

40 JOER natur&ëmwelt
FONDATION
HËLLEF FIR D'NATUR
1982 - 2022



40 Years
in the service of nature
We protect nature with and for you.

40 years
in the service of nature

Liebe Freunde und Freundinnen der Natur,

Die Stiftung Hëllef fir d'Natur feiert ihr 40-jähriges Bestehen. Vom ersten Grundstück, das 1982 gekauft wurde, bis hin zu den 1650 Hektar Naturschutzgebieten im Jahr 2022, es liegt bereits ein langer Weg hinter uns geprägt von Biotopen, Lebensräumen, Fauna, Flora... Biodiversität, die wir bewahren konnten.

Mit dieser Sonderpublikation, zum Anlass dieses besonderen Jahrestags der Stiftung, wollten wir einige unserer wunderschönen Fotografien mit Ihnen teilen und Ihnen die Natur zeigen, die wir bisher dank Ihrer Unterstützung schützen konnten.

Mit wenig Text, aber einer Vielzahl an teilweise unveröffentlichten Fotos, nimmt Sie diese Veröffentlichung mit auf eine Entdeckungsreise durch sechs entscheidende Lebensräume unseres Naturerbes: Wälder, Feuchtgebiete, Wiesen und Weiden, Magerrasen, Streuobstwiesen und ökologische Strukturelemente, wie Hecken und Einzelbäume.

Ich möchte die Gelegenheit nutzen, um Ihnen von ganzem Herzen für Ihre Hilfe zu danken, und Sie dazu ermutigen, uns und unser gemeinsames Ziel weiterhin zu unterstützen: das Respektieren, Erhalten und Aufwerten der Natur in diesem schönen Land für künftige Generationen.



Patrick Losch
Präsident
Fondation Hëllef fir d'Natur

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink.



25 experts

Biologists
Engineers
Geographers
Ecologists

SUMMARY

Page 4	Forests
Page 8	Wetlands
Page 12	Meadows and pastures
Page 18	Dry grasslands
Page 22	Tall-stemmed orchards
Page 26	Ponds and puddles
Page 30	Hedges and trees

