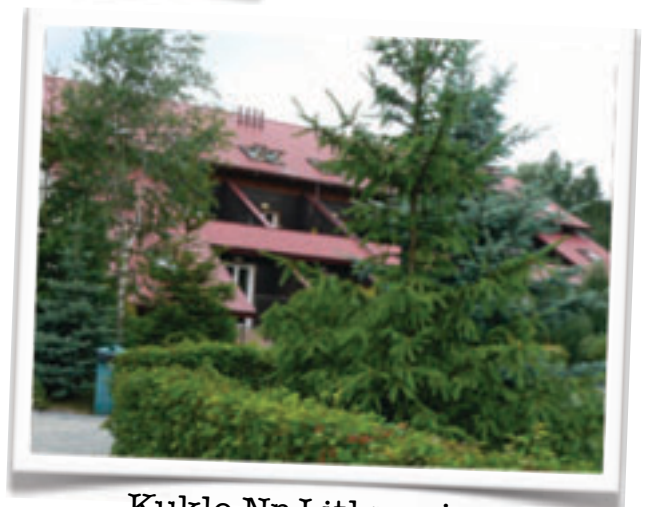


Satellites



Osieck Nr Warsaw



Kukle Nr Lithuania

Osieck & Kukle Poland
Aug 2nd - 18th 2010

13 went to mow, went to mow a meadow... or three



13 men and women went to Poland (Kathy and Nigel of EuCan (European Conservation Action Network) met us there) to mow a number of wetland meadows situated in a Bog, a Fen and a Mire as part of a joint EuCan habitat conservation project with the Leonardo Da Vinci fund and the Lifelong Learning Program... Some history and what the program is all about...

The European Conservation Action Network was established in 2007 by The Kingcombe Trust, a charity based at The Kingcombe Centre in west Dorset, dedicated to conservation and environmental education (it is a registered charity), in association with the Dorset Branch of Butterfly Conservation. The project is funded through the Leonardo da Vinci section of the European Union Lifelong Learning Programme and has partners in France, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Belgium, Poland and Romania. If you would like further information regarding these conservation opportunities, please make contact using the details below. www.kingcombecentre.org.uk or from Nigel Spring (tel: 0044.1963.23559/mobile: 0044.7981.776767.Email: nigelspring@yahoo.co.uk).

The three projects



Bagno Calowanie The Kissing swamp.
So called due to the noise your wellies make when you pull them out of the sodden ground.

We spent 2 days clearing encroaching tree's from the edge and Brushcut biomass. All cut material had to be dragged to the edge of the swamp to prevent enrichment and change the delicate balance of the Habitat



Torf Oronskie was a Fen in the middle of the woods. A stunning spot with beautiful spiders! Here we spent 4 days again removing encroaching trees and scrub with Bowsaws & chainsaws and Brush cutting the Biomass before removing it to the edge of the Woods. Bearing in mind we were in what seemed like the middle of no where, there was a shop that sold the best tasting ice cream after a long hot day up to your ankles in



Last but not least we spent 4 days at Sarnetki Fenland. in North Eastern Poland. Once again a stunning wetland habitat in need of some Chainsaw and Brushcutter TLC to reduce the encroaching tree's and scrub and trim the Biomass for removal

Poland an Amazing country

Personal growth and development

I hadn't met anyone before I went. Many of my friends congratulated me on having the guts to spend 3 weeks with a bunch of people I didn't know. My advice to others who are thinking of going. Go for it!!! This was one of the best experiences of my life. I have made fabulous friends in an extraordinary set of circumstances.

You can't get on with all of the people all of the time!

After being confined in a minibus in +35oC of heat... then sleeping in a room with other peoples bad habits and stinking clothes... when you are exhausted through work and haven't slept because of the sound of their snoring has kept you awake... when all you want is a hug from a love one... This, makes everyone grumpy some times.

The Work

As my friends and family will confirm, my greatest concern was that I wouldn't have the opportunity to work hard and make a difference to the habitats we visited. I was concerned we would be carrying out a lot of surveys. Yes we did surveys but boy did we work hard!!! If you don't like working hard outside in extreme conditions you will not enjoy this trip. I however, loved every last drop of every minute.

