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# Biodiversity, syntaxonomy, and management – Editorial to the 7th Dry Grassland Special Feature (with a bibliometrical evaluation of the series)

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**Abstract**

We report on the activities of the *European Dry Grassland Group* (EDGG) during the last year, namely the 8th European Dry Grassland Meeting in Uman', Ukraine in June 2011, the 3rd EDGG Research Expedition in Bulgaria in August 2011, the 4th EDGG Research Expedition in Sicily in April 2012, as well as the completed and forthcoming EDGG-coordinated special features in international journals. Then we provide a brief bibliometrical analysis of the Dry Grassland Special Features in *Tuexenia* since 2005. The 32 contributions of the years 2005–2011 constituted approx. 17% of the overall content of *Tuexenia* in this period. Including this 7th Dry Grassland Special Feature, sixty-one authors from 12 countries have contributed to these Special Features, guest-edited by yearly changing teams from a total of 16 guest editors. In the years with statistically reliable data, contributions in the Dry Grassland Special Features have been cited approximately four times as much as regular *Tuexenia* contributions. It is likely that this fact together with the internationality of the Special Features has contributed to the final inclusion of the journal in the *Web of Science* in 2011. Finally, we introduce the four research articles of this 7th Dry Grassland Special Feature. Two of them are focusing on vegetation change and restoration issues of cryptogam-rich sand dunes in the Netherlands and calcareous grasslands in Bavaria (Germany), respectively. The others, dealing with siliceous grasslands in Hesse (central Germany) and the results of EDGG Research Expedition 2009 to Transylvania (Romania), focus on syntaxonomy.

**Zusammenfassung: Biodiversität, Syntaxonomie und Management – Vorwort zum 7. Trockenrasen-Sonderteil (mit einer bibliometrischen Analyse der Reihe)**

Wir berichten von den Aktivitäten der *European Dry Grassland Group* (EDGG) während des vergangenen Jahres, insbesondere vom 8. *European Dry Grassland Meeting* im Juni 2011 in Uman', Ukraine, der 3. EDGG-Forschungsexpedition im August 2011 in Bulgarien, der 4. EDGG-Forschungsexpedition im April 2012 nach Sizilien, den abgeschlossenen und laufenden, von der EDGG koordinierten *special features* in internationalen Fachzeitschriften. Dann bringen wir eine kurze bibliometrische Analyse der Trockenrasen-Sonderteile in der *Tuexenia* seit 2005. Die 32 Beiträge in den Sonderteilen 2005–2011 machten rund 17 % des Gesamtumfangs der Zeitschrift in diesen Jahren aus. Einschließlich des vorliegenden 7. Sonderteiles haben 61 Autoren aus 12 Ländern zu den EDGG-Sonderteilen beigetragen, die von jährlich wechselnden Teams aus einem Pool von bislang 16 verschiedenen Gastherausgebern koordiniert wurden. In den Jahren, in denen die Datenlage eine belastbare Analyse erlaubt, wurden die Beiträge in den EDGG-Sonderteilen rund viermal so häufig im *Web of Science* zitiert wie die übrigen Beiträge in der *Tuexenia*. Dieser Umstand zusammen mit der großen Internationalität der EDGG-Sonderteile dürfte wesentlich zur Aufnahme der *Tuexenia* ins *Web of Science* im Jahr 2011 beigetragen haben. Abschließend geben wir eine Einführung zu den vier Forschungsartikeln des diesjährigen 7. Trockenrasen-Sonderteiles. Zwei davon beschäftigen sich schwerpunktmäßig mit Vegetationsveränderungen und Renaturierungsmaßnahmen in zwei verschiedenen kryptogamenreichen Trockenrasentypen, nämlich Binnendünen in den Niederlanden und Kalktrockenrasen in Bayern. Die beiden anderen analysieren Silikatmagerrasen in Hessen und Steppenrasen in Siebenbürgen (Rumänien), vor allem aus syntaxonomischem Blickwinkel.

**Keywords:** citation metric, conference report, conservation, *European Dry Grassland Group* (EDGG), *Festuco-Brometea*, High Nature Value grassland, *Koelerio-Corynephoretea*, research expedition, vegetation classification, *Web of Science*.

**Abbreviations:** EDGG = *European Dry Grassland Group*; FlorSoz = *Floristisch-Soziologische Arbeitsgemeinschaft e. V.*; IAVS = *International Association for Vegetation Science*; IF = Impact factor.

