

of the European Dry Grassland Group



This issue is devoted mainly to the 7th European Dry Grassland Meeting which took place in Smolenice (Slovakia) during 27 May-1 June. Altogether, 100 grassland scientists from 19 European countries and Australia participated in the meeting. Short reports from the meeting and the General Assembly of the EDGG are included. We bring you also the text of Smolenice Grassland Declaration formulated during the meeting and invite you to enjoy some of the moments from the conference recorded in the photographs. Additionally, there are also contributions on dry grasslands in Turkey and basic information on the Saxifraga foundation. We hope that you will spend a pleasant moment reading our Bulletin, even during the peak of growing season.

Monika Janišová & members of EDGG Executive Committee

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Photo left: Ophrys holubiana in the Biele Karpaty Mts. Slovakia). Photo: J. Smatanová.

June 2010

EDGG homepage: <http://www.edgg.org>

European Dry Grassland Group

The European Dry Grassland Group (EDGG) is a network of dry grassland researchers and conservationists in Europe. EDGG is a Working Group of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS). EDGG is supported by the Floristisch-soziologische Arbeitsgemeinschaft.

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 seven 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.
- ♠ **EDGG research expeditions** to sample baseline data of underrepresented regions of Europe
- ♠ **EDGG vegetation databases**
- ♠ **Special Features** on dry grassland-related topics in various peer-reviewed journals

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.

Responsibilities of Executive Committee members:

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

membership administration, book review editor, contacts to other organisations.

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

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

Michael Vrahnakis mvrahnak@teilar.gr: co-editorship of the EDGG homepage, Med-DG subgroup

Everybody can join EDGG without any fee or other obligation. To become a member of the European dry grassland Group or its subordinate units write an e-mail to Jürgen Dengler including your complete address and specifying which of the groups you want to join. The detailed information you can find at: http://www.edgg.org/about_us.htm.



A group of dry grassland scientists in the Biele Karpaty Mts. Photo: L. Janišová.

The EDGG has continued its rapid growth during the last months (Fig. 1). As of 17 June 2010, we had 568 members from 46 countries (Fig. 2). The membership figures of our four regional subgroups are as follows:

- ♠ German Arbeitsgruppe Trockenrasen: 187
- ♠ Working Group on Dry Grasslands in the Nordic and Baltic Region: 70
- ♠ Southeast European Dry Grasslands: 143
- ♠ Mediterranean Dry Grasslands: 139

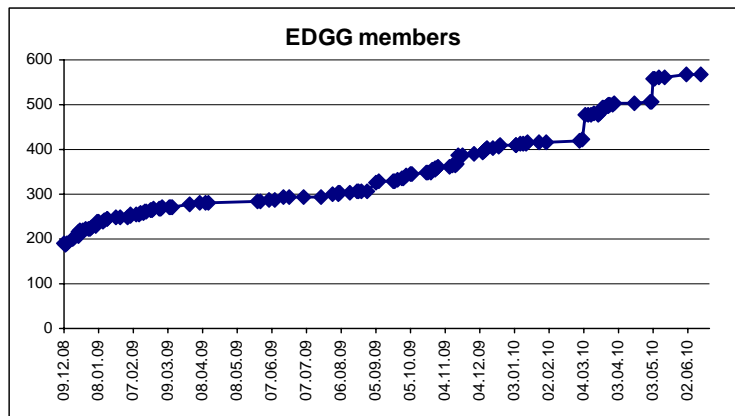


Fig. 1 Development of EDGG membership (2010-06-17).

