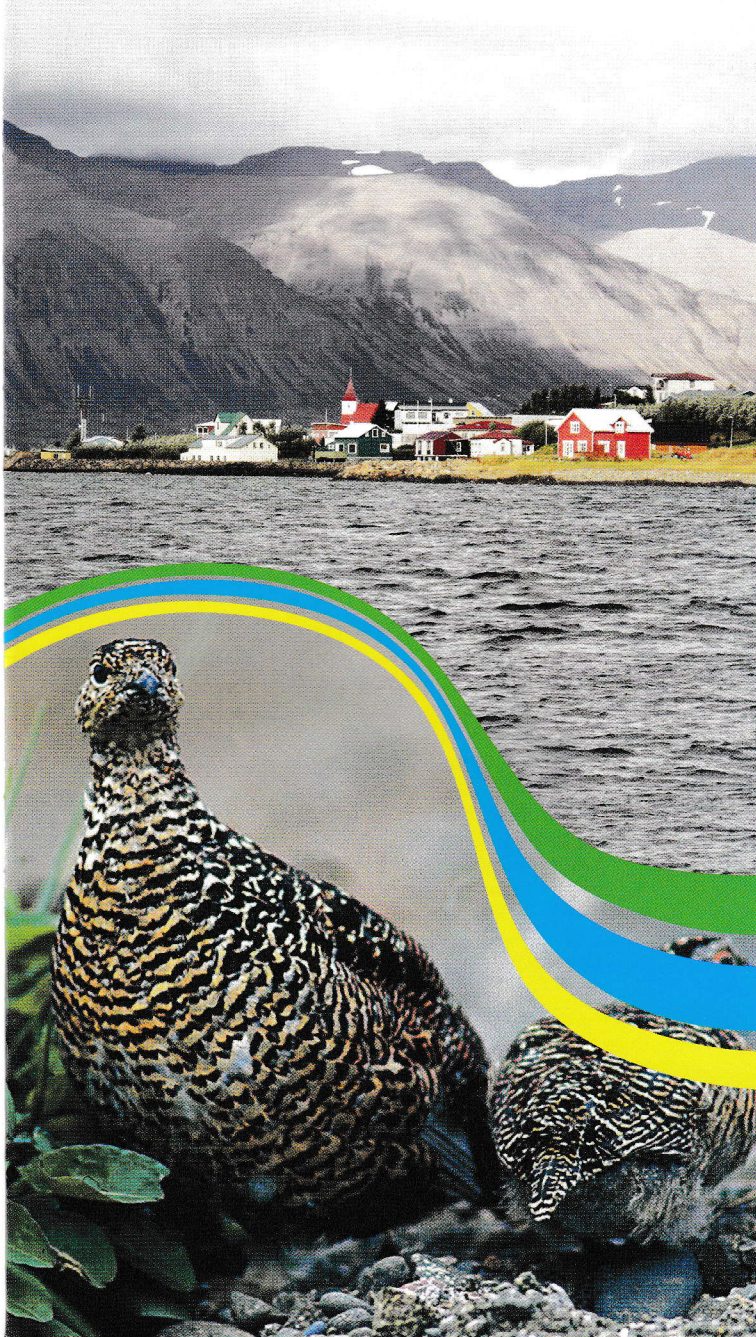




# HRÍSEY

The pearl of Eyjafjörður

2015-2016





## Hrísey - The pearl of Eyjafjörður

Hrísey is truly unique. It is the pearl of Eyjafjörður and Iceland's second largest island after Heimaey Island. It has a flourishing community, magnificent panoramic views of the fjord and a rich birdlife. It is believed that up to 40 bird species nest on the island where as the ptarmigan (*Lagopus mutus*) is the most prominent.

Hrísey is 7,5 km long and 2,5 km broad at its widest point in the south. The population is about 200. Hrísey merged with the municipality of Akureyri in 2004 and Grímsey Island, another island of Eyjafjörður, joined the municipality in 2009.

There are several marked trails on the island and the small seaside village with its flourishing local gardens is enjoyable to visit.

Sailing to the island with the ferry *Sævar* only takes about 15 minutes. Departure is from the small harbour at the community *Árskógssandur* (35 km from Akureyri) on a regular basis (every two hours).

