



# International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey

## NEWSLETTER AGM Highlights

Website: [www.iaf.org](http://www.iaf.org)

The I.A.F. currently has 77 associations from 54 countries worldwide totalling 40 000 members.

Frank M. Bond  
President

## International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey

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President: Frank Bond (USA)  
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### One Quarter of the Speakers at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Falconry Conference are IAF

The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Falconry Conference was held from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December in conjunction with festivities celebrating the inscription of Falconry onto UNESCO's list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mankind. It took place in Abu Dhabi Emirate, whose government led efforts to achieve recognition. The First Conference in 1976 was a vision of his late highness Sheikh Zayed. Over the three days of the conference, which ran three lecture theatres on each day, one quarter of the specialists, falconers, academics and scientists who gave presentations were IAF Advisory Committee Members, IAF National delegates, former delegates, or long-term friends of IAF.

Over 80 specialists gave presentations on topics which benefit falconry and falconers all over the world, a unique opportunity to exchange views and expertise and to encourage communications between different countries and cultures and completely in keeping with the UNESCO ethos.

#### News from Canada: President of the Ontario Hawking Club

Dear Frank

Last year, after many years of effort and countless meetings, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources developed a proposal to allow for the use of wild raptors by Ontario falconers. I am very pleased to let you know that Minister of Natural Resource Michael Gravelle has approved the proposal. The official "decision notice" was posted to the Environmental Register yesterday. This is a great victory and a HUGE step forward for falconry in Ontario.

Twenty five years of effort have finally paid off and we that is something we can all be very pleased about! I also firmly believe that this decision will help to build a strong and knowledgeable constituency for raptors that will have many benefits for conservation in the years to come.

I wanted to send you a personal note of thanks for your support of our efforts now and also for all the indirect support and credibility that comes from the efforts of the IAF to advance falconry around the world. On behalf of all Ontario falconers please accept my sincere thanks.

Sincerely,  
Martin Geleynse, President, Ontario Hawking Club



Members of the Women's Falconry Network at their Belgian Fieldmeet in 2011

#### IAF has a new Working Group for Women.

At the IAF Annual General Meeting in Al Ain, IAF President Frank Bond showed enthusiastic support for the formation of an IAF Women's Working Group.

On the last weekend in October 2011 Véronique Blontrok, secretary of the Belgian Falconers' "Club Marie de Bourgogne", hosted a meeting for women falconers from different countries. This idea originated in 2010 at the IAF meeting in the Slovak Republic where Véronique and Tula Stapert from Holland developed an idea and desire to organize something for women falconers. Shortly before this, Dianne Moller, an active falconer in Wisconsin (USA) had published a report in the NAFA Journal on female falconers in the US, Canada and Europe. The group was joined by Lauren McGough (USA) who had realised a dream to trap and hunt with a Berkutchi eagle by heading off to live for 11 months in Mongolia with a falconer's family

At the IAF Council Meeting in Al Ain, Dianne gave a presentation on the aims of the group and H.E. Majuid Al Mansouri (UAE), Zayed Al Maddeed (Qatar) and Ladislav Molnar (Slovakia) all spoke in support of the project. The whole IAF Council enthusiastically expressed interest.

The Women's Falconry Network is currently preparing a mission statement and a work plan for joint review to see how IAF might help achieve WFN's desired goals, working informally at the moment to develop the initial draft plan, and then announcing a formal Women's WG within a few months. Dianne Moller was appointed chairwoman of the informal WG.

President Bond, whose daughter practiced falconry when she was a teenager, stated he is hopeful that the entire falconry world will be very supportive of the WFN's efforts and thanked its members for their interest in kicking off this program. "You honour us by undertaking this great effort under the IAF umbrella", he said. "In my opinion the greatest opportunity for growth in falconry today is among women".

