

KAPISILLIT – *THE Mountains*



by
Keld Jensen

Kapisillit – The Mountains

A hike from Kapisillit into the wilderness is a journey into a fantastic world. Here, we meet the greatness of the Greenlandic nature and here we can experience the silence.

Some areas in the wilderness may be difficult to access, and it is necessary to bring with you an emergency phone and signal flares. The area is normally free of large predators, but a couple of times during the past years, the local had to kill polar bears that roamed around in the neighbourhood of the settlement. The polar bears were assessed to be a danger to the inhabitants and to the tourists in the surrounding wilderness.

In August the extreme amounts of mosquitoes and other insects begin to thin away. This is a good time for hiking in the valley of Kapisilik. The vegetation gets wonderful colours after the first night frost. August and September are cold, and we need professional camp equipment.

The mountains seem barren and the vegetation is limited to low shrubs. Everywhere there are crowberries with the characteristically black berries. The low vegetation and the stunning clarity of the dry air allow us to see the mountain slopes for miles away. The slopes stand clear with their brown and reddish hues of autumn colours.

In the valley and in surrounding mountains, there are plenty of reindeers. The reindeers live along the coasts of West Greenland. There are different populations from north to south, because the natural barriers in the form of ice sheet, fjords and steep mountains prevent the exchange between the individual populations.

The Royal Greenlandic Trading Company introduced domesticated reindeers from Lapland in the area of Kapisillit. Today, thousands of the direct descendants of these animals live in the wilderness. The hikers constantly are meeting small herds of reindeers in the valley and in the mountains. The reindeer fur seems to be a good camouflage, and often we get close to the animals before we spot them.

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At the end of September, the days grow short in these parts of the far north. The nights are cold, and it quickly becomes necessary to find into the tent and inside the warmth of the sleeping bag.

Nevertheless it is often necessary to leave the tent and go outside in the dark. Wooov! We meet a theatre of light that cannot be experienced in many other places in the world.

There is no pollution from human light and the dark night sky is illuminated by countless stars. The galaxy planetary nebula is shining clear and the northern lights waves its way across the sky. Under this wonderful sky, I feel infinitely small as a human being.



Our tent in the middle of the wilderness, September 2001



The reindeer on the migration through the mountains, September 2001



A reindeer calf alone in the fell field, August 2004



The wheatear on his observation post, August 2004



Reindeer in front of thickets of willow, August 2004



A reindeer foraging by the river, August 2004



The reindeer has catch sight of the photographer, September 2001



*The observations of the hike
are noted down, September 2001*



*Black berries in September,
September 2001*



Reindeers in the mountains, September 2001



Memorial Cross in the middle of the wilderness, August 2004



Reindeers in the landscape of autumn, September 2001



Hiking in the high mountains, September 2001



Dancing mosquitoes in the last rays of the sun, August 2004



Blue moon rising over the valley of the river Kapisillik, September 2004

Thumbnails

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COLOPHON

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