

An aerial photograph of a river winding through a lush green forest. In the center, a lock system is visible with a red house and a parking area nearby. A small bridge crosses the river to the left. The water reflects the surrounding trees and sky.

Skipper's Guide

FOR BOATS, CANOES AND KAYAKS

 Dalsslands
kanal

ETBL. 1868



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Sights and wonders await you

Ahead of you lies a peaceful and beautiful waterway stretching 253 km through lakes and forests. This unique lake system connects Köpmannebro by Lake Vänern in the south with Östervallskog in Värmland to the north, through 31 locks at 17 lock stations.

Ahead of you lies a breathtaking landscape with stunning views and charming old mill towns. Enchanted forests filled with wildlife and thousands of lakes - deep and vast - where pike lurk in the reeds and loons call across glassy waters.

Ahead of you lies Swedish history, culture, and tradition. Visit the cultural hub and aqueduct in Häverud, enjoy local delicacies, art museums, and much more. All set in a landscape rich with legend and lore – a miniature version of Sweden itself.

Ahead of you lies the Dalsland Canal.



All you need is here.

The Dalsland Canal

Dear skipper, don't use this map for navigation - but do let it inspire you to explore this fantastic waterway system. Safe travels!



Vänern

Dalsland

Suggested routes

To make the most of your canal experience, we recommend spending at least five days during the high season. Exploring all parts of the lake system can take several weeks. There are many hidden gems along the way.

- **Travel times are listed in hours**, based on a speed of 8 knots in open water and a maximum of 3 knots in canals. Please note that times do not account for waiting, traffic, or stops along the way.
- **We've also suggested how many days to allow**, so you have time to slow down, explore, and enjoy the journey to its fullest.
- **Number of locks.**

Don't miss the beautiful side routes: Snäcke Canal, Västra and Östra Silen, and Töcksfors Canal including the stretch north of Töcksfors. You can even cross borders – Otteid in Lake Stora Le lies in Norway!

Trailer or truck: Launch your boat using one of the ramps along the canal or arrange for land transport to destinations like the Halden Canal, Halden, Säffle Canal, or Strömstad. Find ramps and transport options via the QR code on page 3.

Köpmannebro–Håverud–Bengtsfors

Aqueduct & Culture



This is the canal's busiest section, with the Håverud Aqueduct as the obvious highlight. Dalslands Center with a tourist office, restaurant, exhibitions, food market, and café. Take a walk to Upperud and the Dalsland Art Museum. Accommodation options in Håverud include hotels, cottages, hostels, and a campground. Passenger boats also depart from here.

On your way north, discover the ancient rock carvings in Högsbyn. In Långbron, ride the vintage railbus or a classic passenger boat, and visit the cozy café in the old lockkeeper's cottage. Just a short walk away is Dals Långed, known for its arts education. A bit further north awaits Baldersnäs Manor.

Bengtsfors is worth a longer stay – with shops and restaurants, canoe rentals, bikes, or trolleys (to Årjäng). Families shouldn't miss the Dals Konfektyr sweets factory shop. Discover the "Great Canal Tour" with a scenic boat ride and train return. And don't miss the view from Majberget and its museums.

6 2-3 21

Köpmannebro–Fröskog

Country Baroque & Bistro



Turn into the Snäcke Canal after Köpmannebro toward Fröskog and Fengersfors. In Fengersfors, visit the old mill and cultural center Not Quite, featuring exhibitions, a stone-oven bakery, and a cozy bistro (a short walk away). In Fröskog, you'll find a charming wooden church in authentic country baroque style.

3 1 3

Gustavsfors–Årjäng

Restaurants & Trolls



A bit north of Bengtsfors, steer to starboard toward Gustavsfors. Here you'll find restaurants and the mill museum. If you head straight to Årjäng, don't miss the 8 metre tall Årjäng Troll.

4 2 1

Bengtsfors–Gustavsfors–Lennartsfors

Ice Cream & Treats



Experience the beautiful and expansive Lelången, with a detour to Gustavsfors for ice cream or something delicious to eat. Continue into the Silen lakes or head straight for the spectacular lock in Lennartsfors, with a great guest harbour and good a restaurants.

6 1 3

Gustavsfors–Östra Silen

Sport Fishing & Nature Harbours



Experience the wild landscape and lake life from Gustavsfors through the lock at Kroksfors into Östra Silen. You'll find excellent nature harbours on Restön and Trollön, or a guest harbour in Signebyn. Östra Silen is a sport fishing paradise with crystal-clear waters.

4-5 2-3 3

Lennartsfors–Otteid–Nössemark–Ed

Wilderness & Moose Park



After the majestic lock station in Lennartsfors, enter Lake Stora Le. Along the way, pass Trollön/Trolløya, which connects Sweden and Norway – marked by the national border cairn. Head north to the lovely guest harbour at Östra Otteid or south to the cosy harbour in Nössemark. In Ed, you can feed mooses at the Dalsland's Moose Ranch and visit the motorcycle and engine museum.

