

# Annual Report 2017

## Dark Sky Park De Boschplaat

written by Marloes Fopma & Wim Schmidt  
commissioned by the Forestry Commission Terschelling and VVV



### Introduction

*"Where beauty find it's way to darkness" - MF*

A growing group of tourists, from the Netherlands and abroad, appreciate the beauty of darkness and are laying in the dunes, gazing at the stars. It is worth a visit at night and with great luck the special phenomenon Aurora Borealis is seen during fall - and autumn time.

What makes this first Dark Sky Park of the Netherlands unique is that it is accessible wherever and whenever you want - taking into account the breeding season. It's the place to be able to see the Milky Way well, which is on the mainland not self-evident. The title is proudly presented by islander entrepreneurs and this creates added value for tourism. Associated activities were organized in 2017 and beautiful pictures were made. Overall more and more guests of the island discover this unique place. And overall, last year there where none great changes in illumination around the park.

## Activities

### Birdwatchers on De Boschplaat

During the bird breeding season from April to mid-August birdwatchers are present day and night on De Boschplaat. Just over 80 qualified and selected volunteers alternate weekly in two couples. At Paal 22.4 stands a shack where they reside and also by 'the heads of 28', at the beginning of de Koffiebonenplaat.

In addition to counting birds and welcoming guests the birdwatchers have an important role as a spokesperson. From 15 March to 15 August, most of De Boschplaat is not open

to the public, but one can walk or bike on the path along De Stuifdijk. More than 150.000 birds perching here annually in all calmness without disturbance.



wagons left towards De Boschplaat where Adrie Warmenhoven of Eise Eisenga Planetarium told enthusiastically about the night sky. When the group got back to the village he gave more explanation about stars and constellations by a presentation. Two nature-photographers were also on 'board' of the horse-wagons to make beautiful pictures. Eilandmeisje organized her populair dust walk 'Joon' extra on this night and restaurant De Heeren van der Schelling made a special Dark Sky Menu. Number of participants: about 125 in total.

### Dark Sky weekend

The last weekend of October, Salt Magazine organized the third Dark Sky Weekend Terschelling. The event was again fully booked out. This year 35 Salt subscribers went to the island for a weekend immersion on Dark Sky. On Saturday night the group went on a mountainbike to Dark Sky Park De Boschplaat. The reactions were very positive. Again Salt magazine used the

### Night of the Night on the island of Terschelling

Foundation Natuurlijk Oosterend organized on 28 October 2017, for the 7th time on Terschelling the Night of the Night. The Night of the Night is an nationwide event that draws attention to the beauty of darkness.

In the evening large horse-

  
**Zaterdag 28 oktober 2017**

**Nacht van de Nacht**

**Waddengouddorp Oosterend**

*Dark Sky Menu*

16.00 uur Schemerwandeling *Joon* met Eilandmeisje  
€ 17,50 p.p.  
06-15392930

vanaf 18.00 uur 3-gangendiner restaurant De Heeren van der Schelling  
€ 33,50 p.p.  
0562- 448780

21.00 uur Huilfartocht Puur Terschelling met sterrenkundige Adrie van Warmenhoven  
€ 26,50 p.p.  
[www.puur-tereschelling.nl](http://www.puur-tereschelling.nl)

Reserveer nu! Tel. 0562- 448780  
VOL = VOL  
De onderdelen zijn ook los te boeken

Foto: Bert Faber

logo, artist Claudia Hek made last year for this special event.

### Excursions to Dark Sky Park De Boschplaat

Under attendance of a guide of the Forestry Commission, a group of guests went weekly to the Jan Thijssenduin for an excursion and explanation about stars and darkness. The animo was again huge, more excursions were given in comparison to 2016.

This excursions were held from June till October on a weekly basis.

Average group size per excursion: 10 persons.



### Dark Sky arrangement

In addition of the last years, also in 2017 holiday-accommodation park Tjermelân offered Dark Sky packages.

Guests stayed a weekend in a comfortable studio at the park, located just a few steps away from the Dark Sky area. On Saturday night a ranger took the guests along on a tour. Afterwards participants received a planisphere of astronomer Rob Walrecht. The arrangement was offered a few weekends. Average capacity: 20 persons.

### Springtij festival: eye for sustainability

During the annual Springtij festival with approximately 600 participants a part of this group enjoyed a Dark Sky walk under attendance of guides of The Forestry Commission.

### Horse wagons trips

Two horse wagons companies organized in 2017 a number of night horse-wagon trips over De Boschplaat. A special experience!

### New: dust walk Joon from Eilandmeisje

Company Eilandmeisje (islandgirl) started in oktober 2017 with a new activity: dust walk Joon. Joon means evening in one of the dialects of the island. Strolling from dune to dune and during the walk the Storycomber of Terschelling, Marloes, tells stories about the surrounding landscape. The walk ends in total darkness and stargazing is part of the tour. She explains about Dark Sky, what the status means, the importance of darkness and the rotatable star chart - planisfeer - made by Rob Walrecht.

