



THE DAWNSONG



GEMINI RACK 2010

ABOVE: SY MALE 2010

Martins have returned!

On April 4, the southerly winds blew purple martins all the way up to Pennsylvania.

I usually have only one returning martin, but this year, 6 showed up in the early afternoon, and by the evening, we had 17 martins here on the first day!

Of course the weather changed the next day, cold and wet.

Supplemental feeding was started right away, and the martins were right back to the Bed and Breakfast and catching the crickets I was flipping into the air.

As I finish this issue we have around 100 martins here, all ASY's.

Weather has been a huge issue this year for many martin landlords. Ironically, I started this issue in early April and by the end of the month some of the most violent weather has been experienced. My heart goes out to all the families and their friends who have suffered loss due to these tornados.



SUPER SYSTEM 24 (2010)



MY DRAGONFLY!



STARTER GOURD RACK

Eagle Scout Project

For my Eagle Scout service project, I would like to purchase and place a Purple Martin pole with gourds that will house up to 24 breeding pairs of Purple Martins at the Town of Bethel "Field of Dreams" Park. The purpose of the project will be to provide an eco-friendly way to help control the mosquito and insect population and to provide the citizens of Bethel a place where they can go and watch these magnificent birds. Currently, the Town of Bethel does not have routinely scheduled operations for insect control. The pole with approval from the Town of Bethel will be located in the open area between the baseball field and the soccer field and approximately 80 feet from the adjacent drainage ditch which borders

the park property on the east side or at an alternate location if required by the Town of Bethel. The pole for the Purple Martin housing will be installed with a below flush mounted ground sleeve that will be concreted in the ground, which will also allow for easy removal of the pole if needed. The pole, gourds and supplies with the exception of the Sakrete concrete will be purchased from Creative Universe Enterprises which is located in Fairview, PA. To obtain the funds for my project, I will hold a pancake supper at the Bethel Baptist Church with the help of members from Troop 15, both Eagle and Cobra patrols, their parents, and my scoutmaster.

Matthew Holmes, Bethel NC

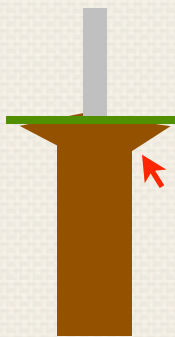


High winds and Gourd Racks

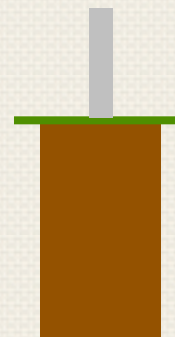
The 2011 martin season started out with some of the worst weather we have seen in a very long time. The cold wet weather here in Erie, to the tornadoes in the south are reeking havoc. As many of you know by now Steve Kroenke's site in Louisiana was devastated by a tornado or tornadic type winds reaching at least 100 mph.

Concerned landlords are worried about their martins as well as their poles and gourd racks and we would like to take this opportunity to address some of these concerns.

How can I prevent my pole or gourd rack from falling down? It begins with how you cement your ground stake. As we state in our directions 'poor soil conditions warrant larger holes'. This is important not for the strength of the ground stake but for the stability of it. Poor soil, like we have here at our research site, tends not to support the cement, so by making a larger hole and using more cement helps to alleviate the problem. What you may notice after a storm is that your pole looks crooked, but actually the concrete holding your ground stake has shifted in the ground. Remember, you cannot have too much concrete.



If you make your hole like the drawing on the left, (hole is flared out at the top) frost can actually raise your concrete up and out of the ground.



Always make your hole straight or enlarge the BOTTOM of your hole.

What should you do if high winds are forecasted for your area? First and the most important, lower your hub. Lowering the hub section reduces the amount of stress that travels down the pole. Lowering the hub section a minimum of two feet can make all the difference. And the best part is that the martins don't mind.

How much winds can the pole and gourd racks take? Not such a simple cut and dry question. We have personally experienced wind gust of 63 mph. My racks were lowered 2 feet and all withstood the burst. But other factors can be in play, how many gourds and or houses are on the pole is a prime example. Landlords want to get the best bang for the buck, I don't blame you, this economy sucks, (gas cost how much?!) but any pole that is overloaded will fail before its counterpart. It is important that you understand that. Whether you have a steel or aluminum pole, they ALL have their failing point.

I heard that Aircraft Aluminum is the best, what it is? Personally I feel that it is nothing more than an advertising ploy. True aircraft aluminum must meet stricter guidelines and quality control than what we have with normal industry standard. While it is true that 6061 is used in the aircraft industry I am sure it is made to higher standards than mill run.

