



Kjell Holmer

Kosterhavet

The national parks reflect Sweden's nature



Peter Rosén

Skiers in Abisko

Welcome to Sweden's National Parks!



Eva Gunnar

Padjelanta

Mountains

Approximately 90 percent of the total area of the national parks are situated in mountainous regions. The landscape is varied, with glacier-rich high mountains, extensive heaths and valleys with mountain birch and ancient coniferous forests.



Jan Schütz/Naturfotograferna

Norra Kvill

Coniferous forest

Coniferous forest is the most widespread nature type in the country, dominating the large national parks in the immediate vicinity of the mountain regions. The forests in the north have a barren and ancient character, with pine trees up to seven hundred years old in Muddus. The forest is often denser and taller in the south, as in Norra Kvill.



Tore Hagman

Store Mosse

Wetlands

Approximately one-fifth of Sweden's land area is covered by different types of wetland, such as mires, bogs, marshland and damp meadows. Many plants and animals are especially adapted to these wet places and they are important for birds such as the curlew and the golden plover. There are magnificent wetlands in, for example, Muddus and Store Mosse National Parks.



Tore Hagman

Söderåsen

Broadleaf forest

Broadleaf forest with beech, ash, oak and elm trees is a very old nature type that emerged during a warmer climatic period 6,000 years ago. It is rich in species and also contains many threatened species. Nowadays, broadleaf forests exist only south of the Dalälven, for example, in Söderåsen, Dalby Söderskog, Stenshuvud and Ångsö National Parks.



Klas-Rune Johansson

Gotska Sandön

Coast and sea

National parks along the coast offer great contrasts: Skuleskogen's high coast, Stenshuvud's sandy beaches, Haparanda Skärgård's sandbanks rising from the sea, Blå Jungfrun's granite rocks, Gotska Sandön's dunes and the lush forests of Ångsö. As of September 2009, there will be a new view: Kosterhavet's salty rocks and open seas.



Conny Sköglom

Färnebofjärden

Lakes and streams

Sweden is one of the countries in the world that has the most lakes. We also have several rivers which are completely or almost completely unaffected by the construction of hydroelectric power plants. As such, Vindelälven, Torne älv, Kalix älv and Pite älv are protected as national rivers. In addition, there are fine freshwater environments in Djurö National Park and Färnebofjärden National Park.

The difference between national parks and nature reserves

SWEDEN WAS THE FIRST COUNTRY IN EUROPE to adopt a nature conservation act and to establish national parks. This happened in 1909. The idea then, as well as now, was that pristine nature should be preserved for present and future generations. Nature conservation has developed since then and is now a matter of both preserving and enjoying the use of our nature in a sustainable way. It is our duty, as individuals and for society as a whole, to look after the precious nature we have.

National park or nature reserve?

Today there are two main ways to protect nature in Sweden: as a national park or as a nature reserve. Both of these are included in the Environmental Code, but the national park signifies a stronger form of protection than the nature reserve.

National parks

The Government and the Riksdag make decisions about establishing national parks, which must lie on state-owned land. The national parks constitute large, unspoiled areas representative of Swedish landscape types. The parks should be accessible for outdoor recreational interests.

Nature reserves

The decision to establish a nature reserve is taken by the County Administrative Board and municipalities after consultation with landowners and other parties concerned. The land may be publicly or privately owned. Nature reserves may consist of small or large areas. Many nature reserves are established in order to preserve natural habitats and species that live there, whereas others are established in order to promote outdoor life – or for both reasons.

Establishing and managing national parks

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency bears the main responsibility for nature protection in Sweden and prepares decisions made by the Government and the Riksdag for the establishment of new national parks. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has made a national park plan of suitable areas. The 21 county



Jan-Peter Lahall

Capercaillie

administrative boards in the country are normally responsible for the administration of national parks and nature reserves but some national parks are administrated by special trusts.

A management plan for how natural values should be preserved is drawn up for each national park. It describes how the administrator should manage the area, build and maintain shelters and hiking trails, put up signs and ensure the avoidance of wear and tear from visitors to the area. In national parks the nature is wild. In certain culture-based environments, however, traditional methods of cultivation must be maintained in order to prevent meadows and pastures from becoming overgrown.

