

# Wild Faroe Islands Soaring

Go north at England and turn left at Norway.

[James Hammond](#)



A landscape which would not be out of place in the next Peter Jackson movie. (image: Regin Eyfinnson Poulsen, Tórshavnar RC — felag)

Want to try some really spectacular sloping? OK, go north from the UK, then turn left at Norway. The next stop is the Faroe Islands — a breathtakingly beautiful and wild place. When thinking of the planet's most idyllic slope soaring sites, the list could be very long indeed, and it's unlikely that the Faroe Islands would be the first place that comes to mind. But, well every picture tells a story.





The slopes are — well — everywhere. (image: Tórshavnar RC — felag)

The Faroe Islands are a well-kept secret, an 18 island archipelago nestled in the north Atlantic to the west of Norway and to the north of the British Isles. It's a green-banked paradise, with most of the islands linked by roads and bridges, and here's the best bit: it's beset with fantastic slope soaring sites and inhabited by a fanatical, warm-hearted band of modelers.



How about that for a flying spot? (image: Tórshavnar RC — felag)

It is there, in this virtually unknown sloping paradise, that dwells *Tórshavnar RC — felag* (in the local language Faroese — yes, they even have one of those)! Or in English, *Tórshavn RC society*, a model club with 45 years of history.



The club was first founded in 1976 by Birgir Simonsen, Carlo Petersen, Magnus Gunnarson, Finnbjørn Johansen, Zacharis Hansen and Bjarne J. Petersen.

Here a very special tribute must surely be made to Birgir Simonsen — founding member of *Tórshavnar RC — felag* and still going strong as an active, well-loved and respected flyer, and also a kind mentor offering his good advice at over 88 years old.



Birgir at 88 years old with a special wing design. (image: Tórshavnar RC — felag)

Birgir is the pioneer, and definitely the father of RC flying in the Faroe Islands. He started building his first plane in WWII, a Spitfire using a rubber motor. As enthusiastic club member Jógvan Hansen comments: "I started early — I remember the day very well when I was a young boy around the year 1978, my father and I went for a little drive outside town. That day was the first time I ever saw an RC glider. It was Birgir Simonsen who was flying that glider and I thought that was very cool."





Father of RC gliding in the Faroes — Birgir Simonson. He bought his first RC radio in 1967—it was a four channel Futaba radio. (image: Tórshavnar RC — felag)

Back in the seventies, the embryo club was simply called *Tjørn* (Lake) as initially it was only meant for members with boats. But when the club was reorganized and re-founded in year 1980 its name was changed to *Tórshavnar RC — felag*. Now with 70 members, the club caters for all branches of R/C: boats, planes, helicopters and cars.





A Dynamic awaits its turn. (image: Tórshavnar RC — felag)

Jógvan goes on: "Now we fly mostly slope gliders near our clubhouse on the island named Streymoy. On the west side are the best spots with nice stable wind from the ocean, but we fly also on the east side of Streymoy. Sometimes when the wind is coming from a different direction, we go for a drive — typically up north searching for a good spot."

The beautiful thing: in the Faroes, the 'good spots' are almost limitless.



Flown by Regin Eyfinnson Poulson, a Typhoon takes to the air above Tórshavn. (image: Jógvan Hansen, Tórshavnar RC — felag)

Jógvan continues: "We are very lucky here in the Faroe Islands because we do not have any restrictions when we go flying. The only restrictions I can think of are if winds are too strong, too little, or when raining. We are flying all

year round with gliders, in winter too when islands are white with snow."



Birgir and Regin stop for a coffee break. But is it coffee that they are drinking? (image: Tórshavnar RC — felag)

Asked if the club has scheduled meetings, Jógvan replies: "For those of us flying, no not really, but members with cars and boats do have regular meetings. We just call around to see who will be going flying and where, when it looks good. Mostly we fly slope gliders. All-round gliders are most dominant and some aerobatic and F3F models are also flown."



A Sessanta 60 shrieks past in the skies above the Faroes. (image: Jógvan Hansen, Tórshavnar RC—felag)

I have flown all over the world, but I have never visited the Faroes — but with its breathtaking scenery and fabulous array of superb soaring sites, it's definitely on my bucket list!

