NYBRO
KOMMUN
Nature Guide

Nature Guide – Municipality of Nybro
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NYBRO KOMMUN

LOkala NAturvårds satsningen

Get to know mother nature!

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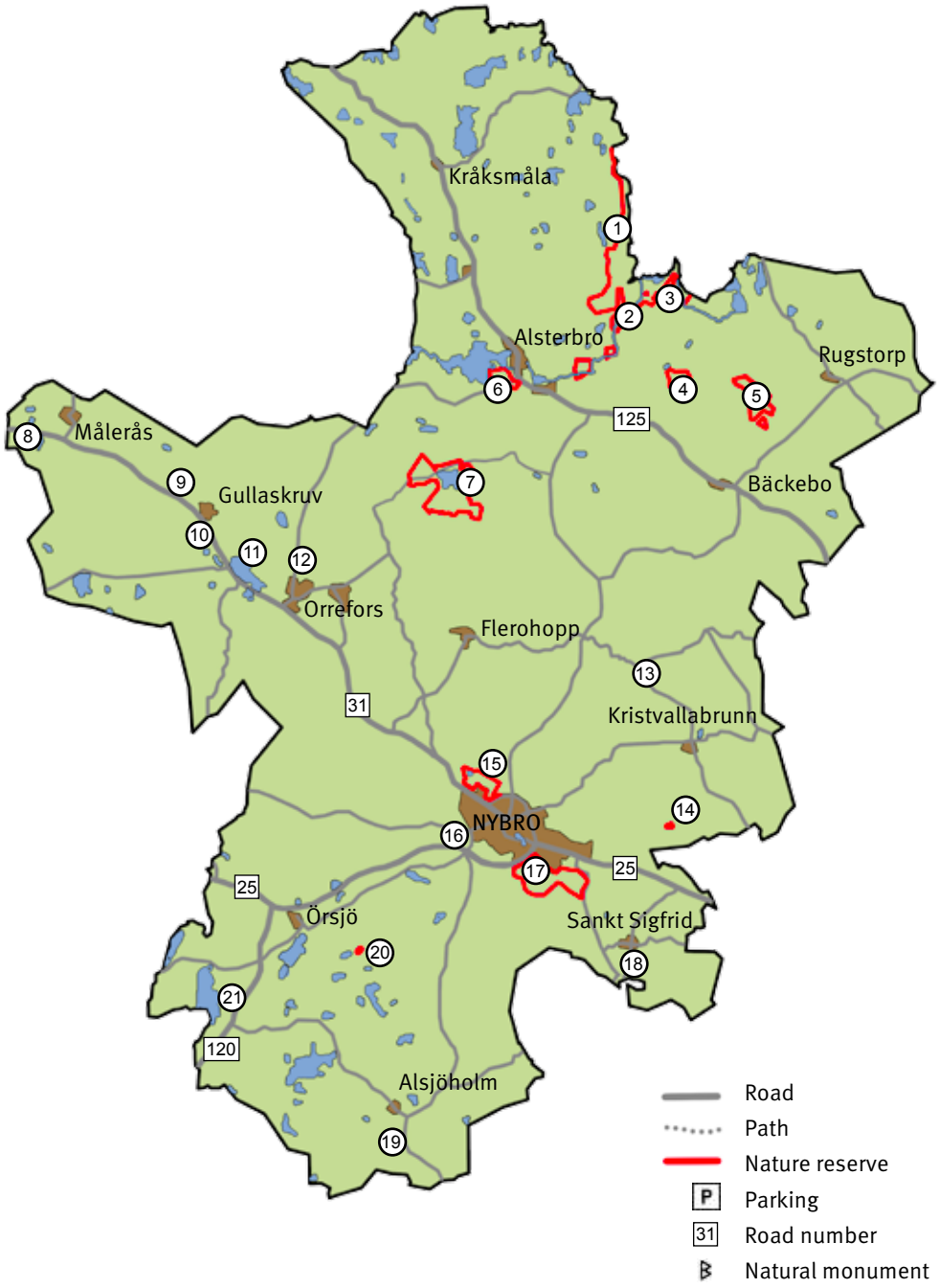
This booklet is your guide to all that mother nature has to offer in Nybro: Nature reserves, Ekopark Hornsö and excellent walking areas. We hope these tips will make you want to see the sights in real life. Swedish wildflowers in all their springtime glory, frogs croaking in the summer night and birds serenading from the treetops are treasures for everyone. Engage your senses – listen, smell, feel – and taste ripe raspberries on a warm summer evening.
Our nature reserves are a haven for plants and animals now and in the future. The Swedish right of public access offers you a unique freedom to ramble and enjoy the countryside – but remember, there are some limitations in nature reserves. You are not allowed to disturb or in any way damage the flora and fauna.
Nybro is a municipality with a lot of forest interspersed with rolling agricultural landscapes. Much of forest is coniferous, but here and there are valuable broadleaf groves as well – the gems of the woods. The deep woods and peaceful little woodland lakes are always open. If you're looking for a bit of a challenge, you can walk the 80 km Dackeleden Trail, which winds throughout the municipality. Find your own path to new discoveries. Every road leads to an adventure – it's all up to you.



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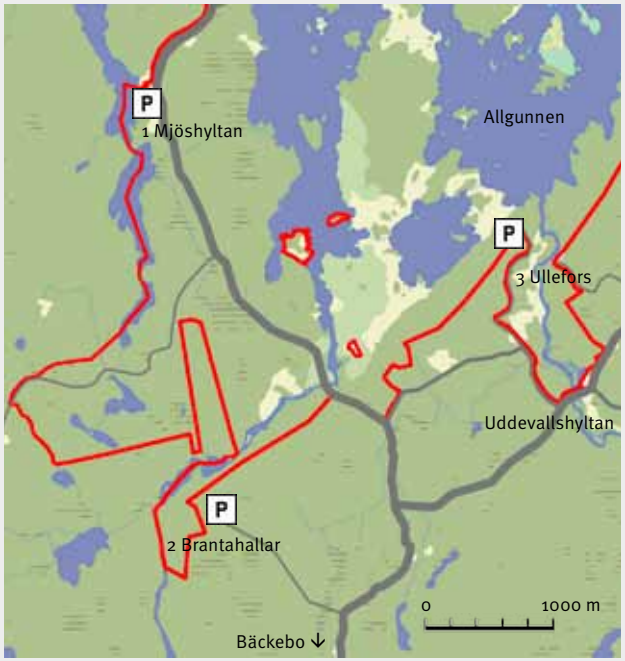
The Allgunnen Nature Reserve and Ekopark Hornsö

The Allgunnen Nature Reserve holds the Swedish record for biodiversity with all of its insects. The deep seclusion among knotted old pines, the flat rocks along the shores of Lake Allgunnen and giant boulders give a feeling of wilderness. Landowner Sveaskog created Ekopark Hornsö to enhance the natural values of the forest around Lake Allgunnen. Bring a picnic basket – it's a big place!

Over 700 species of lignicolous, or wood-living, beetles have been found here, more than any other surveyed area in northern Europe. The warm, dry summers make these woods quite flammable, and forest fires were previously common. This thinned the woods out into open pine and oak savannas. As the importance of forest lands increased at the end of the 19th century, firefighting became more efficient and burn-beating was banned. The County Administrative Board of Kalmar arranges controlled burns as an important method of forest management. Allgunnen is one of the largest nature reserves in the county. We have chosen to describe three places in the reserve: Mjöshyltan, Brantahallar and Ullefors.

Good to know

The Allgunnen Nature Reserve measures 2,256 hectares, of which about 900 are water. The Ekopark Hornsö is almost ten square kilometres and is one of the largest eco-parks owned by Sveaskog. The nature reserve and eco-park are located in the municipalities of Nybro and Högsby. There are no trails in Allgunnen, but the area has many forest roads. You'll find your way with a good map and a GPS system. You need a fishing licence to fish in Lake Allgunnen. Read more at www.sveaskog.se. There are informational signs at the boundaries of the eco-park.



