

14 January 2011

American Kestrel Nest Survey NYC - Issue #1 (2011)

Kestrels are here in NYC – but where?

Well here goes 2011 – let's hope for a good year. Right now in NYC our kestrels are making their way through the winter. We have received several reports from four boroughs, though Staten Island continues to be a tough cookie to crack. We present some of those comments here. This is our snowbird issue...

Do send any observations, photos etc. about NYC kestrels to either Deborah Allen or Robert DeCandido rdcny@earthlink.net – we are especially interested in photos of kestrels. Of course, your observations and descriptions no matter how brief, are important too. It gives us a lead, a hunch, a-something to go on as we look for another kestrel nest here in Gotham. Got a cell phone camera? - send us an image.

This Issue represents #50 of the Newsletter. Here's looking back at where we began, and how much we have learned since.



Above: Two female American Kestrels (© Kerry Perkins 2010)

Kestrel Reports from our Spies in the Field:

From: Alexander Kalogerakis M.D.
Subject: Two Kestrels, Manhattan
Date: December 23, 2010 (Thursday)

Hi Bob,

Happy Holidays. Walking behind the Museum of Natural History yesterday, about 77th and Columbus, two calling kestrels caught my attention. They flew, perched, flew again. I couldn't determine sex or maturity, but it was nice to see them.

Alexi

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From: Gene Miller
To: rdcny@earthlink.net
Subject: Kestrel Migration
Date: Dec 26, 2010 (Sunday)

Dear Robert,

Let me wish you and your family a Happy X-mas and New Year!! After monitoring the Kestrels at Bath Ave., Brooklyn, this past Spring and Summer, I turned my attention to the Fall Hawk Migration. I spent many days at Fort Tilden monitoring the migration of Sharpies, Coopers, Peregrines, Harriers, Red-Tails, and of course - KESTRELS. This year I was also lucky to spot an immature Bald Eagle this far South. The Fall Kestrel migration peaked from September 15- October 7. I am sending you photos of some of the many Kestrels in flight, and also the Hawk watch platform, and one including myself. Hoping to get more photos in the Spring at Bath Ave. in our continuing studies. All the best.

Eugene Miller

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Above: male American Kestrel in flight (© Eugene Miller 2010)

From: Daryl Giampieri
Subject: Female Kestrel (Manhattan)
Date: December 27, 2010 (Monday after Snowstorm)

Hey Bob,

I hope you had a great Holiday!

I thought the American Kestrel went down to Carmen and 6th Ave. but my neighbors called me to tell me that it has been landing on their fire escape, this area is on the 6th Ave side., off of West Houston.

Daryl

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From: Kim Howell
Sent: Monday, December 27, 2010 6:27 am
Subject: Pictures of the Kestrel (Manhattan)

I'm so glad our Kestrel visitor showed back up (first time I've seen him in over a year!), and that you happened to be around. I guess the snow was good luck! Anyway, here are a few of the shots I got this morning.

Enjoy! [\[See below and next page – female American Kestrel in lower Manhattan near West Houston St.\]](#)

Kim





From: Robert Haupt
Subject: Manhattan Kestrel - West Harlem
Date: December 29 [2010]

Robert,

I had dinner with Chad [Seewagen PhD] and Taralynn the other night meant to tell you saw kestrel on antenna at 70 LaSalle eating what looked like a sparrow. I opened my window and it dropped carcass and flew north towards City College. Happy holidays to you and Deb

Robert and Carol

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From: Beth Goffe
To: Robert DeCandido PhD <rdcny@earthlink.net>
Subject: Kestrel sighting (Manhattan)
Date: December 30, 2010 (Friday)

Hey Bob,

I heard a kestrel calling over Columbus Avenue this afternoon and then saw it flying. It landed on top of a water tower on the building on the southwest corner of Columbus and 73rd Street.

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From: Matthew Wills
Subject: Kestrel (Brooklyn)
Date: January 1, 2011 (Saturday)

Happy New Year!

