



Sixtorp lies in a beautiful cultural heritage landscape where meadows and fields are still used, providing habitats for threatened plants and a rich birdlife. The nature reserve has long been a focus for outdoor activities in southern Kilsbergen mountains.

Diverse landscape with long history

On the slope north of Lake Multen there is a beautiful landscape comprising a mosaic of pasture fields and hay meadows. The upper part of the slope consists of bare rock covered with moraine in the lower parts. A stream, Gammelhyttebäcken, runs through the valley and flows into Lake Multen via a boggy area and Lake Igeltjärnen, a kettle hole formed by a melting ice block. For many years people forged iron in the area where Gammelhyttebäcken flows into the lake.

The ironworks, which operated here until 1819, may well have originated in the Middle Ages. Nearby is a mining district where iron ore was extracted. The area contains a lot of bluish cinder stone as well as ruins of dam structures and building foundations. A water-driven saw was sited along the stream.

Fields of herbs and hay meadows

East of the nature reserve is the village of Sixtorp, dating from around 1680. The reserve contains parts of the village's ancient fields, meadows and pastureland. A mosaic of pasture fields and hay meadows spreads across the slopes down towards Lake Multen. The remains of field boundaries and cultivation cairns indicate former land use. Southwest of Lake Igeltjärnen there are also remains of the crofter's cottage called Igeltjärnskulle. In older times there was a lot of meadowland around Sixtorp, something that was typical of mining areas where there was a need for working animals.

The meadows and natural pasture areas now have a rich flora of herbs, including viper's grass, Alpine bistort, arnica, spotted cat's ear, common milkwort, mountain everlasting, lesser butterfly orchid and greater butterfly orchid. A common way of increasing natural meadows' yield in former times was through irrigation, and there are signs that this took place by the Gammelhyttebäcken stream.

Unusual plant and animal life

The forests near the Gammelhyttebäcken stream comprise tall deciduous trees, where aspen and ash are important components. The calcareous soil promotes many unusual species, including globeflower, common toothwort, hedge woundwort, wonder violet and baneberry. The bush layer includes guelder rose and mezereum. There are also rare mosses and lichens such as anomodon moss, rambling tail moss, *Leptogium lichenoides* and dog lichen.

The Gammelhyttebäcken stream has a permanent population of brown trout. Along the banks, the beaver has brought down many ash trees, which now lie decaying on the ground providing a habitat for wood-decay fungi and insects. Birdlife is varied and many woodpeckers thrive in the nature reserve. Over a hundred bird species have been seen in the area. The county animal of Närke, the common dormouse, is also found.

Important for recreation

Sixtorp has been a focus for outdoor life in southern Kilsbergen for many years. Sixtorp's recreational centre is a key stage on the Bergslagsleden footpath, which passes through the nature reserve. The centre offers overnight accommodation, facilities

for camps and other services. Adjacent to the facility is a nature school that is a resource for excursions in the area. Sixtorp allows access to nature, and provides wind shelters, barbecue, drinking water from an outside tap and a dry toilet. You can swim in the lake. The old school in Sixtorp has been used as a clubhouse by the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation in

Västernärke for many years. The society has been active in restoring and managing the Sixtorp area and has an extensive programme of activities for people interested in nature.



Arnica. Photo: Michael Holmberg





How to get there

The nature reserve lies 4 km northwest of Mullhyttan. Take road 204 towards Mullhyttan. In Mullhyttan, turn north towards Sixtorp and the car park is at Sixtorp Recreational Centre immediately south of the nature reserve.

§ In the nature reserve, you are not permitted to:

- damage living or dead trees
- ride
- have dogs or other pets unleashed
- camp or park caravans

Facts

Established: 2005
 Area: 42 ha
 Landowner: Private ownership, Örebro Regional Development Council and Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
 Managed by: County Administrative Board