Can we bring back Swifts to Stinchombe

Can we bring swifts back to Stinchcombe?

I've enjoyed watching swifts by the gravel pits at Frampton-on-Severn, but have never seen any in Stinchcombe. Has anyone else seen any here in recent years?

A species in decline

These amazing birds arrive in the UK in April/May and return to Africa in August. They never land except to nest. In fact, the young birds spend their first three years on the wing. Sadly, their numbers are in decline – about 60% down in the last 25 years. This is mainly due to the loss of suitable nest sites. As old buildings are refurbished, the spaces under the roof tiles that they like to use are often made inaccessible. The decline in insect populations can't be helping either as this is the swifts' only food.

All is not lost

District Councillor Catherine Braun told me about the ***Nibley Swifts project*** They have only been going since 2021, but this summer North Nibley residents saw flocks of 30 or more of these lovely birds. Stroud also has a very active ***Facebook group*** and there are many others.

Installing ***swift boxes*** doesn't cost a lot and is working in North Nibley. Another option is ***swift nesting bricks*** These can be very inconspicuous, however, the swifts apparently find them.



There is evidence that swifts can be drawn to new nest sites by broadcasting recordings of swift calls. Various products are on the market.

A Stinchcombe Swift Project?

How wonderful it would be to attract swifts back to Stinchcombe. Would anyone like to join me in setting up a project? The first step might be to find out more from existing local groups.

Kath Hudson