

SWIFTS

Many people on our Bathwick Estate enjoy watching Swifts arrive in early summer, nest here, bring up their young, and then leave to winter elsewhere.

Unfortunately their numbers have declined rapidly in recent years, and in December the BERA Committee agreed to endorse a project aimed reversing that decline and encouraging our Swift population to grow again.

You can see the proposal - which offers a lot of educational interest – in the attachment below. It outlines what we'd like to do and includes links to some fascinating nature websites.

A number of people have already expressed interest in helping, and some money has been promised for a webcam (to make our swift families world famous!) and/or nesting boxes. So now all we have to do is find volunteers to run the project and make it happen!

If you're interested, please drop a note to Alasdair Barron at alasdair10@gmail.com who is happy to build a team.

It's important to say at this point though, that if there isn't sufficient interest then unfortunately we will not be able to take the project forward.”

Please contact Alasdair if you would like to be part of this.

BATHWICK ESTATE SWIFT PROJECT

Aim

- a) Reverse the swift population decline in the Bathwick Estate
- b) Encourage birding interest in young people and residents.

Through involvement in data collection, observation of habits and life cycle* by providing nesting sites (boxes).

This would include *Contributing data to the 1) RSPB's [Swift mapper](#) (a national project), and 2) making a live video feed available for local/wider interest, and 3) encouraging others to develop their interest in the natural world, would all be important outcomes from this project.

Resources

1. Swift Conservation [Small Wooden Swift Nest Box with Pipistrelle Bat Roosting Slot](#)
2. Nest box design - this US site is full of good material, here's an example for a [Barn Swallow](#)
3. Photography - this link essentially encourages [good photography](#) giving guidance to make better snappers.
4. Bird Cam - live viewing enables project members to get intimately involved in the swifts' natural life cycle, and by posting on the web, others too. Quote from the site, *'Our viewers tell us that watching the cams is a life changing experience: an unprecedented learning experience that they liken to virtual field trips or field biology in their living room.*
5. Cornell Nestwatch- <https://nestwatch.org/>- 'Give a bird a home, and they'll show you their world'.

Skills needed

Coordinator
Education coordinator
IT for webcam

Costs

[Webcam](#) and equipment £100

Internet connection?

Boxes, new £40, build say, £10 each

How cheaply we can do the project depends on what residents can do/provide.

Probably a volunteer or two.

Some financial contribution(s) potentially on offer.