**Welcome to Hrísey Island!**

[www.hrisey.is](http://www.hrisey.is)



## What do you want to do?

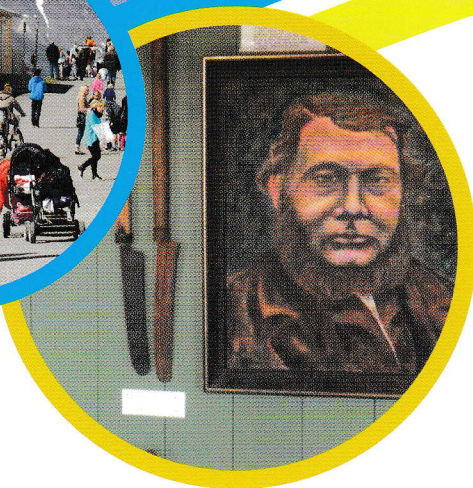
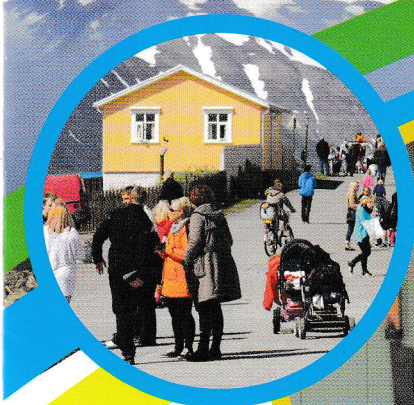
There is a variety of things to do in Hrísey, besides the beautiful nature, there are interesting museums to visit, a nice geothermal pool and several marked walking trails.

Guided tractor rides in a hay wagon are very popular. Daily trips are available during the summer. Each trip takes about 40 minutes. Trips to the lighthouse, where the view is optimal and the sunset truly amazing, are also available.

In the oldest house of Hrísey, *The House of Shark Jörundur*, you will find an exhibition about the history of the island and the history of shark fishing in Iceland in earlier centuries. The house has been renovated and brought to its original state and now hosts the Tourist Information Office during summer.

A memorial museum of a typical working-class home from the era when the new and the old times met, is in a house called *Holt* located in the village.

Find more information about trips, museums and how to book at the Tourist Information Office. Tel. +354 695 0077. Visit [www.hrisey.is](http://www.hrisey.is).



### **The Family Festival**

This festival takes place in the middle of July. Food tastings, games, music, campfire and dancing – all in all adds to create a great family based festival and fun.

### **Trails**

There are various marked trails on the island with signs with information about the flora, fauna, geology and the island's history.

### **The Energy Zone**

The Eastern area of Hrísey is said to be full of energy and is considered to be the second most powerful area in Iceland after Mt. Snæfellsjökull Glacier. The energy is transferred to Hrísey from the stunningly beautiful Mt. Kaldbakur across the fjord. Here you can sit down and enjoy the scenery while inhaling positive and relaxing energy (see map).

### **Flora**

After sheep grazing was stopped in Hrísey in 1974, the vegetation grew back and today it is common to see woolly willow, tea-leaved willow, common juniper, birch, brushwoods (*Betula nana*) as well as many other species on the island in large numbers. The name of Hrísey comes from the plant "hrís" (*Betula nana*) which covered most of the island during the settlement.

### **The herring came and left**

The period from 1930 to 1950 was undoubtedly the biggest boom for the island. There was a lot of herring salting and the deep-sea fishing was very successful. The population multiplied during these months. Young girls eager to work flocked to Hrísey from all over Iceland. The life during these days is still a matter of discussion on many elderly homes far and wide across the country. Stories are told about the wonderful evenings when the midnight sun would play on the peaks of the mountains and young people went hand in hand on the island. The setting sun would dance across the ocean in the dusk and the ground and the heather were so soft and gave off such a pleasant smell. Young people found love on that fairy tale island and kept it forever in their heart. A joke from the period reflects the atmosphere best: A young girl was asked if she had ever been married. "No", she replied, "But I've been to Hrísey Island." [Þorsteinn Þorsteinsson's narrative in the book "Þekktu bæinn þinn" (e. Know your town) by the historian Jón Hjaltason.]

### **The Bull of Þorgeir**

The Saga of Þorgeirsboli, The Bull of Þorgeir, one of Iceland's most vicious ghost is said to originate from Hrísey. The ghost-bull's presence was often sensed late at night in the countryside, when his dark, devastating moos would rumble the earth. Those who saw him and lived to describe it have reported him appearing as a dog, a cat and a string of fog, although most see a skeleton-bull dragging its bloody loose skin behind on its tail.

