



SEILAND

ALPINE ISLAND SCENERY
IN WEST FINNMARK





Store Bekkarfjord (BR)



Jøfjorden (PAA)

STEEP, COASTAL MOUNTAINS WITH THE NORTHERNMOST ICE CAPS IN SCANDINAVIA

Seiland is a distinctive, beautiful island in west Finnmark, with small and large fjords lined by steep mountains that plunge into the sea. Its two ice caps are the northernmost ones in Scandinavia, and Melkelva, the river flowing from one of these, Seilandsjøkelen, links the ice cap with the fjord. To be so far north, parts of the national park are astonishingly green and lush. The precipitous coastal cliffs offer nesting sites for many birds of prey.



Sámi camp in Jøfjordbotn (THB)



Picking cloudberry (THB)



ENJOY THE SCENERY

Outdoor recreation

There are many thrilling experiences to be had on Seiland, and you can take fine hikes or ski trips. The national park offers varied and exciting hiking terrain from fjord coasts and steep coastal mountains to birch woods and lush, tall-herb meadows down in the valleys, via varied mountainous terrain with many lakes, to glaciers and alpine peaks. The most suitable areas for walking are Store Bekkarfjord, Bårdfjord and the Straumdalen valley. If you have suitable equipment for glacier trekking, you should try the Seiland ice caps. Local tourism operators offer activities like mountaineering, glacier trekking and fishing in the national park.

There are no marked paths or open huts in the national park, and no roads lead into this unspoiled, wilderness-like area. Together with the often steep terrain, this makes it particularly important to be well equipped if you want to visit the park. Please also have regard for the semi-domesticated reindeer that graze here, and avoid unnecessary disturbance.

Hunting and fishing

The many mountain tarns offer good fishing, and opportunities to shoot small game in the park are good. Remember to buy hunting and fishing licences, and to disinfect your tackle before you test your fishing skills.



The Seilandsjøkul ice cap (PK)



Melkelva (JA)

LANDSCAPE AND GEOLOGY

Steep mountains, fjords and glaciers

Seiland is the next largest island in Finnmark after Sørøya. It is the easterly outpost of the alpine coastal landscape of Norway, and many peaks are higher than 800 m. The two ice caps in the Seiland National Park, Seilandsjøkelen and Nordmannsjøkelen, are the northernmost in Scandinavia. Ice caps have not formed so close to sea level anywhere else in Scandinavia. The landscape on Seiland is dominated by a number of fjords. Store Kufjord and Jøfjord almost divide the island in two. The most alpine terrain in the park is in the west, where several steep peaks plunge into the sea.

Melkelva – a pristine river from the ice cap to the fjord

Seilandsjøkelen is the largest ice cap on Seiland. In front of its outlet glacier in the south is a characteristic, wide, hummocky plain across which flows a meltwater river

named Melkelva because of its milky appearance due to its heavy load of rock meal. The many faults in the area cause the lakes and river course to be noticeably angular. Melkelva flows undisturbed down rapids and waterfalls out into the sea in Store Bekkarfjord.

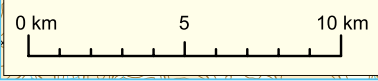
Geology

Seiland is dominated by ultrabasic bedrock, which is fairly uncommon and extremely rich in nutrients. It gives rise to unusual habitats with conditions that support ecological specialists like low sandwort. Seiland is also interesting for its Quaternary geology, since nearly every type of glacier and glacial deposit is represented here. Macrocrystals of zircon (“Seiland diamonds”) are also found on Seiland, a rarity that is highly prized by mineral collectors and attracts many people who are interested in geology to the national park.

Key

-  National Park
-  Accommodation
-  Café or cafeteria
-  Information
-  Camp site
-  Airport
-  Car ferry
-  Express boat

Formgivning og digital kartografi: Gåsavth kart-tjenester, www.kart-tjenester.no Digitalt kartdata: Statens kartverk N250. Tillatelse nr. MAD12002-R125240





A five-spot burnet moth on chives (JA)



PLANT LIFE

Distinctive, lush plant life

The ultrabasic rocks are mostly found in the south where, aided by the moist coastal climate, they support a varied, and locally very rich and lush, plant life. Rare, demanding alpine plants, like low sandwort, spiked snow-grass and a rare subspecies of arctic poppy, *Papaver radicum* ssp. *macrostigma*, grow in the mountains. Around the head of Store Bekkarfjord, the mountainsides are bright green because tall grass grows almost to the summits, producing a very beautiful, grazed landscape. In a few places, such as the heads of Jøfjord and Flaskefjord, there is extremely lush birch woodland with tall ferns and herbs. The coastline in the park is generally steep and rocky, but species-rich salt marshes are also found, for instance in Bårdfjord.



