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Working for wild Birds of Prey and their Habitats

Press Release – Cathedral Peregrine update

First Chick Fledges the Nest!

The peregrine falcons using the Norwich Cathedral nesting platform, installed by wild bird of prey conservation charity the Hawk and Owl Trust, have fledged their first chick for 2013.



'TZ (the number on the chick's leg ring) stretches her wings after her eventful slip from the nest box to the turret, 25m below'

Photo credit: Andy Thompson

President | Chris Packham

Registered Charity No 1068565

A Company Limited by Guarantee in England No 3254207

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The moment that the chick slipped from the ledge was witnessed by a gentleman from Sweden via the peregrine webcam and he quickly rang the Trust's Head Office in Somerset to report the news.

Hawk and Owl Trust Urban Peregrine Project Officer Carrie Kerry was first on the scene and very keen to locate the chick. If the chick had made it all the way to the ground level it would be very vulnerable to ground predators and unsuspecting passers-by who may be tempted to pick the bird up and remove it. Luck was with our first fledgling however as Carrie Kerry noted:

'The youngster landed on the right hand turret of the Cathedral spire about 25m below the nest box. Both adults flew by several times and one, the male I think, perched on the ledge next to the chick. The chick then explored the turret area a few times and following quite a bit of calling, we saw it eating.'

Video clip of the moment (17.20 on 6 June) the chick slipped from the ledge:
<http://youtu.be/yG4outBLzrl>

The chick is fine and the parent birds are in attendance.

The Trust will be launching the traditional 'Chick Naming' competition on Friday 7 June. Any name suggestions for the four chicks should be emailed to lin.murray@hawkandowl.org by midnight on Sunday 9 June. The winning names will be picked by BBC's Country File presenter Ellie Harrison who recently helped ring the Norwich Cathedral chicks. She went up the spire to visit and film the chicks for a forthcoming BBC series called 'The Big British Wildlife Revival' which will be screened this summer as part of the BBC's 'Summer of Wildlife'. The winning names will be announced next Wednesday 9 June on the website at www.hawkandowl.org.

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Caption: Ellie Harrison helping qualified Hawk and Owl Trust team member Phil Littler ring the chicks

Picture Credit: Andy Thompson

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 name tag 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

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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.

Over a million people watched the trials and tribulations of the daily life of the peregrine family last year 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. 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.

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 Solutions M & A Partners, Syngenta Ltd, WildSounds and WiSpire by FreeClix; Kiln Crafts Centre .

-ENDS-

Press enquiries: Lin Murray 07881 657 944 lin.murray@hawkandowl.org

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

Further quotes and interviews are available from Leanne Thomas Education Officer Hawk and Owl Trust 01328 856 788

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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 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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