

of the Eurasian Dry Grassland Group



Dear members of the Eurasian Grassland Group,

we are happy to present you with the first Bulletin under the new Executive Committee. This comes with a couple of changes. First, our Bylaws were changed in various aspects to correspond better to our expanded geographical and topical coverage. Consequently we now deal with all Palaearctic natural and semi-natural grasslands, without the previous restriction to dry grasslands and to Europe. In this context you, the members, have decided, with the approval of the IAVS, to rename our group from European Dry Grassland Group to Eurasian Dry Grassland Group and we, the Executive Committee, have adopted "Grassland Research and Conservation" as a subtitle that further refines our mission. We would like to encourage you to contribute articles and photographs of mesic, wet, saline, coastal and alpine grasslands, in addition to dry grasslands and steppes, for the forthcoming Bulletin issues. As this is the first issue during the two-year term of the new Executive Committee, we would like to introduce you to the eight elected members and their responsibilities. In addition, you can now find the EDGG as a Facebook group, which is introduced in this issue. Beyond these more formal items, this issue contains a report of the wonderful European Dry Grassland Meeting in Mainz and an interview with the main organizer of the EDGG Field Workshop in Poland, Zygmunt Kaçki. We wish you pleasant reading and look forward to collaborating with you.

*Monika Janišová, Anna Kuzemko & Idoia Biurrun (Chief Editors)
with Didem Ambarlı, Jürgen Dengler, Péter Török, Stephen Venn
& Michael Vrahnakis (Associate Editors)*

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Four grassland types of the Palaearctic include i) zonal steppes, ii) arctic-alpine grasslands, iii) azonal and extrazonal grasslands and iv) secondary grasslands. All of them are subjects of research and conservation by the EDGG.

September 2015

Grassland Research and Conservation

EDGG - the IAVS working group for grassland research and conservation - covers now the whole diversity of Palaeartic grasslands



