

We Energies Peregrine Falcon 2012 Nesting Season Report

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

2012 nesting season overview

The total number of peregrines produced at We Energies power plants reached the 170 mark in 2012. For the record, 49 percent (501) of all peregrines produced in Wisconsin since 1992 have been produced at power plant nest sites. Of these, 34 percent (170) have been produced at We Energies sites. Once again, the role power plants have played in the recovery of peregrines is truly significant and quite remarkable.

This year also marked an increased effort to reach out to the community and provide educational opportunities for school groups and environmental organizations within the We Energies service area and, more specifically, in communities where We Energies power plants are located, prompting increased media coverage.

Beginning at the Pleasant Prairie Elementary School on March 15, I gave a peregrine presentation to their fifth-grade students. This was followed up later in the season on May 29 by a class field trip to the Pleasant Prairie Power Plant to attend the banding. The banding event was covered by the Kenosha News.

From there it was on to the Deerfield Elementary School in Oak Creek for a presentation to the fifth grade class. On May 10, a class field trip to the Oak Creek Power Plant observed the banding at this site. This event was covered by Fox 6 News "Real Milwaukee" and WISN.

In addition to school groups, a peregrine talk was given to the Cub Scouts at Rose Glen Elementary School in Waukesha on April 19. The Cub Scouts then attended the banding at Milwaukee's Valley Power Plant on May 17.

At the Port Washington Generating Station, I banded four youngsters on May 21, and this event was attended by a group from the Natural Resources Foundation.

Closing out the season, I banded two young at Presque Isle Power Plant in Marquette, Mich., where employees and their families attended. This was covered by TV 6, TV 10, The Mining Journal and WDET radio. A special note of recognition goes to Cathy Schulze at We Energies Media Relations for her efforts at organizing all the events and media coverage.

In addition to increased outreach efforts, work also got under way to replace the older webcams at We Energies nest sites. Pete Dickinson of We Energies IT department helped get new cabling installed, and we installed new pan/tilt/zoom webcams at nest boxes at Oak Creek (AQCS), Port Washington and Pleasant Prairie. In early 2013, new webcams will be installed at Milwaukee County Power Plant and the Presque Isle Power Plant.

Another first this year was the live streaming video from the nest box at the Pleasant Prairie Power Plant that was very well received. In 2013, we're looking at expanding both the outreach/educational efforts as well as adding live streaming video to a second We Energies nest site.

I again thank everyone at We Energies who have I have had the pleasure of working with over the past year but would like to give a special thanks to Senior Ecologist Mike Grisar for overseeing peregrine efforts and his continuing interest in this project.

We Energies can be proud of its environmental commitment and continued support for peregrine falcons. Without this long-term commitment and consistent effort to provide nest boxes at its power plants, peregrine falcon recovery in Wisconsin would not have succeeded to the degree it has today.

Pleasant Prairie Power Plant



Nesting details

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

Adult male: PBR (b/r) 07/B was produced at Milwaukee's Miller Brewery nest site in 2009. Interestingly, PBR is a son of Herbert (b/g) 80/N, who was produced in 2004 at We Energies' Valley Power Plant in Milwaukee.

Eggs: 4 laid between March 29 - April 5

Projected hatch dates: May 5 - 7

Eggs hatched: 3 between May 6 - 8

Banded: 3 males on May 29

Site visits: Jan. 6, 17, March 7, 15, April 18, May 29

This site has been active since 1997, producing a total of 48 young (3.0/year).



Thilmany observes return of chicks to nest box.



Three brothers back home after banding.

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Rico	M	(b/r) 94/R	1126-14445
Lightning	M	(b/r) 95/R	1126-14446
Sky	M	(b/r) 96/R	1126-14447

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

Oak Creek Power Plant



Nesting details

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

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

Eggs: 4 laid between March 26 - April 3

Projected hatch dates: May 3 - 5

Eggs hatched: 3 between May 4 – 6

Banded: 3 males on May 24

Site visits: Jan. 6, 17, April 17, May 8, 24, Oct. 30, Nov. 7

The nest boxes (3) at this site were cleaned and readied for the next nesting season on Nov. 7.

This site has been active since 1998, producing a total of 46 young (3.06/year).



Eclipse in her new nest box at ACQS.



