



## Keeping Up with the Kestrels

### June Updates

In 2019, FoHVOS received a grant from the NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife Endangered and Nongame Species Program to increase nesting opportunities for the state-threatened American Kestrel with hopes of boosting their population in the Hopewell Valley. Thanks to more than 100 volunteers who attended box-building workshops this spring, we successfully constructed 50 nesting boxes! Over the last few months, FoHVOS staff, interns, and volunteers have installed 36 boxes in the most suitable habitats in FoHVOS preserves, Mercer County parks, and private lands throughout the Hopewell Valley.

The boxes are monitored every two weeks by volunteer citizen scientists to record any kestrel nesting activity and to thwart nest-building attempts by non-native starlings and house sparrows. At the time of writing, six of these boxes have already been occupied! Females from three nests were captured and fitted with uniquely-numbered leg bands by NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife biologists to help track the population's recovery. Two nests have eggs that are being incubated by the adults, and two nests have already hatched! Sadly, the other two nests were abandoned before hatching, which is unfortunately a common occurrence in this species. Luckily, it is still early in the Kestrel active nesting season, and we are hopeful that more nests will appear!

If you wish to learn more about the American Kestrel, visit our designated webpage [here](#). We wish to extend our sincerest gratitude for your participation in this project, and for building the boxes that are currently providing nesting habitat for these state-threatened raptors. Thank you for your help and support!



Female kestrel at the time of banding



A nestful of 5 young chicks



A nestling about to be banded and weighed



Calvary Baptist Church

CUB SCOUT PACK 1776

Painted Oak Nature School

Cambridge School

**Bloomberg**



# FoH VOS

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