

## WHAT MARTINS EAT

Text by Emily K. Pifer  
Illustrations by Ruby McCormick

Purple Martins are aerial insectivores, meaning that they only eat flying

### INSECTS.

Martins forage, or search for food, during the day, high in the sky. They eat large

insects such as **DRAGONFLIES**, butterflies, moths, bees, and

### WASPS.

They are fast fliers and are able to catch the insects in their beaks, in mid-flight. Unlike what many people think, martins rarely eat mosquitoes. However, in cold, cloudy, or rainy

### WEATHER,

insects do not fly around, and the martins then have no

### FOOD.

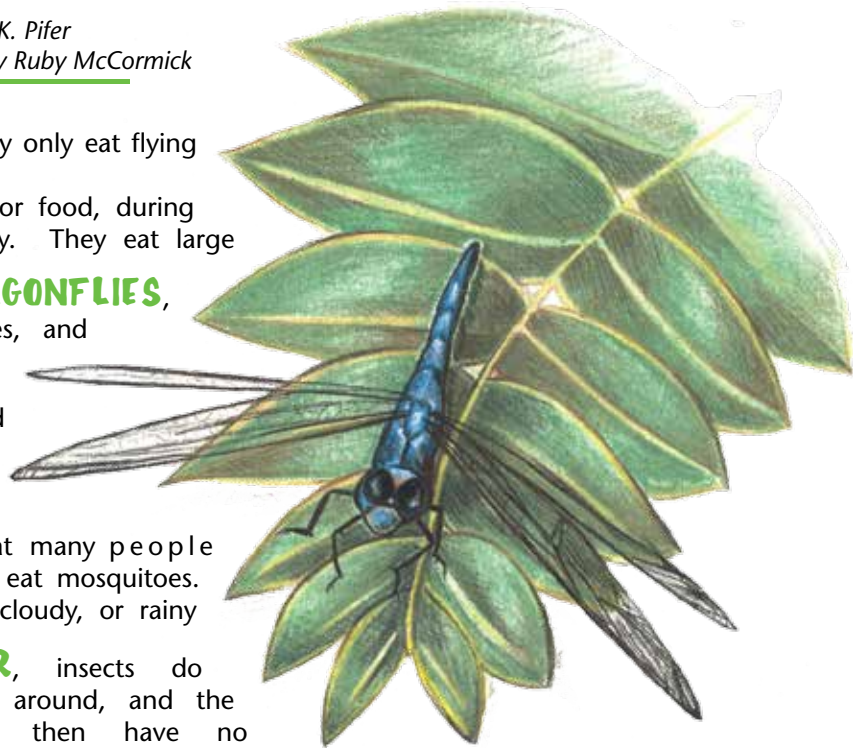
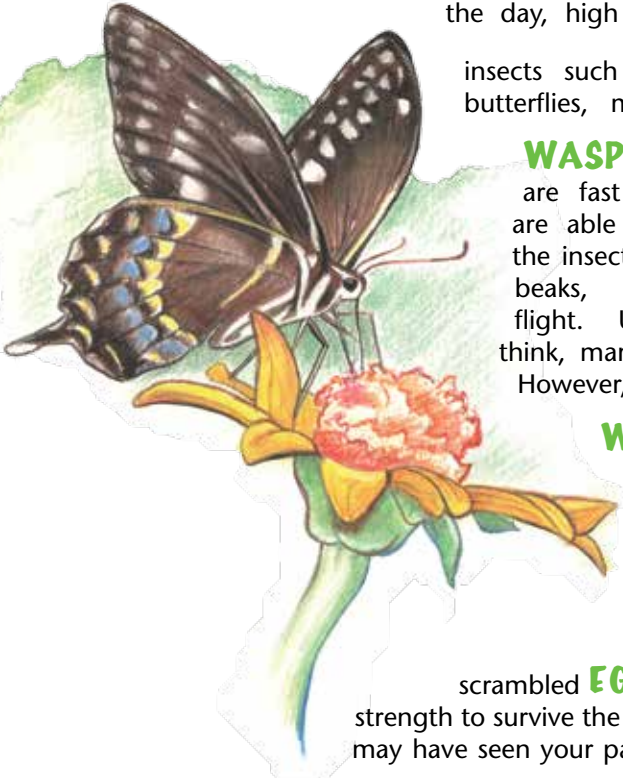
During this time, people can help the birds by feeding them ourselves, what is called supplemental feeding. We can train the martins to eat crickets, mealworms, and even

scrambled **EGGS** that we toss in the air. This gives the birds strength to survive the cold weather and live longer lives. You may have seen your parents or grandparents do this if they

have **MARTIN** colonies. Why don't you take some time and

watch the martins as they **FLY** around searching

for food?



## Martin Word Search

G	N	I	Y	L	F	S	M	R	O	W	L	A	E	M
S	T	C	E	S	N	I	C	S	L	S	K	A	E	B
G	N	I	G	A	R	O	F	R	N	A	P	F	I	E
C	R	I	C	K	E	T	S	W	A	I	I	S	V	E
D	A	Y	T	I	M	E	G	G	S	M	T	R	A	S
S	E	I	L	F	R	E	T	T	U	B	B	R	E	W
D	R	A	G	O	N	F	L	I	E	S	K	L	A	A
F	E	E	D	I	N	G	S	E	A	R	C	H	E	M
B	X	J	L	R	E	H	T	A	E	W	F	O	O	D
D	S	U	P	P	L	E	M	E	N	T	A	L	O	I

AERIAL  
BUTTERFLIES  
DRAGONFLIES  
FOOD

MARTINS  
EGGS  
WASPS  
BEAKS

CRICKETS  
FEEDING  
FORAGING  
MEALWORMS

SEARCH  
WEATHER  
BEES  
DAYTIME

INSECTS  
SUPPLEMENTAL