



## 2.9 Billion Birds Gone

A recent study estimates that 2.9 billion birds of various species have disappeared in Canada and the United States since 1970. Even once common birds like barn swallows are facing significant population declines. You can help reverse this decline!

Interested in becoming involved with swallow conservation in the Columbia Valley, or in swallow habitat enhancement on your private land? If so, please contact us.

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COLUMBIA VALLEY  
**SWALLOW  
CONSERVATION**  
FOR SPECIES AT RISK

Here are some things you can do to help birds:

- Make your windows obvious - there are a variety of window treatments available.
- Keep outdoor lights off during migration, lights can disorient birds.
- Keep your cats indoors.
- Volunteer on a bird conservation initiative in your area.

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A single Barn Swallow can consume 60 insects per hour or a whopping 850 per day!



In 2020, the Columbia Valley Swallow Project located 134 swallow colonies in sandy banks, with 96 confirmed to be active bank swallow colonies and an estimated 7,578 active burrows! This high number indicates that the Columbia Valley provides significant habitat for bank swallows. The project also located 17 barn swallow nest sites, including two large colonies, but it's highly likely there are more remaining to be discovered.

All migratory birds, their nests and their eggs, are protected by provincial and federal laws and are not to be disturbed during the breeding season.

Did you know the Columbia Valley is home to six species of swallow!

Prior to European settlement, barn swallow's nesting habitat was associated with natural features such as holes, caves, crevices and ledges on rocky cliff faces. Since European settlement, barn swallows have largely shifted their habitat preference to human-made structures, such as bridges, buildings and ledges, although they do still nest in natural habitats too. Their population has declined by 76% over a 40 year period in Canada.

The barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) is a blue-listed species in BC and is classified as threatened federally, under the Species at Risk Act.

The bank swallow population in Canada has declined by 98% over a 40 year period. Reasons for this significant decline are not well understood, but are thought to be cumulative, including loss of breeding and foraging habitat, collision with vehicles, widespread pesticide use, climate change and destruction of nest sites. The bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*) is yellow-listed in BC and is classified as threatened federally, under the Species at Risk Act.

