



## VEGETATION

The forests in the area consist mainly of Norway spruce growing on fresh and grove-like upland sites. Verdant groves can also be found along the streams running into Lake Pielinen and at the foot of steep cliffs. Less fertile sites (dry and dryish upland sites) are located on the tops and western slopes of the hills. The birch stands, clearings and natural meadows, relicts from the time of slash-and-burn agriculture, bring considerable variety to the nature in the area.

The Koli National Park is an area where many threatened plants are growing. The most important of them are to be found in groves and fertile fens.



## FAUNA

The fauna in the park is typical of northern Karelia. The bird species to be found in the greatest numbers are chaffinch, willow warbler, goldcrest and spotted flycatcher. Wood grouse, greenish warbler, wren and the three-toed woodpecker, which is a threatened species, all thrive in old forest. Water birds are represented by divers and many species of duck and gull.

Mammals regularly sighted in the park are elk, fox, pine marten, lynx and hare. Bears also occasionally move through the area. The endangered flying squirrel inhabits old mixed woods with aspens where woodpeckers have bored nest holes.

The most important, extremely threatened invertebrate species in the Koli area are *Bulgarica cana*, which is only known in Finland from Koli, and *Solva interrupta* which has only been found in one other place in Finland.

## SETTLEMENT AND CULTURAL HISTORY

Settlements based on slash-and-burn agriculture appeared in the Pielinen area at the end of the 15th century. However, the Koli hill region was for long nothing but uninhabited backwoods, and was regarded as a frightening place suitable for sacrificial rites. Settlements were finally established on the edges of the hills in the 18th century. Slash-and-burn agriculture and forest grazing continued right up until the beginning of this century.

At the turn of the century the rise of national romanticism resulted in a strong Karelian movement, and the Koli landscape provided many famous writers, artists and composers with inspiration for their work. At the same time Koli also became a well known tourist attraction.



## RESEARCH AT KOLI

Due to its high nature conservation, geological and landscape value, the Koli area offers abundant scope for research in different scientific fields.

Basic studies on forests, vegetation and animals are providing data on the area's ecology. This goes into a natural resource database which also assists research into the management and use of other protected areas. Studies on threatened animals and plants provide a basis for management plans for preserving these species. There have been numerous geological studies on the bedrock forming the hill chain.

At Koli, forestry planning methods have been developed in which e.g. the landscape and various forms of forest use can be taken into account more fully. Biotopes created by slash-and-burn agriculture and heritage landscapes are being maintained by burning and cultivation, and by cutting the vegetation on forest meadows - the ones at Koli are included in the Project Silva study.

## THE FINNISH FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE METLA

METLA is a research institute which was established in 1917 under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. METLA researches forest oriented problems, with particular emphasis on studies on the state of health of the forest and forest biodiversity, the multiple use of forests, and the underutilisation of timber reserves.

METLA comprises the Helsinki and Vantaa research centres, plus eight other research stations around Finland. In order to ensure the continuity of long-term research METLA, manages about 140,000 ha of research forest, of which 60,000 ha are nature conservation areas.



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# KOLI NATIONAL PARK



## THE KOLI NATIONAL PARK

Koli National Park is located in northern Karelia on the western shore of Lake Pielinen. The park's purpose is to protect the national landscape of Koli and old growth forests on the foot hills, as well as to maintain plant communities created by slash-and-burn agriculture. The scenery around Koli is considered to be some of the most beautiful in Finland.

Including the water areas, the park covers 1137 hectares, which is to be extended to around 2500 hectares to include areas in the hill chain of value from the nature and landscape protection perspective.

## GEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE

Koli's hills are the remnants of the ancient Karelidic mountain chain formed almost 2000 million years ago as continental plates collided, causing thick sandstone strata to become metamorphosed and folded. The hard quartzites have withstood Ice Age erosion and frost shattering better than their surroundings to survive today as the Koli hills. Ukko-Koli, the highest point in the chain, and also in South Finland, rises to 347 m a.s.l. and 253 m above Lake Pielinen.

The glaciers retreated from the area about 9,000 years ago. Many of the features characteristic of the Koli area were formed during the last ice age, e.g. the eskers that developed as the glaciers retreated. The most impressive of these eskers is the string of eskers dominating the landscape of Lake Pielinen.

The marks left by the ice age can also be seen in the highest parts of the Koli Hills in the form of smooth rock faces with channels and grooves in the surface.

The hilltops consist of rocky ridges running parallel to the direction of movement of the glaciers, with steep bluffs on the northeastern side, intersected by gorge-like valleys.



