

Bulletin 2 (2009)

of the
European Dry Grassland Group



Dear colleagues,

since the publishing of the first issue of our Bulletin the number of members of the European Dry Grassland Group has increased substantially. Many of you sent us positive responses and contacted us with your own contributions. Thank you for that. This positive feedback stimulates us to continue in our activities, and here we offer you the second Bulletin issue. Please, do not overlook the relevant information on the European Dry Grassland Meeting 2009 in Halle and proposals for the logo competition. We wish you a nice time during the reading.

Monika Janišová, Jürgen Dengler, Solvita Rūsiņa

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European Dry Grassland Group



Filipendulo-Helictotrichion in Slutiski, Daugava river valley, Latvia. Photo: S. Rūsiņa

The European Dry Grassland Group (EDGG) is a network of dry grassland researchers and conservationists in Europe. As an informal organisation we live from the activities of our members. Everybody can join EDGG without any fee or other obligation.

The basic aims of the EDGG are:

- ♠ To compile and to distribute information on research and conservation in dry grasslands beyond national borders;
- ♠ to stimulate active cooperation among dry grassland scientists (exchanging data, common data standards, joint projects).

To achieve its aims, EDGG provides four facilities for the information exchange among dry grassland researchers and conservationists:

- ♠ **the Bulletin of the EDGG** (published quarterly);
- ♠ **the EDGG homepage** (www.edgg.org);
- ♠ e-mails via our **mailing list** on urgent issues;
- ♠ **the European Dry Grassland Meetings**, organized annually in different places throughout Europe.

The EDGG covers all aspects related to dry grasslands, in particular: plants - animals - fungi - microbia - soils - taxonomy - phylogeography - ecophysiology - population biology - species' interactions - vegetation ecology - syntaxonomy - landscape ecology - biodiversity - land use history - agriculture - nature conservation - restoration - environmental legislation - environmental education

Recently, three chairs work for the EDGG with the following responsibilities:

Jürgen Dengler: membership administration, book review editor, contacts to other organisations. dengler@botanik.uni-hamburg.de

Monika Janišová: editorship of the EDGG Bulletin. monika.janisova@savba.sk

Solvita Rūsiņa: editorship of the EDGG homepage. rusina@lu.lv

To become a member of the European dry grassland Group or its subordinate units (German Arbeitsgruppe Trockenrasen, Working Group on Dry Grasslands in the Nordic and Baltic Region), please simply write an e-mail to Jürgen Dengler (dengler@botanik.uni-hamburg.de) including your complete address and specifying which of the groups you want to join. The detailed information on the EDGG you can find at: http://www.edgg.org/about_us.htm.

Activities of the EDGG

The membership of EDGG increased substantially from 192 on 9 December 2008 (the day before Bulletin No. 1 was released) to presently 270 persons (Fig. 1). This corresponds to nearly one new member per day if we take into consideration that we “lost” six members because they did not update their contacts (so do not forget to inform us when you change your e-mail address!).

Table 1: Overview of countries represented in EDGG

| Country | No. of members | Proportion (%) |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Armenia | 1 | 0.4% |
| Australia | 1 | 0.4% |
| Austria | 8 | 3.0% |
| Belgium | 3 | 1.1% |
| Bosnia and Hercegovina | 1 | 0.4% |
| Bulgaria | 1 | 0.4% |
| Canada | 1 | 0.4% |
| Croatia | 1 | 0.4% |
| Czech Republic | 5 | 1.9% |
| Denmark | 4 | 1.5% |
| Estonia | 6 | 2.2% |
| Finland | 5 | 1.9% |
| France | 1 | 0.4% |
| Germany | 135 | 50.0% |
| Greece | 1 | 0.4% |
| Hungary | 6 | 2.2% |
| Iran | 1 | 0.4% |
| Ireland | 4 | 1.5% |
| Italy | 4 | 1.5% |
| Latvia | 4 | 1.5% |
| Lithuania | 2 | 0.7% |
| Luxembourg | 1 | 0.4% |
| Netherlands | 7 | 2.6% |
| Norway | 1 | 0.4% |
| Poland | 9 | 3.3% |
| Romania | 7 | 2.6% |
| Russia | 5 | 1.9% |
| Slovak Republic | 9 | 3.3% |
| Slovenia | 7 | 2.6% |
| Spain | 1 | 0.4% |
| Sweden | 7 | 2.6% |
| Switzerland | 5 | 1.9% |
| Turkey | 1 | 0.4% |
| Ukraine | 5 | 1.9% |
| United Kingdom | 10 | 3.7% |

Also, the spatial distribution of our members has widened. Starting with 24 countries in December 2008, EDGG now has members from 35 countries, including three extra-European nations (Australia, Canada, Iran). High densities of EDGG members can be found mainly in central Europe and in the Baltic countries (Fig. 2). By contrast, southern Europe and the far eastern part of Europe are still very scarcely represented among our members (Fig. 2, Table 1). However, within Europe only very few larger countries have no EDGG member at all. The most important “white spots” are Portugal, some Balkan countries, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Iceland – but the latter country probably also has no dry grasslands (Fig. 2). We would thus particularly like to encourage colleagues from the named regions to join our group.

For historical reasons, EDGG started with 67% members from Germany, but this proportion has now decreased to exactly 50% (Table 1). However, the density of EDGG members per 1,000,000 inhabitants (as a more meaningful figure) is already higher in five other countries than in Germany, with Estonia being the European “capital” of dry grassland research (Fig. 2).

Jürgen Dengler, Hamburg, Germany
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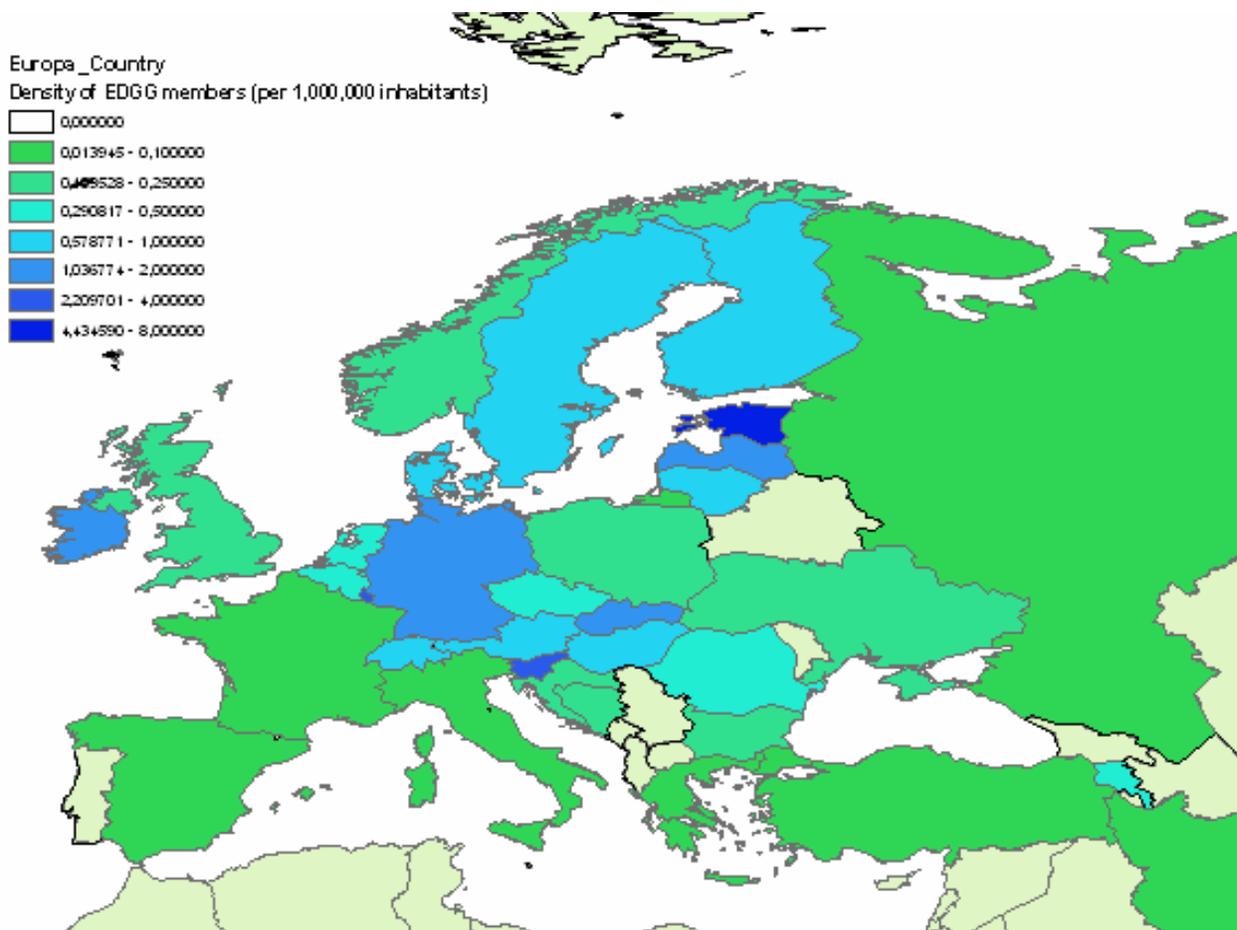


