

# Arboretum Norr

A guide to the Arboretum in Baggböle, Umeå



Foundation Arboretum Norr

## A short description of the arboretum and its parts



**Arboretum Norr** in Baggböle is one of the northernmost plant collections of its kind and the goal is to collect and display most of the world's trees and bushes that can survive here. Geographically the arboretum is situated in Swedish hardiness zone 5-6, but the south-facing slope and the close proximity to the river make the conditions more favorable.

The arboretum is divided into different parts that represent certain geographical regions. Several kilometers of prepared footpaths take you through wild forests that contain trees and bushes from all over the northern hemisphere. In the center of the arboretum we also have Kvarnängen that is cared for more like a park rather than a forest. This is also where you can find our main entrance, parking areas and **Baggböle manor [19]**, which in the late 1800s, was the center of northern Sweden's biggest sawmill industries. The manor is now privately owned and it can offer visitors both a restaurant and a place to hold smaller conferences.

### Europe

The European part of the arboretum is situated at the western border of the area and can be reached on several paths. One of these runs under big pines and spruces on the **Ridge [1]**, where you find some of the arboretums most stunning views; at one side the river in the background and European silver firs (*Abies alba*) in the foreground, and on the other side the area's biggest and wildest ravine. The **Auditorium [2]** with old pines and big open trees (*Populus tremula*) is a place for lectures and small performances. Above the auditorium and the ridge there is another entrance to the arboretum with parking and this is also one of the starting points of our handicap trail. In this area you also find several ashes (*Fraxinus excelsior*) that in 2011 were moved from former research areas in central Umeå even though they were already big trees at the time.

In the slopes of the European part you find a lot of big and old trees which have been growing here since long before the arboretum were even considered. One of these is the **Old pine [3]** with visible scars caused by past wildfires in the area. In **Oak hill [4]** you also have an excellent view over the river. Among other species here you find planted oaks (*Quercus robur*) and elms (*Ulmus glabra*) from southern Sweden intermingled with naturally occurring bird cherries (*Prunus padus*), grey alders (*Alnus incana*) and goat willows (*Salix caprea*).

In the long run we want to exhibit most trees from northern Europe in this part of the arboretum but with an emphasis on species occurring naturally in Sweden. For your convenience we've just started to highlight the latter with special signs.

## Lägdaleden – a trail for everyone



The Arboretum in Baggböle is situated in steep slopes where it sometimes can be hard or nearly impossible to get by with a baby stroller or a wheelchair and therefore we started to construct Lägdaleden [8], which is a 900m long handicap-friendly trail between Baggböle manor and the Europe part.

Lägdaleden runs on level ground alongside the fields in the upper parts of the arboretum and you can park your car at both ends. The trail is coated with hard packed rock flour which makes a hard smooth surface. From the trail there are plenty of viewpoints down into the slopes which makes it possible to see what other parts of the arboretum has to offer. There is also lots of new trees and bushes planted alongside the trail and several of them has signs with more detailed information.

If we can only find positive sponsors, we plan for more improvements in the future. These include: increasing accessibility with more bridges, new detours into the arboretum, grill areas suited for wheelchairs etc.

## Western North America

Western Canada and USA host many of the world's largest conifers and several of these species can survive in our climate. Here you can walk through small stands of White fir (*Abies concolor*), Black spruce (*Picea mariana*), Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) and Tamarack (*Larix laricina*). Douglas firs (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and Subalpine firs (*Abies lasiocarpa*), which were planted when the arboretum was started, have already become big trees. Extensive new plantings of these species have been done in the last couple of years, especially along Lägdaleden. On **Hemlock hill** [5] grows the oldest planted tree in the arboretum. It is a 90 year old Mountain hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*), which was already 50 years old but only a meter high when it was moved here in the beginning of the 1980's. Be sure not to miss the distinctive **Pacific silver firs** [6] that show the importance of choosing hardy plant material for use in our climate.

