



We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service 2023 Peregrine Falcon Nesting Season Report

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Cover image: “Clash” (b/blu) W/99, “Stryker” (b/blu) 15/AE and “Norby” (b/blu) W/98
*back in their nest box at the Wisconsin Public Service Weston Power Plant in Rothschild,
Wisconsin, shortly after they were banded on June 15, 2023. © G. A. Septon 2023*

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2023 nesting season overview

There were 11 young peregrines produced at We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) nest sites in Wisconsin this year, bringing the total number of peregrines produced at these sites to 422. Adding another 22 peregrines produced at We Energies Presque Isle Power Plant in Michigan brings the combined overall total to 444.

Since 1987, a known total of 2,257 peregrines have been produced in the wild in Wisconsin. Peregrines first began nesting at power plants in Wisconsin in 1992. Since then, a total of 917 (41%) have been produced at these sites. During this same period, there have been 422 peregrines produced at We Energies and WPS power plants in Wisconsin, which represent 46% of all peregrines produced at Wisconsin power plants, and 19% of the overall statewide total.

Once again, I began monitoring nest boxes via the webcams in late January and was able to identify all the banded adults at each site well before egg-laying began in mid-March. Although still a concern, the cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) were significantly down this spring. Even so, I once again employed extra precautions when banding. With webcams at numerous sites, I watched daily for any suspect behavior right up until banding day and, if sick birds were observed via webcam or during a site visit, that site would not be banded. I also sanitized my tools and bands between bandings. Banding events were also kept to a minimum. Only one young was lost this year pre-fledging but not from HPAI. A necropsy of the young falcon from the Valley Power Plant nest site done by the Wisconsin DNR Health Lab in Madison determined *E. coli* as the cause of death. Another young was lost at the Oak Creek Power Plant nest site when a new adult male took over that site and attacked it.

As part of We Energies and WPS outreach efforts, We Energies Senior Communications Specialist Alison Trouy and WPS Senior Communications Specialist Matt Cullen once again reached out to the community and news media with a very popular falcon-naming contest. They were also able to arrange for media coverage of the bandings at the Oak Creek, Port Washington and Weston sites. As a result, there again was extensive news coverage this year with just over 850,000 viewers across the state. Posts on social media reached more than 650,000 users this season. I'd like to personally thank Alison and Matt again for their untiring efforts at spreading the story of peregrine recovery in Wisconsin and the important role corporations have played in making this happen.

One of the seldom talked about aspects of the We Energies/WPS peregrine recovery efforts is the extent of the impact falcons born at their power plants have had on the overall recovery across the Midwest. With a 50%+ first year mortality

rate, not every peregrine survives, and those that do face an array of threats as they make their ways in life and hopefully survive to adulthood.

Peregrines that survive to breed often end up great distances from where they were born, and We Energies and WPS peregrines are no exception. Many of these falcons have nested across the Midwest, and I provide what we learn in every annual report. This year, We Energies and WPS-produced peregrines have been identified nesting in Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota and Indiana. An account of this year's nesting peregrines can be found on Page 10 of this report.

We Energies and WPS have made a true difference in the world of conservation and endangered species recovery efforts in Wisconsin. With their power plant nest sites responsible for nearly 20% of all the peregrines produced in the wild since recovery efforts began in Wisconsin in 1987, We Energies and WPS have clearly stepped up and, through their environmental commitment, have helped bring peregrines back in Wisconsin.

It takes a concerted effort on behalf of many to make the We Energies and WPS peregrine efforts successful. From plant engineers, technicians and managers at the power plants, to information technology (IT), environmental and corporate communications departments as well as corporate executives, everyone adds to the overall positive outcomes we've come to experience each nesting season.

As I do every year, I'd like to again thank everyone at We Energies and WPS who I've had the pleasure of working with for many years. I'm always heartened by the interest and help everyone freely provides to help ensure the falcons are given a safe place to nest. This first-hand involvement and the corporate support behind it speaks volumes.

In closing, I'd like to again thank Mike Grisar, whose steadfast friendship and support of peregrine recovery and management efforts on a corporate level makes everything run smoothly. Thank you, Mike!

Looking forward to another productive nesting season next spring!

Greg Septon

Oak Creek: We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant



Nesting details

Adult female: “Essity” (b/blu) 48/Y, produced in 2018 at the Essity Mill nest site in Menasha, Wisconsin. This was her 4th year at this site.

Adult male: “Michael” (b/r) P/58, produced in 2015 at the Racine County Courthouse nest site in Racine, Wisconsin, returned for his 7th year but was displaced by a new male in early June. During Michael’s 7 years at this site, he fathered a total of 23 young.



