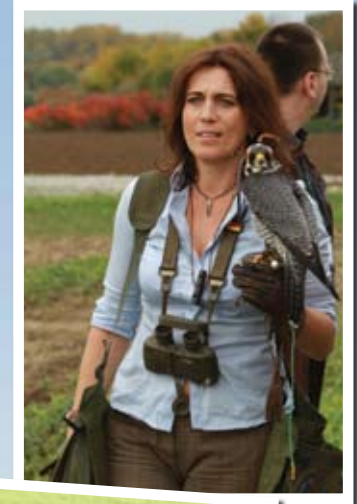


# IAF Newsletter

autumn 2013



International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey  
Member of IUCN

# IAF AGM, Doha, January 2014

The IAF is pleased to take part and assist in the organization of three events hosted by Algannas, IAF member for Qatar, during the Qatar International Falcons and Hunting Festival. Delegates who have registered online through [www.iaf.org](http://www.iaf.org) will receive updates. To register you will need a Delegate log-in code, available on request from Patrizia at [cimberio@iaf.org](mailto:cimberio@iaf.org)

## Draft Schedule:

### IAF MEETINGS

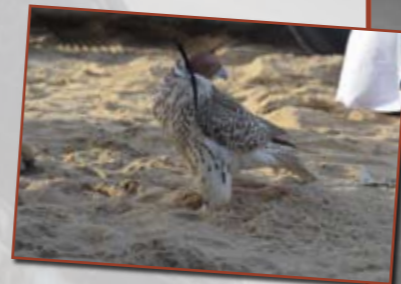
- Sunday 26th Jan: Arrivals of IAF Board and Advisory Committee
- Monday 27 Jan: IAF Advisory Committee Meeting all day. Arrivals of Delegates. Free evening
- Tuesday 28th Jan: Morning: IAF Council of Delegates Meeting First Part 8am- 1pm.  
Afternoon: visit to Museum of Islamic Art  
Evening: Continuation of IAF Meeting
- Weds 29 Jan: Morning: IAF Council of Delegates Meeting Final Session 8am -1pm  
Afternoon: Dhow Trip and swimming opportunity
- Thursday 30th Jan: Visits to Souk Wakif and to the Falcon Hospital
- Friday 31st Jan: Visit to finals of Qatar International Falcons and Hunting Festival
- Saturday 1st Feb: Afternoon: visit to final of Saker Beauty Contest

### AFRICA ASIA FALCONRY FEDERATION

- Friday 31st Jan: Morning: Africa Asia Falconry Federation Council Meeting 8.30am - 1pm  
Afternoon: visit to finals of Qatar International Falcons and Hunting Festival

### VETERINARY CONFERENCE

- Weds 29th Jan: Arrivals of vets  
Evening 7.30pm IAF/Vets opening roundtable discussions
- Thursday 30th Jan: Morning: Veterinary Conference Lectures  
Afternoon: Veterinary Conference Lectures  
Evening: Workshop
- Friday 31st Jan: Morning: Veterinary Conference practical lab session 8.30am - 1pm  
Afternoon: visit to finals of Qatar International Falcons and Hunting Festival
- Saturday 1st Feb: Morning: Veterinary Conference practical lab session 8.30am - 1pm  
Afternoon: Falcon Management Workshop  
Early evening: visit to final of Saker Beauty Contest  
Final roundtable discussions of Veterinary Conference
- Sunday 1st Feb: Departures



Kate Davis photo ©

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  - Italy - *Villa Andrea*
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- 46: Veterinary: Toxic Effect of Lead Shot - *L Molnar*
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### Pictures in this edition:

Keiya Nakajima, Mark Williams, Patrick Morel, Klaus Leix, Tony Crosswell, Bohumil Straka, Adrian Lombard, Tula Stapert, Tony James and Matyas Prommer, Tom Gagne, Lawrence Formosa, Gary Timbrell, Patrizia Cimberio, Kate Davis, Steve Duffy.

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## editor's foreword

People often talk of the quality of our sport, sometimes the artistic aspects as they perceive them, all seen in the light of our current values and society in which they live. Much comment seems to look at characters who lived a century or five centuries ago describing them as they fit into current perspective of values, with the assumption that this man was motivated by today's values, defining his actions by modern secular and scientific perspectives. This may also be applied to people from different cultures today but reality can be very different? If we could meet that man from 5 centuries ago or even a man today from another culture or religion his explanations might be very different from our expectations. At the IAF AGM we have been looking into some of the historical aspects of falconry in Europe in the company of falconers from all over the world.

As is recognised by all its citizens, Valkenswaard in the Netherlands, owes its very existence to falconry. From 1550 until 1928 the Mollen family and others created an economy by trapping and distribution of migrating falcons and hawks traded to much of Europe and even further. The soil in this area, like the Brecks of my native Norfolk, is almost pure sand with the consequence that any

agriculture is wholly dependent upon whatever manure and plant food can be applied. Before 1550 both areas were in great poverty but in Valkenswaard it was transformed by this new economy, trapping falcons, supplying most of the royal houses of Europe.

Later the connection between the two areas grew when Hawks were supplied to the Confederate Hawking Club and then also when the Champagne Club moved to Norfolk at the time of the Franco Prussian War. Dutch Falconers were employed and then eventually the whole operation was transferred to the Loo in Holland in formation of



the new club. Today we are far removed from the constraints of that era with mobility and technology that transforms our way of life and distances us from nature in ways that our awareness finds hard to comprehend. This week I fulfilled my long held inquisitiveness when I attended the IAF AGM hosted in this historic town for falconers worldwide. We were generously welcomed in Valkenswaard, hosted in the town museum and civic centre, addressed by the mayor, whose chain of office has the image of a Peregrine falcon engraved in celebration of their heritage. Many of the roads were bedecked with flags depicting falcons and the IAF, how welcome we all felt. Our way of life came alive for the local population when falconers from 40 or so countries around the world came together for the annual meeting of the IAF. Guest of our president was His Excellency Mohamed al Bowadi of the UAE who in his address to our meeting ably voiced the real essence that has been falconry for thousands of years.

*"We are all here because of an innate sense of purpose, a goal to protect the species that we love, and the long established tradition of falconry. In this journey we have unknowingly enriched who we are as humans, and as such as humanity.*

*We have crossed borders, bridged nations and creeds. This journey has allowed us as a community, to achieve what some may say, were far-fetched conservation dreams."*



Recognition by UNESCO of the intangible cultural heritage of falconry in many countries defines and recalls the context for our way of life which gives us the privilege of our model of behaviour and values, close to nature and aspects of our own being otherwise confusing, seemingly distant from modern society's priorities. His Excellency went on the say:

*"I am standing here as a man and as a falconer. For many of us being a falconer and a person is the same thing, as the values, ethics, moral standards we strive for as people are the ones we abide by as falconers. To be a falconer is to embody the value of respect, resilience, tolerance, ambition, patience and humility. These values are universal and so is falconry."*

Museum staff organised for us a practical demonstration of the trapping procedures at the traditional location where migratory hawks and falcons converge on the heath from all over northern Europe, Scandinavia



and Russia in the autumn season as they head south. Of course this process is reversed in the spring when hawks return to their breeding areas. Today, in countries where trapping is legal, it's a relatively simple process to drive around with traps at the ready and attract the chosen species. In the days of trapping at Valkenswaard it was a far more ingenious process requiring great dedication and patience, the help of a butcher bird, trained falcons and much good fortune to attract a passing falcon to the trap. During our meeting it was fascinating to watch a presentation by Turkish falconers showing their traditional trapping of migrating Sparrowhawks which they rapidly train to catch migrating quail after which, when their sport is done, the hawks are returned to the wild to resume their journey. In national costume their traditional songs were stirring in many ways, touching feelings not far removed from my own daily falconry experience. But we are all falconers in this world together with many shared values as His Excellency had reminded us - certainly it stimulates alternative viewpoints, creates respect and appreciation far removed from some of the more modern aspects with which we also contend.

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# IAF President's report 2013

Adrian Lombard

I bring you a report on an Administration that is only in its sixth month but there is considerable ground to cover. Although the time span covered in the report is relatively short, I must advise you that we certainly hit the ground running and there has been an enormous amount of work done and issues covered. Certainly, not all our efforts have been successful and mistakes have been made. This is how we learn and often it is important to try even if we do not succeed in an endeavour.

The IAF is the representative body for hunting Falconers as defined by our Constitution and that document sets out the specific objectives of the IAF. It is useful to review these objectives when assessing our activities:

## Article 2: Objectives.

2.1. As an international federation of falconry organisations the objectives of the IAF 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.

In this context we can categorize our activities in our effort to support and promote Falconry:

## Support of Hunting Falconry:

On an International level, we have sought to strengthen alliances with other hunting organizations.

I was honoured to receive an invitation from the CIC to attend their Annual General Meeting which was held in Budapest and to present on behalf of the IAF during their opening ceremony in the Hungarian Parliament. In response the IAF had a strong presence at the Meeting. Dr Bohumil Straka presented on the significance of the UNESCO recognition of Intangible Cultural Heritage and its relevance to the Hunting Community during the subsequent Meeting. Our Conservation Officer, Janusz Sielicki also attended to promote the role played by Falconers in Conservation with a poster display and presentation of our brochures. The IAF Delegate from Hungary, Janos Toth, provided a presentation on Falconry in Hungary and a display of falcons was presented to the CIC Delegates. Attendance of this Meeting also allowed me to meet with these IAF Officers and discuss plans and strategy as well as to meet with Karl Heinz Gersmann, who represents Falconry within the CIC, with CIC officials and with representatives of

the Hungarian Falconers. Following this meeting, I am very pleased to inform you that we have further developed our strong and cordial relationship with this organization. All the CIC members have received the IAF brochure on Falconers in Conservation, mailed to them by the CIC administration. Numerous other valued contacts were made at this meeting which will facilitate our work in a range of different issues around the world.

We continue to enjoy a close and supportive relationship with FACE and I welcome Angus Middleton to this meeting as further evidence of this special relationship. Over the course of this year we have communicated and collaborated on a range of issues and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him, specifically, for the considerable support that we have received. One particular area of mutual concern is the proposed legislation which is being developed within the EU covering Invasive Alien Species. I will return to this. Through the offices of FACE we have been able to promote Falconry to the European Hunting Community and the leaders of national Hunting Organizations have received copies of the IAF Journal. This is of particular importance as we will discuss later.

In collaboration with FACE, we were represented at a public meeting held in Brussels on the Invasive Alien Species legislation by Bohumil Straka. I believe it was important to have a presence at this meeting to help us to understand the dynamics of this issue. I believe that this represents the first occasion where the Falconers found themselves in agreement with the Animal Rights representatives. This legislation is critical to the practice



of Falconry as well as to aspects of Hunting within Europe and, ultimately, internationally. More will be said on this issue during the course of the Meeting. It is my intention to attend the FACE AGM later this year.

CITES is of relevance to both Hunting and Conservation but I shall address this here. We continue to look for the possibility of down listing of the Peregrine Falcon and Gyrfalcon to CITES category II. We were represented at the CITES Meeting in Thailand by our Mexican delegate and IAF Officer for CITES and TRAFFIC, Adrian Reuter. Adrian has prepared a report on the Meeting for us. As an aside, he was able to meet with our new member organization from Thailand and go out with some of their members and their hawks – an exercise which fully justified our inclusion of this organization within our ranks at the last AGM. Through our membership of the SULi Group of the IUCN, Keiya Nakajima and myself have been able to follow detailed analysis and discussion of the CITES Conference which have provided invaluable insight into the activities and motivations of this organization.

As signatories of the Transparency Register of the EU Parliament, we receive notifications of Legislation Roadmaps and of Public Consultations. I have monitored these personally and I forward items which may be relevance. It is apparent

that this level of monitoring is not adequate so I am currently investigating an Advisory service which will feed targeted information, emanating from the EU Administration to us. This service is expensive but the cost could possibly be shared among a number of our European members. We have undertaken our first effort in lobbying EU Parliamentarians by addressing them on legislation regarding the Common Agricultural Policy. This will be addressed later but represented a major effort in sending personalized emails to 750 MEPs. I believe that this effort was of merit as it helped to expose the IAF in association with an issue of real conservation significance.

One of the first issues that I was called on to attend to was a request for assistance by our delegate from Denmark that was presented to the last AGM. This was provoked by the institution of harsher regulations by the Danish Conservation authorities addressing the ban on holding species of raptors indigenous to Denmark – and, in fact, Europe. This called on me to review all the correspondence and information which we have received regarding Falconry and its restrictions within Denmark. It became apparent that there was little support from the hunting community for Falconry in Denmark and it was my assessment that a precipitant response to this issue may well have worsened the situation and

could impede our future effectiveness within that nation. It has been the desire of successive administrations within the IAF to address and improve the situation for Danish Falconers. It is my opinion that we must gain the support of Danish hunters and develop a strategy to push for a review of Falconry within that nation. I may well have disappointed our Danish representative in this but I reaffirm our commitment to continue to work on this issue.

We were called on to address impending new hunting legislation which was to go before Parliament in Estonia. We mounted a considerable effort to address this legislation resulting in well over 80 letters of support including IAF member organizations and the CIC, that were sent to the Estonian Parliamentarians, the leader of the Parliament and the Estonian national hunting organization.

We also addressed specific previous concerns based on misinterpretation of a valuable publication which, in fact, supports Falconry. Despite this, Falconry was excluded from the legislation. The reasons given were based on erroneous animal protectionist ideas. The lesson from this is important. Reactive actions of this nature are likely to fail. We must garner the support of the national hunting organizations and address their concerns as a first measure. We must investigate and know the objections to falconry, presented either in error or by our enemies, in good time so that we can address these specifically and persuasively. This means that national Falconry representatives have a duty to advise us in good time about impending issues and must investigate the issue comprehensively so that we can develop an effective response. We, all Falconers, must be far more activist in support of our Art, if we are not to fail in these challenges.

I have been called on to provide support and information to a wide range of issues from a similarly wide range of nations, including Ireland, the United Kingdom, Australia, Namibia, Kenya and Croatia. Time precludes further detail of these issues.

## Support of Conservation:

### On an international level:

We are actively participating in the

SULi Group of the IUCN. This Group is of real significance to Falconry as it addresses a wide range of issues relating to sustainable utilization. Kieya Nakajima and I are members of this Group while Robert Kenward is Deputy-Chair of the group and is very supportive of Falconry. I was able to meet the Chairperson of this Group – Rosie Cooney – at the CIC Conference.

Keiya Nakajima will address an issue relating to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Janusz Sielicki represented the IAF at the First Meeting of the Signatories of the Raptors MoU of CMS. Subsequently, both he and Fernando Feas have become active members of the Saker Falcon Task Group. Janusz will report on this.

We will have a presence at the Conference of the International Union of Game Biologists, to be held in Brussels later this year. Janusz Sielicki will provide a Poster Presentation regarding Falconers in Conservation and, I believe, Prof. Tom Richter will be presenting a paper.

We have had to confront a very serious issue with respect to conservation issues in Italy. In this regard, I am very pleased to have Marco Fiori, representing law enforcement and CITES in Italy present and we will address this issue.

The IAF Electrocutions Data base continues to be active and is receiving reports of Electrocutions. This is an effort that needs to receive more promotion by national delegates and I ask all of you for assistance with this. The issue of Electrocution of Raptors is extremely important and I anticipate the publication of data which will demonstrate that this is a far more relevant issue to the decline in Saker numbers than over-harvesting for Falconry. That said, the illegal trade in raptors is a very serious issue for us, not least in that it does Falconry inestimable harm in the public eye and our enemies are very quick to take any opportunity to promote perceptions of this coupled with dramatically inflated estimates of the value of illegally harvested raptors. As an example, fear that legalized Falconry in Estonia would in some way promote the illegal taking of Lesser Spotted Eagles in that nation was cited as one of the reasons to exclude our Art.

Vulture Awareness Day is held on 7th



September this year. Details are included on our website and member organizations can register on [www.vultureday.org](http://www.vultureday.org) Vultures remain the most threatened group of raptors and Falconers can contribute to their conservation by raising awareness of their plight to the general public so I would encourage you to participate in this effort.

I have been seeking a closer relationship with The Peregrine Fund and have been in communication with Rick Watson. This will be ongoing.

#### **Support of Falconry Culture:**

The promotion of Falconry Culture, both intangible and tangible is important to Falconry. We have a number of initiatives in this regard and these will be addressed during the course of this meeting.

We continue to support the UNSCO process by fulfilling our obligations as an advisory NGO and through assisting our membership in their efforts to join their national inventory and to develop

their submissions. In this respect we have tried to address issues arising in both the Netherlands and Croatia.

With respect to tangible heritage we would support the development of collections and Falconry displays in Museums and Art galleries as these help to preserve our heritage and develop awareness and appreciation for Falconry.

The absence of a tradition of Falconry has erroneously been cited as a reason to exclude Falconry in both Estonia and in Scandinavian countries. In an effort to address this, the IAF will be providing support to a conference in northern Germany on “the origin and importance of Falconry before 1500 AD with an emphasis on Northern Europe”. More will be said on this later.

There is an effort to promote an awareness of falconry to school children and this will also be address later in this meeting.

We plan to establish an International Falconry Day and this will be discussed later.

#### **Support of Falconry Welfare and Ethics:**

The area of Falconry related Animal Welfare and Ethical considerations are certainly contentious. Despite this, I believe that this is an area where we, Falconers, will become increasingly challenged and where we, the IAF, must stamp our authority.

Concerns relating to animal welfare issues were raised with respect to the Netherlands effort to have Falconry included on the national inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage. We were able to address these concerns.

More will be said with respect to this issue during the Meeting. A major opportunity to address and develop this area may arise with respect to the next Falconry Festival. Communication

The IAF is striving to develop and improve communication. This must be aimed a number of targets which include the general public, hunters, conservationists, Falconers in general, our member organizations and delegates, as well as amongst the leadership of the IAF. Significant challenges exist at all those levels.

The website has been completely and dramatically redeveloped. It now provides an attractive, informative and accessible window to Falconry around the world. It can be translated easily through the Google translate facility. Special thanks are in order for this but I wish to mention now the sterling efforts of Patrizia Cimberio, Veronique Blontrok, Gary Timbrell and Bohumil Straka.

This will be further enhanced by the development of the IAF Data Base which will be presented to us by Dan Cecchini.

The IAF Journal of Falconry remains our Flagship and is, I firmly believe, the finest Falconry publication available internationally. I would like to say that the efforts of Anthony Crosswell assisted by his daughter, Tanya, have exceeded themselves yet again with this year's publication.