3 places of work and activities



The nature house
in Kockelscheuer



The Kalborn mill
in Heinerscheid



The Mediterranean Garden
in Schwebsange

84 priority nature reserves

1650 ha
of nature
reserves with
high ecological
value

755 ha
Forests and
brush

565 ha
Wetlands

182 ha
Meadows
and pastures

92 ha
Dry grasslands

56 ha
Tall orchards

250
Ponds and puddles

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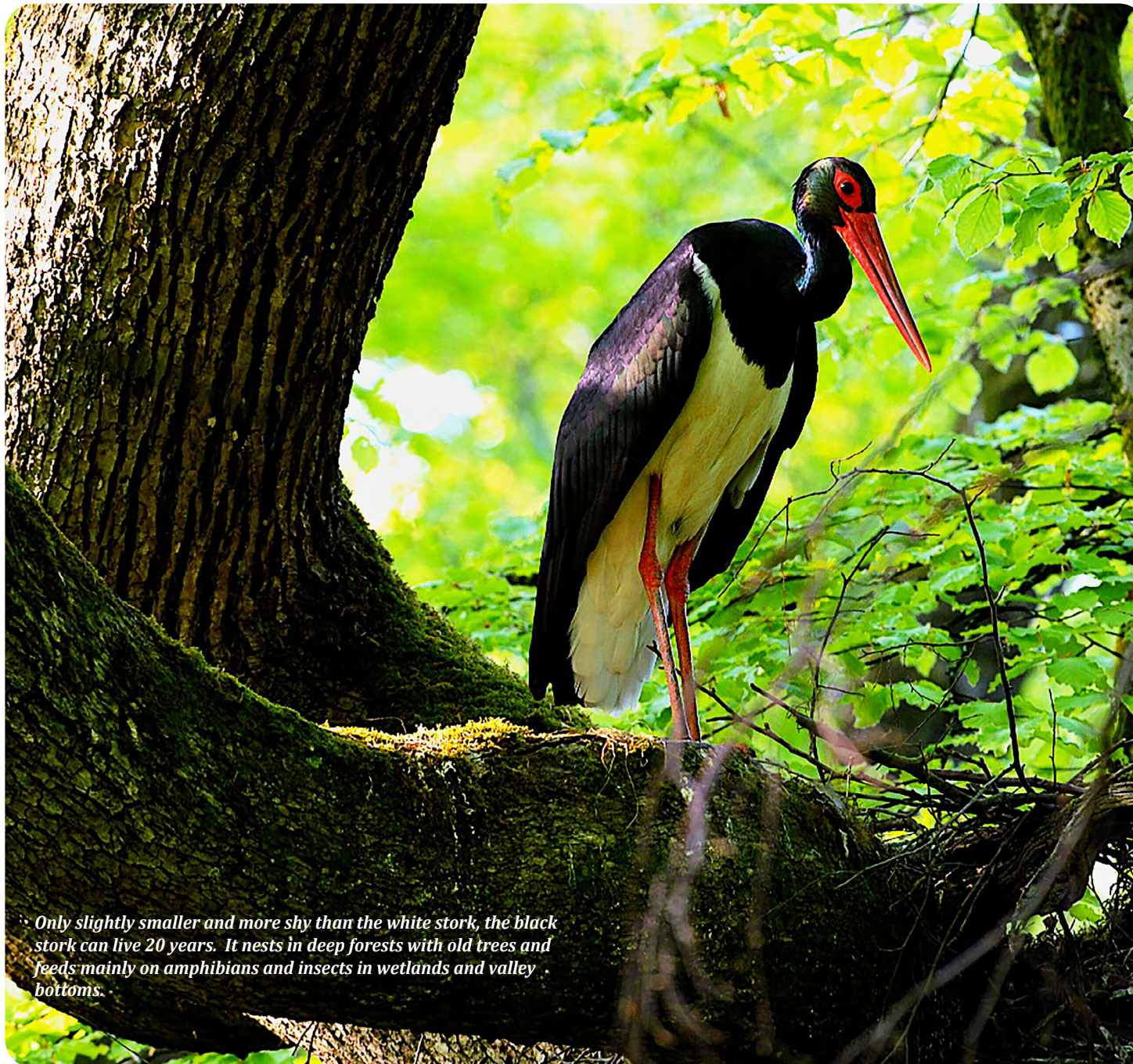
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The large forest near Rødøt/Ell is crossed by the nature reserve Riedergrønn. This valley floor with its slopes is rich in biodiversity with its stream, wetlands, ponds and natural forests.

FORESTS



Only slightly smaller and more shy than the white stork, the black stork can live 20 years. It nests in deep forests with old trees and feeds mainly on amphibians and insects in wetlands and valley bottoms.

Forests are complex ecosystems that are home to many plants and animals, such as the black stork, of which only a dozen pairs have been recorded in Luxembourg.

By occupying a third of the territory, forest habitats mark our landscapes and their multifunctionality plays an essential role for the country. Forests are particularly important in the fight against global warming by fixing CO² and releasing oxygen.

Forests are also places of soil restoration if they are not overexploited. They protect against certain natural risks (floods, drought, desertification) and are elements of ecological resilience.

The Hëllef fir d'Natur Foundation's priority is the protection and rehabilitation of a natural and resilient forest ecosystem, rich in biodiversity.

Make a donation to plant forests



*By bank transfer (Com : 40Joer/forets)
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*Forest on
Ardennes slope*



*Alluvial forest along the
Trèterbaach river.*



*In the forest, mushrooms with their
mycelium play an essential role in
the exchange of food and information
between trees.*


Planting of a mixed hardwood forest in Dasbourg-Pont to replace the ravaged spruce trees.



Removal of spruce trees affected by bark beetle in the Rossmillen reserve in Binsfeld.

For years, the foundation has been committed to transforming spruce monocultures into natural mixed species forests, better adapted to ecological sectors and richer in biodiversity. Global warming, which favors the development of the bark beetle, which ravages spruce trees, has confirmed the importance of these plantations and the orientation towards more resilient forests.

The Hëllef fir d'Natur Foundation celebrates every year on March 21, together with the Administration of Nature and Forests, the International Day of Forests, which allows to raise awareness and communicate on the importance of preserving and restoring forest ecosystems for mankind and his planet.

An aerial photograph of a lush wetland landscape. A winding, muddy-brown river flows through the center of the frame, surrounded by dense, green vegetation. The vegetation includes various types of trees and shrubs, some with yellowish-green foliage. The overall scene is a vibrant, natural environment.

Cornelysmillen (Basbellain) is the Foundation's largest single-section nature reserve of high ecological value with 73.96 hectares. It is home to the beaver, among other species.