## MAP SYMBOLS

- national park
- planned expansion
- hiking trail
- information board
- car park
- toilet
- camp fire site
- landing
- beach
- harbour
- hotel



## RULES FOR PARK USERS

### Permitted

- movement by foot, ski and boat on Lake Pielinen
- the picking of forest berries and wild mushrooms

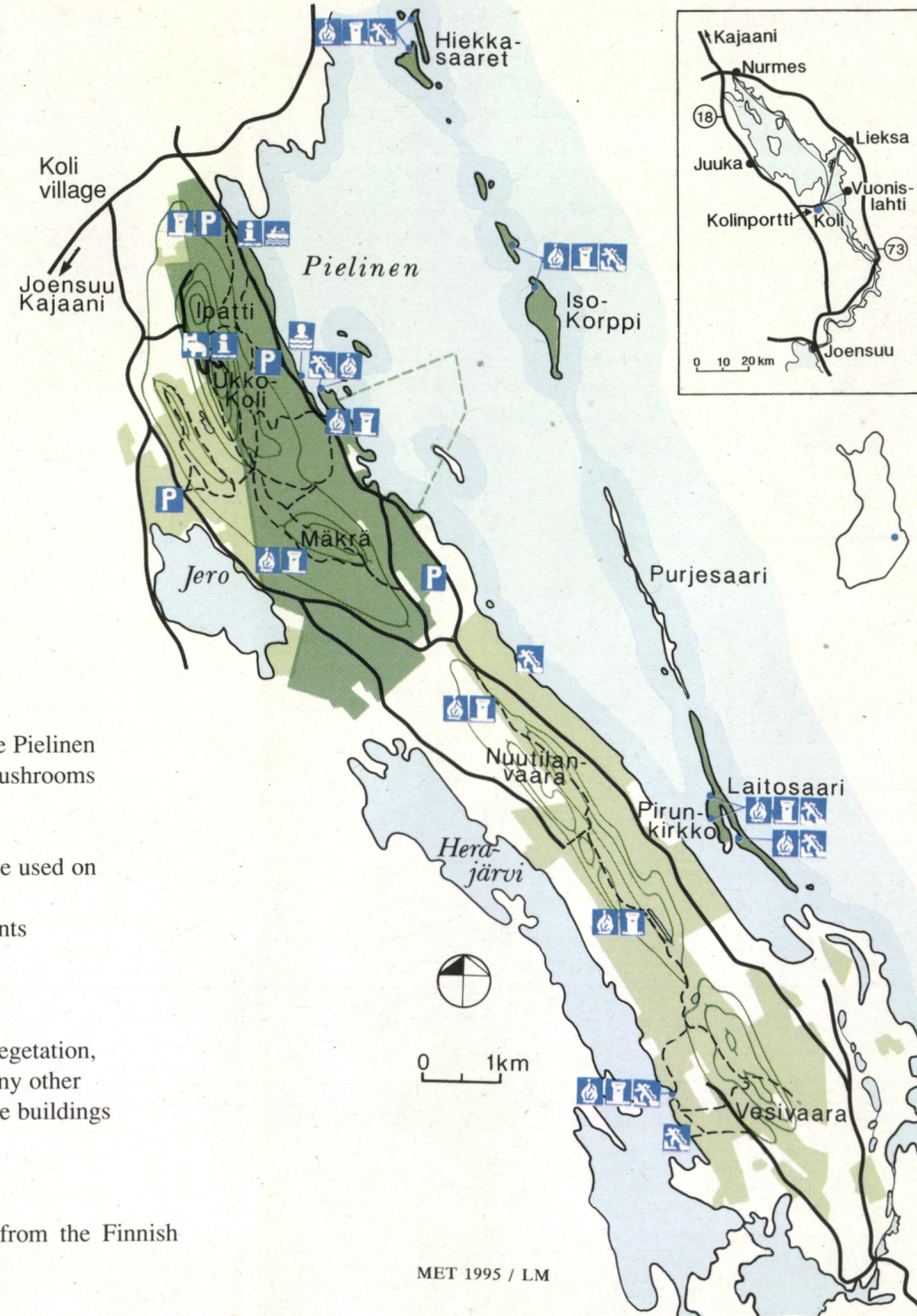
### Restricted

- motor vehicles and bicycles may only be used on the roads
- fire-lighting is permitted only at the points indicated

### Forbidden

- discarding litter, damaging the soil or vegetation, disturbing the animals or carrying out any other activity likely to affect nature or damage buildings in the area
- camping

Detailed park regulations are available from the Finnish Forest Research Institute METLA.



## HIKING AND GUIDANCE

The best way to explore the park is by hiking. There are several marked hiking trails to choose from, all starting at the Ylä-Koli information board, next to the Koli Hotel. A map of the trails can be purchased from offices of the Finnish Forest Research Institute, the Koli Hotel and Kolinportti. There are several camp fire places in the area. In winter there are ski trails in the park varying in length from three to eight kilometres and supplemented by connecting ski trails from Koli to Kopravaara and Loma-Koli.

The national park's information centre is in the lobby of the Koli Hotel. The Kolinportti nature conservation information point lies at the Koli junction at Ahmovaara, along the Joensuu-Kajaani road (no. 18). This covers not only Koli National Park, but also other protected, and outdoor recreation, areas of north Karelia.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Road connections are shown on the map. There is a coach service to Koli from Joensuu and Kajaani. In summer there are boat connections from Joensuu, Lieksa, Nurmes and Vuonislahti. The ferry to Lieksa is a car ferry.

## MAPS

- Finnish Road Map GT 9, 1:200,000
- Tourist map of Northern Karelia, 1:200,000
- Outdoor Map Lieksa Koli Ruunaa, 1:30,000
- Basic maps N:o 4313 08-12, 1:20,000
- Koli hiking trails, 1:20,000

## FURTHER INFORMATION

- The Finnish Forest Research Institute METLA
- The Koli National Park, ph. +358-(9)73-672205
- Joensuu Research Station, ph. +358-(9)73-1514000
- Research forest services, Vantaa, ph. +358-(9)0-857051

