

THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL SWIFT CONFERENCE – TEL AVIV, ISRAEL

MARCH 11th – 16th, 2018

RUTH DANIEL RESIDENCE, 47 Jerusalem Blvd. Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Israel, 972-3-526-4526

At the Fourth International Swift Conference in 2016 at Szczecin, Poland, it was decided to hold the Fifth International Swift Conference in Tel Aviv, Israel. **This is the first time the conference will be held outside Europe and we are very proud to have received this opportunity to host it**, and expand the discussion beyond the European borders by inviting lecturers and participants from Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. We hope to use the swifts as messengers of peace to expand regional cooperation and as you surely would agree, they are the perfect candidates!

We are sure that besides the interesting lectures, you will have a unique and unforgettable experience visiting our small country, rich with many swift and bird species. 540 bird species can be observed in Israel, and 500 million birds migrate over the country twice a year – March is the peak of the migration season.

Please see the following information about the conference.

VENUE & HOTEL DETAILS

Conference hotel

Ruth Daniel Residence (3 stars) located in Jaffa close to the Old City and tourist sites (<http://www.mishkenot-jaffa.co.il/>).

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

- Amnonn Hahn – Director, The Friends Of The Swifts Association (FOTS)
- Dan Alon – Director, Israel Ornithological Center (IOC), Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI)
- Edward Mayer – Swift Conservation, UK
- Dr. Nir Sapir – University of Haifa
- Dr. Mauro Ferri – Italy
- Sorrel Ritter – Conference coordinator, SPNI
- Prof. Yossi Leshem – SPNI, Tel Aviv University

PAPERS

1. Keynote speakers (26 mins + 4 mins questions)
2. Lectures (17 mins + 3 mins questions)
3. Posters (on display in poster area)

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Sunday, March 11th

16:00 – 19:00 Registration

19:30 – 21:30 Evening get together festive event at Ruth Daniel Residence

Monday, March 12th

09:00 – 09:30 **Greetings [not yet confirmed]:**

Ron Huldai – Mayor of Tel Aviv-Jaffa

Dr. Yossef Dreizin – Director-General of the Ministry of Regional Cooperation

Maj. Gen. (Res.) Noam Tibon – Chairman of Tel Aviv Global

Iris Hann – CEO of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI)

Edward Mayer – Swift Conservation UK.

- 09:30 – 10:00 **Christoph Meier** – Migratory schedule of different Alpine Swifts
- 10:00 – 10:30 **Dick Newell** – What do we know about Swift Nest Boxes?
- 10:30 – 11:00 **Coffee break**
- 11:00 – 11:20 **Mark Smyth** – A walk on the wild Side: Swift nesting in the natural landscape
- 11:20 – 11:40 **Lynda Huxley** – Swifts in Ireland
- 11:40 – 12:00 **Ninon Ballerstadt** – Swifts' sleeping behavior
- 12:00 – 12:20 **Judith Wakelam** – 15 years of rehabilitating Swifts in my home
- 12:20 – 12:40 **Edward Mayer** – A new Swift Column for the modern built environment
- 12:40 – 13:10 **Peter Cush** – An overview of *Apus apus* & *Apus apus pekinensis*
- 13:15 – 14:45 **Lunch break**
- 14:45 – 15:05 **Mark Coreth** – The Tree of Hope – A Swift Project
- 15:05 – 15:25 **Alexandru Stahl** – Mauerseglerklinik Frankfurt: Mastering Swift rehabilitation
- 15:25 – 15:45 **Marco Cucco** – Citizen-Science: Swift Conservation in Italy
- 15:45 – 16:05 **Thomas Starkmann** – Common Swift nesting sites conservation in Vienna
- 16:05– 16:35 **Coffee break**
- 16:35 – 16:55 **Katja Schmieder** – Differences between European and American Swifts
- 16:55 – 17:15 **Itai Bloch & Nir Sapir** – Insights from ATLAS tracking of foraging Little swifts in the Hula Valley, Israel
- 17:15 – 18:15 **Poster Session**
- 18:30 – 19:30 **Dinner**
- 19:30 – 22:00 Guided tour of Jaffa's Old City



Israel, paradise for swifts and swift lovers
(Photo: Amir Ezer)



Schiff House in Tel Aviv, a heritage site with nesting swifts
(Illustration: Tuvia Kurtz)

