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MEMBER OF IUCN



Obituary Christian de Coune

I met Christian first about 46 years ago when starting falconry in the early-sixties. He was flying a sparrow-hawk. Due to professional reasons, he was to move to Brussels which prevented him from keeping hawks in the city. Despite the fact that he could no longer fly hawks, Christian engaged himself in the defence of falconry and dedicated his life to the survival of our art. Christian was

a passionate and gripping man, interested in all aspects of nature. Very tolerant

In the early seventies he travelled around India, which soon became soon a passion (he went in India every year for tens of years) from where he got his typical 'maharajah' look.

Christian was elected president of the Belgian Falconers Association - 'Club Marie de Bourgogne' - in 1971 and served as president for more than 30 years. During his presidency, Belgian falconry gained legal recognition and Belgian falconers enjoy one of the best falconry legislations in Europe.

Christian has been associated with the IAF throughout its entire history starting with the draft of its constitution. He was elected president of the IAF in 1984 serving until until 1998, and was still member of the Advisory Committee where his open mindedness, tolerance, diplomacy and experience were highly appreciated.

Christian has been the tireless ambassador for the world of falconry at all the important international meetings,

conferences and conventions where his typical look didn't go unnoticed.

Christian used to cover pages of small notebooks with his pencil notes and at the end of the day converted these notes into extended reports. He travelled throughout the world for the sake of falconry - anecdotally: Christian used to buy a dictionary in every country he visited which allowed him to say a few words in the local language whenever possible. He showed me an impressive collection of more than 100 dictionaries!

Christian understood the importance of having falconry considered in legal texts and had a theory: the "little words" - aiming to see falconry mentioned in all international decisions of the various conferences or international legislation that could affect it. For instance, falconry is expressly mentioned in the European Bird Directive and in the derogation measures for protection. Without such a mention, probably no hawking would be possible for European falconers.

If most of us are still allowed to fly their hawks legally, it's greatly due to Christian's tireless efforts.

Christian was driven by a fascination of nature and was a true natural historian, which gave him an immense credibility when defending the case of falconers and falconry. He was well known and held in high regard by those that knew him. His passing is an enormous loss to falconers and hunters worldwide. He is survived by his partner Kathou, who he met in his twilight years.

Thank you Christian for all what you did for falconry. We lose a friend - we'll miss you. 🦅

Patrick Morel.



CHRISTIAN DE COUNE
PRESIDENT IAF 1985-1998





Editors Forward

This year has proved to be a mixture of emotions for members of IAF with the sad loss of several well known individuals from our community whilst conversely we have enjoyed the satisfaction of some amazing success.

Falconers are usually quite individual people and maybe challenging company for all those involved in their way of life. We are in reality highly dependent upon each other and where controversy rages a little thought reveals another perspective. For members of IAF our organization is one of the most noticeable examples of those better aspects of our nature prevailing over a long period of time.

When birds of prey faced their greatest threat in the pesticide crisis, falconers were among the first to notice an environmental disaster and in the face of big business interests and political process at its worst, it was the falconry community who came together and acted to create solutions. Many individuals were involved with an array of talents so that today we can look with pride at the result of falconer's efforts worldwide – most obviously it can be seen in the creation of such organizations as the

Peregrine Fund, the work of many of the major clubs like BFC, ANFA and DFO, and the various archives of historical records. Individuals had the courage and determination to act – for many it became our way of life.

I think it was in 1986 I met Jim Willmarth at a NAFA meet in Kearney Nebraska. I knew nobody at the meeting and was standing on the motel stairwell overlooking the weathering lawn watching falconers moving around with hawks, dogs and general social courtesies - did anybody strike a chord in me? Jim's manner was so much in harmony with his hawk, with interest in his friends his resonance simply could not be missed - his generosity as we met made my welcome unforgettable.

Many of you will not have heard of him but will read about his life in this Journal and like so many other unassuming people we should all appreciate just how much his being has done for our way of life. More well known was Eckart Shormair who has served the IAF and DFO for many years, well known in the world of falconry and recognizably an exceptional falconer. Walter Crammer served IAF for many of its early years and for the younger

generation he will not be easily recalled even though his contribution has been great.

Each of these people did much in their individual lives to enable falconry to achieve its current position and in this edition we recognize their passing in some celebration of their lives and success.

And now as we go to press we hear of the sad death of our most well known long serving president of IAF from 1985 to 1998 Christian de Coune. I worked with Christian over many years from a difficult start when he heard me to be a 'loose cannon' in my efforts to recruit NAFA to our membership. He was ever a gentleman with his heart in our community and we worked together through many conferences all around the world as understanding between us grew on a personal level until as he put it 'time has done its work and we are now friends'.

Indeed this has been a year of change and I miss each of my friends.

One of the consequences of their lifelong commitment and effort is to have brought recognition and major progress both for falconry and in the world of raptor conservation. In this past year we have seen the amazing achievement of inscription for the intangible cultural heritage of falconry by UNESCO. 11 different countries made a joint submission in fulfillment of the initiative of IAF which was expanded and coordinated by the support of UAE carrying on the work and amazing foresight of H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan. Extraordinarily IAF was accredited as an international advisory NGO in this process and

has been pleased to serve in a uniquely invaluable role. Other countries are still in the process of making their own applications making this a truly memorable time for falconry with refreshed credibility and recognition of its role in society worldwide.

During his final weeks, at a time of great illness, my friend Jim Willmarth asked me to print him a hard copy of the UNESCO announcement so that he could 'pin it above his bed' during his last days - Eckart was similarly delighted by this achievement to which his whole experience in lifelong falconry had been focused – and then most recently, at his 70th birthday party in the sunshine on the lawn at Le Cochetay, Christian de Coune was thrilled at this achievement in culmination of his lifelong dedication to our support. People at the heart of our sport today carry similar feelings – amongst our contributions in this edition of our Journal, Professor Matt Gage brings us a view of classic red-grouse hawking and, from the opposite hemisphere in South Africa, an article by A Mullar of Sandgrouse hawking, one of the most challenging quarry species on the planet - who knows where our ongoing devotion will lead in the future as we each maintain the enduring cultural values of falconry in our communities? 🦅



Anthony Crosswell

Editor, UK
Tel / Fax ++44 (0) 1379 677 296
Mobil. ++44 (0) 7885 769 054
E-mail: gyr.gyrcross@o2.co.uk



Pictures in this edition:

Cover Picture: Andrew Ellis www.andrewellispaintings.com

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Others: A Muller, Keiya Nakajima, Mark Williams (pictured left), Patrick Morel, Klaus Leix, Tony Crosswell, Nick Fox, Bohumil Straka, Adrian Lombard and Matt Gage.

IAF PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 2011

Frank M. Bond

Recently, I returned from a trip to Europe where I was kindly invited to make presentations to the Real Gremio de Halconeros del Reino de España in Madrid, to the large gathering celebrating the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Falconry and Cigarmakers Museum in Valkenswaard, Holland, and finally to a meeting of the British Falconers' Club's Council. I focused on the magnificent success with UNESCO's recognition of falconry as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity. On November 16, 2010, a date to forever remember, in Nairobi, Kenya, the Joint Submission led by the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage on behalf of eleven nations was celebrated with a long standing ovation after the final vote was taken. It is the largest ever multi-national file submitted to UNESCO, and the example by which all future submissions will be measured.

Earlier in 2010, UNESCO accredited the IAF as its international advisory NGO for the broader areas of falconry and conservation. This new status requires the IAF to perpetuate and support falconry and falconry heritage, and to report our efforts periodically to UNESCO.

So many people from throughout the world merit recognition and deserve our deepest respect for the efforts to achieve this

UNESCO success. However, here I give special recognition to a real visionary, the late President of the UAE, H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan. Ahead of his time, thinking of the future of falconry in his own society, he assembled falconers around the world in 1976 to discuss the heritage of falconry. Now his visionary legacy is in hand for posterity, in large part due to the generosity of his nation, and the incredible work of so many.

Internally, the IAF is going through a period of introspection to determine how it will be in a position to protect falconry globally on a proactive basis. We are developing a new business plan model for the IAF's future. I have had the pleasure of presenting draft versions to the Advisory Committee, the Council of Delegates, and several of our Member Organizations. It has stirred debate; participants have wondered how to fund it; but almost all recognize that the IAF must pool resources to face the challenges to falconry in the future. For the IAF's almost 45 years in existence, we have relied on the dedicated volunteers to lead and work for the IAF. At the top of my list for his single-minded dedication, I point to Christian De Coune, a striking, relentless defender of falconry during his fourteen years as president. Yet, now



in a fast-paced, electronic world of communication, I believe that we will need to have professional staff to help the elected leadership. That will make it possible for many more falconers around the world to assume leadership roles in the IAF to guide policy decision-making without having to undertake the day-to-day operations. I will have more to report to the Council of Delegates at our next AGM.

Just recently, we had one of the best among us pass on. Eckart Schormair of Germany, first of all, was a dedicated, passionate falconer, an old-style gentleman, a wonderful companion. In part, he dedicated his life to serving his own DFO and to representing it admirably by serving in various positions within the IAF. He attended our AGMs and he was generous with his personal support of IAF goals. On behalf of the world falconry community, I salute Eckart Schormair for his enthusiastic support of our deep passion.

Our dear friend and the longest serving President of the IAF, Christian De Coune, sadly passed away in September, not long after his seventieth birthday. Christian was the icon of representation of world falconry, as he had the time and resources to devote himself completely to our passion through most of the years of his adult life. He had been associated with the IAF throughout its entire history. During his presidency he literally did everything for the association himself, from pulling together the AGMS, preparing the annual newsletter, responding to falconry challenges throughout the

world, and attending all of the international conventions and meetings of the conference of the parties; he continued to be our representative at most of these meetings even until this summer. It was during his presidency that he oversaw the initial surge in growth of the IAF from a relatively smaller organization representing largely European falconry clubs to one of worldwide significance. Christian will always be remembered as falconry's ambassador, a memorable, striking figure, and as an uncompromising advocate for us in the face of our detractors. I had a number of opportunities to spend time alone with him; like you, I will miss my friend.

Finally, I take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our Editor, Tony Crosswell, for once again producing another spectacular Journal. He is supported by his daughter, Tanya Betts, for the layout and art to make the Journal a publication without peer. Because of the focus on the UNESCO recognition, this is a special edition. For many readers, they see the IAF through this magnificent publication.

I look forward to meeting all of our colleagues in December at the IAF AGM held in conjunction with the Festival of Falconry in Abu Dhabi. Please join us; it promises to be a spectacular event. 🦅

Frank M. Bond
President
June 2011
Santa Fe, New Mexico



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RED GROUSE HAWKING

By Professor Matt Gage

In the early 1980's, falconry was practiced by a tiny minority in Britain. Most of us with a fierce desire for the art had to connect through literature or bird-watching.

Over and over, I read every falconry or raptor book I could get my hands on, and spent hours watching wild raptors, with an obsessed desire that only the die-hard readers of this article will understand.

For me, the ultimate falconry dream had to be hunting high-flying peregrines over an English pointer at red grouse. In post-DDT Britain, getting a buzzard to fly was enough of a challenge, let alone a noble peregrine, so I resigned my pipe dream to the bottom drawer labelled 'sheer fantasy'.

But things got much better through the nineties. Captive breeding took off, equipment and knowledge became more accessible, and it started to seem possible to practice falconry to a good standard in conjunction with other less eccentric activities, like having a job or a family. I played hard with peregrines on the low ground, started an English pointer, and made plans to turn my grouse dream into reality. In 2000, I visited northern Scotland with a couple of friends, one of whom was an experienced grouse fanatic, and we dabbled on a couple of small patches of heather, and even saw one or two grouse. Despite the lack of game and shortness of time, I was hooked on the opportunities that were there, and returned to the balmy south with a gameplan in my head. After writing a lot of letters of enquiry to landowners,

I was fortunate enough to be offered a let on a moor in Caithness, right in the heart of gamehawking Flow country at the very top of Scotland. I've returned to this very special place every year since, and also been lucky enough to enjoy extra opportunities through the season on some Yorkshire moors. There is always more to learn and discover in falconry, but here are some thoughts for the budding grouse tyro, learnt through thick and thin from chasing good sport with peregrines over English pointers at red grouse.

Finding a moor

Ask most lairds why they own and run a grouse moor, and financial return will be quite low on the list: they mostly do it for love, not money. People who maintain and run grouse moors are the unsung – even bad-mouthed - heroes of conservation of the British uplands, a unique habitat in its own



A good days hunting.

right. Numerous studies have clearly shown that grouse management is greatly beneficial for other upland specialist species, which have all been lost on those estates turned over to forestry or heavier grazing. Indeed, the North York Moors National Park have recognised this formally by entering into a formal Wildlife Enhancement Scheme agreement with the British Falconers' Club Yorkshire region to allow a small patch of heather moorland to be managed both for conservation and falconry. The syndicate have improved Levisham moor for upland wildlife and for hawking grouse, and there is now a small but huntable head of grouse being enjoyed. This agreement has been a defining success, showing how low-impact hunting is entirely congruent with conservation of biodiversity and unique habitat.

In general, therefore, it's not simply a case of buying your way into a moor with a fat wallet. In my experience, highland keepers and lairds are pretty particular people who care a great deal about good behaviour and etiquette on and off the moor. Falconers have a steeper hill to climb here into favour, because raptors are not generally popular on grouse moors. Some lairds and keepers are informed and open-minded, and our laird has played a driving role in keeping traditional Flow



Freddie Mackay, 50 years of highland keeping and upland conservation, still going strong.

country grouse hawking alive. But in general, it's hard to find a good let, and it means that falconers actually on grouse moors (and beyond) have a responsibility to fly the flag of good sport and behaviour. It only takes one or two bad apples for the word to spread quickly about what 'falconers' get up to, and news of misbehaviour travels very fast up there. You might think that in the open expanses of heather



Grouse marks persist for a few weeks so give hints on the population size.

moorland, there isn't much opportunity for misbehaviour, but much of the upland sporting culture is built around rigorous cooperation between estates, and a view towards sustainability in the longer term. Because of this, practices like greedy bag-filling, unsporting behaviour to the quarry, straying over marches, racing on the hill tracks, errant hawks and dogs, disrespect to the accommodation, are just a few of the things that vex the protectors of the grouse and traditional highland sport. Our laird has actually descended with his cheque book on (shooting) miscreants, provided a refund, and sent them packing.

So the first thing to realise is that it's difficult, but not impossible, to find a good grouse moor that will allow falconry. If you manage to locate a moor with a possible agreement to you for falconry, what should you look out for? Naturally, you will be interested in the grouse population, and this will depend on whether you're happy to walk all day for a couple of points, or whether you want ten points in a short walk from the Range Rover, and home in time for tea and crumpets. Here, financial considerations will creep in, because a well-stocked moor will cost you more because of competition with the shooting market. If the moor has been shot hard, but still carries enough grouse for a hawking let, the birds could still be very jumpy and difficult to manage for nice flights off a point. Enlightened estate owners will realise that falconers take much much smaller bags than guns, and create less disturbance, so you could get lucky and be allowed onto a moor that has a few grouse and a bit of early shooting, and this has worked fine for me. Be wary of very low grouse numbers, and don't let your enthusiasm run away too much. Walking and running dogs all day for a single point on a jumpy, barren pair is no fun after a week. Tempers get strained, dogs and hawks get disillusioned, and it's no good for the moor to hunt out the last pairs. By the same token that you get bad apples in the falconry barrel, so too can the odd moor owner think it's acceptable to let a barren moor; if you're unsure, see if you can walk the moor and look out for grouse marks and check heather quality, both of which tell you

a lot if you can't run a dog. Another tradition that is widely upheld on Scottish grouse moors, is that last year's tenant (assuming all went well) is usually offered the next season's let first. This means that both parties have a responsibility: the landlord because you get offered first refusal, but also the tenant because if you decide on a year out if the grouse are looking bad, you may well be out permanently. You've therefore got to be prepared to take the good years and the bad if you want to keep returning.

If your detective work and diplomacy are on track, next, let's get a bit more particular in case you have a choice (which is unlikely). Relief is important on a moor, and steep sides and deep ravines (where grouse will often head) can make for hard walking and tricky tracking. Aspect can be important too, with nice updrafts helping, but nasty downdrafts spoiling a beat. If the moor is at high elevation, low cloud can be a problem; if it's at low elevation, check could be a nuisance, and fencing more so. What's the eagle situation like? This is becoming a real problem now. What are the neighbours like, and do they shoot hard? Unfortunate incidents have happened. If grouse are at low density, how big is the estate? What is the accommodation like for dogs and hawks? Is there a safe weathering lawn? Is there the all-important freezer space for hawk food? If all looks good, you're doing very well, so the final question might concern the dates available. Many estates run a fairly traditional season with grouse in August and September, then onto deer in October, with perhaps some pheasant or partridge shooting too on the estate margins. If you get the chance to go at any time of the grouse season, there are pro's and con's throughout. August grouse can still be a bit green, and you might encounter some birds that are too young to hunt if the summer weather forced a second clutch after hatch. Having said that, there's a reason why the Glorious Twelfth is when it is, and shooters don't want to drive weak flyers past the butts either. Young, full-sized grouse fly very fast, and are more honest than overwintered birds, so they provide excellent sport. In Caithness, we probably encounter grouse that are too young, meaning they can be flown down by a half-fit hawk, from about 5% of points in August, and less in September. It's still a disappointment to flush a young covey, because it almost always teaches the hawk only bad lessons, and disturbs the growing family, but I have seen even three-quarter-grown grouse burn off big female peregrines before they get into the swing of it! Positives of August grousing are the long days, lower risks of gales and rain, and the heather is in bloom. It's holiday season and a good time of year to get a fresh eyass hunting. Unfortunately all that warm weather means the mighty midge will be on the wing in the far north, and he is not to be taken lightly. Freddie Mackay, our keeper, has fought the midge single-handedly on the hill for almost 50 years, and although he has a number of gaelic descriptors for *Callicoides impunctatus*, his



Late summer grouse hawking: great fun with Roger Upton, Tristan Lougher, Gus Gough and Robert Hutchinson, and no shortage of dogs.

final conclusion is 'You'll never beat the midge.... NEVER!' As soon as the wind drops, midges will be up and out of the damp heather, and they make life outside almost intolerable for man and beast. Hawks must not be left on weathering lawns, or you will return to find them in a state of hysteria with swollen eyelids, and ceres and feet bitten. The same goes for dogs in outside kennels. Hawking in calm conditions is tolerable as long as you keep moving, but a kill will see your hawking buddies desert you as you stand and scratch and swear, while you try and get your star to take her reward in a dense midge cloud. There is nothing you can do to stop them biting because most repellents aren't effective, and we've even tried German army weapon's-grade DEET. Interestingly, something that does work better than anything is 'Skin So Soft', so book your Avon lady to call, and stock up before your trip, because you're worth it.

