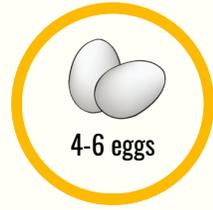
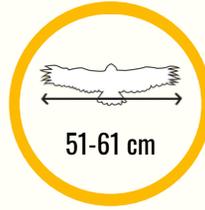




American Kestrel

Crécerelle d'Amérique, *Falco sparverius*



IDENTIFICATION

This is Quebec's smallest and most colorful falcon. It has vertical black stripes under its eyes, called whiskers. The male has slate-blue wings and a rufous back spotted with black. His rufous chest bears a few black spots, and his rufous tail has a single black band at the tip. Females have reddish-brown wings, back and tail, finely striped of black. Her breast has small dark flecks.



22-31 cm 

ECOLOGY

Nutrition

The Kestrel feeds on small rodents, insects (dragonflies, grasshoppers, etc.) and small birds. It usually flies in place to better spot its prey. It can see ultraviolet light, enabling it to follow the urine trails left by rodents on the ground as they run.

Breeding

Like all other falcons, it doesn't build a nest. Instead, it uses a depression or cavity in which the eggs are laid. It can also use a nesting box. The young fledge at around 5 weeks of age. They remain dependent on their parents for 2 to 3 weeks.

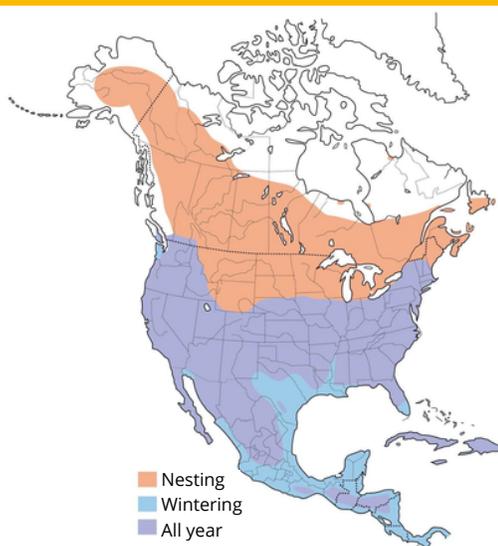
DISTRIBUTION

Its range extends from Alaska to southern Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador. It nests in tree cavities or nesting boxes near open areas such as cultivated or fallow fields and can also be seen in urban environments.

STATUS AND POPULATION

Since 1970, a significant decline in the Canadian population has been observed. The loss of hunting perches, the expansion of farmland, the intensification of agriculture and other processes causing the loss of habitat are thought to be responsible for its decline. As part of its insect-based diet, the widespread use of insecticides is probably also leading to population decline. The species is considered secure.¹

¹ Wild species of Canada report, 2015



■ Nesting
■ Wintering
■ All year