A new-look eNewsletter has been developed by the team I mentioned earlier and will be circulated via a professional internet distribution agency. I plan to make much more frequent use of this newsletter and here I request the assistance of all delegates. Unless specified, this eNewsletter is intended for



wide distribution to all Falconers to inform them of our actions. Please try to circulate this as widely as you can to all Falconers in your country. This is how we reach and inform them. This is how we justify our subscription and this is how, ultimately, we will survive to serve falconry.

Other means of communication are used such as the IAF Facebook site and, of course, email. Much is made of the huge volume of email that is received, but this is an essential. Please do not hesitate to keep us informed. Speaking for the Executive and all officers, we do read and respond to all mails received although with high volumes this may take time. Please, in turn, respond to us. Email has revolutionized international communication and this makes organizations, such as the IAF feasible. Nevertheless, email can be a dangerous tool. Mails are easily misinterpreted and can cause offence. Similarly mails may not be received and this can cause confusion or offence. We must be slow to anger, check where uncertain and maintain a high degree of integrity and etiquette.

#### **Funding:**

The Treasurer's report will follow. I must advise you that funding of this organization and maintenance of the high level of service provided albeit by a volunteer workforce is expensive. There has been no increase in fees within the past 8 years and many organizations that benefit from the IAF pay no fee.

The current increasing level of work and involvement by this organization is not sustainable without professional support staff. Similarly, we must develop other sources of funding but this again

is difficult without appropriate structure and support staff. The development of the business plan becomes even more essential if we are continue to advance our work, or, indeed, if we are to continue at the same level. This will be further addressed in discussion of the Business plan. A wide range of fund-raising options need to be considered, however.

#### **In Conclusion:**

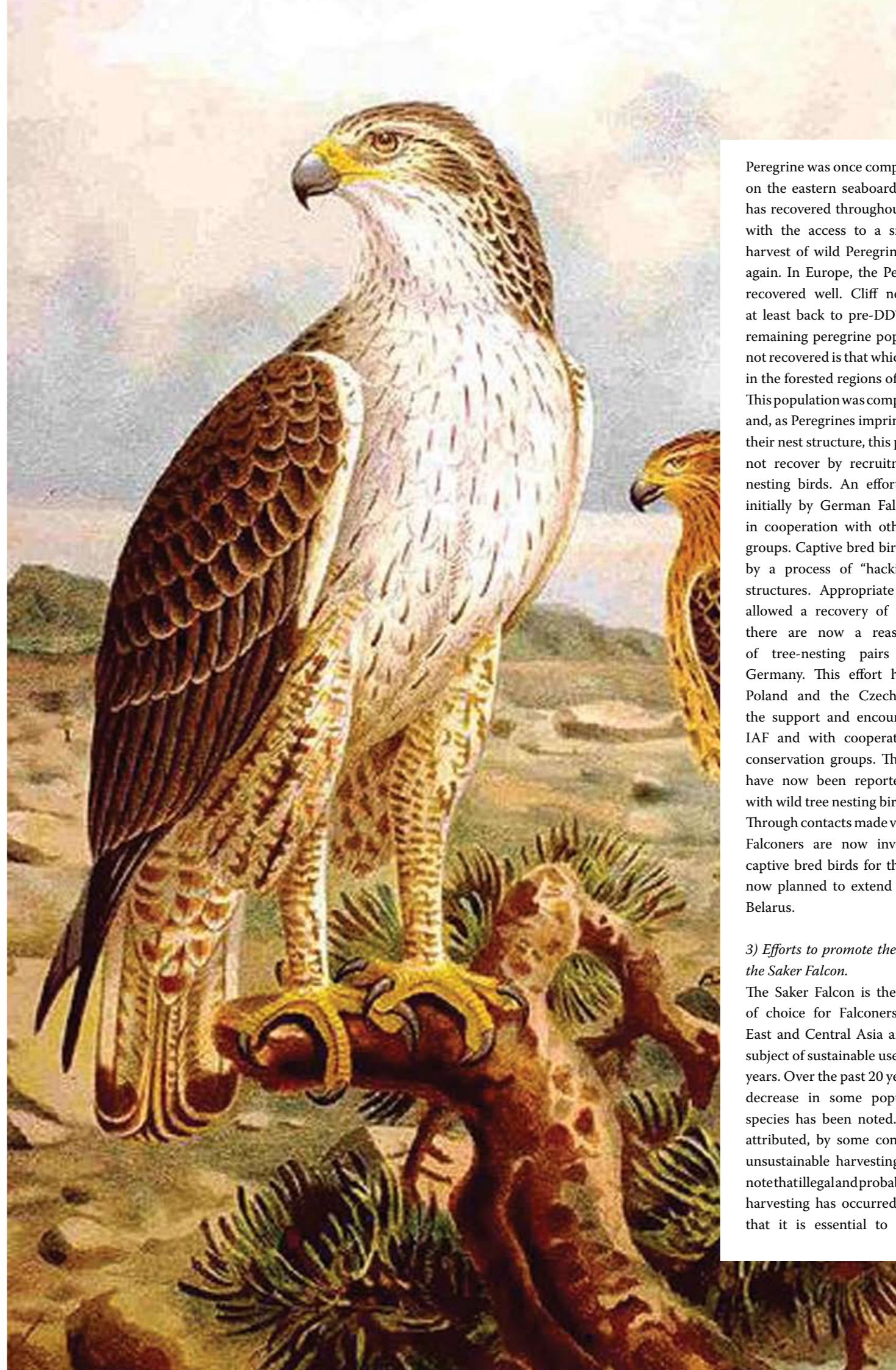
The past 6 months have been, for me, an incredibly stimulating and exciting time. I must thank you all for granting me the opportunity to serve you and the cause of Falconry. I also thank you for the truly amazing level of support and cooperation and friendship that I have enjoyed, and sincerely hope that I will continue to enjoy.

I must however address one aspect with you. I am striving to unify Falconers. It is not necessary that we agree on all things but seek common ground. We must all learn to work together for the common good. I lead you, on the basis of clearly stated policies, by virtue of the mandate granted to me at the last AGM. This is a democratic organization. Falconry is not a “team sport” and Falconers are by their nature individualistic. That said, we, in this room are the leaders of Falconry, gathered from around the world and we must all learn to work for unity in Falconry. Nothing is more destructive than the regular reports of fragmentation and dissent among falconers with new clubs forming and new divisions arising. While the IAF will strive to accommodate and represent all Falconers, true leaders must work for unity. ♦

# falconers and conservation:

## The Role of the International Association for Falconry and the Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF)

by Adrian Lombard



### Introduction:

Thank you for this invitation and the opportunity to address this gathering of Hunters and other Conservationists. Falconers are Hunters who differ in some ways from other hunters. They, along with many other hunters, make sustainable use of quarry species and of the natural environment but, unlike other hunters, they hunt by forming a mutually beneficial relationship with birds of prey and so are concerned, also, with sustainable use and conservation of these raptors. As with other sustainable users, Falconers are engaged in the conservation of those elements of biodiversity which they utilize as well as that of the environment.

I am here to represent the International Association for Falconry and the Conservation of Birds of Prey. We are a globally representative organization with 86 member organizations from 60 different nations. We represent the conservation aspirations of Falconers from around the world and work to engage Falconers in conservation at all levels as well as to encourage a culture of conservation amongst Falconers. In this, we aim to engage with other conservationists and to form partnerships to enhance our efforts. In this presentation I shall briefly examine 3 examples of collaborative partnerships which advance the conservation effort.

### Conservation:

I believe that it is helpful to briefly define conservation and consider the processes that it involves. The definition which I like is "The wise and prudent management of biological diversity within the natural environment". This definition presupposes a management system and it is man's responsibility to actively manage biodiversity. Conservation thus must involve all the following processes and these will apply to a greater or lesser extent to any conservation project be it a small local effort or an international endeavor.

### Conservation Involvement:

#### 1) *The Bonelli's Eagle in Sicily.*

A small population of the Bonelli's Eagle exists on the island of Sicily. While classified "of least concern" by the IUCN, this eagle is considered Endangered in Europe and a significant effort to conserve these birds is maintained in Sicily. Theft of chicks for Falconry is identified as the main threat and the nest sites are intensively monitored. Falconers are currently excluded from this conservation effort. Indeed, this year 2 chicks were robbed from a nest and the subsequent outcry called for the banning of Falconry in Italy. The IAF responded vigorously, condemning the theft and asking for involvement in the conservation process. The chicks were recovered and the perpetrators arrested, in part due to information received from Falconers who responded to our statement. We have subsequently had positive engagement with the law enforcement agency of the Italian Forestry Service (Corpo Forestale). Representatives attended our AGM and presented a report to us and I have subsequently visited them in Italy. We have also corresponded with the "Coordination for Raptor Conservation in Sicily". It is my belief that we must involve Falconers in this effort and give them a measure of custodianship to end the threat of illegal trade. We can then confront the other very real conservation challenges faced by these eagles and prevent their extinction.

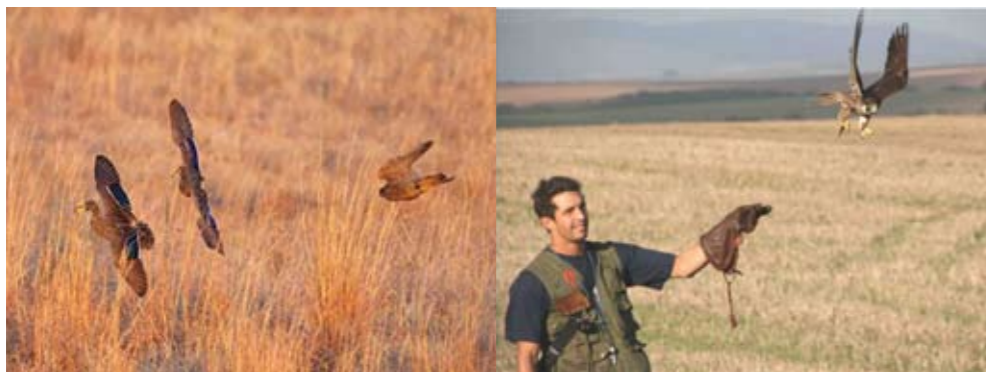
#### 2) *The Tree-nesting Peregrine Falcons of Europe.*

We are all well aware of the collapse of the Peregrine Falcon populations, which occurred throughout the northern hemisphere in the 1960s as a result of DDT. This population collapse was initially blamed on Falconers who were suspected of illegal over-harvesting. Falconers were actively involved in the restoration of this species. In North America this resulted in the formation of the Peregrine Fund. The North American effort was a resounding success. While the

Peregrine was once completely extirpated on the eastern seaboard, the population has recovered throughout that continent with the access to a small sustainable harvest of wild Peregrines allowed once again. In Europe, the Peregrine has also recovered well. Cliff nesting birds are at least back to pre-DDT numbers. The remaining peregrine population that has not recovered is that which nested in trees in the forested regions of Central Europe. This population was completely extirpated and, as Peregrines imprint as nestlings on their nest structure, this population could not recover by recruitment from cliff-nesting birds. An effort was mounted, initially by German Falconers, working in cooperation with other conservation groups. Captive bred birds were released by a process of "hacking" from tree-structures. Appropriate imprinting has allowed a recovery of these birds and there are now a reasonable number of tree-nesting pairs established in Germany. This effort has extended to Poland and the Czech Republic with the support and encouragement of the IAF and with cooperation from other conservation groups. The first successes have now been reported from Poland with wild tree nesting birds being sighted. Through contacts made via the IAF, Dutch Falconers are now involved providing captive bred birds for the program. It is now planned to extend this program to Belarus.

#### 3) *Efforts to promote the Conservation of the Saker Falcon.*

The Saker Falcon is the traditional bird of choice for Falconers in the Middle East and Central Asia and has been the subject of sustainable use for at least 2000 years. Over the past 20 years, a significant decrease in some populations of this species has been noted. This has been attributed, by some conservationists, to unsustainable harvesting. The IAF does not think that illegal and probably unsustainable harvesting has occurred, but we believe that it is essential to recognize other



The Saker Falcon is the traditional bird of choice for Falconers in the Middle East and Central Asia and has been the subject of sustainable use for at least 2000 years. Over the past 20 years, a significant decrease in some populations of this species has been noted.

and, potentially devastating causes for this population decline. We are concerned that electrocution by unsuitable electricity installations across the open steppes of Central Asia extending even into Hungary, cause enormous attrition of these and other raptors. We also note that changing agricultural methods, use of rodenticides which kill the quarry base of nesting Sakers and the use of other poisons are all important issues.

Appreciation for this conservation issue has resulted in a reduction of use of wild-taken birds and development of captive breeding in significant areas of the Middle East. There are efforts to improve legislation and law-enforcement in this region. At the same time a major project has been established in Mongolia to erect artificial nest structures in areas where the Saker Falcons are unable to breed due to limited nest site availability. This effort has been a remarkable success and a program to reward local communities for the success by permitting a sustainable harvest of these birds is planned.

This effort was challenged at the CMS Conference in 2011, where

a resolution was promoted, blaming the decline of this species on unsustainable harvesting and calling for the Saker to be moved to Appendix 1 of the CMS indicating that the species is threatened with extinction. In partnership with FACE and the CIC, we challenged this resolution, calling for a recognition of other causes of the decline of this species and also recognition for the successful sustainable use program. This call was successful and it was agreed to retain the Saker as Appendix 2 where sustainable use programs were effectively instituted. Subsequent to this, the IAF has become a signatory to the Raptors MoU of the CMS and has become an active participant in the Saker Task Force of that organization. Within this, we have contributed by developing a population modeling scheme for the Saker, based on population statistics for European and Central Asian birds. This allows for the establishment of sustainable use programs and will encourage a cessation to illegal and unsustainable harvesting. At the same time, we believe, this will develop an

appreciation for the value of these birds and hopefully encourage moderation of the other factors which are contributing to their decline, by encouraging correction of bad electricity structures, diminishing the use of rodenticides and by nest-site provision. To promote this we have engaged with stakeholders at the recent Stakeholders Workshop of the Saker Task Force, providing the motivation which you will have before you.

**Conclusion:**

Falconers are hunters with a difference. We desire the support and assistance of other hunters and conservationists. Regrettably, our Art is often poorly understood by both these groups and this leads to misconceptions and suspicion. We are working to break down these barriers by being more open in promoting our Art and engaging with hunters and conservationists as well as the general public to try to overcome prejudice.

I am very grateful to you all for your indulgence and for including me in your meeting. ♦



**An invitation from the Irish Hawking Club**

We are delighted that the the IAF Council of Delegates has unanimously agreed to accept our invitation to hold the 2016 AGM

With fabulous hunting grounds, varied quarry and wonderful countryside, the Irish hospitality awaits you for this auspicious event

We look forward to welcoming you in 2016

**47th IAF AGM**  
Co Kerry, Ireland, 2016





## women's working group looking ahead

by Dianne Moller - Chair

It's hard to believe almost two years has passed since our initial meeting of the Women's Working Group (WWG). In November 2012 we held our second official in-person meeting at the North American Falconer's Association field meet in Kearney, Nebraska, USA.



WWG Members traveled a great distance just to participate in the meeting and witness American falconry at its best. We were all eager to see one another since it had been almost a year since we met in Doha, Qatar. I was very impressed with how anxious each of these ladies was to roll up their sleeves and go to work, dedicating a half day to identify new goals and objectives for 2013/2014. We began the session by recapping the Goals and Projects that were identified at our previous meeting in Doha, Qatar. I'm pleased to report each of our tasks were accomplished in a timely manner. We then moved forward in the session by identifying new goals to better serve the IAF organization and increase communication among women falconers. One of goals is to provide education resources and materials through a link on the IAF website. To learn more about how falconry associations present themselves in public and whether they have any programs or information for children and teenagers, we are considering conducting a poll. It is imperative that future generations who are not exposed to nature, have opportunities that allow them to connect to nature and an appreciation for the art of falconry. This will enable falconers and other interested parties all over the world to access information to enhance their knowledge and education programs. We are still in need of feedback regarding the survey and appointment of liaisons for their countries and falconry clubs. Letters requesting this information was sent last year to each of the delegates. This information is important so we may continue to move forward with future projects. If you are in need of information or have questions please contact either Elisabeth Leix or myself. Thank you to those who did take the time to respond. As a result we now have the following falconers appointed as liaisons to their country: Michelle Anderson, USA; Dorianne Borg, Malta; and Valerie Collet, Belgium. We wish to thank these ladies for serving as a point of contact between the WWG and their country. In addition Tula Stapert has been communicating with various International women's hunting groups to see if we share a common ground and if alliances might be formed that would be beneficial to

IAF/WWG and these groups. There is strength in numbers. The WWG continues to be active receiving many inquiries including the following issues: Animal-medical matters: an Austrian veterinarian was able to locate the WWG through the IAF website. She works with homeopathic medicine and diseases in birds of prey and is particularly experienced with aspergillosis. We remain in contact and look forward to learning more about her work. Publications/journalism: a journalist has been in contact with a member of the group and is conducting research to write a book specifically about women and the different types of hunting. She would like include a portrait of a female falconer focusing on the balance between work, family, and falconry. There was also an inquiry from a film industry interested in producing a documentary on falconry. Nature conservation: a biologist inquired about conservation projects including habitat preservation and reintroduction programs of wild game and expressed an interest in supporting these efforts. General assistance with falconry matters: a falconer that had to relocate for work reasons from Europe to America asked for assistance in finding a contact for a local falconer. All of these requests were generated from the newly designed website of the IAF. These are just a few examples of how and why the website is an important means of communication. Patrizia Cimbero continues to work diligently to maintain and keep the IAF website current. We will be working on a display that will provide educational handouts and materials to interested parties. The completion of this project is to coincide with the IAF booth at the 2014 International Falconry Festival, this will be led by Sue Cecchini. The Women's Working group continues to work with the IAF board and officers to prioritize the Goals and Projects. Our goal is to have the WWG organization operate as efficiently and professionally as possible. If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact any member of the WWG. (Dianne Moller: Chair, Elisabeth Leix: Vice Chair, Tula Stapert, Veronique Blontröck, Sue Cecchini and Patrizia Cimberio) We look forward to seeing you in Qatar! ♦





# ARGENTINE FALCONERS UNITE!

by Henrique Rezende

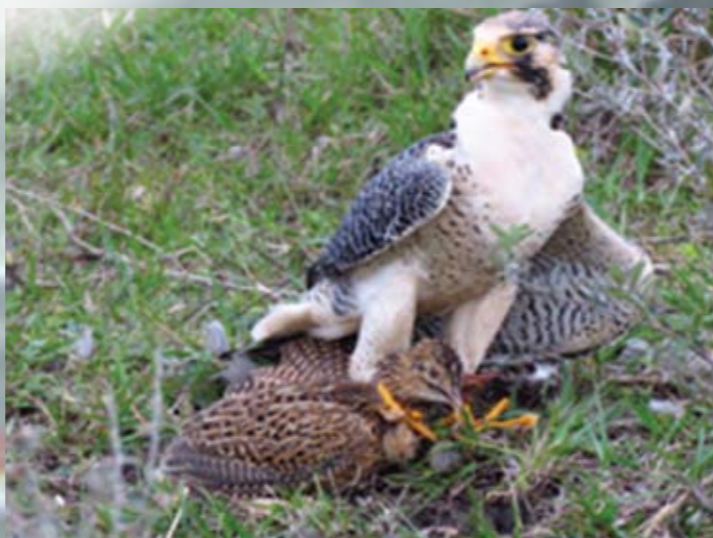
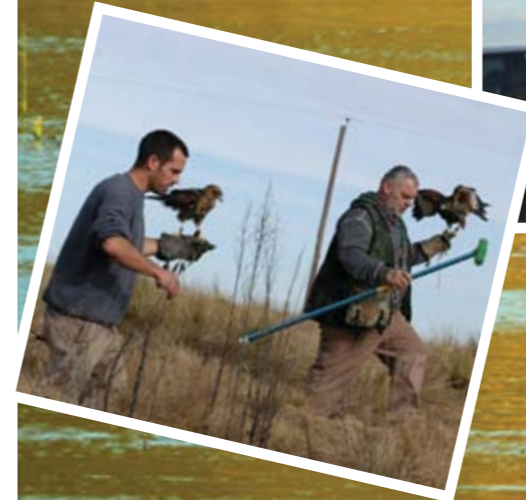
The History of falconry in South America is one of discovery of the sport by isolated individuals, then by small groups who did not always share the same goals. In 2012 there was a major change in Argentine falconry. Thanks to initiatives of a new generation of falconers, long-standing differences and disagreements were set aside and groups were unified in the goal of working towards better falconry in the country.

