

WELCOME IN NATIONAL PARK SCHIERMONNIKOOG



PEOPLE AND NATURE – THAT'S SCHIERMONNIKOOG!
HELP US PRESERVING THE BEAUTY OF OUR ISLAND
FOR EVERYONE



WELCOME IN NATIONAL PARK
SCHIERMONNIKOOG

Hest it heersd, hest it heersd!

Hi, my name is Ivo Prins, lightkeeper and bellman. As the bellman of Schiermonnikoog I announce important updates in and around the village, with my bell and my megaphone. I'd like to welcome you on our beautiful island.

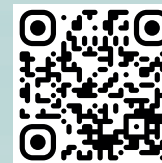
The largest part of Schiermonnikoog is a National Park, for good reasons. The quietness and the vastness, the variety in different landscapes and the varied flora and fauna give this island its unique character. We would like to keep it that way. Therefore, we all contribute to this goal, and we have made agreements on what is or isn't allowed.

This brochure contains the stories of several remarkable islanders, who all feel connected to the magnificent nature of Schiermonnikoog. Each of their stories is linked to a typical animal or a typical plant.

And you can discover what you can do to help protecting the unique nature of the island. On the map you can see where which rules apply. In our top 10 we have summarized for you the most important rules of conduct.

Enjoy our island!

Ivo Prins



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Of bezoek de website: www.welkomopschier.nl



Walk the dog

Hi, we are Atze and Ellen Postma from restaurant Het Wantij. Like no other we know how pleasant it can be to explore the island together with your dog. Every day we stroll with Colin in the dunes, in the wood or on the beach. Colin is a real softy, but still he is not allowed to walk freely on the island. Because a confrontation with your dog is not always enjoyable for the animals that live on the island. We encounter lots of pheasants, in spring often with chicks. For mammals like rabbits and seals dogs aren't nice playmates either. Therefore, we keep Colin on the leash where we must and let him run loose where this is allowed.

Enjoy our island

Geniet van ons eiland!

Atze en Ellen

Rabbits on Schiermonnikoog

About forty years ago Schiermonnikoog was teeming with rabbits. They played an important part in keeping the dune landscape open. But two illnesses, myxomatosis and RHD, took their toll. Now we try to support the rabbits, for example by creating special rabbit corridors in the dunes. Please help us and keep your dog on the leash. This can save the rabbits a lot of stress!



Do you want to know where your dog may walk loose? Look on the map in this brochure. When running loose, your dog should still be under your control. Please clean up any dogshit; on several spots on the island special bags are available. Thank you for your cooperation.



The shell paths take you to the best spots on the island

Hi, I'm Evert-Jan Soepboer, owner of a bike rental company and illustrator. The best thing about Schiermonnikoog is that there are several ways to discover the island – on foot, by bike or on horseback. Even more special is that you may come almost everywhere. On foot, that is. Because I wouldn't like you to drive through the dunes or on the beach on your rental bike. Salt and sand are detrimental for the bike, and it disturbs nature. The same applies to riders: if you stay on the bridle paths, everything is fine. For the rest I'd say: set out to investigate and discover all those unfamiliar spots on the island. Getting lost is almost impossible here.

Enjoy the island!

Evert-Jan Soepboer

Much ado

The pheasant is an exotic species. Originally, it didn't live in the Netherlands. Although you must go far back in time for this since it was introduced in our country by the Romans. Nowadays pheasants really belong to the island. They can give you quite a scare by suddenly flying up with a lot of noise. And then they want us to be quiet and not to disturb nature...



Cycling is allowed on the designated bicycle paths (including the shell paths). For horse riding special bridle paths are available, which in the outside area are indicated by blue and yellow signs. Horse riding on the shell paths is not allowed, since it damages the underground. Please look on schiermonnikoog.nl/ruiterroutes.



Use water sparingly

Hi, I'm Ilja Zonneveld, photographer, councillor and one of the creators of Schierzeep, with water mint. For me, the smell of mint is the smell of the island. Here on Schiermonnikoog we have the best tasting drinking water, filtered by dune sand. All natural. But during the summer sometimes nature is in danger of drying out, especially when all tourists take showers daily, flush toilets and drink water. If it doesn't rain for a longer period, the groundwater level sinks. Sometimes the Westerplas is almost dry! And we can't import water from elsewhere, we just depend on rain. So, please use water sparingly.

