



### About the Author

Paddy Dillon is a prolific walker and guidebook writer, with over 90 guidebooks to his name and contributions to 40 other titles. He has written for several outdoor magazines and other publications, and has appeared on radio and television.

Paddy uses a tablet computer to write as he walks. His descriptions are therefore precise, having been written at the

very point at which the reader uses them. He is an indefatigable long-distance walker who has walked all of Britain's National Trails and several major European trails. He has also walked in Nepal, Tibet, Korea and the Rocky Mountains of Canada and the US. Paddy is a member of the Outdoor Writers and Photographers Guild and is President of the Backpackers Club.

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*Walking on La Palma*  
*Walking on Madeira*  
*Walking on Malta*  
*Walking on Tenerife*

## TREKKING IN GREENLAND

### THE ARCTIC CIRCLE TRAIL

by Paddy Dillon

**CICERONE**

JUNIPER HOUSE, MURLEY MOSS,  
OXENHOLME ROAD, KENDAL, CUMBRIA LA9 7RL  
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*Front cover:* Trekkers take a break before descending to Kangerluatsiarsuaq (Day 4)

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### Warning

Walking across remote Arctic tundra can be a dangerous activity carrying a risk of personal injury or death. It should be undertaken only by those with a full understanding of the risks, and with the training and experience to evaluate them. While every care and effort has been taken in the preparation of this guide, the user should be aware that weather conditions and the level of water in rivers can be highly variable and can change quickly, materially affecting the seriousness of this trek. Therefore, except for any liability which cannot be excluded by law, they cannot accept responsibility for any loss, injury or inconvenience sustained by any person using this book.

For mountain/wilderness rescue in Greenland, the first point of contact is the police. Ring Sisimiut, 70 13 22, or 70 14 48 in the evenings; or Kangerlussuaq, tel 70 13 24, or 70 14 48 in the evenings.

