

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FALCONRY

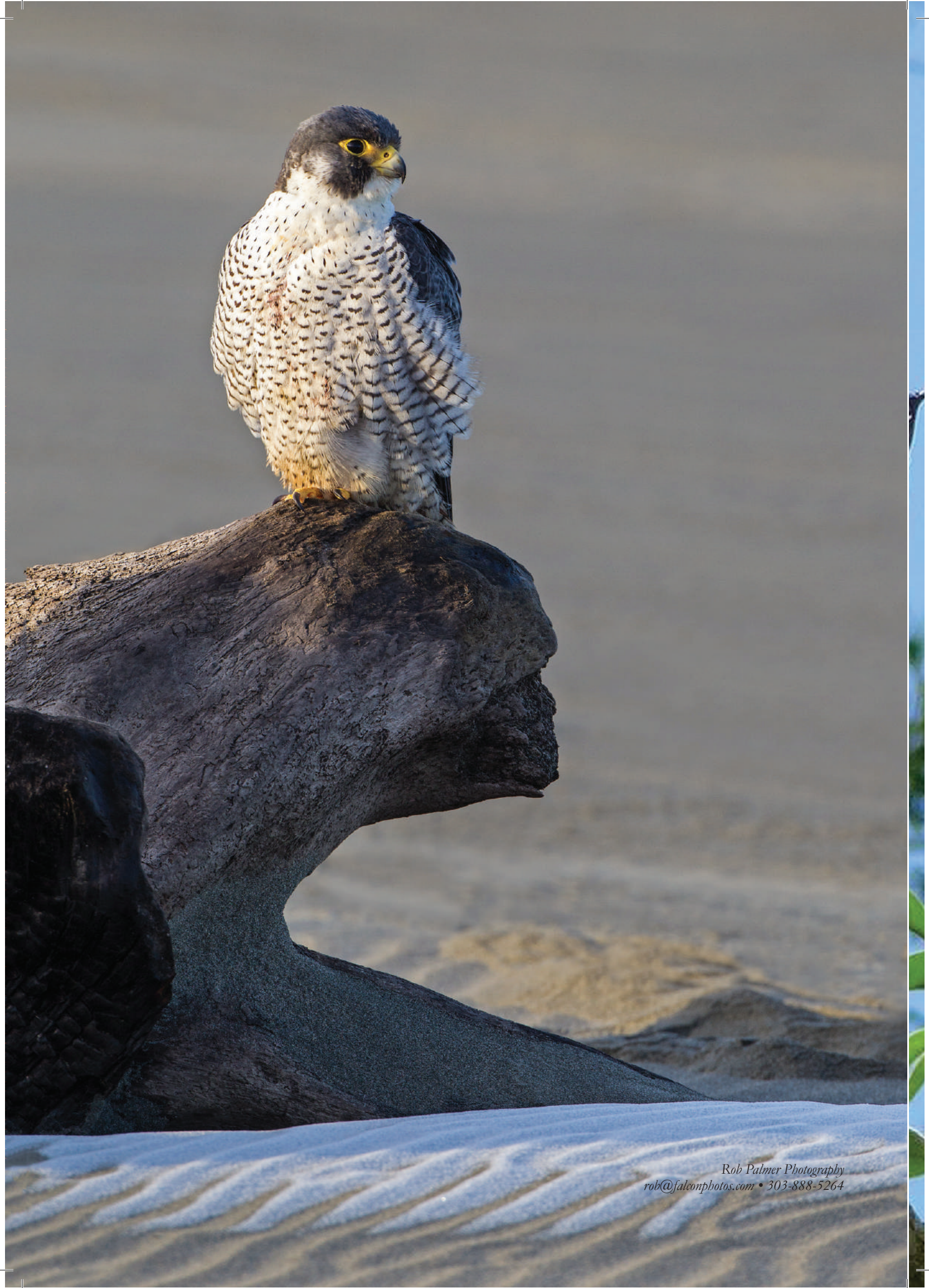


## 2016

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FALCONRY AND CONSERVATION OF BIRDS OF PREY

MEMBER OF IUCN





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Photo by Bob





## *Editor's Foreword*

This is the first edition of the Journal produced with the assistance of two new assistant editors. It has been a remarkably smooth process with much hard work on the part of Sue Cecchini and Dick ten Bosch. Many people will know Sue from her many years dedicated service in production of NAFA Journal during which time she built up an enormous intimate knowledge of people and events in the falconry world which is now helping IAF. Of course Dick ten Bosch is well known on several continents after a very active career in banking and his lifetime's interest in falconry. Thanks to both for making this a congenial experience and for now being available to help cope with succession when my own position becomes vacant.

This edition of the International Journal of Falconry is largely focused upon the cultural aspects of our falconry world as growing involvement for IAF with differing international bodies demands ever greater dedication from our team of officers and experts. These transitions for IAF have been successfully managed under the professional management of Gary Timbrell supporting the demanding leadership of our President Adrian Lombard in his enthusiastic worldwide travels.

It is remarkable just how dedicated and willingly Falconers from many parts of the world volunteer their selfless services to such outstanding success. We are indeed fortunate.

Recent news from the Mediterranean island of Malta brought







some personal fulfilment and pleasure as legislators have listened to local Falconers, conservationists, hunters and IAF to recognise our sport in a framework of new legislation. I think it is only eight years since my visit to the island to help with the creation of the first club on the island, Fridericus Rex Falconers Club, the only sad part being that the clubs first president Count Tony de Piro did not live long enough to see his dream reach fruition. Malta's cultural heritage of falconry is fascinating and will hopefully inspire the growing band of members on the island for a rich future - good luck to them all.

As I write another season has started in the northern hemisphere, reports from the moors are good, enthusiasm high for those fortunate enough to make the trek north. Goshawks are getting fit and a family of Hobbys wake us at first light screaming to each other over the village. This years eyass falcon has completed early training with me and is now

having a well earned break back in her chamber to complete growth while my young tiercel and last years eyass female have been welcoming what few partridge have been about. Rather depressing official reports confirm the hugely negative impact of modern agriculture on our wildlife. How perverse that the amazingly successful conservation work for raptors by falconers now finds our sport threatened by ever decreasing quarry in so many environments worldwide. There seems ever more work for IAF in support of our way of life.

We hope that you find this edition of our magazine enjoyable. I am sincerely grateful for the wonderful contributions so generously given, without this enthusiasm and kindness our publication is not possible. My thanks to you all, to members of the production and distribution team, not forgetting my long suffering family whose support, encouragement and understanding keep me up to the task.

**Anthony Crosswell, Editor UK** 🦅



Sue Cecchini

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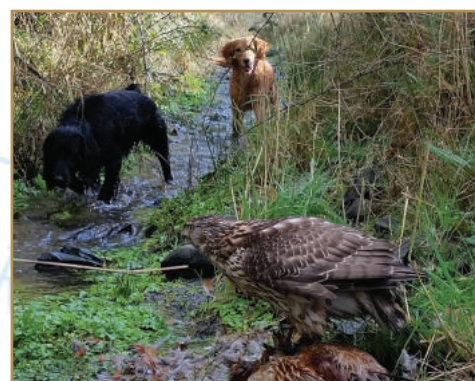


Dick ten Bosch



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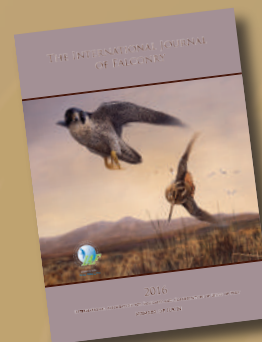
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## Photographers in this issue:

Thanks to all the photographers and authors who have provided photographs for this issue: John Kolman, Andy Ellis, Mark Williams, Adrian Lombard, Don Ryan, Gary Timbrell, Pierre Heymans, Dick ten Bosch, Keiya Nakajima, Janusz Sielicki, Kamran Khan Yousafazi, Bruce Haak, Lauren McGough, Pat Lowe, Stephen Wunderlich, Mark Upton, Dr Javier Ceballos, Dr Jan Loop, Peter Devers, Ata Eyerberdiev, and Bohumil Straka



## Cover picture

Painting by Andy Ellis depicting Peregrine and Snipe.



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## DISCLAIMER

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# A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Adrian Lombard, IAF President



The history of modern falconry has, in many ways been written by the fortunes of the Peregrine Falcon. This species is almost synonymous with falconry, certainly Western falconry. Fluctuations in the populations of this resilient and widespread species over the past 60 years and the responses to these fluctuations have determined the practice of modern falconry, the attitudes of others to falconry and, even, the establishment and growth of the IAF. The consideration of down-listing of the Peregrine falcon at the CITES CoP 17 in Johannesburg this year can be seen as bringing this story in full cycle.

What happened to the Peregrine falcon is part of the falconry legend. It seems trite to repeat the story but young falconers may not be aware of the salient parts of this history and, like any good legend, the tale has morals and lessons. This is a saga which can be passed on, as by some aged “grey-beard” to listeners around the camp-fire or in a majlis, and the issues discussed and debated to instruct us for the future.

If we look back to the time “before the collapse” of Peregrine populations, we must recall that there was virtually

no captive breeding of raptors. This was as recent as the 1960s. Falconry raptors were harvested from the wild. This was the sustainable practice that was the norm for the past four to six thousand years that falconry has existed. Trade in falcons was part of this practice; we all know of the trade in the Netherlands and the iconic Mollen family, but this was but one regional example of trade in a practice that is global in extent. There is no evidence that this trade adversely affected raptor populations. As some of the earliest recorded conservation legislation relates to the regulation of falcon harvests, we can perceive that our forebears had concerns for the issue of sustainability. In some places and at some times, very large numbers of raptors were used for falconry. There were reports that Genghis Khan took 500 gyrfalcons on his campaigns and goodness-knows what other birds. Of course, there were, globally, far fewer falconers at that time.

With established practice and an extended history of sustainable use, what on earth went wrong? In the late 1950s and early 60s Peregrine falcon populations declined. Falconers were the first to recognize this and to react. For



example, correspondence shows that British falconers voluntarily suspended their harvest of Peregrines because they noticed that Peregrines nests were inexplicably failing to produce young. The decline was calamitous and in some regions the Peregrine was completely extirpated. Obviously other species were affected. Conservationists became alarmed and the immediate response was to blame falconers for unsustainable harvesting. The myth of a middle-eastern “sink hole” for falcons was born and every falconer was immediately suspected of being an illegal trapper and trader and the cause of this environmental catastrophe. With power of hind-sight, this may seem ludicrous but it was a very real belief by many concerned with conservation and this belief informs attitudes to this day. Fortunately, proper science prevailed and the cause of the environmental catastrophe was found to be DDT and other organochlorine pesticides. Soon the cause became widely understood; it was brought to the attention of the public through Rachel Carson’s famous book “Silent spring” and DDT was banned although it is still manufactured and has limited specific use to this day. There are still calls for its more wide-spread use against mosquitoes which carry malaria and the newly-prevalent Zika disease.

The essential response was to halt the use of DDT and related compounds. These pesticides are very stable and can remain within the environment for a long time but as the environment became safe once more, many affected species rebounded. DDT accumulates in body fat and passes up the food chain so Peregrines, as apex predators, were most vulnerable and there were huge areas, such as the Eastern seaboard of North America, where the Peregrine had disappeared. Falconers were involved in the Madison Conference in 1965 which led to the establishment of the Raptor Research Foundation and resulted in the decision to use captive breeding and release as a means to re-establish the species. The response of North American falconers was to create The Peregrine Fund. This organization pioneered the captive breeding and release of Peregrines. The tree-nesting Peregrines of central Europe represented another population which had been extirpated. Special techniques were required to imprint Peregrines on tree-nests and work was undertaken in Germany and Poland to restore the tree-nesting population; one which would possibly never re-establish without assistance.

There were other responses to this collapse of the Peregrine population and to the subsequent denigration of the falconry community. The International Association for Falconry and the Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) was started by a group of 8 founder national organizations in Europe as a response to the challenges now faced by falconers. This

organization now has 110 member organizations for 80 different nations. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, God rest his soul, first leader of the newly formed United Arab Emirates, was sensitive to the discord between falconers and conservationists. He organized the first of the Falconry Festivals which centred on a conference to bring these groups together. This was held in Al Ain in 1976 and the event started the significant role which Abu Dhabi has played in developing and supporting modern falconry. Through the leadership of Abu Dhabi, falconry was recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2010 and Abu Dhabi has provided the financial support for the inception of the IAF Business Plan in 2013.

Captive Breeding of the Peregrine falcon for conservation reasons was extended to the captive breeding of surplus birds and other species of raptors for falconry. It also used for a wide range of other endangered or locally extinct species such as the Red Kite and the Mauritius Kestrel. The accessibility to suitable raptors for falconry made our art possible for many more people and the attendant publicity has resulted in an almost exponential growth in the practice of falconry. Falconry is now practiced in more countries in the world, by more people, using more species of raptors and flying their birds in better style and condition than ever before in history. We truly are seeing the golden age of falconry and all this is because we responded to the loss of the Peregrine falcon.

The principle of sustainable use is poorly understood by many people working in conservation.

Quite understandably, a person whose work involves protecting or husbanding a species or an ecosystem may become possessive of this and resist consumptive use by others. It is recognized, with good supportive evidence, that sustainable use benefits conservation and this is one of the three pillars which support the Convention on Biological Diversity and is







further developed in the Addis Ababa Principles. Despite this, there is a powerful move within conservation circles to resist use and to rely on increased legislation and enforcement to conserve species and environments which are considered vulnerable or endangered. This movement is strongly supported by animal rights organizations which operate under the guise of conservation, but whose ideology opposes the use or management of wild animals even to the detriment of sound conservation. This ideology finds fertile ground in the relatively wealthy urbanized populations of the West and informs the decisions of the powerful voting bloc of the European Union and allied nations. Hunting is coming under increasing pressure despite incontrovertible benefits to conservation. To this mix must be added the antipathy towards falconry which developed in the early days of the Peregrine population collapse. This attitude persists today as a subtle and pervasive animosity which is frequently encountered amongst conservation individuals, groups and bodies. With the establishment of a permanent office and professional staff, as well as significantly increased funding, the IAF is working hard to establish and demonstrate the conservation track-record of falconers, to win friends and to inform attitudes. This is a hard persistent effort which is essential to the survival of falconry and to the interests of falconers in every part of the world. Declines in some populations of the Saker falcon have been noted and are of concern to falconers and to other conservationists. In 2011, there was a call at the CoP of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) to up-list the species from Schedule II to I with the reason given for the decline being the unsustainable use of the species for falconry. With some sense of déjà vu, falconers opposed this call, concerned that there were other causes for the declines, that recognition should be given to sustainable use projects such as the artificial nest project in Mongolia and that falconers should have a role

in plans for the conservation of this species. As a result, the Saker Task Force was formed within the Raptors MoU of the CMS. The IAF has played a significant part in this Task Force and in the subsequent development of the Saker Global Action Plan. The Saker Global Action Plan lists the principle cause of Saker falcon declines as due to electrocution. The role of electrocution was uncovered by falconers working in Mongolia for International Wildlife Consultants and funded by the Environmental Agency of Abu Dhabi. From their work, it is estimated that 5000 Sakers are killed by electrocution in Mongolia alone. Other causes for declines were listed as environmental degradation and loss of food sources followed by use for falconry. Falconers have responded to the Saker Global Action Plan. The IAF has funded and has taken joint management of the first of the Flagship projects of this plan: The Portal to Encourage Trust. We have also provided the start-up support for the second Flagship project by funding the first ten satellite trackers for the 100 Satellite Tags project. The issue of electrocution is a serious one which possibly rivals DDT in its impact globally. The IAF has addressed this by preparing a Motion for a Recommendation for the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawaii this September. The Motion calls on governments and funders of all new electrical infrastructure to ensure that it is designed to avoid electrocution and collisions of birds and to mitigate existing structures. We have 15 co-sponsors supporting us in this Motion including BirdLife International and the national representatives of Abu Dhabi, Hungary and Poland.

With the elimination of DDT and allied organochlorine pesticides, new pesticides have been developed which are safer in terms of environmental residue and secondary poisoning of animals that eat insects. The problem with these insecticides is that they are simply too effective and kill all insects including vital pollinators. The use of these insecticides has been coupled with intensification of agriculture and the growth of crops as monocultures, principally maize, for biofuels. This has been catastrophic for biodiversity, particularly in Europe, where loss of insects is leading to a loss of insectivorous birds including, for example, the red-footed falcon. It has also led to a catastrophic loss of partridges as the chicks of this species require insects. The partridge has been the principle quarry of European falconers. Once again, falconers are responding to the challenge. The IAF has established a very capable Biodiversity Working Group and this Group has decided to develop a multilingual interactive Portal that will encourage and inform the reestablishment of biodiversity - The Perdix



Portal. This Portal will allow national sites in national languages providing information that will avoid or reverse biodiversity loss using the Grey Partridge as the indicator species and our motivation will be to restore the small-game hawking for European falconers.

Let us return to consideration of the Peregrine falcon and reflect on the changed conservation status of the species. In response to global declines of the species, it was listed as CITES Appendix I. We know now that these declines had nothing to do with trade. At the CITES CoP 16, calls to up-list the Polar bear from Appendix II to I failed because it was recognized that threats to this species were related climate change and not trade so it was not appropriate for CITES to respond in this case. The Peregrine falcon population is now restored. There are probably more Peregrines in the world now that at any previous time. They have learned to use man-made structures for nests and thrive on burgeoning feral pigeon populations in and around cities. One report claimed that there are nine Peregrine nests in the greater London area – an area where there could never have been Peregrine nests before. BirdLife, in the IUCN Red List, lists the species as “of Least Concern” and suggests a global population of 100,000 to 499,999 individuals.

Falconers categorically do not want to re-start a trade in wild Peregrine falcons but a limited use of wild-taken eyas or passage birds would seem entirely reasonable. This occurs in a number of countries such as the USA, South Africa and Ireland. Other countries with stable populations should be permitted a controlled and well monitored harvest. This allows for the introduction of new blood into breeding stock and also allows for appropriately skilled falconers to fly passage birds and experience the adrenaline charge that traditional historic falconry was based upon. Certainly there are regions where populations of the Peregrine will not sustain a harvest and the illegal market must be closely monitored and prevented. To this end, the IAF is planning to develop a registration and stud-book program with the facility for DNA Banking.

We are, of course, aware that an illegal trade in falcons persists and this trade is strongly opposed by legitimate falconers who have a history of acting against illegal trade. There are numerous examples of this response by falconer in a range of countries but one recent example is instructive. A well-known illegal trafficker by the name of Lendrum has been active for some years. He was caught and imprisoned in Britain smuggling Peregrine eggs. British falconers undertook to incubate, rear, train and release the young birds. He was caught again, in late 2015, smuggling *Falco peregrinus cassini* eggs from Chile via Brazil to the Persian Gulf. An effort

was launched, supported by the IAF and involving falconers from Brazil, Argentina and Chile as well as the respective conservation authorities, to restore these falcons to the wild. Eventually, one chick survived and was placed in an active wild nest in Patagonia where it successfully fledged. Lendrum has a 4 year jail sentence in Brazil. Chilean falconers are planning a project to restore the estimated number of young birds, lost to the wild, through the illegal activities of this individual as a symbolic gesture to show the disapproval of legitimate falconers to this activity.

At the AGM in 2011, the proposal was made to the Assembly of Delegates that the IAF should work to encourage the down-listing of the Peregrine falcon from CITES Appendix I to II. This proposal is now becoming a reality as Canada is presenting a Proposal to CITES CoP 17 in Johannesburg to down-list the Peregrine falcon. The IAF has provided support for this proposal and our Executive Secretary, Adrian Reuter, has worked closely with the Canadian government. The down-listing will not prevent nations from maintaining strict controls on the use of wild birds where appropriate and there is no need or desire for this to lead to any increase in trade in the species. By the time this article is published, the decision will have been made. By all logic, the proposal should succeed and it can only fail on political grounds or because the anti-use lobby has prevailed. Nevertheless, this Proposal represents a very significant achievement for those who have contributed enormous effort to the restoration of this iconic species and, in the process, have changed falconry for ever. Win or lose, this is an event for all falconers to celebrate and one to which many of us have contributed. In our celebration we must remember some giants of this effort who include Tom Cade and The Peregrine Fund, Christian Saar and the Deutsche Falkenorden, ...and the list goes on.

#### Translations:

This article appears on the following pages in Arabic. German and Russian translations can also be found on the IAF website by using the following QR codes:

**German:**



**Russian:**





# كلمة من رئيس الاتحاد

أديان لومبارد

الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة والمحافظة على الطيور الجارحة

كان لصقر الشاهين نصيب الأسد في التاريخ الحديث المكتوب للصيد بالصقور. يعتبر اسم هذا النوع مرادفاً تقريباً في المعنى لعبارة "الصيد بالصقور" وبصفة خاصة في العالم الغربي. ولذلك، فإن التقلبات التي حدثت في أعداد طيور هذا النوع (الذي يتمتع بالمرونة ونطاق الانتشار الواسع) على مدى الستين سنة الماضية، والاستجابة التي تمت لهذه التقلبات هي التي أثرت تأثيراً مباشراً على وضع الصقارة الحديثة وعلى مواقف الآخرين من الصيد بالصقور، وهي التي تمخض عنها إنشاء الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة ونموه وتطوره حتى وصل إلى ما وصل إليه اليوم. وقد تكتمل دورة كاملة من ملحمة استعادة الشاهين في مؤتمر الأطراف السابع عشر لاتفاقية الإتجار الدولي في الأنواع المهددة بالانقراض - سايتس في جوهانسبرج هذا العام بمناقشة الاقتراح المقدم بسحب الشاهين من الملحق الأول ووضعه في الملحق الثاني كمؤشر على نجاح الجهود المبذولة لحمايته والعمل الجاد من أجل استعادته أعداداً في الطبيعة.

ما حدث لصقر الشاهين هو جزء من قصة الصيد بالصقور. يبدو تكرار هذه القصة غير محبذ، ولكن الصقارين الشباب قد لا يكونون على علم بالكثير من معالم هذا التاريخ، ومثل أي قصة جيدة، فإننا نتناول هذه القصص لاستخلاص الدروس والعبر. يمكن رواية هذه القصة بواسطة بعض من المتقدمين في العمر "من أصحاب اللحية الرمادية" حول نار المخيم أو في المجالس لكي نقوم بمناقشة أحداث الماضي.

إذا نظرنا إلى الوراء إلى زمن "سابق" تدهورت فيه أعداد الشاهين، يجب أن نذكر أنه لم تكن هنالك أي مشاريع لإكثار الجوارح في الأسر التي تعود بدايتها إلى ستينيات القرن العشرين. لقد كانت صقور الصيد كلها تجمع من البرية بصورة مستدامة. وكانت هذه الممارسات هي القاعدة المعتادة طوال 4-6 آلاف سنة ماضية من عمر تراث الصيد بالصقور. لا ننكر أن التجارة بالصقور موجودة بالتأكيد. ونعرف جميعاً هذه التجارة ونعرف أشرة مولن التي اشتهرت بها في هولندا، ولكنه مجرد مثال إقليمي للتجارة في ممارسة ذات امتداد عالمي. ولا يوجد أي دليل على أن هذه التجارة تؤدي إلى تأثير سلبي لا يمكن تعويضه على أعداد الجوارح. ونظراً لأن بعضاً من أقدم تشريعات المحافظة على الطبيعة موجهة لتنظيم حصاد الصقور، يمكننا تصور مدى القلق الذي شعر به أسلافنا حول مسألة الاستدامة. لقد تم بالتأكيد (في بعض الأماكن وفي بعض الأوقات) استخدام أعداد كبيرة من الطيور الجارحة لرياضة الصيد بالصقور. وكانت هناك تقارير تفيد بأن جنكيز خان، كان يأخذ معه 500 صقر حر في حملاته، والله أعلم بغيرها من الطيور. بالطبع، كان هناك عدد قليل من الصقارين على الصعيد العالمي في ذلك الوقت، وهو أقل بكثير من العدد الحالي.

مع ممارسة راسخة وتاريخ طويل من الاستخدام المستدام، ما هو الخطأ الذي حدث على أرض الواقع؟ تدهورت أعداد صقور الشاهين في أواخر الخمسينيات وأوائل الستينيات، حيث كان الصقارون هم أول من أدرك تلك الحقيقة وتفاعلو معها. على سبيل المثال، تبين المراسلات أن الصقارين البريطانيين علّقوا طوعاً عمليات صيد الشاهين لأنهم لاحظوا فشل الأعشاش في إنتاج أفراخ جديدة لسبب غير مفهوم. وكان الانخفاض كارثياً في بعض المناطق التي استأصل منها الشاهين تماماً، وكان من الواضح تأثير الأنواع الأخرى.

أصيب دعاة الحفاظ على البيئة بالفرح وكانت استجابتهم الفورية هي إلقاء اللوم على الصقارين بدعوى الحصاد غير المستدام. وهكذا، ولدت أسطورة البالوعة الشرق أوسطية للصقور، وكان كل صقار يشتبه فوراً في أنه صياد غير قانوني وتاجر وسبب في هذه الكارثة البيئية.

مع القليل من التدبر يبدو ذلك سخيفاً، ولكنه كان اعتقاداً حقيقياً جداً من قبل العديد من الجهات المعنية بالحماية، ويعبر عن مواقفهم حتى اليوم. لحسن الحظ، ساد العلم الحقيقي وتم العثور على سبب الكارثة البيئية وهي مادة "دي دي تي" وغيرها من المبيدات الكلورية العضوية. وسرعان ما أصبح هذا السبب مفهوماً على نطاق واسع. وتنبه الناس لذلك من الكتاب الشهير "الربيع الصامت" لراشيل كارسون، وتم حظر مبيد "دي دي تي" على الرغم من أن تصنيعه واستخدامه ما يزال مستمراً حتى هذا اليوم، ولكن على نطاق محدود. ولا تزال هناك دعوات لاستخدامه على نطاق واسع ضد البعوض الذي يحمل الملاريا ومرض زيكا حديث الانتشار.

كانت الاستجابة الأساسية هي وقف استخدام الدي دي تي والمركبات ذات الصلة. هذه المبيدات يمكن أن تبقى في البيئة لفترة طويلة. وبعد أن أصبحت البيئة آمنة مرة أخرى، استعادت الكثير من الأنواع المتضررة عافيتها. يتراكم دي دي



تي في دهون الجسم ويمر عبر السلسلة الغذائية، وقد كانت الشواهين (كغيرها من المفترسات العليا) الأكثر عرضة، ولذلك اختفت من مساحات شاسعة مثل الساحل الشرقي من أمريكا الشمالية. وبعد ذلك شارك الصقارون في مؤتمر ماديسون في عام 1965 مما أدى إلى إنشاء مؤسسة أبحاث الجوارح

وأسفر عن اتخاذ قرار الإكثار في الأسر والإطلاق كوسيلة لاستعادة الأعداد الطبيعية للأنواع. وتمثلت الاستجابة من الصقارين في أمريكا الشمالية في إنشاء صندوق الشاهين، تلك المنظمة الرائدة في إكثار الشواهين وإطلاقها.

وتعتبر الشواهين التي تعيش في وسط أوروبا مجموعة أخرى تعرضت للاستئصال. هناك حاجة إلى تقنيات خاصة لدفع الشواهين لاستخدام الأعشاش المقامة على الأشجار، ذلك العمل الذي بدأ في ألمانيا وبولندا لاستعادة أعداد الطيور المعششة والتي ما كان من الممكن استعادتها بدون مساعدة.

كانت هناك استجابات أخرى لهذا الانهيار في أعداد الشاهين والخط اللاحق له من مكانة مجتمع الصقارين. بدأ الاتحاد الدولي للصقارين والمحافظة على طيور الصيد (IAF) بمجموعة من 8 منظمات وطنية تأسست في أوروبا استجابة للتحديات الراهنة التي تواجه الصقارين. أصبح هذا الاتحاد يضم الآن 110 منظمة عضوا من 80 دولة مختلفة. لقد أدرك الشيخ زايد بن سلطان آل نهيان، طيب الله ثراه، أول رئيس مؤسس لدولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة التي شكلت حديثاً، منذ وقت مبكر أهمية العلاقة بين الصقارين ودعاة الحفاظ على البيئة. ولذلك، قام بتنظيم أول مؤتمر للصيد بالصقور لتجتمع فيه هذه المجموعات على صعيد واحد. انعقد ذلك المؤتمر في العين في عام 1976 وانطلقت منه جهود أبوظبي والدور الهام الذي لعبته في تأصيل ودعم الصقارة الحديثة. وتحت قيادة أبوظبي، تم الاعتراف بالصيد بالصقور من منظمة اليونسكو في عام 2010، ليحتل مكانه الطبيعي في قائمة التراث الثقافي غير المادي للبشرية. كما قدمت أبوظبي الدعم المالي لخطة عمل الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة في عام 2013.

تم توسيع مشاريع إكثار الشاهين وأنواع أخرى من الطيور الجارحة لأجل الحفاظ عليها واستخدام فائض إنتاجها في الصقارة بدلاً من الصقور البرية. وتستخدم هذه المشاريع أيضاً لمجموعة واسعة من الأنواع المهددة بالانقراض أو الأنواع التي انقرضت محلياً مثل الحدأة الحمراء وعوسق موريشيوس. وبذلك، فقد جعلت إمكانية الحصول على الطيور الجارحة المناسبة لرياضة الصيد بالصقور هذا الفن متاحاً لعدد أكبر من الناس، وأدت التوعية المصاحبة لهذه المشاريع إلى النمو المتسارع لمجتمعات الصيد بالصقور. يمارس الصيد بالصقور الآن في مزيد من البلدان حول العالم بواسطة عدد أكبر من الناس، باستخدام أنواع أكثر من الطيور الجارحة التي تحلق بأساليب مختلفة وفي ظروف أفضل من أي وقت مضى في التاريخ. إننا حقاً نشهد العصر الذهبي للصيد بالصقور، وهذا كله لأننا استجبنا لمواجهة خطر تدهور أعداد الشاهين.

