

# Swallow



I am a swallow.

I am a dark blue bird with white underparts.

I have a red patch on my throat.

Can you see the patch in the picture?



I have long V-shaped tail streamers.

I fly very fast and enjoy swooping and changing direction.

It is hard for birds of prey to catch me when I am flying.

In May I was hatched from an egg with two brothers and two sisters.

How many young swallows were there?

My nest was built by both my parents in the shape of a saucer on a ledge inside a farm building.

They used mud mixed with straw and bound together with saliva to build the nest.

My mother lined the nest with grass and feathers.

I like to eat flies and will eat them whilst I am flying.

When I am thirsty I will skim low over the surface of water and scoop water up into my open mouth.

## **Spending the winter in South Africa**

As the summer comes to an end and the temperatures start to drop, there is less food for me to eat.

I gather with other swallows in large groups, often on telephone wires to prepare for a long journey to South Africa.

See if you can find South Africa in an atlas or on a globe.
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The journey is nearly 10,000 kilometres and full of danger.

For example, when I fly over the Sahara desert there is no food, water or places to rest.

When I arrive in South Africa I will join a small flock of other swallows, and each day we will go out looking for food.

In the evenings we form a larger group of swallows and roost.

The following year I return to England to start my own family.

See if you can find the following words:  
Swallow, South, Africa, England, tail

E	N	G	L	A	N	D
S	W	A	L	L	O	W
O	F	G	Q	U	I	T
U	A	F	R	I	C	A
T	S	U	N	F	S	I
H	T	R	W	A	G	L

How many points can you get?

Task	Tick	Points
Have you seen a swallow?		5
Did you notice its V-shaped tail?		3
Did you see its red throat?		2
Total points		

Please try to answer these questions:

What colour is the patch on a swallow's throat?

What does its tail look like?

What do swallows like to eat?

Why do they move to South Africa for the winter?

Why do they return to England for the summer?