

Raptor Resource Project 2007 Annual Banding Report

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2007 Raptor Resource Project Banding Report

2007 was an amazing year for bluff-nesting falcons along the upper Mississippi River. For the first time, we banded more young falcons on bluffs than power plants. Falcons returned to West Bluff following last year's absence and nested at three new bluff sites: the Homer Bluff in Homer, MN, the Lock and Dam 9 Bluff near Lynxville, WI, and 12-Mile Bluff in Alma, WI. In all, we counted 28 babies on ten bluffs, 20 babies on seven power stacks, and 18 babies on 5 structures.

Although power plant and structure nestboxes continue to provide a home for nesting peregrines, their success is almost completely dependent on building and plant owners, workers, schedules, and regulations. This was brought home to us once again at the Hibbard power plant in Duluth, Minnesota. Most power plants can determine their own shut down periods, but Hibbard, which supplies a nearby paper company with electricity, can only shut down and carry out stack inspections when the paper company shuts down. This year, that occurred during egg-laying. The strafing falcon is causing the company to look at re-locating the nest box. Lightning destroyed the nest at Sherco, we were unable to band at Monticello due to safety regulations, Prairie Island becomes more difficult to access with each passing year, the Xcel Energy High Bridge and Riverside stacks are coming down as the plants convert from coal to natural gas, and the LaCrosse peregrines require a great deal of volunteer effort to ensure their continued welcome in the city of LaCrosse. When peregrines first began nesting on city buildings, bridges, and smokestacks, they were still highly endangered. Any nest was better than no nest. However, urban nests have a very serious downside – they will exist only as long as people want them, building and factory schedules and regulations allow them, and structures remain standing.

Should falcons lose a nesting site, they may not respond by simply adopting another available site. For years, urban-nesting falcons engaged in deadly territorial battles over nestboxes, buildings and trays, confounding those who expected them to cross over to the cliffs. We believe that our Effigy Mounds releases in 1998 and 1999 led the way for the long-anticipated crossover that began in 2000. Urban-nesting birds did not respond to a shortage of available housing, but rather to the presence of Effigy Mounds birds on regional bluffs. The cliff-imprinted birds we released at Effigy Mounds drew in the urban population. Peregrines attract peregrines.

Given the uncertainty of long-term nest site availability on man-made structures, we believe it is important to focus on supporting and increasing the cliff-nesting peregrine population. This might include removing babies from urban sites and reintroducing them from bluffs and improving cliff eyeries by adding substrate, removing loose rock and, where possible, securing them against raccoons. The peregrine falcon was removed from the endangered species list in 1999, but still remains endangered or threatened in many states. Our conservation work will continue.

We wrote the Raptor Resource Project's 2007 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 humping heavy and awkward gear to the tops of the cliffs, identifying falcons, tracking hatch dates, emailing pictures and observations, and helping with banding. As falcons proliferate up and down the river, we need more eyes looking for new sites and watching existing ones. You are a crucial part of what we do.

Each year we look forward to the return of the Gaboons to join us in banding on the lovely river cliffs. This year, we were joined by Gaboons Dan Berger and Charles Sindelar. Dan banded the young falcons on Homer Bluff, a spot he last banded in 1952, right before the Peregrine falcon disappeared from the Mississippi River valley. We also welcomed back Dot Karlson, Doug Wood, Gary Grunwald, Tim Jacobsen, Brett Mandernack, and Maggie Jones. Sara Wakamiya, a graduate student of Charlotte Roy Nielson at the University of Southern Illinois, joined us for the first time, as did Joan Schnabel, who volunteers at the National Eagle Center in Wabasha, MN, and Michael Garcia, a falconer and photographer from Illinois.

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.

In total, we counted 66 falcons at 23 sites this year, of which 10 were cliff sites. We were not able to band the young falcons at Castle Rock or Lynxville because they were too old. Falcons were seen on the Trempealeau Bluff, the Fountain City Bluff, Twin Bluff in Nelson, WI, and on a bluff on Highway 26 north of Lansing, Iowa. We will be watching those sites closely next year!

