

We Energies Peregrine Falcon 2014 Nesting Season Report

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Cover image: *Thilmany (b/g) N/44, a female produced in 2007 at the Thilmany Mill nest site in Kaukauna, Wisconsin. Thilmany: has nested at the Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, since 2009, producing 20 young.*

2014 nesting season overview

The total number of peregrines produced at We Energies power plants surpassed the 200 mark in 2014. For the record, 48 percent (593) of all peregrines produced in Wisconsin since 1992 have been produced at power plant nest sites. Of these, 33 percent (207) have been produced at We Energies sites. Once again, the role power plants have played in the recovery of peregrines is truly significant and quite remarkable.

This year also marked a continued effort to reach out to the community and provide educational opportunities for school groups and environmental organizations within the We Energies service area and more specifically in communities where We Energies power plants are located.

We started at Country Dale Elementary School in Franklin, where I gave a peregrine presentation to their fourth-grade students on April 28. Later in the season, a class field trip was arranged to attend the Oak Creek Power Plant banding on June 2. The banding event was covered by WTMJ-4 TV, Fox 6 TV, JSOnline and Oak Creek Now.

Whittier Elementary School in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, was the site of a May 13 presentation for the fourth-grade class, which was followed by a class field trip to Pleasant Prairie Power Plant on June 5 where the students watched the banding of the four youngsters produced at this site.

Next in line was the Milwaukee County Power Plant in Wauwatosa where we banded three additional young. The banding event was attended by guests from the Schlitz Audubon and Riveredge Nature Centers.

My annual trip to Michigan's Upper Peninsula to band at Marquette's Presque Isle Power Plant took place on June 14. This year's banding event was attended by a group of plant employees and their families.

Closing out the season, we banded the last two youngsters of the season at the Port Washington Generating Station. This banding event was attended by WWII veterans who had participated in the Stars and Stripes Honor Flight Program. The event was covered by the Ozaukee Press.

More information on all the banding events can be found on the We Energies Raptors Blog: <http://weenergiesraptors.blogspot.com/>

A special note of recognition once again goes to Cathy Schulze at We Energies Media Relations for her efforts at organizing all the events and media coverage. Also to be thanked is Pete Dickinson for his work in getting the nest box webcams up to speed and for updating the laptop I use to access and position the webcams. The webcams are instrumental in reading band numbers and documenting egg-laying activities.

Being exposed to the Wisconsin elements year-round takes its toll on nest boxes, which have to be replaced from time to time. This year, two new nest boxes were designed and constructed at the

We Energies workshop by Henry Gutmann and Jon Schoenike. The new boxes will replace the current nest boxes at Valley Power Plant and Port Washington Generating Station. Special thanks to Henry and Jon, who I worked with on the project during January and February, and to Roland Simatic who runs the shop, for all the help and hard work.

I also thank everyone at We Energies who I have had the pleasure of working with over the past year and special thanks to Senior Ecologist Mike Grisar for overseeing peregrine efforts and his continuing interest in this project. I feel very fortunate to be able to work with such dedicated individuals who always go the extra mile when it comes to caring about We Energies' peregrines.

We Energies can be proud of its environmental commitment and continued support for peregrine falcons. Without this long-term commitment and consistent effort to provide nest boxes at its power plants, coupled by the involvement of its employees, the recovery of the peregrine falcon in Wisconsin would not have succeeded to the degree it has today.

Greg Septon

Pleasant Prairie Power Plant



Nesting details

Adult female: Thilmany (b/g) 44/N, here for her sixth year, was produced in 2007 at the Thilmany Mill, Kaukauna, Wisconsin.

Adult male: PBR (b/r) 07/B, was produced at Milwaukee's Miller Brewery nest site in 2009. This is PBR's third year at this site.

Eggs: 4 laid between April 4-14

Projected hatch dates: May 13-15

Eggs hatched: 4 between May 13-15

Banded: 2 females and 2 males on June 5

Site visits: June 5

Note: An unbanded adult female was seen regularly in this nest box from Nov. 15, 2013 to March 7, 2014, but was displaced when Thilmany returned.

