

# Where to look for American Kestrels

## Habitat

American Kestrels thrive in open areas with short ground vegetation and scattered trees. They are commonly found in meadows, grasslands, parks, farm fields, cities, and suburbs. The short vegetation allows them to easily spot prey, while tall perches such as trees, power lines, and fence posts provide essential vantage points. Kestrels often hunt by perching and patiently waiting until prey comes into view.

## Nesting

Unlike most raptors, American Kestrels are cavity nesters. As *secondary* cavity nesters, they cannot create their own nest sites because they lack the physical adaptations needed to excavate cavities. Instead, they depend on existing spaces such as old woodpecker holes, squirrel nests, crevices in barns, building eaves, or man-made nest boxes. Kestrels often face competition from invasive species like European Starlings and House Sparrows, but this competition is reduced in areas farther from human development or livestock activity.

