



# BEST PRACTICES

## “Blooming Nature Park”

### Institutional information

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### Summary

#### **Explain the project in one or two sentences**

With the project "Blooming Nature Park", the nature park wants to visually and ecologically enhance areas within the nature park and thus contribute to improve the conditions for insect diversity. The aim is to create a network of wildflower meadows in the Black Forest that is as dense as possible. At the same time, the citizens are to be taken along and sensitized for the protection of biodiversity - and this already begins in kindergarten and primary school with nature education.

#### **Background information: How was the situation previous to your actions?**

Due to intensive agriculture, monocultures or frequently mown lawns, the diversity of wildflower species has declined considerably, and with it the diversity of insects such as wild bees, hoverflies or butterflies, and ultimately also the number of field birds.

#### **What needs have you identified?**

At the moment, many people (private individuals, clubs/associations, municipalities, companies) would like to support biodiversity. However, very few people have more in-depth knowledge about this. Many well-intentioned actions only serve marketing purposes and fail due to an inadequate and not professionally sound implementation.

Starting from the situation before the project started, an institution is therefore needed that passes on the necessary know-how, serves as an information and networking platform in the region and continuously develops measures to improve the overall situation.

### **What solution you found to cover those needs?**

The project was launched in 2016 with cities, municipalities and companies providing fallow land so that perennial, native wild flowers can be sown on it.

Furthermore, it is the nature park's task to coordinate and organize the overall project by informing and connecting partners and informing the public.

### **What actions did you take to reach the solution?**

Specifically, the nature park organises seminars on the creation of flowering areas (information on preparing the area and sowing) as well as on area maintenance. Furthermore, lectures on the project "Blooming Nature Park", on the habitat wildflower meadow, on the topic of insects visiting flowers, and much more are held.

Once a year, an advanced training and networking event for interested parties and project participants with various specialist lectures ("Forum Bienenweide") is organized.

In addition, the project partners are supported on site in selecting the appropriate flower mixture for the respective areas.

For the project "Nature Park School" special environmental education modules, such as a flowering primer for children, were developed.

Through broad public relations work, as many people in the nature park as possible should be informed about the project. This includes, for example, press events for sowing areas, field signs in the flowering areas and the distribution of seed mixtures as give-aways.

In order to make the project more broadly based, a partner concept was also developed: private individuals, families, schools, kindergartens and companies can participate - even if they do not have the opportunity to plant a wildflower meadow. Those who pay an annual contribution take on a "flower meadow sponsorship" and receive a certificate, information material and a honey jar. The financial contributions go into nature education work with children.

### **If any, which partners or other organisations did you involve during the process?**

The nature park works closely with the regional association of the "Badische Imker" (Baden beekeepers) to provide technical support for the project. Further partners for the area-wide implementation of the project are the 106 towns and communities in the nature park area, landscape conservation associations, numerous companies and private individuals.

### **What were the main problems or difficulties you had to face?**

It is important to convince the partners of the professional implementation of the project. In the case of municipal areas, this means, for example, that a wildflower meadow looks less well-tended to the eye than, for example, an accurately cut lawn.

**What is the situation now, after your actions?**

Since the start of the project four years ago, 50,000 square metres of land have already been sown with native wildflower meadows. The nature park has already been able to sensitize many people to the protection of biodiversity and to inspire them to participate in the project.

**Main lessons learned along the way?**

The project and its participants are growing steadily from year to year. The project partners rely on continuous, professional support from the nature park. The topic is still highly topical after four project years. The motto "Every area counts" applies - even small areas in private gardens or a flower box on the balcony.

**Annex:**

Blooming Nature Park01

Blooming Nature Park02

Blooming Nature Park03