

Cotton grass was used as bedding and lamp wicks in the olden days. Look for a big basket of it in the troll's house.



"Moses" with Gudrun, me, and Elof at Vittangi Elk Park, Kiruna, Sweden

When I wrote *Home for Christmas* I knew Rollo troll would be instantly transported from the high mountain down to his home valley on an antler toboggan. But would it be a reindeer or a moose antler? Both animals live in Sweden. I had my answer in Kiruna when I met Lars Bjork's tame moose, Foppa, Tuva, Moses and Hilma. Moses let us rub his hot velvety antler buds. It was spring and they were starting to grow after the old ones fell off in winter. My friend Elof found a huge antler as we searched the woods looking for Capercaillie birds.

There is a magnificent bird that lives in the Northern Pine and birch forests of Sweden called the Capercaillie. It is a very large grouse. The males fan their tails like turkeys when doing their courting dance, and when they gather together to show off to the females it is called a Lek. This happens in early spring, and since my book begins in early fall, I used my artistic license to picture the Capercaillie fanning his tail. The willow Ptarmigan is another ground bird with feathered feet that lives in wild places that I imagined trolls would live. I made the Capercaillie and the Ptarmigan take the place of turkeys and chickens on the troll's farm.



The mountains in the background are called Laplander's gate. The carved antler is carved in the shape of a Ptarmigan bird.