

# Raptor Resource Project

## 2006 Annual Banding Report

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## **2006 Raptor Resource Project Banding Report**

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We wrote the Raptor Resource Project's 2006 Banding Report with two purposes in mind: firstly, to provide formal banding data for collection and study; and secondly, to share our observations of the falcons and their nests with our members and friends. I would like to thank the many people who helped us this year by identifying falcons, tracking hatch dates, emailing pictures and observations, and banding. You help make all of this work possible.

Each year we look forward to the return of the Gaboons to join us in banding on the lovely river cliffs. Although Jack and Connie Oar were not able to attend this season, Dan Berger, Charles Sindelar, Dave Seal, and Jack Oberg returned once again. Charlotte Roy Nielson from the University of Southern Illinois, who is surveying the southern Illinois Mississippi area to assess falcon restoration efforts for this region, joined us for the first time. Doug Wood, Veronica Brice, Dot Karlson, and Diane Gulbrandson all returned for another year.

Our climbing team this year was comprised of Bob Anderson, Dave Kester, Rob MacIntyre and Amy Ries. Every year several people are keen to join us rappelling on the cliffs. Later this summer we will host a climbing day and invite people to learn the techniques and equipment.

The total number of young produced this summer on Mississippi cliffs was down a little from last season. At Maassen's Bluff, the one-year old female laid a single egg that failed to hatch. At Leo's Bluff near Waukon Junction, IA, both of the adult falcons and their young mysteriously disappeared. When we rappelled down into the eyrie, we discovered one pipped egg and fragments from three other eggs that indicated a normal hatch. However, there were no eyass falcons or defending adults. We have searched all of the other cliffs in this area of the river on several occasions without finding either of the adult falcons. This is very strange and we are at a loss to explain what could have happened.

The adult falcons at the Lansing, IA power plant moved back to the nearby cliff this year, most probably due to a major construction project that took place near the stack. In past seasons, these falcons have lost their young around ten days of age to raccoons. On 5/17/06, a large contingency of volunteers met at this cliff to initiate efforts to repel raccoons from the ledge site. However, we were too late. When we rappelled down into the eyrie, we found one set of raccoon tracks and eggshell fragments. We have discussed installing a nest box on the cliff just above this ledge that the adult falcons favor.

Although it is disappointing to see these losses, it is rewarding to find many new cliffs with falcon activity. We now have 19 individual cliffs along the upper Mississippi cliff region that have attracted falcons in the last two years. Although no nesting took place at these locations, falcons were seen at Twin Bluffs, the Fountain City cliff, Gabe's cliff (Indian bluff), Goose Island, the Lock and Dam #9 cliff, and the Homer bluff.

In total, we banded 54 falcons at 18 sites this year, of which 10 were on cliffs. Utility smokestacks continue to provide an unlikely but important home for the peregrine population: several peregrine parents now nesting at utilities and on cliffs themselves fledged from utility nest boxes. Power plant nest boxes – and a lot of hard work – played a key role in returning the Peregrine falcon to the Big River just twenty-five years or so after the species seemed to be gone for good. We open this year's banding season on a sunny Monday morning in late May, at Dairyland Power's Genoa plant. We hope you enjoy reading our report.

## 2006 Productive Nest Sites

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### 5/22/06: Dairyland Power Cooperative | Genoa, WI |

#### Lat/Long

N 43 33 33 8  
W 091 13 57 4

#### Adult Data

Adult female: b/r U/W Scooter  
Adult male: b/g 21/H Rich

#### Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 young hatched  
First egg laid: 3/23/2006  
First hatch: 4/30/2006



Female: 1687-01670 P/91 Katie  
Female: 1687-01920 P/92 Vicky  
Female: 1687-01953 P/93 CV  
Male: 2206-69885 D/91 Bacon

#### Comments

Two adults were confirmed at this nest box on 2/28/06. Plant employees dubbed the male Rich. The sex of falcon P/92 was questionable. We banded her as a female.

Adult female Scooter has been nesting here since 1999. Gretch, one of her sons, is currently nesting at our Horizon Milling nest box in Lake City.

