

Habitat restoration & development for Scarce and Dusky Large Blue in N2K area Vlijmens Ven, Moerputten and Bossche Broek

Project background

The project area is located within the “Vlijmens Ven, Moerputten and Bossche Broek” Natura 2000 network of sites. The area consists of damp meadows, fens and wet forests, but also semi-natural grasslands, as well as intensive agricultural land. Wet grassland butterflies are among the most threatened species’ groups in Europe, especially those associated with damp and moist meadows. The restoration potential of the area is high, because it is situated in a seepage zone.

Project objectives

This project aims to restore the habitat of two highly threatened butterfly species in Europe, the scarce large blue [*Phengaris (Maculinea) teleius*] and dusky large blue [*Phengaris (Maculinea) nausithous*]. Both butterfly species are listed in Annexes II and IV of the Habitats Directive and the project is aiming for a significant improvement in the resilience of their populations.

A key specific goal is to enlarge an area of 170 ha, and improve a 50 ha area of the Annex II habitat types on which the target butterfly species rely – namely the Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clay/silt-laden soils (*Molinia caerulea*) and lowland hay meadow with *Alopecurus pratensis* and *Sanguisorba officinalis*. This will be achieved by creating new nature areas from the currently intensively used arable land within the project area. Best practice measures will be adopted, such as the removal of the top soil of the areas that are now intensively farmed, restoration of the hydrological system and facilitation of the colonisation of target plant species and ants.

The habitat improvements should also benefit three other Annex II-listed species of EU importance associated with the habitats: the spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*), mud loach (*Misgurnus fossilis*) and water plantain (*Luronium natans*); as well as the Annex I habitat, hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara.

Expected results

- Improved quality on 10 ha of suitable habitats of the two target butterfly species in the Moerputten and Bossche Broek Natura 2000 sites. This will improve the resilience of the populations and thus increase the chances of long-term survival of the species in The Netherlands and the Atlantic region;
- 170 ha of newly naturalised grassland habitats on areas in Honderdmorgen, De Maij, Vlijmens Ven and

LIFE11 NAT/NL/000770
Blues in the Marshes



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

79 months (01.06.2012 - 31.12.2018)

Total budget in euro:

3,535,437.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,711,730.00 (48.42%)

Theme: Species-Invertebrates

Heidijk that were formerly unsuitable for the species because of intensive agricultural use;

- Improved conservation status of the scarce large blue, with increased numbers per year and new populations;
- Ecological corridors between Bossche Broek and the larger part of the project area (De Maij, Honderdmorgen, Moerputten and Vlijmens Ven) and between Moerputten and Vlijmens Ven;
- Workshops with partners and stakeholders, helping to ensuring that current and future planning activities recognise the needs of the target habitats and species; and
- A series of communications and demonstration actions, including web updates, leaflets, posters and other printed promotional material; information panels and new footpaths for visitors to the project sites; targeted workshops and symposiums; educational packages for schools; events targeting the general public; and a “Habitat development and reintroduction plan for *Phengaris/Maculinea* in Europe”.