Fig. 2: Spatial distribution of EDGG members, 10 March 2009. J. Dengler.

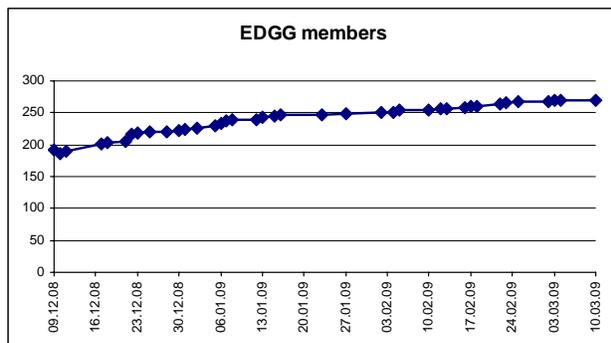


Fig. 1 Temporal development of EDGG membership numbers, J. Dengler.



Polytrichum piliferum. Photo: J. Dengler.

Current status of our webpage

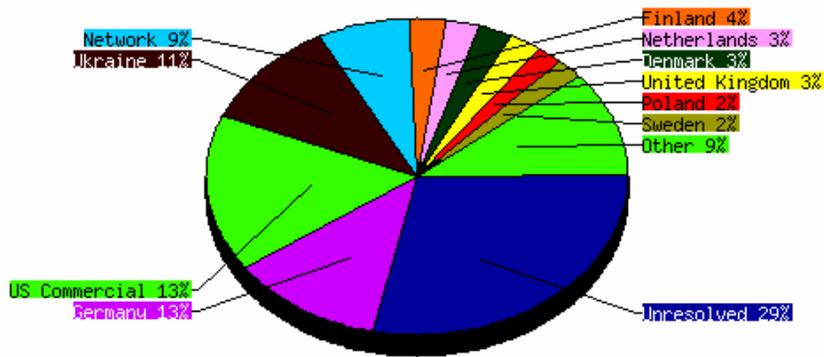
We are glad to announce that the homepage of our group is now fully functional (www.edgg.org).

After the launching of the fully functional version of our homepage on 14 January, persons from 39 countries have visited our pages. The total monthly numbers of hits are following: **December 2054, January 7481, February 3957**. The most frequent visitors have been from Germany and Ukraine (Fig. on the next page). It is a pleasure to see that our site attracted also persons from outside Europe (e.g. Brazil, Canada, Australia, Japan, and South Africa). The event and publication pages have been the most frequently visited.

New information is added continuously and we would highly appreciate to receive your contributions (see Page 22). Lists and pdf-s of your publications would be especially useful for users of our web pages.

As we chairs are no professional web page developers we would be grateful if some of our members could assist us in some technical issues concerning development of some features in our homepage. If you feel that you could help us in this respect, please contact Solvita: rusina@lu.lv

Solvita Rūsiņa, Riga, Latvia



Hits by country in February 2009.

Publication activities of the EDGG

The Special Feature in *Tuexenia* 29 with the supraregionally most relevant contributions of the Dry Grassland Meeting 2008 in Kiel has now been finalised (editors Christian Dolnik, Jürgen Dengler, Ute Jandt, and Kathrin Kiehl) and will be available approximately in May 2009. It contains five research papers and one editorial:

DOLNIK, C., DENGLER, J., JANDT, U. & KIEHL, K. (2009): Dry Grasslands in a Changing Environment – Editorial to the Special Feature with contributions from the 5th Dry Grassland Meeting 2008 in Kiel. – *Tuexenia* 29 (in press).

JUŚKIEWICZ-SWACZYNA, B. (2009): The psammophilous grassland community *Corniculario aculeatae-Corynephorum canescentis* in the Masurian Lake District (NE Poland). – *Tuexenia* 29 (in press).

KUZEMKO, A. (2009): Dry grasslands on sandy soils in the forest and forest-steppe zones of the plains part of Ukraine: present state of syntaxonomy. – *Tuexenia* 29 (in press).

LAIME, B. & TJARVE, D. (2009): Grey dune plant communities (*Koelerio-Corynephoretea*) on the Baltic coast in Latvia. – *Tuexenia* 29 (in press).

RUPRECHT, E., SZABÓ, A., ENYEDI, M. Z. & DENGLER, J. (2009): Steppe-like grasslands in Transylvania (Romania): characterisation and influence of management on species diversity and composition. – *Tuexenia* 29 (in press).

SCHRAUTZER, J., JANSEN, D., BREUER, M. & NELLE, O. (2009): Succession and management of calcareous dry grasslands in the Northern Franconian Jura, Germany. – *Tuexenia* 29 (in press).

Most probably, three further papers from the meeting will be included in the Special Feature on dry grasslands in *Tuexenia* 30 (2010), namely from RŪSIŅA, from KIEHL, and from DENGLER & SCHUHMACHER. Other contributions have already been published elsewhere, are published in this Bulletin (ISERMANN), or will be published in the next issue of the *Kieler Notizen zur Pflanzenkunde* (RICKERT & DREWS). Finally, also some pdf's of poster and oral presentation in Kiel are freely available on the EDGG homepage (at http://www.edgg.org/past_meet.htm).

For the next European Dry Grassland Meeting in Halle, we have already organised that there will be two Special Features with conference contributions. The more regional publications can be published in *Hercynia*, while the supraregionally relevant ones will find their place again in *Tuexenia*.

Jürgen Dengler, Hamburg, Germany



Cladonia foliacea. Photo: J. Dengler.

European Dry Grassland Meeting

Halle, 31 August – 2 September 2009

The second circular

http://www.botanik.uni-halle.de/mitarbeiterinnen_mitarbeiter/ute_jandt/trockenrasentagung/

Dry grasslands – species interaction and distribution

The meeting will take place at the [Institute for Geobotany and Botanical Garden](#) in Halle/Saale, located near the city centre. The main topic of the meeting is „dry grasslands – species interaction and distribution“. We invite all interested persons from European countries to present talks or posters related to this topic.

