



# Peregrine Falcon

July 2025 - BIRD OF THE MONTH

The Peregrine Falcon is an extraordinary bird by every measure. Their worldwide range is more extensive than that of any other bird. They're found on all continents except Antarctica, inhabiting a wide variety of environments, including mountains, coastlines, river valleys, and increasingly urban areas. While historically cliff dwellers, they have adapted to nesting on tall buildings in major cities as well as atop soaring bridges.

Mated pairs form a lifelong bond. They roost together and hunt cooperatively. Although the female Peregrine resembles her male counterpart, she is an impressive one-third larger. She eats first, dives first when hunting together and will take down larger prey. They collaboratively raise their young.

The Peregrine is a conspicuously long-winged, long-tailed falcon that has been described as flying "with the grace of a professional skater". It stoops or flies fast and low after a wide variety of birds, especially pigeons, doves, and waterfowl. The speed of a stooping Peregrine is legendary with some studies clocking their lethal dive at over 200 miles per hour making it the fastest animal on earth.

The Peregrine Falcon became an endangered species in many areas because of the widespread use of harmful pesticides, especially DDT. Since the ban on DDT from the early 1970s, populations have largely recovered.

A designated Raptor Foraging Area has been identified and is being enhanced on the hilltop area adjacent to the Urban Forest. This marked, designated area has been set aside in a mitigation agreement in order to provide suitable habitat for a variety of birds of prey dependent upon natural open field foraging with drought tolerant California native plants suited to their survival needs.

Huntington Central Park with its Fifty Year History continues to be host to a variety of raptors / birds of prey including hawks, falcons, owls, vultures and eagles. We will continue to feature selected descriptions of the dozen or more that have been counted in our central park.

Photos by James Kendall    Written by Betty Kanne

