

## What is a Swift Night Out?



- ↘ Continent-wide effort to raise awareness about and encourage interest in Chimney Swifts and Vaux's Swifts.
- ↘ People gather to observe swifts entering a roost for the night during fall migration.
- ↘ Collect citizen science data by counting the swifts observed.
- ↘ Witness an inspiring avian aerial display during this natural phenomenon.



## How To Host a Swift Night Out

- ↘ Identify a roosting site with swifts. This may involve walking/driving to suitable habitat to look and listen for swifts.
- ↘ Pick a night (Friday, Saturday, or Sunday) during the second weekend of August and/or September.
- ↘ Get permission from property owner before hosting an event.
- ↘ Invite friends, family, children, local birding clubs, nature enthusiasts, city officials, etc. to come along.
- ↘ Observe the roost about 30 minutes before sunset.
- ↘ Count the number of swifts that enter the chimney. (Even sites with smaller numbers provide important data.)
- ↘ Make observations of the weather.
- ↘ Share the data with the Wisconsin Chimney Swift Working Group or on the online eBird database.
- ↘ If you are unable to locate a roost on your own, take a look at reports on eBird from previous years to locate an established roost near you.



# Ways to Engage People Attending a SNO Event

## **1) Have a Question and Answer session to help educate attendees about the species:**

**Q:** Do swifts dive head-first into a chimney or flutter and drop-down tail first?

**A:** They do both!

**Q:** Why migrate and roost in large numbers?

**A:** There's warmth in numbers: during cold nights, the temperature inside a chimney roost can be 70°F warmer than outside.

**Q:** Do Chimney swifts fly at night?

**A:** No, swifts are diurnal and spend their day flying, then stop to rest and roost at night.

**Q:** Where do chimney swifts spend the winter?

**A:** Central and South America.

**Q:** What do swifts eat?

**A:** Swifts are strict aerial insectivores, eating insects while flying. Insects they eat include; beetles, house flies, bees, mayflies and mosquitoes.

**Q:** What is the average lifespan of a chimney swift?

**A:** The average life span is 4.6 years, with the oldest on record being at least 14 years old!

**Q:** How fast can a swift fly?

**A:** It's capable of nearly 100 miles per hour, although normal flight is 18 -30 miles per hour.

**Q:** What are potential reasons for the population declines observed in this species?

**A:** Declining insect populations and changes in insect community structures owing to pesticide use in the 1950s have contributed to wide-ranging long-term declines in Swift populations. Loss of suitable nesting habitat, old masonry chimneys are being capped or torn down.



## **2) Share photos or videos of what they can expect:**

<https://www.wiswifts.org/videos-from-swift-night-out-events/>

## **3) Offer kids a color page to take home featuring swifts (part of this handout)!**

## **4) Bring along Chimney Swift Wisconsin DNR Wildcards to handout to attendees!**

<https://www.wiswifts.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ChimneySwiftWildCards-04-1.pdf>

## **5) If you have questions or need help hosting a SNO contact:**

**Wisconsin Chimney Swift Working Group** [www.wiswifts.org](http://www.wiswifts.org) or [helpchimneyswifts@gmail.com](mailto:helpchimneyswifts@gmail.com)