As the frosts come in late September and October, the midges die back, and the grouse have toughened up. Into November and early December, if you get high pressure conditions you've struck gold as it's a fantastic time to hunt red grouse in the frosty blue. As long as the moor hasn't been shot too hard, they should still hold to a point (though less reliably than earlier on), and they will explode from the

heather and fly like black cannonballs to the horizon. Their back becomes armoured as their synsacrum fuses up, and they can take whumping hits and just keep on going. Your hawks will be fit and on the game, so you can hit the ground running. Unfortunately, like the grouse, the weather can toughen up too in the winter, and if you can only grab a week and there's a deep Atlantic low passing slowly through, you could be stuffed if the moor has the wrong aspect. If the rain or sleet comes hard, then take your salmon rod and try to enjoy some fishing!

Grouse basics

The red grouse is a type of willow grouse, and is endemic to the British uplands. Adult grouse subsist almost entirely on ling heather, and they cannot be economically reared and released on a scale that is normal for partridges, pheasants and some ducks, so they are truly a wild quarry. Sustainable grouse numbers for sport are maintained primarily through a combination of heather and predator management. There are widely-recognised conservation benefits to other upland species as a by-product of grouse moor maintenance and management. Adult pairs form territories, and grouse are generally not big movers from their area of birth, although

this depends on population density, and severe weather will see them packing up and moving to the lower ground in search of food and respite from the permafrost. Being a ground-nesting species that is adapted to living in upland areas with generally low predator numbers, it is especially vulnerable to generalist predators like foxes, corvids and harriers. Raptors are protected in the UK, but other predators are controlled to improve survival of young grouse. For the first two weeks after hatch, grouse chicks supplement their diet with invertebrates, which are essential for growth, so a warm dry hatch is a big bonus. After three weeks, heather becomes the mainstay of their diet, and it is heather quality that is fundamental to a grouse moor's productivity. Despite this somewhat monotonous diet, grouse are excellent to eat: mature them in the fridge for a few days, and then pan-fry them hard for 5 minutes followed by a 12 minute roast in a very hot oven. Serve them up with red cabbage, roast potatoes, and a nice Chianti, and make sure you have a good cook in your team who can do this to perfection!

Back to the management, heather patches are burnt regularly to create a patchwork of young, medium and old growth that provides the right combination of nutrition and cover, and maximises the number of available territories per acre. Heather beetle can be a particular problem on damper grouse moors: eggs are laid in sphagnum, and the beetle larvae eat the growing heather shoots. Whole miles of moorland can be

devastated by this pest, leaving behind red or grey stands of heather that were once green and purple. The beetle's main predator is a tiny parasitic wasp, so the beetle outbreaks tend to cycle as a result. Heather can recover after being 'beetled', but it takes a couple of years, and predisposes the ground to unwanted spread of Molinia grasses, which can dominate the heather and reduce the grouse food supply. Grazing by sheep and deer also needs a careful balance to limit the spread of grasses, and protect the heather. On top of all this, grouse populations can suffer disease cycles when maintained at high density, with the strongyle gut nematode and louping ill from ticks being major constrainters of population health. Despite these pressures, it is remarkable how good management can produce a bumper crop of grouse on productive moors. Many of the driven moors shoot thousands of brace each season. In 1888, Lord Walsingham is famous for shooting 1070 birds in a single day in 1888 on Blubberhouses moor in Yorkshire (which is a terrible waste of good grouse if you're a gamehawker, and enough to keep most of us happy for a falconry lifetime!)

Dogs

Good dogs are the makers of grouse hawking, so don't treat this part of the team lightly. The majority of moors demand pointing dogs to allow the sport to happen. Grouse are secretive, ground-loving game birds, so spotting or walking is



Preparing to set forth.



Good dogs allow the whole operation, so treat them royally.

almost never feasible. Moreover, the actions of a good pointer are at least half of the beauty and excitement of the whole art. To see a fine English pointer or setter working a moor at great distance, with complete and professional independence is a sight and activity to behold. Our dogs have to run big to cover large areas after grouse at quite low densities, and they have to want to do this all afternoon, and again tomorrow. We once took out an ex-England international footballer, who was mesmerised by the stamina and fitness of our dogs as they coursed for hours over hill and dale on boggy ground, before locking calmly onto point. Your dogs might need to cover miles and miles of uneven ground to find grouse, so be wary if you're unsure of their ranging abilities. HPR breeds might seem fast and energetic as they romp across the low ground meadows, but up on the hill the landscape and smellscape are different. I've seen dogs that work fine over short beats on the low ground simply lose interest or energy after 10 minutes of romping about on heather, where the smellscape is relatively monotonous and game is widely dispersed.

Most well-bred pointers and setters will want to cover the ground once fit, so prepare them before the trip with running over soft but uneven and challenging ground; this is important for hardening pads too. The next task is to ensure that they point and flush without error, so the sport and spectacle can be enjoyed. Hot-heads that charge in can spoil a day, though false-pointers are worse. So make sure your dogs don't just point, they point game, and then hold the point until you're ready to serve the hawk. Plenty of exposure to the right game in the right conditions with your sensible control will make a great dog, so don't cut corners. Partridge are probably better to expose dogs to in preparation for grouse, because shifting pheasants can encourage creeping. Sticky dogs are not as bad as creepers or chargers-in, as long as they're pointing grouse, but the nicest flights can be engineered with a staunch dog that flushes on the button from a quiet command. Lots of shouting at the dog to stop creeping, or running about

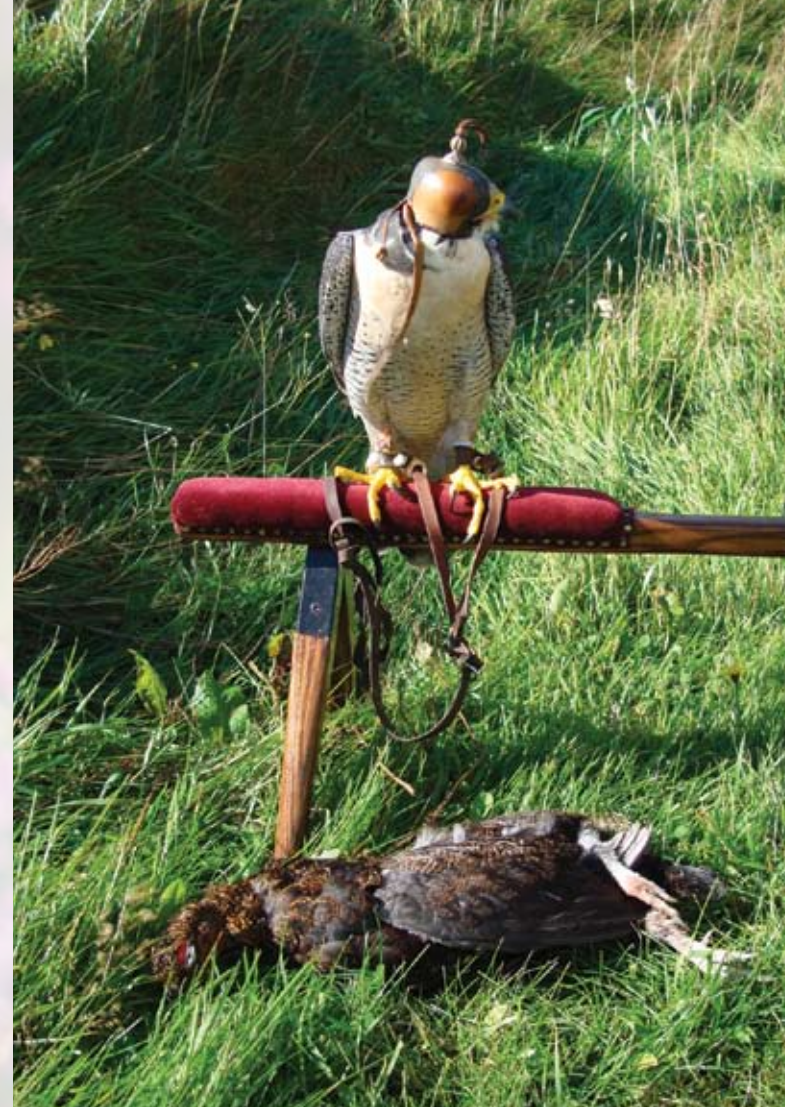
looking to flush the grouse when the dog won't move, makes for a tight-holding falcon, as well as distracting enjoyment from the falcon's flight.

There are lots of views on how to create a good pointer, but they don't train themselves, and however you do it you will have a fantastic hunting companion if you create a dog that covers ground intelligently and independently, looks back at you occasionally, and will turn, stop, or return on your command. If he drops deeper when working a downwind beat, and on finding birds will work round grouse carefully, and then hold a point for as long as it takes you to find or reach him, or your falcon to make pitch and position, then even better. Finally, if he will have birds in the air exactly when you give him a quiet 'get 'em up!', then you're close to grouse perfection. Of course a drop-to flush is nice too, but we're all there to enjoy ourselves a bit. Good dogs are the lynchpins of grouse hawking, so make the effort, and don't be reliant on just one dog. Make sure the runners are getting big meals of good food, and a comfortable, warm, undisturbed bed for rest. If one dog is being used heavily, give him a whole day off every so often to recuperate. Encourage the use of young dogs in your team to let them learn, even if it means your own flight isn't perfectly controlled. Enjoy your dogs, and marvel at their abilities and dedicated service!

Hawks

Most of us will have our own ideas for what makes an ideal gamehawk. For me, a good tiercel peregrine is hard to beat as a stylish match for grouse, and about matched for weight. If you have a female that goes up, then equally good, and she's probably a bit more deadly in general. Size is not as important as confidence and attitude, and I've witnessed tiny tiercels buffering high into a wet Scottish gale as well as any big female, and then slaying grouse. An added benefit of tiercels is that they can take a hearty meal off a kill, yet still be ready to be up and at 'em the next day, while a gorge for a female might put her into uncooperative mode for a day or two. On the other hand, females seem to stoop harder, and certainly punch better into the wind at the bottom of the stoop. Go too big, like a female gyr-hybrid, and you might start to see the hawk looking ungainly alongside a shifty 1½ pound grouse, and the added intimidation can spoil the flight by encouraging dumping.

A word of warning: experienced hawks on the low ground do not always perform as well on the moor. Some will flat refuse to fly, for unknown reasons. Some will refuse to stoop grouse. Some don't like dogs. Some don't like groups. And some just don't like being away from home. These foibles are in the minority, and it's obvious that a new quarry will present a challenge, but beware that your ace partridge hawk might not also perform on high. It's understandably frustrating when a low ground star performer simply flutters to the heather



and stares vacantly at its owner. Others will fly but refuse to stoop or become quickly disillusioned if they don't succeed at the strange new game. Grouse are dark and can tightly hug the contours against a dark background, which can be off-putting for some hawks, especially if the light is low and this is all very new. Repeated dumping lessons into the heather in front of your stooping falcon seems to put off some birds from sacrificing their pitch, especially when they are thinking 'where is my partridge?' So see if you can get a day or two on the heather before you plan your grand tour, and take up eyasses to train on the moor from the start. Better still, if you can catch a grouse, allow a long pluck and feed-up, and even sacrifice the next day, and you'll be well on the way to a committed grouse hawk.

Falconers

Although hawking on your own in the wild country of northern Scotland is a wonderful experience, you'll likely be flying with other falconers to share the fun, and expense! Like dogs and hawks, physical fitness of all the team is important for grouse hawking as you may have to walk miles each day over rough terrain for your sport. Teamwork on the hill and in the lodge is really important, and all the while respecting the ground and the sport. There might be a tendency to push things, like game bags, straying over marches, or raking about back on the same ground after a previous covey. The hills

A good confident tiercel is a perfect match for red grouse.

have eyes, so if you want to return next year, or care about the good name of good falconry, then all of the group need to have the same careful attitudes. The dynamic within the hawking team is also very important. Gamehawkers can be a funny lot, evidenced by a quick glance through the ridiculous arguments and clashes on any web forum, so be careful if you don't want competitiveness or jealousy to spoil your holiday. Days out with Roger and Mark Upton exemplify to me how a positive and polite attitude keeps everyone happy, and returning year after year to enjoy great sport. Even when things go badly wrong, there is never any judgemental sniping, just an acceptance that things don't always go right, and celebrations when they do. Personalities are under bigger pressure up there when falconers are away from home and indulging in emotionally-charged activities! Add a good splash of alcohol and some late nights, and things can turn sour over a week or two, which is the last thing you want on holiday. If grouse are thin on the ground, or hawks or dogs aren't flying or working to expectations, then we can all get a bit obsessive, so easy-going and positive attitudes are very important to stop the gloves flying about! When a deep Atlantic low comes past, then the cabin fever can really test the group dynamic. Last year we endured a storm that ripped at the heather for four days, even preventing us from weathering hawks. There was a lot of pacing about and looking at tree branches to see



Mark Upton and Dodger: a proficient grousing team.

if any lull was coming, between poking about in equipment boxes. We even went for a drive out to visit an RSPB reserve (there were more birds on our moor!) At times like this it's worth feeding up early and trying to do something else, but that isn't easy because often the wind dies down later in the day. So pick your team right and, like me, you will enjoy first-rate company on top of the sport.

Preparation

So you've booked a moor, you've got a good falcon and dog team, and your best buddies are coming. Excellent! What should we do to prepare before the trip? We can probably all agree that your dogs should be losing their summer shape and hardening up, as well as dropping and returning nicely to the whistle. But we won't agree on how to prepare falcons for grouse in the early season. Of course it also depends on the length of your trip, and the background of your hawks. Some people prefer the bottom-up approach of doing the basics, and then working fitness, attitude and pitch into the hawk over each successive grouse flush. Certainly this does work, but it can take time. Others prefer top-down, attaining fitness and pitch with the use of aids like kites, and then hitting the ground running. I prefer the latter, because every day and point is precious to me, and I'd rather start without worrying

about fitness or condition constraining the hawk's potential. I've done both, and some hawks perform better with some work on pre-trip fitness, while others don't seem to need it. I usually fly my hawks only once a day, which doesn't provide a huge number of potential flights in, say, a fortnight trip. You may lose a couple of days to weather or the Sabbath, and possibly end up with only ten or twelve flights, which isn't much for the hawk to really condition itself into a star performer. Two weeks of decent kite work before your trip will clear out the moulting fat, open up the lungs and vessels, calm her pent-up anxiety a bit, and create the appetite of a lion. My hawks enjoy the kite, and it's a relatively controlled method of flying at pitch, so I can put them up to it at a heavier condition after the moult than I might if I was starting to go hunting. Shawn Hayes advocates 'the double', or 'we're going home and doing high jumps', but he's hardcore and I'm a slack-mettled Brit, so I let them get away with just one lift each day. One of the potential downsides of kiting a falcon before the hunt is that it makes the hawk fitter and a bit more outward-looking than a bottom-up trained falcon, and thereby creates an increased danger of success on check. But where you're going the check should be minimal, so you might strive for some Pitcheresque flying style in the big skies of her ancestral home. Up there you can slacken the reins and

really see what she's capable of, so for me, and for both eyass and intermewed falcon, it's more top-down than bottom-up in preparation for the grand tour. Either way, any check trouble will more likely start when you return home from the moor and she's fighting fit and confident; look out the low ground and put some fresh batteries in your transmitters...

Practice

The big day has arrived. You've settled into your cottage, the keeper's mentioned a covey or two are about, and the forecast is set fair: let's get out there and enjoy the sport! Load up the hawks and dogs, put some beer and chocolate in the cool bag, and head for the high ground. Choose a beat that has a bit of lift, but beware that hawks can hang lazily in a good updraft if they're unfamiliar with rising air. Now we're grouse hawking! For me it's the pinnacle of game hawking because, with an experienced team and the reduced number of variables, you can really actually enjoy and absorb the whole spectacle. No distracting woodpigeons, reared game, dog walkers, joggers, tractors, cars; you know where the birds are lying, and that the dog's not lying. You actually have a modicum of control. Your star pointer has been out of sight for some time, so we spread out a bit to check for him. As I climb the hill, I crest the brow and see him locked on point on the top of Soabhe Hill, where there is a patch of good heather and often a covey. He's staunch, and an old stager who knows the game, so I don't hesitate and risk jumping the covey, and back off. No fiddling with jesses, leashes or swivels, it's off with the hood and I release the single clip to her anklet. A bobbing look around her new landscape, a mute and a rouse, and then off she goes, boring into the cool breeze and mounting up and up into the cool blue. Now we can relax and be confident that the grouse will hold until we flush, so take your time if she knows the game, and move slowly into a position to watch the stoop and control the dog. Soon she's just a black spot flickering very high above, and she can see for miles and miles. She knows exactly what's going to happen, and she's a natural climber. Try not to shout at the dog to hold, or rush about swinging your arms in a panic in case she's distracted. Play it cool, like Geoffrey Pollard, and keep her guessing! Now it's up to you for once how to steer the flight, because the grouse will react according to where the falcon is above them. They prefer to escape into the wind, but won't want to fly right under her, and where you stand doesn't make much difference. A downwind flush will allow a faster stoop and a higher chance of her killing. An upwind flush will bleed off stooping speed, especially at the bottom, and give the grouse more anchorage in the air to outmanoeuvre the hawk, but it might encourage an even higher pitch next time... Depending on whether the hawk needs killing confidence, I usually flush downwind if the pitch is making me smile, and upwind if I think she could do better. Today, it's her first

flight of the trip and she's at a lovely commanding height, so I call the flush quietly when she pushes well ahead of me into the wind. The dog is on the covey in a flash and they explode from nowhere and are up and speeding downwind in a panic because they don't want to fly under the falcon. We all shout 'ho!', even though the falcon is already on her way down in a tight tuck as the grouse skim across the heather at high speed. I know I should be looking at the stooping falcon, but my eyes are glued to the grouse at first in the worry that they continue on their way. Then I force myself to search skywards, and see the black streak coming across the sky. She's truly a spectacle. Now I also hear her as she pulls a tight curve while levelling out of the stoop and the air rushes hard against her stiff pinions providing the dramatic sound of tearing canvas to add to this force of nature. In a further second she goes through the covey, who are weaving in their escape and wondering who's going to get it, and she strikes a killer blow with deadly accuracy that takes out one of the younger grouse. She knows she has killed the grouse, and allows herself a long throw-up to bleed off speed, then a relaxed descent to land on the ground, craning her neck to look for her prize. Everyone is pleased, and she is thrown the grouse which lies quite dead in the heather. The dogs howl in excitement and pull to have a sniff of the covey mark, while your star pointer who has just delivered the grouse and has seen it all before, takes advantage of the distraction and slinks off out the back to go hunting for more birds. The falcon sits dewy eyed as the endorphins rage through her system, and then starts to pluck and eat the head and neck. We drink some cold beer and eat the chocolate, then move on to look for a chance for the next hawk on the cadge.

