



FORSVARETS BYGNINGS- OG ETABLISSEMENTSTJENESTE



BORRIS FIRING RANGE



Terms and conditions of access and rules of order

Borris Firing Range is normally open to the public when no firing is being conducted. Because a quite comprehensive check of the area must be performed for safety-related reasons before it is opened to the public, the range can be opened only when there has been no firing for at least 2 days in a row and in such case only on specially marked roads.

Information concerning when the range is open will be posted on the information stands at Borriskrogvej. A box with tourist information folders will also be found here, providing information on the range and a map of the area with the roads marked on which people may travel. Due to the risk of encountering unexploded ammunition, **it is forbidden to go off the specified roads.**

There is however one single area where it is permissible to go off the roads. This concerns the banks along Omme River on the stretch for which fishing cards are sold. Walking along the river is however not recommended unless you are fishing. The view and the possibilities for observing the animals and birds are much better from the roads. In addition, waders are required in most places in order to make one's way along the river. Access is also open by foot along the Skjern River. Since this path lies outside the actual target range, it is always open to the public as a general rule. The path runs nearby the camp, however **there is no access to the camp itself.**



Upon request, the Borris Operating Area (DOBOR) can conduct guided tours for associations and institutions. Requests for such should be sent to DOBOR, see the address below. At DOBOR, it is also possible during normal business hours to purchase a single-day fishing card for a stretch of Omme River to be specified in further detail.

For public access, the following apply:

- Access may be on foot, and it is permissible to drive and bicycle on the roads with road signs (marked with a purple colour on the map on the back side).
- Out of consideration to the animals and birds, the area is only open to the public during the period from 8:00 am in the morning until sundown.
- The speed limits on roads must be complied with. On the Ring Road, the limits are posted on signs. On all other roads on the range, the highest permissible speed is 40 km/h.
- The greatest possible regard for nature must be exhibited everywhere. If you observe a fire or drive into/over wild animals, notification of such must be given immediately to DOBOR, which subsequently will undertake the requisite actions.
- Refuse must not be thrown on the ground or buried. Refuse stands, which are found at all shooting stands, may be used if necessary.
- The toilets that have been set up may be used.
- Please note that dogs must **always** be kept on a leash. Hunting weapons may not be brought along. Fishing tackle may only be brought if the person has a fishing card.
- From the parking lot at Borriskrogvej, there is access to an observation tower with an expansive view, from which large parts of Borris Heath and Skjern Meadows can be observed. From the observation tower, there is a path that connects down to the path along the Skjern River. The parking lot and the observation tower may, just like the river, be utilised even if there is firing in the range and without inquiring to Camp Borris.

Please be especially aware that:

- **Touching and/or gathering unexploded ammunition or ammunition-like objects can pose life-threatening dangers and is strictly forbidden.**
- **During dry periods, the risk of fires in the range is extremely high. The greatest caution must always be exhibited in connection with smoking, and during the period from 1 March to 1 October, smoking is permitted only in closed vehicles.**
- **Other uses of open flame, lighting of bonfires or the like is forbidden throughout the entire year.**
- **Control inspections may occur.**

Military nature

The Danish military administers approx. 33,000 hectares, corresponding to just under one percent of the Danish land mass. This area has over the past approx. 100 years been acquired in order to create a framework for firing and exercises or for other military purposes. The Danish military's areas contain a broad selection of valuable Danish nature. Around two thirds of the areas have been designated as international nature protection areas, which are a part of the European Natura 2000 Networking Programme, and approx. half of these in turn have been designated as Natura 2000 habitat types.

In these areas, there are many interactions between "military" and "nature". First and foremost, the landscapes and habitat types offer good and relevant settings for military training. At the same time, the military application provides space for habitat types and species that are otherwise hard-pressed in the surrounding Danish landscape. In addition, work is performed to manage the habitats, which contributes to maintaining and developing nature in a propitious manner. In other words, it involves a positive synergy.



History of the target range

Borris Firing Range and Camp Borris were established in 1902 – 1903. Borris Heath, which was approx. 1,800 hectares, was acquired by the state in order to conserve a larger contiguous heath area and at the same time for use of the area as a target range.

There was agreement that the botanical interests in the heath and its use as a target range were quite capable of being combined. And this has turned out to be the case, even though the utilisation of the target range at present is much more intensive than anyone could have imagined at the time.

At the beginning of the Second World War, the Germans attempted to build an airfield on the heath, however the project was quickly given up when it turned out to be impossible to adequately drain the area. The remains of the construction work in the area can still be seen in the area to the north of Fort Borris.

