



YTRE HVALER

ABOVE AND BELOW SEA LEVEL





Lophelia coral and Norway king crab

UNIQUE LANDSCAPE ABOVE AND BELOW SEA LEVEL

The Hvaler – Fredrikstad archipelago boasts a rich diversity of species both on land and below sea level.

Most of the park consists of seabed. With its soft bottom, rich kelp forests and corals, the park has a complete subsea ecosystem. Above sea level, you can enjoy a landscape ranging from rocky shores worn smooth by ice and water to coastal woodland shaped by the wind.

The area is also attractive for outdoor pursuits typically linked with the coast. Many people regard it as a summer paradise, but its scenery and natural history also have much to offer the rest of the year.

The Ytre Hvaler National Park borders up to the Kosterhavet Marine National Park in Sweden.



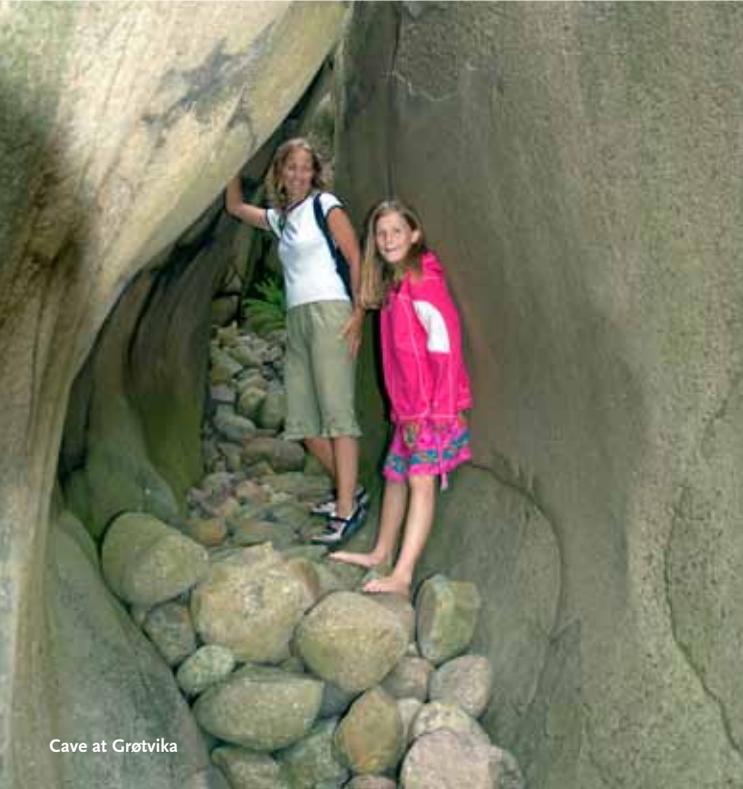
A family of mute swans, Grønne Bakke, Kirkøy



Kuvauen



After a winter storm. Bastangen on Vesterøy



Cave at Grøtvika



ENJOY THE SCENERY AND NATURAL HISTORY

Enjoy the coast with or without a boat

The Ytre Hvaler National Park offers many opportunities for active outdoor pursuits and to enjoy a variety of plant and animal life. You can roam the coast and swim from ice- and wave-smoothed rocks in summer, or enjoy a brisk walk in autumn with the wind in your hair and showered by salty spray.

You can camp at Storesand or in some places on the island of Akerøya. Several cabins can be rented for short stays.

A boat gives you many islands to choose between. Kayaking is popular and an excellent means of exploring the park. Why not take a fishing rod with you, too? The waters are also suitable for diving.



