

EXPERIENCE AXMAR ARCHIPELAGO

AXMAR BLUE PARK

Destinations among wreck and wrack

There is an exciting underwater world off the coast of Axmar. Under the surface of this stony and shallow archipelago are a number of sunken wrecks, all with a story to tell.

We have selected eleven sites that in various ways narrate the 300-year history of the ironworks, from small boats loaded with ore to worn out barges. Some are in shallow water and visible from the surface, others need scuba diving equipment.

The places are marked out with yellow buoys in the water so they are easy to find. There are no buoys at Sandbanken and Patriotien. There is an information board on land at the services in Västerhamn.

More information about the wrecks and life below the surface can be found on the buoys or at axmarbluepark.se.

1 THE ENGMAN WRECK N 61° 1' 01,19", E 17° 10' 18,67"

The Engman Wreck can be seen from the surface on clear days. It is the skeleton of a 27-metre boat from the turn of the 18th Century and is also one of the few archaeologically documented wrecks in Northern Sweden.

2 SVARTSTENSUDDEN BEDA N 61° 0' 49,49", E 17° 13' 53,92"

Lying at a depth of 17 metres is the wreckage of the sloop Beda af Harg. Its cargo of iron ore is still lying on the beach after the stormy night of 5 October, 1883. It's there with a beautiful covering of seaweed, surrounded by the unique nature of Svartstensudden.

3 GRANSKÅR AXMAR WORKS DOCK N 61° 03' 22,68", E 17° 10' 31,21"

At Granskår loads were transferred between barges and sloops. Iron rings can be seen in the stone blocks where the ships were moored. Piles of ballast from foreign ports can be seen in the water. A few metres off the beach is an unknown wreck – built around 1700. There are exquisite flat rocks to rest on and keep an eye out for seal!

4 MALMHAREN A SHIP CEMETERY N 61° 02' 59,20", E 17° 09' 59,08"

Three vessels stand out from a tangled heap of timber – one box-like barge and two unrigged sloops. After sailing the oceans of the world, these too were used as barges at Axmar. Now they are a home for a multitude of small fish and an interesting flora. Most is visible from the surface.

5 VÄSTERHAMN N 61° 03' 34,86", E 17° 16' 07,34"

A treasure of coins, a deserted cemetery and traces after a Gävle fish port. There's something enigmatic about Västerhamn and Kusö Kalv. It's a good place to rest, in the sheltered inlet with much to discover!

6 LENÄNGESVIKEN N 61° 03' 10,15", E 17° 09' 46,09"

The last of the Axmar Works barges lies among the reeds in the shallow Lenängesviken inlet. Just offshore is the wreck of a sloop from the early 19th century. Get there in a kayak or walk along the coastal path.

7 OXELHAREN N 61° 0' 23,39", E 17° 10' 18,05"

Four really large timber vessels lie side by side here. They are all amazingly well preserved even though they are in shallow waters. Getting here by boat is easiest but you can also reach it by land. Good for snorkellers and skin divers.

8 VENUS N 61° 2' 25,36", E 17° 12' 29,25"

After more than 150 years, the wreck of the Venus from Vaxholm is still the site of an accident. Scattered ship wreckage and pig iron lead to the hull of what was once a characteristic Roslag sloop, six metres below the surface.

9 TOKHAREN N 61° 2' 53,08", E 17° 13' 51,21"

The Tokharen wreck probably foundered early in the 20th century. It's still unknown as a vessel. The entire load of iron ore is still in the hull at a depth of six metres. Around the wreck are the rudder, transom and other parts of the ship. And there somewhere is the answer!

10 SANDBANKEN N 61° 3' 39,86", E 17° 14' 42,33"

Sandbanken is a shoal covered in vegetation that extends at between 1.5 and 5 metres deep. At the edge it falls away steeply down to a depth of 15 metres – good for a natural dive!

11 PATRIOTEN N 61° 0' 32,68", E 17° 12' 39,01"

An auction was held in 1840 on the ketch Patriotien, which had beached at Kusön and was later towed to the Sundsmar estate. The rig and other equipment were sold but the hull became a wreck on the edge of the beach and is now a pile of boards.

