



# SALTFJELLET-SVARTISEN NATIONAL PARK





Skiing in spring (CN)



Bredak in Stormdalen (CN)

## FROM FJORDS TO GLACIERS AND PLATEAUS

The national park extends from steep mountains in the west, which plunge into the fjords, to lush valleys in the east with gently flowing rivers and clad with mountain birch. There it meets the open, high plateaus of Saltfjellet dominated by surficial deposits from the last Ice Age. This is the park with the great contrasts. The Svartisen ice cap, the largest glacial expanse in northern Scandinavia, covers about a fifth of the park. The calcareous bedrock leads to a rich flora, including rare species, which, in turn, supports a wealth of animal life. There is also an outstanding diversity of Sámi cultural heritage relics.



Pleasant fishing in Tverrbrentvatn (CN)



ENJOY THE SCENERY



Rock shelter at Stallogropa (CN)



A proud dog after a successful hunt (LMK)

The varied and pristine landscape of the Saltfjellet-Svartisen National Park offers good opportunities for all kinds of outdoor recreation, and is popular among cavers and glacier trekkers. The ice cap and several limestone caves are readily accessible.

The park has many marked trails and paths, including one following the old telegraph line between Rana and Saltdal. Many self-service Norwegian Trekking Association cabins and unlocked national forest company huts are dotted along the trails. One path follows valleys right through the park from Dunderlandsdalen, through Tespdalen and up Bjøllådalen to the Bjøllåvass cabin.

With tarns teeming with fine trout and char, Saltfjellet is very popular among anglers. In autumn, you can easily live just on fish and wild mushrooms, followed by berries, while hiking in the park. Four large salmon rivers, Beiarelva, Saltdalselva, Lakselva in Misvær and Ranaelva, also have their sources in the Saltfjellet-Svartisen National Park.

Small-game hunting is mainly confined to the eastern part, where there are many ptarmigan and willow grouse some years. Elk can be hunted in central and eastern parts of the park. Remember to buy your hunting and fishing licences.



Vesterdalen and Flatisvatn (CN)



## LANDSCAPE AND GEOLOGY

In the west, the landscape is characterised by sharp contours with high peaks, deep fjords, glaciers and lakes. The national park has some of the most magnificent and wildest scenery in the county of Nordland. Further east, the landscape shifts to more open valleys and rounded landforms.

Svartisen is the largest ice cap in northern Scandinavia, although a valley separates it into an eastern and a western part. Altogether, it covers some 370 km<sup>2</sup> of the national park. Ice has been shaping the landscape for thousands of years, and outwash plains of sand and silt are continually being re-worked by the glacial rivers. If you are fortunate, you can see a glacier calving into one of the glacial lakes.

Recrystallised limestone (marble) is widespread in central parts of the national park. Water has found its way into crevices and cracks in the rock here for thousands of years and has excavated and dissolved numerous small and large caves. Some of these are more than 350 000 years old and are able to give unique information about the conditions in several ice ages. Such caves and other limestone features shaped by water are characterised as karst.

The most varied karstic landscape in the park is at Pikhågan in the valley of Glomdalen, and besides caverns, the karstic features here include small marble pillars protected by erratics perched on them, fluted rock, springs and sinkholes, and numerous small cavities and sculptures dissolved out of the bedrock. There is also a marble rampart, a broad strip of light marble crossing diagonally over the entire valley. For thousands of years, the silt carried by the river issuing from the glacier has been grinding and polishing the marble into beautiful shapes.



Enga glacier (CN)

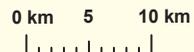


Marble with karstic features (LMK)



## Legend

-  National border
-  National Park
-  Protected landscape area
-  Nature Reserve
-  Parking
-  Overnight accommodation
-  Café/Restaurant
-  Camping
-  National park centre
-  Self-service cabin
-  Hut / Turf hut





Mountain avens (CN)



Cloudberry (CN)



## PLANT LIFE

The varied bedrock on Saltfjellet gives a great diversity of plants. The marble weathers to form favourable soil to support a flora that is rich in species, some of which are rare. The latter include demanding species like *Rhododendron lapponicum*, the only wild rhododendron in Norway, and a poppy (*Papaver radicum* ssp. *subglobosum*) that has only been found in the Helgelandsbukken – Engabreen area. Some species are found in great abundance, particularly mountain avens, which form some impressively extensive heaths.

Around 250 species of plants have been recorded in Stormdalen and the mountain birch woodland has an abundance of tall herbs. Other lush upland valleys include Tespdalen and Bjøllådalen. The Saltfjellet-Svartisen National Park is also an area where coastal plants like hard fern (*Blechnum spicant*) and bog asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*) meet eastern ones like lousewort (*Pedicularis sceptrum carolinum*) and arctic bramble (*Rubus arcticus*). Saltfjellet functions as a barrier for several species of plants and animals. In Nordland, Norway spruce has always had its natural northern boundary as a forest-forming tree in the Storlia Nature Reserve, but scattered trees seen nowadays on Saltfjellet suggest that it is starting to cross the massif.



Arctic foxes (CN)



Female wolverine with her cub (CN)



Lemming (CN)



## ANIMAL LIFE

As a direct consequence of the rich plant life in the Saltfjellet-Svartisen area, the park also has a rich animal life. The lushest upland valleys have large stocks of elk. With luck, you may see several of the four large predators in Norway. Lynx are resident in the lower parts and wolverines in higher areas. Brown bears occasionally roam into the park. Saltfjellet is also one of the few mountainous areas where arctic foxes currently breed. In addition, raptors like golden eagles, rough-legged buzzards and gyrfalcons breed in several parts of the park.