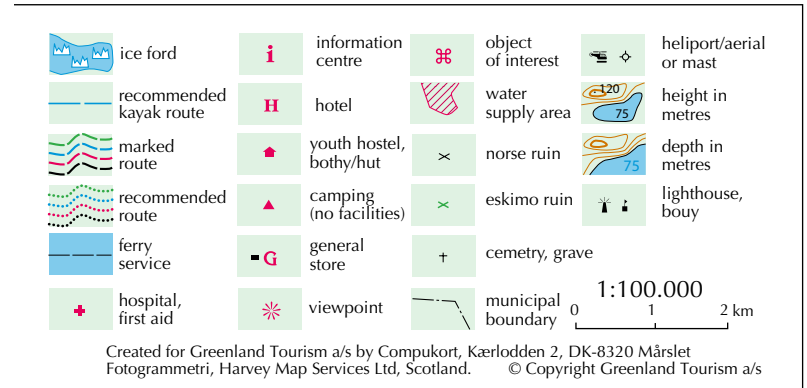
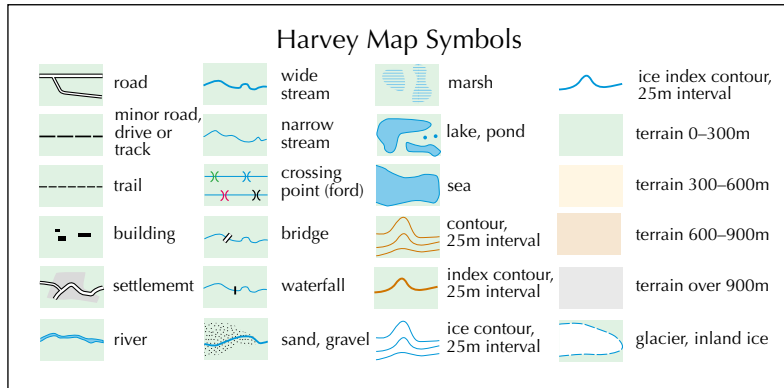
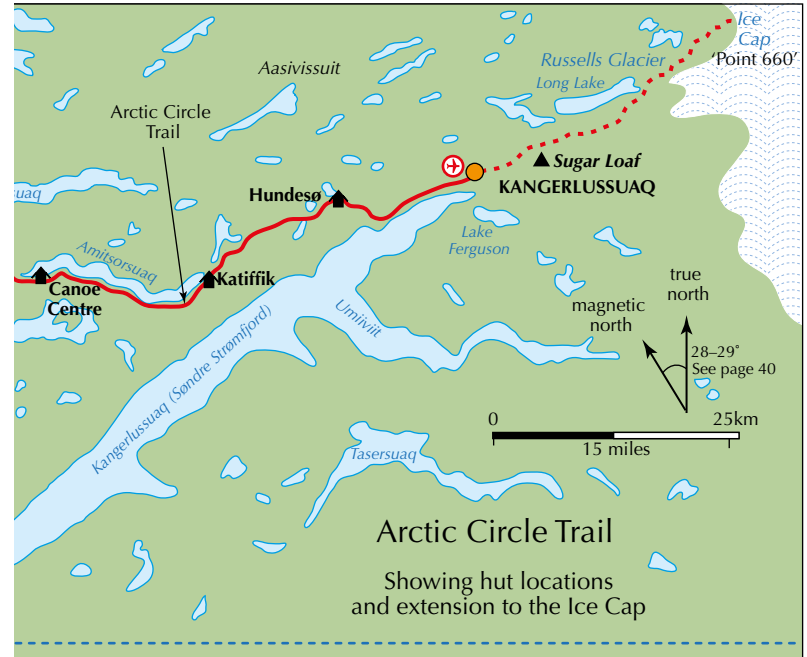
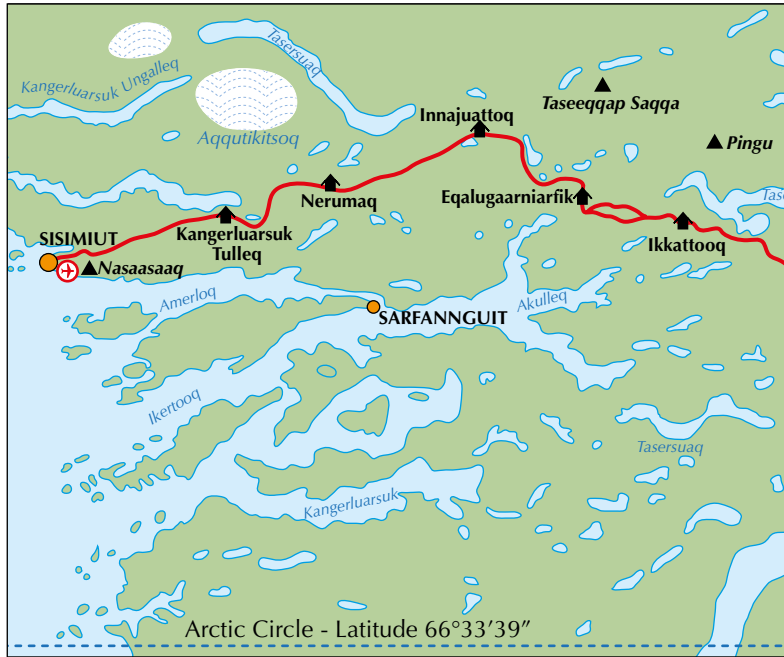
#### Route symbols used on Harvey map extracts

	route		alternative start point
	variant route		alternative finish point
	start point		direction of walk
	finish point		
	start/finish point		

For Harvey symbols see separate key.

## Polar view of Greenland





Crossing the river at the start of Day 7



## INTRODUCTION

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*The scenery along the Arctic Circle Trail looks like an uninhabited version of the Scottish Highlands*

Greenland is the largest island on Earth, excluding the continental landmasses, with an area of 2,175,600km<sup>2</sup> (840,000 square miles). Greenland is also one of the world's most inhospitable and sparsely populated places, with an ice cap occupying 85 per cent of the landmass, leaving only a narrow coastal strip ice-free during the summer. The bulk of Greenland lies north of the Arctic Circle – the line of latitude 66° 33' 39". In high summer this is the 'Land of the Midnight Sun', but in the deepest midwinter there is no sun at all, just the eerie flickering of the northern lights.

Greenland is a harsh environment, where every type of life has

had to adapt to survive the long and bitterly cold winter. It is also a fascinating place to explore, especially on foot in remote places, and in the summer months it can be surprisingly easy. Geographically, Greenland is part of the North American continent, but politically it is tied to Denmark and Europe. The country was granted home rule as recently as 21 June 2009.

The Arctic Circle Trail is a splendid trekking route that fits neatly into one of the largest ice-free areas of West Greenland, lying 40–50km (25–30 miles) north of the Arctic Circle. The trail runs 165km (103 miles) between Kangerlussuaq and Sisimiut,

and the total ascent/descent along the route is surprisingly low, at 4105m (13,465ft). Walkers usually take 7–10 days to complete the route.

