

Frequently Asked Questions

When should I arrive?

The swifts begin gathering in the sky above the school in large numbers an hour or more before sunset. Often, closer to sunset, the swifts begin circling directly above the school chimney in a large flock before dropping in huge numbers into the chimney. They often start to enter the chimney a half-hour to an hour before sunset. If there are extraordinary numbers of swifts, they will start entering the chimney even earlier in order to get all of them in by sunset.

How many swifts will there be?

At the peak of the fall migration, thousands are expected. On September 7, 2010, during the fall migration, over 26,000 Vaux's Swifts were observed flying into the Frank Wagner Elementary School chimney. The Fall Migration is much larger than the spring migration because the young swifts migrate with their parents then.

How long will they be in Monroe?

Probably until the end of September or even early October but in much lower numbers by then. The best viewing is expected to be in the first weeks of September.



Monroe Sunset Times

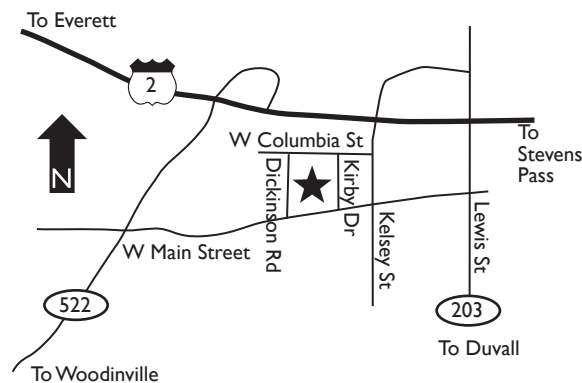
September 2011*

Date	Sunset	Date	Sunset
1	7:51	16	7:21
2	7:49	17	7:19
3	7:47	18	7:17
4	7:45	19	7:15
5	7:43	20	7:12
6	7:41	21	7:10
7	7:39	22	7:08
8	7:37	23	7:06
9	7:35	24	7:04
10	7:33	25	7:02
11	7:31	26	7:00
12	7:29	27	6:58
13	7:27	28	6:56
14	7:25	29	6:54
15	7:23	30	6:52

*For other months go to: www.sunrisesunset.com

Location

Frank Wagner Elementary School
 Monroe, Washington
 Old Town Monroe on Main Street
 between Kelsey St. and Dickinson Rd.



MONROE

Swift Watch

September 10 - 25, 2011



Come witness an amazing natural event occurring in our community!

Celebrate the arrival of the second largest congregation of Vaux's Swifts in North America!

Watch thousands of these small birds squeeze themselves into a 4-foot-square chimney in just minutes!

Frank Wagner Elementary School
 Monroe, Washington



About the Vaux's Swifts

Migration

Each September thousands of migrating Vaux's (pronounced "voxes") Swifts roost in Monroe School District's Frank Wagner Elementary School chimney to rest while on their southern migration from north-western Canada and Washington State to Central America and Venezuela.



The Swifts

These 4-5" long birds are the smallest and most numerous of the swift species in Washington State. They spend much of their time in the air and forage, eat, drink, mate, court, collect nesting materials and mate all in flight. Vaux's Swifts prefer to roost in hollow old trees but frequently use brick chimneys as a substitute. Vaux's Swifts cannot perch because of the way their feet are shaped so they must clutch the rough surface of wherever they roost.

Interesting Behavior

Prior to entering the chimney, the swifts often gather in great numbers and circle the chimney. As they begin to enter the chimney, they change from their head-first direction and go in tail-first. Once in the chimney, they overlap one another in "shingle" fashion to conserve body heat. They often slow their metabolism to a near-dormant state to conserve energy while roosting.









Monroe Swift Night Out

September 10, 2011

4 p.m. to Dusk

Learn more about the Vaux's Swifts that gather nightly to roost in the Frank Wagner Elementary School chimney.

-  Lecture at 6:30 p.m. in the Frank Wagner Auditorium.
-  Docents present from 6-8 p.m. to answer your questions.
-  Visit the Information Booth with a comparative bird display.
-  Watch the swifts' aerial performances in the sky!
-  Participate in activities for children!
-  Enjoy a spaghetti dinner, other food and drinks!
-  Come to enjoy one of nature's spectacles!



Sponsorship

A desire to learn more about the Vaux's Swifts, to study their migration and behavior, and to preserve their habitat (in this case, the Frank Wagner Elementary School chimney) was the impetus for the creation of the Friends of the Vaux's Swifts Committee.

Monroe Swift Watch 2011, Monroe Swift Night Out 2011, education about the Vaux's Swifts and preservation of their habitat are sponsored by Monroe School District No. 103, Pilchuck Audubon Society, Seattle Audubon Society, Eastside Audubon Society, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, PAWS (Progressive Animal Welfare Society), Wild Birds Unlimited - Monroe, Monroe Parks and Recreation Dept., Monroe Chamber of Commerce and many community members.

Your contribution to the Monroe Swift Watch campaign will help local Audubon Societies support Vaux's Swifts research, provide information about conservation of the species, and maintain critical habitat to ensure the future of the Vaux's Swifts. Checks can be made out to the Pilchuck Audubon Society (PAS)-Swifts.

**For further
information contact
Pilchuck Audubon Society
at 425-252-0926**

www.pilchuckaudubon.org

www.monroeswifts.com

