

80°5.0'N 031°25,7'E

Andréeneset, Kvitøya

Nordost-Svalbard Nature Reserve –
After Salomon August Andrée, 1854-97,
a Swedish engineer and Arctic explorer.

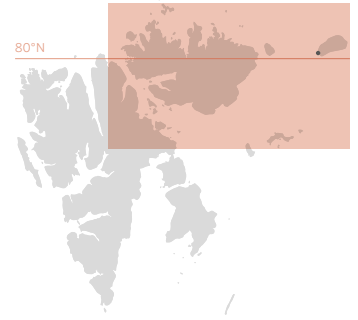


Photo: Lisa Ström

The Eagle has landed

Virgohamna, 11 July 1897: Everything is set for an expedition in the spirit of Jules Verne, equipped with high-technology and daring in the struggle against the extreme forces of nature. The moorings of the balloon “Örnen” (the Eagle) are cut and three men are sent to their deaths on a quest to reach the North Pole.

Kvitøya, 5 October 1897: Salomon August Andrée, Nils Strindberg and Knut Frænkel reach Kvitøya and put up a camp after a strenuous journey when the balloon crash-landed in on the ice. Two weeks later they are dead.

The summer of 1930: The crew from the catching vessel “Brattvåg” stumbles across the remains of Andrée's expedition.

VEGETATION

Kvitøya is without a vegetation cover, but some single plants cling to the ground between the stones and in the gravel. Botanists have visited the island on some occasions, and throughout all of the visits five species of vascular plants and eight lichen species have been reported here.

FAUNA

This site has few species of birds and mammals. Common eider, Arctic skua and Arctic tern breed in the area. Even if the birdlife is not very rich, purple sandpiper, pomarine skua, glaucous gull, kittiwake and ivory gull may be seen in the area. Walrus and polar bear are often seen. The walrus are usually not lying near the landing site, but females with calves are often observed on the rocks and skerries close to the landing site.

CULTURAL REMAINS

Remains of the camp where the participants of the Andrée expedition perished can be seen, including artifacts from the expedition that are still lying on the ground where the camp once was put up. However, most objects have been retrieved and exhibited in museums, mainly in Sweden. Close to the camp is the stone crevice where Strindberg's body was buried. Equipment, diaries and photos found in 1930 made it possible to follow the journey through the eyes of the doomed. A monument commemorating Andrée and his expedition can be seen raised on a cliff overlooking the camp a few meters away.



GUIDELINES

This site is an important haul-out for walrus, also females with calves, and visits must be conducted in accordance with general guidelines for walrus. Pay special attention to the section regarding females and calves.

Try to walk in a line to avoid disturbing incubating common eiders.

When approaching the camp, walk up the cliff to the monument on the south-western side. Do not walk in the area underneath the monument.

Do not pick up or in any way rearrange possible artifacts at the site.

TIP

Try a walk on the glacier-cap which is relatively easily-accessible from Andréeneset.



Photo: Åsa Lindgren

The impressive Kvitøkjökulen covers most of Kvitøya with massive glacier fronts rising from the sea, except for here at Andréeneset where it is accessible.



Photo: Lisa Haglund

Andréeneset is one of few sites in Svalbard where walrus cows and calves can be observed.



Photo: Georg Bangjord

The very robust eider duck is by far the most common duck in Svalbard.