Enjoy our island!

Ilja Zonneveld



Fragrant water plant

Around the Westerplas or in the dunes often a whiff of mint fills the air. It's the smell of water mint, a common plant in wetland areas. And therefore, extremely sensitive to drought! You can recognize it by its smell, but also by its purple-pink spherical inflorescence. Water mint can survive in brackish water. You could use the leaves to make tea. When you feel its stem, you'll notice it's square!

On the island you'll find several water points, where you can fill up your water bottle. In this way we aim to prevent plastic bottles lying around. Please use water sparingly, especially during dry periods. So, take a short shower, don't let your water tap run unnecessarily and don't water your lawn with tap water.



Seals are large predators, not cuddly pets

Hi, I'm Theun Talsma, manager of the duck decoy near De Kooiplaats. Also, I act when a sick or wounded seal is found, as coordinator of the EHBZ (Emergency First Response for Sea Mammals). If necessary, the seal is brought to the seal Sanctuary in Lauwersoog. But the most important thing is to leave seals on the beach alone! It costs them a lot of energy when they feel rushed and therefore flee to the water. By the way, finding a young seal alone on the beach is nothing unusual. The mother returns regularly to nurse her pup. Nothing to worry about.

Enjoy our island!

Theun Talsma

Two seal species

The Dutch Wadden Sea is home to two seal species: the grey seal and the smaller common seal. At the end of the last century things were not looking well for the Wadden seals, but today both species count several thousands of individuals. The white pups of the grey seal are born in the middle of the winter – that's what they have their warm coats for. The pups of the common seal are born much later, from mid-May.



A seal on the beach? Please follow these rules:

- keep at least 30 metres distance
- keep children away from the seal, keep your dog on the leash
- don't do any photoshoots and don't chase the seal into the water
- if the seal is visibly weak or wounded, call 0595-526526





Enjoy one of the most beautiful spots in the Netherlands

Hi, I'm Christy Hagen, from group accommodation Eureka and Parnassia Events & Meer. Every day I enjoy the quietness and vastness of our great island. Schiermonnikoog offers many opportunities for fun activities like sand yachting, playing games in the dunes or a campfire on the beach. But we also want to protect the natural habitats on our island – for example flowering wild orchids or marsh-grass of Parnassus in the wet dune valleys. Therefore, we always consult the rangers about where activities are possible without disturbing nature. A lot is possible, but not everything and not always. Luckily, our guests perfectly understand this. They also want to keep the island pretty.

Enjoy our island!

Christy Hagen Bakker

Rare beauty

Marsh-grass of Parnassus (bog star) blooms from July tot September. This rare plant grows in wet dune valleys and on Schiermonnikoog especially on the so called 'green beach', the overgrown strip along the shore. Look at the wonderful flowers: the bog star has five stamens and each day one of them unfolds. So, you can count how many days it is flowering already.



For many group activities you'll need an allowance, like making a campfire or walking on the mudflats. Please contact Het Baken and ask for the possibilities. Mail: hetbaken@natuurmonumenten.nl or phone: 0031-519-531233. Some activities, like kiting and sand yachting, are only allowed on the activity beach, between pole 3 and pole 5.



Don't leave your waste; take it with you to dispose of it

Hi, I'm Mark Lemmers, ranger at Natuurmonumenten and a fanatical beachcomber. A couple of years ago my wife Ilse and I washed ashore on this beautiful island. Often, I stroll along the beach, searching for what the sea has left there. During my walks, I find a lot of wonderful things, but also a lot of marine litter, varying from plastic threads and glass to fish crates and fishing nets. This is an unpleasant sight, but it's also dangerous for birds and seals, which can get caught up in it or think it's food and swallow it. Often with fatal consequences. Therefore, whenever I take a walk on the beach, I take all litter with me. Will you cooperate and help us keeping the island clean?

