



Hyphen 71

News from the Office

Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux
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We are proud of ...

Dirk Sielmann

President of the International Office du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux

President of the German allotment federation (BDG)



Dirk Sielmann

Dear allotment gardeners

If you carefully read this edition of the "Hyphen", you will very often come across the word "pride". In the following articles the members of the "Office International" present some aspects of their work in and for allotment gardens. The associations, but especially the allotment gardeners can be particularly proud of the achievements described! Once more it is becoming clear that the allotment gardening movement is very complex and means more than "just" gardening and growing fruit and vegetables. In many relevant areas the organised allotment gardening movement does a lot of good for society.

The allotment and leisure gardening sector connects and promotes cohesion in society. Allotment gardeners of different ages, with diverse professional backgrounds and colourful family constellations come together in the allotment gardens to pursue a common hobby.

The allotment gardening movement is integrative. People from all nations of the world come together in the allotment garden associations. The allotment garden associations seem like a microcosm of the world – with all the joys, but sometimes also with the difficulties, that come with it. This common hobby helps to get to know each other, to show consideration for each other, to learn from each other and, little by little, to develop respect for each other.

The allotment and leisure garden sector has built up its expertise over many decades, which has also been passed on to its members for decades. For this purpose, the member federations continuously organise training courses, both by voluntary members and by professionals.

The allotment garden movement is the organised protection of biodiversity. The very existence of allotment garden sites means biodiversity. The topic is increasingly promoted by the

member federations: Nature-oriented gardening has become part of competitions, parts of the allotment garden sites are additionally designed to be insect-friendly. Older allotments have become true gene pools for old fruit species and plants.

The allotment gardening movement contributes to keeping people healthy in body and soul. Staying in the fresh air and physical activity are proven to be beneficial to our health. The regular meetings on the sites have a stabilising effect on the mental state of the people. For the older allotment gardeners, the allotment garden is a guarantee for sociability and the best remedy against loneliness in old age.

The list of the outstanding achievements of the allotment garden movement presented in this issue and in the two next ones*, could easily be extended. However, the aspects already described are reason enough to be proud of the work in the allotment garden associations. The allotment and leisure garden movement has a bright future – which is again underlined in the Corona pandemic – and of that I am proud!

* In Hyphen №72 the achievements in Denmark, Germany, Great-Britain, Japan, Norway and the Netherlands will be presented. In Hyphen №73 the achievements in Austria, Finland, France, Luxembourg and Sweden.

IN MEMORIAM



Lisa VASAMA

All those who knew her were looking forward to meet Lisa VASAMA at the occasion of the planned study session in Helsinki in August 2020.

First, the study session had to be cancelled due to the Corona Crisis and then, much worse, we learned on May 4th that Lisa VASAMA had passed away on May 3rd at the age of 80.

Lisa VASAMA was president of the Finnish federation from 2001 until 2009. She worked hard for the federation, visited many sites throughout the country and wrote many interesting leading articles for the Finnish magazine.

For her the word INTERNATIONAL was also always written in capital letters.

During her presidency she invested many efforts into establishing contacts with the Russian allotment gardeners around St. Petersburg. During that time the Finnish federation advised them under the patronage of the Finnish Ministry of Environment.

During all these years she also represented the Finnish federation in the International Office and was appreciated as a likeable delegate.

She was convinced of the importance of our international movement for the Finnish allotment gardeners and put much effort into explaining the Finnish situation to the other national delegates.

Proudly she showed me the allotment sites in Helsinki and organised for me a meeting with allotment gardeners in the high North.

A general assembly was organised in Helsinki in June 2005 and already at that time the idea of a bigger international event in Finland was born.

Now we were to reach that aim. A study session was planned for August 2020 in Helsinki and Lisa would have been proud of the commitment of the Finnish members to organise this meeting. However, the health situation throughout Europe and the sad event in May did not allow this anymore.

Lisa, we will continue your work, we will not forget your efforts, your smile and we will organise an international meeting in Finland.

We express our sincere condolences to both your family and the Finnish allotment family.

Belgium: The allotment gardeners and some of their realisations

We are proud of our magazine!

Daan Van DEN VIJVER

former Project manager



2013

Our first magazine was published in 1930. Since then we have been publishing 11 à 12 magazines per year. Only during WWII there were fewer magazines due to a paper shortage.

The original name of our magazine was "De Volkstuin"(The allotment).

The magazine gave hints and tips on how to grow crops.

Today we publish 11 magazines a year filled with tips and information about gardening. The subjects are, however, broader. Besides allotments and vegetables we talk about private

gardens, ornamental gardens and ecological gardening. Our organisation's mission is to promote garden pleasure for allotment gardeners and private gardeners. Next to all the gardening it is still a magazine from our association. Thus we talk about the coming and ongoing projects in our

1941



1950



1953



organisation as well. Throughout the years we have broadened our reader's public.

