

SALTÖ

NATURE RESERVE IN KOSTERHAVET



Saltö is one of several entrances to the Kosterhavet National Park.

Karin Björk

INAUGURATED: 1966 (renewed 2011)

AREA: approx 396 hectare, of which 193 hectare land and 203 hectare water

LOCAL COUNCIL: Strömstad

COUNTY: Bohuslän

Kosterhavet comprises Kosterhavet Marine National Park and adjacent areas that include not only Saltö but also the nature reserves of Koster Islands, Västra Rossö and Nord Långö. The area is one of Sweden's most biologically diverse, with about 12,000 different animal and plant species above and below the surface.

CONTACT / GETTING HERE

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Saltö is located 14 km southwest of Strömstad. You can get here by Västtrafik bus or private car. In summer tour boats may operate, check with the tourist offices.

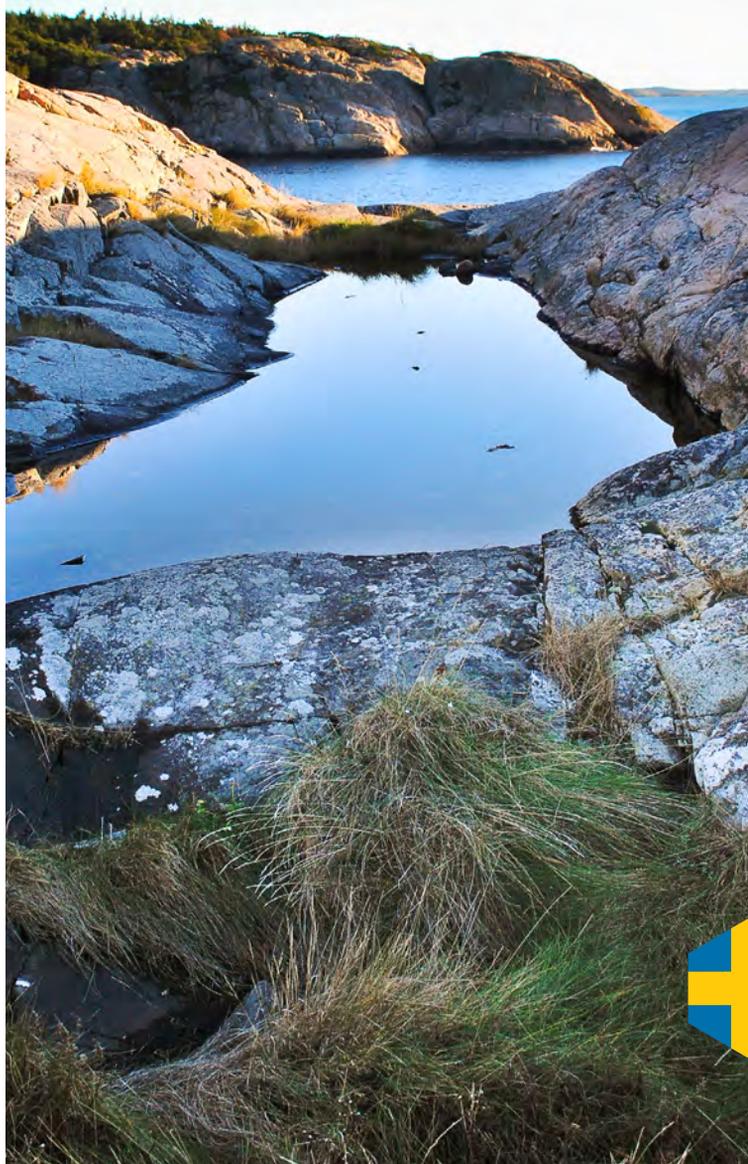
Adjacent to the car park is a small kiosk (open summer only), toilets and information about the nature reserve as well as the National Park.



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Susanne Liljenström

Don't miss the underwater nature-trail. Bring a diving mask to explore.

