

BIODIVERSITY WEEK

ANIMAL OF THE DAY

SWIFTS



- The Swift's name tells us a lot about it! The name in Irish is Gabhlán gaoithe (Wind Catcher). Swifts are very fast! They can reach speeds of over 110 kilometers per hour. This makes them one of the fastest animals around!
- Swifts spend almost all of their time in the air- eating, drinking and even sleeping!
- Swifts return to the same nest in Ireland and meet up again with the partner every year! What a great sense of direction!
- Swifts migrate to Ireland for late Spring and Summer. They spend September to March in Africa before making the long journey every year.
- Many other birds like Swallows, House Martins, Chiffchaffs and Cuckoos also migrate to Ireland for our warm seasons.
- Birds also migrate in the other direction! Some birds like Brent Geese, Mute Swans and Redwings arrive in Ireland just as the Swifts, Swallows etc are leaving! This means we have different birds to spot all through the year as well as our permanent residents!
- Birds are not the only animals who migrate. Many sea creatures swim thousands of miles every year while some insects like certain Butterflies and Locusts fly across continents!

Check out some of the activities that may suit your class below!

Junior Videos	Indoor Activities	Outdoor Activities
Discover more about Swifts in Ireland in this Birdwatch Ireland vid!	Learn how to identify the different songs of birds in this fun activity .	Head out on a walk and see what summer visitors you see. Use this migrating birds spotter sheet!
Check out these Swifts drinking while flying!	Junior Bird Feeder Activity: Make a bird feeding necklace .	Play Bird Bingo! Print off these Bird ID sheets (in English and As Gaeilge) and see who can spot three in a row first!
Learn about how some larger birds migrate in this beautiful video!	Senior Bird Feeder Activity: Make your own Fatballs	Try our Sound Mapping Activity . Lesson and draw the sounds of birdsong in this relaxing activity.