In the last 5 years we had a total of 97 writers. The magazine consists of 32 pages. We've got some fixed articles and some variable articles. Garden activities for the vegetable, the fruit and the ornamental garden are fixed. The same goes for our children's corner, flower arranging and plagues and dis-

eases. Each article addresses problems or tasks for the following month. This way all gardeners can prepare themselves. On average there are 15-20 articles per magazine.

Almost all of our articles are written by volunteers. School teachers, professors, garden contractors, but also experienced leisure gardeners. There is a working group lead by the auditor. They discuss the pictures, lay-out and

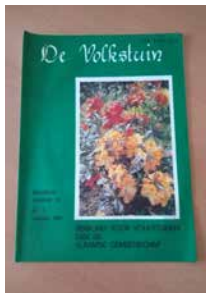


1974



subjects that will be treated in the following year. In 2017 they ordered an enquiry to evaluate the current magazine. Based on the feedback they received they try to make the magazine even more appealing than before. The biggest challenge is to address a broad public, from experienced gardeners to layman, young and old, families living in the city and in the countryside.

1986



As an organisation we cannot thank and applaud these volunteers enough. They put their heart and soul into this magazine. They create a professional magazine worth reading every month!

2010



Belgium: We are proud of our new policy plan

Daan VAN DEN VIJVER

former Project manager

We are currently working on a new policy plan for the following five years from 2021-2025. This plan contains our future goals and projects. We try to anticipate future events and possible social challenges, in order to make our organisation future proof.

In July 2019 we were almost ready. The content was finished and we only had to create a financial plan and write all of it down in a useable document. We created a working team of volunteers and found an external coach for the preparations.

Together we refreshed our mission, gathered data and information, researched the needs of our society, obligations towards the government and wrote down our future goals. These fourteen volunteers and professionals already spent over 12 full days in meetings and in preparations from December 2018 until July 2019.

We are more than proud to have such driven volunteers!

Here's our top three prestigious goals:

1. Create trainings for volunteers who will support our local clubs.
2. Address topical and social challenges through campaigns, events and projects.
3. Via ecological trends and by cooperating with others we focus on more urban areas.

Last but not least, only just not top three worthy, but not any lesser, is our goal to keep investing in our international collaboration in the international allotment movement.

N. B. Since the writing of this article, the strategy plan has been finalised, deposited with the authorities and has already received a positive answer. This ensures Tuinhier to get funding over the next five years.

We are proud of our volunteers and the voluntary sector in Belgium

Daan VAN DEN VIJVER

former Project manager



In Belgium we have a very strong and large voluntary sector. Here are some numbers from 2018 to prove that! 55% of all people living in Flanders are active in at least one organisation. They can choose between 45.000 registered associations. In total there are 1.800.000 volunteers in Belgium. Which is an equivalent of 19,4% of our entire population older than 15 years. Can you imagine the numbers if we counted the unregistered associations as well?

Together the associations organise more than 2 million activities per year which is 6000 per day! On average a volunteer spends 190 hours volunteering per year. They perform the work of approximately 130.000 full timers.

Working as a volunteer has changed over the years. In the past most people joined an organisation and stayed there for life. Some people still do that and form the backbone of the lasting associations. Recently a new kind of volunteer has appeared: The project volunteer, who wants to help for a short period in time. They are very task orientated and want to learn from the experience. Ideology is more important for them. We are happy to welcome both. Luckily in Belgium the idea still lives that volunteering is fun and that it is an obligation free environment where people can learn and develop themselves.

We are proud to be part of this voluntary life with our association. We have 1502 board volunteers on our 210 local boards. Next to those volunteers we have many more that help out on

activities. We have no exact number of those volunteers. Together our local boards organise nearly 600 workshops and countless more activities like open garden shows, fairs, trips and group purchases.

Tuinhier heavily relies on its volunteers. They founded our organisation in 1896 and still keep it running. Only since 2011 we got professional support from paid employers. Today we've got a three head strong team of professional employees, so the organisation is still in the caring hands of our volunteers as we like to keep it.

We wish to express our greatest thanks to all the volunteers willing to work for our organisation and make sure all members have fun in their gardens.



Switzerland: The Swiss allotment federation is proud of the commitment of its members for the protection of nature and environment

The allotment gardeners from the German speaking part of Switzerland: Presentation of an example to imitate: Coexistence of nature and culture

Theres Székely, agro ecologist and member of the Swiss allotment federation

Also in Switzerland recent studies show that family gardens often contain a surprisingly rich diversity of plant and animal species. This is also astonishing because family gardens are by no means undisturbed natural spaces. On the contrary, the presence of people and frequent interventions are typical.

Nevertheless, it is becoming increasingly clear that family gardens are an excellent means to contribute to prevent the alarming disappearance (even in Switzerland) of species that, until recently, were considered common. The Wehrenbach allotment site in the middle of the city of Zurich is an example of why this is so and what kind of nature promotion is promising on allotment garden sites.

The Wehrenbach allotment site in Zurich

Here the harmonious coexistence of family garden culture has been around for a long time.

The approximately one hundred plots of this allotment site are situated above a wooded and largely natural torrent ravine. In the neighbourhood there are green and reed areas which have been extensively cultivated for a long time.

