

**Notes and Corrections on the 1962 NAFA Journal Article
By Richard H. Hoyer, 18 August 2011**

Frank Beebe edited my draft of the 1962 NAFA article but didn't return it. So I didn't have a chance to review his version before he sent it on to NAFA to be published. I have moved 5 - 6 times since 1961- 1962 and do not know where my original draft may be hiding if in fact, it still exists. I did find one folder of correspondence between myself and Frank but the letters only date back to early 1990.

Despite not being able to review the original draft, below I have made some corrections and comments in order to set the record straight on information contained in the article.

1. Flying Choppers: On page 10 of Frank Beebe's introduction entitled "Notes", it is stated I spent 6 summers flying choppers in the arctic and subarctic. I actually spent one summer flying in arctic Canada and two summers in Alaska similar to what is mentioned in the next to last paragraph on page 11.
2. Bald Eagle numbers: I am pretty straight with facts and take precautions towards avoiding exaggerations and embellishing accounts. When I reread my NAFA article, I noted where it mentions observing Bald Eagles by the thousands. At 28 years of age, either I was off course in my personal ethics at that point in my life, or Frank took liberties, I don't know which. Observing a few hundred Bald Eagles would be a more accurate portrayal.
3. Gyrfalcon numbers: Page 12, next to last paragraph: Here again, I don't know if the numbers mentioned were mine or Frank's. Although I do recall seeing quite a few Gyrs on some days, the specific numbers mentioned in the article do not jive with my recollection of reality.
4. Arctic Peregrine sightings: With respect to the last paragraph, I do not recall seeing very many Arctic Peregrines that summer in arctic Canada. It wasn't until the next two years in northern and western Alaska that I observed Peregrines in far greater numbers than in Canada.
5. Released Gyr: I have no idea where Frank got the notion that the Gyr I raised in 1959 was lost due to a broken swivel. I didn't have any falconry equipment with me and improvised at the time. Thus, I didn't have a swivel between the Gyr's leash and jesses. The oil exploration firm for whom I was working was behind on their time table for completing the contract and hired a second helicopter pilot to take on a second shift. The new pilot (Ed) felt it was inhumane

to have the falcon tethered to a perch. He let his feelings be known and later took it upon himself to set the Gyr free while I was out working with the crew.

6. Golden Eagles: Page 13, first paragraph: Golden Eagles were commonly sighted but not common in the traditional sense of the word. Not having the original draft, I cannot tell if at 28 I was less disciplined, if Frank misinterpreted my writing, or what.
7. Arctic Peregrine: Page 14: Here is where I believe Frank took considerable liberty with my original draft. On 2 - 3 few occasions, the geologists had me fly down rivers to the north out into the open arctic plains in search of outcrops / bluffs where they could examine rocks. It was during those trips that the presence of the Arctic Peregrine population became very apparent.

As we flew north away from the foothills of the Brooks Range, the number of suitable nesting cliffs diminished greatly at lower elevations as the rivers cut through more shallow hills. The geologists would have me stop at intervals so that they could examine exposed rock. I recall initially counting some eyries on cliffs with the tale-telltale whitewash. But then further north, suitable nesting cliffs became virtually non-existent. Yet when I landed at spots where the geologists could examine exposed rock, frequently there were Peregrines present that would repeatedly stoop at the intruders thus indicating an active nest site.

8. Peregrine Chicks: It was at one of these sites I climbed a bluff and found a nest of 5 (possibly 4) Peregrine chicks. I took the one female for which you have a photo. Thereafter when we stopped, having been unnerved by the close encounters of stooping Peregrines, the geologists had me accompany them so as to wave my hat and ward off the falcons. So, I never had the opportunity to see, let alone count chicks other than from that one nest. However, I did take notes of the number of territories being defended by Peregrines.
9. Estimating Peregrine Eyries & Chicks: Not having the original draft, I don't know exactly what I wrote Frank nor do I know my actual recorded count of territories. But it is my current recollection that along with the observed cliff eyries and the number of defended territories I recorded, I then extrapolated the total number of potential territories along the course of the rivers we flew on those days. Then by multiply the estimated number of territories by a mean number of chicks per nest site (probably 3 to 3.5), I came up with ball park estimates of the juvenile Peregrines being produced along those sections of rivers. How that information

got translated into actually seeing/counting Peregrine chicks is not known but that certainly was not the case.

10. Nesting on the Ground: As mentioned above, despite the lack of nesting cliffs, we kept encountering agitated Peregrines almost every place the geologist had me land along river embankments. The one female Peregrine I did take came from a nest on bare ground partly hidden amongst grass or some other vegetation on a bluff overlooking the river. I therefore concluded that many of the other observed Peregrines were likewise nesting on the ground. At the time, I thought that was pretty darn interesting but can't explain why I didn't include that information in the NAFA article.
11. Shell Oil: On page 15, Frank got his wires crossed again but really of no consequence. Shell Oil was the prime contractor north of the Brooks Range and required all pilots and mechanics to take a one week break during the summer season. I was the last pilot to take a break in mid-August and when I returned, I was reassigned to a mining exploration company, subsidiary of Kennecott Copper, near Ruby, Alaska where I saw a good number of Merlins.
12. Frank's Own Thoughts: Although the first sentence in the second paragraph on page 15 is likely mine (it starts with a quotation mark), from there on, the last three paragraphs were all Frank's wording and thoughts. Although what Frank mentions in those paragraphs is his opinion, what he mentions is well in line with basic biological principles that govern populations of wildlife. This is one aspect about Frank that I found of considerable interest. I do not believe he had any formal training in wildlife science / population biology but I found he understood such matters to a much better degree than many wildlife biologists and professionals in biological disciplines.