What could be more enjoyable than that for your afternoon's sport? You even got to absorb the whole thing without the usual distractions. Unfortunately, and speaking from personal experience, it can take a long time to develop a team that works to produce such a wonderful spectacle. To start with, you can begin to suspect that grouse are uncatchable, and enthusiasm for the kill is acute. I remember my first grouse was half hawked, half dogged, and I was generously told that 'well if your hawk hadn't been in the air you couldn't have caught it!' Now, that same peregrine kills most of the grouse served to him. He's become a good grouse hawk, but it took time. Most of us want to see the big pitches up on the open moor and the sizzling stoops, so if you're striving for this, you want to try and encourage your hawk to use the third dimension above, so try not to rein her in too tight and let her really fly a bit wide and high. You can probably let her weight creep up a little, as long as she's still motivated to fly (and return). Hopefully she will be a bit of a naturally 'big' flyer, which is something you should aim for in a grouse hawk because the landscape lends itself to allowing a bit of independence, but don't go too crazy because it's no fun



At the end of the day: Dave Myatt, Bob Green and Nick Curry.



Taking a fair reward.

tracking hawks in this huge landscape where roads might be few and far-between. Kiting preparation will help a bit to encourage climbing, and can be a useful recall tool across those wide spaces of the uplands. In the early days, don't be too worried about position over the point: aim to flush when she is at her highest, and this will be your critical call. While she's learning the game, it's far better to have her high and out to the side, than directly overhead but low. With eyasses, it's usually best to bank the lesson and flush early on while she's still pumping, rather than waiting too long and watching her go 'floaty'. As long as she is high enough to stoop down and put in a chase on the fleeing grouse, then you are making great progress. Hawks quickly learn what the dog is about and key in over the point, so you will hopefully quickly get to the stage where she is using plenty of air, while always watching the point.

In fact, the existence of this focal point can sometimes lead to problems. While the unfettered purity of grouse hawking presents a whole load of positives, this purity can also allow negatives. Everything revolves around the point, and clever hawks will pick that up very quickly. One of the most frustrating things that can happen in red grouse hawking is when falcons hang tight over the point. The dog indicates

exactly where those tasty bundles are going to explode from, and the way the falconer is waving his arms about and creeping round the point in that habitual manner makes everything very predictable to your hawk, which is what you don't want. Try and avoid obvious cues of how the flight and flush are going to happen. Of course you can't blame the hawk, as she thinks that the closer she is to the point, and just a bit upwind, is the best place to catch a grouse. A few downwind flushes off the point into the falcon's feet before the grouse get properly going will not encourage those big pitches. Grouse can be caught this way if your dog is good and you get the timing just right, so be wary of this unless you want a meat hawk. It's especially relevant if you're flying a grouse rookie, when the first few flights are going to be very influential for your hawk. So once she's had a grouse to taste, be prepared to flush for a lesson rather than a kill in the early stages, and you will reap the investment later on. If your hawk hangs on the point too tightly, then flushing the grouse into the wind should stop her killing from a low pitch. Although the flush is still a reward, it's not nearly as incentivizing as a kill.

Grouse will almost always try to fly into the wind to beat a falcon, because it works. You might think that heading the



Grouse know their patch: a damaged bird hides down a deep hole in the middle of the moor.

point will encourage the grouse to fly downwind, but the most important thing to crouching grouse during the flight seems to be where the hawk is overhead, and grouse will fly right past your ears to escape into the wind. Grouse can row into a wind like no other game bird I've seen, and can do this at the bottom of a high falcon's stoop and still sometimes pull away. So if your hawk is hanging tight in a manner that displeases you, flush as she flies forward to the point, and make sure she sees the birds, gets a bit of a stoop, but the grouse pull away and escape. It takes a lot of steel to do this, when you might otherwise bag your first grouse, but if you want a high flyer my advice would be to make things testing to start with if there are opportunities ahead. On the other hand, if your hawk needs some killing confidence, then it's your call.

Something that can affirm tight flying even further, is re-flushing grouse that have dumped into cover if the hawk is right on their tail. Sometimes it can help to station people during the flight near patches of likely cover, like streams, hags or reed beds to discourage dumping in the first place. Again, it'll be your call whether to re-flush a grouse, because sometimes it will do little harm and provide a second sporting spectacle, and might even be needed to encourage the chances of a kill for a rookie that has had a run of bad luck, while at other times it will negate style in your gamehawk, waste a good grouse, and encourage disobedience to the lure. Damaged grouse should probably be re-flushed so they are not left to suffer if they cannot be picked up by the dog. If the grouse has out-flown the falcon and then dumps, it's won fair and square, and your hawk wasn't good enough, so give it fair sport. It's a great lesson to the hawk to be out-flown

for a good distance by a grouse. If my falcon has flown high and done everything right, and the grouse dumps before she gets down to have a crack at it, then I will usually encourage a remount and repeat attempt; I realise that this makes her a bit less obedient to the lure. Often, grouse will simply repeat the dump, especially if there is appropriate cover about, and if you suspect this is going to be the case then it's a good policy to re-flush the grouse into the wind when the hawk is out of position downwind, which should encourage the grouse to fly to escape. At least then the hawk is beaten fairly, and it's a good lesson. Roger Upton likens dumping grouse to naughty street kids who know where all the hidey holes are, and scuttle down them under tight pressure! It's amazing where grouse will escape to: down holes, under hanging hags, up to their necks in streams. These tactics obviously help escape from wild peregrines. Hopefully you won't see too much of this and the grouse will outfly your hawk and encourage her to mount even higher and stoop even faster next time. By the time you get to the end of your trip, everything should be in full swing, and you're hopefully enjoying great sport and everything will go right on your last day. Then it's time to tip the keeper well if things have gone great, pack up your kit, and clean up the cottage (hopefully you'll have a few grouse feathers to sweep up). Unfortunately, it's time to return to reality... at least there might still be the remnants of a summer further south.

The future

Most of the heather uplands are a semi-natural habitat that was originally created for grouse shooting. As the general public becomes increasingly detached from nature and field sports, so the demand for this habitat has waned further north. Three-quarters of the world's heather moorland is in the UK, but we have presided over the loss of almost a quarter of our heathery habitat in the last 50 years as we plough it up and plant forestry monocultures, dig out the peat, or over-graze it. The heather uplands also probably face a fairly bleak longer-term future because of climate change, being especially vulnerable habitat in that regard. Despite this negativity, we are some way off these situations, and there is ample opportunity for the low-impact sport of falconry to contribute to the maintenance of grouse moors, as long as we maintain a positive profile of ourselves among moorland lairds and keepers. If there is a huntable head of grouse after a bit of shooting, then winter grouse hawking parties might also allow a moor and cottage some extra income at a time when things are otherwise quiet. Hawking grouse in the uplands is hard work on many levels, but the rewards are great if you can crack it. For me, the uplands remain one of the last wildernesses in the UK where you might genuinely catch a grouse that had never seen a sign of human activity before your dog appeared over the ridge. 🦅



NAMAQUA SANDGROUSE WITH A FALCON

By A. Muller

It is midwinter in the Western Free State; the season has dampened the spirit of the veldt and all the living things in it. Thus the silence that surrounds me, it is as if all living things are resting after the busy summer and are now dreading the cold night that approaches from the east. An energetic rouse from a hooded falcon on the cadge disturbs the silence for a few seconds and holds promise to me of the events that will shortly follow.

Then the familiar but faint sound cuts through the silence of the cold winter afternoon. A high pitched "...too koo hoo..." of Namaqua Sandgrouse is repeated at five second intervals and is getting clearer on every repetition. The sound puts Julius, my English pointer in an excited pointer tremble that gets amplified to a vibrating sound by the load box of the Land Cruiser, so much so that I find it hard to pinpoint the direction of the sandgrouse. I lay my hand on his back to quite the noise while my smile breaks as I look into his frowning face and worried eyes. "Yes Julius this is serious stuff but not that serious" I think to myself. Meanwhile I become aware of an anxiety, restlessness and excitement in me, which I can best describe as "sandgrouse fever". After four seasons of flying them I still get this feeling every time I see or hear a sandgrouse. "I'm the one with the problem, not Julius he is a bird dog, he was bred to be excited about gamebirds ..."

I mutter as my eyes peer into the sky in the direction of the now crystal clear sound. Then I see them, a small group, less than ten approaching at a height of about 400 feet with their distinctive small profile, straight flight style and non-stop, motor-like wing-beat.

They are too high they won't land in the fallow field behind me I think to myself, worrying for daylight is fading. I watch them fly by and just as my worry was about to turn into reality they set their wings and go into steep descent. At about 20 feet above the ground they leveled off, turned the motors back on to fly a wide circle and alight, in their characteristic chopper-like style, about 200 meters from my position, disappearing in the sea of stubble. It doesn't get any better than this.

I keep my gaze fixed on the landing spot and make a mental note of the estimated distance they landed from me. Still looking I pull a five meter line in the sand with my boot in the direction of my gaze. I check for something recognizable in the stubble, and mentally mark a piece of stubble standing upright close by the grouse's position. Checking again and again for flying alone I have to make double sure of the sandgrouse's position to produce a timely flush or any flush at all.

I turn my attention to the hooded falcon on the back of the Land Cruiser. Transmitter on, jesses loose, hood off - all happens in the matter of a minute. I go to the other side of



the vehicle to cast off in the opposite direction of the grouse to prevent a premature flush should the falcon fly straight in their direction at low altitude.

On my outstretched arm sits an eyass African peregrine tiercel, breast feathers quivering from muscles readying for the flight and eyes gazing across the field looking for opportunity. A mute and good rouse completes the ceremony. Wings already open the falcon glances towards my face with indignant eyes that says; "who the hell are you?..." - off he goes. "Vlieg bliksem..." I mutter and take position on the line I draw in the sand with my boot to get the direction of the sandgrouse. With Julius at heel I slowly set of towards the sandgrouse, sure of my direction, distance and beacons that will enable me to find them.

Halfway to the grouse the falcon has climbed to a respectable height of about 600 feet, I proceed and feel my tension and excitement increasing with every step I take. Fifty meters to go and I check on the falcon again. Where is he? Is he after some check? Julius heel!! A sigh of relief as I spot him almost directly above at about a thousand feet. Without caution I walk forward for the falcon is in position. Twenty meters to go and I check on the falcon again, his position is perfect; not directly overhead but to my left at a seventy degree angle. Not willing



to let another second go by and leave this setup to chance, I rush forward shouting and clapping hands. Nothing happens. Where did they go?! I wheel around to check my distance from the vehicle and spot Julius rock solid on point 10 meters behind and 5 meters from my tracks. Without hesitation I rush in again - an explosion of wings and a couple of sandgrouse take to the air. I let out a barbaric falconers' cry, which has been brewing in my chest all afternoon since I heard the first sandgrouse - a diagnostic symptom of 'sandgrouse fever'. The sandgrouse leave; the first 30 meters clumsy but as soon as their bodies become horizontal, their small wings and big motors start working for them. I turn my eyes skyward and meet the tiercel halfway down, stooping, aligning, stooping, and adjusting and then leveling off with a hissing sound, 60 meters behind the fleeing sandgrouse now about 200 meters away from me. The gap is closed in an instant and all detail disappears in a flurry of wings, then the ripping sound of high speed contact between sandgrouse and falcon. With held breath I see my tiercel pull up with a sandgrouse in his talons but before my breath can be expressed into a victory cry, the sandgrouse shrugs loose and the tail-chase is on. I scream out of frustration for I know the sandgrouse is gone. Although evidently hurt by the bind, the sandgrouse manage to stay ahead of the falcon for as far as my eyes can follow in the fading light.

With telemetry out and working for a while I see the tiercel returning low over the ground and alight close by. As I get to him I see the look in his eyes has changed from proud and indignant to perplexed and insecure. How do I build on this? How can I reward him for his great effort? Frustrated I toss an opened rock pigeon carcass before him to feed. As I sit and watch my tiercel feed, I relive the drama in my mind. Slowly I feel the frustration and tension, give way to contentment and bliss. I realize; "It is not about 'the kill'". 🦅



Jim Willmarth

Even though Jim and I were both from New Mexico we met first at the 1966 Centerville, South Dakota NAFA Meet. It was the first meet for both of us. He then visited me in 1967 in Tucson, Arizona where I was in graduate school; I recall that he was flying a prairie at the time. He had more falconry experience than I had then.

We stayed connected sporadically through the years when he began working for The Peregrine Fund. Tony Crosswell really reunited us when Tony lived in New Mexico for a couple of years and through our common interest in red setters, given to us by Tony.

Jim was a falconers' falconer and conservationist. He was gifted, and because he kept his birds so long, he understood the relationship as well as anyone. Jim was known for his tenacity. When Bill Burnham, President of The Peregrine Fund, had tough jobs to do in the field, he sent Jim: to build raptor facilities in remote locations in Pakistan and Hawaii, to trap gyrs with others in Greenland, to be one of the experienced field biologists at Vermillion Cliffs. He was a gifted photographer and cinematographer.

I called Jim from my cell phone driving between Santa Rosa and Fort Sumner (in New Mexico) last December. We spoke of duck hawking; he described every duck pond and memorable flights along that stretch of the road. I told him how many ducks were on each pond ready for him to slip his hybrid. He was delighted. It was our last meaningful conversation.

Some things never change, but now Jim is in our memory.

Frank M. Bond

In the following pages we celebrate the life of a quietly unassuming man who was remarkable in his achievements and left his impression on everyone whose lives he touched. He leaves a lasting legacy not only with falconers worldwide but those whose lives he entered but for a brief moment, in his tireless work and education to the public in his role with the Peregrine Fund.

Words by Bill Heiarich and friends

Jim got involved in falconry in 1955. He began working with The Peregrine Fund in 1980. Little did he know that he was about to take his life with raptors in a new direction. Jim started at the most difficult Peregrine hack site, named on the map Death Canyon, in Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming. Jim showed up fresh from New Mexico in street shoes. After a two-hour hike straight up the mountain, Jim's shoes were literally falling off of his feet. The crew planned to set up another camp and Jim volunteered to do that as well, even though he was by now half barefooted. Everyone learned a lot about Jim at that moment. He did a tremendous job that summer and became part of the Peregrine Fund family at once.

In 1984, Jim Weaver called on Jim to help construct The Peregrine Fund's new breeding facility in Boise, Idaho. Jim put his construction talent to work and performed flawlessly as usual. As the Peregrine release work geared up, Jim worked as a release assistant for 11 years until The Peregrine Fund finished releasing Peregrines in 1997. All of the releases took place during the spring and summer months. During the off-season Jim had other jobs and pursued the sport of falconry. Jim's close friend Anthony Crosswell from England wrote a few words about the time they spent together hawking:

"We bought and shared a house together in Albuquerque in 1990 and lived together for that season hawking all over the Midwest out of a trailer. We trapped my Prairie, flew it along with our Peregrines and Jim's hybrid, Gremlin. The prairie's first kill was a drake mallard (on its 9th day!) at the Rio Puerco where Jim unhesitatingly waded the stream up to his chest at minus ten degrees! This soft Englishman looked for a less challenging crossing. Jim was dedicated to restoration of the peregrine and the work of the Peregrine Fund and showed me pictures of himself hanging from a helicopter installing a precarious hack box on a high cliff doing hack site work. It was a great time with such a close friend.

Jim Willmarth was a falconer, the most accomplished and creative that I ever knew - he had an instinctive understanding of his hawks. He knew how to act, always stood at the beginning and if passion is about action then Jim simply got on with whatever it took - he touched the hearts of people he met. Without fanfare he made practical the quintessential falconer conservationist whose life made a difference to us all. As passion waxed and waned in its intensity his commitment never faltered, fanning the flames of his fire and purpose enabling and inspiring those around him. How fortunate I have been to have this man as my friend."

In 1993, The Peregrine Fund again hired Jim to go to Hawaii

to build a state-of-the-art outdoor aviary to house the endangered Alala, better known as the Hawaiian crow. This was the beginning of Jim's world travel experiences. Peter Harrity wrote:

"I have fond memories of Jim when we built the 'alala aviary. My first memory relates to my predicament regarding its construction. Because of the general fear of avian malaria, pox, feral cats, and mongoose and rat predation, no one wanted to release the 'alala fledglings directly to the wild. The concept was to release them into a large aviary constructed in their habitat including trees and vegetation that the crows could learn about, yet be totally confined and protected. I had selected a large copse of trees, some quite high to build the aviary around. When I returned to Boise, I spoke with Bill Burnham and he asked me the one question that I was struggling to answer. "Who do you have in mind to help you build the aviary?" I admitted that no one came to mind. Bill suggested Jim Willmarth. My eyes lit up. I did not think he would be available but thought Jim was the perfect person. When Jim agreed to build the aviary with me I felt a huge burden lifted.

I met him at the Kona airport and drove him to our rental house which was built in true Hawaiian fashion, with lots of screened windows to allow the tropical breezes to blow through the house. We had a ground level room, all screened windows and gaps in the walls which allowed giant 3 - 4" diameter spiders to enter the rooms. Jim was freaked out by these menacing-looking but rather benign spiders. One night Jim told me that he awoke because he felt someone looking at him. He turned his head toward the wall and spotted a huge cane spider inches away from his face, staring at him. Jim immediately got up and stuffed a sock into the gap in the wall where the spider disappeared into. Later that night I was startled awake by Jim's scream. That very spider had come out the wall in another location and ran right across Jim's face. Jim was at war with those spiders the rest of his time in Hawaii.

We slept in a construction trailer that we had hauled up the mountain behind a bulldozer. We took turns walking up the road and making sure the roadside branches did not puncture the trailer's shell. It took nine hours to go five miles. The trailer was at 5,600' elevation and unexpectedly cold. The first week of sleeping was rough in spite of our sleeping bags. Who knew Hawaii could be so cold.

We worked with USFWS biologists. No matter how many times they attempted to correct Jim, he always called them simply "Forest Service" (which irritated them to no end). Jim enjoyed that.

Jim worked tirelessly. We worked six to seven days a week but would drive down the steep lava road every Saturday at sunset and listen to Hawaiian music on the radio. Our





favorite song was “Aloha Friday”. We’d drive into Captain Cook to eat dinner at the Hong Kong Chop Suey restaurant. We’d shower and then be ready to head mauka the next day. Sunday mornings we’d eat a pancake breakfast at the Aloha Theater cafe in Kainaliu.

Jim saved me a lot of headaches because of his building experience. He always knew the correct way to tackle a construction problem. There was no better person for that role than Jim. When I drove him to the airport for his return to Idaho, it was bittersweet. We had accomplished the single most important task of completing the construction of the large aviary. Jim also impressed the private landowner family where we did the work, impressed USF&WS folks, and set the foundation that allowed the Peregrine Fund to play an important role in establishing the Endangered Species restoration programs in Hawaii. I have very, very fond memories of working, laughing, and experiencing Hawaii with Jim Willmarth.”

In 2000, Bill Heinrich contacted Jim to help construct a new California condor holding pen above the Vermilion Cliffs, Arizona. Jim and Bill slept under the stars and often discussed their experiences together late into the night. The release pen is still in use.

