

2022 Season Report

Chautauqua Bird, Tree & Garden Club Purple Martin Project

Martin chats: Four were given at the martin houses north of the Sports Club, at 4:15 on Thursdays June 30 and July 7, 14 and 21. The weather was good at each of the chats and attendance was estimated in the 30s for each one. Many people stopped to ask questions as routine nest checks were conducted.

Project notes: The natural gourds were taken down on September 1 and painted. The Sports Club T14 was repaired. The T14s were put up on March 26 and the rest of the housing on March 31. House sparrows were present this year but not allowed to raise young. The first martin egg was laid on May 21, three days earlier than last year. Nests were checked every five or six days until the young fledged. To control blowfly parasites, nests have in the past been replaced on a regular schedule. Recent research suggests this may not be necessary, so again this year only a few nests were replaced. As in years past, the detailed data sheets will be sent to the Purple Martin Conservation Association for inclusion in their Project Martinwatch.

A – Sports Club T14 with 18 compartments, 12 occupied

B – Coyle (Sailing Center) T14 with 18 compartments, 11 occupied

C – Coyle (Sailing Center) rack with 24 gourds, 19 occupied

D -- Golf Course T14 with 18 compartments, 9 occupied

E – Soccer Field rack with 24 gourds, 15 occupied

Fledged

	Eggs	Hatch	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
A	60	55	47	31	49	44	25	14	49	28	59	67	60
B	57	50	38	56	36	68	58	56	42	31	68	60	66
C	96	93	69	64	54	55	41	32	49	25	50	87	107
D	51	48	39	28	49	34	36	29	68	38	84	68	93
E	72	64	56	66	77	54	39	38	36	22	52	74	96
Total	336	310	249	245	265	255	199	169	244	144	313	356	422

Production summary:

Occupancy rate: $66/102=65\%$ Hatch rate: $310/336=92\%$ Fledge rate: $249/310=80\%$

The occupancy rate is down and remains low despite good housing well located and managed. The number of eggs laid was down from last year but the hatch rate remains almost as high. The fledge rate dropped despite another year of good weather with no weather-related mortality. A Merlin was seen capturing and eating a martin. Cessation of nest changes for parasite control may be a factor. Over the last ten years the average production was 261 fledged but this year's production of 249 is only 95% of that. Fish crows were present on the grounds but were not actually seen causing problems. A fully successful colony of martins might fledge an average of five young per compartment. By this standard, a colony eleven miles away on Lake Erie achieved 91% success, but at Chautauqua only 49%.

Recommendations: Continue the chats and nest checks. The remaining two Barber houses are in bad condition and are of no benefit to martins. They should be removed. The perch on top of the Sailing Center T14 is broken and needs to be repaired using a lift. This should be done prior to houses going back up at the end of March. The similar perch on the Sports Club T14 needs adjustment and probably repair. The cable for the Sports Club T14 is about to break and will be replaced this fall.

Jack Gulvin, Naturalist 23 August 2022