

Bird of the Month - February

American Kestrel

Male American Kestrel



Female American Kestrel



IDENTIFICATION

- **Males Bright rusty red on back and blue-gray on wings**
- **Females duller version of male without the blue-gray in the wings**
- **Both are Robin-sized raptors that hover while hunting and “bob” in the wind when perched on a wire**

FOOD

- **Feeds on small rodents, reptiles, large insects and small birds. Are able to see ultraviolet light that is emitted from rodent urine which leads them to prey. In winter, males and females feed in different habitats so they don't compete for food.**

PREDATORS

- **Larger hawks, crows and owls. Though not predators, other small birds continually harass Kestrels to keep them from eating their young**

BEHAVIORS AND FUN FACTS

- **Kestrels live in a wide variety of habits. You can find them from the forest to the beach.**
- **They are North America's smallest falcon. All of our local falcons have vertical stripes on their faces.**
- **All raptors, like the Kestrel, kill their prey with their feet called talons.**
- **Some Kestrels store food in winter so they won't starve when snows fall.**