



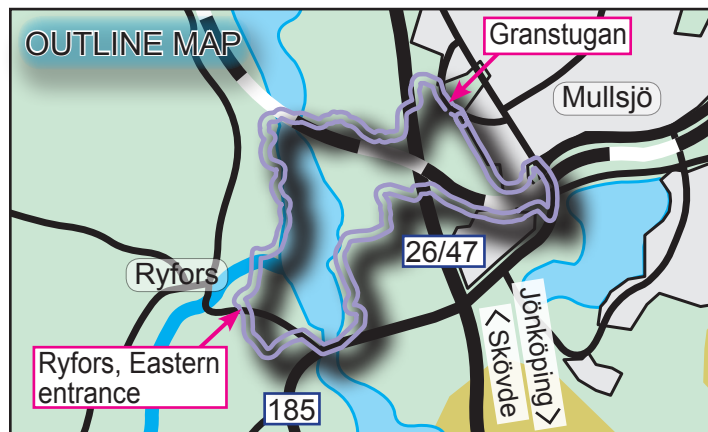
STRÅKENLEDEN

A nature and culture hike - 10km

www.skaraborgsleder.se

1 August 2020

Experience the outstanding nature and culture of the Mullsjö area. The hiking trail Stråkenleden combines the best of several local hiking trails and allows the visitor to experience a selection of the local history from the ice age to modern times. The trail should take around three hours.



THE HIKING TRAIL

Good starting points are at the Granstugan cottage, or Ryfors (points C and H on the large map). Both provide parking for visitors. The trail follows sturdy paths and country roads through an easy-hiking landscape with several short inclinations. Comfortable shoes are recommended. The trail is marked partially by signs and partially by light-purple dots on posts and trees in both directions. Please note that the track coexists with other hiking trails.

Resting spots and other forms of service are marked with letters on the map, sights with numbers.

TRACES OF THE ICE AGE

The landscape around Mullsjö carries a lot of impressive remnants of the last ice age. The 1.5 to 2 km thick ice masses broke off an enormous amount of stones from the bedrock and ground them to gravel and sand which later on became raw materials of the new landscape. The landscape that we see today was mainly built at the edge of the glacier where tremendous amounts of water and sediment were flushed out. This occurred ca. 13,000 years ago when the ice masses retreated. A keen hiker knows how different the landscape can be in various parts of Sweden. Typically for this part of Mullsjö there are next to no erratic boulders. The landscape has a soft curve and is easy to hike, even off trail.

Along the trail you will see small as well as imposing ridges of sand and gravel. Gyljerydsmon is composed of plateaus of gigantic deposits of so-called glacial fluvial sediments. There are traces of a river delta and ice river channels that carved deeply into the plateau, e.g. the ravine along the stream Mullsjöbäcken and other ravines along Lake Stråken. You will also pass Lake Trollsjön, a good example of a kettle lake. Such lakes were formed when massive blocks of ice broke off from glaciers, were flushed over by sand and gravel and melted like isolated islands. The result was a great pit that formed a lake.

THE NATURE

Along the stream Mullsjöbäcken, common alder mix with birches and spruce. The ravine forms a sheltered habitat with high humidity. One effect, amongst others, is to lead to the dense growth of the fiddlehead fern. Once there was a natural stock of trout in the stream. The Project "Let the trout spawn" is aiming to create a clean water environment that the trout would be able to return to.

Along the shores of Lake Stråken, the coniferous forest mixes with stripes consisting of broad-leaved trees. The coniferous forest in the nature reserve Ryfors Gammelskog has largely remained untouched since the early 18th century, resulting in a varied flora and fauna.

Due to the poor sandy soil, pines and spruce dominate on the plateau Gyljerydsmon. The sparse, bright and spacious coniferous forest is a terrific surrounding for a pleasant stroll. An unusually vast area of ca. 300 years old pine contributes to a distinctive flora and fauna on the plateau.



View from the Stråkensbro Bridge (LG)

THE HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE

A ravine at the former ford near Nybro counts as one of the oldest remnants of human life you will stumble upon along the way. It was a part of a bridle route that once connected Jönköping with e.g. Falköping and was used as part of the travel route Eriksgatan in the early middle-ages.

