



# Welcome to Omberg Ecopark and Sveaskog



The Omberg Ecopark is located on the eastern shore of Lake Vättern. Here you will be captivated by splendid orchids and enthralling myths. You can wander among old giant oak trees and shady beechwood forests, as well as enjoy the fantastic view from Hjässan – Omberg's highest point. We turned Omberg into an ecopark in order to preserve and develop the natural values in the area.

## Quick facts

**Opened:** 2003

**Don't miss:** Beechwood forest reserve, Rödgavel grotto, giant oaks

**Suggestions:** Hiking, guided tours, canoeing

**Interesting species:** Marsh helleborine, golden eagle, hermit beetle

**Size:** 1,700 hectares

**Location:** On the eastern shore of Lake Vättern in Östergötland



Sveaskog's ecoparks  
– for nature and mankind

An ecopark is a large contiguous land area that has high biological and ecological values. There is forestry work in most of the ecoparks, but at least half of the productive forestland is used for nature conservation. Ecological values take precedence over financial ones in the ecopark. At the same time, the forest's importance in terms of outdoor activities and human well-being is in focus. Sveaskog is developing 37 ecoparks around the country. Omberg was inaugurated as the first ecopark in 2003.



Mosaic of forests at Omberg

Omberg is one of the forest landscapes in Sweden that is the richest in species. There is a mosaic of broad-leaved deciduous, spruce and broad-leaved wetland forests, and we work to reinforce these environments. There is also a strong showing of giant oaks and deadwood. The Omberg Ecopark comprises 1,400 hectares of productive forestland. The table below shows our long-term nature conservation ambitions for the Omberg Ecopark.

Rich in broad-leaved deciduous forests

Throughout history, Omberg has been rich in broad-leaved deciduous forests, but a great deal of these forests were

Nature conservation in Omberg Ecopark			
Nature types with high natural values	Starting point 2003	Resto-ration	In the future
Broad-leaved deciduous forest	15%	30%	45%
Spruce forest	5%	10%	15%
Total forest with high natural values	20%	40%	60%
Production forest with intensified consideration	0%		40%
Production forest with general consideration	80%		0%

As a result of the intensified consideration for the natural and cultural environments, which are also left unmolested in the production forests, the total nature conservation area is approximately 70 per cent. Of this area, 2 per cent is nature reserve land.

replaced by thick spruce plantations in the 20th century. Even so, the broad-leaved deciduous forest still has a prominent position at Omberg – just visit the beechwood forest nature reserve, for example, to see evidence of this. Our ambition is to recreate the deciduous forests in the ecopark.

Old spruce forests

Omberg's inaccessible screes mean that the spruce forests located there have remained relatively untouched and been



able to develop freely. In some cases, the spruce trees are a couple hundred years old. There is an abundance of dead trees and deadwood in the forests at various stages of decomposition. This is beneficial to a number of rare lichens and mosses, as well as to insects and woodpeckers.

Giant oak trees

A great deal of Omberg was previously an open grazing landscape. This benefited the oak trees, which were allowed to grow extremely large and old. Omberg currently accommodates around 400 giant oaks, but many of these are extremely pressed by the young forest growing there. Since over 1,000 species live on, in and off the oak, it is important for biological diversity. As a result, our aim is to increase the number of giant oaks to 5,000.

Queen Omma

Omberg's eternal sovereign is Queen Omma. Her most important task is to safeguard and manage the mountain, its plants and its animals, and there are numerous myths about her. For example, water seeps down to Lake Vättern through the ceiling of Rödgavel grotto, and myth has it that these are the tears of Queen Omma who is mourning a deceased suitor.

Omberg's enthralling history

The mountain was used for farming as early as the Stone Age. The ancient castles were built at around the 5th and 6th centuries during the turbulent period of migration. The area became the centre of the House of Sverker (12th century) and, amongst other things, the Alvastra Monastery was founded. Omberg subsequently became one of the largest animal parks, which means it served as the king's private hunting grounds through 1805. A government forester training school was opened at Omberg in 1859, and forestry became more organized. The forester training school closed in 1935. There was traditional forestry at Omberg up until 2003 when the ecopark was inaugurated.

Outdoor activities

The Omberg Ecopark is a popular area for outdoor activities. Visitors can exercise, pick berries and mushrooms or just experience nature. A comprehensive hiking system takes visitors to most of Omberg's sights. Guided tours are offered during the peak season to visitors interested in learning more about Omberg's nature and culture.

