

17 March 2009

American Kestrel Nest Survey NYC - Issue #1 (2009)

Kestrels are returning to Nest Sites

Greetings Everyone, and Happy New Year. We are beginning to receive reports about kestrels returning to their 2008 home territories, and in one case, even re-visiting a nest cavity in which they nested in 2008 (near the Brooklyn Bridge). See below for more details.

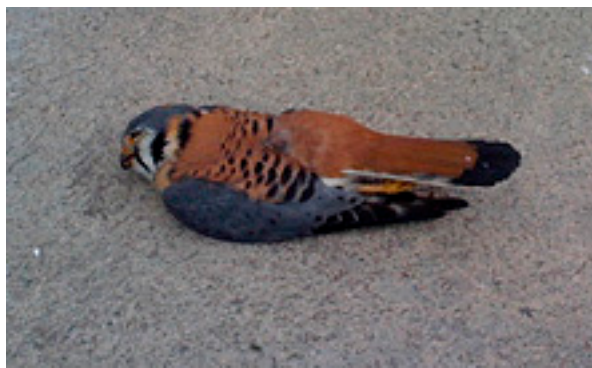
Since it seems as though bob will be here for the spring (no wind power research positions right now - economy still very slow), the best thing to do is to use one's time productively. I hope this is the first in a series of Kestrel Newsletters for Spring-Summer 2009. Last year with your help, approximately 30-35 active kestrel nests were located. Most were in Manhattan. The earliest time frame that young left the nest was in mid-May at the nest site studied by Chuck McAlexander in Chelsea (Manhattan) for the last several years. The latest seems to have been in mid-July at the nest in Queens watched by Travis Molkenbur and his two young daughters. The most number of young fledged from one nest was five (at 69th and Broadway - Carol Wood's and Rob Cicchetti's nest site) and the West 111th street nest site (Manny's).

Now it is March 2009...and this is what we are seeing and hearing about from our kestrel spies:

8 March 2009 (Bronx) - about 7:30am - near the Castle Hill Avenue train station (#6 line), a male kestrel was making undulating display flights while calling (killy-killy-killy). On **15 March**, the same male was making direct flights but flapping only with wingtips (a display flight), and then landing next to a female kestrel on a TV aerial atop an apartment building. No copulations were observed...

13 March (Queens) - "saw the male for the 1st time in about a month flying over 37th Ave making a terrible noise [killy-killy-killy?]. And had a female hanging out across from work....she flew right by the window too...very close." **Mike DiPrima**

15 March (Queens) - "Sadly, very sadly it was dead on the sidewalk. There are no glass buildings around, in fact no buildings over 2 stories. Not sure how it died. I pulled it off the sidewalk, do you know anyone that would be interested in him for an autopsy? [*Yes, bob does: for a study of metal contaminants such as lead and mercury*]. To me he looks plump/healthy. There does seem to be some sort of abrasion/matting on his upper chest/neck area." **Kent Anderson** (*could be building strike...or the kestrel was struck by another raptor, especially a Cooper's Hawk - see email from Eileen Wicker on page 3*).



Dead male kestrel on sidewalk in Queens (15 March)

© Kent Anderson



Red-tailed Hawk w/ kestrel prey

Photographer unknown

16 March (Queens) - "Well, I found another kestrel, hanging out on PS 122 on Ditmars between 23rd and 21st. This is a block away from where I found the dead Kestrel. I'm hoping it isn't the widow, but with the lighting today, I couldn't tell. The face and head was pretty dark, and I would swear when it took off, I saw a flash of blue gray on top of the wings. So, I'm hoping it was another male. The school is the tallest building in my neighborhood, by far, and I figured if I'd see one, it would be on that school. I'll keep my eyes peeled. **Kent Anderson**

16 March (Lower Manhattan) - Last year you gave me your business card when you were at Front and Dover street in the South Street Seaport, NY. **This morning I saw an American Kestrel flying into the corner of the bldg. I assume to make another nest.** It was exciting to see him/her. **Shelley Simpson** [See the two photos below; and one photo on p. 5 of the nest atop a nearby water tower in 2007.]



View of the same 2008 nest building in the South Street Seaport/Brooklyn Bridge area where Shelley Simpson found the kestrel (probably a female) investigating a nest cavity on 16 March.

From: [Janet Bachant](#)
Subject: Kestrels - Upper West Side
Date: Jan 14, 2009

I had some correspondence with you earlier this year and just wanted to report that the kestrels are still coming after the finches I feed in the courtyard of the Belnord building on West 86th Street. They seem to both come from and fly to the West. I've seen them quite a few times (I have two jobs and don't spend all my time looking out my kitchen window!) but I have gotten a few decent photos. One of the photos looks only like a finch spreading its wings, but the kestrel has it in its grasp (it is hidden behind my window sash).

--

Janet Lee Bachant, Ph.D.

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Question #1 for our kestrel spies and philosophers: We are now (mid-March) seeing kestrels returning to nest sites and territories that they used in 2008. **Where are they returning from?** As Jane Bachant indicates above, some kestrels have been here all winter. Did others migrate away from NYC? Did some pairs just shift to a nearby location (a few blocks away) where there is more food (House Sparrows) in winter?