It is estimated that around 1300 people per year walk the trail, maybe many more, arriving from all parts of the world. They are usually experienced backpackers, but this is often their first experience of walking in Greenland. Access to the trail is easy, and the walk can commence immediately from the international airport at Kangerlussuaq. Although Greenland has the reputation of being an expensive place to travel, the Arctic Circle Trail is completely free of charge. The trail is equipped with a series of basic huts, for which there is no charge, and it costs nothing to pitch a tent in the wilds. At one point there is the option of paddling a canoe along a lake – again free of charge. Some walkers even fish or gather berries along the trail to supplement their rations!

Well-prepared walkers, who take care to pack lightweight and efficient gear, will doubtless rank the Arctic Circle Trail as one of the classic walks of the world. There is an incredible sense of open space from start to finish, and, if blessed with sunny and stable weather, few walkers would wish to be anywhere else. It is essentially a summer route, and this guidebook describes the trail during the brief summer months (June to September), when the tundra is vibrant with new life. The dark Arctic winter, with its

sub-zero temperatures, is of course a completely different experience!

This guidebook describes the trail as it existed up until 2018. Please note that there is a plan to convert part of the trail into a dirt road, and if this plan ever comes to fruition, expect to find quarries, bulldozers and other intrusive works. This plan might never come to pass, but it might also be your last chance to enjoy this remarkable trail.

### GEOLOGY

Greenland is part of the Laurentian Shield. This is a vast area of ancient rock, among the oldest exposed rock in the world, stretching across much of North America. Whatever its original structure, it has been altered beyond recognition during the course of its existence as it was crushed under incredible pressures, causing it to melt and re-crystallise over and over again. Vast areas of rock were torn apart, crumpled together and intruded by a variety of igneous rocks and mineral veins. Unravelling the long and complex history of Greenland's geology is time-consuming, but geological study is made much simpler because so much of the bedrock is buried out of sight (and hence out of mind) beneath the ice cap, or beneath glacial drift and blanket bog.

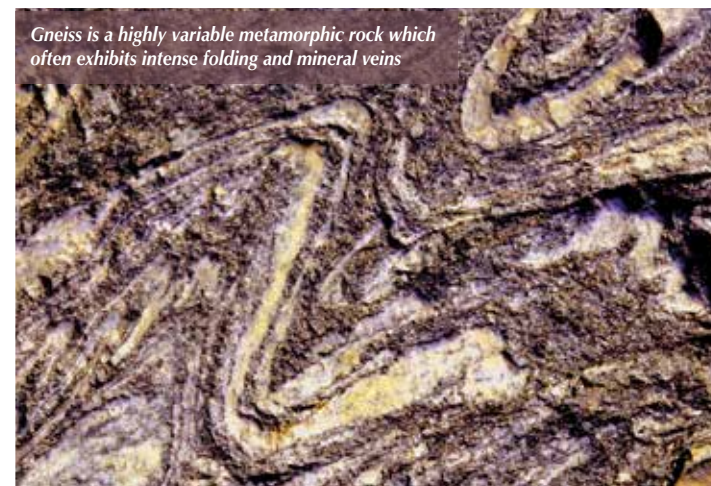
In the region of the Arctic Circle Trail the bedrock is broadly described as being Palaeoprotozoic (2500 to 1600 million years old) and Archaean (as much as 3800 million years old).

During that distant epoch the Earth's atmosphere was high in methane and ammonia. The earliest life forms were stromatolites, anaerobic cyanobacteria which very slowly enriched the oxygen content of the air, making it possible for more complex life forms to evolve.

The rocks around Kangerlussuaq are part of the Ikertoq Complex, formed of Archaean gneiss. This metamorphic rock has been substantially altered over time. It contains a large number of 'kimberlite' and 'lamproite' dykes, roughly trending north-west to south-east. While geologists might argue about precise definitions, these dykes are attracting the attention of diamond prospectors. Don't expect anyone to lead you to any diamonds, though there are tours to Garnet Mountain, where you can chip for lesser gemstones.

The Archaean gneiss has been thrust northwards, and the Arctic Circle Trail passes through the thrust zone at its halfway stage, where the geology becomes even more complex, passing a formation described as a 'syntectonic granite suite'. Towards the end of the trail around Sisimiut, the bedrock is Palaeoprotozoic, a mere 1900 million years old. These rocks belong to the Isortoq Complex, and are mainly granitic and metamorphic charnockite.

