



R.P. Lieven De Schampheleere • Coxiestraat 11 • 2800 Mechelen © Wim Dierckx, Shutterstock.com, Hugo Willocx, EuroGeographics for the administrative boundaries



LIFE GREEN VALLEYS

LIFE Green Valleys is a LIFE project close to Brussels. A second region is situated in the western part of Poland. The main targets of the project are the restoration of wet habitats (6510, 7230) and woodlands (91E0*, 9160); finding useful solutions for the biomass created by the management of the nature reserves; involving stakeholders and improve tourist and recreation facilities.

The European Commission has granted 5 million euros to the LIFE nature restoration project “Green Valleys”. The project will be carried out over the next 7 years by a team of local volunteers, supported by professionals.

The Green Valley is the name of the nature project grouping the various nature reserves in the network of small river valleys between Leuven, Mechelen and Brussels. One of the main goals of the project is to connect these scattered reserves, and create one large robust nature area.



Another goal of the project is the restoration of groundwater-fed haymeadows in the nature reserves so that rare orchids, already 9 species in total, can recover. These orchids are dependent upon the groundwater rich in lime surfacing in the valleys. Having this many wild

orchid species in one place is unique in Flanders and even special on a European level.

For this European nature project, Natuurpunt works together with Natuurinvest, the Agency for Nature and Forest, several municipalities and local farmers. There is also a collaboration with a Polish nature organization: Klub Przyrodników. This partner has an extensive expertise with this type of nature restoration and the conversion of left-over biomass resulting from nature management into reusable products such as paper, compost, animal feed or bio-ethanol.



THIS FLYER IS PRINTED ON PAPER MADE FROM GRASS FROM OUR OWN NATURE RESERVES.

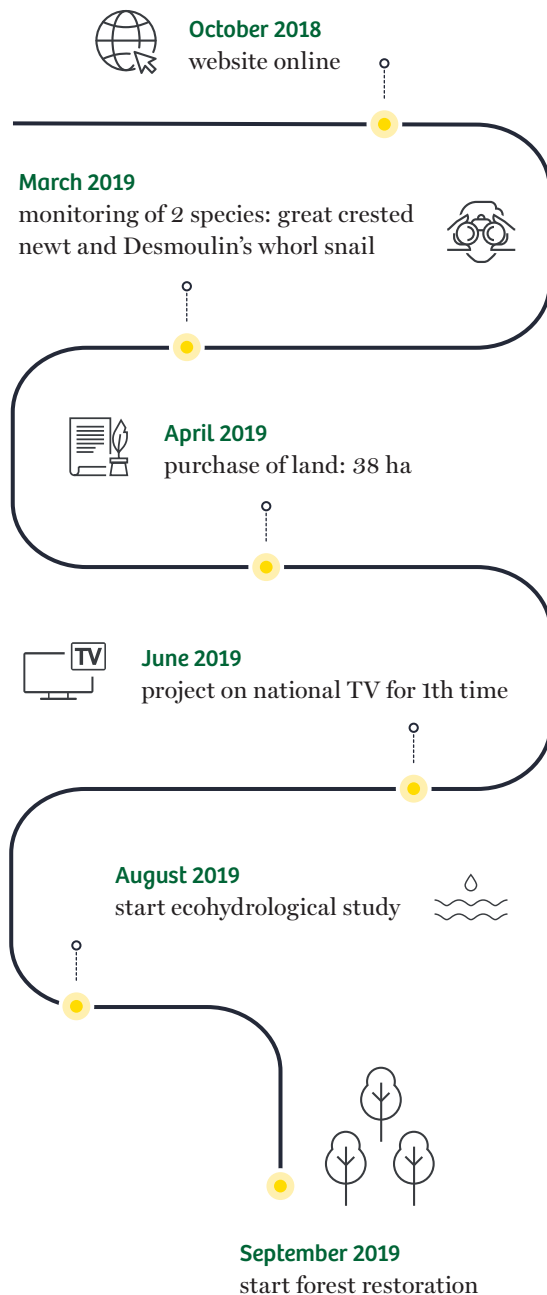
Partners

Klub (Polish nature conservation organisation)
ANB (Administration of nature and forest, Flemish government)
Natuurinvest

AGENTSCHAP
NATUUR & BOS



TIMELINE



TO DO



Purchase 56 ha of land



Multi-stakeholder approach



Use of biomass



85 ha restored forest
(91E0*, 9160 and 9120)



110 ha restored wet open
habitats (6510, 6430, 6410, 7230)



3 ha restored aquatic habitats (3140)



1,5 ha restored 6230*



Installing trail with benches



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In the Floordambos, sound recordings revealed the presence of a hunting lesser horseshoe bat. This bat has not been observed in Flanders for nearly 45 years. Hence it was considered extinct. The observation was made during the implementation of the preparatory actions of the LIFE project.

The lesser horseshoe bat, an Annex II species, was widespread before the World War II. The last observation in Flanders dates from 1975. Measuring only 3.5-4.5 cm, it is one of the smallest bats in Europe. Distances travelled for feeding are on average less than 2.5km from the roost.

It prefers a mosaic of structure-rich deciduous forest and meadows as hunting ground. These are also the habitats targeted by LIFE Green Valleys.

In 2018, researchers were also able to determine the presence of Geoffroy's bat (another Annex II species) in the same area.

These nature reserves are part of the Natura 2000-network of European important nature reserves and receive financial support of the LIFE-fund of the European Union.

