

# Wildlife

Fall 2005  
www.njfishandwildlife.com

## 'Single Mom' Peregrine Captivates the Nation

The drama that engulfed the peregrine falcons nesting this spring atop New Jersey's second-tallest building at 101 Hudson Street in Jersey City captivated nature lovers nationwide. It involved an injured falcon, a single parent, sick chicks and a failing video camera.

On May 2, just about a week before three of the pair's four eggs hatched, the male peregrine succumbed to what amounts to an occupational hazard for such wild, fast-flying birds in urban environments – he apparently hit a wire and severed one of his wings. So, at a time when the female normally broods her chicks while the male brings in food, the female alone had to both protect her eggs and chicks and hunt for food, which she did successfully.

And the drama continued. A week after the three chicks were born, Kathy Clark, principal zoologist with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Endangered and Nongame Species Program, noticed the chicks had signs of trichomoniasis, a potentially fatal bacterial infection common to pigeons, the falcons' main urban prey. Fortunately, Clark was able to counter the infection with pills she wrapped in raw chicken and fed to each chick.

Then, the peregrine world was abuzz with reports that the female and apparently a new male suitor had been observed on several occasions in flight together while the chicks were still in the nest.

From as far away as San Francisco, transfixed webcam watchers shared their thoughts and observations via e-mail with biologists until the video camera trained on the nest

box began to deteriorate, making it difficult for viewers to see the birds.

Originally installed in 2001, the camera needed to be replaced. Since no funding for new equipment had been budgeted, Linn Pierson, a volunteer Citizen Scientist nest watcher, included a plea for donations in one of the

riveting *Nestbox News* updates she regularly posted on the DEP's Division of Fish & Wildlife Web site: [www.njfishandwildlife.com](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com).

The response was overwhelming. Two anonymous donors contributed \$7,000. Folks across the country pledged another \$1,500. To all those who contributed, thank you. As a result of your generosity, next year two new cameras will offer a choice of two different views of a repositioned nest box.

"I was absolutely floored that so many people from all over really care about these birds," said Pierson, a park naturalist and supervisor of operations for the Palisades Park Commission. She also watches three cliffside falcon nests on the Palisades.

Unfortunately, one of the three

101 Hudson Street fledglings died apparently on her first flight in June when she collided with the building. But the adult male who lost his wing has recovered well at The Raptor Trust in Millington, and may become an education bird. The potential suitor is still seen sporadically flying with the female. And the other two chicks successfully fledged, adding to the record total of 40 fledglings produced by a record 20 peregrine falcon nests this year.



Photo courtesy of Linn Pierson

As a photographer records the event, Kathy Clark (center) and Mick Valent, ENSP principal zoologists, band a peregrine falcon chick atop the 101 Hudson Street building as its mother dive-bombs them.

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**ENDANGERED AND NONGAME SPECIES PROGRAM MISSION**

"To actively conserve New Jersey's biological diversity by maintaining and enhancing endangered and nongame wildlife populations within healthy functioning ecosystems."



## Wildlife Plan, Red Knot Assessment Highlight a Very Productive Summer

Message from Larry Niles, Chief  
Endangered and Nongame Species Program

The Endangered and Nongame Species Program's completion of two nationally important documents, which will help protect fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, made this past summer one of our most productive.

Since early last year, Fish & Wildlife has been working on New Jersey's Wildlife Action Plan, a blueprint for the future conservation of our state's species of greatest conservation need. Every state must submit a wildlife action plan to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service by October 2005 to qualify for future State Wildlife Grants (SWG) from the federal government. The SWG program provides federal funds to states for the conservation of species that are endangered, threatened, rare or have special conservation needs. New Jersey now receives approximately \$1.1 million dollars in SWG funding each year. To ensure New Jersey qualifies for the federal funding, Acting Governor Richard J. Codey signed legislation which provides an appropriation of \$381,715 to fund the state-match component.

The Wildlife Action Plan lays the foundation for better coordination of wildlife research and management among programs within Fish & Wildlife, state and federal agencies, and many partners in the conservation community. The conservation strategies in action plans from states throughout the nation will collectively offer a strong argument to Congress to consider providing a stable and permanent funding source for rare species conservation. The plan is now available for review on Fish & Wildlife's Web site: [www.njfishandwildlife.com](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com). We welcome your comments, which will be accepted through Dec. 31 and considered for incorporation in the final version.

### Possible Federal Listing for the Red Knot

ENSP staff also led a distinguished group of nearly 50 shorebird scientists in the development of the first status assessment of the red knot, which the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service will use to determine if it is necessary to federally list the bird as either endangered or threatened. The red knot population, declining for the past decade, is now so critically low that scientists fear the species could become extinct within five years.