Upplev Omberg

Upplev Omberg (Experience Omberg) is a co-operative consisting of some twenty local companies which offer products related to nature, and culture and health including kayak rentals, guided tours, accommodation, food, culture, art and handicrafts. Upplev Omberg has put together a biking route of 12 kilometres, connecting Omberg and Dags mosse. A map with the biking route can be downloaded at their homepage, [www.upplevomberg.se](http://www.upplevomberg.se)



## SIGHTS

- 1 Ecopark Centre** at Stocklycke is a good starting point for your visit to the ecopark. Several nature paths, hiking trails and guided nature and cultural hikes begin here. There is also information available about the ecopark.
- 2 Stocklycke meadow** is a hay meadow with fantastic floral splendour. There are characteristic hay meadow plants growing here such as rock rose, milkwort and cowslip.
- 3 Stocklycke harbour** was of great importance to the forestry at Omberg up to the 1950s. Timber from felling on the mountain was shipped from here to industries around Lake Vättern. There is a grotto due south of the harbour that is easy to get to at the edge of the water.
- 4 Rödgavel grotto** is the largest of 15 grottos found along the precipices leading down to Lake Vättern. It is only accessible by boat.
- 5 The Bokskogen nature reserve** is a beautiful beechwood and broad-leaved deciduous forest found on the slope leading down to Lake Vättern.
- 6 The Ellen Key villa Strand** shore lies invitingly at Lake Vättern, and is surrounded by beechwood forest. Ellen Key, a writer, lived here during the latter part of her life. Her home was a gathering place for the period's most well-known artists and writers.
- 7 Sverkersgården** is a medieval site from the time of King Sverker and the powerful House of Sverker. The king reigned during the 12th century.
- 8 The Alvastra Monastery** was founded by French Cistercian monks in 1143. Holy Birgitta had many of her most important revelations here. The monastery fell into ruin as a result of the Reformation in the 16th century.
- 9 Pålbyggnaden** is Sweden's only known pile-dwelling from the early Stone Age, and is one of the country's most ancient relics. It dates back to around 3100 BC. There is nothing left above ground today, but signs on the site describe what it was like there.
- 10 Hjässan and Hjässaborgen** together constitute one of the ecopark's most popular destinations. Hjässan, the mountain's highest point, offers a magnificent view of Lakes Vättern and Tåkern and the Östgöta plain. The remains of Hjässaborgen, which is the largest of Omberg's three ancient castles, can be found around Hjässan.
- 11 The Høje Lilläng** meadow shelters Omberg's most beautiful meadow flora. Sveaskog and the County Administration in Öster-

götland are recreating the ancient meadowland's traditional hay making and grazing.

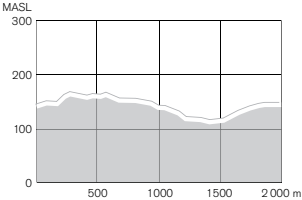
- 12 The Mörkahålkärret nature reserve** has a limestone marsh with several different types of orchids such as fly orchids and spotted orchids, as well as many other plants that thrive on limestone.
- 13 Oxbåset** slopes almost straight down into Lake Vättern. It is a hillside worth seeing. It is possible to reach the lake via a deep ravine, and patterns in the limestone create a mosaic on the slope.
- 14 Pers sten** is a boulder at Sjövägen that, according to legend, the giant Per threw there.
- 15 Borggården** is the most well-preserved of the mountain's three ancient castles.
- 16 Renstadsfällan** is a flowery natural grazing pasture where cowslips bloom in the summer.
- 17 Älvarums udde** is a beautiful site right next to Lake Vättern. It offers a fire pit, wind protection, swimming and fishing.
- 18 The Storpissan nature reserve** is a rich spruce forest with big, ancient trees. The forest has a great many stumps and trunks at various stages of decomposition, which benefits a number of insects, larvae and birds.
- 19 Storpissans utlopp** forms a powerful beam of light down to Lake Vättern in the spring.
- 20 Omberg's giant oaks** are found within a 16-hectare area. There are around 40 oak trees that are several hundred years old. Sveaskog is using felling and grazing livestock to recreate a grazing landscape similar to that found over 150 years ago. Several unusual wood insects are found in the area such as the rare hermit beetle.
- 21 Marberget** offers a beautiful view of the forest and Lake Vättern.
- 22 The Vitlerbäcken** brook is rich in limestone and inventories of lichen have been done here.
- 23 Västra väggar** offers a fantastic view over Lake Vättern – see the front of the leaflet.
- 24 The Ombergsliden nature reserve** protects some of Östergötland's foremost orchid marshes.
- 25 Drottning Omma's ancient castle** was built during the period of migration in the 5th and 6th centuries.
- 26 The Bockakyrkogården** cemetery is a burial site for Russian prisoners of war.