Female kestrel on antenna at Union & Hoyt (Carroll Gardens/Gowanus) this afternoon. [= Brooklyn]

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From: Michael DiPrima
To: "Robert DeCandido, PhD" <rdcny@earthlink.net>
Subject: Kestrels - Queens
Date: January 4, 2011 (Tuesday)

Kestrel at hillside & 165 st today jan 4th (and again on 6 January 2011)
Happy new year



Above: not a NYC kestrel (*photographer unknown 2010*) – but a young NYC Red-tailed Hawk

Kestrels from Afar – The Amur Falcon



Above: male Amur Falcon (©Richard Degouveia 2011) in South Africa

January 9, 2011

"Small things amuse small minds," so they say...well today was one of those days and I wasn't the only one interested in the small things.

An emergence of termites had just got under way on one of our open areas and thousands upon thousands of birds came in to join the feast. Everything from swallows and martins to rollers and hornbills. We also had a huge flock of Amur Falcons and many different eagles all cashing in on the food abundance. We were in amongst the birds for about 20 minutes just watching as they swooped and grabbed the small protein packs trying to fly to freedom.

Here are some of the photos I managed to get of the Amur Falcons.

Richard Degouveia

<http://mybushadventures.blogspot.com/>

25 January 2011

American Kestrel Nest Survey NYC - Issue #2 (2011)

Kestrels are here in NYC – but where?

Send Info to: rdcny@earthlink.net



Above: adult Female American Kestrel (James Salywoda 2011)

Kestrel Reports from our Spies in the Field:

From: John Wender

Subject: Kestrels - Manhattan

Date: January 13 (Thursday)

Hello Bob and Deborah,

Isaiah and I saw a kestrel perched on the finial of a water tower on the roof top across from my office windows. mid-block on 29th street between 7th and 8th Avenues.

John B. Wender

Bartolone Wender Architects

New York, NY



Above: Pair of American Kestrels (male, lower, with blue wings) on a water tower, Upper West Side in spring 2008; photographed by rdc

From: Mary Prlain
Subject: Kestrels - Brooklyn
Date: January 14 (Friday)

Hi Bob,

Here are the photos of the Kestrels I took back in my naiveté bird sighting days. Don't have a long lens but they are always out my window. Haven't seen them since Fall. They are in a cornice nest, yes, on Union St between Smith and Hoyt.

<http://gowanuslounge.blogspot.com/2008/04/carroll-gardens-resident-hawks-revealed.html>

I know they are eating when I see baby pigeon torsos and dismembered bird legs littering the sidewalks..

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mary prlain
set decorator & set dec buyer & props buyer
maryprlain.com



Above: nest of a Red-tailed Hawk (not a kestrel!) in the Bronx © Deborah Allen, spring 2004.

From: Allen Wolovsky
To: rdcny@earthlink.net
Subject: red-tail roost on 5th st (Brooklyn)
Date: January 14 (Friday)

Hi Bob,

I saw your red-tail note on pardonmeforasking.

I live on 5th Street between 5th and 6th aves. About 10 years ago I noticed a red-tail perched in the tree in front of our house. She(?) would come in late November and stay until Feb or March. In the first few years she would be there every night, coming in at dusk and leaving early morning. Same branch. As the years went on she would move around a little in the tree, but only to two or three spots.

I often would just watch her, mostly motionless. When I took out the garbage at midnight she was company even though her head was tucked in.

Luckily for me the tree in front of our house kept its foliage until late into the winter. I assume that's why she picked that one. So it could be hard to spot her at night. To find her I learned to stand where the light of the streetlight would shine on her breast.

Sometimes she would come in a little early and I could go out and watch her directly from the street. She would watch the pedestrians go by below her but never moved because of that. There was even a squirrel in the tree one day who got pretty close but didn't notice her. But no confrontation. I guess she had dependable feeding spots. When she came in, it was for the night. I was honored to see her in a terrible storm, when the branch was moving in a fierce blowing rain. She just hung on.

I only saw her arrive once. I was working on my car, around 5 pm, and I could feel her flying in over my, and heard rustling and crashing and branches breaking above my head. She came in fast. I looked up to see her on an unfamiliar branch. Sure enough, within a minute she started hopping around to get to her safe, level spot.