The status assessment includes detailed information on the red knot's natural history, its habitat in five foreign countries and the eastern United States, a description of the population status and a discussion of the threats that could drive the species to extinction. It focuses on the Delaware Bay, the most critical habitat along its 10,000-mile journey between wintering and breeding grounds.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife has received petitions for an emergency listing of the red knot from New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bradley M. Campbell, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary John A. Hughes and various environmental groups, including the New Jersey Audubon Society, the National Audubon Society and Defenders of Wildlife. Canadian officials also are preparing a status assessment for use in deciding whether to federally list the species in their country.

### Would you prefer an e-mail version of *Conserve Wildlife*?

To maximize our funds for rare wildlife conservation, we'd like to know if our readers are interested in receiving *Conserve Wildlife* via e-mail, rather than through regular mail. If so, please send us an e-mail at [pola.galie@dep.state.nj.us](mailto:pola.galie@dep.state.nj.us). If enough readers respond, we will produce an e-mail version of our newsletter for those who request it.

## Large Frosted Elfin Population is Found

The world's second-largest known population of frosted elfins, a small butterfly on New Jersey's list of threatened species, was discovered this year in Cape May County during joint surveys by the ENSP and the Bureau of Land Management within the DEP's Division of Fish & Wildlife.

"Globally, it's the second-largest known population, second only to the population at the Atlantic City International Airport," said Dave Golden, an ENSP biologist. An accurate count of the population would be impossible, but survey teams found more



*A frosted elfin*

than 180 individuals at three different sites along power-line rights of way within a three-mile span. Measuring about an inch to an inch and a quarter, the frosted elfin's underwing is primarily brown with a white frosting on the rear edge of the wing. In southern New Jersey, it relies on wild indigo (*Baptisia spp.*) as a host plant to lay its eggs. Wild indigo is an upland plant that prefers very dry habitat, usually along power-line rights of way, railroads and airports. Frosted elfins are found in isolated pockets along most of the Eastern Seaboard, and in Texas, Michigan, Indiana and Wisconsin. In New Jersey, the open habitat it prefers has been limited by both deer overgrazing and the suppression of fires, which allows trees and woody shrubs to thrive.

"To augment the habitat within the three-mile area in Cape May County, we've obtained funding through the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service to create a fourth habitat pocket in between two of the three known sites," Golden said. When the indigo was blooming in August, state biologists also surveyed other possible areas to identify suitable habitat for surveying frosted elfins in 2006. In addition, biologists are working with Dr. Dale Schweitzer, a frosted elfin expert and member of the ENSP Advisory Committee, to reintroduce frosted elfins at a historic site within the Millville Wildlife Management Area.

## Biologists Further Investigating Large Indiana Bat Hibernaculum

New Jersey biologists later this fall will rappel into the long shaft of an abandoned iron mine in Morris County to search for state and federally endangered Indiana bats.

When they first probed the mine in February 2004, biologists counted 13,500 little brown bats and 540 Indiana bats – five times more than the largest Indiana bat count ever recorded at the nearby Hibernia Mine. This newly explored mine, along with an adjacent shaft 100 yards away where bats previously have been netted near the opening, could yield even more Indiana bats when biologists survey the two mine shafts after the bats begin to hibernate in October.

The rectangular shaft biologists explored a year and a half ago plunges 130 feet, where it opens into a large cavern-like area with a 70-foot-high ceiling. Besides assessing bats in that area, biologists will descend into a 40-foot shaft from the main room to an underground lake, and hope to explore beyond it. They also want to investigate the second vertical shaft, which is even deeper and might be connected to the shaft where the 540 Indiana bats were found.

"We hope to find more Indiana bats in the unexplored areas of these mines and, ultimately, in other mines that we've yet to fully survey," said Melissa Craddock, assistant biologist with the ENSP. "But given the large underground volume of the mine with the 70-foot-high ceiling, it's very possible that it could be the state's largest hibernaculum for Indiana bats."

During the surveys, Craddock received assistance from Cal Butchkoski of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, John Chenger of Bat Conservation and Management Inc., and John and Mitzi Gumbs and other members of the New Jersey Initial Response Team.

These latest discoveries bring to three the number of known Indiana bat hibernacula in New Jersey, all within four miles of each other in Morris County. Acquired a decade ago by the state's Green Acres Program, the Hibernia Mine is now protected as part of the Wildcat Ridge Wildlife Management Area. Green Acres has been negotiating to acquire the two vertical mine shafts to protect the Indiana bats, which are exceptionally vulnerable to human disturbance.

Besides assessing winter populations, ENSP biologists ultimately want to determine the summer habitats in which the Indiana bats roost, forage for food and give birth to their young.

