

# We Energies Peregrine Falcon 2011 Nesting Season Report

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**Cover image:** *The adult female peregrine on the cover of this report was photographed at the Oak Creek Power Plant nest box on April 18, 2011. Her name is **Eclipse (b/g) 67/H**, produced in 2009 at the Rhodes State Office Tower in Columbus, Ohio. Although she nested unsuccessfully, it is hoped she will return and try again in 2012.*

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## 2011 nesting season overview

The year 2011 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of peregrine falcon recovery efforts in Wisconsin. Beginning in Milwaukee in 1987 with the first releases of captive-produced young, Wisconsin's peregrine population has steadily grown from the first nest in Milwaukee in 1988 to 32 nests throughout the state in 2011.

In 2011, a known total of 85 young were produced at 32 successful nest sites. Thirteen nests were located along the Lake Michigan shoreline, four along the Fox River, two along the Wisconsin River, one on the shore of Lake Superior, 10 along the Mississippi River (six on cliffs) (*source RRP*), and two inland at Madison and Jefferson.

Electric power plants continue to play a critical role for nesting peregrines in Wisconsin and throughout much of the upper Midwest. Since the Wisconsin peregrine falcon recovery program began in 1987, a known total of 959 peregrines were produced in the wild. Of these, 456 (48 percent) have been produced at power plants with a total of 155 produced at We Energies sites. The first successful peregrine nest at a We Energies site took place in 1997 when peregrines nested at Pleasant Prairie Power Plant. Following Pleasant Prairie, peregrines began nesting at Oak Creek Power Plant in 1998, Port Washington Power Plant in 2002, Valley Power Plant in 2005 and Presque Isle Power Plant in Michigan in 2011.

We Energies can be proud of its environmental commitment and continued support for peregrines. From funding the releases of captive-produced young early in the recovery program to building and installing nest boxes at its power plants, to continuing with the day-to-day management necessary to ensure suitable nest sites are available for peregrines, the company's commitment is exemplary. As a further commitment, We Energies also provides an educational website with live webcam links to nest boxes and downloadable nesting reports for the public.

I've been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work together with We Energies employees and management over many years, and it is always heartening to realize the very real interest they share in "their" falcons. Such "ownership" will help ensure a secure future for these magnificent birds.



## Pleasant Prairie Power Plant

### Three males produced!



**Adult female:** Thilmany (b/g) 44/N, here for her third year, was produced in 2007 at the Thilmany Mill in Kaukauna, Wis.

**Adult male:** Likely Dave (b/g) B/36

**Eggs:** 4 laid between April 4-12

**Projected hatch dates:** May 12-14

**Eggs hatched:** 3 between May 13-15

**Banded:** 3 males on June 6

**Site visits:** April 18, May 23, June 6, July 5

On May 23, the Kenosha News covered the nesting at this site.

This site has been active since 1997, producing a total of 45 young (3.0/year).

**Note:** On July 4, the remains of Zap (b/r) 63/R were found on site. Cause of death is unknown.

#### Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Reliable	Male	(b/r) 62/R	1126-14413
Zap	Male	(b/r) 63/R	1126-14414
Filament	Male	(b/r) 64/R	1126-14425

**GPS:** 42 degrees 32' 16 N, 87 degrees 54' 13



**Above left:** Three brothers back home after banding. **Above right:** Thilmany observes us returning her chicks to the nest box.

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## We Energies great horned owl nesting account

### Owl banding at Oak Creek Power Plant

For the fourth year now, great horned owls have nested at the Oak Creek Power Plant – this year producing three chicks.

On the morning of March 14, Eric Adsen noticed the female owl removing an eggshell, and by the end of the week, all three owlets had hatched.

As in past years, the owlets were banded at night to avoid any potential conflicts between the adult owls and the peregrines that occupied the nest box just a hundred yards or so to the south.

This year, the adult female owl was observed on the webcam, and visits made to the nest box after she left.

Once at the nest box, the youngsters were loaded into their air kennel and transported to the chem lab where a table was set up for banding.

The three male owlets were then weighed, measured for aging, and banded.



*The welcoming party in the nest box on the evening of April 11 when the owlets were banded at Oak Creek Power Plant.*





**Above:** From left, We Energies employees Eric Adsen, Rose Dehli and raptor biologist/bander Bill Stout prepare to return the owlets to their nest box.



