



MØYSALEN

A MAGNIFICENT LANDSCAPE
RICH IN CONTRASTS





FROM ALPINE PEAKS TO LUSH DECIDUOUS WOODLANDS

The Møysalen National Park on Hinnøya, the largest island in Norway, is one of the smallest in the country, only 51.2 km². Yet its scenery and natural history are varied, with striking alpine peaks, lush slopes clad in deciduous woodland, farmland dotted with settlements, and some of the finest fjords in Norway. Møysalen, in the centre of the park, towers to a height of 1262 m, and is the highest mountain on an island in Norway (excluding Svalbard). Other peaks in the area reach close to 1000 m.

The name Møysalen derives from the characteristic shape of the mountain. Just south of the actual peak are two smaller summits, Lille Møya and Store Møya. Legend has it that they are two troll girls who were petrified. The saddle-shaped ridge is interpreted as either the roof of their hall or the saddle of their mount.

For many people, Møysalen is the supreme wonderland, a paradise for those who surmount all their obstacles and toil to the summit. Their dream has finally come true after gazing at the bewitching peak for years, longing to reach it! Just imagine! To be able to stand on Møysalen!

Along with the Møysalen Protected Landscape Area, this is the only fairly large area in Lofoten and Vesterålen that has been little spoilt by man.



On the way to the summit (TL)



Descending from Møysalen (JR)



Spring flood on the River Vestpoll (WV)

ENJOY THE SCENERY

In Møysalen National Park you can hike in virtually unspoilt scenery from the fjord to the mountaintops.

Hiking and climbing on such coastal mountains is a magnificent experience. You can follow marked paths to Møysalen from Nordbotn in Lonkanfjord, from Storvatn in Øksfjord, or Vestpollen in Øksfjord. The walks offer everything from lush slopes clad in deciduous woodland near the fjord to corries, glaciers, screes, ridges, rock slabs and, not least, a fantastic view from the summit!

Snytindhytta, an unlocked, no-service cabin, offers accommodation just a couple of kilometres from the northern boundary of the park. With its fine view of Møysalen, this is an excellent starting point for hikes in the eastern part of the park, to the summits of Storsnytinden (996 m) and Nordtinden (883 m), for example. You can also follow old tracks like that from Blokken to Vestpollen, which crosses the pass at Innerdalskaret. Or how about canoeing or kayaking on a pristine fjord? Since Innerfjord is protected from the weather, canoeing or kayaking is an excellent means of making your way along the fjord to Vestpollen, in the centre of the park. Another possibility is to enter the park with a canoe on Innervatn, a lake on the River Blokken.

The beautiful Trogangen, in Fiskfjord, in the Møysalen Protected Landscape Area, is one of the highest waterfalls in Vesterålen.

Mining

Drifts on the south-west side of Vestpolltinden date from mining (1904-1908) in the park. The iron and manganese ore was carried along a track called Malmstien. Vestpolltinden is also a fine goal for a hike and offers spectacular views of Møysalen and along Øksfjord towards Vestfjord.

Berry picking, hunting and fishing

The national park is rich in berries. Or you can try your luck at fishing; trout and char have been released in lakes and streams, but the River Vestpoll mostly has sea trout. Since some of the park is privately owned, you must check on the hunting and fishing rights just where you are. Licences for hunting and fishing on state-owned land are sold at www.inatur.no. The area also has quite a good stock of elk.



PLANT LIFE

The plant life in the park is typical for the region, marked by the cool, damp climate and the coastal location. Bog asphodel, common scurvygrass and an abundance of ferns underline this. Lush, small-fern woodland is common where plant nutrients are plentiful. Tall ferns predominate in steeper parts. There is salt-marsh vegetation around the estuary at the end of Vestpollaldalen.

Fens and bogs are common, but seldom fairly large. The tree line is between 300 and 400 m a.s.l. Birch is the most common tree and forms dense woodland on many hillsides. Bilberry heath and willow scrub are common further up. Grassy heath and snow-patch vegetation predominates on the highest peaks, where a continuous cover of vascular plants is lacking. Mossy mats are found in depressions, and lichens (*Umbilicaria* spp. and crustose lichens) occur in the most exposed places.

Calcareous rock also occurs and this supports richer vegetation, such as *Dryas octopetala* (mountain avens) heath, in places like Storelvdalen in Vestpollen.