3-5

1-2

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Lennartsfors–Holmerudsfors

Wildlife & Nature



A journey through the wilderness from Lennartsfors northward to Skomsnäsundet, continuing to Fölsbyviken and on to the delightful guest harbour at Holmerudsfors. If you prefer nature harbours, the sheltered east side of Getön near Skomsnäsundet's entrance is beautiful. Gåsön also offers a nice dock, outdoor toilet, and grill area.

3

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Lennartsfors–Töcksfors

Shopping & Car Graveyard



North of Västansholm, Lake Foxen splits into two routes. The western channel takes you past the famous car graveyard in Båstnäs, while the eastern route has many great nature harbours. In Västra Fågelvik, pass through a narrow strait. From the Töcksfors guest harbour, it's a 10-minute walk to the local shopping center. If you prefer not to walk, you can lock through the lower lock and dock at the shopping center's dock.

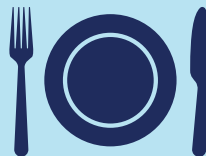
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Töcksfors–Östervallskog

Food & Nature



Leave Töcksfors full and content after enjoying one of the local restaurants. Now a peaceful journey north awaits, through the narrow Värmland lakes Töck and Strömmen into Lake Östen. Here you'll find the canal's northernmost guest harbour in Östervallskog – just 800 meters from the Norwegian border. Note: the clearance under the E18 bridge in Töcksfors is only 3.60 meters.

2

1

2




Lock pause

Being a lockkeeper is rewarding, but the workdays can be long. That's why even the lockkeeper deserves a break from time to time. We appreciate your understanding if lock operations are paused during these rest periods.

Locking through is simple

Allow a little extra time when planning your journey along the Dalsland Canal. You can't rush a system that has worked beautifully since 1868. But then again, it's often in the waiting that the unexpected happen. At every lock, a lockkeeper is there to guide and assist you – just follow their instructions, and your journey will flow smoothly.

This applies:

-  **Ticket:** Buy your canal ticket on our website before you lock through. The ticket will be sent via email, and the lockkeeper will scan your ticket (QR code) at each lock station.
-  **Equipment:** Your boat should be equipped with two boat hooks, four or five fenders, and life jackets.
-  **Life jackets:** Children and canoeists must wear life jackets. However, we prefer that everyone wears a life jacket.
-  **Open fires, smoking, and cooking:** These are things you should wait to do until after you've finished locking through.
-  **Number of people in the boat:** There should be at least two people in the boat when locking through.
-  **Dinghy:** A support boat or similar must be securely tied during the locking process.
-  **Lockkeeper:** Always follow the lockkeeper's instructions. They are there to assist you.
-  **Music and engine:** Turn off music and the engine. It's safer for locking through and better for the environment.
-  **Last locking:** The last locking through may be earlier than the scheduled closing. The locking process must be completed when the lock closes. Arrive early to avoid delays.



Lining up & timesaving

- Boats are locked in order they arrive at the lock.
 - Canoes are locked in last.
 - Passenger boats have priority.
- The latter mainly affects traffic at Håverud and Dals Långed. If you pass through Håverud before 10:00, you can save several hours. At Dals Långed, a line up may occur (high season) between 11:30 and 13:30.*



The lockkeeper at your service

Lockkeepers work at each lock. However, they may occasionally have difficulty noticing if you are waiting. In that case, you may need to contact the lockkeeper. Feel free to ask them about anything. They know where to find nature harbours, swimming spots, and other must-see places you shouldn't miss.

Tip! Cut this out and put it up...



Here's how to do it

1

Wait for assistance and make contact

If the lock gate is closed or the lockkeeper hasn't signaled that you may enter, dock at the waiting pier if there is one. Tip: Have your canal ticket ready for scanning.

2

The lock gate opens

If several boats are locking through at the same time, it's a good idea to put fenders on both sides now. Wait for a signal or call from the lockkeeper before entering the lock.

3

Position your boat in the assigned spot

When locking down, it's important to position the boat in the lock so that the stern clears the lock sill behind the boat. Turn off the engine!

4

Fixed mooring lines

The lockkeeper will lower bow and stern lines. These are looped around a cleat but must not be tied off. You need to be able to haul in or ease off in pace with the boat rising or lowering. Keep the bow line taut and under control during upward locking.

5

Protect your boat

The boat is protected from the lock's stone wall by rubbing posts (wooden poles on the lock walls). Place the boat so that the gunwale is against a rubbing post, but keep a few centimeters of space between the gunwale and the post using a boat hook.

6

After locking is complete

Toss up the lines and exit the lock in the same order you entered, unless the lockkeeper instructs otherwise. Wait for a signal from the lockkeeper before leaving the lock.



On our YouTube channel, you'll find the video "Locking through on the Dalsland Canal".



How to loop the mooring line around the cleat while locking through



Lock station	No. of locks	Rise	Passage time	Walking time to next lock
Köpmannebro	1	0,1 m	10 min	45 min
Upperud	2	5,0 m	30 min	10 min
Håverud	4	9,9 m	60 min	20 min
Buterud	1	0,08 m	10 min	40 min
Mustadfors	1	3,1 m	15 min	10 min
Långed	4	13,1 m	60 min	10 min
Långbron	1	0,3 m	15 min	25 min
Billingsfors	2	6,1 m	30 min	5 min
18th	1	2,4 m	10 min	10 min
19th och 20th	2	6,1 m	30 min	15 min
Bengtsfors	2	3,5 m	25 min	160 min
Lennartsfors	3	7,5 m	30 min	95 min
Töcksfors	2	10,1 m	60 min	
Bengtsfors	2	3,5 m	25 min	100 min
Gustavsfors	1	2,8 m	20 min	45 min
Krokfors	2	5,3 m	25 min	
Köpmannebro	1	0,1 m	10 min	50 min
Snäcke	1	3,0 m	20 min	45 min
Strömmen	1	1,2 m	15 min	



Travel Time Estimated based on 8 knots in open water and a maximum of 3 knots in marked passages and canals. The time does not include waiting times, other traffic, or stops along the way.

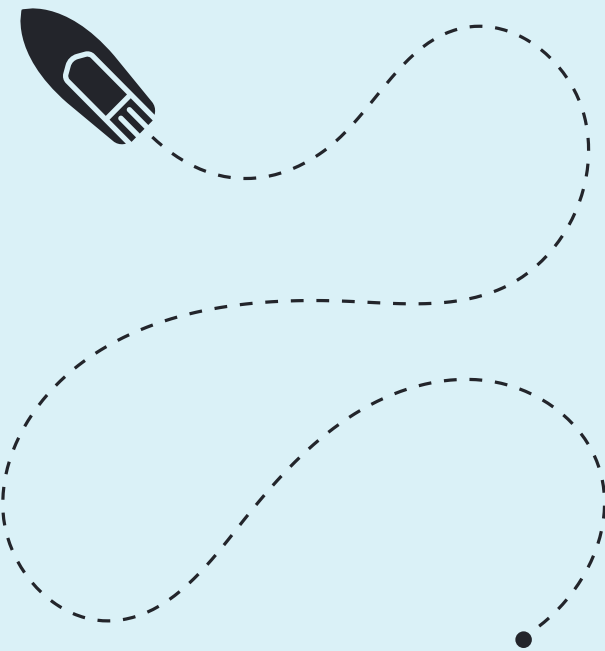
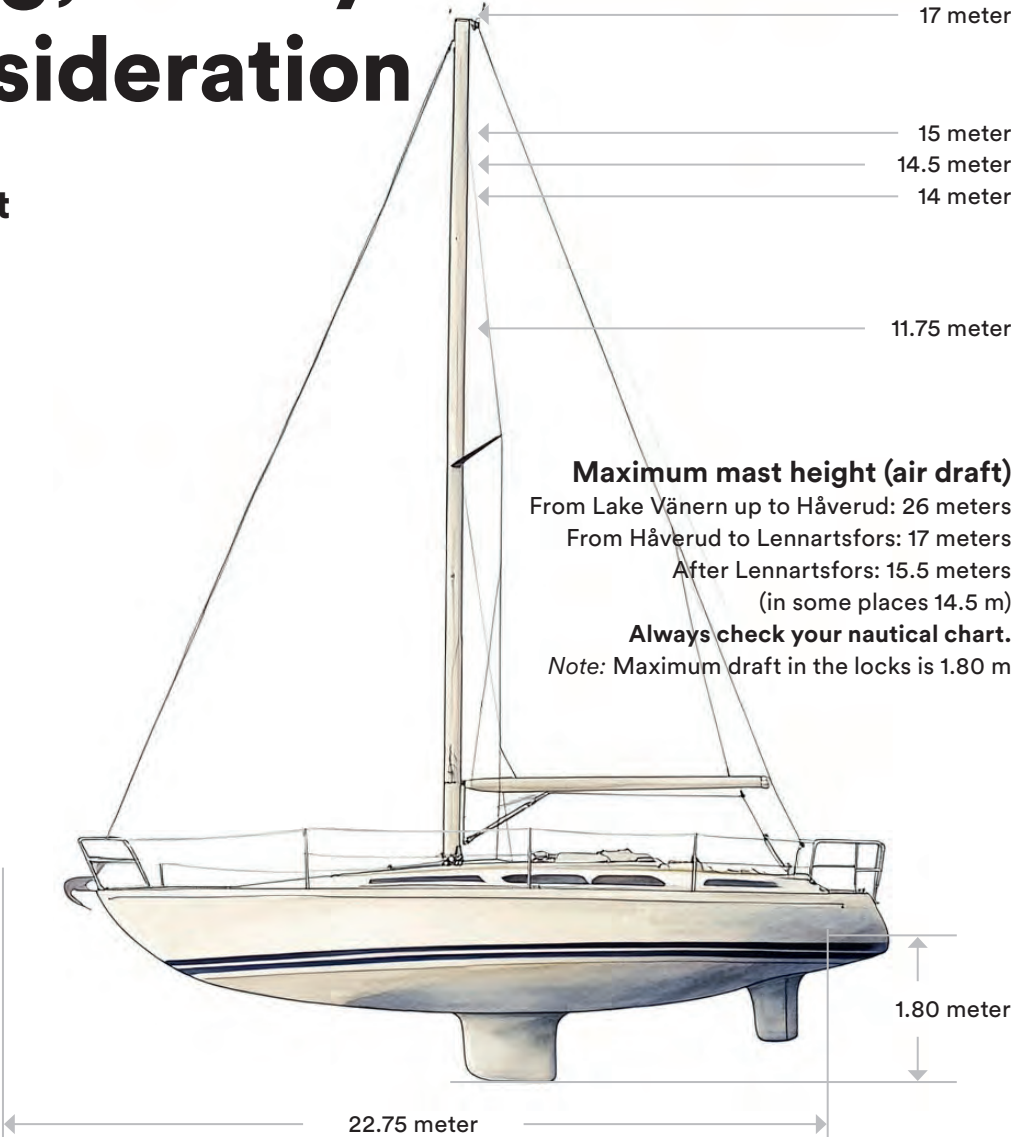
High and Low Season: In June and August, the overall time required is usually shorter. The travel times in the table give you an approximate idea of how long it takes to get between the locks on the canal.

