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The **Falconers**  
& Raptor Conservation  
Magazine

**David L Prescott**  
Wildlife Artist

Falconers' Fair  
and  
Falconry Festival  
Previews



July 14-15  
Saturday & Sunday

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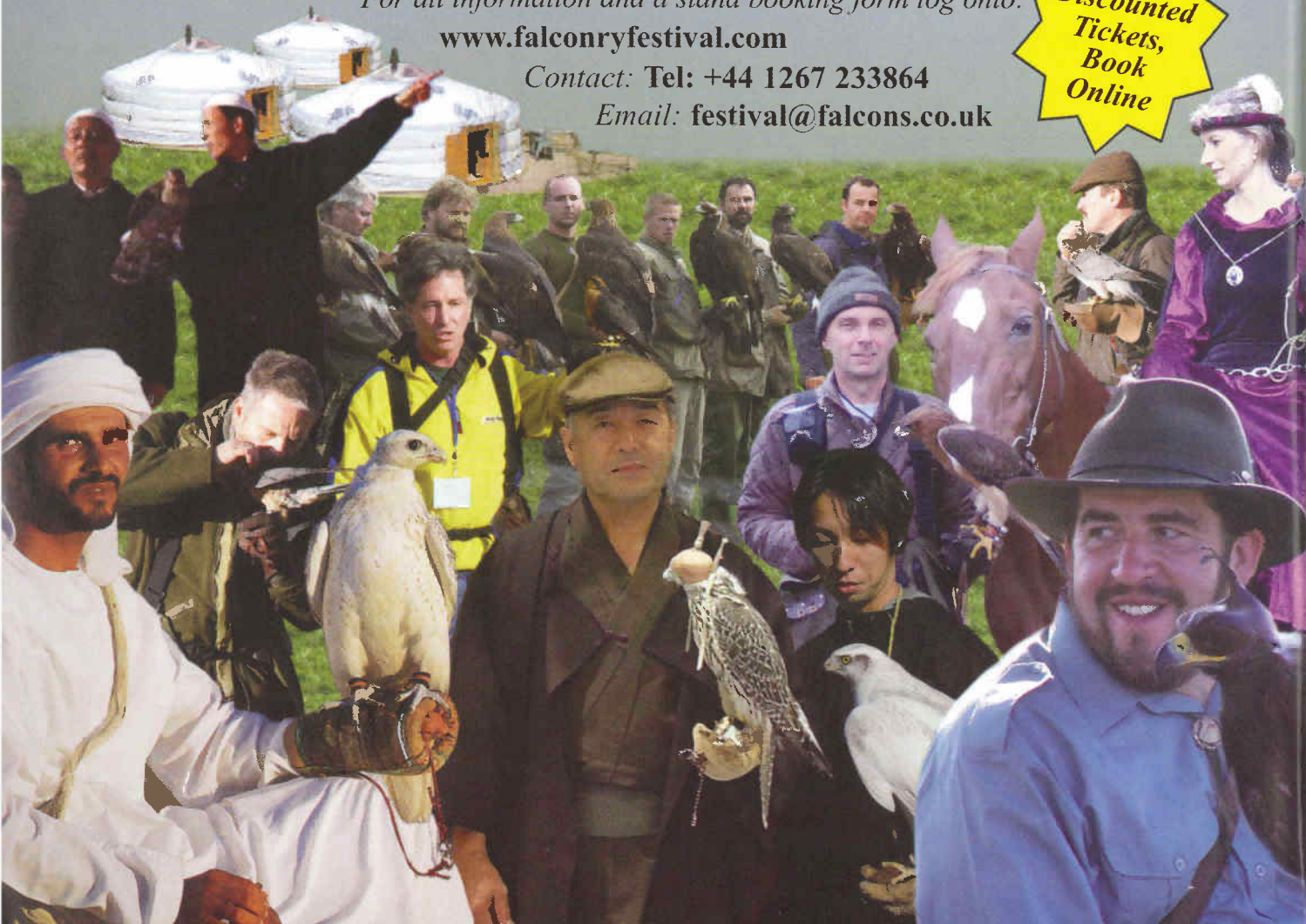
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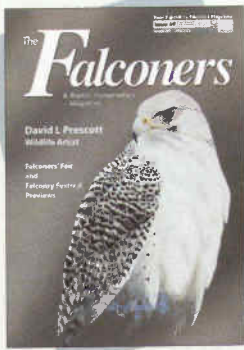
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I can't believe that another year has passed and we are looking forward to visiting the Falconry Fair once again. Where does the time go? What a season it has been. Not only has the bad weather played its part in the cancellation of various field meets, but also the events in Suffolk have also had an effect. I hope all of you have come out of this unscathed.

The other big event to be happening this year, of course, is the Falconry Festival in July to be held at the Englefield Estate, near Reading. This was covered in the last issue of The Falconers Magazine but I would draw your attention to the Hawk Board News page of this edition for more information.

Talking of The Hawk Board, this year is election year for officers and I hope all those who are eligible to vote, do so. The board exists to help you, the falconer, in keeping our sport alive so please spend a little time to help those elected officers with the hard and time consuming work that they all put in. Please see the News and New Products pages for more information.

I would like to thank those who have contributed to this issue as it contains articles from around the globe – Mexico, Japan and America, together with conservation projects that are happening in this country. Something for everyone I hope you will agree.

In the meantime, have a good read.



# editorial

# news & products

## The Last Wolf Hawker

The Eagle Falconry of Friedrich Remmler by Martin Hollinshead

I consider myself lucky to be asked to review books for the Falconers magazine. Whilst I have reviewed some good books, and many very bad books in my time, it does give me the opportunity to read books that I might otherwise have overlooked. And, very occasionally, it throws up a little gem.

The Last Wolf Hawker is one of these, a real gem of a book and a total surprise. It is the biography of a German Falconer, Friedrich Remmler (1888 - 1972), whose previously recorded career was only based on small fragments of information and a very few written records.

However, this very little information, hinted at an extraordinary career; the career of a falconer, who specialised in training and hunting with Golden Eagles and was believed to have successfully hunted the Wolf.

The author's interest in him was ignited when he stumbled upon a rare article written by Remmler for the German falconry club Deutscher Falkenorden just before his death in 1972. He understandably wanted to find out more but as Remmler hadn't written very much about his activities, very little physical evidence was to be found.

Only through the author's dogged commitment over a number of years was it possible to piece together the life of this very remarkable man.

Calling on a number of sources; the author takes us through; his search for this elusive information; Remmler's, first Eagle; his early influences and how he trained and housed his birds throughout his career. Going on to describe in detail how he hunted a variety of Quarry and how his technique and knowledge evolved over time.

The book contains Remmler's own description of a number of hunting days, which make wonderful reading. Whilst explaining the mechanics of the hunt; the intention; the positioning and the thinking behind the whole set up. They also convey the emotions of the hunt. Emotions, that any falconer can empathise with. The quick decisions that need to be made as circumstances' dictate. Some leading to near ecstasy and some to near disaster with everything in between.

These are written so well that any falconer can put themselves in his place and fully understand the tide of emotions that these would have invoked.

For this to have gone almost unrecorded for so long is a great shame and it is to Martin Hollinshead's great credit that he has brought Remmler to Falconry's attention once more. It is also to his credit that he has handled the subject with such skill.

The few pieces, which were written by Remmler have been translated by the author, and these have been translated so well that

exception: the gyrfalcon. This was unexpected but as the gyrfalcon is not a native to these islands and the saker is already off, perhaps we should not have been so taken aback.

Our proposal is that all hybrids and any species that are classed as F2 (that is third generation removed from wild-taken), should no longer be registered. All Schedule 4 hawks and falcons should have an A10 (possibly transactional: i.e. re-applied for each time the owner changes to keep track of the holder).

## The last Wolf Hawker The Eagle Falconry of Friedrich Remmler



Martin Hollinshead

the knowledge, understanding and humour of the man still shines through, successfully showing us the falconer as well as the sport. I am sure that Friedrich Remmler's remaining family, a great source of information for the author; must be very pleased with this lovely tribute.

The book is very well written. It is informative, uplifting, in parts, amusing and at one point suddenly and unexpectedly very moving.

A must read and rare in falconry books, one that I could read over and over again. It is apparently a limited edition but I will definitely secure myself a copy as soon as I can.

Reviewed by Paul Manning

## Schedule 4 species: DEFRA consultation

This consultation exercise is now closed and the Hawk Board has submitted its recommendations. It is very simple. We are in favour of major overhaul and simplification. The Joint Nature Conservation Council prepared a species evaluation for DEFRA which, unsurprisingly, recommends keeping all the existing registered species on the list with one

Thus the A10 replaces the 'blue form' without any loss of information. To apply for an A10 you have to provide parental ring and A10 information, so the claim that DNA testing is not possible cannot be made. Some fine tuning is required regarding gifts; these do not need an A10 so fall through the cracks.

But all-in-all if adopted, government is less burdensome, the costs are reduced (we hope) and the bird protectionists can still keep an eye on us.

## Eagle Journal – The Movie

Joe Atkinson

**T**his DVD starts with Joe introducing the film from the back of his 4-wheel drive vehicle. We then enter the weighing room with his Golden Eagle, Jackhammer, who, it seems, is rather vocal. At 8lb 6oz the eagle is ready to be taken to the flying ground.

Now you would have thought that in America, Joe would have millions upon millions of acres of open country in which to fly his bird at quarry. Not a bit of it. Joe and Jackhammer prefer to hawk between industrial warehouses, lorry parks and a railway line. But he flies there with great success.

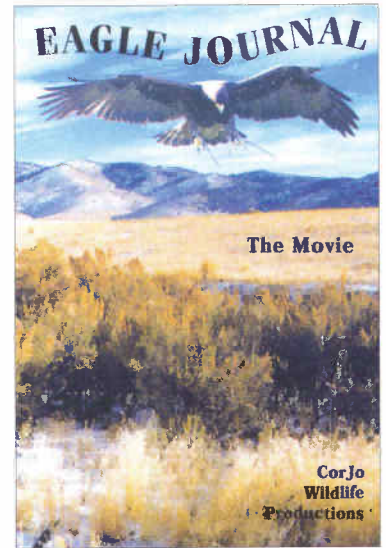
The action is well filmed by Joe's wife, Cody and sometimes slow motion footage is used. There seems to be plenty of game at the side of this industrial site and throughout the film Joe gives us a commentary explaining what is happening at the time. This is something that I like in a film of this nature. I do find films with no commentary as interesting as a rich tea biscuit.

The film is a day-to-day diary with plenty of action including Joe being footed by his eagle, something which is not recommended from such a large bird and the film shows how Joe handles a potentially dangerous situation.

The next section of the DVD is taken up showing us Joe flying his bird at Minden, Nevada, in open country away from any industrial buildings on their way to a site in Wyoming 15 hours drive away from Joe's home. Lastly we see a short section of flying in Wyoming and then returning home to California.

Although this film only lasts 30 minutes or so, it is well worth adding it to your video and DVD library. You can obtain the film through Western Sporting: [www.westernsporting.com](http://www.westernsporting.com) or e-mail: [sales@westernsporting.com](mailto:sales@westernsporting.com)

Reviewed by Peter Eldrett



### Festival accommodation

**A**re you looking for overnight accommodation when you attend the Festival of Falconry on 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> July? You may care to try The Old Lamb Hotel in Church Street, Theale, which is about one mile from the Englefield Estate. They are offering a rate of £60 bed and breakfast per room to anyone who mentions the *Falconers' Magazine* when booking. At the time of going to press, they have both twin and single-bedded rooms available that weekend. Their phone number is 0118 930 2357.

Alternatively, you will find an accommodation list on the festival web site [www.falconryfestival.com](http://www.falconryfestival.com)

### Hawk Board elections

**I**t is election year. Some of the six specialists are re-standing, some have retired. Perhaps you know a falconer who has something to offer; perhaps you would like to help give something back? It means a bit of extra time on the e-mail and attending four meetings a year (currently two in Bristol and two in London).

Our stand at the Falconry Fair will be open for nominations, so come and find Mike Clowes or any of the other HB or Campaign for Falconry committee on either day. Let us know what you think – we work for you and value your input – so come and have your say.



### Competition winners

**T**he five winners pulled out of the hat for our competition that we ran in the last issue of *The Falconers & Raptor Conservation Magazine* to win an ornamental silver plated falcon hood are:- B Marriot, A Fraser, P Broughton, S Upton and M Legg. Congratulations to our winners who will be contacted in due course.

If you would like to order one of these splendid hoods, please contact Crown Falconry 01246 237213 and speak to Jim Moss. The cost of these hoods is £22.00 each plus £2.50 P&P.

Many thanks to all those who entered the competition and commiserations to those who were unlucky not to win.