Do be on the lookout atop tall buildings for a little bird sitting on a TV antenna...The kestrels are "advertising" themselves to potential mates - possibly even kestrels that are migrating north through the area...Resident kestrels like to perch in prominent places to (a) keep an eye out on their territory; (b) make themselves known to potential mates as well as competitors for their territory ("I live here."); and (c) they feel safer higher up...and can look for food over a wider area too.

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From our Kestrel correspondents from places further afield:

Date: Jul 22, 2008
Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2008 4:35 PM
RE: NYC Kestrels

"The Hawk Mt Conference was interesting, expensive and enjoyable...for raptor rehabilitators from many of the attendees. A good year for me on Coopers Hawks used to be [receiving] 5 injured Cooper's Hawks, that was extremely high compared to some years. Last year we admitted 55, the majority of them window strikes. On the kestrels a normal year was around 50. Last year we admitted I believe 19. After questioning friends across the country they have all had similar experiences.. "

Eileen Wicker
Raptor Re-habber, Kentucky

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From: [Stefan Kupko <stefan.kupko@web.de>](mailto:stefan.kupko@web.de)
Subject: Re: Frounce in Eurasian Kestrels
Date: Jul 22, 2008 5:09 PM

Hello Robert,

Thanks for the mail and the interesting Newsletters. I study kestrels in Berlin, for more than 30 years in Berlin. This year we have more than 250 breeding pairs in Berlin! We ring the young kestrels (400-500 per year), built nest boxes (more than 320 in the moment in Berlin), have an falcon hospital and a station for kestrels for make them healthy and let them free. We also made studies about the prey (many house sparrows in the city area), genetic studies (with Luka from Warschau) and so on... But I have never found "Frounce" by my kestrels, this

will be found by my colleagues which are ringing goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*). They have some cases every year, all the birds must be euthanized in the hospital. Sorry for my bad English, but I do my "kestrel job" only honorary on my free time, my real job is in an hospital (emergency room). I hope we will keep in touch, I am very interested about your work in NYC, I will send you some pictures and results from Berlin later,

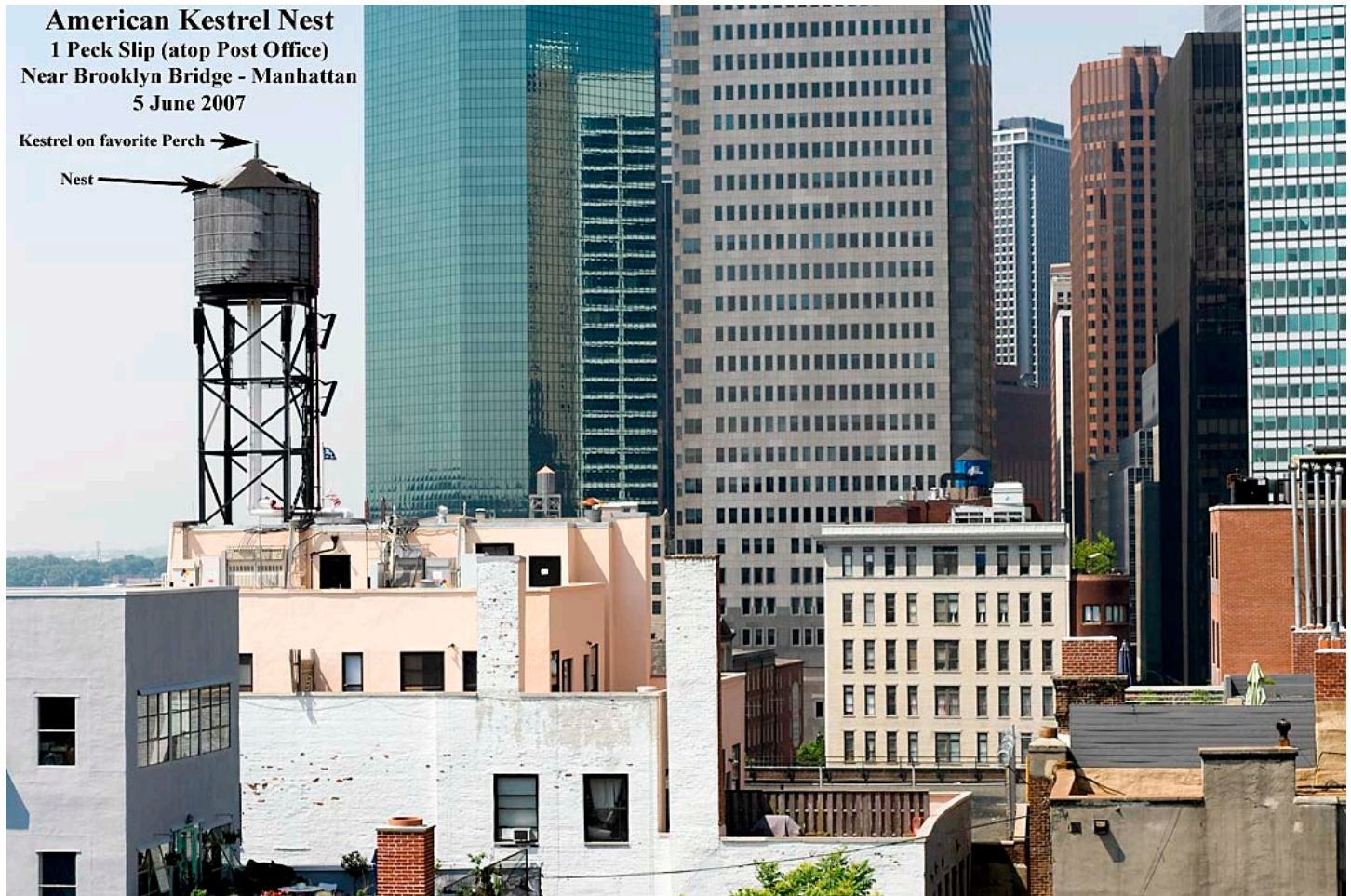
best regards,

Stefan

Here are two Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) kestrel nests from Romania (white arrows):



