

Chaetura

SUMMER 2011

Driftwood Wildlife Association

Volume 16

Replacing Lost Chimney Swift Habitat



For many years, the residents of Bloomington, Indiana had been enjoying displays by the Chimney Swifts roosting in the chimney of Fairview School. The local school corporation decided to replace the old school with a modern structure and the chimney would be destroyed. Neighbors and local birders were dismayed because roosting sites of this type are scarce in Bloomington.

At a meeting in 2008 the local school board express sympathy for the plight of the swifts but could provide no money for a solution. So the local Audubon society donated some money and launched a campaign to fund a substantial free-standing tower to replace the demolished chimney. Over \$13,000 was raised. This along with donated supplies and labor was enough to complete the project. Teachers and students at the school were excited by the project and designed plaques to go on the tower, which was dedicated on May 7, 2010.

Construction of the tower was a human success, but what if the swifts did not cooperate? The answer to that question came emphatically in mid September when large numbers of swifts dropped into the tower each night for about two weeks as they migrated to their South American winter home. At the peak as many as 300 swifts put on a spectacular show as they circled the tower and gradually dropped in for the night to the delight of many observers, young and old.

Bob Dodd



Photos courtesy of Bob Dodd

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Report from Travis Audubon's Chaetura Canyon Bird Sanctuary

*For a virtual hike through Chaetura Canyon go to www.ChimneySwifts.org
and click on the "Chaetura Canyon Bird Sanctuary" link*

Chaetura Canyon is an eight acre bird sanctuary owned by the Travis Audubon Society in Central Texas that is managed by Sanctuary Stewards Georgan and Paul Kyle. Research and educational efforts on behalf of Chimney Swifts have been conducted on this property since 1989. Sixteen structures constructed for Chimney Swift nesting and roosting are available for swift habitation. Eight towers are constructed of wood; the other eight are constructed of concrete block.

CHIMNEY SWIFT PRODUCTIVITY AT CHAETURA CANYON – 2010

| | Tower | # Eggs Laid | # Eggs Hatch | # Young Fledged |
|-----------|-------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Wooden: | North Observation | 6 | 4 | 4 |
| | South Observation | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| | West Field | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| | 12' Demonstration | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| | Garden (Marlene) | 9 | 7 | 7 |
| | Workshop | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| | Prism | 9 | 7 | 5 |
| Concrete: | South Pool | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| | North Pool | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| | Castle | 5 | 3 | 0 |
| | Castle Companion | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| | Driveway | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | Totals | 63 | 41 | 36 |

During the breeding season of 2010, twelve of the sixteen structures were utilized by the birds. Seven of those were wooden and five were concrete. Two of the concrete towers are only 36 inches apart. These are the Pool Towers and both attracted mated pairs of swifts. Although nests and eggs were produced in both towers, only one pair successfully fledged young. Previous research had revealed that swift pairs would not nest closer than ten feet from another occupied nesting structure. Joyce Rosson of Holt, Missouri reported swifts nesting in two fireplace chimneys in 2010 that have entrances adjacent to each other. Perhaps Chimney Swifts are becoming more tolerant of close proximity as nesting sites continue to diminish.

The first swift arrived on March 27 in 2010; the last bird was sighted on October 13. Chimney Swifts were present at Chaetura Canyon for 201 days.

AUDUBON Magazine Highlights Chaetura Canyon in “High Hopes” article by Frank Graham



*Frank and Ada Graham in front of the “Pool Towers”
Photo by Paul Kyle*

Two very unique snow birds migrated to Chaetura Canyon on April 4 of this year. After a grueling twelve hour flight from Maine, Ada and Frank Graham landed at our doorstep.

Frank is a distinguished writer of nature and conservation issues. He has been a field editor for AUDUBON since 1968. He has also authored more than a dozen books, including “The Audubon Ark”, a must read tome, that brilliantly ushers the reader through the myriad losses, triumphs and personalities that created the National Audubon of today. Ada is the author of numerous prize-winning children’s books. She was also largely responsible for developing and writing for the Audubon Adventures program. The program newspaper was used by teachers in the classroom all across America to educate children about natural history and the environment. Both authors also collaborated on a variety of books for young readers.

So, why would two such impressive individuals fly to Texas? After an evening of watching swifts on the deck at Chaetura Canyon, Victor Emanuel (Victor Emanuel Nature Tours - VENT) persistently lobbied National Audubon on behalf of Chimney Swifts and our efforts at the Sanctuary. After his third call, National responded by sending Frank. For two delightful days, stories were shared, hikes were taken and a few birds were chased. Their departure occurred all too soon as our new friends and kindred spirits returned to cold and rainy Maine.

Frank has authored an impressive article spanning six pages that appears in the July/August issue of AUDUBON. He has chronicled the history and creation of Travis Audubon’s Chaetura Canyon Sanctuary and the conservation efforts on behalf of Chimney Swifts that have originated there. We are honored and humbled by this recognition.

Heartfelt thanks to Victor, Frank and National Audubon for bringing much needed attention to the plight of and conservation possibilities for the remarkable Chimney Swifts.

To read the article, go to:

<http://www.audubonmagazine.org/features1107/birds.html>

There is also a Web Exclusive at:

<http://www.audubonmagazine.org/web/swifttowers/>

The Travis Audubon Society is now actively acquiring lots adjacent to the existing sanctuary. This is very exciting but also very time critical. Only a few lots remain undeveloped around Chaetura Canyon, so the possibility for expansion is limited. If you would like to contribute for the protection of more habitat for the sanctuary and thus additional locations for Chimney Swift towers, please visit the Travis Audubon web site at www.TravisAudubon.org.



The following letter was written in response to an article by the Humane Society of the U.S that appeared in an issue of their membership magazine "All Animals". Thanks to Robin Horne for bringing this matter to our attention.

It has come to our attention that The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) magazine **ALL ANIMALS** recently published an article ("Close Encounters of the Critter Kind") advocating capping chimneys to exclude wildlife.

This has the potential of becoming a major set back in more than 20 years of education about and conservation of Chimney Swifts by the Driftwood Wildlife Association, Audubon Societies (national and local branches), and many other conservation groups across North America. Chimney Swifts are now in such decline in North America that the Canadian Wildlife Service added them to their list of threatened species in February of 2009.

The Driftwood Wildlife Association has worked closely with representatives of the HSUS in the past to educate the public about the plight of Chimney Swifts and how to easily coexist with Chimney Swifts -- a species that now nests almost exclusively in chimneys. I would refer you to the HSUS publication 1997 "Wild Neighbors, The Humane Approach to Living with Wildlife" (chapter 9, page 80) as one example.

Current information about the benefits and plight of Chimney Swifts is available on many web sites, and most link to the one operated by the Driftwood Wildlife Association (www.ChimneySwifts.org). A link to this particular site is even offered on the HSUS site in several places.

The fact that the HSUS is advocating and encouraging capping "all" chimneys to avoid the potential death of one species (e.g. raccoons) at the hands of uneducated property owners without taking into account the undeniable negative impact on a seriously declining, federally protected species (Chimney Swifts) is extremely disappointing and short-sighted. I can only hope that the HSUS is not also advising the public to cap chimneys that are being successfully used by breeding Chimney Swifts after the swifts have fledged their young -- preventing them from returning to breed in subsequent years. If so, this would seem to place the HSUS at cross purposes with a very large segment of the wildlife conservation community.

Of course, some chimneys must be capped, but only after the property owner has been given ALL of the available information and consequences of their decision. From a conservation stand point, chimneys should be divided into two distinct types: metal and masonry.

All metal chimneys should be capped with no exceptions. Metal chimneys are death traps to all animals. They are too slick inside for any animal to be able climb out once they enter.

