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Sweden - Bronze Age (1700 BC - 501 BC)

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Description

Sweden's southern third was part of the stock-keeping and agricultural Nordic Bronze Age Culture's area, most of it being peripheral to the culture's Danish centre. The period began in c. 1700 BC with the start of bronze importation; first from Ireland and then increasingly from central Europe. Copper mining was never tried locally during this period, and Scandinavia has no tin deposits, so all metal had to be imported though it was largely cast into local designs on arrival. Iron production began locally toward the period's end, apparently as a kind of trade secret among bronze casters: iron was almost exclusively used for tools to make bronze objects.

The Nordic Bronze Age was entirely pre-urban, with people living in hamlets and on farmsteads with single-story wooden long-houses. Geological and topographical conditions were similar to those of today, but the climate was milder.

Rich individual burials attest to increased social stratification in the Early Bronze Age. A correlation between the amount of bronze in burials and the health status of the deceased's bones shows that status was inherited. Battle-worn weapons show that the period was warlike. The elite most likely built its position on control of trade. The period's abundant rock carvings largely portray long rowing ships: these images appear to allude both to trade voyages and to mythological concepts. Areas with rich bronze finds and areas with rich rock art occur separately, suggesting that the latter may represent an affordable alternative to the former.

Bronze Age religion as depicted in rock art centres upon the sun, fertility and public ritual. Wetland sacrifices played an important role. The later part of the period after about 1100 BC shows many changes: cremation replaced inhumation in burials, burial investment declined sharply and jewellery replaced weaponry as the main type of sacrificial goods.

References: [Wikipedia](#)

Popular Sites

[Gannarve Ship Grave](#)



The Gannarve grave is outlined by large standing stones, forming the shape of a ship. It has been built at the end of the Bronze Age, about 1100 – 500 B.C. The grave is 29 metres long and 5 metres wide. It is only one of about 350 boat-shaped graves on the island. In most cases, only one burial has been uncovered in each grave. When these people were buried, it was a custom to cremate the dead on a pyre. After crema ...

Founded: 1100-500 BC | Location: [Gotland, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [pellesten](#)

[Tjelvar's Grave](#)



Tjelvar's Grave is one of the best preserved stone ship settings in Gotland. According the legend Tjelvar, the first man lived in Gotland, is buried there. Archaeologists have dated the grave to made in the late Bronze Ages, 1100-500 BC. Tjelvar's grave is 18 metres long and 5 metres wide. The height of the gunwale stones diminishes towards the centre of the ship, which has also been filled with stones ...

Founded: 1100-500 BC | Location: [Slite, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [Swedish National Heritage Board](#)

[Gettlinge Stone Ship Burial Ground](#)



Gettlinge is a village in the southwest portion of the island of Öland It is known for its impressive Viking stone ship burial ground. Gettlinge is situated on the western fringe of the Stora Alvaret, a World Heritage Site designated by UNESCO. The principal evidence of life in the Gettlinge area from 1000 BC to 1000 AD is derived from the gravefields themselves. The Gettlinge burial ground is situated near the coas ...

Founded: 1000 BC-1000 AD | Location: [Morbylånga, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [Peter Karlsson](#)

[Anundshög](#)



Anundshög is the largest tumulus in Sweden. It has a diameter of 60 metres and is about 9 metres high. Assessments of the era of the mound vary between the Bronze Age and the late Iron Age. A fireplace under it has been dated by radiocarbon dating to sometime between AD 210 and 540. Some historians have associated the mound with the legendary King Anund, while others regard this as speculative. It is purported also ...

Founded: 1500 BC - 1000 AD | Location: [Västerås, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [YlvaS](#)

[Gnisvård Ship Settings](#)



There are three ancient ship-formed graves in Gnisvård. All of them are set in line, as if out sailing together. The largest one is 45 metres long and 7 metres wide. That makes it the biggest ship setting on Gotland. Graves were made in the Bronze Ages, 1700-500 BC.

Founded: 1700-500 BC | Location: [Gnisvård, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [JsonLind](#)

[Rickeby Rock Carvings](#)



Rickeby is known of its Bronze Age rock carvings. The area contains about 50 carvings displaying for example humans and animals.

