

Your Favourite Falconry Magazine

Issue 87

£4.25

www.falconers.info



ISSN
0967-2206

The **Falconers**
& Raptor Conservation Magazine

Return of the
Red
Kite



The

Falconers

& Raptor Conservation Magazine

Take out a
subscription for just

£16.50



You can subscribe or
renew on-line. Just
visit our subscription
department website:-

www.mysubcare.com

For credit card orders

TEL: 01442 820580 Most credit cards accepted

FAX: 01442 827912 E-mail: falconers@webscribe.co.uk
or write to: The Falconers & Raptor Conservation Magazine,
Unit 8, The Old Silk Mill, Brook Street, Tring, Herts HP23 5EF

Cheques/Postal Orders made payable to PW Publishing Ltd.



Front Cover:

Photograph courtesy
Mike Read
www.mikeread.co.uk

Autumn 2011 / No.87

Editor:

Peter Eldrett

ALL EDITORIAL
INFO TO THIS
ADDRESS

Knowle View, Kings Lane, Woodlands,
Wimborne, Dorset BH21 8LZ
Telephone: (01202) 826181
E-mail: peter.eldrett@tiscali.co.uk

Art Editor: Steve Hunt

Telephone: 0845 803 1979
Fax: 01202 659950
E-mail: steve@pwpublishing.ltd.uk

Advertising and Marketing:

Sales:

Roger Hall
0845 803 1979

Production:

Peter Eldrett
PW Publishing Ltd., Arrowsmith Court,
Station Approach, Broadstone,
Dorset BH18 8PW
Telephone: 0845 803 1979
Fax: 01202 659950
E-mail: sales@pwpublishing.ltd.uk

Finance:

Alan Burgess
Telephone: 0845 803 1979
Fax: 01202 659950
E-mail: alan@pwpublishing.ltd.uk

Subscriptions:

UK & Eire: £16.50
Europe: £20.00
Airmail: £28.00

Send your details to our Subscriptions Department:

ALL
SUBSCRIPTION
INFO TO THIS
ADDRESS

Falconers Magazine,
Subscriptions Dept.,
Unit 8 The Old Silk Mill
Brook Street, Tring
Hertfordshire HP23 5EF
Telephone: (01442) 820580
Fax: (01442) 827912
E-mail: falconers@webscribe.co.uk
Web: www.webscribe.co.uk

Cheque/Postal Order payable to: **PW Publishing Ltd.**

The views expressed in this magazine are the views of the authors. No responsibility for the quality of goods or services offered in this magazine can be accepted by the publishers or the printers, and all advertisements are accepted in good faith.

© PW PUBLISHING LTD. 2011.

Copyright in all drawings, photographs and articles published in *The Falconers & Raptor Conservation Magazine* is fully protected and reproduction or imitation in whole or in part is expressly forbidden. All reasonable precautions are taken by *The Falconers & Raptor Conservation Magazine* to ensure that the advice and data given to our readers is reliable. We cannot, however, guarantee it and we cannot accept legal responsibility for it. Prices are those current as we go to press. *The Falconers & Raptor Conservation Magazine* is published quarterly for £16.50 (UK) per year by PW Publishing Ltd., Arrowsmith Court, Station Approach, Broadstone, Dorset BH18 8PW. Printed in England by Holbrooks Printers, Portsmouth, Hampshire.

contents

- 4 News
-
- 7 Ask Chitty
Gout in birds of prey
-
- 8 Hawk Board News
-
- 10 Return of the Red Kite
Photographer Mike Read and the survival of this iconic raptor
-
- 12 A Story from Arctic Greenland
Paul Deeley tells us about falconry in the frozen north
-
- 16 Dullstroom Volunteer
Beth Silvester and her experiences working in South Africa
-
- 18 Eagle Meets 2011
Dr. David Glynne Fox with another excellent eagle article
-
- 22 UK Falconry Event 2011
A report on the inaugural Falconry Event
-
- 26 For the Avoidance of Mutes
Nick Kester tells us his thoughts on travel boxes and mutes
-
- 28 Food for Thought
How different foods affect our hawks
-
- 28 Tackling the Tree Rat – part II
The conclusion of the article by Yvonne Taylor
-
- 34 Club Directory
-
- 36 IBR Lost & Found

As I write this editorial I cannot believe how warm it is on the second day of October. I think it is called unseasonal weather. Still, I am not complaining, winter will soon be upon us.

About a month ago I took possession of a new female Harris Hawk whom I have named Pasha. The training has been going very well and I'm very pleased with her progress. I hope other falconers are having a good time with their new charges, especially those who are new to our sport.

In this issue there is a report of the UK Falconry Event held at the International Bird of Prey Centre in Gloucestershire and if you didn't manage to attend you missed out on a great event. It will, I understand, be repeated next year at the same time and venue so make a date in your diary and we hope to see you there.

By the time you read this, the flying season will be well underway and I hope you have a safe and successful one.

In the meantime, have a good read.

editorial



news

a review of what's new in our sport Send all your news and product information to peter.eldrett@tiscali.co.uk

Westweald in the West Country

On 12 August this year Westweald Falconry relocated to Cornwall in the west country. For many years it had been our plan to make this move, with the only thing holding us back being my main business and source of income. The answer came to me in a flash of inspiration, (I don't have these very often!).....fold up my main business that has paid my mortgage and kept food on the table for 37 years and attempt to make a living from falconry equipment alone! This was a major, life-changing decision and one not to be taken lightly. With this in mind I immediately packed up the business and went about finding a new property that would meet our needs!

'Moving house is one of the most stressful things that you will do in a lifetime' said a number of people. 'Yeah, right' said I, believing that stress was something that other people do. How wrong was I, it was a bloody nightmare but we eventually moved into our new home, drained both emotionally and physically.

We are now the proud owners of a beautiful converted barn (Westcombe) in a stunning location close to the edge of Bodmin Moor, but boy oh boy, does it know how to rain down here. The lane that approaches our property is so narrow that wing mirrors touch the hedges either side and grass grows in the middle of the road down virtually the entire length of the lane. We have so far found the people to be very kind, friendly,

generous and laid back in their attitude to everyday life. They also seem, almost without exception, to be happy and cheerful at all times. And the Buzzards, oh so many buzzards, and they are beautiful pale phase, almost white-chested birds that stand out like a beacon when perched in a tree. Simply stunning!

I am working hard to get my business premises up and running, and although we were trading again within a week of moving we are still not straight and have boxes of stock everywhere. It's only now that I realise just how much stock and how many stock lines we actually carry. I have already met a few of the local falconers and they seem to be a nice and very cheery bunch of people.

We can be contacted on my usual mobile number 07973 379736 or my new home/business number 01579 363613 where Becci (my daughter) and I will be happy to speak with you and relieve you of your hard-earned cash in exchange for top quality goods.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my personal calling customers for their business and their friendship over so many years. I will miss you all and hope that you will become my new 'online' customers from now on. I also miss all my really good friends at South Eastern Raptors Assoc. and look forward to meeting with them again when time allows.

Reader's Letter

More of an observation than a rant

Peter,
As a reader of the magazine for a good number of years, I enjoy the diversity of falconry practised throughout the world and reported in the articles of your magazine. However, I do have one small niggle and that is the front cover details shown on the contents page. Some of the cover photographs require no or little explanation, however as a case in point, the cover of issue 86, a splendid and detailed photo of, well I don't know. I could make a guess or two and I could be wrong, but I would like to be able to check. Inside the magazine, articles with accompanying photos are identified i.e. *The Current Threat to Large Birds of Prey* by Jemima Parry-Jones, clearly labelled the Bonnellis and Marshall Eagles, Lappet Faced and Griffin Vultures.

Falconry is always looking to educate and inform

newcomers, and to that end knowing exactly what we are admiring would be helpful.

On a positive note, also in this issue, I was very interested in reading Ask Chitty, with reference to food values and preparation. Then, perhaps for those not able to attend the Falconry and Raptors Fair this year, an article by Derek Stotton on the subject, following his demonstration as mentioned by you in your observations of the fair, would be of great interest to many.

Thank you, Nigel Pitts

Many thanks for your e-mail, Nigel, I do appreciate your comments and I will try to ensure that pictures are fully captioned in future issues. Your comments are rendered somewhat ironic by the fact that in the last issue (Issue 86) I published incorrect captions for some of the pictures – I can only apologise for this. The front cover shot on issue 86 is of a Bateleur Eagle. Unfortunately, I published the wrong captions on three of the images in The Current Threat to Large Birds of Prey article and they should be Martial Eagles on pages 10 and 11, Hooded Vulture and African White-backed Vulture on page 12. I hold my hands up and apologise once again for the mistakes. Ed.

Hobby chicks cause celebration on Upton Heath



Despite the dramatic fire that hit Upton Heath this year, conservationists are celebrating as a pair of hobbies has managed to raise three chicks. The birds, which first nested in 2010 in an artificial 'hobby basket' placed by Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT), returned this year in May and survived the fire, which missed their nest site.

Hobbies are small and extremely agile falcons, about the size of a kestrel, which can catch food, including dragonflies and even swallows and martins, on the wing. Heaths such as Upton Heath, which has recently been named one of the top sites in the country for dragonflies, are particularly attractive to them, providing plenty

of food through the summer and into early autumn for this late-nesting falcon.

Andy Fale, Dorset Wildlife Trust's Upton Heath Warden, said: "We are very pleased that the hobbies have come back and shown such resilience in the face of the damage to part of the heath in June. The fact that they have successfully reared 3 chicks shows that Upton Heath still has good numbers of dragonflies and other insects on its many pools and boggy areas."

DWT has been helped by Jason Fathers of Wildlife Windows in this project to encourage hobby breeding on the reserve. This year the hobbies decided not to use the basket but used an old crow's nest

in a nearby tree. The chicks hatched in the middle of July and have been ringed to help with future monitoring. They should stay in the area with their parents until the second half of September or even into October, before migrating to southern Africa for the winter. Warm evenings are the best time to look for them as they hunt. Resembling a large swift, with scythe-shaped wings, the adults are dark blue/grey with peregrine-like moustache markings and a spectacularly agile flight.

Upton Heath is open at all times. For more details, visit www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/uh or ring the Urban Wildlife Centre on 01202 692033.



Owl's eyes bigger than its belly

Whilst Vets Now Referrals in Swindon has treated pets swallowing strange objects including stones, coins, and soap; never have they seen an owl swallow a sock, until now.

John Dowling, the owner of a falconry business and keeper of a 13 week old Indian eagle owl called Lydon began noticing he was not eating properly and looked dazed and confused when taking part in the local "Stonehouse Horticultural Show & Summer Jolly" where John Dowling Falconry Limited had a display. After the show John became concerned as Lydon looked like he was trying to vomit but couldn't so took him to Vets Now Referrals in Swindon for a consultation.

Neil Forbes, FRCVS, a qualified Specialist in Avian Medicine, examined Lydon realising there was a hard swelling on his abdomen. Radiographs confirmed a bloated and very full stomach. The decision was taken to operate on Lydon to remove whatever was inside. Fearing a growth or tumour, Neil was surprised, and confused, when he found a smelly old sock in Lydon's

stomach. With the sock successfully removed, Lydon was able to go home a few hours later, none the worse for his experience.

Lydon's owner, John, commented "Lydon is a hand reared Indian eagle owl and is often in and around the house. The sock is a toy he has played with since he was a owlet, and never did I think he would, or could, have eaten it!

"I was obviously surprised when Neil found the sock in Lydon's stomach but more relieved than anything. I feared the worst but was delighted to find out it wasn't something more sinister."

Neil added "Never in my 28 years of avian medicine experience have I treated an owl that swallowed a sock, it's just unheard of. Thankfully John brought Lydon into our clinic for a consultation upon suspicion something wasn't quite right and we were able to remove the sock preventing further health deterioration.

"We would always advise owners of pets to be careful when leaving items around the house, as you can never predict how mischievous pets can be."



Silent Bell

Christian de Coune – 1941-2011

It is with great sadness that I must inform you that Christian de Coune passed away on the evening of 21 September 2011 following a brave battle against a relentless illness. His funeral was held in Belgium on Monday 26 September. The International Association for Falconry (IAF) was represented by Patrick Morel.

Christian, a Past-President of the IAF, was still an active member of the Advisory Committee and was a tireless champion of falconry, a wise counsellor and dear friend to many people. He was a gentleman in the truest sense of the word. This is a great loss to the IAF and to the whole falconry community. We are much the poorer for his death and his presence will be deeply missed.

If you have special messages for his wife, please send them to me on lombarda@mweb.co.za and they will be forwarded on to her.

Adrian Lombard





askchitty

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

I understand hawks and falcons can get gout. How can they get this condition, what are the signs and what is the treatment?

Gout does occur in birds of prey, as it does in other birds and even in people. While it is extensively described in raptors, especially the Indian vultures, it is vital to remember that gout, like jaundice, is not a disease in its own right but a clinical sign.

What is it?

Gout is the deposition of urate crystals in body tissues. It exists in two forms – articular gout (with urate crystals in the joints) and visceral gout where the crystals are deposited throughout the body tissues.

The former seems slow in onset and is responsible for swollen, very painful joints.

The latter usually appears very rapid in onset – occasionally the bird will seem very unwell before death: usually they are simply found dead: whichever, visceral gout is rarely treatable.

Where does this come from?

Urate (or uric acid) is the final stage of protein metabolism. In man, the urate is converted one stage further to produce water-soluble urea that is then excreted by the kidneys. However, birds produce uric acid which is why a large part of their urine is solid white and chalky.

In some (rare) cases, excess uric acid may be produced resulting in the relatively insoluble uric acid crystallising out of the blood and into joint tissues. However, in the vast majority of cases, the excessively high levels of uric acid result from a failure of the body to excrete as much as is produced. In other words, gout is normally a sign of kidney failure.

Again, this is not a precise diagnosis – kidney failure may result from many causes:-

- Infection ● Inflammatory disorders
- Nutritional ● Toxin (e.g. diclofenac in the vultures) ● Prolonged dehydration
- Tumours ● Heart failure ● Age-related kidney failure

In most cases we advise a post mortem if the bird has been found dead as this usually shows the underlying cause.

Unfortunately in visceral gout, the kidneys are normally so badly damaged by the gout crystals that it is simply impossible to determine the original cause.

Is there treatment available?

As usual, this depends on the main cause. However, either form of gout carries a poor outlook. In the case of visceral gout it is rare to even get a chance to treat. In articular gout, therapy is possible to attempt treatment. However, the pain produced by the gout crystals often makes it simply unethical to proceed especially if the underlying kidney disease cannot be treated. The following may be attempted:-

- Fluids- in an attempt to solubilise some of the gout crystals and “flush” them out of the system.
- Investigate and treat the underlying kidney disease- this will likely involve blood samples, xrays and endoscopic biopsy of the kidneys.
- Pain relief. Vital, yet difficult. The usual non-steroidal drugs may be effective but sadly have the side-effect of kidney damage which is simply not helpful in these cases. Tramadol (an oral opiate) is probably best choice.
- Allopurinol. This drug increases excretion through kidneys. However, it is designed for people where it is not normal to produce uric acid rather than urea (ie a disease of production, not of failing to excrete). In birds, uric acid is normal . . . so using this drug is essentially just try to get a little more work out of failing kidneys and so doesn't have such a good effect.
- Sadly if the pain cannot be controlled then the bird will need to be euthanased. In short, gout is not a good finding- ideally it should be avoided by maintaining your bird in as good a condition as possible and, especially, allowing plenty of access to fluids in order to promote kidney health/function.



Gout deposits (“tophi”) in the heart muscles of a vulture

Nick Kester
Communications Officer



As I write the weather is unseasonably hot, and the goshawk is obscenely fat: the former having a negative impact on the latter – he is holding weight like a redtail! Hope you are having better luck. On the shoot the pheasants are still short in tail and behaving more like chickens than game birds. Which reminds me. A friend was weathering his newly caught up gos on the lawn, and introducing him to his new GSP puppy when one of his free-range chickens set upon the hapless, tethered gos. I hope it doesn't bode badly for his season, but it could reduce the rows with farmers' wives if it refuses fowl.

Sustainable Users Group (SUN): This critical body meets next week (4th Oct) and has a very relevant agenda including:

- Definition of hybrids. There has long been confusion over when a hybrid ceases to be one in regulatory terms. Of course, scientifically speaking 'once a hybrid, always a hybrid'.
- Wild disabled bird policy. The withdrawing of Article 10s for wild

disabled caused some emotion at the last Hawk Board meeting, particularly as it now means they cannot be used for breeding. Martin Jones, who was active on SUN and HB when early wild disabled regulations were implemented reminds me that the breeding use clause was permitted because we agreed to withdraw from wild take applications, because disabled would continue to enhance the breeding gene pool without impacting on the healthy wild population. Of course, any F1 progeny could never be offered for sale, although I am advised some slippage in this policy has occurred. More to follow.

- Policy on charging for replacement documents. Keeping documents safe is our responsibility. "The dog ate my homework", is not an excuse. But things do get mislaid. So it will be interesting to hear what Animal Health has in mind.
- For those interested the official line on the first two points above can be found on the Animal Health

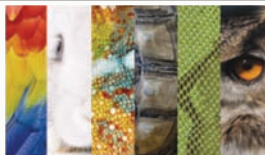
website. <http://animalhealth.defra.gov.uk/CITES/> We are in discussion.

Readers will also recall my report on Invasive Alien Species, a Brussels initiative on which SUN plays an active role. Hopefully we shall hear more on this.

Bizarre Crimes, BBC 3: This new series, scheduled for broadcast either later this year or early next, features the Birmingham Airport Peregrines stolen by Jeffrey Lendrum as one episode. Lee Featherstone was interviewed in August at Jemima Parry-Jones' centre. All went well, but you can never tell what will be lost or how it will look after the edit suite has done its work. However, we were able to tell the true story of the falconry community's work in hatching, rearing and releasing these peregrine falcons.

Meetings:

The Hawk Board meetings take place four times a year in Bristol so if you have a subject you wish to raise, contact your club representative or an elected member. We work for you, so let us know what is important.



GREAT WESTERN EXOTIC VETS
BECAUSE EXOTIC PETS NEED EXOTIC VETS

Do not compromise on the treatment of quality birds

A Specialist Bird Veterinary Service
The only specialist staffed, exotic specific facility in the UK.

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU & YOUR BIRDS 24/7

Neil A Forbes DipECZM(avian) FRCVS

RCVS and European College
Recognised Specialist in
Avian Medicine and Surgery

And colleagues

Full specialized diagnostic,
surgical and hospitalization facilities
On site laboratory with results in 30 minutes

<http://www.gwreferrals.com>

Tel. 01793 603800

exotics@gwreferrals.co.uk



Honeybrook
animal foods

A successful family owned business supplying quality frozen raptor food for over 20 years.

Run by Falconers supporting Falconry worldwide.

Distribution to major breeders, zoos and collections throughout the UK, Ireland & Europe.

Top quality Chicks, Quail & Rodents, carefully selected, packed and blast frozen by Honeybrook Animal Foods at our own premises.

Major sponsors of the International Festival of Falconry and the Campaign For Falconry.

For further information phone:

**44(0)1386 830089 or FREEPHONE 0800 1971 777

Visit our web site: www.honeybrookfoods.co.uk



Honeybrook Animal Foods for all your raptor's needs

VETARK PROFESSIONAL

Veterinary formulated
to be the best



Available from vets,
good retailers, by
mail order or our on
line shopping site:
www.noahs-cupboard.co.uk

VETARK PROFESSIONAL
POBox 60, Winchester
SO23 9XN
Tel: 01962-844316
Fax: 01962-877412

Rings of Distinction



AVIAN ID

PO Box 107 Truro,
Cornwall. TR1 2YR. England.
Fast friendly service

Call or Fax (+44) 01872-262777

e-mail info@avianid.co.uk

credit/debit cards accepted

Westweald Falconry
Staying ahead in the field

Now in the West Country and looking forward to meeting new friends and new customers. Brian and Becci welcome you all – customers old and new.

We have an ever expanding stock range and still set the standard for customer service and quality. Yes, I know they all say that . . . but we back it up, and have the reputation to prove it.

Come on, try us!!



Shop open to callers but strictly by appointment only.

Westcombe, Uphill, Callington,

Cornwall PL17 7PE

Tel: /Fax: +44 (0)1579 363613 or 07973 379736 and speak to Brian.

E-mail: info@westwealdfalconry.co.uk

www.westwealdfalconry.co.uk

Return of the Red Kite



Just over a century ago the British population of Red Kites was at an all time low. Genetic studies show that up until 1977, the entire Welsh population was almost certainly descended from just one female bird. That is how close they came to extinction! However, in 2010 the Welsh breeding population was thought, by the Welsh Kite Trust, to have exceeded 1000 pairs. So what has brought about such a wonderful recovery of this beautiful and majestic raptor?

In the early part of the 20th century, it would have been only local landowners and farmers in the remote hills and valleys of mid Wales that were seeing Kites because there were so few of them. For decades the species struggled for its very survival. Needless to say, genetic diversity was exceptionally low and consequently breeding success was poor. Around the mid 1970s a wandering female Kite from the German population joined the birds in Wales and began to breed.

From the all time population low, it

took many decades for a slight increase in the population. Unfortunately persecution hampered the recovery somewhat until the outbreak of the Second World War. With gamekeepers away fighting, the kites could breed more or less unhindered by man. Whilst long-term persecution brought about the decline of the species (once common even on the streets of London) nest protection by a hardcore band of concerned conservationists played a vital role in the species comeback.

Nest site protection was necessary because egg collecting continued to hold the population in check and a small amount of poisoning and shooting resumed after WW2. Consequently it took until the mid 1980s for the Red Kites to reach 50 breeding pairs. Since that date the Welsh population has increased enormously. In 2000 there were just over 200 pairs and by 2010 that had increased five-fold to 1000 pairs.

Kite feeding centres help

Some of the increase and slight range spread was brought about by Red Kite feeding centres providing food to help birds through the winter months. At first this was just a winter activity but some centres now feed year round. Despite this increase in numbers, wing tagging of kites showed that following considerable wanderings during their first winter or two in particular, young birds nearly always returned to their natal area to breed. Some, in fact, would nest just 1000 metres or so from where they were raised. The likelihood of a range expansion was very low.

As natural re-colonisation of its former range was very unlikely within the foreseeable future, studies were carried out to satisfy a number of parameters for the beginning of a re-introduction scheme. Firstly it was realised that the Red Kite was one of three species breeding in Britain that was globally threatened. There was a full and clear understanding of how it had declined from much of its former British range but probably the two most important factors were that there was plenty of habitat to support any re-colonisation and there were still suitable donor populations in mainland Europe.

Amid great secrecy regarding the locations the re-introduction began in 1989. We now know that there were two centres for the start of the scheme, the Chiltern Hills and the Black Isle in Scotland. Birds brought to the Chilterns were collected from Spain as 4-6 week old nestlings while birds of a similar age were brought to Scotland from Sweden and, more latterly, Germany. In all cases, at least one chick would be left in the donor nest in the hope that the adults would raise young successfully and remain faithful to the site in future years. The reason for collecting chicks that were



already 4 weeks old was that they could readily feed themselves on the smaller carrion given to them. Later they learn to tear up larger prey.

Minimum human contact

Once in aviaries in Britain, the birds were fed through a hatch thus reducing human contact to an absolute minimum. After 6-8 weeks in captivity the young birds are released and carrion is continually provided at the release site to simulate parental provision of food. After a while, the birds begin to find food for themselves and gain their independence. Three years after the start of the releases, Red Kites bred in both areas. Four pairs in England fledged 9 young and one pair in Scotland reared a single chick.

Re-introductions continued and once the first two centres had viable breeding populations, new release sites were established. These extra releases were because of the sedentary breeding nature of kites. More centres of population were thought necessary to reduce the chance of a population crash because of disease etc.

Today, Red Kites are doing well. Not only has the Welsh population expanded into the border counties of England (still counted as honorary Welsh kites!), but the various populations in England and Scotland are doing very well too. In 2010 Scotland held in the region of 170 breeding pairs in 4 areas while in England there were well over 1000 pairs. Now, there are even releases taking place in Northern Ireland and County Wicklow

from 'surplus' chicks in British nests.

The future for this enigmatic raptor now seems assured in the British Isles. Its comeback owes much to the dedicated work of kite watchers, workers and conservationists the length and breadth of our land. Its distinctive form graces the skies over most, if not all, of our counties and regions. For some it is now truly a 'British bird' again but for many it will remain the Welsh Red Kite.



Mike Read is a freelance wildlife and landscape photographer, writer, tour guide and lecturer. Mike is the co-author of 'Red Kite Country' (with artist Colin Woolf), a book which illustrates the beauty of mid Wales and much of its wildlife. E-mail Mike (mike@mikeread.co.uk) to find out how to purchase this title at half price or check out his web site (www.mikeread.co.uk) where you can purchase greetings cards, giclée prints or canvas prints. Mike also runs photographic workshops.

