

Sites in Blekinge County

Ire

Ire is to east of the road between Karlshamn and Tingsryd, North of Karlshamn. It is 100 hectares in size and owned and managed as a nature reserve by Länsstyrelsen.

Ire was a working farm until the 1970's (according to the leaflet – but we were told the trees were restored in the 1970's). There was a wide range of trees pollarded within the wooded meadows, including, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Tilia*, *Acer platanoides*,



Sorbus intermedia, *Ulmus glabra*, *Carpinus betula*, *Fagus sylvatica* (1), more species than seen anywhere else.

Hay is cut from the meadow, partly by hand, and the area then grazed by Ringamålako (Swedish red cow).

Pollard management

The trees were supposedly cut since the 1970's so it would be expected that there would be 4+ cuts in that time but they do not look like it. Work by Slotte (2000) aged the trees here by counting rings. Seven of the 10 trees studied were over 150 years old, the other three were over 200 years. Old pollards are being cut each year and now trees started too.

Ire was described to us as being somewhere to see a more traditional way of pollarding but the cutting did not appear very sensitive. The area is close to a 'Kulturskolen' although we were told the trees were not cut as part of the training in the school it looked like they had been done by inexperienced students! Some of the old trees seemed to be growing better than the younger ones.



A young *Fagus sylvatica* pollard, 0.7m in girth. Probably cut once, retaining some branches, which resulted in some die back. The retained branches have grown upwards and were cut again probably 2 years ago. Last year's growth was 20cm and the year before 40cm.





Young *Carpinus betulus* pollard with extensive die back on one side (left)



***Fraxinus* pollard cut two or more times and showing die back of cut stem (right)**



Three stemmed *Tilia*, two stems of which have been cut and one left in tact. Of the cut stems one has no growth and the other just a little. Probably the tree is putting all its effort into the uncut stem (left)



Old *Tilia* pollard with two good knuckles. The growth looks good (right)



A double stemmed *Carpinus* pollard. This tree was probably cut several years ago but appears to have only produced growth this year (left)



***Fraxinus* pollards cut perhaps four times at different heights (left)**



***Fraxinus* meadow (left), older *Fraxinus* pollard, cut several times (above right), close up of older *Fraxinus* pollard (right) showing new shoots**



Steneryd

Steneryd is on the road between Jämsjö and Torhamn, south of Jämsjö (south east of Karlskrona). It is a Nature Reserve owned and managed by Länsstyrelsen.



Description of tree pollard management

Presumably the old trees of *Fraxinus excelsior* and *Ulmus glabra* were cut regularly as part of the farm work, up until 1970's.

They are mostly found around the edges of the fields. Work by Slotte (2000) aged the trees here by counting rings. Eleven *Fraxinus* were over 150 years and three over 200 years. The oldest *Ulmus* were

350 years but many were rotten in the middle and difficult to age. From looking at the rings it is likely that the trees here were pollarded when they were very young and cut every 3-8 years. Hæggström (1992a) comments that some of the trees here show a combination of pollarding and shredding – the trunks were cut at 6-10m and the resulting branches had leaves cut from them.

Some young pollards were created between 1990 and 2000 but there was a generation gap with no trees started in the 1960's. Many of the trees have been shredded and pollarded, cut to their form to create lots of leaves. The trees have a clumped distribution, many (especially *Fraxinus*, *Tilia* and *Ulmus*) are clustered on top of cairns. Probably these are mostly suckers of a single (or small numbers) of trees.

This site was described as being less traditional than Ire but the cutting looked more careful. With old lapsed trees where there is only a short lapse it is easy to see where to make the next cut. With younger trees it is not so easy and so there is perhaps a tendency to cut too hard.



View of the pollards at the edges of the cereal fields

Fraxinus pollard cut at progressively higher levels (right)

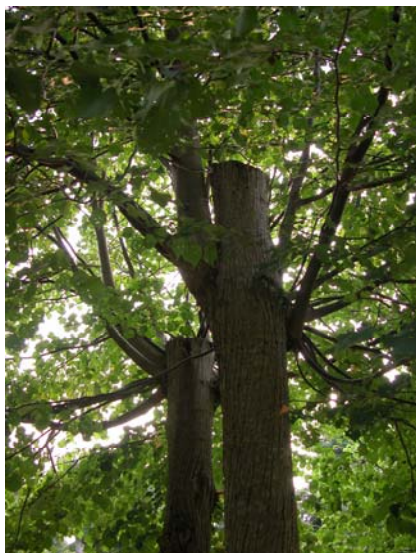


Very high cut *Tilia* pollards. There are signs of cattle browsing on growth at the base.



Young *Fraxinus* pollard 2-3 years since cutting. Three cuts had been made of stems roughly 5cm in diameter.

A clump of *Ulmus* pollards (below) and close up of tops of bollings (right)



Two large *Fraxinus* pollards 30cm in diameter. Resulting growth is rather one sided and the long term viability of these trees may not be good (left)

Large *Fraxinus* pollard cut and then flushed but now dying back (right)



Cow browsing on *Fraxinus* leaves



Bråbo – Village with many pollards; management only recently abandoned

Bråbo village is South of Kristdala, north west of Oskarshamn. There are pollards found all around the village, both east and west of the road between Bråbo and Ostantorp. There is a photocopied leaflet about a nature trail available.

