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Working for wild Birds of Prey and their Habitats

Press Release

A secure nesting platform and lots of food attract falcons back to Bath Church



The peregrine falcon nesting box at St John's Church, Bath. Photo by Hamish Smith

President | Chris Packham
Registered Charity No 1068565
A Company Limited by Guarantee in England No 3254207

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The pair of peregrine falcons that have made Bath their home, have remained around the city through the winter and have once again returned to the nest box installed by the Hawk and Owl Trust on St Johns RC Church on South Parade. They have laid four eggs this year and are due to hatch around the end of April 2013.

Traditionally peregrines nest on coastal cliffs but increasingly over the last few decades, have begun to move into our towns and cities. Our tall buildings such as churches provide perfect nesting sites. Another factor that has tempted these 'urban peregrines' to Bath is the plentiful food supply in the form of huge flocks of feral pigeons.

Peregrines were first observed regularly at Bath from around 2000. After three years of peregrine residence without any indication of successful breeding the Hawk and Owl Trust built a nest platform. It was installed on the spire of one of the peregrine's favourite roost sites, St John's RC Church in South Parade in 2005 and the birds first bred successfully the following season, in 2006.

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They have hatched young every season since.

Hawk and Owl Trust Trustee and Bath Peregrine Project coordinator Mike Rogers says:

‘I am delighted that these magnificent birds of prey have chosen to make their home in our nest box installed high up in the tower at St Johns Church in Bath. This is the eighth year that the peregrines have returned to the box and laid a clutch of eggs. We hope that the four eggs will hatch towards the end of April and that the young birds will go on to fledge successfully a few weeks later and join their parents in the skies above the city.’

The Hawk and Owl Trust team are able to monitor the progress of the adults and their young thanks to a camera installed above the nest site.

The observations via the camera have provided invaluable insights into the feeding



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and breeding ecology of these magnificent birds. Because of the nature of the site there is no public access to the camera images, but thanks to the technology the Hawk and Owl Trust are able to keep a close eye on the birds without disturbing them.

More information on the Bath Peregrine Project can be found at

www.upp.hawkandowl.org/

Notes to the Editor

The Hawk and Owl Trust was set up in 1969 to highlight the plight of the peregrine falcon and other birds of prey suffering terribly due to persecution and the effects of pesticides such as the infamous DDT, their numbers falling dramatically. Although the use of damaging pesticides have ceased persecution by man continues to play a very unwelcome role in the life of the peregrine and our other birds of prey

For information, interviews and more photographs please call Lin Murray 07881 657 944.