AXMAR NATURE RESERVE



FACTS:
The Axmar Nature Reserve was formed in 1978. It is around 4,500 hectares, mainly under water. More information on the nature and the rules that must be followed in the reserve to protect the flora and fauna can be found at lansstyrelsen.se/gavleborg. In 2011, Axmar Works became the first culture reserve in Gästrikland.

Big on and under the surface

A special underwater nature has been created here between fresh water and brine.

The many stones and blocks, shallow inlets and lagoons found in the archipelago offer many varied environments under water where flora and fauna with differing demands on life thrive. The beds of the shallow coastal inlets are richly covered in macroalgae, luscious vascular plants and dense stonewort. It is a treasure trove for crustaceans, snails, fish and waterfowl that are seeking food.

16 KUSÖ KALV

Västerhamn on Kusö Kalv is a shallow inlet that is just as beautiful above as below the surface. Snorkellers can see at least ten species of underwater vegetation and many different types of fish. A larger boat will take you easily into Österhamn. A path will take you easily from Österhamn to Västerhamn.

17 COASTAL PATHWAY

The pathway starts at the information board and goes 1 km north along the coast. There are nature and geology information boards dotted along the pathway.

18 BATS

An evening stroll in the height of summer will give you a good chance of seeing bats in the English Park. There are 5 of Sweden's 18 species of bat here.

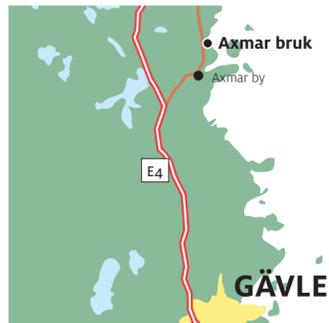
19 GRANSKÅR

There are exquisite flat rocks here where you can take a break and see the rich bird life with velvet scoter, red-breasted merganser, common tern and perhaps a sea eagle gliding past. There is also a good chance of seeing a seal. Go ashore in the bay to the west.

20 KUSÖN

On Kusön there are several fine sandy beaches and you can stroll the around 3 km forest path between Badviken and Korshamn. A larger boat will take you easily into Korshamn.

GETTING THERE



For guidance and information, see:
www.axmarbruk.se (in Swedish)
www.axmarbluepark.se (in Swedish)
www.lansstyrelsen.se/gavleborg
www.lansmuseetgavleborg.se (in Swedish)
www.visitgavle.se (in Swedish)
www.axmarbrygga.se
www.paddla-gastrikland.se

PLEASE BEHAVE THOUGHTFULLY

Take care of the natural and cultural environments during your visit. Respect the residents' privacy. Remember that both the nature reserve and the cultural heritage site have rules that you must follow. Full details of these regulations are available on the County Administrative Board's website: www.lansstyrelsen.se/gavleborg.

This publication is produced jointly by Gävleborg County Administrative Board, Länsmuseum Gävleborg (Gävleborg County Museum), Gävle kommun (Municipality of Gävle), Föreningen Hyttan (Smelting House Society), Paddla i Gästrikland and Axmar Blue Park.



THE WORKS AND THE SEA



As it once was

Axmar's first foundry was built close to the sea in 1671. Here, iron was produced with power from the waters of the Skärjeån river and coal from the surrounding forests in Ödmården. The Axmar Works has always been isolated from villages and public roads, and the sea was the main contact with the rest of world for a long time.

Much has been built and changed during the 250 years iron was produced in Axmar. The biggest change took place in the 1860s when the entire works was demolished and moved closer to the seashore.

12 THE PARK

The English Park is from 1866. The owners laid a modern park in English style with different types of deciduous trees on the site of the old foundry. A manor house, pavilion, orangery and outlook tower were also erected in the park. Here you will find deciduous trees, paths and glimmering water. The pavilion and orangery remain of the buildings.

13 THE FOUNDRY

The owners built a new foundry closer to the sea in the 1860s. The new foundry was very modern for its time with roasting furnace, blasting furnace, Lancashire hearth and rolling mill in the same facility. The last pig iron was manufactured here in 1927.

