifjord to Mehamn is 100 km. Note that there can be convoy driving in winter. Ring 175 for information about this.

Further information

At Slettnes one can stay the night at the lighthouse (Slettnes fyr). At present it is possible to book via Gamvik Museum 71° N (telephone 78 49 79 49, e-mail gamvik@kystmuseene.no).

In summer a café is open and there are guided tours of the lighthouse.

In Gamvik there is Gamvik Guest House, fully licensed (telephone 48 02 36 40, e-mail gjesten@gamvik.org).

Mehamn is 20 km away, and can be an alternative if one will stay at a hotel (Mehamn Arctic Hotel) or bed & breakfast (Expedition Earth Mehamn).

There are also cabins to be hired, so there is something for everyone. Of course all are free to put up a tent, but we do not wish anyone to do this far into the reserve. Gamvik has its own shop and postal service, but no petrol station.

One can most easily watch for seabirds by sitting by Slettnes lighthouse. There is a parking place by the lighthouse. An alternative is Flintodden, a fine place east of Gamvik centre. One can find other species by following the road and the marked tracks in Slettnes nature reserve.

This fact sheet is prepared by Roy Erling Wrånes

Stabbursdalen - Lompola



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

The terrain is characterized by enormous gravel and stone deposits following the last Ice Age. Here one also finds the most northerly pine forest in the world. In this area one can observe many of the species that are typical of pine forest, but which here are right at the edge of their normal area of distribution. At the entrance to Stabbursdalen National Park, a feeding site for birds has been built where one can experience many of these species beside the parking place.

The Lompola area lies partly in Stabbursdalen landscape preservation area, and partly within Stabbursdalen National Park in the Porsanger District.

Lompola is a term for a lake or a broad part of a river that the river current runs through. Lompola is from the Kven/Finnish language, and “louppal” is the corresponding term in the Sami language. The word is used both as a description of the nature and as a geographical place name.

The Lompola area and the valley below are undoubtedly one of the most productive parts of the

national park, where from olden times there has been both harvesting of hay and felling of timber for house building.

Around the cabins in the area, and at a communal boat-mooring site, one can easily see that that the area has been much used during the summer. Along an old cart track, a gravel road has been formed that ends at a parking place a few hundred metres from the park boundary. Otherwise there are few signs of human activity that devalue the environment.



© Almar Paulsen

The Lompola area in Stabbursdalen National Park. The photo is taken eastwards from Ganecohkka which lies on the west side of the river.

Best time to visit

The best time to visit Lompola and the surrounding forested area is from about 10th May until 1st September. Many of the species overwinter here, but the area is not so accessible during the winter.

Habitat and observation species

The pine forest around Lompola, designated the world's most northerly, grows mainly on the dry gravel terraces deposited during and after the last Ice Age. The soil is not especially fertile, and the ground vegetation is therefore meagre. At the lower parts of the rivers and around the lakes there is a much richer deciduous forest, with birch, willow, alder and rowan. In the more sheltered places we also find groves of aspen. In the fertile wetland areas we find belts of sedge and willow that give good nesting sites for many different bird species.

Even on arrival at the parking place at the end of the road, one can experience a varied bird life. Here a feeding site has been erected that is eagerly visited by most of the species that are found in the pine forest in Stabbursdalen. Species that you can observe here are Blue Tit, Willow Tit, Great Tit, Siberian Tit, Brambling, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Waxwing, Siskin, Common Redpoll, Arctic Redpoll, Lesser Spotted and Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Three-toed Woodpecker, Eurasian Jay, Siberian Jay, Pine Grosbeak, Common Crossbill and Hawfinch. In good rodent years, Rough-legged Buzzard, Short-eared Owl and Hawk Owl are common.

From the parking site several paths lead down to Lompola and Stabburselva. The walk from the parking site takes about ten minutes. In the lush deciduous forest by the river and on the shore zone round the lakes there have been observed such species as Lapland Longspur, Yellow Wagtail, Wigeon, Tufted Duck, Goldeneye, Slavonian Grebe, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-throated Diver, Common Sandpiper, Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper and many others. Hole-nesting species such as Goldeneye and Goosander have also been reported nesting in hollow pine trees.

If one chooses to take a trip from the parking place along the marked track to Stabbursfossen, one goes through ancient and stunted pine forest. On arrival, one finds wood to light a fire, and there is a good view over the river and the canyon. The walk provides both a rich birdlife and fine subjects for photography

There is also a marked path that leads from the parking place to the top of Bingalvarre. This is a fine



Information board at the entrance to Stabbursdalen National Park



Siberian Jay at the feeding site

day trip that ends in mountainous terrain with Long-tailed Skua, Meadow Pipit, Golden Plover and Rock Ptarmigan, to mention a few. On the way there and to Stabbursfossen there is the possibility of seeing several

species of raptor such as White-tailed Eagle, Golden Eagle and Goshawk.

Access

The easiest way of coming to Lompola is by car. Follow road E6 northwards from Lakselv centre for about 15 km. The road follows the sea all the way. When one drives up a steep slope, and comes up to the flat Stabbursneset, one turns off along an unmarked forest road on the left. One continues along this for about 6 km until one arrives at a large parking site with an information board and other facilities. From here one can continue, following the signs and marks, if one wishes to go on some of the fine walking tours along the valley.

Information about Stabbursdalen National Park, Stabbursdalen Landscape Preservation Area and other protected areas, both in Porsanger and in the rest of Finnmark, can be obtained at Stabbursnes Naturhus og Museum. This centre is situated along road E6, about 1.5 km north of the turning off to the park.

Further information

Stabbursdalen National Park was established in 1970 and extended in 2002. The park now covers 747 km²,



Information board at the feeding site in Stabbursdalen

and Stabbursdalen Landscape Preservation Area, which borders on the national park in the north and east, covers 189 km². Apart from a small corner of the park in the northwest, which extends into Kvalsund District, the whole of the landscape preservation area and the national park lie within Porsanger District. There are no access restrictions in Stabbursdalen National Park.

At Stabbursnes there is a camping site with a café. The nearest shopping centre is at Lakselv.

Faktaarket er laget av Steve Aslaksen, Torkjell Morset og Almar Paulsen

Stabbursnes and Valdakmyra



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

The Inner Porsangerfjord, with its system of broad beaches, tidal and shallow water areas, river outflows, islets, inlets and tidal water currents, is one of the most important wetland areas for birds in Norway. Valdakmyra lies in the Stabbursnes Nature Reserve, about 15 kilometres north of Lakselv. Stabbursnes is an exciting starting point for experiencing birds in Porsanger, with its closeness to the Stabburselv delta and the world's most northerly pine forest. This area is also the place where one, in both spring and autumn, can observe the Lesser White-fronted Geese on migration.

Best time to visit

The best time to visit Valdakmyra is when the birds migrate in May, June and August. At this time there are most species and greatest number of birds on the bogs. The chances of finding rare birds are also greatest during this period.

Habitat and observation species

Stabbursneset is a broad delta of sand and gravel that the river Stabburselv has washed out into the Porsangerfjord at the end of and after the ice age. Both north and south of the promontory we find broad, flat beaches and tidal areas. The offshore sea is very shallow, and the nature reserve covers one of Norway's largest continuous shallow water areas.

The most distinctive characteristic of the vegetation in the area is the extensive plains of shore fields, with many arctic plant species and plant societies. One of these shore fields is Valdakmyra, which lies immediately south of Stabbursneset.

On the broad shore fields, dabbling ducks and geese in particular rest and forage, with Teal, Mallard, Shelduck, Wigeon, Grey-lag Goose, Bean Goose and Lesser White-fronted Goose appearing in largest numbers. Dunlin and Bar-tailed Godwit also occur in

large numbers, together with Oyster Catcher, Ringed Plover, Turnstone and Ruff. Especially noteworthy is the great number of the arctic wader species Knot (flocks of 30,000 have been recorded). Lapwing, Ruff and Curlew breed in the area.

Ducks, geese and waders all use the area. Especially important is the significance of the area as a staging site for waders during migration, as a moulting area for ducks, and as an overwintering area for Common Eiders in particular.

Access

From Lakselv you follow road E6 on the west side of the Porsangerfjord towards the North Cape. After



Stabbursnes naturhus & museum



© Wenzel Prokosch

Each spring up to 30,000 Knots gather along the coast at Stabbursnes

about 15 km you arrive at Stabbursnes. The first thing you find when you come up onto the plateau is an information board on the right hand side, with a view over Valdakmyra. On the opposite side of E6 there is a

turning off to Stabbursdalen, and to the border of the National Park. Here there is a feeding site for birds, and the entrance to the most northerly pine forest in the world.

Just before driving down to Stabbursnes there is a road, with no signpost, that turns off to the right. By following this road one comes, after 400-500 metres, to an observation hut, which is the best point for studying the birdlife. Here a telescope is an advantage, as the birds are quite far out. When one leaves Stabbursneset northwards, one comes to the river Stabburelva and to Stabbursnes Information Centre and Museum. Here a nature trail starts, with a view to the river delta and Valdakmyra.

Further information

Stabbursnes nature reserve was established in 1983. The aim of giving protection is to preserve a wetland area that has international importance as a stopover and migration site for a number of species of ducks, geese and waders, and to preserve extensive, well-developed coastal fields with arctic species and plant societies. Note that entry into parts of the reserve is forbidden in the period 1st May to 30th June and 10th August to 20th September. These areas are marked.