Later that year, Jim was asked to help work on the Cape Verde Red kite project where Peregrine biologists needed help trapping kites for genetic analysis. Our colleague Simon Thomsett wrote:

“Dear old Jim, Here’s an old recollection:

Jim spent a few months in the remote and windswept archipelago of Cape Verde, off the West African coast. His mission, to catch the rare and elusive Cape Verde Red Kite. This required careful observations of their habits and enduring patience. Waking long before dawn across the Saharan-like desert to wait days fruitlessly staring at a distant and hidden bow net, to be thwarted in the end by a faulty transmitter. In the shade of thorn tree he spent the timeless hours relating the virtues of the passage Prairie Falcon over all others, and spoke of his soft spot for his ancient gyrkin hybrid, Gremlin. He did in the end catch his kites by tying tiny nooses on locusts and setting them on the tips of branches. It was a genius idea born of innovation spent during a lifetime living with his birds. “

Between 2001 and 2003, Jim lived in Portland, Oregon. He purchased an old house in a quiet neighborhood. The house was in shambles. Jim completely rebuilt it from scratch, including the entire foundation. He turned it into a beautiful home. When he wasn’t working on the house he attended a motion picture film directors program at the university. Jim

had a passion for cameras and photography. The Peregrine Fund has often used Jim’s photos in publications, including ones he took at the Death Canyon hack site. In 2003, Bill Heinrich saw his totally new, remodeled house. Jim had put it on the market and was ready to move on. He told Bill that, maybe, he was ready to get a full-time job that offered health insurance. That was great news for The Peregrine Fund. Bill immediately asked him if he would be interested in working full time with the California condor release project in Arizona. Jim agreed, but first there was another mission. Peregrine Fund scientists were involved with the Asian vulture crisis and had just discovered that a pharmaceutical drug, diclofenac, was responsible for killing thousands of vultures. There was an urgent need to build holding facilities in Pakistan. Jim was again selected. Veterinarian Dr. Martin Gilbert, who played a major role in making the discovery, wrote the following:

“I was fortunate to spend time with Jim during a critical juncture in the story of vultures in Pakistan. The discovery that diclofenac was responsible for the death of vultures all over the Indian subcontinent was still fresh. Our elation at the finding was tempered as we watched whole colonies wink out to extinction one after the other. Jim arrived in Pakistan at a turbulent time, as we tried in desperation to rescue a founder population of vultures to give the species a new hope through a captive restoration program. Politics and time conspired against us, but throughout it all Jim was a rock of reliability, turning a dry wasteland into holding aviaries fit to house 100 vultures within a matter of weeks. Jim combined the good humor and flexibility that made daunting tasks possible, and from a personal perspective he was a huge support at a time that was very difficult. He was a good man, and will be sorely missed.”

After Jim returned from Pakistan, he went to Arizona where he spent the next four years, 2004 through 2007, working with Chris Parish and the field crew releasing endangered California Condors at the Vermilion Cliffs. Chris Parish wrote the following:

“How do you take a guy like Jim, with all of his past experiences, to just settle in to working as a field biologist collecting data in a day to day manner on a species as different from falcons as the California condor? Well, let me tell you! It wasn’t long after Jim arrived that I saw that we had something special. Despite the fact that Jim had been working in the field longer than many of our crew had been eating solid foods, he melted into the fabric of the red-rock desert land of the condor. It wasn’t so much that he fit in, but we all fell



in around him, his stories of old, and the easy way about him that left nothing too big, too hard, or impossible in the future that lay before us. Nothing stopped this man of steel, yet to the inexperienced or assuming eye, you wouldn't know his tensile strength. When called to task, look out, because as long as ol' Jim was there we could handle anything. As with most experiences and relationships, one never seems to know

when you are amidst some of the best times of your life, but Jim always seemed to exude an understanding that every day was one of those days."

During Jim's time in Arizona, he was asked to work in Greenland at the request of Peregrine Fund president Dr. Bill Burnham. Bill Heinrich, Cal Sandfort, and Kurt Burnham had

the good fortune of spending most of September and part of October of 2004 and 2005 with Jim in East Greenland. During that period, over 100 gyrfalcons were trapped. These were very special times as the close-knit group discovered the northern lights together while living in solitude. Their only company consisted of the migrating falcons, arctic foxes, ptarmigan, arctic hares, a few sled dogs along with the

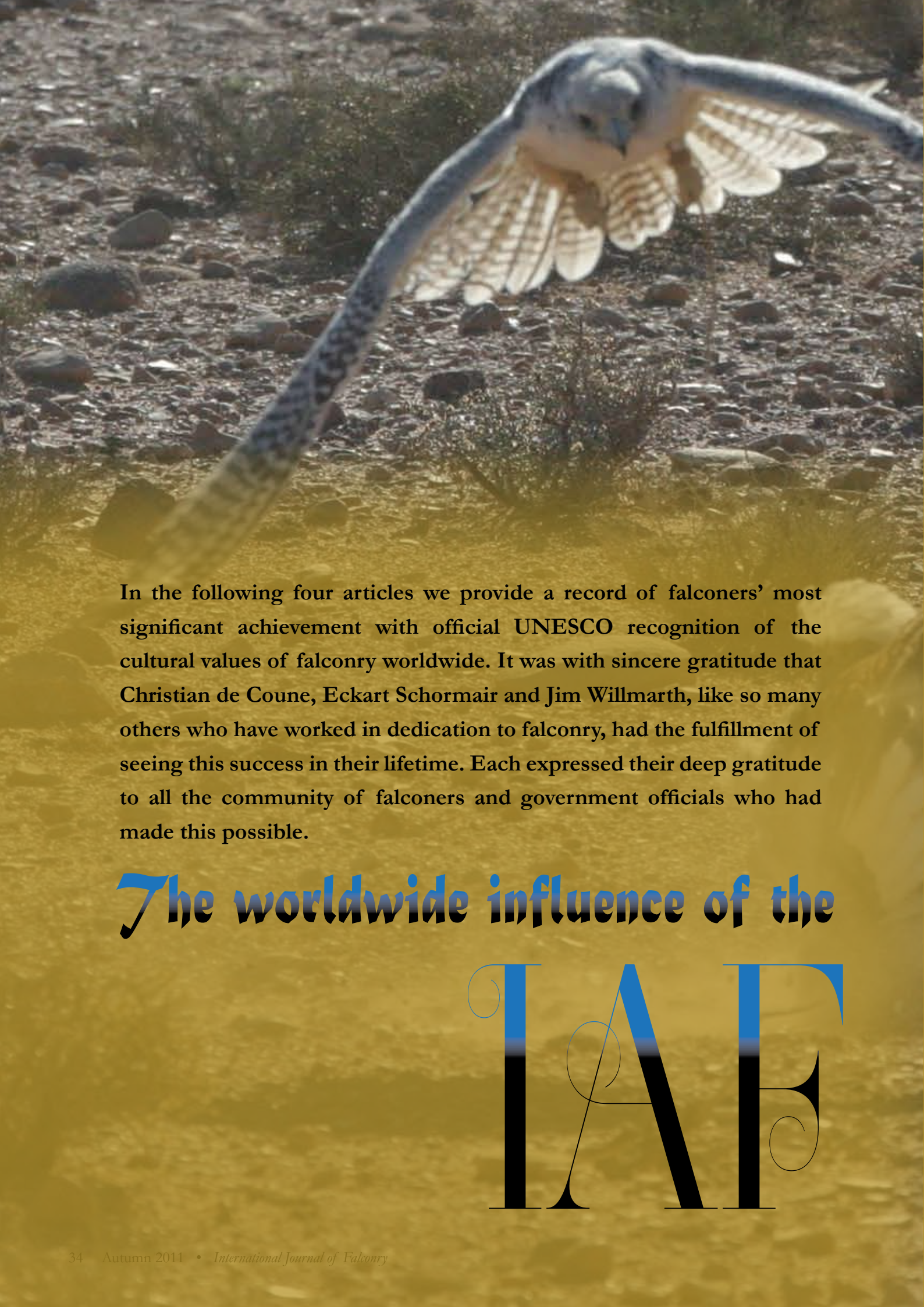
clusive polar bears that were never seen. During this time, we rediscovered just how strong Jim was both mentally and physically. There was always a tremendous amount of physical labor involved from carrying water, moving 55 gallon barrels of diesel fuel around, as well as jumping off and onto boats in the frigid arctic water to load and unload equipment. Jim always took care of his comrades first, without a thought about his own safety, and took on more than his share of the work. Life was always good when Jim was close by.

In 2007, The Peregrine Fund's current president Peter Jenny asked him to move to Boise, Idaho, and manage our education birds at the World Center for Birds of Prey. Jim was able to utilize his knowledge of falconry and put together flight demonstrations for the public. He worked with kestrels, peregrines, gyrfalcons, and his favorite Harpy eagle. Trish Nixon worked with Jim during this period and wrote the following:

"I wasn't lucky enough to work with Jim for decades, but during the four years that we worked together, he became my friend, my teacher, and my confidant. When I first talked with Jim, I felt that I'd known him all my life. I'd been working with our education birds for a decade when Jim joined the team. With his guidance, we developed more flight shows and I gained an immeasurable amount of knowledge from him in all aspects of falconry, husbandry and understanding raptors. Jim brightened my days, made me laugh, and listened in a way that made me feel comfortable discussing anything with him. We often sat in my office after finishing our work - discussing bird behavior, teasing one another about silly things we did, or talking about how odd both of us were as kids, interested in nothing but birds and wildlife. Jim was dedicated to taking care of our education birds and to demonstrating that raptors are beautiful, well-designed, vital birds that everyone should care about. I will always remember Jim as the sweet person who prompted a five-year-old boy to write a note thanking Jim for teaching him to "not be afraid of birds of prey." That same little boy, upon learning of Jim's illness, wrote, "I am so sorry you are sick. It makes me cry." We all feel that way. A fine, gentle man and steadfast friend has left us - and I, for one, am a better person for having known him and will miss him immensely."

Material items meant nothing to Jim, aside from a camera that could capture images from nature that he could share with others. His determination and work ethic were unmatched, setting a standard that inspires us still. When it came to building things, both large and small, Jim was gifted with a special genius.

Finally, it can be said that Jim was a hero to everyone who knew him, and he lived his full life as a free spirit. 🦅



In the following four articles we provide a record of falconers' most significant achievement with official UNESCO recognition of the cultural values of falconry worldwide. It was with sincere gratitude that Christian de Coune, Eckart Schormair and Jim Willmarth, like so many others who have worked in dedication to falconry, had the fulfillment of seeing this success in their lifetime. Each expressed their deep gratitude to all the community of falconers and government officials who had made this possible.

The worldwide influence of the

IAF

THE IAF: A UNESCO RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY NGO

By Frank M. Bond

Historically, UNESCO recognized certain culturally important historic sites and natural areas, all known for their importance to humanity. Then in 2003 many nations adopted the new UNESCO Convention to recognize important intangible cultural heritage of humanity. Initially the signatory nations (now more than 130) may have contemplated intangible cultural heritage such as dances, music, traditional art forms in need of safe-guarding by local societies for posterity. However, by 2005, a few people recognized that falconry might meet the criteria for UNESCO recognition.

In September 2005, the Government of the United Arab Emirates sponsored a symposium entitled, "Falconry: A World Heritage". The objectives were:

1. to exchange expertise, ideas and visions on Falconry as a World Heritage;
2. to focus on common issues, problems and solutions for falconry worldwide; and
3. to establish international working teams of experts to jointly prepare a submission to UNESCO for the recognition of falconry as a part of the World's cultural heritage.

The participants provided a global perspective on the current and historical status of falconry as a cultural heritage in its role as a hunting art, science, conservation, national customs, cultural traditions, and its evolution through time from generation to generation. The speakers who made presentation were: HE Majid al Mansouri, then Director of ERWDA and representative of the Emirates Falconers' Club; Jevgeni Shergalin, Estonia, biologist and researcher; Ali Yazdani, Iran; Nick Fox, Director, Falcon Research and founder of Falconry Heritage Trust; Teruo Morimoto, National Conference for Japanese Falconry; José Manuel Rodríguez-Villa, Spain, IAF Vice President and CIC's Falconry Commission; Frank Bond, USA, NAFA and IAF; Helen Macdonald, University of Cambridge, UK; Adrian Lombard, South Africa, SAFA; José Manuel Fradejas Rueda, University of Valladolid, Spain; Christian De Coune, former President, IAF; Carlos Bernabéu Gonzales, Spain, AECCA; Mohammed Nour Eddine Fatchi, Morocco; Thomas Richter, University of Neurtingen, Germany; Xiaode Ye, Chinese Academy of Science; Robert Kenward, IUCN, UK; Brig. Ahmed Mukhtar, Pakistan; Janos Toth, Hungary; Ata Eyberdiev, Falconers Club of Turkmenistan; Ata Annamamedov, Falconers Club of Turkmenistan; S. Kent Carnie, USA, The Archives of Falconry; and, Thomas Cade, USA, The Peregrine Fund.

Based on the breadth and depth of the presentations, the potential for a joint submission to UNESCO became imaginable. However, we recognized that the development of a submission could only be undertaken by the UAE, principally through ERWDA (now EAD-Environment Agency Abu Dhabi) and the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage, in the name of the Emirates Falconers' Club. No other organizations were considered as having the capacity

and resources to undertake such a massive submission.

Many of the participants at the 2005 Symposium worked nationally to prepare their nation's parts of the joint submission. The individual efforts were not done in the name of the IAF, but in the name of their respective cultural authorities or in some cases, their national or regional falconry organizations. The result, of course, was thrilling when the Joint Submission was completed and filed with UNESCO in 2009 and 2010, culminating with falconry recognized as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity on November 16, 2010 in Nairobi.

Separately, I filed the IAF's application on April 21, 2008 with UNESCO to become recognized as an international advisory non-governmental organization. The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage attaches great importance to the role of advisory NGOs, so it seemed appropriate for the IAF to seek this special accreditation.

I prepared the IAF's application pursuant to the criteria set forth in the Decisions Adopted by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Second Session, Tokyo, September 2007. The criteria were specific and extensive, thus limiting the potential for many NGOs to be accepted. For the application, I set out the IAF's corporate status as an international non-profit corporation, recognized under the Laws of the Kingdom of Belgium. I was able to point directly to the objectives and goals in the IAF Constitution, which include both "tradition and culture." The criteria included demonstration that the NGO is truly international. At the time, I noted the 48 countries (now 50) that the IAF represented, plus an additional 12 countries with which we had sporadic contact. From the majority of our Member Organizations, we have active participation principally during our annual general meetings. As the IAF has been in existence since 1967, we clearly met the criterion of having existed for at least four years.

While an international NGO must be independent from any national submission for recognition, it must still demonstrate a link to preserving cultural heritage through participation in international events. I described the IAF's historic and ongoing participation in international meetings of CITES, IUCN (where the IAF is the only falconry organization member), the Bern and Bonn Conventions, intervention in

the EU, nationally within nations, to promote and perpetuate falconry. The IAF has formal and informal association with the CIC, FACE, and the Raptor Research Foundation. Either as an organization or by individual leaders, the IAF has participated in activities of The Archives of Falconry (USA) and the Falconry Heritage Trust (UK). In November 2006, the entire Council of Delegates, plus many more guests, flew to Boise, Idaho for a special visit to The Archives of Falconry. The IAF participated in the first Festival of Falconry in 2007 held in the United Kingdom.

Finally, I included a sampling of the historical IAF Newsletters and all of the very professionally prepared, glossy newsletters edited by Tony Crosswell. Finally, I described the IAF's website.

In June 2008, the EAD hosted another UNESCO workshop in Paris. It was ably organized by Nick Fox's company, International Wildlife Consultants, the professional organization doing much of the work to support and assist the EAD and ADACH in preparing the Joint Submission. The workshop coincided with UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee meeting in Paris. The UAE hosted a reception for the delegates to the UNESCO meeting at its Embassy. There, I met Dr. Gadi G.Y. Mgomezulu, Director of the UNESCO Division of Cultural Objects and Intangible Heritage; I had met him before at an event in Abu Dhabi the previous year. Because I received no acknowledgement of receipt of the IAF's application on April 21, 2008, I resubmitted it directly to Dr. Mgomezulu on June 20, 2008.

Later on November 28, 2008 Ms. Cécile Duvelle, Chief, Section of Intangible Cultural Heritage, wrote to inform the IAF that our request for accreditation would be recommended by the Intergovernmental Committee to the General Assembly of the States Parties scheduled for June 2010. This decision was made in November at the meeting in Istanbul, Turkey. Bohumil Straka attended that meeting, so he was able to inform us that we had jumped one more hurdle for IAF recognition.

For assistance with the Joint Submission, Bohumil Straka and Gary Timbrell prepared a booklet entitled, "Falconry Heritage is Everywhere." It describes the extent of falconry heritage, in an abbreviated form, in many nations throughout the world, including nations which are not even signatories to the UNESCO Convention. On the cover, Bohumil printed innocuously, "IAF is an advisor to the UNESCO ICH Comm." The Joint Submission included this publication when it was filed in September 2009.

On November 19, 2009, I received a terse letter from Ms. Duvelle warning me that the IAF must not use "Falconry Heritage is Everywhere" with the front cover notation until it had been accredited. I responded to her immediately that we would not distribute it further. Nevertheless, for me it was recognition by her of the indirect role the IAF was playing

to support the efforts of all the people preparing the Joint Submission.

After the meeting of the States Parties in Paris in June 2010, when I had not received notice of accreditation, I inquired of Ms. Duvelle in July about our status. The next day, July 15, I received a short notice from Josiane Poivre, ICH-NGO Accreditation, that the IAF was accredited by the Third General Assembly. The decision was confirmed formally on September 6, 2010 with a formal letter from Ms. Duvelle to the IAF, as a newly accredited UNESCO international advisory NGO. Obviously, this was a notable achievement for the IAF, and for the falconry community around the world. This was a harbinger for the successful acceptance of the Joint Submission by the participating nations. And, of course, it was when falconry was recognized as an intangible cultural heritage on November 16, 2010, a date for falconers to remember forever.

With UNESCO recognition of the IAF as an advisory NGO, the IAF must continue to assist in preserving falconry as an intangible cultural heritage. Our ongoing responsibility will be reevaluated every four years. Ms. Duvelle communicated in her letter of September 6, 2010, that, "In accordance with paragraph 94 of the Operational Directives, 'The Committee reviews the contribution and the commitment of the advisory organization, and its relations with it, every four years following accreditation, taking into account the perspective of the non-governmental organization concerned.' Thus, the first review will be conducted in 2014. I encourage you, therefore, to inform us regularly of your activities in the field of intangible cultural heritage." This ongoing commitment obligates the IAF to report periodically to maintain its advisory status. I plan to write an annual report to UNESCO in September of each year, the formal date of receipt of our accreditation, to recount the IAF's activities during the prior year. I will encourage my successor as president to do the same. Part of our participation may be more direct with UNESCO, because the Intergovernmental Committee may ask a group appointed by the IAF to review future submissions from nations seeking recognition of falconry as an intangible cultural heritage. Also, the IAF will be invited to attend all future Intergovernmental Committee meetings and General Assemblies of the States Parties. The future leadership of the IAF will need to stay connected to the UNESCO process to maximize our participation and to ensure that we fulfill future requirements. In this role, I am sure as more nations gain recognition, the IAF will continue to be able to assist more directly with future submissions so it can assume an advisory status for national cultural authorities.

