

## Abstract

Land-use change that took place in the second half of the 20th century affected population sizes and viabilities of many species adapted to extensive land use. Dusky and Scarce large blue butterflies are ones of these species. Both number of their populations and population sizes declined all over Europe. During the last decade, many protected areas of the Natura 2000 network have been established to preserve these butterfly species. Protected areas are managed specifically to support viability of the *Maculinea* populations. This thesis investigates a current status set of the Natura 2000 sites in southwest Bohemia protecting one or both *Maculinea* butterfly species. Implementation of the specific management was found to be a crucial factor for successful protection of the Dusky and Scarce large blue butterflies. We found that there are significant differences in managements applied in different locations. Almost half of protected areas are managed in inappropriate ways, their butterfly population sizes were very small or already extinct. Other sites are managed well and stable *Maculinea* populations live there.

An assumption that a specific *Maculinea* management could also support another rare or endangered species has been tested in this thesis too. All available records (i.e. field inventories, records published in the management plans, and data of the Nature Conservation Database) about the rare and endangered species occurring in the *Maculinea* locations were analysed. No significant evidences supporting this assumption were found due to a heterogeneous and incomplete dataset but there are some indications, that *Maculinea nausithous* and *M. teleius* could play a role of the 'umbrella species' in protected areas dedicated to their protection. Additional survey for species and following research are necessary to prove this theory.

**Keywords:** *Maculinea*, management of protected areas, Natura 2000