

LIFE Oak Processionary

Midterm conference 05/10/2023, Sittard-Geleen

The Project Team

Provincie Antwerpen



Johan Neegers
Projectcoördinator



Kathleen Verstraete
Bioloog, Trekker
mezenstudie

Provincie Gelderland



Joost Bloemberg
Ecoloog, coördinator
Gelderland

Provincie Limburg



Luc Crevecoeur
Bioloog, Trekker studie
Grote Poppenrover



Toon Willems
Veldmedewerker

Provincie Noord-Brabant



Anne Leeflang
Bermbeheer en
mezenstudie

EV INBO



Luc De Bruyn
Bioloog, statisticus,
trekker monitoring

Sittard-Geleen



Jules Sondeijker
Coördinator
Sittard-Geleen

Day Program

- **Programma:**

- 13:00: Opening - Dagvoorzitter Jules Sondejker en wethouder Leon Geilen (Sittard-Geleen)
- 13:10: Doelstellingen LIFE Project Eikenprocessierups - Dirk Vandebussche (Provincie Antwerpen)
- 13:20: Trends van de eikenprocessierups in de Benelux
- 13:30: Tussentijdse resultaten - wat hebben we de voorbije 2,5 jaar geleerd?
- 14:10: Pauze
- 14:20: Gastspreker - Geert De Blust (UA/INBO)
- 14:50: Vragenronde
- 15:20: Conclusie en afronden

Agenda

- Is the Oak Processionary Moth declining?
- Ecological control of the Oak Processionary Moth
 - Tits as natural predators
 - Road verge management, parasitoid flies and wasps
 - Common Ivy - An unexpected sidestep
 - The Forest Caterpillar Hunter, back with a vengeance
- Biocide use in Flanders and the Netherlands – on the way to a drastic reduction?

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Is the Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) declining????





25 mei 2023

Minder last van de eikenprocessierups dit jaar

Dit jaar krijgen we waarschijnlijk minder overlast van eikenprocessierupsen. Dat komt omdat er vorig jaar minder vlinders waren dan normaal. Veel gemeenten bestrijden de rups elk jaar op meerdere plekken. Dat helpt.

Rupsen uit de grond

Het is nog niet helemaal zeker dat er minder rupsen komen. De afgelopen jaren zien we niet alleen rupsennesten in bomen, maar ook steeds meer nesten in de grond. Mogelijk hebben veel rupsen zich door de hitte vorig jaar ingegraven en komen zij dit jaar tevoorschijn. Dan kunnen die rupsen toch nog voor overlast zorgen.



Wikipedia C Reinhold Möller

Processierupsen verdwenen, maar wat zijn die groene rupsen aan een draadje?

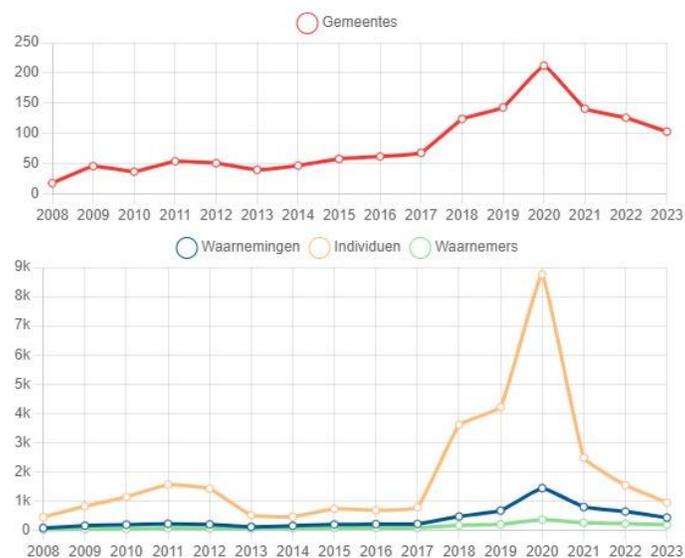
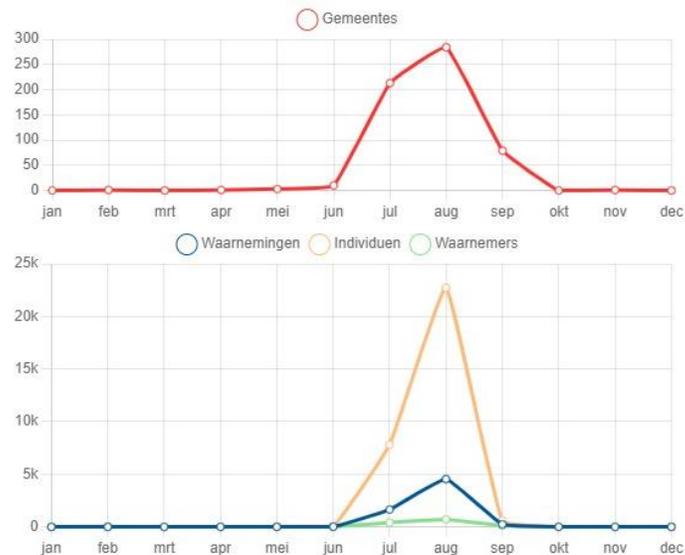
Bree - Er zal deze zomer weinig tot geen hinder zijn van eikenprocessierupsen in Limburg. Dat zegt het Provinciaal Natuurcentrum (PNC) na terreincontroles in Bree, Maaseik en Kinrooi.

Observations in Belgium

Maand	Waarnemingen	Individueen	Waarnemers	Gemeentes
jan	0	0	0	0
feb	1	50	1	1
mrt	0	0	0	0
apr	1	1	1	1
mei	3	47	3	3
jun	14	78	13	10
jul	1.640	7.806	407	213
aug	4.549	22.726	701	284
sep	240	590	123	79
okt	0	0	0	0
nov	1	2	1	1
dec	0	0	0	0
Totaal	6.449	31.300		

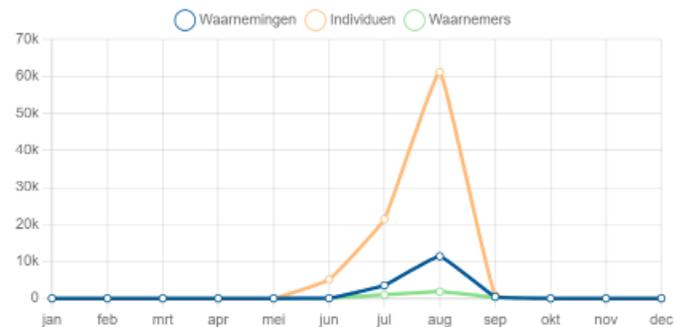
Per jaar

Jaar	Waarnemingen	Individueen	Waarnemers	Gemeentes
2023	435	951	196	103
2022	644	1.544	229	126
2021	799	2.487	261	141
2020	1.445	8.758	367	212
2019	675	4.215	207	143
2018	475	3.610	170	124
2017	219	788	90	68
2016	210	685	90	62
2015	199	737	85	58
2014	156	468	67	47
2013	120	517	61	40
2012	202	1.425	70	51
2011	224	1.565	76	54
2010	193	1.145	52	37



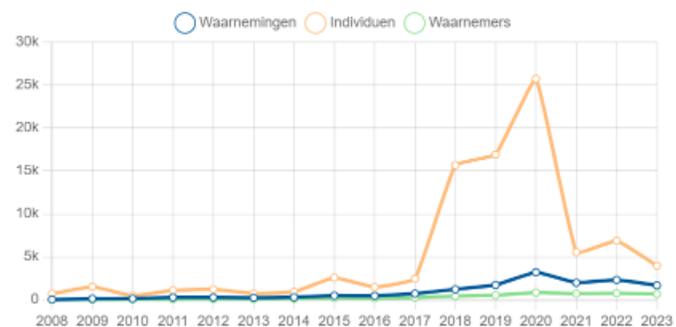
Observations in the Netherlands

Maand	Waarnemingen	Individueen	Waarnemers	Gemeentes
jan	0	0	0	0
feb	1	4	1	1
mrt	0	0	0	0
apr	0	0	0	0
mei	3	4	2	2
jun	50	5.087	42	37
jul	3.536	21.410	981	283
aug	11.395	61.136	1.846	330
sep	449	824	291	133
okt	1	1	1	1
nov	0	0	0	0
dec	0	0	0	0
Totaal	15.435	88.466		



Per jaar

Jaar	Waarnemingen	Individueen	Waarnemers	Gemeentes
2023	1.689	3.976	695	242
2022	2.329	6.882	770	271
2021	1.998	5.546	724	245
2020	3.217	25.732	854	272
2019	1.730	16.921	543	230
2018	1.232	15.683	441	207
2017	726	2.467	271	157
2016	472	1.480	199	124
2015	497	2.587	217	141
2014	305	938	142	95
2013	252	746	115	82
2012	290	1.234	115	94
2011	295	1.105	93	71
2010	147	475	78	58



Less moths?

2023 records

- Weert Kettingdijk 50
Roosendaal 15
Stokkum 16

- Ellikom 17
Kalmthout 35

2022 records

- De Hamert 60
Strijbeek 55
Winterwijk 30

- Bree 35
Geel 60

Average numbers per light trap

Nederland

- 2018 8,8
- 2019 9,5
- 2020 7,5
- 2021 2,5
- 2022 2,5
- 2023 2,2

België

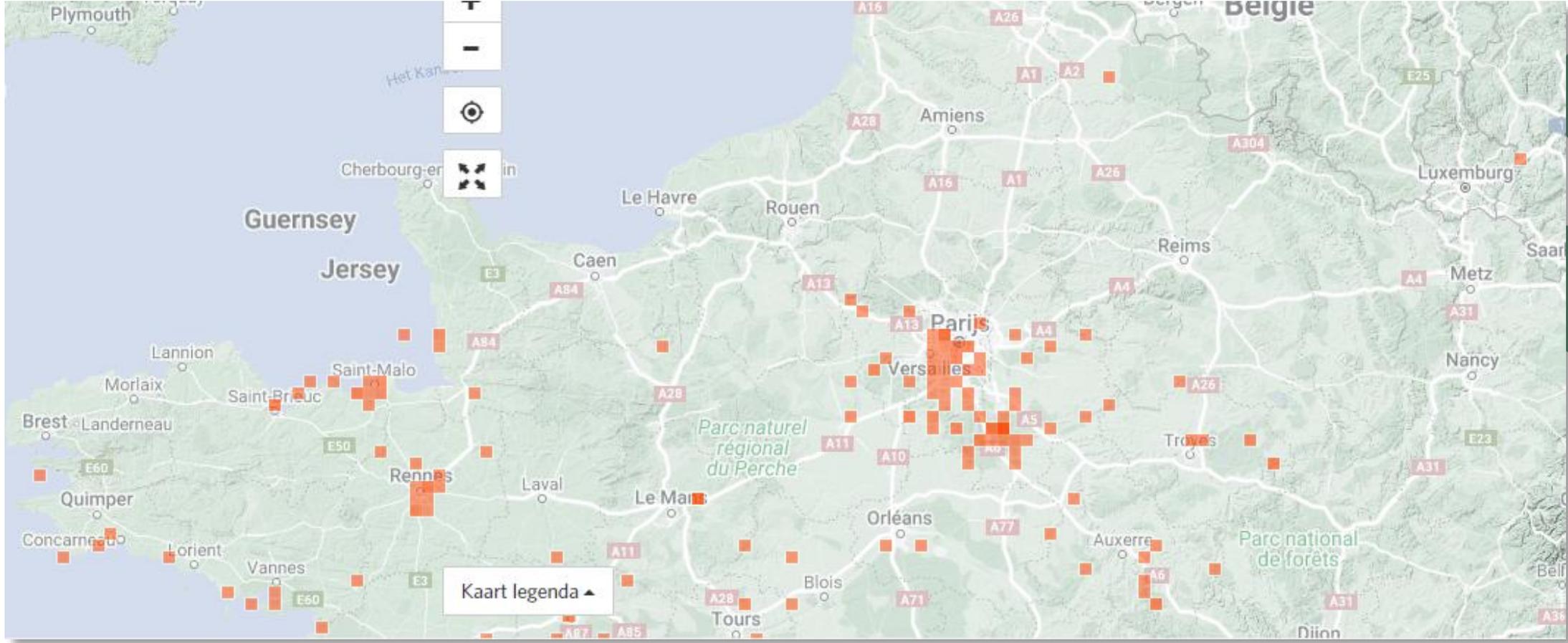
- 2018
- 2019 6,2
- 2020 6,0
- 2021 3,1
- 2022 2,4
- 2023 2,1

