

Haystacks as small-scale structures

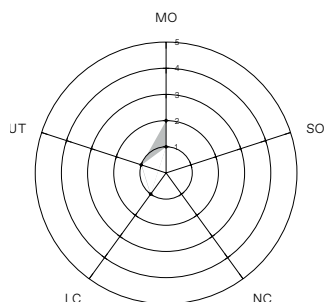
Haystacks provide ideal conditions for reptiles to lay eggs.



Definition

A haystack consists of a considerable amount of gathered hay, which results from mowing local meadows. Dry hay is piled up and pressed firmly around a pole that is driven vertically into the ground. The haystack narrows towards the top, resulting in its characteristic shape.

Site requirements



Moisture (MO)

- 1 Dry
- 2 Fresh
- 3 Moist
- 4 Wet
- 5 Always/part. inundated

Soil (SO)

- 1 Raw soil
- 2 Mineral soil (gravelly)
- 3 Medium humus content
- 4 Rich in humus
- 5 Litter-rich humus (duff)

Nutrient content (NC)

- 1 Very low
- 2 Low
- 3 Moderately low/rich
- 4 Rich
- 5 Very rich

Light conditions (LC)

- 1 Full sun
- 2
- 3 Semi-shade
- 4
- 5 Shade

Utilization (UT)

- 1 Passive nature experience
- 2
- 3 Active utilization temporarily possible
- 4
- 5 Active utilization possible

Principles

Fulfilling these guidelines promotes the biodiversity of this habitat type.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Structure | Alternating layers of hay, leaves, and chaff |
| Maintenance | Add new clippings on top |
| Utilization | No active use |
| Site | Sheltered from wind
Hedge/forest margins or near bodies of water
Ideally sunny |

Advanced requirements

By fulfilling these requirements, the biodiversity of this habitat type is additionally promoted.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Structure | Stacking dry hay around a vertical pole to make it stable
Cover using thorny branches or vines |
| Minimum size | > 2 m ³ |



Planning

- Adjust the time of creation to maintenance work (e.g., mowing local meadows)
- Include into utilization and design concept

Implementation

- Use fully dry grass (hay)
- Pile up layers of hay, branches, leaves, and chaff
- Cover using thorny branches or wood pieces

Maintenance

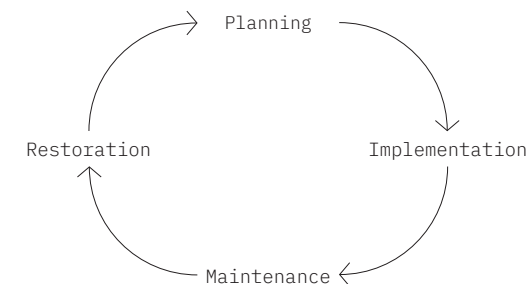
- Add new material on top
- Use pruning forks carefully to protect animals
- Promote natural herbaceous border

Restoration

- Reutilization of material where possible
- Conduct interventions between April and May or in October

Climatic requirements

No specific requirements as long as the location is not too moist and not too windy.



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Haystack (Valentin Klaus)



Haystack near a residential area in Arnhem, Netherlands (Adobe Stock)



Slowworm, *Anguis fragilis* (Adobe Stock)



Barred grass snake, *Natrix helvetica* (Adobe Stock)