Glacier buttercup (THB)



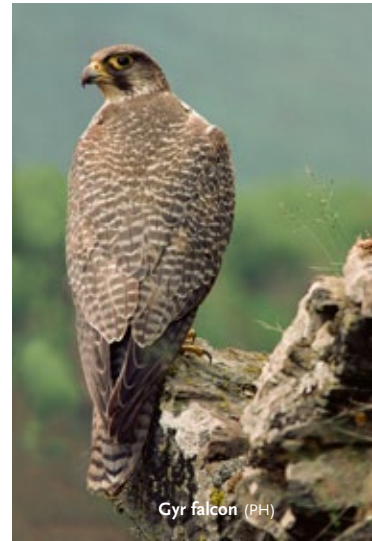
BIRD AND ANIMAL LIFE

Many birds of prey

The many desolate, steep mountains and numerous sea cliffs give refuge to large numbers of birds of prey. White-tailed eagles nest here, as well as golden eagles, gyrfalcons, merlins, kestrels and rough-legged buzzards. The less steep parts of the coastline have gull and tern colonies, as well as waders, grey lag geese, eiders and black guillemots. Some wetland birds, including black-throated and red-throated divers, nest beside lakes and rivers in the interior of the island.

Mammals

Otters, stoats, hares and small rodents are common in the national park, and semi-domesticated reindeer graze on the island from April to September-October.



Gyr falcon (PH)



White-tailed eagle (PH)

HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE RELICS

Traces from prehistoric and historic time

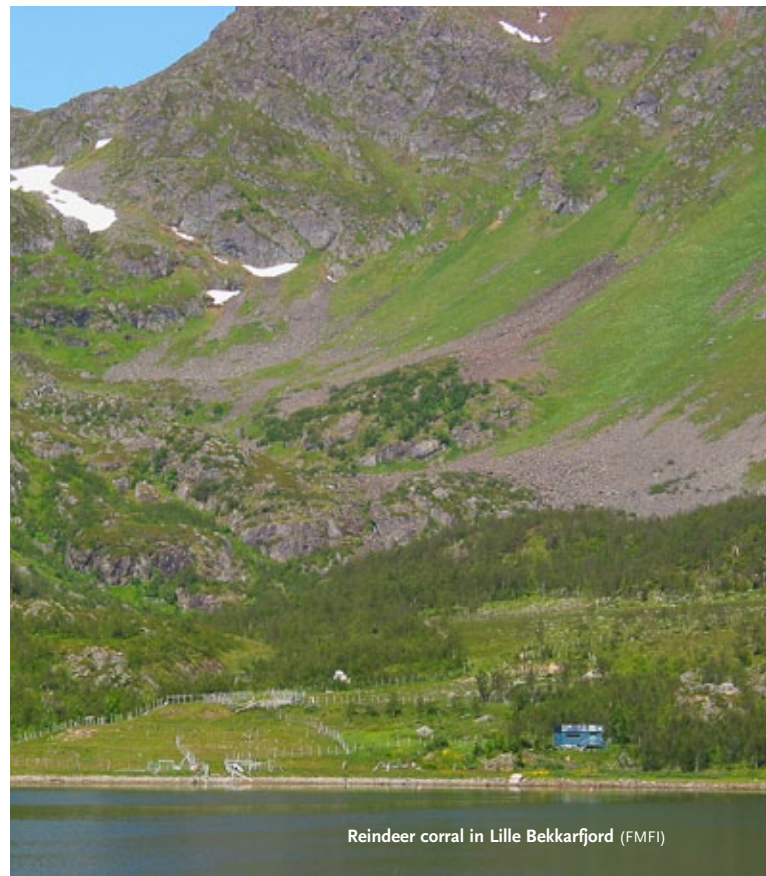
Remains of habitation have been found in the national park that date back to the Stone Age and the Iron Age. Constructions for trapping animals have also been discovered. 19th-century maps show that people lived in almost every fjord on Seiland then. No-one lives in the national park nowadays, but you can see many remains of former habitation close to the sea in the shape of foundation walls, strips of shore cleared of rocks to draw up boats, and small patches of cleared land.