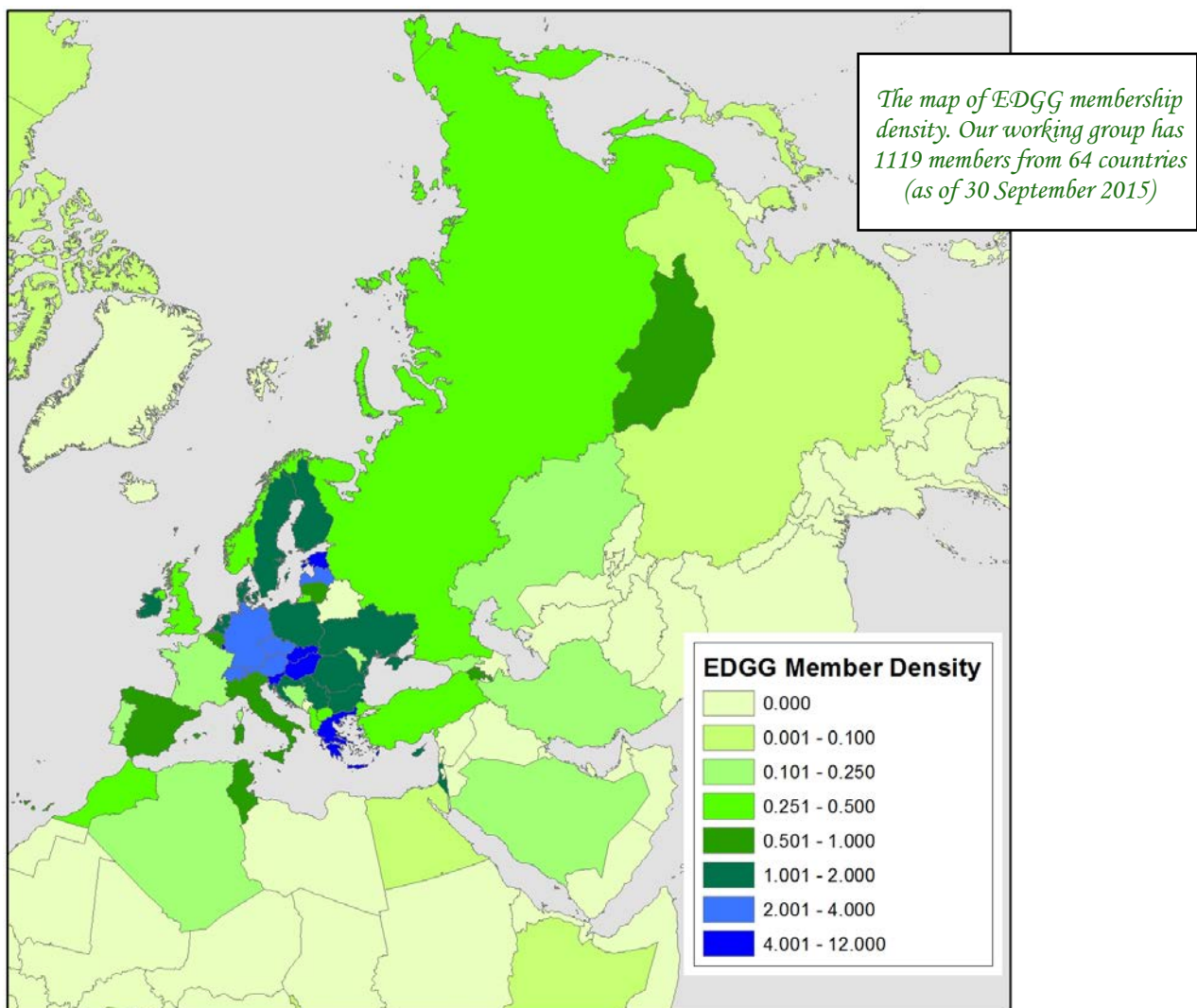
Recent changes of the EDGG Bylaws

The Bylaws of the EDGG define the scope and aims of our Working Group and how we organise ourselves. In the context of the elections to our new Executive Committee in spring 2015, we realised that several aspects of the original Bylaws are no longer optimal for our group, gained so much in membership, geographic/topical coverage and activities since its foundation. Therefore, the old and the new Executive Committee as well as the EDGG General Assembly in Mainz discussed in total six changes. According to the regulations the more technical changes were implemented with $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of the Executive Committee members, while for the two of fundamental importance (name of the organisation, name of our conferences) the whole membership could vote in July. In the end all proposed changes were approved by the required majority and the whole package of changes was later approved by the IAVS Council at the IAVS Symposium in Brno.

You find a short explanation of all six changes below, while you find a complete new version of our Bylaws on our homepage at <http://www.edgg.org/pdf/BylawsEDGG.pdf>.

1. Ensure that the Executive Committee consists of seven members at least. (approved by the old Executive Committee on 27 April 2015)
2. Adjust Nomination and Election periods both to “at least two weeks” (approved by the old Executive Committee on 27 April 2015)
3. Ensure that there is at least one non-European member in the Executive Committee (approved by the old Executive Committee on 27 April 2015)
4. Change the name of the organisation to Eurasian Dry Grassland Group (approved on 11 July 2015 by a vote of the general membership: 132 yes, 27 no)
5. Change of the name of our conferences to Eurasian Dry Grassland Conference (approved on 11 July 2015 by a vote of the general membership: 109 yes, 50 no)
6. Harmonization of our scope throughout the Bylaws to “Palaeartic natural and semi-natural grasslands” (approved by the new Executive Committee on 11 July 2015)

Péter Török & Jürgen Dengler



The Election of the Executive Committee (EC) 2015

A total of 10 candidates stood in the 2015 election of the Executive Committee. The election was conducted from 10th April until the 8th May. The ten candidates were Didem Ambarli (Turkey), Idoia Biurrun (Spain), Jürgen Dengler (Germany), Monika Janišová (Slovakia), Anna Kuzemko (Ukraine), Alireza Naqinezhad (Iran), Ilya Smelansky (Russia), Péter Török (Hungary), Stephen Venn (Finland/UK) and Michael Vrahnakis (Greece). The results of the election, as announced at the General Assembly in Mainz, were as follows (among 130 valid votes):

	Candidate	Votes	
1	Didem Ambarli	65	elected
2	Idoia Biurrun	66	elected
3	Jürgen Dengler	109	elected
4	Monika Janišová	107	elected
5	Anna Kuzemko	90	elected
6	Alireza Naqinezhad	38	
7	Ilya Smelansky	54	
8	Péter Török	87	elected
9	Stephen Venn	94	elected
10	Michael Vrahnakis	79	elected

According to the Bylaws, the seven candidates with the highest number of votes were directly elected. Since all these seven persons were from Europe, according to Bylaw 4.2.f (new version), the one candidate from outside Europe with the highest number of votes is additionally elected (Didem Ambarli). Thus the new EC comprises eight members, whose two year term of office will extend until the General Assembly in 2017.

We thank you for your trust in us!

The EDGG Executive Committee

13th Eurasian Dry Grassland Conference in Sighisoara, Romania, is planned for 20-24 September 2016

The 13th Eurasian Dry Grassland Conference (EDGC) is planned to be held in the historic town of Sighișoara in central Romania, in early autumn 2016. It is organized by the ADEPT Fundatia and the Babes-Bolyai University. Like all previous conferences (meetings), the conference of Sighișoara aims to promote exchange and collaboration between those interested in all aspects of grassland research and conservation across Eurasia. The major theme is to link theory and practice in all aspects of management and conservation of semi-natural Palearctic grasslands. Participants will have the opportunity to meet and explore the High Nature Value grasslands in the hilly Târnava Mare landscape near Sighișoara, and mountain hay meadows in the Miercurea Ciuc (Csíkszereda) area. A detailed First Call will appear in the next EDGG Bulletin.

Responsibilities in the new Executive Committee and whom you should contact for what

EDGG does not have a single president/chair, but eight co-chairs of equal rights, each with different responsibilities. Each task has one main responsible person (blue) and one or two deputies (green). Please contact these persons directly for the different tasks. The e-mails and complete contact data can be found at:

http://www.edgg.org/about_us.htm

Membership Administrator: Idoia, Steve

- Keeping member database & providing functional mailing lists for EDGG and EDGG subgroups
- Providing membership statistics
- Advertising with the aim of gaining new members, particularly in underrepresented regions and taxa
- Arranging of all batch mailing of the EDGG (e.g. sending the Bulletins)

Please contact Idoia and Steve if your e-mail address or affiliation has changed or you could gain a new member.

Editor-in-Chief of Bulletin: Monika, Anna + Idoia

- Compilation of contributions (articles, reports, pictures, note on publications and conferences) for the Bulletin
- Arrangement of linguistic editing and check by other EC members
- Layout of Bulletin issues

Please send your comments, ideas and contributions (articles, announcements, photos) for forthcoming Bulletins to Monika, Anna and Idoia.

Editor-in-Chief of homepage: Didem, Anna

- Management of the EDGG homepage
- Compiling the content and keeping it up-to-date

Please send your contributions and ideas for improvement of the homepage to Didem and Anna.

