

Editor's Page

Heading South!

Many of the birds we see everyday make their permanent homes in Ireland, but there are some birds which only visit us for parts of the year. One such bird is the swallow.

In March, swallows make an unbelievable journey from South Africa to Ireland (and Sherkin!), travelling nearly 9,656 km (6,000 miles).

It's wonderful to see some of the first swallows arriving in spring, and all through the summer months we see them dipping and swooping around the laneways on Sherkin Island. Not being experts at identifying birds, it's very satisfying to be able to recognise these birds from a distance, as they are so distinctive. Their long forked tail feathers, elegant lines and blue, white and rust colouring are easy to pick out.

As in other parts of Ireland over the summer months, swallows build their nests and have their young. Now that autumn has arrived, they are gathering together to begin their journey back to South Africa to spend the winter in a warmer climate. We'll be sad to see them go, but it's amazing to think that they will be back next spring, completing the lengthy journey once again, and gliding along the roads of Sherkin before we know it!



Swallows

Welcome to the
Autumn Edition of
Nature's Web!

Dear Reader,



Welcome everyone to the autumn issue of Nature's Web. In this issue we learn about the work of Daniel Buckley, a researcher in the Centre for Irish Bat Research (see page 7). We also look at bats in general (page 5) and discover that they are not as frightening as one might think!

We take a closer look at mushrooms and fungi, some of which can be deadly and we find out exactly what makes the seasons what they are! Check out nature news from around the world on page 11 and enjoy a giggle on page 13.

We would love to hear your views and comments and suggestions for future articles. Have a good read!

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SEAFOOD RECIPE

Smoked Mackerel Tortilla

What's Needed:

- 200g smoked mackerel, flaked
- 4 medium potatoes - peeled and cut in thin slices
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic finely chopped
- 1 red pepper finely chopped
- 6 eggs - lightly beaten
- Little salt & pepper

What to do:

- Preheat oven to 180°C/Gas 4
- Heat a little oil in a heavy-based ovenproof pan
- Fry potato slices over a medium heat until lightly browned on each side. Remove and drain on kitchen paper
- Heat remaining oil in pan, add onion, garlic and red pepper, cook gently until softened. Add potatoes and gently mix in mackerel
- Pour eggs over and stir gently
- Place the pan in the oven and cook for 15 minutes
- Serve with green beans or mangetout



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