1 Mjöshyltan

East of Lake Mjösjön lies a tiny forest homestead called Mjöshyltan, with abandoned fields and meadows. Come on a sunny May day and be enveloped by the scent of blooming cowslip, which thrives in the tender greenery under the trees, as does lily of the valley. All these herbaceous plants mean lots of butterflies. Many of the species here are quite rare – new forest burnet, Assmann's fritillary, green-underside blue, Duke of Burgundy, tawny prominent, scarce chocolate-tip, owlet moth and grey shoulder-knot.

Directions

From Nybro, drive 13 km towards Alsterbro. In Slättingebygd, turn right towards Bäckebo 11. In Bäckebo, turn left on Road 125 towards Alsterbro. After about 4 km, turn right towards Uddevallshyltan 9. Follow the gravel road 6.5 km and turn left towards Mjöshyltan 5. After 3.9 km you will see a small parking area on the left. Park and walk to the old pasturelands.

Longhorn beetle

Common milkwort

2 Brantahallar

It is four times as common for lightning to ignite the forest here than it is in northern Sweden. Fire scars are visible on some of the pine trunks. The last really big forest fire occurred in 1868 and the most recent one was just a few summers ago. The path through the reserve passes the ruins of an old crofter's cottage, with gooseberries, sweet cherries, damson plums and lilacs around the stone foundation. The croft is just a hundred metres from the Alsterån. You can follow its black glittering waters along the six-metre high ridge to the right. Brantahallar is one of the best, most easily accessible places for studying the plants of bedrock glades. The narrow rock shelf and steep escarpment are home to practically every species found in the region.

Spike speedwell

Red ring rot

Good to know

The closer you get to the Alsterån, the steeper – and often slipperier – it is. Hold on to small children's hands as you approach the drop. It's a great place to take out your thermos and sip a hot drink while admiring the stunning view.

Directions

From Nybro, drive 13 km towards Alsterbro. In Slättingebygd, turn right towards Bäckebo 11. In Bäckebo, turn left on Road 125 towards Alsterbro. After about 4 km, turn right towards Uddevallshyltan 9. About 5 km after the Fridhem croft, turn left on a forest road marked Branthallavägen. After 1.4 km you can park in the turnround. A narrow road begins here, which you follow a few hundred metres past an old cottage foundation and another 100 m to the escarpment down to the river.

3 Ullefors

Water is life. You'll feel its might when you visit the Alsterån. The Ullefors Nature Reserve is located where the Alsterån flows into Lake Allgunnen. The river is bordered with black alder, ash and giant stands of old world royal fern, Sweden's largest fern. There is also wild calla, common hepatica, lichen such as common script lichen and silky wall feather-moss and fungi such as robust bracket. The oak woodland is largely untouched, with elements of birch, aspen and spruce of all sizes.

Beautiful demoiselle on an old world royal fern

Old world royal fern

Good to know

An informational sign is posted by the parking area next to the forest road on the western side of the reserve. There are no trails. Follow the sound of running water to the Alsterån.

Directions

From Nybro, drive 13 km towards Alsterbro. In Slättingebygd, turn right towards Bäckebo 11. In Bäckebo, turn left on Road 125 towards Alsterbro. After about 4 km, turn right towards Uddevallshyltan 9. After 8 km, turn left towards Mjöshyltan 6. After 400 metres, you can park on the right and follow the trail down to the river. To continue to the nature reserve, go back to the car and drive 100 m to the junction with Norrskogsvägen. Follow it 1 km to a car park next to the nature reserve sign – *Naturreservat*.

4 Vackerslät

The wet parts of the nature reserve are called Fågelmossen and Stora Tällemossen. Vackerslät is an old-growth aspen forest and is protected largely to preserve the white-backed woodpecker in the area between Lakes Allgunnen and Grytsjön. The richness of species here is indescribable.

Vackerslät has many habitat types, such as old spruce forest, boulder-strewn pine forest and mixed forest of aspen and spruce. There are also wetlands with wooded fens, pine bogs and freshwater swamp forests. The stunted pine trees are surrounded with leathery-leaved, fragrant wild rosemary. Tinder fungus grows on the trunks of the broadleaf trees. Many of the fungi have small, round holes from larvae of a fungus moth, *Scardia boletella.*

Forestry has not been carried out here in many years. The forest is self-thinned and has extensive deadwood, lichen, mosses and moisture-loving plants. It's like climbing through a giant game of pick-up-sticks – trees lie scattered all over the ground. Although the trees are not very thick, they are often very old. Vackerslät has a rich insect fauna, including the marbled jewel beetle and lesser goat moth.

The first sighting of white-backed woodpecker in the Municipality of Nybro was in the western part of Vackerslät. This species is an indicator of a rich broadleaf forest. Hundreds of species are dependent on the same environment as the white-backed woodpecker. Creating an ideal environment for them involves preserving aspen, alder, birch and sallow on a large scale and leaving dying and dead trees in the forest.

Wild rosemary

Nest cavity in an aspen trunk

Good to know

The Vackerslät Nature Reserve measures 68 hectares and lies just south of the Allgunnen Nature Reserve and 2 km west of the Grytsjön Nature Reserve. Don't forget your compass – it's easy to get lost! There are no trails. Mosquito repellent is a good idea too.

Great spotted woodpecker

Dirtections

From Nybro, drive 13 km towards Alsterbro. In Slättingebygd, turn right towards Bäckebo 11. In Bäckebo, turn left on Road 125 towards Alsterbro. After about 4 km, turn right towards Uddevallshyltan 9. After 2 km you'll see a green post box marked 114. Turn right between the buildings of an old railway station and onto a gravel road. After 600 m you'll see the nature reserve sign – *Naturreservat*. The car park is 400 m further on and has an informational sign.

5 Grytsjön

Explore the wilderness to the 'drumroll' of woodpeckers at Grytsjön. Sweeping boulder fields made the forest inaccessible for forestry, but a joy to visit. All sorts of rare butterflies and beetles thrive in the aspens.

Grytsjön is probably the remnant of an ancient lake. It was partly drained around the turn of the 20th century and is now open fen. Nineteenth-century forest fires bared the rocky ground, which completely lacks soil in places. The forest consists primarily of aspen, which hosts an unparallelled butterfly fauna of over 600 species.

A virgin forest has a large amount of dead and dying trees, including snags, logs and hollow trees. Hurricane Gudrun in 2005 and spruce bark beetles have drastically changed the area. Most of the spruces have died or been felled to give new aspens a chance to grow. Europe's largest mammal, the elk – known as the king of the forest – roams freely on its long legs among the rowans, willows and aspens. To secure regrowth, part of the young broadleaf forest is fenced in so the large numbers of elk can't eat the saplings.

An astounding beetle fauna lives in hollow trees, fungi and logs. Large aspen trunks are home to the lesser goat moth during its larval stage, and this is the best place in Sweden for the *Pygaera timon* moth. The longhorn beetles *Monochamus sutor* and Pine sawyer beetle/*Monochamus gallo-provincialis* live under the bark of newly fallen trees.

Pine sawyer beetle

In the 1980s ornithologists observed the endangered white-backed woodpecker here; the species is found in only a handful of places in Sweden. White-backed woodpeckers need old, dying hardwood forests with thick aspens and dead birches.

Elk

Good to know

The 139 hectare Grytsjön Nature Reserve lies just south of the Allgunnen Nature Reserve and 2 km east of the Vackerslät Nature Reserve. The area is a trailless wilderness and you'll need a GPS or a map and compass to find your way. Heavy boots and mosquito repellent are also good ideas.

Directions

From Nybro, drive 13 km towards Alsterbro. In Slättingebygd, turn right towards Bäckebo 11. In Bäckebo, turn left on Road 125 towards Alsterbro, follow it for 300 m to the junction and turn right towards Ålem. After another 300 m, turn left towards Kättilstorp 2. After 1.8 km you will come to the second nature reserve sign to the right. Follow the gravel road 3.7 km until you reach an informational sign. Cross the old railway embankment. After another 2 km you come to a turnround with a parking area and an informational sign with a map.

