

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FALCONRY



2015

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FALCONRY AND CONSERVATION OF BIRDS OF PREY  
MEMBER OF IUCN





Photo by Mark Williams

# TAKE THE NEXT STEP: SUBSCRIBE TO IAF

**Traditionally IAF has only allowed clubs or organizations to take part - now this is possible for individual falconers.**

Please join a select group of people among the international falconry community. These individuals care so much about ensuring the future of falconry in their own countries and throughout the world that they generously support the IAF with philanthropic contributions above and beyond their support of their national clubs. At the 45th Council of Delegates Meeting the IAF voted to accept individual subscribers who may subscribe by using the online form [www.iaf.org/DownloadAppForm.php](http://www.iaf.org/DownloadAppForm.php)

INDIVIDUAL SUBSCRIBERS may be invited to attend IAF events and to volunteer for roles within the IAF.

**What is the IAF? Why does my National Club belong to it?** Influences and controls on falconry so often come from outside national laws. The IAF is the Global Defense and Advocacy organization for falconry: we attend all those meetings so that you can go out practice falconry in the field.

- We provide the international voice for falconers, defending your rights and privileges alongside your national club
- We are the face of falconry at international conventions and conferences
- We safeguard culture to practice of falconry for you, for your children and for their children

Falconers share an international brotherhood, a common language and an understanding which bridges continents, races and religions. Falconry is a force for peace and friendship in the world. The IAF is your representative organization – we work for you and for all falconers. We are your insurance against outside attacks.

**What does IAF do for me personally? Why should I bother?** IAF represents falconry throughout the world. Falconry is the traditional sport of taking game in its natural state and habitat by trained birds of prey. It is a hunting art. IAF supports hunting falconers all over the world and we represent them at international hunting organizations. These include both FACE (European Hunters' Association) and CIC (International Council of Hunting). We represent falconers at International Conventions that can influence hunting and falconry:



- CITES, Conference on Biodiversity, Conference of Migratory Species, Bern Convention
- IAF preserves and encourages falconry in the context of sustainable use of wildlife
- We support the sustainable use of quarry and of the environment and recognize sustainable use requires the presence of good conservation measures
- We are actively involved in the conservation of raptors and we promote the efforts of falconers all around the world
- We promote the development of veterinary care of raptors and encourage the breeding of falconry raptors
- IAF requires the observation of falconry, hunting, conservation and welfare laws, regulations, traditions and culture with regard to the taking, import, export and keeping of birds of prey, the taking of quarry species and the right of access to land in the country concerned
- IAF supports the legal practice of falconry and stands against wildlife crime
- We promote the culture of falconry and the rights of our membership and we help in the development of suitable national regulations and legislation
- We promote falconry and the support of falconry as an intangible cultural heritage
- The IAF is widely representative of falconers at all relevant international forums – we are an Advisory NGO to the Directorate of Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO, we are an international NGO member of IUCN and actively involved in the Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group, we are one of only 3 Co-operating Partners in the Raptors MoU of the Convention on Migratory Species and we have right of representation at meetings of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.

Since 1968 the IAF has been an entirely voluntary organization that has achieved major results all over the world. Now we represent 67 countries and have entered a period where a professional staff is needed. Generous funding has been received from Emirates Falconers Club for the start up of the permanent office, but there are time limits and we will need to find alternative funding sources in the future. You can help by subscribing and buying items from the webstore. 🦅





## Editors Foreword

Recently watching the YouTube video of our president Adrian Lombard welcoming guests to the official opening of IAF's new office in the FACE building in Brussels was a poignant experience. It was twenty years ago when Christian de COUNE, Yves Le Coque and myself met with Willem Weinsteckers, who was then head of DG11 in Brussels, in preparation for the upcoming CITES CoP. Willem Weinsteckers went on to become Secretary General of CITES and a sincere friend, always remaining professionally neutral he was nevertheless helpful to IAF with a dependably warm welcome to his office in Geneva. After our meeting was over and Willem had left, informal discussion continued for some time gradually outlining what became our shared dream that one day IAF might have a formal office in Brussels with permanent staff and that the then fledgling organisation might expand greatly to truly have members from all parts of the globe.

Twenty years later, building on the business plan brought into being by our past president Frank Bond, the Emirates Falconers Club has generously sponsored IAF under the presidency of Adrian Lombard to bring the shared dream for IAF to reality. You will understand

my somewhat choked emotion as I watched and heard Adrian's speech marking this giant step for IAF.

To have been involved and watched our Association grow over so many years to achieve its current position in support of so many falconers, clubs and organisations worldwide, has been my privilege. My gratitude to so many people over this period is far beyond anything I could have imagined and as I see so many younger people now enlisted in the work of IAF it inspires complete confidence for the future of our Association and development of its relationships around the world at all levels.

Today I breathe a sigh of relief and enjoy my way of life in falconry, happily retired from the hurly burly of business and its demands, privileged to fly my hawks in an environment where we as falconers are now respected and welcomed, contributing to the regulatory process and so many conservation efforts.

In our last edition of the Journal we reported the passing of our past president Frank M Bond who sadly did not live to see this fruition of the business plan he developed with such expertise and insight. He would have been proud to see the association develop and mature into

today's professional body representing so many falconers from different cultures. The recognition of falconry by UNESCO for its intangible cultural heritage is another strand of work that benefits our way of life and again it is with sadness that we report the passing of a person of major influence in bringing this about. Mohammed Khalaf Al Mazrouei was a man of vision and selfless dedication who worked tirelessly to bring about this success and to whom we all are indebted.

Producing this edition of The International Journal of Falconry has been pressured by this also being the breeding season here at home with unrelenting demands on our time. Sitting up at night for the wonder of foaling our mare whilst at the same time watching for eggs and inseminations lost much sleep followed by the usual busyness of hatching, feeding young, tending horses and dogs. Our Spring has been long and slow, cooler than usual, lengthening the glorious abundance of garden flowers and delaying arrival of our summer visitors, swallows, swifts and the occasional cuckoo.

Today the latest clutch of eggs has pipped in the incubator as the first round of eyasses being fed in their nests by their mothers start to show feathers. The next few weeks will hopefully be frantic with imprints and tame hack for these hatching second clutches. My thanks to my family, particularly my wife Jenny, without whose patience and diligence this magazine would not have been possible.

I hope you enjoy the result of this team effort from the authors who have been willing to write, photographers and artists, my daughters family who do all the layout and production, our printers in Poland and the IAF editorial board. Meanwhile in our hurly-burly at home there is more food to prepare!

Anthony Crosswell, Editor UK

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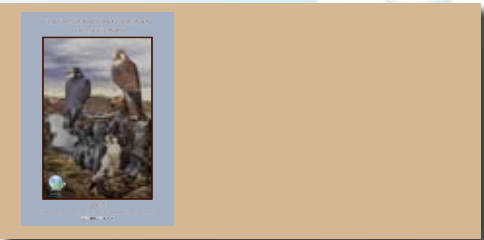
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Ralph Rodgers and Henrique Renzende look at the explosion of enthusiasm, learning, sharing and practice of falconry in Latin America today



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**44: New Birds in a New Land:**  
Mark Williams moved to the UAE in 2013 and here he explores his aspiration to experience the wild species of raptors found in this land



Photo by Mark Williams



# IAF PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE 2015

A Vision for the International Association for Falconry and the Conservation of Birds of Prey

By Adrian Lombard, IAF President

The International Association for Falconry and the Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) was conceived in 1967 and became a reality in 1968. Its initial membership consisted of the eight European founder nations. Today it has become an organization which represents 67 different nations and has an additional five observer nations with a membership of some 105 different organizations. The IAF can truly claim to be the global organization for the promotion and advocacy of falconry. Central to this is our definition of falconry which we recognize as a “hunting art”

The terms “promotion” and “advocacy” have been selected with due consideration. If the IAF were described as an organization for the “defence” of falconry, this would suggest that we have something to defend and that we accept that there may be something wrong with what we do. This is far from the case; falconers are passionate about their art and acceptance by UNESCO as a living human heritage denotes a world-wide acceptance for our practices. However, this does not mean that we do not face challenges. These challenges are very real and are driven by individuals with an animal rights agenda, who are equally passionate, if misguided, and pose a serious threat to the continuation of falconry. Their arguments can gain acceptance in an increasingly urbanized world where the general public will often base decisions on superficial and emotive arguments. It is only too true that conservation policies may be determined more by politics and funder desires than by scientific reasoning and evidence-based decisions.

Current threats are related to the development of a powerful, emotion driven, anti-hunting lobby, animal welfare concerns with a strong animal-rights bias and current concerns to address wildlife crime through greater restriction and regulation. The IAF must assist falconers by alerting them to these threats and to promote a strategy to address these issues. One of the most important perceptions through my tenure as President of the IAF has been to place the IAF into a “front foot” campaign where we can anticipate challenges and prepare for them rather than a “back-foot” defensive role where we react to threats as they arise. Key to this is the acquisition of information and “intelligence”, the development of sound relationships with friends and allies as well as those with at least some common interest, and the structuring of a talented and dedicated team of volunteers to take the work of the organization forwards. Also central to this strategy has been the development of the IAF Business Plan. This was the brain-child of President

Frank Bond and conceives the establishment of a permanent office with professional staff to provide logistical support to the volunteers as well as an essential communication and lobbying capacity. Once again, strategy determines that this office should be located in Europe and, ideally, in Brussels; but this office must have a global perspective and serve the interests of falconers all over the world. This office has become a reality with its official opening in April 2015. The inception of this office has significantly altered the stature of the IAF from a rather ephemeral volunteer organization to one substance and permanence. The realization of the Business plan has been made possible by the generous and perceptive support of the Emirates Falconry Club. The establishment of this office would not be possible without this support as the developments necessary to make the Office and Business Plan sustainable require an already established office. It is now our duty to make this sustainable and ensure the long term support for falconry on a global level.

We cannot and should not rely on a single generous donor as a source of long term support. Thus the “start up” funding from the Emirates Falconry Club has a limited term of five years. What then can we do to raise the necessary funding to make the IAF Business Plan sustainable in the long term? We can analyse our potential sources of income and see how these fit with the role and objectives of the IAF:

## 1. Membership fees

This has been the traditional source of income of the IAF and has obvious limitations. As the IAF provides greater services and representation, so these fees must increase but there are limitations on ability of some falconers to pay a fee and on the tolerance of wealthier nations to carry the poorer. Some increased flexibility must be developed but this will not satisfy the funding requirements.

## 2. Subscribership

The facility for individual falconers to donate to the IAF through subscription could be a valuable source of income. This must be promoted by our member organizations to develop the source of funding as the IAF has limited contact with individual falconers. Promotion of the more expensive categories of membership such as Life Subscriber, Falconry Sponsor or Patron with prestige and recognition accruing from this will be necessary.

## 3. Sale of Regalia

There is a very limited role of the sale of items such as ties, scarves, books etc. as these involve capital outlay, the holding of stock and there are limited opportunities for sales. The

main value of this is to promote the “branding” of the IAF but on-line sales could be further developed.

## 4. Foundations

The original business plan envisaged significant donor funding in three Foundations to be the most viable long term solution to provide sustainable income to fund the work of the IAF. These Foundations would be established in Europe, North America and the Middle East. This remains the long term funding goal and work is afoot to establish these Foundations but to attract donor funds there is a need to present a prospectus and to have viable and creditable track record.

## 5. Provision of Services

There are a range of services which could be provided by the IAF which would be to the benefit of Falconry and be in keeping with the roles and objectives of our organization and which would provide operational funding for the medium to long term. The development of these services will, in fact, fit with the strategic planning of the IAF to support global falconry.

These services could include:

### a. Management of Conservation Projects

### b. Development of a Falconry Heritage Tourist Route

### c. Development of a Raptor Breeders Registry, Studbooks and DNA Bank

### d. Raptor Welfare Audits

I shall briefly discuss these services which will all require due consideration and approval by the Council of Delegates.

### Management of Conservation Projects

The IAF is ideally placed to manage significant conservation projects which involve raptors or quarry species. Current examples would be the Flagship Projects of the Saker Global Action Plan such as the plan to provide 1000 artificial nests in Kazakhstan. We are in the process of establishing a creditable track record by funding and managing the first of these projects, the Portal to Enhance Trust. This has been developed and will be actively promoted over the coming months. The larger and more costly projects envisaged by the Saker Global Action Plan would entail support staff and this, in turn, would assist in funding our professional office. There is the potential for similar projects addressing issues such as the Asian Vulture crisis or the plague of raptor slaughter caused by electricity transmission lines in Asia. Engagement in these projects would not only support the IAF financially but would entrench our role as a very significant conservation organization.

### European Falconry Heritage Route

Funding is available within the European Union to develop Tourist routes which stimulate tourism within the European

Union and also help to create the sense of a European identity (as opposed to a national identity). This funding would support the IAF running costs but there is also a potential to generate significant income from commissions and advertising. Falconry fits this concept perfectly and there is a wide range of different sites and events which would populate this route. This project would also fit the essential role that the IAF must play in promoting both the Tangible and the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Falconry.

### Breeders Registry and Stud Book

Falconry remains one of the very few activities which utilize captive-bred animals but which does not protect the users through the formal recording of breeding stock and progeny. This is partly due to the strange fact that raptors are still seen as wild animals despite a 50 year history of captive breeding but also due to the wide array of species and subspecies which are utilized by our art. It is also a commentary on the strong antipathy of falconers to regulation and bureaucracy. The Code of Conduct for Hunting and Invasive Alien Species, developed by the Bern Convention, calls on falconers to establish a registry of raptors within the European Union. At the same time, the world is currently addressing the issue of Wildlife crime. This issue has achieved significant stature within the legislatures as it is seen to provide income to criminals and terrorists and has been likened to trafficking in drugs, arms and humans. My efforts to evidence the insignificance of raptor related crime are sabotaged by the idiots who steal Bonelli’s Eagle and Lanner chicks in Southern and Eastern Europe. It is clearly in the falconers’ interest to protect their autonomy and to safeguard their sport by insisting that the bird they purchase is indeed legitimate and the bird that they want. Here the IAF can assert its impartiality and engage with breeders to develop a registry while addressing the concerns of both national legislators and falconers. This registry could provide pedigrees for the progeny of breeders which falconers could insist upon. We have developed the “Mark and Bank” proposal which links tamper-proof marking of birds with banking of DNA material. The IAF is optimally placed to put this banking system in place for species which are considered threatened by crime or where falconers require definite proof of lineage. A small fee per bird registered would fund this project and support the IAF

### Raptor Welfare Audits

The IAF believes that falconers are the experts on the welfare and management of falconry raptors. The practice of falconry requires birds that are physically and mentally fit and much of the “art” of falconry is related to addressing this aspect. Indeed, if we consider the intangible heritage of falconry as the passing of skills from master to apprentice, then much of the skill and knowledge that is transmitted



relates to the welfare of the hawks within our care. The IAF has engaged in this area, as the global representative of falconers, to become the global expert organization on the welfare of falconry raptors. To this end, we have developed the General Welfare Guidelines which were adopted at the 2014 IAF AGM and we have started the development of Raptor Veterinary Conferences to enhance the capacity of veterinarians to treat falconry raptors with the first of these held in Qatar with the support of the Alganaas Club of Qatar in 2014. Hunting falconers are necessarily skilled in the welfare of their raptors and much of their activity does not take place within the public eye. There are many, however, who are not falconers (by definition) but who use falconry “methods” and often they are in the public eye and their practices are commercial. The general public and, in particular, those who wish to attack falconry do not make the distinction, as we do, between hunting falconers and those who use falconry methods. The question is thus raised “how do we address those who use falconry methods and who have the potential to bring our Art into disrepute?”. Our response to this dilemma has been to develop, with the expert assistance of Prof. Dr. Tom Richter, our Vice-President for Europe and expert on Animal Ethology, a formal Animal Welfare Audit for those who use falconry methods such as Bird Displays, Commercial Breeders, Rehabilitators and those who use raptors for pest mitigation. The IAF represents falconry and this is, by our definition, a hunting art. Other activities which use falconry method are not represented by us but we may be seen as an impartial body with respect to these and this positions us well to provide an audit for their activities. This Welfare Audit is planned to involve an exhaustive questionnaire which would be completed on-line and submitted, along with relevant photographs and a statement by the responsible veterinarian for assessment by the IAF. On completion of a satisfactory audit, and for a fee, the IAF will provide a Certificate of Welfare Compliance to the applicant. In the event that the applicant is subsequently challenged on welfare grounds, the IAF will perform an on-site inspection to determine if the enterprise matches its submission and whether we can support it against criticism. In this way the IAF can exert an influence over those who use falconry methods, can generate funding and can entrench our role as the expert organization on the welfare of falconry raptors.

#### **The Future Role of the IAF**

The IAF has now developed a capacity to represent falconry that we have never before enjoyed. This capacity has been in evidence over the past two years and influences our plans for the future.

#### **Representation for Hunting Falconry**

The IAF represent falconers as hunters. In Europe, our ability to monitor the legislative processes which may influence

falconry has been significantly enhanced through our use of a contract with the Dods Monitoring Agency which allows us to focus on the activities of specific individuals and organizations within the European Union as well as watching specific areas of legislation. While this initiative is Eurocentric, much of the discussion and data has implications for the rest of the world. We would like to extend this type of service to other parts of the world and we look towards working with member organizations, such as NAFA, to develop this capacity further.

We have strengthened our relationship with significant hunting organizations. In April 2015, we signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding with FACE and, at the same time, opened our Office in the Brussels headquarters of FACE. We have been represented at successive meetings of the CIC with whom we have developed an excellent cooperative relationship, enhanced by the appointment of Karl-Heinz Gersmann to the IAF Advisory Committee as our CIC Liaison. Through the CIC we have access to the Collaborative Partnership on Wildlife Management which is a high-level body that addresses aspects of conservation, hunting and sustainable use. We have good representation within the IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Group where we have the opportunity to learn from and contribute to the discussions of world experts in this area. We have also improved our contacts with regional and national falconry groups so as to ensure that we have a working knowledge of the concerns and problems of hunters. Visits have been made by members of the Executive to a range of countries to meet with our members and more are planned.

We have established the IAF Biodiversity Group which addresses the very significant loss of biodiversity and, in particular, small game within Europe as a result of agricultural practices and this group is composed of a group of exceptionally competent individuals.

#### **Promotion of the Conservation Interests of falconers**

The IAF has provided representation for falconry at all the major international conservation related gatherings. We have held side events at both the recent meetings of the Congress of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Korea and the Convention on Migratory Species in Ecuador. The IAF is one of only three Cooperating Partners in the Raptors MoU of the Convention on Migratory Species. We have representation both on the Technical Action Group and the Saker Task Force within this organization. Through this we have contributed significantly to the development of the Global Action Plan for the Saker Falcon and we have taken on the funding and management of the first of the Flagship Projects envisaged by this Plan. This project is the “Portal to Enhance Trust” and is now up and running. The Portal can be visited at [www.sakerfalcon.org](http://www.sakerfalcon.org) where you will see that this engagement has made the IAF a direct partner with UNEP/

CMS, BirdLife International and the IUCN. The IAF has the right to send an observer to meetings of the Bern Convention of which we have made invaluable use with the development of significant contacts and the opportunity to have input in areas of interest.

The IAF is building its capacity to contribute to future significant conservation projects and is currently looking to support efforts to re-introduce the peregrine falcon to Malta and to enhance lanner falcon conservation in Southern Europe. We are also engaged in a very significant development involving falconers in raptor conservation in Pakistan.

Electrocution has been identified as a very significant cause of raptor mortality in Asia and Eastern Europe. This is seen by the IAF as the “DDT event of our time” and we intend to address this including the proposal of a resolution for the next IUCN World Congress in 2016.

Establishing the IAF as the Global Authority on the welfare of falconry raptors: This has already been extensively addressed under consideration of the Falconry Welfare Audit. The IAF has plans to go ahead with future Veterinary conferences including a Conference on Raptor Biomedicine which will call for the presentation of original research work.

#### **Promotion of Falconry as an Intangible Cultural Heritage and of the cultural aspects of falconry**

The IAF will meet its obligations as an Advisory NGO associated with the Directorate of Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO. We will be represented at the next Congress of this convention which takes place in Namibia in 2015. We are assisting with the presentation of new applicant nations to join the falconry submission and would like to recognize the role of Abu Dhabi and Dr Awadh Ali Saleh in this effort. We contributed to the 2014 Falconry Festival in Abu Dhabi and look forward to an even greater contribution at the next planned for 2017. The New York University in Abu Dhabi is planning a conference addressing “Arab-European Contact through Falconry in the Middle Ages”. The IAF will be fully engaged in this conference and will present one of the sessions. The IAF has contributed to the book “Premodern falconry and bird symbolism - interdisciplinary and practical considerations: the global perspective in relation to northern Europe” and will also provide limited financial support for the publication of this scholarly text. The IAF has developed “World Falconry Day”, held annually on 10th November in recognition of the recognition of falconry as a world intangible cultural heritage and we shall continue to promote this.

#### **Communication**

Communication is key to the functioning of the IAF, however growth and development bring their own problems which require the evolution of improved means of communication. The IAF needs top-down as well as bottom-up communication to reach and understand the needs of grass-roots falconers

who are our *raison d'être*. The link to this is the National Delegate who must communicate up and down. All too often, this does not occur.

• The IAF Journal remains our flagship publication and is our means to reach out to falconers and those, outside falconry, whom we wish to inform and influence. The Journal must be of good quality, contain a good selection of articles and also reflect the activities, interests and ethos of our organization. It will reach more people if we can find a means to include more languages.

• The IAF Newsletter is an invaluable addition to our publications which can provide news and information with reports of the activities both of the IAF and of our membership. We have managed to incorporate additional languages in the latest edition which is available on-line. This publication is aimed at our membership and addresses the need to reach grass-roots falconers. We still rely on national delegates for its dissemination.

• The eBulletin has been invaluable in keeping our members and friends informed of our activities and of current events and issues. Once again, the national delegates must be called upon to distribute these widely.

• The web site with its appropriate address - [www.iaf.org](http://www.iaf.org) - is an important means of communicating and providing information about the IAF and about falconry. We have an excellent web site but have experienced some difficulty in maintaining it and renewing the information which it contains. This is currently being addressed.

• Communication amongst the leadership (the Executive, Board and full Advisory Committee) has been good with limitations. This has significantly improved with the employment of the Executive Officer. We have obtained software “GoToOffice” to allow on-line meetings but must master the technology to use this effectively.

#### **Where to now?**

The IAF has developed and expanded beyond the wildest dreams of the early founders in 1968. This has been the result of the vision and efforts of a number of dedicated and able individuals who have led and served our organization. The immediate prospects are exciting: we are opening up to falconers in South America, China and Russia. We have expanded from a single Vice-Presidency to four Vice Presidencies with the imminent addition of the Vice Presidency for the MENA region which is designed to allow us greater interaction with the many falconers in North Africa and the Middle East. Our current policy is to strive to be inclusive of all hunting falconers and to create real incentives for them to be part of our organization. Above all, we must ensure that our development is sustainable. Our recent growth has been exponential; we have the responsibility that our future growth follows a “sine” curve and not a “bell” curve. Interesting times and much work lie ahead. 🦅



# South American Falconry

There is little or no evidence that native peoples in the Americas practiced the art of falconry. Falconry most likely came to the new world with Europeans who discovered new quarry, new species of raptors, and of course, new landscapes begging to be explored by the men/women of hawk and glove.

By Ralph Rogers and Henrique Renzende

In North America, the Art remained dormant and practiced by a few until the 20th century when its practice spread gradually but strongly through Canada and the US resulting in some 4500 practitioners by the beginnings of the current century. That 20th century growth did not apparently occur in South America and the handfuls of participants of European origin continued to practice in relative isolation. There was then and continued until the last few decades, an extractive history of raptors going from South America to Europe. The best documented is the fascination of Europeans with the Aplomado falcon or “Alethe”, as it was known in Europe. There continues until today interest in some of the species of raptors unique to South America, but the practice of falconry itself has changed rapidly within the last 30 years in all of America.