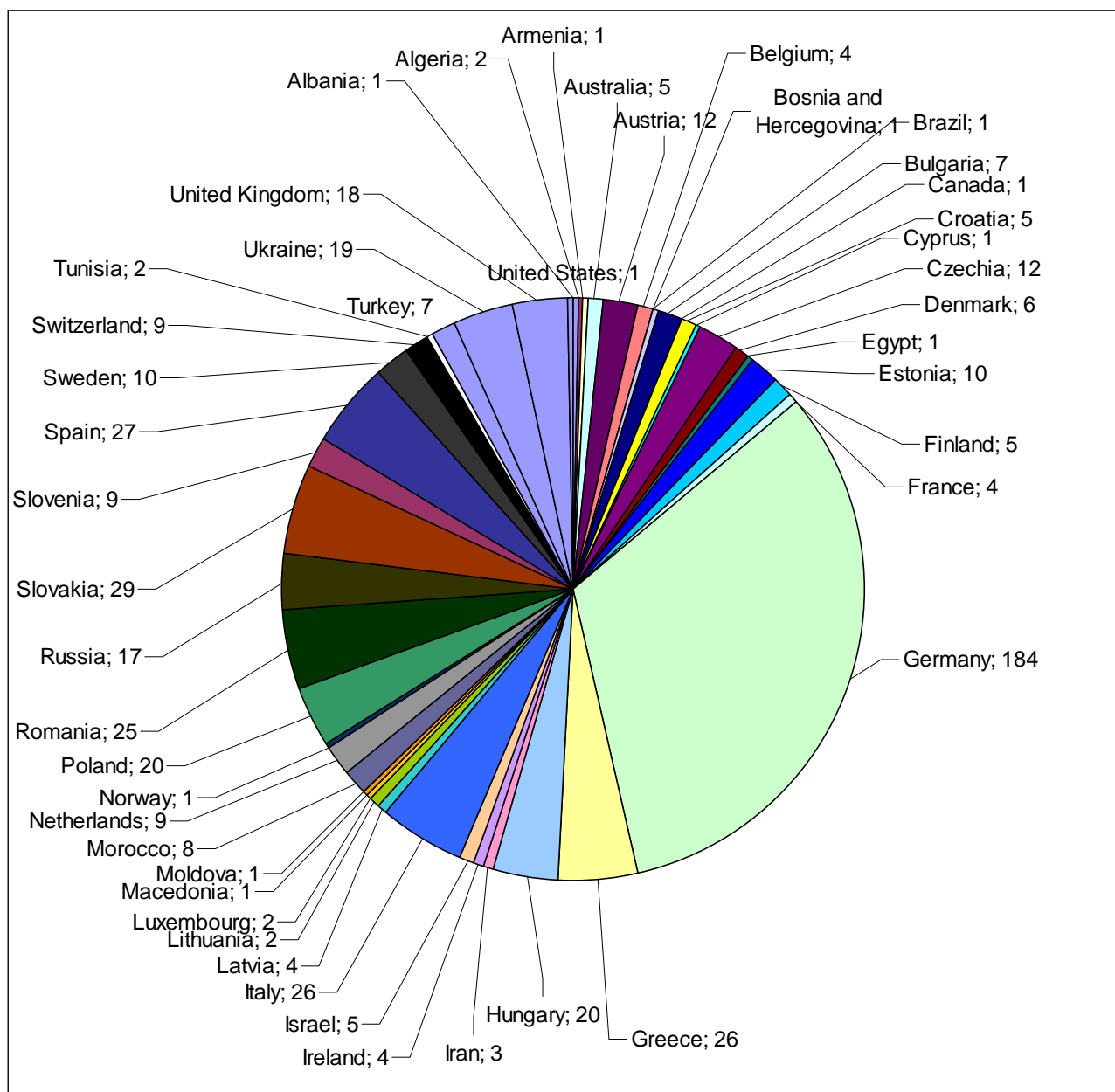


Fig. 2 Countries represented in the EDGG (2010-06-17).

7th European Dry Grassland Meeting



Venue of the 7th European Dry Grassland Meeting—Smolenice Congress Centre of Slovak Academy of Sciences (Slovakia). Photo: P. Chmielewski.

The idea of dry grassland meetings is more than 7 years old. This idea was formed in Germany and its basic aim was to gather people dealing with the diversity, classification and conservation of dry grassland vegetation. It was also Germany where the first six grassland meetings took place (Lüneburg, Münster, Freising, Kiel and Halle). This year, the European Dry Grassland Meeting took place outside Germany for the first time. In some respect, it was a reflection of the ever wider cooperation among dry grassland scientists connected within the European Dry Grassland Group.

The 7th European Dry Grassland Meeting was held in Smolenice (Slovak Republic) from 27 May to 1 June 2010. The Congress Centre of the Slovak Academy of Sciences provided a pleasant location for scientific debates and was highly appreciated by all participants. Altogether, 100 participants from 19 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom) and Australia took part in the meeting.

The conference was devoted to applied ecological aspects of dry grasslands – their succession, management and restoration. These topics have recently become increasingly important. Secondary succession is a widespread phenomenon contributing significantly to degradation of dry grassland ecosystems. However, management and restoration are human activities helping to maintain dry grassland diversity. Slovakia is one of the most “successional” countries in Europe. The land-use changes commonly occurring within the whole continent are multiplied here in their consequences due to strong political changes during the last 60-70 years. The collectivisation and agricultural cooperatives during the second half of the 20th century were accompanied by a decreasing management intensity and land abandonment. Although the land was returned to private owners after the velvet revolution in 1989, the general trend of land abandonment continued.

The conference was devoted to the memory of Pavel Deván, one of the best Slovak experts in zoology of invertebrates and important nature conservationist. He devoted his life to the conservation and practical management of grasslands in the Biele Karpaty Mts.



In the Biele Karpaty Mts. even the wet dry grasslands were highly attractive for dry grassland scientists. Photo: M. Vrahnakis.

where he also lived with his wife Katarína and three children who took part in the meeting, too.

In the introductory session the participants were welcomed by Monika Janišová (Institute of Botany, Slovak Academy of Sciences and European Dry Grassland Group), Ján Šeffler (DAPHNE – Institute of Applied Ecology) and Drahomír Stano (Administration of the Landscape Protected Area Biele Karpaty and NGO Pre Prírodu). Katarína Rajcová introduced Pavel Deván and his life. After that, the participants enjoyed a talk by Ladislav Mucina focusing on origin and evolution of dry grasslands of Central Europe. This influential vegetation scientist, recently made Professor of Environmental and Aquatic Science at the Curtin University of Technology in Australia, was born in Piešťany, a city located about 30 km from Smolenice. Years ago, Laco has worked at the Institute of Botany in the Slovak Academy of Sciences and carried out research in the regions of the meeting excursions. These were some of the reasons why he did not hesitate to travel such a huge distance from the

southern hemisphere to attend this meeting. The next speaker, Daniela Dúbravková provided an overview of Slovak dry grassland vegetation. Then, Ján Šeffler informed the participants in detail about the mapping of grassland vegetation and application of its results.

The second session, chaired by J. Dengler focussed on conservation of grassland species, communities and habitats (strategies, experiences) included 6 talks by C. Hobohm, V. Šefflerová Stanová, I. Vitasovic Koscic, Z. Drillet, M. Vrahnakis and S. Burrascano. The third session, chaired by L. Mucina and focussing on methodological issues (evaluation of habitat quality, detection of favourable habitat conditions, classification of successional stages and degraded communities), included 4 talks by S. Bartha, S. Maccherini, W. Willner and S. Hanoteaux. The fourth and the fifth sessions chaired by C. Wellstein and K. Prach focussed on processes in succession and management effects. Both sessions included 11 talks by L. Halada, S. Znamenskiy, A. Catorci, J. Šeffler, L. Rose, D. Galvánek, S. Kandrelis, M. Seifan, M. Wiezik, J.

Dengler and J. Házi. Session 6 chaired by V. Stanová was devoted to restoration of dry grasslands. Eight lectures were given by Jongepierová, P. Török, A. Csecserits, B. Tóthmérész, G. Matus, C. Wellstein, A. Ödman and E. Volkova. Then the destinations of the three field excursions were introduced by M. Janišová, I. Škodová and K. Hegedúšová.

The program continued with social events. After the guided tour through the Smolenice castle, the grassland party was opened in the castle courtyard. The results of competition for the best talk and poster contributions were announced. The winners, M. Wieszik (the best talk on “The importance of dry grasslands for preservation of ant communities in cultural landscape of central Slovakia”) and I. Paulini (the best poster on “Vegetation survey of the hay meadows in the proposed Natura 2000 site „Eastern Hills of Cluj, Transylvania, Romania”), were awarded by the book on Grasslands of the White Carpathian Mountains edited by I. Jongepierová.

The third EDGG General Assembly took place after the first day’s oral presentations (the special report is devoted to this event in this Bulletin issue, pp. 10–13).

During the three following days the conference participants visited dry and semi-dry grassland sites in the Tematínske vrchy Mts. (the first excursion guided by L. Mucina, M. Janišová, K. Rajcová and S. Mertanová),



Iris variegata in the National Nature Reserve Machová (Czech Republic). Photo: K. Baraňská.