Geeflijke Insekten: Ein schlechtes Jahr für den Eichenprozessionsspinner

5. Juni 2023, 10:58 Uhr
Lesezeit: 2 min



Pine Processionary moth



Preliminary Conclusions

- 2023 is a year with little Oak Processionary Moths
- Expectations for 2024 are similar

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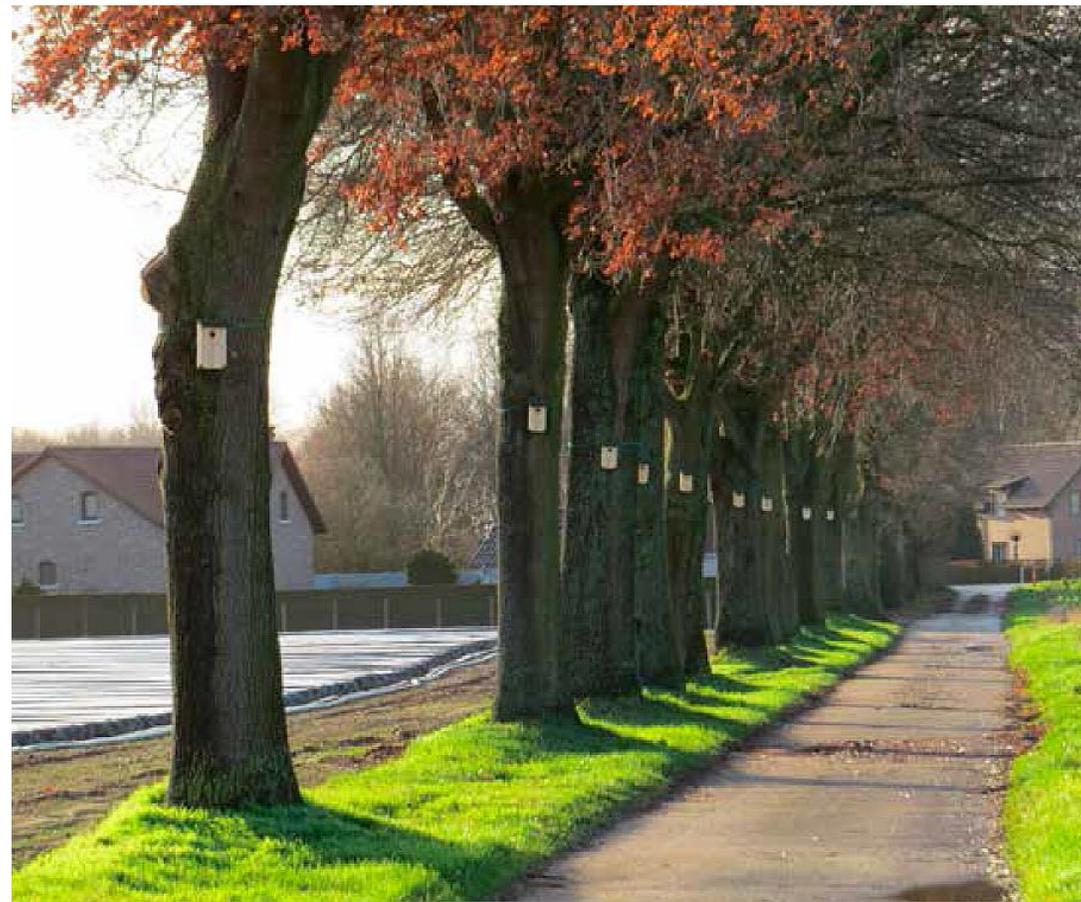
Tits as natural predators

- Study: 48 test locations spread over 4 provinces (Antwerpen, Limburg, N-Brabant, Gelderland)
- Per province, 12 locations, 6 with and 6 without nest boxes



Tits as natural predators

- Per location, 15 infected trees provided with a nest box
- 360 nest boxes in total



Densities

- Nest size

pipo golf tennis
3 cm 4 cm 7 cm

hand
15 cm

soccer
20 cm

basket
40 cm



Densities

- Nest size

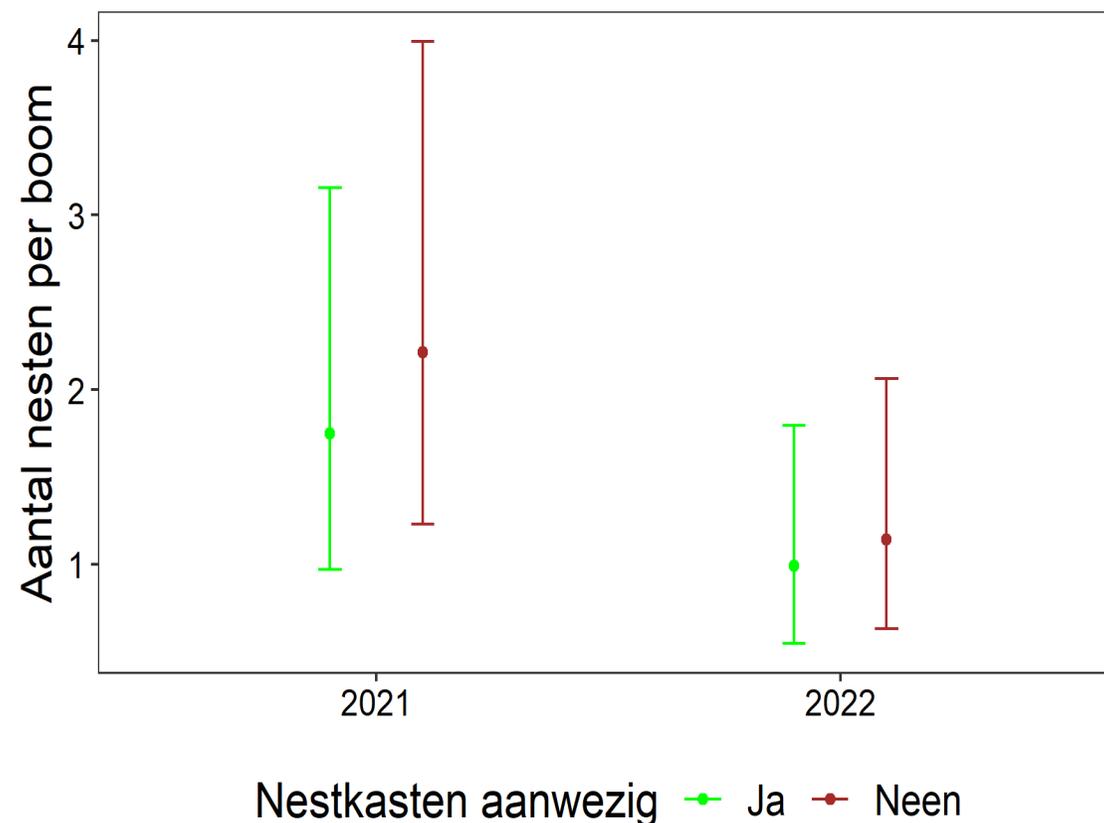


Disc-shaped
X cm x Y cm



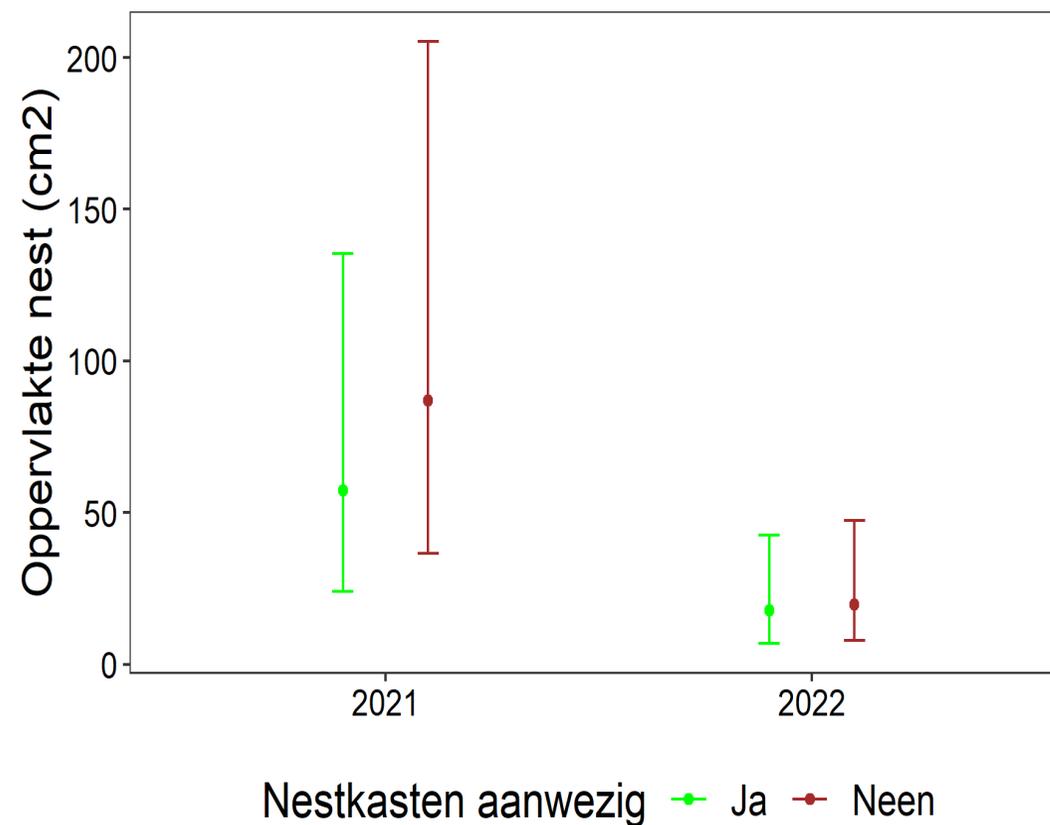
Number of nests per tree

Provincie	Gemeente	2021	2022
Antwerpen	Merksplas	0.7	1.4
Antwerpen	Retie	6.1	4.6
Antwerpen	Wortel	1.3	1.6
Gelderland	Arnhem	4.2	5.8
Gelderland	Brummen	3.6	15.3
Gelderland	Hall	0.9	0.4
Gelderland	Klarenbeek	1.1	0.8
Gelderland	Wageningen	3.7	2.8
Limburg	Bree	0.7	1.0
Limburg	Hechtel-Eksel	0.3	1.5
Limburg	Kinrooi	0.7	0.4
Limburg	Maaseik	1.3	2.5
Noord-Brabant	Asten	0.7	0.6
Noord-Brabant	Oud Gastel	0.4	0.2
Noord-Brabant	Westerhoven	1.5	1.2
Noord-Brabant	Zeeland	0.3	0.3

