

28. AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) NESTING STUDY AT THE DELTA JUNCTION AGRICULTURAL PROJECT, 1990-1991

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About 40 American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) nest boxes were placed in the Delta agricultural area in 1988 by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. We placed 30 more boxes during the subsequent years for study of grasshopper control effects on raptors. Egg laying commenced in late April 1990 and about 10 days later in 1991. Clutch size averaged 4.9 eggs per nest attempt each year. In 1990 (high grasshopper density), 97% of the nests successfully fledged at least one young (N=38). In 1991 (few grasshoppers), 82% were successful (N=34). Mean number of nestlings fledged per nest attempt was 4.4 in 1990 and 3.6 in 1991. Mean number of nestlings fledged per successful nest was 4.4 young each year. These fledging rates were greater than for kestrels nesting during the same period in Colorado, Idaho, North Dakota, and Wyoming.

Keywords: raptors, American Kestrel, nesting success, nest boxes, grasshoppers.

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