



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR IN THE CLASSROOM: CHIMNEY SWIFTS AT MANSONVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Eastman, Wednesday, June 21 2017- Children from Mansonville Elementary School are quite lucky: their school's chimney is home to the Chimney Swift, a very rare bird species. The species is indeed at risk, due primarily to the destruction of its natural habitat. "Appalachian Corridor monitors species at risk such as the Chimney Swift on its territory of action" indicated its Executive Director, Mélanie Lelièvre. Over the years, we have raised awareness to many homeowners in order to help this unusual species. The good news is that people can make a big difference by adopting simple, but efficient, actions". A team from Appalachian Corridor recently paid a visit to the school in order to explain the characteristics of this rare bird.

A biologist at school

The children listened with great interest to the presentation made by Caroline Daguét, biologist, who explained that "Chimney Swifts fly constantly. Since their short legs prevent them from landing on power lines or branches, they spend almost the entire day flying. When the night falls, they return home to sleep". The children also watched a video produced by Radio-Canada on the subject. Furthermore, as they came out from class, the pupils had the chance to hear and see a few Chimney Swifts. "You can observe the bird again at sunset when they enter chimneys to roost for the night" explained Ms. Daguét.

An agreement was signed with the Eastern Township School Board in order to adopt certain common practices, such as sweeping the chimney after September 1st or before April 1st of the following year, i.e. outside the bird's nesting season.

An increasingly rare type of chimney

Originally, the Chimney Swift used to nest in large hollow trees. Unfortunately, with the intensification of forestry practices, such trees are increasingly scarce. This is why the Chimney Swift turned to stone or brick chimney to nest. Their vertical porous surface provides a perfect structure for Chimney Swifts to hang on and set up their small half-moon-shape nest.

However, these chimneys are now often fitted with metal liner or replaced by metal chimneys too sleek for these rare birds to grip onto. Moreover, metal grids or caps which are often



installed on top of chimneys prevent Chimney Swifts from entering, thus leaving them with no habitat.

Thanks to initiatives such as those put forward by Appalachian Corridor, which consist in meeting homeowners and raising awareness about the presence of Chimney Swifts, the birds increase their chance of finding appropriate shelter and besting sites.

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To learn more about the Chimney Swift:

http://corridorappalachien.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/factsheet_swift.pdf

<http://ici.radio-canada.ca/tele/la-semaine-verte/2014-2015/segments/reportage/2045/martinets-ramoneurs-sans-abri> (in French only)

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Caroline Daguét, Biologist at Appalachian Corridor, addresses pupils at Mansonville Elementary School



Chimney Swifts fly all day.