

Hidden treasures around Lake Zug

The prehistoric pile-dwelling sites have been inscribed on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites since June 2011. The serial site “Prehistoric Pile Dwellings Around the Alps” extends over Switzerland, Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Slovenia. Of the 111 sites around the Alps which were selected to represent more than 1000 pile dwellings, 56 are located in Switzerland and three of those are in what is today the municipality of Zug.

Remains of 50 pile-dwelling settlements dating from the Neolithic period to the Late Bronze Age have so far come to light at 33 different locations in Canton Zug. They include the sites at “Zug-Sumpf”, “Zug-Oterswil/Insel Eielen” and “Zug-Riedmatt” which were awarded UNESCO World Heritage status as sites of universal historical and scientific importance.

The pile dwellings give us a unique insight into the early settlement of the Alpine region and its first farming communities. They rate amongst the most important sources of information on Europe’s pre-literate past and are some of the continent’s most outstanding cultural goods. Their contribution to the understanding of the development of civilisation is as valuable as that of the Egyptian pyramids or the Great Wall of China.

We would like to invite you to discover the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Zug.

Amt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie,
Direktion des Innern



UNESCO World Heritage

The World Heritage (World Cultural Heritage and World Natural Heritage) designation is awarded to unique and authentic sites that are of outstanding historical, artistic or scientific universal importance.

After the Second World War, the 37 founding member states of UNESCO concluded that lasting peace between all peoples cannot be based solely on political agreements but must also be embedded in spiritual and moral human solidarity. UNESCO is dedicated to advancing international collaboration based on cultural exchange by protecting and promoting cultural diversity.

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, was founded on 16 November 1945 in London as one of 17 special UN organisations. Today (2021) it is composed of 193 member states.

Hafted double axe dating from around 4000 BC (reconstruction). It was recovered at Cham-Eslen. The axe handle was wrapped in strips of birch bark decorated with a pattern of lozenges. The birch tar which was used as glue can be seen through the holes in the bark.



Moss sole (c. 3200 BC). When it was found at the Late Stone Age pile-dwelling settlement of Zug-Schützenmatt in 2000, the media reported the discovery of the “world’s oldest rheumatology insole”.

In 1999 a rescue excavation had to be carried out in an area of some 5000 m² at Steinhausen-Chollerpark. Besides thousands of architectural timbers, 65 paddles were also recovered. This rich assemblage has remained the only one of its kind found in Europe to date.

These perforated seashells were used as pieces of jewellery and came from the Mediterranean region to Zug, where they were found at the settlement of Steinhausen-Sennweid.

These trapezoidal wooden frames (Bronze Age, around 1400 BC) measured 13–16 m in length and came to light at Steinhausen-Chollerpark in 1999. But what were they used for?



Archäologischer Verein Zug
[Zug Archaeological Society]

Museum für Urgeschichte(n)
[Museum of Prehistory]

The Archäologischer Verein Zug (AVZ; formerly Vereinigung für Zuger Ur- und Frühgeschichte) has been dedicated to promoting archaeological research in Canton Zug since 1928. The society aims to raise public awareness of pre- and protohistory. Construction and climate change are both threatening the archaeological heritage of the canton which continues to require the support of the AVZ.

The Zug Museum für Urgeschichte(n) gives a fascinating insight into the lives of the earliest inhabitants of the Zug region from the Stone Age to the Early Middle Ages. A true-to-scale pile dwelling as well as impressive finds from prehistoric settlements are on display. There is a programme of interactive events where visitors can get hands-on experience of prehistoric techniques and crafts.

You can support the society by becoming a member or by making a donation. Members of the AVZ can take part in adventure days, specialist lectures and guided tours and also receive an annual publication about a particular subject of archaeological research in Zug.

Opening hours:
Tuesday to Sunday, 2–5 pm

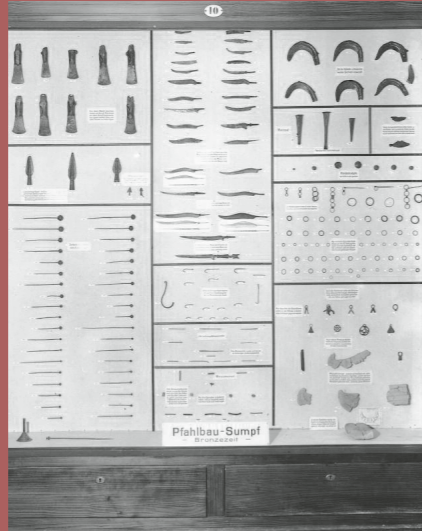
Admission:
Adults CHF 5.–
Adolescents (16–20) CHF 3.–
Children free
Free admission on Sundays and public holidays

For more information go to
www.urgeschichte.ch
www.zug.ch/pfahlbauten
www.pfahlbau.ch

Museum für Urgeschichte(n)
Hofstrasse 15
6300 Zug
www.urgeschichte-zug.ch

17 **UNESCO World Heritage site Zug-Sumpf**

Zug-Sumpf is one of the most important Late Bronze Age sites north of the Alps. The rich assemblage of finds allowed us to gain insight into the architecture, eating habits and trade relations of the period. The site was discovered during the construction of a railway line between Zug and Lucerne in 1859. The pioneers of pile-dwelling research in Zug, with their tireless excavation work, laid the foundations for the knowledge that has since been accumulated, thus preserving the cultural heritage of the canton.



This photograph shows one of 10 showcases that were put on display at the opening of the Museum of Prehistory in Zug in 1930. The showcase can still be seen in the "nostalgic corner" of the museum.



This photograph taken in May 1931 shows a public viewing of the excavation at Zug-Sumpf.

This photograph shows dark, so-called archaeological layers with the remains of prehistoric settlements at the bottom. As they are embedded in light-coloured layers of calcareous mud and submerged in groundwater, the archaeological layers are protected from drying out and eroding.



Treasures around Lake Zug UNESCO World Heritage

PILE DWELLINGS UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE



32 **UNESCO World Heritage site Zug-Oterswil/Insel Eielen**

The site at Zug-Oterswil/Insel Eielen has yielded the largest assemblage of Corded Ware finds so far discovered in central Switzerland. The remains dating from an earlier and a later phase of the epoch provide an ideal opportunity to study the cultural development of the people from that period. The site is unusual due to its location in the lake.



The Corded Ware period (2750–2400 BC) is so called because of its pottery, which was decorated with cord impressions.

22 **UNESCO World Heritage site Zug-Riedmatt**

The site at Zug-Riedmatt yielded the best-preserved material from the Horgen Culture found so far in central Switzerland. The site was discovered in 2007 during preliminary investigations of a construction site. Once the finds had been recovered for scientific examination, the construction work could resume and was completed in 2010. Thanks to various constructional measures, the underlying remains of the pile-dwelling settlement are optimally protected. At Zug-Riedmatt, the UNESCO World Heritage site is not on one's doorstep but beneath it.

The wooden finds from Zug-Oterswil/Insel Eielen are extraordinarily well preserved.



Divers regularly monitor Zug's shorelines. Because finds can be exposed by wave action and archaeological layers can be washed away, the shoreline in this case must be artificially stabilised.

Late Bronze Age jewellery could be made of things like amber and glass beads.

