

Newsletter



QUOD TOTUM PROCEDIT EX AMORE

www.i-a-f.org

Edition - June 2004



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FALCONRY & CONSERVATION OF BIRDS OF PREY

Jesus
Millán



SPONSORS
OF IAF AGM 2003
JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA
SPAIN





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Editor's Forward

Standing in a very muddy field watching a famous matador, Jesus Millan, run towards the horizon acting in place of the flushing dog was an unavoidable realisation for many of the watching crowd of how age takes its toll and leaves us behind. Eventually the running covey of red legged partridge, harried by a man fitter than many thought possible, flushed reluctantly under the tiercel waiting on high above. Our matador stopped to catch his breath and watch the flight that thankfully was coming towards the gathered crowd. So high was his pitch, the stooping tiercel took fully 15 seconds to reach the fleeing birds, binding to one in great style, bringing a whooping cheer from appreciative onlookers. Now even our matador was smiling.

It was Spain, December 2003, and the IAF AGM field meet, struggling amid floods and inhospitable weather for our falconry meet. Undaunted we all enjoyed our own dreams of the obvious perfection of opportunity for classic game hawking in this otherwise ideal countryside. At the same time we each were struggling to resist temptation to believe that this area near Jerez de la Frontera in Southern Spain would be so much better than our own more familiar ground. It is the nature of our sport to challenge us with seemingly doom laden prospects until we reflect on the season just past and usually realise how good it really is.

Our hosts in Spain could not have been more kind and generous. Even as the weather conspired against too much sport the real camaraderie of our meeting proved an even greater success as social events became more relaxed and extended than anticipated. Lunch, a typical Spanish paella and tapas, laid out by the landowner in an empty barn was enjoyed by all to the full whilst we simply had to wait for rain to ease. Of course in the conditions it did not stop. Hawks and falconers all got thoroughly soaked, vehicles got bogged in the mud, but flights were good and partridge brought to book. We simply enjoyed ourselves in true friendship that our sport engenders.

Of course our annual general meeting is to conduct the business of our sport and handle the politics that necessarily effects us all. IAF, under the guidance of its current presidential team, grows from strength to strength with ever more member organisations. This year has seen the first Middle Eastern members just at the time that the political challenges and ecological problems for some of our species of hawks appear to be severe. The CITES secretariat has organised a conference to bring all parties and range states together. Hosted by UAE it offers real opportunity for constructive progress at last.

Most of all the true friendship of our shared way of life and instinctive understanding between like minded sportsmen will help resolve issues that so bedevil those who make political capital out of our sport. Our wellbeing and vibrant way of life is indeed a true barometer of greater issues that IAF has been so successful in sailing through choppy waters. King James the 1st of England (James the VI of Scotland) preferred hunting to hawking, because, as he said 'hawking was a great stirrer up of passion'. Sadly that is as true today as ever and we are beset with perfidious behaviour from within and without

our sport by those who often lose sight of our true values in pursuit of their own.

The issues that challenge us today thankfully enable us to surmount these problems, often by a bumpy passage, when true sportsmen come together in shared joy of their experience. IAF reaches out to falconers everywhere to join in support of shared ideals. Current success is a tribute to those who work so selflessly on behalf of the sport and to the IAF Presidential team that guides us all.

Anthony Crosswell
Executive Secretary IAF



Correction and thanks:

In the last issue of the Newsletter an article appeared by Dr Tom Richter about animal welfare. This article was originally written in German and was kindly translated by Dave Bowman of the UK. Many thanks to Dave for his kind work.

Pictures in this edition :

Cover Picture - Andrew Ellis 'African Peregrine with Carmine Bee-eater'

Others:

Keiya Nakajima, The Falciformes Centre, Japan - jaface@ylw.mmtr.or.jp Tom Richter, Frank Bond, Patrick Morel, Tony Crosswell

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The Golden Age Is Now

Those who prattle on about the glorious summers before the war, when the sun always shone and there was a permanent abundance of strawberries are talking arrant nonsense. The facts simply do not add up, memories lie. Things have always seen to be better in retrospect. Falconers who bestow the great names of the past with almost god like status are delud-



ing themselves. Men and women of all ages have loved myths and fairy tales and will go on loving them.

The truth is that many of the 'so called' heroes of the past were privileged men of means, often self centered and arrogant. They had unlimited time and employed professional falconers and took center-stage only when it suited them. Many of their or their falconer's practices were barbaric in the extreme. Close seasons were ignored or did not exist. Furthermore they had a wide choice of hawks to pick from and those found to be unsuitable for training were simply slipped down wind to prey on the wind of fortune.

When I joined the BFC in 1951 I was placed under the strict tutelage of the late Bill Rutledge, such was the way the BFC operated in those days. (He once told me to scrub my hawks shed floor more thoroughly). Bill was my mentor and friend. He impressed on me that the falconer's efforts should always be directed at obtaining what he called 'quality flights.' A good ringing flight with a merlin was reward in itself whether successful or not, a kill was a bonus. Filling gilt lettered, green bound game books with copious notes on the weather etc., was not on the menu. We were not allied to the ratchers' union. Trophy hunting was not what the noble art of falconry was about.

For many of our predecessors lark hawking in July and August was the norm. It is no wonder their bags were large. They probably trod on as many larks as their birds caught.

Today, I and many others, have had the good fortune to see Alan Horton and Sue Mulecock's merlins twisting and turning high in the heavens in flights of unmatched quality. I very

much doubt that Michell ever witnessed such magnificent flying. And there are many more merlin practitioners than Alan & Sue -they are simply the best I have ever seen, and I have been out with quite a few.

I have had little experience of game hawking save with Ronald Stevens and the odd field trips. However it is obvious that in the days when Gilbert Blain recorded an eyass making 93 kills in 96 flights it implies that a large percentage of the flights must have been complete doddles. I have watched wild eyasses hunting in autumn gales for close on fifty years. They don't find it a doddle.

Birds that have languished in the kitchens of domesticity cannot be as fit as their wild brethren

Hawking has made gigantic strides during the last few decades: captive breeding, telemetry, social imprinting and hawk husbandry, but veterinary medicine has perhaps made the biggest stride of all. The days of the esoteric hawk doctor with strange potions are long over, but not the yard long bill!

Falconry to day is probably at its peak. Many falconers from all walks of life are enjoying high quality flights; be it with Harris Hawks, Goshawks Sparrowhawks Peregrines or hybrids. As long as they are fair and the contestants are on equal terms is all that matters. Times change and so must we. In Britain, but not so on the Continent where regulations have reached new levels of absurdity, we are living in a golden age of falconry, of that there can be no doubt. The real problem is that the wild open spaces suitable for flying longwings are being gobbled up by the increasing demands of industrial developments. To defend our sport we must defend our land or the golden age will quickly perish.

Dick Treleaven

P.S. According to Graffiti on Birmingham Station, Nostalgia is not what it used to be.

NOTICE OF 35th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2004

Below is notice to the members of the IAF for preliminary information for the AGM in Abu Dhabi, probably September 14th - 19th, UAE by kind invitation of the Emirates Falconry Club.

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The IAF Annual General Meeting (Council of Delegates) 2003

Montecastillo Hotel & Golf Resort, Jerez de la frontera, Spain



Annual General Meeting (Council of Delegates) in Jerez de la Frontera (Spain) on 6th-9th December 2003 in cooperation with AECCA (Spanish Association of Falconry and Conservation of Raptors).

AGM Agenda

Opening address by Patrick Morel

Jerez de la Frontera and the Asociación Española de Cetrería y Conservación de Aves Rapaces (AECCA) are pleased to host the 34th AGM of the IAF.

Jerez de la Frontera, beautiful city of South Andalusia became famous throughout the world for its sweet wines named after the town, which the British pronounced "sherry". It is called "de la Frontera" because it once stood on the frontier between the Moorish and the Christian realms. Jerez is also famous, throughout the world, for its fine horses and brilliant singers and dancers of flamenco.

The distinctive wine in Jerez has been exported for centuries; it was even praised by Shakespeare. It is distinctive because the strong sun gives the grapes high sugar content. British merchants have been involved in the wine trade here for centuries, producing and shipping a fortified wine known as sherry.

Famous names of these dynasties can be seen here over the doors of the bodegas: Sandeman, John Harvey, Domecq, Gonzalez Byass. The Spanish word bodega means "cellar", but it has the general meaning of "wine manufacturer".

But Jerez is also world famous for its magnificent dancing horses, which you can see at the Real Escuela Andaluza de Arte Equestre - the Royal Andalucian School of Equestrian Art.

The town has a markedly aristocratic flavour with wide streets and squares. The 11th century Moorish fortress, or Alcazaba, has been partially restored.

Of special interest is its church, originally built by the Arabs as a mosque. The Sacristy of the Cathedral del Salvador is home to a lovely painting by Zurbarán, The Sleeping Girl.

Apart of official meetings (Advisory Committee Meeting on Saturday 6th December 16.30 and AGM Council meeting on Sunday 7th Dec at 8.00AM) we'll have some entertainment and hopefully quality hawking.

On Sunday 7th Dec, the ladies will have the possibility to tour the city of Jerez in a guided panoramic bus during the AGM. After the AGM, a limited group will be invited to visit the Spanish Imperial hawking site while the other will have lunch at the Hotel Montecastillo. Also, on Sunday 7th, we'll enjoy a flamenco dinner in a local restaurant at 22.30PM. Please see program for details.

Monday 8th and Tuesday 9th will be devoted to hawking on two "cotos" (hawking grounds) Cortijo Vicos and Cortijo Plata with departure early in the morning and end at 18.00. Please see program for details, as well.

This program has been possible thanks to the generosity of some sponsors: Junta de Andalucía (Andalucian Regional Govt. in charge of environment, hunting and hawking), ASISA (first health insurance company of Spain), ASPRO-OCIO (European leading group in entertainment parks), Osborne (famous food and drink company), Yeguada Militar (Spanish Ministry of Defence) and Jerez's Municipality.

On behalf of the IAF and the meet organizers, it is my profound honour and pleasure to wish you good hawking, safe travels and a wonderful stay in Jerez de la Frontera.

Patrick Morel

Carlos Barnabeu spoke to thank the sponsors and welcome all guests on behalf of Spain and Spanish falconers.

1. Apologies for absence

Received from Morocco, Czech Republic, Turkey.

5. President's - report

2003 was a busy year for the IAF.

On internal front, various Member associations saw a complete change in their board. The DFO in Germany, the BFC in



2. Minutes of last AGM

Minutes were approved and signed by the President.

3. New member candidatures - presentation and election.

Emirates Falconers Club gave a Power Point presentation by Majid al Mansouri. The Club has more than 1000 members and represents more than 4000 falconers of the UAE.....Vote accepted as full member

Polish Falconers Order founded 25 months ago. Presentation by Janusz Sielicki. Organised as a second club in Poland with 35 members, flying mainly falcons. It was formed as an NGO to work in partnership with Government and official bodies.....Vote accepted as full member

New Zealand - presentation made by Dr Nick Fox. The Association in this country has formed a charitable trust with regard to birds of prey with about 200 members. Falconry as such is only quasi legal in that it is a part of rehab programs.....Vote accepted as corresponding member.

4. Constitution changes.

Presentation by Frank Bond who chaired the workings of the AC. The updated version is shown at the end of this Newsletter.

Questions were invited but none asked.

Yesterday the AC met and questioned the subject of fees.

The fees will in future be based on the previous years membership number. Consistent with that the membership organisation must have paid its annual fee for the previous year for the delegate to be able to vote.

A vote was taken and the amendments approved unanimously.

the UK, Adriaan Mollen in Netherlands, AECCA in Spain while other associations had only changes of presidents - Czech, Belgium (CMB) and Hungary.

Falconry is questioned in Germany as a federation of associations for protection (NABU) supported by Euro Group Against Bird Crime started a fight against falconry with the aim to ban it. Hybrids will probably be banned this spring. The Slovenians failed to see falconry included in the new hunting law but still keep a licence system. The Danes are discussing the possibility to fly crows, rooks and magpies, a good step for legalising falconry. The Americans had still to face sanitary problems with WNV (West Nile Virus) and HPAI (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza). The peregrine take was confirmed with the announcing of the Notice of Availability of the Final Revised Environmental Assessment, Management Plan and Implementation Guidance and a Finding of No Significant Impact for take of nestling American Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) for use in falconry. The states are now in a position to permit a harvest. Delegates of the IAF attended the 6th Raptor World Conference in Budapest (May 2003), the Symposium on Saker in Abu Dhabi (September 2004) and a forum 'pro and contra' falconry in Slovenia.

State and legal status of falconry in the world

Statistics: estimated number of falconers

Falconry is practised on 5 continents:

The World population of falconers is estimated at about 24.000 to 26.000

Africa	300-600
Americas	4.000-4.500
Asia	12.500-13.000
Europe	7.800-8.500
Oceania	20-50

Legal status

Falconry is legally recognised in most parts of the world. Falconry is legally practised in many African countries, in most of Asian Countries and Middle East, is legal throughout the Americas and is accommodated under the Bern Convention and in the Wild Birds Directive of the European Union where it is practiced in 20 out of the 25 members. However, without a federal regulatory framework for falconry as in the United States, nations in Europe each have separate regulations.

Regulations worldwide

The main areas of legislation concerning falconry regulate

- Obtaining raptors
- Possessing raptors
- Welfare
- Transport
- Hunting
- Release of raptors to the wild

Legal status of falconry

Africa

Algeria	Legal
Egypt	Legal
Libya	Legal
Morocco	Legal
Namibia	Forbidden but are trying to legalise
South Africa	Legal
Tunisia	Legal
Zimbabwe	Legal

Americas

North America	
Canada	Legal
Québec	Legal
USA	Legal
Central America	Not mentioned in the law
Guatemala	
Mexico	
El Salvador	
South America	Not mentioned in the law
Argentina	
Brazil	
Chile	
Peru	

Oceania

Australia	Forbidden but allowed on airports
Indonesia	Not mentioned in the law
New Zealand	Not mentioned in the law
Philippines	Not mentioned in the law

Europe

Austria	Legal
Belgium	Legal
Bulgaria	Not mentioned in the law
Cyprus	Not mentioned in the law
Czech Republic	Legal
Croatia	Legal
Denmark	Hunting with birds of prey is illegal but keeping and flying them is allowed
Estonia	Forbidden
Finland	Not mentioned in the law
France	Legal
Germany	Legal
Greece	Legal

Hungary	Legal
Ireland	Legal
Italy	Legal
Latvia	Legal
Lithuania	Legal
Luxembourg	Not mentioned in the law
Malta	Not mentioned in the law
Netherlands	Legal
Poland	Legal
Portugal	Legal
Romania	Not mentioned in the law
Slovakia	Legal
Slovenia	Legal
Spain	Legal
Sweden	Hunting with birds of prey is illegal
Switzerland	Legal
UK	Legal
Georgia	Legal
Russia	Legal
Ukraine	Not mentioned in the law

Asia

Middle-East	
Arab Gulf Countries	
Bahrain-Qatar-	
Kuwait-UAE	Legal
Iran	Legal
Iraq	Legal
Jordan	Legal
Saudi Arabia	Legal
Syria	Legal
Turkey	Legal
China	Legal in one province
India	Forbidden
Japan	Legal
Kazakhstan	Legal
Kyrgyzstan	Legal
Mongolia	Legal
Pakistan	Not mentioned in the law
Turkmenistan	Legal



QUOD TOTUM PR

6. Vice-president for the Americas report for 2003 - Frank M. Bond

2003 Annual General Meeting
Jerez de la Frontera, Spain

In my opinion the International Association for Falconry had a very productive year in 2003. The reports of the officers and Council Delegates attest to the broad range of accomplishments completed on behalf of falconry. Yet there are ongoing challenges to the sport and with respect to raptor conservation issues.

At this meeting we will have the candidacies accepted of several new national associations and clubs. They are all worthy of coming under the broad umbrella of the IAF. I particularly note the candidacy of the recently formed falconry club from the United Arab Emirates. Where Falconry is deeply rooted as a cultural icon, the Arab falconry community now merges with the remainder of the falconry world. We are grateful to have Mr. Majid Al-Mansouri join with us to begin this new participation.

For North America, you will hear the reports of Council Delegates Ralph Rogers representing NAFA - United States and Juan Carlos Rojo representing NAFA-Mexico.

Through 2003 in the United States we have continued to push forward to reinstate the harvest of eyass *Anatum peregrine* falcons. As the Council will recall, the *Anatum peregrine* was removed from the United States list of endangered and threatened species in August 1999. For one season we had a harvest but then there was a problem found with the harvest model, so the United States Fish and Wildlife Service suspended the harvest. In the summer of 2002, NAFA President Darryl Perkins, Vice President Jim Ince, NAFA Conservation Committee Chairman Ralph Rogers, and I, as General Counsel, met with Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dr. Steve Williams to review several subjects, including the eyass harvest. With a very fine reception from Dr. Williams and his senior staff, we came to some understanding on the eyass harvest, the future harvest of passage Tundra peregrines, and a review of the United States falconry regulations.

We expect the final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact (required by the National Environmental Policy Act, a United States law) to be issued in late winter of 2004 to permit a spring and summer harvest in the western states. The states of Arizona, Utah, Colorado and Washington will now permit harvest. We do not expect the issuance of the passage Tundra Harvest Environmental Assessment until the fall of 2004. Then it will be out for public review and comment. We would hope that a final decision to permit a passage take will be in place for fall 2005 in selected coastal states in the eastern United States.

NAFA's goal for the federal falconry regulations is to fix some parts which can be misinterpreted, to simplify them overall and finally to have them administered solely by the state wildlife agencies. The revised regulations are expected to be reissued in 2005. Currently falconry is permitted in all states, except for Hawaii (where we do not have any falcons). There is current interest in authorizing falconry in Puerto Rico, a territory of the United States.

With respect to the eyass *Anatum peregrine* harvest, I thank President Patrick Morel for writing a letter of support on behalf of the IAF. I particularly thank Dr. Robert Kenward, the IAF Scientific Advisor, for preparing and submitting an expert opinion on the eyass harvest. His contribution will be especially important in defending against any legal challenge to the harvest by environmental groups. Finally, I thank other officers and Council Delegates for writing letters of support from their

national clubs. If there is a legal challenge, I will enter the lawsuit to defend NAFA's position.

'Frank Bond's Jerkin with his first duck'



At this meeting of the Council we will review changes proposed by the Advisory Committee to the IAF Constitution. The principal changes are to permit other kinds of organizations, which do not represent exclusively falconers, to join the IAF. Then there are other changes which will fix minor issues.

I have followed issues relating to CITES with our Executive Secretary, Tony Crosswell. These will be reported on separately. Of special note, however, CITES will be sponsoring a special meeting of the Animals Committee in Dubai to review specific issues of concern related to falconry. Of course, Majid Al-Mansouri will participate in those extensive discussions.

Each year we find greater interest in the IAF from falconers in South America. In several countries new clubs are being formed. Frankly the real door to the inclusion of the South American falconry clubs in the IAF is probably through the leadership of Juan Carlos Rojo. The natural affinity of the countries to Mexico is great.

Finally, I report each year what a pleasure it is for me to work with all of the IAF officers. Your officers work extraordinarily hard for the IAF. Because of his outstanding leadership, I am pleased to support Patrick Morel for another term as president. And we will welcome Jose Manuel Rodriguez-Villa as the new Vice President for Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania; he will replace Dr. Thomas Richter who is retiring.

I take this final opportunity to praise Tom Richter of Germany for the outstanding leadership he has provided to the IAF. He is cognizant and perceptive about the European issues and trends related to falconry and hunting. His speciality on welfare issues has guided us into areas we have not considered before. The Council needs to understand that Tom Richter will be known always as one of the important leaders of the IAF. On a personal note, Tom Richter has become a great lifetime personal friend for whom I have the greatest admiration.

7. Vice-president for Europe, Africa, Asia & Oceania report
- Tom Richter

We must all respect the different traditions and points of view for falconers world-wide. The next main issue to falconers will be animal welfare. The IAF is conducting a working group for this aspect of our concern. Tom Richter will continue to contribute to this group after his resignation from the AC. Our concern must be for the welfare of the quarry as much as the bird of prey. Ethically falconers have concern for all aspects of our sport to properly represent ourselves and gain support from society in general.

8. Treasurer - report

The account report from year 2003:

2003 Income		%
Balance (31-12-2002) carried forward*	3,230.70 €	15.73%
Members contribution	13,972.90 €	68.03%
Donations income	3,074.00 €	14.97%
IAF - Buttons	262.65 €	1.28%
Total	20,540.25 €	100.00%

* 18,30€ in Bank Cantonale Vaudoise

* 3212.40€ in Banco Comercial Portugues

2003 Expenditure		%
Secretariat	4,659.61 €	23.24%
Newsletter expenses	4,646.24 €	23.17%
Traveling expenses and accommodation	7,793.41 €	38.87%
Subscriptions	594.50 €	2.96%
Donations	500.00 €	2.49%
Bank charges	441.65 €	2.20%
IAF Buttons	1,415.59 €	7.06%
Total	20,051.00 €	100.00%

2003 Balance	489.25 €
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Income: The principal income is from our member's contribution. We are preparing some material to inform and look for a sponsor/sponsors who will benefit from having their logo and a short message on our website, Newsletters, banners etc. If any of you have personal knowledge of getting sponsorships or could in any way help in finding potential candidates we

would all appreciate it.

Expenditure: The IAF responsibilities are growing as are the expenses related to the secretariat and travelling, one more reason to find extra ways to finance our activities. We expect a reduction on the newsletter printing expenses this year.

Fees 2004:

At the 2003 AGM in Jerez, it was decided that the formula to calculate the fees should remain the same:

Clubs with <100 members; 100 € per club + 1,75 € per member

100 to 200 members; 200 € per club + 1,75 € per member

>200 members; 250 € per club + 1,75 € per member

It was also approved at the AGM that the number of members from each club to be used in calculating the fees is the highest from the previous year. In other words in 2004, each club uses the maxim membership figure from 2003.

António Carapuço



9. Executive Secretary report.

Tony Crosswell thanked all members for their help and support during the year and especially their production of reports for the Newsletter. The Newsletter itself has been quite successful and is the message to the world in general. The circulation list is in future to be managed by Janusz Sielicki and we also hope to be able to reduce costs by having it printed in Poland or some other country with low charge rates. It is essential that we maintain our standard and quality however.

PROCEDIT EX AMORE

10. Presentation by CIC - relations with IAF - Dieter Schramm.



Collaboration with CIC. Nobody is an island and today falconry has objectors as it is embedded in hunting. Sustainable use has to be the way forward. We have to fight for our right to hunt and this can not be done alone. Falconry is a traditional art with a great heritage. CIC has restructured to include all forms of hunting including falconry and now is the time to move forward together in education to preserve our sport and hunting in general. Falconry embedded into the broader context of the greater hunting community it becomes a power. CIC is not a world hunting organisation but is an advisory body and we must work together. CBD (Convention on Bio Diversity) is not understood by hunters in general but is understood by falconers as the principle for sustainable use. CBD was undermined by the reintroduction of the phrase 'non-consumptive use' in Montreal. We have to leave our past difficulties behind us and find ways now to work closely together with IAF taking the lead in the world of falconry.

Discussion then took place to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between IAF and CIC as a step towards our working together for the future.

Patrick Morel then explained the AC discussion with José Manuel to be chairman of CIC Falconry Commission.

11. Report AEECA Spanish Imperial Eagle Conservation Project.

12. Report by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee Gilles Nortier

13. Report of the Baltic and Scandinavian States Working Group for 2003 - Robert Kenward

Members of the BASS Working Group in 2003 were Robert Kenward (chair), Herwig Hoedl, Jevgeni Shergalin, Tage Jessen, Frank Hansen, Darius Daugela and Magnus Wildt, plus Patrick Morel ex-officio.

Falconry has never been practised widely in the Baltic and Scandinavian states of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Norway. It is legal in the EU-accession states of Latvia and Lithuania. In Finland and Norway, falconry is not forbidden by law, and until 2003 this was also the case in Estonia. In Sweden falconers may keep and fly birds, but may not hunt quarry with them. Tage Jessen reports that a working

group is currently considering whether the use of trained raptors for hunting corvid species might be permitted.

The main BASS WG activity was preparation for a meeting in Helsinki at the 50th Anniversary meeting of CIC. This had been suggested at their 49th meeting, in Istanbul in 2002, and CIC had kindly put it under discussion with government authorities in Finland (CIC being an organisation with governmental and individual membership) when events in culturally-close Estonia caused a re-think of the initiative.

The tiny handful of falconers in Estonia are primarily of Russian ethnic origin, and limited ability in the Estonian language that is now aggressively promoted officially had prevented contact with their authorities despite IAF efforts to create meetings with delegates to Bern Convention meetings. In 2003, a peregrine falcon was confiscated from a holder unable to prove legal acquisition and held in the zoo, where it died. Despite advice, the bird's owner attacked the authorities in the media. The response was to make falconry illegal in law.

Falconry therefore remains a fragile flower in these states. There are few falconers in each country, probably because until the advent of modern agriculture, radio-tracking and increased leisure time, the heavily-wooded landscapes were too challenging and poor in suitable quarry. Modern falconry has a challenging mission to persuade the authorities that the sport has more advantages than disadvantages for conservation and culture. However, there is now only 1 state of 15 in the current EU in which falconry may not be practised, although there will again be 2 such states among 25 from April 2004.

Herwig Hoedl leaves the working group this year, after serving through the president's first term. Many thanks are due for his help.

14. Report for 2003 of the BERN convention working group - Robert Kenward

Members of the Bern Convention Working Group in 2003 were Robert Kenward (chair), Herwig Hoedl, Tom Richter and Christian de Coune, plus Patrick Morel ex-officio.

A strategic issue here was to recommend modifications to the draft European Charter On General Principles For Protection Of The Environment And Sustainable Development. Proposals, with a detailed rationale, were made in writing to introduce a "Principle of Encouragement" for activities benefiting conservation into a Charter that was extensively protectionist. It is not yet known if that attempt was successful.

The major effort of this working group has focussed in 2003 on the draft European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species. This issue was first raised at the Bern Convention annual Conference of Parties in December 2000. A draft was then presented by Dr Piero Genovesi, as a joint project of IUCN and Council of Europe (which hosts the Bern Convention), at the COP in 2001. The draft was referred back to a working group, which Robert Kenward joined by virtue of knowing Piero Genovesi from work on the grey squirrel (a North American species invasive in Italy and the UK). The working group met in October 2002 and produced a draft with relatively minor alterations. At that meeting it became clear that species used in falconry could not avoid consideration. Therefore IAF engaged in the issue by making a list of proposals, drafted initially by Christian de Coune and Robert, to improve the draft. Thanks to



'Past President Frikki Pratesi with our new Vice President Jose Manuel Rodriguez-Villa'

Christian's strenuous efforts with Piero Genovesi, the Secretariat and other parties, and his presence at meetings in 2003, these recommendations were all accepted in a much improved draft that was adopted at the 2003 COP. An important consideration was Christian's work to ensure inclusion of a CoE recommendation from 1997, in which he had ensured that flying of trained hawks was not to be defined as an introduction to the wild.

The main factors affecting falconry are now:

1. A definition of **invasive alien species**: "an alien species whose **introduction** and/or spread threaten biological diversity". This implies assessment of which species are likely to become invasive, by **risk analysis**, and involves creation of **black and white lists**.
2. A definition of **introduction**: "the movement by human agency, indirect or direct, of an alien species outside of its natural range (past or present). This movement can be either within a country or between countries". The crucial change in that introduction is now movement into or within a country, not into the wild. Use of raptors in falconry is therefore included.
3. Requirement of **risk analysis**: "(1) assessment of the consequences of the introduction and of the likelihood of establishment of an alien species using science-based information (i.e. risk assessment), and (2) identification of **measures** that can be implemented to reduce or manage these risks (i.e., risk management), taking into account socio-economic and cultural considerations".

4. **Black list**: "Species whose introduction is strictly regulated, following a risk assessment prior to species listing. No further risk assessments are required for the area for which the assessment was conducted. Priority should go to:

- * species already identified as highly invasive in one or more European States;
- * species proven to be invasive in other regions;
- * species that are likely to cause problems to several European States, are not yet present there and have a high potential of introduction."

5. **White list**: "Species classified as low risk following a risk assessment or based on long-standing experience. Introduction of specimens of these species may be authorised without restriction or under conditions. However, care should be taken to avoid giving the impression that uncontrolled releases of white-listed species are encouraged. The use of white lists should not prevent preference being given to the use of native species of local provenance where appropriate."

6. Under identification of general **measures**, it includes: "Work with the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey to prevent escapes into the wild of alien birds of prey used for falconry, which could lead to hybridisation with native species. As appropriate, cooperate in the elaboration, adoption and implementation of a European Code of Conduct on Falconry."

5. Inclusion of "A duty on all states to make all efforts to permit only those species that are unlikely to threaten **biodiversity**".

The positive aspect of the current situation is that Falconry, and its representation through IAF, achieves recognition. The negative aspect is that it will need to be accepted, on the basis of risk analysis or "long-standing experience" (which we inserted as a basis for white listing), that our use of non-native raptors does not threaten biological diversity.

We can now work to take advantage of general measures item 6, in a way that may avoid a need for separate discussion of which raptors are permitted in each country and generally enhances the freedoms of falconers in Europe. The proposal in a Council of Europe document to create a Code of Conduct for Falconry is a great opportunity, provided that it's scope is expanded beyond the restrictions implied in a Code of Conduct to also recognise the scope for developing falconry's benefits. This can be done by embedding a Code of Conduct for the management of falconry within a Charter that also recognises the values of falconry for conservation and human culture and the rights of falconers, like the Royal Charters that have established Towns, Universities and Hospitals throughout Europe.

Conditions for a Charter for Falconry are ideal, because the European Commission is already working with FACE and Birdlife International to build a charter for bird hunting. Rather than have a Code of Conduct imposed on falconers as a result of the Council of Europe's strategy on Alien Invasive Species, falconers have the opportunity to initiate broader consultation on how falconry can benefit sustainable development. By taking the initiative, falconers can agree a draft charter (e.g. based on existing IAF position statements) before opening discussions, and then work to ensure acceptability by IUCN and Birdlife, with whom we have good relations. The Code of Conduct within such a charter will include consideration of how

government should regulate falconry to obtain most benefit from it, as well recommendations for how falconers should behave. A charter recognising that falconry has value for conservation and culture could be a basis for improving legislation of falconry in all EU states.

Herwig Hoedl and Tom Richter leave the working group this year, after serving through the president's first term. Many thanks are due for their help. The group welcomes new members Herman Doettlinger and José Manuel Rodríguez-Villa. Robert Kenward hands the chair to Christian de Coune. As well as his hard work during 2002-3 on the issue of Invasive Alien Species, it was Christian who secured and developed IAF's status in the Bern Convention.

15. Report of MERWG and NAMEAN - Tim Kimmel

Membership Application of the Emirates Falconers' Club (EFC)

Although Arab falconry has had an extremely long and rich tradition of practice, the relative lack of organized falconry clubs in the region has precluded much direct affiliation to the IAF. However, within the past few years the situation has changed somewhat with the establishment of the Emirates Falconers' Club. We now are most pleased that within the past several months, the Emirates Falconers Club has submitted its application for membership with the IAF and approval is slated at this Annual General Meeting. We welcome the Emirates Falconers' Club to our organization, and we look forward to a growing and productive relationship with the Emirates Falconers' Club and other falconry organizations throughout the Middle East. In our modern world, local issues and problems often are perceived at a much larger scale - sometimes a global scale. The IAF now can look to work directly and formally with local falconers more and more in the Gulf Region to preserve the rich falconry tradition in the Middle East and cooperate to find solution to problems of falconry in the Region and elsewhere.

NAMEAN:

The Northern African, Middle Eastern, and Asian Network (NAMEAN) e-mail discussion group continued to function throughout the past year, albeit somewhat episodically. Currently, NAMEAN has nearly 50 members from 22 countries. The majority of members and countries are from throughout the NAMEAN region (Morocco to Eastern Asia).

A total of nearly 100 messages were posted on the network since December 2002. These messages ranged in content from the welcoming of a new NAMEAN members, to informational postings on various resources (thanks in large part to Dr. Jevgeni Shergalin), to certain discussion that became somewhat heated and emotional about sakers, houbara, and related conservation issues. A discussion within the Advisory Committee at this AGM is warranted to produce a clearer understanding of the role of NAMEAN. In particular, the Advisory Committee needs to ensure that all members of NAMEAN have a realistic expectation of the role and authority of NAMEAN. The network, as originally intended, is to provide a forum for the exchange of information to the benefit of both the IAF and other NAMEAN members. Perhaps some NAMEAN members had the misunderstanding that NAMEAN was decision-making body, which it is not.

Submitted by Timothy Kimmel, MERWG Chairperson & NAMEAN Facilitator

16. Report of CITES working group for 2003 - Tony Crosswell

CITES consultative meeting on the trade in falcons for falconry 22-25 March 2004 postponed and now scheduled for end of May or early June.

Information for falconers and breeders.

Subject.

The main area for trade in falcons is Arab falconry and primarily concerns three species: the saker, the peregrine and the gyr. However there is potential that views expressed about aspects of the trade in falcons could have implications for falconers in other parts of the world or for other falcon species. Therefore it is important that all shades of opinion are represented.

This is purely a consultative meeting, and no binding decisions will be made at this stage.

Representation from falconers and breeders.

This is a CITES meeting and invitations will only be issued through the CITES Secretariat or through your national CITES office. There will be an invitation for a single delegate from IAF. IAF of course is a falconry organisation but does not represent breeders or people professionally or commercially involved with birds of prey. Therefore people not represented by IAF, in particular the CITES registered breeders, will have to seek representation through their national CITES office. They have a choice, either of briefing (verbally or in writing) their national CITES delegate, or of proposing and funding an official representative of their national interests to attend by arrangement with their national CITES delegate. Falconers with an issue of concern should first approach their national IAF delegate, who can bring it to the attention of IAF for possible handling by the IAF representative at the meeting.

One of the issues that may well arise is consistency of interpretation of CITES regulations. For example, some countries such as Japan and USA, only issue export papers to CITES registered breeders. Others, such as UK, have not implemented this and issue permits to non-CITES registered breeders. (*This particular issue is also being dealt with at the next CITES Animals Committee Meeting March 2004, deadline for submissions 29 January 2004.*) This means that representation in your country may need to include non-CITES registered breeders as well as the registered ones. In UK, the Hawk Board represents breeders as well as falconers. In other countries there are breeders' Associations which may be suitable to represent the interests of exporters. Similarly in some countries there are falconry groups who are not currently represented by IAF and they may need to seek representation independently.

Given that there will be further meetings on these subjects, nations that do not have an all-embracing representative body such as the UK Hawk Board, may wish to consider or formalise their lines of representation, either by widening the scope of their falconry organisations, or by establishing organisations to represent those not otherwise represented.

Potential issues.

One of the issues of general interest to falconers is the concept of Falcon Passports for transporting falcons between participating CITES signatory countries for the purpose of a temporary visit (normally for falconry but it could include filming or any other legitimate activity). Passports have been pioneered by UAE and are currently being used between a shortlist of participating countries. There is potential to expand

the system to further countries and situations.

Another issue of concern to European falconers is the expansion of Europe to 25 countries. This will greatly increase the potential for illegal trade in wildlife. At present Europe has failed to achieve a Europe-wide registration system or central database for species of concern within its own boundaries. If this is unachievable it is probably not realistic to contemplate a global or Asian database system, even for close-ringed falcons in CITES trade, although a standardisation of rings could be possible. At present we have what some would see as an anomaly, namely the entire EU functioning as a single CITES area, but with individual European national CITES Authorities functioning independently, both of each other, and of national registration schemes.

For European falconers subject to a national registration scheme and the Article 10 system, there must be scope for rationalisation of all these documents and costs down to a single ring and passport type document that travels with the bird for life, including between CITES countries. Here is the forum for tackling these issues.

There are a number of trade routes or potential trade routes that could be improved (both for users and for enforcers) by a CITES passport system. USA/Canada or USA/Mexico, or Europe/north Africa are examples that spring to mind beyond those already being pioneered by Arab falconry.

Other issues, probably of more interest to Arab falconers, include the implementation of CITES by the saker falcon Range countries, the export quota systems, and the monitoring of wild populations to verify sustainable use.

Hosts.

The meeting is convened by the CITES Secretariat and the meeting is restricted to persons with official CITES invitations. The hosts and co-sponsors are the United Arab Emirates Federal Environmental Agency and Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Costs.

The hosts are sponsoring one designated CITES official delegate from some of the more needy countries. All other representatives must cover their own travel and accommodation costs. There will be bulk rate discounted accommodation and meals at the conference hotel for delegates as far as space is available.

Language.

There will be simultaneous interpretation for English, Russian and Arabic. All documents will be in English only.

Timescale.

Please circulate this document to all interested parties. Any organisation seeking to send a representative should contact their national CITES Authority in early 2004.

The countries for which CITES representatives will be invited are: Afghanistan, Algeria, Austria, Bahrein, Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA, Uzbekistan, Yemen.

17. Report of the Research Co-ordinator - Robert Kenward A final report from IAF's Research Coordinator for 1974-2003

The office of Research Coordinator was created in 1974, with the need to prepare for a 1st World Conference on Birds

of Prey that was to be held in Vienna in 1975. The appointment was made at Petronell by the president, Graf Abensperg Traun, along with the office of Foreign Representative. Falconry was under severe attack because it had been accused of causing declines in raptor populations, before DDT was identified as the real culprit. Robert Kenward became Research Coordinator. After spending 5 years editing a journal "Captive Breeding of Diurnal Birds of Prey" for the British Falconers' Club, his first task was to conduct a survey and present a paper in Vienna on how falconers had developed domestic breeding of raptors. Tony Jack was appointed Foreign Representative, of an IAF that was just 6 years old.

In the following 25 years, the same Research Coordinator served under Presidents Toni Lutz from Switzerland, Charles de Ganay from France, Christian de Coune from Belgium and Ferrante Pratesi from Italy. The role included arranging international conferences in Oxford, of "Bird of Prey Management Techniques" (1977) and "Understanding the Goshawk" (1981), and in giving presentations that shed a favourable light on falconry at each World Conference on Birds of Prey. These included a survey of falconry's economic contributions to conservation (Thessaloniki in 1982), papers on radio-tagging (Eilat in 1987, Berlin in 1992) and solving raptor-human conflicts (Johannesburg in 1998) and ways to gain most conservation benefit from falconry (Budapest 2003). The role also led to being falconry advisor and resolutions committee member for what had become World Working Group on Birds of Prey and Owls (WWGBP), and serving a 12 year period as a director of Raptor Research Foundation, initially to help develop a Position Statement on Falconry. The strategy was to gently build knowledge and acceptance of falconry, while helping each IAF president, primarily with issues that involved conservation but also, under Christian de Coune, in a small Advisory Committee.

When Christian resigned in 1998, responsibilities of the President had become very wide. Increased global communications and domestic breeding of raptors had produced a worldwide renaissance of falconry, and Christian had created links for IAF with CITES, IUCN, the Bern Convention and the European Commission. It was impossible for one person to replace Christian's role. The Research Coordinator therefore became chair of an Advisory Committee that was enlarged to be more representative of the world's largest falconry organisations and was restructured to spread the many tasks. During the ensuing presidency of Frikki Pratesi, the constitution originally created by Charles de Ganay was revised extensively by Frank Bond of NAFA, to include active vice-presidents and various committees.

Although the Research Coordinator position was diminished within an enlarged Advisory Committee, and by increasing importance of the vice-presidents, the need of research increased with the expanding activity of IAF. Thus in 2000 the Research Coordinator surveyed clubs for a Position Statement on Hybrids and liaised with IUCN, WWF, Birdlife and TRAFFIC to take a resolution on the saker falcon to the 2nd World Conservation Congress in Amman, while also representing IAF at meetings of in Eilat and Strasbourg.

When Patrick Morel became the 2nd President from Belgium, the Research Coordinator tasks in 2001 included a survey of clubs on laws and regulations, developing a Position Statement on Falconry Regulations and representing IAF at an RRF conference in Seville (including a workshop to bring together falconers and other Spanish conservation interests). In 2002 there was work for Vice-President Tom Richter to expand the position statement into a guide for regulations to



enable falconry (REGUIDE) in the 10 states about to join the European Union, travel to Turkey to help secure legal falconry there and to 2 other meetings to ensure that falconry's interests were not harmed by a new European strategy on Invasive Alien Species.

Projects in 2003 included an attempt to hold a symposium on falconry's value for conservation at CIC's 50th anniversary in Helsinki. As Finland was reluctant to host the symposium, the main project became development of a strategy document for falconry, which is presented separately. As in 2001 and 2002, when visits to Spain and Turkey involved helping falconers and government to work together, so the same was necessary in 2003 in Slovenia. The worst task in 2003 resulted from an ill-conceived and culturally insensitive resolution put to the Budapest conference of WWGBP by a biologist (and one-time falconer), who called for moratoria on use of saker falcons and hunting of houbara bustard. As IAF privileged withdrawal of the proposal and in case it was not accepted offered to help redrafting, while neither the originator nor WWGBP favoured withdrawal, the production of a resolution that was less hostile to falconry required help from IUCN and Birdlife International. Much time was also needed to prepare papers on the value of falconry for that conference and for a symposium on game biology in Italy, to defend falconry from criticism on newsgroups and to work on related issues with individuals or organisations in Brazil, Estonia, Finland, Russia, the Middle East and the USA.

A tenure of 30 years as Research Coordinator for IAF has depended on the opportunity to draw together and disseminate relevant material during a career in ecological research. However, IAF now needs its research to be spread more widely. It is becoming clear that perception of utility for human societies and wildlife conservation will affect (if not determine) the future of falconry. International thinking is moving to conserve-by-use policies, with a debate on fox-hunting in the UK finally coming round to its utility for culture, employment and conservation. Falconry has superb qualifications of utility. Work to make this clear will depend as much on co-operative work to build cultural and socio-economic credibility as on ecology.

This approach may not immediately attract falconers, any more than the public at large will immediately embrace the utility of falconry. There will be those who maintain that falconry is a right and that the need is only to fight for legality,

with captive breeding to fill all requirements even if stocks of raptors or prey become rare in the wild. Domestication is an attractive option for avoiding protectionist pressures. However, falconry is more than just keeping raptors. It is the art of hunting with them. The public must understand the value of hunting if falconry is to remain legal. Work of falconers with wild raptors and their prey serves not only to show utility for conservation, but also to remind the public that falconry is natural. People appreciate that dogs bond with humans, but have largely forgotten that hunting is an important part of life for the wolves that became our dogs: wild wolves like to hunt foxes. Domestic breeding is important too. Beyond the reduction of pressure on rare species, it has a more positive value as an insurance against future threats in the environment. Anyone doubting such dangers should consider how insidiously Dichlofenac has destroyed Asian vulture populations.

So IAF needs to support domestic breeding, but also to encourage conservation through use, and to support the rights of falconers but also to encourage utility for society. A further challenge is the price to pay for acceptance of falconry's utility. Landowners have to make a living, and often their intensified use of land makes it less productive of wildlife. Falconers are already prepared to pay a price for domestic bred raptors, but are they also prepared to pay for wild raptors and to preserve quarry-rich landscapes that have previously cost nothing? Can the income and importance of those who breed raptors and game be maintained if the limited resources of falconers are directed towards wild stocks? It may be challenging to reconcile the interests of breeders and the need of falconers to win public acceptance through conservation. IAF leadership must have wisdom to maintain balance between different interests in falconry, and to use any tensions creatively, ensuring that benefits for falconry are maximised and frictions minimised. This will require great understanding and skill of IAF leadership in the years to come. The evidence of that skill will be the survival of falconry in the long term.

Robert Kenward

18. Strategy document

Committee formed to further develop the document in conjunction with CIC - Tom Richter, Nick Fox, Gilles Nortier, Janusz Sielicki Dieter Schramme and Robert Kenward.

Strategic Recommendations of IAF for Falconry

Falconry is the art of training and hunting with birds of prey. The International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey aims to preserve and encourage falconry within the context of sustainable use of wildlife and the cultural heritage of humanity. IAF also has as its Statutes:

1. To represent falconry throughout the world;
2. To encourage conservation, the ecological and veterinary research on birds of prey and promote, under scientific guidance, domestic propagation for falconry;
3. To develop, maintain and amend national and international laws, treaties and conventions to permit the pursuit and perpetuation of falconry; and
4. To require the observation of falconry, hunting, conservation and welfare laws.

Falconers fly raptors from the wild and from domestic breeding. Falconry has evolved for centuries as a way of life with high utility for human and wildlife populations, whereby falconers encourage, develop and maintain:

- (i) knowledge from their research on domestic and free-living animals (e.g. pioneering successful captive propagation and release of endangered raptors);
- (ii) skills for conservation and for reducing human problems from wildlife (e.g. protecting aviation from bird strikes and improving safety of power lines);
- (iii) education that engenders support for conservation and human cultural diversity (e.g. through ancient falconry traditions that encourage respect for wildlife);
- (iv) resources (funding and personal effort) for incentive-based conservation (e.g. revenue from minimal-impact hunting to maintain non-intensive land use).

To safeguard the future of falconry, IAF considers it wise for falconry organisations:

- a) to encourage falconers in activities which benefit humanity and wildlife conservation;
- b) to obtain regulations that enable such activities by falconers;
- c) to create public awareness of their beneficial activities;
- d) to preserve organisational knowledge by archives and use of their elder statesmen.

In these contexts, IAF also encourages:

1. development of skills among falconers that benefit humans and wildlife;
2. support for young falconers in occupations that engender such skills;
3. seeking opportunities to benefit wild raptor populations through domestic breeding;
4. access to wild raptors for falconry, especially in ways that conserve their populations;
5. policies that acknowledge the value and rights of falconers as well as responsibilities;
6. development by falconers of close relationships with their regulatory authorities;
7. development by falconers of culturally sensitive public relations strategies.

Annex 1. Position Statement of IAF on Falcon Hybrids

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. We recommend, as a minimum, that:

1. hybrids be fostered if possible by a parent that does not occur locally in the wild;
2. hybrids only be hatched in large conditioning pens;
3. hybrids only be flown with reliable telemetry equipment;
4. maximum efforts be made to recover any hybrid that is lost;
5. 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. In that spirit, we appreciate a growing tendency of falconers in some countries to fly pure-bred falcons rather than hybrids. We are keeping this issue under review and will remain actively involved in the political consultation processes at all levels of regulation.

Annex 2. Position Statement of IAF on Falconry Regulations.

The responsibility of the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey for governance of falconry is given in its Statutes, namely "To develop, maintain and amend national and international laws, treaties and conventions to permit the pursuit and perpetuation of falconry" (Article 2.1.4). In its duty to "To represent falconry throughout the world" (Article 2.1.1), IAF is also bound "To preserve and encourage falconry within the context of sustainable use of wildlife" (Article 2.1.2), "To encourage conservation, the ecological and veterinary research on birds of prey and promote, under scientific guidance, domestic propagation for falconry" (Article 2.1.3), and "To require the observation of falconry, hunting, conservation and welfare laws" (Article 2.1.5).

At a time of global degradation through pollution, habitat loss and climate change, IAF wishes to ensure that falconry contributes maximally to conservation of raptor and prey populations by sustainable use of these renewable resources. Moreover, at a time of rapid loss of humanity's cultural heritage through globalisation, IAF also earnestly desires to play as full part as possible in the maintenance of the diverse and spiritually important traditions of partnership with animals. IAF desires to cooperate with all others interested in these goals of conserving the world's cultural and natural heritage.

From 30 years of experience as an international non-governmental body, now representing falconry in the Council for Europe (Bern Convention), World Conservation Union (IUCN) and in CITES, IAF believes that falconers can best be motivated to contribute effectively to cultural and wildlife conservation if legislators aim to:

1. Apply legal regulation only where there is real risk to wild raptors or to falconry.
2. Reduce bureaucracy to a level concomitant with real conservation requirements.
3. Register birds, if needed, by a scheme for 1-time recording and passport.
4. Encourage mentorship, or training and exams, to ensure best-practise.
5. Encourage sustainable-use of wild birds to benefit conservation.

Falconers are recommended to develop good relationships with others interested in conserving wildlife, especially in the government bodies with national and international responsibilities.

19. Reports of the IUCN working group for 2003 - Robert Kenward.

Members of the IUCN Working Group in 2003 were Robert Kenward (chair), Frank Bond, Herwig Hoedl, Tim Kimmel and Janusz Sielicki, with Patrick Morel ex-officio.

IUCN's Sustainable Use Initiative has been absorbed to mainstream, as a specialist group within Species Survival Commission (SSC). The chair of this Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) is Dr Jon Hutton, who helped arrange sponsorship of IAF's Amman resolution. Jon is one of those producing publications in major scientific journals to increase the status of incentive-driven conservation. Although most of the Specialist Groups operate on a global basis, SUSG has a number of regional groups. Membership of these groups within SUSG is by invitation of those with suitable academic or practical qualifications, and IAF clubs would be wise to consider linking in each region through one of their members. Robert Kenward is a committee member of European SUSG, and also represented Global SUSG in Budapest, keeping SUSG chair Jon Hutton well-briefed on the values of falconry for incentive-driven conservation.

IUCN's next World Conservation Congress (WCC), which now occurs at 4 year intervals, is in Bangkok during 17-25 November 2004 (one month after the next CITES COP, also in Bangkok). There will be a need to report for WCC3 on progress arising from the Amman resolution (CR2.74). Thanks to the efforts of UAE's Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency (ERWDA), managed by Mohamed al Bowardi and advised by Nick Fox, good progress has been made on monitoring saker populations and introduction of a micro-transponder-based registration scheme. Following moves by Saudi Arabia's National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development (NCWCD), similar systems are now under consideration in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar. This brings closer the introduction of an international e-passport system that would not only drive legal procurement, but could also eventually facilitate movements of trained raptors globally. IAF has the opportunity to work with ERWDA and NCWCD to report for WCC3 on this good progress, and perhaps also to help prevent the indiscriminate poisoning of agricultural pests that risks the decimation of a major saker population (and other raptors) in Mongolia.

Herwig Hoedl and Janusz Sielicki leave the working group this year, after serving through the president's first term. Many thanks are due for their help. The group welcomes new members Majid Al Mansouri, Herman Doettlinger, Matt Gage and Tony Crossell.

20. Election of Officers - lead by Frank M. Bond

Having completed a full term, the following positions were for election:

President, Vice-president for Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania and Advisory Committee Members. Positions of Executive Secretary, Treasurer and Information Officer will be appointed by the newly elected president and approved by the Council of Delegates.

For those of you who are unaware of the constitutional process in the coming election I recall the following points from the constitution.

I refer you below to 11.1.2 of our constitution and also 10.2. In view of the short period before the AGM we are effectively within the run up period for the elections.

11.1.2. The President must be a National Delegate of or nominated by a Member Organisation, and after serving a term is eligible for re-election to a second term of office.

Also, with regard to the actual election process, our constitution allows for Proxy votes.

10.2. A National Delegate may give, in case he cannot attend a specific Council meeting, a proxy in writing to a National Delegate of another country for purposes of voting on such matters that may come before the Council. A National Delegate may hold no more than two (2) proxies. For purposes of conducting business a quorum of the Council is established when a majority of the duly selected National Delegates is present or represented by proxy in writing.

This means that those unable to attend may notify the Secretary of their wishes or send their written certified proxy with an attending delegate from another member country. This proxy would then have to be presented to the Secretary at the meeting.

President was elected unanimously as Patrick Morel. - nominated by A Crosswell seconded by Ralph Rogers.

Vice President for Europe, Africa, Asia & Oceania was elected unanimously as José Manuel Rodrigues Villa - proposed by A Crosswell seconded by Gary Timbrel.

Election of AC members.

Executive Secretary: Anthony Crosswell

Treasurer: Antonio Carapuço

The above board members and officers are ex officio members of the AC.

Advisory Committee:

al Mansouri Majid (Union of Arab Emirates)

Bond Frank (USA)

Carapuço Antonio (Portugal)

Crosswell Anthony (UK)

de Coune Christian (Belgium)

Döttlinger Hermann (Germany)

Gage Matthew (UK)

Hussong Hans Kurt (Germany)

Jones Martin (UK - Hawk Board)

Kenward Robert (UK)

Kimmel Timothy (USA)

Morel Patrick (Belgium)

Nortier Gilles (France)

Rodriguez-Villa José Manuel (Spain)

Sielicki Janusz (Poland)

21. Delegates reports - Poland - Czech Rep - Belgium - Netherlands - Hungary - Mexico - Spain - Denmark - Japan - UK - Estonia - US - Germany - UAE - Ireland - Italy - France - Portugal

22. Any Other Business

Discussion was raised on the subject of poisoning of raptors occurring in Mongolia. The decision on the Mongolia poisoning issue was only to take further action in conjunction with our new UAE members. Robert Kenward commented that "this is a serious issue in which pressure from falconers can save



major raptor populations and prompt action is important to prevent further poisoning".

23. Presidents Award of IAF Button

Presidents Award of IAF button to Tom Richter retiring Vice-President for his services to IAF during his Vice-Presidency and upon his retirement.

Presidents award of IAF Button was made to past president of IAF Ferrante Pratesi.



24. Consideration of offers to host the 2004 AGM.

Offers were made from Czech Republic and from UAE.

Members accepted UAE for September 2004 and asked for the President to discuss further 2005 with Czech Republic. Frank Bond asked that we create a greater lead in period of at least 2 years for future AGMs. This was agreed.

25. Closure

The AGM was closed by the President with his thanks to all those who attended.

Anthony Croswell
IAF Executive Secretary

Forum in Slovenia

13-14-15/10/2003

Report written by Patrick Morel, Christian de Coune and Robert Kenward.

On 01.10.2003, the IAF received an invitation to participate on a Forum with the topic "Pro and Contra Falconry in Slovenia" organized by the Ecological Forum of Slovenia (a scientifically minded group for the ecological management of Slovenian resources) at the Slovenian Technical Museum at Bistri-Vrhniki, near Ljubljana on the 14th of October 2003.

There has been already one ecological forum round table discussion in which the Falconers convincingly had the better arguments. To reverse this "bonus" however the Ornithologists this time try to pull the "international gun". The Slovenian Falconers worked hard and with good skills to get Falconry drafted as "hunting with trained birds of prey on permitted quarry" in the new Slovenian Hunting Law. However strangely or not, on pressure of the most influential political group close to the Ornithological Association of Slovenia, the past Ministerial Decree regulating Falconry was deleted from the new hunting law without comment in the proposal submitted to the parliament.

The attendance of the forum was about 55 people mostly opponents (green parties, ornithologists...)

Slovenian Falconers' representation was lead by Dr Roman Savic, president of the SZSZPU.

The IAF sent three delegates: Christian de Coune, Dr Robert Kenward and Patrick Morel.

Christian gave a presentation stressing the acceptance of falconry in international legislation, including CITES, the Bern Convention and European Directives.

Patrick followed up by noting that in the EU and the new Accessing States, falconry has remained legal in all 16 of the southern European states (including Slovenia) in which it has been practised during the last century, was not mentioned in the law in further 6 countries and was illegal in 3 countries. He asked for the Slovenian not to be another country to ban falconry, but legalize it, asking even the possibility to make use of provision of the Bird Directive allowing harvesting goshawks from the wild and extended hunting seasons for falconry.

Robert gave a presentation noting that falconers are a valuable source of management skills, education capabilities and dedication for conservation benefit, that any concerns about falconry can be avoided by regulations based on new technologies and that governments need to promote co-operation between all conservation interests and discourage resource-wasting conflicts.

Peter Sapara, representing the CIC Falconry Commission and the DFO, did made a presentation on German regulation and the Peregrine Release project in Germany.

The Slovenian falconers had proved well able to defend themselves against attacks, which became almost hysterical from one animal rights enthusiast. They were also supported by comments from representatives of hunters, foresters and airport pest control work. However, it became apparent that

despite invitations to the Environment Ministry, their only representative at the ecological forum was a clerk. It was even suspected that the forum might have been arranged cynically to discover which anti-falconry arguments were untenable and to probe for weakness in falconry's defences, while providing a platform for negative publicity.

Although the Slovenian hunters were apparently not prepared to support falconry openly, they might help to identify a suitable MP, and perhaps to distribute a brief leaflet on the benefits of falconry a couple of days before a parliamentary vote.

For future reference, it may be wise for IAF not to commit substantial resources to such operations unless certain conditions are met. One condition would be to avoid any debate at which unfounded allegations against falconry could benefit from publicity. It is much better for IAF representatives to be able to discuss directly with Ministry Officials, for example to advice on regulations. These two conditions were met last year in Turkey, to very positive effect.

On being approached for such ventures, minimal questions could be:

1. "Has a meeting been arranged with Ministry Officials?"
2. "Who else will be there? Will there be reporters?"
3. "What are the precise objectives of the meeting?"

Another relevant question in defending falconry seems to be: "How much help can you expect from hunting organisations? Advice with contacts? Help with lobbying contacts? Public support?"

Igor Tavcar took care of us and gave us a very interesting overview of Slovenia (including a visit of Ljubljana and the cave of Postojna He was kind enough to welcome us in Trieste and to invite us to stay at his parent's house. Attendance costs were covered by the Slovenian falconers who did welcome us very warmly and invited us to discover Slovenian specialities (good food and wine) and friendly hospitality.

Sent: Thursday, January 29, 2004 3:51 PM
Subject: Slovenia / Sad final result: Falconry not regulated in New Hunting Law
Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,
with regret I inform you that against determination of the Falconers:

The final voting on the new Slovenian Law on Game and Hunting in the Slovenian Parliament on the 28th of January 2004 has confirmed the wording of the Law accepted already in the 3rd voting.

This means that Falconers have not succeeded in obliging the legislators to regulate Falconry as a form of hunting in Slovenia. The forces against Falconry clearly had the stronger lobby.

Looking at the recent events and our sincere attempts to regulate Falconry in Slovenia I ask myself if it was a good idea to get so very active in trying to convince the majority about Falconry. For the final result as well as a good part of our public activity of promoting hunting with birds of prey meant exposing ourselves to defamation. The Zeitgeist (German "Mind of our present times") does not understand and accept Hunting in any form any more.



Falconry was and will be the way of life of a definite minority. Gentlemen can anybody explain to me why in a democratic Society the majority should vote for the interests of a minority. As far as I understand it needs a fearful or a knowledgeable and tolerant and romantically inclined Society to accept the rights of a minority to practice Falconry. Slovenia is neither of this and I am afraid neither is most of the rest of the World in the year 2004.

I continue to live in good hope that events to come will convince me of the opposite.

Yours sincerely
Dr Igor Tavcar
Bangalore, India

Status of Falconry in the United States of America

Report for 2003 meeting of the International Association of Falconry, Jerez de Frontera, Spain
Ralph Rogers, IAF Delegate from NAFA-US

Falconry continues to thrive in the United States (US) and this year, 2003, has been a critical and successful year for NAFA. Through continued discourse with state and national governments, this year's activities bring three important goals closer to attainment. Within the year 2004, US falconers can expect to see the first substantial simplification of falconry regulations since the initial promulgation in 1976; US falconers should be allowed a resumption in the take of eyas peregrine falcons from the wild; US falconers can expect to see a proposal for resumption of take of wild passage peregrine from the south-

ern coasts of the US in 2004 with full implementation of take in 2005. Simplification of regulations and the take of wild eyas and passage peregrines have been highest priorities of NAFA and the US falconry community for many years. It is with great pride that we report these achievements to the international falconry community and behalf of NAFA, I would like to thank the IAF for comments submitted to the US Government in support of these issues.

While US falconers have achieved significant goals on regulatory issues, it seems that we are helpless to prevent the ravages of West Nile Virus as the infection moves across our country. Many falconers have lost birds to the virus; some important breeding projects have been hurt significantly. Dr. Pat Redig and The Raptor Center, University of Minnesota, indicates that an avian-based plasmid vaccine could be ready by next summer provided funding remains adequate. NAFA and the falconry community continue to aid Dr. Redig in pursuit of a prevention for this malady. We appreciate the financial support of the IAF and the falconry community generally.

An increased concern over the destruction of native prairie with resultant significant declines in populations of native grouse prompted the formation of the North American Grouse Partnership (NAGP). Initiated by Tom Cade and other falconers (including Frank Bond and Ralph Rogers) during 1999, this national organization is rapidly becoming an important US advocate for grouse and other prairie species. Of special note is the drafting of a nation-wide North American Grouse Management Plan during 2003. While this organization is rapidly becoming larger than the US falconry community, it is significant to note that falconers continue to play important rolls in the conservation of wild places and species in the US.

Falconers in the US continue to enjoy the benefits of a strong central organization like NAFA. Most states have extended falconry seasons for upland game species with an average length over 6 months. Most states enjoy falconry waterfowl seasons extended to the maximum allowable under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. NAFA's membership continues to grow slowly but is still reduced from the high counts seen in the early 1990's.

US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT From Daryl Perkins

Dear Member:

Hallelujah!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Hallelujah!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Over a year ago NAFA General Counsel Frank Bond, Conservation Committee Chairman Ralph Rogers, VP Jim Ince and myself met with US Fish and Wildlife Director Steve Williams and other Service representatives including Dr. George Allen in Washington in the hopes getting some movement on the nestling peregrine EA. In January Frank sent a letter to Director Williams inquiring on the status. Today, the fruits of our labors and your letters and comments came home to roost!

[Federal Register: March 10, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 47)]

[Notices]

[Page 11455]

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[DOCID:fr10mr04-95]

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Availability of Final Revised Environmental Assessment, Management Plan, and Implementation Guidance, and a Finding of No Significant Impact for Take of Nestling American Peregrine Falcons in the Contiguous United States and Alaska for Use in Falconry.

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: This notice is to announce the availability of a Final Revised Environmental Assessment, Management Plan, and Implementation Guidance, and a Finding of No Significant Impact for take of nestling American Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) for use in falconry. We published the Draft Revised Environmental Assessment in April 2003. We considered 945 comments in revising the assessment. After completion of the Final Revised Environmental Assessment, we also produced a Finding of No Significant Impact for the action.

ADDRESSES: The documents are available from the Division of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop 4107, Arlington, Virginia 22203-1610. They also are available on the Division of Migratory Bird Management Web pages at <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. George T. Allen, Division of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, at 703-358-1714.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the draft Revised Environmental Assessment, Management Plan, and Implementation Guidance (draft Revised EA) we considered six alternatives for take of nestling American peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) in the western United States and Alaska. We accepted comment on the draft Revised EA for 60 days (68 FR 22727). We received 945 electronic or written comment letters on the draft Revised Environmental Assessment, Management Plan, and Implementation Guidance. Fifteen were from State or Federal agencies; 930 were from individuals and organizations. Thirteen agency responses favored allowing take of nestlings, and two responses were neutral. Of the individual and organization comments received, 6 opposed take of nestlings and 929 supported allowing take. We modified the Draft Revised Environmental Assessment, Management Plan, and Implementation Guidance to respond to concerns expressed by agencies, organizations, and individuals.

Having reviewed the comments on the draft, our proposed action is to allow take of up to 5 percent of the American peregrine falcon nestlings produced in the States west of 100[deg] longitude, at the discretion of each State. We believe that this conservative level of take is appropriate for a species recently removed from the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants, and will have no discernible effect on the American peregrine falcon population in the western United States. Based on this assessment, I have signed a Finding of No Significant Impact for take of nestling American peregrine falcons under the conditions we evaluated.

QUOD TOTUM PRO...



tries. Forbidden to take birds of prey from nature.”

Hunter can begin practice in Lithuania only from 18 years old. We organise meeting of our club in summer 2002. 8 members take part in meeting. 12 members refuse membership. Reason of that:
- most of members motivate, that couldn't become falconers, through new Hunting law and Hunting rules;
- economic reasons;
- emigrate from Lithuania.

So 8 members stay in our Lithuanian falconers club from 2002 meeting.

I ask employees, which create new rules and law about possibility to changed point Nr.15 Especially about forbidding. Answer was negative. They explain, that rule is oriented in EU.

Our falconers couldn't make big damage for 100 - 150 goshawk population, if give 2 - 3 birds. It is my personal opinion.

2001 autumn our club got good present from Hungarian falconers club - 3 goshawks males. I want thank once again Janus Toth , who organised all assistance. Now we keep 3 birds and successfully hunt ducks, partridges and black birds.

Future of falconry in Lithuania belong only from young generation. Older generation look in falconry like it is exotic, but not like in hunter type.

Today address of our club is:
Lietuvos sakalininku klubas
Akmenes 34,
Vieksniai, Mazeikiu raj.,
Lithuania
mob.ph. ++370 87 51970, E-mail: ddaugela@takas.lt

Darius Daugela
president of Lithuanian falconers club

Dated: March 1, 2004.
Steve Williams,
Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.
[FR Doc. 04-5306 Filed 3-9-04; 8:45 am]

Peregrine Take

Since announcing the Notice of Availability of the Final Revised Environmental Assessment, Management Plan, and Implementation Guidance, and a Finding of No Significant Impact for take of nestling American Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) for use in falconry, I have received numerous inquiries as to just what this means. Are we now allowed to take nestling peregrines or is there something else that the Fish & Wildlife Service needs to do before this can happen? I posed the same questions to NAFA General Counsel Frank Bond. Below is his reply:

“With the issuance of the final EA and the FONSI, as approved by FWS Director, Steve Williams, there is nothing more that needs to be done by the FWS to proceed with a harvest, except as noted below. The states are now in a position to permit a harvest. When they have selected the falconers who will be permitted to take an eyass Anatum, they will notify the FWS so that the selected falconer will have the peregrine harvest prohibition removed from his individual falconry permit. Then that individual, with the state permit in hand, will be authorized to harvest an eyass.”

Lithuania

Sent: Wednesday, December 03, 2003 1:20 AM

Falconry in Lithuania

In 2001 Lithuanian falconers club - Lietuvos sakalininku klubas - was 20 members. 8 active and 12 passive members. We could hunt with all birds of prey, except species, which was in Red Date book. Birds for falconry we could take from wild nature with permit of Environment ministry.

From 2002 year our Government and Environment ministry recreated Hunting law and Hunting rules. Now document talks about falconry in several points:

- “...III. Hunting tools, means and terms
- 11....hunters could use tools and means:
- 11.2.means
- 11.2.3. dogs, birds of prey, horses.
- ...
- 11.7. hunters could hunt with bird of prey small games
- ...
- 15. For falconry hunter can use legal purchase or breed birds. Lithuanian Republic Environment ministry give certificate for birds keeping, which is breed or legally buy in foreign coun-



Netherlands

Present (November 2003) legal situation about falconry in the Netherlands:

- * Legal means to hunt with only
 - o Goshawk
 - o Peregrine
- Both species only with a closed ring, which means: bred in captivity.
- Only goshawks bred in Holland need a DNA - prove on top.
- * With a closed ring and a birth certificate from the breeder we are allowed to keep (only keep, not fly) all other kinds of birds of prey.
- * A new law coming up (welfare of animals) prohibits keeping those birds as long as you do not have falconry-license which is a very good development.
- * Game to hunt on:
 - o Mallard
 - o Pheasant
 - o Rabbit
 - o Hare
 - o Wild pigeon

THAT IS ALL!!

Licence for the peregrine.

- o Falconry license (two seasons apprentice and a theoretical exam)
- o License to keep the bird and bring it into the field

Licence for the goshawk

- o Falconry license
- o License to keep the bird in your garden.
- o License to bring the bird into the field.

Needless to mention that you have to pay for every particular license. (typical dutch)

o Maximum number of licenses given by the government:

- 200
- So far in use \pm 150

o Pending

- o Hunt on crow and jackdaw
- o Using governmental owned property for falconry.
- o Bringing down costs of licenses.

Some good news:

Our four falconry clubs stick together to deal with our government. This panel

(I mean the clubs) go on well together and we even established an every now and than discussion with our government (right winged).

At least our government listens to our arguments which, so far, does not mean, they are going to do something about it.

Some bad news.

- o Only gos and peregrine.
- o Only five species to hunt on.
- o Release of captive bred pheasants is forbidden.
- o Rabbit disease (apart from some special places) makes them disappear.

All in all: Falconry is established in our law so we exist but our adversaries make it as difficult as possible.

But falconers in Holland are dedicated: WE WILL SURVIVE (for the time being).

Thijs Fleskens - Holland



Concerns about the Future of Falconry in Japan

Kinya Nakajima

The Japan Falconiformes Center (JFC)

Falconry is believed to have been brought from the mainland China to Japan in the 4th century, and from its very start its practice was limited by law solely to the noble class, as it was established as a hunting activity as a sort of status symbol. Ordinary people were not allowed to keep hawks or falcons, and a falconer, as a vassal to a lord, was paid salary and was given the role of raising hawks or falcons owned by his master and always training hawks and falcons to be ready for the day of hunting the lord decided on.

Even after the 12th century when the real power in politics and economics was moved from the emperor to the Shogun, who was originally a military commander, the falconer's position, as a member of the military family, was for training hawks or falcons owned by the Shogun and other feudal lords, and at the same time serving as a private secretary and a body-guard.

In short, a traditional Japanese falconer was not in a position to keep his own hawks or falcons and practice falconry by using them as his hobby.

In order to allow the lord or his guests to enjoy falconry, goshawk must be trained to dash to the prey, once released from the fist of a person who has never even handled a goshawk before. This means that hawks should be trained by paying special attention to letting hawks keep their wild spirit as a bird of prey and avoiding making hawks attached to a particular person. In other words, without turning them into pets. For this reason falconers valued more passage-hawk than eyess. For orthodox Japanese falconry, hawks used for falconry for several years were to be sent back to nature, and special training methods were designed for allowing hawks to be restored to their original habitat.

Moreover, a falconer who was entrusted with falcons or hawks cherished by the Shogun and feudal lords, had to also pay due attention to the falcons' or hawks' physical conditions. Due measures had to be taken so that training of falcons or handling of preys, which often tended to be smeared in blood, should not appear unpleasant to look at. Even in those days when the pathological or biological knowledge was non-existent, trials and errors over a long period of time seem to have

brought about a method to hygienically raise and control the birds of prey.

According to existing Japanese law, falconers are deemed to have disappeared as the feudal system ended, and even for laws concerning hunting, hunting by using birds of prey are kept outside the concept of regulation by these laws. The present situation in Japan is that it lacks a law to sanction falconry, and there exists no article to ban falconry either.

For the birds of prey original to Japan, on the other hand, all species are designated as birds to be protected, and that should not be captured. Birds of prey may be raised only when a special permit for capture is obtained from the Environment Ministry for purposes of scientific studies or treatment of sick or injured birds. Under such conditions, in Japan at present, it is impossible for an individual to keep birds of prey, but birds of prey imported from other countries may be freely sold or bought through pet shops as long as they do not violate the CITES.

An increasing number of people seem to use Harris's Hawk for falconry in various parts of the world; at least here in Japan, falconry for pleasure with Harris's Hawk should never be encouraged.

The mass-media keen to chase rare topics introduce anyone who flies a falcon as a "falconer" and copycats, after watching those scenes, buy falcons at pet shops, and accidentally set them free since they are simply handling them as a toy. But, they start justifying such acts as if they were endeavouring for the preservation of the tradition of falconry, when actually they merely wanted to play with a falcon. The very structure that the mass media report, as told without making any verification, ends up further fanning such pleasure falconry.

Recently in Japan, measures for stamping out species of foreign origin are becoming a social issue as black bass originally from North America, discharged into rivers for sports fishing, eating the young of fishes, drastically reducing the original fresh-water species in various parts of the country. Raccoons that ran wild after escaping from captivity are causing damage to crops. Or dangerous reptiles live in gutters in urban areas. As ordinary citizens and municipalities as well are bent on stamping out imported species, the pleasure falconry of keeping imported falcon for the purpose of flying outdoors, not for keeping inside one's home, is recently drawing critical attention.

In present-day Japan where natural preservation and animal protection have become a social awareness, hunting is a synonym to massacre, and hunting is liable to be regarded as a cruel way of hunting as an evil deed to end an animal's life solely for one's personal pleasure. Guidebooks on the natural preservation movement quote the poaching and smuggling of hawks used for falconry as actual examples of illegal capturing of birds and beasts.

The situation is moving towards the direction unfavourable to the survival of falconry. All this originates from the misunderstanding caused by practising the pleasure falconry in a self-taught manner without regard to the genuine tradition. It is still acceptable as long as it is considered as a misunderstanding, but the trend of easygoing pleasure falconry may not only

fan opposition views, but would also put a ban on falconry in statutory forms. It would actually be falling into a trap set by itself.

For the skills of Japanese falconry nurtured over as many as 1600 years, falconers lost their job as the feudal system crumbled, and their skills were about to be scattered and lost, now only to be preserved by us at JFC. We, at JFC, apply the orthodox skills of falconry to the preservation of birds of prey by securing special permits for capturing birds of prey from the Environment Ministry. Methods for training of falcons without making them lose their wild nature can be directly applied to the training sick/injured birds for their return to nature. The clean mews can be used directly as the protection and nursing chamber of sick/injured birds. The genuine traditional falconry provides the best skill and knowledge in which to handle birds of prey. A falconer, who masters the genuine traditional falconry, is the person who has keen senses to sympathise with the feelings of birds of prey. There should be more scenes where a falconer's outstanding skills can be applied, not only to the treatment, protection, or nurturing of sick/injured birds, but also for the preservation of the natural habitat of wild birds of prey.

In Japan, falconry is a genre not supposed by law, and there exists no law to acknowledge falconry, nor any law to ban falconry, as stated above. If it is an activity belonging to such an uncommon field, those who are involved in falconry should behave themselves with far more rigor than any ordinary citizens. Instead of wasting time with falconry for selfish pleasure by using foreign-born falcons, directing more efforts to the protection of falconiformes by preserving our nation's genuine traditional techniques would surely help dispel misunderstanding, winning due evaluation. The future of Japanese falconry should be guaranteed as a refined outdoor sport by serving for the measures of the preservation of birds of prey now facing extinction.

Since Japan is an island country, its natural environment tends to be limited. But, as the Japanese archipelago is located off the Asian Continent flanked by the sea on both sides, long in north-south direction and its east-west axis being slightly tilted to the east, with many ups and downs, the natural world of Japan fortunately brought about a highly diversified ecological system.

Fauna and flora have been surviving over many years within a network system of coexistence by weaving a complex and dynamic 3-D ecological mesh. We should not presume that we human being have the vested right to meddle with this exquisite harmony that nature created over so long a time.

Bulgaria

REPORT

about the activities of BACBP in the period April 2001 - September 2003, represented by the chairman of BACBP at the annual meeting on 6th of September 2003

The Bulgarian Association for Conservation of the Birds of Prey /BACBP/ was founded on 21st of July 2000 and registered on 13th of April 2001 as a voluntary, non-political society with ideal aim, whose members are both physical and judicial persons. Main purpose of the Association is the protection of

all species diurnal and nocturnal birds of prey, their dwelling territories and alimentary basis. Taking into consideration the fact that organization of falconry could not be set up in Bulgaria, the Association was registered with more general aims, which corresponds to the normative basis in our country. No matter this, the members of the Association know that besides the general aims, our purpose is to represent the falconry as art and traditional sport. Among the main goals of BACBP are: lending support to the government institutions and non-government organizations in their efforts to protect the wild fauna and in particularity the birds of prey; developing and improving of the national and international laws, which permit the practicing of the falconry; preserving and stimulating the falconry according the requirements for conservation of the game. And last but not least among our purposes, is to support the populations of some rare and protected species of birds of prey throughout ecological enterprises and the reintroduction of some extinct species from the Bulgarian fauna. Among the main targets of our Association are the confinement of the illegal extermination, catch and trade with rapacious birds and their eggs as well as imposing and sustaining of positive social image of the falconry.

According to the statute accepted during the Constituent Assembly, the Association comprises of General Assembly, Managing board and Chairman. From the foundation of the Association till this moment, chairman of BACBP is Mr. Pavel Yakimov /second mandate/. Constitutors of the organization are 7 persons. One of the main purposes is the recruitment of members with specific interests in the falconry.

After a detailed estimation, the Managing board invite 13 persons to become members in the Association, among which in the current period 6 joined to BACBP. The problem with the recruitment of the members consist in the fact that falconry is still forbidden in our country by the law. All who are interested in practicing the falconry are repressed by the law and prefer to hide and do it secretly. Of course they all share our ideas, but will join officially to our organization when the falconry becomes legally permitted.

During 2001 in the Association were accepted 4 members. In the same year were expelled 2 members. In 2002 joined another three /3/ members. In the same year were expelled 2 members and in 2003 - another 3. **So at the end of the revised period there are 7 members remaining in BACBP.**

Additional information: 1 euro = 1.95 levas; Average monthly salary - 200 leva /about 100 euro/.

The main activities of the BACBP during the current period were directed to the reaching of the planned targets. One of the principal aims, preceding the acceptance of the falconry is the popularisation of the idea. That is why BACBP directed part of its efforts to the representation of the falconry in an accessible form. The popularisation of the idea is separated in three main groups - acquaintance with the ordinary citizen, contact with the mass media and contact with the institutions.

From August 2002, BACBP publishes every month thematic articles in the magazine "Bulgarian Hunter" - specialized hunting edition. On 24th of April 2003, Mr. Pavel Yakimov took part in the broadcast of Television Centrum Group - "With rod and raffle - we draw a bead on you ". In 11 December Pavel Yakimov took part in the broadcast of radio and in 13 December same year we were guests on the National TV. In January we expect secondary invitation and next interview on National TV.

We keep up with thematic publications related to the falconry contact with mass media, interested in this topic. With

regards to the articles published in dailies, we sent materials to the newspapers "Standard" /2001/ and "Monitor" /2003/. For the popularization of the Association's activities we sent a lot of letters and organized several meetings with representatives of different non-government institutions. The principal target of BACBP was and remain the government sector. Our aim was to go into our suggestions for discussion related the alternations in the Law for hunting and protection of the game, in the section with the birds of prey. In this direction BACBP did a lot. On 11th of February 2002 were sent letters, introducing the activities of BACBP, together with suggestions for the alternation of article 45, section 12, which prohibits the falconry. The suggestions were addressed to the: Ministerial Council, Ministry of Agriculture and Woodlands - 3 letters, Ministry of the Environment and Waters - 3 letters, National Board of the Woodlands - 3 letters, SLRB, WTU - department "Hunting Economy", BAS - Zoology Institute, as well as the non-government organizations BDZHP and BDZP. Regarding to the alternations in the legislation a special written suggestions were sent to the National Assembly - to the Committee of Environment and Waters and the Committee of Agriculture and Woodlands - 30th of May 2002, 10th of June 2002 and 26th of June the same year. As a result of this correspondence BACBP had a conversation in the National Assembly about the acceptance of alternations in the Law for Hunting and protection of the game. Despite of the expressed serious argumentation, the alternations in the Law were accepted without any changes in the section related to the falconry. There is something else - as a result of the strong solicitude of some ecological organizations, was specified the meaning of section 2, article 65 from the Law for Hunting and protection of the game. BACBP opened a public discussion on the pages of the magazine "Bulgarian Hunter", dedicated to the alternation of the Law and sent once again letters to "green" Ministries. In 2003 a meeting with representatives of these institutions took place - more particularly with Eng. Julian Rusev, chief expert in "Hunting and fish economy" department in NGU in the Ministry Agriculture and Woodlands, as well as representatives of the non-government sector. With the collaboration of BACBP was made an interview with Ass. Prof. Nino Ninov, rector of the Wood Technical University and one of the experts in "Hunting Economy" department in WTU.

As a resume of the work in the current period, there are several conclusions to be made:

1. The government institutions and the non-government sector are extremely distant to the idea of the restoration of the falconry.
2. An interest to the falconry is shown. There are supporters of our ideas who practice in isolation the falconry, but part of them have very confined practice in training rapacious birds.
3. More active cooperation between the members of BACBP and IAF is needed for the realization of the idea in the different levels.

One of the greatest successes and recognition of the work of BACBP during the current period was the acceptance of our Association in IAF. This event took place during the 34th annual meeting of the international organization, in England in October 2002. Unfortunately BACBP could not sent its representative to this prestigious forum, because of the definitive refusal of some financial organizations.

No matter all this, on 8th of October 2002, BACBP possesses the statute of associated member of IAF. This is an advantage for us during our work here on local level, with the government sector and the non-government organizations, because our Association has its own name and recognized international

image, despite the legal disorders. With connection to this fact we have a lot of responsibilities and obligations. That is why I would like once again to lay a particular stress on the more engaged activity of our members. It is of great importance for the development of the idea that everyone feels responsible and declares not only in words his dedication to the falconry. As a conclusion, in the passing period BACBP won recognition as the unique legitimate acknowledged organization in Bulgaria and abroad who is interested in the restoration of the falconry. What we have succeeded may look little in content, but we have to confess that it is a great success and important stride ahead to the defense of the idea.

*Pavel Yakimov,
Chairman of BACBP*

*The report was made at the annual meeting,
6th of September, Sofia*

Czech Republic

Status of falconry in the Czech Republic

Czech Falconers Club and statistics

Czech Falconers Club (Klub sokolniku CMMJ) was founded in 1967 as the only club organizing falconers in the Czech Republic having currently 407 members. Internally, the club involves 20 district groups having five to fifty members. Although some members are passive, majority of the members have one or more hawks and the essential part of members are active falconers. Last year the club registered no new members, because the special annual falconry examination, which is necessary for membership in our club, was postponed to this year due to the new hunting laws. Our club registered 61 new hawks for hunting (of which 16 are goshawks) and encountered following birds bred by its members: 63 peregrines, 50 falcon hybrids, 43 sakers, 4 gyrs, 16 golden eagles, 3 goshawks, 2 tawny eagles, 3 merlins and 1 harris. In the last decade 2500 birds in total (of which over 1800 falcons) were bred. The club registers currently: 333 goshawks (mostly females), 54 sakers, 52 falcon hybrids, 53 peregrines, 38 golden eagles, 16 harrises, 4 kestrels, 6 sparrow-hawks, 4 eagle owls, 4 tawny eagles, 2 common buzzards, 2 red tails and 2 lanners. The club registers only hawks used for hunting. The total number of hawks kept by falconers for breeding and other purposes, which is registered by the authorities (common species at district level and rare species at ministry level), is about triple.

Overview of the new Czech legislation related to falconry

Falconry in the Czech Republic has always been quite popular and strong, however last years are more hectic than ever before due to the new hunting, environmental, CITES and animal welfare laws as a consequence of so called "approaching EU and its legislation".

In December 2001 the new *Hunting law* was accepted. This law was proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture, where we have good contacts and relations and therefore it was positive for falconry - giving falconry a legal official status, while previous hunting law just tolerated falconry at the level of ministry order. An unhappy error occurred in the law, which prevented us to hunt in 2002 falconry season. Since 2003 the error was fixed and we enjoy this law. All subsequent ministry orders, which describe practical details for this law, are also useful and positive for falconry. The new falconry examination, now officially recognised by laws, will become more demanding since this year.

In October 2003, the new *Environmental law* was rejected by parliament. This law was proposed by the Ministry of Environment, which is controlled by green activists, some of them have very extreme opinions. The first draft was very negative for falconry (as well as for other human activities) and it would seriously affect Czech falconry:

- * obligatory DNA tests for all birds of prey in captivity at owners expenses and risk
- * breeder would have to get a licence to breed. Even if a pair of birds breeds natural way in aviary but without licence, eyases would be illegal. We estimate they would issue a quite limited number of licences that in the practice
- * no more hybrids
- * no more legal possibility to obtain a bird of prey from the wild, not even common species such as kestrel, buzzard and goshawk

Our proposals to change relevant parts were refused only by a weak majority in parliament due to negative opinion of the ministry, but at the end the law - as a whole was rejected by a tight majority fortunately. The main reason was not falconry, but pressure from land and forest owners, because the Ministry wanted 20-30% area of our state to become protected. Thus power of ministry would increase much and owners would suffer from it, while they would receive a minimum or no compensations for this.

In February 2004 the new *Animal welfare law* was accepted. This law was proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture. This law is stricter than previous, e.g. it limits training of animals, circuses and experiments on animals, but it means no threat for falconry as we know. Our club uses "Rules for keeping birds of prey and owls" - a document which is recognised by the ministry, so a general strict rules such as licence for every single public display with birds of prey or special examination and qualification for people who transport animals are not applied for normal falconers.

In March 2004 the new *CITES law* was accepted. It is basically previous CITES law with updated EU requirements. As we know so far, this should pose no problems for falconry, but practice will show the reality. Some practical procedures will be described in details in ministry orders, which are not created yet.



In March 2004 the new *Environmental law* accepted by parliament. When previous law was rejected in October 2003, the ministry prepared "a new" draft which was basically the same, but a bit softer for us, they allowed hybrids and possibility to obtain a common species from the wild. In practice we doubt that they would issue any permissions for birds from the wild. We had very intensive negotiations directly with some members of parliament, which finally lead to success. The new law is generally positive to falconry, even better than the old environmental law, because it means less bureaucracy, power is moved more from central ministry to regions and there are less restrictions:

- * no obligatory DNA tests, in case of essential suspicion, environmental inspection can make a DNA test, but at their expenses and their risk
- * no limitation for breeders, no sorting for licensed and unlicensed breeders, the only qualification standard remains the falconry examination
- * hybrids allowed
- * possibility to obtain birds of prey from the wild. Previous ministry proposal was that they would issue licences themselves (in practice no licences), now the licence should be issued at regional level, which means that there is a good chance to get some licences

Basically, when the law becomes valid, the state will be similar as now, so Czech falconry will be preserved for future.

Reasons of our success with the new laws

Following analysis of our success could be useful for other falconry clubs. Every country is different, but some rules are general to reach a success in a legislation process:

- High effort. Negotiations with the Min. of Agriculture which was positive to us during preparations of law drafts + effort to obtain direct support from members of parliament to support these positive law drafts. After unsuccessful negotiations with the Min. of Environment which is negative to us, bypassing this ministry and making effort to obtain direct support from members of parliament to change these negative law drafts. This would be our advice for other countries in troubles. When we visited MPs 3 times, they did not mind us too much, when we visited them 20 times, they saw that we are serious and many of them will give us support, some of them even became very familiar with us - having a drink or lunch with us. This had an additional effect that environment ministry became very nervous and "softer" when they saw how some MPs are familiar with us and when they were criticized by MPs.
- Support from IAF. We kindly requested the IAF to provide us info about the status of falconry legislation in the EU describing the importance of the situation. Based on the IAF materials and other sources, we prepared an overview and arguments for negotiations. In addition IAF sent several times lobbying letters to government and parliament. This was very important and useful, because in May 2004, we become EU member and our authorities consider everything, which 'comes from Brussels'. We used the original letter with arguments from "experts in Brussels" many times to persuade various members of parliament.
- Support from the Czech Hunting Union (CMMJ)

having over 100,000 members to which our club belongs to. CMMJ has much influence in government and in parliament, because many "high level people" are active hunters. They introduced us to several important MPs and gave much know-how about the legislation process and practical advice "how things go in the parliament". We advice other countries in troubles to ask hunters for help if possible.

- No falconry scandals, but two government scandals. There were two medialise scandals recently, which came in a good moment.

An environmental inspector-employee of Ministry of Environment attempted to smuggle rare orchids from the New Zealand. He was convicted and judged there. He had to pay a high fine there, when he returned to our country, he was not willing to give his notice, which was criticized in media. Another corruption scandal was that a chief of CITES department at the ministry took bribes, not only money but also goods such as rare parrots, animal food - simply everything. His strategy was to be very arrogant and unpleasant when everybody applied for CITES, when somebody gave them a bribe, he treated his request promptly, while others had to wait for several months. He was sent for 2.5 years in prison. This shows how media are powerful, they form the public opinion and should not be underestimated.

Goshawk issue

We observe for several years that goshawk becomes unavailable for Czech falconry. In the past, it has been possible to get a common species, such as goshawk, from the wild with certain obstacles imposed by bureaucracy. Nowadays authorities do not want to allow taking legally goshawks from the wild, although it is very common and its population is stable, if not growing. Czech falconry has been based on goshawks for a long time and currently still about 70% Czech falconers use goshawks for hunting, although many falconers moved to falcons in the last decade. We are concerned that many falconers could give up falconry, because they cannot afford or are not interested to move to falcons. In the past, about 40 new goshawks were registered every year, which is far less than 1% of goshawk population and thus this cannot harm this species anyhow. Only 16 new goshawks were registered in 2003 and immature goshawk becomes rare to see in autumn field meetings. We hope that the new environmental legislation, which gives possibility to obtain certain amount of goshawks from the wild at regional level will help this. Another, but long-term solution, is the captive breeding. This year Czech falconers bred 3 goshawks, which is still too low number compared to about 150 bread falcons.

Other activities

Apart from the legislation activities, Czech Falconers Club tried to influence positively the public opinion through mass media and exhibitions more than in other years. The official internet page of Czech Falconers Club has been updated:

<http://www.sokolnictvi.cz>

In October 2003 our club held its 36th annual international field meeting, which took place at Opocno castle about 150 km to the east of Prague. Every year about 150 Czech and 50 foreign falconers (UK, Germany, Austria, USA, Slovakia.) come with about 100 hawks such as 50 goshawks, 30 falcons and 20 eagles and they hunt for three days in groups of about 10 hawks. Usual quarry is hares for goshawks, pheas-

ants for falcons and hares/roe-deer/foxes for eagles. The next 37th international field meeting will be held again in Opcno castle from October 7th to 10th 2004. Our club will be pleased to organise IAF AGM 2005 followed by our 38th traditional field meeting in Opcno in October 2005.

*Dr. Bohumil Straka
Czech Falconers Club*

New Zealand

March 2004

From: Debbie Stewart

To: PM

Cc: jm.rodiguez-villa@mazda.es

Sent: Monday, December 01, 2003 5:19 AM

Subject: Re: falconry in New Zealand

Dear Patrick

My apologies for the delay in a response, in the last few days we've had a quite intensive period of field work with NZ falcons. However, a special meeting of the Wingspan Board of Trustees was held over the weekend which included a general discussion on the IAF questionnaire, - notes of which, where possible, I have included on the form attached.

We appreciate that it is a short time frame for consideration at the AGM, and are mindful the notes below offer little as an introduction about the Wingspan raptor programme, and status of falconry within New Zealand. We welcome the opportunity to send through further supportive information and overview of the programme, with the Wingspan management plan, newsletters, brochures, and references. In the short term an overview of the programme can be viewed at www.wingspan.co.nz

The motivation for making special application to join, is based on the IAF Constitution, as outlined and recognised within the Article 2 Objectives, and with consideration for membership by Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust listed in 3.1 Membership. In particular, Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust welcomes the opportunity to be aligned with the IAF to enlist support networking for raptor conservation, and importantly, to uphold and maintain accepted international standards of falconry.

Regards

Debbie

WINGSPAN

BIRDS OF PREY TRUST

1164 PARADISE VALLEY RD

P.O.BOX 993

ROTORUA

NEW ZEALAND

wingspan@xtra.co.nz

www.wingspan.co.nz

Poland

Falconry in Tuchola - Polish second falconers club

Falconry in Tuchola has been practiced for more than 30 years now.

Czesław Sielicki, father of Polish modern falconry, in 1971 was a teacher at Forestry College in Tuchola. That year he established school's club of interest named School Club of Falconers "Raróg" (Saker). His idea to rise the Raróg Club was a return to centuries old tradition of Polish falconry after at least half-century break. In frame of after-school activities students have been building falconry house and trained Gos-

hawks to hunt. Three birds of prey species (Goshawk, Sparrowhawk and Marsh Harrier) were treated as hunting pests and weren't legally protected birds those years.

On Czesław Sielicki initiative in 1972 Falconers' Club of Polish Hunting Association named "Gniazdo Sokolników" was established. Significant part of the club's members up to nowadays are former students of Forestry College in Tuchola, who had been taking their first steps at falconry learning this field of hunting in School Club of Falconers "Raróg".

Modern falconry means not only training of birds of prey to hunt, but also number of other activities. We, falconers in Tuchola, are very involved in many activities, such as:

a. Rehabilitation of birds of prey - people bring birds of prey which because of various reasons lost ability to unaided living in nature to Tuchola falconry house. Among others there are some cases of poisoning, hunger weakness caused by hard weather conditions, wings' harms etc. As only it's possible birds after treatment are set free. In case bringing birds back to nature is impossible they are donated to zoos.

b. Reintroduction of Peregrine Falcon - Peregrine Falcon became extinct in Poland and other parts of the World because of organochlorine pesticides used in agriculture such as DDT. DDT has an ability to cumulate in living organisms. Falconers from Tuchola participate in Project of Restitution of Peregrine Falcon in Poland.

c. Breeding of birds of prey - as all species of birds of prey are legally protected falconers were forced to breed birds of prey. It's an origin source of birds' used by falconers to hunt.

d. Nature protection education - birds of prey evoke many positive as well as negative emotions. Birds' fans always attributed number of human features like: -nobleness, affection to freedom, "king of skies". Farmers, hunters often saw them as pests. One way or another attitude towards this group of birds was mostly emotional but not always based on reliable biological knowledge. In Tuchola's falconry house there is a possibility to see at close range Peregrine Falcon, Saker and Lanner, Goshawk and Common Buzzard. It's a lesson of nature with living birds taking part and speakers are people who commune with these animals the whole year, know their biology as well as psyche.

In 2001 a Society of Birds of Prey Lovers and Falconers in Tuchola named Polish Falconers Order was founded - second after Gniazdo Sokolników falconers organization in Poland. The organization is based in Forestry and Agricultural College in Tuchola. Polish Falconers Order continues falconry traditions of Tuchola.

For more information see

www.zakonsokolnikow.republika.pl.



Denmark

Dear Patrick Morel,

As you know, the Danish Game Management Council has set up a working group to analyse the aspects and potential consequences of allowing falconry/hawking in Denmark. This work will culminate in a report/recommendation being made to the Council.

The group consists of 1 person from the birdwatchers, 1 from the hunters/shooters, 1 from the Nature Conservancy, our President Frank Skårup Hansen and 4 persons from the Forest and Nature Administration (government).

The Chairman is the head of office at the Forest and Nature Administration, Lars Gudmand Pedersen. We are happy with the composition of the group.

The group held the first meeting in a very positive and friendly atmosphere. At present the timetable for the coming year looks as follows:-

March - next meeting.

May - meeting at Franks breeding facilities.

September/October - hawking field-meet.

December - report/conclusion.

We are happy to tell you that the group will be looking at falconry and hawking in general. This will include the hunting of game-birds(partridges, pheasants, ducks). We are very pleased.

We would like to ask all of you to be advisers/consultants at such times as the group needs assistance, should that occur. If you agree, would you please assist us by sending an e-mail to the persons mentioned below, detailing your name, e-mail address and your fields of expertise.

Lars Gudmand Pedersen, Chairman
lgp@sns.dk

Karsten Due, Secretary
kdj@sns.dk

Maj F. Munk, Secretary
mfm@sns.dk

Also, it would be very useful to us to procure the DNA-profiles on Goshawk (*accipiter gentilis gentilis*) and Sparrowhawk (*accipiter nisus nisus*). If this is possible are you able to help?

Best regards,

Frank Skarup Hansen - President Danish Hawking Club
and

Tage Jessen - IAF Representative

Mèxico

November 2003

There are a total of 25 falconry associations in México, 10 are committed to join in one National Federation of Falconry. Presidents and other members of these associations are coordinating efforts by e-mail and forums of internet pages:

<http://groups.msn.com/t1nn8qf3162rqhh338lo8r7u21>

<http://www.geocities.com/hawkjaime.geo/>

Every association is in contact with their wildlife department, (Semarnat) of each state, in order to have all the falconry birds registered.

The associations are as follows:

1 - Asociación Queretana de Cetrería A.C.

2 - Asociación Xalapena de Cetrería A.C.

3 - Club de Cetrería de Monterrey A.C.

4 - Grupo Cetrero del Valle de México A.C.

5 - Grupo Mexicano de Cetrería A.C.

6 - Halconeros de Aguascalientes A.C.

7 - Asociación de Cetreros Potosinos A.C.

8 - Asociación de Cetrería Itzcuahtli

9 - Grupo Cetrero de Toluca A.C.

10 - Harris Club

Our last national meeting was held in 2001.

This year, members of "Grupo Cetrero del Valle de México" (GCVN) have organized a National Camping in the State of Zacatecas (central part of México) for December 18,19, 20 and 21, they coordinated several activities such as conferences, falconry market and a raffle. We expect 200 maybe 300 falconers from all over the country, most of them with Harris-hawks, some of them with redtail-hawks, cooper's-hawks, aplomados, peregrines etc. The place is good for long-wings and short-wings; there are plenty of hares, rabbits, ducks, quail etc.

Everybody is welcome.

Letter from President of GCVN addressed to Director of Wildlife Department on September 26 2003.

Translation of the main paragraphs.

National Ecology Institute

Wildlife Department

Dr. Felipe Ramírez Ruiz de Velazco

With the basis established by the law and to the interior regulations of Semarnat,

I kindly ask for the renewal of the "Falconry Group of the Valley of Mexico A.C." register with the code of the General Direction: INE/DGVS-CLUB.002-DF/99

Based on what was mentioned on the registration document that was granted to us by this Direction, the expectations and goals that were needed for the development of Falconry were fulfilled, this as an alternative for the conservation of birds of prey.

For the last 10 years, "Falconry Group of the Valley of Mexico A.C.", has focused on the task of altruistic form to give back to the nature what correspond, and in this way sustain our ecological balance.

Some of our consolidated expectations in the year are:

1- Conferences and exhibitions with the Coordination of the General Direction of UNAM (National University) were given at the CCH High-School on June 5,2003.

2- Conferences at National School of Iztacala in the 7th Fair of the Environment on October 9th 2003



3- Clinical conference of Birds of Prey, Speaker Dr Guillermo Yamil held at National University UNAM on April 11th, 2003.

We received a telephone call from Semarnat communicating us that a family of birds, of great size, were flying in a residential zone of Rincon de Echegaray, north of Mexico City, it was a couple of harris-hawks, for this reason a triptych was elaborated for better knowledge of the villagers, as well as a Conference and Exhibition with the colonial assembly, to protect what now they consider part of their environment.

Our page of internet and "Rapaz", informative magazine of the group, has the objective to transmit the knowledge and feelings of the Mexican Falconers; and the forum is where ideas can be exposed from those who are dedicated to this activity. 8 birds of prey were recovered this year by Semarnat and canalized with the members of the association.

Sincerely

Dr. Guillermo Yamil

President of GCVM

Mexico City

To the Community:

Only to inform you that on Sunday, October 28th, 2003 an event took place at the "Park Viveros" organized by Ciceana Semarnat and Birdlife International. The occasion was because of the Worldwide Festival of Birds, in other countries of America they are organising these type of events. It had quite success although there was not much diffusion, there was bird monitoring, a guide accompanied a group providing them binoculars and made a tour searching and identifying different bird species, actually there are one nest of Harris-hawks and we could observe some of them ; There were workshops of ornamental feathers decoration, Mexican birds of prey in clay, embossed eagles in aluminium, birds of Sierra Madre range in origami, birds of prey paintings; Exhibitions of birds of prey of taxidermy of the UNAM Ixtacalco collection and the Natural History Museum; Original paintings Exposition of birds of prey of the Mexican painter Gerardo del Olmo; Movie." The ABC of birds of prey" and " Knowing the Mexican eagle through its eyes." Theatre; "Between beaks, wings and bullets." Falconry Exhibition; Conferences; Sales of litographies, postal,

crafts, etc. there were stands of conservationist groups as: Pronatura, Naturalia, and many falconers assisted with whom we talked to.

Regards.

Juan Carlos

Zimbabwe

From: Gary Stafford

To: iaf.president@skynet.be

Sent: Saturday, January 10, 2004 11:35 AM

Subject: Season Greetings

Dear Patrick and the IAF Board,

I wish you all a happy and successful 2004. My falconry in Zimbabwe is always exciting from the falconry point of view, but in our present situation we have to constantly be vigilant with regards to the war veterans that have occupied the farms once owned by whites. It is interesting to note that the cloud over falconry in Europe is as challenging as the cloud that hangs over falconers in Zimbabwe, because a lot of falconers have a real problem with hunting grounds as these farms are now under the control of war veterans that regard whites with suspicion. I feel falconry in Zimbabwe is making history on a daily basis and I hope 2004 will see our sport face less challenges from the political arena's so that we can appreciate the wonderful spectacle of a falcons flight. After all is that not all we want?

Yours sincerely

GARY STAFFORD

Hunting in Georgia

Givi Chogovadze

Hunting birds is famous from ancient time in Georgia. There is a legend about the origin of the capital of Georgia - Tbilisi.

Until V century the capital of Georgia was Mtskheta. According to the legend the king of Georgia Vakhtang Gorgasali was hunting pheasants with is favourite falcon (today this is the territory of the sulphuric baths in Tbilisi). The falcon caught a





pheasant and both of them fell into the spring of hot water and boiled. The king was very angered to lose his favourite falcon and ordered a town to be built in memory of his falcon. The town was named Tbilisi - in Georgian 'the town of warm springs'.

Tiles with falcons sitting on the hand were found by the archaeological excavations in Mtskheta. We can suppose that bird hunting was known earlier than the V century.

There are lots of legends. Folk songs about *Accipiter nissus* are very popular in Georgia. Here we call falcons MIMING.

Falconers in Georgia are called Bazierei and it means the head huntsman. In Georgia there was a post Baziertukhutsesi. The falconer that trained the hunting bird was called Bazieri. Later the name of the post became the name of a family especially in western Georgia.

Hunting birds used to be a tradition in Georgia. High eastern Georgia people were hunting with falcons and *Accipiter gentilis*. In western Georgia it was the tradition to hunt with *Accipiter nissus*.

It's known that in western Georgia along the Black sea coast are the migration lines of many birds, among them a lot of quail and that is why *Accipiter nissus* is preferred here. Mainly they use passage birds but some falconers keep their hawks for five or six years.

Accipiter nissus is not only an animation for a falconer - it is a part of his family. With its help the peasant can get quail to feed his family. Nowadays people make smoked quail for winter. That's why this type of hunting is truly traditional and is maintained up to the present in spite of having been prohibited.

For two hundred years hunting with birds was called the survival of the past. Falconers were under pressure but inborn falconers stayed faithful to their favourite sport. Being in the 'underground' they tried to keep them out of sight.

The masterpiece of training had high value in Georgia, proven

by historical documents. In 1578 Georgia was conquered by Turkey and had to send them every year the following: 12 virgins, 12 young men, 12 falcons and 12 *Accipiter nissus*. There were hawks in Turkey also, but hawks from Georgia had been valued higher.

From 1967 began the period of blossoming for falconry in Georgia. Unity of hunters and fishermen organised the section of birds of prey. Today this sport is famous in the following regions of Georgia: Ajar and Abkhazian Autonomous Republics, Chokhatauri, Ozurgeti, Martvili, Poti and Lanchkhuti.

Nearly 500 Falconers are registered in Georgia mainly hunting with *Accipiters* - Goshawk and Sparrowhawk. The hawks are in the red book and we do not use them. We use one year old hawks and never take them straight from the nest. We follow the traditions and as a rule after the hunting season on quails we set them free. That's why most of them return to nature unharmed.

Style of hunting. There are two styles in Georgia: classic and Lazian styles. Georgian style is when the hawk is sitting on the falconer's hand. After the dog flushes the quail the hawk flies from the hand and follows the quarry. Pointers and English Setters are the dogs used in Georgian hunting.

In the Lazian style the falconer takes the hawk in his hand and lays down its wings on his head. When the quail is flushed he throws the hawk to the flying side. By this method he gains rapid speed and takes the quail with ease. We do not encourage this as some become useless and can not be returned to the wild.

At the end of October a competition for hunting birds will be held to show the best falconer, popularise defence of hunting birds and fight against poachers.

Slovakia

Slovenský klub sokoliarov pri SPS

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Bratislava 20.10.2003

For 32 years the Slovak Falconer's Club at the Slovak Hunter's Union has been organising an annual international meeting of falconers, which has always enjoyed a very good reputation both in Slovakia and abroad.

However, in the recent years the officers from the Ministry of Environment have excessively complicated the issuance of import CITES documents thus gradually putting off international participants. The situation was critical last year already, when only 17 out of 60 registered international participants attended.

We regret to inform you that the international meeting of falconers will not take place this year as the international participants have definitely refused to bear the harassment by the officers from the executive body of CITES and will only come to Slovakia after Slovakia's accession to EU.

We would like to ask you for your understanding and assistance in the resolution of these issues.

Anton Moravčík - prezident SKS pri SPZ

A BRIEFLY PREVIEW OF THE PROBLEMATIC ZONES CONCERNING ANIMALS AND PLANTS PROTECTING LAW NORMS IN RELATION TO KEEPING BIRDS OF PREY AND OWLS IN CAPTIVITY AS PROTECTED ANIMALS, BY MEMBERSHIP OF THE SLOVAK FALCONER CLUB AT SLOVAK HUNTING UNION.

In the present time are the birds of prey and owls captive managing problematics regulated by law/norms in environmental protecting, hunting and veterinary section.

In creating process of the hunting and veterinary laws they were always subsumed asides and proposals from the consulting council of the Slovak falconers club {SFC}

So that it does not come to interest engagements or any other problems, quite opposite to the case of environmental protecting laws.

In the year 1990 members of the SFC came with a cooperation proposal with the State nature conservation {SNC}, certainly at that time to the Head quarter of nature conservation Liptovsky Mikulas in the case of birds of prey wild population fortification by captive bred individuals. Skilled breeder SFC members gave also proposals for particular methods. On a negotiation in December 1999 this plans were accepted by officers of the SNC and a group was built contained of SNC and SFC experts to finishing and realizing the project. However, in January 1991 this group on the first meeting stopped its operation, because the Head quarter of nature conservation Liptovsky Mikulas received attitudes of Mr.-s Simak, Danko, Kadlecik and Kornan, which evaluated the birds of prey situation in Slovakia as a not calling for the above quoted activities bound up with the wild population fortification {most of all they considered the golden eagle population as a form stable to rising one}.

Notice books of these negotiations are in the archiv of SNC.

Up the year 1993 was built the so-called gestor system at the SNC for diverse species or groups of protected plants and animals. The birds of prey and owls protection gestor group elaborated the so-called birds of prey and owls conservation concept in Slovakia. At its creation also the interests of the captive holder from SFC were subsumed {Ing. Alojz Kassak was a member of the gestor group}. At that time arose also the environment-protection law, valid since 1994 under the N 287. It is necessary to notice, that at last nearly nothing from the above quoted conception was subsumed into this version, although for its time very professional, we can say dateless, elaborated.

The law 287/ 94 Z.z. has brought the first serious problems;

- an agreement for keeping protected species with special farming conditions
- a new tally of the captive individuals
- categories of protected species
- designation of kept individuals
- agreement for using hawks for falconry

These circuits are still influencing in keeping hawks for Falconry and are complicated by issue of Decree Nr.93/ 1999 Z.z.

I would like only briefly to comment the single circuits of problems;

Agreement for keeping protected species with special farming conditions.

According to this law the protected animal species captive keeping agreement is issued by the environmental departments of the proper township offices and on a base of promoted documents of the hawk-acquiring the received origin

certificates and the so-called cards of a species. The environmental department of the township office specified also the origin of discreet kept individuals. In case of the ascertainment and recognition of origin there was after the law-issuing a meeting at Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republik {MESR} under participation of Dr.Svec, Dr.Klescht and members of the gestor group, which draw a line, that all individuals kept in captivity acquired before 28.5.1992, consequently before CSFR get into the Washington convention, will be consider for legal acquired on the base of promoted documents.

However, already at 16.1.1995 the MESR reserved for itself the law to confer judgements for birds of prey and owls keeping. Any later begun the Environmental departments of the district offices with issuing this judgements again. That's why different SFC members are in possession of different licenses with different farming conditions. At least, by joining of Mgr. Kmecova to the office of the MESR they began to permit the valid certificates of origin. In defense of the promoted documents of birds origin issued by environmental office, which determined on this base the great part of bird origins, mostly falcons and eagles, as "C" {minimally 2nd generation bred in captivity}, Mdr. Kmecova determined their origin as "U" {unknown}, even she "intended" new origin categories, as U/C etc., unknown in the rest of Europe. At present it is plane as the nose on ones face, that it was only a breeding-ground preparation for further restrictions brought by the decree 93/99 Z.z.

The new tally of kept individuals

Each individual received a so-called certificate of origin and was written into the card of the species. This document for keeping in captivity. That's why became the control twice complicated, because the SFC used since a long time the so-called Hawk Control Cards, which are not accepted by the SNC.

Then the control system of the SNC changed more times, including the control numbers of captive keepers, so that on this field a really confusion was built, activated by the MESR, it caused a considerable displeasure also at the officers of the district environmental offices. At the present time new certificates of origin and cards of species are issued, where Mgr. Kmecova appropriates again the origins of individuals off hers bat.

Many SFC members appealed against such procedures, even sued against the willful process of the MESR. During February 2002 the High Court of Slovak Republic satisfied the sue of Mr. Tibor Bedi in full range and eliminated a judgement of the MESR. On this example it is evident, that the complaints sued by SFC members are justified.

Designation of the kept individuals

The gestor group of SNC recommended her own concept a closed ring, a microchip and a DNA-test as a basic designation.

The MESR set on the first place the DNA-test, then the closed ring and microchip. At present, all hawks belonging to SFC are designated with closed rings edited by the SNC, which are frequently by themselves brought in question. Following microchip use is often directed, and certainly, at most of all individuals DNA-tests are also wanted. By a SFC members self initiative ordered DNA test up 1994 in the firm MEDSER-VICE Brno. These were at first by MESR accepted, but later

gradually for transporting blood or pen assays to Czech Republic of course with time terms of 30 days and more for transaction the agreements, so that was at last not to realise. After a stimulus by SFC-members, the firm MEDSERVICE Brno created up September 1996 the society BIOSERV Nitra, which converged all the essays for DNA analysis from the whole territory of Slovak Republic and supplied them to Brno for evaluation. But in a short time this firm stopped its activity. Also by a stimulus of SFC, in cooperation with Veterinary University Kosice and the Slovak Environmental Agenture Banska Bystrica a firm was searched, which could realize the DNA=analysis on the Slovak territory, nevertheless more proposals were handing by the above quoted institutions, the MESR selected the firm Slovgen s.r.o. Bratislava for this activity. This firm yet don't have a state accreditation for making DNA-analysis and their edited protocols have not any legal value. That's why the SFC refuse to make DNA-analysis at this firm.

Agreement for birds of prey use for Falconry

The law 287/ 94 Z.z., 7 f is about the using of hawks for falconry and animals to catch or killing other animals. In the practice does it mean, that if one want to keep hawks in an aviary, needs only an agreement for captive keeping, {this agreement has each member of SFC} but if a falconer want his hawk to give a possibility to fly and hunt in natural surroundings, he needs to have the above quoted agreement edited by the district environmental office for the proper district, of course for a proper fiscal stamp charge. This agreement has a validity only for the district of falconers residence. If he wants to go visit a friend with a hawk on the glove to an other district, he need to have an agreement for all the districts he has eventually to pass, because for the SNC even a holding a hawk on the glove indicates falconry. If all Slovakian falconry meeting is organized, the SFC asks for agreements global for all the attendees and all districts, where the hawking takes place. In practice does it mean minimally 30 days transactions for agreements and 2000,-SK fiscal stamp for each district. The great problems induced the Decree Nr.93/ 99 Z.z. about protected plants and protected animals. It is possible to preface, that this decree was elaborated only by MESR officers and a narrow group of their consultants, and asides of natural reservation or national park administrations regional SNC-centers or groups were absolutely negated.

In 3-details about protection conditions of protected animals assessed also the manners and possibilities of obtaining an animal from the wild. Neither one of them gives a possibility to obtain a hawk for falconry by taking a nestling from the wild. Hereby is blocked a possibility to obtain a young goshawk, sparrowhawk or kestrel for falconry use. It is possible to acquire a goshawk by catching in a pheasantry, but the pheasantry must have an agreement for goshawk catching edited by MESR. In the last year no one pheasantry obtained such an agreement. Taking goshawk nestings from the wild, in the past the most common way to obtain a hunting hawk for SFC members is blocked by the SNC because of the ostensible critical situation of our goshawk wild population. Paradoxly, even in the year 1998, when the same MESR granted agreements for taking young goshawk from the nest in their reasoning adduced under other arguments, that in the whole Slovak territory bred about 1600 pairs of goshawk, the population is plus or minus stable, the presumed yearly accession is about 350 young birds and according to the birds of prey and owls protection gestor group it is possible to take yearly 20

individuals from the nest, it is about 0,6 % of the populations accession, without endangering the wild population.

Decree 230/ 2001 of Ministry of Agriculture, changing and amplifying the Decree Nr.172/75 Z.z. in wording Decree 231/ 1997 Z.z. 3 sect 1 and 3 gives a possibility to catch during the whole years goshawks in independent and accredited pheasantries, and in black grouse and capercaillie localities. This possibility is by MESR not accepted.

3 sect 9 says; sale, gift, interchange, rent and lending of extremely endangered and critical endangered animal species is only to realize with animals born after fertilization in controlled or artificially by man designed surrounding e.t.c., and which origin is minimally from the second generation born in captivity without amplifying by genetic material from the wild. The breeding ground for this paragraph was prepared by into the question bringing of birds of prey origins obtained before entrance the CITES.

All eagles and falcons imported to Slovakia in the past were minimally the first captive bred generation and their young were F 2 generation, with a possibility of free treating with them. Mgr. Kmecova did after ostensible control willful change the categories of origin for U or U/ F1, and so stopped any manipulation with their broods.

The most sas thing on the whole problem is the fact, that the SNC is not able to rationalize her measure against members of the SFC {or SHU}. Also the standpoints about a captive keeping of diverse species, hybrids, their designation and other measures had in some years extremely changed.

Some examples;

- standpoint about obtaining of goshawk was quoted above
- hybrids and foreign species- in the year 1990 the keeping of hybrids was absolutely disqualified

In the year 1992 and 1993 was the SNC standpoint positive for holding such birds by SFC members, because of protecting of our autochtoneous or original species and a more easy control. At the present time they were more cases of not agreed imports of foreign species and hybrids because of endangering of original species in the wild lost birds came free to the wild.

For example in the year 1992 and 1993, were only foreign species and hybrids were recommended, was the lanner falcon categorized to the original species because of 2-3

Founds during the last 50-70 years on our territory. In the recent time for more our members an import of this species was not agreed, because it is a foreign species.

At the present time, also because our protests against the law norms and procedures of the SNC executives is persisting intentional sickness of the operation of SFC, victimizing of their members, groundless interruptions of proceedings and similar non correct procedures. During the last 2 years made the SNC also attempts to ruine international falconry meetings on Slovak territory. For example in the year 2000 during the falconry meeting in Rimavska Sobota transferred 22 SNC officers with assisting 3 police officers a control reid with a following blood-letting on hawks, so that the meeting was practically ruined. It is necessary to say, that for all the participating hawks also the export permits were conferred already before the meeting. It is oddly, that a German falconer after refusing the blood letting on his eagle had originally to pay 5000 Sk fine.

After his refusing again they proposed a fine of 3000,-Sk and closely they satisfied with a fine of 300,/Sk. Ultimately they made them excused after his protests at any international organizations.

In the last year the MESR-officers an attempt to ruin the 30th jubilee falconry meeting by handing import permits to foreign attendees only in the last while under the condition of blood letting at overstep the state border. That's why {in apprehension on well-being of their hawks } 2/3 of the foreign participants didn't com to the meeting. A control with blood letting subjected consequent the hawks only of the attendees passing the border in the working hours of a business day { SNC officers }

Who came at week end or in the evening could pass the border after waiting any hours without such controls. Later, also the export permit certificate cheated them a whole hunting day.

For illustration only, as long as in other countries are the CITES permits transacted promptly at the same day or in a 5 days per post, in Slovakia this procedure has a more month duration. Last, but not least it is evident, that because of the last version of the law about handle with protected animals the SNC officers don't want to apprehend, that CITES-norm doesn't mean a generally stop in manipulation with protected animals, but only its control and regulation.

I want finally to point out, that the SFC does not activate the problems, we are only defending against victimizing, contravention of the constitution of Slovak Republic and breaking laws valid in the Slovak Republic, in the order to bring the state officers to work for the citizens welfare and not to discredit our state in contact with foreigners.

It is necessary to apprehend, that falconry means a very old hunting method, a a component of cultural heritage from our fathers. An endangering of this hunting art leads to endangering of the whole hunting in Slovakia.

At present it is so, that a Slovak falconer or animal keeper is discriminated toward falconers and keepers in the states of European union, because countrywide, that in EU-states the holding of foreign species or hybrids allowed- and in our country also in the year 1994 it was forced to fly or bred hybrids or foreign species- so now are hybrid and foreign species imports rejected. SNC officers predicate, that such individuals can our original species endanger, although the have not any occupancy about such an endangerment.

News From The EU

Christian de Coune

Guide on Hunting

The EU Commission has been working out a guide "Towards a Guidance document on hunting under the Birds Directive". According to the Commission "there is clearly a demand for improved guidance on the hunting provisions of the directive. Court cases & general litigation show need for clarity..." "...to provide better clarification of the requirements of the directive relating to hunting, within the existing legal framework and strongly based on scientific principles and data".

FACE and BirdLife were the sole partners of the Commission in the drafting of the Guide.

We have been asked by the Commission not to disclose the draft document. As expected, the text did not contain anything detrimental to falconry

We asked however for falconry to be somehow quoted in the document, which was agreed. (see IAF Newsletter, June 2003, p.15)

The publication of the said Guide has been kept in suspense during a court case submitted to the European Court of Justice concerning opening and closing of the hunting seasons.

The Court of Justice has made its decision on 16th October 2003, so the green light is on.

The English version is expected to come out before the end of this year, translations will appear as and when.

We have been told that falconers will be happy with the text...

EC Court of Justice 16th October 2003

France did ask in January 2002 to the Court "whether the Directive permits derogation from the opening and closing dates for hunting which are set in the light of the objectives for the protection of birds laid down in the Directive and, if so, what criteria determine whether that derogation can be used".

In May 2003, the Advocate General published his Opinion.

The opinion of the Advocate general contained non-judicial statements that were really displaced in a text like this. He went grossly beyond his juridical role. For instance he claims that hunting is probably the most important factor of threat to the conservation of species. His interpretation of some provisions of the Directive was also "very personal".

Although IAF was not a party to that procedure, although there was no possibility to lay down counter arguments against the said Opinion, we decided to send a letter to the President of the Court complaining about the biased attitude of the Advocate General and counter-arguing the statements of the latter's Opinion.

Did the President read our letter or did he throw it in the dustbin? we shall never know.

All we can say is that there are happily several points of resemblance between our arguments and several considerations of the judgement of the Court.

It is more than unusual that the Court does not follow the opinion of the Advocate General.

A great relief!

In reply to the first question "the Court declares that the hunting of wild birds for recreational purposes during periods of particular protection may constitute a "judicious use" permitted under the Directive".

In reply to the second question "the Court points out that such hunting may be authorised only if certain conditions are met, in particular that there is no other satisfactory solution, that the hunting is carried out under strictly supervised conditions and on a selective basis and that it applies only to certain birds in small numbers".

EU Pets.

We have been asked unofficially by the Belgian authorities to comment on a draft Commission Regulation (EC) concerning amongst others "personal pets". One of the reasons of that draft was that Resolution Conf.10.20 of CITES concerning frequent transborder movements of personally owned live animals could not be implemented by the EU. This impossibility would most probably have been avoided if the dialog had been better within the IAF team at the meeting of CITES Animals' Committee years ago.

This draft regulation is an attempt to make the CITES Resolution implementable by the EU.

Comments have been sent to the Belgian authorities as well as to the EU Commission.



Letter by the EU Commissioner

The EU Commissioner (DK) competent for environment will send to all interested parties a letter clarifying some points about hunting because some misunderstanding may have arisen due to distorted news spread by some extremists through the media.

We have not been shown the draft of that letter. We asked that falconry should somehow be mentioned in that letter. We left it to our interlocutor in the Commission to introduce the word falconry in a non controversial way.

If it works, it would be one more text by the Commission where falconry would be quoted positively.

The usefulness of having as many as possible such statements has been once more illustrated when we were in Slovenia.

Alien Species

The European Strategy on Invasive Species has been adopted practically without any discussion except two minor changes that had been kept pending by the expert meeting of June 03, no new changes have been introduced.

Has also been adopted, the Draft Recommendation of the Standing Committee, on the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species.

This Recommendation recommends to the Contracting Parties to implement national strategies taking into account the European Strategy.

This Recommendation is important insofar as it mentions Recommendation No. 57 (1997) which excluded falconry birds from the measures to be taken concerning inter alia the prohibition of keeping of non native organisms.

Falconry is explicitly dealt with in the Strategy among the examples of " best practices " for preventing unintentional introductions of alien species : " *Work with the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey to prevent escapes into the wild of alien birds of prey used for falconry, which could lead to hybridisation with native species. As appropriate, co-operate in the elaboration, adoption and implementation of a European Code of Conduct on Falconry* ".

There is a similar recommendation for FACE about alien game species for restocking.

Once more, the IAF is recognised as the interlocutor of a major international body.

I had a long exchange of views with the Secretariat (Eladio Galiano) and with Piero Genovesi, one of the authors of the Strategy.

My first question was, what would happen if we propose no code of conduct or any similar document, the reply was : " nothing ! ". They do not intend to propose us some sort of

a code nor to impose whatever on us. It would be purely an initiative of ours, if something occurs.

My other question was to which extend would the name of the Council of Europe or of the Bern Convention appear in connection with some kind of code of conduct. Both the Secretariat and Piero Genovesi agreed on some form of a reference to the Council of Europe like for instance the logo of the C of E or even some sort of an approval or other " blessing " .

I said that we would not want a code that would contain any sort of disapproval of the use of alien species of birds of prey, because such use has been in existence for centuries without any adverse affect to conservation. Genovesi said : " what about hybrids ? ", I said that hybrids are aliens like others but with even smaller probability to breed in the wild. I said that falconers often use non native species because of the excessive difficulty to have access to native wild birds of prey ; if we had easier access to the natural resource that wild birds of prey are, the things could be rather different.

I said that IAF had an old code of conduct containing amongst others measures to be taken to avoid losing a bird and recommending to make every possible effort to recover a lost bird, I said that most of the falconers' clubs have since very long time ago similar rules and anyway falconers have always done their very best to avoid losing their birds. The result of it being that there has never been a case of a population of alien birds of prey settling in the wild in spite of the centuries long use of aliens by falconers.

Genovesi would see such a code as sufficient. I felt that he would be satisfied with a rather minimalist solution.

I insisted on the fact that the decision must come from our members and that I could not anticipate what they would be ready to do.

I said that we want absolutely to avoid opening a debate within the Standing Committee on falconry because we never know if some people who do not like falconry would grab that opportunity for fighting against it. I said that we have always had a very straightforward dialogue with all the authorities, especially with the Council of Europe but that we have always kept a low profile avoiding confrontation. I said that I did not doubt of the positive attitude towards falconry of the Standing Committee, but that one never knows...

My impression is that Piero Genovesi would be happy if " his " strategy would result in any sort of a code or " best practices " ; that he would be happy if the Strategy would yield some achievement. He told me " it would be good for you, it would be good for us " .

He said that he could manage that such a " good practices " could bear the logo of the Council of Europe or the Bern Convention, of the IUCN aliens specialist group as well as of his Institution. He offers us his help and advice in the drafting of such a document and agrees that we would be totally the masters of the text and that if we decide to abandon the drafting the text would be abandoned too and that nothing further would happen.

I must say that the dialogue with the Secretariat and with Piero Genovesi was very straightforward and reliable.

He agreed not to take any initiative and to wait for us to contact him " if we so wish " .

FACE

There has been a complaint against traditional collecting of Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) eggs in North Holland. The complaint has been rejected as not acceptable. The legal service has expressed the opinion that the argument of the non-existence of " other satisfactory solution " was not applicable in

this case, because there is no other satisfactory solution to the existence of that traditional collecting than allowing eggs to be collected.

Yves Lecocq will send me the opinion of the legal service. The question to be examined is whether it could apply to falconers harvesting hawks from the wild.

FACE has a new Deputy Secretary General, a Belgian, Mr de Tillesse, whom I know a little, I should meet him soon.

Yves Lecocq is not in favour of code of conducts that he considers too mandatory, but he prefers "good practices" statements.



Symposium on Saker Falcon Status in the Range Countries

(Abu Dhabi, 23rd September 2003)

Report written by Patrick Morel and José Manuel Rodríguez-Villa

The Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency (ERWDA) of Abu Dhabi (U.A.E.) organized a one-day symposium on Saker falcon status in the range countries on September 23, 2003, at the Millennium Hotel, Abu Dhabi, to discuss preventive measures to protect this species from threaten by extinction. The symposium was held on the sideline of the Big 3 Show, which includes Arab Hunting Exhibition.

The IAF was kindly invited by ERWDA to participate in the event and to that purpose was represented by two delegates, Patrick Morel, President and José Manuel Rodríguez-Villa, member of the Advisory Committee and member of the MERWG and NAMEAN.

In his opening and welcome speech HE Mohammed Al Bowardi, ERWDA's Managing Director, said Saker falcon has been a symbol of Arab falconry for centuries and has played

an intrinsic role in the Arab culture and heritage. He added that today Saker falcon is in a perilous situation and is fighting a grim battle for its survival in the wild. "There is an 80 per cent decline in Saker falcon population. If we understand the gravity of the situation it can still be effectively conserved. Today conservation concerns for the Saker falcon is one such urgent ecological issue to which we should give utmost importance."

Currently it is estimated that 8,000 to 9,000 falcons are used for falconry in the Gulf. An estimated 3,000 wild Saker and Peregrine falcons are trapped and brought into the Gulf countries from Range Countries (China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Siberia).

The symposium was attended by a number of international experts, agencies and bodies (IUCN, CITES, WWF), plus researchers and conservationists presenting working papers and research studies and Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) falconers' leaders from Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and UAE.

Prince Bandar bin Saud Mohammed Al Saud, Director of Protected Areas at Saudi National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development (NCWCD), summarised the Arab-GCC region concerns stressing the needs more stringent measures to protect the wildlife, especially the endangered Saker falcon threatened by extinction. "We should have a comprehensive plan to cover all the GCC countries to educate the public on environmental conservation and wildlife protection. The member countries should also introduce stringent penalties and regulations to put an end to the destruction of the environment and wildlife." Prince Bandar also called for deeper cooperation between the GCC countries and exchange of expertise in environment and wildlife fields.

Nick Fox opened the meeting with a global overview of the Saker falcon, explaining how a sane population of birds used in traditional falconry in the Arabian Peninsula were put under pressure in a few decades.

Brigadier Mukhtar Ahmed President of the WWF in Pakistan, in his paper, also raised similar grievances. He said Saker falcon is also on the decline in Pakistan. Taking note of the situation, he added, the Government of Pakistan has directed provincial governments not to allow trapping of the falcon forthwith. "So far only a limited quota was being allocated to the foreign dignitaries from Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar for export after approval by the competent authority. Even this limited quota is being reduced at the rate of 10 per cent annually."

Dr Eugene Potapov provided alarming news from Mongolia. Rodenticide (Bromdiolone) continues to be distributed on a massive scale to kill agricultural pests (voles), and is devastating populations of predators such as Sakers. The tripod nest platforms adopted for sakers in areas without safe natural sites are also proving useful in Mongolia, and could be a basis for work to restore Saker populations elsewhere.

Several other pre-eminent researchers funded by ERWDA presented conclusions on their works on saker status and related issues in different areas (Russia and Eastern Europe, Kazakhstan and China) within the Theme I of the Symposium ("The Status of the Saker"). It is to be pointed out how professionally and openly the issues were addressed by all participants. Theme II ("The Future of the Saker") and theme III ("The Way Forward"), included presentations on projections for the final

loss of the Saker, the role of captive bred falcons, the CITES system and its role in the concern (by a senior officer of CITES Secretariat in Geneva), monitoring of wild populations, controlling exports and imports, networking and information exchange etc., plus the already mentioned presentations of EFC and IAF.

It was also made clear that ERWDA was not for uplisting saker in CITES Appendixes but for a better implementation of its procedures, quota systems and a better control of exports/imports, use of captive bred falcons, etc.. by utilizing schemes as the one already implemented in UAE.

Majid Al Mansouri, ERWDA's Executive Secretary General, made a presentation on the Emirates Falconer's Club, the first initiative to have a falconers club in the Middle East.

José Manuel Rodríguez-Villa closed the presentations session by introducing the IAF to delegates, supported by a Power Point presentation. José Manuel outlined IAF facts and purposes inviting falconers from the GCC countries to get organized and join the IAF, is the best way to work jointly and efficiently for Arabian Falconry survival and to help in solving its related conservation concerns. The IAF presentation was co-authored by Dr. Tim Kimmel.

Just after a break for a lunch that José Manuel and I were invited to share with Mohamed Al Bowardi and Prince Bandar, so we could exchange some viewpoints, thorough deliberations on various studies and research on the agenda were held in a closed meeting by GCC countries representatives. As a result, the symposium, issued a declaration calling for the development of a national legal regulation to conserve falcons and reorganize the CITES legal framework, including the Falcon Registration Scheme.

The Abu Dhabi Declaration reiterated that falconry was an integral part of the cultural identity of the Gulf region, having been practiced over the centuries by the people of this region. It recognized that these morals had been derived from the noble tenets of Islam as well as from the Gulf-Arab values that were markedly sensitive to the need for sustainability of the species and natural habitats.

It appreciated the significant efforts made by the GCC countries to protect the natural environment, wildlife and biological diversity.

The declaration also emphasized the catastrophic decline of the Saker population that had pushed it to the brink of extinction in many Central Asian countries, with only a few remaining pockets of distribution in some of these countries.

The declaration attributed this decline to the unimaginative land use policy, poor and short-sighted agriculture policy, unsustainable harvest levels at nest and also during autumn migration.

The symposium stressed the need to enhance cooperation at all levels of research and policy to conserve falcons, and carry out coordinated efforts by national and international organizations to study its population biology and conservation problems. This revealed the considerable volume of data collected on Saker populations, and the efforts being made to bring trade under control.

The declaration lauded the example of the UAE Falcon Reg-

istration Scheme, particularly the successful implementation of microchip marking and the issuing of a certificate in the form of a passport by the CITES Management Authorities of the UAE, and the fact that several countries like Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait had expressed an interest in implementing a similar scheme to manage and control the hunting impact on the falcon population in the wild.

The delegates invited countries concerned to introduce export quotas for falcons based on scientific studies and information. The Abu Dhabi declaration also called for encouraging falconers to import wild saker falcons only if they conform to the international standard regulations of CITES and follow the legal ways in the countries concerned.

Finally, the Abu Dhabi Declaration on Saker Falcon Conservation encourages the GCC countries to establish falconers' clubs/associations. Something in which we, the IAF, may try to help a bit.

Meanwhile, Emirates Falconers Club (EFC) announced its recent joining of the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF). As reported by the local Press: "Patrick Morel, President of the IAF, who was also participating in the symposium, said it is a positive initiative on part of the EFC to join the international organisation. He also welcomed the growing cooperation between UAE's Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency (ERWDA) and Saudi Arabia's National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development (NCWCD). He called upon other such organisations in the Gulf region to join IAF to help protect endangered wildlife species such as the Saker from extinction".

As a result of our contacts in Abu Dhabi, Prince Bandar and Dr. Hany Tatwany also from NCWCD, will be invited to our next AGM in Jerez, as observers.



The symposium was followed in the next days by visits to the Arab Hunting Exhibition, a public event mostly dedicated to falconry, where we had the opportunity to be presented to various personalities including HH Lieutenant General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chief of Staff of the UAE Armed Forces and a keen and experienced falconer. In making contacts and interacting with local falconers we were helped

by our colleague in the AC Martin Jones, who was also present at the Exhibition.

This year's Show was a unique event being a part of a series of exhibitions appropriately named as 'The Big 3'. It included the Arabian Hunting Show, the Arabian Adventure Show and the Arab Equestrian Show.

The event provided falconers with updated information on hunting regulations and guidelines, and houbara bustards' life cycles, migration patterns, ecological diversity, threats to its environment and ongoing conservation in an aim to increase falconers' awareness.

The Emirates Falconers' Club (EFC), participated for the third consecutive year for the Show. The pavilion house exhibited at the Show was 2,250 square meter offering a full immersion into falconry and wildlife in the UAE and reiterating the role of falconry as a significant cultural heritage and legacy in the UAE. The theme chosen by EFC was Towards Sustainable Hunting underlining the Club's concern to increase falconers' awareness on various aspects of falconry and on falcon migration and life cycle, in addition to promotion and support of sustainable hunting methods.

NARC presented its programs and research development in the field of conserving Houbara and its captive breeding program. Additionally, the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital highlighted its modern health care facilities, which are provided to falcons and to avian in general. The Arabian Saluki Center, highlighted its programs and achievements at the Exhibition.

As part of the Arab Hunting Exhibition, there were many activities conducted at the Conference Hall of the Abu Dhabi International Exhibition Centre including a Young Falconers day and a Poetry Night.

A workshop on First Aid & Common Diseases of Falcons was held on Wednesday, September 24, 2003. The presentation was delivered by Dr. Margit Muller, Senior Scientist and Veterinarian at the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital. This was followed by a practical demonstration on how to keep the falcons in the healthiest condition possible.

Our hosts brought us to the National Avian Research Center for a visit of the Houbara Breeding Center nearby city of Sweihan where we were briefed by ERWDA's houbara team on the conservation concerns of the species, and later to the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital, closed by Emirates Falconers Club Headquarters in the outskirts of Abu Dhabi city.

Next day we had the opportunity to be guests of the training camp of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. So we could enjoy some falcon training and long talks with the Chief of the Camp, Chief of falconers team and several other falconers and learn about their different methods of training and hawking and their consequences in conservation of houbara, one of their main concerns.

Every day we met at the Hunting Exhibition where we were kindly invited by Mohamed Al Bowardi to share his Presidential table during lunch time.

During our stay in Abu Dhabi we could meet with Dieter Schramm, President of CIC who was attending the meeting as

observer, and discussed lengthily about IAF/CIC relations. In principle he agrees the IAF to take over the chair of CIC's Falconry Commission. In fact, he even proposed José Manuel to Chair such Commission shortly. Now it's been discussed internally within CIC how that take over could be implemented without harming personal sensitivities and how it could fit with the Constitution of the CIC. I'll report separately on the results of Dieter's dealing with his colleagues in the CIC. Dieter is supposed to attend our AC and AGM in Jerez.

In principle, the Arab Hunting Exhibition was scheduled from 22nd to 25th of September, but as the President of UAE, HH Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, a legend of Arab falconry and a pioneer of environmental concerns in the Middle East, could not visit the Exhibition on those dates, it was extended for one day more.

José Manuel and Martin report, as I had to leave 25th late night, that the visit of President Zayed was a major event. He was accompanied by his son Sheikh Mohamed and both were briefed by Mohamed Al Bowardi throughout the Exhibition booths.

José Manuel and Martin were also invited to share the lunch on that 26th with Mohamed, who showed his personal interest in attending our AGM in Jerez, an area he knows as he had some hawking there as José Manuel's guest few years ago.

On behalf of the IAF I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our friends in ERWDA who provided the invitation to participate in this important and promising meeting and their very generous hospitality and kind attentions to IAF representatives throughout our stay.

We firmly believe that our visit has been very positive and fruitful for IAF's future presence in this key area falconry wise. We have had the chance to better understand the complex and serious concerns of Arab Falconry directly on the ground, learning facts and projects from actual players. Hopefully we'll be able to help, to our best ability and means, our Arab friends in their challenging endeavours in the future. This has been a first good step.

Finally, I want to thank Tim and José Manuel for their presentation and José Manuel for making all previous arrangements to assure IAF's presence and participation in this important occasion.

We are enclosing some photos of our presence in AD. I hope you'll enjoy them.

You can find a complete report on the Saker Symposium including images, abstracts, speakers, press coverage, final declaration etc... in ERWDA's web page. Have a look at:
<http://www.erwda.gov.ae/eng/pages/conservation/conservation1.html>

The 3rd symposium “Asian Raptor Today”

The 3rd symposium “Asian Raptor Today” was held in Kenting, Taiwan on October 10-13 2003. 230 participants from 18 countries attended the symposium. 3 workshops, 24 oral presentations and 23 poster presentations were given. ARRCN collaborative project meeting was held during the symposium. The proceedings of 2nd symposium were introduced by the co-ordinator of the 2nd symposium on the venue.

I am most thankful to all members of Raptor Research Group of Taiwan and Mr. Roger C. J. Wang for his kindness and great job to make the 3rd symposium succeed. Also, 7 new members from 4 countries join ARRCN on the symposium.

Overwhelming majority of reports were dedicated to raptors not used in falconry and hawking in Asian countries. Only one report had more or less direct attitude to falconry - it was report by Le Manh Hung from Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources, c/o Zoology Museum Department, Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources, Vietnam “Raptor trade in Bird Market of Hanoi, Vietnam” but the number of falcons used in falconry mentioned in this report in Bird Market of Hanoi was miserable. Thus, no soil for any worries.

3 sets of IAF Annual Newsletters for the last 3 years were handed by me to the following persons: Dr.Toru Yamazaki (Japan) as a President of Asian Raptor Research and Conservation Network (ARRCN) - now this organisations includes about 140 members; Mr. Roger Wang (Taiwan) as a Chairman of Raptor Research Group of Taiwan (72 members) and Mr.Mike Chong (Malaysia) as Director of Information Centre of ARRCN.

I was the only representative from all countries of the former Soviet Union.

During 1 day excursion after two days spent in the hall all participants could observe at several sites of Taiwan very impressive and intensive migration of Chinese Sparrowhawks, Oriental (Crested) Honey Buzzards and Gray-faced Buzzards.



Jevgeni Shergallin

Book Review

21 September 2003

Dear Friends,

In contrast to very pleasant detailed and clear letter of Jose Manuel I would like to add some news from Ukraine. Recently friends of mine have informed me about publication of new book on “Falconry since ancient times”. Author - falconer from Ukraine Mr. Mikola Rud’ - editor in chief of Ukrainian journal “Naturalist”. The book is in Ukrainian language and well illustrated. I have not it yet (it’s very risky for me to recommend this book for all of you but the same people informed me that number of printed copies is 1000 only and that means that this book can be out of stock until reaching me and therefore I am writing to all of you right now). Unfortunately I don’t know any details of this book (gift edition) but I know that it is quite expensive (according to Ukrainian standards). If you wish to get it - you can write to author Mr.Mikola Rud’ directly at the address, mentioned at the site: http://proeco.visti.net/naturalist/falconry/fln_51.htm
uvira@ukr.net

With best wishes
Sincerely,
Jevgeni Shergallin

The Sinews of Falconry’ by Gordon Robinson

Published by:

Gordon Robinson, South Nethercott Farm, Whiddon Down, Okehampton, Devon EX20 2QZ, UK

Long heralded as Gordon Robinson’s contribution to the history of our sport this book achieves all it sets out to. His classical background and knowledge of the literature of our sport backed up by his close involvement with the BFC over its whole existence conveys an authority unrivalled by any other current author.

As its title implies the book sets out to give the reader an insight and flavour of our sport over the ages and provide an understanding of its very roots. In this it succeeds very well. In no way is it a ‘how to’ reference but more an effort to provide the moral and ethical tone for our sport as it has evolved through time. In today’s world of high tech gadgetry, scientific analysis and speculation it is a refreshing reminder of all the better aspects of human nature in relation to our civilisation, nature, our quarry and our hawks.

He does not set out to teach us his own ideas and acknowledges this in his frontispiece.

‘It might be said of me that here, I have merely made up a bunch of other men’s flowers and provided nothing of my own but the string to bind them with.’ Michel de Montaigne, 1533-1592.

As a collection of relevant quotations and extracts from other authors Gordon has managed to bring together a coherent picture. The senior Vice President came to the BFC almost at its very beginning and his personal relationships with those who kept falconry alive through the most adverse times are of great interest as he sets them in context bringing to life aspects that others speculate and misquote in the bar.



Of course he sets the scene in Part 1 with the vernacular of the sport and cleverly relates this to archaeological evidence of the Chinese, Hittites and Egyptians. The advance of the sport across Asia into Europe is charted through Roman times to its arrival in England and its establishment under Saxon and Norman interest. It's flowering during the Tudors and Stuarts through their contacts with other Europeans is brought to light with his references and perceptive quotations. Throughout his writing Gordon Robinson maintains a keen awareness of the sports world wide context and significant people.

In Part 2 he brings us the clubs and people who have created our modern heritage. The Confederate Hawks of Great Britain, The High Ash Club, The Loo Hawking Club through to the Old Hawking Club are all set in their context through the people who made them possible, Col. Thornton, Lord Orford, Lord Lilford, Hon. Gerald Lascelles, Capt, Francis Henry Salvin, Prince Duleep Singh to Lt-Col E Delme Radcliffe are all brought to life. He concludes this section with international records bringing us into the 20th century.

Logically Part 3 brings us the well-known personalities in falconry of modern times from Mitchell to Luff Meredith. Some of these are written by the author whilst others are contributions from Paul Jacklin, Dick Treleaven and others.

For those with an interest in the roots of our sport, its progress and history this is a remarkable record. Modestly produced it is good bedtime reading.

ARC

Zimbabwe Falconers' Club raptor research and conservation programme.

For The Raptor Conservation Group of the Endangered Wildlife Trust

WORKSHOP

On the

FUTURE CONSERVATION OF RAPTORS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

At

Aventura Gariep Dam

FREE STATE PROVINCE, 23 March - 25 March 2004

BACKGROUND

Falconry can assist raptor conservation, especially in Africa with its meagre financial resources and expertise. In Zimbabwe falconers have assisted by:

- monitoring nest sites,
- ringing raptors,
- establishing captive breeding programmes for endangered species,
- assisting with raptor rehabilitation,
- running educational programmes and
- providing specimens (mainly raptors and selected prey, but also unhatched eggs) to the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe.

This has been applied successfully for the past 28 years in Zimbabwe, as a result of the government falconry policy, consisting of a formal arrangement between the Zimbabwe Falconers' Club (ZFC) and the Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management (DNPWLM).

A vital component in this relationship has been the linkages between a ZFC research coordinator and a senior ecologist (DNPWLM). The ZFC established a Raptor Conservation Unit (RCU) in 1989, which has also worked in joint programmes with The Peregrine Fund Inc.

Falconry has been a legal pursuit in Zimbabwe (Hartley 1993) for some 40 years and the special falconry policy established in 1976 by the Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management (DNPWLM) has led to a systematic and concerted to conserve both raptors and their prey by the falconers.

The Zimbabwe Falconers' Club (ZFC) conservation strategy has four components:

- education and public awareness through talks and demonstrations by experienced falconers and also from two falconry clubs at private schools;
- veterinary care and rehabilitation;
- a research data base on raptor nest sites used for studies of populations, comparative ecology, DDT impact and the prey base of hawks;
- and a captive breeding and release programme mainly on the African Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus minor* and Taita Falcon *F. fasciinucha*

Guidance and professional input on the conservation programme was achieved by regular linkage between the Chief Ornithologist of DNPWLM and the Club's Research Coordinator, as a consequence of official policy and also the commitment of the respective personnel concerned. A cornerstone for the success of the programme has always been the falconers' access to birds from the wild.

The Raptor Conservation Fund was established by the ZFC in 1989 to provide financial support to the research programme. A separate breeding fund was established by the ZFC thereafter as well. TPF has provided most of the financial and material support, but additional help has come from the Endangered Wildlife Trust of southern Africa (EWT), the National Birds of Prey Centre (UK), while the Ecological Risk Section Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UK) has sampled eggshell contents for pesticide residues.

ROUTINE ACTIVITIES

- Annual monitoring has continued, with the maintenance of the nest record card system, which has continued to burgeon.
- Numerous specimens (eggs and shell fragments; dead birds) have been measured and submitted to the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe (NHMZ) in Bulawayo.
- Data on prey taken by trained hawks included weights and measurements (including gonads), moult and location and was collected almost exclusively by RH at the Falcon College Falconry Club. This has amounted to over 3500 individuals of over 140 species.

- Furthermore RH has also compiled a prey catalogue which now represents 132 species of birds, useful in the identification of prey remains.
- The monitoring of the raptor community around Falcon College in the Esigodini area has continued for 21 years.
- Over 300 raptors have been ringed by the ZFC and numerous raptors have been successfully rehabilitated, including considerable veterinary work done by Dr. A. Huelin. Post mortems have revealed incidences of avian tuberculosis in a few free living and captive Peregrine and Lanner Falcons, and a possible vulnerability to aspergillosis in some captive Black Sparrowhawks.
- Education - since its inception in 1983 Falcon College Falconry Club has produced 70 fully fledged falconer-conservationists, all of whom have spent a minimum of two years of intensive activity in the unit. They have also hosted many groups of visitors, instructing them on the raptors at the facility and on aspects of raptor conservation. As many as 20 groups from visiting schools make organised trips to the facility each year.
- A similar service has been provided at the Peterhouse Falconry Club.
- Several falconers have put on posters illustrating the ZFC conservation and research programme at conservation workshops and at game fairs held in Harare. They have also given flying displays with trained raptors.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

These include research and captive breeding, which are described in turn:



Research

- Under direction from RH, ZFC members and students conducted the following work, supported by The Peregrine Fund Inc. **Batoka Gorge.** While monitoring has focused on the Taita Falcon, an inventory on all raptors has been conducted from Victoria Falls to the proposed dam site about 60 km downstream. Habitat - gorge cut by Zambezi River. A long-term project started in 1983.

- **Bubiana Conservancy.** The role of hyrax on a population of six pairs of Black, three pairs of Crowned and four pairs of African Hawk Eagles in a 100 km² study area. Habitat - domed inselberg terrain in lowveld near West Nicholson-Beit Bridge. Project started in 1999.

- **DDT impact study.** Periodic collecting of raptor eggs, especially specialist bird and fish eating species i.e. Peregrine, Lanner, Black Sparrowhawk, African Goshawk and African Fish-eagle. We try to repeat studies at 10-year intervals. Analyses conducted by Ecological Risk Section Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, and also by the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute, UK. Project started in 1976.

- **Egg collection.** RH is documenting Fin O'Donoghue's registered egg collection, which contains multiple clutches of a number of raptor species. A comprehensive report is under way which will accompany the collection, which is destined ultimately for an appropriate museum/institution. A selection of this information will be published. Project started in 2002.

- **Esigodini.** Raptor community study. Some data available from P. Steyn (1961-1970). Monitoring focused around Falcon College and done in conjunction with Falcon College Falconry Club and Senior Natural History Society. Habitat - mixture of broad-leaf savanna woodland (on sandveld) and fine-leaf (acacia-combretum) bushveld (on clay). Project started in 1983 Malilangwe Conservation Trust. Raptor community project, which has focused largely on eagles. 49 species of diurnal raptors and 11 species of owls. This is integrated into the overall environmental research programme of this conservancy, which includes habitats and all trophic levels where the emphasis is on research that will compliment wildlife management. Habitats varied and include sandstone hills with miombo and thickets, riparian, mopane woodland and acacia woodland in the south-eastern lowveld. Data plotted onto GIS. Project started in 1995.

- **Marula (Matobo Hills).** Focused on the Black Eagle on private land to compliment long-term studies in National Park and Communal Lands by Black Eagle survey team of Birdlife Zimbabwe. Habitat - kopje terrain, ranchland and wildlife conservancy. Project started in 1996.

- **Marondera-Mvurwi.** Monitoring of accipiters primarily viz. Black Sparrowhawk, Ovambo Sparrowhawk, Little Sparrowhawk, African Goshawk, Little Banded Goshawk. Other species include Long-crested Eagle, Wahlberg's Eagle and Crowned Eagle. Habitat a mosaic of miombo woodland, open grassland savanna, domed inselberg terrain, intensive commercial croplands (mainly tobacco, maize, soya beans and winter wheat) and patches of agro-forestry (eucalyptus). Project started in 1978.

- **Mbalabala.** Raptor community project, including Crowned and African Hawk-eagles and Black, Ovambo and Little Spar-

rowhawks mainly. Habitat - domed inselberg terrain in eastern Matobo Hills. Project started in 1995.

- **Raptors in Harare and Bulawayo.** There are a variety of raptors in these two cities, which reflect the interesting dynamics between raptors and human landscapes. Species include Bat Hawk, Ayres' Hawk-eagle, African Hawk-eagle, Black Sparrowhawk, Ovambo Sparrowhawk, Little Sparrowhawk, African Goshawk, Little Banded Goshawk, Gabar Goshawk, Peregrine and Lanner. Habitat - urban and sub-urban with urban-rural fringe including intensive cultivation around Harare. Project started in 1989.

- **Save Valley Conservancy.** Raptor community project focusing largely on eagles, especially Crowned Eagle. 51 species (24 sp. breeding) diurnal and 10 sp. of owls (4 sp. breeding). In 2003 work started on monitoring invaded areas. Varied habitats including kopje, riparian, mopane woodland and Acacia tortilis woodland in south-eastern lowveld. Project started in 1984.

- **Status and distribution of Taita, Peregrine and Lanner Falcons in Zimbabwe.** Nest site characteristics, productivity, prey, nesting densities and ecology are being studied. We have data on 155 Peregrine sites, 22 Taita sites and 256 Lanner sites. Project started in 1976.

- **Triangle.** While the original focus of this study was on the effect of sugar cane farming on the distribution and abundance of large winter breeding eagles at Triangle, it has the added component of land degradation from widespread land invasions. Habitat of mopane woodland, riparian areas and extensive patches of irrigated fields with sugar cane in the

south-eastern lowveld. Project started in 1992.

- **Miombo woodland study at Karoi.** 30 species of diurnal and nine species of owls. Key species include Cuckoo Hawk, Lizard Buzzard, Little Sparrowhawks, Little Banded Goshawk, Gymnogene, Wahlberg's Eagle, and African Fish, Eagle Barn Owl, White-faced Owl, Spotted Eagle Owl. As war veterans and settlers are an increasing problem in that area, it may not be easy to sustain the study. Habitat typical of large parts of the miombo biome of central Africa and includes mosaic of emergent miombo and cultivated land, typical of Zimbabwe's intensive farming region. Project started in 2000.

CAPTIVE BREEDING

This has involved Peregrine and Taita Falcons. High levels of DDT and its metabolites in eggs of Peregrines, plus the desire of falconers to develop expertise in captive breeding, stimulated this programme in 1978. TPF collected four Taita Falcon chicks from two sites in Zambia in 1983 for captive breeding and the ZFC gave them an injured male in 1984. In 1988 TPF collected two chicks from a site in Zimbabwe and in 1991 we collected four chicks from three different sites.

Peregrine. The first successes were in 1981. 27 pairs of captive Peregrines produced 265 young. Three females produced young at 14 years of age, and one at 15 years. No females bred successfully after this time, according with patterns at TPF. One male fertilized a female at 21 years old. 78 Peregrines were released to the wild. Each released falcon was ringed and 13 were recovered. There was a tendency to drift to towns and to cereal croplands near Harare, usually within 100 km of the release sites. The longest distance recovery was at Pretoria west, for a falcon released at Marondera. A five and four year old falcons were recovered respectively, while another falcon bred successfully at a dominant, traditional Peregrine site in the Matobo Hills in 1997.

Taita. In 1993 four pairs of Taita Falcons were constituted from three females and one male taken from the wild, and three males bred in captivity by TPF. One pair has died. Two pairs have produced 12 chicks and seven pairs are currently held in captivity. The goal of the project is to establish at least 10 pairs and release their progeny to the wild.

CONFERENCES

The ZFC has long been recognised as a valuable contributor in the field of raptor and gamebird conservation in Zimbabwe, and it has contributed to several conferences: Perdix VI gamebird symposium (Hartley & Mundy 1992, Mundy 1996); VIII Pan Afr. Orn. Congr. 1992 (Hartley 1993, Hartley et al. 1993 - extended abstract); Raptors and Man symposium (Hartley et al. 1996); Our Endangered Environment (Hartley 1996); Migrating Birds Know No Boundaries (Hartley, R.R. 1998); V World Conference on Birds of Prey (Hartley 2000a,b) and the IOC Conference in Durban (Bell et al. 1998).

PUBLICATIONS

Publishing the results and sharing information with stakeholders is an important goal of our programme. ZFC members have published over 150 papers, short notes and popular articles over the past 30 years and these have been carefully archived. Each of the projects above has been the subject of at least one publication. Many key papers and notes have been used in standard works on birds and conservation, including the Handbook of Birds of the World Vol 2 (1994), the



Atlas of southern African Birds (1997), Gamebirds of southern Africa (2000), Raptors of the world (2001), and Robert's seventh edition (in press.).

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*Ron Hartley
Research Coordinator, ZFC &
Zimbabwe Representative, TPF.*

9 March 2004

Ethical and scientific aspects concerning animal welfare and falconry

by Thomas Richter

Each type of dealing humans do with animals is being tested at the moment by the society. This is true for hunting and especially for hawking as well. The present paper shall evaluate whether hawking and falconry go morally and biologically together with the ideas of animal welfare.

Moral by my means is the advise for well acting. Moral gives the answer to the question: "how shall we act". In the Middle Ages at the times of pope and emperor, the decision making was quite easy. The decisions came from the authorities. Unfortunately - life would be much more easy - and thanks God - to be kept in leading strings would be not our pleasure - at the present times there is no universal moral left. Everybody is forced to think by oneself whether his or her behaving is right or wrong.

At present times I am allowed to decide many various subjects by myself personally. If I don't like the taste of spinach, I am not forced to eat some. But if my aim is to regulate the living of other people by law, my duty is to justify my thoughts. The arguments have to be reasonable and without contradiction in it self. The much better it would be, if other people could agree with my decision, in case of spinaches this would fail.

One basic principle in philosophy is the principle of equality. Equal things should be treated equal, unequal things should be treated different. A person is acting reasonable, who decides comparable items the same way (Wimmer, 1980, by Mueller, 1995, P. 87). This means: if the ethical assessment is known for a possible option of acting, and if there is a second possible option of acting comparable to the first, the assessment has to be the same. By this means I will compare the keeping of Bird of Prey with other animal keeping and hawking with other hunting methods.

Ethics is that part of philosophy that does scientific research on morals. The relation between moral and ethics is comparable to the relation between a disease and the medicine science. Ethics is super individualistic. To forbid spinach for the only reason, that I personally do not like it, would not fit to a critical overview by ethics.

In order to decide whether falconry and hawking fits to the principles of animal welfare, we have to do four steps:

1. ethical overview,
2. scientific overview, using the concept of Meeting the Demands and Avoiding of Damage, an ethological scheme accepted by most of the scientists dealing with animal welfare in the German speaking countries,
3. regarding the fact that there is no acting of human beings that has only positive or negative aspects, there is a comparison to be done to weigh the benefit by the human acting (i.e. hawking) versus the harm it may probably cause,
4. synopsis and conclusion.

I. Ethical Overview

Asking if falconry and hawking can be accepted morally, you have to answer the following questions:

1. is keeping birds of prey in the hands of man acceptable?
2. is the special kind of keeping and training used by falconers acceptable?
3. is hunting acceptable at all?
4. is killing of one animal by another animal to human benefit acceptable?
5. is hawking less acceptable like other hunting methods.

To the first question:

Most of the citizens do accept keeping animals. This is verified by the enormous number of pets, that are kept, assessment tells that 100 million pets are kept privately in Germany alone. Humans do have a big urge to live together with animals. The position "the one who loves animals does not keep animals" is just shared by a minority of our fellow citizens.

This leads to the sub question if the keeping of animals whose conspecifics are usually living in nature ("wild animals") is allowed or just the keeping of domesticated animals? This is accepted by the majority of our compatriots as well, as the big amount of fish kept in aquarium shows as well as parrots, reptiles and amphibians. Besides the decision of the majority, for my opinion it is to clarify whether the status of being member of a (sub)species living usually in the wild constitutes a special status. Following the principle of equality - that means using moral principles - you have to refuse this idea. Every animal has to be taken care for, with no difference between wild animals and domestic animals. This idea has to be refused as well, if you take biological points of view into account. There is no evidence that there have raised up new behavioural patterns by domestication. There has just established increase or decrease of intensity. The criteria for animal welfare by this can not be how long an animal or its ancestors have been kept in the hands of man, but if it is possible to fulfil the demands of the animal while being kept, with other words, whether the conditions within the animal is kept are too much for the adaptability of the animal or not. To decide this question the concept of Meeting the Demands and Avoiding of Damage will be used. To come to the point: I can see no problem keeping an animal of a usually free living (sub)species if there is no evidence of damage or pain. Keeping a domestic sow, who shows stereotypes like bar-biting, or injuries at the tarsal joint, because of being reared in an impoverished environment (which is the rule and not the exception) for my opinion is a big welfare problem. As far as we know, do animals have no thirst for freedom. Especially hawking is the very best example for a voluntary co-operation between an animal (who's conspecifics live freely) and a human being. I personally am fascinated by hawking, because the hawk has to be physically, and by its behaviour, fit at a very high level, to be a successful hunter. And this successful hunter accepts to co-operate with little me by a positive learning experience. The bird co-operates even if flies completely free, it could fly away easily and - as a successful hunter - it could survive without problems in the wild.

Do we accept the keeping of not domesticated animals in general, we have to investigate how the environment for the animal has to be like to avoid damage and/or over-stretching of the adaptability. Every keeping of animals requires resources of

material and of knowledge. Especially successful falconers proof that they have access to this resources, otherwise, they won't be successful.

In order to answer the second question we shall have a view on the methods used by falconers typically. First is to say, that during the moult period the birds are mostly kept in aviaries (or so called moult-houses). If we accept bird-keeping at all, we have to accept aviaries.

During the hunting season, especially previous to the hunting act, the bird will mostly be tethered at both of the two legs and fixed up at a perch or the fist. The so called falconry method is just justified with birds that are allowed to fly freely at the very same time. Keeping other species of pets, tethering is a very common method for leading an animal as well and is completely accepted morally. Nearly all dogs and a lot of cats are led with collars and leads, horses wear a halter and are steered by reins which force much more power to the sensible moth than the jesses to the legs of the hawk.

Scientific results show, that Birds of Prey are very keen on saving energy by resting and avoiding flying. Wild living peregrines at the shore in the Netherlands have been observed during the winter period where a lot of quarry (ducks, seagulls etc. are available easily). They did fly in the average one and half minute per day in order to catch a duck (Bednarek, 2002, citing ??). Concerning the locomotion activities, most people have a wrong idea. This idea may result from human dreams of freedom (see the advertising the Marlboro Tobacco Company does worldwide) and from the behaviour of the buzzards, who are sailing in the thermionics. This ringing cost very less energy far different from the actively flying of a peregrine or at least a goshawk. And even the buzzards don't fly just for fun. They need ringing either to look for carrion as food or for mark off their territory. Falconers are very interested, that their birds are very well trained physically, because a less fit bird will not catch as much quarry, if even one. They take a lot of care, that the birds do have a lot of flight opportunity and experience.

The training of the hawk firstly means taming. Even if this is quite different between the various species of Birds of Prey used for hawking, it just can be done by patience. Sanctions like they are used a lot in the training of dogs and horses for example, are deadly bad for the learning process in Bird of Prey. All birds have in common, that they are much less capable to learn, than mammals. They are too "stupid" to understand sanctions. They just would become frightened as the only result. Do we accept the training of dogs or horses for human purposes, we have to accept the training of birds of prey even more.

Birds of prey, no matter if they are living freely or together with men, do not hunt unless they are hungry (or mating or rearing offspring). Additionally birds of prey, like nearly every predator, are capable of eating much more than the demand for one day, if they had the luck to hunt successfully. While hawking one has to control the food intake of the bird carefully to keep it still motivated, but even strong enough to hunt successfully. If this food management is done carefully, the bird is in the same condition like its wild living conspecifics. If we are asking whether feeding a bird less food than it could eat as a maximum can be accepted morally, we have to compare the feeding of birds with the feeding of other animals and even of

humans. A lot of animals (including the Homo sapiens) have to be fed controlled to get them at a maximum rate of fitness. A moralistic difference between feeding a diet that fulfils the demands but prevents from becoming too fat, to birds, or to dogs, horses or (wo)men, I am not able to see.

Whether hunting itself is acceptable, must not be answered at this very moment. Nevertheless I allow myself to give you some of my ideas. Killing animals for my opinion is allowed, if there is a reasonable reason. What reasons can be considered as reasonable, depends on the cultural context and the personal opinions of a certain person. The range varies from no reason to self-defence, defence of human property, defence of nature (by pest control as well as by sustainable use of quarry for sport hunting purposes) and consumptory use (especially for human nutrition) to every reason. There is no method to verify which opinion is the one and only right one.

the most usual answers to the question of what might justify killing (while hunting) are:			
no reason	just self-defence	self-defence and defence of human property and nature conservation and food	any reason

But you may have a look at the consequences that occur, if you take one of the opinions.

- If no reason justifies killing, then you must not take a drug if you are occasionally infected with a tapeworm.
- If just self-defence is acceptable, you may kill the tapeworm and even the fox, if you can show, that it endangers you with *Ecchinococcus multilocularis*.
- Defence of human property (in Europe, in other parts of the world there are different animal species causing problems) is a big item of farmers concerning crops and wild pig and of foresters concerning wild ruminants, that eat the trees.
- Nature conversation, as said before, can mean control of predators to avoid the extinction of rare species (like fox-control in Germany to protect the last Grouse-Populations) as well as saving white rhinos in the Southern Africa for hunting purposes.
- Consumptory use of game-meat, fur or skin has the side-effect that there is a concurrence to products from farm-animals, which mostly are kept under far less protective circumstances, then the harvest of wild animals does mean.

Now you can decide, what consequences you personally are willing to bear, and you can ask the compatriots what their opinion is. In Western Europe, to accept the killing of animals for self-defence, defence of property, nature conservation and nutrition supply will be common sense of most of the people.

We are coming now to the forth question, whether it is allowed to use an animal to kill others. The most common predator that kills animals for human benefit, is the cat that catches mice. It is our duty to look, if the mice-catching of a cat - let's say to a farmer's benefit - is more acceptable morally than catching rabbits with a goshawk by a falconer. Indeed there

are two substantial differences between these two cases - but in both times the Goshawk has the advantage over the cat. First does the cat not respect close seasons and catches for example lactating mother-mice with the result, that the independent offspring will die. The second problem is that cats do not respect the nature protection law and do catch protected species like songbirds as well. If there is consensus among the people, that catching mice by a cat is acceptable, I can see no reason, why catching rabbits with a goshawk (or partridges with a peregrine and so on) should be immoral.

In order to give an answer to the last question, if hawking is more immoral, than other hunting methods, we shall compare it with hunting by using a gun. This comparison lead to a better result for the hawking method. The hawk is part of nature and the quarry does know it very well. Both share a long time of evolution. Hawking is silent, it disturbs potential quarry, and even other wild living animals and not involved human less than shooting. Additionally it is worth to mention, that you need no lead-shot, that means less pollution for the environment. Hawking is the less disturbing hunting method by an ecological point of view.

Killing and injuring: while shooting quarry animals that are injured but not killed immediately and escape occur occasionally. They will die after a certain time with relevant suffering. This is very unlikely while hawking. The hawk catches the quarry properly or it will escape unhurt. Falcons kill their prey quickly, quarry captured by a short wing, can usually be reached and kill by the falconer within seconds.

There is no risk for being injured due to hunting, if hawking is the method. Even there is no risk for human property to become damaged. For this reason falconers are quite popular



if the aim is to reduce rabbit-populations in graveyards, industrial areas or camping grounds.

Another interesting possibility is to chase away crows, seagulls or herons from airfields, rubbish tips or fish farms. For this means it is often successful just to let a falcon fly, to bring the birds to leave this areas.

II. Scientific Overview

As tool for the decision whether falconry has a significant relevance to animal welfare, one can use the concept of Meeting the Demands and Avoiding of Damage. This concept was outworked by a group of Swiss and German ethologists (ethological working group of the German Veterinarian Society, Tschanz et. al., 1987) and first published in 1987. At present it is the most often used method to decide whether a certain phenomenon has an animal welfare relevance or not.

The concept of Meeting the Demands and Avoiding of Damage is proceeding from the assumption, that every organism is able to self-creation and self-maintenance. Whether an animal can manage self-creation and self-maintenance sufficiently, can be evaluated if the animal is able to fulfil its demands and prevents itself from damage. The animals use for this aims their physiological, morphological and ethological equipment, acquired by evolution and by individual ontogenesis. With this equipment the animals use or avoid structures and conditions in their environment (if an animal is kept, the structures and conditions are ruled by men). If the adaptability of an animal is overstretched, physiological, morphological and/or ethological damage will occur. Physical damage can be seen easily with, but mostly even without a certain knowledge about this certain animal species. And there is no discussion about the relevance of injury for the lacking welfare of the animal. Ethological damage will be recognised as disturbed behaviour like stereotypes. It is most often not so easy to detect, and there is much more discussion, whether disturbed behaviour does really indicate poor welfare. The concept of Meeting the Demands and Avoiding of Damage claims if there is a significant amount of injured or damaged individuals correlating to a certain keeping or managing system, this system will be recognised as not compatible with the approach of animal welfare. For this judgement the seriousness of the damage is to be taken in consideration as well.

Disturbed, especially stereotypic behaviour, as we do know very well from domestic and not domesticated animals kept under poor environmental circumstances, like weaving, wind-sucking and crib-biting in horses, bar-biting in sows or feather-picking in poultry and parrots has not been recognised in falconry birds at all.

There is just a single pathological problem left, that had been cause of a severe illness, the so called bumble-foot disease. This occurred especially in wild caught (passage) falcons. The reason is supposed to be a too rapid change in metabolism (Heidenreich, 1996) additionally are poor perches discussed (Trommer, 1992). Bumblefoot can be prevented by good housing, food and management in captive bred and wild caught bird.

III. Conclusions

At least the question is to answer, what pros and cons for the benefit of humans and even for the benefit of nature follow falconry.

1. Benefit for humans:

- a. falconry is a great pleasure for a lot of people, it belongs to the constitutional protected freedom (in Germany).
- b. the tame hawk with undisturbed behaviour is a great chance for science. Most of the knowledge we have about the behaviour of hawks, especially of the reproductive behaviour, comes from trained birds.

2. Benefit for Nature Conservation:

- a. just the intimate rational and intuitive knowledge, falconers do have from their birds, especially from their ethology, gave the chance to breed birds of prey successfully. This had been the basis not only to serve the falconers demand on birds, but for some releasing programs worldwide. Especially the peregrine populations, both in Germany and in the US have had a great advantage from several thousand captive bred birds that have been released to the wild.

3. Benefit for Animal Welfare:

- a. Injured or otherwise helpless caught bird of prey must not been released after medical treatment without a training based on falconers methods and experiences.

4. Disadvantage from Hawking?

- a. I just can see none.

IV. Summary and Valuation

A moral disadvantage from falconry and hawking can not be seen. On the contrary: a ban of falconry would be quite doubtful from a moral point of view. It would restrict a lot of people of their rights without a reasonable reason.

From a biological point of view, there could no welfare relevance be detected by the *Meeting the Demands and Avoiding of Damage* concept.

Weighing the pros and cons makes clear, that the possible reduction of the hawks well-being, if there is any at least, is of a very small amount. Compared with the living in nature a tame hawk has a much more comfortable and secure living. The stress for the quarry is, compared to other hunting methods, quite low.

Falconers' birds are indispensable for science, especially for ethological and reproductive research. Watching the natural behaviour of a bird of prey - nothing else does hawking mean - is a basis of invaluable merit.

The knowledge and the engagement of falconers made the new foundation of many populations possible that had been extinct.

Falconers knowledge and techniques are the basical requirements for a successful rehabilitation of injured or otherwise helpless wild birds.

By this is the benefit, that men and nature profit by falconry and hawking much higher than the possible disadvantage caused by this hunting method.

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- Authors address: Prof. Dr. Thomas Richter, Neckarsteige 6, D-72622 Nuertingen, Germany
- ¹¹ By a biological point of view, domestication creates no new species, the animals remain to be a member of the original species (dogs remain member of the species *Canis lupus*, pigs of the species *Sus scrofa*), therefore you just can talk about wild or domesticated subspecies.
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An Incident in the Hunting

From Ata Eyeberdiyew

The head of the Turkmenistan National Falconers Club

An Incident in the Hunting.

The driver was experienced and could pass over sand hills which is difficult to do in the first trial. We drove one and a half hours into the desert with my falcon on my hand among the sacks, bags and other things that are necessary in hunting. The Turkmen dog by the name Uchar was on the soft mat. Sometimes it got up, turned around and got down again. My tutor Annaaman-aga was sitting in the car with his falcon. Every hunting season when we are driving along this road our car stops softly on the way. I knew that my tutor was now checking the places if there are footprints of the hare. So we went on until we found the place which satisfied the old hunter. Only two of us, me and my teacher will have to wait for the driver and live in the desert for three or four weeks. When we took our stuff from the car and made a fire it was evening. We slept under the open air after we had dined and fed the falcons and the dog.

After the morning tea we saw off our driver with our best wishes on the way back. We decided to hunt after the lunch. We had to sort out our things, make a dog hole for the Uchar and collect woods for the night. The old man showed how and where to build a camp. Usually they make a camp in the middle of high sand hills, where it is forbidden to collect saxauls for burning. Lots of bushes prevent from the bad weather. That which we made yesterday mustn't go out till we come back to the camp. The sand under the fire must be red-hot, because tomorrow we'll make bread burying a dough under the hot sand.

We went to hunt after we had settled down. For first three or four days we set loose our old falcon which is experienced. We let the old falcon in for five times. Three of them were successful. I was walking nearby with my fresh falcon on my hands. It had to watch how the old falcon flew to the hare which comes out from bushes chased by the swift hunting dog. The old man gave to his falcon a piece of meat from every output. The young falcon was let to peck the output. The hunting skills gained by centuries - training of the hunting birds give results immediately.

The fifth day was the turn of the young falcon. It is easy for the falcon to catch it if the rabbit comes out to the straight land without bushes. It is important for the falcon to behave correctly while hunting the hidden rabbit. The falcon has to fly vertically above the saxaul, because the desert rabbit usually hides under it. The falcon shows its place and the dog drives the rabbit out from bushes. If the rabbit hides under the bushes or behind the sand the falcon cannot get it. The rabbit runs out from the prickly bushes and quickly hides under the bushes. The bird can't take a necessary speed in such a short period of time.

We let the young bird fly in, and it flew directly upwards - a correct sign, the bird will not lose the output. Uchar galloped over the sands and we came across the falcon that was keeping a rabbit in its claws and the dog was waiting near after it had

finished his task. Annaaman-aga who has just reached them became satisfied. The young falcons rarely get the output at the first try. We took the birds hunting in turns. In the first half of the day my bird stayed in the camp alone. In the morning we hunted with the old falcon. One day when we arrived from hunting, I found the feathers of my falcon. The bird was wounded. We made deductions about what happened. Another bird of prey must have attacked my falcon.

Soon after that our driver came with some stock of water and we decided to change the place of our camp. After we had driven ten or fifteen kilometers we got from the car to check the place. There were many footprints of rabbits around the saxauls. We hunted successfully for another two weeks. We didn't have any problems. My young falcon got another rabbit on the sands. There was a hundred or hundred and thirty meters of distance between us. I was walking slowly in order to let the bird to eat some meat and after that take it to the camp earlier. I wasn't much worried about the Steppe Eagle flying high above us. It was hardly seen. Suddenly its mate appeared and heat my bird. I passed only the half of my way till the place of tragedy. It is the hunting skill of birds of prey to hunt in pairs. The flying bird high above suppresses the victim and its pair flying in low altitude attacks the victim. My falcon didn't react my calling flying away which was frightened by the Eagle. The Eagle took the rabbit and disappeared behind the sands. The search continued through out the whole day, but it was fruitless. The young wounded falcon came to the camp in the evening the next day. The wounds of the bird were cute and soon it died. The falcon with an output in its claws is vulnerable to enemies, to the bigger birds of prey which attack them on the land. They cannot get the falcon on the sky. People can domesticate the falcons but can't always defend them and sometimes they lose their faithful assistant.

Offence

Ata Eyeberdियew - The head of the Turkmenistan National Falconers Club

Hardly expecting the sunrise, aunt Dursun got out from the yurt and made her way towards the small awning, where her husband kept his falcon and his swift hunting dog - "tazy". When falcon had noticed that the old woman is coming it greeted her with its scream and broke the silence. But the old woman got more worried when she saw the bird alone. Garagush - the hunting dog - wasn't home for the second day. The old woman went through the whole neighborhood and asked them whether they saw the dog or not.

She didn't know that Garagush would get so offended for being punished when it didn't deserve the punishment. The old woman saw the dog near the vessel of milk spilt to the ground. She beat the dog with a whip. When their neighbor's boy came and told that the real culprit who spilt the milk was a little camel, the dog was far away from the village.

Aman aga is the old woman's husband. He must come home in the evening. Before he has gone to his friend's home, he explained his wife how to feed the bird and the dog for several times. Although aunt Dursun knew how to feed them, she listened to her husband's manual silently. He was an experienced falcon trainer who has been hunting for more than twenty years, making a camp in the desert far from his home.

His former neighbor Kerim-aga, who lives in the neighborhood village now, has joined him in hunting recently. The old man was with Kerim-aga when the incident happened. They discussed the place of their next hunting. The following week was the opening of the hunting season. The old woman knew that his faithful friends in hunting were important in the old man's life. She has been living with him for many years. After the old man had opened the doors of the yurt and greeted his wife, he went towards the awning where he kept his falcon and the dog. He took the falcon on his hand and looked for the dog. He wasn't worried because didn't use to bind his dog, and thought it was walking nearby. His wife came and told him about the incident. The old man listened to the story silently and went to the yurt.

Garagush has been serving him faithfully for five seasons. The next morning Aman-aga went around the village and looked for his dog. He hoped to see his dog under the awning near his falcon every day.

It was time to go hunting. When the old man's friend Kerim-aga knew that Garagush is gone, he tried to calm down the old man assuring him that his dog by the name Uchar could hunt with two falcons in turns. They would only reduce the use falcons so that the dog didn't get too tired.

They drove more than seventy kilometers into the desert and camped at the old place. As soon as Aman-aga got out from the car, his dog Garagush ran towards him. The dog got very thin and knelt near the old man's feet. The dog has been waiting for his host at an old camp, believing that he would come to that place. Aman-aga didn't take the dog to hunt for several days in order to let it have rest and recover. Later they hunted successfully for two months. It was time to go home. When the old man began to put his things in the car, Garagush's behavior showed that he didn't like to go home. The driver asked them to hurry, because it was difficult to drive at night. The old man tried to enforce the dog to get into the car but it ran away. Even after they had started the man called his dog, but it didn't come. The old man came home and decided to go back to get the dog. After three days he asked his neighbor to go to the camp and found his dog.

The dog served faithfully to his owner, but still couldn't go home where was offended for no reason. Garagush stayed to live in the desert. Other hunters and herdsmen told the old man about his dog that lives in the desert.

The International Association For Falconry And Conservation of Birds of Prey

CONSTITUTION

TITLE I

NAME, REGISTERED OFFICE, DURATION AND OBJECTIVES.

Article 1: Name. Registered Office. Duration.

1.1. "THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FALCONRY AND CONSERVATION OF BIRDS OF PREY" (hereafter, "I.A.F.") is a nonprofit international association formed pursuant to the laws of the Kingdom of Belgium of 25 October 1919, which has its registered office at:

Maison Européenne de la Chasse et de la Nature
Rue F. Pelletier 82, B-1030 Brussels, Belgium

1.2. Said office may be established at any other location within Belgium, by resolution of the Council. The transfer of the registered office shall be published in the 'Annexes du Moniteur Belge'.

1.3. The I.A.F. is established for an indefinite duration of time.

Article 2: Objectives.

2.1. As an international federation of falconry organisations the objectives of the I.A.F. are:

2.1.1. To represent falconry throughout the world. 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.

2.1.2. To preserve and encourage falconry within the context of sustainable use of wildlife.

2.1.3. To encourage conservation, the ecological and veterinary research on birds of prey and promote, under scientific guidance, domestic propagation for falconry.

2.1.4. To develop, maintain and amend national and international laws, treaties and conventions to permit the pursuit and perpetuation of falconry.

2.1.5. To require the observation of falconry, hunting, conservation and welfare laws, regulations, traditions and culture with regard to the taking, import, export and keeping of birds of prey, the taking of quarry species and the right of access to land in the country concerned.

2.1.6. To promote and uphold a positive public image of falconry with specialist organisations which regulate or otherwise affect falconry.



TITLE II

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS.

Article 3: Membership.

3.1. Membership shall be limited to organisations representing falconry (hereafter, 'Member Organisation', 'Associate Member Organisation' or 'Corresponding Member Organisation') possessing legal personality according to the laws and practices of their country, and to supporting organisations which are not traditional types of falconry clubs or associations (hereafter, 'Supporting Organisation').

3.2. A potential Member Organisation may apply for full membership after it has formally existed for at least two (2) years of operation as a legal organisation or association in a country where falconry is a legal field sport. A potential Associate Member Organisation may apply for membership as a legal or informal organisation or association in a country where falconry is not recognised as a legal field sport. The applicant Member Organisations must subscribe to the Constitution.

3.2.1 By invitation of the President and with the approval of the Council, a Corresponding Member Organisation may apply for membership. Its representatives and members, if any, shall not have voting rights; it shall be exempted of fixed dues pursuant to Art. 15.

3.2.2 By invitation of the President and with the approval of the Council, a Supporting Organisation which represents or supports falconry may apply for membership. A Supporting Organisation shall not qualify for membership as a Member Organisation or Associate Member Organisation; its representatives and members, if any, shall not hold any office pursuant to Art. 12 nor have voting rights on the Council but may be appointed to working groups pursuant to Art. 6.1 and the Advisory Committee pursuant to Art. 13; and, it shall pay fixed dues pursuant to Art. 15.

3.3. The Council shall admit an applicant Member Organisation, Associate Member Organisation, Corresponding Member Organisation or Supporting Organisation by a majority vote of the National Delegates.

3.4. Membership entitles the Member Organisation, Associate Member Organisation, Corresponding Organisation and Supporting Organisation to international representation by the

I.A.F., subject to the provisions of this Constitution and the resolutions of the Council.

3.5. Individual members of a Member Organisation, Associate Member Organisation, Corresponding Member Organisation or Supporting Organisation may attend Council meetings, but attendance and participation, if any, may be limited by the Council at its sole discretion.

3.6. Loss of Membership. Membership shall terminate upon any of the following: (a) by the dissolution of the Member Organisation, or Associate Member Organisation, Corresponding Member or Supporting Organisation; (b) by resignation; (c) by suspension for an act contrary to the Constitution; (d) by repeated failure to pay dues pursuant to the conditions set forth in Article 15.1., below; or, (e) by expulsion.

3.6.1. A Member Organisation or Associate Member Organisation shall only be expelled for cause upon a two thirds (2/3) vote of the National Delegates at a regular or special meeting after notice is provided to the Member Organisation or Associate Member Organisation proposed to be expelled. The Member Organisation or Associate Member Organisation proposed to be expelled shall be afforded a hearing, upon request, before the Council prior to any vote on expulsion.

3.6.2. A Corresponding Member and a Supporting Organisation may be expelled with or without cause upon a majority vote of the National Delegates at a regular or special meeting after notice is provided to the Supporting Organisation proposed to be expelled. The Corresponding Member or Supporting Organisation proposed to be expelled may be afforded a hearing, upon request, at the sole discretion of the Council prior to any vote on expulsion.

TITLE III THE NATIONAL DELEGATES.

Article 4: Election of the National Delegates.

4.1. The National Delegates shall be selected by the Member Organisations and Associate Member Organisations. The selection procedures of National Delegates are left to the initiative of the Member Organisations and Associate Member Organisations.

4.2. Member Organisations and Associate Member Organisations from the same country shall select a single National Delegate from their country to the Council. Only National Delegates shall be entitled to vote on matters before the Council.

4.2.1. In the event that a Member Organisation represents individual regular voting members from several countries, a National Delegate shall be selected from each country and approved by the Council so represented by such a Member Organisation.

4.3. For purposes of the Constitution, a Member Organisation will only be accepted for membership from a country recognized by the United Nations as a sovereign state.

Article 5: Role of the National Delegates.

5.1. Member Organisations and Associate Member Organisations are responsible for providing their National Delegates with funds and appropriate office equipment to be able to attend and participate fully in the deliberations of the Council.

5.2. The National Delegates represent their Member Organisations or Associate Member Organisations at meetings of the Council, or they may be represented by proxy. The National Delegates shall elect the President and the Vice Presidents.

5.3. The National Delegates shall represent and report decisions of the Council and activities of the I.A.F. to their Member Organisations or Associate Member Organisations.

5.4. The National Delegates shall discharge faithfully any special responsibility assigned to them.

5.5. The National Delegates shall report, timely, to the IAF any official problem arising in the country they represent. They shall report as well all alterations of the existing regulations concerning falconry in their country.

TITLE IV COMMITTEES.

Article 6. Formation and Appointment of Committees.

6.1. The President, in consultation with the majority of the Advisory Committee, may appoint regular committees and working groups as needed from among the Council membership, the Member Organisations, Associate Member Organisations, Corresponding Member or Supporting Organisations and from the membership of cooperating organisations.

6.2. Each regular committee and working group shall elect a Chairman from among its membership.

6.3. When necessary, decisions shall be made by a majority vote of the members of the committee and working group.

6.4. The chairman of a committee and working group shall report the progress of the committee and working group to the President and the Council at the annual meeting or at such other times upon request.

Article 7: Committee Work.

7.1. The program of work of the committees and working groups shall be set by the Council. Urgent matters may be considered at any time by a committee and working group as requested by the President after consulting with the Advisory Committee.

7.2. The work of the committees and working groups may terminate on the making of recommendations submitted for approval by the Council, or in case of an emergency, to the President of the I.A.F.

7.3. The President, after consulting the Advisory Committee, may take appropriate action on the recommendations of a committee and working group in an emergency.

Article 8: Communication and Publication.

8.1. No communication or publication may be made in the I.A.F.'s name or by reference to committee and working group

work without the President's prior written approval, or in emergency circumstances by verbal approval of the President, later confirmed in writing.

TITLE V COUNCIL MEETINGS.

Article 9: Attendance at Council Meetings.

9.1. The I.A.F. Council consists of National Delegates from Member Organisations and Associate Member Organisations.

9.2. All Member Organisations and Associate Member Organisations may send no more than three (3) representatives to Council meetings, but only the National Delegate (s) may vote.

9.3. Postal and electronic voting shall be permitted after full consultation on and presentation of the issue to be voted upon., except for amendment to the Constitution pursuant to Art. 19.

9.4. Notice of all Council meetings shall be given thirty (30) days in advance by postal mail or electronic mail with an agenda provided with such notice.

9.5 The National Delegate may vote at Council meetings only if the Member Organization he represents is current on its payment of dues.

Article 10: Council Meetings.

10.1. A Council Meeting shall be called at least every two (2) years by the President but more frequent meetings may be held on the President's initiative or at the request of at least two thirds (2/3) of the duly selected National Delegates.

10.2. A National Delegate may give, in case he cannot attend a specific Council meeting, a proxy in writing to a National Delegate of another country for purposes of voting on such matters that may come before the Council. A National Delegate may hold no more than two (2) proxies. For purposes of conducting business a quorum of the Council is established when a majority of the duly selected National Delegates is present or represented by proxy in writing.

10.3. The Council shall have the authority to establish the broad outlines of the I.A.F.'s policy, to examine the financial statements, to set the dues and generally to conduct such other business as necessary for the proper operation of the I.A.F.

10.4. The Council shall be informed of the work of the committees and working parties or groups. It may approve, amend or reject any of their recommendations. It shall review the President's report of his activity since the last meeting.

10.5. The Council shall adopt resolutions by a majority vote of the National Delegates present or by proxy provided that a quorum of the Council votes on all such resolutions.

10.5.1. By a majority vote of a quorum of the National Delegates present or represented by proxy, the Council meeting may be closed for special purposes as determined by the Council.

10.6. Every three (3) years the Council shall elect the Presi-

dent and the Vice Presidents by majority vote of the National Delegates provided that a quorum is present or represented by proxy. If necessary, multiple ballots may be taken in order to elect the President by a plurality.

10.7. The decisions of the Council and the Advisory Committee shall be recorded in a register kept by the Secretary.

TITLE VI THE PRESIDENT, OFFICERS, AND THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Article 11. The President and Vice Presidents.

11.1. President.

11.1.1. The President of I.A.F. is elected for three (3) years at a Council meeting pursuant to Article 10.6. If the President chooses to resign, he shall provide three (3) months advance notice, when possible, to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee before the effective date of his resignation.

11.1.2. The President must be a National Delegate of or nominated by a Member Organisation, and after serving a term is eligible for re-election to a second term of office.

11.1.3. In the event of disability or resignation, the President shall be replaced by the Vice President senior in service or upon the independent action taken by the Council pursuant to Art. 10.1. The Vice President or other substitute for the President shall serve only until the next Council meeting and then may be eligible for election as the President.

11.1.4. A former President may attend Council Meetings in a non-voting capacity if he is no longer a National Delegate.

11.2. Vice Presidents.

11.2.1. The Vice Presidents of I.A.F. are elected for three (3) years at a Council meeting pursuant to Article 10.6.

11.2.2. The Vice Presidents must be National Delegates of or nominated by a Member Organisation, and after serving a term are eligible for re-election to a second term of office.

11.2.3. In the event of disability or resignation, a Vice President may be replaced by another National Delegate by appointment of the President. The substitute for the Vice President shall serve only until the next Council meeting and then may be eligible for election as a permanent Vice President.

11.2.4. A former Vice President may attend Council Meetings in a non-voting capacity if he is no longer a National Delegate.

Article 12: Powers and Duties of the President, Vice Presidents and Officers.

12.1. President.

12.1.1 The President shall have the standing authority by and obligation to the Council to implement the I.A.F.'s policies and to execute them with the Council's and Advisory Committee's assistance.

12.1.2. The President chairs the Council and is an ex officio member of the committees and working parties or groups.

12.1.3. The President is responsible to the Council and shall inform it periodically of his actions.

12.1.4. The President shall act as administrator of the I.A.F. He shall transmit recommendations and resolutions approved by the Council to the organisations or governments involved through the National Delegates in order to take action thereon. He shall deal with any internal problems and shall be responsible for the I.A.F.'s external relations.

12.1.5. The President may invite any expert, specialist or, generally any person whether or not a member of a Member Association or Associate Member Organisation of the I.A.F., whose skills may be helpful, to the Council and committees, working party or groups meetings.

12.2. Vice Presidents.

12.2.1. The Vice Presidents shall represent respectively the following geographic areas: (1) one for Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania; and, (2) one for North and South America.

12.2.2. The Vice Presidents shall have the standing authority by and obligation to the Council to implement such policies and to fulfil such other obligations as may be set by the Council.

12.2.3. The Vice President senior in service shall be chosen by the Council to serve as President in the event of the President's resignation or incapacity pursuant to Art. 11.1.3.

12.3. Secretary and Treasurer and Other Officers.

12.3.1. The President shall appoint a Secretary and a Treasurer, whose appointments shall be approved by the Council at its next regular meeting. Their duties shall be determined by the Council. The President may appoint, with the approval of the Council, such other officers as necessary for the proper conduct of business of the I.A.F.

12.3.1.1. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the proper financial management of the I.A.F. pursuant to Art. 16.

12.3.2. The President, with the assistance of the Secretary and Treasurer, shall comply with all of the annual reporting requirements, including the filing of any tax reports, under the laws of the Kingdom of Belgium of 25 October 1919 to maintain the legal status of the I.A.F.

Article 13: The Advisory Committee.

13.1. The I.A.F. shall be managed by the President, who shall be advised by an Advisory Committee of a minimum of six (6) and a maximum of ten (10) members, plus the Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer who also shall be voting members. The Advisory Committee members, who are members of a Member Organisation, will be appointed for no

longer than the term of the presidency, and then after consultation with their Member Organisation. At least one member of the Advisory Committee shall be a Belgian citizen as long as the I.A.F. is recognised under the laws of the Kingdom of Belgium of 25 October 1919; if not, then such member shall be a citizen of the country in which the I.A.F. is recognised.

13.2. The members of the Advisory Committee shall upon recommendation of the President be appointed or reappointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Council for no longer than the term of the presidency. The Advisory Committee shall elect its chairman from among its membership.

13.3. The Advisory Committee shall meet at the President's discretion but not less than one (1) time per year.

13.4. The advice and recommendations of the Advisory Committee shall be adopted by a majority of the committee members present or represented by proxy in writing. The decisions of the Advisory Committee shall be recorded in a register kept by the Secretary.

13.5. The list of the members of the Advisory Committee shall be published in the 'Annexes du Moniteur Belge'.

TITLE VII FINANCIAL PROVISIONS.

Article 14: The I.A.F.'s Financial Resources.

14.1. The I.A.F.'s financial resources derive from dues and any income from its capital fund, or gifts and other sources.

Article 15: Dues.

15.1. Member Organisations, Associate Member Organisations and Supporting Organisations owe dues in an amount fixed by the Council based on the total regular membership of the previous year. The dues are payable annually. If they are not paid within three (3) months of the notice, the members in default shall be sent another notice to pay within three (3) months. If such default recurs for two (2) consecutive years, the provisions of Article 3 shall be applied.

15.2. The National Delegates shall assist the I.A.F. in the collection of dues from their respective Member Organisations and Associate Member Organisations.

Article 16: Financial Management.

16.1. Based on the information obtained by the President and on planned programs, the Treasurer shall submit an annual budget at each Council meeting. The Treasurer shall also present to the Council a report on the I.A.F.'s financial accounts for such period prepared annually which shall be audited by auditors appointed by the Council.

16.1.1 The I.A.F. business year is the calendar year beginning January 1 and ending December 31.

TITLE VIII. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

Article 17: Languages of the I.A.F.

17.1. The official language of the I.A.F. is English. Other languages may be used insofar as they may be needed for meetings, publications, or official documents.

17.2. In case of doubt or disagreement as to the interpreta-

tion of the Constitution or any other written document of the I.A.F., the registered language version (French) adopted by the Council shall be determinative and authoritative.

Article 18: Fundamental Principles and By Laws.

18.1. The President, when necessary or when requested by the Council, may propose additional rules covering particular matters not covered by this Constitution, or the Fundamental Principles. Any such proposals shall be subject to discussion and amendment by the Council and may be adopted only on a majority vote of the Council.

Article 19: Amendment.

19.1. This Constitution may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Council by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the National Delegates present or represented by proxy. Said amendments must be approved by Royal Decree of the Kingdom of Belgium and published in the 'Annexes du Moniteur Belge'.

**TITLE IX
DISSOLUTION.**

Article 20. Dissolution.

20.1. The I.A.F. may be dissolved and its assets disposed of at a special Council meeting called by the President or at the request of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the National Delegates on the Council. Upon dissolution, the assets of the I.A.F. shall be assigned first to the successor organisation to the I.A.F., or then be redistributed pro rata to the Member Organisations and Associate Member Organisations based on the percentage of dues paid of each member to the total amount of dues paid by all members, or then to any organisation or association which follows the principles and purposes subscribed to by the I.A.F.

Stop Press

**Consultative Meeting on the Trade in Falcons for Falconry
Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates)
May 16-19, 2004
By Frank M Bond**

The CITES Secretariat organized a special meeting of selected countries to discuss the trade in falcons for falconry purposes in Abu Dhabi. The intent was to review CITES issues with respect to international movement of falconry birds and to focus particularly on the trade of Saker falcons harvested from the wild. The meeting was hosted generously by the UAE's Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency through its CITES Management and Scientific Authorities and the United Kingdom's DEFRA. The Parties, non-Parties, and observer organizations were: Canada; the Czech Republic; Egypt, Germany; Hungary; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kuwait; Mongolia; Pakistan; Qatar; the Russian Federation; Saudi Arabia; Tunisia; UAE; UK; Turkmenistan; IAF; Greifvogelzuchtverband; and, Birdlife International. President Patrick Morel and Vice President for the Americas Frank Bond attended to represent the IAF at the invitation of the CITES Secretariat.

Because of the superb organization of the meeting by Mohamed Al Bowardi, Director of ERWDA and IAF Advisory Committee member, Majid Al Mansouri, Secretary-Gen-



eral of ERWDA, the attendees were hosted at several special events which included special visits to the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital, the Emirates Falconers Club and the National Saluki Center. All of the facilities, staffed by very competent professionals, were first class. Patrick Morel, Frank Bond and Nick Fox were given a special tour of Sheikh Khalifa's spectacular Falcon Breeding Center near Al Ain which houses approximately 120 pairs of Gyrfalcons, hybrids, Peregrines and Sakers.

Since the CITES Secretariat had only set a provisional agenda a significant portion of the first day permitted the Parties to explain the falconry issues of their countries and their expectations for the meeting. There was a rather marked difference of views between some of the European nations, Saker falcon range states of Asia and the consumer countries of the Middle East. With these introductions the delegates were able to understand the magnitude of the international trade in falconry birds. Overall the most significant issues discussed were enforcement matters, establishment and management of catch and export quotas, use of certificates of ownership (falcon passports), captive breeding, and marking. The delegates ultimately produced a summary document of the meeting which will be available on the CITES website.

Enforcement: Particularly to protect the very low populations of Saker falcons in many range states, the delegates are encouraged to raise the awareness of falconers about compliance with CITES, the significant illicit trade and the need for additional training among law enforcement and airport security personnel. There was recognition of several nations' schemes for individual bird registration with encouragement of the Gulf States to adopt similar approaches for mandatory ringing and registration for identification and CITES compliance. Particularly in the Gulf States, the delegates stressed the need for stopping the waiving of various laws regarding hunting and falcon transport, which are often afforded to Middle Eastern VIPs.

Establishment and management of catch and export quotas: Saker falcon range states were encouraged to know their populations in order to make non-detriment findings for appropriate quotas. Some range states, like Hungary, prohibit export and breeding of Saker falcons altogether. The range states are encouraged to provide data to the CITES Secretariat and Animals Committee for quotas. Finally, those countries authorizing export of falcons should do so in a transparent and fair manner.

Certificates of ownership (falcon passports): Generally the delegates approved of the use of travel documents,



often to act as falcon passports, for frequent cross-border movements to curb illicit trade when combined with national registration efforts. The passport information should include at least country of origin, source (wild, captive bred), and reference to proof of legal acquisition.

Captive breeding: While acknowledging well regulated captive breeding programs in many countries, the delegates are concerned about unregulated captive propagation in other countries, which then become a means of laundering wild birds or locations for propagation of illegally acquired wild birds. The delegates noted that captive bred birds reduce the need for wild birds, although some Middle Eastern countries (particularly Saudi Arabia) noted that the strong preference of their falconers was for wild birds. There was considerable discussion on the adverse impact to wild populations by interbreeding with hybrids. Germany and Hungary were most vociferous, without being able to provide more than cursory detail; Germany has a proposal to completely ban propagation and use of hybrids, this ban will be effective very soon (when adopted by the Parliament) with a moratorium of 10 years for commercial breeders, allowed to produce hybrids only for export.

Marking: The delegates expressed a need to develop a harmonized approach to marking falconry birds by rings, rings embedded with microchips, microchips embedded in the birds, and/or use of DNA sampling. Frank Bond made a presentation of the IAF's Mark and Bank scheme, put together by AC members, Dr. Matt Gage and Dr. Robert Kenward. The delegates were generally receptive, and our suggestions are included in the summary document. Finally the delegates noted that registration databases need to be compatible to provide shared information. Dr Michel Schoffeniels of European Pet Network made a presentation of a falcon database based on the new pet passport, marking and banking of pets.

Overall the meeting was positive, despite the widely varying views among some delegates. There were some rather pointed comments by falconry range states to others who were not sympathetic to falconry as a practice. Obviously there were some issues which were discussed only cursorily or not at all. Most importantly the delegates and observers developed relationships to move into new areas of concern with greater knowledge of the biases and potential areas for consensus. The summary will be presented to the 51st meeting of the CITES Standing Committee. It was extraordinarily important for the IAF to attend to explain the view of the world's falconers and to be a resource of falconry information.



Field Hosts



Cortijo Plata lunch



German Delegates



Janusz Sielicki



Juan Carlos Rojo



Gary Timbrel



Illustrate

andy

Andy

Falconry in Turkmenistan

