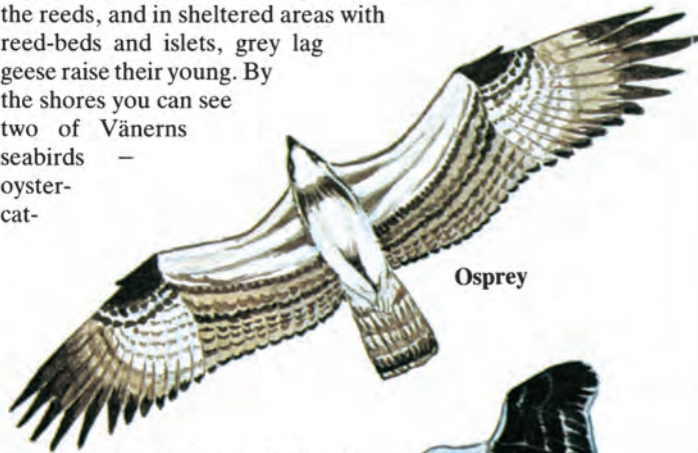


Rich and varied bird-life

Djurö islands bird-life is varied. Several pairs of ospreys nest here. The hobby hunts over the reeds, and in sheltered areas with reed-beds and islets, grey lag geese raise their young. By the shores you can see two of Vänerns seabirds – oyster-cat-



Osprey

cher and great black-backed gull and of course there are gulls, terns, several species of duck and the great northern diver. You can hear cross-bills calling in the forests of the larger islands and red-



Great Black-backed Gull



Oystercatcher

wings singing in the bushes. You can also flush up black grouse and other members of the grouse family.

As regards mammals, Djurö, (djur = animal, ö = island) does not live up to its name. Small rodents and bats are the only natural mammals found here

on the islands. Vänern's large stretches of water have deterred the migration of the otherwise common fauna of moose, roe deer and badger. The odd fox or so may visit the islands during hard winters when there is ice, but there is no resident population.

The absence of predators has contributed to favourable living conditions for frogs and reptiles which are found in large numbers on most of the islands.

Man on Djurö

The island was first inhabited in Gusta Wasas era. Towards the end of the 1600's Djurö was cultivated by a man called Oluf whose son Börje Olufsson was allowed to buy the island in 1711. He was the ancestor of the so-called Djurö-family who owned and lived on the island (excepting only a few years) up to 1890.

When the Djurö-family was at its largest, there were three families on the island. Their main income was from fishing. To sell their catch they had to row 30–40 km. to the nearest market in Mariestad or Lidköping. There is nothing left of the original buildings on Djurö. The remnants of cultivated land (eg a hollow in the middle of the island) bear witness that the Djurö island dwellers were also farmers.

The present lighthouse on Djurös most northern point was built in 1912. Today the lighthouse is unmanned and the island have no permanent residents.



Hobby

If you are in luck you can see a hobby hunting bats in the twilight.

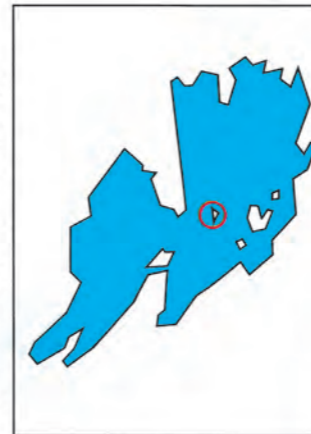
Visting the island

There is no regular ferry service. The only way to reach the island is by your own or hired boat. There are several places where you can rent a boat, around Vänern.

The waters east of the islands are rather unpredictable but approach routes from north and west are simpler. There are a couple of natural harbours in Djurö archipelago. The most well-known and frequently used harbour is at Malbergshamn on the main island. There is also an emergency telephone here.

Remember

- that Djurö is a sanctuary for Lake Vänerns bird-life. Be observant when you anchor or go ashore – uneasy birds making warning signals around the boat indicate that you are too close to the nesting places.
- that parts of Djurö are bird-sanctuaries and from 1st April to the last day in July it is forbidden to approach those areas. See map!
- that all animal life is protected and you are not allowed to cause disturbance. Eg. it is forbidden to collect insects or other animal life.
- that you may not damage the flora of Djurö. It is forbidden to break twigs, cut trees, pick plants and flowers or dig up plants.
- that you may make fires only at authorized places.
- that you may camp at Malbergshamn and stay at the most two nights. Also you may not anchor your boat more than two nights at the same place.



