

Vallaskogen became the most visited forest

In the forest of Vallaskogen outside Linköping, visitors are able to see how farmers and country folk made use of the forest in days gone by. Vallaskogen is a very good example showing how the development of cultural and natural assets has created a well visited recreational forest with great biodiversity close to a built-up area.

With the restoration of the forest of Vallaskogen outside Linköping, the municipality has succeeded in creating a complete experience of nature and culture for visitors.

Visitors are guided by thoroughly prepared information material. Vallaskogen is also a popular destination for school groups.

The project was financed with support from the local investment programme (LIP) and was in progress from 2001 until the end of 2004.

POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- Action was taken on 17 ha of land during the project to boost biodiversity. Of this area, 15 ha consists of grazed forest, 1 ha of hay meadow and 1 ha of cultivated land with old crops and endangered arable weeds.
- Inventories have the protective value of this land for future preservation of species.
- Forest work is labour-intensive, and the action consequently created a number of jobs during the project period

Photograph: Göran Billesson



IMPLEMENTATION

The action included erecting fences, quarrying stone, building stone walls, clearing brushwood, clearing space around oaks, felling conifers and removing stumps. The timber was partly transported by horse. A number of deciduous trees were pollarded – the shoots were cut off for fodder, but in such a way that more shoots were formed. A wooded meadow has started to be created alongside Gamla Linköping (Old Linköping). Forest sheep and Gotland sheep graze all year and ‘rödkulla’ (red polled) and mountain cows graze in the summer. Three ponds have been recreated in the forest. Old-fashioned utility plants are grown on small allotments.

The various actions are based on a large number of inventories of flora and fauna and geology and archaeology.

POTENTIAL AND FUTURE BENEFIT

The natural landscape, natural resources and biodiversity have to be preserved and used in a sustainable way, for instance by restoring forest, the farmed landscape and wetlands. Having access to and being able to spend time in nature is important for everyone. In the long term this can lead to greater environmental involvement. The restoration also increased the attractiveness of the area and benefited biodiversity.

WHY BEST PRACTICE

The action in Vallaskogen is a very good example showing how development of high cultural and natural assets has created a very well visited recreational forest with high biodiversity close to an urban area that also reflects how country folk used their forest in the past. Vallaskogen can therefore show new generations what the forest looked like in days gone by, and contributes to public education.

Vallaskogen proved to be the best-known and most visited forest in the vicinity of the city in the survey of the local population conducted in 2007. Several public guided walks with various themes are held annually.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Contractors/providers:
The Municipality of Linköping ran the project
and engaged standard contractors.

The project on the Internet:
www.linkoping.se

For further information on Best Practice:
www.naturvardsverket.se/mir
www.swedishepa.se/bestpractice

FACTS

LIP Linköping 2001
Action 09
Grant: SEK 1.4m
Environmental investment: SEK 3.0m

