

Denman Island Purple Martin Preservation Project

Terms of Reference February 11, 2024

Background and Motivation:

The Western Purple Martin *Progne subis aboricola* (WPM) population in the wild had plummeted to 55 known nesting pairs in British Columbia in 1995. The species is dependent on suitable nest holes in snags (woodpecker holes, natural cavities and buildings). Introduced cavity nester like starlings and European house sparrows began to compete for nest sites. In addition, modern forest management practices removed dead trees and snags eliminating nesting opportunities. WPM prefers coastal habitat and many nested on old pilings which were likewise disappearing. Astute bird enthusiasts saw the dilemma and began mounting man-made nest boxes on Vancouver Island and the perilous population of just a few pairs began to recover. Without that action the subspecies would likely have become extirpated in B.C. To that end a formal support group is established to accomplish the Purple Martin Project objectives.

Name: Denman Island Purple Martin Preservation Project (DIPMPP)

Project Mandate: "To sustain a viable breeding colony of Western Purple Martins on Denman Island, B.C. for its preservation into the future."

Relationship to Denman Island Resident's Association:

the DIPMPP is considered a subset (project) of the Parks Committee.

Project roles: The roles of team members involved with the WPM Preservation Project will be to:

1. Construct, mount and maintain suitable nest boxes for a self-sustaining colony of Western Purple Martins. (WPM)
2. Inspect the condition of nest boxes on an annual basis.
3. Recruit and maintain a viable team of committed islanders to carry out the mandate.
4. Solicit assistance from other Denman Island committees or organizations (e.g. Denman Island Volunteer Fire & Rescue, Community Dock Committee).
5. Coordinate relevant work and activities with the Denman Island Community Dock Committee.
6. Appoint a liaison to the Denman Island Dock Committee.
7. Liaise with other conservation organizations involved in the preservation of the WPM in BC.
8. Generate or secure funding for construction and maintenance of the nest boxes.
9. Operate under the umbrella of the Parks Committee to allow for insurance coverage and community reporting functions for volunteers.

10. Hold a minimum of one team meeting per year to review and establish operating procedures, generate meeting minutes and reports, orient new team members and review performance.
11. Publish public educational material for community support and awareness.
12. Monitor breeding success of the colony annually.
13. Other task

Project Team Organization:

The Project Team is split into two functions; an administrative and construction function as described below.

Project Administration: Responsibilities of this team include achieving the Project's overall objectives, communicating with key organizations on Denman Island and within the WPM volunteer and conservation communities outside of Denman Island, establishing and monitoring budgets and resources, pursuing funding support, recruiting volunteers, liaising with relevant DIRA Committees and the Project's Construction team.

A Project Leader will serve as overall Project Chair of the Project Team, responsible for organizing team meetings (schedule, venue), preparing reports to the relevant DIRA Committee(s), attending DIRA meetings as requested, signing correspondence on behalf of the Project Team, and communication with other conservation organizations as appropriate.

Project Construction: Responsibilities of this team include repair and maintenance of the nest box infrastructure as required.

A Project Construction Leader will oversee the scheduling and execution of tasks associated with on-site repairs and maintenance of nest boxes. Safety of volunteers will be paramount to the successful execution of this work as well as coordination with other entities such as the Dock Committee and potentially BC Ferries. The Construction Leader will coordinate closely with the Project Leader regarding maintenance and construction needs, including developing cost estimates for materials, and alternative placement of nest boxes design (if applicable), as well as securing volunteers.