



Æbelø

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Photos: Jan Skriver and Viggo Lind

Birdlife

More than 170 bird species have been recorded on and around Æbelø. Since 2011, the White-tailed Eagle has bred successfully in a tree in the middle of the island. To ensure the eagles a peaceful nest, travel is allowed only on the trails marked on the card in the brochure. If you are lucky, you will also see a stock dove, a raven or perhaps a red-backed shrike.

Along the coastal cliffs on Æbelø you can't avoid noticing the many nesting sand martins every spring in May. The beautiful and rare songbird, the Eurasian Golden Oriole, breeds on Æbelø as well. It is the size of a blackbird, but looks like a tropical bird with its bright yellow coat. Often you won't see it, but you will hear its characteristic, loud song "or-i-ol" that inspired the name Oriole.

On the way to Æbelø and around the coast you can see a large number of water birds, the eiders being the most numerous. Along with sea gulls, terns and many other water birds they breed particularly on Dræet, Æbelø Holm and Ejlinge, and this is why you are not allowed access to the small islands during the breeding season (1st May-15th July, and at Drætte Holm to the west of Dræet until 1st September). The road on Æbelø Holm is open all year round.

Enjoy your trip to Æbelø!

The Foundation aims to give everyone in Denmark the opportunity to experience a rich and varied nature – today and in the future.

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DEUTSCH



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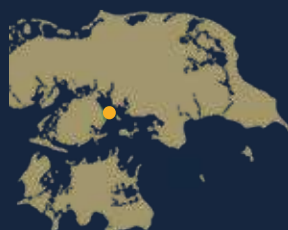
The rules of the conservation area

Æbelø state:

- Walking along the beach is permitted 24 hours a day, but spending the night on the island is not allowed without special permission. From 6 a.m. to sundown you can follow the trails marked on the map and walk on the uncultivated, unfenced areas.
- Dogs must be kept on leash.
- During the birds' breeding season (1st March-15th July), access to Dræet and the area outside of Æbelø Holm is not allowed. At Drætte Holm, the birds' breeding season is 1st March-1st September.
- Do not remove plants, fungi, animals and deadwood.
- Open fire is not allowed at Æbelø.

Information:

- You have to walk about 1.5 km through water. This means you have to pay attention to tides. Check the tide tables at Lindøhoved or at www.vistnordfyn.dk before setting off. Strong wind from the N.W. = high water level.
- Don't forget to bring food and drink for the trip.
- Transportation is not available.
- Remember to bring appropriate footwear for the walk through the water.
- Walking distance to Æbelø is approx. 4 km.
- A walk around Æbelø is approx. 7 km.
- Help protect the special nature and take your litter with you back.



- Ruins of a disembarkation point from the 1930s, when gravel from the island was used as building materials for the old Little Belt Bridge.
- A third of the forest was coniferous before the conservation – the conifers have now been removed, and the forest is now left to nature's own forces.
- The highly plastic clay causes blocks of cliff to slide down into the sea, creating large stairs. The beeches follow along and continue to grow.
- The island's harbour from 1930 to the 1960's when there were a lot of people on the island.
- Part of the forest was protected for conservation in 1924. Dead, fallen trees are left on the ground.
- A large European crab apple tree (Malus sylvestris) that along with other wild apple trees has given the island its name (Apple Island). In King Valdemar II's Census Book from the 13th century, the island was called Æblaø, later Ablø and Ebløe.
- Geologically famous cliff with beautiful folded dark and bright layers of Æbelø Clay.
- The oldest parts of Æbeløgaard were built about 1680.
- The island's light tower was built in 1883 out of Bornholm granite and is 18 m tall.



Address for navigator
Drive towards Lindøhoved
60, 5400 Bogense and continue to carpark.



White-tailed Eagle



Cormorant



Avocet



The common seal can be seen on the islets around Æbelø



Welcome to Æbelø

Æbelø is an island in the Kattegat, about 4 km off the north coast of Funen. The island and the shallow waters around it are protected, but open to the public (with restrictions). A 1.5 km long marked tide road leads from Lindøhoved to Æbelø Holm. Here, you can walk to the island by foot – usually, the water will be less than 30 cm high in the period of 3 hours before and after low tide.