ALL THIS AND MORE  
IN ARGENTINA!  
IAF AGM MISIONES,  
ARGENTINA AUGUST 2015  
BE THERE,  
MAKE PLANS  
NOW!



In 2012 there were 5 regional meetings including; in El Niego, in Bahia Blanca, in Henderson and in Junin, all in the province of Buenos Aires as well as one in the province of Mendoza organized by West Falconers group.

To extend this spirit of cooperation further, all groups agreed to hold a single national meeting in 2013. This inclusive national meeting was held in the City of Henderson, province of Buenos Aires from 20 to 23 of June. Everyone in attendance agreed it was a complete success. Argentine falconers traveled some distance to participate and the meeting included several





guests from other countries such as Brazil and Uruguay. This national meeting enjoyed the institutional support of the City of Henderson and especially from its Mayor. There to cover the meeting in detail was "El Pato", one of Argentina's most widely circulated and best-known hunting and fishing magazines. It is especially important to note that many falconers brought their entire families adding to the friendship and camaraderie. These new and renewed contacts resulted in strengthened friendships and enabled the sharing of hawking stories to continue across this large land throughout the remainder of the hunting season.

Approximately 50 falconers attended with their birds. Raptors brought to the meet included Aplomado Falcons, Harris, Peregrines, Buzzard Eagles, Kestrels and Little Grey Falcon (*Spizaapteryx circumcincta*).

The weather was favorable for falconry and we saw nice flights to a wide varieties of traditional prey like ducks, hares, and tinamou (a unique South American game bird related to the ostriches, aka "partridge"). There were flights at non-traditional prey like lapwings, herons, coots, as well.

Note, the true stars of the meeting were Aplomados; they showed their versatility by capturing from "frogs" to little white egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) and one big white egret (*Egretta alba*) in a beautiful flight, as well as lapwings and tinamou.



The upcoming IAF AGM in Misiones Province was discussed and participants were excited to welcome the world to Argentine falconry. Letters were read from Adrian Lombard and Ralph Rogers of the IAF offering support and extending a hand of friendship from all falconers in the world. The meeting was such a success that the concept of annual South American meetings was endorsed by all and plans for the next meeting in Henderson are underway. We look forward to hosting the IAF in 2015. ♦

# CROATIA: EU ACCESSION

First Croatia EU citizens to visit the heart of the EU?  
Why? Because they care for their nature and wildlife

As one of the first Croatian civil society groups to visit the heart of the EU, Croatian hunters celebrate and discuss Croatia's excellent game management in the first few days of the 28th Member State's Accession.

## 3 July 2013, Strasbourg:

Representatives of the Croatian Hunting Federation and the Croatian Government gathered with MEPs under the auspices of the European Parliament's Sustainable Hunting Intergroup to discuss the integration of Croatia's wildlife, nature and hunters within the EU.

A sizeable delegation of the Croatian Hunting Federation whose members include 60,000 new EU citizens was amongst the first civil society groups from Croatia to actively connect with the EU at the European Parliament following the country's Accession on 1 July. The 29 Croatian hunters and conservationists travelled 15 hours to Strasbourg by bus for this unique meeting, to engage with their new points of contact in the EU, asking questions about the Union's processes and Nature Directives as well as the work of the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup itself. Seven Croatian MEPs joined the meeting where they expressed their support for the hunters' work in wildlife conservation.

The representatives of the Croatian hunters and the Croatian Government - Duro Dečak, President of the Croatian Hunting Federation and Nikica Šprem,

Assistant to the Croatian Minister for Forestry, Hunting and the Wood Industry - gave excellent outlines of the country's wildlife and its game management practices. Mr Šprem provided insights into Croatia's successful large carnivore management, highlighting their growing Brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) populations encompassing some 1000 individuals as well as their stable population of Wolf (*Canis lupus*).

FACE's Secretary General Angus Middleton and Senior Policy Advisor Yves Lecocq provided an overview of the impacts the Accession can have on Croatian hunting, specifically in terms of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives. Both speakers detailed FACE's expertise in European conservation policy and implementation, as well as its sustained dialogue with the European Commission and other EU Institutions, citing as a recent example FACE's involvement in the Commission's Large Carnivores Expert Group\*. The growing populations of large carnivores in Croatia will require appropriate management options so as to keep human-wildlife conflicts in check and enable sustainable co-existence.

András Demeter, Advisor in the European Commission's DG Environment, an expert in nature and biodiversity issues and one of the officials for the EU Action on Large Carnivores gave the following message:

As the Commission has repeatedly stated, hunting is an important management tool for Natura 2000.

President of the Sustainable Hunting Intergroup MEP Véronique Mathieu Houillon chaired the session and closed the discussion by highlighting the effectiveness of the Croatian conservation system, and assessing that the EU can learn much from Croatia about successful game species management, especially large carnivores. Preserving the existing successful management of large carnivores in Croatia encompasses one of the key challenges ahead in Croatia's new EU context.

FACE President Gilbert de Turckheim outlined the great benefits of this latest Accession: "Croatia brings to Europe a landscape rich in natural and cultural diversity. Game is generally abundant, thanks to good management and long-standing hunting traditions which are culturally rich and ecologically sound."

As the bridge builder between EU citizens who stand for sustainable hunting and conservation and the European legislative bodies, FACE will continue to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and understanding between the EU and Croatian hunters, ensuring that hunting remains good for Croatian hunters, nature and society in this new era. ♦

## Algannas News: Prize-giving for the Best Mews

From the Algannas Club

Last night the Algannas Society of Qatar celebrated and awarded three prizes for "best practiced summer moulting".

This is basically a competition to see which falconers are keeping their Sakers in the best custody, falconers who can keep falcons at their houses, feed them, watch over them, cool, medicate and clean the falcons' mews during the long and hot summer season.

Among the thirty falconers' houses competing with each other Algannas rated all the houses with similar criteria and concluded first, second and third places.

What is the purpose of such practice? A competition looking after saker falcons with the best of care possible, lessons learned with a cash prize incentive. After the long summer the results will be announced in the local newspaper, referencing the name of the best falcon house in Qatar and detailing the tools and methods used during the summer time, sharing the information with falcon owners and improving the conditions



in which falcons are moulted in order to give Sakers the best possible care and attention in this harsh environment. Next year the prize fund will be doubled in order to include the best ten. ♦



## goshawk on the winter salt marsh

There's an uneasy way about Ginsu these last few days of the season. Perhaps her hormones are making her a bit temperamental with spring merely weeks away. In the mews she isn't stepping to the glove with the same silent focus of only a week ago.

Story and photography by Tom Gagne



No doubt I'm already contending with some end-of-the-season jitters myself; an unsettled voice of my own resonating with the crystal clear awareness that every outing now is on borrowed time. Eagles hang high in the cold ocean blue skies while hungry owls perch like statues in the shadows of the Maine forest. And Murphy's Law seems to loom over every decision, every action. February can be a nervous time for an austringer. Yet I know I'm not quite ready to let any of it go as I reluctantly consider life after duck hawking season once again. I'll pass my spring and summer earning my money and truly cherishing the company of my family yet never really taking an eye off next November.

But in this moment my four-year-old goshawk is right here riding calmly but alert on her old familiar perch- my fist- surveying the coastal salt marsh that now spreads outward before us. Her beautiful black and white cap dances in anticipation. Her deep red eyes scan the open terrain

seemingly making guesses as to where she might find a sudden contest with the American black duck.

Larry Barnes and I are still glowing a bit from the spectacular flight that has just ended his gyr/peregrine's season. With only a handful of days left and poor weather predicted for most of them he's happy to close another year by taking a hard flying drake home for a celebratory dinner later this evening.

A few fleeting years ago Larry was my "sponsor"- a mentor under US falconry regulations who has agreed to act as a guide to apprentice falconers for a minimum of two year. Larry has also become one of my best friends. And this was never demonstrated quite as clearly as it was yesterday. After checking off an out-of-range duck my goshawk sailed on a light gust of wind across a very wide river and landed several hundred yards away. Moments later she made a promising effort to return to the lure but as soon as she got to the river's edge she turned back

to the tall trees. It's still not entirely clear why the river bothered her so much. But there was no crossing that frigid water for me either and the threat of bald eagles was nagging me. Perhaps she'd even seen one. This was Larry's area and he has had falcons cross that river as well. He said the only way to get to her was to hike the half-mile of marsh back to the vehicles, drive twenty minutes around the river and then hike a couple of miles over a snow-covered mountain trail. So off we went. Larry is a little older than me so I was impressed by his stamina as we pushed ourselves over the steady incline in heavy clothes and hawking gear. And with a bit of added reassurance from my telemetry he led me straight to my hawk. Ginsu watched over us from a little hardwood across the field, waiting for Daddy within a few yards of where I last saw her across the river.

A day later I'm still feeling something of that little "odyssey" (as Larry put it) both in my bones and in my nerves. It's never a joy to lose sight of your game hawk for any

length of time.

"That's mostly bigger water over there," Larry says as we press forward tightly against a sort of peninsula of mixed trees that reaches out across the marsh and splits the first quarter mile of it. He's pointing to a long channel about a hundred fifty yards to our right. "We can try it on the way out if she doesn't catch one."

Ginsu and I have never been to this marsh but she knows exactly why we are here, though it took some real time and effort to help her evolve into the duck lover she has become. This is the end of her fourth season and being a part of her evolution has been inspiring, maybe life-changing in some ways. She's a native, wild-taken eyass imprint that I raised from two weeks old here in Maine. She was heavily socialized from the start, though I went to extremes to make direct food associations all but non-existent for the first six months or so of her life. She is extremely quiet and well mannered. And she is equally in her element taking squirrels and snowshoe

hares while following me through the trees or when racing after fleeing black ducks and wild mallards from the fist.

But it wasn't until her third season that I was able to get her to commit to those ducks. For a long time she would fly them down and pull them to the ground but seemed reluctant to fully engage them. She would let them go. Then one day she just did it. She pulled a female black duck down from its fast and frantic escape, transferred to its head and simply stopped it. And then two days later she did it again. A confident duck hawk was born.

I had recently moved from our densely forested hills to the open coast of Maine where I began exploring the tidal marshes of the area. These marshes are complex, dynamic environments that can take a good deal of time to learn. For starters, the terrain is unpredictable and porous. It would be easy in a moment of distraction to twist an ankle if one is not mindful of their footing. The ducks we pursue here are typically feeding in channels of variable

width and depth. These tidal waterways are subject to the gravity of the moon, so they rise and fall dramatically in just a few hours giving a falconer a fairly narrow window of opportunity. Complicating things further, these watery landscapes are subject to Maine's extreme weather swings. A quiet mud and grass covered marsh today could be a crunchy, desolate expanse of ice tomorrow. And once the snow hits and a cold spell lingers for just a little too long those ditches will often freeze out the ducks for long frustrating periods of time. Most of my favorite smaller estuaries were too frozen to hold ducks this season.

But for all of its unique challenges and little disappointments the tidal marsh presents me with something of a spiritual theater; a wide open stage magnificently decorated, on which some of nature's great players- God's actors, if you're so inclined- offer an endless stream of insights great and small, personal and universal. There I have a front row seat to all the beauty and grace,

the triumphs and the endings, the ebb and flow of life and death. And I'm perched right on the edge of it.

It's a charming world but one of utter indifference, thus a perfect place for learning. Many a winter morning I've crept across the ice and snow keeping my profile low with hawk on fist, doing my very best to silence my footsteps as though alarming a single duck would mean my own end. In that state I'm more alert and cautious of my movement, which in turn inspires empathy with the quarry that I pursue in these often harsh environments. After all, are we any greater than the quarry that we hunt? They have survived the elements, predators, and disease and many have traveled hundreds if not thousands of miles. So as I manage to weave in and out of serpentine ditches through the falling snow, dipping down and across the water in my hip waders, carefully pacing myself across the crunchy ice with a silent and patient goshawk ready to burst at the slightest sound of water, I am vibrating inside and out with heightened awareness and almost unbearable anticipation. And when those powerful American black ducks finally break from hidden water up ahead and thunder toward the sea with my finely tuned American goshawk in hot pursuit...I become nothing more than a pair of eyes. I witness a battle of will and a trial of evolution itself. I'm seeing wild ducks use every bit of their strength to escape. And I'm watching my goshawk racing from behind; choosing her prey and flight path with calculations faster than my own mind can even fathom. And when she throws her talons out at the duck just as it is about to pull away and she takes it down to the ground in one final burst of energy, it's time for me to act again. I become nothing more than a pair of legs. I run across the marsh heavy with gear and lay myself down before two great champions. They have both flown with something akin to dignity and honor. Ginsu holds on tight to her prey while I help to hastily bring it to rest. Before I do I never fail to look straight into its eyes and give thanks. And I become nothing more than a man.

In falconry it's not failure that humbles me. It's success. "Alright, I'll stay behind you. Right over there is where the channel starts to narrow." Larry kneels down and slips into a soft whisper. "I don't think we can cross this section here if she catches one on the other side so try and push this way." The air is still. Mercifully there is very little



ice on the upper ground but my footing must still be perfect as there is no breeze to mask the sound of my steps. And every sense in my body is telling me we are in the midst of wary ducks. I can tell by Ginsu's grip on my glove that she knows it too. I begin to move toward a series of big bends that look promising, much like the "lies" that one would seek out when fly fishing for trout in a stream. These bends tend to accumulate food and may attract ducks for longer periods. But after only a few steps I notice some ripples in a very small ditch to my right coming off the wide channel we are avoiding. I decide to go for it. Rather than approach it directly and

risk a bad flush I circle back and then hug the big water until I reach the beginning of the small ditch. I sneak up and get almost directly over a single duck feeding with its head in the water and I actually have to make a little noise to flush it. The duck blasts off and Ginsu gives chase but since the duck is actually flying lower than the hawk its powerful wings seem to prevent the hawk from taking a good shot at it. The duck escapes and Ginsu lands in a nearby birch tree. I'm not too disappointed, really. It would have been a pretty unmemorable end to a season. I call her back to the glove and we move toward those bends again. They turn out

a long finger. There is very little chance of surprising the few ducks that remain as they can see me from a safe distance each time I peek over the edges. "I'd love to hunt this again some time now that I know how it's laid out," I tell Larry as he catches up to me. "Beautiful spot, too." Larry says "We can try the other side but I haven't been here in quite a while. Don't know how much water to expect at this point. Still a couple hours before low tide." "Well, let's have a look," I shrug. When my hawk misses ducks I try to be objective. It's easy to create excuses for her but what if she just isn't really into it? What if the end of our season has already passed? But we're here now. We walk a few hundred yards back to the other side of the trees and after a few minutes I begin to see the top of the long winding ditch as it works its way from the ocean toward the road. Approaching this will be tricky. I don't know how deep it is or even how wide it is. As I get to about 60 feet away my head is jerking from left to right trying not to be spotted by ducks on either side of me. One



to be bigger than anticipated and having never hunted here I have no idea how to best approach them or what's ahead of us. As I approach I see more ripples. I have to circle back again to try and flush them away from the deeper water. I charge forward and a dozen black ducks tear out ahead of us. Some were far enough away to gain enough speed for escape while the birds that were closer bail back into water in the next bend just as Ginsu catches up to them. She checks off and once she lands in a tree they safely take flight again. She's back on the glove and we try as patiently as possible to work the rest of the ditch which has straightened out into

tiny step at a time I move forward to see the water. I see no clues in front of me but up around the next bend I see ripples of some sort. It could be the breeze that has picked up, or it could be the current from the outgoing tide. I can't be sure. I decide to go all in and I charge straight at it with the goshawk leaning forward and gripping the glove. In fact it's not ducks that are causing those ripples but my actions have startled some ducks still farther up the channel. They appear to be a bit out of range but Ginsu launches after them despite their distance and in my mind I can only imagine her breaking away and heading to the trees on the other

side of this deep water. But to my surprise, just as the big black ducks start pulling away she turns on the afterburners. It's like she simply decides that these ducks are not getting away today. She picks out a Suzie that's climbing hard toward the sky. She pumps and she pumps and she throws her feet out from below and pulls the black duck down pinning it to the ground like a wrestler. I turn to see Larry and all I can do is holler "WOW." He's saying something back but I'm already trying to figure out a way across. It's deep, dark and too wide to jump. I run down the little river frantically looking for some sort of bridge but nothing is presenting itself. Larry stays behind to keep an eye on her and watch for eagles while I run several football fields back to the road and then back up the other side of the ditch. I find myself thinking as I run and run in my waders and my hawking gear that if I was a smoker I'd be dead by now. As I get closer I can barely hear Larry over my own breath yelling something about "duck" and "into the ditch." My heart sinks. I can't see my goshawk or the duck. I'm sure the duck has broken free and the hawk has flown into the pines. But Larry says "no, she's got it!" So now I think it has pulled her into deep water so I'm sprinting with what little strength I have left. But closer still I see the pile of duck feathers next to a two foot wide side ditch. I run over and the black duck has pulled my lady down into a four foot deep crevice. I peer down at her standing on her duck and she looks up at me as if to say: "think you might want to give me a hand sometime today?"

