

## ULVSHALE

The peninsula of Ulvshale is unique, made of flint from the white cliffs of Møn, transported here by currents and waves. This special landscape means an abundance of various experiences. We will recommend only some of the possibilities of this route leading you through different types of nature. A major area is quite flat, but that is of minor importance to the experiences.

You may start your walking tour in the forest of Ulvshale or at the beach, the meadow or the heath. You can experience a lot of things all over the place. If you follow the indicated route, you will pass through some of the key types of nature.

### 1 THE FOREST OF ULVSHALE

The forest of Ulvshale is quite special. It is light and open. You cannot find a forest of a similar kind in all Denmark. This is mainly due to two circumstances.

Firstly the forest grows in stony soil – flint stone soil. The peninsula of Ulvshale is made of flint stone from the white cliffs of Møn. When the cliffs erode, the chalk disappears into the sea, whereas the heavy flint stones are transported by the currents and the waves northward and southward and then westbound, where they have built the peninsula of Ulvshale and the point of Hårbølle. The flint at Ulvshale has been deposited in large banks – beach ridges. The earliest beach ridges

are found near Hegnede Bakke, the youngest at the northern side of Ulvshale. They give the forest floor a rolling look with hollows filled with water between the ridges.

In brief: where the forest of Ulvshale is today there once was the sea. Secondly the looks of the forest of Ulvshale reveals that it was formerly used for grazing. It is called a light-open grazing forest. In the 16-1700s there were many oak trees in the forest. In 1769 the king sold the forest to the citizens of Stege. It became a corporation forest for the citizens of Stege to be used according to certain rules. So many trees were felled that the forest was quite overcut, and so many cattle were driven to grass that the forest was quite gnawed down. Pigs, too, were pastured in the forest;

they were to eat the fruits of the beeches and oaks (beech nut and acorn), which was not quite so harmful to the forest. All the same the forest of Ulvshale was so gnawed down that with the forest protection law, passed with the Forestry Act of 1805, it was in such a poor condition that it was declared a non-forest. The result was that the grazing continued until 1840 – 1860 when the forest was bought and afforested.

The forest of Ulvshale contains an abundance of different tree species, including bushes. The forest is run as a natural forest, which means that on the whole it is left alone. If a tree falls, it is left to rot, and rotting trees attract a lot of insects that feed on the tree. The insects attract the birds, and so we have a forest filled with many species of both plants and animals. And fungi: in the autumn the forest of Ulvshale can be a veritable paradise for collectors of mushrooms.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIVITIES:

Find the beach ridges in the forest and try to mark a couple of them on a map.  
Become acquainted with different trees by comparing their leaves with the pictures in a book of trees.  
Catch small animals by removing the bark of fallen trees, lifting broken-off branches or stones etc.

### 2 THE BEACH OF ULVSHALE

The beach of Ulvshale is one of many fine bathing beaches on Møn. Here you can relax, bask in the sun, go swimming – and take a long walk along the beach. If the wind has been easterly, you may find amber. Other washed-up things may be interesting to look at: eelgrass, fine thready algae, various sea shells and plastic things of modern consumption.

In the dune and dike land behind there are good possibilities of seeing different plants and their adaptation to life in the rough surroundings. The plants are in constant danger of being washed out or blown away, being covered with sand or just flood-

ded, as the coastline – the line between land and sea – is constantly changing. Moreover the plants have to be able to survive in the desert-like hinterland.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIVITIES:

Try to find different adaptations with the plants, e.g. thick skin, hair, a layer of wax on their leaves, seeds filled with air that can float away and sprout somewhere else.  
Look at the many different insects and other small animals that live at the beach.

### 3 WEEKEND COTTAGES AT ULVSHALE

At Ulvshale there is quite a display of “summer houses throughout the time”. Many elements make Ulvshale a sought-after holiday resort. For one thing Ulvshale is a lovely natural area with a good bathing beach, an interesting forest, heath and meadow for country walks. In the second place the soil at Ulvshale is not particularly good for farming, which has meant the lack of interest from the farmers here.

A number of summer houses at the Sandvejen were built between 1918 and 1921. They stand in line along the edge of the forest and are quite uniform as for materials, shapes and colours. Often they are black with a high rise of the roof, and a balcony. At the Mågenakken there is a small group of summer houses outside the forest and quite close to the coast. The houses were built in the 1939s and 1940s.

On the other side of the Ulvshalevej the weekend cottages stand inside the forest between birches and pines. The houses look different from each other. Some of the houses from the 1970s and 1980s are built of bricks and are more like single-family houses.