# askchitty

Do you have any veterinary questions relating to your bird? If so, send them to the editor (see address on page four) and they will be passed on to John Chitty - BVetMed CertZooMed CBiol MIBiol MRCVS

## Multi-clutching

**What are the problems of double or triple clutching when breeding birds of prey in any one season? Also, what signs do we look out for if breeding takes place in older birds?**

When hand-rearing birds of prey it is now commonplace to double or even triple clutch these birds: it makes sense as extra clutches means doubling or quadrupling the output of each pair each year.

It is, after all, making use of a natural mechanism where a bird losing her eggs during the breeding season can immediately be stimulated to lay again.

Naturally, parent rearing of young does not lend itself to this form of production as too much time and energy is spent by the parents in rearing the first clutch. However, in captivity as well as in the wild, correct environmental conditions and plenty of food may enable two clutches to be reared in a single season. So, will extra clutches cause problems?

Basically, if the female is young, fit and receiving a good quality diet then, no. However, intensive production will deplete the body so extra care must be taken to keep breeding females in optimal condition and to ensure that she is not overworked – while raptors are not quite worked like battery hens it must be remembered that intensive egg production may shorten breeding and lifespan unless the bird is cared for properly and given sufficient rest between breeding seasons. The major issues revolve around calcium and vitamins.

Calcium – As is well known this should not be considered on its own but always with dietary phosphorus and vitamin D3 and ultra-violet light exposure. The latter is unlikely to be a major factor unless breeding aviaries are indoors or are completely covered. However, diet is important – the calcium: phosphorus ratio for breeding birds should be 2:1 to 3:1 (i.e. plenty of accessible bone and not pure meat) and should contain good Vitamin D3 levels (whole carcase should do this). Certainly if multiple clutching, a good quality supplement containing both calcium and activated vitamin D3 should be used

as calcium is so important for shell quality and for muscle tone to expel the egg. The growing chick accesses this calcium in its early development in and out of the egg (as the yolk contains a lot of calcium too and this is taken into the chick for its first few days) and inadequate calcium from the female is reflected in rickety chicks.

When should calcium supplements be given? Well, everyone is aware that they should be given through the season. However, the breeding female lays down most of her calcium for breeding in bone stores BEFORE the breeding season. Importantly this occurs once only – i.e. she doesn't follow a pattern of store calcium; lay eggs; store; lay; store; lay; and so on.

Instead the initial calcium store must be sufficient for the whole season's breeding no matter the number of clutches. This is probably the biggest single reason why chicks hatched from later clutches are much more likely to suffer from calcium-related bone disorders than those in earlier ones.

Therefore when multiple clutching it is vital that calcium-Vitamin D3 supplementation begins a good month before the breeding season.

Other Vitamins – Vitamin D3 has already been mentioned. However, many vitamins play a part in fertility, development and growth and, obviously, the more chicks needed the more vitamins are required. It is also important to note that some vitamins are stored in the body and some are not.

The former are the fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K) and these should be given through the breeding season and for a good month beforehand alongside the calcium.

Water-soluble vitamins (that are not stored) should be supplemented from just before breeding and continued throughout.

It is vital when giving these supplements that BALANCED multi-vitamin preparations designed for the purpose should be used – large quantities of single vitamins may have repercussions on others and cause more problems rather than less.

How about age? Raptors should be able to breed throughout their entire natural lifespan. However, we all know that as we get older things don't work as they used to!

It is, therefore, unlikely that an older female will be able to achieve the same level of fertility and fecundity as one in the prime of her life. It's also worth noting that young birds just beginning their breeding life will be less fertile.

Importantly, as birds get older they are more prone to disease in many organ systems especially liver, kidneys and gut and these will certainly impact on their fertility and their ability to process nutrients for multiple clutches. In particular kidney disease will affect calcium metabolism and this will make rickets in later clutch chicks more likely.

Therefore, before the breeding season it is an excellent idea to have the birds examined to confirm they are in suitable breeding condition. This becomes more important the older they get and blood tests maybe very useful in determining underlying disease.

Where there has been a problem with fertility and/or chick development in a past season these checks become more important and should include endoscopy (of both male and female) to assess the state and activity of ovary and testes as they come into breeding condition.

It is hard to assess the exact state of the calcium stores. However, body radiographs will show that the female has been laying down large quantities of bone and this may give some idea as to her ability to cope with extra clutches.

So, in summary, taking multiple clutches of eggs from raptors is possible and can be safely achieved but greater care of the breeding birds must be taken.

How about the purchaser of chicks from later clutches? As we have discussed earlier, these chicks are more likely to show problems if there have been any issues with the parent birds' nutrition and health. While the majority of these chicks are perfectly okay, it is a fact that we see far more rickets and other bone problems in later clutch chicks.

## Recommendation

It is thoroughly recommended that a purchaser takes any new bird to their avian vet for a post-purchase check but this is particularly important when buying young birds late in the breeding season.

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All information correct at time of going to press. The organisers reserve the right to change any of the above due to unforeseen circumstances.

# The British Falconry & Raptor Fair 2007

**T**he annual British Falconry and Raptor Fair will very soon be embarking on its 17th outing and will, once again, be held at Chetwynd

Park, near Newport in Shropshire. The Bank Holiday weekend of May 6th and 7th will see the normal gathering of falconers and raptor enthusiasts from all over the world. An event that started out from such humble beginnings at Stoneleigh so many years ago has now grown into the most significant and prestigious falconry event anywhere in the world. Exhibitors and visitors alike come from all corners of the globe to enjoy the event and its unique atmosphere.

This year's event will be a very significant one as it marks the return

of the first lady of falconry, Jemima Parry-Jones, to our raptor community here in Britain. Jemima left our shores a couple of years back to pursue a new and interesting challenge with raptors in the States. This entailed her moving lock stock and barrel as well as parting with her beloved centre at Newent. Her departure created a void in the falconry world, which could not be filled. As well as her unrivalled knowledge on breeding and conserving raptors, her sparkling sense of humour and intolerance of fools was greatly missed. However, another change of direction and another challenge for Jemima means that she will very soon be back with us permanently and it will be a case of America's loss is most definitely our gain.

Fortunately, Jemima has very kindly

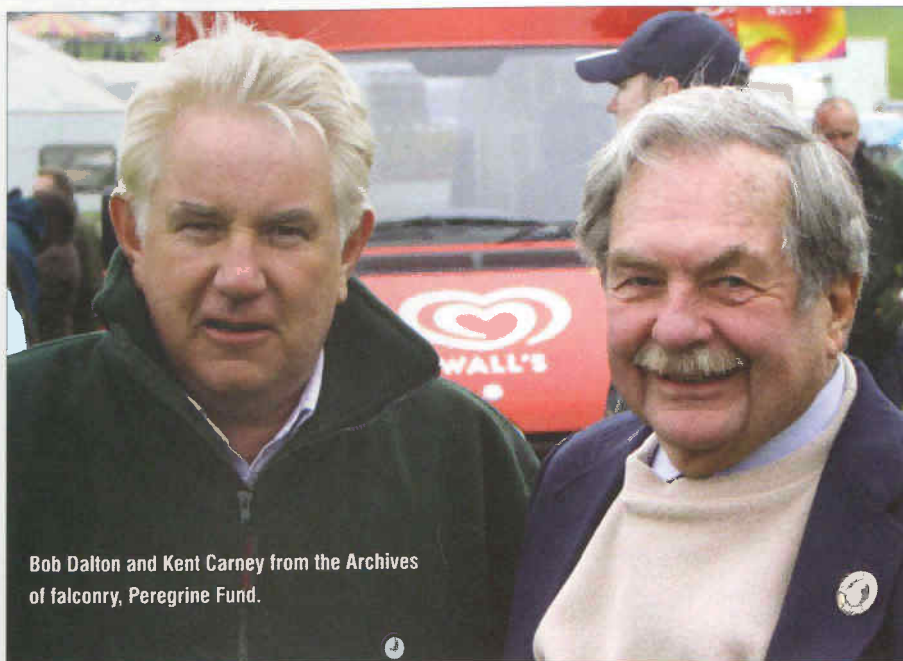
agreed to open the Falconry Fair this year and is looking forward to seeing friends again, both old and new. Not that Jemima is a stranger to the Falconry Fair, having carried out displays in the main arena on a couple of occasions.

For the sixth year running, the principal sponsors of the event will be Honeybrook Farm Animal Foods. This prestigious company is highly respected and very well known throughout the raptor world. The company has built its enviable reputation of supplying a first class product, which is backed up by truly excellent customer service. It is a family firm that is run by falconers for falconers. The organisers of the Falconry Fair are indeed honoured that Honeybrook have continued their substantial association with the event.



Jemima Parry-Jones with Tawny Eagle





Bob Dalton and Kent Carney from the Archives of falconry, Peregrine Fund.

### In the arena

Flying displays are the backbone of the main arena events as far as falconers are concerned and this year will see a rich assortment of people with different hawks and falcons going through their paces. Foremost amongst these will be The South East Falconry Group, who each year, takes a great deal of care and trouble in an effort to put on a good representation of the art of training birds of prey. Sometimes their displays run incredibly smoothly; on occasions there are slight hiccups. Anyone who has ever trained a hawk or falcon knows these little glitches will occur from time-to-time, but the South East group have always been innovative in their presentation and try hard to bring something that is a little different each year.

As well as bird of prey flying displays, there will be plenty more going on in the main arena to keep the spectators entertained. Our old friends The Knights of Arkley will once again be giving two demonstrations of horsemanship and medieval fighting skills each day. Always very popular with the crowds, it never ceases to amaze me how the knights don't end up with serious injuries at the end of each performance. They appear to put their very heart and soul into trying hard to kill or at least seriously wound each other. I suppose it is a measure of their craftsmanship that they manage to create such a sense of reality with their fighting.

Another old favourite is the Icarus

Parachute Display Team and they will quite literally be dropping in at the end of each day, weather permitting. Quite what motivates someone to jump out of a perfectly sound helicopter when they don't have to is beyond me.

As with previous years, there will also be a stunning display of trained hawks, falcons and eagles on the weathering ground. The quality and diversity of the raptors gathered on the weathering each year just gets better and better. It is a unique opportunity to see such a fabulous collection of raptors at such very close quarters. Our good friends from the Central Falconry and Raptor Club will be manning and policing the weathering and will be on hand to assist with the taking of any photographs or answering any queries.

### Even more to enjoy

Chris Christoforou has managed to once again assemble a group of artists, both well known and up and coming. Each year Chris brings us a mixture of well established and respected talent as well as encouraging those that have just started out on their careers. The art marquee acts like a magnet to a great many people, myself included and really has established itself as a major part of the fair. The only problem with visiting the art marquee is that it becomes a test of one's self control. Every year, I vow I am just going to pop in and have a quick look, not buy anything but simply have a look. Every year, I come out enriched by another superb painting but somewhat

lighter in the bank balance. This is, of course, fully understandable when you have artists of the calibre of Martyn Brook, Carl Bass and Andrew Ellis. I always console myself with the thought that I have probably just made a very sound financial investment for the future, or at least that's my excuse.

All the other things that have become associated with the Fair will be present such as the antiques fair, stick dressing display, muzzle loader display, dog agility, Lurcher show, clay pigeon shoot, etc. Stands with everything from wax jackets and Wellington boots through to garden furniture and pet supplies will be there with their wares. When it comes to falconry there will be more than one hundred stands selling every and anything associated with the sport and breeding raptors. Gloves, bells, swivels and incubators through to lures, hoods, books and imprint tanks. The widest selection of falconry trade stands to be gathered at any one time in one place will be there.

Hawking clubs will be very well represented with the major national and regional clubs all having a presence. Also several of the top flight foreign clubs will be there including The North American Falconers Association which, as far as membership numbers are concerned, is the third largest British Club. Although hawking is not really a sociable sport in its day to day application it is a shame more falconers don't join their national clubs. The stronger our clubs are the greater voice we as falconers have. The same is true of the Hawk Board. Whether or not the individuals that comprise the board are your cup of tea or not they do represent us and our sport and we should be behind them fully in what they do for us. So much that we take for granted, when it comes to our sport, would have already been lost to us without their sterling work.

Sitting on top of the hill, in its prime location over looking the main arena, will be the stand of Honeybrook Farm Animal Foods. Visitors to the stand are always assured of a warm welcome and the principal sponsors of the event always do a tremendous amount to contribute to the general good natured atmosphere of the weekend. Be sure to drop in and say hello.

For those wanting more details of the event these can be obtained from the show office on 01588-672708.