*Year falcons first nested here: 1998 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 30*

### 5/24/06: Alliant Energy Nelson Dewey Plant | Cassville, WI | Grant County

#### Lat/Long

N 42 43 20 6  
W091 00 33 0

#### Adult Data

Adult female: b/g ?4?/E  
Adult male: b/g G/V

#### Nesting Data

Female: 1807-91979 48/B Carol  
Female: 1807-91980 49/B Eliz  
Male: 2206-47685 22/M Mander



#### Comments:

Two adults were confirmed back at this nest box on 2/28/06. They laid their first egg on the same day as the Genoa power plant pair. On 3/1/06, three falcons were seen vying for the nest box.

*Year falcons first nested here: 2001 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 16*

## 5/25/06: Horizon Milling | Lake City, MN | Wabasha County



### Lat/Long

N 44 26 30 5

W092 16 18 0

### Adult Data

Adult female: b/g 29/A Lolo

Adult male: b/g K/U Gretch

### Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 young hatched

First egg laid: 3/25/2006

First hatch: 5/03/2006

Female: 1687-01941 M/50 Courtney

Female: 1687-01942 M/51 Rosie

Male: 2206-69886 D/55 Tim

Male: 2206-69887 D/56 Blaise

### Comments

Last year, adult female 29/A was found injured near the plant when her clutch of eggs were about halfway through incubation. She could fly just well enough to evade capture. When my contact at the plant, Roger Wilson, reported seeing her on the ground with green mutes stuck to her vent feathers, I ran some frozen quail up to the plant. Roger daily located the injured falcon and tossed her a quail. After about ten days, the falcon had garnered enough strength to make it back up to the box and continue incubation. However, with the male able to help slow heat loss but not apply heat, the eggs failed to hatch.

We were all very surprised when Lolo survived the winter and returned to this nest site. When we arrived at the plant to band the young falcons, the plant manager told us she was more aggressive than in past years. As soon as we emerged from the roof access door, she began to strafe us very aggressively. I grabbed her so we could hold her during the banding process. This prevented her from injury and made banding much easier, since we didn't need to constantly duck her stoops.

Gretch, the adult male, fledged from our Dairyland Power Genoa nest box in 2000. Lolo, a granddaughter of Mae, fledged from our Xcel Energy Highbridge nest box in 2001.

*Year falcons first nested here: 2002 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 15*

## 5/26/06: Xcel Energy Highbridge Plant | St. Paul, MN | Ramsey County

### Lat/Long

N 44 93 34 4  
W 093 10 93 0

### Adult Data

Adult female: b/g 01/D Athena  
Adult male: un-banded

### Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 young hatched  
First egg laid: 3/24/2006  
First hatch: 5/01/2006



Female:	1687-01720	85/C	Starshadow
Female:	1687-01721	86/C	Patao
Male:	2206-72214	25/M	Lucky
Male:	2206-72215	26/M	Yugi

### Comments

Since the stack at this plant will be razed in the next year or two, we have started searching for a replacement site.

*Year falcons first nested here: 2000 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 18*

## 5/31/06: Minnesota Power and Light | Cohasset, MN | Itasca County



### Lat/Long

N 47 15 35 8  
W 093 39 12 2

### Adult Data

Adult female at this plant appears to be unbanded and the male has a b/g band.

### Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 young hatched  
First egg laid: 3/31/2006  
First hatch: 5/08/2006

Female:	1687-01945	77/C	Falcon
Female:	1687-01946	78/C	Franklin
Female:	1687-01947	79/C	Spirit
Male:	2206-72097	C/95	Centuria

### Comments

Rob MacIntyre and Amy Ries banded young at this site on 6/01/2006 with the help of Minnesota Power employee Brian Borgman. The falcon nest box is mounted to a catwalk about 275' up the stack – unlike many of the electric utility sites we manage, banding here entails a long ladder climb!

A grade school class in Chisago Lakes, Minnesota, picked the falcons' names.

*Year falcons first nested here: 1993 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 44*

## 6/2/06: Xcel Energy SHERCO Plant | Becker, MN | Sherburne County

### Lat/Long

N 45 22 840

W 093 53 871

### Adult Data

Adult female: b/r W/A Seminoe

Adult male: could not read bands.

### Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 young hatched

Female: 1687-01954 M/52 Abbigail

Female: 1687-01955 M/54 Isabelle

Male: 2206-72087 09/N Lecx (Xcel backward)

Male: 2206-72088 10/N Freedom

### Comments

Dan Orr banded the young falcons at this site. Seminoe, the adult female, fledged from our Xcel Energy Prairie Island nest box in 1999. The 2006 females are named for the two conjoined twin girls that were recently separated. Freedom was named in honor of the soldiers serving overseas and the 4th of July.

*Year falcons first nested here: 1992 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 38*

## 6/3/06: Great Spirit Bluff | La Crescent, MN | Houston County

### Lat/Long

N 43 52 25 1

W 091 19 20 4

### Adult Data

Adult female: b/g 59/E Katrinka

Adult male b/g

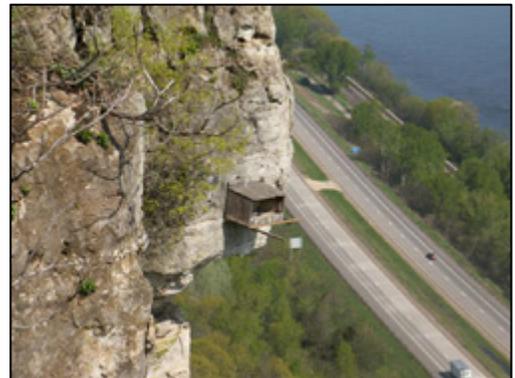
### Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 3 young hatched

Female: 1687-01722 87/C Cheryl

Male: 2206-72216 27/M Tom

Male: 2206-72217 28/M John



### Comments

In 2003, we installed a nest box on the vertical wall of this cliff to provide falcons a raccoon-free location in which to nest. They nested here for the first time in 2005. Bob Anderson confirmed two falcons defending this cliff on 3/23/2006. We were hoping to band the young falcons at this cliff with Dan Berger but, due to their early hatch date, we had to band them before he arrived.

Katrinka, the adult female, fledged from our Dairyland Power Alma nest box in 2003.

*Year falcons first nested here: 2005*

*Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 7*

## 6/3/06: Lynxville Cliff | Crawford County, WI

### Lat/Long

N 43 28 73 0  
W091 04 76 9

### Adult Data

Adult Female: b/g 51/E Jackie  
Adult Male: b/g 64/K Les

### Nesting Data

Female: 1687-01723 88/C Jerry  
Male: 2206-72218 29/M Dana

### Comments

The adult female at this nest site is a daughter of Gunner, one of our cliff- raised, cliff-hacked falcons who now nests at Maiden Rock. The adult male fledged from the Horizon Milling nest box in Lake City. This pair returned to the cliff they used in 2004.

This cliff is recorded as P5 in Dan Berger's notes of the historical nesting population in J. Hickey's book, Peregrine Falcon Populations. Young falcons were confirmed in 1952 and adult falcons present in 1953, 1954, and 1956.

*Year falcons first nested here: 2003 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 10*



## 6/6/06 Xcel Energy King Plant | Oak Park Heights, MN | Washington County

### Lat/Long

N 45 01 47 7  
W092 46 39 0

### Adult Data

Adult female: b/g W/E Belinda  
Adult male: b/r 0/\*L Doug

### Nesting Data

#### 5 eggs laid | 3 young hatched

Female: 1687-01749 83/C Tweeters  
Male: 2206-72096 C/96 Peanut  
Male: 2206 72095 C/97 Kiwi



### Comments

This site is part of a monitoring project to determine the health of the peregrine falcon population following delisting. Adult falcon W/E appeared to over-winter at this plant. Adult male Doug was confirmed on site on 2/19/06.

A grade school from Lake Elmo selected the chicks' names and came to see them banded. The class was very interested in and excited about 'their birds.'

