



Trolldalen and Vargkitteln



Photos: Thomas Eriksson

A powerful glacial meltwater stream surged through Trolldalen (Troll Valley) and Vargkitteln (Wolf Kettle Hole) as the ice melted 10,000 years ago. The water eroded the sides of the valley and set large stones in a circular motion, which then drilled straight down into the rock to form potholes. The steep valley sides are covered with old forest and many rare mosses, lichens and fungi.

The Trolldalen and Vargkitteln nature reserves are parts of the same rift valley, Östra Trolldalen. The rift occurred when Kilsbergen was formed many million years ago but it was not until the most recent glaciation, around 10,000 years ago, that Östra Trolldalen developed its dramatic and characteristic landforms.

When the ice started to melt, a large lake was formed in Kilsbergen. The water continued its journey towards the sea through the valley, where the raging water eroded the rock and transported large blocks of rock. Some of the stones that the powerful river carried through Östra Trolldalen ended up on a beach that is today situated in the Lövbrickan nature reserve. The fine-grained material, sand and clay, was washed further out to sea and deposited on the sea floor that later would form the fertile Närke plain.

The potholes are the most remarkable remnants of the meltwater stream's progress through the Östra Trolldalen valley. They were formed by stones that started to move in a circular motion in the powerful water. The results are large, deep holes in the rock. The drill stones can sometimes still be

seen on the floor of the hollows. One of the area's most well-known and legendary potholes is called Trollgrytan (Troll Hollow), situated in the Trolldalen nature reserve.

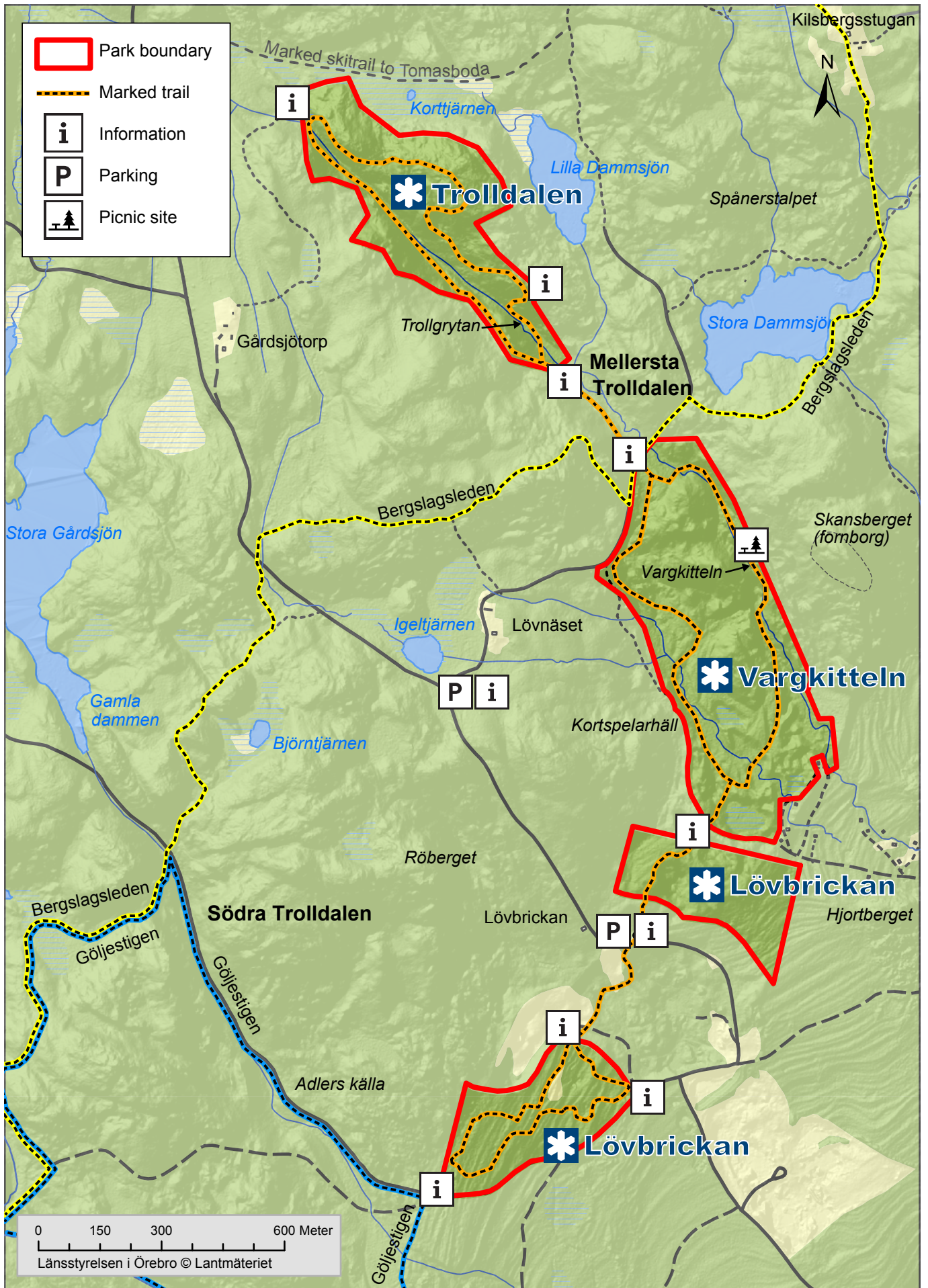
The rift valley is narrow in Trolldalen. The ravine is famous for the exciting natural ice sculptures that form in winter. The valley sides are covered with an aged spruce forest that is almost completely undisturbed by forestry. The forest is damp, shady and contains many dead trees – a perfect environment for many unusual mosses, lichens and fungi. The rare fungus *Phellinus ferrugineofuscus* grows on dead, fallen spruce stems. *Anastrophyllum michauxii* and Swedish pouchwort (*Calypogeia suecica*) are two unusual mosses that also thrive on decaying spruce stems.

