

SPECIES AT RISK in New Brunswick



Peregrine Falcon

Scientific name: *Falco peregrinus*
N.B. Status: Endangered

Peregrine Falcon

Description & Biology

The Peregrine Falcon is a bird of prey; approximately the same size as a crow. The females are generally 1/3 larger than the males. The adult is slate-blue with white to dusty-coloured under parts that are barred on the chest, belly and flanks. They have a noticeable black “mustache” mark on their head, and a long tail which ends in a point.

The Peregrine Falcon is renowned for its hunting ability. It will soar to a great height, then dive at a high speed and deliver a blow which either kills the prey instantly or knocks it out of the air. It can capture many small and moderate-sized birds, with a preference for shorebirds, ducks and pigeons. The Peregrine Falcon usually pursues its prey in open areas, such as shores, marshes, or forest clearings.

Peregrine Falcons court during the springtime and the female produces three to four eggs.

Habitat & Survival

In New Brunswick, Peregrine Falcons most often construct their nests on cliffs.

Occasionally, nests can also be found on office towers and bridges, but this usually occurs in large cities. Peregrine Falcons have been known to nest on the Harbour Bridge in Saint John.

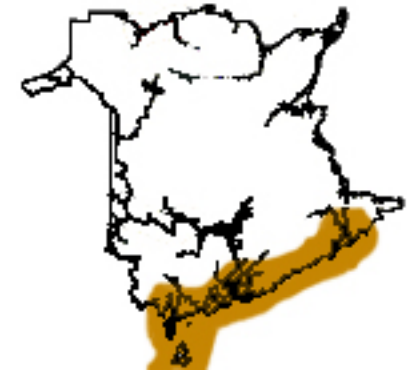
The Peregrine Falcon experienced dramatic declines in the 60’s because of the usage of DDT and other pesticides. In 1982, a program was established to reintroduce the Peregrine Falcon to the Bay of Fundy, and we now expect roughly a half dozen nesting pairs a year in New Brunswick.

Distribution

There are two subspecies that occur in New Brunswick. *Falco peregrinus tundrius* breeds in the Arctic and is seen in the province during migration. The subspecies *Falco peregrinus anatum* breeds in New Brunswick, along the shores of the Bay of Fundy and the mouth of the Saint John River. Both subspecies typically winter in the southern and eastern United States through to South America.

The Peregrine Falcon was never considered common in New Brunswick, and the current population levels may be approaching historic levels. On a continental scale, the population of this species has increased

since the banning of DDT and initiation of conservation efforts.



NB Distribution of
Peregrine Falcon