



Hampshire Swifts

Saving Hampshire Swifts

South Wonston

Tim Norriss

Date: 31 Mar 2023



ID of Swifts, Swallows and Martins

House Martin

Swallow



Common Swift

Sand Martin



The 'Scanish Swift' fossil



Birds evolved from dinosaurs

49 million years old

Senckenberg Museum in Frankfurt

200mm wingspan

Swifts in Britain

Eight species of swift have been recorded in Britain though only the Common Swift breeds here and all the others have just occurred as rare or very rare migrants.

- **Common Swift**

- Pallid Swift }
- Alpine Swift } from Europe
- White-rumped Swift }
- Little Swift }

- White-throated Needle-tail }
- Pacific Swift } from Asia

- Chimney Swift } from America



Alpine Swift

What are Swifts?

- Swifts belong to a family of birds called the Apodidae (“no feet”).



- 92 species. Found on all continents except Antarctica.



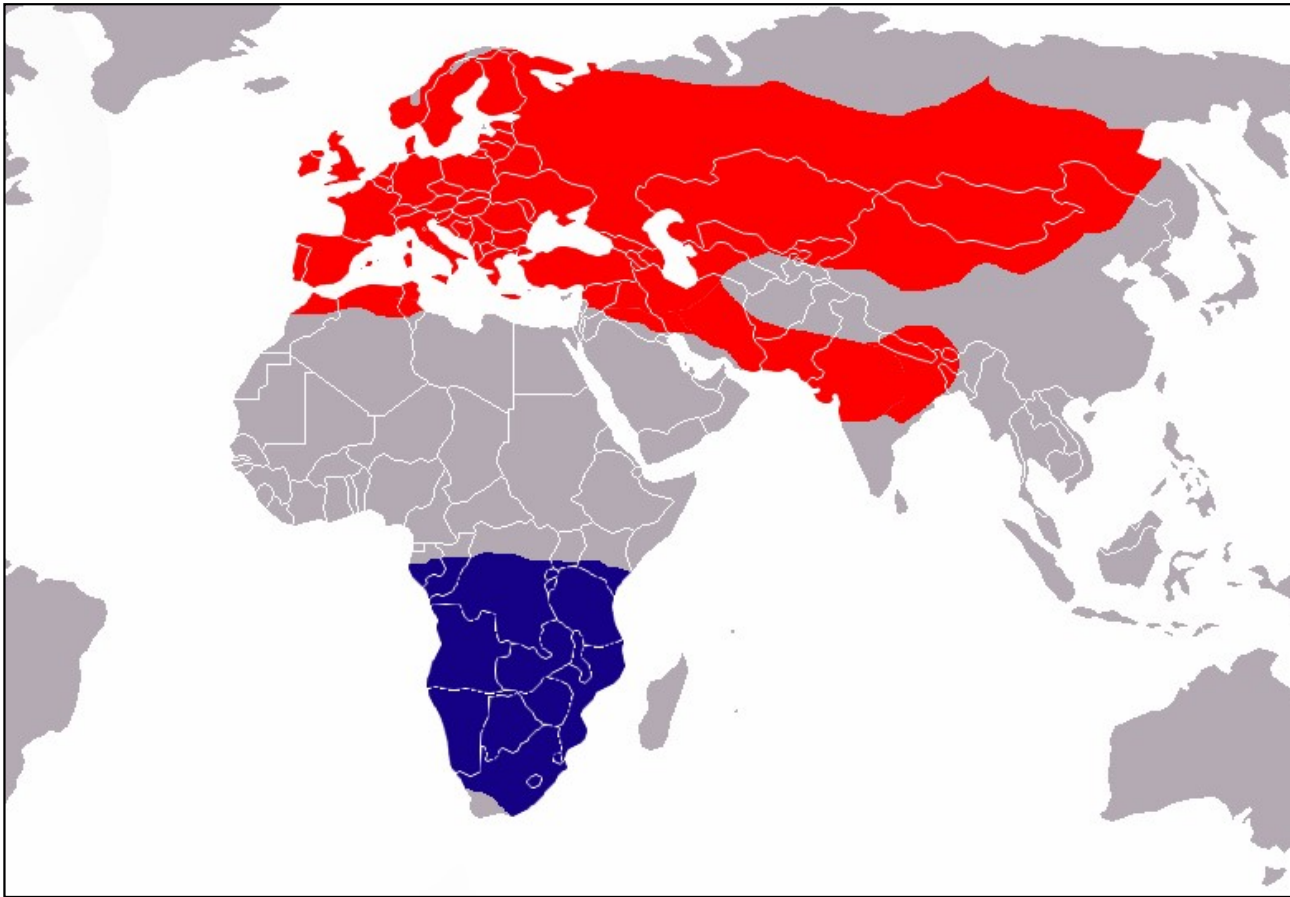
Feeding and Drinking



How high do Swifts fly?



The Common Swift: distribution



Breeding areas



Wintering areas

Migration

Arrival and departure dates

Step-by-step migration: on the wing with Swift A320

We follow one individual Swift, known as A320, tagged overnight on 21/22 July in 2010 at Fowlmere in Cambridgeshire.



Fastest in level flight



69.4 mph

Peregrine



Hobby

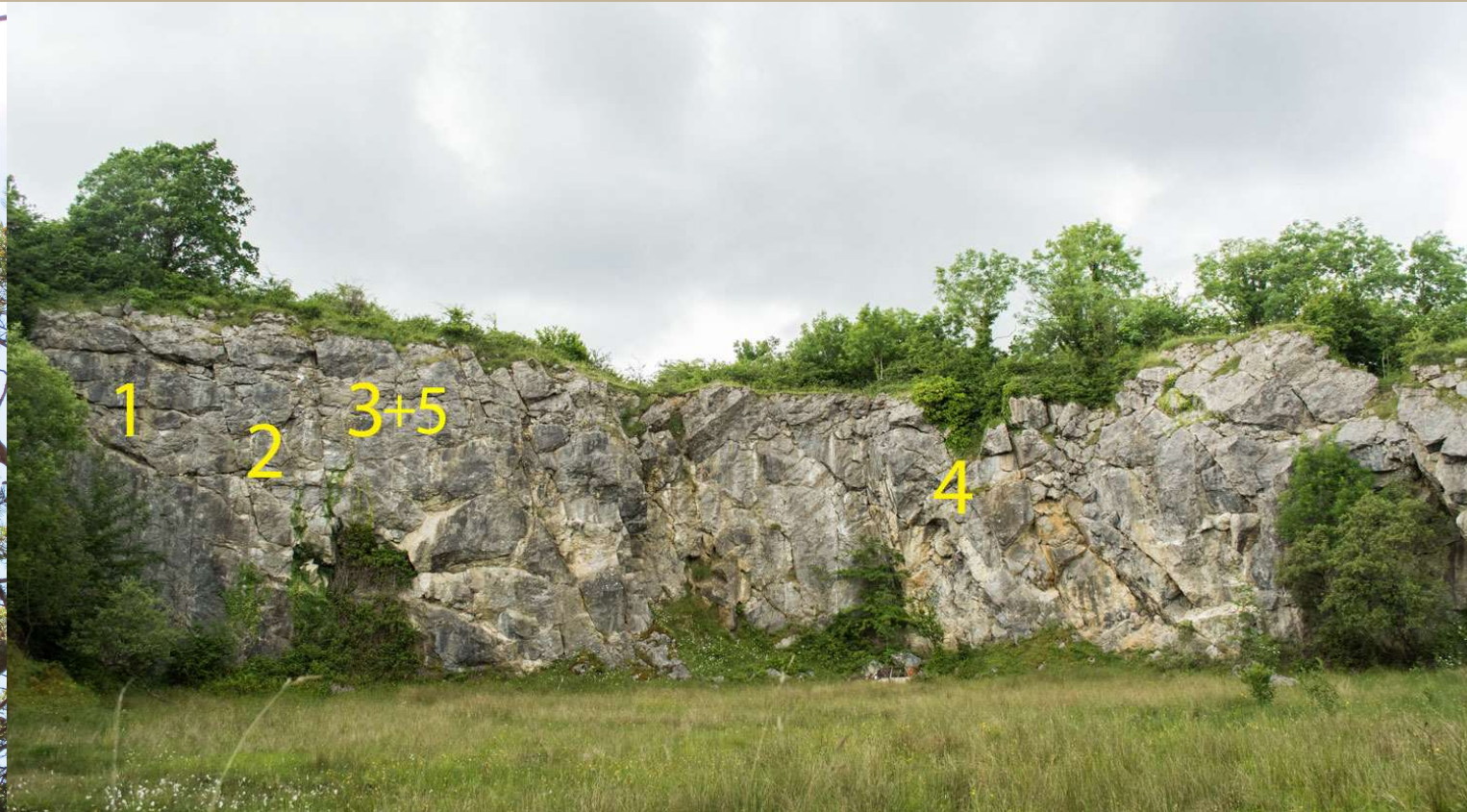
Where do Swifts nest?

