

Peregrines in the City

Andrew Kelly & Sue Lawson
Illustrated by Dean A. Jones

TEACHER NOTES



Specifications

Authors: Andrew Kelly & Sue Lawson
ISBN: 9781742036519
Format: 260 x 270mm
Extent: 32pp self-ended
Binding: Hardback
Reading Level: 7+
Interest Level: 4+
Category: Non-fiction

AGE
SUITABILITY
Years
Foundation – 6

Australian Curriculum Outcomes

FOUNDATION TO YEAR 4 CURRICULUM LINKS

- English • Literacy • Literature
- Humanities and Social Sciences • Science

ENGLISH – LANGUAGE

- ACELA1426 • ACELA1443
- ACELA1460 • ACELA1475
- ACELA1476 • ACELA1483
- ACELA1487

ENGLISH – LITERATURE

- ACELT1575 • ACELT1581
- ACELT1582 • ACELT 1586
- A CELT 1587 • ACELT 1589
- ACELT1592 • ACELT 1593
- ACELT1596 • ACELT1602
- ACELT 1783 • ACELA1488
- ACELA1496 • ACELA1504
- ACELT1608 • ACELT1609
- ACELT1613 • ACELT1614

ENGLISH – LITERACY

- ACELY1646 • ACELY1650
- ACELY1655 • ACELY1656
- ACELY1658 • ACELY 1559
- ACELY1666 • ACELY1789
- ACELY1670 • ACELY1675
- ACELY1677 • ACELY1678
- ACELY1682 • ACELY1687
- ACELY1694

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Inquiry and Skills

- ACHASSI001 • ACHASSI005
- ACHASSI007 • ACHASSI008
- ACHASSI009 • ACHASSI018
- ACHASSI022 • ACHASSI023
- ACHASSI024 • ACHASSI026
- ACHASSI034 • ACHASSI042
- ACHASSI052 • ACHASSI056
- ACHASSI058 • ACHASSI059
- ACHASSI061 • ACHASSI073
- ACHASSI080 • ACHASSI08

Knowledge and Understanding

- ACHASSK015 • ACHASSK016
- ACHASSK017 • ACHASSK031
- ACHASSK032 • ACHASSK045
- ACHASSK049 • ACHASSK062
- ACHASSK063 • ACHASSK066
- ACHASSK083 • ACHASSK088
- ACHASSK089

SCIENCE

- ACSSU002 ACSSU211 ACSSU030
- ACSSU044 ACSSU072 ACSSU073

Blurb

Look up!

There is wildness in the heart of the city.

High on the ledges of tall buildings, the peregrine falcons come to lay their eggs.

The compelling story of these fierce, beautiful birds.



Themes

- PEREGRINE FALCONS
 - WILDLIFE
 - URBAN HABITAT
 - CONSERVATION
- RESILIENCE • FAMILY
- ADAPTABILITY • CITY
 - BREEDING
 - LIFE CYCLE

Definition

eyas (plural eyases or eyasses)

A young hawk or falcon in the nest, or that has not yet fledged.

Synopsis

As urban development encroaches more and more on wild areas, many species have to adapt to survive. One species that has adapted to city living is the peregrine falcon. Falcons normally nest on high cliffs but in many cities across the world they can be found nesting on tall buildings.

Since 1991, from August to November, a pair of peregrine falcons has nested in the heart of the city of Melbourne. *Peregrines in the City* tells the story of these falcons as they prepare their nest, lay and incubate their eggs, and care for the eyases until their first flight.

Writing style

Based on fact, *Peregrines in the City* follows one breeding cycle of peregrine falcons that call the city home. This book uses simple language to engage students with the fascinating world of these birds, while remaining a little removed so as not to anthropomorphise the creatures.

The text, suitable for both establishing and established readers, introduces students to the adaptability and resilience of the species as well as correct terms for the creatures, their body parts, young and nest.

Peregrines in the City is an amalgamation of the 367 Falcons' breeding season over the last four years.

Illustration style

Peregrines in the City is illustrated by artist, teacher and illustrator, Dean Jones. Dean's work utilises bold colours and realistic detail to bring the falcons' story to life. His illustrations move beyond the dryness of life-science drawings, breathing life into illustrations with a clear artistic vision and passion.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATOR

Andrew Kelly



Andrew Kelly was born in Melbourne, grew up in Melbourne and apart from a few years in England – the land of a portion of his ancestors – has spent his life in Melbourne. He is passionate about the city, its history and its river. Andrew has been a children’s publisher, the Yarra Riverkeeper, and now concentrates on writing.

He has written numerous awarding-winning books for children, including *Wilam: A Birarung Story*, and the beautiful *Accidental Penguin Hotel*, also illustrated by Dean Jones. *Little Lon*, illustrated by Mark Jackson and Heather Potter, was shortlisted at the 2021 Victorian Community History Awards.



Sue Lawson

Sue has long been a bird lover. From August until early November, Sue Lawson can be found streaming the ‘367 Falcons’ livestream. ‘Obsessed’ might be the word for her interest.