Gasping for air and my vision somewhat blurred from exhaustion, I jump down into the narrow ditch. As I lift Ginsu and her quarry up onto the ground at eye level I see it all once again. It's a timeless moment of both power and peace. There is a sudden deluge of memories from all my days afield of moving thoughtfully through tantalizing little worlds, mentally merging with my goshawk- in the moment and fully aware of it. Larry and I gather ourselves then hike out of the marsh along opposite sides of the channel. We celebrate our good fortune and falconry itself as Ginsu enjoys the rest of her well-deserved reward on the glove. Her crop is reaching full capacity and her blood-red eyes appear relaxed and satisfied. Larry, perhaps more than anyone else I've hunted with probably knows what's going through my mind. It's the feeling of having lived and knowing it. ♦



# IAF AROUND THE WORLD

Reports from delgate countries around the globe that make up the colourful world of the IAF.

## Report from Croatia: Tomislav Cvar

A report of falconry related developments in Croatia or as some of us know it Apsurdistan.

First subject is Unesco recognition. Few months ago we were visited by an delegation from Ministry of Culture. We made a presentation of falconry for them and introduced them to falcons and falconry equipment. At the end of the meeting we discussed the problems or UNESCO application. The Ministry of culture has no objections to support the applications since they have seen the art is developing and has historical background. On the other hand the Ministry of Nature protection has been protesting that they will not support this application since falconers in Croatia are performing illegal wild take, the birds of prey trained by falconers are hunting protected species and falconers hybrids are polluting the wild living species. None of these statements were backed by examples in the real life. On the contrary we offered to confront the staff with real life facts and numbers of the real risk and practice. In due time the Ministry of Nature protection has to supply the Ministry of Culture with their

official statement (opinion). That may take time since they have been dragging it out for about 6 months now. I am concerned that we won't be able to get a statement and that will block the application. On the other hand the Hunters association of Croatia has offered full support in lobbying on our behalf. The newly elected mayor of Petrinja has seen value in falconry as their local heritage and has also promised to contact the relevant authority to support the objective.

Second subject is Saker reintroduction project in Croatia. During the beginning of the year the feasibility study was presented to the Ministry of Nature Protection for evaluation. To this day we had no contact from them regarding the evaluation or any on that matter. The authorities have the deadline to refuse or approve the study within one month if all of the documents are submitted , or two months if additional explanations are necessary. In the time since the project was started in 2008. Until today the financial cost (including the feasibility study) rose to 17 000 euros. And due to the unwillingness of Ministry not one falcon was released. In that period the Ministry formed the Saker working group to deal with management of the species. It was not a surprise that no falconers from Sokolarstvo Petrinja was invited to participate. Only rehabilitation shelter members and some veterinarians and bird watchers were involved. We protested but the answer was that they had enough members in the group.

Third subject is progress on falconry history research. To this moment we have established around 130 leads to research in the future. Some are the artifacts that have to be found and documented in museums, archives etc. And some are real objects or monuments still located in the field. With the grant from Falconry Heritage Trust we have located one of the most beautiful



Above Mr. Maroje Tihole and Tomislav Cvar  
Below: Falconry motif on grave stone



artifacts of falconry. The old grave stone with carved ornaments locally called Stećak. On three other visited locations no stones have been found with falconry images. They have been catalogued in books to have falconry motifs but on the location a lot of them have been destroyed to build walls or roads. This urges us for a fast documentation process followed by a protection scheme. New discoveries were also being researched in archives with special details on breeding and training of falcons in town of Dubrovnik. There



Mr. Željko Civić

is some proof of existence of contracts between local falconers and falcon traders.

Fourth subject is a bit strange way of conduct of Department of Hunting. This department has a work group to deal with falconry exams and other relevant falconry issues. Now the last team has been disbanded without notifying all of the members and new team has been created.

The first had four falconers, representative of the Ministry of the Nature Protection, President and Secretary as members. The new team has two falconers less and another member from a working group dealing with lynx as a member staff. This way they have taken the expert members and replaced them with persons who themselves don't know what to do in that team.

Lastly please visit us in Croatia, you will be most welcome. We can tell you a lot more of this kind of stories.

**Tomislav Cvar**  
**President of the Falconry Petrinja - Society for the protection of the birds of prey and falconry**  
**CIC Expert of the Croatian delegation**  
**Croatian delegate at IAF**  
**IUCN SSC member**

## Report from Ireland: Hilary White

Firstly a message from our director Don Ryan:

*"Officers of the IAF and fellow nation members, I wish you all the best of luck at this year's IAF AGM. I would sincerely have liked to be there to give my support to both Hilary's presentation and to back up the IHC's commitment to wanting you all over here but unfortunately events conspired against me. Should we be selected to host the AGM in 2016, I can assure you that you will not find me lacking in the preparation for their arrival and to make their stay here is as enjoyable and memorable as possible."*

**Don Ryan, IHC Director.**

Executives of the committee, fellow delegates and friends, Ireland has recently had a blip on our usually serene relationship with our wildlife authorities. Earlier in the year, our National Parks and Wildlife service attempted to suspend our wild take for peregrines for the first time since it was established in 1979.

Although each year there might be 32 applicants for these, four to five licenses are awarded, usually with two to three being fulfilled. The excuse was that 2012 had been a bad year for the species according to data from rangers.

The matter was acted on immediately by the IHC and our department liaison officer got the issue turned around on the basis that it was based on no scientific evidence and without any consultation of relevant stakeholders. Of course, the fear would have been that this was the thin end of the wedge and if they had done away with peregrine licenses then spars and kestrels would have been next.

Headed by Eoghan Ryan, the IHC quickly got to work in compiling water-tight data on peregrine numbers and the impact of wild take on peregrine stocks. Peregrine figures have soared since Ratcliffe's 1980



**The IHC is looking forward to hosting the IAF 2016 AGM**

estimate of 180-200 pairs. A 2002 survey had Irish peregrines at an all-time high of 390 occupied breeding territories. Then last year, the Irish Raptor Study Group put this at more like 500+ pairs. It's therefore safe to say that 32 years of peregrine wild take in Ireland has not affected the species

too badly! In fact, looking at density figures in Janusz's book, it is possible that Ireland has the highest population density of this species in Europe.

The District Conservation officer/s who spearheaded this decision are being entirely subjective, and it would seem



their major concern is that we are the only country in Europe issuing peregrine wild take licenses. We even have written evidence obtained through a freedom of information order that he himself has said the 'country is 'awash with peregrines.' The report will be presented to the principal officer in the department along with the relevant district conservation officers and

administrators. We also have the attention of the Minister who has opened a line of communication with us on the matter. Our evidence is more or less irrefutable and sincere thanks are due to the IAF for their back-up and advice, both tactically and scientifically, which has been invaluable. Wild take is something that we are immensely proud of in Ireland and we

do not take the privilege lightly. On a wider level, we feel it is important that we maintain it so that we can be something of a flagship country as our neighbours in the UK try to re-instate it or other EU nations look to have it further legislated for.

As always, we will be keeping the IAF fully updated on any developments in this.

**Hilary White**

Lentate sul Seveso; fundamental principles of pathology, taught by the veterinarian Dr. Peccati, and hunting legislation, whose knowledge is necessary to legally hold a bird of prey in captivity.

Furthermore, several FIF members participate, whether autonomously or with the patronage of the federation, to activities that involve schools, referring

both to children under-6 and older kids. Some of the FIF members take care of the reproduction of birds of prey or other endangered species, and they also take part in projects of reintroduction; for example, the reproduction of Eurasian eagle-owl, which is nowadays very easy to obtain in captivity, was started in Italy more than twenty years ago by Vico Battel,

a FIF member who has been a pioneer in the reproduction and the handling of Eurasian eagle-owl.

In the end, FIF, which is continually in contact with IAF through its representative, is co-working with other organizations that deal with falconry in order to obtain UNESCO's acknowledgment.

Report from Italy: *Villa Andrea (member of FIF and IAF delegate)*

FIF (Federazione Italiana Falconieri), during the past year, has acted in correspondence of the principles of falconry and has worked as a promoter of the principles themselves, taking care to inform all of its members and all the supporters of falconry of the activities undertaken by IAF.

FIF is deeply committed on the territory since it has been participating for years to several events, known both nationally both internationally, one of which takes place in Brescia in the month of April; it's one of the biggest exhibitions about hunting and its name is EXA, a valuable occasion that offers our federation the opportunity of making its presence visible, and it also allows hunting enthusiasts to learn about the art of falconry.

Another event that concerns hunting takes place in the medieval castle of Bereguardo (PV) in the month of May; this event attracts a crowd of people, who are not only experienced hunters: the event is also family-friendly.

EXA and the exhibition in Bereguardo are just two of the numerous events that allow FIF to popularize the art of falconry on our territory.

Apart from the indispensable activity of making falconry known in order to attract new supporters of this art and allow



people of every age to get in contact with falconry for the first time, one of the major concerns of FIF is to organize meetings among falconers, an important occasion for its participants to get to know each other and to express their points of view. Every year FIF organizes at least four meetings that are spanned over the entire hunting period; the meetings are opened not only to affiliated members but also to the members of other Italian associations of falconry; obviously FIF also takes part in the meetings organized by other associations, traveling all over Italy.

In fact, during the past year, FIF did not only organize one of the biggest Italian

meetings, with the active participation of at least thirty falconers from every part of our country, but it was also involved in several events, sending some of its members to events that took place, for example: in Friuli, where there was the biggest meeting of the past hunting season; in Lombardy (UNCF meeting), in Tuscany, in Emilia Romagna and in several other places.

Another activity with educational purpose conducted by FIF is the organisation of falconry courses, which are meant to provide the fundamental teachings of the discipline to serious enthusiasts who are determined to learn about hunting with a hawk. Every year at least ten people join in the course, which spans over the months of September and October, with the participation of important specialists in every branch of the discipline. I've attended several falconry courses, and that's why I take the liberty to define our course, with a little bit of presumption, one of the best organized: it does not only teach the practice, which is indispensable in any case, but also the history of falconry, taught by Dr. Cimberio; biology referred to birds of prey, taught by experienced ornithologists from the Museo Civico in



Report from Portugal: *Antonio Carapucio*

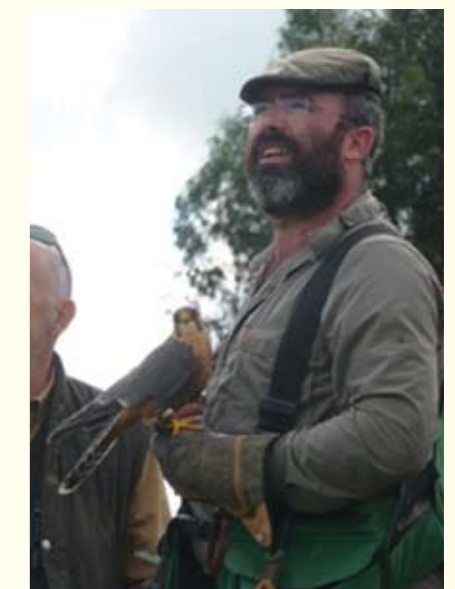
The Portuguese Association for Falconry is small association that represent some 100 associates were 60 are active falconers. Nevertheless our small size we try our best to improve practice conditions to our associates, spread information and keep a spirit of union. The last year was particularly rich in improvements and innovation. Our sport is old and our traditions resound from the millennia but now we must protect that spirit using today's modern technology. Using this principle our association started using the internet in a more active way. Our new website: [www.apfalcoaria.org](http://www.apfalcoaria.org) is our new virtual headquarters where we meet almost daily to talk about our daily achievements and problems in pursuing this sport. From distributing our bi-annual magazine to video collections and information about hot topics like Animal Welfare and Hybrids, the wonders of the internet can make the distribution on information easy (also can relieve the board of Direction of some simple administrative task letting more time to hunting, which we surely appreciate!). We advise all who want to improve efficiency to "go web"!

From last year we would also like to highlight some initiatives:

The first is our commitment to the pursuit of the recognition of Portuguese Falconry has Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO. A very important and actual proof of our cultural attachment to falconry was the recent creation of a Philatelic Emission about falconry by our national mail company. This moment was beautiful and we have great pride in the stamps that were printed (photos above right). We hope you enjoy them as much as we! For the goal of submitting to UNESCO have signed a protocol with the Portuguese University of Evora to help us with the process and with a tow in which falconry traditions go deep since the XVII Century: Salvaterra



A series of wonderful stamps published in Portugal this year





de Magos, the ex libris of Falconry in Portugal. We hope to have good news on this quest soon. We are trying to improve falconers practice conditions. Having engaged in a quest for hunting places for falconers, we are trying to change some inadequate rules that are applied to our sport just because we own autochthone birds. This is going to be a

long journey but we are hopeful. Our meeting is one of the highest moments of the year. You can see some photos on our annual assembly where our associates display their birds and we talk about falconry to exhaustion (or so say our wives and friends). In the meeting falcons and wait on flights start to be the norm but the variety is still there and from

Harris hawks to Aplomados we can see a glimpse of other "falconry flavours" in these photos. We hope to have given an understanding of our activities from last year and Portuguese falconry. Our best regards, **Associação Portuguesa de Falcoaria Portuguese Association for Falconry**



Above and left: Alexey Bahterev at one of his tours for schoolchildren on the life of predatory birds



Above and right: Anton Modnov educating the pupils in Tambov

Report from Russia: Alexander Musakov

The Interregional Public Organization on Conservation of Birds of Prey and Falconry Development "Association of Falconers" continues its activities together with IAF as a corresponding member. National falconry traditions revive in Russia and our Interregional Public Organization on Conservation of Birds of Prey and Falconry Development "Association of Falconers" makes efforts to speed up this process. One of the main tasks of IPO "Association of Falconers" is popularization of falconry and predatory birds protection in Russia. Recognition of falconry by UNESCO is very important for those whose interest to this ancient art is growing. We sent an open letter to Russian president to ask him to recognize falconry as cultural inheritance and to ratify the list of cultural inheritance of humankind. This year our site falcation.org has appeared. It was created so that newcomers in the field of falconry could find all necessary information on falconry. The site also includes consultative section, where learners can ask their questions to



Above and left: Muhammed Al Shamery at an outreach activities on predatory birds biology in the school of Vladikavkaz



Above and below: pupils from Platonova Nastya take third place in the Samara regional scientific conference of school children



experienced falconers. Interregional Public Organization on Conservation of Birds of Prey and Falconry Development "Association of Falconers" broadens its staff as this year regional department of Altay Krai and Amur area have entered our Association. Activities of "Association of Falconers" is connected with making school children and students familiar with the world of predatory birds together with conducting free of charge tours and delivering lectures on biology of predatory birds and their ecology. Nowadays the activities of our members are very productive. The member of Association Muhammed Al Shamery (regional department of Caucasus region), conducts outreach activities on predatory birds biology in school of Vladikavkaz. The association member Alexey Bahterev (Sverdlovsk regional department) also conducts tours and tells pupils and students about the life of predatory birds. The Association member Anton

Modnov (Tambov regional department) delivers lectures for pupils and children in Tambov telling them everything about predatory birds. Under the leadership of the association member Ivan Pavlov (Samara regional department) Platonova Nastya – the gymnasium pupils took the third place in Samara regional scientific conference of school children, the topic was: "Sparrow-hawk in a winter city". In the early autumn of 2013 IPO "Association of Falconers" is going to hold rally of Russian falconers. We are sincerely glad to be participants of IAF and within the framework of international cooperation believe in your cooperation and support in the sphere of falconry promotion in Russia! **Best regards, the Chairman of the Interregional Public Organization on Conservation of Birds of Prey and Falconry Development "Association of Falconers" Alexander Musakov**

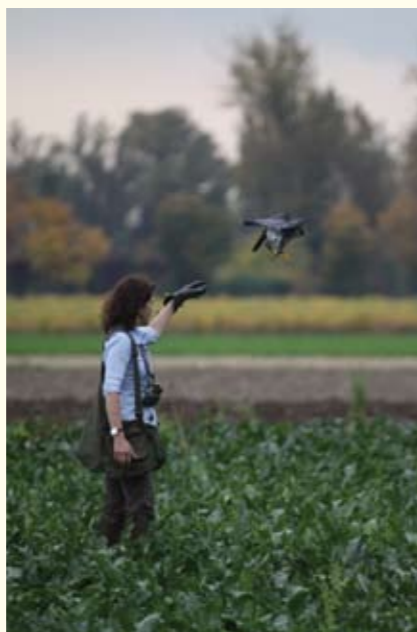


Report from Germany: Elisabeth Leix

**DFO Field Meet 2012 in Meerbusch (North Rhine Westphalia) Germany**

The international DFO field meet, which takes place every two years, was held in Meerbusch, North Rhine Westphalia, from the 17th to 21st of October 2012. In glorious weather and some high summer temperatures, the members and international guests were greeted by the first chairman Dr. Johannes Kuth. A special pleasure was that Frank Bond, then still IAF President, attended our meeting, especially as the IAF was founded in Düsseldorf near Meerbusch 44 years ago. Other authorized international falconers and guests like, Pierre and Christine Basset from Switzerland, Patrick Morel and Veronique Blontrock from Belgium, Tula Stapert from the Netherlands, Jock Hunter from Scotland, Stanislav Menclik from the Czech Republic, Janusz Sielicki and Robert Zmuda from Poland also participated in part of the meeting. Julian Hepburn from England gave an interesting talk on a northern English Grouse Moor, which with a wild stock that declined to nearly zero over the years could be rebuilt with a lot of commitment and a well thought out concept to a recovered hunting ground. Klaus Richter (Germany) presented his new book "With hawk and sparrow-Falconry in the GDR" and Peter Sapara, a former CIC delegate, presented his report of 2010 on the World Heritage of falconry in an updated version of the lecture.