The conference will start with a workshop about databases and classification of dry grassland vegetation on Monday afternoon. The meeting will continue on Tuesday with lectures and a poster session dealing with species interaction and distribution in dry grasslands. For the third day, we will organize an excursion to visit dry grasslands in the surroundings of Halle. Participants, who want to present a lecture or a poster are kindly requested to submit a short abstract until May, 15th 2009. In case too many applications for oral presentations are submitted, we may ask to present some of the contributions as a poster.

The main language of the meeting will be English, but possibly a meeting on the progress of the German working group will be held in German.

Conference fee will be 45 Euro (accommodation not included). The deadline for registration is 30 June 2009 (registration form is attached in the next page).

We can possibly offer students and researchers with low budget a reduction of fees and/or participation on travel costs. Applicants should send an abstract of the planned contribution to the organisers as soon as possible (latest until May 15th 2009).

Contact:

Dr. Ute Jandt & Dr. rer. nat.

Monika Partzsch

Institute of Botany/Geobotany and Botanical Garden-
Martin-Luther-University, Halle-Wittenberg, Am
Kirchtor 1, 06108 Halle, Tel.fax:0345 55 27228, Email:
ute.jandt@botanik.uni-halle.de or
monika.partzsch@botanik.uni-halle.de

Accommodation and travel

Halle offers various types of accommodation. Please ask for details at tourist information (<http://www.stadtmarketing-halle.de>). The youth hostel (Jugendherberge) in Halle offers nice and cheap accommodation for owners of membership card (DJH and others) and is located at about 5 minutes walk from Institute for Geobotany.

Halle has good train connections. Those, who wish to travel by plane could arrive at airport of Leipzig-Halle (LEJ) and use the connection by local train (about 10 minutes) to continue to Halle train station.

Excursion

Dry grassland vegetation of the porphyry outcrops near Halle ([Monika Partzsch](#))

The plant cover of the porphyry landscape northwest of Halle forms a mosaic of strongly contrasting vegetation units. These are characterized by a high species diversity and the presence of numerous rare and endangered plants. The vegetation is geobotanically characterized by an overlapping of continental, subatlantic, and widespread Central-European species and forms atlantic-subatlantic dwarf-shrub heaths (Euphorbio-Callunetum) as well as (sub)continental dry and semi-dry grassland communities (Thymo-Festucetum, Filipendulo-Helictotrichetum, Festuco-Brachypodietum, Festuco-Stipetum etc.). A lot of floristic elements prevail outside central Germany and represent outposts of other plant-geographic regions. Especially at porphyry outcrops and the steep slopes on the bank of the Saale river near Halle they form characteristic vegetation types.

Reasons for the high diversity are site dependant changes in edaphic and microclimatic factors as well as the macroclimate of the rain shadow region southeast of the “Harz” mountain (Central German dry region: mean annual precipitation: 473 mm; mean annual tempera-

ture: 9.2). The bedrock is mainly porphyric covered with Loess deposits from the last ice age. Natural and anthropogenic erosion forms a nearly naturally fragmented landscape. The rocky outcrops of different size and origin are embedded within more or less intensively used farmland (field, fallow, meadow). The different small-scale environmental factors affect the variation in the vegetation mosaic, too. Especially small-sized outcrops show a high "edge"-effect, indicated by a high number of ruderal species.

For the protection of species rich xerothermic vegetation it is necessary to re-introduce the traditional land use by sheep grazing which was stopped due to economical reasons in 1990. A planned biomonitoring of the vulnerable plant communities could be useful to observe the change of vegetation in time and space.

Registration form

conference on dry grasslands - species interaction and distribution
Monday, 31st of August to Wednesday, 2nd of September 2009
Halle/Saale

| | | |
|-------------|------------------|--|
| degree | name, first name | |
| institution | | |
| street | | |
| postal code | city | |
| country | phone | |
| email | | |

I want to participate in the conference on dry grasslands in Halle/Saale from 31/08/2009 to 02/09/2009.

I want to join the following activities:

- conference on dry grasslands
- Excursion to porphyry hills
- guided city tour
- I would be interested in participating in an additional whole day excursion on September 3rd, with additional costs of about max. 20 Euro (will be organised only if sufficient number of people wants to participate)

I have transferred the conference fee of 45 Euro to the following bank account: bank account owner: Ute Jandt, bank name: CC-Bank Halle, Blz: 31010833, bank account number: 6226207920, purpose "dry grassland 2009 + your name" IBAN: DE27 3101 0833 6226 2079 20 BIC: CCBAD31

I want to contribute the following scientific presentation

| |
|------------|
| author(s): |
| title : |

- poster oral presentation

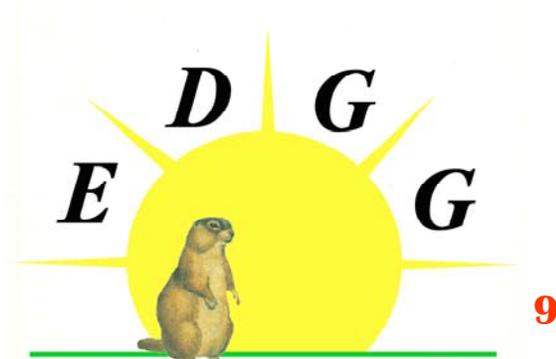
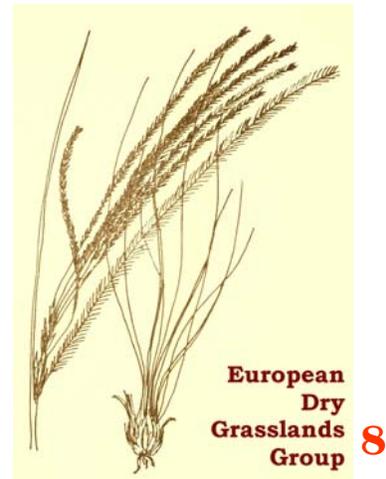
a summary must be submitted via email to ute.jandt@botanik.uni-halle.de until 15/06/2009

- I want to subscribe to the EDDG newsletter at my email address:

please return this registration form until 30/06/2009 to
 email: ute.jandt@botanik.uni-halle.de or fax: +49-345-5527228 or mail: Dr. Ute Jandt, Institut für Geobotanik und Botanischer Garten, Am Kirchtor 1, D-06108 Halle, Germany

Logo for the EDGG

This page presents ten logo proposals for the EDGG you sent us since the publishing of the Bulletin 1. We thank all contributors for their interest and effort. Each proposal is depicted by a number in red colour. All members of the EDGG are invited to vote for one of the proposals. Voting can be performed by an e-mail to Monika Janišová (monika.janisova@savba.sk). You can vote until the 31 March 2009. In the following issue the results of logo competition will be published. The logo will be used to promote the activities of the EDGG. It will be presented on the homepage and on the first page of the following Bulletin issues. The winner will receive two books - "Flora, Fauna and Conservation from Schleswig-Holstein to South America" and "Survey of Slovak Grassland Vegetation".



Dry grasslands in European countries

This section is devoted to overviews of dry grassland research activities in different countries/regions of Europe. We believe that exchange of information can help all of us to get a better understanding of the overall situation of dry grassland research and conservation. Our expectation is that stimulating articles on dry grassland research topics and stories of successful protection will encourage everybody to seek for closer cooperation and for new horizons in dry grassland research.