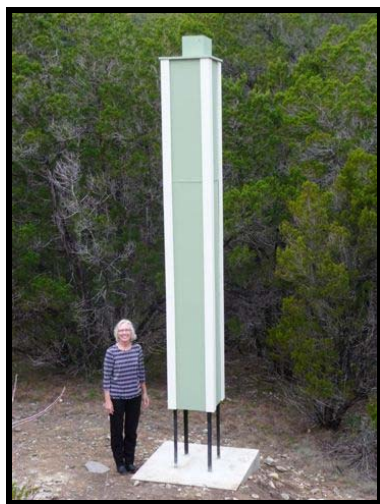
Masonry chimneys should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Many are suitable nesting sites for Chimney Swifts and can be left uncapped if owners wish to do so. Some may need to be modified with predator guards (to exclude raccoons, squirrels, etc.) or special rain caps that will protect the integrity of the masonry while still allowing access to the swifts. Many helpful suggestions are provided on the ChimneySwift.org web site under the "Is there Chattering in your Chimney" link.

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues. Please do not let all of the work that has been done to protect and conserve Chimney Swifts over the past two decades by so many individuals and organizations (including the Humane Society of the United States) be cast aside for the sake of expedience. We should all continue to take the time necessary to educate the public about the importance of properly maintaining their chimneys and coexisting with our vanishing native wildlife of all species.

Sincerely,
Paul D. Kyle
Project Director, Driftwood Wildlife Association

For more on this issue, please see the "Questions and Answers" section on page 13

Here and there 1.0



Courtesy of Ann Connell

Hays County, TX

With Lin Weber's permission, I wanted to forward this photo of my fellow Hayes County Master Naturalists Chimney Swift tower! They are planning to add a predator guard.

Ann Connell

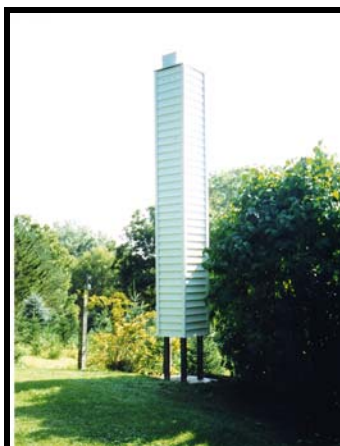


Photo by Marie E. McClure

Eastover, SC

My husband and I are hopeful that the swifts will find our just-competed-tower this season. Fourteen feet tall, it was built by our friend Bill Carlson who is shown putting on the finishing touches in late February.

Larry and Marie E. McClure



Courtesy of Harold Kranbeer

Saint Olaf, IA

I used vinyl siding for the outside. I drilled three 1/2 inch holes on each side on the top course of the siding and left the gap open at the bottom for added cooling. The inside is 1 x 6 spruce lumber. 1/8 inch deep horizontal cuts were made on the spruce for swift toe holds. We reside on 10 acres and my plan is to erect 2 more towers before spring.

Harold Krambeer

Lake Jackson, TX

We FINALLY have a pair of Swifts using our tower at the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory!

John Arvin saw a pair of swifts collecting small sticks from the large pecan just outside our office.

On Thursday June 10th I was working out back and checked the tower. I saw a number of small sticks at the base so figured the swifts had dropped them in the process of nest building.

Cecilia Riley



Courtesy of Giselle Smisko

Vernon, NJ

We have two towers up at the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge in Vernon, New Jersey now and a third one built for our rehab center in Wantage, NJ. I have included a photo of the first one being installed by refuge staff. Funding was obtained through a grant with National Audubon Society and Bergen County Audubon. Two of the towers were built by an Eagle Scout candidate; we built the first one. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is having a sign made about the swifts.

Tonight I will be talking to Washington Crossing Audubon about swifts. They had an eagle scout put up another swift tower in their area. We are all anxiously waiting for the swifts to start using them.

Giselle Smisko



Here and there 1.1



Photo by Kelly Applegate

Onamia, MN

At work on Tribal lands, the 4 towers remain unoccupied.

At home, I added a 3rd tower this spring which is an experimental 8' design. Even with playing attraction cds, it was largely ignored, possibly because it was too low for the swifts comfort.

At home, the 12' wooden tower did well with an active nest for the second year, and the concrete tower also did well with an active nest. Both successfully fledged young.

Chimney Swift conservation has never looked better here in Minnesota. The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Dept. of Natural Resources is a primary partner for these efforts. We are having some success with promoting tower placement and public awareness.

We are also working on testing alternate structures, such as cement sewer pipe for nesting and roosting swifts.

Kelly Applegate, Wildlife Biologist
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe DNR/
Environment



Photos by John Koenig

Bayside, TX

Looks like the 18, 2" round holes behind 3 vents cooled the tower enough, had five eggs and believe they all hatched. Have yet to see young birds come in and out of tower, but adults still around and going in and out throughout the day. Old nests are visible on two of the walls.

John Koenig



Courtesy of Hal Opperman

Humble, TX

Our Audubon partner, the Kingwood Country Club provided the labor and donated the supplies needed to construct a swift tower. The crew at the Kingwood Country Club, preassembled our tower at their facility and also erected one at their golf club property. On October 11th they assembled our tower at Oak Forest Elementary school in Humble, TX. We have been long time volunteers at the school and work with children in the gardens that we helped establish over the years. Our school is a certified wildlife habitat and an official Monarch Waystation. The tower is inside our orchard area and is a great addition to our gardening and nature program.

We look forward to receiving residents next spring. The picture shows Mike Taylor, Deanna Berry, and Steve Vaughn, all with the Kingwood Country Club.

Hal and Gudrun Opperman
Oak Forest Elementary Volunteers

Here and there 1.2



Photo by Paul Kyle

Travis County, TX

A pair of Chimney Swifts is checking out our chimney swift tower this morning (May 17, 2010). They keep flying around in circles and then dropping down to the entrance and hovering about 2 feet above it before flying around again. I haven't seen them go inside yet but they are definitely interested.

Monday at 6:01 PM - I just saw two Chimney Swifts enter the tower. There were 5 swifts hanging around it earlier this morning.

Linda Laack

Houston, TX

"...5 swifts fledged from the Russ Pitman Park Chimney Swift tower about a week and a half ago – June 25 -27."

Pam Smolen
Houston Audubon Society

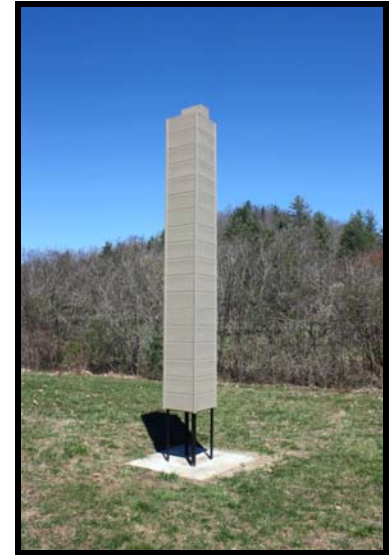


Photos by George Abide

Golden Valley, MN

Just wanted to thank you for all the information you have put out about building chimney swift towers. When my son decided to build one for his eagle scout project it inspired me to build one as well. I am attaching a few photos. I really feel that this tower, in addition to being important habitat for swifts, is a neat sculptural element for our yard. Since it is sheathed in galvanized metal I increased the insulation to 1.5 inches (the thick pink foam, rigid sheets). The arrows on the top are decorative...I tell everyone it is to show the birds where the entrance is. This will be our first spring.

George Abide



Courtesy of Deb Rosengrant

Cedar Mountain, NC

My friend Winkie and I just completed construction of a new swift tower in Sherwood Forest which is residential community and Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary. A naturalist who studied this 1000 acre forest last year reported 2 pairs of chimney swifts nesting in trees here. The tower was funded by a grant from Wildlife Rehabilitators of NC in part.

Deb Rosengrant

Conroe, TX

Please enjoy my video on the construction of a Chimney Swift tower at W.G. Jones State Forest. This was an Eagle Scout project supported by W.G. Jones State Forest, the Heartwood Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist Program and the Houston Audubon Society. *YouTube: Chimney Swift Tower – W. G. Jones State Forest, Conroe, TX*

Kenneth Kramm

Here and there 1.3



Photo by Stephen Van Gee

Hays County, TX

New tower: This one is about 300 feet from the one I built in 2008. Guests arrived on May 23rd.

