

Swifts Make Their Home at MTU

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Swifts are in decline. It is estimated by Birdwatch Ireland that their numbers are down by more than 50%. The evidence suggests that because of the impacts of climate change, the decimation of insect populations and a shortage of places to nest, this extraordinary bird is in serious trouble.

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Every year swifts fly from Sub-Saharan Africa to Cork, arriving in May and leaving in late August. They spend most of their lives airborne, eating, sleeping and mating in flight while weighing the same as a Cadbury's Crème Egg.



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We can do so much to help swifts. One way is to insert swift boxes. Swifts nest in the nooks and crannies in the eaves and walls of building. Swift boxes can be installed and are hardly noticeable. Swifts do not leave a trace on the walls of building and reside in boxes for only four months of the year. Once swifts have found a place to nest, they will return to it every year for the rest of their lives.



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It is vital that nature be included into [building] design, not just for swifts but for other bird species also.
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Maria Young - Co-ordinator of Green Spaces for Health, Cork Healthy Cities

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The Swift Project at MTU has been a great success. Swifts were spotted going in and out of one box only one month after installation. At least three of the boxes were inhabited this summer and were safe for chicks.



Swift boxes at Student Centre



The six swift boxes



close-up of swift boxes

Collaboration between Green Spaces for Health,
MTU Library and MTU Building and Estates.