Nick Kester  
Communications Officer



# Festival of Falconry

**H**ere's hoping you have 14 and 15th July firmly in your diaries by now. The Festival is moving on a pace. We now have a massive commitment by the Emirates Falconers' Club for a stunning exhibit on what Arab falconry is all about. Think camels, salukis and sakers. If you think you are passionate about your sport, talk to a falconer from the Middle East; he will have learnt it at his father's knee and his annual hunting trip will occupy his thoughts from late summer on. Many Arabs are in the UK during July and most have promised to attend.

But Arabs are not the only visitors – last month we got a really excellent commitment

from the Kazakhstan Embassy and they are also throwing their weight behind the event. So, if eagles, yurts (tents) and small hairy ponies are your thing, then stand by to be amazed.

The British village will show the very best of our sport with all clubs providing co-operative input; the Netherlands are demonstrating why their golden age – Het Loo – deserves a place in the history books; plus the Americans, the Japanese and all the many other falconry nations. They will all be there.

Tickets are now available on-line ([www.falconryfestival.com](http://www.falconryfestival.com)) and if you book now you get a discount. Also, if you plan to make a weekend of it, reserve your camping space.

The organisers are working on the main arena events and these will be published on-line very soon. How did that first hawk end up on a falconer's fist? Perhaps, he just emerged from the fog of evolution with dog and hawk into the wonderful sport we have today.

Don't delay, book today.

---

**If you have areas of concern about falconry, remember this is your Hawk Board and you can raise issues with us by contacting me or any other member of the board.**

**My E-mail is:**  
[nk.quattro@zetnet.co.uk](mailto:nk.quattro@zetnet.co.uk)



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# The National Hawking School Trains Police Officers



**S**taff at the National Hawking School held a training course for Derbyshire Constabulary Wildlife Liaison Officers, at the School's base in Ashover, Derbyshire.

"It is vital that police officers specialising in wildlife crime, should be adequately trained for their very specialised duties," said James McKay, Director of the School, which was established in 1989. "We have been helping to train Derbyshire's Police Wildlife Liaison Officers for over 15 years, supplying in-depth detail of legislation affecting raptors (birds of prey and owls) both in captivity and in the wild. We also teach the officers how to handle and restrain birds from the size of the diminutive little owl (*Athene noctua*), to the massive and powerful golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)."

Twelve officers from police stations throughout Derbyshire attended the course. The police team was led by Sergeant Darren Belfield, who is based at Police HQ at Ripley. Darren is the newly appointed Force Wildlife Liaison Officer and appreciates the importance of on-going training for his team of dedicated officers.

"The event was thoroughly worthwhile, forming part of our on-going training programme for Wildlife Crime Officers," said Darren. "The content of the session was excellent and the facilities offered at the school were first class, with a wide range of birds for our students to see and handle. The obvious depth of experience and extensive subject knowledge of the

school's staff made for a valuable learning experience, which was supported by positive feedback from our officers. I welcome the school's support and look forward to working with James and his team in the future."

The day began with classroom-based tuition from Peter Wise, a former Derbyshire Force Wildlife Liaison Officer, who covered current wildlife legislation. The afternoon was taken up with matters relating to raptors, including species recognition, handling and restraint, legislation and licensing.

## Impressive Collection

The National Hawking School has one of the largest and most impressive collections of raptors in the country, with over 50 birds of prey and owls in its collection. These range from small owls to eagle owls, kestrels to gyrfalcons, buzzards to eagles. The School runs a series of courses and "have-a-go" events, which include sessions designed for those simply wishing to experience a raptor flying and landing on their fist, to in-depth specialist courses. The National Hawking School is one of only a few institutions in the UK approved to deliver the nationally recognised "Beginning Falconry" course.

In addition, the School takes in many injured owls, hawks, buzzards and falcons etc., with the aim of treating them and returning them to the wild.

"We do not allow visitors to disturb the wild birds we take in," said James, "but

we have a large collection of captive bred raptors, many of which are not commonly seen by the British public."

## Well Established

The School's director, James McKay is a zoologist, lecturer, author and TV presenter, who trained his first hawk (a kestrel) in 1963, while a young boy. Since then, his passion for, knowledge of and dedication to raptors and falconry have grown tremendously. He established the National Hawking School in 1989, and runs courses on all aspects of hawks, owls, hawking, falconry and ferreting. In addition, the School stocks and sells a wide range of falconry and ferreting equipment, as well as videos and books, including many out-of-print titles. James can be seen at many of the major county and country shows and fairs throughout the UK. The School also supplied some of the owls used by Warner Brothers in the Harry Potter series of films.

Full details of the School can be obtained via E-mail ([info@hawking-school.co.uk](mailto:info@hawking-school.co.uk)), or snail mail (please include SAE) to: The National Hawking School, Honeybank Conservation Centre, Holestone Gate Road, Holestone Moor, Ashover, Derbyshire S45 0JS.

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# Lucretia

## The Aplomado Falcon



**Gabriel with Lucretia**

### Open terrain

Where Gabriel hunts the terrain is vast, open and slightly undulating grasslands. The area is used for grazing cattle but because of the poor quality of the grass the cattle numbers are exceedingly low and spread over very many thousands of acres. There is a series of very shallow ditches that crosses the grasslands and these are supposed to help with irrigation. But for the majority of the year they remain bone dry. One of the species of bird that can be readily found in this environment is the Cattle Egret. They are never found in large numbers and they have to be tracked down as they can be somewhat elusive. The way to find them is to find the cattle. Once you have the cattle in sight somewhere nearby will be some Egrets, normally in threes and fours. Very occasionally slightly larger groups will be encountered.

The beauty of the grasslands, from the point of view of the falconer, is that there is nowhere for the Egrets to put into and take cover. They have to fly to make good their escape and this can lead to some classic flights. Very often when pursued hard by the Aplomado Falcon the Egret will realise the best way to escape is to take to the upper air and then a ringing flight will ensue. Miniature Heron Hawking can often be enjoyed on the open grasslands of Mexico. It seems very strange but it is absolutely true. I was fortunate enough to witness several such flights and was in awe. Without a doubt this is falconry at its very best.

When I eventually got to meet Gabriel I was very interested to know whether Lucretia had started to tackle such a large quarry species on her own or if she had been artificially turned onto them. Bagged quarry is, quite rightly so, both illegal and unethical here in Britain but some other countries take a completely different view

**L**ucretia is a falcon I had heard about long before my recent visit to Mexico to spend a few weeks hawking with various friends. Apparently she is an average sized Aplomado Falcon with a flying weight of around 340g that specialises in catching Cattle Egrets. An Egret is a bird that is more than five times her size and has a very long pointed and potentially very dangerous beak. I found it hard to believe that such a small falcon would willingly tackle such a large quarry and was very keen if at all possible to see her fly for myself. Added to this of course is that I am an avid Aplomado Falcon fan and always relish the chance of seeing someone else's flying quarry.

I flew a male myself here in the UK last year and had tremendous fun with him and was truly impressed with his tenacity and bravery when it came to quarry. He was a joy to fly and made falconry such fun again. Unfortunately, he died of a heart attack just before my Mexican trip and his passing left a very

large void in my hawking life. Over the last few years the species has become one that I take great pleasure in flying and seeing flown. Consequently I have travelled to Mexico, Brazil and Peru to see them flown at a very wide and differing range of quarries in a variety of landscapes. Because I obviously enthuse about them when I see them fly I am lucky in that I receive many invitations now to go to South America and see them flown. The latest being an invitation from Columbia, which I may well take up later in the year.

Lucretia is owned and flown by Gabriel Ignacio, who lives a short distance from Toluca on the outskirts of Mexico City. Prior to my trip, I made contact with him and arranged to spend some time with him hawking with the renowned Aplomado. This proved a little more difficult than it might seem at first as Gabriel speaks no English and I no Spanish. But through the good offices of a mutual friend things were sorted and arrangements put in place.

and giving baggies to your hawk or falcon is considered the norm. The practice appears to be quite widespread in Mexico and I was interested to learn whether or not Lucretia had been taken down this route. But I was assured categorically by Gabriel that Lucretia's desire to hunt Egrets had been entirely self motivated. It had come about when out hunting a more conventional quarry.

Lucretia had been trained in the traditional manner and when ready had been entered to small birds. These consisted mainly of Meadow Larks and Rails. Meadow Larks offered a good flight, being very strong and capable fliers. Although they will not ring-up in an effort to escape in the manner that the European Skylark does. Rails are weak ineffectual fliers that can only be hunted when they can be found far enough away from water to offer the falcon a decent chance of catching them. Once they make the safety of water they will just keep diving and can very rarely be re-flushed. Normally, if an Aplomado is slipped at a Rail it is in effect a straight race to see if the falcon can reach the Rail before the Rail can reach the water. Flights at Rails tend not to be very sporting ones and are hardly the stuff of classic falconry.

### **Aplomado identification**

For those that have never flown an Aplomado or seen one flown it should be remembered that although the species is a true falcon they have long tails and can be quite accipiter like in their behaviour and hunting manner. Therefore a straight dash at a feeble flying bird would certainly appeal to them very much. Lucretia had caught a number of Rails in her early flights and on the occasion of her first Egret had chased one into a ditch and was cruising round at head height whilst Gabriel did his best to re-flush it. Whilst Gabriel ran backwards and forwards through the ditch and the shallow murky water it contained, an Egret got up some distance away and started to lazily flap away.

Lucretia broke off from watching Gabriel and gave chase. At first the Egret didn't realise that it was in trouble and continued to fly at a leisurely pace. But something in the clippie wing beat of the little falcon must have triggered a danger signal in its brain and it stepped up a couple of gears and tried to out pace the falcon. When this failed and the falcon was still closing the gap between them at

a tremendous rate the Egret decided the upper air was the best place to be and started to ring up in tight circles which had the effect of helping it gain height very rapidly. But the diminutive falcon stuck doggedly to the pursuit and rung up after the Egret. Gradually, bit-by-bit the falcon kept on until at last she had gained the upper hand. Now safety for the Egret lay in the bottom of a ditch and that's



where it made for. As the Egret dropped the little falcon started to put in a series of stoops hitting the Egret repeatedly. Being so small the falcon was unable to deliver a fatal telling blow but she did manage to upset the Egret sufficiently that it came to earth away from the safety of a ditch.

As the two birds almost reached the ground the Aplomado bound to the Egret and they fell to the ground in a whirling mass of feathers. Gabriel sprinted to where they both fell to earth because he wanted to try and save his falcon from getting a beating from the wings of the Egret or, worse, skewered on its formidable beak. But he need not have worried. When he arrived the Egret was quite dead and the falcon was starting to enjoy a well deserved reward of warm flesh and blood.

From that moment onwards Lucretia has been wedded to Egrets as her principal quarry. In fact, when I was out hunting with Gabriel she demonstrated her love of chasing Egrets with crystal clarity. Two Egrets had been spotted some three hundred metres away and Lucretia was put into the T-perch and this was then held aloft to give her a good view. We walked forward towards the Egrets. The normal procedure is that as

they lift Lucretia will then give chase. Just as the T-perch was raised a feral turkey accompanied by her chicks emerged from a depression in the ground and waddled off. But one chick dallied for a while and as Lucretia took off from the perch it actually came towards the falcon cheeping happily. To my amazement the falcon passed the chick within a matter of inches and continued her flight to get on terms with the Egrets. Had the chick frozen at the advance of the falcon and stopped cheeping then I could have understood the falcon allowing it to survive. But to be moving around and cheeping just shows how focused the falcon was.

Not all the flights at Egrets end up being ringing ones. Some are straight forward chases with the little falcon putting in repeated stoops until the Egret finally drops to the ground. Having landed the Egret then stands up straight, puffs itself up and opens its wings to make itself look as large as possible. It has to be said that in comparison to the Aplomado it does look very big. But this trick which may well work with wild hawks cuts no ice with Lucretia. She piles straight in and the Egret's time on earth is then over. I find it remarkable that Gabriel has never once had to help Lucretia despatch such a large and formidable prey. Whenever he gets to the little falcon she has the situation under control and doesn't need human assistance.

### **Enjoyment**

I enjoyed the flying with Gabriel and Lucretia and fully intend to take up the invitation to return again next season. What the trip did do for me was make me determined to get myself another Aplomado to fly and to carry on going wherever I can to see them flown at different quarries in a variety of terrains. Fortunately, I have several invitations at the moment to see Aplomado Falcons flown in other countries and best of all I have managed to get myself another superb Aplomado to fly. He is a male and I got him quite by chance. He was a falcon that was kept back for breeding and therefore sat untouched in an aviary for a year. The female he was in with unfortunately died and his owner very kindly let me have him. Having sat around for so long he will be hard work to get going and to get truly fit. But one thing is for certain, the effort will be more than worthwhile.

# David L Prescott

## Wildlife Artist

**D**avid believes he inherited his artistic skills from his Mother and Father, who were both extremely talented. David began his artistic career as a stained glass window artist, in his home town of Liverpool, where he had his first one man exhibition, in a city centre department store at the age of 17. David attended art college in Liverpool, where he became adept in oils, watercolours, pastels and graphite pencils.

