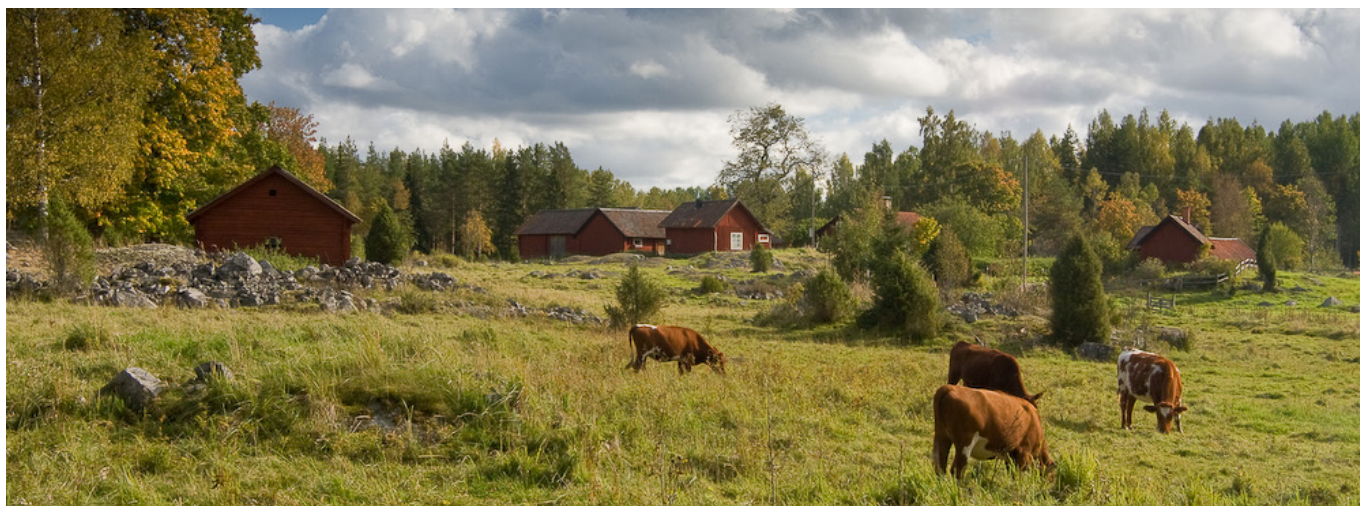


MEADOWS AND PASTURES ARE NEEDED



The presence of a new forest burnet (*Cygaea viciae*) indicates a well managed meadow and high biodiversity.



The eurasian pygmy owl (*Glaucidium passerinum*) likes wooded pastures. It utilises hollows in old trees for nesting.



Coniferous forest pastures contributes to a diverse landscape. Rare species of mushrooms and orchids can be found here.

WHY DO WE NEED TO CONSERVE OPEN LANDSCAPES?

A living rural area with grazing livestock does not only give a beautiful landscape. It also creates a variation of habitats, which in its turn creates the conditions for biodiversity and economically viable agricultural businesses. Nobody likes to see their farm or the countryside getting overgrown, to see flowers, butterflies and an open varied landscape disappear.

WHAT ARE PASTURES AND MEADOWS?

Pastures and meadows, or semi-natural grasslands, have a long history of management by grazing and mowing. The land has not been ploughed in modern time, fertilized, ditched or been planted with trees or grasses. There are different types of meadows and pastures, such as oak pastures, coastal pastures and forest pastures.

WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Man and his livestock have created a large part of the open landscape that we see today. Traditional farming during hundreds of years, with growing of crops and grazing livestock, has created the agricultural landscape and a base for these species rich habitats. Meadows, fields and pastures are examples of this co-existence.

WHY ARE THEY SO RICH IN SPECIES?

Unfertilized pastures and meadows are the habitat in the agricultural landscape that has the highest number of species. Reoccurring grazing or mowing and lack of nutrients give small plants and the possibility for many species to coexist. 40 different plant species have been noted on one single square decimetre. Species that are typical in pastures and meadows are elder-flowered orchid (*Dactylorhiza sambucina*), cowslip (*Primula veris*), common milkwort (*Polygala vulgaris*), catsfoot (*Antennaria dioica*), meadow saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*) and spreading bellflower (*Campanula patula*).



CAN PASTURES AND MEADOWS BE PROFITABLE TODAY?

With EU's environmental subsidies livestock owners can get support to manage pastures and meadows. Meat from live stock that have been raised on pastures, and are fed hay during the winter, is healthier and tastier than from cattle that have been raised in stalls, which can give the farmer a better price. Pastures and meadows are not ploughed or fertilized which saves costs. By organising guided tours and other activities connected to nature tourism the farms incomes can be improved.



Agricultural landscape in the 1940's. An open landscape characterised by meadows and pastures. Photo from Gräsö, Sweden.



Same agricultural landscape 70 years later. A landscape overgrown by bushes and trees. Only the old field has been kept open. Photo from Gräsö, Sweden.

WHAT HAPPENS IF GRAZING IS NOT CONTINUED?

A rationalisation of agricultural practices by growing crops on arable land for fodder and raising cattle indoors all year round have led to the abandonment of meadows and pastures. When management stops overgrowth, bushes and finally forest takes over the landscape. Today only 1% of the meadows and 15% of the pastures that existed in Sweden 100 years ago remain.

HOW CAN MEADOWS AND PASTURES BE USED?

- Production of high quality meat.
- Production of meadow hay.
- Production of high biodiversity such as insects, birds and flowers.
- Summer grazing for hobby animals, such as horses.
- Make archeological remains visible, which are often found here.
- Source of history through traces of old agricultural practices.
- Base for recreation and eco-tourism.
- Source for handicraft material.
- Food and habitat for insects.

READ MORE

Roslagens grasslands. Hoflin, M. Upplandsstiftelsen 2012.
The rural landscape of Europe: How man has shaped European nature. Emanuelsson, U. 2009.

CONTACT

Upplandsstiftelsen, Sweden
Box 26074, 750 26 Uppsala
+46-(0)18-611 62 71
info@upplandsstiftelsen.se
www.upplandsstiftelsen.se