© Terje Kolaas

Stabbursnes is an important stopover site for Lesser White-fronted Geese

This fact sheet is prepared by Steve Aslaksen og Torkjell Morset

The Svanvik area



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

The Pasvik valley is well known for its rich bird life. Most bird enthusiasts drive quickly southwards to Noatun, Nyrud and Øvre Pasvik National Park, but in fact there is also much of interest in the northern part of the valley. For those who have limited time at their disposal, there are several exciting localities worth visiting in the immediate vicinity of Svanhovd.

Best time to visit

You can probably find the greatest number of species if you visit the Pasvik valley in the second half of June. The Little Bunting and Arctic Warbler usually sing most actively from Midsummer Day until two weeks later. Earlier in spring there is great activity on the river just after the ice has melted, usually from the transition April–May. Resting Whooper Swans, Bean Geese and various duck species gather as soon as there is access to open water.

The Little Gull often appears in mid-May. Waders in display flight are most active at the transition May–June. The Svanvik area has however something to offer visiting bird watchers most of the year. Many species of the coniferous forests are residents. In several places those who live in the area have feeding sites that attract exciting species such as Siberian Tit, Siberian Jay and Pine Grosbeak. Also Hawfinch and Tree Sparrow have recently appeared at feeding places.

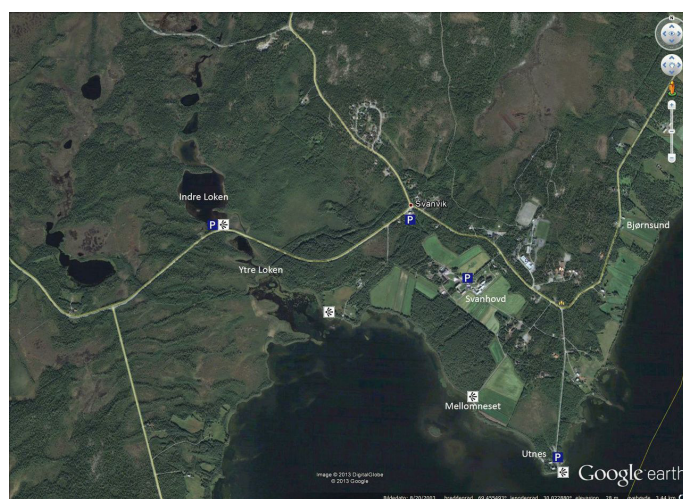
In some years there may be resident Hawk Owl and/or Great Grey Owl in the Svanvik area in winter.

Habitat and bird species

The Pasvik valley is broad and forested with an appearance of wilderness and with many wetland areas. Here we find a number of exotic species that are not found breeding at many other places in Norway: Bean Goose, Smew, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Jack Snipe, Spotted Redshank, Great Grey Owl and Little Bunting.

Whooper Swan, Common Crane and Short-eared Owl nest in several of the large bogs, and in the coniferous forest you can find species such as Hazel Grouse, Hawk Owl, Three-toed Woodpecker, Waxwing, Siberian Tit and Siberian Jay. The Little Gull first became established as a breeding bird near Svanvik in 1999.

The fertile river banks along Svanevannet (Salmijärvi) are an important stopover site for ducks in both spring and autumn. One gets the best view over the northern part from Utnes and Mellomneset just east of Svanhovd. Other localities worth visiting are Ytre and Indre Loken, Bjørnsundvegen and Strandvegen between Ryeng and Strand.



Map of the Svanvik area



The Little Gull was first found nesting in Svanvannet in 1999

With the exception of a few hectic weeks in summer, the Pasvik valley seldom sees visiting bird watchers. The area is large and there are always good possibilities of discovering something exciting. Rarities such as Lesser White-fronted Goose, Bar-headed Goose, Red-crested Pochard, Black Kite and Ivory Gull have all been recorded in the Svanvik area.

Access and localities

Follow roads E6 and 885 southwards from Kirkenes/Hesseng to Svanvik (40 km). An alternative route is to turn left at Rødsand (31 km) towards Furumo. This so-called Bjørnsundveien is two kilometres shorter and well worth a visit.

Vinterveiskaret

A lush birch forest area four km south of Hesseng. Take off to the right at the sign "Skytebane". Arctic Warbler and Chiffchaff are often heard singing in this area.



The view towards Mellomneset from Bioforsk Svanvik

Strandvegen between Ryeng and Strand

28 km south of Hesseng (6 km north of Svanvik). Turn off to the right at the sign "Strand" or "Bjørnehi". Several singing Arctic Warblers have been heard along this road in recent years, on both the upper and lower side of the road.

Bioforsk Svanhovd

Research centre and national park visitor centre one km east of the shop at Svanvik. The feeding site in winter can attract Siberian Tit, Pine Grosbeak and Arctic Redpoll. Several pairs of House Sparrows nest in the forecourt. Resting Golden Plover, Common Crane, Bar-tailed Godwit and Ruff are often to be seen on the grass fields in June (especially at night). Uncommon species such as Wood Pigeon, Robin, Tree Sparrow, Chaffinch, Hawfinch, Jackdaw and Yellowhammer have all been recorded near the centre.

Follow the farm track almost a kilometre south-eastwards from the rear side of Bioforsk Svanhovd. From Mellomneset there is a fine view over the northern part of the lake Svanvannet. Check especially the shoreline and the offshore islets for ducks and waders. Wigeon and Tufted Duck are the commonest species, but Smew are seen regularly. Black-throated Diver and Whooper Swan often stay further out on the lake. The same applies to small flocks of Little Gull and Arctic Tern. Both White-tailed Eagle and Osprey fish in the area. Across the road from Bioforsk Svanhovd lies Pasvik Folk High School. From the school's sports centre there is a 1.5 km long asphalted path for users of wheelchairs. Here one can find forest species such as Siberian Tit and Siberian Jay.



© Morten Günther

The Siberian Jay is a characteristic species in the Pasvik valley pine forests

Utnes

The old ferry terminal, Utnes, is easily accessible one km south of Svanvik church. Here there is a small public bathing place for wheelchair users. Park on the right just past the red pump building. From here there is a good view over large parts of Svanvannet. The Little Gull was first found nesting in a colony of Black-headed Gulls on the low islet 300 metres south of Utnes. Check the shoreline for resting ducks and waders. Check also Bjørnsundet on the other side of the road.

In spring 2013 there will be opened a nature and educational path from the shop at Svanvik, via Svanhovd and Mellomneset to Utnes.

Loken

Indre and Ytre Loken consist of two small lakes and the little bay furthest north-west in Svanvannet. The area is easily accessible just over a kilometre south-west of Svanvik along road 885. Parking is possible at Loken recreation site where there is also a wheelchair pathway and several fishing jetties. Whooper Swan, Common Crane and several species of ducks and waders appear in the area, especially in the outer part where there is less traffic. In recent years Loken has also been a reliable site for seeing muskrats.

The way between Svanvik and Loken has damp birch forest on both sides of the road. Arctic Warbler, Rustic Bunting and Little Bunting have all been recorded in this area.

Conduct at the border

Remember that there are special regulations concerning movements along the Norwegian-Russian border:

It is forbidden to

- *Cross the border on land, on water or in the air*
- *Have any form for contact with, or behave offensively to persons across the borderline*
- *Throw objects over the borderline*

Further information

Bioforsk Svanhovd is a natural starting point for bird trips in the Svanvik area. Here you can get information about protected areas in the Pasvik valley and study the displays about nature and the environment. It is also possible to stay for the night.

Remember that Pasvik is bear country. Be careful if you should meet a bear, especially if it has young or has found a carcass.

This fact sheet is prepared by Morten Günther

Svartnes and Barvikmyra



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

These are among the most important bird localities in Varanger. Here one finds large breeding populations of waders, divers, passerines, dabbling ducks and seabirds. Along the coast large numbers of waders, gulls and diving ducks gather. Birds of prey hunt regularly in these areas. Here there are long sandy beaches with several outflows of rivers and streams. Extensive bogs stretch far in over the moors. A wide harbour surrounds the outflow of the river Storelv. On the west side of the breakwater lie Sandbukta and Smelror. Around Smelror there is some agriculture and scattered habitation.

The extensive bogs along the coast, the cultivated areas and the nutrient-rich coast, together create a great species diversity. These areas are easily accessible and surveyable from the road. Use some time here, look out over the bogs and walk along the beaches and tracks.

Best time to visit

The coast can be exciting throughout the year, but the period May to August is especially fine.

Habitat and observation species

The extensive bogs have many small lakes and pools. There is great variation in the water content of the bogs,

and this creates many different habitats which suit many species. There is a particularly dense population of breeding Red-throated Diver, Arctic Skua and Red-necked Phalarope. Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Golden Plover and Common Snipe also breed here. This is also true of the Ruff, and from late May to mid-June one can experience the breeding display of the Ruffs. This is also a good area for nesting ducks such as Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Pintail, Wigeon and Teal. The bogs are also much used by Bean Geese and Whooper Swans.

Nearer the coast, the terrain is drier and there is more vegetation in the form of willow scrub. Here



Barvikmyra is an important breeding site for Red-throated Diver, Arctic Skua and many species of waders and ducks.



In the evening the Short-eared Owl may often be seen hunting.



The Red-necked Phalarope nests out among the bogs, but can often be observed along the coast.

there are good numbers of Red-throated Pipit, Lapland Longspur, Bluethroat and Ringed Plover. In the driest areas one finds Shorelark and the locally scarce Skylark. The coastal fields and sand dunes dominate down near the shore, and in this area several pairs of Temminck's Stint nest. Many wader species use the shore during migration. In addition to the species already mentioned, one can often see Spotted Redshank, Sanderling, Little Stint and Turnstone.

