

Dassenbos to be enlarged

Trees are regularly felled on campus to make way for building projects, so it is big news when trees are planted. Especially when it's over 2000 trees.

Leo Goudzwaard, a researcher at Forest Ecology & Management, and his team turned a field to the north of Dassenbos wood into new woodland. This was partly in the name of science. 'The field had been used by Carus and then it became available,' explained Goudzwaard. 'A number of people had the idea of planting trees there to enlarge Dassenbos. The Dutch Forest Strategy states that 37,000 hectares of new woodland needs to be planted by 2030. We are doing our bit here.'

The new trees are not intended as compensation for the trees felled to allow construction of the bus lane on

the other side of Dassenbos. WUR and nature group Mooi Wageningen are still arguing about that. Dassenbos 2.0 is not a continuation of the original either. 'Quite the opposite,' says Goudzwaard. 'It is actually good for diversity to select different species.'

Not just pretty

A total of 20 different species were planted, including euonymus, privet, viburnum, birch and wild apple. They are a combination of flowering bushes with berries and trees. The soil had to be loosened before planting could start. Goudzwaard: 'The soil had become very compacted. A crane with a knife had to cut the ground open first. Then holes for planting were created with an electric drill. All in all, it was a lot of work. It took us an entire week.'



Some of the trees on the site will be used for research. The species of rowan, wild service tree, field maple and Turkish hazel will be studied as part of the Climate Smart Forestry programme. One aspect of that programme is to assess how less common species fare in the various kinds of soil in the Netherlands. RK