The Vargkitteln nature reserve gets its name from another well-known pothole in Östra Trolldalen. Other glacial features are kettle holes in the southern part of the nature reserve. These were formed by large, slow-melting ice blocks buried in deposits of gravel and stone. When the ice block finally melted, hollows were formed where the ice had stood. Forestry has had a pronounced effect on most of the forest in the Vargkitteln nature reserve, but along the inaccessible valley sides in the northern part of the reserve, there is undisturbed spruce forest with some birch and aspen. In places the ground is so full of nutrients that broadleaf trees such as lime and wych elm can form small stands.

Liverleaf, baneberry and spring pea also indicate a good nutrient supply.



Länsstyrelsen
Örebro län



How to get there

Follow signs from Frösvidal. Keep to the right of the quarry and continue for a few kilometres before parking at Lake Igeltjärn. Trolldalen: Walk from the car park to the nature reserve (1.5 km). Vargkitteln: Walk from the car park as above, just under 1 km to the nature reserve.

Facts about the nature reserve

Established: Trolldalen 1997, Vargkitteln 2006

Area: Trolldalen 18 ha, Vargkitteln 29 ha

Landowner: Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and private ownership

Managed by: County Administrative Board

Established by: County Administrative Board

The area is part of the EU network Natura 2000

§ In the nature reserve, you are not permitted to:

In the Vargkitteln nature reserve, you are not permitted to:

- remove or damage dead trees or parts of trees
- light fires except where designated

Without County Administrative Board permission, you are not permitted to:

- collect mosses, lichens and fungi that grow on trees or wood, nor collect insects or other invertebrates

In the Trolldalen nature reserve, you are not permitted to:

- damage the ground surface
- disturb animals
- pick flowers, lichens or wood-decay fungi or cause damage by picking or digging up vegetation
- carve on dry wood or bark or damage fallen trees
- light fires or camp
- drive motor vehicles or cycle
- set up notice boards, placards, posters, signs, inscriptions or similar
- set up orienteering control points or mark trails with paper strips

Without County Administrative Board permission, you are not permitted to:

- collect insects or other invertebrates