### Light-procession Oosterend

Foundation Natuurlijk Oosterend organized a light-procession between Christmas and New Year's Eve with the theme witches. Often families with children, brought their home-made lights with ( instead of lanterns with batteries) and walked along. All the public lighting in the village was taken off and inhabitants put their own lighting around the house off.

Number of participants: about 100 persons.

Schemerwandeling Joon van Eilandmeisje

Joon is Aasters - een Terschellinger dialect - voor avond. Tijdens de schemering, wandelen we als het ware de avond in. De Boschplaat is het eerste Dark Sky Park van Nederland, en Eilandmeisje laat je graag de schoonheid van de duisternis zien. De duinen rondom Waddengouddorp Oosterend herbergen tal van verhalen: over sandverstuivingen, levende duinen, nachtjagers, dreskeelingen, verdwenen akkers en meer.

Voor (internationale) groepen is schemerwandeling Joon ook te boeken op andere dagen.

Start: Parkeerplaats strand Oosterend

Eilandmeisje  
06-15392930 0562-850817  
marloes@eilandmeisje.nl  
www.eilandmeisje.nl  
www.facebook.com/EilandmeisjeTS



## Couch as part of Oerol project

A wooden couch is placed at the beginning of The Boschplaat, next to a bike track where people can stop over and star gazing on this specially designed couch. The couch was part of a expedition project at the Oerol festival.

## Future activities

In 2018, Leeuwarden will be Europe's Capital of Culture. One of the program components is Feel the Night. The aim: preserve the darkness and silence of the night and experience the beauty of the night. Feel the Night is the name of numerous activities and events leading up to 2018. A presentation about Dark Sky Park De Boschplaat will be given in Leeuwarden by Marloes Fopma (Eilandmeisje) on the 6th of February.

## Publicity

### Articles

Various media published articles about De Boschplaat as a Dark Sky Park. I.a. in naturemagazine 'Roots', newspaper 'Leeuwarder Courant', magazine 'National Geographic', 'Salt magazine' en 'Wadden' of the Waddenvereniging. Foundation Natuurlijk Oosterend gave a new walking book out with a chapter about Dark Sky. Also a book is written about the Terschelling Night, published by Isola Arte.



On the blog of The Forestry Commision Terschelling, Eilandmeisje wrote a blog about Dark Sky colleges given in the Nature barn for children of the island. The colleges where part of the exhibition about Dark Sky. The blog is read [here](#).

The website [www.darkskyterschelling.nl](http://www.darkskyterschelling.nl) was updated with new information.

## Darkness and light

In June 2015 a SQM LU-DL is erected in the middle of De Boschplaat, about six kilometres from the nearest building.

In the year 2017, like the previous years, at the same location are made measurements with the same SQM number.

Sadly the measurements from January till May 2017 are lost; the whole SQM–DU-DL number 1985 was stolen beginning of May, before we could download the data.

We replaced the old SQM in august by another SQM-



DU-DL number 2124. This SQM was in the Dutch calibration program already a few years so we could easily incorporate this device in the measuring campaign in the Netherlands. But it was a sad moment.

From 7 august till 22 October 2017 in total 8766 measurements were conducted with the new SQM-DU-LD number 2124.

3436 measurements were done with the sun more than 18 degrees under the horizon and the moon under the horizon.

Of these last the results are given.