No nesting, never a partner.

This year the tree was brought down in the tornado on 9/16/10. But she had stopped visiting a few years ago, so she'll never know. I miss her.

I've been looking for kestrels recently. Haven't seen any yet. We do get quite a few parrots, though. They're fun.

Best wishes,

Allen

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Allen Wolovsky

From: John M. Clarke
Subject: Kestrels - Brooklyn
Date: January 14 (Friday)

Thank you both, and Happy New Year !

I'll let you know should my Brooklyn kestrel pair returns this year (just off the southwest corner of the Prospect Park Parade Grounds)... I have a young male Cooper's Hawk visiting my backyard this season (feasting on sparrows) in addition to the larger female that's been coming back for 3 years now (eating pigeons and doves)...

Jack C

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**Above: adult female (?) Cooper's Hawk eating a bird in Manhattan (Lower East Side?)
Photographer Unknown (if you are reading this, please remind me of your name!!!)**

From: Barbara Grant
To: rdcny@earthlink.net
Subject: Red Tailed Hawk (Queens)
Date: 18 January 2011

My neighbor Michael DiPrima sent you a photo captioned: "not a NYC kestrel (photographer unknown 2010) – but a young NYC Red-tailed Hawk"

I am the photographer and my name is Barbara Grant.... The photo was taken in Jackson Heights (Queens). I have a series of 6 photos from that day and that was the last photo as the hawk turned toward me then flew off. The hawk first landed on my air conditioner on 12/26/10 and has made repeated landings (at least 8) since then.



From: Barbara Grant
To: rdcny@earthlink.net
Subject: Red-tail Hawk photo from Queens
Date: 20 January 2011

Hi Bob,

After the hawk made too many visits I had my window air conditioner removed for the season. It was becoming too comfortable and was upsetting my two very small dogs. I enjoyed the visits but did not want a permanent boarder.

Thanks for your interest in the photo.

Barbara Grant



Above: also not an American Kestrel but a (juvenile?) Red-tailed Hawk on the Upper East Side of Manhattan by Karen (13 January 2011)

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From: Michael DiPrima
To: rdcny@earthlink.net
Subject: Queens Kestrels
Date: 16 January 2011 (Sunday)

Just saw the female kestrel on the school roof
she spied the red tail hawk we have and started dive bombing it
great show
came within 50ft of me

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From: Chad Seewagen PhD
Subject: Columbia University area Kestrel
Date: 20 January 2011 (Thursday)

FYI there's a kestrel perched on top of the water tower on the roof of the building next to mine (108th between Broadway and Amsterdam) calling right now. Same spot as the last time I reported an observation to you.

From: Richard Schwartz
Subject: Kestrel sighting (Mahattan: Chelsea)!
Date: 20 January 2011 (Thursday)

Hi Bob,

It's your old birding friend, Richard Schwartz, from East 75th Street.

I just saw a Kestrel on a rooftop on 30th St & 8th Ave. about 100 feet from my window. I saw the bird which didn't look like anything else. Its tail was bobbing. Ran and got my binoculars and saw that it was a Kestrel! He then dove straight down about 10 stories to a courtyard below. I'll let you know if I see him (her) again. This was on West 30th St between 7th & 8th Aves. right across from my living room window. Very exciting. Hope all's well and we'll be in touch.

Richard

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From: Haley Main
To: "Robert DeCandido, PhD" <rdcny@earthlink.net>
Subject: Manhattan Kestrels (Varick Street area)
Date: 20 January 2011 (Thursday)

Hi Bob,

As for Kestrels, we are always on the lookout (my colleague and I teach a bird program to elementary students all over the city, so we're always on the lookout for birds!) And just this past week we had a great sighting down here by our office, on Carmine, close to Varick street. Heard it several times, and caught a great view of it overhead. Very nice!

Take care and thanks again for your response.