Finally, we have put together a fine 2009 Kestrel research team: Bobby and Cathy Horvath who are responsible for re-habbing and releasing back into NYC somewhere between 30-50 young kestrels each year; Eileen Jones who re-habs a significant number of kestrels from lower Manhattan and Brooklyn; Chad Seewagen of the Wildlife Conservation Society; Jim O'Brien who has discovered more NYC kestrel nests than an entire dept. of researchers; Deborah Allen, photographer...and You. We look forward to unraveling a few more kestrel secrets in 2009, and insuring their continued success here in NYC.



Be on the lookout for those little dots atop water towers and TV antennas...there is a kestrel nest nearby. There is indeed a kestrel sitting atop that water tower, above.

Thanks!

Robert DeCandido PhD
rdcny@earthlink.net

30 March 2009

American Kestrel Nest Survey NYC - Issue #2 (2009)

Kestrels are calling [you] - listen for them!

Hello All,

This week we feature the first potential nest of 2009, on the Upper West Side. Our own Janet Bachant heard them while walking home from a market on Sunday, 22 March. Here's the neighborhood, in infra-red black-and-white. Where do you think the female kestrel is perched?



*Is the female kestrel on one of the water towers or somewhere else in this photo? See the next page!
Again, all infra-red black-and-white photos. Apologies - the printers were on strike this week, and we have been forced to cut costs...because printing money gets expensive.*



She is atop the cell phone/cable towers on the building of which we hope she will choose to nest. Thank You, Janet Bachant! Note small park next door - good for sparrows.



Meanwhile, here are a few more kestrel comments from around New York City - please do send us yours - any and all observations are good one. Thanks from the editors - if not for you we have nothing to do, etc....

From: Annie Barry (Inwood area, Manhattan)

Date: December 2005

"...I spotted her on Dec. 17 (2005) during the Christmas count. She was on the light stanchion at Baker Field that day, looking down Seaman Ave. A kestrel (don't know if it's her or another kestrel) seems to favor Seaman as a hunting location. Several neighbors have reported seeing a kestrel chasing and catching pigeons there. They didn't know if it was a male or a female kestrel, so there may be 2 in the area...Do you know about the kestrels in Riverside Park near Columbia University? They often ventures on to campus to hunt pigeons there. I've seen both a male and a female in the area.

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From: Ben Cacace (Manhattan - Upper East Side)

Date: Mar 16, 2009

The 75th St. between 1st and York Ave. American Kestrels are back. I first saw the male in late December of 2008 and he has been seen regularly since then. I saw the female and male, perched together, for the first time at the end of February of 2009. Both have been seen visiting their usual perches as recently as this weekend. It appears they are back on territory and may make use of the nesting cavity you discovered last year.

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From: Matthew Wills (Brooklyn)

Date: Mar 16, 2009

I saw kestrels in Brooklyn in December around Washington & Fulton in Clinton Hill, and near Atlantic Center area. Probably overwintering. The eating is good (?) and the antennas and chimney pots are always there for perching. Where do they roost?

Also, in January: I saw a pair at the western end of Montague St, down where the new park is being built, over a couple of weekends. One lamp post particularly smeared with droppings there. Big weedy lot near there has been cleared out more recently, and other construction activity may have scared these off, since I haven't noticed seem them in a while.

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From: Jessica Katz (Brooklyn)

Date: Mar 16, 2009

Thank you so much for the Kestrel report! That's fabulous. I looooooove those birds and am glad to see this kind of network of enthusiasts working to gather information about them and support them. I look forward to seeing future updates.

I haven't noticed any in my neighborhood, yet, this season. But I have seen them in the past, here - Park Slope, Brooklyn, near Prospect Park. I'll certainly keep any eye out for them and report back if I see any and any nests.

BTW....my dad worked at the Peck Slip Post Office Station for many years (many years ago). It was nice to see that a kestrels have made it their home [2007].

Jessica

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From: Lisa Darms (Brooklyn - Fort Greene)
Date: Mar 16, 2009

One of "our" kestrels was back yesterday, on their usual perch in Fort Greene Park across from our window. It's our first sighting of the year, though we are pretty positive we've been hearing them for a couple of weeks.

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From: Shelley Campbell (Manhattan - South Street Seaport area)
Date: Mar 16, 2009

Thanks for the kestrel newsletter. After the morning sight of the Kestrel, I went back at noon with my dog and binoculars and much to my surprise, after about a minute looking through my binoculars at the cavity, the Kestrel stuck his/her head out and then flew out towards the East River. He/she had a full white front with symmetrical, long black markings, one on each side of the face into the white front. Regards, Shelley Simpson

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From: Mike DiPrima (Queens)
Date: Mar 17, 2009

Saw the local kestrel flying around this morning but at work today i saw one go after a red tail on top of the water tower

when i saw the small bird hover then dive i grabbed my cheap binoculars and saw it hover again.....the shape of the wings gave it away

i had seen it around noon too.....looks like i have 2 to watch!

