

Identifying Red-rumped, Streak-throated, Barn and Wire-tailed Swallow

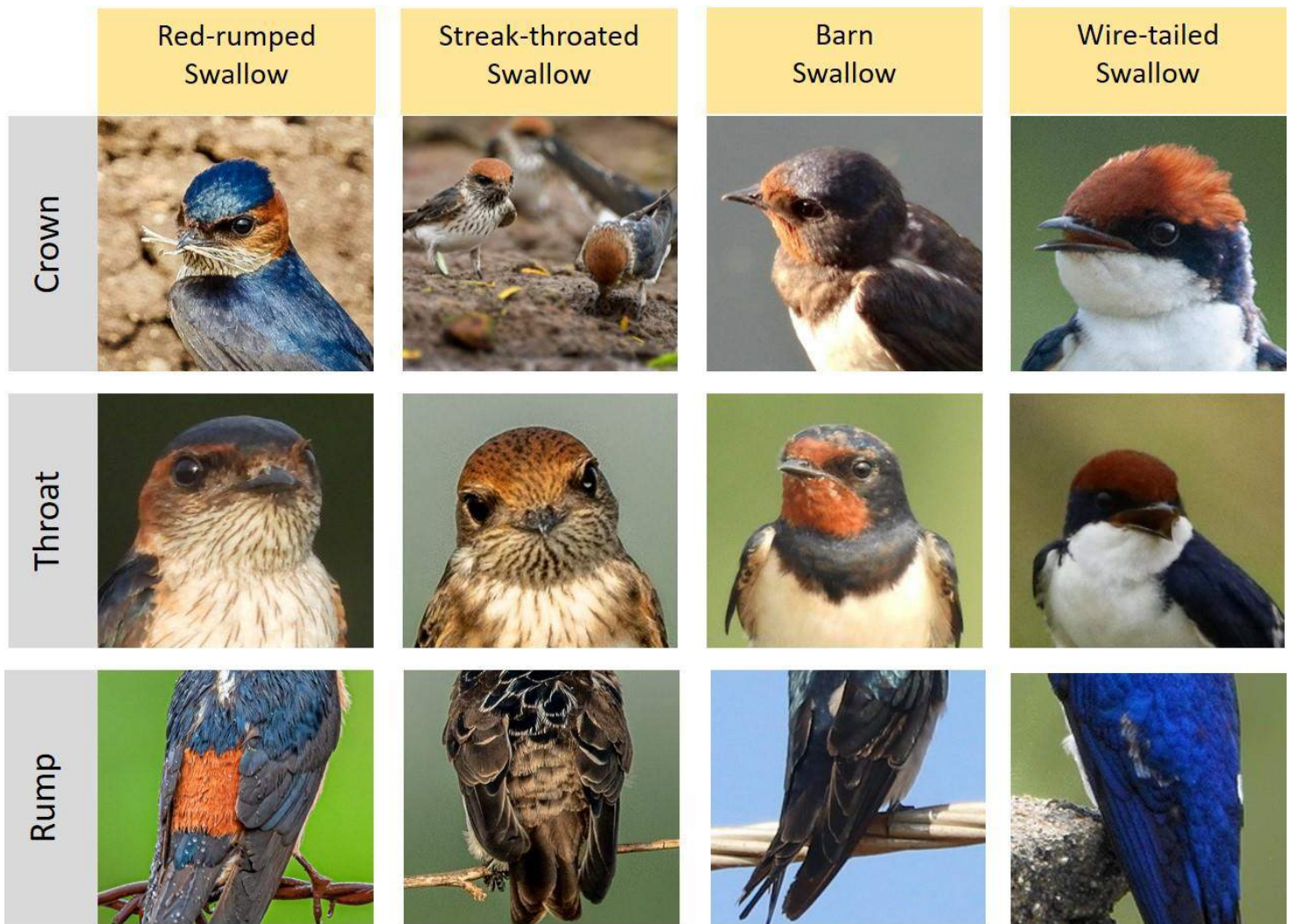
(by Kaushik Sarkar and Ashwin Viswanathan)

For a more detailed article see: birdcount.in/identifying-swallows-I

Swallows on a perch

Observe the colour of the crown, face, throat and not the general size/structure.