Enjoy our island!

Mark Lemmers

A real omnivore

When people say 'sea gull' they mostly mean the European herring gull. These smart birds live on the island throughout the year. Herring gulls breed mainly on the salt marshes. See the red dot on their bill? Their young peck against it when they want to be fed. Keep an eye on your sandwiches and 'strandkoeken' when you are on the beach, because herring gulls are real omnivores. Another reason to clean up your waste..



Wil je meehelpen om het strand schoon te houden? Bij een aantal strandopgangen staan afvalcontainers. En in de zomer staan er bakken op het strand waarin je troep kunt deponeren. Alvast bedankt voor je hulp. Wees voorzichtig bij zwemmen in zee; bewaakt zwemmen kan in juli en augustus aan het einde van de Prins Bernhardweg.





Proud of our meadow birds; do not disturb them

Hi, I'm Peter Visser of farmhouse De Duinhoeve. Together with my wife Marijon I run a dairy farm and a holiday farm. For me spring is the most beautiful time of the year, when many couples of oyster catchers, redshanks, lapwings, and godwits breed in the polder. As island farmers we are very proud of them. Together with the Natuur- en Vogelwacht (Nature and Bird Watch) we try to support our meadow birds as much as possible. Of course, it is important that the (breeding) birds and their chicks are not disturbed by, for example, drones or free running dogs.

Enjoy our island!

Peter Visser



Godwits on Schiermonnikoog

About thirty pairs of godwits breed on the island. That's a respectable number already, but hopefully it will grow in the future. The island farmers support the godwit and other meadow birds by sustaining higher water levels in trenches and ditches, by creating meadows with lots of herbs and insects, and by creating rest. The first godwits arrive at the end of February or in the beginning of March. After the breeding season they depart to their wintering areas.

During the breeding season (April 15 to July 15) parts of the island are not accessible, to give breeding birds and their chicks the rest they need. In other parts of the island, you'll have to stay on the paths. This is shown on the map elsewhere in this brochure. And of course: do not disturb the birds or other animals anywhere on the island.



Fire hazard!

Hi, I'm Halbe Kroes, one of the owners of pension Westerburen and volunteer of the fire brigade of Schiermonnikoog, which is part of the Veiligheidsregio Fryslân. Of course, we act when there is a fire alarm, but also in case of damage by storm, traffic accidents and missing persons we come to help. During dry periods, the risk of wildfires is of course the biggest. Pine forests catch fire quickly, but in the dunes fires can spread fast as well. This was apparent in 2018, when we had to fight several wildfires on the island. Luckily, the damage was limited. Prevent wildfire: never make a fire outside and don't throw away a smouldering cigarette.

Enjoy our island!

Halbe Kroes

A fine flutterer

This magnificent butterfly flies around from the end of April to the end of October, in and around the village, in the dunes and on the salt marshes. The small copper winters amidst fallen leaves as a half-grown caterpillar. The caterpillars mainly eat docks and sorrels. Although it has a fiery colour, the small copper doesn't like fire, since it destroys its food plants. Fun fact: the small copper belongs to the family of gossamer-winged butterflies.



Because of the danger of wildfires between April 1 and October 1 fire and smoking are completely forbidden in the whole National Park area. Want to make a campfire on the beach? That's possible, but only with a valid permit. Please contact GRAS, Groepsaccommodaties Schiermonnikoog, phone number: 0031-519-531421.





High-tide roosts: havens of rest for birds

Hi, I'm Janneke van der Velde, gardener of the Tuin naast de Branding (the garden next to De Branding). Here you can harvest vegetables and fruit that we grow ourselves, without fertilizer or pesticides. We also grow flowers and oyster mushrooms. Over the years our garden has become a real haven of rest, just like Schiermonnikoog is a haven of rest for many plants and animals. Wading birds for example come together at so called high-tide roosts to rest and regain their strength. It's important we leave them at peace there, because taking flight when we disturb them costs them a lot of energy

Enjoy our island!

