



## WHAT IS A NATIONAL PARK?

National parks in Finland are conservation areas established for the public to visit. They are preserved as samples of the Finland's foremost natural features. The primary function of these areas is to serve as sanctuaries for the country's original fauna and flora. In some national parks the conservation function also extends to heritage landscapes and man-made structures. National parks also serve the needs of scientific research, education and recreation.

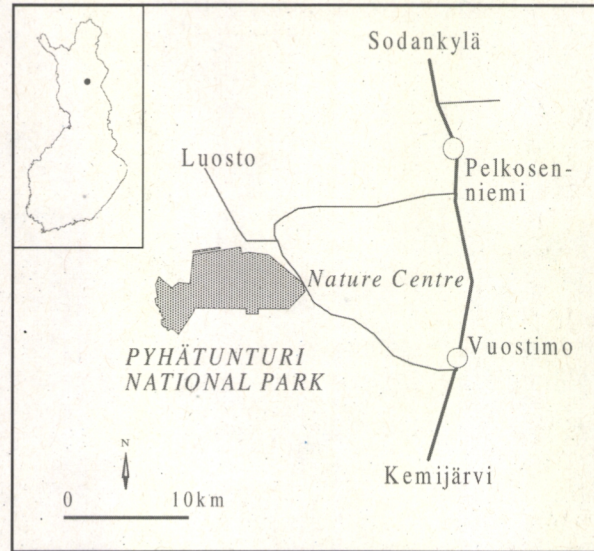


*Black bearberry*

## PYHÄTUNTURI NATIONAL PARK

The Pyhätunturi National Park, located in Pelkosenniemi and Kemijärvi, in northern Finland was founded in 1938. The purpose of this national park is to preserve in their natural state the area's geologically unique string of fells and the fell forests. The ancient sámi people's historic sacrificial places and the baptism places connected to the early years of Christianity are further objects of protection.

The park has a surface area of 43 square kilometres. In the north-west it extends to the Luosto nature management forest. A hiking route 35 kilometres in length, and accessible throughout the year, connects Pyhätunturi and Luosto.



## HOW TO GET THERE

We recommend that you begin your visit at the park's Nature Centre, which is located adjacent to the Pyhätunturi downhill-skiing centre. To get there, turn off the main road (see the above map) when coming from either Kemijärvi or Sodankylä. Sign-posted trails lead off into the national park from the Nature Centre.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:



Pyhätunturi National Park  
Nature Centre  
FIN-98530 Pyhätunturi  
Tel. (9692) 882 773  
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ENGLISH

## PYHÄTUNTURI NATIONAL PARK





## PYHÄTUNTURI NATIONAL PARK AT YOUR SERVICE

The Pyhätunturi National Park contains 24 kilometres of sign-posted trails and 16 kilometres of winter trails. While the winter trails are maintained, they become easily snowed-over in the high country. The park's winter trails are most suitable for hikers on skis.

In winter there is also a nature ski-trail, ca. 4 kilometres in length. Along this trail you will find illustrated guide spots telling how the local flora and fauna have adapted to the winter in Pyhätunturi. The summer nature trail tells of the local nature, history and human activity in the area.

Other sources of information on the national park are the Nature Centre's exhibitions and slide-shows. Opened in 1984, the Nature Centre is open the year round.



## HIKING IN THE NATIONAL PARK

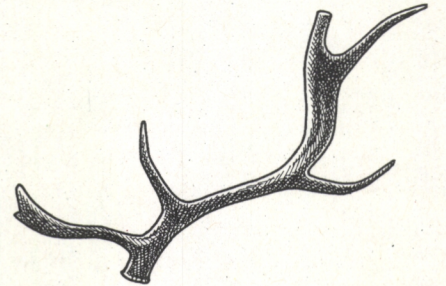
From the viewpoint of access, the Pyhätunturi National Park is subdivided into what are called basic and restricted parts. In the basic part, visitors are permitted to move about on foot or on skis. Due to the sensitivity of the ground vegetation, visitors are asked to stay on the sign-posted trails.

Rights of access to the restricted parts are more stringent. Moving about in the restricted part of Isokuru is confined to the sign-posted trails. Climbing up or down the sides of the gorge is prohibited due to the risk of landslides and avalanches, and also because of the possibility of harm being done to the flora and fauna. In the rest of the park's restricted parts, access is denied to visitors in the snowless season of the year.