Although we plan to concentrate on supporting and expanding the cliff-nesting peregrine falcon population, we need to recognize the role our utility partners played in returning the falcon to the Mississippi River. We pioneered the peregrine-utility program twenty years ago. It has resulted in hundreds of young falcons fledging in the mid-west. Power plant nestboxes – and a lot of hard work – played a key role in returning the Peregrine falcon to the Big River. Xcel Energy, Dairyland Power, Alliant, and other utility companies could have refused to help. Instead, they stepped up and made a real difference. The peregrine-utility program is very important to us and we intend to continue supporting it.

Once again, we open this year's banding season on a bright, sunny day in late May at Dairyland Power's Genoa plant. We hope you enjoy reading our report.

5/25/07: Dairyland Power Cooperative | Genoa, WI |

Lat/Long

N 43 33' 33.8"

W 091 13' 56.3"

Adult Data

Adult female: b/r U/W Scooter

Adult male: b/g 21/H

Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 3 young hatched

First egg laid: 3/25/2007

First hatch: 5/3/2007

Female: 1687-01734 P/14 Rebekah

Male: 2206-72025 C/88 Foss

Male: 2206-72026 C/89 JT

Comments

No comments.

Year falcons first nested here: 1998 / Total young fledged from this location (2007): 33



5/30/07: Minnesota Power and Light | Cohasset, MN | Itasca County

Lat/Long

N 47 15' 35.8"

W 093 39' 11.4"

Adult Data

Adult female: unbanded

Adult male: b/g band number unknown

Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 2 young hatched

First egg laid: unknown, since the camera failed. All eggs were laid by 4/10/2007.

First hatch: 5/06/2007

Male: 2206-72027 C/90 Box

Male: 2206-72028 C/91 Retro

Comments

Bob Anderson and Amy Ries banded young at this site on 6/01/2006 with the help of two Minnesota Power employees. It was so foggy that we could not see the stack, which is usually visible from the highway, until we were almost underneath it. The falcon nestbox 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!

Year falcons first nested here: 1993 / Total young fledged from this location (2007): 46



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

Lat/Long

N 46 47' 23.0"

W 092 05' 43.0"

Adult Data

Adult female: b/g 82/C Amy

Adult male: un-banded

Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 young hatched

Female: 1687-01735 96/C Kelly

Female: 1687-01736 97/C Julie

Female: 1687-01737 98/C Sarah

Male: 2206-72029 C/92 Jimbo



Comments

Last fall, we replaced the old nestbox with a new one, which is located roughly eight feet from the top of the Duluth Hotel in downtown Duluth. According to Julie O'Conner, adult female Amy likely overwintered here. These falcons have many followers thanks to the hard work of Julie and everyone else at Hawk Ridge. Julie has a scope set up down on the Lake Walk, which she uses to educate the public about falcons. She also gives presentations and regularly publishes falcon updates online.

This year, we were accompanied by Julie, her daughter Carly, Kelly Boedigheimer from Fond-du-Lac, former property managers Ed and Miriam, Duluth photographer Michael Furtman, Rob MacIntyre's friend 'Third', whose actual name escapes me, and Jim, a building resident. Despite the intermittent rain, pea-fog soup, and Amy's theft of Bob's cap, we successfully banded four healthy young. The babies were roughly 16 days old.



Falcon Kelly was named after Boedigheimer, an employee of the Fond-Du-Luth casino and Fond-du-Lac tribal member. Julie was named after Julie O'Conner, Sarah was named after Ed and Miriam's granddaughter, and Jimbo was named after Jim.

Regrettably, falcon Kelly was found dead on Michigan Street on July 24, 2007.

Year falcons first nested here: 2003

Total young fledged from this location (2007): 14

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/1/07 Xcel Energy King Plant | Oak Park Heights, MN | Washington County

Lat/Long

N 45 01' 47.8"

W092 46' 38.1"

