



Birdies of the Month 11- the Swift

The **Swift** (*Apus apus*) - is a medium-sized aerial bird, which is a superb flyer.

They sleep, eat and mate on the wing (while flying); Swifts rarely touch the ground.

They are also the fastest birds in level flight, with an impressive top speed of 69mph (111kph).

Swifts are plain sooty brown, with a white throat, but in flight against the sky they appear black. They have curved wings and a forked tail.

Swifts feed on flying insects.

Swifts are summer visitors, breeding across the UK. They spend their winters in Africa.

Swifts migrate 3,400 miles twice a year, stopping off to refuel in places like Portugal and France along the way.

Swifts pair for life, returning to the same site each year for a little nest renovation before laying and incubating their eggs.

They like to live in houses and churches, squeezing through tiny gaps to nest inside roofs. However, as more old buildings are renovated and gaps in soffits are closed up, Swift nest sites are fast disappearing.

By installing a “Swift brick” in a wall, or putting up a “Swift Nestbox”, you could give a Swift a place to rest and raise a family.

Swifts are particularly common on the golf course around the 10th green and 11th tee where South Liverpool Sewage Works provides an abundance of flies and other insects.



Swifts are common around Childwall Golf course in the late Spring and Summer especially around the 10th green and the 11th tee



Swifts in flight catching flying insects on the wing



“Swift Brick” built into a modern house and a “Swift Nestbox” under the eaves of a house