



Strömmen and other waters

The stream you can see is called Strömmen (The Current), just like many other streams on Öland. In summer it usually dries up, but in spring and autumn water flows freely. The stream runs straight through Karum and was probably one of the reasons why the farmhouses were built here. Strömmen's water served both people and animals.

GREEN, JUICY PASTURE

The land alongside Strömmen was especially good for grazing. When the stream overflowed its banks in spring it brought sludge that was rich in nutrients. The sludge brought life to the grass and green plants, which grew green and juicy well into the summer when other pastures had dried out. That is probably why Strömplanen (The Stream Area), an area near to Strömmen, was the village's common grazing land well into the 20th century.

DRINKING WATER AND PUBLIC WATER

Animals could drink the water from Strömmen, but people could not. The villagers took drinking water from the wells they had dug on their own properties. In Karum there were also water sources that all the villagers could use. A map from 1817 mentions the springs Grön and Lund, Övre Brunn (The Upper Well), Fågelkärr (Bird Marsh) and a new well at Västergården farm.

WATERPOWER

Strömmen also drove small watermills where the farmers could grind their grain. At the end of the 17th century there were almost 200 watermills on Öland. The waterwheels were horizontal and therefore suitable for a small stream like Strömmen.

The watermill started when the water hit the 1) paddle wheel, the engine of the watermill. 2) The axle from the wheel started to turn 3) the upper millstone. It rotated against the lower millstone, which was fixed. 4) Funnel in which the grain was poured. The grain ran down between the millstones, where it was ground into flour. The flour ran out through an opening between the stones. 5) Device to raise and lower the upper millstone.