Billions of years of Greenland's geological history are completely missing from the Arctic Circle Trail, but are represented in other parts of the country. Over that expanse of time, Greenland was part of the super-continent of Pangaea. As such, the country's landmass has been situated at the



*Gneiss is a highly variable metamorphic rock which often exhibits intense folding and mineral veins*

Equator, submerged beneath the sea, risen from the sea and been trodden by dinosaurs. Around 100 million years ago Greenland parted company with Europe and drifted westwards as part of the North American continent. Only in relatively recent geological time has Greenland become the ice-bound Arctic island seen today.

Fossiliferous rocks are completely absent along the Arctic Circle Trail. However, shortly after leaving Kangerlussuaq, the route climbs above a coastal site called Fossilsletten, where relatively recent post-glacial fossilised marine shells are contained in thick beds of sand and clay. In some low-lying valleys along the trail, similar marine deposits are found, dating only from the end of the Ice Age.

A comprehensive and colourful book, full of useful and interesting

information, available in English, but too heavy to carry on the trail, is the Geological History of Greenland, by Niels Henriksen, published by the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS).

### THE ICE CAP

Around 85 per cent of Greenland is still in the grip of the Ice Age, covered by a vast ice cap (Danish – inlandsisen) that reaches a maximum thickness of about 3km (2 miles) in the middle of the country. In some places the ice reaches the sea, where it ‘calves’ icebergs into the water. In other places the ice terminates more than 200km (125 miles) from the sea, leaving a strip of land that is free of snow and ice throughout the summer. The Arctic Circle Trail exploits one of the widest of these ice-free

regions, which enjoys some of the country’s best weather.

Ice is apparently solid and brittle, but under stress it can bend, becoming plastic, with the ability to melt and re-freeze almost imperceptibly. This allows the entire ice sheet to ‘flow’ inexorably downwards and outwards from the centre of Greenland towards the edges. The fastest rate of ‘flow’ is around 20m (65ft) per day, but at the same time, the edges of the ice sheet are melting. This melting causes an apparent ‘retreat’ during the summer, followed by an apparent ‘advance’ during the winter. In fact, the ice is advancing all the time, but with climate change it is melting back at a far greater rate than ever recorded before.

For those undertaking the Arctic Trail, the easiest way to visit the ice cap is from Kangerlussuaq, where four-wheel drive vehicles follow a dirt road north-east past Russells Glacier to a place known as ‘Point 660’. Visitors can stroll around on the edge of the ice cap, and the journey there and back can be accomplished in an afternoon. No other part of Greenland’s ice cap is so easily accessible, so make the most of it while in the area. Beware of crumbling rubble moraine at the edge of the ice, and keep away from torrential, murky glacial rivers. Not only do these rivers flow fast and furiously, but the sand and mud-banks near them are notoriously unstable.

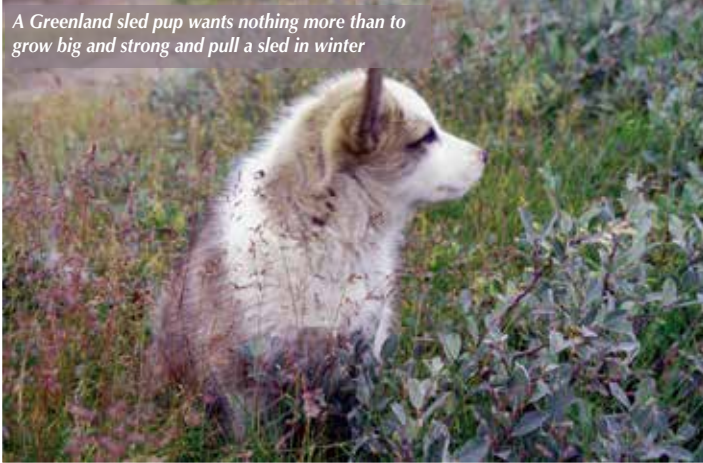
It’s worth remembering that the fringes of Greenland aren’t as ice-free as they might appear. If you were to dig deep into the thick beds of mud, sand and gravel in some places, you would discover frozen ground and even big chunks of stagnant ice. This permanently frozen ground is called ‘permafrost’, and like the ice cap and glaciers, it is gradually melting. When big chunks of ice melt inside thick layers of sediment the ground caves in, forming deep water-filled holes called ‘pingos’. Countless thousands of little pools dotted around the edges of Greenland were formed in this manner.

