

Ontario  
Purple  
Martin  
Association



*Summer*  
*2022*

[www.ontariopurplemartins.ca](http://www.ontariopurplemartins.ca)

## *Message from our Chair:*

Hello everyone. I hope you are all doing well and have been enjoying your Martin colonies. We finally have gotten back to some sort of normality. We've been able to have in-person meetings where it is great to interact with our members and hear about their colonies.

The Martins have been back for almost 4 months and it won't be long before they will once again be heading off to the various staging places to prepare for their long journey back to Brazil. Time sure does go by fast. So take the time to enjoy their antics and song while you can.

The Ontario Purple Martin Association continues to maintain a healthy membership and promote the joys of being a landlord to the community. We still are looking for a person to fill the vice-chair position and a person to come on as a member at large on the board. I feel it is important to have new people on the board to bring new ideas to move our organization forward. If you are interested, contact myself or one of our board members to indicate that you might be interested in filling one of these positions.

Because of the pandemic, we have not been able to participate in any events. This could change this year if we decide to have a presence at the Hawk Festival at Holiday Beach in September. We should be hearing from the organizers of this event sometime in August so stay tuned for more info about our club participating. We will be looking for volunteers to help with our booth if we decide to participate.

I would like to thank Mary Wilson for all her work that she does to put this newsletter together for us. Remember, if you have pictures or would like to submit something in writing send it along to Mary so it can be included in our upcoming newsletter in the fall.

Keeping track of our colonies is important so we can get an idea of the Martins' success in our area. Normally John Balga takes the info and passes it on to Nature Canada. When you are finished checking your colony in August or September and have finalized your numbers, you can send them on to John or give them to him at our final meeting in October at Orchard View Golf Course.

I have been in contact with a gentleman from Chartwell Retirement Home in Tecumseh and he really would like to put a Martin house up on their premise. He has their permission but he needs a Martin house. If you know of anyone who is taking theirs down and would like to donate it or sell it for a reasonable price let me know. He would like to put one up sooner than later so he can be ready for next year.

That's about all I have to say for now. Hope to see you at our final meeting of the year at Orchard View. Continue to enjoy your colony while the Martins are still here for another month!

***Paul Hamel, Chair***

## **Welcome to our New Members !**

*David Vogelzang, Aylmer  
Joel MacDonald, Harrow  
Joe Gorski, Amherstburg  
Jim & Cathy Thomson, Leamington*

## **OPMA MEETING – April 2022 ... Orchard View Golf Course**

This was our 1<sup>st</sup> meeting since February of 2020, and it was really wonderful to be able to gather safely together again! We had 31 attendees, with several coming from quite some distance away. We had our usual "go-around" where everyone shares news about their returning birds, or in some cases, the continuing wait for Purple Martins to start a colony. After the meeting, a demonstration of cricket flinging took place at the Martin colony site. The birds weren't interested at all, since it was a beautiful day, but they did show off their wonderful aerial skills right overhead!

**Do you have any prized photos of your Martins?** Our member and renowned local artist **Lorraine Moon**, who was featured in our SUMMER 2021 newsletter, has offered to make a custom painting, if someone will provide her with a beautiful photo to use as inspiration. Her painting would be donated to the OPMA for auction / raffle.

Please send your lovely photos to Lorraine at: [dwight\\_moon@hotmail.com](mailto:dwight_moon@hotmail.com)  
(You can see more information about Lorraine here: [A Depth of Colour – windsorlife.com](http://A Depth of Colour – windsorlife.com))

## OPMA MEETING – May 2022 ... Ernie & Carol Taves, Wheatley

Carol and Ernie have a wonderful Martin colony and a beautiful setting for a meeting. The weather forecast was questionable, but 20 members attended and enjoyed some great discussions and a visit to the colony where Carol lowered one of the houses to show everyone some nests and eggs. Of course the birds all took to the sky, so everyone was treated to a beautiful view of martins wheeling about overhead. Then storm clouds built quickly, and although the resulting storm ended up being short lived, some left early to avoid what looked like ominous conditions coming our way.



## OPMA MEETING – June 2022 ... Anne & Al Hamill, Harrow

What a lovely day for gathering together! About 20 members were present for a very relaxing and enjoyable time in the “Home and Garden” magazine-worthy backyard of Al and Anne. Truly a beautiful setting!

Our **“go-around”**, which has become a traditional feature of our meetings, seemed to indicate that so far, everyone was having a pretty good year with their birds!

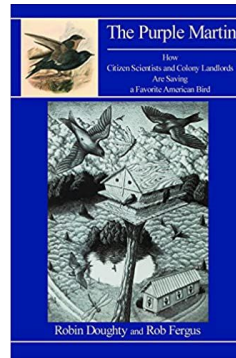
**2022 PMCA Conference:** John Balga told us that this conference, which will be held in Oklahoma, is, for the first time, going virtual. To sign up for the 2 day “zoom” event – August 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> - the cost is \$15.00. Check out the link below for all details:

The PMCA’s Purple Martin Conference 2022 is officially a virtual event. This was a difficult decision to make, but we are so excited to share the conference with many more people in the comfort of their own homes. For more information, to purchase a ticket, or become a sponsor – visit our website. [https://www.purplemartin.org/research/2 ... the-event/](https://www.purplemartin.org/research/2...the-event/)

John also told us about this book:

“The Purple Martin –  
How Citizen Scientists and Colony  
Landlords Are Saving America’s  
Favorite Bird”.

(available on Amazon)



Ron Delcourt shared an experiment he is working on with a gourd cap and multiple elbow vents. Over the years he, and others, have observed an accumulation of moisture in plastic gourds, likely a combination of atmospheric conditions, number and age of young, and lack of venting and drainage if a nest gets damp. We'll look forward to future reports!