Different types of contributions are welcome for this section as the present status of dry grassland research and protection in a particular region is determined by several aspects, e.g. the history of overall vegetation (ecosystem) research, nature conservation priorities in the area, the possibilities of cooperation among scientists and practitioners, etc.

We would highly appreciate contributions of our members to this section. They should preferably fit in one of the following categories:

- *overview of dry grassland research/protection/restoration in your country/region (incl. list of publications etc.);*
- *single aspect of dry grassland history in your country/region e.g. history of dry grassland research/protection/restoration;*
- *personalities who contributed or who are contributing to dry grassland research/protection/restoration;*
- *successful/significant project contributing to dry grassland research/protection/restoration;*
- *interesting results of dry grassland research, information on the state of the phytosociological database, etc.*

Current Status of Dry Grassland Vegetation Research in Latvia

During the last 10–15 years research on dry grasslands has been carried out mainly in two directions: syntaxonomy of plant communities and long-term vegetation research.

Long-term Vegetation Research

At present, only one monitoring project is devoted primarily to dry grasslands. It started in 2000 and was implemented by the Latvian Fund for Nature (<http://www.ldf.lv>) with the financial support of the Province

of Overijssel of the Netherlands, the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries and the Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands, within the framework of the [Eurograssland](http://www.veenecology.nl) (<http://www.veenecology.nl>) projects initiated by the Dutch Province of Overijssel. There were three monitoring sites, all situated in the most spectacular dry calcareous grassland area in Latvia – the Abava River valley. The aim of the monitoring was to evaluate several management types to restore dry calcareous grasslands after two decades of abandonment. Results of the very first



*Calcareous grasslands (*Filipendulo-Helictotrichetum*) in The Abava River Valley Photo: S. Rūsiņa.*

years were published (Jermacāne et al., 2002). The data from 2001 to 2007 were analysed, and results were presented at the 1st Meeting of the Working Group on Dry Grasslands in the Nordic and Baltic Region. The [poster](#) is available at the EDGG homepage. The monitoring was carried out without any financing during the last five years.

Since 1996, long-term dynamics of plant and invertebrate communities have been studied in the protected nature area of coastal grasslands "Randu Meadows", which is situated on the northern coast of the Riga Gulf. Several permanent plots have been established in dry grassland plant communities. The studies were carried out at the Laboratory of Bioindication of the Institute of Biology (www.lubi.edu.lv). Long-term changes in coastal meadow communities under the impact of the interaction between natural environmental factors and management practice were studied (Melecis et al., 1997, 2005).

Several monitoring activities were carried out in the framework of EU LIFE-Nature programme. The aim was to monitor the impact of restoration and management activities on the vegetation development. Unfortunately, the data were recorded only for several years (duration of these projects were three to five years). Only the results of a four-year dry grassland vegetation monitoring after management reintroduction in the Gauja River valley (the project "Protection and Management of the Northern Gauja Valley" homepage: <http://www.zgauja.lv>) have been published so far (Rūsiņa, 2008).



Grassland monitoring site in the Gauja River. S. Rūsiņa.



Goats grazing in forest. Photo: S. Rūsiņa.

was low due to low number of scientists interested in this vegetation type (only 2–3 persons). During the last nine years less than 15 publications dealing with dry grassland syntaxonomy have been published. Twelve of them were prepared by the author (with co-authors) of the present overview (see the list of publications in the page 22 of the [Bulletin No. 1](#)) and some publications by botanists basically working on other vegetation types (Laime, 2000; Kļaviņa et al., 2001). The most important publication containing a phytosociological analysis of dry grasslands of Latvia was published in 2007

Syntaxonomy

First publications on dry grassland syntaxonomy appeared in 1999–2000 (Laiviņš & Jermacāne, 1999; 2000; Jermacāne, 2000a, 2000b; Laime, 2000). However, until now the progress in dry grassland research



Dry grassland monitoring site in the Abava River Valley. Photo: S. Rūsiņa.



Filipendulo-Helictotrichetum in Latvia. Photo: S. Rūsiņa.

(Rūsiņa, 2007). It contains the description of 19 association-level communities of dry grasslands (Table 1) and includes phytosociological tables of the individual relevés. Another important publication has been prepared by Brigita Laime and Didzis Tjarve recently (Laime, Tjarve, 2009) dealing with syntaxonomy of grey dune vegetation on the Baltic Sea coast in Latvia (the class *Koelerio-Coryneporetea*).

At present, the largest phytosociological database of dry grasslands is owned by the Laboratory of Geobotany at the Institute of Biology of the University of Latvia. The database is developed by the means of Turboveg software (Hennekens & Schaminee, 2001). Presently, approximately 780 dry grassland vegetation relevés are stored in the database incl. 80 relevés of *Trifolio-Geranietea*, 400 relevés of *Festuco-Brometea*, and 300 relevés of *Koelerio-Coryneporetea*. The relevés were collected from 1997 to 2006 and the size of relevés changed between 1 m² and 100 m² (the majority of them was 4 m² or 9 m²). The database is being renewed continuously. Latvian dry grassland relevés

have been included into the database of [the Working Group on Dry Grasslands in the Nordic and Baltic region](#) (Dengler et al., 2006.).

More than 3000 relevés of grey dune vegetation have been collected by Brigita Laime (Faculty of Biology, University of Latvia) (Laime, Tjarve, 2009). Possibly, several hundreds of relevés are possessed privately by some vegetation scientists, but there is no official or published information about that.



Scorzonera humilis Photo: S. Rūsiņa.

Synopsis of dry grassland vegetation of Latvia (Rusina, 2007)

Cl. *Koelerio-Corynephoretea* Klika in Klika et Novak 1941

- O. *Corynephorotalia* Klika 1934 em. R. Tx. 1955
 - All. *Corynephorion* Klika 1931
 - Ass. *Helichryso arenarii-Jasionetum* Libbert 1940
 - All. *Thero-Airion* R. Tx. ex Oberd. 1957
 - Ass. *Airo caryophyllea-Festucetum ovinae* Sommer 1971
- O. *Festuco-Sedetalia acris* R. Tx. 1951
 - All. *Plantagini-Festucion* Passarge 1964
 - Ass. *Diantho-Armerietum elongatae* Krausch ex Pötsch 1962
 - typical variant
 - Equisetum hyemale* variant
 - Festuca trachyphylla* variant
 - Poa angustifolia* com.
 - typical variant
 - Galium boreale* variant
 - Deschampsia flexuosa* variant
 - Hypochoeris radicata* variant
 - All. *Koelerion glaucae* Volk 1931
 - Ass. *Poetum compressae* Kizienè 1998
 - Ass. *Festucetum polesicae* Regel 1928
 - Koeleria glauca* com.
 - Silene otites-Koeleria glauca* com.
- O. *Alyso-Sedetalia* Moravec 1967
 - All. *Alyso-Sedion* Oberd. et T. Müller in T. Müller 1961
 - Ass. *Saxifrago-Poetum compressae* (Kreh 1951) Géhu et Lericq 1957
 - Sedum sexangulare* com

Cl. *Festuco-Brometea* Br.-Bl. et R.Tx. ex Klika et Hadač 1944

- O. *Brometalia erecti* Koch 1926
 - All. *Koelerio-Phleion phleoidis* Korneck 1974
 - Ass. *Pulsatillo-Phleetum phleoidis* Passarge 1959
 - All. *Mesobromion erecti* (Br.-Bl. et Moor 1938) Oberd. 1957
 - Ass. *Medicagini-Avenetum pubescentis* De Leeuw in Br.-Bl. et Moor 1938
 - All. *Filipendulo vulgaris-Helictotrichion pratensis* Dengler et Löbel in Dengler et al. 2003
 - Ass. *Filipendulo vulgaris-Helictotrichetum pratensis* ass. prov. Rusina 2007
 - Subass. *typicum* subass. prov.
 - typical variant
 - Carex caryophyllea* variant
 - Helictotrichon pubescens* variant
 - Dianthus deltooides* variant
 - Festuca ovina* variant
 - Subass. *caricetosum flaccae* subass. prov.
 - typical variant
 - Sesleria caerulea* variant
 - Ass. *Centaureo scabiosae-Fragarietum vescae* Rusina 2007
 - typical variant
 - Fragaria viridis* variant
 - Artemisia campestris* variant

Cl. *Trifolio-Geranietea* T. Müller 1961

O. *Origanetalia vulgaris* T. Müller 1961

All. *Geranion sanguinei* R. Tx. in. T. Müller 1961

Brachypodium pinnatum com.

