



Västra Norrskär

Västra Norrskär is the second largest island in the Norrskär archipelago. On the island there is a 21 meter high brick and stone lighthouse that was built in 1846. The lighthouse was automated in 1987 and it is now one of the most luminous lighthouses in Finland. There used to be a functioning pilot house on the island in the years 1922-1970. The island has a highly varied wildlife. It is mainly made up of brushwood fields that spread over different gravel, stone, and rock formations. Of trees there are only a few alder groves on the island's shores. In the summer new born water birds and gulls swim around in the small ponds.



Thanks to the different sea weeds that have been washed on land over the years the coastal meadows have gained a nutritious vegetation base. The lush coastal meadow on the north-coast of the island and the small ponds intertwined with it are popular resting spots especially amongst shorebirds. The majority of the Norrskär archipelago's buildings are located on the east coast of Norrskär and close to the light house. Some of the buildings are now state-owned, but the rest are private summer cottages and fishing huts.

Since 2012, part of the Forestry Board -owned old pilot station has been rented out to Kvarken ornithology association (Merenkurkun lintutieteellinen yhdistys ry) in order to launch the bird watching. Bird watching activities will be highly standardized. The main activities include migratory bird watching and counting the resting species.

Municipality

Korsholm

Coordinators

70305:31790

Driving directions

Coming from Vaasa first drive about 20 km along Alskatin-tie (724) to Replot. Then turn left towards Vallgrund onto the road 7242.

Drive about 7,1 km and turn right onto the road 7245 towards Klobbskat. After driving along this road about 16,3 km you will arrive at a sharp turn, where the road continues to the left (Klobbskatvägen).

After driving about 1,9 km along this road you will arrive at the Klobbskat fishing harbour. At the port there is ample parking space, at least on the northwestern side.

From there one can get a fishing boat ride to Norrskär with previous arrangement. The sea journey is more than 25 km long and goes towards the west southwest (WSW).

Services

World heritage site -information boards.

Best time for excursions

Open water season between April and November.





Nesting species

At least 50 different nesting species have been found in Västra Norrskär. These mainly include typical outer archipelago species, such as the Arctic Tern, Common Gull, European Herring Gull, Black Guillemot, Parasitic Jaeger, Ruddy Turnstone, Tufted Duck, Common Eider, and the Rock- and Meadow Pipit, etc. Within the rarest nesting species it is worth mentioning the Common Shelduck and the Sand Martin. During good years for moles also birds of prey, such as the Short-eared Owl and the Common Kestrel have been found nesting on the island.

More detailed information about the nesting species can be found in the third Finnish bird atlas (atlas3.lintuatlas.fi, in Finnish). : <http://atlas3.lintuatlas.fi/tulokset/ruutu/703:317>

Migratory species

At least 264 different bird species have been found in the Norrskär



archipelago! Considerable amounts of birds congregate in the area during migration, especially Gulls, shorebirds and anseriformes. Regardless of this, seeing mass migration in the area is difficult. This is due to the fact that the migration route that crosses Merenkurkku goes more or less across Raippaluoto in the direction of Vaasa-Umeå, whereas the migratory route that goes in

the direction of the Gulf of Bothnia follows the coastline.

Therefore Norrskär is left slightly outside of the main migratory routes. Still, Norrskär is one of the best places in Finland with regards to spotting rare bird species.

Rarities

Ruddy Shelduck, Surf Scoter, Yellow-billed Loon, Little Grebe, Red-footed Falcon, Gyrfalcon, Pacific Golden Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper, Purple Sandpiper, Great Snipe, Marsh Sandpiper, Terek Sandpiper, Red Phalarope, Pomarine Skua, Mediterranean Gull, Atlantic Puffin, Eastern Turtle Dove, Laughing Dove, Shore Lark, Richard's Pipit, Blyth's Pipit, Olive-backed Pipit, Grey Wagtail, Siberian Rubythroat, African Stonechat, Pied Wheatear, Thick-billed Warbler, Booted Warbler, Pallas's Warbler, Yellow-browed Warbler, Hume's Leaf-warbler, Radde's Warbler, Common Chiffchaff tristis, Lesser Grey Shrike, Yellow-breasted Bunting.



PHOTOS: JOUNI KANNONLAHTI / VAASAN YLIOPISTO

