



# The Meadow

Meadows are rare in today's Sweden, but this is what they looked like in the 19th century. The meadow in front of you is one of about 50 of which have been cleared of brush and recreated in Karum. In the past, the harvest from the meadows decided how much cattle would survive the winter. The meadow produced both hay and leaves for fodder.

## HARVEST TIME

Almost everyone in the village helped with the harvest. It often started in early July and could go on for a whole month. The men mowed the meadow with scythes which cut the hay close to the ground. The women followed, raking together the grass, which was then left to dry into hay. Finally, the fens and other wetlands were mowed. Once the hay had been transported to the barns, the cattle were allowed in for after-grazing.

The meadows also gave a second harvest, but that comprised leaves from the trees, above all ash trees. The amount of fodder the farmers could harvest decided how many animals they could keep alive until spring grazing.

In the 20th century farming changed. The farmers began to grow grass on the fields. Some meadows were ploughed into fields and others were used as grazing land for the animals.

## MEADOWS WITH ROOMS

There was a time when meadows started as clearings in shady, leafy forests. Where light filtered in, grass and plants thrived, and the meadow was created.

The meadows here in central Öland are special – they consist of different “rooms”. They have been divided into rooms by all the stone walls the farmers built in the Iron Age (500 BC–AD 1050). Trees and bushes could grow to form green walls in the stone walls surrounding the small rooms. The meadows could be given strange names such as The Kitchen and The Living Room.

In the 1850s the nearby meadows were called Asklunden (the Ash Grove) and Tomtängsbacken (Plot Meadow Hill). The word ash refers to the tree that gave leaf fodder. The word plot indicates that there has been buildings here, perhaps dating back to the Iron Age. Keep going north and you will find out more about that time.

Haymaking in Ismantorp in the 1920s. The men are scything and the women are raking. On the picture we can see Alfrida Olsson, Lilly Svensson, Gottfrid Svensson and “Master Erik”.

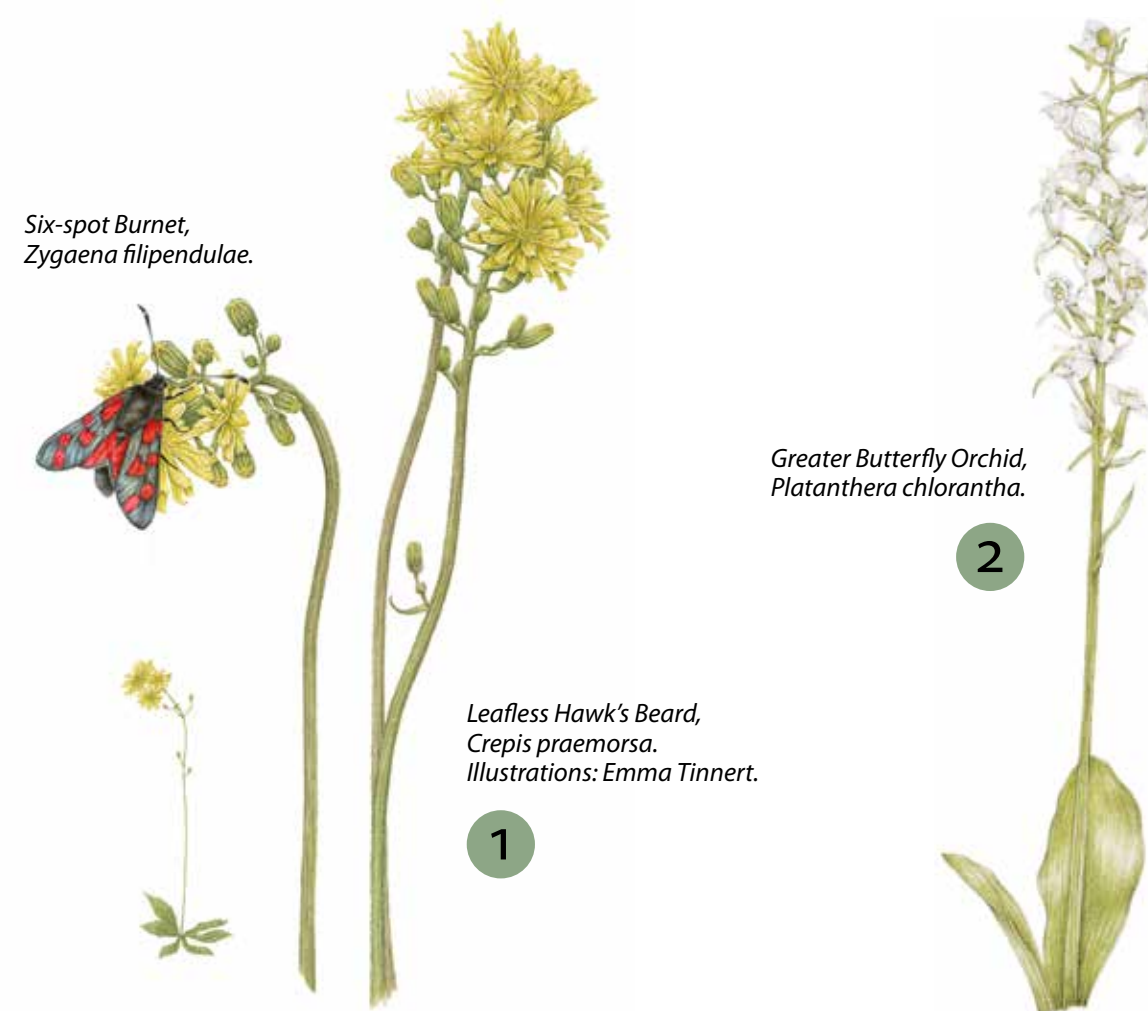


Photo: Långlöt Heritage Association.

