

= Swedish heraldry =

Swedish heraldry encompasses heraldic achievements in modern and historic Sweden . Swedish heraldic style is consistent with the German @-@ Nordic heraldic tradition , noted for its multiple helmets and crests which are treated as inseparable from the shield , its repetition of colours and charges between the shield and the crest , and its scant use of heraldic furs . Because the medieval history of the Nordic countries was so closely related , their heraldic individuality developed rather late . Swedish and Finnish heraldry have a shared history prior to the Diet of Porvoo in 1809 ; these , together with Danish heraldry , were heavily influenced by German heraldry . Unlike the highly stylized and macaronic language of English blazon , Swedish heraldry is described in plain language , using (in most cases) only Swedish terminology .

The earliest known achievements of arms in Sweden are those of two brothers , Sigtrygg and Lars Bengtsson , from 1219 . The earliest example of Swedish civic heraldry is the city arms of Kalmar , which originated as a city seal in 1247 . The seal (Swedish sigill) , used extensively in the Middle Ages , was instrumental in spreading heraldry to churches , local governments , and other institutions , and was the forerunner of the coat of arms in medieval Sweden . Armorial seals of noblewomen appeared in the 12th century , burghers and artisans began adopting arms in the 13th century , and even some peasants took arms in the 14th century .

Heraldry in Sweden today is used extensively by corporations and government offices ; the rights of these private entities and of official bodies are upheld by Swedish law . In order to become legally registered and protected under Swedish law , an official coat of arms must be registered with the Swedish Patent and Registration Office (PRV) , and is subject to approval by the National Herald (Statsheraldiker) and the bureaucratic Heraldic Board of the National Archives of Sweden . Heraldic arms of common citizens (burgher arms) , however , are less strictly controlled . These are recognised by inclusion in the annually published Scandinavian Roll of Arms .

= = Characteristics = =

Swedish heraldry has a number of characteristics that distinguish the Swedish style from heraldry in other European countries . Common features of Swedish heraldry are similar to those of other Nordic countries and Germany , placing it in the German @-@ Nordic heraldic tradition , distinguished from Gallo @-@ British heraldry and other heraldic traditions by several key elements of heraldic style . One of these is the use of multiple helmets and crests , which cannot be displayed separately from the main shield . These helmets and crests are considered to be as important as the shield , each denoting a fief over which the bearer holds a right . In Scandinavia (as distinct from the German custom) , when an even number of helmets is displayed , they are usually turned , with their crests , to face outward ; when an odd number , the center helmet is turned affronté and the rest turned outward (whereas in Germany the helmets are turned inward to face the center of the escutcheon) . Additionally , the crests are often repetitive of charges used on the main shield , and marks of cadency typically occur in the crest , rather than on the shield as in Gallo @-@ British heraldry . Also , the use of heraldic furs on the shield , while common in Gallo @-@ British heraldry , is rare in German @-@ Nordic heraldry . Furs in Scandinavia are generally limited to ermine and vair , which sometimes appear in mantling , supporters , or the trimmings of crowns , but rarely on the shield.a

Consistent with German @-@ Nordic heraldry , the most common charges in Swedish heraldry include lions and eagles . Additional animals that frequently appear in Swedish heraldry include griffins and (especially in the northern provinces) reindeer . Stars are common and are usually depicted with six points and straight sides , in contrast to the Gallo @-@ British tradition , which typically depicts stars as either a five @-@ pointed straight @-@ sided star (mullet) or as a six @-@ pointed wavy @-@ sided star (estoile) . In Swedish , these stars are usually described as " six @-@ pointed stars " (sexuddig stjärna) . In terms of blazoning , Swedish heraldry is described in plain terms using common Swedish language , rather than using specialized language such as Blazon . Canting arms occur frequently.b

= = Terminology = =

In English , achievements of arms are usually described (blazoned) in a specialized jargon that uses derivatives of French terms . In Swedish , however , achievements of arms are described in relatively plain language , using only Swedish terms and tending to avoid specialized jargon . Examples include the use of Swedish blå and grön for blue and green , as compared to the French @-@ derived azure and vert used in English blazon . Rather than argent , the Swedish words silver or vit (white) are used , and white , while rare , may be a different color than silver . Purpur (purple) is used in the lining of crowns and in the royal canopy of the greater national coat of arms . Traditionally , purple was rarely used as a tincture on the shield , though it does appear on the shields of some (especially modern) burgher arms . Ermine likewise appears in the lining of the mantling over the greater national coat of arms , but is otherwise virtually unknown in Swedish heraldry.c Vair is also rare in Scandinavian heraldry , and other furs are unknown.d

