

Purple Martin Chatter

A Publication of the Wisconsin Purple Martin Association

Spring 2021



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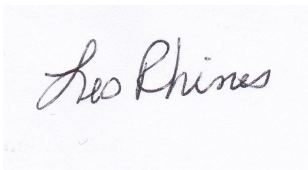
Greetings everyone, as of this writing there have been 43 reports of Purple Martins at colonies throughout Wisconsin according to the Purple Martin Conservation Association Scout Report. Many landlords reported birds much earlier than “normal” with the earliest arrival listed March 23 in Fort Atkinson and more birds arriving March 28. I have heard from many that this is the earliest that they have ever seen birds and they have had colonies for many years with some close to 50 years. Since then there has been a steady stream of birds pouring into our state, and so far the weather has been cooperating, but just in case the weather turns cold and damp for prolonged periods you will want to become familiar with the concept of supplemental feeding. Our Vice President, Greg Zimmermann covers this subject for us providing us with the details and resources to successfully keep our martins healthy when the weather turns cold. Look for this in Greg’s vice president report, I recommend that you follow the link that he provides that explicitly shows the steps to successful supplemental feeding.

Additionally in this newsletter retired DNR Biologist and Board member, Dick Nikolai provides us with a look at the overall population of our colonies in his report entitled Wisconsin Purple Martin Statistics 2020. In the report Dick provides the historical significance of where the bird populations have been, where they are today and what we need to consider to maintain and grow the bird populations in the future. This is a very worthwhile read.

As a mentor, one of the things I have been asked quite often is, just how do you go about playing Dawnsong? In this issue I outline a few of the common methods to play the vocalization.

Now as an organization, we were very much looking forward to hosting our annual MartinFest this year at Marsh Haven Nature Center located in Waupun Wisconsin on June 26, however, we do not feel it is the right time to safely host the event. We have begun planning for year 2022; we have retained the venue, Marsh Haven Nature Center and our guest speakers. So mark your calendar’s for MartinFest 2022 on June 25, 2022. It is worth noting that in 2022 The Wisconsin Purple Martin Association will celebrate it’s 10th anniversary, so I’m hoping that you will be able to join us then and help us celebrate.

Additionally, this is a good time to think about starting or renewing a membership in the Wisconsin Purple Martins. Memberships for the WPMA run through the calendar year, January through December. The dollars that you provide allow us to continue our missions work “To Restore and Preserve the Purple Martin Population across Wisconsin”. We appreciate the support that you have shown us.



With that said, here’s hoping that everyone enjoys a productive martin season. Oh yea, the picture on the front cover, is from Harrington Beach State Park.

A Message from the Vice President:

A word from the vice president, we are getting closer for our birds to arrive, April 1st is fast approaching and within the first few weeks of April some of us will have our first scouts taking up residence at our colonies. Between now and April you need to make sure everything is ready to go, always check your cables and winches and anything that could cause unnecessary problems getting your Martin House's raised. Once you finally have your house up be prepared for anything that comes your way. My first and biggest concern is the weather. Weather conditions that limit insect availability include temperatures below 40 degrees, steady rain, or dense fog for example. When flying insects are scarce, energy spent foraging unsuccessfully can hasten starvation. Watch perched birds for drooping wings a sign that the martin's system is beginning to break down and digest its primary flight muscles. Physical condition of the birds, severity and duration of poor weather, site specifics, and individual limitations will all play a role in what feeding technique works best for you and your birds. Be flexible—try several methods until you find one that works. Here are some methods

Tossing—Tossing crickets scrambled eggs or mealworms into the air may be the best method for first-time feeding attempts, as it is closest to the martin's natural feeding habits. Propelling food into the air requires time and effort from both the landlord and martins, and food will be missed or dropped. Landlords report the greatest success with tossing food after 2-3 days of non-feeding weather when martins are hungry enough to pursue the food but not too weak to go after it.

Platform Feeding—Offering food on a platform is ideal. This self-serve method requires minimal energy and allows martins to eat multiple items at one sitting. Since most landlords report that supplemental food is recognized as food more quickly when tossed, many transition their birds to platform feeding after they have first eaten tossed food. Tossing food right above the feeder encourages martins to land on the feeder.

In-Cavity Feeding—Mealworms, scrambled eggs and crickets can be placed inside a gourd or house compartments where they can easily be seen and eaten by roosting martins. This method can be particularly helpful during very cold temperatures or advanced stages of weakness when conservation of energy is critical. While live food often stimulates a feeding response, they tend to escape or bury themselves in nest material. Landlords can use dried or thawed insects. Another method to try is to put food in shallow dishes and fasten them to porch or cavity floors, or to interior walls. Lowering the house to add food will flush the martins but the energy expense is worthwhile if they return and eat. For a video on supplemental feeding and how to save starving martins please visit; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNcZ6ip92h0> I might dwell on this all season long but this is a necessity and supplemental feeding will ensure your birds survive and be healthy enough to fly south when that time comes for departure. Good Luck to all this Season.

Greg

Wisconsin Purple Martin (*Progne subius*) Statistics—2020

By Dick Nikolai

Please note that statistics are representative for a time and place given by people throughout Wisconsin. They vary by region and by how each individual may have calculated their numbers given to me. This is our snapshot for 2020 given by over fifteen people with their data. I hope that it gives all of you a better insight of Wisconsin on how our Purple Martins are doing and may not reflect your own colony.