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Vice President for the Americas: Ralph Rogers (USA)

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### Proposal to seek amendments to CITES listings for the Peregrine and the Gyrfalcon

**CITES Resolution Conf 9.24 (Rev. CoP14) details the criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II. Using Annexure 1 which stipulates the Biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I, it would appear that a case may be made to call for the down-listing of both the Peregrine falcon and the Gyrfalcon.**

Good biological evidence exists to support this call, including the proceedings of the 2nd International Peregrine Conference held in Poland in 2007 and the proceedings of the Conference on the Gyrfalcon and Ptarmigan in a Changing World, held in Boise, Idaho in 2011. Range States of an amendment proposal must also be consulted.

It is proposed that, citing this evidence, IAF will review the feasibility of the amendment of the Appendix listing of the Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*, and the Gyrfalcon, *Falco rusticolus*, from Appendix I to Appendix II of the CITES Convention. IAF will involve experts who may assist with the submissions to CITES in this regard.

With the support of the Council of Delegates, the IAF President will appoint a Task Team with the aim of submitting proposals on the down listing to the Animals Committee of CITES in Geneva on March 15<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> 2012. The Task Team will then prepare the formal Proposal with the aim to present this at the Conference of the Parties of CITES in Thailand on 3<sup>rd</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> March.

### International Data Base of Electrocutions of Falconry Birds

The electrocution of Falconry birds is of serious concern to Falconers. It is also a serious threat to wild raptors and is a significant conservation issue.

The problem is well understood and dangerous structures can be readily identified, but not all electricity organizations are aware of or sensitive to this problem. This is an area where falconers can contribute to the conservation of wild raptors while protecting their own birds.

It was proposed that IAF's Council of Delegates direct the establishment of an Electrocutions Registry with the IAF President electing a volunteer Chairman to select a small committee to manage it. IAF National Delegates will submit reports of electrocutions of falconry birds to the Electrocutions Registry for inclusion on the data base, along with such additional information as may be required. National Delegates will also gather and submit information regarding the electrocution of wild raptors in their nation.

The Electrocutions Registry Committee will maintain a Data Base of Electrocutions of Falconry Birds as well as of such information regarding wild Raptors as they can obtain. They shall gather information regarding unsafe electrical structures and mitigation measures and make this information available to National Delegates so that they are able to address problems that are identified. The IAF shall provide its support as an International Conservation Organization to encourage Electrical Supply Organizations to address identified problems. This support can vary depending on the extent of the problem.

### UNESCO Nominations Update

**One part of IAF's work as an Advisory NGO to UNESCO is to monitor progress and encourage nations in the preservation of Falconry as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mankind. Dr. Bohumil Straka, IAF's Vice President for Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania, has been involved from the earliest stages of the UNESCO project. He gives us this update:**

"The largest ever nomination in the history of the UNESCO convention was originally inscribed on 16th Nov. 2010 by 11 nations: Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Korea, Mongolia, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Syria and the United Arab Emirates (leader of the nomination). The nomination extension was filed in March 2011 by additional 2 countries: Austria and Hungary (in accordance with the regulations both countries had first included falconry as national heritage on their national inventory list). Since the application two other countries have added Falconry to their National inventory lists and became eligible for further extensions: Croatia and Pakistan. Other countries, which are not eligible yet, but are giving consideration to join any future extension, include Bulgaria, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey.

We received news that on December 21, 2011 President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan signed into law Ratification of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. This is the first step to recognition of falconry and happened after much lobbying over the past four years including many letters from the Kazakhstan IAF Delegate. Kazakhstan now joins the list of countries considering future enrolment.

The deadline for nomination applications (an extension is considered as a new application) is the end of March every year. During the UNESCO workshop in Al Ain, it was indicated by UAE leaders that this March 2012 is not realistic for any further extensions due to the short time and because one (Austria/Hungary) extension is already pending. Therefore the target for new countries should be to include falconry on their inventory list by February 2013.

In November 2012, there will be a UNESCO session in Granada, where the first extension (Austria and Hungary) should be inscribed making a new record of 13 countries. New countries will join the next extension in March 2013 should be inscribed in UNESCO list in November 2014."



Kazakhstan IAF Delegate,  
Bakyt Karnakbayev.