A Story from Arctic Greenland

After travelling around the world these last few years in pursuit of my obsession and passion for falconry and hunting, I now find myself back on the small island of Fyn in southern Denmark. I can't really believe that I ended up in Denmark which, don't get me wrong, is a wonderful country and some of the most beautiful people I have met on my travels come from here, but it is the falconry situation here in Denmark which is in quite a sorry state. It currently has some of the strictest controls and laws concerning falconry in the world, very similar to all the Scandinavian countries like Sweden, Norway and Finland, all of which have a rich background in this ancient art.

It is especially sad here in Denmark because it has such a wonderful and rich history dating back to the early Viking period of the 5th century. In the last few



Immature Sea Eagle with Danish miners

centuries all around the Danish mainland there have been many artefacts and much evidence found with strong connections to falconry and raptors, such as wooden

and bone knife handles depicting falconers with their hawks, and stunning Viking gold brooches also depicting images of falcons and eagles.

The last hunt in Denmark with royal participation was in March 1803 in honour of Duke William of Gloucester's visit from England. Over the next 150 or so years falconry almost disappeared from Danish soil, except for a few very dedicated people.

Falconry became prohibited according to the Hunting Act of 1967 but now, with the advent of the Danish Hawking Club, there is a possible future for falconry. The club has established good relations with politicians and the future looks brighter, all thanks to a small dedicated group of falconers left practising here in whatever way they can with their hawks and falcons.

Photo album

It was one day last month, whilst helping my girlfriend to move out of her apartment, that I discovered an old photo album in the basement of her parent's house. I was overwhelmed



Eagles on the rocks of Greenland

with excitement when I turned the first pages and found many photographs of eagles and falconers, and of course many pictures of the indigenous Greenlandic people in their native dress. These people too have always held a fascination for me from my early childhood, reading books about the first contacts with white explorers. Having lived myself on and off in the Canadian Arctic with indigenous people over the years, I have always held a great respect for these people and their way of life.

Researching the photographs

I have tried to research a little about some of these photos, which I have found out were taken around 1915 – 1925 in and around a place called Ivigtut in the south west of the island. These men were in fact Danish miners living and working here in Greenland, over which Denmark still to this day holds sovereignty. They were up here looking for a very rare mineral called cryolite, nicknamed the white gold of the north. When the Vikings first visited the coast of Greenland, they found the native Eskimos who lived there used heavy stones to anchor their fishing boats. The Vikings were amazed to see that when the stones were dropped into the water they became nearly invisible. When pieces of this mineral are seen out of the water, they look like ordinary white stone. What is remarkable about cryolite is its translucence; light passes through it easily, thus when it is placed in water it becomes invisible. Cryolite was used as an insecticide and a pesticide.

These Danish miners had probably trapped, or most probably taken, these young immature sea eagles and imprinted them, and by the look of the feather condition and their relaxed manner, they did a great job. I did some research on falconry and have never found any accounts of falconry being practised by white Europeans or indigenous Greenlandic people around that time, so I presume this is a “one off”.

As you can imagine, up there at that time game and fish were abundant all around the coast. There are many photos in the album depicting hunting scenes and camps set up with people carrying and preparing many different kinds of game including ducks, Greylag



Danish falconer with his eagle

Geese, Ptarmigan and the small Greenlandic Caribou or Reindeer which inhabit the island. There are also some incredible photos taken off the coast of some huge Greenlandic sharks, which are the second biggest shark in the North Atlantic. They can grow to over seven metres long and quite easily weigh over a ton, so I can imagine they ate quite well over the many hard winters they must have spent up there away from their families. Also in the album were many hand-written cards which were sent back to their Danish families, telling stories of the harsh winters up there and living on whale meat.

Gold mine for Gyrfalcons

Over the past centuries, Greenland was a gold mine for the export of rare falcons, especially the beautiful and highly prized white Gyrfalcons, which were shipped out of here and Iceland in large numbers during this period. There were records of boats coming into Copenhagen with 200 to 250 Gyrfalcons on board, ranging from white and silver, to grey in colour. Many of them were to be trained here in Denmark for hunting, and some were given to the nobility of Europe as highly prized gifts.

Going back to those White-Tailed Sea Eagles, the men had kept them with them

during their period in Greenland. The total number of pairs of this Greenlandic subspecies (*H.A. Groenlandicus*) is estimated at only around 150 to 190 pairs. They are different only really by their size and structure. Within its wide range the White-Tailed Sea Eagle lives in quite different habitat, from treeless marine fjords in Greenland to the outer coasts of Norway, to the brackish forested coast of the Baltics.

A hunter and fisher

The sea eagle is also quite capable both as a hunter and fisher, although less agile than more specialised raptors. These Greenlandic birds up here feed mainly on fish and water birds (ducks, ptarmigan, coots, grebes, gulls, etc.). Recent reduction in the prey base in Greenland due to over-exploitation of fish resources and bird colonies is probably the main reason for a slight drop in the productivity of this vulnerable subspecies of eagle. Recent observations of this subspecies have

confirmed that it is in a stable situation and, hopefully, this remarkable eagle has a clear future ahead.

During the 1950's and 1960's, White-Tailed Sea Eagles dramatically declined in many regions of Europe, and even went locally extinct. Intense conservation measures proceeded after this (legal protection to decrease hunting, protection of breeding sites and winter feeding sites) which led to a recovery for the eagle population in Europe.

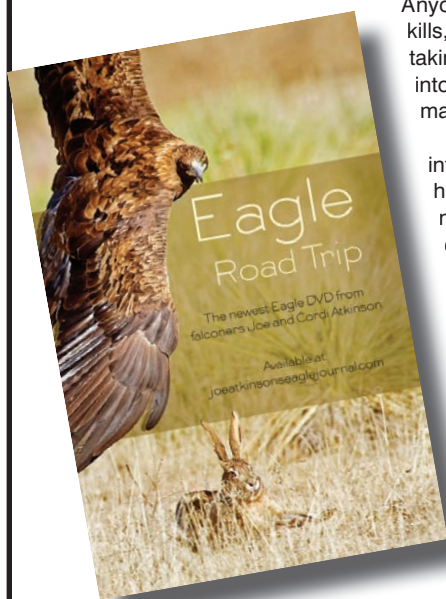
Thus, the eagle has today re-colonised many traditional breeding areas in Europe, and even here in Denmark the birds are doing extremely well. Recent microsatellite and DNA studies of these eagles in the northern part of the world showed the recovery population has retained appreciable amounts of genetic diversity, implying low risk of inbreeding (a serious concern in wide-ranging long-lived species) making the recovery of this beautiful eagle a true success story for the nature conservationists.



Greenlander in traditional costume

Eagle Road Trip

A DVD by CorJo Wildlife Productions



Anyone who enjoys watching golden eagles flying from the fist at rabbit, including the occasional kills, will enjoy this DVD. It features footage of Joe Atkinson's eagles, Jackhammer and Mini-Me, taking on black tail jack rabbits in Kansas, Oregon and Texas. The viewer is given a rare insight into hunting with golden eagles and the patience that this requires. Expert filming shows just how manoeuvrable a large eagle can be, even at speed.

But this is more than just a film about eagles; it is also a film about Joe and the way he interacts with his birds. Throughout the film he comes across as a man who is confident in his ability as an austringer. He is surprisingly gentle with his birds and is sympathetic to their needs. The action is filmed by Cordi Atkinson and she does a good job of capturing the true excitement of the flights. This is a film which celebrates the bond between one man and his eagles. Over a few field meets, the viewer gets to share in the excitement of flying these magnificent creatures and can only marvel at the dedication and skill required to enable them to do what they do best. If you like golden eagles, this is a DVD for you.

LIMITED STOCK **£20.00** + £2.05 P&P

To place an order, just telephone

01202 659910

with your credit card details or send a cheque made payable to PW Publishing Ltd.

Send to: **PW Publishing Ltd**

Arrowsmith Court, Station Approach, Broadstone, Dorset BH18 8PW.

NEW BOOKS ON FALCONRY & RAPTORS

FALCONRY PRINCIPLES & PRACTICE. Roger Upton. Hbk. £19.95
 THE FLYING OF FALCONS. Pitcher & Velarde. Hbk. £85.00
 HIGH-FLYING GYRFALCONS. Hardaswick & Christopher. Hbk. £50.00
 KAI: HAWKING IN BRITAIN WITH A REDTAIL. T Borrill. Hbk. £19.95
 DIRT HAWKING. Joe Roy III. Hbk. £25.00
 GOSHAWK: MEMORIES OF A SPANISH GOSHAWKER.
 Pareja-Obregon. Hbk. Price reduced! (£50.00) £35.00
 Y2K FALCONRY. Pete Smith. Hbk. Price reduced! (£40) £25.00
 SHAHEEN: A FALCONER'S JOURNEY FROM TURKEY.
 Paul Harris Jones. Hbk. £25.00
 HAWKING & FALCONRY FOR BEGINNERS. A. Hallgarth. Hbk. £19.95
 HOOD, LEASH & LURE. Roger Upton. Hbk. £30.00
 THE COMPLETE RABBIT AND HARE HAWK. Second
 edition. Martin Hollinshead. Hbk. £25.00
 HAWKING GROUND QUARRY. M. Hollinshead. Hbk. £19.95
 ARAB FALCONRY. Second Edition. Roger Upton. Hbk. £25.00
 HUNTING WITH HARRIS HAWKS. Bob Dalton. Pbk. £12.95
 A YOUNG FALCONER'S WALKABOUT. Lawrence Crowley. Hbk. £25.00
 PRACTICAL FALCONRY. James McKay. Hbk. £19.95
 TRAINING BIRDS OF PREY. Jemima Parry-Jones. Pbk. £14.99
 HUNTING WITH APLOMADO FALCONS. Bob Dalton. Pbk. £12.95
RONALD STEVENS - New editions
 THE TAMING OF GENGHIS. Hbk. £25.00
 OBSERVATIONS ON MODERN FALCONRY. Hbk. £25.00
 LAGGARD. Hbk. £25.00
 A LIFE WITH BIRDS. Hbk. £25.00
 SET OF ALL FOUR RONALD STEVENS BOOKS. £75.00

JACK MAVROGORDATO - Complete works

A FALCON IN THE FIELD, A HAWK FOR THE BUSH &
 BEHIND THE SCENES. 3 volumes. £110.00
RAPTOR MANAGEMENT & ECOLOGY
 UNDERSTANDING OWLS. Jemima Parry-Jones. Pbk. £15.99
 IMPRINT ACCIPITER II. Michael McDermott. Hbk. £40.00
 UNDERSTANDING THE BIRD OF PREY. Dr Nick Fox. Hbk.
 (£43.50) £30.00
 ACCIPITRINE BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS: DIAGNOSIS
 & TREATMENT. Michael McDermott. Hbk. £50.00
 CAPTIVE RAPTOR MANAGEMENT & REHABILITATION.
 Naisbitt & Holz. Hbk. £29.95
 BIRDS OF PREY: HEALTH & DISEASE. J.E. Cooper. Hbk. £89.99
 RAPTORS IN CAPTIVITY: GUIDELINES FOR CARE
 AND MANAGEMENT. Lori M.S. Arent. Hbk. £29.95
 RAPTOR RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES.
 Bird & others. Pbk. £29.95
 CAPTIVE RAPTOR MANAGEMENT & REHABILITATION.
 Naisbitt & Holz. Hbk. £29.95
 RAPTORS OF THE WORLD. Ferguson-Lees & Christie. Hbk. £60.00
 RAPTORS OF THE WORLD: A FIELD GUIDE. Ferguson-
 Lees & Christie. Pbk. £24.99
 THE PEREGRINE FALCON. Derek Ratcliffe. Hbk. (£45.00) £20.00
 GYRFALCON. Emma Ford. Hbk. £65.00
 THE GYRFALCON. Potapov & Sale. Hbk. £50.00
 THE GOSHAWK. Robert Kenward. Hbk. £50.00
OWLS OF THE WORLD. König & Weick. Hbk. £50.00
 THE PRAIRIE FALCON. Anderson & Squires. Pbk. £9.95

LIMITED EDITION FALCONRY BOOKS

BIBLIOTHECA ACCIPITRARIA II. John Swift. Hbk. £100.00
 ONE THOUSAND YEARS OF FALCONRY. Keyton Gibson. Hbk. £125.00
 FALCONRY IN LITERATURE. David Horobin. Hbk. £29.95
 THE LOO FALCONRY. Van de Wall. Hbk. £60.00
 DUCK HAWKING. Joe Roy III. Hbk. £29.95
 REMINISCENCES OF A FALCONER. Major C.H. Fisher. Hbk. £30.00
 FALCONRY. Gilbert Blaine. Hbk. £25.00
 LAST WOLF HAWKER: THE EAGLE FALCONRY
 OF FRIEDRICH REMMLER. Martin Hollinshead. Hbk. £30.00
 GERMAN EAGLE. FRITZ LOGES: MASTER FALCONER.
 Martin Hollinshead. Hbk. £30.00
 HUNTING EAGLE. Martin Hollinshead. Hbk. £35.00
 LATHAM'S FALCONRY. With a separate Commentary Volume
 by David Horobin. Two volumes in slipcase. £145.00


