



for birds  
for people  
for ever

# Swallow



The swallow is a familiar summer visitor, characterised by its long tail streamers.

## CALENDAR

### Breeding season:

Mid-May to mid-August.

### Nest:

Nests in buildings, on a small ledge including beams, 2–5 m off the ground.

### Winter:

Migrates to Africa between late August and early October.

## HABITAT

In the summer prefers farmland with grazed pastures and meadows. Often seen hunting for insects over fields, ponds and lakes, especially where there are suitable nesting areas.

## DIET

Swallows depend entirely on flying insects such as flies (mosquitoes and midges included), mayflies etc.

## HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE SWALLOWS?

- Where hygiene regulations are not an issue make farm buildings accessible to swallows for nesting. Simply by opening a window, skylight or stable door, you will let the birds gain access.
- Retain old farm outbuildings and barns, maintain the roof to keep these dry and sheltered and create ledges 2–5 m high on which swallows can nest.
- Leave wet and muddy areas near to farm buildings from which swallows can collect mud for nest building.
- Reduce pesticide inputs to lessen the impact on insects, a vital food source for adults and chicks.

You can get further information on this and other ways of managing your farm for wildlife from:



The RSPB,  
Northern Ireland HQ,  
Belvoir Park Forest, Belfast BT8 7QT.  
Tel: 028 9049 1547



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Countryside Management Division  
Annexe D, Dundonald House,  
Upper Newtownards Road,  
Belfast BT4 3SB Tel: (028) 9052 0922

## Swallow distribution

Data provided by *The New Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland 1988–1991*. British Trust for Ornithology, Scottish Ornithologists' Club and Irish Wildbird Conservancy (now known as Birdwatch Ireland).



Filled dot = breeding

Open dot = present during the breeding season