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Winter returns of American Kestrels in southern Florida

Eric Tabb

From December 1968 to March 1977, 842 American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) have been banded in southern Florida as part of a banding study of wintering raptors involving four common species. All capturing has been accomplished with Bal-chatri traps, set from a slowly moving car. Largely week-end banding has resulted in a modest sample of southern Florida's large winter American Kestrel population; 93.5 on the average per year.

The most significant information gathered to date concerning these banded kestrels has been made possible by retrapping some individuals after at least a year. It appears as though it takes at least a year for some kestrels to lose their fear of the "noose trap", permitting recapture. 17 kestrels have been recaptured, one to six years from their banding dates. All of these birds were encountered on both occasions at approximately the same location, indicating remarkable persistence in se-

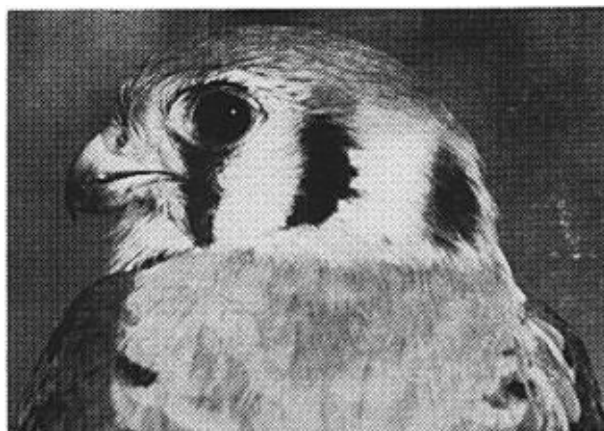


Photo by William S. Clark

lection of ideal winter territories over successive years. 📷

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Table 1. Wintering American Kestrel returns — southern Florida.

Band number	Date		Age		DAL*	Sex	Region*
	banded	recov.	banded	recov.			
1003-28986	12-21-69	12-22-73	AHY	ASY	1421	M	Keys
833-05683	12-21-69	1-13-72	HY	ASY	749	F	Keys
1153-21339	11-14-70	2-19-77	HY	ASY	2239	F	Redlands
1223-23518	2-20-71	3- 4-72	AHY	ASY	379	F	Keys
1223-23529	10-19-71	12-29-72	HY	SY	435	F	Everglades
1223-23530	10-19-71	12-29-72	HY	SY	435	F	Everglades
1223-23571	12-18-71	2- 5-77	HY	ASY	1922	F	Keys
1223-23567	12-18-71	1-23-77	AHY	ASY	1860	F	Keys
1223-23584	12-18-71	11-17-75	HY	ASY	1401	F	Redlands
1003-28967	1- 8-72	1- 7-73	AHY	ASY	364	M	Everglades
1183-26234	10-27-72	12- 1-73	HY	SY	400	F	Keys
1183-26236	10-27-72	2- 5-77	AHY	ASY	1519	F	Keys
1003-28977	11-18-72	11-23-73	AHY	ASY	370	M	Keys
1183-26259	12-16-72	2-20-75	HY	ASY	789	F	Keys
1073-52576	1-26-74	2-20-75	HY	ASY	359	F	Keys
1273-50302	1- 8-75	1- 6-76	HY	ASY	363	F	Redlands
1273-50354	10-29-75	12- 5-76	AHY	ASY	400	F	Redlands

*DAL: Days at large refers to the number of days between banding and recapture.

*Region — Keys: the chain of islands off the southern tip of Florida connected by overseas US No. 1

Redlands: The farming district south of Miami

Everglades: The generally wetland center of southern Florida.