Stephen Van Gee



Photos by Tony Amos

Ingleside, TX

It looked like the wall to their house had grown a beard! But Sandra and Stan Stenson of Ingleside soon saw that the “beard” was alive and made up of hundreds [Chimney Swifts], clinging to the wall and to each other as if trying to keep warm in the chilly air of a late spring cold front. Perhaps as many as a thousand birds were clinging to the wall, in places as many as three deep.

Tony Amos



Photo courtesy of Tony Cheevers

Boston, MA

Here is a photo of my friends from the summer of 2009. Birds came back last year and hope for another return in the next month.

Tony Cheevers



We did a double-take when we opened this photo from Ross and Linda Hall. Yes, it is all wood: the bricks, the swift and even the wasp and the wasp nest.

The artist is Jim Edsall

<http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/jim.edsall>

Jim told us “...I did the Chimney Swift mainly because it fit into the brick wall/wasp nest scenario! Sort of a backwards way of doing things I guess. I also like doing birds with muted colors and subtle shading. This particular carving finished first in Advanced non-passerine land birds and second best of show in the advanced division at the Ward World Wildfowl Carving Championships in Ocean City Maryland at the end of April.

Thanks to Linda and Ross for bringing this remarkable talent to our attention. Thanks also to Jim for allowing us to share this piece with our readers.

Here and there 1.4

Holt, MO

The 2010 season was odd because when the swifts first arrived in spring they would leave the towers for a day or so and then return. It was a great year for the swifts. Six eggs were laid in both towers, all hatched and fledged. Both towers were used as roosts, but they like the west tower best. We also had swifts in both fireplace chimneys. The entrances are right next to each other.”

Joyce Rosson

Bloomington, IN

We have had fantastic success with our new swift tower at Fairview School in Bloomington, IN. The swifts were using the tower every night for about two weeks during migration. One of the biology faculty members at Indiana University got great videos of the swifts entering the tower. You should be able to see it on this link: <http://www.heraldtimesonline.com/stories/2010/10/10/outdoors.qp-6702411.sto>

Bob Dodd

Suggested Chimney Swift Tower Protocol

We endorse the following protocol that was recently adopted by Travis Audubon:

Chimney Swift Towers are designed as nesting and roosting sites for Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*). Only one nesting pair will inhabit any tower during a single season. However, roosts consisting of numerous swifts may occur during spring and fall migration.

1. Hand-reared or displaced Chimney Swifts from any other sites should not be placed in Chimney Swift towers. The resident parents will not feed the introduced young. They will often attack them as intruders and the introduced young will perish.
2. Chimney Swift towers are designed to exclude all other species (ants, owls, bats, snakes, squirrels, raccoons, etc.). To further protect the nesting birds, the area directly around a Chimney Swift Tower (36”) should be free of any vegetation taller than 12”. The area should preferably be free of all vegetation. Vines of any kind should be kept away from all Chimney Swift Towers.
3. Chimney Swift Towers must not be disturbed (climbed with ladders, opened or worked on) during the entire time swifts are in residence (March 1 thru November 1). Loud noises such as chain saws should also be avoided within ~20 feet of the tower. Regular lawn maintenance (mowing, trimming, etc.) will not normally deter the swifts.
4. All monitoring of Chimney Swift Towers should be conducted by remote observation rather than opening, climbing with ladders or peering up through the bottom so as not to disturb nesting or roosting swifts. Results of the nesting season are best determined by evaluating droppings and other detritus during annual maintenance after the swifts have migrated from the area.
5. Chimney Swift Towers should be maintained annually when swifts are not in the area - preferably in the months of January or February. This maintenance should include:
 - Removal of the bottom to clean and remove droppings and other detritus from the nesting season.
 - Removal of the old nest. Removal of any wasp nests.
 - Replacement of original bottom. If undue wear or deterioration has occurred, a new bottom should be manufactured and installed ASAP, but no later than March 1st.
 - Fresh Tanglefoot (Brand) insect barrier should be applied in a 2” band around each tower leg just below the bottom of the tower.

Chimney Swift Conservation Efforts

Take Wing in Minnesota

To conserve Chimney Swifts, we must first advance the understanding and appreciation of them and then engage others in these efforts. Only when the public appreciates and gets engaged can we hope to conserve. In Minnesota we are working to partner with parks, nature centers, scouts, churches, schools, corporations, and individuals to educate citizens about what they can do to help these swifts.

Audubon Minnesota initiated this program to engage the people of Minnesota in a tangible, easy-to-accomplish project that can make a difference to the chimney swift populations and create greater awareness about bird conservation. Through a Toyota TogetherGreen grant, we have been able to expand the Chimney Swift project and also engage a wide diversity of youth and urban communities. Many of these people have had few, if any, opportunity to interact with wildlife or become involved with their conservation. In addition to the Native Americans, we are working with African Americans, Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans to create demonstration conservation projects in many neighborhoods across Minneapolis-St. Paul.

We believe the success of this program is credited to the four step approach in order for people to consider the conservation of Chimney Swifts: partnerships, awareness; education, and engagement.

Partnerships are Powerful: The conservation of any species is too big of a task for just one group or organization to do by themselves. The more partnerships you form the better the chances of success. Partners in the Audubon Minnesota Chimney Swift Conservation Project include a wide diversity of groups, with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (MLBO) being the primary partner. Other partners include numerous parks and recreation departments, various public and private schools, several corporations, Audubon chapters, Minnesota DNR, and the Boy and Girl Scouts of America. Kelly Applegate, a biologist with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, has been an instrumental partner to get towers built on tribal lands and to urban residents building towers in their yards. It is partners such as this that really make a difference in conserving Chimney Swifts.

Raise Awareness: We have found that the public is excited to learn about these swifts and what a fantastic creature it is. Most people have no idea what a Chimney Swift is, and when they do see them they immediately assume they are swallows, or more commonly, bats. Through state and local newspapers, radio and television interviews, articles in newsletters, postings on websites and the use of social media, we have been able to reach thousands of Minnesotans about the swifts and the need to help conserve them. A Chimney Swift conservation brochure and several handouts have also been produced and used to raise awareness.

Educate: This follows awareness, and is being done here in Minnesota through presentations, writing articles, giving certificates of appreciation for having uncapped chimneys or not tearing one down. The risk that some will balk at saving or not capping their chimneys is always there, but when approached tactfully, and with the encouragement that they can help the swifts, people usually see the wisdom in doing so. It is worth the risk as without working with these landholders a greater risk exists in losing even more nesting and roosting habitat. Presenting a plaque or certificate of appreciation to these people gives them a sense of pride. They often then help spread the word about swifts and their conservation to others.

Engage: Most of the readers of this newsletter know about the Chapman School chimney in Portland and its importance to the Vaux's Swift. This gathering of these swifts has generated the opportunity for thousands to see the spectacle. Seeing this they have decided to save this chimney and others around Oregon. In Minnesota we are using that approach by hosting Community-wide Chimney "Swift Sit Socials." We invite folks to come in before sunset to hear a 15 minute presentation about swifts, have some ice cream and cake or other refreshments, and then sit back on lawn chairs or blankets and watch the swifts come in to roost. We also give volunteers an opportunity to find their

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own chimneys/smokestacks, etc. and to count or estimate the number of swifts using that particular structure during the first and last weekend in August as part of our state-wide Chimney Swift Sit. They report their findings to us and we forward this data to the Driftwood Wildlife Association for their continent-wide "A Swifts Night Out" project.

Build Towers: Another way of engaging people is to get them involved in building Chimney Swift towers. This also raises awareness for many within the communities where the towers are erected. Audubon Minnesota has facilitated the building of 41 towers, primarily through a Toyota TogetherGreen grant and the numerous partnerships. Another 19 other towers have been built as a result of presentations/talks given and the efforts of Kelly Applegate of the MLBO. By fall of 2011 we expect that a total of 105 such towers will be built and ready for occupancy when the swifts return next spring!

