

easy.

In 2003, a small group of horses was released on Langeland, a small island in Denmark. They are currently living almost entirely without help from humans all the while their presence benefits the local nature.

Professional forester Søren Kirk Strandgaard oversees the horse experiment on Langeland. He calls it a clear-cut success. He would like to see horses reintroduced to more areas in Denmark.

“But it should happen in fenced off areas as it would cause too many problems if horses are running wild on the roads or on farmers’ fields,” says Strandgaard.

People need to change their views on horses

The new study shows that horses could thrive in anything from the cold regions in the north to the dry and tropical in south.

But even so, repopulating Europe’s wilderness with horses could pose certain problems--one in particular is that people tend to think of horses as a purely domesticated animal.

According to Svenning, people might have problems with seeing horses in the wild when the horses become sick or injured.

“But this is purely a question of communication and it can be solved by putting the right information out there,” he says.

[Read the Danish version of this article on Videnskab.dk](#) [9]

 [Repopulating nature with wild horses could benefit endangered animals and plants, say scientists.](#)
(Photo: Claudia Feh) [10]

 [The map shows the 186 populations of wild horses currently living on the planet. \(Illustration: Jens-Christian Svenning/Plos One\)](#) [11]

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[Jens-Christian Svenning](#) [18] [Jonas Geldmann](#) [19] [Søren Kirk Strandgaard](#) [20]

[A Geographic Assessment of the Global Scope for Rewilding with Wild-Living Horses \(Equus ferus\), Plos One, DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0132359](#) [21]

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