TRAILS

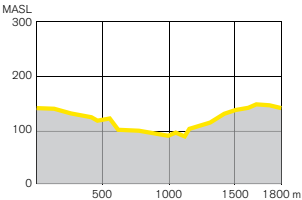
Nature trail—Omberg and the ice age (“Naturstig – Omberg och istiden”) □ 2 km

Do you know what a glaci-fluvial channel, alluvial cone and a dead ice hole are? Signs at these and other unique finds tell the history of the ice age and its significance to today's landscape in Omberg. The trail also takes you out to Vätterbranten and the view at Oxbåset 13 and the former shoreline of the Baltic ice-locked lake.



Nature trail—Trees, bushes and forests (“Naturstig – Träd, buskar och skog”) ■ 1.8 km

Learn to recognize our most common trees and bushes! On signs along the trail, you can also read about changes to the landscape and forests from the ice age to today. Which varieties of trees came here first and which came last? How can many “hot age” plants and animals thrive in Omberg today?



Ellen Key Trail (“Ellen Keys led”) ■ 6 km

This hike offers a view for miles, beech forests that smell of wild garlic, scraggy shoreline forest and a blooming hayfield.

The path goes down toward Vättern on the boulder ridge from the Stocklycke parking lot. After about 200 meters, you will come to a hayfield 2 —one of the most rich in species and most endangered types of nature in Sweden.

From Stocklycke hamn 3 the path winds through a varied “shoreline forest”, past the Rödgvall groto 4 toward Bokskogen nature reserve 5. Just south of the nature reserve, Ellen Key built her tasteful house Strand 6 in 1910, designing it as “a home for the soul”. Sverkersgården 7 just after Strand is an old crypt church. The path passes Ombergs turisthotell 3 and then takes a steep incline up to the highest point in Omberg, Hjässan, where views of Östgötaslätten, 10 where views of Östgötaslätten, Tåkern and Vättern await. Around Hjässan you will find the ruins of Hjässaborgen, the largest of Omberg's ancient castles.

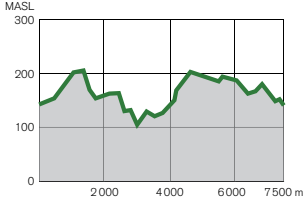
The pond of Mörkahälkäret nature reserve 12 harbor toads, frogs and other pond animals. Keep an eye out for grass snakes on the prowl for frogs! The last leg of the path goes through a beautiful beech forest.

Älvarum Trail (“Älvarumsleden”) ■ 7.5 km

On this hike, you can meet the diversity of the heights and the natural spruce forests, get a taste of Vättern and visit some gorgeous outlook points.

A few hundred meters after the start, the path enters a so-called glaci-fluvial channel—a remnant of the ice age. North of Pers sten 14 you follow a bewitching and gorgeous stretch down toward Älvarums udde 17. You can catch glimpses of Vättern through the trees of the deciduous forest and behind awe-inspiring spruces. At Älvarums udde you can go down to the pebble beach for a dip or to catch some fish for dinner. Just north of Älvarums udde is Storpissan nature reserve 18. In the spring, the Storpissan Basin, which runs along the northern boundary of the nature reserve, builds a forceful stream straight out in Vättern 19.