In 1978, David emigrated to the USA and took up residence in the San Bernardino Mountains of Southern California, where his neighbours were Black Bear, Cougar, Bob Cat, Raccoon and Golden Eagles to name just a few. "It was heaven", he says. It was David's insatiable interest in animals, their conservation and habitat that began his career as a wildlife artist.

David has always had an affinity with the animals and birds that he paints. His paintings are the result of many hours spent in the field observing, sketching and photographing wildlife and their natural habitat, followed by many more hours in his studio striving to reproduce that perfection of light, composition, contrast

and harmony of colour that was observed in the field.

David's original paintings, have raised considerable amounts of money for worthy causes throughout the British Isles and America. "It's important to give something back to conserving wild places on this earth, therefore ensuring ongoing habitat for the many different creatures that inhabit this beautiful planet with us", he says. This is the philosophy of one man, who receives immense pleasure from painting animals.

David has been a featured artist at a number of shows. In 2003, one of David's original paintings was exhibited at the Mall Galleries, London, having been juried into the finals from an entry of over 10,000 hopefuls run by the *Daily Mail* newspaper. His artwork has been featured in many magazines and newspapers and his original paintings are in private collections throughout the world and have been exhibited at many prestigious locations in Britain and the USA.



You can contact David by E-mail: [davidlprescottwildlifeart@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:davidlprescottwildlifeart@yahoo.co.uk) or visit his web site: [www.davidlprescottwildlifeart.com](http://www.davidlprescottwildlifeart.com)



Gyr Falcon head study



Barn Owl



Perching post, Peregrine Falcon



Peregrine Falcon

# Wind Farms Threaten Raptors

**E**verybody probably agrees with the transition from fossil fuel energy to one that is a natural one to prevent global warming. Wind power is one such natural energy and people generally consider it "environmentally friendly." However, it's not always true. If the site selection for wind farms is not properly selected, they could threaten wildlife including raptors directly and indirectly, as well as destroying rich natural environments but not contributing to the reduction of carbon dioxide emission. In Japan, a considerable number of wind farms have been constructed, or are planned, on the raptor migration routes and in the home ranges of endangered birds of prey. How do these wind farms impact on these birds in Japan?

## Collision against Wind Turbines

Among the impact on raptors, the most straightforward one is collision against wind turbines. As of December 2006, five White-tailed Eagles have been killed by rotating wind turbines in Hokkaido, northern Japan. The White-tailed eagle is designated as a national natural treasure and an endangered species in Japan, besides being protected internationally. Although any other collision cases of endangered raptors have not been reported within the country, more raptors might have been killed by turbines because it is quite difficult to find dead birds under turbines due to limited accessibility to the wind farms themselves being fenced or on a high mountain ridge.

## A Wind Farm along the Major Eagle Migration Route - Cape Soya Wind Farm

Cape Soya in Hokkaido extends between the Sea of Okhotsk and the Sea of Japan, located just south of Sakhalin, Russia. The cape is along the major migration route of Steller's Sea Eagles and White-tailed Eagles, which are internationally protected species as well as national natural treasures and endangered species in Japan. Wind farms have been built indiscriminately in this area.

The largest one is the Cape Soya Wind Farm with 57 large turbines about 100 meters high. The Wild Bird Society of Japan (WBSJ) and other environmental Non-profit

organizations (NPO) have been strongly against the wind farm because of the possible large impacts on many migratory avian species including eagles. They also found the environmental impact assessments by the developer inadequate. For example, the migratory bird survey was conducted in August when no birds actually migrate, which supported the developer's conclusion of no impact on migratory birds. Although the WBSJ and other groups had demanded a comprehensive review of the plan to the developer, the governor of Hokkaido and the local office of the Ministry of the Environment, the wind farm finally started its operation in November 2005.

No eagle collision has been reported so far in the wind farm. However, some raptors might have collided against the turbines without being noticed by the public; the wind farm is fenced and citizens are not able to enter. All five eagle death cases mentioned above were reported by local people who accidentally found the eagles split in two on the ground, not by the wind farm companies. In addition to the Cape Soya, some other wind farms are planned along the raptor migration routes, including the famous one with numerous Gray-faced Buzzard-eagles and Honey Buzzards heading south every fall.

## Golden Eagles are at Risk by Wind Farms

The Golden Eagle in Japan is a unique subspecies with its small size and adaptation to woodland-predominant habitat. As well as being designated as a national natural treasure, it is listed as an endangered species in Japan due to its limited population of about 650. The reproductive success drastically dropped in 1970s and has not been recovered yet.

Currently, some wind farm plans in Honshu, the main island of Japan, are threatening Golden Eagles and their habitats. Since Japan is a mountainous country with dense forests, wind farms tend to be planned on the mountain ridge with favorable wind conditions. Such winds are also favorable for eagles to fly. There would be a high risk of collision if a wind farm is constructed in the home range of eagles. Unlike the wind farms on relatively flat grassy hills, those on the high mountain ridge require considerable forest clearing for the new roads to carry up long

turbine blades besides the space for turbines themselves. This results in the considerable destruction of eagle habitats with rich natural environments.

Therefore, wind farm developers are supposed to avoid the farm construction in the crucial habitats of the eagles. As they can avoid such places, a map showing the eagle habitats is available. However, they often ignore the map and try to build wind farms desperately in the eagle home ranges and some local governments where wind farms are planned support the plans harmful to endangered eagles and environments. The Society for Research of Golden Eagles (SRGE), a NPO working on the conservation of the Japanese Golden Eagle since 1981 and other NPOs have been trying to stop such wind farm plans but some developers and local governments don't seem to give them up. Here is the story of such a case - the Dangamine Wind Farm.

## A Wind Farm Planned in an Eagle Home Range - Dangamine Wind Farm

The Dangamine wind farm is planned by two companies in Asago and Shisou cities in Hyogo prefecture. With 22 large turbines (100 and 130 meters high) on the mountain ridges at around 1,000m elevation, the wind farm would threaten Golden Eagles. Dangamine is an area with rich biodiversity and natural environment. You would find a lot of rare species there including Giant Salamanders and Mountain Hawk Eagles and the area is also the home range of Golden Eagles whose population size in the prefecture is only eight.

Since SRGE had confirmed that eagles lived in the planned site for many years, they submitted a written demand to the mayors of the two cities in May 2005 when the plan came out into the open, to ask to stop or revise the plan. In October 2005, SRGE also submitted an opinion brief to the Agency of Natural Resources and Energy, asking them to instruct the two developers to revise or stop the plan. However, no instruction was given and thus no revision or cancellation of the plan took place.

Since May 2005, the Hyogo branch of SRGE had conducted observations at the planned site for 51 days and observed the eagle flying 37 times in 11 days. Moreover,

# orn Japan

they videotaped the eagle flying just above the ridge where wind turbines were planned, as well as a Mountain Hawk Eagle soaring around the site. They submitted the data on the Board of Review of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in Hyogo prefecture with the attendance of the branch representative at the council meeting.

In April 2006, the Board of Review decided to ask the governor of Hyogo to advise one of the developers, which planned to build 12 turbines in Asago city, to stop the plan. At first, the prefecture intended to follow the Board of Review immediately, but they postponed making their final decision until July, waiting for the developer's report of the raptor assessments.

In the meantime, the developer held a forum to discuss the wind farm plan. In the forum, they reported no Golden Eagle observed flying 'inside' the planned site during their 230-day assessment conducted over the almost same period when SRGE regularly watched for the eagles. They said that an eagle was seen three times but 'far' from the planned site. Those results totally conflicted with the SRGE's data described above. The most possible reason of this discrepancy is the improper way of observation by the assessment company hired by the developer. They allocated several observers on the ridge where the wind turbines were planned and conducted observation every day for nearly eight months. Producing considerable observation pressures on the eagles, this method might have altered the movements of the shy eagles making them avoid flying around the ridge. The proper EIA could never be done by such an unreliable survey.

Furthermore, the developer has proposed to feed the eagles to distract them from the planned site and compensate their hunting places which would be destructed due to the wind farm construction. This kind of nearsighted feeding not only is harmful to the eagles themselves but also disturbs the ecosystem of Dangamine. Because this proposal is apparently lacking the viewpoint of conservation biology, raptor specialists are strongly against it.

The mayor of Asago city and the city board have agreed with constructing the wind farm. As well as SRGE, a group of local people are protesting against this plan by submitting a letter of appeal to the city board



White tailed eagle

and the governor, because they believe that this plan is not profitable to citizens. They appeal that the wind farm in Dangamine is highly prone to destroy the natural environment and cause natural disasters including land slides but not to contribute to the reduction of carbon dioxide emission due to high costs for constructing and managing the farm on the high mountain ridges covered with snow during winter. They also point out the shorter lives of wind turbines (could be less than 10 years) under harsh conditions like in Dangamine, thus less cost-effective. Since the wind farm cannot be built without subsidy from the government, it would be a wasteful use of our tax money to steamroll this plan.

The citizen group and I called for people to E-mail the city and prefecture to ask the cancellation of the plan. In addition, the group and SRGE invited two overseas raptor specialists to Dangamine, the director of the Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota and a raptor researcher working on Golden Eagles for many years. We visited the planned site together and exchanged opinions how the eagle habitat at risk by the wind farm plan should be protected.

In mid-December 2006, a local newspaper reported that the Board of Review of EIA had concluded by summer 2006 that the wind farm plan in Dangamine was "not favorable." This conclusion has been held by the board chairperson without being disclosed to the public. Responding to the conclusion, the developer officially proposed changes on the plan to the Board

of Review before the possible request of the plan cancellation by the governor. If this news is true, it would be almost impossible for the developer to build the wind farm in Dangamine. The revised plan seems to be submitted in January 2007. We will carefully watch how the plan finally would be.

### Why Improper Site Selection? – Problems in the EIA Law

Even if we successfully stop some harmful wind farm plans, new plans come out one after another in the places that should be protected such as national parks and the Japan Alps. This improper site selection partly comes from the defective EIA law.

In general, EIA is required by law when large-scale developments are planned. However, wind farm construction is not included into such a category under the national EIA law in Japan.

Wind farm developers usually conduct their own EIA by hiring assessment companies but the obtained data are evaluated by the developers themselves, not by the third party. The system lacking objective judgment tends to result in the biased impact evaluation by possible manipulated data, causing the developer to steamroll the wind farm plan in the inappropriate site.

In order to avoid such improper site selection of wind farms, it is urgent to make the EIA for wind farm construction mandatory by law and develop the system of subjective impact evaluations by the third party.



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# Research & Conservation Projects in Dorset

**M**y name is Jason Fathers, I live in East Dorset and I have been asked to write a short piece about myself and some of my recent conservation work and filming of wild birds of prey.

Most forms of wildlife interest me, however, birds of prey have held a particular fascination for as long as I can remember. I suppose the two words that sum up raptors for me are, illusive and dynamic. Watching kestrels hovering beside a road or catching a fleeting glimpse of a sparrowhawk as it disappears into the undergrowth still gives me a sense of excitement as it did when I was child. Nowadays, I am fortunate to come into contact with raptors on a regular basis through my work and also my leisure...I'm afraid so... I just can't get enough of birds of prey.

## **Some research projects I have been involved with include:**

Studying the predation of sparrowhawks and buzzards on grey partridge in English lowland farmland, Growth rate data of nestling ospreys in British Columbia, Canada; assisting with wing tagging red kites for the Welsh Kite Trust and comparing the diets of breeding kestrels and little owls in English lowland farmland.

At the age of 30 I made a career changing decision to study for a degree in Wildlife Management (Sparsholt College,

Hampshire) in the hope of making my passion for wildlife my profession. The plan seems to be working so far, as for the last three years I have been employed as the Project Officer for the Chalk & Hawks Project (C&H), an EU funded Conservation and Wildlife Tourism initiative ([www.chalkandhawks.org.uk](http://www.chalkandhawks.org.uk)). The project has revolved around delivering guided wildlife walks and daylong tours in the rural heartland of Dorset. We have been using innovative wildlife watching techniques (video/cctv camera technology) and have advertised our events through countryside B&B, hotels and so on in the hope of attracting tourists and therefore a boost to the rural economy of Dorset.

The Chalk & Hawks Project arose from the conservation work of the Dorset Owl & Hawk Group. DOHNG, a local voluntary organisation, brought together enthusiastic volunteers to help make and install nest boxes for barn owls and kestrels, two amber listed in need of conservation attention. To date over 200 nest boxes for barn owls and 100 boxes for kestrels have been installed in Dorset.