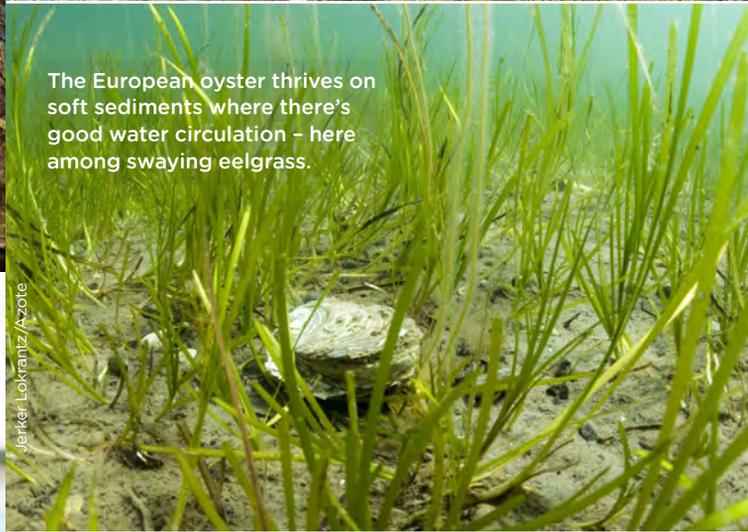


Karin Björk



A hike along Saltö's west side offers great views of Kosterhavet.

Karin Björk



The European oyster thrives on soft sediments where there's good water circulation - here among swaying eelgrass.

Jelker Lokramiz/Azote



In the past, Saltö residents boiled seawater to produce their own salt.

Anders Tysklind

Susanne Lijénström



Anders Tysklind



Anders Tysklind



Matt Ahlund

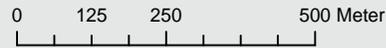
The granite blocks at Västra Bryggan were once part of a herring factory which operated during the “herring eriod” at the end of the 1800s.

A strip of black diabase runs through the bedrock along Saltö’s west side. This strip continues south along the coast all the way to Smögen.

Along the shore you’ll find seaweed of many different species. Pinch off the top of a shoot and enjoy a taste of the salty sea!

Dwarf pines cover to avoid the wind. A large taproot and strong lateral roots help them withstand the storms.

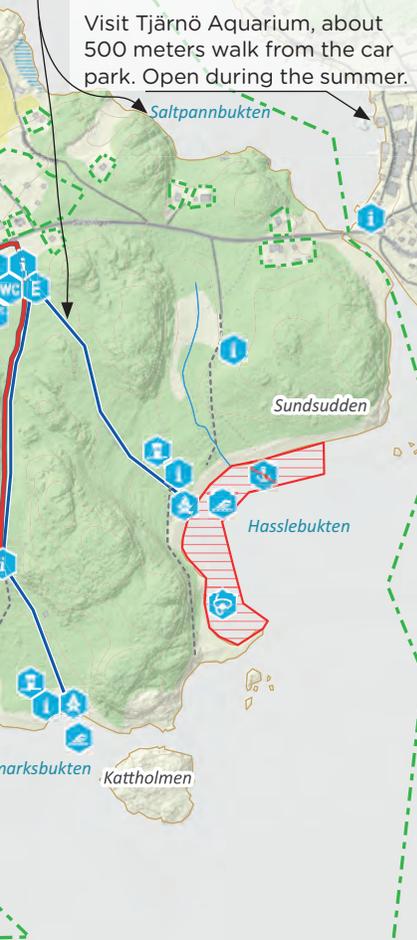
Look around – in winter, razorbills and other auks can be seen fishing around Saltö.



During the 1800's several crofts and cottages were built on Saltö. Today they're all gone, but the stone foundations of the little cottage Stubbekas remain.

Seawater was boiled in Saltpannebukten ("Salt Boiler Bay") to extract salt.

Visit Tjärnö Aquarium, about 500 meters walk from the car park. Open during the summer.



Susanne Liljenström

The Swallowtail butterfly can have a wingspan of 9 cm, and has characteristic "tails" to the wings.



Anders Tysklind

The Arctic starflower blooms in early summer.



Anders Tysklind



Anders Tysklind

Spring brings sea-trout into the shallow bays to hunt prawns and other small animals. Anglers also come to visit Saltö's beaches.

REGULATIONS

You're welcome to visit Saltö Nature Reserve, but remember you're not allowed to:

- dig up plants
- bring dogs without a leash
- overnight or camp in any way
- start a fire other than at designated places
- cycle or drive motor vehicles other than on roads
- remove, stack or move stones
- take off or land any airborne craft, including drones
- damage, drill, carve in or paint on rock, ground or stone
- park other than in the designated parking lot
- moor or anchor in natural harbours for more than two nights in a row at the same place
- allow engines to idle and use motorised generators
- pull up, moor boats or anchor within anchor ban areas (May 15 to Aug 31)
- anchor or use any fishing gear in the fishing prohibition area.