Hawkeye, Lightning and Tony

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Hawkeye	Male	(b/r) 83/R	1126-14434
Lightning	Male	(b/r) 84/R	1126-14435
Tony	Male	(b/r) 85/R	1126-14436

GPS: 42 degrees 84' 20 N, 87 degrees 82' 83 W

Happy ending for trapped peregrine at Oak Creek

I spent a good part of Tuesday afternoon Oct. 30 at the Oak Creek Expansion attempting to “encourage” the adult peregrine trapped inside the Waste Water Building (WWB) to safely exit the premises. The situation was less than ideal in that there are several large open water vats in the building where the falcon could drown, and exit doors that were blocked from view from above where she would perch. She was in essence trapped and her options for escaping were limited.

It seemed the easiest way to get the falcon to exit the building was to leave all the doors open and hope for the best, but with fiberglass work under way inside, the doors, for the most part, had to remain closed. Trapping her was another option, but there were just too many ways things that could go wrong inside the building.

Looking at the situation realistically, I figured the only way to get this falcon back outside was to lure her down with a live pigeon. To that end, Erik Adsen and I scoured the upper elevations of the old OCPP north plant where pigeons had often been seen in the past. If we could catch one, we’d at least have a chance to lure the falcon to a lower level in the WWB. We found not one pigeon. It seems the peregrines at OCPP are doing a pretty darn good job of keeping the pigeon population at bay.

I then phoned Jim Kitzman, a falconer I know in Oak Creek. Most falconers keep some pigeons for training their hawks and Jim was no exception. Problem was, he had high-end racing pigeons and was leery about possibly losing one. In the end, he agreed to “loan” me a pigeon with the understanding I would do all I could to keep it alive. Agreed! I left the plant and drove to Jim’s home and picked up the pigeon. Jim had graciously attached soft leather anklets (jesses) and a creance to the pigeon so I would be able to let it flap its wings but yet retain control so it wouldn’t escape.

Returning to the plant, I took the pigeon into the WWB and searched for the peregrine, finding it again perched high near the ceiling. Beneath it was a grated landing between two large filtering units, so I headed up to this level where the falcon was then perched only 30 feet or so above me. The plan was to show her the pigeon and then gradually walk back down the stairs luring her to the



Eclipse perched near ceiling of wastewater treatment building.

ground level where I'd left some doors open for her. But this particular falcon was hungry and had more immediate plans. I'd no more than begun to show her the pigeon when, in an instant, she left her perch and dove straight down at me striking and binding to the pigeon that I still held in my right hand. It was a little exciting to say the least, and with my left hand free, I grabbed the peregrine and was able to get her to let go of the pigeon. So there I stood with an angry peregrine in one hand and a nerve-wracked pigeon in the other. Before things got entirely out of hand, I was able to put the pigeon back in a small cardboard box and wrap the falcon in a yellow rain coat that I found nearby.

The good news is that I was able to return to ground level and safely release the peregrine outside where she flew to the west and then south around the old OCPP north plant. Before setting her free, I checked her bands and as I'd suspected, it was Eclipse (b/r) 67/H. Eclipse was produced in 2009 at the Rhodes State Office Tower in Columbus, Ohio. She arrived at OCPP in 2011 and successfully nested this year in the new nest box inside the chimney at AQCS producing three young. Although Eclipse was a bit thin from her ordeal, she was strong and should pull through OK. Her mate also was present at OCPP, so I was confident she would get the food she needed soon.

And, the pigeon – well, aside from a little blood on its right wing – survived the harrowing experience pretty much unscathed, which in itself was amazing. Less than an hour after I picked it up, I had it safely back to Jim Kitzman who was quite surprised but very pleased I'd returned it alive.

Many thanks again to Dave Bernovich, Eric Adsen and Rose Dehli.

Milwaukee Valley Power Plant



Nesting details

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 third year at VAPP.

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

Eggs: 4 laid between March 16 - 23

Projected hatch dates: April 23 - 25

Eggs hatched: 3 between April 24 - 26

Banded: 1 female and 2 males on May 17

Site visits: April 27, May 8, 17, June 6, Nov. 6

The nest box was cleaned and readied for the next nesting season on Nov. 6.

This site has been active since 2002, producing a total of 25 young (2.27 young/year).



