

Swift Count 2018!

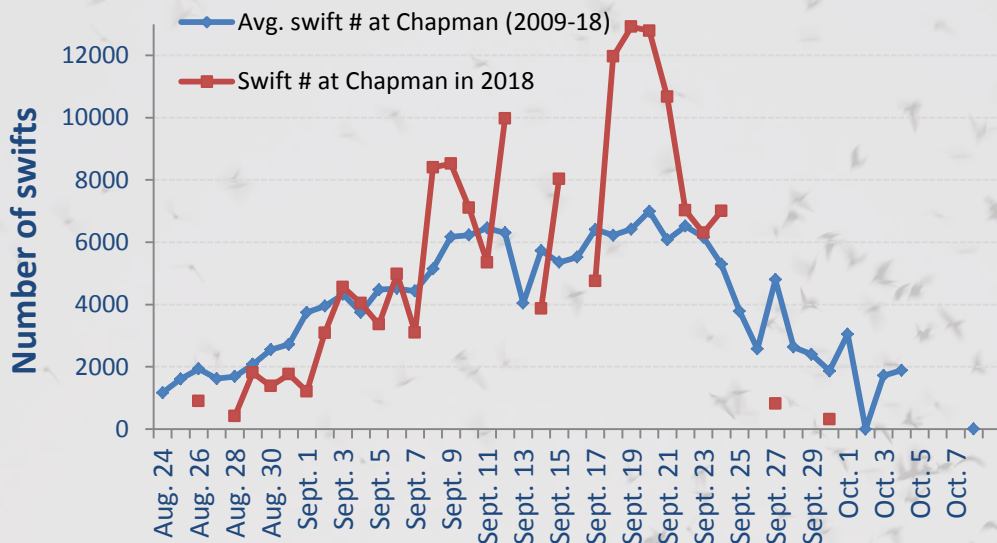


Why we count swifts

Since 2009, the Audubon Society of Portland has been counting migrating Vaux's Swifts at Chapman Elementary School and at a number of other sites in the Portland-metro region as part of a community science project to monitor population trends of these exciting birds. In addition to tracking local numbers, these counts contribute toward a larger [Pacific Coast-wide effort to track this bird species](#), which has had a declining population trend in the Northwest over the past several decades.

2018 effort at Chapman

In 2018, 23 volunteers monitored Chapman 29 nights between August 25 and September 29. Swift numbers reached their peak in the third week of September (See graph below). The peak number of birds seen roosting at Chapman was on September 18 when 12,920 birds were counted! This was the highest season peak number since 2012. No monitoring occurred on August 26, September 12 & 15 due to rain.

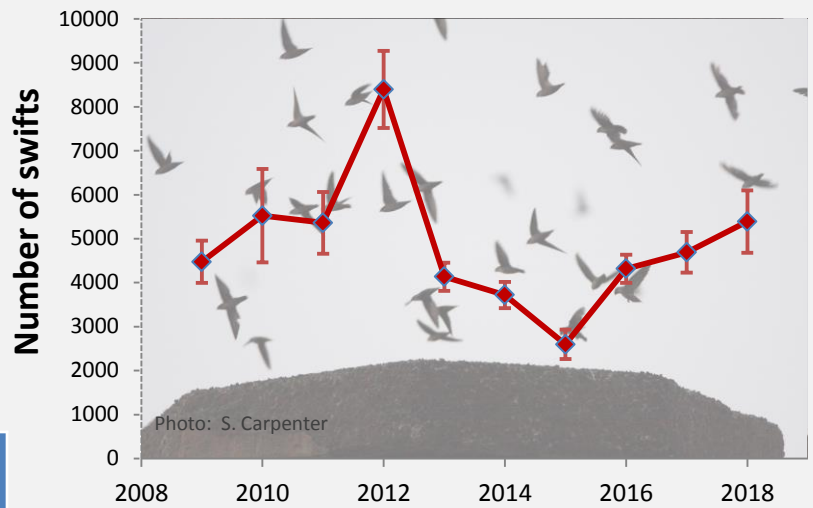


Swift counter at work (Photo: T. Hunsdorfer)



Annual trend at Chapman

In 2018 the average number of swifts counted per night at Chapman was 5,392 swifts. This is higher than the 10-year average (4,860 swifts per night). Average numbers have been trending upward since a low in 2015. See graph to the right.



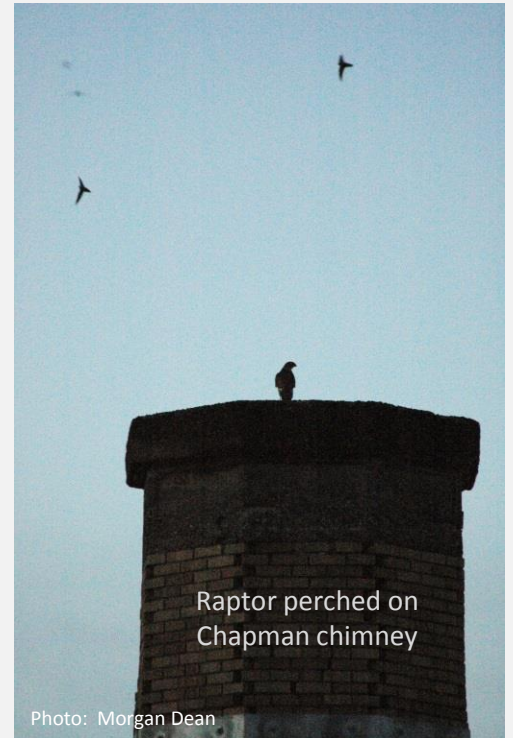
Swifts detected at other sites in or near Portland

Site	Peak #	Days surveyed
Saint John's Theatre, Portland	4,446	2
Oregon City, OR (Main Street)	3,820	11
Aurora, OR (Museum Annex)	2,000	3



Predators at Chapman

In 2018 counters documented 18 predation events in 13 of 29 nights. Cooper's Hawks were responsible for 14 predations followed by Accipiter sp. (3) and Peregrine Falcon (1).



People and swifts

On average, over 650 spectators came to view the swifts on a given night at Chapman this fall. The peak number was approximately 2,000!

Chimney conservation

We want to protect chimneys that traditionally host significant swift roosts. If you hear about chimneys in trouble contact Joe Liebezeit (jliebezeit@audubonportland.org; 971-222-6121)