WETLANDS



The European beaver was considered extinct in Luxembourg since the 19th century. The efforts of the Foundation for the preservation of wetlands have created favorable conditions for its return. Today, there are more than 80 sites occupied by beavers, who work tirelessly to restore wetlands with water reservoirs, essential to their habitat.

Wetlands are transitional spaces between land and water. They are home to a large number of plant and animal species. They are remarkable living environments because of their biological diversity. Unfortunately, they are becoming increasingly rare in Luxembourg and, as a result, the biodiversity specific to these ecosystems tends to disappear.

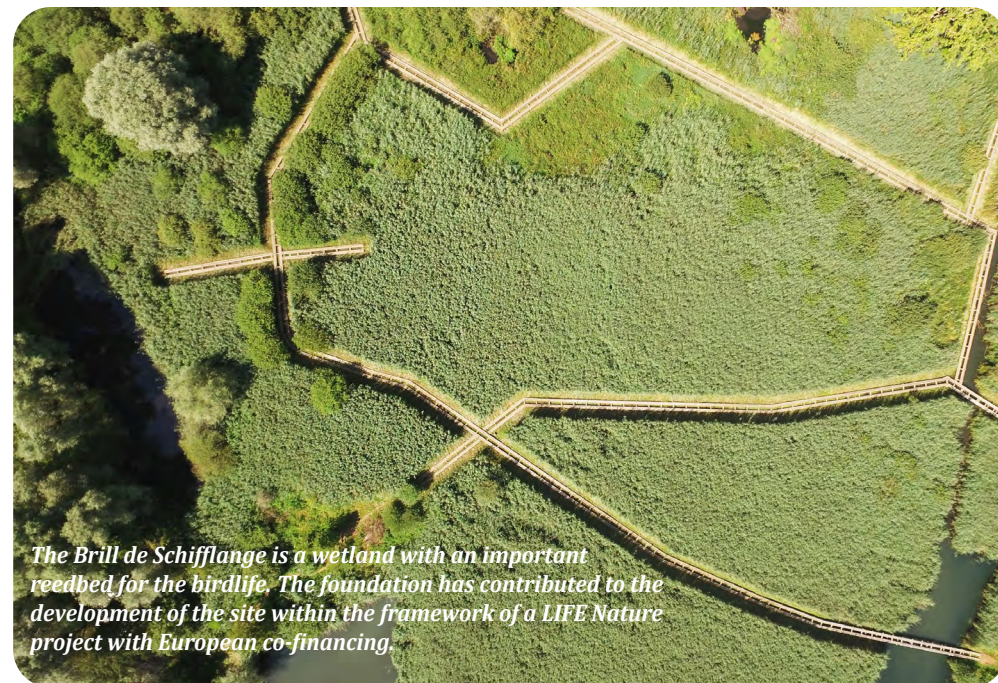
Wetlands not only play a major role in regulating water resources and preventing floods, but they are also very useful in mitigating the effects of climate change.