Rhomb porphyry conglomerate on Struten



Salt-lined pool on ice- and wave-smoothed rock at Grøtvika

LANDSCAPE AND GEOLOGY

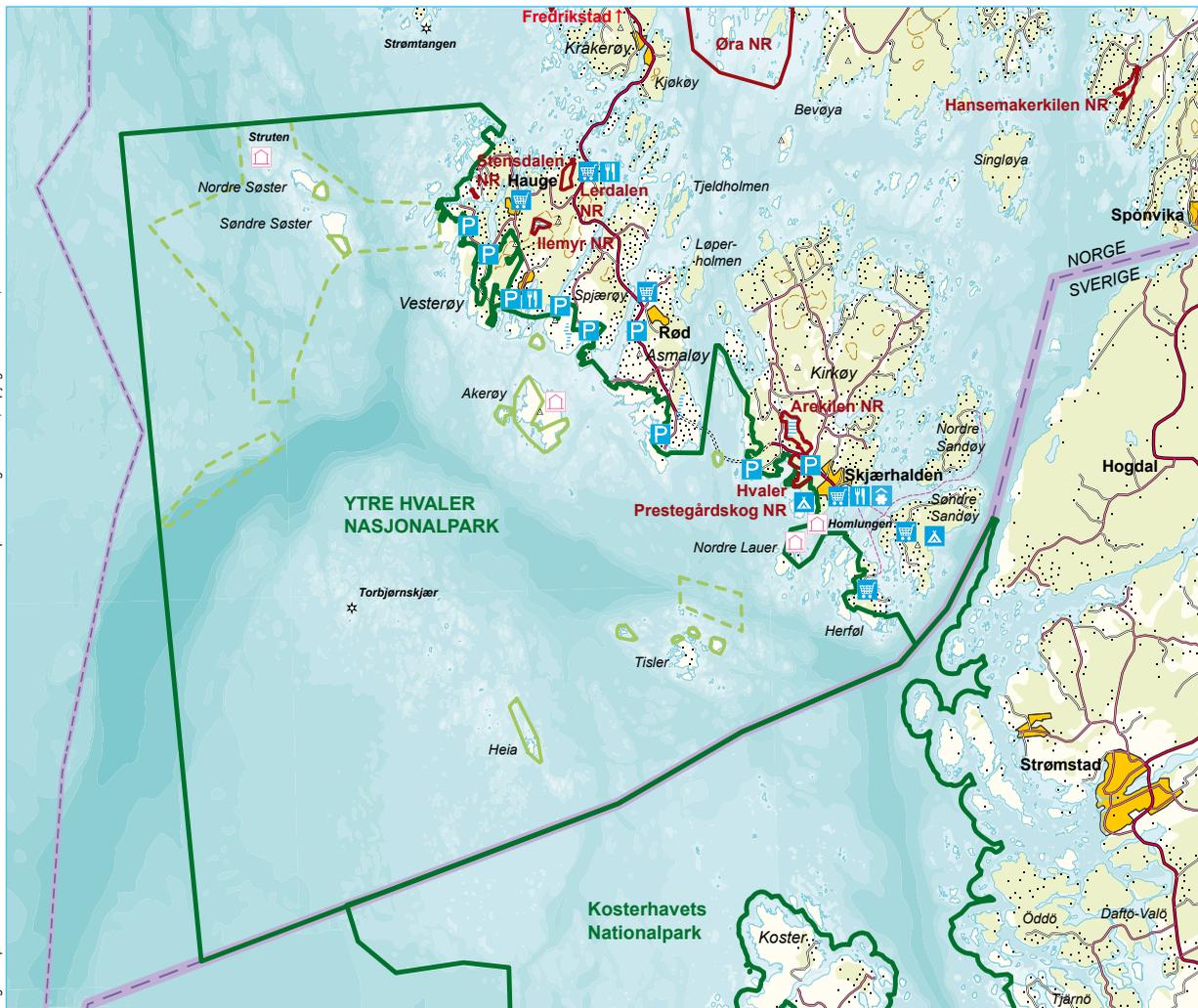
From coastal woodland and rocky shores to depths of 400 metres

Furthest out, the wave-worn rocky coast is interrupted here and there by inlets and narrow bays whose inner parts have been cut off from the sea to form valuable wetlands. Further in, belts with low-growing shore plants gradually take over before the landscape eventually becomes dominated by knolls sparsely clothed in pine trees and intervening clefts filled with lush deciduous woodland.