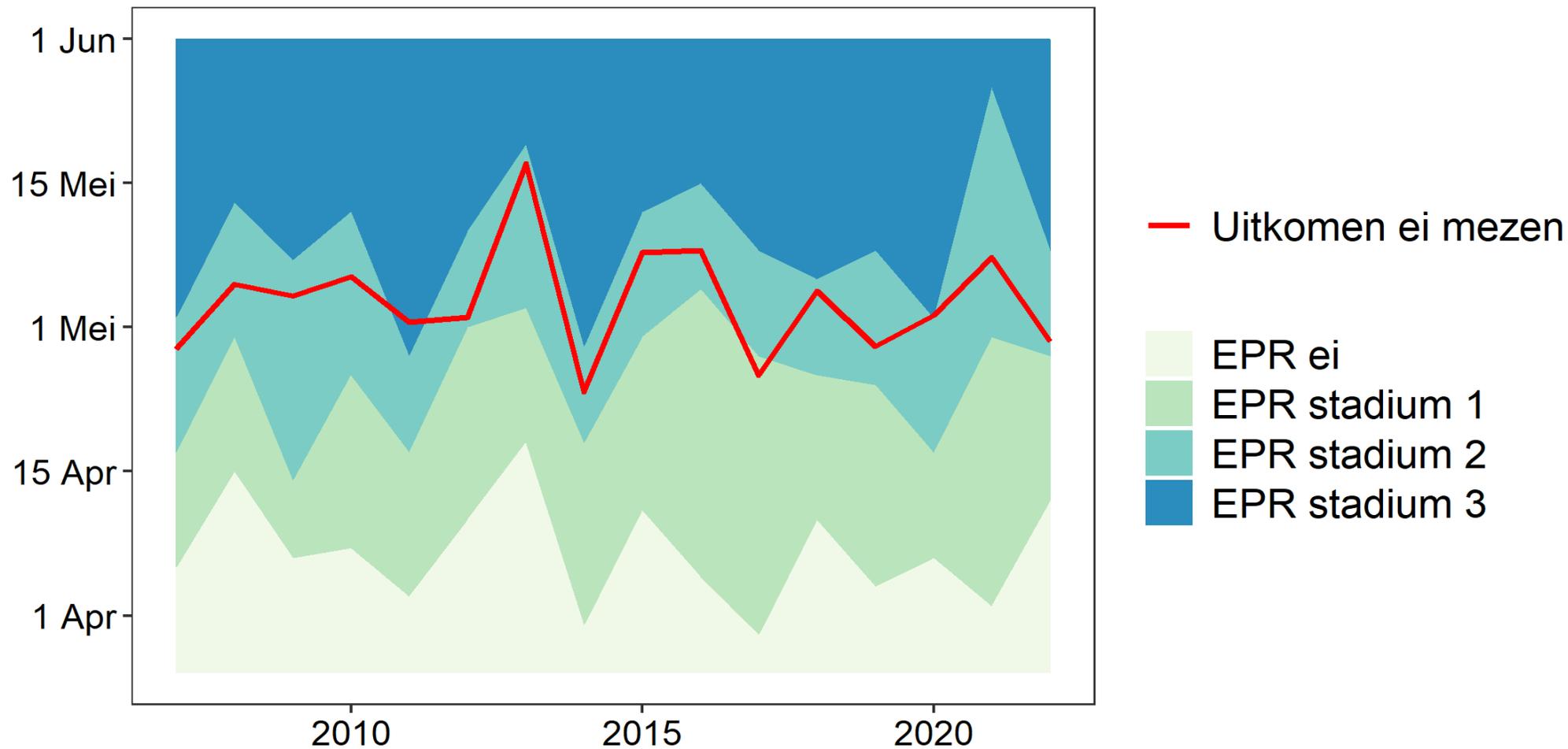


Nest area per tree

Provincie	Gemeente	2021	2022
Antwerpen	Merksplas	-0.4	0.4
Antwerpen	Retie	3.8	3.0
Antwerpen	Wortel	0.7	0.0
Gelderland	Arnhem	3.5	1.6
Gelderland	Brummen	2.1	4.6
Gelderland	Hall	-0.4	-2.2
Gelderland	Klarenbeek	1.4	-0.8
Gelderland	Wageningen	1.6	0.5
Limburg	Bree	-0.4	-0.1
Limburg	Hechtel-Eksel	-1.2	0.3
Limburg	Kinrooi	-1.0	-1.1
Limburg	Maaseik	0.3	0.3
Noord-Brabant	Asten	0.4	-0.6
Noord-Brabant	Oud Gastel	-3.0	-3.5
Noord-Brabant	Westerhoven	1.2	0.4
Noord-Brabant	Zeeland	-2.7	-1.9



Synchronisation Oak Processionary caterpillars - tits

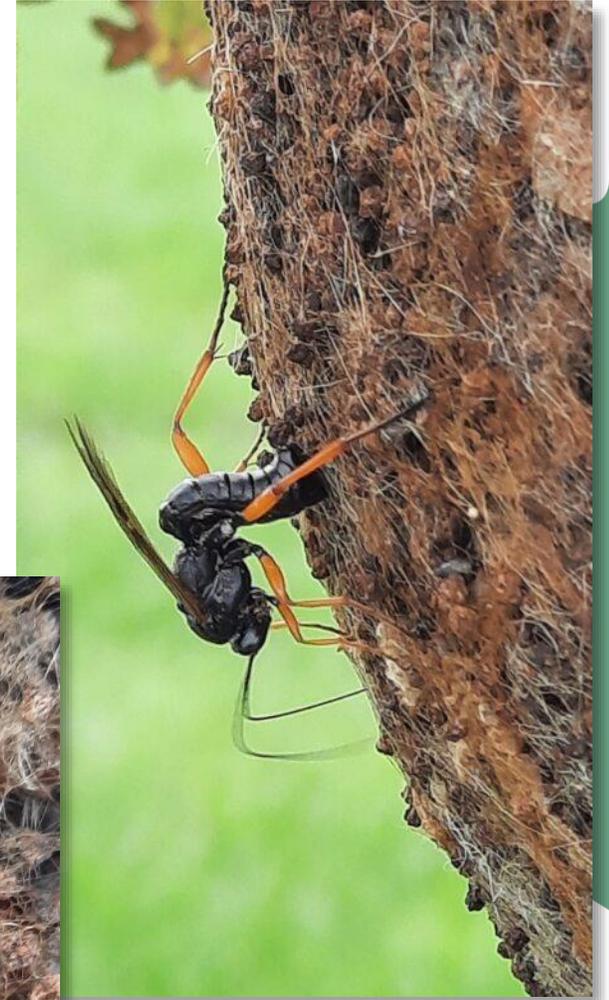


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Parasitoid flies and wasps

- Parasitoid flies and wasps parasitize OPM nests
- Number of parasitoid flies and wasps highly dependent on the environment
- Adjusted roadside management can lead to an increase



Parasitoid flies and wasps

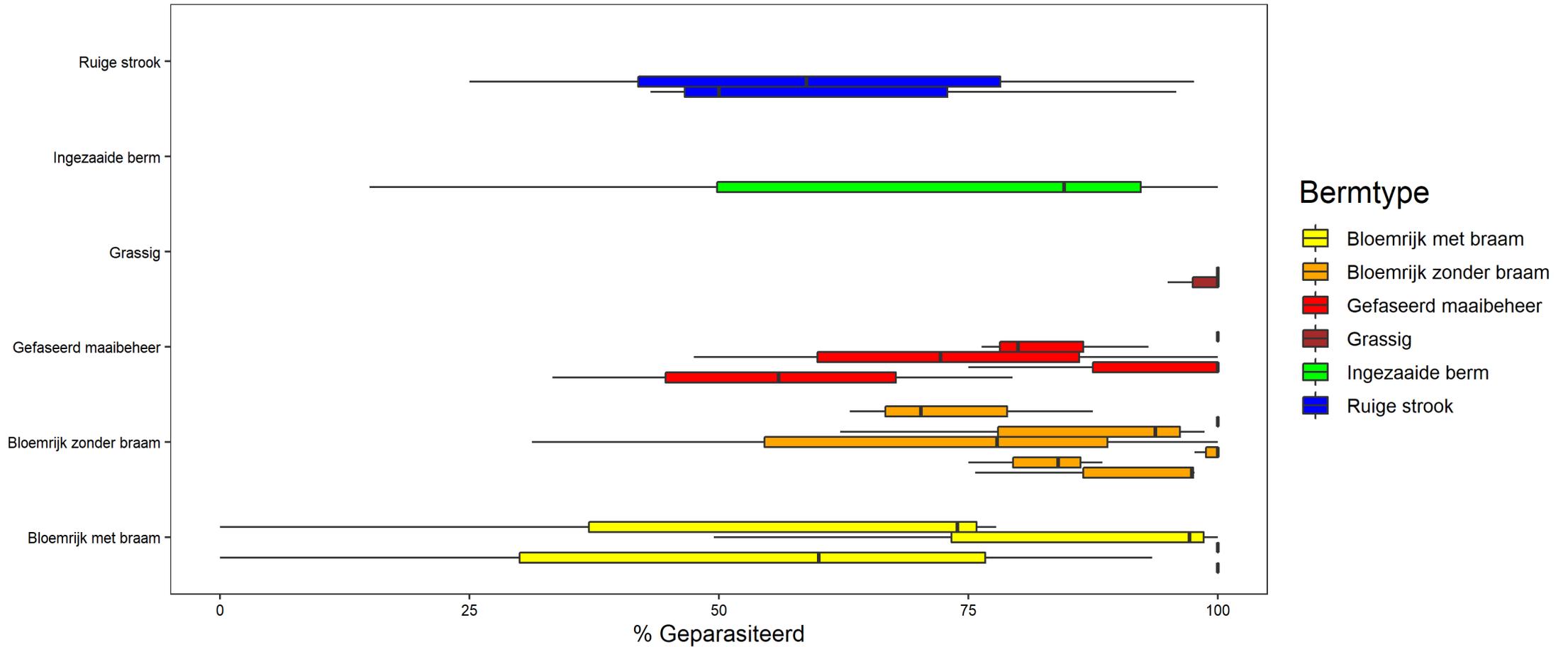
- 55 Road verges spread over 4 provinces
 - grassy without herbs, mowed several times/year
 - flowery verge, without blackberries or other shrubs, mowed once/year
 - flowery verge, with blackberries or other shrubs, mowed once/year
 - sown verge with EPR seed mixture (NL), mowed once/year
 - rough grassy verge with nettles, mowed twice/year
 - phased mowed verge
- Monitoring per test location:
 - Vegetation
 - Level of parasitization in OPM nests