## 1. News from the *European Dry Grassland Group* (EDGG)

The *European Dry Grassland Group* (EDGG) has been founded in autumn 2008 as a successor of the German *AG Trockenrasen*, which dates back to 2004 (see DENGLER & JANDT 2004, 2005) and now continues as a regional subgroup of EDGG. From the early days, both organisations have been closely connected to the *Floristisch-Soziologische Arbeitsgemeinschaft e. V.* (FlorSoz), through many joint members, financial support from FlorSoz to the dry grassland groups and the Dry Grassland Special Features in *Tuexenia* (see Section 2). EDGG is now a vivid international network of dry grassland researchers and conservationists. It has become an official Working Group of the *International Association for Vegetation Science* (IAVS) in 2009, organises international conferences (see Subsection 1.2) and research expeditions (see Subsection 1.3), publishes a quarterly electronic journal (*Bulletin of the European Dry Grassland Group*) as well as topical Special Issues/Features in international journals (see Subsection 1.4), and provides an informative homepage (www.edgg.org). Persons interested in dry grasslands from any perspective (botany, mycology, zoology, land use, conservation, management,…) can join EDGG for free: just contact the corresponding author of this article who is EDGG Membership Administrator.

### 1.1. Members, Executive Committee, Subgroups, and Bylaws

As of 21 April 2012, EDGG had 806 members from 51 countries, Germany (196), Greece (127), Italy (37), Ukraine (36), and Slovakia (34) being best represented in absolute numbers. EDGG has four regional subgroups (*AG Trockenrasen*, *Working Group on Dry Grasslands in the Nordic and Baltic Region*, *Mediterranean Dry Grasslands* – Med-DG, *South-East European Dry Grassland Group* – SEEDGG), one recently founded topical subgroup (*Grassland Conservation and Restoration*), and a *Special Policy Committee*. In consequence of the rapid growth both in terms of members and activities, a more formal structure of EDGG had become necessary. Therefore, the EDGG members adopted formal Bylaws as required by the Statutes of the mother organisation IAVS in September 2011 (available from http://www.edgg.org/pdf/BylawsEDGG.pdf), and held the first election for the EDGG Executive Committee in December 2011. As a result of these elections, EDGG is now, for the period 2011–2013, governed by six chairs with equal rights: Jürgen Dengler (Germany), Monika Janišová (Slovakia), Solvita Rūsiņa (Latvia), Péter Török (Hungary), Stephen Venn (Finland), and Michael Vrahnakis (Greece; contacts to all are available from www.edgg.org).

### 1.2. European Dry Grassland Meeting in Uman' 2011

The 8th European Dry Grassland Meeting was hosted in the National Dendrological Park "Sofiyvka" of the National Academy of Sciences in Uman', Ukraine, upon the invitation of Anna Kuzemko from 13 to 17 June 2011. In total, 80 scientists from 18 countries participated (Fig. 1) and contributed 20 talks and 33 posters. Among these, the best presentations of colleagues below 34 years in age were awarded with Young Investigator Prizes. The winners were Péter Török with her talk on "Techniques and costs of grassland restoration on former croplands", Triin Reitalu with her talk on "Responses of grassland species richness to local and landscape factors depend on spatial scale and habitat specialisation", Anikó Csecserits with the poster "Factors affecting the diversity and stability of dry grassland developed in oldfields", and Orsolya Valkó with the poster "Resampling plastic beads, a tool to model seed bank development and propagule dispersal in dry grasslands". The prizes were handed over by the EDGG chairs during the Grassland Party, which took place in the Scientists House in the park with traditional Ukrainian food and live music. After that, the three-day post-symposium excursion went to the south of Uman', with accommodation in the city of Kherson near the Black Sea coast. The major places visited were the National Natural Park "Buz'ky Gard" (dry grasslands around granite outcrops in the valley of the Southern Bug River), the Biosphere Reserve "Askania-Nova" (virgin steppes of the class *Festuco-Brometea*; Fig. 2), and the National Natural Park "Oleshkivs'ki Sands" (sand steppes in a huge dune system of the lower Dnieper River, belonging to the class *Koelerio-Corynephoretea*, and here mainly the alliance *Festucion beckeri*).



Fig. 1: Conference participants of the 8th European Dry Grassland Meeting in Uman', Ukraine. The organiser of the conference, Dr. Anna Kuzemko, can be seen in the centre of the first row (Photo: J. Dengler, 13 June 2011, JD112265).

