

HÖGARPS BY VILLAGE

Högarps by Village is at the same time both special and representative for the development of agriculture and settlements in this part of the Småland highlands. What is special is that old agricultural structures have been preserved, offering a highly pedagogical picture of the how the landscape has changed in the last centuries. The continuous use of meadows and pastures explains the rich flora in the village. Högarps by is both a culture and a nature reserve.

Over the centuries, farming and subsidiary industries have shaped and reshaped the landscape. Different methods for cultivation and fodder harvesting have succeeded each other and left their mark on the land. The southern part of the village – Stora Högarps – has been documented several times since the first map was drawn in 1647. We can therefore follow the development towards, for example, the increasingly expanding amount of arable land. Changes in the built environment can also be studied from when it was concentrated to one village plot up until around 1820. Then the old plot was abandoned, and Stora Högarps was divided into four farms.

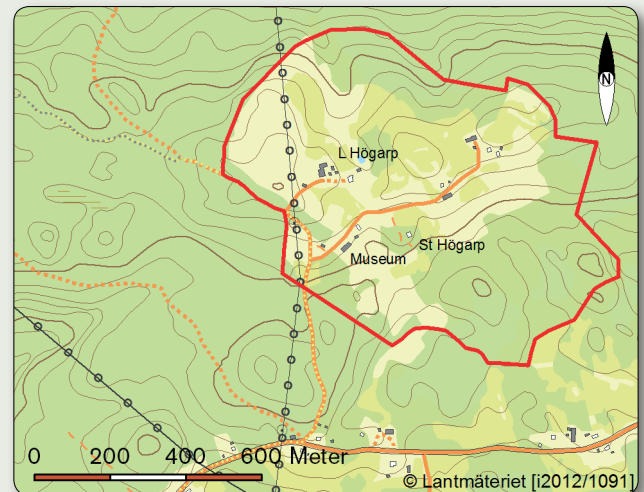
Old land use also left its mark in different ways. On the one hand, we have physical traces – clearance cairns, stone walls, cultivation terraces and building foundations –, and on the other hand, we have biological traces by way of special vegetation promoted by scything and grazing. The pollarded trees also bear witness to leaf-fodder harvesting.

Both Högarps and neighbouring villages are known for their richness of species. Here you find e.g. lesser butterfly-orchid, heath-spotted orchid, mountain everlasting, wolf's bane and common milkwort, but also more unusual species such as leafless hawk's-beard, rock cinquefoil and the protected elder-flowered orchid. In spring there are in some places carpets of yellow cowslips.

In the south-western part of the village there is a cowshed, which houses a museum with old agricultural and household implements from the village.



The traditionally managed ground contains pollarded trees, i.e. leaf-bearing twigs, and branches have been cut for winter-fodder for the cattle. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.



HIDDEN GEM 73



HOW TO GET HERE

From Stenberga Church around 10 km west of Virserum: Drive east from Stenberga towards Virserum. After approx. 5 km turn north (left). Follow the signs and continue for around 500 m.

Coordinates:

N 6354778 / E 529739
(SWEREF 99 TM) // N 57°
20' 5.770", E 15° 29' 38.387"
(WGS84)



The old village plot, which was abandoned around 1820, was located along the road in the background of the picture. Photo: Jönköping County Museum.

JÖNKÖPINGS LÄNS
MUSEUM

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HIDDEN GEMS

There are so many things to discover in the countryside! Here, Jönköping County Museum presents some of the cultural environment and heritage attractions in the county.

They include well-known cultural monuments such as Habo Church and the Smålandsstenar Stone Circles, but also lesser known gems such as log-driving remains in the river Valån and Stengårdshult Church. Around the county you can find evidence of how people lived and worked in the past, everything from castles and manors to abandoned embankments and clearance cairns in forest areas.

The idea with Hidden Gems is to tempt you to make excursions in the cultural landscape – here you find our history, revealed in different ways in the physical environment. This heritage is worth experiencing and protecting. Bit by bit, we will be adding more sights under the heading Hidden Gems, both for people living in the county and visitors from further away. The more people who discover these gems, the better chance that they will be preserved for the future.

FACTS

In Jönköping County there are more than 4 000 registered ancient remains, 87 cultural environments of national interest, close to 130 listed buildings, around 150 churches, some 100 rural community centres with old settlements, a large number of industrial heritage sites, and two cultural reserves. There are also a large number of cultural environments with buildings worthy of conservation. More information about the sites can be found on the websites of the County Administrative Board, the municipalities and the local heritage societies.

GOOD TO KNOW

Access to the Hidden Gems varies. Some sites are well signposted, with easy access and proper parking facilities, etc. Others are more challenging to reach. Visitors may have to walk some distance, sometimes through scrubby forest, only to be met by a broken sign (if there ever was one) when they reach the site. All the sites, however, have an exciting and interesting history.

Please note that many of the cultural heritage buildings are privately owned and can only be viewed from the outside. Also, please respect private land. Many churches are open in the summer. During other times of the year, the churchwarden may be able to open the church for you.

