

Biodiversity-promoting measures in grassland



Old grass strips / insect protection strips

Description of the measure

- No mowing of parts or strips on 5-20 % of the plot
- At least 5 m wide; if ground nesting birds are present, the width should be 10 m to avoid predators.
- With each cut, a new strip of grassland is left aside, the previous old grass strip is mown again. Alternatively: leaving it for 1 year, then ensure that there is an appropriate offset with further structures (an application may have to be made to the Agricultural ministry, due to the minimum use requirement of at least once a year).
- During the last cut of the year, old grass strips should be retained in any case to provide overwintering habitats for insects and other animals. It is particularly valuable to leave wider strips standing.
- Areas or strips can be distributed over the entire field (e.g. a strip of 5-10 m every 100 m); in the vicinity of water bodies or on diverse flowering hilltops
- Insects benefit even more if the unmown strip is next to bushes, hedges or other woody elements

Effects on biodiversity

Unmown grassland strips/parts allow herbs in the grassland to flower. This creates a small hotspot for flower-visiting insects that feed on nectar and pollen. Grasshoppers and butterflies also find breeding and retreat space here.

Other positive effects

- Biotope networking
- Food supply
- Protection and cover
- Structural enrichment

Further recommendations

Problematic weeds, such as thistle, can be removed locally. On the other hand, thistles are important food plants for butterflies. Therefore, it is not desirable to have completely "clean" areas. In the case of other problem plants, an individual approach must be agreed upon. If Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) or Canada Goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*) are present, a strip of old grass is not advisable.

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Cooperation Partners



Further reading

<https://www.rheinische-kulturlandschaft.de/massnahmen/g4-altgrasstreifen-ueberjaehrige-streifen-und-flaechen/>

Sources

[https://franz-projekt.de/uploads/Downloads/Massnahmen/Ma%C3%9Fnahmenblatt_Altgrasstreifen%20\(1\).pdf](https://franz-projekt.de/uploads/Downloads/Massnahmen/Ma%C3%9Fnahmenblatt_Altgrasstreifen%20(1).pdf)

<https://www.kulturlandschaft.nrw/project/altgrasstreifen/>

NABU, Fact Sheets - Field birds, cultural successors of agriculture

Birds of the agricultural landscape, NABU 2004

Coordinator Further partners