Abb. 1: TagungsteilnehmerInnen des 8. European Dry Grassland Meeting in Uman', Ukraine. Die Gastgeberin der Tagung, Dr. Anna Kuzemko, steht in der Mitte der ersten Reihe (Foto: J. Dengler, 13.06.2011, JD112265).



Fig. 2: Post-symposium excursion of the 8th European Dry Grassland Meeting in the zonal steppe vegetation of the Biosphere Reserve "Askania-Nova" (Photo: J. Dengler, 16 June 2011, JD112715).

Abb. 2: Nachtagungsexkursion des 8. *European Dry Grassland Meeting* in der zonalen Steppenvegetation des Biosphärenreservates „Askania-Nova" (Foto: J. Dengler, 16.06.2011, JD112715).

### 1.3. EDGG Research Expeditions in Bulgaria 2011 and Sicily 2012

Since the initial expedition in Transylvania (DENGLER et al. 2009, 2012), which recently was highlighted with a photograph in *Science* (ANON. 2012), the EDGG Research Expeditions have become a major part of the annual EDGG activities. The aims of these expeditions are to sample standardised high-quality biodiversity data (i.e. nested plots 0.0001 to 100 m²) and phytosociological relevés (both including also terricolous bryophytes and lichens as well as soil samples) from undersampled regions with valuable grasslands and to make them available through scientific publications (the first of which is available in the present *Tuexenia* volume: DENGLER et al. 2012) and in vegetation-plot databases (DENGLER et al. in press and others). The second EDGG Research Expedition went to Central Podolia, Ukraine (DENGLER et al. 2011), and two more expeditions have been carried out since the last Dry Grassland Special Feature.

The 3rd EDGG Research Expedition was conducted from 14 to 24 August 2011 in Western Bulgarian Mountains upon the invitation of the Vegetation Science Working Group of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, mainly Kiril Vassilev and Hristo Pedashenko (for details, see APOSTOLOVA et al. 2011). Nine participants from five countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Slovakia, and Iran) participated in the nine-day expedition studying various dry grassland types in the Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park and the Stredna Gora Mts. The expedition received great fincancial support from the *Förderkreis Angewandte Naturkunde Biologie* – FAN(B) (see http://www.fan-b.de/html/index.html). In total, we collected 15 biodiversity plots (i.e. nested-plot series) and 83 phytosociological relevés (Fig. 3).

The 4th EDGG Research Expedition was conducted on the island of Sicily, Italy, from 29 March to 6 May 2012 upon the invitation of Riccardo Guarino (University of Palermo). A team of 14 researchers from five European countries (Italy, Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia, and Poland), day-wise supported by some students of the University of Palermo, sampled Mediterranean dry grassland vegetation on a trip around the island. The expedition received considerable financial support from the scientific association *Forum Plinianum – International Association for Biodiversity and System Ecology* thanks to Prof. Dr. Sandro Pignatti. In total, we could collect 21 biodiversity plots and 67 phytosociological relevés (Fig. 4).

### 1.4. EDGG Special Features/Issues in international journals

An EDGG Special Feature connected to the European Dry Grassland Meeting 2010 in Smolenice, Slovakia, guest-edited by M. Janišová, S. Bartha, K. Kiehl and J. Dengler, was published 2010 in the Italian journal *Plant Biosystems* (IF = 0.829) (JANIŠOVÁ et al. 2011b). Apart from the editorial, it included nine research articles dealing with *Succession, management, and restoration of dry grasslands* in different parts of Europe and adjacent areas.

The European Dry Grassland Meeting 2011 in Uman', Ukraine, apart from the *Tuexenia* Special Feature at hand, gave rise to three other Special Issues and Special Features in international journals, which are currently under production:

- Special Issue of *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment* (IF = 2.790) on *Grassland biodiversity: patterns, processes and conservation*, guest-edited by J. Dengler, M. Janišová, P. Török & C. Wellstein. Of the 68 proposed articles, 20 have been invited, and the publication is to be expected in early 2013.
- Special Issue of *Biodiversity and Conservation* (IF = 2.146) on *Diversity patterns in European grasslands across taxa, regions and scales*, guest-edited by J.C. Habel, P. Török, J. Dengler, M. Janišová, C. Wellstein & M. Wiezik. A total of 26 papers have been invited, and publication is to be expected in early 2013.
- *Virtual* Special Feature (VSF) of *Applied Vegetation Science* (AVS; IF = 1.802) on *Towards a consistent classification of European grasslands*, guest-edited by J. Dengler, E. Bergmeier, W. Willner & M. Chytrý. This VSF is produced in connection both with the 8th European Dry Grassland Meeting 2011 in Uman' and the 21st Workshop of the European Vegetation Survey (EVS) 2012 in Vienna. Already in 2011, 21 papers had been proposed, of which 12 were invited; however, additional contributions can be proposed by the second deadline 31 July 2012 (contact J.D. for details). The submission of invited papers will be possible until September 2013, accepted papers will be published continuously in regular issues of AVS, and the VSF will be concluded by a synthesis paper of the guest editors around mid-2014.



Fig. 3: Surveying a "biodiversity plot" in a dry grassland dominated by *Chrysopogon gryllus* in the Sredna Gora Mts., Bulgavia, during the 3rd EDGG Research Expedition (Photo: J. Dengler, 20 August 2011, JD115573).

Abb. 3: Aufnahme eines „Biodiversitäts-Plots" in einem *Chrysopogon gryllus*-dominierten Trockenrasen im Sredna Gora-Gebirge, Bulgarien, während der 3. EDGG-Forschungsexpedition (Foto: J. Dengler, 20.08.2011, JD115573).



Fig. 4: Surveying a "biodiversity plot" in a grey dune community in Southern Sicily during the 4th EDGG Research Expedition (Photo: J. Dengler, 1 April 2012, JD120794).

Abb. 4: Aufnahme eines „Biodiversitäts-Plots" in einer Graudünen-Gesellschaft an der sizilianischen Südküste während der 4. EDGG-Forschungsexpedition (Foto: J. Dengler, 01.04.2012, JD120794).

In connection with the 9th European Dry Grassland Meeting 2012 in Prespa (see Subsection 1.5), two new Special Features are in preparation:

• The "traditional" Dry Grassland Special Feature in *Tuexenia* 33 will be guest-edited by T. Becker, D. Galvánek, T. Reitalu, E. Ruprecht & J. Dengler and focus on temperate and boreal dry grasslands.

• For the first time, we will also produce a Dry Grassland Special Feature in the Italian journal *Annali di Botanica – Coenology and Plant Ecology* (see http://ojs.uniroma1.it/index.php/Annalidibotanica/index). This Special Feature will be guest-edited by I. Apostolova, R. Gavilán, R. di Pietro, I. Tsiripidis & J. Dengler and will focus on mediterranean and submediterranean dry grasslands.

For these two Special Features we invite articles from EDGG members, both contributions of the conference in Prespa and other suitable papers. Authors who wish to contribute need to submit a structured abstract to J.D. by 30 July 2012. Note that contributions in these Dry Grassland Special Features will be pre-evaluated as abstracts, and only contributions that pass this screening will be invited for full paper submission and then undergo regular peer review, co-ordinated by one of the EDGG-appointed guest editors (contact J.D. for more information).

### 1.5. Forthcoming EDGG events

During the final stages of the production of this *Tuexenia*, the 9th European Dry Grassland Meeting and the 5th EDGG Research Expedition were taking place in Prespa, Northwest Greece. The next major EDGG events will be:

• The 10th European Dry Grassland Meeting will take place in Southeast Poland in May 2013. There will be a pre-conference excursion of several days mainly to *Koelerio-Corynephoretea* communities, two days of conference in Zaność near Lublin, and a post-conference trip of several days mainly to *Festuco-Brometea* communities.

• The 11th European Dry Grassland Meeting will take place in Tula, Russia, located in the forest steppe zone, approx. 200 km South of Moscow) in Summer 2014.

• The 6th EDGG Research Expedition will be organised in the Russian part of the Altai Mountains (July 2013).