Adult Data

Adult female: b/g W/E Belinda

Adult male: b/r 0/*L Doug

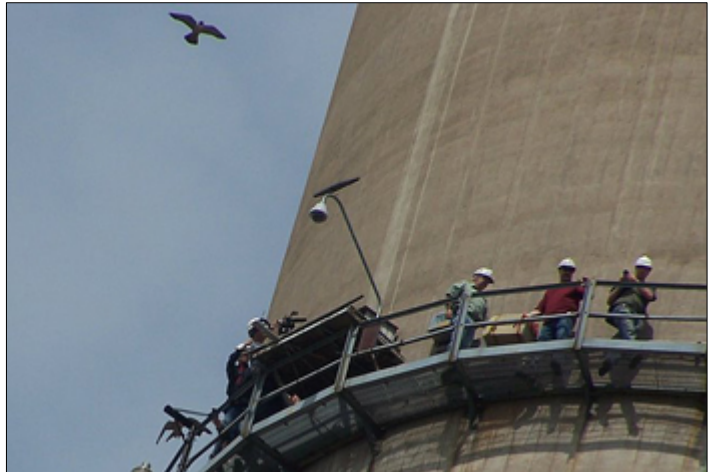
Nesting Data

5 eggs laid | 4 young hatched

First egg laid: 3/26/2007

First hatch: 5/7/2007

Female:	1687-01738	99/C	May
Female:	1687-01739	P/15	Frightful
Female:	1687-01740	P/16	Lightning
Male:	2206-72030	34/M	Croix



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 in early spring. It was a busy year for the nest site – in addition to major construction work occurring at the power plant, Project member Amy Ries collected video footage for Animal Planet's *SpringWatch* program. She collected the footage from a recorder inside the plant, so she did not need to go near the nestbox.



A second grade class from Anderson Elementary School selected the names and came to see the young banded. Teacher Ms. Hild did a wonderful job preparing the students, who were very excited about 'their birds.' May was named after the plant's first resident falcon and Frightful was named after Frightful the falcon from the book *My Side of The Mountain*.

Year falcons first nested here: 1990

Total young fledged from this location (2007): 45

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/01/07: 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: 3/23/2007

First hatch: 4/30/2007

Female: 1687-01741 P/17 Amy

Male: 2206-72089 11/N Mac

Male: 2206-72090 12/N Cody

Male: 2206-72091 13/N Rex



Comments

It was hot and pouring rain when we arrived in Lake City. Since the young falcons were 31 days old, Bob brought a board to block the nestbox opening, which prevented them from jumping. However, they had to be very carefully removed from and put back into the nestbox to assure their safety. This gave an irate Lolo the chance to nail Bob's arm, resulting in a quite a bit of blood. The plant manager warned us last year that she had become more aggressive. He wasn't kidding!

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

Falcon 12/N (Cody) was found dead at the plant on 7/11/07

Year falcons first nested here: 2002 / Total young fledged from this location (2007): 19

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/2/07: Leo's Bluff | Waukon Junction | IA Allamakee County

Lat/Long

N 43 10' 02.9"

W091 10' 39.7"

Adult Data

Adult female: b/g 66/A

Adult male: unbanded

Nesting Data

2 young hatched

Female: 1687-01742 P/18 Aly

Male: 2206-47689 D/93 Chance

Last year, the falcons hatched one egg successfully, but the entire family mysteriously disappeared in mid-May. This year, the nest was successful.



The adult female hatched in 2005 from a nest in St. Louis, MO.

Year falcons first nested here: 2004 | Total young fledged from this location (2007): 4

6/4/07: Alliant Energy Nelson Dewey Plant | Cassville, WI | Grant County

Lat/Long

N 42 43' 22.6"

W091 00' 29.6"

Adult Data

Adults unknown

Nesting Data

Male: 2206-72092 33/M Dream

Male: 2206-72093 D/00 Pumpkin

Female: 1687-01743 P/16 Nicole

Comments:

Year falcons first nested here: 2001 | Total young fledged from this location (2007): 19

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/5/07: Xcel Energy Prairie Island Plant | Mdewakanton Dakota Indian Nation | Goodhue County

Lat/Long

N 44 37' 17.6"

W 092 37' 58.2"

Adult Data

Adult female: b/r 7/1

Adult male: could not read bands.

Nesting Data

2 young hatched

Male: 2206-72222 D/94 Marcus

Male: 2206-72223 D/95 Franklin

Comments

Adult female 7/1 fledged from the Montgomery Wards building in 1993, the last year it stood. At 14 years of age, she is the oldest female at any of our sites. Babies Marcus and Franklin were named after two plant workers.