Maya



Brady, Rosie and Honor

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Rosie	Female	(b/r) 26/V	1907-02765
Brady	Male	(b/r) 73/R	1126-14423
Honor	Male	(b/r) 74/R	1126-14425

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

Port Washington Generating Station



Nesting details

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

Adult male: Ives (b/g) 78/N, produced in 2004 at the Edgewater Generating Station site in Sheboygan, Wis., likely present since 2007 when he was first identified here.

Eggs: 4 laid between March 22 - 29

Projected hatch dates: April 29 - May 2

Eggs hatched: 4, April 30 - May 2

Banded: 4 young on May 21

Site visits: Jan. 6, 10, April 27, May 21, Nov. 5

The nest box at this site was cleaned and readied for the next nesting season on Nov 5.

This site has been active since 2000, producing a total of 40 young (3.4/year).



Indy Froona



The four chicks on banding day.

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Edna	F	(b/r) 30/V	1907-02769
Patricia	F	(b/r) 31/V	1907-02770
Dr. J	M	(b/r) 78/R	1126-14429
Peeta	M	(b/r) 79/R	1126-14430

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

Presque Isle Power Plant, Marquette, Mich.



Nesting details

An adult male peregrine was first observed in the nest box on Feb. 21 and an adult pair was present on March 28.

Adult female: (b/g) *P/*S, produced in 2008 at Grand Haven L and P, Sims Plant, Grand Haven, Mich. – back for her second year.

Adult male: Unbanded

Eggs: 4 laid between April 7 - 16

Eggs hatched: 2, May 17 - 18

Banded: 2 males on June 9

Site visits: June 9

Banding was covered by TV6, TV10, and the Mining Journal.

The nest box at this site was cleaned and readied for the next nesting season on Dec. 5 by Greg LaBonte and Sue Schenk-Drobny.

This site has been active since 2011, producing a total of 4 young (2.0/year).



**P/*S at her nest.*



The two chicks shortly after banding.

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Felco	Male	(b/r) 36/P	1156-14766
Superman	Male	(b/r) 37/P	1156-14767

GPS: 46.57901N, 087.39538W

Milwaukee County Power Plant

Beginning in late March, we thought we would finally see nesting activity at this site, but in the end, it was another season of uncertainty with no eggs laid.

At least four different peregrines were here this spring, but those observed most often were an adult female identified as **Adah (b/r) 01/S**, produced in 2009 at Queen's Bluff along the Mississippi River in Minn., and an adult male named **Polyo (b/g) E/65**, produced in 2008 at Port Washington Generating Station.



Polyo at MCPP nest box on June 2.

In addition to regularly checking the webcam here and visiting this site seven times, I also checked the nearby Children's Hospital and Mayfair Mall Towers numerous times, since this was where Polyo nested in 2010 and 2011, but came up empty on all accounts. Interestingly, **DJ (b/r) 54/E**, the female that Polyo successfully nested with at the Mayfair site last year was found nesting at the St. Joseph's Hospital site this year where she and her mate produced two young.

My take on the sequence of events at MCPP this year was that after DJ moved on, Polyo spent all of his time trying to attract a new mate and did this at the Mayfair Mall Towers as well as at MCPP and Children's Hospital. In essence, he appeared to be showing prospective mates that he was ready and willing to nest at any of these sites. As late as June 19, I found Polyo and an adult female half-heartedly defending the south Mayfair Mall Tower, so it appears that although there wasn't a successful nest this season, a new female has remained with Polyo. If she sticks it out and stays with him, perhaps next year, I won't have to once again say – "maybe next year."

Site visits: April 5, 10, 18, May 2, 9, 30, June 19

News about We Energies produced peregrines

Patricia (b/r) 31/V, a female produced in 2012 at We Energies Port Washington Generating Station was trapped and released Sept. 17 at the Cedar Grove Ornithological Research Station (banding station), which is located on the Lake Michigan shoreline just south of Sheboygan, Wis.

We Energies produced peregrines nesting in Wisconsin

Verne (b/g) E/42, a male produced in 2007 at We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant, is paired with an unbanded adult female at the MG&E site in Madison, Wis. Four eggs were laid and four young produced. This is Verne's the third year at this site.

Polyo (b/g) E/65, a male produced in 2008 at We Energies Port Washington Generating Station, was identified at We Energies Milwaukee County Power Plant this season as well as at the Mayfair Mall Towers and Children's Hospital. He courted at least two different females, but no eggs were laid. Polyo nested at the Mayfair Mall site in 2010 and 2011.

