



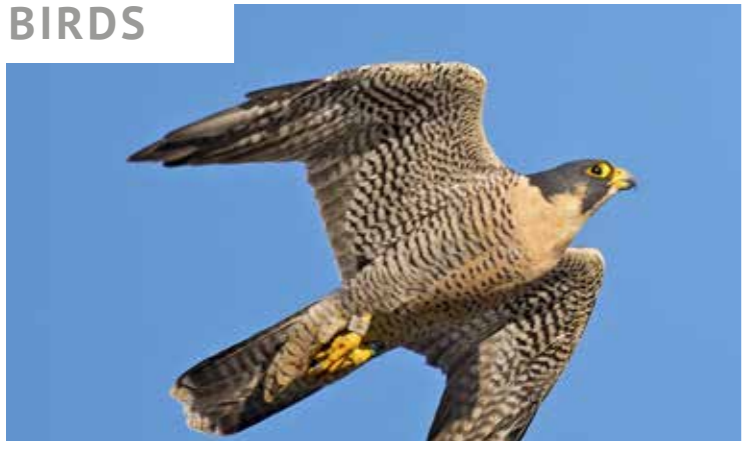
**UNIQUE FLORA & FAUNA IN MAGMA UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK**

If you are standing on a hillside overlooking the landscape of Magma Geopark you may easily get the impression of being on another planet. The landscape in the Geopark is distinguished by its rolling, bare rocks. The dominant rock, Anorthosite, is hard and compact. This causes the soil to be low in nutrients and as a result the vegetation is sparse. In the North and East we find wider valleys with loose deposits from the last ice age. This provides a more lush landscape which is important for agriculture. Many lakes, streams, rivers and waterfalls carve through the landscape creating a varied and appealing natural area.

In addition to the soil, the climate in the Geopark also has a significant impact on the selection of plant species. The coastal climate is suitable for plants that can not tolerate low winter temperatures and also want a long, hot summer to allow buds to develop and seeds to mature before the winter frost comes. This means that we find many plant species here that have very limited national distribution.

The coastal landscape was more wooded before modern man started farming and keeping livestock. The need for grazing habitats for livestock contributed to the disappearance of forest which was replaced between 2 and 4 thousand years ago by the extensive areas of bog known as myr in Norwegian. Another effect of deforestation was the increasing amount of marshland. As the forest has a significantly greater consumption of water than open fields the removal of woodland resulted in large areas of marsh forming along the coast.

**BIRDS**



**PEREGRINE FALCON**  
*Falco Peregrinus*

In Magma Geopark you can actually have a close encounter with the world's fastest flying bird; the Peregrine falcon. This bird reach a speed of 400 km/h diving to catch its prey. This falcon is easy recognisable with dark lines on its chins and its back covered in grey and white to brown and black feathers. Because of environmental pollution the Falco Peregrinus was close to extinction in the 60s and 70s. Due to hugh efforts there are now once again a sustainable stock in Norway.

Falco Peregrinus build their nests on ledges and on tall buildings. The female Falco will brood the eggs for 29-32 days. Most commonly there are 2-5 eggs in a Falcon nest. It takes the wee birds 5-6 weeks to fly out of the nest.

The main prey of the Falco Peregrinus is smaller birds which they hunt and catch in the air. Most Norwegian Falcos emigrates to the South Western parts of Europe during winter.



**EAGLE OWL**  
*Bubo Bubo*

Jæren and the area of Magma Geopark is one of the main habitats in Norway for Europe's largest owl; Bubo Bubo. This owl has large feathers on its head resembling horns, and eyes with a colour mixed of red and yellow. The Bubo Bubo is a versatile hunter and prey on various smaller animals like frogs, rodents, hares and capercaillies.

In early spring you can hear the mating song from the male Bubo Bubo as far as four kilometres away; hoo – å.



**BLACK-THROATED DIVER**  
*Gavia Arctica*

In Magma Geopark there are more than 6000 lakes. By numerous of these you can stumble upon the Gavia Arctica. Changing feathers every autumn and spring makes these birds appear quite differently in summer and winter. However the main colours of the Gavia Arctica are black, grey and white.

Gavia Arctica prefere nesting close to large lakes with lots of fish. They catch the fish diving for long stretches. The shape of the beak is a great advantage when catching the fish. The beak is shaped like a dagger.

Outside the breeding season you are likely to encounter the Gavia Arctica along the coastline. Their song is evocative and beautiful. Many of us have probably heard it on a quiet spring evening, sitting by a lake, without even realizing that it is the song of the Gavia Arctica.



**WHITE-BACKED WOODPECKER**  
*Dendrocopus Leucotos*

White-backed woodpecker is red listed, and in Norway it is mainly in the Southern and Western parts of the country you can encounter it. In Magma Geopark this woodpecker is found heading when inland and into our woodland areas. In Norway in total there is about 1700 couples, and at present moment this is the only sustainable stock in Western Europe.