Swifts are entirely reliant on finding gaps or holes in buildings to access a safe place to breed.

If you can see the nest it's not a Swift's.



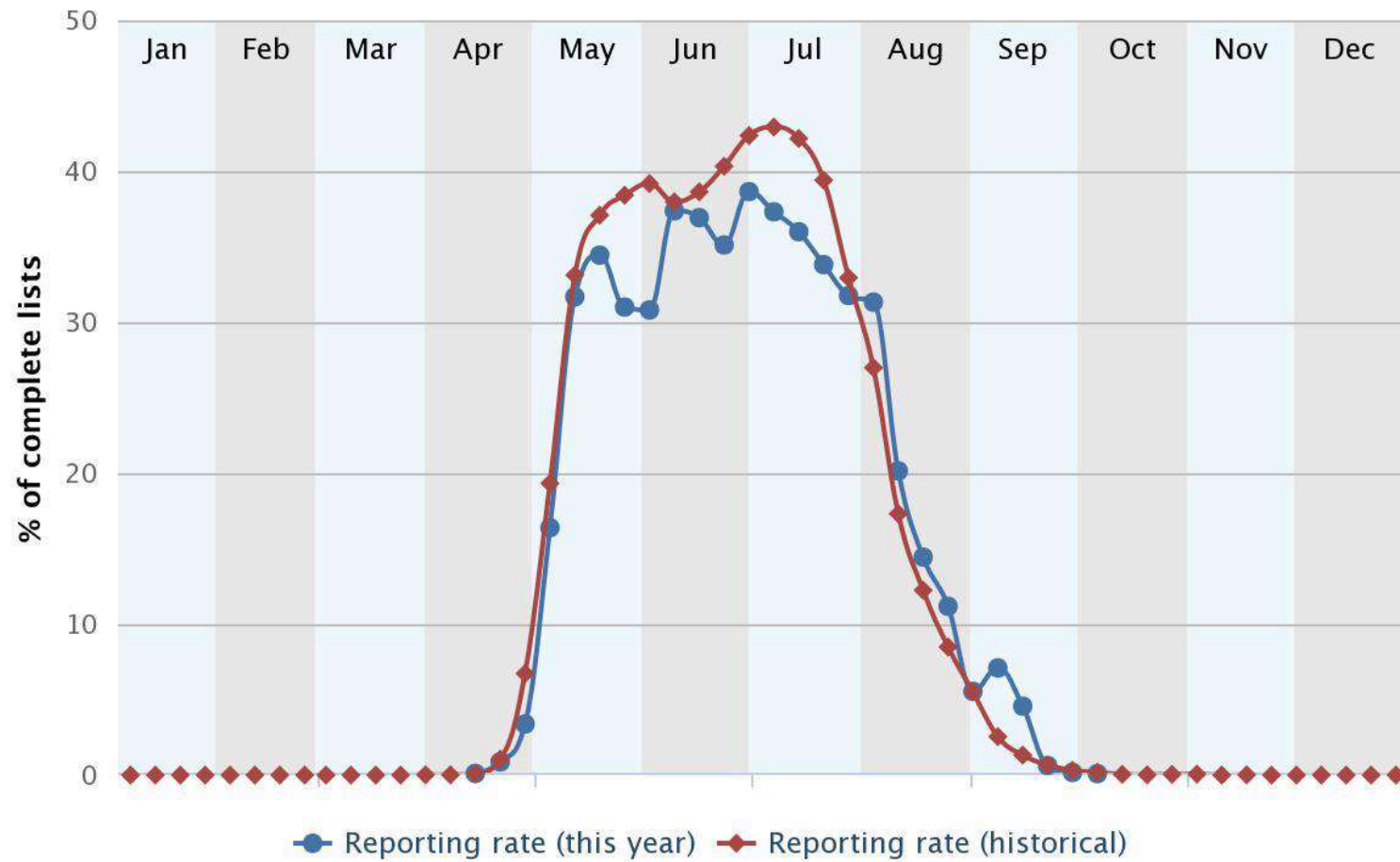
Nesting in trees and quarries



Swifts used to nest Odiham chalk quarry

Swift arrival & departure dates

Swift *Apus apus*



Breeding



