

*Thought you might be interested, Harold - Believe it's from Free Press.*

*Lois*

# Use your eagle eye and checkoff per

LANSING — Hunters and non-hunters alike can help non-game wild-  
life two ways in the next three months:

Report sightings of rare bald eagles  
on a special Department of Natural  
resources address.

Volunteer a portion of your state  
income tax refund to the non-game  
checkoff program on your tax form.

"These non-game checkoff dollars  
are really about all we have to help pay  
for expanding non-game management  
programs statewide," said Bob Hess,  
co-ordinator of the program for the  
DNR. "We get little money from the  
state game and fish fund and no general  
fund money."

Last year, \$670,000 was donated by  
taxpayers. This year the DNR hopes to  
take \$750,000. The fund's first year,  
1983, produced \$230,000.

Much of the money has gone for  
low-profile work to identify and cate-  
gorize the problems endangered spe-  
cies face. Scheduled to be completed  
next year is a breeding-bird atlas that  
will tell the abundance and location of  
230 or more species of breeding  
birds in Michigan. The entire state has  
been divided into nine-square-mile  
blocks for surveys. The project was  
conceived by the Kalamazoo Nature  
Center with the help of more than  
100 volunteers.

ANOTHER NON-GAME program is  
under way in Grand Rapids and De-  
troit: the introduction of rare peregrine  
falcons to city skyscrapers.

Over a three-year period, biologists  
hope to introduce dozens of falcons  
to downtown areas, where high  
buildings offer suitable nesting habitat,  
and an abundance of pigeons, other  
birds and rodents provide food.  
The falcons, taken from private  
trappers and released when about 40  
days old, have shown an adaptability to  
city life. Two were sighted during the  
Audubon Club's Christmas bird count.  
Others are believed to have migrated  
from the Gulf or Atlantic coast, where  
they usually winter.

"Some may show up next year,  
but we'll be releasing more," Hess  
said. "But they normally don't return  
after three years — until they're sexually



**Tom  
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mature."

Another release is scheduled to be-  
gin this year in the Upper Peninsula,  
either along the Pictured Rocks National  
Lakeshore or in a cliff area of the  
Ottawa National Forest.

In another non-game fund program,  
pine martens from a wildlife reserve in  
northern Ontario were released in the  
northern Lower Peninsula. Martens  
were once native there. Hess hopes to  
get about 200 more to add to the 81 live-  
trapped and released earlier — if the  
Ontario government approves.

At least six nesting sites of only 18  
breeding pairs of piping plovers have  
been identified and the affected beaches  
have been closed during nesting  
season. A loon registry program has  
been started, too, enrolling landown-  
ers on 110 lakes where loons nest. Only  
a few hundred pairs breed in the state.  
Where nests are observed, the program  
has designated loon "rangers" to patrol  
the area, warning boaters and fisher-  
men away.

PERHAPS Michigan's most famous  
endangered species, the Kirtland's  
warbler, is protected by federal funds.  
Tom Weise, another DNR endangered  
species co-ordinator, is paid from federal  
funds for warbler preservation.  
Besides Hess, non-game funds pay part  
of the salary of a secretary and a  
promotional expert who prepares  
fund-raising posters and programs for  
non-game matters.

Last spring's survey counted only  
167 breeding warbler males that re-  
turned to nesting habitat in the north-  
ern Lower Peninsula after a winter in  
the Bahamas.

Some 25 workshops on bluebirds  
were held last year with non-game  
fund money teaching more than 3,500  
people how to build nesting boxes for  
bluebirds, barn owls and purple mar-  
tins, as well as how to help preserve

natural nesting sites in den trees.

Other non-game protection pro-  
grams are aimed at rare snakes and  
frogs, the loggerhead shrike (only five  
nesting pairs in the state), and three  
species of terns — common, Caspian  
and Forster's.

Even with all these programs, one-  
fourth of all donated money goes into a  
trust fund. Administrators are worried  
that as the novelty of donating wears  
off, contributions will fall.

As for the eagles, Michigan re-  
corded 137 nesting pairs last year, most  
of them in the UP's interior forests.  
Eagles are just starting to recolonize  
the Great Lakes shorelines, Hess said,  
where DDT and other pesticides de-  
stroyed their populations in the 1950s  
and '60s.

"They produced 149 young last  
year," Hess said, "and we want every-  
one to help us keep track of the eagles  
we have."

Anyone seeing an eagle should drop  
a postcard with the date, specific loca-  
tion and number of eagles seen to:  
Eagle Alert, DNR Non-Game Wildlife,  
P.O. Box 30180, Lansing, Mich., 48909.



If you see one of these, the DNR wants to know.