

Kestrel Nest Boxes

Project Leader: Gene Groshon, Naturalist

groshopg@co.cal.md.us

410-535-5327

Calvert County Natural Resources is participating in an exciting new research and conservation program called the American Kestrel Partnership coordinated by The Peregrine Fund, an international non-profit organization committed to the conservation of birds of prey worldwide. The American Kestrel is North America's smallest and most colorful falcon, though unfortunately kestrel populations are declining across many regions of the continent. As a participant in the Partnership, Calvert County Natural Resources is building and installing nest boxes locally to provide breeding habitat for this cavity nesting species. In addition to building nest boxes, we are periodically monitoring the boxes to collect data for the Partnership's research program.

VOLUNTEER DUTIES

- Complete training on kestrel natural history, nest box installation and monitoring, and private property etiquette
- Build new nest boxes; clean and repair older nest boxes
- Help install boxes at approved locations around the county
 - Transport nest boxes, mounting supplies, ladders, and other equipment to and from nesting sites
- Work independently to monitor select nest boxes every two weeks from April through July.
 - Drive around the county to different box locations
 - Transport and setting up ladders and equipment
 - Check boxes for kestrel activity and eggs
 - Scout the area for kestrels or signs of kestrels
 - Remove invasive species' nests and eggs from boxes, if present
 - Record and analyze data
 - Promote the project and the importance of kestrels to others

Volunteers may also:

- Climb tall ladders to access and mount the nest boxes
- Hike across uneven and overgrown terrain to get to box locations
- Be exposed to ticks, mosquitoes, poison ivy, bad weather, cranky birds, and other wild life

Requirements and Training

Training will be provided over the winter. Volunteers must complete training before participating in this project.

Volunteers will need their own transportation and 15' (minimum) ladder and will be expected to check designated boxes on a regular bi-weekly schedule

Project Dates

Winter and Early Spring: box repair and installation as a group; general volunteer training

April-July: Boxes checked for activity every two weeks (independently)