Year falcons first nested here: 1997 | Total young fledged from this location (2007): 33



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: unbanded

Nesting Data

Female: 1687-02038 K/50 Freya

Female: 1687-02039 K/51 Oriana

Comments

Female Husker, fledged from the Woodman Tower in Nebraska, is a daughter of Zeus, released by the Raptor Resource Project in Rochester, New York. She has a reputation for fiercely defending her nest – something she proved once again, although she didn't hit anybody this year. The unbanded male replaces Prescott, who was a son of Mae.



We installed a camera here that should be operational by spring of 2008.

Year falcons first nested here: 2001 | Total young fledged from this location (2007): 18

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/6/07: US Bank Building | La Crosse, WI | La Crosse County

Lat/Long

N 43 48' 48.6"

W 091 15' 10.0"

Adult Data

Adult female: b/g 43/C

Adult male: b/g C/80

Nesting Data

Female: 1687-02040 K/52 Dixie

Female: 1687-02011 K/53 Emma

Male: 2206-47690 D/56 Davis

Comments

Female 43/C nested here last year: new male C/80 is Burt, a 2005 hatch from Castle Rock, WI. He replaced Luke, who fledged from Dairyland Alma in 2004.

Once again, there was a great deal of interest in this site and the banding was well-attended.



Year falcons first nested here: 2006 / Total young fledged from this location (2007): 6

6/8/07: Xcel Energy Blackdog Plant | Eagan, MN | Dakota County

Lat/Long

N 44 48' 38.8"

W093 14' 57.3"

Adult Data

Adult female: b/r G/*V Nora

Adult male: b/g not read

Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 3 young hatched

First egg laid: unknown – camera was down

First hatch: 5/17/2007

Female: 1687-01999 M/57 Nora

Female: 1687-01998 M/56 Dot

Male: 2206-72224 D/58 Meyer



Comments

Like the King Plant, this site is part of a monitoring project to determine the health of the peregrine falcon population following delisting. Both falcons spent the winter here.

Bob Anderson, Rob MacIntyre, and Amy Ries went up the stack to band the babies. This site has a 300' elevator ride, followed by a 300' climb. The adult female at this plant is a falcon named Nora.

2007 Productive Nest Sites

She is extremely aggressive, often flying through the ladder rungs to strike us. We bring the babies inside the stack to band them for their safety, Nora's safety, and our safety! We captured and held her last year, but were unable to do so this year.



While Bob and Amy banded the babies, Rob worked on fixing the camera.

Year falcons first nested here: 1993

Total young fledged from this location (2007): 38

6/8/07: Great River Energy Plant | Elk River, MN | Sherburne County

Lat/Long

N 45 17' 46.4"

W093 33' 28.8"

Adult Data

Adult female: b/g 30/B

Adult male: unknown

Nesting Data

3 eggs laid | 3 young hatched

First egg laid: unknown

First hatch: 5/18/2007

Female:	1687-02042	K/54	Jennie
Male:	2206-72225	D/59	Dougie
Male:	2206-72226	D/60	Falcor



Comments

This was a brand new site. Boy Scout Daniel Sundberg built the nestbox as his Eagle Scout project. He did an excellent job – the box was installed in 2006 and productive by the spring of 2007.

The adult female at this site has an interesting history. 30/B is from Cleveland, Ohio. She was admitted to the Raptor Center on 10/08/2002 with head trauma. They banded her, patched her up, and released her in Rochester, Minnesota, on 10/17/2002. She briefly showed up at Xcel Energy's Sherco plant in Becker, Minnesota, where she laid eggs in the detritus of a nestbox that had earlier been destroyed by lightning. Unfortunately, a storm washed the gravel and eggs from the catwalk. The falcon disappeared, only to show up at the GRE nestbox not long after.

2007 Productive Nest Sites

Brenda Beauchaine, the plant's administrative assistant, pointed out the female's left foot when we came to band the falcons. The falcon had broken and fused crooked toes, and walked with a severe limp. Brenda told us she thought that the falcon had been injured not long before she came to the plant, since she had initially spent a lot of time worrying at her foot. Whatever had happened, it didn't seem to affect her ability to care for her young since there were three healthy babies in the nest.



This is also the only site to date that we access with a bucket truck.