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## UNESCO Ambassador's Address at 2<sup>nd</sup> International Falconry Conference

In her address at the opening of the celebrations in the UAE, the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Falconry Conference, UNESCO's Ambassador H.E. Ms Katalin Bogyay said:

*"It is really inspiring to see such a profound diversity of nations and cultures represented at this event today! With over seven hundred participants from sixty countries, this is truly a microcosm of cultural diversity and a vivid example of people from distant corners of our planet coming together to engage in inter-cultural dialogue, celebrating their common heritage. This festival of friendship is truly UNESCO in action!"*

Very often, when hearing the term "cultural heritage" people

think of monuments, buildings and collections of objects. These are of course very important examples of our heritage. But largely due to the instruments developed by UNESCO, the notion of cultural heritage has changed considerably in recent decades, embracing traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our posterity. A seminal instrument in this regard is the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2003, which states that intangible heritage "is the mainspring of our cultural diversity and its maintenance a guarantee for continuing creativity." The adoption of the Convention, which for the first time recognized the need to support intangible cultural manifestations and expressions within an international legal framework, became a milestone in the evolution of international policies for promoting cultural diversity.

In the face of globalization, the protection of intangible cultural heritage has become an imperative for maintaining cultural diversity. This festival is a very clear example of how the understanding of the intangible cultural heritage of different communities helps with intercultural dialogue, and encourages mutual respect for other ways of life. The art of falconry, which has brought together so many nations, embodies the concept of intangible cultural heritage: it is Traditional, contemporary and living at the same time – falconry not only represents inherited traditions from the past but also contemporary practices in which diverse cultural groups take part; it is Representative: Falconry thrives in communities and countries and depends on those whose knowledge of traditions, skills and customs are passed on to the rest of the community, from generation to generation, or to other communities; it is Community-based: falconry, just like the other examples of intangible cultural heritage, can only be heritage when it is recognized as such by the communities, groups or individuals that create, maintain and transmit it; it is Inclusive – nowadays falconry is practiced by people of all ages in local communities in more than sixty countries. Whether they are from the neighbouring villages, from a city on the opposite side of the world, or have been adapted by peoples who have migrated and settled in a different region, all who practice falconry contribute to the maintenance of intangible cultural heritage. The practice has passed from one generation to another, has evolved in response to different environments where it was introduced, and has given people a sense of identity and continuity, providing a link from the past, through the present, into the future.

For me, an amazing feature of falconry is its representation of human journey through history. Practiced along the migration routes used by falcons for thousands of years, the practice of falconry is mainly found within these traditional migration flyways and corridors that run from north and east Asia and north Europe through Mediterranean Europe, the Middle East and the Caspian Sea to North Africa, and from North America, south to Central and South America.

As we all know, the culture and the traditions associated with Falconry are as multifaceted as the practice of falconry itself. They are manifested in the diversity of customs, dresses, dances, songs, and other means of cultural expression that evolved around this practice in different countries for centuries. And at the same time, while falconers come from different backgrounds, the traditions and practices that they share have a universal value.

Falconry, like so many other examples of world's intangible heritage, needs protection from various threats arising from contemporary global processes and trends. Just to name one – the rapid urbanization is restricting the opportunity to practice falconry and leads to its decline. The global trend of migration from the countryside to big cities is a major threat to rural-based traditions, including that of falconry.

**Falconry does not belong in a museum, it represent heritage that is alive.** That is the reason why my own country, Hungary, which has its own rich tradition of falconry that goes back for centuries, has decided to accede to the long list of nations that have joined efforts to protect and to celebrate the ancient practice by inscribing it in UNESCO's list of world intangible heritage. We must protect and promote these vulnerable, minority aspects and practices of falconry as precious jewels of world cultural history. I hope that the inscription of the practice into the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity will encourage research into the social history of falconry, enrich the historical consciousness of falconers and promote and safeguard falconry for future generations.

**I am confident this will be a celebration of friendship and shared values between peoples, between nations, between those who practice and perpetuate the traditions of falconry."**

UNESCO's Ambassador H.E. Ms Katalin Bogyay



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