

Family life



Alpine swifts build their nests in colonies in niches of rocks or high buildings. They use feathers, bits of plants and any other things they can collect in the air. The swifts return to the same nest every year, rebuilding it when necessary.



These birds pair for life. They *mate* in the air. In May female swifts lay two to three eggs. The parents take turns brooding the eggs. After about three weeks *the eggs hatch*. The young are fed for another eight to nine weeks. Swifts collect food in their *crops*.

If the weather is bad the parents can't catch many insects. Then the young swifts in the nest can drop their body temperature. Their heartbeat slows down and they stop moving. This helps them to survive because they use almost no energy.

<i>mate</i>	sich paaren
<i>the eggs hatch</i>	die Jungen schlüpfen aus
<i>crop</i>	Kropf