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Working for wild Birds of Prey and their Habitats

Press Release

The 4th peregrine falcon egg at Norwich Cathedral has hatched!



The peregrine falcons using the Norwich Cathedral nesting platform, installed by wild bird of prey conservation charity the Hawk and Owl Trust, have hatched their fourth and final egg of 2013!

At 20:26 last night, 27 hours after the hatching of the third egg, the 4th egg hatched. Just moments before, the male brought food to the nest but the female, who was covering the egg and 3 chicks, just wasn't interested so he took it away. She then turned around and pulled two still-connected halves of an eggshell from beneath her – and started to eat it, as she had done with the other 3 shells.

David Gittens, the Hawk and Owl Trust Technical Support Officer responsible for the webcam says:

'So, the 'race for life' for these four little peregrine chicks begins. It won't be an easy ride. The Laws of Nature are tough and unyielding, or at least that's the way it seems to us humans sometimes. To the peregrines though it's just the way it is. They know no different and have no option but to deal with it as best they can. We will see what fate awaits them in the coming weeks. Fingers crossed!'

President | Chris Packham

Registered Charity No 1068565

A Company Limited by Guarantee in England No 3254207

Chair | Barbara Handley

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You can see the latest video clip of chick activity and live webcam feed at:

<http://upp.hawkandowl.org/live/>

Stills of the chicks are attached to this email. More will be available.

Normally a bird of the sea cliffs, wild peregrines have been slowly moving into our cities, especially over the last few decades, earning themselves the nametag of 'urban peregrines'. In Norwich, a male peregrine first appeared at the Cathedral a few years ago and was then joined by a female. The Hawk and Owl Trust installed the nest platform, 75 metres above street level, in February 2011 to give them somewhere secure to nest. The birds started to use the new platform immediately and hopes were high for successful breeding in 2011, but the female was then driven away by a larger juvenile bird. Although the juvenile female was not expected to breed because she was too young, she surprised everyone by laying an egg but it did not hatch successfully.

Happily the peregrines returned to the spire in 2012 successfully fledging two chicks, the first recorded in the city. Their first egg of 2013 arrived at about 4.30pm on Thursday 21st March 2013, the 2nd about 04.55 on Sunday 24th March. The third egg appeared at about 17.00 on afternoon of Tuesday 26th March. Their fourth and final egg for 2013 arrived on 29 March, Good Friday morning, around 6.35am.

Over a million people watched the trials and tribulations of the daily life of the peregrine family in 2012 via the live peregrine webcam or through the telescopes at the Peregrine Watch Point, set up in the Cathedral grounds by the Trust. These dedicated followers and many more are once again settling down to enjoy another season in the life of our own pair of 'urban peregrines.' The Watch Point started again on 25 March and will be open daily until the chicks fledge sometime in July. The live webcam is available at www.hawkandowl.org; click on the Urban Peregrine button, or on the Norwich Cathedral website www.cathedral.org.uk where you can also find directions to the Cathedral.

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The live webcam can also be viewed at the Hawk and Owl Trust's reserve - Sculthorpe Moor Community Nature Reserve near Fakenham. You can sit in the warmth of the visitors centre and enjoy a cup of coffee and cake, whilst catching up on the latest episode of 'The Peregrines'! The reserve is open every day except Mondays and the visitor centre is open from 9am until 4pm. For more information please visit: www.hawkandowl.org/sculthorpe/about-sculthorpe/

If you are interested in volunteering to help at the Watch Point please contact the Hawk and Owl Trust by emailing the Peregrine Project Officer carrie.kerry@hawkandowl.org. 20,000+ visitors came to the Watch Point last year, many of them children, keen to connect with the peregrines that have made their home in an urban environment.

The Cathedral Peregrines project has been generously supported by hosts Norwich Cathedral; Archant, Viking Optics, I-Catcher Systems, SRE Technologies, Syngenta Ltd, WildSounds and WiSpire by FreeClix; Kiln Crafts Centre, M & A Partners

-ENDS-

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There are pictures of the peregrines on the cathedral available in high resolution. We have avi video available from the webcam and more stills from the webcam.

Please note: Copies of stills from the webcam are available but as they have been taken from the CCTV system they are not available in particularly high resolution.

Notes to editors:

Hawk and Owl Trust

Founded in 1969 to help save the peregrine, in serious decline due to the effects of pesticides and persecution, the Hawk and Owl Trust is a national charity which now works for the conservation and appreciation of all wild birds of prey and their habitats – both in its nature reserves (such as Sculthorpe Moor Community Nature Reserve near Fakenham) and in partnership with others. Working with

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communities and other organisations, farmers, foresters and landowners, the Trust researches, restores and manages nesting, roosting and feeding habitats and encourages greater understanding and appreciation of these very special birds.

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