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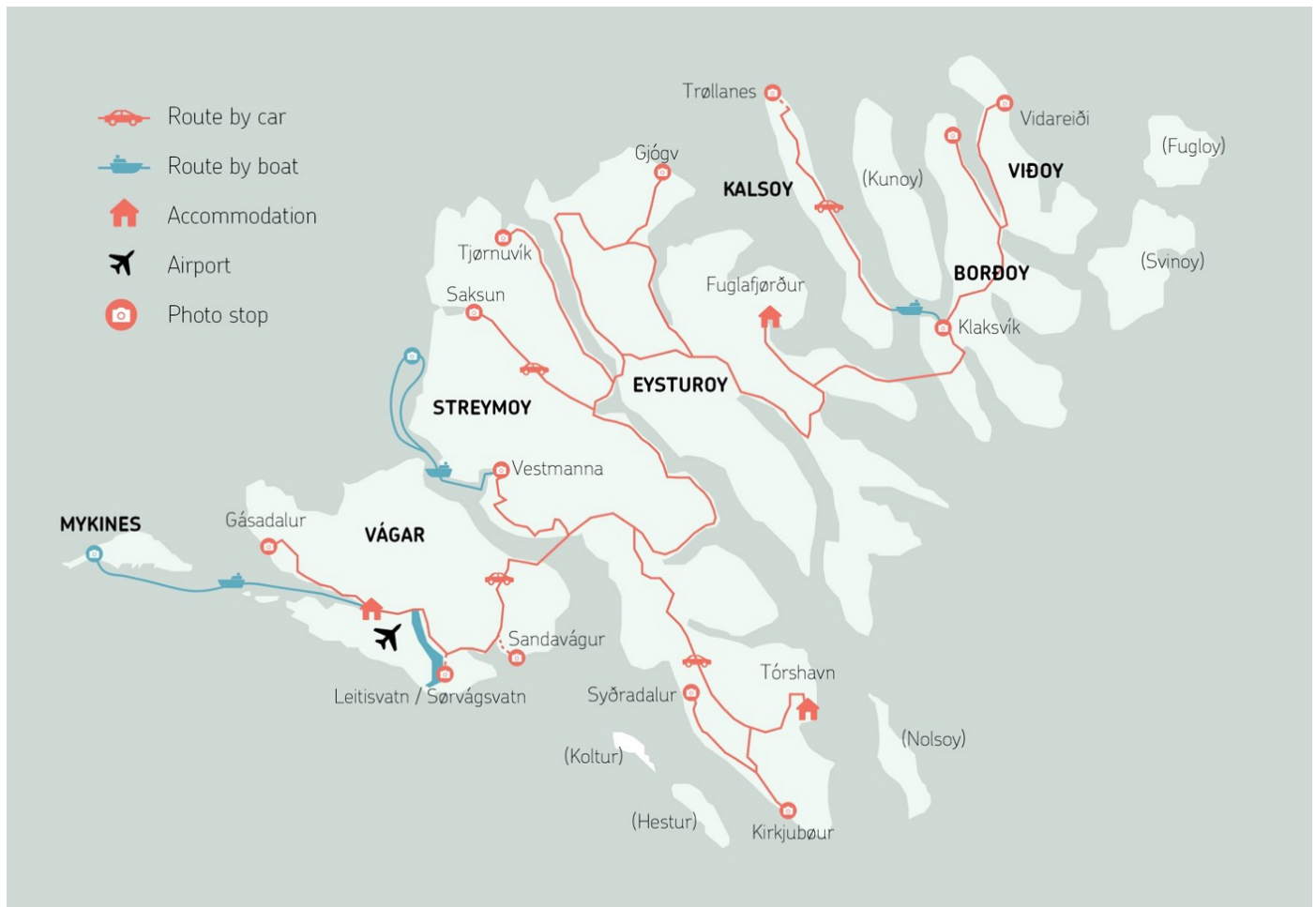


Parting shot of Birgin Simonsen — just about to loft a Stormbird — not a model for the faint of heart! (image: Tórshavnar RC — felag)

## Faroe Islands Facts

- A well-kept secret, for radio glider flyers at least, the Faroe Islands archipelago is a group of 18 volcanic islands separated by fjords and sounds and situated in the middle of the Gulf Stream in the North Atlantic at 62°00'N and 06°47'W, halfway between Scotland and Iceland.
- Total land area: 1,399 km<sup>2</sup> (540 square miles) with the highest peak 880m (2,887ft); average height above sea level 300m (980ft).
- Because of the Gulf Stream flowing around the Islands, the climate varies very little, in fact averaging between 3.8 °C in the winter to 11.1 °C in the summer
- Population: approximately 52,650 of which over 22,000 people reside in the capital, Tórshavn.
- The Faroes is a self-governing region within Kingdom of Denmark, and even has its own Faroese language, though of course Danish is almost universally spoken.

- The main industry is blue water fishing, and this amounts to 80% of the GDP of the Faroe Islands.



The 18 volcanic islands which make up the Faroe Islands archipelago are well connected by both land and sea routes. (image: Sarah in the Green)

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