We had various guests of honour from the political, environment community, as well as senior representatives of hunting in Germany. Dr. Hallermann, Vice President of the DJV (German Hunter Association) and LJV-NRW (State Association - North Rhine Westphalia) delivered warm greetings from the associations, pointing to the role of DFO in collaboration with those who support our peregrine falcon release program. He underlined the importance of preserving the knowledge of hunting and falconry and to convey that knowledge to the public, because only what is understood by society, can and will be accepted. On behalf of Agriculture Minister Rimmel, Dr. Kaiser, deputy head of the Department of Conservation and Forestry of the Ministry in Düsseldorf, spoke of the preparatory work for the



revision of the Federal Hunting Law, along with a few words about the general fascination with birds of prey by the normal population. He encouraged the falconers with their knowledge to go out in public and warned the hunters to seek dialogue and not confrontation with new policy. Frank Bond, as president of the IAF, the international representative of falconry reviewed the current status of the IAF. He made it unequivocally clear about the important role of Germany and the DFO as a founding association and one of the oldest and largest organizations in the falconry world. He emphasized the importance of the recognition of falconry as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage and promised assistance to Germany to achieve this recognition. He was praise the concluded-tree-nesting peregrine release program in Germany and the continuing project in cooperation with Poland. It was a special pleasure for him to meet again Professor Christian Saar after more than 48 years; they had met in 1964 in Spain at a falconry meeting with Felix Rodriguez de la Fuente. As keynote speaker we were then welcomed Dr. Meyburg, who made his very interesting lecture on use of GPS telemetry to study the migratory behavior of birds of prey, an entertaining end of the official evening. The 69 active falconers had from Thursday to Saturday over 70 hawking territories available for their hawks. The already mentioned almost summer temperatures bestowed on most high-flying-falconers high and glorious flights, but with less success. Most had not reckoned







with the extreme weather changes, and so there was hardly a hawk that could not be motivated by the mild weather to soar in the thermals, especially with the arrival of cooler weather. This was probably also the reason that in these groups very little was brought to bag. For this, the short-wing hunters had even more success, which was shown with 51 hare and 98 rabbits taken. Despite the beautiful weather problems for long wings, the represented crows falconers were able to achieve an outstanding success with their birds by taking 48 crows in 3 days. Furthermore 4 pheasants, 1 duck and 1 woodpigeon were brought to bag, with a total of 203 head of games, quite a decent result for the restricted landscape in the Ruhr district. On Friday evening, the traditional general meeting took place with elections and reporting of current and falconry club related issues. Among the memorial tributes we were reminded especially of our honorary chairman Eckard Schormaier, whose death was a great loss for the international falconry community. With thanks and honors the official program was kept short. Janusz Sielicki asked for special attention and took the opportunity to officially thank the DFO for the German-Polish cooperation in the tree-nesting release program. After 20 years of peregrine reintroduction, they could confirm the first tree-nesting peregrines in Poland in 2012. The rest of the evening was left for the audience for discussions, exchange of old and new experiences, to make new friends and revive memories of the past.

On Sunday, a public event with flight demonstrations and explanations of Wolfgang Schreyer (Bavarian Association) with enlightening words for all present was organized jointly with the local hunters, in which more than 1,000 people attended. The local hunters presented its rolling forest school and a hunter Corps provided the musical entertainment. Our thanks, as always, goes to all the organizers who had spared neither time nor effort to enable carefree days. Even if the current small game situation in Germany is not the best and the future of falconry is provided by some of the question, we are stopped all together, each in his area to obtain the conditions and improve for our small game and for falconry, so we can experience such beautiful field meet also in following years.



Report from Malta: *Lawrence Formosa*



Group photo of Fridericus Rex Malta falconers

As maybe some falconers know there is history which regards falconry and falcon trapping in Malta in the past especially in the medieval period (some more details can be found on a book written

by Natalino Fenek 'Birds of Malta'). Many agree that due to lack of resident quarry and by the introduction of fire arms falconry vanished from Malta for many decades. From those times very few

people thought about it and nobody made so much effort to bring it back. As a young boy I used to keep birds of prey since 1981 as I was fascinated by these birds. In 2008 I decided to form a falconry club and with



The first redtail flown in Malta



Falconers at the Mdina festival



the help of our treasurer Jack Farrugia and some others we managed to do arrangements with the government to help us forming this club. From the government side we manage to get a sponsor to bring a foreign person who had experience in falconry to help us forming this club. Following this I contacted IAF which I've been in contact with them from years before asking if they can help us to form our club. From the IAF we had immediate response and they organized to send Mr. Anthony Crosswell which he was of great help for us. This was the kick start for our club.



Group photo from the first vulture awareness day

By the great support we receive from the IAF currently we are twenty two members and with all the challenges we had during these years we are still here and this year we are going to celebrate our fifth anniversary. In these five years we just started exploring the world of falconry which for us can be a bit more difficult due to as I explained before mainly lack of quarry followed by other things like small open spaces and lack of land which have to be shared with so many other things. Our main birds used for falconry are Harris hawks followed by peregrines and some other birds of various kinds. With these we are exploring too and we are trying to find the right bird which fit most to our country. Also for the future we are trying to plan game release for our birds which can be our next big challenge. Now as we can say that falconry is reestablished it took part of our lives and we wish to keep on going.

Report from Spain: Dr Javier Ceballos

Spain has two IAF member associations. Since 1982 the Spanish Association for Falconry (now called AECCA) and since 1999 "Alicantina de Cetrería" the Alicante's Association for Falconry.

The AECCA's new board debuted on 10 November 2012. Its new president, Andrés Lopez, has initiated significant actions. Among other highlights are his interest in improving relations with the IAF and offering collaboration in international cooperation for the benefit of falconry.

Both associations, AECCA and Alicantina de Cetrería, organize hunting days and are working for the recognition of falconry as a way of hunting. It should be remembered that in Spain there has been a proliferation replacing falconry's hunting by the use of pigeons. This is hawk training instead of falconry. Many participate in competitions with numerous public and media people attending. AECCA from the beginning has been organizing a few hunting days per year in different parts of Spain.

In 2012 the Coto was chosen in Villanueva de Alcardete (Toledo). It brought together some thirty birds and a large number of fans. The "Alicantina de Cetrería" organizes a hunting day each month. Members practicing principally short-wings flights over rabbit and hare. They enjoy exceptional permission to hunt all year for damage to agriculture in over 5,000 km2 of vegetable patches.

During the year 2012 two numbers corresponding to the perch have been published, and an Annual. The publications reaching nearly 1000 members who are already in AECCA. The authors are prestigious falconers at national and international level. The result is a publication reference in the sector.



The Spanish Association for Falconry AECCA organises hunting days



The Gowhawkers' group in the AECCA's hunting day



Participants during AECCA's meeting talks: Jose Souto, Jurgen Nikolaus, Ed Pitcher, Javier Ceballos, Andrés López and Ricardo Velarde



The AECCA Board of Directors, from l to r: AECCA President Andrés Lopez; Rodrigo Garcia; Jorge Hernandez; Ricardo Olmos; Hector Pazos; Antonio Cuartero and Esteban Martin



Working with regional associations and Andalusian Hunting Federation (FAC) with the falconry legislation about hybrids

Since 2011 has been held annually AECC few days of talks. In 2012 the guest speakers were Ed Pitcher and Ricardo Velarde, author of 'Flying Falcons', José Luis Souto, English falconer associative with a wide experience and Jurgen Nikolaus, German aguilero master based in Spain. Andrés López Javier Ceballos and speakers participated in the presentation of the discussion at the end of the day. We were treated to the hottest topics that most affect our national and international falconry, as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the Federation or the training of novice falconers.

AECCA has initiated a series of training talks to environmental agents of the Guardia Civil, SEPRONA to know closer to falconry. Spain has 17 different regulations

on hunting and consequently also on falconry. This involves a lot of inequalities between them and other communities. Andalusia, one of the communities with more restrictive falconry legislation, initiated in early 2012 a process to try to ban the use of hybrids, claiming a possible genetic introgression. Thanks to the work of various entities and individuals, among of whom was AECC, regional associations and Andalusian Hunting Federation (FAC) was achieved that the Ministry of Environment retreated.

AECCA try to be present at major exhibitions of falconry and hunting in Spain. In 2012 we participated with a stand in FICAAR (International Exhibition of Arms and hunting). We managed to disclose falconry to the public and to

other hunters, showing the falconers heritage through equipment, books and paintings, as well as raising awareness of the association and its activities. The next days October 31, 1, 2 and 3 November will develop "Falconry Days: Culture, Hunting and Conservation - AECC 2013". Under the framework of the event, will give talks on falconry with speakers from several countries. We will have an exhibition of works of art of falconry theme, the usual days of hunting, a photo competition ... As we move through the organization, will be incorporated into our web site [www.aecca.org](http://www.aecca.org) everything related to the event.

**Dr. Javier Ceballos**  
Delegat of Spain to the IAF

Report from United Kingdom: *Mark Upton*

**IAF AGM Valkenswaard 19th to 23rd June 2013**

We have had recent changes within the British Falconers' Club. Nick Havemann Mart stood down as Director due to ill health and has been replaced by Martyn Standley. Our President, Roger Upton, is standing down at our AGM in October due to his own deteriorating health. The BFC has been concerned by the lack of communication between the BFC, Hawk Board and IAF. Although we have had some differences of opinion in the past with the Hawk Board, currently we enjoy a good relationship with them. The HB are our first port of call for communication with government bodies and it is imperative that we work with and support them. As the BFC IAF representative, I

have been asked by our Director to work with the HB to improve communications between these two bodies. Subsequently, the HB have recently co-opted me to act as IAF Liaison Officer

Our Director and the IAF President asked me put together a presentation on the role of the Hawk Board in the UK, to present at the IAF AGM. Because of time constraints at the AGM we were unable to do so. I have attached the presentation to this report. I have tried to show their role in a completely unbiased way. British falconers are not always happy with the way the Hawk Board works, mainly because they represent all hawk keepers to government and not just falconers. This means that sometimes they are representing groups that falconers do not approve of. We have



Mark Upton



to remember we have no option but to work with the Hawk Board as this was the body put in place by the UK government to represent all raptor keepers not just falconers. Also the majority of hawk keepers in the UK are not falconers, but can have an adverse effect on falconry. The Hawk Board can have a role in limiting damage caused by bad practice by these non falconry hawk keepers. One of the main problems facing falconry in the UK at present is pressure on the quarry species. The BFC have been opening

communication with other hunting groups and game bird conservation bodies. We are hoping to be involved with some game bird conservation projects in the very near future. Recently we have been able to help government with some sensitive issues involving problem raptors. This is enabling us to improve relations with the authorities and put falconry in a good light with conservationists and government. It is anticipated it will help with the future relaxing of wild take in the UK. I hope to

be able to relay more information with this on-going project at our next meeting. Lastly, the BFC is very aware that the UK is the last major country to recognise UNESCO Convention For The Safeguarding Of The Intangible Cultural Heritage. The BFC wants to encourage progress on this and our Director has helped put together a team to work on a bid. The team consists of representatives from the BFC, Scottish Hawking Club, Welsh Hawking Club, Hawk Board and IAF.

Report from USA: *Dan Cecchini, Jr.*

There have been a lot of natural disasters in the US this past year, including wildfires, tornados, drought, and flooding. These disasters have had an impact on falconers' homes, the habitat of quarry, and the entire hunting environment across significant areas of the United States. It has been very difficult on some members of the US falconry community. I hope that much of the impact from these natural disasters will have been lessened by the time the fall falconry seasons arrive for those individuals who were so unfortunately impacted.

On a more positive note, the US is in the last year of transitioning to the new federal regulations and permitting authority, granting more responsibility to the individual states. This has been a five-year process, each state is responsible for getting their individual new regulations approved by the federal US Fish and Wildlife Service. At this time, there are 17 states out of the 49 states where falconry has been legal in the United



Dr Lynn Oliphant (wheelchair, recovering after a hawking accident) taking raptor measurements at 2012 NAFA Meet weather yard for research study



States (all states except Hawaii, where falconry is not legal), which need to have their regulations approved by the federal government. Most of those states will have no problem meeting the submission deadline of August 31st, but a few states will have to hustle to meet the deadline. If there are any states that do not meet the August 31st deadline to submit their proposed federally compliant falconry regulations, they will lose legal falconry in those states. There are no provisions for extension or additional grace periods. The US federal regulations state "What will happen if a State with falconry regulations certified under earlier regulations does not come into compliance with this section by January 1, 2014? ... If a State does not come into compliance with this section by the compliance date, we (USFWS) will require that all raptors held for falconry

in that State (including captive-bred raptors) be transferred to falconers in other jurisdictions, transferred to captive propagation programs, permanently released to the wild (if that is allowed by the State and by this section), or euthanized. However, you may not permanently release hybrid raptors to the wild." The NAFA leadership, including presidents, officers, directors, and committee members have worked long and hard for many years to help states ensure falconry remains legal in every state that had falconry before the new regulations. There is hope and optimism that every state successfully crosses the finish line, getting their new regulations submitted by August 31st! When it comes to the topic of invasive species, during this past year there had been a move by some members of the

U.S. House of Representatives to enact into law a bill titled "HB 996: Invasive Fish and Wildlife Prevention Act". The bill was intended to restrict invasive species from outside the borders of the United States. The bill would have affected imports of birds from overseas and even imports from the North American countries of Canada and Mexico. NAFA asked for some minor language changes to the bill that would make it clear that birds of prey that are already governed under other federal laws need to be exempted from the provisions of this bill. Fortunately, I don't believe that bill ever made it out of the US House committee for any kind of action by the full House of Representatives. NAFA continues to be engaged in monitoring and responding to wind energy development and its impacts on raptors. NAFA commented on its



Kent Carnie in 2012 NAFA Meet weathering area



Falconers picking up falcons in the 2012 NAFA Meet weathering area



Tom Smylie, NAFA's very first Secretary in 1962, at 2012 NAFA Meet weathering area



Donna Vorce (Secretary), Ron Clark (DAL), Scott McNeff (NE Director), Danny Cecchini, III (NP Director) at the 2012 NAFA Board meeting



Dave Fulks and Cliff Kellog with Harris' at weathering area 2012 NAFA meet



Soon-to-be Oregon falconry apprentice, Finnegan, talking with NAFA Director Danny Cecchini III about American Kestrel at the 2012 Oregon Falconers Association meeting

opposition to allow commercial wind farm developers to have 30 years of voluntary compliance with guidelines for wildlife protection. NAFA's opposition was done in conjunction with other groups also opposing voluntary compliance, instead strongly urging mandatory compliance. Allowing 30 years of voluntary compliance

will allow the commercial wind energy developers to "take" eagles, other raptors, and protected passerines with wind turbines; the term "take" that means kill. At the same time licensed falconers are regularly being denied permits to take eagles from the wild for falconry purposes. NAFA challenged allowing the killing of

eagles by the commercial wind industry, while denying the limited harvest of eagles for American falconers.

During this past winter, NAFA held its first regional field meet. It was held in the eastern US state of Pennsylvania, with the NAFA affiliated state club, the Pennsylvania Falconry and Hawk Trust. It was a successful event, that was well attended. This regional meet allowed eastern falconers who can't make the long trip to many NAFA Meet sites to get an opportunity to experience a large field meet, make new friends, experience many types of hawks and falcons, buy from a variety of falconry vendors and learn more about NAFA and what NAFA does for individual falconers. NAFA is planning a similar western regional meet in 2014 in partnership with the California Hawking Club.

While flying large longwings, as well as other species, in the US continues in good style across the US, higher fuel prices in the US over the last 4+ years do seem to have had an impact on how falconry has been practiced by many falconers. A number of falconers have switched to birds that can provide falconry opportunities closer to home to hunt, rather than drive long distances in search of slips for large longwings. It is hard to know if this will be a permanent trend or not at this point in time. In the past we have been fortunate to be spared the higher fuel prices that falconers in many other parts of the world have had to deal with for quite a long time.

Finally, at the last annual NAFA Meet, a blood drive was conducted to benefit the local community. A blood drive has nothing directly to do with falconry, but it creates good will in that community toward the falconry community, plus it's a nice thing to do! I understand there are plans to do the same type of blood drive at another NAFA Meet in the future.

NAFA's president, board, officers, editors, and committees continue to work hard to be alert for threats to falconry, as well as opportunities to enhance North American falconry—they are truly dedicated to the art and sport of falconry. Without a strong national falconry organization, it's unlikely that legal falconry would continue to thrive the way it does today. The international connections between national falconry organizations, via the IAF, will likely make us all stronger and wiser in our ability to protect falconry into the future. ♦

The Black-and-chestnut Eagle (*Spizaetus isidori*) is found all across the Andes, from northeastern Colombia to the north of Argentina (Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001) and is one of the most threatened raptors in all of its distribution range.

By Santiago Zuluaga Castañeda, Biologist and Alex Ospina Restrepo, Master Falconer

Both from the Centro de Rehabilitación de Aves Rapaces San Isidro (CRARSI), Colombia



## black and chestnut eagle colombia project



Because it is found in low population densities and has high territory requirements - with an estimated 10,000 hectares of mature forest needed to maintain a viable pair (Thiollay 1991) - it is considered to be one of the most sensitive raptors due to the fragmentation and degradation of its habitat.

Thiollay (1989) states that habitat loss is the greatest threat to these species. However, it is also affected by the high voltage lines and poachers (Córdoba-Córdoba et al. 2008). Additionally, the juveniles of this species easily acquire the habit of hunting poultry and domestic mammals, causing conflicts in rural communities making them susceptible to being injured or killed with relative ease (Márquez & Renjifo 2002; Córdoba-Córdoba et al. 2008). Because this species requires large areas of land with mature forest in good condition, (Strewe 1999, Márquez & Renjifo 2002) it is considered an “umbrella species”, so by preserving and protecting this eagle, we are also protecting many other wildlife species of interest.

This is a species considered Vulnerable by BirdLife International and the IUCN, is cited in Appendix II of CITES and resolution number 383 of February 23, 2010 (which are declared by wild species are threatened in the Colombian territory) (MAVDT 2010) and belongs to the group of birds of priority conservation in several National Parks and wildlife sanctuaries. However, today there are few conservation measures that focus on solving problems that this species is faced with rural communities, biological knowledge is still scarce and needs more research efforts (Zuluaga 2012).

The urgency of implementing measures for the conservation of the Black-and-chestnut Eagle relies on its small population that qualifies as ‘Endangered’ in Colombia (Márquez & Renjifo 2002). Due to their strong preference for natural forest of great extension and their preference of medium and high mountains. Starting effective initiatives to understand its biology, preserving



Alex Ospina and an Isidori Eagle



its habitat and mitigating its threats are essential. Places that are exposed to human activities such as farming, agricultural production, expansion of urban development and pollution, among others. The objective of this proposal is to increase the biological and ecological knowledge on Black-and-chestnut Eagle and mitigate threats by hunting to which this species is faced in Colombia.

At CRARSI we work with the captivity Isidori eagles trying to reproduce them. A high number of individuals that have come to the CRARSI are juveniles. The observations of their nests in natural forests let us know that their principal source of alimentation is chicken bred by farmers. When the juveniles leave their nest, they attack these chickens and are captured by the farmers. After that, the eagle can be killed or left in captivity by these farmers. In CRARSI we have made educational campaigns for the preservation of this eagle. However, our economical resources don't let us reach our preservation goal of this eagle. Colombia has suffered a big deforestation, affecting the Isidori's habitat.

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Due to the heroic efforts of the falconry community, dedicated biologists, state and federal agencies and numerous wildlife organizations, the populations of wild peregrines recovered to a level allowing wild take by falconers again in 2009. It was on a Texas beach during the fall migration of 2010 that one such migrant began her intimate association with falconry.

I was also on my annual migration, fleeing the chill of the Rocky Mountain winters, pursuing ducks and grouse along the way. A good friend and fellow falconer, Dave Allen shared with me that a local falconer had been drawn in the peregrine permit lottery, 36 permits nationally, ten for the state of Texas, six to residents and four to nonresidents. This falconer was a novice longwinger. Due to a lack of suitable quarry and his time restraints, he was contemplating releasing his falcon. Dave convinced him otherwise. I just happened to be in the right place at the right time. It was early February with a week left in the Texas duck season, soon I was headed north to Oklahoma for ten days of duck hawking. Next I was up to Kansas to finish off the last two weeks of their 2011 duck season followed by wrapping up the year with three weeks of grouse hawking in Nebraska. Texas is a very LARGE state, and I was looking at a six hour drive to pick up the falcon from Dave. My drive to meet Dave was an imagination free for all. I was soon to find out I was the undisputed self-elected "Ambassador of Fantasy Land"!

The hot date I was eager to meet turned out to be an emaciated blonde with major baggage. I seriously contemplated not accepting her. I was flying two accomplished game hawks at the time and the last thing I needed was a rehab project. After a very long, difficult time of thought, contemplation and more emotion than I care to admit, I decided to take her. The last several years of my life had been rough ones and I too was a second hand soul in need of a lucky break. Had it not been for the support and encouragement of my friends, I would still be facing a similar uphill climb. Do unto others... right!

As they say, the rest is history. Like so many of life's challenges, falconry included, it seems that fear and ignorance try to obscure my vision. Surrounding myself with honest, caring friends has proven a sure fire way to navigate the obstacles. I've invited a few of those friends to share with you the incredible blessing I call Twiggy. Enjoy!

Right: Twiggy in immature plumage

# Passage Tundra

by Steve Duffy

**In 1970 the Arctic peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus tundrius*) was listed as endangered. The Tundra peregrines that migrated through the lower U.S. from northern Alaska, Canada and Greenland to Central and South America were prized and cherished visitors. The fortunate falconers with the resources, contacts, and skill to trap the immature "passage beach birds" or "blonde birds" as they were affectionately called, experienced an era that we all thought would be retired to a chapter in falconry history. Fortunately we were wrong.**

## Rick Sharpe: "Beach Birds"

This moniker evokes many memories or desires. For some, it is to the past and their favorite Tundra Peregrine. For others, like me and many of my contemporaries, it denotes a falcon that for many years was unobtainable. Fortunately federal regulations are beginning to catch up with biological reality, these falcons have become available again.

I finally had a chance to see one of these falcons fly when Steve Duffy stopped in for a visit. After trial and error, Duffy found that his best option to condition his secondhand falcon, Twiggy, was to reward and recover her with bagged game served

as she mounted up and away.

We found a small pond with just two ducks giving Duffy a chance to provide Twiggy with her first "falconry" slip at a wild duck. As the wind and thermals pushed her up and out, I wondered if she would ever make it back from downwind. Quite a few tense moments later she came sliding back across the sky to a position near us, Twiggy stooped from a 500-foot pitch. Her choice between the Drake Mallard and Ring-necked duck was obvious. The Ring-neck attempted to circle back but Twiggy knocked it down before it could splash in. After a big feed, and emptying out, she was ready for her next slip.



Rick Sharpe

Two days later, on the last day of duck season, what started as a windy afternoon soon mellowed into a nearly calm sunset. Luckily, there were ducks on the pond and just enough daylight remaining to attempt a flight. As Duffy made his way to get below the pond's dike to flush three Redhead ducks, Twiggy cranked into a slight breeze, rapidly gaining height, but a long distance from the pond. Before he could get into position, a Hen Mallard flushed from the back of the pond. Without hesitation Twiggy started her long-angled stoop. With the aid of her 750-foot pitch and some really hard pumping, she eventually closed a seemingly impossible gap. As she disappeared down the draw, the vibrant sunset colors and the howling of coyotes had us scrambling.

Once we located her on the duck, and the adrenaline driven breathlessness subsided, all I could do was say, "for a second duck kill that was really impressive!"

After watching this flight, it was evident that this falcon was special. Twiggy had landed in experienced hands that would offer her the chance to develop to her fullest potential and become one of the legendary Beach Birds of our time.

## Ed Pitcher: Ace In The Hole

In January of 2013 I was at a THA meet in Waco, Texas. I joined Duffy for a couple mornings of duck hawking. He was flying 'Hemi', a seven-year-old tiercel gyr/peregrine hybrid and a three-year-old female passage Tundra Peregrine named 'Twiggy'. She is truly an Ace-In-The-Hole,

Right: Ed Pitcher



often see with wild caught falcons. Passage falcons can be much more difficult to manage because of their 'wildness'. They seem to realize that they do not need the falconer and the 'trust' issue can be intimidating to the falconer. When a captive raised falcon leaves the fist and makes a long outrun to begin its climb into the sky it is much easier to wait and see what is going to happen. When a passage falcon leaves the fist and begins to climb away the question of her intent creeps into the mind of the falconer. Is she leaving or just adding her style to the opportunity she has become accustomed to? At this point the falcon trusts the falconer to do his job, she just wants to add drama to the flight. The falconer on the other hand lacks trust and tries to control the falcon out of fear of loosing her. Duffy and I had several conversations in this regard and I encouraged him to relax and continue to add weight to Twiggy's increasing dimensions. By her third season she was flying at or above trapped weight.

The two mornings I was able to watch both Hemi and Twiggy fly at ducks were just simply "great falconry". The Texas morning temperatures in January were in the high 50's and by ten in the morning the temperature was approaching the low 70's. With these conditions, Duffy liked to fly at first light. Twiggy was up to fly and was released once her telemetry was beeping and her footgear removed. We began the trek to the pond with dog at heel. Duffy uses a German Wirehaired pointer as both a pointing dog and a flushing dog. 'Eins' is well trained and very helpful in the field. Unlike hybrids, Peregrines do not typically



Painting of Twigg by Marc Ellett

mount directly over the falconer but instead take an outrun climbing away as if to leave the area. Out about a quarter mile Twigg made her first climbing turn and continued to go skyward until her height and distance required binoculars. Duffy trusted my judgment and got into position to flush the ducks even though he had lost sight of Twigg. A large flock of ducks consisting of several species, Pintails, Gadwalls, Mallards, Widgeon and others were all mixed and swirling about as I watched Twigg speed across the sky while at the same time continuing to increase her pitch. Still climbing, she passed over the ducks, the entire flock turned under her heading for a distant pond. Once the ducks were committed and flying at top speeds Twigg launched a stoop away from the fleeing ducks. At the bottom of her stoop she did the 'J' thing and using her momentum sling-bladed through a small flock of Northern Shovelers. She simply bound to a hen and took it to the ground. As we approached she reached down and gave the fatal bite into the neck of the duck. Crimson beads began flowing cleanly off the plumage of the duck and I watched as the duck's head fell limp to the ground, Twigg fed up. Duffy uses the term "a fine dinning experience"\* to describe the meal following a kill. It's a great term.

This was the first passage Tundra I had seen flown in over twenty years and it was well done. Falconry is much more than just catching game with a trained hawk. It's about relationships and the opportunity to share time with falcons and friends.

\*I) Duffy appropriated this expression from Dave Cherry.

#### Marc Ellett: Twigg and Her Team

First of all, I would like to say that I was honored when Duffy asked me to

contribute to an article about Twigg. Twigg is of course the perfection that all falconidae represent in the phylogeny of raptors, however early on she began to show something that was not easy to relate using the common adjectives of our sport. It was not quantifiable in respect to the number of quarry taken, or in the normal sense of evaluating the progress of a peregrine as a falconry bird. For the past two seasons I have been able to watch Twigg develop Duffy, myself, an overweight schnauzer named Max Moose, an impeccable GWP bitch named Eins into her perfect team. Twigg is a unique sort of creature, no matter the situation she always adapts and if not for her support team, would probably bat a thousand. My family was at one time involved in horse racing, in fact my mother ran a horse in the Kentucky Derby. I was weaned on stories about the great Secretariat. The past two years I have bent Duffy's ear about Secretariat to the point where I think his left ear is sort of floppy now, it adds to his charm. A great sports writer once said that "Secretariat's chief problem in life was that he had been handled by people, had he had been handled by something other than flawed human beings he would have been undefeated. Twigg has the same handicap, although I will say with great prejudice Duffy gets in the way less than any falconer I have ever flown with and that has resulted in Twigg being able to show us what flight to prey is all about.

I had difficulty picking out one flight to share, because with her avian intelligence and adaptability there have been so many. I settled for a flight which took place early in her history with the team. We have a pond nicknamed the "Too Many Duck Pond".....nice name huh? We observed about 300 Pintails bumping into each other

on this small pond. As I recall it was cold for a central Texas day, with little wind. Duffy released Twigg and she promptly mounted up around 1000 feet; we moved in for the flush. The team prepared itself for the charge. Max Moose ready to do his consummate belly flop, while Eins moved with her long stride ready to arch into the air gracefully gliding into the pond as she always does, the moment our heads appeared over the top of the dam 300+ sprigs launched into the air simultaneously, like one giant ball of bait fish, with an incredible explosion of sound. Both dogs just stopped frozen in their tracks and stared transfixed by the magnitude of energy, sound and movement. Observing from her lofty perspective Twigg delayed her stoop until the biomass had dissipated somewhat. Then you could hear that rush, she came in a classical stoop, intersecting with a drake Pintail at least 100 feet directly above the pond. It was either dead instantly or knocked unconscious and started to fall to the water, Twigg immediately snapped into an inside barrel roll again intersecting and binding to the drake, then gently, almost lazily she flew it across the pond to solid ground. Later as we stood over her I said, "Did you see that? She's done that before!!", Duffy had this huge grin and nodded agreement, I was literally shaking, the rest of the team had not even gotten wet.

There are times in life that God, no matter your definition of term, shows us that spirit, soul, courage and intelligence are not just the domain of man, in fact perhaps it's just that all of those things are "peregrine". Thanks Duffy for being a great friend, and for allowing Max and I to be part of Twigg's team.

#### John Graham: Classic Flight

I have had the pleasure of going out duck hawking with Steve Duffy for a number of years now. Twigg the passage tundra falcon that Duffy has in his charge is the epitome of consistency. Every time Twigg is in the air you can count on her always being upwind with a great pitch waiting for Duffy to live up to his end of the bargain.

A classic flight I got to witness, the best I have seen from her to date, was when my wife and I traveled down to visit Duffy, Dave Allen and Marc Ellett. Marc and Duffy had secured some fantastic ranch property, a lot of it was planted in winter wheat. There were small perfect tanks\* out in the middle of these wheat fields full of ducks. We just kept driving by one great

set up to the next great set up and I was wondering why weren't we flying any of these?

Finally Duffy came to the tank\* he wanted to put Twigg on that morning. It was a beautiful clear day with not much wind at all. The tank was loaded with pintails, mallards, and gadwalls. There was easily a hundred plus ducks on this fairly small tank way out in this wheat field with only a couple of trees at the water's edge. The ducks would have to fly a good distance before having a chance to escape the wrath of Twigg. The walk out to this tank was a solid ¼ of a mile tromping through the wheat field. About half way to the tank Duffy had released Twigg. Now it was time to seriously move at a much faster pace as it never takes Twigg long to be in the perfect position and a pitch of 800' plus. As Duffy, Dave and Eins raced down the remaining distance bent half over to keep the ducks from seeing them I decided for once I was going to go about half way and sit back to watch the show in its entirety. With "Team Twigg" closing in and a tank packed full of ducks this was going to be an easy flush.

Twigg was ringing up fast just upwind of the tank. She was 800' or so up with the flushers still making their way to the tank. Twigg was all business as usual. She continued to pump upwind of the tank climbing still higher, just at a slower pace. It was just a minute later when the ducks exploded off the tank. As the ducks lifted off Twigg was still slowly climbing. In the past it seemed like she was stooping as we worked the ducks off the tank, but being able to sit back and watch I realized she was waiting.

It was obvious the ducks didn't want to leave the safety of this tank. Finally a small group of ducks headed down wind. During this time it, seemed like maybe a minute for this to happen, Twigg was in perfect position waiting for them to make the fatal error. When a small group of ducks committed to leaving the safety of the tank, Twigg streaked above the fleeing ducks, not losing any of her pitch, she rolled over and did a nearly perfect vertical stoop cutting out a hen mallard in a picture perfect flight. The way the duck fell towards the earth after the hit you could tell it was lifeless. Twigg made a huge pitch over and landed on her duck. To put it simply, it was a longwingers classic flight.

\*tank is Texas speak for a man made earthen pond typically used for watering cattle.



Steve Duffy with Twigg and Eins

#### Season Finale: Steve Duffy

Last seasons culmination was especially rewarding for both Twigg and I. We would be finishing up hawking grouse in Nebraska. It was the first time I felt she was in top shape and the weather cooperated enough to find her a grouse slip. The first two slips she went way out and way up assuming we were duck hawking however after a couple of days of grouse busting and frustrating tail chases she soon realized.....It's a new game, with new rules.

On her third slip she smacked down a Greater Prairie Chicken, I was ecstatic, unfortunately so was my buddy's dog. Good ole Amber charged right in and blew the disoriented grouse out while Twigg was mounting furiously slightly out of position. Another lesson learned by both of us. The next day, slip four resulted in a solid hit, a puff of feathers and a lesson in turbo charged Prairie Chickens. Her learning curve was steep, another good meal but not a quality dinning experience.

As so often happens a spring storm was headed our way. We had spent several days stuck in grouse camp between the aforementioned slips and prayed we would get one more day of flying before the storm hit. The next morning winds were getting stiff, no dark clouds yet and we still had a good high ceiling. Our gear was broken

down and packed up. Our prayers were answered.... We were able to locate a group of Prairie Chickens and get Twigg in the air. This time however she stayed tighter, only went up to about 800-900 ft. and positioned herself slightly up wind. It was a bottom of the ninth, bases loaded play and she knocked it out of the park! Once we flushed the grouse we realized that there was a Sharp Tailed grouse in with the chickens, Twigg instantly saw the opportunity and took her first grouse. After a VERY high quality dinning experience we loaded up and started the trek to the mews, another season over and high hopes for the next.

As you can see there is nothing typical about Twigg's flight style. When given an opportunity to fly quarry she utilizes any and all of the elements available to maximize her chances of success. If a high speed smack seems appropriate it is delivered with style and finesse, if binding is necessary so be it. Numerous times we have watched as she flew up and out directly into the sun. I soon learned that this was an intentional maneuver to conceal her presence from all creatures great and small. By striving to providing successful opportunities that build her confidence and rewarding her in a natural manner Twigg has developed into a falcon that greatly exceeds any ability I may have to "train" her. ♦

# veterinary: the toxic effect of ingested lead shot pellets by captive falcons

by L Molnar

## Summary

Paper summarising clinical experience with treating lead poisoning in hunting falcons used in Middle East falconry.

In years 1999 and 2001 85 falcons expected to be exposed to shotgun lead pellets were tested for lead poisoning. Tested falcons were saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*), peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*), gyr falcons (*Falco rusticolus*) and their captive bred hybrids. Positive cases were confirmed by:

- 1) Present of radio dense heavy metal particles in gastro-intestinal tract,
- 2) Elevated whole blood lead (Pb) level,
- 3) Inhibited delta-aminolevulinic acid dehydratase (ALAD) activity.

32% of all tested falcons were negative on lead poisoning. 52% were sub clinical cases with elevated whole blood Pb level or decreased ALAD activity. 16% of the falcons had severe symptoms of lead poisoning. Radiogram only in seven falcons (8.5%) showed heavy metal particles in ventriculus. Very good treatment success was achieved with repeated (2-3 times) regime of 5% CaEDTA (Calciumedetate), ANIMALCARE (35 mg/kg TID or 50 mg/kg BID) for 5 days. In very severe cases when ALAD activity was 100% inhibited and blood Pb level exceeded 100 µg/dl, 80-100 mg/kg EDTA i.v. with 20 ml Lactated Ringers solution for 5 days markedly reduced the blood Pb level and the clinical symptoms. The falcons fully recovered and performed very well as a falconry birds.

## Introduction

Lead poisoning is a well-known problem in different species of wild waterfowls, swans or scavenging - sanitary raptors like eagles, condors (KRAMER and REDIG, 1997). The most common sources of lead are ingested lead shots from shotgun cartridges used in game bird hunting. From the raptors the most affected are

the sanitary species which ingesting lead shots from the bodies of wounded or killed carcasses (SAITO, 1997). Lead poisoning in wild falcons is very rare and is exclusively related to a captive management. In the Middle East the falconry is an ancient cultural heritage and still large number of falcons are kept in captivity. The usual food source are farm bred pigeons, quails, day old chicks or rats. Some of the falconers believe that they can improve the performance ability by providing "better" quality food. This is a reason to feed falcons with shotgun shot birds. Falcons often regurgitate the lead shots with the daily cast together with the undigestible parts of food (feathers, bones), but small sized pellets (1-2 mm) can stay longer time (few days or even weeks) in the ventriculus, especially when casting material is absent in the diet. Sub clinical lead poisoning due to repeated exposure and ingestion of lead shots is a common veterinary problem, which reducing performance ability and affecting the health of falcons used for falconry.

## Toxic effect of lead

Lead is not a biogenic element. It is considered to be hemotoxic, neurotoxic, nephrotoxic and immunotoxic. In organism lead inhibits different enzymes by its binding affinity to sulfhydryl (SH-) groups. From the clinical point of view main diagnostic values have its hematotoxic

abilities (SCHEUHAMMER, 1987). Lead causes microcytic hypo chromic anemias in chronic exposures. The following enzymes incorporated to the cascade of haemoglobin synthesis are inhibited (PAGLIUCA et al., 1990):

- 1) ALAD (delta-aminolevulinic acid dehydratase),
- 2) Ferrochelatase,
- 3) Uroporphyrin and protoporphyrin dehydratase,
- 4) Pyrimidin-5-nucleotidase.

As the effect of lead, activity of ALAD is decreased and its substrate, ALA (aminolevulinic acid), concentration is increased in the blood. The enzyme ferrochelatase is also inhibited. Ferrochelatase is responsible for incorporation of iron molecule (Fe<sup>3+</sup>) into porphyrin cycle. As result of this inhibition in the acute cases the concentration of Fe<sup>3+</sup> and also free porphyrins are increasing in the blood.

## Materials and methods

Tested falcons were presented for routine clinical examination with different complaints. Most often the owner noticed decreased performance, muscle weakness, reduced appetite or constant weight loss even during excess feeding. In most severe cases greenish discoloration of urine, crop stasis and seizures were presented. The CNS symptoms manifest usually after short-term exercise for only 0.5-2 minutes.



Clinical Symptoms	0	+	++	+++
Pb (µg/dl)	0-5	5-15	15-40	40<
ALAD (U/dl)	50-30	30-10	10-2	2-0

Table 1: Relation of blood Pb<sup>2+</sup> level and ALAD activity from the intensity of clinical symptoms

The most typical symptom of acute lead poisoning with markedly increased blood Pb level was disvocalisation. The falcons during exhalation vocalised a "ka-ka-ka-ka" -like voice. Endoscopic examination of the trachea revealed a narrowed lumen of the syrinx due to decreased tension of the external tympanic membrane. In cases where radiologic examination showed metallic, radiodense particles in the ventriculus the falcon was anaesthetised with Isofurane and the particles were flushed out using 5mm and 30 cm long gastric tube and 60 ml warm water. From all falcons with mentioned symptoms or anamnesis data confirming a possible lead shot ingestion 1.5-2.5ml whole blood was collected from the metatarsal vein. The blood tubes contained CaEDTA as anticoagulant, because 90% of circulating lead is in the red blood cells. 0.5 ml unclothed blood was sufficient for blood Pb<sup>2+</sup> detection using GFAAS (graphite furnace atomic absorption spectrometry) techniques. As additional tests CBC, RBC, Fe, Hb and ALAD activity was detected. For the determination of ALAD activity using the method of MODER (1983) 0.3 ml of whole blood was essential. The test is based on the reaction of haemolysed blood and aminolevulinic acid (ALA) as substrate. The product of the reaction is porfobilinogen which quantity is detected by spectrophotometer. ALAD is a very unstable enzyme and fast detection of its activity is necessary. Pb<sup>2+</sup> and ALA are very stable substances in the blood and samples can be stored for a long time. In cases positive for lead poisoning, treatment was initialised with intramuscularly injections of 10% CaEDTA, 35 mg/kg TID or 50 mg/kg BID for five days. If seizures or vocalisation was presented CaEDTA 80-100 mg/kg SID was used intravenously with 20 ml of Lactated Ringers solution for 5 days. The same time in all treated cases daily 60 ml oral fluids and 0.2 ml/kg i.m. hemoplastic vitamin - amino

acids injection Hemo 15, STERIVET Canada were administered as part of supportive therapy. 10-14 days after five days treatment regime the patient was reevaluated. If blood Pb level was still high and ALAD activity did not increased markedly, the CaEDTA treatment regime was repeated.

## Results and Discussion

Blood Pb level and activity of ALAD were used as indicators of lead poisoning as well as markers of efficiency of detoxifying treatment. In falcons with known history that were never exposed to lead, blood lead level was very low 0.5-2g/dl (0.005-0.02 ppm) and ALAD activities were in range 30-50U/dl. If lead exposure occurred, ALAD activity was inhibited within 2-3 days. In most severe cases activity were 100% inhibited (0 U/dl detected level) and correlated with 60 g/dl Pb level and above. The highest detected blood levels were 308g/dl, 240g/dl and 172g/dl. In our experience blood Pb<sup>2+</sup> level did not correlate with the clinical symptoms of lead poisoning in all treated cases and did not reflect the whole body Pb<sup>2+</sup> content. A single injection of CaEDTA can significantly reduce the blood Pb<sup>2+</sup> levels. This decrease is temporary and Pb level will rise up again within few days. The inhibition of ALAD activity correlates with clinical symptoms. In our clinical experience the blood lead level did not correlate with total amount of absorbed lead. 10-14 days after the termination of CaEDTA treatment the blood Pb level is rising up again. The reason is that CaEDTA chelates the lead only from the blood and lead is release from organs and interstitial tissue. As a good indicator of recovery is when ALAD activity rise above 20-25 U/l with it simultaneous blood lead level decrease. Other haematological indicators as Hb, RBC indices show changes only after chronic, high dose exposure and are not suitable to monitor sub clinical



patients. The absorbed lead circulates in blood for about 25-30 days. Then starts a slow deposition into the bones (see Table 1).

In three cases after a long period of sub clinical lead exposure falcons started to show symptoms similar to lead poisoning (vocalisation, seizures, reduced ALAD activity). All three falcons had a history to be fed with mutton and goat meat, which are low in calcium. We expect that a long-term low calcium diet can induce calcium release from the bones and the same time release of Pb<sup>2+</sup> deposits can cause recurrent lead poisoning. Repeated intravenous administration of CaEDTA even in higher dose (80-100 mg) did not have any nephrotoxic side effect, especially if sufficient rehydration was provided. If treatment is 2-3 times repeated it is a very effective way to treat lead poisoning in falcons. The birds can fully recover and well perform. The parallel blood sampling for detecting blood Pb level and ALAD activity provides more exact prognostic information's to evaluate the patient and monitor efficiency of treatment. The exposure time and the total amount of absorbed lead are the factors responsible for sudden onset of clinical symptoms related to lead poisoning in falcons.

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# FALCONRY INTRODUCED INTO THE LAND OF THE ELEPHANT

The Thai people have a long history with the elephant called *chang Thai*, throughout the country. The ancient kings of Siam used elephants to ride into the battlefield, and the numbers of elephants the king had showed the power of the king.



And kings were looking for white elephants similar to the Japanese *Shogun* looking for white goshawks almost at the same period. But somehow no falconry has been introduced into Thailand until recently. We don't know the reason but the hot climate throughout the year and the landscape with deep rainforest must be unsuitable for most forms of falconry. Furthermore, the people have an abundance of food all the year round, so they just didn't need such a complicated method of hunting using trained live birds to catch their food. In any case there was no record of falconry in Thailand until this century.

However in the last few years, under the influence of the internet, some people started falconry after watching videos on YouTube to learn and imitate what they had seen of falconry world-wide. In reality nobody knew anything much about hunting with falcons until they were fortunate enough to meet with Mr. Hidetoshi Ishibashi about five years ago. Mr. Ishibashi is a Japanese company owner working both in Japan and Thailand. Mr. Saknarong Sakulyoenyong, president of

Falconwing Thailand WFC said, after recovering from the Asian Crisis of 1997-1998, the Thai economy has been dramatically growing every year and the people's life has also changed to be able to introduce many forms of western culture and various hobbies, then we organized a group of falconers five years ago. In the last five years a total of 115 falcons were imported mostly from the UK with all legal documentation, and now today there are four falconry groups, in total 90 people in Thailand as follows:-

- Falconwing Thailand WFC
- Thaihawk Master
- AT Falconry
- Hawkingshop Thailand

The hunting season in Thailand is between September to March, so they are now busy training with lures in the morning before the temperature goes up. And by cooperating with Thai and Japanese falconers, Mr. Ishibashi has opened a new company for bird infestation problems in industrial sites around Thailand, he believes that more and more people will start falconry in Thailand in the future and they will attend IAF meeting someday. ♦

...the people have an abundance of food all the year round, so they just didn't need such a complicated method of hunting using trained live birds to catch their food. In any case there was no record of falconry in Thailand until this century.



Relevant side events are also held with COP. The last conference was the eleventh meeting as COP11 at Hyderabad (India) from 8 to 19 October 2012. COP12 will be held in Korea during Autumn 2014 (date and venue is not fixed at the moment). In the COP11, participants totalled 9000, from government bodies and related organizations from 172 nations. And a total of 33 decisions and 125 documents were released.

#### Relevant matters to IAF in CBD

IAF activities are related to main objective 1, 2 and Article 10 of CBD such as conservation of biological diversity (birds of prey, quarries and their habitat) and the sustainable use of wild resources through falconry. In the case of latest COP11, Decision XI/25 is also a relevant matter as sustainable wildlife management through falconry. It is linked to Aichi Biodiversity Targets that was one of decision in COP10 (Nagoya, Japan 2008) and the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines that was adopted at COP7 (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 2004). "Aichi" in the title of Aichi Biodiversity Target means prefecture name in Japan which includes Nagoya city and the surrounding area.

#### Article 10 Sustainable Use of Components of Biological Diversity

Clause (a)-(e) are included in the article. The following clauses are related to IAF activities.

(c) Protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements.

(e) Encourage cooperation between its governmental authorities and its private sector in developing methods for sustainable use of biological resources.

# approach to the Convention on Biological Diversity

by Keiya Nakajima



**The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was established in 1993 with 42 Articles and 3 Annexes to achieve following 3 main objectives. Currently, it is concluded with 193 parties of national level.**

1. The conservation of biological diversity.
2. The sustainable use of the components of biological diversity.
3. The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

**The Conference of the Parties (COP) is a general meeting for CBD that is held every two years. Various decisions and documents are released after the discussion at COP to carry out CBD.**

#### Decision XI/25 Sustainable use of biodiversity: bushmeat and sustainable wildlife management

It consists of 15 items and 19 Annex. And, following texts are related to IAF activities.

##### *The Conference of the Parties*

Emphasizing that sustainable use of biodiversity is a precondition to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

*Acknowledging* the importance of the work on the application of sustainable use carried



Conserving birds of prey, their quarry species and their habitats

out by international organizations, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Tropical Timber Organization, and under relevant conventions and international agreements,

10. *Notes with appreciation* the support afforded to the work of the Liaison Group on Bushmeat by the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the Central African Forests Commission, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Great Apes Survival Partnership (led by the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the Center for International Forestry Research, the Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network (TRAFFIC) and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation;

13. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to:

(a) Consistent with national needs and priorities, make use of the recommendations of the Liaison Group on Bushmeat annexed to this decision, as appropriate and as a potential complement to the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines, taking into account Article 10(c) of the Convention and national legislation;

(e) Develop and promote methods and systems, and build capacity and community awareness to determine sustainable wildlife harvest levels at national and other levels, with a particular view to monitoring and improving sustainable wildlife management and customary sustainable use, consistent with national legislation;

#### Annex

Revised recommendations of the Convention on Biological Diversity Liaison Group on Bushmeat

3. *Rights and tenure, and traditional knowledge:* Access, rights and associated accountability, as well as the responsibility to sustainably manage wildlife resources, should be transferred whenever possible to indigenous and local communities and other local stakeholders who have a vested interest in maintaining these resources and who can deliver sustainable, desirable solutions. The capacities of these empowered indigenous and local communities should be built and strengthened to ensure that they have the capacity to exercise these rights. Conservation and sustainable use of wildlife resources would be enhanced through the incorporation of traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use into management and monitoring systems, as well as by favouring the use of the most ecologically friendly (e.g. species-specific), cost-efficient and humane hunting methods.

4. *Review of national policies and legal frameworks:* States where bushmeat species occur are strongly encouraged to review existing policies and legal frameworks related

to the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife. In addition to restricting harvesting in protected areas and of threatened species in accordance with existing legislation, it is recommended that States establish strategies, policies, capacity, and management systems that support the legal and sustainable hunting of targeted species. The review should ensure:

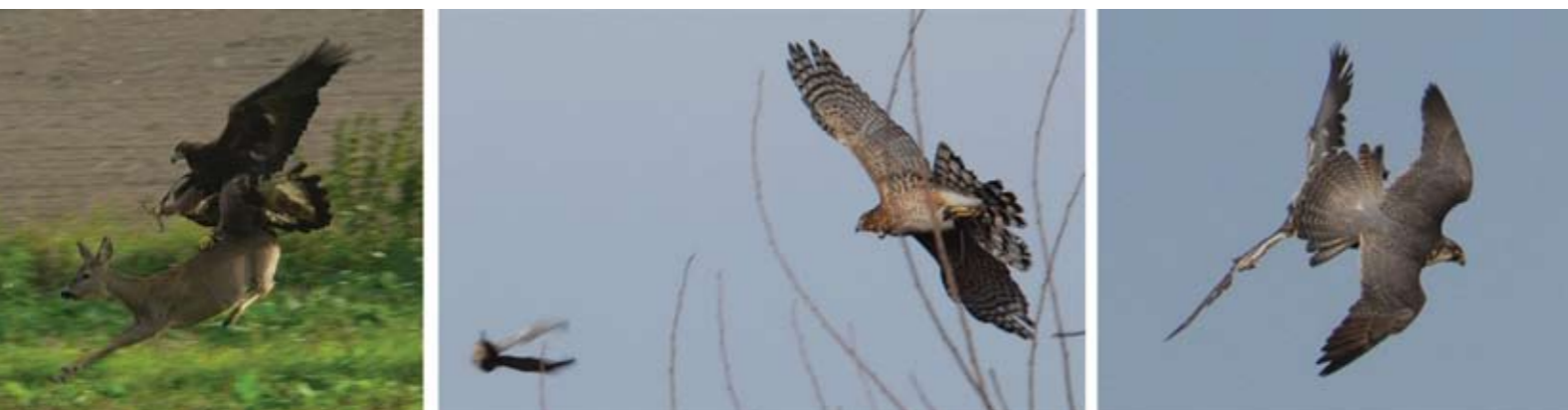
(g) The full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, and include their views and proposals based on traditional knowledge, customary practices and laws;

6. *Science, traditional and indigenous knowledge and monitoring.* Management decisions should be made based on the best available and applicable science, the precautionary approach and the practices and traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities. Further research is crucial and better information management is needed. Appropriate monitoring systems of bushmeat harvest and trade and wildlife habitats should be developed based on an integration of traditional, indigenous and scientific knowledge and implemented at national level, and allow for comparability of bushmeat harvest and trade at the regional level. International support and guidance should be provided for harmonization of monitoring and reporting. Standardized methods to assess and monitor the status of wildlife populations should be developed and implemented. New, updated and additional reliable data on populations of harvested species and on levels of use and trade should be made available for consideration within the Convention on Biological Diversity – Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (CBD SBSTTA), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Animals Committee, the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) Scientific Council, other relevant international conventions, the Great Apes Survival Partnership led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-GRASP) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red Listing Process.

#### Aichi Biodiversity Targets

It consists of following five strategic goals with a total of 20 targets to prevent the loss of biological diversity as urgent measures. Target 12 is related to IAF activities.

**Goal A:** Address the underlying causes of



The sustainable use of wildlife with falconry tradition

Biological systems and the economic and social factors that can affect the sustainability of use of biological diversity are highly variable. It is not possible to have knowledge of all aspects of such systems before a use of biological diversity begins



COP 10, 2010 held in Japan

biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society

**Goal B:** Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use

**Goal C:** To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

**Goal D:** Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services

**Goal E:** Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building

Target 12 on Goal C

By 2020, the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained.

#### Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines

It consists of 14 practical principles and items on each principle for the sustainable use of biodiversity to provide the framework for assisting government, local communities, resource managers, the private sector and other stakeholders. Practical principle 4(a) is related to IAF activities.

Practical principle 4 Adaptive management should be practiced, based on:

- (a) Science and traditional and local knowledge;
- (b) Iterative, timely and transparent feedback derived from monitoring the use, environmental, socio-economic impacts, and the status of the resource being used; and
- (c) Adjusting management based on timely feedback from the monitoring procedures.

### Information of expenses

#### Entry to COP

The host country supports basic cost to the participants of the conference. Entry fee is not required to the representative of organization after the approval by CBD secretariat. Transportation to the venue is also supported. Accommodation fee is not supported.

#### Entry to side event

An entry fee is required to the exhibitor. It is depended on the content of the event:

*Case of COP10 (Japan, 2010)*

The exhibitor fee was 120,000 JPY (927 Euro)/9.7 square meters area for the period of COP10 (11 days). In the case of poster display, the charge was not required to keep the panel. Table for flyer was also prepared without charge, but they were shared for all participants. It was impossible to keep individual space on the table.

The Japan Falconiformes Center held the forum to introduce conservation works with falconry technique at the interactive fair for biodiversity that was held with COP10. In this case, exhibitor fee was not required, because our plan was approved for the suitable program on the event. In the forum, event hall (280 seats/590 square meters) was provided for 2 hours without the charge. Total expenses were 265,000 JPY (2,046 Euro) to complete the forum. In the expenses, 230,000 JPY (1,774 Euro) was the charge of simultaneous interpreting service. Remainder 35,000 JPY (270 Euro) was cost of poster (1050 copies), flyer (1000 copies) and payment to temporary staff.

*Case of COP11 (India, 2012)*

The exhibitor fee was 1,800 USD (1,380 Euro)/9 square meters area for the period of COP11 (2 weeks). Another information is not clear.

#### Rationale

Biological systems and the economic and social factors that can affect the sustainability of use of biological diversity are highly variable. It is not possible to have knowledge of all aspects of such systems before a use of biological diversity begins. Therefore, it is necessary for the management to monitor the effects of that use and allow adjustment of the use as appropriate, including modification, and if necessary suspension of unsustainable practices. In this context, it is preferable to use all sources of information about a resource when deciding how it can be used. In many societies traditional and local knowledge has led to much use of biological diversity being sustainable over long time-periods without detriment to the environment or the resource. Incorporation of such knowledge into modern use systems can do much to avoid inappropriate use and enhance sustainable use of components of biodiversity.

#### Operational guidelines

1. Ensure that for particular uses adaptive management schemes are in place;
2. Require adaptive management plans to incorporate systems to generate sustainable revenue, where the benefits go to indigenous and local communities and local stakeholders to support successful implementation;
3. Provide extension assistance in setting up and maintaining monitoring and feedback systems;
4. Include clear descriptions of their adaptive management system, which includes means to assess uncertainties;
5. Respond quickly to unsustainable practices;
6. Design monitoring system on a temporal scale sufficient to ensure that information about the status of the resource and ecosystem is available to inform management decisions to ensure that the resource is conserved;
7. When using traditional and local knowledge, ensure that approval of the holder of that knowledge has been obtained.

#### The Approach of the IAF to CBD

Correspondence to CBD is performed by each nation (government body). IAF cannot keep the seat for high-level ministerial segment as representative of the parties at COP. But, we can attend to COP as observer, and we can approach to interested parties or leading persons for our benefit. The side event with COP is also opened to various organizations. Actually, IUCN and CIC held the events to promote their activities. In the COP10 on 2010, IAF joined to side event by CIC, and Bill Heinrich and Prof. Robert Kenward had a presentation for falconry, conservation of birds of prey and sustainable use of wildlife. If IAF has a presentation or event at future COP, it will be good opportunity to introduce IAF activities to government bodies, interested parties, another organizations and media in the world.

COP12 on 2014 will be an important meeting at which progress in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets would be reviewed. Falconer's activities will be suitable example for the objective of Aichi Biodiversity Target 12 (e.g. recovery of Peregrine population in North America, conservation of injured birds of prey, prevention of electrocution). U.A.E. also has great project to conserve Saker falcon and Houbara Bustard. Currently, CBD secretariat does not seek the result of the achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. If they start to invite the result for COP12, it will be good

opportunity for IAF to promote falconer's works.