Year falcons first nested here: 2007

Total young fledged from this location (2007): 3

6/10/07: West Bluff | Pepin County, WI

Lat/Long

N 44 31' 51.7"

W 092 17' 42.2"

Adult Data

Adults unknown

Nesting Data

4 eggs laid | 4 young hatched

Female:	1687-02043	K/55	Brenda
Female	1687-02044	K/56	Sara
Female	1687-02045	K/57	Sheila
Male:	2206-47691	D/61	Dan



Comments

Falcons nested here in 2005, but not in 2006. We were happy to see them return to West Bluff this spring. They did choose a different location, nesting downstream and 'around the corner' in a much easier eyrie to access. We were very happy to leave the 'Norwegian Falcon Grabber' at the top of the bluff.



Dan and Sheila, the landowners, were our very gracious hosts. They are thrilled to have falcons nesting on their land. They welcomed us with refreshments and accompanied us down to the top of the bluff where we banded the young falcons. Like many of the landowners we met this year, they are involved in clearing some of their bluff land

and restoring goat prairie on the top. It was great to see their involvement and interest!

The four young falcons were about 23 days old and, judging from their crops and prey remains, eating well. We found red-wing blackbird, blue jay, and green heron remains at the nest.

Year falcons first nested here: 2005

Total young fledged from this location (2007): 6

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/10/07: Maiden Rock Cliff | Pepin County, WI

Lat/Long

N 44 30' 06.4"

W 092 17' 17.2"

Adult Data

Unknown

Nesting Data

Male: 2206-47692 D/62 Griffin

Male: 2206-47693 D/63 Chase

Female: 1687-02046 K/58 Liz

Comments

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. This year, the falcons nested in the same eyrie as in 2001. A number of things made this year's banding challenging: the falcons were 30-32 days old, the eyrie features a roughly 40' long ledge for the babies to run on, which can make it quite challenging to capture them safely, and there was a lot of loose rock. A rock knocked Bob on the head – it is a good thing he was wearing a helmet!

Despite the challenges, we banded three healthy young falcons. Dan Berger, who was present for banding again this year, recorded falcons on this cliff in 1954. It was the last time anyone would band young falcons here until 2001.



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 young fledged from this location (2007): 19

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/11/07: Maassen's Bluff | Buffalo County, Wisconsin

Lat/Long

N 44 22' 59.5"

W 091 57' 43.3"

Adult Data

Adult female b/g unknown

Adult male unknown

Nesting Data

1 young hatched

Female 1687-02047 K/59 Stephanie



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 the improved eyrie and hatched three babies.

The site failed in 2006, although an adult male and sub-adult female were defending their territory. This year, they moved out of the improved eyrie and hatched one baby in a shallow hole with very little substrate.



This is really a lovely cliff – solid, interesting, and quite raccoon-proof. At right around 300', it is also the tallest face we band on. While Bob explored further ways to improve the eyrie we began working on in 2003, Dave Kester and Rob rappelled down and got the single baby. We banded her on top of the bluff and Amy returned her to her home. We named her Stephanie after Gary Grunewald's daughter. She was roughly 18-20 days old and looked healthy.

Sara Wakamiya is pictured holding the young falcon.

Year falcons first nested here: 2001 | Total young fledged from this location (2007): 12

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/11/07: 12-Mile Bluff | Alma, Wisconsin | Buffalo County

Lat/Long

N 44 18' 34.5"

W 091 54' 23.1"

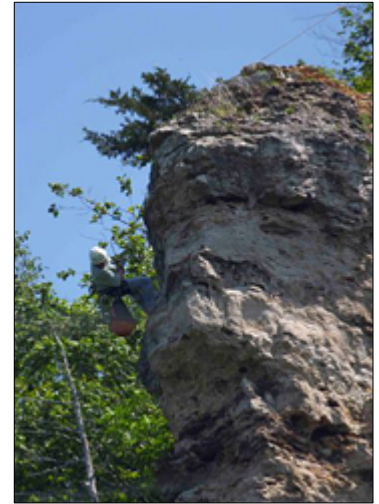
Adult Data

Adults unknown

Nesting Data

4 young hatched

Female	1687-02048	K/60	Zephyr
Female	1687-02049	K/61	Chinook
Female	1687-02050	K/62	Mistral
Female	1687-02051	K/63	Diabla



12-Mile Bluff was the first of three new cliff sites to come on line this spring. The bluff is located directly behind Dairyland's Alma power plant, and the power plant falcons have jumped between the plant and the cliff for the past three years. In 2005, they nested on the cliff, although their nest failed. In 2006, they spent time at both places before choosing the plant. This year, they successfully nested at the cliff.



