A HOME FOR THE LESSER KESTREL

For the pictures thanks to the photographers: Franco Aresi, Andrea Curcio, Luca Eberle, Nikos Koutras

LIFE FALKON
LIFE on the move

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You are inside a Site of the Natura 2000 network, a Europe wide network of more than 27.500 sites, established under the Directive 92/43/CEE "Habitat" and the "Birds" Directive 2009/147/CE.
The aim of the network is to ensure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

THE LESSER KESTREL (Falco naumanni) IDENTITY CARD

About the size of a pigeon, the Lesser Kestrel is a small falcon.
Very different from each other, **male** and **female** can be easily distinguished.

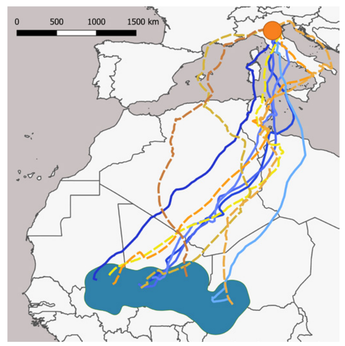
Feeding on **crickets, grasshoppers** and small **rodents**, it is farmers' good friend.
One pair of Lesser Kestrel is able to prey up to 160 grasshoppers every day!

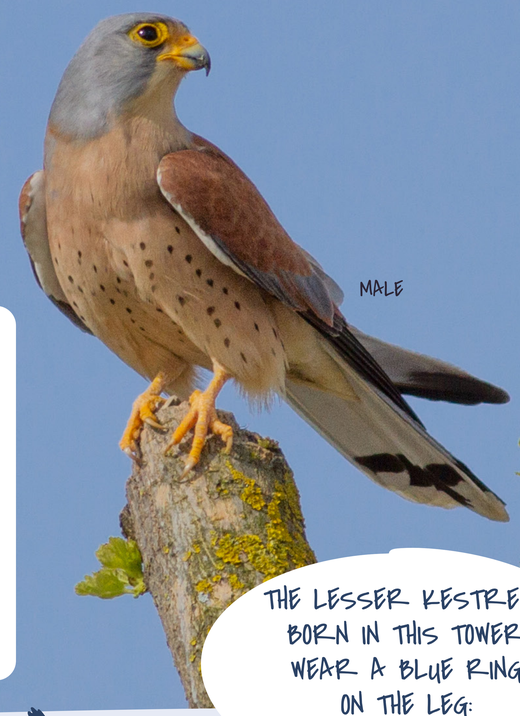
It does not fear the presence of man. It nests inside **farmsteads** and other buildings, preferably disused ones, surrounded by cultivated fields.

Fond of companionship, it forms colonies of 2-20 pairs. Small groups of Lesser Kestrels can be easily observed hunting above fields.

It is an intrepid **migrant**. When autumn comes, it flies to **Africa**, covering over **5,000 km**, before returning to the nest in early spring.

Tracks of migration of Lesser Kestrels nesting in the Po Plain (orange circle) studied by LIFE FALKON.
Solid lines: autumn migration
Dashed lines: spring migration
Blue area: wintering quarters





THE LESSER KESTRELS BORN IN THIS TOWER WEAR A BLUE RING ON THE LEG: LOOK FOR IT!

WHY A NEW HOUSE?

As time goes by, the disused buildings, hosting the Lesser Kestrel colonies, are becoming more and more unsafe, even demolished to make room for new ones.
LIFE FALKON helps the Lesser Kestrel by providing safe nesting sites, where they can locate their nests.
We have built 5 nesting towers and installed approximately 200 nest boxes within the provinces of Mantua, Modena, Bologna and Ferrara.
LIFE FALKON: five institutions and three Countries together to save the Lesser Kestrel!

LESSER KESTREL'S FRIENDS!

The nesting towers are designed for the Lesser Kestrel, but sometimes they are used by other species with similar habits!

Little Owl
(*Athene noctua*)

European Roller
(*Coracias garrulus*)

Project partners: Università degli Studi di Milano; ISPRA Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale; Sistema Nazionale per la Protezione dell'Ambiente; Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche; IRSA CNR Istituto di Ricerca sulle Acque Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche; Hellenic Ornithological Society; alda European Association for Local Democracy

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