Biele/Bílé Karpaty Mts. (the second excursion guided by I. Škodová, K. Devánová, S. Mertanová, I. Jongepierová and K. Fajmon) and Malé Karpaty Mts. (the third excursion guided by K. Hegedúšová and V. Feráková).

The pdf versions of the talks and poster presentations for which the authors agreed to publish their electronic version will be available at http://www.edgg.org/edgg_meeting.html. On this web page you can also find the conference proceedings and the photo gallery from the meeting.

During the conference, the text of Smolenice Grassland Declaration was formulated. By now, 107 participants, invited scientists and persons of different institutions and authorities from 16 countries have signed this declaration (the list of signatories is available at the conference homepage http://www.edgg.org/edgg_meeting.html). We invite you to join our Declaration and sign it electronically (the detailed instructions will soon be available on the EDGG homepage).

Finally we would like to express our thanks to all conference participants for their valuable scientific contributions, good mood and high resistance against the moisture stress. We are grateful to Monika Budzáková, Daniela Dúbravková, Dobromil Galvánek, Peter Jánky, Jana Medvecká, Zuzana Melečková, Sylvia Mertanová, Mária Petrášová, Katarína Rajcová and Janka Smatanová for intensive help before and during the meeting. We thank to Karel Fajmon, Viera Feráková, Ivana Jongepierová and Ladislav Mucina for help in guiding excursions. We are grateful to the heads of Institute of Botany, Slovak Academy of Sciences and Daphne – Institute of Applied Ecology for their support during the conference organisation, to organisations of the State Nature Conservancy for enduring high density of grassland scientists in the protected areas. The meeting was supported by a grant „Management models for grassland habitats” through the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and from the state budget of the Slovak Republic in the framework of individual project SK0115 and by the Floristisch-soziologische Arbeitsgemeinschaft e. V.

Monika Janišová, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia
Iveta Škodová, Bratislava, Slovakia
Katarína Hegedúšová, Bratislava, Slovakia

Smolenice Grassland Declaration



Europe supports a huge variety of grassland ecosystems, both natural and those made or managed by man, spanning the coasts and high mountain regions and ranging from tundra in the North to the Mediterranean in the South and from the Azores in the West to the Ural Mountains in the East. These grassland ecosystems provide many goods and services such as food/forage, climate regulation, securing water and nutrient cycling, medicine and energy - all related to human health, prosperity and well-being in general.

Furthermore, grasslands are home to both wildlife and domestic livestock. For several groups of plants and animals, grassland ecosystems are characterized by remarkably high biodiversity. Many parts of Europe landscapes with pastures, meadows and/or natural grasslands contain regional biodiversity hotspots and support high proportion of native and rare species.

In spite of European states' commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity objective of halting biodiversity loss by 2010, and in spite of the global importance of European pastures and meadows, the area covered by grasslands continues to decline dramatically, in particular due to conversion to cropland or abandonment; the remaining grasslands are often impacted by changes of management and accompanied by eutrophication, causing the regional extinction and the high global extinction risk of many species.

We note that while many European countries have water and forest legislation and strategies which promote a coherent vision and an integrated policy approach, grasslands lack such a framework and the effects are clear to see.

We therefore call for a strong and comprehensive Convention on Grassland Conservation in Europe within the framework of the Pan-European Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy, to secure the future of grasslands which provide vital ecosystem services to human society, are home to biodiversity, sources of natural beauty and cultural values.



Moments in the Smolenice castle: Katarína Devánová with her son Peter (upper left picture taken by Lenka Janišová), coffee break on the castle terrace (upper right picture taken by Miké Vrahnakis), Karel Prach chairing session 5 and the audience (pictures in the middle taken by Janka Smatanová), grassland party in the castle courtyard (bottom pictures taken by Ríta Ketner-Oostra).

Next page:

Moments in the field: the excursion to the Tematínske vtchy Mts. (upper pictures taken by Moníka Janišová and Janka Smatanová), the excursion to the Biele/Bilé Karpaty Mts. (four pictures in the middle, taken by Moníka Janišová and Janka Smatanová and the excursion to Sandberg and Devínska Kobyla (bottom pictures taken by Moníka Janišová).



Bull. Eur. Dry Grassl. Group 7 (June 2010)

Minutes from the General Assembly of the EDGG

These notes were kept by Michael Vrahnakis – if there are points that participants wanted to be presented here and they are not please do not hesitate to make a conduct with Michael at mvrahnak@teilar.gr and additional material of the G.A. maybe presented in the next 8th Bulletin.

The General Assembly (G.A.) of the EDGG during the 7th European Dry Grassland Meeting in Smolenice took place after the first day's oral presentations (28/05/2010), starting at 20:00 hrs. Before the G.A. the three members of the Executive Committee (E.C.) present, Jürgen Dengler, Monika Janisova and Michael (Mike) Vrahnakis had a short meeting just to structure the general shape of the G.A. Eight major topics were discussed during the G.A. chaired by Jürgen Dengler.

The first one was about some introductory notes, like **membership development, subgroup formation, and relationships with other organizations**. The rapid expansion of our Organization was illustrated by figures that show an expansion from 191 members in 09/12/2008 up to 561 members in 13/05/2010. A special acknowledgement was addressed to Mike's effort to expand our Organization in the Mediterranean countries. The an-

nouncement of the new EDGG subgroup formation for the south-east European countries (SEEDGG) was shortly presented with a special reference to its dynamic nature (134 members, 14 countries). A general conclusion was that despite the rapid expansion, there are still European countries missing or with rather low representativeness in EDGG. We shortly discussed the need to establish closer relationships with organizations like IAVS, EGF, and FAO.

Secondly, a short report from the present members of the E.C. was devoted to the activities related to their responsibilities, and a short introduction was made for the responsibility allocated to the new member of the E.C. (Mike) to support Solvita in editing the EDGG homepage. The G.A. welcomed the new member of the E.C. and his responsibilities.



Orobanche lutea and Orobanche alba in the National Nature Reserve Devínska Kobyla (Slovakia). Photo: P. Chmielewski and J. Smatanová.

