

A survey of Swift (*Apus apus*) nesting sites in county Carlow 2018.

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Findings

This survey of swift nesting sites in county Carlow has identified a total of 28 nest entrances (17 Leighlinbridge, 3 Ballon and 8 Carlow Town) across 8 sites. A further 14 sites have been identified as harbouring swift activity indicative of nesting activity. These include areas where swifts were repeatedly seen over the season and areas where bangers/screamers were seen to fly low by at buildings (which is indicative of nesting swifts). It is likely that many of these sites contain nesting swifts and additional prolonged surveying of these sites and those already known to be harbouring nesting swifts should lead to the discovery of new nests.

At sites where nests were found a blue dot is used to pinpoint on an image the spot at which the swifts were seen entering/exiting from their nesting cavity. This is accompanied by a written description of the position of the nest site in relation to the image taken.



Leighlinbridge Village

16/07/2018 60 swifts over village

- A very active swift population with 60-70 birds seen regularly throughout the summer.
- A total of 17 nest entrances have been located at the following sites.

Site 1. Mill above Cullen's Butchers. Milford St.

10 digit Grid Ref = S 68957 65539

Latitude = 52.73660 (north)

Longitude = -6.97899 (west)

Orientation: East

Description of nest sites.

1. Before first set of windows on left in hole in wall above the 2nd story.
2. Before first set of windows on left in hole in wall above the 3rd story.
3. Between windows 5 and 6 from left under gutter above metal plate.
4. Between windows 6 and 7 from left under gutter above metal plate.
5. Above the 7th window on right under gutter.
6. Right of (black) 7th window on 1st floor in hole in wall.
7. Between 2nd and 3rd story on right in hole in wall.
8. There is possibly another nest under the gutter on the adjoining premises to the left. This is thought to be above the 3rd window from the right.



Leighlinbridge Village

Site 2. The Old Mill (Now Apartments). Church St.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 68924 65451** Latitude = **52.73581** (north) Longitude = **-6.97950** (west)

8 nests mostly below gutter at top in holes in stonework.

Orientation: South East

Description of nest sites.

1. In the hole between 1st and 2nd windows from left above 4th level, below metal plate.
2. Hole under fascia between 2nd and 3rd windows by a grey dimple rock above metal plate slightly to left.
3. Above the centre of 7th window under fascia.
4. Above the right of 7th window under fascia.
5. Between 7th and 8th windows under fascia above metal plate over a limestone rock with a streak through it.
6. Above 8th window on left under fascia over a round granite stone on right and a narrow stone on left.
7. Between 8th and 9th windows above metal plate under fascia.
8. Above 9th window to right under fascia left of a long narrow granite stone.



Leighlinbridge Village

Site 2. The Old Mill (Now Apartments). Church St.



Leighlinbridge Village

Site 3. The Black Castle. Main St.

10 digit Grid Ref = S 69042 65488

Latitude = **52.73613** (north)

Longitude = **-6.97775** (west)

16/07/2018 10 bangers

Images and description by Margaret Brennan

As you look at the castle there is a tall narrow slit window in the centre of the castle very near the top. Now look to the very top of the castle and you will see a large rectangular stone just under the top and underneath this is a line of grass/plants, underneath this are 3 smaller blocks with holes between them...the left hand of these 2 holes is the one...enlarge the picture to see this better.

Orientation: North



Ballon Village

A total of at least 3 nest entrances with more nests likely in pub and school.

Site 1. Old National School. Ballykealey Lane

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 83036 65870**

Latitude = **52.73759** (north)

Longitude = **-6.77050** (west)

29/07/2018 6 bangers at NW side.

1 bird landed on right hand side of building under gutter and dropped off again on NW side. Possible nest sites are denoted by blue dots. No birds were seen entering.

North West

South East



Ballon Village

Site 2. Joe Doyle's Pub Main Street Ballon (N80)

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 83098 66026**

Latitude = **52.73898** (north)

Longitude = **-6.76954** (west)

29/07/2018 7 Bangers.

Description of nest sites.

1. From left on west side above the 1st window under tiles above gutter.
2. From left on west side above the 3rd window above the box to left over under tiles over gutter in one of holes.
3. On south side over gutter under tiles about 2nd or 3rd tile from left.

Orientation: West



Ballon Village

Site 2. Joe Doyle's Pub Main Street Ballon (N80)

Orientation: North



Orientation: South



Carlow Town

- A very active swift population with the most birds seen over the town at 127 on 04/08/2018.
- A total of 8 swift nest entrances have been identified with many more sites showing active swifts.

Site 1. Number 10. Brown St.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 72136 76798**

Latitude = **52.83735** (north)

Longitude = **-6.92945** (west)

08/07/2018 2 swifts seen entering and exiting this entrance

Description of nest site.

