



Swifts Night Out, Wednesday, September 17, 2025

submitted by Tom Gaffney

Trip Coordinator(s): Tom Gaffney

Location: Downtown Greensboro at the Guilford County Schools District Office, 501 W. Washington St., Greensboro

Temperature: Low 70's

Weather: Very light winds, partly cloudy. Some of the cloud cover seemed low but it didn't significantly interfere with seeing the swifts.

Target Bird(s), if any: Chimney Swifts

Number of participants: 40

Bird List: Chimney Swifts, Approximately 2,000

Comments: (such as, notable birds seen, interesting bird or animal behavior, condition of the birding site, participant comments):

The large parking lot behind the building was empty and has an excellent view of the chimney. Most of the participants watched from this parking lot; a few watched from the front of the building. There is a very large piece of industrial equipment (air conditioning? a generator?) right next to the building that runs all the time. This noise did not appear to have any effect on the swifts, nor did it keep us from hearing the swifts.

This location had been good for swifts in the past, and PBC members scouted it for this year's Swifts Night Out. Approximately 750 swifts were seen here for several nights in a row, so the event was held here.

The event went extremely well. Most of the participants were there by 7:00. While there were few swifts at first, and they arrived later than the first birds on the previous night, there was a lot of activity by 7:20. By 7:30 it was obvious that this was going to be a big night. There were probably close to 1,000 birds by then. More kept coming and many of the birds were circling right above the participants in the back parking lot.

They started dropping into the chimney about 7:50, while more birds were still arriving. Several experienced birders estimated the scream to be at least 2,000. One of the reasons it was hard to tell is that birds were still dropping into the chimney when it was too dark to see them. The last birds were heard a little after 8:00.

Some participants had never seen this activity before and were amazed by the whole thing. Even experienced birders felt that the number of birds, how close we were to them, and the cooperative weather made for a very successful Swifts Night Out.

Photos for Swifts Night Out, 17 September 2025



Chimney Swifts beginning to gather



Chimney Swifts swarming just before going into the chimney