

SWIFT

The Latin name for the swift is *Apus apus*.

The swift is a familiar, dark torpedo of a bird, common in the summer months across the whole of Europe. It arrives in Europe in late April from African wintering quarters, and will stay in Europe until late August or early September, before undertaking its massive journey back southwards.

The swift superficially resembles the swallow. It is a smallish bird with a body length of 16-17cm. It has a short bill, a wide, gaping mouth for feeding on insects, small, weak feet, long, crescent-shaped wings and a dark brown plumage. It has a harsh screaming call uttered by parties of birds in chasing flight.

Swifts nest along vertical surfaces, building their nests of various materials glued together with a cement-like substance secreted by their salivary glands.

They lay 2 or 3 eggs, which are dull white, between March and June.