وما يزال مبدأ الاستخدام المستدام غير مفهوم بصورة جيدة من قبل العديد من الناس الذين يعملون في الحفاظ على البيئة. من المفهوم تماماً أن الشخص الذي يتضمن عمله حماية أو رعاية نوع أو نظام بيئي، قد يصبح غيوراً ومقاوماً للاستخدام الاستهلاكي من قبل الآخرين. ومن المسلم به مع أدلة داعمة جيدة، أن الحفاظ على فوائد الاستخدام المستدام هي واحدة من الركائز الثلاث التي تدعم اتفاقية التنوع البيولوجي، الأمر الذي تم التوسع في صياغته ضمن مبادئ أيس أبابا. على الرغم من هذا، فإن هناك اتجاه قوي داخل دوائر الحماية لمقاومة الاستخدام والاعتماد على تشديد التشريعات وإنفاذها للمحافظة على الأنواع والبيئات التي تعتبر عرضة للمخاطر أو مهددة بالانقراض.

ودُعِمت هذه الحركة بقوة من قبل منظمات حقوق الحيوان التي تعمل تحت ستار الحماية، ولكن أيديولوجيتها الواضحة هي معارضة استخدام أو إدارة الحيوانات البرية بما يصل إلى الإخلال بالمبادئ السليمة للمحافظة على الطبيعة. وتجد هذه الإيديولوجية أرضاً خصبة لدى السكان الحضريين الأثرياء نسبياً في الغرب، وتتحكم في قرارات كتلة انتخابية قوية في الاتحاد الأوروبي والحلفاء. وهكذا، يتعرض الصيد لضغوط متزايدة على الرغم من فوائده التي لا تقبل الجدل في المحافظة على الطبيعة. ويضاف إلى ذلك الكراهية التي نشأت للصيد بالصقور في الأيام الأولى من ملاحظة تدهور أعداد الشاهين.

استمر هذا الموقف اليوم كعداء حاد ومنتشر وكثيراً ما يجابهنا به بعض الأفراد والجماعات والهيئات التي تعمل في مجال حماية الطبيعة. وبعد إنشاء مكتب دائم وموظفين متفرغين وزيادة التمويل بنسبة كبيرة، أصبح الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة يعمل بصورة جادة لإنشاء سجل بالأعمال التي يقوم بها الصقارون في مجال المحافظة على الطبيعة، وذلك من أجل كسب الأصدقاء والتعريف بالمواقف. إن هذا الجهد الشاق المستمر أمر ضروري لبقاء الصيد بالصقور وضمان مصالح الصقارين في كل جزء من هذا العالم.



ومن جهة أخرى، فقد لوحظ انخفاض في بعض مجموعات الصقر الحر، مما يثير قلق الصقارين ودعاة الحفاظ على البيئة على حد سواء. في عام 2011، كانت هناك دعوة في مؤتمر أطراف اتفاقية الأنواع المهاجرة (CMS) لرفع هذا النوع من الجدول الثاني إلى الجدول الأول في قوائم الاتفاقية، وكان السبب الذي تم إيداعه هو تراجع أعداد هذا النوع نتيجة للاستخدام غير المستدام في رياضة الصيد بالصقور. مع بعض التفكير في عدم صحة هذا الافتراض، عارض الصقارون هذه الدعوة مع التنبيه إلى أن هناك أسباب أخرى للتدهور يجب وضعها في الحسبان، بالإضافة إلى ضرورة الاعتراف بمشاريع الاستخدام المستدام مثل مشروع إنشاء أعشاش اصطناعية للصقر الحر في منغوليا. كما أبدى الصقارون استعدادهم للنهوض بدورهم في التخطيط للحفاظ على هذا النوع. ونتيجة لذلك، تم تشكيل فريق عمل الصقر الحر ليعمل في إطار مذكرة تفاهم للحفاظ على الجوارح تحت مظلة اتفاقية الأنواع المهاجرة.

وقد لعب الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة دوراً هاماً في هذه المذكرة وفي التطورات اللاحقة لخطة العمل العالمية للصقر الحر التي أعدت قائمة بالأسباب الرئيسية لتناقص أعداد الصقر الحر مثل مخاطر التعرض للصق الكهربي التي تم اكتشافها بواسطة الصقارين الذين يعملون في منغوليا لصالح مؤسسة الاستشارات الدولية للحياة البرية وتمويل من هيئة البيئة - أبوظبي.

ومن واقع الدراسات التي قاموا بها، تشير التقديرات إلى أن 5000 صقر حر تتعرض للقتل في منغوليا وحدها صقاً بالكهرباء. وتم إدراج أسباب أخرى للانخفاض تشمل التدهور البيئي وفقدان مصادر الغذاء وأخيراً الاستخدام في رياضة الصيد بالصقور. وقد استجاب الصقارون لخطة العمل العالمية للصقر الحر، حيث مول الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة وشكل إدارة مشتركة لأول المشاريع الرئيسية لهذه الخطة: "بوابة لبناء الثقة". كما وفرنا أيضاً التمويل المبدئي للمشروع الرئيسي الثاني من خلال تمويل شراء أول 10 أجهزة لمشروع 100 جهاز تتبع بالأقمار الصناعية. وتعتبر قضية الصق بالكهرباء واحدة من المشكلات الخطيرة التي ربما تنافس مبيد "دي دي تي" في تأثيرها على الصعيد العالمي.

واجه الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة هذه المشكلة عن طريق الإعداد للحملة المقترحة لمؤتمر الاتحاد العالمي للمحافظة الطبيعية (IUCN) في هاواي في شهر سبتمبر القادم. وتدعو هذه الحملة الحكومات والممولين لجميع البنيات التحتية الجديدة للكهرباء للتأكد من أنها مصممة لتجنب الصدمات الكهربائية واصطدام الطيور، مع التخفيف أضرار الهياكل القائمة. لدينا 15 راعياً مشاركاً لدعم هذه الحملة، من بينهم منظمة حياة الطيور العالمية والممثلين الوطنيين لأبوظبي والمجر وبولندا.

مع القضاء على مبيد "دي دي تي" والمبيدات الكلورية العضوية المتحالفة، تم تصنيع مبيدات جديدة أكثر أماناً من حيث بقاء آثارها في البيئة والتسمم الثانوي للحيوانات التي تأكل الحشرات. المشكلة مع هذه المبيدات هي أنها ببساطة فعالة جداً وتقتل جميع الحشرات بما في ذلك الملقحات الحيوية. وقد اقترن استخدام هذه المبيدات الحشرية مع تكثيف الزراعة ونمو المحاصيل، خصوصاً الذرة، لإنتاج الوقود الحيوي. يعتبر هذا الأمر كارثياً للتنوع البيولوجي، لا سيما في أوروبا، حيث يؤدي فقدان الحشرات إلى الإضرار بالطيور التي تتغذى عليها، بما في ذلك الصقر أحمر القدمين. وقد أدى ذلك أيضاً إلى خسارة فادحة لطيور الحجل، حيث أن أفراخ هذه الطيور تحتاج للحشرات في النمو. وهذه الأفراخ هي الفريسة الأساسية للصقور الأوروبية. مرة أخرى، يستجيب الصقارون لمواجهة هذا التحدي، فقد أنشأ الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة مجموعة عمل متخصصة للتنوع البيولوجي. وقررت هذه المجموعة إنشاء بوابة تفاعلية متعددة اللغات للتشجيع والإعلام من أجل إعادة تأسيس التنوع البيولوجي، باسم "بوابة الحجل". تسمح هذه البوابة بإنشاء مواقع وطنية باللغات الوطنية وتوفير المعلومات التي من شأنها تجنب أو عكس فقدان التنوع البيولوجي باستخدام "الحجل الرمادي" كمؤشر بيئي، ونهدف من ذلك لاستعادة الطرائد الصغيرة للصقارين الأوروبيين.

نعود إلى صقر الشاهين وإلى التفكير في التحسن الذي يجب أن يطرأ على وضعه في قوائم الحماية المختلفة. كان قد تم إدراج هذا النوع في الملحق الأول لاتفاقية الإتجار الدولي في النباتات والحيوانات المهددة بالانقراض (سايتس)، وذلك لمواجهة التراجع العالمي في أعداده، إلا أننا نعرف الآن أن ذلك الانخفاض لم تكن له علاقة بالتجارة. وفي مؤتمر أطراف السايكس السادس عشر، فشلت الدعوة لرفع الدب القطبي من الملحق الثاني إلى الأول لأنه التهديدات التي تواجهه متعلقة بتغير المناخ وليس بالتجارة، لذلك لم يكن مناسباً تعديل وضعه في السايكس لهذا السبب. والآن، تمت استعادة أعداد صقر الشاهين، وربما يكون هناك المزيد من الشواهد في العالم في الوقت الحالي أكثر من أي وقت مضى. لقد تعودت هذه الصقور على استخدام هياكل من صنع الإنسان للتعيش، وازدهرت أعداد هذا النوع بالاعتماد على الأعداد الكبيرة من الحمام البري داخل المدن وحولها. وأشار أحد التقارير إلى رصد 9 أعشاش للشاهين في منطقة لندن الكبرى - وهي منطقة لم تشهد أبداً وجود أعشاش للشاهين من قبل. وتبعاً لهذا التطور، أدرجت منظمة حياة الطيور



الشاهين في القائمة الحمراء للاتحاد العالمي للمحافظة على الطبيعة ضمن الأنواع "الأقل إثارة للقلق"، مشيرة إلى أن العدد الكلي لهذه الطيور يتراوح من 100 ألف إلى 500 ألف طائر في العالم. واعتماداً على هذه الأرقام، وبمقدار متحفظ، يمكن القول أن هناك 50 ألف زوج فقط من الشاهين. ومرة أخرى، بتقدير متحفظ، يمكن القول بأن فرخ واحد من العش يستطيع الطيران في كل سنة، وبذلك يصبح لدينا 50 ألف فرخ جديدة يتم إنتاجها سنوياً. وبناء على بيانات نموذج الأسماك والحياة الفطرية بالولايات المتحدة الأمريكية فإن حصاد 5% (2500-5000 طائر) لن يحدث أي تغيير ملموس في عدد طيور هذا النوع. بشكل قاطع، لا يريد الصقارون إعادة التجارة في صقور الشاهين البرية، ولكن قد يبدو الاستعمال المحدود للأفراخ البرية أو الطيور العابرة معقولا تماماً. يحدث هذا في عدد من البلدان مثل الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية وجنوب أفريقيا وإيرلندا. ويبدو أن هناك دول أخرى بها أعداد مستقرة من الشاهين وينبغي السماح لها بالحصاد الخاضع للسيطرة والرقابة الجيدة. وهذا يسمح بإدخال دماء جديدة في مجموعات الإكثار في الأسر ويسمح أيضاً للصقارين ذوي المهارات بتطير الطيور العابرة وتجربة النشاط الحقيقي الذي تعتمد عليه التقاليد التاريخية للصقارة. بالتأكيد هناك مناطق لن تتحمل فيها أعداد الشاهين استمرار الحصاد والسوق غير المشروعة، وهنا يجب أن تراقب هذه الأنشطة عن كثب ويتم منعها. تحقيقاً لهذه الغاية، يخطط الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة لإنشاء برنامج للتسجيل وسجل للأنساب مع بنك للحمض النووي.

نحن، بالطبع، ندرك أن التجارة غير المشروعة في الصقور مستمرة، ولكن تلقى معارضة شديدة من الصقارين الشرعيين ممن لديهم تاريخ حافل من العمل الجاد في هذا المضمار. وهناك العديد من الأمثلة على مواجهة الصقارين لهذه التجارة غير المشروعة في مجموعة من البلدان، ولكن مثال واحد حديث، سوف يغني عن المزيد من الأدلة؛ ثمة مهرب غير شرعي معروف من قبل باسم (Lendrum) ظل يعمل لعدة سنوات، إلى أن أُلقي القبض عليه وتم سجنه في بريطانيا بتهمة تهريب بيض الشاهين. قام الصقارون البريطانيون باستلام البيض ووضعه في حاضنة اصطناعية وتربية الأفراخ وتدريبها على الطيران وإطلاقها في البرية. وتم القبض عليه مرة أخرى في أواخر عام 2015 بتهمة تهريب بيض شاهين من سلالة "كاسيني" من تشيلي عبر البرازيل إلى الخليج العربي. وما أن حدث ذلك، حتى انطلقت جهود الصقارين من البرازيل والأرجنتين وشيلي بدعم من الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة وسلطات الحماية في تلك الدول من أجل استعادة هذه الصقور إلى البرية. في نهاية المطاف، نجا أحد الأفراخ وتم وضعه في عش بري نشط في باتاغونيا حيث استكمل نموه بنجاح. وحكم على المهرب بالسجن 4 سنوات في البرازيل. ويخطط الصقارون التشيليون لتنفيذ مشروع لاستعادة الأفراخ الصغيرة المفقودة بسبب هذا الشخص كبادرة رمزية لإظهار عدم موافقة الصقارين الشرعيين على هذا النشاط.

في اجتماع الجمعية العمومية في عام 2011، تم تقديم اقتراح بأن على الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة أن يعمل على تشجيع إنزال صقر الشاهين من الملحق الأول إلى الملحق الثاني لاتفاقية السائتس. أصبح هذا الاقتراح الآن حقيقة واقعة، حيث تتقدم كندا باقتراح لمؤتمر الأطراف 17 في جوهانسبرج لإنزال صقر الشاهين للملحق الثاني. قدم الاتحاد العالمي للصقارة الدعم لهذا المقترح ويعمل سكرتيرنا التنفيذي (أدريان رويتر) بشكل وثيق مع الحكومة الكندية لإجازة هذا الاقتراح. لا يمنع إنزال الشاهين إلى الملحق الثاني الدول من استبقاء ضوابط صارمة على استخدام الطيور البرية حيثما كان ذلك مناسباً، وليس هناك حاجة أو رغبة لأن يؤدي ذلك إلى أي زيادة في التجارة في هذا النوع.

في الوقت الذي يتم نشر هذه المقالة، سيكون قد تم اتخاذ هذا القرار. وتشر جميع الدلائل المنطقية إلى إمكانية إجازة هذا الاقتراح، إلا إذا حالت أسباب سياسية دون ذلك أو إذا نجح اللوبي المعادي للاستخدام (المستدام وغير المستدام) في إسقاطه. وفي كل الأحوال، فإن هذا الاقتراح يمثل في حد ذاته إنجازاً كبيراً لكل من ساهم بجهود جبارة لاستعادة هذا النوع الرمزي، والذي كان فقده سوف يغير الصقارة إلى الأبد. لقد ساهم الكثيرون في هذا التحول ويحق لجميع الصقارين الاحتفال بهذا الحدث سواء انتهى التصويت بالفوز أو الخسارة.

في احتفالنا بهذا الإنجاز المستحق، علينا أن نتذكر عمالقة أسهموا بقدر وافر في هذه الجهود، منهم على سبيل المثال: توم كيد، وصندوق الشاهين، وكريستيان سار، ودويتشه فالكيوردين، والقائمة تطول.

أدريان لومبارد

يوليو 2016



# Falconry and Pakistan

Words and photos by Adrian Lombard

**The Pakistan Falconry Association became a member organization of the IAF in 2010 and has subsequently shown increasing capacity to represent falconry in that country as well as to reach out to falconers in neighboring countries.**

This organization has succeeded in advancing falconry onto the national inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The national submission will be presented at the UNESCO ICH Conference in Addis Ababa later this year with hopes that Pakistan will join the growing group of nations enjoying inclusion in the World recognition.

Falconry in Pakistan has been a controversial practice because of the confusion between the traditional Pakistani falconers who fly predominantly sparrowhawks and goshawks and the illegal trappers of Saker falcons. The falconers of Pakistan have been seeking recognition for their legitimate practice and acceptance by their conservation authorities. While falconry is not illegal in Pakistan, there are some difficulties in legitimizing the obtaining of falconry raptors and full understanding of the role of local falconers and their practice. The PFA have been involved in negotiation with their authorities in seeking greater understanding and a role in the conservation of raptors in Pakistan.







In order to support their efforts, I paid a brief visit to Pakistan earlier this year. My visit was facilitated by PFA and by Brig. Mukhtar Ahmed, President of the Pakistan Houbara Foundation. I was met with incredible hospitality and courtesy. In an intense three day visit, I was able to hold fruitful meetings with the Secretary of the Ministry of Climate Change – Mr. Sayed Abu Ahmad Akif, the Inspector General of Forests – Mr. Nasir Mahmood and the Director of Conservation for the Punjab. As a result of these meetings, there is official recognition of the tradition of local falconers in Pakistan; they will have legitimate access to a harvest of wild raptors; they will have authorization to establish a rehabilitation facility, probably in the Rawalpindi area, and there is acknowledgement by conservation authorities for the Intangible Cultural Heritage status of Pakistani falconry. MOCC will support and provide relevant input to the IAF interest on raptors loss due to electrocution during IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawaii (USA) 2016 and also Inclusion of IAF on the Pakistan national culture recovery committee. IAF also agrees to provide third party monitoring of any ongoing and future project for Raptor Conservation in Pakistan.

Fitted into this intense program was a generous effort to introduce me to the culture of this fascinating country, with visits to outstanding museums of Culture and of Natural History and to the Fortress of Lahore which was built as the capital of the Moghul Empire. With all of this, the highlight of the trip was an afternoon spent with Pakistani falconers in the field. This was an incredible opportunity to meet with local falconers who had kept their hawks in training at the end of the season, especially for my visit. We enjoyed a wonderful afternoon pursuing quail with superbly conditioned sparrowhawks and a really fit and well-tuned passage goshawk. This was a really enjoyable afternoon and the memory of the friendship and hospitality will remain with me forever. This really epitomizes the wonder of falconry – that we can travel across the world and share a common bond and passion which requires no other common language.

My thanks go to Kamran Khan Yousafzai, Arbab Haroon and the other members of the PFA who were incredible hosts. 🦅





# *So man hath his desires....*

Words and photos by Irish hawking Club director Don Ryan

If asked my views on an ideal days hawking, there's no doubt my thoughts would drift to the kept ground of shooting estates and the opportunity to share good sport with fellow falconers in the secure knowledge that game will be met.

Of course, there's no guarantee it will be caught, but it will at least be seen. Well stocked estates prove ideal venues to witness a variety of flights and experience the diverse styles and partnership of falconer, dog and hawk over the course of a day. The key ingredient is the abundance of game which prevents the fray of tempers that can arise from the frustration of finding the lack of it. It can be testing to attend a field meet where game is thin on the ground. Dogs lose interest, hawks bate at the slightest movement and falconers trudge around sulking like they're on a day's shopping with their better half. Many of the shooting estates in Ireland are built on the grounds of what was commonly known in the local area as 'The Big House'. These were, and in many cases, still are, magnificent country manors and castles that originally belonged largely to the Anglo-Irish ascendancy. They were designed as grand symbols of power and privilege that reflected the landed gentry's status in society. Granted the choice of prime land, they selected idyllic locations to erect these splendid mansions with one of the fundamental conditions to be able to host elaborate hunting parties which in turn lead to the grounds having been developed and maintained for this purpose. Of the grand houses still standing and not turned into exclusive spa resorts or hotels, they remain very much the same as they were when first built, although the surrounding land would be much reduced – in many instances, sold off to pay for the upkeep of the house. The more manageable 300 to 1,000 acres is still an ample tract of land for a day's hunt and



trees, manicured parklands and well-built stone walls to define the outer boundaries. Driving through the main gates, you feel you are entering into an old world adventure.

The field meets at these grand houses are formal occasions with attention to appearance a matter of respect and courtesy. Preparations begin the night before when wellie boots receive a spit and polish. The club neck tie or at least one with a game bird is searched for and hopefully found; usually in a ball in the press or a pocket of a coat worn at the last meet. Anklets and jesses are greased, feathers straightened and impied if necessary, talons polished clean with an old toothbrush. You stop short of taking the bell off to give it a lick of Brasso only for fear of it looking too bling.

The gamekeeper is met on the morning whose manner can be either gruff or pleasant or both, depending how he's addressed. Either way, he is granted a certain latitude. He is the master and holder of the key to your permission in the Garden of Eden. He owns the knowledge of where the birds will be and his dogs will





faultlessly find them regardless if they lead you downwind. The tension of whether your hawk will fly well is eased by the general good humour and banter between flights where neat flasks are produced from inside pockets that contain elixirs to suit all tastes; from cough syrup at the sweet end of the scale to paint stripper at the other. The weather can play a major part in the mood of the day but by far the greatest factor in determining a favourable outcome is the number and fitness of the game encountered.

Days on these estates are days to be cherished and preserved. They are showcases of our sport and deserve a place of honour to be savoured each season.

Less formal and more my bread and butter falconry, is hunting the unkept ground in wild remote places. These are days I look forward to most each season. Not to take the shine off the kept moors and estates or question the fitness of managed birds. Rather, it's the element of the unanticipated when hunting wild game in wild places. Nature is manipulated in the managed estates with the right environment created to hold game in particular areas to be consistently found and flushed. On unmanaged ground, there are no certainties. We rely on our instinct and try to think like the game we hunt. We learn over the passage of seasons and build on it. Similar to the knowledge gained from years fishing a salmon river. We





learn the lies and moods of the fish in the varying weather and different heights of water. Even then, there are no hard and fast rules. We do however accumulate vital information over time and take advice from locals and the written and spoken word of the more experienced and we build on that knowledge. Like the stages of the moon and direction of the wind, the plants that are in bloom or whether the birds are singing. All of nature is in harmony. We just need to listen for the right notes to learn its tune. We hunters can so often be guilty of considering ourselves the great adventurer and having exclusive insight into the ways of nature but when we compare the journeys the wild creatures undertake to reach and survive in these wild places, our ventures and knowledge pale into horrendous insignificance.

One of these wild places I visit each season is on the Iveragh peninsula in County Kerry in the South-West of Ireland. It is an area where the ice age when sculpting the landscape, considered the eye of the adventurer above the hand of the farmer. It is a rugged landscape of mountains and lakes, of bogs and protruding boulders. Streams fall abruptly from corries in mountain sides to meander over rocks and

around rocks and through rocks, past forests and  
marshes to inevitably empty into the  
tempestuous Atlantic. The  
varying rustic shades  
of brown on the

blanket bogs and mute and mottled greys of the sandstone that cover most of the region, give the landscape an altogether antique hue.

I stay at a hunting/fishing lodge that sits on the left upstream bank beside the main salmon pool of a spate river. The pool forms a sharp angle less than 10 yards from the lodge where it gets diverted downstream to a series of varied runs to the village where it chatters over a dramatic series of rocks to meet the estuary. The lodge itself is a creaky affair; built from stone and wood salvaged from a derelict 'Big House' in the war years when supplies were hard come by. It was built to replace the wooden lodge burnt down by poachers who kindly swore they would; prompting the Major who owned the sporting rights to take out extra insurance. The proceeds of which, funded the new build. The threadbare mats do little to silence the loose creaking floorboards and on a windy night, the rattling window and door latches are sure to interrupt your sleep. But it has all a sporting person could ask. A large open fire, worn but comfortable chairs and beds; dripping taps that cause water pipes to shudder; burnt down candles in wobbly candleholders; incomplete decks of cards, draughts and domino games which can be found in the Victorian oak pedestal desk that sits beside the French doors that look out onto the river. The game registers can also be found in one



of the drawers whose pages are filled with entries dating back several decades telling of sporting days with accounts of fish and fowl.

Being a spate river, it requires sufficient rain to create a flood to motivate the salmon to move upriver which is really the only opportunity to catch one on the fly. Rain is not a big ask in this part of the world and a good 4 to 5 hours of persistent downpour particularly if concentrated in the upper regions can be sufficient to turn a hopeless still pool into one full of life and promise. Once the clouds roll past and the hills are clearly seen, the width of the curtain of water spilling from the uppermost lough like an overflowing bath into Eagle's lough below along with the streams like veins of white ore rushing down the surrounding hills are good indicators of when to expect the right fishing conditions. When an evening rain falls, alarm clocks are set for an early rise to catch the river at the right height. A quick glance out the bedroom window can determine if the flood is sufficient to warrant booting up or whether curtains can be drawn closed for a few more hours sleep.

There is great life by a river lodge. Otters scuttle along banks causing salmon to stir from their sleepy trance to head and tail in pools. The blaze of electric blue from a passing kingfisher is always a welcome sight as is the flight of the flapping heron along the river's course. From the back window, I have seen woodcock at dusk cautiously feed near the ditch and along the flooded grass at the side I've disturbed snipe to watch them ricochet into the morning sky with the urgency to share a secret. Wild pheasants call from the far bank finding security

close to the river to hop across if danger approaches. Bold hares have run past the front door sending me frantically searching for the whistle to call back the pursuing dogs. Ducks have erupted from the lodge pools in early morning when the river is low and a few hundred yards down river just beyond the Bathing Pool where I caught my biggest salmon, I was fortunate to see a white tailed eagle lift from the rocks beyond an old ford.

I like to start each season here to reacquire the relationship of hawks and dogs. It helps create a strong bond that lasts through the season. There is freedom from timetables and meal times and the demands of an orderly world. Days seem longer and more filled and despite the real world being but a short drive away, you feel far enough removed to doubt it ever exists. I make a point to come alone so as not to be distracted by family or guests. Besides, I'm torn between shortwings and longwings and find it easier to divide my time when I don't have to consider the needs of others. It is not the place to bring a dog you intend to teach the disciplines of trialling. It is rough terrain and you need them to hunt hard with a certain independence of whistle. You need dogs that want to find game as opposed to dogs that happen on game and it makes a world of difference on unkept ground. Contrary to what you'd expect of wild areas where game is less abundant than the kept estate, the dogs seem to be always on scent. It's like the hare and wild pheasant have covered every inch of its territory each day staking





its claim and checking for trespassers. No doubt the residual scent from woodcock and snipe still remain from feeding on open ground during the night. The hawks too appear more in tune. They've measured this wild environment and know they need help from the team to put game in the bag. Recall is sharper – anxious to get back on the fist to continue.

You can expect to cover a variety of ground in a day; from scrub to open moorland; from dense impenetrable cover to neat copses. Crossing streams where dark salmon linger in deep pools narrow enough to step over. The level of growth can be phenomenal; benefitting from wet summers and mild winters. Game can spring from almost anywhere and when least expected. You need to be on your toes at all times to have any level of success. There is no gamekeeper to lead you along the rides to feeders as there are none. You follow your nose or more correctly, the dog's nose, and you can end up wandering anywhere. Often in the most remote place where you expect no one has been in years, you meet an old farmer checking his sheep or fixing a fence. Nothing too permanent; maybe a piece of damp mountain ash to hold up the rusty barb wire that's slumped after the untreated posts have failed. If you bid them time, you are sure to hear talk of the weather and if you're in no hurry, perhaps you'll hear tales of other sportsmen that have come here over the years: of the Parish Priest that crossed the mountain to course for hares or the old Colonel that arrived in December to hunt the red bogs for snipe. Or maybe the one eyed Captain that stripped fish at the hatchery he built with the eager young Lieutenant that was never quite right after the war. You may be surprised to hear of the number of fish the locals once poached from the Major's river in pools far up; now long forgotten and heavily overgrown - 15 salmon in a day with not one under 8 pound or the geese that came over the hills each year to rest on the wet mountain marshes now drained from afforestation. Depending on the date they arrived, the winter could be reliably forecast by many of the old sages in the area.

If you take the last week in September, one of the chores you are given is to return the boat from the pier at the mouth of the estuary (once famous for its oysters) down along its winding course to the safety of the sheltered pier in the village to be stored up for winter.

It is on this journey,

if you stop the engine and allow the boat to drift; the taste, fragrance, sounds and lack of sounds fill your senses and open your mind to the possibility that other worlds exist.

Oyster catchers pipe as they surf above the leaden depths stirring the lolling seals on nearby islands to raise a lazy eyelid to watch you pass. Cormorants gather on rocks like old men at a funeral; their beady eyes glaring at you down hooked beaks as if you were listening to their private conversation. The lapping of the waves against the boat and the cry of the curlew on the estuary's haunted bogs, send you into a blissful trance. You feel you could drift into another dimension; somewhere long lost where only the sea remembers. There is an indescribable feeling of sadness that slumbers here; like a great knowing that all things will pass.

A typical day will see me out after a light breakfast with my tiercel goshawk and 2 or 3 cocker spaniels. Depending on the river height, I'll cross the swing bridge in front of the lodge to the far side where there's always a pheasant or two in the marshy ground or skirting the rhododendrons down river. If we fail here, I'll try further up the main river or down by the estuary. You never fail to find game of some description. I'll expect to flush a number of woodcock but have yet to catch one. I witnessed my last goshawk, a parent reared male, have his best flights here. One flight sticks in my mind where I saw him mid-air a cock pheasant then watch in horror as they tumbled over a 30 foot embankment to the river below to find him safely at the bottom with 1 talon on the bank and the other on the head of the completely submerged pheasant. Daft as it may sound, on a number of failed flights across the swollen river, I'd swear he consciously returned to me knowing I'd have difficulty crossing. We enjoyed 5 memorable seasons hunting together and I released him recently in early summer to hopefully start a family the following spring. My latest partner, an imprint goshawk is showing an equal love of these wild places and in the past season has proved himself worthy of the challenge. Unlike kept ground where multiple kills are not unusual and even expected, once the hawk catches, I call it a day, regardless if it's the first flight; for you can be sure against wild game, the flight will be of the highest quality. A good day's hunt with a hearty workout for dogs and hawk, will see 3 to 4 flights at various game and a pheasant in the bag to finish. If all goes





to plan, I'll be back at the lodge by early afternoon for a quick cup of tea and to collect the tiercel Peregrine and setter for a flight at snipe. There's a fine red bog a short drive up river that always holds a few and the surrounding views of the looming mountains are just the tonic to close the day. I've only ever been fortunate enough to catch both a pheasant with the goshawk and a snipe with the Peregrine once on the same day. I believe when it becomes a regular event, my days of hawking will come to a close.

At the end of a day's hunt, you will have covered many

colourful miles; your legs will be more toned and you will have earned your pint. The hawks will already have a talon raised as you back them onto their nightly perch. Content at their day's efforts with a good feed inside them, the dogs will raise no more than a weary eyelid as you leave the creaky lodge to go to the village. The sweet smell of a turf fire will hit you long before you sit beside it in the quiet pub. Watching the welcome and rewarding sight of the pint of Guinness settle on the bar, it's hard not to have a silly smile of contentment break out on your ruddy weathered face.

