

Brårudsmossen

Quick Facts

Distance to Sunne town centre: 2 km. **Trail length:** 2 km. **Hiking time:** 45 minutes.

How to Get There

From Sunne, drive west toward Munkfors on road 241. Go past the church and take the first turn to the left, at the sign reading "Lysvik". Drive on for about 650 metres and take a right turn onto Mossvägen, at the sign reading "Brukshundklubb". Park at the lot to the left after the cottage, at the parking sign. Follow the orange trail markings and the ditch north. There is an information board at the edge of the forest, after which you only have about 100 meters until you reach the trail.

About the Area

Brårudsmossen is a peat marsh with a surface of roughly 40 acres. The peat is one meter thick. Peat consists of vegetation that, due to a lack of oxygen, has only partially moldered. The marsh consists of peat soil with damper sections in the middle, while the outer edges are drier and covered by pine, fir and birch trees. The marsh was previously used as an open peat pit and there are still traces of this.

You can see "graves" and ditches that have been dug in the peat soil, as well as remains from old peat barns. The traces indicate that the peat mining performed was small-scale. The farms in the area all had their share in the marsh and used to mine there for household requirements. During the first half of the 20th century, autumn was harvest time for peat in Sweden. With a sharp shovel one would cut out blocks of 20x30x10 cm. This was done all the way down to 40 cm below the level when the peat started to become saturated with water. By cutting down below the water level, the miners automatically got a ditch for leading water away, which also dried up the edge of the ditch for next year's peat harvest.

The peat blocks that were cut out were then left to dry over winter. In early summer they would be placed standing up so that they would dry more efficiently, so that they could then be transported to barns on the marsh or home to the farms. The peat was ground into moss which was used to absorb urine and manure in the barns. In late winter, the burnt manure was used as nutrition on the fields. The peat blocks could also be used to make fire. In the marsh north of Brårudsmossen, you can still see remains from a peat factory, where the peat was transported on a railway.

Sunne municipality wishes you a pleasant hike on Brårudsmossen!

About the Trail

Starting from the information board in the southwest corner of the marsh, there is a path that leads to the actual trail, which is 2 kilometres long. The trail follows the edges of the marsh, allowing you to hike protected by the trees and still have a view of the surroundings. Rubber boots are recommended if the weather is or has been wet, otherwise regular shoes or hiking boots are fine.

It is a relatively varied and beautiful walk, despite it being a “flat” hike. You walk through an old, coarse mixed forest with both growing birch trees as well as birch trees that have been knocked down by a storm. You can also see sparse pine trees of varying ages. Where there is a clearing and the sun reaches the ground, the ground vegetation separates itself from the other vegetation. Here you can find fir trees and young broad-leaved trees. Large carpets of stiff clubmoss (*Lycopodium annotinum*) make excellent photography subjects, since they look like dense miniature coniferous forests.

You will walk along a 2-3 meter wide canal for a while, before you reach a bench where you can sit and enjoy nature and its pleasant scents. The sound of singing birds is very soothing. This trail is a comfortable hike since the ground is so soft and springy. Since it goes over a marsh, there are areas that are wet and soggy. These areas have wooden footbridges to help you across. However, if there has been a lot of rain recently, there may be damper areas without footbridges. You can normally get around the trail in running shoes or hiking boots. During periods of heavy rain, the water doesn't get a chance to drain, but is left sitting for a period of time. You will notice that at the information board. The rain rarely causes any major problems, however one might be forced to take a detour in some places. More wooden footbridges are placed along the trail when needed.

There is a bench at the beginning of the trail, and another one further along. At the second bench, you can sit down and enjoy a view of Backatjärn. Here, you can often hear and sometimes see whooper swans and cranes. At night in early summer, you might be lucky enough to hear water rail and waterhen. The woodcock regularly flies across the marsh.



Animals and Birds

Brårudsmossen is a popular home to, among others, roe deer and moose. The badger has its den here and you may come across a fox or hare. From the northwest corner of the marsh, you can see a beaver hut the overgrown pond Backatjärnet.

There is a rich bird life at Brårudsmossen. The birds thrive in the damp areas around Backatjärn, and along the canal that separates it from Brårudsmossen. The sunny edge of the field surrounding the bog attracts many birds that like to sit there and chirp. Here, there is a lot of dead wood, and the birch forest that fell during the storm of the autumn 2014 has been left lying to enrich the biological diversity. This is an excellent environment for the woodpecker to search for food, and a place for the wren to build a nest.

The mosaic of biotopes that border the marsh makes it favourable for animals. In the spring, you can hear many different singing birds; willow warblers, common chiffchaff as well as marsh warblers and nightingales. Occasionally, even the pied flycatchers have been heard here. Larger and smaller woodpeckers live here permanently. Other bird species also like it here and if you are lucky, you will be able to see flocks of long-tailed tits search for food in the trees.