Thirdly, Jürgen outlined the present status of some **publication-related issues**. *Tuexenia* 30 (2010) with a Dry Grassland Special Feature guest-edited by a team of EDGG members is presently in press and contains six articles + one editorial. Also, it was stressed that, given the efforts are made for *Tuexenia* to gain an Impact Factor, only high quality papers for the Special Issue devoted to the Smolenice Conference will be accepted by the guest editorial committee. The Dry Grassland Special Feature in *Tuexenia* 31 (2011) will comprise up to 150 pages, and only invited papers will be accepted to publish. Jürgen expressed his regret that as he was recently informed it would not be possible to have a Special Feature in *Applied Vegetation Science (AVS)*, given that AVS is already planning to devote two complete issues in 2011 to Special Features (Ecoinformatics and Vegetation classification). Nevertheless efforts were and are still made to find a hospitable space in some other significant journals (like *Restoration Ecology*, *Plant Biosystems*, *Community Ecology*, etc.). Mike expressed his thoughts that it might be productive to have some contacts with the *Grass and Forage Science* that it is the official journal of the European Grassland Federation (IF=1.378). The G.A. approved all the efforts made by the E.C. to find Special Issues for hosting the members' papers.

In the fourth and fifth session, we discussed about the future venues that may host **next EDGG's conferences and research expeditions**. Several future conference venues were proposed by the present members, thus illustrating the emerging robustness and appeal of the EDGG in the scientific European grassland community. Representatives from Ukraine, Greece, Poland, and Russia expressed their wish to host the 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2015 conferences in their countries, respectively. The G.A. approved the Ukrainian proposal to host the conference 2011 in the Dendrological Park of the National Academy of Sciences in Uman' near Kiev. Anna Kuzemko as chair of the local organizing committee in consultation with the E.C. will publish a First Circular in the next months to be sent to all EDGG members.

In the sixth session Mike presented to the G.A. his thoughts about the **expansion of the web site**. This expansion may include the construction of: 1. A *Dry grassland-related project list* where open calls, project names, objectives, participants, findings, publication lists, web links are to be presented. Our members will be able to post all this information for communication purposes. 2. *Training and mobility* (open calls, running Erasmus projects, etc.) will offer the opportunity to our academic members and their students to exchange experiences and methodologies. 3. *Policy issues* will offer the opportunity to establish communication with policy makers and to exchange scientifically-based ideas. 4. *Alerts for issues for consultation* may host relevant links where our members are kindly invited to express their ideas for consulting dry grassland related issues. 5. Finally more *Thematic parks*, are expected to develop in our web page relevant to (among others) (i) DG and climate change, (ii) DG and



The area of the former quarry in the protected site Sandberg is recently overgrown by successional woody species. Photo: J. Smatanová.



The results of restoration activities of the NGO Pre Přírodu in the Tematínské vrchy Mts. Dry grasslands gradually overgrown by successional pines have recently a new chance to be maintained. Photo: K. Baraňská.



During the moments without rain the grassland scientists enjoyed grassland observations and common debates. Photo: J. Smatanová, M. Janišová and R. Ketner-Oostrá.

desertification, (iii) DG and biodiversity, (iv) DG and renewable energy resources, (v) Methodological issues, (vi) issues of terminology, (vii) country's DG profile, etc. This way ideas, articles, and papers of our members will find a ground to be expressed and discussed. The G.A. approved these ideas and authorized Mike (together with Solvita) to proceed with the necessary reforms of the web page. Our members are all kindly invited to take part in this initiative by sending relevant information to Mike and Solvita.

The seventh session included **governance issues**. Jürgen pointed out that the E.C. of the EDGG is not a close group and anyone who has interests in coordinating our

members and community is welcome. The G.A. authorized the present E.C. to continue its work. The present E.C. expressed its acknowledgements to the G.A. and it was agreed that such authorizations will take part in every future EDGG conference. It was also reminded that a call for a fifth chair (a zoologist related to dry grasslands, preferably from a country not yet represented among the E.C. members) is still open.

In the last (closing) session Jürgen expressed the E.C.'s gratitude for this excellent Smolenice conference, and deeply **thanked the organizing committee**.

Michael Vrahinakīs, Karditsa, Greece



Activities and subgroups of the European Dry Grassland Group

Special Features from European Dry Grassland Meetings

Corresponding to the attractiveness of our conferences, we are able to publish increasing numbers of the oral and poster contributions in Special Features in international journals, guest-edited by teams of experienced EDGG members.

Dry Grassland Special Feature in *Tuexenia* 30 (2010)

Guest-edited by Ute Jandt, Thomas Becker, Jürgen Dengler & Monika Janišová, this Special Feature with six contributions and one editorial has just been published (the books and the reprints are now being delivered):

Jandt, U., Becker, T., Dengler, J., Janišová, M.: Dry grasslands: species interactions and distribution – Editorial to the Special Feature with contributions from the 6th European Dry Grassland Meeting 2009 in Halle (Saale).

Dúbravková, D., Hegedúšová, K., Janišová, M., Škodová, I.: New vegetation data of dry grasslands in the Western Carpathians and the northern Pannonian Basin.

Janišová, M., Uhliarová, E., Ružičková, H.: Expert system-based classification of semi-natural grasslands in submontane and montane regions of central Slovakia.

Janišová, M., Uhliarová, E., Hlásny, T., Turisová, I.: Vegetation-environment relationships in grassland communities of central Slovakia.

Jones, A., Akeroyd, J., Beldean, M., Turtureanu, D.: Characterization and conservation of xeric grasslands in the Târnava Mare area of Transylvania (Romania).

Juškiewicz-Swaczyna, B.: Population structure of *Pulsatilla patens* in relation to the habitat quality.

Rusina, S., Kiehl, K.: Long-term changes in species diversity in abandoned calcareous grasslands in Latvia.

The pdf's of these articles will be made available on the EDGG homepage soon, and you all are invited to download them, and hopefully many of you will consider them as relevant for their own research and quote them in their publications.

Dry Grassland Special Feature in *Tuexenia* 31 (2011)

Thanks to the continuous support by the Floristisch-soziologische Arbeitsgemeinschaft (FlorSoz), also in 2011 there will be a Dry Grassland Special Feature in *Tuexenia*, this time guest-edited by Monika Janišová,

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Dobromil Galvanek, Thomas Becker, Jürgen Dengler, Camilla Wellstein & Wolfgang Willner. As the available space (approx. 150 pages) was significantly smaller than the space needed for all expected articles, we conducted a pre-selection this time to avoid the situation that editors and reviewers spend a lot of time for improving articles that cannot be printed in the end. Based on this pre-selection, we have meanwhile invited seven contributions from the conference 2010 in Smolenice and three from the conference 2009 in Halle. After submission (deadline is 30 September 2010) they will be subject to a normal peer review and can still be rejected.

