

The Lowland Grassland Management Handbook

2nd edition

A Crofts and R G Jefferson (eds)

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Foreword

The substantial additions and revisions contained in this second edition of the *Lowland Grassland Management Handbook* indicate the tremendous enthusiasm that the first edition generated.

The first edition's reception confirmed our beliefs that many land managers care very deeply about the future wellbeing of one of our most vulnerable UK habitats. Their collective input has been vital in compiling the *Handbook's* second edition.

There are new sections on managing grassland habitats for particular groups of species: rare vascular plants; lower plants; and reptiles and amphibians. We have added to the special cases chapter by incorporating a section on grasslands in wood pasture and parklands with veteran trees; and we have also added a chapter on monitoring grasslands.

A further new chapter explores the agricultural perspective of lowland grassland - particularly relevant in view of the economic pressures on sheep and beef farmers and the growing support for less intensive systems of production.

Although creation can never be a substitute for retaining our existing unimproved grasslands, new areas can bring many benefits to both people and wildlife. In recognition of that fact, a chapter on grassland creation has been added.

We hope readers will find these additions valuable as they manage to maximise native biodiversity under the Government's UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

At their best, lowland grasslands are huge contributors to the nation's variety of wildlife; places of inspiration and beauty to people; and integral to the rural economy.

This *Handbook's* distillation of scientific wisdom and best practice provides a working guide that should help allcomers manage our existing grasslands in a sustainable manner, to bring as many as possible into good order for the benefit of this and future generations.

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This has been designed to help the user locate information on key **management activities** although a few additional significant topics are also included. It is **not** a full index and not every reference to a topic in the handbook will be listed in the second column. It is designed to help the reader locate the main sources of information on a particular topic.

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