

Chaetura

Fall 2014

Driftwood Wildlife Association

Volume 19

Creating a Chimney Swift Roost in Shawville, QC



It all started a fall morning in late October 2013. Deb and I had met earlier in a Chimney Swift Stewardship workshop; at that point, all I knew about the species was what I had retained in that quick workshop, which wasn't much. That morning, over the phone, Deb was telling me about Shawville's Dr. S.E. McDowell elementary school chimney and how it had served as a roost for some 200 Chimney Swifts for decades (the 5th biggest roost in the province of Quebec). Then in July 2013, the chimney was reduced and after the birds' departure for their long migration to South America, it was lined and capped by the school board. We both agreed we had to do something.

How were we to know that this decision to take action would have such an impact in our lives for much of 2014!

We did a lot of research and found out that no purpose-built swift structure in Canada had succeeded in attracting swifts! But no one could say exactly why! We did know that all the structures had been built out of wood and were designed to be nesting sites rather than roosts.

We were very happy to find the example of the roost built at Fairview School in Indiana. Brick was the answer!

PROTECTING A SPECIES AT RISK – NOT A SCHOOL BOARD'S MANDATE?

To make a long story short, one of our main challenges in this project was to win over the school board. They were certainly not used to dealing with this kind of request and made it clear that protecting species at risk was NOT part of their job.



Photo by Bruce Di Labio
Submitted by Claire Charron



Photo by Claire Charron

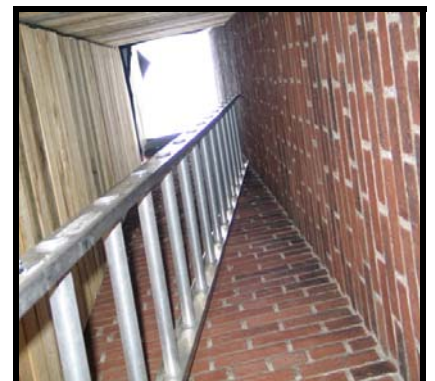


Photo by Claire Charron

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They did not greet our proposal to build a freestanding brick Chimney Swift Roost on the front lawn of the school with enthusiasm, to say the least! But there were other challenges that made this adventure complicated until the very end: the school is in an earthquake zone. Therefore, for the security of the students and staff, a structure built on the property would have to meet the highest construction standards in North America. And that costs a lot. We launched our Indiegogo campaign and were really, really pleased with the response - donations from everywhere and people were generous. Plus, organizations such as Canadian Wildlife Service, the Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club, Bird Protection Quebec and the Fondation de la faune du Québec offered financial support. A team took shape almost spontaneously. Citizens from all walks of life offered help for free including, thanks to networking, a building contractor, an architect and an engineer.

THE DRIFTWOOD WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION – A TRUE INSPIRATION

The very first thing we did at the beginning of this community initiative was to contact Paul and Georgan Kyle. We read their book on Chimneys for Swifts and then we sent them tons of questions about design, about the swifts, about everything. Of all the help that we have received, Georgan and Paul's has been our lucky star. Because they believe in what they do, we have had the courage to pursue our own little roost adventure until the very end. Thank you for your patience and support!

A HAPPY ENDING

Our timeline was very tight as we wanted to have a roost ready for the swifts when they returned in May. While we didn't end up building a free-standing brick chimney we did build a roost and a very original one. We boxed in the L-shaped corner formed by the brick walls of the school and old chimney using wood that was then insulated and finished with metal siding on the exterior. Rough cedar boards were installed horizontally with small gaps in between to make the interior swift-friendly.

Deb and a group of Shawville supporters observed the roost on the first evening after its completion, May 14. The swifts, loyal to the site of their old, now blocked chimney proceeded to check out the new structure, going in and out. It was estimated that half the group of approximately 40 swifts stayed in the new roost. The second evening there was a lot of ground noise at the time the swifts would normally be entering the roost and they all took off elsewhere. The third evening was similar to the first and around 20 swifts entered the roost and stayed. The 4th evening, there were approximately 70 swifts circling the roost and we think that at least 40 stayed in. After that the roost stayed empty until the evening of June 2 when 2 swifts were observed entering the roost. While no nesting activities were observed in daytime, between 1 and 4 swifts used the structure as a roost until the end of the season (just after mid-August in our part of the world!)

Two things we know for sure however: first, with Chimney Swifts, one can never be sure and one has to be patient; second, giving a little back to nature as we did through this roost project is the greatest gift we could have given ourselves, ever.

Claire Charron and Deb Powell
Ottawa Valley, Quebec, Canada

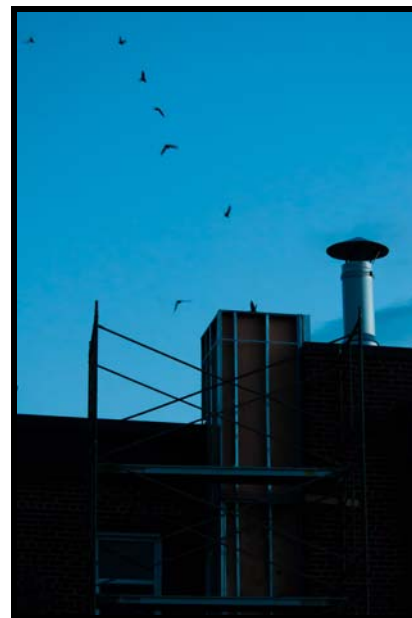


Photo by Claire Charron



Campaign Launch in Shawville

From the left and back: Marilee DeLombard, Barbara Houghton, Venetia Crawford, Deborah Powell, Peter Gauthier, Rick Valin, Monique Boivin and Paula Armstrong

2 sitting, from left: Mary McDowell and Claire Charron

Architectural Design with Chimney Swifts in Mind

Chimney swifts continue to decline as more and more chimneys are capped or torn down. Historically chimney swifts nested and roosted in hollow trees in old growth forests. They quickly adapted using the insides of masonry chimneys of cabins and other buildings as settlements spread eastward.

The building of artificial wood towers provides additional swift habitat and should be continued. However, what is also needed to provide long term swift habitat is to incorporate suitable habitat into the design of new buildings. All that is required for swift habitat is a hollow structure a minimum of 12' tall/deep and 15" x15" square inside and suitable substrate for the swifts to cling onto and attach their nests. The shaft depth can be of any depth, actually the deeper the better as swifts prefer using the lower 1/3 of a chimney.

The 2014 national "State of the Birds" report from the U.S. Committee of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI), a 23-member partnership, lists the Chimney Swift as one of the Common Birds in STEEP DECLINE! All the reasons for this decline are not known but lack of suitable habitat in many areas is considered one such cause.

New buildings being constructed however use metal or ceramic shafts for venting furnaces, fireplaces, and water heaters instead of brick. These new shafts are not suitable for swifts as there are no rough surfaces on which to cling, or attach their nesting materials.

As new churches, office buildings, schools, business, and houses are designed such habitat could easily be incorporated in the primary facades, columns, pillars, and or towers. Having these hollow with a rough surface inside would provide the much needed habitat to support swifts for many years to come. The exterior can be most any shape or size to accommodate the desired architectural design thus allowing the architects and builders many options compatible to their overall design. Drainage and vent holes at the base should be incorporated to provide the necessary ventilation for the swifts and their young.

If you know of any architects, professors of architecture, or upcoming annual architectural conventions (such as the American Institute of Architects <http://www.aia.org/>) we encourage you to meet with them or exhibit at such conventions and encourage them to incorporate swift habitat into their design of new buildings.

Eventually perhaps swift habitat could become point earnings for LEED, (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certification. LEED is a green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices. Although the church (Zion United Church of Christ, LeSueur, MN pictured on page 5) was not designed with the thought of providing habitat for chimney swifts it never-the-less served as a large roosting site for upwards of a thousand migrating swifts in 2013. Many other similar structures could easily provide long term swift habitat if designed with an open top and incorporate drainage holes and a small access door/panel for cleaning.

