

We Energies Peregrine Falcon 2008 Nesting Season Report

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"Atlanta" L/C perched in front of her nest box at We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant*

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Pleasant Prairie Power Plant

All five eggs hatched at this site between April 26-May 2, but one chick died shortly afterwards. The remaining four young were banded on May 16 and fledged during the first week of June.



Nesting Details

Adult Female: "Breezer" (b/r) *R/*2. This is Breezer's 10th year at P4. She was wpr in 1998 at the US Steel site in Gary, IN.

Adult Male: "Duke" (b/r) 1/*P, is a 1998 falcon produced at Milwaukee's Landmark on the Lake site.

Eggs: 5 between March 13-23

Projected Hatch Dates: April 22-26

Eggs Hatched: 5 between April 26-May 2

Banded: 1 female and 3 males on May 16

NOTE: Duke was found dead at this site Dec. 23. Carcass sent to WDNR Health Lab for necropsy.

Banding Data

Name	Sex	Project Band	USFWS Band
Lex	Female	S/53	1687-02106
Remmie	Male	E/53	2206-84680
Bob	Male	E/54	2206-84681
Light	Male	E/55	2206-84682

Site Visits: March 28, May 6, 16, Nov. 18, Dec. 30



Above Left: Breezer's chicks on banding day.

Above Right: Breezer perched at nest box.

Bottom Right: A portrait of Duke.

Oak Creek Power Plant

All four eggs hatched at this site, and the chicks were banded June 16. The three males and one female fledged toward the end of June.



Left: This year's lineup.
Above: Atlanta perched in front of her new nest box.



Nesting Details

Adult Female: Atlanta (b/r) L/C. Atlanta was wpr in 1996 at the WPS Pulliam Power Plant site in Green Bay, WI. This is Atlanta's 10th year at this site.

Adult Male: "Scott" (b/g) M/Y, here for his third year was wpr in 2000 at the ADM malting complex (formerly Froedtert Malt complex) in West Milwaukee, WI.

Eggs: 4 between April 15-22

Projected Hatch Dates: May 24-26

Eggs Hatched: 4 between May 21-25

Banded: 1 female and 3 males on June 16

Banding Data

Name	Sex	Project Band	USFWS Band
Amazon	Female	R/38	1687-21347
Armin	Male	(b/r) 74/A	2206-72294
Uthyr	Male	(b/r) 75/A	2206-72270
Prion	Male	(b/r) 76/A	2206-72269

Site Visits: Jan. 10, 24, Feb. 24, March 6, 27, April 7, 14, May 16, June 16, Nov. 1

Oak Creek Power Plant Great Horned Owl Saga

Peregrine Falcons have been nesting at Oak Creek Power Plant since 1998. Between 1998-2004, they occupied a nest box mounted at the catwalk level on one of the chimneys. In 2005, a new nest box was constructed and mounted inside the top floor of the old north plant where a window had been removed to serve as the entrance to the nest box. All in all, both nest boxes served the falcons well, and as of 2008, a total of 38 young have been produced at this site.



The two young owlets photographed in the nest box at night just before being banded.

But on the morning of Jan. 4, 2009, when I checked the Oak Creek nest box webcam, there were no peregrines present, and I was shocked to see instead, a great horned owl perched on the front deck of the nest box. This was especially surprising knowing that the adult pair of falcons at this site were on territory and seen regularly in the nest box.

For the ensuing three months, a standoff existed between the owls and the peregrines. The falcons knew enough not to go into their nest box where the owl would certainly be the victor in any confrontation, and the owl knew not to leave the nest box and expose itself to the wrath of the falcons in the air. In the end, the owls were successful in hatching two eggs and fledging two young, which were banded March 6. Both young fledged between April 5-7, and one was found dead beneath the nest box the morning after it fledged.

On the morning of April 11, the surviving owlet was found perched on the arm of a cherry picker in a construction area and subsequently captured and released in a nearby wooded area. Then on April 17, just when we thought things were going to calm down, the adult female found owl herself caught up in some metal grid work and was rescued, rehabilitated and released again on site on May 12.

While the owl was incubating her eggs, another nest box was installed about 100 yards south of the one they had taken over so the peregrines would have another option for a place to nest. Interestingly, early on the morning after the second owlet fledged, Bill Holton and I observed the female peregrine coursing back and forth in front of her old nest box and the new nest box almost to make sure the owls were gone. She then landed twice in the new nest box and laid her first egg there a week later.

Milwaukee Valley Power Plant

A lone adult male spent a good portion of the winter and spring at this site finally attracting a mate in mid-May who I identified as "Jean" (b/g) 19/C, the female that nested at Milwaukee's US Bank (USB) site last year.

Although the 3 eggs that were laid restored hope for this site, in the end they failed to hatch. I still believe the adult male here is also paired with the new female at the nearby USB site. Once the eggs hatched at the USB site, the male spent less time at Valley Power Plant, leaving Jean on her own to hunt and may be the reason the eggs failed to hatch. Interestingly, Jean was his mate last year at the USB site and produced four young there. The nest box was cleaned on Nov. 18.



Nesting Details

Adult Female: Jean (b/g 19/C) was wpr in 2005 at the Evanston Library site in Evanston, IL. This is Jean's first year at this site.

Adult Male: Banded b/g

This site has been active since 2002, producing a total of 17 young (2.4/yr.)

Eggs: 3 between April 21–26

Nest Failed

Site Visits: April 4, 14, 23, May 16, Nov. 18



Above: Jean does a close fly by when we visited the nest on May 16.

Left: Jean's three eggs.

Port Washington Generating Station

All four eggs hatched at this site between May 11–13. The chicks were banded June 2. When the bluff south of the plant opens to the public, it will provide great viewing opportunities of this nest site as the nest box is directly across from the northeast corner of the bluff and nearly level with it. The nest box at this site was cleaned Nov. 1.



Nesting Details

Adult Female: "Icon" (b/g) 50/D was produced at the LTV Steel site in Cleveland, OH in 2004.

Adult Male: Not yet ID'd

Eggs: 4 between April 1-7

Projected Hatch Dates: May 8-11

Eggs Hatched: 4 between May 11-13

Banded: 1 female and 3 males on June 2

Banding Data

Name	Sex	Project Band	USFWS Band
Sydney	Female	S/68	1687-02111
Polyo	Male	E/65	2206-84622
Lunar	Male	E/66	2206-84623
RC	Male	E/67	2206-84624

Site Visits: April 14, May 16, June 2, Nov. 1



Above: Icon... being herself.

Above Left: Sydney, Polyo, Lunar and RC back in their nest box after banding.

Presque Isle Power Plant, MI

The encouraging webcam images of a peregrine at the nest box here in March were, unfortunately, short-lived, and according to plant employees, there have been no sightings since. As disappointing as this is, it is important to remember how long it took in the past to even have activity at a nest box. Years ago, when there were far fewer peregrines, nest boxes sometimes went 10 years or more before seeing activity. The fact that there are more falcons looking for nest sites today coupled with the fact that there have been falcons in the nest box at this site for the past two years gives one some well founded hope for the future. Maybe next spring.

Milwaukee County Power Plant

The nest box at this site is in a prime location, and peregrines should find it in the next year or two. Even though peregrines were not seen here this spring, a pair of peregrines were present at the north tower at the nearby Mayfair Mall. The pair consisted of an adult male and an immature female, so there has been promising activity in the area.

Site Visits: Feb. 3, March 19

We Energies Peregrines Nesting in Wisconsin

“Leopold” (b/r) C/D, a captive-produced male falcon released at Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in 1992, paired with **“Raynie” (b/r) A/H**, a female falcon produced at Chicago’s Broadway nest site in 1995. They nested again at the ADM malting site in West Milwaukee producing two young. Leopold and Raynie have been together at the ADM site for 14 years. Leopold has produced an impressive total of 42 young -- 34 with Raynie. Leopold is now 16 years old, and Raynie is 13.

NOTE: Leopold was injured in a wire collision on June 29 and subsequently euthanized.

Leopold perched atop a silo at ADM’s West Milwaukee nest site.



“Beaster” (b/g) 67/M, a male falcon produced at Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in 2005, paired with **“Lily (b/g) 56/A**, a female hatched in 2001 at the Firststar Bank site in Cedar Rapids. They produced three young at the Racine County Courthouse nest site.

Beaster perched on the roof of the Racine County Courthouse.



“Herbert” (b/g) 80/N, a male produced in 2004 at Valley Power Plant in Milwaukee, paired again with an unbanded female producing three young at Milwaukee’s Miller Brewery nest site.

“Ceptyn” (b/g) N/Y, a male produced in 2002 at Port Washington Generating Station, is paired again with Smokey (b/g) 82/A, a female produced in 2003 at the Edgewater site in Sheboygan. They produced four young at the Renew Energy LLC complex in Jefferson.

“Ian” (b/g) 71/N, a male produced in 2004 at Port Washington Generating Station, paired with **“Nora” (b/g) P/76**, a female produced in 2005 at the Graysolon Plaza nest site in Duluth. They produced four young at the Thilmany Mill site in Kaukauna.

We Energies Produced Peregrines Nesting in Other States



ILLINOIS

“Emily” (b/g) 5/*E, a large male banded as a female who was produced at Oak Creek Power Plant in 2000, paired with “Hercules” (b/r) *D/W produced in Minneapolis in 1997. The pair nested at the Metropolitan Correctional Center site in Chicago.

