



Announcing the Napa-Solano Kestrel Nest Box Initiative

We are launching a long-term American Kestrel nest box monitoring program in Napa and Solano counties.

We are looking for agricultural and open spaces to join the network. Contact us if you have existing Kestrel nest boxes or are interested in installing new ones.

For more information please contact:

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UCCE Napa, Lake & Solano counties



American Kestrel populations are declining across California, and scientists are working to figure out why.

Through long-term monitoring we can learn about local Kestrel population health, inform conservation and management, and increase biological control of agricultural pests.

Nest box installation: October – February. We can advise on nest box placement, plans, and suppliers.

Nest box monitoring: April – July. Several planned visits to check occupancy by UCCE research associate.





Install new American Kestrel nest boxes this fall/winter

Where to place them and how many?

Kestrel nest boxes should be placed in open areas, such as grasslands or vineyards, and away from roads and areas with regular human activity as much as possible. Nest boxes should be hung on a pole at least 10 feet high and spaced out approximately ½ mile apart.

We can answer questions about the specific number and locations for your property.

Nest boxes can be purchased and/or installed by Clark's Sustainable Solutions:

Tom Clark – tom@clarkclaudon.com

(707) 484-4920 – aloftnapavalley.com

Plans and instructions to build nest boxes:

ucanr.edu/sites/NapaCountyUCCE/files/390202.pdf

Enroll existing American Kestrel nest boxes

If you already have American Kestrel (or Screech Owl) nest boxes and would like to enroll them in the new monitoring network, contact Breanna Martinico: bmartinico@ucanr.edu (707) 253-4141

Visit your current nests this fall and winter to ensure nests are structurally sound and to make repairs as needed. Nest boxes should have a thin layer of wood shavings or debris so the floor is not bare— this is important for eggs and nestlings.



What does monitoring entail?

We will monitor nests with a wireless camera on an extendable pole, a minimally invasive method to check the status of nests.

We will document nest box use and nest phenology including the number and timing of eggs, nestlings, and nestling survival.

We will visit nests 3-5 times from April through July and coordinate all visits with landowners.

We hope this network opens opportunities for future research to learn about Kestrels, including about diet, movement patterns, and natural pest control services 😊

This project is in partnership with Napa-Solano Audubon, Clark Sustainable Solutions, and UC Davis graduate student Mary Badger.