Closed Lock: The final locking of the day may take place significantly earlier than the posted closing time, depending on how long the process takes. So be sure to arrive in good time if you're in a hurry.

Boating, Safety & Consideration

Maximum boat dimensions:

Length: 22.75 meter
Width: 4.05 meter
Draft: 1.80 meter



Swimming:

You are welcome to swim in the canal, but not within 50 meters of a lock, bridge, or waiting pier. Lock chambers create strong currents when emptied. Choose your swimming spot carefully. If you're unsure, ask a lockkeeper for advice.

Speed limits:

In constructed canal passages, the speed limit is 3 knots. In lakes and other parts of the canal, refer to nautical chart 956 (Dalslands kanal) for local speed regulations. Always adjust your speed and show consideration for residents, fellow boaters, and wildlife.

Fault reports:

If you suspect that a navigation marker is out of position or missing, please contact the canal company as soon as possible with the location or coordinates.

Nautical charts:

The 2020 combined chart for Dalslands Canal and the Trollhätte Canal includes fairways, guest harbors, attractions, facts, services, and canal history. Printed on waterproof and tear-resistant paper. Available for purchase in Köpmannebro, Håverud, Långbron and Lennartsfors.

Insurance:

All boats navigating the Dalsland Canal must carry valid third-party liability insurance. It is the skipper's/ owner's responsibility to ensure this is in place. If you suffer any damage that you believe the canal company is responsible for, you should contact the nearest lock keeper immediately. Afterward, send a damage report to: info@dalslandskanal.se

Flowing water in navigation channels:

Most of the time, natural water flow won't pose an issue for boaters. However, take extra care in the following areas where strong currents can occasionally occur:

- Håverud:** Just above the upper lock
- Buterud:** North of Buterud Lock near the boom.
- Lennartsfors:** North of the Lennartsfors lock station, the fairway splits—keep well to port when passing the boomt.
- Töcksfors:** At the entrance north of the lower lock, the fairway splits and leads to the hydroelectric station

Perch and the ‘salmon’ bills

A few canal fish

The Dalslands Canal and Lake Vänern offer everything from running waters and rapid fishing to quiet tarns, rift valley lakes, and inland seas. Whether you're after monster pike or salmon, trout, Arctic char, perch, or whitefish, you'll find your perfect fishing experience here. Spin fishing, fly fishing, trolling, or peaceful angling – Dalsland has it all.

Learn more about local fishing areas and where to buy permits at: www.vastsverige.com/fiskeland/

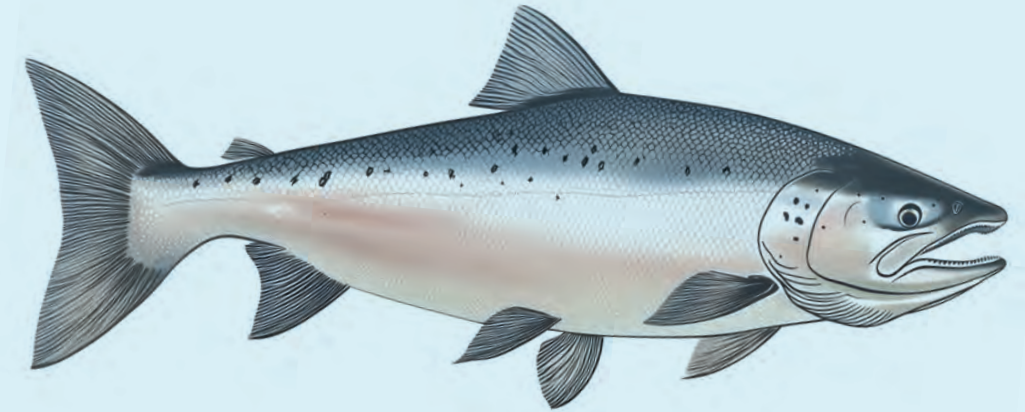
Bullhead (Hornsimpä)