Conference Coordinator: Mike, Didem

- Active search for suitable hosts of future EDGCs
- When potential candidates are found: helping them with preparation of a first proposal to EC and to GA (2 years before the planned meeting!)
- Providing and updating the EDGC Manual
- Helping the Local Organizing Committee with its work
- Arrangement of the IAVS Travel Grant applications (together with the IAVS Administrator)

If you consider hosting one of the future Eurasian Dry Grassland Conferences or you have suggestions how to make these events more attractive, please contact Mike and Didem.

Special Features Coordinator: Jürgen, Péter

- Planning future Special Features (SFs) with international journals (possibly also together with other organisations) and making the contact to the respective journals/organisations
- Appointing chairs of guest editors (together with the journal) and guest editor team (together with the appointed chairs)
- Publication of calls for our SFs in the EDGG media (mailing list, Bulletin, homepage)
- Overseeing the work of the guest editor teams to ensure high editorial standards and timely production
- Publicizing and advertising of published SFs and contained articles in the EDGG media

If you have suggestions for future Special Features/Special Issues (topics, journals, guest editors), please let Jürgen and Péter know.

Secretary-General: Steve, Péter

- Keeping all official EDGG documents (Bylaws, minutes from General Assembly) and making them available to EDGG EC and IAVS
- Inviting to, chairing of and recording minutes of EC Skype conferences and GA
- Elections to EC (in uneven years), including call for candidacy
- Preparation and updating the EDGG advertising materials (like the EDGG poster)

If you seek some general information about EDGG, Steve and Péter are the right contact.

IAVS Representative: Péter

- Communication with IAVS, its subgroups and committees (for their requests, for our requests)
- Preparation and delivery of annual report to the IAVS Council (including publication in the IAVS Bulletin)
- Other publications in the IAVS Bulletin
- Ensuring that EDGG benefits from available IAVS funding schemes (baseline funding, project funding, travel grants)
- De facto treasurer for EDGG (although all our assets are managed through IAVS accounts)

Field Workshop Coordinator: Jürgen, Idoia

- Active search for suitable hosts of future Field Workshop
- Providing and updating the manuals and forms for the Field Workshops
- Helping the LOC with its work
- Arrangement of the IAVS Travel Grant application (together with the IAVS Administrator)
- Planning and coordinating international publications from EDGG Field Workshops
- Ensuring that the EDGG Field Workshop data are fed into appropriate public vegetation-plot databases

If you have suggestions for future Field Workshops (regions, topics), would like to host one yourself or use the EDGG Expedition data for own publications, please contact Jürgen and Idoia.

Book Review Editor: Anna, Péter

- Keeping an overview of new books that might be of broad interest to our international readership
- Asking publishers for books to be reviewed and providing published reviews to them
- Writing some book reviews and arranging for others to be written by other EDGG members

If you wish to review a certain book or you published a book related to EDGG topic, which you would like to see reviewed, please contact Anna and Peter.

Contact Officer to other organisations: Péter, Mike

- Keeping and expanding an overview of other related organisations, internet platforms etc. (including contact data and deadlines of their media)
- Providing invitations to EDGCs and other relevant information to these organisations
- Contact to the European Forum for Nature Conservation and Pastoralism (EFNCP) where EDGG is a member

If you represent another organisation that is interested in more intensive cooperation (e.g. reciprocal announcement of events, joint conferences or joint Special Features), please contact Péter and Mike.

Policy Officer: Mike, Steve

- Serving as contact person for science-policy issues and political petitions
- Organisation and publication of political declarations to the benefit of grassland conservation

If you have a policy issue (national or international) where you wish EDGG to become active, please contact Mike and Steve.

Facebook Editor: Anna, Steve

- Maintaining our Facebook account
- Feeding the account with key information on EDGG activities, linking to Facebook accounts of related initiatives
- Moderating the discussions on our Facebook account

If you have suggestions for our Facebook activities, please contact Anna and Steve.



In order to enhance the rapid dissemination of information to our members about EDGG activities, as well as in order to attract new members, a discussion on various topics related to grasslands research and conservation has been established in the EDGG Facebook group. We invite all members of the EDGG to visit us there at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/938367279561202/?ref=bookmarks> and to join the group and participate in the discussions or initiate new ones. If you have problems accessing the group or have any questions or suggestions about it, then please contact our Facebook editors Anna Kuzemko (anya_meadow@i.ua) and/or Stephen Venn (stephen.venn@helsinki.fi).

The 12th European Dry Grassland Meeting in Mainz 2015



*Participants of the Middle Rhine Valley Excursion within the 12th European Dry Grassland Meeting in Mainz, Germany.
Photo: M. Janišová*

On 22-27 May 2015, the 12th European Dry Grassland Meeting took place in Mainz, Germany. This was the second time that the EDGG has held its annual meeting in Germany, after Halle in 2009. The meeting was organised by Dr. Ute Becker (Botanic Gardens, University of Mainz) and Dr. Thomas Becker (University of Trier), and hosted by the Universities of Mainz and Trier. The Local Organising Committee included Ute Becker (Mainz), Thomas Becker (Trier), Hans-Jürgen Dechent (Saulheim), Ralf Omlor (Mainz), Lisa Thill (Trier), and Christian Uhink (Mainz) while the Scientific Committee consisted of Thomas Becker (Germany), Ute Becker (Germany), Monika Janišová (Slovakia), and Laura Sutcliffe (Germany). The conference was supported by the Institut für Spezielle Botanik und Botanischer Garten of the University of Mainz, Botanic Garden of the University of Mainz, Friends of the Botanic Garden of the University of Mainz, International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS), Floristisch-soziologische Arbeitsgemeinschaft (FlorSoz), and Rheinische Naturforschende Gesellschaft (RNG).

