

Chatter from the Colony

*The Newsletter of the
Purple Martin Conservation Initiative*

November 2021



Dedicated to helping Purple Martins thrive through education and conservation.

PURPLE MARTIN RESCUE SUCCESSFUL THANKS TO MANY

2021 has been a busy year for PMCI which began with a rare winter storm that swept through Louisiana in mid-February. The severe freezing weather presented a significant challenge for the Purple Martins that arrived early at the colonies throughout Denham Springs, Louisiana, including PMCI's largest colony at North Park, managed by Mike and Krista Adams. The weather conditions caused significant issues for the birds. The Purple Martins first experienced limited insect availability. Because they are aerial insectivores, meaning they consume insects during flight, the availability of food was scarce due to the frigid temperatures, freezing rain and ice. Energy spent unsuccessfully foraging was causing starvation among the birds. Initially, Mike and Krista attempted to supplemental feed the Purple Martins, but their attempts were futile.



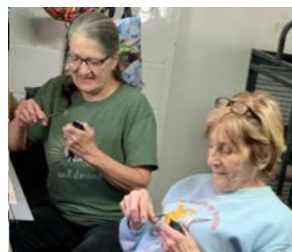
With the freezing temperatures not letting up and ice forming on the bird houses, the Purple Martins were then blocked inside huddling together to keep warm. Mike and Krista knew they had to act if they were going to save these neotropical migrants. Over a course of three days, they were able to rescue most of the Purple Martins and bring them to Wings of Hope Wildlife Sanctuary. A call was then placed to the Louisiana Master Naturalist of Greater Baton Rouge organization for volunteers to help feed the birds. It was a huge commitment to keep 60 Purple Martins alive over a 5-day period. Due to the efforts by many volunteers who helped with feeding all day, most of the Purple Martins were able to be released back to their colonies on February 21, 2021. It truly was a group effort!



Mike and Krista ready to rescue the distressed birds



Feeding mealworms to Purple Martins before transport to Wings of Hope



Wings of Hope Volunteers



Purple Martins in "ICU" recuperating

Sunday, February 21, 2021

The Adams family released the Purple Martins back to their colonies!



EXPLORE NATURE EVENT

PMCI sponsored the *Explore Nature* event on Saturday, May 8, 2021, at North Park in Denham Springs, Louisiana. This outdoor educational event was well attended and fun for everyone. Various nature and gardening organizations from around the State provided information about activities centered around nature. Organizations included:

Capital Area Beekeepers Association



Louisiana Master Naturalists of Greater Baton Rouge



Louisiana Amphibian and Reptile Enthusiasts (L.A.R.E.)



Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries (Bat Information)



Wings of Hope Wildlife Sanctuary



Arts and Craft Table for Children



Livingston Parish Master Gardener



Audubon Louisiana



Live Oak High Environmental Club



Denham Springs Garden Club



Livingston Parish Book Mobile



Tractor Supply (Provided water)



The PMCI North Park Colony



The colony at North Park in Denham Springs, Louisiana was started in 2016 with only one pair of Purple Martins nesting at the site. The colony has grown over the years and in 2021 hosted 52 pairs of Purple Martins. It's been a huge success and allows for many opportunities to educate the community and inspire others to put up Purple Martin housing. The season begins early at the park with the first Purple Martins arriving the first week of January. Mike and Krista monitor the colony throughout the entire nesting season and perform weekly nest checks. Having the colony at the park provides many opportunities for PMCI to educate the community about these birds that depend on us for their housing.

Visit the PMCI website at www.pmcila.org to learn more about our conservation efforts and how we are helping Purple Martins thrive through education and conservation.



PCMI Upcoming Events



November 6, 2021	Purple Martin Presentation, 10AM-12PM Denham Springs - Walker Livingston Parish Library 8101 US Hwy 190, Denham Springs LA 70726
November 11, 2021	Polar Purple Martin Rescue Virtual Presentation 7PM-8PM Baton Rouge Audubon Society Zoom Meeting. Presentation will be streamed on BR Audubon's Facebook page.
April 29-30, 2022	St Bernard Bird Festival, All Day Los Islenos Museum Complex, St. Bernard, LA
April 2022 (Date TBD)	Grand Isle Bird Festival, All Day Grand Isle, LA
May 7, 2022	Explore Nature, 9AM-12 PM PARDS North Park 30372 Eden Church Rd, Denham Springs, LA 70726