A NATIONALPARK IN THE COUNTY OF VÄSTRA GÖTALAND



Djurö



LÄNSSTYRELSEN
VÄSTRA GÖTALANDS LÄN



NATUR
VÅRDS
VERKET



NATURA 2000

The National Park is managed by the County Administrative Board of Västra Götaland.
Phone: 0501-60 50 00 | www.o.lst.se

The area is a part of Natura 2000, an EU wide network of nature protection areas.

The goal of the Swedish National Park Organization is to preserve large areas in their natural state for research and openair recreation. The parks are open to the public, but their original character must not be spoiled.

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Naturvårdsverket
Swedish Environmental
Protection Agency

AN ISOLATED GROUP OF ISLANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF SWEDEN

Few Swedish archipelagoes are more remote and isolated than Djurö. Yet it is situated inland! This contradiction may explain why these islands in the middle of Lake Vänern are both interesting and exotic.

To reach the islands you must cross 8 km of open water. Once there, a glance at the horizon emphasises the feeling of an archipelago in the open sea. This vast lake expands to the north – open water as far as the eye can see. Lurö archipelago is visible only as a narrow strip to the south-west. Only the unmistakable profile of the hill of Kinnekulle reminds us of land and that we are actually in the county of Västergötland.

Djurö archipelago consists of approximately thirty islands. East of the islands there is a widestretched area of stony shallows with crested waves, flat rocks and islets. West of the islands the water is 70 m. deep and the shores are steep and exposed. Djurö islands are at the edge of the huge system of rift valleys which are visible in the straight shore lines on the east coast of Värmlands Näs and Kålland.

The bedrock of the islands is crossed by many smaller cracks parallel to the rift valley. Because of the thin soil layer the cracked bedrock gives the area a characteristic appearance.



Smooth bedrock with sparse pine forest dominates most of the islands.

Nature and landscape

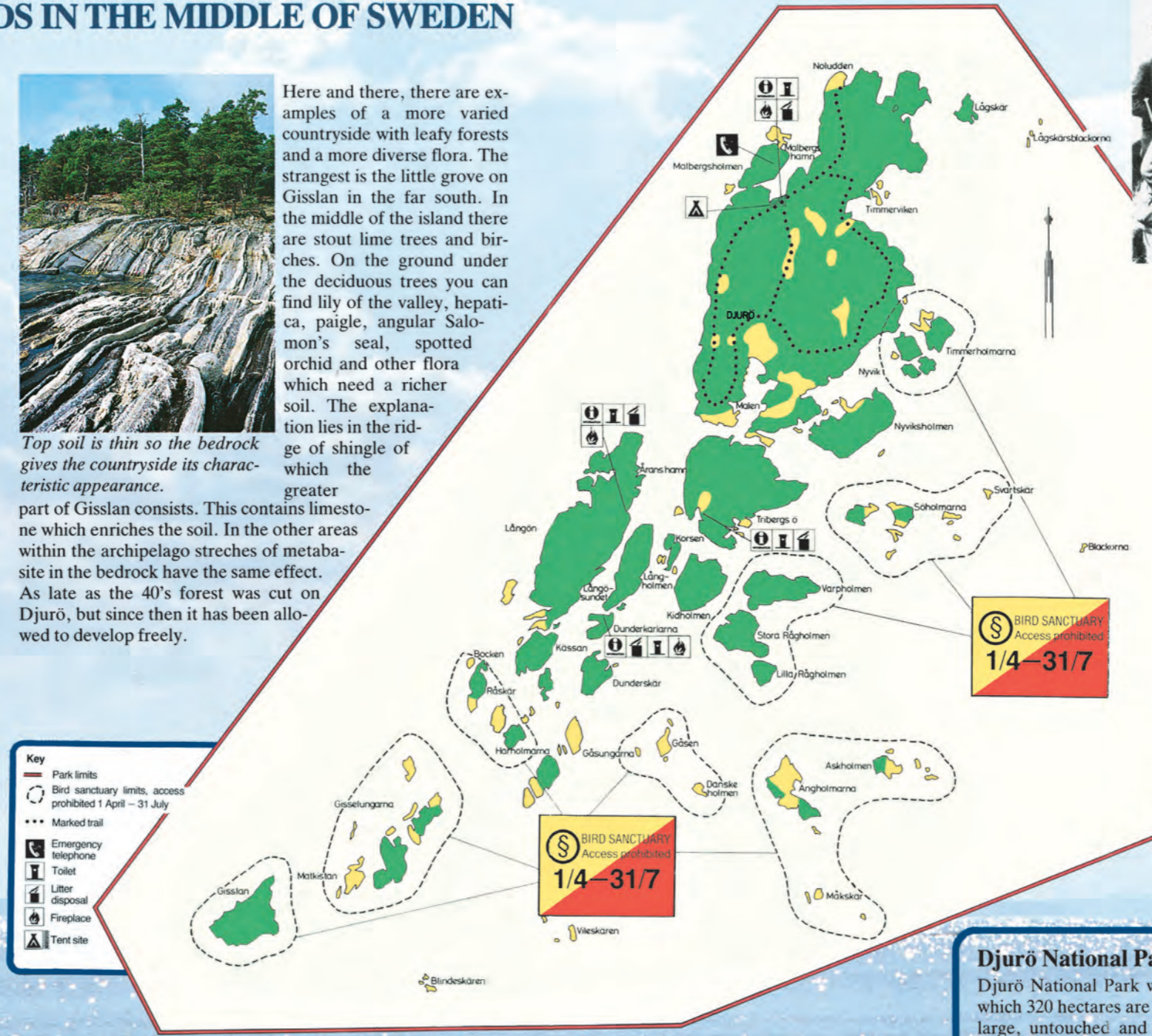
In Djurö islands most sheltered bays, large stretches of reed beds reveal the lake's true nature. Smooth, polished rocks and shingelbeaches are however more usual. Flat bare rocks with sparse pine forest dominate the area. The ground is most often covered with heather and blueberry bushes. On the main island there is open grassland – the remains of the former agriculture. Today it is kept open by grazing deer.