By monitoring the majority of these boxes, with the help of volunteers, I am able to get a good sense of the breeding performance of particular species. The summers of 2005 and 2006 were so contrasting in the breeding performances of both barn owls and kestrels. In Dorset the 2005 breeding season began several weeks earlier than usual and ended being highly productive. I monitored and



Jason Fathers

ringed several healthy broods of six barn owls as well as above average broods of kestrel and buzzards. I knew of one well-developed brood of 7 barn owl chicks in Hampshire!

## **Different breeding season**

The 2006 breeding season was completely different. At the beginning of June most of the traditional barn owl breeding sites I monitor were either not occupied or the resident pairs had not begun breeding. Some pairs did make a late attempt at breeding but these either failed or produced very few young. Kestrels in the south of England also had a very poor breeding season. At least half of all the active kestrel nests I found had their eggs abandoned by the female midway through incubation. Andrew Village (1990) found that female kestrels would abandon their eggs if their body weight fell below a critical level.

The poor breeding season of 2006 pointed to a severe lack of short tailed field voles (*Microtus agrestis*) in the environment. Both barn owls and kestrels are field vole specialists and breed poorly when numbers are low. However, when vole numbers are low kestrels are able to change their predominant prey species, usually to small birds, but their breeding productivity drops when this happens. While filming a nesting pair of kestrels over the course of 2006 I was able to gather evidence to support this.

Detailed observations of one successful

pair of kestrels in Dorset were made with the use of a video camera. The pair laid four eggs (two weeks later than average), hatched all four eggs but only fledged two of the chicks.

Normally the female does virtually all of the incubation while the male feeds her and himself. However, the male of this pair was recorded incubating the eggs for long periods of time. Was he unable to find sufficient food (voles) for himself and the female so forcing the female to hunt for herself?

Furthermore, the chicks of this pair were fed a high number of birds. Andrew Village (1990) states that birds, on average, make up about 15% of a kestrel's diet in the breeding season. However, this figure will rise when there is a shortage of field voles. He also states that kestrels' breeding productivity is highest when field voles, their preferred prey, is abundant.

Although I do a lot of work with barn owls and kestrels, my passion lies with the hobby falcon. To me these charismatic little falcons are jewels in the sky and I never tire of seeing them. My own conservation activities focus on hobbies in Dorset:

- I install artificial nesting baskets
- Colour ring chicks
- Hope to track British hobbies with satellite technology
- Have been fortunate enough to film a nesting pair through the whole of the 2005 season.

The British hobby population has expanded northwards in the last 20 years and population estimates continue to be revised upwards. The hobby is a difficult species to study and therefore there are large gaps in our knowledge of this species. Little is known about where British hobbies winter in Africa (there has never been a

recovery of a British ringed hobby south of the Sahara).

### The use of artificial nesting baskets for the study and conservation of hobbies

Hobby pairs are highly site faithful, they tend to use the same group of trees year after year. Male hobbies also tend to return to natal areas. Once a suitable nesting site has been chosen by a pair of hobbies it may then be used successively for many years after.

Some raptor biologists have recently discovered a conservation issue concerning hobbies, namely baling twine (used by crows to build their nests) causing fatalities. Adult and young hobbies get caught in the baling twine and perish. Installing artificial baskets supplies hobbies with a secure nesting site at regularly used locations... baling twine free. Another benefit of installing baskets is ease of locating pairs for monitoring / studying.

### Colour ringing chicks

The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), together with raptor biologists/ringers across the UK, have been piloting a system of hobby study by running a five year project to colour ring chicks before they leave their nest. It is hoped that new information on the movements of these birds will be generated by sightings of these colour-ringed birds in the UK and abroad.

### Potential satellite tracking of hobbies 2008 or 2009

Until recently satellite tags have been too heavy for relatively small birds like hobbies. However, light enough tags do now exist, albeit expensively. A course of study over the next two years is being proposed with the aim of satellite tracking a number of hobby chicks on their journey to (and

return from) their wintering grounds. We will be able to see, for the first time, where British hobbies over winter and how they choose to get there.

The process will involve:

- Developing suitable harness design for a satellite tag
- Ensuring hobbies can wear this harness without ill effect
- Ensuring aerodynamics of satellite tag has minimal effect
- Raising necessary funds for tags/satellite time
- Choosing sites where birds will be tagged
- Maintaining website to view progress of birds/project.

### Filming breeding hobbies

Having installed several artificial nesting baskets for hobbies across Dorset in the winter of 2004/2005, I set about trying to film a breeding pair. I installed a camera on one of the baskets at the beginning of the season, before the expected pair returned to the site where they had bred for the previous two years. On May 12th, I saw the pair for the first time, back on territory having seemingly arrived together. Besides my basket there were three or four other old nests they could have chosen amongst the tree stand so a certain amount of luck was involved. On June 11th, I connected to the camera cable at a point 200m from the basket and there was a live image of the female sitting on two eggs. This was a very YES moment. I continued to film the breeding attempt until all three eggs laid had turned into chicks and fledged from the nest. I was able to create a very accurate Nest Record Card and gather some wonderful footage.

The last three years with the Chalk & Hawks Project has been a great experience. I have experienced a steep learning curve and have come to enjoy the challenge of filming particular species and being able to share the results with others. During 2007 the project is metamorphosing into a business (Wildlife Windows), consulting and supplying specialist wildlife watching equipment. If you have any question about the above or large amounts of money you would like to contribute to the hobby project please do get in touch.

**Jason Fathers:**  
jason@chalkandhawks.org.uk



Colour ringed Hobby chicks

References: Village, A. 1990. The Kestrel. Poyser, London

# Windows of Opportunity Can be Magical

Joe Atkinson

**Y**ou do all the necessary things; like checking the local TV stations, waiting for the talking heads to get through all the meaningless news and finally show the weather forecast. For me, news that does not directly relate to whether I can go hawking in the morning is of little interest. OK, I confess, it all sounds like blah, blah, blah (except sports, naturally). But with the words "... and now for tomorrow's weather" I snap back into the present and listen with total focus.

The forecast was not good, high winds and heavy rains all day. On to Plan B, my alternative source of weather information, my computer and the Internet. The neat thing about looking up weather on the Internet is you can get down to the important data, like the hourly rain forecast and, just as importantly, the hourly wind speed. Simply by typing in my zip code, up pops the area that I

## Predicted rain fall

The first thing I noticed was that the rain was predicted to fall for six hours. Let me see, there are roughly eight hours of daylight each day and it's only going to rain for six hours, so that would mean there's a two hour window in which I could fly my falcon. Wait, did I do that right? Maths was never my strong point. Now, the trick is to find that two hour window and then be prepared to respond quickly as the window of opportunity opens. It can be a little tricky because the storm could end up moving faster or slower, throwing the forecast off, sometimes by as much as two hours. Even with all the high powered computers and information we modern falconers have at our fingertips, it's a good idea to also use the old tried and true, time-tested method of sticking your head out the window. If, when you pull your head back in, it's wet and your hair is messed up, then it's raining and the wind is blowing.

pond or creek that you know you can get to quickly and where the odds are you will find quarry. It also helps if your falcon will fly in the rain. Over the years, I found that most light colored hybrids (gyr-peregrine) don't like flying in the rain. They eventually learn to fly in wet conditions but aren't thrilled about it at first. Dark hybrids, on the other hand, seem to like flying in the rain. It seems that the lighter birds lean towards the gyr side of their parents and the dark ones lean towards, or act more, peregrine-like. The peregrine, being a marine bird for the most part, is geared to wet weather so, to me anyway, this makes sense.

When the alarm clock goes off and you roll over, look out the window and if it's raining, you can relax and take your time. Not too much time, mind you, but you can take care of some necessities. Teeth brushing, face washing, stuff that would not get done if you had rolled over and the rain had stopped. Then it's panic city. Get the birds, dogs, everything in the truck, and roll!

Crystal clear days with blue skies and temperatures in the low 30's with just a breath of wind are spectacular but hawking in between storms is equally as sensational. Everything comes alive. You can feel the power of the storm, sense its presence around you, watch it as it moves and builds in front of you. The trees, the birds, everything can sense the energy of the storm and can sense that something is going to happen. With light rain falling on my truck, I drove over to the small creek where I have hunted wood ducks for years. I wondered if there had been enough rain to turn this normally small, slow moving creek into a fast, angry rush of water, making duck hawking very tricky and it wouldn't matter much, I'd fly anyway. Today's flight would be a total speculation flight, high water or not. My window of opportunity just would not allow for anything other than just putting up my falcon and sending in the dogs. The creek is small, maybe 10 feet across but has large trees, 300 year-old valley oaks, buckeye and black walnut trees, that line the edges on both sides of the creek. I turned my truck left and headed down what used to be a train track but the tracks had long since been removed, leaving just a clearing through the trees - I parked my truck and stepped



Driving through the rain

live in, showing lots of colorful graphics with satellite pictures and radar images. Again, I am not impressed with any of that; well, maybe the satellite pictures since they track the storms, but the rest I can do without. What I'm looking for is the hourly break down of predicted rainfall and wind speed. Those two items do directly affect whether I am going to be able to hawk in the morning.

When the window of opportunity opens up, like a lull between storms or maybe the storm is just resting for a few moments, you need to be ready. You cannot spend time checking ponds, looking for slips. There's no time, your window will close. To be prepared I load up falcons, dogs, and get everything in the truck beforehand so I'm ready at a moment's notice. It's a good idea to have one



Blackie after a successful flight



out. The only sounds I heard were those of a covey of valley quail feeding off to my left. Seeing me, they flew into the cover of the blackberries, sounding off in protest.

### A sense of urgency

The thing about flying in a storm window is there seems to be a sense of urgency. Everywhere I look animals are feeding, hunting, doing what they need to do before the next wave of the storm rolls in and drives them back into hiding. Unlike flying in any other conditions, the sense of urgency that the storm window creates triggers a deep response in all living things, including my two dogs and especially my falcon, who is dancing on his perch, wanting to fly. I wire him up, put my dogs at my heel and, in a light drizzle, begin my approach; crossing fences, winding in and out of trees, making my way to the creek. Stopping just close enough to the edge of the trees that line the creek, I strike my falcon's hood and after his normal preflight routine, he is airborne.

Hawking wood ducks in this kind of environment requires a lot of trust in your

falcon. Because you will not be able to see him much, just quick glances as you look up through the tree canopy, you must trust that he is in position. Wood ducks will flush and use the trees to their advantage and they are masters at using the natural cover for escape, that's why they are called wood ducks. Without the help of two good dogs there would be no flight, the woodies would simply fly down the middle of the creek and my falcon would have little chance.

With my falcon in good position, as near as I could tell, I sent in the dogs. Nothing happened. Next spot, nothing. I moved down the creek heading for other spots or holes, as I call them, where the wood ducks like to hang out. As I was running along the bank I saw my German short hair on point near a known favorite hole. "Find the birdie!" I yelled out. Over the bank she went, barking. She only barks when she has flushed something, and sure enough, I saw four wood ducks flushing wide out over the far creek bank and instantly turn back into the creek, flying down the center. I quickly moved as far as I could down next to the water and waved

my arms, causing the wood ducks to turn sharply and fly back out over dry land. The wood ducks still had one more trick up their sleeve. They flew almost at ground level, just inches off the top of the wet grass, speeding their way to the large patch of blackberries that have grown to the point that they almost cover the entire creek on both sides. The area is very thick and full of needle-sharp thorns that virtually nothing can get a wood duck out. However, between where I was standing and the blackberries was a gap with no trees and no cover and that would be my falcon's only window of opportunity.

I had no idea where my falcon was but, having faith that he would be in the right spot at the right time, I continued the hunt. With my dog running in my direction we effectively pinched the wood ducks, causing them to swing wide, away from the creek, entering a clearing. I stood and watched as the wood ducks sped towards the blackberries. Suddenly, I heard the unmistakable sound of a falcon stooping, the sizzle, and I knew that my falcon was in the right position. The wood duck was, I'm sure, confident that it had overcome the threat and was home free. My eight-year-old falcon, however, had something to say about that and, just as suddenly, the sound of a whack seemed to echo off of the storm itself. I saw the woodie fold up and drop into the wet grass. My falcon landed softly on his prize, followed closely by both of my dogs who converged on the scene and then, finally, I arrived with a big smile and a feeling that all is right in the world. Well, at least in my world.

### Undercover

With my falcon feeding on my fist and my two dogs in tow, the light drizzle that had begun falling as I made my approach to the creek, turned into more serious rain and the storm started to build once again, resuming its hold on the land, sending all the creatures running for cover. It's a mistake to think that you have in some way beaten the storm or that you are somehow smarter or above the storm's power, because the truth is you are not. Falconers, I believe, are just a little more in touch with the rhythm of nature through the birds we fly. Not that we know more or are somehow better than the rest of the world, nothing like that. Through the actions of our hunting partners we see things that most do not see. We also know that each time we release our birds could be the last time we ever see them. The call of nature is strong and the wind is a seductive temptress. She calls to our birds and sometimes they answer but not on this day. I walked back to my truck, grateful that I had had this window of opportunity.