*And if the architects and the builders can both get LEED points everyone wins, especially *Chaetura pelagica*!*

Ron Windingstad



A few examples of
"Missed Opportunities"
for Chimney Swift habitat
Photos by Ron Windingstad

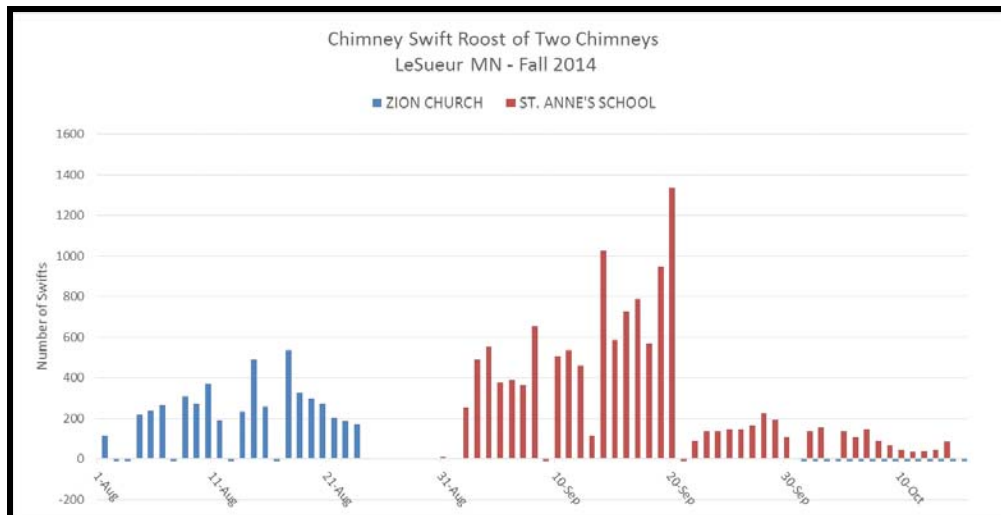


Chimney Swift Roost Survey in LeSueur, Minnesota

Since the fall of 2009 two senior citizens of LeSueur, Minnesota, Art and Barb Straub, have been surveying swift roosts at three sites in LeSueur and one in nearby Henderson. Shown here are the results of the 2014 counts conducted at two of the sites in LeSueur. The Straubs' tireless efforts have resulted in hundreds of residents in these communities becoming aware of Chimney Swifts and the need for conservation efforts. They continuously work with all ages from elementary school to senior citizens sharing their knowledge of the swifts.

The 2014 survey started on August 1st at Zion Church of Christ (116 swifts observed) in LeSueur and on August 2nd at the Hillside New Country Charter School in Henderson (108 swifts observed). The counts began at St Anne's School also in LeSueur on August 30th (12 swifts observed).

The graph shows the swift usage of the chimneys at Zion Church and at St Anne's School. Note: At the bottom of the graph where minus usage is indicated are the dates when the Straubs were unable to conduct the survey. Blank spaces indicate the survey was conducted but no swifts observed. Thanks to Kristin Hall of Audubon Minnesota for constructing the graph and the map.



The following additional comments should be considered when interpreting the data in the graph:

No survey was done in the evening of August 24 as there was a benefit dance at a nearby park approximately four blocks east of the Zion church. The party was extremely loud and being a perfectly clear evening, with the wind in just the right direction, the loud music, (complete with drums) really carried. One could hear the lyrics of the songs and the drumming quite a distance. No further swift usage was observed at the church during the fall even though the chimney was monitored every evening through the end of September.

Swifts were first observed at St Anne's school (approximately one-half mile from Zion) on August 30th peaking at 1,335 swifts on September 19th. On September 8th the observation started late so only 12 swifts were seen going into the roost just as darkness occurred. The increase of usage of St Anne's may have been a result of the low temperatures (mid to low 30s) at areas 100- 150 miles north.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

Following the annual AppleFest Celebration at St Anne's on 20 September the number of swifts using that chimney dropped significantly. Hundreds of people attended the celebration and here, as at the Zion Church Fund Raiser, there was loud music and games. However, "hundreds of swifts" were observed by the school principal and he was able to use the open microphone to tell the attendees about the swifts, so it was a great educational opportunity!

The Straubs continued their surveys the following evening, 21 September, but unfortunately were unable to get there until the last of the swifts were going in. What is amazing is that the swifts continued to use the chimney throughout September and through the first half of October (usually the swifts are well on their way out of Minnesota by mid-September). One lone swift was seen on the evening of October 16. Why the swifts remained in Minnesota so much later than normal is unknown. Perhaps these late migrants were those that either bred later in the season than normal or were families that re-nested.

The efforts of Art and Barb Straub are to be commended as they go above and beyond in educating residents of central Minnesota about the wonders of nature and the need for the conservation of our natural resources, including Chimney Swifts. They are consistently being invited to give programs at schools, senior citizen and assisted living residences, and nature centers to speak about conservation topics.

Although both almost octogenarians their boundless enthusiasm is not waning but instead appears to get stronger year after year! Thank you Art and Barb!

Ron Windingstad



*Zion Church in LeSueur, Minnesota
Photo by Art and Barb Staub*

It Takes a Community

Four 12-foot free-standing wood Chimney Swift towers were placed in Kane County, Illinois in the spring of 2014. The initiative was a community partnership between Kane County Audubon (KCA), Forest Preserve District of Kane County (FPDKC) and the Veteran's Conservation Corps of Chicagoland (VCC).

Jerry Hope, the KCA historian, started the ball rolling with his interest in Chimney Swifts and the purchase of the Kyle's books on Swifts. The planned initiative was twofold: Chimney Swift tower construction and increasing community awareness and education about the Chimney Swift. Rich, my husband, and I were chosen by the KCA board as coordinators for the project. During the planning stages in the fall of 2013, Ben Haberthur, ecologist from FPDKC, contacted me about a Chimney Swift sighting I reported during one of my BCN breeding monitoring surveys. He was interested in conservation of the Chimney Swifts. This phone call was a major impetus to begin the construction of the towers. He proposed collaboration between the KCA and VCC on the Chimney Swift Tower project.

The VCC was created in 2012 by Ben, himself a Marine Corps veteran, to make a positive difference both in the lives of Chicagoland veterans and in the landscapes in which they live. The VCC is a group of volunteer veterans who believes that a country worth protecting is worth preserving. Grant funding from Toyota Together Green and National Audubon Society enabled Ben to hire 4 veterans for a Corpsmember internship and training program. The construction of the Chimney Swift Towers would be just one of many projects VCC would do within the FPDKC. This was truly a collaborative effort on many levels.

The KCA board led by Bob Andrini agreed to fund materials for three towers. The Milford Company, a conservation-minded friend of KCA, donated materials for a fourth tower. VCC Corpsmembers constructed all four of the towers. Ben's involvement greatly facilitated the job of obtaining approval for sites to place the towers. More collaboration occurred as St Charles Park District and Dundee Township gave us approval for tower placements. Two of the four towers were placed near nature centers: Creek Bend Nature Center in LeRoy Oakes FP and Hickory Knolls Discovery Center in St. Charles. A third tower was built at Jelke Creek Bird Sanctuary in Sleepy Hollow and the fourth at Brunner Family FP in West Dundee. All towers were up by the first week in May.

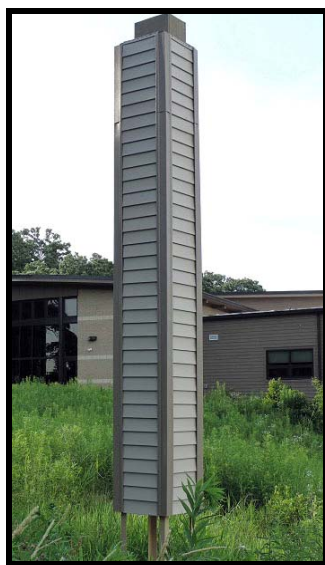
Kane County Audubon is in charge of long term monitoring and maintenance of the towers. Educational signs and displays are in the development. Sue Harney, Dundee Township Supervisor, has her design team working on an interpretative sign to be placed along the trail a safe distance from the Jelke Creek Tower. Both nature center program managers, Pam Otto and Valerie Blaine, are working on educational displays within their centers. Also, grant monies have been requested for web cam placement in the Creek Bend tower.