Founded: 1700-500 BC | Location: [Enköping, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [Signora NN I](#)

[Stenehed Grave Field](#)



Stenehed is an Iron Age grave field containing about 45 graves, a stone circle, a stone ship, and a row of menhirs. Originally, there were eleven or twelve menhirs at the site; today, there are nine. The tallest one is 3,3m high. They are placed in a row, according to their heights. In 1980, astronomer Curt Roslund suggested that they form an astronomical calendar, similar to Stonehenge in England.

Founded: 600-400 BC | Location: [Hällevadsholm, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

[Hagbard's Gallow](#)



Hagbard's Gallow consists of two pair of menhirs, large upright standing stones. The monument was probably constructed during the bronze age. The stone has engravings, some discovered in the 18th Century and some in modern times. The name is related to the legend of Hagbard and Signy, as well as several other nearby remains.

Founded: 1700-500 BC | Location: [Falkenberg, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [arkland_swe](#)

[Uggårda Cairns](#)



Uggårda is the largest Bronze Age burial ground in Gotland, founded around 1500-1000 BC. The biggest cairn is 7,5 meters high and 40 meters wide. There are also several smaller cairns on the site.

Founded: 1500-1000 BC | Location: [Hemse, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [carlstr](#)

[Gålrum Burial Ground](#)



Gålrum is an ancient burial ground including 122 ancient monuments. There are 5 large stone cairns, 110 round stone settings and 8 ship settings. The site was in use for 1500 years and reflects the differing burial styles over that long period of time with the earliest dating back to the Bronze Age around 1500 BC. The cairns vary in size from 10 metres to 25 metres in diameter and mostly have perimeter stones around ...

Founded: 1500 BC - 100 AD | Location: [Gålrum, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [m-klueber.de](#)

[King's Grave](#)



The King's Grave (Kungagraven i Kivik, Kiviksgraven) is what remains of an unusually grand Nordic Bronze Age double burial c. 1000 BC. In spite of the facts that the site has been used as a quarry, with its stones carried off for other uses, and that it was restored carelessly once it was known to be an ancient burial, these two burials are unique. In both construction and in size — it is a circular site measuring ...

Founded: c. 1000 BC | Location: [Kivik, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [Luca Pradella](#)

[Möckleryd Rock Carvings](#)



There are 140 rock carvings in Möckleryd and it is the largest rock art site in Blekinge dating probably from the Bronze Age. There are mainly boats, horses, people and elks described in carvings.

Founded: 1700-550 BC | Location: [Torhamn, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [Signora NN I](#)

[Getterön Burial Ground](#)



There are five big tumuli (burial mounds) in Getterön. The graves date probably from the Bronze Age (1500 - 500 BC).

Founded: 1500 - 500 BC | Location: [Varberg, Sweden](#)

[Backa Rock Carvings](#)



Backa rock carvings date back to the Bronze Age (1000-500 BC). There are sixteen separate carvings depicting humans and ships. The most famous carving depicts a 1,5m long man with a spear.

Founded: 1000 - 500 BC | Location: [Lysekil, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

[Lugnarohögen](#)



Lugnarohögen is a burial mound dating from the late Bronze Ages. The excavation made in 1926-1927 revealed a 8 meter long stone ship in the cairn. Archaeologists also found bones and three small bronze items made in 700-500 BC.

Founded: 700-500 BC | Location: [Laholm, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [Signora NN I](#)

[Jättakullen](#)



Jättakullen is the largest cist (stone-built coffin-like box or ossuary used to hold the bodies of the dead) in Sweden. The 14x4 meter grave is dated to the Bronze Age, around 1500 BC. There are some carvings inside the cist.

Founded: 1500 BC | Location: [Vårgårda, Sweden](#) | Photo copyright: [Göran Höglund \(Kartläsarn\)](#)



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- [Dun an Sticir \(United Kingdom\)](#)
- [St. Clement's Church \(United Kingdom\)](#)

Historic Site of the Week: Havránok

Havránok is an important archaeological site in northern Slovakia. It is located on a hill above the Liptovská Mara water. The archaeologists unearthed a prehistoric Celtic hill fort and a medieval wooden castle in the 1960s, during the construction of the Liptovská Mara dam. Both objects have been partially reconstructed. Duri ...

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