*As the ox hath his bow, sir, the horse his curb, and the falcon her bells, so man hath his desires...*



# THE PERDIX PORTAL

The loss of species is often due to changes in land use. This is especially true for grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*) whose populations have been negatively affected by increasing intensity of agricultural practices. Together, IAF and the UK's Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust are collaborating to help pioneer restoration of nature by creating an online network of wildlife users using the Grey Partridge as a flagship. By taking responsibility for this, falconers yet again pioneer a new approach to conservation.

This project thus protects our natural heritage, combines benefits for the reputation of those who both communicate and act and aids falconers across Europe by restoring game populations.

The vision of the Perdix Portal is to encourage and enable the restoration of partridge populations, and the healthy habitats that they and many other species require, by creating a network of practitioners that rapidly convey news and best-practice examples across all European rural areas. This network will enable the EU to start meeting 2020 targets for biodiversity

restoration through local, community-driven efforts.

The Perdix Portal is accessed via a website providing multilingual general information on grey partridge restoration for all users, whether falconers, farmers, anglers, shooters reserve managers or local officials. This staging site then links to monolingual sites that enable the exchange of country-specific information for developing projects and can, in turn, link to a network of similar local project sites run by associations, local administrations, or for more specific exchange of information.







Knowledge of restoration techniques will therefore be shared with interested parties across Europe in as many languages as possible; this will also be achieved with the aid of the European Landowners' Organisation and of sustainable use groups in IUCN. The human population of our world is growing, and increasingly lives in towns and cities. In the developed world, most people are divorced from the sources of food they eat and interact with wildlife mostly via television or the internet. Despite peoples' alienation from the natural world, their 21st century demands still put huge pressure on that world, resulting in increasingly intensive use of the land to maximise efficiency. This is seen in this crop monoculture to the left. Such farming methods often lack biodiversity-rich landscape features such as trees.

This intensive use alters natural ecosystems and affects wildlife. Large animal species are often driven off the land and are now commonly only found in protected areas; even smaller species

suffer as the insect life ecosystems depend upon are often intentionally removed to protect crops.

However, lost species can be returned to areas where they were once present. Commonly, species disappear from fragments of less productive land due to past management practices and can often be restored. Research shows that this is especially true of the grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*), a species which was once common in Europe but has seen serious declines in much of its range in Europe. However, the solutions presented by research have not been implemented.

Therefore, IAF has joined with the UK's, Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust to help pioneer restoration of nature by using the Grey Partridge as a flagship.

By working together with other land users and supporters of sustainable use, falconers can drive innovative conservation methods and spearhead a new campaign to assist the recovery of European biodiversity and of this iconic bird species. 🦅




# FALCON COLLEGE

## Falconry Club


One of the many extra-mural activities offered at the College is Falconry. Falconry has been practised at the College since the 1960s when a small group of boys with an interest in the activity were assisted by the well known raptor biologist and author Peter Steyn – a teacher at the school at the time.

Words and photos (unless stated) by Pierre Heymans



Chris Hayes with his African Goshawk at Dollar Block  
Photo: B Godfrey





Although Peter is not a falconer, his interest and passion overlapped with the pursuit, and he willingly helped the youngsters out. The current IAF (International Association of Falconers – the world governing body) president, Dr Adrian Lombard, was part of this group of school boys. The club regained momentum with the arrival, in the early eighties, of the late Ron Hartley, a falconer par excellence and raptor researcher with world-wide acclaim. The club has remained an integral part of the school's extra-mural curriculum since then.

Falconry is the hunting of wild quarry using trained birds of prey. It is a blood sport. Falconers make no apology for this but acknowledge the critical necessity to incorporate responsible conservation ethics including sustainable off-takes of both quarry and raptor species. Falcon College is fortunate in having easy, in some cases very close, access to large areas of land which lend themselves to the practice. Boys from form three upwards are eligible to join the club as active members but junior boys who have an interest are encouraged to join as “associate” members to familiarise themselves with the pursuit. The boys are expected to collect young suitable hawks and train them themselves in an environment which is particularly suited to falconry. It is an exacting discipline which teaches the youngsters the importance of many life skills. There is very little margin for error and the members who make a success of falconry have to be organised and efficient at managing their time. Members of the Falconry Club are required to also be members of the Natural History Club because of the very close correlation between the two activities.

Usually the activity is precipitated by an interest in the bush and specifically in birds. Boys who come to the school are offered the opportunity to join the club at the start of the school year.

As mentioned, junior boys are allowed to join as associate or apprentice members but not as full active members. Falconry requires an unusually high level of commitment and this period of association gives the younger boys an opportunity to witness, first-hand, this level of commitment. There is no other activity that demands as high a degree of efficient time management and organisation. The birds require constant attention even outside of the hunting season – they can never be put away as is the case with the most sophisticated set of sports equipment. Some potential members will recognise that their interest is not acute enough to sustain the rigorous demands on their time and may then choose to remain in the more passive role of falconry observer. This choice is supported and understood. There can be a lot of exceptional experiences in the more passive role of observer.

The boys who have decided to continue with the discipline are expected to monitor wild raptors in the vicinity or elsewhere so as to establish breeding territories and sites with the ultimate aim of collecting a young hawk to train. Obviously collection of young hawks (the so-called eyases) is carefully regulated so that no sites are over utilised. We also ensure that the collection is carried out within the framework of the law. Some hawks may be passed on to other boys when a falconer has reached a certain level of competence or chooses to collect a different species. This means that some boys will have the opportunity to fly a bird without the need to collect one from the bush. Zimbabwe is fortunate in having a wealth of species of raptor suited to falconry. The boys are expected to gain experience and competence with the more common and easy to manage species such as the African Goshawk. As they gain this experience and their competency improves, they can choose to fly the more demanding species that may provide flights that are more exhilarating but require more





Early morning hunting at Dollar Block: 1 to 3, Chris Hayes, Munene Kermer and Euan Brice. Photo: C Guthrie



Josh Smith (Left) and Evan Wellock with some kills made by Evan's African Goshawk. Photo: C Guthrie



Munene Kermer and Ryan Johnston with IAF President Dr Adrian Lombard



Munene Kermer and African Goshawk



Munene Kermer with his African Goshawk  
Photo C Guthrie



Ryan Johnston with members of the ZFC before a parade at the Falconry Festival

careful management.

In addition to the routine activities available to the boys – during the winter months when falconry activities are in full swing, they will be taking their birds out on a daily basis to fly them at quarry in the surrounding bush – there are other satellite activities which add value to their experience. The boys are often involved in the care and management of birds from the breeding programme. Zimbabwean falconers have been involved in captive breeding of Peregrine falcons since the late 70s. The headmaster, Mr Reg Querl, himself a falconer, has a number of breeding chambers and sometimes enlists the help of some of the more competent school boys. Some captive bred birds are taken up for falconry whilst others are released in an attempt to augment wild populations. Currently, Reg is in the process of habituating three young Peregrines to an area on campus where they will ultimately be released. This process, though spectacular to be involved in,

can be arduous and time-consuming and hence the assistance of the young falconers can provide a significant benefit. Also, we currently have taken charge of a juvenile martial eagle in the hopes of rehabilitating it for eventual release. The care and management of this bird requires careful and competent ability. Martials are mostly too large and unwieldy for falconry and are best left to the select few who make eagle flying their speciality. Nevertheless, the opportunity afforded by this experience is invaluable and the interest factor generated by having the largest eagle in Africa in the club is most welcome. At the end of 2014, two school boys from the club and I were sponsored to attend the International Festival of Falconry held every three years in Abu Dhabi. The experience was wonderful and the boys achieved some degree of celebrity status mostly because the idea of school boys doing falconry under the auspices of a school curriculum was so incredibly alien and unattainable in most other places. Their exposure on





Baby Lanner Falcons



L to r: Patrick Van Wyk, Evan Wellock and Chris Hayes in a hood making session after morning flying



Peregrine Falcon Star, on Red Billed Teal



Ryan Johnston with Bald Eagle



Evan Wellock with Martial Eagle



Ryan Johnston and Munene Kermer with ZFC President Mr A Groenewald at the World Falconry Festival

the global scale was extremely valuable and they were sought out by many media agencies to give interviews related to their ability to practise falconry at school. While the experience of meeting falconers from all over the world illustrated the very real ability to interact based on mutual interest and common ground, perhaps the most striking spinoff from the trip was the stark realisation of how incredibly fortunate we are here at Falcon, having the ability to do what it is we love to do in such conducive surroundings!

Every year the Falconry Club takes a field trip to some area where we are able to fly our birds in areas with abundant quarry. Although we have access to areas with big game, we mostly make use of areas with plains game only. The boys spend a lot of time in the bush in small groups and the presence of dangerous game would severely hamper our ability to give the youngsters free-reign to go out and fly their birds. Nevertheless we have flown birds in areas where it is imperative to have

back-up from experienced guides to ensure that our activities can be carried out in relative safety. Last year, one of the boys' gabar goshawks caught and killed a crested francolin about 500 metres from a pair of resting male lions!

Falconry at the school is an extremely valuable part of the curriculum for the boys who choose to do it. It is perhaps the most difficult thing to get right and is therefore one of the most rewarding when one does get it right. It is exacting and demanding and there are seldom any second chances. The margin for error is minute and so errors have to be anticipated and avoided. Lessons in falconry can be tragic and final. In my opinion, there is no discipline that instils such a strong sense of responsibility and organisational ability, and the small group of boys privileged to do it properly, have shown a strong sense of community of purpose. The bonds they have formed with raptors and with one another will generate experiences and memories of these experiences that will last a lifetime. 🦅



# The Great Heidelberger Book of Songs

## or Codex Manesse

By Dick ten Bosch, with the kind permission of the University Library of Heidelberg, Germany

*The Great Heidelberg Book of Songs*, also known as *Codex Manesse*, was created between 1300 and 1340 in the “Free City of Zurich”, now the largest city in present day Switzerland. It is the most comprehensive collection of ballads and poetry in the German language of the middle ages. It consists of 426 parchment leaves, each 35.5 x 25cm, double-sided. The manuscript contains almost 6000 verses from 140 poets. Its core was formed around 1300 and was compiled by the patrician Rudiger Manesse of Zurich and his son. The manuscript represents the sum total of mediaeval lay songs and in some cases is the only source. It is famous for its glorious full-page miniatures. To each of the 137 poets or singers one miniature is dedicated. The miniatures illustrate the poets in an idealized manner following courtly activities, falconry included. The miniatures are considered to be an important document of Gothic illumination from the Upper Rhine region and were made by four illustrators. The poets are arranged in order of rank: Emperor Henry VI, son of Frederick I Barbarossa, comes first followed by kings, dukes, margraves, counts, barons and lastly commoners.

From the 137 miniatures in the Book of Songs we have selected seven which depict scenes of falconry:

Margrave Heinrich von Meissen (1218-1288), “The Illustrious”, is shown as a falconer. Together with a companion and a servant, both of whom carry lures, he is depicted hunting herons with his falcons on horseback. Although falcons are depicted on miniatures 1, 2, 4 and 5, the ladies at court have all the attention in



Margrave Heinrich von Meissen hunting herons

the accompanying poems, not falconry. Picture 5 especially, a portrait of the poet Herr Konrad von Altstetten (app.1320), has become a famous icon of courtly love which was a frequent theme in art and literature in feudal times. On picture 3 Lord Ulrich von Gutenberg (app 1170) is shown as a falconer on horseback. Perhaps the most interesting miniature from a falconry point of view is miniature number 6 of the singer Kunz von Rosenheim, a commoner of whom no personal information is known. It shows a typical short wing falconer on foot hunting what appears to be quail in a cornfield with a sparrow hawk and pointing dogs. Next to him is depicted a farmer busy with the harvest. The falconer's bag attached to his belt is of a model which is still in use to this date.

For reasons of preservation the original codex is kept in an air-conditioned safe in the University of Heidelberg in Germany and is rarely exhibited.





Miniature 1



Miniature 2



Miniature 3



Miniature 4



Miniature 5



Miniature 6



# Falconry

## as Local Knowledge and Application to Conservation System

Words and photos by Keiya Nakajima, Ph.D,  
Vice President for Asia

Falconry has developed under traditional culture in various regions across the world, and it has been listed as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO 1) since 2010 for its importance. Local knowledge and style has also been accumulated with a long history (Fig. 1), and although the knowledge is commonsense to many falconers in the region, it is unique and takes a special understanding to people who do not practice the sport. Recently, the policy of sustainable use of wild resources has been recommended to keep a healthy environment. It is not a new idea, because it has been a basic policy for falconry with wild birds. Falconry techniques and traditional knowledge have been applied to the conservation of birds of prey such as restoration of endangered species, and the rescue and rehabilitation of injured birds (Fig. 1). Management of quarry species is, also, needed to keep the hawking fields in good shape. This means that the fundamentals of falconry are related to conservation of nature by human activities, and a falconer's knowledge and experience will be useful for various projects, if they are spread across the world. For this purpose, it will be important to provide effective information or activity to governments, related authorities, organizations, specialists and general public. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was established in 2012 by over 100 governments as a mechanism to provide scientific information in response to requests from policy makers. It has the potential to spread the advantage of a falconer's experience and technique that is due to traditional knowledge and policy. In the website of IPBES (<http://www.ipbes.net>), the outline is introduced as follows: IPBES is the intergovernmental body which assesses the state of biodiversity and of the ecosystem services it provides to society, in response to requests from decision makers. It is placed under the auspices of four United Nations (UN) entities: UNEP <sup>2</sup>, UNESCO, FAO <sup>3</sup> and UNDP <sup>4</sup> and administered by UNEP. Its secretariat is hosted by the German government and located on the UN campus, in Bonn, Germany. One thousand scientists from all over the world currently contribute to the work of IPBES on a voluntary basis. They are nominated



Fig 1: Rehabilitation of recovered goshawk with falconry technique



by their government or an organization, and selected by the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel. Peer review forms a key component of the work of IPBES to ensure that a range of views is reflected in its work, and that the work is complete to





Fig 2: Goshawk on screen perch in the traditional manner of Japan

the highest scientific standards.

IPBES has set up the first program for 2014-2018 that is designed to put the platform on the right path, firmly establishing its working modalities, deliverables, credibility, relevance, legitimacy and reputation, based on a collaborative approach and a high volume of in-kind contributions. It is intended to pave the way for the incremental strengthening of the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem

services across scales, sectors and knowledge systems. The program has four categories by objectives as follows:

1. Capacity & Knowledge Foundations
2. Regional & Global Assessments
3. Thematic & Methodological Issues
4. Communication & Evaluation.

In these categories, there are 18 deliverable items. The



following items are related to falconry and conservation activities by falconers.

### **Indigenous and local knowledge**

#### **Deliverable 1(c):**

Procedures, approaches and participatory processes for working with indigenous and local knowledge systems

IPBES aims to promote effective engagement with indigenous and local knowledge holders in all relevant aspects of its work. This is to be achieved by facilitation of a roster and network of experts to support the Platform's work, a number of global dialogue workshops of indigenous and local knowledge experts, a review of regional case studies to inform the Platform's procedures for and approaches to working with indigenous and local knowledge, and the delivery of a preliminary and final set of procedures and approaches for working with indigenous and local knowledge systems. IPBES is also to establish a participatory mechanism for indigenous and local knowledge systems to be established under the Platform, oriented to facilitate the linkages between indigenous and local communities and scientists and to strengthen the quality of indigenous peoples' participation in the development of the deliverables of the Platform.

Recognizing the importance of indigenous and local knowledge to the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems as a cross-cutting issue relevant to all of its activities, IPBES established a task force on indigenous and local knowledge systems and agreed on terms of reference guiding its operations implementing this deliverable.

### **Knowledge, information and data**

#### **Deliverable 1(d):**

Priority knowledge and data needs for policymaking addressed through catalysing efforts to generate new knowledge and networking

IPBES has been mandated to identify and prioritize key scientific information needed for policymakers at appropriate scales, and to catalyse efforts to generate new knowledge in dialogue with scientific organizations, policymakers and funding organizations, while not directly undertaking new research.

Further, to support the implementation of the work programme IPBES is to facilitate access to knowledge and data needed, e.g., for the production of assessments and the use of tools and methodologies in support of policy formulation and implementation, and to provide guidance on how to manage and present knowledge and data, e.g., from and for different scales and sectors.

Recognizing the importance of access to and management of knowledge and data to the implementation of the work programme, IPBES established a task force on knowledge and

data and agreed on terms of reference guiding its operations implementing this deliverable, which is to be supported through and build on a thematically widespread network of institutions and relevant initiatives such as initiatives to provide indigenous and local knowledge and citizen science initiatives.

### **Sustainable use of biodiversity**

#### **Deliverable 3(b)(iii):**

Thematic assessment on sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity and strengthening capacities and tools

This assessment is to address the ecological, economic, social and cultural importance, conservation status, drivers of change, of mainly harvested and traded biodiversity related products and wild species. It will also assess the potential of the sustainable use of biodiversity for the enhancement of livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities, including the role of traditional governance and institutions. It will identify guidelines, methods and tools and promote best practices, including both modern technologies and indigenous and local knowledge, for sustainable management and harvesting.

The assessment will contribute to identification of related knowledge gaps and better technologies, including in respect of indigenous and local knowledge. It will also contribute to the development of policy support tools and methodologies, to enhancing sustainable management schemes (including the establishment and management of harvest quotas), to aiding compliance and enforcement measures, and to addressing capacity-building needs in countries of origin.

### **Policy support tools**

#### **Deliverable 4(c):**

Catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies

IPBES is to establish an online catalogue of policy support tools and methodologies to facilitate easy access to tools and methodologies promoted by the Platform. Guidance will be developed on how the customization and further development of policy support tools and methodologies could be promoted and catalyzed in line with the Platform's function regarding policy support tools.

Under the various programs, IPBES has conducted assessments by Task Force on Indigenous and Local Knowledge Systems. These assessments were to be based on, in addition to scientific knowledge, the knowledge, practices, observations and understandings of indigenous peoples and local communities. Indigenous and Local Knowledge for the Asia-Pacific Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services focuses on several themes in the call for submissions. One of the themes was sustainable use & conservation, and



two sections were set up for the submission form as follows:

#### 1. Sustainable use & conservation

The sustainable use and conservation assessment will address the ecological, economic, social and cultural importance, conservation status, drivers of change, and related livelihoods and other values for local communities and indigenous people, of mainly harvested and traded wild species. It aims to identify and promote best practices and tools, including both modern technologies and indigenous and local knowledge and practices, for sustainable management, harvesting and utilization.

##### • Section A

Projects based on indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) about status and trends in biodiversity and ecosystem services, land degradation and restoration, sustainable use and conservation, or/and invasive alien species and their control.

##### • Section B

Documentation on ILK about status and trends in biodiversity and ecosystem services, land degradation and restoration, sustainable use and conservation, or/and invasive alien species and their control.\*

The deadline for the submission was 6th May 2016. The Asia-Pacific region is an important area for falconry, because various countries in the region have a long history of falconry as a tradition that has been maintained in many

areas with indigenous and local knowledge. So, the following references have been submitted to Section B to introduce the information of China, Japan, Mongolia and Pakistan on the theme of sustainable use & conservation. In this case, the IAF Journal provided beautiful and effective material to introduce falconry and falconer's activities, and I wish to express my deep gratitude to editor and publisher for their great effort.

Understanding the falconry systems of older times will help to make the plan for conservation of endangered species or management of the environment in the present day. It is, also, an application of traditional knowledge. For example, in Japan, falconry was a noble custom in the ruling class, and the falconry system was developed to keep the custom. In the case of the 18-19 Centuries, regulation for falconry and the hawking fields was prepared for a licensed system of falconer, control of village in the hawking field and management of the habitat of the hawk. Fig. 3 is an example of this system.

In old times, falconry was an event for the Shogun or lord. A falconer was retained as an official for keeping or training of birds and as an assistant in the hawking field (Fig. 4 overleaf). Other officials for falconry were also prepared to manage the hawking field and habitat of the hawk, and inhabitants of the hawking field helped in the support of falconry. Their daily life was controlled under the regulation of the hawking field.

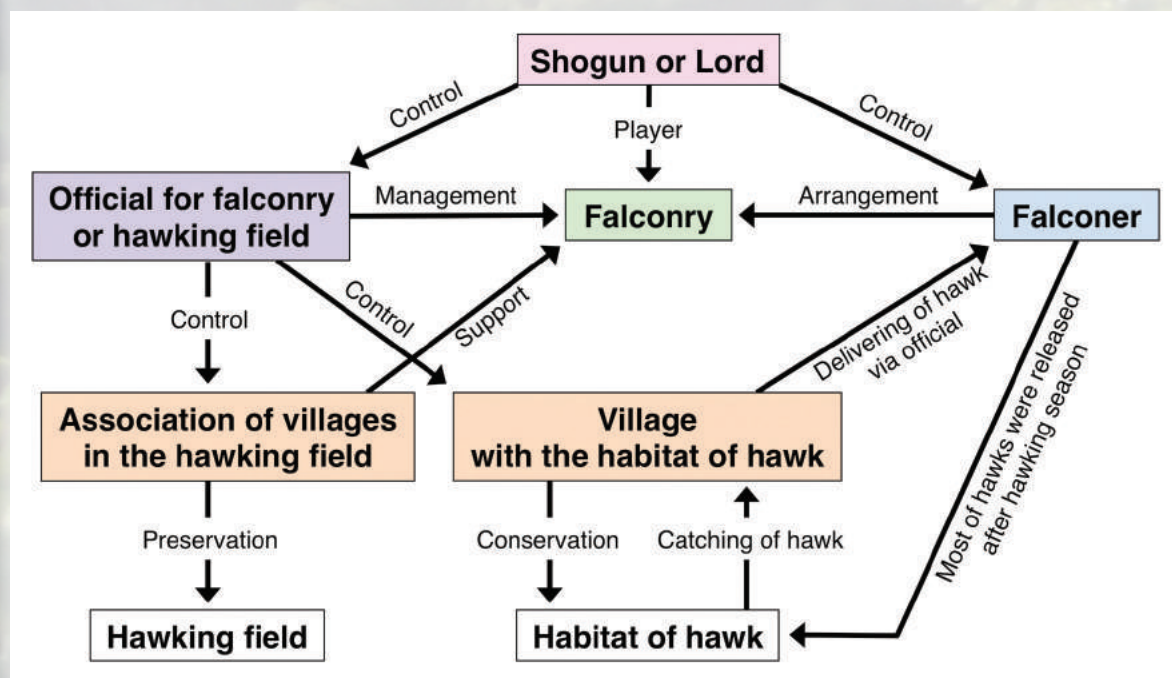


Fig. 3 Outline of Falconry System in Japan at 18 - 19 C

\* List of references for Section B

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Fig. 4 Traditional style of Japanese falconer at 18-19 C

For example, they had to check for illegal hunting or a stranger in the village. If they overlooked a violation, it could result in a penalty. Construction of a new house or facilities (e.g. temple) in the village was not allowed if it caused changes to the hawking field<sup>5)</sup>. Live feed for falconry birds was provided to the falconer, and the quarry species were also conserved

by inhabitants of the field<sup>6)</sup>. When falconry was practiced by the ruling class, inhabitants had to provide materials, foods, resting place and laborers on the request from officials<sup>7)</sup>. But, they could get extra income for the assistance.

Falconry birds were sent to the Shogun or lord from a village that had the habitat of the desired hawk; most of them were Northern Goshawks. The nest site was an important area to get falconry birds every breeding season. So, conservation of the nest site was imposed on inhabitants in the area by regulation. For example, poaching of a hawk or concealment of information about the nest was subject to penalty of death. The penalty was applied to the offender and their family, but the sender of a hawk or finder of a new nest could get extra income as a result<sup>5)</sup>. Falconry birds were sent to the falconer via related officials. Many passage birds were used for falconry for one hawking season, and most of them were released back into the habitat after the season, because new birds were provided for next season. This means that a young bird was conserved in the first winter season without debilitation under suitable management by the falconer. This would improve the survival ratio of young birds and support of the next generation by breeding the survived birds.

Currently, the falconry system of old times is not maintained in Japan because of social change at the end of the 19 Century. Wild birds of prey are not permitted in Japanese falconry because they are protected as endangered species, but we should think about a conservation system using falconry techniques and traditional knowledge to keep the position of the falconer as a specialist. Fig. 5 is idea of the system with a falconer.

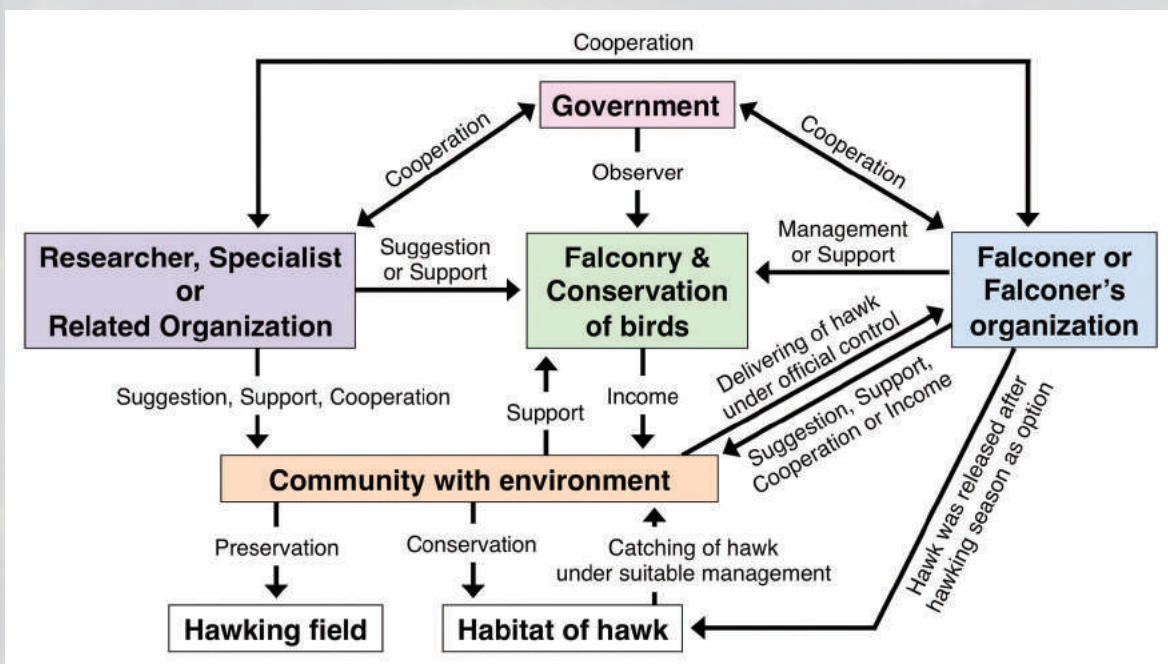


Fig. 5 Idea for Conservation System with Falconer





**Fig. 6 Continuous observation for the breeding of Mountain Hawk-eagle**

An ideal system is the management of the environment with the sustainable use of falconry birds under suitable cooperation with related groups and recognition from the government and/or community. Usually, the government makes a decision on a specific matter with regulation, and researchers or specialists may support a policy on occasion through a special committee. Opinions from stakeholders are, also, important in the consideration. In this situation, a falconer should keep the position as specialist and stakeholder in order to promote our activities and to prevent negative influence by misunderstandings. The role of the IAF is important as an advisory group because it is an international organization with experts. Cooperation with related organizations (e.g. organization for wildlife, research groups, department in a university) for the conservation project will be useful to get good understandings of falconry techniques and trust of the falconer. Continuous conservation activities or research will be effective to accumulate various data for birds of prey that have long lifespans (e.g. observation of total breeding result by one pair and change of the pair by aging, Fig. 6), because it is difficult to run a long time project over several decades by the same department of a university or the government. It could, also, be helpful for a falconer's group to take over some projects from a previously concerned party in order to prevent the stopping of the operation or a lack of data. A good relationship with the community (e.g.

landowner, companies, and local governments) will be useful to get success on these projects. If the community could get a benefit from the support of falconry or conservation of birds of prey, cooperation in projects will be promoted causing a healthy environment for all parties. The benefit is not only for the falconer, but various activities will be encouraged under the policy of sustainable use of wild resources and suitable management for coexistence without the damage of habitat. Recently, captive breeding technology was developed, and many falconry birds are provided by breeders. International trading of birds is promoted, but a basic style of falconry is the sustainable use of wild birds in the region. If a falconer could get special permission to use wild birds as a result of the conservation works, it will be a reward or success for our activities. The restoration of the endangered Peregrine falcon in North America is excellent example of the falconer's contribution, but we must continue our efforts to keep traditional methods alive with good understanding from related authorities, organizations, researchers, specialists and the general public. Poaching or illegal trading, also, has to be prevented by suitable action. It is difficult to maintain or restore the traditional style under the current global situation, though some regions in the world still keep the style of sustainable use, but building a good management system for falconry and the conservation of wild birds of prey will be a challenge worth doing. 🦅



# FALCONRY – SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE OF OUR PASSION

*Words and photos by Janusz Sieliński  
IAF Vice-president for Europe, Africa and Oceania.*

**From January 1st 2016, I have the honour to serve as Vice-president for three regions – Europe, Africa (South of the Sahara) and Oceania, each of them facing different challenges. We have a strong presidential team, bigger than ever, which is a result of our growing IAF family, both in the number of clubs and in the number of countries. We have to face many threats, but there are some nice victories as well.**

## **Regional approach**

Europe is the region where the IAF was born almost 50 years ago, within it is the highest number of clubs and nations present in our association. Some of us are in the European Union, some are not. In Europe in general we are overregulated, especially inside the EU. We face strong anti-hunting and anti-sustainable use movements, especially the “animal rights” or “welfare” organisations who have “stolen” conservation from biologists and specialists. Such an approach based on emotions, not on knowledge and understanding of nature and scientifically based facts is a very strong risk for our passion. That is the real tragedy of conservation in western countries, including America. Even conservation organisations that were originally founded by hunters are now, very often, against hunting. This is, in fact, anti-human. Falconers are perceived only a little bit better than hunters, mainly due to the conservation projects on the Peregrine and the other species that we have been involved in. Falconers should be very active in conservation bodies, organisations, conferences, etc. We must speak loudly about our passion, our achievements in conservation, we need to lead the new projects on conservation, we need also to stress what we need to continue our passion. This is true not only for Europe, but for all the regions.