This Chimney Swift tower initiative was truly a community coming together to help the Chimney Swifts. We know the more the community of Kane County learns about Chimney Swifts and their needs, the better chance we have to help more Swifts.

And the story ends, or is it really just the beginning? One of the four towers has a Chimney Swift nest with young this first season!

Special thanks to the hard-working veterans, Jacob Honaker, Larry Thompson, Brian Stark and of course, Ben Haberthur who constructed our towers.

Marion Miller



Two of the four towers and a Chimney Swift nest

Photos by Marion Miller





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 Bird Sanctuary is a ten acre preserve of the Travis Audubon Society of Central Texas. Paul and Georgean Kyle remain the Sanctuary Stewards and continue research and educational efforts on behalf of Chimney Swifts that were begun by them on this property in 1989.

Eighteen structures have been constructed specifically for Chimney Swift nesting and roosting. An eight foot tall wooden tower was constructed in 2014 as a memorial to Pat Powers bringing the total number of wooden towers to ten. The other eight towers are constructed of concrete block.

Over the years, several reports have been made from across the swifts breeding range of multiple swift nests in the same structure. However, there has been no documentation of those nests being occupied at the same time. Observations utilizing surveillance cameras in one of the 20 foot tall wooden towers at the Canyon provided proof of such an occurrence during the 2014 nesting season. Nest construction had begun on April 30 at the traditional nest location 72 inches from the bottom of the tower. By June 6, five eggs were being brooded. On June 23, four hatchlings were being cared for and the beginning of a second nest foundation was discovered 115 inches above the active nest and 57 inches below the top of the tower on the same south wall. Only one

CHIMNEY SWIFT PRODUCTIVITY AT CHAETURA CANYON

| Tower | 2013 | | | 2014 | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | # Eggs Laid | # Eggs Hatched | # Young Fledged | # Eggs Laid | # Eggs Hatched | # Young Fledged |
| Wooden: 1. North Observation | 5 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| 2. South Observation | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| 9. West Field | 6 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 8 | 6 |
| 8. East Field | 7 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 2 |
| 5. Prism | 6 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| 4. Garden (Marlene) | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 5 |
| 16. Workshop | 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 4 |
| 14. 12' Demonstration | 4 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 5 |
| 17. Jack Freeman | 3 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 4 |
| 18. Powers Tower | NA | NA | NA | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Concrete: 6. North Pool | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 7. South Pool | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Castle | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. Castle Companion | 6 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 12. Castle Gate | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 10. Driveway | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| 13. S.W. Corner | 8 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 15. LBB | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 66 | 40 | 39 | 77 | 53 | 41 |

hatchling remained alive on June 29 when the first of four eggs was laid in the upper nest. The nestling was being well cared for at the lower nest while concurrently the upper pair were frequently together on their nest. On July 25, only one egg remained in the upper nest and that pair abandoned the site. Unfortunately, the single nestling from the lower nest did not survive. Although there was no productivity from this tower, the implications of multiple swift pairs nesting in the same structure are intriguing. In late October, all structures were cleaned and evaluated for productivity. Our yearly maintenance practice includes the removal of all nests. Three other wooden towers without surveillance cameras also held double nests constructed in the same year. Our observations of a single swift pair producing two broods within the same season have always shown the pair utilizing their original nest. Whether the double nests in the three towers were constructed by six separate swift pairs is unknown.

The first swift arrived on March 23; the last bird was sighted on October 13. Chimney Swifts were present at Chaetura Canyon for 205 days in 2014.



Chimney Swift Towers of Travis Audubon's Chaetura Canyon Sanctuary

The red lines indicate the current boundary of the Sanctuary

The towers are numbered in the order of their construction with #1 being the first tower constructed in 1989.

The most recent tower (18) was constructed in the spring of 2014

Here and there 1.0

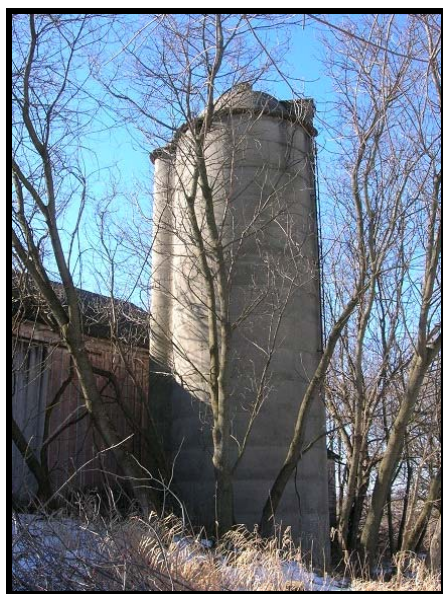


Photo by Bruce Luebke

Portage, WI

I took a closer look at another one of our old silos.... good news and bad: There was a swift nest up fairly high in the silo that was not there in previous years! Bad news is there were three dead ones at the bottom of the silo. I did not crawl in to get a closer look but they were pretty good sized and fully feathered. Perhaps they were fledglings that ended up on the ground and couldn't get back up the relatively smooth concrete wall. I was a pleasantly surprised that swifts started using it because there are some tall trees that now almost block the two entrances. I hope to get the trees cut in the near future.

Bruce Luebke, U.S. Fish & Wildlife



Photo by Bruce Luebke



Photo by Janet Pulver

Bayard, IA

The chimney swifts did look over our tower, but with our farm house chimney standing almost 20 feet higher, they just didn't seem compelled to use it. So we decided we should add another section to close the gap in the difference of heights. We will be anxious to see if this is more attractive to the swifts. The camera is installed and ready to go.

Janet Pulver

Richardson, TX

I have had chimney swifts visit me every year for the past 20 years at my house in Richardson (north Dallas). I am the only person in my neighborhood that has the chimney cap removed in March and put on in October when they leave! I have thoroughly enjoyed the swifts over the years. And I still am amazed when I watch them dive in the chimney at dusk and climb out at dawn. What incredibly interesting, fascinating birds they are!

Sara Jamison



Photo by Stephen Murdoch

Newport, NC

Attached are two pictures of our Chimney Swift Tower that my brother Stephen Murdoch and I built back in October / November of 2012. Unfortunately, to date, we have not had a nesting pair use this new facility but we are still hoping for success in the future.



Photo by Micahel Murdoch

Here and there 1.1



Photo by Carol Hadlock

Herndon, VA

I have just completed the registration of the tower that was built and installed by the Friends of Runnymede Park.

We used your plans and instructions for building and installing. Our Town building inspector required that we make the concrete pad thicker and that we extend the legs further into the ground, but everything else went according to plan. We held a ribbon cutting ceremony in the Park. We know we were very late getting the tower up, but we have high hopes that swifts will find it next summer. The man in the photo is our master carpenter, Dave Schumaker.

Carol Hadlock

Iowa

Our Friends of the Sherman Swift Tower group has helped erect a nesting tower at Founders Park in Elkader, Iowa. This park is on land previously flooded by the Turkey River; homes have been removed from the site, and the site converted into a park. It sits near a popular campground, that is connected by a walking trail. We were lucky to partner with the Founders Park group to erect a nesting tower there. Our next step is to put up signage by the tower, and we have included basic information about the chimney swift in the sign.

Our tower replica at National is ready for returning swifts. We saw three babies fledge last year, with one (possibly two eggs) which didn't hatch. The nesting pair was much less tolerant of activity at the tower last year, so we tried to respect that by making few visits inside. The donation of a camera by Bob Anderson was very helpful, but we are still working on how to reduce the glare in the window over the monitor.