On the site itself there are several parts which are too steep for gardening. Natural meadows have been growing here since time immemorial, some of which are covered with fruit

Foto1: The allotment site Wehrenbach in Zurich @Theres Székely



1



2

trees. They are also too steep for any lawnmower and were, therefore, for decades cut by some tenants with a scythe. For some years now a scythe group from the neighbourhood has been taking care of the cutting of these meadows.

Part of the overall picture is also a certain tolerance shown by the site management board towards individual tenants, who prefer a more natural look to the always rigorously weeded one. As a whole, the site makes a harmonious and natural impression without appearing “scruffy”.

A lucky chance for nature

Throughout the entire vegetation period, the steep meadows catch the eye, where grasses and meadow flowers compete with each other. Many people stop enchanted at this rare sight. If you look and listen carefully, you will discover all kinds of insects.

Observing tenants also know that the allotment site has subtenants that are hardly seen elsewhere. Thanks to many years of nature-friendly gardening, species that have otherwise become rare still live here, such as fireflies, yellow-bellied toads, fire salamanders, common toads and sand lizards.

In cooperation with the association “Natur im Siedlungsraum (NimS)”, (nature in the residential area), which is linked to the scythe group, the occurrence of sand lizards and yellow-bellied toads was investigated in 2019. Both species are on the Red List in Switzerland.

In the same year, a student of environmental engineering at the Zurich High School of Applied Sciences searched the site for wild bees for his bachelor thesis – and found 111 species! That is almost a fifth of the species known in Switzerland. About half of the species found are rare or endangered, and some of them have so far only been found here in Zurich. Some

of them were even thought to have already disappeared.

Promoting rare species

After all these positive findings, wild bees, sand lizards and yellow-bellied toads are now to be specifically promoted on the allotment site.

In March 2020 a first action day for tenants took place, with the focus on wild bees. The allotment gardeners were not stopped in their project by the corona measures, which had just been decreed. The programme was simply adapted accordingly:

- A lovingly designed exhibition provided comprehensive information about the whole project
- Wild bee food: seedlings of native flowering perennials and woody plants for self-service, sponsored by the lessor “Grün Stadt Zürich”.
- Various soil substrates for self-service
- Plant descriptions and planting instructions
- Building instructions for nesting places, hiding places and small ponds

The environment and nature scientists together with the student at the High School of Applied Sciences in Zurich, who studied the above-mentioned species on the site, created a favourable area for wild bees on a meadow slope. Here you can see what various useful elements look like and this makes it easier for interest-



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Foto 2: The scythe group on the Wehrenbach allotment site. The cutting with a scythe is fun and is the nicest and most animal friendly method of meadow care

Foto 3: *Hesperia comma* and common on butterfly blue (*scobiosa columbaria*) @Christine Dobler Gross

Foto 4: Yellow bellied toad @AdobeStock

Foto 5: Couple of sand lizards @Mandes Rupp, wikimedia

Foto 6: Bee on gold varnish @Christine Dobler Gross



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11

ed tenants to reproduce them on their own plots.

The planned wild bee lecture by the bachelor student and beneficial actions for yellow-bellied toads and sand lizards will be organised as soon as circumstances will make it a little easier for everyone!

The potential of family gardens

So what makes family gardens an attractive living space? In many ways they resemble the small-scale traditional agriculture that has practically disappeared today and which was accompanied by a rich biodiversity.

On family garden sites, many tenants with different preferences work close together. The result thereof is a great variety of crops, perennials, woody plants, wild plants and weeds, and thus also a wide variety of flower species, spread throughout the season. Open and densely overgrown areas alternate. There are all kinds of compost heaps, paths, small walls, piles of branches and stones, small biotopes and also the extremely important “forgotten” corners and edges – these are all valuable niches for nature.

In addition, family garden sites usually cover large areas and form, as a whole, important green spaces in the residential area. The use of pesticides, which is prohibited in more and more places, and the call for a near-natural care also help to ensure that insects and other animals have better living chances again.

Foto 7: Corona-Virus indications @

Theres Székely

Foto 8: Part of the exhibition @Theres

Székely

Foto 9: Native plants @Theres Székely

Foto 10: Soil substrates @Theres Székely

Foto 11: Creation of a support area for wild bees @Theres Székely

Foto 12: Cultures, perennials, woody plants, wild plants, paths, walls, open spaces... Garden area on the site of Wehrenbach, Zurich



12

The project is the result of a cooperation between the family garden association, practical nature conservation, applied research and city administration.

Imitation desired!

- “Obvious”: Promoting species that are still present in the immediate vicinity.
- Start with the insects: many of them are mobile due to their ability to fly and can so migrate from greater distances. To attract them, plant suitable native plants: they provide nectar, pollen and leaf food for insects and their larvae.
- It is not necessary to include the whole allotment site in the project: every little corner is valuable!
- A high insect population and suitable hiding places can soon attract other species such as birds, amphibians or reptiles having insects on their menu. They make themselves useful by exterminating pests.
- Without a nature-friendly care it does not work! “Modern” devices such as thread mowers or infrared burners chop up or burn animals hidden in the herb layer. Instead, work with scythe and sickle (which is also more fun).



