
MONTANA PEREGRINE FALCON SURVEY: 2012

Jay S Sumner*, Montana Peregrine Institute, Arlee, Montana 59821

Ralph Rogers, Centmont Bioconsultants, Winifred, Montana 59489

Adam Shreading, Montana Peregrine Institute, Arlee, Montana 59821

The release of 617 captive-bred young during the 1980's and 1990's sparked the recovery of the Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) in Montana. By 1994, a mix of state, federal, and private biologists (Montana Peregrine Falcon Working Group) documented 13 known active Peregrine Falcon territories. For the following four years, the number of known territories averaged about 16, but then intensive survey efforts in 1999 documented a total of 28 territories. The number of active Peregrine Falcon territories discovered in Montana has increased yearly. Montana had a record number of 108 active Peregrine Falcon nests recorded during the 2012 field season. Montana Peregrine Falcon surveys are conducted in conjunction with the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service national surveys scheduled every 3 years, beginning in 2002 and ending in 2015. Annual survey objectives include the establishment of a citizens group (Project Peregrine Watch) to monitor individual Peregrine territories throughout the state, determine status and trends of Montana's Peregrine Falcon population, study all known historic Peregrine Falcon eyries, record occupancy and productivity at all active territories, locate new Peregrine Falcon territories, seek confirm and consolidate information from all public and private sources, record activity and locations of neighboring cliff-nesting raptors (Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), and the Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), and develop , a long-term and cost-effective monitoring program for determining annual status and population trends of the State's Peregrine Falcon population.