Deanna Krambeer
Friends of the Sherman Swift Tower

Little Rock, AR

Thanks to all for your assistance. I am not quite finished; darkness and weariness stymied me around 8 p.m. last night. But I am within 30 minutes effort of the finish line. I am tickled to have the tower up and hope a Swift family finds a new home.

Keith Hawkins

Florida

After two years our tower has a pair of Swifts using it. This is the second night they have come in. We used the plans from your book and the cd.

Jose Rodrigues

More News from Iowa

I just want to share the good news that the chimney swifts have returned to St. Olaf, National, and Elkader Iowa as well as surrounding areas.

I was delighted to see them fly over St. Olaf on May 12th. At one time there was a group of over 20, which I thought might be a migrating group. We do believe that 3 of our 4 towers here in St. Olaf are being chosen for nesting sites. We've been fortunate to see several pairs in the "V" flight pattern, so we trust they are claiming one or more of the towers. Harold has seen swifts enter the tower near the garden. The other towers have swifts flying over them in pairs, so...we are hopeful. It is so relaxing and calming just to sit and watch the swifts fly overhead, and a joy to hear the chattering.

The swifts have returned to the Tower replica at National. The nest construction has begun, and we plan to go this afternoon and see if we can see some progress. The monitor is very helpful for getting a peek without too much disturbance to the birds. When we were at the tower last weekend, a group of three swifts flew over us very low, and chattered loudly, as if they were agitated at our presence. They didn't enter the tower, but flew away. Last year's nesting pair was very leery of humans too, and we try not to disturb them. I continually wonder how Althea Sherman could get so close to these birds in her nesting tower.

Deanna
Friends of the Sherman Swift Tower

Here and there 1.2

Iowa City, IA



Photo courtesy of Kyle Cullen

Mount Sinai, NY

My name is Kyle Cullin. For my Eagle Scout Service project I constructed two Chimney Swift Towers at Cedar Beach in Mount Sinai, NY. In addition to providing a nesting/roosting site for the threatened Swift in my hometown, my Chimney Swift Towers will also serve as educational purpose for the Nature Center located at the beach. The environmental educator requested that I place an informational plaque path-side to educate the public and also in hopes that in doing so people will not approach and disturb the Swifts nesting site.

Kyle Cullin

Everyone associated with the restoration of Althea R. Sherman's historic Chimney Swifts Tower had given up hope that the swifts would nest this year - their first chance since the tower was re-erected last year. But when Sherman Project Director Barbara Boyle recently checked the structure, she was delighted to find a new swift nest, with five white eggs - attached inside the chimney in exactly the spot where the swifts had nested year-after-year for Althea Sherman!

Typically, swifts nest only once a year, although second nests are not unusual. Given the lateness of this nesting, it could be either a second nesting or possibly the first by a pair who had failed in an earlier attempt.

Chimney Swifts build a nest from small twigs, glued to the inside of a chimney by a sticky saliva they produce. They usually have clutches of 4-5 eggs and incubate for about nineteen days. As the young swifts grow they can leave the nest and move around inside the chimney by using the specialized feet that allow them to tightly grip the wall. As their wings strengthen, they practice flying inside the chimney, before finally joining their parents in the breathtaking aerial flights that swifts are known for.

In 1915, Iowa ornithologist Althea R. Sherman designed the very first Chimney Swift tower and had it built in her backyard in the tiny town of National. She was the very first person - using this unique structure - to observe the complete nesting cycle of the swifts. She studied swifts in this tower for eighteen years and became the world's leading authority on the species.

When the Althea R. Sherman Project put the deteriorating tower into protective storage back in 1992, swifts were still regularly nesting in it. Project members are thrilled that the swifts have returned the very first year the tower was again available to them.

Over the last week three of the five eggs have hatched and the parents are busily feeding them.

Although video cameras are in place in the restored tower, a Internet linkup has not yet been established. The Sherman Project hopes to have these cameras up on the Web soon. Here is the link...

<http://thegazette.com/subject/news/birds-nest-in-historic-chimney-swift-tower-20140807>

Now comes another link to a video published by Chris Gourley of Iowa Public Television. This is delightful! Baby Chimney Swifts, as seem from within Althea Sherman's original Chimney Swifts' Tower!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqKcbhIar4s&feature=youtu.be>

Check the website (AltheaSherman.org) for more information and for ways that you can support this ongoing work.

Barbara Boyle

Here and there 1.3

Prairie Ridge, NC

At long last and after much fundraising the Wake Audubon Society is partnering with the NC Museum of Natural Sciences to install a 30-foot tall brick Chimney Swift Roost Tower at the Museum's Prairie Ridge field station. The chimney will be equipped with portholes and other viewing and research capabilities.

Funding sources include a grant from Toyota Together Green by National Audubon; the Carolina Bird Club; in-kind service donations from Frank Harmon Architects, Clancy & Theys builders and Custom Brick & Supply; as well as the sale of inscribed bricks.

John Connors

I purchased your book on how to build a Chimney Swift tower on 10/15/2011 because I was having a fireplace insert installed. I got the new tower up in February 2012. Sadly, I watched the swifts fly over the new insert again and again for several weeks. It was quite a large family and I think they finally found a neighbors chimney.

You will be happy to know that this spring 2013, we watched a pair of swifts claim the new tower! I don't know how many babies they had but all of them fledged. We looked in the tower today and there was an empty nest. Apparently, they have already left for the season.

Building the tower was not easy but it was well worth the trouble. We really enjoy the chimney swifts when they are here!

Thanks again for your work!

E. Pool

Ohio

We have a small group of volunteers at Mosquito Lake located in Trumbull County in North East Ohio.

Our projects are directed toward cavity nesting birds. We have no income or membership dues. Donations have been very limited and we recycle wood products to build our cavity nesting boxes. We report to the Army Corps of Engineers that manages the lake, but receive very little financial support from the Corps.

A Chimney Swift tower was fabricated and erected in the first three months of 2013. I bought your books on "Chimney Swifts" and "Chimney Swift Towers" and used these as a reference to construct the tower. The only change was to use 4x4's for the base similar to what the Western Pennsylvania Audubon is doing with their towers. We did not get any chimney swifts. I talked to a naturalist who is familiar with other chimney swift towers in Ohio and she said most towers take about three years to get birds, so there is still hope. A couple saw our tower and liked it, so they had a Boy Scout build one to earn his Eagle Scout badge. I was a resource and helped build it. Our tower didn't fledge any birds, but spawned another tower to increase our chances of providing habitat for chimney swifts in Trumbull County. There is one more tower that will be built this spring as a result of seeing our tower and a fourth tower under consideration.

Loyd Marshall
Volunteer Coordinator

Batavia, IL

GREAT NEWS and I wanted to share with you. We have nesting Chimney Swifts in one of four of the Kane County Chimney Swift Towers that went up this season. How exciting!! After construction was complete and during monitoring we noted that the sun collar was put on the east side versus the recommended north side on one of the towers. We figured we would just turn it come fall. Lo and behold, this is the tower where the nest got built. The nest was built in the north-east corner versus on the full face of the wall.

Marion Miller

I removed the bottom from the tower on November 3 and found a nest on the south wall, 42 inches from the bottom of the 12 foot tower. The nest appeared complete but never having seen one I may be wrong. There were no egg shells and I could see where the birds had attached several sticks in various locations above the completed nest in I suppose was an attempt to find the ideal location. Up to 7 birds used the nest as a roost up until October 15th. I thought they were going to be the longest remaining bird migrants on our property until a male hummer showed up on November 3rd extending our hummer sightings by about 3 weeks.

It was an enjoyable, first active tower season for me.

Tim Cannon

New Brunswick, Canada

Just to let you know we have 9 towers they are all in New Brunswick Canada.