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17



18

Insects and their offspring must also be able to survive in autumn and winter. Native plants should, therefore, be left standing over the winter, including the seed heads. Only “clean up” around May, when it is warm again. Do not cut meadows too late in autumn.

Also have a look at <https://natur-im-siedlungsraum.ch/2019/02/25/familiengarten-wehrenbach/>

Foto 13: Wild bees on thistle @Theres Székely

Foto 14: Caterpillar of a machaon butterfly @Theres Székely

Foto 15: Nest of rufous-jacamar @Onegin, wikimedia

Foto 16: Common toad @Jerzy Strzelecki, wikimedia

Foto 17: Blind worm @Kristian Peters, wikimedia

Foto 18: The project is the result of an application by the family garden association of practical nature conservation, applied research and a cooperation with the city administration. @Ruth Bossardt, Grün Stadt Zürich

The allotment gardeners in the Romandie: a great diversity

Text and pictures by Simone Collet

editor of the monthly magazine: Gartenfreund/jardin vivant



La Touvière

In the Southwest of Switzerland, situated in the French speaking part, the dynamic gardeners of the Romandie, cultivate the earth according to the strict principles of a sustainable development and show a remarkable diversity.

First some quotations:

Jean-Marie Brodard, president of the Lausanne allotment garden association (8 sites) stated:

We are proud of our gardens ...

- Stop the pesticides! We request a manual or thermal weeding, as well as organic fertilisers for a natural garden in our association.
- Moreover, we do not consider often enough, that nature offers us all the tools to garden ecologically. Plant manure, horse manure, seaweed etc. are all 100 % natural fertilisers that are an excellent alternative to chemical products.

Jean-Paul Gygli, president of the Geneva allotment federation (25 sites) said:

We are proud of our gardens ...

because they bring us varied, healthy and tasty vegetables.

Discover now the presentation of the allotment gardens we are so proud of by starting with their manifold diversity.

The diversity of the gardeners' countries of origin, then the diversity of the plant species that they have brought from their countries of origin. Then the diversity of the plots: those that are created on grounds subtracted to speculation are normally smaller than the ancient plots created a long time ago.

Let us not forget the diversity of the climate, varying according to altitude, orientation and topography. Many sites are created near the border of the Lake Lemman where they benefit from the weather conditions that resemble more and more to those of the South of France, because of the quick climate change. On those plots you find grapes, kiwis, sweet potatoes and persimmons which grow next to figs and other plants with exotic origins which find all the necessary favourable conditions for their development in our country thanks to the care of the gardeners. Be they situated in lowlands or in hilly regions, the allotment gardens constitute a real enriching factor for the biodiversity in the Romandie.

To all this we have to add the precious diversity of food products coming

from the allotment garden considering the proximity, the freshness and the health of the products harvested next to us, neither using long transport nor problematic supplements. The inhabitants were not mistaken: In this time of the Corona crisis where one noticed the fear of food scarcity facing our country, the waiting lists of all our areas in the Romandie have been seriously lengthened by the arrival of candidatures of citizens, who wanted to get natural products.

Everywhere gardens are in demand!

On average twenty percent of plots are currently missing in order to satisfy the needs of the population, which has suddenly become aware of the proven value of a kitchen garden. But where can one find these additional spaces, which are so strongly requested, when constructions and infrastructure rapidly devour the landscape? Estate agents, with much power, exercise a persistent pressure on grounds situated at the periphery and even sometimes in the heart of the cities, as for example, the area of Petit Flon in Lausanne. So much profitability to which they do not wish to renounce for the safeguarding of some flowers and bean plants!

Luckily some communes have understood the importance of allotment gardens. The town of Lausanne has inscribed the durability of allotments in its regulation under the condition that no pesticides are used. Which relief for the allotment gardeners, assured to be able to continue to plant, cultivate and harvest for the coming



Petit Flon

years.

The next generation is being prepared.

The sites welcome the young generation with enthusiasm, as for example, on the site of Bois-Gentil. On our allotment sites children can play and benefit from protected playgrounds.

In the areas of Vidy, then later Vidy-Bourget after the spectacular transport of the sheds by helicopter,



(Foto UNE Boiz)(Foto Rionzi 3).

organised by the commune of Lausanne (!), an educative garden has been created. During many years the association has welcomed dozens of classes and hundreds of school-children as well as young dropouts who have been able to be sensitised for the joys of gardening. This exemplary and kind activity has been reduced, not because of a lack of interest by the school-children, but due to the teachers' restricted possibilities, rushed by overcharged school programmes.

The gardens open to the city

Allotment gardens participate in taking care of society. In Geneva, for example, elevated plots for disabled people were created in the past. After a decline, this relevant activity will probably be repeated. And in more than one area in the Romandie, migrants have been welcomed and could follow courses, despite the fact that the conditions, as far as their future was concerned, were uncertain.

