

Höjentorp – The Drottningkullen Nature Reserve

Höjentorp-Drottningkullen is the largest of six nature reserves in the Valle area. Walk for miles under the dense tree canopy across flowering pastures, lime-rich marshes dotted with dark forest tarns and through alder wetlands where alternate-leaved golden-saxifrage sparkles in spring.

Legend has it that Drottningkullen (Queen's Hill) was named for Queen Ulrika Eleonora who stood here in 1722 and watched as Höjentorp Castle burned to the ground. Today, you can no longer see Höjentorp from this point since the hill is now snugly embedded in the firm embrace of elm and hazel, but when the trees have shed their leaves you can make out Varnhem Abbey. Drottningkullen is situated on the left-hand side of the road, near the main car park (there is another large car park at Höjentorp). The hill may have lost its former vista, but there are still plenty of green undulating hills worthy of a queen.

Large parts of the nature reserve are becoming overgrown; still, these hills and the elms evoke a fairy tale landscape that could be mistaken for a rainforest. Dödisgroparna turn into dark hazel caves with sun spots dancing on the floor and there is a lingering scent of wild garlic and wood anemones in the little valleys.

There are over 1,000 large deciduous trees (with a circumference of over 70 cm) – mostly oak and elm – at Höjentorp–Drottningkullen nature reserve. Eggby is derived from the Danish word for oak, egg.

 **Don't miss:** The fallen hollow oak to the north of the path and west of Drottningkullen. Any small, brave person can crawl several metres through the dark inside of the log

 **Wildlife:** Wild garlic, bird's eye primrose, pigeon scabious, marsh helleborine and red-backed shrike

 **Picnic spots:** There are many suitable picnic spots. Drottningkullen itself is best in the spring, before it becomes overgrown.

 **Getting there:** Join road 49 from Skara towards Skövde. At the Varnhem junction turn left towards Öglunda. Shortly afterwards turn left again towards Eggby. If you want to look for rare plants on open ground, stop at the first car park by the nature reserve sign. But you will still hear the noise from road 49. The next car park is larger. From there you can access Drottningkullen by turning west on the path and following the first steep hill on the left.



The undulating
landscape makes your
body and mind soar.





The friendly landscape around Valle has been shaped by muzzles and hooves. You will even find cattle grazing in the woods.



