

The Wakefield Peregrines

Until very recently, peregrine falcons were an endangered species in the UK. Thanks to a ban on the use of the pesticide DDT and the efforts of a number of conservation groups, numbers are now increasing.



Photo: Julie Knowles

A willingness to make use of urban nest sites has also helped the population to grow.

Falcons over-wintered on the cathedral spire in 2011. Wakefield Naturalists' Society (WNS) and Wakefield Cathedral Chapter agreed on the provision of a nestbox to encourage peregrines to breed.

With financial help from a number of local businesses and individuals, WNS has been able to install a nest platform on the east parapet of the cathedral tower.

In 2015, a very young male (ringed on 16 May 2014 at St George's Church, Sheffield) attracted a mature female to the nestbox, where they hatched and fledged three young peregrines.

From 2016 to 2018, the adults have successfully fledged a further 10 young peregrines and a fostered juvenile that was introduced from a nest site in Hull.

The young peregrines stay in and around Wakefield for several weeks. They gradually become less dependent on the parents and they roam more widely.



Wakefield Naturalists' Society

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL



A webcam was installed in time for the 2016 breeding season and live images from the nestbox of the adults and four juveniles were streamed to the internet for the first time in May 2016. In 2018 a second webcam was installed that shows live images of peregrine activity on the east parapet near the nestbox. To view live images from the webcams visit the WNS website at:



www.wakefieldnaturalists.org

Egg-laying takes place in late March or early April but courtship and nest-scraping activities begin a month or two before that. Outside the breeding season highlights can be seen on the WNS website or on YouTube.

Inevitably, the streaming service costs money to run. If you would like to help to maintain this, you can make a donation via BT MyDonate. A link to this can be found on the WNS website webcam page or Twitter page.

Wakefield Naturalists' Society is a registered charity.

Registered Charity Number: 1165774



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