The underlying geology of the Arctic Circle Trail, and its recent scouring by glaciers, has created in a rather bleak landscape. Nearby mountains peak between 1000m and 1500m (3280ft and 4920ft), while the valleys between them are seldom higher than 300m (985ft), and often much less. The Arctic Circle Trail only rarely reaches an altitude of 450m (1475ft). There is abundant bare rock, but also thick deposits of gravel, sand and mud. Some places are well vegetated, while in others vegetation is sparse. In permanently wet areas the vegetation cannot decay completely, and forms thick layers of peat that become blanket bog. Overall, the scenery is reminiscent of how the Scottish Highlands must have looked before anyone lived there!



*The savage coast of eastern Greenland, where glaciers push their way straight into the ocean*

A Greenland sled pup wants nothing more than to grow big and strong and pull a sled in winter



#### WILDLIFE

A summer trek along the Arctic Circle Trail reveals abundant wildlife, despite the species count being low. It could be described as 'big game' country, with reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*) and musk ox (*Ovibus moschatus*) likely to be seen. Greenlanders, unlike their distant cousins the Sami of Finland, hunt reindeer, rather than herd them. Reindeer antlers and bones are seen on a daily basis on the trail. Juvenile reindeer are inquisitive and may approach walkers, while adults are quick to flee. Stocky, shaggy musk ox, related to sheep and goats, were hunted almost to the point of extinction, but the area around Kangerlussuaq was restocked in the 1960s with 27 calves, and their numbers are now around 8000 strong. Musk ox are only rarely seen on the trail. By all means admire them, but give them

wide berth. They are unpredictable, especially in family groups, and might charge anyone approaching them.

Mighty polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) shouldn't be seen, as there is no reason for them to be in the area, but there have been a couple of recent unexpected sightings near Kangerlussuaq. Humble lemmings (*Discrostonyx torquatus*) aren't present, as the Arctic Circle Trail isn't part of their range. Two animals that do occasionally make an appearance are the arctic hare (*Lepus arcticus*) and arctic fox (*Alopex lagopus*). The hare is white, as are some of the foxes, but other foxes are a dark colour, referred to as 'blue'.

Although not 'wild', Greenland sled dogs are not exactly 'tame' either. Forbidden to live in the towns, sled dogs are generally tethered en masse

somewhere out of earshot. Only a few of these dogs live at Kangerlussuaq, though more are brought into the area in winter. At Sisimiut, walkers pass many sled dogs as they walk to and from town, and the former campsite is now overrun by them. When one dog starts howling, they all start howling like wolves!

Land mammals are few in number, but a trip to sea from Sisimiut could reveal a variety of whales, seals and possibly even a walrus. The sea contains a number of fish species, including cod, halibut, redfish and wolf fish. It is worth visiting the Qimatulivik shop in Sisimiut to inspect the 'catch of the day'. Inland, clear lakes and rivers contain arctic char and salmon, which some walkers attempt to catch to supplement their food rations. (Note that a fishing licence is required, obtainable from the police, although in practice

they may tell you not to bother applying!) Notable birds include a variety of small species that dart, flutter and twitter among the Arctic scrub. Look out for the northern wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*), common redpoll (*Acanthis flammea*) and snow bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*). The well-camouflaged ptarmigan (*Lagopus mutus*) will tolerate a close approach. They are rather like grouse in size and habit. Black ravens (*Corvus corax*) are spotted on a daily basis, while birds of prey include the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) and gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*). Gyrfalcon nests near Kangerlussuaq have been used almost every summer for 2500 years! With luck, a white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) might be seen.

The abundant lakes support ducks, geese, waders and wildfowl. The largest lakes are home to the red-throated loon (*Gavia stellata*),



Reindeer can be seen almost every day along the Arctic Circle Trail, and will tolerate a close approach



which often laughs at passing walkers and canoeists, or sometimes pipes a lament to their suffering! Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*) and mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) are commonly seen, along with a variety of gulls near the coast. Sometimes, a cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) will wing its way inland.

Insect life is abundant in high summer, but while butterflies may delight the eye, nothing causes more misery than the mosquitoes and biting flies. From mid-June throughout July they can be a plague, but their numbers are vastly depleted towards the end of August, and by September they may be absent altogether. Consider using insect repellent and head nets in June and July, and hope that the first frosts decimate the mosquitoes soon afterwards.

