The information on these pages is not specifically endorsed by the RSPB or the local group.

**How to Attract Swifts to your nest box**

- There is a much better chance of attracting swifts to your nest box if you play a recording of their calls.
- Early in the season you will attract the birds nesting this year
- Late in the season non-breeders will be prospecting for the following year

**Types of system**

- Use a CD in a CD player with speakers through a window near to the nest box. Advantage – cheap CD £6.00 from [www.swift-conservation.org](http://www.swift-conservation.org). Disadvantage – no timer, not always near enough to the nest box.
- Use a swift call kit (picture below). Advantage – timer, compact, near to the nest box. Disadvantage – more expensive £45/£50

![Swift Call Kit](image)

**Information from Edward Jackson SOS Swifts**

- edward.jackson@uwclub.net
- [www.sogonline.org.uk/save-our-suffolk-swifts](http://www.sogonline.org.uk/save-our-suffolk-swifts)
- Other sound systems include MP3 players with speakers. Swift calls can be requested from Edward Jackson

**Using the system**

- [www.rspb.org.uk/groups/woodbridge](http://www.rspb.org.uk/groups/woodbridge) - We have leaflets to access, on making your own swift call kit and on how to use the swift calls recordings.

**Other useful websites**

- [www.swift-conservation.org](http://www.swift-conservation.org); [actionforswifts.blogspot.co.uk](http://actionforswifts.blogspot.co.uk)

**Contact us**

woodbridge-swifts2015@outlook.com
Swift Call Kits Purchase and Set Up Details

Here are details of the equipment that you need to make up a Swift call kit, with links to take you through to the relevant websites. These were last tested at the end of December 2015, so I hope they work for you, but if not please let me know. I originally sourced this information from Dick Newell's Action for Swifts blog, but as some of the items he mentions are now no longer available, my list below is modified from his to bring it more up to date.

1. **Cheng Sheng HS-9004 12V Stereo Power Audio Amplifier**

   This unit comes well recommended by Dick. It's not directly available in the UK and you need to order through the US website called [dx.com](http://dx.com), who will then arrange for it to be shipped to you from China. The current price for UK customers is £11.83, with free delivery. My experience is that it takes about two to three weeks to arrive.

   http://www.dx.com/p/100w-hi-fi-stereo-amplifier-mp3-player-for-car-motorcycle-black-silver-sd-usb-90266#.Vg0-ls5Idb1

   I've included an instruction sheet at the end on how to set up the amplifier, as it doesn't come with one! If by any chance you decide to buy these in bulk, don't buy more than 5 at a time as the packet may attract the interest of HMRC.

2. **2 no. PCS 500 Watt Dome Car Tweeters Stereo Audio Speakers**

   These are also now recommended by Dick as the Maplins version he used to suggest are no longer available. Available through Amazon at current price £4.78 per pair.

   http://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B0057DLS88?psc=1&redirect=true&ref_=oh_aui_detailpage_o00_s00

   Provided there is some cover from the weather e.g. a nest box is under the eaves, they can be fixed externally onto the top of the box pointing outwards and upwards. Apparently they can also be put inside the box attached to the underside of the roof, although I have no personal experience of this at the moment.

3. **12V Power Supply**

   There is no power adaptor supplied with the amplifier, so you need to purchase this separately. A 12V Power Supply Code HK100157 can be found on the HandyKam website. Current price £4.95.


4. **TimeGuard TG77 electronic timer**

   This goes between your 240V mains source and the 12V power supply. This timer gives you 24 hour and 7 day options for setting times for the calls to be played. Once set and switched on you can forget about it.

   I have recently been purchasing this timer from the John Lewis website, priced at £10.00.

However, at the moment it seems to be unavailable there so an alternative is Direct Trade Supplies, currently priced at £11.87

http://www.directtradesupplies.co.uk/product.php/31458/timeguard-7-day-compact-electronic-time-switch--white--?gclid=CJDisLXQ4skCFUwYGwodCHEN2Q

Assuming you have understanding neighbours close by (if any), a good on-off balance would be to play calls each day between 0600 and 0900 and again between 1800 and 2100.