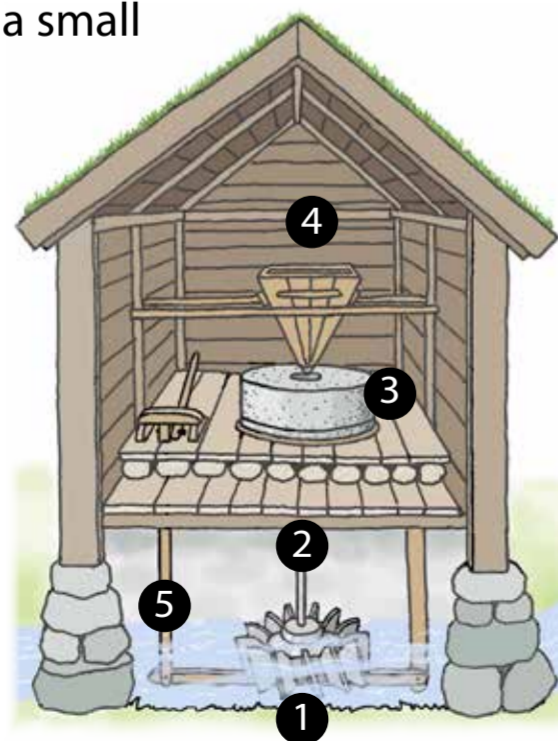
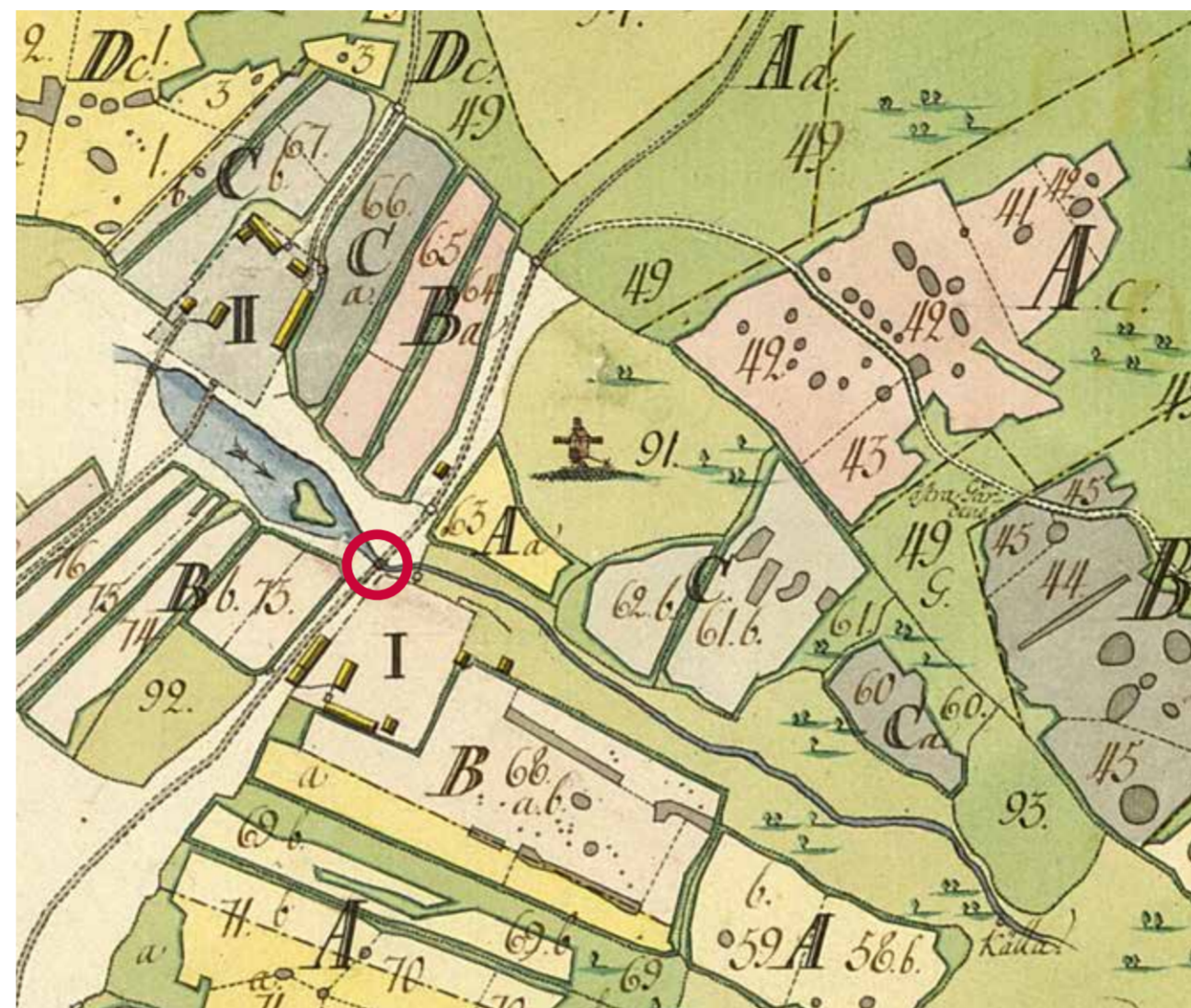


Illustration: Ulf Ragnarsson.



Map: Land Survey, historical maps.

The red ring marks where you are standing. The map was drawn up in 1777 and shows among other things Strömmen with some bridges. The bridges were made of limestone slabs and some of them remain to this day. Further downstream you find the word Källa, meaning a freshwater spring. And on the other side of Strömmen on Kvarnkullen Hill you can see a windmill.