Would using a ground socket be beneficial? Ground sockets can be a useful tool for the landlord who knows they are moving in the near future or a landlord who would like to have the ability to remove the entire pole, including the ground stake during the off season. But as to whether or not using a ground socket (aka sleeve) would help your over all pole or gourd rack withstand tornadic winds, no, it will not. A ground socket (sleeve) that is flush with ground level gives you no better support. A ground socket that extends ABOVE ground will give added support, how much would depend on the wall thickness, alloy and temper and how high it extends upward. How about a ground socket that you slip your pole into? Would that make a difference? While the socket would be stronger I still believe that the pole would come down in

tornado like winds. Lets face it there is no gourd rack that can stand up to violent twisting 100 mph winds.

Now if we examine the poles that are used to hold lights up on the major highway, you know the ones, the lights hang out over the roads...These poles are tapered, where they are very wide at the bottom and narrow at the top. It's an interesting idea but again in our case cost prohibitive.

So where does all this lead us? I can speak only for ourselves but here at Creative Universe we are looking at ways to ensure that your pole or gourd rack will be standing after the next storm. In our quest for bigger and better poles and housing I believe that manufactures as well as landlords tend to exceed what is safe for the pole.

We have designed our gourd racks to hold 'X' number of gourds, what we feel is safe and not over-stressing the pole. Over the years we have allowed ourselves to be persuaded into adding more gourds. Well no more. Here are some of the steps we are implementing to ensure the integrity of your gourd rack or pole:

- There should be no more than 18 gourds on a 2" square pole 16' tall.
- There should be no more than 36 gourds on a 3" square pole 16' tall.
- Multipurpose poles using the 2" square pole, should have no more than 2 houses and 4 gourds on them.
- Instructions are being updated to state that your rack should be lowered during high wind storms.
- We will be looking at offering many of our gourd racks on 14' poles only. Shorter poles place less stress at the bottom of your pole, where the greatest amount of pressure is.

While we fully understand that the chances of your colony are slim to be the recipient of a head on collision of 100 mph winds like that at Steve's, many lessons can be learned from this. We will, and are continuing to evaluate our products and will do what ever we deem necessary to ensure the overall integrity of the pole and to an extent the martins safety.

High winds and Gourd Racks, continued.

We are all affected when a high-profile landlord like Steve goes thru such a catastrophic disaster. There are thousand and thousand of landlords whom will never experience what Steve did. It is important to remember that our gourd racks can withstand powerful straight line winds. We have received reports from many landlords who have experience straight line winds of 60 mph. We just recently had a 63 mph gust here.

When developing our gourd racks and more recently when we developed our custom aluminum ground stake we had the dilemma of which should fail first. The pole or the ground stake? I choose the pole. To me it is a lot easier to replace a pole bottom section than it is to dig a new hole and cement the ground stake.

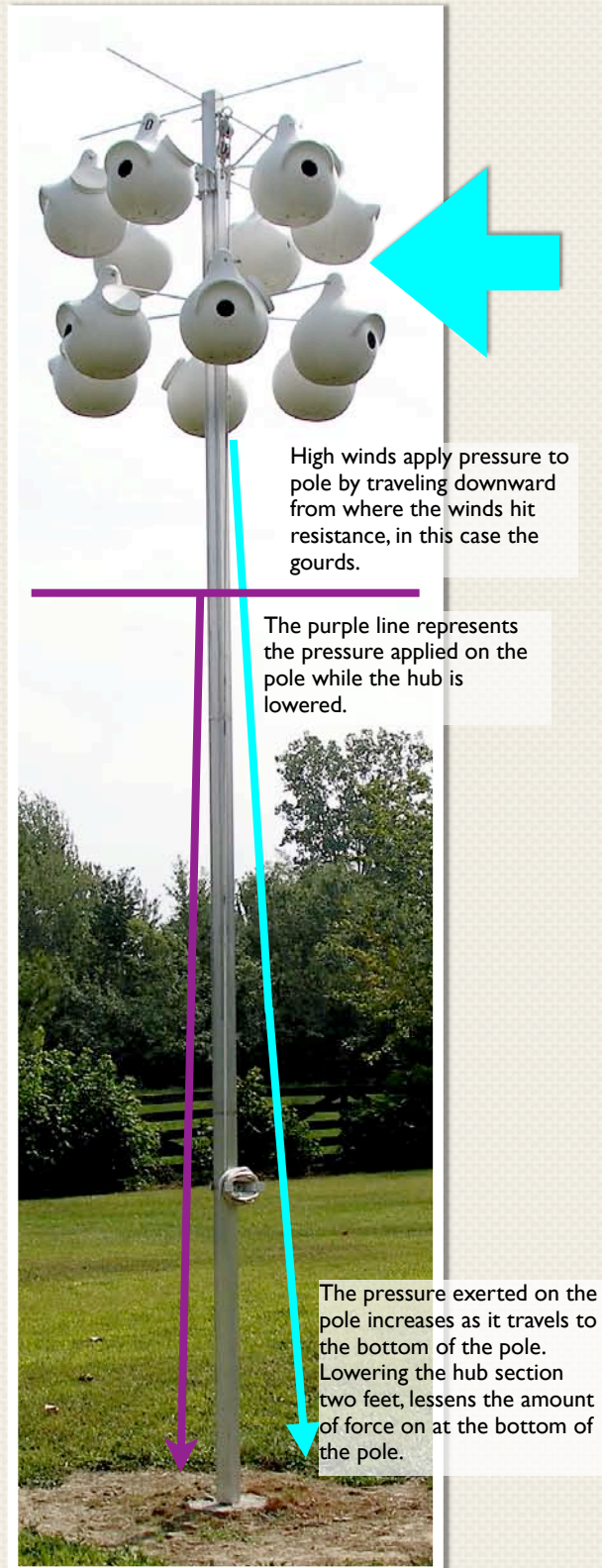
We are and will continue to help Steve restore his colony to its former glory. We realize that we are not obligated to do this, it is just the right thing to do. That has always been at the heart of our business, doing what is right for the consumer and the martins.