Lewnanny Richardson - Biologiste
Coordinateur de programme
Nature NB - Espèces en péril
Rivière à la truite, NB

Here and there 1.4



Photo by Paul Kyle

Spicewood, TX

The first artificial habitat for Chimney Swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) was installed on private property owned by Chris Harte in 2001. Over the next twelve years, eleven additional towers of various designs were installed either on the original tract or other parcels in the area. The purpose of these structures was two-fold: to create new habitat for a declining species of migratory bird, and to help the property owner satisfy the requirements of the State of Texas to maintain a wildlife exemption for conservation and restoration efforts on the properties.

Next to Travis Audubon's Chaetura Canyon Sanctuary in Travis County in Texas, Chris Harte's property near Spicewood, Texas have probably the largest concentration of Chimney Swift towers anywhere in North America. The 13th tower on this property was constructed in the spring.

On-site construction began early Saturday morning, May 24. Native grasses were relocated from the

excavation site and watered in. The tower base was set and foundation poured by early afternoon.

We returned the next morning to complete the tower. Construction was completed, but rain showers put a halt to painting. Showers continued on Memorial Day, so the final work was postponed until the following Sunday, June 1.

The final coat of paint was applied, and we adjourned to the Bluebonnet Café in Marble Falls for breakfast while the paint dried. As we were leaving, a pair of swifts flew low over us and the new tower. We returned an hour later to install the final trim and clean up the site. Looking down into the tower we discovered that nest construction was already underway! We quickly finished up and departed.

The productivity over the past decade has been equivalent to that at Chaetura Canyon. In 2014 37 eggs were laid, 29 hatched and 25 fledged.

Georgian and Paul Kyle



Setting the base



Pouring the foundation



Working the concrete



Insulating



Photo by Georgian Kyle

Travis County, TX

The participants of a Travis Audubon Swift Tower Workshop constructed the tenth wooden tower (now 18 towers total) at the Chaetura Canyon Sanctuary. This tower dubbed the Tower of Powers was financed by donations in memory of Pat Powers. Pat was a Fire Specialist and longtime advocate for swift conservation. A pair of swifts fledged five young.

OBSERVATIONS

An interesting swift experience at Hornsby [Hornsby Bend Wastewater Treatment Facility] this morning: I, and several others, participated in the "Ponds" portion of the bird survey led by Eric Carpenter. At the far west end of the dike, we turned left and immediately pulled off the road on the right side and parked our cars next to the long, low structure on the right side of the road. After exiting our cars, we reversed direction and walked north on the side of the road opposite the ponds. Between the buildings, where we made our left turn at the "T" intersection, there is a concrete cylinder maybe 10 feet tall and 5 feet in diameter. As our group passed by this cylinder, 30 or 40 swifts exploded up out of it! (I'm not sure of the official count). The way they flew out made it clear that the cylinder had no top. After the initial excitement, with the swifts that flew out milling about overhead, I climbed up a steel ladder built onto the side of the cylinder and peeked down inside. 11 swifts clinging to the inside walls looked back up at me! I looked inside for about a minute and conversed with the rest of the survey group before climbing down. All the while those 11 swifts stayed in place. I've never seen that before, at least not in person.

George Kerr
Austin, TX

Laurie Foss and I were at Hornsby this morning and saw three birds come out of the structure. That evening we had 85 birds using the structure as a roost site last night. The amazing part is they all entered within five minutes!

Shelia Hargis
Austin, TX

Well, that's what happens when they don't have to funnel into a small opening! You might think that the Old Cistern at Jonestown would be the same, but there is an opening on the top of the cistern that is less than 24" in diameter.

OBSERVATIONS - Vaux's Swifts

Our southbound Vaux's migration this year had a stunning finish you might find interesting.

Late August and most of September were hot and dry in the Pacific Northwest and apparently swifts and swallows, finding plenty of bugs to eat, didn't head south. Then on September 23rd the entire area was hit with a week of heavy rain and strong, mostly southerly, winds. The birds had pushed their luck, stayed too long, and now were in a survival situation. Dead and dying swallow stories were in the news. But October brings lighter winds and rain. Any little birds still up north had better make a break for it. Our inside the chimney camera had somehow been functional since May. It can see at night and we had been continually live streaming the evening swift action. I get home a little after sunset and log in to see if there were any birds in our Wagner Chimney. The chimney was absolutely packed! Not a brick in sight! Swifts hanging on swifts that were hanging on swifts. Two days later what little wind there was shifted to the east, the barometer continued to rise, and 22,500 Vaux's poured out of the Wagner roost at sunrise. That night the roost site in Portland would have its largest count in 5 years. It seems our little swifts dodged the bullet.

Larry Schwitters

Eugene, OR

Owen Schmidt and I joined Barbara Combs, Larry McQueen and his wife, and two other Eugene birders at the parking lot on the north side of Agate Hall on the UO campus this evening (May 12, 2014) for the arrival of the roosting Vaux's Swifts. The swifts roost in the old chimney visible from the parking lot.

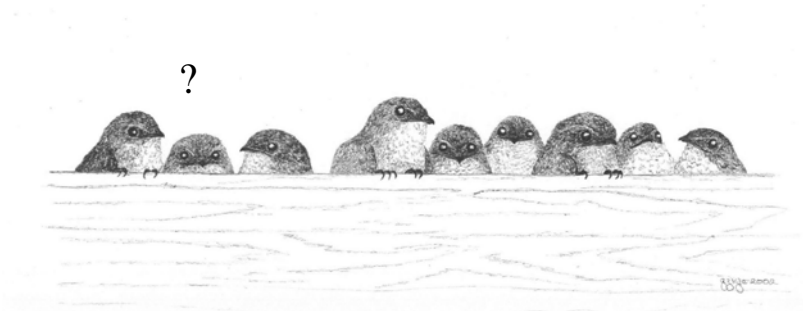
To our delight, the Chimney Swift heard yesterday by Barbara made several passes making its distinctive calls.

It later came by several times with a small number of Vaux's Swifts before entering the chimney and we were able to distinguish it in flight by its larger size and generally darker coloration, as it also made its distinctive calls.

Barbara said that the number of swifts had greatly decreased from recent days, but that might have helped us to get observations of the Chimney Swift. It really cooperated in several swirling passes by us not much higher than the roof top, and was quite easy to keep distinguished from the Vaux's once it was spotted

Jeff Gilligan
Portland

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS...



My name is Shannon Shaw. My dad, step mom, and I have a venture company, and we purchased a fairly large 1930's brick building a couple years ago that used to be the school for our small village of Saranac, Michigan. We are slowly fixing and restoring the building to use, mostly for community events and affairs, possibly a future WiFi cafe, bed and breakfast, etc.

Right away, we noticed the large flock of swifts that nest in our unused chimney every year. At first we didn't know what type of birds they were, but through websites like yours, found they were easily identifiable as beautiful chimney swifts!

My question and our issue is: the Saranac community, only about 1,100 residents, are entirely convinced that we have an "infestation of bats". We have people tell us when we go down main street, shout at us when we are on the roof, drop comments at church, etc. We even had a neighbor last year see us walking by on the sidewalk, bring out a dead bat, show it to us, and say, "I got one of your bats in my house last night!"

No matter what we do to explain that these birds are Chimney Swifts, not bats, the community will not believe us. We have written articles on our web site, uploaded videos, and correct the notion in person every time we can. Rather than understand, most of them simply argue with us in return - such is the depth and length of the community rumor that this building - which had been abandoned for a few years prior to our occupancy - is infested with bats.

(There are so many reasons that we know these are chimney swifts, certainly not bats. I could list many, but the most obvious is that they come out at dawn and go in at dusk...)

So, here are our questions... Could you offer us any advice on how to help our community accept these amazing, and protected, birds, rather than arguing with us that they are bats? Perhaps if there are people in a Chimney Swift society nearby that we could invite out this August to dispel the rumors from a more authoritative standpoint?

Shannon Shaw

Yours is probably the most unusual email about Chimney Swifts we have ever received. Without a doubt the birds are Chimney Swifts, and all of your arguments to assure folks that they are birds and not bats would seemingly be sufficient to convince any reasonable person.

