LIFE Project Number

LIFE19 ENV/BE/000102

D.1 Report on Networking Activities with other LIFE projects

Reporting Period

01/09/2020 - 30/08/2025

Report Delivery Due Date – Actual Date

30/11/2025 – 22/12/2025

LIFE PROJECT NAME or Acronym

LIFE Oak Processionary

Authors

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1. Context

This report is a result of Action D.1 Communication and dissemination. This report covers the whole project research period (2020 to 2024).

This report summarizes the networking activities of the project with other LIFE projects and other European organisations involved in Oak Processionary research and management. These actions were necessary to ensure public awareness, stakeholder involvement, replicability and transferability.

2. Objectives

The project team initially planned (and held) 3 networking events to inform stakeholders and partners on the project, keep them updated and share knowledge. The results for this are reported in the deliverable E.1 Final Report.

Additionally, the team was requested to provide, as part of the "Communication Plan" due on 28/02/2021, a complete list of earlier LIFE projects identified for networking, and to report related activities in a separate deliverable – this report.

To increase the project's impact, it is crucial to collaborate with and learn from other projects, with a particular focus on other LIFE projects. We intended to focus on (video) meetings, project visits, information exchange, and concrete collaborations.

3. Results

3.1. Networking activities with other LIFE projects

- At the start of the project in 2020, we received a Letter of Support (LoS) from the LIFE PISA-project manager Christos Athanassiou.

- Following the request of the LIFE Program, in November 2021 we listed the LIFE Projects with which networking activities would be useful. 5 candidate LIFE-projects were identified and added in the Communication Plan. This plan was delivered in the Mid Term-report.

  The projects identified at that time were:
  - LIFE20 ENV/GR/000801 | Acronym: **LIFE eGYMER;** Using smart traps and pheromones to control the gypsy moth: ecofriendly control in practice; https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/5598

  - LIFE19 ENV/IT/000358 | Acronym: **LIFE BIOREPEM**; Biocide Reduction in Municipal Pest Management; https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/5315

  - LIFE13 ENV/ES/000504 | Acronym: **LIFE PISA**; Innovative eco-friendly traps for the control of Pine Lepidoptera in urban and recreational places; https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/4082

  - LIFE17 CCA/NL/000093 | Acronym: **Farm LIFE**; Farming the Future – Building Rural Networks for Climate-Adaptive Agriculture; https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/4881

- LIFE14 IPE/BE/000002 | Acronym: **LIFE BNIP**; Belgian Nature Integrated Project; https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/4337

- In the end, we had a firm contact with the project LIFE eGymer (LIFE20 ENV/GR/000801, www.egymer.eu, https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/5598), which is focused on the development of novel control methods against the gypsy moth, *Lymantria dispar*. Our contacts were the project manager Christos Athanassiou, and Paraskevi Agrafioti of the University of Thessaly.

- On the 2nd of February 2022 we had an initial contact with the team of eGymer-project were we discussed the contents of both projects and the way we could work together.

- During the European Congress of Entomology in Crete in June 2023, we organised a poster session and a joint workshop for LIFE Oak Processionary and LIFE eGymer, where the findings of both projects were presented. Luc De Bruyn presented a topic on *'The Life Oak Processionary Caterpillar project – Is biological control possible*? The book of abstracts can be found here: ECE2023_Book_Of_Abstracts

- On august 14th 2024, our project team and the team of LIFE eGymer organised a joint Webinar meeting where the results of both projects at that time were presented. Luc Crevecoeur presented the status of our breeding experiment with *Calosoma sycopohanta.* (https://egymer.eu/webinar/)

- During the kick-off meeting of the Expert Group Processionary Caterpillar on June 12th, 2025, in Antwerp, Christos Athanassiou and Paraskevi Agrafioti presented a topic on *"Utilizing traps and pheromones in areawide management of Lymantria dispar in European forests"*. We discussed if this method could also be used in the management of OPM and PPM. The presentation used can be found on our website: Expert Group - Workshop_LIFE-eGymer (password OPMExpert 2025)

- We invited the members of LIFE EGymer to join us next year on the XIII European Congress of Entomology (ECE 2026) in Tours.

3.2. Networking activities with other European organisations

3.2.1. Jersey Departement of the Environment

- Beginning of 2023 we got an invitation from the Government of Jersey, Department of the Environment to visit the island. Jersey has been plagued with both OPC and PPC the last few years and they were very interested in exchanging information.

- In June 2023 three of us (Luc Crevecoeur, Kathleen Verstraete and Johan Neegers) visited the island. We visited locations with OPC nests, installed & inspected parasitoid traps and exchanged knowledge and experiences on management techniques

- Additionally, during our visit we presented our project and intermediate results at a local congress on invasive species, NNIS (Non-Native Invasive Species).

- Afterwards we delivered a few of the boxes we use at the lab in Genk to store the OPC nests so that they could identify the parasitoids typical for Jersey.

- We invited the people of the Jersey Department of Environment in our Expert Group.

- A report of this visit is added as annex in this document.