Every year prizes are awarded to the nicest gardens. The sites of Rionzi and of Châtelard, with its attractive insect hotel, situated in the North of Lausanne at the border with the neighbouring commune of Du Mont are, for example, often rewarded. We can't omit to mention the steepest site in the capital of the Vaud canton, which maintains the gardeners' flexibility and is located on the hill of the tree-covered Montriond hill next to the cantonal botanic garden.

Additionally, many societies participate in festivities and events organised by their commune, as for exam-



Bourget et Bourget-école sous la neige



ple, the gardeners of Geneva, who take part in the feast of the tomato in Carrouge, and those of the association of Lausanne, who create a stand at the feast of the merchants in Chailly. Additionally, they bring splendid bunches of fresh flowers to elderly residents of care centres at the occasion of the day of the flowers, celebrated in the same nice way by many associations.

The Swiss allotment federation is also partner of the International Year of plant health 2020 (IYPH), organised under the protection of the United Nations. In this framework all the associations put the directives at the disposal of their members and the bilingual monthly magazine Gartenfreund/Jardin vivant regularly spreads news concerning the fight against neophyte plants and insects which are a big danger for our biodiversity.



Our gardens under the magnifying glass

The Romandie unifies five sections. The allotment federation of Geneva with its numerous associations unifies more than two thousand families and gardeners. The allotment association of Lausanne counts nearly 600 members. The allotment federation of Fribourg and surroundings has approximately 300 gardeners. They are followed by the small sections i. e. the allotment association of Morges, which will be transferred to another site, due to the enlargement of the neighbouring school and the allotment association of Aigle of which a third of the plots are threatened by flooding following a third correction of the Rhône river.

Depending on the areas, the surface of a garden in the Romandie varies from 50 sqm (rarely 30 sqm) up to 200 and even 300 sqm. On the big plots the planting of trees of a reasonable size, the building of sheds and the construction of pergolas are authorised.

These oases of well-being and liberty that represent our allotment gardens also had to comply with the directives concerning the fighting against the Corona virus. Generally, the gardeners have followed the measures with philosophy. According to the committees everything mostly went well. “The problems could be solved, thanks to the fact that our gardeners let reason prevail” concluded Jean-Paul Gygli, president of the Geneva allotment sites and Jean-Marie Brodard, president of the sites in Lausanne.

The Swiss allotment federation motivates its members and does PR activities at the same time

By Simone Collet



1) The Swiss allotment federation (FSJF) is the main partner of the International Year of Plant Health 2020

What would life on earth be without plants? We can't even imagine it!

80 % of our diet depends on plants, which also produce oxygen for the air we breathe. This underlines the importance of the plants' health, the richness of their diversity and the necessary balance of the ecosystems.

During its general assembly, the United Nations proclaimed 2020 as the "International Year of Plant Health" (IYPH) recognising the importance of plants in the supply of raw materials, their contribution to food security and the services provided in agriculture, wetlands and protective forests.

During the year 2020 measures are being implemented to control the spreading of plant pests: all species of pathogens including insects, viruses, bacteria, worms and fungi. According to the FAO, they cause each year a loss of 40 % of the world's food crops. The threefold increase in international traffic over the past twenty years has led to their spreading throughout the world. In addition, climate change "boosted" by human activi-

ties weakens the ecosystems. The federal plant protection service (FPS) support the IYPH by taking concrete measures: promotion of certified seeds and seedlings, introduction of a plant health law, a plant passport and stricter requirements for imports from third countries, including tourist destinations, from 1st January 2020, both here and in the European Union.

The Swiss allotment federation is recognised as a main partner; a recognition of the patient work carried out by our committees and by our members. Allotment gardeners, a big thank you!

So, for example since the beginning of the year, the federation's magazine has been reporting the news and the events concerning the "International Year 2020 for plant protection" campaign launched by the United Nations. The articles on this subject can easily be recognised by a specific logo placed at the top of the pages.

Articles by Simone Collet published in the federation's magazine

January: Article: International Year of plants, the Swiss allotment federation is partner

February: Leading article: invasive plants, border controls and phytosanitary certificate

March: Threat to the tomato plants and peppers" (Jordan Virus)

April: To eliminate invasive neophytes, but not regardless of how

May: The new attacking predators! (post stamp Jordan Virus)

September: Presentation of the allotment gardens in Biel

In order to keep our members informed on the various developments of the project which will take place all over this year, newsletters are published on the federation's internet site.

2) Consultation procedure on the protection of drinking water

The Swiss allotment federation was invited by Mr. Christian Levrat, president of the Commission, to take part in a consultation procedure concerning a subject of extreme importance

organised on one of the highest levels in our country: the protection of drinking water and consequently, the protection of our health.

During the meeting on January 20th 2020, the Commission for economy and taxes approved a preliminary draft in order to put into practice its parliamentary initiative nr. 19.475 entitled "to reduce the risk of the use of pesticides". In fact, the Commission aims at definitively reducing the risks linked

to the use of phytosanitary products and increasing the quality of drinking water of the surface water and the groundwater.

