

# Nutrient-poor grasslands rely on regular human management



Nutrient-poor grassland

Nutrient-poor grasslands rely on regular disturbance through grazing or mowing. Without this, scrub would start to take over, leading eventually to the development of forest. In contrast to intensively fertilised grassland that is mown several times a year, nutrient-poor grasslands are not fertilised and only mown or grazed 1-2 times a year.

## Photos:

- 1** Many areas that could potentially support species-rich calcareous grasslands like this one in the Experimental Botanical Garden have been turned into intensively used, species-poor grasslands or arable fields. Photo: D. Hertel
- 2** Annual mowing with removal of the hay leads to the loss of nutrients from the grassland, promoting the development of a species-rich meadow. Nutrient-poor calcareous grasslands can contain up to 40 plant species per m<sup>2</sup> and thus count among the most species-rich habitats in Central Europe. Photo: L. Köhler
- 3** The many plant species growing in nutrient-poor calcareous grasslands provide a rich food source for many insect species, such as the marbled white (*Melanargia galathea*). Photo: U. Hertel



Experimental Botanical Garden

More information