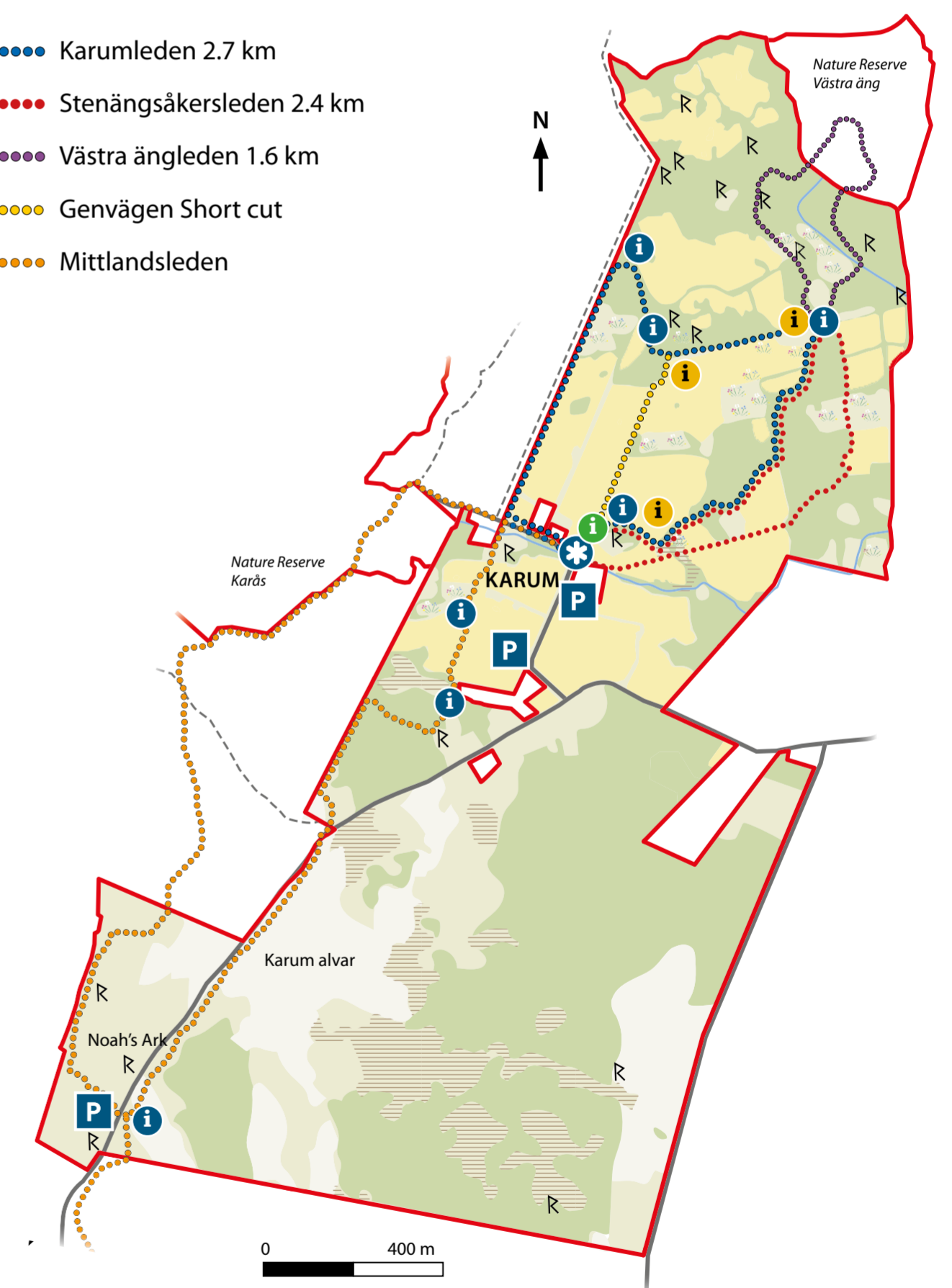
WATER FOR SOAKING FLAX, WASHING AND PLAYING

Strömmen has certainly been used in many different contexts that we do not know of today. For example, the villagers may have had retting pools there. The flax they harvested was "retted" or soaked in water to soften the fibres. The women then worked the flax to be able to spin thread and weave for example bedlinen, cloth and clothing.

When it was time to wash, Strömmen was again useful. Children helped to bucket up water and also filled bathtubs at home when it was bath time at the weekend. And they surely took the opportunity to play with bark boats where the water flowed fastest. Perhaps there were frog spawn and tadpoles where the water was still.

- You are here
- Kvarnkullen Information centre
- Information board
- Field info-board
- Car park
- Alvar land
- Open land
- Hay meadow
- Wetland/wet meadow
- Farmed land
- Forest/brushland
- Reserve boundary
- Road
- Watercourse
- Ancient remains

- Karumleden 2.7 km
- Stenängsåkersleden 2.4 km
- Västra ängleden 1.6 km
- Genvägen Short cut
- Mittlandsleden



Länsstyrelsen
Kalmar län