The harbour area is a good place to see Stellar's Eider in the period January to May. Between the mainland and Vardø lies Bussesundet. This is a very nutrient-rich area, and from February until mid-April there gather thousands of King Eider, Common Eider and Long-tailed Duck. In summer Smelror is a fine place to find King Eider. Tjuvholmen near Smelror is a good nesting site for Black Guillemot, Cormorant and gulls.

The gulls use the river outflows as a site to wash, and several thousand Kittiwakes and big gulls can gather. The Glaucous Gull may be seen throughout the year, and other rare species may also occur here, such as Ross's Gull of which there are at least two observations!

The White-tailed Eagle is commonly seen along the coast, while the Rough-legged Buzzard is often seen over the bogs and moors. One may also meet with Gyr Falcon, Peregrine and Merlin. On rare occasions a Snowy Owl may visit these fine areas. The Short-eared Owl can often be seen hunting from evening until early morning. The fields around Smelror and the airfield are good places to see this attractive species.

From the observation hide placed up on the height overlooking the bogs, there are fine possibilities of bird watching. Spend some time looking over the bogs with a telescope. On the opposite side of the road out towards Blodskyttsodden there is a more barren mountain landscape. Here the Snow Bunting nests on the highest peaks.

Access

Turn off from road E75 immediately before the undersea tunnel to Vardø and onto road 341 towards Hamningberg. The road follows the coast, and it is worthwhile stopping at the bridge over Storelva. One should drive out to the western breakwater, around the gravel roads on the inner side of the road, and then down to Smelror. The road is closed in winter at Smelror, but usually opens in early May.

Further information

In large parts of Barvikmyra and Blodskyttsodden entry is forbidden in the breeding season from 15th May until 31st July. Use of firearms and release of dogs is forbidden throughout the nature reserve from 15th May until 30th September. Show extra respect for the wildlife also outside the boundaries of the nature reserve.

*This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland
All photos: © Anders Faugstad Møland*

Syltefjordstauran and Syltefjorddalen



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Syltefjordstauran is one of Norway's greatest and most important bird cliffs. It stretches three kilometres along the north-west side of the Syltefjord, and reaches 200-300 metres above sea level. Many seabird species nest here. Birds of prey often use the bird cliffs as a hunting ground. Along the fine Syltefjorddal there are good areas for passerine species. Along the first part of the way one can find most of the typical mountain species.

The bird cliff Syltefjordstauran had at one time several million seabirds. Unfortunately there has been a catastrophic reduction in many populations of seabirds along the Norwegian coast, and this has also hit these colonies. The populations of Kittiwake and Common Guillemot have been especially severely affected, nevertheless one still finds a teeming bird life here.

Best time to visit

These areas are best to visit in the period May to August and are mainly breeding grounds for seabirds, but are also staging sites for ducks.

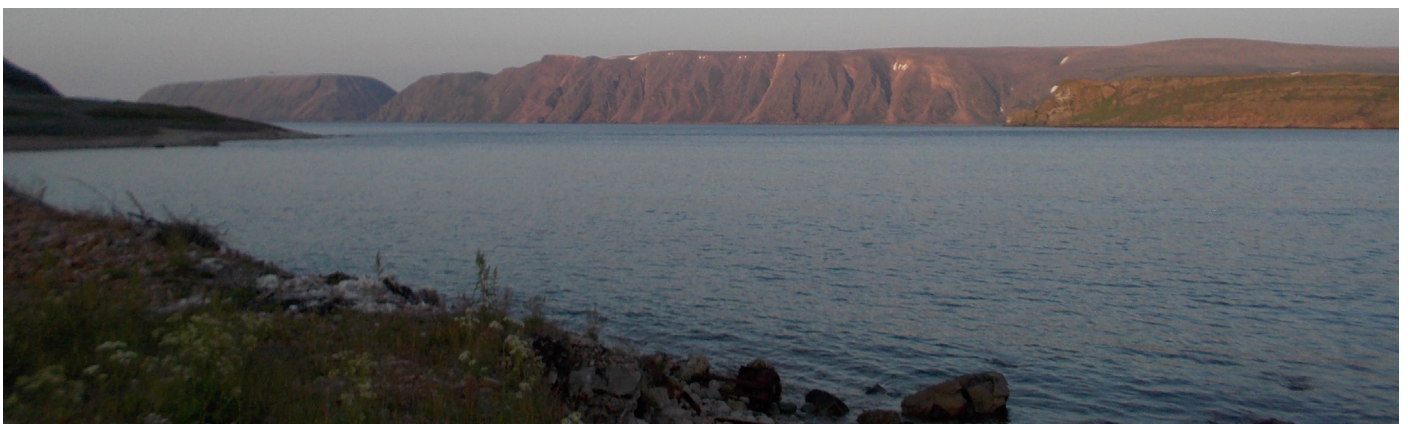
Habitat and observation species

In the bird cliffs Kittiwake, Common Guillemot, Brünnich's Guillemot and Razorbill all nest. Black

Guillemot and Atlantic Puffin may also be seen in the area. The bird cliff also houses the northernmost Gannet colony in the world. The White-tailed Eagle can often be seen hunting in the bird cliffs, and there is also the possibility of seeing Gyr Falcon. From the Syltefjord there is a path out to the bird cliffs. This is a long walk, partly in difficult and barren terrain, where one can also observe Snow Bunting and Rock Ptarmigan.

The road down towards Syltefjorddalen can offer many exciting bird observations. The first kilometres pass through fine mountain terrain, and Long-tailed Skua and Lapland Longspur often sit right beside the road. In the lakes one can see Red-throated Diver and Scaup, and along the steep downward path towards Syltefjorden the Rock Ptarmigan has its home.

The vegetation is richer when one comes down



The bird cliff Syltefjordstauran is most easily accessed by boat and still houses a large population of Common Guillemots and other species.



The road down to the Syltefjord lies in a fine and varied landscape



The Long-tailed Skua may often be seen by the road down to the Syltefjord

to level ground and to the road that leads along the Syltefjord river. In the luxuriant and isolated willow and birch forest the Bluethroat and Brambling are common species. The Arctic Redpoll may also be found here. Red-throated Pipit and Willow Ptarmigan can be found in the open bog areas. In the innermost part of Syltefjorden, Straumen, many Red-breasted Mergansers and Goosanders often rest, and also some Velvet Scoters and Red-throated Divers. Out in the fjord one can see several species of marine mammals such as killer whales, porpoises and grey seals.

Access

About four kilometres before Båtsfjord one turns off from road no. 891 and onto road no. 25 eastwards towards Syltefjord. After 35 kilometres one arrives out at Syltefjord. The road to Syltefjord is closed in winter, but usually opens in mid-May when the snow has begun to thaw.

Further information

Boat trips are arranged from Syltefjord during the summer. This is the easiest and best way to experience this fantastic bird cliff.

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland

All photos: © Anders Faugstad Møland



Common Guillemot and Kittiwake are still numerous on Syltefjordstauran

Tanamunningen Nature Reserve



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Tanamunningen – the Tana River Delta - is one of the few unspoilt larger river deltas in Europe. There is a rich bird life here throughout the year. This area is best known as a very important locality for Goosanders. Up to 30 000 moulting and foraging Goosanders gather here during the summer and autumn. Large numbers of Common Eiders and Long-tailed Ducks use the area outside the breeding season, and hundreds of common and grey seals have their home here. With its large dry areas at low tide, the Tana Delta is an important area for bird life during spring and autumn migration, especially for waders and ducks. Large flocks of Snow Buntings find food here in spring and autumn. Birds of prey such as White-tailed Eagle, Gyrfalcon, Peregrine, Snowy Owl and Short-eared Owl hunt in this area.

Best time to visit

The Tana Delta is one of the few localities that are worthwhile visiting at all times of the year. In winter there will be large flocks of Common Eiders and Long-tailed Ducks. In the coldness and the frost mist where one can hardly see a single bird, the birds can be heard well, and this in itself is an experience that can make the visit worthwhile. On the west side the road is not cleared of snow all the way down to Kalbakknæs. At Høyholmen the road is usually open, but following bad weather it may be impossible to drive a normal car right out to Høyholmen.

The Snow Buntings arrive in large flocks in late March or early April, and thereby announce the coming of spring. Then several seabird species have already arrived. In May-June, large and small waders are present on migration. During the breeding season in June-July there can be good numbers of breeding waders, ducks and gulls, especially in rodent years when predators have their focus on catching rodents.

The most spectacular time is August-September, when the large flocks of Goosanders gather here before



The area where the Tana River flows out into the Tanafjord. On the right lies Lávvonjárgasundet/Bohki with Høyholmen on the west side, and the village Lavvunjárga of the Coastal Sami on the east side.



© Bjørn Frantzen

When you have driven along the west side of the Tana River to Benjaminsbukta and over towards Gávesluokta, and further up on the mountain at Kaldbakknes, you gain a view over the northern part of the Tana Delta. With a telescope one gets a good overview of the species out on the sea.

migrating southwards to their overwintering areas. In the evenings the birds fly from the river mouth area and rest for the night on fresh water in adjacent areas. With the sun in the north, this is a fantastic sight.