“Squawker” (b/g) 48/M, a male produced at Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in 2003, paired with a female banded (b/g) 64/D produced at Cedar Rapids in 2004. They nested at the Evanston Library site and produced four young.

INDIANA

“Marie” (b/g) 04/A is nesting at the Arcelor Mittal West plant nest site in Lake County, IN. Marie was produced at Port Washington Generating Station in 2001. Her mate is (b/g) 53/A (banded with female bands) from the Bailly Plant in Burns Harbor, IN from 2002.

Photo credit: “Marie” by
John Castrale, Indiana DNR



OHIO

“Jesse” (b/g) 97/A, a male produced in 2005 at Port Washington Generating Station and banded with female bands, paired with a female named “Pinkie” (b/g) 73/E who was produced in 2003 at the IPL Stout Plant in Indianapolis. The pair nested at the J. M. Stuart Power Plant in Aberdeen, OH. Two eggs were laid, but the nest failed.

A Tribute To Leopold: 1992 - 2008 A Remarkable Peregrine

Leopold (b/r) C/D was captive-produced and hatched at Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in 1992 along with 14 other captive-produced young. He was first identified at the Froedtert Malt site (now ADM) in West Milwaukee in 1994 and spent the summer there with an immature female.

In 1995, he paired at the ADM site with an unbanded adult female we named "Vera" producing three young. In 1996, he and Vera produced another four young. In 1997, Vera was killed, and Leopold paired with an immature female who laid three eggs. Of these, only one hatched and later died. In 1998, Leopold paired with Raynie (b/r) A/H, who was wild-produced in 1995 at the Broadway nest site in Irving Park, IL. Raynie spent the spring/summer of 1996 at Oak Creek Power Plant and nested at Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in 1997, producing two young.

On June 29, 2008, Leopold was found on the ground in the parking lot of the Pick & Save grocery store near South 43rd St. near his nest site. His severed wing was found 10 feet away. He was taken to the Wisconsin Humane Society for care, but because of the severity of his injuries, he was euthanized the following day.

Leopold and Raynie were together at the ADM site for 14 years. During his long and productive lifetime, Leopold fathered an impressive total of 42 young--34 with Raynie. Leopold was 16 years old, and Raynie is now 13.



The last photo I took of Leopold – May 8, 2008.

Wisconsin State Fair – Peregrine Falcon Exhibit

During the spring and summer, I worked with We Energies staff to develop a peregrine falcon exhibit for the Wisconsin State Fair. This exhibit included a nest box like the ones used at We Energies sites as well as descriptive photo panels covering peregrine life history facts. I provided the photos, text and proofed these materials as well as provided additional props for this exhibit.

Copies of the info panels developed for the fair are shown below.



Production at We Energies Peregrine Falcon Nest Sites 1997-2008

Year	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	Totals
<i>Site</i>													
Pleasant Prairie Power Plant	2	3	2	3	4	1	4	2	4	5	2	4	36
Oak Creek Power Plant		4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	1	2	4	37
Port Washington Generating Station				3	3	3	4	4	4	2	4	4	31
Milwaukee Valley Power Plant						4	4	3	2	4	0	0	17
Neenah, Minergy									2				2
Presque Isle Power Plant, MI													
Milwaukee County Power Plant													
Yearly and grand totals:	2	7	6	10	11	12	15	13	15	12	8	12	123

Thanks to the Following We Energies Employees for Their Continued Support and Much Appreciated Help Throughout the Year:

Irrisol Arce	Terry Hoffman	Kris McKinney	Annie Salmona
Tony Bernier	Bill Holton	Nathan McNeil	Rachel Sawicki
Mike Boyer	Mike Grisar	Barry McNulty	Sue Schenk-Drobny
Barb Cahak	Henry Gutmann	Bob Meidl	Mark Schultz
Bill Carlson	Jim Jeske	John Noegle	Rick Schubert
Tom Connolly	Beverly Jurkowski	Ray Numella	Steve Skibba
Noel Cutright	Dennis Keifer	Jack O'brien	Pat Stiff
Rose Dehli	Tim Kemen	Jacquelyn Peck	Liz Stueck-Mullane
Peter Dickinson	Mike Kowalski	Jim Petersen	Claire Twohey
Stece Durocher	Kris Krause	Joe Piette	Don Verbsky
Reuben El	Mike Krimmer	Trisha Rebek	Tom Ventimiglia
Joe Garcia	Greg Labonte	Bob Reske	Chuck Vincent
Dave Groshek	Dawn Lemke	Sherrie Richter	Steve Washkun
Dale Hauswirth	Brian Manthey	Tim Rozumalski	Bob Zahn
Doug Herzog	Tony Mariuzza	Karen Ryan	

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