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Santa Fe Audubon Society - Florida

Santa Fe Audubon Society

Melrose, FL

AUGUST 2021
NEWSLETTER

THE NATIVE PLANT CONNECTION

SANTA FE AUDUBON IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

by Celina Rohman

Santa Fe Audubon provided a grant for Florida native plants for a landscaping installation in support of a deserving disabled veteran. On July 29, we partnered again with Habitat for Humanity for our sixth year. In a community collaboration with Bradford and Putnam County Master Gardeners, Alligator Creek and Palatka Garden Clubs, The Elegant Garden and Keep Palatka Beautiful, we were able to achieve a beautiful native plant installation expertly designed by Kelly Tesiero of The Elegant Garden.



Black-eyed Susans, Firebush, Calamint, Ironweed, Shumard and Swamp Chestnut Oak were all installed on three separate islands in the natural landscape.



We had 14 volunteers and enjoyed a great day of comederie and talked about the next Habitat installation!



Once they move in, the new homeowners will be educated about their new plants, their care, value and benefits to birds and butterflies.



Kestrel Corner

by Bill Chitty

As this year's American Kestrel nesting season come to a close we are happy to report that two of the missing radio collared kestrels have been located about 9 miles from the box.



We will be attempting to follow the young kestrels at least until October. If successful in keeping track of them, we may make an attempt to trap them in order to replace the radio transmitter battery. Then maybe we will be able to follow them until they nest.

Thank you to the Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI) for their collaboration on banding, attaching radio telemetry devices and locating the kestrels via an airplane.

To learn more about ARCI visit their website:

www.arcinst.org



BIRD OF THE MONTH

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*)
band code "AMKE"



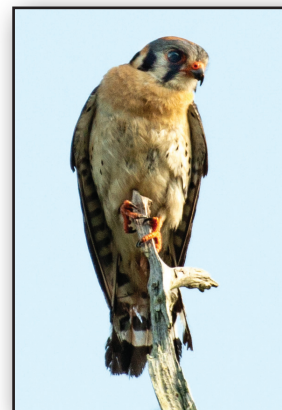
North America's littlest falcon, the American Kestrel packs a predator's fierce intensity into its small body. It's one of the most colorful of all raptors: the male's slate-blue head and wings contrast elegantly with his rusty-red back and tail; the female has the same warm reddish on her wings, back, and tail. Hunting for insects and other small prey in open territory, kestrels perch on wires or poles, or hover facing into the wind, flapping and adjusting their long tails to stay in place. Kestrels are declining in parts of their range; you can help them by putting up nest boxes.

Scan fence posts, utility lines and telephone poles, particularly when driving through farmland. Or catch them by the hundreds at coastal migration sites—such as Cape May, New Jersey, or Kiptopeke, Virginia—in September or early October. Particularly in summer, listen for their shrill killy-killy-killy call to be alerted to when they're around.

The slender American Kestrel is roughly the size and shape of a Mourning Dove, although it has a larger head; longer, narrow wings; and long, square-tipped tail. In flight, the wings are often bent and the wingtips swept back.

COOL FACTS:

In winter in many southern parts of the range, female and male American Kestrels use different habitats. Females use the typical open habitat, and males use areas with more trees. This situation appears to be the result of the females migrating south first and establishing winter territories, leaving males to the more wooded areas.



The oldest American Kestrel was a male and at least 14 years, 8 months old when he was found in Utah in 2001. He had been banded in the same state in 1987.

For more information about American Kestrels visit:

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Kestrel/overview

Fun Fact:

A group of kestrels are collectively known as a "flight", "hover", and "soar" of kestrels.



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