Contrasting features of head and rump

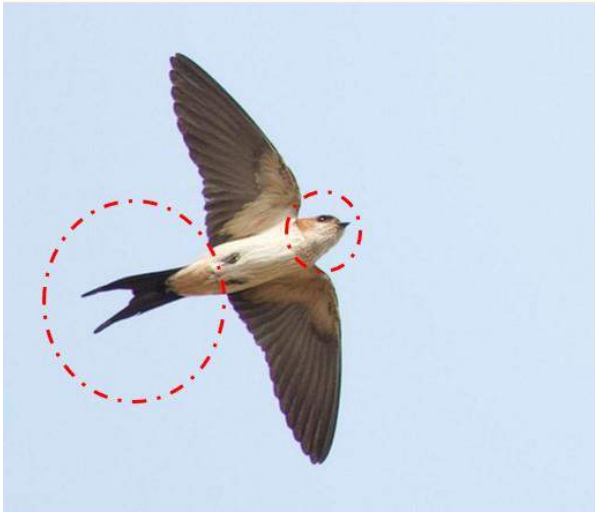


Comparative panels for different features of swallows. All images © Lakshmikant Neve (2), Hiren Khambyata, Aseem Borkar, Arvind Khanna, Vivek Saggur (2), Nishad Eshaal, Bharat Vyas, Srinivas Mallela, Srinivas S, Afsar Nayakkan and Macaulay Library.

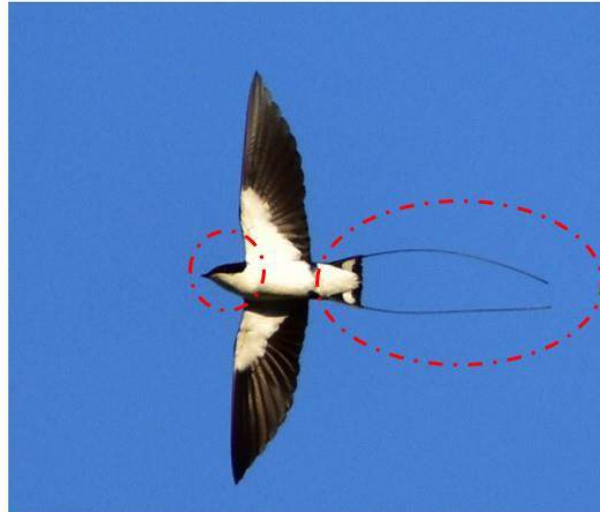
Swallows in flight

Observe the tail shape and the underparts (throat/breast).

Red-rumped Swallow



Wire-tailed Swallow



Barn Swallow



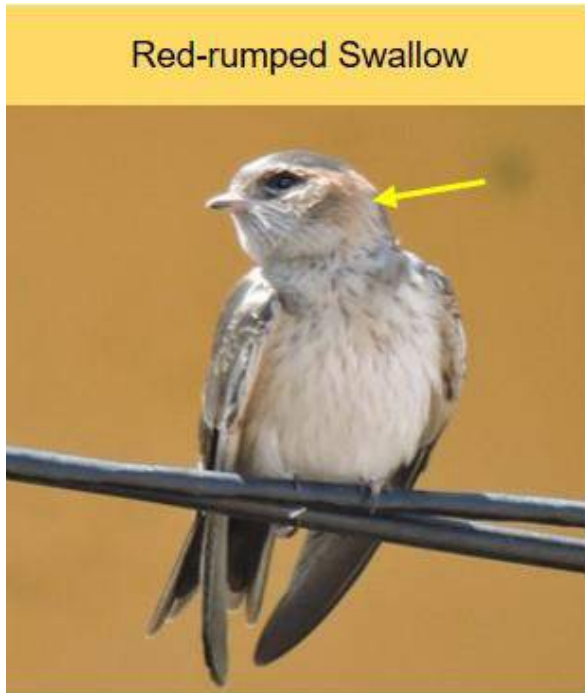
Streak-throated Swallow



Key identifying features for swallows in flight. All images (clockwise from top left) © Shehnaz K.A, Harish Dobhal, Kakul Paul, Kamal Hari Menon and Macaulay Library.

