

## **Site 08: Monnet**

### **8.1 Change of the site by project activities:**

With 130 ha of saltmarsh, Monnet is one of the largest salt meadows in eastern Denmark. The area has never been 'improved' and the meadows have natural topography and hydrology, with a large system of gullies and pools and ant hillocks are widely distributed. The meadows are grazed but due to a declining and now (2010) fairly low grazing pressure overgrowing is gradually taking place locally. In 2011 the grazing pressure rose as a result of our negotiations.

Earlier the area was grazed with a combination of cattle, horses and occasionally goats. At the beginning of the project only dairy cattle was grazing the area, which is insufficient to keep the vegetation short.

The overgrowing of lagoons and natural depressions with *Scirpus maritimus* had limited the breeding possibilities for *Bufo calamita* and *Bufo viridis*.

At the beginning of the project grazing had been reduced to only a few individuals of non-robust dairy cattle. Therefore it was needed to add robust grazers in order to get rid of the unwanted vegetation and to hinder the upgrowth of *Crataegus*. Until 2010 it was not possible to achieve success on this issue, as the environmental permit for the dairy farm to increase the grazing intensity had to be obtained first. In the meantime however, several workshops with the board of landowners were held. During these workshops, *Crataegus* bushes were pulled out by tractors or cut down, hoping to be able to start robust grazing in order to prevent their sprouting and preserve an open landscape. As this was not the case, the bushes now function as ideal lookout posts for birds of prey such as crows that are predating on wader birds and meadow birds and their chicks.

### **8.2 Remaining challenges and actions:**

It is still being considered which ponds are best to restore in order to safeguard the natterjack, which is on the brink of extinction at the site.

As no robust grazing could be installed yet, it is being considered to mow high vegetation around the last *Bufo calamita* and Dunlin ponds. In this way, the two species would find better foraging possibilities on the meadows around the water bodies.

### **8.3 Public perception:**

The island is owned by one board of landowners. They initially were very positive towards the project and agreed to the implementation of the foreseen actions. Because of no environmental permissions to increase the number of dairy cattle for the site, nothing could be implemented until 2010 and 2011.

The board has actively participated in removing unwanted bushes during the project period; being hunters themselves we consider it as a good success that they allowed to

mount a bird hide for the general public and ornithologists during the project period. Leaflets and poster were made and guided tours were organized.