3.2.2. UK Forest Research

- In 2024 connections were established with the Tree Health - Entomology Team at the British Forest Research (FR).
- OPC has been introduced accidentally to England in 2005, probably through imported oaks originating from Italy. Since then, the species is established in most of Greater London and in some surrounding counties.
- There is a shared interest in developing more ecological methods to control the OPC, and alternatives such as the CS beetle are being explored. The UK was at that time planning to start a project on alternative control methods for OPC. They were very interested in our experiments, especially with the parasitoids and the CS beetle.
- In July 2024, three members of the team visited Belgium. Luc Crevecoeur and Toon Willems showed them around in the lab in Genk. Kyle Miller (FR) gave us a presentation of the situation of OPC and its natural predators in England. He explained how the Entomology team has identified OPM parasitoids using DNA sequencing technology and is now using this method to monitor the presence of parasitoids in the affected area. He also told us their plans sequencing OPM to find out their origin, with the hypothesis that OPM has probably entered the country several times.
- Together with the LIFE project team we visited several locations where the forest caterpillar hunter (*Calosoma sycophanta*) (CS) was observed in the near past, looked for beetles, determined the habitat conditions and compared them to British situation.
- We invited the people of Forest Research in our Expert Group, and they were present on our first workshop in 2025.
- A report of this visit is added as annex to this document.

3.2.3. Kennisplatform Eikenprocessierups

- In the Netherlands, the 'Kennisplatform Eikenprocessierups' (Oak Processionary Knowledge Platform) is a partnership established in 2019 at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV). The platform's goal is to reduce and prevent nuisance caused by oak processionary in the Netherlands. The Kennisplatform is responsible for, among other things, the official Dutch 'Leidraad Beheersing Eikenprocessierups', which is considered the Dutch governments' policy regarding oak processionary management.
- Our project partner, the city of Sittard-Geleen is a member of that platform.
- We had a first meeting with them about our project in 2021. During the project's inception we had sporadic contacts with the Knowledge Platform, which increased in 2025 when our results became more clear.
- Beginning of 2025, the provinces of Antwerpen and Limburg were invited to start a regular consultation with the representatives of the Kennisplatform. We discussed the results of our research, our plans for creating our own version, and their plans for the future.
- We invited the members of the Kennisplatform in our Expert Group, and they will attend the 2026 meeting.

3.2.4. International Expert Group on Oak & Pine Processionary

- One of the goals of the project was to create in international expert group on oak processionary. Since its cousin, the pine processionary, is also becoming more abundant in the south of the region, we decided to include this species as well.

- Already in 2023 during our visit to the European Congress of Entomology in Crete, Greece, the idea rose to use this platform to disseminate the results of our project to the European scientific community.

- Beginning of 2025, we started contacting possible candidates (all members of universities and scientific organisations) in 7 countries (The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Germany, the UK and Greece). We encouraged them to join the Expert Group on Oak and Pine Processionary and invited to the first meeting of this group.

- On June 12th and 13th 2025 the first workshop was organised in Antwerp, with great success. We had 21 participants from 5 European countries (BE, NL, FR, GB, GR). We presented our final scientific results in detail. After that, 10 other presentations were given by the participants on the OPM/PPM and related topics. A full overview of the topics discussed can be found on our website: Outputs & Reports - Expert Group Processionary Caterpillar - LIFE Oak Processionary Project (password on request).

- On Friday we visited the lab at Thomas More Highschool in Geel, where some of our beetles are bred, and the lab in Genk where the parasitized nests are stored. All participants were interested in attending future events of the new Expert Group.

- The next meeting for the expert group is to be planned in May 2026. In this meeting we will also invite members of the Dutch Kennisplatform Eikenprocessierups, and of the University of Copenhagen, who are also starting a project on Oak Processionary.

- Additionally, the project team and some members of the Expert Group will attend the European Congress of Entomology 2026 in Tours, France. We will take this opportunity to visit the INRAE laboratory (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment) in Orleans at their invitation.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Report on the visit to Jersey

Appendix 2: Report on the visit of UK Forest Research 2024

Jersey Visit June 2023 - Report

Title of the Event: Visit Jersey
Date of the event: 27/06/2023 - 1/07/2023
Participants

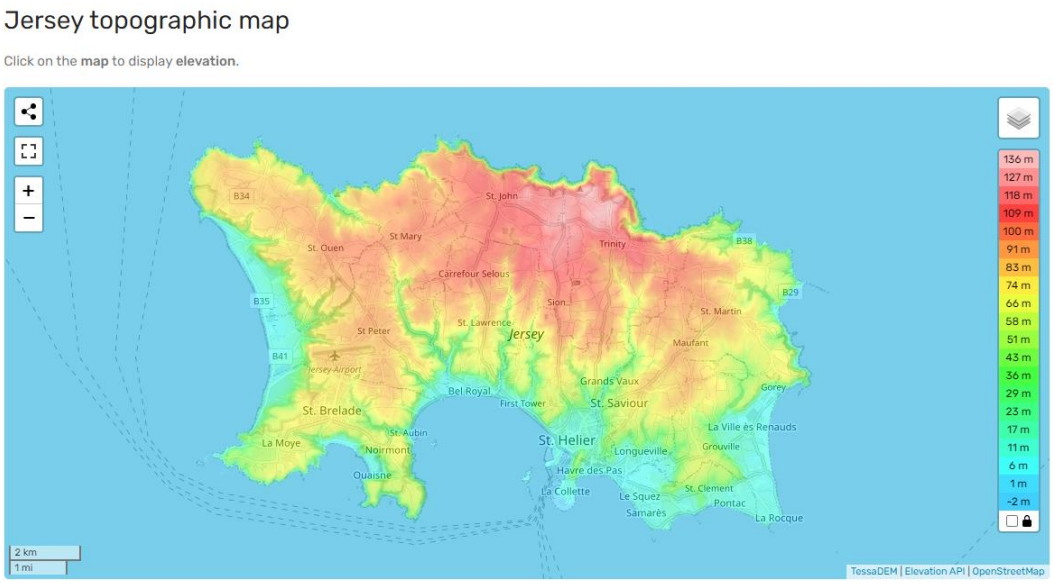
NEEGERS Johan (Organizer)
VERSTRAETE Kathleen
CREVECOEUR Luc