BARGAIN-PRICED FALCONRY BOOKS

FALCONRY & HAWKING. Phillip Glasier. New Hbk. (£35.00) £20.00
 THE MODERN FALCONER. D. Durman-Walters. Hbk. (£19.95) £9.95
 JEMIMA PARRY-JONES' FALCONRY: CARE, CAPTIVE
 BREEDING & CONSERVATION. Pbk. (£12.99) £7.95
 ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FALCONRY. Adrian Walker. Hbk. (£39.95) £19.95
 FALCONRY FOR YOU. Drummond / ap Evans. Hbk. (£12.95) £4.95
 A MIXED BAG. Martin Hollinshead. Pbk. (£12.95) £5.95
 EAGLE DREAMS: SEARCHING FOR LEGENDS IN WILD
 MONGOLIA. Stephen Bodio. Hbk. (£15.99) £9.95
 MUSINGS OF AN AFGHAN FALCONER.
 Sirdar Mohamed Osman. Hbk. (£30) £9.95 Pbk. (£18) £5.95
 THE HUNTING FALCON. Bruce Haak. Hbk. (£22.95) £9.95

Coch-y-Bonddu Books, Machynlleth, Powys SY20 8DG


Tel: 01654 702837

email: orders@anglebooks.com




VOLUNTEER IN AFRICA

And make the dream a reality




REHABILITATE AFRICAN BIRDS OF PREY BACK INTO THE WILD

Situated in Dullstroom only 2 hours from Johannesburg and 150km from the world famous Kruger National Park, is the home of the Dullstroom Bird of Prey Rehabilitation Centre. Housing and exhibiting over a 100 African birds of prey, the centre is proudly owned and managed by Mark Holder an English falconer and rehabilitator. With his hands full managing the centre and thrilling the public with two entertaining and informative presentations every day the centre is in desperate need of enthusiastic paying volunteers to assist with the day to day running of the centre. As a volunteer, candidates can attend any one of three separate courses



which run for 2 weeks, 4 weeks or 3 months. During your stay at the raptor centre, you will be required to assist in flying birds, helping in the raptor hospital, preparing food, cleaning aviaries and helping with the flying demonstrations. At the end of your course, you will be presented with a certificate for your efforts and treated to a once in a life time trip to the Kruger National Park to experience Africa's big five.

For more info and prices, send an email to Mark at falconer@dullstroom.net or visit us at www.birdsofprey.co.za





Author and Brutus, the Cape Vulture

In 2010 I found myself lucky enough to be in South Africa. I was here to study, but my classroom was the bush and all that goes with it. The wildness takes your breath away and the heat is something to experience rather than just talk about. Electricity, well you forget eventually that there is such a thing, generators powered our facility and even then only at set times.

Every now and again, I craved for a hot bath, or a hair dryer, maybe even a bit of TV, and as we got time off periodically I was over the moon when a friend, Nigel King, arranged some volunteer work for me at the Dullstroom Bird of Prey & Rehabilitation Centre, in the heart of Mpumalanga province where all my missed luxuries still existed.

Within hours of arriving I was made to feel like a member of the team and was assigned different jobs and responsibilities. The morning began with weighing the birds

for the daily demonstration and before I knew it I was handling a Cape Eagle Owl, a Lanner Falcon and 'Barney' (no surprises, Barney is a Barn Owl) but I was soon stepping back respectfully when one of the owners, Mark Bett, came into the weighing room with Samson a rehabilitated male Verreaux's Eagle.

Samson is just one of the many examples of the excellent rehabilitation work carried out at the centre. Brought in with a broken foot and dangerously underweight, he was cared for by Mark Holder and Mark Bett but unfortunately, the injury means he will never successfully hunt in the wild. Samson remains at the centre as a handsome ambassador for the centre's work in the flying displays. As a centre truly committed to conservation and rehabilitation, the majority of success stories aren't seen as you walk around the centre because to be a success means the animals have already been re-released.

With the birds weighed, baths washed out, feeds prepared and leathers greased it was time to assist with the morning display. There can't be many Bird of Prey Centres in the world where there are more wild birds flying above your head in the displays than there are wearing jesses. In Dullstroom, the array of raptor life is incredible – and it extends well beyond the aviaries. Secretary Birds, Cape Vultures, Black Shouldered Kites and many more species often grace the skies during the twice daily flying displays. Displays are quite often interrupted whilst everyone looks up with crooked necks to see the wild birds pass over. Also, there is the mandatory comedy commentary spiels from the mouths of messrs H and B. Cutting through the humour, the knowledge and skills of these two men are unbelievable and not many questions go by unanswered.

The morning show complete, it was time for training Brutus – the Cape Vulture. Little did I

know that it would be as much training for me as it would Brutus. Complete with Cape Vulture sized chunks of meat and a falconry bag, Mark H and I set off with a reluctant Brutus hopping behind with his comic gait.

The next 30 minutes were filled with belly laughs as we tried to get him to stretch his wings. Even with the wind in our favour, he just didn't want to do anything he was meant to and had us running around looking foolish. With training still in the early stages, we hoped for progress in the days to come.

At midday we squeezed in some lure training with a female Greater Kestrel – great lunch time entertainment for the members of the public eating in the restaurant. Mark H and Mark B then carried out the afternoon display whilst I prepared owl feeds and chopped up some meat for a couple of Secretary Bird chicks. They had been brought to the centre because the tree that they were growing up in was cut down mistakenly by some overzealous lumber jacks.

Still covered in down feathers, their fate was uncertain - rehabilitating Secretary Birds had never been done by the centre before so each day proved to be a learning curve. Now, finding their feet, and with adult feathers pushing through and causing mayhem, their future looks set for release.

With the centre closing up for the



Beth eye-to-eye with Secretary Bird

day, I rounded the dogs whilst Mark H boxed up his most prized possession – a male Black Sparrowhawk. We walked

the highveld in search of quarry and the Black Spar had a couple of nice, but unsuccessful flights after Francolins. The scene was framed by the huge orange ball that is the African sun, setting behind us. The light quickly turned against us so we headed back home. An early night was in order after a busy day, but not before a quick manning session with a young African Peregrine Falcon. With bird on fist, I chatted on and on about how amazing the day had been. Mark H laughed... for him, it had been just another day at the office – not bad ay?



Training a Greater Kestrel on the creance

The centre now runs a complete volunteer program for overseas visitors.

If any of you are interested you can e-mail Mark Holder on falconer@dullstroom.net

For more information about the centre visit the web-site www.birdsofprey.co.za

Eagle Meets

End of 2011 Season

I had organised and was looking forward to the last two days of eagle meets for the closure of the 2010/2011 season at the end of February before putting my eagle Star down for the moult; the first one being at Bunny in Notts and the second, two days later at a huge disused airfield in Bedfordshire. On the morning of the first day, and for some daft reason, I elected to wear a pair of Wellington boots that I knew had caused me a problem in the past as they were a size too small and on that occasion had formed a blister on one of my heels. Actually, the reason I elected to wear these was twofold. Firstly, I had recently been out in them for a short trip and they had been fine, but really, to be perfectly honest, I simply could not be bothered to get my normal pair out of my van, for it meant removing the wheel clamps, moving the vehicle forward, retrieving the boots from the back of the van and then reversing and re-clamping again. Bone idleness on my part for sure and I was to regret that decision.

This first meet was to replace a Goshawk meet that had failed to materialise and as the land had already been paid for by the Midlands region of the British Falconers Club, the Midlands region Chairman, Martyn Standley, had offered me the opportunity to use the venue for the eagles instead. Obviously, I jumped at the offer as we have seven members of the Midlands region who fly Golden Eagles and I rapidly e-mailed invites to all. However, just five of these turned up for the day and two of these came without their eagles. Simon Tebbutt's eagle was overweight as Simon had been spending more time with his Goshawk, and Gary Knight's eagle had suffered an infection in one of its hallux toes and so he had grounded the bird for a while. Pete Sibson had injured his ankle



Black Eagle, Ebony

so he could not attend with or without eagle and lastly, Chris Miller was due to arrive but never turned up, he had transport problems, so that left Wayne Chesterman with his female eagle named Cuddles, Glyn Thompson with his male named Otto and myself with my male, Star.

Safety rules change

For reasons of safety and for the future good of eagle falconry in the UK, several of the BFC eagle falconers including myself, have recently taken the decision to disallow European flying rules from any BFC meets that we organise through the recently formed British Falconers Club Eagle Group. Some eagle falconers in the UK prefer the European method of slipping and disagree with me that it is not particularly dangerous if the rules

are followed to the letter. I only wish this was true, for I have personally witnessed some very close calls, occasionally resulting in damaged eagles even after the said rules were supposed to be operating. If eagles used thus are constantly flown together and know each other well, then I am prepared to accept the risks are minimised but not altogether ruled out, but on most meets that I have attended, there have generally appeared new falconers with new eagles, both of which may well be an unknown quantity and herein lies just one of the dangers. We have been very lucky so far and it is now our intention to remove luck from the mix by playing safe and flying by numbers only. There are enough anti's against falconry as it is without handing them ammunition on a plate. For those unfamiliar with the European rules,

they follow thus; all the land to one's immediate front and to the right of the falconer as far as the next eagle in the line, belongs to that falconer and nobody else must slip their eagle at any quarry rising in this section.

In theory the method is fine, but the reality is often somewhat different. I am fully aware that the Continental eagle falconers use this ruling all the time, but we never seem to hear the outcome of eagle clashes, which most certainly arise as I have seen them on photographs and on DVD. Indeed, I have seen more than enough in the UK to convince me that the latter system is basically a serious accident waiting to happen.

Additionally, if two or more hares break cover simultaneously at different points in the beating line, two or more eagles become launched and thus are free and airborne together. Now, previously I believed that provided none of the eagles made a kill, or all of the eagles took their quarry, (not impossible, but unlikely), then all eagles returned to their respective owners with no problems, and I have to admit that indeed, this is the usual scenario. This all changed for me on a recent eagle meet where this exact scenario had occurred. Both eagles launched had missed their intended quarry and both were sat on the ground.

Male attacks female

The male, higher up the slope, then took to the air and launched a direct attack on the larger female perched at a lower elevation. One or two thought that the male merely flew towards the female, but this was not so, he was definitely hunting her. I know a hunting eagle when I see one and had it not been for the rapid intervention of Roy Lupton and his Argo Cat (an all terrain, six wheeled vehicle) the outcome would have been far more serious, for the rest of the field were too far away and on foot to be of any assistance whatsoever and there is no doubt that one of these eagles would have been seriously hurt, if not killed.

Again, one or two on the day intimated that nothing would have happened had Roy not intervened, but I know only too well what one Golden Eagle is capable of doing to another and was incredulous at such a lackadaisical viewpoint. I have seen more than enough close calls elsewhere to ring many alarm

bells and in my opinion, no amount of slips lost or quarry taken is worth the possible destruction of one eagle. Others unfortunately disagree however, so this is why I have deemed it necessary to bring some rules into the game where I am personally involved, simply for the protection of eagle falconry in the UK. Yes, I know falconers pay good money for a day's eagle meet, but I don't care and if you wish to fly eagles on meets that I have personally organised, then you must be prepared for numbered slipping, otherwise, leave your eagle at home or don't attend the meet.

Slipping by numbers however, does have one major disadvantage and that is usually because too many eagles may be present for the slips available. I do believe it is possible to have too many eagles out in one group and a case in point was at a recent meet in Norfolk, where we had ten and it was simply too many, because having so many eagles and initially so few slips rendered long lengths of time before one's turn came around again. As aforementioned, members of the field had paid good money to fly their eagles at quarry and so some lax of rules was permitted to ensure that most hares flushed were flown at, but this applied only through woodlands, where most were out of sight of one another and

could take advantage of the European rule. Out on the open fields, numbered slipping was supposed to resume, but instead we ended up with the two aforementioned slightly injured eagles due to an obvious mix-up. With this episode in mind, I plan in future to opt for smaller eagle groups, because the more eagles are out, the greater the margin for error and the likelihood of fewer slips per eagle.

