

Name \_\_\_\_\_



# Peregrine Falcons

Peregrine falcons are the most common bird of prey in the world. They live on every continent except Antarctica. They can be found in every land biome. Sometimes they even live in cities, making nests on bridges and skyscrapers!

“Peregrine” means “wanderer”, and these birds certainly live up to their name. Falcons like wide open spaces, and can often be found along coast lines. When they are not nesting, falcons often travel great distances. Many of them migrate, sometimes traveling as much as over 15,000 miles a year. Falcons have an amazing instinct, though, that leads them back to their nesting grounds, some of which have been in use by falcons for hundreds of years.

Falcons are fierce hunters. They snatch birds and bats right out of midair. They hunt from above, and when they zero in on their prey they drop straight down on top of it, sometimes diving as fast as 200 miles per hour!

Peregrine falcons were once an endangered species. But since humans stopped using DDT and other chemical pesticides, their numbers have increased once again. Humans have also helped to restore their populations in the U.S. and Canada by breeding them in captivity.

Peregrine falcons are unique birds in that they can be trained to hunt for humans. Keeping and training falcons to hunt for sport is called falconry, and people have done it for many centuries.

1. What evidence is offered to support the point that falcons are the most common bird of prey in the world?

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2. How do Peregrine falcons “live up to their name”?

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3. Why did Peregrine falcons almost become extinct?

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4. How have humans helped the peregrine falcon population to increase?

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5. Describe the unique relationship Peregrine falcons can have with humans.

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