**Right:** One of the owlets being weighed – waiting comfortably in the safety of a plastic bowl atop the scale.

**Below:** Three brothers.



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## Milwaukee Valley Power Plant

### Two egg clutches: one youngster

Webcam images revealed the first clutch of two eggs here disappearing on March 29 with the possibility that a second clutch of eggs was initiated on March 31. It is not known if a new female produced the second clutch or not, but on the same day the first clutch disappeared, a pair of adult falcons was recorded in courtship display inside the nest box, and a new scrape was made on the opposite end of the nest box.

Fox 6 News covered nesting at this site on April 29.

**Adult female: Maya (b/g) M/12**, was produced in 2006 at the WPS Weston Power Plant in Rothschild, Wis. Maya nested at Milwaukee's US Bank site in 2007 and 2008. This is her second year at VAPP.

**Adult male: Swede (b/g) P/Z**, produced at the WPS Green Bay Pulliam site in 1999 -- likely here for his sixth year.

**Eggs:** 2 laid between March 25-29 and lost  
3 laid between March 31-April 5

**Projected hatch dates:** May 11-13

**Eggs hatched:** 1 on May 11

**Banded:** 1 female on June 2

**Site visits:** April 19, 21, 29, June 2

This site has been active since 2002, producing a total of 22 young (2.2 young/year).



*Tesla after banding.*



*Maya observes.*

#### Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Tesla	Female	(b/r) 14/V	1907-02753

**GPS:** 43 degrees 02' N, 87 degrees 57' 49 W



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## Port Washington Generating Station

### New female from Indiana – two chicks produced

Indy Froona, the new female from Indiana, produced three eggs and hatched two, a male and a female on May 4. The adult male remains unidentified.

Nesting here was covered by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on May 11, and banding was covered by Fox 6 News, CBS-58 News, Ozaukee Press and Port Washington Patch.

**Adult female:** Indy Froona (b/g) \*V/Y, produced in 2009 at the Market Tower nest site in Indianapolis, Ind. This is her first year at PWGS.

**Adult male:** Not yet identified

**Eggs:** 3 laid between March 24-30

**Projected hatch dates:** May 3-5

**Eggs hatched:** 2 on May 4

**Banded:** 1 female and 1 male on May 27

**Site visits:** May 11, 27

This site has been active since 2000, producing a total of 40 young (3.3/year).



*Indy Froona.*



*Amara and Kilowatt.*

#### Banding data

Name	Sex	Project Band	USFWS Band
Amara	Female	(b/r) 07/V	1907-02746
Killowatt	Male	(b/r) 54/R	1126-14405

GPS: 43 Degrees 23' 01 N, 87 Degrees 52' 13 W



**We Energies Presque Isle Power Plant, Marquette, Mich.  
First successful nest!**



At long last, after nine years of patiently waiting, peregrines have successfully nested here for the first time, and two youngsters were produced. Banding was covered by TV6 Fox UP and Mining Journal.

**Adult female:** (b/g) \*P/\*S, produced in 2008 at Grand Haven L. and P., Sims Plant, Grand Haven, Mich.

**Adult male:** Unbanded

**Eggs:** 3 laid between April 21-26

**Projected hatch dates:** May 29-31

**Eggs hatched:** 2 on May 28

**Banded:** 1 female and 1 male on June 18

**Site visits:** June 18



**Above:** \*P/\*S making quick stop at nest box.

**Below:** Chicks back in nest box after banding.

**Banding data**

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Spirit	Female	(b/r) 25/V	1907-02764
Phoenix	Male	(b/r) 71/R	1126-14422

GPS: Lat. 46.57901, Long. 87.39538

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## Oak Creek Power Plant

### Unsuccessful nesting attempt



**Above left:** Scott.  
**Lower left:** The three eggs.  
**Upper right:** Eclipse.

The nest here likely failed because of interactions between the peregrines and the great horned owls. During daylight hours, the falcons regularly incubated, but they left their nest and their eggs untended at night when the owls (with young in their own nearby nest) were present and active. During daylight hours, the falcons ruled the roost here, but the owls were in charge at night. If the falcons continued to incubate at night, they would have been vulnerable to an attack inside their nest box by an adult owl. In such an attack, the owl would have been the victor.