The aims of the EDGM-2015 were to acquaint participants with the westernmost dry continental sandy grasslands and dry grasslands on acid rock containing relict plants from the Pleistocene. Another aim of the

conference was to gain knowledge of the biology of individual dry grassland species, both plants and animals.

The meeting consisted of two days of oral and poster presentations and two half-day excursions, one to the dry grassland replica sites of the Botanic Garden, and the other to the original Mainz Sand area at the city margin of Mainz. The south-Siberian steppe replica site in the Botanic Garden was created with seed material collected during the EDGG expeditions to Ukraine 2010 and Siberia 2013. During the two days of post-conference excursions to Rhine Hesse and the Middle Rhine valley, participants explored the dry grasslands of these areas.

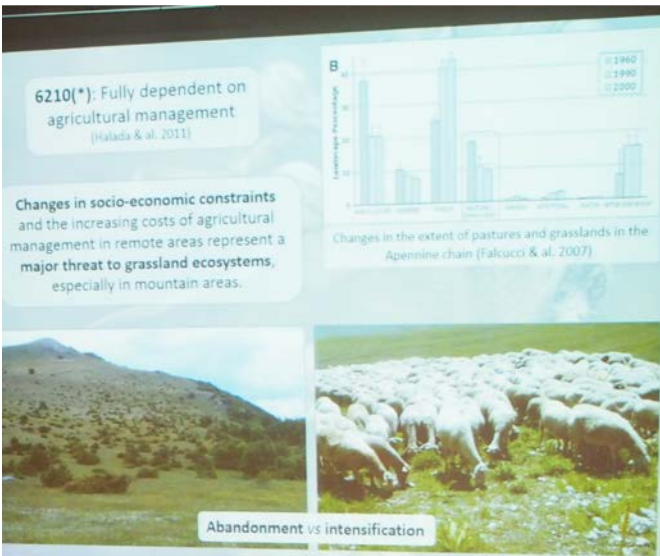
The conference consisted of 3 sessions:

1. Syntaxonomy and biodiversity of dry grasslands
2. Management and conservation of dry grasslands
3. Population biology of dry grassland species

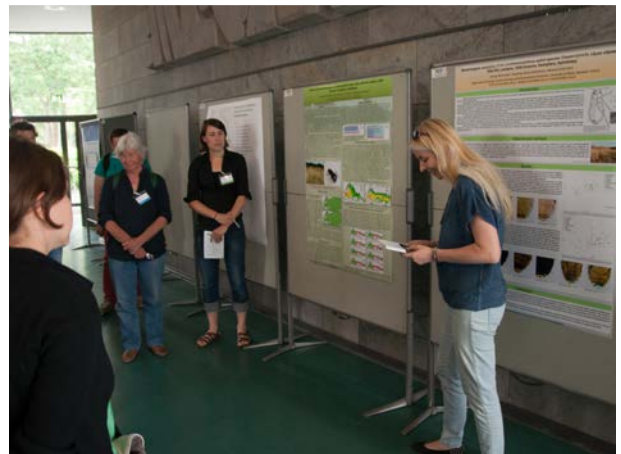
In total, 50 participants from 15 countries (Algeria 4, Belgium 1, Germany 21, Hungary 8, Iran 3, Israel 1, Italy 3, Netherlands 1, Poland 1, Romania 1, Russia 1, Slovakia 1, Slovenia 1, Tunisia 1, and Ukraine 2) took part in the conference. There were two invited talks by Joachim W. Kadereit (Mainz) about “Biogeography of Rhine Gorge orophytes” and by Martin Diekmann



During the lectures. Photo: J. Dengler



Talk about vegetation changes in Apennine semi-natural grasslands by E. Giarrizzo. Photo: M. Janišová



Poster presentation by Karina Wiczovek on aphids in dry grasslands. Photo: J. Dengler



Poster session lead by Laura Sutcliffe. Photo: J. Dengler

(Bremen) about “Long-term changes in the vegetation of dry calcareous grasslands – evidence from community and population ecology”. In total, 23 talks and 18 posters were presented during the sessions. The poster and oral sessions were led by members of the EDGG Executive Committee (Monika Janišová, Péter Török) and other active EDGG members (Laura Sutcliffe, Michael Jeschke). The sessions ended on 24th of May with the award ceremony for the Young Investigator Prizes and the EDGG General Assembly. The Young Investigator Prizes were handed to the best oral and poster contributors (below 34 years in age). The winners were as follows: Best oral presentation contributors were Eleonora Giarrizzo (Italy) together with S. Burascano, L. Facioni, L. Zavattero, and C. Blasi as collaborators with her talk entitled “Causes and outcomes of change in species composition of the Apennine semi-natural grasslands in the last fifty years”, and Lisa Thill (Germany) with O. Kienberg and T. Becker as collaborators who gave a talk about “Compensating extinction by reintroducing *Scorzonera purpurea* into steppe grasslands of Central Germany”. Best poster presentation contributors were Dávid D. Nagy (with T. Magura, R. Horváth, C. Szinetár, J. Eichardt, V. Ködöböcz and B. Tóthmérész as collaborators) with a poster entitled “The effects of fragment size and isolation on ground-dwelling arthropod assemblages in dry sandy grassland fragments” and Jianshuang Wu (with C. Zeng, X. Zhang, Z. Shen and S. Wurst as collaborators) with a poster entitled “Effects of grazing exclusion on above- vs. below-ground biomass allocation in three zonal alpine grassland types on the Northern Tibetan Plateau”.