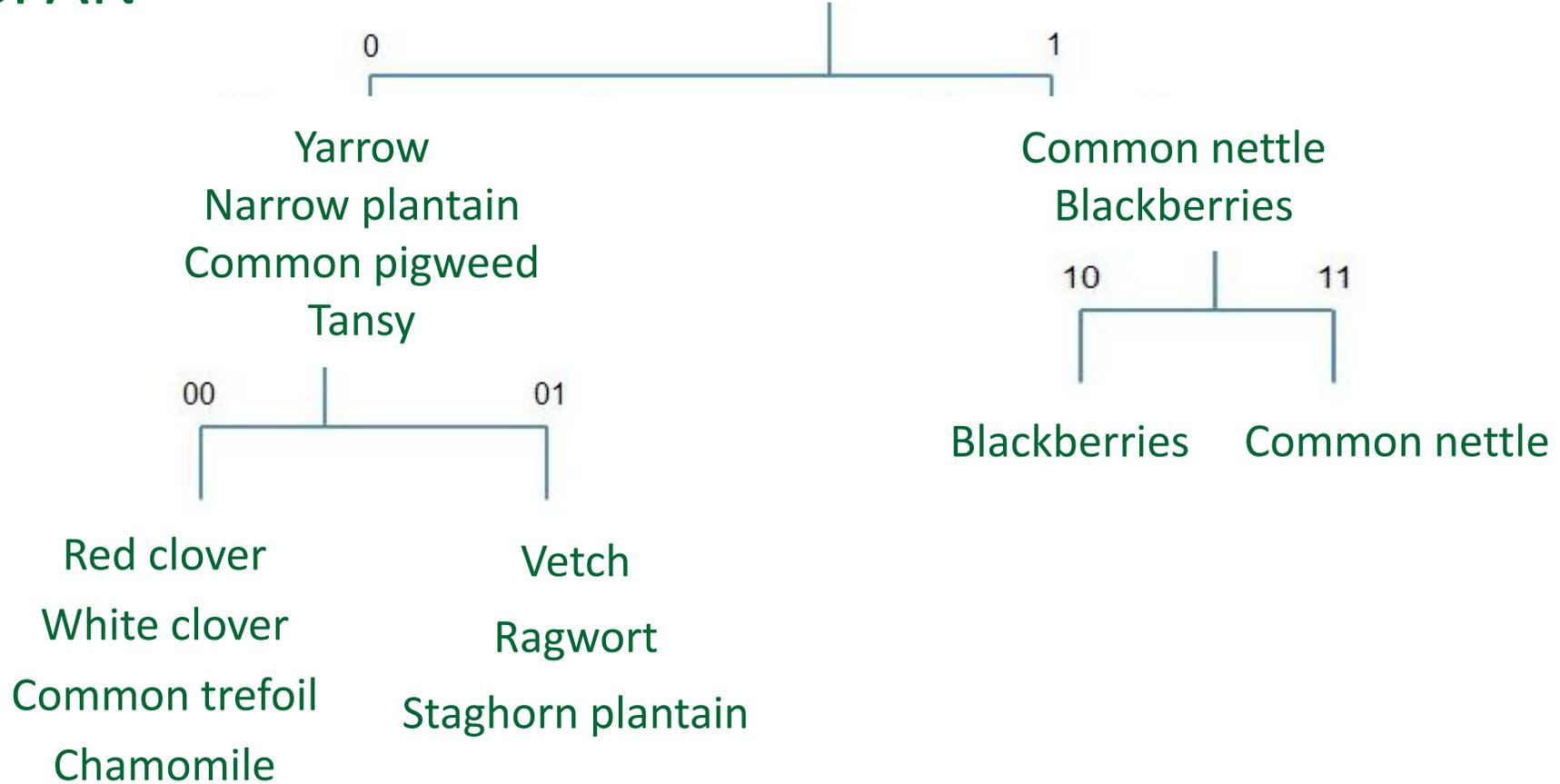
Parasitoid flies and wasps



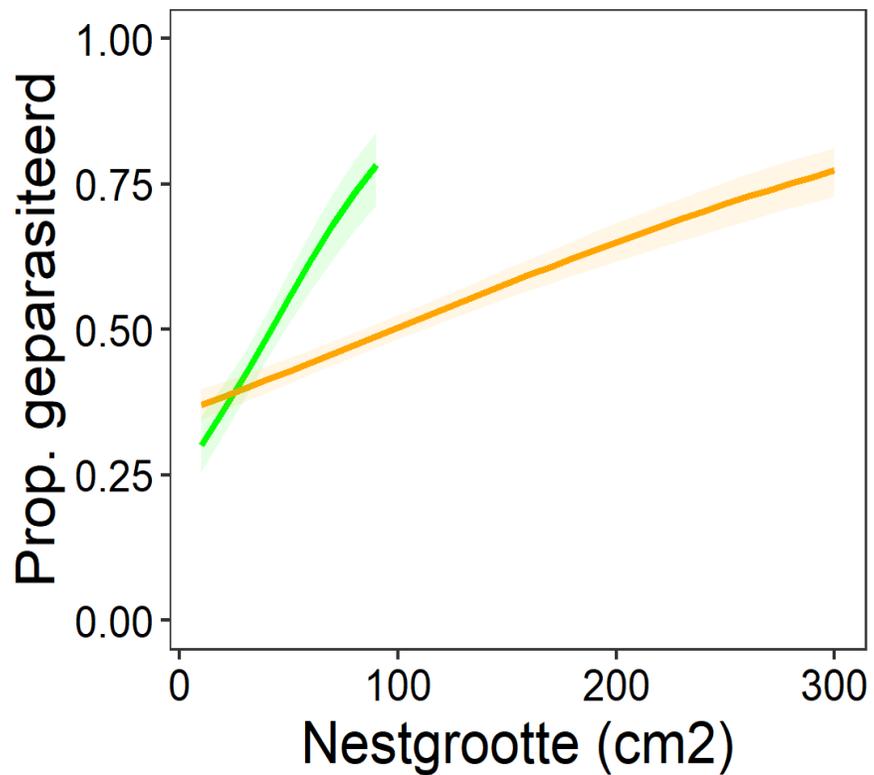
Level of parasitization by road verge type



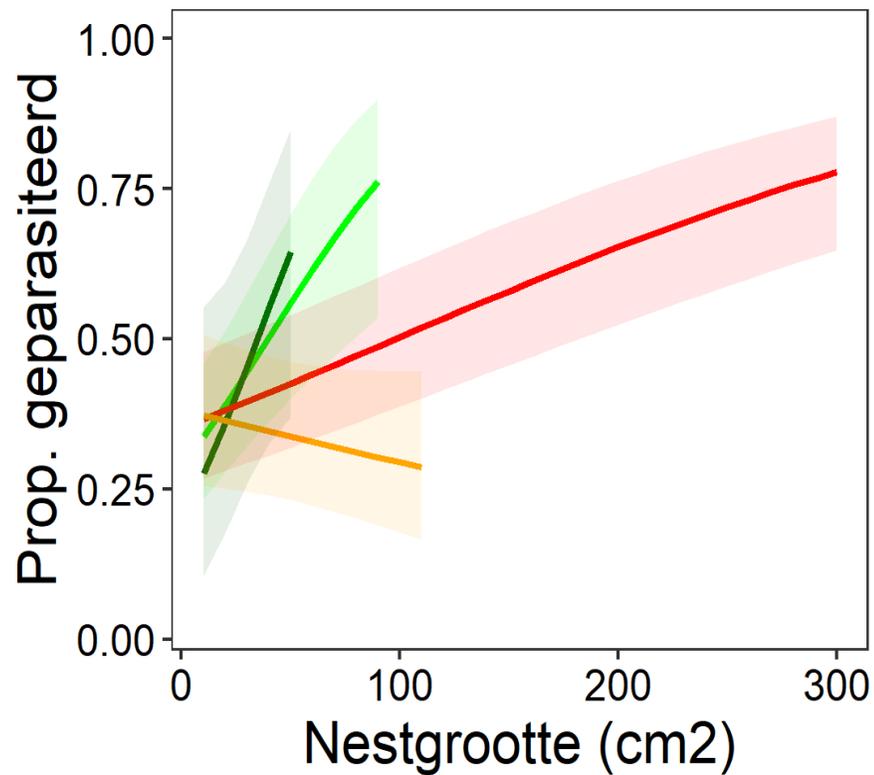
TWINSPAN



TWINSPAN

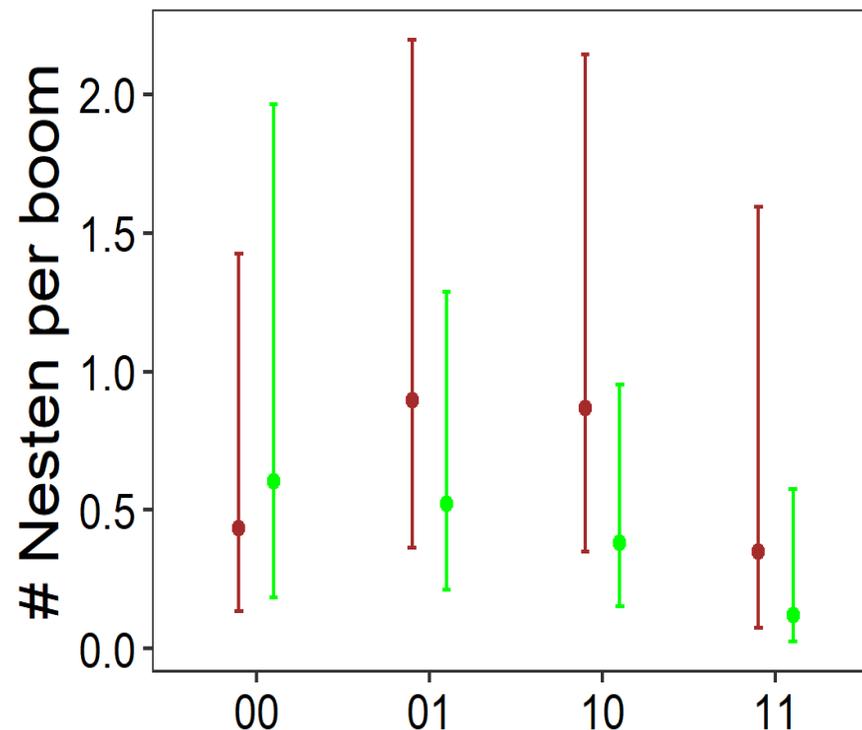
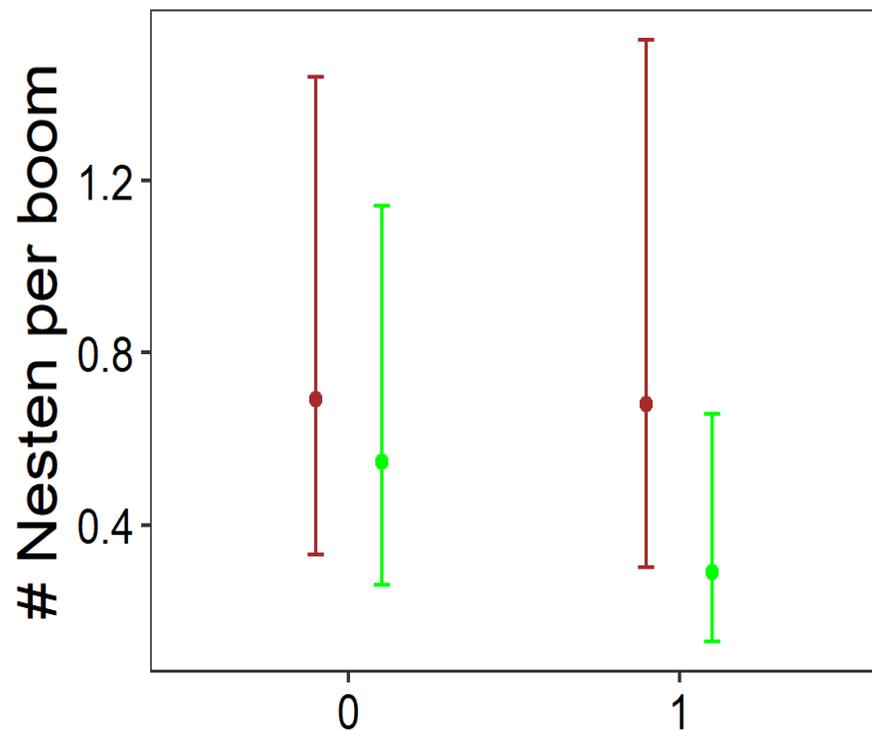


