



ONTARIO PURPLE MARTIN ASSOCIATION

Newsletter September, 2011

Hello fellow martin enthusiasts!

The martins have gone and now we will be tabulating our numbers to see how well we have done this year. It's also the time of year to take a look at our housing. Cleaning and any repairs should now be made, or at least noted, so that they can be done next spring. The preliminary reports on fledging results show that we had a very good year. We have all played our part in maintaining the martin population in our area and continued success depends on you and your efforts.

During the year we had some interesting meetings which took place at Colasanti's and Orchard View Golf Course. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of our group to thank all those who provided and hosted a meeting place for our club members. They are as follows: Gilles and Judy, Mary and Jim, John and Barb. Each get-together is always an opportunity for our members to share ideas and to socialize with people who have similar interests in the continuing success of the Purple Martin. I don't think we would be as successful as we are if we could not get together every few months to meet as a group, so thanks to all!

This was our second year participating with the Leamington Home and Garden Show during the month of March. This venue has enabled us to set up our displays, promote our club, and provide information on the Purple Martin. However, through our Board discussions, we have decided to not participate in the 2012 show.

In order to better promote our club, we are now looking at other places where we can meet people who have similar birding interests. We may be participating in the Hawk Festival at the Holiday Beach Conservation Area this coming September and also at the Point Pelee Birding Festival in the spring of 2012. We feel these types of events are more in-line with what we do as a club. In fact, it looks like we will be setting up an information booth at The Holiday Beach Conservation area on September 24th and 25th. **If you are able to help with this booth, let either Mary, John, Dennis or I know about your intentions to do so.**

At the present time we have 36 paid-up members of our club. We hope to continue growing as a club and to participate in our communities. With this in mind, we are looking to start new martin housing at the Holiday Beach Conservation area and possibly the Leamington Marina. John and Mary are working on these possibilities and we hope to hear further about these projects during the upcoming months. **The following members should now be recognized and given thanks for their many hours of attention given to the success of our Purple Martin population and our club.** They are as follows: Mary, for all her hard work in maintaining the colonies at Orchard View and Leamington Golf and County clubs, Gilles for his efforts at Woodland Hills Golf Club, Nancy for notifying the media with our meeting dates, and John, who through his many contacts with other clubs/organizations in Canada and the USA continues to promote our club and keep our website current.

It has been decided that the name of our association will change. It will now be called The Ontario Purple Martin Association. Since we have a number of members from the Chatham-Kent area, we feel that this change will better represent our club and give us more opportunities to expand our membership throughout the Province of Ontario.

Please note that **our first meeting of 2012 will be February 18th**. We are hopeful that holding it one month later than normal will provide more favourable weather conditions for our members who must travel some distance. (*Mary's note: see club calendar on last page of this newsletter.*)

I wish you all continued good fortunes for the rest of 2011, and hopefully we once again will meet in February 2012.

Paul Hamel, Chairperson



**Tom Ridge Environmental
Centre at Presque Isle State
Park, Erie, Pennsylvania.**

Hello fellow members:

Lyle Papps and I had the opportunity to join John Balga for the 2011 PURPLE MARTIN CONFERENCE in Erie PA

This was an experience I highly recommend to all club members. The food and accommodations were excellent. The PMCA staff and members were very helpful, accommodating, and friendly. The credentials of most of the speakers were extremely impressive. There were Professors, Scientists, Ornithologists, Naturalists, Engineers, Teachers and others. One of the Professors that impressed me was Bridget Stutchbury. She had two PHD students doing a presentation with her. The most important was information feedback from the Geolocators on the birds. These Geolocators are providing important knowledge on Migratory patterns as well as behaviour information on Martins and other songbirds.

Several other important points that I learned are:

- Most of our birds migrate to the Amazon Jungle rain forests. Previously there were 300-million acres of Rainforest; today, only 32-million. Some reasons for this tremendous loss are cattle farming; soya bean fields, lumber sales, urban development, and poor government intervention.

Another interesting point was about martin housing. Some of the attendees wanted housing to be regulated by the PMCA. This was brought up due to unmaintained housing and poor conditions in some of the colonies. The PMCA maintained that they could not regulate housing. Then Mike Scully, a teacher in Texas who monitors over fifty colonies raised some important points. Quite a number of the housing in his area were the cheaper \$50 SK housing because that's all many people can afford. Even if they have only two pair per house, there is still one hundred pair having young.

I would like to sum up by saying this conference was definitely a tremendous experience.

..... By Dennis Shady

Dear members:

I would like to share my experience at the first Purple martin Conference I have ever attended.

I traveled with John Balga and Dennis Shady to Erie Pennsylvania and the Tom Ridge Environmental Centre.