Latin

There is an explosion of enthusiasm, learning, sharing, and practice of falconry in Latin America today. This was inevitable given the nature of the Art. Clearly the passion that has kept this sport alive for more than 4 thousand years has just been repressed below the surface but has now been loosed. While there are handfuls of master falconers with decades of practice, most of the many South American falconers are new to the Art. This explosion and experimentation is most likely the product of improving economic conditions combined with improved communications in a new world of internet and on-line video. For the first time, falconers are able to find each other and share their knowledge and enthusiasm, resulting in this rapid growth.

A visit with Latin American falconers today will keep a smile



on your face for the duration. Here falconers do not have hundreds of years of experience dictating what to do with the available prey species or the available raptors. Of course there are great opportunities for practicing classic falconry with dog and waiting-on falcons. Most falconers from the world would recognize a new variation of the classic flight at tinamou or ducks, but who knew that the diminutive spotted falconet (200 grams) was such a game little raptor taking anything it can hold, refusing very little, and putting on performances any austringer with a spar would envy. Who knew that in the absence of large goshawks falconers would be “forced” to use the beautiful and usually ornate hawk eagles from the forests? Who knew that aplomado falcons can willingly provide the ringing flights on egrets that are clearly reminiscent of falconry at the Loo? Who knew that the common buzzard eagle was as fast and adroit as a Harris hawk, or so biddable, or for that matter so beautiful up close? Folks there didn’t know that ducks are not regularly caught with Harris’ Hawks in the rest of the world....so they just go out and do it. The bottom line is that here in South America, no one is bound by institutional knowledge of what is possible and what isn’t. Along with classic falconry practiced with relatively unknown (and beautiful) races of peregrines on relatively unknown species of game, falconry is one giant enthusiastic experiment. The



history of falconry in this part of the world is being rapidly written by some of the most skillful and friendly practitioners anywhere. It is a wonder to experience and difficult not to get completely caught up in the enthusiasm.

## General Aspects

### Legal

In most places in South America, falconry is not provided for in national laws. This is a situation many countries are attempting to change especially with the designation of falconry as an “Intangible Cultural Heritage”.

All raptors receive full protection of provincial and federal laws, and the permits to possess a raptor are given in a case by case basis, to the background of each person.

If you have a permit to have a raptor you can hunt gun hunters, may vary from one province to another.

Also in recent years there has been an increase in the numbers of breeding projects that will be the major legal source for raptors.

### The landscape

The country is 1,090,550 sq miles and a wide range of latitudes 21 to 55 degrees with altitudes ranging from 7000 meters in the Andes to sea level, presenting all kinds of weather with great enviromental variation from rain forest in the north, forest eagles (Harpia, Morphunus, Spizaetus







- Harris Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) (Male 650 gr, Female 850 gr)
- Bat Falcon (*Falco ruficularis*) (Male 110 gr, Female 240 gr)
- Spot-Winged Falconet (*Spizapteryx circumcinctus*), (Male 170 gr, Female 200 gr)
- Bicolored Hawk (*Accipiter bicolor*) (Male 260 gr, Female 380 gr)
- Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis*) (Male 280 gr, Female 360 gr)
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus cassini*) (Male 550 gr, Female 900 gr)
- Kestrel Falcon (*Falco sparverius*)

#### The Quarry

The species most often used in falconry are :

& Spizastur), forest falcons (*Micrastur*), accipiters (*Bicolor*) and falcons (*Ruficularis* & *Deiroleucus*) then to the pampa steppes in the south. The grasslands in the center we have open-land eagles (*Harpyhaliaetus* & *Geranoaetus*), Hawks (*Parabuteo*) and falcons (*Femoralis* & *Peregrinus*). Along with these predators there wide variety of prey - stilts, ibis, lapwings, snipe, doves, ducks, tinamous, egrets - falconers have yet to experiment with many varieties of quarry species.

#### The Hunters

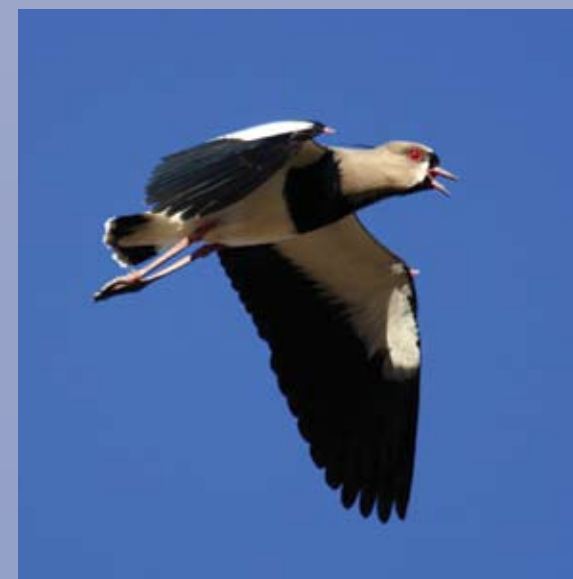
- Black and White Hawk Eagle (*Spizastur melanoleucus*) (Male 900 gr, Female 1200 gr)
- Ornate Hawk Eagle (*Spizaetus ornatus*) (Male 1000 gr, Female 1500 gr)
- Buzard Eagle (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*)

- Ducks (Several species)
- Common Tinamou (*Nothura maculosa*)
- Red winged Tinamou *rRhynchotus Rufescens*
- Crested Tinamou (*Eudromia elegans*)
- California quail (*Callipepla californica*)
- Southern Lapwing (*Vanellus chilensis*)
- Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)
- European Hare (*Lepus europaeus*)

Ducks and tinamous are taken in traditional waiting on flights with peregrines. The tinamous are also taken in direct flights from the fist. The tinamous are classic upland game. These interesting birds have evolved into the role of a game bird from a non gallinaceous origin. They hold to a point like a grouse, fly like a grouse, and occur in several sizes. There are more than 20 species, the common tinamou (300 gr) to the red winged tinamo (1000 gr). They are however composed of white breast meat. They are very fast but don't have the potential to fly long distances. There are 3 species that are commonly taken; the common tinamou, the crested tinamou and the red winged tinamou. The habitat of the other species are not suitable for long wing falconry.

Lapwings are also taken in waiting-on flights with peregrines. Direct flights from the fist with Aplomados make spectacular long tail chase like the saker/hubara flights on a smaller scale. Another great flight is chasing cattle egrets with aplomados at sunset when small flocks on passage flying at high altitude on their way to roost. It is a real struggle for height with ringing flights where the strongest win. It has the disadvantage that sometimes the flight can be very long distance and nighttime recovery is quite common.

For the eagles and Harris the main prey is the European brown hare. Also ducks and tinamos are taken in some cases. 🦅





# NIGEL

*By Bill Johnston*

**Nigel is an imprinted Eurasian Sparrowhawk, a bird all too familiar to most IAF readers. As common in the UK, Ireland and Europe as Red Tailed Hawks and Harris's Hawks are here in the US, sometimes it's the exotic that hold appeal to falconers that despite advancing years yearn to explore.**



Nigel was pulled from the chamber at seven days, and raised alone in the breeder's home until at 14 days he was shipped to me. I could have purchased several tiercel peregrines or a gray phase gyrfalcon for what I paid for the pitiful looking mass of down and feathers standing on two elongated toothpicks that looked back at me from the interior of the shipping crate. Once home and comfortably installed in his "nest", my little guy settled right in. I subscribe to the notion that accipiters must be taken at an age where they shown no fear and are exposed to everything that one can think they will see later on. Until hard penned, Nigel was kept in my family room amongst people, dogs, TV and any other distraction that occurs in a

normal household. Never hand fed, his dish was always full. He also took frequent car rides, sitting on a modified box strapped to the front seat of my truck. I even remembered to turn the windshield wipers on. Many of our excursions took us to a local farm and a trash recycling plant where I planned to hunt him. He saw cows, cars, sheep, trucks and all manner of industrial and farm equipment. About the time Nigel was hard penned, he was introduced to the lure. Thereafter, the dish was removed and all food was taken on the floor, from the lure. My theory is; they must learn to love the lure and be willing to come any distance to it. Not only does this remove the falconer as the target, it also helps

ensure that a wayward hawk can be retrieved as long as it can see the object of its affection.

House Sparrows, European Starlings and Common Rock Doves are abundant and not protected in The United States, either by state, or federal law. They are generally considered exotics, or pest species and are therefore available to hunt, trap and kill in any number at any time of year. In fact, it's been my experience that their droppings, and the grain that they consume, or spoil make them a prime target for control. Hunting pheasants and sometimes, even ducks can be difficult because, they are not always easy to locate, or landowner permission is not readily granted. All songbirds are protected and can never be hunted. Plus, everyone loves them and I cannot imagine a scenario even if it were legal where permission would be granted.

As soon as Nigel penned, I began trapping sparrows and starlings. Bagged quarry is legal here and young, inexperienced birds were easy to acquire. Most days would see several dozen in the traps. Most were killed and frozen, but each day, Nigel was allowed to pursue and take one. As soon as he had dispatched it and eaten some, he was transferred to the lure, then to the fist. I have flown goshawks, both North American and European as well as passage Coopers Hawks. All accipiters, albeit with decidedly different dispositions, and all with one thing in common, when on weight its, chase, kill, eat, now! Nigel fit the profile perfectly. Pity the poor sparrow or starling that looks into those implacable, staring, unblinking, yellow

eyes. There is no mercy there. Please, just make it quick!

I have been blessed with relatively good health and the means to feed my passion. Shortly before I retired and left work some 11 years ago, I bought a small home in Central Nebraska that allowed easy access to fields of prairie chickens and ponds of ducks. The down side is it's an 1,800-mile drive and in some years the ponds are dry and grouse numbers fail. However, when the constellations align and the falconry gods smile, it's nirvana. Unfortunately the last several years of drought have seen a precipitous decline in chicken numbers and the migrating ducks just keep going. So, I choose to stay home, here in Massachusetts and fly ducks in the cranberry bogs and costal salt marshes. Last year was particularly bountiful, with large numbers of ducks, both local mallards and visiting blacks. It worked out well and I have been able to make the 100-mile drive to Cape Cod several days a week during the season, from mid October to early February. But, what of the other months of the year, and how about something a little closer to home? Well, there isn't much in the large avian department, close to home except sparrows, starlings and pigeons. And, these mostly in industrial parks and building interiors. So, any raptor that requires open space in which to hunt is pretty much out. The ideal hawk for the job is therefore reduced to small accipiters. Goshawks are too large and Coopers Hawks and I don't get along. The Sharp Shin Hawk is ideal, as is the Euro spar. Biddable, birdy, with a strong prey drive, either of these two close working short wings would do. Initially, I wanted something that would take pigeons, even crows, which are also abundant. However, the choice of US breeders is a short one that I know of and he was selling both of his breeding pairs in order to concentrate on other species. So, when the DNA test showed all muskets, there really wasn't any choice.

Nigel topped out at 147 grams. His first flight was at 142 grams and I spent the better part of an afternoon swatting bugs as I chased him through the woods behind my home. As might be expected, his response improved as his weight decreased. That's not to say we arrived at his hunting weight overnight. Another basic tenant of flying imprints is, in order to avoid behavior problems, don't reduce them too quickly. We finally arrived at 128 grams and have since increased to 132 grams. At this weight Nigel responds instantly to the lure and will fly long distances to it. He can be somewhat possessive of it and quarry, but he has never tried to attack, or foot me.

Our first flights were tentative, but determined. He soon learned, however, the art of surprise and ambush. Sparrows have been Nigel's principal prey. Not that he wouldn't take starlings, but principally







because sparrows are what we are finding where we hunt. Our favorite venue is a veterinary college a few miles away. They are plagued with sparrows and pigeons. Especially concerned about disease bourn from bird droppings, they welcome my frequent visits. Generally we have three opportunities, which in turn provide numerous slips, the sheep barn, the cow barn and an enormous compartmentalized chicken coop. At first, Nigel would chase any small bird that got up, wherever it came from, or wherever it went to. He would only break off when his target eluded him by dumping into tall grass, or finding some other refuge to hide in. In time, however he became selective, only pursuing inside structures or those close by on the ground feeding when we could get within 15 feet of them. His readiness to launch an attack can at times be confusing. Most of the time he will launch himself when we are in position and he deems the quarry is vulnerable and subject to capture. Other times, when I think he is going to attack, I have to throw him. He does not seem to mind being thrown and quickly composes himself for the chase. When hunting at the vet school, I usually start at the sheep barn. If there isn't much human activity, sparrows are usually

to be found in the hay used for bedding, or in the feed troughs scrounging for leftover feed. Because they see people all day long, the sparrows are desensitized to human presence and will allow a relatively close approach. Holding the musket close to my chest, I sort of back into the barn. There is a group of maybe a dozen birds in the bedding, around and under the sheep as well as in the troughs. I get as close as I can without spooking the birds and quickly turn around and launch Nigel. All pandemonium breaks loose! Some seek shelter in the stacks of hay; others find little nooks and crannies, while others make a run for it and head out the open side of the barn. The action is so fast with sparrows and sparrowhawk flying in amazingly tight circles, jinxes and turns, that I loose track of the little spar. I turn on the receiver and find him atop a hay bale clutching the shadow of the now departed sparrow. I pick him up and proceed to the cattle shed where I find people working and no sparrows. On to the chicken coops. There are over 200 chickens running around inside the various enclosures and a bonanza of at least 50 sparrows. Here, we are able to hide behind a partition and exercise some stealth, sneaking up on the unsuspecting sparrows. The musket is off of the fist in a flash and disappears up and over the partition. He does not come back up or perch nearby, so things look good. I run out of the door of the pen that I am in and into the one adjoining it. Where is the musket? If he has caught a sparrow I have to get to him while he is still in a catatonic state, or risk him carrying his prize to some secluded spot. The chickens are going ballistic in one of the nesting areas, so that's where I look. He is under a nest box, glassy eyed with his feet firmly implanted in a sparrow, still as a statue. I carefully hook him up and allow him to break in and feed. After a few minuets, I offer the garnished lure, which he quickly switches to. He is then taken on the fist for the remainder of his well-earned meal. It's a rare occasion when the musket fails to take quarry. I recall Gary Timbrell when asked, "what do you feed your spar?" Replied, "what ever he catches." That might have been a facetious remark, but it isn't far from the truth. I have been told that were sparrowhawks larger, no one would fly a goshawk. I can't attest to that, but for my purposes a micro hawk with tenacity and the heart of a lion is perfect for the quarry I have available. One of the most fundamental rules of falconry is, fly a bird for the game that is most common to where you hunt. Urban sprawl and loss of habitat has reduced opportunities for traditional quarry, plus seasons where it can be hunted limit what and where we fly our hawks. Here in the US, at least as far as sparrows are concerned, there is no limit to where and when they can be legally taken.

One word of caution, musket sparrowhawks are delicate. I keep Nigel in the house where the temperature is constant, and even so, he cannot miss a meal. However, if lots of action and plenty of game in the bag is your objective, consider a spar, or here in the US, a sharp. 🦅



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# Traders & Trappers

## Verbrugge and Mom and the Dutch falcon trade with Iceland in the 17th century

Based on a doctoral thesis\* by Maria Simon Thomas,  
published in 1935  
Adaption by Dick ten Bosch

### The Netherlands, later The United Provinces, in the 16th century

Emperor Charles V, in his ordinance *Beroerende de Edele Vogelen* (Regarding the Noble Birds) of 1539, firmly established that, without exception, all falcons caught in his empire in the district of Holland had to be presented to the grand falconer at the Falcon House in the Hague, the local seat of government. This civil servant would make a selection and pay for any birds he took. If a trapper failed to deliver his catch, having sold his birds underhandedly, both the buyer and the seller would be penalised. The Emperor's ordinance also extended to birds captured abroad: . . . . *also, regarding such birds as gyrfalcons, gyrtiercels, falcons, falcon tiercels and the like, coming from Norway and Iceland in our Country of Holland, nobody will be allowed to buy or sell them without having first brought and presented them to our dear and beloved sister the Queen, etc. etc., Regentess and Governess for us in our Country, or in the earlier mentioned Falcon House in our Court in the Hague, in order to purchase and select out of what is presented that which might please her.*

Here, for the first time, Icelandic falcons were mentioned. The value of a falcon was decided by species, gender, age and whether or not it had moulted. A price list of falcons from the time when Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, was Governor-General of the United Provinces (1585-1587) exists, carrying his signature:

- Red gyrfalcon	X guilders
- Red gyrtiercel	VII guilders
	X stuivers [5 cent coin]
- Haggard gyrfalcon after moult	XV guilders
- Haggard gyrtiercel after moult	XIII guilders
	III stuivers
- Red peregrine falcon	XV guilders
- Red peregrine tiercel	V guilders
- Haggard falcon after moult	XX guilders
- Haggard tiercel after moult	VIII guilders

### Grand Falconers of the Netherlands and other falconers

These precise instructions make clear the extent of the rulers' passion for their falconry. The Grand Falconer bore the responsibility for ensuring that his lord would not fail to see any valuable hunting bird passing through his lands at any time. It was a position of trust. A falconer was a man of distinction. It is remarkable that in our regions, the northern and southern Netherlands, the number of falcons caught was relatively small in comparison with the number imported. Before they were sold or presented the falcons were trained to a high standard and Dutch falconers stood in high esteem. Adolf van der Aa, Grand Falconer of the Netherlands in 1540, was sent by Mary of Hungary, governess and sister of Emperor Charles V, to the French king with trained falcons. Strict supervision during transportation ensured that no exchanges occurred, preventing inferior falcons being sent instead of the valuable, carefully trained ones. A wing feather was clipped from each bird and mailed separately as proof of identity, in order to be matched to the individual falcons later on. Philip II of Spain, who was a passionate lover of falconry, appointed Martin de Mol, Lord of Hove and Hoogvorst, Grand Falconer in 1556. Each year he arranged for the best birds to be sent to Spain: once, 32 birds in one go were sent, accompanied by four falconers. Martin de Mol, who died in Spain, was succeeded as Grand Falconer of the Netherlands in 1561 by his son Pierre de Mol, Lord of Hoochboort, and thereafter by another son, Jean de Mol, who was confirmed as Grand Falconer in 1591 by the Duke of Parma, the then Governor-General of the Netherlands.

In 1586 we find, in Holland, a falconer by the name of Philips Dircxz Mars who, in the presence of the Dutch court record keepers and of Johan Heyn, nobleman and Grand Falconer, swore an oath to serve loyally. From his terms of employment we learn the following: *In the first place said Philips Dircxz, will do his utmost duty to trap and to have falcons trapped in the customary*



White gyr with hood from the ‘Collection Museum het Prinsenhof’ in Delft

*places both here in Holland as in a number of places in the vicinity, as he deems fit and at his own discretion. Secondly, that to the benefit of His Excellence, he will do his utmost to learn about and to lay his hand on any kind of falcon trapped in the provinces of Holland, irrespective by whom. Thirdly, to the benefit of His Excellence, he will make a selection from various kinds of falcon from each cadge passing through these United Provinces, of not more than two falcons per cadge, paying the established price for each kind.*

In the same period in the southern Netherlands, modern-day Belgium, the archdukes possessed eight gyrfalcons specifically for flights at heron. In our regions it was the Princes of Orange, Maurits in particular, who held falconry in the highest regard. Gyrfalcons were imported from Iceland where trapping them was a privilege of the Danish crown. For centuries the

Danish kings presented falcons to other rulers as tokens of friendship and would send their falconers to Iceland to collect the birds.

### The Mumme or Mom family

In the 16th century the merchant Matthias Hoep, from Hamburg in Germany, became involved in the Icelandic falcon trade. In 1584 the brothers Mumme, who were in his service, made a voyage to Iceland and the falcons they brought back were sold to England. Among the members of the Mumme family travelling for Hoep, we find Augustijn, Marcus, Jochem and Thomas, all names which in the 17th century would still be prevalent in the family. They probably originated from Elmshorn in Schleswig.

The introduction of a trade monopoly changed the trade in falcons. After 1614 it was forbidden to trap or buy falcons in Iceland without the King of Denmark's permission and payment of a toll became obligatory. From then on continental monarchs and other rulers would obtain permission from the Danish court for their agents and falcon trappers. From this we know the names of those trapping falcons for the Princes of Orange. The first one, Prince Maurits' falcon trapper Antonius Hendriksen, obtained approval for three years' trapping in the whole north-western peninsula on 24 April 1609. In an almost identically worded text, this

permission was renewed on May 1, 1618.

### Johan Verbrugge and Johan Mom

In a permit of 1620 we find the name Mumme again, but this time 'Dutchified' as Mom. Johan Verbrugge was, at that time, Prince Maurits' head falconer and Marcus and Johan Mom are named as his servants. They were granted permission to trap falcons in the north-eastern part of Iceland for the duration of twelve years from December 31, 1620. A branch of the Mom family had joined the service of the Prince's falconer and established themselves in Weert in Brabant. They must have foreseen better trading opportunities as servants of the House of Orange than as agents of a merchant. On January 2, 1624, King Christian IV granted permission to Johan



Verbrugge and Johan Mom, falconers of Prince Maurits, to trap falcons and goshawks in Iceland for nine years. Their area for trapping was enlarged with lands to the west and east of the originally assigned Pingeyjarsysla. The legal toll would be due and the patent would not supersede other permissions granted earlier for the same area. In the same year, 1624, Pieter Verbrugge was allowed to send his trappers to Iceland to trap and buy birds. He was Johan's elder brother and one of the long serving falconers of the Prince. In 1612 he had already received permission to install *leggen*, trapping installations, *on the hill outside of 's Gravenzande or in any other convenient location here in Holland* for capturing falcons. Not satisfied with what would be possible in his own country, in 1620 he concluded a contract with the brothers Tobias and Claes Antonisz Vosters from Weert, present day Valkenswaard, in Brabant. They would travel to Iceland for him to buy all kinds of falcons and other merchandise. The concerns of the Danish kings that, once in Iceland, the foreigners would not limit themselves to falcons, were not unfounded.

As head falconer at court, supervisor of the Prince's falconers, Johan Verbrugge occupied a privileged position. He was allowed to live in the *Valkhuis* at the *Buitenhof*, the old Outer Court of the Counts of Holland in The Hague and seat of government in later centuries. Not only did some of the falconers, for example *Hendrick de Valckenier*, (Henry the falconer) lease their office from him for 'an undisclosed sum,' but Verbrugge also demanded for himself the exclusive right to make all decisions on all of the buying and selling of birds. Apparently the advantages connected with trade were not to be sniffed at.

Whenever the States General wished to continue the tradition of presenting falcons to befriended monarchs, Verbrugge was instructed to deliver the birds. When, in 1629, they honoured the King of France with twelve birds, he was on his best behaviour by adding two white falcons which increased the value of the gift considerably. However *Their Mightynesses, the members of the States General*, found the price of 1400 guilders for twelve birds and an additional 1500 guilders for the two white ones, too high. A well trained falcon, and a white one at that, was a great treasure. Unfortunately for Verbrugge there was not much room for negotiations and finally, after some protests from the other provinces, the price was fixed at 1200 guilders. Verbrugge had to wait a whole year before he finally received the money.

Johan Verbrugge was getting older and his son Willem was



Engelbert II of Nassau from the Collection Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

predestined to succeed the office of head falconer, residing in the *Valkenhuis* in The Hague. This situation offered good opportunities for Johan Mom to become the agent for abroad. In an agreement concluded with Verbrugge in 1623, Mom had obtained for himself the trapping rights in four districts of Iceland. Verbrugge gave him a free hand in Iceland but kept the sale of birds to himself. This is how Johan Mom became involved in the falcon trade which he gradually expanded in every possible direction at every opportunity. He established himself in Rotterdam where he bought a house in the Baanstraat which he called The White Falcon. He would live here for the remainder of his life, a respected merchant. Because of his repeated travels to Iceland, Mom knew this country well. He employed Icelanders for trapping falcons and acquired trapping rights from others who possessed them. This practice sometimes led to problems as the rights obtained were not always sharply defined and could even overlap with other previously issued trapping permits. In 1633 Mom protested against the sale of falcons by a certain Bjarni

Oddson in the Mulasysla, an area allotted to him. Until Mom showed him his permit, Bjarni had not been aware of it. They reached an agreement whereby Mom relinquished his rights to the Iclander but was still able to obtain birds. His dispute with the representative of Willem Adams from Helsingor, who had transferred his trapping rights to Mom for 100 rijksdaalders per year, was of a more serious nature. The case went to court but ended in Mom's favour. Mom was able to steadily expand the area under his control. Even the King's Keeper of Silver, Jens Andersen Boldmester, gave up his rights to him. When the King's letter concerning the licensing was read out at the Althingi (Icelandic parliament) in 1636, the country's governor could but confirm the correctness of Mom's earlier statement having stepped onto Dane's rights with the King's approval. Having delivered birds to the Danish court, Mom enjoyed Christian IV's favour.