As you are attempting to attract first time breeders, wait until mid May to start playing calls (the established breeders arrive c. 7-10 May and are then followed a week or so later by the younger birds). Then play every day through to the end of June - or until the nest box is regularly occupied! Birds show an interest by repeatedly flying up to the box - sometimes perching on or close to it - and then dropping away again. When they do this they are known as 'bangers'.

5. 2GB SD card

The set up requires an SD Card for storing downloaded Swift calls ready for playback. The minimum size now seems to be 2 GB of storage space. There are cheaper brands, but I feel that this one from Fuji will be more trustworthy.

https://www.calphoto.co.uk/product/Fujifilm-2GB-SD-Card/331-002P?gclid=CJS6kaS_oegCFWk2wodUYwIkg

The files you download onto the SD card need to be in .MP3 format (rather than .aiff etc). I've attached a folder with five sets of calls sent to me by Dick to get you started.

6. Additional speaker cable

Depending on where your nest box is located you will probably need to buy some lengths of additional standard speaker cable to link the amp to the speakers, plus some connector blocks. Maplins stores or website are the best places for this.

http://www.maplin.co.uk/

Most people have their amp easily accessible in a ground or first floor room and then run the speaker cable out accordingly.

7. Erecting nest boxes safely

The Swift Conservation website has really helpful information and leaflets on where and how to set up external and internal nest boxes.

http://www.swift-conservation.org/

If you do intend to do the work yourself, carry out your own risk assessment with respect to using ladders and working at height. The HSE website has a useful leaflet about this which can be found at

http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg455.htm

Always have someone working alongside you and do keep safe!
Edward Jackson

On behalf of SOS Swifts (a joint Suffolk Ornithologists’ Group and Suffolk Wildlife Trust project)
and also Swift Conservation

http://www.sogonline.org.uk/sos-swifts/

CHENG SHENG HIFI CD.MP3 STEREO AMP: INSTRUCTIONS

Connect 1 or 2 speakers by inserting the speaker cable into the red and black speaker terminals (depress to open the sockets). Polarity is irrelevant. Insert an SD card or a USB memory stick, with 1 or more .mp3 files. Connect a 12 volt power supply.

Switch power on with the POWER button.

The device will now commence playing all of the tracks on the SD card/memory stick repeatedly. The green LED should be flashing.

Switching mains power on and off will cause the device to play or not play without pressing any buttons on the device, so it is easy to control with a timer switch.

Knobs

There are 3 knobs to adjust Treble, Base and Volume. For high-pitched bird calls, we suggest turn Treble to maximum. In order not to miss out on the lower part of the spectrum, also turn Base to maximum. Then set Volume to desired level.

Buttons

There are 4 other buttons on the device

V-/*|<<

Long press turns the volume down.

Short press goes to start of track

>||/0

Short press toggles pause/play
Long press toggles play one track/play all tracks

Note that Power on always starts with play all tracks

**Green LED**

Not flashing means pause

Slow flash (once per second) means play all tracks repeatedly

The 3 red lights give a visual indication of sound level

>|/<V+

Fast flash (twice per second) means play one track repeatedly

Long press increases the volume. This is a separate volume control to the Volume knob. Suggest set to maximum, and then set Volume knob to desired level

Short press moves to end of track, so start of next track. If in the last track, then it will move to the start of the first track.

**Mode**

The device can play from the SD card, the USB port or from the audio terminals on the back. Successive presses of the Mode button cycles through these options. If only one medium is available, it will select that medium automatically.

**Remote control**

You need to pull the white slip out to activate the battery. The remote replicates the functions described above and can be used to select individual tracks on the SD card

E.g. `<3>` selects the 3rd track

Amplifier instructions provided by Action for Swifts

Email: actionforswifts@gmail.com