



# Did you know?

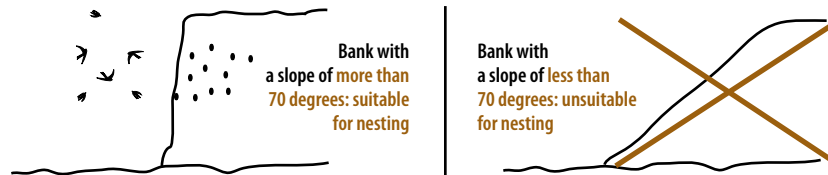
# What you can do

## BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*)

in sandpits  
and quarries

The Bank Swallow is a declining migratory bird species that has lost 98% of its Canadian population over the last 40 years.

This insectivorous bird is particularly drawn to sandpits, quarries, stock piles of sand and soil, and sandy banks along water bodies and roads. Bank Swallows generally dig their burrows in near-vertical banks (slopes of at least 70 degrees) that are more than 2 metres high. Bank Swallows typically use their nesting sites from mid-April to late August. This is the sensitive period during which the risk of harming the birds is especially high. The absence of the birds in August is a good indicator that the breeding season is over.



The best way to minimize the possibility of contravening the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* and its regulations is to fully understand the impact that your activities could have on migratory birds and their nests and eggs and to take reasonable precautions and appropriate avoidance measures. In fact, under the Act and its regulations, it is an offence for anyone to kill, hunt, capture, injure or harass a migratory bird or to damage, destroy, remove or disturb its nest or eggs without a permit.

**The sand and gravel industry can play a major role in the conservation of Bank Swallows by adopting operating practices that do not harm the species.**

[www.ec.gc.ca/paom-itmb](http://www.ec.gc.ca/paom-itmb)

Paper: Cat. No.: CW66-522/2016  
ISBN 978-0-660-23221-8

Pdf: Cat. No.: CW66-522/2016-PDF  
ISBN 978-1-100-25596-5

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### Before the breeding season (generally before mid-April)

- Prevent Bank Swallows from nesting in areas where operations will be carried out during the breeding season by contouring your piles to have a slope of less than 70 degrees and by creating suitable nesting habitat in inactive areas with vertical faces of at least 70 degrees.
- Install scaring devices to deter Bank Swallows from establishing colonies in active areas.

### During the breeding season (generally from mid-April to late August)

- Avoid intense activity near the colony. You can prevent disturbance by marking off a protective buffer zone around the colony and notifying all employees of its existence.
- Generally speaking, there is a particularly high risk of disturbing nesting when noisy activities or vibrations occur within 50 metres of the bird colony. This protective radius is only a rough guideline and must be adjusted after an assessment of the risk factors. In some cases, where operating activities are intense, a larger protective radius may be needed to minimize the risk of disturbance.
- Spend a few minutes flattening vertical faces in active areas at the end of the day to prevent Bank Swallows from digging burrows in them overnight or on weekends.
- Stop excavation work if Bank Swallows colonize a bank in an active area. Activities cannot resume until the birds leave at the end of the breeding period.
- Do not use scaring devices once the colony is established as they may interfere with ongoing Bank Swallow breeding activities.

### After the breeding season (generally after late August)

- If a nesting site needs to be excavated after the birds leave, compensate by providing an alternate site that can support nesting in the following year. To be suitable for nesting, the bank must have a slope of at least 70 degrees.

**Notify your employees of the restrictions and techniques that can be implemented to prevent detrimental effects on the species.**

Thank you for participating in the conservation of Bank Swallows.