

# Helping swifts in





## About BirdLife Cyprus

- Non-profit, non-governmental organisation
- Formed in 2003 through the merger of 2 ornithological societies
- 10 staff
- Approximately 500 active members and 5000 supporters
- **BirdLife International** partner in Cyprus



# Our mission



**Protecting the wild birds of Cyprus, their habitats,  
and wider biodiversity, through monitoring,  
conservation and education actions,  
and by developing people's appreciation of nature.**



# Some of BirdLife Cyprus' projects

- Campaign against illegal bird trapping
- LIFE Oroklini – wetland restoration
- Akrotiri Marsh (Darwin Plus) – wetland restoration
- Management plans for all SPAs in Cyprus
- Barn Owl Project
- Swift Project

# Campaign against illegal Bird Trapping

- Industrial scale
- 155 different species of birds found trapped on mistnets and limesticks
- Over 2 million birds could have been killed in Cyprus in autumn 2015 based on our latest report
- BirdLife Cyprus is working for a 'zero tolerance' approach



© BirdLife Cyprus,  
Trapped Blackcap



# Wetland Restoration

## Oroklini Lake (LIFE+)



© M. Apostolidou, Oroklini Lake



© S. Christodoulides,  
Spur-winged Lapwing



© A. Stoecker,  
Black-winged Stilt

# Wetland Restoration

## Akrotiri Marsh (Darwin+)



© Melpo Apostolidou, Akrotiri Marsh



© Martin Pettitt, Ferruginous Duck



# Barn owl projects

The main objective of the project in Cyprus, is to use Barn Owls as pest controllers of rodents by placing nest boxes in certain sites in order to minimise rodenticide use. (2015-16 & 2018-19)



