



# Herrfallsäng



*Herrfallsäng in springtime. Photo: Elisabeth Karlsson*

The Herrfallsäng nature reserve is a classic habitat, with nearly 300 known species of vascular plants. Many of them thrive in the lime-rich soil, and are dependent on annual pasture and hay making.

The purpose of the reserve is to protect and manage a lime-influenced cultural heritage area with wooded hay meadows, pasture and groves of deciduous forest for research and visitors. The nature reserve, covering an area of 43 ha, was established in 1973, but from as early as 1934 a small part of the area including the hay meadow had been protected.

## Limestone and groundwater flow

Herrfallsäng lies in a fault slope, just south of a limestone plateau. A few kilometres to the north, near Yxhult, there is a major limestone outcrop. The ice sheet moving southwards transported crushed rocks known as moraine, and this was mixed with lime at Herrfallsäng. The position on the slope creates a significant groundwater flow. It is these conditions that combine to promote a rich growth of vegetation.

## Hay meadow with long tradition

The Herrefallsängen meadow has been used for hay making since at least the 18th century, with only short breaks. This makes it especially interesting. The meadow was originally part of Herrefallet Farm. In the 1870s the Herrefallet buildings, fields and meadows were part of Bred-sätter Farm, which owned land north of the reserve. At that time, the area that now comprises the nature reserve compri-

sed pastureland with deciduous trees in the eastern part and meadow in the west with trees and bushes. The two current pasture areas have been cultivated in the past but were used as meadows before that. Even part of the south-west area with groves was cultivated at the start of the 19th century. Today, the meadow is not cut until the end of July so that the meadow plants have had time to seed. Hay making is vital for the continued existence of many plant species. The diversity is also stimulated by grazing at the end of summer and in autumn so that the grass is kept short. The former cultivated areas east and west of the meadow are grazed to promote the pastureland plants. At Herrfallsäng, trees are trimmed to simulate the traditional practices of lopping or pollarding. Pruning reduces the size of the tree crown, thereby allowing more sunlight to reach the ground and lower vegetation. Many elms in the nature reserve have died as a result of elm disease.