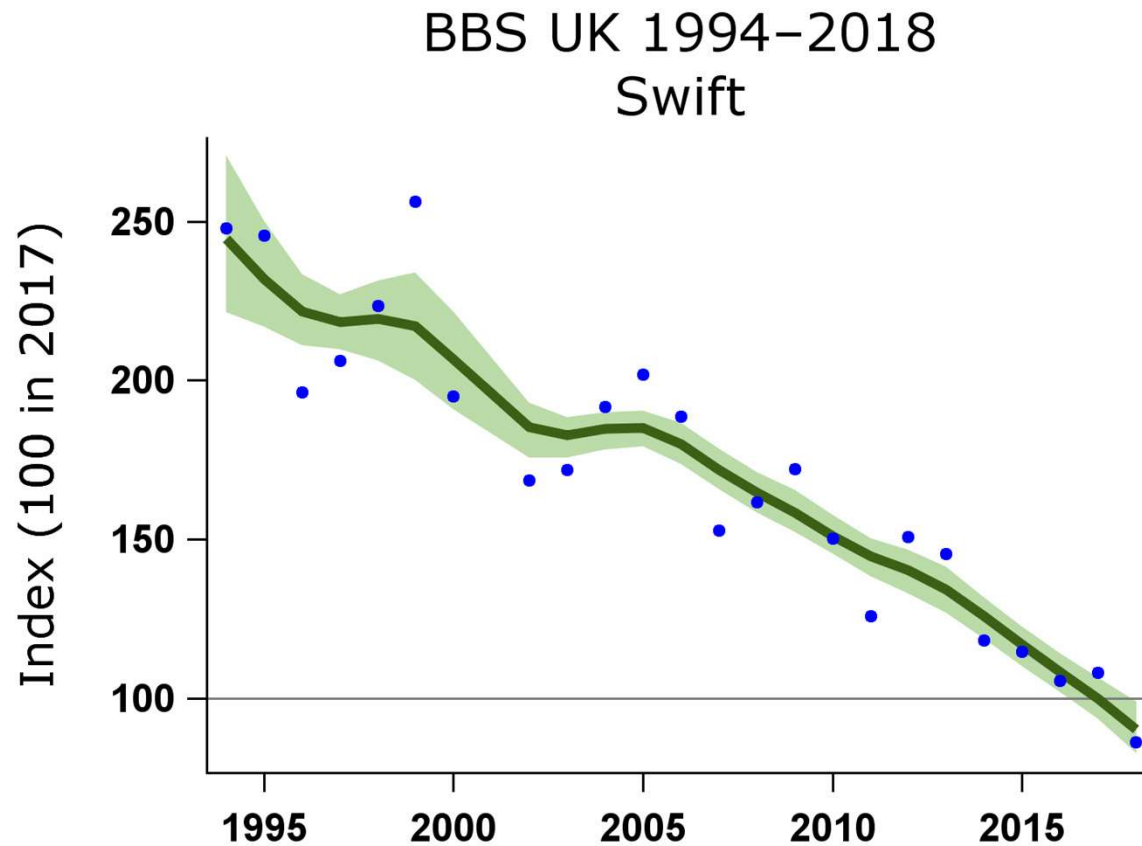
- Sexual maturity – 3-4 years
- Life-span – average 8-9 years
- Low mortality and slow reproduction rate
- Single brood of mainly two young
- Colonial nesters and Site faithful and Partner faithful
- The young can go into a state of torpor in cold weather when the adults are unable to find food.