The adults continued to attempt to incubate their remaining two eggs into July (one egg was broken and removed by the adults), but they never hatched. As far as a re-nest goes, this generally

happens when eggs are lost early in the nesting season. Since the eggs weren't lost and were still present, the falcons did not lay again.

To prevent this problem in the future, a nest box has been installed in the new chimney south of the plant. The falcons likely will locate the new box and use it at some point in the future – if the owls don't find it first!

As soon as the falcons locate the new nest box, the old nest boxes in the north plant will be closed off.

**Adult female: Eclipse (b/r) 67/H**, a 2009 falcon produced at Rhodes State Office Tower in Columbus, Ohio. This is her first year at OCPP.

**Adult male: Scott (b/g) M/Y**, here for his sixth year, was produced in 2000 at the Malteurop complex (*formerly Froedtert Malt complex*) in West Milwaukee, WI.

**Eggs:** 3 laid between April 15-18

**Projected hatch dates:** May 21-23

**Eggs hatched:** Nest failed

**Site visits:** April 11, 18

This site has been active since 1998, producing a total of 40 young (2.86/year).



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## Milwaukee County Power Plant

### A few visitors but no takers

Webcam images first showed a peregrine here March 4 and another was spotted March 29. On April 5, Chuck Vincent caught an image of an adult female in the nest box that was identified as **Jesse (b/g) K/77**, a falcon produced in 2008 at the Dairyland Power Coop in Genoa, Wis. On the same day, Kathy Fox was able to take a few images of this falcon as it perched in front of the nest box (at right). This same falcon was captured on the webcam here last year, but ended up nesting at Milwaukee's Mayfair Mall site.

When I visited the site again on April 11, I found an adult pair of peregrines "prospecting" possible nest ledges at the nearby Children's Hospital. I also saw an adult peregrine in the area on May 10.

Once again, it looks like MCPP is being passed by this year, but as you'll read in the following account for We Energies Presque Isle Power Plant – sometimes these things take time.

**Site visits:** March 11, April 4, 11, 20, May 10



*Peregrine perched in front of MCPP nest box April 5.*



*Webcam image of an adult female in nest box April 11.*

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## We Energies produced peregrines nesting in Wisconsin

**Verne (b/g) E/42** was produced at Oak Creek Power Plant in 2007. He is paired with **Frightful (b/g) P/15**, produced in 2007 at the King Plant in Bayport, Minn. The pair nested at the Madison Gas & Electric site in Madison, Wis., producing four young. This is the second year at this site for both falcons

**Polyo (b/g) E/65**, produced in 2008 at Port Washington Generating Station, paired with female **Jesse (b/g) K/77**, produced in 2008 at Dairyland Power Coop in Genoa, Wis. The pair nested at the Mayfair Mall North Tower site in Wauwatosa, Wis. They produced four eggs, all of which hatched. The four chicks were banded on June 18.

**Ian (b/g) 71/N**, a falcon produced at Port Washington Generating Station in 2004, paired again with **Nora (b/g) P/76**, produced in 2005 at the Graysolon Plaza in Duluth, Minn. The pair nested at the Thilmany Mill in Kaukauna, Wis., and produced one male chick that was banded on June 14. This was the fifth year for both falcons at this site.

**Beaster (b/g) 67/M**, a male produced in 2005 at Pleasant Prairie Power Plant, paired again with **(b/g) R/13**, a female produced in 2007 at the Tower Building in South Bend, Ind. The pair nested at the Racine County Courthouse, produced four eggs and hatched three. The two females and one male were banded on May 28. This was Beaster's third year at this site.

**Herbert (b/g) 80/N**, produced in 2004 at We Energies Valley Power Plant in Milwaukee, Wis., paired again with an unbanded female at Milwaukee's Miller Brewery site, producing two young.

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## We Energies produced peregrines nesting in other states

### Illinois

**Squawker (b/g) 48/M**, a male produced at Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in 2003 paired again with a female banded **(b/g) 64/D** produced at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 2004. They nested at the Evanston Library site and produced three young. This was Squawker's fifth year at this site.

**Amazon (b/g) R/38**, a female produced at Oak Creek Power Plant in 2008, paired again with male **(b/g) L/N**. The pair nested at Chicago's Pilson Park site, producing two young.

