

79°7.3'N 011°50.9'E

Fjortende Julibukta

Nordvest-Spitsbergen National Park
Named after the National Day of France.

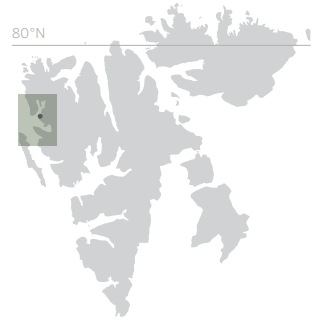


Photo: Yan-Ali Tabarand

The Hanging Gardens of Svalbard

Very few places near 79° North can offer more opulent vegetation than this very special site. Here you can enjoy the rich diversity and colors of Arctic vegetation and nice smells at close range. The bay close to the glacier offers one of the most beautiful beaches in the Arctic. The water temperature may not be impressive but the view is!

VEGETATION

This site offers very contrasting vegetation within a few hundred meters, from the barren gravel near the glacier to the most spectacular flowering meadows below the bird cliff. The high diversity of species and the size of individual plants make the site a vegetation hotspot. Species like the yellow polar dandelion and black erigeron have a restricted distribution at Svalbard, but are seen in large numbers under this bird cliff. These can be observed from below, without walking up the slope.

FAUNA

The bird cliff above the shore holds thousands of seabirds, including Brünnich's guillemot, black-legged kittiwake, northern fulmar, glaucous gull, black guillemot, little auk, Atlantic puffin and a few razorbill. A few pairs of Arctic skua breed close to the shore and barnacle and pink-footed geese breed on the slopes below the cliff. Reindeer also frequent these slopes. Good numbers of common eider and Arctic tern can be seen around the bay.



Guidelines

- Stay along the shore and the lower flat area to avoid disturbance of breeding and foraging geese and trampling on the loose vegetation on the slope.
- Walk around the wetland areas as they have very low-trampling tolerance.
- The breeding areas for Brünnich's guillemot, Atlantic puffin and razorbill can be observed from the small ridge to the east of it. Avoid walking into the breeding area.
- This breeding area can also be observed from the water, but beware of shallow waters.



Photo: Georg Bangjord

The Atlantic puffin is also known as the sea parrot.



Photo: Ole Magnus Rapp

The cliff is like a botanic garden with high diversity of species, also in sizes rarely seen in Svalbard.



Photo: Ole Magnus Rapp

Go for a swim from one of Svalbard's finest beaches.

Tip

Stroll along the beach towards the glacier, Fjortende Julibreen. However, do not approach too close and in the event of a calving be aware of the surging wave.