Larger colonies typically have more predation compared to smaller colonies and more interactions that are dynamic due to the habitat locally. Weather always plays a factor along with the age of the colony and its tolerances of human interactions. Some colonies are only affected by the homeowner or colony landlord. They may or may not cause positive or negative values by what they do. Public versus private colonies are subjected in different ways and circumstances those Purple Martins are adjusted. Last of all Purple Martins are individuals and we as guardians over them do influence their life styles and behaviors on how we may manage them. This possibly may influence their genetics on how their future is shaped. Remember Purple Martins are wild birds that travel thousands of miles to another continent. They are not owned by you but owned by all of us. We need to follow the laws and regulations pertaining to the Migratory Bird Treaty both federally and within our state.

Finally keep in mind that all Purple Martins need the greatest amount of variability to adapt. When we reduce that variability by our actions as we address human features on them, are we then directing their populations to a suitable outcome for their benefit?

As you see by my writings, I am trying to get all of us to appreciate Purple Martins as part of our environment. Since Purple Martins have been with me forever, I want the information presented to be a static situation where we can evaluate and learn. For 2020, it was cooler and wetter than normal when Purple Martins came to Wisconsin in April, May and early June. This had a big influence on their success throughout the breeding season contributing fledglings for the future.

From the Purple Martin Association (PMCA) website for 2020, Purple Martins were first recorded in Wisconsin on April 2. Sightings occurred in Barron, Green Lake and Marquette counties. At that time, the eastern portion of Wisconsin was having east winds and a Low Depression stalled over Lake Michigan (**Figure 1**) while the other side had southerly breezes with warmer temperatures. It was not until three days later on April 5 that the first Purple Martins entered eastern Wisconsin. On April 6th and 7th, the front cleared and Purple Martins began flooding the whole state in the days and months following. Overall, for 2020, 86 people reported their first Purple Martin in Wisconsin. The coloration of the map is my personal vision on how the state is divided by county lines for Purple Martins. These encompass the cool impacts from Lake Michigan shown in the light blue. The Central Agricultural zone with concentrations of wetlands and forest are shown in orange. The Northeastern Forest zone is shown in green. The Northwestern Barrens and Forest is shown in purple or lilac. The Southwest Driftless or non-glaciated Zone is shown in pink. Finally, the Southern zone, which is the heart of the former prairie and savanna, is near high population centers.

Green—Northeastern Forest, **Purple or Lilac**—Northwestern Barrens & Forest, **Pink**—Southwest Driftless & non-glaciated Zone, **Orange**—Central Agricultural, Wetland & Forest Zone, **Yellow**—Southern Prairie & Savanna Zone & **Light Blue**—Lake Michigan Zone.

Another way of looking at presence of Wisconsin Purple Martins is shown in Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas 2 conducted from 2015 to 2019 (**Figure 2**). We are losing colonies presence in the northern third of the state. When springs are bad, influence of cold waters of Lake Superior, landowners who move or pass away, housing is not maintained, alien species take over housing like sparrows and starling, lack of monitoring and many other impacts means Purple Martins will be harder to attract, especially in the north. The same can hold true for the remaining portion of Wisconsin. Remnant colonies are important no matter where they exist for they can lead to colonization to fill in the gaps. Note the areas in the north contracting, the lack of colonies in the driftless or non-glaciated areas in the southwest except along the Mississippi River basin and the few colonies existing in central Wisconsin. This may mean a colony over 50 miles or more away from an existing colony making it harder to attract or even keep a colony.

Over the past six years, emphasis has been made along the upper reaches of the Bay of Green Bay with presentations at Oconto providing people expanded knowledge of Purple Martin ecology and a source from *public colonies* at Oconto to assist in being able to attract this species for many. Banded Purple Martins have been reported near Crivitz and Pound in Wisconsin and Escanaba in Michigan. In the Northwestern Barrens and Forest Zone, key private and a single public colony has provided sources to maintain numbers given tornadoes and other weather phenomenon over the past few years along with several individuals relaying important educational materials in workshops. Very little education has been provided in the other areas mentioned where Purple Martin colonies are sparse. Our current pandemic with Covid-19 has not allowed expansion through individual education as we had hoped in 2020. As we go through 2021, please contact us or use the website of Wisconsin Purple Martin Association for materials, documents or sources of information to assist in improving those gaps during 2021 and the future.