The invitation to take part in a national consultation on such an important subject represents a real honour for the Swiss federation. It underlines the relevance of our practices flowing from a long gardening experience and from the constant care we give to our plots throughout the whole country.

The allotment association “De Doordouwers” in Utrecht (NL) received the diploma for ecological gardening



Natural gardening

The allotment association De Doordouwers (the Sustainers) started in 2006 on the site of the current garden park, which at that time consisted of only a meadow and a parking space. The first years were dominated by working on the structure and layout of the garden park. In 2013, a group of members enthusiastically started with the project Quality Mark Natural Gardening. In 2015 the association was awarded with a Quality Mark Shield which contained a ladybug (symbol of natural gardening) with 3 dots. In 2019 the fourth dot (highest possible) was added.

Various facilities for nature development (both aimed at plants and animals) have been realised at the garden park. For the animals, for example: dry stone walls, branch fencing, heaps for grass snakes, bird groves, apiaries, insect hotels (for e. g. solitary bees), hedgehog houses

(and hedgehog passages in the fences), a kingfisher wall (under construction) and all kinds of bird nest boxes (painted by children) like a wood owl box. For the plants: amongst others flower meadows (with mainly field flowers, but also phacelia and rattle), constructed riparian zones (including valerian, purple loosestrife and king-cups), and a flower bulb field (with organic spring bulbs).

For a few years the association has been managing the paths and ditches in an ecological way. They mow with their own tractor and brush cutters and remove the grass clippings. This prevents enrichment of the soil and gives natural bank plants more opportunity to grow. Part of the garden park is grazed by sheep and is hayed annually.

Organisation and communication

In addition to a Facebook group, the

association also has a newsletter. In this, attention is given to, for example, information about composting, reuse of material and alternatives to pesticides. Photographs are also published of the gardens of members with special flora and fauna. A topic about natural gardening is regularly discussed at member meetings. As a result, the association also takes into account members who have a poor command of Dutch. In 2018 our association was on the local TV. They are also regularly in the local newspaper and neighbourhood magazine.

Various activities have been organised for members, from a nature treasure hunt for children to building hedgehog houses, from a tour at the beekeeper to pruning fruit trees.

Gardeners getting started

The association has 115 members. Among other things, members are involved in the Natural Gardening Pro-



ject by letting them help with the construction and management of natural facilities. Information is also given at that time. There are many gardeners with a non-Western background ($\pm 40\%$), who are above average scared of grass snakes. Promotion of natural gardening has considerably changed that mentality; In the meantime, the board now even receives smart phone videos from these members when they spot a grass snake. In the Facebook group photos, experiences and tips are exchanged. Pesticides are not used. A few dozen gardeners also make room for nature in their own garden, by providing nest boxes, small branches and insect hotels and they buy organic planting material. The individual gardens are reviewed annually and, if necessary, members receive tips or an explanation about maintenance or planting. There are a number of members who supervise starting gardeners the first year and give them advice.

Project garden for women

There is one garden in use to give (single, non-Western) women who live in the neighbourhood the opportunity for gardening. Under the guidance of members, they can learn how to work in a vegetable garden in the Netherlands. This assistance takes 2 years. If all goes well the women can get their own garden if they like. This participation project creates more contacts between other cultures within the association. It also has the advantage that the children of the women in question also spend more time outside, by helping in the garden.



The allotment association “Tuinpark Onderlinggen”(OTV) in Leiden (NL) received the diploma for ecological gardening



The natural garden park

In November 2019, the allotment association OTV in Leiden was awarded the National Quality Mark for Natural Gardening. The ladybug (symbol of natural gardening) on the Quality Mark Shield received 4 dots. This is the highest possible. In the garden park of OTV there are many natural elements in the common green space. At the entrance there is an insect hotel (in the shape of the OTV logo) made of wicker. Via a parking lot surrounded by willows one comes to the entrance of the garden park. At the entrance there are frames that are used to dry the cut grass. Then one walks past the picking garden where flowers and vegetables are grown, which can be purchased by members and non-members. Last year, part of the income from the vegetables was do-

nated to the food bank. The bird grove is located next to the picking garden. There are native trees and shrubs with food (fruits, but also plants that attract insects) and shelter for birds.

In the garden at the clubhouse there are, among other things, a Zeeland (natural) hedge and beehives. A number of hedgehog houses can be found in the adjacent hydrangea garden. A long branch has been laid from the hydrangea garden over the water on behalf of the kingfisher. There is also a garden with plants that are attractive for bees and butterflies. The place is surrounded by a large branch grove. There is a pond and a large insect hotel that was built during a workshop with volunteers. A seating area was also created so that the gardeners can sit down and enjoy the place.

There is also a garden with lots of shade plants and stinzen plants and examples of fencing flower beds. Furthermore, a dry stone wall was built, with two seats on top of it. This place overlooks meadows and a grove. OTV cares for animal life. There are so called “bee camp sites”, hedgehog houses, piles of wood and branches, roof tiles around the pond, different nest boxes and space for different animals in the insect hotel, and the dry stone wall.

