



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo Attached

Harrisburg's Newest Peregrine Falcons Banded in Educational Event Streamed Live

Harrisburg, PA – In an educational event attended by students and [streamed live](#), officials from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) today banded the three young peregrine falcons nesting on the 15th floor of the Rachel Carson State Office Building.

“It’s fitting that peregrine falcons have nested for 17 consecutive years at the building named for the Pennsylvania native and scientist who identified the dangers of DDT to birds and other species, and helped launch modern environmentalism,” said DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell.

“Sixty-four falcons have now hatched since the nest was first installed in 1996. All have been banded, advancing our effort to help the peregrine population recover in Pennsylvania.”

The peregrine falcon is endangered in Pennsylvania and protected under the Game and Wildlife Code. It formerly was listed as endangered, then threatened at the federal level; it was removed from the federal Endangered Species List in August 1999. All migratory birds are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.

Game Commission biologist Art McMorris, outfitted with a GoPro camera, led the team in weighing, examining, and banding the birds. Banding young peregrines provides important information on the birds' movements and is essential to understanding their habitat needs year-round. The bands are uniquely lettered and numbered so that if the falcons are observed later, or found injured or dead, they can be identified.

Students and teachers from St. Stephen’s Episcopal School watched, asked questions, and recorded the weight and band code. The process was completed in about 20 minutes, and the falcons were returned to their nest. Patrick Miller, an educator at ZOOAMERICA North American Wildlife Park, then discussed this species’ amazing abilities.

The event was streamed live on the [DEP Facebook page](#) and PAcast.com and will be posted to the [DEP YouTube channel](#). The banding team took questions from the public submitted through Facebook and on Twitter @FalconChatter using #hbgfalcons.

There are about 45 falcon nest sites now across Pennsylvania. The nest at the Rachel Carson State Office Building is the most successful. Its success is attributed in part to the annual falcon watch and rescue program, whose volunteers keep an eye on the young fledglings when they take their first flights.

Fledging in an urban environment can be challenging for the peregrines, but there are benefits,

too, including an abundant food supply, such as pigeons and other birds, and plenty of high perches.

The Harrisburg Falcons have an international audience of millions of viewers who have watched them online via the [FalconCam](#). Viewers can learn the falcons' history, download educational lesson plans, and see spectacular images of these magnificent birds.

The [Harrisburg Peregrine Falcon Education Program](#) is a joint effort of DEP, PGC, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Commonwealth Media Services.

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