



**Closer
to Nature**

PRESS RELEASE

Come and see orchids right in the middle of a village!

Střelná u Teplic (27 Aug. 2011) – Today, the Czech Union for Nature Conservation (ČSOP) and NET4GAS jointly opened an orchid meadow in Střelná u Teplic to the public. It is already the second location opened within the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme this year.

People often feel the nature is “somehow out of reach”. And yet, you may find natural treasures almost in the very centre of villages. Střelná u Teplic is one of them. One of the most important wet meadows of the Ústí nad Labem Region, where you will find a number of very precious and endangered plants, is surrounded by houses on three sides.

In the past, you would find dozens of hectares of similar meadows in the foothills of the Ore Mountains. Today, the one in Střelná belongs to the last ones. Thanks to the care of its former owners, who used it for their cow, goat and several sheep, the meadow survived agricultural intensification in the second half of the last century. It was the Czech Union for Nature Conservation (ČSOP) which saved it from the pressure of developers when it bought the meadow within the Space for the Nature campaign in 2009 and made it “a private reserve”.

“Private reserves “owned by ČSOP are not closed to the public. On the contrary, ČSOP tries to bring the locations closer to the people and opened them to the public. The NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme has been a reliable partner in this effort for five years now. The Střelná meadow is the newest location opened within the cooperation. Two interpretive panels were placed in the area, safe access was created and a nice resting place for the visitors was built here. A wooden balustrade separates the meadow from the road.

The most precious species of plants you can find at the Střelná meadow are rather inconspicuous - adder's-tongue, a tiny little fern, equally tiny arrow grass, long-leaved hare's ear, onescale spikerush, eggleaf twayblade, or four precious sedge species. What you will, however, not miss is pink spikes of western march orchid and white fluffs of broad-leaved cotton grass you will know from your trips to mountain peat bogs. “Of course not now, in springtime, some time at the end of May and beginning of June,” says Jiří Rous, the President of the local ČSOP office, which currently takes care of the meadow and arranged for it to be opened to the public. You are heartily welcome!



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The Czech Union for Nature Conservation is a civic association of people who share an active interest in nature conservation and the environment. ČSOP's mission is to protect and restore nature, the landscape and the environment, to promote environmental education and support sustainable living. The Union currently has 9,000 members coming from the ranks of professional naturalists, experienced volunteers as well as pure enthusiasts who simply love nature. In 2009, ČSOP celebrated its 30th anniversary. For more information please go to www.csop.cz.

NET4GAS is aware of its social responsibility and therefore develops and constantly deepens its concept of sponsorship and corporate philanthropy. The company acts as a reliable and safe gas transmission system operator and develops a responsible environmental policy that takes into account the interests of future generations. The NET4GAS long-term sponsorship strategy - which is put into practice through the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme - springs from the close relation between the line of business pursued by NET4GAS on the one hand, and nature-conservation and environmental issues on the other. Supporting also various other entities, NET4GAS is the general partner of the Czech Union for Nature Conservation and of the Peat Bog Revitalization project in the Ore Mountains, organized by the civic association DAPHNE ČR – Institute for Applied Ecology. For detailed information on the locations newly opened to the public and on other natural spots of interest, as well as for destination tips, please see www.blizpriode.cz.