

Medeltida växter bevarade under glaciärisen, Longyearbreen, centrala Spetsbergen



Under isen finns det medeltida växter. Den undersökta platsen är markerat på bilden.



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Forskarna kröp ned i vattentunnlar vintertid då det inte var något vattenflöde.



Medeltida växter

Frozen samples of soil and vegetation taken from below Longyearbreen were radiocarbon dating (^{14}C). With a probability of 95.4% the period of vegetation growth ended at 1104 cal yr BP. This is a minimum age for the advance of the glacier Longyearbreen over the study site, killing but not destroying the vegetation. Since then the glacier has advanced an additional 2 km downvalley, thereby lowering the altitude of the glacier terminus from about 450 m a.s.l. to 250 m a.s.l. At the time of the advance across the study site the glacier length was about 3 km. The modern length is about 5 km, meaning that the glacier Longyearbreen still is about 2000 m longer than it was about 1100 years ago (Humlum et al. 2005). “Late-Holocene glacier growth in Svalbard, documented by subglacial relict vegetation and living soil microbes” publicerat i “The Holocene 15,3 (2005) pp. 396/407”