

What do I need?

Printed copy of page 3

2 sheets each of black, dark blue, red and white card*

Scissors

Twine

Glue stick

*Swallow feathers are black, dark blue, red and white.



swallow migration bunting



What do I do?

Read the story of the swallow's migration on page 2, then cut out the swallow templates on the following page. The templates show the swallow in different stages of flight.

Trace both templates onto each piece of your coloured card, then cut them out with your scissors. Each piece of bunting will be made by sticking 2 matching birds together. As we're making 8 pieces of bunting, you'll need 2 of each swallow shape in all 4 colours to give you 8 pairs.

Take 1 of each swallow pair and arrange them in a line as you want them to appear in your bunting. Leave a gap of at least 15cm between each one and make sure they're all facing the same way!

Cut a length of twine long enough to fit your bird sequence on with an extra 30cm at each end for tying. Arrange the twine along your sequence so that the twine runs through the middle of each bird.

Now, find the matching bird for the first swallow in your sequence. Apply a layer of glue to the underside and stick it on top of the first swallow to secure the twine in place. Repeat with the other birds until your bunting is complete.

Hang your bunting in a window or on a wall to see your birds flying through the air!

TIP: If you're feeling creative, why not change the shape of the wings slightly for each bird so it looks like it is in flight.



swallow migration

What is a swallow?

Swallows are small, migratory birds with blue-black backs, long forked tails, and unmistakably white stomachs and red throats. They are widespread in the northern hemisphere and spend most of their time in flight. Swallows follow the sun, so migrate north in the summer months and return south in the winter months. They eat small insects and are often spotted living in and around quiet farm buildings where they can roost. In late summer and early autumn they spend time in large reedbeds before they migrate south again.



Where do swallows migrate?

In April, swallows make their long journey from Africa to Britain where they spend their summer raising up to three broods. They build their nests in half-bowl shapes using a mix of mud and grasses. They love to nest in the eaves inside barns. [Photo: middle-left].

By September, the swallows are getting restless and are ready to migrate south. At this point you can often see them gathering along telephone lines. [Photo: top]

It can take the swallows up to six weeks to make the full journey south. Swallows from other parts of Europe may take slightly different journeys, but almost all make it to the very south of Africa.

Swallows from Britain will migrate through western France and eastern Spain into Morocco. They then make the perilous journey over the Sahara Desert and the Congo rainforest. Finally, they end their great migration south in South Africa and Namibia. [Photo: bottom-left]

Swallows tend to fly relatively low in the sky and only fly during daylight hours. So we often see them flying in large flocks, filling the sky like a big black cloud. [Photo: bottom-right]



