

Chimney Swift Glider Craft

Chimney Swifts are among the most aerial of all land birds. They capture and eat flying insects, bathe, gather nest material, and even mate in flight. Other than stopping to roost (sleep) for the night or for nesting activities the Chimney Swifts spends almost its entire life in the air.

Chimney Swifts are perfectly adapted to this aerial lifestyle, they have super long wings, a torpedo shaped body, and, like all birds, have hollow bones to make them lighter. The average weight of an adult male Chimney Swift is only 23.6 g, about the equivalent of 3 toonies (toonies weigh about 7 g). Chimney Swifts have an average air speed of 46.5 km/h with a maximum speed of about 58km/h and are amazing aerial acrobats!

Chimney Swifts cannot perch like other birds such as robins, but rather need to cling to a vertical surface like the inside of a chimney because of the way its toes are oriented. Therefore, this bird is adapted perfectly for its particular life in the air.

To give us an idea of how perfectly adapted a Chimney Swift's body is to life in the air we're going to make a Chimney Swift glider with the approximate proportions of a real Chimney Swift.



Materials

- Cardboard
- Tracer print out
- Scissors
- Tape
- Black Marker

Instructions

- 1) Cut the tracer out and trace the different parts of the glider onto a piece of cardboard
- 2) Cut out the cardboard pieces and draw in the parts of a Chimney Swift (i.e. eyes, feathers, feet etc.)
- 3) Cut a slit across the Chimney Swift's belly where you will insert the wings
- 4) Tape the two triangles onto the Chimney Swift's face (line it up with the beak)
- 5) Insert the wings, and tail flap and tape into place

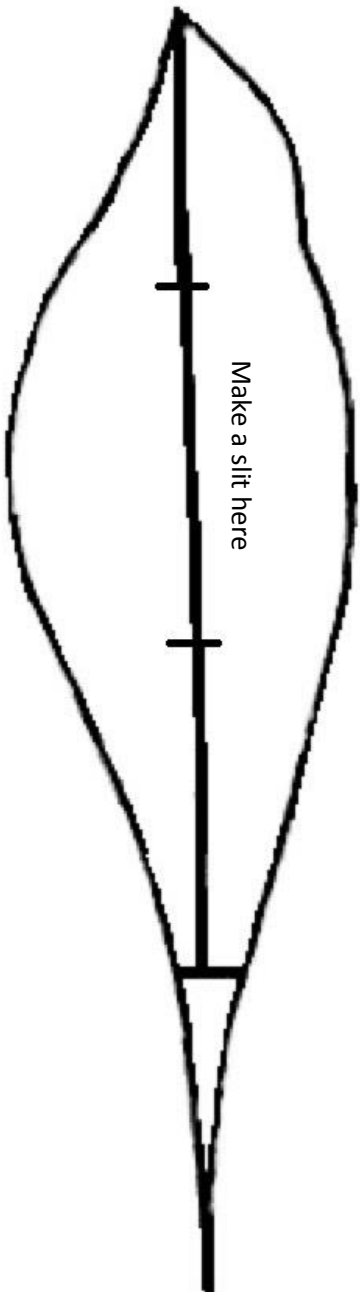
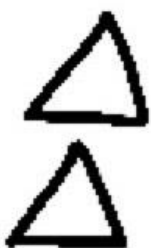
Reference: Steeves, T. K., S. B. Kearney-McGee, M. A. Rubega, C. L. Cink, and C. T. Collins (2020). Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), version 1.0. In *Birds of the World* (A. F. Poole, Editor). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. <https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.chiswi.01>

(the average body length of an adult male Chimney Swift)

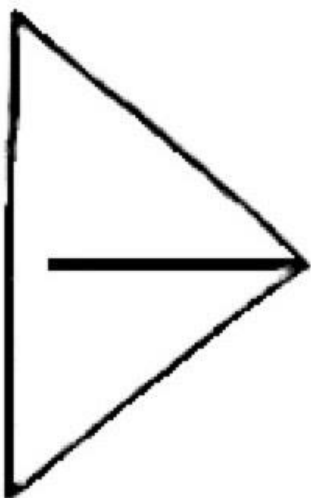
124mm

(the average tail length of an adult male chimney swift)

42mm



129 mm



(the average wing length of an adult male chimney swift)

