

## INFORMATION SHEET ON RAMSAR WETLANDS

**Country:** Sweden

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**Name of wetland:** Lake Åsnen

**Date of Ramsar designation:** 12 June 1989

**Geographical coordinates:** 56°37'N 14°43'E

**General location:** In the County of Kronoberg, about 25 km south of the town of Växjö.

**Area:** 16,800 ha

**Wetland type:** Q U

**Altitude:** Average of 139 m above sea level.

**Overview:** Lake Åsnen is a large, oligotrophic lake containing many basins, islands and bays. The site has internationally important nesting waterfowl populations and is also of international significance as a stopover and wintering area. Lake Åsnen has a rich variety of fish species, including a few rarer ones.

**Physical features:** Lake Åsnen has been lowered and is nowadays regulated with an average depth of about three metres. The soil consists mostly of moraine and the terrain is flat. The site also includes Lake Lidhem, which is also a shallow eutrophic Lake that has been lowered. There are several bogs spread around Lake Åsnen.

**Ecological features:** Shore meadows used for grazing and flooded marsh meadows can be found around the northern bays of Lake Åsnen. The rest of the lake is surrounded by stony or even boulder-clad shores where the forest starts directly. *Picea abies* is the dominant species around the lake, but locally there are old *Pinus sylvestris*, which are important for the lake's predatory birds, as well as sections of old deciduous forest found particularly on the islands, Lake Lidhem is now partially overgrown with *Scirpus spp.* and surrounded by shore meadows used for grazing.

### **Land tenure/ownership of**

**a) site:** Mainly privately owned, but the Nature Reserves within the site and some other areas are owned by the state.

**b) surrounding area:** no information supplied.

**Conservation measures taken:** Listed as site of national importance for nature conservation. There are four Nature Reserves in the area making up 1,580 ha. 1) Bjurkärr, 150 ha, established 18 June 1960; 2) Långö, 45.80 ha, est. 19 Feb 1987; 3) Toftåsa bog, 156.3 ha, est. 29 Jan 1987; and 4) The Islands of Västra Åsnen, 1,228 ha, est. 39 Jan 1987. All Nature Reserves have approved management plans. There are also several Bird-Sanctuaries comprising 108 ha.

**Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:** no information supplied.

**Current land use: principal human activities in**

**a) site:** Livestock grazing; Recreation (e.g. canoeing); Fishing; Nature Conservation.

**b) surroundings/catchment:** The surroundings contain woodlands with small dispersed patches of arable land. thus, forestry and agriculture are the main activities.

**Disturbances/threats, including changes in land use and major development projects**

**a) at the site:** Disturbances originating from human leisure activities in the lake can be a threat to birdlife locally. Further restrictions to the general Right of Common Access (Allemansrätten) as it pertains to this area may be required. To ensure that grazing of the shore meadows in the area continues is important to prevent revegetation. Older tracts of forest which are important to the lake's predatory birds should be protected. The proportion of deciduous forest should be maintained at the current level.

**b) in the surroundings/catchment:** no information supplied.

**Hydrological and physical values:** The natural hydrological balance is manipulated through the regulations of the lake.

**Social and cultural values:** Forestry is important in the surroundings.

**Noteworthy fauna:** Internationally important nesting: *Gavia arctica* (70 pairs) and *Pandion haliaetus* (45 pairs).

Other nesting species: *Podiceps cristatus* (300 pairs), *Anser anser* (10), *Mergus merganser* (70), *Rallus aquaticus*, *Porzana porzana*, *Tringa totanus*, *Numenius arquata*, *Ardea cinerea*, *Falco subbuteo* (8-10), *Circus aeruginosus*, *Motacilla flava*, *Pernis apivorus* (15-20), *Dendrocopus minor* (25), *Ficedula parva*, *Crex crex* (sporadically).

Great significance as a stopover and wintering area: *Mergus merganser* (10,000-15,000 birds in autumn), *Anser fabalis* (about 2000 in spring and around 2500 in autumn), *A. anser* (about 500 in autumn), *Anas platyrhynchos* and *Anas crecca*.

Outside nesting season: *Haliaeetus albicilla* (around 20 birds). Lake Åsnen also has a rich variety of fish species, including a few rare ones like *Gobio gobio*.

**Noteworthy flora:** no information supplied.

**Current scientific research and facilities:** no information supplied.

**Current conservation education:** There is an information leaflet concerning Bjurkärr Nature Reserve.

**Current recreation and tourism:** In summertime the lake and its islands are used by a large number of people for recreational purposes.

**Management authority:** The manager of all the four Nature Reserves is the County Forestry Board. Outside reserves it is the landowner himself who manages his land.

**Jurisdiction:** Territorial and functional: County Administration of Kronoberg.

**Bibliographical references:**

- Grimmett, R.F.A. & Jones, T.A. (1989). Important Bird Areas of Europe. ICBP.
- Svenska våtmarker av internationell betydelse (1989). Swedish EPA information. (English summary).
- County Administration (1986-1989). Management plans for Bjurkärr, Toftåsa, Västra Åsnen and Långö Nature Reserves.

**Reasons for inclusion:** 1b, 2b, 3b, 3c

**Map of site:** enclosed.