On Thursday August 11, we started with a social "meet and greet" from 6:30 – 8:30 pm. We met martineers from many US states and even a martin rep from Alberta. I really enjoyed this session; everyone was so receptive and friendly.

On Friday, August 12, we got down to business. There were many presentations that I found very informative. The status o purple martins, banding, extra pair copulations, geo-locators, and many more points of interest. The presentations continued through Saturday.

During the conference we were well fed and even had a picnic in Presque Ilse Park. While in the park we viewed a martin staging area where the birds line the hydro wires before going to the roost.

The roost was breathtaking ! Thousands of martins were flying overhead, and at sundown they dropped like rain into the marsh and surrounding trees. What an experience !

..... by Lyle Papps

For an extraordinary view of hummingbirds, visit:

<http://www.komar.org/faq/travel/hummingbirds/nest/>



*Passages in memory of our former members:
Joe Reffle - July 2011..... Bart Mathers -September 2011*

We have changed our name !!

From: Essex County Purple Martin Association **To:** **Ontario Purple Martin Association**

During a meeting of our board in August, it was proposed by John Balga that our club should move forward as the “Ontario Purple Martin Association”. After some discussion, we unanimously agreed that this is a wise and timely change, for several reasons:

- we are currently the only purple martin club in Ontario, and felt that we should take on the provincial designation that this new name provides *while it is still available to us*. And we have always reached out to and supported purple martin people from anywhere within and even beyond our province.
- We feel that within our local area, we have grown into a very experienced club that can offer valuable help to all who are interested in purple martins. With no other clubs in existence throughout Ontario, we want to extend our ability to help others.
- We hope to move forward with a broader influence. In the same way that the PMCA Affiliates Program aims to advance the conservation and perpetuation of Purple Martins, we hope to become a resource for others desiring to start their own local club elsewhere in Ontario. *(Our club is a member of the PMCA Affiliates Program, and here is an excerpt from their website regarding affiliate clubs.)*

“ The purposes of the PMCA Affiliates Program are to promote coordination, communication and recognition among these other Purple Martin organizations, and to foster partnerships between them and PMCA. Good partnerships between Affiliates and the PMCA are important to the future of the Purple Martins, Purple Martin landlords, and the organizations that support them.”

John implemented the name change immediately in our own and affiliate websites and all communications will now be under our new name.

Remember to visit our own & affiliate websites:

www.essexpurplemartins.ca The website of our club. Both our **CLUB CALENDAR** and our **NEWSLETTERS** are here, as well as photos of various club activities. (Constructed & maintained by John Balga Please contact him (see calendar page) for submissions or suggestions

www.ontariopurplemartins.ca/ontario This site is to facilitate the connecting of purple martin landlords throughout Ontario with the aim of safeguarding the purple martin which is now officially declared “in decline” in Ontario. (Constructed & maintained by John Balga Please contact him (see calendar page) for submissions or suggestions

<http://www.purplemartins.com> - goes to main website of above (**Purple martin Society NA**) which has the ECPMA link. A website that John has been active in, on our behalf, for several years is the Purple Martin Society NA. This website allows us to participate, in our own page, within a discussion forum that is shared with a much broader audience.
<http://www.purplemartins.com/RTC/forumdisplay.php?f=14> – goes directly to our page

2012 MEETINGS and EVENTS
Ontario Purple Martin Association

MEETING NOTIFICATIONS: We will make reminder phone calls or emails for each meeting, but you may want to clip out this schedule, or transfer the dates to your calendar. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated to everyone. For the “**member-host**” meetings, in case of questionable weather, individuals should contact the “host” to confirm if the meeting will be held as scheduled. **It will NOT be the responsibility of the “host” to contact everyone.**

9:00 am.....Feb. 18..... Location to be announced.

9:00 am.....Apr 21. Gilles & Judy Breton’s house

9:00 am.....Apr 28. **BLUEBIRD TOUR** – Hosted by Don Bissonnette (Note: **May 5** is rain date)

9:00 am.....May 12 “**Member-Host**” **Meeting** Location to be announced.

9:00 am.....Jun 9 Orchard View Golf Course (to be confirmed)

9:00 am.....Jun 30 “**Member-Host**” **Meeting** John & Barbara Balga’s (lunch meeting) . 519-776-5777

Jun 30 - *Approximate Time Window for banding*

Jul 11 Bird Banding Contact John Balga to participate. 519-776-5777

9:00 am.....Sep 15 FINAL 2011 MEETING - Orchard View Golf Course (to be confirmed)

Paul Hamel.....519-738-3476
John Balga.....519-776-5777
Mary Wilson519-326-1710
Dennis Shady 519-738-4411
Pauline Dunn 519-975-0460

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“*SUNSHINE LADY*”