

CASE 04 · FOOTBALL · PROFESSIONAL SPORTS CLUB

Real Betis Balompié

An environmental group prompts the club to protect a swift colony



DRIVER

NGO identified a protected nesting colony during planned demolition

LOCATION

Estadio Benito Villamarín, Seville, Spain

SCOPE

Verification of nesting swifts and mitigation across stadium redevelopment

PARTNERS

Biodiversity experts; regional authorities; researchers

OUTCOME

Construction completed without harm to the colony

CONTEXT

During planned demolition at Estadio Benito Villamarín, an environmental group identified a colony of swifts, a protected and declining species in Spain, nesting within the stadium structure and turning a standard redevelopment project into a biodiversity issue.

ASSESSMENT APPROACH

Working with biodiversity experts, the club confirmed the presence of the species and mapped nesting areas within the stadium. The assessment was technically straightforward but had significant implications for project planning and delivery.

ACTION TAKEN

Construction timelines were aligned with the birds' reproductive cycle, delaying demolition until chicks had fledged. Five artificial "nest box hotels" were installed at the training ground, designed with academic and technical experts to meet the species' behavioural needs.

OUTCOME

Construction proceeded without harming the colony, and the creation of alternative habitat now supports its long-term survival. The project also reinforced biodiversity as a consideration in the club's operational decision-making.

WHAT THIS MEANS IN PRACTICE

Clubs planning stadium work should commission an ecological screening before the reconstruction schedule is finalised.

Adjusting plans late almost always costs more than assessing impacts early.

