



International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey

NEWSLETTER

Website: www.iaf.org

The I.A.F. currently has 70 associations from 50 countries worldwide totalling 30 000 members.

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President

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Algannas Falconry Club joins the IAF and Qatar becomes the 50th Member Nation of the IAF

The Algannas Falconry Club of Qatar proposed its candidature at the IAF AGM in Slovakia in October 2010. Membership was granted, provisional on the club obtaining the support of its membership. At the invitation of Algannas, Bohumil Straka (IAF Vice President for Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania) and Adrian Lombard (IAF Executive Secretary) visited Qatar to meet members of the club board. Meetings took place over the course of three days, from 10th to 12th February, 2011 and at a formal meeting at the club headquarters membership of the IAF was accepted. At this and subsequent meetings, discussions on a variety of topics of mutual interest were held and the IAF guests were able to gain insights into Qatari Falconry and the challenges it faces.

Falconry is of immense cultural significance in Qatar, being an important link to the Bedouin roots of this desert people. Qatar was one of the eleven nations which submitted the successful bid for recognition of Falconry as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO last November. In Qatar, the traditional Arabic style of pursuit falconry is practiced with falcons, historically, sakers and peregrines, but today, also gyrs and hybrids. They are predominantly captive bred. Favoured quarry is the houbara bustard but desert hares and stone curlew are also hunted. The falconers of Qatar are represented by the Algannas Club. Algannas means "Hunting with Falcons".



Algannas Club is closely associated with the Saluki Club of Qatar and has offices in the impressive Falconry Centre in the Katara Cultural Village on the outskirts of Doha, the site of the "Giant Hood", as yet incomplete, planned to house an interactive multimedia exhibit for visitors wishing to learn about the rich heritage of Qatar falconry. The centre houses the oldest veterinary clinic for falcons in the Middle East. Guests went to the south of the Qatar Peninsula where they had the privilege of visiting Nasser Almaadeed, Chairman of Algannas, at his farm outside Doha. Here they watched his falcons flown and shared dinner with him, his sons and other board members of the Algannas club. Guests were also able to see the city of Doha, its Dhow harbor, Souq Waqif, its corniche and business district and the Al Jazira Broadcasting station. The Qatar hosts were incredibly hospitable and IAF was able to gain an insight into their vibrant country and the customs of its people. In particular, it gave an opportunity to get to know the officers of Algannas, the IAF's newest member, with whom we have been able to forge a warm and productive relationship.

The website www.algannas.net is currently one of the best Arabian websites.

Vice President Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania : Bohumil Straka (Czech Republic)

Vice President for the Americas: Ralph Rogers (USA)

Executive Secretary : Adrian Lombard (South Africa)

Treasurer: António Carapuco (Portugal)