

# Tree Swallow

# Tachycineta bicolor



The photo at left was taken in 2002 by a Garden City student who visited the site. The upper ones were taken 2000 by Rob Alvey

The Tree swallow is a beautiful and iridescent songbird that is very migratory. They are able to hunt down flying insects by swooping and twisting and turning acrobatically in the air. Their large migratory flocks number in the hundreds of thousands. The Tree Swallow is a frequent visitor and nests at the Garden City Bird Sanctuary, sometimes using nest boxes designed for bluebirds.

## Description

Size and Shape- The Tree swallow is a small songbird with a very short beak, long, pointed wings and a notched tail.

Color Pattern- Black head, back, and tail with a patch of iridescent blue-green on head and back, white belly.

Behavior- They are highly social and form migratory flocks. Very agile and acrobatic and forages mostly during flight.

Song- Series of cheerful tweets

Habitat- Live near bodies of water like fields, swamps, and shorelines

Range- Very migratory—Northern part of the US and Canada during the winter. Mexico and other parts of Central America during summer

Diet- Mostly flying insects. Sometimes they eat plants and other vegetation and small mammals if there are no insects flying about.

## Bird Statistics

Scientific name- Tachycineta bicolor

Family- Hirundinidae (Swallows)

Conservation Status- Least concern

Length- 4.7-5.9 in (12-15 cm)

Wingspan- 11.8-13.8 in (30-35 cm)

Weight- 0.6-0.9 oz (16-25 g)

## Egg Statistics

Color- Pale pink- turns white in 4 days

Nest- They use nest boxes or nest in tree cavities

Clutch size- 4-7 eggs

Number of broods- 1-2

Length- 0.7-0.8 in (1.7-2 cm)

Width- 0.5-0.6 in (1.3-1.4 cm)

Incubation period- 11-20 days

Nestling period- 15-25 days

## Additional Information

[http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Tree\\_Swallow/id](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Tree_Swallow/id)

<http://www.sialis.org/tres.htm>

<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birding/tree-swallow/>