Geranium sanguineum com.

Veronica teucrium-Bromopsis inermis com.

Calamagrostis epigeios variant

Fragaria viridis variant

All. *Trifolion medii* T. Müller 1961

Ass. *Trifolio-Agrimonetum eupatoriae* T. Müller 1961

typical variant

Plantago media variant

Ass. *Agrimonio-Vicetum cassubicae* Passarge 1967



Astragalus danicus in dry calcareous grassland, Latvia. Photo: S. Rūsiņa.

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Solvita Rūsiņa, Rīga, Latvia

Expansion of *Rosa rugosa* in Coastal Dunes

Species-richness in coastal dunes

Coastal dunes are one of the most valuable habitat types in Europe. They are often species-rich and contain many regionally rare plants. Therefore, dunes represent priority habitat types of the European FFH Directive. The preservation of semi-natural dune grass- and heathlands has a high conservation priority and the expansion of species-poor shrubland poses a serious conservation problem.

Shrubs in coastal dunes

The non-native *Rosa rugosa* establishes and spreads both in yellow dunes as well as in landward following grey and brown dunes (Fig. 1). As a result of dense dominant stands, many plant species of typical dune communities are shaded out. In comparison to the native *Hippophaë rhamnoides*, *Rosa rugosa* occupies a larger ecological niche (Fig. 1).

Rosa rugosa

Rosa rugosa was introduced to Europe in the 18th century. In comparison to its native range, *R. rugosa* estab-

lishes in NW Europe in various plant communities, at a wide range of environmental conditions (Isermann 2008a). In European coastal areas *R. rugosa* was planted for sand stabilisation, for marking boundaries of pathways, and it was also used as ornamental plant. *Rosa rugosa* occurs in dunes in various forms because of garden escapes that go wild, and which based on different cultivars. From the introduced sites, *R. rugosa* spreads into neighbouring dune areas, and due to tillers, it creates large, dominant and dense stands. Today it is widely distributed along the German North Sea Coasts.

Light availability

In general, relative light availability beneath shrubs decreases with increasing shrub cover. As to different growth- and leaf-forms, shading by *R. rugosa* is clearly more pronounced than shading by *Hippophaë rhamnoides* (Fig. 2). In the case of *H. rhamnoides*, the relative light availability decreases to about 20%, but in the case of *R. rugosa* there is more or less complete shading. Thus ecological consequences are more improved in comparison to *Hippophaë rhamnoides* (Isermann 2008b).

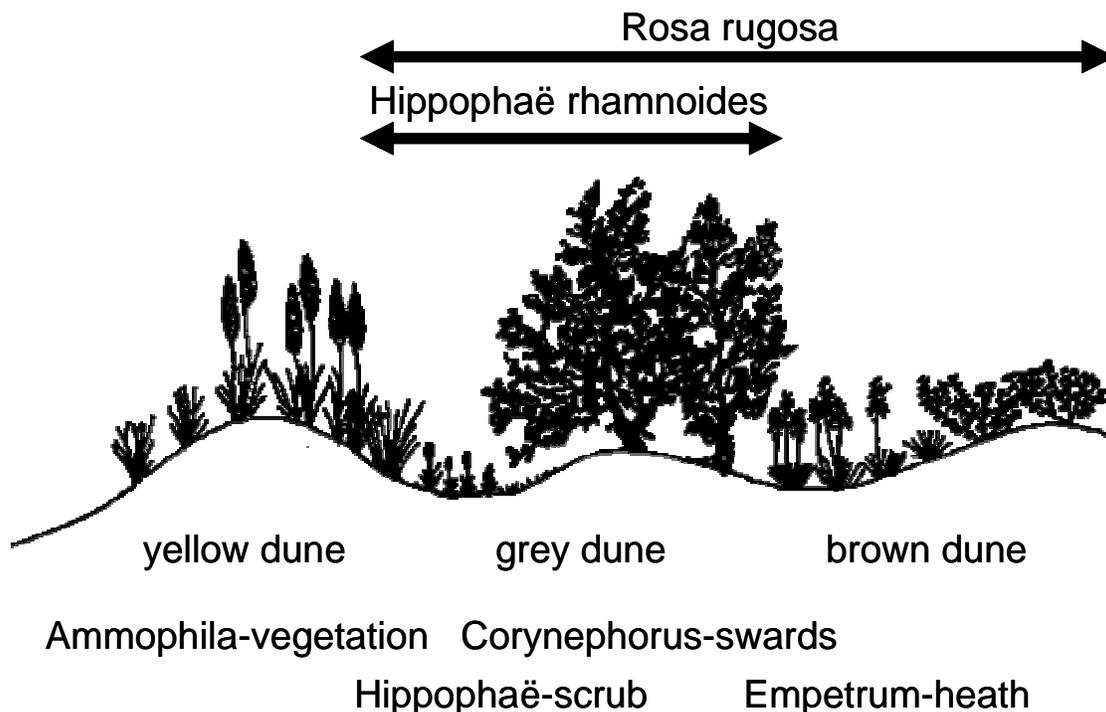


Fig. 1. *Rosa rugosa* and *Hippophaë rhamnoides* in coastal dunes, M. Isermann.

Decreasing species richness

Total species-richness decreases with increasing cover of *R. rugosa*, and declines in all dune vegetation types (Isermann 2008c). The number of typical grassland species declines especially in the case of species-rich *Corynephorus*-swards, but also in the case of *Ammophila*-vegetation and *Empetrum*-heathlands (Fig. 3). Moreover, the number of Red-Book-Species decreases with increasing *R. rugosa* cover. Furthermore, decline in species-diversity (Shannon, evenness) is more improved in the case of *R. rugosa* than in *H. rhamnoides* (Isermann 2008b). Shading-effects are similar in all dune habitats, as well as are similar at different scales (1-16 m²) (Isermann 2008b).

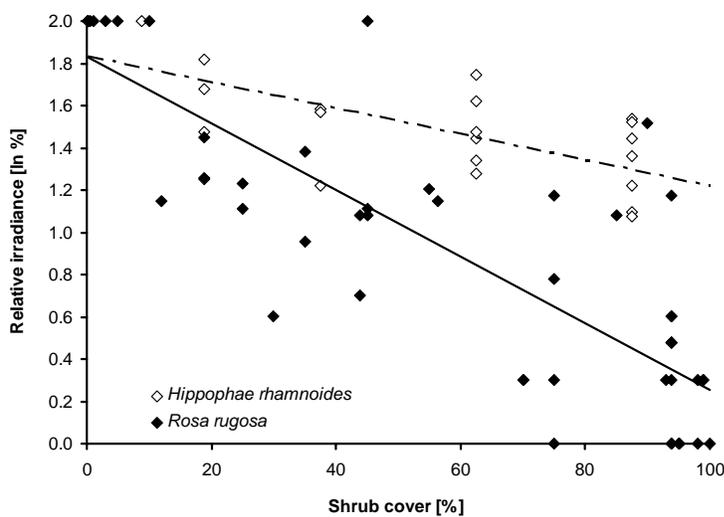


Fig. 2. Decreasing light availability with increasing cover of *Hippophae rhamnoides* and *Rosa rugosa*, M. Isermann.

