



# The Supporter

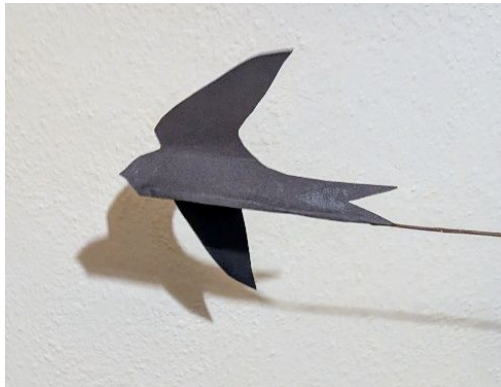
Newsletter for Lewes Swift Supporters

April 2025

Dear Lewes Swift Supporters,

## Welcome back to the Swifts!

We hope to see Swifts returning to Lewes by the end of this month and to celebrate their arrival we are organising a “Welcome Back” parade on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April. You are very welcome to join in – just meet us at the Linklater Pavilion at 10.30 a.m. for a short walk up to Lewes Climate Hub, 32 High Street. It would be wonderful if you could bring along a “Flying Swift” or a placard!



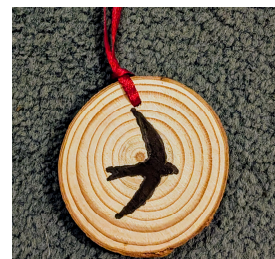
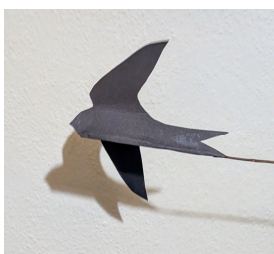
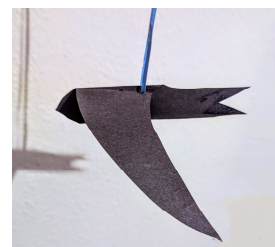
We have been very busy organising six weeks of events to share the importance of keeping Lewes as a “Swift-friendly Town for Nature Recovery”. All events will be at the wonderful space at Lewes Climate Hub in Lewes House, 32 High Street. The season opens on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, with special visitors and activities every Saturday until 31<sup>st</sup> May to encourage actions to boost biodiversity. All events are free – sponsored by Chalk Cliff Trust.

## Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April – A Summer with Swifts, Swallows and Martins

Following the pavement parade you can add to our Mosaic Wall and make a flying Swift, a Swift mobile or a Swift pendant.

Then, at 1.30 p.m., **Paul Stevens will give his talk: “A Summer with Swifts, Swallows and Martins”**, sharing wonderful videos of the Swifts and House Martins that have colonised his house.

A Swift-friendly town will bring benefits to lots of other birds and wildlife too!



## Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May – Ponds for Wildlife



As I am sure that you know, one of the challenges to Swifts is the fall in the population of the insects and airborne invertebrates that they feed upon. Ponds are great for Insects, invertebrates and other wildlife and on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at 1.30 p.m. **Pete Birchall, (Pete the Pond),** will talk about “The importance of ponds for wildlife”.

*During the day you may make your own Pebble Frog!*



## Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May – The Lewes Mosaic Project

To sustain our wildlife, it is essential that we cultivate bigger, better and well-connected green spaces.

The Lewes Mosaic Project is a collaboration between the Railway Land Wildlife Trust, Common Cause Cooperative, Wildflower Lewes, Lewes Urban Arboretum and Lewes Swift Supporters.

We want to help build a mosaic of habitats right across the town, providing homes and food for our wonderful wildlife and bringing the town to life!

On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May, **Helen Meade, (Railway Land CEO),** will share information about how you may help to make this a reality through adding to the Lewes Mosaic for Nature.

<https://www.railwaylandproject.org/lewes-mosaic-map>



## Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May - Step into the Wild Time Machine!

On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May, join the People's Park for Nature team at Lewes Climate Hub and help them build a Wild Time Machine – powered by your wild memories and dreams for the future!

**Dylan Walker, ecologist and community rewilding expert from Peoples' Park for Nature,** explains:

“At the People's Park for Nature, we're on a mission to reconnect people and places with the wild. Join us to dream big and build a wilder future! What wildlife once roamed our local spaces? What creatures could return? How might nature flourish? Share your stories and ideas, and together we'll create a magical, sensory experience that brings the wild past and future to life – the sights, sounds, and even tastes!”

Dylan will bring an interactive display so that you may share your ideas. He will finish the day with a talk about how we can all help to reintroduce lost species and restore ecosystems.