Alpine catchfly (AB)



Silverweed (SAM)



"Flowering" lichen (SAM)



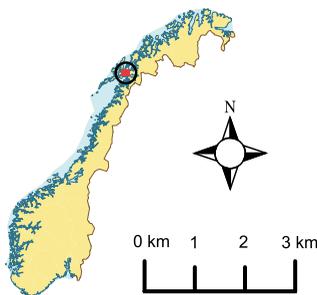
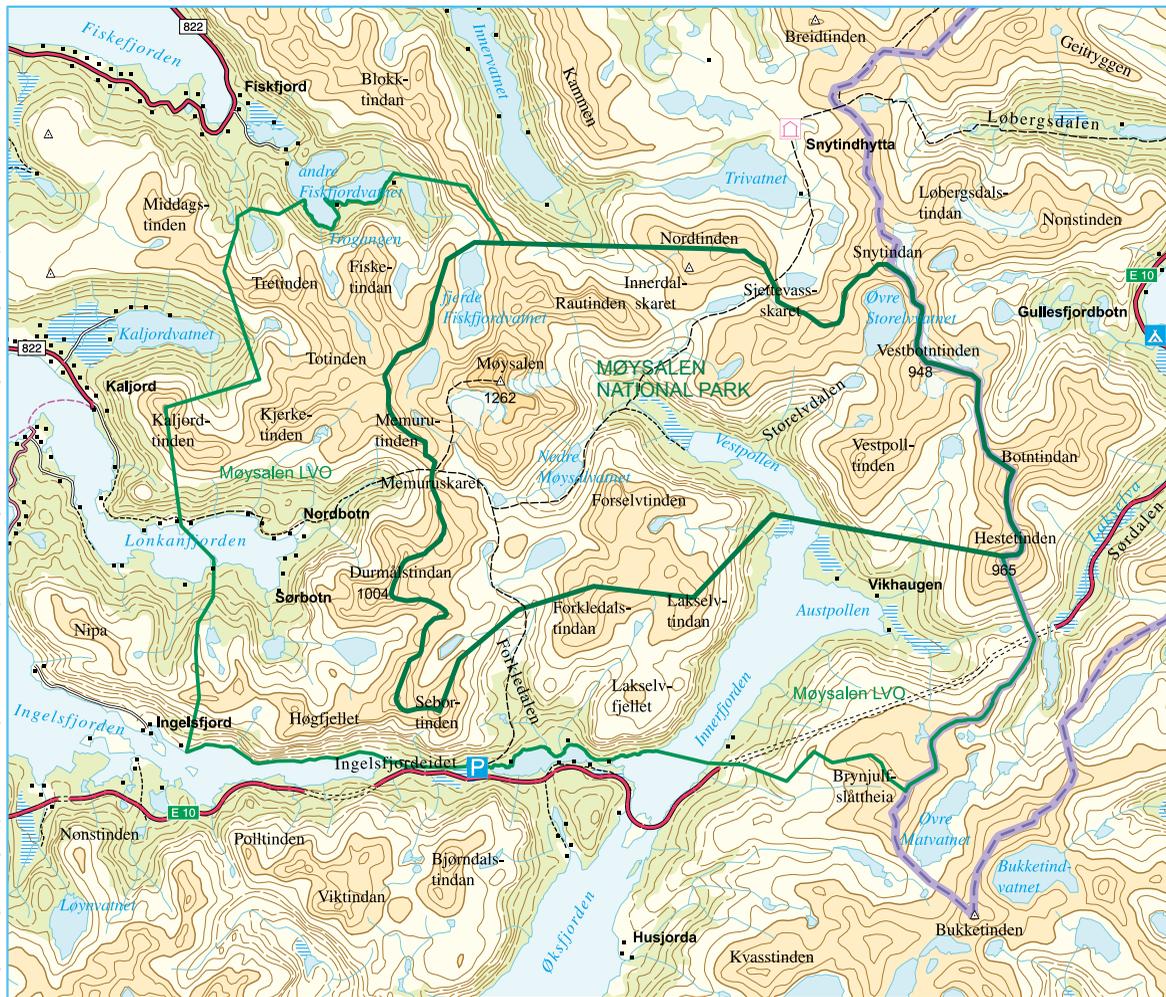
Lille and Store Møya (AB)



LANDSCAPE AND GEOLOGY

The national park has some of the most dramatic landscape in Norway. It was shaped during and after the last Ice Age and is extremely varied, including deltas, valleys, corries and peaks that reach a height of more than 1000 metres.

In the west, the terrain is alpine, crowned by Møysalen (1262 m). The largest glacier in the area, Fonnisen, is south of the summit. In contrast, the landscape forms east of Øksfjord are more rounded.



LEGEND

-  County boundary
-  National Park
-  Protected Landscape Area
-  Parking
-  Camping
-  No-service cabin



Dipper (JES)



BIRD AND ANIMAL LIFE

A number of rare and endangered birds of prey breed in the park, including peregrines, gyrfalcons, kestrels, merlins, rough-legged buzzards, white-tailed eagles and golden eagles.

Many passerine species nest on the south-facing, wooded slopes. Ptarmigan, meadow pipits, wheatears, ring ouzels and ravens are among the species that dominate above the tree line. Dippers and common sandpipers are found along the River Vestpoll.