Making an open fire and pitching of tents are permitted only in places designated for these purposes. The Huttuloma wanderer's hut is available for overnighing. The Karhuluoma hut is reserved for daytime use only. You may pitch your tent in the immediate vicinity of either hut. Mushrooms and berries may be picked freely.

In order that the possible disturbance to the environment created by hiking activities might be minimised, visitors are asked to follow these rules:

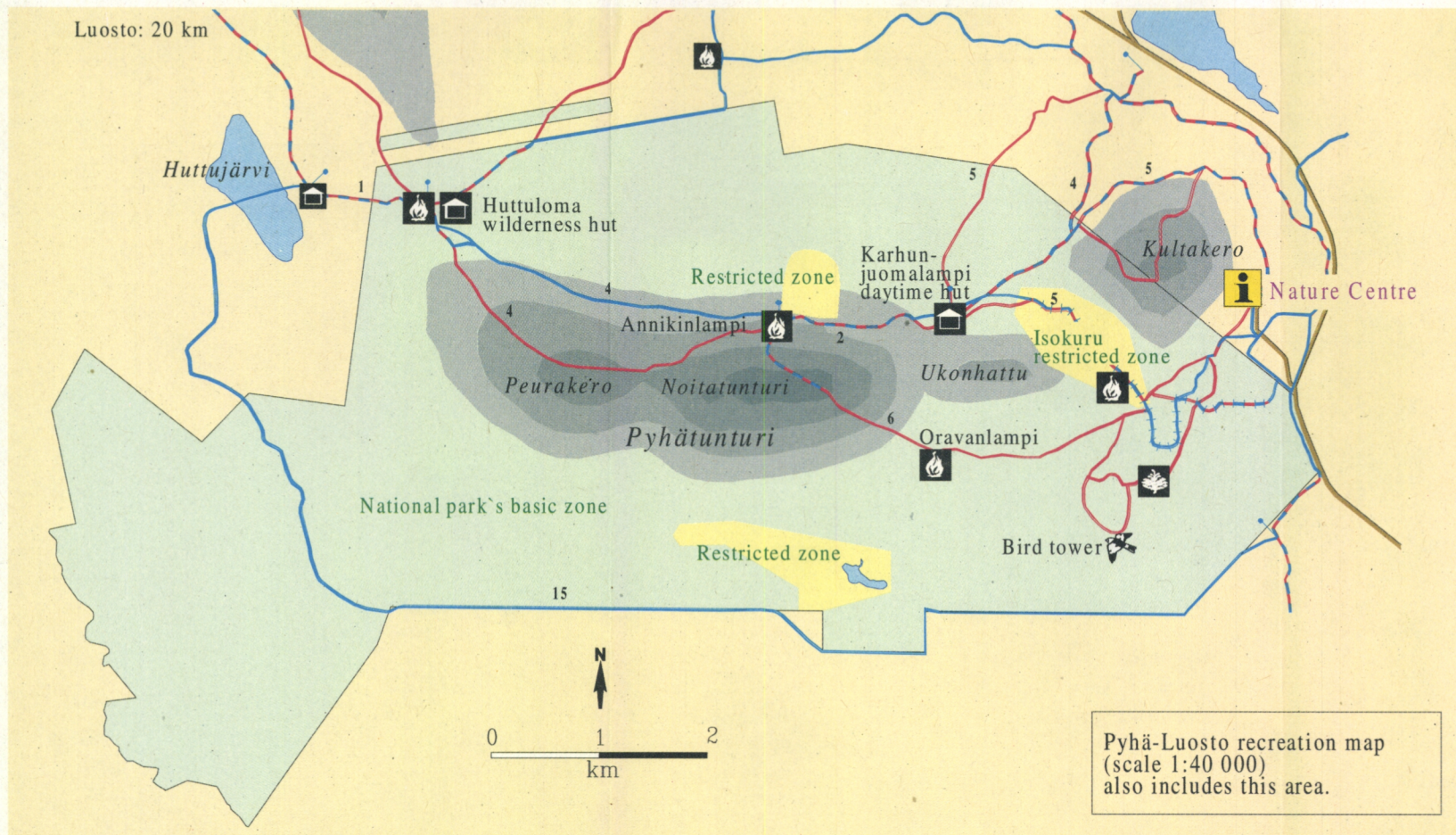
- do not collect plants, animals, stones, etc.
- keep domestic animals (e.g. dogs) on a leash
- do use motorised vehicles
- do not litter
- do not fish.



## OTHER ACTIVITIES

Local residents engaged in reindeer husbandry activities have been granted more rights than visitors. Permitted activities also include the taking of samples for scientific purposes. For more information on these activities, please contact the park manager at the guidance centre.