Identifying juveniles

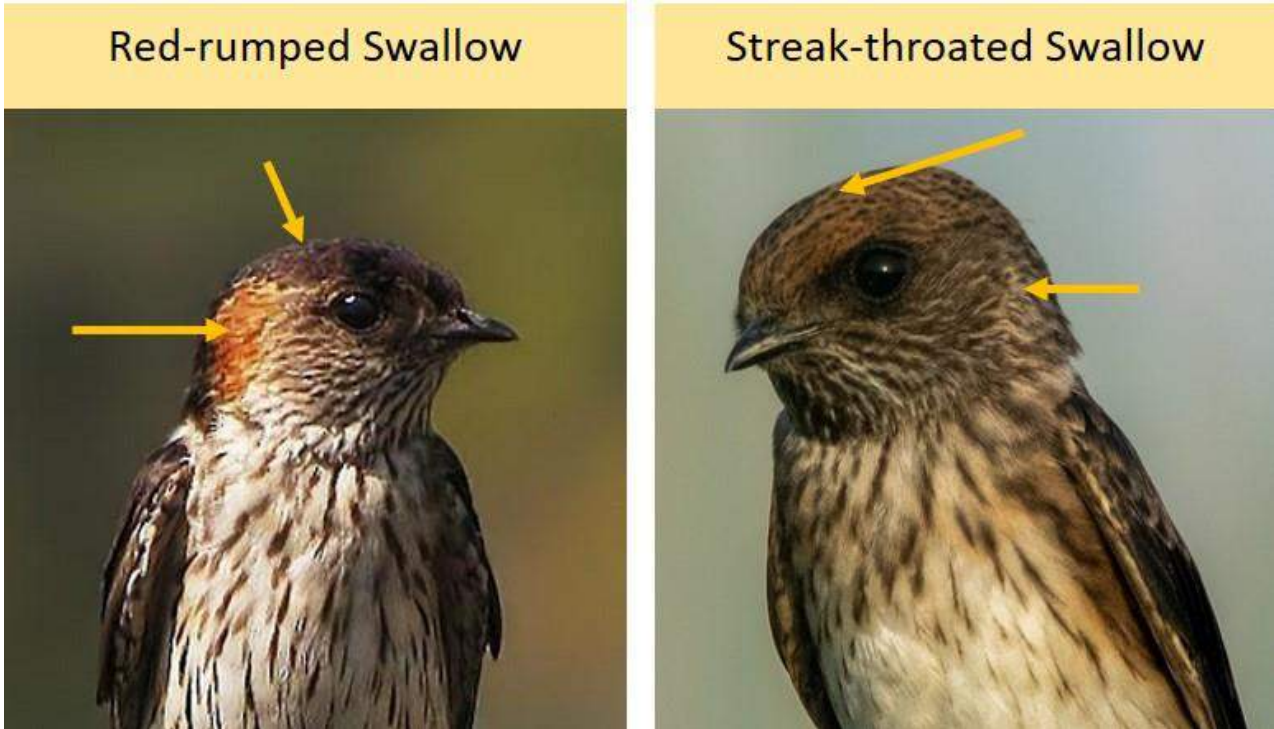
Observe the underparts, face, throat and crown.



Immature/juveniles of swallows. All images (clockwise from top left) © Mohammad Anesh Khira, Lalit Mohan Bansal, Shuvendu Das, Kalpesh Krishna and Macaulay Library.

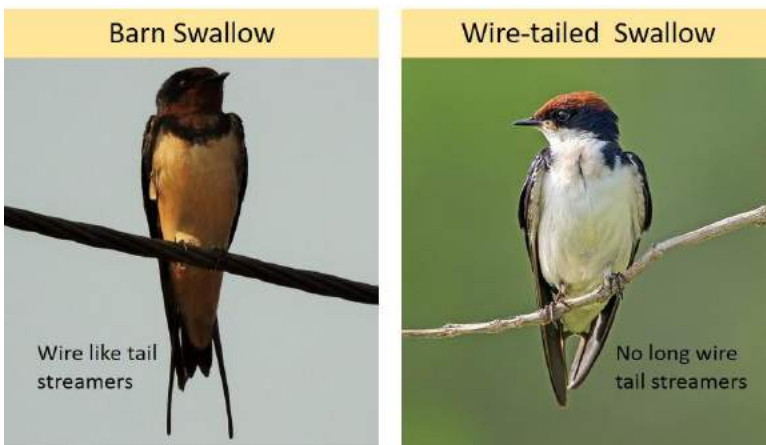
Confusing features

Both Red-rumped and Streak-throated can have streaks on the throat! Observe the face/‘ear’, crown, and general shape and size (Streak-throated is smaller).



Streaked throats compared between Red-rumped and Streak-throated Swallow. All Images © Ragoo Rao (L), Vivek Saggar (R) and Macaulay Library.

Both Barn and Wire-tailed can have very long tail streamers. Red-rumped can also have long streamers but not as long as the other two.



Tail streamers comparison between Barn Swallow and Wire-tailed Swallow. All images © Arulvelan Thillainayagam (L), Arijit Banerjee (R) and Macaulay Library