This is the beginning; the future recognition of falconry as an intangible cultural heritage promises to be even more satisfying. 🦅

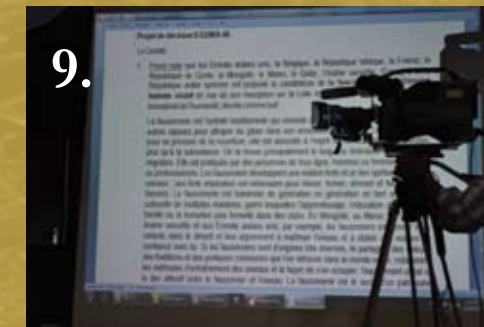




UNESCO SESSION, NAIROBI, KENYA, 16 NOVEMBER 2010

*Photo report by Bohumil Straka,
Vice President*

These photos show the Inscription Falconry as the largest nomination in history of UNESCO world heritage list. Falconry is also one of the oldest cultural elements inscribed, it is even older than the Egyptian pyramids. Eleven countries made up the largest multinational nomination: Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Korea, Mongolia, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Syria and the United Arab Emirates. From total number of 147 nominations in 2010 from all over the world, only two of them were multinational and only 46 nominations were approved for the final UNESCO list inscription.



- 7 - 18:13 The presentation of the Falconry clearly demonstrated to the delegates that transmission of this cultural heritage to the new generation is provided, which is essential condition for inscription of any cultural element in the UNESCO list.
- 8 - 18:14 The Subsidiary body is presenting decision draft
- 9 - 18:14 The presentation is also presented simultaneously in French language
- 10 - 18:17 His Excellency Mohammed Khalaf Al-Mazrouei - Director General Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) is defending the multinational nomination on behalf of all 11 nominating countries.
- 11 - 18:18 local Nairobi time, short tension in the hall and the UNESCO delegates approve Falconry for inscription in the list of the world cultural heritage.
- 12 - 18:19 a big applause...
- 13 - 18:19 first spontaneous congratulations
- 14 - 18:19 due to general emotions in the hall, chairman had to tolerate unexpected 10 min. break, while all previous inscriptions continuously followed each other without any emotional gaps.
- 15 - 18:22 After several minutes, congratulations are still going on
- 16 - 18:22 Never ending congratulations...

Falconry:

a living cultural heritage, recognised by UNESCO

A VIEW FROM BEHIND THE SCENES WITH DR NICK FOX

What is it that gives us our identity – as individuals, or as a nation?

Is it really the fancy watch, the car parked outside, or the new iconic tower buildings?

Or is it something less definable, deeper?

Buildings are important, for sure. UNESCO recognises this by designating important structures, such as the Pyramids, as World Heritage Sites. Of course, mankind must look after them, they are a historical legacy that we must cherish, but at the end of the day, they are dead materials.

Nations began to realise that there is more to our heritage than just archaeological sites and buildings. Together at UNESCO they came up with the term ‘intangible cultural heritage’ to cover oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge of nature, traditional craftsmanship and so on. These are the kinds of things that really give us our identity, that make us what we are. They are almost indefinable – intangible – and yet without them we would all just be ‘grey men in suits’.

UNESCO first began the process by recognizing ‘Masterpieces of Intangible Cultural Heritage’ in the 1990s. The late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan was quick to appreciate the importance of this and awarded the Sheikh Zayed Prize for Masterpieces of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Sheikh Zayed’s life bridged the critical developmental period of Abu Dhabi from the desert lifestyle to the urbanised modern nation that Abu Dhabi is fast becoming. He wanted good things for his people – good health, a green environment, and an education preparing them to take their place in a modern world. But he also remembered his background, and he wanted his children never to lose their roots.

A new Convention

In 2003, UNESCO created a new Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage as a legally binding instrument on signatory states. Countries queued up to join and UAE was one of the original signatories. Now, 134 nations have signed up.

Insert picture from ... CIC new logo colour

Prof Dr Monika Reiterer proposed to CIC in 2005 that Falconry could be a suitable candidate for this Convention and the proposal was tabled by the IAF at its AGM in Abu Dhabi. The Emirates Falconers Club offered to lead the process.

When a state signs the Convention, its first task is to create



Dr Nick Fox, HE Mohd Khalaf, Dr Awad Ali Saleh and Dr Sulayman Khalaf at the Inscription of Falconry in Nairobi.

an Inventory List of all the elements of ICH in its culture. This task was undertaken by ADACH under the guidance of its Director General, HE Mohamed Khalaf Al Mazrouie. Of course, Falconry was the first to be considered.

One then has to prepare a submission to UNESCO, carefully describing the element in film and in writing, and providing an Action Plan to safeguard it. Having worked now on Falconry issues for HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed and for the Environment Agency for 22 years under the watchful eye of HE Mohammed Al Bowardi, I was designated to help prepare the Falconry file. Then followed six years of meetings, conferences and events.

When I started, I thought heritage was all about the past. But actually it is about the future: how do we pass the baton on to the next generation? Some things are gone for ever, victims of modernisation and economics. For example, we will never see pearl-diving again in the UAE, not as it was done in the old traditional way. Perhaps that is no bad thing, it was after all a tough life. But Falconry is alive and well and not only is it worth keeping in its own right, it is also an important way of keeping future generations in touch with the simpler desert life, and that is what Sheikh Zayed was getting at.

Teamwork

So we formed a team to create the UNESCO Falconry

submission. ADACH supplied scholars such as Dr Nasser Al-Hmiri, Dr Sulayman Khalaf and Dr Ismail Ali Al-Fihail who researched falconry in the UAE. Dr Awad Ali Saleh has been a tireless diplomat, persuading and cajoling representatives at governmental level to support and join UAE. He even chaired the entire UNESCO conference when Abu Dhabi was host in 2009.

My task was to approach the Falconers of about 65 nations who practice falconry. Not all of these had signed the Convention, and still fewer had put it on their Inventory List. We had to encourage them to do this, and help them prepare submissions. This required endless workshops and meetings, all of them underpinned by Abu Dhabi. Most of them could not comply with all the criteria but a dozen or so were left in the hunt by the time we were ready to submit. Finally eleven countries were ready: UAE, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Mongolia, Morocco, Qatar, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Spain and Syria. They represented a good geographic and cultural spread. In addition we have seven more countries: Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Slovakia, Turkey, Tunisia and the Netherlands now also hoping to join us in the next year or so.

We gathered together the Falconry nations at the First International Festival of Falconry in UK in 2007. It was strongly supported by Abu Dhabi who took a bold step in appearing abroad. HH Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoun represented UAE. The Second International Festival was held in UK in 2009. Prince Andrew, Duke of York joined HH Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoun and appeared before 53 nations; it became the



Six years of UNESCO meetings: Nick’s dog tags from UNESCO meetings.

Olympic Games of Falconry. We also prepared a book on international Falconry and made a film to fulfil UNESCO’s requirements.

Success at last!

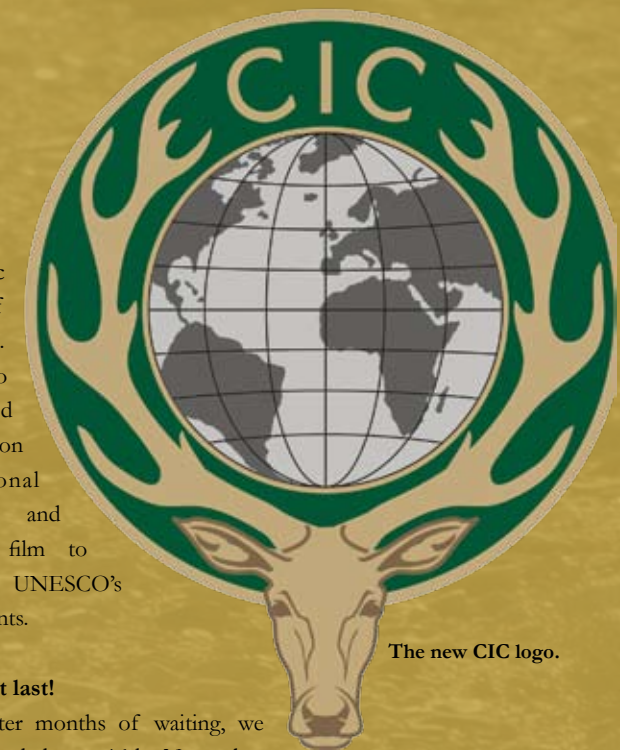
Finally, after months of waiting, we were rewarded on 16th November 2010 at the UNESCO Conference in Nairobi with the announcement that our submission was successful. Falconry has been officially inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the World. The Conference had to be suspended for ten minutes while we all cheered and clapped!

The submission, the largest multi-national submission ever made under this Convention, was singled out for special praise by UNESCO: as ‘an outstanding example of co-operation between States and the exemplary nature of the information provided was underlined’. Not only was it a milestone in Falconry’s history, it was a landmark in the history of the UNESCO Convention too.

Is it all over, or has it just begun?

Do not make the mistake of thinking this is just a rubber stamp, a pat on the back. Now the real work starts! The whole point of the exercise is that each country has an action plan to safeguard Falconry for the future – to sustain a ‘living heritage’. We have to help some of these countries. The falconers of Morocco are getting on in years and have lost most of their traditional hawking grounds to agriculture. South Korea too just has a few old people still with knowledge and skills of the Korean traditions. And we have to help future nations to join.

In December 2011, to celebrate the UNESCO achievement, the week-long Third International Festival of Falconry will be hosted by Abu Dhabi at Jahili Fort in Al Ain. We hope to see falconers from 65 nations together with delegates from UNESCO. There will be a three day conference to discuss Falconry issues. When you see all those Falconers in their national dress, with their hawks and falcons, gathered together in the brotherhood of Falconry, sharing a common passion, you can understand how Falconry is a force for world peace and cross-cultural understanding. 🦅



The new CIC logo.

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

By Patrick Morel

At its 5th Intergovernmental Committee conference held 15 - 19 November 2010 in Nairobi, Kenya UNESCO announced that Falconry, a living human heritage has been inscribed to the ‘Representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity’ following a multinational application of 11 countries (Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Mongolia, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, Republic of Syria and the United Arab Emirates).

What is Intangible Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage is not limited to material manifestations, such as monuments and objects that have been preserved over time. This notion also encompasses living expressions and the traditions that countless groups and communities worldwide have inherited from their ancestors and transmit to their descendants, in most cases orally.

Many years of research undertaken by UNESCO on the functions and values of cultural expressions and practices have opened the door to new approaches to the understanding, protection and respect of the cultural heritage of humanity. This living heritage, known as intangible, provides each bearer of such expressions a sense of identity and continuity, insofar as he or she takes ownership of them and constantly recreates them.

As a driving force of cultural diversity, living heritage is very fragile. In recent years, it has received international recognition and its safeguarding has become one of the priorities of international cooperation thanks to UNESCO’s leading role in the adoption of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The new Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO replacing a previous convention classifying Masterpieces of Intangible Heritage adopted in the early nineties was adopted by the General Assembly in Paris on 17 October 2003 and came into force on 20 April 2006 after 30 states had ratified it. The Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage validates all practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills - and the associated instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces - that communities, groups and individuals regard as part of their intangible cultural heritage

The saga of the submission

Several people could probably claim ‘fatherhood’ of the idea of a recognition of falconry as our cultural heritage. Nevertheless, it seems that the current idea arose when survival of falconry was questioned in some European countries, probably first in Belgium, then in the Netherlands and Germany.

In 1994, discussions on a revision of the Hunting Law of 1882 in Belgium (Walloon Region) brought concern for traditional methods of hunting: hunting with hounds, trapping of songbirds and ... falconry. Hunting with hounds was especially contested by the greens and lead to discussion in the Parliament about a possible ban of all traditional methods of hunting. During the debate, Members of the Walloon Parliament argued that hunting with hounds was part of our cultural heritage. Unfortunately, hunting with hounds was banned in the Walloon Region on 14.07.1994 with a transitional period of 5 years for the ‘equipages’ still active and legally approved before 1 Jan 1994.

Falconry was saved but for how long?

After trapping of songbirds and hunting with hounds was banned, which would be the next target?

Patrick Morel, then Secretary of the IAF, discovering the existence of a 1988 UNESCO Convention classifying Masterpieces of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, wrote an article, in 1995 IAF’s Newsletter, about the concern for ban of traditional hunting methods and the pressure on falconry in several European countries. Inspired by the minutes of the Walloon Parliament, he thought that claiming falconry as a part of our culture would be an excellent argument for the preservation of our art. He expressed the possibility of



Patrick Morel.

considering a recognition by UNESCO of falconry as an art belonging to our cultural heritage as a safeguard for the future. Christian de Coune, at that time president of the IAF, brought the subject up at the 1995 AGM but without an action plan except a mention in the minutes.

In 1998, in the Netherlands, a red-green government worked on a reform of the Hunting Act. The Dutch government abolished the Hunting Act altogether and replaced it by the ‘Fauna and Flora Act’. Hunting was severely limited and regulated but falconry remained unscathed and hawking continued to be allowed but on a limited basis licensing system with the two ‘traditional’ falconry birds: Peregrine falcon and Goshawk. The Dutch Parliament recognized the centuries-old cultural tradition of falconry in the Netherlands and appraised its continuation as a naturally selective form of hunting.

In Germany also, concerns about the future of falconry arose when in 1998 the federal elections brought a red-green government with ‘green’ environment and agriculture ministers and at the same time a request from nature and environmental organizations for a reform of the Federal Hunting Act (BJG) including a ban on falconry despite one of the most successful nature conservation projects success: the captive breeding and reintroduction of peregrine falcons by falconers.

Due to this continuous rejection of the merits of falconry in Germany, the CIC Falconry Commission, lead by German falconer Peter Sapara, decided to explore new ways to secure falconry for the future, not only at national level, but also at supranational level.

For the CIC Falconry Commission, the different signs in neighbouring countries asserted that the cultural aspect of falconry had to be moved to the forefront of public awareness to get the appropriate cultural recognition the tradition of falconry deserved. The question was how to proceed with it?

In a letter to the German UNESCO Commission in Bonn, the CIC Falconry Commission pointed out that falconry could be now considered as endangered, as the heritage of falconry was gradually disappearing. The response was encouraging. UNESCO had a convention listing “masterpieces of traditional intangible cultural heritage” into the framework of which traditional falconry would fit.

Austrian Prof Monika Reiterer wrote an article on the benefits for falconry of an UNESCO recognition in the Newsletter of the Austrian Falconers Club ‘Falkenblick’ in 2002. She offered the CIC to build up a file for a UNESCO submission but no agreement could be achieved for financial reasons.

On 17 October 2003 the UNESCO adopted a new ‘Convention

for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage.’

After a long work of persuasion by the VP of the IAF, Jose Manuel Rodriguez-Villa Matons, the Emirates Falconers Club (UAE) was accepted as member of the IAF. Arab falconry culture differs from Western culture and falconers are not used to group together in clubs or associations.

The CIC Falconry Commission, after approval of the Executive Committee, decided to go through the procedures of an application process for recognition of the intangible cultural heritage status of falconry. As the path was cleared, the FC took up contact with falconers all around the world in order to achieve the best possible application together.

The CIC Falconry Commission signed a MoU with the IAF. This union is in retrospect the first visible milestone on the path to recognition.

The IAF held its 35th General Assembly in Abu Dhabi from 14-19 September 2004 at the invitation of the Emirates Falconers Club of the United Arab Emirates. At this meeting, the President of the CIC, Dieter Schramm, presented to the nearly 100 delegates from around the world a project suggestion of recognition of falconry as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO. The response from the assembled delegates was enthusiastic. It was agreed that the realization of this idea would have tremendous importance for the future of falconry. During the meeting calls were made for an immediate UNESCO application to be drawn up as soon as the Convention would enter into force but some urged patience, arguing that the practice of falconry has a 3000-year history and more background information, historical material, including films, photos and legal documents was necessary to provide the basis for a successful application.

Jose Manuel Rodriguez-Villa Matons was elected as president of the CIC Falconry Commission in 2005.

The Wales based IWC Ltd lead by Nick Fox signed a professional services contract to provide professional staff and expertise on the preparation of a Joint multinational UNESCO Submission under the lead of the United Arab Emirates.

On February 15th 2005, Patrick Morel, president of the IAF, set up a Working Group under the leadership of two Chairmen, Jose Manuel Rodriguez-Villa Matons IAF Vice president and president of the CIC FC and Nick Fox, to coordinate and administer all national submissions, seek the cooperation of the world falconry community to participate in the process of recognition, to seek the collaboration of national museums and libraries, to contact the owners of significant falconry collections and to coordinate all budgetary matters, as necessary. The very active secretary and PR officer of the WG was Gary Timbrell.

Patrick Morel, JM Rodriguez-Villa Matons and Nick Fox went on 09 June 2005 to the UNESCO HQ in Paris to enquire about the feasibility of a submission.

A Newsletter detailing the procedures was published by the IAF on 14/06/2005.

A two days Symposium 'Falconry, a World Heritage' was organised in Abu Dhabi on 13-14 September 2005.

In October 2005, Patrick Morel suggested to recommend to UNESCO to use IAF as an Accredited Advisory NGO for the purposes of submissions on Falconry under Article 9 of this Convention.

A second Newsletter detailing the way to go with the UNESCO submissions was published by the IAF the 10/11/2005.

Patrick Morel, JM Rodriguez-Villa Matons and Nick Fox went to UNESCO HQ in Paris again on 22 March 2006 to meet Gadiy. Mgomezulu, Director of Division of Cultural Heritage of UNESCO to enquire about the procedures of a submission: submission had to be made by State parties but multinational submissions were possible. The first step was to inscribe falconry on the national Inventory Lists of State parties.

The new 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage ratified by 66 countries entered finally into force by April, 20 2006.

The first application for inscription on a national list was

made by Belgium (Communauté française de Belgique) on 25/05/2006.

It was to take another four years until the final breakthrough.

Numerous workshops, national and international meetings and conferences followed in both Abu Dhabi and Paris (26-29 June 2006), mainly supported and funded by the United Arab Emirates as it became clear that an application was only likely to succeed if multinational.

A Falconry Festival was organised in the UK (Reading) in July 2007 and in July 2009.

After several years of hard work, 12 countries inscribed Falconry on their national Inventory List : Belgium (French Community) 30/04/2009, Czech Republic 16/06/2009, Belgium (Flemish Community) 30/06/2009, United Arab Emirates 01/07/2009, Mongolia 05/07/2009, Spain 17/07/2009, France 20/07/2009, Syrian Arab Republic 27/07/2009, Slovakia 20/08/2009, Saudi Arabia 23/08/2009 and at not precise known dates (2009), the Republic of Korea and Morocco.

On 18 August 2009, 11 States made a multinational submission to UNESCO to include falconry in the "Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity".

After examining and evaluating the application, a unanimous positive recommendation was made by the Committee of Experts on 17 May 2010 at the UNESCO headquarters



in Paris and the inscription was officially approved by the delegates during the AGM on 16 November 2010 in Nairobi.