The park's personnel keep the huts and campfire places stocked with firewood. They also attend to things such as garbage disposal and trail maintenance. When carrying out these duties in winter, they often need to use a snowmobile.



## LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

It is safest to stay on the signposted trails. Make sure you have a map and compass with you. Learn to use them before starting out.

Do not go alone. Do not leave your group. Plan your route beforehand. Take into consideration the weather when making your route plan. Especially in the fells, the weather is liable to change rapidly. Your start to feel the cold first in your fingers and your toes. The wind has the effect of multiplying the impact of sub-zero temperatures. This

is why windproof, warm clothes are your best choice.

Inform others (at your lodgings or the Nature Centre) of your route. Also remember to tell when you plan to return! Write your name in the guest-book in every hut you visit.

Should you lose your way, set up camp or seek shelter in good time. The most important thing to do is to keep yourself warm. Remain calm.

Beware of landslides and avalanches at Pyhätunturi. Isokuru is the most dangerous in this respect.

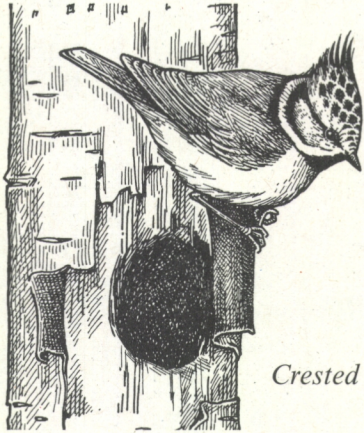
## TRAIL DESIGNATION IN THE FIELD





## THE NATURE AT PYHÄTUNTURI

Pyhätunturi is Finland's southernmost big fell. It comprises a string of fells, seven kilometres in length with bare hill tops and rocky gorges alternating. The highest top is called Noitatunturi, 540 metres above sea level. The deepest of the rocky gorges is Isokuru, 220 metres in depth. Pyhätunturi is among the world's oldest mountains – it was formed over 2000 million years ago. The fell is mostly composed of quartzite derived from the shoreline and sea-bottom sands of an ancient sea. Occasionally, one comes across pieces of stone with petrified wave formation on them.



*Crested tit*

The rock-strewn and barren fell country is home to a few fell plant species. The more common of these are Mountain Heath, Wild Azalea, Mountain Club-Moss and Black Bearberry. Here and there, in crevices between the rocks, you will also find the Rock Brake, a typical avoider of calcareous soils. It is only on the lower slopes of the fell and along the banks of brooks that you will find more flourishing vegetation.

The Pyhätunturi National Park is too small to

serve as a permanent habitat for large predators. The park's numerous dead standing trees, or snags, on the other hand, provide nesting places for many bird species.

## THE HUMAN IMPACT ON PYHÄTUNTURI

In the old days, Pyhätunturi was an object of worship for the Sámi people. It was at the Uhriharju ridge that they used to pray to the fairies to grant them success in hunting. Sacrificial offerings included reindeer bones and antlers. These pagan rituals came to an end in the late 1600s when the local Sámi people were baptised into the Christian faith at places which continue to carry the names Pyhänkasteenlampi and Pyhänkasteenputous.

Pyhätunturi has always been reindeer husbandry country. Forestry was practised there right up to the time of the founding of the national park. Traces of this practice are to be seen even today in the form of long stumps and extraction tracks.

The magnificence of the natural landscapes has always attracted people to Pyhätunturi. Tourism proper began in the 1920s and picked up in pace with improvements in accessibility.

Eventually, a popular downhill-skiing centre was established there.

In 1991, the national park lost some territory, the north-eastern slope of Kultakero, to the needs of skiers.

Building activity adjacent to the protected

area is another threat to the conservation purpose of the park.

## RESEARCH

Forest and environmental research requires areas beyond the impact of human activity. Such areas are invaluable for research delving into the functioning of natural forests and for arranging long-term experiments and follow-up studies. An extensive vegetation mapping study and other studies on plant and bird species have been conducted in the Pyhätunturi National Park. The timber line and development of natural forests are further objects of follow-up studies. Annual vole inventories are done in order to learn more about why and how vole populations fluctuate. Alongside this information, data is also collected on the populations of game animals and of pests.

The increase in visitor numbers has resulted in the refocussing of research to make it better serve the management and use of the park. Visitor studies are in progress. The wearing away of vegetation and how to rehabilitate worn areas are also studied.