Most of the national park is below sea level and ranges from depths of 470 m to shallows where skerries pierce the surface. Almost 200 m high, vertical, underwater

cliffs line parts of Hvalerrenna, a huge cleft formed in a marginal fault zone created as a result of the collision of crustal plates and subsequent crustal fracturing some 300 million years ago in what is now outer Oslofjord. The area between the marginal rift faults sank and new rocks formed on the more than 800 million-year-old bedrock cropping out elsewhere in Østfold.

Glacial and marine erosion of the bedrock gives great variations in landforms ranging from smooth, rounded granite and gneiss on the Hvalerøyene shores to the rough surface of the rare rhomb porphyry conglomerate on the Søsterøyene and Struten, where you would not like to walk barefoot.



LEGEND

- | | |
|--|--|
|  National border |  National Park Information Center |
|  County border |  Parking |
|  National Park |  Groceries |
|  Nature Reserve |  Café/restaurant |
|  Restrictions on the seabed |  Camping |
|  Landing forbidden 15 April - 15 July |  Unstaffed cabin |





ANIMAL LIFE

The national park has an abundance of birds. Islets, narrow inlets, wetlands and shore meadows offer breeding, resting and overwintering sites for seabirds. Skipstadkilen and Vikerkilen are particularly important resting places for ducks and waders. The number of species observed in the area is higher than usual for Norway; more than 260 have been observed on Akerøya alone. The park also has very many species of butterflies and moths, including 48 which are Red-listed; if you are fortunate, you may see the beautiful swallowtail on sunny days. The sea between Heia and Torbjørnskjær is an important pupping area for common seals, and more than 12 000 eider ducks moult there. Large flocks of common scoters as well as various ducks overwinter or can be seen on their spring and autumn migrations.

Many marine habitats are found in both shallow and deep water. The mud and silt are the home of shrimps and Norway lobsters, as well as various species of bristleworms, starfish, cnidarians (e.g. anemones, corals



Common seal pup



Red sea fan



Large clams

and jellyfish) and molluscs. The dense kelp forest in the shallows between Heia and Torbjørnskjær has the same function as forest on land. Fish, crabs and several species of shellfish are among the creatures living there, besides various algae and anemones which grow on the seaweed.

The large clam is abundant on the cliffs lining Hvalerrenna. Several coral reefs occur where strong currents flow; Tisler has the largest inshore reef in Europe, 1200 m long. The reefs are habitats for numerous species and along with the rest of the marine fauna they make the area unique, not only in the Skagerrak but also in a European context.



Male common eider



Swallowtail



Wind-shaped birch trees



PLANT LIFE

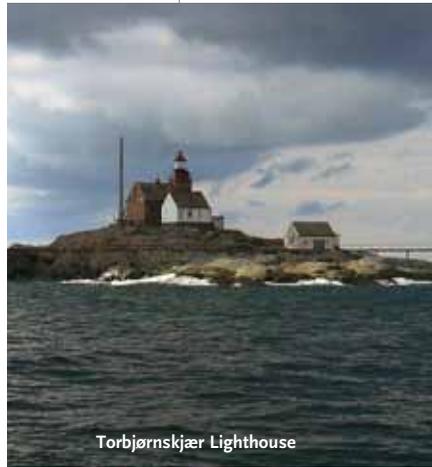
The diversity of plant life from the weather-beaten, almost naked, islets on the outermost coast to the narrow clefts between the knolls is vast. Scattered plants cling to the wind-battered rocks fringing the sea while lush woodland thrives in the sheltered clefts. Between these two extremes is everything from small, nutrient-rich lakes and inlets, streams, shell banks, sandy beaches and flowery meadows. The park has many rare plants including 32 which are red-listed, like musk orchid and horned poppy.



Kelp forest



Horned poppy



Torbjørnskjær Lighthouse



HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The cultural history and former land use have left their mark on the national park. Hvaler has ancient settlement sites ranging up to the end of the 16th century, and some may be as old as the Late Bronze Age. The latter were probably used seasonally by people hunting, trapping and fishing. Akerøya Fort was in use from 1682 to 1807 and has been partially restored. The lighthouses at Torbjørnskjær and Homlungen are protected heritage sites. Kuvauen was important for generations of fishermen and pilots. Fishermen's shacks there are a reminder of Hvaler's long history of fishing. Shrimp trawling is now the most important fishery.

The sea conceals at least 50 shipwrecks, including the frigate, *Lossen*, which sank off the island of Vesterøy on Christmas Eve in 1717. Excavations have uncovered more than 4300 artefacts, including butter, clay pipes and gaming pieces.

The landscape here is also part of the cultural history since grazing has been immensely important for centuries and remains so today.



Contents of a seaman's chest



Clay pipes and gaming pieces



Shell bank at Vassholmen

You are one of Nature's guests in a national park

- You may travel on foot and by boat anywhere in the national park except in the zones where seabirds are nesting and seals are pupping from 15 April to 15 July
- All motorised traffic on land is forbidden; remember the special regulations regarding anchoring in zone A
- Stop wherever you wish and you are welcome to camp at Storesand or on parts of Akerøya
- Tidy up and take your rubbish home; it is forbidden to empty boat toilets anywhere in the park
- You may light a fire, but remember the general ban on fires between 15 April and 15 September. Branches must not be broken off for firewood anywhere in the park. Never light a fire or a disposable grill on bare rock
- You may pick berries, edible fungi and common plants for your own use.
- Take care not to damage cultural heritage remains, vegetation and animal life; please take special care in the nesting and pupping seasons
- Take advantage of the opportunities for recreational fishing
- Hunting and trapping are permitted under the terms of the Game Act
- You may bring a dog, but remember to keep it on a lead from 1 April to 20 August



Grazing sheep on Sauholmen



The Ytre Hvaler National Park in brief

Where: The Boroughs of Hvaler and Fredrikstad in the County of Østfold

Ways of getting to Ytre Hvaler National Park:

From E6, take Rv 110 to Fredrikstad and RV 108 to Hvaler. Branch roads take you to several parts of the park or the village of Skjærhalden. You can get a ferry from Skjærhalden to Herføl. The other islands can be reached with your own boat or by hiring a taxi boat

- Train to Fredrikstad
- Bus from Oslo and Fredrikstad to Skjærhalden
- Ferry from Strømstad to Skjærhalden

Information on overnight accommodation and other services:

Tourist Information Offices at Fredrikstad and Hvaler
www.opplevfredrikstad.no or phone +47 69 39 65 00

Cabins to let: Lauer, Hornlungen, Akerøya, Struten
 See www.oslofjorden.org

Tips: Walk the coastal trails from Skjærhalden to Rødshue on Kirkøy or Vikar to Brattestø on Asmaløy.

Map: 1:50 000 sheet, 1913 III (Fredrikstad)

Designated: 2009

Area: 354 km², 14 km² of which is land

Adjoining protected areas:

Kosterhavet Marine National Park, Sweden
 Prestegårdskogen Nature Reserve
 Arekilen Nature Reserve
 Stensdalen Nature Reserve
 Illemyr Nature Reserve
 Lerdalen Nature Reserve

National Park Information Center:

Ytre Hvaler National Information Center

Management and inspection:

County Governor of Østfold, phone +47 69 24 70 00
 Norwegian Nature Inspectorate (SNO), www.naturopsyn.no

More information:

www.norgesnasjonalparker.no
www.skjaergardstjenesten.no
www.ytrehvaler.no
www.kosterhavet.se



NORWAY'S
NATIONAL PARKS



Norwegian national parks are our common natural heritage

We set up national parks to safeguard large areas of countryside – from the seashore to the mountain-tops. 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.

You will also find cultural heritage remains showing how the areas were used in the past. The national parks offer a multitude of opportunities for thrilling encounters with natural history.

Make use of our magnificent nature – on its own terms. Welcome to Norwegian national parks!



Directorate for
Nature Management
www.dirnat.no