The animal life is typical for this part of Nordland. The otter, regarded as a vulnerable species in Norway as a whole, is common here. The area around Øksfjord is a core area for elk on Hinnøya. Other common species are hares, red foxes, stoats and American mink.



Otter (GR)



Ptarmigan (SW)



Hare (MOF)



Snytindhytta (TL)



HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES

Culture heritage relics typical for both Sámi and Norwegian settlers typify the area. Semi-nomadic Sámi have kept their reindeer in the area for some 300 years and this is still a core area for reindeer husbandry. Farming and fishing are also important occupations. Remains of former Sámi habitations include stone settings that mark tent sites, turf huts and stone foundations of houses. The park also contains some unusual cultural heritage features, such as pitfalls for brown bears in Øksfjord.

Traces left by former hay making, fishing and hunting, and also the mining on Vestpolltind, are valuable and interesting cultural heritage remains.



Moonlight on Møysalen (T1B)



Vestpollen (AB)

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.
- You may hunt and fish, but remember to buy the 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.

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Front cover: Møysalen in winter (TL) and black/white: Møysalen (AB)



Print: GRØSET™



Møysalen National Park in brief

Where: In the municipalities of Lødingen and Sortland in the county of Nordland.

How to reach Møysalen National Park:

The simplest way to reach the park is by car or bus along E 10 to Storvatn or Øksfjord in Lødingen. You can walk on a marked track from Storvatn up the valley of Forkledalen. It takes 1 to 1 hours to drive to Storvatn from the main airport, Evenes, or the smaller ones, Stokmarknes or Svolvær.

The daily Coastal Express ships ('Hurtigruten') call at Sortland and Stokmarknes. You can get a bus from Sortland to Hennes, where you can hire a boat along Lonkanfjord. A hired boat can also take you from Lødingen to Vestpollen, at the head of Øksfjord.

Information on overnight accommodation and other services:

Vesterålen Reiseliv, phone +47 76 11 14 80, www.visitvesteralen.com
Møysalen National Park Centre, phone +47 97 46 08 89,
www.moeysalen.no

Offersøy feriesenter AS, phone +47 76 93 39 00,
www.offersoy-feriesenter.no

Cabins:

Snytindhytta (DNT – Norwegian Trekking Association)

Tips:

Spend a day hiking to the top of Møysalen. It is best to set off from either Nordbotn in Lonkanfjord or Storvatn in Øksfjord.

Maps:

M711 series, 1:50 000 scale, (1231 I), Raftsundet (1231 IV), Gullsfjorden (1232 II) and Sortland (1232 III). 1:100 000 map of Vesterålen for cyclists and walkers.

Designated: 2003

Area: 51.2 km²

Adjacent protected area:

Møysalen Protected Landscape Area

National Park Centres:

Nordland National Park Centre, Storjord in Saltdal,
www.nordlandnasjonalparksenter.no

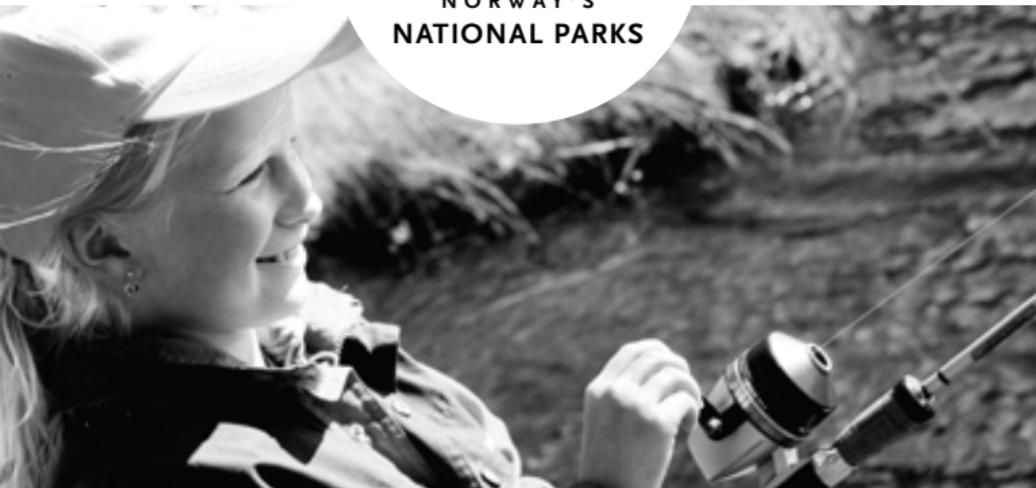
Management:

County Governor of Nordland, www.fylkesmannen.no/nordland

Supervision:

Statiskog Troms, Narvik, Fjelltjenesten, phone +47 76 95 53 10
Norwegian Nature Inspectorate, Bodø office, phone +47 99 52 93 88

More information: www.norgesnasjonalparker.no



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!



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www.dirnat.no/english