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From: Janet Bachant (Manhattan)
Date: Mar 22, 2009

Walking home from the Flea Market I was startled from my reverie by the calls of kestrels. Could it be? They were so persistent I had to find them -- and there they were: a lovely pair that I observed going into their nesting cavity, standing watch, catching a mouse and perhaps the offering of a nuptial gift? I did see two kills within the space of about an hour and a half. I'm glad the one I had the camera for was a mouse and not one of my little finches!

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From: Ivan Martinez (Bronx)
Date: 23 March 2009

"...the HUNT'S POINT (Bronx) Kestrels are doing great, they are on the prowl and active."

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From: Toni J Canzoneri (Staten Island)

Date: Mon Mar 23, 2009 11:56 am

Great Kills Park - Dead House Sparrows

While waiting for the express bus this morning on Hylan Blvd and Bay Terrace, I noticed at least 5 Dead House Sparrows right behind the bus shelter.....seems that the ballfield treated???

Regards

Toni J Canzoneri

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From: Sharon Kass (Manhattan)

Date: Mar 25, 2009 7:46 AM

Hi Bob,

You probably know more about this kestrel than do I but I was walking along 6th Ave at 4th Street at 6:45pm last night and heard a kestrel and then saw it land on a building with slanted metal roof attachment (perhaps solar panels?) but I did not see it going into a nest. Just letting you know.. not much info.. just a quick spotting..

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If you read this far, then you are a true NYC kestrel aficionado. Here is a link to some wonderful kestrels in western Pennsylvania - by our friend, Jane Lynn. The kestrels have indeed returned to their nesting areas (but from where?).

<http://windowonnature.blogspot.com/2009/03/kestrels-return.html>

Thanks! Any and all kestrel observations are most welcome,

Robert DeCandido



Eurasian Kestrel (Netherlands)

8 April 2009

American Kestrel Nest Survey NYC - Issue #3 (2009)

Kestrels are copulating - and will be on eggs soon!

Hello All,

We received several suggestions last week to include photos of actual NYC kestrels whenever possible - and not just photos of black-and-white buildings. Always sensitive to the requests of our readers (we just returned from the hot place by the way), here is a female American Kestrel on a "stoop" (dive) at one of the Red-tailed Hawks from that well-known nest at 74th and 5th Avenue. This female kestrel is defending her nesting territory - in March. It is a long-standing interaction between two raptor species that nest in that upper east side neighborhood. This female kestrel photo is by Lincoln Karim (thanks Lincoln!).



From Alex Paul we have this image of an adult male American Kestrel (below left). One of our staff photographers captured this side view of a different adult male kestrel in 2008 at West 68th street (right).



Note the great variation in the color of the plumage by males of this species - some are very blue while others are barely bluish grey.

Starting about now, kestrels are getting down to business, copulating frequently:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/jlbachant/KestrelBirthdayPresent?feat=email#>

With the help of our kestrel spies (some of you are shown below), we were able to restore missing colors from last week's Newsletter, after our printers left us high and dry. Our spies below are just about to head out and paint the town red in celebration. Hooray! We can now go back to printing money to support our research.



Thanks to Deborah Allen who took the photo of the kestrel spies.

Here are a few more kestrel comments from around New York City - please do send us yours - any and all observations are good one. Thanks from the editors!

From: Kenneth Hicks (Manhattan - Upper East Side)

Date: Mar 26, 2009

Bob: The local kestrel that I told you about previously has reappeared this year perching on the water tower of a building on the southwest corner of 93rd and Lexington (the spot where I see it most often). I have only seen it once this year, within the last few weeks, but I don't get a chance to look for it during the

week. I haven't figured out where it nests, but I will keep looking.

From: Hamish Young

Date: March 27, 2009

I spotted a male kestrel flying near the Hecksher ballfields at the south west corner of the Park, Wednesday afternoon (25 March). He perched at the top of a tall tree to watch the frantic robins and other bird life. I don't know the direction from which he came. Hamish Young

From: Matt Fuller (West Side, Chelsea, Manhattan)

Subject: kestrel in chelsea

Date: March 30, 2009

Robert,

i've emailed you before about kestrel sightings on my rooftop water tank on 21st and 6th, and we've agreed it is likely to be the local bird. just a note i got my first 2009 sighting this weekend. the kestrel was swooping to and fro on 21st between 6th and 7th. exciting !

From: [Ben Cacace](#) (Upper East Side, Manhattan)

Date: Mar 30, 2009 7:16 PM

I got *very* lucky tonight. When I arrived home I spotted the female kestrel on a water tower a half block east of last year's nest location on 75th St between 1st & York Ave. This was at 6:40p.

Just now, at 7:10p, I was able to view the nest hole and the female perched on the water tower. In order to see the nest hole I need to stand on two huge books. While viewing the old nest location and the female I watched as she left her perch making a *direct* flight into the nest hole on the east side of the building you found the nest site in last year.

I'm not sure what the outcome was of last year's nesting attempt.