Haley



Above: female American Kestrel in the rain peering out from her nest on West 105th street (rdc)

From: Anil Melwani

To: rdcny@earthlink.net, YoJimBot@gmail.com, DAllenyc@earthlink.net

Subject: American Kestrel – Upper West Side

Date: 23 January 2011 (Sunday)

Hello,

I saw a beautiful bird swoop by my window and fly up. After leaning half way out my 9th story window (something I will probably never do again) I spotted it one floor up. This was taken about 30 minutes ago on 62nd and West End Avenue (Manhattan). My friend identified it on facebook and I googled American Kestrel Manhattan and saw a link to your webpage asking for people to report sightings to you. I feel very lucky to have seen it. I am attaching a pic I took with my wife's camera. I can send you a higher resolution version if you want it. How common are these in Manhattan? I have seen some larger hawks flying around before, but never one of these. I usually survey the sky when I see all of the pigeons dive bombing into the projects across the street because I now know they do this when birds of prey are about.

Sincerely,

Anil Melwani



Above: Adult male American Kestrel – photo by Anil Melwani on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, 23 January 2011

From: Jessica S. Ancker
To: "Robert DeCandido, PhD" <rdcny@earthlink.net>
Subject: Inwood Hill Park Kestrels (Upper Manhattan)
Date: 24 January 2011 (Monday)

Hi Bob, and it's great to hear from you. I am a regular birder in Inwood Hill Park and the webmaster of the inwoodbirdwatchers listserv.

We have been seeing a kestrel fairly regularly in our neighborhood. In December, a male was hunting in soccer field near the inlet, and in January, we saw a kestrel (indeterminate sex) take a small bird and land on an apartment building on Indian Road to eat it. Over the past few months, I've also seen one landing and eating on a TV antenna on Seaman Road, across from my apartment, and have heard it hunting overhead (I'm on the top floor). We do not know if they are nesting in the neighborhood, but we are hopeful.

I'd be happy to try to track these more regularly. Also, feel free to subscribe to the inwoodbirdwatchers. To subscribe, send an e-mail to inwoodbirdwatchers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and then you will have access to our archives here <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/inwoodbirdwatchers/>

Jessica

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Above: male American Kestrel on a 20th floor building ledge, east side of Broadway and 68th street (rdc)

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Do send any reports of American Kestrels to us, and if you sneak in a photo of an urban Red-tail or Cooper's Hawk or even a Great Horned Owl – we won't complain. Thanks!

Deborah Allen and Robert DeCandido PhD rdcny@earthlink.net

21 February 2011

American Kestrel Nest Survey NYC - Issue #3 (2011)

Kestrels are returning to nest sites in NYC – but where?

At this time last year, NYC kestrels were beginning to vocalize to one another throughout the city. You might have heard them above your building, perhaps even outside your window. The first copulations were seen in late February, but we also speculated that the warm days of mid-February might bring some activity too...Once we get passed Monday's snow, the temps will rise – so do keep your ears attuned for the killy-killy-killy of NYC's smallest falcon – and most common breeding raptor species.



Above: *The kestrel that ate NY! Just fledged male American Kestrel on Mercer and 8th street on the Lower East Side in June 2009 - photo by Todd Clapp. It is amazing what can be done with a cell phone camera – so do send us your images. We will try and work them into the Newsletter. Thanks from Debs and rdc!!!*

Kestrel Reports from our Spies in the Field:

From: Robin and Jim Otton

To: rdcny@earthlink.net

Subject: American Kestrel Sighting – West Side Manhattan

Date: 25 January 2011 (Tuesday)

Hi Bob,

Sunday afternoon I spotted an American Kestrel on a balcony at 155 West 68th Street. It was there long enough to give both Jim and me an opportunity to see with binoculars from our 26th floor apartment across the street.

Best,

Robin

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Above: *adult male American Kestrel in flight* – James Salywoda 2011.

From: Haley Main
To: Robert DeCandido PhD <rdcny@earthlink.net>
Subject: Varick Street Kestrels - Manhattan
Date: 25 January 2011

While walking west on Carmine street, towards Varick, my colleague and I heard a Kestrel calling repeatedly, and looked up to see it flying back and forth over the buildings on either side of Carmine. It was very vocal, and eventually flew north over the buildings to where we could no longer see or hear it further. This was mid-day, I can't remember the exact hour (it was a few weeks ago), sometime between 11am and 1pm. Great sighting!

Haley

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Above: *adult female American Kestrel* – Quang V Ho – 2011.

Staten Island Naturalist List

Posted by: Anthony Ciancimino

Date: 26 January 2011 (Wednesday)

Along the Richmond Parkway today was an American Kestrel sitting on a lamppost. Luckily, I had my binoculars with me and I was able to identify it as a female.

Anthony Ciancimino

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From: Joanne Dusatko

Subject: Kestrel sighting

Date: Feb 1, 2011 (Tuesday)

Hi Bob,

It's Joanne from the bird walks. I have moved from Morningside Heights and I am apt sitting in the Wall St area right at ground zero.

On Jan 28th, not long after the big snow, I spotted a kestrel that flew from the red building in the first pic to the brown building in the forefront. The building is at the intersection of Greenwich and Albany Streets. The kestrel [*a female – note brown wings*] was eating something. You can see him standing on it. I have been looking, but have not seen one since. The photos are horrible as I had to shoot so far away on my little camera [*nah...see below*].

Hopefully I will get to go on a walk before I leave NY (www.BirdingBob.com). Not sure yet when that will be.

Joanne



From: Hamish Young
To: "Robert DeCandido, PhD" <rdcny@earthlink.net>
Subject: Kestrel sighting
Date: 4 February 2011

Hello Bob. Today, Friday Feb. 4th, I saw a pair of kestrels making brief flights and landings on building roof railings on East 81st between 1st and York Avenues. Quite a lot of calling too. The local pigeons seemed a bit spooked. Best wishes to you and Deb. Hamish Young

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From: Tom Walsh
Subject: Hallett Sanctuary (Central Park) Kestrel
Date: 6 February 2011 (Sunday)

Right after we left you at the Wood Ducks and Mallards at the 59th Street Pond (a good time, thanks again), we had a Kestrel on a bare branch at the top of a tall tree directly across from all those ducks. [*Randy heard a kestrel at Columbus Circle a few minutes later – heading south.*]

See you soon.

Tom and Jack

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From: Jamie Calacanis
To: rdcny@earthlink.net
Subject: American kestrel nest
Date: 7 February 2011

bob,

I'm not much of a bird watcher but it looks like we have a large and small American kestrel eating on the 7th floor set back of 1155 6th ave. The set back is actually on the southwest corner of 45th and 6th ave.

it looks like the nest might be up in the cornice on the 45th street side of the building (se corner of 45th and 6th)

you can see the larger kestrel perched on the roof of an 8 story building across the street on the SE corner.

the smaller kestrel has a bright orange back- i'm guessing it is relatively young, altho we've seen it eating a mouse or a small bird on its own. there is also the remnants of a very large seagull on the set back- i can't imagine the smaller kestrel could have taken that down.

i've looked at a ton of kestrel and red tail hawk pics online- these birds look much more like kestrels - particularly the coloring and the vertical black slash marks around the eyes

i'll work on getting some pics

best,

Jamie

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From: Jamie Calacanis
Subject: Re: American kestrel nest
Date: 9 February 2011 (Wednesday)

massive raptor out on the ledge today- maybe a peregrine [*Need photo...even cell phone photo would do. Could be a Peregrine or a Red-tail – both are large. Look for falcon “sideburns” that a Peregrine would have.*] Would a kestrel share a feeding perch with a peregrine? maybe to scavenge the left overs? [*after the Peregrine leaves? – good question – quite possibly, yes.*]

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From: Steve G. Jones
Subject: two kestrels – near Inwood (Upper Manhattan)
Date: 8 February 2011 (Tuesday)

spotted hunting pigeons this morning in Isham park. [*Isham Park is a small park opposite Inwood Hill Park in northwest Manhattan.*] This was actually spotted by my husband, not myself. He said that he saw a small falcon hovering over the area where the pigeons were feeding. [*Probably interested in the small birds such as House Sparrows feeding near the pigeons; even the starling is on the large size for a kestrel to try and catch.*]