Organisation, communication

The natural gardening committee deals with the redesign and maintenance of common green spaces and provides information about natural gardening to the gardeners by organising activities and writing articles for the newsletter. The committee or-



ganises several workshops and other activities throughout the year to provide gardeners with information about natural gardening. These activities are organised with other garden associations if possible. OTV has mandatory jobs to be done by the members. All members work on common greenery four times a year, in smaller groups. The members then receive information about natural gardening. About 80 percent of the members garden according to the principles of natural gardening.

Members are kept informed of the progress of all the projects via a newsletter and the website. In addition, the park shop committee regularly issues its own flyers in which natural gardening is promoted (also digitally and via the bulletin board). The garden shop promotes things such as organic cultivation and sells garden soil, as well as special and mostly native plants and shrubs. Attention is also paid to natural gardening during the general members' meetings.

Specials

The technical committee helps with the preparation and/or making of various architectural artworks with added value for insects and other animals. A "walking garden tour" was held to ensure that the members inspire each other. Members open their garden to other members and give a tour of their own garden, where they show the most beautiful places and give an explanation about what is growing.



Kupittaaan ryhmäpuutarhayhdistys, Turku (FI) received the diploma for social activities



Cooperation partnership in the 'Multaa ja mukuloita' -project

The Kupittaa Allotment Garden Association is the cooperation partner in the project 'Multaa ja mukuloita'. The Finnish name of the project has a dual meaning: 'multaa' = soil and 'mukuloita' = both tubers and kids ('ja' = and). The project started in June 2019 and goes on until summer 2021. The owner of the project is the association Sateenkaari Koto ry. and it has been funded by the Finnish National Agency for Education.

The project has created a science-based, mathematical and technology-based learning environment in the Kupittaa allotment garden. Within the project the principles of child-oriented phenomenon learning are used to inspire the children (aged 1-6 years) to explore the life of the urban nature. The activity promotes broad-based learning as part of the children's overall well-being. The aim

is to support the principles of a sustainable lifestyle by strengthening the relationship between nature, circular economy thinking, knowledge and appreciation of nature and the origin of food. The project creates meaningful new local networks to share cultural knowledge, promote children's social skills, exchange diverse knowledge and prevent exclusion of older people and immigrants.

This project is unique in Finland and has received wide publicity. It has, for example, been presented by Yle (the public broadcaster) in the main tv-news.

Kupittaaan Ryhmäpuutarhayhdistys ry.

Kupittaa allotment garden is the oldest in Turku – founded in 1934. The allotment garden was set up for the recreation and well-being of the city's working population and for the security of food supply for families. Nowa-

days there are 57 plots with a cottage in the allotment garden and three of the cottages are original.

Although the primary function of the plots is no longer to feed the gardeners, there are still about 300 apple trees that were planted in the area in the early days. In addition, the plots grow a large number of old ornamental and useful plants, the value of which is immeasurable from the point of view of plant genetics.

At present, the continuation of the Kupittaa allotment garden is threatened. The Turku City Council has proposed that the gardening activity in Kupittaa is terminated and that the allotment garden is moved further from the centre.

Sateenkaari Koto ry.

Sateenkaari Koto ry. is a non-profit association. The association owns the company Sateenkaari Koto Oy,



which provides early childhood education and home care for families with children. In addition, the association's activities also include Educational Homes supporting social integration.

Background of the project

The cooperation between Kupittaa allotment garden and the association Sateenkaari Koto ry. began with apples. The children picked up surplus apples in the garden and baked pies.

That aroused a mutual enthusiasm for the opportunities offered by the allotment garden for children. Among adults, it was stated that it would be in everyone's interest to intensify the cooperation and join forces. There were no children in the allotment garden and the kindergarten children had no contact to the garden. Opening the allotment garden to children would be a win-win situation for both parties.

Implementation of the project

During the summer of 2019, children from six different Sateenkaari Koto's kindergarten visited Kupittaa allotment garden frequently, with almost a hundred visitors a month. Every day one kindergarten group spent a full day in the garden – eating outside and relaxing in the hanging swings under the apple trees. The children diligently took care of the plot assigned to them. As a result, every child now has their own favorite chore in the garden.

The life in the garden is monitored throughout the project throughout the year. During the first summer the children worked diligently on their own rented garden plot. They studied garden phenomena and organisms, played and brainstormed their own research projects using the allotment garden creatively. Valuable gardening information was obtained from the allotment gardening community. At Kupittaa, the children have also had the opportunity to learn about bee life - all year round - and to take part in honey extraction.

In Finland, winter is not a gardening season, but the winter 2019-2020 has been so mild in Turku that it has provided several opportunities for activities and exploring the peaceful and unique winter allotment garden environment. During the winter there are monthly allotment garden days. At the end of January 2020, a water-themed day was celebrated in the garden, with about 70 children attending. During the day, the children learned about the water droplet journey in our nature.