The Eurogroup of European Hunters organised in conjunction with FACE a celebration of the UNESCO recognition at the European Parliament on Jan 19th 2011 in Strasbourg (France).

Mrs Irina Bokova, General-Director of the UNESCO, in an official visit in Belgium, presented the Certificate of Inscription of Falconry as Intangible Cultural Heritage to Patrick Morel during a dinner hosted by the Minister-President of the French Community of Belgium in the Château de La Hulpe (Belgium) on February 15th 2011.

Conclusion:

From an idea originated in 1995, 15 years elapsed till the dream became reality thanks to a common effort of the whole falconry community. Disputed and, in some countries, at the brink of disappearing in the nineties, Falconry is by now recognised as a world living heritage!

Falconers owe a special gratitude to the UAE falconers who took the initiative to lead a multinational submission coordinated by the talented efforts of the professional team of IWC. National submissions asked timeless efforts and means of a few devoted falconers who often had more difficulties to persuade their fellow falconers of the necessity of recognition than to convince their authorities. That the UNESCO recognition of falconry is a great political success, especially in the signatory countries, is beyond question. In these countries, the falconers associations are now in a better position to count on state support for the preservation and promotion of falconry in the future.

UNESCO recognition will also benefit other countries. For if approval of falconry has been found in the common cultural space of European states, this will also affect the political debate of neighbouring countries and perhaps ease the legalisation in the few countries where falconry is not legal.

It is hoped that the recognition of falconry as an intangible cultural heritage will also open the door for hunting in the historical cultural context of mankind. 🦅

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PRESENTATION

By Philippe Justeau

Following UNESCO Inscription, a presentation for members of the European Parliament was invited and Phillipe Justeau (Président of ANFA and IAF Delegate for France) made the presentation.



Introduction

In order to complement the reception at the European Parliament it is interesting to speak about the role France and the other European submission members played in the work that preceded the inscription of Falconry as Global Intangible Heritage. I have, together with Madame Sylvie Grenet, who was in charge of the submission for the French Minister of Culture, gone over several important points.

Of course the role played by Bohumil Straka is well known to everyone and his personal involvement was a very great one.

France and the other European countries were very close to the spirit of the 2003 Convention. They asked that the human values upholding the convention be taken into account, emphasizing the links that unite mankind with the animals and so from there, the links that unite mankind to the universe.

Before the August 2009 workshop in Abu Dhabi, we had, over the course of a week, reworked the first text, which although technical and thorough did not appeal to the reader, emphasizing the beauty of falconry, its ethereal character, while deliberately avoiding any suggestion of commerce that would certainly have threatened the success of the submission.

The initial title of the project was “Falconry – a global heritage”, but the French Ministry of Culture, backed up by other countries intervened to request a change of title to “Falconry – a living human heritage”. The candidature rightly brought up opportunities for encountering other falconers, at festivals. We wished to have exchanges and discussions between falconers taken into account so that fairs and festivals do not seem like a pretext for the exhibiting of animals, but more as a means of exchanging



information, of sharing ones common experiences and the emotion a falconer experiences while hunting with his Falcon.

I am very sorry that Slovakia left us for national political reasons, we had worked well together in Abu Dhabi but I am happy to see that other great falconry nations, like Austria and Hungary, will soon be joining us. The more there are of us to speak about our ART, the more good times Falconry will have before it.

The presentation given was as follows:-

For the Colloquium at the European Parliament in Strasbourg 19th January 2011

Madame la Présidente de l'Intergroupe Chasse Durable au Parlement Européen, Monsieur le Vice Président, Mesdames, Messieurs les Députés, dear falconer friends, dear friends. Permit me, Madame Chairman, to thank you in the name of Frank Bond, President of the IAF, who has come specially from the USA, accompanied by Bohumil Straka from the Czech Republic who is our Vice-president for Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania and by Gary Timbrell from Ireland, who is IAF's Public Relations Officer, and in the name of all the IAF members present here. We thank you for welcoming us here at the European Parliament to celebrate the brilliant inscription by UNESCO of a hunting method, falconry, into the global intangible heritage of mankind.

The first person to have spoken of this project to me was Patrick Morel, president of the Belgian falconry club Marie de Bourgogne, a former president of IAF and above all a falconer of international reputation. For the French falconers it was Pierre Courjarret, member of the board of ANFA and an astringer, who prepared the dossier. He convinced the Minister of Culture to take an interest in the project, for which we thank him here today. The preparation of this global submission with the participation of 11 nations, among them 4 European countries out of the 50 in the world that practice falconry, has inspired passion and has been very enriching (Belgium, the Czech Rep., France, Korea, Mongolia, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Syria and the United

Arab Emirates).

I have some good memories of the workshops organised by Dr. Awadh Saleh, President of the UNESCO committee of Abu Dhabi who led the global project. These workshops went on to the success of this submission. The support of the French ministry of Culture has been a determining feature and our task was made considerably easier by Mme Sylvie Grenet's mastery of the submission documents. It must be said the reception and the organisation in Abu Dhabi were perfect and put us in the best conditions for success. Mme Sylvie Grenet will speak to us about the inscription and the part France played in the submission. In addition I would simply like to present to you “Falconry -la Chasse au Vol”:

For a definition of falconry I recall the world renowned verse of the great English poet John Keates: “A thing of beauty is a joy forever”. This is to me the purest definition of an art which has impassioned me since my earliest childhood and which has brought me immense pleasure. I have seen flights of unforgettable beauty. I have shared with my friends the intensest of emotions where after such moments mere words have been superficial However I will try a more traditional definition of falconry where the choice of words is crucial.

“Falconry is the art of capturing wild quarry in its natural environment, with the aid of a specially trained bird of prey, with or without the aid of a dog”

You should understand that in falconry, as in hunting with hounds, the hunter uses the innate gifts of his animals. Claude Bussy says it so well when he says that man sets up an “Opéra sauvage” that is played out in nature between animals where the falconer himself is the conductor of the orchestra. This opera comes to us from the earliest of times, probably from the Great Plains of Central Asia when nomadic peoples moved around with their flocks, flushing game before them, which helped falcons and eagles to capture their prey. It is likely that there were two main routes for falconry's dispersion from Central Asia, the one eastward to China, Korea and Japan and the other west and southwards via Iran, India, the Arab peninsula and Europe.





It is fascinating that even now the methods of hunting remain the same, gestures are the same, equipment is the same. The only concession to the modern world is the telemetry transmitters we fix on our birds so as to find them quickly. These days man is always in a hurry, even when hunting. Hunting techniques are the same, training methods are the same; there have been practically no changes since falconry's origin. The basic principle is simple, the falcon must lose her fear of man, she must accept that she eats in his company, then on his fist and afterwards, with a great deal of patience and finesse you can hunt with her. You must make the falcon understand that if she flies high above the dog on point the falconer will serve her with game that she can catch and eat. All this might seem simple to you, but here it is expressed so well by Charles d'Arcussia, Lord of Esparron, a great falconer in the time of Louis XI and the author of treatises on falconry.

"Not every falcon is born to sport and fly with us. Also falconry is not for simply anyone to know and to be able to practice."

For many centuries the best way to catch quail, partridge, pheasant, rabbits, hares, was with hawks and falcons. When guns became effective falconry was transformed from a hunting **method** to a hunting **art**. We have now prioritised the beauty of the spectacle (as opposed to the mere catching of prey).

Marco Polo at the Court of the Great Khan spoke of a single hunt with 10,000 falcons. Try to imagine the importance of falconry in daily life, think of the paintings, tapestries, porcelain, where we uncover sumptuous scenes of hawking and falconry. Since my stay in Abu Dhabi I have been bowled over by an 18th century Korean tapestry, every bit as beautiful as the famous Gobelin tapestries of Paris or those of Flanders. Do not forget that even during wars, and these were numerous throughout Europe and Asia, both sides reserved some moments of respite each day to fly their falcons and if a falcon crossed enemy lines it was given back to its master!

At the time of the Crusades, the great clash of cultures, exchange of knowledge permitted European falconers

to bring back hoods and lures, two considerable points of progress. It was much simpler to hood a hawk than to seal its eyelids, as was the western custom of the time. As for the lure, this permitted the development of the "high flight" (waiting on) in Europe. After losing the Battle of Pavie (1525) the French King François 1st was obliged to give up his two sons as hostage to the Emperor Charles Quint in exchange for his own liberty. In order to pay the ransom he had to do it with white gerfalcons.

Falconry was so important that a huge number of words have come down into our modern language, like leurrer quelqu'un, lui dessiller les yeux, faire carrière, niais, hagar etc...

(Editor note: these are modern French expressions that aren't really used in modern English but many others appear such as 'gentleman, cadger, hoodwinked etc.)

Moving on into literature: Professor Baudouin Van Den Abeele explains "falconry books are fascinating for their experience of nature, for the number of words that come down to us and for the historic resonance of the hunt as a diversion". Above all, for me, they are works of philosophy, the way in which one must carry out one's life to be a good falconer. I will list one or two: "De arte venandi cum avibus" or "The Art of Hunting with Birds" by Frederic II of Hohenstaufen, "La Conférence des Fauconniers" by Charles d'Arcussia, the excellent "Traité des Chasses" by Sid Mohamed el Mangali, a Syrian treatise of the 10th century and the sumptuous "Treatise of Falconry" by Schlegel, a Dutch work published in French between 1844 and 1853. The editors explain:

"We observe that by writing this history of falconry, we have tried to show that knowledge of such a remarkable activity, transmitted from one people to another, can be used to throw light on their daily life, on the rapport there was between them, on their migrations, in a word on the obscurest points of their history. It is hoped the publication of this work may contribute to the conservation of an art whose future has been, more than once, a rather doubtful one".

Falconry finds itself at the interface of worlds, Hunting, Ecology and Art; as hunters so are we. If you need evidence, the president of FACE Gilbert de Turckheim, is an austringer, his director Angus Middleton, is a falconer, the director of the National Federation of French Hunters, Claude Bussy, is a falconer and the vice-president of ANFA. My predecessor in the presidency of ANFA and a former president of the IAF, Count Charles de Ganay, present here today, flies his falcons in Scotland and shoots regularly, he was also president of the Retriever Club of France. Myself, I am vice-president of the Departmental Federation of the Hunters of Maine and Loire. (I see president Bidault, he is president of the Foundation for the Protection of the Habitats of the Wildlife, a rather nice feather in the cap for hunting people who are concerned about Ecology.)



Raptors have always been protected by falconers. We were the first to discern in the 1970's the rapid decline of world raptor populations due to the ravages of DDT. We have worked towards the classification of raptors as protected species. In the USA, it was by using stocks of falconry birds that Tom Cade, researcher in the University of Cornell developed his program for the reproduction of raptors in captivity. In the present time all the falconers of the world are concerned decline of small game, attacked in its habitat by modern farming methods. We are really concerned, because what is the use of having a falcon and of having good laws to practise our art if we do not have any more a wild game to hunt in natural spaces? Even the recognition of UNESCO may not save falconry. Here in France falconers put their resources into the maintenance of their hunting territories, Jean-Claude Dufour in the Marne, Charles Martin in Belgium, who was himself rewarded by Wilde Life Estate in 2010. Falconry is compatible with sharing nature between townspeople and falconers. There is no need to keep nature in sanctuaries. We are conscious of the fragility of nature, game books and lists of kills do not concern us, and we are limited by our hunting partner, who hunts only to eat, not to destroy. She hunts to live and for our pleasure. Falconry is demanding, as Gilles Nortier often repeats: "Falconry is either complete perfection or complete failure".

All falconers are poets, many draw and paint then some are true artists, like Etienne Fougeron one of whose paintings made the cover of the last "Jour de Chasse". I would like to take advantage of my speaking time in front of European members of Parliament concerned with hunting, to ask them to work towards the recognition of falconry in the countries of northern Europe where it is still prohibited, from Denmark to Estonia, because to me it seems to be a breach of fundamental liberty to prohibit the practice of our art, especially here in Europe. I ask you also to be attentive to protectionist laws which may be "full of good intentions" but which risk by wider application, bringing important parts of culture to an end; I am thinking of current discussions on "invasive species". For centuries we falconers have flown raptor species from every corner of the world and our birds

remain under our control. Professor Brosset had clearly expressed himself about falconry birds and the very minor risk posed.

The recognition of the Art of Falconry is very close to our heart because French falconry did not even have legal existence between 1789 to 1954. It only survived thanks to a few very dedicated falconers. This inscription with the intangible heritage invites us to preserve the birds, nature, the techniques of flight and morally obliges us to continue to pass down our art. I would like to read to you the Code of Honour of the French falconers as it was written down by the founders of the ANFA.

"Be a sportsman and an honest one. Respect your bird and take care of her health. If she is misled, persevere in your search. Salute effort and reward courage. Shorten the suffering of her prey".

You will understand this code of honour better when you know that the founder of ANFA, Abel Boyer, was a Companion of Duty, his motto was: 'Périgord Honest Heart'.

We will now look at a short film made by Alexandre Réquintel, during the falconry meet organized in Deux-Sevres in December 2010 by our general secretary Benoit Labarthe. This film had the honour of being selected to open the first "Festival du film de chasse durable et biodiversité" (film festival of sustainable hunting and biodiversity), organized by the young members of CIC France in April 2010.

To conclude my talk, here in the European Parliament I would like to underline the role of the great Master Falconers of modern Europe, their ardour and their passion was very motivating for our French falconers. We all dreamed of reaching the perfection of the Spaniard Felix Rodriguez de la Fuente, of the Italians Ernesto Coppoloni or Fulco Tosti, of the Germans Christian Saar or Eckhart Schormair, of Jack Mavrogordato or Steven Frank in England, of the Belgian Kruyshoof or of Dijkstra in Holland.

To finish, I will read you the Marquis de Cherville's introduction to Florian Pharaon's 1880 translation of the "Traité des Chasses" by Sid Mohamed el Mangali:

"A sheik was sitting in the middle of a large group when a man who had lost his ass presented himself to him, asking if somebody had not seen the stray animal. The sheik turned towards those who surrounded him and addressed these words to them:

"Is there any one of you to whom the pleasure of the hunt is not known, who has never pursued game with the risk of injury to himself or followed it with the risk of being killed in the ravines?"

One of the listeners answered him: "Me, I have never known it, nor done any of the things that you say here"

Then the sheik looked at the owner of the ass: "Here" he said to him, "Here is the animal you seek, take him along with you!" 🦅

REPORT OF COP10-CBD AND RELATED EVENTS IN NAGOYA, JAPAN

*By Keiyo Nakajima, Ph.D.,
The Japan Falconiformes Center*

The Convention on Biological Diversity was opened for signature on 5 June 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Currently, 193 parties are members of the the Convention. The main goals are “the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of genetic resources”. Falconry and the conservation of birds of prey is related to the first and second goal in the Convention.

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP10-CBD) was held in Nagoya Japan, from 18 -29 October 2010. 179 parties from governments and organizations joined in the conference at Nagoya Congress Center. The number of people attending totaled over 13,000 and 350 side events were also held.

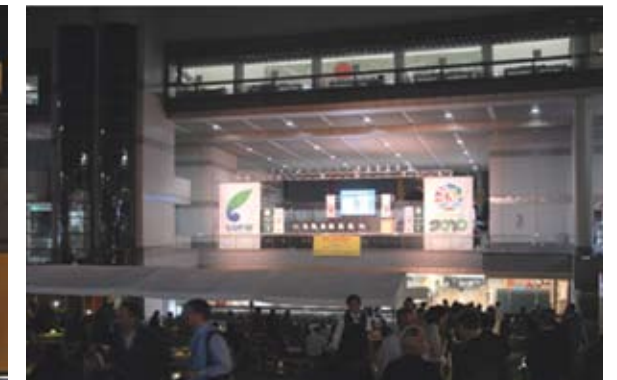
General meeting at COP10-CBD

After the meeting, 47 decisions (Decision X/1 - X/47) were adopted in COP10-CBD. There were a lot of discussions in the category of “the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of genetic resources” for the confrontation between developing nations and developed nations. The result of negotiation was adopted as Decision X/1 (Nagoya Protocol). In the category of “the conservation of biological diversity”, Strategic Plan for Biodiversity was adopted as Decision X/2 (Aichi Target) with the period of 2010-2020. “Aichi” is the prefectural name for Nagoya area. There are 20 items in Aichi Target for the conservation of biological diversity. Conservation works for birds of prey is related to Target 12, that is, by 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained. It is one of the strategic goals for improving the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic

diversity. In the category of “the sustainable use of its components”, Sustainable use of Biodiversity was adopted as Decision X/32 which includes the contents for the conservation and sustainable use of bushmeat. The Satoyama Initiative was also mentioned in the Decision. Satoyama is a Japanese word that means ‘human-influenced natural environments’ (Farmlands and Secondary forests). According to the Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan, the Satoyama Initiative targets complex rural ecosystems formed by long periods of interaction between human lifestyles and the natural world. The initiative strives to create a vision for resource management and land use which balances the twin needs of biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization. Currently,



The region of Satoyama.



Clockwise from top: the banner used to publicise the event; a general view of the event arena; Introduction of the Peregrine with Japanese falconer's costume. The speaker is Tamas Marghescu, Director General of CIC.

it is introduced in the official website (<http://satoyama-initiative.org/en/>) as The Satoyama Initiative which promotes and supports socio-ecological production landscapes, which have been shaped over the years by the interaction between people with nature. The Initiative aims to realize societies in harmony with nature where both biodiversity and human well-being are maintained harmoniously. A part of the hunting field is also included in Satoyama. Falconry will be a good example for the activity to be fit to the Initiative.

In Decision X/32, related parties are invited to the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI) that has aims to carry out the activities identified by the Satoyama Initiative; this includes collecting and analyzing case studies, distilling lessons and promoting research on different practices of sustainable use of biological resources, as well as increasing awareness and supporting on-the-ground projects and activities in human-influenced natural environments. IPSI has already established on 19 October at COP10-CBD with 51 parties. IUCN and CIC are included in the parties as founding member.

Subsidiary event to COP10-CBD

In COP10-CBD, the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) held an event entitled

“Sustainable Use is Conservation at Heart” to introduce their activities on the evening of 20 October with Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU (FACE) and IAF also worked together. Falconry is a good example of sustainable use, and their skill is useful for conservation of birds of prey. In the event, William Heinrich made a presentation to introduce the activities of The Peregrine Fund as success of conservation works with falconers. Professor Robert Kenward also introduced the advanced techniques to keep biodiversity. In COP10-CBD, the organizer prohibited to take birds to the event in the conference area, though we thought that live peregrine is displayed in relation to the presentation of William Heinrich in our first plan. However, the organizer approved it on the day before the event as special case on the request from CIC. Therefore, we prepared one peregrine on the rehabilitation stage after wing damage with Japanese traditional falconer's costume, to show to participants as one of conservation works with falconry skill.