The Nature of Æbelø

Æbelø is a nature sanctuary for animals and native plants. Most of the forest on Æbelø is completely undisturbed, and fallen trees are left for the benefit of fungi and small animals. There are two species of linden tree, old beeches, oak forests with trees gnarled by the ceaseless onshore wind, and of course the wild apple trees that have given the island the name Æbelø – which means Apple Island.



You can find many birds and insects on Æbelø which are rare to find elsewhere in Denmark. The varied nature with forests, wetlands and bright, open, uncultivated areas ensures good habitats for numerous species that have difficulty surviving in the cultural landscape. Peace and the forces of nature are allowed to reign on Æbelø, surrounded by the Kattegat waves and the fresh sea air.

An Old Landscape

In the cliff at the vantage point at the north eastern corner of Æbelø you can see folded layers of dark grey Æbelø clay that were formed 55-60 million years ago. The clay has a high content of the mineral smectite which can absorb large amounts of water, and this frequently causes large masses of clay to slide into the sea.

Æbelø emerged from the Kattegat 8,000-9,000 years ago when the Stone Age Sea withdrew for the last time. Waves gnawed stone, gravel and clay away from the north side of the island and deposited it in the shelter of the island's south side, thereby creating Brådet as well as the islet Æbelø Holm.

In the 1930's, there was a gravel pit along the west side of the island. The gravel was used as building material to build the old Little Belt Bridge. You can still see the ruins of the old port at the southwest beach of the island. An

impressive exhibit of rocks from Æbelø can be seen at the North Funen Museum in Bogense.

Firewood, Farming and Hunting

Since the Early Middle Ages, people would gather their firewood, go hunting or fishing or let their livestock graze on the island. In 1623, the citizens of Bogense bought Æbelø and began clearing the forest. In the middle of the 17th century, the extent of farming on the island had increased and the island became a permanent residence for a few families. Until World War II, there were about 50 people living on Æbelø, and the island had its own school. In the 1960's, many residents left the island. Most of the buildings were demolished, but still left is the old farmhouse Æbelø-gaard and the 18 metre tall granite light house from 1883 at the northwest tip of the island.



Rose Chafer

The Nature Restoration

In 1995, the Aage V. Jensen Naturfond bought Æbelø along with Æbelø Holm, Dræet and later parts of Ejlinge in order to give the islands back to nature. Since then, the foundation has implemented a nature restoration focused on recreating the lost habitat for animals and plants. The planted coniferous forest (30 ha) has been removed, and many kilometres of game fence has been taken down, letting the animals of Æbelø move freely. Ditches have been filled in to make the former forest marshes become wetlands again, and waterholes have been cleaned up to improve the habitats of aquatic insects and amphibians.



Mouflon



Eurasian Golden Oriole

Æbelø, Æbelø Holm, Dræet and the sea area around the island were designated a protected area in 1998 to protect and reconstruct the valuable nature and landscape. Already in 1924, part of the oak wood in the northern part of the island was protected for conservation. It was the last place in Denmark where the largest beetle in Europe, the stag beetle, could be found. It disappeared from Æbelø in the 1950s.

Plants and Fungi

After a century of intensive game management, cultivation of game feed on the tidal meadows and a very high grazing intensity, it is now the aim to give many of the rare plants of Æbelø a chance to return. In the forest, you can find the rare parasitic plant the Common Toothwort as well as a fair number of orchids, such as the Early Purple Orchid and the European Com-

mon Twayblade, and in the southern part of the island you can see the prickly sea holly. There are more than 400 known species of fungi, lichen and moss on Æbelø. In particular, the wood decaying fungi are expected to get much better conditions in the coming years with the rising amount of dead wood on the forest floor.

Large and Small Animals

Grazing deer and mouflon (wild sheep) keep the plains open to the benefit of many plants and butterflies. You can find Europe's northernmost population of the 15 mm large round-mouthed snail (*Pomatias elegans*). In the forest lake and the small water holes in the forest you can see a myriad of smooth newts.

There are about 1,000 species of beetle on the island, corresponding to one fourth of all species of beetle found in Denmark. One of the most eye-catching beetles is the 20 mm long, shiny and humming rose chafer. Its numbers are in decline in Denmark, but not on Æbelø, where there are numerous adult beetles that often can be seen on umbel flowers and elderflowers, glistening like jewels in the summer sun. At the turn of the millennium, 15 beetle species on Æbelø were included on the Red List of rare and endangered species in Denmark.



Fallow Deer