Notes

- ### Goals of the visit
  - At the invitation of the Government of Jersey, Department of the Environment
  - Jersey has been plagued with both OPC and PPC the last few years
  - We will visit locations with OPC nests, install & inspect parasitoid traps and exchange experiences on management techniques
  - Additionally, a presentation will be given on the project at a local congress on invasive species, NNIS (Non-Native Invasive Species)
  - 

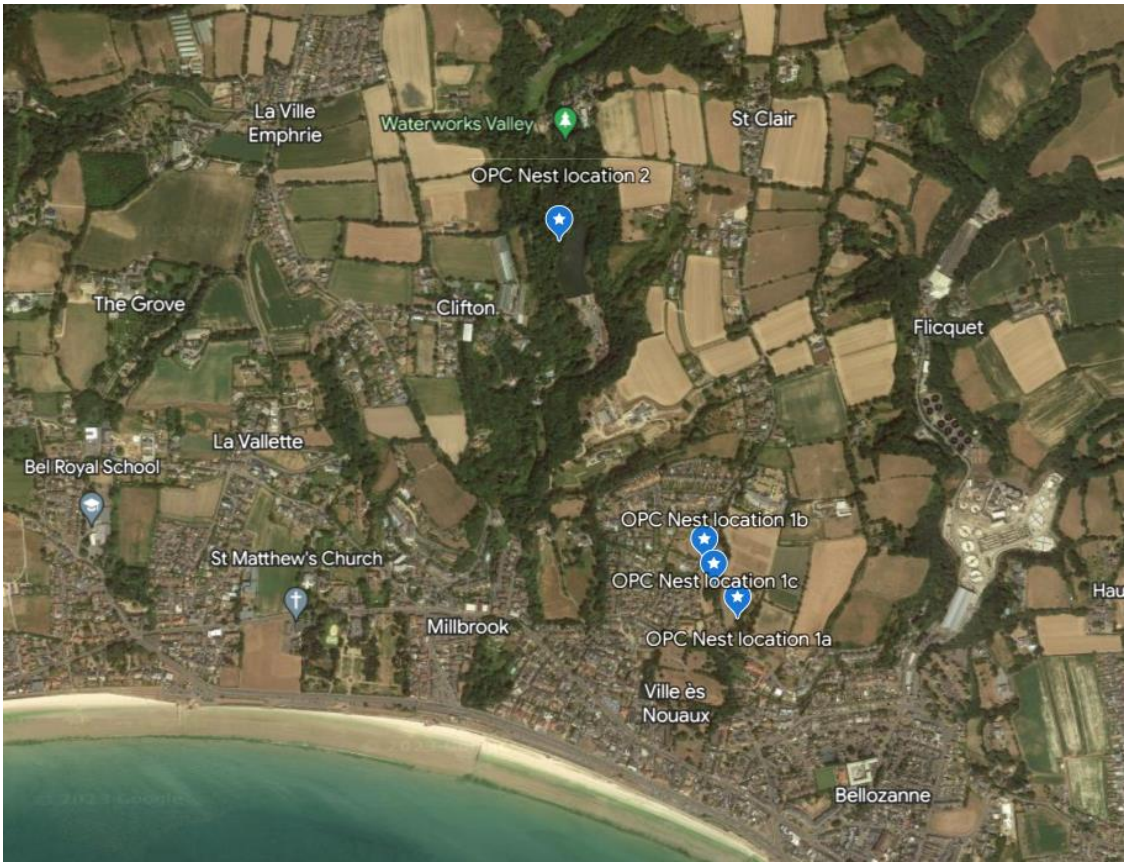
Figure 1: Jersey Departement of the Environment headquarters at Trinity Village

- ## Context
  - Jersey is the largest of the Channel Islands between France and Great Britain. It has a total area of 120 square kilometres, is situated twenty-two kilometres from the Cotentin Peninsula and about 55 kilometres from Saint-Malo, the closest OPM hotspot at the French coast. Jersey has a generally mild temperature and oceanic climate. The terrain is generally low-lying on the south coast, with some rocky headlands, rising gradually to rugged cliffs along the north coast. Small valleys run north to south across the island. The subsoil consists of shale, slate, granite, and volcanic rock. (Source: Wikipedia)



  - Oak trees can be found mostly in the valleys and along the road verges. Most oaks are less than 100-year-old, since most large trees were cut down in WWII. The plateaus between the valleys consist mainly of fields and pasture intersected by sunken roads bordered with wooded banks and rows of (oak) trees.
  - Jersey probably has OPM since at least ten years. The species was probably introduced through the import of oak trees. So far, the distribution of the species is limited to two valleys in the south of the island and only a few spots more to the east. Health problems are limited so far. The Department of Natural Environment manually removes nests where necessary, but they do not use biocides.
  - Last year one nest op PPM was found in the west of the island in a tree plantation. It was probably brought in with pine trees from Europe. The nest has been removed by the Department.