6 Bjällingsmåla

The Bjällingsmåla Nature Reserve is walking distance from Alsterbro at the south end of Lake Store Hindsjön. It offers fine sandy beaches and woodland trails with lots to see.

The nearby lake makes its mark on the woods, which have many low-growing oaks. The mineral-rich greenschist in the soil is beneficial to plants and animals. The western part of the reserve has an old-growth broadleaf forest with groves of thick aspen, oak and hazel bushes, all of varying ages. The damp areas have alder, sallow and deadwood. If you're lucky, you may spy a lesser spotted woodpecker – Sweden's smallest, no larger than a bullfinch. They live on wood-boring insects, so plentiful deadwood is a must. Standing deadwood, or snags, are particularly important to woodpeckers, both for nesting and for finding food.

Keep an eye out for the unusual flowery lichen, high up in oak crowns. Flowery lichen prefer bright, damp locations and are gradually dying out in Sweden. On thick, heavily rotting aspen logs you find the unusual crown-tipped coral fungus, which decays wood.

Winter excursion at Näset

Sparse pine forest surrounds Sandvik, where you can take a dip from the sun-warmed rocks or let the children play on the sandy beach. Otters live in Lake Hindsjön and the Alsterån River. Their numbers have increased dramatically in Sweden since PCBs were banned in the 1970s, and now they have returned to the Alsterån water system. Otters need protective vegetation along the shores and suitable places for dens, such as stone mounds and large root cavities. They are shy creatures and are most active at night. They're not easy to catch a glimpse of, but you can find tracks and droppings. The otter is the provincial animal of Småland.

Otter tracks in the early spring snow

Good to know

The Bjällingsmåla Nature Reserve measures 68 hectares, of which 15 are water. There's a car park by Lake Store Hindsjön near the Sandvik beach and barbecue pit. You need a fishing licence to fish in the lake. The reserve is managed through the removal of spruce saplings, while all deadwood – logs, snags and hollow trees – are kept.

Black alder – catkins and cones

Directions

From Nybro, drive 28 km towards Alsterbro. At the Alsterbro turnoff, head left towards Fröseke 9. After 600 m, turn right onto a small, unmarked gravel road, which leads towards the Sandvik beach and car park. Follow the trail to the right to get to the beach. If you head left instead, you follow the lake shore up into the woods.

7 Smedjevik

A rare orchid, a long-abandoned village and a legend of a murdered land surveyor. It's all at the Smedjevik Nature Reserve.

Lake Stensjön and the Sjömaden wetlands are surrounded by several types of forest, from pine forests with poor soil to broad-leaf forests with plenty of deadwood. In some places the lands have been untouched for a long time and resemble an old-growth forest. West of Sjömaden is a pine and aspen forest where you might very well see western capercaillie, black grouse, hazel grouse, lesser spotted woodpecker and Tengmalm's owl.

In the southeastern part of the reservation lies Sjömaden, untouched fen with vast expanses of peat. You can get here by a forest road leading west from the *Dackeleden* Trail. There is a turnround at the end of the road, from which you can continue along a trail to a small cabin on Lake Stensjön. Turn off towards the fen. In July, you may be lucky enough to see the rare spotted orchid in bloom, along with cross-leaf heath and bog asphodel.

In the summer of 2010 a controlled burn was conducted in the northern part of the reserve. Forest fires create dead and fire-damaged wood, in which many insects can live. They also make it possible for many plants, fungi and mosses to grow and establish themselves. In the past, fires in the reserve's forest lands were due to lightning and burn-beating. Since firefighting has become more effective, fire-favoured species have had increasing difficulty surviving. Controlled burns are a part of efforts to preserve unique natural values.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Smedjevik was a tiny village of three farms. The villagers fished up bog ore from the bottom of Lake Stensjön and delivered it to the ironworks in Flerohopp. All that remains of the village today is an old loft shed. No one knows where the smithy was for which the village was named. But what about that murdered land surveyor? Well, in the middle of Lake Stensjön is an island called Baggans Ö. According to legend, the bones of a land surveyor were dug up on the island, where his spirit is said to have walked.

Controlled burn

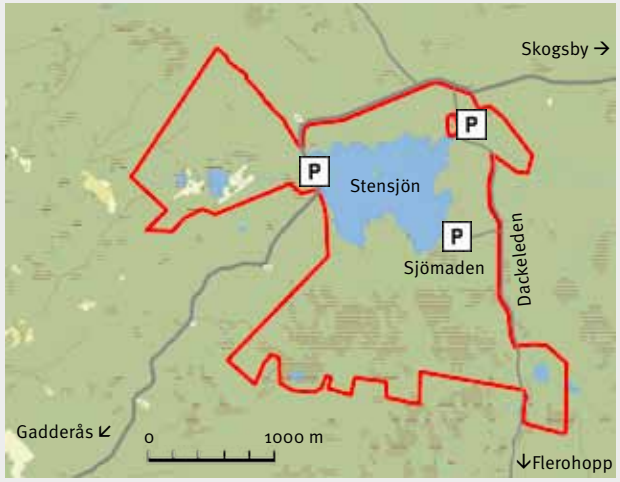
Small pearl-bordered fritillary

Bog asphodel

Spotted orchid

Good to know

The Smedjevik Nature Reserve is a Natura 2000 area measuring 488 hectares, of which 74 are water. There's a small car park by Lake Stensjön alongside a wind shelter with a barbecue pit. A fishing licence is required. Lake Stensjön is also a great place for ice-skating in cold winters that aren't too snowy. The 84 km *Dackeleden* Trail runs through the eastern part of the reserve, while two riding trails, *Vilseleden* and *Ridleden genom Glasriket*, pass through the north part. There are two informational signs along the road between Gadderås and Skogsby.



Directions

From Nybro, drive 18 km towards Alsterbro until you come to Hälleskalla. Turn left towards Skogsby, 2.1 km. In Skogsby, turn left towards Gadderås and continue 2.6 km to Smedjevik. Turn left to arrive at the wind shelter. Continue on 1 km, then turn right on a small forest road until you arrive at a turnround at Sjömaden.

8 Gråstensmon

The wetlands along Vapenbäcksån River, the Rövarekulan cave and the dead-ice pits are some of the best reasons to don your hiking boots and set out on the trails of Gråstensmon.

Gråstensmon contains many different habitats. If you follow the marked trail you will come to a beautiful moraine landscape, a meandering system of ridges, dead-ice pits and hills. The pits were created where remnants of the inland ice sheet remained behind. The lower areas have bare block-fields and rows of frost-worn, sharp-edged boulders and rocks, all deposited by the glacial meltwater. The thin layer of till makes it difficult for plants to grow, but pine trees thrive. Heather, mosses and lichen conceal the hard halleflinta that was carried here and crushed by the inland ice sheet.

Part of the wilderness is called Gråstensmon, which is mentioned in documents as early as the 14th century under the name *Skritstenmon*. The old road from Lenhovda to Nybro passed through far-reaching wastelands, which were once a dangerous place. Robbers knew that people would stop at one of the water-filled dead-ice pits to let their horses drink, so they stationed a man at the waterhole to chat with the travellers and distract them while his companions robbed their carriages. If you dare, you can crawl into the robbers' lair, *Rövarekulan*, the cave where master thief Johan Samuel Lif hid with his booty.

You will also pass the Lindekulla croft, where the crofter's family struggled daily to rid their fields and meadows of stones. All the stones they dug up became walls and clearance cairns. Mountain arnica, a plant that farmers used to judge when to mow the hay, still grows here.

Many glass makers have cooled off in Lake Långegöl after a hot summer day in the Målerås Glassworks. In winter, young people played bandy and ice hockey on the lake. Take a swim among the water lilies, enjoying the scent of bog myrtle and wild rosemary.

