

## **ARCTIC PEREGRINE FALCON**

The Arctic peregrine falcon is a subspecies of peregrine falcon that lives in the tundra regions of northern and western Alaska, as well as Canada and Greenland. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) delisted the falcon in 1994 due to successful recovery under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In reality, the ESA had essentially nothing to do with the Arctic peregrine's rebound.

There are a number of issues about the Arctic peregrine's conservation that will be examined.

- The banning of the pesticide DDT in 1972, not passage of the ESA in 1973, is widely acknowledged as the foremost cause of the peregrine's rebound
- The vast majority of Arctic peregrines live in Canada and Greenland, which means the subspecies was never in danger of extinction.
- The FWS created a great deal of confusion by failing to refer to Arctic peregrines as such, instead referring to generic peregrine falcons.
- There was virtually no habitat protected under the auspices of the ESA.
- The FWS engaged in a fiasco of a law enforcement "sting" operation under the premise that peregrines were being taken from the wild to supply a lucrative international black market of falconers.
- Pesticide monitoring under the ESA was of very minor importance.
- It appears the taxonomic classification of the Arctic peregrine was due as much if not more to political considerations.
- The Arctic peregrine was downlisted in 1984, from endangered to the less-imperiled status of threatened, as a smokescreen to obscure regulatory problems with the release of captive-bred, non-native peregrines as part of recovery efforts for the American peregrine falcon subspecies.
- The FWS belatedly delisted the Arctic peregrine in 1994.