



FACTSHEET

# Nankeen Kestrel



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**Common Name:** Nankeen Kestrel

**Scientific Name:** *Falco Cenchroides*

**Noongar Name:** Waalitj

Conservation Status: Listed as Least Concern under ICUN (2014). All Rottnest Island's fauna is protected under the *Rottnest Island Authority Act 1987*.

**Habitat:** Limestone heath.

**Body length:** 31-35 cm

**Weight:** 120-170 g

**Gestation period:** 28-29 days

**Number of young:** 1-6 (3-6 eggs)

## Description:

The Nankeen Kestrel is a small falcon which has a blue-grey beak, long wings and a long tail.

Both the male and female have reddish-brown upper surfaces apart from long wing feathers which are brownish-black. Their under sides are white with some faint brown streaks. The skin round their eyes is yellow, as are their legs.

The male's tail is pale grey with black bar near tip whereas the female's tail is reddish-brown with fine black bars. The female is larger than the male.

## Diet:

Insects, skinks, young dugites, legless lizards, mice, small birds.

## In the Wild:

Nankeen Kestrels are commonly seen ranging all over the Island. Rottnest has six to ten resident breeding pairs. The young kestrels appear to leave the Island for the mainland once fledged.

This small falcon nests in cliff crevices, offshore stacks, old buildings or abandoned stick nests. It hunts by hovering then stooping (diving at speed) and snatching its prey in its talons. This distinctive hovering ability makes the Nankeen Kestrel easy to identify.

### Threats:

- Pest birds
- Climate change causing habitat change
- Uncontrolled fire

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Nankeen Kestrel is the smallest and supposedly the slowest Australian falcon. However, it makes up for its lack of speed by its ability to hover motionless while searching for prey.