Habitat and observation species

Diving ducks

The shallow waters have large amounts of sand eels, krill and a species of flounder. There are also plenty of softshell clams, cockles, scallops, and also blue mussels where there is a stony seabed. All this gives rich nourishment to sawbill ducks and other diving ducks, waders and gulls. The Goosander is the commonest bird species at the Tana Delta, and those that gather here are mainly males. Some few overwinter, but from May and later to mid-October, its numbers increase continually. In early October as many as 30,000 Goosanders can be gathered. Here they moult, and their breeding plumage develops before they leave the area. It is estimated that the Goosanders alone can eat 650 tons of sand eels annually.

Among the flocks of Goosanders there may be up to 3000 Red-breasted Mergansers. Some of these overwinter, but most migrate during the autumn. The Smew is only an occasional visitor. During autumn migration, several hundred Common Scoters come to the Tana Delta. Here they feed to improve their body condition before migrating further. Also on spring



© Bjørn Frantzen

In September the outflow area of the Tana River is full of Goosanders (in the photo more than 5000). The birds fly from the river mouth and up along the river a couple of kilometres in order to fish, and then drift down along the river towards the outflow again.

migration they visit this locality before migrating further to the mountains. At the same time small flocks of Velvet Scoters often appear.

After the Long-tailed Ducks have completed their breeding, they begin to move to the Tana Delta. In September and October there may be as many as 5000. They normally feed on small animal life on the seabed, such as snails and other invertebrates. At the Tana Delta they also consume large amounts of sand-eels during the autumn. When the sand eels go into aestivation in November, the number of Long-tailed



© Øystein Hauge

The Tana Delta is an important staging site for waders in spring and autumn. Here we see a Turnstone.

Ducks decreases. Some of them migrate further along the coast. Nevertheless, a considerable number of Long-tailed Ducks overwinter in the area.

From time to time they can be several thousand Common Eiders, also at the river mouth. The Eider may be found here throughout the year, and this is the only diving duck that breeds in the reserve. Like the Long-tailed Duck, the Eider can add to its diet, normally shells and snails, with sand eels. In winter and sometimes in spring, a few King Eiders may appear among the flocks of Common Eider. This applies especially to the flocks that stay at the northern edges of the reserve.

Dabbling ducks

Mallard can be met with in the reserve mainly in spring. Here the snow thaws early, and the vegetation therefore grows early. The forest edge on Høyholmen and Benjaminsbukta are perhaps the best places to see the Mallard. The Teal appears in the reserve in more or less the same pattern as the Mallard. They also use some of the pools that are more accessible. The Teal also nests at several sites, the surest being the large forested island north of Rødberget.

The Wigeon frequents the pools on the open areas in Benjaminsbukta, especially on Høyholmen in spring. From time to time large flocks of wandering drakes arrive in late summer.

The Pintail is also a common visitor in spring. The best place to observe it is on the pools on Høyholmen. At open water in the southernmost areas the Tufted Duck may appear.

The Common Shelduck has been an annual visitor in the last 15 years, and in some years it has also nested on Høyholmen, but these nest sites have been exposed

to predation by foxes. Nevertheless, a few broods have survived. The Shoveler has also been seen in recent years, but only single birds.

Geese

No geese breed in the reserve, but during migration time one often meets small flocks and single birds that stop to forage. The Greylag Goose has now become the commonest species, and the population increases from year to year. The Bean Goose is also a frequent visitor. The Brent Goose and Lesser White-fronted Goose have also been observed in recent years. All the geese prefer to stay on the broad open grass areas on Høyholmen and on open water. During autumn migration, flocks of geese often land for a short time on the Tana River in the Rødberget area.

Gulls

Great Black-backed Gull, Herring Gull, Common Gull and Arctic Skua breed in the reserve. The Common Gulls and Arctic Skuas nest on Høyholmen. In years with few rodents they are exposed to predators, and their eggs and young are taken by foxes, Ravens and Crows. The Great Black-backed and Herring Gulls nest on the sandbanks that have dry areas at high tide. They can nest on sandbanks devoid of vegetation, but they thrive best where there is dense lyme grass. The Kittiwake does not nest in the reserve itself, but has colonies at several other sites in the inner parts of the Tanafjord.

The gulls are also dependent on sand eels during the summer. In recent years there has been little cod and coalfish in the river mouth area. This has led to the sand eels remaining in deeper water, and this has led to problems for the gulls. At times when the sand eels have gone too deep, the big gulls particularly have learnt a new



© Bjørn Frantzen

Benjaminsbukta is an important area for ducks and waders, especially during spring and autumn migration.

method of getting food. Flocks of gulls dive down onto the flocks of Goosanders until these become stressed and rise from the water. At the same time they gulp up their stomach contents, and in this way feed the gulls.

In recent years, the Black-headed Gull has become a common sight early in summer, and its numbers are increasing. Usually only single individuals of the Lesser Black-backed Gull appear. Occasional visitors such as Sabine's Gull and Ivory Gull have also been recorded in later years. The Great Skua and Long-tailed Skua are sporadic visitors.

The Arctic Tern was previously an annual breeding bird in the reserve, and alternated between Høyholmen and Gullholmen. In recent years its numbers have become greatly reduced, and in 2012 none nested in the reserve. The Common Tern is only an occasional visitor.

Waders

The Temminck's Stint nests at several sites in the reserve, both on islands and on the mainland, but only in modest numbers. In autumn, flocks of up to several hundred birds can appear. The surest place to observe them is along the road on Høyholmen, where they both display and nest. The Little Stint also breeds in the reserve. Its numbers vary greatly from year to year, but Høyholmen is the surest place to find this species. The Ringed Plover is a common breeding bird, as also are Redshank and Wood Sandpiper that nest in the forested areas.

In some years the Ruff displays along the Høyholmen road, but in recent years has become a steadily rarer sight. The Whimbrel and Curlew are annual, but in limited numbers. The Whimbrel nests annually at several places in the reserve, usually where heather goes over to grassland. The Common Snipe nests at several places, especially on the large tree-covered island in the river. The Oyster Catcher is a characteristic bird in the reserve, and is a common breeding species in areas adjacent to salt water.

Many other waders can appear in large numbers on migration, especially in autumn (from August). Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Greenshank, Common Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, Turnstone, also several other wader species, are common observation species. In winter, flocks of Purple Sandpipers are scattered over the whole of the ice-free parts of the reserve.

Passerines

In spring and autumn large flocks of Snow Buntings visit the reserve. They are especially attracted to the large



© Øystein Hauge

Snowy Owl, Gyrfalcon, Merlin, Peregrine and White-tailed Eagle are among the birds of prey that one may see hunting in the Tana Delta.

amounts of seed of lyme grass on the sandbanks. The Red-throated Pipit is perhaps the most distinctive of the small birds in the area, and is distributed throughout the reserve. In spring, the Høyholmen road is a sure observation point for seeing this species. The Rock Pipit and Tree Pipit also nest, while the Horned Lark uses the grassy planes as a resting site during spring migration.

The Sand Martin nests in steep sandbanks within the reserve. They forage low over the water at Stangnes, the northernmost point in the reserve.

The Willow Warbler and Willow Tit breed commonly in the fringes of the area and in the forested parts of the reserve. The White Wagtail is also widely distributed, while the Yellow Wagtail is only found in small numbers.

The fringe areas of the reserve have a rather different bird life than the reserve itself. Luxuriant forest with elements of dry ridges, scrub, slow-flowing streams and bogs, give variation for a rich bird life. The Ring Ouzel is a characteristic bird of these areas, although it is not as numerous as Redwing and Fieldfare. Lavvonjårga and Vieltegiehnjårga (Grønnes) are good areas for Ring Ouzel.

In the course of recent years more and more species have been recorded in the fringe areas. One can mention

Siskin, Greenfinch, Wren and Eurasian Jay. A rarity such as Bee-eater has also been a visitor.

Ravens and Hooded Crows nest at many sites in the fringe areas. They take the eggs and young of other species, and also steal from the White-tailed Eagle and Otter. At low tide they feed on amphipods and shells.

Birds of prey

The White-tailed Eagle breeds at several sites near the reserve, and is commonly seen within the reserve. Up to 30 may be seen in the course of one day.

The Merlin often hunts in the area. It prefers to sit on a high perch in order to gain a view of possible prey. The Gyrfalcon often arrives early in the autumn in order to hunt waders, and usually sits low down in the terrain looking out for prey. The Peregrine is also a sporadic visitor.

The Rough-legged Buzzard can appear in large numbers following a good rodent year. Then they might hunt gulls and ducks on Høyholmen. In autumn, in rodent years, several family groups can gather in the reserve. The broad, open grass plains are ideal for small rodents.

Short-eared Owls and Hawk Owls normally hunt over the open areas in the reserve. In the fringe areas one may also find the Tengmalm's Owl. The Snowy Owl has also been observed several times.

Other species

Rock Ptarmigan and Willow Ptarmigan may be found right down to the shoreline. Whooper Swan, Common Crane and Grey Heron are annual visitors. The Great Skua has been recorded several times in recent years.

Access

The final kilometres of the road along the west side of the Tana River go along the border of the reserve which follows the water's edge. The road ends at Kalbakknes, about a kilometre from the river mouth. Just south of Kalbakknes lies Benjaminsbukta, an area with saltgrass fields, pools with sea arrowgrass, and dense woods along the edges – an interesting area for dabbling ducks, warblers and waders. On the east side of the river the road goes along the reserve border about a kilometre below Rødberget, before turning slightly left. From Birkestrandsletta a road goes three kilometres out and into the reserve itself to Høyholmen, Suoidnesuolo. This is the only road into the reserve itself.