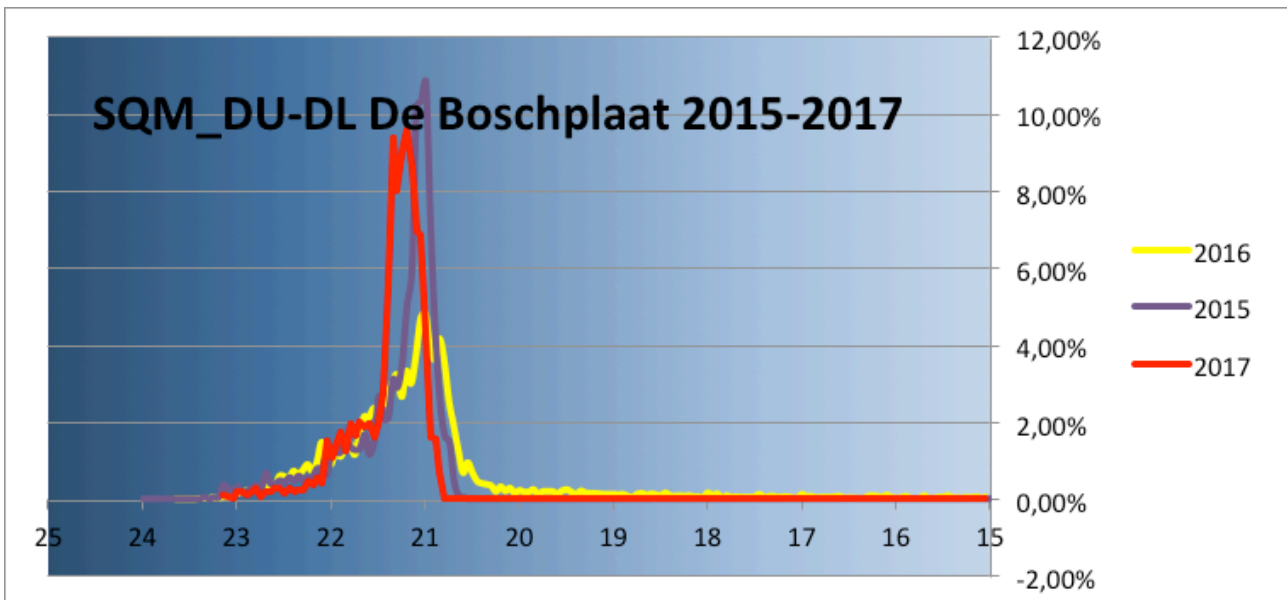
Mean mags/ bs<sup>2</sup>

2015: 20,85

2016: 20,83

2017: 21,2

Median mags/ bs<sup>2</sup>



2015: 20,83

2016: 21,09

2017:21,21

### Frequency table of the results in the last three years

The results have the same form as previous years, but the results are substantially higher (darker) than the other two years.

It could be the result of the program, a lot of the northern municipalities are conducting, to reduce the amount of upward going light by replacing old luminaries with full cut off led light. In general it seems Holland is getting not lighter anymore ( or even darker).

We must see what the results will be next year and if this tendency is continuing.

It could also be the result of good weather or the change of the SQM (although this SQM was also been calibrated like the old one).

## Increase livability Waddengoud village Oosterend

Oosterend, the village next to the Dark Sky De Boschplaat received from the provincial subsidy fund StreekWurk in 2015 almost 40,000 euros for facilities in the village. A part of this is reserved to improve the street lights in and around Oosterend (less illumination where possible and yet maintain safety). In doing so, the working-group, compiled in 2016, took into account the new status of De



Boschplaat. In 2017 the first light bullets were placed along the bike-path below the dunes and replaced the old lanterns.

## Appendix Reactions on TripAdvisor:



HenrySchajk  
Groningen,  
Nederland

262 likes 41

1 december 2017 beoordeeld

### mooi, wijds

De Boschplaat is altijd mooi, s'zomers, 's winters en daartussen. Dag, nacht en daartussen. 's nachts is het extra bijzonder, zeker als het helder is. de sterrenhemel dient zich dan overvloedig aan.

1 Bedank HenrySchajk



Roellywood  
143 likes 13

16 augustus 2017 beoordeeld via mobiele applicatie

### Absolute duisternis

Ik ben hier naar toe gereden om de meteoren regen te bekijken en fotograferen. Deze plek is uniek in nederland, compleet donker en rustig. Echt de moeite waard om even lekker tot rust te komen.



2 Bedank Roellywood



holoctelamie

15 augustus 2017 beoordeeld

### Bezoek aan de Boschplaat en slapen op Tjermelan

De Boschplaat is een unieke ervaring voor mij geweest. Ik woon in de randstad waar alles gejaagd en snel moet. Op Terschelling heerst een ontspannen sfeer. Bij de bakker bv kun je



AnnemiekWaanders  
Terschelling,  
Nederland

📄 8 👍 2

🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 8 augustus 2017 beoordeeld

### Th Sky is My Limit

Absoluut hoogtepunt. Bezoek ook het Dark Sky Park De Boschplaat op Terschelling. Waanzinnig de rust, de stilte, de donkere nachten met de helderste sterrenhemel van Nederland. Ervaar het weldadige gevoel : Je staat midden in het Universum en word 1 met de natuur.

👍 1 Bedank AnnemiekWaanders



jaspershentao  
Terschelling,  
Nederland

📄 1 👍 1

🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 18 juli 2017 beoordeeld

### Schitterende locatie om de hemel te bewonderen!

Deze locatie is werkelijk prachtig als je houd van een echte donkere plek buiten. Je kunt hier op een heldere avond/nacht echt genieten van een prachtige sterrenheme!! Tevens worden er een aantal keren per jaar een korte excursie gehouden met uitleg wat er zoal te... [Meer](#)

👍 1 Bedank jaspershentao



31roby6

📄 1

🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 16 juli 2017 beoordeeld  via mobiele applicatie

### Mijn beleving.

Het bezoek was onmiskenbaar geweldig. voor iedereen een openbaring. Volop genoten van de manier van beleven. De uitleg en ondervinding was voor ons allemaal geweldig. Goed voor nog een herhaling. Dus kort gezegd TOP.

👍 Bedank 31roby6

