



NORRA KVILL *MAGICAL FOREST IN SMÅLAND*





FOREST DAWN

It is early morning. I discern a dreamy haze among the trees as I start my walk through the forest. Everything is quiet. The silence here is striking; an evasive luxury for modern man. But it is only a human silence. All at once, I hear the rushing of the brook ravine, trees leaning and creaking against each other, a woodpecker's determined chiselling in a dead pine and the silver warbling of a newly-awoken robin.

I continue my walk past rocky heights with gigantic green-clad boulders. Thick carpets of moss glisten like emeralds in the dew. Fallen spruces of almost inconceivable dimensions blend in with the verdant garb of the forest. Suddenly, I discover some bracket fungi in various shapes and colours. And there, beside the path is the spring pea, with its violet flowers on a filigree stalk.

Unexpectedly it lies before me – the forest lake Stora Idgölen, or Troll Lake as it is also known. Like a dark, shining eye, fringed by eyelashes of curved spruce branches. A pair of goldeneye ducks draw long lines across the water's surface, and a song thrush sings from the forest tops. I take a breath and sit down to rest. What a magical forest!



THE NATIONAL PARK IN BRIEF

- AREA: 114 HA (after the expansion in 1994)
- ESTABLISHED: 1927 (then 27 ha)
- NEAREST TOWN: VIMMERBY
- COUNTY: KALMAR
- PROVINC: SMÅLAND
- HABITAT TYPES: CONIFEROUS FOREST, DECIDUOUS FOREST, LAKE/WATERCOURSE AND BOG

WILD AND UNTAMED

Norra Kvill is not a primeval forest, but it has been allowed to grow freely for more than 150 years and has a wild and ancient feel. The national park opens up a magical world of undulating carpets of moss, masses of boulders, giant spruces and pines, and tarns covered in water lilies.

Four out of five trees in the national park are pines. Many pines are more than 350 years old. Spruces prefer the humid depressions and are usually younger, but taller, than the pines. Some giant spruces are 35 metres tall and 2.5 metres in circumference.

The forest has been shaped by frequent fires over the centuries. Very old pine trees show traces of up to eight fires.

Ancient forests like Norra Kvill have a greater diversity of plants and animals than forests that are managed to produce timber. How about 200 mosses, 100 lichens and 200 vascular plants? Not to mention grouse, woodpeckers and owls. The national park is also a sanctuary for many insects and fungi that depend on dead and decayed wood for their survival.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Norra Kvill is located right in the rolling countryside of the Småland Highlands. It is very hilly and after walking here you will definitely feel it in your legs. The trails wind between the steep slopes and can be quite rough and stony.

There are two marked circular routes. The shorter route goes around Lake Stora Idgölen, and the longer route goes further up on Idhöjden mountain and around Lake Lilla Idgölen.



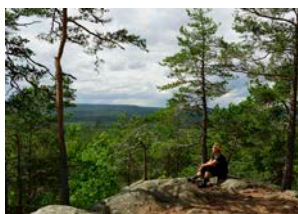
🔺 NÄCKÖN

Näckön is a picnic area just outside the national park entrance with wind shelter and fireplaces. Tank up with energy before starting your walk!



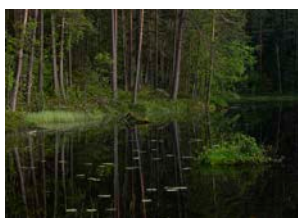
📍 STORA IDGÖLEN

Lake Stora Idgölen, also called Troll Lake, reminds us of a John Bauer painting. This part of the national park became protected already in 1927.



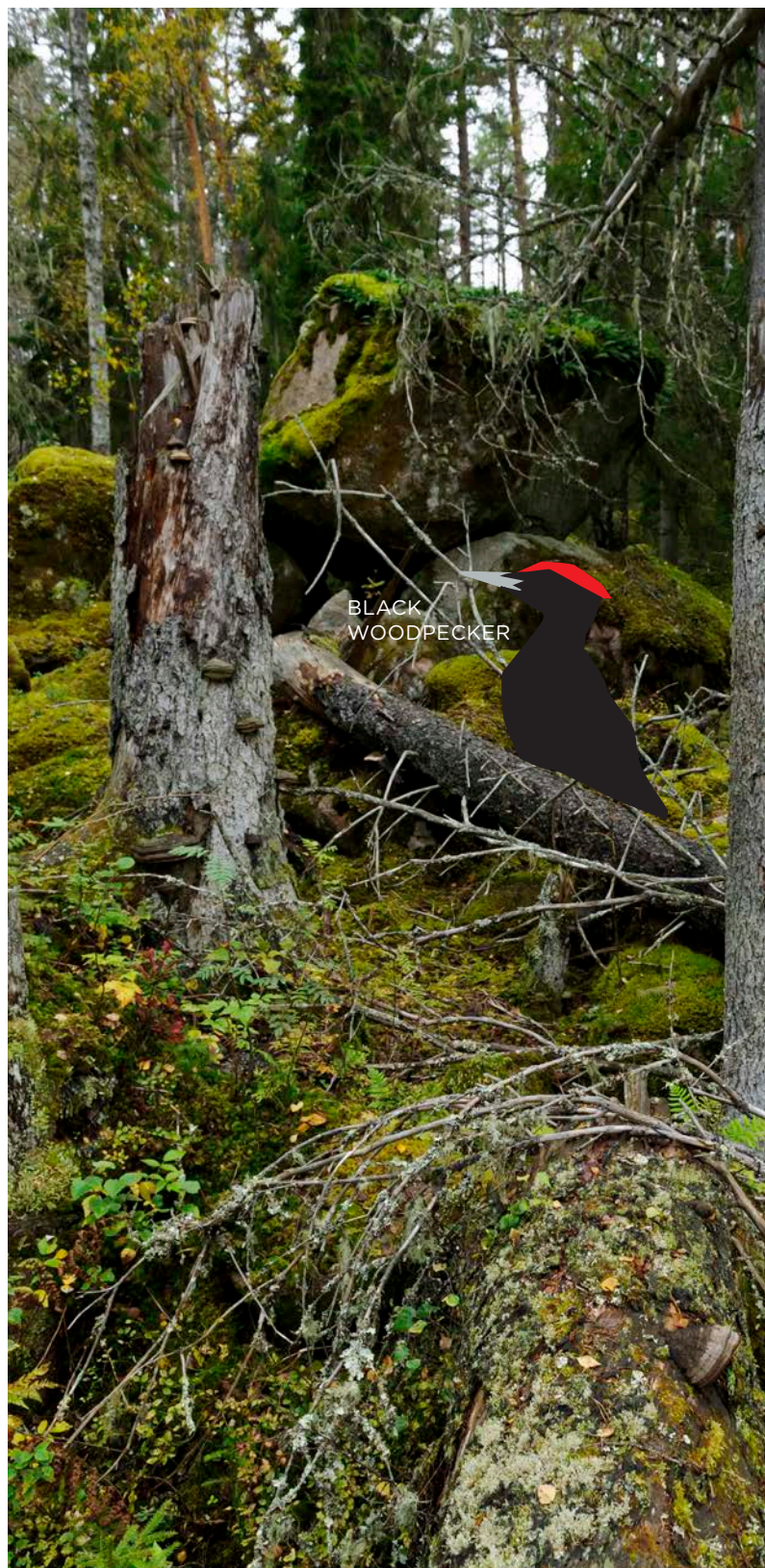
📍 IDHÖJDEN

45 metres above the water level of Stora Idgölen, you reach the top of the mountain Idhöjden. Rest your legs and enjoy the magnificent views!



📍 LILLA IDGÖLEN

Lilla Idgölen is another enchanted forest lake. The national park was enlarged in 1994 to incorporate the forest to the north, which is slightly younger than the southern forest.



BLACK
WOODPECKER



CAPERCAILLIE FOREST

Without warning, the silence is interrupted by strong wing beats. The pulse races. A black shape flaps away between the trees. A meeting with a capercaillie cock in the ancient forest.



SPECIAL DECAYERS

Wood-living fungi are strangers to many. In the forest's natural eco-cycle, they carry out the heavy work in returning trees to earth. Fomitopsis rosea is one of Sweden's rarer decayers on fallen spruces.

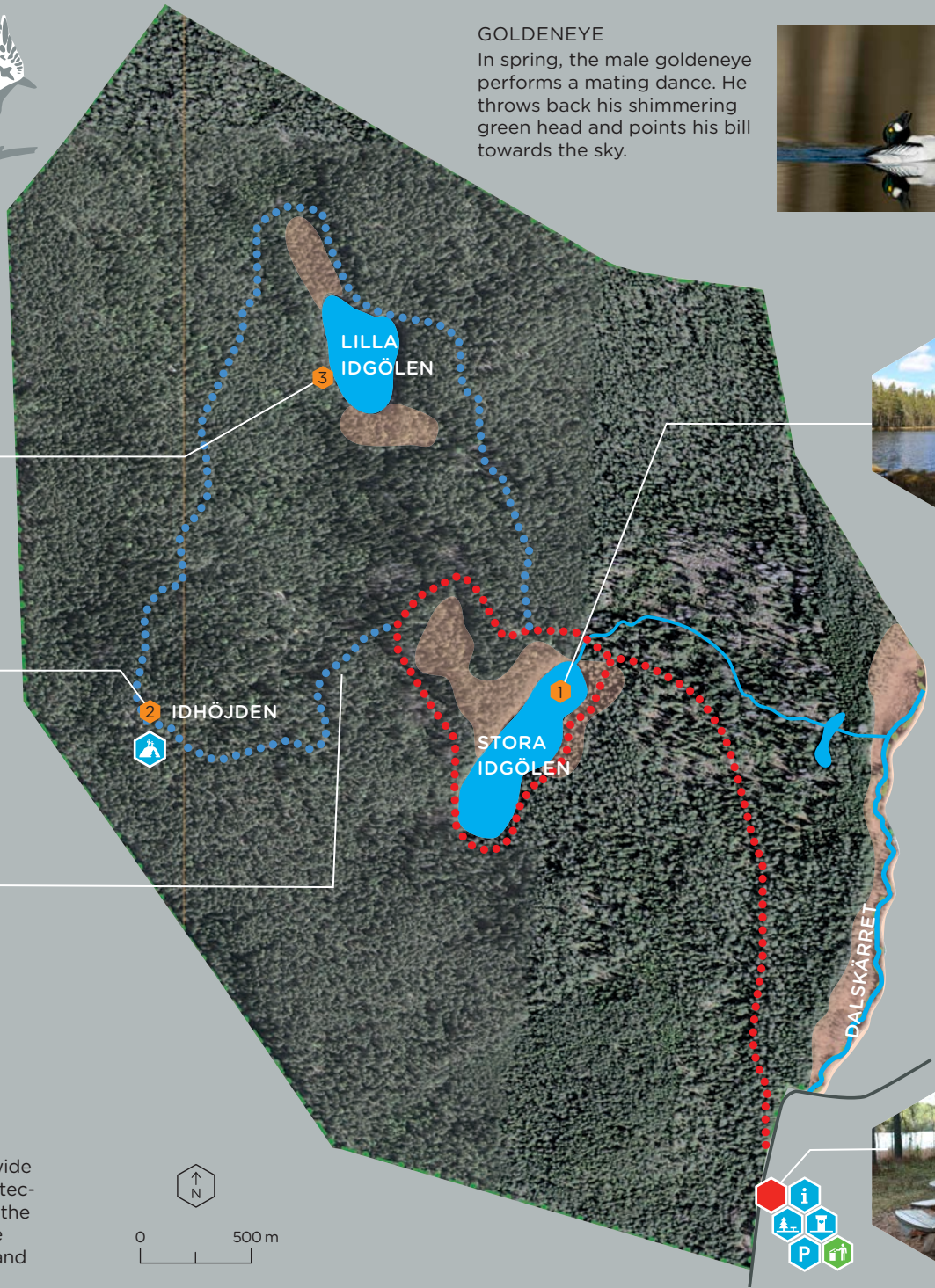


CRESTED TIT
Lophophanes cristatus



NATURA 2000

Norra Kvill is part of Natura 2000, an EU-wide network of nature protection areas. The aim of the network is to stop the extinction of species and habitats.



GOLDENEYE

In spring, the male goldeneye performs a mating dance. He throws back his shimmering green head and points his bill towards the sky.



SYMBOLS

- ENTRANCE
- POINT OF INTEREST
- INFORMATION AREA
- DRY PRIVY
- PARKING AREA
- OUTLOOK
- WASTEBIN
- FOREST
- BOG
- LAKE/WATERCOURSE

WALKING TRAILS

- STORA IDGÖLEN CIRCULAR ROUTE (2.5 KM)
- LILLA IDGÖLEN CIRCULAR ROUTE (4 KM)

FOREST ORCHIDS

In July and August, the white flowers of creeping lady's tresses glow against the moss-green carpets in the forest. Lesser tway-blade, another orchid, grows in the wet forest north-west of Lake Stora Idgölen.



PYGMY OWL

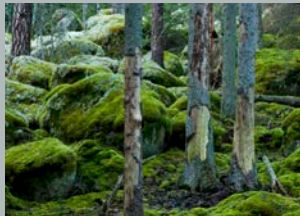
OWL HOOTING

The best time to listen for owls is from late February until early April. This is the mating season and the males call ardently, especially at dusk.

