

Company: CEMEX
Location: Sandillon, France

Objective To offer a wintering place to northern birds and a resting place for migratory birds over their flightway.

Context Situated on the river Loire, upstream from Orléans, the quarry of Sandillon is located on an important migratory axis. The valley, protected from river floods by a 3 to 4 m levee, is essentially devoted to agriculture, but also offers some urbanized and forest areas.

- Operation from 1973 to 2000; 10 million tons of aggregates extracted; operated surface: 100 ha
- Rehabilitated surface: 60 ha for crops, 40 hectares for ecological restoration
- Water surface: from 25 to 35 ha, depending on the time of the year.

Solution

- Creation of a wetland of 27 ha which comprises a water plane of 15 ha and one swampy area of 12 ha. The wetland has three levels with the goal of ensuring that all areas are covered with a shallow layer of water all year round. Irregularities have been strategically positioned at the bottom so as to have landed platforms for birds to land. The swamps offer muddy areas inhabited by limicolous creatures.
- A 4 ha area has been restructured close to the water plane where the spontaneous vegetation affords wildlife access to water while remaining protected.
- Creation of a 7 ha pond, separate from the wetland, which contributes to the diversification of the habitats and allows certain populations of animals to stay isolated.
- Planting of crops for the feeding of wildlife. This area is completed by 60 ha of agricultural land.
- Plantation of 7800 trees of various essences, chosen to complete the spontaneous vegetation.
- Embankment of a 100 m wide swath of land, to protect from eventual erosion caused by the river.

Result In 2000, a biological assessment carried out by Les Naturalistes Orléanais demonstrated the ecological interest of the site. In 2000, CEMEX was rewarded for the quality of ecological restoration of the Sandillon quarry and received the Grand Prix des Trophées de l'Environnement du Loiret (Grand Prize of the Environmental Trophies of the Loiret department).

Partners CEMEX has established the quarry restoration project in partnership with the Institute of Applied Ecology (IEA) of Orléans. All the restoration works have been performed under the advice of the IEA and in consultation with the Departmental Federation of Water Game and the association for the conservation of nature Les Naturalistes Orléanais. This partnership with Les Naturalistes Orléanais fits in the framework of the corporate partnership between CEMEX and BirdLife International.