More detailed information will be made available in the *Bulletin* and on the homepage of the EDGG:

## 2. Dry Grassland Special Features in *Tuexenia* – brief history and outlook

Since the very first Dry Grassland Meeting 2004 (at that time termed *1. Jahrestagung der AG Trockenrasen*), *Tuexenia* served as major media partner of the *AG Trockenrasen* and later of the EDGG. While some major Special Features/Issues have also been published in other journals, namely the *Kieler Notizen zur Pflanzenkunde* (Dengler & Jandt 2004), *Arbeiten aus dem Institut für Landschaftsökologie Münster* (Bültmann et al. 2006b), and *Plant Biosystems* (Janišová et al. 2011b), there was one Dry Grassland Special Feature in *Tuexenia* each year since 2005, except for 2007 (due to the cancellation of the *3. Jahrestagung der AG Trockenrasen* in 2006). The first six Dry Grassland Special Features in *Tuexenia* contained 32 articles on 533 pages (Table 1). Together with the 7th Dry Grassland Special Feature at hand, 16 young EDGG scientists have served as guest editors so far, with J. Dengler (7×), U. Jandt (5×), T. Becker (3×), C. Dolnik, M. Janišová, and K. Kiehl (each 2×) being particularly active. The articles of all seven Special Features excluding the editorials ($n$ = 30) had not less than 61 authors from 12 countries (Germany: 40%, Slovakia: 23%, Romania: 14%, Netherlands: 5%, Czechia: 4%, Latvia: 4%, Poland: 2%, Sweden: 2%, United Kingdom: 2%, Austria: 1%, Turkey: 1%, Ukraine: 1%). There are 13 persons who co-authored more than one article in the Dry Grassland Special Features (editorials not counted): J. Dengler (DE; $n$ = 5), K. Kiehl (DE; $n$ = 4), M. Janišová (SK) and M. Jeschke (DE; both $n$ = 3), T. Becker (DE), M. Beldean (RO), D. Dúbravková, née Michalková (SK), E. Ruprecht (RO), I. Škodová (SK), A. Szabó (RO), P.D. Turtureanu (RO), and E. Uhliarová (SK; each $n$ = 2).

Taking the Dry Grassland Special Features of 2005–2011 together, they make up approx. 17% of the journal s overall content (3,090 pages) during that time. What is even more

Table 1: Overview of the Dry Grassland Special Features 1–7 in *Tuexenia*. The article counts include the editorial/report from the respective Dry Grassland Meeting.
Tabelle 1: Übersicht der Dry Grassland Special Features 1–7 in *Tuexenia*. Die Artikelzahlen schließen das jeweilige Vorwort/den Bericht vom betreffenden *Dry Grassland Meeting* ein.

| No. | Citation | Associated conference | Topic | Articles | Pages |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Dengler & Jandt (2005) | Lüneburg 2004 | *Trockenrasen als Biodiversitätshotspots* [Dry grasslands as biodiversity hotspots] | 6 | 87 |
| 2 | Bültmann et al. (2006a) | Münster 2005 | *Trockenrasen auf unterschiedlichen Betrachtungsebenen* [Observation scales in dry grasslands] | 6 | 100 |
| 3 | Kiehl et al. (2008) | Freising 2007 | *Wiederherstellung und spontane Ansiedlung von Trocken- und Halbtrockrasen in ursprünglichen und urban-industriellen Lebensräumen* [Restoration and spontaneous establishment of dry and semi-dry grasslands at traditional and urban-industrial sites] | 2 | 16 |
| 4 | Dolnik et al. (2009) | Kiel 2008 | Dry grasslands in a changing environment | 6 | 105 |
| 5 | Jandt et al. (2010) | Halle (Saale) 2009 | Dry grasslands – species interactions and distribution | 7 | 138 |
| 6 | Janišová et al. (2011a) | Smolenice 2010 | Succession, restoration, and management of dry grasslands | 5 | 87 |
| 7 | Galvánek et al. (2012) [this paper] | Uman' 2011 | Biodiversity, syntaxonomy, and management | 5 | 127 |

important is the fact that articles in the parts guest-edited by EDGG have been more frequently cited in the *Web of Science* than other *Tuexenia* articles, even when disregarding the cross-references from the editorials to the articles of the EDGG Special Features (Table 2 and see below). In the years with statistically reliable data (i.e. old enough and sufficient number of replicates), namely 2005, 2006, and 2009, the citation rates for EDGG articles by international journals were approximately four times higher than for other *Tuexenia* articles. From the articles in *Tuexenia* 31 (2011), so far only the Special Feature contributions have been cited at all, resulting in a ratio of infinity (Table 2). When looking at individual articles, in most of the last years the two most cited contributions of the respective *Tuexenia* volume are EDGG papers:

- 2005: 1st Dengler (2005: 11×); 2nd: Kiehl & Jeschke (2005: 5×)
- 2006: 1st: Dengler et al. (2006: 5×); 2nd: Jeschke & Kiehl (2006: 3×)
- 2009: 1st: Ruprecht et al. (2009: 6×); 2nd: Schrautzer et al. (2009: 3×)
- 2011: 1st: Petrik et al. (2011), Škodová et al. (2011), Wiezik et al. (2011) and Willner (2011; all: 2×)

It is likely that these high citation rates together with the fact that the authors, reviewers and editors of the Dry Grassland Special Features were more international than on average in *Tuexenia*, promoted the inclusion of this journal in the *Web of Science* (WoS; http://apps.webofknowledge.com) and the SCOPUS database (http://www.scopus.com/home.url) in 2011. Since last year, all *Tuexenia* articles are indexed in both databases, a fact that increases their international visibility tremendously. Further, the inclusion in the WoS together with the open access policy implemented since 2010 not only for the EDGG articles (which are freely available online since 2005) but for the full *Tuexenia* content (at http://www.Tuexenia.de/index.php?id=14&no_cache=1) will make publishing in *Tuexenia* even more attractive in the future than it was in the past.

*Tuexenia* will receive its first *Impact Factor* (IF) in 2014 for the year 2013 (based on the articles published in 2011 and 2012). The citation rates for the articles of the last year up to

Table 2: Citations in the *Web of Science* (http://apps.webofknowledge.com; accessed on 2012-04-21) to articles published in *Tuexenia* in the years 2005–2011, differentiated into articles within the Dry Grassland Special Features (EDGG) and outside (non-EDGG). Note that all articles including editorials, reports, and orbituaries were counted here, while, for example, for the calculation of *Impact Factors* certain types are only considered among citing, not among cited articles. This aspect should not have a major effect on the outcome as such "non-regular" articles are similarly frequent inside and outside the Dry Grassland Special Features. ∞ = infinite; NA = not available; values in *italics* are unreliable due to a very small $n = 2$.

Tabelle 2: Zitationen von *Tuexenia*-Artikeln der Jahre 2005–2011 im *Web of Science* (http://apps.webofknowledge.com; Zugriff am 21.04.2012), differenziert nach solchen innerhalb (EDGG) und außerhalb (non-EDGG) der *Dry Grassland Special Features*. Man beachte, dass bei dieser Auswertung alle Veröffentlichungen einschließlich Vorworten, Berichten und Nachrufen gezählt werden, wohingegen solche Beiträge bei der Berechnung der *Impact Factors* nur bei den zitierenden, nicht unter den zitierten Artikeln berücksichtigt werden. Dies sollte die Relationen zwischen EDGG- und Nicht-EDGG-Artikeln nicht wesentlich verändern, da solche „nicht reguläre" Beiträge innerhalb und außerhalb der *Dry Grassland Special Features* ungefähr gleich häufig sein dürften. ∞ = unendlich NA = nicht verfügbar; *kursiv* gesetzte Werte sind wegen $n = 2$ nicht belastbar.

| Year | Papers total | Citations total | Papers EDGG | Citations EDGG | Papers non-EDGG | Citations non-EDGG | Citation rate total | Citation rate EDGG | Citation rate non-EDGG | Relative citation rate EDGG vs. non-EDGG |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2011 | 21 | 9 | 5 | 9 | 16 | 0 | 0.43 | 1.80 | 0.00 | ∞ |
| 2010 | 26 | 19 | 7 | 7 | 19 | 12 | 0.73 | 1.00 | 0.63 | 1.6 |
| 2009 | 26 | 18 | 6 | 10 | 20 | 8 | 0.69 | 1.67 | 0.40 | 4.2 |
| 2008 | 18 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 16 | 11 | 0.61 | *0.00* | 0.69 | *0.0* |
| 2007 | 27 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 27 | 31 | 1.15 | NA | 1.15 | NA |
| 2006 | 22 | 15 | 6 | 9 | 16 | 6 | 0.68 | 1.50 | 0.38 | 4.0 |
| 2005 | 31 | 53 | 6 | 25 | 25 | 28 | 1.71 | 4.17 | 1.12 | 3.7 |

now raise the hope that this first IF might be reasonably good. On 21 April 2012, *Tuexenia* articles of last year has been cited 0.43 times on average and an average article in the Dry Grassland Special Feature even 1.80 times (or 1.00 times if the cross-references from the editorial to the four articles are not counted). The citation rates in other geobotanical journals, such as *Phytocoenologia* (0.20 citations per article of the year 2011; IF 2010 = 0.618), *Plant Biosystems* (0.51; IF = 0.829), *Folia Geobotanica* (0.79; IF = 1.229), *Preslia* (0.81; IF = 2.792), and *Applied Vegetation Science* (1.22; IF = 1.802; all figures including the cross-references in editorials of Special Features), were similar or even lower than those in *Tuexenia* in general or its Dry Grassland Special Feature in particular.

