



The Supporter

Newsletter for Lewes Swift Supporters

May 2025

Dear Swift Supporters,

Welcome back to our Swifts!

At the time of writing, we have recorded Swifts returning to three known nest sites in Lewes. On 25th April, the nest cam in Sharons' house showed one Swift returning at 8.20 p.m.



Some photographs of the Swift at King Henry's Road

On 28th April, Audrey, Nick and Nigel all saw a Swift return to the colony at 98 Western Road at 8.24 p.m. later in the evening they were joined by Kevin, who saw a Swift exit from one of the nests at the rear of the High Street. This is very early!

Swift Watch Sightings

With the fine weather we have been having, we had some early sightings of Swifts from Swift Watchers and surveyors. Here are some of them.

21st April

- Emily, one of our new surveyors, saw a high-flying Swift over The Avenue in the evening
- Silverstick saw a Swift over the top of The Avenue, and again on 22nd

23rd April

- Sue saw her first Swift over St Swithun's Terrace,
- Emma saw two Swifts, Swallows, House Martins and Sand Martins flying over the Cockshut wetlands

27th April

- Margaret Healy spotted at least four Swifts high in the sky above Southover
- Sue saw six flying over St. Swithun's Terrace
- Piers saw three Swifts over Landport Bottom about 1.00 p.m. and later one over the Black Horse
- Michael Birt saw one Swift over 24 De Montfort Road where there is a nest box that has been used for twenty years.

28th April

- Emma Chaplin saw two Swifts screaming over number 98 Western Road at midday
- Debs saw three Swifts at the rear of the High Street at 2 noon, then six Swifts up high at 5.00 p.m.
- Liz saw her first Swifts seen above the junction of The Avenue and Bradford Road at midday.
- Lynn saw five Swifts flying over St Martin's Lane at 11.00 a.m.
- Bill saw two Swifts above 98 Western Road at 8.35 a.m.

29th April

- Susan heard and saw her first low-flying Swifts over Southover this morning 8.50 a.m.
- David saw three Swifts flying over Lansdown Place at 3.40 p.m.

A Swift-friendly Town for Nature Recovery

On Saturday 26th April, we were joined by the Mayor of Lewes, Councillor Imogen Makepeace, for a wonderful “Welcome back to the Swifts” parade from the Railway Land to Lewes Climate Hub. Thank you to everyone who came along! Your placards and flying Swifts were magnificent!



Once we were at Lewes Climate Hub our artistic visitors made some lovely Swift pendants and added to our Mosaic Wall, which celebrates actions contributing to our Swift-friendly town and also to the Lewes Mosaic for Nature: <https://www.railwaylandproject.org/lewes-mosaic-map>



During the afternoon, Paul Stevens, (Hirundine Champion for Sussex Ornithological Society and conservation officer for House Martins UK), gave an excellent talk on “A Summer with Swifts, Swallows and Martins”. It was wonderful to see all the videos and nest cam footage from the 60+ Swift boxes and House Martin cups installed at his home.



We are looking forward to meeting Pete the Pond for his talk about “The Importance of Ponds for Wildlife” on Saturday 3rd May at 1.30 p.m. Do come along if you can – you could pick up some tips for making or improving you pond and make a pebble frog to take home!

Our season continues throughout May and the Climate Hub is open Wednesdays to Saturdays, 11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. For more details of the special events on Saturdays, see our April newsletter: <https://e-voice.org.uk/lewesswiftsupporters/newsletters/>

Thank you to the team at Lewes Climate Hub for letting us use their lovely room and for supporting us in so many ways!

Nest box update

In March and April, we installed ten more Swift nest boxes around Lewes, and we are making site visits to plan for some more. Do get in touch if you are interested in hosting one at your home. Single Peak nest boxes cost £48 each and we charge £25 for installing them. If you live next to an existing colony and there is a chance to expand it, LSS will pay for the box and installation.



Rotten Row



Valence Road



Mealla Close

If you used to have House Martins nesting at your home, let us know if you would like an artificial House Martin cup installed. We have successfully installed several of the House Martin cups made by Paul Stevens - and two of them were occupied a few months later!

We hope to see you at Lewes Climate Hub over the next month – and to hear from you with your Swift Watch sightings! <https://e-voice.org.uk/lewesswiftsupporters/swift-watch/>

Get in touch or follow us:

Email: lewesswifts@gmail.com

Facebook: Lewes Swift Supporters

X: @LewesSwifts

Instagram: @lewesswifts

BlueSky: @lewesswifts.bky.social

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