

Experiences with the collection and harvest of diasporas from semi-natural grassland: A Creative conservation viewpoint

Richard Scott¹



Landlife is an environmental charity (NGO) of some 34 years standing. After being a pioneer champion in ecological landscapes, as part of a sustainable operation it became one of the first wildflower seed producers in the UK, which paralleled an objective of creating new opportunities for nature and enabling people to enjoy them.

In the UK Landlife has become a catalyst for practical activity and advice and in September 2000 opened the National Wildflower Centre, one of a very few landmark environmental projects established for the new Millennium.

Landlife's experience ranges from the diverse fields of seed collection from the wild, and all the inherent experience of scaling up seed production from collected samples, to delivery of our own projects in challenging social circumstances in places where ecological landscapes are demanded as a matter of environmental justice.

Experience from both growing, harvesting, cleaning seed selecting seed mixtures and delivering ecological landscapes, gives an exceptional insight into the best practical means of delivering the best potential for nature in many scenarios. This is creative conservation, which relies on good scientific method, innovative land practice, creative thinking and practical delivery.

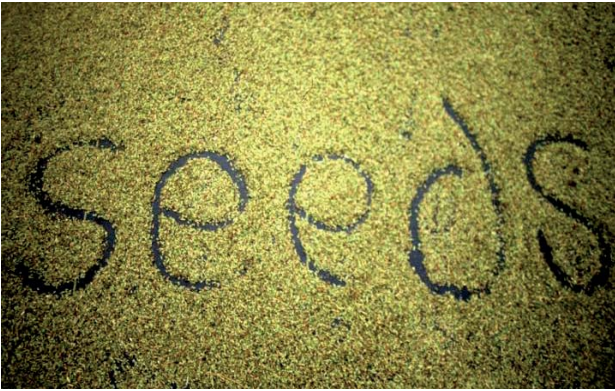
Landlife organised the first UK conference on climate change and its implications for con-

servation policy in May 2000, and continue to challenge traditional ways of working. Landlife enables other organisations and communities to deliver ecologically especially in areas with low ecological potential and low aspirations of ecological landscape delivery.



Woolfall Heath, Huyton. Sustainable landscape delivery on Merseyside

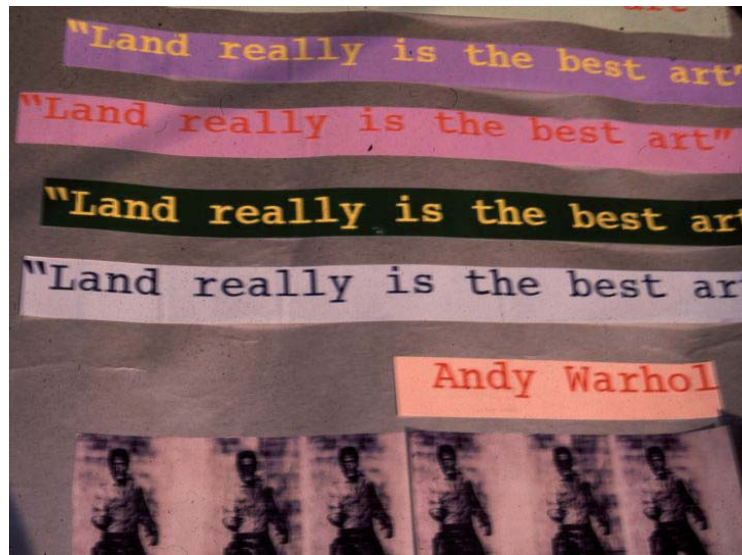
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Seeds represent potential and their resource should be used wisely, the starting point of projects is therefore critical.



What awaits us? As the world becomes increasingly urbanised, aspirations for landscape practice need to be raised as a matter of urgency.



Semi-natural landscapes demand a link to culture and society, ecological networks are often abstracted from communities and social networks this need not be so.



The oldest grassland experiment in the world. What secrets does it hold for semi-natural grassland project work?

This presentation will demonstrate Landlife's experience in the realm of the semi-natural grassland delivery, and illustrate the important concept of creativity in response to a changing world and considerable environmental and social need. The opportunity of nature is reflected in the potential of seed and how it is used. This takes on board the Parable of the Leaning Tower of Pisa and the Accidental Rainforest, and lessons from the world's oldest grassland experiment.