

Sisters Country birds

By Douglas Beall
Correspondent

The American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) is Sisters' most common small falcon. Often seen on fence-posts and telephone wires, this 8- to 12-inch tall bird is also known as the sparrowhawk.

They build their nests in cavities in trees, rock walls and even buildings. The male will choose several nest sites and present them to the female, and she makes the final decision. No nesting material is used except what is already in the cavity.

Incubation of 4-6 mottled yellowish white eggs for 26-32 days is shared by both male and female kestrels, and then the hatchlings are fed grasshoppers, moths, lizards, moles, mice and large variety of insects as they grow at a rapid pace. Fledging begins in 28-31 days and then the chicks for several months are taught to hunt for themselves.

For the last 17 years Don McCartney has installed nesting boxes throughout Central Oregon and tracked the hatching success with much assistance from volunteers, especially



PHOTO BY DOUGLAS BEALL

American kestrel.

master raptor-bander Jim Anderson. This program has enabled the kestrels to maintain a healthy population as more nesting trees are removed and falcon habitat is shrinking.

Kestrels in groups are called a "hover," a "flight," or a "soar." On the British Isles the European kestrel is called a "windhover."

For more American kestrel photos visit <http://abirdsingsbecauseithasa.com/recent-journeys>.

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STA to host trails fundraiser

Sisters is invited to shake off the trail dust and join Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) for the fifth annual Turn Out For Trails fundraiser on Friday, September 22 at Brand 33 Restaurant at Aspen Lakes. Proceeds from the popular event support the trail building, maintenance and advocacy efforts of STA.

This year STA volunteers maintained hundreds of miles of trails, supported three cycling events, created and distributed 25,000 free trail system maps, installed a new kiosk promoting cycling on the Scenic Bikeways and worked behind the scenes with countless agencies and individuals to ensure our trail

system is in the best condition ever.

The evening is underwritten by STA champions Tracy Stout and Your Store. Special thanks to wine steward Dean Reiman and Ray's Food Place for providing elegant wine pairings and to Kelly Cyrus at Aspen Lakes for making the event possible. Dinner is \$75 per person and includes appetizers, dinner with a vegan option and wine pairings, and is followed by the popular Dessert Dash. For tickets visit www.sisterstrails.org.

For more information about the event, email info@sisterstrails.org or call 541-719-8822.

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