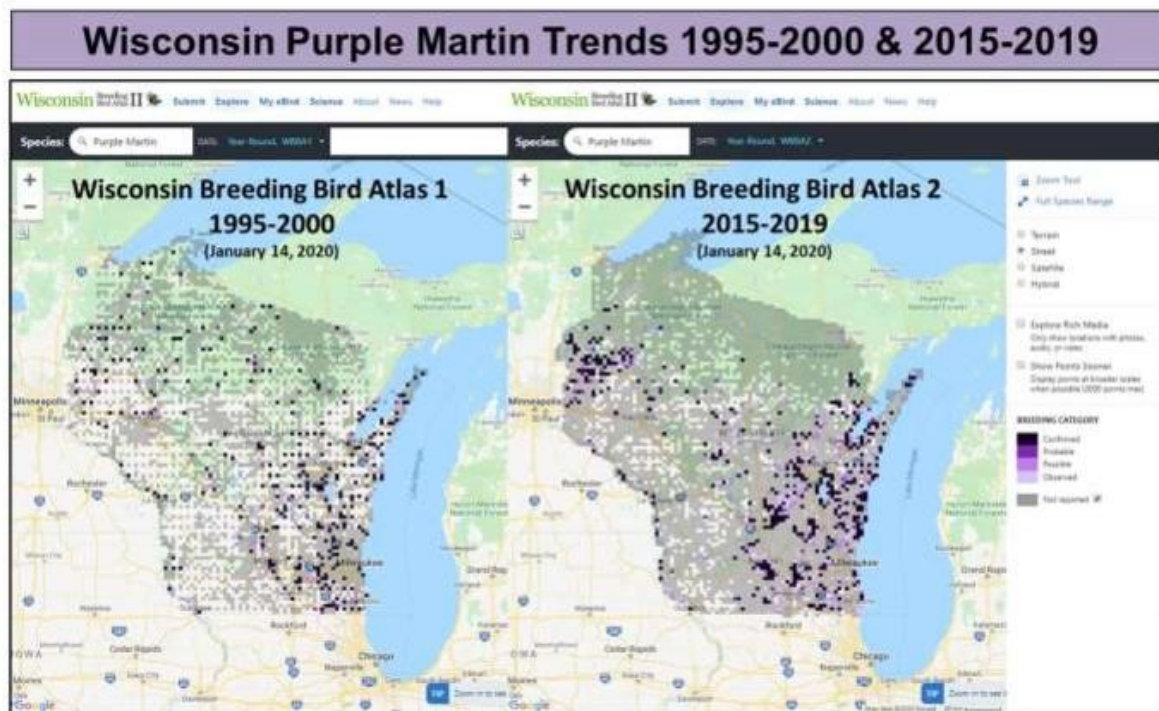


Figure 2: Comparison of Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas Survey 1 (1995-2000) and Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas Survey 2 (2015-2019). Note the areas in the north contracting, the lack of colonies in the non-glaciated areas except along the Mississippi River basin and the few colonies existing in central Wisconsin.

Another way of showing presence of Wisconsin Purple Martins is in **Figure 3**, which comes from The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology showing e-Bird reports from people during 2005 to 2020. All of us can contribute to whole of Purple Martins or other bird species by reporting observations through this simple method of being a citizen scientist with time and effort in the field. This contribution assists in many ways by keeping time for being in the field to see bird species, which relates to dollars to retrieve for matched grants, our reporting makes it easier to show abundance, where species occur throughout the year, health of Purple Martins and many other aspects for reports for our learning. For us as bird enthusiasts it contributes an avenue by professionals of making decisions for the betterment of this species and others along with their continued existence within Wisconsin.

As we can see from the map compiled from the past 16 years, Wisconsin has huge gaps in those areas I mentioned before above Highway 64. Again, Lake Superior has influential impacts showing the demise of Purple Martins in the north by not being recorded or few records from citizen scientists. The Southwest Driftless or non-glaciated Zone to the Wisconsin River shows a similar lack of reporting. Where Purple Martins are reported is from population centers in the southeast, south-central and west-central portions of Wisconsin. With e-Bird emphasis from us or other citizen scientists in absent areas, we may be able to see success of any expansion of future colonies and any effort we have towards educational processes to bring Purple Martins back to where they were over 50-years ago.