On the east side of the Tana Delta you drive to Høyholmen where you need a boat to come over to the Coastal Sami village of Lávvonjárga. From here you can walk along the coast towards Stangnes. In order to get a good view of the bird and animal life it is worthwhile to climb some way up on the hillside.

The greater part of the reserve, including the lowest part of the river, consists of sandbanks and shallow areas that are affected by the tidal water. Some of the sandbanks are flooded at high tide. Other sandbanks, furthest down in the river, also some north of Høyholmen, are never flooded. On these there is lush vegetation that creates the basis of life for warblers, thrushes, Willow Ptarmigan, waders and gulls. The largest of these islets is covered with grey alder forest with a height of 3-4 metres. The only one of the islets not formed by sand is Gullholmen on the west side of the river, about two kilometres south of the river mouth.

The reserve boundaries mainly follow the high water mark except at Høyholmen, which is the only part of the reserve that can be accessed without a boat. The name Høyholmen is rather misleading. At normal high tide one can walk out to Høyholmen without having to wade, as you walk over several square kilometres of flat sandbanks covered with saltgrass, lyme grass, Tana timian, sea pea and other species. The road itself is a bare metre higher than the surroundings. The roadsides are especially luxuriant, and provide shelter and nest sites for many bird species.

The Tana Delta is the only locality in Norway where the common seals give birth to their young on sandbanks. In total, there are several hundred common and grey seals that live in the reserve.

This fact sheet is prepared by Øystein Hauge

Tørrvann - Guorroláttu



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

The area around the lake Tørrvann/Guorroláttu is an easily accessible high mountain locality that one should visit after the snow has melted sometime in June until August/September. This is normally a good area for seeing Long-tailed Skua, Willow and Rock Ptarmigan, Dotterel, Lapland Longspur, Temminck's Stint, Red-throated Diver, Long-tailed Duck and Golden Plover.

A small river runs into Tørrvann from the west. Immediately before entering the lake, the river forms a broad, slow-flowing area, a "luobbal". Both the luobbal and the lake are very shallow with an average depth of less than two metres. Deepest are some small depressions of 3-4 metres. These depressions are formed by rotting plants that release gas from the benthic sediments. Because of this, parts of the lake never completely freeze. Even in cold winters there are small, unfrozen circular holes in the ice.

At one time the river ran from Tørrvann down to Austertana and to the sea there. Then, in the spawning season, many large arctic char migrated up to the lake and the river above. After spawning, the fish stayed

in Tørrvann until the spring flood. Now the river is regulated via a canal over to the Kongsfjord watercourse. Before being diverted there was a good stock of char in the lake. Now the lake has too many small char, and the level of the lake is no longer regulated. From Tørrvann the river runs to Nástejáv'ri, Stjernevann, a couple of kilometres further north.

Tørrvann consists of a western, rectangular part, about 500 x 300 metres, and an eastern more triangular part, about 300 x 300 metres. These parts are connected by a shallow channel, but have some rather deeper depressions.

The banks of the lake consist mainly of dry heather vegetation that consists of crowberry and cloudberry,



© Bjørn Frantzen

When you go to Tørrvann you park the car beside road no. 890, at the starting point of the gravel road that the reindeer herders - the Samis - have the right to use. This gravel road crosses the river between Tørrvann and Stjernevann. You can meet such species as Golden Plover, Long-tailed Skua, Dotterel and Rough-legged Buzzard when you go along the dry ridges towards Tørrvann.



© Bjørn Frantzen

An artificial watercourse has been made from Tørrvann towards Stjernevann. Early in the season there may be much water in this channel, and it can be difficult to cross if you are not willing to wade barefoot.

with sparse growth of some willow species and sedge in the water's edge. In the water there are few plants, but relatively good amounts of drab brook-moss. The lake floor is largely mud with a cover of moss. There are mainly gravel and stones at the inflow, the channel in the lake and the outflow. Along the river into the luobbal and the lake there is some low willow scrub and boggy ground.

North of the eastern part of the lake, there is a larger area of bogs with some open marshes, scrub and several larger shallow pools. These pools are fishless, and the drainage from them goes into the peat and to the lake.

Habitat and observation species

The area is rather flat. Only a few places stick up above the surrounding terrain. The east side of the lake is best for observations. To reach here one must cross the river, either before it runs into the luobbal, or between Tørrvann and Stjernevann. By crossing the river before it runs into the luobbal, one can experience the terrain at the river inflow. There one can find wader species, warblers, other passerine species and ptarmigan.

In order that the lake should not drain to Austertana, an embankment has been built at the eastern end of the lake. This can be a good site for observations. Here one has a good view over parts of the lake, the upper part of Julelvdalen and a low area of scrub on the east side. The forest in Julelvdalen stretches almost to Tørrvann.

At the bogs and the pools east of the lake there are good possibilities of observations, even though the area is quite flat. The area between Tørrvann and Stjernevann also has a good deal of scrub, some slow-flowing parts of the river, as well as marshy areas.

Waders

The Ruff displays at several places in the area along the watercourse, and it also nests sparsely in this area. It often forages at the water's edge around the whole lake. The Golden Plover nests sparsely on the dry ridges that surround the lake. The Dotterel is also a common breeding species. The Redshank prefers to nest where



©Terje Kolaas

The area between road no. 890 and Tørrvann has been a reliable locality for seeing the Long-tailed Skua, also in years when there are no rodents, often in company with one or two Arctic Skuas. They are often inquisitive and circle round the observer.



© Bjørn Frantzen

Temminck's Stints arrive in the mountains when there is still a snow cover, and one can see that they seek shelter in scrub during bad weather. During the breeding season the Temminck's Stint is easy to identify due to its butterfly-like display flight.



© Bjørn Frantzen

This cement construction takes overflow water to Julelv river during high water level. In the willow scrub along the stream one finds Reed Bunting, Lapland Longspur, Willow Warbler and maybe the Bluethroat.

the vegetation is lush, with some scrub and scattered trees. Red-necked Phalaropes nest at several places in the area, and one often finds them foraging in the shallower parts of the lake, and in the pools on the east side. Other small waders may also be found in small numbers in the area, and in some years the Temminck's Stint nests here.

Ducks

The Teal nests by the pools on the east side of the lake, and in the pools towards Stjernevann. They remain at these pools during the whole summer. The Wigeon can nest in small numbers on the east side of the lake. They also forage in the shallow areas where there is rich vegetation. The Long-tailed Duck nests along the lakeside, and feeds on snails and other small animal life on the open water. The Merganser may nest along the river to Stjernevann, and the Goosander uses this area early in spring. They usually remain in the river until the ice thaws in the lake.

Divers

The Red-throated Diver nests at the shallow pools east of the lake. They forage in the lake itself, or fly right out to the sea.

Swans and geese

The Whooper Swan nests occasionally at the pools east of the lake. The Bean Goose was once widely distributed



©Terje Kolaas

One can be sure to find the Lapland Longspur nesting in the scrub along the streams and in the wet areas.

as a breeding bird in the inner parts of the Varanger peninsula. Now it sometimes lands at Tørrvann to forage during the spring migration.

Ptarmigan

The area around Tørrvann forms a border area for both Rock Ptarmigan and Willow Ptarmigan. The Rock

Ptarmigan breeds no lower, and the Willow Ptarmigan no higher.

Passerines

The Horned Lark nests sparsely in this area, and may arrive early at the dry ridges before the ice has thawed on the lake. The Lapland Longspur and Reed Bunting can nest in small numbers where the willow scrub is most dense. The Snow Bunting arrives early to forage on the dry ridges, and nests sparsely on the dry areas. The Dipper nests at some sites along the whole of the watercourse. In Juladalen the Brambling is distributed up to the tree line, and the Chaffinch may also be found here. The Redwing also nests all the way up to the limits of tree and scrub, and the Willow Warbler may be found right up to the highest tree clumps. Ravens and Crows also use the area, but these do not find suitable breeding sites in the immediate neighbourhood.

Gulls

A few pairs of Common Gulls nest around the lake. The Arctic Tern nests in decreasing numbers in the area, and they forage both in the lake and along the whole watercourse. The Long-tailed Skua is a species that makes its mark on the area, but it only breeds in years with large numbers of small rodents. The Arctic Skua has become much more numerous in recent years at Tørrvann, but whether it nests here is uncertain.

Birds of prey

In years with a good population of ptarmigan the Gyr Falcon hunts around the lake, and the Rough-legged Buzzard also often hunts in the area. Like the Gyr



©Terje Kolaas

The Gyr Falcon is a characteristic species for Varangervidda where it hunts grouse. If you are near grouse when the Gyr Falcon comes, you may experience the grouse seeking shelter beside you.

Falcon, it nests in steeper and more rugged terrain. In good rodent years, the Short-eared Owl nests in the area. It prefers to hide in low scrub by marshes where it also nests. In lemming years the Snowy Owl can be seen hunting here.

Access

Tørrvann, or Guorroláttu, lies two km from road no. 890 from Austertana towards Båtsfjord or Berlevåg, about 10 km before the road junction at Gednje. Park the car beside the main road where you see that a gravel road starts towards the hills. You can follow the gravel road all the way to the stream between Tørrvann and Stjernevann. The terrain is open and easy to walk along, and after a slight uphill incline the road goes down to the lake.

This fact sheet is prepared by Øystein Hauge



©Terje Kolaas

The Red-throated Diver is a common species in small lakes in high mountains, even where there are no fish. The adults then fish in other lakes where there are fish, or they fly to the sea which is never far away, in order to fish there.

