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Abstract No. 32

USE OF NEST BOXES IN STUDIES OF BIRDS OF PREY

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Nest boxes may be used to facilitate studies of cavity-nesting birds of prey. In the Fairbanks area, a volunteer-based boreal owl (*Aegolius funereus*) project was initiated in January 1989.The project was designed to monitor trends in numbers and productivity, and learn more about nest-site preferences and prey of this secretive owl. Volunteers helped build nest boxes, and then placed them near their residences. They will report on owl activity and maintain the boxes. A second nest box study is planned in the Delta farming area. Nest boxes are being used there in a project monitoring levels of pesticides in American kestrels (*Falco sparverius*). Delta farmers are planning aerial spraying programs in anticipation of future grasshopper outbreaks. Concern for the effects of pesticides on wildlife, especially endangered peregrine falcons nesting close to the agricultural fields, led to the selection of the cavity-nesting kestrel as a study species. Volunteers are assisting in this project also.

Keywords: nest boxes, boreal owl, American kestrel, pesticides, volunteer participation

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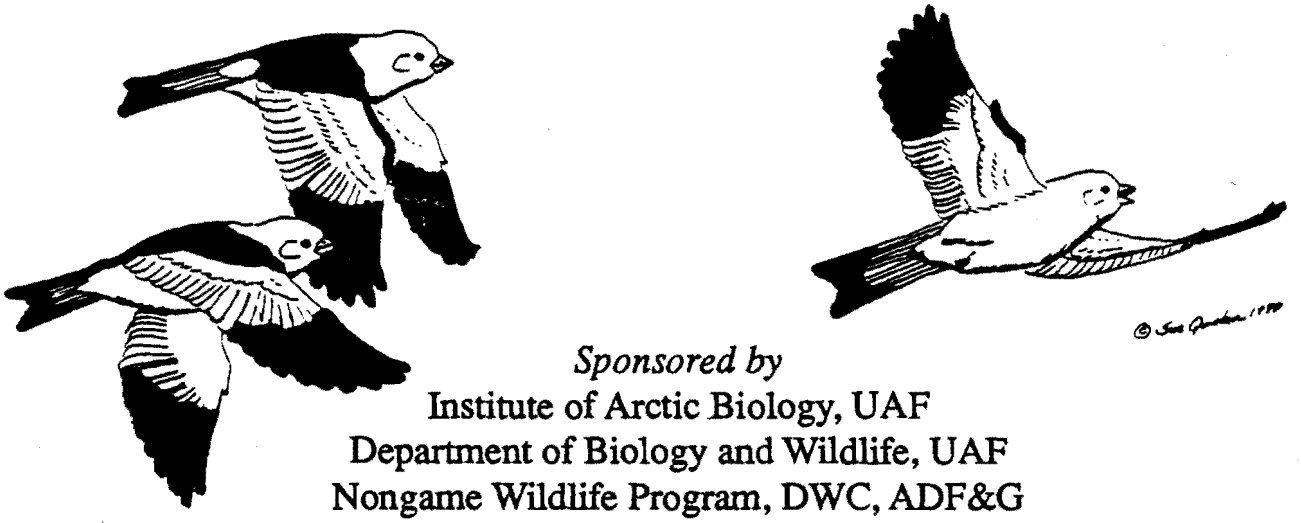

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