

EU promotes the Biological Station's conservation activities

„Orsoyer Rheinbogen („Orsoy Rhine bend“) in the bird reserve „Unterer Niederrhein“, this is the name of a new large-scale EU conservation project, begun under the Kreis Wesel biological station's management.

The floodplain outside the dyke to the north-east of the town of Rheinberg is part of one of the most important breeding, wintering and resting areas for many thousand water birds in western Europe.



Bird reserve „Unterer Niederrhein“, this term covers about 25.000 hectares of meadows, pastures, meres, lakes, bushes, meadows and riparian woods – in short, a multitude of different habitats, which ensure the survival of diverse lifeforms. Over the next four and a half years, our LIFE+-project will focus on a small part of this enormous area.

Life+ and Natura 2000

Life+ is an EU incentive program to finance conservation measures in areas within the network of sites protected by Natura 2000. These include areas protected by the EU habitats directive and others covered by the birds directive. Our project's target area, the Orsoyer Rheinbogen, is subject to both of these.

The measures planned for the course of the project are intended to help preserve Europe's biodiversity for future generations according to the goals of Life+.

Project data

Title:

Orsoyer Rheinbogen im Vogelschutzgebiet
Unterer Niederrhein
LIFE 12 NAT/DE/000133

Duration: October 1, 2013 to March 31, 2018

A project by:



Supported by:



Ministerium für Klimaschutz, Umwelt,
Landwirtschaft, Natur- und Verbraucherschutz
des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen



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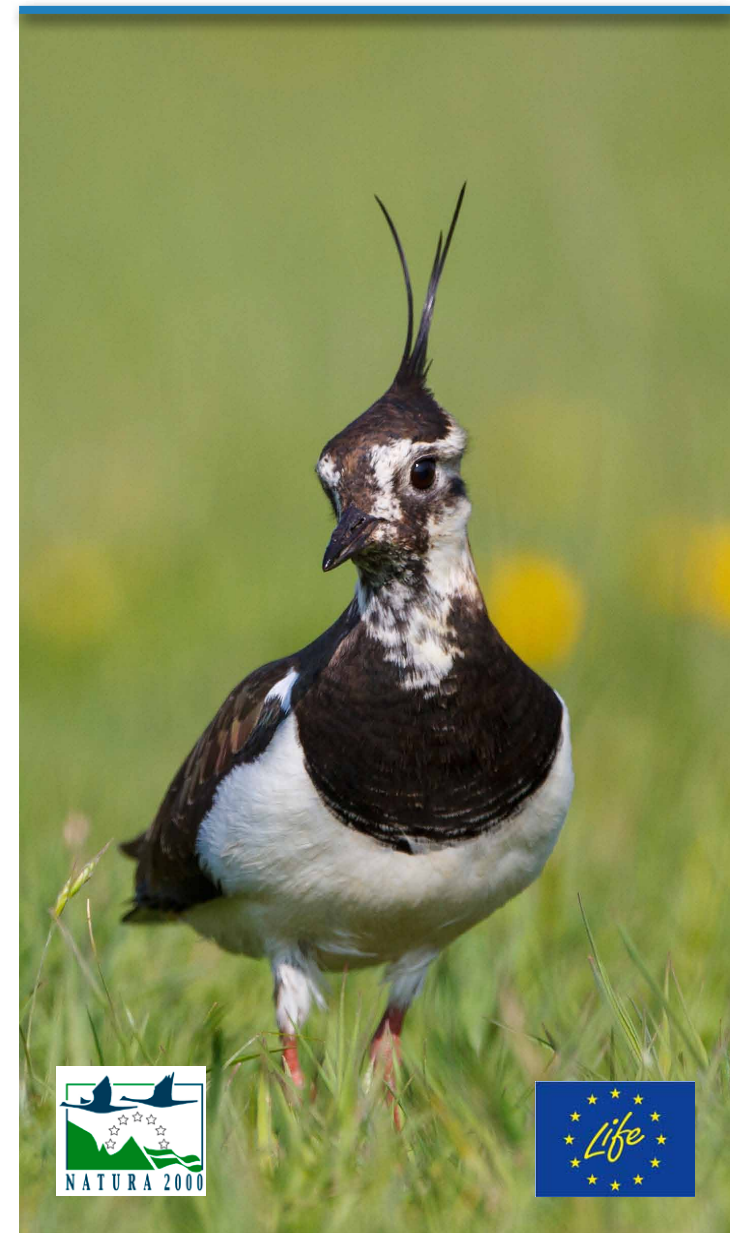
Further details about the project and the state of its realization as well as event announcements may be found on the project's homepage. You can also order the half-yearly project newsletter here.

www.orsoyer-rheinbogen.de



Orsoyer Rheinbogen

in the bird reserve „Unterer Niederrhein“



The project area

The area targeted by this project lies in western North Rhine-Westphalia, between the Ruhr valley and the Dutch border and encompasses 397 hectares. With grassland, vernal pools and riparian woodland all formed by the Rhine, the Orsoyer Rheinbogen offers a habitat to numerous plants and animals.

The presence of rare species such as redshank, black-tailed godwit, beaver, crested newt and bedstraw boomrape led to the area being declared a special area of conservation of Europe-wide relevance. As a part of the EU bird reserve „Unterer Niederrhein“, it is – among other things – a vital stop for long-distance migrants such as Arctic geese, water birds and waders. Lowland hay meadows, displaying a colourful variety of flowers and endangered in North Rhine-Westphalia, occur here in the form of sage-oat grass meadows.



The aims

The sinking water table as a consequence of the Rhine eroding its bed, along with ubiquitous intensification of agriculture has decreased the floodplain habitats' quality almost everywhere in the Lower Rhine region, causing them to dry out and their structure to be lost. We hope to recreate the floodplains' initial humidity and increase their mosaic structure. The creation of shallow pools and meres on the one hand and the right choice of agricultural methods on the other hand will play an important role.



The intended measures centre around grassland birds and amphibians of Europe-wide importance whose local populations are to be stabilized and increased in the target area.

We will also focus on the development of lowland hay meadows which owe their status as special areas of conservation to species such as small burnet, field scabious, meadow sage.



Informing the public about this unique Natura 2000 landscape and conveying an understanding of the protection targets is also highly important to us.

The measures

Between 2014 and 2018 we hope to achieve the project's aims by means of the following measures.

- Creation of shallow pools
- Creation of meres with open banks and humid
- perennial growth
- Introduction of extensive grazing, beneficial to grassland birds
- Increase of the floodplain's local habitat diversity through wood pastures
- Development and optimisation of lowland hay meadows at two appropriate locations
- land acquisition
- Excursions, newsletters, information boards and our homepage