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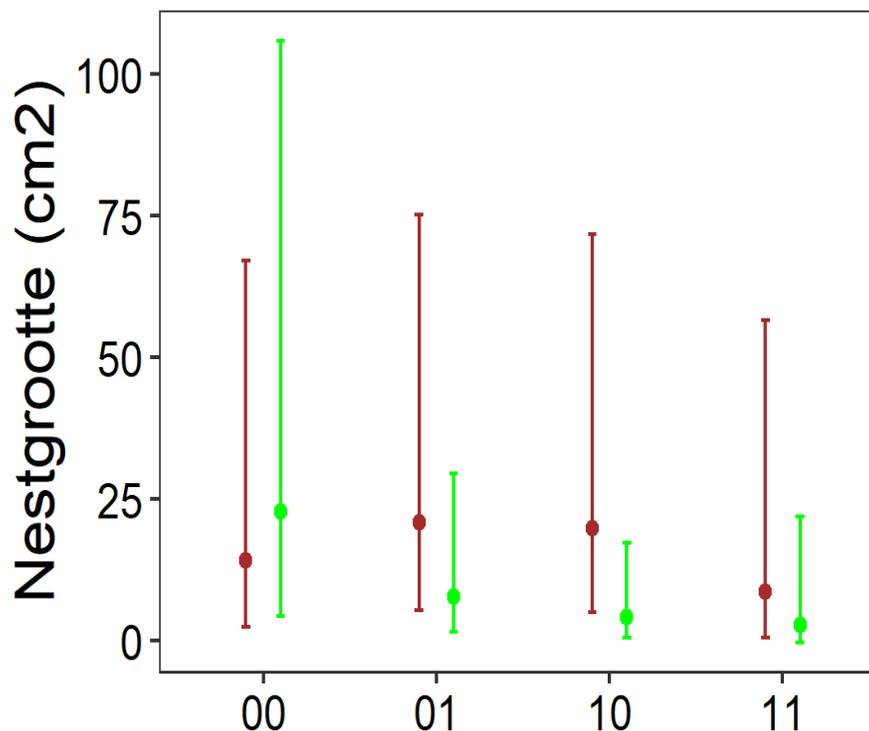
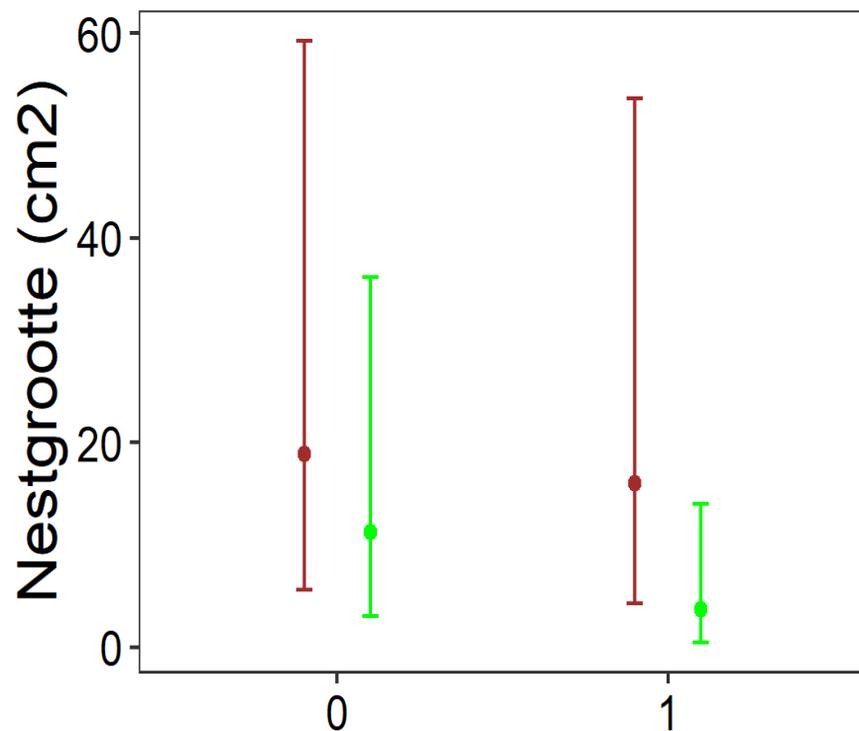
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TWINSPAN



Jaar ● 2021 ● 2022

TWINSPAN



Jaar ● 2021 ● 2022

Agenda

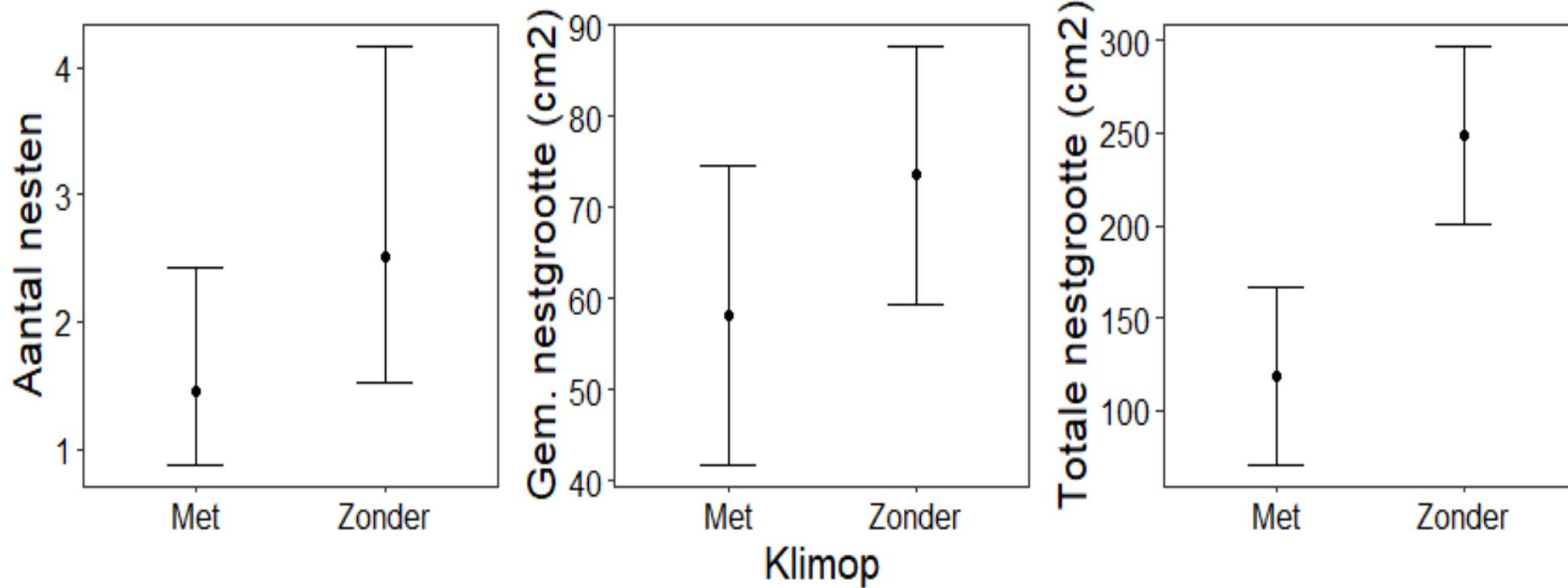
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Common ivy - an unexpected sidestep



11 locations

Impact of Common Ivy



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The Forest Caterpillar Hunter

Back with a vengeance - 2022 / 2023



Provincie
Antwerpen

provincie
Gelderland



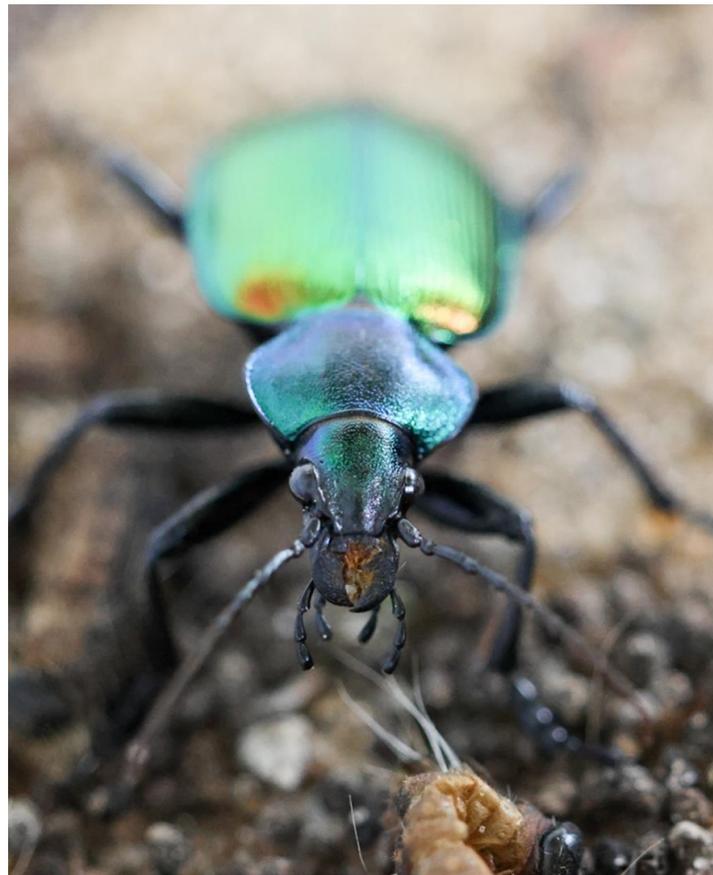
Provincie Noord-Brabant



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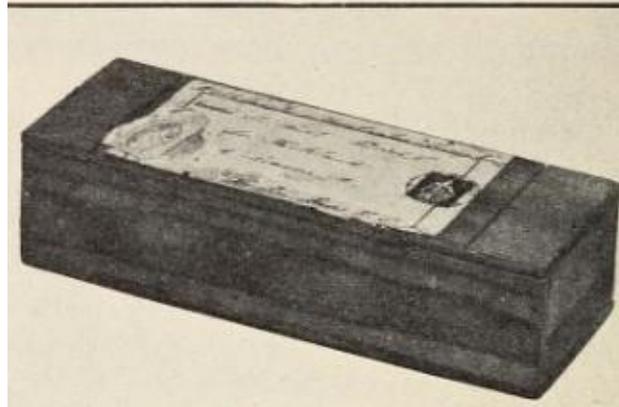
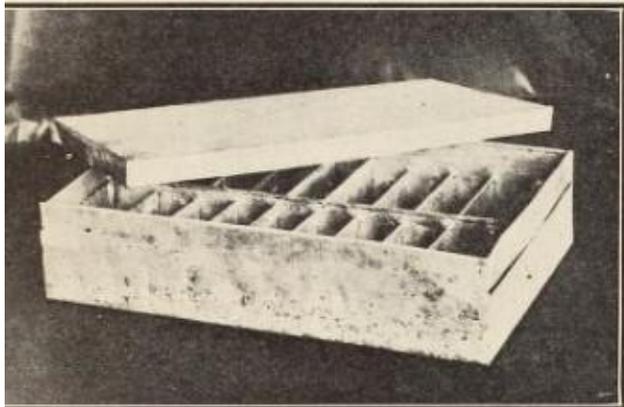
The OPM's biggest natural enemy

- Both the larva and the beetle
- Eat up to 11 caterpillars per day
- First eliminates about 10 caterpillars
- Large beetle, can live up to 4 years
- Good flyer
- Single observations in B/NL



Known for a long time...