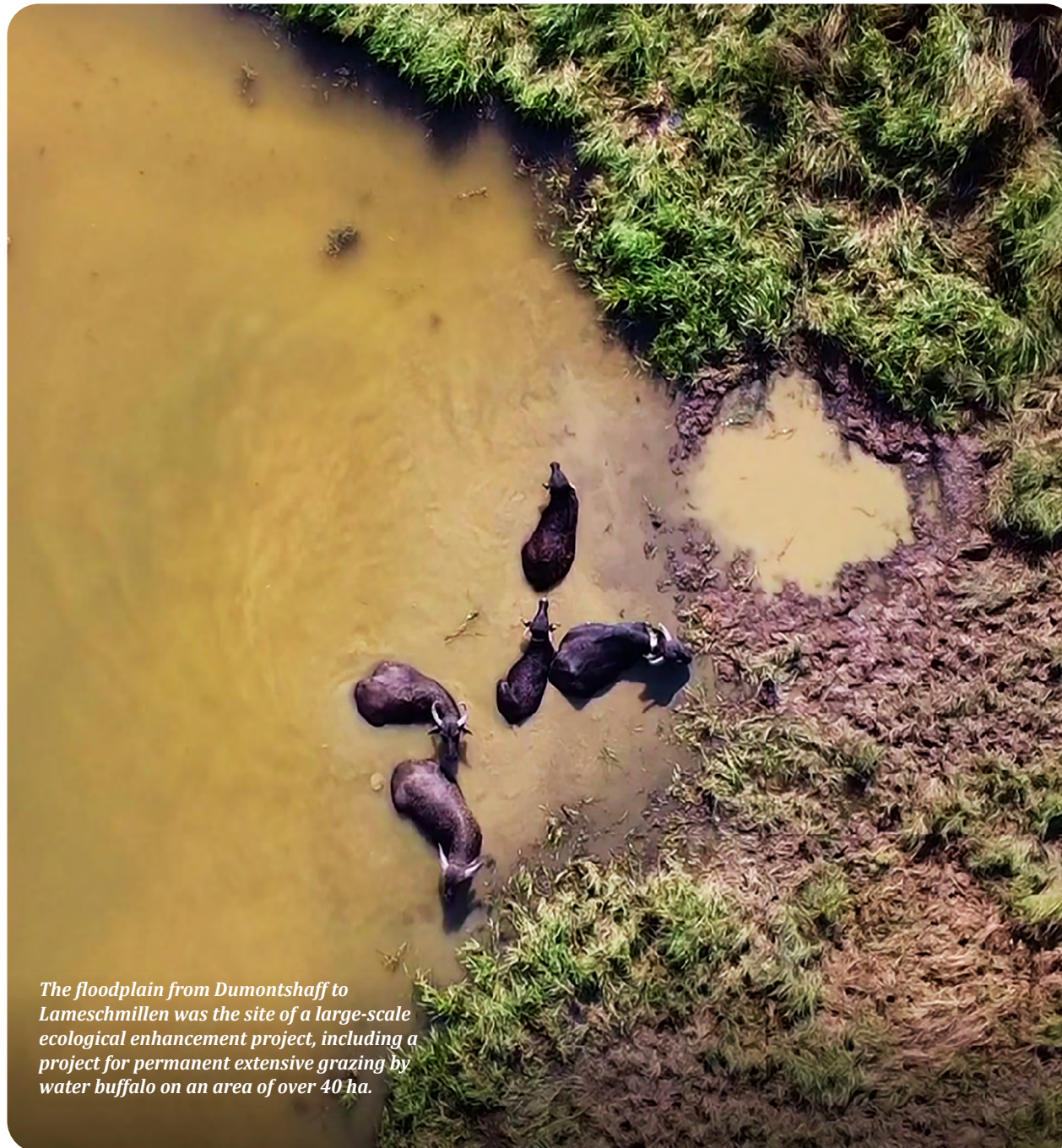
Large-scale projects to rehabilitate watercourses such as the Alzette at Dumontshaff in Schifflange or the Trëtterbaach at Breitwies or Léresmillen in the municipality of Wincrange have made it possible to valorize these sites and to restore essential wetland habitats for the white stork and the spring wagtail, for example.