Breeding



Minimum nine weeks to fledging is the longest of any smaller bird.

Population Status of Swifts in the UK



Source: Woodward, I.D. et al. (2018) BirdTrends 2018: trends in numbers, breeding success and survival for UK breeding birds. Research Report 708. BTO, Thetford

TN1

The cause of the decline - exclusion



Slide 17

TN1

Tim Norriss, 25/03/2021

How can we help Swifts?

- Swift boxes
- Cost is low - £35 incl installation
- Free advice from Hampshire Swifts
- Locations



How can we help Swifts?

- Swift bricks
- 200,000 new homes each year
- RIBA, RSPB and the NHBC recommend 1 per dwelling
- House Sparrows use them too



Not just Swifts - Biodiversity crisis



Hampshire Swifts

- Formed in 2016 with the aim of reversing the decline in breeding Swifts in Hampshire
- Lobby local councils and developers
- Exhibitions and talks
- Advise about the provision of Swift nest boxes & Swift bricks
- Hampshire Swift Survey
- And we supply and install boxes



Hampshire Swifts

The screenshot shows the Facebook interface for the 'Hampshire Swifts' group. The top navigation bar includes the user's name 'Tim', 'Home', 'Find Friends', and 'Create'. The group name 'Hampshire Swifts' is displayed in the search bar. The left sidebar contains navigation options: 'About', 'Discussion' (highlighted), 'Chats', 'Announcements', 'Members', 'Events', 'Videos', 'Photos', 'Files', 'Group insights', 'Recommendations', 'Moderate group', and 'Group quality'. Below these are search and shortcut sections. The main content area features a large image of a swift in flight, a 'Change group cover' button, and interaction buttons: 'Joined', 'Notifications', 'Share', and 'More'. Below the image is a post creation area with options for 'Write post', 'Add photo/video', 'Live Video', and 'More'. A text input field contains 'Write something...'. Below this are buttons for 'Photo/Video', 'Watch Party', 'Tag friends', and 'More'. The 'Announcements' section shows a post by 'Andy Broadhurst' (Admin) dated '7 April 2016', stating the group's aim to halt and reverse the decline of breeding swifts in Hampshire. The right sidebar includes an 'INVITE MEMBERS' section with an 'Embed invitation' link and an input field for names or email addresses. Below this is a 'MEMBERS' section showing '274 members' and a row of member profile pictures. A 'Write Post' button is present. The 'DESCRIPTION' section states the group's aim to halt and reverse the decline of breeding swifts. The 'GROUP TYPE' is listed as 'General'. The 'LOCATION' section is partially visible at the bottom.

Hampshire Swifts
Closed group

About
Discussion
Chats
Announcements
Members
Events
Videos
Photos
Files
Group insights
Recommendations
Moderate group
Group quality

Search this group

Shortcuts
Insectos Caribeños 20+
Wild New Forest 20+
Hampshire Swifts
IOW Butterflies and ... 8
Lesvos Birders 20+
See more

Write post | Add photo/video | Live Video | More

Write something...

