

What happens to the falcons when they leave the nest?

By Nick Houser, June 4, 2025



EarthCam viewers were surprised May 19 when [they tuned in to check](#) on the baby peregrine falcons and saw humans removing the birds from their enclosure. But there was no cause for alarm — wildlife experts were simply applying identification bands to the young birds, a routine part of monitoring their development.

That action sparked curiosity: What happens to the falcons after they leave the nest?

The mother peregrine falcon has laid more than a dozen eggs since making the top of the UC Davis Medical Center its home. Unfortunately, experts estimate the chicks' first-year survival rate is about 50%.

We contacted in-house expert William "Bill" Corbett for insight.

How are the falcons tracked?

The first important fact is that the bands are not GPS trackers. They can identify a bird, but only if teams can get close enough to read the band or if the band is found (typically recovered from a deceased bird).

Corbett contacted our partners at the Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group for any information on our birds.

"There has been just one band encounter in 2023 for a bird born in 2021," the team wrote in an email. "It appeared in November 2023 on the Whirley Crane Osprey nest camera in Richmond Harbor. But there have been no other encounters with UC Davis Health chicks or band recoveries."

A possible causeway connection?

Corbett said a falcon showing up in Richmond could mean our nestlings want to live in cooler climates than Sacramento provides. However, "there were two peregrines spotted on the Davis Campus Water Tower two months ago," he shared. While their bands haven't been identified yet, he noted that it's possible those birds may have come from our UC Davis Health nest.

We may have to wait until next year's nesting season to confirm their identities — but for now, the mystery of the falcons' journeys continues to inspire awe and curiosity.