Beaster (b/g) 67/M, a male produced in 2005 at We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant, is 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 and laid four eggs that produced three young.

Herbert (b/g) 80/N, a male produced in 2004 at We Energies Valley Power Plant in Milwaukee, Wis., was identified again at Milwaukee's Miller/Coors site on March 22. In April, he returned to Milwaukee's St. Joseph's Hospital site and paired with **DJ (b/r) 54/E**, a female produced in 2010 at the Edgewater Generating Station in Sheboygan, Wis., producing two young.

We Energies produced peregrines nesting outside Wisconsin

Illinois

Squawker (b/g) 48/M, a male produced at We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in 2003, is paired again with a female banded (b/g) 64/D. The pair is once again nesting at the Evanston Library site in Evanston, Ill., where they produced two young.

Minnesota

Seapro (b/g) R/97, a female produced at We Energies Port Washington Generating Station in 2009, paired with **Frisco (b/g) K/13**, a male produced in 2006 at the Lock and Dam 1 site in Minneapolis, Minn. The pair nested at the UMN campus site in Minneapolis, producing four young. Another female, (b/g) N/53, was identified at this site during egg laying, so the parentage of the four young is uncertain. Last year, Seapro nested at the Hwy 610 Bridge in the Twin Cities, Minn., producing two eggs that did not hatch.

Wisconsin nest site types and production 2012



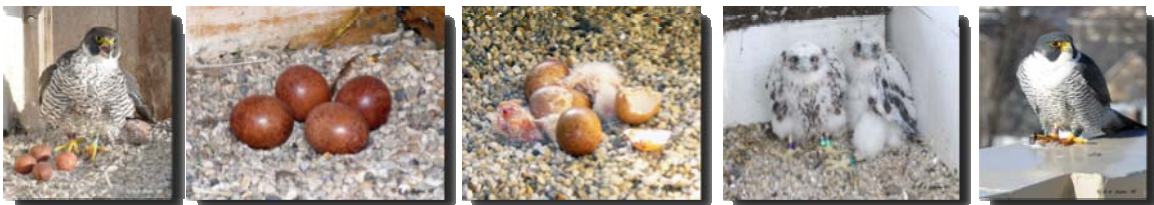
Nest sites

Site type	N	%
Power plants	12	44%
Buildings	11	41%
<i>Elevators/Silos</i>	3	11%
<i>Paper mills</i>	1	4%
<i>Banks</i>	1	4%
<i>Courthouses</i>	1	4%
<i>Breweries</i>	0	0%
<i>Universities</i>	2	7%
<i>Hospitals</i>	2	7%
<i>Office towers</i>	0	0%
<i>Sewage treatment</i>	1	4%
Natural cliffs	3	11%
Bridges	0	0%
Ore docks	1	4%
Total nest sites	27	

Production

Site type	Young	%
Power plants	41	49%
Buildings	29	37%
<i>Elevators/Silos</i>	7	8%
<i>Paper mills</i>	2	2%
<i>Banks</i>	2	2%
<i>Courthouses</i>	3	4%
<i>Breweries</i>	0	0%
<i>Universities</i>	6	7%
<i>Hospitals</i>	6	7%
<i>Office towers</i>	0	0%
<i>Sewage treatment</i>	3	7%
Natural cliffs	10	12%
Bridges	0	0%
Ore docks	3	4%
Total young	83	

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



Production at We Energies peregrine falcon nest sites 1997-2012

Year	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	Total
Site																	
Pleasant Prairie Power Plant	2	3	2	3	4	1	4	2	5	5	2	4	1	4	4	3	49
Oak Creek Power Plant		4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	4	2	3		3	46
Port Washington Generating Station				3	3	3	4	4	4	2	4	4	3	4	2	4	44
Milwaukee Valley Power Plant						4	4	3	2	4	0	0	2	2	1	3	25
Neenah, Minergy									2								2
Presque Isle Power Plant, Michigan															2	2	4
Milwaukee County Power Plant																	
Yearly and grand totals	2	7	6	10	11	12	15	13	16	13	8	12	8	13	9	15	170

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

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

For additional information on the peregrine falcon recovery program, contact:
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