Nature's Year

IN 1909, SWEDEN INTRODUCED its first-ever nature conservation act. At the same time, the Riksdag made a decision to found nine national parks - the first national parks in Europe! To celebrate the centenary we have designated 2009 as Nature's Year. Lots of activities you can participate in are being organised throughout the country. Come out and enjoy our beautiful nature! Read more on www.naturensar.se



Information about the National Parks

DURING 2009 WE ARE CELEBRATING Nature's Year to commemorate 100 years of Swedish national parks and nature conservation. In 1909, Riksdagen established the first nine national parks in Sweden.

In this leaflet we present all of Sweden's national parks and the fantastic nature you will see in them.

On our websites you will find more information about each national park, including maps, activities and links to nearby tourist offices.

www.swedishepa.se/nationalparks
www.lansstyrelsen.se
www.naturensar.se



Länsstyrelserna

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VADVETJÄKKA *The northernmost national park* | A large delta area with lakes, osier thickets and mires is located south of Mount Vadvetjåkka. There is rich bird life and the flora benefits from the proximity to the Atlantic rains and the lime-rich bedrock. This is the location of some of the larger caves in the country, including the deepest one (155 metres).
Area: 2,630 ha. Established in 1920.

STORA SJÖFALLET *Varied mountainous environment* | The park is divided in two by the Akkajure lake, which was taken out of the park to allow the construction of a hydroelectric power plant. The southern part is dominated by the summits and glaciers of Mount Akka. The northern part includes Mount Kallaktjäckå, whose northern side faces the deep Teusadalen valley. Part of the Laponia World Heritage site. *Area: 127,800 ha. Established in 1909.*

PADJELANTA *Extensive mountainous heaths* | Padjelanta consists of a high plain surrounding the large lakes of Vastenjaure and Virihaure, known as “Sweden’s most beautiful lake”. The area is valuable reindeer grazing land with rare plants and rich animal life situated far from roads. Staloluokta is an intersection along the Kvikkjokk – Akka hiking trail. Part of the World Heritage site of Laponia. *Area: 198,400 ha. Established in 1962.*

PIELJEKAISE *Virgin mountain birch forest* | A few traces of cots or huts do not spoil the impression of the unspoiled area of Pieljekaise. The area is covered by primeval mountain birch forest and functions as a place of refuge for many animals. If you are lucky, you can see wolverines, bears, arctic foxes, golden eagles and gerfalcons. The national “Kungsleden” hiking trail passes through the park. *Area: 15,340 ha. Established in 1909.*

SÄNFJÄLLET *Legendary bear country* | Mount Sänfjället rises in lone majesty amid the extensive forest landscape. The area is known as one of the most important bear habitats in the whole of Scandinavia. The mountain slopes bear clear traces of the power of the inland ice. *Area: 10,440 ha. Established in 1909, enlarged in 1989.*

TÖFSINGDALEN *Genuine wilderness* | Töfsingdalen is a barren and deserted wilderness with boulder fields and primeval forest. The snags extend towards the sky and the rare and poisonous wolf lichen grows on many of them. The national park boasts of what may be the most difficult terrain Swedish nature has to offer. Hiking trails from Grövelsjön and Storån. *Area: 1,615 ha. Established in 1930.*

FULUFJÄLLET *Distinctive southern mountain heights* | Fulufjället is a sandstone plateau with steep forested slopes. The heaths of the bare mountain are covered by thick carpets of lichens which benefit from the mountain not being used as grazing ground for reindeers. Sweden’s highest waterfall is located at Njupeuskär. *Area: 38,500 ha. Established in 2002.*

GARPHYTTAN *Old cultivated landscape* | Garphyttan is like a green oasis of flower-rich meadows and deciduous forest, surrounded by Kilsbergen’s coniferous forest. The landscape has been shaped by man through cultivation and forestry throughout time. The park boasts of rich cultural history and is inhabited by the otherwise rare dormouse. *Area: 111 ha. Established in 1909.*

DJURÖ *Isolated lake archipelago* | Djurö Archipelago consists of about 30 islands in the middle of Lake Vänern. Despite its inland position, there are few other archipelagos that are more distant and isolated than Djurö. Barren rocky soils with sparse pine forest dominate the islands. The park has a rich bird life. *Area: 2,325 ha, including 2,013 ha of water. Established in 1991.*

TRESTICKLAN *Untouched border terrain* | Tresticklan, next to the Norwegian border, is the largest forest area without roads in southern Sweden. Narrow mountain ridges run from north to south, separated by valleys covered by forest, swamps and lakes. The peculiar terrain has been formed with the weathering of the bedrock. *Area: 2,910 ha. Established in 1996.*

