

# African swifts come to Blair

**BLAIRGOWRIE is gearing itself up for the role of hosting part of Africa's swift population as the speedy birds leave their winter homes for the warmer climes of East Perthshire.**

Perth and Kinross Council ranger Daniele Muir, based in Blairgowrie, is hoping to install a 'nest box' on the wall of the Co-op in the Wellmeadow in time for the swifts expected arrival in early May.

Daniele told the Blairie: "Swift numbers have dropped over recent

years as there has been less places to nest as old buildings diminish. I hope the nestbox will be taken on by a pair of young birds looking for a nest site for the first time, though it can take a few years for them to find a new nesting location."

The ranger service conducted a survey last summer of swift populations in the area with new colonies being found in Rattray, Crook of Devon and Inchtute.

Daniele said local Hillcrest Housing Association were hoping to become involved in making and in-

stalling boxes across the town.

"The Blairgowrie area is a great place for wildlife and having a bigger population of swifts here can only add to the appeal of the town," she added.

Local councillor Bob Ellis, a keen wildlife follower, said: "This is a wonderful feature to be added to the town. It is important we do everything we can to protect these birds."

The wall at the Co-op is currently being surveyed for safety, the box will be installed before May.

## Ian makes a glide to success