Over one-third of these projects were/are being done by Boy Scouts for their Eagle Projects. The Scout towers are sited primarily in parks and at schools where visibility is high and the potential for raising awareness is great. Eleven towers have also been built by corporations on their campuses, and 16 by private citizens in their yards. Plaques are presented to those who build a tower for mounting on the tower itself.

We worked with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to obtain CD's of the swifts calls. We are now experimenting with their effectiveness to attract swifts to just-built towers. Early results are promising and suggest that this is effective to help the swifts find the towers and expedite their use.

Much of the above has been accomplished only because of working in concert with partners. The synergistic effect of these partnerships has guaranteed that much more success can be achieved than by working alone.

For more information about this project you can go to the Audubon at Home page at <http://mn.audubon.org> or contact Ron Windingstad at 651-739-9332 ext 14 or email rwindingstad@audubon.org

The Minnesota Chimney Swift Conservation Project is funded in part by the TogetherGreen Grant from Toyota and the National Audubon Society.

Ron Windingstad
Audubon Minnesota
Audubon at Home Coordinator

Canadian Update

From Bird Studies Canada latest newsletter:

BSC – Ontario Program Workshops

5 October 2010 – Bird Studies Canada's Ontario Region Staff will visit New Liskeard, North Bay, and Sault Ste. Marie for workshops that will introduce Ontario Region programs and provide comprehensive training on the **Ontario SwiftWatch** program. Ontario SwiftWatch is a volunteer-based monitoring program designed to gather information on the abundance, distribution, and habitats of Threatened Chimney Swifts across the province, to inform Chimney Swift conservation efforts. Workshops are free, but pre-registration is required. This project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through the Department of Environment, the Government of Ontario, and TD Friends of the Environment Fund. Special thanks to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (Kirkland Lake District; North Bay District; Sault Ste. Marie District); Nipissing Naturalists; Sault Naturalists; and the Great Lakes Forestry Centre.

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Here are two sites regarding Chimney Swifts, a species at risk in Canada:

<http://www.naturelondon.ca/PDF/SwiftFactsheet201004.pdf>

<http://www.naturelondon.ca/PDF/SwiftInfo201004.pdf>

Karen Potter

The September issue of *Blue Jay* is now out, so I can share our Chimney Swift publication with you. The nest site and breeding success work in Manitoba has generated the only information known about these birds at the northern edge of their distribution. There are some significant differences from what you folks see in Texas.

I just wanted to let you know how inspirational you both are in your conservancy efforts. It has been a wonderful experience to see a quiet community burst to life with the new-found knowledge that a special migratory bird dives in and out of local chimneys all summer long. The information in your book was a tremendous help in deciphering what all those movements translated into!

Barb Stewart

www.naturemanitobaca.CHSW.html

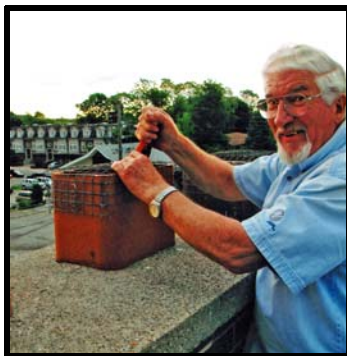
You may find it interesting that the Bert Miller Nature Club partnered with the third year construction engineering students at Niagara College. They took on the planning for this Chimney Swift Tower as their year long project. The detailed building plans they produced were approved by the Town of Fort Erie.

A panel highlighting the swifts and 5 others of different environmental topics are to be mounted on, or nearby the newly constructed Chimney Swift Tower at SHAGBARK NATURE PARK, in the Town of Fort Erie, Ontario.

Scott

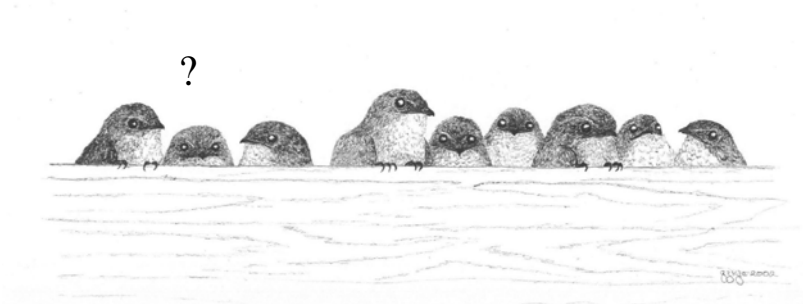


Photo by Dawn Pierrynowski



Bill Evans in Streetsville, Ontario is a long-time supporter of Chimney Swift conservation and the Driftwood Wildlife Association. Bill is seen here cutting the screen off of a chimney so the swifts can use it again. Great job, Bill!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS...



In 2010, we were contacted by the Humane Society of the United States for input into an article they were writing about Chimney Swifts. This article was to counter a previous article in their publication "All Animals" that advocated capping all chimneys. Following are the questions posed and the answers that were provided.

1. What is it about their feet that prevent them from perching on branches and other horizontal surfaces? How do the barbs on their feathers help them cling to bricks?

*Chimney Swifts evolved to roost and nest on vertical surfaces -- originally inside large, hollow trees. All of their feeding takes place in flight, so they have no need to be able to perch in the open on branches. This is not a disability, but rather a highly specialized adaptation of feet and legs to their unique, aerial lifestyle. Their stiff tail feathers with exposed spines act as a prop - much like the tail feathers of some species of woodpeckers. Chimney Swifts are in the genus *Chaetura* which means "spiny-tailed".*

2. Insurance companies that require chimney caps: Are the caps only required to be affixed during winter when the fireplaces are being used? Do they allow caps to be removed during summer months or is that done in spite of policy requirements?

We cannot speak for the many insurance companies and their various policies, but caps should be in place during the burning season to arrest any sparks which may come out of the chimney and create a fire hazard. There should be no objection to having the caps removed during the time the swifts are in residence -- which coincides with the time when the chimneys are not being used for fires.

3. When babies are forced to leave nest early, why are parents unable to care for them?

Young Chimney Swifts must be able to fly perfectly and catch their own food before they leave the safety of their nest chimney if they are to survive. This is 28 to 30 days after they hatch. If the young are forced from the chimney early they will not be able to fly or feed themselves. The parents instinctively return to the nesting chimney with food to feed their young, and all feeding is done near the nest in the chimney. If the babies are no longer in the chimney where the nest is located, the parents will have no way of finding them.

4. Are there chimney sweep companies that remove nests and young despite Migratory Bird Act protection? Do they do this out of ignorance or because enforcement is lax and they can get away with it?

All reputable chimney cleaning companies are aware of and abide by the laws that protect Chimney Swifts and all wildlife. This includes the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act as well as state and local laws that normally mirror the federal statutes. However, there are still many disreputable companies that do remove and destroy nests, eggs, babies and adult Chimney Swifts. In some cases this is due to ignorance, which is no excuse since their profession will ultimately present them with a chimney containing swifts. Ignorance of the law is no defense against prosecution and fines. In other cases, some companies may simply choose to defy the law for financial

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gain. Enforcement is not lax, but wildlife crimes are seldom reported to the authorities. When violations are reported and can be substantiated, prosecution usually follows.

Most reputable chimney cleaning companies are members of the National Chimney Sweep Guild which offers certification and actively supports Chimney Swift protection and conservation:

<http://www.ncsg.org/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>

5. You recommend removing nests in fall after birds have left as they may become too unstable to use the next season. I believe I read somewhere else that swifts tend not to reuse nests. Is that the case?

Maintenance of chimneys is somewhat different than maintenance of Chimney Swift towers: structures that are built specifically for swifts to use as nesting and roosting habitat. Chimney Swifts typically do build a new nest each year. It is rare for swifts to reuse an old nest, but it does occasional occur. When this happens, the old nest sometimes collapses under the stress of raising a new brood of young. Because of this, we recommend removing the old nests from Chimney Swift towers each year as part of the routine maintenance.