# So You Want a

**T**o kick off, let me try to give you some general background information. First, remember that whatever you hear the Harris' Hawk is not an easy beginner's bird; it is a complex little beast and to get the best from it you need to understand it fully. So, in preparation for the 2007/8 season here is the first part of the Harris' Hawk by Steve Hopper.

The Harris' Hawk (also known as the Bay-winged Hawk), *Parabuteo unicinctus*, is a medium-large bird of prey which ranges from the south western USA south to Chile and central Argentina. It is the only member of the genus *Parabuteo* (Ridgway, 1874).

Being found in the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico, from Baja California to southern Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, extending south through Central and South America to Chile and just into Patagonia. (Johnsgard, 1990)

A medium to large sized hawk with a long tail and broad wings. Harris' Hawks range in length from 18 to 23 inches (46 to 76 cm) and have wingspans of 40 to 47 inches (100 to 120 cm). Adult plumage is

uniformly chocolate brown with distinct reddish shoulders, upper and underwing coverts and leg feathers. The tail is dark with white upper and undertail coverts and a white base and terminal band. Juveniles are similar to adults but are less distinctly coloured and have a white belly with chocolate brown streaking. The tarsal feathers are pale with reddish barring and there is barring on the tail and wings. Females weigh an average of 1,047 grams, and males are smaller, weighing an average of 735 grams. (Driscoll, 2000; Thomas and Gates, 1998; Wheeler and Clark, 1996).

John James Audubon gave this bird its English name in honour of his ornithological companion, financial supporter and friend Edward Harris.

Harris' Hawks can be found in semi-open habitat varying between sparse woodland and semi-desert, as well as marshes (with some trees) in some parts of its range (Howell and Webb 1994). The various habitats, from upland desert dominated by saguaros to mesquite, palo verde, and ironwood woodlands in the Colorado River valley. There is a population of hawks being reintroduced to the Colorado River that prefer to

nest in mesquite near water and willows and cottonwoods. In urban areas, they are seen utilising washes, open lots, and open desert. These hawks may be found at elevations of 400 to 1,000 metres. (Driscoll, 2000; Johnsgard, 1990)

## Breeding Season

Harris' Hawks breed all year round laying a clutch of between three to five eggs with two or more clutches that may be laid. The eggs being incubated over 33 to 37 days before hatching, the resultant chicks fledge over the following 35 to 45 days, becoming independent after two to three months.

Social groups of Harris' Hawks often contain a single monogamous breeding pair, however, these hawks are known to practise simultaneous polyandry, where more than one male mates with a female and shares in the responsibilities of raising offspring. Polyandry is commonly found in areas where the habitat quality is rich as opposed to arid habitats where the chances of reproductive success are less, even when there are three adults hunting. It is also found to be common in Arizona where the sex ratio is significantly skewed towards males, in comparison with areas



Following on

# a Harris' Hawk? part 1

such as Texas, where the sex ratio is not as skewed. (Johnsgard, 1990).

Harris' Hawks build their nests in saguaros, palo verdes and mesquite trees at an average height of five metres. In urban areas, nests can be found on cottonwoods, ironwoods, palm trees and electrical towers. Nests are platforms made of sticks, weeds, twigs, and are usually lined with soft mosses, grasses and roots. Between two and four eggs are laid at a time. Females have the ability to breed all year long and can lay two to three clutches within a year. The incubation period lasts about 35 days and the males often share duties with the female during this period. Fledging occurs after another 40 days. The young birds tend to stay around the nest area for two or three months longer.

Both the female and the male contribute to parental care. Harris' Hawks practise co-operative breeding, with several birds helping with building nests, incubation, feeding, and defense. This assistance increases nest success. There is often a trio consisting of two males and a female, which aid in the nest cycle. (Driscoll, 2000; Johnsgard, 1990; Thomas and Gates, 1998).

Records on longevity are collected from the Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) in Laurel, Maryland. The maximum longevity record for Harris' Hawks is 14 years, 11 months. (Klimkiewicz, 2002).

## Non-migratory birds

Harris' hawks are non-migratory and diurnal. They form complex social groups, which aid in the nesting cycle. Most often these groups are trios consisting of two males and a female, but groups of four or five hawks are not uncommon. There is a strict dominance hierarchy within groups of Harris' Hawks. The breeding, or alpha female, is dominant to all other hawks in the group. Occasionally, there is a second female who is subordinate to the alpha female but dominant to all other males in the group. The breeding, or alpha, male is dominant to all other males in the group. Commonly the group contains a beta male, who may



The recall

attempt, often unsuccessfully, to mate with the alpha female. Finally, there may be several gamma birds, which are subordinate to the alpha and beta individuals. These gamma birds may be either male or female, and usually they are sexually immature individuals. Often they are the juvenile offspring of the alpha pair. All members of the group help with obtaining food, defending the breeding territory, and providing nest protection. These groups also hunt co-operatively. They are able to take much larger prey when hunting in groups. This aspect of group hunting and food sharing increases survival rates for birds as individuals. (Bednarz and David, 1988; Coulson and Coulson, 1995; Dawson and Mannan,

1991; Thomas and Gates, 1998)

Harris' Hawks establish and defend territories that range from 0.2 to 5.5 square kilometres in size. Territory size depends on the availability of food and other resources.

Like all hawks, Harris' Hawks have keen vision and hearing. They are known to make hissing noises, give alarm calls, and probably communicate visually as well.

The diet of Harris' Hawks is versatile and varies with prey availability. These hawks feed mostly on small mammals such as rats and mice, but also take birds and lizards. They commonly hunt in groups of about five hawks, increasing their success rate and enabling them

to take larger prey such as cottontails and jack rabbits. These hunting groups consist of a breeding pair and other helpers, with the female dominating. They are fast flyers and once they have spotted their prey, they land and take turns trying to scare and actually flush the prey animal until it darts from beneath its hiding place. Another member of the hunting group captures the animal and assumes a posture known as mantling, in which the hawk shields the prey with its wings to hide it from other birds. It has been suggested that group hunting is encouraged by the dense brush and thorny nature of their habitat. There is some evidence that these hawks may feed on carrion if food availability is low. (Bednarz and David, 1988; Coulson and Coulson, 1995; Johnsgard, 1990.

### Greatest threat

Great horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*) pose the greatest predation threat to this species, but coyotes (*Canis latrans*) and common ravens (*Corvus corax*) also threaten young hawks. Female Harris' Hawks utilize helpers to protect their nests. The helpers perch in saguaros and scan the surroundings for predators.



On the lookout

They tend to become excited and will use an alarm call when predators come within their nesting area. Groups consisting of two to five hawks will attack and harass any predator threatening the nest. The alpha male is most likely to strike the predator as the female stays behind to protect the nest. This establishment of

helpers greatly increases the detection of predators and nest success. (Dawson and Mannan, 1991)

Harris' Hawks are important predators in their ecosystem, controlling populations of many small mammal species. (Coulson and Coulson, 1995)

The only negative impact of these hawks is their habit of congregating on electrical transformers, where they are often electrocuted. This has become a great cost to electric companies who are being forced to reinsulate and, in some cases, build arms for perching to reduce the mortality rates of hawks. (Driscoll, 2000)

Harris' Hawks are of great benefit to farmers whose crops are destroyed by rodents. These hawks feed primarily on small rodents such as mice and rats and therefore alleviate a lot of destruction to crops. (Coulson and Coulson, 1995)

Harris' Hawks are not listed as threatened or endangered. They are included in CITES appendix II and they are protected from harassment and illegal shooting by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. A population on the Colorado River is thought to have been destroyed due to their dependence on a riverbank

community which was altered by dam construction and disturbance from dredging as well as nest destruction. Real estate and agriculture threaten the species in Arizona. Recent declines in Texas populations resulted from the clearing of mesquite for agriculture and livestock grazing. Habitat loss is the major

cause of decline of this species as well as excessive human disturbance. Shooting can result in nest failure, abandonment and mortality. Electrocution is responsible for the loss of half of the population of breeding hawks. It is possible in areas such as Arizona for birds to live in cities where the native vegetation is protected, houses are spread apart and there is not an overabundant amount of asphalt and concrete. (Johnsgard, 1990; Whaley, 1986)

Harris' Hawks social behaviour is unusual for raptors. Young may stay with their parents for up to three years, helping to raise later broods. They also hunt together, groups of two to six birds often co-operating to flush and then capture prey. In contrast, the vast majority of raptors are solitary hunters.

### Sociable species

This social behaviour gives Harris' Hawks an easygoing nature that makes them desirable captive birds. Since about 1980, Harris' Hawks have been increasingly used in falconry and are now the most popular hawks in the West (outside of Asia) for that purpose, as they are the easiest to train and the most affectionate, if that is the right term for a bonded fully manned bird. Hunting with Harris' Hawks often works best with two or more birds. (In contrast most other raptors cannot be flown together, as they can and may well attack each other.) When prey is flushed, the birds can work together to corner the animal – compensating for their relatively low acceleration and speed. Harris' Hawks will happily treat the falconer as a hunting partner and will follow from tree to tree and perch until the falconer flushes a rabbit from the bushes!

The Harris' Hawk is now widely used in European towns to scare pigeons and starlings. Many airports use falconers to scare these birds away from the land around runways and reduce the risk of bird strikes on planes.

There have been recent (as of 2005) reports of escaped Harris' Hawks breeding in the wild in the UK but at this time I can add nothing to substantiate these claims, I am aware, however, of two female Harris' Hawks that are living wild in the South Devon area; as I write one has been out for the last three years on the edge of Dartmoor and the other since spring 2006 has been thriving on the feral pigeon population in Torquay.

# Hunting with Harris Hawks by Bob Dalton

## Hunting with Harris Hawks



**bob dalton**



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# Dogs and Harris' Hawks

## Don't Mix!

**W**e had spent a couple of successful seasons 'rough hawking' without a dog but as with all things

in this sport the desire to tweak and refine an approach is paramount. Slope soaring with *Parabuteo unicinctus* is without question the pinnacle of all of the various flying styles a Harris allows. Harry McElroy's 1977 description in *Desert Hawking* solidified such flying concretely in my mind. Hollinshead's requiem in *Passion for Harris' Hawks* still literally blows me away. Not least because it comes from the landscape I have been hunting and fishing over all of my life. A landscape that is in my blood, one I understand and breathe daily.

In my limited experience, it is possible to achieve a modicum of soaring success without a dog but field craft has to be absolutely perfect; patience at a premium, luck supplied by the bucketful and ferrets working consistently and with speed. To convince other sceptical falconers of such success also requires deft photographic skills and a steady camcorder hand.

But I'll be honest; achieving any semblance of serious soaring without a dog is haphazard at best. The weather is the biggest factor. However, assuming the wind is right then a regular quantity of 'flight worthy' quarry is next. Purely and simply a lumbering human is no match for the evolutionary brilliance of either rabbits or pheasant especially when that human has to keep an eye on his charge sailing about on the breeze and the ferrets below. Without all of the detailed balance and checks coming together at the right time, success becomes impossibly slippery and complex.

### Predicament answer

In answer to our predicament we needed to have a guarantee of rabbits in every mountainside bury or at least ground game sitting tight while Cody worked



Ellie

the sky. The only answer was the nose of a well bred, hard working historic dog. We also had one eye firmly on the future and the acquisition of our first Tiercel. The Peregrine being specifically bought to extend our falconry skills rather than replace the hawk we already owned. A good dog, a hawk for fur and a falcon for feather, then our dreams and hard work would finally be complete.

I am without doubt a traditionalist at heart, believing wholeheartedly in certain styles and methods of historical country life being preserved. Not because they are old but purely and simply because they are the correct tools for the job. After all, if a job is worth doing then it must be done right! So, it was the hunt, point and retrieve breeds we turned to for inspiration.

We spent about 10 months researching the various lines, working out dates of when to buy a puppy and most importantly, asking our peers what they thought of the different breeds. Vizsla's are an old, well-established HPR dog. In fact, it is possibly the only known dog specifically bred for falconry. We also compared notes with all the other available breeds and other than the Munsterlander, the rest had traits that we didn't want or indeed didn't like. Key to our choice was watching a beautiful bitch named 'Hope' being run over Braco Castle Moor and then by her new owner, Anthony Rigby, on our own permission in Shropshire. She had everything

we required: a good nose, manners, intelligence, hard working enthusiasm, no need of a stern voice and a shape and form that pleased the eye.