Above: “Essity” feeding her three young on May 20, 2023.

Note: A new unbanded adult male was noticed here on June 2 and displaced “Michael” (b/r) P/58. During the turnover, at least one young was also struck by the new male and on June 7, “Ember” (b/blu) S/89, one of this year’s young, was found dead on-site — likely struck by the new male. On June 8, wildlife photographer and plant contractor Chris Keller also witnessed the new male attempting to strike “Bucky” (b/blu) S/90, another of this year’s young.

Eggs: 4 laid between March 18-25

Projected hatch dates: April 24-29

Eggs hatched: 3 between April 25-27

Banded: 1 female and 2 males on May 16

Site visits: March 20, May 16, June 9, Oct. 9

This site has been active since 1998, producing a total of 77 young (2.96/year).

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Ember	Female	(b/blu) S/89	2447-02348
Ollie	Male	(b/blu) S/88	2447-02347
Bucky	Male	(b/blu) S/90	2447-02349

GPS: 42 Degrees 84’ 20 N, 87 Degrees 82’ 83 W

Milwaukee: We Energies Valley Power Plant



Nesting details

Adult female: Unbanded — likely the same female present since 2014.

Adult male: “Rolo” (b/blu) 69/E, produced in 2017 at Milwaukee’s St. Joseph’s Hospital nest site. Rolo was also photographed at the Allen Bradley building in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 2019 and 2021, so he’s been around waiting for an opportunity to take over a nest site. Rolo replaces “Hercules” (b/r) 60/R, who was also produced at the St. Joseph’s site in 2011 and had been present here since 2013. During Hercules’ years at this site, he fathered a total of 23 young.



*Above: “Rolo” incubating on March 25.
Below: His three young shortly after banding on May 22.*

Eggs: 2 laid between March 23-31

Projected hatch dates: April 30-May 2

Eggs hatched: 3 between April 30-May 2

Banded: 1 female and 2 males on May 22

Site visits: March 20, May 22, Sept. 29

This site has been active since 2002, producing a total of 50 young (2.27/year).

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Iggy	Female	(b/blu) S/96	2447-03460
Roscoe	Male	(b/blu) S/94	2447-03458
Blu	Male	(b/blu) S/95	2447-03459

GPS: 43 Degrees 02’ N, 87 Degrees 57’ 49 W

Port Washington: We Energies 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 Co., Minnesota. This was her 10th year at this site.

Adult male: “Beasley” (b/r) P/07, produced in 2014 at We Energies Milwaukee County Power Plant in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. This was his 7th year at this site.

Eggs: 4 between March 23-31

Projected hatch dates: May 1-3

Eggs hatched: 2 between May 5-7

Banded: 2 females on May 25

Site visits: March 20, April 6,

May 5, 19, 25, Aug. 30



Above: “Beasley” incubating

Below: “Brinn”

Left: Their two young after banding.

This site has been active since 2000, producing a total of 76 young (3.17/year).

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Pete	Female	(b/blu) W/54	2447-05976
Phlash	Female	(b/blu) W/55	2447-22766

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

Rothschild: WPS Weston Power Plant



Nesting details

Adult female: Unbanded

Adult male: "Sheldon" (b/r) 19/M, produced in 2013 at the UW-Oshkosh site in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, back for his 8th year.

Eggs: 4 laid between April 17-24

Projected hatch dates: May 26-28

Eggs hatched: 3 between May 28-29

Banded: 2 females and 1 male on June 15

Site visit: June 15



*Above: The unbanded female.
Below: "Sheldon"
Left: Their young after banding.*

This site has been active since 2006, producing a total of 44 young (2.44/year).

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Clash	Female	(b/blu) W/99	2447-06020
Stryker	Female	(b/blu) 15/AE	2447-06021
Norby	Male	(b/blu) W/98	2447-06019

GPS: 44 Degrees 51' 34 N, -89 Degrees 38' 57 W

We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service-produced peregrine falcons nesting — 2023



Following is known information on We Energies and WPS-produced peregrines that nested or were identified at nest sites in 2022.

Wisconsin

“Melvin” (b/r) 80/P, a male produced in 2013 at We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, paired with an unbanded adult female at the MG&E site in Madison, Wisconsin, producing two young. This was Melvin’s 9th year at MG&E.

“Beasley” (b/r) P/07, a male produced in 2014 at We Energies Milwaukee County Power Plant, paired with “Brinn” (b/r) 84/X, produced in 2012 at Gold Hoist cliff, Split Rock State Park, Lake Co., Minnesota. The pair nested at We Energies Port Washington Generating Station in Port Washington, Wisconsin, producing two young. This was Beasley’s 7th year at this site.