#### Success!

Finally, in 1641, Johan Marcusz Mom and both of his sons, Marcus and Johan, excluding all others, were granted a patent for the duration of his life to trap falcons and goshawks in the following districts: Thorsnesthing (Snæfellsnes) Thorskafjartharthing (Reykjanes) and additionally in Hunavatns-, Myra-, Borgarfjarthar-, Kjosar-, Gulibringu-, Arnes-, Rangarvalla- and Skaftafellssysla. Mom had finally reached his goal. Almost the whole of Iceland had come under his control for trapping, as the four districts in the north-east (Thingeyjar-, Mula-, Eyjafjarthar- and Skagafjartharsysla) were his already, having been included in the patent granted to him in 1637.

In the permit of 1632 it was stipulated that the falcon trappers should travel via Copenhagen with ships of the Iceland Company. Dynamic as ever, Mom had serious objections against this detour. Moreover, the Iceland Company's ships often left so late in summer for Iceland that the optimum trapping period had already passed. For that reason he began to use English ships which shortened the crossing considerably. By his decree of 16 April 1636, the King forbade the export of falcons on English ships, thus seriously hurting Mom's business. In 1646 he requested Willem Verbrugge, who had succeeded his father in 1643, to induce the Prince of Orange to write to King Christian IV on the matter of transport. During the years 1643-1646, Mom stated, he had been unable to travel to Iceland. Finding a solution for the transport problem was also in Verbrugge's interest since, as long as Mom could not

travel on English ships as he used to do, the contract regarding the delivery of falcons would be of no value.

We know now that it was not true that Mom had not been in Iceland from 1643-1646. In May 1645 he had sailed to Iceland with the *Waterhondt* (water dog) of skipper Cornelis Starreman. After a crossing of ten days he arrived in Grundarfjord. For about a month he was busy trapping and buying falcons before returning to Rotterdam at the end of July with nineteen birds and other merchandise.

This journey, without Verbrugge's knowledge, points towards a damaged relationship. In 1639 Mom delivered four white falcons to the States General for the sum of 1800 guilders but had trouble getting paid as Verbrugge had placed an attachment on the monies. The birds were destined for Prince Willem. When Verbrugge found out about Mom's voyage, he quickly placed his own representative in Iceland. In 1646 he concluded an agreement with a Joachim Mum in *Voornoorden* regarding some twenty falcons which were delivered to The Hague before All Saints, wholly feathered and sound, in 1647 and 1648. Most likely Joachim Mum in Voornoorden was a relative of Johan. The name Joachim was common among the Mummies of Hamburg. According to the Fitja-annals, a Jochum Jochumsz Mum, whose father was a Dutch falcon trapper, drowned in the Lagarfljot in 1661. Around 1686 an Elisabeth Mum, daughter of Jochum Mum, a Dutchman, was living in Northurmulasysla. Undoubtedly *Voornoorden* stands for what in the Danish language

is a common indication of location for Norden paa Island, in the north of Iceland.

#### Salmon fishing

On 24 January 1648 Martin Tancke, the Danish resident in The Hague, acquired the privilege of salmon fishing in the Hvita and in the Burgarfjardarsysla for the period of twenty years. He





chose as partners the well known Hans Nansen, mayor of Copenhagen, Marcus Raadebant, also from Copenhagen and Johan Mom. During the first three years they were exempt from any kind of taxation but thereafter they had to relinquish one tenth of the catch to the King. At the end of April the galleot de Gerechtigheyt (Justice) under Jacob Willemsz Prins, with Mom on board, went under sail to Iceland. After an adventurous crossing, during which the passenger, with more obstinate behaviour than know how, wanted to take charge of the navigation, they reached Hafnarfjord. Here they took some falcons on board before sailing up the Hvita for two more miles. The salmon fishing had little success but Mom was not the type of man to put all his eggs in one basket. The trapping of falcons showed better results. With 16 falcons on board, a white one amongst them, *de Gerechtigheyt* eventually returned to the fatherland. From the attestation of the skipper it becomes obvious that Mom was a difficult fellow who, by his obstinacy, had repeatedly brought ship and crew in danger. Iceland was reached with damaged rigging and it was only by secretly giving counter orders that the skipper was able to save his galleot from shipwreck near the Shetland Islands. His annoyance with this landlubber, who *despite all problems went to sleep comfortably between two sheets as if he was at home*, knew no bounds. The deed describing all these events is dated only a few days after a safe return to the city on the Meuse, Rotterdam. In Iceland the bishop and the farmers disliked Mom though when the king’s letter about the salmon fishing privilege was read out in the Althing, no objections were made. The enterprise was not a great success although, according to the Ballarar annals, a ship of Mom’s had come to the Hvita to fish as late as 1651.

According to the original agreement of October 1623, Verbrugge was to receive one and a half rijksdaalders from

each bird brought over from Iceland. During the period September 1641 to December 1648 Mom had been negligent in handing over any of this money which, with interest, had increased to an amount of 767 guilders and 5 stuivers. As he considered the privilege of October 1641 his personal property, he no longer felt obliged to observe the original agreement with Johan Verbrugge, which was concluded in totally different circumstances. However, he did not try to deny the existence of the 1623 agreement. When Verbrugge took the case to the Court of Holland in 1655, the court, after ample deliberation, decided it to be inadmissible. Taking into account the varied interests of Mom, it should not come as a big surprise that this Rotterdammer became a business partner of Jonas Trelund, the soul of the Dutch-Icelandic trade in Amsterdam. Around 1660 the latter had obtained a patent to *fish with four ships anchored under Iceland*. More precise facts about this partnership are not available and we do not know if Mom went to Iceland once more. He was now over sixty and gradually the time must have come for his son Marcus to take over the business. Marcus also had relations with Trelund, whose service he entered as factor for the whaling business. This is another story, unconnected with the trapping and trading of falcons and which therefore should better be told at another time.

#### Verbrugge in Norway

Since Johan Verbrugge had gained a firm foothold in Norway, trapping falcons there had become the main business for the Verbrugges. This resulted in endless quarrels between Willem and Hendrick de Gier, a competitor, as trapping areas had to be defended against intruders. However de Gier had older rights. In 1638, Christian IV declared that Johan had obtained permission to trap falcons in Norway on false grounds.



Willem Verbrugge with dogs and falcon from the Collection Museum in Rotterdam

The discord between both falcon trappers led to hostilities, attested to by many notarial deeds, between their servants in Norway. An agreement was concluded in 1646 according to which Verbrugge was to deliver five gyrfalcons and tiercels annually to Hendrick de Gier. De Gier, in his eighties, slowly withdrew from business.

#### Verhoeven

Between 1648 and 1660 messages about falcon trapping on Iceland are scarce. From one letter written by a certain Jacob Verhoeven in Copenhagen, dated July 9, 1653, we deduct that the King of Denmark must have had some Dutchmen among his falconers as well. The author, a falconer, complained that because of the delays beyond his control, the voyage to Iceland could not begin on time and he demanded compensation of the costs. The last falcons brought over from Iceland had been presented by Verhoeven to the courts of Brunswick and Luneburg, on behalf of Frederik III. Aside from the falcons’ food, he was owed a sum for travel expenses and he was still entitled to two liveries. Apparently his wishes were satisfied because, in 1655, the King issued an instruction to provide Jacob von Hube (most likely **Verhoeven** is meant here) and his falcon trappers with the usual maintenance.

#### The final years

After his last permit of 1641 for trapping and buying falcons in Iceland, Mom is no longer mentioned in the registers. The events of 1648 resulted in a withdrawal of the privilege and thereafter he must have been out of favour with the Danish King Frederik III, who succeeded Christian IV in 1648. The

King was not in favour of admitting him to Iceland, but Mom would not be Mom if he had resigned himself to that. Even without permits he saw ‘opportunities,’ as we have seen in the years since 1623.

The last conflict which Mom experienced through his falcon trapping in Iceland started in 1660. On behalf of his King’s falconers, the Danish resident in The Hague, Petrus Charisius, was instructed to complain to the States General about the conduct of foreign trappers of falcons, Mom especially, in Iceland. This was the beginning of a long line of legal battles and court cases which, with a short interruption, dragged on until 1667. At the very end, despite protests from Charisius that his King’s honour was at stake, Mom obtained a favorable judgment. When the resident continued his legal resistance, his actions remained without response and the case was off.

In the meantime, the resident’s principal opponent, Johan Marcusz Mom, had died. Vital until the very end, he had remarried in 1665 before passing away in 1667 in Rotterdam. With him disappeared a personality who, from beginning to end, had been in control of the trade in falcons. Rotterdam owes direct trade connections with Iceland to him. After 1662, no more licenses for trapping falcons would be issued. Frederik III also prohibited the sale of falcons to foreigners, an instruction which was apparently upheld strictly since, thereafter, falcons no longer showed up on export lists. The number of birds remaining in the wild also no longer allowed intensive trapping as, from the mid-18th century, exports on the King’s behalf only amounted to 60 falcons compared to 150 previously. Falconry had lost its value as the recreation of monarchs.

#### A brief revival

In the 18th century, Stadholder Willem V was still hunting with falcons at Het Loo but he was not as passionate a hunter as his predecessor King-Stadholder Willem III had been. In the middle of the 19th century falconry, unexpectedly, experienced golden days thanks to the enthusiasm with which Prince Alexander led the “Loo Hawking Club” during the years 1842-1843. King Willem III of the Netherlands was also a lover of hunting with falcons. Icelandic falcons were still a treasured possession because in 1845 Jan Peels, known in Great Britain as John Pells, travelled to Iceland once more to collect gyrfalcons which were trained and flown at Het Loo. Unfortunately this revival was short lived.

\* Onze Ijslandvaarders in de 17e en 18e eeuw. Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van de Nederlandsche handel en visscherij. 🦅



Decorative tiles depicting hunting scenes



# IRISH HAWKING CLUB INTERNATIONAL MEET 2014

*By Diana Durman-Wallers*

Four years ago whilst discussing the merits of high flying falcons with Irish falconer Martin Brereton, he mentioned that he had a tiercel who was showing great style and ability on Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*). In passing he noted, that should I like to see this good tiercel, then best make it sooner rather than later, in order to experience the brilliance of him on this quarry. I saw him in action for the first time at last year's IHC Snipe Hawking Meet. Fortunately for me, he has been graced with longevity and at 14 years of age, is still a remarkable falcon to see flown at this demanding, supremely fast, species of wader.

Landing at Dublin airport with its bustle and traffic and predictable movement of passengers already faced with heavy rain and hire car congestion, was a far cry from the short drive out of the city into the open spaces of Co Kildare. This part of the Irish midlands is renowned for its rich natural beauty such as lakes, waterways and canals.

The Moy Valley Hotel and Golf Resort was the central base for the week-long event was very well appointed. Ample room to weather the falcons with very good facilities for guests and falconers alike.

Traditional game hawking produces high pitched flights, the focus of which is on either partridge or Red grouse. It is capable of producing quite dramatic stooping and mastery of their quarry. A great deal has been written on this element, as not only does it require excellent falcons that are tremendously fit, but equally requires pointing dogs that are great gamefinders and work as part of the team with the falcon and falconer. This style of falconry is in a stand-alone class and has been promoted as the ultimate challenge for any falconer.

Ireland has a lack of suitable quarry in this respect and has traditionally been known for its falconers who excelled at flying sparrowhawks. Snipe hawking you might feel doesn't have many comparisons, but that would be very far from the reality. Irish falconers are blessed with enviable snipe terrain that is tantalising quarry for those who have chosen this as their ultimate quarry. Snipe test a falcon's ability, skill and discipline. Their exceptionally quick flight, rolling from side to side with flicked wing beat action and a rapid, fast escape require a very fit falcon and one that has taken a dominating pitch into the bargain.

This year's event was in the capable hands of Don Ryan, Martin Brereton and Robert Hutchinson, who was field master each day.

As Robert pointed out, most kills are in fact from a lower

pitch (by comparison to game hawks) and rely on a bind style to secure their quarry. This is why a lot of tiercels kill on their second or third attempt. It is rare to take snipe from an incredibly high pitch in a vertical stoop. The most successful falcons need to master the techniques of applying a different approach in descent and adjusting their flight pattern to connect with the snipe just as it comes out of the jinking phase of its flight and before it starts to pump upwards. Many proven grouse hawks fail at snipe, as they all too often overshoot the quarry, or may refuse to take them once flushed. The latter may well be to do with becoming "wedded" to large quarry from a young age, therefore it is important that young falcons are introduced to snipe from the onset.

There have probably always been falconers that have attempted snipe as a quarry, but it has been with limited success. Ronald Stevens mentioned as much in correspondence to others and Richard Browne targeted the species in the 1990's in County Kerry. It wasn't until approximately 15 years ago when Robert Hutchinson moved to the Bog of Allen and arranged for a number of English falconers who flew perlines and peregrines at small quarry to come over for the first snipe field meet, that snipe hawking came of age and was taken seriously. At this event, Greg Liebenhals took the first snipe with his perlin. Martin Brereton attended the event with his then un-entered tiercel, which was unsuccessful. It took another 20 days before he had his first kill. Success breeds success and as the seasons rolled on, this tiercel was to be unstoppable in its ability and talent at this quarry. It is Martin's enthusiasm and his generosity in bringing falconers on that has played a most significant part in the sport's development. His falcon showed how it could be done successfully on such a regular basis that it became, for many Irish falconers, a dedicated branch of falconry.

Grant Hagger, who is very well known for his perlins, has also been a great influence. Totally committed to the sport, and producing flights at the highest level, he lives in Ireland during the winter, where he is totally devoted to flying snipe over his setter.

Ireland has traditionally produced, both past and present, great Pointers and Setters. The landscape is made

for hard-running dogs, despite the sparsity of game. As a consequence, this group of gundogs have evolved to be tireless runners, strong hearted and capable of locating points where there is a shortage of game.

Snipe in abundance, are excellent for getting dogs to point. There are few distractions as far as scent goes and Pointers and Setters can excel at this quarry. In particular, dogs that are worked solely on these birds, especially in difficult cover, become exemplary in locating them.

In attendance during the week were eight Irish falconers flying 11 falcons in total, namely Kevin Marron, Trevor Roche, Jason Deasy, Don Ryan, Martin Brereton, Bruce Wilkie, Robert Hutchinson, whilst overseas visitors came from Austria, Belgium, France, Holland, Isle-of Man, Poland, Spain and the UK.

Snipe are found on wet marshes and boggy heaths at all times where they can use the soft ground cover to probe for worms and small crustaceans. Blanket bogs are found wherever there is high rainfall, which is typically in western Ireland and also in mountainous areas. They are called blanket bogs because of their appearance as from a distance they appear uniform and hug the landscape like a blanket. They are dynamic ecosystems, rich in unique flora and fauna covering 20% of the land area and making 50% of the bogland of Western Europe. Snipe arrive from Northern Europe and join with resident birds usually the second week in October and can be flown until end of January, which is the close of the season.

However, traditional turf cutting on bogs on an industrial scale can be seen and was very evident in certain areas of the fieldmeet. How this will impact on these specialised environments is a subject that is already hotly debated and hopefully will resolve in good conservation measure taken to preserve these unique landscapes.

A fairly large party of spectators and falconers alike took to the bogs each day. Very easy walking, but the entry to some of these grounds can present problems in navigating onto it. Soft wet peat banks can be difficult to climb over, and irrigation trenches to leap across, but there was never a shortage of helping hands to get you into the best place to view the hawking.

As soon as one, or a brace of dogs were cast off, it was a joy to be able to see these fast, accomplished gamefinders, running out questing for scent and indicating they were drawing onto point. Here one can appreciate the running style of pointers and setters compared to HPRs, particularly dogs running



boldly in unison then backing whilst the first dog claims the point. It's exciting to watch.

All of the tiercels flown were quick to take flight once the hood had been struck and begin to take a pitch that would give them the advantage. Noticeably, the more experienced of them flew into a commanding position over the point and kept gaining height between falconer and the dog. Once the snipe had broken cover and flushed, the falcon's reactions were immediate and those that had taken a good pitch made some exhilarating stoops. The sudden fast escape, with undulating flicked wingbeats that snipe are masters of, ensure that this is no easy contest. Quite often the flight can be taken over some distance before the tiercel can gain an advantage and make a kill. They are superbly matched; they feature very much as part of a wild peregrine diet and as a consequence have evolved to be a tricky, fast quarry capable of outmanoeuvring its natural predator.

Only one hybrid, a gyr x merlin tiercel, attended the meet, flown by Jason Deasy and combined with a very good Hungarian Vizsla. Whereas for him the high-pitching style of the peregrines was not so evident or compulsory, the formidable flying skills of merlin and gyr provided him with the skill for this quarry. In addition, he was undaunted by cover when his snipe used the trees and bushes on the edge of the bog to fly through. For his size and weight he was outstanding to watch on this challenging quarry.

Another equally talented combination was that of Irish Red Setter and peregrine tiercels, flown in excellent style by Eric Witkowski, a resident in County Kerry who has been flying Snipe for the last six years.

There can be few falconry fieldmeets that allow a large gallery of spectators to see excellent falcons flown at snipe. The Irish Hawking Club is emerging in a distinctive branch of falconry that has some outstanding dogs, falcons and falconers flying at a very challenging quarry. The sports development is a tale of generous sharing of knowledge and know-how and enjoying flights on the bog. It is without doubt a falconry meet that should be experienced. 🦅



# MOUNTAIN HAWK-EAGLE

## in Japan

Keiya Nakajima  
The Japan Falconiformes Center

### Japanese Falconry and Mountain Hawk-eagle

Falconry was introduced into Japan from Korea at 4th Century that is based on old document. It was kept in ruling class as noble sport from then, and it was developed with Japanese culture.

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis fujiyamae*), Eurasian Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus nisosimilis*), Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus japonensis*) were typical birds for their falconry. Merlin (*Falco columbarius insignis*) and Japanese Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter gularis gularis*) were also used. Mountain Hawk-eagle (*Nisaetus nipalensis nipalensis*, former *Spizaetus nipalensis nipalensis*, Fig. 1) and Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos japonica*) were not included in the traditional falconry birds. Falconry by

non-ruling class was prohibited by law in 17th -19th Centuries. But, Mountain Hawk-eagle was used by local hunter at mountain area in northern part of Japan in 19th - 20th Centuries. It was new style of falconry by non-ruling class, because falconry system by ruling class was not maintained after big social and political change in Japan at 1868.

Currently, we cannot get wild Mountain Hawk-eagle for private falconry, because it is protected species by the Law for the Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora that was established in 1992. It is a main reason for the end of falconry with Mountain Hawk-eagle. Special permission was not provided to the falconer who used Mountain Hawk-eagle. Captive breeding for falconry is also not approved. Imported Mountain Hawk-eagle (another subspecies) is not suitable for falconry in Japan, because it is classified in dangerous bird that has potential to hurt human or another pet animals by Act on Welfare and Management of Animals since 2014. In this case, we cannot fly the bird freely like Goshawk.

### Outline of Mountain Hawk-eagle

Recently, the genus of Mountain Hawk-eagle in Asian area has been changed from *Spizaetus* to *Nisaetus* by the result of



Fig 1 the Mountain Hawk-eagle in Japan

DNA research for classification<sup>1</sup>. *Nisaetus nipalensis nipalensis* is current scientific name of Mountain Hawk-eagle in Japan. Body length 70 cm (male) - 83 cm (female) and wingspan 140 cm (male) - 165 cm (female) are common size of Mountain Hawk-eagle<sup>2</sup>. Body weight was 2.1 kg (male) - 3.0 kg (female) in our measurement cases. Over 3 kg females are also reported (Biggest one was 4.5 kg). The population of Mountain Hawk-eagle in Japan was estimated at least 1800 individuals<sup>3</sup>. Japan and the Korean Peninsula is main distribution area of this subspecies, though it seems that Mountain Hawk-eagle in Korea has become extinct. The habitat is mountain area with rich forest (Fig. 2). Common quarryies are Japanese hare (*Lepus brachyurus*), Japanese squirrel (*Sciurus lis*), Japanese marten (*Martes melampus*), copper pheasant (*Symaticus soemmerringii*), jungle crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*), Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*), Japanese ratsnake (*Elaphe climacophora*), etc. It seems that young Japanese Macaque (*Macaca fuscata*), is also quarry, because they sometimes make alarm voice and behavior to watch out for Mountain Hawk-eagle. In the case of our

research, the breeding pair keeps about 10 - 15 km<sup>2</sup> for their territory. The nest is built on the upper part (not top) of big tree such as over 20m height (Fig. 3). Typical trees for the nest are Japanese red pine (*Pinus densiflora*), Japanese White Pine (*Pinus parviflora*), Southern Japanese Hemlock (*Tsuga sieboldii*), Japanese Fir (*Abies firma*) etc. Breeding season is begun from end of January or February. The nest is built from February to March. The egg is laid on the end of March. The hatching is the beginning of May after incubation for 42-46 days. The middle of July is the season of leaving the nest that the juvenile move to another branch or tree without long flight. 94-96 days is total period from hatching to flying. Juvenile stays in the breeding area with parent birds till end of autumn or next breeding season. The breeding season is not every year such as 1 time for 1-3 years, and the egg is usually only one. The record of two eggs is only 2 cases at 1922 and 1933<sup>2</sup>. It means the breeding efficiency is lower than another birds of prey. Currently, Mountain Hawk-eagle is one of endangered species that is classified in "Endangered" category by the Japanese Red List 2012 with White-tailed Sea Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla albicilla*), Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos japonica*), endemic subspecies of Japanese Sparrowhawk in Yaeyama islands (*Accipiter gularis inasakii*), endemic subspecies of Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo toyoshimai*) in Bonin islands and Eastern Marsh Harrier (*Circus spilonotus spilonotus*).