The Polish

Not an easy language to master! Hello, Goodbye, Please, Thank you and '5 beers please' plus a few other odd words was as good as my Polish got. The food is brilliant for meat eaters. Thankfully I love pork and potatoes... but some vegetables would have been nice. Some of the Locals we met at work thought we were mad... its true what they say, only mad dogs and English people work in a swamp in the mid day sun :)

I would also like to thank Kathy & Nigel for making this experience incredible, they and our hosts worked hard to keep us entertained.

My favorite Polish Piwo

After a Hard days work in the 'very wet land' a cold or even a warm beer was very welcome. Here are my top 4 and why...



Number 1) Zubr

A real throat charmer, just like them local Polish cigarettes. Some where between a real ale and a pilsner. A whopping 6 % ABV of moreish beeryness. Available in bottles or cans, but please bring the glasses back to the bar when you've finished.



Number 2) Zywiec

Very tasty indeed! Classed as a premium larger with an ABV of 5.7% Best consumed chilled, straight from a bucket of cold water. Goes very well with Pork.



Number 3) Tatra

Classed as a Pilsner with an ABV of 6%. A cheeky little number, rolls down throat a little too easily and leaves you with a mouth like a Beavers rear end the day after.



Number 4) Tyskie

Classed as a premium larger. ABV of 5.2% any aspiring young larger lout would be proud to drink. Best consumed after a dip in the local pond, known to kill all germs... dead.

My Best Bits :)



Going to Poland was like stepping back in time. Old fashion hay ricks at Bagno Calowanie.



Learning. Every day was a school day :) Day one, a Moth trap and survey.



Group Schmoo number 1



Jelle's Birthday party



The lads making the most of the 35oC heat up to their knees in Water :)



Poland, home of some beautiful scenery and dramatic sky's



When it rained, it rained!



Chris (AKA Dormouse) & Mary loving every moment of every minute of every day.



Being abandoned in Warsaw! By myself for a couple of blissful hours. A Chopin concert in the park.

My Best Bits :)



The change in scenery from the middle to the east of Poland.



"The Kids"
Night Crawler, Kirstie, Gazelle,
Mary Flynn & Dormouse



The stunning sunsets



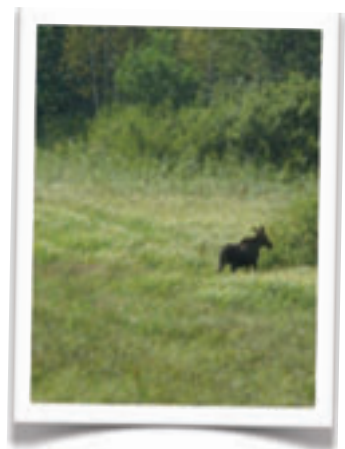
The lads always got in to the spirit of things



Getting Hammered on Wodka
and Zubr Beer



The "Auf weidersehn pet" party
We were invited to join in the
Locals celebration



The Elk :)



Where we had lunch whilst
traveling to the 3rd site



Wise Chris having a 'Callander
girls' moment with his
delicious dumplings

My Best Bits :)



A very long board walk in to a very big swamp & seeing an Aquatic Warbler (Uhhum Nigel, yes it was!)



Satellite spotting and Star gazing from the pontoon @ Kukle



The Night crawlers, I loved the fact they NEVER came in before 2am after working their pants off all day!



The carriage ride through the woods drinking hot tea with rum :)



Look at that sky!



Early morning ventures in to the woods to see what we can see...



Swimming in the river...



After a beating with birch twigs in the Sauna



Its not everyone who can handle a 80oC Sauna after working in 35oC of heat all day!

My Best Bits :)



Paddling down the river with Mary Flynn and spotting a Beaver (Damn)!



The lake where we stayed, and going for a dip after work.



Our day off!!!



Schmoo number 2



These ladies have no time for lunch! They Never give up! Kirstie and Mary's strimmin'tastic stamina.



Giving Jelle a Lionelle Blair cut :)



The train journey both ways was a fabulous way to travel



The great team spirit



Dormouse, KitKat and Wise... Always grinning like idiots :)