

## 5-day Wildlife Experience in Västmanland (around 2 hours from Stockholm)

### *Information about the area*

Västmanland is one of Sweden's most interesting provinces, offering a multitude of different attractions, both historical and otherwise. Västmanland is a province of small distances. You only have to travel short distances in order to encounter extremely diverse landscapes and vegetation zones. The southernmost part of the province consists mainly of Mälaren's archipelago. Animals, plants and deciduous forests are characteristic of this part of the province. The middle of Västmanland consists mainly of very fertile agricultural farmland. The northern region is dominated by vast pine and fir forests.



The mining district of Bergslagen is a historically, culturally, and linguistically distinct region of Svealand in central Sweden. It covers several districts - Värmland, Närke, Västmanland, Dalarna, Uppland and Gästrikland. In the heart of Bergslagen is Skinskatteberg, beautifully situated between the two lakes Övre- and Nedre Vättern.

You will stay two nights in the charcoal-burner village in real charcoal-burner cottages. "Kolare" is the Swedish name for charcoal-burner and at the village the skills and traditions of the charcoal-burner are kept alive today.

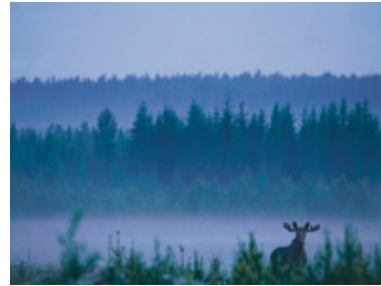
The charcoal pits or stacks were built vertically. Building the stack and then covering it with broken coal and earth required equal measures of skill and care. Once the stack had been lit, the charring process would take two to three weeks. There was always a danger that trapped gases would cause the stack to flare up suddenly, throwing off the broken coal and earth, with, at worst, the entire stack going up in flames.

Voids could also occur, causing the stack to collapse, so the charcoal-burner had to sit watch over the stack continuously, day and night, and be ready to intervene at any time. The charcoal produced from a stack would only be enough to keep the blast furnace fuelled for two days, yet it represented two or three weeks of work for the charcoal burner. Still, it was absolutely vital that an adequate supply of charcoal was maintained.

The Bergslagen area is rich in wildlife. The elk population outnumbers the human population, and the forests are also home to lynx, wolves and beavers.

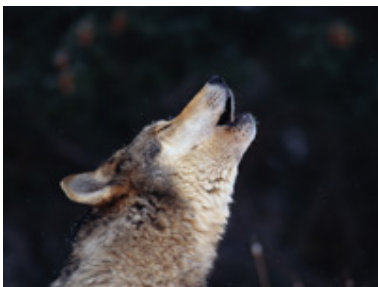
**DAY 1: Arrival day and Elk Safari.**

- Transfer from Stockholm-Västerås airport to charcoaler village (45 min).
- Introduction and welcome dinner in the forest.
- Optional sauna bathing and plunge in the lake.
- Guided elk safari tour on foot and by minivans until midnight. Excellent chances of seeing see a large number of elk and reasonable chances of spotting roe deer, red foxes, badgers and mountain hares.
- Return to charcoaler village for lodging in genuine rustic forest huts.



**DAY 2: Predator Adventure day**

- Breakfast in the forest.
- Visit to Mammal Research Station and its predator exhibition.
- Lunch outdoors.
- Guided Wolf Howling tour on foot and by minivan until midnight. Very good chances to hear howling wolves and to howl along with the family of wolves living in the area.
- Dinner right in the middle of the wolf territory.
- Return to charcoaler village for lodging in genuine rustic forest huts.



### DAY 3: Rest day

- Breakfast in the forest.
- Optional short hike (30 min) or transfer to Borntorpet hostel where you will be accommodated during the rest of your stay. Borntorpet offers self-catering but can arrange breakfast and meals for a reasonable price. Food can be bought from the nearby supermarket, 20 minutes' walk or 10 minutes' cycle ride away. Transfer by car can be arranged on request.
- Showering, sauna and day at leisure.
- Self-catered lunch and dinner.
- Accommodation at Borntorpet hostel.



### DAY 4: One day of leisure and optional guided tours

- See below for possible activities.
- Self-catered breakfast, lunch and dinner during these days. Breakfast at Borntorpet can be purchased if required for £X per person.

### DAY 5: Departure day

- Self-catered breakfast.
- Transfer to Stockholm Västerås airport at desired time. Optional shopping in Västerås or guided sightseeing in Västerås old town and cathedral. Optional guided tours



***Tours or self-guided excursions possible to add as optional extras:***

During your three days at Borntorpet, members of the group can choose to add one or more tours or self-guided excursions. Below are listed some one-day activities which may be of interest.

**Beaver Watching Tour by Canoe**

Time: 5 hours during the evening including dinner

Join beaver guide Mikael on a canoe trip with good chances to see beavers working at dusk. The silent river eventually leads you to a traditional forest farmhouse where you will be invited to enjoy a hearty dinner.

**Guided Bird Safari**

Time: 5-8 hours during the day including lunch.

Join birding guide Daniel on a fascinating tour to seek out some really spectacular birds, including the White-tailed Eagle and Common Crane.

**Guided Fly Fishing**

Time: 3 hours during the evening in groups of maximum 10 people per day. Just in front of Borntorpet there is a beautiful lake with a good number of rainbow trout. Experienced guides will teach you how to fly fish, gut your catch and grill it over an open fire.

**Self-guided Forest Hike**

Time: approx. 3-5 hours

Just behind Borntorpet in the deep forest of Bergslagen there is a hiking trail. This stretch offers easy to moderate hiking. You can choose to walk this individually or as a group. After 10 kilometres you reach a road where a public bus takes you back to Borntorpet. Bring your own packed lunch on this hike and eat by Lake Kolpen where there is a fireplace.

***Requirements***

Recommended minimum age 15 years. Participants should be able to walk in the forest without difficulties. We recommend you to bring sleeping bag, camera, binoculars, water bottle, and weather resistant clothing and footwear. (Sleeping bags can be rented for £X per stay).

*For an offer specifically tailored to the needs and wishes of your group, please contact Bob Carter on*

*01929 463774 or email [bob@naturetravels.co.uk](mailto:bob@naturetravels.co.uk)*