Yellow bird's nest

Mountain arnica

Garden loosestrife

Good to know

Gråstensmon is a Natura 2000 area measuring 101 hectares and stretching into the next county. The marshland complex lies north of Road 31. There's a parking area, barbecue pit and non-flushing latrine at the Långegöl swimming area, where you can also follow the signs to the 7 km walking trail. There are ten informational signs along the trail, in Swedish, English and German. At the southern part of Långegöl is a wind shelter with a barbecue pit.

Directions

Take Road 31 from Nybro towards Vetlanda. After 30 km you pass the turnoff for Målerås Glassworks. Head straight on another 700 m, then turn left towards the Långegöl swimming area.

9 Gullaskruvs Stone Labyrinths

Ravens flock in the pine forest and abandoned workplace where millions of stones are stacked in rows. The gravel was taken to build the railway embankment between Nybro and Sävsjöström.

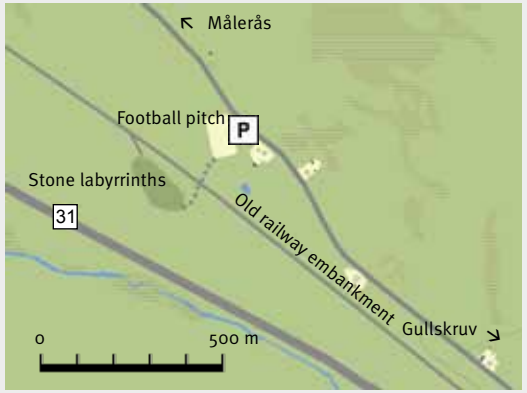
The stone labyrinths at Gullaskruv look like an ancient grave field, but they are actually remnants of technological history. A railway was built in the area in 1874 – 1876, with up to 500 men building up the 43 km long railway embankment. Most of the gravel that was needed to support the rails and sleepers came from the esker ridge. It was sifted out by hand and the larger stones were cast aside and placed out in long rows. The site is an important labour monument.

Pine is stubborn and able to grow in nutrient-poor soils. Its deep roots allow it to withstand heavy winds. The climate here is dry and practically desert-like in summer, so there is little fauna here. Not even adders thrive here. Lichen bring the rock to life. The boulders are decorated with concentric-ring lichen, salted shield lichen and the crackly *Aspicilia cinerea.* Concentric-ring lichen starts as a circle and grows out from the outer edges. The oldest parts in the centre die and decay, and new lichen can start growing there. This creates multiple concentric rings. Salted shield lichen is our most common foliose rock lichen. The young lichen are perfectly circular, while older specimens are more irregular. This lichen makes a fabulous red-brown dye for woollen yarn. *Aspicilia cinerea* is one of the most common crustose stone lichen. Map lichen actually looks like a map, with black boundaries between sections. It grows on granite and other acidic rock types. It ranges in colour from greenish-yellow to bright yellow depending on the amount of sunlight it gets.

Building the railway embankment in the early 20th century. Photo: Hälleberga Local History Society

Good to know

You can get here on foot, bicycle or horseback following the old railway embankment between the Orrefors and Målerås glassworks. There is a wind shelter with a fire pit and informational sign along the way.



Directions

Take Road 31 from Nybro towards Vetlanda. After 20 km, take the Gullaskruv turnoff. In the middle of the community is a T-junction; turn left on the old Målerås road. After 1.5 km you reach an old football pitch where you can park. Follow the trail from the southwest corner of the pitch and cross the old railway embankment. After about 200 m you will arrive at the Gullaskruv stone labyrinths.

10 Barkeström

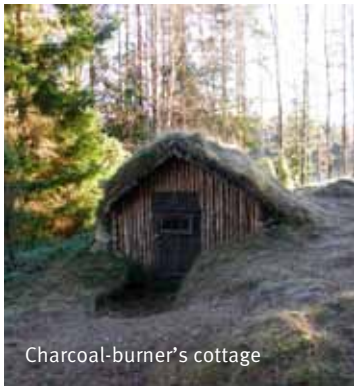
Barkeström is a great place to explore a characteristic dead-ice landscape. You can see the brook, the ridges and the embankment that trapped the water. The waterfall powered a flour mill, sawmill, blast furnace, tannery and power plant.

Barkeström is part of the Nybroåsen Ridge. From the air, the region looks like a network of ridges interspersed with depressions and pits. The ridges were formed when a giant block of ice detached from the inland ice sheet and remained trapped as dead ice. The vegetation on the ridge is special. Because of the gravel, only species that can live in dry soils grow here. Pine and oak trees thrive up on the ridges – their roots go deep. Heather, lichen and lingonberries also grow here. On the slopes you'll see spruce, bilberry shrubs and mosses. In the dead-ice pits – the round depressions between the ridges – fen-like areas form, with birch, willow and alder growing in a carpet of sphagnum mosses.

In the 18th century the Orrefors blast furnace by Barkadammen Dam manufactured pig iron for the Orrefors hammer mill. The green-shimmering slag on the ground is a remnant of this era. The blast furnace closed down in 1780 and the waterwheel and buildings were taken over by the newly started tannery, which tanned hides using oak bark. The tannery operated from 1790 to 1905. There was also a sawmill at Barkadammen at this time.

Starting in the mid-19th century, the waterways in the area were used as timber floating routes from the forests down to the sawmill at Orrefors. There was a wooden chute where the timber could be pulled past the dam. Timber floating was done in stages between a number of dams built along the way towards Lake Orranäsasjön. Timber cutting was most extensive in 1915 – 1920, when large portions of the area's forests were cut down. In the early 20th century, Barkadammen also served as a reservoir for the power plant that provided electricity to Gullaskruv and Hälleberga. The turbine building still stands by the dam.

Barkadammen



Charcoal-burner's cottage

Dead-ice pit

Good to know

A 1.5 kilometre walking trail with 13 informational signs starts at the parking area. The trail starts at a barn, where you can also go in and rest. You'll find a box of brochures in English and German in the parking area. The 50 km Orrefors – Nybro bicycle route passes Barkeström. Fishing in Barkadammen is not permitted.

Directions

Take Road 31 from Nybro and drive 20 km, passing Orrefors after the first 15 km. Just after Orranäsasjön is a turnoff to the left, Barkeströmsvägen, at the Sveaskog road sign. Follow the gravel road to the car park at Barkeström.

11 Orranäsa Gärde

Out on a cape in Lake Orranäsasjön lay Orranäs Manor, surrounded by meadows and pasture lands where the oaks began growing over 300 years ago. The hundreds of clearance cairns among the hardwood trees bear witness to the huge amount of work farmers put into clearing the land.

Thick hollow oaks are the single natural environment that accommodates the most threatened species in Sweden. Fungi are the most important decomposers of wood, creating hollows where beetles thrive. Did you know that even dead trees are important to many plants and animals? Seventy per cent of Sweden's endangered insects live in deadwood at some stage of their lives.

As early as the 1570s, Orranäs was owned by the noble Silfversparre family. In the early 18th century Lars Johan Silfversparre applied to the Swedish Board of Mines to start an ironworks in Orrefors. Finally, in the late spring of 1726, the messenger arrived at Orranäs Manor and presented him with the letters patent allowing him to begin building. Only stone walls and clearance cairns remain of the manor today. Parts of the land are under water, as the lake's water level was raised two metres in the 18th century to serve as a reservoir for the ironworks in Orrefors. The farm is now an island in the lake, Trädgårdsön. Legend has it that the house had silver doors. They say that Silfversparre hid his silver doors by lowering them in the lake, where they supposedly remain. If a fisherman catches them on his hook, they come up to the surface, but then break loose and sink again.

Workers at Orrefors came here on a borrowed rail trolley or by rowing. On Sundays Orranäsa Gärde was full of picnickers. In the summer, the ironworks' cattle grazed on the lush grass under the hazels.