6. Since homeowners wouldn't have access to nests, I imagine chimney would need two cleanings a year – fall to remove nests, spring to remove creosote.

Chimneys (whether occupied by swifts or not) should be cleaned annually after the burning season comes to an end. This will remove creosote build up which can be a fire hazard as well as any materials left behind by the swifts not incinerated during the winter burning season. There will be only one nest per season, and it is a small compact structure (~3" x 4") that does not block the flue or cause any potential fire hazard. It will normally be quickly incinerated with the first fire of the season, so there is no reason to clean a chimney in the fall unless it was not cleaned the previous spring.

More Questions and Answers:

I am in Houston for a couple of weeks visiting my husband who works here. Yesterday I went to lunch with friends at Sugarland. They have a 2 story house. At the front the entrance around the door is 2 stories high. For the past two years Chimney Swifts have nested on this entrance wall. There are five chicks hanging onto the wall now. It is a brick wall that is covered with stucco. Not smooth but not very rough either. Anyway last year, they said that the chicks slowly came down the wall and then disappeared and they were afraid that cats may have taken them as the chicks were low enough for this to happen. I am emailing you to find out if the chicks are OK on this wall or will the same fate happen to them as last year's chicks? Is there anything that can be done? My friends are very concerned and fond of their Chimney Swifts.

Jennifer Singfield

Although it is unusual for Chimney Swifts to nest in the open, we are starting to receive more reports of this behaviour each year. In all likelihood, the young were old enough to fly away. We would be inclined to leave them alone and let nature take its course. Once the swifts leave the nest, they are usually just a week or so away from fledging.

Of course cats are introduced by humans and are not part of nature. Outdoor cats do present a clear, unnatural threat to all fledgling birds. If your friends own cats, they should keep them inside at least while the young swifts are so vulnerable and encourage their neighbours to do the same.

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You were so helpful this spring regarding a chimney cover that I needed to have built. Now I'm worried about my swifts. They nested in abundance but rather late, I thought. My house has been resounding with their wonderful chattering, especially the last couple of weeks - sounds as though there are many dozen in there. But today I heard virtually nothing except one faint sound or two mid afternoon. We went from hot to far-too-hot today with heat indices from 105 to 109, no wind. My chimney gets full sun from noon on, west facing. I thought I knew a great deal about "my swifts" but apparently I don't. Would they stay inside the chimney in such an inferno and be killed, not flying out? It's now almost 7 p.m. and I still hear nothing, extremely sad and worrisome. The cover did not get built yet so the full opening of the chimney is unobstructed. The house is so deathly quiet without their cheerful sounds. I had given thought that maybe this was the day for the babies to get their wings with a mass exodus but I've never experienced a complete lack this suddenly. Any thing you can tell me, good or bad, will be appreciated.

Gloria Saylor
Port Lavaca, TX

It is certainly late enough in the season for the young to have fledged -- especially on the coast. Once they fledge, there will be no more (or very few) of the feeding calls. It may be that your babies fledged today as you expected.

The inside of the chimney will be much cooler than the outside temps, so you should not worry about the heat. We suspect that everything is just fine. You might go out this evening at dusk and watch to see if the swifts return to your chimney. However, they may also decide to stay with a neighbor. So you should not be worried if they don't show up.

You are exactly correct. I just now heard some sounds from the chimney but nothing like this last week or so. So the kids were indeed ramping up for getting out on their own which happened today. It really was louder than I've ever heard before in my over 40 years in this house, having a conversation in the den was almost impossible. So we must have had a bumper crop of babies which is wonderful.

Gloria

I have had chimney sweeps in my chimney every year as long as I can remember. Every year I hear a sound like a 5 gallon bucket being dropped down my chimney several times a day. It is usually followed by lots of chirping. What is the sound? I've racked my brain trying to figure it out but I'm stumped. Any help? They are a pleasure to have around. I enjoy the pronounced lack of mosquitoes around my house!

Dwayne

Parent swifts drop into the chimney to feed their young on average every 30 minutes to an hour during daylight hours. Often, instead of entering the chimney at reduced speed, they drop in at full flight and must slow their speed by rapidly flapping their wings. As they drop in and flap, the beating of their wings can create a rumbling sound. The young react to the sound in anticipation of being fed.

We have an old (100 yr) house with a 21" square brick chimney which is used only by the swifts. The mortar is in very poor condition, and I am anticipating that it will not tolerate the basement floor, upon which it rests, being jack hammered out in the upcoming remodel. We have to do the remodel within the next month, and I am still hearing some bird noise, though not nearly as much as when there were babies. They like to nest in or around the old connector pipe used to service the stove in the kitchen and now is covered with one of those aluminum "pie plate" covers. So the birds are quite literally behind the fridge, chattering away and they are delightful. They descend about 15 feet to reach this area.

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I am planning on building a replacement chimney out of metal studs lined with grooved mortar board (tile backer). I will re-install their favorite connector at the bottom. The new swift chimney must be supported by beefing up the attic joists and cannot be taller than 8 foot in height, two foot above the roof and six into the attic, same as before but no descent for the final 3 feet into the kitchen level. Will this be a concern for overall height? It appears that I should plan to take the chimney down and have the new one up in one day, as they clearly enjoy settling there by night. I can't wait till winter as the remodel involves changing the heating system. The other concern is that I would like to place a weather cap on the top of the new 'swift chimney'. Is 12" height on the sides adequate? Will they return (I know one can never say for sure with wild birds) after I have altered their home?

Anne Graham
Code Enforcement Official
Commercial Building Inspections
Building Safety
City of Asheville

We have no experience with the material you plan to use for the inside of your replacement chimney. However, if it is roughly-textured, it should be fine. As long as the depth of the chimney is at least 8', it will be suitable for use by the swifts. Also, twelve inches of height on the cap will allow access by the birds.

There is certainly no guarantee that the swifts will accept the new structure, as they tend to be fairly neophobic. But since it will be in the same location with similar dimensions, they will probably not be deterred.

This is quite an undertaking on your part on behalf of the swifts. We salute your initiative and dedication! Thanks very much for your conservation efforts. Please let us know how this project works out for you and for the swifts. We will be very interested to know how the backer board works.

We have a Chimney Swift nest in our chimney. The babies are fairly loud at times (not a problem). The problem is that I think we forgot to close the flue after the last winter fire. Is it safe to close it now, or will that disturb the nest? Also, how are these baby birds going to learn to fly out if they are in the chimney? Do they climb to the top?

Karen Duplantis

It would probably be best to leave the damper as it is. This late in the nesting season there may be young birds that are almost ready to fly. If they are frightened from the chimney too early, they will not survive. The young will actually fly out rather than climb. You might consider taking a look at the "Chimney Swift Videos" link on our web site. There are some clips posted that will show you what is going on inside your chimney.

Last night 23 swifts went into our newly constructed chimney on a grade school in Brunswick, ME and 23 came back out after a few minutes. For the next twenty minutes small groups of 2-10 went in and came back out after a couple of minutes. Finally, all of the birds disappeared toward town (a mile away). We know that there are at least five nesting chimneys within five blocks of each other downtown. We expect to have about 400 swifts in the area in 2 weeks.

We are using a tape recorder at the base of the chimney to play swift calls. Is this a good idea, a bad idea, or no idea?

The chimney turns out to be a bit shorter than we planned (it is 40 feet - the original was closer to 60 - we asked for the same height and were not diligent enough in reading the plans - we were more focused on the inside lining). The school's outside walls are still under construction (the chimney was built first at our request so that it would be ready

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in time); so we could increase the height. I have talked to the chief architect and he thinks that we could probably add 10 feet. Would it be worth the aggravation to try to do it now, or should we wait a week or so and see what the swifts decide?

Ted Allen

Based on your description of the swifts' behavior, we think the tape recorder may be a problem. The vocalizations of adult Chimney Swifts have not been completely deciphered to date, so there is no telling what the birds on the tape are "saying" -- it could be territorial. Recordings have been used to lure swifts to a new tower, but "your" swifts obviously now know the chimney is there. We would recommend discontinuing the play back.