Western and eastern North America are divided by large grasslands in real life, and in Baggböle there is a meadow between these parts. There you can have a picnic in the sun or visit the **Riverside grill area** [7] right next to it.

## Eastern North America

A visit to the **Woodland meadows [9]** in Eastern North America during the spring is one of the most stunning experiences the arboretum has to offer. Enjoy beautiful broadleaves such as Hawthorn (*Crataegus intricata*), Northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), Green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*) och Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*). If you follow the path from the meadow that leads up the hill you can find a large group of Eastern white cedars (*Thuja occidentalis*), here growing in its natural form and not in the pillar shape which is common in many gardens. On the upper side of Eastern North America where **Lägdaleden [8]** is located we have made new plantings of several broadleaves that are common in the region. Here we also find the rarest tree of the arboretum, an American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*). Rare in the sense that it is almost extinct from its natural habitat and that it is not expected to survive this far up north. Growing here is also this region's most common conifer, the Balsam fir (*Abies balsamifera*). The wild flora in this part of the arboretum is in itself spectacular, especially in the **Fern valley [10]** with enormous stands of our biggest fern, the Ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*). This species is circum-polar and can also be found in North America.

## Siberia

Siberia and Lägdaleden are now separated from the field above with a classic Swedish wooden fence and a row of Hawthorns (*Crataegus chlorosarca*) planted on the inside. This unusual and pretty tree from east Siberia was once planted among the avenues of St. Petersburg during the tsarist regime. Take a walk along the **Siberian trails [12]** and enjoy the wild and hilly forests reminiscent of Kamchatka, where one of our previous seed gathering expeditions took place. One species brought home was the rare Kamchatka fir (*Picea gracilis*). Others were Siberian fir (*Abies sibirica*), Erman's birch (*Betula ermanii*) and Siberian alder (*Alnus fruticosa*). Have a seat at the **Siberia view [13]** before you proceed to the **Siberian larch forest [11]** with larch trees that were 15-18 meters high when they were moved here.



### Art in Arboretum Norr

Currently there are two art installations in the arboretum in Baggböle. Along Lägdaleden (in Western North America) you will find the piece "**In between**" made by Carina Olsson, Ulla Thøgersen and Rebecka Adelhult Feklistoff. In the now abandoned power station next to the Japanese garden there is a sculpture by Fredrik Wretman called; "**8 11**" [21]

## Kvarnängen

Kvarnängen differs from other parts of the arboretum in the fact that it has kept its historical name from a time when there was a mill in this area (kvarn = mill, ängen = meadow). Here we want to show some of the most interesting plants the other parts has to offer, like many flowering species such as crab apples and lilacs. Another thing that sets Kvarnängen apart is that we take care of the area more like a regular park [15], unlike the other parts which should resemble a forest environment. **Tvätthällstugan** [14] which is situated right next to the river is a nice place if you want to find shelter and make a fire. Downstream you can rest in **Hammocks** [16] among several beautiful planted trees.

One important goal with Kvarnängen is to show the big genetic variety that can be seen within a species, both naturally occurring forms and varieties but also cultivars made through plant breeding. Examples of the previous are different forms of common Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) like Snake bransch spruce (*Picea abies* f. *virgata*) and Red-needle spruce (*Picea abies* f. *cruenta*) or the Finnish red downy birch (*Betula pubescens* f. *rubra*) which originally was found in northern Finland. A classic example of manmade cultivars is roses and in our **Rosarium** [18] we have gathered several local sorts. Right next to the roses we have a **Large poplar** [17], a Carolina poplar (*Populus x canadensis*) which have had the best growth of all the trees planted since the arboretum was started in the 1980s.