- Field work
  - At the evening of our arrival on Tuesday 27/06, we visited three locations near Saint Andrew's Park in St. Helier where OPC nests were present (OPC Nest locations 1a, 1b and 1c on the map below)



  - These locations are in a small, shallow, north-south oriented valley from 35 to 45 m above sea level. In 1a two large oaks and some smaller ones on a rather steep slope dominate a sunny meadow. In 1b and 1c some large oaks are standing in a steep road verge. The verges in this are very grassy with lots of Sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*) and contain among others Wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), Navelwort (*Umbilicus rupestris*), Alexanders (*Smyrnium olusatrum*), Spreading pellitory (*Parietaria judaica*), Common gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and several small fern species.
  - We found several OPC nests ranging from tennis ball size to handball size in two oaks on location 1a, a smaller nest in location 1b, no nest in location 1c

Figure 2: Oak trees at location 1a

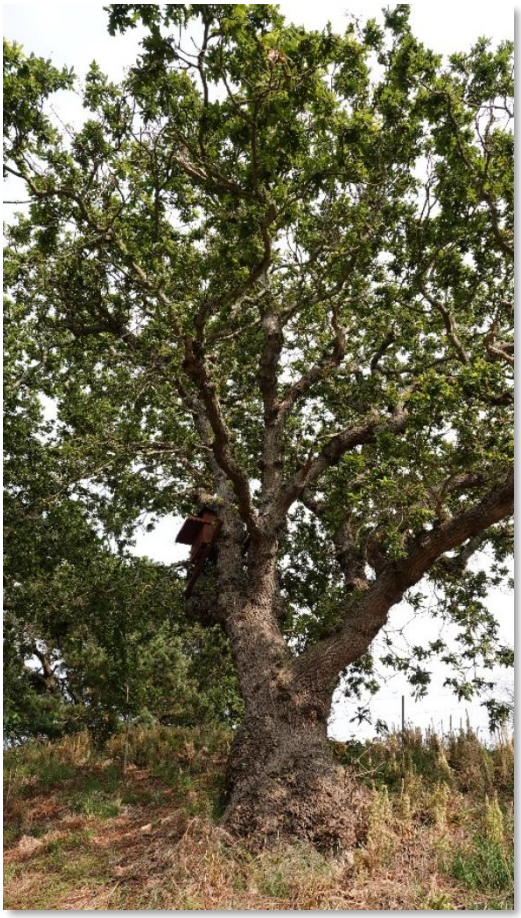
- 


Figure 3: Oak tree and OPM nest at location 1a

- On Wednesday 28/06 in the morning, we returned and put two parasitoid traps in location 1a and one trap in 1b. We also tried to catch parasitoids using a hand net, with no success

Figure 4: Catching parasitoids with the hand net

- The same day we also visited a location in the Waterworks Valley, less than 1 km away (OPC Nest location 2). Waterworks Valley is a narrow valley with relative steep walls, heavily wooded, with a row of oaks along the road. Some of these oaks are heavily covered with Common ivy *(Hedera helix*). The road verges contain typical wood species like Woodland germander (*Teucrium scorodonia*), Green alkanet (*Pentaglottis sempervirens),* Lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), Soft shield fern (*Polystichum setiferum*) and Hart's-tongue fern (*Asplenium scolopendrium*). We found one potential small nest high up in the tree.

Figure 5: Oak trees at location 2

- We put two parasitoid traps in the road verges between the oak trees.

Figure 6: Putting the parasitoid traps in place at location 2

- On Thursday around noon, 24+ hours later, we picked up the traps and collected the parasitoids and other flies and wasps in the traps. Luc took them to the lab and investigated the catch. We did not find any known OPM parasitoids

Figure 7: Results of one of the parasitoid traps

- ## Communication and dissemination actions
  - Wednesday afternoon we gave a 1-hour presentation to the staff of Jersey's Department of Environment about the OPM, the LIFE project, the experiment setup and the preliminary results of the three experimental areas. After the presentation we discussed the situation of the OPM on Jersey and our ideas on how to manage the local situation.
  - On Thursday morning we gave a thirty-minute presentation on the NNIS (Non-Native Invasive Species) Conference at the headquarters of the Société Jersiaise in St. Helier. On this conference, local ecologists together with specialists from among others Guernsey, Italy, Hawaii, Montserrat, and Belgium discussed the invasive plant and animal species threatening biodiversity and health on the Channel Islands. Our contribution was to give some background information on the distribution and migration trends and on the possible impact of both OPM and PPM.

