

Peregrine Falcon Fledge Watch

Presented by:

Rochester Falconcam

And

Genesee Valley Audubon Society



<http://rfalconcam.com>
<http://gvaudubon.org>

Watching the Fledglings

Thank you for taking part in the Genesee Valley Audubon Society's Peregrine Falcon Fledge Watch! We're glad to have your help this year. You'll have a good time and be helping these beautiful birds continue their recovery from the brink of extinction. We hope you find it rewarding to witness these youngsters as they learn the skills they need not only to survive, but to become masters of the air. Below are a few guidelines to help make your experience more enjoyable.

Safety: Your personal safety is paramount. Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Traffic is a constant hazard, and there may be construction or other activity that you need to keep in mind. Watch the falcons with a friend if you can. (Most shifts are staffed by two or more people.) Don't venture into an area if you feel uncomfortable. The downtown area is usually well patrolled by the Rochester Police Department. If you are approached by a panhandler or someone with whom you are not comfortable, or if you feel you're in an unsafe situation, leave and/or call 911.

Gear: Recommended items are in **bold text**. Some optional items are also listed.

Pen/Pencil	Cell Phone
Binoculars (8-10x magnification)	FRS/GMRS Radio (Channel 7 Sub-channel 1)
Notepad	Hat/Sun shade
Comfortable Shoes	Lightweight Jacket
Spotting Scope	Water Bottle and Snack
Sunblock/Sunscreen	Camera

Clothing: Dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes or sneakers. It can get breezy even in summer, so a lightweight jacket is a good idea. If it's raining, a hat or hooded jacket works better than an umbrella so that you can keep both hands free. During the hottest summer days, a hat also provides useful shade and protection from the sun.

Documenting Your Watch

Please post a brief summary of your watch on the Rochester Falconcam's FalconWatch blog found online at <http://rfalconcam.com/falconwatching>.

Here are the "Three R's" of Fledge Watch posting:

Remember the Basics: Let us know how many of the birds you saw, their names or tape band colors (if you were able to ID them), where they were, and what they were doing (playing together, flying, eating, sleeping, etc) during your watch.

Report Only What You Know: If you didn't see all of the fledglings, please don't engage in worried speculation as to their whereabouts. The birds easily blend into their surroundings and often perch where we can't see them. Also, they can appear without warning, usually when a parent arrives with food. Keep your report as upbeat as you can, but be sure to be accurate. Use interactive map at <http://rfalconcam.com/rfc-main/falconmap.php> if you need help with area locations and features.

Remember Your Audience: Your reports will be read by people from around the globe, many of whom may not be native English speakers. Please write as clearly as you can. Try to avoid spelling errors, and avoid using slang or phrases that may not be understood by non-Rochesterians.



Considerations For Rescue

Safety: Ensure your own safety and the safety of the safety of the scene before attempting any rescue. Do not make any attempt to rescue the bird unless you can safely remove the downed falcon from its current situation. You should be guided by common sense and an honest evaluation of your skills and comfort level. Here are some things to consider:

- **Traffic:** Can you get into the street without endangering yourself? Is the bird on a busy road or one with multiple traffic lanes? Do you have the assistance of others to help direct traffic? Are Rochester Police officers or other public safety officials available?
- **Location of the Falcon:** Has the falcon landed behind a fence or other barrier that prevents access? Did it land in a small space where it might be difficult to take off, or is it in an open area? Is it accessible without trespassing on private property?
- **Condition of the Falcon:** Is the bird moving? Does it appear to be injured? (e.g. wing held at an odd angle, obvious bleeding, wing/leg broken, unable to fold wing against body) Can the bird rescue itself (move out of the street, fly out of an enclosed space or off the ground)?
- **Preparation for Rescue:** Do you have the materials needed to rescue a falcon (see the list below)? Do you have time to rescue the falcon, considering its position, traffic, and other hazards?