Dalsland's provincial fish, the "hornsimpä" can growl and is considered Sweden's spikiest fish. Its roe is also considered a delicacy.



Perch

Perch can vary greatly in shape and color depending on habitat. A filleting technique that removes all bones is called "trouserer" the perch.

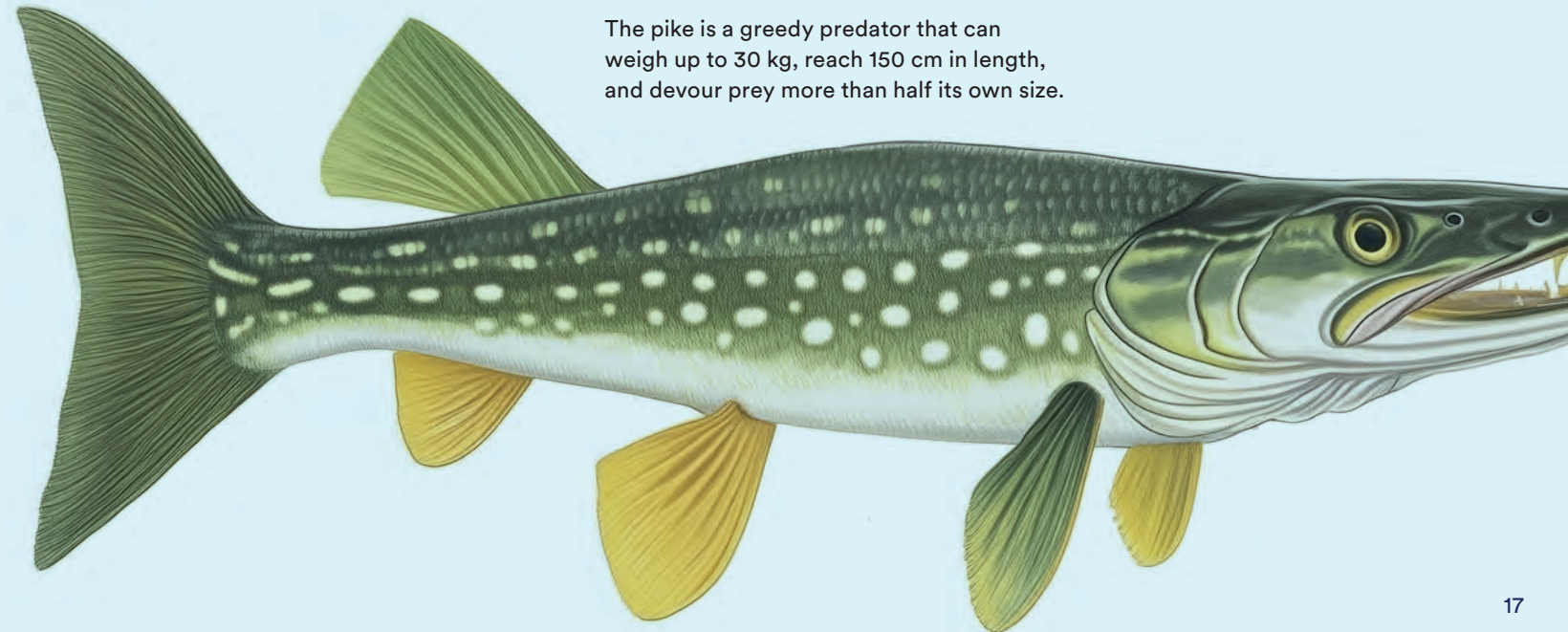


Trout & Salmon

Both species spawn and produce "smolts."
Fun fact: In Sweden, old 1,000 SEK banknotes were nicknamed "lax" (salmon) due to their pink color.

Pike

The pike is a greedy predator that can weigh up to 30 kg, reach 150 cm in length, and devour prey more than half its own size.



A few canal creatures

The wilderness of Dalsland and Värmland is mystical and secretive. Here you might encounter elk, deer, hares, and foxes. If you're silent, patient, and lucky, you may even catch a glimpse of some rare wildlife hidden in the deep forests.

Beaver

Beaver castoreum – a secretion from the beaver's rear – was once used to flavor vanilla and in natural remedies.



Lynx

Vikings once traded luxurious lynx pelts during their travels. These soft and expensive furs were even used as bedding.