“Millennial” (b/blu) 75/E, a male produced in 2017 at We Energies Port Washington Generating Station, paired with “Alpha” (b/blu) E/02, a female produced in 2020 at the Multifoods/City Center nest site in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The pair nested at Milwaukee’s U.S. Bank site, producing four young. This was likely his 4th year at this site.

“Blaze” (b/blu) C/43, a male produced in 2020 at We Energies Valley Power Plant in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, paired with “Dana” (b/blu) 79/W, a female produced in 2019 at the St. Mary’s Hospital site in Chicago, Illinois. The pair nested at Milwaukee’s Veolia Water site, producing four young. This was Blaze’s first year at this site.

“Wisco-Spirit” (b/blu) 07/R, produced in 2018 at the WPS Weston Power Plant in Rothschild, Wisconsin, paired with “Crush” (b/blu) 73/H, a female that was trapped and banded in 2018 by Dave Evans at the CRH Concrete Plant in Duluth, Minnesota. The pair nested at The General Mills S&X site in Superior, Wisconsin, producing at least one young.

Minnesota

“Seapro” (b/g) R/97, a female produced at We Energies Port Washington Power Plant in Port Washington, Wisconsin, in 2009, paired with an unknown male banded black/blue. The pair nested at the Mayo Building site at the University of MN in Minneapolis, Minnesota. One egg was laid but failed to hatch.

Illinois

“Lisa” (b/g) R/39, a female produced in 2009 at the WPS Pulliam Power Plant in Green Bay, Wisconsin, paired again with **“Ben” (b/r) H/34**, a male produced in 2013 at Chicago’s Wrigleyville site. The pair returned to the original Wacker Drive site, producing three young.

“Gunner” (b/blu) 96/E, a male produced in 2018 at We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant, Oak Creek, Wisconsin, paired with an unnamed female produced in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2019. The pair were sighted around a new balcony but did not lay eggs.

Indiana

“Jeffery” (b/blu) 52/E, a male produced in 2016 at We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant, paired with an unbanded adult female at the Market Tower nest site in Indianapolis, Indiana, producing four young. This was Jeffery’s 6th year at this site.

“Xenon” (b/blu) 27/M, a female produced in 2015 at We Energies Valley Power Plant in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, paired with an unbanded male. The pair nested at the Carmeuse Lime Plant/Dean Mitchell power plant site in Gary, Indiana, producing two young. This was Xenon’s 2nd year at this site.

*Info on We Energies and WPS-produced peregrines nesting in other states provided by:
Illinois — Mary Hennen, Field Museum of Natural History.*

Indiana — Brad Bumgardner, Indiana Audubon Society, and Allisyn-Marie Gillet, Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Minnesota — Amy Ries, Raptor Resource Project, and Jackie Fallon, Midwest Peregrine Society.

We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service-produced peregrines out and about!

The following images showing band numbers were taken by birders and researchers, or captured on webcams at nest sites, in 2023.



***“Checkers” (b/blu) A/97**, a male produced in 2021 at We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant, was captured on webcam at the MRMC Thermal nest site in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, on March 13, 2023.*



“Blaze” (b/blu) C/43, a male produced in 2020 at We Energies Valley Power Plant in Milwaukee, WI was captured on the webcam at the Veolia Water nest site in Milwaukee, WI on March, 7, 2023. Blaze took over the Veolia territory and successfully nested here this year fathering 4 young.

We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service-produced peregrine falcons found injured or dead — 2023

The following provides information regarding We Energies and WPS peregrine falcons that (to the best of my knowledge) were identified and/or reported injured or dead as of Oct. 15, 2023. Some of the encounters below were not reported until after last year's report was published. [Falcon IDs are in blue.](#)

We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Project band(L)</u>	<u>USFWS band(R)</u>	<u>Banded</u>
Favre	M	(b/blu) 28/V	1266-06961	5/18/2022

This falcon was found dead by Lisa Pelland on May 20, 2023. The location was 3301 North 6th St., Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Cause of death was window collision.

We Energies Valley Power Plant, Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Project band(L)</u>	<u>USFWS band(R)</u>	<u>Banded</u>
Blu	M	(b/blu) S/95	2447-03459	5/22/2023

This falcon was observed (via webcam) on June 15, 2023, limping and appeared to have a wing issue, as well. It was found dead on-site the next day. The carcass was salvaged and shipped to the Wisconsin DNR Health Lab in Madison for necropsy.