Dry Grassland Special Feature in *Plant Biosystems*

Thanks to the generous offer of the chief editor of the Italian botanical journal *Plant Biosystems* (impact factor: 0.744 for 2009), Prof. Carlo Blasi, we can now produce the first EDGG Special Feature in an ISI journal. It will comprise 6–8 articles and appear presumably in the second issue of 2011. The Special Feature is entitled **“Succession, management, and restoration of dry grasslands”** and is guest-edited by Monika Janisova, Sandor Bartha, Jürgen Dengler & Kathrin Kiehl.

Here also a two-step approach applies. First, interested authors with high-quality contributions on the named topic are invited to submit an abstract (up to 200 words) to the chair of the guest editors Jürgen Dengler (dengler@botanik.uni-hamburg.de) by **30 June 2010**. Note that also non-participants of the conference can submit abstracts. The guest editors together with the chief editor will then select the approximately ten most promising abstracts, and their authors will be invited around mid-June to make a full submission. After submission (**deadline is 30 September 2010**) the manuscripts will be subject to a normal peer review and can still be rejected.

PLEASE USE THIS EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO PUBLISH YOUR HIGH-QUALITY STUDIES ON DRY GRASSLAND CONSERVATION IN A SPECIAL FEATURE OF AN ISI JOURNAL AND SUBMIT YOUR ABSTRACTS BY 30 JUNE.

Jürgen Dengler, Hamburg, Germany

South-East European Dry Grassland Group (SEEDGG)

Geographic coverage: S Poland, Slovakia, E Austria (Vienna, Lower Austria, Burgenland), Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia (southern part of European sector), Kazakhstan (European sector), Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

Chair: Iva Apostolova (iva@bio.bas.bg)

Steering Committee: Iva Apostolova, Claudia Bită-Nicolae, Jürgen Dengler, Monika Janišová, Anna Kuzemko, Hristo Pedashenko, Inge Paulini, Nikolay Sorokin, Wolfgang Willner

National Representatives: Slovakia: Monika Janisova, Austria (eastern part): Wolfgang Willner, Romania (Transylvania): Marios Barbos, Romania (rest of the country): Claudia Bită-Nicolae, Bulgaria: Iva Apostolova, Macedonia: Renata Cušterevska, Ukraine: Anna Kuzemko, Russia (southern part of European sector): Alexey Sorokin, Azerbaijan: Jan Pepper.

Since its foundation in February 2010 (see Bulletin No. 6, pp. 3–4), the SEEDGG has developed dynamically. Meanwhile, we have 144 members, appointed additional National Representatives and members for the Steering Committee, and extended our geographic coverage to eastern Austria. We had two meetings of the Steering Committee at the 19th EVS Workshop in Pécs, Hungary, and at the 7th European Dry Grassland Meeting in Smolenice, Slovakia, where we discussed further details of our database. However, it turned out that it is not a trivial task to establish a vegetation database that covers so many different countries with different plant nomenclature. Therefore and because most of us are busy now with field work, final decisions and the actual start of the database are to be expected for autumn or winter 2010. Minutes from the two Steering Committee meetings as well as further information will be sent to all registered members and be posted on the EDGG homepage under About us – Subgroups – SEEDGG.

Those, interested in collaboration are cordially invited to contact Iva. In particular, we are still seeking national representatives for Poland (southern part), Hungary, Serbia, Moldova, Kazakhstan (European sector), Armenia, and Georgia.

*Iva Apostolova, Sofia, Bulgaria
Jürgen Dengler, Hamburg, Germany*



Linum austriacum in the Tematínske vrchy Mts. Photo: P. Chmielewski.



Onosma visianii in the Tematínske vrchy Mts. Photo: P. Chmielewski.



*This and the next page: Moments from Tematínske vrchy Mts. and Devínska Kobyla. Photo: K. Baraňská.
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Dry grassland profile of Turkey

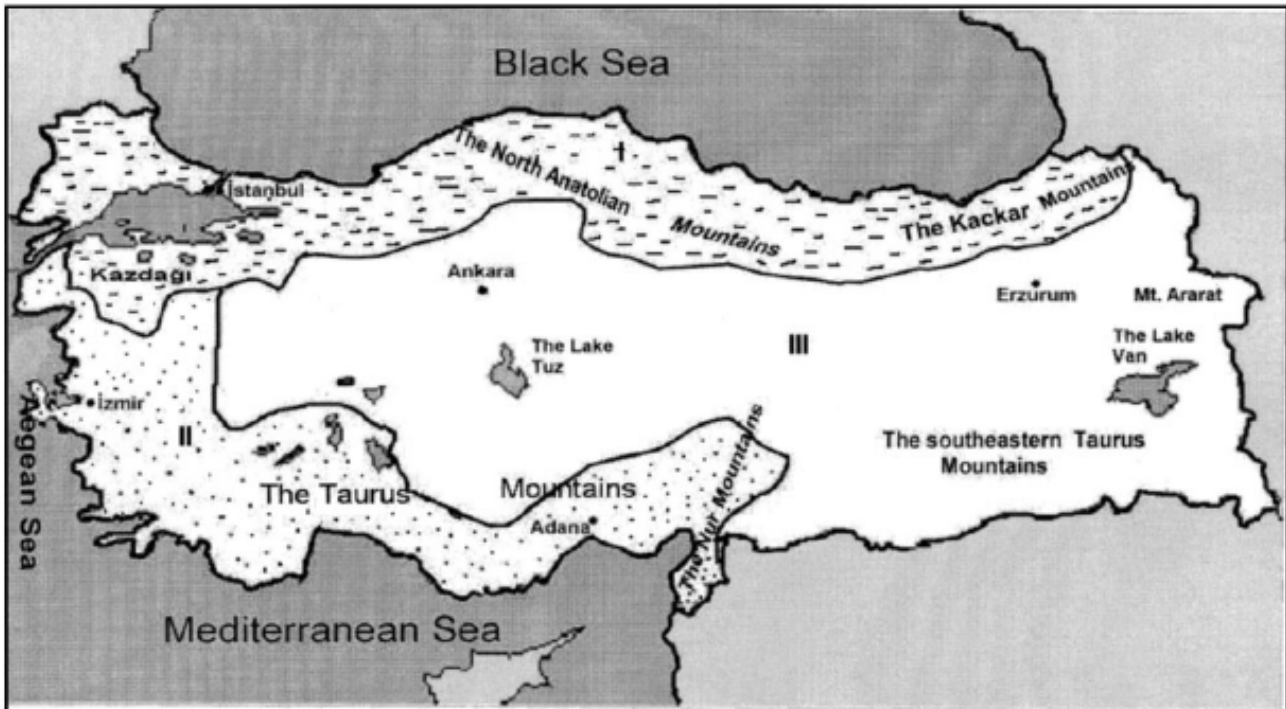


Fig.1: Floristic regions of Turkey I. Eurosiberian Region, II. Mediterranean Region, III. Irano-Turanian Region.

