

The new lord of the castle

Directed by: G. Pancaldi, A. D'Onofrio, U. Adilardi, M. Bogliani

Produced by: SD Cinematografica

Duration: 30'

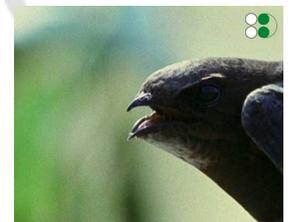
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Format: 16 mm

In the Tuscan hills of northern Italy lies a town that has not changed for centuries: San Gimignano. Here a vast colony of jackdaws builds its nests in the famous medieval towers that characterise the town. Rather than describe the biological behaviour of this bird community, the documentary chose to dwell on the unusual story of a little jackdaw that fell from its nest and was raised by a man. The story is a homage to Konrad Lorenz and his love for these animals, of whom he wrote so well.

The towers in medieval Italian towns make better homes for jackdaws than those found in their usual environment. In another instance, a bird looking for a home found a man ready to build towers especially for it.

The swift, a real son of the open sky, spends its whole life in flight, even managing to make love in the air. It normally hunts at more than 60 kilometers per hour but during its courting and battle acrobatics, it reaches almost 200 kilometers per hour. Great altitudes are another of its specialties and it is most comfortable above 3,500 meters. The only time it stops flying is during the nesting period and while raising its young. At Portico Romagna, in Italy, the tall medieval watch towers situated at strategic points contain many small openings in their walls. Similar apertures are found in the buildings in other towns nearby. These openings were built in many parts of Italy to attract swifts to build nests there, making it easy to remove the young birds before they learned to fly. Times have changed but the swifts still build their nests in these wall openings. They offer an excellent opportunity to study these birds close up.



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