Top soil is thin so the bedrock gives the countryside its characteristic appearance.

This contains limestone which enriches the soil. In the other areas within the archipelago stretches of metabasite in the bedrock have the same effect. As late as the 40's forest was cut on Djurö, but since then it has been allowed to develop freely.

Here and there, there are examples of a more varied countryside with leafy forests and a more diverse flora. The strangest is the little grove on Gisslan in the far south. In the middle of the island there are stout lime trees and birches. On the ground under the deciduous trees you can find lily of the valley, hepatica, paigle, angular Salomon's seal, spotted orchid and other flora which need a richer soil. The explanation lies in the ridge of shingle of which the greater



Approved by security authorities as unclassified information. National Board of Land Survey 1991-05-24.



During the greater part of the 1900's the forest industries' businessmen in Värmland arranged stylish hunts for fallow deer, hare and other introduced wild-life on the island of Djurö. Photograph is from 1923.

Djurö as a deerpark

If you are inconspicuous and move carefully in Djurö's countryside you have a good chance of seeing fallow deer. The remnants of a flock of fallow deer are a reminder of a strange epoch in the history of the islands.

In 1890 the Djurö-family sold the islands to an industrialist, Frans Kempe. He decided to make the islands into a hunting and wild-life estate, and built a hunting lodge which still remains. His son, Karl introduced the first fallow deer in 1912. The isolated position of the islands made it possible for the new owners to do more or less what they liked and they were allowed to experiment with the animal life. Roe deer and hare were introduced several times, also pheasant and grouse. Even red deer were introduced on one occasion and there were plans to release wild turkey and mouflon. The Uddeholm Co. continued the hunting tradition and "care" of the wild life when they bought the island in 1947.

Hare is still plentiful on Djurö, but otherwise only a few fallow deer remain of those introduced to the island. Their grazing is still an important factor in keeping the old grazing pastures open.

Djurö National Park

Djurö National Park was grounded in 1991 and encompasses 2. 400 hectares of which 320 hectares are land. The aim of the national park is to preserve a relatively large, untouched and attractive lake archipelago with a unique situation. The forest will be allowed to develop into a primeval forest, birdlife will be protected and the area will be accessible for out-door life activities and nature lovers.