We cannot be sure about our future. We know that in Austria (regionally) public demonstrations of falconry have been banned, and laws that are actually against the nature of birds of prey have been summarily introduced, like a ban on hooding and keeping birds on blocks. Other problems are occurring in Germany with limitations on hunting some quarry species and this is not the end. We have to work against such rules everywhere it is possible. One of our achievements during

my time as IAF Conservation Officer is that IAF is more and more frequently perceived as a conservationist organization by other government and non-government organisations. Being present at international conservation bodies we have more chances to act against the introduction of regulations which can harm falconry. While the role of IAF is to work towards safeguarding falconry, the clubs must also be careful and be involved in the process of legislation changes in their own countries. We had an example in Georgia, where the keeping of wild birds was banned one day and the whole tradition of *bazieri* faced a risk of being illegal. Fortunately, there seems to be a chance to legalise traditional falconry techniques use there, especially now that falconry has been inscribed there on their national intangible heritage list.

Europe is rich in culture and traditions; falconry is a vital part of it. In many European countries falconry is already listed on national heritage lists. Last year we celebrated the inscription of falconry on the national heritage list in my homeland, Poland. This year falconry was inscribed on national heritage list in Georgia. The current UNESCO extension includes 18 countries, so the next one hopefully will count more than 20. Our heritage is our strength. We should promote the inscription in as many nations as possible. We should create a pan-European network of falconry heritage. We have a lot in common, we have a lot to share. Our Brussels office took up a work to establish falconry European Cultural Road, as a part of such a project by European Union. That will show our vitality at the European level and can be in future followed by other regions. We need to show our heritage also to outer world, seeking falconry artefacts in surrounding world and giving them a new importance. Many people around do not even know that so many artefacts are connected to falconry





IAF side event on electrocution at 2nd Meeting of Signatories of the CMS Raptors MoU

and we should show them the light.

The European tradition of club field meetings where colleagues from other countries are invited, is something invaluable. I had a chance after being elected to visit Ireland and France at their field meetings and AGMs. That was a real pleasure and I learned a lot. We will all visit Ireland this year and will have a chance to learn more about Irish hospitality. The French Meeting was a truly international meet, with so many friends from neighbouring countries. All that leads me to propose a new idea. Perhaps there is a space for regional IAF meetings in the years when IAF AGM is held in another part of the world. For smaller clubs which are afraid to hold an IAF AGM this a way to show their achievements to friends from other countries. We have also a lot of our own European questions, which are not necessarily interesting to IAF members in other parts of the world. The Regional Meeting is also an idea for other parts of the world, already present in Asia, but vital also for South America or other regions. I dream to visit such IAF regional field meetings in Africa and Oceania.

We still have countries in Europe where falconry is not legal. IAF will continue its work toward legalisation of falconry, especially in Nordic countries. We should use all the tools we

have, history, heritage, conservation and bird control, as in other regions of the world. Again, mostly only prejudice keep our opponents saying “no” to legalisation of falconry. We had an example in Norway, where officials are against falconry on the purpose of birds of prey protection but in the same time they allowed to cull Golden Eagles accusing them of causing losses in reindeer farming.

We are working closer with our colleagues from CIC and FACE, we should also call for help of our homeland hunting organisations, who can help to change hunters’ attitudes to falconry in these countries.

Africa is a homeland of humanity and falconry is of very special importance there for all of us. Our current IAF President is from the region, which is a sign of our appreciation of the falconers of Africa. We all know how well organised is South African falconry, we had a pleasure to be hosted at IAF AGM there some years ago. SAFA is known as conservation organisation and this is example from which we all can learn. The presence of falconry at Falcon College in Zimbabwe is also unique. I have very special personal affection for falconry as a method of educating youngsters, as my father, Czesław Sielicki, started Polish modern falconry from the students’





**At Polish Falconers Field Meet 2015**

club he organised in the Foresters' High School in Tuchola in Poland forty five years ago. This is something we should promote all over the world, as education is a key for future of falconry. The IAF Education Working Group has a lot of work to do, we should compile best practices from all over the world and promote them globally. Transferring our passion from one generation to another is the core of our UNESCO Falconry as Intangible Heritage submission

The falconers from the other countries in Africa need our help to legalise falconry in more countries of the region. There are many ways to do this, conservation, birds of prey rehabilitation or falconry as a protection of airfields are amongst them. There is no one single way of doing it, we need to try as many methods as necessary to get closer to our goal – safeguarding the falconry of the world.

Oceania is a region of rather small falconry presence, nevertheless it is very important for global falconry. The great news was the legalisation of falconry in New Zealand, first nation of Oceania to achieve this. The New Zealand

Falconers' Association and Wingspan are very active in promoting falconry and conservation of the Karearea, the iconic New Zealand falcon.

The New Zealand way to legalisation is a shining example to be followed by other nations. Our next target in the region is legalisation in Australia. We have already two member clubs from Australia – the Rehabilitation Association of Western Australian (RAWA) and the Western Australia Birds of Prey Centre, with some more groups staying in contact with IAF. A lot has already been done towards legalisation in Australia, so I hope we will achieve it one day. There is not much about falconry in other countries of the region, but hopefully that will grow one day.

#### **Falconry and Conservation**

Conservation attitudes in the 20th century were based on total prohibition, now that thesis is put more and more under discussion and doubt. If those methods are effective than why we do we still have so many species disappearing and so



much biodiversity declining? There is a need for new formula for nature protection, with aim of keeping biodiversity. Sustainable use is a promising approach, which has been in fact done for centuries. Falconry is a completely sustainable use practice, both in terms of prey and in using wild birds of prey for falconry. We should work towards obtaining back our right to use wild birds of prey. It is possible for some species in some countries of Europe, but there are no biological reasons why we should not widen it. The very good case is Peregrine. The species recovered in almost whole Europe (and the rest of the world). IAF is active in supporting Peregrine downlisting to CITES Appendix 2. The Peregrine Falcon is the real success of active conservation, with many breeding and reintroduction projects initiated and run by falconers all over Europe and America.

IAF for last few years is perceived more and more has a conservation organization. We are present and very active at international conventions and meetings, speaking up for the falconer and the falconer conservationist. Falconry is not only Peregrine conservation, falconers are running rehabilitation centres in many countries and we were often the first to do so. I had the privilege to represent IAF in the Saker Task Force of the Convention of Migratory Species. As a result we achieved a lot: Sustainable Use and Falconry are included in the Saker Global Action Plan, adopted by Convention on Migratory Species in 2014, as a tool for conservation, not as a threat to falcons. For the first time ever an international convention supports falconry in this way.

There are four Flagship projects of the Saker GAP. IAF financed the first one – the Saker Portal for conservation. It is available in 4 languages – Arabic, Russian, Pashto and Farsi, with information on Saker biology, migrations, health and many more. In reality IAF also started the Second Flagship Project, a study of Saker migrations. We co-funded 10 satellite transmitters, which were attached to wild Sakers in Russia this year. The whole Flagship Project is aimed at minimum 100 satellite trackers and we are still looking for possibility to finance this project. If you can help, do not hesitate to contact me on this.

The last of the Saker Flagship Projects is about safety of Sakers on electric poles. I had a chance to propose at the Electrocution Workshop during the Falconry Festival in 2014 a new approach to invite financial institutions to put bird-safe poles regulations in place when financing infrastructural investments. This year IAF proposed to IUCN at its World Conservation Congress a Motion “Preventing electrocution and collision impacts of power infrastructure on birds”, which has been supported by more than 20 other organisations and countries from all over the world. The motion has been accepted by the IUCN Congress and we will promote this approach. I call here to all who have contacts in banking sector to join our efforts in this problem. Electrocution is not

only the problem for Sakers, many other species suffer as well. Many falconers have also lost their birds this way. Falconers should take a lead in fighting electrocution.

Following the success of Saker Portal, a second – the Perdix Portal, is under construction. This is about Partridge, the flagship species for falconers in many European countries. IAF takes a lead in a new movement in ecology, managing sustainable ecosystems and conserving biodiversity. This is a key to keep our art alive, as we need a quarry to hunt. Flying to a kite or drone is a not real falconry. We need to work together with hunters, farmers, foresters, conservationists and everyone to keep the biodiversity of our land. Cooperation with FACE and CIC are crucial for IAF, but we need to seek partners also in other groups which are involved in nature and sustainable use. The Perdix initiative is a very good example of such cooperation.

A very special moment for IAF was the 2nd Meeting of Signatories of the CMS Raptors MoU in Trondheim, Norway in October 2015. For the first time ever IAF was invited by Birdlife International to be a guest speaker in their side event on fighting bird crime. I see my role in stimulating falconry organisations and all falconers to become more active in conservation, in public discussions, to promote falconry as conservation tool and to inform public opinion on facts about birds of prey conservation.

Falconers care of birds of prey, not only the ones we use for hunting. Falconers were always foremost in birds of prey conservation. Many people who are not falconers have not seen this. Our goal is to show it to the conservation world. Falconry is hunting wild quarry with trained birds of prey. For millennia falconers have used wild birds and that was always sustainable, even though they did not know this word and its meaning. My first bird was a wild Hobby, next were wild Goshawks. For me real falconry is hunting with passage hawks and falcons. In many countries of the world the falconers still have access to wild birds. Unfortunately, in many other countries we are not allowed to catch a wild hawk to train and hunt. As a biologist I am against the domestication of birds of prey. Breeding them in captivity is not actually necessary in most countries and for most species. On the contrary, forcing falconers to use non-indigenous species is not conservation. We as IAF should work towards allowing falconers in all countries to have access to wild birds of prey in a sustainable way. We should be not afraid to say that we expect to have the right to use wild birds of prey. The species that we use are usually not threatened. Most of them are more numerous than ever. There is no any scientific evidence against sustainable use of their populations; there are only prejudices without scientific background. We should encourage sustainable use in every country in the world, especially in Europe.

I hope that after my term of office finishes at least some of my dreams will come true. 🦅



# FALCONRY

## IN WAR TORN AFGHANISTAN

Words and photos by Kamran Khan Yousafzai



Afghanistan is a country that has suffered from war and strife more than any other nation of the world in the last forty years. During the colonial time, it was the center stage of the Great Game between the British and Russian empires. In 1979, the country was attacked by the Soviet Union and the occupation lasted for about a decade. The war resulted in one and a half million Afghan deaths and twice as much wounded. After the Russian withdrawal, the country slid into a civil war and different Mujahideen factions fought among themselves to take control of Kabul – thereby paving the way for the ruthless Taliban regime. Then 9/11 happened, and the U.S. and Nato forces arrived, seeking to eliminate Al Qaida and the Taliban fighters. Fourteen years on and the country is still

fighting the Taliban and IS fighters in thirty of its thirty four provinces.

The war has not only destroyed the social fabric of the land but also its cultural and historical heritage. Recall, for instance, the destruction of the two giant Buddha statues in Bamiyan that were razed to the ground by the Taliban in March 2001. Many of Afghanistan's historical artifacts and archeological findings have either been destroyed or have made their way to the foreign museums and private collections. In so far as falconry is concerned, the tradition, like any other cultural activity, has not escaped the ravages of war. Long gone are the days when the Afghan royalty would practice the princely sport on horsebacks with festive enthusiasm in the scenic





Afghan landscape.

Located at the crossroads of Central and South Asia, Afghanistan has played a key role in transferring the art of falconry from one region to another. It was from Kabul, for instance, that the founder of the great Mughal dynasty, Zahiruddin Muhammed Babur, set out for India. The renowned 17th-century poet falconer, Khushal Khan Khattak also comes from the same race of men. Says he: "The falconry field requires great skill and art/ But the Afghans know this art by heart." British colonial ornithologists like Charles Swinhoe and TC Jerdon wrote extensively on the birds of Afghanistan. The French ornithologist, Gerd Kuhnert, likewise, has authored a book titled *Falckenrie in Afghanistan*. In our own times, the late SM Osman, who's a direct descendant of the Afghan royal family, has written the critically-acclaimed *Falconry in the Land of the Sun* and *The Memoirs of an Afghan Falconer*.

When I set out for Afghanistan along with a colleague in December in an effort to explore the prospects of falconry in

the country, I had no idea what lied ahead. Friends and family warned me of the pitfalls of deteriorating security situation. The Taliban had just recently attacked the northern city of Kunduz and there were reports of IS ambushes along the Torkham-Jalalabad highway – the route we had to take on our journey. During my last visit to Afghanistan in 2014, I was lucky enough to trace a couple of falconers. They were my sole contacts. I had kept in touch with them on the regular basis. We drove through the historic Khyber Pass and crossed into Afghanistan, where a guy was already waiting to take us to Jalalabad in the Nangarhar province. It was a two hour drive. After arriving in Jalalabad, I made a contact with my friend, Kashmir Khan. Together, we decided to call a meeting of the local falconers in the neighboring Laghman province. In the meantime, I had to visit Kabul – the capital of Afghanistan – where I had already arranged a meeting with the Afghan deputy minister of Culture and Tourism, Zardasht Shams. I had to convince the good minister of the need to preserve the tradition of falconry in their country and to submit their





case in the Unesco's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. I left for Kabul the next day. The road from Jalalabad to Kabul provides one of the most scenic topographies of the world. The road meanders through narrow gorges and beautiful vales along the Kabul River, taking about three hours to get to Kabul. The city is notoriously cold during the winter season with sub-zero degree centigrade. We spent the night with a friend and enjoyed the Afghan hospitality.

The next morn, we headed for the office of Mr. Shams, located in the heart of city. We had a good interaction. Mr. Shams was quite cordial and understanding and was appreciative of the whole idea. After furnishing him with further details, he suggested taking the Afghan environment agency also into the loop. I presented him a copy of the latest issue of the IAF magazine and Khushal's Book of Falconry, and promised him further literature. We also discussed the possibility of a future interaction between the Afghan officials and the IAF. The meeting concluded on the positive note that IAF and the Afghan Culture and Tourism Ministry will keep in touch and a roadmap will be evolved to pursue the case. After taking leave of the deputy minister, we made our way to the National Museum. The scarcity of collection at the museum meant it had little to offer in terms of historical evidence. This was understandable. Still, we were able to find a couple of clues. We also paid a visit to the tomb of Babur, located in a beautiful fortified garden on a hillock.

After spending a couple of days in Kabul, we returned to Jalalabad for a meeting with the local falconers in Laghman. We were surprised by the number of falconers who turned

up in the meeting. There were young and old alike, donned in traditional dresses with turbans and pakol, enjoying the scanty winter sun on traditional mats and rugs. This was so reminiscent of the jirga system, when elders would gather to resolve their mutual differences and tribal issues. The purpose of our meeting was twofold. First, to know about the problems of the Afghan falconers and to encourage them to form a local club to sort these problems. Second, to preserve the centuries-old tradition, while working for the conservation of both birds of prey and quarry.

The goshawk (*accipiter gentilis*) is the ideal bird of prey with the Afghans. It's followed by the sparrowhawk (*accipiter nisus*), which is the laymen's bird of choice. Even if one has no income or livelihood, he'd still keep a bird or two, one falconer would remark. They're followed by the black shaheen (*falco peregrinus peregrinator*), the Peregrine, the red-headed merlin (*falco chicquera*), and the shikra sparrowhawk (*accipiter badius*). Red-headed merlins are easy to handle and within a week a haggard merlin would catch you the seese partridge (*ammoperdix griseogularis*). Among the long-winged, the black shaheen is a prized bird. There's one drawback attached to the species by them. It wouldn't pursue the ground quarry as efficiently as the goshawk or the Peregrine, but would rather give up instantly and return to the fist empty-handed. The Peregrine, that is called barai in Pashto, is also eulogized. The sakers are trapped but are sold to the falconers from Peshawar mostly. Unlike Central Asia, there are no reports of eagles trapping or manning in the eastern or southern parts of Afghanistan. The luggar is commonly found but is used mostly in trapping the long-winged. Gyrfalcons have rarely



been observed in the area, according to them.

As for the quarry, it's usually the seese partridge, the chukor partridge (*alectoris chukar*), the black francolin (*francolinus francolinus*) the rabbit and the quail etc. The goshawk is used in hawking mostly in autumn, while the sparrowhawk in spring, when quails are on their return migration from Pakistan during the wheat harvest. War has greatly damaged the flora and fauna of the country, an older falconer informed us. The population of the quarry has also decreased exponentially in the recent past. It's true of the species like the houbara bustard, the seese, the chukor, the grey and black francolins, and the quail. It's worth mentioning that the goshawk is flown at fawns and small foxes in some areas.

Hawking is done mostly on foot and no horses or vehicles are used by common falconers. The knowledge of the Afghan falconers, as elsewhere in the world, transfers from one generation to another and it's mostly traditional in nature. They use the solar calendar in describing the trapping months, showing Persian influence. The trapping of goshawks takes place from mid-August till mid-December. So are the Sakers and Peregrines. Sparrowhawks are found abundantly from

mid-March till mid-May Both tercel and females and haggards and juveniles are trapped. As for the goshawk, a juvenile is preferred. Hawks captured in Laghman arrive from China on their yearly migration and fly over the neighboring Badakhshan and Nuristan before arriving there. This is in contrast to the other migration route that originates from Central Asia and runs over the northern and southern parts of the land.

The trapping of sparrowhawks is done either through the local technique of doghaza i.e. mist-nets. They are trapped through netted sparrows and quails. For capturing the Saker and the Peregrine, about 4-inch diameter round balls of red cloth – which are called looma or pandos – are tied to the legs of the luggar falcon to entice them. Both the haggard and juvenile Saker and Peregrine are highly valued. When the hunting season is over, the hawks are either sold or given as gifts to friends who'd be ready to take pains in handling them during the molt. That's to say, there's no concept of hawk releasing at the end of the hunting season. The use of halsband or jangoli is almost universal. It's used both for the goshawk and the sparrowhawk. It's advantageous for two reasons according to the locals. First, the hawk maintains its





balance on the fist during the throw and is able to keep its focus on the prey. Second, once cast, it propels the hawk in its flight. A sparrowhawk is hooded most of the time, while a pigeon is usually kept by the Afghan falconers in the field to tempt a hawk that tries to turn her tail.

As was the custom in olden days, when a hawk is captured, its eyes are seeled in the traditional manner. A hawk would remain in such a state for about two weeks. For another ten days, its eyes would be half-seeled or partially opened. Finally, they're opened completely at nighttime. Pehra or waking then follows as part of the training – also a very old Eastern tradition. A hawk is kept awake till midnight or morning, depending on the nature and species of the hawk. The ideal tidbits would be those of sparrows, quails, seesees, and small birds. They'd also give a hawk pigeons but as one falconer keenly observed, it results in frounce. The hawk's accustomed at length to the outside world and is taken to the marketplaces and bazaars. It's then called to the bagged quarry or train line of seesees, chukors, or black francolins. The night before taking her to the field, she's kept hungry. Once in the field, every precaution is taken for the hawk not to become fist-bounded. To flush the quarry, the local breed of pointers is used, called gurji.

When asked about the nests and eyries of hawks in the region, Afghan falconers replied mostly in the negative. In the neighboring Nuristan and Badakhshan provinces, which almost borders with China, however, such nests have been observed in the mountains. The falconry equipment and furniture like jesses, perches, hoods, and leashes are mostly hand-made. The

Afghans, like other Muslim Easterners, would use the right fist for carrying a hawk. The glove is made of goat skin and is called dast kash. While hunting is done mostly in the evening, when the hawk is most intent on its prey, a master falconer is he who flies his hawk in the morning, or when there's the wind or drizzle, one falconer observed. The hunting itself is of two kinds. One is that of the plains and which involves mostly quails and rabbits; the other to the mountainous terrain, involving seesees and chukors etc. Except for the southern part of Afghanistan, most of the topography of the country is hilly. It's home to the gigantic Karakorum mountain range that extends toward the neighboring Pakistan where it embraces the Himalayas and further touches parts in China, India and Nepal.

There's no proper legislation with regard to falconry in Afghanistan nor is there any banning or prohibition by the government that local falconers would abide to. The Taliban wouldn't allow falconry. But that's entirely for another reason, one falconer told us. It was since falconers would usually go into the wild and otherwise inaccessible mountainous terrains, where the Taliban would be hiding from the security forces. That's to say, they don't want to be exposed.

The molting season starts from mid-May till mid-August. The hood, jesses and other gear are removed from the bird and she's confined in a separate mud-made quarter. A large mud pan full of water is there round the clock for the hawk to take its routine baths. Proper diet would be given to the molting bird and every care is taken to keep her tiptop. The claws







of the hawk are regularly manicured. A stone or a boulder is also there in the mews, on which the hawk would sharpen her beak every now and then. If some ailment takes place, traditional medicines or recipes are usually used. They'd also use raw sugar as laxatives or purgatives. Bumblefoot, avian pox, flu and frounce are the common ills Afghan falconers cope up with most of the time. Cold and flu would attack a bird when it's routinely given the washed meat, according to some. There's also this hamstring that occurs in the right wing of a bird mostly, making her lethargic and unable to fly. An extreme case of scabs on the feet of a goshawk was also observed during the meeting.

The Afghan falconers are as much passionate about the birds of prey as are other enthusiasts around the globe. One old falconer would proudly announce that he had a sparrowhawk for fourteen years. One cannot keep one's wife for that long in the house, he'd jokingly remark. Another, who was about forty five years of age, had kept record of all the birds he had: fifty-two sparrowhawks, seven tercel goshawks, four female goshawks, four red-headed merlins, four black shaheens, and

two Peregrines. Why'd the Afghan falconers prefer the short-winged over the long one? Well, it's simply because of the kind of terrain and quarry they've and the fact that they're easy to get by. Besides, the long-winged, like the Saker and Peregrine, have this tendency of chasing quarry to longer distances and in absence of the GPS system, there's the risk of losing the bird.

Overall, our visit to Afghanistan was quite fruitful and informative. It was great to visit this historical land and interact with the locals. We made great many falconer friends. Perhaps, peace will one day prevail in the country and our Afghan brothers will be able to practice this centuries-old tradition in a modern and scientific way. The international falconer community has the responsibility to support the Afghans in every possible manner. Obviously, both the Afghan government and falconer community will need professional advice and consultancy on issues of mutual interests. The IAF and suchlike international organizations should rise to the occasion and fill this gap, so that the hitherto ignored nation is well integrated into the global network. 🦅



# ROYAL HUNTING HORN

*Words by Dick ten Bosch*



An anonymous donation by a Dutch citizen recently enabled the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, to acquire a rare silver hunting horn, still in the original case, at a public auction in Brussels, Belgium.

Photograph with the kind permission of Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, the Netherlands

The horn was made by order of King Willem II of the Netherlands as a prize for the winner of a horse race, the Plume Stakes, one of the activities of the Royal Loo Hawking Club (RLHC). The maker of the horn was the famous silversmith Johannes Mattheus van Kempen and was probably designed by Gerardus Willem van Dokkum in 1848/1849. Equally important was the way in which the horn was made. Repoussé silver, in which the design is hammered into the object from the interior, and chasing, in which the design is sunk into the object from the front, was highly appreciated and therefore expensive. The quality of the object was recognised internationally and compared very well with the work of the than famous French artist Antoine Vechte. However, when van Kempen's horn was later exhibited at the Great Exhibition of All Nations in London in 1851 as the work of this French virtuoso, national Dutch pride was affected. One of the Dutch board members of the RLHC, Prince Hendrik, immediately decided to acquire the horn and to bring it back to the Netherlands where it was proudly displayed at a trade and industry exhibition in 1852.

## Hooded Falcon

Both the form and the decorations of the horn contain references to hunting. The model itself is derived from a traditional ox horn. Hidden in a asymmetrical rococo network of plant shoots is a deer menaced by a hound; a fox is surrounded by a pair of lions; and a hooded falcon is waiting to be released to hunt its prey. Obviously the hooded falcon is a reference to the RLHC while the fox and the lions could be seen as a wink towards the traditional British-Dutch rivalry as most members of the RLHC had either nationality.

## Royal Loo Hawking Club

The Plume Stakes, which took place at the royal domain in Apeldoorn on June 21, 1849, was won by Edward Clough Newcome Esq. of Feltwell Hall (1810-1877). Clough Newcome was one of the most active members of the RLHC if not the driving force. The name Plume Stakes should be read as a reference to falconry, a nod to the plume of feathers on the top of a Dutch hood or to the head feathers of a blue heron which were worn by the falconers on their hat as a badge of honor. For this race only horses which had been ridden earlier in the pursuit of the hunting falcons over the heath could be entered.

The RLHC, whose members can be described as an international aristocratic elite, met each spring at the Loo Palace in Apeldoorn to see Peregrines and gyr falcons being flown at blue heron during their foraging flights to and from their nesting sites. Following the falcons over the Soeren heath on horseback alternated with horseracing by the members. The Dutch royal family, patrons of the RLHC during most of its existence, regularly presented expensive cups and other trophies to the winners of these stakes. Some of those trophies are now part of the collection of the Royal Library in the Hague and of National Museum Paleis Het Loo in Apeldoorn. The silver horn was one of those valuable prizes donated to a winning member of the RLHC.

The horn will be part of the collection of the Rijksmuseum and will be permanently exhibited.

## Acknowledgement.

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# His Excellency's Falcon House

Words by Dick ten Bosch

The Mauritshuis Museum in The Hague, is situated next to the Binnenhof, the seat of government and parliament of the Netherlands. This museum, crammed with Dutch masters, displays at least one famous 'falconry' painting namely Portrait of Robert Cheseman (1533) by Hans Holbein the Younger. For many falconers the Cheseman portrait, more than any other work of art, captures the essence of falconry, the intense relationship between hawk and falconer in all its facets.

Portrait of Robert Cheseman (1485-1547) by Hans Holbein the Younger. c. 1533. With the kind permission of Mauritshuis Museum, The Hague, the Netherlands



I know someone, a falconer, who visits the painting whenever he is in the Netherlands. Just to have a quiet look at it with full concentration is, to him, ample compensation for the taxi ride from Amsterdam airport. What my friend probably does not know is that the Binnenhof, the castle complex next to the museum, has a rich falconry history which goes back many centuries. This article tries to describe a small part of that history where falconry is concerned, which is sometimes a bit sketchy when the sources are scarce.

## The Binnenhof as residence of the Counts of Holland and Zeeland (1229-1433)

In 1229 Count Floris IV of Holland (1210-1234) acquired an estate from Lord Wassenaar, as he wanted to establish a new court on lands of his own near his birth place. The property was located in the west of his county, in the dunes, conveniently near a stream and a pond and surrounded by woods. It was, therefore, an ideal place for his hawking and hunting activities.



The Binnenhof Complex, from across the Hofvijver (court's pond)





Statue of Floris V, (1254- 1296) Count of Holland and Zeeland by Danielle Orelia. The statue was erected in Rijnsburg near the former Abbey where reportedly Floris was buried  
Photo: Dick ten Bosch

At just seven years of age, Willem II (1227-1256), Floris IV's son, became Count of Holland when his father died in a tournament at Corbie. He resided from time to time at the modest new court which his father had begun. From 1242 onwards, the hamlet nearby would be known as The Hague. Willem II was still a young man in 1248 when he was elected King of Germany following the excommunication of Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, who was often at odds with the Pope. Known to many if not all falconers, Frederick II was the author of *De Arte Venandi cum Avibus*, one of the greatest treatises on falconry ever written. Willem was probably accorded this honor in compensation for having provided military and political support for the Pope in Rome. Following his coronation, Willem began the construction of a suitable residence to enhance his prestige and power. This new palace would be called *Binnenhof*, meaning "inner court". A start was made with the construction of his personal quarters, followed by a Great Hall for ceremonial and administrative purposes.

Willem was killed by the West Frisians in the Battle of Hoogwoud in 1256. His son, Floris V (1254-1296), started to reside at the Binnenhof, which by that time had become a large, impressive complex of buildings. An inner court in the most literal sense of the word, it was surrounded by a moat, brick walls and several gates. In addition to the Great Hall and

the private residences it contained a chapel and kitchens. The growing court was supplied from nearby gardens and orchards and from other estates owned by the Count in the vicinity. To the west of Binnenhof was the outer court, or *Buitenhof*, where cattle were kept, horses stabled, hawks and falcons housed and where other service buildings could be found.

Floris V of Holland was killed in July 1296 by several of his nobles who had entered into a conspiracy with Edward I of England. He was captured while hawking near Hollandsche Rading in the province of Utrecht. The local peasantry, hearing of this capture, so threatened the traitorous nobles that they killed Floris and fled the country. He is said to have been buried, with his two greyhounds, in the Abbey of Rijnsburg, where a statue of him holding a falcon was erected.

In 1316 a *havichuus* (literally, a "goshawk house") is mentioned in the records of the Binnenhof. It was constructed on the west side of the *hofvijver*, the court pond. The same site is also known as the "kennels" (*bondebuis*) and "mews" (*valcherch*); the facility was clearly one where both hawks and hounds were kept.

After the original line of the Counts of Holland became extinct with the death of Floris V's son John, the counties of Holland and Zeeland became the property of the Counts of Hainaut who, in turn, were succeeded by the House of Bavaria. Duke Albrecht of Bavaria (1336-1404) and his son, Willem VI (1364-1417), came to reside almost permanently at the Binnenhof. During their reign the private quarters were



Portrait of a Nobleman with a hawk by Hans Holbein the Younger. c. 1542. With the kind permission of Mauritshuis Museum, The Hague, the Netherlands





The Binnenhof Complex, seat of government and parliament, seen from across the Hofvijver (court's pond)

enlarged, a knights' house for important visitors added, plus a saddlery, a smithy, and a bottlery. A new mews, again also described as a kennels, was constructed at the outer court in 1388, close to the previous location.

The image of Willem VI's daughter Jacqueline of Bavaria, Countess of Holland (1401-1436), out in the fields hawking with members of her court, is well known to children in the Netherlands from classroom decorations. Many sources clearly indicate that the old dynasties which ruled Holland and Zeeland from the Binnenhof in The Hague were keen hunters and falconers and must have maintained substantial falconry establishments under capable professional falconers. However, the powerful nobility around the rulers of Holland and Zeeland are also known to have flown falcons in the Middle Ages. Frank van Borssele (1395-1470), Stadtholder of Holland and Zeeland who married a Countess of Holland, inhabited a city castle at the Kneuterdijk in The Hague. He was an avid huntsman and falconer. His facilities included stables for himself, his most important servants and archers, at least three kennels and a mews. Other prominent families of that period like Egmont, van Velzen, Van Amstel and van Wassenauer, must have had similar establishments at their disposal.

