The Swallows of Prince Edward Island

Did you know that **three different species** of swallow can be found on PEI?



Photo: T. Smith, BAWG

Tree Swallow

Tachycineta bicolor

Iridescent blue above

White below

Habitat: open fields and forest edges, especially near ponds

Nests: natural cavities and nest boxes — usually not in large colonies



Photo: Johnathan Nightingale, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

Blue above **Rusty orange below**

Deeply forked tail

Nests: cup-shaped nests of mud and grass in barns, stables, eaves and other structures

Threatened · Species at Risk Act



Photo: T. Smith, BAWG

Bank Swallow

Riparia riparia

Brown and white

Brown chest band

Nests: in colonies, in burrows dug into eroding cliffs and banks

Canada's smallest swallow — weighs slightly more than a AAA battery!

Threatened · Species at Risk Act

BANK SWALLOW SPOTLIGHT

Erosion builds their homes

Coastal erosion is a familiar PEI sight, often shown in a negative light — but this natural process is essential for bank swallows. They have evolved to nest in eroding cliffs, where they raise their young.

The threat: activities like **shoreline armouring** can permanently eliminate critical habitat for this legally protected species.



How you can help

- **Choose natural living shorelines**
- **Don't mow to the cliff's edge**
- **Avoid insecticides (insect-killing chemicals)**

WHAT ALL THREE SHARE

They're all insect eaters

Swallows and many other insect-eating birds have experienced significant population declines. Fewer insects is considered a contributing factor — including on their breeding grounds:

Right here on PEI

BAWG
BELFAST AREA WATERSHED GROUP

A beautiful island is a diverse island!

Kindly supported with funding through the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund