

Small-scale structures

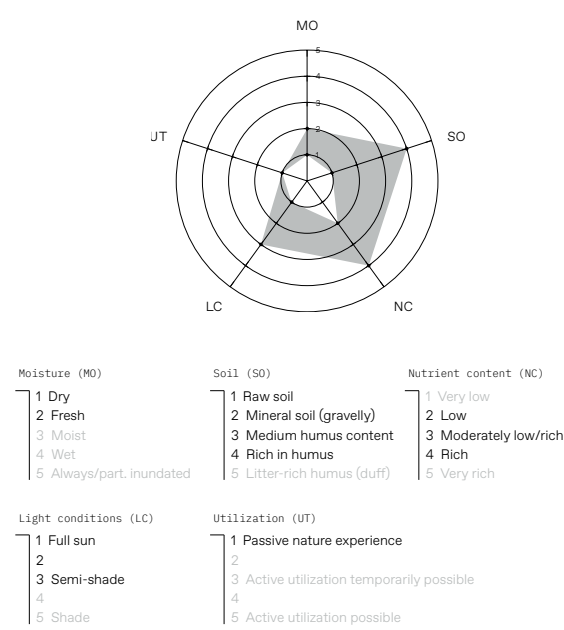


Many animal species depend on small-scale structures that provide shelter, hibernation, and nesting sites.

Definition

Small-scale structures are additions to open spaces. They are mainly made from natural materials (e.g., wood, sand, stones) and are placed in appropriate locations in other habitat types. They serve as an important biotope for various animal species.

Site requirements



Principles

- Fulfilling these guidelines promotes the biodiversity of this habitat type.
- Seeds and planting material
 - Managing as much of the area as possible according to the principles of near-natural maintenance
 - Avoiding total overgrowth
 - Promoting a natural herbaceous fringe

Advanced requirements

- By fulfilling these requirements, the biodiversity of this habitat type is additionally promoted.
- Maintenance
 - 100% of the area in accordance with the principles of near-natural maintenance

Biodiversity effect

- If the habitat is planned, realized, and maintained as described, it has the following potential to benefit biodiversity:
- high = ●●●●● low = ● negative = (●)
 - Ecological connectivity
 - Habitat for wildlife
 - Habitat for wild plants
 - Ecological compensation



Planning

- Combine one type of small-scale structure with biodiverse habitats and other types of such structures.
- Preserve valuable small-scale structures and add materials if required
- Use material from maintenance activities (e.g., cuttings) for the creation of small-scale structures
- Locate in wind-protected, low-disturbance locations
- Use design potential in an optimal way, ideally after examining the actual local fauna
- Consider maintenance already during planning

Implementation

- Establish small-scale structures in locations according to near-natural principles
- Use locally produced material wherever possible
- Consider ideal timing for establishment
- Combine with other near-natural habitat types and further small-scale structures

Maintenance

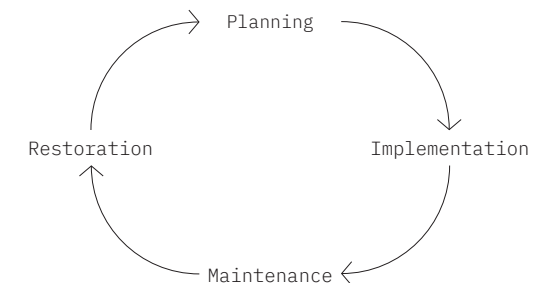
- Add new material regularly if required
- Create new small structures early on when the rotting process is advanced
- Consider ideal timing for maintenance measures
- Animal-friendly maintenance and machine use
- Promote herbaceous fringes around small-scale structures, prevent total overgrowth
- Remove invasive alien species early on
- No pesticides or fertilizers

Restoration

- Reutilize material where possible
- Coordinate the timing of deconstruction and rearrangement with the needs to inhabiting animal species

Climatic requirements

Widely usable in different climates. Depending on the type of small-scale structure and the animal species that are to be promoted/can be promoted, the climate can be sunny or semi-to full shaded. Adjust design to the needs of local species.



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Many animal species depend on small-scale structures that provide shelter, hibernation and nesting sites.





Small structures on the foot- and cycle path in Cham, Switzerland (Manuela Hotz)



Combination of various small structures on a school grounds in Cham, Switzerland (Manuela Hotz)



Banded demoiselle, *Calopteryx splendens* (Adobe Stock)



Slow worm, *Anguis fragilis* (Adobe Stock)