

## PURPLE MARTIN USE OF ASIAN CLAMS IN NEST CONSTRUCTION

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During February 2014, I erected a Purple Martin (*Progne subis*) gourd rack with six artificial gourds in my yard at Jackson. The first time I observed Purple Martins checking out the gourds was during 2017, though none nested. The first nesting attempt occurred during 2018, when one pair occupied one gourd and fledged young. At the beginning of each nesting season, I lined each gourd with a handful of pine straw. The pair from 2018 added additional nesting material, including mud. Brown and Tarof (2013) state that miscellaneous items are sometimes incorporated into a nest, including aluminum can pull tabs and nails. The pair from 2018 incorporated at least four valves (three whole valves and three partial valves) of Asian clams (*Corbicula* sp.; Figure 1) into the mud they used to build their nest. It is possible these valves were inadvertently picked up with mouthfuls of mud that were brought to the nest, but the largest was 1.5 cm wide and would likely have been the main component of a mouthful taken by a Purple Martin with a mouth width of about 1.5 cm.



**Figure 1.** Three whole and three partial valves of *Corbicula* sp. incorporated into mud used to construct a Purple Martin nest during 2018, Jackson, MS.

**LITERATURE CITED**

Brown, C.R. and S. Tarof. 2013. Purple Martin (*Progne subis*), version 2.0. In *The Birds of North America*, (A.F. Poole, Editor). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY. <https://doi.org/10.2173/bna.287>.

**MISSISSIPPI'S SECOND LIMPKIN RECORD**

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On 24 September 2018, while collecting fish for the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science (MMNS) with museum colleague Matt Wagner, I saw a Limpkin (*Aramus guarana*; Figure 1) from a bridge overlooking Big Springs Creek in Marshall County. Wagner also saw the bird. The day was cool and overcast, and it rained later in the day. We were on Potts Camp Road on a fairly high bridge overlooking the creek (34.634102°N, -89.396687°W). The bird was below us, standing on the edge of a back water slough of the creek. It stood about two feet tall, had brown feathers with white spots on its back, a long neck with lighter brown feathers, long grayish colored legs, and a long, tannish brown, slightly downward curved bill. It was not feeding, and seemed very oblivious to our presence. The bird walked along the bank and eventually hopped across the water before disappearing into the underbrush. I did not hear any vocalizations. I was able to take a few pictures and some short video of the Limpkin before it disappeared (video available online under *The Mississippi Kite* Supplemental Files at [missbird.org](http://missbird.org)). I knew I had seen this species many years before at Biscayne National Park at Homestead, Florida, but could not recall its name. Upon returning to the museum I showed fellow staff member Bob Jones the