Janneke van der Velde



High-tide roosts

Many of the birds on the island get their food from the mudflats: shellfish, like cockles, and other benthic animals, like lugworms, shrimps, crabs, and fish. These birds can only forage for food at low tide, when part of the mudflats have fallen dry. Therefore, they rest at high tide – during the day but also at night, there's no difference. They do this in large groups on regular spots that are called high-tide roosts.

Outside the breeding season the island is almost completely accessible, so you can stroll through nature. Of course, this doesn't mean that you don't have to take anything into account. Birds on high-tide roosts for example need their rest! Do you spot a large group of birds sitting together? Give them a wide berth and keep your dog on its leash. Look at the map in this brochure



Make sensible use of energy

Hi, I'm Ramón Hendriks, bus driver on the island. In addition, my wife Sygrid and I develop and produce nice island souvenirs. Taking guests from and to the ferry is never boring. I like answering questions and giving advice about the island. We drive electric buses. This fits in with the aim of Schiermonnikoog of being self sustainable regarding energy. Just like the solar panels on the roofs of the farms on the island. Do you want to get rid of some energy yourself after you have arrived? Take the bike or take a stroll and discover the best spots!

Enjoy our island

Ramón Hendriks

Long distance traveller

The Wadden Sea is of vital importance for the red knot. Red knots breed in the northern polar region, but winter much more to the south. Some of them winter in the Wadden area, others fly further to Africa. But all of them really need the mudflats of the Wadden Sea to replenish their energy, because these are an almost inexhaustible source of food. Red knots try to be efficient when it comes to energy use, just like we do.



Nature is there for us to enjoy, so feel free and go out. But take nature into consideration; do not disturb any animals, don't pick any flowers and take your waste with you. In the grazing area, please stick to the rules: keep 50 metres distance to the herd (don't try to pet or feed the animals) and don't cross the herd.





Important phone numbers

In cases of emergency: Fire brigade, Ambulance and Police: call 112

Police Schiermonnikoog: Voorstreek 28 | Phone number: 0900 - 88 44

Information centre Het Baken: Reeweg 9 | Phone number: 0519 - 53 12 33

This brochure is a collective release from: Nationa Park Schiermonnikoog, municipality Schiermonnikoog, Natuurmonumenten and VVV Schiermonnikoog.

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OUR MOST IMPORTANT RULES OF CONDUCT

- 1 Do not disturb** | This means: don't scare any animals, keep your dog on its leash, don't pick any plants and of course throw your rubbish in a bin or take it home with you. Wild camping isn't allowed on Schiermonnikoog.
- 2 Don't access breeding areas** | From April 15 to July 15 the Oosterkwelder and the beach to the east of pole 10 are closed, except for the shoreline. The same applies to parts of the Rif and the Westerstrand. Local signs tell you where you are allowed to go.
- 3 Leave grazers alone** | To keep the dune landscape open Natuurmonumenten deploys several large grazing animals: cattle, horses, sheep, and goats. Don't pet the animals and don't feed them, keep 50 metres distance, keep your dog on its leash and don't cross the herds.
- 4 Smoking and campfires** | Because of the danger of wildfires from April 1 to Octobre 1 smoking and campfires are not allowed in the National Park. A campfire on the beach is only allowed when you have a valid permission. Please call 0031-591-531421 for more information.
- 5 Activity beach** | Kiting, kitesurfing and sand yachting are only allowed on the recreational beach between pole 3 and pole 5.
- 6 Group activities** | Are you planning a group activity in the National Park? Please contact Het Baken well in advance to ask for permission.
- 7 Seals: do not disturb** | Is there a seal on the beach, young or old? Keep at least 30 metres distance and keep your dog on the leash. Only if you see clear signs of illness or wounds you may call the EHBZ: 0031-591-531421.
- 8 Careful with water** | Use drinking water sparingly, especially when the weather is dry.
- 9 Cycling and horse riding** | When you are cycling or horse riding, please stay on the designated paths. You can find these on the map, for example from the VVV.
- 10 Safety on the beach** | You can swim under supervision of KNRM lifeguards in July and August on the beach at the end of the Prins Bernhardweg. Always take the tide into account and always make sure you can still stand on the ground. Call 112 when you have found a dangerous substance.