--

Ben Cacace

Manhattan, NYC

<http://novahunter.blogspot.com>

From: Mike DiPrima (Queens)

Date: Apr 2, 2009

This morning I was out on my terrace and heard the kestrel calling loudly. i looked around and could not see him but soon realized he was directly over my head on the roof so close yet so far. The spot where i saw the family last year has redone their chimneys and they no longer have the screen covering birds of prey seem to like - mike diprima

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From: Billy Benish

Date: Apr 2, 2009

Hi Bob,

I attended one of your walks a few weeks ago at the NYBG where I saw my first saw-whet owl.

Thank you for sending issue #2 of the NYC Kestrel Newsletter. I noticed that there was no mention of kestrels in the vicinity of their former nest site at W105th St. between Amsterdam and Columbus in either issue #1 nor #2. Do you have someone keeping an eye out in that area? I head to Central Park across W104th St. or 105th St. frequently and will keep an eye out.

Today and a couple of weeks ago, I walked past the building on W105th St. where I could see the former nest site. I did not see any birds there. The last time I saw a kestrel nearby was on March 1st this year, on top of the water tower on building #123 on W104th Street, between Amsterdam and Columbus. I've often seen a bird there.

After visiting Central Park this morning, the kestrels came back into my mind as I strolled back home, so I started to keep an eye out for them. After I got to Broadway, I saw a bird soaring above that busy street which I assumed was a pigeon. I took a closer look, and it was definitely a kestrel. It swooped around in a few circles before leaving the area, heading East from Broadway, between 94th & 95th St.

Bill

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From: barbyte@aol.com

Subject: Kestrels doin' the 'wild thing'

Date: Apr 3, 2009

Yesterday I got lucky and captured our kestrel pair copulating. It ain't easy - Jane and I have both missed several times. Thought you might get a kick out of seeing our lovers ;-)

<http://mybirdtales.blogspot.com/2009/04/kestrels-in-love.html>

Barb

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From: Rob Cicchetti (Upper West Side, Manhattan)

Date: Apr 4, 2009

Sorry for not having emailed lately, I've been super busy (still employed fortunately) and have not been home much nor at home during daylight hours in the last several weeks, with the exception of today to watch our feathered friends across the street.

I been watching our favorite kestrels on and off today, and at least twice today I saw prey in their talons. They seem to be up to their active, young-rearing selves again. I am assuming they are the same pair I've been observing since 2006, but no real way to verify this.

They have been active though which given the time of year is a good sign there are hungry young ones on the way!

Ed Note: Rob is referring to the kestrels that nest at 69th street and Broadway.

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From: Scott Barnes, Senior Naturalist, Sandy Hook Bird Observatory
Date: 4 April 2009 (Saturday - day of very strong west-northwest winds)

There was an excellent American Kestrel [northbound migration] flight today; Sandy Hook New Jersey Migration Watch Counter Seth Cutright tallied 93+ today.

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From: Barbara Ward (Spanish Harlem - 119th street and First Ave)
Subject: 119th St. kestrels active
Date: Apr 5, 2009 6:12 PM

We talked to our daughter Lyra, who lives in Harlem, last week. She said she had heard screaming birds and looked out to see the kestrels on the same building as before. She also mentioned walking down the street and exchanging smiles with some binocularized birders in the area. Was that you?

Barb and Dick Ward from Eastpointe, MI

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From: Jared Harary
Subject: Kestrels Union Square area (Manhattan)
Date: Apr 7, 2009

I have seen an American Kestrel in the city. In early January 2006 I was at my then girlfriend's apartment in union square. She lived on the top floor of a 6 story building at 101 east 16th which is at the corner of 16th and Union Sq East. Her back window faced north, overlooking other rooftops with the W Hotel towering in the background.

I saw a bird with a rust colored breast and black bars on its tail perched on an antenna, and on closer inspection it was picking at a mouse in its talons. I snapped a few pictures with my digital camera (only the attached one was in focus, though the bird's face was unfortunately obstructed). In my excitement I looked it up in Sibleys and thought it looked most like a male Kestrel, but I wasn't sure. Not knowing many birders, I actually emailed the attached picture to David Sibley who confirmed my ID. I never saw the kestrel again, but I was convinced it lived on a cornice atop of the W Hotel, or the Barnes and Noble building at the north end of Union Sq, which is one of the tall buildings there.

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From: Robert Schroeder (Union Square, Manhattan)
Subject: American Kestrel Family back 3rd year in a row!
Date: Aug 15, 2008

Hey guys, I'm happy to say that a pair of American Kestrels, have returned to the rooftops at 20th ST between 5th and 6th Ave, for the third year in a row. On this Wednesday I spotted the pair of Kestrels+ a juvenile, while on my companies rooftop at 36 West 20th St. I have been in this building for 13 years, I

first discovered the pair August 05 2006, they were raising a juvenile, stayed around till mid Sept then took off. They repeated that trend in August 2007, and I was very excited to see them back again this year, with a new juvenile. Thats 3 babies in 3 years. WOW. Watching them hunt, and performing aerial acrobatics is very cool. It's as if they recognize me, they have flown over my head and seemed to hover on the air currents, while calling down at me! Very rewarding!!!!!! They love the water towers on the adjacent buildings. I am happy to have come across your names after doing a google search for "american kestrels in manhattan". Please feel free to contact me.

