

= Schwalbe @-@ class cruiser =

The Schwalbe class of unprotected cruisers were the first ships of the type built for the German Kaiserliche Marine (Imperial Navy) . The class comprised two ships , Schwalbe , the lead ship , and Sperber . They were designed for service in Germany 's recently acquired colonial empire , and were built between 1886 and 1889 . They were armed with a main battery of eight 10 @. @ 5 @-@ centimeter (4 @. @ 1 in) guns and could steam at a speed of 13 @. @ 5 knots (25 @. @ 0 km / h ; 15 @. @ 5 mph) .

Schwalbe and Sperber spent their active careers abroad , usually in Germany 's African colonies or in the Pacific . The two cruisers assisted in the suppression of the Abushiri Revolt in German East Africa in 1889 ? 1890 . By the end of the 1890s , both ships had been overhauled and decommissioned in Germany . They returned to service at the turn of the century for another tour overseas ; Schwalbe joined the forces that battled the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900 before being decommissioned a second time in 1902 . Sperber remained in Africa until 1911 , when she too was decommissioned . Schwalbe was used as a training ship after 1912 and Sperber was used as a target ship during World War I. Both vessels were sold in 1920 and broken up in 1922 .

= = Design = =

The ships of the Schwalbe class were designed for use in Germany 's recently acquired overseas colonies . These newly conquered territories required warships to police them , and at the time , the German Kaiserliche Marine (Imperial Navy) possessed a motley collection of older sailing ships that were suitable only for training purposes . The design was prepared in 1886 ? 1887 , under the tenure of General Leo von Caprivi , the Chief of the Kaiserliche Marine ; Caprivi sought new cruisers that would have strong fighting capabilities in addition to traditional overseas cruiser characteristics . The Schwalbe class was the first unprotected cruiser design built in Germany , and along with several other small warships , they permitted Caprivi to retire five old sailing frigates and modernized the German cruiser force .

= = = General characteristics = = =

The ships of the Schwalbe class were 62 @. @ 59 meters (205 ft 4 in) long at the waterline and 66 @. @ 90 m (219 ft 6 in) long overall . They had a beam of 9 @. @ 36 m (30 ft 9 in) , though over the sponsons for the main guns , the beam increased to 10 @. @ 1 m (33 ft) . The ships had a draft of 4 @. @ 4 m (14 ft) forward and 4 @. @ 72 m (15 ft 6 in) aft . They displaced 1 @, @ 111 metric tons (1 @, @ 093 long tons ; 1 @, @ 225 short tons) as designed and up to 1 @, @ 359 t (1 @, @ 338 long tons) at full combat load . The ships ' hulls were constructed with a transverse framing composed of steel , wood , and copper . Their stem and stern were made of wood , and a bronze ram was mounted at the bow . The hull was divided into eleven watertight compartments .

The two cruisers were good sea boats , and were very maneuverable . They suffered from severe weather helm , and tended to roll badly in a beam sea ; their metacentric height was .665 m (2 ft 2 @. @ 2 in) . They lost little speed in a head sea . Schwalbe and Sperber each had a crew of 9 officers and 108 enlisted men . They carried a number of small boats , including one picket boat , one cutter , one yawl , and one dinghy .

= = = Propulsion = = =

Their propulsion system consisted of two horizontal 2 @-@ cylinder double @-@ expansion steam engines powered by four coal @-@ fired cylindrical water @-@ tube boilers trunked into a single funnel . The engines drove a pair of 3 @-@ bladed screw propellers that were 2 @. @ 80 m (9 ft 2 in) wide in diameter . The ships ' engines provided a design speed of 13 @. @ 5 knots (25 @. @ 0 km / h ; 15 @. @ 5 mph) and a range of approximately 3 @, @ 290 nautical miles (6 @, @ 090 km ; 3 @, @ 790 mi) at 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . On trials , both ships exceeded their rated

speeds , with Schwalbe reaching 14 @. @ 1 knots (26 @. @ 1 km / h ; 16 @. @ 2 mph) and Sperber making 14 @. @ 3 knots (26 @. @ 5 km / h ; 16 @. @ 5 mph) . At these speeds , the cruising radius fell to 1 @, @ 630 nmi (3 @, @ 020 km ; 1 @, @ 880 mi) . To supplement the steam engines , the ships were fitted with a barquentine rig . Steering was controlled by a single rudder . Schwalbe was fitted with one electricity generator rated at 5 kilowatts (6 @. @ 7 hp) at 67 volts during her modernization in 1903 .

= = = Armament = = =

Since Caprivi sought overseas cruisers that would still have significant combat power , the ships were armed with a relatively heavy battery ? for ships of their size ? of eight 10 @. @ 5 cm K L / 35 guns . These guns were placed in single pedestal mounts and were supplied with 765 rounds of ammunition in total . They had a range of 8 @, @ 200 m (26 @, @ 900 ft) . Four of the guns were mounted in sponsons , with two side by side forward and aft . The remaining four guns were placed amidships in gun ports . Four guns were mounted on each broadside . The gun armament was rounded out by five 3 @. @ 7 cm (1 @. @ 5 in) revolver cannon .

= = Ships = =

= = Service history = =

Schwalbe and Sperber spent the majority of their careers on Germany 's colonial stations , where they policed the colonies , suppressed unrest , and showed the flag . Both ships were initially called to German East Africa to help put down the Abushiri Revolt in 1889 ? 1890 . Schwalbe remained in the colony after the rebellion was suppressed , but Sperber left for the South Seas Station in German New Guinea . In mid @- @ 1893 , Schwalbe was recalled to Germany for a major overhaul , and Sperber was similarly ordered to return at the end of the year , but while en route she was sent to German Southwest Africa instead . Sperber finally returned to Germany in late 1897 for her overhaul , which was completed the following year . Both ships were decommissioned after their overhauls were finished .

In April 1898 , Schwalbe was recommissioned for another tour abroad . She first returned to German East Africa , where the Second Boer War threatened regional stability ; British warships began seizing German vessels suspected of carrying contraband to the Boers . This created a major diplomatic incident and Schwalbe was sent to protect German shipping in the area . The outbreak of the Boxer Rebellion in Qing China in 1900 proved to be more pressing , and so Schwalbe was sent to join the Eight Nation Alliance that had formed to crush the Boxers . During her deployment to China , she helped blockade the Yangtze and sent landing parties ashore to control unrest in Ningpo . In mid @- @ 1902 , she was recalled to Germany for a second time , was overhauled , and was again decommissioned .

Sperber meanwhile had been reactivated in December 1902 in response to the Venezuela Crisis of 1902 ? 03 ; she was sent there in January 1903 , though by the time she arrived the crisis had subsided and she was no longer necessary . She was therefore transferred first to German East Africa , where she remained only briefly before being moved again , this time to the East Asia Squadron . She served in the unit from late 1903 to early 1905 , when she was reassigned to German Southwest Africa . She returned to Germany in early 1911 and was decommissioned in July . In October 1911 Schwalbe was recommissioned for use as a special purposes ship . Initially , she was to be a survey ship , but the Navy instead decided to use her to replace the old aviso Grille as a training ship . Sperber was stricken from the naval register in 1912 and used as a target ship through World War I. Schwalbe continued on as a training ship during the war until 1918 , when she too was employed as a gunnery training target . Both ships were sold for scrapping in August 1920 and were broken up in 1922 in Hamburg .