**Emily (b/g) 5/\*E**, a large male banded as a female that was produced in 2000 at Oak Creek Power Plant, nested with an unidentified female at the Metropolitan Correctional Center site in Chicago, Ill. On June 16, two immature birds were visible on the nest ledge.

## Ohio

**Jesse (b/g) 97/A**, a female produced in 2005 at Port Washington Generating Station, paired with a male named **Pinkie (b/g) 73/E**, produced in 2003 at the IPL Stout Plant in Indianapolis, Ind. The pair nested at the J. M. Stuart Power Plant in Aberdeen, Ohio, and produced three young.

## Indiana

**Shirley (b/g) N/36**, produced at Oak Creek Power Plant in 2007, was believed to be at the East Chicago, Inland Steel lime plant (Mittal Steel, Indiana Harbor East). Her former mate, 58/N, was found injured and subsequently euthanized. Also, the former lime nesting substrate had been removed and replaced with a nest box, but no nesting occurred.

## Minnesota

**Seapro (b/g) R/97**, a female produced at Port Washington Generating Station in 2009, paired with male **Brandon (b/g) W/31** produced in 2006 at Financial Center Xerxes and I-94 Bloomington, Minn. The pair nested at the Hwy 610 Bridge in the Twin Cities, Minn., producing two eggs that did not hatch.

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## We Energies produced peregrines injured/killed

**Zap (b/r) 63/R**, a male produced at Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in 2011, was found dead on site. No obvious broken bones or signs of injuries. The bands were removed, and very ripe carcass disposed.

**Tesla (b/r) 14/V**, a female produced at Valley Power Plant in 2011, was found dead on site on Aug. 14. The bands were removed, and carcass disposed.

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## Production at We Energies peregrine falcon nest sites 1997-2011

Year	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	Total
Site																
Pleasant Prairie Power Plant	2	3	2	3	4	1	4	2	5	5	2	4	1	4	4	46
Oak Creek Power Plant		4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	4	2	3		43
Port Washington Generating Station				3	3	3	4	4	4	2	4	4	3	4	2	40
Milwaukee Valley Power Plant						4	4	3	2	4	0	0	2	2	1	22
Neenah, Minergy									2							2
Presque Isle Power Plant, Mich.															2	2
Milwaukee County Power Plant																
<b>Yearly and grand totals:</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>155</b>

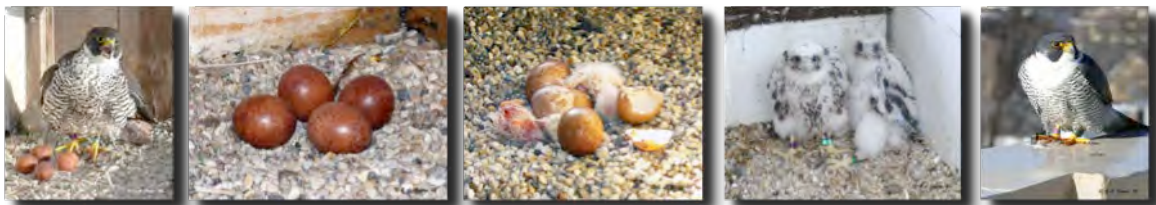


## Wisconsin nest site type and production 2011



Site type	N	% total	Site type	Young	% total
Power plants	11	34%	Power plants	30	35%
Buildings	13	41%	Buildings	35	41%
Elevators/silos	3	9%	Elevators/silos	8	9%
Paper mills	2	6%	Paper mills	6	7%
Banks	2	6%	Banks	5	6%
Courthouses	1	3%	Courthouses	4	5%
Breweries	0	0%	Breweries	0	0%
Universities	2	6%	Universities	6	7%
Hospitals	2	6%	Hospitals	5	6%
Office towers	1	3%	Office towers	1	1%
Sewage treatment	0	0%	Sewage treatment	0	0%
Natural cliffs	6	19%	Natural cliffs	15	18%
Bridges	1	3%	Bridges	3	4%
Ore docks	1	3%	Ore docks	2	2%
<b>Total nest sites</b>	<b>32</b>		<b>Total young</b>	<b>85</b>	

**Note:** Numbers of young represent known production. Percentages are rounded.



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**Thanks to the following We Energies employees for continued support and much appreciated help throughout the year**

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

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