

Fifty key farmland species

President of the Executive Board Sjoukje Heimovaara was recently presented with the *Canon of Dutch Farmland Nature*, a book detailing 50 species of flora and fauna that typify the Dutch countryside. The selection was made with input from Professor Liesje Mommer and researcher Dirk van Apeldoorn, who are both involved in the Wageningen Biodiversity Initiative.

'The *Canon* would have been a thousand pages long if it had been up to Liesje and Dirk; they were so enthusiastic,' said the publisher. 'They also showed that "farmland nature" is not a contradiction in terms: the Netherlands is home to various animal and plant species that live here precisely because farm practices create the right habitat.' That association between cultivation and nature is the key theme of the foreword, which was written by WUR emeritus professor of the Ecology & Philosophy of Nature Restoration Matthijs Schouten. 'We

have become used to seeing humans and nature as polar opposites,' he argues. 'But a form of cooperation that benefits nature *is* possible. However, that will require us to see nature as a partner to a greater extent than at present.' ME