KOSTERHAVET *Salty rocks and open seas* | Kosterhavet is Sweden’s first marine national park. It is the most species-rich marine area in the country. Many species benefit from the deep waters that flow from the Atlantic Ocean in through the Koster Fjord channel which is 100 to 250 metres deep. The protected area continues on the Norwegian side of the border in Ytre Hvaler National Park. *Area: 39,450 ha, including 38,600 ha of water. Established in 2009.*

STORE MOSSE *Largest mire in southern Sweden* | The Stormyren mire is the most untouched nature type in southern Sweden. The peat layer in the mire has grown for at least 5,000 years and consists mostly of plant remains from bog moss. Forested sand dunes form a system of islands and ridges in the open mire. Kävsjön Lake, with its rich bird life, is also located in the national park. *Area: 7,850 ha. Established in 1982.*

SÖDERÅSEN *Broadleaf forest and rift valleys* | The park offers extensive views and flowing streams. Deep rift valleys and impressive talus slopes make the landscape unexpectedly dramatic and bear witness to the powerful forces of nature which are still at work today. The forest is dominated by beech and is one of the largest protected broadleaf forests in northern Europe. *Area: 1,625 ha. Established in 2001.*

DALBY SÖDERSKOG *Thick broadleaf forest* | Dalby Söderskog is a broadleaf forest with continental characteristics, only 10 kilometres from the centre of Lund. The lime and chalk content in the ground benefit the flora. During spring and early summer the park is in full colourful splendour, bedecked with wood anemone, yellow wood anemone, corydalis cava, gagea and lesser celandine. *Area: 36 ha. Established in 1918.*



ABISKO *Arctic herb garden* | The national park is a birch-clad valley with flowery alpine meadows and river rapids. It is surrounded by lofty mountains and Scandinavia’s highest alpine lake, Torneträsk. Abisko is one of the sunniest places in the country and a classic starting point for hikes in Lapland’s mountainous world. *Area: 7,700 ha. Established in 1909.*

SAREK *Majestic high mountain massif* | Sarek represents the truly dramatic Swedish nature, with jagged mountain peaks, glaciers and deeply cut valleys. The Rapadalen valley features dense mountain birch forest, osier and herbaceous plants. The park, which is extremely difficult to access, has no facilities for tourists and will be preserved as wilderness. Sarek is part of Laponia World Heritage site. *Area: 197,000 ha. Established in 1909.*

MUDDUS *Kingdom of wilderness in Lapland* | The terrain in the world of primeval forest and extensive mires is flat and the bird life rich. The forest is affected by fires at regular intervals. There are deep ravines, such as Måskoskärså, in the south that offer a stunning experience. Muddus is part of Laponia World Heritage site. *Area: 49,340 ha. Established in 1942, enlarged in 1984.*

HAPARANDA SKÄRGÅRD *Island kingdom with sand dunes* | Wind, sea and land elevation continuously shape this archipelago in the northernmost part of the Gulf of Botnia. Short and wind-swept pine forest, sandy beaches and dunes give the national park a peculiar and exotic character. There are rare plants and insects in Haparanda Skärgård, which is also a resting place for migratory birds. *Area: 6,000 ha, including 5,230 ha of water. Established in 1995.*

BJÖRNLANDET *Fields of boulders in primeval forest* | Björnlandet is a magnificent wilderness and one of the most valuable virgin forests in Sweden. Slopes and sheer cliffs break up the rolling mountainous terrain. The park features large boulder fields and clear traces of forest fires. *Area: 1,130 ha. Established in 1991.*

SKULESKOGEN *Mountainous steep coast* | Skuleskogen’s terrain is varied. Pronounced mountain peaks covered by pine forest are divided by deep rift valleys carved by the sea and the inland ice. There are also bare boulder fields, mires and tarns in the park. The stream valleys are fertile and home to lots of birds. Part of the High Coast World Heritage site. *Area: 3,062 ha. Established in 1984, enlarged in 2009.*

HAMRA *Striking primeval coniferous forest* | Hamra is one of the few primeval forests in the otherwise heavily logged landscape of southern Norrland. The many old trees with hanging lichens, snags and windfall are characteristic of a primeval forest. *Area: 28 ha. Established in 1909.*

FÄRNEBOFJÄRDEN *Borderland between north and south* | For millennia, the lower Dalälven River has been subjected to periodic flooding which has had a very strong influence on the surrounding landscape. Coastal fens and riverside meadows are intermixed with old-growth forest and bogs. Färnebofjärden has a very rich bird life and is popular among anglers. *Area: 10,100 ha, including 4,110 ha of water. Established in 1998.*