We would also leave the chimney as it is for this season. With birds already in the area, any additional work and disturbance could dissuade them.

You have achieved a remarkable feat in having such a large chimney constructed specifically for the birds. We would suggest sitting back and observing for this season. Congratulations on your efforts.

We have a nest of Chimney Swifts in our chimney. We had them last year and they have returned. We found one of them in front of our fireplace dead. When we look up the chimney we can see that the rest of the birds are a lot smaller than the dead one we found. We are afraid that it might have been the mother bird that died and now the baby birds are going to starve to death. What can we do to rescue these tiny birds? We have considered calling Animal Control, but I thought I would contact you first.

Mandy Montero

The loss of one adult swift does not necessarily mean the death of the young since both parents feed the babies. In addition, there are often other "helper" birds that will join in to care for the young. If you continue to hear the babies making the loud feeding calls, it means that they are being cared for.

A baby chimney swift fell out of its nest in my chimney. I found it in the fireplace today. I fed it a few flies and gave it some water with a medicine dropper. Its eyes are open but it cannot fly yet. Don't see how I could return it to its nest. Will it survive on flies and water until it can fly? Do you have any suggestions?

Bill Wheeler

The bird will not survive and develop properly on only flies and water. The best thing is to get the young bird back to its parents if possible. If you go to the "Is There Chattering in Your Chimney?" link on our web site, there are some suggestions. If you are unable to return it, it will need to be placed with a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. Your state Department of Nature Resources or Parks and Wildlife Department should be able to help you find one in your area.

Thanks for the reply. I got the bird perched on the end of a broom stick and raised it above the damper until it grabbed onto the side of the chimney, then closed the damper. I hear others in the nest so I'm hoping the mother will hear it and come to feed it. Got that info from your website. Thanks for the help....

I am just completing construction on a chimney swift tower based on the plans in your book. I used Hardy board siding for the outside. I was wondering if you think the metal critter guard around the top is still required, as it seems

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like it would be pretty difficult for any critter to climb up cement board. Any opinion or experience that could help guide me would be greatly appreciated.

Tom Walters

If you use smooth, flush metal trim on the corners, you can eliminate the predator guard around the top. However, if you use any kind of corner that protrudes, you will still need the guard. We have learned that squirrels, raccoons and snakes can still climb a Hardi-covered tower by gripping or wedging against corner trim that is not flush with the siding. See the attached photo.



Mayfield Park Tower with smooth siding and metal corners
Photo by Kelly Applegate

Do adult swifts carry fecal sacs out of the chimney or do they toss them over the side? Does anyone have an idea?

Bonnie Sample
MN Breeding Bird Atlas Coordinator

Chimney Swifts do not carry off the fecal sacs as songbirds do. The babies back over the edge of the nest to defecate. Because Chimney Swifts do not carry off any of the fecal material or nest detritus, we are able to accurately evaluate the nesting success (or failure) by examining the material in the bottom of a Chimney Swift tower at the end of the season after the swifts have migrated south.

Thanks for your speedy (swift!) help with this swift behavior. I am writing better evidence code descriptions for the MN Breeding Bird Atlas after a question from one of our committee members. This will definitely improve our evidence reporting for this species.

Bonnie

I read a newspaper article recently ... I believe it was in the Washington Post (I live in Fairfax, VA, just West of DC). I have since misplaced the article but as I remember it referenced your work and among other statements that amazed me it said that although there may be many Chimney Swifts in a chimney there was only one active nest. I wondered at how a species could be successful with such a demand ... with an ideal nesting site and only one active nest. Tell me that they got it wrong ... or at least I misunderstood them ... and that there are in fact many active nests at a typical nesting site.

Wes Hetrick

There will only be one active nest per season in any structure, and that nest is maintained by one breeding pair. They generally will have only one brood per season, but occasionally they will raise two broods. The mated pair are very territorial, and will not allow another pair to build a nest in the same structure during the entire season. However, they may allow non-breeding birds to roost at night in the upper section of a large site. This gives the mistaken impression of multiple active nests.

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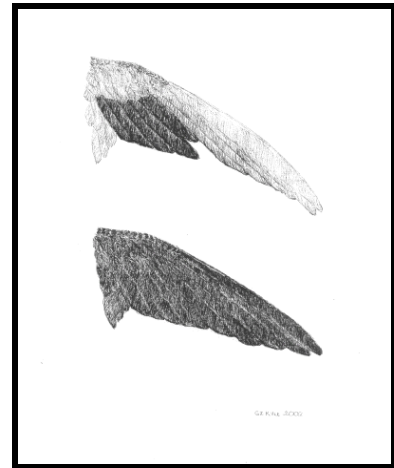
The nesting season runs from May thru August, but that is over the entire breeding range in North America. The swifts begin earlier in the south (Gulf Coast states) and later in the north (Canada). It may take several weeks to build the nest; a couple of weeks to lay the eggs; three weeks of incubation after the next to last egg is laid and four weeks for the young to fledge. In the south, the first young fledge around the first week of July. At that time the parents may start their second brood in the same nest.

At this point, Chimney Swifts are actually not very successful due to a decline in suitable nesting sites. Their numbers have plummeted by ~60% since the 1960s in the lower 48 states and by more than 90% in Canada. In 2009, Chimney Swifts were listed as a "Threatened Species" in all of Canada and as an "Endangered Species" in some provinces.

Today (15 July) our chimney has been pretty quiet and there is a great deal of swift activity outside. I figure that the young [from our chimney] have just fledged. Is there a way to differentiate the fledglings as they zip by?

Trent

Congratulations! Look at the wings. The adults will look ragged since they are molting (top sketch). The youngsters will have clean, dark wings with smooth edges (bottom sketch). Of course you have to wait for them to glide to see the difference very well.



Yesterday evening motorists reported a large number of dead birds along a section of highway 295 in the District of Columbia. It was next to our sewage treatment plant, but officials there have been very cooperative in ruling out any sort of chemical mishap. Moreover, the regional FAA received no reports of bird strikes, though there is significant helicopter traffic not too far from where the birds were found. It turns out that the birds are all chimney swifts of different ages, as identified by a biologist from the Smithsonian Institute. Several carcasses were collected for necropsies. But at this point, it appears that the most likely cause of the birds' deaths was being hit by vehicles. In fact, employees of the treatment plant said that they saw a tight flock of the birds flying low over the highway and being hit repeatedly.

My question is whether anyone else has ever heard of or witnessed such an event involving so many birds. If it was due to cars, why doesn't this happen more often?

Jim Monsma
City Wildlife
Washington DC

Your report is interesting, though sad. Over the past week with the cloudy weather the swifts here in Baltimore have been flying very low, virtually to ground level. They do this when poor weather prevents insects from flying higher in the sky. Although this incident in DC is sad, it is also probably quite unusual since weather conditions most of the time will allow swifts to forage at much higher altitude.

David Curson, PhD
Director of Bird Conservation,
Audubon Maryland-DC.
Baltimore, MD

CHIMNEY TIME-SHARING REPORTS

Sometime around the middle of March a strange noise began recurring within our fireplace chimney. At the beginning it sounded like a super sonic micro-mini-jet entering and leaving day and night. I could hear the noise very plainly and it didn't sound like what friends and family said it must be--bats. After a while I got used to the "mini-sonic boom" and just smiled every time I heard it. Around the latter part of April and early May another noise joined the first-- soft twittering. We were told it might possibly be Chimney Swifts. I was excited to think that yet another bird species enjoyed our property enough to want to nest here. The twittering has turned to cyclic chirping and we are quite sure it is Chimney Swift babies being fed by their parents. I have marked the day down on my bird journal: Chimney Swift family in Pearl River, Louisiana (St.Tammany Parish)

E and J Foster

My wife and I built a house (with 2 uncapped chimneys) in Marshall County, MS (northern MS) in 2005. Each year we have had chimney swifts nesting in both chimneys. Last fall, for the first time, we had literally 100's of chimney swifts (we estimated 150 to 200) occupying one of our chimneys for a number of weeks just before they migrated south. We loved going out with a glass of wine and watching the swifts seemingly fall into the chimney at dusk. Hopefully, we will have a similar experience this fall.

