

BARN SWALLOW

Hirundo rustica

SPECIES-AT-RISK

IDENTIFICATION TIPS:

Dark chestnut-coloured forehead and throat

Light rufous underparts

Steely blue upperparts

MALE PLUMAGE

FEMALE PLUMAGE

Paler colouring than male

Very long, forked tail

Sparrow-sized swallow.

Weight: 17-20g

Length: 15-19cm

Wingspan: 29-32cm

Juveniles are more brown, with paler underparts, and lack the long tail feathers of the adults.

HABITAT

Historically, barn swallow nested on cliffs and in caves. Presently, they prefer human-made structures like barns, bridges and culverts. Although barn swallow are often associated with the agricultural landscape in PEI, they also make use of bait sheds in many small craft harbours across the Island.



DIET



Barn swallow are aerial insectivores, meaning they feed on insects during flight. On PEI, they forage over open areas like agricultural fields, shorelines, and wetlands, consuming a large number of insects. They are often seen foraging in flocks with other swallow species like bank swallow and tree swallow.



**ISLAND
NATURE
TRUST**

902-892-7513
admin@islandnaturetrust.ca
www.islandnaturetrust.ca

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada

BARN SWALLOW

Hirundo rustica

NESTS AND YOUNG

Barn swallow return to PEI in early-May. Both parents build a cup-shaped nest, made of mud and vegetation, and lined with feathers. They need a rough surface or small projection on which to secure their nest.

Females lay approximately 4-5 eggs as early as mid-May and they hatch 12-17 days later. After 18-23 days the chicks leave the nest. Parents continue to feed their young for an additional week.



LOCAL THREATS

- **Fewer appropriate nesting areas.** Old wooden barns are being destroyed and replaced with modern buildings constructed of materials like steel or aluminum. Barn and outbuilding doors and windows are increasingly being kept closed.
- **Reduction of food supply** due in part to the use of pesticides and the destruction of insect-producing habitats, such as wetlands.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Report sightings and biologically significant dates to INT. Ask about our fridge forms!
- Open doors or windows of suitable buildings to allow barn swallow access to nesting areas from May to August.
- Do not remove swallow nests after the breeding season, as they often re-use nests from the previous year.
- Avoid the use of insecticides when possible.



ISLAND
NATURE
TRUST

902-892-7513
admin@islandnaturetrust.ca
www.islandnaturetrust.ca

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada