



**THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FALCONRY
AND CONSERVATION OF BIRDS OF PREY**



Newsletter April 2000

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EDITOR'S FORWARD - by *Robbie Wilson*

The past year has been very busy and successful one for the IAF involving, thanks to the Internet, a constant and improved flow of information and exchange of views between members, as well as representation at various international meetings, CITES, the Bern Convention etc.

The most important and very welcome event however must be that NAFA has at last joined ranks with the IAF marking the successful culmination of several years of patient negotiation. The IAF can now justifiably claim to be a truly international falconry organisation with all that implies in terms of enhanced status and influence. To quickly summarise the Association's activities, the early part of the year was largely taken up with two major issues, which have concerned our President and the Advisory Committee.

The first is the proposal to introduce a law banning hybrids in Germany and the fear that it might possibly be extended to the other EC countries and second, the so called Falconry Championships in Spain. It should be made quite clear that the IAF's role is not to pass judgement, impose rules or apply sanctions on any of its members. Rather by free and frank discussion to promote a better understanding of each others problems and view points thereby exercising influence for the benefit of falconry generally. As can be seen from the detailed coverage in this newsletter a great deal of work and thought has been put in by the Advisory Committee which will, it is hoped, prove helpful and eventually influence the outcome of these two ongoing contentious and potentially divisive matters.

In July Tony Crosswell represented the Association at the 15th Meeting of the Animals Committee in Madagascar. His report is included in this newsletter.

In September the opportunity of several members of the Advisory Committee being in Scotland for their annual grouse hawking was taken to hold a very useful meeting at Lochindorb Castle.

The 31st Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on the 29th October 1999 in Hungary at the kind invitation of the Hungarian Falconers Club to coincide with their annual Field Meeting.

The Hungarians' warm welcome and generous hospitality was much appreciated for which many thanks to our hosts. It was a very well organised and successful meeting enjoyed by all those who attended.

The minutes of the AGM are published in this newsletter together with reports received from the following countries:- Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, North America, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.

In November Hermann Doettlinger attended the EU Bird Directive Meeting at Helsingar in Denmark at which the taking of birds of prey from the wild for falconry came under scrutiny as being unnecessary in view of the many birds now being bred in captivity. It seems just as well that Hermann was present and able to counter this argument but it goes to show how vital it is that falconers are represented at such meetings.

In December our President convened a working group to examine a restructuring of the IAF's finances and in particular membership fees. The group consists of :- Frank Bond (NAFA) Chairman, John Fairclough (BFC), Hermann Doettlinger (DFO), Gilles Nortier (ANFA), Vaclav Svoboda (Czech Falconers Club), Antonio Carapuco (APF).

Finally to take us into the new millennium an IAF web site is in the process of being developed. Mr Ray Cooper who looks after the BFC web site is doing this. (rayval@globalnet.co.uk) He would welcome input and ideas and in particular has requested suitable photographs be sent to his address:-

96 Norman Crescent
Pinner
Middlesex HA5 3QL, United Kingdom

IAF web site address will be www.I-A-F.org

MINUTES OF THE 31ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FALCONRY AND CONSERVATION OF BIRDS OF PREY.

The 31st Annual General Meeting of the Association was convened on the 29th October 1999 in Hungary by the kind invitation of the Hungarian Falconers Association.

The Meeting was honored to be opened with a short speech of welcome from the Owner of the hotel who explained that the establishment was 215 years old this year and was a horse breeding establishment to produce horses for the military in years past. This building was created in 1803. The stud is now a famous national asset maintaining 250 horses today employing many of the local people for tourism and hunting. We were kindly given an equine demonstration and tour of the stud during the lunch break.

This was followed by a welcome speech from the president of the Hungarian Hunters Association Dr Heltay Istavan. He explained the breadth of different traditional methods of hunting in Hungary and their great support in Hungary today with modern ethics of quality and values. Work with other interested groups, conservationists and greens is ongoing and they welcome the visit of the IAF in support of their political efforts.

The President of the IAF, Ferante Pratesi then thanked the speakers and the Hungarian Falconers Association for hosting the meeting of the IAF. 39 Officers, delegates and observers then introduced themselves to the meeting.

ATTENDANCE

31 Countries

36 Associations totalling 7,683 members

27 Member Organisations

7 Corresponding Member Organisations

2 Associate Member Organisations

Special guest:

Belarus - Raptors of Belarus - **Dmitri Vintchevski**
(IAF-ZBT AP joint project)

AGM AGENDA

1. Candidatures - presentation and election.
2. Election of Officers and AC confirmation
3. Minutes of last AGM
4. President - report
5. Treasurer - report
6. Hybrid document presentation as result of working group. No further discussion.
7. Spain - presentation by delegates - 15 minutes
8. Delegates reports - Questions on situation in other countries by the President.
9. Any Other Business
10. Consideration of NAFA offer to host the 2000 AGM in the US at their field meet in Amarillo, Texas.
11. Closure

The President proposed an amendment to the agenda to enable a constitutional problem to be resolved. This was voted and accepted.

The President then proposed an amendment to the constitution to enable a new category of corresponding, non-paying, non-voting membership. These members could attend the meetings, receive publications, be represented internationally, contribute to discussion but have no vote. Gilles Nortier, Chairman of the Advisory Committee seconded this amendment. Comment came from the British Falconers Club and Czech representative with appropriate discussion amongst members about contributions and fees. Christian de Coune commented that it was sad that voting rights might rest on a financial consideration. Others voiced their willingness to contribute to funds and expenses. The amendment was then voted and approved 9 in favour and 1 against. The item was passed.

The President then moved to candidatures. Patrick Morel read applications with each representative presenting his case to the meeting. Past President Christian de Coune expressed his pleasure that NAFA was now an applicant to join the IAF, sadly not within his term of office.

Applicants then withdrew and the members and officers considered applicants. Patrick Morel expressed the opinion that Article 3.1 and 3.2 of the constitution allowed the category of Associate Member Organization in countries where falconry is legal. Others disagreed with this interpretation. Clarification of the constitution was provided by Frank Bond for members guidance and it was made clear that this category for Associate Member Organization only applies to countries where falconry is not legal and is intended to gain them the help from the IAF and access to communication and information until they can gain legal status. Following this clarification, members then voted on candidates.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Frank Bond (USA) was voted to the post of Vice President.

Tim Kimmel was voted onto the Advisory Committee to fill the vacancy caused by Frank Bond

The Secretary, Treasurer and Vice President were confirmed in their posts by vote of the members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting were read by the Secretary A Crosswell and approved.

Comment from Martin Jones asked that reports be produced before the meeting and the President agreed that this will be done next year.

Vice-president's report - Patrick Morel.

Ministry of Justice:

IAF has at last received legal recognition.

The IAF was recognised and registered as a non-profit international association by Royal Decree of the Kingdom of Belgium on 11th April 1999. This decree was published in the Belgian official journal on 7th July 1999. This is the end of a long administrative battle and I express my thanks to Frank Bond and Christian de Coune (for the translation) who helped me in this long process.

Miscellaneous contacts :

UAE (United Arab Emirates):

The President and I had several exchanges and contacts with United Arab Emirates and NARC about Arab representation in IAF. After long discussions, ERWDA couldn't accept our invitation to join because they were not able to fulfil the required conditions (no falconers association). One seat as AC member was offered to Mohammed al Bowardi, but he was unable to accept at this time.

SWEDEN

A letter with a complete set of arguments was prepared for Sweden at the request of the Swedish falconers association, to start the process of legalizing falconry (18.01.99) in Sweden.

AIRPORTS – Contacts were made with Taiwan and India. A complete file was prepared.

UNEP – CITES vacancies.

UNEP advertisements for four vacancies for 'key' positions within the CITES were circulated to all our members. The UNEP (CITES) was looking for a new Secretary for the CITES to replace Mr Leduc; we thought it would be fine if a falconer would fill one of these positions.

DATABASES :

With the help of a young Swede, Magnus Wildt working under a 4 months EU program, we made a start on two databases:

Falconry Legislation Database -:

We started to compile all legislation affecting falconry world-wide as well as animal welfare and hunting law. We received useful information from numerous countries but are still missing a lot. We were working with a mailing system, personal letters, research on Internet and web-sites and contacts with NGO or international associations (FACE, ONC).

Some countries were very helpful and we have to thank especially Spain, El Salvador, Germany (Gerhard von Hugo), Ireland and Belgium.

This information will add to that collected by Christian: Property rights over on wild animals, questionnaires sent to members.

Here are concrete examples of use of such a database:

Czech Republic: They are drafting a new law on welfare. IAF helped by providing them with some information about similar laws in Germany, France and Switzerland.

Vergy case: (see Belgium Report) Information about a decision by the European Court of Justice from Luxembourg was circulated to all European members.

Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on conservation of wild birds requires the member States to prohibit trade in specimens belonging to a species of bird which is not listed in the annexes thereto – in so far as the species concerned is a species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the European territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies – subject to the option to derogate provided for by Article 9.

The decision of the Court was that: Directive 79/409/EEC is not applicable to specimens of birds bred and reared in captivity.

This means that national governments may change their law on Protection of Birds in a sense of an easing of regulations.

This was already done in Belgium by the Flemish government, which adopted a new law concerning the Protection of Birds. This law allows the unrestricted keeping of all birds bred and reared in captivity. Providing certain conditions for "sensitive" species such as raptors (closed ring, data base and annual inventory).

Falconers of European countries where restrictions on the keeping of birds of prey are imposed for example Sweden or Denmark may perhaps make use of this case for asking their government to review their law on Protection of Birds.

Two years ago, our Hungarian member asked the IAF for information about a new law on native conservation and property rights over wild birds (and the notion of 'res nullius'). (See Christian de Coune comments).

Request:

We would ask all our members to update the questionnaire.

Could the members provide us with the web-sites of their Ministries with references of the laws concerning falconry, hunting and animal-welfare?

This data-base is quite rough, a lot of work needs to be done on it to bring it 'fit for use'.

DATABASE on FALCONERS WORLDWIDE

We started by updating the membership list and contacts world-wide. Over 400 addresses are at present in our 'Outlook contact list'.

Some interesting information:

The greatest density of falconers seems to be in the Arab Emirates followed by the UK with 4.2 f/1.000 population and about 40 associations, but Spain holds the record of number associations with 47!

HOUBARA and SAKER ISSUE;

This issue was treated in conjunction with Robert Kenward . Good links exist with Birdlife International and LPO. See Robert's report.

FACE:

Very good contacts with the Secretary Dr Yves Lecocq. Christian de Coune was asked to write an article for their special anniversary issue (20 years old 'Birds' Directive (02.04.79). This article was published and Christian got permission to reproduce it in our newsletter.

C.I.C.

Vice president Patrick Morel has good contacts with the new president of the Working Group on Falconry and Birds of Prey, Peter Sapara (together with Gilles Nortier). Unfortunately he was unable to attend the meeting of the Working Group in Austria (06.11.99) The agenda was not considered sufficiently important to spend IAF's money on yet another trip. Discussion will be held on the peregrine release project in Germany to rebuild the tree-nesting population. Giampiero del Mastro will represent the IAF. Gilles met Peter Sapara twice.

HYBRIDS

The president decided to create an international working group on this delicate issue and asked me to chair this working group.

With reference to a similar forum co-chaired by Tim Kimmel and Nick Fox, Robert Kenward prepared a discussion document that we sent to all members.

In summary, two cases of breeding with hybrids occurred in the wild (gyr/peregrine with wild peregrine). One was reported in Germany and the other one in the USA. Hybrids could be present in the wild from two causes : lost when flown by falconers or escaping when at hack. Statistics show that falconers who fly their hawks with proper telemetry equipment lose very few birds. One concern could be the great number of hybrids put out at hack without any precaution by commercial breeders in Germany. Only a small percentage of these birds is lost; it seems that most of these birds die during the first few days at hack and that only around 1% could be considered lost when able to fly and hunt successfully.

We amended the discussion document after analysis of the comments (about 1.000 sheets of e-mails and letters). The discussion document was re-drafted 9 times !!! and is now presented to the delegates for approval.

COMPETITIONS:

Competitions with birds of prey exist in many countries: for instance 'sky trials' or 'pigeon derbies' in USA, Italy, Portugal, Spain, South Africa and competitions on game (wild or released) in Spain, Italy, Georgia, and Tunisia.

Our Spanish delegate, José-Manuel Rodríguez-Villa from the AEC asked the IAF to make an official policy statement about the competitions in Spain specifically on the public competitions with bagged game (Falconry World Championship organized by the FEC Federación Española de Caza – Spanish Hunters Association).

While working on our database, we got a better figure of the number of falconers in Spain: 47 associations that between them claimed 1287 members and around 900 practising falconers. The figures presented by our member are that around 1000 falconry 'aficionados' are closer to reality; anyway they are far away from the ones asserted by the FEC (3000).

Anyway a opportunity in representation of the Spanish falconry has arisen, in so far that two groups have requested (unofficially) if they may become members of the IAF.

Our delegate, José-Manuel Rodríguez Villa produced a report on the Spanish situation. The two above mentioned groups also produced a report criticizing the role played by the Federación Española de Caza. The main accusation by the Spaniards against their federation is that the FEC did nothing to defend falconry when it was prohibited and is now more involved in organizing competitions than representing and defending falconry. Some Spaniards are in favour of competitions, others are against.

Our delegate requested the IAF's official policy statement on Falconry Championships, in other words:-
A clear definition of what falconry is, consistent with the one stated in the IAF's Constitution. Why falconry, as defined previously, is incompatible with competition. Apart from many other considerations, particularly, when bagged quarry is used, as it breaks the natural balance between predator and prey, inseparable from falconry and, at the same time, increasing tremendously the usual ratio achieved in actual hawking. The public image of falconry could be affected, by this misleading act.

One of the risks of the Falconry Championships is that they are 'creating' a new generation of unnatural falconers, just dedicated to Falconry Championships.

A specific reference to the Spanish Championships is needed, as it is a unique and rare case. As far as we know, Spain is the only country in the world, apart from the sky-trials in the U.S.A. where competition in falconry takes place. A reference to sky-trials in the U.S.A. and Spain could be included following the advice of Frank Bond. Although not in favour of sky-trials, we feel they are more acceptable due to their low killing rate. In summary, the IAF's official statement is specially directed to the Spanish situation, although it could be applied, theoretically, to any other country where such concern could arise.

A questionnaire was sent to the Advisory Committee Members asking them to express their opinions on the following questions:-

Position on competition (open to the public) with bagged game (world) championship organized by the FEC.

Position on competition on natural game organized by the FEC (championship with goshawks on hares)

Position on sky-trials (or pigeon-derbies)

The Advisory Committee members produced interesting comments and Tony Crosswell wrote a diplomatic letter for our Spanish delegate. As a result, here is a summary of the different viewpoints.

Following the definition of falconry as described in its constitution (see point 2.1.1: 'Falconry is the traditional sport of taking quarry in its natural state and habitat by means of trained birds of prey. It is a hunting art'), a competition with birds of prey is not hunting, and is therefore not to be considered as falconry. Competitions are therefore strictly speaking outside of the remit of the IAF.

However, some commentators stressed that, although not really within the competence of the IAF, competitions such as these will probably be perceived by many as actually being falconry and will therefore also have an impact on falconry. Considering the fact that the IAF was also specifically asked by its member to intervene in this seemingly internal matter, it does seem appropriate for the IAF to produce some kind of official response.

Although generally not opposed to the use of bagged game for the training of birds of prey in countries where it is legal, all the commentators agree that releasing bagged game in public would generally not be conducive to a positive view of falconry and falconers, especially since it is liable to be distorted by the media and/or used by anti-hunting and animal-welfare organisations. They also agree that the use of bagged game on a competitive basis, especially if involving prizes of a substantial economical value, should be discouraged as against the image of true falconry.

Concerning the Sky Trials or other similar derbies that use pigeons, most commentators had no opposition. Although actually also considered as 'bagged' game, because of the very low killing rates, most of the commentators felt that the use of pigeons has to be treated as a separate question.

The general feeling is that IAF should not dictate policy. Instead IAF should try to communicate the different viewpoints on any question that might have been raised, yet at the same time also try to make the representatives of falconry aware of the potential effects that the actions by falconers might have on the future of falconry. The opinion among the commentators therefore seems to be that the IAF should write some sort of official 'letter of regret', thereby expressing its concern that the privilege of being allowed to use bagged game is being abused in a short-sighted way that could ultimately result in bringing falconry into disrepute.

TREASURERS REPORT

Treasurer Antonio Carapuco presented his report and answered questions to members satisfaction.

1999 BALANCE (EURO)

1999 INCOME	YEAR	VALUE
1 Balance carried forward	31-12-1998	953.51
2 Members contribution	1999	8.622.44
	1998	1.231.19
3 Donations income	1999	5.356.36
4 Other incomes	1999	845.59
TOTAL		17.009.09

1999 EXPENDITURE	VALUE
1 Secretariat	4.268,99
2 Travelling expenses and Accommodation	9.357,10
3 Subscriptions	428,35
4 Donations expenditure	613,55
5 Bank charges	293,27
6 Non recurring expenditure	1.460,32
TOTAL	16.421.58
1999 BALANCE	587,51

REPORT OF THE RESEARCH CO-ORDINATOR - ACTIVITIES 1998-99

Activities during this year have involved drafting documents on hybrids and sustainable-use, liaising with Bird-life International to reduce risk of public relations problems from Arab falconry, and attending meetings of the Bern Convention and IUCN groups. Some developments within Raptor Research Foundation are also worth mentioning.

HYBRIDS and TRADE

The hybrid document you have separately is the 6th re-draft. It has taken a great deal of work by Patrick Morel, Tony Crosswell and myself to try to find a consensus among all the interested clubs. Our efforts included a visit to talk with Tom Richter and Hermann Doettlinger in Germany. We were unable to reach complete agreement with DFO on the preamble, which the DFO (supported by the leading German molecular geneticist Prof. Michael Wink) consider too lenient. However, the preamble is only for internal explanatory purposes. The important thing is that we have all agreed on the brief position statement.

Tony Crosswell took a document, which we had prepared with Patrick Morel, to the CITES Animals Committee meeting in Madagascar. The document built on the 'falconry passport' idea of to propose one-off registration of high-value resources, like live raptors. The aim is to simplify proof of legality and control of movements (no paperwork), with conservation benefits from sustainable use of wild raptors. This and other initiatives from Tony help to convince people that it is worth listening to falconers, such that he is now an NGO delegate on the CITES Animals Committee working group.

There has been liaison with LIPO, the Bird-life International partner in France, concerning impact of Arab falconry on Sakers and bustard species. IAF has routinely kept WWF, IUCN and Bird-life International informed on these issues to try to prevent development of international scandals, but pressure continues to grow because use of these wildlife resources is not sustainable in some parts of the species' ranges.

BERN CONVENTION of the COUNCIL of EUROPE

At the annual meeting of the parties in 1998, a brief questionnaire provided a short-cut for getting to know delegates' viewpoints and open discussion with them. They found the questionnaire interesting and its systematic use introduced me to half the countries represented (with the other half to do in 1999). Advice from FACE and Christian de Coune was also invaluable. The questionnaire tested the strength of support for a view that conservation will succeed best if based on all human resources, including falconers and other hunting interests. The delegates now tend to be government biologists, and favoured a pragmatic approach more strongly than I expected. There is a growing realization that conflict between resource users and other conservation interests is undesirable. The Bern Convention is currently dealing with conservation issues arising from hybridization of North American ruddy Ducks with Eurasian White-headed Ducks, and North American Grey Squirrels introduced in Italy. Falconry can benefit from these issues, in the duck case by gaining favour from support for other conservation groups, and in the squirrel issue (in which I have been professionally involved) by laying the responsibility for a coming eco-disaster squarely at the feet of animal welfarists who have blocked attempts to remove squirrels until it is too late.

WORLD CONSERVATION UNION (IUCN).

Christian de Coune kindly provided an introduction to the IUCN's new Director General, and a number of other IUCN staff, at a reception in Brussels, after which two meetings of the European Sustainable Use Specialists Group were attended, and one European Regional meeting to prepare for the World Congress in Amman in 2000. As for the Bern Convention, it is a matter of making friends and looking for opportunities to enhance the reputation of falconry as a force in conservation. It helps that I am involved for my Institute, with the IUCN European Regional Office, in a project proposed to the EU 5th Framework for a 'Sustainability Audit for Fauna and Flora in the Regions of Europe (SAFFIRE).'

RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION

RRF was started by falconers in North America and a contributor to the good relations enjoyed between falconers and other conservation interests there, is developing strongly in Eurasia, with its 3rd Eurasian meeting in the Czech Republic. NAFA's Brian Millsap chaired the RRF committee on down-listing of Peregrines under the Endangered Species Act, and I attended two meetings as a Board Member. Tim Kimmel is keeping RRF informed of NAFA's efforts to persuade US Fish and Wildlife Service to permit re-licensing of wild peregrines for falconry.

It will benefit falconry and raptor conservation if Eurasian falconry clubs encourage their members who are also raptor biologists, vets, rehabilitators or educationalists to join RRF and attend its meetings.

Robert Kenward 28.9.99

CITES report 15th Meeting of the CITES Animals Committee
Report by Tony Crosswell Antananarivo, Magagascar 5-9 July 1999

Approximately 180 delegates attended the meeting, a record number for this committee. Our team of NGO's was larger at this meeting :

Tony Crosswell – IAF, Hawk Board
Bruce Taubert – International Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (also unofficially a falconer NAFA)
Marshall Meyers – Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council
Rick Parsons - Safari Club International
Ricky Jordon – American Federation of Aviculture
Ingo Pauler - DGHT (Reptile breeders)
John Hutton – Africa Resources Trust

There were 22 Animal Welfare Agencies attending!

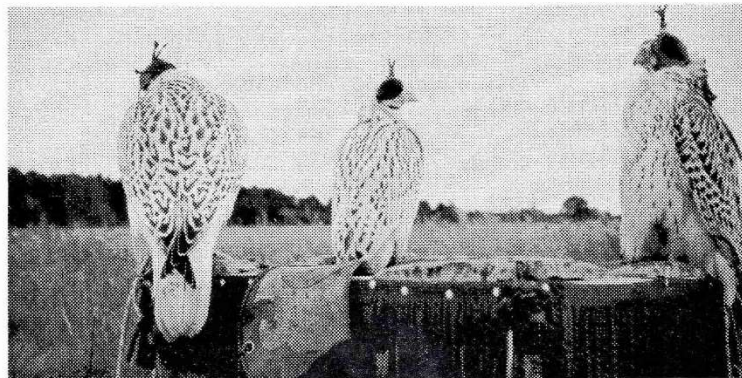
Agenda Items of concern to Falconers

1. Implementation of Conf. 10.21 on transport of live animals
2. Review of Conf. 8.13 on use of coded microchips for marking live animals in trade
3. Decision 10.77 regarding specimens of animal species bred in captivity report of the working group established to review registration procedure Consideration of the draft list of animal species commonly bred in captivity
4. Implementation of decisions 10.75 and 10.76 regarding trade in alien species review of draft IUCN guidelines identification of alien species in trade
5. Assessment of animal Taxa for recommendation to the Standing Committee
6. Strategic Plan of the Convention

Summary outcome

1. Politically we achieved greater recognition and more inclusion than any other group.
2. The Peregrine species is to be reviewed as a candidate for down-listing from Appendix 1.
3. The US is to make a proposal to COP11 to down-list the North American population of the Gyr falcon.
4. Captive breeding and replacement of 8.15 has gone to a further working group of which I am a member. The new goal seems to be to have 8.15 withdrawn since replacement seems problematic to say the least in the face of range states for species demanding financial benefits from their resources now captive bred in other countries. We made some progress in this evolutionary process.
5. Commercial Purposes and the creation of a list of Commonly Bred species under 10.16 has made progress and might be given back to the Management Authorities for their national administration. When taken in the context of Convention on Biological Diversity this could make export almost impossible for some of the commercial breeders depending upon the outcome of CBD progress.

6. Invasive species is going to become a real problem for falconers. Hybrids are not liked and non-indigenous species will be included for non-detriment review in the EXPORT evaluation process.
7. Transport will become more difficult as soon the airlines look likely to refuse to carry ANY live animals.
8. Microchips has gone to a further small working group - Bruce Taubert is a member
9. IWMC is to be the focus for users to create a network process for communication like IAF, NAFA and Hawk Board has already done within their own structure. This will enable us to better handle COP11 and other subjects of concern to users.
10. There are real dangers in impending resignations and new appointments to the members of the Animals Committee which may jeopardize our current good standing.



Cadge of White Captive Bred Gyrfalcons

HYBRID RAPTORS - A CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES.

Background

Falconers started to breed hybrids almost as early as they could breed falcons, the first well- documented case being the saker-peregrine crosses produced by Ronald Stevens in 1971. The first crossings were mainly to show that falconers really could breed falcons: hybrids could not readily have been taken from wild pairs. In the USA, hybrids produced by Jim Weaver gave impetus to the creation of the Peregrine Fund and its release program. Particular crosses may have advantages for falconry, in providing quality flights in circumstances and surroundings where pure-bred birds are more likely to fail. In artificial landscapes of modern countries, hybrids may allow falconry to continue in places and at quarry which were previously impractical. In desert countries, hybrids of gyrfalcons are preferred to pure-bred sakers or peregrines because they are larger and faster, and less stressed by heat than gyrfalcons.

Concern about hybrids centres on loss into the wild of domestic hybrids or species that may hybridise in the wild. Falconers have always lost some birds, and are skilled in the deliberate releases that have frequently been used for conservation. Although radio-tagging has now made accidental loss a rare occurrence, the hacking of untrained domestic progeny, as a means of improving flying skills, may create a greater risk of losing hybrids than after they are trained.

The extent of concern depends on the type of hybrid, which may be between species that occur together in the wild (sympatry), between species that occur in adjacent areas (parapatry) or between species from geographically isolated areas (allopatry). Concern may also depend on the health of local wild raptor populations, and is likely to affect public perception of falconry.

1. Sympatry and parapatry

Species that occur in the same area or adjacent areas, such as gyrfalcons, peregrines and sakers, have opportunities to breed together naturally. Behavioural and physiological mechanisms usually prevent them hybridising, although occasional natural raptor hybrids have been recorded. In the long-term, traces of such rare hybrids are likely to be eliminated by natural selection, possibly aided by physiological mechanisms. Therefore, no risk can arise from pure-bred species hybridising with sympatric or parapatric species after loss by falconers. This statement is valid for any sub-species a species may have, because a species is defined as a population of individuals with natural gene flow between them.

However, hybrids of sympatric or parapatric species that have been bred by enforced proximity or artificial insemination may lack natural isolating mechanisms. They may cause problems if either their genetic fitness is higher than that of native birds or if lost in numbers where natural populations are depressed, for example in areas where peregrine populations have not recovered after the pesticide era. In such cases, natural selection through competition is reduced, and hybrids may tend to persist in the wild. They may also have added strength during the interference with breeding that occurs naturally in healthy populations. There are reports from Germany of such interference by hybrids, and hybrid falcons have produced young in both Germany and the United States. Some of these records probably result from the many hybrids that disappear while at hack with inadequate precautions against loss.

2. Allopatry

Some allopatric species, which are from geographically isolated areas, lack natural mechanisms that prevent hybridisation. An example is the American Ruddy Duck, which hybridises with the European White-Headed Duck and aggressively displaces it following release at wildlife parks. Thus, pure-bred species introduced to an area they could not reach naturally, or hybrids between allopatric species, sometimes prosper at the expense of a less robust native equivalent.

In raptors, which are very mobile creatures, allopatry is likely only between the American and Eurasian super-continents, Australasia and oceanic islands. Among raptors of wide interest to falconers, the only species with less robust allopatric equivalents are Red-tailed Hawks (for Common Buzzards in Europe), and Sakers (for Prairie Falcons in North America). Falconers have avoided producing hybrids between Hawks, flown widely in Europe, create no risk because there is no closely related ecological allopatric raptors. Red-tails are not hacked and Sakers only in their native Eurasia. Harris equivalent. Compared with deliberate release of wildfowl, it has long been accepted that there is negligible risk from rare losses of single trained raptors.

3. Public relations

Although natural selection should eventually eliminate hybrids, it may not act fast, and if many hybrids are lost they could represent a small proportion of the total wild population at any time. This might offend people who worry about wild raptor populations. Falconry is at present fairly well understood across a spectrum of conservation organisations, for whom sustainable use is becoming an important part of conservation. This improved understanding recently gave falconry explicit exemption from Berne Convention constraints on use of exotic species. Moreover, falconers are gaining increased access to wild populations in some countries, which reduces motivation to fly non-native species. At a time of growing cooperation in conservation, it behoves falconers and other groups to engage positively to handle any issues arising from production of hybrids.

Position Statements

In a recent Position Statement, the main biological issues affecting falconry were reviewed by the Raptor Research Foundation (RRF), which is the largest international organisation specifically for research and conservation of raptors. RRF's position was that 'escape of sympatric or parapatric species or their hybrids is unlikely to pose any significant threat to wild populations', but that 'hybrids between allopatric species (defined as from different super-continents) should not be bred for falconry' and that steps should be taken

to reduce risk of breeding by any lost hybrids. It also noted that, to avoid wasting conservation resources, the intensity of regulations on falconry should be consonant with the risk to raptor populations.

A recent review by the Advisory Committee of the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) endorsed this position. It was concluded that current regulations and practices are adequate to prevent risk to raptor populations from hybrids. However, IAF was concerned to preserve its positive relationships with other wildlife interest groups, and therefore also issued a Position Statement on the subject.

HYBRID RAPTORS - A POSITION STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FALCONRY AND CONSERVATION OF BIRDS OF PREY.

POSITION STATEMENT ONLY

The International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) has examined in depth the practical and theoretical considerations that arise from the production of hybrid raptors.

After a review of the available data and taking expert advice, we consider it unlikely that a problem for wildlife conservation will arise from the breeding of hybrid raptors if their loss to the wild is rare. However, we seek optimal relations of falconry with all other wildlife interest groups and therefore recommend that:

1. hybrids should if possible be hatched in a large conditioning pen;
2. any free-hacking of hybrids should be for a minimum period to reduce risk of loss
3. hybrids be fostered if possible by a parent that does not occur locally in the wild;
4. hybrids should not be hatched or flown without reliable telemetry equipment
5. maximum efforts be made to recover any hybrids that are lost;
6. hybrids should never be deliberately released.

We ask IAF member clubs to bring these considerations to the attention of falconers world-wide. We accept that individual clubs may feel obliged to endorse stricter measures. However, we strongly believe that self-regulation is preferable to regulatory supervision. We are keeping this issue under review and will remain actively involved in the political consultation processes at all levels of regulation.

DELEGATES REPORTS

Reports from members were submitted for inclusion in the next newsletter. Georgia made a personal presentation to members of falconry in that country. Also Belorussia made a presentation and request for sponsorship for their research project. Reports are attached to this document.

CONSIDERATION OF NAFA PROPOSAL TO HOST YEAR 2000 AGM

Frank Bond offered on behalf of NAFA to host the year 2000 AGM at the NAFA field meet in Amarillo Texas. He proposed that if this were accepted he would hope to support through fund raising to enable some members delegates to attend when they otherwise would be unable. The motion to accept was proposed by Frank Bond seconded by the BFC and unanimously accepted by the meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

NAFA also made the points that NAFA was proposing to CITES COP the down listing of the Gyrfalcon from Appendix 1 to Appendix 2. Similarly they have been asked to make a proposal for down listing of the Peregrine. Christian de Coune congratulated NAFA on the down listing of the Peregrine within the US.

The meeting was then closed by the President.



REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

'RES NULLIUS' – PRESUMPTION of GUILT – Christian de Coune (Past President IAF)

There is a common complaint I have heard more than once, mainly in Britain: that unlike any other citizen, falconers are the victims of 'presumption of guilt'.

You must be able to prove that your, say, peregrine is legal. If you cannot, you are guilty of keeping an illegal bird. In other words you are guilty until you prove you are not.

This looks like being a contradiction to the fundamental principle of the presumption of innocence.

The area is peculiar: we are dealing with wildlife.

A Peregrine falcon is supposed to be a wild bird that belongs to nobody. It is what we call a 'res nullius'. It is the same with a starling, a swallow, a trout or a frog, they belong to nobody.

Under some circumstances, as an exception to the principle that wildlife is a 'res nullius', a wild animal may become someone's private property.

There are ways to become the owner of a wild animal; for example if you legally shoot a woodcock, the dead woodcock becomes your property whereas it belonged to nobody when it was still flying. A butterfly caught by a collector becomes his. He becomes the owner and you may not take it from him, but you may catch yourself another butterfly that passes by.

If you legally take a peregrine from the wild it will become your private property; if you breed a peregrine in captivity it will be your property since it first hatched; if you acquire a peregrine through legal channels it will be yours. But keep in mind that those processes are exceptions to the principle that wildlife is supposed to be 'res nullius'; if you claim that there is an exception it will be for you to prove it. You will have to produce proof that the bird has become your property by having legally acquired it. The onus of proof lies with you.

In the case of an object, the onus of proof lies with the one who challenges the possessor. Unlike a peregrine Falcon, an object is supposed to belong to somebody. The person who possesses an object is assumed to be the owner of it, unless someone else proves that it is not true (possession creates a presumption of ownership). If you wear a pair of shoes, you do not need to prove that you have acquired them through a legal channel; you are the owner without having to document it. If someone claims that there is an exception to that principle and that the shoes are not yours, he will have to prove it.

The big difference between a pair of shoes and a Peregrine Falcon is that the latter is supposed to be 'res nullius' and the former is supposed to have an owner.

The **Belgium Association of Flemish Falconers and Austringers (BVVVH)** has 33 members of whom 25 are active falconers.

This year we celebrated our 25th anniversary.

Most of the hunting members use the European goshawk for rabbit hunting, this is due to the landscape and the environment, as we lack open spaces, we do not make as much use of falcons.

A few members, especially young or very senior members hunt with Harris hawk or redtail hawk.

Our members are not allowed to do displays with their hawks or appear on TV shows, only hunting and breeding is permitted.

Hunting law for falconry in Belgium:

All European birds of prey have been protected in the Flemish part of Belgium by law since 1981. Exceptionally a few licenses have been issued to members of the CMB and BVVVH for keeping birds of prey for falconry. These licenses were issued individually, and identify the falconer by name and ring number of the hawk. Every 3 years these licenses are reviewed and renewed.

For keeping and hunting exotic birds of prey, the European Directive was followed. In 1991, the hunting law included falconry as a legal method of hunting.

At the beginning of 1999 the law of 1981 was changed due to a decision of the European Court of Justice. In France a farmer, named mister Vergy, had Canada geese and the government confiscated them. Mister Vergy did not accept this because the geese were born in captivity and the bird protection law is not applicable to these birds. The objection was accepted and mister Vergy was allowed to keep his geese. Flemish bird keepers of course immediately used this judgement and the Flemish government had to change their law. The different bird species were divided in 3 categories, official appendices called:

Appendix 1: 104 species bred in captivity, with closed foot ring can be kept and traded.

Appendix 2: A few bird species may be trapped in the wild in order to avoid inbreeding. Open foot ring and registration is obligatory.

Appendix 3: All 250 bird species living in the European community, birds of prey included. A closed foot ring is needed and registration in the database of recognised associations is obligatory. Legal origin must be proved and for every trade a CITES document is needed.

It was expected that this change in the law would cause a huge increase in the number of European birds of prey kept. However this was not the case, only a few goshawks and peregrines were bought by falconers, even in the in Belgium unrecognised falconer association, which were unable to obtain licenses in the past there was no large increase in the number of European birds of prey.

KLUB SOKOLNIKU PRI CMMJ – CZECH FALCONERS CLUB

The first attempt to establish a falconry association in the Czech Republic was in 1929, when the well known falconer B. Mensdorf-Poulli was unsuccessful due to lack of interest. In the fifties a veterinary surgeon, Mr Brdicka gathered around him a group of young falconers who went on to form the nucleus of the Czech Falconers' Club.

The Czech Falconers' Club was founded on the 11th November 1967 in Opocno, where the Club's annual falconry meeting has been held ever since; this year being the 32nd anniversary. Currently the Club has 421

members in 20 falconry centres which possess between them 508 birds of prey (341 goshawks, 117 big falcons, 26 golden eagles and several less common species).

According to Czech law falconry is a legal method of hunting and is incorporated into the Czech Moravian Gamekeepers Union (CMGU). Anyone who wishes to hunt with a hawk has to pass the game keeping examination and in addition, since 1978, after at least one year's noviciate of the Club, novices are required to pass a special falconry examination. After successfully passing the examinations he becomes a falconer and he is allowed to use a bird of prey for hunting. Other persons who are not members of the Club and have permission to keep a bird of prey, are allowed to keep a bird of prey but are not allowed to hunt with it.

A new law, which came into force after the revolution in 1989, made no important changes affecting falconry.

The main provision for falconers is law no. 512/1992 'Hunting and Game-keeping' and its decrees no. 134/1996 which makes it possible for falconers with the landowners permission, to hunt hares and pheasants from 1st September to 31st December. The shooting season for hunters is from 1st November to 31st December. Under law 167/1993 'Protection of Animals against Cruelty' it is forbidden to set one animal against another (hunters for training dogs). Falconers are the exception from the law.

A new law 'on hunting and Game-Keeping' is in preparation and should be in force from the year 2002. The Czech Falconers' Club aim is to co-operate very closely with the CMGU to ensure that the status of falconry is protected in the new law to include amendments to change the list of hawk species allowed to be used in falconry. Another problem is to persuade the authorities to make it easier to obtain permission to take goshawks from the wild. In some districts this is not allowed.

At the present time falconry is not only a traditional sport in the Czech Republic. Falconers are also employed at civil and military airfields to scare off birds and they do the same job on agricultural land, vineyards and fishponds. Of course this is not falconry but it is carried out by falconers.

Among falconers there are many breeders, in fact, all breeders are falconers and the Czech Falconers Club produces about 200 birds of prey every year.

Approximately one third of these go for release programmes, the remainder to falconers.

All this work does much to enhance the good image of falconry with the general public and we are confident it promotes a better understanding of the falconry tradition.

PETER KOLOMAZIK (IAF Representative)
CZECH FALCONERS CLUB

VACLAV SVOBODA (President)

PRAG OCTOBER 25th 1999

STATE OF FALCONRY in GERMANY

Falconry is, at present, a legal method of hunting in Germany.

Falconers must have a falconer's licence. To obtain this they are required to pass two examinations: the general hunters examination and a special falconer's examination.

It is forbidden for private individuals to keep any of the 18 species of birds of prey endemic in Germany (such as common buzzards and kestrels). Only licenced falconers are allowed to keep peregrines, goshawks and golden eagles up to a maximum of two birds per falconer.

An unlimited number of any other species non endemic in Germany e.g. gyr falcons, sakers and the like may be kept by anyone. (This is incomprehensible and illogical, but it is the law).

Falconers are bound by the general hunting legislation as far as hunting areas, quarry and so on are concerned in the same way as a hunter with a gun.

There are a couple of very small falconers' clubs with regional influence and three larger clubs: the Deutscher Falkenorden (DFO) which has about 1000 members in all except two states in the former GDR, the Orden Deutscher Falkoniere (ODF) with about 200 members, mainly in the old states and the Verband Deutscher Falkner (VDF) with about 100 members in 4 new states.

Falconry has many enemies among the environmental and animal welfare activities and a new campaign has recently been activated against hunting and falconry in particular, by these groups.

MAGYAR SOLYMASZ KLUB (MSK) – HUNGARIAN FALCONERS' CLUB

Hungarian falconry, the present situation:

Hungarian falconry was reorganized three years ago when falconry was separated from the Hungarian Ornithological Society and an independent Club was established as the Hungarian Falconers, Club (HFC); in Hungarian: 'Magyar Solymasz Klub' (MSK). Our Club continues the tradition of the original modern Hungarian falconers organisation, established in 1939 with the same name: Hungarian Falconers' Club.

The Hungarian Falconers' Club is the only organization in Hungary dealing with falconry. There are 120 members of the Club. The falconers have about 240 birds (80 falcons and 160 goshawks and others). The following species of birds are allowed to be kept by falconers: kestrel, peregrine falcon, gyrfalcon, lanner-falcon, goshawk, sparrow hawk, common buzzard and golden eagle. Saker falcons, imperial eagles and merlins are not allowed to be kept by falconers. Each falconer may keep two breeding pairs and two hunting birds (six birds per falconer). This regulation prevents the formation of large breeding projects. Hybridisation between species is not allowed. If falconers want to take a bird abroad, a microchip must be implanted into the bird. This regulation is absolutely useless because no microchip readers are available at the border.

A serious problem for Hungarian falconry is the highly bureaucratic and slow procedure to obtain valid CITES permission to import or export birds. This situation prevents more active falconry-tourism besides the implantation of the useless microchips into our birds.

Falconry is well organized. Four to seven hunting weekends and an international field meeting are organized per year. Two other club meetings are held. The falconers are active. Some of them have excellent birds, falcons and goshawks. The main quarries are pheasants, hares, ducks and crows.

THE PRACTICE of FALCONRY in IRELAND

Compiled by Liam O Broin
IRISH HAWKING CLUB

The practice of falconry in Ireland is done under the Wildlife Act 1976 and the Birds of Prey Regulations (S.I.NO8 of 1984) statutory instruments.

At this time of writing a green paper on the Wildlife Amendment Bill 1999 has been published. This paper is at a consultative stage and contains aspects under law which if ratified may impact on the practice of falconry in the Irish Republic. In this regard the Irish Hawking Club has met with the relevant authorities and voiced its concerns. Also we are in consultation with FACE Ireland in that regard. It is not possible to predict at this stage what will become law as a consequence.

We have sent the Wildlife amendment Bill 1999 to Christian de Coune who has very kindly agreed to examine the bill and offer his opinions. It is our intention to then if necessary consult with the IAF on the matter.

In the practical sense the following modus operandi operates for falconers in the Irish Republic as of now September 1999.

Two licences are required, renewable annually at a cost of ten IR per licence. One is a licence to possess a bird of prey and the second is necessary to practice falconry .

Licences are by application to the conservation section of the Department of Wildlife. There is no definitive criteria as regards standards required of applicants. However applicants may be inspected by a wildlife ranger (rangers have little and in most cases no falconry experience).

Licences are by application for the taking of certain birds of prey from the wild for falconry and captive breeding. Again there is no written definitive criteria and the final selection after short listing for applicants in the case of peregrine falcons is by drawing of lots. We understand that in the case of peregrine falcons the number of licences each year is five. This is calculated on the basis of one percent of the total annual mortality rate of peregrine young. Successful applicants are not confined to members of the IHC.

There is at present a moratorium on the taking of merlins from the wild and this has been the case for twenty five years. It is indeed therefore very likely that this situation will prevail for the future.

Sparrow hawk licences are issued more liberally. Very few, if any falconers, apply for the common European Buzzard.

Licences to both possess a bird of prey and for falconry normally expire on the 31st January each year. This does not however constitute a closed season as such for falconry.

All falconers are required to apply for renewal and also for applications to take a bird from the nest by February each year.

SUMMARY

Five indigenous birds of prey exist in the wild in Ireland for falconry:

Peregrines
Sparrow Hawk
Merlin
Common Buzzard
Kestrel

Excepting merlins which as said are the subject of a taking moratorium, the remaining four species may be taken under licence from the nest provided there are at least three or more young present,

Trapping however is illegal for taking any bird of prey for falconry.

As regards taking from the nest a third licence, issued for a limited period, must be applied for. There is no fee payable in this regard.

In the case of peregrines an area is designated to a successful applicant who then may initiate their own fieldwork as regards eyries. As the licences are not issued until mid May disturbance at the critical egg stage is minimised. However because three young must be present before taking is allowed, falconers are

unhappy as a number of sites may be subjected to disturbance in order to find a suitable eyrie in any one region.

In some cases the Department of Wildlife insist that the eyass is not taken by a falconer but it is on the other hand taken by rangers and passed onto the successful applicant.

In the case of a falconer taking an eyass he must notify the local ranger who then must supervise the actual taking and be satisfied that there are three eyasses present.

In the case of sparrow hawks, all field work is done by the falconer who then declares his choice of site to the local ranger.

It is practice in most cases for the ranger to instruct the falconer to take the eyass unsupervised.

Various other species of hawk and falcons are flown by Irish falconers. The most common being:

Harris hawks
Redtail hawks
Goshawks
Saker falcons
Hybrids.

SUMMARY

The birds of prey flown in Ireland will compare generally in terms of species with UK and European falconry practice. The number of falconers represented by the Irish Hawking Club totals sixty. The non indigenous species used by Irish falconers are imported from breeders in Britain and in a small number of cases from European sources.

In the case of importing a bird of prey the following procedures are applicable.

Permission as opposed to a licence from the Wildlife Department is required. Also the Department of Agriculture must be informed, as to the expected date of importation and must include the following documentation:

A declaration by the exporter that the bird has been on the premises for at least six weeks prior to export.

A veterinary health certificate and a veterinary declaration that the area from which the bird is exported is free from Newcastle's disease.

No haemoglobin test is required, however the bird is required to be contained in captivity (not flown free) but can be handled by the falconer, for a period of one month after arrival in Ireland. Entry at present is by air or seaport named by the falconer.

Quarry species for falconry;

Rabbit, hare, grey squirrel, pheasant, grouse, gulls, water hen, mallard, plover, woodcock, snipe, teal, native songbirds, passerines, corvids, pigeons (no hunting of partridge except under licence for captive reared).

Unlike our colleagues in the UK who have quota licences for example merlins at skylarks, there are no regulations in this regard for quarry species for either merlins or in the case of sparrow hawks i.e. thrushes and blackbirds, in the Republic of Ireland.

A closed season however exists for those quarry species listed for shooters. This list does not include rabbit some species of gulls and water hen. The list does not include song birds which are protected from

shooting. In the case of waterfowl the season applies from 1st September to 31st January. The remainder on the list 1st November to 31st January applies. These season regulations however apply also to falconers when hunting with a dog.

The grouse season is open for the month of September only. As regards game hawking grouse are not commonly hunted by falconers due to sparse density of numbers. The short season mitigates against any concerted efforts to propagate grouse.

TRANSFER of BIRDS of PREY in the IRISH REPUBLIC.

If a falconer takes possession of any bird or prey from another falconer under the regulations he/she must notify the Department of Wildlife within two days for a licence update.

As regards the selling of birds a breeder must have a wildlife breeders licence issued by the Department of Wildlife.

The regulations as regards falconry in Northern Ireland are conducted under UK laws.

However the following regulations apply to all falconers:

A falconer flying an indigenous bird of prey must have a BPH (Bird of Prey Holding Licence). In order to obtain a BPH the falconer must hold a trainee licence for at least two years. This trainee licence entitles a beginner to fly either a kestrel or common buzzard. No licences are applicable for non indigenous birds of prey species. As regards hybrids which contain indigenous genes, the Northern Ireland authorities have not reached a conclusive decision in that regard.

LITHUANIA

The Lithuanian Falconry Club (Lietuvos Sakalininkø Klubas) received official government recognition and falconry as a legal activity on 5th November 1997.

There are currently 21 members of the club, of whom 5 are active falconers. They keep 4 hawks (3 goshawks and 1 sparrowhawk).

Relationships with conservationists are good. Permits are issued for keeping and hunting with birds of prey and the position for falconry is positive.

Contacts are maintained with representatives of the hunting organisations and those who hunt with hawks are officially recognised as hunters under the Lithuanian Hunting Rules. The Club is not only involved with hunting but also protection of birds of prey in the wild and captive breeding to ensure the survival of certain species in the future.

There are currently no problems for falconry in Lithuania. Nobody considers conservation an issue as so few birds are kept in captivity. Other hunters do not see us as competition or a threat. Small game is of little interest to Lithuanian hunters and most people, including hunters consider falconry as an exotic rather than serious method of hunting.

Falconry in Lithuania enjoys much freedom.

Yours sincerely,
DARIUS DAUGELA
PRESIDENT, LITHUANIAN FALCONERS CLUB
PAVENEJO 19-37
5500 MAPEIKIAI
LITHUANIA

STATUS of FALCONRY in NORTH AMERICA

Frank M. Bond, General Counsel, North American Falconers Association

The Board of Directors of the North American Falconers Association (NAFA) voted to seek membership in the International Association of Falconry (IAF) for the two nations, Canada and the United States, which make up NAFA. The NAFA membership is voting on the inclusion of Mexico as part of its regular membership, and it appears that Mexican falconers will soon be eligible to be regular members of NAFA. NAFA President Tim Kimmel will file applications for NAFA membership in the IAF on behalf of Canada and the United States now, and later for Mexico. Dr. Kimmel will make recommendations of the NAFA members to hold the IAF positions of Vice President for the Americas, Advisory Committee member, Canadian Council member, and U.S. Council member. We respectfully request that the IAF Council vote favorably on the NAFA applications for membership and our recommendations for the positions in the IAF.

Falconry is permitted throughout North America. It is legal in 49 of the 50 U.S. states (except Hawaii where there is no interest) and most of the provinces of Canada. It is permitted in Mexico. Falconry is regulated in the U.S. in a coordinated federal and state system adopted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In Canada falconry is regulated separately in each province. I am not clear about any regulations which govern falconry in Mexico.

As most IAF members know, the U.S. and Canada are the sources of a huge number of raptors bred in captivity. Captive propagation is undertaken on a commercial basis. Birds are exported throughout the world. There is use of a broad spectrum of birds, including hybrids. The majority of NAFA's membership fly short-wings.

In both the U.S. and Canada, falconers may take eyass and passage birds from the wild. We feel that this is a traditional part of the sport which we defend very hard and, to date, quite successfully. The harvest includes all raptors customarily used in falconry, including the use of passage Golden Eagles. We are permitted to hack birds, and we have the free use of hybrids. In most U.S. states we have extended falconry seasons for hunting beginning usually on September 1 and ending in February or March of the following year.

There are approximately 2,600 regular voting members in NAFA and approximately 4,000 active falconers in the U.S. I do not know the number of Canadian falconers who are not members of NAFA. Virtually every state and province has a state/provisional falconry association or club which is an affiliate member of NAFA. We recruit the non member falconers actively.

NAFA provides representation for falconry issues in Washington, D.C. and Ottawa. That representation is aggressive, because we lobby and appear before U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service administrative hearings and before the U.S. Congress. Canada generally has presented fewer problems which are handled for the most part at the provincial level.

Falconers lead the effort, through The Peregrine Fund and individually, to restore the delisting of the Peregrine from the U.S. endangered species list. The U.S. is beginning to attempt to establish a management and harvest plan for peregrines by falconers. We were dealt a setback on this when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service imposed a permit condition on all falconry permits to prohibit the take of peregrines. It is expected to be rescinded as soon as the management plan is implemented. Nevertheless, NAFA objected to this highly offensive approach, so I coordinated 300 separate individual appeals to have the permit condition rescinded. We feel that it sets a bad precedent for other species. I can explain this in greater detail at the AGM.

NAFA has proposed the downlisting of the gyrfalcon from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II. The U.S., with the support of Canada, will make the proposal at COP11. NAFA member Tom Cade and I prepared the scientific and legal document to support the downlisting. Dr. Cade has the most extensive knowledge

of the gyrfalcon of anyone in the world, and Tundrius Peregrine Falcons throughout North America. In August, 1999, we celebrated the NAFA had been asked by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to begin preparing the scientific documentation to support the similar downlisting of the Peregrine for COP 12. NAFA recognizes that many real challenges to the lawful practice of falconry arise in such groups as CITES, the IUCN, the World Working Group, etc. We recognize that our opponents are many and real. We welcome the opportunity to be represented by the IAF and to assist in the representation of falconry in the international meetings. We will always request that the IAF be cognizant and supportive of the North American traditions and practices of falconry. We have some differences with Europe and other parts of the world, so we do not want our practice compromised. We believe that some policies adverse to falconry may arise in the EU and that those policies may migrate from Brussels to Washington and Ottawa.

Similarly we are prepared to commit to support the reasonable practice of falconry everywhere, even where there are traditions and practices are different from our own. We must stand together as an international organization. The IAF's success will largely depend on the strength of mutual respect among all of the member organizations.

I am prepared to supplement information at the AGM.

PORTUGAL

HUNTING SEASON - September to December. Some areas until the end of January.

Hunting days – Wednesday and Saturdays (falconry)

Usual Game – Quail, Partridge (red leg), Hare, Rabbit, Ducks.

Law – Falconry has been officially recognised as a method of hunting since 1985. Falconers are required to pass a general examination as do all hunters, plus a specific examination covering falconry. Only captive bred birds of prey may be used and must be registered. An annual fee is paid for a hunting licence.

Falconers are restricted to limited areas where they may train their birds using bagged game. Those areas are shared with hunters who wish to train their dogs.

Three different statutes rule general hunting grounds:

FREE LANDS – any licensed hunter may hunt over these lands; shooters on Tuesdays and Sundays, falconers on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The management of these lands is carried out by public administration. The new law will bring this to an end in five years time.

ASSOCIATIVE LANDS – Several hunters from a region (land owners or not) make an agreement with the landowners to lease the hunting rights. A 10 years plan must be presented to the authorities and after approval the area is restricted to club members. A limited number of foreign hunters may be admitted to the club. As with 'free lands' hunting days are restricted.

TOURIST HUNTING GROUNDS - A 10 year plan must be submitted to the authorities by the landowners or others who lease the hunting rights. The main objective is economic exploitation. There are no restricted hunting days.

APF goals

To approve the use of ferrets with no restriction.

To approve the right of falconers to train their birds unconfined to restricted areas, in the same way as professional dog trainers.

To seek a suitable land and establish restricted areas just for falconers.

SPANISH FALCONRY SITUATION

BACKGROUND and CURRENT STATUS

After a period of legal vagueness, due to political changes, falconry was banned in Spain in 1989 by a Royal Decree of the Central government due to its, as stated literally in the Decree, 'massive and non selective' character! As it can be easily understood, the green pressure was behind this groundless decision.

By then, Spain was already organised in 17 Regional Autonomous Regions and powers on Wild life and Hunting were already transferred to them from Central Government. Some of the Autonomous Regions lodged an appeal against the Royal Decree before the Constitutional Court, claiming that the Central Government was invading their powers on the subject. In 1995 the Constitutional Court declared the 'non basic character' of the royal Decree's concerned article, meaning that the Autonomous Regions could promulgate laws against its warrant.

Anyhow, the banning Royal Decree remains as a supplementary rule that should be applied where a specific legislation on the subject is not in order and also it has been considered as a guidance by some of the Autonomous Regions that promulgated rules on falconry.

As a result of all the above, we have Autonomous Regions that have permitted falconry, regulating its practice under different conditions in laws, regulations and orders of different rank, like Andalucia, Castilla Leon, Cataluna, Madrid, Extremadura etc.

There are other Autonomous Regions with no regulation at all, but are preparing, like La Rioja. Navarra etc. Some falconers are practising falconry in these Regions through exceptional permits issued by the authorities.

There is a third group of Autonomous Regions, like Aragon, Castilla La Mancha, Asturias etc. in which the practice of falconry is prohibited by different rank regulations that echoed the 1989 Royal Decree. In these Regions there are also exceptional permits to practice falconry under specific circumstances.

As might be expected, there is a 'green' pressure on this subject all over Spain which was overcome, to some extent, in those Regions that promulgated regulations on this subject. There has been a huge amount of work carried out by many falconers associations with the regional authorities to present falconry favourably and to achieve reasonable regulations on the subject. We believe it is fair to mention that in most cases co-ordination of the actions was carried out by the AEC (Asociacion Espanola de Cetreria/Spanish Falconry Association) and the UEDECA (Union Espanola para la Defensa de la Cetreria y las Aves de Presa/Spanish Union for the Defence of Falconry and Birds of Prey).

But, as you may have learned from the above, due to the irregular and unstable situation and the ecologists lobbying, there is still a lot of work to be done everywhere.

It is also worthy of mention that, on the occasion of the 1989 banning Royal Decree, falconers associations from all over Spain rapidly and spontaneously joined a Co-ordinadora de Asociaciones de Cetreria with the sole objective of fighting the Royal Decree. On its behalf, an appeal was lodged in the Supreme Court, based on the Decree's discord with former and higher rank laws and the new political organisation of the Spanish State. It is also fair to mention the leading role played by the AEC in that Co-ordinadora, not only from the economic viewpoint, but also as promoter and organiser. The Co-ordinadora itself disappeared sometime after the appeal was lodged.

It is not only fair, but a must, to mention the very valuable and greatly appreciated support provided at that time to Spanish Falconry by the IAF, represented by its former President Christian de Coune and by Tom J. Cade, on behalf of the Peregrine Fund. At that very difficult time, it was sad that we did not hear a single word of support or advice from the FEC (Federacion Espanola de Caza/Spanish Hunting Federation), bearing in mind that they claim to be the only representative body of all methods of hunting in Spain. We, as Co-ordinadora had a meeting with the FEC Officers and they stated they were not going to help falconers to fight against the Decree, because it was a political problem and very few falconers were members of the FEC. It was clear that they had bigger battles to fight. We believe this is a very significant fact about the real approach of the FEC to falconry, but this will be developed in a different paragraph.

Nowadays, we reckon about 30/40 Falconers Associations in Spain. The two biggest being the AEC and the UEDECA, with a membership fluctuating between 150 to 200 members each approx. and regular publications. UEDECA was founded in 1995 with the aim of being an umbrella organisation for falconers in Spain, once the Co-ordinadora dissolved. In fact, the majority of its members are members of other clubs and Associations. Most of the remaining Clubs and Associations have less than 20 members, as a maximum.

Although it is not easy to confirm the number of falconers in Spain, we reckon no more than one thousand, including hawk keepers, and between 300 to 400 practising falconers.

RELATIONSHIP with FEDERACION ESPANOLA de CAZA (FEC) and the so called SPANISH FALCONRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

We refer to IAF President's Report 1998, where the minutes of a meeting, in March 1998 in Brussels, between Christian de Coune and the representatives of the FEC, at their request, are included.

Frankly speaking and to say the least, the statements of FEC at that meeting are of unfair and inappropriate comments about the current IAF's Spanish Member Organisation that demonstrate the arrogant attitude of the FEC towards dedicated, reputable Spanish falconers representatives. We are not surprised by this, as we have suffered in the past from this kind of behaviour, including intolerable threats from top FEC's officials to promote a ban on falconry if falconers did not follow their guidelines.

We are grateful to Christian for his well aimed comments to FEC representatives at that meeting.

The FEC is a powerful and huge organisation with almost half a million members. After the first disappointing meeting, as Co-ordinadora, in the early nineties, once it was dissolved, we held some meetings with representatives of the FEC, including the National President, Manuel Andrade, due to what we understood was our common interest in collaborating for the sake of falconry in those difficult times.

We were then referred to Luis Ciria, at that time recently designated as Falconry Delegate within the FEC. We do not know the reasons behind Luis Ciria's appointment. He is a non falconer but is still Falconry Delegate at the FEC as well as being President of the FEC in the Autonomous Region of Castilla Leon, with whom we've got on well, from a personal view point. Nevertheless, we cannot agree at all with his management of the falconry inside the FEC, loyally following, we are sure, FEC's official policy.

We held several meetings with Mr Ciria. We tried to explain to him the real needs of falconers making proposals of collaboration with the FEC on aspects such as legal advice, political lobbying, public relations, publications, scientific projects, International #falconry Convention etc. knowing they could offer us a lot of advice and support in such a crucial area. We did not even exclude, in good faith, the integration of our organisations in the FEC.

Their main interest was organise the Committee, most of them with little field experience and very much interested in competition and publicity. With respect with the other aspects to which we asked for their support, we received just empty words and postponements.

In the circumstances, the relationship between AEC/UEDECA and FEC cooled down. We organised some meetings with falconers and FEC representatives in several Autonomous Regions to establish a strategy to

fight for recognition of falconry as a legal sport. To be frank FEC's support for this aim was always conditioned to the integration of falconers in the FEC and never resolute. Afterwards the already mentioned threats from FEC came along.

It became very clear to us, that the image of falconry as a 'natural' hunting method, the public interest in raptors and the media coverage could be well used in those Championships for the sake of the FEC's public image at no cost to themselves, due the Governments subventions to the events.

On the other hand, FEC is very suspicious of anybody who might represent a threat of segregation within its organisation. This is what happened some years ago with a Spanish popular field sport Galgo (Spanish greyhound) hare racing. The galgo people felt that the FEC did not represent their interests as a qualified minority, and founded their own federation. At the present time, falconers, due to resources and work load involved unfortunately cannot achieve this. We are far fewer than the 'galgueros'. But we do not dismiss that choice for the future.

On our side, we felt we could not deliver a falconry future of our country, something on the other hand much easier and hassle free for us, if an organisation like the FEC whose main interest, if not the only one, is to organise championships, but which as far as we are concerned is a prostitution of genuine falconry.

This controversy with the FEC is not a problem involving personalities. In May 1996, Mr Ciria offered Jose Manuel Rodriguez-Villa, one of the undersigned, that he should take over from him as Falconry Delegate inside the FEC. He was thanked very much the offer but rejected it for the above reasons. Jose Manuel was aware of the capabilities and resources on offer but and was sure he would have not been able to modify the FEC's policy and approach towards falconry.

SUMMARISING

Federacion Espanola de Caza is a huge and powerful institution with influence at economic, political and media levels.

Its approach to falconry has proved to be wrong, arrogant and dangerous. They have shown us that they are not interested in genuine falconry and related concerns (legal, scientific, educational PR etc) but in the positive and spectacular image they can take advantage of, organising Championships. As you can imagine, what is seen by the audience at those Championships is far from real hawking. A new generation of Spanish 'falconers' is born just for the sake of competing and winning, flying their hawks over released game. Wild game is not convenient for the FEC's objectives, as the crowd and Press cannot follow the flight, particularly with long wings.

We are clearly against this policy. We believe positive feeling from the public opinion can be achieved with non competing meetings, mainly through educational exhibitions or field meetings and a careful

approach to the media. If, because of the circumstances, bagged quarry must be used in front of a crowd, strong pigeons should be preferred due to their low killing rate.

Championships like the ones organised by FEC should not be claimed as a defensive tool for falconry anymore. There are already harmful side effects and, at the same time, there are better alternatives to that aim, as the ones mentioned above. We understand championships not only do not have anything to do with falconry as it is defined in the IAF's constitution, but they are against the spirit true falconry, particularly if bagged quarry other than strong free flying pigeons, are used.

Nowadays an increasing number of hunters (not only falconers) are disappointed with FEC's role and a new platform is being formed for the sake of the genuine values of hunting. We have been invited to attend, among other influential groups of hunters, the preliminary meetings of this platform.

On the other hand, the UEDECA's Board at its September meeting made the decision to introduce the proposal at its next AGM to apply for membership of the IAF. The next date of the next UEDECA's AGM is yet to be decided.

Jose Sanchez Martin

President AEC and UEDECA's Honorary Chairman

Lorenzo Machin

On behalf of the AEC and UEDACA's President

Jose Manuel Rodriguez-Villa

On behalf of the AEC and UEDECA's Vicepresident

FALCONRY in the UK – REPORT for the IAF AGM 1999

Because the last AGM was largely taken up with the new Constitution and election of officers, the usual reports from member nations were not then given.

This report from the UK therefore covers a two-year period 1998 and 1999.

The past two years have certainly been eventful for falconry on the UK. Turning to people first: as you all know, in February 1998 the BFC sadly lost its President Emeritus, Anthony Jack. His contribution to the Club over seven decades and to the IAF and falconry generally was immense and we still sorely miss his wisdom and sound guidance in BFC affairs. In his Will he very generously bequeathed his hawking library and papers to the Club together with the sum of £5000.

We also recorded with sadness the death of Cyril Morley a past Hon Secretary of the BFC and founder member of the IAF.

On a more cheerful note one of the major successes of the past two years has been the financing by the Hawk Board and Countryside Alliance (previously the British Field Sports society) of the salaried post of 'Hawk Board National Co-ordinator to act as the focal point for all matters relating to falconry. The person selected for the post was Iain Timmins who has proved highly effective in liaising and establishing working relationships with the Countryside Alliance, National Trust and the Department of the Environment (DETR) responsible for the issue of Quarry Licences, implementation of CITES, EU Regulations and Directives, Registration etc. The aim has been to turn the Hawk Board into a proactive organisation, anticipating potential problems rather than reacting after the event and it seems to be working.

This, together with the launch of the Campaign for Falconry by Marie-Louise Leschallas and Andy Gray at the Falconers Fair in 1998 with the support and backing of the Countryside Alliance in order to raise money to lobby on behalf of falconry, bodes very well for the future and has already paid handsome dividends in two major success stories.

First, Quarry Licences to take certain protected species. In 1997 falconers were shocked and dismayed when the DETR, under the new government, without warning and without reason, refused to issue the customary licences to take traditional quarry i.e. skylarks with Merlins and blackbirds with sparrow hawks.

After protracted negotiation by members of the Hawk Board on behalf of falconers, the DETR, at the last moment agreed to issue licences for 1998 and have done so again for 1999.

The second major success was that the National Trust has been persuaded, again after long and persistent negotiation, to rescind its total ban on falconry and to allow hawking to take place under licence on its properties where it was previously traditionally practiced.

Both these successes speak volumes for the fact that falconry in the UK is at last getting its act together and lobbying effectively where it matters. This is just as well because in the past year the DETR has come up with two new sets of proposals, one concerning quarry licences and the other to do with the Registration and Article 10 certificates to comply with EU regulations. Both of which if applied as proposed would have restrictive and costly implications for falconers without achieving any of the conservation benefits, which they claim. At least the channels of communication are now well established and understood, and although negotiation and dialogue continue and success cannot be guaranteed, it will not be default if the DETR impose their proposals as originally drafted.

Meanwhile, as I wrote recently in the BFC Newsletter and Journal, I really believe that falconers in the UK have never had it so good.

For a start the population of wild raptors in the UK has reached an all time high after the disastrous decline in numbers during the fifties and sixties. Indeed there are now calls from certain quarters that numbers need to be controlled. In spite of this, and for some years now, no licences have been granted to take raptors from the wild for falconry and none are likely to be given in the near future. Although in principle the BFC supports the IAF philosophy that raptors are a renewable resource to be harvested with discretion, and there is no doubt that falconers' reasonable requirements could easily be satisfied without endangering UK native wild populations, we are content to live with the situation. More than sufficient hawks of almost every species of interest to falconers are being bred domestically and are available at reasonable prices, and while we are self sufficient we believe it would be counter productive, and not in falconers' long term interests to upset the bird protectionists and conservationists by applying for licences.

Meanwhile advances in veterinary science, specialist raptor veterinary surgeons who conduct regular seminars, ready availability of suitable hawk food, etc. mean that raptor husbandry and the mortality rates of falconers' hawks have improved out of all recognition in comparison with the not too distant past.

Telemetry, now readily available to all has also played an important part in minimising, if not entirely eliminating, the risk of loss in the field.

Beginners to the sport are now given encouragement. Apart from the British Falconers Club offering its Apprenticeship scheme, there are a plethora of other clubs and associations which they can now join, falconry schools offering tuition, courses and hands on experience, raptor breeders to provide them with hawks, equipment makers selling them everything they might be persuaded they need and a lot they do not! Videos, new books and manuals by the known and unknown, E-mail etc. Judging by the Falconers Fair now attended by falconers worldwide, falconry in the UK is, like it or not, a growth industry and booming!

Falconers can now travel to and from the UK and Europe with their hawks with little more than bureaucratic inconvenience and within the next couple of years they should be able to bring their dogs as well without undergoing quarantine.

Certainly several of our friends and colleagues from Germany, Italy, France, Belgium and Denmark manage to make the annual migration to Scotland in pursuit of the grouse.

Quarry, with the possible exception of the partridge is generally available and we are very fortunate indeed to still have the goodwill of the landowners who allow us to hawk over their land, generally at negligible expense to ourselves.

But there is of course the other side of the coin. Our present government 'New Labour', has now been in power for over two years. There is no doubt about the apparent schism that is widening between that rural and urban ways of life.

Farmers and landowners feel threatened by the government's policies whether they are in context of livestock prices or rights to roam the countryside. As far as field sports are concerned the Prime Minister has only recently repeated his promise that hunting with hounds will be banned in the current parliament and likewise the Scottish Assembly has undertaken to abolish hunting as one of its priorities. The Prime Minister assured us that a ban on hunting with hounds would have no affect on either shooting or angling. That is not what either the League against Cruel sports says, or indeed one or two of his own Ministers.

They see such a ban as the first step in banning all so called 'blood sports', and make no secret of it. Already the straws are in the wind. Following the ban on handgun ownership, already the government is proposing more restrictive ownership of shotguns, particularly on those living in urban areas.

So, how does this effect UK falconers? The fact that in spite of the euphoric picture of falconry I painted earlier in this report, we are as much in the firing line as hunting, shooting and angling if not more so as we are very much a minority activity.

There is certainly no room for complacency and we will have to run very hard to stay where we are and not lose ground.

ROBBIE WILSON
PRESIDENT BRITISH FALCONERS CLUB

**US FISH and WILDLIFE ANNOUNCES INTENT to DEVELOP PEREGRINE
FALCON MANGEMENTS PLANS**
From Frank Bond General Counsel
North American Falconers Association

This announcement by the Fish and Wildlife Service should be of interest to all of you associated with the International Association of Falconry.

The actual text of the formal notice in the Federal Register follows:

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service.

MIGRATORY BIRD PERMITS; NOTICE of INTENT to PREPARE TWO MANAGEMENT PLANS and ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS for TAKE of WILD PEREGRINE FALCONS.

SUMMARY:

The American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) was removed from the protection of the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA) on August 25th 1999. The arctic peregrine falcon (*F.p. tundrius*) was removed from EAS protection in 1994. due to their special status as recently delisted subspecies, we intend to develop two joint State/Federal management plans to govern take of wild peregrine falcons (*F. peregrinus*) in the United States. We will prepare Environmental Assessments (EAS) for public review as part of the process. One management plan will address take of peregrine falcon nestlings in the United States. The other will address take of immature peregrines that originate in Alaska, Canada and Greenland, and migrate through the contiguous United States. These management plans will be developed co-operatively by the Service and the States with input from the governments of Canada, Greenland and Mexico. Once the plans are completed, the States will be responsible for managing the species within the framework of the plans. Our intent is that these management plans will apply only until the Service and the States agree that special management is no longer warranted. Comments on development of harvest strategies and management plans are solicited and will be considered in development of the plans and associated Environmental Assessments.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Three subspecies of peregrine falcon are recognised in North America: the maritime, or Peale's peregrine (*F.p. paelei*); the tundra or Arctic peregrine; and the American peregrine. The Peale's peregrine is a year round resident of the coastal areas of western Canada and southern Alaska to the Aleutians. It was never listed as endangered or threatened under the EAS. The Arctic peregrine breeds in the northern tundra regions from Alaska across Canada to Greenland. It was listed as endangered, but breeding populations in North America expanded considerably in recent decades, and the subspecies was delisted in 1994 (October 5th 1994; 59 FR 50796). The American peregrine subspecies breeds from the boreal forests of Alaska and Canada south through the western United States and northern Mexico. Numeric recovery goals for breeding pairs in southeastern Canada and the eastern United States have recently been met, and numbers now exceed recovery goals over most of its North American range. We delisted the American peregrine falcon, and removed the similarity of appearance provision for free-flying peregrines in the conterminous states, on August 25th 1999 (64 FR 46542). That action had the effect of eliminating the Endangered Species Act prohibitions against take of wild-caught peregrines for falconry, raptor propagation, scientific collecting and other purposes permissible under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. However, except for scientific research, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and depredation permits issued for public safety reasons at airports, we have continued the prohibition on take of wild peregrines until we complete management plans to govern harvest.

Migrant juvenile peregrines were captured by falconers along the Atlantic coast barrier islands annually for many years prior to 1970, and migrants and nestlings were taken less regularly elsewhere in the United States. Falconers would like the use of wild peregrines to resume now that peregrines have met recovery goals. Although captive-bred peregrines have been available for falconry since 1983, wild peregrines have not been available due to ESA restrictions, except in Alaska where a limited take of Peale's peregrines is allowed, and a limited take of Arctic peregrines has been allowed since its delisting.

Falconry is regulated under a joint State-Federal permitting system (50 CFR 21.28-21.29). Regulations provide for three progressive classes of falconry permit's apprentice, general and master falconer' depending on the individual's level of experience. Apprentice falconers may possess only one raptor at a time and may take only certain species, which do not include peregrine falcons. General falconers may

possess two raptors at a time and may take no more than two from the wild during any 12 month period. Master falconers may possess three raptors and take no more than two from the wild during any 12 month period. Federal and most States falconry regulations permit the removal from the wild of non-endangered raptors for falconry.

In anticipation of high interest in take of wild peregrines for falconry following the delisting of the American peregrine, we have been working with the States to develop harvest criteria that will ensure that recovery achieved under the ESA is sustained and that further population growth is not impeded. We will develop, co-operatively with the States, two management plans. The first plan will deal with the take of nestling (eyas) peregrines in the United States. The second plan will deal with take of juvenile migrant (passage) peregrines. Most migrant peregrines will originate in Canada, Greenland or Alaska. The management plans will include (1) biological criteria for a harvest of peregrine falcons, (2) implementation criteria for the harvest, (3) procedures for evaluating and adjusting harvest in an adaptive-management framework. The management plans will provide overall guidance for take of peregrines. Within the framework provided by each plan, the States will be responsible for decisions about harvest.

To avoid compromising the restoration of peregrine populations in North America, our preliminary objectives for the combined plans are:

- (1) Protect from harvest to the extent possible, nestling and dispersing juvenile American peregrines from natal areas in eastern Canada and eastern United States
- (2) Allow a conservative and sustainable level of take of migrant juvenile peregrines originating from the Alaskan and Canadian Arctic and Greenland.
- (3) Allow a conservative and sustainable level of take of nestling peregrines from healthy populations in the western United States and Alaska.

The Environmental Assessments will likely include several alternatives, such as various harvest levels from particular management groups. Possible harvest levels include no take, take of 5 percent or 10 percent of annual production, or no restrictions on take beyond the existing falconry regulations (i.e. no management plan).

Because take of nestlings is a United States issue, we expect to complete this plan for migrants, which will require international co-ordination with Canada, Greenland and Mexico. We hope to complete the plan and EA for nestlings by spring and for migrants by fall, 2000, respectively.

The Service has a statutory obligation under the ESA to monitor the status of delisted species in cooperation with the States. The purpose of the EAS monitoring plan is to ensure that recovery is sustained. We intend to publish a draft ESA monitoring plan for the American peregrine falcon in the Federal Register in the near future. Take of American peregrines under the MBTA pursuant for the management plans that are the subject of this current notice will be considered during the ESA monitoring program. However, the management plans under MBTA, which will govern take all North American Subspecies of peregrine, and the monitoring plan for the American peregrine subspecies under ESA are otherwise unrelated.

Dated: September 27th 19999
Jamie Rappaport Clark
Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year 2000. I hope that the following information will be interesting for all of you!

The Saker Falcon (*Falco Cherrug*) is a grassland species of raptor that has been found throughout a large part of northwest China. As a result of human persecution, the Saker Falcon began to be extirpated throughout much of its former ranges since the middle of the century. Although a tremendous effort is being made to establish grassland reserves.

Perhaps the greatest immediate threat to the Saker Falcon is continued human persecution, that of shooting, net-capturing and smuggling.

On November 20th we successfully prosecuted a total of 70 individuals for smuggling Saker Falcons in our Qingdao Airport. These raptors were captured from Sinkang Province in the northwest of China and transported to Qingdao. All of the raptors were released with one of their legs painted red, in our Laoshan National Forest Park. This site was selected because it is part of the corridor of the migration flyway of raptors.

In co-operation with our release actions we will continue to monitor them and expect them to migrate to their winter sites.

With best wishes
Sincerley,
Jevgeni Shergalin
4th January 2000
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On behalf of the Swedish Falconers' Club I am writing to you concerning this years Annual General Meeting of the IAF.

First of all, I wish to thank you for the kind invitation that was sent to me to participate in this year's field meeting at Oroshaza and the AGM that is to be held in conjunction with it. I have heard that the conditions for hawking are quite something there with lots of pheasants and hares, and I would dearly like to join you all one day on a field meeting such as this. Unfortunately, the university course that I am attending is quite intensive at this time of year (it is currently in the middle of our autumn semester), and my test schedule does simply not enable me to undertake trips abroad at the moment. Regrettably, I will therefore have to wait for another opportunity.

We will however have one representative at the reunion in the form of Georg Pinter, who is actually Hungarian of origin (he follows in the footsteps of Laurent de Bastyai one might say, by being the only member in our Club that actually understands Hungarian). Georg Pinter is a member of the board of our association and will be able to answer any questions you might have regarding the situation for falconry here in Sweden.

There are two more things that you should be aware of. The first concerns our application for membership that we sent in before last year's AGM, and the other concerns hybrids.

While we have not applied to be officially registered as a Swedish falconry organisation yet, we have existed as an organisation for the two years that the IAF requires from any applicants ; at our founding assembly we came to the conclusion that it would be better to wait with this until we had been allowed to join as a member of the IAF. (And at least here in Sweden, such an official registration is mostly for postage fee reductions and to be able to claim minor state subsidies).

On the topic of hybrids, it now seems as though the pair escaped falconers' birds that nested in southwestern Sweden last year and successfully produced offspring, actually consists of a Peregrine female and a Gyr/Peregrine male, both supposedly coming from Denmark. Apparently, the young were collected, blood sampled and later euthanised on orders by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. This story was printed in at least one large Swedish newspaper recently following a report by TT (the Swedish equivalent to AP in the United States or Reuters in Germany). I will report additional information about the case as soon as I can get hold of any.

Once again, I thank you for the kind invitation, and regret the circumstances that unable me to participate.

Best regards,

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Members associations after AGM 29.10.99

Country	Name of association	N° of members	Category
Austria	Osterreichischer Falknerbund	120	M
Belgium	Club Marie de Bourgogne	54	M
	Belgische Vereniging van Vlaamse Valkeniers en Havikeniers	33	M
Brazil	Associação Brasileira de Falcões e Preservação de Aves de Rapina	21	CM
Canada	North American Falconers Association	99	M
Croatia	Sokolarski Centar	15	M
Czech	Klub Sokolniku	421	M
Denmark	Dansk Falkejagt Klub	35	AM
Estonia	Zoolit	4	CM
France	Association Nationale des Fauconniers et Autoursiers Français	210	M
Georgia	Georgian Section of Falconry	300	CM
Germany	Deutscher Falkenorden	1.000	M
Hungary	Magyar Solymasz Klub	120	M
India	Hawking Club of Hyderabad	47	CM
Ireland	Irish Hawking Club	62	M
Italy	Circolo dei Falconieri d'Italia per lo Studio e la Protezione dei Rapaci	28	M
Japan	The Japan Falconiformes Center	42	M
Lithuania	Lietuvos Skalininku Klubas	21	M
Netherlands	Nederlands Valkeniersverbond Adriaan Mollen	150	M
Poland		120	M
Portugal	Associação Portuguesa de Falcoaria	25	M
Salvador	Club y Escuela de Cetreria de El Salvador	9	CM

Slovakia	Slovensky Klub Sokoliarov	232	M
Slovenia	Sokolarsko Drustvo Kranj	15	M
	Slovensko Sokolarsko Drustvo Horus	14	M
South Africa	South African Falconers Association	131	M
	Cape Falconry Club		
	Eastern Cape Falconry Club		
	Free State Falconry Club		
	Natal Falconry Club		
	North West Falconry Club		
Spain	Transvaal Falconry		
	Asociacion Espanola de Cetreria /	150	M
	Club Rodriguez de la Fuente Alicantina de Cetreria	55	M
Sweden	Svenska Falkenareförbundet	20	AM
Switzerland	Schweizerische Falkner-Vereinigung	70	M
Tunisia	Association Nationale des Fauconniers Tunisiens du Cap-Bon	20	CM
United Kingdom	British Falconers Club BFC	1005	M
	Scottish Hawking Club SHC	150	M
	Welsh Hawking Club WHC	245	M
USA	North American Falconers Association	2.620	M
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Falconers Club	20	CM

31 Countries

36 Associations totalling 7.683 members

27 Member Organisations

7 Corresponding Member Organisations

2 Associate Member Organisations