Tom Heineke

OBSERVATIONS - Chimney Swifts

I'm at a conference in Knoxville, TN (June 16) and there is a town square with a dozen or so outdoor eating establishments. Even though the weather is hot and humid I've been dining out on the square. There are about a dozen Chimney Swifts overhead at all times, which greatly adds to the charm of the place. I counted between one and two dozen the other night, and they were flying in pairs, threes, sixes, etc. I don't understand why at this time of the year they are in such large groups - it seems (to me) late for pairing off and early for family groups, but whatever the cause they are doing very well here.

Ernie Lewis

It is not unusual for adult swifts to socialize in the evening in small groups this time of year. It is the "between time" after the eggs are laid and before the babies hatch. Seeing these groups is a good indication that there are multiple nest sites close by -- that's a good thing!

I'm sorry to report it, but 2010 has been the worst swift season I've ever seen in Wabash and the surrounding towns. My neighborhood local population of about 20 has dwindled this year to one nesting pair. Tragically, a 110 year old big chimney downtown, a generational migratory roost, was capped. I had counted almost 2000 swifts some nights using that chimney for years. Other chimneys have been capped or demolished and our hospital is building a new facility which will result in the demolition of several large old chimneys.

Mary Purcell, Wabash, IN

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Today (June 06, 2010) at 1:30 PM I witnessed my new pair of swifts doing "kissy face", embracing each other with one wing over the other, and copulating! I'm so glad I installed the camera. They must be ready to build their nest any day now....can't wait!

I have several swifts in pairs and trios observing and going into the towers. Every evening is a treat to watch several pairs of swifts go in the various towers. It's also fun to watch new swifts inspect the towers....they fly in a low glide around the base several times while giving an intense chip call, sometimes vee-ing.

Now that I have 2 pairs semi-committed to the 12' wooden and 12' concrete tower, I've been playing the CD near the 8' tower and a trio of swifts have been investigating it.

Kelly Applegate, Onamia, MN

“A Swift Night Out!”

A SWIFT NIGHT OUT is a continent-wide effort to raise awareness about and encourage interest in Chimney Swifts and Vaux's Swifts. The project has become a favorite late summer event for professional and amateur birdwatchers alike.

As summer draws to a close and the swifts have finished raising their young, these fascinating aerial acrobats begin to congregate in communal roosts prior to their migration in the fall. Some roosts may consist of an extended family group of a half a dozen birds or so, but the larger sites can host hundreds or even thousands of swifts! We encourage you to involve your local Audubon chapters, bird clubs, scout groups and neighbors in this exhilarating spectacle.

Here is how it works: Keep your eyes to the skies at dusk in late July and watch for areas where swifts are feeding. Look for a tall shaft, chimney or similar structure to locate where Chimney Swifts (central to east coast) or Vaux's Swift (Pacific coast) go to roost in your area.

This year, on one night over the weekend of **August 5, 6, 7 and / or September 9, 10, 11** observe the roost starting about 30 minutes before dusk and estimate the number of swifts that enter. When you have your number, email us at:

DWA@austin.rr.com

Are You a Member of the Driftwood Wildlife Association?

If not, please join our Chimney Swift Conservation efforts!

Dues and contributions help:

- ***maintain the ChimneySwifts.org website***
- ***publish the newsletter, Chaetura***
- ***produce and distribute educational information***

If you are a Member, please renew ASAP

Visit the web site and click on “Membership” for information and categories of support...

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

Driftwood Wildlife Association

1206 West 38th, Suite 1105

Austin, Texas 78705

USA

(512) 266-3861

dwa@austin.rr.com

*A volunteer organization
dedicated to promoting
research
and
providing community education
in the areas of
wildlife rehabilitation,
and avian natural history.*

Officers:

Don Connell.....President

Georgan Kyle.....Secretary

Paul Kyle.....Treasurer

Editors for *Chaetura*
Georgan and Paul Kyle

Research and Rehabilitation

Driftwood Wildlife Association publications continue to be useful to rehabilitators throughout North America and the world at large. A list of these may be found on the "Publications" page of our web site. This year use of our research has expanded "across the pond" to Europe. Our carefully researched techniques for hand-rearing Chimney Swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) have been adapted for use with Common Swifts (*Apus apus*). For an international look at swifts, please take a few minutes to peruse the following web site: www.falciotnegre.com/index.php?lang=en

Education

Our two web sites were well-visited again in 2010 with more than 110,000 visits to date, and are our most efficient way of disseminating educational information. We continue to work with the Travis Audubon Society at Chaetura Canyon to provide workshops on a variety of conservation and habitat issues. For more information, please visit the TAS web site at www.TravisAudubon.org

With Appreciation

We wish to express our thanks to the many members, supporters and contributors who have helped make the Driftwood Wildlife Association recognized as a continent-wide conservation organization. We welcome your comments on past and current projects as well as suggestions for the future.

Migratory Bird Banding by Don Connell

I banded at Calcite from 4/11/10 to 5/15/10. The format was the same: alternating between the xeric upland habitat (H) and the riparian habitat (R). 1600 net-hours were spent at H and 1090 at R. Wind and other weather factors prompted closing earlier in the day at R. Species and numbers are in the accompanying file. After last year's spring banding, I was eager to see how many returns there were. Returns are birds that migrated away and returned to either spend the winter or, as is in this case, spend breeding periods. As you can see from the chart, there were over 60 returns with Painted Buntings leading the way with 25.

One of the management techniques we consider important is the continued use of controlled burns. The more xeric area (H) received one of these prescribed burns about 3-4 weeks before banding. Successful burn. All was charred. Banding was a bit like the moon with some wind. Not much re-growth had occurred and so there was minimal cover and food. Hence, few birds were found. It will make for future interesting comparisons. The numbers of individuals at the river site (R) was also down from last year. New species banded for Calcite were the American Kestrel and Golden-crowned Kinglet. The Pine Siskin was truly a lost child. Neither saw nor heard any others during the two week period. Six days with 400 net-hours produced 69 new individuals at H. Six days with 570 net-hours produced 214 new individuals at R.

I would like to express appreciation to those that visited and helped with the operation of the station: Ann Connell, David Connell, Randy Lenz, Ashton Leon, Steve Janda and Paul Kyle. The technical support of Kelsey Behrens and Greg Lasley has been most valuable. Thanks to Brent Ortego, Ross Dawkins and Nancy Floyd for their help in overseeing the operation.

Calcite Ranch Bird Banding

| location | 2008 | | 2009 | | 2010 | | TOTAL |
|---------------------------|------|---|------|----|------|----|-------|
| | H | R | H | R | H | R | |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk | | | 1 | | | 1 | 2 |
| American Kestrel | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Sora | | | | | | 2 | 2 |
| Spotted Sandpiper | | | | 2 | | | 2 |
| Mourning Dove | | | 2 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 11 |
| Common Ground-Dove | 6 | 5 | 14 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 37 |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo | | | 1 | 2 | 2 | | 5 |
| Eastern Screech-Owl | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Common Poorwill | 2 | | 8 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 22 |
| Chuck-will's-widow | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Ruby-throated Hummingbird | 2 | 1 | 5 | 21 | 19 | 9 | 57 |
| Black-chinned Hummingbird | 2 | | 28 | 33 | 32 | 27 | 122 |
| Rufous Hummingbird | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Green Kingfisher | | | | 1 | | 2 | 3 |
| Ladder-backed Woodpecker | | | 2 | | 3 | 4 | 9 |
| Olive-sided Flycatcher | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Yellow-bellied Flycatcher | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 3 |
| Traill's Flycatcher | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 3 |
| Alder Flycatcher | | | 3 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 13 |
| Willow Flycatcher | | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 4 |
| Least Flycatcher | 6 | | 52 | 24 | 19 | 5 | 106 |
| Eastern Phoebe | 4 | 1 | 4 | 4 | | 6 | 19 |
| Say's Phoebe | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Vermilion Flycatcher | | | 4 | 1 | | | 5 |
| Ash-throated Flycatcher | | | 8 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 14 |
| Great Crested Flycatcher | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Western Kingbird | | | | 1 | 2 | | 3 |
| Scissor-tailed Flycatcher | | | 1 | 5 | 2 | | 8 |
| Loggerhead Shrike | | 1 | 2 | | 1 | | 4 |
| Barn Swallow | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| White-eyed Vireo | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Bell's Vireo | 3 | | 82 | 27 | 65 | 35 | 212 |
| Black-capped Vireo | 1 | | 3 | | | | 4 |
| Blue-headed Vireo | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Hutton's Vireo | 1 | | | | | | 1 |

