

## Peregrine Falcon Fill-in the Blanks Activity Part II

### *The Peregrine Falcon, A Powerful Yet Vulnerable Bird*

Use the words below to fill in the blanks.

banned  
hatching  
wild  
calcium  
incubates  
eggshells contaminants  
Mississippi  
scientists decreased  
reproduce

By the mid 1940's the number of peregrine falcons in North America \_\_\_\_\_ drastically and at least 300 known nesting sites were abandoned. By the 1960's \_\_\_\_\_ noticed that the population of peregrine falcons went from a few thousand to just a few hundred. They were believed to be extinct east of the \_\_\_\_\_ River where once 350 nesting pairs had existed. Scientists began to search for the cause of the decline.

Researchers found that many of the birds had large amounts of DDT in their bodies. The peregrine falcon's position at the top of the food chain makes it appear to be a powerful bird. However, this position causes it to be vulnerable to \_\_\_\_\_. Although this contaminant does not kill them, it can interrupt the production of eggs and the \_\_\_\_\_ of chicks. DDT breaks down the enzyme that makes \_\_\_\_\_ harden. This prevents calcium from being used in the making of \_\_\_\_\_. Since the eggshells lack calcium they are weak and crumble easily. Either the female bird does not lay eggs or the eggs are weak and crush when the mother \_\_\_\_\_ them. This results in the inability to \_\_\_\_\_.

In 1972, as a result of scientists' findings, most uses of DDT were \_\_\_\_\_ in the United States. However, it could have been too late for the peregrine falcon. In 1972, the peregrine falcon was placed on the \_\_\_\_\_ species list. A law known as the Endangered Species Act calls for the design of a recovery strategy and an attempt is made to help the species return to a thriving state. It was up to scientists to develop a plan to increase the population of peregrine falcons in the \_\_\_\_\_.