Figure 8: Presenting the project results at the NNIS

- Various
  - Instead of using aerial work platforms which are difficult to use on the narrow roads and steep road verges, in Jersey OPM nests are collected by tree climbers. This means a lot of manual work for tree surgeons.
  - On the NNIS Conference we followed the discussion on the Asian Hornet (*Vespa velutina*) which is considered a major threat in Jersey. A member of the Department of National Environment explained us the impact on Jersey's biodiversity and how the government tries to manage (and destroy) this species using workforce, drones, and insecticides, so far with rather limited success.
  - On Thursday afternoon some of us visited Plémont Point at the northwest peninsula, a cliff that is famous for its Atlantic puffin (*Fratercula arctica*) population. Due to increasing predation from invasive mammals like brown rats, house cats, ferrets, and stouts and of course from seagulls, the puffin population on the island has been reduced from 300 couples a few decennia ago to only 4 couples today. On Plémont point, there are now plans to protect the last remaining breeding place by surrounding it with a high fence. We did not see any puffins (except for the two giant ones attracting tourists), but enjoyed the views from the cliffs down to the sea, the European shags (*Gulosus aristotelis*), Oystercatchers (*Haematopus ostralegus*) and Herring gulls (*Larus argentatus*) flying around, and the vegetation of Blue bonnets (*Jasione montana*), Red sandspurry (*Spergularia montana*), Musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*), Sea campion (*Silene uniflora*), Common mallow (*Malva sylvestris*) and Dune stork's-bill (*Erodium cicutarium* subsp. *dunense*).
  - We ended our visit to Jersey on Thursday evening with a dinner for all conference members at a restaurant and terrace at Portelet Beach, on the southwest peninsula of the island. It gave us the chance to learn a bit more about the

Island's biodiversity, the difference s with Guernsey, and the way invasive species are managed around the world.

Figure 9: Discussing the threats of invasive species all over the world at the conference dinner

- ## Conclusions
  - The OPM problem in Jersey at this moment seems to be contained, since it is limited to two valleys in the south. It seems that the moth has difficulties migrating over the plateau to other suitable habitats - maybe due to the stronger winds on the plateau? There is a risk that, with climate warming, this would change, and the moths will find it easier to migrate to other areas.
  - Even in the two valleys currently impacted, not all oak trees are infected. So there seem to be local factors like predators or parasitoids that limit the local population growth. However, Luc's research of the species in the parasitoid traps did not show any known parasitoids. Also, we did not find any OPC nests in trees with Common ivy.
  - If it is correct that both the local OPM and PPM outbreaks were initiated by imported trees - assumptions which are reasonable-, import restrictions from other infected regions would reduce the risk of new outbreaks occurring.
  - We think that technically, at this time it would be possible to eliminate OPM completely on the island. It would however take some work for tree surgeons to make sure all OPM nests in the infected trees (and surrounding ones) are removed in the summer, before the new moths emerge, and a few years to monitor the species and destroy new nests. However, this might also destroy the parasitoids specialized on OPM and thus increase the risks of rapid spreading of new OPM outbreaks.
  - After our return, Luc delivered the material for capturing and hatching some of the OPM nests in a controlled environment, so that we have a second try to catch some parasitoids. These should be collected in July. All possible parasitoids can be delivered to Luc for determination.

Visit UK Forest Research 2024 - Report

maandag 12 augustus 2024
11:06

Date: 6/08/2024 - 9/08/2024
Participants:

Johan Neegers
Jules Sondeijker
Luc Crevecoeur
Anne Leeflang
Joost Bloemberg
Max Blake (Forest Research)
Kyle Miller (Forest Research)
Katiana Saleiko (Forestry England)

Objectives of the visit

- On request of the Tree Health - Entomology Team at the British Forest Research (FR)
- Visit locations where the forest caterpillar hunter *(Calosoma sycophanta)* (CS) is observed in the near past, look for beetles, determine the habitat conditions and compare them to British situation.
- Exchange information on the research done in the UK and in the LIFE project on oak processionary moth *(Thaumetopoea processionea)* (OPM) and its predators, especially CS and parasitoid flies.

Context – the OPM in Great Britain

- Oak Processionary moth (OPM) has been introduced accidentally to England in 2005, probably through imported oaks originating from Italy. Since then, the species is established in most of Greater London and in some surrounding counties. "The remainder of the United Kingdom (UK) is designated as an area free from the pest with special restrictions on movements of oak plants to minimise the risk of introducing OPM to new areas." (“Oak processionary moth (T*haumetopoea processionea*)”)