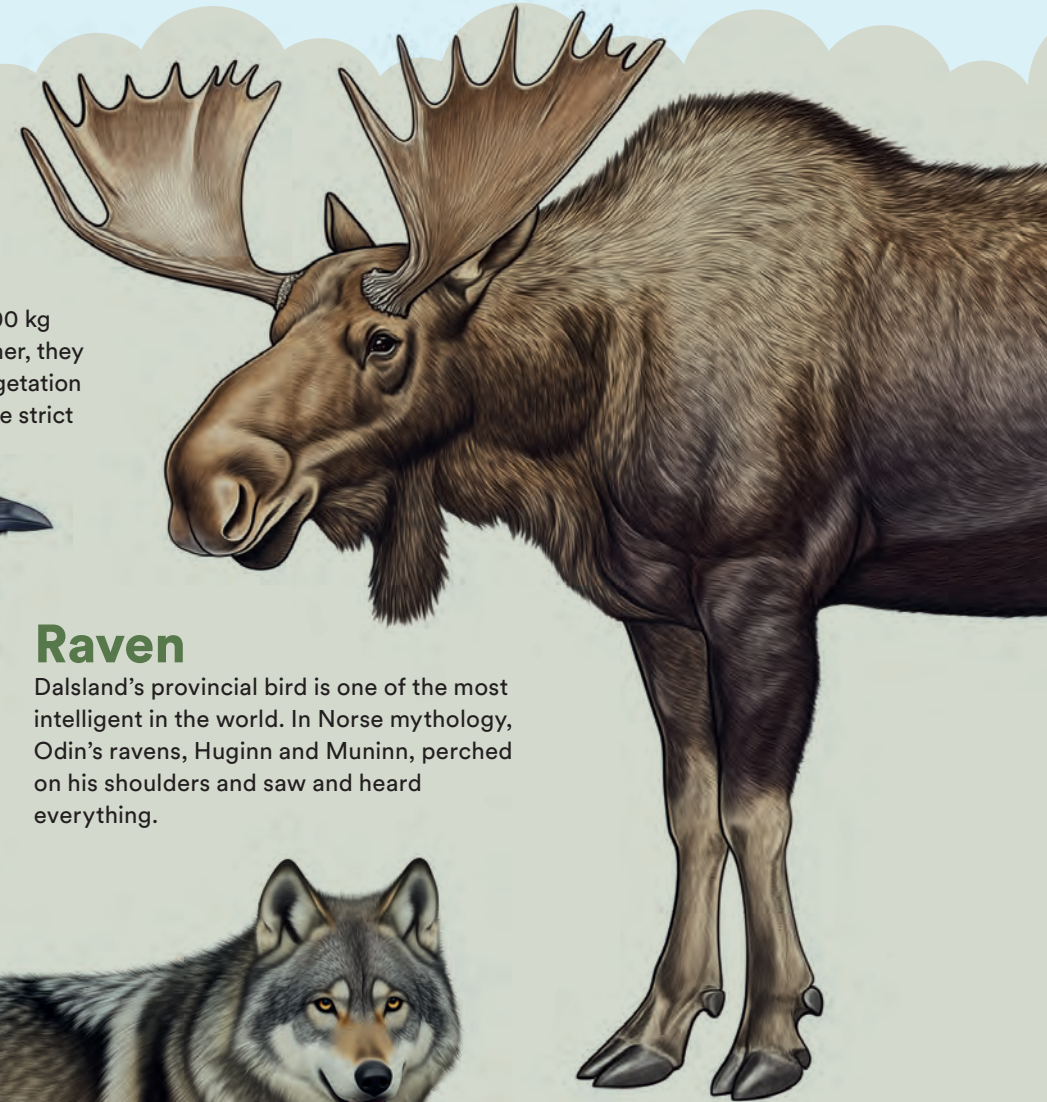
Harvest Mouse

In 1985, Sweden welcomed a new mammal species when the tiny harvest mouse was discovered in Dalsland. Just 5 cm long and weighing 7 grams, it's one of the world's smallest rodents.



Moose

Moose weigh between 200–800 kg and need a lot of food. In summer, they can consume up to 35 kg of vegetation per day—but don't worry, they're strict herbivores.



Raven

Dalsland's provincial bird is one of the most intelligent in the world. In Norse mythology, Odin's ravens, Huginn and Muninn, perched on his shoulders and saw and heard everything.



Wolf

The wolf is Värmland's provincial animal. Few people ever spot one in the wild, but if you stay quiet and keep your eyes open...

Canoeing on the canal

Many of our visitors are canoeists. With long, narrow lakes where the waves rarely rise high, and wilder waters further north, the Dalsland Canal – one of Europe's most beautiful lake systems – offers a safe haven for beginners and a true challenge for the more adventurous.