Donate to wetland restoration

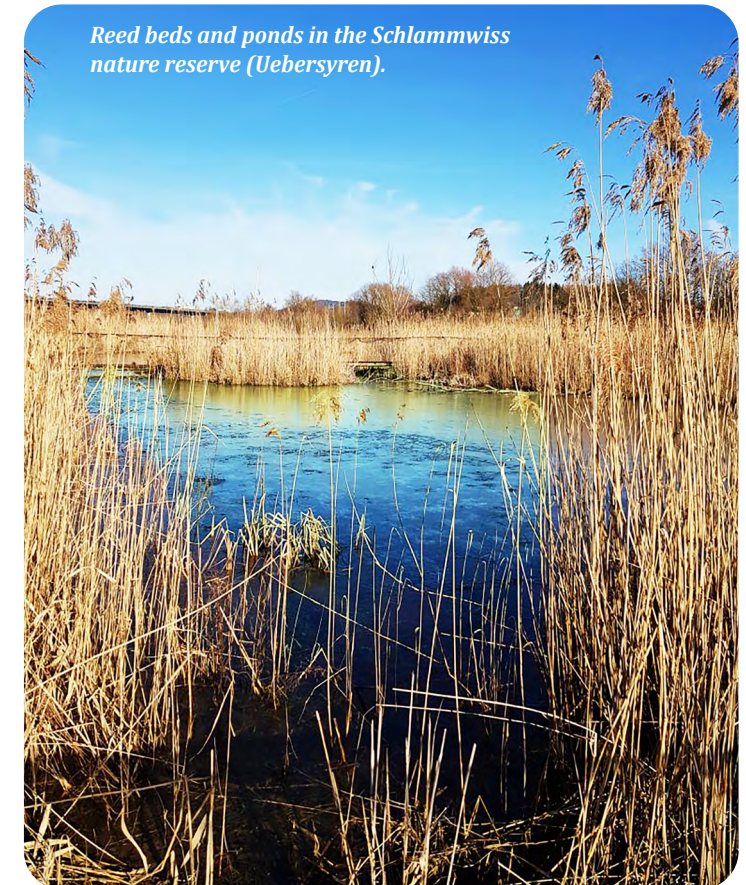


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The floodplain from Dumontshaff to Lameschmillen was the site of a large-scale ecological enhancement project, including a project for permanent extensive grazing by water buffalo on an area of over 40 ha.



Reed beds and ponds in the Schlammwiss nature reserve (Uebersyren).

During the year, the Hëllef fir d'Natur foundation organizes many "nature workcamps". From sessions to pull out invasive plants to the rehabilitation of complete sites, the Foundation needs volunteers to preserve these ecosystems on the new lands it has just acquired.

In addition, to ensure thoughtful management, the Foundation, with the help of the Administration of Nature and Forests and livestock farmers, is implementing grazing projects with cattle, sheep, goats or water buffalo better adapted to wetlands.

The Half-moon (Melanargia Galathea) is a butterfly species of lean open environments.



MEADOWS AND PASTURES

*Flower meadow with meadow sage and daisy
in the nature reserve Kanecher Wängertsberg
(Canach) before the sheep graze.*



Extensive grasslands and meadows are unamended grasslands (without the addition of fertilizers). They are biotopes with a diversified flora where numerous species of flowering plants abound.

Depending on the conditions of the environment, one can observe for example *Bromus erectus* (Erect Brome), *Onobrychis viciifolia* (Sainfoin), *Centaurea scabiosa* (Scabious Centaurea), *Salvia pratensis* (Meadow Sage), *Leucanthemum vulgare* (Daisy), *Crepis biennis* (Biennial Creeper), *Knautia arvensis* (Field Scabious), and more rarely orchids. These flowers compete with fromental (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), the large grass typical of meadows mowed once or twice a year.

These meadows are home to a wide variety of insects and butterflies such as the Half-mourning, but they are also an ideal habitat for frogs, lizards and orphans. Birds, deer, hares and other small mammals find plenty of food.

Donate to our meadows and pastures



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In collaboration with the National Museum of Natural History, the Foundation has replanted Arnica montana seedlings on more than a dozen different sites, including the Conzefenn site in Weiswampach.



Spring Wagtail (Motacilla flava) is a typical bird of open to semi-open areas, often found in grazed wetlands where it hunts insects.



The common vole (Microtus arvalis)





Mowing a wetland in the Ardennes with a PistenBully.



Extensive grazing of the orchard with Drenthe sheep in the nature reserve Weimericht / Duelen (Junglinster)



Mowing of a wetland

Once the majority, this type of grassland is becoming increasingly rare. Due to fertilization and intensive mowing, many species are disappearing and biodiversity is diminishing.

In order to preserve these specific environments, the Foundation has set up with the Weber sheepfold in Lieler, a plan of itinerant grazing on 72 sites of the Foundation, more than 100 ha of wetlands and dry grasslands. This type of grazing is characterized by the annual passage of a large flock of sheep (300-400 animals) over a short period of time, usually once or twice a season.

Extensive grazing with cattle is done within the framework of biodiversity contracts proposed by the Ministry of the Environment. It is characterized by a low density of animals per hectare. Depending on the type of habitat, it is sometimes necessary to use appropriate agricultural machinery or to intervene moto-manually with brush cutters or shredders.

DONATE TODAY FOR THE
NATURE OF TOMORROW



MAKE A DONATION TO THE FOUNDATION

Since 1982, the Fondation Hëllef fir d'Natur de natur&ëmwelt is at the service of nature and biodiversity in Luxembourg.

By making a donation to the Foundation, you can concretely participate in the conservation of nature and thus preserve the biodiversity, flora and fauna in Luxembourg.

Supporting the Foundation is also giving us the means to manage more than 1650 ha of land with high ecological value, and to enlarge our nature reserves.

Thank you to all our donors for their support.



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© Claude Piscitelli





WE PROTECT NATURE WITH AND FOR YOU

DONATIONS OF LAND

A donation is a simple way to pass on part of your estate to the Hëllef fir d'Natur Foundation during your lifetime.

