The 11th European Dry Grassland Meeting

*European Steppes and Semi-natural Dry Grasslands:*

*Ecology, Transformation and Restoration*

5-15th June 2014

Tula, Russia

http://www.edgg.org/edgg_meeting_2014.html
Main topic of the meeting

“European Steppes and Semi-natural Dry Grasslands: Ecology, Transformation and Restoration”

Subtopics:
1. Steppes and Dry Grasslands: Diversity and Succession
2. Ecology and Management of Steppes and Dry Grasslands
3. Restoration of Steppes and Dry Grasslands and Rural Societies

Preliminary time schedule

**June 5** – arrival to Moscow, transfer to Tula and Kulikovo Field, accommodation in Hotel of Kulikovo Field Scientific Centre

**June 6** – registration, opening ceremony, oral presentations, poster sessions

**June 7** – oral presentations, poster sessions, EDGG General Assembly, grassland party

**June 8** – excursion to protected area *Srednyi Dubik*, visit to Museum of Kulikovo Field

**June 9** – excursions to protected area *Tatinki* and experimental fields of landscape restoration

*Post-conference tour:*

**June 10** – transfer to Kursk, accommodation in Hotel “Kursk”

**June 11** – visit to Central Black Earth Reserve, run by professor V.V. Alekhine, excursion to Strelets Steppe

**June 12** – transfer to Rostov region (village Veshenskaya), accommodation in the Sanatorium “Veshenskiy”

**June 13** – visit to the M.Sholokhov Museum-Reserve, excursions to chalk slopes

**June 14** – excursions to sandy sites

**June 15** – transfer to Tula (Kulikovo Field)

**June 16** – transfer to Moscow
The general scheme of the route

Location
The 11th European Dry Grassland Meeting will take place at the Hotel of Kulikovo Field Scientific Centre, located in the south-east part of Tula region, in the village Monastyshino. This is the territory of the Museum-Reserve “The Kulikovo Field”, which was established in 1996 as a museum of the Kulikovo battle of 1380 and located 150 km from Tula (regional capital; 700,000 inh.), 350 km from Moscow (capital of Russia, 11 mln inh.). The nearest airports are located in Moscow, the nearest train stations are located in Tula and Uzlovaya (45 km from Tula).

Tula region covers an area of 26,000 km² and is situated between forest (mixed and broad-leaved forests) and forest-steppe vegetation zones. The forest vegetation occupies about 14% of the territory and is extended in northern and north-western parts of the region. The forest-steppe vegetation is typical for south and south-east and characterized by low forest cover - less than 2 to 4%. Natural steppe communities are unique, saved on small sites (13-35 ha) and associated with limestone slopes and calcareous soil on the river valleys of Don, Nepraydva and Krasyvaya Mecha. All of xerothermic sites are regional protected areas (Red Book, 2007).
Tula Kremlin

*Museum-Reserve “The Kulikovo Field”* is located in the Upper Don, south-east part of Tula region and characterized by forest-steppe vegetation. The forest vegetation (137 ha) is represented mainly by oaks which are located on watersheds and ravines. The most common association is *Lathyro pisiformis–Quercetum roboris* (class *Querco–Fagetea*) with *Prunus spinosa*, *Cerasus fruticosa*, *Crataegus curvisepala*, *Rhamnus cathartica*, *Lonicera tatarica*, *Laserpitium latifolium*, *Anthericum ramosum*, *Brachypodium pinnatum*, *Carex montana*, *Veratrum nigrum*. Some transformed plant communities don’t have any syntaxonomical status («no ranked» communities). They represent stages of restoration of natural forest.

Steppe vegetation (81 ha) is presented by assoc. *Gentiano cruciatae–Stipetum pennatae* (with *Artemisia campestris*, *Gentiana cruciata*, *Jurinea arachnoidea*, *Pediculatis Kaufmannii*, *Seseli annuum*, *Stipa pennata*, *Veronica spicata*) and assoc. *Stachyo rectae–Echinopetum rutenici* (with *Asperula cynanchica*, *Centaurea sumensis*, *Echinops rutenicus*, *Euphorbia subtilis*, *Galium octonarium*, *G. tinctorium*, *Stachys recta*, *Trommsdorfia maculata*, *Vincetoxicum hirundinaria*) (class *Festuco–Brometea*). These communities are characterized by rich biodiversity (approx. 50-75 plant species per 100 m²).