We were not sure exactly where the eyrie was, so our first trip up the bluff was exploratory. Bob dropped down first, to what we hoped was the eyrie, but found nothing. Rob dropped down the main wall, but found nothing. Bob dropped down an extremely precarious chimney and, after failing to find falcons, continued to the bottom and went off rope. He made his way over to the scope to find the young falcons low on the main wall. We needed a break, so everyone came down, ate lunch, and went back up.

The approach was quite challenging. We had to thread our way through poison ivy, underbrush, and a large, loose cedar snag at the very top of the bluff. There was a lot of loose rock, which made rockfall a real threat, and a large cedar tree growing out of the cliff presented an obstacle for rappellers and sky kennels alike. However, we were able to get the babies and send them up the bluff for banding. The eyrie was small, unshaded, and very, very hot, but all four babies appeared in good health – and quite feisty after being banded and cooling down a bit!

Young falcon K/60 was recovered near Kellogg, Minnesota, on 8/3/2007. She had a wing injury.

Year falcons first nested here: 2007 | Total young fledged from this location (2007): 4

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/13/07: Great Spirit Bluff | La Crescent, MN | Houston County

Lat/Long

N 43 52' 15.2"

W 091 19' 12.4"

Adult Data

Adults unknown

Nesting Data

3 young hatched

Female: 1687-01745 K/70 Alice

Male: 2206-47694 M/58 Jac

Male: 2206-47695 M/59 George



Comments

In 2003, we installed a nestbox 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.

The Howe family owns Great Spirit Bluff. They are great supporters of our work and truly enjoy watching the falcons. Several family members and friends joined us for falcon banding at the top of the bluffs.

The falcons were roughly 25 days old.



Year falcons first nested here: 2005

Total young fledged from this location (2007): 13

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/15/07: Homer Bluff (P-4) | Homer, Minnesota | Winona County

Lat/Long

N 44 01' 22.4"

W 091 34' 33.8"

Adult Data

Adults unknown

Nesting Data

3 young hatched

Male	2206-47696	D/64	Sidebar
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Female	1687-02052	K/64	Joan
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Female	1687-02053	K/65	Fran
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Homer Bluff was the second of three new cliff sites to come on line this year. Dan Berger banded the last young falcon on this cliff, which he called P-4, in 1952. After that, falcons were absent from this cliff for fifty-five years, until this spring – when Dan came back to band them.



The eyrie was deep, cool, and easy to reach, and the young falcons were healthy, with nice crops.

Year falcons first nested here: 2007 | Total young fledged from this location (2007): 3



2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/24/07: Lock and Dam 9 | Crawford County, WI

Lat/Long

N 43 12' 48.8"

W 091 05' 39.2"

Adult Data

Immature female, unbanded

Adult male, unbanded

Nesting Data

2 young hatched

Female 1687-01746 K/66 Caya

Female 1687-01747 K/69

Lock & Dam 9 attracted a non-productive, immature female and adult male in 2006, so we were surprised to find an immature falcon on territory again this year. On the selected banding date, we were not sure young were present, but Maggie Jones, one of our key monitors at this cliff, was quite confident they were. She was right.

The landowners helped us haul our gear up to the top of the bluff in a 4X4 truck. We passed several Indian mounds on the way to the area above the eyrie. Of the banding itself, Bob writes:

“This cliff was the most loosely-rocked cliff I’ve ever been on. We dislodged many rocks with our ropes, and Dave Kester and I had to rappel side-by-side to avoid sending rocks down on the other person. The eyrie ledge the young falcon had chosen was extremely small: much smaller than a dish plate, with several hand-size rocks crowding it. We banded the two young falcons on rope at the small ledge.

“During banding, we were able to remove several of the rocks on the ledge, giving the two young falcons more room. When we completed the banding I went down and off rope, and Dave when back up. We were only on the cliff face for about 15 minutes.

