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?