As well as obsessing over falcons, Sue also writes picture books, junior fiction and nonfiction, and young adult novels. She particularly enjoys collaborating with other writers. Her previous books have won the Australian Family Therapists’ Award for Children’s Literature and been short-listed for the Prime Minister’s Literary Awards and Children’s Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Awards.



Dean Jones

Dean Jones is based in Melbourne, but loves to travel the world through drawing and painting. He is an illustrator, painter, and passionate art teacher, and is obsessed with how pictures tell stories and communicate emotion through shapes, colour and light. Dean has been shortlisted and received notable mentions in the Australian Children’s Book Council’s Picture Book of the Year awards.

Before Reading

- Discuss what students know about birds.
 - Cover breeds, habitat, habits etc.
 - Introduce the term ‘bird of prey’. Discuss what birds of prey might be and the names of these breeds.
 - Where might students see/encounter birds of prey. Have any students had this experience before?
 - The 367 Falcons, on which the book is based, have thousands of viewers who livestream them during breeding season. Ask the children if they are familiar with them, or other falcons, nesting in the city.

Examine the cover

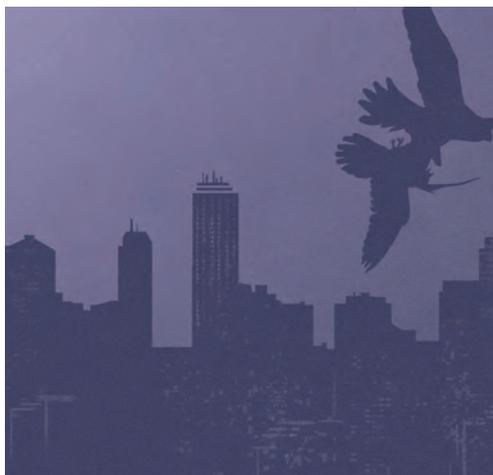
- Ask students if they can name the breed of bird on the cover and where they might be.
- Discuss why these birds might choose this place to live in an urban setting.

Read the blurb

- What clues does the blurb give about these birds and the book?
- Does the blurb change any of the ideas shared while discussing the cover?
- Where might it be set?

Examine the endpapers

- What clues do the endpaper offer about the book and its setting?
- What other information do the endpapers offer the reader?



Discuss students' reactions to the story

- What did they like?
- What did they already know?
- What surprised them?
- What questions do they have about the story or the falcons?
- How are falcons similar to other birds students were familiar with? How are they different?

Words Activity

- Give students paper or sticky notes. Re-read *Peregrines in the City* and ask students to write any words they may not understand on their paper.
- After reading, collate the words on the board. Give pairs a strip of paper and allocate each pair a word to investigate. Students share what they have learned about the word and other discoveries with the class.
- Once all meanings have been shared, ask students if the words can be categorised. If so, what headings might be used? Can they use these words to talk about other things?
- Falcon terminology, nouns, verbs etc.
- Strips of paper can be used to create a Falcons poster.

Online Activity

- Introduce children to the 367 Falcons. Show students select pieces from YouTube channel Melbourne CBD Falcons.
- https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTbW03PLPdt6nNWV_URiEqQ/featured
- After watching, ask students to share descriptive words to describe the falcons, eyases and nest. Add these words to the falcons poster created earlier.
- The breeding season (August to November) is livestreamed. Discretion should be used before playing to students.
- website <https://367collins.mirvac.com/workplace/building-overview/falcons-at-367-collins>
- YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Un8f85yADAU>

Examining the Book

Pages 4 & 5

- Discuss the line ‘faster than anything else living on earth’.
- Show students the YouTube video of a falcon in flight.
https://youtu.be/p-_RHRAzUHM
 - What have they learnt about falcons in flight?
 - What questions do they still have?

Mini project

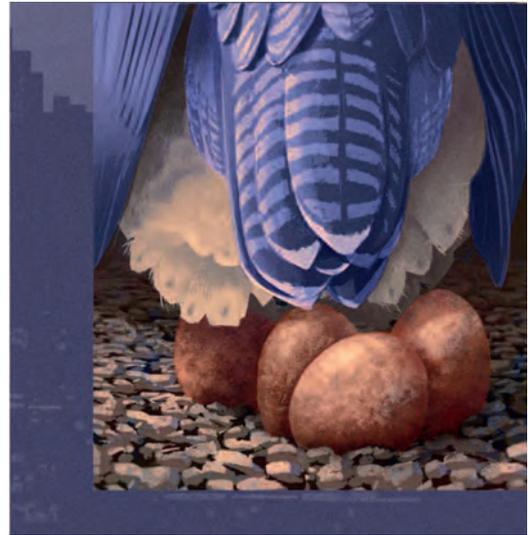
- Ask students if they know other creatures that are said to be ‘fastest on earth’. Discuss these.
- In groups of three, ask students to create a mini project on A4 paper about their chosen ‘fastest creature’. Consider why they are so fast and body adaptations that help them to achieve this.
- This activity can be adapted to become a maths lesson, comparing and graphing animals and speeds.