The national park has good stocks of trout and char. The two species generally live in different lakes. The char, an arctic species, thrives best in cold, nutrient-poor lakes like Bjøllåvatnan, while trout live in slightly warmer lakes at lower altitudes.

Ptarmigan are found above the tree line and willow grouse and hares in the mountain birch woods at lower levels. Capercaillie and black grouse can be encountered in the coniferous and mixed woodlands on the park margins.



January sun beyond Nordre Bjøllávatn (CN)



## HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE RELICS

People have been travelling through and using the national park area for many centuries and traces of this use are still visible. The oldest relics are from about AD 800.

The Saltfjellet-Svartisen area is regarded as the oldest and most important area for Sámi cultural heritage south of Finnmark. Remains of Sámi settlements, turf huts called stallo dwellings, stem from the Middle Ages.

The present-day semi-domesticated reindeer husbandry is rooted in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Many cultural heritage relics stem from this activity, including tent sites, rock shelters where reindeer herders and other people regularly spent the night, food storage pits and timber food stores, Sámi sacrificial sites, pitfalls and fences to guide reindeer to hunting traps. Lønsdalen, a core area for reindeer husbandry, has many such relics.



In the reindeer corral (CN)

Much land in the upland valleys was cleared for farming at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nearly everyone left these valleys long ago, but some old farms and hay barns in clearings in the birch woods still remind us of how these old farmers toiled. Bredek, at the entrance to Stormdalen, is one of the farms that can be visited. It is now part of Rana Museum and the farmhouse, a stone byre and barn, a cookhouse, a cellar, a woodshed, an outside lavatory and a hay barn are still standing.

The remains of several old tracks can be seen on Saltfjellet, including that along the old telegraph line between Rana and Saltdal. This stretch began to be built in 1867 and stone huts were provided for the workers. They were later replaced by wooden buildings, some of which are now used as accommodation for hikers.



Ørfjellet (CN)

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

- Go wherever you want, on foot or on skis. Anything with an engine is basically banned.
- Stop wherever you want, and camp for the night if you wish, but tidy up afterwards and take your rubbish home.
- You may light a fire, but remember the general ban on fires in woodland between 15 April and 15 September. Take care when you gather firewood.
- You may 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.
- Take the opportunity to hunt and fish, but remember to buy hunting and fishing licences. Do not use live fish as bait. You must not take live fish from one river or lake to another.
- You may have a dog with you, but remember to keep it on a leash from 1 April to 20 August and always take special care with regard to reindeer, sheep and other animals.



## Saltfjellet-Svartisen National Park in brief

**Where:** The Boroughs of Beiarn, Meløy, Rana, Rødøy and Saltdal in the County of Nordland.

### How to reach the Saltfjellet-Svartisen National Park:

By plane to Mo i Rana or Bodø, and then bus or train.

**Train:** the Nordland Line, and get off at Hjartåsen, Bolna, Lønsdal or Røklund stations.

**By car:** E6 along Saltdalen, Mo i Rana - Rognan, and take the branch road at Røssvoll towards Glomdalen, Svartisdalen and Røvassdalen, or stop at several places on E6 where tracks or paths take you into the national park.

Rv 812 and 813 to Storjord, and take the road up Beiardalen. Rv 17 Jektvik - Glomfjord, and take the path to Storglomvatnet. You can cross the fjord and get to the Enga glacier at Holand.

### Information on overnight accommodation and other services:

Mo i Rana Tourist Information Office, phone +47 75 13 92 00  
 Meløy Tourist Information Office, phone +47 75 75 48 88  
 Saltdal Tourist Centre, phone +47 75 68 24 50  
 Beiarn Tourist Information Office, phone +47 75 56 95 00

**Cabins:** Many cabins and huts are available close to and within the national park. They have a variety of owners, such as the Norwegian Trekking Association (DNT), the Norwegian Forestry Company (Statskog) and the Norwegian Association of Hunters and Fishermen (NJFF). Enquire in advance about the standard, who owns it and whether it is unlocked.

**Tips:** Visit Bredek, a former farm in Stormdalen, and experience the spectacular scenery, a good path and beautiful flowers, and enjoy a waterfall, Bredekfossen, on the way.

**Maps:** Saltfjell Map 1:75 000 and several maps in the Norge 1:50 000 set.

**Designated:** 1989

**Area:** 2102 km<sup>2</sup>

**National park centre:** Nordland National Park Centre, phone +47 75 69 24 00, [www.nordlandsnaturen.no](http://www.nordlandsnaturen.no)

**Associated protected areas:** Storlia, Semska-Stødi, Dypen, Fisktjørna and Blakkådalen nature reserves and Gåsvatnan and Saltfjellet protected landscape areas

**Management:** Central Nordland National Park Board  
 County Governor of Nordland, [www.fylkesmannen.no/nordland](http://www.fylkesmannen.no/nordland)

**Supervision:** Norwegian Nature Inspectorate, the Norwegian Forestry Company ranger service, phone +47 07800

**More information:** [www.norgesnasjonalparker.no](http://www.norgesnasjonalparker.no)



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## **Norwegian national parks are our common natural heritage**

We set up national parks to safeguard large areas of countryside – from the seashore to the mountaintops. For Nature's own sake, ourselves and future generations. National parks boast magnificent scenery with varied animal and plant life, waterfalls, glaciers, lofty mountains, endless plateaus, deep forests and lush woodlands, and beautiful fjords and coasts.

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