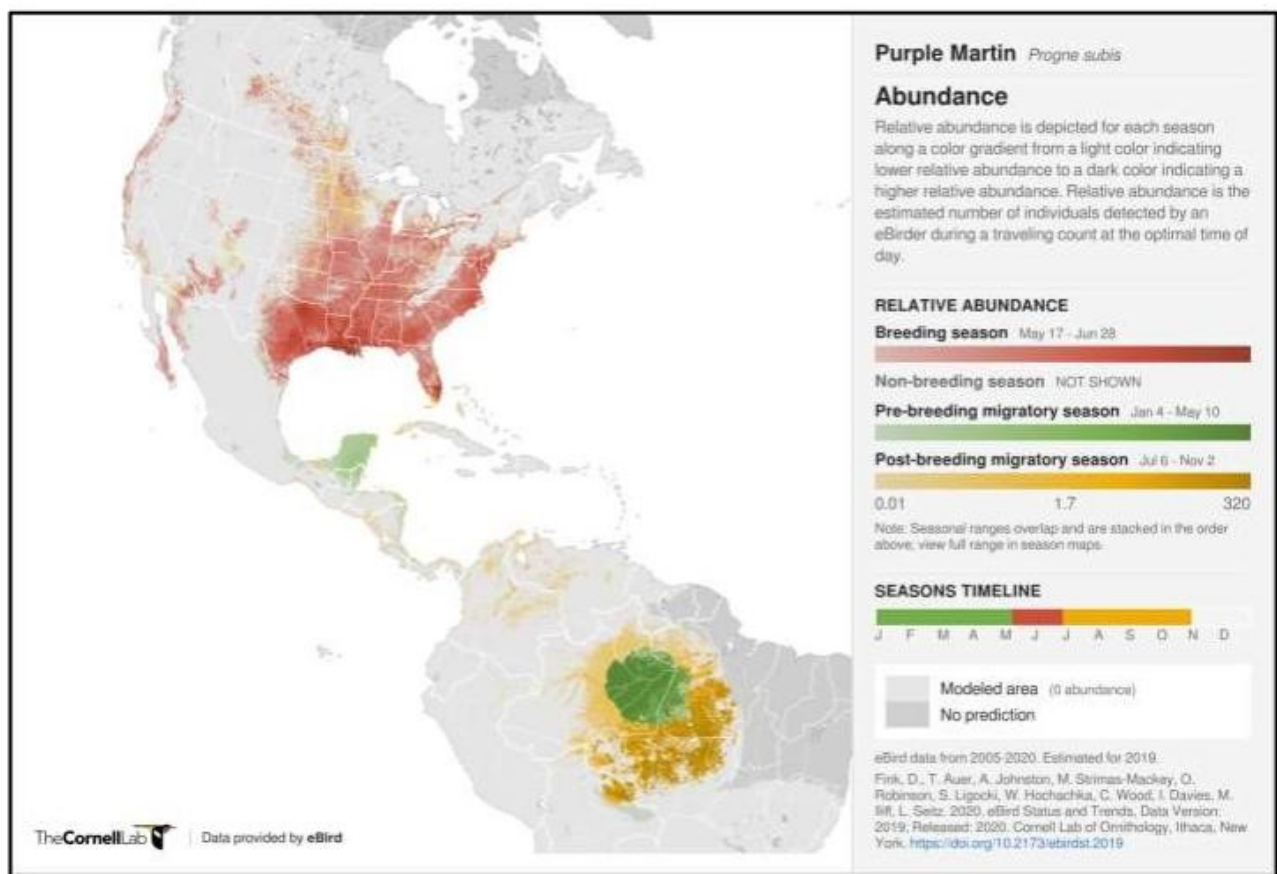


Figure 3: e-Bird information from citizen scientists reporting Purple Martins during 2005 to 2020 from North America, Central America and South America to The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology at <https://ebird.org/home>