LESSER TWAYBLADE
Neottia cordata



CREEPING LADY'S TRESSES
Goodyera repens



BOULDER FIELDS

A walk across Norra Kvill's boulder-strewn landscape can be rough in places. But thanks to the steep terrain, the forest has been spared from large-scale forestry.



Norra Kvill
National Park

A SCENT OF WILDERNESS

On still summer days, the scent of Labrador-tea lies heavy over bogs and lakesides. The white flowers bloom in June, but the fragrance comes from the leathery leaves which are green all year round.

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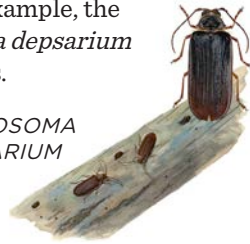
GETTING HERE

You reach Norra Kvill National Park from the road between Vimmerby and Norra Vi, via a turning 7 km south of Ydrefors. Follow this road for 2 km and you come to a parking area.

LIVING DEAD WOOD

Between 6 000 and 7 000 species in Sweden are dependent on dead wood. Norra Kivall has an abundance of snags and fallen trees in various sizes and states of decay: a paradise for wood-living plants and animals which find it hard to survive in well-ordered production forests. The rare stag beetle *Ceruchus chrysomelinus* thrives on the decaying fallen spruce logs in Norra Kivall. As a typical “primitive forest species” it likes old, damp shady forests that have not burned in a long time. Species that live in the light, open flat rock pine forest have other requirements. For example, the rare longhorn beetle *Tragosoma depsarium* needs coarse, sunlit pine trunks.

TRAGOSOMA
DEPSARIUM

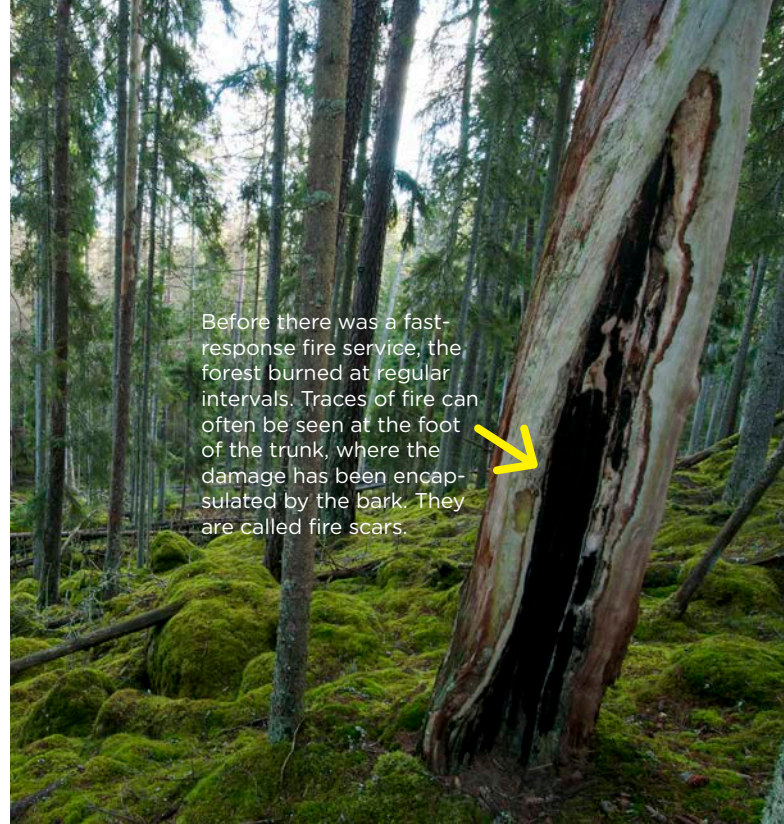


CONIFER BATTLE

Fire used to be the forest's normal method of rejuvenation. More than 100 years have now passed since the last fire in Norra Kivall.

The pine, with its thick bark, is well adapted to forest fires. But spruce has a thin bark and is prone to fire-damage. After a long time without fires, pine is finding it harder to hold its own, as spruce seeds germinate more easily in dark dense forests. The existence of pine is now increasingly threatened in Norra Kivall. Without another fire, the proportion of pine in the national park will eventually decline in favour of spruce.

This is a dilemma for conservationists: Should we burn old-growth forest and risk both valuable spruces and pines? Should we let nature take its course? Or can we do something else that will save both spruce, pine, and the rare beetles?



Before there was a fast-response fire service, the forest burned at regular intervals. Traces of fire can often be seen at the foot of the trunk, where the damage has been encapsulated by the bark. They are called fire scars.



Fallen dead trees are sometimes called coarse wooded debris.

