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WHICH SWIFT NEST BOX AND ATTRACTION CALL SYSTEM

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- Swifts are colonial nesters so try to provide as many nest compartments as possible. We would consider three nest compartments per project to be an absolute minimum and 12 would be nice colony and 20 + is an excellent colony.
- Once Swifts have found a nest site they will breed there forever (a pair is faithful to its nest site and should one of the birds die it will be replaced by a new mate, thus giving continuous occupancy of the nest site(s)) so it is important that if nest boxes deteriorate that they are replaced like for like and the entrance hole should be positioned in the same location.
- Nest boxes should be installed at a minimum of 4 metres above the nearest flat surface below where the boxes are installed i.e. ground or flat roof but the higher the better.
- **Nest boxes should be installed facing North or East.** They can be installed facing West if there is an overhang providing shade. They should **NOT be installed facing South** because the boxes will get too hot in full sun and chicks may die or eject themselves from the nest in extreme heat.
- Entrance hole dimension is important. Ideal entrance hole size is 29mm x 65mm (height not less than 28.5 and not greater than 30mm). If the entrance hole is greater than 30mm then Starlings will be able to access the nesting compartment. If the entrance hole is smaller than 28.5mm it will be too small for Swifts.
- Ideal minimum internal nest compartment size which will be adequate for a roosting Swift family (2 adults and 3 fully grown chicks) and will enable the chicks to spread their wings so that they can do their pre-fledging exercises is:
Length 30cm x Height 15cm x Depth 15cm.
- The attraction call is an essential element of any nest box project. You should play attraction calls until Swifts have taken up residence in at least two or ideally all of the nest boxes.

All of the nest boxes detailed herein are suitable for Swifts and well proven in use. There are many other models of "Swift Nest Boxes" available on the market. There is no independent quality certification process for nest boxes and so not all nest boxes are fit for the species claimed, despite best intentions. We recommend checking the suitability of any other nest box models you are considering with us prior to purchase. Our email is swiftconservationireland@gmail.com

EXTERNAL MOUNTING

The nest boxes listed below can be mounted externally on an existing building or other vertical surface. They should ideally be installed facing North or East. They can be facing West if protected from sun by an overhang. They should NOT be installed facing South. Minimum height for installation is 4.5 metres ABOVE ground level or nearest flat surface e.g. flat roof

1) Schwegler 17A (used by Swift Conservation Ireland)

Manufacturer	Schwegler
Model Name/No.	17A triple compartment nest box
Material made from	Woodcrete (wood pulp) and cement mix)
Pros	Very well made. Woodcrete is suitable and long-lasting for wet Irish weather conditions. Swift Conservation Ireland has some in place for 12+ years and they are still in good condition. Be sure to request the Irish spec. entrance hole size that is 29x70mm using unique Schwegler Product Code 613-IRL – see note below under ‘Where to order’. The entrance hole disc can be removed so cameras can be installed. See this document for installation guidelines https://www.swiftconservation.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/installing_cameras.pdf
Cons	Has a flat roof so predators can sit on top of the box if it is not installed under eaves or under an overhang.
Where to order	https://www.quickcrop.ie/products/triple-swift-nest-box-17a-irish-spec.html Quick Crop are based in Ballymote, Co. Sligo
Approximate cost	€400
Shipping Cost	Free shipping
Delivery time	Within days when they have them in stock.



2) Schwegler 17B

Manufacturer	Schwegler
Model Name/No.	17B is a single compartment nest box that is deeper than the 17A providing more space for a nest box camera and for the chicks to exercise
Material made from	Woodcrete (wood pulp) and cement mix)
Pros	Very well made. Woodcrete is suitable and long-lasting for wet Irish weather conditions. Ensure you get the Irish spec. entrance hole size that is 29x70mm using unique Schwegler Product Code 613-IRL – see note below under ‘Where to order’. The entrance hole disc can be removed so cameras can be installed. See this document for installation guidelines https://www.swiftconservation.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/installing_cameras.pdf
Cons	Has a flat roof so predators can sit on top of the box if it is not installed under eaves or under an overhang.
Where to order	https://www.quickcrop.ie/products/single-swift-box-17b.html Quick Crop are based in Ballymote, Co. Sligo
Approximate cost	€180.00
Shipping Cost	Free shipping
Delivery time	Within days when they have them in stock.



3) Vivara Pro GZ 10

Manufacturer	Vivara Pro in the Netherlands
Model Name/No.	GZ 10 – WITH FORWARD FACING ENTRANCE NOT DOWNWARD FACING ENTRANCE
Material made from	Woodstone (wood pulp and concrete)
Pros	Woodstone is suitable and long-lasting for the wet Irish conditions. Sloping roof which means predators can't sit on top of the box. Large internal nest space. Indented nest mould in the floor of the nest box.
Cons	Heavy at 9kg per single box. Care must be taken to not over-tighten the mounting bolts as this could crack the woodstone.
Where to order	Quick Crop in Co. Sligo now stock this model of nest box. https://www.quickcrop.ie/products/swift-facade-nesting-box-nkgz10.html Or you can buy directly from VivaraPro in the Netherlands by emailing info@vivarapro.com
Approximate cost	Approx. €75
VAT & Customs	If you buy directly from VivaraPro in the Netherlands then VAT will only be applied once you have confirmed your order and they have sent the final invoice to you - please bear this in mind. There is no customs to pay since it's being shipped from within the EU.
Shipping Cost	If you place a bulk order of minimum €1,000 you can request a discount
Delivery time	Within a few weeks of confirming order



