

## 2024 Updates from the Nestbox

### March 19



Welcome to the 2024 nesting season! The first egg was laid on March 18th. VIDEO HIGHLIGHT: [check out the moment the egg was first revealed!](#) Hopefully, more eggs will be coming any day now.

This season marks the 25th anniversary of watching these fabulous birds of prey – check out the tables below to see the parents and offspring, as well as the dates of major events for each year. Over the season, watch the male and female tend to each other and to their young.

You may be wondering how we get the nestbox so clean each year? The answer is “we” don’t! It is nature that cleans the nestbox for us – wind, rain, snow – nature slowly cleans the box once the falcons leave it so that by early spring, it’s ready for the next nesting season.

Image and video captured by Audubon volunteer Sandi B. (Zoom into the picture [here](#))

### March 20

A second egg was laid this morning! The female will lay the clutch of three to four eggs at approximately 48 hour intervals. Incubation will not begin until the second-to-last egg is laid, which ensures all eggs will hatch around the same time. Once incubation

starts, one of the adults will be sitting on the nest (with the exception of brief moments during warm weather or when the male and female need to exchange food.) Thanks to a viewer for submitting this image. (Zoom into the picture [here](#))



## March 22

A third egg has been laid in the early hours. [WATCH THE VIDEO REPLAY!](#)  
Keep watching to see if there will be a fourth!  
[Click here to open the image in a new tab.](#)



## March 23

### **FAQ: How can I tell if the falcon I am seeing is the male or the female?**

Most of the time, the falcon sitting on the eggs will be the female, but there will be times when she leaves and the male will take over the “egg-sitting” duties. Typically, the female relies heavily on her mate to provide food periodically during incubation and consistently for the first 10 days after the eggs hatch. So unless they are at the nest box at the same time, it may be hard to tell them apart. Here are some ways to distinguish the two parents this year. In the side-by-side photo, the female is on the right and the male is on the left.

- **Size:** The female is taller and broader, with a larger head and thicker neck than the male. Females can weigh up to 50% more than the males. The male is generally smaller and more streamlined (this makes him more agile and better at catching highly maneuverable prey, while females are better at catching larger prey.)

- **Color:** The male's beak is darker than the female's beak. Differences can also be seen in the 'bare' parts: the skin around the eyes, the cere (skin around the beak), and the legs and feet. The female's coloring is a more muted yellow, while the male's coloring is a brighter yellow-orange. These differences are especially strong during mating season.

- **Throat:** They have slightly different markings (green arrow) – on their left sides (pictured) the female's marking is shaped slightly like a sideways heart, while the male's markings are more blocky-looking.

If you can spot any other differences, let us know! Happy viewing!

[Click here to open the image in a new tab.](#)



## March 24



A 4th egg was laid today around 9:15 am! [Click here to open the image in a new tab.](#)

## April 14



Although the female is the one to primarily incubate the eggs, the male will also take a turn at different times throughout the day. Try to spot when the changeover occurs! It happens very quickly, so they can be easy to miss—sometimes the changeovers even happen off-camera (the parent will sense or see the other is near and get off the eggs.).

The falcons “hang out” all around their territory range, not necessarily at the nestbox (which is strictly a nursery.) Since the last egg was laid on March 24th, we are more than half-way through the incubation period of about 5 weeks. By the end of April, the hatching should begin. You’ll see the parents at the nestbox together for longer periods once the eggs hatch and there are many mouths to feed! Don't forget to let us know if you spot something interesting or have a question by submitting through the form below. [Click here to open the image in a new tab.](#)

## April 18



Changeover time! Pictured here, is the female perching as she returns to the nest while the male incubates the eggs. [Click here to open the image in a new tab.](#)

**April 22**



Happy Earth Day! All four eggs are still intact - stay tuned for hatching! [Click here to open the image in a new tab.](#)

**April 25 - HAPPY HATCH DAY!**



Hatching has begun! The first egg to hatch was spotted by viewers this morning. The female was observed eating the eggshell to replenish her calcium levels after producing

the four eggs. [Click here to open the image in a new tab](#) - thank you to our viewers for the submission!

Look closely when the adult lifts their body up - can you see the pipping holes on any of the other eggs? Pipping is what occurs when an egg is ready to hatch. The eyas (Peregrine hatchling) first uses the egg tooth on the tip of the beak to punch a small hole in the egg to allow it to breathe air. They will fully emerge 12-24 hours later.