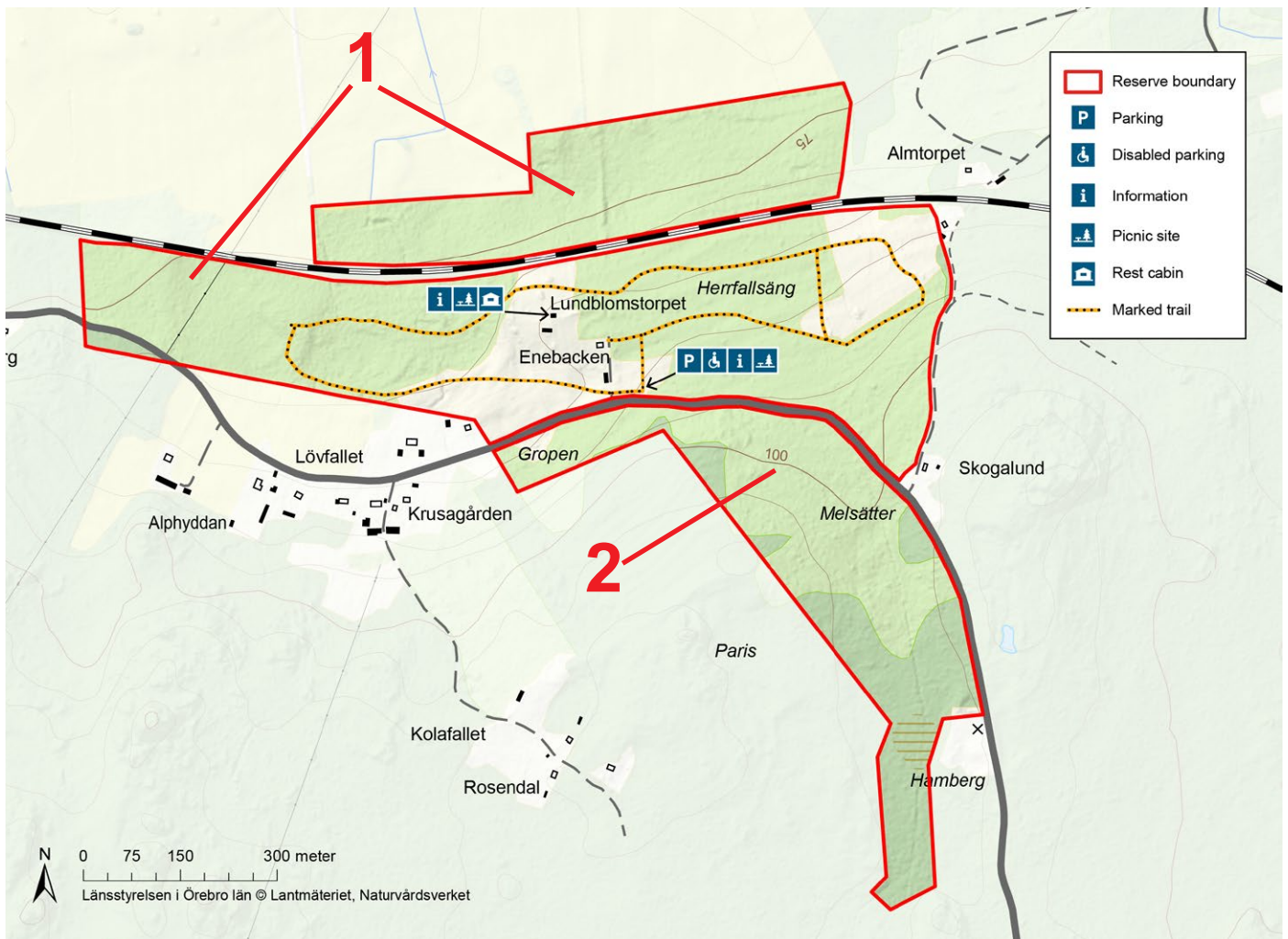
## A classic habitat

Nearly 300 species of vascular plant are known from Herrfallsäng. This is one of the leading habitats in the county for rare species, and Herrfallsäng is often named in the ancient publications about flora in the county. The most diverse areas are the open hay meadows and pastureland, where species such as mountain clover, viper's grass, adder's tongue and dwarf milkwort are found. The grove areas contain fewer unusual species, but noteworthy is the unusually rich occurrence of elm, mezereum and rough horsetail. Liverleaf and wood anemone occur in large quantities, as well as Solomon's seal, spring pea and lungwort. The wetland vegetation includes rare species such as birds-eye primrose, hoary willowherb, early marsh orchid and brown bog-rush.

## Birds, fungi and snails

There is also a rich fauna, particularly in terms of certain groups of lime-loving simpler animals such as snails. The nature reserve also contains many threatened and rare fungi, including candelabra coral, hedgehog puffball and flaky puffball. The bird fauna is also varied, and some of the distinctive species found here are chaffinch, blackcap and robin. Hawfinch and nutcracker are also attracted to the area.





## Within the Reserve it is for example, forbidden to:

### 1 Reserve area north of the road (act of 1973)

- damage the ground
- Pick, dig or in any other way damage the vegetation
- camp or park caravans
- light a fire
- ride a bike or drive motor vehicles
- park except in the designated area

### 2 Reserve area south of the road (act of 2021)

- damage the ground, boulders/rocks or take away rocks
- drive motor vehicles
- ride a bike or horse
- damage the vegetation (but you are allowed to pick berries and edible mushrooms),
- damage living or dead trees and bushes
- disturb wildlife

Complete regulations: [www.lansstyrelsen.se/orebro/naturreservat](http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/orebro/naturreservat)

## How to get there

There is a signpost to the nature reserve from the road between Hallsberg and Pålsboda.

## Facts

Established: 1934 (Natural memory), 1973 (Nature reserve), extended 2021

Area: 58,8 hectare

Landowner: Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and private

Managed by: Länsstyrelsen i Örebro län, Örebro County Administrative board

The site is a part of the Natura 2000 European network of conservation areas.