The EDGG Executive Committee has therefore agreed with the FlorSoz President and the *Tuexenia* Chief Editors to continue the EDGG Dry Grassland Special Features as an important element of the journal. We hope that, when the word of the WoS inclusion spreads, this will attract more good-quality publications on dry grasslands s.l. in the future. Publication in these special features is offered to all EDGG members. The fact that *Tuexenia* made it into the WoS and SCOPUS through the help of EDGG now has prompted another journal, *Annali di Botanica – Coenology and Plant Ecology* (see Subsection 1.4), to come to a similar arrangement with EDGG. A first Dry Grassland Special Feature in *Annali di Botanica* will appear 2013 parallel to that in *Tuexenia*. We envisage that in the future, the Special Features in *Tuexenia* will more concentrate on papers dealing with grasslands in the tem-

perate and boreal zones, while the Special Features in *Annali di Botanica* will focus on mediterranean grasslands. However, there will be some overlap, particularly, as we plan to continue the series with basic results from EDGG Research Expeditions (*Dry grasslands in … – a preliminary overview on syntaxonomy, ecology, and biodiversity*), started in this volume with DENGLER et al. (2012) from Transylvania, in the next volumes of *Tuexenia*.

## 3. Introduction to this Special Feature

This Special Feature is the seventh series of dry grassland-related articles in *Tuexenia*, guest-edited by members of the EDGG or its predecessor *AG Trockenrasen* (see JANDT et al. 2010). The past and the present contributions are all freely downloadable from the EDGG homepage at http://www.edgg.org/edgg_publications.htm.

While this year the Dry Grassland Special Feature consists only of four papers, they nevertheless represent quite well the geographical and topical diversity of EDGG. They are mostly based on presentations from the three last European Dry Grassland Meetings (2009 in Halle, 2010 in Smolenice, and 2011 in Uman'). The first two papers are mainly focusing on vegetation change, conservation, and restoration issues, while the main topic of the others is phytosociology.

The first paper (KETNER-OSTRA et al. 2012) presents a study from lichen-rich sand dunes in the Netherlands. The vegetation change in this habitat was studied and analysed in relation to the conservation value of the habitat. The results confirm that these grasslands are a very vulnerable habitat that suffers from changes of environmental conditions.

The second paper (JESCHKE 2012) deals with the aspect of the cryptogam flora in grassland restoration. It is obvious that grassland restoration measures have to be monitored and evaluated, and there are many studies focusing on this aspect (see KIEHL et al. 2010). However, most of the studies take into account only vascular plants, while non-vascular plants are often neglected. JESCHKE (2012) now could demonstrate that also cryptogams may profit from hay transfer, and there are possibilities to restore their diversity.

The third paper of BECKER et al. (2012) presents a study of nutrient-poor grasslands on acid bedrock in the Lahn-Dill Highlands in Hesse, central Germany. Such grasslands have been less in the focus of phytosociologists than calcareous grasslands, despite the fact that they are of similar conservation value. The study provides detailed syntaxonomical analyses of the vegetation units and suggests how they should be divided between the classes *Calluno-Ulicetea*, *Koelerio-Corynephoretea*, *Festuco-Brometea*, and *Molinion-Arrhenatheretea*.

The final paper by DENGLER et al. (2012) brings the results of the 1st EDGG Research Expedition 2009 in the Transylvanian Plateau (Romania). There, *Festuco-Brometea* communities from three phytosociological orders are found. Among these, the stands of the *Festuco sulcatae-Brachypodietum pinnati* (*Brachypodietalia pinnati*) are outstanding as they belong to the globally richest plant communities at small scales (see KLIMEŠ 2008, WILSON et al. in press). DENGLER et al. (2012) comprehensively describe species richness of the grasslands in the region and provide a modern syntaxonomic synthesis, which was absent for the region so far, while conservation issues have been treated in a previous *Tuexenia* paper (RUPPRECHT et al. 2009).

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