Here is a simple experiment you can do at home. During a windy day go out side and hold up cardboard say 8x10. Easy to hold on to right? Now go outside with a very large piece of cardboard, you can really feel the resistance in your hands.

A Note from Robert.

I know there are a lot of landlords who believe that the higher the better for martin housing. Twenty years ago when we first started to make gourd racks our systems were only 10-½ feet tall, we sold thousand of them all over the states and martins really used them with success.

Martins at are our research site readily choose the shorter gourd racks over the 16' ones available. I personally feel that 14' pole is plenty tall enough for most applications. Martin safety to me is more important than having a pole that is taller. Remember that a shorter pole standing up after a tornado is always better than a taller one laying on the ground, martins killed, eggs broken and no place for the birds to go.



Survey Says...

I would like your opinion on a few things. If you would please take the time to print this page and answer the survey questions. You could mail the survey to us at: Creative Universe Ent 6033 Sterrettania Rd Fairview, PA 16415 Thank you.

Would you like to have more than 4 issues per year?

Yes

No

Are there any product questions you would like answered.

What topics interest you that you would like more in depth coverage on.

Do you like the How To's found on our web site? Are there other How To's you would be interested in?

Yes

No

Specify:

Did you know that you can review instructions by visiting our web site. If so did you ever look at them before buying a gourd rack?

Yes

No

Yes

No

Have you ever ordered on-line? Have you tried the Paypal feature we offer?

Yes

No

Yes

No

Do you feel the prices on the gourd racks are to high? If the prices were less money purchasing them on-line only would you do it?

Yes

No

Yes

No

Anything you would like to add?

Your name and address is optional. For those who wish you can also email this back to me: cuent@hughes.net



MONTHLY SPECIALS

MAY'S SPECIALS:

NO ROCKER 8 PACK \$29.95

BW EXTENSION HANDLE
\$32.95

BBIT, 2 FOR \$19.95

IF YOU HAD TAKEN
ADVANTAGE OF EVERY
MONTHLY SPECIAL YOU
WOULD HAVE SAVED:

2011 SAVINGS \$150.00

2010 SAVINGS \$576.95!

News...

There are a few products that have been discontinued, or soon will be, I need to make you aware of.

Porches: We are all out of the metal porches for SuperGourds. This product has been discontinued and will no longer be manufactured. For those needing porches the plastic porches offered by S&K work, or make your own.

Extension Poles. There are 4 left in stock and this product will be discontinued.

Bed & Breakfast: There is one unit left. While we very much like this product it is such a poor seller we will no longer manufacture it. We will however continue with the Personal Pan Feeders

so you can make your own feeding station.

I have 6 sets of Owl Guards for Deluxe style gourd racks left. While the Owl Guards are effective there are numerous other ways to protect your martins from the owls. When these are gone they will be discontinued.

Lower prices on Nite Guard Lights, one for \$28.95 or the 4 pack for \$98.00 both prices shown are delivered.

On a side note I would like to thank all those who went to Steve' and Bob's aid. Special thanks to Troy, Robert, and Scott. I appreciate all the time you spent helping restore Steve's and Bob's gourds racks and the time you spent on the phone with us.