Downed Falcon Kit

- **Lightweight Towel or Blanket:** Do not use a heavy towel or thick blanket, as this may harm the falcon further. In a pinch, a light jacket or shirt also works.
- **Pet Carrier or Cardboard Box:** 12x16x10 inches. Use one with a close fitting lid or top and holes for ventilation. **DO NOT USE A WIRE- FRAME CAGE! THE BIRD'S FLIGHT FEATHERS CAN BE BROKEN ON THE WIRES.** A soft towel or paper strips (NO WOOD SHAVINGS, PLEASE!) can be placed in the bottom of the container for the bird's comfort.
- **Heavy Leather Gloves:** Falcons have sharp talons and beaks. A downed bird may act defensively.
- **Spray Bottle:** A light mist of water can help cool a stressed/overheated falcon and may also keep it calm.

Falcon Rescue Procedure

STEP 1. Call one of the following rescue contacts (in the order shown)

June Summers	585-865-6047 (Home) 585-355-1824 (Cell)
Dana Mulhern	585-752-8501 (Cell)
Carol Phillips	585-314-3980 (Cell)
Lee Brun (Lic. Rehabber)	585-624-2861

STEP 2. Consult the **Falcon Rescue Protocol** found elsewhere in this brochure. If you're advised to capture the falcon:

- Approach cautiously but quickly. If possible, use two people with one approaching from the front and the other from behind. Remain motionless when the falcon turns in your direction while the other person advances toward the bird. **USE NO MORE THAN 4 PEOPLE FOR THE RESCUE. BYSTANDERS SHOULD BE KEPT 20 FEET AWAY OR FARTHER.**
- Carefully cover the head of the falcon with a light cloth (not a heavy towel) to calm it down and to allow easier capture. **ALWAYS USE TWO HANDS WHEN HANDLING THE BIRD.**
- Place an open palm over the back and top surface of each wing. If a wing appears to be broken (the falcon can't fold it) be very careful touching that side of the bird.
- Support the bird's back against your torso, with the bird facing away from you. **DO NOT GRASP THE FALCON'S LEGS UNLESS ITS WINGS ARE TOO BADLY INJURED TO USE THE METHOD DESCRIBED ABOVE.**
- Beware! A falcon's feet are its primary weapons. They are very sharp, and cannot be easily released once the bird establishes a grip.

STEP 3. Carefully place the falcon in a pet carrier or cardboard box (see the Downed Falcon Kit). **KEEP THE FALCON QUIET and AWAY FROM BRIGHT LIGHTS and LOUD NOISES.** Use the spray bottle as needed. If you weren't able to contact someone on the list above, do so now.

Falcon Rescue Protocol

You should not attempt to rescue a falcon unless **ALL THREE** conditions below have been met:

1. You can do so safely
2. You have physical access to the falcon
3. You have the needed rescue materials (see the Downed Falcon Kit)

The circumstances that might require a rescue are listed below in order of priority. If a downed falcon meets ANY of the conditions below, you should call a rescue contact immediately. If TWO OR MORE conditions are met, you should attempt a rescue if it is safe for you to do so (see **Considerations For Rescue**):

- The falcon is in IMMEDIATE danger of being struck by a vehicle or other object that could cause serious injury.
- The falcon has an obvious injury to a wing, leg, or its head. **NOTE: YOUNG FALCONS' WINGS MAY "DROOP" DUE TO FATIGUE RATHER THAN INJURY**
- The falcon is obviously bleeding. **NOTE: FALCONS ARE MESSY EATERS AND MAY HAVE BLOOD ON THEIR FEATHERS FROM A RECENT MEAL**
- The falcon is in IMMEDIATE danger of being attacked by a predator (fox, coyote, dog, etc.)
- The falcon is in a roadway on which traffic is present.
- The falcon has landed/fallen into a confined space less than 10 by 10 feet.

Young falcons learning to fly may tire themselves out and land on the ground or simply be resting. **NOTE: A RESTING FALCON ONLY NEEDS RESCUE IF IT IS IN DANGER AS LISTED ABOVE.**

If in doubt, keep an eye on the falcon from a safe distance (20ft. or more) and call one of the people on the contact list. Staying too close to a falcon may discourage the parents from dropping food to it, so please keep your distance to avoid stressing the bird unnecessarily!