

FLIGHT PATHS

Praise for *Flight Paths*

“In *Flight Paths* Darryl McGrath weaves together science, politics, personal struggle, and the emotional gravity of permanent loss into poignant tales of survival. She reminds us that our actions and determination can have a huge impact on birds and other wildlife that make their homes in the Adirondack Park. She brings a fresh perspective to modern conservation efforts and reminds us why birds matter in our everyday lives. Anyone who loves the Adirondack Park, or just appreciates wild places, will enjoy reading this book.”

— William C. Janeway, Executive Director, Adirondack Council

“Not since David R. Zimmerman’s *To Save a Bird in Peril* has there been a popular book on rare and endangered birds so well researched and documented as this one. McGrath writes the story of the remarkable restoration of our national bird in New York, a saga that is largely the story of a few unique people who devoted their lives to this endeavor. She writes similar stories about the peregrine falcon, the common loon, the Bicknell’s thrush, and the short-eared owl, emphasizing the special problems and solutions for each species. Anyone interested in the details of what it takes to save rare or endangered species from extinction should read this sympathetic and well-written book.”

— Tom J. Cade, Founding Chairman
and Director, The Peregrine Fund

“In *Flight Paths*, Darryl McGrath tells the compelling story of New York’s legacy as a national and international innovator in modern bird conservation. In an engaging style that often reads more like a novel than typical historical reporting, she focuses on the successful efforts to save the peregrine falcon and bald eagle from extinction in the Lower 48 states. Her conversations and field experience with the dedicated scientists and conservationists whose tireless efforts brought these magnificent birds back from the brink bring a rare depth and richness to the narrative. The pioneering work described in this well-told tale give some hope that when courageous and innovative scientists simply refuse to take ‘no’ for an answer, seemingly intractable problems will yield.”

— Kenneth P. Able, editor of *Gatherings of Angels:
Migrating Birds and Their Ecology*



FLIGHT PATHS

*A Field Journal of Hope, Heartbreak,
and Miracles with New York's Bird People*

Darryl McGrath



excelsior editions

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Cover photograph: female peregrine falcon, by Barbara Allen Loucks, used with permission.

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For my husband, Jim McGrath.

June 4, 1957–September 4, 2013.

*He always told me I would finish this,
and he made it possible for me to do so.*

Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars, and spreads his
wings toward the south?

Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and
makes his nest on high?

On the rock he dwells and makes his home in the
fastness of the rocky crag.

Thence he spies out the prey; his eyes behold it afar off.

—Job 39:26–29