

July 2008

How do you like the latest picture of the barn on the home page? It's getting better all the time. The sky was particularly blue the day of that photo, and the shadows were dancing on the barn with a warm breeze. Ahhhhh.....Summer in Madrid, Maine! Can't be beat!

For you birders out there, we've had lots of nesting going on around here. We had two sets of Phoebe's; one nest in the eaves of the front porch on the guest house and another on the frost eave of the barn in the back. What fun to watch the parents tend their young, which fledged one day recently as I was watering the potted plants on the porch beneath their nest. I saw them sitting on the edge of the nest, but they must have been asleep – all of a sudden there was a great fluttering about my head as they flew in all directions, obviously startled right off their seats! Mom and Dad were on the scene in no time, trying to round them up. They managed to get them back in the nest, but the next day the nest was empty and has remained so.

We also have Tree Swallows in a box on the garage (I love the contrast of their snowy white underside and their shiny, dark blue backs). So cute to see their little heads poking out of the box, waiting for mom to return with a juicy tidbit for them. Finally, a pair of Great Crested Flycatchers in a birdhouse gourd hanging off the gate walk into the back yard. This is a new addition to my life list. None of these birds visit our several feeders, but must have felt quite comfortable raising a family here.

The rhubarb has gone by at this point, leaving only the tougher stalks. David made himself a couple of batches of stewed rhubarb which he was willing to share with guests who stayed in the barn. They loved it! These same guests enjoyed a ride on the ATV and a paddle in the boat on the pond. Their hiking was a bit damp as it was during a rainy time, but they did see 2 moose!

After a minor medical set back, we hope to get back on track with finishing up the siding and relocating the remaining old barn wood piled nearby. Definitely want to open up the view more before autumn. With all the rain we've had early this summer, there promises to be a spectacular leaf show come late September, early October. Reserve now so you don't miss it!

Ginni and David Robie