You clearly have an important roosting structure, and we are delighted that you recognize its importance. All over North America these old historical sites are being destroyed to the detriment of the swifts.

We suggest that you contact Michigan Audubon (<http://www.michiganaudubon.org/>) and tell them of your situation. It may be

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that they will have some suggestions. There may also be a local Audubon chapter in one of the larger cities near you that would be interested in helping educate your community about your biological treasure.

I am wondering if you have witnessed this or have received reports of this:

Sunday morning, September 29th, I watched about 700 Chimney Swifts exit the chimney of Huffman Memorial United Methodist Church. They began exiting at 6:28 AM and were all out by 7:10 AM. Then, something happened which I had not witnessed before. Almost all of the swifts headed out in a southerly direction, some in other directions and some just swirling/circling around the chimney. And then of those circling about 150 of them (in groups of 10/15) went back into the chimney. What was that all about? I watched and waited for another ten minutes or so, but none of the re-entering birds exited. I could not stay longer as I had to get to church, so do not know how long it took those returning swifts to exit once again!

Larry Lade
Saint Joseph, MO

Actually, this is a very common behavior although most people never observe it. Departure is very different than entry. The swifts normally leave individually at sunrise. Late in the season, just prior to migration, they may not leave until late in the afternoon, or they may leave early for "snack" and pile back in. We assume that they are conserving energy and storing fat reserves for the migration south.

A group of Hartland School of Community Learning (HSCL) students are trying to raise funds to build a new roosting chimney in a park in Hartland, WI for over 1,000 Chimney Swift birds. The bird's original chimney in Hartland was recently knocked down to make way for apartments. We believe this will be the first time in the U.S. that relocating this large of a colony and creating a 40 foot free standing chimney for the birds has been attempted.

Any help or advice you could give the students would be appreciated

Sharon Kimmel (Mom of student involved)

As a small, all-volunteer organization, we have no personal experience with such a large project or with major fund-raising. We do know that the Toyota Together Green program has funded wildlife and habitat-related projects in the past. There are certainly other grants available, but that is not our expertise.

Our efforts over the past 25 years have concentrated on designing and constructing smaller nesting structures because every pair of Chimney Swifts need a tower of their own to raise their brood. There have been several replacement roosting towers built across North America, but to our knowledge none this large.

Thank you so much for responding. The students are working very diligently to raise the funds, which we expect to be in the thousands, if they are not able to raise enough-we will put the money towards making the smaller wooden structures for the Swifts.

Sharon

I am contacting you because I am involved in a project in Hartland Wisconsin. An existing 50' Masonry Chimney was torn down this year. The swifts had made this a nesting area, so the kids of Hartland Elementary want to start the process of building a replacement chimney of wood. There is a conservancy located nearby and the tower is to be located there. However, the construction needs to be simple and cost effective. I am planning a 50' tower with a base of about 8' square. There are a number of Design Considerations for the tower.

I am looking for your recommendations, if you have any.

Timothy Seidel – Architect LLC
Wales, WI

Although we have built over 100 towers, we have never tackled anything as large as what you are proposing. Our largest wooden towers to date are 22' tall and are an integral part of the residence here at the Chaetura Canyon Sanctuary. Still, the basic requirements for the Chimney Swifts will be the same. A copy of the book "Chimney Swift Towers: New Habitat for North America's Mysterious Birds" covers all of these requirements. It is available from our web site and may be helpful to you.

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T1-11 installed with groove running horizontally is the best product we have found for use on the inside of wooden and masonry towers. Be sure to use the 5/8" material as the texture and grooves on the 3/8" siding is insufficient. The thinner material also tends to warp and weather rather quickly. We designed the 22' towers so that the T1-11 panels can be removed and replaced (using 1 5/8" decking screws) if needed.

Some ventilation from the bottom is essential in smaller towers, but less important in larger structures. The larger they are, the less they tend to over-heat. However, you will need to allow for drainage at the bottom.

Reducing the opening at the top has several advantages:

- *reducing the amount of direct sunlight that can enter the tower*
- *reducing the amount of rain that can enter the tower, extending the life of the T1-11*
- *providing some over-head shelter for the swifts*

We would recommend reducing the opening on top by no more than half of the inside dimensions of the top of the tower. Metal flashing will help prolong the life of the wood on the tower, but be certain there are no sharp edges anywhere on the top of the tower. The swifts do often tend to bump against the opening when entering - especially when large numbers of birds are entering the roost.

Is it a myth that Chimney Swifts act as chimney sweepers? We have had these wonderful birds for 10 years or so, but I have heard rumors that they actually help clean the chimney...???

Cori Dawson
SC

Yes, it is a myth. You do need to sweep your chimney every year if you use it to burn wood in the winter. This is necessary for your safety as well as that of the swifts. Wood fires produce creosote that will coat the inside of the chimney. This material is flammable and can ignite if allowed to accumulate. It also makes the walls of the chimney too slick for swifts' nest to adhere to the wall. If you do not use your chimney, you should still have it cleaned every other year to remove old nests and other detritus.

We have a family (unsure of how many) in our chimney. We don't mind them at all. We rarely use our fire place even during the coldest days of the year because we live in southern Georgia.

Is there anything truly bad about them being in our chimney? We are animal lovers and after reading about them I think it's amazing that the same family returns over and over. We may look into building a faux chimney if needed..... our county doesn't have a large mosquito control unit so now that I've discovered that my summer roommates dine on them I most certainly want to always have a welcome place for them to come.

Andi Kesler

We cannot think of any "down side" to hosting Chimney Swifts. Most folks who have a problem with them just don't like the loud sound of the babies begging for food. There are some things you need to do for you and the swifts, and these can be found under the "Is There Chattering in Your Chimney?" link on our web site.

If you are interesting in building an additional home for the swifts, we suggest the book "Chimney Swift Towers". It has step by step instructions and complete material lists for several different styles of successful designs. To learn more, please click on the "Books About Chimney Swifts" link on our web site.

Do Chimney Swifts catch the twigs in the air as they get blown off the trees? Our Common Swift mostly uses feathers and other stuff that floats around. Occasionally you will find a nest with material that would not float for long in the air, like substantial twigs. One of my pairs uses Corsican Pine Needles which would drop off the trees fairly rapidly, but, it seems, slow enough for a Common Swift to get them.

Dick

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Cambridge, UK

Chimney Swifts actually break dead twigs off the tips of trees with their feet, transfer them to their bills, enter the chimney feet-first, grab the wall and go from there. When humidity is high or during rain events, nest-building comes to a halt.

We have seen Chimney Swift nests made entirely of pine needles or juniper needles in areas where that is the dominant tree.

We have documented small groups of hatchling year-birds repeatedly "tagging" a conspicuous tip growth on trees over and over again as if in play. One briefly holds on as it sags down before letting go. As it pops back up another swift repeats the action. This sometimes goes on for several minutes – probably practice for more serious activities the following year.

I'm happy to report we have "3" young swifts out of the nest and clinging to the wall of the tower we built this year. I haven't observed them flying out of the tower yet and am concerned if this brood is too late to build up the stamina needed for migration. Your thoughts on this would be appreciated.

Marion Miller

Batavia, IL

Congratulations! There is still plenty of time for your youngsters to fledge, so don't worry. We would advise strongly against visiting the tower during this critical time. You could accidentally "force-fledge" the young causing them to leave the tower before they are fully capable of supporting themselves. If this happens, they will not survive.

Greetings... my name is Scott Chantland. I am located in Maple Lake, MN. I own an old creamery building that was originally built in 1912. One of the most distinctive attributes of the building is the very large chimney. Over the years I have seen what I estimate to be hundreds of Chimney Swifts leaving and entering the chimney. As I'm sure you already know... it is a spectacular thing to watch in the evening hours as they are returning to their roost!

