

## Mixed orchard habitats

In mixed orchard habitats you find fruit trees distributed across a meadow. There are about 250 different varieties of cherries, 1000 varieties of pears and 1200 varieties of apples that grow there. Depending on their characteristics the fruits can be stored for a long time, be used for cooking marmalade or baking cakes. Some allergy sufferers are only able to eat old and 'unstressed' apple varieties from such meadows.

If these meadows are only cut once or twice a year and no pesticides are used, they are great living spaces for many animals and plants. 5000 species of animals and plants are able to live in the trees or the grass. Not only the green woodpecker lives there - also bats, hornets and dormice, for example, can find a home in mixed orchard habitats.

Even though they have many positive aspects the status of these meadows is threatened. Some people think that fruit plantations are more profitable than mixed orchard habitats and so they want to replace them.

But picking the fruits together is such fun! The apples and pears are natural and smell good. Also, lots of animals and plants need the meadow as living space. In mixed orchard habitats you can sometimes find honey because beekeepers position their bee colonies near apple trees.

You can also do some things to help preserve mixed orchard habitats. For example, adopt such a meadow together with your school class. Together you can pick the fruits - that may be fun!

If you don't know where to find a meadow you can buy products made from fruits grown in mixed orchard habitats instead. They are marketed with labels that tell you about the source.

Task: Mark everything about what grows and lives in mixed orchard habitats in the text. Then work with your group and draw a very big meadow on a poster. Portray everything you have marked in the text. Have fun! =)