#### **Burgundy, Habsburg and the Stadtholders(1433-1702)**

In 1433, after years of political and military wrangling, Holland and Zeeland came into the hands of the mighty Dukes of Burgundy. From their court in Brussels, a centre of culture and power, they governed their sprawling empire. The day to day administration of the counties of Holland and Zeeland was left with governors, regents and stadtholders who represented the sovereign locally and who resided at the Binnenhof. In 1467 the then Stadtholder had a garden laid out at the Buitenhof in which a new "falcon house" (Valkhuys) was constructed. It was connected to the front gate annex prison of the castle complex. This falcon house was built around three sides of a central yard. In court records of 1492 it was also described as a kennel. In the following centuries,

stadtholders would govern Holland from the Binnenhof as if they were heads of state, maintaining a lavish court with hunting and falconry as major pastimes. Falconry was a costly pursuit, even for the mighty and powerful. Falcons were trapped in the Netherlands at several locations, not just near Valkenswaard and Arendonk in Brabant as is often thought these days. For centuries, a substantial trade in falcons existed in the Netherlands where imported birds actually exceeded those trapped locally. Dutch falcon trappers were sent to the north, to Iceland and Scandinavia, and the birds they brought back had to be trained and looked after before they could be sold or presented as diplomatic gifts. This was costly but, again, the power and prestige of the stadtholders and the country was enhanced greatly by this business.

Most of the professional falconers employed at various courts and private falconry establishments throughout Europe originated from the Campine (Kempen in Dutch) area in Brabant, in particular from the villages of Valkenswaard and Arendonk. The price of a good falcon could be as high as 1 1/2 times that of a horse. The falcon trade was strictly regulated by the government. Emperor Charles V (1500-1556), in his ordinance *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 Valkhuys in The Hague. This civil servant would make a selection of, and pay for, any birds taken. If a falconer or trapper failed to deliver his catch, having sold the hawks underhandedly, both buyer and the seller would be severely penalised.

#### **The Stadtholders of Orange-Nassau and their falconry**

The position of Master Falconer of the Prince was not an honorary appointment in any sense. Only capable falconers, who, after the start of the Dutch rebellion in 1556, would originate almost exclusively from Valkenswaard, could occupy this position. The Master Falconer was in charge of supervising the Prince's other professional falconers. He had to ensure that sufficient falcons were trapped or bought to meet the hawking requirements of the Prince and his court and that these falcons and hawks were manned and trained to the highest standards. He was accorded the privilege of living in the Valkhuys at the Buitenhof. An Equerry – the chief administrator – supervised the Master Falconer, the dog trainers and stablemen. Dating from the time of Prince Maurits, we find in a court instruction for the equerry of "Son Excellence": "*that he will be found frequently in the Escurien [stables] of [the court of] The Hague and [the manor of] Rijswijk as that is where the birds and dogs are kept*". His role was to "*supervise coachmen, jockeys, falconers and other officers of the Escurien and Hunt*".

Prince Willem of Orange (1533-1584) was an avid hunter from an early age. Educated at the Imperial Court in Brussels,





The Princes of Orange and their families on horseback. Riding out from the Buitenhof by Pauwels van Hillegaert. c. 1621-1622. With the kind permission of Mauritshuis Museum, The Hague, the Netherlands

he was appointed *Grand Hunting Master of Holland* in 1560 by Philip II of Spain who, from 1555, was Lord of the Seventeen Provinces of the Netherlands. Willem was brought up with falconry on the old Nassau family estates in Brabant where, at one time, eight falconers and seven huntsmen were employed. Park De Valkenberg in Breda still keeps alive the memory of the falcon house which once could be found there. During the revolt against Spanish rule, starting in the 1560's, times were hard. Willem wrote to his brother Lodewijk in 1564 about how difficult it was for him to reduce the cost of his huntsmen and falconers. Even in the field on campaign, Willem often ended his letters with a short description of, or remark about the day's hunting or hawking. At a later age Willem reproached himself (probably weakly) for having spent too much money on hunting, fencing and falconry.

Prince Maurits (1567-1625), like his father Willem, was a passionate hunter. He too was appointed *Grand Hunting Master*, in 1590. Falconry, especially the high flight at heron, was one of his favorite pastimes. A heronry was maintained near The Hague at considerable cost. From court accounts we know that in 1591 and 1592 masts of poplar were erected to provide nesting sites for herons. In 1598 river fish were bought for the birds. In 1600 some 200 nests could be found which, with time, would grow to 300 in 1648. Expenditure was also made to modernise and improve the *Valkhuys*. In

1591, the facility's terrain was raised with sand and sod. In 1596 the Prince's coat of arms was painted on the facade and, in 1612, a permit for the construction of living quarters for the falconer, in the Valkhuys' garden, was issued. In 1613 the Prince's falconer's yard was raised again and, in 1635, two kitchens were installed. Johan Verbrugge, born in Valkenswaard in 1577, was appointed Prince Maurits' Master Falconer in 1602 and would continue in that position during the stadtholdership of Maurits' successor, Prince Frederik Hendrik. His brother Pieter would also serve as the Prince's falconer. In 1586, Philips Dirckz Mars took the oath, in front of Grand Falconer Johan Heijn, nobleman, to serve loyally as falconer of the Prince. Adriaen Lenaerts and Dirck Hendrikxs are mentioned as falconers of Prince Maurits in 1611.

In the 1605 instruction "*Proclamations and Regulations regarding the Wildernesses*", it was stipulated that any falcon trapped in the Netherlands, or imported, first had to be offered to Prince Maurits or, more precisely, to his Master Falconer in the Valkhuys at the Buitenhof. Additional ordinances were also issued to conserve partridge for hawking and he would send his falconers, one of them being Antonius Hendriksen, to Iceland and Norway to trap the noble birds. All this shows that Prince Maurits must have flown his Peregrines and gyrs at heron and partridge on a truly royal scale and that no expense was spared. Rumour has it that he especially enjoyed flying his



falcons at short-eared owls, which are active in day time and which would mount very high when pursued.

Prince Frederik Hendrik (1568-1647), successor to Maurits who died without legitimate issue, was known to enjoy hunting and hawking very much. He employed father Johan and son Willem Verbrugge as master falconers at his *Valckenbosch* (literally “falcon wood”) mansion near The Hague where he maintained a falconry establishment. He is generally known as the last stadtholder to hunt in the dunes and forests of Holland and West-Friesland.

Prince Willem II (1626-1650), the son of Prince Frederik Hendrik, was well versed in falconry and spent hours in the saddle, following his falcons and their quarry. Upon the occasion of his marriage to Maria Stuart of England (1631-1660) in 1641, when she was still a young girl, the States of Holland presented four trained falcons to the couple, a very valuable gift. However the Prince's main passion was “parforce”: hunting deer on horseback, with hounds. In 1647 Willem II bought the large estate *Hof te Dieren*, plus some 1,200 hectares as a hunting base on the Veluwe, a thinly populated area of forests and heaths in the province of Gelderland.

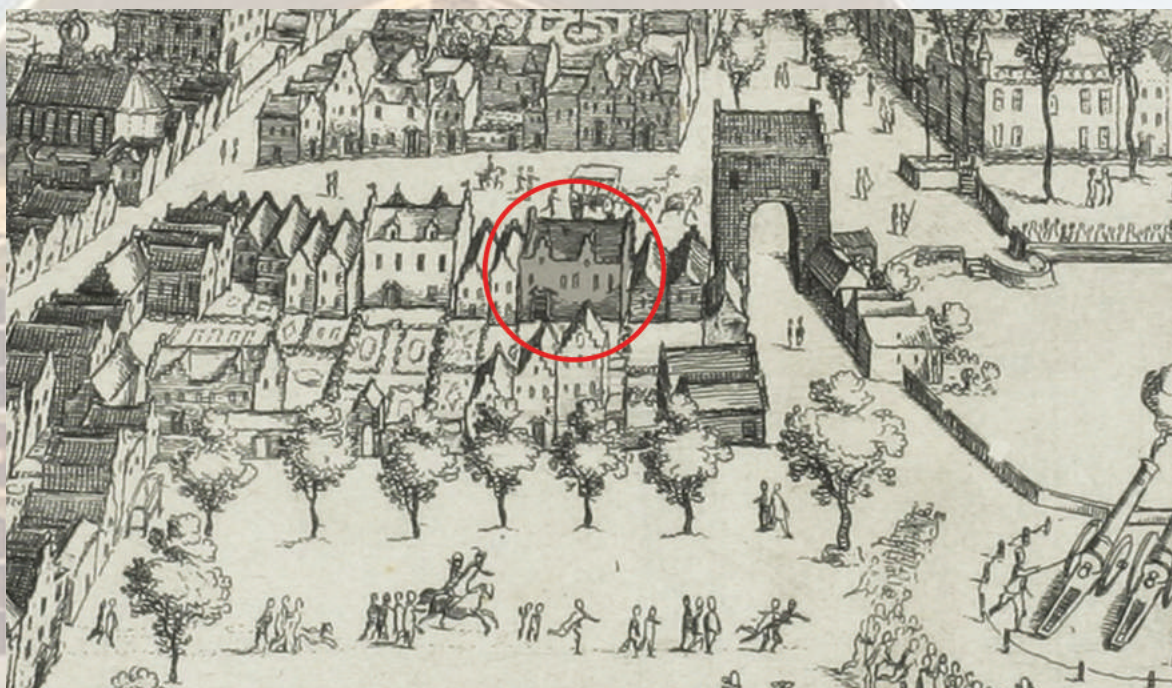
Ever afterwards, the Princes of Orange would do most of their hunting in the Netherlands on the Veluwe. Hans Adams from Valkenswaard, in the service of Master Falconer Willem Verbrugge, is mentioned as falconer to the Prince in 1649.

Willem III of Orange (1650-1702), Stadtholder and, after 1689, King of England, Ireland and Scotland, is generally regarded as the most important and ablest royal hunter known in our country. A long list of hunting facilities, ranging from castles, mansions and hunting lodges to simple farms and smallholdings, were at his disposal at key locations in ‘his’ provinces. On November 27, 1684, Willem acquired The Old Loo, an ancient castle surrounded by a moat, from Lord Bentinck and immediately started the construction of a new palace for hunting nearby. There should be no doubt about the fact that Willem's preferred activity in the field was also the ‘venerie royale’, parforce hunting. Not without reason was it called, at the time, *His majesty's hard hunt* in Dutch. A sickly person during most of his life, Willem III was an excellent horseman who could be in the saddle for long hours, even over heavy terrain. A legendary hunt is described as follows: “According to plan a red deer was found after the valet de



Willem Jans Verbrugge (1620-1678) master falconer, in front of Valckenbosch mansion by Johan Le Ducq. With the kind permission of Museum Rotterdam, the Netherlands





An enlarged detail of an engraving by Simon Frisius of a bird's view of the Buitenhof which dates from the year 1616  
With the kind permission of The City Archives of the Hague

*limier, Baptiste, had detected its shelter in a thicket near Warnsborn. After several pursuits in the vicinity of Doorwerth, the deer ran for it pursued by first pikeur Noblet with the meute d'attaque [literally, the "attacking pack"] and the hunters to Het Oude Hout, from there to the Pampel, the Langerhout, through the forrest of Hoog Soeren, the Wolfs- and Uddeler Heegde and from there to the swamp of Staverden. Just before the deer could enter the wood of Putten it was brought to bay by the bounds and captured thereafter."* The Prince writes that it was an extremely hard run, five and a quarter hours long, without having dismounted once.

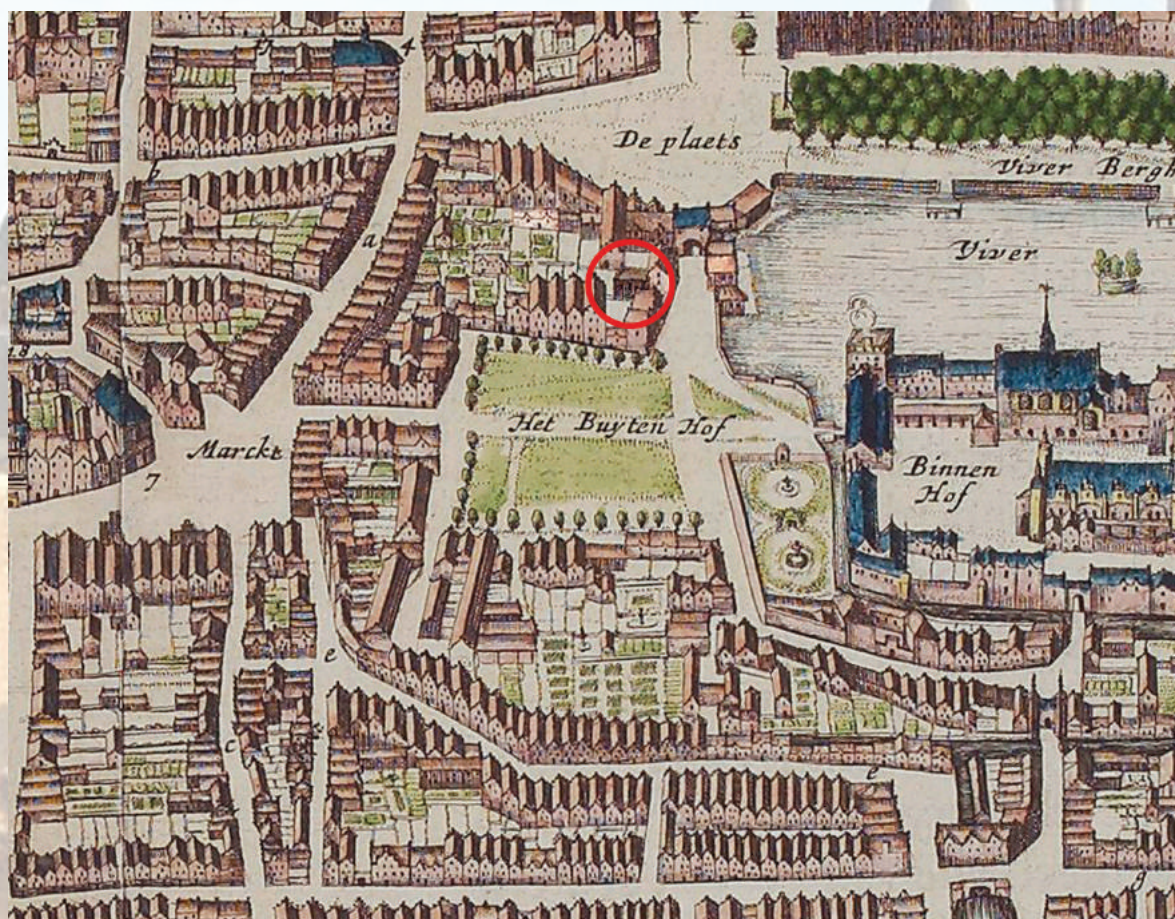
Falconry is only mentioned sparsely in the sources of the time. It was reported that, as a young boy, the Prince enjoyed flying falcons. During his studies in Leyden, only nine years old, he had four falconers in his retinue. He was properly educated by Master Falconer Willem Jansz. Verbrugge, the son of the former Master Falconer, who was in charge of four Icelandic and four Norwegian gyrfalcons which were flown at heron and partridge. In 1664 the King of Denmark presented some falcons to him which were flown regularly thereafter. When at the beginning of the summer the court moved from The Hague to Breda in Brabant, Verbrugge would join and accompany the Prince in order to *'be able to continue teaching him the art of flying falcons in the approved manner'*. In his art collection falconry was represented by two famous paintings: Hans Holbein's *Prince with Falcon* and *A Falconer* in fact a portrait of Robert Cheseman, falconer to Henry VIII. Obviously the Valkhuys at the Buitenhof had an historic significance for Willem. Both the old Counts of Holland,

as his own ancestors, had used it for centuries. After having remained unused for a decade, during the stadtholderless period, Willem was able to acquire the Valkhuys from the States General in 1668. A floor plan dated 1669 was drawn up and part of the complex was converted into stables, some of which he placed at the disposal of his protégé William Bentinck, Earl of Portland (1649-1709). When the Prince was appointed Stadtholder in 1672, the States General decided to re-purchase the Valkhuys from him and its former status as a court facility was established once again.

Since acquiring Het Loo in 1684, the high flight at heron had become an important hunting pastime for Willem. The two little lakes of Uddel, in the centre of the Veluwe massif, provided a splendid location for falconry. Rich in fish, with shallow streams and ditches, they would always attract herons. To the east of Het Loo, the marshy valley of the river IJssel would also attract herons from the Soeren forest. During their return flight to their nests with young, crossing the open heaths loaded with fish, they made an ideal target for the kings' falcons and gyrs.

On May 17th, 1696, a visitor from England, Edward Southwell, wrote in his diary about having been taken out heron hawking in the King's retinue. The company was driven in a 'Berliner' coach from Het Loo to Dieren. During the trip they halted on the heath near Coldenhove, not far from the village of Eerbeek. Here falcons were flown at two or three herons, one of which was captured and brought to the ground. Southwell wrote that it was a wonderful flight: *"Again and again herons*





An enlarged detail of the City map of The Hague by the famous cartographer Johan Blaeu dating from the years 1649-1652  
With the kind permission of The City Archives of the Hague

are passing over the beath, both in the morning as in the evening on their way to the river IJssel where they forage and from where they will return again. It is a curious sight to see how in flight the herons resist the falcons, turn upside down and thrust their long bills upwards which does scare the falcon and could even be fatal. The first hunter to discover a heron shouts "Helva", an exclamation to warn the falconer and the entire company". Southwell also noted that His Majesty hunted deer three to four times per week. Each hunt began with an assembly which usually took place at a distance of ten to fifteen miles from Het Loo. On other week days the King hunted hare in the morning and flew his falcons at heron in the afternoon. Jan Beckers from Valkenswaard was falconer and heron keeper during this period for an annual salary of 345 guilders. Following the death of the King-stadtholder in 1702, the States General rented out the old Valkhuys, prior to selling it to private persons in 1725. However, when Willem IV was appointed Stadtholder in 1747, the States General repurchased the buildings a second time, only to be used as stables for the court. Although the name Valkhuis continues to be used for the building at the Buitenhof to the present day,

from 1702 onwards Master Falconers with hawks and hounds could no longer be found living there.

Today you can visit the Binnenhof and Buitenhof and walk the grounds and corridors where the old Counts of Holland and the Stadtholders once lived and where they housed their hawks, hounds and horses; where they flew their Peregrines and gyrs at herons that rose over ponds which are now parking places; where goshawks took hares over what are now city streets. It may be hard to imagine that this extended castle in the centre of a busy city started life as a simple hunting lodge nine centuries ago. Somehow, the ghosts of falconers past continue to remind us of that past. Falconry, which the Dutch have carried to its highest form, was part of the blood that gave the Binnenhof life.

**Acknowledgement:** I am most grateful for the valuable contributions and the sound advice received from David Horobin and Peter Devers. Also thanks to Mr. Ewoud Mijnlief, curator prints and drawings, City Archives of the Hague. 🦅



# SONS OF DISTANT DESERTS

*Words and photos by Bruce A. Haak*

**It was nearly 35 years ago that I met Zayed Al Ali Al Maadeed. At the time, he was a college student at Portland State University (PSU) in Oregon and still somewhat befuddled by the alien, liberalized culture he had encountered during his brief time in America. His worldly education, far beyond the campus and classrooms, was just starting to take place.**

For a devout Muslim raised with formal protocols of behavior in Qatar, the ways of the West were strange indeed. For one thing, women were seen everywhere and many boldly spoke with men, something he had never experienced before. Dress was sloppy, speech was loose, and there were none of the nightly meetings of men in an Arab *majlis*, (sitting room)--a social place and time where coffee and tea servers made the rounds, things were learned, ideas were discussed, and information and meals were shared. The Lone Ranger was not a concept conceived in Arabia.

Years later, I would learn that Zayed had been sent to the U.S. under pressure from his family. His country was just beginning to prosper from oil revenues but had not yet formed the infrastructure that would later support 30 colleges in Doha. Like other promising students, he was sent abroad to learn the skills that would advance his country on the global stage. His degree in economics would later serve him well in this endeavor.

These days, it is hard to imagine him a rebel who had run away for a year to live with his Bedouin relatives in Saudi Arabia. The nomadic life suited him, and he relished daily hunting with falcons and salukis. These pursuits were, for him, the real pleasures of life. But duty and responsibility soon came calling, and one day he was on an airplane bound for America. He'd never been in an airplane before, and didn't even know how to fasten a seat belt. And while the learning curve was steep, Zayed would soon master the new language and life thrust upon him.

He had come from one of the driest, hottest places to one of the cloudiest, wettest places on the planet. He was completely disoriented and now immersed in a world in which he sometimes stumbled, and learned through experience every day. But pleasant manners, a courteous nature, and a friendly smile cut quickly across cultural divisions.

After some months, Zayed discovered other Qataris attending PSU. Having friends from home, people with whom to speak and play soccer, would do much to ground him during his college years. But of all his hardships, he missed hawking the



**The author with Zayed returning from a successful hunt**

most. There is an old saying about pilots that goes: There are people who can afford to fly and people who have to fly. I think this description applies to falconry as well. Fortunately, that part of his deprivation was short-lived.

It was in an art class at PSU that professor Byron Gardner, one of the old guard of Oregon falconry, discovered that one of his students was an accomplished falconer. Looking over Zayed's shoulder, he noticed a drawing of a Peregrine falcon's head and promptly said: "I have one of those!" This was a revelation for Zayed who never dreamed that anyone in America might practice his beloved passion. While game hawking here was nothing like home, and there were no houbara (bustard) or carawan (stone curlew), he appreciated being introduced to North American raptors and game species, most of which were new to him.

Byron would introduce Zayed to many members of the





Oregon Falconers' Association and he attended several of their field meets. His foot speed eventually earned him a certain notoriety, and many claimed that the hawks were lucky to beat Zayed to any rabbit flushed! Eventually, Byron brought him and young Sheik Ali Al Thani to Eugene to meet me and go duck hawking. That's really where our friendship, and my introduction to Arab culture, began.

My childhood was a ping-pong game of relentless moves from one coast of America to another. My father was a naval officer, with important duty assignments that included flying jets, serving on aircraft carriers, and working in the Pentagon. However, our migrant lifestyle was characterized by constant disruptions, a dizzying series of new schools, and too many unanticipated relocations. We couldn't even own a dog. By the time I was ready for college, I was done with this lifestyle and pretty much anything to do with the cultural and geographical confines of the Eastern Seaboard. In time, I would become comfortable with the handle of *desert rat*.

Unlike Zayed, who had grown up in a falconry culture, and whose friends and family taught him to handle and train wild falcons since childhood, mine was a singular quest to learn falconry the hard way: information gleaned from books and the occasional contact with an experienced falconer. I did, however, benefit by growing up in a time and place when I could legally trap and train wild raptors. Those trial-and-error pursuits were admittedly fraught with failures. But in retrospect, they constituted the best of all possible educations.

Eventually, age, experience and increased exposure to other falconers led me to some level of success in the field. When I

met Zayed, falconry in Oregon had only been legal for a few years, we could take raptors from the wild, and we had legal hunting seasons. I had previously pursued doves, quail, snipe and miscellaneous field birds with tiercel prairie falcons. On the west side of the Cascade Mountains, where I lived, the only large avian quarry available to chase was ducks. Fortunately, I had an intermewed passage prairie falcon named Kudu that was totally committed to killing them.

At the time, all I knew about Arabs was that they bred fantastic horses, survived in a hostile environment, and had a long history of falconry. The international chess game in which Arabia has been embroiled for centuries, the politics of oil production, and the ever-changing power struggles within the region, were not a part of my consciousness. My introduction to this world was through polite young men, eager to talk and interact, and in search of some level of acceptance in an American society that can turn a blind eye towards its own minorities. But these attributes constituted, as well as any I suppose, the basis for a friendship.

For Zayed, "Arabia Deserta" was in his blood, the product of a lineage of desert dwellers that could be traced back for generations. But my desert was an adopted home that I came to through fascination, curiosity, and a consuming interest in falcons. In time, I would share this world with Zayed, take him camping in the high desert of eastern Oregon, and show him what I was learning about the ecology of prairie falcons in the expansive basin-and-range country dominated by sagebrush. His ease away from creature comforts, his Bedouin tales, and his appreciation for falcons in their natural environment





confirmed, in my mind, that we were indeed kindred spirits. Time and distance would separate us soon enough. In 1984, my family and I relocated to Idaho and in 1985, Zayed graduated from college and returned to Qatar. In the years that followed, we both pursued careers, raised families, and carried on flying falcons in our respective fashions. We kept in touch via occasional letters and emails. Then, in 2011, Zayed invited my wife Evelyn and me to attend the International Falconry Festival in Al Ain, UAE and, later, to visit Doha and experience the culture of Qatar. This was an eye-opening experience, to be sure. And it was especially good to know that you didn't have to speak Arabic or a host of other languages if you understood the etiquette and forms of falconry. In this place, whether in the demonstration field, the tent of a Sheikh, or the majlis, falconry was the universal translator.

I laughed when Zayed said: "Look for me in the Dubai airport, I'll be the only one who looks like an Arab." Not entirely true, of course, but it made our re-acquaintance interesting. I'd never seen him dressed formally like this before—immaculately pressed thobe and headscarf of fine cloth. But the broad smile was familiar. He walked up, gave me a manly embrace, and we started talking like we hadn't seen each other since last weekend. It is amazing how friendships imbed themselves within you.

Truth to tell, I might have been uneasy in the Middle East without Zayed's counsel and company. There are too many unconscious errors that Westerners can make within a formal, codified culture like that of Arabs. The convention of "men being with men and women being with women" was foreign



to me, but this segregation was appropriately stressed upon me by Zayed. For me, making an unintentional faux pas is the pitfall of international travel. Foremost in my mind was the notion that I should avoid embarrassing my host in front of his friends and colleagues.

Our time at the International Falconry Festival went quickly. I saw many interesting and unusual sights, encountered many friends from around the world, and gained a new appreciation for the manner in which the worldwide falconry community is now communicating. During these days, Zayed represented his country in IAF meetings and volunteered to sponsor the first Women's Working Group within the organization.

Soon after, Evelyn and I were touring Qatar. Doha is a city of space-age architecture, impressive by both day and night. I especially liked walking along the cornice, visiting the Islamic Art Museum, shopping for falconry equipment, and meandering through the shops of the old souk. There too, I would be reacquainted with Shk. Ali Al Thani, another old friend from our Oregon days. In the evening, I would talk and eat with men in the majlis of various friends of Zayed, as well as see falcons being conditioned for upcoming hunting trips at tent camps far out in the desert. But all too soon, our holiday was over and we were heading home.

Back in Idaho, I was training the first passage female Peregrine I had trapped under permit in Texas the previous October. Two years later, I would acquire another one from the East Coast. After a nearly 40-year moratorium on the capture of passage Peregrines for falconry in the United States, I was excited to witness the potential of these unique hunting partners. Naturally, I was sharing photos and stories of trapping, training and hawking with these falcons with Zayed. The previous winter, I had sent him photos of my hawking safari to the American Southwest, a desert area that I thought might appeal to his sensibilities.

Imagine my surprise when a message arrived from Zayed last summer, saying that he wanted to come to the U.S. to hawk with me in the Southwest during January. We had not been on an actual hawking trip together since our last falconry adventure in eastern Oregon with the late Byron Gardner.







Fortunately, I now had two intermewed passage Peregrines to fly, and figured that, with luck, we would find enough game to show us daily sport. To hedge my bets, I spent time scouting ponds in December, and was somewhat disappointed by the low numbers of ducks I was seeing. The autumn forecast was for a large migration this winter, but they just weren't coming south due to mild conditions farther north. However, by the time Zayed arrived, the ducks were starting to show up.

I have always preferred wild-caught falcons to those bred in captivity. However, Peregrine falcons were a high-profile endangered species and, for many decades, there was a moratorium on their use by American falconers. Once it became legal to acquire migrant Peregrines, it became my mission to trap and train passage tundra Peregrines. Because offshore islands along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts areas are the best places to capture these northern migrants, these falcons are often called "beach birds." They are typically smaller and paler than either anatum Peregrines or Peales falcons, but equally as capable in the field.

My team of game hawks included Vinda Lou, now in her fourth season, and Sandrine, in her second season. Passage falcons bring something extra to the hawking experience, and I had traveled thousands of miles from my home in Idaho to the beaches where I could trap them. Fortunately, they often showed me why I had driven so far and worked so hard to acquire and train them. Flying these capable falcons was pure fun. Their abilities to take a high pitch, control flocks of ducks, and deliver a killing blow at the right instant, made for great spectator sport. Plus, flushing ducks is fine exercise for

those of us dealing with the aging process.

As it turned out, Zayed and I did a lot of driving and often checked a dozen or more ponds before finding a slip. Unlike the previous year, when I routinely found diving ducks like ring-necks and scaups on the deeper ponds, they never arrived in large numbers. What we found instead were various species of puddle ducks and divers, giving us a wide variety of flights.

The weather was ideal with cold nights, frosty mornings, and balmy afternoons. With consistent slips, the falcons were mounting high overhead, putting in dramatic stoops, and delivering serious, knock-out punches when they struck ducks. Thus, we were able reward the falcons with a good feeding, and share ducks with our friends who, in turn, invited us for dinner.

To stave off homesickness, Zayed brought dates, Arabic coffee, cardamom, a special coffee pot, and kabsa spices. Kabsa is Arabic spiced rice and each family concocts its own spice formula, according to their tastes. Zayed brought containers of his family's recipe to share and made wonderful meals from our hawking bounty. I am pretty sure we were the only people in America eating wild duck and kabsa for dinner. It was delicious!