Note: Rio C/97 was found dead on site on July 14 – building collision.

This site has been active since 1997, producing a total of 56 young (3.11/year).



Thilmany



Four young

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Buddy	Female	(b/r) C/95	1947-22069
Shadow	Female	(b/r) C/96	1947-22067
Rio	Female	(b/r) C/97	1947-22068
Skittles	Male	(b/r) P/03	1156-17370

GPS: 42 degrees 32' 16 N, 87 degrees 54' 13 W

Note: C/96 could be a large male.

Oak Creek Power Plant



Nesting details

Adult female: Eclipse (b/r) 67/H, a 2009 falcon produced at the Rhodes State Office Tower in Columbus, Ohio. This is her fourth year at OCPP.

Adult male: Scott (b/g) M/Y, here for his ninth year, was produced in 2000 at the Malteurop complex (formerly Froedtert Malt complex) in West Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Eggs: 4 laid between April 2-9

Projected hatch dates: May 9-11

Eggs hatched: 4 between May 10-12

Banded: 4 males on June 2

Site visits: June 2

This site has been active since 1998, producing a total of 50 young (2.94/year).



Eclipse at her nest box



Banding day

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Franklin	Male	(b/r) H/27	1156-17364
Cliff	Male	(b/r) H/28	1156-17365
Hunter	Male	(b/r) H/29	1156-17366
Flash	Male	(b/r) P/00	1156-17367

GPS: 42 degrees 84' 20 N, 87 degrees 82' 83 W

Milwaukee County Power Plant



Nesting details

Adult female: (b/r) 33/U, produced in 2012 at the Eastlake Power Plant in Eastlake, Ohio. This was her first year here.

Adult male: Lightning (b/r) 84/R, produced in 2012 at We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. This was Lightning's first year at this site.

Eggs: 4 laid between April 9-16

Projected hatch dates: May 16-18

Eggs hatched: 3 between May 17-18

Banded: 1 female and 2 males on June 6

Site visits: March 11, June 6

Note: There was a complete turnover of adults here this year. On Feb. 27, last year's female **(b/r) 47/X**, was found shot in West Allis, Wisconsin. She was treated for her injuries and rehabbed at the Wisconsin Humane Society's Wildlife Rehab Center and released back to the wild near Horicon, Wisconsin, on June 21.

On June 8, **Lightning (b/r) 84/R**, was recorded via the nest box webcam at the UW-Milwaukee EMS (UWM) nest site where he remained through June, leaving his mate **(b/r) 33/U** alone to care for their three young back at the MCPP site.

On June 21, the decaying remains of **Hoffmann (b/g) 54/M**, the resident male at the UWM site were found at that site. Hoffmann may have been killed in a territorial battle with Lightning taking over the UWM site.

This site has been active since 2013, producing a total of 6 young (3.0/year).

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Mimi	Female	(b/r) D/54	1947-22299
Beasley	Male	(b/r) P/07	1156-21964
Kozmo	Male	(b/r) P/08	1156-21965

GPS: 43 degrees 02' 45N, 88 degrees 01' 39W



Webcam image of (b/r) 33/U at her nest box

Port Washington Generating Station



Nesting details

Adult female: Brinn (b/r) 84/X, produced in 2012 at Gold Hoist cliff, Split Rock State Park, Lake County, Minnesota. This is her first year at this site.

Adult male: Ives (b/g) 78/N, produced in 2004 at the Edgewater Generating Station site in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, likely present since 2007 when he was first identified at this site.

Eggs: 4 laid between April 11-20

Projected hatch dates: May 20-22

Eggs hatched: 2 on May 22

Banded: 1 female and 1 male on June 16

Site visits: June 16

This site has been active since 2000, producing a total of 50 young (3.3/year).