The village traditionally had many pollards that were cut regularly and pollarding was abandoned here only in the 1980's. The pollards are largely *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Ulmus glabra* & *Tilia* within wooded meadows. The ground flora has hay cut and is then grazed. The trees look to be regularly pollarded again.



***Tilia* pollard two years since cutting, cut back hard with almost flush stubs 20cm in diameter. Growing about 1m per year but lots of decay (left)**



As above, in close up (right)



Close up of *Fraxinus* pollard, three years since cutting. Good growth of over 1m per year but lots of dead stems (left)



***Tilia* pollards on a large heap of stones (right)**



Views of ash meadow (left)



Close up of *Tilia* pollard cut hard (right)

Misterfalls äng (and discussion with Pär Johansson) – Small wooded meadow with very regular pollarding

Misterfall is on the west side of the road from Kisa to Tidarsrum, west of Kisa in Östergötland. It is at an altitude of 250m and only 2ha in size. It is a biotope protection area (i.e. a nature reserve not owned by Länsstyrelsen). Pär Johansson is in charge of the management.



There are 140 *Fraxinus excelsior* pollards on the site, some estimated to be 300-400 years old. Hay is cut and then the area is grazed with cattle to benefit the ground flora. A variable number of animals used, usually 10-15.

Description of tree pollard management

The trees were pollarded regularly until 1955. They were cut again in the 1970's after a 20 year lapse. As part of the restoration work some trees were felled, but no pollards.

Currently some trees are cut each year with 5-10 years between cutting on each tree. The branches cut are 6-8cm in diameter, if they are left bigger there are fewer leaves on them (relative to the amount of wood). Also, the branches were originally cut with hand tools so the bigger branches would not have been easy. Now there are better tools and it is easier to cut the larger branches. The work is done now with a Japanese saw and the stubs are cut as low as possible as there is no benefit in leaving long stubs (however the trees cut this year did not appear to have short stubs). With the older trees it is more difficult to tell if the cutting is going to work and bigger branches are more difficult. New pollards are started on suitable trees, the biggest of these are generally about 30 years old and 10cm in diameter. When the older pollards don't have so many roots they shoot from the base, then new pollards can be formed from the old tree. Not many of the trees have been lost, only some of the older ones.



This year the trees were cut on 9th August. Five people were working on the trees and it took them 2 hours to cut 25 trees. A ladder was used to climb up and a tractor was to be

used to remove the branches. The leaves are burnt (unfortunately) as there is no use for them. EU money is received for hay cutting and pollarding.





The managers of the site appeared very confident that the work they were doing was right and would work. They had an approach much that was less focussed on individual trees that would be likely in the UK. They were making use of suckers to perpetuate individual trees rather than concentrating entirely on the existing trunk and canopy.

The future management of this site is reasonably secure but it is sad that the leaves and branches cannot be used.

A four year old branch removed in the recent cutting work (above)



The main stem of this pollard has died but the suckers from the lower part of the trunk will replace it (left)



Pollard cut last year, it has died back on one side and has very large leaves (right)



Pollard getting very 'leggy' and in need of cutting again soon (left)



One of the largest trees with a girth of 2.62m (right)



Close up of a very vigorous pollard bolling (left)

A small newly created pollard of 6cm diameter this has grown about 1m/year for three years and needs cutting again! (right)



Krusenberg Uppsala (with Håkan Slotte)

Krusenberg is situated along road 255 from Sävja to Alsike near Uppsala, Uppland. Some of the old trees are protected but the wooded meadow is not. It is part of a large estate, recently bought by the university and was an old wooded meadow grown up with dense woodland at the time of purchase. Normally such an overgrown area would not have been considered worthwhile to restore, however it was done partly as an exercise for the students. Gotland sheep were grazing as part of the restoration phase, cattle will be used too.



There are no old pollards here but new ones have been created from *Fraxinus excelsior* and some *Ulmus glabra*. The trees to be retained were selected before the area was cleared so they were smaller than in many other areas of restored wooded meadow. The ideal age was said to be about 2 years old and the cut was made above existing branches, ideally above a whorl. The trees were cut by hand, using gob cuts from a ladder. The tops were then pulled off using a rope

from the ground. The tops were flat or with a slight slope to the north so they don't dry out. As the work was done by hand tools, the pollards were not cut a second time to 'perfect them' so the first cut was generally the final one. Long stubs were left but were not generally considered necessary, cutting to the branch collar was reported to be more usual when pollarding. When a few branches were left on the trees they tended to produce very vigorous growth; the second cut then results in even more growth. The restoration and pollard management will continue here but the *Ulmus* will probably die of Dutch Elm Disease which is in this part of Sweden and spreading.

This site was a very different example of creating new pollards and wooded meadow restoration than all other sites visited in Sweden. It was much more tree focussed and the restoration work planned over a longer period of time.



Gotland sheep and Håkan in front of a *Fraxinus* pollard tree (the red ribbon was to indicate that it should be saved during clearance and cut as a pollard) (above right)

Long stubs were left on this young *Fraxinus* pollard but usually they would be much shorter (left)

Young *Fraxinus* two years of age and an ideal diameter to cut. This tree was cut just above existing branches (right)