Hazel blooming on a bare branch

Fresh-caught pike

Good to know

From the car park at Pålavik you can follow the orange-marked trail along the lake about a kilometre to Orranäsa Gärde. There are several campfire pits along the trail and at the swimming area in Pålavik. The trail continues on to Orrefors. You need a fishing licence to fish in the lake. The lands of Orranäs Manor are protected under the Cultural Monuments Act.

Directions

Take Road 31 from Nybro and drive 15 km past Orrefors. Just after Lake Orranäsasjön, turn right towards Pålavik. Follow the gravel road to the farm at Pålavik. You can park here or continue on about 1 km until the road ends. Park there and follow the trail down towards the lake.

12 Kabbe Backe

Kabbe Backe is a forest with high natural values and a veritable haven for beetles. Stroll down the paths in what was once a public park and you'll see traces of the rare hermit beetle in the hollow old oaks.

Kabbe Backe is a farm forest, where animals grazed and farmers collected wood for building and for fuel. It has many species because the woods are varied, with sunny gaps and trees of all ages. There are about ten thick oaks and ageing limes, maples and thick sallows. Many lignicolous beetles need blooming shrubs like hawthorn, water elder and dog rose in sunny locations to breed. The broadleaf trees have a rich flora of lichen and mosses with many indicator species – species that indicate a valuable broadleaf forest environment. The thick oaks host lung lichen and the rare fungi *Pachykytospora tuberculosa* and beefsteak fungus. When it rains, the lung lichen stands out in bright green against the dark trunks. In dry, sunny weather it is a more modest grey-brown. Lung lichen is a foliose lichen, which grows patchily and loosely on its substrate.

At the bottom of oak trunks a substance called wood mould collects, which is a key living environment for insects. Wood mould consists of fine, soft, loose wood, boring dust, fungi and remnants of birds' nests. This is the environment of the hermit beetle. The oak zebra beetle is a rare longhorn beetle that needs dead, sun-exposed oak branches both to find a partner and during its larval stage. Eastern Småland is its only known location in the entire Nordic region.

Orrefors Folkets Park was built after a municipal council meeting in 1924 brought up the idea of leisure activities for young people. Dance-loving Simon Gate chose the site and designed the bandstand so that the dance could begin on New Year's Eve 1927. Orrefors' own dance band, Glaves, played, with Nils Landberg on the drums. The park had a restaurant, tombola, shooting range, sweets stand, sausage casserole and a stand selling *lushunnabir*, which was the name for low-alcohol beer. Flyers were posted in neighbouring villages to bring people in to dances, and people came.

Oak with wood mould

Wood mould with hermit beetle droppings

Lung lichen

Small-leaved lime

Hepatica

Directions

Take Road 31 from Nybro 15 km to Orrefors. Turn right towards Orrefors. At the supermarket, turn left towards Fröseke. Drive 1.5 km through Orrefors to the sports field on the right. Park alongside the road just after the 80 sign. The path starts at the parking area and follows the edge of the sports field, Orrevallen, into the woods.

13 Södra Gunnabo

The Södra Gunnabo Farm and Gunnaboån River are the perfect place to relax. Thick old oaks with wide crowns line the roadside and the edges of the farmland, forming a valuable living environment for many unusual species, including the red-listed beefsteak fungus.

A tree-lined avenue leads to the yellow farm house and its park-like garden. The Gunnaboån flows past the farm, filling two ponds. The garden is surrounded by a dry canal with a little wooden bridge leading to a path up to a ridge covered in oak trees. Up on the ridge, a previous owner created an English garden with benches under the widely spaced oak, lime, hazel, ash and beech trees.

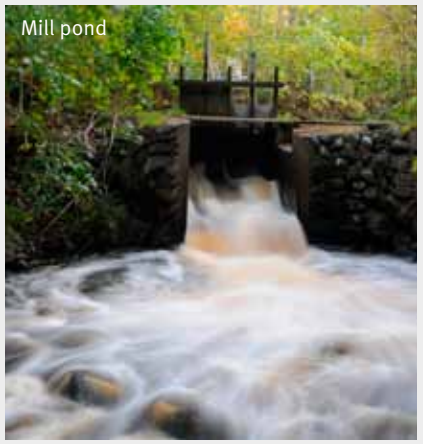
Seven protected oak species grow around the farm. Old oaks today are primarily found near manors and castles, where they were often spared the 19th century ship-building period when many oaks were felled. A dead oak measuring over six metres in circumference stands by the road that passes the red-painted stable. You can see traces of insect activity on it and large patches of bark hang loose. In autumn you'll see beefsteak fungus near the base of the trunk. It grows almost exclusively on centuries-old oaks. The fungus loves warmth and grows best after warm summers. Its flesh is soft and juicy and reminiscent of beef. Beefsteak fungus is lignicolous and causes brown heart rot in oaks.

Hornets thrive in warm, sunny places and nest in big hollow trees. They are our biggest wasp species, but they are very peaceful compared to other wasps. Hornets are a character species for Småland's oak woodlands and are therefore the provincial insect here.

East of the main road lies the Gunnabo mill and miller's cottage. Local farmers used water power to grind flour all the way until the 1960s. Waterways attracted many businesses. This one had a dairy, distillery, tannery, sawmill, bone crusher and smithy.

Oak labelled as a natural monument

Beefsteak fungus



Mill pond

Good to know

Södra Gunnabo Farm is privately owned, so be respectful. The ridge and its oaks are labelled as natural monuments. There are no marked trails.

Directions

From Nybro, drive 10 km to Kristvallabrunn. There, turn left towards Gunnabo. Follow the road about 3 km to Södra Gunnabo Farm, which lies on the left. Cross the bridge and pass the bus stop, and park on the right side of the road near two old outbuildings. Walk down the tree-lined avenue towards the farm.

14 Fjelebo Hay Meadow

The Fjelebo Nature Reserve is a joy to visit in spring when the wood anemones are in bloom. You may also see the rare green-tipped 'bracteata' form. The meadow is also heavenly on still summer evenings when the air is full of birdsong.

The Fjelebo Hay Meadow has wide open spaces with oak and ash trees and tangled hazel and hawthorn bushes. In spring, the ground is covered with wood anemones. One unusual form of the white wood anemone, called *Anemone nemorosa* forma bracteata, has green-tipped petals and a ruff of green bracts. It is only found in a handful of places in the County of Kalmar. It was first observed here in 1922, with only a few specimens appearing each year. They're hard to spot, so walk slowly.

Hay meadows are one of our most species-rich habitats. A single square metre may be home to 40 – 50 species. The plants are specially adapted to the practice of hay-making, with their leaves low to the ground. If traditional grassland management ceases, the meadow plants are soon outcompeted. A few garden flowers have also spread to the meadow: daffodils, narcissus, grape hyacinth, primulas and lupines. The hay meadow has never been ploughed or fertilised. The grass is mown with a scythe or mower. Meadows were once very important for providing winter fodder. Traditional meadow management included raking in the spring. In April, before the wood anemones bloomed, the villagers raked leaves and branches in the meadow. In late summer the trees were pruned and branches of ash, lime and birch were collected and dried. This pollarding provided animal fodder and increased the sunlight on the meadow lands. Some of the trees show traces of previous pruning. The hollows created where branches are cut off become homes for birds, bats and insects.

Rose chafer

Common blue

Common hepatica, wood anemone and 'bracteata' anemones

Good to know

The Fjelebo Slåtteräng Nature Reserve measures 2 hectares. There's an informational sign at the car park. You can follow the footpath through the reserve, but walk carefully in the summer to avoid trampling the vegetation.

Directions

From Nybro, take Road 25 towards Kalmar for 6.8 km, then turn left at the Västrakulla 2 sign and follow the signs to Fjelebo. You arrive at the Fjelebo Nature Reserve in Fjelebo Village exactly 3.4 km after leaving Road 25. The nature reserve is on the left.