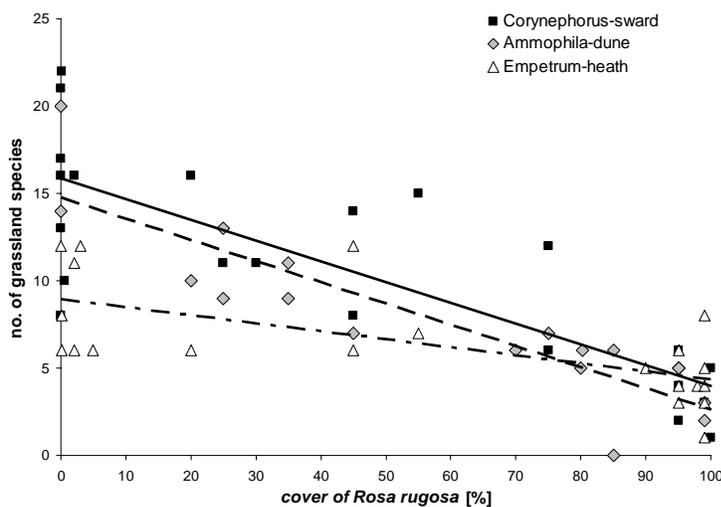


Fig. 3. Decline in the number of grassland species with increasing *Rosa rugosa* cover in different dune types (Isermann 2008c).

Conclusion

Decline in species-richness, change of vegetation composition as well as reduction of landscape diversity due to extensive dominant stands manifest *Rosa rugosa* as a serious problem in relation to sustainable protection of biodiversity in coastal dunes.

Outlook

A current research project (2008-2011; Prof. Dr. Martin Diekmann, Dr. Maike Isermann, Bremen University; Prof. Dr. Ingo Kowarik, Dr. Anna Jürgens, TU Berlin) is supported by the Rudolf and Helene Glaser Foundation. Using *Rosa rugosa* the project will exemplify, how a differentiate analysis of species invasion potential in relation to various habitats, could be used for nature conservation strategies. The project is dealing with following questions:

- Which genotypes and *Rugosa*-hybrids were and are planted in German coastal areas?
- What differences of invasion potential exist, regarding dispersal, establishment, and spreading between *Rosa rugosa* types in various coastal dune areas?
- How do different dune types vary in relation to habitat suitability in relation to *Rosa rugosa*?

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Maike Isermann, Bremen, Germany,
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Book reviews

In this section, we will publish reviews of recent books relevant for dry grassland research and conservation. Apart from titles particularly dealing with dry grasslands, also more general titles can be included, as for example phytosociological overviews, floras/faunas and field guides of relevant taxa, or text books on methodology, ecology, and conservation/restoration. Jürgen Dengler (dengler@botanik.uni-hamburg.de) serves as coordinator for this section (book review editor). Thus, if you are an author, editor or publisher of a book and want to have it reviewed in the *Bulletin of the EDGG*, please, contact Jürgen. The same applies to EDGG members who want to review a specific new title.

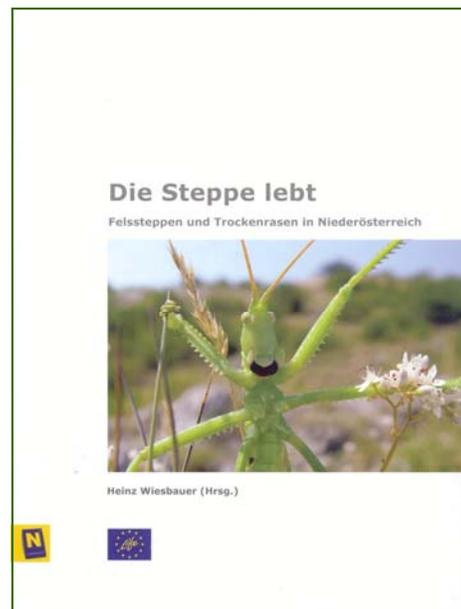
Wiesbauer, H. (2008) [Ed.]: Die Steppe lebt – Felssteppen und Trockenrasen in Niederösterreich

[The steppe is living – rocky steppes and dry grasslands in Lower Austria. In German.] 224 pp., Amt der NÖ Landesregierung, St. Pölten, Austria. ISBN 3-901542-28-0. 20,- €

Orders: post.ru5@noel.gv.at or <http://www.noel.gv.at/Umwelt/Naturschutz/Publikationen/Publikationen.wai.html>

The northeastern sector of Austria, i.e. parts of the federal states Lower Austria, Burgenland, and Vienna, belongs to the Pannonian floristic province. This region is famous for its great variety of different continentally influenced dry grassland types, occurring on a wide range of different substrata from limestone through loess and acidic rock outcrops to sandy soils. The reviewed book has been prepared as accompanying title for an exhibition within the framework of an LIFE Nature project of the European Union (“Pannonian Steppes and Dry Grasslands”, see <http://www.steppe.at/en/index.html>). The sponsorship of the EU made it possible to prepare a quite attractive, hardbound, and full-colour book.

The book consists of 26 chapters, each of which is written by experts of the respective field. The first chapters deal with the Pleistocene in central Europe and how large herbivores may have contributed to the existence of open grasslands at that time. In the following three chapters, the history of human settlement in the area of NE Austria and its influence on landscape structure are addressed. However, the major part of the book (160 pp., 18 chapters) presents the different groups of organisms inhabiting dry grasslands. Not only well-known groups such as vascular plants, birds, reptiles, and grasshoppers, but also typical dry grassland cicadas, snails, moths, spiders, and even springtails (*Collembola*) are presented with magnificent pictures and informative text. Unfortunately, bryophytes, lichens, and fungi are not included. The final chapter of the book addresses vulnerability, conservation, and restoration of these endangered habitats.



Despite the more popular style of presentation, I can recommend this book also to scientists as it usually does not lack scientific precision and as it provides access to more specific literature via extensive reference lists at the end of each chapter. With its coverage of so many different groups of organisms, this book holds – as far as I know – a unique position and thus allows specialists of one taxon to retrieve the basic knowledge about other taxa inhabiting the same habitat. It is a pity that this title has been published in German only and not even English summaries and bilingual captions are provided.

Jürgen Dengler, Hamburg, Germany

Bylebyl, K. 2007. Central European dry grasslands: processes of their development and possibilities for their maintenance.

Dissertationes Botanicae 406: 142 pp. J. Cramer in der Gebrüder Borntraeger Verlagsbuchhandlung, Berlin and Stuttgart. ISBN 978-3-443-64319-5 . 44,- €.

The monograph represents a doctoral thesis elaborated at the University of Regensburg, Germany. The author had the goal to elucidate the processes of the development and possibilities for the maintenance of Central European dry grasslands. To achieve this goal the author made a contribution to three research directions.

Firstly, she investigated the past processes of the expansion and current processes of species life-history of dry grassland plant species in Central Europe using the example of *Eryngium campestre* (analysis of phylogeography using molecular biology methods). The main finding was that the two distribution areas of the species within Germany are clearly separated genetically, and the post-glacial colonization occurred from geographically isolated refugia. The results of this research were published also in a separate paper (Bylebyl et al. 2008). The definition of xerothermophilous species and their post-glacial spreading in Central Europe have been discussed.

