

277 Common Swift

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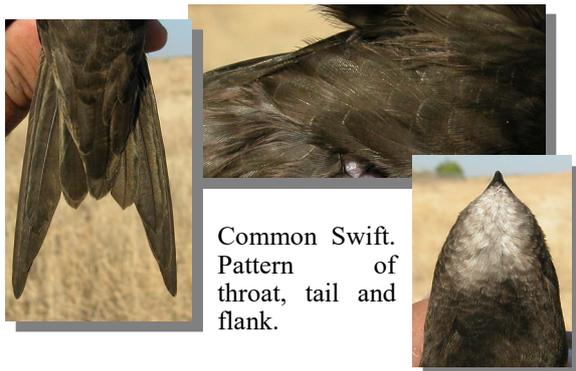


Common Swift. Adult (13-VII).

COMMON SWIFT (*Apus apus*)

IDENTIFICATION

14-16 cm. Plumage blackish brown; with some greenish gloss on upperparts; whitish throat; long wings; forked tail.



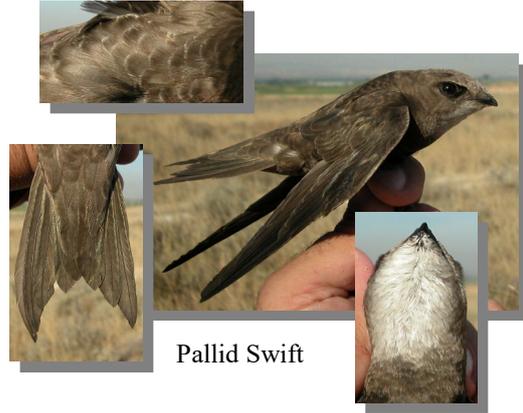
Common Swift. Pattern of throat, tail and flank.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Can recall a **Barn Swallow**, which has white underparts and buff throat and forehead. **Pallid Swift** has bigger pale patch on throat, flanks with pale streaked, no so black plumage and less forked tail.



Barn Swallow



Pallid Swift

SEXING

Plumage of both sexes alike.

AGEING

4 age groups can be recognized:

Juvenile with feathers on body, wing and tail edged white; outermost tail feather with both webs rounded and curved. **CAUTION:** in late summer some birds have lost much of their white edging by wear.

2nd year similar to **adult**, but recognizable by retained **juvenile** flight feathers and wing coverts, which will be very worn; outermost tail feather more rounded than in **adults** but less than in **juveniles** (**CAUTION:** this characteristic is not always useful due to overlap).

3rd year only in birds which have retained **juvenile** 10th primary, which will be very strongly worn and reduced to the shaft.

Adult with plumage without white edges; flight feathers and wing coverts less worn than in **2nd year**; if outer primaries retained, then brownish and worn contrasting with the neighbouring moulted feathers; outermost tail feather with both webs straight.



Common Swift. Ageing. Pattern of a wing covert: left adult; right juvenile.

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Common Swift. Ageing. Pattern of the outermost tail feather: left adult; right juvenile.



Common Swift. Juvenile (10-VII)

MOULT

Complete **postbreeding** moult but some birds can retain the 10th primary. Partial **postjuvenile** moult, involving body feathers, tail and only lesser wing coverts; sometimes some birds can retain their 10th primary till their second **postbreeding** moult. Both age classes moult in wintering sites.



PHENOLOGY

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII

STATUS IN ARAGON

Summer visitor. Widely distributed throughout the Region, being absent from uninhabited areas of the Pyrenees and the Ebro Basin.



Common Swift. Head pattern: top adult (13-VII); middle 2nd year (13-VII); bottom juvenile (10-VII)



Common Swift. 2nd year (13-VII)



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Common Swift.
Crown pattern: top left adult (13-VII); top right 2nd year (13-VII); left juvenile (10-VII)



Common Swift.
Breast pattern: top left adult (13-VII); top right 2nd year (13-VII); left juvenile (10-VII)



Common Swift.
Throat pattern: top left adult (13-VII); top right 2nd year (13-VII); left juvenile (10-VII)



Common Swift.
Upperpart pattern: top left adult (13-VII); top right 2nd year (01-VII); left juvenile (10-VII)

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Common Swift. Flank pattern: top adult (13-VII); middle 2nd year (13-VII); bottom juvenile (10-VII)



Common Swift. Juvenile: pattern of tail and the outermost tail feather (10-VII)



Common Swift. Adult: pattern of tail and the outermost tail feather (13-VII)



Common Swift. Adult: pattern of primary coverts (13-VII)



Common Swift. 2nd year: pattern of tail and the outermost tail feather (01-VII)



Common Swift. 2nd year: pattern of primary coverts (01-VII)

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Common Swift. Juvenile: pattern of primary coverts (10-VII)



Common Swift. Juvenile: pattern of secondaries and wing coverts (10-VII)



Common Swift. Adult: pattern of secondaries and wing coverts (13-VII)



Common Swift. Adult: pattern of primaries (13-VII)



Common Swift. 2nd year: pattern of secondaries and wing coverts (13-VII)



Common Swift. Adult with 10th primary retained: pattern of primaries (02-V)

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Common Swift. 3rd year: pattern of primaries (01-VII)



Common Swift. Adult with 10th primary retained: pattern of wing (02-V)



Common Swift. 2nd year: pattern of primaries (13-VII)



Common Swift. Juvenile: pattern of primaries (10-VII)



Common Swift. 2nd year: pattern of wing (13-VII)



Common Swift. Adult: pattern of wing (13-VII)



Common Swift. Juvenile: pattern of wing (10-VII)