4) Action for Swifts Polymer Nest box

Manufacturer	Action for Swifts UK
Model Name/No.	Polymer Nest Box
Material made from	Polymer
Pros	Moulded Polymer so totally waterproof. Very light at 1.5kg so easy to install. Has insulation on inside of the roof and a grippy surface on the floor of the box. It comes in three colours – grey, brick red and sandy brown.
Note	New to the market since June 2024 so no known uptake as of June 2025.
Where to order	Directly from Action for Swifts by sending enquiry via the website https://www.actionforswifts.com/polymer-swift-boxes
Approximate cost	Approx. €75
VAT & Customs	On ordering inform them you are based in the Republic of Ireland and no UK VAT will be applied. You will have to pay Irish VAT once the product enters Ireland.
Shipping Cost	This is calculated by Action for Swifts once you place your order.
Delivery time	Within a few weeks of confirming order



BUILDING INTO NEW WALLS

The nest boxes listed below can be built into new walls.

See the booklet on the Swift Conservation Ireland giving best practice guidelines on the building-in process.

<https://www.swiftconservation.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Booklet-Building-Next-Boxes-into-Walls-PDF.pdf>

NOTE: Cameras cannot be installed in built-in nest boxes because they can't be accessed post installation unless you have a bespoke project that enables access to clean and maintain the cameras.

1) Vivara Pro GZ 03

Manufacturer	Vivara Pro in the Netherlands
Model Name/No.	GZ 03 https://www.vivaraapro.nl/shop/inbouwstenen-voor-vleermuizen-gierzwaluwen-en-huismussen/inbouwstenen-gierzwaluw/ib-gz-03-inbouwsteen-gierzwaluw-renovatie/
Material made from	Woodstone (wood pulp and concrete)
Pros	The material and size of the box is suitable for incorporating into concrete block walls. It is made specifically for building into walls.
Cons	The box protrudes a few cms into the cavity but there is still plenty room for insulation.
Where to order	Quick Crop in Co. Sligo now stock this model of nest box. https://www.quickcrop.ie/products/built-in-swift-nest-box-ib-gz-03.html Or you can buy directly from VivaraPro in the Netherlands by emailing info@vivaraapro.com
Approximate cost	Approx. €65
VAT & Customs	If you buy from VivaraPro in the Netherlands the VAT will be applied once you have confirmed your order and they have sent the invoice so please bear this in mind. There is no customs to pay as shipped from within the EU
Postage/Shipping Cost	If buying from VivaraPro in the Netherlands and you place a bulk order of minimum €1,000 you can ask for a discount. If you buy from QuickCrop then postage is free over €65.
Delivery time	Within a few weeks of confirming order



2) Schwegler 17A

Manufacturer	Schwegler
Model Name/No.	17A triple compartment nest box
Material made from	Woodcrete (wood plup and cement mix)
Pros	Very well made. This nest box is easy to incorporate into concrete block walls. Large internal nest space. Be sure to request Irish spec. entrance hole size that is 29x70mm unique Schwegler Product Code 613-IRL – see note below under ‘Where to Order’
Cons	The box is 1 metre long so we recommend placing a lintel over each nest box as per picture below. The standard entrance hole size for the Schwegler 17A is 32x70mm which will let Starlings enter the nest box.
Where to order	https://www.quickcrop.ie/products/schwegler-17a-triple-swift-box-irish-spec.html Quick Crop based in Ballymote, Co. Sligo
Approximate cost	€400
Shipping Cost	Free shipping from QuickCrop
Delivery time	Within days if they have the nest box in stock.



ATTRACTION CALLS

You need to play attraction calls to help Swifts locate nest boxes. Non-breeding Swifts are flying 24/7 so they have to find their nest site whilst flying. They do this in two ways 1) by following breeding birds who have a nest site which gives them an idea what sort of location they should look out for to find their own nest site 2) by listening for birds within a nest site. It is method 2) that we are mimicking with an attraction call system.

You should play attraction calls from 1 May to 31 August each year until Swifts have taken up residence in at least half of the nest compartments or ideally all of the nest them.

Note: Do not play the calls at full volume because this distorts them and could cause a public disturbance. We have found that keeping the volume to around half is the best.

Calls for externally mounted nest box projects:

We would recommend the **Peak Boxes** system from the UK. They ship to Ireland but you need to email them directly to get a price but please note that you'll have to pay customs/VAT when the parcel arrives in Ireland. <https://peakboxes.co.uk/shop-sound-systems>

Quick Crop now sell the Peak Boxes call system <https://www.quickcrop.ie/products/multi-bird-call-sound-system.html>

Or

We would also recommend Tweetbird Call Systems. They do wired, battery operated and Solar Systems. You can purchase one system at a time in Euros and there is no customs to pay when they enter Ireland. The purchase price at the on-line check-out includes postage. <https://tweetbird.com>

Or

You can assemble your own system. Information on this can be found in this document on the SCI website. <https://www.swiftconservation.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/How-to-Assemble-Attraction-Call-System.pdf>

Calls for built-in nest box projects:

See page 18 of our booklet for details on installing a marine quality waterproof speaker <https://www.swiftconservation.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Booklet-Building-Next-Boxes-into-Walls-PDF.pdf>

Or

You can use the **Peak Boxes** system from the UK because it's an extremely good system and quite reasonable in price. To order directly from Peak Boxes visit their website <https://peakboxes.co.uk/shop-sound-systems> You'll need to pay Irish VAT when they arrive in Ireland.

Quick Crop now sell the Peak Boxes call system <https://www.quickcrop.ie/products/multi-bird-call-sound-system.html>

Or

You can contact Swift Conservation Ireland who may be able to supply. swiftconservationireland@gmail.com