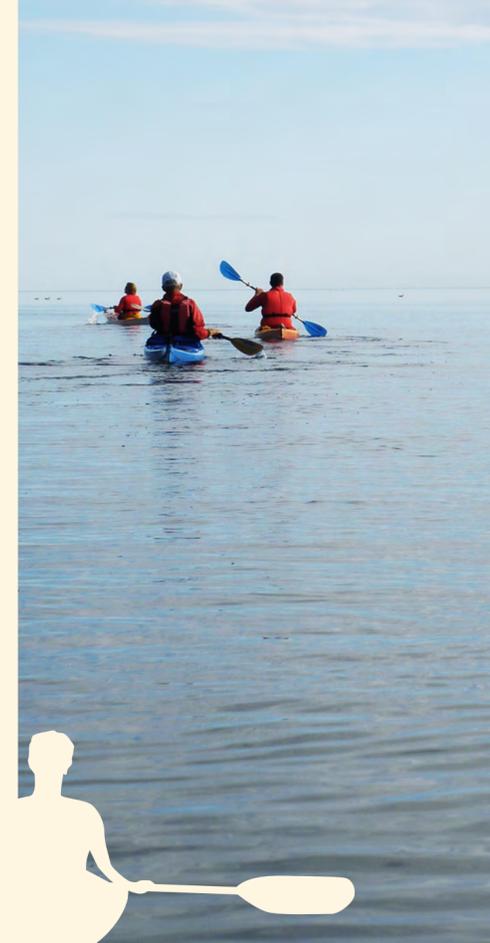
14 THE HARBOUR

The harbour was of great importance to the works and almost all transport went by sea. Iron ore, coal and grain were shipped in to the Axmar harbour and the finished iron was shipped out. Today, there are two warehouses preserved where the iron ore and grain were stored.

15 THE VILLAGE AT KUSÖN

The little picturesque village of Kusön was inhabited all-year-round and there was once a school for the children. Fishermen and farmers delivered grain to the works and paid rent in the form of fish.

PADDLE



The delightful Archipelago

The Axmar archipelago offers glorious paddling if you want to paddle between small islands, sandy beaches and skerries. You can make day trips or longer paddle trips of a few days. The degree of canoeing difficulty depends on how you plan your outing - and the forces of weather.

Good places to launch your kayak are at Trollharen, Axmarby, Gåsholma and Axmar Works, as well as others. You can park your car close to these places. The IP symbol on the map shows you where you can put your canoe in the water.

Once you're on the water, there are plenty of good places to go ashore on Kusön and Kusö Kalv. For more adventurous canoeing, carry on toward Tupparna and Kalvhararna.

21 ALDERNÄSVIKEN

Aldernäsviken on the south side of Kusön has a sheltered location and a good sandy beach where you can easily pull up your canoe. Facilities include toilet and windbreak.

22 DJUPAVAN

Djupavan on the east side of Kusön offers a sandy beach. On Kusö Kalv (16) are a number of picnic and camping sites. Österhamn, the east side of Kusö Kalv, gives the opportunity to bathe or light up a barbecue. There's also a toilet.

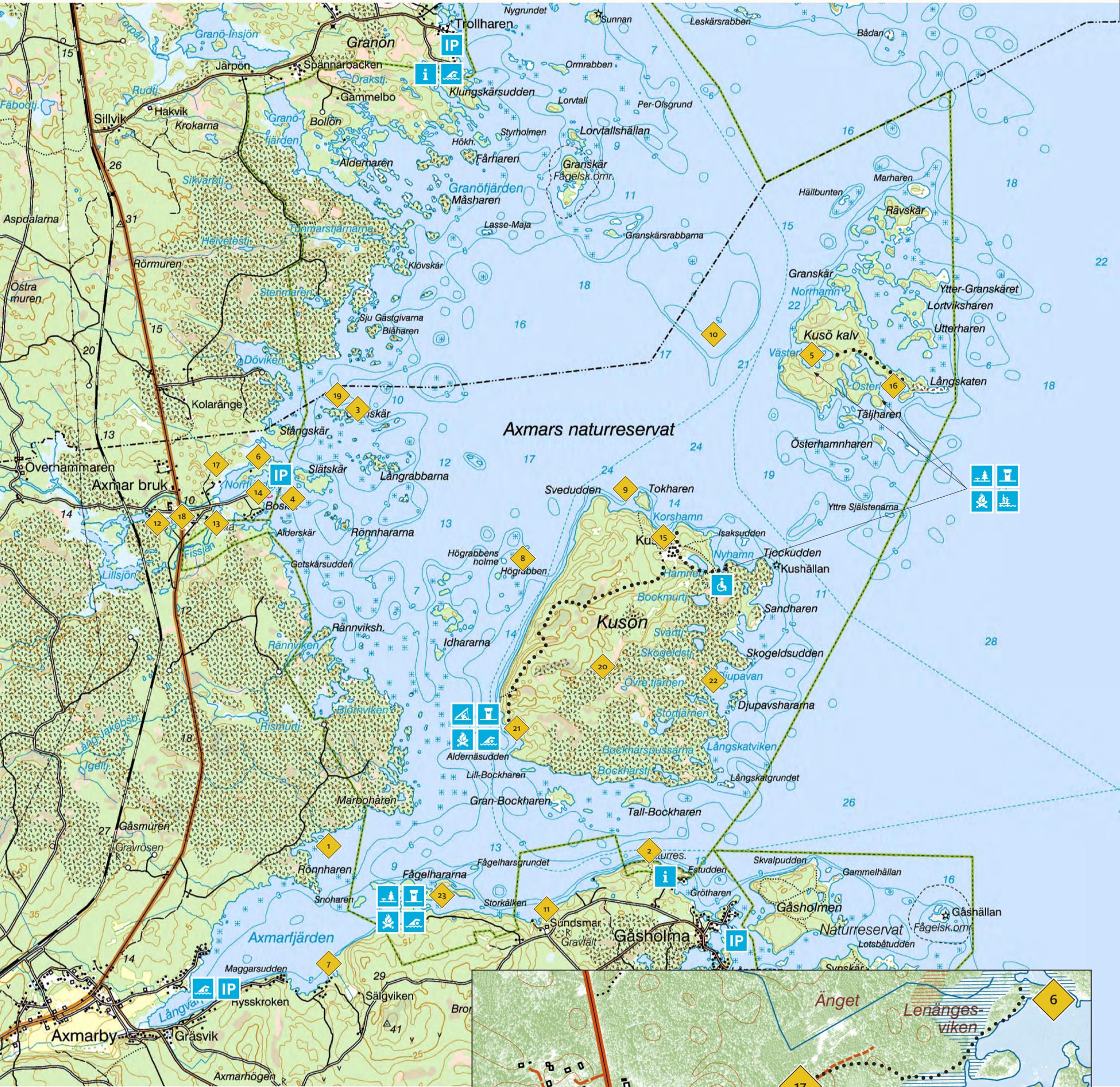
23 FÄGELHARARNA

Fågelhararna is a good place to stop for bathing and camping. There's a fireplace, sandy beach and you can enjoy the evening sun.

There are more suggested resting places and more information at www.paddla-gastrikland.se.

Don't forget to take your binoculars with you, if you're lucky you might see a seal or sea eagle!

PLACES TO VISIT IN THE AXMAR ARCHIPELAGO



Other places to visit

- Axmarbrygga Havskrog – a well-reputed fish restaurant located in a stone building with exquisite sea view www.axmarbrygga.se.
- Café Svarta Katten in Slottsparken is open during the month of July.
- Art and handicraft exhibitions in Hyttan and Galleri Bläckhornet.
- Axmar Works day one Saturday in August.
- Christmas market in Hyttan on the second Saturday of Advent.
- Guided tours – book at www.axmarbruk.se.
- For music, theatre and other events, see information at www.axmarbruk.se.

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|  Swimming area |  For disabled persons |  Attraction |  Hiking trail |
|  Jetty |  Information |  Earth closet |  Parking |
|  Fireplace |  Lay-by |  Windbreak |  Launch place for kayak |