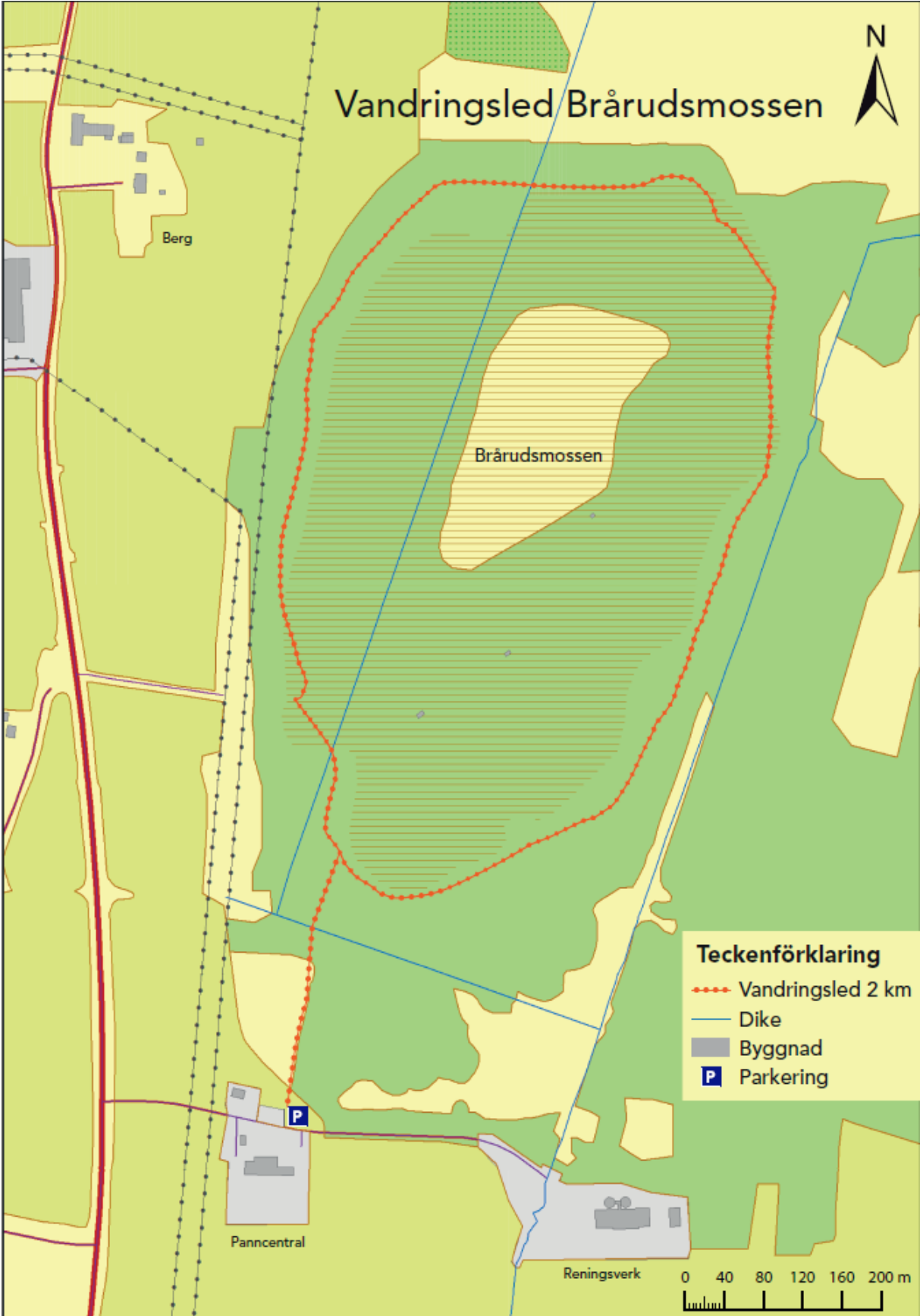
Vegetation

In the open grounds in the middle of the marsh you will find cranberry, tussock cottongrass, common cottongrass, and other plants on the white moss. Scraggy, ancient pines appear on the edges of the marsh, and further out there is a proper forest with of pine, fir and birch, and mixed forest. Under the trees, there is growth of marsh blueberry, crowberry and marsh Labrador tea. The soil is poor in nutrition, which is beneficial to the heather. There is also a lot of lycophyta here.

The lycophyta that you find here is *Lycopodium annotinum*. In the past it was used to braid carpets of for decoration. Since it grows so slowly, you should not disturb it but leave it in the forest. From lycophyta you also get lycopodium powder. The lycopodium is harvested from the unripened seeds, which are collected and dried. Lycopodium powder is also called "old hag powder", since it very easily catches fire. It was also used as a release agent for tablets. *Lycopodium annotinum* is different from other lycophyta types because it grows taller and the strobili are individually dispersed on the bristled stalks.



On some of the birch trunks you can see black, scraggly growth. That is the chaga mushroom that attacks broad-leaved trees and it is a sign that the tree is dying.



Map of Brårudsmossen Hiking Trail