Photo/Video | Watch Party | Tag friends | More

Announcements

Andy Broadhurst updated the description.
Admin · 7 April 2016

The aim of this group is to halt and reverse the decline of breeding swifts in Hampshire. We will do this by developing our understanding of the numbers and distribution of breeding swifts across Hampshire and encourage the protection and provision of nesting sites wherever possible. Swift enthusiasts are encouraged to join, communicate, share expertise and actively contribute.

INVITE MEMBERS | Embed invitation

+ Enter name or email address...

MEMBERS | 274 members

You have 6 new members this week. Write a post to welcome them. | Write Post

DESCRIPTION | Edit

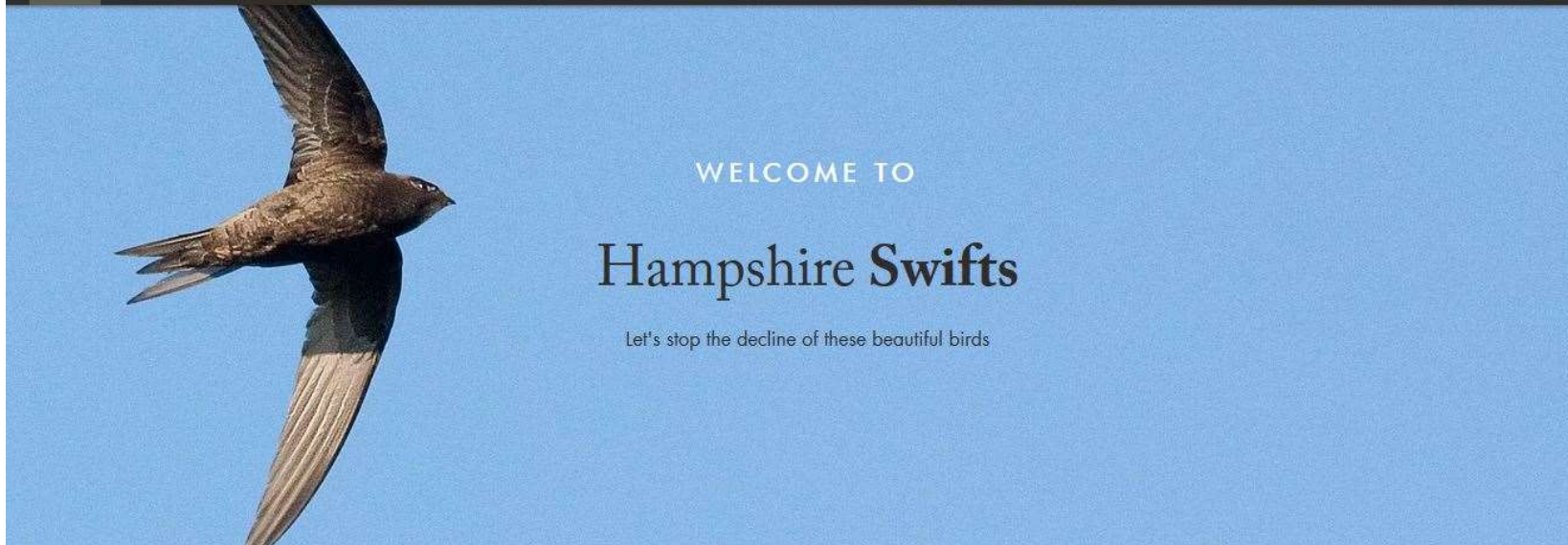
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GROUP TYPE
General

LOCATION

Hampshire Swifts

[Home](#) [About Us](#) [Hampshire Planning](#) [Our Projects](#) [Swift Nest Boxes and Call Systems](#) [Swift Survey](#) [The Science](#) [Swift Trails](#) [Talks & Events](#) [Volunteering Opportunities](#) [Links](#) [Contact Us](#)

