



Credit: DesertUSA.com/animals/cliff-swallow.html



**City of Phoenix**  
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

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## **Cliff Swallow**

*(Petrochelidon pyrrhonota)*

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The purpose of this flyer is to provide City of Phoenix employees and contractors working on City projects with basic knowledge to reduce the risk of impacting cliff swallows.

### **Legal Status:**

The cliff swallow is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended. All migratory birds and their parts (including eggs, feathers, and nests) are fully protected. They are also protected under Arizona State Law, Title 17-101, Title 17-235, and Title 17-236.

### **Species Description:**

- Orangish buff to chestnut with dark cap
- White underparts
- Length: approx. 5.5 inches
- Short triangular wings and square tail
- Gourd-shaped nest built of mud
- Call: subdued squeaky twittering in flight and near nest

### **Where are they found?**

- Colonies of mud nests on vertical structures:
  - Cliff faces
  - Buildings
  - Box culverts
  - Under bridges
- Colonies may consist of tens, hundreds or even thousands of mud nests at one location

### **Where/When are they active?**

- Cliff swallows can be found in rural or urban settings where a likely structure for building a nest exists; mud nests will be present or under construction
- They arrive in the Sonoran Desert in early March; generally depart by the end of August

### **How to avoid impacting cliff swallows:**

- Scan your work area before you start for mud nests on structures
- ***If mud nests observed and work will physically impact the nests or will occur within 30 feet of the nests; STOP WORK and call one of the contacts below***

**Questions? Work will impact cliff swallow nests or will be within 30 feet of cliff swallow nests?** Contact the City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs, Environmental Programs Coordinator, Tricia Balluff at (602) 534-1775 or [tricia.balluff@phoenix.gov](mailto:tricia.balluff@phoenix.gov)

Sources: National Geographic <http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birding/cliff-swallow/>

Updated November 4, 2019