Perhaps you have a piece of land that you no longer use, or that you want to preserve?

Donate it to the Foundation. By donating your land to the Foundation, you are doing your part for nature by supporting our daily actions for the protection of endangered species, the preservation of sensitive natural environments, but also in favor of the natural heritage of Luxembourg.

In this way, you give the Foundation the means to act concretely for the preservation of natural areas.

For more information, contact us!
Phone : 29 04 04 306
Email : donation@naturemwelt.lu
Our discretion remains our priority.

BEQUESTS AND WILLS

Act today to protect nature tomorrow!

Throughout our lives, we shape our lives so that they are consistent with our values and needs. Taking stock of our lives also means thinking about the future. What is important to me? What will happen to my possessions? What traces will I leave behind?

These questions lead many people to take their share of responsibility during their lifetime and to become more involved in preserving our nature. Your estate is your legacy to future generations. If you wish, you can continue this commitment after your death by mentioning the Hëllef fir d'Natur foundation in your will.

For more information, please contact us!
Phone : 29 04 04 306
Email : donation@naturemwelt.lu
Our discretion is required.

THANK YOU TO EACH OF YOU FOR THE SUPPORT YOU GIVE US



The foundation Hëllef fir d'Natur has restored more than 65 ha of dry grassland in eastern Luxembourg.

DRY GRASSLANDS

Today, lizards are threatened! Many of their habitats such as dry grasslands and old terraces with dry stone walls have disappeared or are degraded.



The dry grasslands are natural areas included in the Natura 2000 network and registered in the European directive “Habitat Fauna Flora”. They are made up of a relatively short vegetation. Grasses, thistles and certain shrubs such as sloes are the plant formations that are most often found in these environments. These lawns appear on sloping, poor, calcareous soils that retain little water. They could be mistaken for simple wastelands but in reality these environments shelter a rich variety of fauna and flora and have an important landscape role.

A good number of orchids can be found there, in particular : Ophrys bee (Ophrys apifera), Ophrys bumblebee (Ophrys fuciflora), Fly orchid (Gymnadenia conopsea), Red epipactis (Epipactis atrorubens), Man-hanging orchid (Aceras anthropophorum), Great listeria (Listera ovata), Goat orchid (Himantoglossum hircinum), Military orchid (Orchis militaris)... and lizards, among other things, which appreciate the warmth of the soil.

*Make a donation to preserve
dry grasslands*



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Dry grasslands are rare and a natural exchange between similar environments is no longer assured. It is this exchange of seeds from one reserve to another, which is ensured by the flock of sheep, through the transport of the seeds on the wool and by the dejections.

The foundation Hëllef fir d'Natur, in its projects with European co-financing Life Orchis and Life Bats&Birds has in particular for objective to restore habitats like dry grasslands or meadows rich in flowers. These biotopes are often on poor soils and slopes abandoned by agriculture which, in the absence of grazing or mowing, are quickly colonized by scrub.

The clearing of brush, partial deforestation, followed by extensive grazing with goats or sheep allows a diversified vegetation to return, beneficial to a multitude of insects which also benefit birds and bats. Open and sunny sites are appreciated by lizards and orchids are more frequent on lean and limestone-rich soils.

In the Moselle hinterland, large areas of terraced vineyards have been abandoned and have gradually been invaded by scrub. Within the framework of the cross-border Interreg project "Dry Stone Walls", the Foundation was able to reopen terraces and restore walls, notably in the Kanecher Wéngertsbiërg nature reserve. It is also on this site that the Foundation, together with local partners from natur&ëmwelt, was able to initiate the first organic vineyard in Luxembourg in 1995.



*In the nature reserve of Ditiesbaach
(Cactus-Bongert project) the Foundation
has planted a conservation orchard of some
120 trees, with more than 60 old and local
varieties of plums and apples.*

TALL-STEMMED ORCHARDS

The little owl or owl of Athena, is one of the smallest owls. To nest, it seeks cavities in old trees, low stone walls ...



Orchards provide a comfortable habitat for a wide range of plants and animals through the combination of extensive grasslands and fruit trees.

The orchard meadow is a particularly rich agricultural environment in terms of biological diversity. It makes the transition between closed environments of forest type and very open environments: meadow, ploughing, ... Moreover, the presence of trees - in particular old trees with cavities or dead trees - and the associated agricultural practice offer a palette of very diversified habitats useful to a great number of threatened species.

