



Message from our Chair:

2022 is quickly coming to an end. I am sure many of us will begin to look back on this year to reflect on how successful our colonies were and begin to think about the return of the Martins in the spring of 2023. It has been months since the Martins headed south for the winter and I am sure many of us still miss the very distinct sound of the bird.

From early reports that were given at our October meeting, it looks like the Purple Martin had a very successful year in our area. Most landlords reported that they were very pleased with the number of Martins fledged. In fact, quite a few reported an increase in the number of pairs they had and this resulted in an increase in the numbers that were fledged. I can say with confidence that the Purple Martin continues to enjoy a great deal of success in our area. It is still very important, if you have not done so yet, to report your numbers to John Balga (martinman@hotmail.com). John uses this information to see how the Martin has been doing from year to year and he sends the current statistics to Nature Canada so they too have record of results.

We were finally able to have a more normal year with our association. We met two times at Orchard View Golf Course and we were able to have two member host meetings. One was held at Carol & Ernie Taves's house in Wheatley and the other was held at Al & Anne Hamill's house in Harrow. It is nice to be able to get together in May and June because we are able to enjoy the Martin colonies when they are full

of activity. We will be looking for other members to host these meetings in 2023. If you are interested let us know.

Our club continues to enjoy a strong membership. We have over 70 members with many coming from areas outside of the Essex and Chatham Kent region. Our membership is very important because we get new ideas about how the club should be run and the membership dues collected allows us to continue with our financial responsibilities. Al reported at our October meeting that we have \$4000 in our account. We use this money to maintain our web site, pay for hall rentals if required, maintain our colonies at Holiday Beach and other ERCA sites as well as sites in the Town of Essex, and any other expense that may come up throughout the year. We are always open to suggestions on how this money should be spent.

At the present time we have ten board members. This includes the three executive positions which are chairperson, secretary and treasurer. We have had one board position open for a year now and we are still hoping to find someone to take this position. In fact, we would like to see more people join the board. It is always good to have new ideas on how to better the organization and the best way to achieve this goal is to have new members on the board. If you are interested, let me or someone on the board know that you have an interest in becoming a board member.

At our last board meeting, a proposal was put forward that we should try to have more opportunities to come together as a group. It was thought that we could have “**Martin Nights**” that could take place in April, May, June and July when the Martins are most active. A date would be chosen and we would meet at a member’s house to take a look at what is going on with their colony. It would probably not last much longer than an hour but would give us a chance to socialize with one another and have a discussion on Martins. Members would simply volunteer to host one of these nights. A notice would go out indicating a time and location. Anyone interested in participating in this would show up at the designated time and enjoy the time together with other members.

This year we were able to participate in the Festival of Hawks at Holiday Beach Conservation Area. A number of board members helped out with our information booth. It is hoped that next year - because we already know the dates - we can get more volunteers from the general membership to help out. More information will be coming about this event in 2023. If you are interested in helping, let me know so I can add your name to the list of volunteers.

Unfortunately, we were unable to hold our first meeting of the year in February because of Covid restrictions. Next year, we hope to be back on track and start the year off with our first meeting in February. Our venue has to be changed because Colasanti's no longer rents out their halls. We are working on a new location and should be able to let you know in January where this meeting will be held.

As you read further into this newsletter, you will see that there is going to be a change to the format. It is going to be a good change and hopefully it will give more opportunity to hear from everyone in the organization. I want to thank Mary Wilson for all her hard work and dedication to make sure the newsletters got out to each and every one of us. The good news is Mary will remain as our secretary and continue to send out the newly styled information page/s to our members. Thanks again Mary, all your work is greatly appreciated.

This now ends my final submission to our Newsletter.

But, it will not be the last time you hear from me because I too will be contributing to the new format. Read on to find out the shape it will be taking.

Paul Hamel, Chair

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS !

Stefan Wieclawek, St. Catharines

Alicia Good, Leamington

Rose-Marie Symes, Leamington

Mike & Tiffanie Rajki, Kingsville

OUR FINAL MEETING OF 2022


Our last meeting of the year took place at Orchard View Golf Course in Ruthven. The owners of this golf course have for many years welcomed our “birding” efforts on their property. They also provide use of their very spacious meeting area, and are happy to make coffee available for us as well. There is no charge from Orchard View for the use of their facilities, but the OPMA does give a small payment to express our appreciation.

Paul welcomed everyone who came out to the meeting. There were 23 people in total, and one guest who then joined as a new member.

The Go-around:

The traditional “go-around” as always was enjoyable to hear, as everyone in turn described their colonies’ results for the year. In general, it seemed that most members had a successful season with their purple martins.

A few sample reports:

- John Balga is encouraged by the numbers he has received so far from members who submitted their results via the Nature Canada form.
- Ron Delcourt reported that Holiday Beach had 70 pairs with approximately 300 fledged. They also banded 275 nestlings there. The ERCA 1 site fledged 62 from 15 pairs. The new Big Creek site, adjacent to Holiday Beach, was a disappointment, as no martins ended up nesting there this year.
- Fern Bellavance built a scarecrow to keep unwanted visitors away, and said he must have been successful in making it look realistic because his neighbour asked him why he was sitting out there all the time.

- Audrey Festeryga got Martins this year! 3 pairs nested in her new house !!!!!
- Mary Wilson reported a first-time-ever problem at Erie Shores Golf Course with their tree swallow/bluebird boxes. Snake predation is suspected. Approximately 1/3 of all nestlings were lost.
- Several landlords felt that the ever present HOSP problem seemed to be a little worse this year.
- John Balga spoke about Roost Rings and showed a map which included the Walpole Island roost ring, and the much smaller Point Pelee ring. He also shared about the Woltings’ involvement at Rondeau Park – they have installed housing there and will be monitoring it (some PM housing existed already in the park, but it wasn’t being maintained or managed).

Paul talked about our participation in September in the **Festival of Hawks** (formerly HawkFest), which was only a 1-day event this year. Next year it will be a 2-day event on Sept. 16-17.

Paul also mentioned that **MartinFest** will not happen in 2023, because the preparation must start very early in the previous fall, including contacting potential vendors. There is still too much uncertainty regarding Covid, and we may need to search out a new venue due to Colchester Harbour having made some changes to the property which would decrease the area we used for our 2018 event.

Fern manages our **lending library** and refreshed everyone on how it works. It is for the use of our members and contains lots of useful information and tools for attracting martins. Everything is free to borrow, just by signing the items out in the book provided. This is a great member benefit which Fern encourages everyone to take advantage of.

John talked about the concept of having **“Martin Nights”** (or Marty Party ☺). The idea is that members can go and observe an active colony and have a time of socialization. During the very active months of June and July, this would allow potentially 8 or so visits to various sites. Someone noted that this idea could also be expanded to include some early spring feeding demonstrations. A “show-of-hands” vote was taken, and the overwhelming response was that members **WOULD BE INTERESTED** in attending this type of get-together.

Dennis Shady showed us the sprayer he uses to **clean up his housing and nesting trays** in the fall. It was a pressurized sprayer which can be bought for about \$4 at Princess Auto, or apparently at the dollar store as well, someone mentioned. Dennis uses a mixture of Dawn dish soap and bleach, and:

- Sprays down the nesting tray BEFORE removing the old nests; lets them sit for a day.
- Removes the nest trays and old nests; sprays the trays down again.
- Sprays the interior of the house, including inside the V-roof of his Trio housing.
- John added that this spray could be used in the perimeter of ground around the pole, since many bugs will fall to the ground during the process of cleaning.
- This solution kills all the fleas, mites, blowflies, etc., that may be in the nests.

John shared that the first-ever online **Zoom conference, held by the PMCA** in August 2022, was the very best conference he has ever attended (an opinion seconded by Ron Delcourt). During that conference, one notable piece of information was that the winter roost area in Brazil had been located, and many wintering PM's were banded by PMCA. PMCA staffers will be looking for any of those bands in the spring when the martins return to the PMCA colony.

