

Urban Raptor Conservancy Annual Report

December 2019



Dear friends,

Our second year as a nonprofit kept us busy. No sophomore slump for us! Here are the year's highlights.

Research

Seattle Cooper's Hawk Project. What a spectacular season. We found a record 56 nest-building pairs, and 46 pairs successfully fledged 174 youngsters — far more than double both nesting attempts and fledglings of a mere eight years ago. How much larger will this population grow before reaching carrying capacity?

We put color-ID bands on 47 fledglings and one adult. Keen observers have already sent us a stream of band sightings, and we anticipate more in the coming months. Thank you, keen observers! Read our 2019 Cooper's Hawk report [here](#).

Seattle-Tacoma Peregrine Project. 2019 was a tough year for our fledgling urban peregrines. Read our 2019 report on the Seattle-Tacoma peregrines [here](#). Highlights and lowlights:

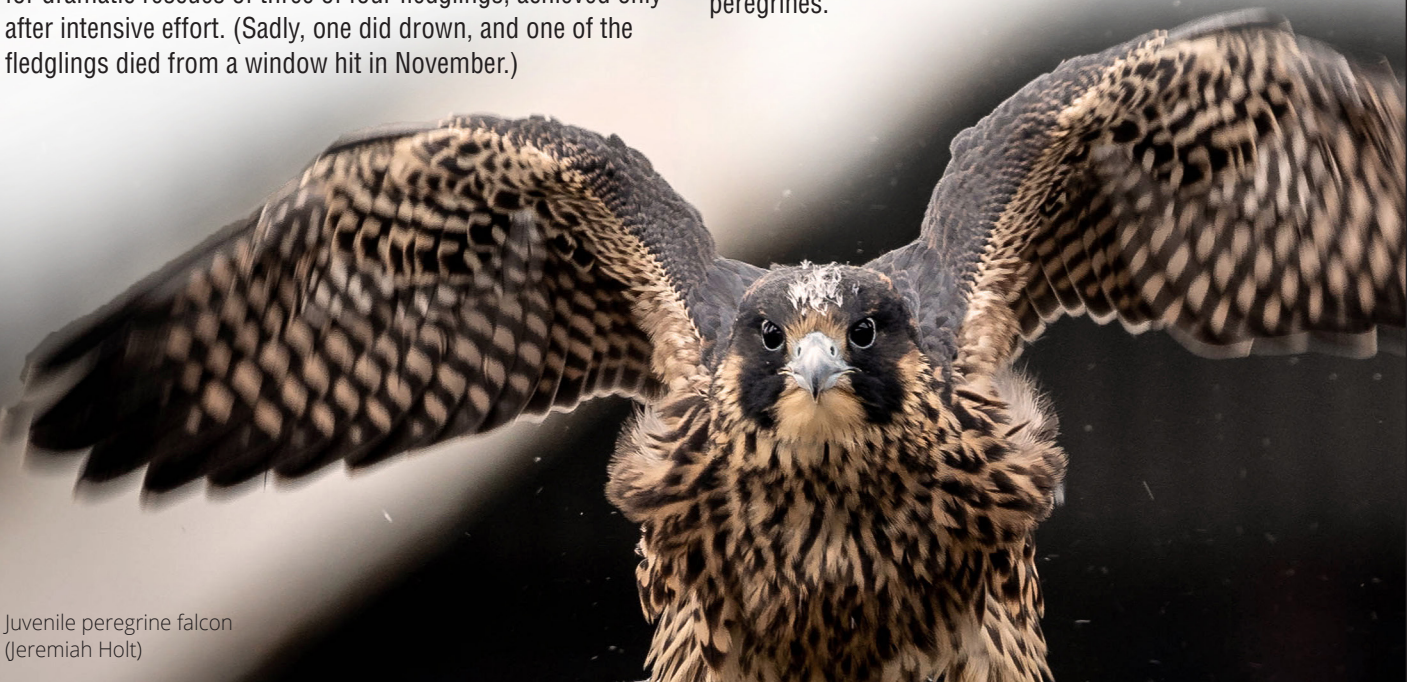
Peregrines again nested at University Bridge, where fledglings inevitably drown. The Northlake shore community mobilized for dramatic rescues of three of four fledglings, achieved only after intensive effort. (Sadly, one did drown, and one of the fledglings died from a window hit in November.)

We met with SDOT in September to plan how to exclude this nest — a complicated enterprise, but we hope they will complete it in time to persuade the pair to find a new site before January.

Three grounded fledgling peregrines were rescued from the huge Boeing Renton 737 plant, where peregrines have amazingly nested *inside* the hangar for several years. The fledglings could not be returned to their parents to learn to hunt, so they cannot be released into the wild. We recently toured the plant and observed the happy pair firsthand. We are collaborating with Boeing and Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife to develop a management plan.

Next fall's *Raptor Research Foundation* annual conference in Boise is co-sponsored by the *Peregrine Fund*, which is honoring its 50th anniversary. This historic occasion will be a perfect time to present our decades of research on urban peregrines.

Juvenile peregrine falcon
(Jeremiah Holt)



Education

Talks. Ed Deal gave six talks around the Northwest to spread the gospel on Seattle Cooper's hawks.

URC on Facebook. We have almost 7000 followers! Thanks to volunteer Jake Burroughs for creating and managing this site.

Banders in training. After over a year of being humbled by various raptors under the stern but benevolent eye of master bander Ed Deal, Patti Loesche and Jake Burroughs are awaiting their subpermits from the *USGS Bird Banding Lab* (BBL) under Ed's permit.

Conservation

Rodenticides in Raptors Project. In collaboration with PAWS, we are testing dead raptors in urban western Washington for exposure to anticoagulant rodenticides. Our goal is to test 100 raptors. We send samples for (costly) analysis as we have funding to do so. Pilot results showed rodenticides in 2 of 7 raptors. The latest 25 samples were 100% positive for anticoagulant rodenticides. Although we expected positive evidence of rodenticides in some samples, we are stunned by this result.

We also began to census rodenticide bait boxes near Cooper's hawk territories in Seattle, with the eventual goal of replacing these bait stations with nontoxic alternatives. The initial survey on Capitol Hill, in collaboration with the Urbannest Bird Treaty City initiative, turned up a dismal 49 bait boxes in less than a mile. We have our work cut out for us.

Banding Raptors at PAWS Wildlife Center. So far in 2019 we have banded 50 rehabilitated hawks, eagles, falcons, and owls with color-ID bands (Cooper's hawks and peregrines) and US Fish and Wildlife bands (all). And we just received approval to collaborate with Larry Hubbell's *Union Bay Watch* to band rehabilitated Bald Eagles with color-ID bands, enabling us to track individual eagles.

You

Your strong support has made possible this fruitful second year and beyond. Thanks to over 50 donors, we launched our world-class website and our *Rodenticide in Raptors* study. And as we write this, we just received a generous donation from our partner nonprofit in California, *Raptors Are The Solution* (RATS), to help support this study. Thank you, donors! Thank you, RATS!

We rely on our volunteers, donors, and friends to continue our long-term population studies on urban-nesting Cooper's hawks and peregrine falcons, to fund our *Rodenticide in Raptors* study (75 samples to go!), and to communicate the results of our work to you, the stewards of urban raptors and the denizens who share their environment.

Thank you for the many ways you support us. Please consider us when you make your year-end charitable donations. Donations may be made either *online* or by check to:

Urban Raptor Conservancy
9251 39th Ave S
Seattle, WA 98118

urbanraptorconservancy.org

Here's to a prosperous 2020 for all of you and for our urban raptors!



Juvenile Cooper's hawk (Cindy Roberts)