I have actually been a bird lover for many years... but, am now faced with a dilemma. My chimney is in need of very serious repair. As much as I want to save the chimney, I have heard that taking it down would make more sense financially. Which of course leads to my question... do you know of any funding available to preserve chimney swift habitat? As much as I want to preserve it, I am also faced with doing my roofs etc. etc... and the financial side of things is a bit overwhelming.

Any info you might be able to share would be greatly appreciated!

Scott Chantland

We appreciate your dilemma. There is serious concern all across North America at the loss of these old historic roosts. As the roost go, so will the Chimney Swifts. Their numbers are already in serious decline. In Canada their numbers are down by more than 90% since the 1960s. They are now listed as threatened or endangered in every province where they nest.

We are unaware of any specific funding to save structures like yours. However, we are aware of several efforts in the U.S. that have had positive results. These have all been grass roots movements often involving students to help raise awareness and funds. We would suggest starting with the nearest Audubon chapter and, by all means, contact Minnesota Audubon. They have been very proactive in saving several large structures in your state. They have also been successful in building many new smaller Chimney Swift Towers for nesting swifts.

Your situation is somewhat unique since you are a property owner who does not need to be convinced to help protect the swifts.

Thanks very much for your interest and concern. We hope this information is helpful to you and "your" swifts.

Hi - We're all wondering if it is common for the swifts to spend longer amounts of time in their chimneys before migration. Yesterday they were in the chimney until at least 2 p.m., when I had to leave, and today they're in there at 4 p.m. They were all out when I got to the site yesterday at 4:30 p.m., returned at 7:30. This morning 5 of the 7 were out flying when I left at 7 a.m. Anyway, what does this mean, if anything, probably soon before migrating?

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Barbara Boyle

Ahhh, now you've seen it also!

From around the first of August until the swifts leave for South America in October, there are days when the swifts do not leave the roost until an hour or so before sunset. They then go out (presumably) for a quick snack and drink before returning to the roost for the night. This seldom happens two days in a row, but may occur several times in a week. We first discovered and documented this in the 1990s, but we have not been able to link this behavior to temperature, weather, availability of insects or any other quantifiable phenomena. We suspect that it has to do with the social structure of a Chimney Swift roost. Observing the roosting flock inside the roost via video cameras, it seems clear that some swifts are restless and more than ready to exit while others are quite calm and content to cling to the inside wall. Chimney Swifts do not go torpid like hummingbirds. However, they do have the capability of slowing their metabolism during periods of time when prey is not active (cold and / or rainy days) and apparently when they choose to just "sleep in".

CANADIAN UPDATE

I am wondering if you have dealt with any situations where chimneys known to support Chimney Swifts have been up for demolition? We have a chimney known to support swifts that the province wants to redevelop and since the species is provincially listed in Manitoba we are pushing for the retention of the chimney and that it be incorporated into the redesign. If you have encountered this or know of any similar situations in other areas let me know. I know Texas has had a lot of success with artificial chimneys but the artificial chimneys do not work as well in Manitoba, in fact we have had no success with artificial chimneys here.

Nicole Firlotte, MSc
Manager
Biodiversity, Habitat and Endangered Species Section
Wildlife Branch
Conservation and Water Stewardship

Winnipeg, Manitoba

We know of several cases where community action has saved an existing roost, and they are all documented in our newsletter, Chaetura (please see the link on our web site). One that comes to mind was in Minnesota and can be found in Volume 15. If you scan back through previous issues, there are more.

The sites were saved by concerned individuals, birding groups and some scientists coming together in a grass roots effort to raise awareness about the beneficial nature and plight of Chimney Swifts. School children can be extremely persuasive when educated about swifts.

In some cases similar sites were constructed close to the original roost. In order to be successful, a replacement chimney will need to be as similar in size and construction to the original as possible. Such a project is currently being pursued in Lac-Mégantic, QC. There has been a discussion on the Chimney Swift Working Group Facebook page (www.facebook.com/groups/ChimneySwift/)

We certainly wish you success in this worthwhile endeavor.

I have tallied the first sightings for Chimney Swifts arriving at various locations in Manitoba this spring. I thought that you would appreciate knowing some details about our swifts which finally arrived despite the cold, miserable lingering "winter". Over the

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last week we finally have soared to mid-20 C to low 30 C temperatures and the abundance of swifts is amazing!

You can follow our developments at: <http://swift-notes.blogspot.ca/>
So, the first sightings, by community are:

1. St. Adolphe (49.67 N, 97.11 W) - May 10; Andy Courcelles
2. Selkirk (50.14 N, 96.87 W) - May 15; Gerald Machnee
3. Carman (49.50 N, 98.00 W) - May 18; Matt Dedrick
4. Portage La Prairie (50.13 N, 98.25 W) - May 18; Gordon Ogilvie
5. Dauphin (51.15 N, 100.04 W) - May 21; Ken and Jan Wainwright
6. Winnipeg (49.89 N, 97.13 W) - May 22; Rudolf Koes
7. La Broquerie (49.52 N, 96.51 W) - May 25; David Dawson
8. Clearwater (49.15 N, 99.03 W) - May 25; Greg deJong

The first sightings do not really reflect "settlement". We are supporting a national monitoring initiative which has four designated nights (May 21, 25, 29, and June 2) for monitors to collect roosting hour data. It was miserably cold and rainy on May 21st and few swifts were seen. During the May 25th monitoring evening, many swifts were in the air after the roosting hour and many favorite sites were still unoccupied. More occupancy was noted on May 29th.

Indeed, it was not until May 29th that the St. Adolphe swifts sorted themselves out to commit to nest sites. They will have to start being VERY busy nest building if the season is to be a success. Fortunately, there is a large hatch of insects, including many mosquitoes, to support them for now!

After the last national monitoring night coming up on Monday, June 2, we will post a news flash on our website. However, many of our dedicated volunteers will be keeping the chimney side vigil over the summer. I hope our swifts do well.

Barb Stewart
St. Adolphe Monitor & MCSI Steering Committee Member
Manitoba Chimney Swift Initiative
Winnipeg, MB

Check out this article in *Avian Conservation and Ecology* (Volume 9, Issue, Article 1)

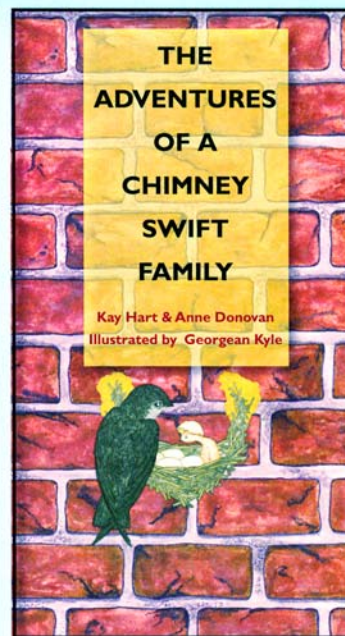
Tree cavity use by Chimney Swifts: implications for forestry and population recovery

Utilisation de cavités d'arbres par le Martinet ramoneur : incidence sur les plans de l'exploitation forestière et du rétablissement des populations

Carolyn Zanchetta 1, Douglas C. Tozer 1, Trina M. Fitzgerald,
Kristyn Richardson 1 and Debbie Badzinski 1

<http://www.ace-eco.org/vol9/iss2/art1/>

Coming Soon . . .