Paul thanked everyone for coming and brought the meeting to a close.

Festival of Hawks: Holiday Beach Migration – September, 2022



... by Al Hamill:

“We were in a reasonably good spot and there was lots of interest. Two new members signed up. A number of folks were very interested but simply did not have a suitable location for any housing.

Fern was active with many of the children that were there as he had a video on his phone with the martins singing and flying around--this was a big hit with them.

HBMO did not catch a great deal of hawks and they have switched from having single adoptions by individuals to having multiple adoptions for the same bird but each person gets a photo of the hawk with their name etc on it if they sponsor/adopt one. Corey Balkwill is a master at entertaining the crowd with his detailed description of the birds.”



“Room for Two” Original painting by Lorraine Moon



This beautiful painting is shared with permission from both the artist and the owner.

It was painted by Lorraine Moon for Dennis Tatomir (both OPMA members). (You may recall mention of Lorraine in our most recent newsletter – Summer 2022).

Also, a “Member Profile” of Lorraine was part of our Summer 2021 Newsletter, and included a link to a local newspaper which featured her paintings. See it here: [A Depth of Colour – windsorlife.com](https://www.windsorlife.com)

Lorraine can be reached at [Moonshine Designs \(519-999-5601\)](https://www.moonshinedesigns.com) or dwight_moon@hotmail.com

FeederWatch

Thank you to our member Henry Wolting who forwarded the following information, sure to be of interest to all bird lovers!

Get ready—FeederWatch begins tomorrow, November 1! Do you love having birds around your home but don't love putting out bird feeders? Then FeederWatch is for you! Despite the name, you can FeederWatch without feeders, in fact we encourage it. If you garden or have plants that attract birds and want to monitor your site and contribute to science, you'll love FeederWatch.

Join now so you can start counting tomorrow and enjoy the entire season!

"I joined FeederWatch this year to better judge how successful my habitat improvement efforts have been. In winter birds forage on the sunflower and tithonia seeds and the winterberry fruit from my plantings, showing that my love for pollinators comes full circle" – Melanie Kelley, Johnson City, TN

The \$18 annual membership fee in the U.S., or **a donation of any amount in Canada**, covers everything you need to get started, including a bird identification poster, a calendar for keeping track of your counting days, and a suite of online tools for tracking your birds (including access to our mobile app!).

We hope to hear about your birds!

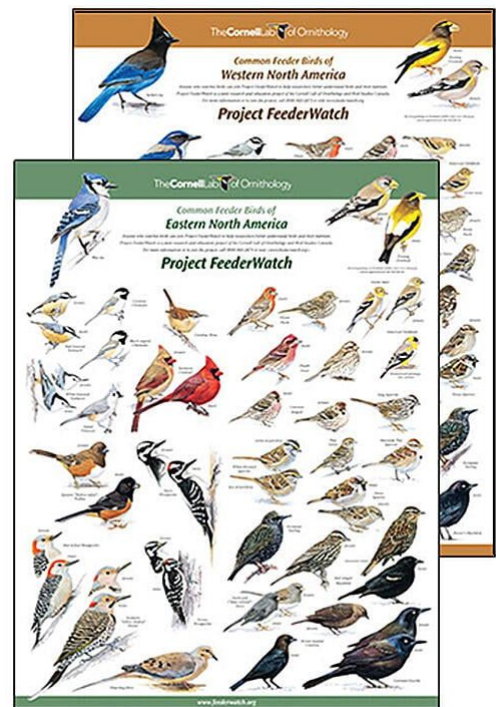
Emma Greig, Project FeederWatch

When you join FeederWatch you will receive:

- Double-sided poster of eastern and western common feeder birds
- Bird-Watching Days Calendar
- Tools to track your birds over time on our website and mobile app
- Our annual summary, *Winter Bird Highlights*
- Digital access to *Living Bird* magazine

Have questions about FeederWatch?

Find answers to your questions on the [FeederWatch website](http://www.feederwatch.org).