15 Rismåla

The Rismåla Nature Reserve lies very close to Nybro. Walk the winding trails to the woodland pool Rismåla Göl. You can also see traces of the receding ice sheet.

The area was formed by glacial river sediment, and parts of a dead-ice landscape are included in the southwestern part of the reserve. The hummocky terrain offers huge height differences over a small area. Pines grow on the ridges, spruces on the slopes and marshy forest in the lowlands. At the edge of the reserve an old gravel quarry, Mariegrop, has been transformed into a grassy field for games and sports.

Rismåla Göl is a part of the Ljungbyån River's drainage basin. It connects to the Gåsamaden wetlands via the Visbäcken Brook, and from there another brook, Bolanders Bäck, flows out of the wetlands. To prevent the pool from being choked with vegetation, several carp species have been planted. They eat aquatic plants, expanding the amount of open water annually. The fishing club in Nybro regularly releases rainbow trout in Rismåla Göl.

Gåsamaden is the wetland around the waterways in the northern part of the reserve. It is freshwater swamp forest that is regularly flooded by Bolanders Bäck. The nutrient-rich water creates lush vegetation and high humidity.

Biodiversity conservation efforts are under way in parts of the nature reserve to increase the amount of deadwood. Trees are being cut down and left on the ground as homes and food for many insects, lichen and fungi.

Tengmalm's owl

Ridge with exposed glacial river sediment

Good to know

The Rismåla Nature Reserve measures 112 hectares. A road goes through the reserve that is suitable for wheelchairs, prams and bicycles. There are several paths in the reserve. By the lake is a rest area with wind shelter and fire pit. You'll find an informational sign and non-flushing latrine by the swimming area's car park. Fishing is allowed with a visitors' licence or membership in the Nybro Fiskeklubb.

Horn of plenty mushrooms

Directions

Walk or cycle from Nybro centre past Svartgöl along Bolanders Bäck. You'll pass under Road 31 at Flyebo Damm and arrive in the southern part of the reserve. Drive Road 31 from Nybro 1.3 km towards Orrefors. Turn right and follow the signs to the nature reserve, 1 km. You can park by the Rismåla Göl beach or on Desemålavägen Road.

16 Klockarängen

Klockarängen is a peaceful oasis near Nybro centre, surrounded by the Madesjö Church Stables and a paradise for stag beetles. The giant oaks lend a feeling of spirituality to the meadow. You just want to sit down and enjoy the scenery – but the oaks also have a dark history.

In the spring, Klockarängen is a sea of wood anemone and lesser celandine. The tiny, bright yellow flowers of trailing tormentil will pop up among the rocks and boulders in the summer. The Nybro region has Sweden's largest occurrence of this species. The root is red inside and was once used to stop bleeding. The land was formerly used for hay-making and grazing. A red-painted wooden loft shed stands right in the middle of the meadow.

Legend has it that Danish soldiers were hanged from the oaks in the 17th century. Lovely places often have nasty histories. Four of the oaks are protected as natural monuments, one of them right next to Klockarängen. It measures an amazing eight metres in circumference. Fungi on the oaks include hen of the woods, beefsteak fungus, *Pachykytospora tuberculosa* and saffron bracket. This is one of only three known locations of the endangered saffron bracket in the province of Småland. Unusual beetles include stag beetles, sap beetles and the rove beetle *Velleius dilatatus,* which often live alongside hornets and hermit beetles. Stag beetles are Europe's largest beetles. Their larvae take five years to develop, but the full-grown beetle only lives a few weeks in summer. The larvae prefer living in stumps and dead root parts, while the beetles live on the sap of old oaks.

In the 1870s, people attending services at Madesjö Church stabled their horses in the many stables lining the roadside. At most there were over 300 stables of two stalls each. Some of the rows of stables were torn down in the early 20th century, but two remain, one of them 90 metres long. It now houses Sweden's longest local heritage museum.

Stag beetle ♂

Saffron bracket

Good to know

A gravelled path along the wall of Klockarängen makes it easy to get around by wheelchair or with a pram. The church stables house the Madesjö local heritage museum, which is open in summer.

Directions

From Nybro centre, drive towards Madesjö Church. Park along the western short side of the stables or along the wall of the graveyard across from the museum.

17 Svartbäcksmåla

The inland ice sheet carved the Svartbäcksmåla Nature Reserve into an exciting outdoor recreation area with high, steep ridges along the Sankt Sigfridsån River. The reserve makes a perfect winter excursion for skiers and sledders.

Svartbäcksmåla mixed coniferous forest with maple and aspen. Southeast of the ski slope lies an old-growth forest, where lichen hangs from the trees and dense moss covers the ground. A network of waterways criss-crosses the area. In the eastern part of the reserve, a steep ravine descends to the Sankt Sigfridsån River. Thick alders on buttresses with straggly exposed roots create an enchanting scene. The pools of the river are home to pike, perch and roach. Bog violet and yellow iris feel at home in the occasionally flooded lands.

If you enjoy cross-country skiing, don't miss Svartbäcksmåla in winter. Strap on your skis and enjoy all the many prepared trails. There is also a downhill slope with a ski lift. And if there's no snow, you can always hike the trails.

The orienteering club's cottage lies on a height that was once the outermost island in an archipelago in the Baltic Ice Lake 12,000 years ago. Standing there, you would have looked out over miles of blue glacial lake, not a tree to be seen. The area shows clear marks from the waves of that ancient lake, in the form of gravel ridges and wave-washed boulders. The river carried materials that formed the highest level of the Baltic Ice Lake, 81 metres above sea level. In the modern day, an unusually well-formed ice wedge was found in the sand quarry in the delta. The wedge was created when heavy material fell down in a crack due to constant frost in a process that took centuries. A cross-section of the 2½-metre deep ice wedge is preserved in the town hall, Balder.

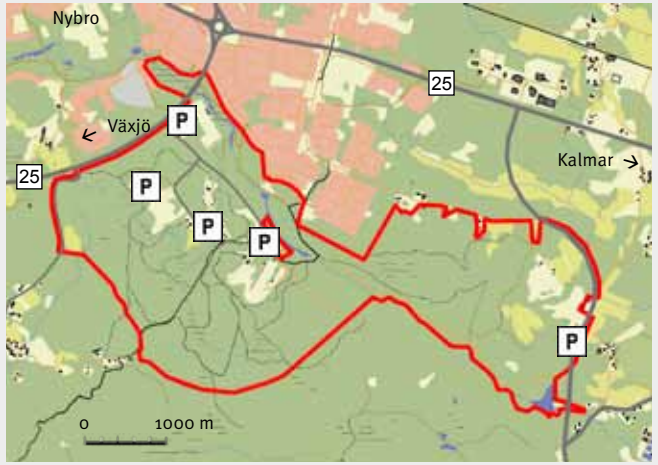
Sankt Sigfridsån River

Good to know

The nature reserve measures 345 hectares. A path ideal for wheelchairs and prams starts at the big car park by the barbecue pit next to the Sankt Sigfridsån. Several ski trails start at the car park – 2.5 km, 5 km, 10 km and a lighted trail. The Nybro ski club's clubhouse has changing rooms, a wax shed, shower, toilet and warming cabin. You can rent downhill skis near the lift. The 2.2 km nature trail has ten informational signs and a barbecue pit with a wind shelter. The *Dackeleden* and *Grönmoleden* Trails and the *Sankt Sigfridsleden* bicycle route pass through the reserve. See the informational sign at the big car park.

Directions

Drive Road 25 from Nybro towards Växjö. Just 600 m from the roundabout with the blue glass globes you'll see signs for Svartbäcksmåla. Turn left. Drive to the big car park by the outdoor activity centre. There are other parking areas nearby.



18 Källebäck

The story of Saint Sigfrid's Spring, bubbling out of the Nybroåsen Ridge in the tiny village of Källebäck, is an exciting tale.

