

Bath group boosts peregrine watch

Wireless remote camera to improve monitoring



The Bath group of the Hawk and Owl Trust has installed a new wireless remote camera to improve monitoring of the peregrine nest on the city's St John's Church which has seen successful breeding in the last three years.

The nest is on a platform box erected by the group in 2004 and the new camera should make it easier to check developments through the breeding season. In 2008 it was initially thought the female produced three eggs.



However group member Ed Drewitt reports that recent evidence suggests that the peregrines laid four in 2008. Two chicks fledged, and were ringed, measured and tagged in May, while one egg was added. But recently fellow member Louise Hazelton found the mummified corpse of a newly hatched peregrine chick at the base of the church tower. This suggests that a third chick hatched but didn't survive, making four eggs in all. Peregrines usually just drop dead chicks below the nest or carry them off.



At one stage later in the season it was feared one of the surviving fledglings might have died, but both have been seen and photographed, so the fears proved groundless.

"We plan to fit a new camera in the box this winter so we should be able to keep a good eye on progress," says the group's publicity officer, Mke Rogers.

"Let's hope for another successful year in 2009. With the adult male now absent, it will be interesting to see who the

adult female pairs with. A chick from an earlier brood, identified as Chick AA (*top photo*), which was ringed in 2007, has come into adult plumage already and could mate with his mother."



The nestbox was first erected in 2004, and has been used successfully each year since 2006. The first camera was installed in 2007 to allow monitoring with disturbance, but the uncertainty over the number of eggs showed the need for improvement.

For more information about the Bath and West Wiltshire Group of the Hawk and Owl Trust [click here](#).

See also

[Bath and West Wiltshire](#)

group of the Hawk and Owl Trust

[Peregrine watch](#)

3 June 2009