

Peregrine Falcon



Peregrine Falcons in Yellowstone National Park

Peregrine falcons are blue-gray and black with white spotted chests. The females weigh two to three-and-a-half pounds and are larger than the males, who only weigh one to one-and-a-half pounds. Their wingspans are 29 to 47 inches. They are birds of prey, meaning they hunt and eat meat, such as other birds, small mammals, and reptiles. They will also eat insects, which is why they almost went extinct from being poisoned by pesticides meant to kill the insects. In the 1960s, many pesticides were banned in the U.S. after we found out how they killed birds, such as falcons.

Yellowstone was one place peregrine falcons were protected. They were taken off the endangered species list in 1999, but are being watched closely.

What did you learn about the peregrine falcons of Yellowstone?

1. Which are bigger, male or female peregrine falcons?

The female peregrine falcons are bigger.

2. What almost killed all the peregrine falcons?

Pesticides used to kill insects also killed the birds who ate the insects.

3. Are peregrine falcons still endangered?

No. In 1999, peregrine falcons were taken off the endangered species list, but they are still watched.

