

INFORMATION SHEET ON RAMSAR WETLANDS

Country: Sweden

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Name of wetland: Isles off Gotland
a) Faludden
b) Grötlingboudd-Rone Ytterholme
c) Laus holmar
d) Skenholmen

Date of Ramsar designation: 5 December 1974

Geographical coordinates:

- a) 57°00'N 18°22'E
- b) 57°07'N 18°30'E
- c) 57°17'N 18°45'E
- d) 57°48'N 19°03'E

General location: In the Baltic Sea off the east coast of Gotland, in the county of Gotland.

Area: 4,220 ha
a) 1,320 ha
b) 1,640 ha
c) 540 ha
d) 720 ha

Wetland type: A E

Altitude: average of 2.5 m above sea level.

Overview: The site consists of low-lying islands and coastal areas along the eastern coast of Isle of Gotland. The designated site is probably the most important locality in the Baltic for migrating *Branta leucopsis* and also for *Anser anser* during moulting.

Physical features: The site consists of low-lying islands and coastal areas on gravel-covered limestone bedrock.

- a) Faludden is flat and open with low-lying, long shallow shores of sand or stone. South of the point of Faludden is Stockviken, a former bay now cut off from the sea. Yttre Stockviken is shallow and contains many sand bars.
- b) Grötlingboudd-Rone Ytterholme: A large part of Grötlingboholme consists of shore gravel formed into very distinctive banks, especially at the southern end. These shroe embankments even appear in long series on Rone Ytterholme where there are extensive shallows with protruding shoals.

- c) Laus holmar consists of three islands: Storholmen, Skarpholmen and Gräsholmen. On the islands there is a system of natural shore embankments, some of which consist of sand spurs that have been raised by land elevation.
- d) Skenholmen is a flat island.

Ecological features: To a great extent the islands and coastal areas have no trees or bushes and they are mainly covered by short grass vegetation. The land has been used for pasture for many years.

- a) Faludden: Most of it consists of grazed grasslands with varying degree of moisture. Stockviken is covered with reeds in many parts.
- b) Grötlingboud-Rone Ytterholme: Grötlingboud is mostly made up of open grasslands and shore meadows. The islands of Grötlingboholme and Rone Ytterholme are devoid of trees.
- c) Laus holmar: Storholmen is grazed by cattle and is covered with shorter grass vegetation. There are also a few low-lying hollows here. Skarpholmen and Gräsholmen have not been grazed and are thus partially covered by well developed higher plant forms.
- d) Skenholmen is a flat grassy island almost completely devoid of tree vegetation. Sheep graze here.

Land tenure/ownership of

- a) **site:** Ownership is state (d) and private (a-c).
- b) **surrounding area:** no information supplied.

Conservation measures taken: Listed as site of national importance to nature conservation.

- b) Grötlingboholme (220 ha) and Rone Ytterholme (182 ha) are Nature Reserves established on 9 October 1973 and on 15 March 1976 respectively.
- c) Laus holmar (520 ha) is a Nature Reserve established on 26 November 1981.

Access is restricted to the Nature Reserve. All three reserves have management plans.

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

Current land use: principal human activities in

- a) **site:** Grazing (sheep, horse, cattle); Military practices at Skenholmen (d); Fishing; Nature conservation.
- b) **surroundings/catchment:** no information supplied.

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

- a) **at the site:** If these areas are to retain their great ornithological value, they must be kept open through continued grazing. Skenholmen is used for military target practice. However, the activity does not occur during periods when geese are resting in the area. Military use during certain periods is therefore not regarded as a threat to the natural values.
- b) **in the surroundings/catchment:** no information supplied.

Hydrological and physical values: no information supplied.

Social and cultural values: no information supplied.

Noteworthy fauna:

- a) Faludden: Nesting: *Recurvirostra avosetta* (50 paris), *Philomachus pugnax* (15), *Charadrius hiaticula* (25), *Calidris alpina*, *Limosa limosa*, *Numenius arquata* (in great numbers), *Sterna albifrons* (5), *Anas penelope* and *Motacilla Flava*. Resting: *Branta leucopsis* (2000-4000 birds), *Cygnus columbianus* (up to 100). The numbers of wading birds and ducks making a temporary visit are also great.
- b) Grötlingboudd-Ytterholmen: Resting: Large numbers of *Branta leucopsis*. Nesting: *Larus ridibundus*, *Sterna sandvicensis*, many ducks and waders such as *Calidris alpina*. The islands are very important habitats for *Branta leucopsis* and *Anser anser*. Both species have been observed in numbers of around 3000birds each. The area is considered one of the Baltic's most important moulting sitesfor *Anser anser*.
- c) Laus holmar: Nesting: *Branta leucopsis* (about 1200 pairs), *Calidris alpina*, *Sterna albifrons*, *Recurvirostra avosetta*, *Arenaria interpres*, periodically large colonies of gulls and *Somateria mollissima*. This area represents one of the three most important habitats for *Branta leucopsis*.
- d) Skenholmen: Nesting: *Somateria mollissima*, *Anser anser*, *Limosa limosa*, *Larus minutus*, *Philomachus pugnax*, *Calidris alpina*, *Sterna caspia*, *S. Albifrons*, *Larus ridibundus*. Resting: *Branta leucopsis* (up to 3000).

Noteworthy flora: no information supplied.

Current scientific research and facilities: no information supplied.

Current conservation education: There is an observation tower at Faludden.

Current recreation and tourism: no information supplied.

Management authority: The manager of Rone Ytterholme N.R. and Laus holmar N.R. is the County forestry Board. Grötlingboholme N.R. is managed by a private person. Outside reserves the areas are managed by the landowner himself.

Jurisdiction: Territorial and functional: County Administration of Gotland.

Bibliographical references:

- Grimmet, R.F.A. & Jones, T.A. (1989). Important bird areas of Europe. ICBP.
- Svenska våtmarker av internationell betydelse (1989). Swedish EPA information. (English summary).
- Gustafsson, L. (1982). Rone Ytterholme. Botanisk inventering av provrutor utförd i juli 1978. (Botanical Survey). Länsstyrelsen Gotlands län.

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

Map of site: enclosed.