Peace Love and Birding

Robert Schroeder
Senior Designer / Interactive Samurai

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Fusebox, Inc
36 West 20th Street
New York, NY 10011
t: 646.485.9113
www.fusebox.com

From Jim O'Brien on 13 August 2008: **yes, I just discovered this nest a few weeks ago. the kestrels nest on 20th street in a modillion above the strip club there. I also see the male on the star flag pole in the park at lunch.**



Female kestrel zooming across 5th Ave (Lincoln Karim)

Well - we are outa here for this week - off to look for kestrels with our spies - hope to see you all //// Debs and rdc ////

20 April 2009

American Kestrel Nest Survey NYC - Issue #4 (2009)

Female Kestrels entering (potential) nest cavities!

Hello All,

This past week two new kestrel nest sites were found on 116th street in Manhattan, about four blocks (approx. 325 meters) from one another.

Be on the lookout for kestrels perching regularly on roof antennas, cell phone towers, and church (school) spires. If you see a lone kestrel, or a pair, that perch regularly, you can be 100% certain that they will nest nearby. How far the nest from the perch? About 100-300 feet...And if you see a female kestrel enter a nest cavity (especially in a bracket of a cornice), chances are that is where she will nest.

For example, here is the probable nest on west 116th street photographed 13 April 2009:

133 West 116th Street between
Adam Clayton Powell Blvd and Malcom X Blvd.

Nest in Bracket of Cornice (Modillion)



We have seen the female chasing starlings away from the area of the cavity (another good indicator). This nest cavity faces north and is above a busy two-way (four lane) street. The adults like to perch on the south side of the street...and use the gothic high school about 1.5 blocks to the southwest as their favorite winter residence.

By comparison, here is the probable nest on East 116th street near Lexington Ave (located above "Professional Nail"). This nest faces north...and the female likes to perch on cell phone antennas of the building on the NE corner of Park Avenue that overlooks the Metro North Railroad tracks.

American Kestrel Nest - Spanish Harlem (2009)
124 East 116th Street (between Lexington and Park Aves.)
South Side of Street - above "Professional Nail"
13 April 2009



Here is the nest hole up close:

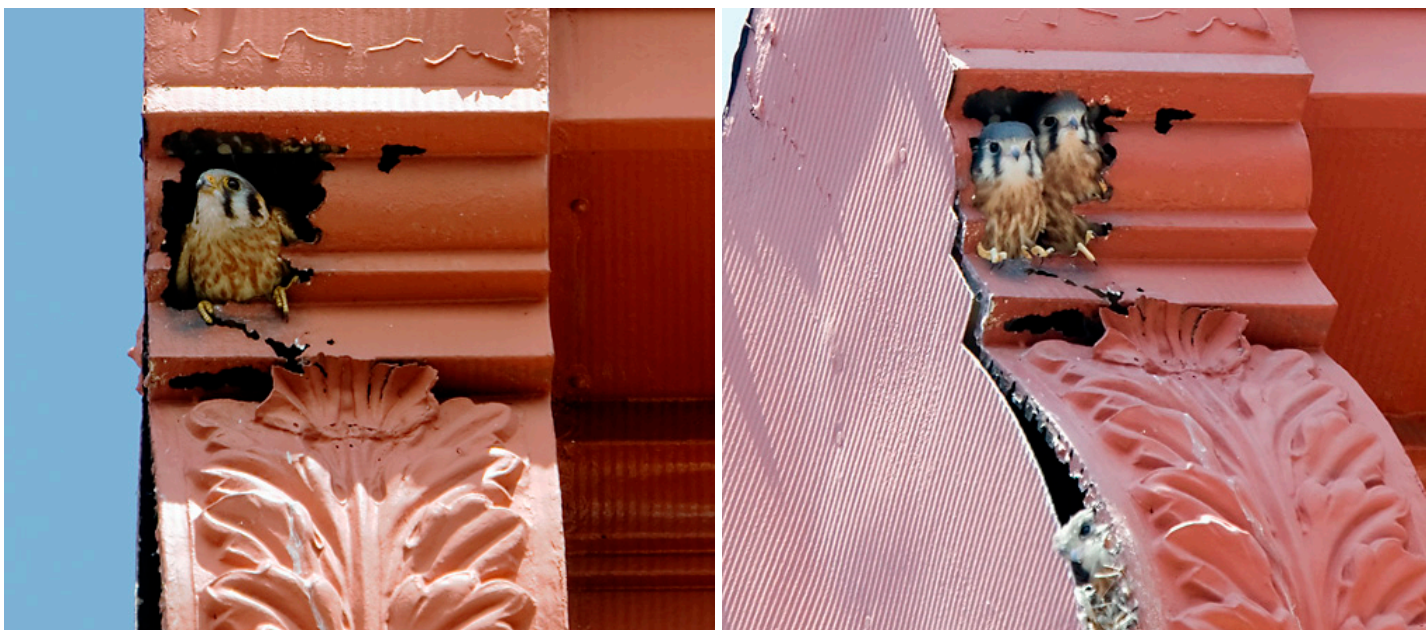


If we borrow a photo of an occupied nest cavity from 2008, here is what we hope these two 116th street (potential) nest sites will look like soon:



This photo shows the adult female during a rainstorm at the East 105th street nest in 2008 before the eggs have hatched. Note how she selected the smaller opening to nest in...not the larger one on the far left (that was eventually used by pigeons).

