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Life in Quarries - Newsletter #1

After a few months of operation, it is time to give you some news of the LIFE in Quarries project with this first newsletter. Every 6 months, these newsletters will keep you informed of the progress of the project. For additional details about the project, latest news and agenda, please visit our website (www.lifeinquarries.eu) or follow us on [facebook](#).

Biological inventories

Despite a rainy spring, inventories of fauna and flora have confirmed the biological interest of the 14 quarries involved in the first phase of the project. Among others, the naturalists found a little-known population of great-crested newt, many couples of Little Ringed Plovers, some timid Orthetrum between rainfall, attested presence of smooth snake and already several orchid species i.e, pyramidal Orchis, bee Orchid, Orchis Fuchs ...!



Figure 1: Naturalist inventory ongoing, with some help of quarry workers for reptiles and amphibians!
(Left : Carrière du Milieu, Holcim | Right : Carrières du Hainaut)

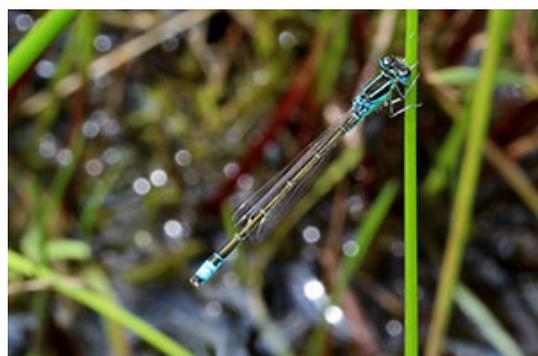


Figure 2: Natterjack toad and Small Bluetail, two pioneer species of temporary ponds.

In parallel to the inventories, a series of tests of dynamic management of biodiversity was implemented in 6 quarries. So far, more than 50 pioneers ponds have been created through various methods like clay digging, filling ponds with compacted clay, deepening of wet depressions,... Encouraging sign: freshly-made ponds were quickly occupied by egg strings of Natterjack toads.



Figure 3: Channelling of running water in a multi-compartment basin at Lustin (Sagrex). Digging of a new ditch to collect running water on quarry tracks at Carrières du Hainaut.

The refreshment of sand stocks allowed the installation of a colony of fifteen pairs of Sand Martins at Carrières Les Petons. In continuation of a long history of living with this case, the resident colony of the sand quarry Lannoy found cliffs to his taste in Châtillon.



Figure 4: Sand martins colony installed in a sand stock at Carrières Les Petons

Rock screens have been installed as shelter for reptiles and amphibians in the direct vicinity of freshly-made ponds at Calcaires de la Sambre.

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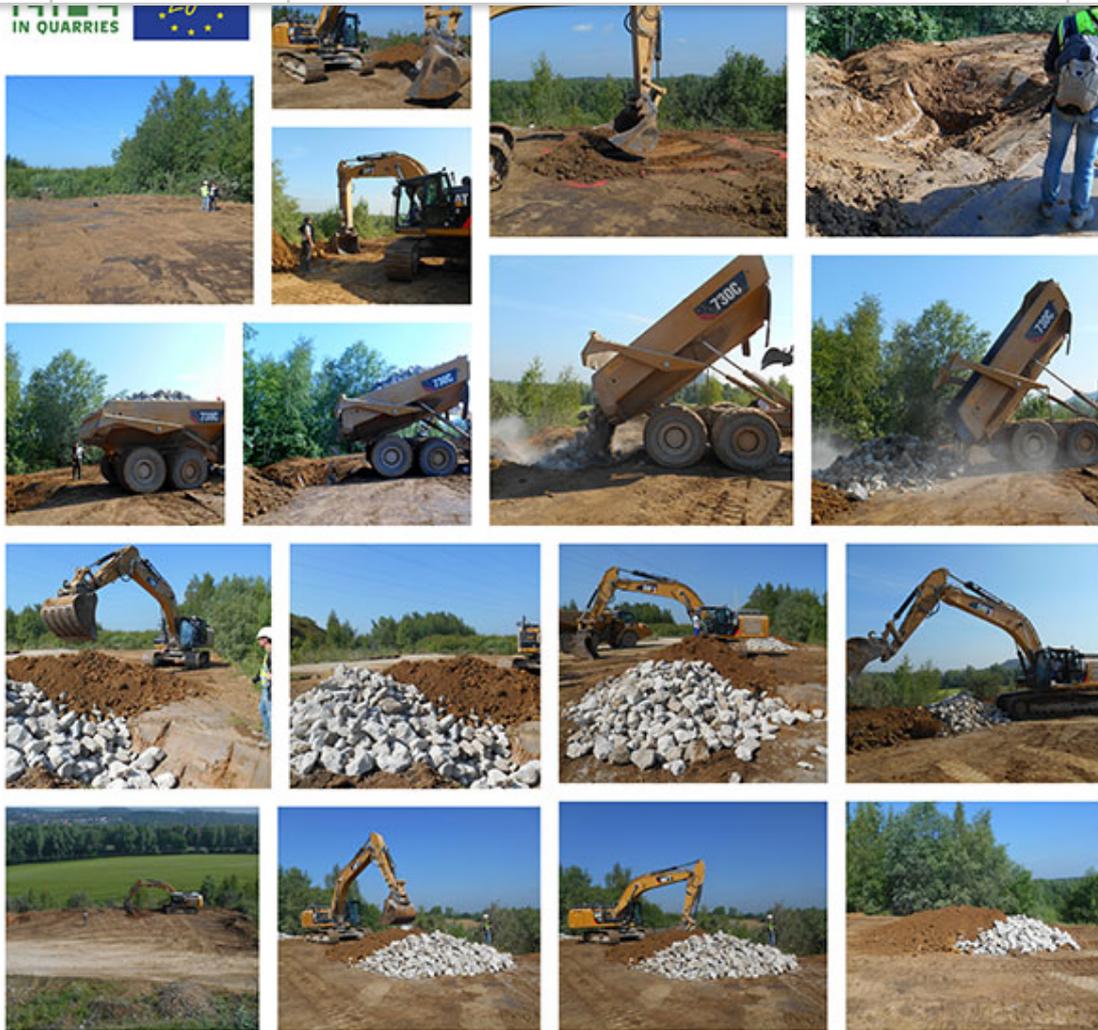


Figure 5: Creation of a shelter in the direct vicinity of freshly-made ponds (Calcaires de la Sambre)

Upcoming months will be an opportunity to further test conservation actions like transfer of pioneer grasslands and installation of additional shelters for reptiles and amphibians.

International workshop – 4 Mai 2016

Organized jointly with the company Sibelco, the initial workshop of the project was held on Wednesday, 4th of May at the FEB in Brussels. Throughout the day, the interventions of fifteen experts highlighted valuable information and feedback that generated active discussion within the public about the dynamic management of pioneer habitats and protected species.

We would like to thank the speakers and all participants who have made this event a success! You can find all the presentation support on our website (<http://www.lifeinquarries.eu/documents>).



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Within the project, a survey is ongoing to assess the perception of the quarry sector on the cohabitation of operation and biodiversity and to identify communication opportunities. Various questions were asked about their daily work in the quarry, their knowledge of biodiversity, the importance and value for nature in a quarry. Overall, all showed a great interest towards biodiversity, but they are asking for more information. What a great challenge for communication actions of the project!

Partners



Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech
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Rue Edouard Belin 7, B-1345 Mont-Saint-Guibert

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