= = Officers of arms = =

In the Middle Ages , heraldic arms in Sweden were granted by the Royal Council (kungliga kansliet) , but this role was turned over to the College of Antiquities (antikvitetskollegiet) in 1660 . Prior to 1953 , the office of the National Herald (Riksheraldiker) was responsible for preparing municipal arms and the royal arms of Sweden , but today these duties are carried out by the Heraldry Board of the National Archives , including the State Herald (Statsheraldiker) . In order to register new municipal arms , a municipality must submit its proposal to both the National Archives Heraldry Board , which consults and renders an opinion , and to the PRV for registration . Once the board has completed its consultation process and provided a warrant of arms , the arms thus warranted may then be registered by the PRV and implemented by the municipality . Apart from municipal arms , heraldic arms registered by counties and by military and other government bodies are also handled by the National Archives Heraldry Board and the PRV .

The National Archives Heraldry Board , established under Swedish statute 2007 : 1179 , is the highest heraldic body in Sweden . The board is chaired by the National Archivist and includes three other officials , three deputies , the State Herald (who acts as secretary) , the National Archives jurist and the National Archives heraldic artist . This board convenes as needed , which in recent years has been once or twice a year .

The first National Herald was Conrad Ludvig Transkiöld (died 1766) , who served as Riksheraldiker 1734 @-@ 1765 . Subsequent National Heralds included Daniel Tilas (1768 @-@ 1772) , Anders Schönberg (1773 @-@ 1809) , Jonas Carl Linnerhielm (1809 @-@ 1829) , Niklas Joakim af Wetterstedt (1829 @-@ 1855) , August Wilhelm Stiernstedt (1855 @-@ 1880) , Carl Arvid Klingspor (1880 @-@ 1903) , Adam Lewenhaupt (1903 @-@ 1931) and Harald Fleetwood (1931 @-@ 1953) , and State Heralds (since the 1953 reform) have included Carl Gunnar Ulrik Scheffer (1953 @-@ 1974) , Lars @-@ Olof Skoglund (1975) , Jan von Konow (1975 @-@ 1981) , Bo Elthammar (1981 @-@ 1983) , and Clara Nevéus (1983 @-@ 1999) . Since 1999 , the State Herald of Sweden has been Henrik Klackenberg .

The Swedish Collegium of Arms , operating under the Swedish Heraldry Society , is responsible for reviewing and registering burgher arms . The Swedish Heraldry Society is a non @-@ profit association founded in 1976 , and is not affiliated with the National Archives or their Heraldry Board , which registers arms of municipalities and other public entities .

= = National heraldry = =

The greater national arms (stora riksvapnet) originated in 1448 and has remained unchanged in Swedish law since 1943 . The first legislation of state arms in Sweden was in 1908 , and prior to that the state arms were changed by royal decree . It is also the personal coat of arms of the king of Sweden ; as such he can decree its use as a personal coat of arms by other members of the Royal

House , with the alterations and additions decided by him . Since the beginning of the reign of Gustav Vasa in 1523 it has been customary in Sweden to display the arms of the ruling dynasty as an inescutcheon in the centre of the greater arms .

The coat of arms of Queen Silvia of Sweden is similar to the greater arms of Sweden , but without the ermine mantling , and with the central inescutcheon exchanged for her personal arms : Per pale gules and Or , a fleur @-@ de @-@ lis counterchanged . The shield is encircled by an azure ribbon with dependent cross of the Order of the Seraphim .

The lesser coat of arms of Sweden (lilla riksvapnet) is emblazoned : Azure , with three coronets Or , ordered two above one ; Crowned with a royal crown.f This is the emblem used by the government of Sweden and its agencies ; it is , for example , embroidered on all Swedish police uniforms . Any representation consisting of three crowns ordered two above one is considered to be the lesser coat of arms , and its usage is therefore restricted by Swedish Law , Act 1970 : 498 .

The three crowns have been a national symbol of Sweden for centuries ; historians trace the use of the symbol back to the royal seal of Albrecht of Mecklenburg , and even earlier . The three crowns have been recognized as the official arms of Sweden since the 14th century . The earliest credible attribution of the three crowns is to Magnus Eriksson , who reigned over Norway and Sweden , and in 1330s , bought Scania from Denmark . Written in 1378 , Ernst von Kirchberg 's Reimchronik depicted Magnus Eriksson with a national banner of dark blue , charged with three crowns , although this banner did not ultimately become the national flag of Sweden .