We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant, Pleasant Prairie, Kenosha Co., Wisconsin

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Project band(L)</u>	<u>USFWS band(R)</u>	<u>Banded</u>
Jeffery	M	(b/blu) 52/E	1126-16188	5/31/2016

This falcon was identified (by band numbers) by Amy Kearns on April 26, 2022. The location was 0.1 miles W from Indianapolis, Indiana (Indianapolis Market Tower).

We Energies Port Washington Power Plant, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Project band(L)</u>	<u>USFWS band(R)</u>	<u>Banded</u>
Barney	M	(b/blu) 34/V	1266-06967	5/24/2022

This falcon was captured at O'Hare International Airport by IL APHIS Wildlife Services on Oct. 11, 2022, and released at Castle Rock State Park in Oregon, Illinois.

We Energies Valley Power Plant, Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Project band(L)</u>	<u>USFWS band(R)</u>	<u>Banded</u>
Xenon	F	(b/blu) 27/M	1807-71378	6/1/2015

This falcon was identified (by band numbers) by Amy Kearns on April 4, 2022. The location was 1.8 miles E from East Chicago (Carmeuse Lime Plant), Indiana.

Peregrine falcon production at We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service power plant nest sites 1996-2023



Year	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	Total	
Site																														
WPS Pulliam	4	3	4	2	4	4	4	3	2	1	3	4	2	4	3	2	4	3	3	3	3	4	3							72
WE Pleasant Prairie		2	3	2	3	4	1	4	2	5	5	2	4	1	4	4	3	4	4	2	1	2	4							66
WE Oak Creek			4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	4	2	3	0	3	4	4	0	4	4	2	3	3	3	4	3		80
WPS Kewaunee						3	4	3	3	1																				14
WE Port Washington.					3	3	3	4	4	4	2	4	4	3	4	2	4	4	2	4	2	3	5	3	0	3	4	2		76
WE Milwaukee Valley							4	4	3	2	4	0	0	2	2	1	3	2	0	4	0	3	4	2	3	3	2	3		51
WE Neenah, Minergy										2																				2
WPS Weston											4	3	1	2	4	2	0	4	0	0	4	4	3	4	2	2	2	3		44
WE Presque Isle, MI																2	2	4	3	3	3	3	2							22
WE Milwaukee County																	3	3	3	4	4									17
Yearly and grand totals:	4	5	11	8	14	18	20	21	18	18	20	15	15	14	20	13	19	28	19	19	21	27	23	12	8	11	12	11	444	

Note: WE = We Energies, WPS = Wisconsin Public Service

Wisconsin nest site types and production — 2023



Site type	N	%Total	Site type	Young	%Total
Power plants	10	23%	Power plants	28	23%
Buildings	17	40%	Buildings	55	44%
Elevators/Silos	5	12%	Elevators/Silos	16	13%
Paper mills	2	5%	Paper mills	8	6%
Courthouses	1	2%	Courthouses	3	2%
Breweries	1	2%	Breweries	4	3%
Universities	2	5%	Universities	6	5%
Hospitals	2	5%	Hospitals	4	3%
Office towers/Banks	2	5%	Office towers/Banks	7	6%
Sewage treatment	1	2%	Sewage treatment	4	3%
Churches	1	2%	Churches	3	2%
Natural cliffs	12	28%	Natural cliffs	30	23%
Quarries	2	5%	Quarries	5	4%
Bridges	0	0%	Bridges	0	0%
Canal walls	1	2%	Canal walls	4	3%
Ore docks	1	2%	Ore docks	3	2%
Total nest sites	43	100%	Total young	125	100%

NOTE: Numbers of young represent minimum known production. Percentages are rounded.



Thanks to the following We Energies and Wisconsin Public Service employees for their continued support and much appreciated help throughout the year.

Ryan Braman	Mike Grisar	Dawn Lemke	Adam Remiker
Eric Bump	Dave Groshek	Steve Liegl	Len Rentmeester
Gerald Buresh	Tanya Holler-Muench	Art Link	Peter Roy
Terry Cisewski	Julie Hallet	Lisa Maynard	Tim Rozumalski
Jason Cole	Bill Holton	Matt MacKenzie	Paul Spicer
Brendan Conway	Brian Hunt	Ed Mahler	Kelly Stoop
Matt Cullen	Amy Jahns	Jerry Meissner	Beth Straka
Dawn DeJardin	Gina Johnson	Mark Metcalf	Liz Stueck-Mullane
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Jeremy Golding	Pat Lawlor	Dave Polster	
Charles Griffith	David Lee	Dave Reed	

For additional information on the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Program, contact:
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