



ONTARIO PURPLE MARTIN ASSOCIATION ---- (Founded in 2000)
www.ontariopurplemartins.ca

Welcome to our new members !

*Craig Dougall...Consecon
Rob Daubs...Forest
Judi Lacey...Kingsville*

[OPMA General Meeting... March 21, 2026... Colasanti's Tropical Gardens](#)

Chair **Paul Hamel** welcomed everyone to our first meeting of the year, and introduced our speaker:

"This morning we have **Edward Miller** from **RAEON** - based out of the University of Windsor. The full name is Real-Time Aquatic Ecosystem Observation Network: <https://raeon.org/>

RAEON is a network of researchers that deploy sensing instruments that help scientists and governments conduct cutting edge Great Lakes research, while creating an early warning system for harmful algae blooms.

Edward Millar works with RAEON as a post-doctoral fellow specializing in community-based water monitoring, with a PhD in Environmental Applied Science and Management from Toronto Metropolitan University. Let's welcome Edward to our meeting and take the opportunity to listen to his presentation on the Great Lakes. Martins and other song birds are greatly affected by what is happening with the lakes - especially Lake Erie and Ontario."

It was very interesting to learn of the types of studies being conducted in our lakes, by both Ontario and US teams, and also that we can become “citizen scientists” trained in the collection of samples for ongoing water quality monitoring.

See <https://raeon.org/cbwm/>

OPMA news:

- Our Vice-Chair Board position is now filled after being empty for some years. Our **new Vice-Chair**, Ken Winter, will step up into the role of Chair in 2027. Ken has also volunteered to take over the collecting and sharing of our members’ colony results at the end of Purple Martin season. Thank you, Ken, for your involvement in both of these areas!
- The **OPMA has an article published** in the February issue of the OFO magazine (Ontario Field Ornithologists). See the article here: [OFO News 44-1 February 2026](#)
- **2026 Member Fees of \$20 are now due.** You can do an e-transfer, pay by cheque or cash (see our website: <https://ontariopurplemartins.ca/membership/> for details. If you are paid by the end of April, you will be eligible for the draw of a free membership to the OPMA for next year. And toward the end of this year, a draw will be held for a membership in the PMCA for all paid up members.

Congratulations to Nancy Robson
Winner of the 2026 draw for the PMCA membership!

- **2027 Member fees will increase to \$25** Annual dues are the OPMA’s only source of income. To keep our finances stable so we can pay our bills, a modest \$5 increase was decided upon by the Board of Directors (the only increase since our founding in 2000). (Some of our main expenses are website domain and maintenance; acquiring purple martin housing for public site initiatives, and costs related to our meetings and involvement with other events to promote our cause.)
- New housing is up at the **Tilbury North Side Park**. This is a public site that has been enthusiastically supported by the municipality. The site will have 3 types of housing: a T14, a Trio Grandpa, and a Gourd Rack which was purchased recently by the club. Al Hamill and Ken Winter made the trip to Forest to collect it, and it will be installed in time for the martins to settle in.

Thank you to all involved in the initial establishment of this site, the donations of equipment, and the installations that have and will be done, and the ongoing supervision and care of the martins that will make this site their home: Ken Winter, Fern Bellavance, Al Hamill.

- **Martin Festival:** The earliest potential date for another Martin-Fest would be 2027. A committee would be needed to undertake this effort. Each of our two Martin Fests (2018 and 2025) offered great learning opportunities, and detailed documentation has been developed to record what was learned. This will be available to a future new team. If anyone has any suggestions to share about a future Martin Festival, or would like to find out more about participating in a Martin Festival, please let anyone on the Board know.

Submissions to the “OPMA Chatter” are welcome!

If you have photos of your colony, anecdotes, inventions or experiments to share - please do! We all can learn from each other!
(send to helenmwilson@yahoo.com)

Thank you to our member **Marie Hall** for sharing the two articles, below.

*(It seems that House Martins are beloved in the UK just as our Purple Martins are in North America. They are also in decline, for many of the same reasons. **Hirundinidae** (order Passeriformes) names a family of passerine birds consisting of swallows and martins. Approximately 90 species of these streamlined birds, noted for their strong and nimble flight, are found worldwide except in Polar Regions and on certain islands.*

<https://www.britannica.com/animal/Hirundinidae>)

- The UK has a house martin and it appears their bird numbers are in decline as well. Check this out from the BBC: <https://bbc.com/news/articles/clyx72n2vwxo>
- House martin nest cups offered in Hampshire to combat decline: <https://share.google/Y2fjcl62LIU4XrqzD>