“After banding was completed, a large contingent of us gathered below to celebrate a new cliff with falcons and the end of the banding season. The falcons settled down as soon as we pulled the ropes, so Maggie was shocked to see the adult female bump one of the young falcons off the ledge when she made her fourth trip back into the eyrie after we left. Tod Neal and Dave Kester hiked to the top of the talus directly below the eyrie and recovered the body of K/69.”

Year falcons first nested here: 2007 / Total young fledged from this location (2007): 1

2007 Productive Nest Sites

6/26/07: Xcel Energy Highbridge Plant | St. Paul, MN | Ramsey County

Lat/Long

N 44 93 34 4
W093 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: 4/15/2007
First hatch: 5/26/2006

Male:	2206-47697	J/65	Sky
Female:	1687-02054	K/71	Nimbus
Female	1687-02055	K/72	Grynn
Female	1687-02056	K/73	Century



Comments

It was roughly 140 degrees inside the stack on the day we banded. It felt like a sauna climbing the inside ladder on an already warm and humid day

Anderson and Scott Anton, an Xcel Energy employee, reported healthy young falcons and extremely hot conditions at the Highbridge plant.

Year falcons first nested here: 2000 | Total young fledged from this location (2007): 22

Unusual Incidents and Non-Productive Nest Sites

Xcel Monticello | Monticello, MN | Wright County

Due to a safety recall of the equipment used to scale the Monticello stack, we were not allowed to climb the stack this year to band the young falcons. Dan Orr confirmed that at least one young was produced here.

Castle Rock cliff | Trempealeau County, WI

We planned to band the falcons at Castle Rock on 6/11/07, but they were too old to safely band. We observed three young falcons through a spotting scope. Last year, when we banded on 6/14/06, the babies were quite close to 40 days. We may have to plan to band at this site a little earlier in the month.

Lynxville Cliff | Crawford County, WI

We planned to band the falcons at the Lynxville cliff on 6/14/07 but, like the Castle Rock cliff, they were too old to band. We observed three young falcons here.

MN Power Hibbard Plant | Duluth, MN | St. Louis County

The falcons here laid four eggs, but none of them hatched. They were very, very rotten by the time we came to check the nest. We do not know why the site failed: both adults were on territory and defending the nest when we arrived.

Xcel Energy SHERCO Plant | Becker, MN | Sherburne County

Lightning destroyed the Sherco nest box and killed the resident adult female while she was incubating. Another falcon, 30/B, attempted to lay eggs in the remains of the box, but she left after a storm washed them away. She turned up at Great River Energy not long afterwards.

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. Unfortunately, the immature female and adult male failed to produce young this year. We are hoping they will be more successful next spring.

Power Plant and Cliff | Lansing, IA | Allamakee County

We boarded up the power plant nest box and installed a cliff nest box here on 3/30/07. Raccoon predation has been a problem at this location, but we believed the box would give us a successful nest. We were all extremely disappointed when we arrived to band young on 6/13/07, and found raccoon tracks and shell fragments once again. We need to give this private cliff more study to see what we can do to eliminate raccoon access to the long ledge favored by the falcons. I don't think Alliant Energy will allow us to use dynamite this close to the plant.

Alliant Energy is proposing to add another rail line for coal needs - an extremely controversial project.

Unusual Incidents and Non-Productive Nest Sites

Xcel Energy Riverside | Minneapolis, MN | Hennepin County

For the fourth 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. The photo shows a fight between the resident unbanded female and another female, probably Speedy.



We don't know what happened to Speedy, although she was not found at Riverside following the battle.

LaCrosse Cathedral | LaCrosse, WI | LaCrosse County

Early this fall, we received a very interesting call from the LaCrosse Cathedral. Although the LaCrosse peregrines nest on the US Bank building, they spend a great deal of time at the Cathedral. Unfortunately, their prey remains had backed up the building's gutters, which caused quite a mess. Unknown to us, the local Audubon society was already involved in removing prey remains from the Cathedral grounds.

We will donate time to cleaning the Cathedral's roof; however, the Cathedral provides yet another example of the difficulties involved in long-term urban peregrine management. How long will the Cathedral tolerate peregrine falcons? How long will volunteers be willing to clean the roof and grounds? Ultimately, peregrine falcons belong on cliffs. We need to direct our efforts toward cliffs and away from buildings if we are to ensure the species' long-term success. Although we will continue to support all of the urban and utility sites we've developed, we plan to direct future conservation work towards cliffs.