CERUCHUS
CHRYSOMELINUS



FOUR THINGS NOT TO BE MISSED

Even if you are short of time, there are things you must not miss during your visit – here are four gems:

1.

BOULDERS

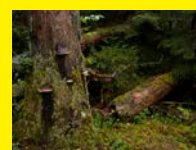
Moss-grown boulders will set off your imagination on your way up to Lake Stora Idgölen.



2.

SPILLIKINS

Decaying fallen trees of impressive size, home to the beetle *Ceruchus Chrysomelinus* and an abundance of wood-living fungi.



3.

LAKE STORA IDGÖLEN

Enjoy the tranquility of the lake, but remember to look out for frogs and toads!



4.

SCARRED TREES

Numerous dead trees with fire scars can be found on the slope south-west of Lake Stora Idgölen. Some of them are more than 300 years old.



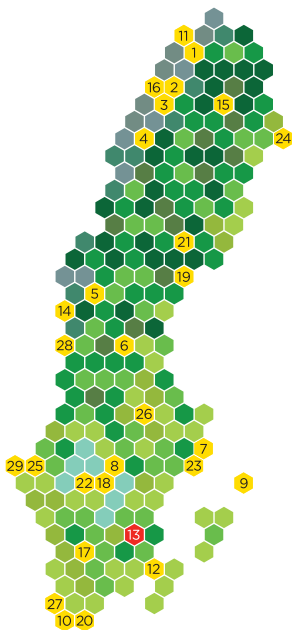
REGULATIONS

Special rules apply within the national park. The complete regulations regarding your rights to travel through and visit the national park can be found on separate signs at each entrance.

- Don't damage the vegetation. This includes dead trees. You are not allowed to break off twigs or pick or dig up plants.
- The animals are protected and, accordingly, must not be disturbed.
- Dogs must be on a leash.
- Don't hunt or fish.
- Don't camp or light fires.



NATIONAL PARKS OF SWEDEN



1. ABISKO – An easily accessible mountain valley with unusually rich flora.
2. STORA SJÖFALLET / STUOR MUORKKE – Impressive peaks, glaciers and ancient pine woodlands.
3. SAREK – Magnificent, demanding wilderness in a unique mountainous landscape.
4. PIELJEKAISE – Expansive, pristine woodlands of mountain birch.
5. SONFJÄLLET – A low mountain with natural woodland and plenty of bears.
6. HAMRA – A rare complex of natural woodland, wetland and watercourses.
7. ÄNGSÖ – Genuine agricultural landscape with grazing animals and haymaking.
8. GARPHYTTAN – This old agricultural landscape is a sanctuary for many songbirds.
9. GOTSKA SANDÖN – Unique, beautiful island with miles of sandy beaches.
10. DALBY SÖDESKOG – Leafy woodland on the plains of Skåne.

11. VADVETJÄKKA – Sweden's northernmost national park is a mountain with deep caves.
12. BLÅ JUNGFRUN – An island of legends, with smooth rocks, deciduous trees and beautiful views.
13. NORRA KVILL – One of the few old growth type woodlands in southern Sweden.
14. TÖFSINGDALEN – Valley with ancient pine woodlands, rich in boulders and rushing waters.
15. MUDDUS / MUTTOS – The land of vast wetlands and old growth woodlands.
16. PADJELANTA / BADJELÄNNDA – Rolling mountain heaths and big lakes, far from the nearest road.
17. STORE MOSSE – The largest wetland area in Sweden south of Lapland.
18. TIVEDEN – A wooded landscape with a sense of wilderness.
19. SKULESKOGEN – Coast with magnificent views and the world's highest isostatic lift.
20. STENSHUVUD – Coastal hills, broadleaved woodlands, inviting heathlands and beaches.
21. BJÖRNLANDET – Mountains, cliffs and woodlands with traces of old woodland fires.
22. DJURÖ – Archipelago in western Europe's biggest inland sea.
23. TYRESTA – Pristine woodland just south of Stockholm.
24. HAPARANDA SKÄRGÅRD – Archipelago with sandy beaches and shallow waters.
25. TRESTICKLAN – Roadless wilderness with expansive views from pine-covered ridges.
26. FÄRNEBOFJÄRDEN – A mosaic of broadleaved woodlands and water in Nedre Dalälven.
27. SÖDERÅSEN – Deciduous woodland, scree slopes, running water and a rich flora and fauna.
28. FULUFJÄLLET – By Sweden's highest waterfall, old growth woodland meets mountainside that is white with lichen.
29. KOSTERHAVET – Species-rich area of sea and archipelago with Sweden's only coral reef.

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