The herbaceous layer on the ground and the flowering of the fruit trees provide a substantial supply of food for insects such as bees and butterflies. Many species of mammals and birds that feed on insects and worms find in the orchards not only food (fruits and insects), but also nesting and breeding places.

*Make a donation to plant
tall-stemmed orchards*



**By bank transfer (Com : 40Joer/vergers) :
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*Conservatory orchard of the
Emeschbaach reserve*



*Apple trees in bloom attract
pollinating insects.*



Pruning course for fruit trees.



*Old apple variety:
Rheinischer Bohnapfel*

For centuries, arboriculture has allowed the selection of fruit varieties for their storage quality (keeping quality), disease resistance, bearing quality (solidity and flexibility) and to develop specific functionalities (cooking, candying, cider, drying fruits).

The richness of this genetic diversity and a careful selection of these trees provides the potential to develop new varieties to fight against pests and/or climate change.

A high-stem orchard is mainly composed of old varieties. For 40 years, the Hëllef fir d'Natur foundation has been preserving, rehabilitating and creating high-stem orchards to protect biodiversity and preserve this forgotten fruit heritage.



A 4 km long trail in the nature reserve Mensder Brill (Cactus Weier) offers an insight into the world of wetlands and ponds.

PONDS AND PUDDLES



The green tree frog inflates its cheeks to amplify its call - the croak - and its song, which is important during the breeding season.

Ponds are stagnant waters of relatively small surface area, less than 10 ares in size and generally no more than 1 meter deep. Compared to their reduced water volume, they are often very rich in species.

As they frequently run dry in the summer, fish are lacking and it is the absence of these predators that allows many aquatic animals, such as amphibians, dragonflies, mollusks and others to thrive.

At the edge of the pond, the vegetation is generally composed of sedges, rushes, as well as cattails and reeds. In its depths, the plants release oxygen allowing aquatic animals to breathe and feed.

They provide water for livestock and act as a buffer to reduce runoff and soil erosion.

Make a donation for the restoration of ponds and pools



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*Nymph with the body of fire
(Pyrrhosoma nymphula)*



*Restored pond in the nature reserve
Téresmillen (Winrange)*



*New pond built in
the Alzette plain at
Dumonthaff.*



Inventories have shown that between 1962 and 1999 the total surface of ponds in Luxembourg has decreased by more than 80%. Since then, there is a strong need to reverse this trend, as this loss of habitat has led to the observation that many species that depend on these bodies of water are also at risk of disappearing.

Currently, the Foundation manages more than 200 water bodies out of a total of more than 2,700 identified for Luxembourg.

In response to the loss of these biotopes, the Hëllef fir d'Natur foundation has initiated several initiatives to preserve and re-establish ponds throughout the country.

To densify the network of ponds and ponds and to contribute to improving the conservation status of many threatened species, the Foundation has committed to create more than 50 new water bodies from 2018. The strategy of creating these habitats contributes to achieving the objectives defined by the "National Plan for the Protection of Nature" of the Ministry of Environment.

For bats, hedges and tree lines, while providing a suitable hunting ground with food resources, are necessary for their orientation.



TREES AND HEDGES



Lonely tree in the morning mist of the Eislek in the middle of a meadow.



The hedgehog is rare!



The Eurasian Squirrel (Sciurus vulgaris)

These landscape structures are valuable habitats that offer a wide variety of conditions in a small area. They are often essential islands for ecological corridors.

Hedgerows, solitary trees and copses offer wildlife the opportunity to hide and nest. Flowers are vital for pollinating insects and ripe fruit is an important part of their diet to get through the winter. In addition, the foliage of these structures also provides a special microclimate for livestock by protecting them from wind and rain and providing shade.

It is important to preserve and create new structures to strengthen the ecological network, on which the populations of many species in rural areas depend. The Hëllef fir d'Natur foundation is working to plant hedges and solitary trees (with the action "A Bam an d'Gewan") to fight against the continuous loss of these biotopes in our agriculturally marked landscapes.

Make a donation to plant solitary trees and hedges



*By bank transfer (Com : 40Joer/haies) :
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Thanks to your donations, the Foundation was able to purchase the Kalborn Mill and rehabilitate it. Over the years, the more than 200-year-old mill has found a new function in the field of nature conservation with its water discovery center and pearl mussel breeding station.

Merci

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