I think that representatives from each party had good opportunity to learn about falconry and the relevance to keep biodiversity through conservation works or hunting with sustainable use. 🦅

RELATED EVENT FOR COP10-CBD: THE INTERACTIVE FAIR FOR BIODIVERSITY

*By Keiya Nakajima, Ph.D.,
The Japan Falconiformes Center*

The Japan Falconiformes Center (JFC) held a forum in Nagoya Gakuin University at 23 October on the Interactive Fair for Biodiversity which was related to the event for COP10-CBD at a neighboring site of the conference hall. The theme was “How Bird of Prey Conservation can Benefit Biodiversity”, to introduce the meaning of conservation, results with falconry skill and advanced approach in overseas. One of presentation was “From Jess to TESS: Conservation through Falconry” by Professor Robert Kenward, who attended to COP10-CBD as Science Supervisor of FP-7 Transactional Environment Support System (TESS) and Chair of IUCN Species Survival Commission European Sustainable Use Specialist Group.



Presentation by Keiya Nakajima.

I also had a presentation “Conservation of Birds of Prey to Keep the Biodiversity” to introduce the situation of Japanese birds of prey and our conservation activities with falconry skill. There were around 80 participants at this event.

In COP10-CBD, a registration pass was required from the organizer to enter the conference area. Therefore visitors could not enter the place if they were interested in the event at the conference hall. However, the Interactive Fair for Biodiversity was open to the public without registration. I think that the forum was also good opportunity to find new understanding for related persons who could not enter the conference hall.

For more information on this event visit the website at:
www.cop10.jp/fair/en/index.html

Messe Nagoya 2010

This event was held from 27-30 October at Port Messe Nagoya in Kinjo Pier, Nagoya Port with 450 exhibitors and 43,000 visitors. It was big trade fair in Nagoya area to promote business under the theme of “Environment & Energy” that was cooperated with COP10-CBD.



Talk show at Messe Nagoya 2010.

In the event, JFC attended to talk show on 27 and 29 October at the booth of CHUBU Electric Power Co., Inc. Related display was also provided in the booth to introduce conservation works for bird of prey and good results with falconry skill. It is likely that almost all the participants visited to the event in their business. We hoped that our presentation would be helpful for their understanding or resolving a difficulty on the conservation of environment.

For more information on this event visit the website at:

www.messenagoya.jp/2010/english.html

Conclusion

COP10-CBD and related events were held in Nagoya Japan at late in October 2010. They were a unique opportunity to meet many parties and persons in the world that are related to keep biodiversity. In this time, falconry and the conservation activities for birds of prey were introduced to the participants by several events that were prepared by CIC, FACE, JFC, TESS, IUCN and IAF. The next meeting for COP11-CBD will be held in India at 8-19 October 2012.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to Professor Robert Kenward for his kind help to the related event by JFC. 🦅

TRADITIONAL TURKISH SPARROWHAWKING

By Doğan Luke Smith

Falconry has been in Turkey since prehistoric times. The oldest artifact of falconry in Turkey is a carved stone picture showing a Hittite prince holding a goshawk found near the city of Kahramanmaraş dating to 800 B.C. This ancient tradition is still living in the people of the Republic of Turkey. Falconry in Turkey has developed into a cultural tradition and now is a very important passion in several regions of the country.

Historically several forms of falconry were practiced in Turkey. Three separate falconry centers are known: the Eastern Black Sea consisting of only sparrow hawks, the Southern Mediterranean coast using both goshawks and sparrow hawks, and the North West where all species were used, but was dominated by large falcons. The peak of Turkish falconry in the country as a whole was reached during the Middle Ages and the Sultans created special quarters for and employed hundreds of falconers and hawkers for his hunting parties. In modern Istanbul, though no historic buildings survive, the area is still referred to as the Falconer's Square and Falconer's Street.

During this time many falconry books were written in the Turkish language, excellent raptor protection laws were in place, and all forms of falconry were held in high regard by social leaders. Many falconry books and paintings from this period still survive in the Topkapi and Dolmabahçe Palace libraries. From reading one of these I learned that falconry was so important to the Sultans that if a bird performed a particularly exciting flight they would personally find the trainer and reward him by giving the trainer the catch.

Unfortunately falconry lost importance in the 18th century and ceased as a royal tradition and therefore lost significance nationally. In modern times only training sparrow hawks has

survived as a culture. Fortunately sparrow hawking is truly the most unique form of Turkish falconry. Other forms of falconry have decreased almost to extinction because of pressures from environmentalists and economic problems. Only this proverb still survives which was often a taunt said by falcon users to serious sparrow hawkers, “Atmahjah ee ee deer ama ee ee lay ya hee shaheen-(A sparrow hawk is good but a falcon is more progressed).”

Trapping new birds of any species was made completely illegal and only previously captured sparrow hawks could be used from 1987 until 2002. During this time the art of falconry/hawking severely suffered and a generation of youth was not properly taught the sport. In 2002, hawkers fought to make capturing sparrow hawks legal again. After help from European falconers from IAF and intense meetings with the government was convinced to legalize the capturing and use of sparrow hawks once again.

In the fifteen years when hawking was illegal the tradition significantly suffered. Yet there are still a number of older sparrow hawkers left. Training sparrow hawks was and still is a very important tradition. There are statues in the center of the cities of Arhavi and Rize to show the importance of this culture. Many songs describing trapping and training sparrow hawks and its significance to people living in the eastern



A statue of a man with a sparrowhawk from the centre of the town of Arhavi.

Black Sea region have been orally passed down for centuries. I have written these songs down to preserve them, but this culture must be passed on by a teacher and learned hands on. This culture in Turkey is in recent decline, though it is one of the richest and well-preserved ancient falconry practices in the world.

The process of Turkish Falconry starts first with the capture of the insect. This insect is captured by hand and found by overturning large mammal dung or piles of compost. Another method is to find the insect's hole in a garden and pour soapy water down its hole causing the insect to come out. The insect is then tied into a trap. There are a variety of traps of which the design varies by region. These include using fishing line or cow hair nooses, trap doors, and a pole with nooses with the insect suspended above a perch. The insect chosen is special for attracting the red-backed shrike. The shrike is chosen because it is strong, easy to feed and tames easily. Once a red-backed shrike is found, the insect and trap are placed within its sight. The insect by constant wiggling is irresistible to the bird. Soon the bird flies down to



A good days' hunting; here we can see the traditional carrying pole which the hawks are trained to sit on.

catch the insect and then is captured.

After the shrike is trapped, leather bracelets are placed on the bird. These bracelets are attached to a string that is attached to a carrying pole. The shrike is then fed and trained to sit on the carrying pole. Leather covers are placed over the top half of the shrike's eyes to prevent it from looking up and being afraid. The shrike then lives in the house with the trainer and becomes part of the family and is taken for walks to become accustomed to being carried on the stick. There are three different carrying poles as the shrike's education advances. The last carrying pole used is long, flexible, nicely crafted and painted for use during the trapping season.

The shrike is used to attract migrating sparrow hawks to the trapping house. On the side of the trapping house nets are placed and the shrike is made to fly behind the nets. The trapping house is built with a wall to the path of the migration with a small window to watch for the oncoming hawks. The hawk is sighted high in the sky and then the shrike is made to fly behind the net. If the falconer uses the shrike correctly the hawk will soon come after it. When the hawk gets very close to the net, then the falconer very quickly pulls the shrike away. When the hawk continues after the shrike he hits the



Trapping hawks from a tree trapping house.



Removing a captured hawks from the nets.

net and is caught!.

To train the hawk to be comfortable around people, it is taken to a crowded place where other falconers are. Everyone tells stories, shares about life, and at the same time trains their hawks. Younger people learn how to train the hawk from older people. Sometimes in one village as many as thirty sparrow hawkers will sit together in the same place to tame the birds. The birds tame very quickly because of this.

The main quarry of Turkish hawking is quail (*Coturnix coturnix*). If the opportunity arises woodcocks and doves are also taken. Training the hawk for the hunt by traditional means takes 5-10 days. This is because the sparrow hawks are captured during the same time that the quail migration begins and therefore birds are quickly flown on wild game while there is the chance. The hawks are made to eat on the first day by giving it meat when it tries to bite. On the second day the hawk is fed many small pieces of meat on the fist and made to be around many people. The next step is for the hawk to fly from someone else's fist to the owners fist. The next day a quail on a string is shown to the hawk outside. If she immediately pursues the quail, then the hawk is released and fed the head and neck of the quail. From then on it is introduced to wild quarry. Only live quail or a recently killed one are used as lures to call the sparrow hawk back. These are obtained from the catches of other already trained hawks. In some villages where there are only small open places to fly, the hawks are never free flown, but always on a line.

As soon as the hawker feels his bird is ready, they go to fields where migrating quail come. The falconer and friends walk the field beating the bushes with a stick or sometimes with a dog. When a quail flies the hawk is released to chase the



quail. The sparrow hawk is held in the palm of the hand and thrown up in the air to give it an advantage. This was traditionally done because the hunting fields had tall corn stalks. Even though now most of the fields grow tea, this practice of throwing the hawks is still used. If the hawk can afford it he also has a trained pointing dog. In flat areas traditionally hawking was done off horseback, but this is a very scarce practice today. An old saying from the eastern Black Sea region states that the perfect life is owning a horse,



The position to release the hawk on a quail.

a dog, and a good sparrow hawk.

In the past rice was grown in the flat river valleys of the eastern Black Sea region and this attracted large numbers of quail to stop over. One elderly man told me a story about 50 years ago when the fields were covered with quail and he caught over 50 quail with one bird in one day. This was very important meat for the family. In the past, if a man was caught being lazy a woman would say, “can’t you at least train a sparrow hawk and catch some meat?” The meat was dried and salted, put into a big clay pot and then stored in a cellar made into the mountain.

Now it is normal to catch only 5-10 quail a day and hawking is done mostly for sport. In many areas in Eastern Turkey people have stopped growing rice and corn so quail don’t stay for long periods of time during the migration. The hawkers best chance is to catch them when they land in the tea fields during bad weather. So because of this the modern tradition has become to trap new sparrow hawks in good weather and hunt for quail with trained sparrow hawks in bad weather.

In northwest Turkey where the land is flatter and grains are still grown, quail will stay in the fields in the migration season and provide the best hunting opportunities. In modern times the shotgun has become the choice weapon for quail hunting. In fact, a gun manufacturer from an ancestry of sparrow hawkers named his company Sparrow Hawk in honor of the most famous weapon for centuries in the eastern Black Sea region. Now with most families not relying on a “real” sparrow hawk to supply meat, hawking has become a social sport.

In many villages it seems it is more important to have a beautiful bird of a rare color sitting on your arm than to have a good hunter. The tradition of identifying the color is very important in Turkish hawking. When a bird is captured that appears to be of a sought after color the person who caught it will rush to tell all his friends. After a discussion of which color it is, actually sometimes becoming a heated argument, the bird is taken to a hawking elder to have the final say. Once the color of the bird is chosen by the elder there is little that others can do to argue. Once you are the proud possessor of a rare color, then everyone is obliged to give you respect and say “Maash Allah” which means “God Protect” the bird from evil.

The color is referred to as the bird’s race. It is widely believed in northern Turkey that these represent different species of sparrow hawks and not just color phases. This belief is not held in southern Turkey because young birds were taken from nests and it has been witnessed on many occasions that birds of different colors come from the same nest. There are four basic colors of sparrow hawks that are then separated into sub categories for a total of over twenty different recognized colors. For example, the most common color phase is white edged-black. In many discussions the word hawk is not used



There are many different ‘races’ of bird three of which are pictured here; (above) light yellow; (below from left) black and red edged black.



but only the birds color as is understood in this famous song:

Geldi Ağustos ayı, nerdesin Ali dayı- (The month of August has come, where are you uncle Ali), Bildircınlar geliyor, hazırla bozkara’yı- (Quail are coming, prepare the White-Edged Black).

The main categories of color are Black, Yellow, Red, and the very rare White. The bird’s color is identified by her breast feathers and the colors on the back and side of her head. In some villages it is believed that the color of the bird determines if it will be a good hunter. This is typically said



about yellow colored birds as they are generally larger and more aggressive. Yet, I have had many discussions on this subject with master hunters and they said they have had great hunters from all color phases. Then after making that statement they will then say, “but this color ... is the best!” Personally I do believe that in most cases the different color phases do fall into different size and personality categories, but any can be a great hunter. Of course it is every hawkers goal to obtain a bird of beauty and strength. This way when you are sitting at camp in the evening not only is your bird the center of attention, but you have some great stories to keep that attention.

Serious game hawkers will not pay attention to the color of the bird. In fact, it seems that some of the best colors of birds are not the best hunters at all. Pure white birds are considered to be ill, though beautiful; they have never been successful in the field. What is known as a true white bird is the most prized of all colors. She is one that has all white coloring except for black barring. There is an ancient song that describes the sorrow of a man walking back in the dark who has lost a very beautiful and expensive sparrow hawk. He had just bought it for a hundred heads of corn but soon after he took it out quail hunting and it was interested in other birds and escaped: Gedkidido so ulu osh hhesi chala chkimi (Where are you going on this village road with a hundred heads of corn?); Sifteri toli sari, makvali emush gayi (The sparrow hawk’s eyes are yellow, the egg is your food); Mzesku zakali, kudelepe hhunkani (Black bird on the mountain, you are shaking your tail); Mohhtuh, kogelahay-duh, Gali sari torojee, (The yellow throated pigeon came and sat on the mountain), Bozo skanden vortikone kamaptapooptee hhojee (Girl, may it come from you, I knocked on the door to see you); Amseri tuta vanen tancee, mooyooshee tancee (Moonless night, the stars are shining); Rakanus goleetashee, te memotanee (While passing at the foot of the mountain the light from your house showed the way).

When you finally find your right bird and a day with good quail numbers a lot of excitement is sure to be had. The flights are usually quick and straight forward with the quail

flushing at your feet and the hawk catching it soon after. Occasionally a long and exciting flight occurs with everyone running to keep track of where they have gone. Of course the younger hawkers like myself are responsible to chase after the birds and see where the quail lands if the hawk missed. Or if both birds have disappeared into a nasty thorny thicket the youngest falconer must listen carefully for the bells and create a path for the elder falconer to go in and retrieve them. Other older hawkers must watch carefully to see if the birds reflush to another location. For reasons such as these flying is usually done in groups of up to five or six hawkers together. On good days up to three hawks will be carried in the same group of people all together working the field. On some excellent occasions two hawkers, have released their hawks at the same time at two quail that flushed at the same moment and both hawks were successful on each quail. This was on accident of course, each hawk claiming that he flushed the quail and not the other.

At the end of the season the shrikes and the majority of hawks are released back into nature. Turkish falconers have been releasing their hawks in the idea of sustaining their populations for thousands of years! The traditional sparrow hawk festival has recently been replaced with a new one. The traditional festival was at the beginning of the season focusing on flying contests and rewarding the most beautifully new molted bird. The new festival is held at the end of the season and is a time for everyone to release their sparrow hawks back on the migration route. A reward is given to man who releases the most beautiful bird in an effort to keep its “race” alive!

Keeping a sparrow hawk over winter is a rare tradition because it is difficult to care for the bird. Traditionally in Eastern Turkey the people migrate to higher elevations in the summer and it was believed that the trip would bring harm to a molting sparrow hawk. Only really good birds are inter-mewed and by people who do not migrate. Some men prefer keeping the same bird because it is a much better hunter as an adult and will be ready if there is an early quail migration that year. Traditionally nearly all birds are released at the end of the season.

Unfortunately, in the last 35 years due to urbanization, previous illegalization and disinterest from modern youth, the numbers of hawkers in Turkey has continued on a serious downward trend. These days it is very difficult to find a serious sparrow hawk under age forty and the culture is dying. To combat this trend I have been traveling all over the country collecting traditional songs, sayings, and other hawk training related traditions from the old men and encouraging younger people to keep the tradition alive. Also I have been translating modern raptor health information into the Turkish language. It is my hope that we can sustain and keep this thousands of years of tradition alive for future generations. 🦅

GERMAN AND POLISH FALCONERS CO-OPERATE FOR TREE-NESTING PEREGRINES IN EUROPE

By Janusz Sielicki

European Peregrine Falcon Working Group,
www.falcopegrinus.net



The history of decline and local extinction of Peregrine Falcon populations is well known. Falconers in many countries were involved in Peregrine restoration projects. There is still one population which needs our help.

In Central and Eastern Europe the Peregrine Falcon was nesting in trees, using nests of other large birds. The tree-nesting population occupied an area from northern Germany, Poland and Belarus to the forests of central Russia, as well as the Baltic countries - Denmark, southern Sweden, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and southern Finland. That ecotype disappeared in the entire area of its existence in 1960's.

Falconers and conservationists in the beginning were very focused on saving the species in general. The successful projects in USA, southern Germany and many other countries, proved that that we know how to breed and release falcons. These methods were then used to save many other species worldwide, especially California Condor and many smaller falcons. When the project aimed

on general Peregrine restoration in Germany was finished the idea of restoring the tree-nesting population was raised. Peregrines did not start themselves to reoccupy those habitats. The idea of imprinting on place of birth was accepted as a basis for restoration of this ecotype.

The German project aimed at restoration of tree-nesting ecotype based on that principle started in 1990 and was conducted by ornithologists from German Peregrine Working Group (Arbeitskreis Wanderfalkenschutz e.V.) in cooperation with German Falconers Order (DFO - Deutsche Falkenorden e.V. - which provided young Peregrines for reintroduction) and Hunting Corporation of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. A total of circa 400 Peregrines were released in forests of north-eastern Germany, additionally more than 100



Peregrine in hacking box in Włocławek.
Photo: Sławomir Sielicki.



19 Peregrines waiting for reintroduction in Barlinek.
Photo: Sławomir Sielicki.



Left: Peregrines from Germany for Polish forests – ready for hacking box in Włocławek. From left: Sławomir Sielicki (Falcon Society), Günther Schäfers (Ministry of Nature Protection of Land Hamburg), prof. Christian Saar (DFO), Włodzimierz Pamfil (Polish State Forests) and Janusz Sielicki.
Photo: Sławomir Sielicki.

Below: Round-table discussion in Hamburg; from left: Janusz Sielicki and Sławomir Sielicki (Falcon Society), Bernd Reuter (breeding station in Hamburg), Johannes Kuth (DFO President), Professor Christian Saar, Günther Schäfers (Ministry of Nature Protection of Land Hamburg) and Thilo Henckell (DFO).
Photo: Johannes Kuth

birds were relocated to forests from wild nests in cities. The first nest in a tree was found in 1996 in Germany. Growth of this initial population is very slow. In 2010 the total tree-nesting population in Europe (in fact – only in Germany) was circa 30 pairs. German Peregrine Working Group (AWS) decided to cancel reintroductions in Germany since 2010, only a limited number of chicks from nests in cities which are under risk of losing chicks will be still relocated to forests.

In 1980's Polish falconers started to breed birds of prey with the aim to restore Peregrine in Poland. First reintroduction started in 1990, the same year as in Germany. From the beginning the tree-nesting population was also one of the aims of the project.