## April 26



The second and third eggs hatched this morning! [Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

**April 27**



All four eggs have hatched. Here is a shot from lunchtime today! [Click here to open the image in a new tab.](#)

**May 2**





Last week all four eggs hatched, and we welcomed four eyasses to the top of the Superman building in Providence. The female is still doing her best to cover the eyasses to keep them warm (brooding), which must be hard with all four of them squirming beneath her. Did you know that eyasses are born with their eyes closed, making them blind – they cannot see their siblings or even the female who feeds them. These “cute” little balls of white down are pretty weak and can’t stand at this stage, having disproportionately large feet, but make no mistake – these are fierce birds of prey and over the next few weeks will grow in size and in strength. In addition, the dark plumage of the falcon will slowly come in, including their primary wing feathers.

During the first two weeks, the nestlings will be brooded almost constantly, usually by the female. The male has been spotted at the edge of the ledge – presumably to drop off food as the female will then leave the nest box only to return with food for her hungry nestlings. The diet of the Peregrine Falcon is diverse, consisting primarily of other birds, with pigeons being a favorite in the city, but it also includes small mammals such as bats and rodents. Feeding occurs several times throughout the day, see if you can spot what is on the menu for that meal.

[Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

**May 3**



Both parents at the nest to feed their nestlings! [Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

## May 8



The four siblings! [Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

**May 11**



**FAQ: Where are the parent Peregrine Falcons?!**

Answer: As you can see from this picture from this morning, the eyases are growing quickly and are now too big for the adults to cover with their bodies. The eyases are continuously brooded for only around the first 10 days of life. Then, the eyases will huddle together until their adult feathers come in at around three weeks. At this stage, it is normal for the parents of the eyases to be absent from the nestbox. They are now spending most of their time hunting to feed their growing family, and they will really only return to feed their young. It also becomes pretty uncomfortable for the parent(s) to remain in the nest box at all times due to the increasing size of the eyases!

Rest assured: the parents are only seconds away if any predator approaches. After all, they are the fastest creature on the planet. Keep watching and hopefully, you will be watching at just the right time to see the adults return to feed their young!

Pictured is one of the adults seen this morning. [Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

May 13



05/13/2024 13:48:48



Audubon Society RI Peregrine

05/13/2024 13:49:34



Audubon Society RI Peregrine

05/13/2024 14:02:54



Audubon Society RI Peregrine



Lunchtime! The nestlings have just about doubled in size. They are resting and walking on their tarsi (lower leg) - and have also been observed standing fully! They are becoming more aggressive at feeding time.

[Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

## May 16

**Tomorrow (Friday, May 17) is banding day!** Here is what to expect:

Sometime around 9:15 /9:30 am, we will begin the banding process. A board will be placed across the front of the nesting box to protect the falcons. Joe Zbyrowski, our bander, will remove the back opening of the box and remove the falcons. The bird's sex will be determined based on the size of their legs and then two bands will be placed on one leg of each bird. The bird's legs have stopped growing at this point so the bands will never constrict their legs. The bands will help scientists identify where the birds were hatched, the year, and if they are male or female. The birds will then be placed back in the box, the front board removed and the process will be over. It takes a little over an hour to band four birds.

## May 17

Today we banded the four healthy peregrines—and determined that **all four nestlings are males!** [Check out images from today by Peter Green on our Facebook!](#)

## May 21

We're hoping to observe the Providence Peregrine parents tomorrow at our Providence Birding Adventure! Please join us from 12-1 pm: [click here for location and other details!](#)

## May 23





This weekend the eyasses will be one month old! They are still being fed by the female and the female is often seen on the ledge watching over her nestlings at night. They have undergone significant changes since they were born. The most noticeable change is that their fluffy, white down is being replaced by tan/brown juvenile feathers and their secondary (wing) feathers have developed dark tips. They have also developed darker face coloring. They are opening/flapping their wings to strengthen their wing muscles within the safe confines of the nest box. Sometime over the next week or so, they will



begin stepping out onto the ledge of the nest box and may begin to leave the nest box. They have a natural instinct of how to fly, but the parents will be supervising them closely.

[Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

## May 26



All four lined up after dad stops by with a meal! You can really see the difference in their coloring: the second from the right still has more of the white down than the others - possibly the last one to hatch.

[Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

## May 28 am

Yesterday, viewers could see an eyas resting his head on the ledge, and today a couple of the birds were showing curiosity about the world beyond the nest box.

[Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)



## May 28 pm



Here is a side-by-side image of the first two eyasses perched on the edge of the nest box for the first time today! One eyas almost lost his footing but was able to get himself in again with a good flap of his wings.

[Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

## May 31 pt. 1

The eyases have begun fledging! Three have hopped onto the roof



Audubon Society RI Peregrine

05/31/2024 06:28:05



Audubon Society RI Peregrine

05/31/2024 06:46:13



Audubon Society RI Peregrine



## May 31 pt. 2

The fourth eyes has hopped onto the perch and finally onto the roof with the others!



## June 1 pt. 1



The morning of May 31st was certainly exciting – in less than 6 hours all four eyasses left the nest box! We have zoomed the camera out a bit so you can watch as the fledglings begin to explore the 'outside' world of the rooftop. Also, with the wider view, you can often see the parents flying in the background, never very far from their young.

Within a few days, they will be learning to fly. You can already see them exercising their wings as they go down from the ledge to the rooftop and then fly back up to the ledge. The fledglings may still return to the nestbox to sleep at night, but they will spend less and less time in the nest box as the nest box is a nursery, not a 'home'.

Fledging is a very dangerous time. Luckily, because the nestbox is so high up, the falcons that fledge from this spot are able to easily glide from this roof to the many lower roofs of buildings below them as they learn to fly with confidence. Although the parents are still providing prey for their young, they may even stop feeding the fledglings in the next couple of days to encourage them to take their first flights.

Want to watch the "flying lessons" that will take place this month? You can visit them yourself: the Providence Place Mall is close by, making it a great place to park (it's free for the first two hours.) Don't forget your binoculars!

Viewer Question: How do the parent peregrines locate their fledglings once they take flight?

Answer: The juveniles stay in the family's territory while they are still learning, so they are never far. The parents will use the same incredible skills they possess for hunting purposes to keep track of their young - their keen eyesight and hearing.

Have a question or want to submit a photo of something you saw on the live stream? Scroll down and complete the form. We love receiving viewer questions and photos! [Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

## **June 1 pt. 2**

The fledglings regrouped back in the nest box for the night!



**June 4**







Audubon Society RI Peregrine



Audubon Society RI Peregrine

06/04/2024 11:57:10



Audubon Society RI Peregrine

06/04/2024 12:36:55



Audubon Society RI Peregrine



The juveniles have become much more bold since leaving the box. Some of their recent antics include stealing food from each other and flying to and from the building roof to the nestbox roof and the nearby ledge (in the background)! Their parents are still bringing them food. They will soon begin travelling farther and farther from this spot by gliding to different rooftops—until they are zooming around the city learning to hunt!  
[Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

## June 9



The fledglings have now officially taken flight. For most of the first week of June, the juveniles returned to the nest box to sleep, but on the night of June 5th, only one returned. On the night of June 6th, none of the juveniles returned, but viewers were treated to one more view of the mother Peregrine as she was at the nest box for several hours. The juveniles have since been spotted a couple times over the weekend.

They will slowly begin to explore more of their parent's range as they spend the summer learning to hunt and improving their flight skills. At this age they are fully developed and would easily manage to glide (instead of "falling") if they can't fly back up to a ledge. "They don't drop straight down like heavy stones, they are very light and open their wings and glide to safety," says Peter Green of Providence Raptors. This photo of the 'Superman building' shows the location of the nest box and where juveniles have been spotted in the past. By early August, the parents will encourage their young to move out and find their own territory. Peregrine Falcons are a migratory species and have been recorded to migrate up to about 8,000 miles. Many birds will stay in their urban territory year-round though, due to the abundance of food in these locations (namely pigeons.) So, if you are in Providence, keep looking up to see these magnificent birds of prey!

It's always bittersweet to see an empty nest box and roof top, but we are celebrating the successful flights of our four juveniles! We hope you enjoy the collage of photos that shows the growth of this year's brood ([Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)). We will be shutting the camera off for the season tomorrow. Thank you to everyone who tuned in for the 2024 season, sent in their observations and pictures, donated in support of the live stream, and shared this live stream with friends and family! Your enthusiasm and support, in all forms, are greatly appreciated. Let's do it again next year!

If you haven't done so already, [sign up for Audubon's emails](#) so you won't miss the official 2025 Providence Peregrine nesting season announcement and [please consider making a donation](#) to bring back the live stream next year!

**June 10**

06/09/2024 14:53:49



06/09/2024 16:06:32



Audubon Society RI Peregrine



A Sunday visit! Here are some photos showing one of the juveniles quickly returning to the ledge on-screen. Another photo has arrows showing two falcons on the far back ledge. [Click here to open the image in a new tab](#)

In case you missed it, we'll be shutting the camera down later today for the season. Please see the June 9th update!