### Investigation and Conservation of Mountain Hawk-eagle

The Japan Falconiformes Center (JFC) has a project of long period investigation for Mountain Hawk-eagle since 1990's by support from our members. Recently, the activity is also supported by the grants of AEON Environmental Foundation (2011-2015, <http://www.aeon.info/ef/en>). It is one of our activities by falconers to conserve Japanese endangered

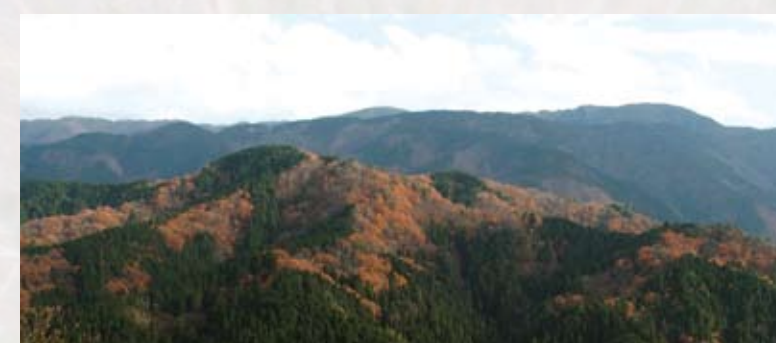


Fig. 2 Example of the habitat of Mountain Hawk-eagle. The same place at February, May and November from the top. Common prey of the Mountain Hawk-eagle include the copper pheasant (below left) and Japanese Macaque (right)







Fig. 3 Nest of Mountain Hawk-eagle on Japanese fir (above left, circled) and eyas 30-35 days after hatching (above right)

birds of prey. The long period investigation will be helpful to understand the ecology of Mountain Hawk-eagle such as number of total breeding capacity by same pair, how to change the breeding pair or nest tree in the area and adaptation to the change of environment, etc. In the investigation, continuous fixed point observation is needed to collect the data for long period. Therefore, we have to go to the habitat of Mountain

Hawk-eagle through the year (at least 1-2 days/month with 2-3 observers) to get the data of behavior of birds (soaring, perching, hunting, display for breeding, etc. with time record), their position or route of flying in the area, weather data of the fixed point (temperature, humidity, wind direction, wind velocity, atmospheric pressure, etc.). Video or photo is also taken to identify the individual. Observation results are



Above and top: Observation in winter season by Keiya Nakajima

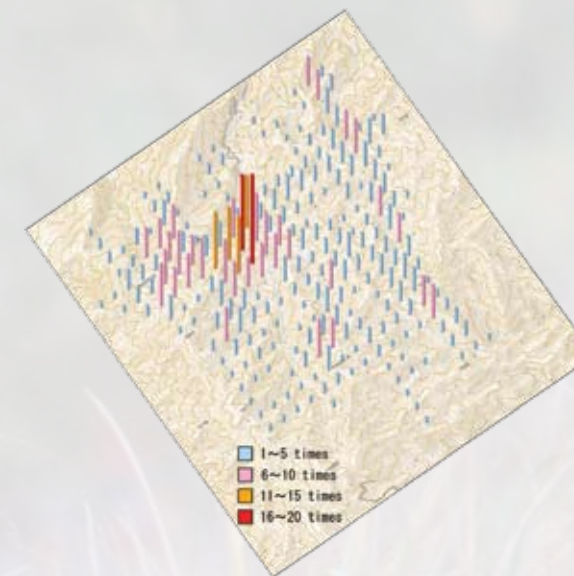


Example of perching (above) and soaring (top)

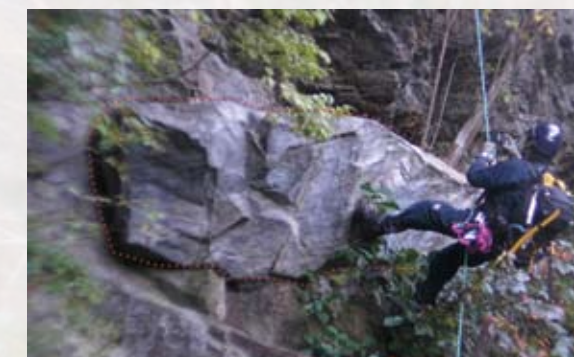


recorded on the map (Fig. 4). The territory and important place (nest or core area) come to light after the simple analysis by frequency of observation on the plot (e.g. 250 m x 250 m) in the research area (Fig. 5).

Proponents of developmental project (e.g. government agency or company) also have operation of investigation for endangered species, because it is required by Environmental Impact Assessment Law on the developmental project (construction of road, railway, big facility such as dam or power plant, etc.) to conserve the natural environment and habitat of endangered species in the area. They have to start the investigation before the construction works. And, if endangered species have been kept the habitat in and around the area of developmental project, they have to make the suitable plan to conserve the habitat, and they have to continue the investigation till end of works to prevent the loss of habitat or bad effect to the endangered species by the project. Mountain Hawk-eagle is one of typical endangered species in mountain area. It is investigated by various proponents for the developmental project. The investigation (observation and analysis) is carried out by research company as contractor. JFC assist the proponents or contractors to suggest the suitable conservation or investigation plan for endangered birds of prey as member of committee for assessment or adviser of third party. Additional program for the conservation is also proposed to improve the situation as the need arises such as introduction of video recording system to check the breeding status or reinforcement of the nest after the trouble by



Left: Fig. 4 Example of records for 1 year  
Above: Fig 5 Frequency of the record on the plot. The area of red bar is nest site  
Below: Keiya Nakajima performing maintenance of an artificial nest for Golden eagle (inside of dotted line)



violent storm. The period of investigation by proponent is depended on the schedule of the developmental project. It is not research to understand the life and habitat of endangered species for sustainable conservation works. So, some results of investigation by proponents are provided to JFC to use the data well for the future research after end of construction works. It is one of cooperation system for the conservation of endangered birds of prey.

It is also important to understand the territory or behavior of another birds of prey for total conservation. Usually, breeding pair of Golden eagle keeps large territory in mountain area, and the pair of Mountain Hawk-eagle keeps their territory in the surrounding area of Golden eagle's range. Therefore, situation of Golden eagle is investigated with Mountain Hawk-eagle in almost case. Advanced conservation works for Golden eagle is also prepared as the need arises such as making of artificial nest after collapse of suitable cliff for breeding.

Golden eagle is typical endangered species in mountain area that the situation is severer than Mountain Hawk-eagle. Total population of Japanese Golden eagle was estimated 400 - 650





individuals 4), though their position in the nature is stronger than Mountain Hawk-eagle. Recent breeding success ratio is also very low such as only 2 juveniles from 32 pairs. Actually, Japanese Golden eagle is making progress to become extinct. Further active program for the conservation should be started to improve the situation before it was too late. But, it is difficult to get the permission from government agency to start new project (e.g. captive breeding and releasing) because, Golden eagle is not only endangered species but also precious natural treasure in Japan that another regulation is applied to treat the bird in addition to the Law for the Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Golden eagle comes under the jurisdiction of the several governmental agencies and, Ministry of Environment thinks that breeding by birds in zoo is suitable multiplication program. Sometimes, result of breeding is reported as success case, but it is an accidental case without management for sustainable breeding, and there is no release program for juvenile. Number of birds in zoo is also not enough for the breeding project. Artificial insemination or using of wild birds for captive breeding is not considered yet.

#### Role of falconer in conservation of wild birds of prey

Some people think that falconer is just falcon lover or falcon keeper to enjoy their personal pleasure. It is not correct understanding, but it is true that the advantage of falconer's knowledge is not well known in another specialists, government officials and general public, though there are various projects and good results with falconers in the world. Conservation of endangered birds of prey is important and impressive activity, because it is linked to total conservation of the environment to keep biological diversity or sustainable use of wild resources. The role of falconer is also important in the activities to improve the situation. If various achievements by falconers or falconry organizations are widely accepted as excellent results, the status of falconry will be promoted. JFC has research project for endangered birds of prey in Japan and advisory works to conserve birds of prey on the developmental project. Rescue works for injured wild birds of prey is also continued with traditional knowledge of Japanese falconry. Cooperation system with another bodies is developed by past performance. It will be one of step to keep the position of falconer or falconry organization in the responsibility for the conservation of nature.

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## IAF FALCONERS, SUSTAINABLE USE, AND CONSERVATION POSTERS

*By Dan Cecchini, Jr.*

**Quote from Gary Timbrell, IAF's Executive Officer regarding IAF presentation at the United Nations COP-12 on Biodiversity and Sustainable Use in Pyeongchang, Korea,**

*"This is a prestigious event for IAF to take part in. All my life I have been defensive of falconry in an almost apologetic way, the anti-hunting people have been so strong and righteous. Now falconers are taking our rightful place among conservation bodies. It is very impressive."*



Working together, falconers from around the world created the foundation for the IAF presentation to the UN COP-12 conference on Biodiversity and Sustainability held in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, in October 2014. This article captures the 12 individual posters which were created by IAF members from different regions around the world.

Each poster uniquely depicts the culture and habitat of a particular area of the world in which falconry is practiced, and they showcase how falconers are, in fact, international conservationists. This article will give some background on the effort and coordination it took to create these posters and how the IAF was able to increase our stature among the international conservation community with our presentation at the UN's COP-12 in Pyeongchang.

In June of 2014, Dr. Keiya Nakajima proposed that the IAF be represented at the United Nations 12th Conference of the Parties Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-12). This was to be a gathering of officials from governments and NGO's from over 190 countries to address biodiversity and sustainable use at the global level. IAF President, Dr. Adrian Lombard, not only agreed to send a display to the COP-12, but upped the proposed level of involvement and felt it would be even better if the IAF could put on a side-event. I was asked to join Keiya and represent the IAF at the side-event presentation at the COP-12 and was very honored to be involved with this important presentation.

In the IAF side event, three presentations were provided to introduce falconry, falconer's activities and a basic





The IAF Team in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, in front of some of the IAF posters; from l to r: Sang-hyun Park, Dan Cecchini, Jr. and Dr. Keiya



IAF representatives with the CIC Markor Award winners from Tajikistan



Keiya standing in front of the IAF posters displayed in the public building during UN COP-12



Dr. Keiya Nakajima in traditional Japanese falconry clothes holding peregrine



Presentation by Dan Cecchini, Jr with Hobby



Side event team from IAF and CIC



Twelve posters to show the outline of falconry and falconer's activities

understanding of hunting. The keynote speech was to introduce falconry to the conference and was presented by me. Birds of prey rehabilitation work was presented by Sang-hyun Park (Korean Delegate of IAF), and hunting - being part of nature was presented by Tamás Marghescu (Director General of CIC). Twelve posters created by falconers from around the world were also displayed in the event room to show and explain falconry and falconer's activities in the context of biodiversity and sustainable use. The latest IAF Journal, IAF brochures which included some of the twelve posters and the program were provided for participants as references of the event. The amount of work that Keiya did to plan and coordinate this event was amazing and greatly appreciated; I had some challenges taking care of my travel to Korea, but once I finally arrived, our presentation and display went flawlessly because of Keiya's efforts. His attention to detail, advance planning, networking, and relentless focus was what allowed this to be a success for the IAF at the CO-12.

As a result of our attendance and participation at the event, we strengthened our strong bond with the CIC organization. In addition to partnering with us during the side-event, Tamas Marghescu, Director General of CIC, invited Keiya and I to attend and be recognized as special guests representing the IAF at the presentation of the CIC Markhor Award. We also had a number of opportunities to talk and visit with Tamas, as well as Jan Heino, President, Policy and Law Division of CIC, Dr. Kristof Hecker, Head Division Coordinator of CIC, Dr. Stepan Uncovsky, Director of GIZ, and the winning team of the CIC Markhor Award from Tajikistan. Before the side-event, the Director of the Beninese Center of Biodiversity, Ecotourism, and Seeds, Kakpo Comlan Marcel, spent a considerable amount of time talking to me about falconry and sustainability. Also before the side-event started, a communications expert from the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability, Mr. William Dunbar, spoke with me for some time about falconry. So it was an opportunity to create various international contacts at the COP-12 on behalf of the IAF and falconry. In addition

to the actual side-event, Keiya had the foresight to get the IAF posters hung in one of the main buildings in the venue for most of the duration of the COP12, which meant that hundreds or thousands of people were exposed to our posters and their messages during the COP12. Each time we stopped by the posters there were people reading, looking at or photographing them. The success behind getting the posters from around the world completed and printed in time for the COP-12 was directly the result of Gary Timbrell and Keiya—quite an accomplishment!

I want to express my many thanks to Keiya and Park for their significant work on the IAF's behalf and their positive impact at the COP12. Having Park bring his falcons to the event, all the way from Seoul to Pyeongchang, was very helpful and made an important positive impact on the people attending the conference. Additionally, Park's ability to communicate with the Korean reporter, Mi Hye Park, was invaluable during our 1-1½ hour interview, which Park had arranged.

Finally, on my 3-4 hour bus ride back to Seoul from Pyeongchang, I sat next to a professional forester associated with the UN FAO, who was in Pyeongchang to attend the COP-MOP1 for the Nagoya protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing. I showed her our side-event PowerPoint presentation and she was very interested. She thought that perhaps the UN FAO might find the IAF's work interesting. I gave her my IAF card (created and printed for me by Keiya), so who knows, perhaps that may be to the IAF's benefit in the future.

I feel lucky to have been part of an excellent team on the ground in Pyeongchang; together, along with the posters created by falconers from many regions, we were able to represent our sport to the world. I believe the IAF investment in this event will pay unknown positive dividends in the future.

This success for the IAF is directly the result of Keiya, Adrian, Gary Timbrell, Park, and all of the IAF member organizations that created and contributed their region's poster on biodiversity and sustainable use and how it ties to falconry. Thank you to Adrian and the IAF for supporting our participation in this global conference. 🦅



# Hobbies

in Meijendell near The Hague in the Netherlands

Words and photos by Dick Ten Bosch

Early May our Hobbies return from Africa. Since five pairs of Goshawk have established themselves in nature reserve Meijendell in the past years, Hobbies no longer breed there. They now make use of Meijendell to forage -mainly on insects- and to recuperate from migration, before continuing their journey northwards. Pictures were taken early May 2015. Dr. Ruud Wielinga, ornithologist. (ruud.wielinga@casema.nl)



Patrolling the area ...



a prey is spotted ...



a steep dive ...



?



ready to grab the insect ...



which is captured ...



and consumed in flight ...



a competitor sees an opportunity to rob the prey ...



a race ensues ...



but the prey can be saved.



# PAKISTAN FALCONRY ASSOCIATION AND THE REVIVAL OF FALCONRY IN PAKISTAN

By Kamran K Yousafzai, Pakistan Falconry Association



## Pakistan Falconry Association and the Revival of Falconry in Pakistan

The art of falconry that once thrived during the golden age of the Mughal rule in the Sub-continent, saw a huge decline in the late 19th and 20th century. Political turmoil and the introduction of gunpowder were two major causes for such a change that inflicted the region during the British colonial period. Long gone are the days, when hawks were considered as a status symbol and the field sport was practiced with great fanfare by the aristocracy and common enthusiasts alike. With the advent of communications revolution and technologies like the internet and mobile phones in the late

20th century, humankind distanced itself from nature still further. The number of falconers, as elsewhere, dwindled in the South Asia. Thanks to the efforts by the international falconry organizations in general through IAF and the United Arab Emirates in particular, the art was salvaged from its imminent doom, but there still remains great challenges that falconers face in their respective countries.

Pakistan is no different when it comes to such challenges. Lying on one of the world's most important migration routes, it occupies a historic place in the field. It shares its borders with falconry-rich countries like Afghanistan and Iran on the one hand, and the Himalayan range on the other. It's also



home to the historic Indus Valley, where Sir Richard Burton once had the opportunity to go out hawking with the locals in deserts.

The great blow to Pakistan's falconry came in the shape of the lopsided wildlife rules and regulation in the mid-eighties, when falconry was completely outlawed. Since then the local falconers are fighting a battle for survival. The ban is doing more harm than good and there's a palpable increase in the illegal trade and smuggling. There's no virtual record of data of the migration birds, while the human population growth remains at all-time high and with it a decrease in the hunting grounds.

In this backdrop, Pakistan Falconry Association (PFA) was created in 2008, in an attempt to amend and streamline the whole situation. Since its founding, the organization has

relentlessly been pursuing the global agenda of preservation and conservation of birds of prey and their overall welfare. With the support of International Association for Falconry and Conservation Birds of Prey (IAF) and the Abu Dhabi Department of Cultural Heritage, the story of PFA has so far been a successful one.

The organization submitted its case to the IAF as early as 2008 and achieved its full membership status in a meeting in Qatar in February, 2014. It has throughout been supportive of the UAE's struggle for recognition of falconry as the "intangible cultural heritage of humankind" in the UNESCO, and was proud when it was added to the ICH list. With the support of the IAF and Abu Dhabi government, the case of Pakistan was also approved at UNESCO's Workshop on the Extension of Multi-national Nomination of Falconry Human Living







Heritage, in March this year.

The efforts of the PFA have duly been recognized in the government offices. Of particular importance is its association with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting aka Pakistan Lok Virsa. The organization has also been successful in introducing a falconry bill in the National Assembly of Pakistan of late, urging the government to review and amend the old law.

The conservation of birds of prey tops the PFA's list. Keeping a check on the hunting grounds and the associated game birds e.g. the grey and black francolins, the chukor partridge, and houbara, is also the priority of the organization. Falconry-related events and competitions are being regularly organized with a view to educate the general public and schoolchildren about the history and practice of the falconry art. Furthermore, it celebrates the World Falconry Day on November 16 each year, and keeps in touch with the environment and wildlife offices on the new developments in the field.

The organization maintains a dedicated website and a facebook page which is also updated on the regular basis for

the benefit of local and international falconers. Representation of Pakistani falconers in the international events and festivals has also been the sole privilege of the PFA. It has participated in the second International Festival of Falconry, held in Al Ain, UAE, in 2011, and the third such event in Abu Dhabi, last December. A documentary on the palm-nest was shot with the support of Falconry Heritage Trust and premiered in the Abu Dhabi festival. Likewise, the PFA has also published the unique 17th-century Book of Falconry by the renowned Pakistani poet warrior, Khushal Khan Khattak. Needless to say, both the documentary and the book were a hit in the Abu Dhabi festival. Responsible and sustainable practice of falconry has been sole goal of PFA. Since its inception in 2008, the organization has continuously been following a welfare program for both the falconer and the birds of prey. Its future goals are the data collection of endangered species, recording of birds of prey population, putting an end to the illegal trade and smuggling, and establishing a healthcare facility. With the support and encouragement of our international friends, we at the PFA are hopeful for a positive change.

## FALCONRY IN CHITRAL IN THE WORDS OF RL KENNON

**Chitral, is the capital of the Chitral District, situated on the western bank of the Chitral River, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. RL Kennon was second assistant political agent of Chitral and wrote a book about the region. He says:**

*"In Chitral, which is a great country for falconry, the art of driving chakor has been reduced to as cience. Chakor remain high up in the mountains during the summer, where the markhor or ibex stalker sometimes puts them up in great packs, or meets them coming round the corners like a whirlwind, uttering their peculiar cry, "Whichoo whichoo-whichoo!" which is quite different from their call or cackle. But in winter, when the upper*



*country is deep under snow, they are driven into the lower valleys, and are attracted to the neighbourhood of the villages by the seed in the ground. There are few places in Chitral where there are not the well-known cut-and-dried drives, which are managed now in precisely the same way they have been for hundreds of years past, and in which every man and boy knows his own place. Of course in this country none of it is done on the level as it is at home, for though some slopes are steeper than others, such a thing as a level space much bigger than a tennis-court scarcely exists. So chakor-driving usually means sweeping the birds along the side of a valley in the downward direction, or, if the valley is sufficiently narrow, both sides are taken at once.*

*The usual formation for the beaters is that of a horse-shoe when two sides of a valley are taken, or a half horse-shoe for one side. The flankers proceed straight up the hillside in single file before the drive begins, and after climbing up a certain height so as to be well above the birds, turn at right angles and station themselves at intervals right up to the guns. Their duties are to act as stops and prevent the birds running up, and these they carry out by keeping up a continual cannonade of stones down the hillside (often pleasant for the beaters!), not to speak of yes; in fact, they do anything that occurs to them both to keep the birds in the drive and to prevent them pitching among the scree or on bluff's of the hillside. After his first or second flight, a chakor sits very tight when he gets among rocks and boulders, and is often passed over. Often too, when put up a second time, they fly back over the beaters' heads, and when they once start in the wrong direction nothing on earth the beaters can say or do will stop them. As for the guns, needless to say there are no butts, and they have to take their chance in the open, or behind bushes or boulders as fate may decree; and if a level square yard or even less offers on which one can.*

*The sporting Chitralis, though they prefer their hawks, appreciate good shooting. A remark once made to the writer after a high bird had been crumpled up was, "Ah, Sahib, what sport! what shooting! Before the English came, the height of skill was to bring a dove down plump from the top of a high tree!" In justice to then Chitralis, however, it must be said that when they do use a gun it is the native match- or flint-lock with a small round bullet, so it is evident that the feat of bringing a dove down from the top of a high tree did not at all deserve the contempt with which the flattering Oriental spoke of it. One of the best drives near Chitral, and a very characteristic one, is that near a village called Ayun. It was a famous drive for hawking in the days of the old kings, and as the manner of it is peculiar some description may be given".*



# A MEETING BEYOND THE FE

## OFFERING OF SPANISH FALCONERS TO THEIR PATRON SAINT FRANCISCO DE BORJA (1510-1572)

*By Dr. Javier Ceballos*

**In October 2013, the Vatican recognized Francisco de Borja as patron saint of Spanish Falconry. This recognition is the result of the initiative, effort and skill of the Royal Guild of Falconers, led by D. Antonio de Castro.**

After almost a year without knowledge of any event to express and share the satisfaction of the falconers for this important milestone, three associations have taken the initiative to make an offering to their patron saint. The idea came from the Madrid Association of Falconry, adopted at its general assembly to delegate to Dr. Javier Ceballos the organization of the event. Soon joined AECCA, the most representative association of Spanish falconry and Asociación Cetrera Amigo Félix SMV the other falconry association that exists in the Community of Madrid, venue of the event.

The site chosen was the parish church of San Francisco de

Borja in Madrid, where rest his mortal remains. The date, October 3rd, his name day. In the “Jesuitas de Serrano” as popularly referred to this parish, we have had the warmest welcome. The Revd. Father Xavier Ilundáin SJ, along with the president of the Madrid Association, D. Francisco Uceda, and the delegate of the event, Dr. Javier Ceballos, participated in the review of the falconers’s prayer to their patron saint making insightful comments being as follows:

**‘Dear St. Francis Borgia, our Patron**

**You found falconry a source of divine inspiration, I beg that you ease the encounter with God**

**Accompany me in my way. Bless my bird. Make me as just as she is and may I demand from her just as much as she can demand from me.**

**Both in the field and in my daily tasks give me a spirit of improvement to flee from the easy task**

**In my mistakes make me learn the lesson rather than being frustrated.**

**You who made yourself small in order to be great in God’s sight, teach me humility**

**Help me understand that as the rabbit which hides or the quail which flees, so Nature’s laws need to be respected.**

**Make me courageous like the kestrel, noble like the falcon, strong as the goshawk, perseverance like the merlin and swift like the sparrowhawk. Once I’ve learnt these virtues, may I use them for the good of others.**

**Make that my daily meeting with creation may enlighten my life and may I know how to reflect it to those who are strange to the greatness of God.**

**Take my gratitude to those who, like yourself, went before me in the practice of this noble skill. Do not allow me to forget my responsibility to pass on this heritage of falconry to future generations once I have undertaken my final flight.**

**Guide me so that the feelings and values which you experienced as a falconer may model me to a better self, as a man and as a Christian. Amen’**



Representation of falconers offering at the altar of the patron saint of the Spanish falconry, Francisco de Borja



Above: Group photo at the end of the Mass  
Below: falconry attendees with their birds



Gathering among falconers

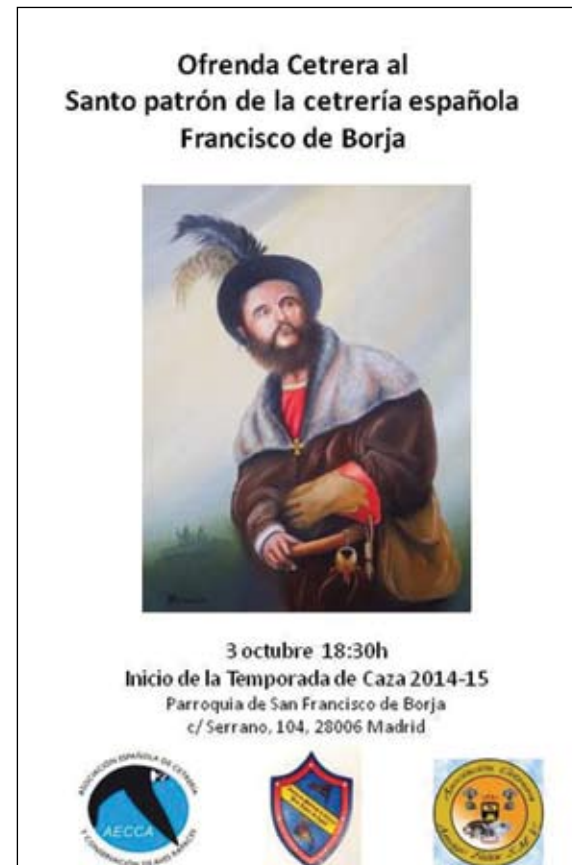
Once agreed upon prayer, D. Pascual Francés, Madrid’s veteran falconer and master in the art of calligraphy was commissioned to write text on parchment. The many hours he has selflessly dedicated to the task have certainly been worthwhile. We were surprised and strangers with a huge picture framed double glazed. Simple, stylish and well made. Besides text, written in Gothic former script, representing different birds used in Spanish falconry, like the sparrowhawk, goshawk and peregrine falcon.

