

FALCONIFORMES

(Falcons)

Kestrels



Hobbies

(not native to North America)

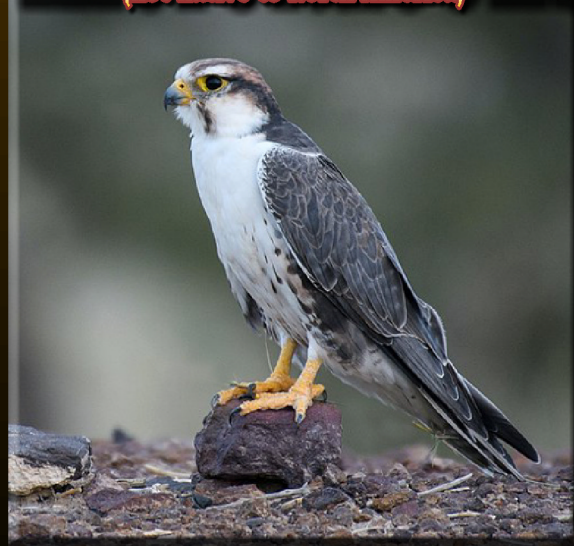


Peregrines



Hierofalcons

(not native to North America)



Family **FALCONIDAE** (Kestrels)

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)

Measurements:

Length: 9-12" Wing Span: 20-24"

Average Weight: (m) 4 oz (f) 4.5 oz

Distinguishing field characteristics:

very small size for a bird-of-prey; dark crown with white malars (cheeks) blazed by two distinctive dark, vertical facial bands; rufous body color; often hovers before diving down on prey

Notes:

smallest NA falcon; numerous subspecies found throughout the Americas; common locally, though seldom seen as they tend to be secretive ambush hunters rather than hunting on the wing; however, when spotted, often found on telephone wires, fenceposts, treetops; feed mainly on insects and small mammals; though called a "kestrel," genetic studies indicate a closer relationship to typical falcons than Old World kestrels

Mojave presence: year-round



central Las Vegas, NV



Las Vegas Municiple GC



Corn Creek; Desert NWR, NV



central Las Vegas, NV



Corn Creek
Desert National
Wildlife Refuge
near Las Vegas, NV

Wilson Pond
Overton Wildlife
Management Area
Overton, NV



Family **FALCONIDAE** (Merlins)

Prairie Merlin (*Falco columbarius richardsonii*)

Measurements:

Length: 12" Wing Span: 25"

Average Weight: (m) 6 oz (f) 9 oz

Distinguishing field characteristics:

brown upperparts, pale underparts with distinctive brown streaks on breast; black and white tail bands; pale eyebrow over darker eyeline, pale moustache; lacks bold black face markings of kestrels; lighter subspecies of the darker nominate *F. columbarius*

Notes:

uncommon; numerous subspecies found throughout NA and Eurasia; preys almost exclusively on small birds in flight; often mistaken for kestrels, but slightly larger, different facial markings, and kestrels lack white tail bands; once known as "Pigeon Hawk" and "Lady Hawk"

Mojave presence: winter range

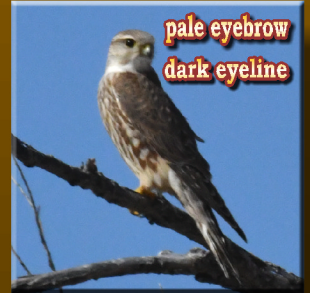
female

pale brown



Overton WMA; Overton, NV

pale eyebrow
dark eyeline



Overton WMA; Overton, NV

white
tail
bands



streaked
breast



Overton WMA; Overton, NV

Family **FALCONIDAE** (Perigrines)

Perigrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)

Measurements:

Length: 16-20" Wing Span: 36-44"

Average Weight: (m) 1.5 lbs (f) 2.4 lbs

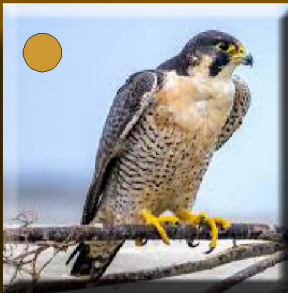
Distinguishing field characteristics:

pointed wings (typical of falcons); uniformly patterned underwing; white throat with dark "moustache" that blends with cap to form characteristic "helmut" pattern

Notes:

solitary; widespread (cosmopolitan, excluding polar and high alpine regions, and NZ), but uncommon; fastest animal in the world, reaching record speed of 242mph; feeds chiefly on birds (pigeons, ducks, etc), occasionally small rodents, reptiles, insects; adapted to urban setting (often nests on buildings, bridges, etc)

Mojave presence: migratory, some year-round residents



central Las Vegas, NV

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)

Measurements:

Length: 16-20" Wing Span: 35-43"

Average Weight: (m) 1.25 lbs (f) 2.5 lbs

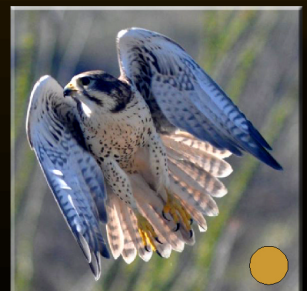
Distinguishing field characteristics:

pale breast with brown spots; dark axillary feathers; vertical cheek stripe similar to peregrine, but narrower; white eyebrow

Notes:

solitary and uncommon; ranges in open country, grasslands, and deserts in western NA from southern Canada to northern Mexico; preys mostly on small mammals and birds; arid adaptation of early peregrine lineage

Mojave presence: year-round



Las Vegas Municipal GC; NV