Flying by numbers

Slipping by numbers prevents any mishaps like the foregoing, because not only is each eagle hooded, but is also clipped to bag, belt or glove, so accidental slipping is impossible. Additionally, it also takes off some of the pressure, because flying by European rules keeps one on edge and constantly scanning the ground for quarry and also any action from the beating line for anyone else who may be slipping at any time. This causes the adrenalin to flow and itchy "trigger fingers," thus a matrix for errors evolves. At least flying by numbers renders one able to relax because until one's time comes round again to fly, it is of no concern whether or not a hare gets up at one's feet and one can simply enjoy the magic of other falconers' eagles doing what they do best.

I used to cut up small pieces of paper



Glyn Thompson with Golden Eagle, Otto



Golden Eagle, Star, with David Glynne Fox

with numbers on to place into a hat for the draw for deciding the slipping order, but now my good friend Geoff Surtees of the Yorkshire BFC region has very kindly manufactured for me, a batch of small, reusable numbered plastic discs, which instead of the paper cut-outs will be placed into a hat for meet members to draw and thus place their slipping positions for the duration of the meet. So what has all this got to do with the aforementioned wellies? Well, nothing, but I hope it helps to set the scene.

Arrival on different land

We arrived on site with the three eagles and about a dozen or so beaters. A new farm was tried which we had never used before and soon we were spotting hares, seven in one field alone. The slipping order had been established and Glyn's eagle was soon away after its first hare, followed shortly afterwards by Wayne's eagle and then mine, with all three missing their intended quarry, but not without exciting chases. The Brown Hare just has to be one of the most difficult of all quarries to catch and it is this aspect that makes it such a worthy opponent. Sometimes they seem impossible to get on terms with, but using Golden Eagles instead of smaller raptors renders the

spectacle nothing short of awesome. True, I have seen hares caught by Goshawks and Harris Hawks etc. but the flights have almost always been of short duration and hardly worth watching and the smaller raptors often receive a good kicking for their effort, which sooner or later, generally causes them to give up on this exacting and tough animal. With eagles, the flight almost always covers a good deal of ground with fascinating escape tactics brought into play by the hare, giving everyone in the field a mind blowing experience. I have said it before and I'll keep on saying it, it is not about the kill but the quality of the flight that matters. I am perfectly aware that a Goshawk can overhaul a hare within a few yards, a struggle ensues and the falconer rushes in to help his hawk. I have nothing against the Goshawk, indeed, I have flown a few over the years, but this short, mad dash of a flight is not for me at all. I much prefer the long tactical flight across the fields that one witnesses so often with Golden Eagle falconry. Eagles can soon overtake a hare it is true, but usually the flight pans out for a hundred yards or more with thrilling twists, turns, stoops and other manoeuvres, that renders such a worthwhile and exciting spectacle and this is evident by the

oohs and aahs of all in the field. Some of the best days hawking I have ever experienced have resulted in no kills, but my God, what stunning flights! Some I will remember to my dying day.

We were enjoying some of these flights when I began to feel somewhat uncomfortable in my wellies. In fact, I became aware that I was limping somewhat and we had much uneven ground yet to traverse. As the morning wore on, both of my heels were smarting with the constant chafing and rubbing to the degree that I was spending more time trying to walk in a less painful way than spying out quarry. By lunchtime and after more thrilling flights, I told everyone that I would be returning home to change my boots. Fortunately, I only lived a few minutes from the flying grounds so I could rejoin the field in no time. I had little choice really, as I could barely walk. I returned Star to his travel box, still kitted out with flying jesses and transmitters and set off for home. My socks were wet with blood and I had a raw blister on each heel the size of a fifty pence piece. Had I been flying alone, I would have called a halt to my flying there and then, but I was the meet organiser, people were out in the field due to my actions, so I had to return, wearing my other boots. The latter were

certainly more comfortable, but the damage had been done and the rest of the day's hawking did little to improve the situation.

Upon rejoining the field, we had moved on to our usual area at Bunny and we were soon into the hares again, although on this occasion, they seemed fewer than on previous meets and we had to cover more ground to find them. This was not good news for my blisters. Then a thought struck me. I had to do all this again in Bedford in two days time. How on earth was I going to manage? I could barely walk now. Again, I had little choice for I was the organiser of that meet too, in conjunction with Alan Smith. No time to worry about that now though, for it was my turn to slip again and so launched Star after his intended hare, which like all the others that day, eluded us completely, but not without that classic high jump for which hares are so famous. All three eagles had put in some great flights and all had a most enjoyable day, which is what this was all about. Glyn's eagle had removed some fur from a hare as it spun round to escape and that is the closest we came to taking a hare that day. The beauty is, they will all still be there for our next visit.

Ebony in Bedfordshire

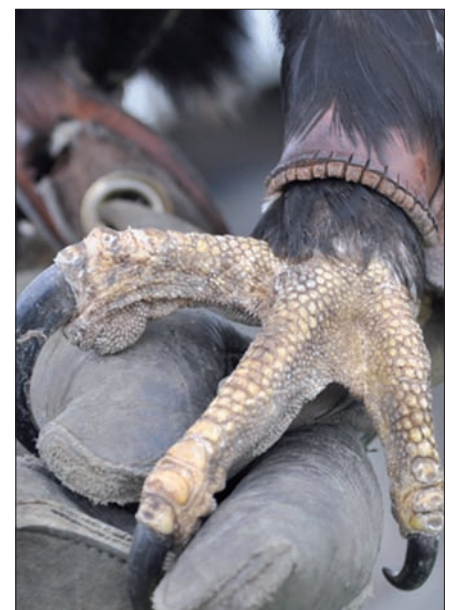
Two days later, I was driving down to Bedford with Geoff Surtees and his female Black or Verreaux's Eagle Ebony that he had loaned from the well-known eagle breeder Alan Griffin. This bird had, however, been bred some ten years previously by Jemima Parry-Jones MBE at her centre in Gloucestershire. Geoff had trained the bird originally when he purchased her from Jemima, but later swapped her for a Golden Eagle belonging to Alan. More recently, Geoff had been flying a young female Golden Eagle named Abbey, but she had been electrocuted on a pylon whilst out flying, hence the loan of the Black Eagle. Geoff had only had the Black Eagle for a few weeks, so she was not really ready for hare flights. She bated quite a lot and would not wear the hood, so in order not to stress her out, Geoff placed her back in the box for the afternoon session of the meet.

Glyn Thompson had joined us again with his eagle Otto and just as we were about to line up, a hare broke cover

and ran to our front. Otto was after it in a flash and took the hare in the hindquarters rendering much spinning around of hare and eagle before the latter subdued his prize. It was the first flight of the day and it ended with a kill. It doesn't get much better than that, but it didn't improve after this, for despite some wonderful flights on ground that was teeming with hares, we failed to make a second kill. Star was off the boil during the morning session and was not flying his hares with his normal gusto. He had cast, I made sure of that and he was bang on weight, but he just messed about. Glyn however had several near misses. Even though I stated earlier that the kill is not the be all and end all, it is important that the eagles take quarry on a sufficiently regular basis to keep them motivated, otherwise they become despondent and begin to believe that hares are un-catchable. This is something to avoid if at all possible.

We broke for lunch, which Alan had provided and we all enjoyed a rather sumptuous break. There were sandwiches, pork pies, rolls, cake and cans of beer, plus tea and coffee, all served out of the rear of Alan's truck. Thanks for that Alan for it was very much appreciated. I had elected to wear a pair of leather walking boots with thick, thermal socks to prevent further chafing to my heels. It worked to a degree, but I was still in a lot of pain. After lunch, rain began to set in. The ground was already marshy in places but the hares did not seem to mind. Star had improved after lunch and was taking on decent slips with some very close flights. The rain began to fall heavier and my boots soon became waterlogged, causing more chafing. My heels felt shredded after a couple of hours of this but we persevered in what soon became driving rain. We were wet through and so were the two eagles. They carried on flying valiantly, but the rain clogged their primary and train feathers, reducing their efficiency to almost nil. Again, had I been out alone, I would have called a halt at this point, not because I am a fair weather falconer, far from it, but the situation had deteriorated into something close to impossible. Had the eagles been sat on bow or block perches, the rain would have run off their plumage and they would have remained dry, but here in the

field, they were spreading their wings and chasing hares all over the place, thus allowing the rain water to access every inch, to the point that both eagles must have weighed a few pounds more due to absorbed water in their plumage. In the end, we decided to give up as it looked as though the rain was in for the day and the eagles could no longer function as eagles. Glyn had the last flight at a hare which got up at the wheels of our recovery vehicle and the poor bird made it for a yard or two and then hit the deck, looking more like a porcupine than an eagle! The recovery truck ferried us back to our parked vehicles, where we fed the eagles their well-earned daily ration. Shortly afterwards, as bad luck would have it, the sun came out and soon there wasn't a cloud in the sky. We had a couple of Harris Hawks with us and these were flown to a mechanical lure drag, a machine which can drag a deer carcase more than fifty miles an hour over rough ground. Both Harris's flew as a cast and took the lure simultaneously, but our eagles, apart from already being fed, were too wet to use on the lure. Apart from the drenching, my heels were red raw and felt as though they belonged to someone else and for the next two weeks, I limped wherever I went. I sincerely hope I do not suffer such from any future hawking excursions, especially from my own stupidity. Oh well, all I can do now is dream of next season's eagle falconry meets.



Black Eagle foot

The UK Falconry and Hawking Event



Jemima Parry-Jones giving a lesson on lure swinging

The first U.K. Falconry and Hawking Event took place at the International Centre for Birds of Prey, Newent on 3 and 4 September 2011. The event was organised by Jemima Parry-Jones and members of the U.K. Falconers Club and its main sponsor was Kiezebrink, the animal food suppliers

from Holland. The Falconers Magazine were pleased to have a stand at the event and we had a truly great weekend – meeting up with old friends and making new ones with new subscribers and traders.

Much planning had obviously gone into the actual layout of the stands, so that as well as being part of the event

stallholders were also able to enjoy the arena events. (The only exception to this was the sound – extra speakers are needed for future events, so that the commentary can be heard all around the arena.) Access to the grounds was good for stallholders (something which cannot be said of all events we have attended) and we were given every help in finding our pitch and tables. Our thanks go to Burgoyne's (Lynonshall) Ltd. for all their efforts.



Howard Kirby and his gundog display

Flying demonstrations

Throughout both days there was a comprehensive mix of flying demonstrations, including displays by Mima and her team, Terry Large and Gary Biddiss and a rare opportunity to see an Aplomado Falcon which was flown by Nigel King. The lure swinging demonstrations attracted much interest each day, and the dog training demonstration on Sunday by Howard Kirby (who I understand was a late

substitute) was one of the best I have seen. One other comment on the arena events – they kept largely to time, which is so rare these days.

There was also a programme of seminars and talks in the Education Room on both days. Unfortunately, I did not get to attend any of these but I did speak to some who had – all agreed that they were very interesting and informative. The only adverse comment was the heat in the room – apparently it was like a sauna!

There was a good array of trade stands, selling falconry equipment, clothing and magazines and for the more artistically inclined, artists including Carl Bass and David Rampling and sculptor Bill Prickett, were showing off their works. The number of public attending was encouraging for a first event. Yes, we would have liked more – a lot more – but an event like this grows through word of mouth and I'm sure, if it is held again



Sculptor Bill Prickett



Gary Biddiss giving one of his excellent displays

next year (and I understand plans are under way) there will be more people. More publicity would also help future attendances.

A barbecue was held on the Saturday night, followed by live music courtesy of Jonathan Marshall and his band. This was a chance for all the organisers, traders and falconers to socialise and exchange views on the weekend. I think it safe to say that a great time was had by all – and there were a few headaches the following morning to prove it !

Impressive aviaries

During the weekend, I took the opportunity to look around the aviaries and I must say that Mima does have an impressive collection of birds. At this point, I must also say that the grounds themselves, including the aviaries, looked a picture. Mima and her team had obviously put a lot of hard work into tidying the grounds and cleaning all the

aviaries, and it certainly paid off. The weather was kind too, which helped everything look wonderful – a really good advert for the International Centre for Birds of Prey.

All in all, I think it was a very enjoyable and successful event and I look forward to it being held in future years. But don't just take my word for it have a look at the following comments from other traders



Ben Crane cooking the barbeque

And the traders said . . .

The George Edward Lodge Trust found the Falconry Event to be a very amiable, and rewarding two days. It gave the Trust an opportunity to educate the public in the artwork, life and skills of George Lodge. The GEL display of artwork and memorabilia was well received by the public – Lodge has many new admirers. Historically, the venue could not be better, and Mima and all the organisers made us feel so welcomed. A BIG thank you

Brian Bird, GEL Chairman

It seemed like the general feeling was that the event was at a better time of the year than the Falconry Fair, given that many people who are breeding find it difficult to get away in early May. The fact that it was a smaller event also seemed to give it a more “intimate” atmosphere. I think visiting falconers, particularly those of a senior nature, also appreciated that it took place at the ICBP. Some of us will always remember it as The Falconry Centre, which for many of us old ones will have been our first tantalising glimpse into the sport of falconry.

Ben Long

I don't feel that a better event venue could have possibly been chosen! Mima had the centre looking amazing. The weekend far surpassed our own expectations from not only a business perspective but also on a social level. Being around like-minded people whom share a passion that is very dear to my heart is second to none. There was a great atmosphere generated at Mima's place and we have already pencilled it into the diary for next year. I would say very well done for all involved in generating a fantastic show which I feel our sport very much needs as some of the other shows have fallen by the wayside. So again, thanks to Mima and all her staff at ICBP and the UK Falconry Club

Carl Bass, Artist

I thought it was a great couple of days. The setting was superb, the hospitality excellent and the flying displays just awesome. Everyone was made to feel welcome and the atmosphere was warm and friendly. Jemima and her team must be congratulated for all the hard work that went into making it such a success.

Paul Gollidge, Chairman, Hawk and Owl Trust

The UK Falconry & Hawking Event was a really enjoyable two day event with much potential for the future. It was beautifully located with excellent falconry demonstrations (visible to virtually all stand holders) and the organisers had worked hard to help generate a good atmosphere among participants.

Bill Prickett, Sculptor

My family and I had a wonderful time, my very first visit to the iconic centre at Newent, which I have read about, and dreamed of since childhood. It was also my first time exhibiting my paintings away from the gallery at my centre, and it was a profitable weekend for me, better even than I had hoped. Some great displays, and great company, it all seemed to run very smoothly. I only hope Mima chooses to run it as an annual event, it would be the one event I would make sure my calendar was clear for.

David Rampling, Artist

I thoroughly enjoyed the whole weekend and the nice friendly atmosphere that accompanied it. Roll on 2012 and let's hope the next one is equally as enjoyable to participants and visitors alike.

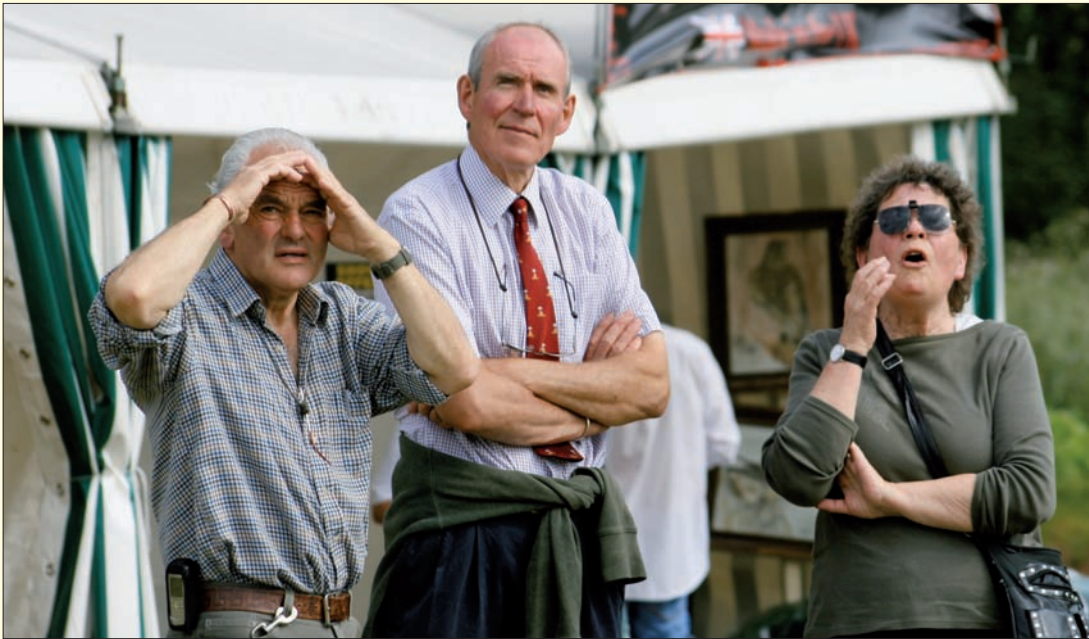
Bob Dalton, Falcon Leisure

Saturday, September 3rd and Sunday, 4th September 2011 saw the arrival of what could become a regular and important date in our diaries. A new UK falconry event opened its gates at the ICBP (International Centre for Birds of Prey) – otherwise known as “Jemima's place”. Around 700 people attended what I deemed would already be a success (and which sets it apart from other events) by the venue alone. Everyone attending not only had the choice to peruse the varied falconry related trade stands but also the vast collection of the ICBP's hawks, falcons, and owls, which is unparalleled at any other UK event. There were numerous flying displays and lectures during the day followed by the hugely popular BBQ in the evening.

Ian Vance, falconryequipment.com

The event will be hosted on the same weekend and venue next year.

Further details can be found at: <http://www.thefalconryevent.co.uk>



Left: Where's that falcon?
Chris Spittle, Nick Kester and
Dianne Spittle enjoying the
displays

Right: The crowd starts to
assemble



Left: Ian and Robert Vance
equipment suppliers

For the Avoidance of Mutes!



Wooden travelling boxes

One of the first falconers I ever met had a van, the inside of which he hosed down at regular intervals, not that it made any real difference. The residual smell was awful. No matter how clean you think you have it, and regardless of the amounts of paper laid onto the floor, it is a fact of science that the largest and smelliest mute will be sliced by your hawk into an un-reachable crack where it will fester forever. But even worse was the falconer whose hawks sat on the back of the rear seat, for if they turned to face the rear, there was a real risk that you would receive a well aimed slice into the back of the neck. Every so often Paul would screech to a halt so that he could persuade his caste of Harris hawks to face forward.

Cheap estate cars

My first redtail was a particularly good exponent of the high-pressure slice so I bought a succession of very cheap estate cars with hawking in mind. He sat on what was known as a travelling cage where he defecated to his heart's content, occasionally hitting the dog. These old cars were purchased with just enough MOT to get me through the hawking season after which they were scrapped. The only trouble was that sometimes they scrapped themselves; usually as far from home and in the worst possible weather. But that's falconry.

I cannot tell you when I first saw a hawk box, but I think it must have been the American David Frank, who lived up the road and had most new inventions. As an aside, he once built a cage for our regular trips to Scotland, which was seriously over-engineered. Built like a commercial doorframe, it weighed a ton and even had cunningly hidden, slide



Redtail on a cadge

out falcon blocks on each side. I have a photograph of me burdened by this edifice, but only once. Thereafter, I, like everyone else in the party, refused to shoulder it.

Initial hawk boxes were made in garden sheds and designs differed. Light plywood was the preferred material with the outside adorned with hooks for gloves, leashes and all the other panoply required for a day in the field. Air holes were drilled around the base – but only the idiots put them front and back where mutes could leak out. And leak they did. Hawks have an un-nerving habit of riding with their backs to the door and as these were usually ill fitting (unless you were a high-end carpenter) the mutes would dribble through the gap leaving a nasty puddling mess under the box, which was only noticed when it was moved days later.

Being wood, mutes congealed and the surfaces became resistant to all attempts to keep the inside clean. I once resorted to the sticky-backed plastic so loved by early Blue Peter presenters, to provide a easy-clean surface but its application was fiddly and usually resulted in a crumpled mess with mute laden creases, which

was worse than useless.

Then miracle of miracles someone started to make hawk boxes of black polypropylene and we have never looked back. Every manufacturer, and there are several, has his own design – although there is a common format. Here is what I have found best. The holes should always be at the top with a baffle to obscure light. Whether the baffle is from roof down or below the holes going up is debateable. Some say that with the latter the stale air collects against the roof, others that there is less through flow of air. Although the doors are now of engineering fit, I do think an inner lip at the bottom of the door prevents the mutes running down and seeping out. The perch should be large enough for your hawk to grip comfortably. I did not like the rubber one that my box came with and replaced it with one covered by AstroTurf. There must be a drain hole in the floor with a good bung in it.

No matter how clean you think you are going to keep it, use newspaper on the floor. It mops up the mutes and when you are at a field meet, when the hawk is overnight in the box, a kitchen

roll and plenty of newspaper makes for a happier hawk and less foul smells. And here is the cleaning tip given to me by Diana Durman-Walters that everyone needs. You can wash off the black faeces but the white urates can set like concrete so you make a solution of soda crystals and scrub these with a rough-sided kitchen sponge. They then quickly dissolve leaving the box clean and fresh.

New transport box

I am not a sucker for gadgets, but at this year's Welsh Game Fair Duncan of Kingscott Transport Boxes (www.ktb.eu.com) showed me Circair, his latest invention. A small exhaust fan located under the perch pulls in clean air through the top vents of the box. Of course it is up to you to ensure the air in your car is fume free, and Duncan cannot recommend use in heavy traffic or smog areas where the external fumes could be toxic.

He fitted it as we talked and I am now fully equipped for the first field meet of the season. The fan works from a standard 12-volt plug that most modern estate cars have in the rear as well as in the old cigar lighter position on the dashboard. In my Ford, this is permanently on, while in the older Isuzu Trooper the key must be in the auxiliary position for it to work. There are pros and cons here. Duncan tells me that the fan draws down very little power, so the device can be left on over night in the Ford without draining the battery. (With more powerful devices such as cool boxes, this is not the case as I discovered when I went to start the car at Cheltenham having left the booze chilling nicely at the cost of a flat battery.) I have yet to prove it, so I will hold Duncan to that beer if he is wrong!

Hawks love travelling boxes because they feel so safe in them. Baldrick, my six-year-old goshawk, jumps in with enthusiasm even the day after he has been caught up – it is his second home. So here we are in 2011 having moved from the s**t encrusted motors of the seventies and eighties, through the packing cases of the nineties, into the purpose built super-box of the 21st Century. Falconry is constantly evolving, and it is the technology that enables us to proudly boast we have some of the best animal welfare in the country.

Food for Thought



Good food

Way back in the early Nineties I wrote an article about my passion for the feeding of good raptor food. It was originally published in the year Journal of the Welsh Hawking Club "Austringer" in 1991 and later re-published in this magazine in the Summer of 1996 issue 27.

For those of you who may have missed these publications it can be found on my website at www.eaglefalconer.com under the Article section. It still has some valid points especially on feeding a varied diet of adult food with good muscle, hard calcified bones and tendons.

This not only gives a raptor flesh that has come from creatures that have eaten a good and varied diet, including vital minerals and vitamins. It also strengthens a raptor's neck, chest and leg muscles with the twisting and pulling that is entailed to rip its food apart. This in turn has the additional benefit of helping to

keep the upper and lower mandible in perfect shape.

Sadly in today's modern world, time seems to be a commodity that is in short supply, or at least we humans generally kid ourselves that it is.

Many of us who succumb to the belief of time saving, often fall into the trap of feeding ourselves and our families on convenience food, and with the same belief, often purchase all-in-one convenient feed for our pets.

Although raptors do not fall into the category of pets, they in turn often get the most convenient food we find available regardless of much thought.

Back in the day when I first started falconry the acquisition of food for my raptor was a daily chore. Very few households had such a thing as a deep-freeze and my mother was never going to let me keep "dead-things" in the ice box of her fridge.

For me it was a daily routine of scouring for road kill, walking the back

lanes armed with an air-gun and/or checking my baited cage traps.

In the winter months our goshawks often killed enough to almost sustain themselves, but during the moult the pressure was on.

It was not until the mid Seventies when the Mink Farm industry in the UK started to wane due to the fall in fashion for Mink coats, and the added pressure from the animal rights groups who through their stupidity unlawfully released thousands of North American Mink into the British countryside.

Our wildlife is still to this day paying the price of this illegal stupidity, but the demise of the Mink farms did open up the contracted surplus of "Day old Chicks" which had been absorbed by this industry.

I can remember the relief at getting my first bags of chicks and feeling the release from the daily grind of obtaining raptor food from the wild.

Raptor Food supply companies are a major advancement these days, with just



40-year old eagle, only had 1/4 inch nipped off her upper mandible every five years

a phone call you can purchase a great variety of hygienically grown raptor food and have it delivered to your door.

Without this facility many would have difficulty in maintaining a raptor throughout the year, and I guess, a lot fewer raptors would be domestically produced.

It is a sad fact, that so many raptor keepers and falconers narrow their raptor food to just chicks. A diet consisting of a high proportion of chicks is almost the equivalent of a human living on a diet of the consistency of mashed potato.

On this soft diet your jaw muscles would become weak, your teeth would become loose and you would certainly be lacking in many vital minerals and vitamins.

It is self evident that many raptors are fed a poor diet by the large number with overgrown beaks and in many individuals, sporting grossly over developed beaks. Unfortunately this deformity seems to go un-noticed because almost every other captive raptor is suffering to some degree.

Feeding a well balanced diet can pretty well solve this problem as it does in the wild, but if some additional help is needed, then...

Beak coping is well documented in many "How-to" falconry books and

most falconry equipment suppliers have a good assortment of files and cutters. Yet there is still a high proportion of raptors with over-grown beaks.

Yes, I agree I am a bit pernickety about this subject and I can bang on

about it whenever I see a raptor with an over-grown beak, which is sadly too often these days.

It brings to my mind a television advert that is currently being broadcast. It shows the viewer a close camera shot of the body of a beautiful young woman. As the camera angle caresses up her torso towards the back of her head, she turns and smiles seductively to the camera, only to show a mouthful of bad teeth.

Immediately the attraction is turned to rejection and this is the same feeling I have when looking at a raptor with an over-grown beak, or even a photograph or painting of one.

Just like a mouthful of bad teeth an over-grown beak is debilitating and can impede feeding, with the worst case scenario that the raptor has difficulty in opening its beak as the lower mandible catches on the sickle shaped upper mandible.

Rarely is a wild raptor seen with an over-grown beak. The fact is they all have perfect beaks because they live on a varied diet. They are also hard muscled and very fit, and this is what we should strive to achieve through correct feeding and good management.



37-year old eagle. I have never touched his beak in 20 years

Tackling the Tree Rat

Part 2

Image supplied by Mike Read



To catch any quarry at all, all birds need a certain level of fitness. How you keep the bird, feed it, exercise and fly it all contribute to that fitness. The female Harris Hawks I have at the moment are generally flown three or four times a week depending on weather and work. They have a keen interest to fly and hunt if rested for a few days, so I find flying every day is not essential. I have always kept Harris Hawks free lofted, save for the couple of weeks each year when they undergo retraining. A bird that is able to move at will in or out of the weather, will keep

a better circulatory system than one permanently bowed. The birds have an internal shelter area of about 5ft x 10ft with a high perch, with an external flight area open to the elements of 16ft x 8ft. They do not crash about, nor do they fly round in circles. They are simply able to move about to be where they prefer at any time of day. They always roost in the sheltered section. For the quarry under discussion here, the level of fitness and mental agility required is of the highest level. The Harris is a “perch and search” or “soar and search” bird essentially in the wild, and has extra pairs of eyes from the family to help each individual hunter.

When a bird is flown on its own at squirrels, it learns to be particularly alert. The falconer needs to be able to read their bird at this stage, and to know when and where she has spotted the squirrel or its drey. I have not yet figured out how the birds can tell when a drey is occupied and when one isn't, but they are invariably correct in their choice. Sometimes the bird will simply look up into the tree canopy, other times she will circle above the tree canopy looking for squirrel activity below.

When a chase has ended without a kill, you may be tempted to go and find the next one. However spare a thought

for how the bird feels. She has exerted herself expending a lot of energy for possibly 20 minutes. Her blood sugar levels will be depleted, she will be hot and a little annoyed that it “got away”.

Regain her to the fist with a reward and walk or sit with her a while. I keep my chocolate bar in a meat-free pocket for just such a moment! Rest her for as long as the chase was on, and then she will fly with renewed interest. If you try to get her going too soon after a failed chase, she may be too tired and uninterested. If however she spots another on her own before you retrieve her, then let her try for it. She will know when to stop or when she has a chance. There have been times when mine has refused a subsequent chase, and the likelihood is that she was too tired after the first.

When a bird has caught a squirrel on a day out she always gets some of the kill back at the aviary while it is still fresh and warm. This reinforces their appreciation of the quarry. If she is to be flown the next day, I give her the head and if she is not being flown the next day she will have a back leg or piece of the body. These may look small portions, but it is a meat with a high protein content and will add weight to a bird easily. Because it is tough, it is good for the beak and strengthening of the chest muscles while they pull at it. I have never coped the beak on any of my Harris Hawks, and they’ve all been fed squirrel at some time or another.

Reward for the hawk

Why do I feed up at the aviary and not on the kill you may ask. The bird’s reward is at the scene of the kill. It is a 1/3rd portion of a Day old chick (DOC) and this is what she expects as it is what I have done from the outset of her training. Once the quarry is dispatched, I hold it down with the inverted Y stick and cover it with a bag. The chick portion is then tossed about two to three feet away where the bird can clearly see and jump to it. If there is no such clear space, I lift the bird AND the quarry to a clear space in order to do the exchange. It should be a quick jump off the quarry onto the chick, she must not be able to grasp the chick without letting go of the kill! I then pick up the bag and quarry in one motion and put it safely out of sight in the back of my jacket and have another small pickup

piece ready for the bird in my gloved hand. Usually it is better to walk away from the scene with the bird on the fist – these birds have a good memory and may go back to find the kill, so walking them away avoids this. I can then safely continue flying her if conditions allow it. This exchange of the kill also prevents a bird from being difficult to remove from a kill by preventing possessiveness. I am only referring to experienced Harris Hawks here, and others may have different experiences with Red Tails or Goshawks. You may also want to feed up a newly entered bird at the scene too, but that should only be necessary for a few occasions until they are really hunting successfully.

The most number of squirrel taken in one morning was three within one hour, but the bird worked well and worked hard that day and it has not happened since. One rabbit and one squirrel would be a more normal day’s hawking bag.

Dispatching Quarry

My experienced Harris Hawks will now throttle their quarry, so that it is dead-on-arrival when I get there. That is fine, but when it happens be aware that the next stage as far as the bird is concerned is eating it. She will want to eat under cover, so this period represents the danger period for carrying. An immediate securing of the quarry is required, followed by the exchange.

Another twist of the tail (pun intended!) is that Pebbles (female HH) has learned a technique by accident but then repeated it deliberately. At the end of one squirrel chase in February 2002, when the ditches around the farm fields were swollen with heavy rainfall, the squirrel bailed out of the tree top not realising that it would land in one such deep flowing ditch some 3ft wide. Pebbles followed and grabbed it round the head, but could not steer out of the way of the water. She splashed down heavily and although her wings kept her afloat, she was being washed down stream by the current of the running water. She did not let go of her prize, but instead gave me that “well come and help me” look. I ran a little further down the edge of the ditch and managed to snag her with my Y-headed stick (reason number four to carry it). I then put one foot onto the slippery sloping root of a



Squirrel bolt hole

tree sticking into the ditch, and my gloved hand went down to reach her hidden legs.

One falconry glove holds approximately one pint of cold wet ditch water! I leashed her up and traded the soggy squirrel for a dry chick. That was the end of the day’s hawking as I wanted to get us both in and dry. Pebbles did not forget that day.

A week or so later, in a different location she took a squirrel that bailed out of a tree. I couldn’t find her even though the ground had been open below the tree. When I heard her bells, that sloshing low-toned tinkling sound, I could tell she was in water – but where? Using sound rather than sight to locate her, I found her sitting atop the lifeless drowned grey she had grabbed earlier, now squarely in the middle of a decent sized puddle. This happened on two more occasions, and on the third I actually saw her leave the tree and carry the squirrel to the water. On leaving the tree she was actively looking below her for water in which to drown the quarry, and as the season had been so wet she never had far to go. Anything from two to



Harris Hawk on the look out

12 inches was considered suitable.

It was not until I had been flying squirrels that I had a greater appreciation of the tactics of the quarry. Everyone knows that a rabbit will head for a hole that it knows and then it is gone from view. The squirrel is a little more devious and cunning in its tactics to evade a pursuer. It certainly knows its ground well, and where all natural and man-made holes are, but holes are its last refuge. A few examples of flights will illustrate what the greys will do when they are pressed.

Scurrying squirrel

By the time we've driven to the day's hawking ground, we will know if it's to be a squirrel day or not, as they can be seen out in the hedgerows and scurrying across the roads on cold crisp winter mornings. They will stay in on windy days, or if snow is due. Sometimes we will get the first one just after entering an area – which used to be satisfying if unsporting. Now, we prefer to get a few exhilarating flights to really warm up the birds before the finale of a capture. The birds (and a pair is usually more successful than a singleton) don't have it all their own way either. The escapes are often fast, daring and surprising, and the Harris can definitely develop an 'expression' when it has just lost its squirrel as it bolted down a rabbit hole.

The most dramatic flight I remember,

which made me scream with both fear and delight, went like this. The duo, or 'A' team as they were sometimes called now, were flying in an area of tall pine trees, average height I suppose was 60ft (18 metres). The lower half of the trees only had dead twigs where the branches once were, and the live part was just the canopy at the top. At the top were squirrels in a nice cosy little drey. Then we came along, and the Harrises decided to ladder up the dead twigs until they reached the drey, pulled it apart and thus evicted the tenants. The ground was open, no cover and no rabbit holes nearby, so we knew we were in for some long flights. Cocoa was above the quarry when it started to run down the trunk of the pine head first, which is what squirrels have evolved to do. The Harris looked for a few seconds and I can't believe she isn't following. Coward, I thought. Then she just folded her wings and tipped forward off the branch head first, ALL the way down the tree-trunk. This was when I yelled. I swear she did it with her eyes closed as I watched the small side dead branches give way as she rushed past them. She pulled up out of the stoop just before she ran out of tree and opened her wings to swing up with momentum and land on another pine. The grey got away that day, but I aged a decade in two minutes.

Some squirrels will try to tough it out

by "freezing" and hanging upside down under a bough when they know they are being pursued in the air. Not only do they freeze, but they cling flat to the tree so reducing their outline. This is when the human spotters with neck ache, stumbling about under a tree, have their part to play. If the squirrel then spots a human near it, it will move, and thus the bird spots it from above. Teamwork is the name of the game here.

In the early days the Harrises used to just tail chase the grey wherever it went, but now they take a more planned approach. One bird initially chases it while the other gains a higher position either in the same tree or in a neighbouring tree. Then each bird will 'work' the squirrel up to the top of the tree. Once a grey is at the very thin tips of an oak tree it does one of two things – bail out to the ground or leap into the top of an adjacent tree. The birds know this only too well. Over half their latter kills have been taken in the air on the descent. Unencumbered they sail to the ground and squeeze the life out of their victim. Sometimes I no longer need to dispatch the quarry. The bird that doesn't get the kill always sits above and just watches. We've not had a case of both birds on the same grey unless it was not under proper control by the head. This seems to be the epitome of co-operation, respect and sociability between Harrises.

Flying a Cast at Squirrels

Most people didn't want to fly their birds in a cast with mine, because I tempted fate by flying the bushy tails. But a local falconer now had a female Harris which was too aggressive to fly with other Harris. It had been like this since an immature and had not subsequently socialised to learn its place in the hierarchy of a cast. She (Becks) was also an experienced squirrel taker. So the two falconers decided to put the two birds in the air and aim to take on the local squirrel population. We flew them some yards apart to begin with, but with their curiosity and natural social skills they ended up in the same tree looking at each other. Sizing each other up, who was the stronger of the two, who had the larger punch. There was one contact between the birds, literally a punch with a clenched foot, and from that moment on they never challenged each other again. We were just pleased at that time that we still had two birds left! But we never could have hoped for what happened over the subsequent seasons. The "A" team as we came to call them, showed a wide range of skills and tactics in their pursuit of greys. Cocoa would invariably spot a moving target, or select a likely drey. Cocoa would pull dreys apart whilst her assistant Becks stood alert in the adjacent tree – usually slightly above the drey – ready to make the first assault on the evicted quarry. Sometimes a flurry of squirrels emerged and it was difficult for us to see who was chasing what where, and how many exactly were running around. Families of four or more greys will rest up in one large drey, and if you are standing under it at the time be prepared for what may fall in your direction!

If only one quarry is isolated in a tree though, the two birds will work it up to the top of the tree. You cannot rush this nor help the process much, but simply observe and be ready. If males are flying as part of the cast, they usually stay closer to the ground floor level, and become the bottom marker. They will give chase, and may even grab it on the ground. This is a dangerous way to catch squirrels, but can be done by an experienced bird. We found very few of the catches happened on the ground. Males are good at running under cover to flush a squirrel that is merely hiding under some ground cover,

leaves or bracken or the like, and will do so even when the squirrel has left the ground!

The most extraordinary event of co-operation happened between these two birds quite early on in their adventures. One morning we went out early to avoid the dog-walking holiday makers and family parties out to look at the countryside. After a couple of mediocre chases, Cocoa had a view of two squirrels. Both birds are off through the naked beech and oak trees to their goal.