Falcon Sightings

- A single falcon was spotted at the Shellhorn bluff just north of Reno, Minnesota.
- Bob Anderson spotted a pair of falcons at the Trempeleau bluff, although as far as we know they did not nest successfully.
- A falcon was seen again at Twin Bluffs in Nelson, Wisconsin. We met with the landowners, who are very excited about the possibility of falcons on their bluff.

Ospreys, Eagles, Owls, and Kestrels

The Raptor Resource Project is also involved in managing osprey, eagle, owl, and kestrel nests in Minnesota and Colorado.

Ospreys

Xcel Energy King Plant | Oak Park Heights, MN

The Ospreys are nesting on the barge unloader at Xcel Energy's King plant, not far from the falcons' stack. This nest has produced 38 young since Bob Anderson installed it on Earth Day of 1993, making it the most productive metro-area nest. Anderson recalls the installation:

"Just as I completed securing the nest frame and adding sticks, an adult male osprey began circling overhead with a stick in his talons. As soon as I vacated the area, he began nest improvement and attracted a mate. It made the hair on the back of my head stand up."

Anderson banded three babies here on July 7.

Year ospreys first nested here: 1993 | Total young fledged from this location (2007): 38



Bald Eagles

Xcel Energy Fort St. Vrain Plant | Platteville, CO

The Bald Eagles are nesting in a large cottonwood tree on the grounds of Xcel's Fort St. Vrain plant, near the juncture of the South Platte and St. Vrain rivers. Bob Anderson and Rob MacIntyre installed a wireless solar-powered web cam here in 2003. The cam system, which contains two cameras, was an instant hit. Hundreds of thousands of visitors have logged in to watch the eagle family and several elementary school classes have incorporated the nest into their curriculums.

The Colorado Division of Wildlife banded two young eaglets here on May 23rd.



Ospreys, Eagles, Owls, and Kestrels

Owls

Bob Anderson installed two owl nestboxes at Xcel Energy's Valmont Station in Valmont, Colorado. One box attracted a family of Barn owls and the other attracted a family of Great Horned owls.



Great Horned Owls | Xcel Energy Valmont Station | Valmont, CO

In 2003, Anderson installed a nestbox and camera on a platform at the 260-foot level of the Valmont stack. It was quickly adopted by a pair of Great Horned owls and has been active ever since.

The owls arrived at their nest box in January of 2007. The female laid her first egg on February 24, followed up by a second on February 28th. Unfortunately, both eggs died following a very heavy snowstorm that sent large drifts of snow into the box. Fortunately, the female reclutched, laying two more eggs. Both eggs hatched in late April.

Barn Owls | Xcel Energy Valmont Station | Valmont, CO

The Barn Owls are nesting near the Valmont plant, not far from the Great Horned Owls. Bob Anderson installed a cam here in 2005. Unfortunately, either the camera or lead failed just before the nesting season. Anderson hopes to make repairs in the next few weeks.



Ospreys, Eagles, Owls, and Kestrels

Kestrels

Xcel Energy Pawnee Station | Brush, CO

Bob Anderson installed a nestbox here in 2005. It was quickly adopted by a pair of kestrels, who fledged five young. Anderson and several web watchers noted the number of skinks in the family's diet – they must be quite plentiful and relatively easy to catch.



Web-Based Resources

Web-Based Resources

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

- [Maiden Rock Banding Video](#) (produced by Wisconsin Public Television)
- Nora's Slideshows and Videos
 - [West Bluff Slideshow](#)
 - [West Bluff Video](#)
 - [Maiden Rock Slideshow](#)
- [Dot's Photo Album](#)
(includes Maiden Rock, Lansing, Great Spirit Bluff, Lynxville, West Bluff, Maiden Rock, Maasen's, and Alma)
- [Julie O'Conner's PeregrineWatch Page](#) (Hawk Ridge, Duluth)
- [Raptor Resource Project's Banding Blog](#)
(includes photos and text about banding)
- [Michael's 2007 Duluth Peregrine Banding Photos](#)

Many, many pictures may also be viewed in our forum

- [Raptor Resource Project Forum](#)