After the ceremony, the General Assembly (GA) of the EDGG chaired by four present EDGG Executive Committee members: Jürgen Dengler, Monika Janišová, Anna Kuzemko, and Péter Török. The GA was followed by the Grassland Party in the Green School in the Botanic Garden with a vegetarian buffet and locally produced white wine.

During the conference the participants were involved in cultural programme including a walk through the historic city centre of Mainz. During the Dry Grassland Picnic in Rhine Hesse, participants could enjoy local food in the surroundings of a dry grassland.

The half-day excursion led to the Mainz Sand area at the edge of the city. Here, participants could visit the westernmost dry continental sand grasslands of the alliance *Koelerion glaucae* (association *Jurineo-Koelerietum*) and stands of the *Festucion*



Visit to the dry grassland replica sites in the Mainz Botanic Garden, guided by Ute Becker. Photo: J. Dengler (upper picture) and T. Becker (lower picture)



Visit to the dry grassland replica sites in the Mainz Botanic Garden. The picture shows the south-Siberian steppe replica site which was created with seed material collected during the EDGG expeditions to Ukraine 2010 and Siberia 2013. Photo: T. Becker



Joachim W. Kadereit (Mainz) and Martin Diekmann (Bremen) were the two invited speakers. Photo: J. Dengler



Dry sandy grasslands of the Koelerion glaucae with Helichrysum arenarium and Gypsophila fastigiata in the Mainz Sand area. Photo: T. Becker



Summer aspect of a steppe grassland of the Festucion valesiacae on sandy soil with Stipa capillata and Dianthus carthusianorum in the Mainz Sand area. Photo: T. Becker



Semi-dry grasslands of the Cirsio-Brachypodium with Adonis vernalis in the Mainz Sand area. Photo: T. Becker



valesiaca (*Allio-Stipetum*) on sandy soil. In a natural pine forest of the *Cytiso-Pinion* (*Pyrolo-Pinetum*), semi-dry grasslands of the *Cirsio-Brachypodium* (*Adonido-Brachypodietum*) were visible, and on disturbed open sites, annual vegetation of the *Sileno conicae-Cerastium semidecandri* (*Bromo tectorum-Phleietum arenaria*, and *Sileno conicae-Cerastietum semidecandri*) were inspected. The area is the only location of *Onosma arenaria* in Germany which we saw during the excursion. During our excursion through the area, we focussed on plants and vegetation (guided by T. Becker, U. Becker, H.-J. Dechent, C. Lehr and A. Schönberger), animals (mainly insects; guided by N. Chalwatzis, V. Hohenberg and A. Westenberger). Furthermore, we discussed the challenges and opportunities for conservation.

During the one-day excursion to Rhine-Hesse we visited dry grasslands and heathlands on volcanic soil. The area is the *locus classicus* of *Koelerio-Phleion* communities with a peculiar species combination including xerothermic relict species. Excursion sites were the Martinsberg site and Höll site near Siefersheim, and the Mühlberg site and Horn site near Neu-Bamberg. Vegetation types shown during the excursion included the *Gageo-Veronicetum dillenii* (*Sedo-Veronicion dillenii*), *Cerastietum pumili* (*Alyso-Sedion albi*), *Allio-Stipetum* (*Festucion valesiaca*), *Genistello-Phleietum* (*Koelerio-Phleion*) and *Calluno-Genistetum* (*Genistion pilosae*).

Finally, an excursion led to the Middle Rhine Valley with slopes covered by xerothermic vegetation complexes containing dry grasslands and *Acer monspessulanum* forests. The area is one of the classic tourist locations of Germany and an important place for German ancient history.

The Local Organizing Committee would like to thank all participants, the EDGG Executive Committee, sponsors and supporters and many other people and organisations who made this conference possible, especially H.-J. Dechent for organizing the field guides and I. Metz, M. Scheer, E. Entenmann and L. Thill for organizing food during conference and grassland picnic together with many other people.

*Ute Becker and Thomas Becker
Mainz and Trier, Germany*

Moments during the Grassland party. Photo: J. Dengler



Steppe-like grasslands on volcanic soil at the Höll site in Rhine Hesse. *Stipa pulcherrima* is flowering; in the background the Martinsberg is visible. Photo: T. Becker



Dry grasslands on volcanic soil of the Koelerio-Phleion at the excursion site Höll in Rhine Hesse with flowering *Genista sagittale* and *Rumex acetosella*. Photo: T. Becker



Pulsatilla vulgaris at the excursion site Höllberg in Rhine Hesse. Photo: T. Becker (taken earlier in the year)



Exploring rocky grasslands on acidic soil (Koelerio-Phleion) at the Höll site in the Rhine Hesse region. Photo: T. Becker



Investigations of dry grassland biota during the excursion to Rhine-Hesse. Photo: J. Dengler



A break during the excursion to the Middle Rhine Valley. Photo: T. Becker



Dry Grassland Picnic during the post-conference excursion to Rhine Hesse. Photo: M. Janišová



Peter Török and his group enjoying the Grassland Party. Photo: M. Janišová



During the walk through the historic town of Mainz. Photo: J. Dengler



Michael Jeschke, Laura Sutcliffe and Ute Becker in the Mainz Sand area. Photo: J. Dengler



Introduction to the Lepidoptera fauna in the Mainz Sand area. Photo: J. Dengler



Studying a semi-natural dry grassland during the excursion to the Middle Rhine Valley. Photo: M. Janišová



