



Attracting Raptors to Agroecosystems with Nest Boxes

Barn Owls are voracious predators of gophers, voles, mice, and rats. A Barn Owl pair and their young likely consume over 3,400 rodents each year.

Barn Owls can be attracted to nest on farms with nest boxes. It is important to choose safe nest box designs, install nest boxes securely, and keep them well maintained.

Install nest boxes on a metal pole 9-12 feet high. Having the opening closer to the top ensures young nestlings don't fall out accidentally.

Owls prefer larger nest boxes where they have more space. Nestlings will have more room to exercise their wings and better ventilation. Face the opening north or east and consider using sun shields in areas with hot summer temperatures.

Place nest boxes in open areas around the edges of fields, out of the way of farm activity.

Barn Owls are less territorial than most raptors so nest boxes can be placed about 100 yards apart or less.

Nest boxes with open habitats nearby have a higher chance of occupancy, rather than areas with dense forest. Avoid busy roads.



American Kestrels consume a wide variety of pests including grasshoppers, voles, and songbirds. They can also be attracted to agricultural areas with nest boxes.

Annual maintenance is essential to keep nest boxes safe and effective.

- ✓ Inspect in late summer/early fall when breeding activity is the lowest
- ✓ Ensure nest box, pole, and hardware are secure and structurally sound
- ✓ Remove pellet debris if it has built up close to the opening
- ✓ Leave a layer of pellets or wood chips