Today all preserved natural forest and steppe sites are rare and became protected areas of Tula region. The territory of Kulikovo Field comprises 11 protected steppe and forest areas with a lot of rare species of plants which are included in Red List of Russia (*Cotoneaster alaunicus*, *Stipa pennata*, *S. pulcherrima*) and Regional Red List (*Amygdalus nana*, *Spiraea crenata*, *Adonis vernalis*, *Artemisia armeniaca*, *A. latifolia*, *Aster amellus*, *Astragalus onobrychis*, *Allium flavescens*, *Anthericum ramosum*, *Campanula altaica*, *Centaurea rutenica*, *C. sumensis*, *Delphinium cuneatum*, *Dracocephalum ruyschiana*, *Echinops ritro*, *Galatella angustissima*, *G. linosyris*, *Gypsophila altissima*, *Helianthemum nummularium*, *Heliotrichon desertorum*, *H. schellianum*, *Iris aphylla*, *Linum flavum*, *Oxypotis pilosa*, *Prunella grandiflora*, *Scorzonera stricta*, *Stipa capillata*, *S. tirsa*).

In terms of species, the diversity of Kulikovo Field area includes more than 700 plants, 906 insects, 9 amphibians, 3 reptiles, 120 birds, and 30 mammals.
Intensive anthropogenic impact was the reason of the forest-steppe landscape transformation in European Russia. This process began in XVII-XVIII centuries. As a result, most part of forest massives were cut, steppe and meadow vegetation were plowed and transformed into arable land. Museum-reserve “The Kulikovo Field” restores the forest and steppe vegetation on natural sites. Now forest vegetation is in the process of restoration in an area of 20 ha and steppe vegetation has been restored on an area of 50 ha.

**Language**

English

**Accommodation**

During the conference, accommodation and meals will be provided in the Hotel of *Kulikovo Field Scientific Centre* (Monastyrshino village, Tula region).

The village is located at a beautiful place on the confluence of the Don and Nepryadva – the historical site of the Kulikovo battle of 1380. According to legend, fallen Russian soldiers were buried at this site. The confluence of the Nepryadva and Don Rivers is situated just 1 km from the complex. This place is closely connected to the battle itself. Dmitry Donskoy and his army camped on that spot the night before the battle. From that place they went out to the great battle.

The Memorial in the village of Monastyrshchino is composed of the Museum of the Battle of Kulikovo, the temple of Nativity of the Virgin Mary, the monument to Dmitry Donskoy, and the Unity and Memory Alley. Now Monastyrshino is a typical village with Russian traditional style of living.

The Hotel is situated in the village of Monastyrshchino, which is near the museum of the Kulikovo battle and just 2 km from the battlefield. The Hotel consists of the main building and cottages. In the main building, the administration of the hotel, a conference hall and a banquet hall are situated. Each of the cottages is equipped with kitchen and dining rooms. There are three types of rooms in the hotel: single (7), double (18), and triple (3) rooms, in which all the conditions of comfortable living are provided (internet access, television). The hotel can accommodate 52 guests.

The participants can book the hotel rooms in a Guest House of “*Museum of Russian Merchants’ Life*” in Epifan; an ancient Russian town. It was founded on the shore of the Don River in 1566. It has since become a shelter town on the border of Rus (“Rus” is a name of Russia in the Past). Today guests can get acquainted with the traditional living quarters of the merchant’s house. The Guest House of this Museum can accommodate 10 (5 double rooms) persons.

If you wish, you can be accommodated in a tent camp

Accommodation is limited to 70 persons!

*Accommodation during the post-conference excursions will be in:*
1. Hotel “Kursk”– Kursk region, two nights (http://kursk-hotel.ru/). Preliminary costs: 45 euro (with breakfast and dinner) per day.

N.B. The precise cost will depend on the exchange rate of the euro/ruble

Conference publications
All participants will receive a Book of Abstract, which will also be published online on the EDGG homepage. As in previous years, there will be Special Features (SFs) with selected contributions from the conference in international, peer-reviewed journals, guest-edited by EDGG members. We plan to have one such SF in Tuexenia (http://www.tuexenia.de/index.php?id=14&no_cache=1), and a second in Hacquetia (http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/hacq).

Prizes
As in previous years, prizes will be awarded to young scientists who excellently present their researches (orally or in poster). For these purposes, young scientists (less than 35 years old) will be asked at the registration desk if they wish to participate in the contest.

Registration
Registration is open from November 2013 on the conference homepage: http://www.edgg.org/edgg_meeting_2014.html

N.B. Foreign participants from most countries will need a visa. You can get a tourist or business visa.
To obtain a business visa you need an invitation letter (for the purpose of which we will need some information from you). After you register, please send a photocopy of your passport (the page with your picture, name and date of birth) and personal information (place of work, position, address) to Olga Burova (burova@kulpole.tula.net).

We recommend that you visit the website of the Russian Embassy in your country to find out the precise visa requirements

Important dates
Registration deadline – 31 January 2014
Deadline for Abstracts – 28 February 2014

Fees
The conference fee: 120 euro/person. The fee will cover:
- attendance pack (Book of Abstracts, map, notes, pencil),
- mid-session snacks and refreshments,
- ticket to the Grassland Party,
- two field excursions (after EDGG Meeting)
- lunches for field excursions,
- cultural excursions to Museums of Kulikovo Field

Preliminary accommodation costs during the conference part (Hotel “The Kulikovo Field”):
- meals (according to the menu) - 250 euro/person (5 days, 3 times per day).
- hotel rooms – 23-57 euro/day/room
**Preliminary post-conference fee:** 300 euro/person (10 days, buses, excursions, lunches). During the post-conference tour, hotel accommodation and meals are at the participants’ own expense.

**All fees will be paid at the registration desk on the first day**

**Contact persons**
Olga Burova – Museum-reserve “The Kulikovo Field”, 47 Lenin ave, Tula; burova@kulpole.tula.net
Elena Volkova – Tula State University, 92 Lenin ave, Tula; convallaria@mail.ru

**Conference excursion:**
The aim of all excursions (including the post-conference tour) is to show the diversity of steppe and dry grassland vegetation in different zones. During the conference excursions, you will become acquainted with the vegetation of the northern part of the forest-steppe zone (Tula region, Kulikovo Field area) and also experiences steppe restoration. During the post-conference tour, you will become acquainted with the vegetation of the southern regions of Russia: forest-steppes of the Kursk region and the steppes of the Rostov region. *We will start our tour in the Upper Don and will finish it at the lower reaches of the Don!*  

Field excursions in the area of Kulikovo Field will be organized from the third day of the Meeting.  

**June 8 - Kulikovo Field area (Tula region)**


2) museum in Monastyrshchino village

*Lilium martagon* in a forest of the protected area “Srednyi Dubik” (Kulikovo Field, Tula region)
**Iris aphylla** at steppe slope of protected area “Srednyi Dubik” (Kulikovo Field, Tula region)

**June 9** – Kulikovo Field area (Tula region)

1) – protected area “Tatinki” on limestone slopes of the valley of the Don river. The forest vegetation is represented by assoc. *Lathyro pisiformis–Quercetum roboris* with *Aegopodium podagraria, Lysimachia nummularia, Rubus saxatilis*. The steppe vegetation is represented by assoc. *Gentiano cruciatae-Stipetum pennatae* with *Stipa pennata, Chamaecytisus ruthenicus, Carex humilis, Salvia pratensis, Lavatera thuringiaca, Vicia cracca, Centaurea jacea, Cirsium polonicum*.

2) – experimental fields of restoration forest and steppe communities (different methods and “ages” of agrosteppes). Acquaintance with the methods of restoration of steppe communities:
   a) transplantation of *Stipa* swards into semi-natural meadow-steppe communities
   b) transplantation of *Stipa* swards from natural plots into arable land
   c) sowing of herb mixes which were cut on natural plots
   d) seeds of *Stipa* are planted in rows and other herbal steppe plants between them
Post-conference excursions:

**June 11** – visiting Central Black Earth Reserve run by Professor V.V. Alekhine, Strelets Steppe (Kursk region).

**Kursk region** (350 km from Tula) covers an area of 30,000 km² and is situated between broad-leaved forests (north-west part, forest cover is 13-14%) and forest-steppe vegetation zones. The forest-steppe vegetation is characterized by low forest cover – from 10% in south-west part to 1-3% in east part of region. Forest vegetation is dominated by oak species. The steppe vegetation is conserved in the Central Black Earth Reserve. Strelets Steppe is one of the steppe sites of the Reserve (730 ha). It is the largest surviving massive of zonal virgin meadow steppes in Eastern Europe. The Strelets steppe has several modes of management: mowing, grazing and «strictly protected» (no mowing and grazing). The mowing mode is the most traditional and covers the largest area. Currently this mode is represented by several variations: annual mowing; five-year mowing cycle without grazing (4 years of mowing, and no mowing in the fifth year); ten-year mowing cycle (9 years of mowing, and no mowing in the tenth year) with grazing on stubble-field. The vegetation of the Strelets Steppe is represented by assoc. *Stipo tirsae–Bromopsietum ripariae, Vicio craccae–Centaurctum pseudophrygiae* and *Bupleuro falcati–Bromopsietum ripariae* (class *Festuco–Brometea*). The floristic diversity is rich (approx. 98-120 plant species per 100 m²). A lot of rare and protected species of plants occur in Strelets Steppe: *Iris aphylla, Fritillaria ruthenica, Paeonia tenuifolia, Stipa dasyphylla, Stipa pennata, S. pulcherrima, S. zalesskyi* (Red List of Russia) and 32 species from Regional Red List (*Adonis vernalis, Anemone sylvestris, Carex humilis, Centaurea sumensis, Delphinium cuneatum, Echium russicum, Linum flavum, Linum nervosum, Linum perenne, Prunella grandiflora, Pulsatilla patens, Scorzonera purpurea, Stipa tirs, Valeriana rossica*). In terms of species, the diversity of Central Black Earth Reserve is represented by 1287 vascular plants (908 species are typical for Strelets Steppe), over 4 thousands insects, 191 spiders, 10 amphibians, 5 reptiles, 226 birds and 50 mammals.

![The Second World War Monument in Kursk](image-url)
June 13-14 – Rostov region, village Veshenskaya, M. Sholokhov Museum-Reserve (the distance from Kursk is 620 km).

Rostov region covers an area of 100,000 km² and is situated in the steppe vegetation zone. The steppe communities are formed on chestnut soils, sands, chalk slopes and saline habitats. Most of them have been cultivated. The steppe and dry grassland vegetation is represented by classes Festuco-Brometea, Helianthemo-Thymetea, Festucetalia vaginatae and Festuco-Puccinellietalia. The surroundings of the villages Veshenskaya, Elanskaya, LebyaziYar, Olshanskiy and Kalininskyi are characterized by different habitats (substrates) with specific communities. For example, assoc. Stipetum capillatae, Trifolio alpestris-Stipetum tirsae, Artemisio marschallianae-Stipetum dasypyllosae, Stipetum lessinginae, Astragalo ponticae-Brometum squarrosi, Ajugo orientalis-Festucetum pseudovinaceae, Astragalo asperi-Stipetum lessingianae, Astragalo albicaulis-Stipetum capillatae, Gypsophilo glomeratae-Artemisietum lerchinae, Medicago romanicae-Stipetum ucrainicae are typical for “steppe” sites (class Festuco-Brometea); assoc. Hedysaro cretacei-Melicetum transsilvanicae, Lepidio meyeri-Scrophularietum cretacei, Sileno boryschnicae-Hyssopetum officinali, Artemisio hololeucae-Polygaetum cretaceae, Genisto scythicae-Artemisietum salsoloides occur on the chalk slopes (class Helianthemo-Thymetea); assoc. Secalo-Stipetum boryschnicae, Hieracio echidioides-Stipetum boryschnicae, Artemisio arenariae-Festucetum beckeri, Artemisio arenariae-Thymetum pallasiani occur on the sands (class Festucetalia vaginatae). These communities have a lot of rare and protected species from the Russian and Regional Red Lists: Stipa dasypyllosae, S. tirsae, S. ucrainica, S. pennata, S. boryschnica, Pulsatilla patens, P. pratensis, Astragalus ponticus, Calophaca wolgarica, Astragalus longipetalus, Caragana scythica, Matthiola fragrans, Aspervella tephrocarpa, Atraphaxis frutescens, Silene cretacea, Elytrigia stipifolia, Artemisia holleuca, Linum ucrainum, Artemisia salsoloides, Genista scythica, Onosma tanaictica, Hedysarum grandiflorum, Centaurea ruthenica, Linum hirsutum, Festuca cretaceum. The diversity of M. Sholokhov Museum-Reserve surroundings is presented by more than 1500 plant species (from a total of about 1700 species Rostov region), 70 mammals, about 300 birds, 11 reptiles, 6 amphibians.
M. Sholokhov Museum-Reserve (Rostov region)
Organizers:
- **European Dry Grassland Group (EDGG)** ([www.edgg.org](http://www.edgg.org)) was established in August 2008. It is an official working group of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS, [www.iavs.org](http://www.iavs.org)). Its aims are to compile and distribute information on research and conservation in dry grasslands beyond national borders, and to stimulate active cooperation among dry grassland scientists, NGO's and all who work with or are interested in dry grasslands.
- The State Museum of Military History and Natural Reserve “The Kulikovo Field” ([http://www.kulpole.ru/en/](http://www.kulpole.ru/en/)). The Museum was established in 1996 as a museum of the Kulikovo battle of 1380. The main scientific goal is restoring forest and steppe vegetation of the 14th century at the battle site.
- **UNDP-GEF Project “Improving the Coverage and Management Efficiency of Protected Areas in the Steppe Biome of Russia”** is the first large international project in Russia aimed specifically at securing the long-term conservation of Russia’s steppe biological diversity.