Tuesday, March 13th

- 06:00 Early morning birding tour before breakfast [optional]
- 07:00 – 08:00 **Breakfast**
- 09:00 – 09:30 **Yossi Leshem & Amnon Hahn** – A Swift Way to Peace
- 09:30 – 10:00 **Chris Huxley** – Some aspects of the breeding biology of the swifts of County Mayo, Ireland
- 10:00 – 10:20 **Gen. (Ret.) Mansour Abu Rashid & Imad Atrash** – Birding activities in Jordan and the Palestinian Authority
- 10:20 – 10:50 **Coffee break**
- 10:50 – 11:10 **Elena Markitani** – Swift projects in Cyprus
- 11:10 – 11:30 **Lukas Viktora** – Does it really work? A study in the Czech Republic
- 11:30 – 11:50 **Diane Yorgason-Quinn** (presented on behalf of **Larry Schwitters**) – Audubon's "Vaux's Happening" Project

- 11:50 – 12:10 **Parcharidou Effrosyni** – Swift friendly buildings in Thessaloniki, Greece
- 12:10 – 12:30 **Stefano Pesaro** – A multi-facetted approach to Swift conservation in Italy
- 12:30 – 12:50 **Lothar Schiffler** – Airlines: Bird Tracks in the air
- 12:50 – 14:00 **Lunch break**
- 14:00 – 18:00 Swift tour in Tel Aviv to include: (1) Swift “Living Wall” at Catzenelzou School; (2) IDF Headquarters to learn about the Nature Defense Forces and their connection to Swifts and heritage sites; (3) Schiff House with online cameras in Common Swift nests
- 19:30 Free evening in Jaffa

Wednesday, March 14th

06:00 – 23:00 Tour to Jerusalem and the Dead Sea:

- Jerusalem Bird Observatory – ringing station in the Israeli Parliament grounds
- Wadi Kelt (a gorge in the Judean Desert between Jerusalem and Jericho) to see three Swift species: Alpine, Little and Pallid Swifts
- Swifts Welcoming Ceremony at the Western Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem

Greetings [not yet confirmed]:

Mr. Reuven Rivlin – President of Israel

MK Tzachi Hanegbi – Minister of Regional Cooperation

Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz – Rabbi of the Western Wall



Map of swift nesting sites in the Western Wall, the Old City of Jerusalem, the holiest Jewish site (Ulrich Tigges 2002)

- St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital, the Christian Quarter to see the **Tree of Hope**, an olive tree Swift sculpture, and then the closing event with dinner and Middle Eastern music



The Tree of Hope in the Garden Of Hope at St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital
Sculptor: Mark Coreth | Photo: Amnon Hahn

Thursday, March 15th

07:00 – 08:30 **Breakfast**

08:45 – 09:05 **Gert de Yong** – How to conduct a census of Swifts in a city like Amsterdam, The Netherlands

09:05 – 09:25 **Mauro Ferri** – Artificial Swift nests from Medieval period up to modern times

09:25 – 09:45 **Kevin Prince** – X-ray fluorescence study of Swifts' feathers

09:45 – 10:05 **Francisco Javier Saez Frayssinet** – The protection of Apus Apus in Segovia, Spain

10:05 – 10:45 **Coffee break**

10:45 – 13:00 Open discussion including voting for the 2020 International Conference location

13:00 – Lunch and free afternoon & evening in Tel Aviv-Jaffa

March 16th

Optional tour to see the Griffon Vultures in Mt. Carmel and Little Swifts nesting in the Hula Valley in north Israel as well as many more local and migrating birds [**PRICE**: €40 including bus and professional guide]

March 17th-20th

Optional 4-day tour (3 nights) from Tel Aviv via the Negev to Eilat to view the amazing bird migration as part of the Eilat 2018 International Spring Migration Festival; accommodation at Eilat's excellent Agamim hotel; price includes half board, bus, professional guides and participation in all the festival events [**PRICE**: €755 per person in double room / €1,065 per person in single room]



Schiff House (Illustration: Tuvia Kurtz)

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May 2012: Joint seminar with the Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians at Schiff House – regional cooperation using Swifts who nest in the Church of the Nativity, Mosque in Amman and Jerusalem's Wailing Wall to bring nations and religions together; on the left (center): General (Ret.) Mansour Abu Rashid, Chairman of the Amman Center for Peace and Development (ACPD), Jordan