D. Fernando Lopez Herencia, legendary falconer and magnificent painter, was comisioned to the task of representing San Francisco de Borja as a falconer. Was a challenge. There is scarcely iconography of the saint. In fact no representation in which you can identify practicing falconry is unknown. Fernando was documented in various sources, some contemporary to the protagonist, others made by renowned painters throughout the centuries. The result has been the work presented in this article. The only portrait that exists of San Francisco de Borja falconer. We hope that after completion of the works in the parish we can exhibit both prayer of falconers as the portrait of the falconer San Francisco de Borja.

Definitely Fernando was wisely not representing a falcon. He has managed to focus on the expression of the saint. Do not forget that through falconry this good man found a way to reach God. In his gesture is sensed that is flying a hawk. In his eyes you read that sees more than two wings ascending into heaven. This reflection on the falconry spirituality of St. Francis Borgia and his passion as a falconer is found in the work of Pedro de Ribadeneyra SJ (s XVI) on the saint’s life:

Believers and nonbelievers enjoyed a wonderful homily of Xavier Ilundáin SJ. He told us about the gift we have in our birds and how this fascination that we produce it must also generate specific actions to the service of others. Was significant and emotional to see falconers with his bird to the fist, reading or praying beside the altar after Communion. Also there was the final blessing to the birds present. A good start to the hunting season.

We hope that such events continue building bridges between falconry and society as well have been on this occasion. From here my gratitude to all who have made possible this first meeting, certainly the first in a long history. 🦅



Cover of the leaflet distributed among the attendees showing a calligraphy on parchment portrait by D. Pascual Francés





Barbary Falcon

# New Birds in a New Land

With the arrival of hot weather (even at pre-dawn), my flying season is coming to an end and my experiences with the three falcons I have flown in this, my second season here, has been both very enlightening and enjoyable.

• Words and photographs by Mark Williams

Since moving to the UAE in 2013 with a career change, one of my personal aspirations has been to experience some of the various wild species of raptors that are found here that I might never otherwise have an opportunity to try. This past year I have been flying three of the more common local wild “wahesh” falcons, as they’re referred to locally. These are the Red Nape Shaheen, the Black Shaheen and the Calidus peregrine. With exception of the Calidus the previous two are also referred to as “Weikeri” which is the name given to any falcon that is not saker, peregrine or gyr origin.

I’ve flown a few passage birds in the past that were taken in early season (except the goshawks), but those early passage birds are significantly different from the late birds that have had almost a full season to learn about life ..and survival. Upon reflection

our captive bred birds in general go through the same training and

hunting technique day in and day out each season. Even

though they get very fit and proficient at it and might

catch the odd check, generally speaking they don’t

know much else than to go up get served and

they will eat regardless of outcome. I’m

frequently reminded these late passage

birds have had a much harder life

and no doubt have experienced

true hunger and hardship and

they use every subtle

bit of experienced

their life to date has

shown them in order

to survive yet another

day. Recognizing good

from poor hunting

opportunities, using

the wind, good

position, patience



Passage Red Nape Shaheen female (left) and Calidus male





and attack style all distinguish them from their captive bred cousins. They make their own success and when flown in captivity our role truly is more often as just a mere spectator if we can hang onto them long enough. I've been flying birds for 37 years and only now am I beginning to fully appreciating what our forefathers saw in flying wild late passage birds and thanks to great radio telemetry we are able to hold onto them longer to fully experience, evaluate and appreciate them.

#### **The Black Shaheen**

No question they're a stunning looking dark falcon with thick tarsus and huge feet used for catching birds in flight. I have now experienced two intergrades of this species. They have a wide geographic range with the typical variety coming from Sri Lanka. Most of the birds we see are from the fringes of their range that overlap into India, Pakistan and I'm told as far as Turkey. However as stunning as they look, they seem to



**Black Shaheen**



**Red Nape Shaheen on pigeon**



**Passage Red Nape Shaheen**

have a common reputation over here and my 2nd one proved to follow much along the lines and behavior as other people experiences. I initially thought the criticism from others was unfounded and perhaps unwarranted based upon my positive experience with my first one, but I have since come to better appreciate and understand other peoples experiences. It might sound harsh or premature to say they appear to look better than they fly but they are proving to be very temperamental and inconsistent based upon the handful I have seen flown. I've personally only had two myself and the first was quite good, although somewhat "talkative" for a wild late taken passage bird and seem to bond with me like a captive bred bird. My second Black Shaheen seems closer to the true black shaheen in appearance, but seemed to follow the behavior and lackluster performance of majority of them over here which prompts the old saying "looks aren't everything".

While their performance is mediocre at best in my humble opinion, I am sure there's a lot more to learn about them and that perhaps they are a slower to develop and need abundant quarry and opportunities to make into a great game hawk. I remind myself that they are a forest bird and hunt birds high above the tree canopy and that is often only a "one shot deal" affair so perhaps a realignment of our expectations is also in order. I'm sure with more open set ups and easy abundant quarry like ducks they might be good. Here in the gulf we're taking them from their lush environment and using them in



a harsh desert environment with totally different quarry for the most part. The purist in me struggles with the notion that for most falconry needs they might perhaps be better utilized when hybridized with something like a gyr or perhaps another peregrine species. Meanwhile I have since given my Black shaheen away to a friend to allow me to focus on my two remaining birds.

**The Red Nape Shaheen (RNS)**

This bird grabbed my attention from the start and has clearly stood out as being a very different bird to what I've experienced before right from the onset. They're aggressive and tenacious on quarry yet sweet well mannered and biddable to have around much like any peregrine. All I've seen flown seem to adapt to the falcon/falconer partnership well, with peregrine like demeanor. Although not very common in North America and non-existent in my home country of Canada, the RNS is not too dissimilar to an Arabian version of the prairie falcon in many ways with heavier built feet and like all desert falcons they possess similar feather properties (soaks water like a sponge) and their increased aggression and willingness to rough and tumble is well matched to their harsh dry environment etc. Locally they are very similar to the Barbary falcon but the RNS has much heavier build, shorter wings, and more heavily marked on the front chest in general. My RNS flies at around 670 grams but they can go into the mid 700's particularly in cooler climates, whereas the female Barbary weighs usually in low 600's as a general rule.

I'm really taken with mine and following her overnight episode in early training where she took off on a 27km jaunt and killed a pigeon at will in Dubai, she has really gotten into a groove and is working well in captivity. This being said she has made it very clear she has a more exacting weight control and is quickly bored of lures and gadgets like quad copters preferring live quarry instead to the point that she will refuse the hanging bait of a dead pigeon she killed the day prior and go off and kill something on her own instead. No doubt this is the deep ingrained passage experience showing through and I really do wish we had good quarry like sand grouse to fly and see her true potential.

Pigeons and doves have obviously featured highly in her wild diet and she is simply deadly on them. Her most effective technique is to stoop down below the pigeon and shoot up from underneath. They simply can't see her coming from below and make a necessary evasive maneuver. During a recent flight she took off directly after a pigeon as they both climbed up and almost out of sight. At about 300ft up and far into the distance she suddenly pulled off the pigeon and started flying in the opposite direction. I thought it had beaten her and so did the pigeon. Next thing is the pigeon realizes (thinks) the heat is off and turns to circle and perhaps get its bearings. At this point the falcon had gained considerably more height and is tracking back across the sky and when almost directly above she stooped down vertical and caught it. Both the pigeon and I were surprised but that's late passage birds for you and I was the one who was taught the lesson that day.



Mark carefully approaching on kill  
Top: Calidus with pigeon

Of all the birds I have ever flown in my life, passage or captive bred this is one bird I have absolutely no question of her ability to survive should she be lost. I'm at the point whereby each day flying her is a bonus and I thank God for good quality and powerful radio telemetry. Her last flight went over 5.2 km after a fast pigeon she ultimately did not catch. So many of these late passage or haggard birds are very persistent and therefore lost within the first few flights free by fellow falconers who are unprepared for long telemetry chases since these birds flying arena is considerably bigger than any captive bred bird. Good telemetry is essential if you want to hang onto them in the early days when the co-operative hunting relationship is still being formed.

**The Calidus**

This tiercel is very similar to most tiercel peregrines I have flown in years past in that he is a predictable, consistent, sweet tempered yet very aggressive and tenacious hunting bird with a big heart. He was a little delicate on the kill at first and I had to take great care in my approach at first as he will try and pack it. If I let him pluck and break in then it is OK. I guess I should have him a bit keener but he is flying so well at 625-635 grams which is as big as any good Peales or bigger Scottish tiercels. The females I've seen are flying around 850 grams. The birds from Iran are bigger and some females are flying around 950-1050grams. They are known to be very late moulters like our North American Tundra falcon and this passage bird will not likely be done until October or November. I got this bird very late in the season in February and he seems to possess the similar life skills of the passage RNS although he is much more agile and keeps the pressure on the quarry (pigeons in particular), at all times, so much so, that if he doesn't hit it in the first stoop, his agility and repeated attacks and persistence causes the pigeon to lose its minerals and panic and he either binds to it or drives it to the ground. This being said his last flight was a vertical stoop whereby he hit it on the way down through and pitched up and bound to the dazed but still flying pigeon in the throw up.

**Barbary Falcons**

I have yet to fly the most common of indigenous falcons here, the Barbary falcon, although I do train regularly with someone who does. As passage birds the females seem very similar to the passage male Calidus in appearance, plumage, size and demeanor. Comparing same sex's though, the Barbary is much smaller with both being very tenacious in the field yet so very tame and biddable in the majelis / mews. However as



mentioned when adults, it's very hard to tell pure Barbary's from the pure Red Nape and no doubt there are some Barbary that are misidentified as Red Nape and visa versa. I'm told that in the wild the red nape is the more dominant species so when it comes to breeding time and if there is a spare RNS it will drive off the same sex naturally paired birds to mate with their partner. This would explain why we see red nape crosses with black shaheen and peregrines and Barbary's. As you can imagine there is an abundance of captive bred birds that arrive in the gulf from all over the world each fall yet I count myself very fortunate to be in a situation and environment to have the opportunity to fly such different local falcon species that I would never otherwise have had. The local falconers are also so hospitable, friendly and supportive. The common bond and interest with falconry overcomes all cultural differences and lays a path for mutual respect, co-operation and friendship. It will be a very hard place to leave some day but for now I plan on continuing to make the most of every day.

*Editors Comment:*  
“The LAF is opposed to illegal trade in wildlife and this is supported by our actions and statements. We do however strongly support the sustainable use of wildlife, which contributes to conservation. Passage falcons have been sustainably used in the Persian Gulf and Arabia for thousands of years and remain available from trappers and in souks. Recognizing this, the LAF is developing the first of the Flagship Projects of the CMS Saker Global Action Plan which is designed to measure the trade in these birds and to develop means to make this use sustainable. This is discussed elsewhere in this Journal. Whilst recognizing that the trade in these birds is illegal in terms of CITES regulations, the following article is included because it contributes to our understanding of this issue and the attraction of passage taken birds to falconers”



# STEPHEN FRANK MEMORIES

By Roger Upton

I first met Stephen when I was still a school boy and saw a notice in my local paper about a lost hawk. I hadn't seen the hawk but was very interested in Falconry and wanted to find out more, so rang the number in the paper and spoke to Steve. This was the start of a lifelong friendship during which we spent much time together, most of it hawking. The death of Stephen is a sad loss to me, and my family and the falconry world. There is probably no one who did more to help the resurgence of the highest quality game hawking in the western world.

There will be much written about Stephen because of his influence in falconry and fond memories of many falconers so I thought I would just pass on a few stories of our experiences together which might entertain the reader and bring the odd tear to the eye of those who remember him well.

The falcon he had lost in the notice in the paper was a young eyass peregrine called 'Screamer'. Steve gave his hawks interesting names. 'Screamer' was one of the most beautiful peregrines I have ever seen and was one of Steve's first peregrines. He was flying her on his parents farm in the north of Wiltshire and regularly lost her as it was unsuitable country

for flying longwings, especially in the days before telemetry. Luckily 'Screamer' had been hacked on the farm so rarely strayed far from the area. On this occasion she had been found and I was lucky enough to regularly go hawking with her and Steve. On another occasion she had been lost and had spent the night out. We found her early the next morning. The day was bitterly cold with frost on the ground and snow blowing about. We quickly found 'Screamer' in a tree. She wasn't hungry and was happily settled with leg up. We tried everything we knew to entice her to come down to no avail. Then Steve had a moments inspiration, asked me to stay watching her and dashed off back towards the farm buildings. I wondered what he was up to and then saw the family car gingerly driving back across the frosty rutted field.

When Steve pulled up beside me he went around to the boot and got out a hawk bath and a half emptied bucket of water. He put the bath down under the tree and put in the water. After a few minutes of watching down came 'Screamer' to bathe. When Steve judged she was wet enough not to want to return to her tree he crawled in and picked her up.

In those early days our hawking was very amateurish and we



Stephen with Locky and Screamer



Steve's team



often had hawks out. I went off on my first trip to Arabia and Steve kindly came to stay with my family to look after the hawks and dogs. He was at the time driving a horse box for my father-in-law, a well known race horse trainer, so it was convenient for him to stay with my wife Jean who was nursing my newly born son Mark. Steve took the opportunity to fly his hawks on the open down land near our home and did a spot of rook hawking. When I returned from my trip I was told the story of how Steve, one day had flown 'Mecklenburg' in an open valley near the racing yard where the hard pressed rooks took cover in the only cover for a long way round which was an old wind pump tower. The falcon had gone into the top of the tower along with the rooks and Steve determined to get one had climbed the long and rickety ladder to the top only for the rooks and falcon to retreat and take cover at the bottom. Down he went, only for them to go back to the top. This happened several times before he had to give up and give the rooks grace.

On my trip to Abu Dhabi Sheikh Zayid had given me a fantastic passage peregrine called 'Mansour'. She was a great houbara hawk and when I brought her back to the UK I immediately started her on rooks. She was one of the best I have ever had and hardly missed. She was too brave and I started to give her extremely long slips which made for great flights but they covered great distances. She spent several nights out and eventually I lost her completely. After several weeks I got a report of a hawk roosting on Hungerford

Church about 15 miles from my house. It was on the day of the BFC AGM in London and Steve was due to pick me up on his way. When he arrived at the house Jean told him I was out looking for 'Mansour' and gave him my clothes and he came via the church. I hadn't seen her and thought she had probably moved on. I changed at the church car park and travelled to London with Steve where we had a very enjoyable evening which went on late. We drove back to Wiltshire and when we got to Hungerford we stopped at the church to collect my car and as I got in I heard the tinkle of hawk bells. It was her. We waited until first light and she came down to the lure. She gave me a second season of outstanding flights before I lost her for good.

I also got a good saker from Abu Dhabi who went well at rooks but was tricky to fly. We lost her one day and found her in the evening sat in a tree where she refused to come down from. I tried climbing to her without getting far. I then had the idea of noosing her. She was on a nice open branch. I left Steve watching her and rushed back to my wife's shop in Marlborough. We sold fishing tackle amongst other things and I had the idea of using a fishing rod to attach a noose to. I took the longest one off the wall and rushed back to Steve. I still couldn't reach the falcon so Steve found an old oil drum in the hedge and rolled it under the tree. It was now getting dark and we were running out of time. I clambered on top of the drum and reached up to the hawk. I just managed to get the noose over her by standing on tip toe when the drum





them. One memorable trip to Scotland was with Stephen and Mike Woodford. We had been told of some eyasses of the right age by some local keepers. The weather was against us and the first day we got soaked through. The next day we were due out to dinner at Walter Johnson's, a famous character from the falconry world. Mike and I put our wet clothes on again so if it rained again we would still have something dry to wear that evening but Steve took the chance. Again it rained and we were soaked to the skin. The clothes from the day before hadn't dried at all in the camper van we were travelling in. Steve had a smart jacket and tie to wear but no dry trousers. Mike and I persuaded Steve that he would be alright in his pajama trousers as he would be sat at the table most of the evening. Walter and his wife used to live in separate sides of the house so we arrived at Walter's and were then invited into his wife's side for dinner. She was a little surprised by Steve's attire but was very understanding. We all settled down to a perfect dinner and partway through John Murray and a girlfriend arrived. Steve being a perfect gentleman and forgetting about his lack of trousers, stood up to greet them giving the young woman a terrible surprise!

We had a lot of fun hawking together and the quality of hawking gradually improved. We had some marvelous years hawking together on Birichin, James Robertson Justices moor. In those days Steve was flying his famous falcon 'Bitch' who was a fantastic grouse killer who rarely missed. Steve was famous for his enthusiasm and noise while flying a hawk. He would shout at his dogs and encourage his hawks to go higher.

rolled away and I tumbled to the ground. I had the falcon but the rod had snapped in two. Jean was not overly pleased as it turned out to be a Hardy split cane rod of great value. In those days we were still allowed to take eyasses under license and we would take trips to Wales and Scotland to take



One day we had some important guest out and Steve was flying Bitch who was going well with 'Queenie' on point. Steve was rushing about making his usual chorus of noise when a pipit got up which the falcon cleverly bound to and started to eat. Steve didn't see and carried on to flush the covey of grouse and then proceeded to curse the falcon and dog for everything when the falcon failed to stoop. We had to explain to him the reason for the failure when he quietened down.

One day we had the Duke of Edinburgh out with us and again Steve was flying 'Bitch' who unusually went off on the soar. Steve had a good point which he didn't want to waste and was trying everything to get her to come back over. He swung his lure and threw it out with no result so then he threw out a dead grouse he had caught earlier. He lost them both in the heather along with his flat-cap which he had also thrown up. He was running around shouting at the falcon and dog and looking for his lure, grouse and hat when the Duke thought he might be able to help. He walked over and asked Steve how he could help. Steve not looking up to see where the offer had come from said "find my bloody hat".

Steve being very kind and generous often lent his good pointers to other falconers. One season Geoffrey Pollard was in need of a dog and had seen a pointer of Steve's called 'Mac', who had worked extremely well and Geoffrey had named 'Super Mac'. He invited Stephen over to Straithmore along with Christian Saar and me. It was a windy day and we started on a poor slope where we were all encouraged to fly. Geoffrey saying that his hawks wouldn't be ready for a while.

When we crossed the ridge into updraft Geoffrey announced his hawks would now be ready and could Steve run 'Mac'. He quickly found a point and Geoffrey said to Steve, "is that point good". Steve said if you won't fly it I will and put a hawk up before Geoffrey had the chance to decide. Stephen's falcon waited-on nicely and killed a grouse from a good covey that 'Mac' flushed perfectly. Geoffrey once again asked for 'Mac' to be worked forward and he came on point. This time Geoffrey got a hawk up quickly for him, not wanting to miss another chance. The falcon went very high and Geoffrey in his quiet way asked Steve if he could get 'Mac' to flush. 'Mac' ran in and flushed a hare and proceed to course it all over the more with cheers from Christian and Steve! Luckily I ran a dog on and was able to flush a grouse for the falcon. But 'Mac' lost the 'Super' bit of his title.

There are many more stories I could tell but it would need a whole book. Hawking with Stephen was always entertaining. He was a great falconer and when flying put everything into it but he wasn't over serious about it and took the good with the bad. I never saw him lose his temper with his hawks or dogs and they were always kept immaculately. He taught me and numerous others a great deal and was always the perfect gentleman. I remember him hawking with me and my son, his godson, Mark one day about 15 years ago. He was sat on the back of his car struggling to get his walking socks on. He was about 70 and he turned around to Mark and said when I can't get these socks on any more can you take me out and bury me on the moor. 🦅



# FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE GERMAN VETERINARY SOCIETY:

## Is there a justifiable difference between domesticated and wild animals from an ethical and biological point of view? A technical overview of animal welfare with special reference to birds

By Thomas Richter, Peter Kunzmann, Susanne Hartmann, Thomas Blaha

*Comment from the Editor:*

*The following paper was originally published in German in the Deutsche Veterinarmedizinische Gesellschaft Forum. While we appreciate that this is a specialist article written primarily for veterinarians and that it is more academic than the usual articles published in the IAF Journal, it is included because the topic is particularly relevant to falconers at this time. There is strong pressure by groups with “animal rights” interests, to promote the concept of National Positive Companion Animal Lists. These lists will set definite limits on the range of species which can be kept as pets by ordinary people. This legislation will be developed at a national level so must be addressed on a nation by nation basis. Thus there is a real danger that we will need to ensure that hawks, falcons and eagles, including wild taken hawks, are on every nation’s positive companion list for birds. In time this concept may spread beyond the European Union. If the species is included within the positive list, there is no promise that this will not be challenged with calls for exclusion in the future. As an organization with a real interest in animal welfare, the IAF has concerns that these positive lists will not be to the benefit of the welfare of species excluded from the lists. The following article addresses this issue and proposes alternative measures. This article, then, is relevant to every falconry organization and particularly to those within Europe. For those readers interested in issues relating to animal welfare and ethics, please also visit: <http://iaf.org/WelfareandFalconry.php>*

### 1 The Problem

In many animal welfare motivated discussions a special ethical and biological status for wild animals is claimed. “This is a wild animal, therefore...” it may e.g. not be (supposedly) kept or used for displays. The German Animal Welfare Association demands the prohibition of the keeping of pet birds, ornamental fish and exotic animals. What we are discussing here refers to wild animals in captivity, for which several interest groups suggest there is a different ethical and biological status by comparison to that of domesticated animals. A “wild-animal” is understood, in the following, as an animal, whose genetic makeup is the same as that of a “free” living population of the same animal species; in other words, an animal that is not domesticated. The animal itself can be both hatched and born in captivity and also may have been taken from “nature”. The paper deals with the keeping of such “wild animals”, because it is true that the procurement of such animals from nature can cause problems for the ecology and also for species conservation, unless they have been bred in captivity. However, this is not the subject of this paper, but rather it is the question of whether the characteristic of being “not domesticated” demands different requirements regarding the welfare of these animals.

### 2 The animal welfare relevance:

#### 2.1 Moral and legal aspects

The German Animal Protection Law is a moral justification for the protection of animals, especially in claiming the responsibility of man for animals as his fellow creatures. This

moral principle applies without exception to all animals in human custody; in this respect, there is no difference between domesticated and wild animals. For assessing animal keeping (possibly use custody or holding), the German Animal Protection Law - reasonably – refers to morally relevant biological criteria, namely to the avoidance of pain, suffering or injury. This applies equally to keeping of wild animals. These patho-centric criteria are based on biological facts, i.e. the possible limitations of the animals’ well-being. Wild animals can only “claim” a particular moral-legal status, if they had particular biological characteristics, which domesticated animals have not, and these are of relevance in terms of animal welfare.

According to the general principle of equality (cf. Teutsch, 1987) equal entities are to be treated equally, but different entities need to be treated differently. Thus, if domesticated and wild animals should be treated differently, then their inequality is to be assumed, which requires a justification. In this light, any person that keeps animals is responsible for housing, feeding, and looking after them according to the animals’ nature and their biological and social needs, for which the animal keepers have to have the necessary knowledge and skills. Furthermore, animals in human care need to be kept without limiting their ability to species-typical behaviour so that the animals are protected from pain or avoidable suffering or damage (§§ 1 and 2 of the German Animal Protection Act). This has to be considered a basic requirement for all animals that are in human care. This basic moral and legal responsibility of humans caring for animals has nothing to do with the degree of domestication



Photo: Mark Williams

of the animals kept by humans. The biological criteria to assess this ability of the animal keepers and caretakers are undoubtedly the same for domesticated and wild animals.