© D. Nye





# The Swift Project in Cyprus



# 3 species of Swifts in Cyprus



Pallid Swift



Alpine Swift

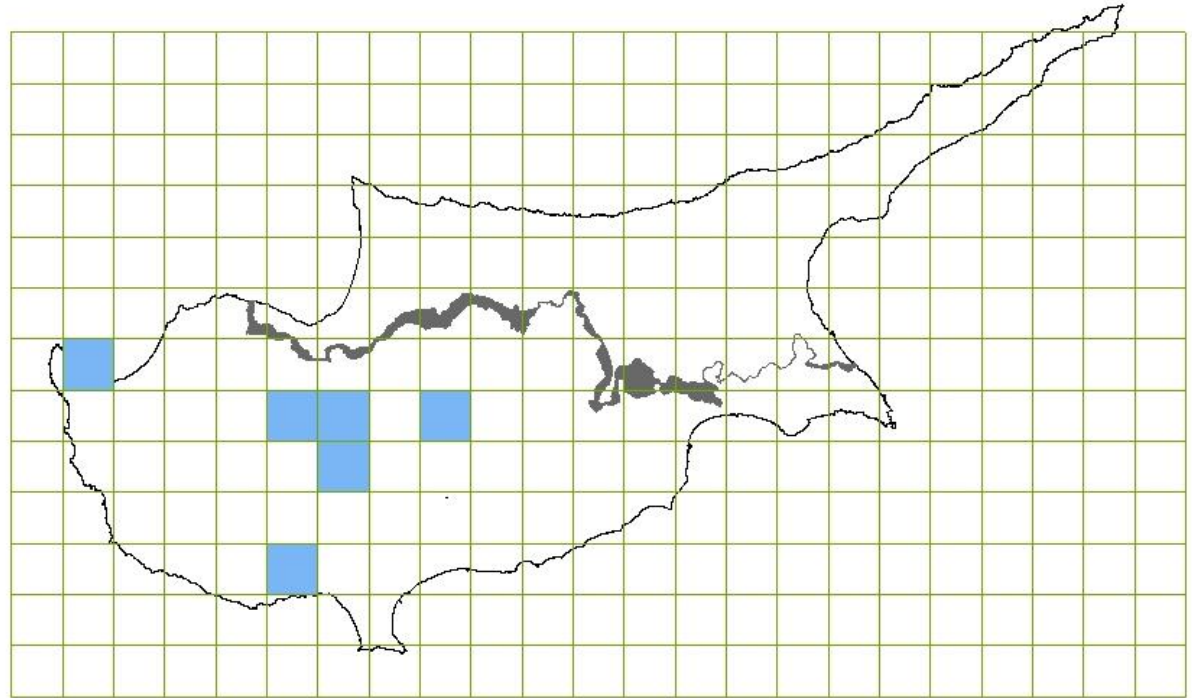


Common Swift

# Pallid Swift



Pallid Swift © Bogpumper /  
Commons Wikimedia

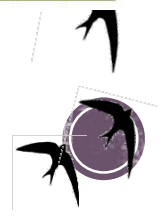
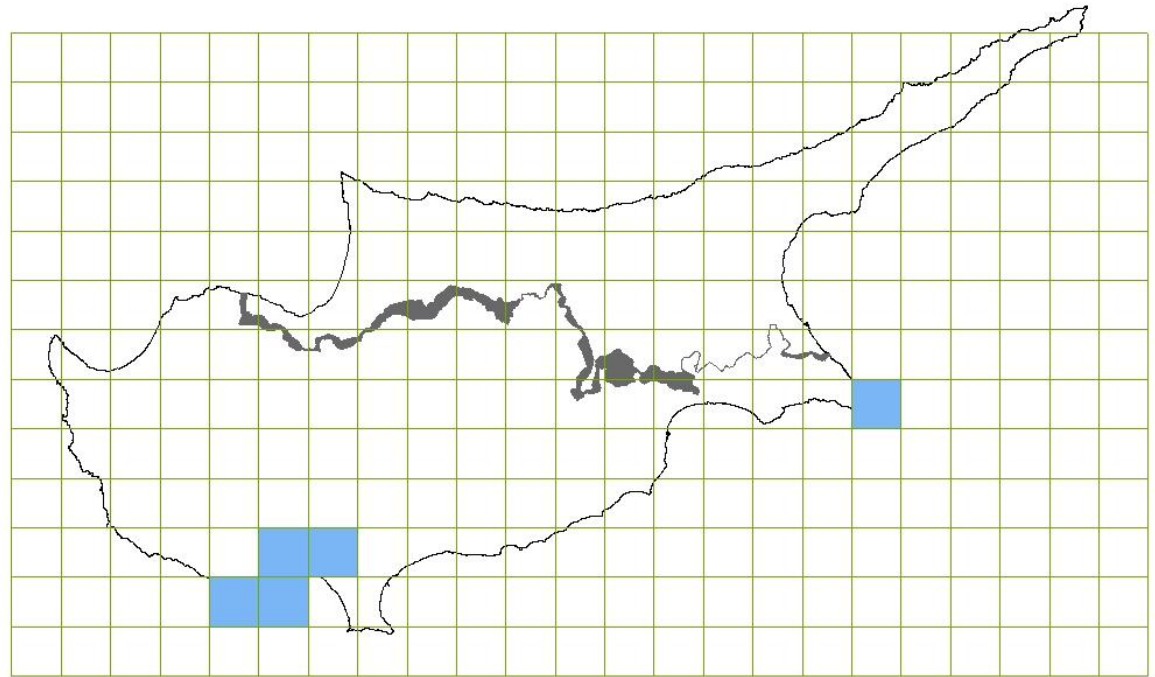


# Alpine Swift



Alpine Swift © Jonathan  
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Tachymarptis melba 10km x 10km Breeding Distribution

