

# USACE Natural Resource Management

## Migratory Birds



### Northern Aplomado Falcon

### FAST FACTS

**REASONS FOR CURRENT STATUS:** This bird is listed as Endangered wherever found, except for where it is considered an experimental, non-essential population in Arizona and New Mexico. The Northern Aplomado Falcon was originally listed in 1986. This falcon was first found in the U.S. in 1852 and was considered common within its range. However, this subspecies' population began to decline in the 1930's and by 1940 it had disappeared from most of its U.S. range. (USFWS)

The decline of this species has been influenced by the loss habitat due to degradation, conversion to farmland, and overgrazing. The introduction of exotic grasses has also contributed to the degradation of this bird's habitat. (Birds of the World, Cornell) Pesticide exposure was likely another significant factor in this falcon's disappearance. (USFWS)

**MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION:** USFWS developed a recovery plan for this falcon in 1990. Since then, over 1,142 captive-bred birds have been released in Texas. These reintroduced falcons have fledged more than 244 young since 1995.

In 2006, the population in Arizona and New Mexico was deemed a nonessential experimental population under section 10(i) of the Endangered Species Act. This designation authorizes unintentional or incidental take of the falcon pursuant to otherwise legal actions, but still prohibits intentional take.

**HABITAT NEEDS:** According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this bird inhabits desert grasslands and coastal prairies of Texas, New Mexico and southeastern Arizona.

- The species can be found in oak woodlands and riparian gallery forests if they are located within desert grassland.
- Occupied habitat typically has scattered yuccas and honey mesquite.
- Nesting and hunting areas are generally open with scattered trees or trees concentrated along the margins of streams. (Birds of the World)

**Size:** These birds are medium sized falcons which grow to be 14 to 18 inches in length. Females tend to be larger than males. (USFWS)

**Color:** Both sexes are similar in appearance. Adults have a gray back, rust colored underparts, and a black and white pattern on their face. (USFWS)

*Photo Credit:*

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

*Natural Resource Management (NRM)*

*This fact sheet has been prepared as an unofficial publication of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). This online publication is produced to provide its readers information about best management practices related to special status species. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Mention of specific vendors does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Army or any element thereof.*



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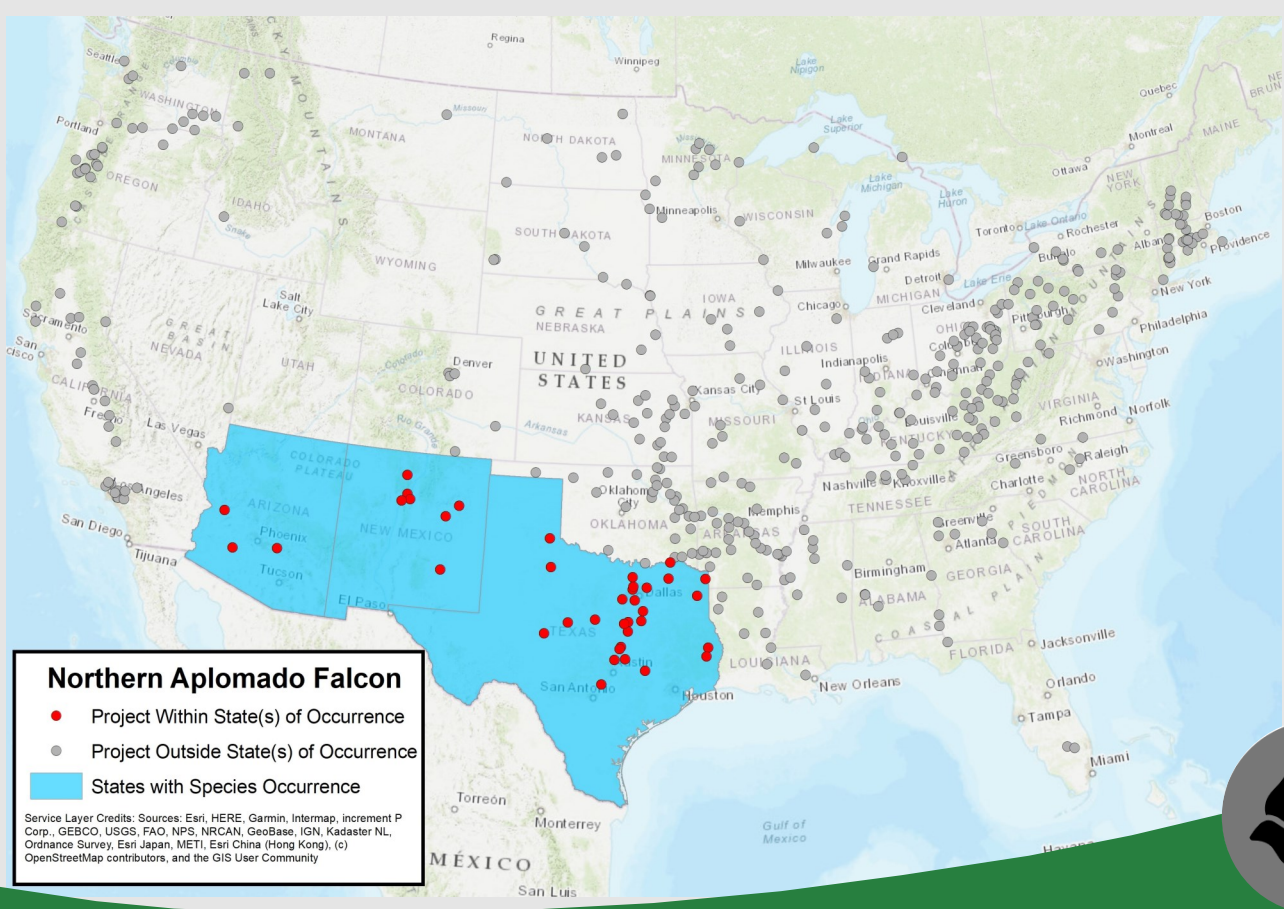
**USACE ROLE:** Since 2005, the USACE has expended over \$1.4 million dollars on efforts related to the Northern Aplomado Falcon. These efforts have been initiated by multiple business lines including Planning and Program Management, Regulatory, Navigation, and Environmental Stewardship.

Of that sum, nearly \$1.1 million was spent on inventorying, surveying, and monitoring the Northern Aplomado Falcon. Almost \$200,000 was spent on the in-house protection, construction, creation, and/or restoration of habitat.

*Photo, left:* The cover of the Aplomado Falcon Recovery Plan developed in 1990 by the USFWS.



**WHAT IS USACE DOING:** The USACE operates a number of projects within the range of both the experimental, nonessential population of Northern Aplomado Falcon and the endangered population. As such, USACE works diligently to analyze project plans to ensure they will not have negative impacts on the Northern Aplomado Falcon or its habitat. All current and future projects are closely coordinated with resources agencies.



Source: Map provided by Ashleigh Boss, ORISE Fellowship, Institute for Water Resources

Non-migratory Birds

