

The reindeer husbandry act

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When reindeers are within the grazing area where reindeer herding is allowed dogs shall be on a leash or be confined if the provincial government doesn't permit otherwise. Is a dog met chasing or in other ways disturbing reindeers within said area the dog can, if not letting itself being caught, be put down by a person who owns or herds reindeer.

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Those who by intent or carelessness scare or in other ways disturb reindeer within a grazing area, and without authorization set reindeer on the run can be fined.

About the reindeer

The reindeers are cervids that live in packs in the north of Sweden. This species that reside in northern Scandinavia are called tundra-reindeer, and in Sweden there are about 225 000 – 280 000 reindeer. The reindeer are the only cervids where both genders have antlers. The sarv (the bull) and the vaja (the cow) sheds their antlers every year.

To transport themselves between different grazing areas when the season changes the reindeer use special hiking- and moving trails, that are often very old. Every reindeer in Sweden has an owner who marks the reindeer in a personal mark, a cut, that is often passed as heritage within the family.

STEKENJOKK - A REINDEER HERDING AREA



Länsstyrelsen
Västerbotten



TRAFIKVERKET



VILHELMINA
KOMMUN

VUALTJEREN TJIJELTE



VILHELMINA SÖDRA SAMEBY

All the pictures in this brochure are
taken by Stina Blind.

www.visitvilhelmina.com

WELCOME TO STEKENJOKK!

One of the wilderness roads most beautiful sceneries with wide views, wild rapids and rolling mountains. This environment is special and therefore demands a little extra care and consideration. That is why we give you this brochure, where you can find guidance in how to visit the area without disturbing the wild life.



Stekenjokk is sami cultural landscape and a grazing area for reindeer where two sami communities (in Swedish samebyar) are active, Vilhelmina Södra Sameby and Voernese sameby. That means that Stekenjokk is inhabited by thousands of reindees every year from the end of April until the end of October. The reindeer, the seasons and the weather all affect the reindeer herders work.

An encounter

If you meet a reindeer, take it slow and enjoy the experience. Sit down and watch silently until the animal has passed. This conduct is especially important in the spring and early summer, when the reindeer calves are new born. If the vaja (the cow) gets scared she can easily run away from her calf, which leaves the calf exposed to the challenges of the nature and is made an easy prey for predators.

Enjoy the view from afar

The reindeer prefers to graze in the spots where the snow first disappears. If a lot of people are gathered in these areas it will have severe consequences for the calves that can get separated from their mothers. The stretch of road between Saxån and the parking lot up on the Stekenjokk plateau is an example of an extra sensitive spot. Therefore, you must drive directly to designated parking spaces and enjoy the view from there instead.

Tempary restrictions

Temporary restrictions regarding where it is allowed to stop the car and park may apply in the area. The provincial governments restriction aims to create a better

flow in the traffic and peace and quiet for moving and calving reindeer. Parts of Stekenjokk are also a bird protection area. These parts are completely restricted from parking during a certain period of time during the summer.

You have a responsibility to check if there are any current restrictions while you are visiting.

You can do this by reading the signs that are put up, and also visiting the websites www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasterbotten and www.lansstyrelsen.se/jamtland. These are the websites of the two provincial governments that maintain managing of the area. The road in Jämtlands province is named road 824 and the road in Västerbottens province is named road 1067.



The reindeer resides at Stekenjokk from May to October. During the end of April and the beginning of May thousands of reindeer arrive from their winter grazing down by the coast.

calves returns to the place where they were born to welcome their offspring. A new year in reindeer herding takes its beginning.

The reindeer strolls in peace and quiet during May when the calves are born, and in the end of June when the small ones have gotten bigger it is time for the marking of the calves. The reindeer herders use motorbikes, four wheelers, dogs and sometimes a helicopter to gather the reindeer in to big enclosures. A great amount of knowledge and experience is behind the work.

In the enclosures the calves get branded in the shape of a cut in the ears that marks who own them. Each reindeer owner has their own mark, and can in this way recognize their own animals in the enclosures as well as in the wild. The marking procedure often take place during late evenings and nights, due to the reindeer being an arctic animal that prefers cool temperatures.

It is a powerful sight to see so many reindeers gathered, running around in big circles in the enclosure. If you are moving nearby it is important that you consider this a workplace, where people are working. It is also important to remember that it is not always ok to take pictures. It is therefore crucial that you ask people if they feel okey with being photographed. As a by passer you must ask yourself "is it always okay to take pictures"?

The marking of the calves proceeds until the end of July, and after that the reindeer can roam freely and graze until it is time for the next big event of the reindeer year – the slaughter in the beginning of September.

If you find yourself in close proximity to a gathering of the reindeer you must apply the same manners as when you see just a few animals – sit down quietly and watch. If there are fenced areas, choose another route to avoid disturbance, or enter the area without risking to unfence the area so the reindeer can escape.





How to move

Be considerate to your environment. Besides being careful towards the reindeer herding, there are also other species and plants in the Stekenjokk area that needs caution.

There are also historic leavings and sites in the area, and you can localize these by downloading the app Västerbottens naturkarta to your smartphone. You can also see where the enclosures in the area are, so that you can choose another route.

Traveling with a dog

Stekejokk is a beautiful place to stretch your legs and let your dog get out of the car for a while. Please consider that you need to pick up after you dog. Always keep your dog on a leash, this is a Swedish law within reindeer grazing areas. Even if you trust your dog, have in mind that it also is an animal and that you can not take for granted how it will react when it sees or smells a reindeer or another wild animal.

The garbage

We want Stekejokk to remain as beautiful as it is today. That is why it is very important that does not leave anything behind.

Garbage does not belong in the nature and shall be disposed of at appointed places. This can mean that you may have to take the trash with you to an appropriate disposal site. The best mindset is to leave the nature without any signs of you being there at all.

The same applies to toilet visits. There are no temporary toilets set up in Stekenjokk, and if you need to go you should dig a small pit at least 100 metres from a campsite or hiking trail to dispose of your leavings. You can otherwise burn or take your toilet paper with you so it does not becomes a burden for the nature to take care of.

Do you wish to know where you can hike without causing disturbance?

Contact the sami community that is active in the area you are planning to visit.

You can find contact information at the website www.sametinget.se/samebyar



A sami community is a geographical area where reindeer herding is active. The sami community is organized as an economic and administrative association that has its own board. There are 51 sami communities in Sweden, from Karesuando in the north to Idre in the south.

Do you want to learn more about sami culture and reindeer herding? Read more at www.samer.se or www.sametinget.se.