Complete regulations can be read at www.kosterhavet.se.

KEY

 Entrance to Kosterhavet National Park	 Swimming spot
 Parking	 Bin
 Information	 Anchor ban
 WC	 Fishing prohibition
 Accessible WC	 Skogsstigen (walking trail)
 Dry toilet	 Unmarked walking trail
 Snorkel trail	 Cycling allowed
 Fireplace	 Anchor ban area
 Picnic area	 Fishing prohibition area
	 Saltö Nature Reserve



Listen – woodpeckers peck for insects in tree trunks. Black woodpecker and great spotted woodpecker are common on Saltö.



From the left:
Blue mussel *Mytilus edulis*
Razor clam *Ensis sp.*
Seastar *Asterias rubens*

SEA GREETINGS

Saltö Nature Reserve is almost as much water as land. Quiet days in autumn and winter are perfect for a quiet stroll on the deserted beaches. There are plenty of shells and seaweed cast up by the waves. An unusually large blue mussel shell could be a horse clam. Horse mussels can grow to more than 50 years old, and build underwater reefs with polychaete worms, barnacles, hydroids and many other residents.

SURF BEACHES

The west side of Saltö is exposed to heavy swells. At Vinnarstrand and Kobukten, the waves have washed away the sand and earth, exposing large boulder and cobble fields left behind after the glaciers. From the sea, you can clearly see ancient shorelines in these cobble-stones – a legacy of times when sea levels were much higher.

FISHING FARMERS

Saltö has probably been inhabited since the Middle Ages. For a long time the islanders survived on small-holdings and fishing. In winter, fish catches were dominated by cod, and in summer by mackerel. Then, as now, there was good income from lobster fishing in the autumn.

The open areas northwest of the car park were once cultivated. Today they are maintained as open meadows to promote plant diversity.



Pine needles grow in pairs. When they fall to the ground, they are about five years old.

PINE TREES AND SEA

Saltö's undulating terrain is characterised by rocky outcrops and narrow valleys, but there's plenty of easy walking trails that criss-cross the island. Follow them through the tall pine trees where patches of pink twinflowers cover the mossy forest floor and chanterelle mushrooms grow in autumn. Continue up the rocky outcrops with gnarled old pines and cup-lichens that crunch underfoot. On the west side of the island the shore can be quite steep and rocky, though there are also beaches of cobble-stones. From here you get a good view over the islands and skerries of the Kosterhavet National Park.

There are many nice places to swim around the island. Smooth rocks and secret sandy coves await those who go exploring. Hasslebukten is a shallow and popular sandy beach – and home to one of Kosterhavet's snorkel trails, a shallow-water trail with information about life below the surface.



Twin-flower *Linnaea borealis*

FORESTS FULL OF LIFE

In the valleys toward Hasslebukten, Danmarksbukten and Ängklåvbukten, tall pines form stately forests. There are large populations of evergreen plants such as Arctic starflower and several species of *Pyrola*. In summer, heath spotted orchid and other protected orchid species flower here. The trees grow quickly on these sandy soils; despite their size, most of them are “only” about 80 years old. The gnarled pine trees that grow on the rocky outcrops are much older, often several hundred years. Here you can quickly find yourself in old-growth forest with twisted trunks and over-turned trees. Young fir saplings grow in the damper places.

Deer, fox, hare and squirrels all thrive in Saltö's forests. Walking on the rocky outcrops, you may suddenly find you're standing in the middle of steaming fresh moose droppings! Year-round you can hear the *perrerritt* of crested tits as they look for insects in the tree-bark.

HARDY BEACH PLANTS

Lyme grass, sea lavender and sea holly grow on the sand and gravel beaches. They are hardy species that can tolerate the wind and salt-spray. In the sandy meadows look for catsfoot, milkwort and Nottingham catchfly, which grows in tufts and can be recognized by its white, deeply cleft petals.



The thistle-like sea holly is a protected species and is rare on Saltö. The blue-green leaves have a waxy coating that protects them against the wind and salt-spray.