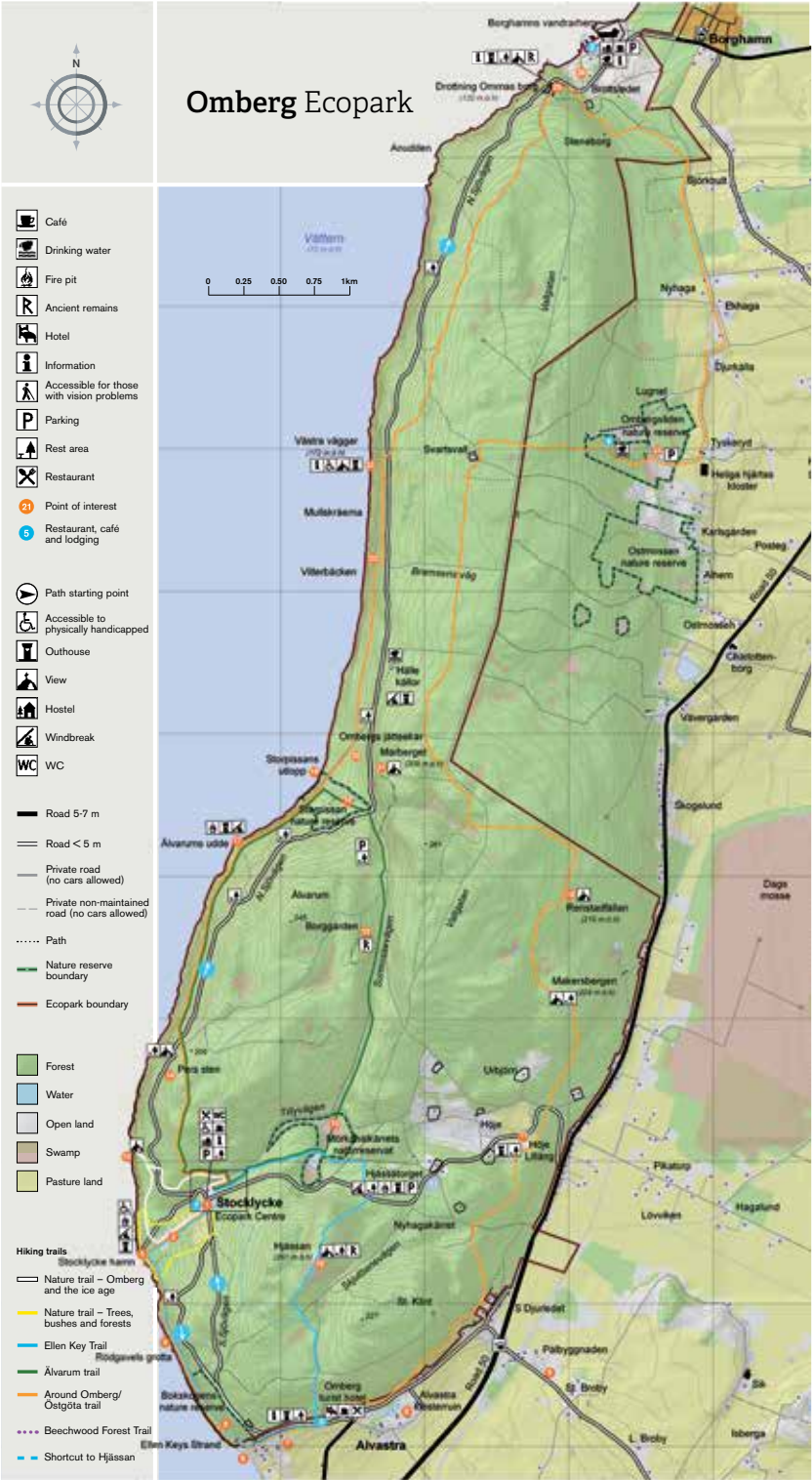
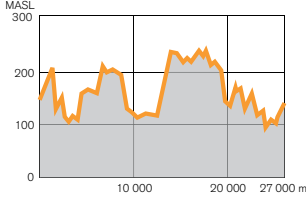
Take a detour to the slope of Marberget 21, with its magnificent view of Vättern and the forests of Omberg. The return trip passes Borggården 15, the most well preserved of the mountain's three ancient castles and the limestone marsh in Mörkahälkärets nature reserve 12.



Around Omberg/Östgöta Trail (“Omberg runt/ Östgötaleden”) ■ about 27 km

The crème de la crème of the mountain's natural and cultural treasures lie along this new hiking path. Västra väggar, Alvastra and Ellen Keys Strand are well known in Sweden and abroad, but along this path you will also find lesser known favorites, such as Bockakyrkogården and Renstadsfällan. The route up to Storpissan nature reserve 18 is described under “Älvarumsleden”. North of the mouth of Storpissan 19 you will find an oak landscape 20 that is reminiscent of the Djurgård epoch when the mountain was a royal hunting ground. Livestock graze here once again. The hike continues past the lime-rich Vitterbäcken 22 toward the outlook point Västra väggar 23. Here, you can peer down into the clear water of Vättern 100 meters from above. At Drottning Ommas borg 25 you will find wall ruins from a 1500 year old castle. You will also get a view of the historical Borghamn with limestone quarry, port and Bockakyrkogården 26—the burial site of Russian prisoners of war.

While hiking along eastern Omberg, you will soon meet Östgötaslätten. You will pass Ombergsliden nature reserve 24, which harbors some of Östergötland's foremost orchid marshes, Renstadsfällan's 16 natural pastureland that is rich in flowers and offers a view of Tåkern and the plains. At Høje Lilläng 11 you pass unique pasture and hayfield environments. Stop for awhile and read about the nature conservation project going on here. At the southern slope of Omberg, you will meet extensive beech, ash and elm forests. Alvastra kloster 8 is made up of the grand ruins of the medieval Cistercian monastery. The path from Ombergs turisthotell and back to the starting point Stocklycke is described—in the opposite direction—under “Ellen Key Trail”.