The Arab approach to falconry differs from that practiced in the West. They do intensive manning of their falcons, keep them in close contact, handle them often, and put them through rigorous conditioning exercises. Their goal is to have a falcon that is calm, aggressive and able to fly long distances chasing game multiple times per day. Zayed characterized it





as military training. When they see or flush game, the falcon is unhooded and it immediately goes into attack mode. Given enough time and room, the quarry can be chased down by a fit falcon. Arab falconers do not use dogs to point or flush, and the hunt begins when game springs from cover.

In contrast, I train falcons to wait-on high overhead in anticipation of a flush. This maneuver works to pin down game, give the falcon an immediate height advantage over its quarry, and set the stage for a dramatic stoop as the falcon approaches at great speed to strike its quarry. The waiting-on maneuver also gives falcons a chance to capture swift quarry that cannot be caught in level flight, which is most of the game birds in North America.

Over dinner one night with our friend Erik, we lamented the fact that the northern shovelers and green-winged teal we encountered were proving difficult to flush properly. Not long before, a friend referred to these two species as the “cockroaches of the duck world,” due to their reluctance to flush cleanly from a pond, thus giving a falcon a clean shot from a nice pitch. Under these circumstances, what looked like a perfect setup could quickly degenerate into a “rat hunt” of repeated flushes and a steadily lowering pitch.

Erik suggested that we try a *matraca* to scare the ducks into flight. He recounted how people in rural Mexico used these wooden ratchets, spun around a handle to create a machine gun-like sound, as noisemakers during fiestas. Apparently, soccer fans around the world try to deafen their opponents with similar devices, some of them quite large and loud. According to Zayed, *matraca* means hammer in Arabic. Given that many Spanish words have Arabic roots, this is not surprising. Not one to dally, Zayed immediately got on the Amazon website and two *matracas* were delivered to us in a matter of days. It would be hard to assess the effectiveness of such a tool in concert with screaming humans and flying rocks, but we did manage to flush ducks and make kills off some large ponds using these devices.

There wasn't much “down time” during his visit but we did escape to the city to shop, fix a tire, see a few sights, and eat great Mexican food. Fortunately, he is an adventurous eater and we experienced

some fine  
dining  
along

the way. His gregarious nature made him many friends, as I knew it would.

Being a fan of Western movies, it didn't take Zayed long to get into the swing of cowboy culture. At the North American Falconers' Association (NAFA) field meet in November, Zayed was presented with a beautiful leather belt buckle, decorated with a hand-painted portrait of a Peregrine head. He brought it along in hopes of finding a suitable belt to go with it. With a bit of research, we found a custom belt-maker who crafted the perfect match for his buckle. The belt included little sheriff-badge stars, which complemented the overall look of the belt in fine fashion.

However, the most challenging purchase facing us was a weathervane with a Western motif. I mean, who hauls a weathervane home on an airplane? But Zayed is nothing if not persistent and, eventually, he talked a merchant into selling the one adorning the top of his shop. I must say, it was entertaining to watch Zayed climb a ladder with a cordless drill and remove the iconic image of an American Indian on horseback made famous in the painting entitled, “The End Of The Trail.” How we managed to get this into a suitcase, I'll never know!

In hindsight, our hawking holiday was an exceptional experience. The weather, game and falcons all cooperated. In addition, we explored miles and miles of desert, shot quail over my setter, took photos and laughed a lot. He taught me much about his world and, equally as important, put an interesting spotlight on mine as well. These are the kind of memories that stay with you. I only hope that we won't go another 30 years between hawking adventures.

Nobody I know is as adept at fitting into different cultures as Zayed. He has visited Japan, Kazakhstan, The Netherlands, Germany, the U.S., the UAE and Morocco, all since August. Plus, he attended the Deutscher Falkenorden's bi-annual field meet in Germany, and was a guest speaker at the NAFA field meet in Texas. Because he is comfortable with his feet in different worlds, he serves as an adept ambassador for international falconry. People like Zayed, who bridge continents, cultures and religions, are a rarity in this world. They strengthen the bonds and enhance the understanding among the members of the worldwide falconry community. Now, more than ever, people with these qualities are needed to preserve and promote falconry's viability around the globe. 🦅





# Prairie Dragons

## Flying Golden Eagles in the American West

When I think of quintessentially American falconry, I think of high flying falcons on sage grouse. I think of passage red-tailed hawks spiraling around tree trunks after squirrels and casts of harris's hawks chasing desert hares through the cacti. I think of impossibly fast cooper's hawks on quail and beach-trapped Peregrines on ducks. What doesn't come to mind, and I'm sure doesn't for many in the international falconry community, is golden eagle falconry. It should.

Words and photos by Lauren McGough

The United States is among best places in the world to fly golden eagles. We have an abundance of public lands, readily accessible private land, and several species of hare that are ubiquitous inhabitants across thousands of miles of prairie, desert and mountains. We also have a robust, thriving population of wild golden eagles (estimated to be some 30,000 individuals nationwide) and a rich, protected, tradition of passage take in American falconry. Unfortunately, golden eagles are the only species to which this take has not been extended. This lack of availability has been a huge hindrance in the development of eagle falconry in our country. Falconers are not currently allowed to breed golden eagles in captivity,

and though a provision in the legislation exists for us to trap depredation eagles for falconry, namely those that have been thought to kill livestock, in reality it has only sporadically been permitted. Current legislation also allows golden eagles in need of rehabilitation to be flown by experienced falconers, but again, it is inconsistently permitted.

The North American Falconers Association has worked tirelessly to affect change the last few years, and though we've yet to see significant progress, I can only commend their effort and I believe that with continued work change will come (albeit slowly). Despite all this, there is a small community of falconers that have found their way through the legislation and





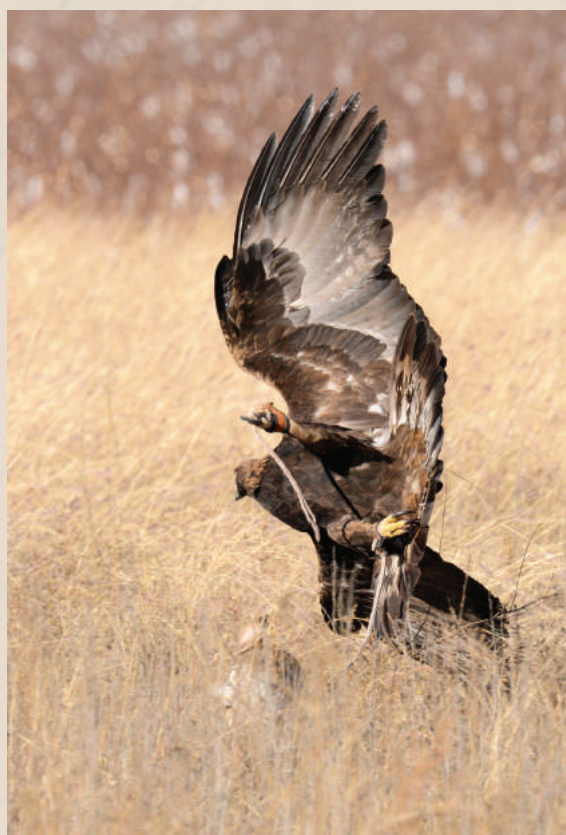


in the last decade some spectacular eagle falconry has emerged in the United States. There are eagles being flown to a high standard both waiting-on and off-the-fist in a huge variety of habitats, they are flown with dogs and at large falconry meets with many spectators, they are eminently capable eagles that bring many jackrabbits to bag – it is incredibly exciting to me because, when I began falconry, very little of that existed.

My fascination with golden eagles goes back so far I don't remember where it began, and after I stumbled upon a black and white photo of a Kazakh eagle hunter in the local library as a child – that was it. That was my moment. When I had difficulty finding any eagle falconers in the United States, I studied abroad in Scotland as an undergraduate and learned to fly eagles there. I spent several years chasing mountain hares on Scottish moorland and brown hares on the continent with chamber-raised eagles and hand-raised eyasses. It opened up a whole new world to me. While negative myths about eagles persisted in the US, in Europe I saw well-mannered, powerful and consistent hunting eagles that could be flown and handled by anyone. Those were formative years.

I also spent two years living and hunting in the Altai Mountains of Mongolia, first as Fulbright scholar and later in pursuit of a PhD in anthropology. What I found there, once I pushed past the tourist attractions and wolf-hawking fables, were pockets of dedicated falconers who flew passage eagles on foxes in an extraordinary manner. I apprenticed myself to a master whose family quickly took me in. He helped me trap a second year female and not a month later she took her first

fox, one of ten we'd take that season. Kazakhs aim for a quick turnaround from trap to kill, and the way that this is achieved is through the use of a make-eagle. Indeed, my eagle Alema





was entered with the help of an experienced four year old female. They were slipped together on a faraway fox, and though Alema was at first hesitant, when she watched the experienced eagle explode from the fist and power away in pursuit, she followed. Alema mirrored the first eagle's movements and they hit the fox like a one-two punch. As long as both birds involved are passage females, I never witnessed an issue with crabbing. From then on I flew Alema solo, and she demonstrated a remarkable capacity for outwitting and subduing foxes – all the passage eagles did.

Passage eagles in Mongolia are flown fat and full of energy, this is because of the brutal cold of the region (-30 C during the day and -40 C at night were the extremes I encountered) and because of the sheer difficulty of fox slips. The red foxes of the region are so wily and aware of human presence, that there are no easy slips. An essential skill in the region is deciphering fox tracks and anticipating their moves two or three steps ahead. The vast majority of the foxes I saw were rust-colored spots scooting along in the far distance, literal miles from our position. Yet given enough height – which is why the slipping falconer rides his horse from mountaintop to mountaintop – a fit, confident eagle can catch those







foxes. They are long, arcing flights that play across the sky and involve stoops, pitch-ups and wingovers on a grand scale – almost like the action waiting-on flight viewed from the top rather than from the ground. Though life as a nomadic herder in Mongolia can be unbelievably harsh, the experience filled me with ideas. I returned to the US full of enthusiasm for flying eagles in my home country.

The first thing I learned was that it is never too late to let an eagle be an eagle. The only eagles available to me in the US were former rehab eagles deemed non-releasable. These were older imprints with a history of aggression – a female I'd taken to calling Pterodactyl and a male I called Miles. Having only had experience with clean slate eagles, I wasn't sure what to expect with these birds. I decided to focus on lure work. The only thing I asked of the eagles was to fly away from me to catch a lure. What began as hopping to a twitching lure quickly progressed to catching the lure at speed as it was pulled by a lure machine or an RC car. Then we went for a walk on the Kansas prairie. Imagine golden flat lands that stretch out forever. Black-tailed jackrabbits are found in fallow fields pocked with tumbleweeds, fields of winter wheat, cut corn, and my favorite, pure shortgrass prairie. There is not a tree in sight, the only landmarks are ancient windmills, farmhouses



and giant grain silos. Red-tailed hawks, ferruginous hawks, prairie falcons and merlins command the prairie from power poles, and in the evening, coyotes yip and howl to one another across the wide open. It's magic.

It is very difficult for an eagle – any eagle – to resist chasing a hare that materializes into existence nearby. After a few close slips and chases, the eagles stood very tall, hyper aware of the field out in front and flinching at every snapped twig and bailing meadowlark. The air becomes electric – each step brings the potential for a sudden burst of action. When conditioned for it, golden eagles will surprise you with their explosive power and sheer speed off the fist. It only took a few days of hunting before both eagles made their first kills with me. Although they began with poor fitness and little knowledge of how to counter the evasive maneuvers of jackrabbits, I was shocked at how quickly they learned and, eventually, excelled. It shows how resilient eagles can be when given the right opportunities – lots of advantageous jackrabbit slips. Miles in particular had never caught a head of game at 12 years old, and within six weeks was taking triples. And as is the case in many instances of aggression in falconry birds, with consistent hunting their manners improved dramatically.

What jackrabbits can give you is incredible, sustained action and endless variety. They leap at the last second, spin around in circles, stop short, and pin their ears back and motor to the horizon. They are exquisitely matched with eagles; their

gravity-defying maneuvers and the eagle's counter aerobatics will leave you open-mouthed and amazed in the field. On the kill I employed the methods I had learned abroad – trading for a modest reward, continuing the hunt to shift the eagle's focus away from me and back on the field, and feeding the bulk of the daily ration from the bowl at night. With eagles like mine, that have a penchant for possessiveness, it worked wonders.

A close friend, Chase Delles, who flies a passage eagle he'd trapped from Wyoming at four years old (a depredation eagle), had the idea to organize an annual field meet in Kansas for eagle falconers. The prairie is a perfect playground for entering an eagle, and getting an intermewed bird going again – each autumn we meet for his 'jackrabbit camp'. Over the years Chase has refined the art and strategy of this niche in falconry more than anyone else I know; his eagle has hundreds of hares to its credit. As there is only a handful of us and no shortage of hunting ground, we don't fly out of the hood but instead focus on each eagle individually. This was a notion I'd initially resisted, having learned to fly out of the hood Europe, but I've really come to appreciate the unrivaled feeling of reacting along with your eagle when the hare appears.

Venturing west to Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona have brought their own adventures in adapting to the terrain and cover of a new region. In Arizona, desert jacks are lithe and cunning, and the cholla does its damage to both falconer and eagle feet, but the view is hard to beat. The mountains that







ring the hawking fields remind me of the Altai. On one surreal day I took Harry McElroy, the author *Desert Hawking*, out with Pterodactyl. Harry, his wife, local falconer Jamaica Smith and her daughter Deborah were flushing jacks on horseback for me. The wind was howling, and I decided to try walking straight downwind and not think about the return journey. A jack got up far ahead and Pterodactyl was off in a flash. She never missed a wingbeat, even with the wind pushing her. It wasn't a particularly stylish flight, but she came in like a freight train on that speedy jack and both animals went from 60 to 0 in a split second. Harry rode up to me and said that, at 84 years old, it was the first successful eagle flight he's seen. It meant a lot, both because I really look up to Harry as an innovator in falconry, but also because it really is a privilege to help bring eagle falconry to new places.

Finally, I want to mention those falconers who fly eagles waiting-on. This is a specialty that the United States has enormous potential for. Joe Atkinson has practiced this to a high caliber for several years in the remote, high desert of Oregon. Joe thermals his female golden, whose attached altimeter routinely reads over 4,000 ft, while he and two

tazis (Central Asian sighthounds bred for work with eagles) cover the ground below to flush hares. Dogs are essential to keep the hares moving in the thick cover. Widow, his eagle, is extremely tuned into him and the dogs, and though she may be a pin dot overhead, there is no worry in her losing interest or drifting off. I've watched her hold her position for over an hour. But when the dogs take off and you spy a hare darting through the sage brush, the result is otherworldly. You watch the pin dot grow in size and then you hear it. The wind screaming through feathers – the sizzling sound of a Peregrine stoop amplified ten times. The tucked form of the eagle whooshes by overhead, overtakes the dogs now running all-out, and collides with the jackrabbit. It's an astonishing thing to orchestrate. After ten years of flying golden eagles, the sense wonder I first felt when I saw that faded photo of a Kazakh man and his eagle in the library as a child remains as strong as ever. I am continually astounded by what eagles are capable of. They are sinew and brute strength, intelligence and electricity. When flown hard and handled thoughtfully, they are the perfect hunting companion. Golden Eagles deserve a firm place in the American falconry tradition. 🦅



# The Origins of falconry?

*By Pat Lowe*

In 1986, I went to live for three years on the edge of the Great Sandy Desert of Western Australia with my late husband, Aboriginal artist Jimmy Pike. Jimmy, a Walmajarri man, was born in about 1940 in the Great Sandy Desert, into a society of hunters and gatherers.

Although desert people had heard about the incursions of European people and their livestock into the fertile valleys to the north of the sandhill country, and some of their relations who had left the desert to work on the cattle stations returned from time to time with news of the modern world, Jimmy and his family still lived in the old way. The few items their relations brought back included steel-bladed axes and metal billycans, but apart from these useful novelties, people's tools and utensils were made of stone and wood. Their grinding stones, used for crushing grass and wattle seeds, are almost indistinguishable from those of 'stone-age' Europe, as Jimmy was delighted to see when we visited a museum in Italy.

Jimmy Pike left the desert for the first time in the 1950s, during the great migrations of desert people to cattle stations, which both employed them and provided a life of plenty, with meat on the hoof and bags of ready-ground flour. He went back to the sandhills once or twice after that, to visit and bring other members of his family to the station. In his teens, Jimmy left the desert for good, as eventually all his people did, and their country remained unoccupied for two decades. He went to work on cattle stations for a number of years and later spent time in prison, where he learnt to draw and paint.

When Jimmy moved back to the desert in his early 40s and I joined him there, we took with us an array of modern equipment, notably motor vehicles, sheets of canvas for sheltering our belongings, pots and pans and metal tools, blankets and a rifle. We were able to drive the mining tracks to camp further south in the desert, and north-west into the small town of Fitzroy Crossing every couple of weeks to buy fuel and other supplies. We had no permanent shelter, but lived and slept in the open except on the rare occasions when it rained, when we pulled our swag under the canvas. We went hunting, by car and on foot, almost every day, and Jimmy killed 'turkeys' (bustards), goannas, feral cats and, occasionally, snakes for our meat. This hybrid lifestyle allowed Jimmy to practise the many skills he had learnt during his childhood, and others he had acquired after leaving the desert. Meanwhile, I was learning every day features of a lifestyle I had previously known nothing about. In between our hunting and exploring forays, Jimmy painted to earn his living, and I wrote what was later to become the first of a series of books built around what I had been learning. I have set the scene so that readers can begin to understand how I came to learn about desert people's traditional hunting methods from someone who had learnt them at first hand.

I recently read *H is for Hawk* by Helen Macdonald (Vintage, 2014), who told of her efforts to train and fly her goshawk, named Mabel. As I read it, I suddenly remembered what Jimmy had told me about hunting with Wedge-tailed Eagles (which Walmajarri people call 'Wamulu' or, in English, 'eaglehawks'). He said that wild eagles used to 'help people to hunt'. When an eagle saw someone hunting in the desert, it would fly into a nearby tree and watch. If the hunter flushed an animal such as a marsupial out of the undergrowth, the eagle would swoop on it and catch it. The hunter would then run and shout at the eagle, which would often drop the prey for the hunter to pick up. After this had happened two



or three times the hunter would allow the eagle to carry off its next catch. People saw this as cooperation between bird and hunter. Macdonald's account of flushing pheasants and other birds out of the brush for her goshawk, Mabel, to catch, seems to match perfectly the joint efforts of the hunter and the Wedge-tailed Eagle as described by Jimmy Pike.

I have read about stone-age sites where the remains of birds of prey were found alongside those of human beings, with the intriguing possibility that the birds were used for hunting rather than just for food. I imagine that the first attempts to tame or train eagles and other raptors were the next step from hunting with wild birds as Jimmy describes. It seems likely that the first birds to be trained were captured as fledglings. Desert people wore no clothes and cooked their mammal prey whole after singeing off the fur, so they had no use for leather. Other cultures that did tan and fashion leather must have been the first to make arm- or hand-coverings for falconry.

Jimmy told me of one incident when he was out hunting with his second mother and an eagle took her prey, which I wrote as a short story ('The Eaglehawk and the Kangaroo', picture above) in a fictionalized book of events from Jimmy's childhood, called *Yinti — desert child* (Magabala Books, 1992). On this occasion, the eagle failed to leave its prey for the human beings, but clearly Jimmy's mother had been hoping that it would do so. 🦅



# PREVENTING ELECTROCUTION AND COLLISION IMPACTS OF POWER INFRASTRUCTURE ON BIRDS

Resolution 003 of the 6th IUCN World Conservation Congress, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, 2016.

**ALARMED** by mounting evidence that a largely unaddressed silent epidemic of electrocution and collision of a wide diversity of birds and bats is resulting from inappropriately designed and routed electricity distribution infrastructure, with significant negative impacts on some avian populations;

**CONCERNED** that effects may be especially severe for apex predators and important scavengers, including globally threatened, internationally protected raptors species such as the Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*), Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*), Spanish Imperial Eagle (*Aquila adalberti*), Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), White-backed Vulture (*Gyps africanus*) and Cape Vulture (*Gyps coprotheres*);

**AWARE** that bird mortality through electrocution and collision is documented in every region of the world, with the 'Review of the conflict between migratory birds and electricity power grids in the African-Eurasian region' adopted by the Tenth Conference of Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS COP10), the Fifth Meeting of Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA MOP5) and the First Meeting of Signatories to the CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa (CMS Raptors MoU MOS1) estimating that up to 10,000 electrocutions and 100,000s of collisions may occur per country in the African-Eurasian region each year;

**FURTHER AWARE** that for migratory bird species, the cumulative impacts of poorly located or poorly designed power infrastructure may be particularly significant;

**TAKING INTO ACCOUNT** that risks of electrocution and collision will increase with proliferation of new unsafe or poorly located infrastructure;

**NOTING** that bird electrocution and collision can also have direct and indirect financial and social impacts by damaging structures and disrupting power supplies;

**APPLAUDING** the scientific studies conducted to identify, address and tackle this problem in many countries including Hungary, Mongolia, South Africa, Spain and USA, and regional initiatives to address the issue, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) / Global Environment Facility (GEF) 'Migratory Soaring Birds Project' led by BirdLife International; and

**RECOGNISING** that guidance on good planning, as well as cost-effective, simple designs for bird-safe infrastructure

and using a sensitivity mapping tool as well as methods for mitigation of existing infrastructure are readily available and effective in preventing electrocution and collision of birds while contributing to the stability of energy supplies;

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai'i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:

**1. CALLS UPON** governmental bodies and power companies to work together and to ensure that all new and where possible existing power infrastructure complies with measures to prevent bird electrocution and collision;

**2. RECOMMENDS** the use of available multi-language guidance adopted by CMS COP10, AEWA MOP5 and CMS Raptors MoU MOS1, as well as BirdLife International's sensitivity mapping and guidance on this issue;

**3. URGES** adequate environmental assessments (Strategic Environmental Assessment – SEA, Environmental Impact Assessment – EIA) for any planned electricity infrastructure to avoid sensitive areas and to identify, and mitigate through location, bird-safe design and construction measures, potential electrocution and collision impacts on birds;

**4. FURTHER CALLS UPON** responsible financial institutions to adopt appropriate policies to ensure that power companies are required to minimise impacts on birds through planning to select appropriate locations, to implement adequate EIAs, to utilise safe designs and to employ effective monitoring as part of the terms of funding;

**5. FURTHER CALLS UPON** research institutions to develop methods and designs to mitigate the impacts of such incidents on migrating birds and assess these methods and designs appropriately;

**6. URGES** relevant governmental bodies, power companies, financial institutions and other stakeholders to liaise with each other, and with the Secretariat and Energy Task Force of the CMS to ensure that existing and planned infrastructure which is harmful to birds is identified and is subject to urgent remediation, which has no adverse ramifications for other wildlife, with monitoring, including monitoring of vulnerable species at national and international level, to measure effectiveness; and

**7. COMMENDS** countries and organizations, including power utilities, which are funding research and implementing remediation measures.



### Explanatory Memorandum

Throughout the world birds are electrocuted or collide with inappropriately designed power infrastructure. The risks will increase unless the proliferation of new unsafe infrastructure is addressed. Electrocution occurs when a bird bridges the gap between two different phased energized components or an energized and an earthed (also called “grounded”) component of the pole structure. Electrocution mainly involves larger species that perch or nest on wires or poles. Low to medium voltage lines pose the greatest risk. One impacted species is the globally Endangered Saker Falcon, listed on Appendix I of the Convention on Migratory Species in 2011 in response to evidence of declines in certain populations of this species. This species has been closely monitored owing to its cultural and economic significance. Data from Mongolia indicate that at least 5000 Saker falcons are electrocuted annually in that country. Similarly, data from Hungary shows that the number of Saker falcons electrocuted tends to be significantly under-estimated. The global population of the Saker Falcon is estimated at a median number of 10,900 breeding pairs. (BirdLife 2013). Electrocution is the principle threat recognised in the Saker Falcon Global Action Plan (CMS 2014). Saker GAP Objective 1 is to ensure the impact of electrocution on the Saker Falcon is reduced significantly.

This issue affects other species of large bird, particularly in open landscapes where perches are limited. Many affected species, including vultures and eagles, are of conservation concern, currently showing significant declines, and are of social or environmental significance.



Image showing the plight of the Saker in Mongolia



There is urgent need for provision of electricity supply infrastructure in developing countries, such as through the US Agency for International Development’s “Power Africa Initiative”. Appropriate design creates a win-win situation for birds and for stability of power supplies. Significant efforts have been made in many places to address this issue through the formation of partnerships between conservationists and electricity supply utilities or through the development of MoUs with government agencies. CMS has addressed this issue in recent resolutions, provides comprehensive information and guidance on the means to address it and has established an Energy Task Force to reconcile energy development with migratory species conservation. Effective strategies exist which reduce bird mortality caused by power infrastructure, including avoidance of key areas important for birds and avoidance of key flyways. Simple design modifications can significantly reduce the risk of collision or electrocution. There are also simple effective and relatively inexpensive measure to mitigate existing dangerous infrastructure and such dangerous infrastructure must be identified.

Electrocution of large birds may damage infrastructure and mitigation measures for infrastructure represent additional expense. The Proponent of this Recommendation, with support of the Co-sponsors, intends to alert and inform governments, power suppliers and funders, providing tools to assist them in ensuring that future infrastructure is bird-safe and in mitigating dangerous existing infrastructure. 🦅



# IAF Motion at IUCN World Conservation Congress

Words by Adrian Lombard • Photos by Janusz Sielicki

The work done in Mongolia by the International Wildlife consultants on behalf of the Environmental Agency in Abu Dhabi has brought to light the slaughter of thousands of Saker falcons by electricity distribution lines across Asia. This slaughter is not limited to Saker falcons, nor is it limited to Asia. Across the globe, raptors and other birds are being killed in large numbers by electrocution and though collision as a result of poorly designed electrical infrastructure. The IAF decided to address this issue, which rivals the devastation by DDT, by presenting a Motion for a Recommendation at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawai'i in September 2016. This Motion calls on governments and funding agencies to ensure that all new electrical infrastructure must be designed to be safe for birds and that old infrastructure should be mitigated.

With the IAF as the Proponent, we were supported by an impressive array of Co-sponsors which included: BirdLife International (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), BirdLife South Africa (South Africa), BirdLife Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe), Cape Nature (South Africa), Endangered Wildlife Trust (South Africa), Environment Africa (Zimbabwe), Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (United



Lecturing at the Congress

Arab Emirates), European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (The Netherlands), Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (South Africa), Fédération des Associations de Chasse et Conservation de la Faune Sauvage de l'UE (Belgium), Földművelésügyi Minisztérium (Hungary), International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (Hungary), International Council of Environmental Law (Germany), Namibia Nature Foundation (Namibia), Panstwowa Rada Ochrony Przyrody (Poland). The Motion was debated and successfully accepted by electronic ballot prior to the World Congress. The IAF with some of the Co-Sponsors will now prepare a booklet to promote the Motion and provide supporting information to governments and funding agencies. We now have very powerful support to address this serious issue and ensure the situation changes for the better.

The IAF was very well represented at the IUCN World Conference by a very effective team which included Janusz Sielicki, Keiya Nakajima, Dan Cecchini, Robert Kenward and Huisheng Chen. We presented a Poster along with a physical presentation on Saker Falcon Conservation and the Role of Falconers. We participated more actively in all facets of this congress than ever before and demonstrated that falconers are a significant force for conservation. 🦅



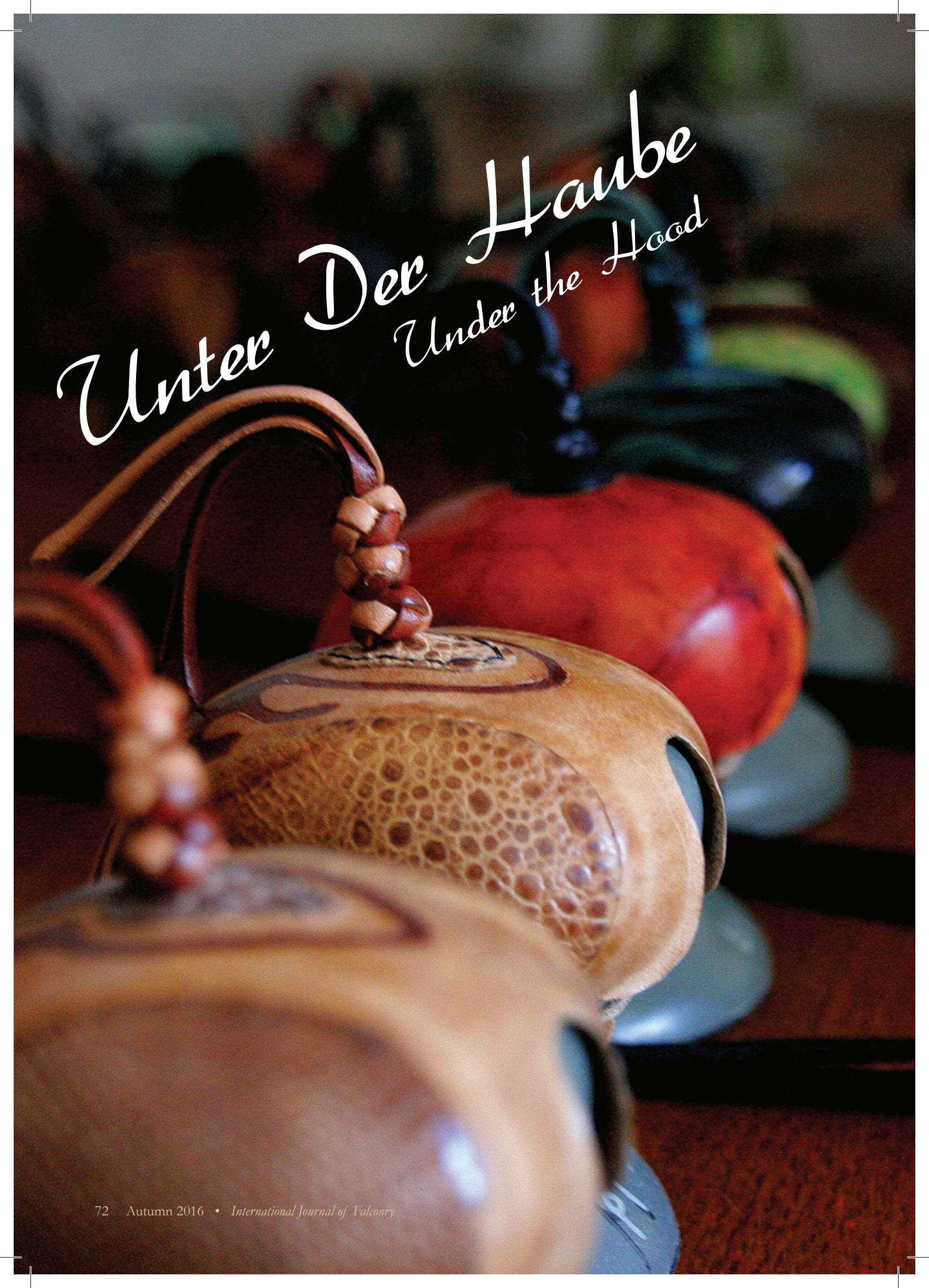
Representatives from the IAF at the Congress





*Photo by Adrian Lombard*





# Unter Der Haube Under the Hood



Words and photos by Stephan Wunderlich

Das Motto „Wissen. Können. Weitergeben.“ des immateriellen UNESCO-Kulturerbes (zu dem die Falknerei gehört) beschreibt es treffend: Die Anfertigung einer Falkenhaube ist Handwerk in Perfektion und basiert auf der generationsübergreifenden Weitergabe von Erfahrung.