The Mediterranean Basin is known for its remarkable biodiversity (Medail & Quezel, 1999). The flora of the Mediterranean Basin contains ~ 24,000 plant species in a surface area of about 2.3 million km² (Greuter 1991), that is 10% of all known plant species in what is really only a small part of the world. Turkey is one of the Mediterranean countries in the eastern part of the basin, reaching from 26^o to 50^o degree of longitude and from 36^o to 42^oN in latitude. Total land area comprises around 780,500 km², of which 3 % belong to the European continent. The country has a rich and precious flora containing more than 10,000 taxa of vascular plants (Yilmaz, 1998).

According to the plant geographical division of the world into floristic realms regions and provinces by Takhtajan *et al.* (1986), Turkey belongs to the holarctic realm at the intersection of three floristic regions. These are Eurosiberian Region, Mediterranean Region, and Irano-Turanian Region (Fig.1)

The European Commission has funded different national grassland mapping studies and Natura 2000 habitats projects for European Countries. However, in Turkey there is a considerable lack of information on dry and semi-dry natural and seminatural grassland types. In the 1950s, almost 60% of Turkey was covered by mainly three types of grassland: steppic grasslands, highland grasslands and moorlands (Baris, 1991). By 1984, this percentage had been reduced to about 30%. The majority

of this steppic grassland was transferred to pseudo-steppe land and used for non-irrigated cereal cultivation and fallow. Based on data from Earth Trends (2003), the total grassland area was around 27.7 million ha (Fig.2), which represents more than half of the national territory. Habitats found there are mostly of a different nature than in the other countries (Tucker and Evans, 1997) thus stressing the uniqueness of Turkish grassland systems.

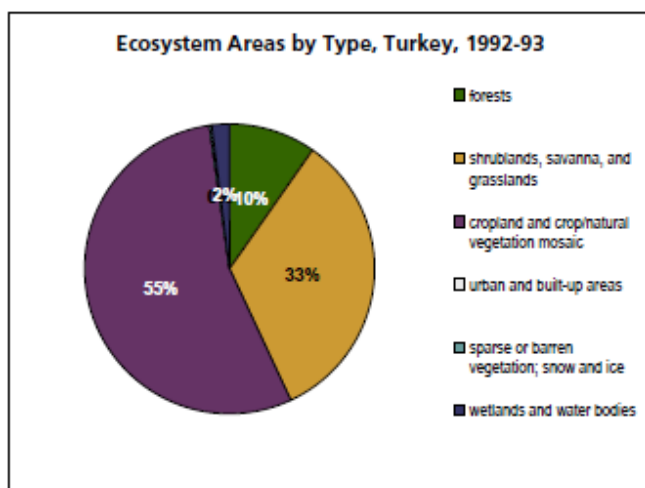
Dry grasslands types of Turkey

Dry grasslands types of Turkey occur from steppe biomes to the alpine zones. We find all kind of dry grassland types; steppe biome, alpine zone, or as azonal/extrazonal vegetation for example on grey dunes or on rock outcrops throughout whole Turkey.

Steppe Vegetation Types of Turkey

Steppe vegetation of Turkey is mainly found in Inner Anatolia, higher altitudes of the Taurus Mountains, and most parts of east and southeast Anatolia. The steppe vegetation area of Turkey is also included within the Irano-Turanian Floristic region (Çetik, 1985) .

Steppe vegetation of the Inner Anatolia was studied by the Cetik, 1985 in detail but also by (Akman, et al, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1996, Aydogdu, et Ketenoglu, 1993, Aydogdu et al. 1994, 2001, Ketenoglu et al., 1999, Kurt et al., 1999, Kurt, 2000,2002).



Forests, Grasslands, and Drylands-- Turkey

	Turkey	Middle East & North Africa	World
Forest Area and Change			
Total forest area, 2000 (000 ha)	10,225	29,104	3,869,455
Natural forest area, 2000 (000 ha)	8,371	20,448	3,682,722
Plantations area, 2000 (000 ha)	1,854	6,533	186,733
Total dryland area, 1950-1981 (000 ha) [a]	60,138	552,621	5,059,984
Change in forest area:			
Total, 1990-2000	2%	2%	-2%
Natural, 1990-2000	X	X	-4%
Plantations, 1990-2000	X	X	3%
Original forest (b) as a percent of total land area (c)	66%	X	48%
Forest area in 2000 as a percent of total land area (c)	13%	2%	29%
Forest Area by Crown Cover (000 ha), 2000			
<i>Note: Crown cover data are gathered using different methodologies than the forest area calculated above. The two estimates may differ substantially.</i>			
Area of forest with crown cover:			
Greater than 10%	21,398	33,369	6,537,209
Greater than 25%	11,574	16,375	4,842,071
Greater than 50%	5,721	7,686	3,143,720
Greater than 75%	3,063	4,077	1,945,916
Ecosystem Areas by Type			
Total land area	77,482	1,256,964	13,328,979
Percent of total land area covered by:			
Forests	10%	1%	24%
Shrublands, savanna, and grasslands	33%	25%	37%
Cropland and crop/natural vegetation mosaic	55%	7%	20%
Urban and built-up areas	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Sparse or barren vegetation; snow and ice	0%	66%	16%
Wetlands and water bodies	2%	0%	3%
Forests certified through the Forest Stewardship Council			
Natural forests, 2002 (hectares)	0	0	11,457,393
Plantations, 2002 (hectares)	0	0	3,324,996
Mixed forests, 2002 (hectares)	0	0	11,461,154

Fig. 2: Percentage of ecosystem types of Turkey and their contribution to total country area according to Earth Trends (2003). Turkey shows a large relative area for grassland ecosystems especially in arid and semiarid regions.

Steppe communities of Inner Anatolia can be put into *Astragalo-Brometea* Classes, with a lot of characteristic species of the *Thero-Brachypodiata* classes, too (Çetik, 1985).