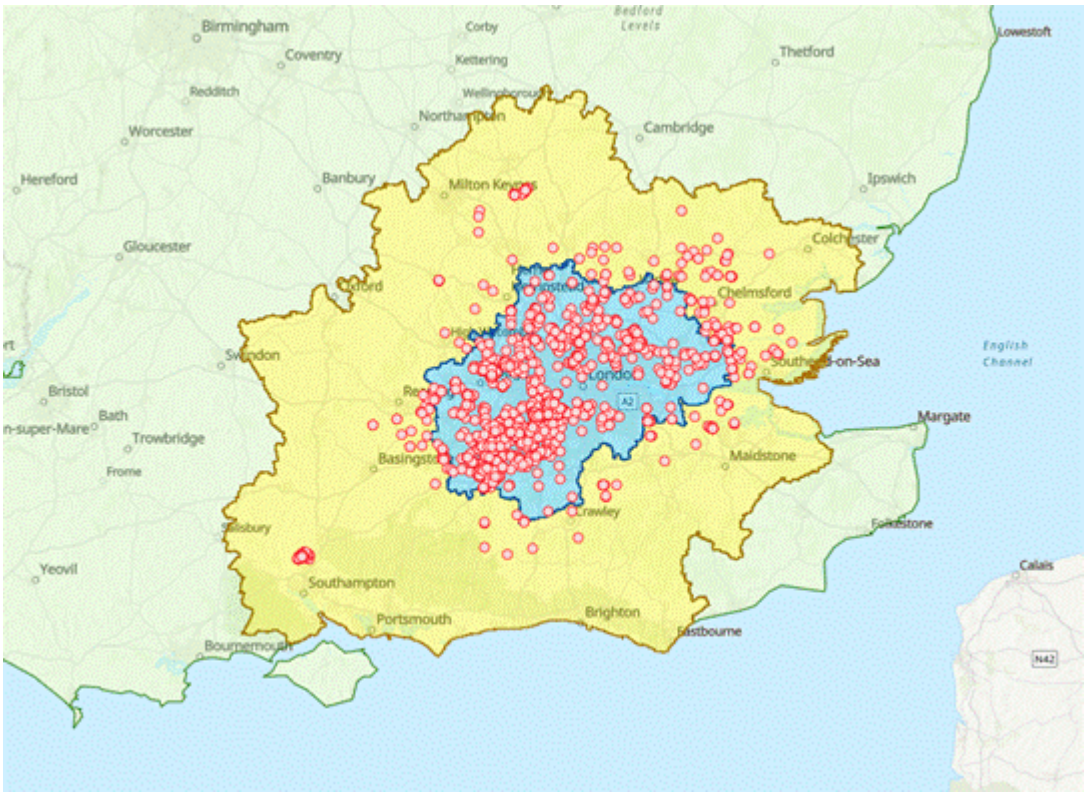


Figure 1: Current distribution of OPM in the UK (2024). Green: Pest free area, Yellow: Buffer zone, Blue: Established area

- Forest Research is searching for a way to control the OPM population. A lot of work is being done on identifying and inventorying parasitoid flies, especially *Carcelia iliaca*. Our other common parasitoid *Pales processioneae* seems to be almost absent in the UK.
- FR has started a project on the possibility for the (re)introduction of *Calosoma sycophanta* (CS) as a control measure for OPM. CS is probably native to the UK and has been recorded fairly frequently since the 19th century. ("*Calosoma sycophanta* | UK beetles") Many sightings have been near-coastal from the southeast and so attributed to occasional immigration, but inland records may relate to specimens introduced by other means and the only verified breeding population was recorded from West Suffolk. With these field trips, the team aims to evaluate the suitability of Greater London's forests for reintroduction of CS. They also want to collect DNA material from as much as possible European CS populations to compare the DNA with UK specimens.

• Context – *Calosoma sycophanta* in the Moselle region

Calosoma sycophanta has been reported since a few years in the border region between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the German state Rhineland-Palatinate and the French department of Moselle, along the rivers Moselle, Saar and Saur. Although these sightings are rather sporadic, they are supported by photo material and good enough location determinations. Being close to the project area, this area seems to be the most promising to go look for the beetles.

- ## Presentations & lab visit

Figure 2: The fellowship ready for departure. FLTR Luc Crevecoeur, Max Blake, Johan Neegers, Joost Bloemberg, Anne Leeflang, Kyle Miller, Katiana Saleiko (absent: Jules Sondeijker)

- On the first day of the visit the LIFE EPR Team presented the results of their experiments with predation by tits and parasitoids, the impact of common ivy *(Hedera helix)* and the results of the breeding experiment with *Calosoma sycophanta* so far. Also, we visited the lab in the PNC were the OPM nests are stored for the parasitoids to hatch, and where the CS breeding experiments take place.
- After our breakfast on Thursday in Trier, Kyle gave us a presentation of the situation of OPM and its natural predators in England. He explained how the Entomology team has identified OPM parasitoids using DNA sequencing technology and is now using this method to monitor the presence of parasitoids in the affected area. He also told us their plans sequencing OPM to find out their origin, with the hypothesis that OPM has probably entered the country several times.
- At the end of the trip, the FR team took some samples of our Oak processionary caterpillars, Turkish beetles and parasitoids to perform DNA analysis.

- ## Field work

On Wednesday 07/08 and Thursday 08/08, we visited two locations in Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany, one nearby Nittel in the Mosel valley, and one at Taben-Rodt in the Saar valley, where CS has been observed in the near past. We hoped to find more specimens of the beetles, and to better understand the kind of biotopes the species uses as a habitat. A third location in Bollendorf in the Sauer Valley was considered but our contact person there was unavailable. The three locations are at max 25 km from each other.