Pages 12 & 13

- Why is it important that the falcon shuffles and rolls the eggs?
- What might happen if she didn’t do this?
- What do you think ‘an egg pips’ means?
- Investigate the term pip. Is it a term only used for falcons or is it used for all birds?
- The book moves quickly from pipping to the eyas hatching. Discuss with children how long it might take any chick to hatch from its shell.
- Introduce the concept of an ‘egg tooth’.
- Resources: National Geographic Kids on hatching
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JF4pBKKXUAFc>
- How long does it take for eggs to hatch?
<https://kidadl.com/fun-facts/how-long-does-it-take-for-bird-eggs-to-hatch-fun-facts-for-kids>
- English falcon nest hatching (includes first feed which some may find distressing)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qju7WaVRrTA>

Pages 24 and 25

Examine the image. The text doesn’t explain what the threat may have been.



- Ask students what may have frightened the eyases. (The parents are wary of people on nearby roofs and balconies and planes and helicopters that fly close to the building.)
- What threats might falcons face in urban settings?
- What threats might they face in a natural habitat?
- This YouTube video shows the eyases’ reaction to a plane flying nearby. You can hear the parent’s cry (2.52) and once the danger passes, see the eyases call for food.
 - <https://youtu.be/kyAyzaj64w8>
- Play students the following YouTube video of the falcons’ response to the 2021 earthquake without explanation.
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2h_347xF-Jg
- Discuss what may have frightened the parents. What might they have thought is happening?
- Discuss their own reaction to the event, if appropriate.

Pages 28, 29, 30 & 31

- Discuss why the falcon parents feed the eyases less and ‘tease’ them with food.
- Watch the video of the 2020 chicks’ fledging.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEP42EY-NcU>
- Why might the male fledge first? (smaller so lighter)

Introduce the concept of adaptability

- Discuss the meaning of adaptability.
- Discuss the main effects people and the spread of land development has on the natural environment and the creatures that live there.
- Ask students to suggest ways creatures might adapt to these changes. Consider food, shelter, threats.
- Discuss why some species thrive while others become endangered or even become extinct?
- In groups, have students brainstorm examples of creatures that have adapted to living in city or town environments. After the allocated time, ask students to share their results with the rest of the class. Encourage students to extrapolate what animals and birds might need to successfully adapt to an urban environment.
- Return to the *Peregrines in the City*. How have these birds adapted to live in the city?
- Discuss threats falcon chicks might face in urban settings and in more natural settings. How are they different?



Class Falcon Project

In pairs, students investigate one of the following areas and create a poster on it. Display all posters to create a study into falcons, their life cycle and their habitat.

- Topics
- Identification
- Habitat – include natural and urban – and distribution
- Flight and hunting
- Nesting and incubating eggs
- Development of chicks
- Fledging and life out of the nest.

Alternative covers

The author, illustrator and publisher had to choose between two images for the cover. The options were pages 10 and 11 and pages 16 and 17.

- Discuss why the current image might have been chosen.
- Ask students which option they prefer.
- Is there another image they think would have been better?
- Have students design their own cover for *Peregrines in the City*.

Diorama

- In pairs, direct students to create a diorama of one aspect of the falcons' breeding season using materials such as shoe boxes, gravel, construction paper, paper mache, modelling clay, paint and glue.
- Models could be of incubating eggs, eyases just hatched, eyases feeding or eyases building their strength.
- The models could link up to show the falcons' life cycle or simply be a standalone creation.

RESOURCES

Falcon fact sheets

- <https://www.birdlife.org.au/bird-profile/peregrine-falcon>
- https://australian.museum/learn/animals/birds/peregrine-falcon/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwpcOTBhCZARIsAEAYLuV5bYunqaBVpSO2ZfZU7uZDcer2PIH8-NvHZq6yys2a_3b4hAOtYlkaAhU-EALw_wcB

Short videos of the eyases

- ‘Approximately three weeks’
– https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4Zw_FRJ-rQ
- ‘Dad misjudges the landing’
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMuXlmH-Lhk>

Other nesting cameras – active only during breeding season

- <https://explore.org/livecams/falcons/peregrine-falcon-cam>
- <https://explore.org/livecams/falcons/peregrine-falcon-chesapeake-conservancy>
- <https://youtu.be/GoBJxXIZNpY>

List of five sites

- <https://birdwatchinghq.com/live-falcon-cams/>

Specific nests

- Orange, NSW
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KNCpKDKt7Y>
- Nottinghamshire
– <https://www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/peregrine-cam>
- California
– <https://pbrg.pbsci.ucsc.edu/page4.html>
- New York
– <https://hdontap.com/index.php/video/stream/utica-falcons-live-cam>
- Virginia
– <https://dwr.virginia.gov/falcon-cam/>
- Sussex Uk
– <https://sussexheights.co.uk/sussex-heights-brighton-peregrine-falcons-nestbox-camera>
- https://www.birdsoutsidemywindow.org/2013/04/19/how-do-they-hatch/?fbclid=IwAR1YQTjOztyvDZZ_3KYEc_MuWh10RexCC8jw_RbSH8yiTR4yrFz9vB_Umn8

