

BREEDING PROJECT INFORMATION EXCHANGE

B.P.I.E. No. 15. Tony Robertson (20820 Kittridge, Canoga Park, California 91306) on Peregrine Falcon breeding project (March 1970). The birds are *tundrius* Peregrines. The attempt to breed these raptors in captivity has been a plan of mine for the last several years.

When my birds finally reached an age when successful breeding could be obtained, I fabricated a 12 ft. long, 8 ft. wide, and 7½ ft. high breeding pen. Both birds were released into it on March 7, 1970.

They were both trapped in their first year plumage during the fall migration. Since their capture they have been in excellent health, and I believe this is a function of their diet and care. They have always been brought inside at night and put back on their blocks during the day. Their diet has been pigeon and chicken wings when being flown, and during moult they have been fed 90% day-old chicks and 10% pigeon with six drops of Polyvisol per week added for each bird.

The falcon is now three years old and was flown for the past 2½ seasons. Her temperament has always been fairly even, except she has never liked strangers in the yard nor does she like to be picked up early in the morning. Since she has been released into the breeding pen, she has become very content, spending most of her time lying down on either the nesting ledge or a 6.00 inch wide shelf which exposes her to morning sun. To my knowledge she has never flown into or hung to the chain link fencing covering either window. She sleeps during the night lying down on the nesting ledge with her right wing sometimes hanging down over the edge.

To my knowledge, she has never taken any food away from the tiercel, even when very hungry. She is very trusting and allows me to walk up and stroke her or even pick her up; sometimes I even have to push her to make her stand up. I don't think she has acquired a pair bond relationship with me. I believe she has accepted captivity as she seems very content and trusting. To date she has not shown any signs of wanting to nest, nor has she shown any interest in the tiercel.

The tiercel is two years old and was flown only his first year due to damaged No. 1 and No. 2 flight feathers on his right wing. These feathers were damaged in the first few months of his moult, while being free in a smaller hawk house. He had a very long moult starting on June 22, 1969 and not completing it until February 17, 1970 (referring to primaries and tail feathers).

He was always very even tempered during the period he was flown and through his first moult, and I am sure it was because he was handled every day. Since he has been released into the breeding pen, he has become somewhat wild, not allowing me to pick him up unless I have food in my hand. He also gets very jumpy when

strangers approach and this is something which never seemed to occur during the period when he was flown. When he does get excited, he invariably ends up flying into the chain link fencing which covers the windows and hangs there several seconds before flying to one of the perches. So far, he has not damaged any feathers, but I'm sure the day will come when he does. His relationship with the falcon has not been in any way intimate, and whenever possible, he will take food away from her. He spends the night at the opposite end of the breeding pen from her and, to my knowledge, has never laid down as she does. (Photographs are on file in the Raptor Research Foundation office.)