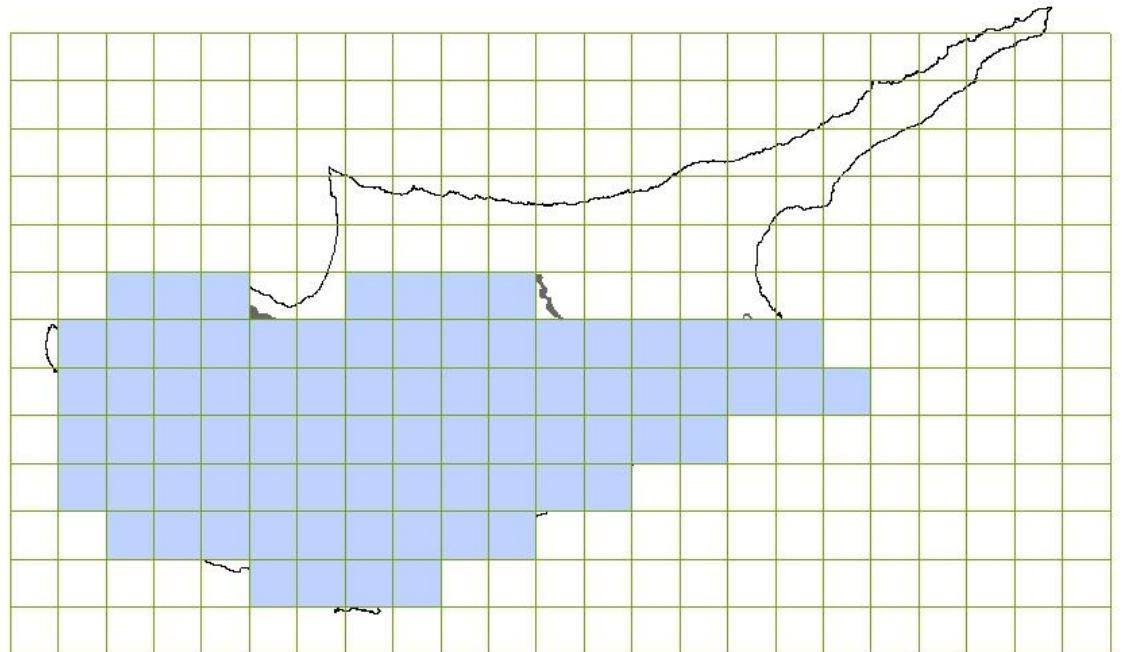


Apus apus 10km x 10km Breeding Range

# Common Swift



Common Swift © Albert  
Stoecker



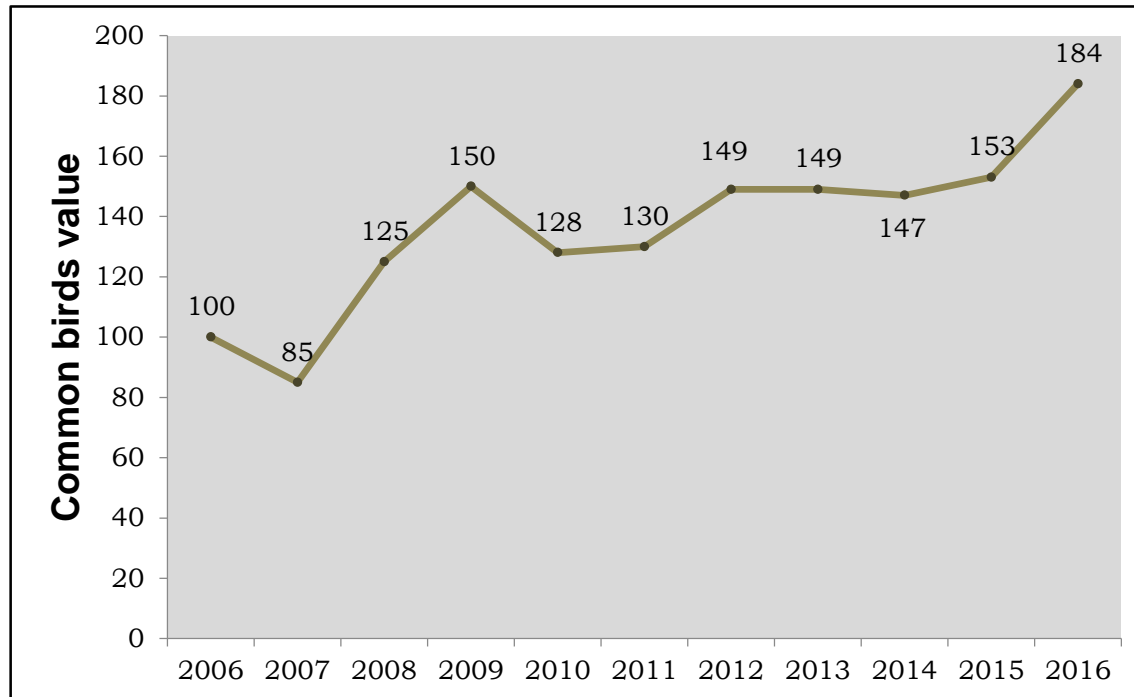
- **Arrive in March** (usually with some first records in February)
- **Leave by late July**
- **Passage birds until September** (even October)

## The most up-to-date population estimates (Article 12 reporting in 2012) for Cyprus are:

- Common Swift 15,000-60,000 pairs (uncertain trend)
- Alpine Swift 200-500 pairs (trend unknown)
- Pallid Swift 200-1,000 pairs (trend unknown)