Secondly, the author focussed on plant functional traits (characterizing dispersal, establishment and persistence abilities of plant species) and plant strategies as the fundamental approach to understand the vegetation dynamics. The development of trait composition during the four year succession induced by restoration management was analyzed. More detailed study was devoted to one trait – germination response to fire simulation. Four species out of 10 analysed species showed significant positive reactions to fire simulation.

Finally, the author tried to analyze problems of maintenance of a traditional historical landscape exemplified with the Middle Rhine region. Two novel management practices (controlled burning and tank track management – two tank tracks weighting about 1.5 tonnes were mounted into a steel frame and were drawn by a tractor through shrubby vegetation)) were evaluated and compared to manual clear cutting to restore abandoned vineyards and grasslands (several succession stages were compared). Results showed that the novel practices were cheaper and even more efficient in grassland restoration than conventional management (species diversity was higher). In this respect, the title of the book is somewhat misleading as the main emphasis of the research presented in the monograph is not on the

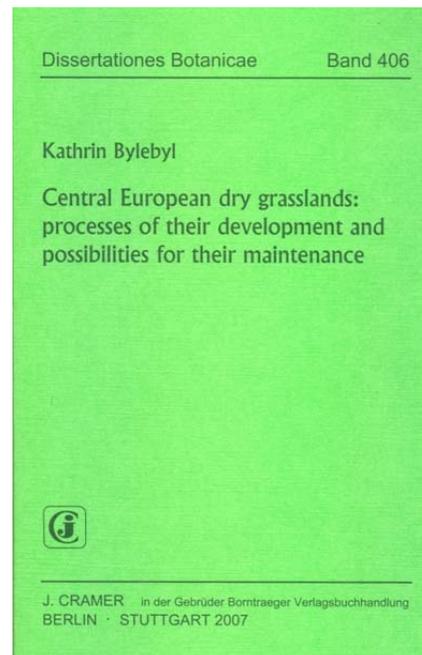
long-term grassland maintenance but the short-term restoration success (four year observations).

The book is divided into nine chapters. Each of them is structured as an independent paper with sections of abstract, introduction, methods, results and discussion. The disadvantage of such an approach is that the reader has to read the same information (e.g. description of the study sites or importance of implementation of novel methods to restore dry grasslands) several times.

The problems comprised are so heterogeneous (from genetical diversity to landscape management) that it is not a surprise that the book lacks integrity and the degree of detailed elaboration is missing in places. Nevertheless, the book is very valuable both for scientists and nature conservation practitioners as a good example demonstrating the importance of integrating different approaches to achieve dry grassland conservation goals.

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Solvita Rūsiņa, Riga, Latvia

Recent publications of our members

With this section, we want to facilitate an overview of dry grassland-related publications throughout Europe and to improve their accessibility because many publications on dry grasslands appear in national or regional journals hardly known to researchers in other countries.

We ask our members therefore to send lists of their recent relevant publications to Monika Janišová: monika.janisova@savba.sk. Please follow the style of a recent issue of the Bulletin and provide an English translation of the title for publications in other languages. Publications of the recent and the three preceding years will be considered and each publication will be listed only in one Bulletin.

If you would like to have your publications linked from our homepage (<http://www.edgg.org>), you may send a quotation to Solvita Rūsiņa: rusina@lu.lv. In this case, you should provide access to a pdf of your publication by one of the following three ways: (i) send a pdf to Solvita to be posted directly on the EDGG homepage; (ii) send a link to a URL at which the pdf is being made available permanently; (iii) provide your e-mail contact to allow colleagues to ask you for a pdf (in case you are not allowed to post a pdf openly).

Regional surveys/monographs

Illyés, E. & Bölöni, J. (2007) [Eds.]: *Lejtősztyepek, löszgyepek és erdőssztyeprétek Magyarországon* (Slope steppes, loess steppes and forest steppe meadows in Hungary) [in Hungarian, with English summary]. – 236 pp., Budapest.

Wiesbauer, H. (2008) [Ed.]: *Die Steppe lebt – Felssteppen und Trockenrasen in Niederösterreich*. – 224 pp., Amt der NÖ Landesregierung, St. Pölten.

Matevski, V., Čarni, A., Kostadinovski, M., Košir, P., Šilc, U. & Zelnik, I. (2008): Flora and Vegetation of the Macedonian Steppe. – 96 pp., ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana.

Methodology, classification, databases

Dengler, J. (2008): Pitfalls in small-scale species-area sampling and analysis. – *Folia Geobot.* 43: 269–287, Průhonice.

Dengler, J. (2009): Which function describes the species-area relationship best? – A review and empirical evaluation. – *J. Biogeogr.* 36: 728–744, Oxford.

Conservation and restoration

Dostálek, J. & Frantík, T. (2007): Význam pastvy ovcí a koz pro xerothermní trávníky v Praze. [Importance of Sheep and Goat Grazing for Xerothermic Grasslands in Prague]. – *Ochrana přírody*, 62/6: 21–23.

Dostálek J. & Frantík T. (2008): Dry grassland plant diversity conservation using low-intensity sheep and goat grazing management: case study in Prague (Czech Republic). – *Biodiversity and Conservation*, 17: 1439–1454.

Illyés, Eszter: illyese@freemail.hu

Wiesbauer, Heinz: heinz.wiesbauer@utanet.at

Čarni, Andraz: carni@zrc-sazu.si

Šilc, Urban: urban@zrc-sazu.si

Dengler, Jürgen: dengler@botanik.uni-hamburg.de

Dostálek, Jiří: dostalek@vukoz.cz



Forthcoming events

52nd Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS)

30 May–4 June 2009, Chania, Crete, Greece

Main topic: **Vegetation processes and human impacts in a changing world**

Excursions:

Optional pre-symposium excursion to eastern Crete (25–30 May)

Optional pre-symposium excursion to the Santorini islands (26–29 May)

Mid-symposium excursion (four alternatives; 2 June)

Optional post-symposium excursion to the Peloponnese (5–9 June)

Fees: 300 € (participation including mid-symposium excursion for members); 150 € (ditto, for student members); for other fees see conference homepage

Deadlines for registration & abstract submission: 28 February 2009

Conference homepage: <http://www.iavs2009.org/>

Jahrestagung 2009 der Floristisch-soziologischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft

26–29 June 2009, Salzburg, Austria

Conference homepage: <http://www.tuexenia.de/index.php?id=8>

European Conference 2009 of the International Association for Landscape Ecology (IALE)

12–16 July 2009, Salzburg, Austria

Main topic: **European Landscapes in Transformation: Challenges for Landscape Ecology and Management**

Excursions:

Optional post-conference excursion to Slovakia (16–19 July)

Optional post-conference excursion to Switzerland (18–22 July)

Deadline for abstract submission: 1 January 2009

Deadline for registration: 30 April 2009

Conference homepage: <http://www.iale2009.eu/>



2nd European Congress of Conservation Biology (ECCB) of the Society for Conservation Biology (SCB)

1–5 September 2009, Prague, Czech Republic

Main topic: **Conservation biology and beyond: from science to practice**

Excursions:

There are options for three three-day trips and for five one-day trips

Deadline for abstract submission: 31 January 2009

Deadline for registration: 1 May 2009

Conference homepage: <http://www.eccb2009.org/>



Male of Decticus verrucivorus. Biosphere Reserve „Flusslandschaft Elbe“, Lower Saxony, Germany. Photo: J. Dengler