And at the nest site near the Brooklyn Bridge - again in a **building cornice**:



Adult female - 20 May 2008

Three (of five) young - 2 June 2008

So again, if you see a perched kestrel in your neighborhood, and especially if you see one enter some sort of opening in a building - this is really significant: Do let us know!

Here are a few more kestrel comments from around New York City - please do send us yours - any and all observations are good one. Thanks from the editors!

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10 April 2009

This Friday morning, there was a female kestrel perched atop a warehouse on the NE corner of 116th street and Park Avenue, overlooking the MetroNorth train tracks. She had flown there from 115th street and Lexington Avenue. A few minutes later, I found a pair on an antenna of 138 West 116th street, just a few doors east of Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard. The female kestrel then flew to a cornice (see photo) bracket of 133 West 116th street (between AC Powell and Malcolm X Blvds, north side of the street).

Also, James O'Brien is reporting a pair of kestrels at 177th street and Amsterdam - anyone know that area at all?

rdc

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From: Hamish Young (upper East Side)

Apr 17, 2009

Wednesday (04/15) about 11.30, a soaring red tailed hawk was being dive-bombed by a kestrel above 80th and York/1st Avenues. This behavior continued as the red tail drifted southward until they disappeared from my line of sight. Cheers, Hamish

(Ben Cacace - you might have more than one pair in your neighborhood!)

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From: [Jack Rothman <jacroth1@optonline.net>](mailto:jacroth1@optonline.net)

Subject: Kestrels at PBPK

Date: Apr 18, 2009

Hey Bob,

I saw three [kestrels] Wednesday. Two on the dump [Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx] and one in the woods. Jeff Hyman saw 5 today and two going in and out of a nest box on the dump.

Jack

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From: "Clarke, John M." <John.Clarke2@us.ngrid.com>

Subject: Kestrel Pair in Brooklyn

Apr 20, 2009 (Monday)

Hello, Robert-

My name is Jack Clarke... I live in the "East Kensington" section of Brooklyn- about a block from Prospect Park (and a little more than a half mile from Greenwood Cemetery)... we get a lot of visitors to our backyard feeders, as well as a Peregrine Falcon in the Fall and Winter (for the past 2 years), and a few stray Brooklyn Parrots (which I believe the Falcon finds tasty...)... over the past two weeks we have a couple to new visitors: both a male and a female American Kestrel.... I haven't seen them together yet; I was able to get video of the male... he is quite small, and very beautiful... just thought you'd like to know there is at least one pair smack in the center of Brooklyn. Jack C

=====

From: Emanuel Baltag <baltag.emanuel@gmail.com>

To: Robert DeCandido PhD <rdcny@earthlink.net>

Date: Apr 10, 2009 2:08 AM

Thank you for newsletter. I find another nest of *Falco tinnunculus* in Iasi county (Romania) which is in an abandoned human structure (pit ballast). Here, in Romania, this species nests especially in *Corvus frugilegus* (Crow) or *Pica pica* (Woodpecker) nest. But it can nest also in different human structure (building, factory, silo and other structure). See below.



Female Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)
Netherlands

Finally, from our colleague William (Bill) Coupon at WCS:



Bill photographed this female American Kestrel way to our south on Peninsula Valdes in Argentine Patagonia (December 2007). Was it a migrant or a resident? Well...there are sixteen kestrel species found throughout the world, but only one species in the Americas. The one photographed above (why is it a female?) is likely a resident.

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Do send kestrel observations and reports this way!

Robert DeCandido PhD
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718-828-8262 (Des Bronx)

18 May 2009

American Kestrel Nest Survey NYC - Issue #5 (2009)

Female Kestrels sitting on eggs or young young!

Hello All,

These last two weeks have found us searching and watching, watching and searching. Briefly, right now all the paired kestrels in New York City are either sitting on eggs or sitting nearby watching the nest and newly hatched young. So if you see a kestrel perched somewhere, particularly a female kestrel - you can be 99% sure that her nest is about 150 feet away (and more likely about 75 feet away).

We have found a number of kestrels simply by listening to Starlings - the latter are amazingly bright and social birds. Whenever they see a kestrel (or a predator such as a cat), they give a quick two note call. If you walk on city streets and hear that call, look up - that is how we find kestrels and then their nests in NYC. Starlings nest on the same block as the kestrels - indeed sometimes in the same cornice...so we have come to recognize this starling call in Manhattan as the way to track down another kestrel nest.

This coming Monday (Memorial Day; 25 May), I'll be running a **free** trip to several kestrel nest sites in Manhattan. Contact me for details (rdcny@earthlink.net or 718-828-8262).



Here is where we stand at a few kestrel nests in Manhattan - and then see the "**Kestrel Reports from the Field**" for other boroughs:

1. East 116th street - Kestrels nesting; likely sitting on eggs as of 15 May
2. West 116th street - eggs likely hatched; fledging about 1-5 June (?)
3. Brooklyn Bridge - eggs likely hatched; fledging about 10 June
4. Greenwich Village (Stuyvesant Street) - no nest at the 2008 location
5. 6th Street - no nest at the 2008 location
6. 9th street - eggs likely hatched; fledging about 10 June
7. 91st street - eggs likely hatched; fledging about 5-10 June
8. 119th street - eggs likely hatched; fledging about 10 June
9. 80th Street (West Side) - eggs likely hatched; fledging about 5-10 June
10. 69th Street (West Side) - eggs likely hatched; fledging about 1-5 June (?)