= = Military heraldry = =

Swedish military heraldry made news headlines in Sweden and overseas in 2007 , when a controversial change was made to the arms of the Nordic Battlegroup at the behest of a group of female soldiers who demanded that the lion 's genitals be removed from the arms . Vladimir Sagerlund , heraldic artist at the National Archives since 1994 , was critical of the decision , saying , " once upon a time coats of arms containing lions without genitalia were given to those who betrayed the Crown . " The Times in London noted a recent trend toward heraldic " castration " , pointing to the lions passant on the royal coat of arms of England , as well as the lions rampant on those of Norway , Finland , Belgium , Luxembourg and Scotland , all of which have been depicted without genitals ; in conclusion , The Times wrote , " some crests are ambiguous , but the message remains clear : the lions are supposed to display courage and nothing else . " Officials at the National Archives treat this as a change in artistic style , rather than a heraldic change , and the lion remains in its original form on the rolls of the National Archives , g while the castrated lion appears on the unit 's sleeve patches . The Nordic Battle Group 's coat of arms was originally designed to incorporate heraldic elements and colours from all member nations , including " a lion that did not look Finnish , Norwegian , Estonian or Swedish . " In an unusual move , the Armed Forces Heraldry Council authorised the Nordic Battle Group commander 's use of a command sign . This consisted of a bunting divided into fields of blue , gold and blue with a Roman numeral V in the gold field , since the unit would be the fifth mobilized combat unit of the European Union .

= = = Swedish Army = = =

The coat of arms of the Swedish Army consists of two crossed golden swords on a blue field . This motif is repeated in the flag of the Inspector General of the Army , and a blue field with a single upright golden sword appears on the flag of Military Region Command infrastructure , with three gold crowns in the canton .

= = = Swedish Navy = = =

The coat of arms of the Swedish Navy , which consists of a blue field with two cannons in saltire and a cabled anchor , topped with a crown , and has been used on the flags of naval commanders , including on the flag of the Inspector General of the Navy , the most senior representative of the

Swedish Navy ? s combat forces .

= = Regional heraldry = =

Each of Sweden 's 21 counties (*län*) , 25 provinces (*landskap*) and 290 municipalities (*kommun*) has its own coat of arms . The Instrument of Government (1634) introduced the modern counties of Sweden , superseding the 25 medieval provinces.h Although many of these counties have been the subject of more recent reforms , many of them occupy broadly similar regions . (See comparative maps at Counties of Sweden .) Most of the counties that have remained largely intact (*Dalarna* , *Gotland* , *Skåne* , *Södermanland* , *Uppsala* , *Värmland* , etc .) retain the respective province 's coat of arms , while the redistricting of other lands has been reflected heraldically (e.g. the newly created *Gävleborgs län* , occupying parts of *Hälsingland* and *Gästrikland* , bears their arms quarterly) . By royal decree on 18 January 1884 , King Oscar II granted all provinces the rights to the rank of duchy and to display their arms with a ducal coronet . While more exhaustive lists can be found elsewhere , i this article only discusses the arms of a few of these regions , selected for their heraldic notability . The arms of *Gotland* , *Västerbotten* , *Uppland* , *Södermanland* , *Skåne* and *Lapland* will be considered here in further detail .

= = Municipal heraldry = =

There are 290 municipalities in Sweden , each with its own coat of arms . A local government reform in the 1960s ? 1970s made all cities part of a municipality . The city arms often ? but not always ? became the coat of arms of the new municipality . As some municipalities were created at this time by merging smaller communities , this led in some cases to arms consisting of two parts , each derived from one of the communities . Some new municipalities also lacked historical cities within , and therefore created wholly new coats of arms . Municipalities which carry the name of a city (with a few exceptions ? see below) traditionally display a mural crown on top of their coat of arms . While no law forbids other municipalities from using the mural crown , it is customarily reserved for those bearing former city arms . Kalmar was the first to establish city arms in 1247 , and Stockholm , Skara and Örebro were also among the first cities in Sweden to establish city arms . As recently as 2007 , Härryda Municipality was among the last municipalities in Sweden to replace its logo with a newly registered coat of arms . Municipal arms may not use any colors (*tinctures*) other than argent , Or , gules , azure , sable and vert . As in other heraldic traditions , the rule of tincture applies and it is the blazon ? not the image ? that is legally registered .

= = = Former city arms = = =

The following is not an exhaustive list of the 133 historic cities in Sweden , but a brief list of cities that are notable and bear heraldic significance within the context of Swedish heraldry . Each is listed by the city name , in general chronological order with the approximate year of settlement or city charter . Note that most city arms originated in the Middle Ages as a city seal , and all were registered as municipality (*kommun*) arms in the 1970s .

= = = Other municipal arms = = =

The following examples do not represent an exhaustive list of Swedish municipal arms . See the list of municipalities of Sweden for a complete listing of these .

