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"Portrait of an Arctic Research Station"

Bartlett, Flora Mary



Tarfala Research Station, Sweden.

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Tarfala Research Station is nestled in the Tarfala Valley in the Arctic north of Sweden. It is

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accessed by helicopter or on foot. The hike is challenging, dominated by the moraine landscape left behind following glacial retreat, where rock and debris of all sizes scatter down the steep valley walls. The station began as a site for the study of glacial mass and quickly became a place for polar-expedition training. It was officially opened as a research station run by Stockholm University in 1961, focussing on glaciology and geomorphology, and today consists of a mess hall and kitchen, lab and lecture hall, workshop, sleeping quarters, staff quarters, and a sauna. In summertime, when temperatures are comparably mild, Tarfala Research Station is occupied by staff, visiting researchers, and guests, and sometimes hosts university visits with lectures and trips to the glacier. I am one such visitor, in the autumn of 2020, staying at the station for a 10-day pilot study concerning landscapes, science, and photography. (From the article)

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