Out with the old In with the new

“OPMA Chatter”

All things change with time, and the OPMA feels it is time to change our method of communicating our NEWS to our members.

This Newsletter is the last of its type that you'll receive! The new **“OPMA Chatter”** will take its place - a mini-newsletter (*2 pages on average*) that will be issued approximately once a month for 9-10 months of the year!

These **“Chatters”** will cover:

- OPMA Meetings, as well as our participation in the local events that are a vital part of our involvement with the public.
- Voluntary submissions featuring specific examples of the **vast and varied expertise of our members**. We **KNOW** that there's a wealth of creativity and innovation amongst you all!
- The opportunity to get to know **all of our members** a little better.

(The creation of our OPMA Website some years ago extended our reach far beyond our local area, and we now have a membership which may never get to meet one another due to geography.)

So, at least several times a year, our **“Chatters”** will feature voluntary **“Member Profiles”** - an introduction to a specific member, their colony, and their unique experiences and challenges as a purple martin landlord.

We believe this change is good for the future of the OPMA! Our communications will be better when they are **the voice of ALL** - not one, or just a few.

This is a new approach for us and it will need to be developed and nurtured over time. Our first year will serve as an example of the direction we are taking. We hope that eventually everyone will take part and embrace the opportunity to share, in our own voice, the experiences and experiments, the successes and the disappointments, **that are unique to each of us alone**.

We all can teach - and we all can learn from - EACH OTHER!

As the Newsletter Volunteer, I want to thank everyone who, over the years, sent me content to share via the newsletters. Your submissions of articles, photos, and experiences were very much appreciated. They helped me to “fill the pages”, and made our communications more personal and interesting for everyone.

I wish you all health and safety as we move closer to yet another new Purple Martin year!

Mary Wilson

RESOURCES

OPMA website (maintained & provided by John Balga, **website** manager). www.ontariopurplemartins.ca

The Feed Store in Harrow carries many Purple Martin products. Located at 2564 County Road 20 East, Harrow. Contact them at 1-519-738-2261

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 N.A.** 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 that are collected by John Balga.
<http://naturecanada.ca/what-we-do/bird-conservation/purple-martin-project/>

OPMA BOARD

Contact anyone below with questions:

**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.ca Chairperson
Al Hamill 519-738-6932.....alhamill70@gmail.com Treasurer
Mary Wilson..... 519-326-1710.....helenmwilson@yahoo.com Secretary

(Board) Directors-at-Large:

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

(Non-Board) Volunteer Functions:

John Balga 519-800-2504.....martinman@hotmail.com Advisor / Website
Fern Bellavance 519-257-0013.....fern.bellavance@gmail.com Lending Library
Ron Delcourt Bird banding
Lyle Papps..... (see above) Natural gourds
Nancy Robson..... 519-326-8557nancyrrobson@gmail.com Media
Carolyn Recker..... Goodwill Ambassador
Dennis Shady (see above) New Member Packages
Mary Wilson..... (see above) Cricket Ordering

OPTIONS FOR PAYMENT OF MEMBER DUES

Dues can be paid by cheque, cash, or e-transfer, and receipts will be issued for all.

Cheques: Please make payable to **Ontario Purple Martin Association** or **OPMA** and mail to the Treasurer:
Al Hamill, 2643 County Rd. 20, RR #1, Harrow, Ont. N0R 1G0

E-transfer: To do an e-transfer from **most** financial institutions (*some may charge a fee for e-transfers*):

1. Log onto bank site.
2. Go to **Interac** transfer.
3. Set up a recipient name (this can be whatever you want) **Suggestion:** Ontario Purple Martin.
(This will stay there until you delete it.)
4. Put in the email address as opmamembership@gmail.com
5. You will need to confirm this email address.
6. Go back to the **Interac** transfer page and:
 - put in your bank account from which the money will be withdrawn;
 - the amount (\$20.00)
 - fill in the recipient name (you can put in a message for me if you want (2022 OPMA membership) but it is not necessary.
 - Usually it then says "**SEND**" or "**NEXT**" and it is done.

..... *The End*