The White-backed woodpecker feeds on insects living in dead trees, and are therefore quite common in deciduous forests. In particular it prefers dead aspen.



TREES,  
PLANTS,  
MOSS AND  
LICHEN



**OAK**

*Quercus Robur*

Ironically the Oak thrives in deep, nutritious, fresh and moldy soil which is not what the Anorthosite and Magma Geopark are known for. The name Egersund has its origin in the oak – eik in Norwegian, and the oak is significantly present in large areas within the Geopark.



**JASIONE MONTANA**

*Jasione Montana*

This beautiful plant covers the dry fields in Magma Geopark and paint them blue when in bloom between June and August. It thrives well in the poor, well drained dirt along the South Western coast of Norway. This herb becomes 10-30 cm tall, has narrow, hairy leaves and contains of hemispherical baskets with small flowers. Jasione Montana is part of the bell family.



**HEATHER**

*Calluna Vulgaris*

Along the coast in Magma Geopark you will find that the cultural landscape is coloured by heather in the autumn. There are few trees in this landscape and this makes the coastal heathers unique and precious. For thousands of years this landscape has been characteristic for the coastal landscape, stretching from Portugal in the South to Lofoten in the North. These areas were protected and adhered to by sheep and farmers. Because of the decrease in livestock, and farmers using modern facilities and development with their sheep, this landscape is endangered.



**MARSH GENTIAN**

*Gentiana Pneumonanthe*

This colourful flower will catch your eyes when you walk in marshes and moorlands in Magma Geopark. The wet and poor soil appeals well to Gentiana Pneumonanthe, and is also the reason this endangered plant is found in this area. Gentiana Pneumonanthe is red listed and protected in Norway.

The plant can grow up to 30 cm, and when in bloom it is characterised by its dark blue flowers stretching upwards toward the sky. Gentiana Pneumonanthe are in bloom in August and September.



**GREAT BURNET**

*Sanguisorba Officinalis*

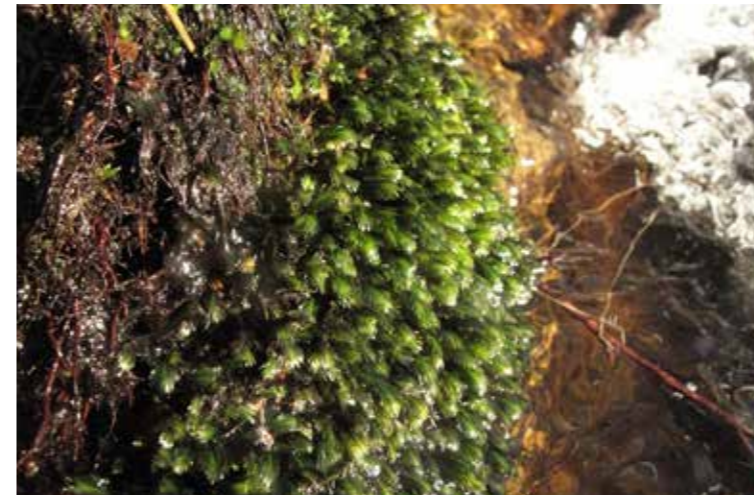
Great burnet is a plant in the family Rosaceae. Its distinct dark red flower stands out in the common flora of the Geopark, and it is quite rare. The great burnet can grow up to 50 cm. The Latin and the Norwegian name (blodtopp – “blood top”) of the flower refers to how this plant was used in traditional medicine. It is said to stop bleeding and heal wounds.



**WOOD SAGE**

*Teucrium Scorodonia*

Walking along the coast between Flekkefjord and Sokndal you can be lucky and stumble upon this perennial plant. Wood sage is part of the Lamiaceae family and can grow up to 50 cm. It does not need a lot of nutrition, and it is often found in screes and rocky areas. Because of its distinctive smell your nose might discover the Wood sage before your eyes. In Norway you can only find these plants along the coast-line between Søgne and Sokndal.



**MANY-LEAVED POCKET-MOSS**

*Fissidens Polyphyllus*

In streams and rivers between Lund and Flekkefjord you can find the Fissidens Polyphyllus thriving in the moist, shadowy environment. Growing on rocks in small streams it is vulnerable for regulations and changes in the waterstream. This is the main reason why Fissidens Polyphyllus is listed as “highly endangered”.

Photo: Torbjørn Høitomt



**POWDERED RUFFLE LICHEN**

*Parmotrema Arnoldii*

Parmotrema Arnoldii is a genus of lichen belonging to the family Parmeliaceae. It is known by its large, grey leaves growing on top of moss on rocks with low pH and in areas with high humidity.

In Norden Parmotrema Arnoldii is only detected in very small areas around Rekefjord in Sokndal municipality. Thriving in open woodland with lots of light, forestation is a huge threat to this rare plant.

Photo: Audun Steinnes

All other photos: Shutterstock