Jessica Ancker

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Above: *not a kestrel but a young (note light eye color) Red-tailed Hawk. Photo by Elizabeth Irwin from her apartment on the Lower East Side between 1st and 2nd Avenues, Feb. 2011.*

From: Phyllis Wrynn
Subject: I am the Cooper's Hawk woman in the newsletter!
Date: 9 February 2011

Dear Bob,

I JUST realized that you posted the image I sent you in the newsletter on page 5 and asked to know details. The Cooper's Hawk was on my garden fence near Tenth Street in Park Slope [[Brooklyn](#)] on 8 January 2011. My name is Phyllis Wrynn. Do you need any more information? I definitely will send you more things. Phyllis



Above: *also not a kestrel but an adult (note dark reddish eyes), female (?) Cooper's Hawk in Park Slope, Brooklyn in early January 2011. Photo by Phyllis Wrynn. Up-rezing her photo caused the terminal white band to disappear, and make the tail look notched (like that of a Sharp-shinned Hawk). Do send any reports of American Kestrels to us, and if you sneak in a photo of an urban Red-tail or Cooper's or even a Great Horned Owl – we won't complain. Thanks Very Much – without the observations and images You Folks contribute, there would be no Kestrel Newsletter!*

From: Sharron Crocker
To: Bob DeCandido - Kestrel
Subject: Peregrines
Date: 12 February 2011 (Saturday)

Well I was on my way to join you on the Owl Walk - but unfortunately was on the train the Brooklyn murderer jumped on - fortunately in the second, not the first car ... so after they let us off the train two hours later I came home - went up to the roof and saw the peregrines hanging about on the telephone building at 18th street -- here are a couple of not-great shots taken from almost two blocks away with my 400mm ...



Above: *also not a kestrel but close - an adult Peregrine Falcon. Photo by Sharron Crocker.*

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Well if the weather ever warms into the fifties (10-12C), there will be kestrels calling to one another throughout the city. Do listen for them, and tell us what you hear...or just where you here it.

That is biodivercity – that's NYC.

Deborah Allen and Robert DeCandido PhD

rdcny@earthlink.net

11 March 2011

American Kestrel Nest Survey NYC - Issue #4 (2011)

Kestrels are returning to nest sites in NYC – but where?

The first pairs of kestrels will begin nesting this week – sitting on eggs that will hatch by early April, with the first young to leave the nest by mid-May. However, for most of these small falcons, the next three weeks or so will be a time to hang close to their prospective building nest sites, calling to one another, doing display flights and copulating. Meanwhile, for Art Gingert and me, we are interested in finding a few more schools in NYC that want a (free) kestrel nest box atop their school...if you are interested, particularly if you are in Manhattan, do send us an email.



Above: *Preening male American Kestrel by John Guastella 2010.*

Kestrel Reports from our Spies in the Field:

From: David Franz
To: rdcny@earthlink.net
Subject: Kestrels Upper West Side, Manhattan
Date: 23 February 2011 (Wednesday) 10:43 AM

A pair of kestrels appeared this morning. The birds perched for a while on the top of a water tower on the building next store, easily visible from my window on the 12th floor of 440 West End Ave [*at 81st street*]. I'm pretty sure that I saw the birds mate. Both birds were pretty seedy looking, and i'm wondering when molting takes place. [*Molting occurs while females sit on the nest; and for males, just after the nesting season.*]

David Franz PhD

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From: Richard Kaplan
Subject: Re: Kestrel Nest Box (Manhattan)
Date: 25 February 2011 (Friday)

Bob:

Isaac and I are very interested in putting a kestrel nest box on the roof of PS 87 on West 78th St. [*Great! For anyone reading this, Art Gingert and I are quite interested in placing American Kestrel nest boxes on the roof of any school in NYC, particularly in Manhattan – and the boxes are free.*]

Richard Kaplan



Above: *Female American Kestrel in Brooklyn (Bath Avenue) by Gene Miller 2011.*

From: Matthew Wills
Subject: Distant borough kestrels (Virgin Islands)
Date: 1 March 2011 (Tuesday)

Hi, Bob,

I was on Virgin Gorda in the British Virgin Islands last week. Saw American Kestrels every single day. Lots of lizards too; thinking they're good falcon-food.