## East Asia

This part of the arboretum mostly consists of species planted alongside a 500m long stretch of the main trail. The **East Asia path** [22] always delivers a pleasant view with the **River rapids** [23] steadily in the background. Manchurian walnut (*Juglans mandshurica*) and Manchurian ash (*Fraxinus mandshurica*) are planted next to the path together with about 50 other Asian species. The slopes above the path has been classified a **Key habitat** [25] important for biodiversity, and is not used for our plantings. Right below Baggböle manor we have a group of what is regarded as the world's hardiest pear tree, Manchurian pear (*Pyrus ussuriensis*). They are beautiful during the flowering in spring.. One of the arboretum's expeditions went to the mountain Changbai shan in China. The plants gathered on that expedition has been planted below **Tore's staircase** [24], for example the Edible honeysuckle (*Lonicera caerulea* var. *edulis*).

Be sure also to visit our newest part, the **Japanese garden** [20] where we have been inspired by traditional Japanese horticulture. Come here to meditate by the pond and enjoy a lot of Japanese trees and bushes. More information about the garden and the species growing here is available on an information board next to the entrance.

## Foundation Arboretum Norr

The foundation Arboretum Norr was formed in 1984 through a collaboration between Umeå Municipality, Umeå University and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, in order to take care of the Arboretum that had recently been set up in the village Baggböle. The history of the arboretum actually started ten years earlier when the Danish forester Carl-Gustaf Thøgersen, then a student in Umeå, presented a plan to build the world's northernmost arboretum in Umeå.

In addition to the care and management of the collections (besides the main arboretum in Baggböle we nowadays also run two smaller arboreta, one on the campus in Umeå and one in Gällivare further north), two distinctive goals are stated in the bylaws of the foundation:

- to gather knowledge about the hardiness and growth of trees and bushes for the purpose of selecting interesting species and varieties for our northern climate.
- to communicate dendrological knowledge to students and the public (dendrology; the science and study of wooded plants).

Arboretum Norr is financed through contributions from Umeå municipality and other municipalities in Norrland. Funding also comes from private donors, companies and various institutions.

Contributions are greatly appreciated on **Giro: 5167-1451**



Shirasawa maple, *Acer shirsawanum*  
Photo: Lars Dahlberg

When time is available we accept groups for guided tours in the arboretum. Contact our curator Johnny Schimmel or consult our home page [www.arboretum-norr.se](http://www.arboretum-norr.se) for more information.

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The cover photo of this pamphlet shows the bud development of a bird cherry. After an original oil painting by Sonja Strömkvist Blycker ([www.ateljefridhem.com](http://www.ateljefridhem.com))



The word arboretum comes from the Latin word *arbor* which means tree. It is in short a botanical garden containing living collections of woody plants such as trees, bushes and vines.