Vadsø, with Vadsøya and Kibymyra



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

In Vadsø you can find exciting bird life, even in the town centre. Both in the harbour and along the tideline just east of the centre, you are guaranteed to see Steller's Eider in winter and spring. Large flocks of waders stop to feed and rest during migration, and on Vadsøya, waders, ducks and passerines all nest. Kibymyra lies north-east of Vadsø, and is a rich wetland that has been proposed to be given protection.

It is primarily the shallow areas between Vadsøya and the town itself that attracts large numbers of birds. Here it is so shallow that in principle one can wade over to Vadsøya at low tide, but the soft mud underfoot with its rich benthic fauna hardly invites to this.

Best time to visit

There are most species in summer, but Vadsø has much to offer throughout the year. The spring migration of waders reaches a peak in the week following 17th May. Then you can still reckon on seeing the sought-after Steller's Eider before it leaves its wintering areas and moves to north-east Russia.

Habitat and observation species

Immediately west of the town centre lies the harbour basin where King Eiders, Steller's Eiders and Long-tailed Ducks lie during the winter months. The Glaucous Gull is present in small numbers in winter, while the Iceland Gull is more sporadic. These species can also be observed from the fishing quay at Ørtangen. The Common Eider and Cormorant are also common. Among waders one can see Purple Sandpiper in winter, Dunlin on spring migration and Oyster Catcher in summer. Other wader species appear more sporadically.

On the east side of the centre there is a more varied birdlife. On the tideline and the shallow water areas



Ytrebyfjæra in Vadsø has a rich bird life throughout the year



The Steller's Eider arrives in October-November, and is quite common until mid-May.

from the Statoil station and all the way to Ytrebyfjæra, there will often be large numbers of ducks and waders. Here the Steller's Eider forages at low tide in winter, and often a few stay until the end of May. Later one finds mainly young birds, but sometimes one can also see adults in summer plumage here in June.

The Long-tailed Duck is numerous in winter, Common Eider and Mallard are common throughout the year, and one or two King Eiders may be seen in winter. Goosander, Red-breasted Merganser, Wigeon, Teal and a few Pintail can also be seen here, mainly in spring and early summer. Glaucous Gull, together with the one or two sporadic Iceland Gulls, can be found in the large flocks of Herring Gulls and Great Black-backed Gulls that often gather here, especially in late summer.

The Purple Sandpiper forages in small flocks throughout the winter, often easy to approach and fine to photograph. The Dunlin is very common on spring migration, when the Bar-tailed Godwit is also most numerous. Turnstone and Ringed Plover are common in summer, Temminck's Stint and Little Stint in more varying numbers. Juvenile Spotted Redshanks are often seen on autumn migration in August. Flocks of several hundred Knots are a colourful sight during late May and sometimes the first days in June.

Vadsøya

Access

Vadsøya lies immediately south of Vadsø centre. Drive over the bridge and stop by Vadsø Fjordhotell. From the parking site you look out over Makkeleire with its rich birdlife.

Observation species

Here one finds, naturally enough, the same species as in Ytrebyfjæra, but the number of Dunlin just east of the bridge can exceed 1000 on a good day in late May.

Among curiosities, it may be mentioned that Norway's first observations of Semipalmated Plover and Greater Spotted Eagle were made here with only a few days interval in May 2001.

Further east on Vadsøya there are grassy plains, willow scrub and a large pool. Several pairs of nesting Red-throated Pipits are the main attraction, as also are the often large numbers of Red-necked Phalaropes in the pool by the airship mast. Several pairs of Tufted Ducks nest annually by the pool, and as a rule also Wigeon and Mallard. Common Eider are also often seen here. Redshank, Wood Sandpiper, Golden Plover and Whimbrel may be present on the island, whereas the Temminck's Stint and Ruff appear less often than previously.

A large colony of Arctic Terns nested regularly on Vadsø during many years, but are now more unstable. Among passerines you can reckon on seeing Meadow Pipit, Yellow Wagtail, Bluethroat, Willow Warbler, Redwing, Greenfinch, Common Redpoll and possibly Arctic Redpoll.

Vadsøya also has a number of cultural relics: tofts of villages dating from the Middle Ages, firing positions from the Second World War, and not least the airship mast – first used in connection with Amundsen's expedition over the North Pole in 1926.

Kibymyra

Access

Turn off from main road E75 some hundred metres east of Vadsø centre, where there is a sign "Skytebane" (rifle range). Follow the road 4.7 km to the left of the rifle range, park by the buildings by the river, and go over the bridge. The path eastwards follows the north side of Kibymyra (the Kiby mire), where you have the best view.

Observation species

There are plans to protect Kibymyra, which has a rich birdlife of wetland species and passerines.

The Wood Sandpiper is a characteristic species, while breeding Jack Snipe is perhaps the greatest attraction. The following also breed: Golden Plover, Temminck's Stint, Dunlin, Common Snipe, Red-necked Phalarope, Bar-tailed Godwit and Whimbrel. In connection with protection, the bog has been thoroughly investigated, and nesting Common Sandpiper, Curlew, Redshank, Little Stint and Lapwing have all been registered. The Ruff has unfortunately decreased greatly during the period since these registrations.

Red-throated Diver and Black-throated Diver are



The Purple Sandpiper is the only wader species that overwinters.



The Red-necked Phalarope can occur in large numbers on the pool on Vadsøya

commonly observed, and ten species of duck have been recorded. Among these are Wigeon, Teal, Pintail, Scaup, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Red-breasted Merganser and Goosander. Common Crane, Spotted Redshank and Hen Harrier are more sporadic visitors.

Redwing, Bluethroat, Lapland Longspur, Reed Bunting, Willow Warbler, Common Redpoll and Brambling dominate among the passerines in the area. In addition, there are Sedge Warbler, Yellow Wagtail and Red-throated Pipit. Willow Ptarmigan and Arctic Skua are other breeding species.

This fact sheet is prepared by Knut-Sverre Horn

All photos: © Knut-Sverre Horn



There are plans to protect Kibymyra. The variety of habitats: scrub, bogs and small pools, attract a large number of species.

Varangerbotn – Karlebotn – Meskelv



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Varangerbotn, Karlebotn and Meskelv are strategically situated innermost in the bird-rich Varangerfjord. The sea here is shallow, and at low tide extensive areas of mud stretch far out into the fjord. Along the coast there is some habitation, while the vegetation varies from birch forest and coastal fields to bare rock. First and foremost we find species related to the marine areas which are special for this locality, but the surrounding areas of coast and forest can also have a number of exciting species. These are well worth a visit provided the fjord is ice-free. Parts of the inner areas form Varangerbotn nature reserve.

The peninsula Selesnjarga divides the Varangerfjord into two fjord arms. The broadest, that on the south side, leads in to Karlebotn, while the Meskfjord stretches along the north side in to Varangerbotn. In order to get a view over the inner parts of the fjord, one must therefore observe from several different places.

Best time to visit

The species diversity is especially great in the summer period from May until July, but as long there is open water these areas are worth visiting.

Habitat and observation species

In this presentation the three areas, Varangerbotn, Karlebotn and Meskelv are described separately.

Varangerbotn and the inner parts of Meskfjord

The inner parts of the Varangerfjord are ice-covered in winter, and these are also the shallowest parts of the fjord. The mudflats stretch outwards for several hundred metres at low tide. Along the shore there are fine coastal fields with small pools of brackish water. Two small rivers flow out here. The innermost areas form Varangerbotn nature reserve.

Above the coastal fields and along the rivers there are fertile birch forest and willow scrub. The birch forest stretches from here inland towards Finland.

Typical for the inner parts of the Varangerfjord are the large gatherings of dabbling ducks, diving ducks and diver species. The calm sea innermost in the fjord makes it easy to study birds on the water.



At the mouth of the river Meskelv there is a large parking site on the seaward side, with good opportunities to observe the bird life in the delta.



© Anders Faugstad Mæland

Innermost in the Varangerfjord lies Karlebotn. Offshore from the beach there are large mudflats with many stones. At high tide these are excellent resting places for birds. In autumn, at high tide, one can often see Mallard, Wigeon, Teal and Pintail in the belt of seaweed. On the south side of the beach a small stream runs out which can be seen in the photo.

The extensive mudflats and small river outflows are good for waders. These are often different species from those in the fjord. “Tringa waders” such as Greenshank, Spotted Redshank and other species that prefer fresh water are commoner here. Along the whole fjord one can see large flocks of Bar-tailed Godwits, while the concentration of small waders is greater further out in the Varangerfjord.

By the road junction in Varangerbotn lies the Varanger Sami museum. From here there is a path down to two observation hides. One gives a view over the inner part of the Meskefjord, and the other over a small river delta. Here there can be gathered large flocks of Wigeon, Teal, Pintail and Shelduck. Spotted Redshank and Temminck’s Stint are also common. In the birch woods on the way down to the hides, several pairs of Pied Flycatchers and Bluethroats nest. Here one

may also find other forest species such as Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and Three-toed Woodpecker.

Only a limited part of the inner fjord areas are visible from the hides. Birds can be equally numerous in the



© Anders Faugstad Mæland

On the mudflats there are often dense gatherings of small waders such as Dunlin and Little Stint



© Tormod Amundsen

It is best to use a telescope to gain a view over the extensive mudflats at Varangerbotn

southern areas where the river Vesterelva flows out. In order to gain a view here, one must walk out from the housing area that lies along road E6, about one km south of Varangerbotn.

At high tide the birds come close to the inner areas, but at low tide they are often at long range. Then one gets a better view a little further out in the fjord.

