

## HOW TO Secondary Security Latch by: Tim Mangan

Many martin landlords use aluminum houses at their colony sites. I have used three different houses from three different manufacturers and there is one area of concern that seems to be constant. That concern is the accidental opening of the access door. Different manufacturers use various means to secure the access door. I want to show a simple but hopefully effective modification I made to give the landlord some extra peace of mind ensuring access doors cannot be blown open by the wind or pried open by an owl or hawk allowing access to the nest.

Attached are a couple of pictures showing a modification made on the Safe Haven house I recently purchased. Although unlikely, I could see the possibility of an owl or hawk landing on the porch and accidentally lifting up on the latch allowing the access door to drop open exposing the nest.

One picture shows some "EZ-Cable Clips" I had on hand from another martin related project. I am also showing the carton they came in so you will know what size I used. The clips come straight and I put them in my vice to bend them back. You can see two clips in the picture, one before bending and the other after bending.

I then drilled a hole above the access door on the house to attach the clips. I used "stop nuts" on the bolts. The stop nuts have a little piece of hard plastic on the inside of the nut. That way I could adjust the tension on the cable clip. After attaching the clip to the house, I am able to rotate the clip to the right allowing the door to open.

The other picture shows the finished product. I thought about installing two on each door but decided to go with one for now so I can see how they will hold up throughout the season. Several nice benefits about these clips are, they are for external use, they come in white to match the house color and they are small and fairly inconspicuous.

Although I made this modification on my Safe Haven house, I believe this application will work on many different models of aluminum houses. Although the Safe Haven house probably did not need this back-up security lock, for my piece of mind, since I have started experiencing owl attacks, I made the modification. Tim.