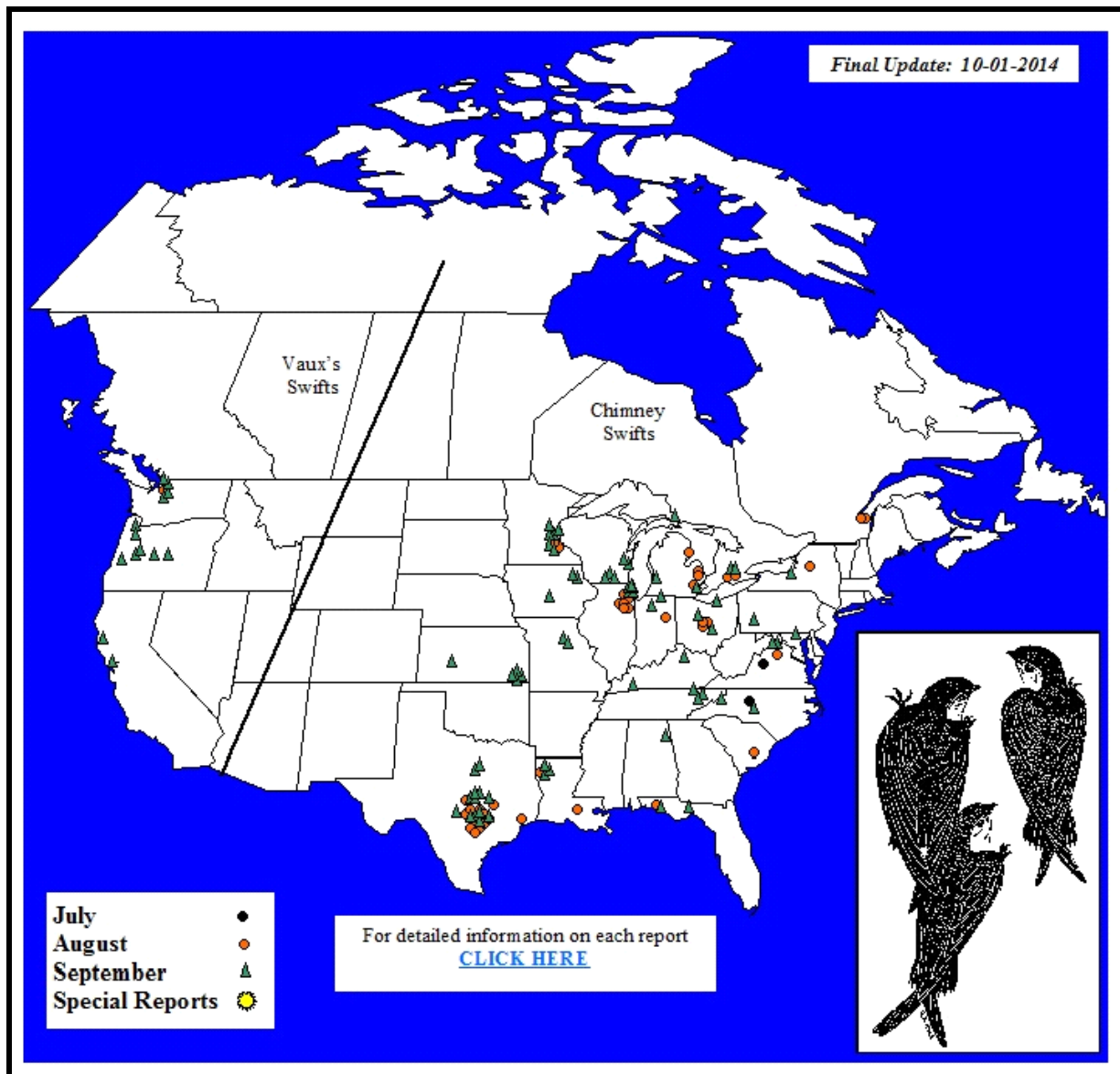


to children near you.

This book tells the story of Clarissa and Clarence Chimney Swift and their struggles to migrate between North and South America, find a chimney where they can raise a family, and avoid the dangers that nature tosses their way. It is based entirely on the research of Georgean and Paul Kyle, who are dedicated to the rehabilitation and conservation of Chimney Swifts.

If you wish to be notified when the book is available, please email the Kyles at Kyle@ChimneySwifts and enter "Children's Book" in the subject line. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this book will be used by the Travis Audubon Society for Chimney Swift conservation and research.

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.

This year's event was centered around the second weekends of August and September, but reports continued to come in through the end of September. This year we received more than 200 individual reports as well as several state-wide composite reports from 32 states and 1 province. If your state or province is not represented or is under-represented, please spread the word and plan to participate next year. There is now an on-line reporting form to make participation easier. The form also makes all of the data available for research and analysis.

2013 - 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Driftwood Wildlife Association

14246 Hunters Pass

Austin, Texas 78734

USA

Kyle@ChimneySwifts.org

*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

Georgian Kyle.....Secretary

Paul Kyle.....Treasurer

Editors for ***Chaetura***
Georgian and Paul Kyle

Education

Our web site was well-visited again in 2013 / 2014, and remains 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.

Awards

This year, Georgian Kyle and Paul Kyle were honored with the Travis Audubon Society's 2014 Victor Emanuel Conservation Award for "... *their dedication to native habitat restoration and Chimney Swift conservation...*". They were the organization's fifth recipients and first couple to be honored. At the award ceremony more than \$35,000 was raised for the maintenance and expansion of the Chaetura Canyon Sanctuary. Half of this amount will be placed in a growing Endowment Fund to support the sanctuary in perpetuity.

Donation

In 2003, DWA purchased two undeveloped lots adjacent to what is now Travis Audubon's Chaetura Canyon Sanctuary. The purpose was to protect this property from development that would effect the water quality and habitat of the property downstream which was being managed for wildlife, and Chimney Swifts in particular. This year those two lots were donated to Travis Audubon to become part of the Chaetura Canyon Sanctuary. As a larger organization with greater resources, Travis Audubon will be able to ensure protection of the property in perpetuity.

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.

Memorials

As time goes by we inevitably must bid farewell to supportive friends and family who are no longer with us.

This year Fred Lewis passed away. Fred and his wife M.E. built three 12' Chimney Swift towers on their property in Homer, Louisiana and have been regular participants in "A Swift Night Out" for many years.

Norma Heine also passed this year. She and her husband Tom have been supporters for a decade, and built a 12' tower 2004.

SUPPORTING MEMBERS AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

Ted Allen
 Polly and Bobby Anderson
 Barbara Anderson
 Brian Faber and Kelly Applegate
 Barbara Baggett
 Paula and David Bourne
 W. E. and Mary Bourne
 Doug Boyd
 Michael Snider and Evelyn Bull
 Tim Cannon
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 Carol Cassetti
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 Calvin Cink
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 Laurie Foss and Sheila Hargis
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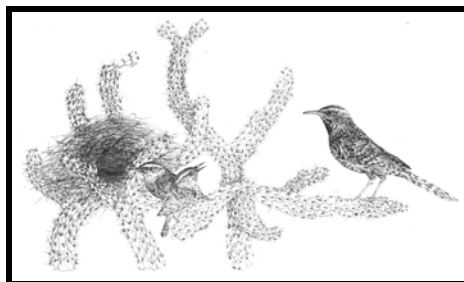
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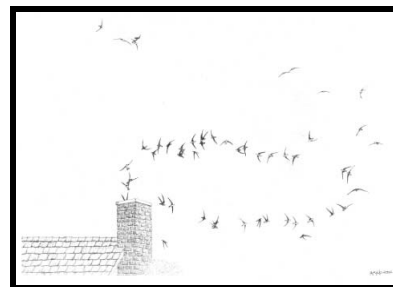
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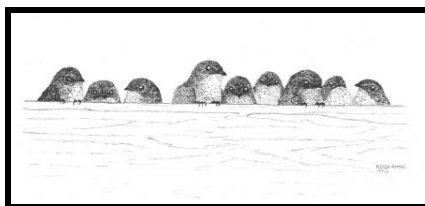
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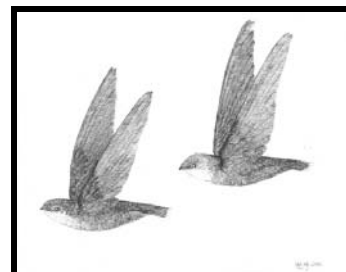
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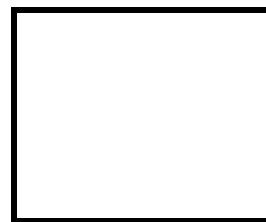
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