# Common Swift

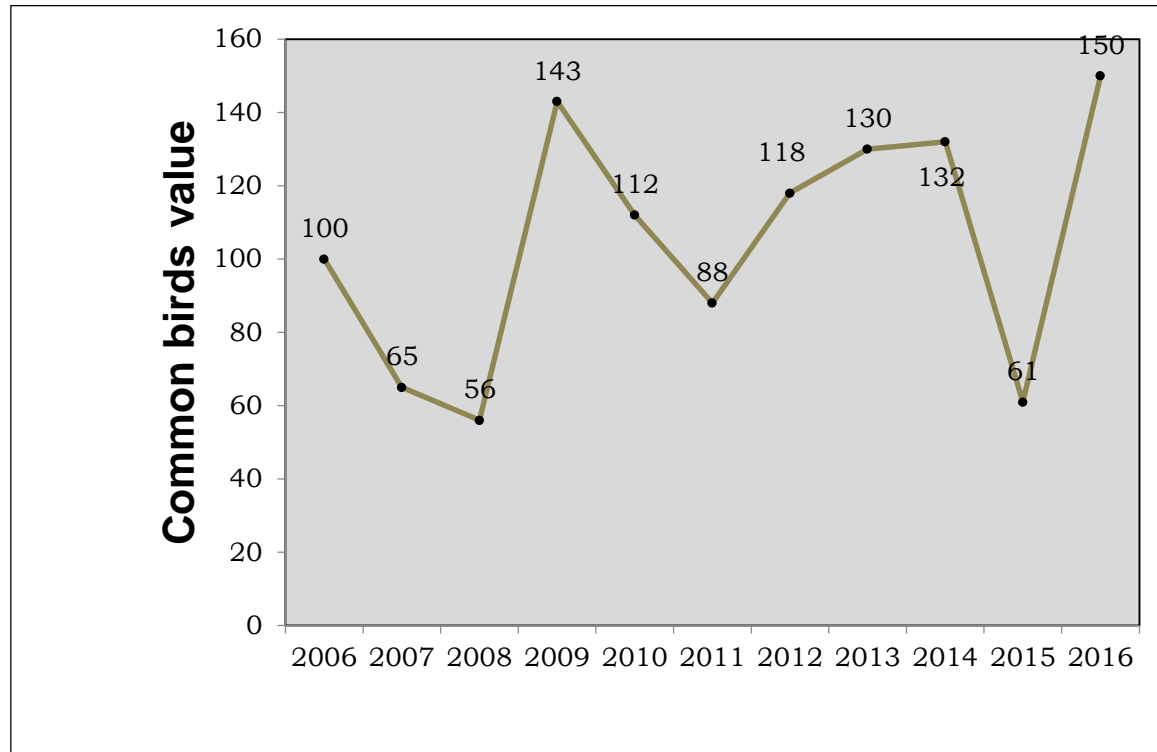
Trend Evaluation 2006 - 2016: Uncertain trend (data from 103 sites)





# Common Swift

Trend Evaluation 2006 - 2016: Uncertain trend (data from 85 farmland sites)





**A joint project for SPNI, the Friends Of The Swifts association and BirdLife Cyprus, using Swift nest boxes as an awareness raising tool**



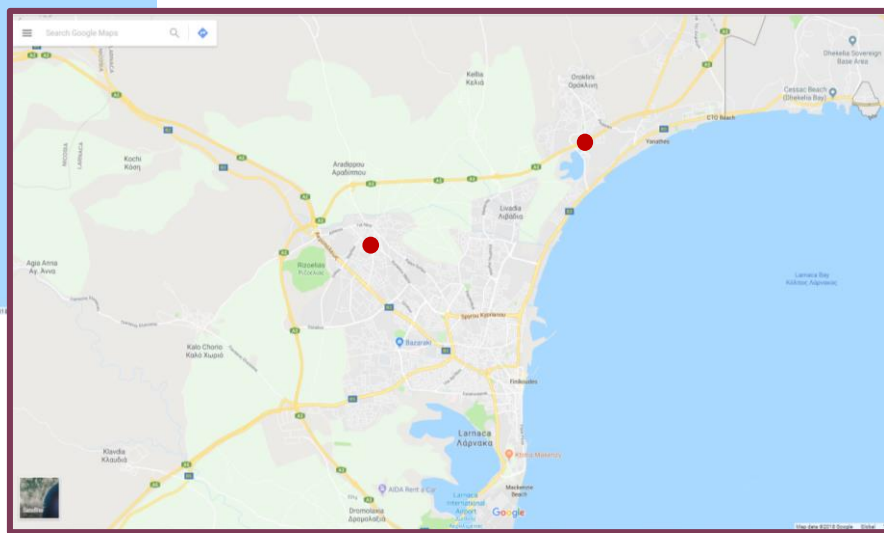
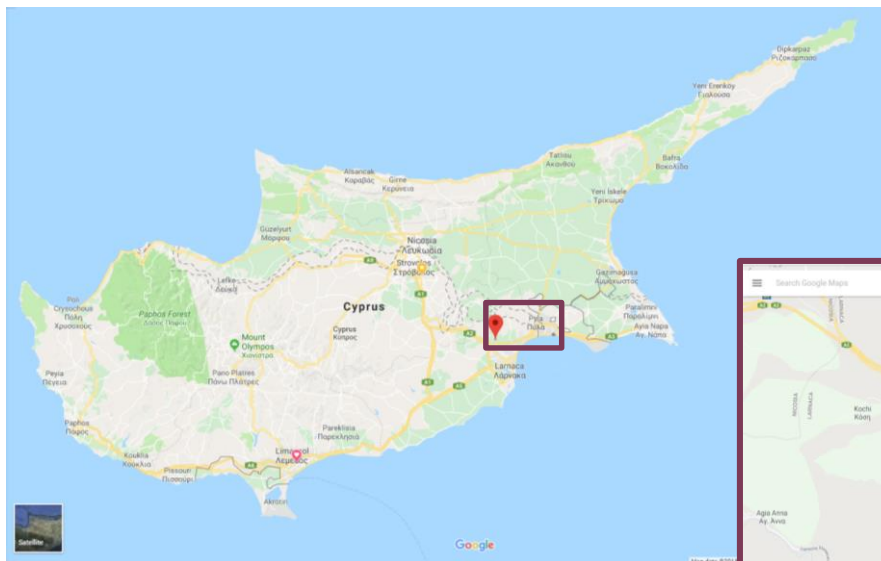


