

ONTARIO PURPLE MARTIN ASSOCIATION

www.ontariopurplemartins.ca

www.essexpurplemartins.ca

FALL 2019



... until next year ...

Message from our Chairperson:

We had our last meeting of the year on October 19th at Orchard View Golf Course. We had a smaller than usual turnout but those attending were able to give their final fledged counts.

Over all it looks like the Martins had a good season. Hopefully everyone will be able to submit their final tallies to John Balga (martinman@hotmail.com) so he can finalize this year's statistics. It will be interesting to see how they compared to past years.

As many of you know, Richard Carr resigned from the Vice Chair position last June. We now need someone to step forward and take over this position. We also have three director-at-large positions whose terms are now up. If you are interested in any of these positions, put your name forward at our first meeting in February. If we have more than three individuals interested then a vote would take place at our meeting in April.

We participated in Hawk Fest this past September for only one weekend. Because of a severe windstorm the first week, Hawk Fest had to be cancelled the first scheduled weekend. Even though it was a shortened Hawk Fest, we were able to talk to a lot of interested people about having a colony on their property. Hopefully, we created enough interest that they may join our organization and start their own colony.

This storm also caused a great deal of damage at our site at Holiday Beach. We lost the gourd rack and our castle's pole was bent. John Balga contacted Nature Canada about this situation and they have agreed to donate a new pole for the gourd rack. This will save us quite a bit of money because the

OPMA is responsible for maintaining this site at Holiday Beach. We were in the process of removing the castle because it was getting old and two new T14s were put up this past spring. We will be discussing the future of this site at our next board meeting because of the flooding that has occurred this past year which makes it difficult to monitor the housing.

We depend on our dues to pay for all our organization's expenses, one of which is the maintenance of our vital website. Membership fees of \$20.00 are due at our first meeting in February. You also can pay them electronically to Al Hamill or send him a cheque if you are unable to attend this meeting. (See OPMA Board listing at end of this newsletter for contact information.)

Our meeting dates in 2020 for February, April and October have been set:

February 22nd in the Willow room at Colasanti's Tropical Garden,
April 18th at Orchard View Golf Course,
October 17th Orchard View Golf Course.

We still need to finalize dates and location for our two member-host meetings for May and June. If you are interested in hosting one of these meetings let us know by the February meeting so we can make plans. The June meeting is our pot luck meeting so you should be aware that we will need tables to eat at and possibly a barbeque to cook the food

Well that's about all the news I have. I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a joyous upcoming holiday season! Hope we will see you in the New Year!

[Paul Hamel](#)

RESOURCES

Remember to check the wonderful OPMA website maintained and provided by John Balga, our **website** manager. www.essexpurplemartins.ca or www.ontariopurplemartins.ca

- ❖ **The Feed Store** in Harrow carries many Purple Martin products. Phone # is 1-519-738-2261 and they are located in Harrow at 2564 County Road 20 East.
- ❖ **The PMCA** (Purple Martin Conservation Association) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of Purple Martins through scientific research, state of the art management techniques, and public education. **The PMCA forum does not require sign-up, is totally free, and is a wealth of information from landlords all across North America.** www.purplemartin.org
- ❖ **Nature Canada:** Nature Canada's Purple Martin Project is part of an international initiative between university researchers, naturalist groups, Purple Martin landlords and citizens to help protect and recover aerial insectivore populations. The OPMA are partnered with NC in this endeavour and they are the recipients of our end-of-season colony statistics. <http://naturecanada.ca/what-we-do/bird-conservation/purple-martin-project/>



A bulk order is submitted around late February by Brian at the **Harrow Feed Store**. This saves considerably on the shipping costs for everyone. If you have anything on your PM wish list, please keep this deadline in mind.

Welcome to our new member!

Gary Hass Arnprior, Ont.



I've had this picture for years now. It showed up in an internet search for gourd racks, and had no information other than a tagline of "the nut lady". I can't find it now, and it may not even be a gourd rack! 😊. But whatever it is, there's certainly some nice features - the roofs for shade and the individual owl guards!
Winter project, anyone?

At our October Meeting

Paul started the meeting with the usual "go-around", with everyone discussing their colony results and experiences. Like most years, there was a mix of results. Here are some of the things shared:

Walpole Island:

- Susan Carr shared the Walpole Island stats: 115 pairs, with 543 fledged. Also, 324 nestlings were banded.

- Walpole Island Roost is now known as **BKEJWANONG** (the beautiful Ojibway name which means "*Where the Waters Divide*"). Susan said that the 2019 roost video (filmed again by Jeremy Wolting) is even more spectacular than the one in 2018, and will be uploaded soon. Once is it, I'll let everyone know, but in the meantime:

For any members who haven't seen the 2018 (1st ever) video of this recently discovered Purple Martin Roost, go to <https://youtu.be/7grOwZnFMfs> to view the beautifully rendered recording of this awe-inspiring natural event!