The ironworks Ryfors Bruk was founded in the 18th century. However, production was discontinued in the early 20th century as it became unprofitable. The ironworks was replaced by forestry and the keeping of livestock. Nowadays various tenancies and production of electrical power provide the income.

The locality of Mullsjö greatly developed when the railway was built in the 1860s. It was a convenient place to refill the steam engine's water tank.

The railway opened up new business opportunities. At the beginning of the 20th century fish farming became an important business in Mullsjö.

In the 1940s tourism was established in Mullsjö. The healthy air and great opportunities for winter sports lured the stressed urban people out here. Nowadays, the locality provides fantastic possibilities for an active outdoor lifestyle all year round.

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- + Blå Spåret (The Blue Track), 6km
- + Kulturlid Gyljeryd, 6km
- + Eriksgatuleden, 7km (14km return)
- + Ryforsleden, 7km
- + Knipesjöleden, 9km
- + Röda Spåret (The Red Track), 9km
- + Mullsjö Runt, 22km
- + Södra Vätterleden, Hotel Mullsjö-Bottnaryd, 28km
- + Västra Vätterleden, Fagerhult-Hotel Mullsjö, 31km

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- + Mullsjö City Hall, tel. 0392-140 00
- + Directory inquiries, tel. 118 118
- + Emergency, tel. 112
- + Medical aid, tel. 010-242 47 00

DIRECTIONS

1. **Mullsjöbäcken Stream** is part of a water treatment project that aims to raise the water quality to enable trout to return and spawn. The surface water and water from various streams are led down to Lake Stråken in two separate flows. Several of the dams, three at the cottage Granstugan and one where the path leads underneath road 26/47, were built in 2005 as infiltration ponds to clean the surface water. They do not belong to the original fishponds.

2. The railway bridge near **Stråkensbro Bridge** was finished in 1862. The current bridge is the third generation. A footbridge is located underneath the railway bridge. The children who lived on the west side of the lake crossed here to reach school in Nykyrka. Most probably, the footbridge was erected fairly early on as the 1790s cottage southwest of the bridge is named Spängerna (The Planks).

3. The 30km long **Lake Stråken** is a beloved place for canoeing and fishing.

4. A short detour leads to **Tolv stenar** (Twelve Stones). This site is linked to the family Sager of the ironworks Ryfors Bruk.

5. **Tidan River** is 187 km long, including the headwaters. The river begins at the head of Lake Strängseredsjön between Ulricehamn and Bottnaryd, runs past the elongated Lake Stråken and finally merges into Lake Vänern at Mariestad. Tidan is one of the few Swedish rivers than run northwards.

6. Once a **railway track** led from the sawmill at Ryfors to Lake Stråken. The carts were pulled by horses and the sawed timber was shipped to a place ca. 150 m south of Stråkensbro Bridge. There was a connecting track up to the Southern Main Railroad. Due to the steep embankment, the carts were pulled up by a winch. The first winch was steam-powered and later replaced by an electrical model. This shows how complicated the logistics up until the 20th century could be when the industry no longer needed water to power the process.

7. **Ryfors Bruk** was founded in 1742. The industry, based on ironworking, closed down in 1906 when the competition got too fierce. The ironworks were replaced by forestry and the keeping of livestock. Nowadays various tenancies and production of electrical power provide the income. The buildings on the property of the ironworks remain largely intact and a visit is definitely worthwhile. The 375 hectare English landscape garden from 1880 is unique in Sweden. The oldest golf course of the country, built in 1888, is located in the park.

8. The nature reserve **Ryfors Gammelskog**, a part of the English landscape garden, is untouched since the early 18th century. Here you will find 35 m high coniferous trees. The untouched ecosystem contributes to a special flora and fauna. The dense and stately coniferous forest provides a beautiful contrast to the more open landscape and the broadleaf forest along Tidan River. In the nature reserve you can follow a separate circular path which is marked by orange markings.

9. **The ravine near Nybro** is one of the biggest of its kind in Sweden, ca. 7 m deep. The medieval travel route Eriksgatan led past a ford located where the bridge now stands. Southwest of Nybro traces of the old route can be found and in the northern direction the eastern side of Lake Stråken is easy to pass by.

10. The trail crosses **Gyljerydsmon**, a large plateau-like ice-fluvial-deposit that was created ca. 13,000 years ago. South of Stråkensbro Bridge, in the direction of the camping site, you can find a uniquely large ca. 300 years old pine forest that contributes to a special flora and fauna.

11. **Trollsjön:** After a descent you reach the beautiful Lake Trollsjön, previously known as Gölgegöl. The ca. 10m deep lake is a kettle hole and has only subterranean feeder streams and drainages. Grass carp, which feed on the lake's vegetation and prevent it from becoming overgrown, can be found here. Take advantage of the opportunity to view the beautiful pine and spruce forest surrounding. A rest spot is located near the lake and is worth a visit in any season.

12. **Qvist's den.** This was the residence of silk-weaver Magnus Qvist (1836-1910). He was educated, but revealed very little about his life.

13. The church **Nykyrke kyrka** was opened on the 16th October, 1887. The old church building from 1656 had become too small as the population in the district Nykyrka had increased significantly. The church was built entirely out of wood in a neo-Gothic style. Edvard and Robert Sager of Ryfors Bruk were very invested in the construction of the church. The family Sager was partly catholic which created a difficult problem in those times. The solution was an expansion of the graveyard on the northern side where the family grave was established. The thirteen blacksmiths of Ryfors Bruk made their own grave crosses. Twelve of the crosses can be found in front of the church and the thirteenth is standing on the choir wall. In the porch of the church hangs a so called angel of light, a remnant of the old church.

14. The ca. **100 fishponds** are scattered downstream of Mullsjöbäcken Stream to Lake Stråken. At the beginning of the 20th century the ponds were dug by hand. Brook, rainbow trout and salmon trout were bred here. So called eye-pointed roe was imported from Denmark. The roe was so ripe that the eyes of the spawn could be seen and in this state roe is relatively easy to transport when kept wet. A special hatchery for the roe is located near the stream. Finally, the fish was transported alive by train to the warehouse NK in Stockholm. One person had to accompany the train to saturate the water with oxygen. The company was founded 1909 by Dr. Johan Larsson and run up until 1937.

SERVICE

A. **Lusthuset:** Pavilion with benches.

B. **Clubhouse of Ryfors' Golf Club:** Carpark, cafe opened during the golf season, golf-shop, www.ryforsgk.se, tel. 0392-128 84.