*Year falcons first nested here: 1990*

*Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 41*

## 6/6/06: Xcel Energy Blackdog Plant | Eagan, MN | Dakota County

### Lat/Long

N 44 48 38 6  
W 093 15 07 8

### Adult Data

Adult female: b/r G/\*V Nora  
Adult male: b/g not read

### Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 eggs hatched | Two babies died  
Female: 1807-91986 84/C Sally  
Male: 2206-69890 D/96 AJ

### Comments

Like the King Plant, this site is part of a monitoring project to determine the health of the peregrine falcon population following delisting. Nora laid four eggs and four young hatched, but two disappeared from the nest box at roughly nine and fourteen days of age. Despite the web cam, we really don't know what happened. The weather wasn't bad and the babies don't appear to have been unduly stressed. We did look to see if Nora had stashed the dead chicks anywhere on the stack, but couldn't find them.

Bob Anderson, Rob MacIntyre, Amy Ries, and Blackdog plant worker Dan Meyers went up the stack to band the babies on 6/07. The adult female at this plant is a falcon named Nora. She is extremely aggressive, often flying through the ladder rungs to strike us. For her safety, we captured and held her during the banding process. The babies are named after Dan's children.

*Year falcons first nested here: 1993*

*Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 35*



## **6/7/06: Xcel Energy Prairie Island Plant | Goodhue County, MN**

### **Lat/Long**

N 44 37 27 0

W 092 37 53 2

### **Adult Data**

Adult female: b/r 7/1

Adult male: no bands read

### **Nesting Data**

Female: 1807-91987 P/94 Jaime

Male: 2206-69889 D/97 Jhill

Male: 2206-69888 D/98 McKeown

### **Comments**

JHill and McKeown had quite a bit to do with getting the original box up. Jaime was the name of a former security officer killed in Iraq.

The nest box at this site is mounted to a ledge on the containment dome. We are going to replace this nest box in the next few months and mount it on the very top of the dome to allow easier access for banding and to install a camera system.

*Year falcons first nested here: 1997 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 31*

## **6/12/06: Xcel Energy Monticello Plant | Wright County, MN**

### **Lat/Long**

N 45 19 98 0

W 093 50 84 8

### **Adult Data**

Adult female: b/r E/B Camilla

Adult male: bands not read

### **Nesting Data**

4 eggs laid | 1 egg hatched

Female: 1687-01956 M/55 O'Neil

Comments: Dan Orr carried out the banding at this nest. Three un-hatched eggs were found in the nest box along with the single eyas falcon.

*Year falcons first nested here: 1995 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 40*

## 6/12/06: Red Wing Grain Stack House | Red Wing, MN | Goodhue County

### Lat/Long

N 44 33 92 8

W 092 32 43 9

### Adult Data

Adult female b/r \*M/D Husker

Adult male: b/r \*3/\*2 Prescott

### Nesting Data

Female: 1807-91988 M/53 Raven

### Comments

The adult female at this plant is banded with male bands. We captured her during banding to make sure the bands weren't

too tight. Although the male bands were tighter than female bands would be, we were able to rotate them and there was no damage to her leg.



We tried to capture her using a plastic Great Horned Owl as a lure. She showed no interest in the owl whatsoever, preferring Dan Berger's helmet at every strike. Rob MacIntyre finally captured her when she was sitting on her perch.

Male Prescott is a son of Mae from the King Plant. Female Husker was a daughter of Zeus, released by the Raptor Resource Project in Rochester, New York. Zeus appeared at

the Woodmen Tower in Nebraska, becoming one of the first falcons to return to that state. Both father and daughter are truly wandering falcons.



*Year falcons first nested here: 2001 / Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 16*

## 6/12/06: Maiden Rock Cliff | Pepin County, WI

### Lat/Long

N 44 30 10 5

W 092 17 28 1

### Adult Data

Adult female: b/g

Adult male: b/g D/E Gunnar

### Nesting Data

Female: 1687-01724 89/C Fran

Female: 1687-01725 90/C Naj

### Comments

On March 23, while conducting a survey of the river cliffs, Bob Anderson witnessed quite a show here. He spotted two falcons. While he was trying to focus in on the female's legs, a second male showed up and began copulation. All three falcons took to the air, and one of the males (probably Gunnar, the resident male) chased the other off. Anderson noted, *"I think it is worth pointing out that very little serious aggression took place during this spat. I have noticed that we don't see fights to the death on the cliffs like we've witnessed at nest boxes. Does the single nest box increase territorial aggression because only a single nest box is available instead of a large cliff wall with multiple ledges?"*

The West Wisconsin Land Trust purchased this grand matriarch of river cliffs in 2004. Once again, several members of the Trust joined us for the banding event. Adult male Gunnar is a falcon that we bred in captivity, raised in an artificial rock eyrie, and released at our Effigy Mounds hack site in 1999. One of Gunnar's daughters now nests at the Lynxville Cliff.