At Ulvshale there are also former summer boarding houses, e.g. Peters Hal and Kongens Ø. These houses together with the oldest summer houses form part of the sanitary measures that arose in Europe at the beginning of the 1900s, intensified especially in the 1930s. The body, light, and fresh air were of great importance.



Length of the route: about 8 km



**4 THE SEAWEED DIKE**

To avoid floods it has been common practice in Denmark to build dikes out of seaweed. It was obvious to use the washed-up banks of seaweed, as they were to be moved but a few metres further inland to be built up as dikes. In the first half of the 1700s a large number of seaweed dikes were built all over the country – and on Møn, too.

After 1800 seaweed dikes were no longer built as common protection against floods, but more as protection against the intrusion of unattached cattle into the forest. The seaweed dike along the northern side of the forest of Ulvshale is one of these dikes, built 150-200 years ago to keep out the salt meadow cattle north of the forest.

The Tourist Agency of Møn has made a special leaflet on the seaweed dikes.

**5 THE HERDSMAN'S LODGE**

The herdsman's lodge at the dike was the house of the man who watched the cattle at the salt meadows north of the forest. These meadows belonged to the farmers of Udby – a village outside Stege. As the forest of Ulvshale belonged to the citizens of Stege, the scene was set for conflicting interests.

**6 SKANSEN**

Skansen, the fieldwork to the north, was built at the beginning of the 1800s to protect against the English. The Skansen was manned with soldiers keeping an eye on possible Englishmen who might come from the north. The fieldwork never came into use.

**7 FLINT INDUSTRY ON ULVSHALE**

As mentioned in the section concerning the forest of Ulvshale, the entire peninsula of Ulvshale is built of flint coming from the white cliffs of Møn. The flint stones were thrown up upon the beach in large banks – beach ridges. If you take a walk in the forest of Ulvshale, you can easily find the ridges, especially if you go across the peninsula: up and down, up and down it goes.

First the sea was here, later the beach, and now the forest.

Once the flint was exploited. At the top of Ulvshale there was a flintworks. The flint was dug all over the peninsula and was transported to the works on tipping wagons, and here it was sorted and shipped to all parts of the world. The round flint stones (the flint nodules) were used for crushing the chalk in the production of cement. Some of the flint was used for road material, and some was used for the production of sandpaper.

The digging for flint stopped in 1974, but at Ulvshale you can still find lots of traces from that time: many oblong seas are holes from the former flint digging. Here and there you'll find wheel tracks from the tipping wagons, the old flint works and the remains of the storage facilities and the port of disembarkation.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIVITIES:**

*Find some of the traces in the landscape showing that flint was once dug on Ulvshale.*

**8 JUNIPER LAND**

Follow the path among the large junipers. Quite an experience. When you re-enter the forest you can see the many junipers that do not thrive on this soil. The juniper takes much light and is therefore easily shadowed away by other trees. The many dying junipers at the northern part of the forest show that this part of the Ulvshale forest originally consisted of junipers.

**9 ULVSHALEGÅRD**

Ulvshalegård was built as an attempt to cultivate or to keep sheep at some of the very poor areas. Today the farm exclusively serves as habitation, and the stable and the barn have become a natural centre.

**10 THE HEATH OF ULVSHALE**

As for many other natural areas the meadows and the heath of Ulvshale are under natural protection.

Through different measures a certain "natural condition" is being kept. If nothing is done, the trees will spread quickly, and the area will end up as a forest. The same goes generally for most Denmark. If the farmers gave up farming, all cultivated areas would end up as forests after a few years.

Why keep the natural areas when it is that difficult? Why not let them become overgrown if that is what nature really "wants"? Because we want to keep the landscape in a certain condition, e.g. the way it looked about 100 years ago when the farmers still used it for grazing the cattle, for hay harvest and for cutting the wood. Natural centres are mainly meant to copy processes of the past precisely to keep the landscape in the condition of former times: the cattle are grazing, trees are felled, bushes are cut, grass is cut, heather is burned. All this to maintain a former condition and at the same time to secure the survival of a large number of animals and plants. The areas have an impressive wealth of species.

The meadows and the heath of Ulvshale are interesting areas. On the heath there is a number of small lakes – holes from the digging of flint on Ulvshale. These lakes contain an abundance of animal life.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIVITIES:**

*Find examples of preservation on the heath of Ulvshale.*

*Bring a net and a bucket, and catch small animals in the water holes on the heath.*

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