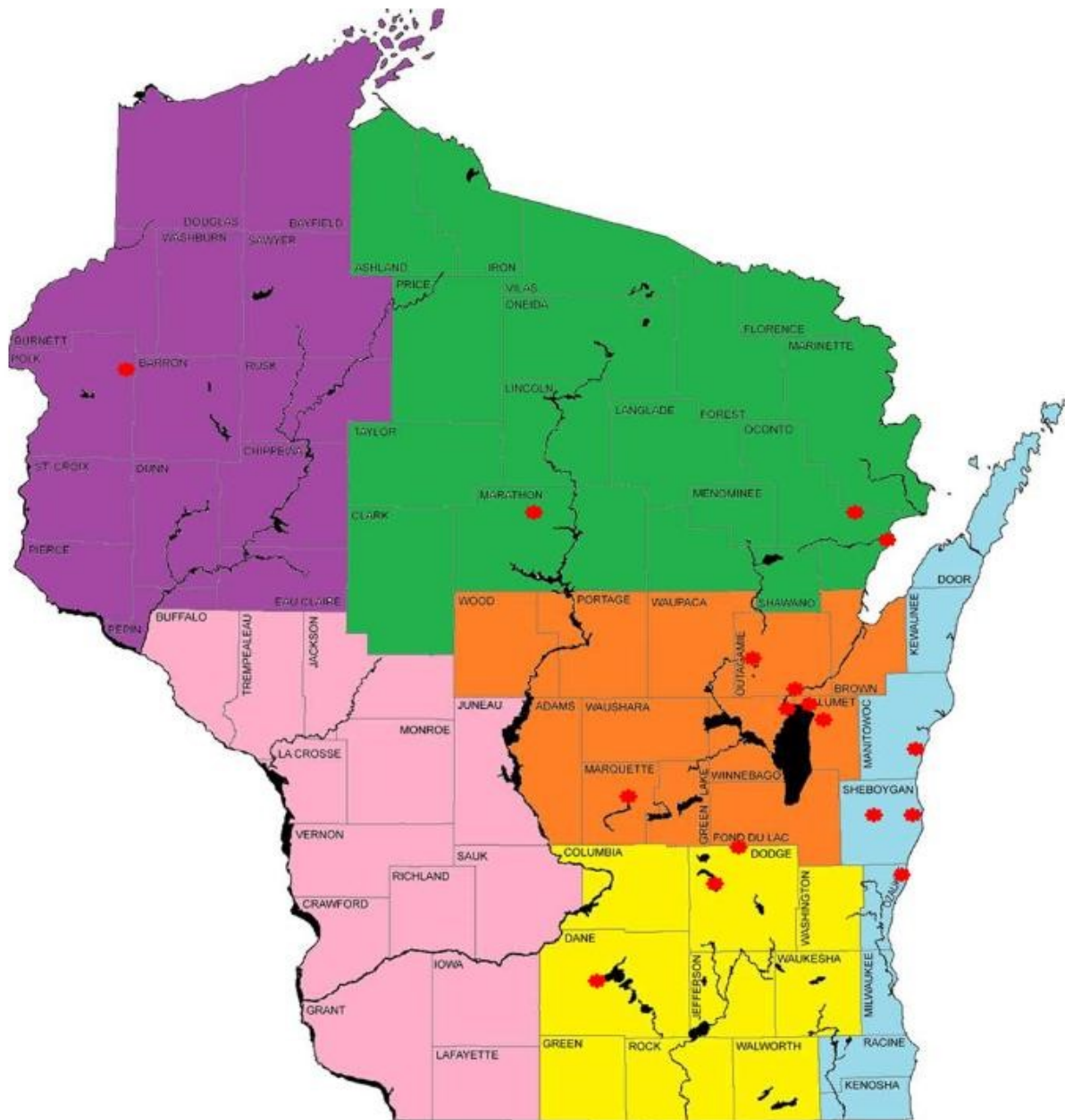


Figure 4: Map of Wisconsin represents reporting Purple Martin colonies in 2020. Red dots show municipal locations, of which one in Calumet County represents three locations at or near High Cliff State Park and the other red Calumet County location represents a fourth location included for summary of Sherwood. Total colony reports entailed 19 separate areas in 11 counties.

Many thanks go out to those individuals who have taken their time in reporting their colony results in 2020. This assists other individuals in seeing how they compared to the state, county or nearby in a municipality summary. As people who know me, I tell them this is a snapshot in time on how we collectively provide assistance for Purple Martins. Earlier I provided many parameters, which come in to factor our success. No

one area is under the same conditions. Our first Purple Martins came in on April 2 with the last fledglings going out on August 17. From this report (**Table 1—2nd** to last summary), we collectively produced **2447 eggs** from our population of 490 pairs of Purple Martins that created 489 nests with **465 pairs actually having eggs** placed in the nest. Remember not all Purple Martins nesting lay eggs. This is a direct result of weather impacts, age of the pairs, disturbance by predators, disease, health, timing and other factors on them. Noting collectively that 4.99 eggs were laid per nest shows potential productivity was high with the distribution of ages of those Purple Martins within the various colonies. Spring weather did have an impact, for **2070 young were hatched** at an **84.59%** probably due to infertility or addling due to the eggs not be kept warm during incubation. Adults need to keep themselves well fed in order to keep up with the rigors of success. Without the adults' survival, the young will not be able to make it unless we interfere when one or both adults are lost. Hatching was still decent at **4.23 young** per nest with eggs aiming at a desired potential. Overall **1822 young Purple Martins did fledge** from the reports. On the average, it is a potential of 95 young per colony site coming back if all survive. Actual survival of the young is approximately 25% or about 455 young will survive to come back to Wisconsin in 2021 from the reporting colonies. Combining this with approximately 50% losses of the adults would mean the total of the original pairs that may return would be 490 adults. With those figures, we have a deficit of 35 adults. Losses are long-term calculations that vary on yearly basis. Then you can understand the predicament that we are not adequately replacing our Purple Martin population within Wisconsin. Survival each year again is dependent on those aspects mention before. This is a constant variable and many colonies were not reported within Wisconsin. Therefore, we need to step back and hope that unreported colonies were more successful otherwise; we may see fewer Purple Martins in 2021. Population dynamics in wildlife populations always need to look at the overall process and find the problems along the way.

Looking at it another way (**Table 1—Bottom summary**), I eliminated the colonies at Sherwood in the report as we are meticulous in watching our colonies providing higher mortality than most people do. Given that set of circumstances, 368 pairs had 5.30 eggs in their nests for 1961 of 371 total pairs present. Of these eggs, a **total hatch of 85.87%** bringing **1684 young** at a clip of **4.55 young per nest**. Those 368 nests with eggs yielded **1541 young fledglings at 91.51% from hatchlings** and a rate of 78.58% from eggs. This yield was 4.16 young fledglings per nest. Therefore, when spring 2021 arrives the 25% survival rate would bring 385-second year Purple Martins back plus another 371 adults for a plus margin of 14 additional birds. I hope that this shows you that populations at a particular site may have a deficit while the others have a surplus. This is the variability in the total population calculated by the sum of the whole. In my perspective 2020, was an average year for the entire population in Wisconsin. Rarely have we had Purple Martin populations at status quo or above for three years in a row. It has been several decades since that has occurred like 2018, 2019 & 2020. In summary 2021 has the potential for positive values of migrating Purple Martins in Wisconsin. Those second year martins are the future for new colonies and the infusion of genetics for everyone's existing colonies. If the colony has too high of a percentage of older birds, there can be greater chance for losses due to health and some of those may be past prime fecundity (*productiveness or fertility*). If too young, the colony may have less success in their production for it has not reached its highest fecundity or their experience may not be an additive one avoiding predators or sustaining or defending their nesting colony. Time will tell for the future and that depends on all of you on what you do with your colonies. Remember those Purple Martins depend on you!