Dan Berger, who was present for banding this year, recorded the last pair present on this cliff in 1954.

The story of the Effigy Mounds release can be read at our site –

Slideshow: <http://www.raptorresource.org/slide/slide1.htm>

1998 hack site report: <http://www.raptorresource.org/pdf/98hackreport.pdf>

1999 hack site report: <http://www.raptorresource.org/pdf/99hackreport.pdf>

*Year falcons first nested here: 2001 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 16*



## 6/13/06: Dairyland Power Cooperative | Alma, WI | Buffalo County

### Lat/Long

N 44 18 52 1  
W 091 54 61 3

### Adult Data

Adult female: R/A  
Adult male: Mark 23/M

### Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 young hatched

First egg laid: 4/09/2006

First hatch: 5/18/2006

Female:	1687-01726	P/11	Peggy
Male:	2206-72219	30/M	Sam
Male:	2206-72220	31/M	Kyle
Male:	2206-72221	32/M	Apts



### Comments

Last year, the falcons here left the power plant nest box they'd used since 1997 for a ledge on nearby 12-Mile bluff. Unfortunately, raccoons had access to the ledge and the site failed. This year, the falcons courted up near the nest box on the stack and on the nearby cliff. We thought they were going to nest on a protected ledge, but they surprised us by laying their eggs in the nest box instead. It will be interesting to see where they decide to nest next year.

*Year falcons first nested here: 1997 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 36*

## 6/14/06: Castle Rock cliff | Trempealeau County, WI

### Lat/Long

N 44 04 73 3  
W091 33 53 2

### Adult Data

Adult female: un-banded | Adult male:

### Nesting Data

Female:	1687-01727	91/C	Rebecca
Female:	1687-01728	92/C	Dasher
Female:	1687-01729	93/C	Nuit

### Comments

This privately owned Wisconsin cliff is a mile upstream across the river from Winona, Minnesota. The only way to access the top of the cliff is a long upward hike on the back side. The climb is grueling, but the view is stunning.

Bob Anderson confirmed two falcons back at this cliff on 03/23/06, when he witnessed them strafe an immature bald eagle. The babies were quite close to 40 days when we banded them. Bob Anderson, Dave Kester, and Rob MacIntyre used a screen in front of the nest box to assure that the babies couldn't jump. This worked very well, although one of the babies made a determined effort to run from the box when Rob removed it for banding, thereby earning the name Dasher.

*Year falcons first nested here: 2002 | Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 17*



## 6/15/06: US Bank Building | La Crosse, WI | La Crosse County

### Lat/Long

N 43 48 81 0

W 091 15 18 8

### Adult Data

Adult female: 43/C

Adult male: 40/N

### Nesting Data

Female: 1687-010730 94/C Jenna

Female: 1687-010731 95/C Pattie

Male: 2206-47688 D/92 Roger

### Comments

Falcons were confirmed in the LAX area in both late summer of 2004 and 2005, so we constructed a new nest box and painted it to match the building. Fred Leshar confirmed falcons here this spring on 3/23/2006. This is the first successful nesting of falcons in the LAX area for a very long time. There was a great deal of interest in this site and the banding was very well-attended.

Veronica Brice, who joined us for banding last year, received a few scratches while helping here. Male Lucas fledged in 2004 from our Dairyland Power Alma nest box.

*Year falcons first nested here: 2006 / Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 3*



## 6/16/06: Greysolon Plaza | Duluth, MN | St. Louis County

### Lat/Long

N 46 47 39 0

W 092 05 70 5

### Adult Data

Adult female was un-banded as in past years. When Rob MacIntyre and Amy Ries checked the nest box on 5/31/06, Rob was able to capture and band the adult female. She is:

1687-01748 82/C Amy

The adult male is un-banded.

### Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 young hatched

Female: 1687-01732 P/12 Carly

Female: 1687-01733 P/13 Kari

Male: 2206-72024 C/87 Kekek

Male: 2206-72023 D/99 Dudley



### Comments

This nest box, located roughly eight feet from the top of the Duluth Hotel in downtown Duluth, has many followers. Julie O'Conner from Hawk Ridge, her daughter Carly, Laura Erickson from binoculars.com, property managers Ed and Miriam, and reporters from the Duluth Superior newspaper all attended the banding. Employees of the nearby Fond-Du-Luth casino, who have avidly followed the peregrines throughout the season, also watched it via binoculars.

Hawk Ridge has a program called Peregrine Watch. Julie has a scope set up down on the lake walk, which she uses to educate the public about falcons. We will be replacing the old nest box and installing a camera system later on this year.



Falcon Carly is named after Julie's daughter. Kelly Boedigheimer, an employee of the Fond-Du-Luth casino, named falcon Kekek – the Ojibwe word for bird of prey.

*Year falcons first nested here: 2003*

*Total chicks fledged from this location (2006): 10*

## **Non-Productive Nest Sites and Unusual Incidents**

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### **Xcel Energy Riverside | Minneapolis, MN | Hennepin County**

For the third year in a row, a falcon named Speedy who fledged from the Xcel Energy King Plant in 2003 was confirmed here before an unbanded adult female displaced her. The unbanded female goes through courtship activity, but does not lay eggs. This is very frustrating to those of us who would like to see Riverside productive again!



Riverside has had a great deal of fighting for ownership over the years, resulting in injured and killed falcons on site. This spring, three females and three males were confirmed here. On 4/16/05, a banded one-year old female was seen in the nest box. On 4/12/06 an adult male, 76/P, was seen in the box. On 3/13/06 an adult male, D/32, was confirmed in the nest box. The photo shows a fight between Speedy and the resident unbanded female, which took place on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The resident male is a falcon named Malik 5/\*9.

### **West Bluff | Pepin County, WI**

This is a historic cliff nest site that last year was productive for the first time in many years. However, this spring no adult falcons were confirmed on site. We are hoping this was just an anomaly and that future years will find falcons back on this historic cliff.

### **Homer Cliff | Winona County, MN**

In 2005, we confirmed an adult female on this cliff throughout the summer. We were all anxious to see whether she would return and attract a mate. However, no falcons were seen until mid-April. On one of my river trips, I was most surprised to find two falcons defending the cliff face. When a third falcon entered the territory, it was driven away.

During the cliff banding period, we stopped by at every opportunity. There was still an adult un-banded male defending the cliff face in mid-June. We can only hope that cliff P4 will come on line in 2007.

### **Lock and Dam #9 | Lynxville, WI | Crawford County**

This cliff is just downstream from the town of Lynxville, WI. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Neil Rettig reported a falcon chasing a Bald Eagle away from the cliff face. As soon as I got the call, I set off to this cliff and was most surprised to find a one-year old female paired with an unbanded adult male. Both of these falcons could be found here until the end of June. We are all anxious to see if the falcons return to this new Wisconsin cliff site in 2007.

### **Leo's Bluff | Waukon Junction | IA Allamakee County**

Falcons returned to this cliff for the third time this year. Both adults were the same birds that nested in previous years. The falcons used the same cliff as in 2005 but moved to a new ledge, where they laid eggs and hatched young. The ledge the falcons had selected appeared to be safe from mammalian predation.

On May 17<sup>th</sup>, a group of us met to rappel down and check the eyrie. We discovered eggshell fragments and one unhatched egg. We could tell from the break up of the shells that a normal hatch occurred, and the remaining intact egg was pipped but dead. It was very strange that neither of the adult falcons could be located on this cliff or any of the nearby cliffs. It appears that something happened to both adults along with their young.