<http://matthewwills.com/2011/03/01/virgin-gorda-part-i/>

[Yes we previously reported on resident American Kestrels in the Caribbean nesting in buildings in a prior issue that I cannot find right now – perhaps it was Eric Salzman who provided those Caribbean reports...Here in NYC our kestrels occasionally feed on non-native Italian Wall Lizards. In the bigger picture, in North and South America, there is only one kestrel species – but in Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia – each of these continents have several kestrel species.]

From: Randy Schutz
Subject: Found the kestrel (Upper Manhattan)
Date: 2 March 2011 (Wednesday)

At long last, I found the local kestrel sitting atop an antenna this afternoon.

As you know, I've been hearing and intermittently seeing this kestrel for some time, but never saw him light anywhere. Today as Gianna and I came down the hill from the A train station on Bennett Ave [*Manhattan just east of Fort Tryon Park*] I saw what I was sure was a kestrel sitting on top of the TV antenna on the building just behind mine, which I believe is #10 Hillside Ave. Now I know why I have heard the bird out my bedroom window but never seen him! It did appear to be a male, too, though the angle was poor and he was in bad lighting. Have a safe trip home. **R**



Above: *Male (left) and female American Kestrels in the Bronx by Abian Sacks, 2011.*

From: Gene Miller
To: rdcny@earthlink.net
Subject: The Kestrels Are Back
Date: 3 March 2011 (Thursday)

Hi Robert,

HOORAH, the kestrels are back!! From November, 2010 till now I've been photographing eagles in the Northeast. After picking up my five year old boy from pre-K, I decided to stop by Bath Ave., Brooklyn, to investigate if last year's resident pair was back. **Sure enough, I viewed a male sticking his head out of the cornice/nest.** I subsequently spotted the male and female perched on various TV antennas. [[See Gene's photo of a male kestrel below.](#)] Hope to collect some behavioral photos in the future. I could not be sure if the kestrels stayed over the winter, or migrated South and recently returned. To help solve this puzzle, I met a John Planeta who does his wash at the adjacent Laundromat. He came over to me as I was photographing the kestrels. He claims that he didn't view the kestrels all winter after they left in July, and just found them today (3/3/11). John immediately placed a cell-phone call to Isabelle Conti, his cousin, who is also an avid birdwatcher, and has been following the Bath Ave. kestrels. Her article in the kestrel newsletter actually alerted me to the location, last year. **Thank you Isabelle.** I am enclosing some of my eagle photos from this year [[see page 7](#)], and the kestrel photos from today.

GENE



From: Gene Miller
To: rdcny@earthlink.net
Subject: Brooklyn Bath Ave. Kestrels - 3/8/11
Date: 9 March 2011 (Wednesday)

Hi Robert,

I checked out the Bath Ave. Kestrel site yesterday (3/8/11). The sky was clear with temps in the low forties, and nice blue skies. When I arrived at 9:15 AM, there was no kestrel presence. At 9:29 AM I heard the familiar high pitched Ki-Ki-Ki sound. I knew that a Kestrel was in the area. Sure enough, I looked up and viewed a Kestrel in flight, flying from the South-East. The male Kestrel flew from TV antenna, to TV antenna, in the immediate area. Once during my hour stay, he flew into a large tree on the corner, proceeded to fly to the cornice/nest, then fly to a TV antenna. I left the area at 10:15, while the male Kestrel was still perched on a TV antenna. I drove around the area searching for the female. She was nowhere to be found.

