

Stone piles/lenses as small-scale structures

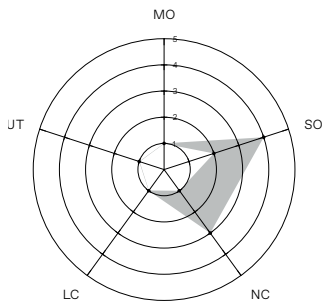
Stone piles offer ideal opportunities for reptiles to sun and hide.



Definition

Stone piles are round or elongated, loose stacks of stones. The stones can have different sizes, but often of a diameter of 20 to 40 cm. Stone piles can be created well in urban areas, with a distinction being made between stone piles and stone lenses. In contrast to stone piles, most of the volume of stone lenses is below the soil surface. This is particularly beneficial if regular mowing is necessary in the surrounding area, e.g., next to railway lines or on roadsides.

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.
- Material

 - Use > 80 % stones with a diameter of 20 to 40 cm
- Structure

 - Use a hollow > 80 cm for stone lenses
 - Alternate flat stones and stabilizing stones
 - Fill some gaps with sand or gravel or dry leaves but also leave hollow spaces
- Maintenance

 - Remove vegetation if required
- Utilization

 - No active use
- Site

 - Sheltered from wind and disturbance

Advanced requirements

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

 - Cover with thorny branches or vines
 - Create several stone piles within a short distance
- Minimum size

 - 2 to 3 m³
- Maintenance

 - Allow for > 1 m wide herbaceous border



Planning

- Include in utilization and design concept
- Embed stone lenses well in base material
- Ensure drainage

Implementation

- Ensure hollows between the stones
- Supplement with deadwood structures
- Cover with thorny branches or pieces of wood

Maintenance

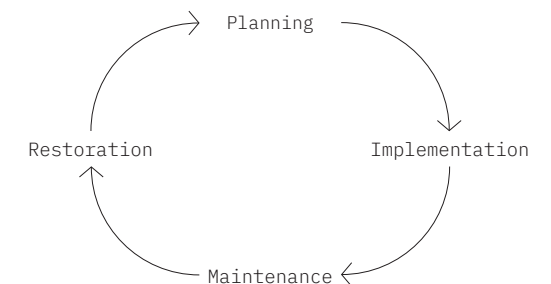
- Promote natural herbaceous border
- Remove or cut back shrubs that create shade

Restoration

- Reutilization of material where possible
- Conduct interventions in September if possible

Climatic requirements

No specific requirements but sites should ideally be dry and sunny. Ensure protection from disturbance.



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Stone lenses (Valentin Klaus)



Stone lenses with a patchy meadow around (Pro Natura)



Red-tailed bumblebee, *Bombus lapidarius* (Adobe Stock)



Grass frog, *Rana temporaria* (Adobe Stock)