Local experts provided detailed information for participants during the excursion to Rhine-Hesse. Photo: J. Dengler



After a dry spring the visited grasslands were rather dessicated, however, still very interesting for grassland specialists. Photo: J. Dengler



Jaime Kigel, Michael Jeschke and Martin Diekmann during the coffee break. Photo: J. Dengler



Sabina Burrascano, Thomas Becker, Eleonora Giarizzo and Emanuela Carli during the coffee break. Photo: J. Dengler



Picture left: Thomas Becker during the one-day excursion to the Middle Rhine Valley. Photo: A. Kuzemko



Patches of rocky grasslands over the Middle Rhine Valley. Photo: A. Kuzemko

Zygmunt Kački - interview with the organizer of Field Workshop 2015

Zygmunt Kački was the main organizer of the 8th EDGG Field Workshop in Poland in June 2015. In order to introduce him and his work to the Bulletin readers we (Idoia Biurrun and Monika Janišová) asked him several questions when we met at IAVS Symposium in Brno in July 2015.

MJ: I find the organizing of field workshops to be a rather difficult task as the organizer has to prepare the itinerary, book the accommodation and meals before the workshop, take care of the participants during the workshop and he is also responsible for the plant determination and publications prepared from the sampled data after the workshop. So I wonder why did you do it and what was your motivation when you decided to go through all these tasks?

ZK: Well, there are many advantages connected with organizing field workshops, which were established by Jürgen Dengler many years ago. First, I met a lot of nice people, and we all enjoyed their stay in my country. I know that it is a very time-consuming process, but I did it first for the scientific reasons and second, for pleasure. I have attended two such expeditions/workshops and my experience always was excellent. I highly appreciated being in the field with people, building personal relationships with them, spending a longer time with them, working together, eating together, talking together, having fun, ... I am still in contact with many of the participants, people share the news, send me greetings. To organize an event is always time consuming and exhausting, but I think it is to some extent also our duty. During our field workshops we always had a nice time together and finally, as a bonus, we have always collected good data.

MJ: Poland is one of the countries with well-established phytosociological research and a large centralized database. Why did you feel that additional sampling would be necessary?

ZK: Generally, we have a lot of relevés, it is true, more than 60 000 of them are already stored in the Turboveg format. All of them have coordinates. But some regions are oversampled and some others are poorly investigated. We tried to choose the most important biodiversity hotspots of dry grasslands in Poland, but those sites, which have been only poorly investigated up to now. For Poland it is very important to have data from dry grasslands because for many years we followed only one type of classification where many vegetation types are missing and people did not try to publish data that did not suit to this classification. For example, we have nice vegetation with *Festuca pallens* from gypsum. We do not have many relevés in our database recorded from this vegetation. Therefore, it was important that we have sampled this vegetation during the field workshop. We also made a nice transect from the west to the east of Poland



and we can compare many different types of vegetation. Now, we try to identify all the mosses, the identification of the lichens should be finished this month, and probably during the winter I will identify all the plants we have collected.

MJ: Would you do it again? I mean would you organize a field workshop again, or is your attitude to the workshops now rather “never again”?

ZK: Yes, I would do it again, because we have at least three other biodiversity hotspots, where dry grasslands are abundant. It is in the western part of Poland along the Odra River Valley and Vistula River Valley, and Wielkopolska region. There are still some places waiting for us.

MJ: How many people were involved in the organization work?

ZK: Generally, most of preparation work was done by Iwona Dembicz and myself, with strong support from Marta Czarniecka and Grzegorz Swacha. I chose some sites where to go. For some regions I asked the local experts Anna Cwener and Piotr Chmielewski from Lublin to suggest some sites that should be investigated, as Poland is a big country, and they helped us a lot during this preparation stage. These people also joined us during



Introduction to sampling methods during the first day of the Field Workshop in Poland, June 2015. Photo: M. Janišová

the fieldwork and they shared their knowledge and helped us to identify species in the field. There were also some people from Krakow (Joanna Korzeniak and Jan Zarzycki), they joined us for rather short time just for pleasure and I think they were very happy to do these relevés with us. Then Łukasz Kozub and Piotr Zaniewski from Warsaw joined us at the last locality. Piotr is lichenologist and will also identify all lichen samples using a new method of chromatography. A very important person is Iwona Dembicz, the second main organizer. She was responsible for the accommodation and the selection of sites near Warsaw. Slawek Solak was not very happy to join us at the beginning, he was afraid that he can not manage to work with us as he is very young and unexperienced, but finally, he joined and was very content. He helped us very much in the field and just now he is identifying all the bryophytes collected during the field workshop. And it is not easy, as we collected very many bryophyte species in our relevés. So, this was a big team of organizers, where everyone knew what to do and for me it was easy just to put everything together.

MJ: As the participants, we also appreciated the new features of field workshops, I do not mean the biomass collection, but the cultural events including dancing, singing at the fireplace, the grill party, local food, strawberries,

ZK: Yes, I wanted to have as much traditional food as possible, everything from Polish culture, but not only the

Polish one, as we were an international group and our Ukrainian participants are good singers, and the Basque participants as well. In the Navarra field workshop they were so quiet, they did not show us how talented they are, but in Poland, we finally discovered their talent ☺.

IB: Zygmunt, I know you have a long experience with field workshops. How many did you attend?

ZK: I attended two workshops before this one in Poland. I was in Sicily, which was great, and then in the Basque country, which was also excellent. The Bulletin of the EDGG also reported on these workshops in detail.