Statewide Wisconsin Reports for 2020															
Place of housing	County	1st martin	Pairs	Nests	Nests with eggs	eggs laid	Eggs/ nest	Hatched	Hatched/ nest	% Hatch	Fledge	Fledged/ nest	% Fledged	Fledged from eggs	Last fledgling
Sherwood	Calumet	4/7/2020	141	141	119	590	4.18	472	3.35	80.00%	345	2.45	73.09%	58.47%	8/17/2020
Hortonville	Outagamie	4/7/2020	40	40	40	208	5.20	194	4.85	93.27%	185	4.63	95.36%	88.94%	not known
Sheboygan Falls	Sheboygan	5/30/2020	4	4	4	17	4.25	15	3.75	88.24%	14	3.50	93.33%	82.35%	8/11/2020
Newton	Manitowoc	4/23/2020	7	7	6	30	4.29	28	4.00	93.33%	27	3.86	96.43%	90.00%	7/22/2020
Montello	Marquette	4/2/2020	14	14	14	76	5.43	71	5.07	93.42%	71	5.07	100.00%	93.42%	7/23/2020
Appleton	Outagamie	4/26/2020	11	11	11	57	5.18	47	4.27	82.46%	36	3.27	76.60%	63.16%	8/1/2020
Oconto	Oconto	4/28/2020	33	33	32	181	5.48	148	4.48	81.77%	141	4.27	95.27%	77.90%	not known
Port Washington	Ozaukee	5/3/2020	11	11	11	59	5.36	54	4.91	91.53%	52	4.73	96.30%	88.14%	7/28/2020
Waupun	Dodge & Fond du Lac line	Unknown	41	41	41	233	5.68	215	5.24	92.27%	181	4.41	84.19%	77.68%	not known
Plymouth	Sheboygan	5/20/2020	3	2	2	10	5.00	9	4.50	90.00%	9	4.50	100.00%	90.00%	8/2/2020
Middleton	Dane	4/8/2020	8	8	8	43	5.38	36	4.50	83.72%	35	4.38	97.22%	81.40%	7/26/2020
Menasha	Winnebago	4/17/2020	18	18	18	103	5.72	81	4.50	78.64%	77	4.28	95.06%	74.76%	not known
Pound	Oconto	4/25/2020	14	14	14	74	5.29	60	4.29	81.08%	58	4.14	96.67%	78.38%	8/8/2020
Beaver Dam	Dodge	4/6/2020	36	36	36	181	5.03	157	4.36	86.74%	138	3.83	87.90%	76.24%	8/4/2020
Edgar	Marathon	4/19/2020	22	22	22	104	4.73	86	3.91	82.69%	64	2.91	74.42%	61.54%	8/14/2020
*Cumberland	Polk	4/2/2020	109	109	109	585	5.37	483	4.43	82.56%	453	4.16	93.79%	77.44%	8/12/2020
*Estimates due to monitoring last on July 4 (Total of 19 sites)		1st Martin 4-2-2020	512	511	487	2551	4.99	2156	4.22	84.52%	1886	3.69	87.48%	73.93%	Last Fledge 8/17/2020
*Estimates due to monitoring last on July 4 and removal of Sherwood colonies (Total of 15 sites)		1st Martin 4-2-2020	371	370	368	1961	5.30	1684	4.55	85.87%	1541	4.16	91.51%	78.58%	Last Fledge 8/12/2020

Table 1: Summary of purple martin production in Wisconsin from 19 separate colonies shows variable success comparisons across 12 counties as shown above. When one set of colonies are excluded in Calumet county, success rates increase dramatically for fledglings per nest.

While this article is lengthy, I want to leave you with additional thoughts. Please be aware of Purple Martins having aluminum bands on their legs. This may be a factor relating to Bob Ring and me but there are other Banders seeking information from them too. **Table 2** shows the numbers of Purple Martins banded over the past five years in Wisconsin. While that summary seems large, only the public reports a handful of Purple Martins on a yearly basis. Some of these Purple Martins have also special auxiliary features like GPS Geolocators on their backs, color bands of many colors, especially red with white lettering or other items attached. Report any of these to the Bird Banding Laboratory at <https://www.usgs.gov/labs/birdb-lab>.

PM Statewide Banding	Year	New	Recaptures	Totals
Dick Nikolai/Bob Ring	2016	1227	153	1380
	2017	2109	141	2250
	2018	2086	131	2217
	2019	1814	134	1948
	2020	1416	143	1559
	Total	8652	702	9354
	Average	1730	140	1871

Table 2: Summary of banded Purple Martins in Wisconsin from 2016 to 2020 by Dick Nikolai and Bob Ring.

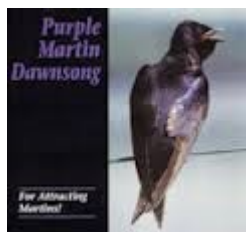
With many summaries for us to ponder, a recent article just came from *Audubon magazine* on January 14, 2021 by Lesley Evans Ogen who summarized some research from Purple Martins. Information derived from GPS Geolocators using available light sensors on 155 Purple Martins from 2008 to 2015 found that those Purple Martins when exposed to bright night-lights at their wintering areas near the time of spring migration were arriving about eight days too early. Dr. Kevin Fraser and his team involving Reid Smith found spikes of light much brighter than moonlight. When looking at exposure of artificial bright light they found at least ten nights were encountered with brighter exposure prior to departure during the 30 days prior to spring migration. This led to eight days earlier of arriving in North America on Purple Martins breeding grounds. More light exposure was attributed due to their encounters with cities and towns relayed by the GPS Geolocators. Arriving early may mean a lack of timing for finding insects on the breeding grounds due to cold weather or exposure to the cold elements resulting in the loss of these early Purple Martins. More study or research will be needed to confirm further problems of artificial light. On end of the spectrum for Purple Martins means, we need to be vigilant in taking care of them when foul weather strikes for we do not know what they have been through on their wintering grounds. Therefore, as my warning in the beginning, we need to be careful of what we do. All that we do has ramifications in the long term for Purple Martins, especially those in our backyards or colonies. Hope this insight provides us for making better decisions for Purple Martins.



