

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources

Endangered Species Program

2011/2012 Peregrine Falcon Season Results

New York State's peregrine falcon population appeared to level off at 77 territorial pairs in both 2011 and 2012, an increase of only one from 2010. However, the number of breeding pairs jumped from 57 pairs to 68 and 70 in 2011 and 2012 respectively, while the number of successful pairs increased from 54 in 2010 to 57 and 64. The numbers of breeding and successful pairs in 2012 were record highs. The number of young produced dipped slightly from 144 in 2010 to 142, and then rose slightly to a record 148 in 2012.

Forty-two of the 77 territorial pairs present in 2012 were upstate, along with 82 of the 148 young produced. The statewide number of young per breeding pair was 2.1 in both 2011 and 2012, while the number of young per successful pair was 2.5 and 2.3. Both were slight declines from 2010.

There were six new pairs with four downstate and two upstate in both 2011/2012. All but one of these twelve new pairs were on structures (buildings, bridges, platform); one was a cliff nest. This continues a trend of most new nests reported being in areas more vulnerable to disturbance and in need of protective management. In 2011, all six new pairs bred and five were successful in producing eleven young. In 2012, five of the six new pairs bred and four were successful in producing eight young.

A total of 24 and 44 peregrines were recovered in NYS during 2011 and 2012 respectively. In 2011, 14 were found alive, rehabilitated and released, three were found dead, four were alive and died or were euthanized, and three were still in rehabilitation. In 2012, 15 were found alive, rehabilitated and released, 15 were found dead, nine were alive and died or were euthanized, and five were still in rehab. The banding of nestlings at urban sites greatly facilitates the placement of uninjured fledged young back with their parents at the appropriate nest sites in a timely manner. Without knowledge of their natal origin, these young would have to undergo lengthy flight and prey training at a qualified rehabilitator for a successful release to the wild.

Carcasses are necropsied when possible by DEC's Wildlife Health Unit. Seven unhatched eggs were collected for analysis in 2011 and 17 in 2012.

A comprehensive Peregrine Falcon Conservation Plan for New York was drafted during the winter of 2011-2012 and is still undergoing internal DEC review. It summarizes the historical and current status of the species in NY and provides information on natural history, threats and guidelines for monitoring, management and research to ensure its future.

Thirty years ago in 1983 after a lengthy restoration process, peregrine falcons returned to breed in NY at two New York City bridge sites. Since then, over 2000 young have hatched and 119 different locations have had pairs. To continue this success, monitoring, protection and management must continue. Our sincere thanks to the legions of partners in this effort- the countless volunteers, bridge authorities, building owners and agencies that help the peregrines flourish. And my personal thanks as I retire from DEC after 35 years ... it's been a privilege - please keep up the good work.

Barbara Allen Loucks

4/28/13



Barbara Saunders

Table 1. New York State Peregrine Falcon Breeding Summary: Statewide 1992-2012																					
NUMBER OF PAIRS	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No. of Territorial ¹ Pairs	22	19	22	25	32	34	38	42	44	48	45	49	52	62	62	63	67	73	76	77	77
No. of Breeding ² Pairs	15	18	19	25	26	30	36	39	40	45	40	42	45	55	52	54	60	61	57	68	70
No. of Successful ³ Pairs	13	17	18	19	24	25	31	37	33	41	34	35	37	46	45	48	50	55	54	57	64
No. of Young ⁴ Produced	30	45	35	46	48	49	69	80	75	96	81	88	79	114	96	127	129	132	144	142	148
Young/ Breeding Pair	2.0	2.5	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.9	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.1	1.8	2.1	1.9	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.1	2.1
Young/ Successful Pair	2.3	2.7	1.9	2.4	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.1	2.5	2.1	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.7	2.5	2.3

- 1 A territorial pair is defined by the presence of two potentially breeding birds within a suitable nesting habitat during the breeding season. In most cases, the pair exhibits courtship behavior and makes a scrape.
- 2 A breeding pair is defined by a pair of birds within a nesting territory where evidence indicates that eggs were laid (such as eggs, eggshell fragments, young, incubation or young-feeding behavior).
- 3 A successful pair is defined as one which produced one or more young that reached fledging age.
- 4 Young presumed fledged.

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Table 2. Upstate ¹ New York Peregrine Falcon Breeding Summary: 1992-2012																					
NUMBER OF PAIRS	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No. of Territorial ² Pairs	10	9	10	10	15	15	16	20	22	25	22	26	26	33	34	35	36	42	42	41	42
No. of Breeding ³ Pairs	8	9	8	10	11	14	16	18	19	23	19	24	23	32	30	29	34	35	27	33	39
No. of Successful ⁴ Pairs	6	8	7	9	11	13	16	18	17	23	15	20	19	27	27	26	29	29	26	27	37
No. of Young ⁵ Produced	9	12	9	14	14	17	30	40	34	50	31	47	35	61	53	62	69	65	65	62	82
Young/ Breeding Pair	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.9	2.2	1.8	2.2	1.6	2.0	1.5	1.9	1.8	2.1	2.0	1.9	2.4	1.9	2.1
Young/ Successful Pair	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.9	2.2	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.4	1.8	2.3	2.0	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.5	2.3	2.2

¹ Upstate includes Albany and areas north and west of the Hudson Valley.

² A territorial pair is defined by the presence of two potentially breeding birds within a suitable nesting habitat during the breeding season.

³ A breeding pair is defined by a pair of birds within a nesting territory where evidence indicates that eggs were laid (such as eggs, eggshell fragments, young, incubation or young-feeding behavior).

⁴ A successful pair is defined as one which produced one or more young that reached fledgling age.

⁵ Young presumed fledged

⁶ From here on, also includes upstate urban nesting

Table 3. Downstate ¹ New York Peregrine Falcon Breeding Summary: 1992-2012																					
NUMBER OF PAIRS	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No. of Territorial ² Pairs	12	10	12	15	17	19	22	22	22	23	23	23	26	29	28	28	31	31	34	36	35
No. of Breeding ³ Pairs	7	9	11	15	15	16	20	21	21	22	21	18	22	23	22	25	26	26	30	35	31
No. of Successful ⁴ Pairs	7	9	11	10	13	12	15	19	16	18	19	15	18	19	18	22	21	26	28	30	27
No. of Young ⁵ Produced	21	33	26	32	34	32	39	40	41	46	50	41	44	53	43	65	60	67	79	80	66
Young/ Breeding Pair	3.0	3.7	2.4	2.1	2.3	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.4	2.3	2.0	2.3	2.0	2.6	2.3	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.1
Young/ Successful Pair	3.0	3.7	2.4	3.2	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.1	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.4	2.8	2.4	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.4

¹ Downstate is defined as areas south of Albany including the Hudson Valley.

² A territorial pair is defined by the presence of two potentially breeding birds within a suitable nesting habitat during the breeding season.

³ A breeding pair is defined by a pair of birds within a nesting territory where evidence indicates that eggs were laid (such as eggs, eggshell fragments, young, incubation or young-feeding behavior).

⁴ A successful pair is defined as one which produced one or more young that reached fledging age.

⁵ Young presumed fledged.