Through the lock

- Always follow the lock keeper's instructions.
- Everyone in the canoe must wear a life jacket.
- Canoes enter the lock last.
- Canoes also pay a lockage fee.

Good to know

- Don't paddle in the middle of the navigation channel.
- There are over 100 DANO campsites throughout the lake system. Most have fire pits, outdoor toilets, shelters, and space for tents. You'll need to buy a Nature Conservation Card to use them - available at dalslandnordmarken.se.
- A fire ban is in effect from June 1 to August 31.
- Use the Right of Public Access respectfully - it's there for everyone.

Guest Harbours

Most guest harbours along the Dalsland Canal operate on a first come, first served basis and cannot be pre-booked. The harbour in Bengtsfors is an exception and can be booked via **dockspot.com**. Prices and contact details for all guest harbours can be found on our website (see QR code on page 3).

GUEST HARBOUR	DEPTH (M)	BERTH	MOORING	FRESHWATER	WC	SHOWER	LAUNDRY		SWIM-MING	PUMP OUT STATION	FUEL	INTERNET	CAFÉ	REST./BAR	CRANE	RAMP	RE-CYCLING	DIST. TO SHOP	MOTOR-HOME
Köpmannebro	2,5	6–10	Alongside	●	●	●	●				●		●						
Upperud – Spången	5	14	Alongside, bouy, post	●	●	●			●	Latrinvask		●	200 m	200 m		●	●	2,3 km	●
Håverud	1,8	25	Post, bouy	●	●	●	●			●	1,6 km		100 m	100 m				1,5 km	●
Dals Långed	1,8	8	Bouy	●	●	●				Blackwater disposal	1 km		100 m	100 m			600 m	400 m	●
Långbron	1,5	4	Bouy		Outdoor toilet				●				400 m	2 km		Brant	300 m	2 km	●
Laxsjöns Camping	1,0–1,8	10	Anchor, post	●	●	●	●		●		1 km	●	●	●			●	100 m	●
Baldersnäs	1,2–1,8	12	Alongside, post	●	●	●			●				w. 26-32	●				3 km	
Bengtsfors	1,5–3,0	45	Anchor, bouy	●	●	●	●		●	●	200 m	●	100 m	100 m		150 m	●	100 m	
Gustavsfors	2,0–2,5	16	Anchor, bouy	●	●	●				●			●	●	●	●	●	100 m	
Fröskog (gästbrygga)	1,8	3	Alongside, bow						●							●		3 km	
Årjäng	1,5	16	Alongside, bouy	●	●	●	●			Blackwater disposal	1,5 km	●		1,5 km		●		1,5 km	●
Sillebotten	2,0–3,0	6	Anchor, post		Outdoor toilet				●				●			●		9,5 km	
Signebyns	1,5–3,0	4	Bouy		Outdoor toilet				●		5 km					●		5 km	
Lennartsfors	3	15–18	Bouy	●	●	●	●			●	300m	●	100 m		Crane truck	●		400 m	●
Holmerudsfors	2,5	11	Alongside, bouy	●	●	●			●			●	w. 26-31				●	13 km	●
Töcksfors	3,5	14	Alongside, bouy	●	●	●	●			●	400 m		●		●	●		1 km	
Östervallskog	2	15	Alongside, anchor, post	●	●	500m	500m				500 m					●	●	500 m	●
Nössemarks Camping	2	12	Alongside, post	●	●	●	●		●	Blackwater disposal		●	●	●		●	●	100 m	●
Ed	1,0–6,0	10	Alongside, bouy	●	●	●	●		●	●	Diesel	●		3 km	Lifting platform	●	●	3 km	●
Otteid (Norge)	2	20	Alongside, post	●	●	●	●		●			●	●			●		18 km	

We do our best to ensure everything is correct – but small changes or mistakes may occur.



An idyllic escape into peace and quiet

The Dalsland Canal winds through one of Sweden's most water-filled landscapes — a labyrinth of large and small lakes, rivers, and idyllic, winding canal stretches. Only 12 km of the entire system is manmade — the rest is a naturally connected, navigable waterway where you'll rarely feel crowded.

An ambitious project backed by the people

Since the 1600s, iron ore had been transported from Bergslagen to the ironworks in Dalsland by boat across Lake Vänern and then by horse and wagon. In the 1700s, discussions began in the Swedish parliament about connecting Dalsland's waterways by canal.

By the summer of 1868, the canal was completed. Now, iron, people, and mail could travel by boat from Dalsland's forests to Gothenburg or even the Baltic Sea via the Göta Canal.

