

## Route 7: The Isokuru gorge

**5-6 HOURS**  
**MODERATE**



Impressive gorge with a lush vegetation and large boulder fields  
Beautiful example of an aapa mire

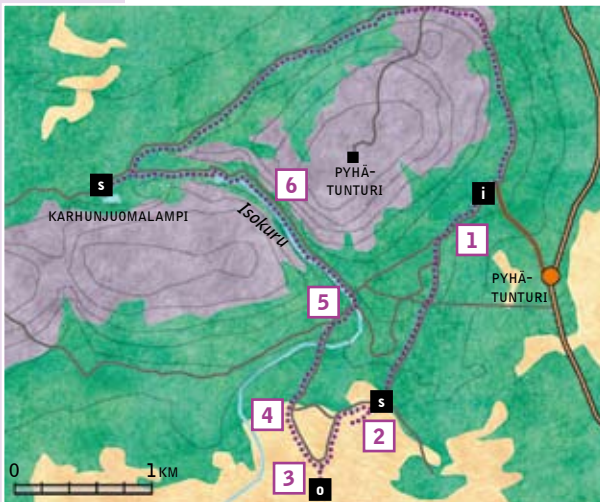
**Habitats:** Aapa mire, pine mire, gorge, pine and mixed forest, herb-rich forest

**Selected species:** Lapland Buttercup, Lapland Butterbur, Great Sundew, Siberian Jay, Pied Flycatcher, Azure Hawker

**! Mosquitoes can be a nuisance**

This walk is deservedly the most popular route of Pyhä-Luosto. Within a small area and conveniently close to the visitors' centre, a range of fine boreal landscapes can be explored. A boardwalk leads you through a large aapa-mire that is full of birds in May and rich in butterflies and dragonflies in summer. The highlight is the rocky Isokuru gorge, which' rugged beauty made it a Seita – a holy place – for the forest Sámi (see page 63). The gorge harbours various rare plants.

- i** = information centre
- s** = shelter
- o** = observation tower



**Departure point** Pyhä-tunturi visitors' centre.

Walk past the visitors' centre following the signs luontopolku (nature trail). The trail crosses the ski slopes and passes the ski lift and then enters the forest. You then arrive at a junction, where you keep left. Continue, following the small pine cone signs in the direction luontopolku and lintutorni (bird tower).



Around the small ponds in the Isokuru gorge (left) the rare Lapland Buttercup grows (bottom). The gorge is also rich in bird species.



**1** The ski slopes support a grassy vegetation with Heath Spotted-orchid, May Lily and Fen Bedstraw. Further ahead in the forest, you pass several kettle-holes – deep, rounded holes in the ground. They are remains of the ice ages, when ice pushed forward the sediments and mingled it with big chunks of ice. When the glaciers retreated this ice melted, leaving these kettle holes.

**2** You pass a shelter on your left, from which a room trail leads to a stream. Just besides the short board-walk Great Sundew grows. Look for it in the wettest patches.

**3** Continue towards the lintutorni. The forest turns into a pine mire and subsequently open terrain. This is a typical aapa mire with a pattern of wet peatmoss-filled basins, bordered by narrow strings of dry peat where Labrador Tea, Bog Rosemary, Cloudberry and a few small pines grow. In May, Wood Sandpipers and Grey-headed Wagtails call from the stunted pines. The tower further ahead overlooks the deepest part of the bog. The lake may hold Crane, Whooper Swan, Bean Goose and various waders in May.