



# Betskogsåker

Here and on the nearby information board you can find out more about the unique fields of Karum. The fields are farmed using the three-field system, like in the 19th century. You can read about what that means and the three different stages of the three-field system here and at two other fields.

## THE SAME SHAPE AS IN 1837

In the 19th century this field was called Betskogsåker or Bärlindan. Today it looks exactly as in 1837. We know this thanks to the land partitioning map that was drawn up that year. Land partitioning meant that each farmer had his fields and meadows collected in a small number of areas. Before that, they were spread all around. The partitioning meant that farmers could work more efficiently and get bigger harvests.

Betskogsåker covers just over 8,000 square metres, in Swedish called a "tunnland", equal to two acres. A tunnland is an old measure equal to the area you can sow with a barrel (tunna) of rye or barley. Today we use the hectare when measuring an area. A hectare is roughly two "tunnland" in size, or about two football pitches.

### Karum's fields are unique in Sweden

Taken together, this makes the fields unique in Sweden:

- They are small and many, around 30, in all, about 30 ha in area.
- They are cultivated using a so-called three-field system, just as in 19th-century Karum.
- They have kept the same shape, size and appearance as 200 years ago.
- Modern machines are used in farming operations. In some cases they have been adapted in line with how farmers worked in the 19th century.
- Every year, about 10 ha of the heritage grain Gotland Rye are grown.
- The focus is on preserving Gotland Rye and endangered species of field weeds.
- Alongside the fields, small 19th century meadows have been re-created.

We know of no know place that can be compared to Karum.



Photo: The County Administrative Board in Kalmar County.

### The three-field system, as in the 19th century

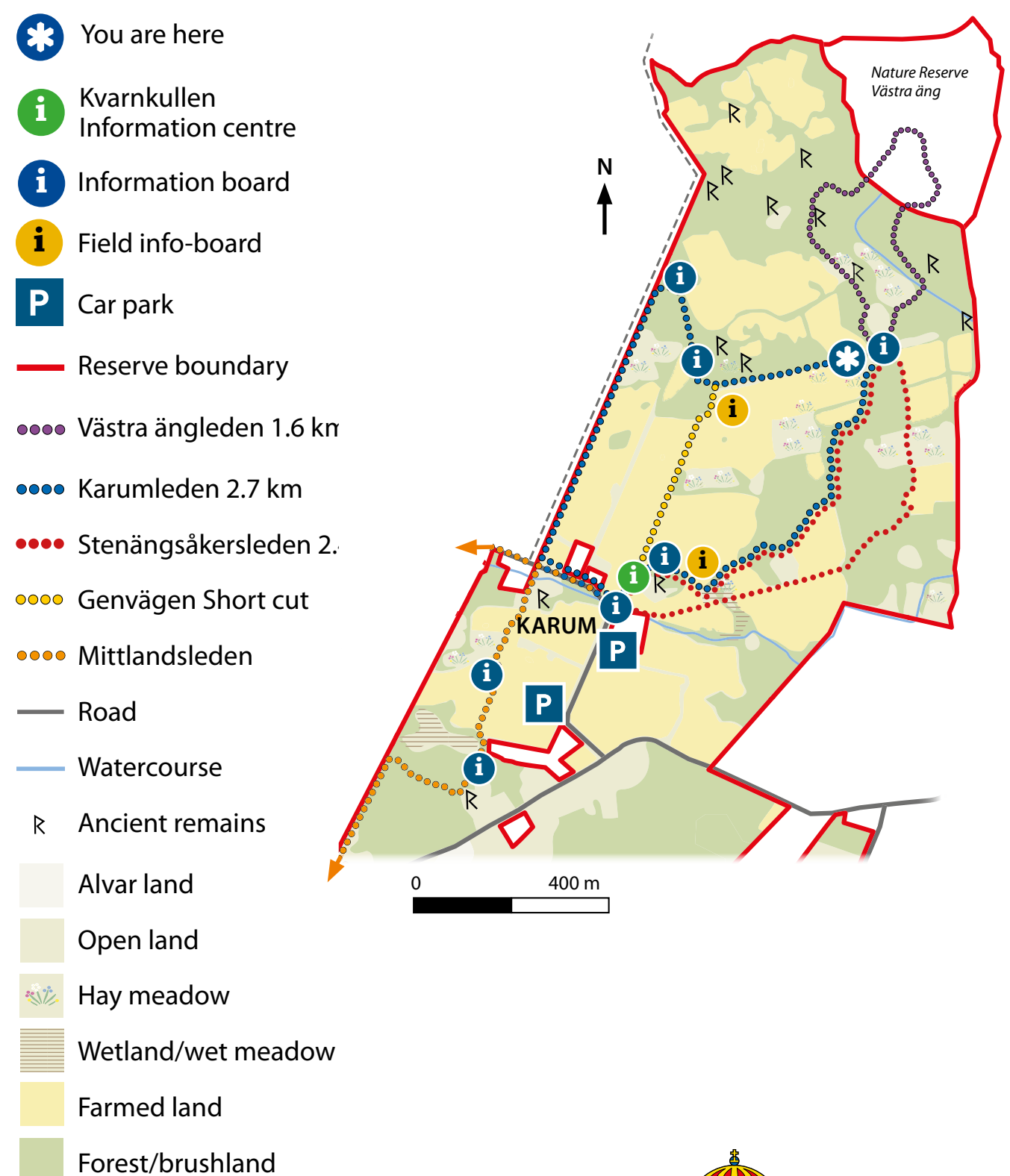
The fields in Karum are today farmed using the three-field system – that means that:

- A third of the fields are sown with rye.
- A third of the fields are sown with barley.
- A third of the fields are not sown at all – the soil is resting/lying fallow.

The field where rye grows one year is sown with barley the next year. For the third year, the field lies fallow. Then it starts again.

The three-field system had its big breakthrough on Öland in the 18th century. Before that, the farmers grew grain on every field every year, known as single-crop farming. Or, half the fields were fallow every year, which is known as the two-field system.

At the end of the 19th century, farmers took up crop rotation. That often means a series of five or six crops, but without the field lying fallow for a single year.



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