IB: What is in your opinion an ideal number of people attending a workshop?

ZK: At the beginning I was afraid that too many people would attend our workshop. But we were an excellent group. We just filled one bus and one car. It is very difficult to manage a big group, because it is difficult to communicate. Some people finish the sampling earlier, some people need more time, etc. In our group containing usually 13-14 people the time could be used very efficiently. So from 10 up to 15 people is optimal, no more, because in bigger groups some of the participants are not so much involved in the research. If we have three persons for one plot, it is ok, because, two people are doing a relevé, one takes the biomass and soil samples. But if there are more people per plot, there is not so much to do. Of course we had temporarily more people, but the

extra people were the experts, they helped to several smaller groups to determine the species.

MJ: What do you think about the length of the field workshops? Are ten days enough?

ZK: Ten days, I think, are optimal. It depends on the area we have to investigate. The transfer sometimes takes a lot of time, we had to travel 2000 km in Poland. The first day is always a bit different, we learn how to work together, and the work is not so efficient. And every other day it is better and the last day is usually the best. In our workshop, all people were really very well organized and everyone knew what to do. And almost everyone worked with all other people during some day and people changed their roles (once she/he was writing the record, once identifying, other time cutting the biomass, etc.)

IB: Was organizing of the field workshop a nice experience for you? Because, for me, the field workshop I organized in Navarra, was my first complete field workshop and I did not know very well how it works. Now, I feel that I would like to organize another expedition in some years. I think now I would make it better and I would enjoy it more.

ZK: In general, I have much experience of organizing the meetings. I organized several big conferences in Poland and some very similar workshops but for the postgraduate students.

MJ: Zygmunt, what is your favorite flower?

ZK: Well, it is difficult to choose. I do not know. It depends, should it be a wild flower or cultivated one?



Photo: Morning during the field workshop in Navarra in June 2014. U. Jandt



Photo: Collecting mosses in dry grasslands during the field workshop in Navarra. Photo: D. Ambarli

MJ: Wild flower, some dry grassland species.

ZK: It is an unexpected question, but I can choose some. I like, e.g. *Papilionaceae* family. I think, that *Trifolium rubens* is a very impressive and nice species. I also like e.g. *Adonis vernalis*. I do not mention the orchids, they all are beautiful. Another beautiful flower is *Scorzonera purpurea*, I like this species very much. It is unusual, this color in *Asteraceae* is unique and not so common. *Rosa gallica* is also my favorite wild flower, especially because we have big populations in the Lower Silesia and Odra River Valley. And I remember the time I first discovered this species in the Odra River Valley: I went to a *Cnidion* meadow and I saw red color from a distance on a dam slope. And when I approached the dam, I recognized one plant of *Rosa gallica*. I also can mention *Trollius europaeus*, this is also a nice species, and *Dianthus superbis*. These species make me happy when I find them in the field.

IB: What genus is the most difficult for you?

ZK: I do not like *Rubus*, maybe I should not say that, but I really do not like this genus. It is horrible ☹. The second one is *Taraxacum*. I always have problems to determine *Taraxacum* species and I tried to read the recent papers on *Taraxacum* species that were found in Poland. And when I start to identify these species, I always get lost and finish with several possibilities, which are overlapping. Among the grasses, *Festuca* spec. div are difficult and I always identify them in the laboratory.

MJ: And you like all other genera?

ZK: Yes, the others are acceptable and I like them ☺. Well *Alchemilla* is also quite difficult genus, but I like identifying *Alchemilla* species.

MJ: Do you have a favorite plant community?

ZK: Yes, of course. I have to say; in general, all kinds of *Molinion* meadows are my favorite plant communities. They are really very beautiful, and very variable, in many places they look different and contain many rare species. I also like montane grasslands of the *Nardion* alliance and *Nardetalia* order, especially with many colorful species such as *Hieracium* spec. div. Among dry grasslands, I like *Inuletum ensifoliae*, is not very species rich, but is easily recognizable and has a beautiful structure.

MJ: At which age did you decide to be a botanist?

ZK: This is a funny story. Because during the second year of my study at the university I decided to be a zoologist. At that time we had some exercises in botany, we worked in the field and started to collect species, identify them, and I realized, that this is something for me. I had no problems to recognize the species; I remembered them very well, so I decided to study botany. I was 21 at that time.

MJ: Zygmunt, what would you like to wish to our readers?

ZK: It is very difficult question. I wish these nice initiatives were kept as long as possible. This type of activity (expeditions and field workshops) is very important. Before, I did not have many opportunities to go abroad and visit interesting sites with the experts, who show me the species typical for the particular region, and vegetation developed only in this region. I think it is very important, especially for young people. It is very important to keep this initiative. Generally, we are very busy throughout the year. But we should find ten days for something new.

IB & MJ: Many thanks for your time and ideas you shared with us and with the readers of our journal. We wish you nice summer days and many successful workshops.



The magnifying glass is a very important tool for every botanist. Photo: P. Chmielewski



Singing in the expedition car during the journey became popular among the FW participants. Photo: M. Janišová



Eurasian Dry Grassland Song

With this section, the contents of which can also be found in conjunction with the video published in our Facebook group, we want to provide the lyrics and the melody of nice and easy songs of diverse origins, somehow connected with grasslands or our activities of the Eurasian Dry Grassland Group (mainly the EDGG Field Workshops). We also plan to sing these songs again and again during our future activities and meetings. You are invited to send us your suggestions (just use the e-mails of the editors) what would you like to sing or hear, and to provide lyrics and audio-records for the Bulletin and Facebook.