## GETTING TO OMBERG ECOPARK

## Car

Omberg Ecopark is located 8 km from Ödeshög where the E4 passes. Follow the signs from road 50. The ecopark is less than an hour drive from both Jönköping (80 km) and Linköping (70 km).



## Train

Mjölby is the closest train station (45 km).

See bus connections for continued transportation.

## Bus

The bus that goes between Ödeshög and Mjölby stops at the Alvastra crossroads (crossroads at road 50, just west of Pålbyggnaden), [www.ostgotatrafiken.se](http://www.ostgotatrafiken.se)

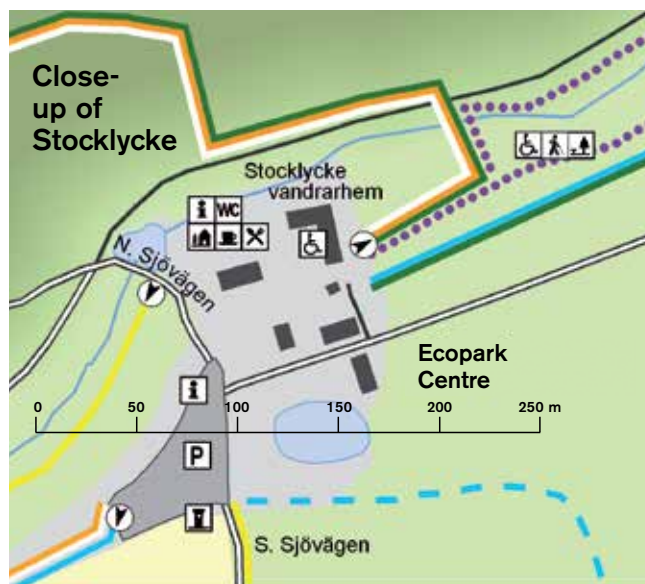


Red squirrel




## WELCOME TO THE ECOPARK CENTER

The ekopark center at Stocklycke youth hostel is a good starting point for discovering Omberg, where you find maps and information about the ecopark. The staff at the youth hostel are happy to answer questions and inform about sights and activities. Most walking trails also start from the ecopark center.



## Beechwood Forest Trail ("Bokskogsstigen") ■

0.6 km 

See the pillared hall of the beechwood forest outside Ecopark Centre. This 650 m trail can easily accommodate wheelchairs, walking frames and prams.

An excellent orientation map of the mountain can be purchased at Ecopark Centre should you wish to stray beyond the marked paths.



## RESTAURANT, CAFÉ AND ACCOMMODATION

## 1 Stocklycke vandrarhem – Hostel

Offers accommodation year round; café and food service. Advance booking during the off season. +46 (0)144-330 44

## 2 Borghamns vandrarhem – Hostel

Offers accommodation year round; café and food service. Advance booking during the off season. +46 (0)143-203 68

## 3 Ombergs turisthotell – Hotel

Accommodation and food for large and small groups when booked in advance. +46 (0)144-330 02

## 4 Ombergsliden Mountain Lodge

Accommodation for large and small groups when booked in advance. + 46 (0)705-83 42 38



Six-spot burnet moth



Discover the ecopark from a kayak



Wild garlic



Chicken mushroom



Dragonfly

West Studios AB  
Photo: Carl Lundberg, Per Petersson,  
Mikael Gustafsson/N and Sveaskog  
2016-07

## Right of public access–freedom with responsibility

The right of public access is a privilege which allows us to move freely through forests and across land as long as we show respect for the plants and animals. The ground rule is *don't disturb–don't destroy*. The right of public access also applies in nature reserves but can be restricted by the regulations of a specific nature reserve. You can find out more information on the right of public access from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency at [www.allemansratten.se](http://www.allemansratten.se)

## Sveaskog

Sveaskog is Sweden's largest forest owner and sells sawlogs, pulpwood and biofuel. Sveaskog also works with land transactions and develops the forest as a venue for hunting, fishing and other nature-based experiences. The forest and its assets are Sveaskog's core business and sustainable development permeates every aspect of Sveaskog's activities. Sales in 2015 were over SEK 6 billion and the number of employees totalled approximately 700.

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### For more information:

[www.ekopark.se](http://www.ekopark.se), [www.sveaskog.se](http://www.sveaskog.se) or Sveaskog's Customer Centre  
0771-787 100

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