

Germany

HeidelbergCement Species Protection Programme Sand Martin:

Installation of a “Sand Martin Shelter” at the Durmersheim pit and nature protection area



HEIDELBERGCEMENT

BACKGROUND



Durmursheim sand pit, Germany

The gravel pit Durmersheim is located in the Upper Rhine Valley south of Karlsruhe. Since 1991 the area of the pit is classified as nature protection area (“Kiesgrube am Hardtwald Durmersheim”) because of its high biodiversity. Regular monitoring (every 3 years) of the habitats and species is made to document the development and changes and to define habitat maintenance measures and conservation objectives. Moreover, since 2007 the pit is part of the “HeidelbergCement Species Protection Programme Sand Martin, Germany”.

Location	Durmursheim sand pit, Baden-Württemberg, Germany
Size	42 sand and gravel pits of HeidelbergCement in Germany
Mineral type	Gravel and sand
Habitat(s) created	Sand cliffs and piles of moving sand, artificial breeding constructions
Target species	Sand Martin, but also Kingfisher and Jackdaw
Protected areas	IBA and Natura 2000 site (SPA): River Rhein, Elchesheim-Karlsruhe Natura 2000 sites (SCI): Rhein valley between Wintersdorf and Karlsruhe, Forests and Meadows near Malsch
Organisations	Heidelberger Sand und Kies GmbH, Plant Durmersheim and NABU Baden-Württemberg

WHY IS THIS PROJECT NEEDED?



The Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*) regularly breeds in sand and gravel pits. Before the channelling of many Central European rivers took place, enough natural breeding space was available for the Sand Martin.

The birds used the river banks as nesting areas after every high-water; unfortunately, these breeding areas are now lost as the result of flood control measures. Today, the birds breed nearly exclusively in extraction sites of the mining industry where the excavator shovel guarantees the birds' survival. The species is the German Red List.



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Promotion of the target species Sand Martin in the pit Durmersheim nature conservation area – increase of the number of breeding pairs and breeding success by 2015.
- Test the application of a new model of artificial nesting houses called “Sand Martin Shelter”.
- The knowledge of the Sand Martins increased by excursion and educational program for employees, school kids (in cooperation with KIS and HeidelbergCement Marketing department).

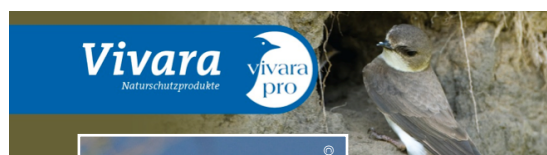
PUBLIC BENEFITS

The Sand Martin is a popular bird in Germany and across Europe, and is known as a traditional messenger of spring. Sand Martin colonies are a suitable demonstration place where schoolchildren and adults can learn about the ecology and conservation of migratory and insectivorous birds. In addition, the artificial nest boxes give an unparalleled opportunity to observe closely the life and reproduction of these birds.

The Sand Martin is an indicator species that reflects the availability of insects and natural riverine habitats in a wider area. The disappearance of their colonies in many places around the world has mobilised thousands of local conservation initiatives.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT FOR SAND MARTINS AT HEIDELBERGCEMENT SITES

- Annual and continuous control of the breeding areas, breeding holes, coordination of the mining and definition of the measures for the next breeding seasons.
- No mining as well as the continuation of work in excavation pits at the breeding season; if possibly secure the breeding area.
- Planning and realization of care measures: cutting of the steep faces after every breeding season with spavins or an excavator, so the Sand Martin can breed at the same place again next year.
- No back filling of the sand pits and gravel pits.
- Creation of top soil waste dumps.
- Available water bodies located in breeding areas should be kept from tourism activities as important foraging habitats may be disturbed.



“Breeding areas can be controlled through nest boxes.”

These activities are part of the BirdLife – HeidelbergCement Biodiversity Conservation Programme: Giving nature a second chance

For more information:

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