



# PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

## News Release

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### **TWO PEREGRINE FALCON CHICKS GIVEN NEW HOME**

Two peregrine falcon chicks removed from a rooftop nest in downtown Pittsburgh in May have been placed with new parents and siblings in a cliffside nest in northcentral Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission on May 31 transported the chicks from a wildlife rehabilitation facility to the nest, where both adult and young peregrines had been seen. It quickly was apparent the adults at the nest accepted the new chicks as their own. The chicks were seen at the nest the next day, with chicks that had hatched in the nest and their parents.

“The young birds’ best prospects are with wild adults, so fostering these relocated chicks into an active nest in a wild setting, with young of similar age, was the best option available,” said Dan Brauning, the Game Commission’s wildlife diversity division chief who placed the chicks in the nest. “After the care received in rehabilitation, the young were capable of tearing food provided to them, and in the wild they’ll learn to hunt with their foster siblings.”

The two peregrine falcon chicks were among four chicks removed from the rooftop nest discovered during a building renovation. The other two chicks died at the rehabilitation facility, where they received care until a suitable foster nest was identified. While the cause of their deaths is unknown, one chick had Trichomoniasis lesions on its lungs and it’s possible both chicks died from infection.

Chick mortality is not uncommon. About half of all birds die before they fledge their nests.

Peregrine falcons are classified as endangered species in Pennsylvania, a distinction that affords them additional protection.

When the rooftop nest was discovered, developer BT Pitt-Third LLC halted work near the nest and applied for state and federal permits that would allow for the birds to be relocated so the project could stay on schedule. The building renovation will create apartments for college students, who are scheduled to move in before starting classes in August.

Both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Pennsylvania Game Commission approved permits that will allow the project to continue, provided the Game Commission supervised the relocation of the nestlings.

BT Pitt-Third LLC agreed to pay all costs associated with the care and rearing of these birds.

Historically, most of Pennsylvania's peregrine falcon nests were located on cliffs, but today, most nesting peregrines in Pennsylvania select manmade structures for nesting sites. They often nest on the roofs and ledges of tall buildings, or on bridges. Conflicts sometimes arise because of this.

In an effort to facilitate successful nesting, the Game Commission closely coordinates with those who own and operate structures where peregrine falcons nest in an attempt to ensure potential impacts to nesting peregrines are avoided.

The location of the cliffside nest in which the chicks were placed is not being identified.

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