



ONTARIO PURPLE MARTIN ASSOCIATION

Newsletter ... February, 2013

www.ontariopurplemartins.ca

Hello fellow Martin enthusiasts!

The 2012 season is now well behind us, and we are looking forward to a new year with lots of hope and expectations. Many of us will soon be checking over and making sure our housing is in order for the new arrivals. This is always an exciting time of year for us.

Our membership increased last year to 47 paid members. These numbers ensure that our organization will continue to be viable for many years to come. It also means that there is increased interest in people wanting to be Purple Martin landlords. This is good news for the martins in our area.

The board members have been busy during the last months putting together a constitution and working procedures for our association. This will help us to operate in a consistent and professional manner because we will have written guidelines to refer to and follow. Many thanks to our board members John Balga, Dennis Shady, Carol Taves, Mary Wilson, Al Hamill, Robert Cornies, Lyle Papps, Cy Poisson, and Nancy Robson for your valuable input to this endeavor. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Mary Wilson for taking all our thoughts and ideas and putting them together to create these documents.

This past year we put on a display at the Holiday Beach Conservation area for the Hawk festival. Thanks to all who were able to come out and help run with our information displays. Hopefully this year we will continue to be involved in various venues which can further our message: our feathered friends are important for our environment.

John continues to improve our web site which showcases our association. You will be pleasantly surprised by it ... check it out at www.ontariopurplemartins.ca. John and Barb, as you know, have moved to Mississauga, but John remains as a Director on our Board, and is still making contacts for our group, and he continues to be a vital contributor to the preservation of purple martins in Ontario.

It has been decided that our dues remain at \$20.00. This money is needed to carry on our club activities. We pay for such things as: room rental, paper for the newsletter, guest speakers, web site, door prizes, food at our meetings, and other miscellaneous expenses that may come up during the year. Carol Taves is our treasurer and is now responsible for the finances of the club. Thank you Carol for taking on this important function.

Thank you for your continued support, and please feel free to express any new ideas that you may have for our club. Remember, your input would be welcome for both the newsletter and the website !!!! Mary and John respectively would love to receive your stories, experiences, and photos to share with all. The more varied the input, the more interesting it is for everyone! Their email addresses are in the newsletter

Let's hope for a good "martin year" in 2013!

Paul Hamel, Chairperson.



It's an early start to the year for Florida landlords. As of January 24th, 66 of them have reported birds at their sites, with the earliest being December 19th !!!

This is 3 weeks earlier than 2012, with the first landlord reporting in on January 11th. Yet by January 24th of 2012, there were close to 70 scout reports made by Florida landlords, so perhaps weather has slowed them down some this year.

Well, there is one thing that is predictable with martins:
They are NEVER predictable !!!!

Your martins don't have to starve during bad spring weather !

Most of you know that supplemental feeding is being practiced by many landlords throughout the US and Canada to help their colonies survive bad weather conditions in the spring. Martins do not naturally know how to eat except "on the wing", so cold spring days can keep insects down and spell disaster for martins that are weakened from a long migration. Training your martins to accept crickets that are flung into the air is wonderful insurance for your colony. After that, they can be trained to accept scrambled egg - a pure protein that they tolerate and sometimes even seem to prefer ! And after that, they can be trained to come to a feeder platform.

For those who are not familiar with supplemental feeding, there are a number of landlords in our club who have trained their birds to accept food, and will be happy to advise you.

CRICKETS: *Once again this year, I will be taking **prepaid** orders for crickets. You can give me your order and your prepayment at the February 9th meeting, or contact me to make other arrangements. Last year we were able to negotiate with our latest supplier to maintain the price we have enjoyed for some years now: **\$20 per thousand.** The order will be placed when martins are reported in northern Ohio (usually mid-late March). I will freeze and repackage them for you, and call you when they are ready to be picked up.*

*If you want to be included in the order, please contact me (Mary Wilson) before mid-March
519-326-1710, or helenmwilson@yahoo.com*



February 23, 2013

Walpole Island Biodiversity Project Conference

This event promises to be a wonderful learning and sharing experience. It is open to the public, and is being chaired by several of our own club members (Richard & Susan Carr), who are spear-heading the efforts to increase purple martins on Walpole Island. Several outstanding speakers are on the agenda, and vendors and exhibitors will be on-site! Everyone is welcome !

Location: Walpole Island Sports Complex, 431 Tecumseh Road, Saint Clair, Ontario.

February 23, 201312:00 - 5:00 pm (approx.)

12:00–12:30: A light lunch will be served.

12:30 – 1:20: Presentation by Mr. John Tautin, Executive Director of the PMCA (Purple Martin Conservation Association), Pennsylvania. The title of his program will be **Building Community for Purple Martin Conservation**, concerning the ecology, status, and management of purple martins, with emphasis on building community to address the decline of martins on Walpole Island and in Ontario.
Mr. Tautin holds a degree in Wildlife Science and in 1974 joined the US Department of Interior, Fish & Wildlife Services to begin a career in migratory bird conservation. During his career, he held a variety of positions at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Centre and was Chief of US Bird Banding Laboratory.