The project has hosted numerous events, such as a weekly Activity Thursday. In connection to the project there has also been arranged food rescue brunches, carried out in by immigrant women from the Sateenkaari Koto's Educational Home Mustika.

The cooperation between Sateenkaari Koto and the Kupittaa Allotment Garden Association creates new innovative interactions between generations. Daily encounters between the children and gardeners, working together and learning, and joint events create meaningful moments for both parties. For the children, a visit to the allotment garden is a holistic experience that combines science, community and respect for the environment. The children learn the importance of sharing, working together and helping across generations and cultures. For the gardeners, interacting and doing tasks with the children brings joy and

enriches the social life of the garden. Sharing the tradition gives credit to the gardeners' know-how and relevance to the continuation of the allotment garden in Kupittaa. Sharing heritage and gardening knowledge with the next generation is important for the continuation of allotment gardening as part of a sustainable urban agriculture.

The Federation of Finnish Allotment Gardens is eager to follow what more interesting will be done within the project over the next two years. With the application for a diploma the federation wants to show its great appreciation for this unique and fascinating project.

COUNTRY	FEDERATION	ADDRESS	TEL / FAX / EMAIL
Austria	Zentralverband der Kleingärtner und Siedler Österreichs	Simon-Wiesenthal-Gasse 2 A - 1020 WIEN	Tel.: 0043/1-587 07 85 Fax: 0043/1-587 07 85 30 email: zvwien@kleingaertner.at Internet: www.kleingaertner.at
Belgium	Tuinhier vzw	PAC Het Zuid Woodrow Wilsonplein 2 B - 9000 GENT	Tel.: 0032/9 267 87 31 email: info@tuinhier.be Internet: www.tuinhier.be
Denmark	Kolonihaveforbundet	Smedeholm 13 C, 2. th DK - 2730 HERLEV	Tel.: 0045/3 828 8750 Fax: 0045/3 828 8350 email: info@kolonihave.dk Internet: www.kolonihave.dk
Finland	Suomen Siirtolapuutarhaliitto ry	Pengerkatu 9 B 39 FI - 00530 HELSINKI	Tel.: 00358/ 103213540 email: info@siirtolapuutarhaliitto.fi Internet: www.siirtolapuutarhaliitto.fi
France	Fédération Nationale des Jardins Familiaux et Collectifs	12, rue Félix Faure F - 75015 PARIS	Tel.: 0033/ 1-45 40 40 45 Fax: 0033/ 1-45 40 78 90 directeur@jardins-familiaux.asso.fr Internet: www.jardins-familiaux.asso.fr
Germany	Bundesverband Deutscher Gartenfreunde e.V.	Platanenallee 37 D - 14050 BERLIN	Tel.: 0049/30-30 20 71-40/41 Fax: 0049/30-30 20 71 39 email: bdg@kleingarten-bund.de Internet: www.kleingarten-bund.de
Great-Britain	The National Allotment Society	O'Dell House/Hunters Road GB - CORBY Northamptonshire NN17 5JE	Tel.: 0044/ 1536 266 576 Fax: 0044/1536 264 509 email: natsoc@nsalg.org.uk Internet: www.nsalg.org.uk
Japan	Association for Japan Allotment Garden	4-27-20 Honmachi-higashi, Chuo-ku, Saitama-shi Saitama Prefecture 338 -0003 Japan	Tel.: 0081 904754 2136 Fax: 003 3266 0667 email: ick05142@nifty.com http://homepage3.nifty.com/ikg-kem/
Luxembourg	Ligue Luxembourgeoise du Coin de Terre et du Foyer	97, rue de Bonnevoie L - 1260 LUXEMBOURG	Tel.: 00 352/ 48 01 99 Fax: 00 352/40 97 98 email: liguectf@pt.lu Internet: www.ctf.lu
Norway	Norsk Kolonihageforbund	Postboks 1247 Vika N - 0110 OSLO	Tel.: 0047/94080090 email: styret@kolonihager.no Internet: www.kolonihager.no
The Netherlands	AVVN	Vogelvlinderweg 50 NL - 3544 NJ UTRECHT	Tel.: 0031/ 30 670 1331 Fax: 0031/ 30 670 0525 email: info@avvn.nl Internet: www.avvn.nl
Sweden	Koloniträdgårdsförbundet	Ringvägen 9F SE - 11823 STOCKHOLM	Tel.: 0046/ 8 556 930 80 Fax: 0046/ 8-640 38 98 email: kansli@koloni.org www.kolonitradgardsforbundet.se
Switzerland	Schweizer Familiengärtnerverband	Libellenweg 5 CH - 3250 LYSS/BE	Tel.: 0041/32 384 71 23 0041/79 251 26 43 email: sekretariat-sfgv@vaunet.ch Internet: www.familiengaertner.ch www.jardins-familiaux.ch

Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux association sans but lucratif



Address: 20, Rue De Bragance,
L – 1255 Luxemburg

The Office online: www.jardins-familiaux.org

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