There is little available in English covering Greenland's wildlife apart from *A Nature and Wildlife Guide to Greenland* by Benny Génsbøl, published by Gyldendal. The pictures in some books may prove helpful. Try *Grønlands Dyr og Planter*, by Benny Génsbøl and Carl Christian Tofte, published by Gads Forlag.

#### PLANTS AND FLOWERS

Four main plant species occur in varying densities from one end of the Arctic Circle Trail to the other, so it is worth being able to identify them at the earliest opportunity, especially those with food value! Greenland is

often said to be treeless, but in fact it is covered in trees – vast forests of miniature trees. The northern willow (*Salix glauca*) is often a creeping shrub, but can grow to 2–3m (6–10ft) in sheltered locations, and is one of the most common plants in Greenland. The dwarf birch (*Betula nana*) is much smaller, often creeping, but occasionally erect in sheltered locations, where it grows knee-high. At ground level are two berry-bearing shrubs, the arctic blueberry (*Vaccinium uliginosum*) and crowberry (*Empetrum hermaphroditum*). Both are edible, but while most visiting walkers prefer the sweet blueberry, native Inuit prefer the slightly bitter crowberry.

Two other berry-bearing plants are often confused, the rock cranberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) and common bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), both of which are red. An unmistakable heath plant is the narrow-leaved Labrador tea (*Ledum palustre*), which has a sweet fragrance when crushed and makes a pleasant herbal drink. There are several species of cotton grass, including five Greenlandic species, of which the most common is the arctic cotton grass (*Eriophorum scheuchzeri*). Cotton grasses mark boggy ground, and when they are particularly dense they look like snow. Delicate horsetails (*Equisetum arvense*) are often salted throughout the heath and grow particularly thick on the disturbed ground beside roads. Grasses, sedges and rushes are abundant, while some species, such as



tall, tough-stalked lyme grass (*Elymus mollis*), favour dry, sandy, desert-like conditions.

Mosses and lichens are important components of the Arctic heaths. Some mosses are low-lying and need to be wet, while fir clubmosses (*Huperzia*) are tall, erect and tough, and can tolerate dry conditions. It is easy to mistake white arctic bell heather or moss heather (*Cassiope*) for clubmosses.

**1** Broad-leaved willow-herb, or *niviarsiaq*, meaning 'young woman', is Greenland's national flower

**2** Crowberry is very common along the trail, and its berries, though slightly bitter, are perfectly edible

**3** Among the fungi, boletus (or 'penny buns') provide an edible treat, seen here growing among dwarf birch

**4** The red berries of rock cranberry are often confused with those of the common bearberry

### Taxi

Taxis can be used to link both halves of Kangerlussuaq quickly, or can be used to get to and from Old Camp. They will also run along nearby dirt roads. Simply pick one up at the airport taxi rank, flag one down on the road, or tel 56 56 56.

### Tours

Kang Mini Tours are based at the Kang Mini Market, beside the Kangerlussuaq Vandrehjem. They offer customised tours for small groups, including trips to and from the ice cap, or along the road to Kelly Ville for the start of the Arctic Circle Trail. For full details see [www.kangtours.dk](http://www.kangtours.dk), tel 54 01 07.

Albatros Arctic Circle operates from Polar Lodge and Old Camp and run regular trips to and from the ice cap, as well as transporting passengers to and from cruise ships. For full details see [www.aac.gl](http://www.aac.gl), tel 84 16 48.

### Ship

Only cruise ships visit the harbour, 14km (8¾ miles) from Kangerlussuaq. There are no ferry services.

### Flights

Kangerlussuaq Airport is currently a major hub for Air Greenland flights. There are daily flights to and from Copenhagen, Sisimiut and other parts of Greenland. However, the permafrost beneath the runway is melting and there are plans to construct new international airports, so in future the status of the airport will be downgraded and the number of flights it will handle will decrease. Check [www.airgreenland.com](http://www.airgreenland.com), tel 84 11 42.

Private sightseeing flights operate between Kangerlussuaq and the ice cap. These are expensive and limited to five passengers per flight, with guaranteed window seats. Contact Airzafari, [www.airzafari.com](http://www.airzafari.com), tel 24 85 84.

### Websites

Kangerlussuaq and Sisimiut are both part of the municipality of Qeqqata, whose website is available in Danish and Greenlandic at [www.qeqqata.gl](http://www.qeqqata.gl). The main business interests are represented by Arctic Circle Business and the main tourism interest is Destination Arctic Circle, whose website is available in English, Danish and Greenlandic, [www.destinationarcticcircle.com](http://www.destinationarcticcircle.com).