- **Kölliger Fells, Nittel, 07/08/2024**
  - The Kölliger Fells is a north-south running dolomite rock slope facing the Mosel Valley towards the west south of the wine village of Nittel, with as highest point the Huttenberg (309 m). It is covered by a mixed deciduous-coniferous forest of +-26 ha, mainly consisting of common beech trees *(Fagus sylvatica)* with some pedunculate oaks *(Quercus robur)*, sycamore *(Acer pseudoplatanus),* chestnut *(Castanea sativa)* and Scots pine *(Pinus sylvestris).*

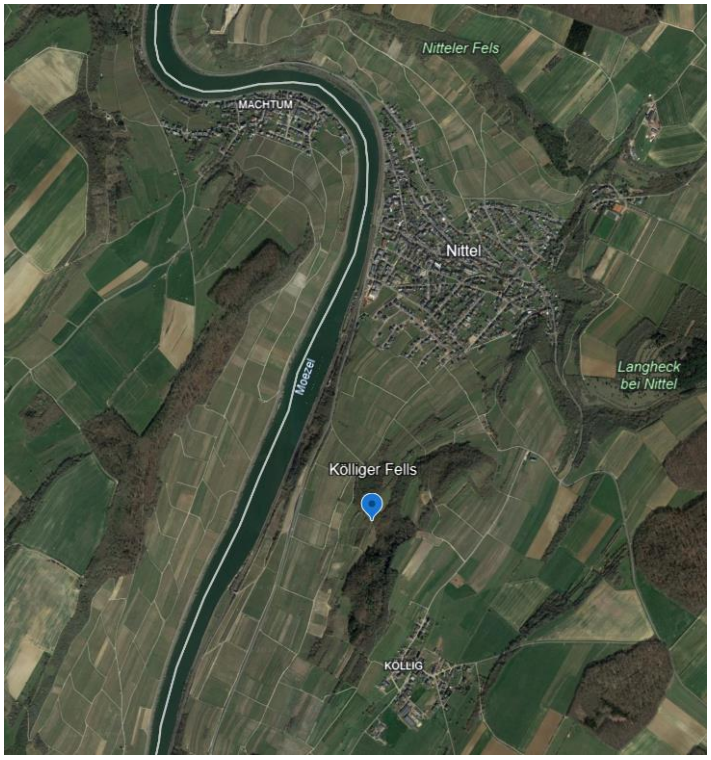


Figure 3: The Kölliger Fells south of Nittel

  - The most recent observation of CS in this area was according to Observation.org on 08/06/2024, on a forest road along the west side of the forest. The forest edge contains common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), wild cherry (*Prunus avium*), common hazel (*Corylus avellana*), common walnut *(Juglans regia*) and other. On the other side of the forest road is a 10m broad sunny rugged area containing oregano (*Origanum vulgare*), parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), and others. Below that start the vineyards which cover the lower slopes of the valley.

Figure 4: The forest on Kölliger Fells

- In the forest edge along the stretch of road where CS was observed, only a few small pedunculate oaks are present, most of them covered in common ivy *(Hedera helix)*. No remains of OPM nests are visible.

Figure 5: The forest road where CS was observed in June 2024

- Searching under rocks, bark and stumps along the forest road did not reveal any beetles, but we did wake up some slow worms (Anguis fragilis).
- On the way to the hotel, we stopped at a limestone grassland east of Nittel, called Langheck. We found several species of orchids, all finished blooming, and other typical limestone grassland species . In the invertebrate fauna we can mention the praying mantis (*Mantis religiosa*) and the chalkhill blue (*Lysandra coridon*).

- **Tabener Urwald, Taben-Rodt, 08/08/2024**
  - The Tabener Urwald is a forest and Naturwaldreservat on a north-south oriented quartzite slope facing the Saar Valley towards the east. The slope is very steep, up to 30°. Altitudes vary between 160 and 320 m. The slope is covered by a mixed deciduous-coniferous forest of +-22 ha. consisting mainly of sessile oak *(Quercus*

petraea) and common beech (Fagus sylvatica) with some sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), birches and linden.