ÅNGSÖ *Idyllic archipelago* | On the island of Ångsö in the Stockholm Archipelago, a piece of old Sweden is preserved, with pastures and hayfields which have evolved over centuries of human cultivation. In the spring, there is a profusion of brightly-coloured flowers. Ospreys and sea eagles are often seen above the island, which is only accessible by boat. *Area: 188 ha, including 115 ha of water. Established in 1909, enlarged in 1988.*

TYRESTA *Primeval forest in rift valley landscape* | Tyresta’s primeval forests are located only 20 kilometres outside of Stockholm. These pine forests are barren and lie in a rift valley landscape with rocky outcrops abraded by the inland ice. Lush spruce forest grows in the mountain crevices. Capercaillie, woodpeckers and owls are among the birds characteristic of the area. *Area: 1,970 ha. Established in 1993.*

TIVEDEN *Hilly magical forest* | Countless myths and superstitious stories are associated with Tiveden. The terrain is intersected by deep rift valleys. The forest’s age and considerable size, in combination with the wild boulder landscape created by the inland ice, gives the area a genuine look of wilderness. *Area: 1,350 ha. Established in 1983.*

NORRA KVILL *Virgin coniferous forest in southern Sweden* | Norra Kvill is a unique and well-preserved virgin forest area in the highlands of Småland. The forest has not been logged for at least 150 years and some of the pine trees are more than 350 years old. Pine trees dominate the national park but there are also large spruce trees here. A magical lake, Idegölen, lies amid the steep and rugged terrain. *Area: 114 ha. Established in 1927 and enlarged in 1994.*

GÖTASANDÖN *Exotic beaches* | Gotska Sandön is very exposed to the weather, with sand dunes held down by wind-swept pine forest. Many dry and dying trees give the environment a deserted and barren look and the unspoiled sandy beaches create an exotic impression. There is an unusually large number of beetle species here. *Area: 4,490 ha, including 842 ha of water. Established in 1909, enlarged in 1963 and 1988.*

BLÅ JUNGFRUN *Exciting granite island* | Enveloped in myths and legends, Blå Jungfrun lies in the waters of Kalmarsund. The island is characterised by reddish cliffs of granite and extensive boulder fields. The black guillemot is a typical species of bird that can be found in the area. The only mammals on the island are alpine hares and bats. Several caves and a stone labyrinth make a visit to the island even more exciting. *Area: 198 ha, including 132 ha of water. Established in 1926, enlarged in 1988.*

STENSHUVUD *Remarkable basement rock* | Stenshuvud’s domed top of basement rock has been a landmark for seafarers for generations. Stenshuvud was once regarded as a habitat of giants and trolls. A warm climate and varied natural features favour the species-rich plant life. *Area: 380 ha. Established in 1986.*



The finest nature we have

NATIONAL PARKS REPRESENT the very finest examples of Sweden’s natural landscapes. This is where the most precious parts of our natural heritage are preserved for the sake of nature itself and also for us, both for today and for the future.

National parks should include natural areas representative of the Swedish landscape and preserve them in their natural state. They should be areas of great natural beauty or unique environments which can create enduring nature experiences.

The national parks of Sweden are an important contribution to international environmental work. Most countries have national parks and many of them are tourist attractions which are known all over the world. Examples of such attractions include the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, Grand Canyon and Yellowstone in the United States, Serengeti in Tanzania and the Galapagos Islands in Ecuador.

Swedish national parks should provide all people with an opportunity to explore nature of different types. This is why most national parks have hiking trails and often information centres. Some national parks even offer overnight accommodation.



Breckland thyme, also known as wild or creeping thyme

Our national parks in figures

SWEDEN HAS 28 NATIONAL PARKS which cover in total almost 7,000 square kilometres, i.e. approximately 1.5 percent of the surface area of the country. In September 2009, Kosterhavet National Park with almost 400 square kilometres will be added to the list.

In addition to the national parks, we have more than 3,200 nature reserves. The total area of nature conservation areas in Sweden is almost 54,000 square kilometres, or 12 percent of the total area of the country, which corresponds to the average percentage of conservation areas in the world.

Many valuable areas still remain to be protected. This takes place above all through the establishment of nature reserves, since the requirements for national parks are so high that only a small number of new areas can be considered for this form of nature conservation.



Offspring of a Tengmalm’s owl