Sámi reindeer husbandry and the Coastal Sámi culture

Few traces of former reindeer husbandry are to be seen, mostly the foundations of huts used in summer. Semi-domesticated reindeer from grazing districts 24 A (western Seiland) and 24 B (eastern Seiland) graze in the park in summer, and there are reindeer fences and corrals, among elsewhere at Lille Bekkarfjord and on the lake shore at Melkevann. Sheep also graze in parts of the park, and there is a sheep pen and a shepherd's hut near Store Bekkarfjord. In former times, resident Coastal Sámi made a livelihood by a combination of fishing and keeping a few livestock. A 'friendship arrangement', a mutual exchange of services, accommodation and work effort, was widely practised. It was usual for nomadic, reindeer-herding Sámi to lodge animals with resident Coastal Sámi in winter and fetch them when they returned to their summer settlement.



Remains of a turf hut (JA)



Reindeer corral in Lille Bekkarfjord (FMFI)



Flasketind (THB)

In a national park, you are one of Nature's guests

- You may go wherever you like, on foot or on skis, but anything with an engine is basically prohibited.
- You can stop wherever you like and pitch a tent. Always tidy up afterwards and take your rubbish with you.
- You can light a fire from 15 September to 15 April, but take care and use only dry wood or fallen trees.
- You can pick berries, mushrooms and common plants for your own use. Show consideration for cultural heritage sites, vegetation and animal life. Take extra care in the breeding season.
- Hunting and fishing are permitted. Remember to buy hunting and fishing licences. Never use live fish as bait, or transfer live fish from one river or lake to another.
- You can take your dog with you, but remember to keep it on a lead from 1 April to 20 August.
- Take care not to disturb grazing reindeer in spring, summer and autumn.



Seiland National Park in brief

Where:

In the boroughs of Alta, Hammerfest and Kvalsund in the county of Finnmark.

How to reach Seiland National Park:

Southern Seiland: E 6 north from Alta, branching off on Rv 883 to Storekorsnes to get an express boat to Hakkstabben or Altneset on Seiland.

Northern Seiland: Rv 94 south from Hammerfest, branching off westwards to Akkarfjord to take the ferry from there to Kjerringholmen on Seiland.

You must then go by foot or boat to reach the park itself. Boat transport can be arranged through Seiland Explore or Seiland House. Local boat owners can also be contacted.

Information on accommodation and other services:

Seiland Explore, phone +47 78 41 96 40, www.seiland-explore.no
Seiland House, phone +47 95 24 40 31, www.seiland-house.no

Huts:

There are no open huts in the national park.

Tips:

Hikes to the Seilandsjøkel ice cap from Store Bekkarfjord, Altneset or Hønseby are recommended. It is also marvellous to experience the national park from the sea. A mooring buoy has been placed at the head of Store Bekkarfjord.

Maps:

1835 I, 1836 II, 1935 IV (1:50 000 sheets).

A set of two 1:50 000 maps for hikers covers Kvaløya, Seiland and Sørøya.

Designed: 2006

Area: 316 km²

Management:

Seiland/Sevju National Park Board
County Governor of Finnmark, phone +47 78 95 03 00
www.fylkesmannen.no/finnmark

Surveillance:

Norwegian Nature Inspectorate, Alta office, phone +47 91 62 22 83
or +47 91 62 22 82

More information:

www.norgesnasjonalparker.no

ISBN (Trykt) 978-82-7072-961-6 ISBN (PDF) 978-82-7072-962-3

Layout: Guri Jermstad AS. Photo: Kristin S Karlsen (KSK), Bente Rønning (BR), Tor Harry Bjørn (THB), Johannes Abildsnes (JA), Petter Kaald /SNO (KP), Fylkesmannen i Finnmark (FMFI), Per Arne Askeland (PAA) naturfoto.net and Pål Hermansen (PH)

Front cover: Melkelva has eroded a deep valley (KSK), and black and white: Nordmannsjøkulen (THB)

Back cover: Straumdalen (JA)



Print: GRØSET™



NORWAY'S
NATIONAL PARKS



Norwegian national parks – our common natural heritage

National parks are designated to protect large areas of unspoilt countryside – from the sea to the mountaintops – for the sake of Nature herself, we ourselves and future generations.

The parks contain a wealth of splendid scenery and varied animal and plant life, waterfalls, glaciers, towering peaks, never-ending plateaus, deep forests, and beautiful fjords and coasts. Cultural heritage sites also show how the areas were used in bygone days.

The parks offer a vast range of thrilling and exciting natural history. Make use of the fantastic Norwegian countryside – on Nature's own terms.

Welcome to Norwegian national parks!



NORWEGIAN DIRECTORATE
FOR NATURE MANAGEMENT

www.dirnat.no/english