

Sweden

Lake Vanern Archipelago

Declaration date: 2010

Surface area: 278,600 ha

Administrative division:

Götene Municipality, Lidköping Municipality and Mariestad Municipality



Advanced study in handicraft in Mariestad

Human activities:

There are almost 60,000 people living in the biosphere reserve. The transition area is the most densely populated area within the biosphere reserve, where a little over 50,000 people lives. The transition area incorporates the city centres of Götene, Lidköping and Mariestad. Lidköping and Mariestad are located on the shores of Lake Vanern, while Götene is situated along the European Route E20.

Core areas include national park, nature reserves, Natura 2000 sites and forest habitat protection areas. The buffer zones consist of areas of national interest for the purpose of nature conservation, areas of national interest for the purpose of culture heritage conservation, Ramsar site, nature conservation areas, forest with nature conservation agreements, fish protection areas and protected shores. The transition area includes other land. The core areas are mainly surrounded by buffer zones which in turn are surrounded by transition areas.



Hindens reefs in Lake Vanern

Ecological characteristics:

The Biosphere Reserve comprises part of the Lake Vanern drainage basin. Lake Vanern is the largest lake in Sweden and the third largest lake in Europe. In the western part of the area is Hindens rev, a long glacial moraine that stretches 5 km in the lake. Hindens rev is part of the so called middle Swedish ice marginal zone, resulting from the receding inland ice 10,000 years ago.

In the central parts of the biosphere reserve in Mount Kinnekulle, Västergötland's highest plateau mountain, and Mount Lugnäsberget, one of the smallest plateau mountains in the country. The area also includes boulder-ridges and sand-ridges. South-west of Mount Kinnekulle is the only species-rich highly calcareous fen outside the lime-rich area, the so called Skebykärret. The area south and south-west of the plateau mountains consists of relatively flat cultural landscape, dominated by agriculture. Large areas of contiguous forest occur in the archipelago as well as in the southern and eastern parts of the area.

Along the 350 km long Lake Vanern coast there are a number of sites with reed areas and rich birdlife. The largest contiguous reed area is found at Lake Dättern in the south-western part of the area. The islands and skerries in the archipelago include extensive sandy beaches and dunes, rocks, flat-rock pine forest and bilberry spruce forest. Torsö, the largest island in Lake Vanern, is home to a wetland area. The area includes five rivers of which the two largest, Tidån and Lidån discharge in Lake Vanern at the two largest population centres Lidköping and Mariestad. The three smaller rivers, Friaån, Sjøråsån and Mariedalsån run through the agricultural landscape before discharging in Lake Vanern.

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