

Chimney swifts are nesting

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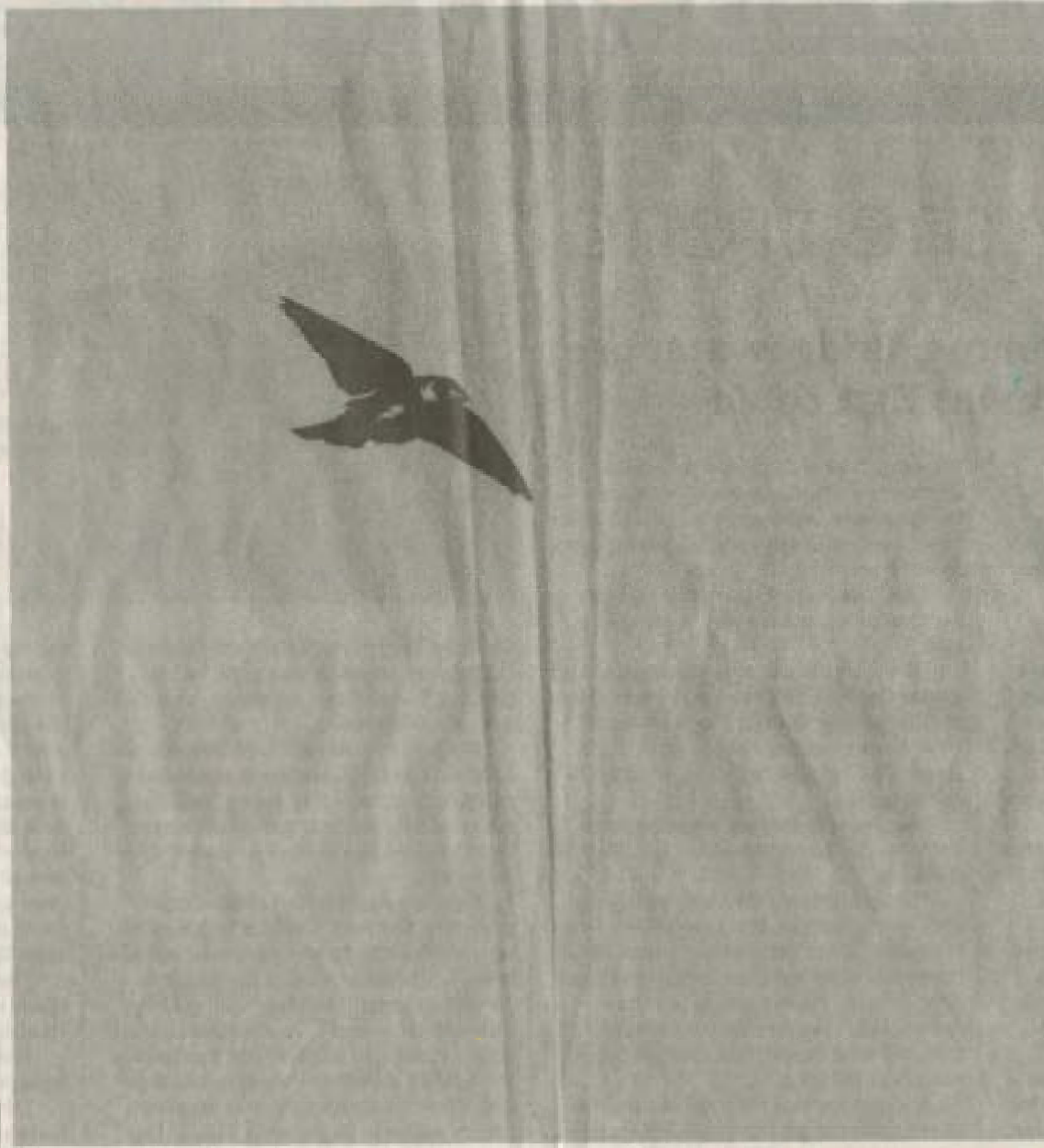
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This is the nesting season for the endangered chimney swift, a small bird that makes its home inside chimneys and hollow trees. The Mersey Tobetic Research Institute (MTRI) is inviting you to join them for a "swift" walk, in the towns of Annapolis Royal, Lunenburg, Shelburne and Liverpool to look for Chimney Swifts.

Chimney swifts are known as "cigar with wings," with a narrow body and long wings. They look similar to swallows but they don't have white markings. They can also be distinguished by their jerky flight pattern and chattering calls.

Every spring, swifts migrate from South America to Nova Scotia to roost in large groups. Once summer begins, they pair up and build a nest, but little is known about the location of nesting sites in Nova Scotia. In late June and July, the parents could be either incubating the eggs or seen flying back and forth from the nest feeding the chicks.

The challenge with monitoring these birds during the breeding season is, once nesting takes place they become very secretive so we have little information on where nesting sites are. Otherwise, you may see the wonderful show they put on before and after the breeding season at roosting sites. Chimney swifts fly in a tornado like fashion into chimneys at dusk to spend the night. Hundreds of swifts can be seen



Truro and Mabou

chimney swift

endangered in part because of habitat loss, as they started using chimneys rather than hollowed-out tree trunks centuries ago. In recent decades, chimneys are becoming capped and lined making them inaccessible for roosting or nesting as they cannot grasp the metal with their claws and spiny tail. We are hoping that by identifying nesting sites, we can gain a greater understanding of where in the province they go after they leave known roosting sites.

If you have spotted a chimney swift or know of a nesting site, you can report your sighting to the Mersey Tobetic Research Institute by email sightings@speciesatrisk.ca or phone 1-866-727-3447.

Swift Walk

Join us in the towns of Annapolis Royal, Lunenburg, Shelburne and Liverpool for a short presentation to learn about these special birds, learn how to identify them and then walk around town in search of nesting sites. Everyone is welcome!

7:30 p.m.: Presentation

8 p.m.: Swift Walk

9 p.m.: Debrief

Shelburne on July 20

Shelburne Community Centre,

63 King St.

Liverpool on July 24

Town Hall Arts and Cultural Centre, 219 Main St.

If you are interested in joining a swift walk or becoming a member of MTRI contact