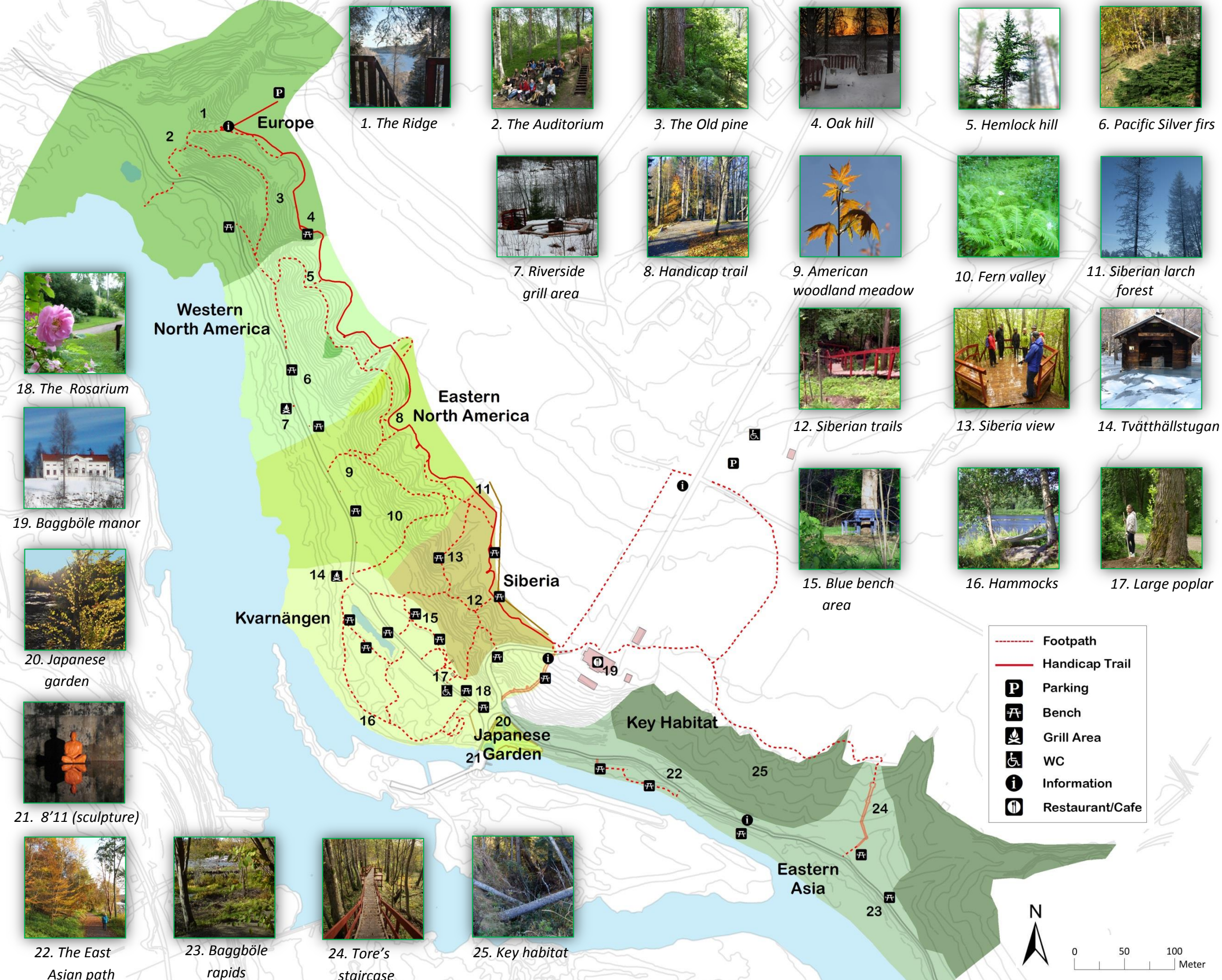
In the mid-1970s the idea to construct the world's northernmost arboretum was born. Ten years later Arboretum Norr was founded through collaboration between Umeå University, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and Umeå Municipality. The organization now manages three arboreta in the northern part of Sweden.

Our main arboretum is situated 10 km outside of Umeå city in the small village Baggböle. The 16 ha large area is situated right next to the Ume River in a southern slope. There are over 2000 planted trees, bushes and vines growing here of over 350 taxa (species, subspecies, cultivars etc).



The arboretum stretches both upstream and downstream of Baggböle manor in the center. It is easy to find and above the manor there are parking spaces. This is also where most of our visitors arrive. You can also come by foot or by bike along the small road that runs through the arboretum.

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1. The Ridge



2. The Auditorium



3. The Old pine



4. Oak hill



5. Hemlock hill



6. Pacific Silver firs



7. Riverside grill area



8. Handicap trail



9. American woodland meadow



10. Fern valley



11. Siberian larch forest



18. The Rosarium



19. Baggböle manor



20. Japanese garden



21. 8'11 (sculpture)



22. The East Asian path



23. Baggböle rapids



24. Tore's staircase



25. Key habitat



12. Siberian trails



13. Siberia view



14. Tvätthällstugan



15. Blue bench area



16. Hammocks



17. Large poplar

- - - Footpath
- Handicap Trail
- P** Parking
- ⌘** Bench
- 🔥** Grill Area
- ♿** WC
- i** Information
- 🍽** Restaurant/Cafe

