



OPMA Chatter

Oct. 2023

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www.ontariopurplemartins.ca

Welcome to our new members!

Hugh Kent

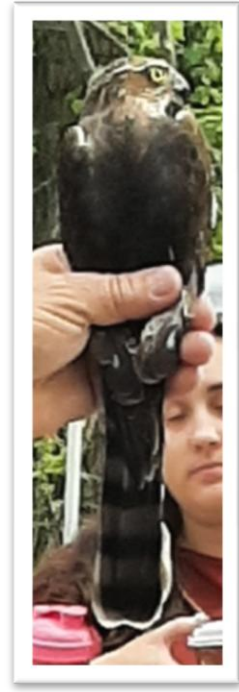
Teo Solgado & Masha Solorzano, Leamington

Dani Couture, Lakehurst

HBMO Hawk Festival - September 16-17

The annual Hawk Festival at Holiday Beach Migratory Observatory is a popular event, with many vendors, various presentations and talks, and hawk banding demonstrations. For many years, the OPMA has put up a booth at "HawkFest", and lots of visitors always stop by to learn about Purple Martins. Here are some photos from the 2 day event.







Walpole Island Purple Martin Roost

Many of you will remember the discovery, some years ago, of a major Purple Martin Roost in the Walpole Island area – deep within a vast delta marsh with huge islands of phragmites. The initial reporting of this find was documented in our 2018 Fall Newsletter (which is archived for viewing on the OPMA website: www.ontariopurplemartins.ca)

For our members who may have never seen a roost, the video linked below - 9 minutes of wonder for the eyes and ears - is well worth watching. (Advice from the original post: **When you hit the link, there is what looks like a gear wheel on the lower right side to change the settings, click the gear and try to watch in 780 or better yet 1080P or higher for the best quality.**)

Walpole Island Purple Martin Roost - 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=7grOwZnFMfs&feature=youtu.be>

The roost was located by members of the Walpole Island Purple Martin Project, as well as several members of the OPMA.

We have an update this year, from one of those people – Henry Wolting – on the status of the roost in 2023. With his permission, here is his August 29th email regarding the roost. There is no accompanying video available, but his words paint a picture. Enjoy.

“Well on our 7th (maybe 8th, time flies) year of doing the roost at Walpole, August 29, 2023, might have been the best night ever as far as having birds all over us.

*Our first trip this year was Aug 3, and we went out about 6 times and all 6 times were terrible. The roost moved about 10 Km east of where it was for the last two years, and about 2km east from where it was three years ago. It was so far back into what is called “St. Anne’s Island” we could not get close with the boat, and it was impossible to see without binoculars, and even then, some nights they were dots **with** binoculars.*

Watching the morning roost ring on the radar for the last two weeks, we noticed the birds finally moved two KM’s more to the west this weekend, which put them within range of the boat.

It wasn’t the most birds ever, but they were the closest to us ever. They stayed right over top of us for almost ½ hour, maybe longer, “Daytime Chatter” blaring in the background brought them right to us in bunches. At dark, they dropped down in three huge batches about 100 meters from us into the phrag. Guessing about 150-175,000 birds last night, the vast majority Martins, lots of TRES, some Barnies, with a few Cliffs at the very end.

We thought this year was going to be a complete bust, and if that is the case, at least we had one night.”