Congratulations to the winners of our 2 **annual draws** which were done at the June meeting:

- The free OPMA membership for 2023 goes to **Nancy & Jim Robson!**
- The paid PMCA membership (which applies to a full year following the subscription bought by OPMA) was won by **Anne Melady!**

Before the meeting wrapped up, we went to view the colony, where everyone got a close look at several different types of martin accommodations, including the Chirpy Nest which is new to many.





## PMCA NESTCAM .. ... 2022

Sadly, it seems that **Pierre & Marie** – the martin couple who were starring in the 2022 PMCA Nestcam, have been unable to hatch their eggs. The PMCA will perhaps be doing some research as to why these eggs were not viable. The dedicated momma sat on them faithfully up to July 15<sup>th</sup> – approximately a full week beyond their predicted hatch date.

And it was such a lovely nest, all ready for babies to grow up in. Better luck next year!

Since we don't have a 2022 nestcam to view, below is the link to the **“recap” of the 2021 nestcam**. PMCA does a great job every year with their “short” version - this one is **8 ½ minutes** – capturing the highlights and showing a sped up version of the growth from hatchlings to fledging day! In the dark days of winter, it can be fun to see and hear them again!

[Fighting To Survive: Purple Martin Nestcam 2021 - YouTube](#)

## ONE TOUGH MARTIN !

This may well be the **earliest ever** report of a “scout” Martin returning to our area:

Our member Ron Delcourt submitted a Scout Report to the PMCA on **March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022**, for Holiday Beach. Unfortunately, it returned to some pretty bad weather. Eight days later, on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, a dead martin was found in the housing at Holiday Beach, and it was banded.

The banding recovery data showed that he was 7 years old! ***Amazing!***  
He survived 14 migrations! He was banded in 2015, at the colony of an OPMA member in Essex.

### **Interesting trivia:**

- This Purple Martin logged 97,902 kilometers (60,830 miles) over his 7 year lifespan ! (Distance from Brazil to Ontario (as the crow flies) is 6,993 km or 4,345 miles.) (This is roughly equivalent to us humans driving **17 round trips to Florida in 7 years !** )
- The oldest martin on record, according to the PMCA, reached the age of 13 years and 9 months!

## THE GILBERTSON BOX .. by Mary Wilson

We really like the Gilbertson Box, and so do the Tree Swallows! (And apparently so do Bluebirds, although we can't get them in town).

The “originals” are expensive to buy, but good instructions for “do-it-yourselfers” can be found online. They are made of PVC pipe, and because of their light weight, can be mounted on a very slim pole such as electrical conduit over rebar. The conduit/rebar mount is claimed to be quite difficult for predators to climb, as it is small in diameter.

To do nest checks, we simply squeeze the PVC pipe so that it releases from the “pins” (screws) that hold it in place against the roof and look down into the nest. Best of all, HOSP do not really like it, although we have had them try to nest in them; they usually give up. With the entrance hole so close to the roof, and the narrow diameter (4”), there's not too much room for the sparrow to “weave” their nest around and around.

We have had Tree Swallows fledge from 2 of 3 of these boxes during the past several years. Our property is probably too small to have 3 pairs of TS, but 2 pairs seem to accommodate each other with the placement we've chosen. We have a shepherd's hook very close to the box shown, and it is visible from our office window. The male frequently sits on the hook, keeping guard and chatting away. They aren't threatened by us, and we can get quite close to them before they fly off. Have to admit, I am every bit as fond of TS as I am of PM's! ☺



## *OPMA Website*

The OPMA website, courtesy of our webmaster **John Balga**, provides excellent and timely information about a variety of subjects, with several examples being:

### **How to Make Scrambled Eggs for Purple Martins & Setting up a Nest Check Sheet**

Check it out in the BLOG at this link:

[BLOG: News/Stories | Ontario Purple Martin Association \(ontariopurplemartins.ca\)](https://www.ontariopurplemartins.ca/blog/news/stories)

## PHASE 2 of RONDEAU PARK .. .. by Henry Wolting

This is phase two of Rondeau Park. Hopefully next year we will put up another two systems. Two ASY males yesterday (April 18<sup>th</sup>) sat nicely on the condo while we worked on the two racks.



## NATURE CANADA'S ROOST VIDEO

Thank you to member **Henry Wolting** for sending this link to **Nature Canada's roost video**. **Seven minutes** of beautiful bird footage and a wonderful *wave* towards the end of the video!

<https://naturecanada.ca/defend-nature/how-you-help-us-take-action/save-our-swallows/field-notes-swallow-roosts/>

## Remaining Meetings & Events 2022

**Start times 9:00 am unless specified otherwise.**

- ❖ Sep ?? .. . . . (date TBD) OPMA Booth at Holiday Beach for "**Hawkfest**"
- ❖ Oct. 15 .. . . . Orchard View Golf Course, Ruthven

## RESOURCES

**OPMA website** (maintained & provided by John Balga, **website** manager). [www.ontariopurplemartins.ca](http://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](http://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  
..... Vice-Chair  
Al Hamill ..... 519-738-6932.....alhamill70@gmail.com ..... Treasurer / Finances  
Mary Wilson..... 519-326-1710.....helenwilson@yahoo.com ..... Secretary / 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  
Ron Delcourt .....  
Dennis Shady ..... 519-738-4411.....dennisshady@yahoo.ca

**(Non-Board) Volunteer Functions:**

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

*Have a wonderful purple martin season!  
We look forward to gathering together again at the closing meeting - October 15<sup>th</sup> !*