39th Annual Conference of the Ecological Society of Germany, Switzerland and Austria (GfÖ)

14–18 September 2009, Bayreuth, Germany

Conference homepage: <http://www.bayceer.uni-bayreuth.de/gfoe2009/>

5th Balcan Botanical Congress

7–11 September 2009, Belgrade, Serbia

For the detailed information mail to:

5bbc@bfbot.bg.ac.yu

5th International Conference on Research and conservation of biological diversity in Baltic Region

22–24 April 2009, Daugavpils, Latvia

Scientific topics:

- Systematics, Morphology & Phylogeny
- Baltic Fauna & chorology
- Baltic Flora & chorology
- Genetics and Biotechnology
- Conservation Biology
- Ecology and Ecosystem Management
- Forest Management & Biological Diversity
- Climate Change & Biological Diversity
- Parasitology
- Agriculture & Biological Diversity

Deadline for abstract submission, registration, registration fee: 20 March 2009

Deadline for full paper submission: 22 April 2009

Contact: Arvīds Barševskis: conference@biology.lv

Conference homepage: <http://www.biology.lv/conferences/biodiversity5th/>



Orchis coryophora in *Festucetalia vaginatae* community, Kolomak floodplaine, near Poltava, Ukraine. Photo: A. Kuzemko.

Mapping and Monitoring of Nordic Vegetation and Landscapes

16-18 September 2009, Iceland

Topics:

- Mapping of vegetation and landscapes
- Monitoring of vegetation and landscapes
- Cultural landscapes and management
- Landscape structure, processes and change

Important deadlines:

- Submission of abstracts for oral presentations: 2009-04-01
- Proposal for posters and papers: 2009-04-01
- Notification of acceptance for oral and poster presentations: 2009-05-01
- Final registration: 2009-06-01

Seminar contact:

Anders Bryn, Norwegian Forest and Landscape Institute <http://www.skogoglandskap.no>
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Erythronium dens-canis in the karst Slovenský kras, Slovakia. Photo: D. Dúbravková

International Heathland Workshop

12-18 September 2009, United Kingdom, Cornwall

European Heathland Network

The origins of European Heathland Network can be traced back to a meeting of heathland specialists sponsored by the French and British Ecological Societies held at the Field Station of the University of Rennes at Paim-pont in Brittany in July 1979. This meeting proved so successful that it led to the first wholly European meeting in Aberdeen and the founding of a group by Charles Gimingham, Jacques de Smidt, Bernard Clement and Nils Malmer. Since that meeting, there have been regular meetings every 2-4 years in various countries. The next meeting will be held in Cornwall, Saturday 12th - Friday 18th September 2009. Delegates will be based all week at the Combined University of Cornwall (CUC), Glasney Park, Tremough Campus, Fal-mouth, Cornwall. There will be four days of site visits to include Bodmin Moor, Goss Moor, The Lizard and the Penwith Moors plus two days of delegate presentations, workshops and discussions. The first attrac-

tive and informative newsletter have been sent out in March 2009. To subscribe to the newsletter, or to submit news, information, or any other heathland matters for the next newsletter (due in October 2009) please e-mail to john.day@footprint-ecology.co.uk

International Heathland Workshop

12-18 September 2009, United Kingdom, Cornwall

The workshop will run from 12 to 18 September and will be based at the Combined Universities of Cornwall (CUC). Further details are given in the newsletter send by e-mail (to receive the newsletter contact John Day john.day@footprint-ecology.co.uk). To register your initial interest and to obtain further information contact isabel.alonso@naturalengland.org.uk.

Miscellaneous

This section includes announcements of the chairs to the members.

How you can contribute to the Bulletin

We cordially invite you to make own contributions to the Bulletin. If you would like to publish in the Bulletin or you want to make suggestions for its improvement, please contact the managing editor of the Bulletin, Monika Janišová: monika.janisova@savba.sk.

Various ways how you can contribute to the Bulletin:

- to provide an article related to dry grasslands not necessarily fitting into one of the existing sections
- to present remarkable dry grassland type/site
- to present new publications
- to share the photos and experiences from meetings, excursions and conferences
- to initiate the establishment of new regular section in Bulletin or a new working group
- to address questions related to dry grasslands (to find co-researchers for projects, to ask for advice in management practices, classification opinion, etc.)
- to provide advice or help to other members asking for advice or help related to dry grasslands
- to inform us on any changes of e-mail or other personal contact data
- to spread this Bulletin to other colleagues
- to announce the EDGG, its Bulletins, its homepage and its meetings in your institute or organization
- to link the homepage of the EDGG from your homepage or that of your institute or organization

Would you like to help us?

We would highly appreciate your help in the following activities: A) cooperating as a chair; B) providing the nice photographs and C) English editing of Bulletin.

A) The chairmanship of the EDGG is not a “closed club”. So, if you feel inclined to work together with the present three chairs in promoting research on and conservation of European dry grasslands, please, contact us. We would particularly welcome colleagues who represent regions (e.g. western and southern Europe) and topics (e.g. zoology, conservation and restoration) that are presently not so well covered by the chairs.

B) We are continuously searching nice photographs of dry grasslands (sites, plant communities, plants, animals, research and conservation activities) for illustrative purposes (bulletin, homepage). If you want to have your photographs published in our media, please submit them in JPG format with sufficient resolution and accompanied by a short caption to Monika:

monika.janisova@savba.sk.

C) None of us chairs is a native English speaker. Thus, it would be useful to have our materials for Bulletin and homepage linguistically checked before publication. If you feel that you could help us in this respect, please contact Monika: monika.janisova@savba.sk or Solvita: rusina@lu.lv.

Homepage

You can find our homepage at <http://www.edgg.org>. We would highly appreciate members’ contributions to its contents and advice to its structure. Please, contact managing editor of the homepage Solvita Rūsiņa: rusina@lu.lv. The materials submitted for the Bulletin will automatically be considered for the inclusion on the homepage.



Forum

In this section, our members can place requests for information or material, make announcements or calls for co-operation. Please, send the contributions for this section to Monika Janišová (monika.janisova@savba.sk).

Meta-database on vegetation databases in Europe

Recently, a meta-database on relevé databases from European vegetation has been launched on the web by Florian Jansen on behalf of the German Working Group on Vegetation Databases. It is freely available to everybody at <http://geobot.botanik.uni-greifswald.de/portal/vegbank>.

This meta-database aims at making basic information on existing relevé databases available, such as scope and status of the database, included syntaxa and geographic coverage, number and sources of the included relevés and available header data. By providing these kinds of information, the keepers of the meta-database want to facilitate data exchange among different projects and help to avoid wasting of time on the double digitization of a particular dataset.

Thus, you are invited to enter some basic facts about the databases you are responsible for, irrespective whether these are small private databases with several hundreds of relevés or comprehensive national or even supra-national databases with tens of thousands of relevés. Including your information in the list, will cost you only several minutes, but the entries of the meta-database together can contribute a lot to a more efficient use of vegetation databases throughout Europe.

Presently, the meta-database already lists 15 database with nearly 300,000 relevés, including the database of the Working Group on Dry Grasslands in the Nordic and Baltic Region, a subgroup of EDGG.

Jürgen Dengler, Hamburg, Germany

Florian Jansen, Greifswald, Germany



Dry grassland community dominated by Sedum acre and Anthemis ruthenica in Psel, Ukraine. Photo: A. Kuzemko



Butterfly of the Lycaenidae family. Nature Reserve "Pfullinger Hochwiesen", Swabian Alb, Germany. Photo: J. Dengler

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