The wonder of the Håverud aqueduct

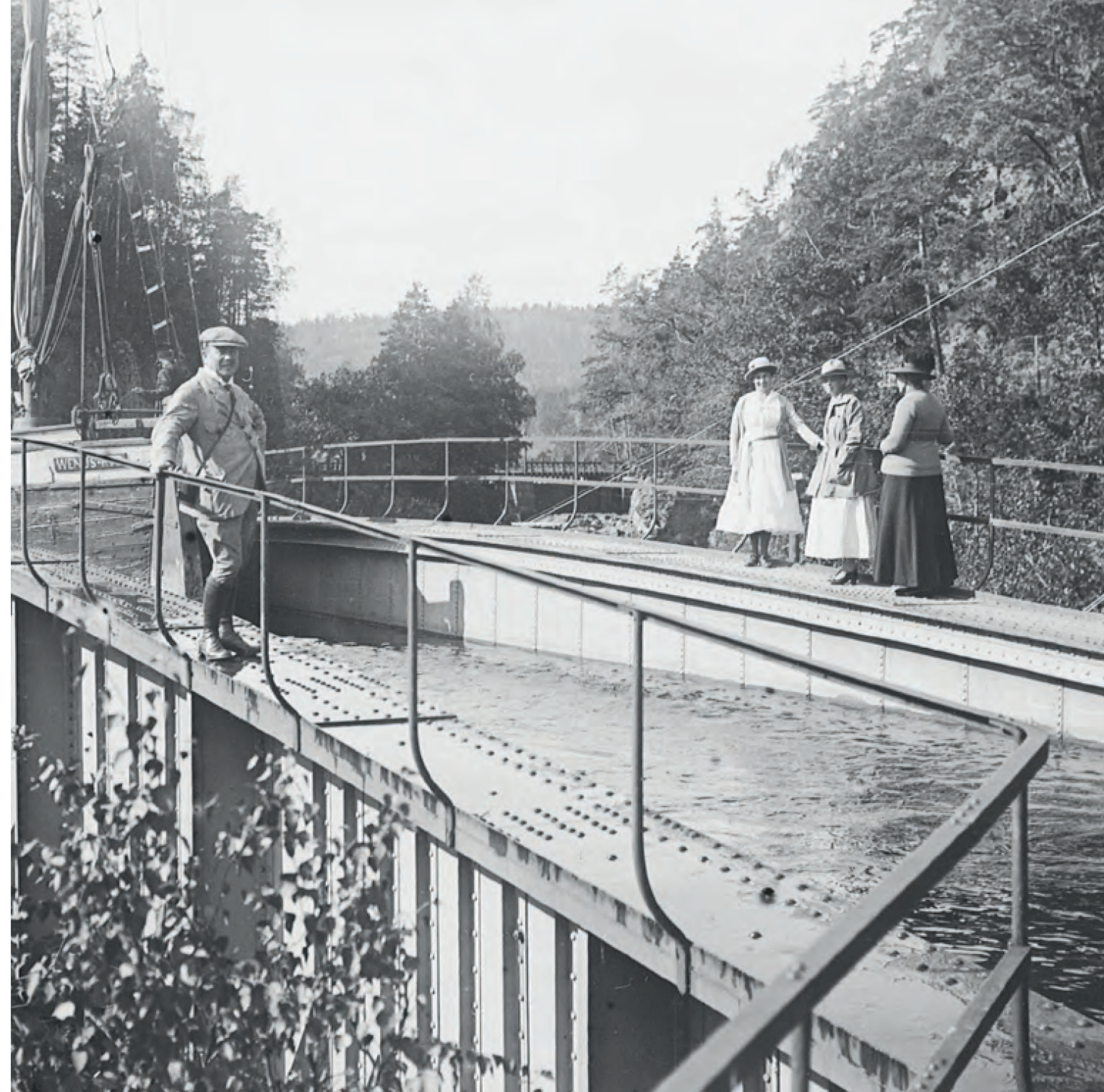
But it wasn't an easy build. Håverud's rushing rapids and 10-meter height difference posed a real challenge. The project leader, Nils Ericson, had already built the locks at Trollhättan, the Stockholm lock, the Saimaa Canal in Finland, and Sweden's western and southern railways—but never an aqueduct. He took on the challenge—and we're grateful he did. The solution was a 33-meter-long iron trough, filled with water, that allows boats to float over the rapids and continue down into the Håverud lock staircase.

On time and on budget

Ericson delivered the project in just four years, right on schedule and budget. And the people of Dalsland showed up in full force to support the project. In Sweden's National Archives, you can still find the original shareholder subscription lists—a testament to the collective commitment to building one of Europe's most beautiful waterways.

The Dalsland Canal: A network of large and small lakes, fjords, coves, and side channels. It stretches from the western shores of lake Vänern, through Dalsland, into Värmland and even touches Norway.

Length:	253 km of which 12 km is man-made
No. of locks:	31 locks distributed across 17 lock stations
Elevation diff.:	66 m between Stora Le in Töcksfors and Köpmannebro at Lake Vänern.
Construction:	1864–1868
Engineer:	Nils Ericson





Dalslands kanal

ETBL. 1868

*Find everything you need to know about the Dalsland Canal at: dalslandskanal.se
Want to buy a fishing permit, see which fish are biting where, or find lake maps? Visit: fiskeland.se*