#### Perfekt unter der Haube

Für die erfolgreiche Jagd mit dem Beizvogel ist eine optimal passende Haube Voraussetzung. Falkner und HALALI-Autor Stephan Wunderlich schildert die unterschiedlichen aubenformen und besuchte einen meisterhaften Haubenmacher in den Niederlanden.

Wir Falkner sind ausgesprochene Perfektionisten und sehr selbstkritisch. Ich kenne eigentlich keinen, der mit sich, der Welt und seinen Fähigkeiten absolute im Reinen wäre. Wir alle fühlen ein fortdauerndes Bestreben nach „mehr“. Empfinden ein Gefühl von „höher hinaus“, das der Falkner mit der Suche nach dem höchsten „Pitch“, dem höchstmöglichen Punkt beim Anwarten eines Wanderfalken über schottischen Grouse-Mooren, erreichen möchte. Für mich persönlich mag es der spektakuläre Flug eines Habichts auf ein Kaninchen sein, das im dichten Brombeergestrüpp versucht, seinem

UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage motto, "Knowledge. Skill. Passed Down." fits the art of hood making perfectly. The making of a hood requires perfect skills and is a craft that is passed down from generation to generation.

#### Perfectly hooded

For a successful hunt with a trained bird of prey, a properly fitting hood is a basic requirement. Stephan Wunderlich, falconer and author of [the German hunting magazine] HALALI describes the different types of hoods and his visit of a master hood maker in the Netherlands.

We falconers are clear perfectionists, and very self critical. Actually, I don't even know one who has completely come to terms with his capabilities. We all feel a continuous urge for "more". We sense a feeling for "higher up", which the falconer with his quest for the highest pitch, the highest possible point which a Peregrine wants to reach, while waiting on over Scotch grouse-moors. For me personally it could be the spectacular flight of a goshawk pursuing a rabbit which tries to escape its pursuer from the air by dodging into thick bramble cover.







Die Werkzeuge zum Bau einer Haube sind häufig zum Teil selbst hergestellte Unikate und werden oft weitervererbt  
The tools for making a hood often are self-made, one of a kind copies that are passed down from generation to generation.

Verfolger aus der Luft zu entgehen.

Uns allen gemeinsam ist außerdem die stetige Bemühung um perfekte Ausrüstung. Ein jeder schwört dabei auf die persönliche Zusammenstellung der Utensilien – Utensilien, die sich bei Gebrauchsgegenständen wie Tasche und Handschuh über die Jahrhunderte eigentlich nur in Details verändert haben. Diese geringe Variabilität hat ihre Ursache nicht in der Scheu vor Neuem. Nein, die Zweckdienlichkeit der Gegenstände ist über Generationen hinweg verbriefte, und das Wissen um sie wird kontinuierlich an die nächste Generation weitergegeben.

Wenn es unter all diesen Utensilien wie Drahlen, Sprenkeln und Blöcken, den Handschuhen und Taschen eine gibt, die bis heute fast unverändert in den verschiedensten Ausstellungen, Sammlungen und Museen weltweit zu besichtigen ist – dann ist das die Falkenhaube.

Ihre Entstehungsgeschichte lässt sich nicht exakt zurückverfolgen. Man darf aber davon ausgehen, dass die Haube zusammen mit Falken und Falknern von Arabien nach Europa verbracht wurde. Ihr Gebrauch wird erstmals Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts in „De arte venandi cum avibus“, dem Falkenbuch Kaisers Friedrich II., erwähnt. Bis zu diesem Zeitpunkt war es üblich, eben gefangenen Falken die Augenlider zu vernähen, sie „aufzubräuen“. Eine Methode, die, wenn überhaupt, heute nur noch vereinzelt von den Falkenfängern Pakistans praktiziert wird.

We all share the constant desire for perfect equipment. Each of us has his own preferred range of tools - instruments used for items of daily usage as hawking bags and gloves only changed in small details during centuries. The minor variations do not derive from an awe of something new. No - the functionality of these items remained unchanged during many generations and the knowledge of them was continuously handed down from one generation to the next. Among all the falconry equipment like swivels, perches, blocks, gloves and bags, there is one item which today can be viewed in various exhibitions, collections and museums, almost unchanged, the hood.

The history of its development can no longer be retraced exactly. One may assume that the hood along with falcons and falconers came to Europe from Arabia. Its use was mentioned for the first time in the middle of the 13th century in “De arte venandi cum avibus”, the falconry manual of Emperor Friedrich II. Until to that time, it was customary to seal the eye-lids of freshly trapped falcons. A method which, if still exists, is only practiced by falcon trappers in Pakistan. By using the hood, modern falconry was able to do without this reprehensible practice.

The demands which the falconer places on his hood correlate with what his passion requires: it must be perfect, light, with an optimal shape. Over the centuries several patterns have evolved.



Die moderne Falknerei kommt durch den Einsatz der Haube ohne diese verwerfliche Maßnahme aus. Die Ansprüche des Falkners an eine Haube korrelieren mit seinen Anforderungen an seine Passion: Sie muss perfekt sein. Leicht und einer optimalen Form folgend. Über die Jahrhunderte wurden auf der ganzen Welt verschiedene Schnittmuster für Hauben entwickelt.

Doch alle folgten einer Maxime: Die Haube soll dem Beizvogel zuverlässig die Sicht auf alles nehmen, was ihn verstören oder von der Jagd ablenken könnte. Sogar eingefleischte Gegner der traditionellen Falknerei, die sich dem Schutz von Greifvögeln und teils bedenklichen Rehabilitationsmethoden nach Unfällen verschrieben haben, kennen den Vorteil einer Haube beim Umgang mit ihren „Patienten“.

### Drei Haubenformen

Auch wenn bei den Schnittmustern Variationen auftreten, existieren im Wesentlichen drei Haubenformen: die indische,



**Haubenmacher Dennis Nijenhuis: Handwerker mit Hang zur Vollkommenheit. Konzentration ist gefragt: Ein falscher Schnitt, und mehrere Stunden Arbeit wären umsonst gewesen.**

**Hood-maker Dennis Nijenhuis: A craftsman addicted to perfection. Full concentration required: one wrong cut, and several hours of work would be for nothing.**





**Zum Trocknen werden die Hauben über Blöcke gespannt. So erhalten sie ihre Passform**  
**The hoods are soaked in water and dried on blocks to form the final shape**

die arabische und die holländische. Die indische Haube wird in einem Stück gefertigt, besitzt traditionellerweise keinen Verschluss und im Vergleich zu den anderen Haubenformen einen extrem weiten Schnabelausschnitt. Eine Besonderheit, die insbesondere von Haubenherstellern in den USA übernommen und später auf die holländische Haubenform übertragen wurde. Indische Hauben Kasten

#### **Historisches Zitat Zur Einführung Der Falkenhaube**

„Dies geschah zu der Zeit, als wir zuerst den Vorsatz faßten, ein Buch über diese gesamte Kunst zu verfassen, und wir haben, wie schon oben erwähnt wurde, das, was sie besser verstanden, von ihnen angenommen. – Im Gebrauche der Falkenhaube waren sie nun auch sehr erfahren und wir erkannten die große Brauchbarkeit derselben, gebrauchten sie beim Abtragen und wollten die auf solche Weise von uns geprüfte Anwendung derselben, welche unsern Zeitgenossen diesseits des Meeres nützlich geworden ist, auch späteren Generationen nicht vorenthalten.“

However, all types of hoods follow the same ground rule: The hood must block the visibility of anything which could disturb the hunting bird or might distract it from the hunt. Even diehard opponents of traditional falconry, including those that are committed to the protection of birds of prey and dubious methods of rehabilitation after accidents, know the advantage of a hood when dealing with their “patients”.

#### **Three forms of hoods**

Although variations of design appeared, basically three forms of hoods exist: the Indian, the Arabian and the Dutch. The Indian hood is made out of one piece [of leather] and traditionally has no fastening and in comparison with other hood forms has an extremely wide beak opening. A particularity which especially was taken over by hood makers in the USA and which was later transferred to Dutch forms of hoods.

#### **Historical citation on the introduction of the hood**

From the falcon book of Emperor Friedrich II, created between 1241 and 1248: “This happened at the time when we had the first intention to make a book about the entire art, and we have, as was already mentioned above, adopted from them what they understood better. They were very experienced



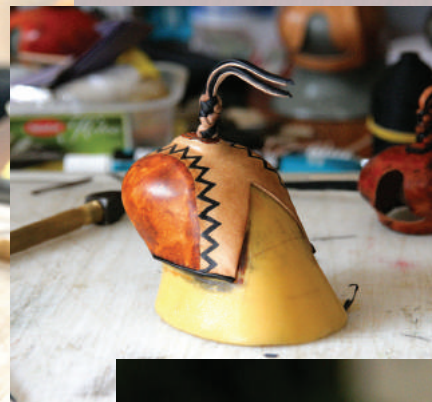
Aus dem Falkenbuch Kaiser Friedrich II., entstanden zwischen 1241 und 1248 müssen wegen ihres einfachen Schnittes, der ein Maximum an Abstand zu den Augen des Beizvogels zulässt, nicht über einen Block getrieben werden. Indem der indischen Haube noch ein Verschluss hinzugefügt wurde, entstand eine einfach herzustellende und sehr praktische Haube – die angloindische Haube. Oft fertigen Jungfalkner in ihrer Ausbildung eine solche Haube. Arabische Hauben werden üblicherweise aus sehr weichem Leder hergestellt und verfügen über einen ziehharmonikaähnlichen Verschluss im Nacken.

Holländische Hauben bestehen aus drei Teilen, die nach dem Vernähen in nassem Zustand über einem Haubenblock getrocknet werden, um ihre Form zu erhalten. Der Schnabelausschnitt war bei den Hauben aus Holland ursprünglich sehr schmal und wurde ab Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts um die Schnabelöffnung der indischen Haube abgeändert. Aus dieser Kombination resultiert die heute wohl gebräuchlichste Haubenform.

in the use of falconry hoods and we recognized the great usefulness of it. We have used it for manning and don't want to withhold the well tried usage, which became useful for our contemporaries overseas, to later generations."

Because of their simple design, which allows a maximum distance to the eyes of the hunting bird, was not formed over a block. By adding a simple fastening to the Indian hood, a simple to be made and practical hood, the Anglo-Indian hood, was developed. As part of their training lessons falconry apprentices in Germany often craft such hoods from very soft leather which also include braces in the neck to close the hood.

Dutch hoods consist of three parts which, after having been sewn together in a wet state are allowed to dry draped over a hood block in order to be shaped. Originally the beak opening of hoods from Holland was rather narrow and in the middle of the 20th century was changed influenced by the beak opening of Indian hoods. From this combination the hood form originates which is most commonly used these days.



Der Ausschnitt für den Schnabel kann später dem einzelnen Beizvogel angepasst werden. Die Haube erhält ihren aus zwei Bändern bestehenden Verschluss.  
The opening can be adjusted later to match the size and shape of the bird's beak.  
The hood is then fitted with braces so it can be opened and closed







### Besuch Bei Einem Haubenhersteller

Ein typisches holländisches Reihenhhaus: grauer Klinker, weiße Fenster. Nicht mehr weit zum Meer. Davor, mit einer Zigarette im Mundwinkel und grauem Strohhut auf dem Kopf, Dennis Nijenhuis. Er ist Mitte zwanzig, schlaksig und empfängt uns mit einem einnehmenden Grinsen im Gesicht. In der Branche hat er sich bereits einen Namen gemacht. Und im Gegensatz zu vielen seiner älteren Mitbewerber lässt er sich bei seinem Handwerk gerne über die Schulter schauen. Dennis ist mittlerweile beliebter (und eigens eingeflogener) Gast auf dem internationalen „Festival of Falconry“, wo er das Publikum am Entstehen einer Haube teilhaben lässt und gerne vorführt, wie man einem Beizvogel eine Haube nach Maß anpasst.

Doch heute geht es nicht um einen Saker- oder Gerfalken eines arabischen Wüstensohns. Heute sind wir hier, um den ganz gewöhnlichen weiblichen Wanderfalken meiner Falknerkollegin Miriam mit einer perfekten Haube für den Alltagsgebrauch auszustatten. Miriam begleitet mich mit ihrem Falken, zuvor hatten wir Dennis bereits Fotos, Gewichtsangaben sowie Mauser- und Jagdgewicht der Falkendame „Arya“ zukommen lassen.

Nach herzlicher, lebhafter Begrüßung durch die Eltern, Schwester und den allgegenwärtigen Springer Spaniel von Dennis, einer Riesenportion Kaffee und Kuchen und der

### Visiting a hood maker

A typical Dutch terraced house: grey brick, white window frames. Not far from the sea. In front of the house, with a cigarette in the corner of his mouth and a grey straw hat on his head is Dennis Nijenhuis. In his mid-twenties, lanky, receiving us with a charming grin on his face. In the [falconry] “business” he has already made a name for himself. In contrast to many of his older competitors, he has no problem with someone looking over his shoulder. Dennis is a popular (and often flown in) guest at “Festivals of Falconry”, where he lets the public take part in the creation of a hood and gladly demonstrates how a falconry bird receives a hood fit to size.

But today it is not about a Saker or Gyrfalcon of an Arabian son of the desert. Today we are here to fit out the female peregrine of my falconer colleague Miriam, who has accompanied me with her falcon, with a perfect hood for daily use. We already have sent Dennis ahead of time pictures and information about weight (moult and hunting) of falcon lady “Arya”.

After a hearty and lively welcome by parents, sister and Dennis’ energetic springer spaniel, a giant cup of coffee and piece of cake, we are introduced to Dennis’ own falconry bird (a female goshawk, which refuses to be hooded: “I’ve tried it – but I totally failed”) we sit down at the large family dining table. Having expected a workshop smelling of leather and wax, with a workbench and skins of leather, I am a bit disappointed. Dennis seems to feel my disappointment. He tells me how a couple of years ago, he finished a hood while travelling to the airport, during the flight and the subsequent taxi ride. After Dennis has finally spread out all his tools







Begutachtung von Dennis' eigenem Beizvogel (einem Habicht, der sich partout nicht verhauben lässt: „I've tried it – but I totally failed“) nehmen wir am großen Esstisch der Familie Platz. Ich bin etwas enttäuscht, hatte ich doch eine Werkstatt erwartet. Nach Leder und Wachs duftend, mit Werkbank und Lederhäuten, die in einem Regal aufbewahrt werden. Dennis scheint meine Enttäuschung zu spüren.

So erzählt er, wie er vor ein paar Jahren auf dem Weg zum Flughafen, während des Fluges und der anschließenden Taxifahrt eine Haube fertigstellte. Als Dennis schließlich seine vielen Utensilien vor uns auf dem Tisch ausbreitet, komme ich zu der Überzeugung, dass Dennis damals wenigstens Businessclass geflogen sein muss. Eine Lederhaut, Nadeln, Faden. Werkzeuge, deren Sinn sich mir erst später erschließen werden und die oft speziell für diesen Zweck hergestellt wurden. Messer, Skalpell, Scheren. Eine Schneideunterlage. Und: Haubenblöcke. Ein ganzer Schrank voller Haubenblöcke, durchnummeriert, aus unterschiedlichen Materialien und in zig verschiedenen Größen. Jeder Block ist das Ergebnis von Überlieferungen aus Generationen verschiedener Haubenmacher.

#### **Blöcke und Schnittmuster**

Diese Blöcke, überdies später die nasenlose, unfertige Haube gezogen wird, stellen die arierenden Kopfformen unserer Beizvögel dar: Terzel, Weib. Stark, schwach. Für Falken, Habichte und Adler und ihre Unterarten. Ein Kabinett an Formen, eine Art Schneiderpuppe für Vögel. Neben den Blöcken liegen vor uns ausgebreitet verschiedenste Schnittmuster. Indische, arabische, holländische Haubenformen und ihre Variationen.

in front of us on the table, I come to the conclusion, that Dennis must at least have flown in business-class. A leather skin, needles, other tools which use will become clear to me only later and which were made for a special purpose. Knives, scalpels, scissors, a hard underground for cutting and blocks for hoods. An entire cupboard full of blocks for goshawks, numbered in subsequent order and made of various material and in various sizes. Each block is the result of passed on experiences of generations of hood makers.

#### **Blocks and Patterns**

These blocks are used to mold the wet, unfinished leather hood to a specific shape. Each block represents one of the many shapes of the heads of our hawking birds. Tiercel or falcon, large or small. There are blocks for falcons, goshawks and eagles and all subspecies. It is a cabinet full of shapes, a kind of tailors' dummy for birds. Next to the blocks are positioned in front of us a variety of patterns. Indian, Arabian, and Dutch hood forms and their variations. I am deeply impressed. How does one determine the exact right size with all these shapes and sizes to choose from? Especially since most of Dennis' customers are spread out all over the world, and most order their hood by email?

I pose this question to Dennis who just shrugs his shoulders and says "I usually send three hoods to allow the customer to choose the one that fits best. Once we determine which size is the best, I will produce several more of the same size. Most falconers keep a stock of custom fitted hoods as the size will not change over the course of the bird's lifetime."

And then he begins. He cuts, carves and punctures. Every









Ich bin nun doch beeindruckt.

Wie soll man bei all diesen möglichen Formen und Größen das richtige Maß ermitteln? Noch dazu, wenn die Kunden über die ganze Welt verteilt sind und ihre Wunschhaube per E-Mail bestellen?

Dennis zuckt mit den Achseln: „Meist schicke ich den Interessenten drei Hauben zur Auswahl. Die, die dem jeweiligen Beizvogel am besten passt, baue ich dann mehrfach. Die meisten Falkner legen sich einen Vorrat der optimalen Haube an, begleitet dieses Muster ihren Beizvogel doch sein ganzes Leben lang.“ Und dann legt er los. Er schneidet, schnitzt, sticht. Jedes Loch für die Nähte wird von Hand vorgestochen. Eine unachtsame Bewegung, und Dennis muss von vorn beginnen. Wie lange braucht er für die Herstellung einer Haube? „Acht Stunden“, antwortet Dennis, „das Trocknen auf dem Block nicht eingerechnet.“ Bei einem Preis für eine Haube von etwa 80 Euro ist das kein Handwerk, das besonders lukrativ erscheint. Beim Zuschauen wird mir aber klar, dass es Dennis gar nicht ums Geschäft geht: Hier arbeitet jemand aus Freude, Passion und mit dem unbedingten Willen zur Vollkommenheit. Jeden einzelnen Arbeitsschritt des Haubenmachers zu beschreiben würde ein ganzes Buch füllen. Mir vergehen die Stunden im Beisein des geschickten und erfahrenen Handwerkers rasch. Schließlich ist die Haube fertig.

Das erste Verhauben quittiert der Falke mit einem Aufschütteln und dem entspannten Einziehen einer Hand. Perfekt.

Einige Wochen nach meinem Besuch erhalte ich ein kleines Paket aus Holland. Inhalt: drei Hauben. Und eine handgeschriebene Notiz: „For your goshawk“ – „Für deinen Habicht“.

Perfekt.



hole for the sewn seams must be pierced manually into the leather before the sewing can start. One careless move, one slip of a tool, and Dennis will have to start all over. I wonder out loud “how long does it take to complete a hood?” He responds “Eight hours, not counting the time to dry on the block.” At about 80€ per hood, it doesn’t sound like this is a profitable craft. But while watching Dennis at work, it is obvious that he does not do it for the money. He is a person who loves what he does and works with pleasure, passion and an absolute will to create perfection. A complete description of all of the steps in making a hood would fill a complete book, but the hours fly by while we watch this experienced and skilled craftsman. Finally the Peregrine’s hood is finished.

Upon being hooded with the new hood for the first time, the falcon responded by fluffing her feathers, and pulling one foot up. Perfect!

A few weeks after my visit, I received a parcel from Holland. Content: Three hoods. And a handwritten notice: “For your goshawk”.

Perfect! 🦅



# BRITISH ARCHIVE OF FALCONRY

*Words and photos by Mark Upton*

**Talk of falconers setting up an archive in the UK had been going on over a long period of time. In many ways encouraged by what was then the American Archives of Falconry, now the Archives of Falconry. The American Archives are a great example of what can be done when falconers get together to support an idea - a large archive with purpose built buildings, with great support from the American falconry community.**

The idea of a falconry archives was originally envisaged by Col. Sidney Carnie, known to us all as Kent. He tells me he was originally inspired to start an archive of falconry material after reading my fathers publication, "A Bird in the Hand", which came out in 1980. A book about the celebrated falconers of the past in the UK. Kent of course, like many falconers had an interest in the history of the sport and was collecting books etc, but reading "A Bird in the Hand" made him realize there was a need to save the historical side of the sport.

While Americans have been a great example of what can be done, there was also a legitimate worry that much of our falconry history was leaving the country for the American archives. While this was undoubtedly true to some extent, they did save material at a time when nothing was being done in the UK and Europe and we have much to thank them for. They showed there was an interest in falconry archives and stopped some items from being destroyed.

There were private collectors in the UK who also did much to save material and of course there was The British Falconers' Club who have an important falconry library and other archival material. Like any club at different times in their history interest in archives has come and gone, partly due to the pressures of running a modern falconry club and all that involves. Because of this some items have gone astray over the years. There had been much talk over of starting a British archive with interest a great deal of interest from the club. In 2010 the then BFC Director, Nick Havemann-Mart and the council encouraged me to put together a team and found a British Archives of Falconry. It was thought most important that we set up an archive separate to the BFC, which would be an entirely independent



organization allowing it to be non partisan and so important to all UK falconers and clubs.

There were several falconers in the UK with much higher levels of knowledge of falconry history than I, who I contacted asking if they would be willing to be part of a new organization to run a falconry archive.

Everyone without exception that I contacted agreed to help and we set up the British Archives of Falconry. We asked Kent Carnie and

Roger Upton to be our Honorary Patrons which gave us an immediate standing in the falconry and archive world and Kent was able to give us a greatly appreciated advice on the pros and cons of setting up an archive. Our original team were, Paul Beecroft, Nick Havemann-Mart, David Horobin, Tony James and myself and we made ties with the Archives of



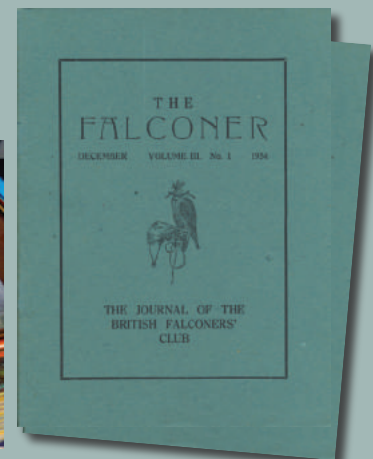


Falconry in America and the Valkenswaard Museum, who have both been extremely supportive. At the invitation of Kent Carnie I visited the Archives of Falconry in America to see how it was run and learnt a great deal, as well as seeing some great hawking and enjoying the wonderful hospitality of the American falconers.

From the beginning we received donations of material which has continued at an ever increasing rate as we have become better known to falconers in the UK. Our first two jobs were to find and rent a secure and safe storage facility in which to house the donations and to design a purpose built database to record the donations as they arrived. It was vitally important to keep a record of items from the beginning. With both these in place we had created the Archive and were up and running. It sounds very simple and except for the time involved it was. The directors put together the aims of what we would like to achieve as an archive.

- To collect, conserve and archive falconry related items for future generations
- To trace and record the whereabouts of significant items to prevent their loss
- To digitally copy and record items for the study of falconry history
- To encourage the falconers of today to record their experiences
- To make our archive available for study and exhibition

The first four of these were easy to archive and we are well underway with all of them. The fifth is more difficult. Most falconers we speak to are keen that we should have a museum type facility where our collection is on view to the public. This is an enormous undertaking and needs the sort of money that is well beyond what the falconry community is able to raise on its own. Because of this we have been in talks with a few organisations on joint ventures. Housing the archive in a building that is part of a bird of prey centre or a stately home. It has been an interesting process going through these talks and as well as the financial implications the main thing that has materialised from our discussions is these venues is that they would like to show the general public different types of items to what falconers are keen to see. Old falconry diaries and letters are not of interest to the general public. The general public would need far more in-depth labelling of items as they wouldn't understand things which are quite obvious to falconers. While it would be nice to have a museum space where we could display material to all, which would also fulfil the remit of the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage agreement for falconry to promote itself. We feel that we were started to protect falconry heritage for falconers and are supported by falconry. So we have been looking at interim



ideas to exhibit our archive without the expense of a museum type building. We have been planning to do small exhibitions of archives at various bird of prey centres or interested venues around the country which would be seen by the public. We will take exhibitions to falconers at falconry events such as the Falconry Fair in the UK and to their club meetings and lectures. With this in mind we have recently acquired a show trailer that can be taken to these events. This was kindly donated to the British Archives of Falconry by Honeybrook Animal Foods and the interior fitted out by Tony James. Most importantly we are also in the process of moving our archive from a purely storage facility to a building we have kindly been offered at low rent where we can store the archive but also have office space and space for meetings and exhibitions. Here we can show the archive to invited guests. This will be available to any falconer, student or member of the public who wishes to visit the archive by appointment. We believe this is a good interim plan for the British Archives of Falconry and are looking forward to moving in.

We have been wonderfully supported by the falconry world and were extremely happy to be made a supporter member of the IAF. We are very keen to be part of a worldwide falconry archive. The more we work with archives the more we realise how international the sport has always been and how important it is we share our archives with other countries. We would be very keen for other countries who haven't already done so to start an archive however small and for us all to work together. It is important that individual countries save their own material for their own falconers but where things have interest to more than one country, that this can be lent for exhibition and study. 🦅



# Adajia's falconry camp for children



Pioneering initiative of international coexistence sharing the Intangible Cultural Heritage that falconry is.

Words and photos by Dr. Javier Ceballos

## Introduction

Falconry has a lot to say in areas such as education in values, the Intangible Cultural Heritage ICH, art, the encounter with nature, species conservation, etc.

I think that the easiest way of returning falconry to where it belongs in society is through children. Getting adults attention usually requires a huge effort and a lot of time and even then, there are no guarantees. Children tend to be more open-minded, without so many prejudices as adults have. On top of that, they can act as prescribers to their parents.

For instance, we may not throw a plastic bottle in the plastic container but, if our child is watching us, we think twice and look for the proper container in order to do the right thing in front of them, so that they learn from our example. In the same way, if children return home with a positive opinion on hunting and falconry, parents would at least have to listen to their points of view, and hopefully learn from them.

After all, the survival of an art is assured as long as new generations keep on learning, understanding and practising it. Falconry is no exception. All of this is empowered by the fact that knowledge is an unlimited good: no matter how much you decide to give away, you never run out of it. So my passion for falconry and my teaching vocation led me in 1992 to the creation of the ADAJA summer camp ('Campamento ADAJA'). Throughout the last 25 years I have organized over 47 editions of this camp.







Initially, activities were focused on the awareness of the natural environment, taking into account botany, zoology and geology. Through 19 editions of the summer camp we have also encouraged a cultural exchange between Spanish and Mexican children. However, within the last 11 years, falconry has become unavoidably the big attraction of our camp, leading to what can be considered a falconry summer camp for children. As a matter of fact, the last two summers we have been lucky enough to share the experience with a huge team of hawks that children have been manning and flying, always under the close supervision of experienced falconers. We are proud to say that we have always achieved our goal of getting children involved with nature whilst they learn and enjoy their summer days.

#### **Our motivation**

I have organized a lot of diverse activities in order to publicize falconry worldwide. Just to name a few, the monographic exhibition on falconry at the Natural Sciences National Museum in Spain and the national school contest organized in collaboration with the Spanish Ministry of Education "Falconry as seen by children". I have also carried out more than 100 workshops in schools and in the Natural Sciences National Museum and established, together with the IAF, the "World Falconry Day". I have taken part in the writing of The Ethical Code of the falconer and in the organization of different acts in the day of Francisco de Borja, Patron Saint of falconers. I have also designed and developed teaching programs about falconry for different universities. As an autor, I have written my doctoral thesis about falconry, published three books, dozens of articles and participated in

the creation of TV documentaries filmed throughout four continents. In the Falconry and UNESCO project I have led the Spanish candidacy and advised in the record of various countries... Without a doubt, all of these initiatives provide visibility and are beneficial for falconry. However, through the falconry summer camp I have achieved something else. When you live this experience with children, sharing the same spaces and activities throughout the days, you end up establishing friendly bonds around your common love for falconry. A lot of us, as IAF members, have eventually become friends after years of meetings. Can you imagine if we had met each other when we were only ten years old?

On the other hand, the feeling of belonging to the "worldwide falconry community" is a huge message of peace and understanding between different cultures. Not every falconer accomplishes this, but working in the IAF it is easy to achieve. The flight of our hawks helps us to focus on what joins us instead of looking at what makes us different politically, religiously or economically.