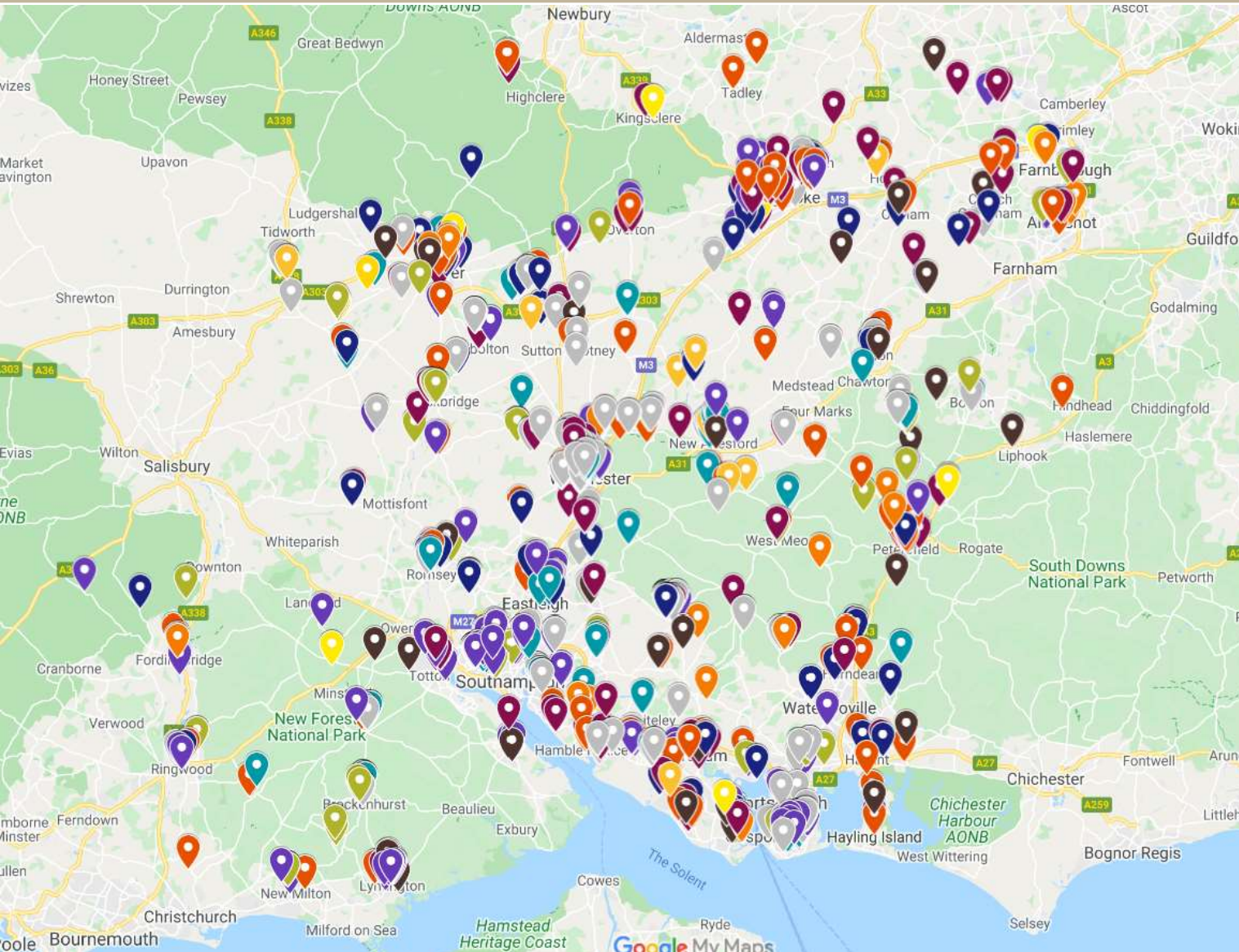


HAMPSHIRE'S SWIFTS NEED YOU



These beautiful and charismatic birds have declined across Hampshire and the UK by more than 50% over the past 23 years.

