

# CARMARTHENSHIRE SWIFT SURVEY 2026



WEST WALES  
BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION CENTRE  
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GORLLEWIN CYMRU

The Carmarthenshire Nature Partnership would like your help to find out where you hear Swifts or know where they nest in the county in 2026



Photo ©Tom Lindroos

## Swift facts

- The Swift (*Apus apus*) is a medium-sized bird; an aerial specialist that spends almost its entire life in flight, sleeping, eating, and even mating on the wing ([rspb.org.uk](https://www.rspb.org.uk)).
- They are the fastest bird in level flight, reaching speeds of 69 mph ([rspb.org.uk](https://www.rspb.org.uk)).
- Appearance: dark sooty-brown (appearing black in the sky), long curved wings, short forked tail, pale throat patch ([rspb.org.uk](https://www.rspb.org.uk)).
- They are known for noisy high-speed “screaming parties” around rooftops.

## Migration and nesting

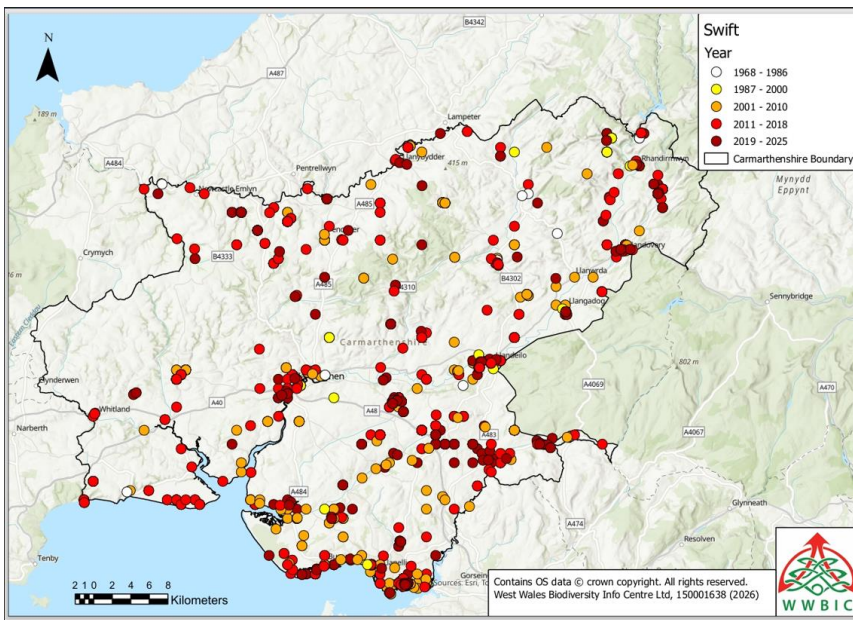
- Swifts are summer visitors, arriving in the UK from late April to May and departing from early August back to Africa. ([rspb.org.uk](https://www.rspb.org.uk))
- UK–Africa migration distance: ~14,000 miles (22,000 km) annually, among the world’s longest migration journeys. ([rspb.org.uk](https://www.rspb.org.uk))
- Many UK swifts feed and roost in the air for months without landing.

## Who Are We?

The [Carmarthenshire Nature Partnership](#) (CNP), a collaboration between local government, wildlife organizations, charities, and volunteer groups, is dedicated to conserving and enhancing our county’s biodiversity. The Council facilitate this Partnership. Together, we want to understand and protect species like the Swift.



- In the Amman Valley, one CNP partner **Wild Cymru** will be working with their community to record and put up boxes and nesting towers for Swifts. If you live in that area and want to find out more contact:
- For sightings in the Amman Valley you can use also the recording form on the Swift recording page on the West Wales Biodiversity Recording Centre website (see link below)



Absence of a species record does not necessarily mean absence of that species - simply that no records are held.

We need your help to fill the gaps and also update existing records.

### Why is this Survey Important?

- Swifts are now on the **UK Red List** due to severe declines. [[rspb.org.uk](https://www.rspb.org.uk)]
- Populations have shown a 68% decline from 1995–2023 [[bto.org](https://www.bto.org)].

### Causes of Swift Decline

- **Loss of nesting sites:**

Modern building practices (roof insulation, sealed eaves) eliminate cavities swifts rely on resulting in a lack of nesting spaces.

- **Decline in flying insects** - their sole food source. [[bto.org](https://www.bto.org)].

### How You Can Help

- Installing swift boxes or supporting use of swift bricks in new builds. [How you can help Swifts](#)
- Recording sightings and nest sites - see below
- Supporting insect-friendly practices (managing green space for wildlife), reduced pesticide use.

### How to Participate

- **Recording:** Simply note when and where you see or hear a Swift. We would like you to record if you know of an active nest site; see Swifts and/or hear parties of screeching birds
- **Submit:** Record your sightings through the Swift recording page on the West Wales Biodiversity Recording Centre website:

[Wildlife recording & biodiversity recording in West Wales](#)

### What Happens Next?

All records will be compiled into a map and shared with the Carmarthenshire Bird Club and RSPB's Swift Mapper.

### GDPR Notice

Your records will be kept confidential and used solely for the purposes of this survey. Any personal data collected will be handled in accordance with privacy regulations: [WWBIC](#)

### Thank You for Your Help!

By participating, you are contributing to the conservation of the Swift and helping us understand what we can do to support them. Let's work together to ensure the Swift's arrival continues to be recorded across Carmarthenshire for years to come!