- Introduced in 1909 in the US for natural control
- Already suggested in 1990 in the Netherlands and recently in Germany



NATUR UND LANDSCHAFT Zeitschrift für Naturschutz und Landschaftspflege

95. Jahrgang 2020 Hef 3 Seiten 105-110 DOI: 10.17433/3.2020.50153781.105-110

Andreas H. Schweiger, Fabian Nützel und Sascha Koch

Die Förderung des Großen Puppenräubers in Deutschland - ein Naturschutzprojekt zur biologischen Schädlingsbekämpfung

Reintroducing the forest caterpillar hunter in Germany - Integrating nature conservation and pest control

In den letzten Jahren häuft sich das massenhafte Auftreten forstschädigender Schmetterlingsarten mit gesundheitlichem und wirtschaftlichem Konfliktpotenzial. Zur Bekämpfung finden derzeit vermehrt nicht selektive Insektizide Anwendung. Der Einsatz natürlicher Fraßfeinde wie des Großen Puppenräubers (*Calosoma sycophanta* L.) wird bislang dagegen völlig vernachlässigt. Eine gezielte Förderung durch flächige Ausbringung dieser stark gefährdeten, heimischen Laufkäferart zusammen mit der Förderung geeigneter Habitate durch angepasstes, forstwirtschaftliches Management birgt ein großes Potenzial für eine effektive biologische Schädlingsbekämpfung mit hohem naturschutzfachlichem Wert. Trotz der generell als gering zu erachtenden nachteiligen ökologischen Nebeneffekte sollte das Erfolgs- und Risikopotenzial derartiger Maßnahmen vor einer praktischen Umsetzung immer gegenüber alternativen Strategien abgewogen und in Pilotprojekten erprobt werden. Neben Informationen zur Ökologie und zum Potenzial des Großen Puppenräubers zur Schädlingsbekämpfung wird eine mögliche Agenda zur Durchführung solcher flächigen, integrativen Artenhilfe- und

In recent years, mass occurrences of forest pest moth species have increased and associated problems for human health and forest economy have mounted. Non-selective insecticides are increasingly applied as control. The use of natural predatory species such as the forest caterpillar hunter (*Calosoma sycophanta* L.) has been completely neglected so far. Strategic promotion by introducing this highly endangered, indigenous ground beetle over a large area, in combination with the restoration of suitable habitats by adjusting forestry management, holds great potential for effective biological pest control with a high nature conservation value. We furthermore argue that such action will have high conservation significance and low ecological side effects. Despite the adverse ecological side effects of such biological control measures generally being small, their prospective outcomes and risk potential should always be assessed for the specific case against alternative strategies and tested in pilot studies before being carried out. In this article, we summarise the current knowledge on the ecology and potential of the forest caterpillar hunter for pest control and set out an agenda for the application of

Actions taken

CS
Opportunities
Report

Habitat Model

Consultation

Visit Turkey

Actions in the
lab



Training in Turkey 28.03 - 01.04.2022

- Forestry Institute in Izmir
- 29 places where they breed CS for release











BERGAMA ORMAN İŞLETME MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ
Bergama Orman İşletme Şefliği

BİYOLOJİK MÜCADELE
ÜRETİM LABORATUVARI



Calosama sycophanta



Thanasimus formicarius



ORMAN GENEL MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ
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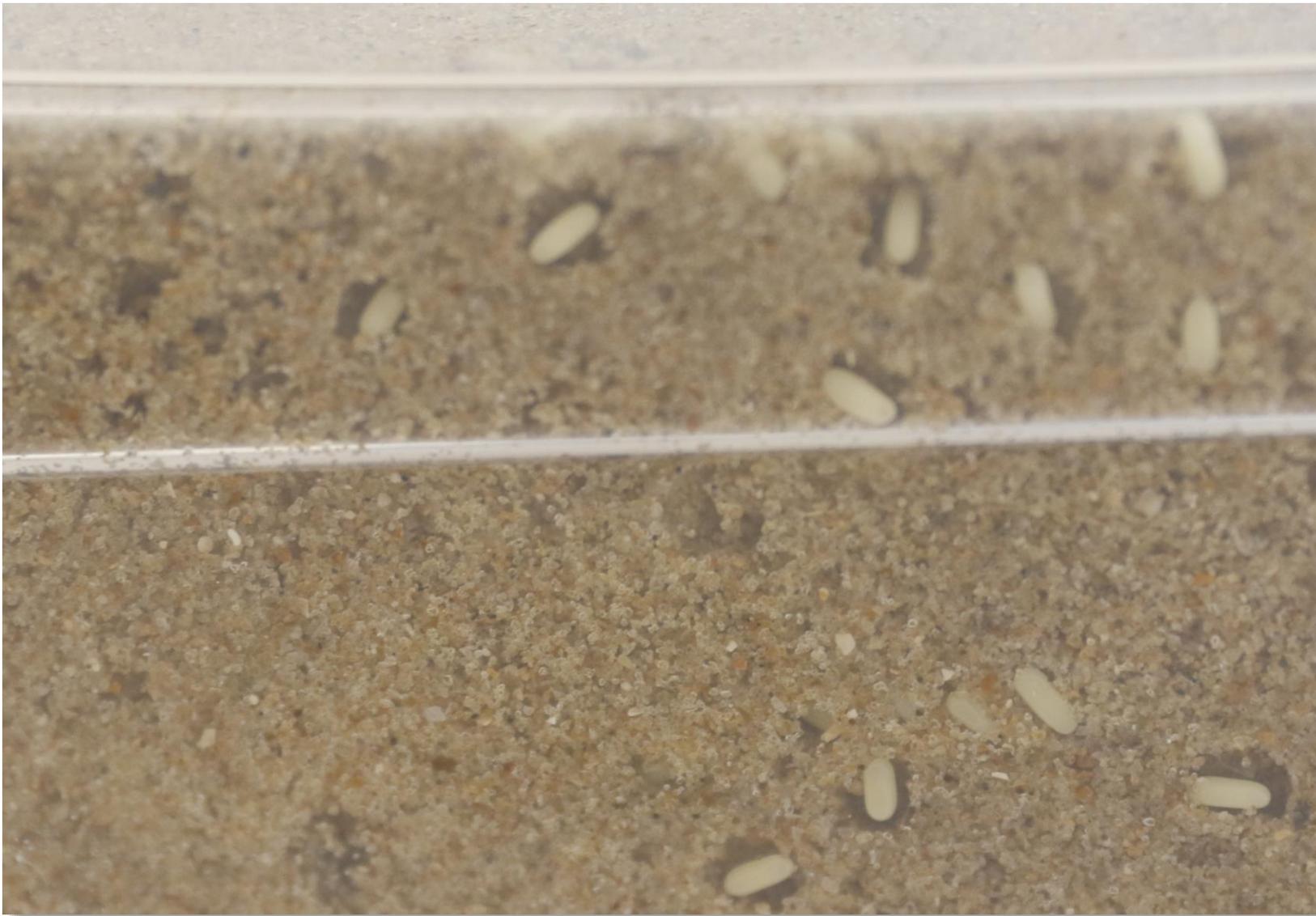


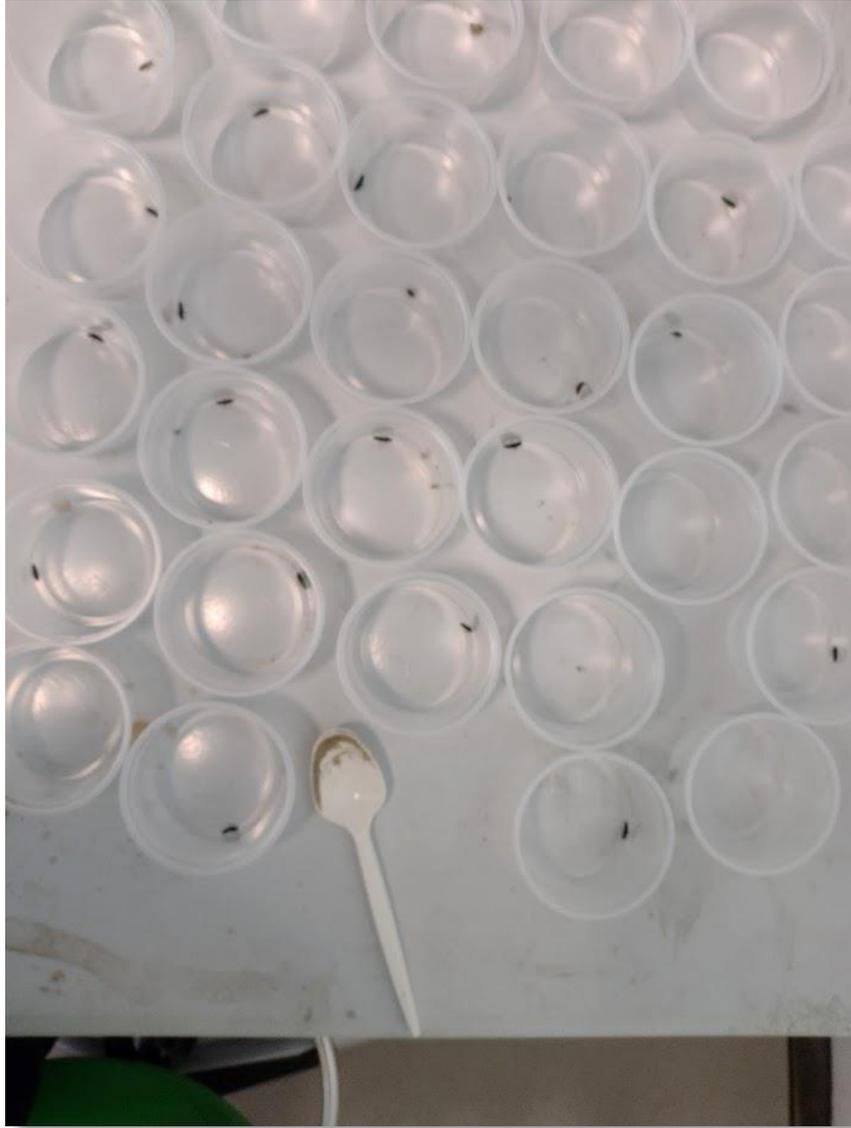












2023 nieuw actie

- Nieuwe Poppenrovers uit Turkije van EPR gebied









Late arrival

- Juni 26th 2023



Late arrival





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Antwerpen

provincie
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Provincie Noord-Brabant



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How to continue with the Forrest Caterpillar Hunter