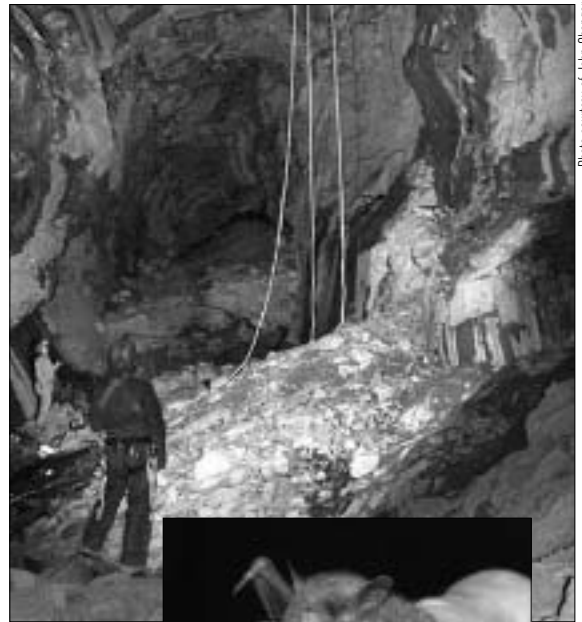


Photo courtesy of John Chenger



*Hundreds of Indiana bats have been found hibernating in a large, abandoned Morris County iron mine.*

## Watchable Wildlife

From bald eagles along the Delaware River to migratory waterfowl from the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge near Atlantic City to the Salem River Wildlife Management Area, New Jersey is rich in wildlife viewing sites during the winter. Here's another site worth checking out:

### SPRUCE RUN AND ROUND VALLEY RECREATION AREAS

Waterfowl most likely to be seen at these two reservoirs near Interstate 78 include mallards, American black ducks, canvasbacks, lesser scaup, ring-necked ducks and Canada geese.

Directions: For Spruce Run, from Interstate 78 take Exit 17 to N.J. Route 31 North. Travel 3 miles to Van Syckel's Road. Turn left and go 1.5 miles to the recreation area entrance on the left. For Round Valley, take I-78 to Exit 18. Take U.S. Highway 22 east 2.3 miles. Follow recreation area signs to boat ramp and office.

For more information, call New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry's Spruce Run at (908) 638-8572 or Round Valley at (908) 236-6355.

## Help Preserve New Jersey: Get Landscape Project Training

If you or members of your community are interested in learning how to identify land for wildlife protection and open space acquisition, sign up for Landscape Project training. Learn how to use hands-on Geographic Information Systems mapping techniques to identify, delineate and ultimately protect habitat critical to the survival of New Jersey's wildlife.

Training sessions are offered throughout the state and fill quickly. For a list of scheduled sessions, visit [www.njfishandwildlife.com/ensp/landscape\\_train04.htm](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/ensp/landscape_train04.htm) or contact Patrick Woerner at [patrick.woerner@dep.state.nj.us](mailto:patrick.woerner@dep.state.nj.us).

## Citizen Scientist Volunteers Needed

### *Metro Wildlife Survey*

If you live in Bergen, Hudson and Union counties or the Raritan Bay areas of Middlesex and Monmouth counties, you can become a Citizen Scientist who helps protect critical habitat and open space by collecting information on the whereabouts of rare wildlife species. The target survey areas include public and private property in metropolitan areas where endangered or threatened species have been seen historically.

You can view survey areas using an interactive map and download data forms. And if you happen to see a rare species while bird watching, paddling, fishing or hiking, you can submit data online through the project's Web site. The ENSP and Rutgers University's Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis are conducting the survey.

To participate, visit [www.dbcrrsa.rutgers.edu/ims/metrowild](http://www.dbcrrsa.rutgers.edu/ims/metrowild). Volunteers must register online before submitting data. For more information, call Melissa Craddock at (908) 735-9281.

### *Herp Atlas*

The ENSP needs trained volunteers to participate in its ongoing Herp Atlas project, a quantitative survey of New Jersey's reptiles and amphibians, also called herptiles. The data gathered will be incorporated into the Landscape Project's critical habitat mapping database.

To volunteer, please contact Larissa Smith at (609) 628-2103 or [lsmith@gtc3.com](mailto:lsmith@gtc3.com).



## Perfect Holiday Gifts

Looking for perfect holiday gifts? For those who love New Jersey wildlife, you can't go wrong with any of these:

### Adopt-A-Species

For a unique holiday gift, why not adopt a rare New Jersey wildlife species in the name of your gift recipient? You can support our biologists' work with nine different species – the peregrine falcon, barred owl, bald eagle, bobcat, bog turtle, Mitchell's satyr, osprey, Pine Barrens treefrog or timber rattlesnake. For more information and an application, call (609) 292-3707 or visit [www.conservewildlifenj.org/adopt.html](http://www.conservewildlifenj.org/adopt.html).