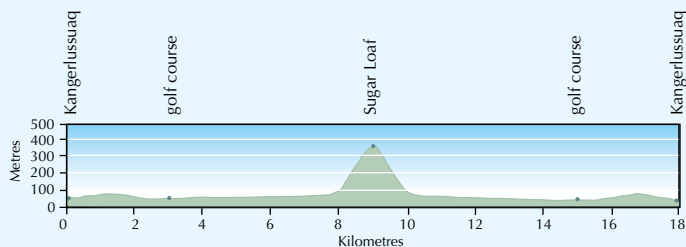
## PREAMBLE

### Ascent of Sugar Loaf

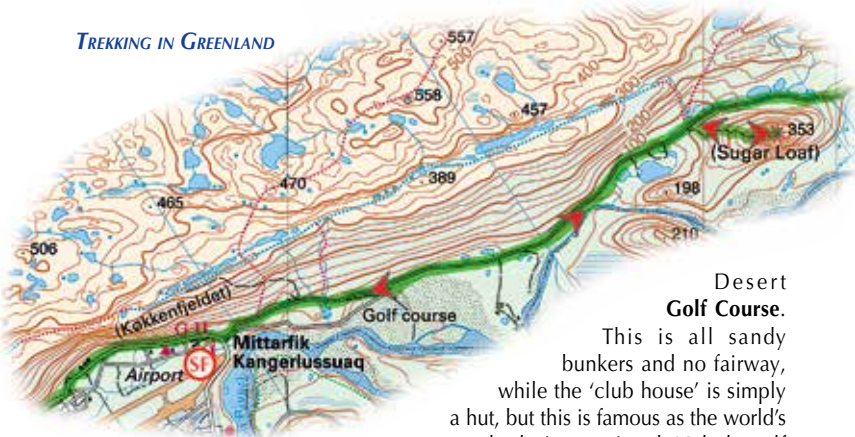
<b>Start/finish</b>	Airport, Kangerlussuaq
<b>Distance</b>	18km (11 miles) there and back
<b>Ascent</b>	500m (1640ft)
<b>Descent</b>	500m (1640ft)
<b>Map</b>	Kangerlussuaq
<b>Terrain</b>	Most of the distance is covered using a broad stony, sandy, dusty dirt road. A short, steep path leads to the summit of the hill.

The Sugar Loaf is a distinctive, steep-sided little hill that even casual visitors to Kangerlussuaq cannot fail to notice. As it stands beside the dirt road leading to the ice cap, many people get to see it at close quarters. An ascent of the Sugar Loaf is easily accomplished from Kangerlussuaq, or it could be included as an 'extra' by anyone walking the dirt road between the ice cap and Kangerlussuaq. The summit is a fine viewpoint.

Ascent of Sugar Loaf



Start from **Kangerlussuaq** by leaving the **airport** and following the main road of Marius Olsen-ip Aqq inland. A junction is reached with a dirt road which is signposted left for the Sugar Loaf, and this is the same road that leads all the way to the ice cap. Follow it uphill and pass an old stone quarry, then drop downhill to the Sondie Arctic



Desert  
**Golf Course.**

This is all sandy bunkers and no fairway, while the 'club house' is simply a hut, but this is famous as the world's most northerly international 18-hole golf

course.

Follow the road onwards, passing a junction where another track heads off to the right. The road is flanked by impenetrable willow thickets, along with a few pines bearing metal tags, planted as an experiment to see if



*A sign warns motorists on the dirt road to beware of musk oxen – with luck, one might actually be seen*



*View from the top of the Sugar Loaf, looking down on the grey glacial torrent of Akuliarusiarsuup Kuua*

they would thrive. These may be the only real trees you see while you are in Greenland. Later, the road overlooks the dirty grey glacial torrent of **Akuliarusiarsuup Kuua**, which pours from a rocky constriction below the twin summits of the Sugar Loaf.

The road later passes through a 'prohibited' area – a wide circle marked by posts – but passage is allowed along the road. The US military disposed of some dangerous materials in this area, which is occupied by three scenic little lakes and a cabin. Soon after leaving this area, climb up a track on the right and continue up a steep and narrow path. ▶

A derelict hut and a few tall wooden masts are all that remains of a communications installation on the hill.