In 1953 – 1954, the firing range was expanded by just under 3,000 hectares to its current size of 4,743 hectares. This expansion consisted primarily of the Omme River Valley, land to the south of the Omme River and a larger area in the eastern part of the range. Excepting the Home Guard Farm and a transformer at the south-eastern corner of the range, all the houses and farms (a total of approx. 50) from that time are gone. However, at a number of places, remains of foundations and gardens can still be found.

The 26.5 km long Ring Road that encircles the firing range is an essential precondition for traffic in and use of the firing range. It was begun in 1954 and completed only first in 1962.

Nature in the target range

Despite the intensive firing activity in the area, the range appears in many locations to be a nearly undisturbed natural environment. The firing activities only have minor effects on the animal life, and the range hosts a number of rare species. Some examples of somewhat rare breeding birds are: marsh-harrier, white-tailed eagle, crane, teal, wryneck, wood sandpiper and the curlew, which is used in the logo of Camp Borris.

In addition, even rarer guests arrive occasionally on stopovers: bittern, golden eagle, blue harrier, peregrine falcon, hobby and merlin and many other species.

Borris Firing Range has been known in particular for a very large population of roe deer. From very few deer, at most 10–20 individuals at the beginning of the 1950s, the population grew



to 1600 – 1700 deer in the middle of the 1970s. It is believed that the first roe deer was seen just south of the range in 1908. The first roe deer was bagged at a small plantation at Gravl in 1912. Since the middle of the 1970s, the population has declined. Initially, the decline was dramatic. The herd has later stabilised at 500 - 600 deer, which corresponds to the range's carrying capacity. There are several reasons for the drastic decline. The most important factor was certainly that their food supply changed during the period in consequence of the range having transitioned from being highly dominated by cultivated areas to being dominated by natural areas offering a diet poor in nutrients. The afforestation in the middle of the 1900s presumably also contributed to securing a substantial food supply in comparison with the present conditions where the older coniferous forests in particular have no value as a food supply for the roe deer.

Since the 1990s, red deer have been frequenting the range. However, red deer wander around a lot, so on any given day there may be many deer and on the next only a few. The operating and maintenance plan for Borris Target Range estimates that the population comprises at present approx. 200 deer that can be regarded as being relatively permanent residents.

Otters are found both along the Skjern River and along Omme River in the approx. 21 km long and naturally meandering stretch of river that flows through the target range. However, otters are shy and nocturnal, so visitors should not expect to see them. On the sand banks by several of the bridges, it is possible however to see their tracks.

Cultural monuments

There are 14 well-preserved burial mounds on the range, presumably from the Neolithic Age. The burial mounds are all marked as protected monuments. The range also contains 5 of Ole Rømer's milestones. The milestones were set up along Ørbækvej during the period of 1691 - 1697, this placement was however hardly the original. In addition, parts of an old earthen dike around the heath have been preserved, as well as the meadow irrigation canals from the middle of the 1800s. All cultural monuments are protected and are being looked after so they are not lost.





Nature management

Heather is thriving on the heath, which is interrelated with the on-going efforts being performed by Camp Borris to look after its natural environment. The firing causes some areas to burn every year and thus natural maintenance to take place. At other places, controlled burning is conducted. Heath areas that have been burned early in the spring can at the end of August of the same year stand covered with a profusion of flowers. In certain parts of the range, the heath areas are managed by mowing them. Camp Borris has a fleet of machines at its disposal that are particularly suited for this purpose.

Common heather, cross-leaved heath and bog rosemary are types of heather that can be found at the target range. The latter is rare. Cowberries also grow nearly everywhere in the heather, and bearberries and cranberries in certain locations.

However, the entire heath area is not covered by heather. Large areas are grass heaths, where the species known as purple moor grass is dominant. Here, the soil is often somewhat water-logged.

Since 1999, a number of old drainage ditches have been closed, and the water table has in general risen in the entire area, causing many old wet areas to have been re-established.

What once were fields and meadows along the Omme River by and large remain grass areas. Here, the heather spreads in the dry areas and willow scrub in the moist areas. Willow scrub is not very interesting botanically, however it is extremely beneficial as a hide-out for red deer, roe deer and many species of small birds. Similarly, the willow scrub comprises important habitats for a number of rare insects.

Especially good points for views on the range are Foldager Hill and the "Lookout" at Omme River.



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Borris Operating Area (DOBOR)
Borris Firing Safety (SKYBOR)

Tel. 72671660
Tel. 72671665

Borriskrogvej 4
DK-6900 Skjern
E-mail: FBE-KTP-DOBOR-DESK@mil.dk

Read more about Borris Firing Range
in the operating and maintenance plan
for the range, see



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