Follow the trail from Källebäck Farm to get to the spring. The water is a steady 6–8°C year round and the vegetation around the spring is greener, more luxuriant and more species rich than the surrounding lands. The flora and fauna are characteristic here, and moisture-loving mosses and vascular plants thrive. Frogs and toads hibernate here.

Sankt Sigfrid´s Spring is located on a steep north-facing slope near an intersecting brook ravine through the Nybroåsen Ridge. The strata of sand and gravel in the ridge are 20 metres thick. Near the spring, the bedrock is nearly exposed and groundwater is forced out. It flows down a little slope and into the brook. As a rule, the spring has a relatively low flow due to a nearby groundwater divide.

Sacred springs are a pagan tradition that was adopted by the Catholic Church, which often linked springs to specific saints. Springs have been used as wishing wells and baptismal fonts. According to legend, St Sigfrid from the Kalmar coast walked along this ridge to the spring, and there he christened the locals. The parish and the river were named after him. The spring has been restored by the St Sigfrid local history society. A dipper hangs on a post next to the spring so you can taste the water yourself. The water contains iron and has a brownish tone due to iron ochre. Pure water welling up out of the earth is a natural symbol of life and health. In southern and central Sweden, springs were traditionally sought out at Midsummer. People made offerings for happiness and prosperity and drank the spring water for health.

Common toad

Good to know

Saint Sigfrid's Spring is protected as an ancient monument under the Cultural Monuments Act. There is an informational sign and a bench to rest on at the spring. The *Sankt Sigfridsleden* Trail is an 18 km long bicycle route that starts at the Pukeberg Glassworks and makes a detour to the spring.

Directions

Take Road 25 from Nybro towards Kalmar. After 2 km, turn right at the Gårdsryd sign. Pass the turnoff for the St Sigfrid Church and continue 7 km. Turn left towards Källdalen. Continue 350 m on the gravel road through a tree-lined avenue to the *Sankt Sigfrids Källa* sign on the right. You can park here. Follow the path along the esker to the spring.

19 Svångemåla

The dappled sunlight through the leaves of the hardwood forest in Svångemåla make the perfect setting for an excursion. Hear the beech leaves under your feet and the drumming of the woodpeckers. What could be more peaceful?

The grove-like old-growth forest of hardwood trees consists mainly of beech, hornbeam, lime, oak, maple, ash and elm, with large populations of hazel and aspen. Natural beech woodlands are unusual. Perhaps the trees have been left in peace because the ground is so rocky. The trees grow on a hill, surrounded by giant erratic blocks. In summer, beech leaves tilt towards the sun, forming a perfectly horizontal surface. They make excellent use of the sunlight! The branches have leaves far in towards the trunk. All this creates heavy shade on the ground and therefore sparse undergrowth. In the hollows below the heights are clearance cairns and stone walls, reminding us that grazing lands were once cleared by hand here.

The area is rich in lying and standing deadwood – what the industry calls 'logs' and 'snags'. Old peck marks by the rare white-backed woodpecker have been found – perhaps a visitor one winter several years ago. Woodpeckers require large deciduous woodlands with lots of dead broadleaf trees and a species-rich insect fauna. Their favourite food is fat beetle larvae that live in deadwood. One example is the fungus moth *Scardia boletella*, which lives in tinder fungus and rotting wood. The white-backed woodpecker uses its bill to make nest cavities, find tasty insects, attract a partner and to mark its territory. They love environments with lots of aspen, alder, birch and sallow. By leaving dead and dying trees in the woods we give the white-backed woodpecker a chance to rally.

Lake Svångemålasjön next to Svångemåla Farm has two parts: The western part has open water, while the eastern part is choked with vegetation.

Beech leaves in spring and autumn

Toothwort

Good to know

The owner of Svångemåla Farm lets people park there. Walk 200 metres south down the gravel road and turn left on a small road into the woodland. There are no trails. Go north from the farm to get to Lake Svångemålasjön.

Directions

From Nybro, drive 20 km towards Alsjöholm. Once in Alsjöholm, continue south, turn left towards Påryd. Continue about 1 km, turn right towards Oskars Kroksjö. After about 800 m, turn left towards Svångemåla. Continue 1 km, then turn left into Svångemåla Farm or continue another 300 m, turn on the old road and park there. From here you can go right into the woods.

20 Toresbo Wooded Meadow

The faint scent of lesser butterfly orchid hovers on the breeze on late summer evenings in the Toresbo Wooded Meadow. It's a perfect place for a picnic with friends. And it's a great place to learn about cultural plants. The meadow is still scythed in order to preserve this bit of cultural history.

Toresbo is a wooded meadow, a vital gene bank with a great variety of species. In the summer the meadow is bursting with mountain arnica, milkwort, quaking grass, viper's grass, spotted cat's ear and devil's bit scabious. If you're a fan of orchids, you'll find fragrant orchid, heath spotted orchid and lesser butterfly orchid, the latter glowing white in the twilight. Their sweet scent brings hawk moths to pollinate the graceful flowers. As autumn comes, splashes of yellow and orange appear in the grass – scarlet waxy cap and other meadow fungi love the natural grazing lands. They're beautiful to look at, but they're not edible.

Farmers created this wooded meadow of hardwood trees. For centuries the farmers of Toresbo have gathered winter fodder for their animals from the village meadows. Meadows are an increasingly uncommon sight these days. When humans and grazing animals abandon a wooded meadow, the woodland soon reclaims it. Only one one-thousandth of the meadow lands that Sweden had in the early 19th century remain. The meadow is managed by the Madesjö local history society, which rakes it in the spring and makes hay in late summer. Raking the leaves and branches in the meadow is a community activity with coffee and socialising. In autumn the grasses are scythed and raked together into haystacks.

The wet meadow near the Hagbyån River is full of sedge and bentgrass species, and near the river lots of horsetail and bogbean. You can also see bog violet and globe flowers here.

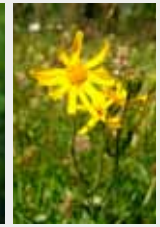
Heath spotted orchid

Lesser butterfly orchid

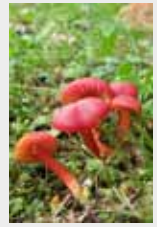
Wild strawberries

Peach-leaved bellflower

Late-flowering yellow rattle



Mountain arnica



Scarlet waxy cap

Good to know

The Toresbo Löväng Nature Reserve is a 3-hectare Natura 2000 area. A car park with an informational sign is located nearby. Remember to walk carefully in the summer to avoid trampling the vegetation. The 84 km *Dackeleden* Walking Trail passes Toresbo. You can make a detour to the reserve from the 27 km *Ageboslingan* Route. The brochure *Cycling in the Kingdom of Crystal* is available at the Nybro Tourist Office.

Directions

From Nybro, cross Road 25 towards Alsjöholm. At the T-junction, turn towards Örsjö 9. After about 1 km, turn left towards Ebbehult 5. Drive through Ebbehult and continue on the gravel road towards Toresbo. The reserve is about 15 km southwest of Nybro. Another way to get to Toresbo is via Örsjö. Start at Örsjö Church and take the old road to Nybro. After 1 km, turn right towards Toresbo. It's about 2 km from here. The nature reserve is about 250 m from Toresbo Village.

21 Skärsjön

Lake Skärsjön is a clear spring-fed lake with a lovely beach. Have a seat and enjoy the aromatic bog myrtle growing around the edges of the lake. Broadleaf deciduous forest with some coniferous trees surrounds it.

The surface of Lake Skärsjön was lowered in the 19th century. Wave-washed boulders and cliffs show where the former shoreline was. Glacial striations are clearly visible on the bathing rocks. They are tracks made by stones being dragged along by the receding inland ice sheet. The shimmering green water of Lake Skärsjön is perfectly clear. Swim out with a mask on and watch the perch play. The lake is rich with burbot, eel, tench and carp. The ice on the lake is skatable long before Kalmarsund Bay freezes, unless it snows all winter.

