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Hullet gjennom Torghatten

The hole in Torghatten

The hole through the mountain Torghatten in the Northern part of Norway is a unique natural phenomenon which is visited by thousands of tourist every year. They wonder how the hole has been made and ask for a natural history based explanation. Heavy storm waves has been the most common theory. But is that the whole truth? In 2006 an expedition to the area tried to find more answers.

The dimensions of the 166 metres long, 41 metres high and 18 metres wide hole are impressive. The type of rock is a red granite. The roof has been strongly eroded, while the walls have been protected from erosion, because they follow collapse zones in the rock. A compact rock formation some 60 metres into the cave makes it unlikely that the waves of the ocean has had any major influence on the eroding process further east. More likely it is the work of the ice.

Plastically eroded shapes in the rock surface has been found along the path and inside the hole of Torghatten. In addition, a heavy draining of melting water between the ice cap and the rock surface has made potholes and sideways meandering lanes of water in the steep, eroded mountainside. These processes have taken place during the last ice-age, and it is very likely that they have had major influence on the making of the hole through Torghatten. This is a brand new discovery.

It has been suggested that the Torghatten is put on the national list of natural phenomena that are of value to the tourist. What if someone suggest that it comes on the world list of UNESCO?