Supporting organisations and institutions:
- **UNDP** is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. The task of the Project Support Office is to provide technical support to a number of projects, which UNDP continues implementing in the Russian Federation in cooperation with local government and other partners.
- **The Global Environment Facility (GEF)** unites 183 countries in partnership with international institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the private sector to address global environmental issues while supporting national sustainable development initiatives. An independently operating financial organization, the GEF provides grants for projects related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants.
- **International Association for Vegetation Science** (IAVS, [www.iavs.org](http://www.iavs.org)); its original precursor was the International Phytosociological Society (IPS) which was founded in 1939. IAVS is a worldwide union of scientists and others interested in theoretical and practical studies of all aspects of vegetation. The main goals of the IAVS are to facilitate personal contacts among vegetation scientists all over the world and to promote research in all aspects of vegetation science and its applications.
- **The Central Black Earth State Reserve of Professor V.V. Alekhine** ([http://zapoved-kursk.ru/](http://zapoved-kursk.ru/)). Established in 1935, the Reserve has belonged to the global network of UNESCO biosphere reserves since 1979, and it is the holder of the Diploma of the Council of Europe since 1998. In 2012, it entered the Emerald Network in Europe. Major functions are: saving the forest-steppe landscape in Kursk region, studying and monitoring of biodiversity and ecological education.
- **The State M. Sholokhov Museum-Reserve** ([http://eng.sholokhov.ru](http://eng.sholokhov.ru)). The Museum was established in 1984 as a homeland of Mikhail Sholokhov (Rostov region), a great Russian writer. Now the Museum is a center of conservation of both cultural and natural heritage.
- **Institute of Arid zones of the Southern Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences** ([http://www.ssc-ras.ru/eng/](http://www.ssc-ras.ru/eng/)). The SSC RAS is a system of scientific institutions, integrated multi-divisional branches and specialized laboratories. The Institute of Arid Zones was founded in 2008 for studying marine freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems of the South of European Russia.
- **Institute of Geography Russian Academy of Science** ([http://www.igras.ru/](http://www.igras.ru/)) - the oldest (founded in 1918) and largest Russian academic research center. The main scientific topics are the evolution of the natural environment and resources; geographical problems of land use and nature conservation; interactions between environment and society, particularly in terms of
increasing anthropogenic pressure and regional frameworks for sustainable development of environment and society.

- **Tula State University** ([http://tsu.tula.ru/](http://tsu.tula.ru/)) Natural-Science Faculty is a big scientific center for studying the vegetation, fauna and ecology of Tula region.

- **Southern Federal University** is a modern research university with emphasis on innovations and entrepreneurship. In its academic activities it combines studies with fundamental and applied science, as well as cutting-edge technologies and innovative approaches. [http://sfedu.ru/international/?page_id=8](http://sfedu.ru/international/?page_id=8)

- **Floristisch-soziologische Arbeitsgemeinschaft (FlorSoz)** ([http://www.tuexenia.de/](http://www.tuexenia.de/)) is a German-speaking association of specialists and enthusiasts interested in the floristic structure of spontaneous vegetation, phytosociology and vegetation ecology. The association is a non-profit organization and will be pleased to welcome everyone who is interested.

- **John Wiley & Sons, Inc.** ([http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/](http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/)) was founded in 1807. It aspires to be a valued and respected provider of products and services that make important contributions to advances in knowledge and understanding, a role that is essential to progress in a healthy and prosperous society. Wiley’s mission is to provide must-have content and services to professionals, scientists, educators, students, lifelong learners, and consumers worldwide.

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