- Currently 92 beetles in the greenhouse
- Hibernating underground
- Woke up again in the spring and offered caterpillars in the lab
- Hoping for offspring

- Test remains under laboratory conditions

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Biocide use in Flanders and the Netherlands

- **Main project objective:**

- Drastic reduction in the amount of biocides used in the fight against OPM
 - - 50% in the project area before end 2025
 - - 50% in Flanders & the Netherlands before end 2030

- **Indicators:**

- Extent of use (-> effect on the environment)
 - Number of trees sprayed
 - **Amount of biocide used (in kg or l)**
- Effectiveness of the biocide (-> percentage of OPM and other species impacted)
 - **Amount of active substance used (in kg)**
 - Potency (biological effect) in IU or MIU



Information sources

- Biocides used by door de project partner
 - All municipalities in the provinces of Limburg & Antwerp (BE) ;
 - Provinces of Gelderland & Noord-Brabant (NL) on provincial roads;
 - Municioalities Sittard-Geleen, Maastricht and Heerlen in Limburg (NL);

✓ **Baseline 2018: 2053 I/kg**

- Annual VMM-data (Flanders)
 - All Flemish municipalities & higher authorities
 - Data as from 2011

✓ **Baseline 2018: 1581 I/kg**

- Ambassador municipalities:
 - Annual survey sent out by the project
 - At least 4 municipalities per province (NL + BE)
 - Data as from 2020

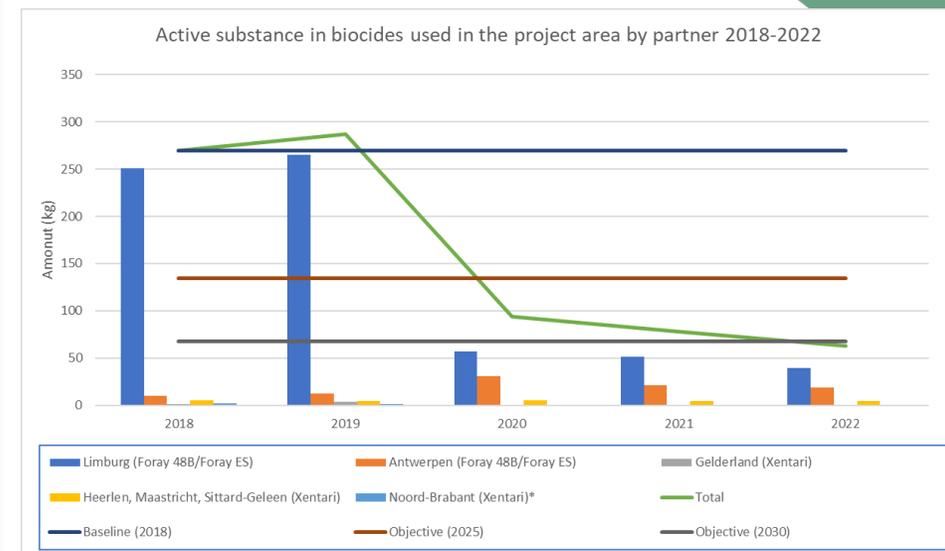
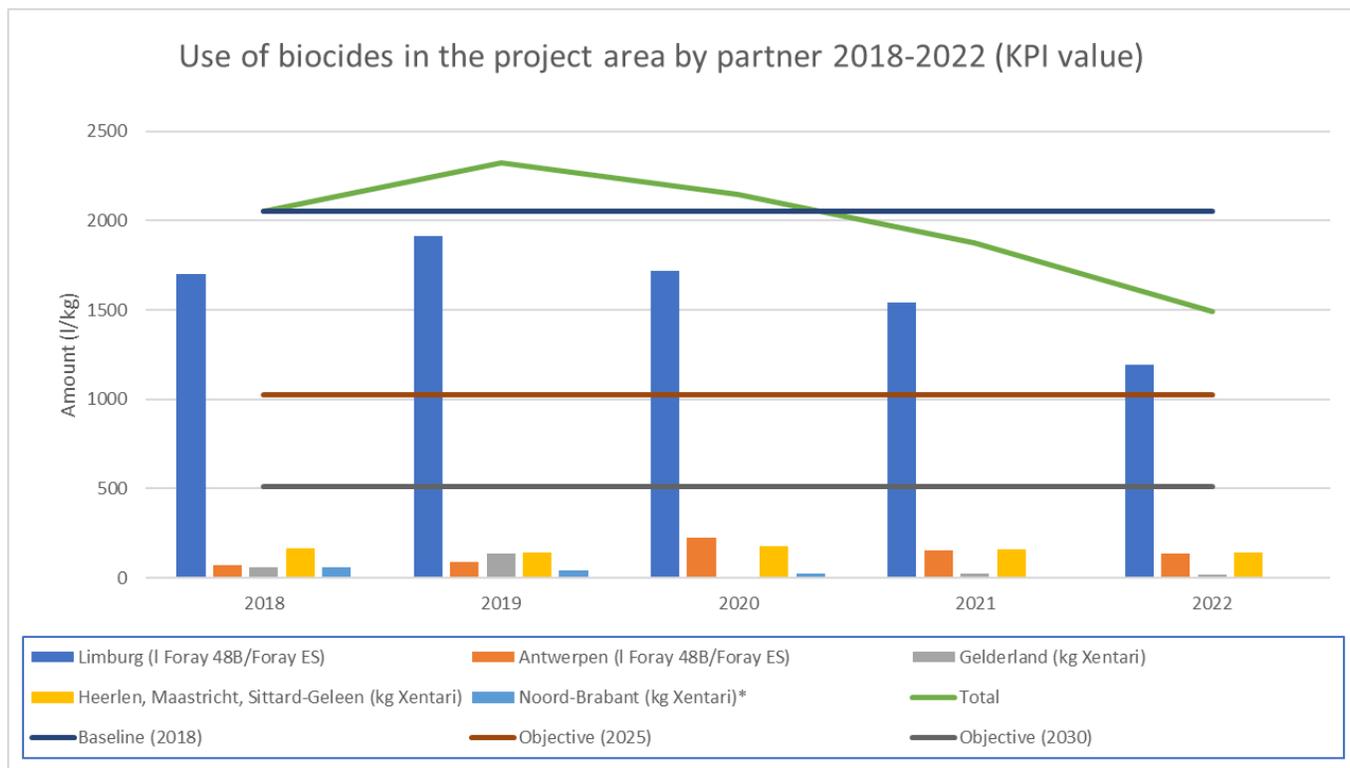
✓ **Baseline 2021: 32,4 I/kg**

Biocides used

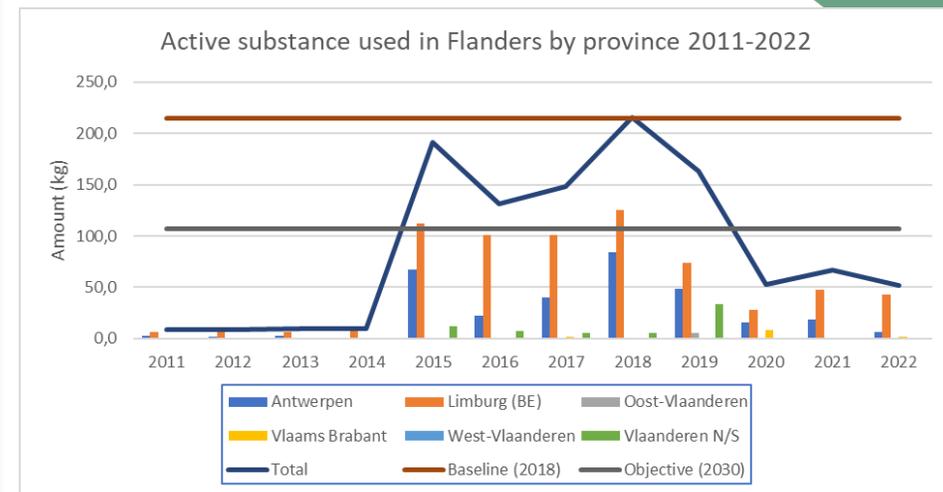
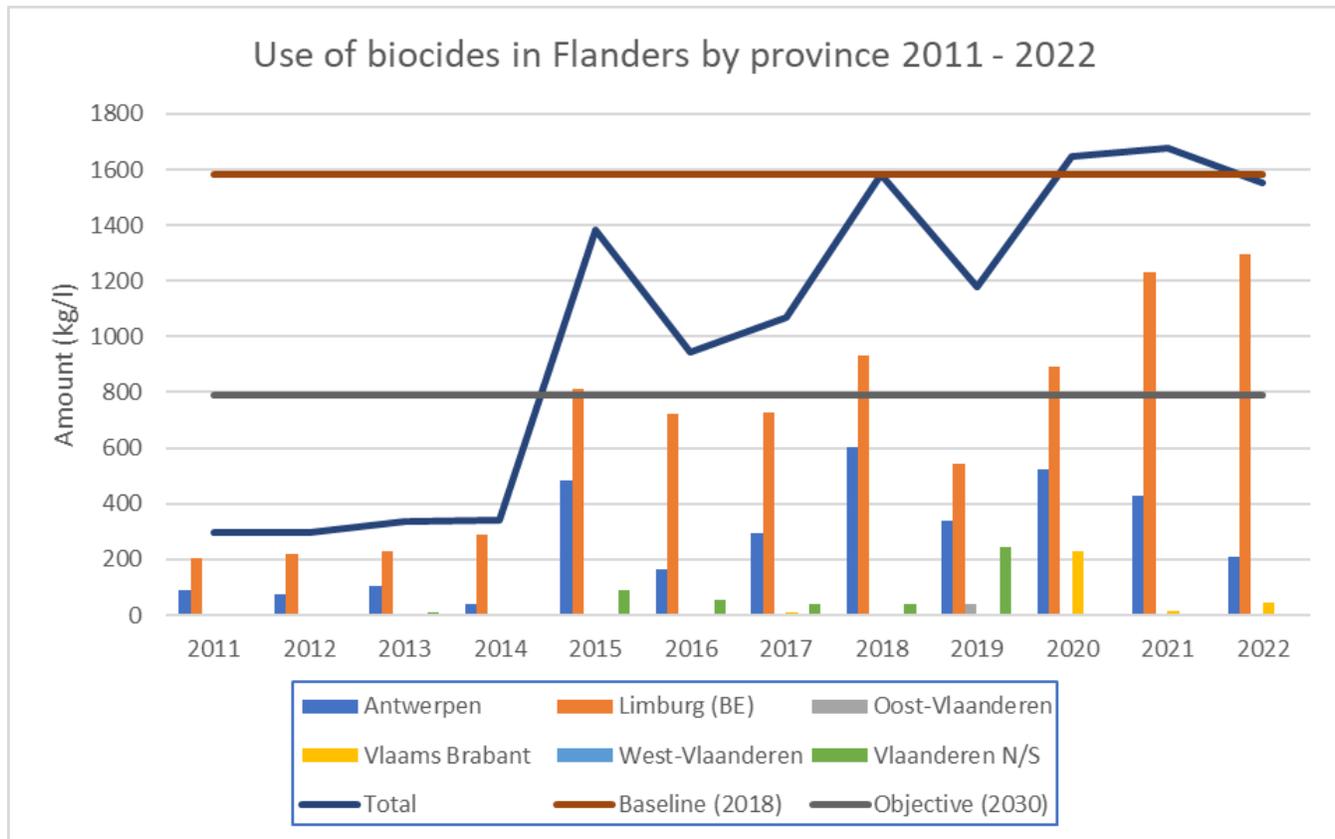
- *Bacillus thuringiensis* (BT)
 - Three variants
 - Impact on all caterpillars – not just OPM
 - Most commonly used
- NeemProtect
 - Extract of the Neem or Margosa plant (*Azadiracta indica*)
 - Impact on all leaf-eating insects
 - Very limited use

