

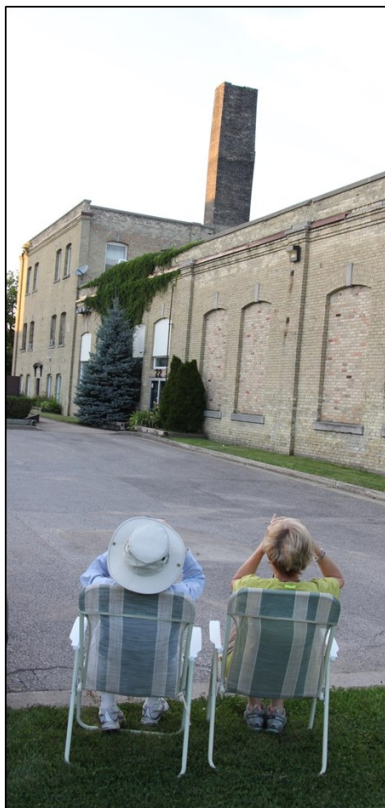
Chimney Swift Monitoring in London, Ontario



Winifred Wake, Chimney Swift Liaison for Nature London, March 7, 2022

What are Chimney Swifts?

Chimney Swifts are small, black birds that are present in London from late April to early October. Often first detected by their twittering, swifts fly high above buildings and treetops, snatching insects from the air. Tiny twig-and-saliva nests are placed well down inside chimneys, one nest per shaft. During spring and fall migration, groups of swirling swifts make spectacular dives into large-diameter chimneys to spend the night. During the summer, non-breeding swifts also roost communally in old chimneys. Sometimes there is an active nest in a chimney at the same time as a roost.



Why Monitor Chimney Swifts?

- Numbers in Canada have declined by >90% in the past 50 years.
- The Chimney Swift was designated a Threatened species in 2009.
- Monitoring tracks which chimneys London swifts are using and when.
 - provides data for calculating population changes.
 - offers insights into how well nesting attempts are faring.
- Knowledge gained informs conservation action on behalf of swifts.

What's Involved in Monitoring Swifts in London?

- Takes place May through September, mostly on Tuesdays.
- Count/estimate number entering or exiting chimney for 1 hr at dusk.
- Field forms provided; enter data online at Nature London swift portal.
- Monitors work in pairs for safety, company, and mentoring.
- Rotate among 13 chimneys, each hosting a nest, a roost or both.
- If enough volunteers, monitoring will expand to 18 chimneys in 2022.
- Detailed monitoring guidelines and directions to chimneys are provided before start of monitoring season.
- Monitors receive regular updates (often weekly) on current numbers of swifts occupying each chimney.
- All data are forwarded to provincial swift database at Birds Canada.
- Opportunities for video-monitoring, visiting additional chimneys, etc.

★ Nature London would love to have you join our team of friendly swift monitors! Friends and family members are welcome too.

★ For more information, or to sign up, contact londonswifts@gmail.com.

★ To enjoy the amazing sight of swifts entering a chimney to roost for the night, check this video link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5-w-QF7Fjg>