### 2.2 The ethical / ethological aspect

If politicians or official of animal welfare organizations are asked what they want to in terms of animal welfare, often the answer is: any animal keeping (is this the best word? Does custody or management of husbandry suit better?) is to be “appropriate to the species”. Is this achievable? And: would this meet all demands desirable for animal protection? To answer these questions, first, the difference between normative and descriptive statements has to be clarified, and second, the species-typical behavior of the animals in question is to be taken into consideration.

#### 2.2.1 Normative vs. descriptive statements

Statements that are normative demands are instructions for people - they are prescriptive, descriptive statements based on existing phenomena. A normative statement for traffic regulations may serve as an example: the § 3 of the German Law on Using Public Roads is a prescriptive statement it prescribes e.g. that in cities the speed limit is 50km/h. In contrast, a descriptive statement is the Ohm’s law, which describes that the amperage (I) is determined by the ratio of voltage (V) to resistance, so  $I = V/R$ . The difference is: the traffic regulations can be violated, but nobody can “violate”

the Ohm’s law.

The term “appropriate to the species” contains elements of both prescriptive and descriptive statements. The reference to the natural characteristics of animal species implies a descriptive-biological statement. The species-typical behavior can be explored by ethological research methods. The demand for welfare rules that take the species-specific requirements of the animals into consideration, however, is implicitly normative.

#### 2.2.2 Ethological observations

Especially, the ethology of the social behaviour of animals provides touching examples of friendly interactions between animals. However, natural species-typical behavior is known that is not ideal from the viewpoint of animal welfare. One of the many possible examples for this is the parent-child behavior of barn owls: barn owls lay as many eggs as they can provide food for all their progeny in particularly good “mice years”. In addition, they breed from the first egg, so that different ages of barn owl chicks in a barn owl mound are the rule. In average or even in bad years, when food is not enough for all the progeny, the younger chicks are fed by the parents to the older offspring. This is species-typical behavior. An owl breeder who is to feed the progeny of his owls in this way, however, would be accused, quite rightly, of a criminal offense according to § 17 of the Animal Welfare Act.

#### 2.2.3 Criticism of the term “appropriate to a species”

Since species-typical behaviour in many cases is not compliant with the human understanding of animal welfare, it should not always be seen as the ultimate goal of animal welfare. The focus of protection of animals, cared for by humans, should rather be protecting the individual animal against pain and damage. In summary, we claim that each animal keeping (?) must be much more animal-friendly, than the natural habitat of the species in question.

### 2.3 The biological aspect

According to § 2 of the German Animal Protection Act and our considerations above, the judgment as to whether a wild animal keeping complies with animal protection requirements should be done by measuring the absence of pain and damage. Animals are committed and empowered to build up and maintain themselves (Tschanz et al., 1987). Their inbred behaviour enables them to adapt to different and possibly changing environmental conditions.

For assessing the degree of the animal welfare compliance of animal keepings the instructions by Tschanz and Stauffacher are useful tools. According to them animal keepings can be classified as animal-friendly, when “the animal is provided with what it needs for successfully building up and maintaining its existence”, and when it succeeds through an appropriate



behaviour in meeting its requirements and preventing pain and damage “ (Tschanz, 1984). According to the concept of “meeting the requirements and preventing damage” (Tschanz et al., 1987), ethological, morphological or physiological damage is to be taken into account. Stauffacher (1993) defines: “An animal keeping is appropriate for the animals in question, if their adaptability is not overtaxed; an overtaxed adaptability manifests itself in behavioural disorders, in chronic stress, in morphological damage and chronic medical disorders.” There is no reason why these criteria should be not valid for domesticated AND wild animals. The attitude not to accept this statement, is probably due to the fact that, concluding from the actual behavior of wild animals in the “Nature”, it is assumed that wild animals have particular behavioural needs, which could not be satisfied in in man-made animal keepings, and thus, would lead to various kinds of suffering.

### 2.3 Do wild animals have a concept of freedom?

A particularly striking example of this assumption is the idea of the “freedom” that a wild animal enjoys in the nature. From what we know, animals have no concept of freedom. If all resources for meeting the animals’ requirements are available, individual animals of species with a strong social behaviour that are associated with humans will often stay all their life in close proximity of humans. .

This, of course, does not rule out that there are species with strong requirements, e.g. moving around or roaming in large areas, for which an adequate accommodation in the human environment is difficult, if not impossible. This, however, is to be decided for each individual case, according to the real needs of the animals and not to the assumed needs. This means that the lack of “freedom” is not a general obstacle for the keeping wild animals in human care. The real need of animals for moving around is an example of differences between species: horses, brown bears and polar bears have a large inbred need for roaming and stereotypes due to the limitation of moving around are not uncommon in these species; cattle and hawks, however, have only a very weak requirement for moving around, if they have plenty of food, and they do not develop stereotypes when they are restricted in their movements.

### 3 Behavioural motivations

In general, it is important to identify the behavioural motivations of animals. This is particularly important in regard to wildlife. It is often assumed that “artificial” environments for wild animals are not able provide the conditions for meeting the animals’ ethological requirements. But it is crucial to know, from what these requirements result, in other words, what is the behavioural motivation. Is the motivation the adaptation to a given environment, thus the same behavior is not necessary in a different environment

According to the classical “motivation model” (Becker-Carus et al., 1972), external and internal factors determine of a motivation. Especially from the perspective of animal welfare, two categories of motivation can be differentiated: those with and without autonomic triggering.

1) The behavioural category of motivation with autonomic triggering has the highest significance in terms of animal welfare. Autonomic triggered - motivation is e.g. a certain time-span elapsed since the last action - as it is the case with sleep, or a certain hormonal change takes place - such as it is the case with building a nest of the sow prior to farrowing. Is the action carried out, a negative feedback decreases the desire to act, in extreme cases, to zero. For example, a (male) animal is, in a certain period of time, available only for a certain number of copulations. The classical ethology coined the term of “threshold increase” (Lorenz, 1978). If an adequate or appropriate behaviour cannot be realized in the context of a special situation, abnormal behaviour is the result. The abnormal behaviour may in single cases result in a spontaneous act without any adequate external stimuli. An example of an action without an adequate external stimulus is the involuntary sleep of humans while driving a car, for which the term is “threshold decrease”. But also stereotypic behaviour disorders can develop such as the stereotypical feather plucking in parrots. These types of “misbehavior” (? mal-behavior – I am not sure if there is such a word?) are indicators for inadequate living conditions, and thus of considerable animal welfare relevance (Buchholtz, 1993).

2) A classic example of motivation solely on the basis of external triggers is the immediate running away from any danger. If the animal’s external environment as threatening, it reacts with escape by fleeing. In this, behavior is triggered neither by a threshold decrease nor by a negative feedback. An animal does not flee earlier, just because the last fleeing occurred a longer time ago. If the animal cannot run away because it is prevented by man-made obstacles, it will react with “learned” helplessness and apathy (Buchholtz, 1993).

### 4 Steering mechanisms of behaviour

A second important question in this context is: How strong is the impact of genetics and the contact of animals to people on the steering mechanisms of behaviour? Or to put it more precisely: do wild animals have a genetically different steering of behaviour than domesticated animals? Wechsler (1992) stated: “Ethological studies in semi-natural reference systems consistently confirm that the species-typical behaviour of our livestock species has been hardly changed by domestication.” [...] “Alternative forms of husbandry, however, provide the animals with housing conditions that trigger and steer species-typical behavioural patterns. Using the example of a combined keeping of breeding and fattening

pigs in a structured pen demonstrates that an animal-friendly housing system needs not to look necessarily “natural”. The behaviour triggering stimuli can also be offered in a confined environment inside a barn. Pigs show a species-typical behaviour because their mechanisms of steering their behaviour do not distinguish between natural and artificial stimuli...”. These findings in domesticated pigs can, in reverse, be applied to wild boars.

Of course, there are genetic behavioural differences between species and even between individuals within species that may be relevant to animal welfare.

Examples for genetic behavioural differences within a species are wolves and dogs: wolves are timid in general, but some individuals show such an increased intraspecific aggression as some strains of the Bull Terrier breed (Böttjer, 2003, quoted from Hirschfeld, 2005).

Genetically determined anxiety, however, is not observed in all species of wild animals: man -reared i.e. imprinted parrots or ravens, to give only two of many possible examples, do not show any anxiety. These genetic differences are, of course, to be taken into account in any animal husbandry, irrespective of whether domesticated or wild animals are cared for by humans.

### 5 Issues of the human-animal relationship

Special attention needs to be paid to the human-animal relationship, when it comes to wild animals in human care.

#### 5.1 The impact of the individual animal's ontogenesis

As shown above, behavioural differences between individuals may have



a genetic basis, but they are mainly based on learning. In this respect, there are no fundamental differences between domesticated and wild animals. A wild animal reared in human care learns just like a domesticated animal, whereas domesticated animals can acquire characteristics that resemble the attitude of wild animals: if, for example, domesticated animals, such as cattle, are kept on large pastures with no human contact over longer periods of time, they can develop a flight distance similar to that of wild animals, whereas wild animals reared with frequently close contact to humans, can become very familiar with their caretakers.

#### 5.2 The ethological basis of learning

During the individual development of the animals’ behaviour various forms of learning support or inhibit the development of appropriate responses to stimuli. The learning forms “imprinting”, “habituation” and the two forms of conditioning (operant and classical) have to be mentioned:

Imprinting refers to a fast learning process mostly at a very young age, the sensitive period. There are different areas where imprinting takes place such as food or nesting sites for birds. The animal welfare relevant imprinting areas are mainly in the field of the species-typical social behaviour. In ducks for example, there is a sensitive period “whom to follow”, which are in the early stages of life the parents, and in the subsequent stage of life the imprinting is targeted on knowing the social needs and, for example, the sexual partner.

Habituation refers to the getting used to a stimulus, when it is experienced several times in succession that there is no negative consequence.

Conditioning is a learning process where the animals experience that an initially meaningless stimulus or an initially meaningless action results in a positive or negative consequence. If the consequences are positive, the animal (will act again in case) (? Will repeat the act if) its desire for reinforcement is strong. If the consequences are negative, the animal will refrain from acting again, unless another stimulus is stronger.

#### 5.3 Imprinting of human-animal-bondage

Depending on the social behavioural patterns of the species in question, the imprinting of human-animal-bonding can be relatively meaningless in respect to animal welfare. If the species has no distinct social structure, as it is the case for many owls or birds of prey. These species have in nature a “stand by population” that does not actually contribute to the reproduction of the species and the individuals live therefore solitary lives. Thus, not to be mated is, in these species, a variant of normal behaviour.

In contrast, in species with complex social structures, such as parrots, most people not have time enough to be birds’ disposal all day as social partners, which means, in many cases, suffering for the birds. (TVT AK 8, 2006).



For animal species that can be dangerous to humans, establishing close human-animal bonding can necessitate isolating and/or castrating the animals as e.g. in the case of hand-reared young male roe deer after their “puberty”, which Rietschel (2011) has identified as animal welfare relevant.

## 6 For which domestic or wild animals is the keeping extremely demanding?

Of course, there are species that’s physiological and or mental demands are extremely high, which are, from an animal welfare standpoint, very hard to meet.

1) Due to their special demands regarding their habitat:

Many animal species live in habitats that are difficult to simulate by humans irrespective of efforts to enrich the environment, such as the deep sea, or where there exist extreme nutritional needs. An example, which may serve, is the vampire bat that lives on warm-blooded animals (see also van Putten, 2002).

2) Due to their inbred desire to move freely:

Some animal species have particular motivation to roam over large distances, such as horses, bears and elephants. Limitations of this desire to move often result in an increased frequency of stereotypical behavioural disorders.

3) Due to their special social behaviour:

All animal species that have a special claim for a species-specific social structure, such as parrots, make it extremely difficult to meet their social demands. If these special social demands are not met the occurrence of automutilations, e.g. feather plucking and other severe behavioural disorders is often the consequence.

There are, in contrast, other domestic or wild animals that have no significant autonomous movement needs and/or any special demands for social partners. For example, birds of prey that, contrary to the popular perception, do not have a particularly strong requirement of flying (as long as they have food) and as predominantly solitary living animals, they also have no special social demands. Consequently, no behavioral disorders are described in birds of prey in human care.

## 7 Animal welfare problems of relevance

Any animal keeping, can have relevant animal welfare problems regardless of whether the animals are domesticated or not domesticated (wild). If so, the main reasons are:

1) Lack of knowledge and expertise

Any keeping of animals requires specialized knowledge and expertise. Since in many cases, the specific knowledge is not sufficient, even in highly motivated “animal lovers”, the acquisition and expertise by all appropriate means should be pursued for each form of animal husbandry. The learning and training of the specific form must be targeted at the biological and social requirements of the animal species in question.

2) Lacking or deficient enrichment of the animal housing

Many commercially available enrichment facilities and housing

equipment do not meet the requirements of the animals in question. Providing animals with the most appropriate equipment and enrichment facilities is a general demand, which applies likewise to domesticated and non-domesticated animals.

3) Sub-optimal care for the animals

Despite an existing proven knowledge of the animal caretakers and despite the provision of optimal housing, animal welfare problems can still occur, if there are deficiencies in the management of the care for the animal, i.e. if the management is sub-optimal. Therefore, it is important to assess the physiological and ethological state of the animals as must be done for the animal welfare assessment of livestock by official veterinarians, as described by Blaha and Richter (2011)

4) Lack or deficient supervision and state controls

The assessment of the physiological and ethological state of birds and other “wild” animals by e.g. veterinary authorities needs to be done by supervisors that have an appropriate knowledge and expertise. Since the holding of specific types of non-domesticated animals does not occur everywhere, there should be a “pool” of specialists that can be asked to provide technical support if, in a local or regional veterinary authority, a specialist for the animal species in question is not available. Another accommodation for the lack of specialist among the official veterinarians is to ask external experts to support the veterinary supervision of certain types of animal keeping.

## 8 Discussion

According to the basic principle of equality, there is no general, biological or moral characteristic of wild animals that demands for any animal welfare decision that is different



Photo: Mark Williams

for wild animals from the decisions made for domesticated animals.

Keeping and caring for wild animals without physical, physiological, ethological and sociological damage and without creating behavioural disorders, chronic stress and somatic dysfunctions is possible, and they are therefore considered potentially compliant for animal protection by Tschanz (1984) and Stauffacher (1993). This, however, does not mean that the animal protection compliance of wild animal keeping is as easily to achieve as that of any keeping of pet (companion) animals. It needs to be emphasized that, regardless of the assignment of animals to the categories “domesticated” or “wild” there is a continuous range between extremely animal-friendly and extremely animal adverse management. Any setting of a threshold between “tolerable” and “unacceptable” animal keepings is not scientific, but “political” (Richter, 2006).

In aviculture, in addition to providing high standards of nutrition, climate and caretaking, particularly the species-typical social behaviour has to be taken in account. The social characteristics of bird species ranges from predominantly

solitary living species, like most birds of prey, to highly social species such as many parrots, where keeping a single bird is of high animal welfare relevance. As in livestock, animal-oriented welfare criteria have to be applied to any animal keeping for birds, irrespective of whether these are domestic or wild birds. If there is no morphological, physiological or ethological damage or pain or suffering, the animal keeping in question should be regarded as animal welfare compliant.

The knowledge and expertise of the animal owners and caretakers as well as appropriate and enriched animal accommodation are, in respect to the wellbeing of the animals, indispensable preconditions for any successful keeping of animals of any species.

So, instead of calling for banning the keeping of “wild” animals, which would create illegal holding and illegal trade of non-domestic animals, including the internet commerce, the knowledge-based and animal welfare conforming keeping “wild” animals, which can be supervised and assessed in terms of the wellbeing of the animals by using animal-oriented criteria by specialized official veterinarians and experts should be strongly encouraged.

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# Saker Flagships for Falconry

By Robert Kenward, Janusz Sielicki, Adrian Lombard

Traditional falconers love flying wild hawks. However, in gaining the many benefits of modern falconry, including domestic breeding and healthy relations with other conservation groups in many countries, the opportunity to trap, fly and then release wild hawks has been lost to many. This includes the majority of European falconers. In Europe, efforts have largely failed to persuade conservation authorities to relax restrictions dating from the 1970s, when populations of hawks and falcons had crashed due to poisoning by organochlorine pesticides. Indeed, despite evidence of healthy populations throughout their range, two of the world's three largest falcons, the Gyr and the Peregrine, are still treated in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) as if they are endangered by trade. Although falconers in North America regained access to Peregrines, traditional transfer of wild Peregrines and Gyrs between friends in different countries remained impossible.

Unfortunately, just at the time when falconers might have expected the recovery of these falcons to be more widely rewarded, the world's second largest falcon showed signs of decline. The Saker Falcon had traditionally been trapped and flown by falconers for centuries in parts of Asia and North Africa. Falconers had enjoyed hunting quarry such as the Houbara Bustard with falcons trapped while migrating from northern Eurasian breeding grounds to winter in Africa. However, Saker numbers had dwindled in parts of Europe. Fears arose in the new millennium that Sakers had declined some 50% across their breeding range, from Hungary in the west to China in the east. The reasons for the decline were not clear, but there was evidence of excessive trapping in some areas. Thus, as in the pesticide era, falconry was again blamed.

## IUCN, BirdLife, CITES and CMS

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) keeps a Red List of species which are considered

endangered; a 50% decline in a population over a short period qualifies a species for that dubious honour. IUCN is the global umbrella for more than 80 governments and over 1000 non-government conservation organisations. IAF is one member and, as the umbrella for the world's falconry organisations, has special status. Another IUCN member, BirdLife International, with its own national partners throughout the world, gathers the IUCN Red List on birds. As the original numbers of Saker Falcons was rather uncertain, an initial endangered listing for the Saker was at first reversed and then, as a precautionary measure, finally agreed. International conventions like CITES are created by governments, who send delegates to meet every 2-3 years and make decisions which governments then turn into national laws. They take note of the IUCN Red List, so an Endangered rating can easily lead to a trade ban. However, in the case of the Saker Falcon, another Convention became involved. The Saker is migratory and therefore falls within the aegis of a Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species. CITES takes heed for migratory species of decisions made of CMS, which is also called the Bonn Convention as it was created and remains headquartered in Bonn.



Some of the first satellite tags for falcons were on Sakers released after hunting in the Gulf States

## Banning use of wild Sakers

In 2011, CMS decided at its meeting in Norway to list the Saker Falcon for strict conservation measures that made trade illegal. However, for several reasons (and with a great deal of work from IAF as an observer to CMS), it was decided that this should be a partial listing. It was noted both that Saker populations varied greatly in health between countries, and that many of the countries between which trade in trapped birds might occur had rather porous borders. Another very important factor was that Abu Dhabi, which had taken the lead in the UNESCO listing of falconry as an Intangible Global Heritage, had been funding work on released and wild Sakers in Central Asia for twenty years. A highly successful project in Mongolia had established more than 5,000 artificial nest sites that fledged some 2,500 young Sakers last year.

It was appreciated by the governments who make the decisions in CMS (and CITES) that a blanket ban on trade might simply increase smuggling that would remove the ability to manage trade. Moreover, it would ignore the dedicated conservation research of countries motivated by support for falconry. IAF therefore sought active conservation measures and not mere uplisting. As a result the CMS resolution on uplisting not only allowed continued trade from Mongolia, but also allowed down-listing for other countries in which Saker populations were deemed healthy. Moreover, CMS established a Saker Task Force (STF) to draw up a Global Action Plan for managing the species in future.

Healthy Saker populations produce large broods (here tagged in early Abu Dhabi/IAF research)



## Four flagship projects

IAF then worked in the STF with CMS secretariat, and with BirdLife International and IUCN, for three years to develop the SakerGAP. It was appreciated from the start that the strong support of governments from the Gulf States, including Saudi Arabia as well as Abu Dhabi, opened an opportunity for conserving and restoring Saker populations through their use in falconry. The SakerGAP therefore used data from other work supported by Abu Dhabi and IAF in the 1990s, and from satellite-tracking of tagged Sakers in Hungary, to show that Sakers could be harvested sustainably for falconry if populations were healthy. It also recommended four "Flagship Projects" to engage falconers, trappers and wildlife biologists in conserving Sakers. To IAF's great pleasure, the following CMS meeting, in Ecuador in 2014, strongly endorsed this plan.

However, this put IAF under a strong obligation to help CMS, BirdLife and IUCN to deliver results. The least costly of the four projects, with an initial shoe-string budget of €25,000, was to build an internet system to reach out on one hand to falconers and trappers, in their own local languages, and on the other hand to engage with researchers and falcon hospitals. This outreach to the falconers and trappers had become possible because, although there were no real clubs to help encourage sound practises and start engaging them in Saker conservation, many of them were starting to use the internet on smart-phones. Thus a "Portal for Enhancing Trust" could reach out to them in the languages for falconers and trappers in Gulf States, North Africa, Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and parts of the former USSR (Arabic, Pashto, Persian and Russian)

A survey in Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi for the SakerGAP had shown that almost all the falconers were in touch with falcon hospitals, to which they took birds for checks especially when newly acquired. This supported the findings of further





Left: the multilingual practitioner portal is for falconers in Asia & North Africa (www.sakernet.org)  
Below: However, you can visit in English too, from the site for Saker researchers.



work in the 1990s which showed that falcon hospitals were a good way to count numbers of trained Sakers, and also to estimate the numbers of breeding pairs if young were marked in nests far to the north. The falcon hospitals were using microtransponders to recognise birds and access their medical histories, so that although rings might be removed by trappers, microtransponders put in nestlings were detected in the hospitals. This revealed the proportion of marked nestlings, which could be used to estimate harvest rates and population sizes.

#### An internet system for conservation

All could in theory be organised through a fairly inexpensive internet system, if falconers and trappers could be attracted to visit it. The attractions would be the provision of useful and interesting information, including knowledge of their dispersed communities through smartphone and online survey across different countries, and prizes for providing information. Perhaps falconers could also be persuaded to sponsor marking of nestlings, with special prizes for those reported later in falcon hospitals, and even to adopt wild falcons with satellite tags whose travels would be revealed on their multilingual web-site. This would link with the two further Flagship Projects, one of which is to gain data from satellite tracking of 100 young falcons, and another to create a thousand artificial nests in Kazakhstan, where like Mongolia there is good food but few natural nests in many areas. The satellite tags are important not only for understanding migration routes, which helps define the origin areas of populations estimated by marking and trapping. The tags also help to estimate the importance of different causes of death, and hence of population declines. Understanding the causes of Saker deaths is important for falconers, because the work in Mongolia was also indicating that thousands were being electrocuted each year, which was recognised as a major threat by the Saker Global Action Plan. As well as a shortage of nesting sites in many good hunting areas, there were also few places to perch. Poles of the power

lines being constructed widely in these developing countries were fatal attractions. The studies in Mongolia were not only showing the scale of the electrocution problem, but also how the poles could be retrofitted with insulation to make them safe. This was a good start for the fourth Flagship Project, to make a million poles safe for falcons and other raptors. As in the pesticide era, it is becoming clear that modern problems are more serious for raptors than traditional falconry. However, in the pesticide era the clubs in Europe and North America played a strong role encouraging falconers to behave responsibly and to help Peregrines recover. A first action of western falconers had been to forgo use of wild adults (haggards). A similar step is badly needed for Sakers, because this very productive species could support an even larger harvest than peregrines if adults were left to breed. With such restraint, and by helping assess and support Saker populations, could ordinary falconers and trappers dispersed across Asia and Africa keep their traditional access to wild falcons? However, first of all, could IAF find the money for the communication system and would the falconers and trappers engage with it? Progress so far is promising. IAF found funds for the communication system. CMS contributed to enable more translation than would have been possible, and arranges meetings which can help get the final projects under way. Individual falconers and their relatives, including Kamran Khan Yousafzai, Reza Parastar Namini and Monif Mahana AlRashidi generously gave much time to complete translation at short notice. Please have a look at the site www.sakerfalcon.org, which will link you through to an English version of the multilingual site at www.saker-staging.net. You might even like to make a donation to help the other Flagship Projects. When you get this journal, the portal system and surveys will have been ‘live’ for several months. We already know that falconers are once again probably not the real problem, and by then we’ll have an even better idea of whether they really are likely to be the solutions in the Saker story. 🦅

# THE CMS GLOBAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE SAKER FALCON:

## PROMOTING CONSERVATION AND COMBATING ILLEGAL TRADE THROUGH ENGAGEMENT.

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Presentation to the Symposium ‘Beyond Enforcement: Communities, governance, incentives and sustainable use in combating wildlife crime’ held by the IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Group in South Africa on 27th and 28th February 2015

Current global efforts to combat illegal trade in an endangered and high value species, the Saker Falcon, *Falco cherrug*, have taken a markedly different approach to that emphasised in responses to many other high profile species. Rather than following the route of bans and emphasis on enforcement, the Convention on Migratory Species has developed an action plan based on sustainable use, trust building among user groups, and engagement of users and communities in monitoring.

