

“Diana,” the peregrine falcon, soon to become an empty nester

Mill Creek’s newest young falcons prepare to take first flight

(LOUISVILLE, Ky.) — While summer break is when many young students flock home, others are preparing to leave the nest for the first time.

Diana, the peregrine falcon nesting at Louisville Gas and Electric Company’s Mill Creek power plant since 2006, will soon become an “empty nester,” sending off her three young falcons who will take their first flight in the coming days.

She and her brood have been drawing the attention of thousands of [live web cam viewers](#) since late March when Diana laid the first egg.

The web cam was installed four years ago inside the peregrine falcon nest box established through a partnership between LG&E and the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

Over the last several months, these falcons have become more active as they’ve matured and their muscles and skeletal structure have grown stronger. Falcons typically learn to fly about 40-45 days after hatching.

Before the falcons take flight, they are banded by KDFWR officials.

The banding process, [shared in this video](#), involves briefly removing the three chicks from the nest and attaching unique leg bands with different colors and number codes. This identifying information is then entered into a database along with each bird's gender, date of hatching and nesting place. Biologists will be able to read the numbers on the bands through high-powered optics.

Power plant crevices and alcoves remind the falcons of natural nesting locations, such as mountain cliffs and ledges. Falcons eat smaller birds, so an ample food supply of pigeons and starlings is readily available at the power plants.

In addition to those at Mill Creek, 13 other young falcons will soon leave nest boxes located at LG&E and Kentucky Utilities Company’s Cane Run, Trimble County and Ghent power plants.

Viewers are encouraged to [tune into the web cam](#) in the coming days for more activity.

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Louisville Gas and Electric Company and Kentucky Utilities Company, part of the PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL) family of companies, are regulated utilities that serve nearly 1.3 million customers and have consistently ranked among the best companies for customer service in the United States. LG&E serves 322,000 natural gas and 403,000 electric customers in Louisville and 16 surrounding counties. KU serves 546,000 customers in 77 Kentucky counties and five counties in Virginia. More information is available at www.lge-ku.com and www.pplweb.com.

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is located in Frankfort and is an agency of the Kentucky Tourism, Arts & Heritage Cabinet. KDFWR conserves and enhances fish and wildlife resources and provides opportunity for hunting, fishing, trapping, boating and other wildlife-related activities. Its nine-member commission is nominated by Kentucky sportsmen and sportswomen and appointed by the governor. KDFWR works with landowners, hunters, anglers, boaters and wildlife enthusiasts statewide. More information is available at www.kdfr.state.ky.us.