

Birds of the Mar Menor

Some of the best times to go out walking and bird spotting is during the early morning and evening when many birds are most active. They get out at this time to feed as there are many airborne insects available for food.

The birds I am going to write about this week all feed on the wing diving and swooping for insects, they are; Swallows, Swifts and Martins.

Swallows are largest of the three birds, with distinctive elongated tail feathers which can easily be seen while they perch on a wire or post.



Swifts are the next smallest. They are totally brown in colour and virtually never perch. They can remain in the air for months, even years at a time and only come to land to breed.



House Martins are the smallest of the three and are often mistaken for Swifts. They dart around in the air catching insects and have a very similar habit, however unlike Swifts; they can be seen perching on wires. They have a white underbelly which can clearly be seen when they are flying.

All three birds use buildings for nesting. Swallows normally nest inside buildings and they frequently use farm outbuildings. House Martins make mud-pellet nests on the outside of a building, usually under the eaves of the roof and Swifts use feathers to line their nests which they often make in cavities high up on buildings, though they will also use cavities in cliffs in remote areas.



You will frequently spot all these birds over reed beds in the evening, as they are areas rich with insects. They may also be seen on the islands of the Mar Menor and the open land near Estrella de Mar, Mar de Cristal and Playa El Vivero at the bottom of the La Manga strip.



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