Oy vydno selo

Oy vydno selo, shyroke selo pid horoyu.
Oy tam yidut' strilci sichoviyi, strilci do boyu.
Yide-yide viys'ko kriz' shyroke pole,
Chlopci z bo to chlopci, yak sokoly.

Chorus: (2x)

Cha-cha-cha-cha-cha-cha-cha-cha-cha
Divchyno-rybchyno, chornobryvka moya,
Vyidy-vyidy, podyvysya chymskorishe do vikna,
Chlopci z bo to chlopci, yak sokoly.

Oy vydno selo, shyroke selo pid horoyu.
Oy tam yidut' strilci sichoviyi, strilci do boyu.
Poperedu yidut' slavni otamany,
Chto ochotu maye, nay yde z namy.

Chorus: (2x)

The video record of this Ukrainian song recorded during the EDGG Field Workshop in Poland (June 2015) you can find at: www.facebook.com/groups/938367279561202

Recent publications of our members

With this section, the contents of which will also be made available via our homepage, we want to facilitate an overview of **grassland-related publications** throughout Europe and to improve their accessibility. You are invited to send lists of such papers from the last three years following the format below to monika.janisova@gmail.com and didem.ambarli@gmail.com. We will include your e-mail address so that readers can request a pdf. For authors who own full copyright, we can also post a pdf on the EDGG homepage. As we plan to publish a book about the European dry grasslands at some point in the future, under the auspices of the EDGG, we would appreciate if you could send a pdf (or offprint) of each of your dry grassland publications to juergen.dengler@uni-bayreuth.de.

Bergmeier E., **Dengler J.**, Janišová M., Jansen F., Krestov P., Roleček J., Walker D.A., Willner W. (2015): Re-launch of Phytocoenologia: new profile for the classic vegetation ecology journal. *Phytocoenologia* 45: 1–10.

Carboni M., **Dengler J.**, Mantilla-Contreras J., Venn S., Török P. (2015): Conservation value, management and restoration of Europe's semi-natural open landscapes. *Hacquetia* 14: 5–17.

Chytrý M., Dražil T., Hájek M., Kalníková V., Preislerová Z., Šibík J., Ujházy K., Axmanová I., Bernátová D., Blanár D., Dančák M., Dřevojan P., Fajmon K., Galvánek D., Hájková P., Herben T., Hrivnák R., Janeček Š., Janišová M., Jiráská Š., Kliment J., Kochjarová J., Lepš J., Leskovjanská A., Merunková K., Mládek J., Slezák M., Šeffler J., Šefflerová V., Škodová I., Uhlířová J., Ujházyová M. & Vymazalová M. (2015): The most species-

rich plant communities in the Czech Republic and Slovakia (with new world records). – *Preslia* 87: 217–278.

De Cáceres M., Chytrý M., Agrillo E., Attorre F., Botta-Dukát Z., Capelo J., Czúcz B., **Dengler J.**, Ewald J., Faber-Langendoen D., Feoli E., Franklin S.B., Gavilán, R., Gillet F., Jansen F., Jiménez-Alfaro B., Krestov P., Landucci F., Lengyel A., Loidi J., Mucina L., Peet R.K., Roberts D.W., Roleček J., Schaminée J., Schmidtlein S., Theurillat J.-P., Tichý L., Walker D.A., Wildi O., Willner W., Wiser S.K. (2015): A comparative framework for broad-scale plot-based vegetation classification. *Applied Vegetation Science* 18: 543–560.

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Exploring dry rocky grasslands on acidic soil (Koelerio-Phleion) at the Martinsberg site during the post-conference excursion to Rhine Hesse. Photo: T. Becker

Forthcoming events

25th European Vegetation Survey Meeting

13–16 April 2016, Rome, Italy

The meeting will be hosted by Università di Roma “La Sapienza” (Emiliano Agrillo, Fabio Attorre, Laura Casella, Francesco Spada and colleagues). The meeting webpage is not yet available.

Special Meeting of International Biogeography Society

5-6 May 2016, Beijing, China

Please check back for updates at:

<http://www.biogeography.org/html/Meetings/index.html>

59th Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS)

Conservation of Plant Communities: From Environmental Drivers to Ecosystem Services

12–17 June 2016, Pirenópolis, Brazil

The venue is in the central region of Brazil, in a Cerrado (savanna) landscape.

The meeting webpage is not yet available.

13th Eurasian Dry Grassland Conference

Management and Conservation of Semi-natural grasslands: from theory to practice

20–24 September 2016, Sighișoara, Romania

The meeting webpage is not yet available.

8th Biennial IBS Conference

9-13 January 2017, Bahia, Brazil

Please check back for updates at:

<http://www.biogeography.org/html/Meetings/index.html>

26th European Vegetation Survey Meeting

spring 2017, Bilbao, Spain

The meeting will be hosted by University of the Basque Country (Javier Loidi and colleagues).

The meeting webpage is not yet available.

60th Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS)

20-25 June 2017, Palermo, Italy

The meeting webpage is not yet available.

27th European Vegetation Survey Meeting

spring 2018, Wrocław, Poland

The meeting will be hosted by University of Wrocław (Zygmunt Kącki and colleagues).

61th Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS)

23-27 July 2018, Bozeman (Montana), U.S.A.

The meeting webpage is not yet available.



The participants of the one-day excursionion to the Middle Rhine Valley. Photo: A. Kuzemko



Montane pastures of the Polygalo edmundii-Nardetum strictae near Hotel Alivia in Picos de Europa, Spain. Photo: Monika Janišová

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