The northern part of Meskfjorden can be seen well from road E75. Here one can stop at several places along the road. One can also park at the old people's home at Nyborg and go down from the rear side. The inner basin of Meskfjord is a very fine site for divers, especially Black-throated Divers. There are often also large flocks of diving ducks, especially Velvet Scoters, Common Scoters, Long-tailed Ducks, Red-breasted Mergansers and Goosanders. These flocks should be studied carefully as they can attract other rarer species. If one drives along the E6 towards Tana one may have the luck to see a Hawk Owl along the road.

Karlebotn

Innermost in Varangerfjord lies Karlebotn. This little village lies along the E6, about 8 km south of the junction at Varangerbotn. This is an easily accessible locality which is often as good for birds as Varangerbotn.



© Anders Faugstad Mæland

When there is a strong east wind many gulls can gather innermost in Karlebotn. Among these may be Little Gulls (photo)

The Karlebotn fjord is broad, and opens out into the sea. It is therefore a natural stopover site for birds that move in to the fjord.

Innermost in the fjord there is a long stretch of beach, and offshore from this there is a wide mudflat with many rocks. These function as excellent resting sites at high tide. In autumn one often finds many Mallard, Wigeon, Teal and Pintail in the belt of seaweed at high tide. On the south side of the beach a small stream flows out.

An old school building stands down by the fjord. Here there is a fine view over the northern parts of the

beach. By following the gravel road some way out by the fjord, one comes nearer the diving ducks and divers. Here one finds much the same fauna as at Varangerbotn, but with greater numbers of seabirds and small waders. Here one can also find passerine species such as Twite, Arctic Redpoll and Red-throated Pipit.

The best areas are around the southern part of the beach. The easiest access is to go down behind the little chapel, where there are several small pools. Here there can be many dabbling ducks and Red-necked Phalaropes. It may also be worth while to look for passerines around the houses.

With a strong wind from the east, seabirds are pressed into the fjord. Then many gulls appear at the innermost part of Karlbotn, and among these Little Gulls may be seen here.

If one follows the coastline out over Selesnjarga one gets a fine view out over the fjord. One can park by the school or at the end of the gravel road and follow the coast, or go up onto the mountain plateau. White-tailed Eagles often hunt in this area. Up in the hills and in the bogs one can find mountain species such as Willow Ptarmigan, Lapland Bunting and Red-necked Phalarope.

Meskelv

Meskelv lies 4 km from Varangerbotn towards Vadsø. At the mouth of Meskelva many waders and ducks often gather. The area is small, and there are good parking places by the road. Here one may find several species of small waders such as Dunlin, Little Stint and Curlew Sandpiper.

At Bunes, where the fjord is narrowest, there is a fine place to look for divers and ducks that pass in and out of the fjord. This is as far as the ice can reach out into the fjord, and along the ice edge there are often many birds to see.

Outwards along the whole coast there are many good places to watch birds. The road follows the coast and there are many side roads and parking places. Now you are driving along one of Europe's finest and most bird-rich stretches of road!

Access

This area is easy of access as it lies near both E6 and E75 which meet at Varangerbotn. The E75 goes further eastwards along the north side of the fjord towards Vadsø. From Varangerbotn, E6 follows the south side of the fjord (past Karlebotn), before cutting southwards



Innermost in Varangerbotn there are two observation hides. To reach these one drives to the Varanger Sami museum. Here one can park and follow the wooden track out to the two hides.

towards Kirkenes. In the opposite direction E6 goes westwards to Tana.

Further information

As parts of the area are protected as nature reserves, there are special regulations concerning entry. More information about this

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland

Vardø - an ornithological paradise



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

For bird-watchers, the town and island of Vardø are a paradise. Few, if any towns in the world, have such a teeming bird life so near a town centre. Right on the edge of Vardø lie the islands of Hornøya and Reinøya (see separate information sheet) which house large seabird colonies. On the inner side lies Bussesundet where thousands of ducks gather. The harbour area attracts large numbers of gulls, and there are good areas for passerines and waders. Birds of prey and skuas are often seen hunting around the island.

Vardø is Norway's easternmost town, with long traditions of fishing and trade. More and more ornithologists and photographers from around the world have discovered this unique and spectacular town. Even though the bird cliffs are the main attraction, the whole island is exciting. Its location is the reason why the most sensational rare birds appear here. Some of the more remarkable observations have been of Short-billed Dowitcher, Semi-palmated Plover, Glaucous-winged Gull, Spectacled Eider (2), White-winged Lark and Lesser Short-toed Lark (Hornøya).

Best time to visit

It is worthwhile to visit this outpost the whole period from late February until October. The best time is from

the end of March until mid-July. Different species can be observed throughout the year, so this is a locality one can visit several times.

Habitat and observation species

The vegetation on Vardø is more luxuriant than on the mainland, the reason being that there is no grazing by reindeer. Inland on the island there are areas of willow, and some gardens have higher vegetation. One of the most interesting localities on the island is Sunndammen. This lies immediately below the old fortress, and is one of the best localities for waders and passerines. This is an area where it is easy to observe the birds, with a small bay and luxuriant willow scrub. Temminck's Stint, Sedge Warbler, Red-throated Pipit and Arctic Redpoll



Vardø is Norway's easternmost town, and has a fantastic bird life.



King Eiders gather in thousands around Vardø from February to April. This bird is an adult male

are all common breeding birds. In most years there is also a colony of Arctic Terns here. The shallow bay is much used by resting waders during migration. Ringed Plover and Dunlin are the commonest waders, but one can also meet a number of other species. Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper, Ruff and Red-necked Phalarope are species one can expect to find here.

From the end of February until mid-April, thousands of Common and King Eiders gather in large flocks around Vardø. This is one of the most fantastic sights that Varanger can offer. Thousands of Long-tailed Ducks and auks also gather at this time. In addition, hundreds of Steller's Eiders often lie near land, often right into the harbour area. Several hundred Glaucous Gulls and a few Iceland Gulls also visit this area, and some of these remain in summer. Large flocks of Purple Sandpipers stay along the coast, and this is the only wader species that overwinters along the coast of Finnmark.

The Snow Bunting is the first passerine to arrive in spring. The first arrive at the end of March and throughout April, and during May they gather in large flocks in snow-free areas along the coast.

Several promontories around the island are worth visiting. From Hasselneset one looks over to Reinøya and the bird cliff on Hornøya. From here one can see all the auk species, including Brünnich's Guillemot. On the north side of the island Skagen sticks out. Here there is a fine view over the sea, and this is also the best site on the island to watch seabird migration. Especially in May, divers and skuas pass by in large numbers. The Twite also nests in this area. Steilneset and Gullringneset are good localities for seeing flocks of ducks and eiders that lie on the east side of the island.

Access

From the mainland there is an undersea tunnel to Vardø. This come up in Austerviken. From here one can drive northwards to Hasselneset or southwards to Gullringneset. By going out on the jetties, the harbour area can be observed from both sides.

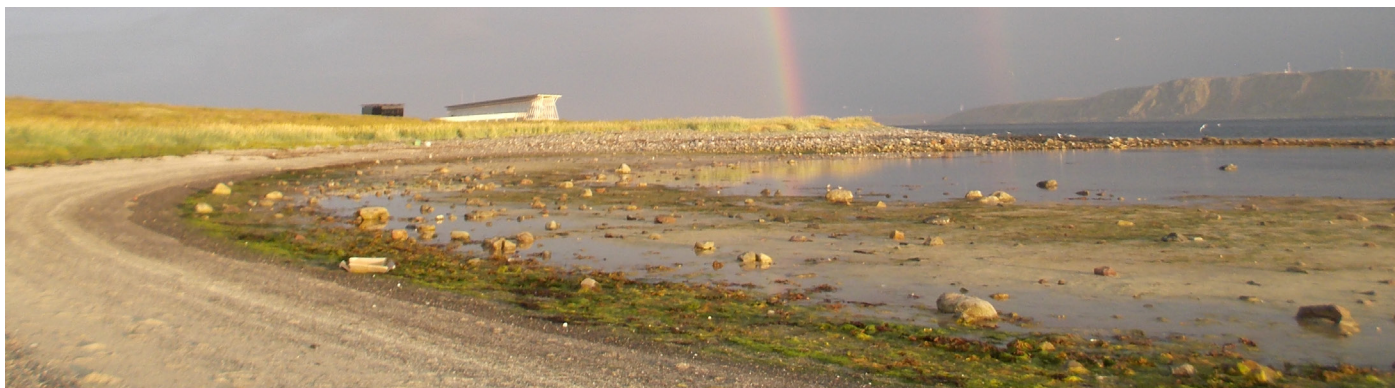
The passenger boat "Hurtigruten" comes into Vardø daily. The airport, which lies immediately on the land side of the tunnel, has daily departures to Kirkenes which corresponds with the plane to Oslo. There are several possibilities for accommodation, both hotels and simpler alternatives. The harbour authorities operate daily tours out to Hornøya.

Further information

This rugged town has gained an aesthetic improvement in recent years, with much creative street artistry. An observation hide is now placed on Steilneset and on the outer side out towards Skagen. The only area where it is forbidden to go, is in the military area on the east side of the island.

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Møland

All photos: © Anders Faugstad Møland



Sunndammen is the most exciting locality for waders and passerines

Veidnesklubben – where people and birds meet



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Veidnesklubben is a village lying on the west side of Laksefjorden, in Lebesby District. The village has road connection to Porsanger District via road no. 183, which leads from Børselv, via Kjås, to Veidnesklubben. The area is especially interesting for bird watchers as it is a meeting point between sea, coast and inland, with forested valleys and mountain plains.