All fledging dates are estimates only - based upon the amount of time I observed the female in the nest cavity when she brought in food (presumably to feed young birds with).



Kestrel nest site and nearby habitat on lower East Side in Manhattan - looking east across Avenue C. Note "Pocket" park opposite nest.

Kestrel Reports from the Field:

From: Jeff Bloom

Sent: Apr 26, 2009

Robert: just saw the blurb in one article about your study of Kestrels nesting in NYC. When I was a government lawyer working for the Federal Trade Commission at 601 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, I witnessed a heart-tugging struggle of a kestrel either roosting or trying to nest on the roof of the building next door to where I worked. The building was the historic location of Matthew Brady's photography studio in the 1800's.

Every morning for several weeks that spring I'd arrive to work and see one of a Kestrel being chased by a crow. The crow(s?) never seemed to give up. I'd come out at lunch to the same spectacle. At one point, the kestrel and crow almost hit the ground between the building where I worked and the historic building, as the birds dived and tumbled through the air. The Kestrel called out constantly as it was chased. I never was able to spot an actual nest or any nestlings up on the historic building, but I suspected that a pair of Kestrels was trying to nest up there.

I wanted to go up there and guard the nest from the crows, if there was a nest, but of course there was nothing I could do.

I'll be looking for any published results of your Kestrel study- I'd like to see evidence of Kestrels having some success in urban nesting. Hope all goes well for you!

Jeff

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From: ["M. Fuller"](#)

Subject: kestrels in chelsea and carl shurz

Date: May 7, 2009

i've seen the kestrels swooping on my block again. 21st / 6th ave, but i haven't been able to locate the nest, which i believe i read in your newsletter is above club VIP on 20th st. Also i wanted to point out that i saw a kestrel hunting in carl shurz park. i was viewing from an apartment above the park, looking down to 88th and East End. has your team located a nest in that area?

keep up the great work,

matt

=====
From: [Jason Laning](#)

Subject: American Kestrel Nest in Greenpoint, Brooklyn

Date: May 10, 2009

Hi -- I found your site and thought you might like to know that I spotted a kestrel and its nest today in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. The nest is a hole in the cornice of 195 Driggs Avenue (at Newel St.) on the left-hand side (if you're facing the front of the building). It's on the absolute corner edge of the cornice (where the northern and eastern walls meet) and can be best viewed walking from the east. I've also seen him hanging out on the crosses of the neighborhood Catholic school and cathedral.

Jason

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From: [Jason Laning](#)

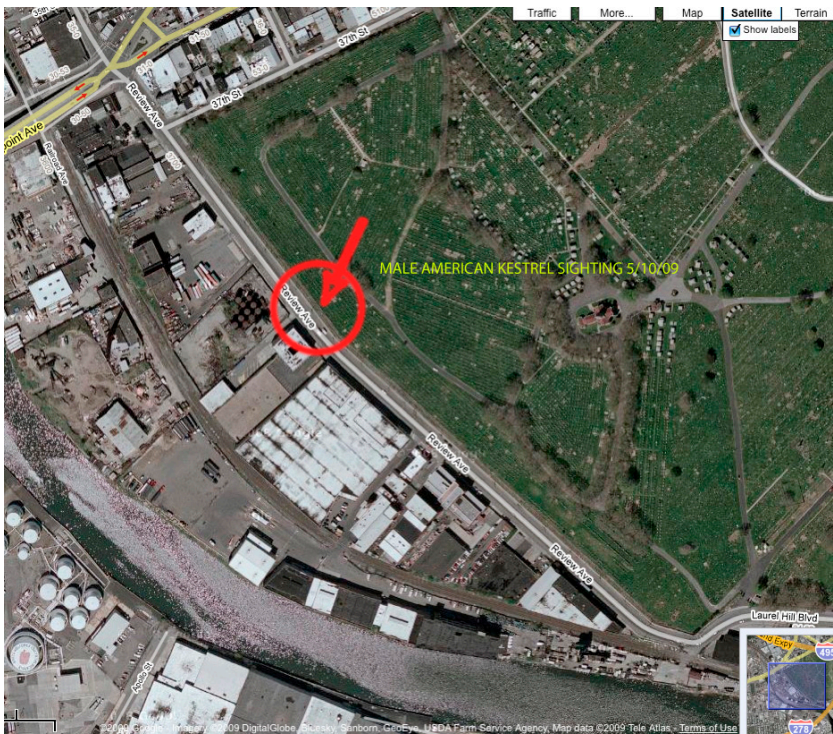
Subject: Re: Kestrels (Brooklyn)

Date: May 14, 2009 12:37 PM

Thanks for the info and newsletter. Not much to update, other than that I'm now certain that there are at least two of them, as I've seen them perched together. I see them almost every day now, on my way to and from work, and they're never more than half a block away from their nest. Yesterday they were involved in quite an aerial battle with a couple of crows over St. Stanislaus Kostka Church, which is very close to their nesting site.

From: William Madigan
Subject: Kestrel Sighting
Date: May 11, 2009

Near Calvary Cemetery Woodside, NY



American Kestrel Nest - Greenwich Village - 2008
Stuyvesant Street Between 9th and 10th Streets
Nest faces due north





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