

Earthly Matters



Cemex & RSPB Partnership Blog February 2025



Welcome to the February 2025 edition of **Earthly Matters**, the blog dedicated to the partnership between Cemex and the RSPB.



Partnership Update

By Carl Cornish, RSPB Senior Business Conservation Adviser

I'm gradually visiting more quarries and my recent visit to Dove Holes Quarry was fascinating. I've been most familiar with sand and gravel quarrying, so Dove Holes was an eye opener. My involvement there is focusing on monitoring the Twite, a special bird found at the site. To many, a Twite will look like a LBJ – little brown job. It looks like a slimmer sparrow, streaky brown with peachy colouration around the face. They like weedy areas of uplands, feeding on flower heads and seeds and scrubby areas for nesting. The loss of these areas has led to their decline and they're now a rare breeding bird in England (more common in Scotland).





Twite. Credit: Mike Langman ©RSPB

Despite the national trend, Dove Holes has maintained a Twite presence. Cemex, working with the RSPB, has created good quality habitat for Twite in their surrounding fields. The site acts as a stop off point for birds migrating back to their breeding grounds in the Spring. In winter, they leave uplands for coastal salt marshes, but Dove Holes acts as a "service station," providing supplementary food to help sustain them on their journey. This careful feeding program supports monitoring efforts, ensuring their needs are met without unintended consequences (see Actions for Nature).

I'm back at Dove Holes in March to meet up with a local birdwatcher who monitors Twite using the fields near the quarry.

Forests for wellbeing for us and our planet!

  [International Day of Forests](#), celebrated on 21st March raises awareness of the importance of all types of forests. This year's theme, forests and foods celebrates the crucial roles of forests in food security, nutrition and livelihoods. In addition to providing food, fuel, income and employment, forests support soil fertility, protect water resources, and offer habitats for biodiversity, including vital pollinators.

Forests also provide clean air, water, and a space for recreation, which are essential for physical and mental health. Spending time in nature reduces stress, boosts mood, and enhances overall wellness. By protecting and restoring forests, we not only preserve biodiversity but also promote a healthier, happier society.

Check out this [blog post](#) from the Forestry Commission about "**Why are forests and woodlands are so good for our mental health**"

Actions for Nature

A reminder to clean bird tables and feeders to keep birds healthy. Ideally, birds would find natural food, but habitat loss makes supplementary feeding essential, especially during the spring "Hungry Gap" when food is scarce. Dirty feeders can spread diseases like avian pox, bird flu, and finch trichomonosis, which has severely impacted Greenfinch populations. Use mild detergent to clean feeders, move them occasionally to prevent food buildup, and remove any mouldy food. Feeding birds safely helps connect us with nature, benefiting mental well-being. Monitoring garden birds also reflects the overall health of our environment.



Greenfinch. Credit: Nigel Blake ©RSPB



If you'd like further information or advice about any of the topics in this blog please contact Carl Cornish at carl.cornish@rspb.org.uk

Do You Know the Sand Martin Code?

If Sand martins colonise an active quarry face, sand or dust stockpiles then **all work must stop between March and August inclusive**. All birds and their nests are fully protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird. >>You can find the Sand Martin Code [here](#). **Please display on all workplace notice boards where sites have sand piles.**



Send us your stories and photos

We are looking for staff stories to include in upcoming blogs, these can be experiences from work or home. We would love to share them in an upcoming blog. Send them in to: gb-communicationsandpublicaffairs@cemex.com

