

Contact

Please contact us if you like to learn more about the natural habitats, the plant and animal species as well as the conservation actions.

Visit our homepage: www.villewaelder.de

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Ministerium für Klimaschutz, Umwelt,
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des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen



Ville Forests LIFE Forests-waterworlds



LIFE+ for oak forests

The oak-hornbeam forests on hydromorphic soils are natural habitats of European importance. The countries of the European Union have committed to preserve them for future generations. For this purpose, nature conservation projects are promoted by the European Nature Conservation Fund LIFE.

The Forestry Commission of North Rhine-Westphalia – represented by the Regional Forest Office Rhine-Sieg-Erft - puts this LIFE+-project into action together with its partner, the Biological Station Bonn / Rhine-Erft. The project budget amounts to 3.3 million Euro and is equally funded by the European Union and the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia.



A very special oak forest

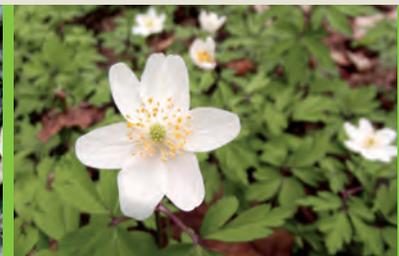
The Natura2000 nature protection areas in the Ville-forests between Cologne and Bonn present a forest habitat of European importance: the oak-hornbeam-forests on hydromorphic soils.

These forests grow on temporary waterlogged soils. Because of an impermeable layer of clay in the sub-soil they fill up with water during winter, while they are mainly dry in summer. On these soils the native pedunculate oak, hornbeam and small-leaved lime form impressive old-growth mixed forests with up to 300-year-old oak-trees. They are habitats for many rare and threatened species such as middle spotted woodpecker, Bechstein's bat and stag beetle.

... more than a forest

The Ville-forests are particularly diverse because of many small "islands" in the forest. There are colourful forest meadows including rare and threatened plant species like arnica, devil's-bit scabious and small lousewort.

As a result of the stagnant moisture soils, there are troughs and ponds in the Ville-Forests called 'Maare'. They offer an important basis of life for rare amphibian species like agile frog and great crested newt and for many aquatic organisms.



Our objectives

Long-term protection of biotope wood

Within the next five years all habitat trees older than 100 years will be mapped and marked. They will remain in the forests to grow age-old and will be habitats for bats, woodpeckers and saproxylic beetles.

Restoration of the water balance

The natural water balance of the forests will be restored to improve the living conditions for the oaks.

Enlargement and connection of natural forest habitats

Spruce and pine forests will be converted into natural forest habitats by planting oak and beech.

Protection of amphibians

New ponds will be established to connect the existing spawning waters.

Restoration of species-rich forest meadows

Colourful and floriferous forest meadows will be restored as habitats for endangered plants and as hunting grounds for bats and woodpeckers.