

**NORTHERN APLOMADO FALCON**  
*(Falco femoralis septentrionalis)*

**STATUS:** Endangered (51 FR 6686, January 25, 1986) without critical habitat.

**SPECIES DESCRIPTION:** Adults are characterized by rufous (rust) underparts, a gray back, a long banded tail, and a distinctive black and white facial pattern. Juveniles differ from adults in three respects: (1) the color of the upper breast and face is deep cinnamon; (2) dark, broad streaks obscure most of the breast; and (3) fleshy parts are bluish, not yellow. Aplomado falcons are smaller than peregrine falcons and larger than kestrels. Other birds compose the bulk of their food, with insects, small snakes, lizards, and rodents serving as supplements. Pairs of Aplomado falcons are often seen hunting together cooperatively, especially when hunting birds. Eggs are laid between March and June with both parents sharing incubation duties. The fledgling period is 4-5 weeks, with fledglings remaining in their natal areas for at least a month.

**HABITAT:** Open grassland terrain with scattered trees, relatively low ground cover, an abundance of small to medium-sized birds, and a supply of suitable nesting platforms, particularly yuccas and mesquite. Typical habitat ranges in elevation from 1,189 to 2,743 m (3,500 to 9,000 ft). Woody vegetation, fence posts, and telephone poles serve as perches.

**RANGE: Historic:** In the U.S., was limited to southeastern Arizona (Cochise and Santa Cruz Counties, Arizona), southern New Mexico, and southern Texas. Was also found throughout most of Mexico south to Tierra del Fuego.

**Current:** Very limited distribution, with no confirmed sightings in the U.S. between 1952 and 1997. In 1887, five nests were located in Arizona; these are the only known nests ever found in the state. A small population has been confirmed in northern Chihuahua and Tamaulipas Mexico, and several confirmed sightings have been made in the U.S. in New Mexico and Texas since 1995.

**REASONS FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY:** Endangered as a result of habitat degradation due to brush encroachment fostered by overgrazing and fire suppression; over-collecting; and reproductive failure caused by organochlorine pesticide use, namely DDT.

**NOTES:** A Recovery Plan was completed in June 1990. A copy of the recovery plan is available online at: [http://ecos.fws.gov/recovery\\_plan/pdf\\_files/1990/900608.pdf](http://ecos.fws.gov/recovery_plan/pdf_files/1990/900608.pdf)

Between 1986 and 1994, 58 nestlings were fledged for release by The Peregrine Fund at Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge in Texas. As of 1994, 106 total falcons had been fledged in captivity and 62 had been released.

Listed as a Species of Special Concern by the State of Arizona