Product	BT subspecies	Nature	Active substance (kg/kg or kg/l)	Potency (IU/mg)
Xentari WG	<i>Bacillus thuringiensis aizawai</i>	Solid	0,03	15.000
Foray 48B	<i>Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki</i>	Liquid	0,14	10.600
Foray ES	<i>Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki</i>	Liquid	0,03	17.600

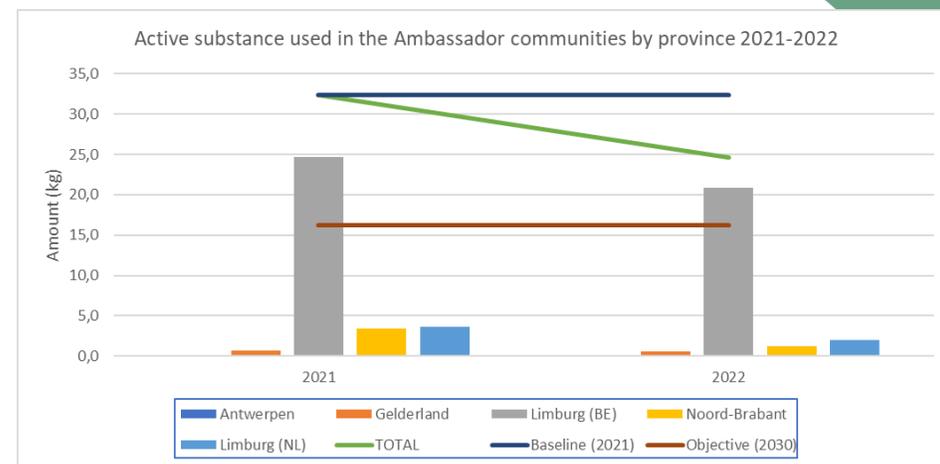
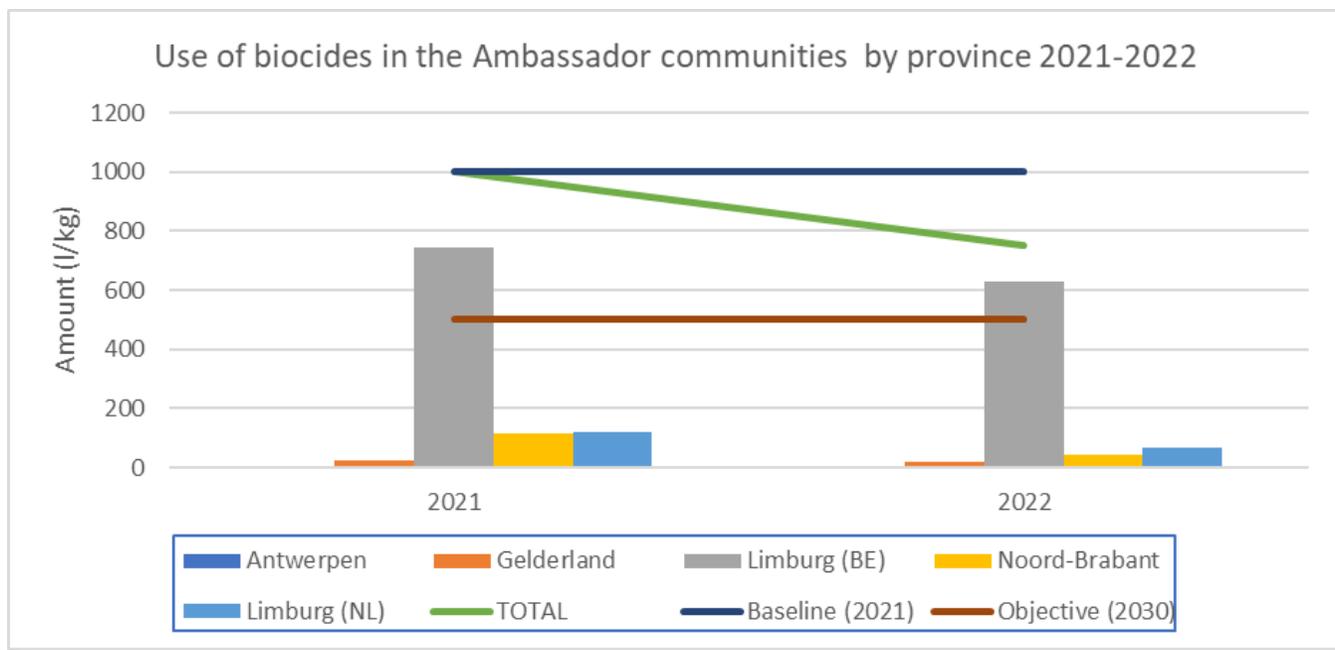
Biocide use by project partners



Biocide use in Flanders (VMM)



Biocide use by Ambassador municipalities

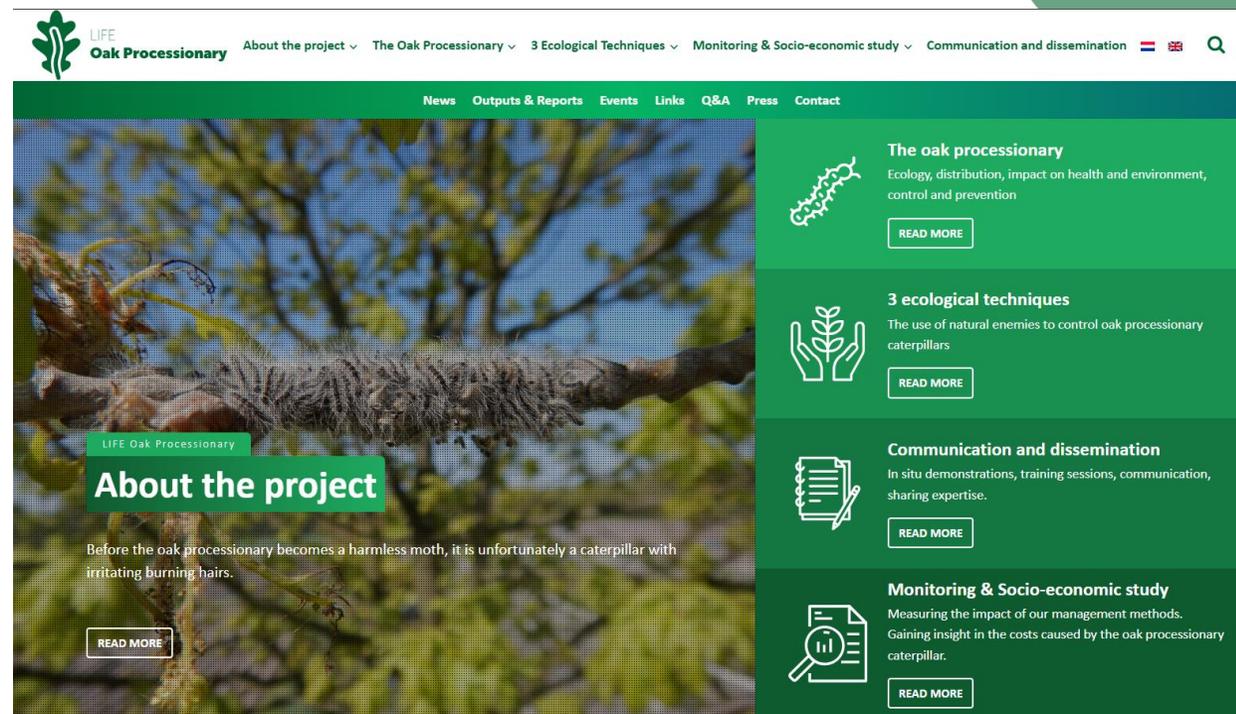


Preliminary conclusions

- ✓ **Reduction of the amount of biocides used (KPI) in the majority of provinces in line with the target**
 - ← Increasing awareness of the negative effects of biocides
 - ← Relatively limited presence of OPM since 2022
- ✓ Strong reduction of the impact on the ecosystem through the introduction of a new product variant
- **However: The use of biocides may increase again with future OPM peaks**
 - Continuous awareness remains necessary

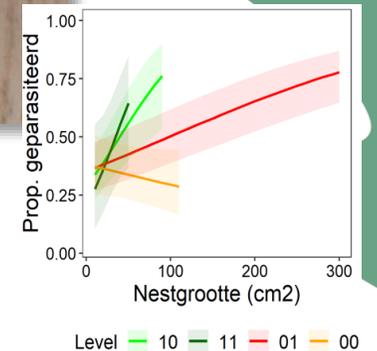
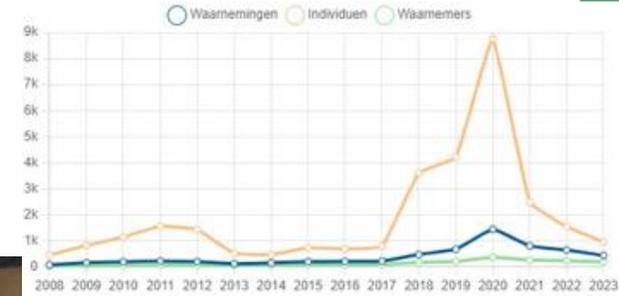
More info? Questions? Comments?

- **Website:** [Home - LIFE Oak Processionary Project](#)
- **Facebook:** [EikenprocessierupsLIFE](#)
- **E-Mail:** info@eikenprocessierups.life



Where are we after 2,5 years? (1/2)

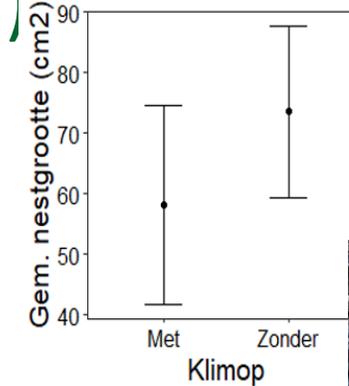
- **Trend Oak Processionary: 2023 quiet, 2024 comparable?**
- **Predation by tits:**
 - No clear impact of tits on oak processionary caterpillars yet;
 - Tit chicks too late in the season to take advantage of young caterpillars;
 - Research continues.
- **Predation by parasitoid flies and wasps:**
 - Promising results in terms of impact on the Oak Processionary Moth;
 - No clear connection yet with the type of road verge, management or nectar index;
 - Research is refined into plant species and continued.



Where are we after 2,5 years? (2/2)

- **Common ivy in pedunculate oak:**

- First results show a significant impact on Oak Processionary Moths;
- Research continues;
- Possible impact on other species is being investigated.



- **Predation by forest caterpillar hunter:**

- Lab tests show that they prefer oak processionary caterpillars as food;
- If a breeding can be started, we see possibilities for controlling the caterpillars;
- Further research in the laboratory and then outside (if there are sufficient caterpillars) is certainly necessary;
- Currently, the population of beetles in the Benelux is too small to have an impact.

- **Biocide use in Flanders & the Netherlands:**

- Decreases almost everywhere in Flanders and the Netherlands since 2021;
- Risk of relapse when pressure increases -> awareness remains important.