Hampshire Swifts Nesting Survey

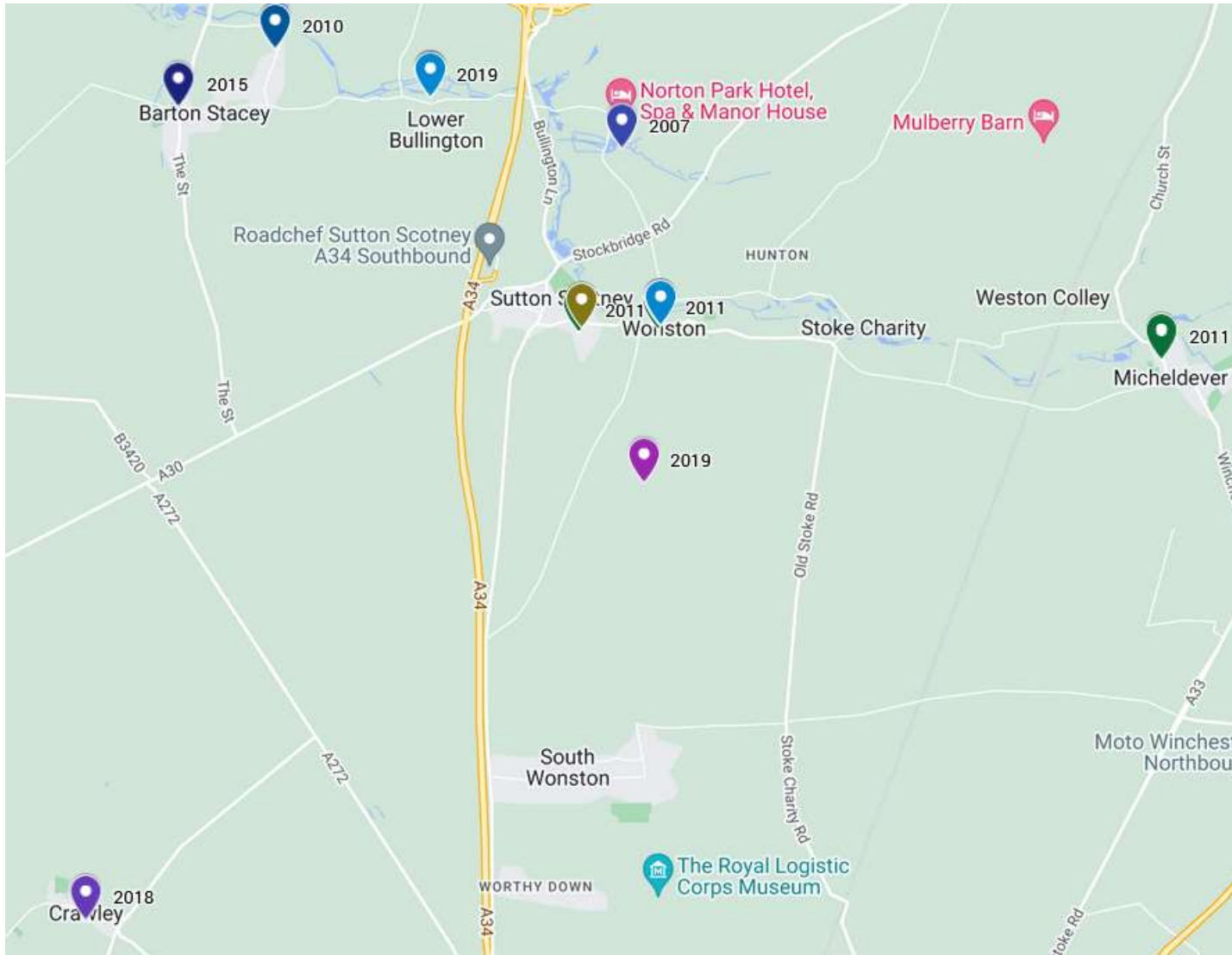


1815 nesting records

1787 to 2021



Hampshire Swifts Nesting Survey



No Swifts nesting in South Wonston that we know about

Sports Pavilion boxes??



Projects – Winchester Cathedral



20 internal boxes early 2021
1 pair nested in 2021
2 pairs nested in 2022 and
11 boxes being used in 2022





Hampshire Swifts



Hampshire Swifts



**Our
Swifts
need
you!**

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 Hampshire Swifts

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