

Don't let Swifts in our skies become a thing of the past!

Can you imagine a summer without Swifts screaming overhead? Let's work together to make sure this very special feature of our summers continues for many years to come.



We are here to help!

Swift Group, Malmesbury and District
Natural History Society

malmesburynaturalhistory@gmail.com



Look out for them!

They arrive around 1st May and stay for around 3 months. If you see swifts trying and failing to access a building, call us!



Thankyou for caring about wildlife and helping to preserve this very special bird.

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You live in a

Swift Conservation Area



This is a very special place for Swifts.

Are you aware that the houses in your area host an important colony of Swifts? Their numbers have dropped by nearly 70% in the last 30 years. As a resident in a Swift Conservation Area, you can help save Swifts from extinction.

A Residents' Guide

What you can do to help.



Our Swifts are amazing! Every May, they fly all the way back from Africa in order to nest and raise their young. That's about 7,000 miles!

From the moment they fledge, they stay in the air without landing, for up to 3 years! They cannot perch like other birds, and so must

eat, drink and sleep on the wing. They only rest when it is time for them to breed, some 3 years later!

Did you know that Swifts were flying in our skies 60 million years ago, and were here at the same time as the dinosaurs? In the modern world, they now depend on us to give them places to nest. This could be under the soffits, in a gable end or under gutters.

As renovations have happened, many of those nesting places have disappeared, leaving the Swifts with no place to lay their eggs.

Swifts return to the same nest year after year, and lay 2 or 3 eggs. They only rear one brood each year, so every chick is precious. If access to their nest has disappeared over the winter,



they do not understand, and will fly again and again at the place the entrance used to be, often harming themselves in the process.

Take care when making renovations

Swifts are so quiet and secretive that we often don't know that they are nesting with us! From time to time you may need to carry out some work on your house either on the soffits or the roof and near the nest site entrance.

If you have Swifts and need to have work done, give us a call or email. We can offer free advice on how to retain the Swifts' nest.

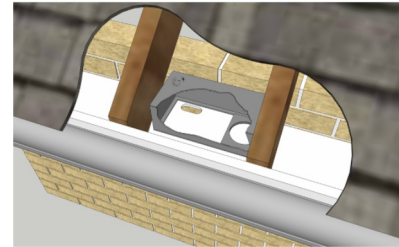
By law, renovations must be done outside of the swift breeding season.



Fitting new soffits

If you are having new soffits fitted, you could install a soffit box. We can provide the boxes at no charge, and advise your builder how to install them.

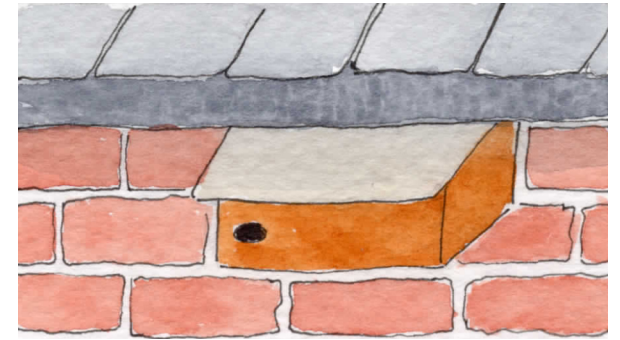
The use of scaffolding must not obstruct Swifts' access to their nest. Swifts are unique birds in that they cannot perch, so they have to fly directly into and out of the nest.



Scaffold boards and netting will obstruct access and should only be used outside of the breeding season.

Swifts are protected by law under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004) when they are actively building or using their nests.

Fitting Swift Boxes!



We keep a stock of very reasonably priced Swift boxes and we can offer advice on the most effective way to install them.

How to Rescue a grounded Swift

Swifts can become injured when trying to enter blocked nest sites and end up on the ground. Young Swifts can also fall out of the nest before fledging, or while trying to fledge if they are not fully developed.

1. Don't leave the Swift on the ground - a cat will get it.
2. If it looks fully grown, try lifting it in your open palms and see if it wants to fly away.
3. If it stays in your hand, put it in a box with a soft cloth and a ventilated lid and contact the RSPCA North Wilts - 01793 640136
4. Keep it in a quiet, warm and dark place until it is collected.
5. Don't try to feed it! The wrong food will damage its chances of survival.