We purchased the bitch through the Hungarian Vizsla Society, from a private breeder, who is also a respected vet. 'Ellie' has already surpassed our expectations, not least because the myths of the breed have been blown apart. We are taking it slow; but it is clear her build and bloodline are good, her nose is sharp, her fitness supreme and intelligence without question. We know it will take a good 18 months to make anything of her, so her ability at this fragile time is not at all under scrutiny. However, the key factor in all of this is how our hawk has dealt with this new partner.

### Canine fear

Harris' Hawks get a bad name for being inherently fearful of canine company, some say this is a throwback to predation by Coyotes in the wild. Having watched Harris' Hawks hunting in the scrub of Texas I can vouch for this theory having more than a modicum of truth. However, having trained my hawk to avoid killing the ferrets (as do many Harris' owners) it doesn't take a leap of the imagination to ensure with careful and thoughtful introduction, the Harris' instinct can be overcome. And if I am totally honest I have seen some 'steady' accipiters, hawks and falcons taking a dislike to dogs. In fact I suspect that many of the Harris' problems stem from the handler and not the hawk.

Throughout this year's moult we slowly and surely introduced Ellie to Cody. First, she was just a background blur while I cleaned out his mews. Then over the proceeding weeks, we moved her closer and closer to the mews at specific times. Food is a great distraction and feeding the hawk daily with a pup in your arms does wonders for creating a bond and lowering inhibitions on the

hawk's behalf. I also bought kennelling, which now doubles up as weathering for a bowed out hawk, while the dog runs sniffing and romping around the garden. Having this barrier between the dog and hawk has also helped in teaching the puppy that a hawk does not like to be sniffed or chewed.

### Successful days

So far, we have had two successful days out with the whole team. On the first occasion the hawk was flying free alongside a free-running dog. The field we worked had no game, no scent or prey of any kind – was merely a way of showing the



hawk that the dog can be trusted. On the second occasion Ellie was firmly under Lucy's guidance and watched at a distance as Cody filled his crop on a rabbit meal. We gave no commands and chastised not one little bit; it is too early for that.

At this moment she is 22 weeks old and other than the basic commands of 'sit', 'down' and 'return' we shall leave her to grow up a happy healthy canine companion. However, each day is not without incident and our patience is tested several times during the day. But we have seen her potential and we are slowly building a balanced hunting team to be proud of. Roll on the soaring weather and the next step; well-managed game on Shropshire's blustery hills and a slope soared pheasant or two!

# David L. Prescott

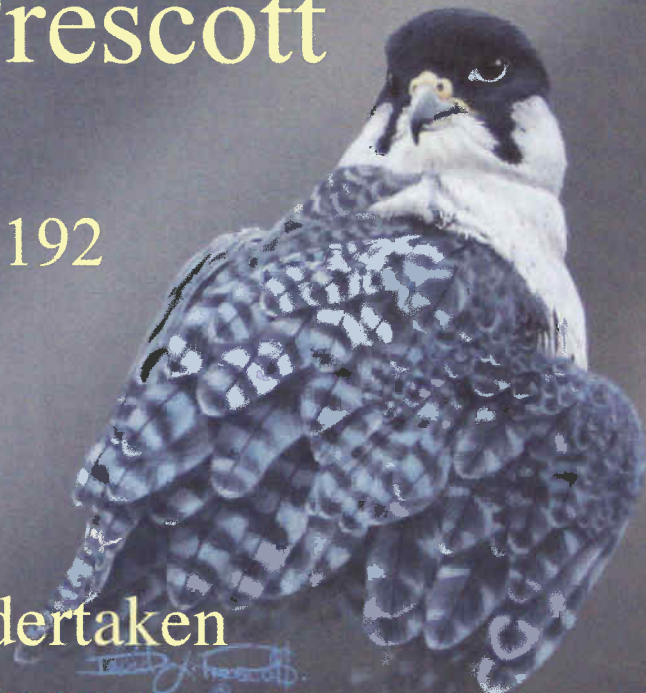
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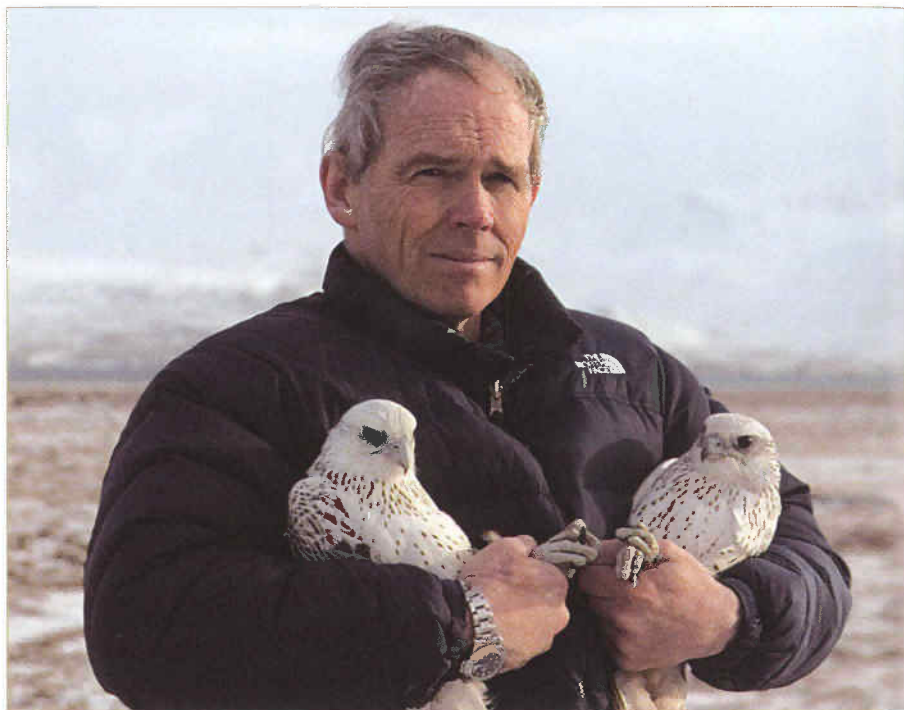
# Bill Burnham 1947-2006

**B**ill Burnham, President and CEO of The Peregrine Fund from 1986 through 2006, has died from brain cancer. Bill grew up in Colorado, spending as much time as possible in the outdoors. His initial interest in raptors developed through falconry when, at the young age of 15, he obtained an eyass Golden Eagle, which he raised and later flew as his first falconry bird. Shortly after this, he found his two true loves: Patricia Wood, his wife of 40 years, and the Peregrine Falcon, a species which subsequently led him from the sandy shores of Padre Island to the barren tundra of Greenland. After completing an M.Sc. in Zoology at Brigham Young University describing his work with Peregrines in Greenland, Bill joined The Peregrine Fund/Cornell University in 1974, where he established The Peregrine Fund's western propagation facility in Fort Collins, Colorado. In 1977 Bill was elected to the Board of Directors of The Peregrine Fund and in 1982 he was named a Founding Member.

During the spring and summer of 1984, Bill spearheaded the creation of The Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho. At the same time he received his Ph.D. in Wildlife Biology from Colorado State University. In 1986 Bill was named President of The Peregrine Fund, a position he held until May of 2006 when he was named President Emeritus.

Under Bill's direction and guidance, The Peregrine Fund's scope and breadth flourished, and its staff, to date, has worked on more than 95 species of raptors in 55 different countries. Despite his ever expanding administrative duties, Bill always remained active in fieldwork, from the Arctic to the tropics. When not working, he maintained his lifelong passion for nature and the outdoors.

Bill's experience with birds of prey extended over 44 years, and led him around the world, from the mountains, plains, and forests of North America (since 1963) to arctic Greenland (since 1972), and then to the tropical forests of Latin America, Asia and Africa, and to the Pacific Islands (since 1980). He's authored more than 90 scientific papers and articles, and one book, *A Fascination with Falcons*. Together, these various publications reflect his diverse interests in raptors, general science, and conservation, from captive



breeding and egg physiology to raptor ecology and species restoration. In addition, Bill edited The Peregrine Fund's publications and website, and co-edited the book *Return of the Peregrine* which chronicled the restoration of the Peregrine Falcon in North America and its de-listing from the Endangered Species List in 1999.

During Bill's tenure as President of The Peregrine Fund, he focused on the continued expansion and evolution of the organization both nationally and internationally, beginning with construction of the World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho, followed in 1986 by the establishment of The Archives of Falconry and the construction of a building specifically designed to house and breed tropical raptors (Tropical Raptor Building).

Two years later, he co-founded the Maya Project in Guatemala and Belize which worked with more than 24 different raptors over a 10-year period of field work. In 1990 a field station was built in Madagascar and work began on endangered birds there; the following year the program expanded to the African mainland. Bill oversaw expansion of the education program with the construction of the Velma Morrison Interpretive Center in 1992, greatly increasing the number of annual visitors.

Starting in 1993, a major program was initiated to breed in captivity and then

release California Condors into the Grand Canyon, Arizona, in order to establish a wild population. This program required the construction of three buildings in Boise, as well as a field station in Arizona over the following 13 years. Additionally, large scale releases of Aplomado Falcons began in south Texas, with further releases in west Texas and New Mexico in later years. Facilities were constructed on two islands in Hawaii to work with rare and endangered Hawaiian birds; a program which was later passed to the Zoological Society of San Diego. In 1997 the High Arctic Institute was established and a field station opened at Thule Air Base, northwest Greenland, to provide a more secure base for the work Bill had been doing in Greenland since 1972. Work in the Neotropics was formalized with the establishment of Fondo Peregrino-Panama in 2000, and the construction of the Neotropical Raptor Center followed shortly after in 2001. In 2002 a long-term goal was realized with the construction of the Gerald D. and Kathryn S. Herrick Collections Building at the World Center in Boise, providing a long-term home for an extensive and ever growing library, egg and specimen collection, and The Archives of Falconry.

In addition to his work with The Peregrine Fund, Bill also attempted to influence conservation and government

policy regarding the environment whenever possible. He was appointed by Secretary of the Interior, Lujan, to the National Public Lands Advisory Council, where he served as a trustee on the Boise State University Foundation, as a conflict mediator and then member of the Bureau of Land Management's Oversight Committee for the Snake River Birds of Prey Area. He served on the council for the multi-agency and university Raptor Research and Technical Assistance Center, on the Board of the North American Raptor Breeders' Association, on the Advisory Board of the Walt Disney Company's Animal Kingdom, as an advisor to the Philippine Government on science and conservation for the Philippine Eagle, and as a Board member of the Philippine Eagle Foundation, Inc.

Additionally, Bill advised on birds of prey and conservation in various other functions nationally and internationally. He was a "fellow" member of The Arctic Institute of North America and of The Explorers Club. He received the Explorers Club's Champion of Conservation Award in 2004 and was awarded the Zoological Society of San Diego's prestigious Conservation Medal in 2006.

In the years before his death, Bill

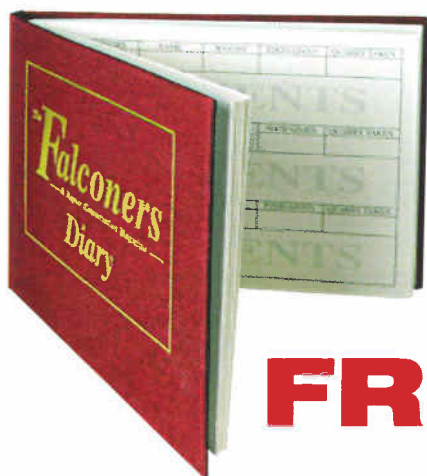
dedicated a significant amount of his time to the re-writing of the Endangered Species Act, working with lawmakers and testifying before both House and Senate subcommittees in an attempt to add language to make the Act more user-friendly and effective for conservation organizations.

The long-term effects of Bill's influence on conservation through the activities of The Peregrine Fund have yet to be felt. Bill strongly believed that education of local individuals in the countries in which The Peregrine Fund worked, was a critical component of conservation, leading to The Peregrine Fund supporting students from Mongolia to Madagascar, with more than 20 Ph.D.s, 53 M.Sc.s, and countless other B.S. and high school diplomas earned. During his tenure over 2,000 Peregrine Falcons, 1,250 Aplomado Falcons, 93 California Condors, and 47 Harpy Eagles were produced in captivity and released into the wild. Highlights included the de-listing of the Peregrine Falcon from the Endangered Species List in 1999 and the first wild-produced California Condor fledging in the Grand Canyon in November 2003. What was perhaps Bill's greatest accomplishment, and the one he was the most proud of, was bringing together the world-changing staff, Board of Directors,

collaborators, and members that make The Peregrine Fund what it is today and to have made all of the before-mentioned results possible. If given one last wish, he would have wanted to thank each and every one of you for your critical help and assistance in making the world a better place.