You could think that workshops and courses help achieve a lot of these goals. Even in the last decade, the so-called 'Day Camps' have rapidly expanded and in my opinion they try to offer something they can't really achieve. Spending the night away from home during several days allows children to experience life out of the comfort zone. The effort of living with other children in a tent establishes a common starting point for all of them, which makes their integration easier. The fact that they can overcome small difficulties on their own will help them learn how to cope with different situations in the future. However, some of the best memories children take from our camp are related to our evening games, which





are a big part of the whole experience.

Any child that finds himself out of a familiar atmosphere develops new abilities, discovers new possibilities and confronts unknown situations. They become aware of their resources and use them so that they can adapt to the group. They find in others the passion they see in themselves, sharing interests and knowledge.

Our approach is to try and encourage children, hopefully helping them acquire new knowledge regarding birds of prey and understand their role in the different ecosystems. In other words, help them discover falconry as a source of cultural interest. We would like them to be able to share their experiences taking into account their different hometowns and cultures. Even if their parents or they themselves belong to a falconry association, we encourage them to explain their singularities so that we can learn from one another.

#### 2017 Adaja's Falconry Camp

Since 1992, The ADAJA Summer Camp has been held in three different venues; it all started in Valladolid, then we moved to Segovia in the Castilnovo Castle where we stayed for 20 summers and finally, the last three camps have taken

place in Espinosa de los Monteros (Burgos).

In 2015 and 2016 we have received children interested in falconry from different countries such as Italy, France, United Kingdom, Russia or the USA. All of them spoke or at least understood Spanish. However, with the idea of expanding the range of participant nationalities, in 2017, on top of our usual ADAJA Camp in Spanish that takes place between the 1st and the 15th July, we are organising the first English edition that will take place between the 17th and the 31st July.

#### Team of camp monitors

The human team leading the ADAJA Camp is the key to our success. As coordinator, when selecting my team I take into account their experience with children, their personal values, their interest and vocation and their resources. Of course, they have all passed the course needed in Spain to become a Leisure and Activity Camp Monitor or Coordinator. In some cases we even count on former campers that after a few years have returned to the ADAJA family to become camp monitors. But above all, we achieve a great balance between instructors with didactic experience in falconry and summer camp experience. After all, children expect to have fun, and being able to count





on animation technics is nothing but an added value.

### Activities

If I were asked to describe ADAJA in a single sentence, it would be 'learning while enjoying'. Every single one of our activities has a didactic component but also a playful one. ADAJA's Falconry Camp can be understood as a monographic camp on falconry. Since they wake up until they go to bed, they are continuously in touch with birds of prey. Taking advantage of the diversity of cultures that will coexist we will encourage an important cultural exchange. If for any reason at some point the English level of the participants weren't enough, camp monitors and other campers would help them out making sure they take part in every activity.

The contents explained have not only a theoretical component that campers usually write down in their notebook but also a practical application. Above all, children share experiences and emotions that they remember for a lifetime. We can classify activities in the following groups:

#### • Knowledge of birds of prey

We have a specific tent conditioned for birds where short and long wing birds are separated. We have species such as

Peregrine falcon, hybrids, lanner falcon, common kestrel, American kestrel, goshawk, Harris hawk... and also birds not related to falconry such as eagle owl or barn owl. In this workshop we show children how to identify them, we talk about their biology, how they adapt for each type of flight and for hunting and of course how they are used in falconry.

#### • Implications of holding a bird of prey. Falconer ethics.

Being a falconer doesn't only imply having a bird of prey. This ancient art has been transmitted from generation to generation for over more than 4000 years. The excellence in its practice is the best explanation for its maintenance. For this reason in the Camp we don't try to encourage children to have a hawk, but to learn everything about them and then evaluate if they are able to offer them the attentions they require. Through different dynamics, we agree on our own ethical code. Our final aim is to develop a well-informed and structured discussion, in which everyone is able to share their point of view through respect and finally learn from each other.

#### • Falconer crafts and equipment

Children are able to identify the different types of hoods and the diverse types of leathers used in their making. They





learn how to cut and sew leather as well as how to do jesses, leashes... They are able to identify different types of gloves used in different cultures, lures, balances, and perches, which they learn to use correctly as well as how to keep a bird diary. They familiarise themselves with the manipulation of transmitters and receivers. Through games, they learn how to use them and get a deeper technical understanding of their functioning.

#### • **Manning of birds of prey**

Each bird has its own daily routine. The cleaning, equipment reviewing, sun and water baths, food... We go through the basic needs of a bird in order to maintain its mental and physical health. We explain children how these birds need to be treated, the veterinary checks they have to go through and how they have to be transported, not only in the fist but also by car.

#### • **Flights**

Before flying the birds we explain to the children how to keep a falconer diary. In this notebook, every day we write down the weight of our bird. Campers even manipulate birds during their taming. Others fly from fist to fist and some falcons fly to the lure. This means that they get in touch with everything they need to maintain their bird in the best conditions.

#### • **Lectures on falconry**


In the ADAJA summer camp we develop lectures and project videos, followed by debates and discussions on the following topics:

- Falconry as Intangible Cultural Heritage ICH by the UNESCO

- Falconry and conservation
- The IAF
- Veterinary cares of birds of prey
- Captive breeding of birds of prey
- Wildlife/pest control with falconry birds
- International Falconry; differences and similarities in Europe, Central Asia, Arabian countries, America...
- Debates between assistants and the lecturer will allow everyone to learn and make the most of their knowledge. Without a doubt others' experiences will enrich our own.
- Collateral activities on falconry

On top of all the already mentioned activities we also develop painting workshops in which we use our birds as natural models and activities related to the photography of birds. With these images and the material filmed during the camp we are able to make projections and that way we can identify our mistakes and learn from them, improving our techniques. We also develop a simple newsletter with the kids, so that parents are informed of our daily activities.

#### **Information and registration**

The registration period opens in January 2017, and it can be done through any of these websites: [www.avium.es](http://www.avium.es) or [www.adaja.es](http://www.adaja.es). If you have any doubts or you are interested in getting more information please don't hesitate to request it at [jceballos@avium.es](mailto:jceballos@avium.es) 



# IAF REPORT FALCONRY WORKSHOP

*Words and photos by: Dr. Jan Loop, University of Kent*

The idea of this workshop goes back a number of years, when Frits Kleyn started sounding out possibilities to promote the study of the historical relationship between European and Middle Eastern falconry. Together with a number of scholars and with the support of the IAF and its president, Adrian Lombard, ideas for a fellowship program and for an international conference were developed and introduced to representatives from NYUAD and to local falconers. As a patron and partner the IAF has made this workshop possible and, together with NYUAD and the Warburg Institute, has successfully put the intercultural and historical dimension of falconry on the map of contemporary scholarship.

It was the principle aim of the workshop to provide historical depth to the practice of falconry, a practice that is still very much part of Arab society. Therefore, the

Workshop was intended to locate falconry within the culture of the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages, bridging the divides between Islam and Christianity, and between the Romance languages, Byzantine Greek, Turkish, Arabic and Syria. The conference was to present the cutting edge research on the archaeological, textual and visual testimonies to falconry, and to establish its contribution to a common mentalité in medieval Mediterranean society.

The following questions were intended to be addressed at the conference:

- 1) What is common to the native traditions of hawking and falconry in Europe and the Arabic world?
- 2) What role did falconry play in Christian, Jewish and Islamic societies?
- 3) How were ideas in the practical arts of rearing and managing falcons transmitted across the Mediterranean?
- 4) How are metaphors from falconry used in Arabic, Latin



Adrian Lombard Adrian with Mark Upton and Thom Havemann-Mart

and European vernacular literature?

In order to address these questions, the conference was planned to provide evidence of the practice of falconry, from the written documents, the representations in illustrations and sculptures, and from the archaeological evidence. One comparative focus should be on the substantial body of literature on the practice of falconry (including books on rearing and curing falcons). The conference was then to look at how falconry appeared in literature—in Arabic, Turkish, Latin and the European vernaculars—in chronicles, novels, proverbs and poems. Finally, the wide range of depictions of the bird in painting, sculpture and music was to be considered too.

The program started with a public session, with welcoming remarks and introduction by Reindert Falkenburg (NYUAD), Adrian Lombard (IAF), Charles Burnett (Warburg Institute) and Jan Loop (University of Kent). It was followed by a keynote lecture by H.E Majed Al Mansoori (IAF Vice President MENA Region and Executive Director of the Emirates



Adrian Lombard and H.E. Mohammed Al Bowardi



H.E. Mohammed Al Bowardi





H.E. Mohammed Al Bowardi receives the Roger Upton films presented by Mark Upton



Falconry School Mohamed Bin Zayed School Gallery



Falconers of the Emirates Falconers' Club



Falconry exhibition

Falconers' Club) and Adrian Lombard (president IAF), Patrizia Cimberio (Member of the IAF Board), Dr Margit Muller (Managing Director Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital) and Gary Timbrell (Executive Officer IAF).

On the afternoon of the first day chaired by NYUAD's Robert Parthesius, the academic program started with three papers on the theme of 'Taxonomy, Geography, and Archeology'. Here, questions of collaboration between practitioners and scholars were discussed (Oliver Grimm/Karl-Heinz Gersmann), of the origin of the practice in a cosmopolite culture such as the Ottoman Empire (Anna Akasoy) and the Gyrfalcon in the Middle Ages (Thierry Buquet). An account of falconry and hunting at the court of Milan (Christina Arrigoni Martelli) was followed by an interesting paper on a Chinese Treatise on Falcons, which had been offered in 1679 to the Kangxi Emperor. He had seen a copy of a western book about birds of prey, and ordered it to be translated into Chinese (Paolo De Troia).

The following, second day chaired by University of Kent's Jan Loop, began with a panel on 'Texts on Falconry'. In five papers (Baudouin van den Abeele, Stavros Lazaris [paper read by van den Abeele], José Manuel Fradejas Rueda, Charles Burnett and An Smets), textual evidences of Western and Eastern traditions of Falconry were discussed and, on a number of occasions, submitted to a comparative examination. This was another panel with extremely precise and detailed papers, that covered textual evidence from the Byzantine, Latin, Arabic and European vernacular traditions, giving another impression of how widespread and multifaceted the tradition is which offers itself to comparative studies.

A visit to the Bin Zayed Falconry and Desert Physiognomy School in the afternoon was followed by a dinner hosted by the IAF and Emirates Falconers' Club. The speakers and organisers were honoured by the presence of dignitaries, among them H.E. Mohammed Ahmad Al Bowardi.

The highlight of this evening at the Desert Physiognomy School was the presentation of digitised films which Roger Upton had made during the sixties and seventies while hawking with H.H. the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The films were handed-over to H.E. Mohammed Ahmad Al Bowardi by Roger Upton's son, Mark.

The third and last day of the conference saw a dense program of scholarly talks. NYU's Philip Kennedy chaired a session on Falconry in 'Literature and Poetry'.

James Montgomery (Cambridge) gave an overview over Classical Arabic Hunting Poetry.

The earliest poems with falconry themes can be dated back to the early eighth century. Like other poems, these poems too had important social functions and communicated personal and political affiliations, created social networks etc. This was also highlighted by Marcel Kurpershoek, who, in his talk





Speakers and guests at the Bin Zayed falconry School

on The Hunting Falcon and Class in Arabian Nabati Poetry focused on the metaphorical use of falcons and falconry in Nabati and Bedouin poetry. Leor Jacobi (Bar Ilan University) presented an impressive panorama of Falconry in Talmudic literature and made the interesting point that the Talmud uses Persian loan words when talking about Falconry.

After a short break, Alessandro Vitale-Brovarone (Turin), Daniela Boccassini (British Columbia), and Ingrid de Smet (Warwick) focused their talks on the use, and the poetic and symbolic function of falcons in medieval and early modern European Literature. Here again, comparative observations and lively debates about influences between Eastern and Western poetic traditions showed the enormous potential of this eminently intercultural, interdisciplinary and international topic.

The afternoon panel of the last conference day on 'Falconry in Illustration' was a highlight of the conference. Particularly impressive was the presentation by Catherine Tsagarakis and Patrick Paillat, which gave a glimpse of the rich holdings of the Middle East Falconry Archive in Abu Dhabi. Finally, Herman Roodenburg (Amsterdam) and Yannis Hadjinicolaou (Berlin) discussed the social and political meaning of Falcons in paintings from the early modern Low Countries.

Closing remarks by Jan Loop & Charles Burnett. The conference has shown that falcons and falconry appear in different contexts and social spheres throughout human history, in a geographical area that stretches from the lands of Central Asia to Europe, with the Middle East and the Mediterranean as a cultural hub. In all these different cultural contexts, falcons and falconry take on shifting symbolic meanings and social functions, many of which are codified and transmitted in

tangible and intangible traditions. Like very few other cultural phenomena, the art of falconry is an eminently intercultural, interdisciplinary and international topic. As such, it can not only provide us with unique insights into the mechanisms of intercultural exchange and into the ways in which techniques, texts and symbolic meanings are transmitted and transformed over linguistic and cultural borders. The study of the art of falconry also promises singular cross-cultural insights into the relation of man and animal under changing social, geographical and climatic conditions.

NYU Abu Dhabi has been a most generous and professional partner in organizing this conference: travelling, transfers from and to the airport as well as to special program events, accommodation and support during the conference were outstanding. The success of the event was mainly due to the initiative and active coordination of Frits Kleyn, member of the IAF Board for Arts & Culture, as well as of Omar Ahmad from the Abu Dhabi Emirate Falconers' Club. Much of the organisation was in the hands of the most experienced and efficient team around Gila Bessarat-Waels, the Manager of Academic Programs at NYUAD. NYU Abu Dhabi made all travel and accommodation arrangements for the speakers, making allowances for a number of special needs and schedules. The POs felt that they could focus completely on the academic and scholarly aspects of the workshop, which was great.

It is to be hoped that this workshop constitutes just the beginning of a more intense scholarly engagement with the intercultural history of falconry at NYUA and that the plans for fellowship program dedicated to the history of falconry will come to fruition. 🦅



## OBITUARY:

# HEINZ MENG 1924~2016

*Words by Peter Devers*



**Dr. Heinz K. Meng, one of America's leading ornithologists and an avid falconer for almost 75 years, passed away quietly and peacefully at the age of 92 on August 13, 2016**

Heinz was born in Germany in 1924 and immigrated to America with his family when he was five years old. His father, a banker in Germany, took a job as a chauffeur to a wealthy New York City family, the J. C. Penny's, who also owned a large farm upstate in Dutchess County. Heinz grew up both in the city and the countryside. The countryside spoke to the boy in many ways that the city did not. Heinz developed a deep fascination with the creatures he saw there that he could not find on the asphalt streets and in the concrete canyons of NYC.

While surf casting off a Long Island beach in 1941, Heinz captured his first peregrine falcon. The bird was feeding on a immature marsh harrier, unaware that a soon to be falconer was stealthily making in on her. A jacket was quickly thrown over the raptor and Heinz had his first bird. He then found a book on falconry and embarked on an adventure with birds of prey that occupied the rest of his life.

Heinz's interest in animals caused him to enroll at Cornell University, one of America's leading colleges, and one that had very strong programs on agriculture, veterinary medicine, and ornithology. He was tutored there by Dr. Arthur A. Allen (1885-1964) who orchestrated the first college program in the United States designed to confer a Doctorate in Ornithology. Through him Heinz met the illustrious falconer and lecturer C. W. R. Knight (1884-1957) of Great Britain who toured the States in many years talking about falconry and the value of preserving birds of prey. Heinz's interest in falconry was further kindled by this meeting. Heinz's Ph.D thesis was a study of the Cooper's Hawk, still a most valuable document to this day.

Upon graduating in 1951 with a Ph.D in Ornithology, Heinz was immediately hired by the State University of New York at New Paltz as its biology professor. He retained this position for fifty years, until his retirement in 2001. Through the years his



classes were amongst the most popular offered by the college. His instruction was both enjoyable and educational. He greatly delighted in taking his students out of the classroom and into the wild to watch birds, insects, and other wildlife in their home. Quite a few of his students went on to become biology teachers themselves. And several of his students have become notable falconers too.

Heinz lived at the base of the Shawangunk Mountains whose steep cliffs harbored eyries of the Anatum Peregrine Falcon. Though his thesis had been on Cooper's Hawks, his heart was captured by these longwings that he often went to watch in their natural habitat, and train for falconry.

In the 1960's Heinz and other ornithologists and falconers grew alarmed at the disappearance of the peregrine from its traditional haunts. Chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides were causing eggshells to thin and shatter when being brooded. Over the course of only a few years, it seemed, the peregrine was gone. In 1971 Heinz became the first scientist to breed peregrine falcons for release into the wild. Frank Beebe in Canada probably was the first to breed peregrines in captivity but the progeny died. Heinz developed a successful – and reproducible – technique for consistently breeding the birds, and his successes were shortly followed by Jim Enderson on the west coast and Thomas Cade & Company at Cornell. Falconers all. For his contribution to the restoration of the peregrine in the United States Heinz was named as one of the Hundred Champions of Conservation by the National Audubon Society in 1998. Amongst the other champions were fellow falconers Tom Cade and twin brothers John & Frank Craighead, and giants in the field of conservation such as Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, and Louis Agassiz Fuertes. As a falconer Heinz was ever the teacher. He was the guru and go-to-guy for many novice falconers in the Hudson River Valley of New York. He never failed to take the time to get initiates off on the right foot, offer advice on how to improve mews and equipment, and was available even in the latest hours of the night when a panicking falconer called with a problem. Heinz was involved heavily in writing the New York State Falconry regulations and for this work was granted falconry license #001 in 1975. From 1967 through 1976 Heinz was the Northeastern Director of the North American Falconers Association. He attended many NAFA Field Meets, New York Field Meets, and travelled west on several occasions to hunt with fellow longwingers such as Steve Chindgren.



An all-around country sportsman, Heinz enjoyed fly fishing very much and travelled quite widely to participate in this sport. He tied his own flies (his books on entomology were not just used for schooling!) and was also an avid bowhunter. His quest for a good venison stew recipe is legendary.

Heinz was a proficient artist and many of his paintings grandly illustrate the 9th edition of Beebe & Webster's North American Falconry and Hunting Hawks. They have also appeared in NAFA Journals, the Conservationist Magazine, and other periodicals. He was the co-author of *Falcons' Return* published in 1975, and wrote many articles on biology and falconry over the years.

Heinz married Elizabeth "Sonny" Metz in 1953, herself an educator and artist. At the time they met, however, she was his student and thought him an interesting person to spend the rest of her life with. He thought the same about her. Sonny tolerated the innumerable drop-in students and falconers with great good humor as they came to "hang with Heinz". They had two children together, Robin and Peter-Paul.

Heinz was a life member of the American Ornithologists' Union, the Cooper and Wilson Ornithological Society, and was an Honorary Life Member of NAFA.

A Celebration the Life of Heinz Meng will be held at The Terrace Building, SUNY New Paltz, on September 25, 2016 at 2:00PM. Falconers will be present with their hawks, and several falcons will be flown in his memory over the campus where he spent his many years teaching the young.

Contributions in his memory may be made to The Archives of Falconry in Boise, Idaho. A bronze plaque for Heinz will be placed on the Wall of Remembrance there at the 2017 Rendezvous. 🦅



# Biography of the Soul

*"Your mentor will have lit the light  
before you and guard you from  
troubles."*

Zelili, Turkmen poet, XVIII century

Words and photos by Ata Eyeberdiev





Однажды, в далёкие 80-е годы прошлого века, мы с моим опытным наставником Аннааман ага, разбив в песках лагерь, уже вторую неделю вели соколиную охоту. Для меня, тогда ещё двадцатипятилетнего юноши, это была не только школа по воспитанию ловчей птицы, но и пример духовного величия, чистоты помыслов и красоты поступков.

В один из дней после утренней охоты Аннааман ага остался в лагере, а я со своей птицей и борзой вышел на поиски песчаного зайца-толая. Зимние сумерки наступают быстро и незаметно. Увлёкшись удачной работой сокола, я оказался вдалеке от нашего стана. Теперь, взобравшись на высокий бархан, я старался по едва заметинам приметам определить правильное направление движения. Когда я начал быстро двигаться к югу, посчитав этот курс верной дорогой к нашему лагерю, вдруг сзади издали послышался человеческий голос. Вновь оказавшись на бархане, я увидел вдали огромный костёр на возвышенности, откуда чётко доносился голос Аннааман ага.

Уже встретив меня в лагере, наставник тихо произнёс: «Сегодня как никогда вокруг непроглядная ночь. Я разжёл костер, стана». Да, мудрый старик всегда был по-доброму тактичен и благороден. Еще не раз, искренность его души, доброе сердце и благочестивая нравственность, словно яркие лучи путеводной звезды, помогали многим из нас выбрать правильный путь в сложных и непростых ситуациях жизни. Мовлямов Аннааман ага родился 25 декабря 1926 года и уже с восьми летнего возраста, его отец Кадырберды ага, брал его с собой на соколиную охоту. Кадырберды ага прожил восемьдесят пять лет и все время практиковал соколиную охоту. Дедушка моего наставника, Язберды ага тоже был сокольником, который прожил девяносто три года.

В 40-е года прошлого века Аннааман ага вместе с отцом занимаясь соколиной охотой, помогли многим семьям в селе пережить трудные годы хозяйственного становления страны. Более 40 лет Аннааман ага пас овец в бескрайних просторах Центрального Каракума и все это время он не разлучался с ловчей птицей и туркменской борзой тазы. В 50-е годы Аннааман ага вне конкурса принимают в Государственную консерваторию по классу оперное пение. Через восемь месяцев обучения Аннааман ага ставит в

Once in far eighties, we were hunting for a second week, staying in the desert camp with my experienced mentor Annaman aga. For me, 25 years old young man then, this was not just about training of the bird, but a good example of mental greatness, cleanness of thoughts and beauty of acts. One of the days, after morning hunt, Annaman aga stayed in the camp, while I, with my bird and greyhound, went for sand hare (tolay). Dusk in the winter comes fast and insensibly. Being animated with my bird's good work, I got quite far from our camp. Now, climbed to the high dune, I was trying to determine, by hardly noticeable marks, the right way to go. When I started to move south, deciding that was the right direction to our camp, I suddenly heard the weak scream far back to me. Climbed to the dune once again, I saw huge bonfire on the hill and heard clear voice of Annaman aga. Greeting me in the camp, my mentor said calmly: "It is surprisingly dark tonight. I just made campfire for you not to miss our site". Wise old man was as always kindly tactful and generous. Many more times the purity of his soul, kind heart and devout ethics, like bright rays of guiding star, helped for many of us to choose right way in complicated moments of our lives.

Annaman Movlymov was born 25 of December, 1926 and from age of eight, his father Kakaberdy aga, always took him for falconry trips. Kakaberdy aga lived for eighty-five years and was practicing falconer all his life. Grandfather of my mentor, Yazberdy aga also was a falconer, he lived for ninety-three years.

During the 40's of last century, Annaman aga practicing falconry with father, helped many families to survive during harsh times of the country revival. For forty years Annaman aga was herding sheep in a boundless expanse of Central Karakum and all this time he was inseparable to his bird of prey and Turkmen greyhound tazy. In fifties, without any exams, Annaman aga was enrolled to the State Conservatory, opera signing class. After eight months of study, Annaman aga gave notice to the rector, that he decided to return back home. Conservatory supervisors beg talented student to stay, but yearning and love for his ancestor's tradition returned him back to his village, to his hunting birds.

Perfectly mastering play on national string instrument Dutar, Annaman aga shortly became marvelous singer of national songs and destans. Knowing by heart more than seventy poem of Turkmen literature classics, he liked to read them as a teaching for purity of conscience, moral and men's honour. In the spring of 2015, we were visiting Erbent village with Annaman aga, hosted by heredity falconers there. During the tea chat, Annaman aga continued his speech with a poem, and when he had finished, seventy years old falconer Byashim aga hugged our mentor, saying "I'm deeply impressed with your memory. Please, stay with us for few days, people want to listen to you and talk to you".



известность ректора консерватории о своём решении вернуться в село. Руководство консерватории уговаривает остаться талантливого студента и обещает повысить и без того повышенную стипендию. Но тоска и любовь древней традиции предков вернули его в родное село к ловчим птицам.

Прекрасно владея национальным струнным инструментом дутар, Аннааман ага вскоре стал прекрасным исполнителем национальных песен и дестанов. Зная наизусть более семидесяти стихотворений классиков туркменской литературы, он любил читать их как назидание о чистоте совести, морали и человеческой чести. Весной 2015 года мы с Аннааман ага были в селе Ербент, где живут потомственные сокольники. Во время разговора за чаем Аннааман ага продолжил диалог стихами и когда он закончил, семидесятилетний Бяшим ага обняв моего наставника, сказал: «Я поражён твоей памятью. Погости у нас несколько дней, многие хотят послушать тебя и пообщаться с тобой».

Аннааман ага был Председателем Совета Национального общества сокольников Туркменистана, и как опытный знаток, руководил селекционной работой по разведению туркменских борзых тазы. Он был главным героем нескольких документальных фильмов о соколиной охоте, снятых как местными, так и рядом зарубежных студий.

Аннааман ага жил в небольшом г. Сердар, что в двести километрах от столицы. Мы часто бывали у него в гостях. Но застать его дома была большая удача. Родители новорождённого ребёнка приглашали Аннааман ага, чтобы он дал имя малышу. Он был почётным гостем, где играли свадьбу молодожёны, старик давал мудрые напутствие молодым. Его можно было увидеть там, где он добрыми словами утешал больного возле его постели. Старик непременно старался быть там, где семью настигла горечь смерти. Аннааман ага со всеми почестями и обрядами провожал покойника в последний путь и разделял с семьёй дни его печали.

Когда в середине мая сего года Аннааман ага стал нездоровиться, я стал посещать его чаще. Многие приходи навещать мудрого старика. И вот когда мы остались одни в комнате, наставник как всегда мягко и по-доброму улыбнувшись, сказал: «Я в пути, мне осталось совсем мало. По ночам мне снятся люди в чистых и белых одеяниях.



Annaman aga was a chairman of the Council of National Society of Falconers of Turkmenistan and as experienced man, was managing selective works and breeding of Turkmen greyhound tazy. He was the central person in few documentaries about the falconry, filmed by local and foreign studios.

Annaman aga lived in a small town Serdar, two hundred kilometers from the capital city. We often visited him, but find him at home was a big luck. Parents of newborn baby were inviting him to give a name. He was honorable guest on all wedding ceremonies, old man was given his wise advises and wishes to young couples. You could find him near to a bed of ill, comforting him or her with kind words. He was serving during funerals, sharing sorrow days with families. When in the middle of May Annaman aga got ill, I started to visit him more often. Many came to see wise old man. And once, when we stayed alone, my mentor, as always, softly and kindly smiling, said “I am on the way, and it is short. During the nights I dream people in white clothes. They come to me and speak to me, but not invite me to follow them yet. And if they will come tonight again, I want to ask them for a power and health to send the bird from my arm for the last time. I think my soul needs it because of honesty and purity of that tradition.” After those words I was unable to keep my tears anymore. Having few seconds to rest, Annaman aga added: “you know how many friends do we have in the whole world. Please give them my sincere regards”. Those were his last words.

After funeral, someone from the crowd told “It is hard to believe that I will not see Annaman aga tomorrow. He went like a bird, soared up to the sky”.

The wife of Annaman aga, aunt Guldjermal, all her life worked as carpet-maker. They raised three sons and two daughters together. They had fifteen grandchildren and nine great-





Они приходят ко мне и говорят со мною, но пока не приглашают следовать за ними. И если сегодня они придут опять, я хочу попросить их дать мне силу и здоровья чтобы последний раз напустить сокола с руки. Наверно душа просит это, потому что это традиция честная и чистая». После этих слов удержать слезы я уже не смог. Немного переводя дыхание, Аннааман ага добавил: «Ты же знаешь, сколько у нас теперь друзей во всем мире. Передай им мой большой и сердечный привет». Это были его последние слова.

После похорон, кто-то сидящий в толпе сказал: «Трудно поверить, что я завтра не увижу Аннааман ага. Он ушёл подобно птице, взмывшей в небо....»

Жена Аннааман ага, тетя Гулжемал всю жизнь работа ковровщицей. Они воспитали трех сыновей и двух дочерей. У них пятнадцать внуков и девять правнуков. Есть среди них и народные певцы и те, кто достойно продолжают древнюю традицию своих предков - охоту с ловчими птицами. После смерти мужа, девяносто трех летняя тетя Гулжемал, часто и тихо, про себя, просила Всевышнего воссоединить их души. Видимо искренняя просьба чистой души была услышана. Ровно через месяц, когда люди собрались в доме Аннааман ага, чтобы почтить его память, ушла из жизни тетя Гулжемал, добрая хранительница семейного очага. Многие из нас часто вспоминают мудрого нашего наставника и его супругу как пример преданности национальной традиции и верности родному очагу.

grandchildren. There are folk singers among them, as well as falconers, who keeps falconry, their ancestors' tradition, with dignity.

After the death of her husband, ninety-three years old aunt Guldjema often privately asked the Lord to restore connection of their souls. And, perhaps, this sincere request was heard. Exactly in a month period, when people gathered in Annaman aga's house for commemoration, aunt Guldjema, the kind keeper of family hearth, passed away.

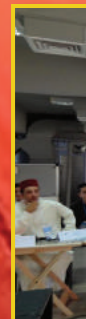
Many of us will remember our great mentor and his wife as a model of devotion for national traditions and adherence for family health. 🦅



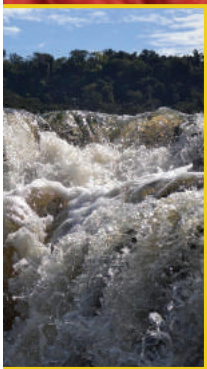
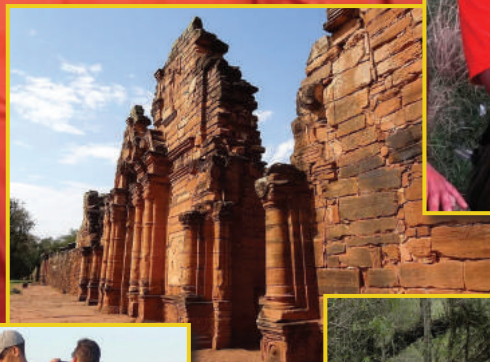
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## ARGENTINA

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