Veidnesklubben is an old habitation of the Coastal Sami who have mainly sustained themselves by means of their traditional livelihood: hunting, fishing and farming. Fishing is still the most important source of food, and the village has a good harbour and fish factory at Holmbukt on Veidesholmen. A road goes all the way out to the fish factory.

The village also has the world's northernmost dairy farm, but agriculture has become greatly reduced. Hunting and inland fishing are now mainly regarded as hobbies, but

the tourist industry has expanded in recent years.

Best time to visit

As early as mid-May the area around Veidnesklubben can be worth visiting. Then the seabirds are beginning to migrate, and the earliest waders have arrived, especially in the stony tidal areas in the centre of the village. Here one can make interesting observations right until mid-September, and during the winter months one can observe the rarer seabird species.



© Almar Paulsen

The fertile lake east of the river Veidneselva

Habitat and observation species

The forest along the coast and in the river valleys consists mainly of birch, otherwise of willow species. The river Veidneselva, which runs through the village, is known as a good sea trout river. For ornithologists, the broad tidal areas, the salt-affected grassy ridges and the shallow pools are most interesting. The local community has erected an observation hide with a good view to the tidal flats. Here one can sit well protected from the cold winds of spring.

The broad tidal areas and the shallow pools are the most interesting places for observing waders and some species of dabbling ducks. Knots can appear in flocks of several thousands, especially in the second half of May. Also around this time come Dunlin, Temminck's Stint, Ruff and Bar-tailed Godwit. The Oyster Catcher arrives as soon as April, and Shelduck, Mallard, Wigeon, Teal and Pintail are common. Offshore from the mudflats one can find Common Eiders throughout the year, and early in spring the Mergansers are in place.

Shortly before one comes to a farm in the centre of the village, one sees a bird placard on the left side. Here one can walk along by the fence a couple of hundred metres out to a bird hide. From the hide one has a good view out to the tidal areas, and one gets good protection from wind and weather.

Krokholmen, which lies a little further out to the north-west, is a favourite resting site for both Bean and Grey-lag Geese, and in some years one can also see Pink-footed Geese here. From Krokholmen one gains a better view over the sea, where in some years, perhaps especially in winter and the early spring months, one can find Yellow-billed Diver, Great Northern Diver,



The bird hide at Langnes



The bird placard by the bird hide at Veidnes

King Eider, Steller's Eider and the rarer gull species. On Veidnesholmen both Long-tailed and Arctic Skua sometimes nest.

If one drives directly to the crossing and over the bridge over the river Veidneselva and some hundred metres further, one can see a small lake on the left. This is partly dammed, and is very nutritious, surrounded by dense vegetation of rushes and bushes. Here one can find dabbling ducks, and nesting Bluethroat and Reed Bunting.

Among birds of prey, the White-tailed Eagle is the commonest, and one can meet with this during most of the year. The Merlin is quite common, and both Peregrine and Gyrfalcon may be seen. In good rodent years the Rough-legged Buzzard and Short-eared Owl are common.

Both Redshank and Common Sandpiper are common breeding birds, and in the forested areas Wood



The White-tailed Eagle is a common visitor around Veidnesklubben

Sandpiper, Fieldfare, Redwing, Brambling and Willow Warbler all nest. In addition, Lapland Longspur, Meadow Pipit and Red-throated Pipit may be found, and up in the mountains some Snow Buntings and Golden Plovers also nest.

Access

At Børselv the roads divide: road no. 98 towards Tana, and road no. 183 towards Veidnesklubben. The distance from Veidnesklubben to Børselv is about 74 km, and Børselv is the last place where it is possible to fill fuel. The road, in some places, is in a bad state, with holes in the surface of asphalt or oil gravel. It is narrow, with few meeting or parking places. The road goes along the east side of the Porsangerfjord, all the way to Kjæs, where it turns north-eastwards and passes through the wooded Kjæsdalen to Lilleporsangen and Veidnesklubben. On the stretch Børselv – Kjerringvik the road goes through a fine landscape dominated by grey-white dolomite, a type of limestone with both magnesium and flint. From Leirpollen and further, the road goes through flat landscape beside the shallow sea.

In winter the road is cleared of snow, although it

can be closed on days with severe weather, and “convoy driving” is not uncommon. There is a bus connection to Veidnesklubben.

For bird enthusiasts, the road from Børselv to Veidnesklubben can offer many surprises, so allow a little more time than usual, and be careful where you park.

By the road junction in the centre of the village one can turn left and drive over to Veidnesholmen. Along this road one can see the foreshore from a different angle.

At Veidnesklubben there is a small food shop with postal service. At the shop, run by the local community, one can buy a fishing licence and gain information about the area. There is no organized camping site here, but a couple of companies have cabins for hire, and one can order serving of food. All this can be checked in advance at the tourist information offices in Porsanger and Lebesby Districts. It is also possible to hire a boat trip out to Sværholtklubben, one of Norway’s largest bird cliffs, dominated by Kittiwakes.

This fact sheet is prepared by Almar Paulsen



Knots appear in large flocks, especially during spring migration.

Vestre Jakobselv



Information sheet for the project «Bird tourism in central and eastern Finnmark», a project part of «The natural heritage as a value creator (M)»

Vestre Jakobselv is finely situated along the north side of the Varanger fjord. This small township surrounds the outflow of the river Jakobselv. Here there is an extensive delta of brackish water which provides good conditions for waders, ducks, gulls and terns. The birch forest is fine for those looking for passerines. From the coastline one has a good view of seabirds on their way into or out of the fjord.

Jakobselv is a well known salmon river which attracts many anglers. It is also a popular place for bird watchers. The combination of species in this area is quite unique. Here one finds typical forest birds only a short distance from seabird species.

Best time to visit

The coastline can be interesting throughout the year, but the river outflow and the forested areas are most exciting in the period from April to September. In common with most other localities in Finnmark, the period from May to July is particularly good. The lower part of the river is an important breeding and resting site.

Habitat and observation species

The lower part of the river is shallow and wide, and forms a nutritious delta of brackish water. This is a fine nesting site for Arctic Terns. The population varies greatly from year to year, but in good years more than a hundred pairs can breed. This is also a potential nesting site for Little Gulls.

The shore grasslands and the small islands and banks in the river are fine resting and breeding sites for waders. Common Redshank and Curlew nest here most years. The Ruff may often be seen on the banks in the upper part of the delta, where the river swings northwards. The delta attracts large numbers of gulls that rest and



© Bjørn Frantzen

Vestre Jakobselv is worth visiting throughout the year. In winter there are often flocks of Purple Sandpipers foraging for food in the tidal zone.



© Anders Faugstad Møland

The Ruff is common in the delta area at Vestre Jakobselv

wash themselves in the fresh water. Numbers of ducks and raptors are also attracted to the area.

The birch forest extends inwards into the valley and westwards towards Varangerbotn. The continuous forest ends shortly east of Vestre Jakobselv. On the way out from the fjord this is the last site where one can find the typical forest species. This is a well known area for the Hawk Owl. This owl is diurnal, and often sits at the top of the trees. The Three-toed Woodpecker also nests here, but is often difficult to find. This is also true of the Siberian Tit, but this can often be seen at feeding sites, as also the Arctic Redpoll, which is relatively common in these areas. Here one may also find species which are relatively uncommon such as Wood Warbler and Garden Warbler.



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The Arctic Tern nests in the delta area

At the mouth of the river there is a small harbour, and a beach extends westwards. Here it is worthwhile looking for gulls and waders, especially at the western end, where a small stream runs out. The Purple Sandpiper is common here in winter. In order to gain the best view of the sea one can go out onto Finneset which lies on the east side of the river mouth. Here it can be profitable to look for seabirds, especially when the wind is from the east. Immediately east of Vestre Jakobselv there are several fields, where one can find resting geese and cranes. Further east there are agricultural areas along the north side of the road (Kariel). In spring one may often see foraging geese such as Grey-lag, Bean and Greater White-fronted.

The mountainous areas inland from Vestre Jakobselv are exciting. Here lies Varangerhalvøya National Park which covers the greater part of the Varanger Peninsula. About ten kilometres north-west of Vestre Jakobselv lie extensive wetlands. Here there are good populations of, for example, Long-tailed Skua, Bar-tailed Godwit, Red-necked Phalarope, Red-throated Pipit and Lapland Longspur. In these mountain areas one can expect to see most of the mountain species.

Access

Vestre Jakobselv is situated between Varangerbotn and Vadsø. From Varangerbotn follow the road E75



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The Little Gull has made attempts to nest in the delta, and can also appear sporadically.

eastwards along the fjord. After 32 km one arrives at Vestre Jakobselv. Within the built-up area one can drive up either side of the river in order to get a view over the delta.

In the summer one can drive 5-6 km into the valley. To reach the national park one must continue to walk 7-8 km from the end of the western road. Remember to take with you necessary equipment such as map and compass/GPS etc.

Further information

The lower part of the river and the delta area are important breeding and staging sites for birds. The birds are often scared away by anglers who walk along the river bank. One should study the birds from a good distance in order to avoid further disturbance.

In Vestre Jakobselv there is a food store and overnight accommodation. About 2 km up the west side of the valley a bird park has been formed. Here one can pay to see and photograph several of the above-mentioned forest species.

This fact sheet is prepared by Anders Faugstad Mæland