Besides that Peregrines were released in cities and mountains. A total of 350 Peregrines were released in Polish forest in the period 1990 – 2009, additionally 55 birds were release in cities and mountains. As a result Peregrines started to breed in Poland in 1998 -first in Warsaw, than other cities and mountains. The tree-nesting part of the project was not so successful. Single birds from Poland nest on trees in Germany, there is only one confirmed case on nesting on tree in Poland in 2010. Unfortunately in 2011 that area was not occupied by Peregrine and no other new area was found. In all other countries of former tree-nesting area there is no any single pair known.

The Society for Wild Animals "Falcon" decided in 2009 to start the Polish Peregrine Project on a new basis. The plan is to intensify reintroduction aimed at tree-nesting population on a smaller number of hacking stations. The Falcon Society has got a grant which allowed preparing new release sites before 2010 season. A total of 56 Peregrines were released in three sites in 2009. That year proved that a new Project is effective.



The next step is to secure birds for the Project. There was an idea to obtain some help from German Falconers Club, as the tree-nesting reintroduction in Germany was closed. In February 2011 a round table discussion on future cooperation was held in Hamburg with representatives of DFO, Ministry of Nature Protection of Land Hamburg and "Falcon" Society. The meeting was held in the breeding station run by prof. Christian Saar. It was agreed that DFO members and the breeding station in Hamburg will provide Peregrines for the release in Poland on the similar basis as for the German tree-nesting project.

In the 2011 spring first Peregrines from Hamburg were brought to Poland for reintroduction. A total of 66 young Peregrines were released in Poland this year. The birds came from falconers of DFO and breeders in Poland, Denmark, Czech and Slovak Republics. Birds were released in four hacking sites all over the country. First year of cooperation of DFO falconers with Falcon Society proved to be effective. We hope that following years will be even more successful with wild nests as a result.



REPORT FROM MEXICO 2011

By Juan Carlos Rojo

A year ago, after the attempt of initiative 85 to make a negative change in the law about possession of birds of prey in captivity, that was postponed because Mexican Deputy Mr. Guillermo Tamborrel made observations to continue registering birds of prey, with the help of the letters of NAFA and IAF among others. This critical situation causes once again a big impact on Mexican falconers and falconry associations so an urgent national meet took place in April 2010 in the city of Queretaro, after that meeting, four groups were formed in order to create a Mexican Falconry Federation.

Then in September 2010 one of these groups, led by Adrian Reuter, had a meeting with authorities of our Wildlife department (SEMARNAT). This was an approach to coordinate efforts and to share points of view of both parties both from the legal status of birds of prey in the wildlife law and from the falconers interest and worries. This was in order to be able to practice falconry with ethics and within the law, as well as to let them know that a serious group of falconers are worried and involved in to defend our right of the sustainable practice of falconry, and the intention of NAFA and IAF to support Mexican falconry. SEMARNAT is developing a plan to have sustainable use of natural resources of birds of prey, and this approach is on time so we can work together for the welfare of Mexican birds of prey.

Later in November 2010, another national meet was appointed in San Luis de la Paz. After a period of deliberations and votes, the board of directors of the Mexican Falconry Federation were elected as well as the consultant committee. 60 falconers representing nine falconry associations attended as well as 19 independent falconers. Francisco Vazquez was elected as President and his team is starting to work with the attorney in order to get the legal constitution of the Mexican Falconry Federation.

On 26-28 February 2011, the second “Festival Mexico



From left: Ricardo Velarde, Raul Pacchiano and Rodrigo Munro.

Cetrero” was held in San Luis de la Paz in the State of Guanajuato (www.mexicocetrero.com). Organized by Alberto Lara, this festival had several activities such as a photography contests, conferences, a Sky Trial, exhibition flight of a golden eagle, falconry market and the presentation of the book “*The flying of falcons*” by Ed Pitcher and Ricardo Velarde, who were special guests of the Festival. It was great to meet falconers from all the country and to share a weekend flying birds. At the end of the festival Martin Guzman extend an invitation to his ranch in Aguascalientes to Ed, Ricardo and few Mexican falconers, so we went for three days to do some duck hawking with seven peregrines, six of them passage anatums and one Barbary. The place has plenty of ponds and ducks, the weather was perfect and Martin has a recipe for ‘duck in BBQ special sauce’ which is very recommended.

Finally on June 24th, Federacion Mexicana de Halconeria, (FEMEHA) Mexican Falconry Federation was formed representing 13 falconry associations and 19 independent falconers. One of the first goals of the Federation is to affiliate to NAFA and IAF which I think is the beginning of a relationship between NAFA, IAF and FEMEHA. More information can be found at www.fmh.mx. Personally I feel very happy to share this great news with the falconry community. 🦅



From left: Jorge Martinez, Ed Pitcher, Ricardo Velarde, Hector Verdejo and Juan Carlos Rojo.

In Memoriam

ECKART SCHORMAIR

Otersen, Niedersachsen, Germany
May 13, 2011



Eckart Schormair was among the very finest good will ambassadors of falconry worldwide. While he was very proud to be German, his travels took him throughout the world pursuing his passion for falconry. I was among those thousands of falconers who became his friend, admirer and supporter of all that he did to preserve and perpetuate falconry. Today, I am sorry that I cannot join you for this celebration of his life. I am with you in spirit.

It is appropriate that we memorialize Eckart here on his home range, not in town, but at a place where he was able to be with his beloved Peregrines. Always we will remember Eckart first as a passionate falconer who loved the opportunity to fly his

birds at home in Germany, and also in Scotland and other parts of Europe, in great style and always with enthusiasm. Eckart served German falconers in the DFO in many positions throughout the decades. And for years he represented the DFO in the IAF in many roles of responsibility. He attended almost every IAF annual general meeting. He was perhaps one of the very strongest supporters of the IAF, because he understood and would remind me in his persuasive manner that the IAF had to serve as the voice for falconers worldwide. Just last year he made one of the largest personal contributions ever made to the IAF. We will celebrate his incredible generosity in a special way.



Eckart was an incredibly strong man, physically and by his strength of character and perseverance. He was forever looking for new falconry opportunities. Even in his final days he was envisioning red leg partridge flights in Spain.

All over the world we will miss him as one of our dearest friends and mentors. For those of us in America, we treasure his memory because he so love the falconry opportunities in our country

I have asked the world's falconers to remember Eckart today and forever. He leaves a magnificent legacy of memories to his family. And for the rest of us he provides inspiration as the quintessential falconer, always with a twinkle in his eye as he tells the story of his last great flight.

On behalf of the 70 Member Organizations from 50 nations, representing more than 30,000 falconers worldwide, we in the IAF join you in spirit to remember Eckart Schormair's life. We send our heartfelt condolences to his family. On a personal basis, I mourn the loss of a special friend. May you all keep Eckart in your prayers and your heart.

In sympathy,

Frank M. Bond
President



Jose Manuel Rodriguez-Villa wrote:

Jerez de la Frontera (South Spain) December, 2003. I remember this flight very well. After eating a paella at the farm barn. Pouring rain. While most of us were more in siesta mode...he went out there, flew the young falcon in great style, ran faster than most of us after the red legs and got his, to come back with friends to share excitement of the flight.... that was Eckart! 🦅

WALTER NORBERT CRAMMER

With WNC, the most outstanding personality of the OFB has left us forever. He was the longest-serving and most meritorious officer in the 60 year history of our association. Without him, the OFB and falconry in Austria would not have such high priority that it occupies today.

But first things first: On his birthday - July 5 1962 - at the age of 41 years WNC joined the Austrian Falconry Association (OFB) – just by chance one would think. But WNC left almost nothing by chance. This day can be retrospectively seen as the birthday of the most fruitful period for falconry in Austria. WNC quickly succumbed to the fascination of falconry. In particular, the cultural and historical aspect fascinated him all his life.

It would have been contrary to his lively mind and his active personality, to just watch the club exist. A year later, in 1963, he became OFB secretary and OFB provincial officer for Vienna and Lower Austria. In 1964/65, he became the executive treasurer of the association.

Otto Graf Abensperg Traun, who presided the OFB since 1963 realized very soon the potential available in WNC. At the 1966 AGM in Petronell, WNC was elected Executive Vice President and was also authorized to sign on behalf of the OFB, a position he successfully held for 31 years. A year later, at the international OFB field meeting in Petronell in 1967, and after an OFB initiative led by WNC, the decision to establish an international and global falconry organization was made. This was the birth of the IAF, a falconer organization which is represented by 70 members in 48 countries. During the IAF presidency of Count Abensperg Traun from 1972-75, WNC was the Secretary General of the IAF.

Many years of constructive work followed during which falconry was not such an integral part of hunting in Austria as it is today. In the following decades, many difficult questions for Austrian falconry had to be solved and it was the most demanding time for OFB board members. We have ploughed through many folders in the OFB archive and we can only respectfully salute these great achievements by WNC during these times.

In 1997, WNC resigned from all his duties in the OFB to place the responsibilities in younger hands. At this stage WNC was 76 years old, having been an OFB board member for 34 years, including 31 years as the managing OFB Vice-president.

But these are just some of the bare facts of WNC's 'official business' in the OFB. It would not do his personality any justice to leave it with just these facts. WNC was not "convenient" person!

One could compare him to a conductor and his orchestra.

In his orchestra he had great soloists, whose interaction he directed to present it to the public.

WNC was a man of very clear words and short, precise statements. He hated diplomatic formulations or paraphrasing. He felt obliged to the simple truth and he always fought his battles with fairness and an open vision – falseness or deceitfulness did not exist in this extraordinary personality. His choice of words was often drastic and overstating to demonstrate the obvious problem – deliberately and to achieve his ambitious goals for the OFB as some only understood later. It goes without saying that he always initiated and sought after joint decisions in the board, which led to the important consistency in the OFB's leadership. WNC set and demanded the highest standards for himself, and also for his fellow board members. One of his famous quotes was: "We are not standard, we are above the norm."

He was convinced of the power of the community and he knew that he had to solve the extremely difficult task to form such a community of falconers who are known as distinct individuals. "The OFB gets its status by you, and you as a falconer get your status from the OFB!" was his quote that he tried to imprint on all of us. He placed great stress onto the OFB to conduct a strict code of honor, which he executed without any compromises in times when incidents threatened the very existence of Austrian Falconry.

Very early on he recognized the cultural dimension of falconry. Being a free-thinker, a rebel and a personality that could not be pressed into any scheme, he felt a close kinship with the Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, the Falconry Emperor. Frederick the Great was an illustrious figure of the High Middle Ages, an exceptional personality and the first modern man on the throne.

WNC was a great admirer of the 'stupor mundi' (wonder of the world) as Frederick II was called. It was his deep personal concern to preserve the legacy of Frederick II "de arte venandi cum avibus". On his initiative, the highest award of the Austrian Falconry Association "Frederick II in Silver" was created.

The recognition of falconry in Austria as Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in March this year was a great satisfaction to him. Under his consistent leadership, the OFB has grown into a nationally and internationally recognized and respected falconers association and his life's work and achievements will accompany us and bear fruits far beyond his death.

May the eternal falconry emperor grant his loyal advocate Norbert Walter Crammer, a rightful place in his celestial round table!

Obituary Walter Norbert Crammer

On 20 November 2010 Walter N. Crammer sadly passed away at the age of 90.

With him the Austrian Falconers association has lost one of the most important and formative personalities of its 60 year history. Shortly after his enlisting in the ÖFB in 1962, Walter N. Crammer was entrusted with the duties of ÖFB Secretary in 1963, and he also led the provincial ÖFB committees of Vienna and Lower Austria. Looking after the ÖFB finances in 1964/1965, he became the managing ÖFB Vice-President in 1966, a position in which he remained for 31 years.

Right at the beginning of his functional period, during the international falconers meeting in Petronell an initiative was taken to establish a worldwide Association of Falconers, which resulted in the IAF, whose General Secretary Walter N. Crammer was between 1972 and 1975. His strategic decisions, that he followed through with great persistence, were always

to the ÖFB's good.

His greatest personal concern throughout the years has been the preservation of the intellectual heritage of Emperor Frederic II of Hohenstaufen. "De arte venandi cum avibus" meant a lot more than just Falconry to him, as did his never-ending requests and appeals for unity among falconers.

For 35 years Walter N. Crammer dedicated his tireless creative power to the ÖFB and to the Falconry community, which led to a sound foundation upon which future generations can build.

The Austrian Falconers Association has become a nationally and internationally recognized representative of Austrian Falconry, and our gratitude will always be with our Honorary President.

May the eternal Emperor of all Falconers grant his devoted advocate a due place at his heavenly Round Table!

Dr. Harald Barsch, Honorary ÖFB President 🦅





JIM WILLMARTH

1945-2011

James L. Willmarth, 65, died Wednesday, April 13, of pancreatic cancer in his home at the World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho.

Jim was born April 17, 1945, in St. Louis, Missouri, and grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He attended the University of New Mexico and Universidad de las Americas in Mexico City. He also became a skilled falconer, adept at capturing and handling birds of prey.

In 1980, he began a 30-year career with The Peregrine Fund. As part of the effort to save the Peregrine Falcon from extinction, he watched over Peregrine chicks as they were released into the wild at one of the earliest hack sites in Grand Teton National Park. In 1984, he helped construct the Peregrine Fund's new breeding facility in Boise, Idaho. Jim's work with The Peregrine Fund took him around the world. He built a state-of-the-art outdoor aviary in Hawaii for an endangered crow species. Then he went to Arizona to construct a holding pen for endangered California Condors being released to the wild.

In 2000, Jim was asked to go to Cape Verde off the West African coast to capture rare and elusive Cape Verde Red Kites. After months of careful observation, he did capture the kites by tying tiny nooses to locusts and setting them out on tree branches, an idea generated by his innate understanding of bird behavior. Jim also worked in Pakistan trying to rescue severely endangered vulture populations poisoned by pharmaceutical toxins. After Pakistan, he returned to Arizona and spent the next three years releasing and monitoring endangered California Condors. During these years, he was asked to work in Greenland, capturing, tagging, and releasing over 120 Gyrfalcons.



Jim's many talents included photography. He also went to film school and was indispensable in producing photos and videos for The Peregrine Fund.

In 2007, Jim moved to Boise and became Bird Curator at the interpretive center at the World Center for Birds of Prey. Using his extensive knowledge of falconry and long experience with birds, he put together flight demonstrations and safeguarded the bird's daily health and well-being.

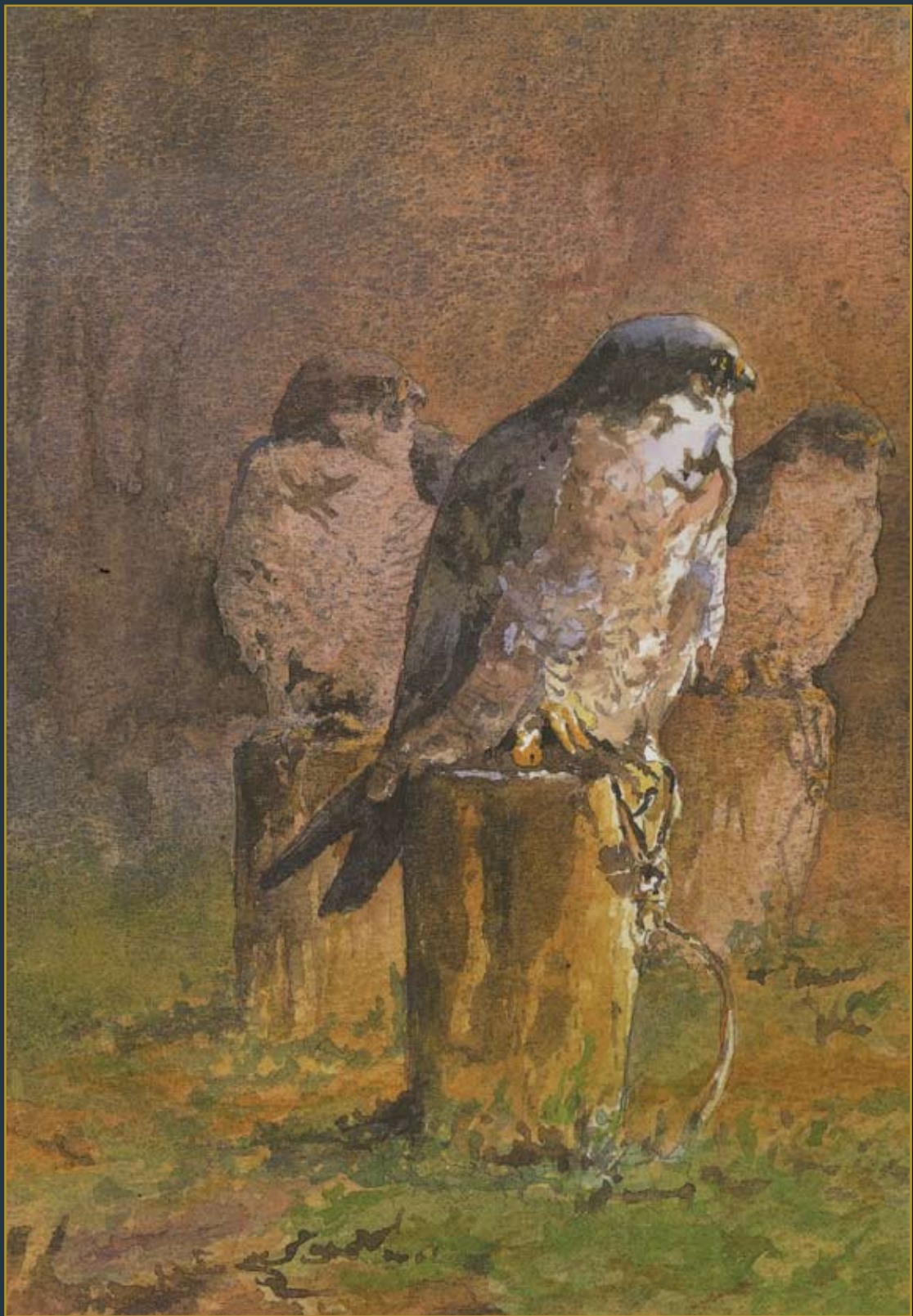
Jim is survived by his mother, Nila Willmarth, Albuquerque, N.M., five siblings: Lynne Wolfe, Taxco, Mexico; Ann Dressler, Newtown, Pennsylvania; Laura Hebenstreit, Las Cruces, N.M.; Susan Willmarth, New York, N.Y.; and Michael Willmarth, Richardson, Texas; and nephew Todd Hebenstreit, Albuquerque, N.M.

The family would like to extend special thanks to Cal and Machel Sandfort, Matt Podolsky, Trish Nixon, Fred Pugh, Bill Heinrich, Tony Crosswell, Kent Carnie, Bob Collins, Peter Jenny, Marti Jenkins, Ed Levine, Meagan Kaiser, and all his friends and colleagues at The Peregrine Fund for their support during Jim's illness. The family also thanks the staff at St. Luke's Hospice.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorials to The Peregrine Fund, 5668 W. Flying Hawk Lane, Boise, Idaho 83709.

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