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From: Jamie Calacanis
To: Robert DeCandido PhD <rdcny@earthlink.net>
Subject: West 45th street Kestrel and Peregrine
Date: 7 March 2011 (Monday)

Rob,

so we come in this morning to find a good sized peregrine eating a pigeon on the parapet- he stays for about 30 minutes or so, and leaves a good amount of bones, feathers, etc.

now the kestrel is out there picking though the remains

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From: Jamie Calacanis
To: "Robert DeCandido, PhD" <rdcny@earthlink.net>
Subject: West 45th street Kestrel and Peregrine
Date: 9 March 2011 (Wednesday)

another pigeon kill today

can we confirm that this is a peregrine? [*Jamie's photo indeed shows an adult Peregrine Falcon - see page 6 for a Peregrine photo taken on a NYC building overlooking Central Park.*]

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From: Jamie Calacanis
Subject: West 45th street Kestrel and Peregrine
Date: 9 March 2011 (Wednesday)

and right on schedule the little kestrel is back now to scavenge

it looks like the falcon leaves the head each time

[*Jamie - this is the first report I know of where a kestrel in an urban area is regularly scavenging on carcasses left by another bird species. This has likely happened in rural areas...but is not a commonly observed phenomenon there either.*]

From: Linda Marcus

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

Subject: **Not Kestrels!** But Peregrines on Central Park West near 60th street

Date: 9 March 2011 (Wednesday)

Hello Robert,

Those Peregrine Falcons spend time on my buildings ledges every day now. They may even sleep on the ledge above my living room. They brought their prey and ate it on the ledge outside my bathroom window several times. I am on Central Park West on the 32nd floor. I don't know where they would be nesting. This pair is banded and I think one of the numbers is 57. There was an unbanded more immature pair until about 2 months ago [[see below](#)], and then this older pair showed up and the first pair was gone. I hear and them every day except when it rains or snows. It starts before sunrise for a brief time. Then they sit on the ledges on the South tower (mine) and the north tower from time to time during the day. I just wanted to let you know.

Linda Marcus



Above – not a Kestrel!: female(?) Peregrine Falcon photographed by Linda Marcus just outside her window, on Central Park West overlooking the Park, August 2010. Note brown feathers on wing and head suggesting to us this is a sub-adult Peregrine. Also, the male and the female that visited Linda's terrace in 2010 were not banded.

From: Joanne Thomas-Fischer
Subject: Kestrel and Red-tail, Upper East Side (Manhattan)
Date: 9 March 2011 (Wednesday)

Hi Bob,

Loved the film! (<http://www.newyorklives.tv/2011/03/birdman-of-central-park.html>) - and the photos as always.

Raptor news: Two for one special at **93rd Street/First Ave** today! Sorry no photos. My husband and I were in our buildings, rooftop indoor pool when we saw a **Kestrel perched on the railing of the outdoor roof deck**. Then, we looked south, and a Red-Tail was circling! An exciting morning for us!

I keep scouring building roofs, cornices, etc. for spots where the Kestrel may nest. I guess these are the same Kestrel and Red Tails I've seen before?

What's the timing for Spring and nesting? [*This week as the weather warms, kestrels can be heard calling from perches in their home (breeding) territories. Egg laying will begin in the next 10 days by early pairs – with the first young fledging by mid-May. The peak time for young leaving the nest is in early to mid-June in NYC. So for the next couple of weeks do listen (Killy-killy-killy) for kestrels in your neighborhood - and do look for kestrels perched atop TV antennas, etc.*]

Thanks for the info. See you soon.

Joanne



Above – Not Kestrels!: *immature Bald Eagles in flight, just north of NYC by Eugene Miller*



Above – *male American Kestrel by James Salywoda, 2011.*

Finally, not a kestrel either, but another common raptor in NYC - especially from late August through early March. In other cities, Cooper's Hawks are the most abundant nesting raptor, but only a pair or two nest here in NYC. This video (*click on image below*) was shot by Steven Beasley on 23February 2011 on the Upper East Side of Manhattan (the FDR Drive is in the background) – not quite the forest habitat associated with this hawk:



Well if the weather ever warms into the fifties (10-12C), there will be kestrels calling to one another throughout the city. Do listen for them, and tell us what you hear...or just where you here it.

Deborah Allen and Robert DeCandido PhD

rdcnyc@earthlink.net