Today about 27 ha of meadowland are kept open in Karum. It corresponds to an area of about 50 football pitches. The man on the picture is driving a mini manual cutter bar mower. The implement cuts the grass in the same way as a scythe would do.



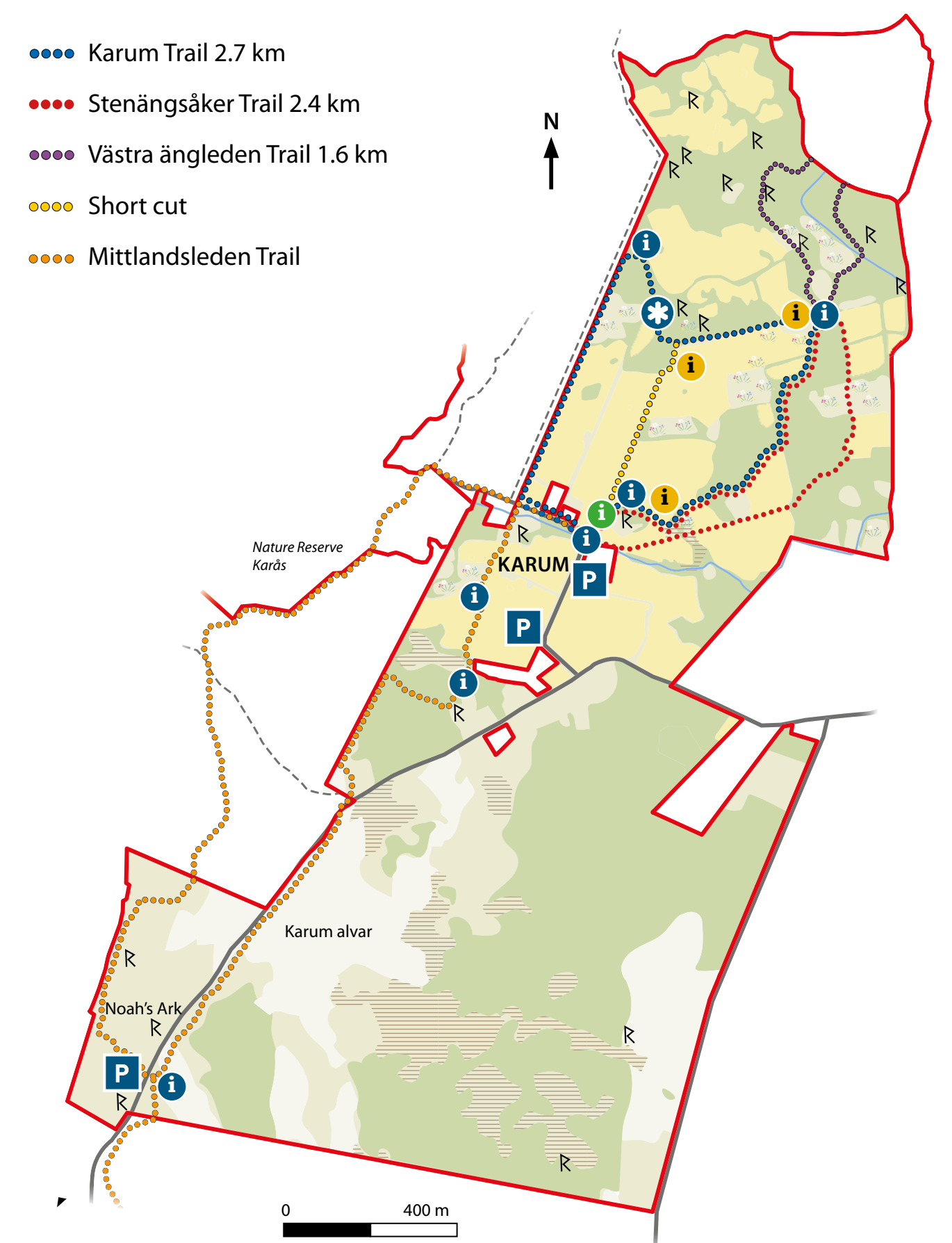
Photo: The County Administrative Board in Kalmar County.



Annual haymaking creates flowery meadows rich in species, which attract butterflies. Here you can see the examples 1) Leafless Hawk's Beard and 2) Greater Butterfly Orchid.

At Kvarnkullen information site closer to the village you can see more pictures of meadow flowers – don't miss it.

- 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



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