### **Power Plant and Cliff | Lansing, IA | Allamakee County**

Two adult falcons were confirmed early in the season defending the stack nest box. However, it appears that some construction taking place near the stack early this season forced the falcons back to the cliff where they failed to fledge young in previous seasons. On May 17<sup>th</sup>, a group of us met at this cliff to carry out some raccoon repelling efforts. We were very disappointed to discover that raccoons had already beaten us to the eggs. We believe that the adults will likely move back to the stack nest box but may mount a second nest box on a cliff ledge to which the pair has shown a strong liking. This will keep the nest safe from raccoons.

### **Cargill Stack House | McGregor, IA | Allamakee County**

We mounted a nest box at this stack house several years ago. It immediately attracted a lone sub-adult male that hung around for a few weeks. However, it has failed to attract a nesting pair. We find this most interesting as the stack house nest box is very similar to the Red Wing Grain stack house in Red Wing, MN and the Horizon Milling stack house in Lake City, MN. Those two have housed nesting falcons for years. Why does this one sit empty?

### **Twin Bluffs | Nelson, WI | Buffalo County**

During our river surveys this spring, we would more often than not find one or two falcons defending this lovely cliff. The owners of this cliff are anxious to have falcons back nesting on these rocks. They reported seeing one falcon on 6/23/06. Will 2007 be the year?



## **Fountain City Cliff | Fountain City, WI | Buffalo County**

Doug Wood lives down below this cliff and has been keeping a close eye on the falcons here. Earlier this spring, he witnessed two falcons defending the nest box we installed high on the cliff wall last summer. Unfortunately, there was no sign of nesting when we rappelled down to check the eyrie on 6/14/06. Maybe next year.

## **Maassen's Bluff | Buffalo County, Wisconsin**

This cliff site came online in 2001. In 2003, we added pea gravel to the eyrie to improve it. In 2004, the falcons chose a different spot and hatched only one baby. In 2005, they returned to their eyrie and hatched three babies. We thought they would be successful yet again, but found only an addled egg when we rappelled down to collect and band babies on June 13<sup>th</sup>. An adult male and sub-adult female were on site defending their territory, so we expect this site will be successful next year.



Falcons were also spotted at the Alma Marina cliff, the Goose Island cliff, and Indian bluff (aka Gabe's cliff) near Fountain City, WI. We will be watching all of these sites very closely next spring. We are pleased with our years-long contribution to returning the Peregrine falcon to the Midwest. Our captive breeding efforts produced the first falcon and many other falcons to breed successfully in the wild in the mid-west, after an absence spanning decades.

The Raptor Resource Project pioneered the unique falcon power plant program that now accounts for a large percent of the nesting population in the central United States. Our Effigy Mounds cliff releases, supported by the Iowa DNR, created the first falcons to successfully fledge young on the historic Mississippi River bluffs. Although we are disappointed at the loss of some cliff sites this year, the amount of falcon activity in southeastern Iowa and Southwestern Wisconsin is staggering when we consider that the first falcons returned to the cliffs here just six years ago.

Bob Anderson would like to point out that he personally logged over 5,000 miles surveying and banding the river falcons. Other members of the Raptor Resource Project logged a collective 5,000 miles doing the same. In addition to fuel, we've spent countless hours standing behind telescopes, building nest boxes, and providing free technical support to others involved in peregrine falcon and raptor recovery. Our conservation contribution is quite substantial!

Hope springs eternal. We'll see you next year.

Robert Anderson  
Director, Raptor Resource Project

## Web-Based Resources

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A number of people put together falcon photo albums or blogs this year. Following are some links. More will be posted at our website.

- [Nora's King Plant Slideshow](#)
- [Dot's Photo Album](#)  
(includes Maiden Rock, Castle Rock, Maassen's Bluff, the Alma plant, and LAX)
- [Veronica's Photo Album](#)  
(includes Maiden Rock, Castle Rock, Maassen's Bluff, the Alma plant, and LAX)
- [Laura Erickson's Blog](#) (Duluth)
- [Raptor Resource Project's Banding Blog](#)  
(includes photos and text about banding)
- [Diane's Maiden Rock Photos](#)
- [Michael's Duluth Peregrine Photos](#)

Many, many pictures may also be viewed in our forum

- [Raptor Resource Project Forum](#)