



Citizen science guide to CHIMNEY SWIFTS

Narrowing your search:

- Potential Chimneys are built of brick, stucco, stone, or concrete
- Used chimneys at least 2.5 bricks wide, and extend well above roofline
- Occupied chimneys do not have visible covers, spark protectors, guards, or flues



Appears Open



Appears open with clay or terra cotta liners



Appears closed by metal liner - may not be visible



Appears closed by animal guard/ spark protector

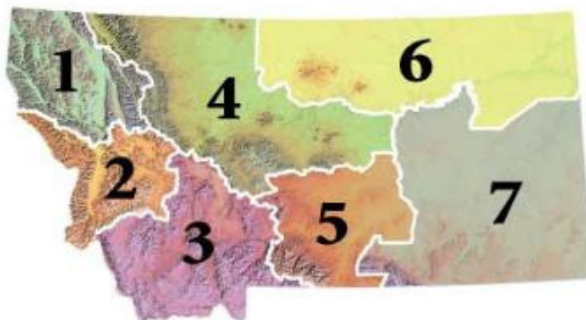


Appears closed or open



Citizen efforts to monitor Chimney Swifts have emerged across North America to help track the decline of this unique aerial insectivore. Its behavior of communal roosting and nesting in chimneys throughout cities and towns make them a fun and interesting species to monitor. During spring and fall migration Chimney Swifts fly most of the day, only roosting between sunset and dawn. During the breeding season in June and July, pairs will separate from the communal roost to nest alone in individual chimneys, and occasionally hollow cottonwoods.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and Montana Audubon are working throughout eastern Montana to discover just where our Chimney Swifts are active and breeding. Unlike searching for other swifts, Chimney Swifts are best surveyed in towns and near buildings with large chimneys! Surveys occur for 30 minutes before and after sunset, during June and July, with observers being stationed for just a short time at selected chimneys. If you'd like to participate please think about what region you'd like to visit. Surveys will be conducted in Regions 5, 6, and 7, and your contact for the project will vary by region.



Bob Martinka photo



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



Citizen science guide to *CHIMNEY SWIFTS*

Knowing Montana's Swifts:

Chimney Swift - *Chaetura pelagica*

A small, uniformly dark swift with a uniquely eastern range throughout Montana. Often called a “cigar with wings”. These birds are often seen around towns and cities at dusk, where they frequently roost and nest in chimneys. They eat insects and feed on the wing, and are often seen foraging high in the air as they exhibit a characteristically swift-like fast, stiff wingbeat. The sexes look similar but slightly different in size. Plumage is slightly glossy, especially on wing, and they have a short rounded tail with spiny tips sometimes visible. They have more blackish than gray rump and upper tail-coverts. The throat, chin, and cheeks are pale colored.



Swift photos courtesy of Richard Crossby, WikiCommons



Vaux's Swift



White-throated Swift



Black Swift

Contribute your swift sightings to science! Please record observations of swifts and include date, time, location of observation, gps location if available, weather information, and who made the observation. Please include detailed information as you could help discover a new nesting location in the state! To submit your observations, just send us a quick email!

For more information on Montana's swift species visit: fieldguide.mt.gov

For more information on species protocol and citizen science opportunities visit: www.mtaudubon.org