Astragalo-Brometea Quezel 1973 classes is divided into two orders in Inner Anatolia.

1. Order *Onobrychido armeni-Thymetalia leucostomi* grows Center of Inner Anatolia and surroundings, mainly found in plain steppe.

2. Order *Hyperico linarioidis-Thymetalia scorpii* grows on Ilgaz mountains that make most of the Northern parts of Inner Anatolia and on silicious parent material.

Onobrychido armeni – Thymetalia leucostomi order is represented by two sub-orders in Inner Anatolia: 1. suborder *Onobrychido armeni-Thymetalia leucostomi* and 2. suborder *Asperula phrygiae-Thymetalia chaubardii*.

Onobrychido armeni-Thymetalia leucostomi suborder grows close to Ankara, Haymana, Polatli, Sivrihisar, Gomu (Afyon), Cankiri and Kirsehir, between 800-1200 m a.s.l., on the marn-gybsium and deep gibs soils. Represented with eight alliances in Inner Anatolia.

Alliance *Convolvulo holsericeae-Ajugion salicifoliae*

Alliance *Salvio tchihatcheffii-Hedysarion varii*

Alliance *Phlomido armeniacaee-Astragalaon microcephali* this alliance contains one suballiance *Astragalion fycii*.

Alliance *Phlomido nissoli-Onobrychion tournefortii*

Alliance *Astragalo karamasici-Gysophilion eriocafycis*. This alliance contains 3 suballiances: 1. suballiance *Artemision santonicii*, 2. suballiance *Asperulenion borrumuelleri* and 3. suballiance *Helichryso-Thymenion cappadoci*.

Alliance *Arenario-Astragalion plumosi*

Alliance *Phlomido nissoli-Onobrychion tournefortii*

Alliance *Minuartion juniperino-pestalozzae*

Alliance *Thymo subisophyllii-Alysson virgatii*

Alliance *Genisto involucratae – Marrubion micranthi*

Asperula phrygiae-Thymetalia chaubardii suborder grows between 1300-1400 m and up to 2000 m altitude. This order contains four alliances.

Alliance *Sidirito phrygiae-Centaurion maculicipis* grows in the Sultan Mountains (Aksehir).

Alliance *Verbasco phrygiae-Astragalion flavescens* grows in the Kumalar Mountain (Afyon, Sandikli-Dinar).

Alliance *Astragalo akscherensis-Onobrychidion pisidici* found on Karadag Mountain (Isparta).

Alliance *Micromeria phrygiae-Olympociadion caespitosi* was found in the Karadag Mountain (Isparta).

East Anatolian Steppes of Turkey

According to the synopsis of the classification by Hamzaoglu (2006), the syntaxa of the East Anatolian Steppes are as follows:

Class *Astragalo microcephali-Brometea tomentelli* Quezel 1973 em. Parolly

Order *Festuco oreophilae-Veronicion orientalis* Hamzaoglu all. Nov. (typicum)

Alliance *Tanaceto aucherani-Thymion pubescentis* Hamzaoglu all. Nov.

Alliance *Astragalo aurei-Festucion caucasicae* Hamzaoglu all. Nov.

Class *Astragalo microcephali-Brometea tomentelli* Quezel 1973 em. Parolly (Syn. *Astragaletea mediterranea* Zohary 1973; *Astragaletea armeno-turcica* Zohary 1973 ; *Onobrychidetea cornutae* Klein 1987. Incl.: *Trifolio-Polygonatea* Quezel 1973)

Order *Festuco oreophilae-Veronicetalia orientalis* Hamzaoglu ord. nov. (Syn. *Artemisietalia fragrantis armeno-turcica* Zohary 1973, syn. nov.)

This order contains 3 alliances:

Alliance *Festuco oreophilae-Veronicion orientalis* Hamzaoglu all. Nov.

Association *Astragaletum elongati* Tatli ex Hamzaoglu ass. Nov.

Association *Galio humifusi-Astragaletum microcephali* Tatli ex Hamzaoglu ass.nov.

Association *Thymo-Astragaletum laguri* Behcet and Tatli 1989

Association *Astragalo-Onobrychidetum cornutae* Gumus 1992

Associatin *Cirsio-Festucetum valesiaca* Ocakverdi ex Hamzaoglu Ass. Nov.

Association *Astragaletum kurdici* Behcet, 1994

Alliance *Tanaceto aucherani-Thymion pubescentis* Hamzaoglu all. Nov.

Association *Isatido cappadocicae-Astragaletum microcephali* Hamzaoglu ass. nov.

Subassocion *astragaletosum microcephali* Hamzaoglu subass. nov.

Subassocion *astragaletosum krugiani* Hamzaoglu subass. nov.

Association *Prango pabulariae-Astragaletum gummiferi* Hamzaoglu ass. nov.

Alliance *Astragalo aurei-Festucion caucasicae* Hamzaoglu all. Nov.

Associatin *Alopecuro-Festucetum woronowii* Behcet and Tatli 1989

Association *Festuco-Brometum variegatii* Behcet and Unal 1999

Association *Stipo-Astragaletum subrobusti* Behcet 1990

Association *Astragalo/Thymetum eriophori* Behcet 1990



Verbascum luciliae - endemic species from rocky habitats of Turkey, flower and general view. Photo E. Ugurlu.



Linum hirsutum subsp. *pseudanatolicum*. Photo E. Ugurlu.

Association *Bromo erecti-Festucetum chalcophaeae* Tatli ex Hamzaoglu ass. nov.

High Mountain Vegetation of Turkey

High Mountain Vegetation of Turkey was studied by Parolly (2004). According to Parolly, some dry grassland types belong to the rock vegetation found in Anatolian high mountains. Some represented vegetation units from Parolly are as follows:

Class *Asplenieta trichomanis* (Br.-Bl. in Meier & Bl.-Bl. 1934) Oberd. 1977 (syntax. syn.: *Parietarieta* Rivas-Martinez ex Rivas Goday 1964) includes chasmophytic vegetation of rock faces, fissures and ledges.

Subclass *Potentillenea speciosae* Hein, Kurschner & Parolly 1998 includes chasmophytic vegetation of rock faces, fissures and ledges of East Mediterranean mountain ranges.

Order *Silenetalia odontopetalae* Quezel 1973 includes chasmophytic, predominantly basiphytic vegetation of rock faces, fissures and ledges of NW, W and S Anatolian and adjoining Levantine mountains.