**Aim of the project:**

- **Establish foundations for an awareness raising program**
- **Help Common Swift by installing nest boxes**

- Activities in Cyprus:

Engaged two communities:  
Aradippou & Voroklini (9km apart)



Both communities have old town centers with old buildings and recent developed areas with no space for swift nesting.





## The project included:



# Exchange visits to Israel and Cyprus

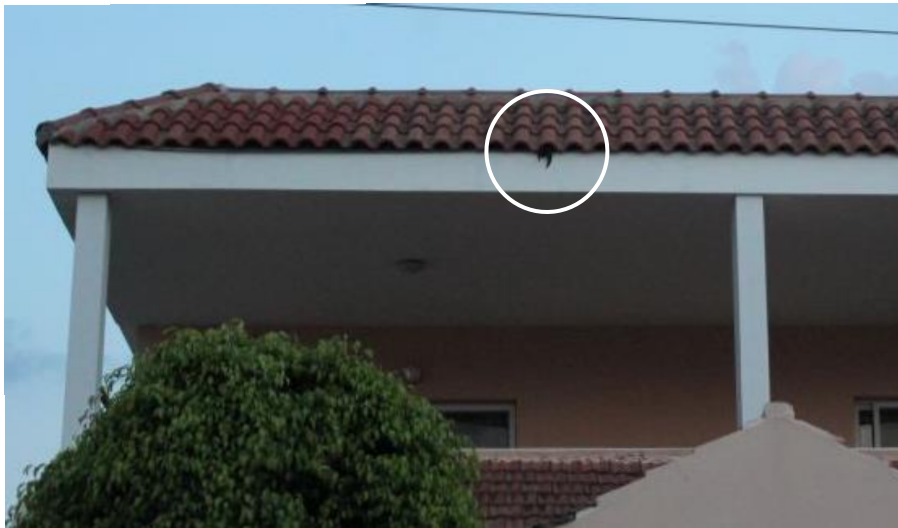


# Exchange visits to Israel and Cyprus





# Observation studies to identify sites for nest box installation





ΕΙΟ



ΑΡΑΧ

TOWN HALL



# Workshops



# Education work with schools



“I am a Swift  
I am in trouble”

# Leaflet for the general public



**HELPING SWIFTS**  
THE MASTERS  
OF THE SKY

[www.birdlifecyprus.org](http://www.birdlifecyprus.org)

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BirdLifeCyprus

Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel  
Πτηνολογικός Σύνδεσμος Κύπρου  
BirdLife Cyprus  
TLCF

The Swift Project is implemented in cooperation with SPNI (BirdLife in Israel) and is funded by the Tasso Leventis Conservation Foundation.

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Πτηνολογικός Σύνδεσμος Κύπρου  
BirdLife Cyprus

The project opened the doors to other collaborations:

Exploring the possibility to install nest boxes at the Ministry of Interior and the Cyprus University of Technology





Currently working with  
Cyprus  
Telecommunication  
Authority to install 5  
nest boxes on their  
buildings



# Our next steps...

- Establish a good collaboration with CYTA and expand the program as part of the Authority's corporate Social Responsibility
- Liaise with corporate companies
- ...and any other inspiring ideas that may come out of this seminar!



# Thank you for your attention!