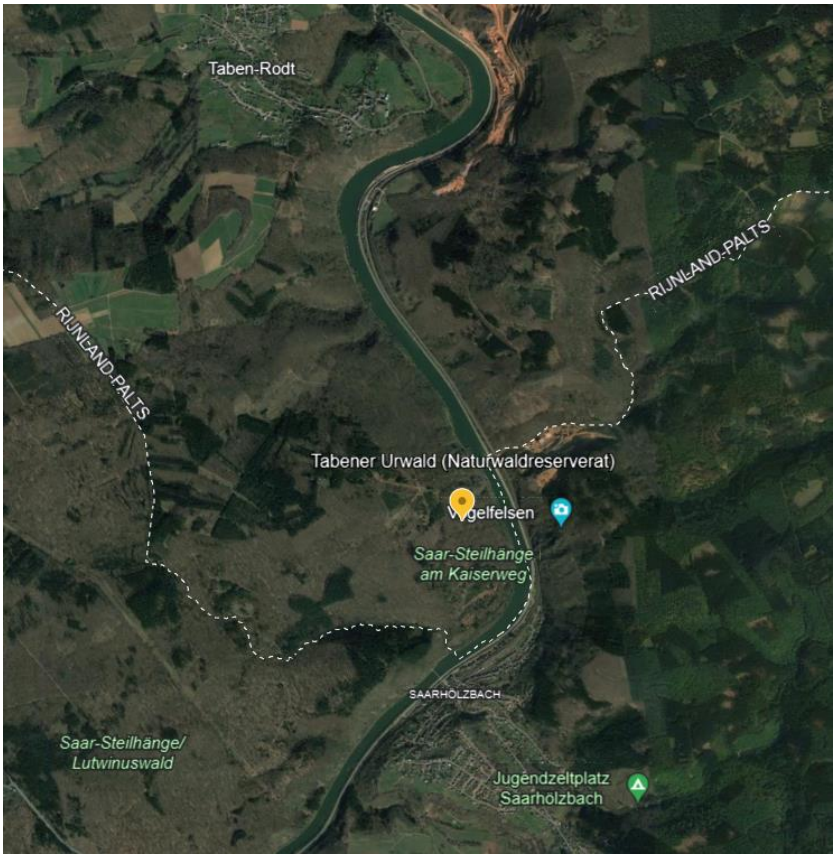


Figure 6: The Tabener Urwald south of Taben-Rodt

- This location is well known for its deadwood beetle fauna, containing 235 Red list species and 19 primeval forest relic species like the hermit beetle *(Osmoderma eremita)* and the oak click beetle *(Lacon querceus).*

Figure 7: The Tabener Urwald along the Saar river

- On the forest road we found several large beetles: a female European stag beetle *(Lucanus cervus)*, a male lesser stag beetle *(Dorcus parallelipipedus),* several spring dumbledors *(Trypocopris vernalis),* rose chafers *(Cetonia aurata),* burying beetles *Nicrophorus vespilloides* and a musk beetle *(Aromia moschata)*.

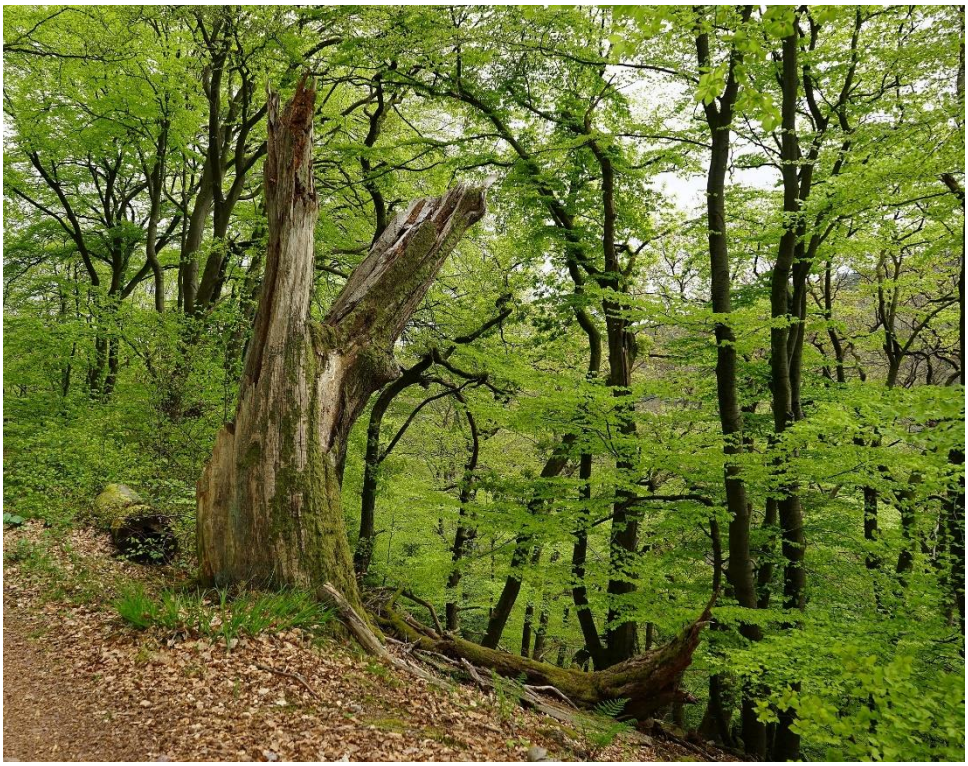


Figure 8: Tabener Urwald

- As far as we could see, no pedunculate oaks are growing here. In the sessile oaks we did not see any remains of OPM nests.
- Searching under dead branches, stones and in tree hollows did not bring additional beetle species to light, but we stirred up lots of slow worms *(Anguis fragilis)* and a smooth snake *(Coronella austriaca).*

Conclusions

- We did not find any CS in either of the locations;
- The two visited locations are very different in their geology (dolomite vs. quartzite), orientation (hillside facing west vs. facing east), plant communities and species composition in all layers of the vegetation;
- They are more similar in the occurrence of various (deciduous) forest complexes with a varied age structure and limited forest management and exploitation;
- Pedunculate oaks were very rare in Kölliger Fells, and the few trees present were overgrown with common ivy; they were probably absent in the Tabener Urwald.
- Remains of OPM nests were not found in either of the locations and it seems unlikely that there have been many in recent years;

- This would mean that, if a viable CS population is indeed present in these locations, they clearly do not feed on OPM, so one or more other species of hairy caterpillars must be widely available here;
- Alternatively, it might mean that the CS population in this part of Germany is either on the brink of extinction or has always been sparse, or that the sporadic occurrence of CS here is just a consequence of their nomadic lifestyle;

Sources & references

- Forest Research - Oak processionary moth (Thaumetopoea processionea)
- UK Beetles
- Datenbank der Kulturgüter in der Region Trier 2024 - Kölliger Fells
- Naturwaldreservat Tabener Urwald
- Forschungsbereich 6.3 „Ökologische Waldentwicklung“