1:30 – 2:20: Presentation by Mr. Larry Cornelis of Wallaceburg, Ontario. Mr. Cornelis will take you on a journey of **Walpole Island's native plants through time and space**.
He is a certified Horticulturist, present owner of his own landscape design business, and director and past president of Sydenham Field Naturalists and Lambton Wildlife Inc., as well as a tour guide for Nature Conservancy Canada and Thames Talbot Land Trust. He is the recipient of many awards for his volunteer work in conservation and preservation.

2:30 – 3:20: Presentation by Mr. Mike Champagne, Director of Seven Ponds Nature Centre. He will be speaking on **The Joy of Bluebirds**.
A graduate of Michigan State University with degrees in zoology, he has worked in Michigan nature centers for 38 years, and has been the director of Seven Ponds Nature Centre in Dryden, Michigan, for 21 years.

3:30 – 4:00: Open Forum discussion.

4:00 Door Prize Raffle

Pre-registration is required. You can fill out a registration form at our Feb. 9th meeting, or go to the OPMA website: www.ontariopurplemartins.ca

Click on NEWS, click on UPCOMING EVENTS, and scroll down to find the "Walpole Island Biodiversity Recovery Project" Registration Form.

At the September 2012 meeting at Orchard View Golf Course, we presented John Balga with a gift in recognition of his many contributions to the success of our association.

We are very happy that Mississauga is not so terribly far away that we won't see John again, and very thankful that he is continuing his contributions to the OPMA through his involvement in the website, banding, and as a Director on our Board. We wish John and Barbara much happiness in their new location!



(The pictures were taken at Orchard View Golf Course by local photographer Randy Holland)



Remember that our logo is available from Silver Stitch Embroidery in Windsor, for use on T-shirts or other products. They have a wide variety of clothing and other items available. Check out their website at www.silverstitch.ca

For the Handy men & women among us

It is amazing to see the creativity that exists throughout the "birding world". Some of the greatest improvements in martineering came out of someone's workshop: SREH being one of the best examples ! A few other creations are shown below.

I know that we have some innovators in our ranks if anyone would like to share their creations, I would love to share their stories and pictures in the newsletter, and others may love to try them !



The martins have used these cedar houses for two years. The inside dimension is 5-1/2 inches x 12 inches. I left a 1/4 inch space on the two long sides under the roof for ventilation. I did not insulate mine in any way. I used cedar fence pickets - they are 5.5 inches x 5/8 inch thick.

To keep water out, I cut a 1/8 inch notch near the bottom edge of the roof pieces (as a drip line). I also glued and caulked the roof to keep out any water. They weigh a bit more than a natural gourd, but are about equivalent to a heavy plastic gourd.

(This is an excerpt from a post on the PMCA Forum by long-time & very experienced Texas landlord Emil Pampell.)

There are some amazing and creative purple martin houses out there on the world-wide-web. Here's one I really liked. The creator is Chet Wells, who unfortunately passed away in 2009 at 90, but his website is being maintained in his honour.



"I build my martin houses from sheet metal, 6" PVC pipe, plastic funnels, and red cedar. Nothing will rot or decay.

The funnels are insulated with fiber glass and the sheet metal roof is insulated with factor one insulation.

I recommend mounting a single house on 1 1/2" ID black iron pipe."

2013 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. 9. Colasanti’s (Willow Room), Ruthven

9:00 am Apr 20. **“Member-Host” Meeting** _____

Don Bissonnette is hosting two Bluebird Tours this year:

9:00 am Apr 27. **BLUEBIRD TOUR**

9:00 am May 4 **BLUEBIRD TOUR**

9:00 am May 11 **“Member-Host” Meeting** _____

9:00 am Jun 8 Orchard View Golf Course (to be confirmed)

9:00 am Jun 29 **“Member-Host” Meeting** _____

Approximate Time Window for banding

Jun 29 → Jul 13 Bird Banding Contact Rob Cornies to participate. **519-733-4004**

9:00 am Sep 14 FINAL 2013 MEETING - Orchard View Golf Course (to be confirmed)

Contact any of the members below with questions and concerns:

John Balga 519-800-2504.....martinman@hotmail.comWebsite / Banding
Rob Cornies 519-733-4004.....roba496@gmail.comBird Banding
Pauline Dunn..... 519-975-0460.....paulinedunn@hotmail.com.....Acknowledgements (sympathy,congratulations,etc.)
Paul Hamel..... 519-738-3476.....kp_hamel@live.caChairperson
Al Hamill 519-738-6932.....alhamill70@gmail.comAdvisor
Lyle Papps..... 519-354-6404.....Natural gourd expertise
Cy Poisson 519-776-9713.....cypoison@hotmail.comLending library
Nancy Robson..... 519-326-8557.....nrobson@cogeco.caMedia
Dennis Shady 519-738-4411dennisshady@yahoo.caNew member advisor
Carol Taves 519-825-7026.....carol@tec-land.comTreasurer, Finances
Mary Wilson..... 519-326-1710.....helenmwilson@yahoo.comMember records, Newsletters, Cricket orders

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