1. On the very right of building under the gutter in the long horizontal hole.

Orientation: North



Carlow Town

Site 2. Number 13. Castle St.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 71883 76703**

Latitude = **52.83653** (north)

Longitude = **-6.93323** (west)

Description of nest sites.

1. Behind number 13. Above window on left under gutter below chimney to right.

Orientation: South



Carlow Town

Site 3. Riverside Estate. R448.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 72088 76304**

Latitude = **52.83291** (north)

Longitude = **-6.93026** (west)

Nests under tiles over gutter. Very active with around 40 birds including bangers over this row of houses. Likely to be a lot more nests.

04/08/2018 with 42 swifts overhead

Description of nest sites.

1. Above wall on extreme right of building above gutter under tile of house number 2.
2. 1, slightly left of window over wall above gutter under tile on house number 3.
3. 1 above extreme left-hand side of window above gutter under tile on number 3.
4. 1 above right side of window above gutter under tile on number 3.

Orientation: South

Riverside estate. Number 2.



Carlow Town

Riverside estate. Number 3



Site 4. Askea Lawns (1986) numbers 22 and 24.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 73381 76163**

Latitude = **52.83147** (north)

Longitude = **-6.91111** (west)

18/07/2018 with 9 bangers

31/07/2018 with 14 bangers

Description of nest sites

1. At very right of building where fascia ends under gutter on number 22.
2. At very right of building where fascia ends under gutter on number 24.

Swifts were seen landing/ attempting to land at these points. It was unclear whether a hole was present for access.

Carlow Town

Orientation: North West



Other sites with bangers and active swifts in Carlow Town

Carlow Castle. Mill Lane.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 71698 76664**

Latitude = **52.83620** (north)

Longitude = **-6.93597** (west)



Castle Mill House Mill Lane

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 71689 76624**

Latitude = **52.83584** (north)

Longitude = **-6.93611** (west)

25/07/2018 with 18 bangers, On south side opposite this view

Orientation: South



Old Perry's Cash and Carry. Kennedy St.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 71874 76624**

Latitude = **52.83582** (north)

Longitude = **-6.93338** (west)

25/07/2018 with 12 bangers

Orientation: South East



Leinster Crescent (Numbers 1,2,3 and 4) (all same building). Dublin Road

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 72342 77179**

Latitude = **52.84075** (north)

Longitude = **-6.92630** (west)

09/07/2018 2 bangers

12/07/2018 6 bangers

Orientation: South East



Saint Vincent de Paul. Dublin Road

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 72453 77281**

Latitude = **52.84164** (north)

Longitude = **-6.92463** (west)

07/07/2018 6 bangers

Orientation: North West



St. Dymphna's Hospital Carlow

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 72309 77428**

Latitude = **52.84298** (north)

Longitude = **-6.92675** (west)

07/07/2018 24 birds overhead with 6 bangers low over outbuildings

12/07/2018 13 bangers



St Patricks College (Carlow College) College St.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 72365 76817**

Latitude = **52.83749** (north)

Longitude = **-6.92604** (west)

05/07/2018 14 Swifts banging at back of college around Student Union Building.

06/07/2018 10 Swifts flying overhead above college

Possible nesting sites under eaves where holes are available.

Orientation: North East



7 Springs/ Spring Dale/ Oakley Park

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 73013 76409**

Latitude = **52.83373** (north)

Longitude = **-6.91652** (west)

18/07/2018. 19 bangers

31/07/2018 34 active swifts

Bangers seen flying at back of houses from number 10-17 Seven Springs, and back of numbers 22-39 Springdale.



St. Patricks Avenue numbers 31,33,34

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 72994 76695**

Latitude = **52.83631** (north)

Longitude = **-6.91674** (west)

22/06/2018 11 bangers

18/07/2018. 4 bangers.

31/07/2018. 8 bangers.

Orientation: West



Youth Centre. Glendale Avenue.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 72701 77224**

Latitude = **52.84110** (north)

Longitude = **-6.92097** (west)

31/07/2018 17 active swifts



Green Road Estate

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 71962 75483**

Latitude = **52.82556** (north)

Longitude = **-6.93232** (west)

25/07/2018 with 27 screeching swifts over estate

04/08/2018 with 32 screeching swifts over estate

Dublin St

12/07/2018 27 swifts over street at 20:45. 12/07/2018

Hanrahans/Kevin Barry/JKL avenues

31/07/2018. 22 active swifts

A Lone Site in the Country between Nurney and Leighlinbridge.

The Harrow Cross L3044 Nurney.

10 digit Grid Ref = **S 71707 66791**

Latitude = **52.74749** (north)

Longitude = **-6.93801** (west)

19/07/2018 1 Swift banging at south side above left window on right.

Orientation: South



References

All images copyright Pádraig Webb except for those of the Black Castle site which are copyright Margaret Brennan.

Grid references and coordinates obtained using gridreference.ie.

Grid Reference Ireland, 2018. Available at <<http://www.gridreference.ie/>> Accessed 19 September 2018.