The Saker falcon is a species of significant cultural importance to many indigenous people and is utilized by falconers across the whole of its extensive range – from Mongolia to North Africa and from Hungary to Saudi Arabia. It has been used sustainably for Falconry for at least 4,000 year and it may have been one of the first species used in falconry. Recent increases in use of the species mirror the increased affluence and the desire to participate in traditional cultural practices within the oil-rich nations of the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula. The significance of the species extends beyond falconers to the communities within the breeding range and migration routes. In these areas, it is a real or potential source of income to trappers and others who can benefit from use of the resource. This falcon, however, is believed to have undergone a significant and recent population decline in parts of its extensive range. This decline is driven in part by illegal trade. The illegal trade is unsustainable as it is not based on good conservation measures; it involves the capture of mature breeding birds along with immature birds, is selective of larger female birds and is associated, we suspect, with a high mortality due to poor transportation during smuggling. In response to the concerns regarding illegal trade some strong voices called for uplisting of the species to Annex I of the CMS in 2011, which would have shut down the prospect of legal trade. By targeting the trade through demands for greater enforcement and legislation, however, would not mean that the decline will be addressed or halted. Had this route been taken the harvesters and end-users of this resource would increasingly operate “underground”. The enforcement of measures to entrench the illegality of the Saker harvest would deny fair remuneration to communities who “own”

عاون ال اتيقافتا لم ع قطخ  
رجل ارقصلل قرجامل  
ىلع قظفاحمل ا دوهج زيزعت  
ريغ راجت ال ا عهف الكمو عاون ال  
فكر اشمل لال خ نم عورشمل

امتدظن يتل قودنل ا يف اضرع مت ققرو  
بسك لبسو مادتسمل مادختسال ا عومجم  
قظفاحمل ا يمل اعل ا داحتال ا يف شيعل  
ايقيرفا بونج يف (IUCN) ا عيبطل ا ىلع  
ناون عب 2015 ري اربف 28 و 27 يهوي  
تاعمت حمل ا رود :نون اقل ا ذيفنت ا اور ام  
يف مادتسمل ا مادختسال او زفاو حل او قملو حل او  
”فيربل ا ي حل ا مئارج عهف الكم  
زسون ا ج ،درا بمل نايردا :نوفلؤمل  
درونك تربور ،يكييليس

راجت ال ا عهف الكمل ا يمل ا حل ا يمل ا حل ا دوهج ا يف  
ضارقن ال اب قندممل ا عون ال ا يف عورشمل ا ريغ  
ذاختا مت ،فيل اعل ا قميقل ا تاذا عون ال او  
قل عتي ام يف ظو حل م لكشب فل تخم جن  
ديك اقل ا مت ام عم قنراقمل اب رل ا رقصلا ب  
ىرخا ل ا قملل ا عون ال ا نم ديدغلل هيل ع  
زيك رتل او رظحل ا راسم عابتا نم ال دبف  
،فينون اقل ا تابي ترتل ا ذيفنت ىلع  
قظفاحمل ا قندحتمل ا م ال ا اتيقافتا تعضو  
موقت لم ع قطخ (CMS) قرجامل ا عون ال ا ىلع  
نيب ققثل ا انبو مادتسمل ا مادختسال ا ىلع



ديزېمب قبل اطمل لال خ نم قراجتل فادمتسا نأ نم مغرلا ىلع ،كلذو ،ءورشملا قراجتل امامأ بابلا قالغ! عابتا مت اذإو .هقوقوت وأ ضافخنال ةجل اعم ين عي ال كدشملا تاعيرشتل او ةيباقرلا تابيترتل نم لمغلا ىلإ ديازتم وحن ىلع دروملا اذل نويئامنلا نومدختسمل او نودايصرلا لوحتي فوسف ،راسملا اذه ’الداع’ ارجأ لفلكي فوس ،رحلا رقصلا داصح ةي عرش خيسرتل ريبادت ذافن! نأ نيح يف .”ضرأ! تحت” حيراصت نم جتانلا لخدلا نم ديزملا راردا! ةينكلم! نع الضاف ،قورثلا هذه ”كلتمت” يتلا تاعمتجمل ماطلا دروملا اذه داصح قمادتسال قلوذبملا دوهچلا معدي فوس چمنلا اذه ناف ،كلذ ىلع قوالعو .مظنملا ديصرلا تاعمتجمل اكلتل

قطخل! بجومبو .(GAP) رحلا رقصلل ةيملاع لمع قطع عضو ىلإ ىدا فلتخم چمن ذاختا مت ،كلذلو ميمص نم روقصلاب ديصرلا يف قلغتسملا علونألل مادتسملا مادختسال او نوراقصرلا ربت عي ،ةيلاحلا ريبادت عم بنج ىلإ ابنج ،قدئاولا عيراشملا نم ادنع قطعلا هذه نمضتتو .ةعيبطلا ىلع قظفاحملا دوهج طوطخل! راثأ نم فيفيختل او ةي عنطصلال شاشعالأ فالأ ريفوت لثم ،رويظلا هذه دادعأ زيزعتل ةيحل! روقصرلا يدايص نيب ققثلا ءانب ىلإ فدهت يتلا تاردابملا نم قدحو نمض ،ءابرطلل قلقانلا رقصلا لمع قيرف مضت ،فارطال! نم قنيابتم ءومجم نيب قطعلا هذه تجمح دقف ،كلذبو .نيراقصرلاو يف مادتسملا مادختسال! ءومجمو قراجملا علونال! فيقافتا نم نيصصختم ءاملع نم نوكتي يذلا رحلا ظافحل! او ةيامحل! تاطلسو نيراقصرلا ىلإ قفاضلاب ،(IUCN) ةي عيبطلا ىلع قظفاحملا يملاعلا داحتالا يف ظلمكتم قروصب نيراقصرلا قطعلا تجمداً ،كلذبو .رحلا رقصلا راشتنا لود يف رويظلا ةايح ىلع باب قطعلا تحتف ،كلذ ىلع قوالعو .خونلا اذه انم يناعي يتلا قفلتخملا تالكشملا لح نع اثحب ناتسنزي غرقو ناتسن اغفأو ناتسكابو ناري! لمشت يتلا لودلا يف تاطلسلاو نيراقصرلا عم راولحلا داحتالا مهاسيو .نيراقصرلا كارشا! نودب ققحتيس ناك ام يذلا رمألا ،امريغو ايلوغنمو ناتسخازاكو قراواو ليومت لال خ نم قطعلا هذه ذيفنت يف (IAF) ديصرلا رويط ىلع قظفاحملاو نيراقصرلل يملاعلا نيدياصرلا كارشا! ىلإ ىعبت تنرتن! قبابوب ءاشن! نمضتي يذلاو ،قدئاولا ةي جذومنلا اه عيراشم لوأ مدختستو .خونلا اذل مادتسملا مادختسالل ماضن عضو متي ،مت نمو ،منيب ققثلا ءانبو ،نيمدختسمل او .ةيميلقلا! تاغللاب قرفتوم نوكتسو ،راشتنالا ءمس او ةيكذلا فتاوملا ايچولونكت قبابوبلا هذه ىلع .علونألل مادتسملا مادختسالل تانكلمال ريوطت – عنمي نأ نم الدب – معد ييملاعلا چمنلا اذه يف ةئيبل! ةئيه نم قردابمب ايلوغنم يف مادتسملا مادختسالل جم انرب يف جورشلا مت ،لاشملا ليبس ’لوشم’ ’اچان’ جم انربلا اذه ققح دقو .ةي عنطصلال شاشعال! نم شع 5000 وحن قماق! ساسأ ىلع ،يبظوبأ نم برقي ام خيرفت ىلإ ىدا! امم ،رحلا روقص اهتمدختسا يتلا شاشعال! نم شع 500 نم رثكأ دصر عم دادعال! هذه نم مادتسملا داصحلل ةينكلم! دجوت ،كلذبو .يضملا رثاكتلا مسوم يف عفاي رقص 2500 ىلع افزحت يتلا ةيلحملا تاعمتجمل! ىلع دوعت يتلا دئولفلا نم ءعونتم ءومجم عم قريبكلا تديجلا .رويظلا هذه ىلع قظفاحملاو ةي امحل! يف فكراشملا

باببسا ىلع عوضلا طيلست ىلإ ىدا ،نيراقصرلا عمتجم كارشال ينواعتل! چمنلا اذه دامتعا ناف ،اريخ! دانتما ىلع ءحراچلا رويظلا تاعمتجمب قحلي يذلا رامدلا امسأر ىلعو ،خونلا اذه دادعأ ضافخنال ىرخأ تاكبشل ةيتحتل! ةينبلل ةيلابملا ريغو وأ ةئيسل! تاميمصتل! لال خ نم ىرخأ نكامأ ايسأو ابوروأ ةايحلل ةيلودلا تاراشتسال! قسسؤم) نوراقصرلا اب ماق يتلا تاساردلا ىدج! ترمظأ دقف .ءابرطلا مهدي نم لكانه نكي مل اذإ .ايونس يلاعلا طغضلا طخ نم مك 10 لك يف رح رقص 55 لتق (فيربلا باقع لثم ىرخأ علونال ثدحي ام ىلع چاچتchalل نذا! لاجم الف – ققيقل! هذه اوكردا نمم ،رحلا رقصلاب يف طوطخل! هذه ىلع ابحن يضقت يتلا علونال! نم امريغو نابرغل! او ،عباصل!ا ريصق باقغل!و بوهسل! .تقول! سفن

كارشا!و مادتسملا مادختسال! ةينكلم!ب فرتعت يتلا ةينواعتل! ريبادتل! نم جذومنلا اذه نأ دقتعن! ’ديرف!مبرو! ايوق! اجومن! مدقي ،ةيربلا ةايحل! كاهتنا! مئارج! تبراحم! يف تديفتسملا ةيلحملا! تاعمتجمل! ةيلاعلا! قميقلا! تاذاو قريممل! علونال! يف دودحلل قرباعلا ءورشملا ريغو قراجتلل يدصتلل هخون نم .اركش

نيمدختسمل! كارشا!و نيمدختسمل! تاعومجم! دصرلا! تايلمع! عيف! ةيلحملا! تاعمتجمل!او .قتبق!ارمل!او

ةيثارت! ةيمه! مل عون رحلا رقصلا نأ كش! ال ،نبيي!حمل! ناكسل! نم ديدغلل قريبك! دانتما ىلع نيراقصرلا لبق نم مدختسيو! لامش ىلإ ايلوغنم نم عساولا مراشتنا قاطن ةيبرعلا ظكلمملا ىلإ! ايراغنه نمو ،ايقييرفأ! مادتسم وحن ىلع ممدختسا مت دقو .ةيدوعسلا فالأ ءعبرأ رادم ىلع روقصلاب ديصرلا يف مدقأ نم! ادحاو نوگي دقو ،لقال! ىلع قس .روقصلاب ديصرلا يف قمدختسمل! علونال! م!دختسا! يف قريخال! تادايزل! نأ ودبيو! يف قبغرل! او ءارثلا! قدايز! سكعت! علونال! ةيديلقتل! ةيثارتلا! تاسرامملا! يف فكراشملا! جيئل!ل! يف! طفنلاب! ةينغل! لودلا! يف! نم!كلو .ةيبرعلا قريزچلا هبشو يبرعلا! لمشتل ،نيراقصرلا عونلا اذه ةيمه! زواجتت! رثاكتل! قاطن! لخاد! يف! قدوجوملا! تاعمتجمل! ثي!ح ،روقصرلا! هذه! قرحه! تاراسم! دانتما! ىلعو! ’اردصم! قطانملا! هذه! يف! رحلا رقصلا! لثم!ي! نيدياصرلل! لخدلل! ’الم!تحم! وأ! ’ايل!غف! نم! ديفتسي! نأ! نكمي! نمم! ممر!يغو! كارشلاب! .دروملا! اذه! م!دختسا!

ضرعت رقصلا اذه نأ دقتع’ي ،كلذ عمو رودت! ثدحو ،مدادع! يف! ريبك! ضافخنال! قنوال!ا! يف! مراشتنا! قاطن! نم! ءمس!و! عاج!أ! يف! ’أيئزج! ’اعفاد! ضافخنالا! اذه! لثم!ي! .قريخال!ا! ريغو قراجت! يو ،ءورشملا ريغو قراجتتل! ،قدجي ةي امح ريبادت ىلإ دنست! الو قمادتسم! قرتاكتملا رويظلا ديص يف طروتت! ثي!ح! امك ،ءعفايلا رويظلا عم بنج ىلإ ابنج ،مچل!ا! قريبك! ثانالا! قصاخ! ققصب! فدهتست! عافترب! – انداقتعا! يف! – طبتر!ي! ام!يف! لقنلا! تابيترت! عوس! ببسب! تو!ملا! لدعم! .بيرمهتل! لال!خ!

راجت!الب! ققل!عتملا! فواخملل! قباچتسا!و! ةيوقلا! تاوصلال! ضعب! ت!عد ،جورشملا ريغو! علونال! قمئاق! ىلإ! رحلا رقصلا! عفر! ىلإ! علونال! ةيقتافتال! لوال!ا! قحلملا! يف! ءجر!ملا! ىلإ! يدؤيس! ناك! امم ،2011! م!اع! يف! قراج!ملا!

the Saker falcons as well as the possibility of income through harvest-permits. Furthermore, this would negate efforts to make harvesting sustainable

However, a different approach was taken, leading to the development of the Saker Global Action Plan (GAP). Under the current plan, falconers and sustainable use of the species for falconry is at the heart of conservation efforts. This plan incorporates a number of flagship projects. Along with measures to boost populations such as providing thousands of artificial nests and mitigation of impacts of powerlines, one initiative is aimed at building trust among trappers and falconers. Engagement has brought together a disparate group of parties. The Saker Task Force has combined the biologists of CMS and the Sustainable Use Groups of IUCN with falconers, BirdLife and conservation authorities of the Saker range states. It has fully integrated the falconers into the hunt for a solution to the plight of this species. Further, it has opened dialogue with falconers and authorities in nations which include Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Mongolia, among others. Only the engagement of the falconers could achieve this. The International Association for Falconry and the Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) is involved through funding and managing the first of the Flagship projects. This project involves the development of an internet Portal which seeks to engage trappers and users, build trust and then develop a system of sustainable use for the species. This portal will utilize popular smart phone technology and will be available only in regional languages.

This global approach supports rather than inhibits the development of the potential for sustainable use of the species. For example, a sustainable use program in Mongolia has been initiated by the Environmental Agency of Abu Dhabi, based on the erection of some 5,000 artificial nests. This has been demonstrably successful with over 500 of the nests occupied by Saker falcons; approximately 2,500 young were produced in the past breeding season. There is the potential for a sustainable harvest from this new breeding population with a variety of benefits accruing to the local communities with consequent conservation incentives.

Finally, adopting this collaborative approach engaging the falconry community has brought to light other causes for the decline in numbers of this species, principally the devastation of raptors across the breadth of Eurasia and elsewhere through poorly designed or cynically built electricity infrastructure. One study undertaken by falconers (International Wildlife Consultants) has demonstrated the killing of 55 Sakers per 10 Km of power line per year. If no one cared about the Saker, who would have recognized this – there is no outcry over Steppe Buzzards, Short-toed Eagles, Ravens and other species that are being equally devastated.

We think this model of collaborative measures that recognise the potential for sustainable use and engage user communities in addressing wildlife crime offers a powerful and possibly unique model for addressing illegal transnational trade of iconic and high value species. 🦅



# THE ROLE OF FALCONERS IN SAKER FALCON CONSERVATION

By Andrew Dixon  
International Wildlife Consultants Ltd

The Saker Falcon has the distinction of being the only member of its genus to be classified as ‘Globally Endangered’ on the IUCN Red List. Whether the Saker deserves this dubious accolade is a moot point, and it could be argued that its listing by BirdLife International as ‘Endangered’ may be due in part to its importance in Arabian falconry and not just its conservation status. Certainly, an ‘Endangered Saker’ is a big stick that can be used to beat falconry. Falconry is widely blamed for the demise of the species in Russia and the former Soviet states in Central Asia. In particular, Arabian falconry is blamed for creating a seemingly insatiable market demand that drives a rampant illegal trade. There is no doubt that illegal trade of wild Sakers is a stain on the image of falconry, particularly Arabian falconry, that falconers must strive to resolve, but its relative importance in driving the post-Soviet era population declines is not known and there is a tendency to overlook the role of other factors such as habitat changes, declines in prey availability and electrocution at electricity distribution lines.

Influential falconers in Abu Dhabi have demonstrated that modern Arabian falconry can be conducted sustainably and even benefit wild falcons, their quarry and their natural habitats. The connection with nature that results from the pursuit of quarry with a falcon fuels the desire to protect the



Photo: A Dixon

Saker Falcon at artificial nest in Mongolia

natural world and is the root of major funding initiatives such as the Mohammed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, which targets on-the-ground practical conservation efforts for threatened species. Similarly, it is the tradition of falconry that lies at the root of support by the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi for a project like Arkive, which strives to increase awareness of our natural world and its conservation through wildlife imagery. The IUCN Re-introduction Specialist Group and the CMS Raptors MoU have their headquarters in Abu Dhabi; this is no mere co-incidence, it is a consequence of falconry. Concern for the well-being of the natural world, the conservation management of quarry species such as the Houbara and custodianship of vast areas of natural habitat in places like Morocco and Kazakhstan are all spearheaded by influential Arabian falconers and are directly related



Photo: D. Stout

Saker about to land on power pole in Mongolia with inappropriately deployed perch deflector spikes, which increase the risk of electrocution

to the falconry tradition in the region. Falconers should be proud that their tradition has been the foundation of so many important conservation initiatives and that Arabian falconry is having a beneficial impact globally for biodiversity. There is a direct link between falconers and conservation of the Saker Falcon, yet this is often overlooked and does not fit with a simple narrative that seeks to solely blame falconry for the population declines reported in the former Soviet Union. A clear example of this can be seen from Mongolia, where loud voices proclaimed that the Saker population was in decline and that this was the result of a CITES permitted trade to supply Sakers for the Arabian falconry market. No evidence was ever produced to support either assertion, yet such claims have appeal and tend to stick as they are intuitively simplistic and deflect responsibility by blaming a specific target group (in this case ‘foreign’ Arabian falconers). Dr. Nick Fox, a well-known and respected falconer and falcon breeder, has collaborated with influential falconers in Abu Dhabi for over 30 years, and as Director of International Wildlife Consultants Ltd he has worked with the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi and its predecessors to put in place the logistics and scientific personnel required to undertake research and conservation management projects on Saker Falcons in Mongolia. This work has demonstrated that the Mongolian Saker population was not declining, but in fact is in a very healthy state with a large non-breeding population that can be induced to breed by the provision of artificial nests. Furthermore, the work has shown that falcon trapping contributes very little to ‘mortality’ of Mongolian Sakers, with

the number of trapped birds being dwarfed by those that are electrocuted on the poles of power lines. The shrill voices were wrong on both counts. After a series of trials conducted over several years and consultation at international, national and local levels, Abu Dhabi falconers funded the erection of 5000 artificial nests in Mongolia. In 2014, the 766 Saker Falcons recorded breeding at these artificial nests produced an estimated 2,322 fledglings. These thousands of young falcons would not be produced each year if it was not for the environmental concerns of Abu Dhabi falconers, who put their money into such direct conservation management projects. The initial aim

of the artificial nests was to create a managed and monitored population that could underpin a sustainable harvest, but the inadequacies of government in Mongolia have undermined this aim for the time being. Nevertheless, the programme has proved useful to demonstrate that sustainable use has a role to



Photo: A Dixon

Saker Falcon electrocuted at 15 kV in Eastern Mongolia



Photo: Oscar Dominguez

Saker at hack cage in Bulgaria as part of a reintroduction project being conducted on behalf of Abu Dhabi falconers



play in Saker conservation, and it was commended by CITES. The project resulted in the Mongolian Saker population being excluded from CMS Appendix 1 listing that prohibits trade, and was key factor in the creation of the Saker Task Force by CMS and the subsequent adoption of sustainable use principles in the Saker Global Action Plan. Grass roots projects, such as the Mongolian Artificial Nest project, which are initiated, directed and funded by falconers, have created a foundation for IAF to promote the role of falconry in falcon conservation at high profile international conventions and meetings. Falconers, through their actions, have earned their right to sit at the table of these meetings.

The Mongolian Artificial Nest Project has several 'spin-offs', including an international School Links Programme as a method of community outreach to inform local Mongolians about the artificial nest project, falcons, falconry and conservation. This education initiative has incorporated schools from several countries including the USA, UK, UAE, Netherlands, Slovakia, Malta and South Africa. It has provided a mechanism for falconers to engage with schools and local communities, and from such small acorns great oaks can grow. Another consequence of the research work in Mongolia was the identification of electrocution as a major cause of mortality of Saker Falcons and other birds of prey in the country. Electrocution mainly occurs at power poles of low-voltage (typically < 15 kV) electricity distribution lines and Sakers are particularly susceptible in open landscapes where there is an abundance of rodent prey. We highlighted the problem in Mongolia and China in the scientific journal published by BirdLife International. We have since undertaken work to assess the scale of electrocution, its impact on the Saker Falcon population and potential methods to reduce electrocution rates. Again, all this work is funded by Abu Dhabi falconers who are concerned for the well-being of the Saker Falcon.

We estimate that electrocution within Mongolia kills over 4,000 Saker Falcons annually. This puts the former CITES harvest quota of 300 Mongolian Sakers per year into context; over a year our surveyors have picked up the bodies of more than 300 dead Sakers at a single power line. The level of electrocution is likely to be increasing year on year as more dangerous lines are constructed, both within Mongolia and in China where most of the young birds migrate in winter. At present we cannot detect a population impact, suggesting that density dependent factors such as competition for prey currently serves to limit the overall population of Sakers in Mongolia, but electrocution mortality could become 'additive' and exhibit population impacts if the number of lines increases or some other factor reduces the capacity of the Saker population to 'buffer' this level of mortality. There is a need not only to reduce the level of electrocution but also to ensure that the Saker population remains robust enough

to withstand these losses on power poles. The thousands of young Sakers produced at artificial nests can contribute to maintaining a robust population and perhaps buys some time to undertake the mitigation work required to significantly reduce electrocution levels.

Following the model of the Artificial Nest Project we have instigated a 'bottom up' approach to dealing with the problem of electrocution in Mongolia. Experience has taught us that this is the most effective approach when operating in a country with a dysfunctional and corrupt governmental system. We have worked directly with engineers and directors of a regional power company to set up a 12-month trial of mitigation techniques. We employed local line surveyors and introduced the issue of electrocution to schools in the resources for our School Links Programme. We have found that the Mongolian power companies are as appalled as the rest of us by the mortality, but that they were unaware of the scale of the problem or how to solve it. Our trial work provided an evaluation of the most cost-effective methods to reduce electrocution rates at the power lines in the Mongolian steppe. A lack of governmental co-ordination and regulation is a complicating factor in organising remediation, but targeted efforts at a relatively small scale can have big impacts where mitigation of a single 50 km line can save around 300 Sakers per year.