Alliance *Aubrietion olympicae* Quezel & Pamukcuoglu 1970 includes xero- to mesophytic chasmophytic vegetation of Uludag and surroundings.

Placed by Quezel & Pamukcuoglu (1970) and Quizelet al. (1992) in the *Potentilletalia speciosae* Quezel 1964, but possibly better included in the *Silenetalia odontopetalae* (Hein et al., 1998).

Alliance: *Silenion odontopetalae* Qu.zel 1973 includes xero- to mesophytic chasmophytic vegetation of the Batõ Toroslar (W Taurus range).

Alliance *Campanulion isauricae* Hein, Kurschner & Parolly 1998 (syn.: *Campanulion davisii* Gemici & Gork 1995) includes xero- to mesophytic chasmophytic vegetation of the western portion of the Orta Toroslar (Pisidian and Isaurian Taurus).

Alliance *Onosmion mutabilis* Quezel 1973 (Original form of name *Onosmion mutabile* Qu.zel 1973) includes xero- to mesophytic chasmophytic vegetation of montane to subalpine elevations of the eastern portion of the Orta Toroslar (Cilician Taurus range).

Alliance *Drabion acaulis* Hein, Kurschner & Parolly 1998 includes xero- to mesophytic chasmophytic vegetation of alpine to subnival elevations of the eastern portion of the Orta Toroslar (Cilician Taurus range).

Alliance *Campanulion cymbalariae* Hein, Kurschner & Parolly 1998.

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Cephalanthera rubra. Photo E. Ugurlu.

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Saxifraga Foundation and European Biodiversity

Pictures of plants, animals and landscapes are important for researchers working in the field of nature and nature conservation. When writing articles or giving PowerPoint presentations, pictures are necessary, and in particular high-quality pictures. On the website of Saxifraga Foundation (www.saxifraga.nl) more than 50,000 pictures of European plants, animals and landscapes can be found. The format of these pictures makes it possible to use these pictures for websites, newsletters and PowerPoint presentations. Visitors are allowed to download these pictures free of charge, on condition that they mention the name of the photographer (this can be found in the filename of the picture). Animals and plants are ordered according to the class or order to which they belong.

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Jan van der Straaten, Netherlands



Ophrys cretica, an endemic species of Southern Greece. Photo: Saxifraga, W. van Kruijsbergen.



Tulipa hageri, a grassland species from Greece. Photo: Saxifraga, J. van der Straaten.

Bull. Eur. Dry Grassl. Group 7 (June 2010)



Pulsatilla halleri ssp *halleri*, an endemic grassland species of the French Alps. Photo: Saxifraga, M. Verhagen.



Bull. Eur. Dry Grassl. Group 7 (June 2010)

Forthcoming events

14th MÉTA-trip to Northern Bulgaria

24 June – 2 July 2010, Bulgaria

Registration closed

Anthropization and environment of rural settlements. Flora and vegetation

29 June – 1 July 2010, Kamyanets-Podilskiy, Ukraine

Contact: 9Anthropization-UA@ukr.net

2nd EDGG Research Expedition

10–25 July 2010, Central Podilia, Ukraine

With 18 participants from eight countries, this will be a major event. Unfortunately, this expedition is fully booked, but hopefully in 2011 there will be a new EDGG Research Expedition (we are still seeking potential hosts).

23rd Conference-Expedition of the Baltic Botanists Seminatural Communities

19–22 July 2010, Haapsalu, Estonia

Conference homepage: <http://www.elus.ee/balticbotany>

Contact: malle.leht@emu.ee

Registration closed

Federation (EGF) Grasslands in a Changing World

29 August – 2 September 2010, Kiel, Germany

Conference homepage: www.egf2010.de

Registration closed

40th Annual Conference of the Ecological Society of Germany, Austria and Switzerland (GfÖ)

The Future of Biodiversity - Genes, Species, Ecosystems

30 August – 3 September 2010, Gießen, Germany

Further information: <http://www.gfoe.org/index.php?id=318&L=1>

High Nature Value grasslands: securing the ecosystem services of European farming post 2013

7–9 September 2010, Sibiu, Romania

The flyer, draft programme and booking form available from Gwyn Jones (...). The conference is free and we have agreed discounted rates with some nice hotels within easy walking distance of the venue.

The conference includes a full day excursion to the countryside of Tarnava Mare (see <http://www.fundatia-adept.org> for an introduction to the area's natural wealth).

Annual Meeting of the British Ecological Society (BES) 2010

7–9 September 2010, Leeds, United Kingdom

Further information:

http://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/meetings/current_future_meetings/2010_annual_meeting/index.php

Eurasian Steppes: Status, Threats and Adaptation to Climate Change

9–12 September 2010, Hustai National Park, Mongolia

Conference homepage: www.hustai.mn

Registration closed

3rd Croatian Botanical Congress

24–26 September 2010, Island of Murter, Dalmatia

Deadline for abstract submission is 15 June 2010

Conference homepage: <http://www.imp-du.com/3hbok>

8th European Dry Grassland Meeting

13–17 June 2011, Uman, Ukraine

Contact: Anna Kuzemko (anya_meadow@mail.ru)

Details: see Bulletin No. 5, pp. 11–13

We are invited by Dr. Anna Kuzemko from the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. The likely date is 13–17 June 2011 and the probable topic will be “Large-scale studies of European dry grasslands”. A first circular with more detailed information will be published in the next Bulletin.

Future European Dry Grassland Meetings

During and after the General Assembly of the EDGG in Smolenice, several proposals for future venues of European Dry Grassland Meetings were made: 2012 North Greece (hosted by Michael Vrahnakis); 2013 Southeast Poland (hosted by Piotr Chmielewski and Katarzyna Barańska); 2015 Russia (hosted by Elena Volkova and Olga Burova).

It is an expression of EDGG that so many colleagues from different countries would like to host future EDGG conferences. No formal decision has been made on any of the venues after the conference 2011 in Uman, Ukraine. However, the Executive Committee invites more detailed proposals (including name of hosts and host institution, proposed year, date and topic, potential destinations for excursions, probable costs) both from the venues listed above and other potential venues. When they are available either the Executive Committee, the next General Assembly, or all members via e-mail ballot will make a decision.



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Important dates: The deadline for Bulletin 8 is 10 September 2010.

Bulletin 8 to appear: September 2010

Bulletin 9 to appear: December 2010