<https://www.peoplesparkfornature.org/>





## Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May – Hedgehogs!

We all love Hedgehogs - but we don't see them as often as we used to do. On Saturday 24th May at 1.30 p.m., **Emily Thrift will share her research about how we may act to protect our remaining Hedgehog population.**

Rustic Tim will be joining us again and showing us how to craft our very own Hedgehogs out of wood!



*You can make your very own Hedgehog with Rustic Tim!*

## Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May – Why Bugs Matter

Did you know that Buglife research suggests that the population of insects and invertebrates has fallen by 79% since 2004? Since parent Swifts need an estimated 20,000 insects a day when they are feeding their chicks, this has the potential to be a huge factor in their decline. To round off our season, we are very pleased to be able to welcome expert **Alice Parfitt from Buglife to give her presentation at 1.30 p.m. on 31st May: “Why Bugs Matter”**. Find out about Buglife here: <https://www.buglife.org.uk/>



*Make a bug hotel to put in your own garden*



*A Swift hunting an insect!*

Thank you very much to **Lewes Climate Hub** for letting us use their beautiful room for our events. You may keep up to date with other interesting events and activities at the Hub through visiting their website and signing up to their newsletter: <https://lewesclimatehub.org/>

The Hub is open from Wednesday to Saturday, 11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

You may find out more about our Swift-friendly town by visiting our website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/lewesswiftsupporters/lewes-a-swift-friendly-town/>

## The “Wild Card” rewilding campaign

Do you like making things?

Rewilding campaign Wild Card is asking people to get involved in a bit of 'craftivism' to persuade the Church of England to rewild more of the 105,000 acres of land held in its investment portfolio. It is asking people, groups and schools to knit, paint or model animals that could be saved by rewilding, then send them to the Church Commissioners between World Rewilding Day, (20<sup>th</sup> March), and Easter Sunday, (20<sup>th</sup> April). For more details see: <https://wildcard.land/campaigns/rewild-the-church>

Could you send them a picture of a Swift?



## Swift Watch 2025

Following our previous email message to Supporters, we were very pleased to be contacted by thirteen people who are interested in joining our survey team this year!

Just to remind you that anyone may send details of their Swift sightings to us through our Swift watch project. If you see any Swifts, let us know:

- How many Swifts can you see?
- What is the nearest address to where you can see them?
- What were the Swifts doing, for example, screaming, entering a nest space, flying quietly?

You can send your record to us at [lewesswifts@gmail.com](mailto:lewesswifts@gmail.com) or report it to our Facebook group, “Lewes Swift Supporters”.

Click on this link to see a [Map of nest sites](#) that we have recorded in previous years.

## Thinking of installing a nest box?

If you live in Lewes and are thinking of installing a Swift nest box or an artificial House Martin cup, this is how we might support you – if your building proves to be suitable and there is access for a long ladder.

- Funding a Swift box and the installation when someone lives next to an existing Swift colony.
- If you do not live next to an existing colony, we still offer support and advice on installing a Swift nest box. We visit the homeowner to find out if the building and location are suitable and help to decide on the best place for a box. At current prices, this would cost you £48 for a single box and £25 for the installation. See: <https://www.peakboxes.co.uk/shop>
- A free House Martin cup and installation for anyone who lives in a suitable location in an existing colony so that we might encourage expansion of the existing colony.

Just get in touch with us if you are thinking of installing a Swift Box or an artificial House Martin cup: [lewesswifts@gmail.com](mailto:lewesswifts@gmail.com)



*Three Swift boxes installed by us at Priory School in March 2025*

If your home is not suitable for a Swift box or House Martin cup, remember that there are other things you may do to help our Swifts to thrive: [How can we help Swifts? - Lewes Swift Supporters \(e-voice.org.uk\)](https://www.lewesvoice.org.uk)

## LDC Lottery

Thank you to all the kind residents who have made donations to Lewes Swift Supporters. If you would like to help the Swifts by making a donation, please contact us on [lewesswifts@gmail.com](mailto:lewesswifts@gmail.com) for our bank details.

You may also support LSS by choosing us as your “good cause” in the LDC Local Lottery: [Support Lewes Swift Supporters when you play Lewes District Local Lottery - Lewes District Local Lottery \(leweslocallottery.co.uk\)](https://www.leweslocallottery.co.uk)

*With best wishes from the LSS Committee:*

Mike Ramsey, Chairperson and Surveyor  
Kevin Murphy, Recorder and Surveyor  
Sharon Hall, Treasurer  
Crispin Holloway, Founder Member  
Audrey Jarvis, Secretary, Surveyor and Communications