Brinn



Brinn's youngsters

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Juneau	Female	(b/blu) H/00	1947-22755
Noel	Male	(b/r) P/48	1156-21978

GPS: 43 degrees 23' 01 N, 87 degrees 52' 13 W

We Energies Presque Isle Power Plant, Marquette, Michigan



Nesting details

Adult female: (b/g) *P/*S, produced in 2008 at Grand Haven L. and P., Sims Plant, Grand Haven, Michigan, back for her fourth year.

Adult male: Unbanded – likely the same male present 2011-2013.

Eggs: 3 laid between April 14-19

Eggs hatched: 3 on May 21

Banded: 1 female and 2 males on June 14

Site visits: June 14



**P/*S at her nest*



The three chicks shortly after banding

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Aurora	Female	(b/r) D/59	1947-22754
Herman	Male	(b/r) P/19	1156-21976
Bullet	Male	(b/r) P/20	1156-21977

GPS: 46.57901N, 087.39538W

Valley Power Plant



Nesting details

Adult female: Not identified.

Adult male: **Hercules (b/r) 60/H**, produced in 2011 at St. Joe's Hospital site in Milwaukee – here for his first year.

Eggs: 4 laid between March 30 - April 10

Projected hatch dates: May 7-9

Eggs hatched: Failed

Site visits: March 18, May 7, July 31

Just as we were expecting eggs to begin hatching, between May 6 and May 7, something happened at this site, and the adults were barely incubating as they had steadily been doing since early April. From watching via the webcam, it became clear there was an intruder (another peregrine) present. For the ensuing week, I never saw a female peregrine in the nest box, and the male incubated sporadically. Then, a female began sharing with incubation again. Whether this was the original female or the intruder will never be known.



Above: *Hercules* photographed on the chimney catwalk near his nest box on July 31, 2014

Eggs were incubated from April 8 through July 29 – 82 days – the longest failed nesting attempt I've ever seen. For the final few weeks, it appeared that only the male was incubating.

Note: **Swede (b/g) P/Z**, a male produced at the WPS Green Bay Pulliam site in 1999 – and likely here since 2006, was found dead in January in Milwaukee. Although it can't be proved, it appeared he may have been shot.

This site has been active since 2002, producing a total of 27 young (2.08/yr.).

GPS: 43 degrees 02' N, 87 degrees 57' 49 W

We Energies produced peregrines nesting in Wisconsin

Verne (b/g) E/42, a male produced in 2007 at We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant, paired with an unbanded adult female at the MG&E site in Madison, Wisconsin. Four eggs were laid, and four young produced. This was Verne's the third year at this site.

Lightning (b/r) 84/R, produced in 2012 at We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant, nested at the Milwaukee County Power Plant in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. This was Lightning's first year at this site. He paired with (b/r) 33/U, produced in 2012 at the Eastlake Power Plant in Eastlake, Ohio. This was her first year at this site. They produced three young.

Beaster (b/g) 67/M, a male produced in 2005 at We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant, is paired again with **(b/g) R/13**, a female produced in 2007 at the Tower Building in South Bend, Indiana. The pair nested at the Racine County Courthouse with four eggs producing three young.

Herbert (b/g) 80/N, a male produced in 2004 at We Energies Valley Power Plant in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was identified again at Milwaukee's Miller/Coors site on March 22. In April, he returned to Milwaukee's St. Joseph's Hospital site and paired with **DJ (b/r) 54/E**, a female produced in 2010 at the Edgewater Generating Station in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, producing two young.

We Energies produced peregrines nesting in other states

Illinois

Squawker (b/g) 48/M, a male produced at We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in 2003, is paired again with a female banded (b/g) 64/D. The pair again nested at the Evanston Library site in Evanston, Illinois, where they produced two young.

Minnesota

Seapro (b/g) R/97, a female produced at We Energies Port Washington Generating Station in 2009, paired with **Frisco (b/g) K/13**, a male produced in 2006 at the Lock and Dam 1 site in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The pair nested at the UMN campus site in Minneapolis, producing four young. Another female, (b/g) N/53, was identified at this site during egg laying, so the parentage of the four young is uncertain. Last year, Seapro nested at the Hwy 610 Bridge in the Twin Cities, Minnesota, producing two eggs that did not hatch.

Peregrine production at We Energies nest sites, 1997-2014

Year	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	Total
Site																			
Pleasant Prairie Power Plant	2	3	2	3	4	1	4	2	5	5	2	4	1	4	4	3	4	4	57
Oak Creek Power Plant		4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	4	2	3	0	3	4	4	54
Port Washington Generating Station				3	3	3	4	4	4	2	4	4	3	4	2	4	4	2	50
Milwaukee Valley Power Plant						4	4	3	2	4	0	0	2	2	1	3	2	0	27
Neenah, Minergy									2										2
Presque Isle Power Plant														2	2	4	3		11
Milwaukee County Power Plant																3	3		6
Yearly and grand totals:	2	7	6	10	11	12	15	13	16	13	8	12	8	13	9	15	19	16	207



Three youngsters at Presque Isle Power Plant nest site in Marquette, Minnesota, shortly after banding.

2014 Wisconsin peregrine falcon production and nest site types



Site type	N	%Total	Site type	Young	%Total
Power plants	13	42%	Power plants	45	47%
Buildings	14	45%	Buildings	41	42%
<i>Elevators/Silos</i>	4	13%	<i>Elevators/Silos</i>	7	7%
<i>Paper mills</i>	2	6.5%	<i>Paper mills</i>	8	8%
<i>Banks</i>	1	3%	<i>Banks</i>	3	3%
<i>Courthouses</i>	1	3%	<i>Courthouses</i>	4	4%
<i>Breweries</i>	0	0%	<i>Breweries</i>	0	0%
<i>Manufacturing</i>	1	3%	<i>Manufacturing</i>	2	2%
<i>Universities</i>	2	6.5%	<i>Universities</i>	7	7%
<i>Hospitals</i>	2	6.5%	<i>Hospitals</i>	8	8%
<i>Office towers</i>	0	0%	<i>Office towers</i>	0	0%
<i>Sewage treatment</i>	1	3%	<i>Sewage treatment</i>	2	2%
Natural cliffs	4	13%	Natural cliffs	11	11%
Bridges	0	0%	Bridges	0	0%
Ore docks	0	0%	Ore docks	0	0%
Total nest sites	31		Total young	97	

Note: Numbers of young represent known production. Percentages are rounded.



Thanks to the following We Energies employees for continued support and much-appreciated help throughout the year

Eric Adsen	Bill Holton	Brian Manthey	Tim Rozumalski
Mike Boyer	Ron Hopp	Bob Matyas	Karen Ryan
Paul Brockish	Steve Jagow	Kris McKinney	Jon Schoenike
Barb Cahak	Jim Jeske	Nathan McNeil	Rick Schubert
Al Ciepluch	Bob Jones	Barry McNulty	Allan Schultz
Rose Dehli	Andre Kaczmarek	Bob Meidl	Mark Schultz
Peter Dickinson	Tim Kemen	Jerry Meissner	Cathy Schulze
Phillip Diehn	Paul Kessler	Tom Metcalfe	Roland Simatic
Kevin Fletcher	Les Kowalski	John Noegle	Steve Skibba
Jose Gonzales	Mike Kowalski	Jenny Nygaard	Brad Smith
Mike Grisar	Christine Kowalski	Jim Petersen	Pat Stiff
Dave Groshek	Jim Krewal	Bruce Ramme	Liz Stueck-Mullane
Henry Gutmann	Mike Krimmer	Trisha Bournelis	Claire Twohey
Doug Herzog	Greg Labonte	Adam Remiker	Tom Ventimiglia
Dale Hauswirth	Dawn Lemke	Bob Reske	Steve Washkun
Brian Henschel	Scott Lenhardt	Sherrie Richter	Jessica Williamson
Terry Hoffman	Marilyn Lovelace	Lisa Rivera	Bob Zahn

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