Nature Canada:

- John Balga passed around a form for everyone to fill out their PM results. Anyone who wasn't at the meeting can find the form on the Nature Canada website, or print out the **attachment** in the email which delivered this newsletter. Submission information is included in the form itself. Thanks to everyone who submits this form. A lot of important information is gleaned from this from year to year!
- In July 2019, Nature Canada asked us to send out a form for the collection of Purple Martin colonies throughout Canada. If you haven't registered your colony with Nature Canada, here's the link to do so. <https://e-activist.com/page/44886/data/1>
- John reported on the **Point Pelee roost**. It was somewhat disappointing this year, maxing out at an estimated 10,000.
- John shared that a band report came in about a Martin that fledged in July 2019. It was recovered in Bayfield after being hit by a turbine. Several other locations where banded birds were recovered / spotted, showed an amazing dispersal range of our birds. (Conventional wisdom is that they disperse within a 50-mile radius of their natal colonies.)

Holiday Beach:

- There was extreme spring flooding at Holiday Beach, which impacted the remainder of the year. For HawkFest (which the OPMA has participated in for many years), the first weekend of the scheduled 2-weekend event was cancelled due to flooding problems that persisted into September. We did participate with our OPMA booth in the 2nd weekend, and then a major storm blew through and knocked down the gourd rack which now has a bent pole at the base and is not really usable. BUT ... Nature Canada will be providing a new 12-gourd rack free to us from their Purple Martin Housing program. 😊 The OPMA Board will be discussing the viability of this site into the future, keeping in mind the wonderful opportunity we have at HBMO to interact with the public on behalf of our beloved Purple Martins.

Colchester:

- This was the site of our "Martin Festival" in 2018. We have had a successful colony there. This year, construction occurred during the nesting season, and they wanted to move one house. The OPMA intervened with a ruling from MNR, and so the house was left in place until September. Construction did continue though, around the Martins, and they completed their nesting cycle through to fledging. There were 10 pairs in the T14, and 5 pairs in the TRIO. The house that was removed in September will be re-installed in Spring 2020.

Banding License:

- Congratulations to our member Ron Delcourt who has obtained his banding license with HBMO.

Wild Bird Bugs

A few members experimented with these in spring of 2019. They are sold at TSC stores. They are the dried larvae of a certain type of fly. They look a little bit like mealworms, but not quite. The usual price was \$29.99 (not bad for 6 lbs. of bugs), but they were initially bought by Mary Wilson on sale for \$24.99. Apparently, their shelf life is indefinite, since they are simply dried. This makes them extremely brittle, and we (Mary and my volunteer experimenter Nancy Robson), discovered that they softened up considerably after a good soaking. We both found that the Martins ate these as a "last resort", but it was handy when we ran out of our more expensive crickets. Al Hamill also experimented with these bugs, and found that the Martins did eat them.

Disclaimer- they are quite smelly ... but since birds don't have a very well-developed sense of smell (unless you're a turkey vulture), this is a turn-off to only the humans involved. 😊

Bottom line: They are a great backup. Martins **will eat them** when nothing else is available.



OPMA Board: Contact anyone below with questions:

*The OPMA Board consists of 4 executive positions, and up to 5 directors-at-large.
Volunteers are not Board members, but Board members may also be volunteers. Volunteer functions are separate from board functions.*

(Board) Executive:

Paul Hamel..... 519-738-3476.....kp_hamel@live.caChairperson
Vacant.....Vice-Chair
Al Hamill 519-738-6932.....alhamill70@gmail.comTreasurer / Finances
Mary Wilson..... 519-326-1710.....helenmwilson@yahoo.comSecretary / Member Records

(Board) Directors-at-Large:

Fern Bellavance 519-257-0013.....fern.bellavance@gmail.com
Audrey Festeryga... 519-712-9708.....afesteryga@yahoo.com
MarieAnne Knapp .. 519-726-6180.....marianne1937@yahoo.ca
Lyle Papps..... 519-354-6404
Dennis Shady 519-738-4411.....dennisshady@yahoo.ca

(Non-Board) Volunteer Functions:

John Balga 519-800-2504.....martinman@hotmail.comAdvisor / Website
Fern Bellavance 519-257-0013.....fern.bellavance@gmail.comLending Library
Richard Carr (see above)Walpole Island / Geo-Locators
Lyle Papps..... (see above)Natural gourds
Nancy Robson..... 519-326-8557.....nancyrrobson@gmail.comMedia
Carolyn Recker.....Goodwill Ambassador
Dennis Shady (see above)New Member Advisor
Mary Wilson..... (see above)Newsletters / Cricket Ordering

*Best wishes from the OPMA for a
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*



....the end....