

# Kestrel Nest Box Program 2021 Report

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The Calvert County Natural Resources Division started the American Kestrel Nest Box program to help provide nesting habitat, gain a better understanding of the local breeding population and to promote conservation research of the species.

## SKILLS NEEDED

- Ability to work independently
- Ability to identify American Kestrels, European Starlings (eggs, nestlings and adults)
- Hike across uneven and overgrown terrain, including off established trails, to get to nest box locations.

### Optional, but Preferred, Skills

- Access to a smart phone or tablet with go pro app

## VOLUNTEER DUTIES

- Monitor nest boxes using binoculars and go pro camera setup

## REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

- Check boxes independently or in teams
- Be exposed to ticks, chiggers, mosquitoes, bees/wasps, poison ivy, bad weather, and other wild life

## TRAININGS

- Learn how to properly monitor nest boxes and receive nest box list

## PROJECT DATES

- **Winter:** prepare nest boxes
- **Spring:** monitor nest sites, remove starlings
- **Summer:** monitor nest sites, remove starlings
- **Fall:** data management, volunteer appreciation

## Summary of 2021 Activities

In 2021 due to Covid-19 and lack of consistent kestrel use we did not have volunteers monitoring nest boxes. Gene Groshon checked in on most of the nest boxes but no evidence of Kestrels nesting were found. There were also no sightings of kestrels anywhere near the nest boxes during the breeding season.

## Future Plans

Gene will be removing nest boxes as they are not able to be sufficiently monitored and they have proven to be heavy starling nesting areas with no kestrels seen in the area during the breeding season.

The focus with kestrel research will now mostly be on winter trapping and banding.

In the foreseeable future, we are not actively seeking volunteers since the nest boxes have not seen much success in the past few years. There is possibility of a box installed on MI Bowen Road since that appears to be a possible breeding area. Gene will type up a set protocol for monitoring visits (how long to watch during a visit, frequency of visits, etc.)

As an incentive for new volunteers, give volunteers a chance to join the winter trapping, a thank you for their efforts since it is an arduous task monitoring boxes with minimal reward.

*Supporting Calvert County's nature parks and natural spaces*



# CALVERT STEWARDS

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

*A partnership between Calvert Nature Society and Calvert County Natural Resources Division*

# 2021 Annual Report

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CALVERT STEWARDS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM  
c/o Natural Resources Division  
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Volunteer Portal: <https://calvertstewards.galaxydigital.com/>

Calvert Nature Society: [www.calvertparks.org](http://www.calvertparks.org)

Calvert County Natural Resources Division:  
[www.calvertcountymd.gov/NaturalResources](http://www.calvertcountymd.gov/NaturalResources)

