

Kestrel Use of Boxes Increases



This year over 250 American kestrels were produced in Iowa's nest boxes. Boxes that have been up for two or more years were used about twice as much by kestrels than new boxes. Thus, the longer a box is up, the more apt you are to attract a kestrel. Nest box use by kestrels can be enhanced by keeping house sparrows and starlings out.

The boxes along I-35 continued to be the highest producers of kestrels with 57 of the 117 boxes being used. In Cerro Gordo County where the kestrel boxes were first placed on highway signs several years ago, 70 percent of the boxes were used by kestrels. Fledging from boxes attached to the highway signs continues to be high since no predators have figured out a way to climb up the aluminum signs.

New kestrel box projects that have begun this year include one in Black Hawk County initiated by Mr. Dean Rigdon, another in Kossuth County sponsored by the Kossuth County Conservation Board, and a route at Lake Rathbun monitored by personnel with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Interest in kestrels continues to increase in Iowa and nearly everyone who has placed boxes out for them has achieved some success. The Iowa Nongame Wildlife Program is interested in learning just how many kestrels are produced in Iowa each year and would appreciate any reports of nesting. Please send reports to the Nongame Program. An annual summary of kestrel nesting will be prepared and distributed to participants to keep interested people up-to-date about the kestrel's status.

The continued support and permission from the Department of Transportation makes this highway project possible.

Numbers of Boxes Available For and Use
by Kestrels in Iowa During 1986.

County	Hwy.	No. of Boxes	No. of Boxes Used	% Boxes Used
Cerro Gordo	I-35	27	19	70%
Fremont	I-29	20	11	55
Decatur	I-35	20	2	10
Black Hawk	US 20	10	6	60
Story/Hamilton	I-35	40	19	48
Kossuth		25	6	24
Appanoose		15	5	33
Total		157	68	43%
				Overall Use

What's Happening?!

Fall is filling up with a cornucopia of activities. We hope to see some of you at the various events. If you have questions regarding any of the programs please contact the person listed at the end of the event.

STATEWIDE BLUEBIRD SEMINAR:
September 27 at Lime Creek Nature Center in Mason City from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This seminar will include a film on bluebirds, information on building nest boxes, what to do about other visitors to your boxes, plus regional information on other people's bluebird trails and how the bluebird is faring. The program will be in conjunction with the Midwest Bluebird Recovery Program so there also will be representatives from Minnesota's bluebird program to share their experiences. (D. Reeves.)

PELICAN WATCH: October 4, Red Rock Reservoir; and October 5 at Saylorville Reservoir from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