Finally, when all has been planned Mother Nature may throw circumstances that may make one consider if it all is worth the effort to have Purple Martins (see **Table 1** for Oconto's contributions). For the past three years, this colony of Purple Martins has had the waters of Lake Michigan or the bay of Green Bay rising. Original placement was 40 feet from high water levels. My car is shown on May 26, 2020 at the parking lot at Oconto City Park. Riprap or large stones saved the parking area against waves breaking it apart. The debris cast in the background shows the force of windblown waves. Looking further in the background is a skid-steer loader moving rocks so the homeowner protects his home from high levels of water near where trees still hold the shoreline. Unfortunately a storm brought waves toppling one of the houses with Purple Martins already inside with nests as shown where it was by the shown red circle. Several died in the storm and we replaced the new house next to the one that withstood the storm. *Purple Martins that died were frozen and sent to Flagstaff Arizona for another survey looking at necropsies of these birds.* We riprapped the base on both to weather future storms and barely made it through the breeding season as waves were lapping one of them again as the last young were fledging. After the season, we moved them again near the parking lot surrounded by riprapping to prepare for 2021. Will need everyone's hopes and thoughts talking to our Supreme Being for the upcoming season otherwise we have run out of suitable habitat for this site. Our best goes out to all of you in success for your arrivals and the season ahead but beware of potential problems!

Methods for playing Dawnsong and Daytime Chatter - Les Rhines

Vocalizations: **Dawnsong**, is the most effective Purple Martin attraction tool. The Dawnsong is a song that the adult male Purple Martin sings during the pre-dawn hours. This song is used to attract other Purple Martins to the breeding site. The method for playing Dawnsong can vary depending on the equipment that you have available to you. The first thing you will need is a Dawnsong CD this is available from the PMCA. The run time is approximately 2 hours in length.



Method 1: Many purple landlords use a simple CD player kept inside their home, out of the elements and run a length of wire to a speaker just outside of their home. While this works to attract purple martins it can sometimes attract them to your home or residence and not the martin housing. It is better to purchase an outdoor speaker and locate the speaker near the martin housing.



Method 2: Many landlords find the use of the Songbird Magnet by BirdX to be very effective in attracting purple martins. The Dawnsong vocalization is pre-recorded in the unit and it plays for approximately 2 hours. The unit comes with a long cord that allows the landlord to place the Songbird Magnet near the martin housing and still plug into a 110 volt power source. An extension cord can be used without a loss of power to the unit. The Songbird Magnet has a photoelectric eye that causes the unit to begin playing at dawn and continue for two hours. The unit also has a volume control located on the inside back, and mounting holes are provided to allow the landlord to easily mount the Songbird magnet to a post. Playing it at mid volume is usually sufficient as at dawn the air is usually still and the sound travels easily. Songbird Magnets are available at many sources including the PMCA and Amazon.



Method 3: As mentioned in method 2, out of the box the Songbird Magnet only plays Dawnsong for approximately 2 hours and begins at dawn each day. But what if you wanted to play Dawnsong for a longer period of time, or at a different time, say from 3 am to 5 am and then again at 6 am until 7 am and then again at night? By adding a 24 hour timer with 1 hour or even 1/2 hour increments will allow you to do this, The timer pictured here has the 1/2 hour increment settings.



The only other adjustment that needs to be made to make this work is to change the setting on the back of the unit to continuous play. Note in the picture you have the volume control, a setting for backyard birds or Purple Martins, and a setting for the photo eye or continuous play.



Method 4: This method of playing Dawnsong requires a bit more technology; as shown in the picture I use an old, slow laptop hooked to a pair of computer speakers and run a speaker wire to an outdoor speaker. To make this work you need to record Dawnsong to the playlist of Windows Media Player; the next step is to use the Task Scheduler feature in windows to set up a scheduled time to run the program. This would be like setting an alarm clock on your computer. I have scheduled several tasks for example I have Dawn1 set to start at 3:00 am, it runs

for 2 hours and shuts off. Dawn2 starts at 5:15 am and again runs for 2 hours.. I then switch over to the Daytime Chatter program which is also recorded to my playlist in Windows Media Player;; I then run the Chatter1 program for 2 hours.

That's the tech part, here's how I have the components set up in my yard. I am fortunate to have a garden shed on my property that has power in it, that is where I keep the laptop, high and dry. I plug the set of computer speakers in the headphone jack of the laptop and plug my speaker wire into the headphone jack of the computer speakers. Next I buried a speaker wire from my shed to the base of one of my martin houses,



a distance of 100 feet or so. I then attached the outdoor speaker to base of the martin house and pointed it upward at about a 45 degree angle. I drilled a small hole, 1/8 inch in the speaker horn to allow water to drain out, other wise it could fill with water and it would sound like a garbled chew, chew, chew. On the laptop, you need to have the date and time set correctly and the volume setting up all the way. I am then able to adjust the volume to the outdoor speaker using the control on the computer speaker. Once I have it set and in place I can basically forget about it and if I want to turn the volume down when

a martin arrives I can quickly access the control in my shed.