▶ Just beyond is the summit of the **Sugar Loaf**, where a cairn stands on smooth, mineral-veined rock at 353m (1158ft). Views stretch inland to the ice cap, across the grey glacial river to the rugged Akuliarusiarsuk range and Garnet Mountain. Looking beyond Kangerlussuaq to the fjord, the distant Sukkertoppen ice cap can be seen. Westwards lies the terrain traversed by the Arctic Circle Trail – the reason for being here in the first place! Simply retrace your steps to Kangerlussuaq to finish.

*The slope is covered in willow and birch scrub, with blueberry and crowberry, as well as arctic harebells.*

*A polar bear attacked the personnel stationed at this hut in 1953.*

### Options for visiting the ice cap

- Walk from Kangerlussuaq to the ice cap and back again (two days with an overnight camp near the ice cap).
- Hire a bicycle at Old Camp and ride to the ice cap and back again (one day and little kit necessary).
- Sign up for a 4WD trip. Either walk or cycle to the ice cap and come back in the vehicle, or travel out in the vehicle and walk or cycle back (as described below). (Bear in mind that 4WD vehicles generally reach the ice cap around 1500, which limits the time for getting back, and an overnight camp might be required.)

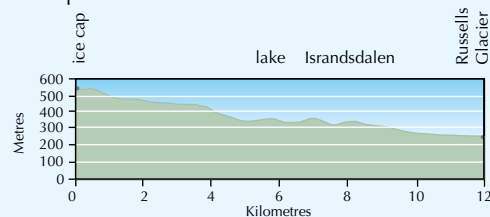
## OPTIONAL EXTENSION

### *Ice cap to Kangerlussuaq*

<b>Start</b>	'Point 660', ice cap
<b>Alternative start</b>	Russells Glacier
<b>Finish</b>	Airport, Kangerlussuaq
<b>Distance</b>	37km (23 miles) or (alternative start) 25km (15½ miles)
<b>Ascent</b>	340m (1115ft) or 240m (785ft)
<b>Descent</b>	1000m (3280ft) or 700m (2295ft)
<b>Map</b>	Kangerlussuaq
<b>Terrain</b>	A stony, sandy, dusty dirt road. Gradients are mostly gentle and only rarely steep for short stretches. At the ice cap itself, tread warily on both the moraine and the ice.

The dirt road between Kangerlussuaq and the ice cap was constructed for Volkswagen in 2000, so that their cars could be tested in extreme conditions, but it was abandoned soon afterwards. It is now used for 4WD vehicle excursions, giving you the opportunity to extend your trek along the Arctic Circle Trail by starting at the ice cap and walking all the way to Sisimiut. The descent to Kangerlussuaq can be covered at a cracking pace, despite the distance. For those with less time to spare, Russells Glacier offers an alternative start.

Ice cap to Russells Glacier



Four-wheel drive vehicles and 'monster truck' buses run from Kangerlussuaq to the so-called '**Point 660**' ▶ where a mass of ill-sorted, frozen, stony moraine hides the ice cap from sight. A path picks its way over this obstacle to reach the very edge of the ice. Specialist equipment is not required to walk on the ice, but tread carefully and don't wander too far as there are dangerous crevasses beyond.

Head back to the dirt road to start walking to Kangerlussuaq, with no route-finding problems for the rest of the day, passing through part of the Aasivissuit – Nipisat World Heritage cultural landscape. ▶ Take the time to admire wildflowers on the grassy slopes, particularly mountain avens. Lakes are a feature of the route, and the first of many is seen down to the right, watered from the edge of the ice cap. Very soon afterwards, a lake full of small icebergs is seen down to the left, where the ice 'calves' directly into the water.

The undulating road passes small lakes and vegetated humps of moraine then drops steeply downhill to cross a bridge over a broad and stony glacial river. Soon afterwards, another bridge is crossed over a short river between two larger lakes. The road rises and falls beside the lake, passing the out-flowing river, which is quickly swallowed into a rocky gorge. Climb uphill to pass through a gap between rocky hills then overlook another lake.

A picnic site is located on the left, on a crest beside the road with toilets below. There are views of a powerful waterfall and the edge of the ice cap. Here, at **Israndsdalen**, the glacier is flanked by a massive lateral

Point 660' is no more than 525m (1720ft) above sea level, but the greater height is always claimed.

The road is used for the Polar Circle Marathon every October. See [www.polar-circle-marathon.com](http://www.polar-circle-marathon.com).