= = Ecclesiastical heraldry = =

The Church of Sweden (*Svenska kyrkan*) is the national church (*folkkyrka*) and , until 2000 , was the state church (*statskyrka*) of Sweden . The arms of the church have been found displayed on a 14th @-@ century heraldic flag discovered in Uppsala cathedral , and are blazoned : Or , upon a

cross gules , a crown Or.s The crown has long been said to represent St. Erik , but in early 2005 , the church issued a press release adopting " a new interpretation of the 600 @-@ year @-@ old coat of arms which was found in Uppsala cathedral , " calling it the victory crown of Christ (Kristi segerkrona) . The Church of Sweden also has many dioceses and parishes with their own coats of arms .

According to tradition , bishops may use the arms of their diocese marshalled with their own personal arms , with a mitre in place of the helmet and a crosier displayed behind the shield , but these are removed when the bishop retires . These arms may take the form of a shield divided per pale or quartered with the arms of the diocese in the first and third quarters and the bishop 's personal arms in the second and fourth quarters.t The cross staff or " primate cross " is used only by the Archbishop of Uppsala and the Bishop of Lund , crossed with the crosier behind the shield . Antje Jackelén , Bishop of Lund , uses the traditional oval shield of a woman 's arms , and her arms were designed by the diocese 's heraldist , Jan Raneke . Raneke also designed the arms of Jackelén 's predecessor , Christina Odenberg , who was the first woman to be a bishop in the Church of Sweden .

= = Personal heraldry = =

= = = Noble arms = = =

Noble arms (adliga vapen) , together with royal and municipal heraldry , are protected under Swedish law since 1970 . In the 17th and 18th century , the nobility fought to ban burgher arms (borgerliga vapen) . The result in 1767 was a compromise in that granted the nobility the exclusive right to barred or open helmets , coronets , and supporters , while " the Town law of 1730 stated that burgher arms are accepted since they are not forbidden . " A coronet of eleven pearls denotes a baron 's arms in Sweden (the ancient nobility does also have the right to have the baronet crown by tradition) , which also typically includes two barred helmets , each wearing this coronet , and a third such coronet is placed above the shield , although some baronial arms feature three helmets or only one , and not every baron uses supporters . A Swedish Greve (Count) bears three barred helmets , each crowned with a coronet showing five leaves , and supporters are usually ? though not always ? present . The arms of Swedish counts also , from the late 17th century , began using manteaux (see the Greater Coat of Arms of Sweden , pictured above) in place of the traditional mantling , although this practice has since been deprecated . Untitled nobility (others granted noble status by letters patent) also bore a barred helm and a coronet showing two pearls between three leaves .

The earliest known achievements of heraldry in Sweden were the noble arms of two brothers , Sigtrygg and Lars Bengtsson , of the Boberg family , dating to 1219 . Other noble arms may have been adopted into civic heraldry within their bearers ' areas of influence , such as the adoption of the arms of Bo Jonsson (Grip) by Södermanland ; the direct adoption of Jonsson 's arms is disputed , but at the least , a certain heraldic influence is evident.u The last charter of nobility in Sweden was issued by King Oskar II to Swedish explorer Sven Hedin in 1902 ; this may well be the last charter ever . The 1974 constitution does not mention charters nor the nobility , and the Royal orders of the State (not including , however , the Order of Carl XIII) can not be conferred to Swedes according to a special ordinance . The house of nobility lost the last of its official privileges in 2003 .

= = = Burgher arms = = =

Throughout the Middle Ages , heraldry in Sweden was primarily the domain of the high nobility , but burgher arms came to Sweden in the 14th century by way of the Hansa trade . This may have been especially true in Stockholm , where there was a large German population . While burgher arms became popular among the merchants of the Middle Ages , by the 16th and 17th century their use was " common among the non @-@ noble officers , judges and priests ... while the merchants tended to give up the tradition of heraldic seals and replace them with owner ? s marks . " In

contrast to noble arms , burgher arms are allowed only a shield with one tilting or closed helmet without a necklace or coronet . A wreath and crest must be placed on the helmet , and a motto or war cry can be used . Unlike noble arms , few burgher arms were handed down through the generations .

Burgher arms are not required to be registered with the PRV , and so they are not protected under Swedish law (1970 : 498) . According to the Swedish Heraldry Society , the most common way of obtaining recognition of burgher arms is by inclusion in the annually published Scandinavian Roll of Arms (Skandinavisk Vapenrulla) , which was first published in 1963 and currently includes over 400 Swedish family coats of arms , along with arms from the other Scandinavian countries . Upon submission to the Swedish Heraldry Society , burgher arms are reviewed by the Swedish Collegium of Arms , whose decisions are published in the Scandinavian Roll of Arms . Approximately 3000 burgher arms are known today in Sweden . Swedish law protects " arms of the nobility as well as civic bodies , while burgher arms are not [protected] , unless registered as a logotype . "

= = Crowns and helmets used in Swedish heraldry = =