C. **Ryfors, Eastern entrance:** Starting point with carpark, information board, picnic table and earth toilet.

D. **Mullsjö Camping:** Camping, cabins, shop and bathing spot, tel. 0392-120 25.

E. **Motell VIP Mullsjö:** Restaurant, rooms and grocery, tel. 0392-120 30.

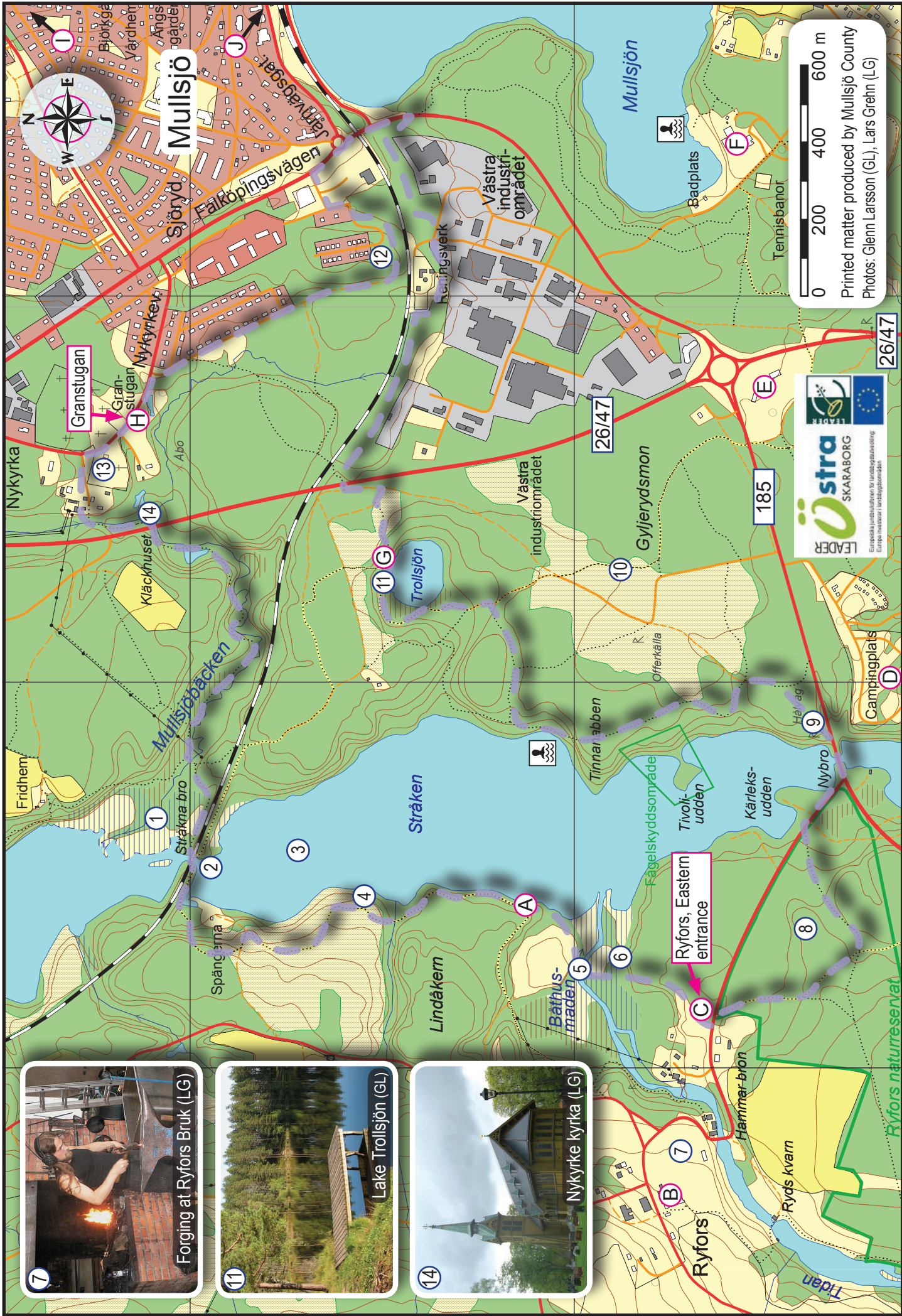
F. **Hotel Mullsjö:** Restaurant and accommodation, tel. 0392-494 00, carpark in front of hotel, tap with drinking water behind the hotel, bathing spot and WC at the lake north of the Hotel.

G. **Trollsjön:** Resting place with picnic table.

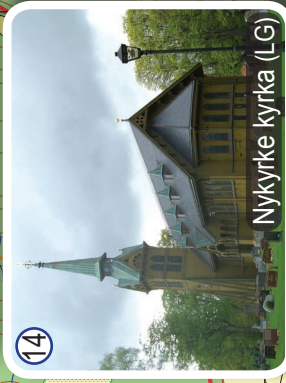
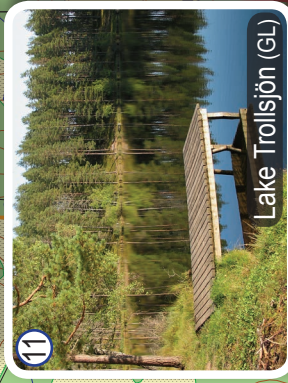
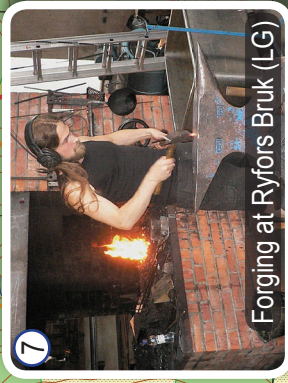
H. **Granstugan:** Starting point of the track with carpark and information board.

I. **Björkhaga Hotell & Konferens:** Restaurant and accommodation (lies off map), tel. 0392-120 50.

J. **Mullsjö centre:** Tourist information, tel. 0392-140 00; traffic information on bus and train connections, tel. 0771-44 43 33.



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