

The bird cliff

The Godthaabsfiord in West Greenland may be seen as a huge organism that provides the framework for a rich fauna and flora.

The pulse of the organism is created by the tide. The difference between the high and the low tide is up to five meters. The organism becomes distended and the water is pressed out again twice a day, year round. About ten million litres of sea water is pressed by the tides in and out of the fiord.

During the winter months more than 15,000 eiders are foraging near the mouth of the fiord, and most of the year the whales are foraging eagerly inside the fiord.

The coast along the fiord is varied. Many places steep cliffs rises directly from the sea. Elsewhere, small isolated beaches with sand and gravel are formed. Here you can walk around at low tide and watch what sea has left behind: Large and small crustaceans, rocks with seaweed and algae. Although the cold water is not inviting you to dip your toes, it's a good place to a lot of small creeping things. The water is crystal clear, and off the coast the deep seawater gets the most

beautiful blue colour.

The continues waves breaking against the shore are sending cascades of seawater over the rocks. Here we also find habitats where the richness and the complexity of species are hard to imagine: Algae, insects, barnacles and other crustaceans abound on the rocks. A delightful place for the gulls and the sandpipers, when they are foraging along the coastline of the fiord.

In the northernmost part of The Godthaabsfiord the largest bird cliff Innajuaattoq rises. The south side of the mountain rises almost vertically into the sky. The mountain reaches the impressive 1,206 meters vertically above sea level.

This bird cliff is during the summer months home to a large colony of breeding seabirds. A new census shows that the bird cliff is home to 1,535 Iceland gulls. In addition, the bird cliff is home to hundreds of kittiwakes, guillemots and cormorants.

The Iceland gulls flight high above the cliff all along cawing to mark their presence until they again rest on the steep cliff.



The bird cliff Innajattoq, The Godthaabsfiord, June 2013