Calcite Ranch Bird Banding

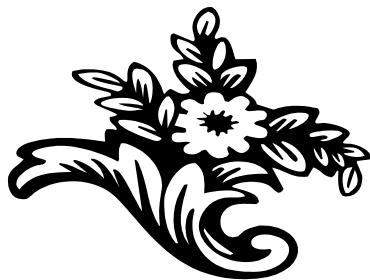
| | 2008 | | 2009 | | 2010 | | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|------|---|------|----|------|----|-------|
| location | H | R | H | R | H | R | |
| Red-eyed Vireo | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Western Scrub-Jay | 1 | | 1 | | | | 2 |
| Black-crested Titmouse | 3 | | 10 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 28 |
| Verdin | 10 | | 3 | | 2 | 2 | 17 |
| Bushtit | | | | 7 | 10 | 5 | 22 |
| Cactus Wren | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Canyon Wren | | | | | | 2 | 2 |
| Carolina Wren | | | | 4 | 1 | 3 | 8 |
| Bewick's Wren | 9 | 1 | 24 | 5 | 23 | 6 | 68 |
| House Wren | | 1 | 13 | 8 | 22 | 4 | 48 |
| Marsh Wren | | 5 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 8 | 23 |
| Golden-crowned Kinglet | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Ruby-crowned Kinglet | 2 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 30 |
| Blue-gray Gnatcatcher | | | 9 | 6 | 17 | 2 | 34 |
| Swainson's Thrush | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 3 |
| Hermit Thrush | 1 | | 5 | 2 | 1 | | 9 |
| Northern Mockingbird | 15 | 1 | 30 | 4 | 31 | 1 | 82 |
| Sage Thrasher | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Cedar Waxwing | | | | | 6 | 38 | 44 |
| Tennessee Warbler | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Orange-crowned Warbler | 3 | 2 | 30 | 13 | 25 | 5 | 78 |
| Nashville Warbler | | | 5 | 9 | 10 | | 24 |
| Yellow Warbler | 1 | | 26 | 17 | 16 | 13 | 73 |
| Magnolia Warbler | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Myrtle Warbler | | 1 | | | | 1 | 2 |
| Black-and-white Warbler | | | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| American Redstart | | | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Northern Waterthrush | | | | 4 | | 1 | 5 |
| Mourning Warbler | | | | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| McGillivray's Warbler | | | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| Common Yellowthroat | | | 4 | 25 | 3 | 21 | 53 |
| Wilson's Warbler | | 2 | 11 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 34 |
| Yellow-breasted Chat | | | 3 | 4 | 17 | 4 | 28 |
| Summer Tanager | 2 | | 15 | 18 | 19 | 11 | 65 |
| Green-tailed Towhee | | | | | 1 | | 1 |

Calcite Ranch Bird Banding

| | 2008 | | 2009 | | 2010 | | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|------|----|------|-----|------|----|-------|
| location | H | R | H | R | H | R | |
| Spotted Towhee | 7 | 2 | 9 | 14 | 6 | 5 | 43 |
| Canyon Towhee | 8 | | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 14 |
| Cassin's Sparrow | 2 | | 40 | | 14 | | 56 |
| Rufous-crowned Sparrow | 17 | | 29 | 28 | 54 | 43 | 171 |
| Chipping Sparrow | 1 | | 17 | 1 | 12 | 3 | 34 |
| Clay-colored Sparrow | | | 254 | 21 | 35 | | 310 |
| Field Sparrow | 28 | 10 | 33 | 15 | 17 | 27 | 130 |
| Vesper Sparrow | 42 | 5 | 92 | 6 | 43 | 2 | 190 |
| Lark Sparrow | 1 | | 61 | 5 | 47 | 2 | 116 |
| Black-throated Sparrow | 24 | | 35 | 4 | 38 | 3 | 104 |
| Lark Bunting | | | 3 | | 2 | | 5 |
| Savannah Sparrow | 45 | 3 | 54 | 16 | 20 | 1 | 139 |
| Grasshopper Sparrow | 20 | | 89 | 3 | 50 | 1 | 163 |
| LeConte's Sparrow | | | 7 | | 1 | | 8 |
| Fox Sparrow | 1 | | | 1 | | 2 | 4 |
| Song Sparrow | | 36 | 5 | 81 | | 30 | 152 |
| Lincoln's Sparrow | 16 | 44 | 76 | 124 | 91 | 32 | 383 |
| Swamp Sparrow | | 7 | | 7 | | 3 | 17 |
| White-throated Sparrow | | | 1 | | | 1 | 2 |
| White-crowned Sparrow | 34 | 14 | 48 | 21 | 21 | 34 | 172 |
| Slate-colored Junco | | | | 1 | | 3 | 4 |
| Northern Cardinal | 11 | 11 | 12 | 20 | 22 | 29 | 105 |
| Pyrrhuloxia | 4 | | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 14 |
| Rose-breasted Grossbeak | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Blue Grosbeak | | | 6 | 40 | 5 | 6 | 57 |
| Lazuli Bunting | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Indigo Bunting | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Painted Bunting | 1 | | 91 | 79 | 47 | 47 | 265 |
| Dickcissel | | | | 2 | 6 | 1 | 9 |
| Red-winged Blackbird | | | 1 | 29 | | 12 | 42 |
| Western Meadowlark | | | 1 | | 8 | | 9 |
| Yellow-headed Blackbird | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Bronzed Cowbird | | | | 1 | | | 1 |

Calcite Ranch Bird Banding

| location | 2008 | | 2009 | | 2010 | | TOTAL |
|------------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | H | R | H | R | H | R | |
| Orchard Oriole | | | 25 | 71 | 8 | 21 | 125 |
| Baltimore Oriole | | | | | 2 | | 2 |
| Bullock's Oriole | | | 1 | | 1 | | 2 |
| Scott's Oriole | | | 3 | 1 | 5 | | 9 |
| House Finch | 11 | 6 | 62 | 4 | 34 | 8 | 125 |
| Pine Siskin | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Lesser Goldfinch | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 9 | | 15 |
| Total | 347 | 165 | 1503 | 907 | 995 | 576 | 4493 |
| H: Highland | | | | | | | |
| R: Riparian | | | | | | | |



*In
Memory...*

Dorothy Flynn was a long-time DWA member and supporter. She was enamored with birds — especially hummingbirds. She cultivated flowers for hummers at her home in Sinton, TX.

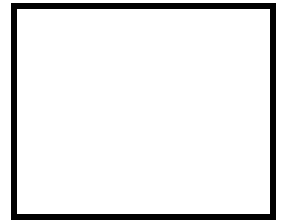
Olga Clifton hosted swift-watching parties at her home in Louisiana where her husband Walter constructed a Chimney Swift tower. She was a regular contributor to our *Spring Sightings* and *A Swift Night Out* programs for many years.

Bill McVaugh was a generous contributor to DWA and father of long-time member Nate McVaugh.

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DRIFTWOOD WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION
1206 West 38th, Suite 1105
Austin, Texas 78705



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- ◇ learn about wildlife rehabilitation
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- ◇ order publications from Driftwood

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