In the side event of COP12, it will be difficult to make a big event by IAF only, because there is a limit to our fund. But, poster display or distribution of brochure will be effective on various events with COP. IAF has already suitable materials for past event or display. Cooperation event with CIC and FACE will also produce good effect on our common benefit. Details of side event of COP12 are not clear at the moment. We should check the announcement from CBD secretariat or authorities of host country. Information of COP12 is released by official website of CBD. It is also possible to make personal account through CBD registration website. In this case, the information is sent from CBD secretariat by e-mail.

IAF is member of IUCN. It is an important to keep the position in the international conservation body. But, IAF is not effective organization in the international meeting at the moment. We must spread the activities by falconers and the results as international organization to conserve birds of prey and to promote sustainable use of wild resources through falconry. In the case of CIC, they send representative to international conference such as IUCN general meeting or COP. In the IUCN meeting, they have prepared the motion for their benefit. In the COP11, the name of CIC was mentioned in Decision XI/25. It is an important to make the result in the official document by leading international body with government and relevant organization. Culture of falconry had a success on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. One of next step will be how to get recognition from government bodies and another organization in the conservation area. COP is one of suitable meeting to enhance our activities. IAF should send the representative to COP, continuously. It will be effective to build up a connection for the promotion of falconry as a conservation activity and eliminate the negative image that anti-falconry groups have of falconry. ♦





## A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF CITES BASICS

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival

by Adrian Reuter

Because the trade in wild animals and plants crosses borders between countries, the effort to regulate it requires international cooperation to safeguard certain species from over-exploitation. CITES was conceived in the spirit of such cooperation. Today, it accords varying degrees of protection to more than 30,000 species of animals and plants, whether they are traded as live specimens, fur coats or dried herbs. CITES is an international agreement to which States (countries) adhere voluntarily. States that have agreed to be bound by the Convention ('joined' CITES) are known as Parties. Although CITES is legally binding on the Parties – in other words they have to implement the Convention – it does not take the place of national laws. Rather it provides a framework to be respected by each Party, which has to adopt its own domestic legislation to ensure that CITES is implemented at the national level. For many years CITES has been among the conservation agreements with the largest membership, with now 177 Parties. (Source: [www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org))

### How does CITES work?

CITES works by subjecting international trade in specimens of selected species to certain controls. All import, export, re-export and introduction from the sea of species covered by the Convention has to be authorized through a licensing system. Each Party to the Convention must designate one or more Management Authorities in charge of administering that licensing system and one or more Scientific Authorities to advise them on the effects of trade on the status of the species.

The species covered by CITES are listed in three Appendices, according to the degree of protection they need.



### Appendices I and II

Appendix I includes species threatened with extinction. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances.

Appendix II includes species not necessarily threatened with extinction, but in which trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival.

The Conference of the Parties (CoP), which is the supreme decision-making body of the Convention and comprises all its member States, has agreed in Resolution on a set of biological and trade criteria to help determine whether a species should be included in Appendices I or II. At each regular meeting of the CoP, Parties submit proposals based on those criteria to amend these two Appendices. Those amendment proposals are discussed and then submitted to a vote.

### Appendix III

This Appendix contains species that are protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling the trade. Changes to Appendix III follow a distinct procedure from changes to Appendices I and II, as each Party's is entitled to make unilateral amendments to it.

(Source: [www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org))

Why is CITES important to the international falconers community?

There are currently 495 species of diurnal raptors listed in CITES. Basically, all Falconiformes are listed in Appendix II (except the species included in Appendices I and III and the species of the family Cathartidae). So, falcon species currently in Appendix I, such as the gyrfalcon, peregrine falcon, barbut, or lugger from wild origin cannot be traded internationally unless under exceptional circumstances (i.e. scientific purposes), and certainly not for their use in falconry or commercial purposes. The same occurs for some eagles whose wild populations could be threatened by international trade. Those species included in Appendix II, such as all hawks and buzzards from wild origin can be traded internationally if national CITES authorities consider that these activities are non-detrimental to their populations and thus grant permits/certificates.

In recent years, there has been some talk about the possibility to down-list the gyrfalcon and peregrine falcons from Appendix I to Appendix II which would allow for international trade in wild caught specimens. But also concerns have been



CITES CoP, Bangkok in March this year

expressed under the CITES umbrella on the sustainability of saker falcon trade and whether existing levels of international trade could endanger wild populations (and thus justify its up listing from Appendix II to Appendix I). As can be seen, decisions taken in this Convention can impact the legal possibility to import/export/re-export species from wild origin of current/potential use for falconry and/or related activities (i.e. captive breeding).

### So, what happened at the recent CITES CoP 16 (March 3-14, 2013 Bangkok, Thailand) of interest to the IAF?

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. CITES is legally binding on the Parties (countries that have joined this Convention) and provides a framework to be respected by each Party, which has to adopt its own domestic legislation to ensure that CITES is implemented at the national level.

CITES works by subjecting international trade in specimens of selected species to certain controls. All import, export, re-export and introduction from the sea of species covered by the Convention has to be authorized through a licensing system. The species covered by CITES are listed in three Appendices, according to the degree of protection they need and based on a set of biological and trade criteria to help determine whether a species should

be included in Appendices I or II. At each regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP) which take place approximately every 3 years, Parties submit proposals based on those criteria to amend these two Appendices. Those amendment proposals are discussed and then submitted to a vote.

Even though CITES decisions should be based on best available data to evaluate agreed biological and trade criteria for each proposal on many occasions political or civil society pressures affect the way decisions go. With trade in wildlife (plants and animals) accounting for billions of euros each year, and charismatic species involved, there are many interests which come into play at the CoPs and lobbying/negotiations surrounding these.

CoP 16 was no exemption, multimillion businesses such as those linked to the shark fisheries (for shark fins) that could be affected by international trade regulations under CITES were discussed, but even though in past years proposals to include fish in the Appendices had failed, with trade and biological data clearly confirming these met the CITES criteria, on this occasion the majority of the countries realized that CITES (given it has teeth meaning trade sanctions can occur) could actually be a complimentary regulatory mechanism to those in existence and thus help keep international trade at sustainable levels.

For those following CITES over the years it is quite significant, also reinforced by the inclusion of timber species that in years past had a lot of opposition even

when data indicated certain species met the criteria for their inclusion and thus implement CITES as a regulatory trade mechanism. So, it seems that parties to CITES on this occasion decided to base their decisions more on existing data and consideration to the CITES listing criteria than to other considerations.

A couple of proposals in the agenda are worth mentioning, there was a proposal to down list from Appendix I to II (so as to allow international trade under certain regulatory frameworks) a population of Vicuna (a Camelid used for its wool made of a very fine and expensive fiber used to make clothes) from Ecuador. The country showed how their existing management plans had allowed for the recovery of the wild population so that the use and international commercialization of the fiber could be an option. Countries not only supported the proposal but also mentioned that this could be seen as a success story. (Perhaps the recovery of the peregrine falcon through comprehensive management and variety of actions including its Appendix I listing can make the case of a success story that could justify a down listing if such a proposal is put forward by a country...of course, many more things to consider though...) But one particular item in the agenda occupied a lot of attention: the polar bear. For this CITES CoP, the US submitted a proposal to up list the polar bear from Appendix II to I. Being a hugely charismatic species this was supported by many actors including large number of organizations from the civil society thus putting a lot of pressure on governments and decision makers. Many groups spent lots of resources (human and financial) in campaigning and lobbying through all imaginable ways, through social media, press, radio, tv, direct interaction and communications with politicians and authorities, etc. with some of these having a physical presence at the Meeting in Thailand with numerous teams of people there. The goal of course was to convince as many countries as possible that the polar bear needed to be in Appendix I, to stop any commercial international trade of live animals or its products. From all the range states of the species, Canada is the only country that allows a quota which is granted to the Inuit given the cultural value and tradition of the bear hunt. This quota is established based on sound science and very strict management plans for the species in Canada of which the Inuit

are an integral part of. Trade data (legal/illegal) did not indicate the proposal from the US met the criteria for an Appendix I listing. Biological criteria did not show a population decline that could be impacted through international trade (as shown in the TRAFFIC-IUCN analysis). It was clearly recognized by all (including the US) that climate change was the main threat, not trade. Nonetheless, polar bears are very charismatic and a lot of discussion took place. Interventions varied from those supporting the proposal because trade could add to the threats faced by the bears, to those opposing it referring to the CITES criteria not being met. Lots of lobbying had occurred so when the vote happened everybody was expectant.

Long story short: the proposal was rejected by 2/3 majority (required for such occasions). Also here the countries seem to have considered the CITES criteria mainly, and recognized that the criteria were not met to justify an Appendix I listing. Having been there I believe that several things helped produce this outcome for this result:

- In general there seems to be a better understanding about CITES by the parties (that it is an instrument to regulate trade and ensure its sustainability not to ban it)
- Updated and recognized data by world experts and expert groups (i.e. IUCN's Species Survival Commission Polar Bear Specialist Group)
- Trade and biological data analyses by institutions known to be objective and neutral (TRAFFIC-IUCN analyses) which indicated criteria were not met
- General agreement that the real threat was climate change, not trade
- Proof of very good existing management schemes based on sustainability criteria and sound science in the only Country that establishes a take quota (Canada)
- Presence, lobbying (pre CoP 16) and joint approach between Canadian authorities and indigenous communities (Inuit) linking the polar bear discussion to culture, livelihoods, tradition, etc... (there was a stand from the Inuit at the venue with at least 8 Inuit there and lots of materials in diverse languages to explain why the proposal was NOT to be supported)
- Discrepancies among conservation NGOs (those belonging to the Species Survival Network SSN for example supporting the proposal, and others well known such as WWF or TRAFFIC not supporting it)

Of course, these are only my personal views, and some of these points might have had a major role in the outcome and some very little influence, but all were relevant in my opinion.

It is hard to tell what the next CoP (that will take place in South Africa in 2016) or those following will be like, implementation of the approved shark and timber App. II proposals will be challenging, and there will probably be actors willing to make sure all problems in the implementation of CITES are evident (to show it does not work for marine species at least). Animal welfare activists will certainly rethink their strategies so as to come stronger if a proposal similar to the polar bear (charismatic species) comes forward, and the weight the climate change argument will have for arctic species subject to future proposals/discussions is still uncertain. The big success of this CoP seems to be that most decisions were taken based on the CITES criteria by the majority, a majority that seems to be evolving into a better informed decision making body.

If the general trend continues to be in countries making their decisions based on whether species meet or not the criteria as established in the Convention, this can be good, as there is a framework to work on and prepare solid arguments if possible. If criteria to down list or up list are met, other actions to convince those undecided or less familiar with CITES can be used in addition (livelihoods related arguments, cultural value, traditions, etc.), and certainly the voice and opinion of range states of the species being discussed is of utmost importance.

Each CITES CoP teaches something new on strategy, policy and diplomacy, skills that are key to augment the chances of a positive outcome. Let's hope that if raptors and other species important for falconry are discussed under the CITES framework in the future, these outcomes allow for the sustainability of this activity and conservation of wild raptor and prey populations involved.

#### For more info:

Detailed information on each of the discussion items in the agenda along with daily journals of the topics covered each day can be found in the CITES website: [www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org) Detailed analyses by TRAFFIC and the IUCN and recommendations by TRAFFIC for each of the species proposals in the agenda of CoP 16 can be found here: <http://www.traffic.org/cop16-table/> ♦

obituary:

## John Rhys Fairclough

1941-2013



John was born in Yorkshire, England, where they have a reputation of being tough and strongly opinionated. John lived up to this in every way.

John started his falconry career in the early 1970's. In his early years he flew a goshawk, 'Bess', before moving onto game hawking. His first seasons were spent on grouse moors in Wales where sport was good but quarry increasingly difficult to find. He then moved his hawking to the Outer Hebrides, the Scottish Western Isles. Where he had grouse hawking of a high quality with falcons such as 'Coco' and 'Fog'. John hawked in style. Probably the only British Falconer in the second half of the 20th Century to employ a professional falconer. He bought and trained top class dogs and flew hawks well. He was insistent that the falconry should be practiced in a sporting fashion and expected his hawks to wait-on. They were only served with fresh points and grouse were never re-flushed if they put in. Eagles were a big problem in the isles and spoilt his last seasons there, with losses of good



grouse hawks. His last few seasons were spent lowland game hawking, mainly partridge on his own ground.

John did a great deal of work for falconry in England. He joined the British Falconers' Club early on in his hawking career and was soon involved with the running of

the club. In 1982 he became treasurer of the BFC, a post he held until 2005, and he was Director between 1990 and 2000. He helped the club through many difficult times with much time and effort, as well as occasionally financially. John was a controversial character. He was very definite in his views and on how things should be run, and didn't mind who he upset on his way.

He greatly enjoyed a drink or two which often resulted in regrets later. Paul Gillott (falconer) wrote to his daughters on their fathers death "... your Dad was truly unique. I know of no other person who could upset so many people and yet be held in such high regard ..."

He deserves an important place in British Falconry history as a sportsman, champion of good falconry and ambassador for the sport. He encouraged many young falconers, giving them a chance to succeed and invited many non falconers to stay with him on the Isle of Lewis to enjoy their first experience of the sport. ♦

Mark Upton

# remembering John Fairclough

by Paul Gillot

John Fairclough was born a Yorkshireman during the second world war. He was six years old before he met his father who was on active service in the Far East. He received a grammar school education where he excelled at nothing but did show a great aptitude for making money. He was successful in both business and sport. By the age of twenty he had formed his own company and six years later he went public allowing funds for expansion into other areas. At one point in his career he simultaneously owned a special metals company, a farm, two hotels, a nightclub, a petrol station and had an interest in a hair transplant company.

John's talents in organisation were not limited to commercial interest, he was chairman of the Tamworth and District Scout Group, treasurer of the Staffordshire British Field Sports Society, member of the national BFSS shooting committee, chairman of the supporters committee of the Mennel and South Staffs Hunts and secretary of the Point to Point Committee. He served as treasurer of the British Falconers' Club 1982-2005 and Director 1990 to 2000 and latterly as Midland Group representative to the BFC Council.

John's interest in falconry began in 1970 and I first met him at a Welsh Hawking Club meeting in Wales in 1974. At this time John had a first season Goshawk Bess, she went on to become an excellent hawk, in her most successful season taking 143 head. Over the years several more Goshawks followed all of which proved excellent hawks.

My next recollection of John was at a WHC meeting in 1976 when in the early hours of the morning and desiring a drinking partner he came to my room and woke me by pouring a bucket of water over my head. Thus began a friendship lasting many years. Captive breeding was at this time very much in its infancy and peregrines were almost impossible to obtain. The club had been given a falcon (Fog) and tiercel (Coco). These hawks were allocated to John and so began his passion for Grouse Hawking. Coco became very famous flying equally well on high or low ground, never flying at check and always being totally committed to his quarry. In order to give these hawks the best opportunity John took a Welsh

moor for grouse for the first weeks of the season and then returned to Staffordshire to fly them at partridges, pheasants and duck. During the next several years John also hosted many field meetings based at Home Farm for both the Welsh Hawking Club and BFC Midland Group. These meetings were not for the faint hearted or tee-total and for many people were the highlight of the season.

In 1983 John moved his grouse hawking to the Garynahine estate on the Isle of Lewis some 60 miles off the north west coast of Scotland. The Factor of the estate Andrew Miller Munday became a good friend of all who visited and was himself an accomplished falconer, fisherman, stalker and wildlife artist. It was certainly a busy time on the island. If Ronnie Moor was visiting then there would be an early morning fishing trip then Goshawking and before lunch flying more inexperienced falcons at grouse. After lunch the more experienced and visitors falcons were flown. One year I took a Merlin so lark hawking was also included. We certainly slept well. It was at this time that John had three home bred setters, English Irish cross. All three were good but Blue was the superior and would often get into the middle of a covey and on command would flush each grouse separately.

With a change of ownership and factor to the estate John changed his activities to the west of the island on the Uig and Hamnavay Estate. This was a large and partly coastal area, very spectacular with an abundance of wildlife. John bought a croft with a long garden leading down to a sandy beach, in good weather it was idyllic, in bad weather you didn't step outside. Unfortunately eagles also favoured the area and John did have one hawk killed by them. It was his second loss that season having had a favourite tiercel killed on the mainland while hawking on his way to the island. The estate stopped employing a keeper and grouse stocks became low so after 23 seasons on the Hebrides John moved to pastures new.

The next few seasons found John in Perthshire again with good hawks and dogs. A friend of his ran a shooting estate not far away and he was able to fit in a couple of days shooting during the stay. For several years I shared the moor with him as junior partner but due to his

sometimes bizarre domestic behaviour I rented a separate cottage a couple of hundred yards away. If necessary we could communicate by radio. On two occasions I witnessed female guests being reduced to tears because they had overcooked the carrots. I thought it safer to cook for myself. Eventually the estate decided its shooting interests were preferable to falconry and this just about ended John's long association with grouse. His last trip north was with myself for a few days in the Borders in the autumn of 2010, his heart wasn't in it and he found the walking very difficult. I did suggest he try it sober but he claimed whiskey wasn't the problem, it was his diabetes.

John usually visited me each year for a few days partridge hawking and in the late spring we would get together with Ronnie Moor either in Staffordshire or Dorset for a couple of days fishing. John always employed a keeper/falconer so there was always someone available to look after the animals left behind.

John ran a small high quality shoot at Home Farm which was invitation only, which in turn generated invitations to several other shoots. The game season for him was always hectic. John was a very good shot but tended to shoot better before lunch than after. He was also a competent fly fisherman and before a serious fall when fox hunting was a good horseman. There are few other people who have fitted as much sport into their life.

John was also a great traditionalist, patriot and supporter of the Royal family. Several years ago he was to be introduced to Princess Anne at a hunt ball; fortunately for the Princess, John was escorted from the premises by security officers before she arrived. In 1995 he hosted a wonderful VE Day 50th anniversary party and named his new tiercel Winston. A hawk that turned out as good as its namesake.

John was twice married, firstly to Gill with whom he had two daughters and secondly to Jane. While both marriages ended in divorce both still had great affection for him. John was a charming at times difficult man who worked tirelessly for the BFC and falconry, I feel privileged to have been his friend.

John was buried in the small churchyard opposite his house, over three hundred people attended including about sixty from the falconry community. A jazz band played the coffin in and out of the church, his hawking bag, glove and a hood were buried with him. ♦

Paul Gillot.



## John Rhys Fairclough 1941-2013





Jornadas de caza con D. Alberto Travé