### New Jersey Wildlife Viewing Guide

This 165-page guide is full of color photos and illustrations and provides directions to 87 of the state's best watchable wildlife viewing areas – such as those listed in the Watchable Wildlife feature that appears in each edition of this newsletter. Included are directions, information on site facilities, best viewing seasons and which animals and habitats can be seen. Also includes five "Wildlife Diversity Tours" that link multiple sites and are ideal for two- to three-day trips. To order, send a \$14.90 (\$10.95 plus \$3.95 s/h) check payable to the Division of Fish and Wildlife, P.O. Box 400, Trenton, NJ 08625-0400, Att: N.J. Wildlife Viewing Guide.

### Endangered and Threatened Wildlife of New Jersey

Richly illustrated, the 336-page color guide to New Jersey's 73 endangered and threatened wildlife species was produced by the Endangered and Nongame Species Program. The 7-inch by 10-inch paperback retails for \$29. All author royalties benefit the Conserve Wildlife Foundation. It is available in bookstores, via online booksellers or directly through Rutgers University Press (RUP) at [rutgerspress.rutgers.edu](http://rutgerspress.rutgers.edu) or by calling RUP at 1-800-446-9323 or (732) 445-7762. For phone orders, there is a \$5 shipping charge per book within the U.S. Shipping is free for online orders.

## 2005 Conserve Wildlife Foundation Golf Classic

The Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ held its sixth annual golf tournament on May 30 at Stanton Ridge Golf and Country Club in Hunterdon County. Under a picture-perfect blue sky, more than 100 golfers gathered for a day of fun that raised upwards of \$60,000 for rare wildlife conservation.

In the evening, golfers enjoyed dinner and a chance to bid on silent auction prizes including a golf vacation for two to Palm Desert, Calif., a Cape May getaway, a champagne balloon trip for two, handcrafted items and artwork. Golfers also entered to win the top raffle prize: two first-class, round-trip tickets on Continental Airlines and a two-night, three-day stay at the Wyndham Palace Resort with Park Hopper Passes for the Walt Disney World Resort.

Our thanks to all our sponsors, players and volunteers who helped make this year's event such a great success!

Bald Eagle Title Sponsor  
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*"Brewing Solutions for a Better Environment"*

"Anheuser-Busch has a long-standing tradition of giving back to the communities in which we do business," said John Hannafin, general manager, northeast region. "We have been a proud sponsor of the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey's Golf Classic for five years and have helped raise more than \$200,000 for projects that improve the environment of our great state. It is important to us to be a good neighbor, and we're happy our efforts this year will help conserve the nesting habitat of the bald eagle."

To learn more about Anheuser-Busch's environmental efforts, visit [www.abenvironment.com](http://www.abenvironment.com).



From left, Johann Lopez of Anheuser-Busch, Inc.; Albio Sires, Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly; Bob Stewart of the Stewart Agency; and Jim Laird of Exelon enjoy an outstanding day of golf.



Bob Lettiere of 0 to 60 Advertising/Public Relations launches his drive into the middle of the fairway.



Golfers bid on a variety of silent auction prizes.

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# Conserve Wildlife Foundation News

Message from Linda Tesauro, Executive Director

## Thank You to our Partners in Protection

The Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ, the ENSP's nonprofit arm, extends its gratitude to the following organizations and companies, which help fund New Jersey's efforts to preserve wildlife and its habitat: Schering-Plough, South Jersey Gas Company, the Johanette Wallerstein Institute, the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences and Washington Crossing Audubon Society. We also would like to thank the members of the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ team in the 22nd annual World Series of Birding this spring. Joe Delesantro Jr., David Delesantro, Margaret Attack-Klewin, Matthew Klewin, Buster Raff and Angi Walters identified an amazing 164 bird species within 24 hours and presented the foundation with \$1,322 donated in support of their efforts.



Principal environmental engineers from Schering-Plough: Mike Latronica, Kelly Moretta and Toni Wagner present a donation to Linda Tesauro, Executive Director, Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ.

## Announcing the 2006 Species on the Edge Art & Essay Contest

Here's a great way for children to learn about New Jersey's endangered species. Open to all New Jersey fifth graders, the *Species on the Edge Art and Essay Contest* runs Nov. 1, 2005 to Jan. 31, 2006. The contest is a compelling way to learn about biodiversity and foster environmental stewardship. Many teachers look forward to this contest, which excites even the most unmotivated student! To get your contest kit, visit [www.conservewildlifenj.org](http://www.conservewildlifenj.org) or call Maria at (609) 984-0621. One winner from each of the state's 21 counties will be chosen.

## Welcome Pola Galie

I am pleased to announce that Pola Galie has joined the foundation as our development associate. An active outdoorswoman, Pola comes to us from the United Service Organizations of Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey, where she organized special events, fundraising activities and coordinated a large group of volunteers in two states. We welcome Pola to help raise critical funding for wildlife conservation.

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