At the Festival of Falconry in Abu Dhabi in December 2014, Abu Dhabi falconers funded a meeting that was attended by engineers and executives of Mongolian power companies, as well as representatives of the Mongolian government, CMS, IAF and the power line safety industry. Here we were able to convey the scale of the problem and potential solutions to the power companies, as well as hear from them about their position. Delegates at the meeting prepared a resolution for the Mongolian government requesting that they urgently address this issue. The meeting served to "to provide a suitable platform for exchange and dialogue between people, organisations and individuals who are interested in falconry, with the aim of supporting, protecting and developing this heritage" and "to emphasize the role of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and the UAE in the protection of the environment and the promotion of its sustainability", both of which were identified as key objectives of the Festival of Falconry. Again falconers are leading the way for others to follow.

There are numerous other projects run by or on behalf of falconers, such as re-introduction of Sakers in Bulgaria and tree-nesting Peregrines in Poland. The work of the Peregrine Fund in North America and across the globe is well-known, though the involvement of falconers is perhaps not fully appreciated outside the USA. Falconers need to make sure that their contribution to conservation is acknowledged and understood as this can only benefit falconry and ensure its future in an ever-changing world. 🦅

## IAF PRESIDENTIAL AWARD PROFILES

*Helen Macdonald*

**Author Helen Macdonald was a recipient of the IAF Presidential Award at last year's Festival of Falconry in Abu Dhabi. Hilary White profiles the British falconer whose book 'H Is For Hawk' has become a publishing phenomenon**



Since its publication, *H Is For Hawk* has been the recipient of major literary awards, topped bestseller lists, been optioned for a film, dominated book-circle discussions and made Helen Macdonald the closest thing that falconry has ever had to a household name.

These are reasons enough to celebrate what the British falconer has achieved through this extraordinary book, but it is only part of the reason why she was presented with the IAF Presidential Award for Exceptional Services to Falconry at the Third International Festival of Falconry in Abu Dhabi last December.

The simple truth is that Helen is one of the very best ambassadors that falconry could ask for at a time when our art's public profile is swelling gradually across the world. She represents everything that we hold dear, from a deep love and intimate understanding of raptors, their prey species and habitats, to an appreciation for history, art, culture





and what it means to be part of a shared heritage that dates back millennia.

Born in Surrey, England, the young Helen was a self-professed “hawk bore” to her parents. Both were journalists, something which cannot be coincidental given her knack for research and enquiry. She is the kind of polymath that defies the paltry 24 hours that we are given each day of our lives. Before *H Is For Hawk*, she had published a collection of poetry (2001’s *Shaler’s Fish*) and an exquisite natural history volume called *Falcon* (2006). She has written radio plays for the BBC, illustrated books and trained and bred falcons for royalty in the United Arab Emirates. Today, she is merely an affiliate of the History and Philosophy of Science Department at Cambridge University, not to mention a touring literary-award magnet.

While the book recounts her experiences with flying a female gos, merlins have always been her first love of falconry.

By this stage, most falconers will have at least a sense of *H Is For Hawk*, but it is a publication that should be required reading for anyone thinking of stepping into the all-consuming world of falconry. Or any one there already, for that matter. Never before have the delicacies and subtext of that relationship between human and raptor been prised open with such precision and beauty. It has meant that the reading public around the globe (*H Is For Hawk* is being translated into a dozen or more languages) has been given a flavour of who we are, why our passion cannot be dimmed and why falconry has refused to ever die out altogether.

“My main worry,” she told me when we met at the festival in Abu Dhabi last December, “was whether this exposure was a good thing for falconry. And it’s turned out – touch wood – pretty well. I’ve had letters from people saying that the book has changed their view of what falconry is and that it’s not cruel after all and that it’s a pretty cool thing. So that makes me pleased.”

She is also effortlessly good company. As we sat on the grass in the shade of a tent, she chatted buoyantly, insightfully and often hilariously about Edmund Bert, JA Baker and aplomado falcons. But when our conversation turned to the worrying disconnect between young people and natural world, Helen articulated a simple truth that underlines why she has been honoured with this award by IAF.

This issue is something, she feels, that falconers can play a big part in simply by pulling back the curtain and allowing ourselves to be seen by the world. “I used to do school visits when I worked at falconry centres,” she recalled, “and I was always amazed at how instantaneously a certain percentage of the children would be absolutely blown away. And one of the messages of the book I think is that there aren’t many ways in which legally we can interact with wild animals any more in a kind of intimate domestic level. Falconry’s one of the only ones. And I think we should be really proud of that.”



*Helen Macdonald's outstanding book, H Is For Hawk, has made the concepts of falconry accessible to ordinary people across the world. The time for biding falconry “under the radar” is long past. Our greatest critics have often never seen falconry and base their prejudice on the weirdest of concepts of what we do. H Is For Hawk is a remarkably honest and sensitive story of the training of a hawk, but with much, much more for the reader. Helen has crafted an engaging masterpiece which is beautifully written, moving and thought-provoking. This will win more friends for falconry amongst the thinking public than any other effort that I could conceive. On top of that, we have a thoroughly enjoyable addition to falconry literature.*

**Dr Adrian Lombard, IAF President**



# Johnny Morris

Over a glass of wine, IAF Presidential Award recipient the Hon Johnny Morris spoke to Robert Hutchinson about his lifelong passion for falconry



Born in 1951, Johnny spent his early years exploring the wild landscape in the West of Ireland. Like many, his passion for falconry emerged first out of a love of nature; watching falcons and sparrowhawks on the soar above the bogs in Spiddal, County Galway.

Johnny’s most important mentor was Ronald Stevens who had recently relocated from England to the West of Ireland. What the young Johnny learnt from Ronald, whom he describes as being very meticulous and great fun, instilled in his pupil the importance of doing it right (which may account for his belief that no field sport can come near to “good” falconry but there is nothing worse than bad falconry).

At Ronald’s, he met many colourful characters including American falconer Henry Swain, English falconer Geoffrey Pollard and the artist David Reid-Henry. In pre-telemetry days, having excellent hearing, Bill Rutledge was always glad to see him appear at his side out lark hawking. His real falconry education, however, began when he started to fly his own falcons; merlins at larks and casts of peregrines at magpies and grey crows (hooded crows), sometimes off sturdy Connemara ponies. What was to follow was many eventful hawking seasons with fellow falconers including Alec Finn, Captain Robert Nairac and Tony Huston.

A free and contented spirit, he has no regrets looking back on his decision to divide his days between children (mornings)

*The stalwart services of Johnny Morris to the Irish Falconry community merit special notice. The Irish Hawking Club (IHC) deserves recognition for its success in maintaining a small but significant licensed harvest of wild peregrines, sparrowhawks and kestrels under the terms of a derogation permitted by the EU Birds Directive. This facility is an example of how wild harvest for falconry in a modern, developed European state is sustainable, green and controllable. It was Johnny Morris’s foresight to intervene when Ireland was drafting its wildlife legislation in 1976 which ensured that this item of legislation was included.*

**Dr Adrian Lombard, IAF President**

and falconry (afternoons). Although not in the best of health at the moment, he is always keen to get out. We recently enjoyed a morning’s sport flying goshawks at pheasants and despite the freezing conditions, he insisted that we flew our tiercels at snipe on his favourite bog in the afternoon.

His achievements include breeding the first ever hybrid falcon in captivity (in partnership with Ronald), setting up the Irish Hawking Club and securing licensed wild harvest for Irish falconers. He is also an honorary member of both the Irish Hawking Club and the British Falconers Club.

But perhaps Johnny’s greatest achievement is his lifelong dedication to “good” falconry. 🦅



# OBITUARIES

## *Stephen Frank 1929-2014*

By Mark Upton

Steve died last October, after just a few days in hospital, away from his beloved Birichin, the moor he had bought in the late 1970's.

Before then he had hawked there as a guest of James Roberson-Justice and then later leasing it himself. He enjoyed many happy seasons hawking there, and to falconers and friends Steve was a part of Birichin, and many of us will have enduring memories of many happy days there in his company. Steve became interested in falconry while at school and got his first kestrel, "Herbert" while he was there. After school he worked on the family farm in Wiltshire and had great success hawking there with sparrowhawks. One in particular "Olga" became a legend in her time and earned Steve just recognition amongst the falcons of the time. At this time Steve met and helped get started Roger Upton, who was a few years younger, and they would become firm friends and hawk a lot together over the following years.

Steve with the encouragement of some of the older BFC members started to do annual trips to Scotland and Wales taking eyasses under license, which he would hack on the family farm and then distribute amongst the other falconers. A lot of his early peregrines were lost, flying on unsuitable land around his parents farm, before the days of telemetry. But he was rapidly gaining experience and began to have more and more success. He met Christian Saar and Hank Dykstra on a trip to Holland and was particularly impressed with a tiercel of Christians which waited on very high.

After one not very successful attempt at grouse hawking in Derbyshire in England he was invited to accompany Geoffrey Pollard grouse hawking in Caithness, Scotland. Steve drove from the west country to London to collect Geoffrey, in In VW Beetle, in which they managed to squeeze 10 peregrines and a pointer of Steve's. Steve then drove the two of them the 600 miles to Scotland. There were lots of grouse and Geoffrey had already had successful grouse hawking. They had extremely good sport and this was the beginning of many years top class grouse hawking and the resurgence of highest quality hawking in the UK.

The following year Steve was invited to go hawking with James Roberson-Justice who had lost his falconer but had good ground with plenty of grouse in Sutherland, Scotland. The next year he asked James if he could bring Roger Upton with him and they hawked together on Birichin for a number of seasons. During this time the grouse numbers were on a great high and between them they had some very high class



Stephen Frank out on the moor with Mark Upton

peregrines. In 1967 they impressed the falconry world by taking 211 grouse and in 1968 they followed with 314 grouse taken by a team of 4 peregrines, the closest to Gilbert Blaine's record of 406 in 1913 that anyone has got. One hawk of Steve's, "Bitch" was particularly successful taking the record of 177 grouse. Unfortunately she was lost at the end of that season chasing a woodcock. One of the reasons for this great success was a English pointer bitch name "Queenie" that Steve had bought from John Nash in Ireland. She was an exceptional worker and the founder of Steve's great line of Embercombe pointers which are renowned around the world making Steve as famous in the field trailing world, as he was in falconry.

By the 1970's the grouse numbers were going down and James Robertson-Justice had become unwell. Steve took over the lease on the ground and bought Londornaich, a croft on the moor. The croft was just an empty shell with a dirt floor, which a stream used to run through on wet days. Steve had it done up to some designs Roger had drawn and it became a comfortable if untidy hawking lodge. Roger moved his hawking to Caithness to lessen the pressure on the grouse. Steve was still living in the West of England for most of the

year but started to spend the whole grouse season in Scotland, often not returning until after Christmas and the beginning of the snows. He was offered the chance to buy Birichin which he did, and a few years later moved there permanently. He was able to enjoy the best of falconry with some great falcons, having a longer grouse hawking season than anyone else was able to have.

In the mean time Steve had had early breeding success with a pair of peregrines and started to fly home breed eyasses. He was also breeding pointers and trailing with lots of success.

Steve was one of the most generous of men and he gave many falconers peregrines and pointers at a time when good hawks were still difficult to come-by. He also gave many a falconer their first taste of grouse hawking on his moor, often engineering a flight with his good dogs so that they falcon had a good chance of its first grouse kill. Foreign falconers had begun to visit and fly in Scotland and Steve was a great host to them all. Many would be invited to fly on Birichin and many great joint days were had there with Steve cooking up a great grouse dinner afterwards in the croft. We will all remember wonderful parties there, with a roaring fire, plenty of whisky and falconry chat long into the evening.

As grouse numbers dropped on the moor Steve would rest it by taking hawking on neighboring ground in return for

running his pointers for shooting parties earlier in the season. Steve's team of dogs became famous throughout Scotland for their durability and reliance in finding grouse. He was welcome everywhere. He also started to share Camster and later Strathy with Christian Saar who had become the closest of friends and hawking companions. Between them they had some great hawks and the best of hawking. Although Roger had his own ground now, they would still regularly hawk together and as I grew up and had my own hawks I would join them and every season would have some great days together. In fact, like most grouse falconers, I learnt a great deal from Steve. Not only in how to fly hawks, but how to respect them and the quarry. And even more importantly how to respect nature and behave properly in the falconry field. Steve was always the perfect gentleman and kind host, an important part of falconry.

Unfortunately in the last few years Stephen's health failed him. He had never looked after himself. He continued to fly hawks into his eighties, walking with the aid of a stick which used to be thrown to the side and forgotten about when his dog found a point and he became young again with a hawk waiting-on above him. There are not many who could claim at least seventy years in hawking with the knowledge and skill that brings. And few falconers have passed that on to the next generation with such kindness and thought.

## *Joost van de Wall 1917-2014*

By Dick Ten Bosch

With the demise of Joost van de Wall, Dutch falconry of the modern era lost one of its most prominent personalities. Not only did he play an important role as founder father of the Dutch Falconry Association "Adriaan Mollen", but also thanks to a very long and active life, he represented a link with those early pre-WW II aficionados (Prof. Swaen, Dr. Quartero, Gerrit van Nie and others) who reintroduced falconry into the Netherlands with some crucial support from friends in the UK and Germany. Culturally too, Joost played an important role. He wrote major falconry contributions for what would become a classic Het Loo, Orange and Hunting published in 1984, for which he was allowed to

do research in the Royal Archives in the Hague. His book Falconry at het Loo (1986) undertaken with financial support of the Falconry Heritage Trust, would become well known among falconers world-wide. A surgeon by profession, next to falconry a big game hunter, often invited to royal shoots at Het Loo, Joost was a gentleman of the old school. He remained closely connected with Adriaan Mollen throughout his entire life. He will be greatly missed.





## يغورزمل فلخ دمحم يحن

اليف زبيغيدور ليونام هيسوخ

فيفختلل قواحم يف بئاذ ناركنب نولمعي نيذلا ددجل ءاقدصأل نم ديدعلا ءاقل قصرف يل ترفو انأل طقف سيل بينأل اضيأ نكلو ،كانو انه ءيربلا ءايحلا عل ع قظفاحمل و روقصلاب ديصلاب ققل عتملا فواخمل او تاديحتملا نم ءعيبطلا ءياعم حو ،ثارتلا و ديصلا نونفب فغشل سفن مهعم تلدايت ،ءيئانثتسا تايصخش ءاقلب ت عتمتسا تمداقلا لايجالل انديلاقت عل ع ظافحل او

ريس شداح يف قرخال رادلا عل انرداغي نأ لبق ءيئانثتسالا تايصخشلا نم عونلا اذه نم يغورزمل فلخ دمحم ناك ادقل نأب اطوظم تنك نيحلا كلذ ذنمو ،2003 ماع يف قزم لوأ فلخ دمحم تيقثلا .يضاملا ربمفون يف يبظوبأ يف مئلأ متفايض مركو مطلب مرمغي ناك نيذلا ءاقدصأل نم اءاحو يئربتعي

يف اريبك امامته رماطأ تركبملا متلوفط ذنمو ،(يبظوبأ قرام! نم ءيبرغلا قطنملا يف) اويل ءاحو يف فلخ دمحم دلو يل تناك ،قراقصلا نونفو ثارتب فوغش راقصكو .ءارحصلا ءايح ديلاقت نم امريغو روقصلاب ديصلاو ءئيبل لاجم .ءيوارحصلا ءيربلا بنارال او ناوركل او عربحل نع اهيف انثحب يتلا انتالحر يف هعم ءعئار تايركذ

نوغيروأ دنالتروب ءعماج نم ريئتسجاملا ءجرو تارامال ءعماج نم قماعلا قراдалا يف سويرولكبلا ءجرو عل ع دمحم لصح .)ءتيكيرمال ءدحتملا تايالولا(

،تاونس ىدم علحو .يفاقثلا لاجملا يف يسبيئر لكشب تركرمو باجعالل قريثم تنك يبظوبأ قموكح يف متريسم قفاقثلل يبظوبأ ءئيمل ماعلا ريذمل ناك ثيح ،ماعالاو ثارتلاو قفاقثلاب قصللا تاذبصانملا نم ديدعلا لغش ءيسبيئرل ماعالا لئاسو امل عبتت يتلا ماعالا يبظوبأ قفكرش قرااا سلجمل اسبيئر ناك امك ،اهسيسأت ذنم ثارتلاو نوؤشلل اراشتسم فلخ دمحم ناك ،قميلاا متافو تقو يفو .(ويدارل او نويذفلثلاو فحصل) يبظوبأ قرام! يف يبظوبأ يف دهعلا يلو ناويديف ثارتلاو ءيفاقثلا

ن.يذراقصلل يملاعلا ءاقتال يف وضعلا تارامالا يذاقص يذان اهيف امب ،ناجللاو سلاجملا نم ديدعلا يف اوضع ناك امك اربيغت تشدحأ يتلا قزيمتملا ءيفاقثلا تايلا عفل او تاسسؤمل نم ديدعلا تقثبنا هفارشا تحتو ،نم قردابمبو ،بطلل اويل ناچرمو ،لببال قرفظلا ناچرم كلذ نمو ،ءدحتملا ءيبرعلا تارامالا قلود يف ءيفاقثلا ءايحلا يف ايرمو ج ديصلل يبظوبأ ضرعو ،يئامنيسلا يبظوبأ ناچرمو ،"نويلملا رعاش"و يطنبنل رعشلل ءينويذفلثلا ققباسملاو امريغو باتكلل دياز خيشلا قرائو ،يبظوبأ كيفارغو ج لانويشان ءانقو ،روقصلاب ديصلا ناچرمو ،ءيسورفل او امل مركأ يتلا قرائلا يو ،ءدحتملا ءيبرعلا تارامالا قلودل ءيداحتالا ءيصوصشلا قرائو هعم مت ،2013 ربمسيد يف نطولل قليج تامدخ تمدق يتلا تايصوصشلا

دقو .ءدحتملا ءيبرعلا تارامالا قلودو يبظوبأ قرام! ريوطتو ءانبلا سركم شيج يف يذنك هسفن ىري نأ دمحم بحبي نيب نم متلع هظو ءانبأ وحن قليبنا متفطحو هب نأ امك ،قريبكلا تازاجنالا نم ديدعلا ديكأتلاب طل تنك ريذقثلاو لالجال لك تقحتسا يتلا قماعلا تايصوصشلا

نيروخف اولظي نأ ملاعلا ءاحنأ فلتخم نم نيزاقصلا عيمجل قحي ،ريبك زاجن! كانه ناك ،تازاجنالا نم ديدعلا نيب نم ،وكسنويلل تايسنجلا ددعتم حجازل بلطلل ميذقت يف ءيسبيئرلا ءيصوصشلا فلخ دمحم ناك دقل .قصاخ ققصب هب .ءيرشبلا يذامل ريغ يفاقثلا ثارتلا قماق نمض روقصلاب ديصلاب فارتعلا عل ع لصح يذلاو

رمغي ناك يذلا مركو هبلق قبيط يف ،املجال هقتفنو فلخ دمحم امل ركذتن لظن ءيصوصش ققص لكل انه تنك اذ! نكلو ،قريهش ءيئامنيس اموجن وأ ،نيمم قداق اونك ءاوس ،عيمجلا عم متاقال ع يف قمسلا هذ تنك دقو .نيريثكل مهءاقدصأ هب لامج ءيبص وأ ،نييداع نيزاقص وأ

ن.انقفل قيمعلو قداصل نزل عل قلا د يف ،فلخ دمحم ءاقدصأل نم فالال او ءدحتملا ءيبرعلا تارامالا قلود قداق ىعن متازاجن او هتيصوصش عل ع عوضلا نم ريثكل ءعساولا قيمالعال ءيطغثلا تطللس امك

قظفاحم اءج رثؤملا نم ناك .قميلاا متافو دعب دحو رش نم لقأ يف فلخ دمحم لزنم قرايزل قصرفلا يل تحنس دقل ،قمسلا مايأ رادم عل ع موي لك ءاسم يف عمجتلل اكترم طزنم ناك .اهبجي ناك يتلا ءاوجل سفن عل ع هءاقدصأو متلئاع نأ ءايفوالا ءاقدصال ءالؤه كءا دقو .قومق وأ ءاش ءئام عل ع ثيداحال لدايتو هشرلل ءاقدصال نم ديدعلا يقتلي ثيح متايح يف دمحم بحبي ناك امك ،امامت ،ملا ءاش ام عل! رمبسي فوس عمجتلل كلذ

.ءعس او قمر طلا ممر ،نوريثكل هقتفي فوسو ،امن ع نيغفامل للصفأ نم اءاحو قراقصلا تدقف دقل

Certainly his many achievements and his love and passion for his people made him a cherished and most valued public servant.

Out of his many achievements, there is one that we, falconers of around the world, must be especially proud of. Mohammed Khalaf was a key person in the successful multinational submission to UNESCO aiming the recognition of falconry as Humankind’s Intangible Cultural Heritage.

But if there is a personal feature for which Mohammed Khalaf will be remembered and missed by his very many friends was his kind-heartedness and generosity that was reflected in his relationships with everyone, be it an important leader, a renowned film star or a regular falconer or camel boy.

UAE leaders and thousands of friends mourned Mohammed Khalaf in a proof of sincere and deep sorrow for his loss. Media coverage was wide highlighting his figure and achievements.

I had the chance to visit Mohammed Khalaf’s house less than one month after his unfortunate demise. It was touching how his family and friends kept same atmosphere as he liked: his house was the place to gather in the evening of every single day of the year for his many friends to chat and share points over a dinner or a coffee. It will continue to be so, as he liked, they said.

Falconry has lost one of his best advocates. He will be missed by many. May his soul rest in Peace.



## HE Mohammed Khalaf Al Mazrouei

By Jose Manuel Rodríguez-Villa

I usually refer to the personal enriching experience that being part of IAF has meant to me. Not just because it has provided me with the opportunity to meet many new falconry friends who unselfishly work to try to ease the threats and concerns of falconry and conservation here and there.

But because I have enjoyed meeting outstanding human beings who, at same time, share same passion for our hunting art and culture, the Nature conservation and the preservation of our traditions for the generations to come.

One of a kind was HE Mohammed Khalaf Al Mazrouei who left us in a fatal car accident in Abu Dhabi last November.

I met Mohammed Khalaf first time in 2003. Since then I was fortunate to be considered a friend out of his overwhelming hospitality and kindness.

Mohammed Khalaf was born in oasis of Liwa (Al Gharbia, Western Region of Abu Dhabi Emirate) and from his early childhood he showed great interest in environment and falconry amongst other desert life traditions.

As passionate falconer himself, I have great memories of his accounts of his hawking trips in search of houbaras, stone curlews and desert hares.

He got his Bachelor degree in Public Administration from UAE University and his Master’s degree from University of Portland- Oregon (USA).

His career in the Government of Abu Dhabi is impressive and mainly focused in the cultural area. Over the years he occupied many relevant positions. Since its inception he was Director General of the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture & Heritage (ADACH), Chairman of Abu Dhabi Media Company a conglomerate that holds main media in the Emirate (newpapers, tv and radio stations) and at the time of his unfortunate demise, Mohammed Khalaf was Advisor for Cultural & Heritage Affairs at the Abu Dhabi’s Crown Prince Court.

He was also member of many Boards and Committees - including IAF’s member Emirates Falconers Club - and under his initiative and supervision many outstanding cultural entities and events were conceived and developed entailing a substantial change in UAE’s cultural life: Al Dhafra Camel Festival, Liwa Dates Festival, Nabati Poetry TV Contest “Million’s Poet”, Abu Dhabi Film Festival, Abu Dhabi Hunting & Equestrian Exhibition (ADIHEX), Falconry Festival, Abu Dhabi National Geographic Channel, Sheikh Zayed Book Award amongst others.

In December 2013 he was named UAE’s Federal Personality of the Year, an Award that honours personalities who have rendered outstanding services to the nation. Mohammed liked to see himself as a soldier of an army dedicated to the construction and development of Abu Dhabi and UAE.





*Tribute to H.E. Mohammed Khalaf Al Mazrouei*



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