In the north, a spring in the bottom feeds the lake. You can see it on the surface, which arches slightly where the groundwater comes up. Water lobelia grows thickly in some places. Since its rosette grows under water, the plant is mainly visible when it blooms in late summer. The widely spaced, bluish sprays of flowers rise a few decimetres above the water, while the leafy rosettes spread like dark green carpets on the lakebed. Water lobelia thrives best in pure, clear water, as it needs plenty of sunlight. If the water clouds up, the plant is disfavoured.

If you're lucky, you may spy an osprey diving for fish or hear the sorrowful call of the black-throated diver. Divers like waters with great visibility depth, and people once believed the bird had no lungs because it could stay underwater for such a long time. The species nests near the shore to stay close to the water. Divers are clumsy on land because their feet are so far back on their bodies. An old fable explains it this way: Once upon a time, the Devil saw the Lord creating the birds and he decided to give it a try himself. His creation was the black-throated diver – but he forgot the feet. When he realised his mistake, he quickly and carelessly tossed a pair on the bird's backside.

European white water lily

Black-throated diver

Good to know

Don't forget your swimwear if you visit Lake Skärsjön in summer! You need a fishing licence to fish in the lake – northern pike, perch, carp fish. A boat is available for rent. You can park near the swimming area, next to a cluster of summer cottages. Rest area with BBQ.

Directions

From Nybro, take Road 25 about 10 km towards Växjö. Pass the Örsjö turnoff, and 1 km after it, turn off on Road 120 towards Emmaboda. After 6 km, directly across from the road sign for Alsjöholm, turn right on an unmarked road that passes under a railway tunnel. Follow the sign to *Skärsjöns Badplats*, 500 m. Park next to the swimming area.

Swimming and fishing

Boasjö

Jetty and tables. Fishing licence: Nybro Jakt & Fiske, 0481-140 04. You can catch pike, perch and various carp fish here.

Store Hindsjön

Jetty with diving tower, changing rooms, toilet, barbecue pit, playground equipment and campsite. Beach volleyball area and football pitch. Home port of Hindsjön's raft house. You can buy a fishing licence at COOP in Alsterbro, 0481-500 23. You can also rent a boat there. You can catch pike, perch, zander and various carp fish here. A kilometre-long waterfront promenade passes the swimming area.

Stensjön

Jetty, tables and changing rooms. Lake Stensjön is located in Ekopark Hornsö. Fishing licence: 063-55 12 98, 0454-501 23 or at *www.sverigefiskekortet.se* You can catch pike, perch, zander and various carp fish here.

Långegöl

Jetty, tables, barbecue pit, non-flushing latrine and wind shelter.

Orranäsasjön

Jetty, tables, wind shelters, campfire site and campsite. You can buy a fishing licence at the campsite, 0481-304 14 or at Tempo in Orrefors, 0481-300 16. You can catch pike, perch or carp fish here. Boat available for rent.

Rismåla göl

Jetty, tables, non-flushing latrine, wind shelter and campfire site. Rismåla Göl is located inside a nature reserve. Buy a fishing licence from Nybro Jakt & Fiske, 0481-140 04. You can catch rainbow trout here.

Linnéasjön

Jetty, tables, playground equipment and campsite with ice cream stand. Free fishing for pike, perch, grass carp, mirror carp and tench. Carp and tench must be released again.

Örsjösjön

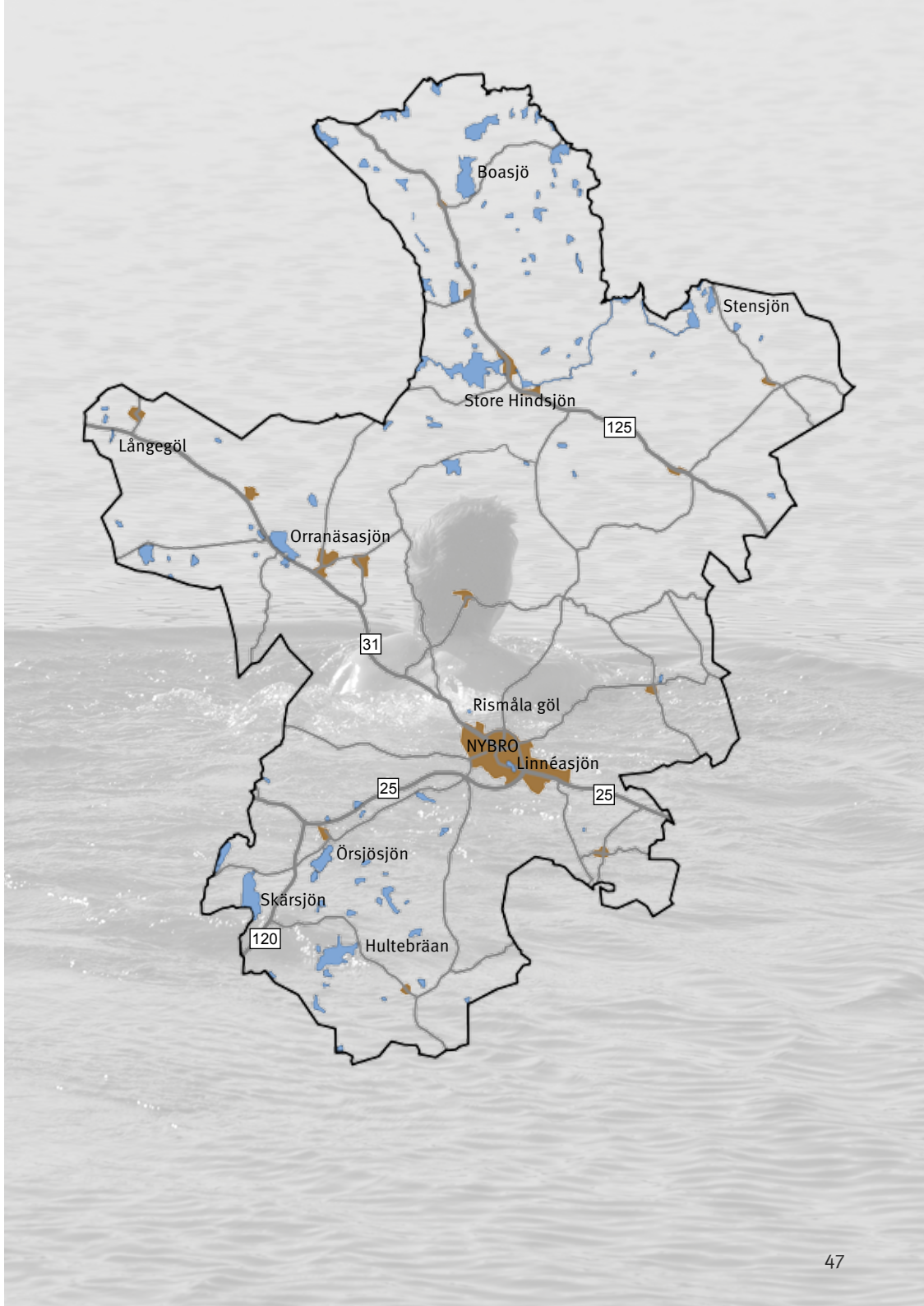
Jetty and tables. Fishing licence: Nybro Jakt & Fiske, 0481-140 04. You can catch pike, perch and various carp fish here.

Skärsjön

Jetty, tables, barbecue pit and playground equipment. Fishing licence: 0481-230 14. You can catch pike, perch or carp fish here. Boat available for rent.

Björnasjöbadet i Hultebräan

Tables, barbecue pit, changing rooms, non-flushing latrine and playground equipment. You can swim here in Kalmar's drinking water reserves. Fishing licence: Nybro Jakt & Fiske, 0481-140 04. You can catch pike, perch, zander and various carp fish here. Boat available for rent. The Dackeleden Walking Trail passes the swimming area.



Further exploration on your own

www.lansstyrelsen.se/kalmar
www.nybro.se
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www.smalandsflora.org

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www.vattenkartan.se

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