Bill married Pat in 1966; they have one son, Kurt, who is completing his D.Phil. in Ornithology at the University of Oxford. As time allowed, Bill was a practicing falconer, still flying a Peregrine Falcon. Each fall Bill looked forward to chukar hunting with Kurt in Idaho and spending several weeks flying his falcons, big game hunting, running dogs, and bird hunting with his friends in Sheridan, Wyoming. Bill held a special love for the Arctic and worked in Greenland from 1972 through this past summer. He was especially proud to have spent the last 16 summers working on Peregrine Falcons and Gyrfalcons in Greenland with his son, Kurt.

Those wishing to help may contribute to The Peregrine Fund's endowment so that Bill's efforts can be continued in perpetuity. Donations should be made directly to The Peregrine Fund and will be split equally between the general endowment for The Peregrine Fund and the endowment for The Archives of Falconry.



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**Dave - Membership Secretary**

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## The South East Falconry Group

AIMS TO SUPPORT FALCONERS IN THE CONTINUATION AND  
PRACTICE OF FALCONRY.

Drawing its membership from around the South and East of England, the SEFG provides a forum for falconers and would-be falconers to meet, discuss and practice the art. Members benefit from having access to a wealth of experience and knowledge, good facilities and field meeting opportunities throughout the winter months.

Meetings take place on the last Tuesday of the month at  
Tilbury in Essex.

For members in our Southern region informal meetings take  
place nr Winchester, Hants.

*For further information or an application form please contact -*

**Dean White (secretary) on 01489 896504**

**E-mail us at [enquiry@sfg.org](mailto:enquiry@sfg.org) or**

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Falconry

*Further details from:*

**Tommy Bryce  
01620 850209**

★ We are a D.E.F.R.A. recognised club ★



## Yorkshire Falconry Club

Meetings held at The Milton Arms, Elsecard,  
Barnsley. We hold our meetings on the 3rd  
Wednesday on the month at 8pm.

Membership includes;

- Public liability insurance
- Affiliation to the Hawk Board

*For further information please telephone Steven on*

**07736 319 347**

*or*

visit our website



[www.yorkshirefalconry.co.uk](http://www.yorkshirefalconry.co.uk)



## HOME COUNTIES HAWKING CLUB

***Affiliated to the Hawk Board.***

***Group member of the Countryside Alliance.***

We meet at Bagshot, Surrey, on the third Tuesday  
of the month.

The aim of the club is to promote good husbandry  
and practices in raptor keeping and flying and our  
membership ranges from complete beginners to  
seasoned falconers.

Our programme includes guest speakers and  
demonstrations, and field meets are held through  
the season.

**Ring Laila on 01945 410150 or  
Alan on 01784 250577 after 6.00pm**

# Club Directory



## South Eastern Raptors Association (S.E.R.A.)

Established for some 25 years, and now affiliated to the Hawk Board and holding group membership to the Countryside Alliance, the aims of S.E.R.A. are to further and maintain the standards of falconry in the South-East of England. With a broad band of knowledge and experience within our club, we extend a warm welcome to new members, whether practising falconers or complete novices. Where practicable, novices will be allocated a mentor. Helpful, honest and friendly advice is always available.

Our meetings are held at 10.30am on the second Sunday of each month throughout the year at  
**The Junction Inn - Groombridge, Kent. (Opposite Groombridge Station)**

Outings, guest speakers, field meets, (at home and away) videos, quizzes and other special events are ever-present features of our club calendar and may be viewed on our website.

Please visit our website at: [www.sera.freereserve.co.uk](http://www.sera.freereserve.co.uk) or telephone Brian for information on: **01732 463218**

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## THE CHESHIRE HAWKING CLUB

Meetings:- Held 2nd Tuesday of every month at 8pm.

Venue:- Railway Hotel, Mill Lane, Heatley, Nr Lymm, Cheshire

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## Lancashire Falconry & Hawking Club

Meetings held at:-

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For information contact:

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[www.lancsfalconry.co.uk](http://www.lancsfalconry.co.uk)



### IBR Lost, Found, Reunited & Stolen birds of prey from 5th January to 1st April 2007

The IBR would like to thank all of those people that helped to reunite and look after found birds.

If you think one of these birds is yours or you think you may know the owner, - please contact us. If you have reported losing a bird it is LOGGED on the database and REMAINS on the LOST LIST until WE are told differently.

Part of the ring number has been replaced with an ? for security reasons  
 The lost birds with the ring numbers written in BOLD ITALIC i.e. DL9 are birds that were reported lost and either the number was unknown, not given or the bird was not wearing a ring.

#### STOLEN x 7

54007 121424452A (chip) / IBRS3422Z EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL  
 29153 13801EN HARRIS HAWK  
 39978 IBR36654W HARRIS HAWK  
 40328 IBR36959W HARRIS HAWK  
 49121 IBR48221W HARRIS HAWK  
 51740 IBRS1123W HARRIS HAWK  
 42822 6290 / IBR39369YA INDIAN EAGLE OWL

#### REUNITED x 106

BARN OWL x 11, COMMON BUZZARD x 3, EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL x 3, GOSHAWK x 5, GREAT HORNED OWL GYR HYBRID x 10, HARRIS HAWK x 37, KESTREL x 2, LANNER FALCON x 3, LANNER HYBRIDS x 2, LUGGER X SAKER PEREGRINE FALCON x 2, PEREGRINE HYBRIDS x 6, RAVEN, RED-TAILED HAWK x 7, SAKER FALCON x 8, TAWNY OWL x 3, URAL OWL

#### LOST x 81

REF RING NUMBER  
 54587 ??CGPOXOWL?? AMERICAN BARN OWL

37465 ??3954?? BARN OWL  
 42546 ??0541?? BARN OWL  
 51149 ??0222?? BARN OWL  
 52581 ??0473?? BARN OWL  
 54272 ??34BCU?? BARN OWL  
 54590 ??9606?? BARN OWL  
 54304 ??262?? COMMON BUZZARD  
 54338 ??49?? COMMON BUZZARD  
 54395 ??5BC9?? EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL  
 30400 ??6507?? EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL  
 48607 ??ESL0?? EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL  
 53150 ??0192?? EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL  
 31673 NRI1 FERRUGINOUS HAWK  
 54501 BS13 FERRUGINOUS HAWK  
 54524 LD6 FERRUGINOUS HAWK  
 54177 ??F0003?? GOLDEN EAGLE  
 54268 ??6252?? GREAT HORNED OWL  
 36947 ??95?? / IDS? GYR FALCON  
 37303 ??92?? / 2DS? GYR FALCON  
 54181 ??96?? / ??654?? GYR / PEREGRINE HYBRID  
 39085 ??350? / ??337? GYR / SAKER  
 39374 ??11349?? GYR / SAKER  
 39413 ??1212? / ??31?? GYR / SAKER  
 53850 ??891? / ??7826? GYR / SAKER  
 54401 ??9348? GYR / SAKER  
 54405 ??8202? GYR / SAKER  
 54549 ??408? GYR x GYR / SAKER  
 1548 ??270?? HARRIS HAWK  
 10164 WA13 HARRIS HAWK

13524 ??3486?? HARRIS HAWK  
 17636 ??4288?? HARRIS HAWK  
 24951 ??4335?? HARRIS HAWK  
 26900 ??ND0?? HARRIS HAWK  
 33273 ??5475?? HARRIS HAWK  
 38545 M24 HARRIS HAWK  
 42237 ??1929?? HARRIS HAWK  
 42415 ??1982?? HARRIS HAWK  
 44804 ??2957?? HARRIS HAWK  
 50007 ??0643?? HARRIS HAWK  
 54149 DN34 HARRIS HAWK  
 54175 PO36 HARRIS HAWK  
 54263 NG17 HARRIS HAWK  
 54265 ??6178?? HARRIS HAWK  
 54337 NG4 HARRIS HAWK  
 54346 ??060?? HARRIS HAWK  
 54540 ??5123?? HARRIS HAWK  
 54672 ??710?? HARRIS HAWK  
 54736 PL10 HARRIS HAWK  
 55000 DE56 HARRIS HAWK  
 55021 ??366?? HARRIS HAWK  
 55047 BA13 HARRIS HAWK  
 29385 ??9575?? KESTREL  
 33022 ??47?? KESTREL  
 39538 PL19 KESTREL  
 45251 ??0293?? KESTREL  
 50416 ??8608?? KESTREL  
 51726 ??8722?? KESTREL  
 32555 ??GTA0?? LANNER  
 40438 ??YOONEEK0?? LANNER  
 44476 ??YOONEEK?? LANNER  
 46585 ??5345? / ??3973? PEREGRINE  
 53513 ??6181?? PEREGRINE  
 55044 ??2137?? / ??4551?? PEREGRINE  
 55045 ??930?? PEREGRINE  
 53002 ??1835?? PEREGRINE  
 53981 ??4263?? / ??1099?? PEREGRINE  
 35558 ??5487?? RAVEN  
 11339 ??420?? RED-TAILED HAWK

14643 ??BB98?? RED-TAILED HAWK  
 20742 ??95?? RED-TAILED HAWK  
 33124 DY3 RED-TAILED HAWK  
 41192 ??LYON?? RED-TAILED HAWK  
 47602 ??KFCC0?? RED-TAILED HAWK  
 54178 ??780?? RED-TAILED HAWK  
 54553 ??0025?? RUPPELLES  
 53565 ??8135?? SAKER FALCON  
 54489 ??KFCC0?? SAKER FALCON  
 54975 ??KFCC9?? SAKER FALCON  
 54976 LD6 SAKER FALCON  
 54154 ??04RP?? SPARROWHAWK

#### FOUND x 21

REF RING NUMBER  
 39661 ??MS0?? AFRICAN SPOTTED EAGLE OWL  
 19810 ??BH9?? BARN OWL  
 32140 ??7134?? BARN OWL  
 39567 ??810A9?? BARN OWL  
 54288 ??3705?? BARN OWL  
 54554 ??110A8?? BARN OWL  
 54673 ??0DMB0?? BARN OWL  
 42587 ??1794?? COMMON BUZZARD  
 54340 ??760?? COMMON BUZZARD  
 54715 ??1DMB0?? EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL  
 54533 ??9TJW?? EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL  
 54334 ??MB9?? GREAT HORNED OWL  
 25766 ??719?? HARRIS HAWK  
 53912 ??3238?? HARRIS HAWK  
 54157 ??ELL7?? HARRIS HAWK  
 54328 ??56BL9?? HARRIS HAWK  
 54335 ??0-1?? PEREGRINE FALCON  
 5027 ??258B?? / ??258E?? RED-TAILED HAWK  
 54152 ??307DO?? RED-TAILED HAWK  
 54488 ??9AM?? RED-TAILED HAWK  
 12626 ??47BC0?? TAWNY OWL

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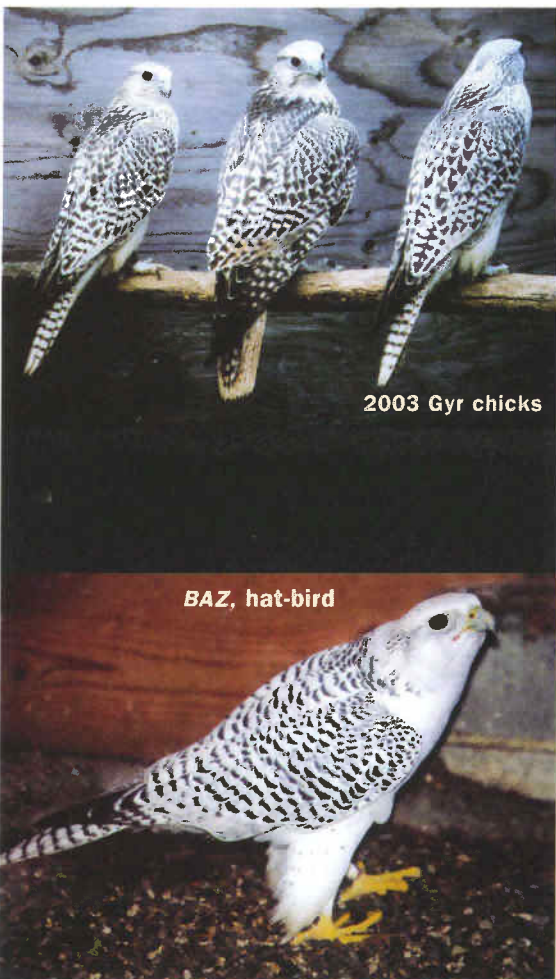
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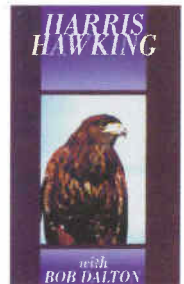
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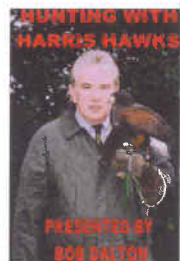
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