

80°28.5'N 019°55.7'E

Chermsideøya

Nordaust-Svalbard Nature Reserve – After Herbert Chermside, 1850-1929, later Lieutenant General Sir Herbert Chermside, Governor of Queensland (Australia), 1901-07.

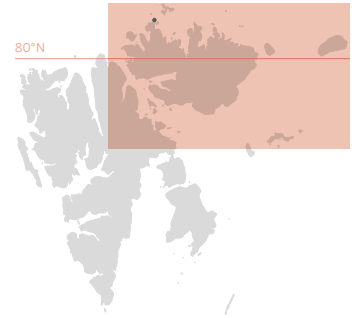


Photo: Jan Morten Bjørnbakk

Graffiti beach

Since time immemorial we have marked our presence. On a headland covered in gravel, several names of ships and men have been written with stones, all telling different stories.

VEGETATION

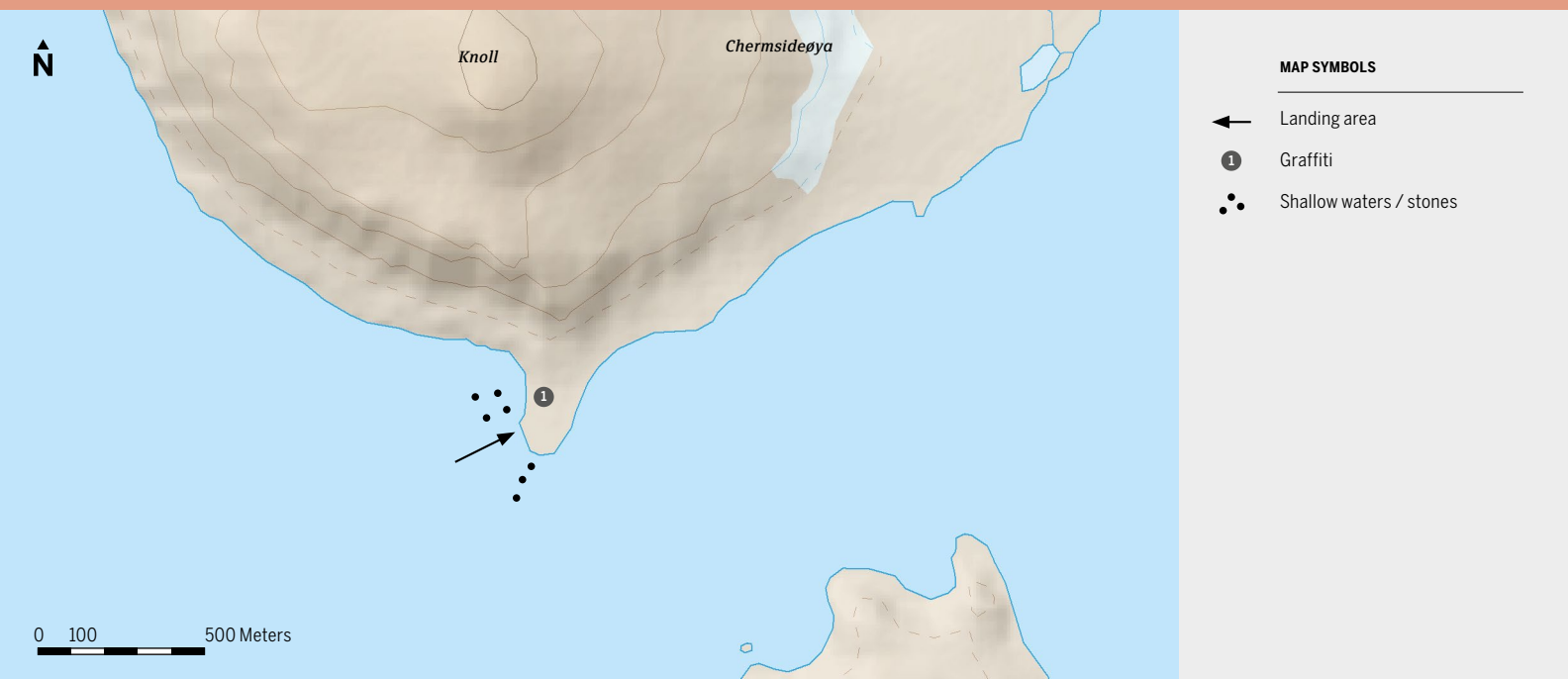
The name-forming stones are partly covered by black lichen species. Apart from this there is no vegetation at the beach and on the plain. The hill behind the beach holds a number of common Svalbard plant species and locally this forms vegetation spots with green-brown impressions.

FAUNA

This site holds few species and low numbers of birds and mammals. At least one pair of Arctic skua and a few pairs of Arctic tern breed close to the beach. Common eider and black guillemot frequently feed close to the shore. One may also see purple sandpiper, glaucous gull, kittiwake, little auk and snow bunting overflying the site. Reindeer and Arctic fox frequent the area.

CULTURAL REMAINS

The oldest names date from 1898 from members of the Swedish part of the "Arc of Meridian Expedition" who a year later overwintered at Crozierpynten in Sorgfjorden. Thirty years later the crew of the vessels "Krassin" and "Red Bear" put down the names of their ships while on a rescue expedition to save the Italian explorer Col. Umberto Nobile. The youngest is a swastika written by young Germans in 1939. A foundation and wooden remains of a Russian Orthodox cross is situated near a large rock next to the swastika on the beach.



Guidelines

If the Arctic skuas and Arctic terns attack, walk away while watching where you step to avoid trampling on eggs and chicks.

Be careful not to step on the stones forming the names and dates on the beach.

No new graffiti, please!

Tip

The beach on the point is not suitable for landings due to shallow water.



Photo: Georg Bangjord

The polar scurvygrass can appear very different; small and tiny on mineral soil and very large and vigorous below bird cliffs.



Photo: Jan Morten Bjørnbakk

The swastika from 1939 is in many ways considered a difficult cultural remain, but it tells a story to be remembered.



Photo: Ole Magnus Rapp

Born to "steal". The Arctic skua steals its food from other sea birds, especially from Arctic terns, kittiwakes and auks.