An alternate place for mounting the outdoor speaker is shown here; by attaching the speaker to the top of your martin housing the sound can really travel, especially in those pre-dawn hours when the rest of the world is quiet.

Additional Thoughts:

Earlier I mentioned Daytime Chatter, Daytime Chatter are the sounds of an active Purple Martin colony site. The Dawnsong according to the PMCA is best played between 4am-7am, the Daytime Chatter can be played from late morning throughout the afternoon. Many landlords will play either vocalization throughout the day to attract martins, the concern is that aerial predators are also active at this time and can be drawn to the colony, so use caution when playing the vocalizations during the day. Another time to consider playing Dawnsong is at night, starting at 11:00 pm to about 2:00am especially on nights when there are strong southerly winds. This is not every night, so you will have to use a wind app on your computer or phone to determine the best nights. Its nights like this that allow martins and other migrating species to travel great distances.

Finally, these methods described are some of the ways that I have used over the years, I'm sure that there are some others that I did not mention. I'm also sure that someone could figure out how to use a wireless "Bluetooth" outdoor speaker that plays from the "Alexa" app on your phone. It could be as easy as saying, "Hey Alexa play my martin playlist at 3:00 am" Hmmmm, maybe I'll have to try to figure that out. If you beat me to it, let me know. Note: the SY migration typically begins during the first full week of May, so you still have time to get your gear in place. Good Luck.



Treasurers Report:

As of April 8, 2021, we have \$1701.86 in savings

\$445.17 in checking

To date the Wisconsin Purple Martin Association received 20 memberships for 2021.

So, Welcome and Thank you to all for supporting the WPMA

Debbie Zimmermann

We would like to hear from you! If you would like to share your purple martin story, we would like to include it in one of our newsletters. Please send it to me, Les Rhines, along with any photo's at musthavemartins@gmail.com

We are looking for mentors! We at the Wisconsin Purple Martins have had many requests for assistance from people who are interested in starting colonies. While we have a network of mentors already, we would like to add to our list. Typically, people need help with site location, types of housing to use, and attraction methods.

If you feel that you would like to become involved in our mentor program contact Les Rhines at musthavemartins@gmail.com



MartinFest 2021

**Marsh Haven Nature Center
Waupun, Wisconsin
Saturday, June 26 9AM-4PM**



Location

**Marsh Haven N. C.
W10145 State Road 49**



Located on 46 acres, three miles east of Waupun on the Northwest end of world famous Horicon Marsh.

Food/ Refreshment

**Provided by Friends of
Marsh Haven Nature Center**

Proceeds to benefit Nature Center & Purple Martin Colony

www.marshhaven.org/

Booths

Purple Martin housing (Bob Shimek)
Sparrow Traps, Decoys, Aerial Insect
& Food Flippers, Nesting Material,
Martin Attractants, Starling Exclusion
Entrances, etc.

(Wisconsin Purple Martin Association)
www.wisconsinpurplemartins.org

Free event is open to the public.



Arrive to meet purple martin landlords & enthusiasts. Be inspired with the sights & sounds of a large colony of purple martins established in 1996-97. MartinFest will be centered around you, purple martins, Wildlife Disease Specialist Nancy Businga, President WPMA Les Rhines, & Master Bird Bander Dick Nikolai. Various vendors will be onsite throughout the day, a popular Festival silent auction & much discussion with colony landlords. Bring your whole family, friends & neighbors!

Disclaimer: Event program may change due to weather, cancellations from speaker or harm to birds.

9:00 AM	MartinFest 2021 Opens. Sign in & Browse
10:00-10:30 AM	Seminar: Purple Martin Ecology & Housing
10:45-11:15 AM	Seminar: Dealing with Weather, Nest Site Competitors & Predators
12:00-1:00 PM	Lunch. Browse Displays & View Martin Colony
1:00-2:00 PM	Purple Martin Health, Disease & You (WDNR Nancy Businga)
2:10-3:15 PM	Nest Record Needs for Monitoring, Banding Demonstration
3:25 PM	Silent Auction Closes
3:30 PM	Award Silent Auction Items (Cash or Check)
4:00 PM	Event Ends



WPMA Officers and Board of Directors Contact Information:

Les Rhines, President musthavemartins@gmail.com (920) 889-0060

Greg Zimmermann, Vice President grgz52@yahoo.com (920) 467-6253

Deb Zimmermann, Treasurer dpierce52@yahoo.com (920) 467-6253

Joe Francis, jnlfrancis44@gmail.com (920) 918-4466

Larry Lienau, larmon@tds.net (920) 565-2780

Dick Nikolai, prairiechicken@att.net (920) 734-0828

Bob Ring, ringbob@earthlink.net (920) 9892771



WPMA New Member Information Form

Please Print Legibly

Name: _____

Address below:

Street: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip Code** _____

Phone: _____ (Home/Cell)

Email Address: _____

Paid Date: _____ **Received By:** _____

Cost of 1 year membership is \$10.00 (memberships run from January 1 to December 31)
Payment by cash or check. Do not send cash in regular postal mail.

You will be contacted by someone from WPMA to complete your membership.

Send to WPMA Treasurer, N6018 Hwy 32, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085