A few isolated pines stand in the woods too. After some cornering round the same tree the two bushies head for their drey in one of the pines. Cocoa goes round and above the pine and jumps down on it from above. She starts dismantling the drey and out flee the hosts! More chases, and the squirrels are lost. HOWEVER, Cocoa did not see where one of them went, so she high-tails it back up to the drey. She jumps and pulls and then, sqwaaak, sqaaawk. Oh no, I thought, she's "begging" off the other bird for food as she did not catch something. Or getting VERY annoyed!

This was not a good sign. B_U_T, as my mind had closed this sentence, she started again . . . sqwaaak . . . sqwaaak.. sqwaaak then chuk-chuk-chukkk-kkkkkk---kkkkk---kkkkk---kkk. Like a squirrel alarm call, but much lower in pitch and quite "harrisy"!! Several more times she did this, and we could see her open beak at the same time. The other bird which had given up earlier (Becks) came to rejoin her instantly. We knew where the other bushy had gone, so were not expecting another to come out of the drey, but her persistence on them is more than I have ever seen on a prey item for a Harris Hawk. But, what about this noise thing? She started with the harsh sqwaaks and then shortened them until they were chuk-chuk sequences like the squirrels. I'd never read, heard of nor seen anything like this before. After moving her on she went way up above the treetops and did a wide circle and yes, she found another one! This was a new squirrel-searching tactic for her at the time.

After this event I contacted some US Harris Hawkers and those who study the species biologically. One was Jim Dawson, whose comments were :

"It sounds to me, however, like the

call I described before. At its peak in cadence, it's very similar to a Coopers Hawk defending it's nest (Kak, Kak, Kak). It often starts out slow and becomes more rapid and increases in pitch. I've only seen it in captives a few times but did manage to get it on the soundtrack of a video. I've heard it more often in the wild and it always occurs when a group has prey cornered in cover. The bird closest to the prey is the one who gives this call. My birds did this twice when they could clearly see but could not quite reach cottontails that were holding fast in prickly pear. I believe that call has a narrow function because it's so rarely used. Maybe it serves to pull other members down to deal with a holding animal that would be an easy kill (with a little fast help)." (J Dawson. 1999)

She did this on a couple of other occasions, but generally the cast is so alert as to what is going on that their communication seems to be of the non-verbal variety now. When one leaves a branch to fly, the other can tell if it has spotted quarry or is simply moving on to have a look elsewhere. This can be deduced from the immediacy of the second bird's departure from her perch, and the fact that she will track the first bird, as opposed to just follow in a parallel line.

The success rate in catching squirrels with a cast can be close to 80%, whereas with a singleton it is roughly 50%, even for experienced birds. Some may say why risk more than one bird at this dangerous quarry. My reply would be that they do it in the wild, that they learn more, that they stay fitter, they socialise better for it, and you can hardly prevent them from doing it if the opportunity arises.

This form of hawking with the ubiquitous Harris has shown me a deeper side to their nature, their skills and their sociability. After six years, they can still learn new tactics and new skills given the opportunity. I now trust my bird to spot quarry, more than my own eyes and ears, and trust her to handle it however she feels comfortable handling it. Every Harris has its own character, tenacity and sense of purpose. To me they are more than just a 'flying dog' that you can take for walk in the park on a Sunday morning. If you doubt it, test your metal and fly the greys.

Club Directory



The Welsh Hawking Club



www.thewelshhawkingclub.com

The Welsh Hawking Club has four regional groups throughout the United Kingdom meeting in:-

South Wales, North Wales, the South West and Essex

For more details please visit our website and click on Regions.

For all general enquiries please contact:

Jan France on 01993 822906

or

e-mail: secretary@thewelshhawkingclub.com

THE SCOTTISH HAWKING CLUB

FOR THE DEDICATED FALCONER

The largest club in Scotland protecting the needs of falconers.

AFFILIATED TO:- Countryside Alliance - Hawk Board - Scottish Hawk Board - Zimbabwe Falconers Club - North American Falconers Association - International Association for Falconry

Further details from:

Jim Coyle

E-mail: info@scottishhawkingclub.co.uk

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

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@sefg.org or

visit our web site www.sefg.org

THE BRITISH HAWKING ASSOCIATION

Regional field meetings held regularly. A family association that welcomes both the experienced falconer and the novice.

The British Hawking Association . . . showing the way forward.

CHANGING ATTITUDES TO IMPROVE STANDARDS.

Contact the BHA via its website:-

www.thebha.co.uk

or e-mail to secretary@thebha.co.uk

Join and support your local club today!

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 visit our web-site

www.yorkshirefalconry.org.uk

British Falconers' Club

Founded in 1927

**The oldest and largest Hawking Club
in the country.**

**Twelve Regional Groups -
Scotland, Yorkshire, Midlands, Cotswolds, Eastern,
North Western, Mid-West, North Eastern, Southern,
Wales, South Western, West Midlands & Borders.**

Please send A5 SAE + 50p stamps to:-

**Dave - Membership Secretary
THE BRITISH FALCONERS CLUB (F.M.)
01253 859062 (evenings)**

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



Established for over 30 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 **NEW** website at: www.seraonline.co.uk

or telephone Brian for information on: **01732 463218**



To advertise here call 0845 803 1979

Independent Bird Register

Telephone 0844 700 8500

IBR Lost, Found, Reunited & Stolen birds of prey from 1 July to 30 September 2011

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.

Our web site now has a rolling 2 month lost IBR registered list and a found list.

Part of the ring number has been replaced with a ? for security reasons

REMEMBER! We offer a service don't abuse it.

STOLEN x 3

BREF	RING	SPECIES
82256	?8922?	BARN OWL
86801	?8461?	HARRIS HAWK
87885	?	?7TEL0?GYR/SAKER FALCON

REUNITED x 122

BARN OWL	17
BLACK KITE	1
COMMON BUZZARD	3
EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL	7
GOSHAWK	4
GYR HYBRID	12
HARRIS HAWK	33
INDIAN EAGLE OWL	3
KESTREL	4
LANNER FALCON	5
MERLIN	2
PEREGRINE FALCON	4
PEREGRINE HYBRID	11
RED-TAILED HAWK	2
SAKER FALCON	6
SAKER HYBRID	2
SIBERIAN EAGLE OWL	1
SPARROWHAWK	4
TAWNY OWL	1

LOST x 39

BREF	RING	SPECIES
53482	?2479?	BARN OWL
78101	?4902?	BARN OWL
80110	?7657?	BARN OWL
80116	?7657?	BARN OWL
80740	?6765?	BARN OWL
81292	?7693?	BARN OWL
81648	?3CHP?	BARN OWL
85497	?1594?	BARN OWL
78090	?5436?	BURROWING OWL
84604	?8048?	EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL
81776	?6TEL0?	GOSHAWK
77844	?5572?	GYR/PEREGRINEXSAKER
85951	?8316?	GYR/SAKER FALCON
39359	?3640?	HARRIS HAWK
42953	?4232?	HARRIS HAWK
46625	?23AM?	HARRIS HAWK

51410	?5105?	HARRIS HAWK
56751	?0037?	HARRIS HAWK
59440	?8838?	HARRIS HAWK
62560	?1023?	HARRIS HAWK
68594	?6697?	HARRIS HAWK
73949	?7276?	HARRIS HAWK
75498	?3384?	HARRIS HAWK
76065	?0RJW?	HARRIS HAWK
78527	?6225?	HARRIS HAWK
80350	?7773?	HARRIS HAWK
69670	?6268?	KESTREL
87680	?MPH?	LANNER FALCON
87681	?2285?	LANNER FALCON
24699	?2418?	LUGGER FALCON
53642	?1526?	PEREGRINE FALCON
87231	?RMSG?	PEREGRINE FALCON
87879	?041DE?	PEREGRINE FALCON
23086	?8PHO?	PEREGRINE X GYR / SAKER
60522	?2GE9?	RED-TAILED HAWK
56995	?E2 9E?	SAKER FALCON
87508	?G0178?	SAKER/ PERE HYBRID
69680	?SPD1?	SPARROWHAWK
86687	?8391?	SPARROWHAWK

FOUND x 13

BREF	RING	SPECIES
9970	?7979?	HARRIS HAWK
12647	?3181?	HARRIS HAWK
30987	?2951?	HARRIS HAWK
37454	?5655?	HARRIS HAWK
62130	?1KN?	HARRIS HAWK
87040	?70BC?	BARN OWL
87079	?7768?	COMMON BUZZARD
87511	?7814?	HARRIS HAWK
87755	?88NB?	LANNER FALCON
87880	?DN14?	GYR HYBRID FALCON
87882	?E078?	HARRIS HAWK
87891	?45SC?	RED-TAILED HAWK
87945	?6BC9?	BARN OWL

IBR web-site
www.ibr.org.uk

The Independent Bird Register

THE Proactive approach to Lost & Found birds

- Open from 08:00 to 21:00 7 days a week
- Lost, found & stolen register
- Bird registration
- Breeders rings
- Split telephone rings
- Registration documents
- Captive breeders certificates
- Independent advice
- THE IBR Falconry Directory
- THE Online Falconry Directory
- Daily updated Birdmart on the web
- Over 15,000 members

VISIT OUR NEW WEB SHOP

for
Vitamins, Aloe Vera & Equipment
Contact us on:

01748 830112

www.ibr.org.uk

juliana@ibr.org.uk

Tiercel House, Falcon Close, Scotton,
North Yorkshire. DL9 3RB

Insurance for your Birds of prey

Insurance cover for the bird of prey enthusiast, clubs, societies and bird of prey centres. The individual is important to us!

- Public liability
- Employers liability
- Veterinary fees
- Mortality, theft & weather perils
- Non return cover



0800 626 012

enquiries@exoticdirect.co.uk

ExoticDirect is a trading style of Brooks Braithwaite (Sussex) Ltd. Brooks Braithwaite (Sussex) Ltd is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) Number 304389. 4 Bridge Road Business Park, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1TX

EXOTICDIRECT



Ben Long

Experience Days and General Tuition
Introduction to Longwings
Coaching and Troubleshooting
Specialist topics (kite training, etc)
Professional Training of Raptors
Displays

www.thefalconryschool.com



The world's best range of falconry equipment and products -the choice of professionals

www.benlongfalconry.co.uk
mailto:info@benlongfalconry.com

Ben Long
PO Box 3162
Gloucester
GL1 9BH
UK
0844 879 3238
07970 038169

EAGLE FALCONRY WEBSITE

Dr. David Glynn Fox

Falconer, Natural Historian, Wildlife photographer, author and Zulu historian for over 40 years.

Visit my new website – in Yahoo.com

www.davidfoxfalconry.com

- Articles
- Falconry
- Lectures
- Photography
- Wildlife art for sale
- Zulu history

Telephone:

0115 937 4877

E-mail:

davidfox78@hotmail.com

Classified

FALCONRY FURNITURE

MARTIN JONES FALCONRY FURNITURE

The name for quality

Breeder of quality falcons and hawks from proven blood lines.

Full range of falconry equipment, books, DVDs and **FULL COLOUR CATALOGUE**. Please ring **01600 750300** or write to:

The Parsonage, Llanrothal, Monmouth NP25 5QJ

E-mail: sales@falconryonline.com

Secure website www.falconryonline.com
Free advisory service and also sponsor of Campaign For Falconry

HAND CRAFTED FALCONRY FURNITURE FROM

falconryequipment.com

25 years of manufacturing & supplying quality equipment at an affordable price.

SAE for catalogue please to:

**80 Ramsey Drive, Arnold,
Nottingham NG5 6QQ**

Tel: (0115) 9203682.

E-mail: sales@falconryequipment.com

Web site: www.falconryequipment.com

Kiezebrink UK Ltd

Now covers most of the UK, with Premier Quality Frozen Raptor & Reptile Foods from Europe's largest supplier.

Top quality blast frozen day old chicks, quail, rats, mice, gerbils and hamsters.

We now sell Chicken and Turkey necks and a range of vitamin and mineral supplements.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sarah

01284 810779

or mobile: **0777 5812602**

Covering: East Anglia, London, Home Counties,
Eastern England, East and North Midlands
and Yorkshire.

Andrew Knowles-Brown on

01864 505245 or

mobile: **07711 952173**

Covering: Northern England & Scotland



A s t r o T u r f

The real thing, use the best for your birds or dogs. Cut lengths or rolls
Phone:-

07711 952173

JOHN CHITTY

BVetMed CertZooMed CBiol MSB MRCVS



JC Exotic Pet Consultancy Ltd

Wombourne
Allington Track
Allington
Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP4 0DD
UK

Telephone:

0777 579 6432

www.jcexoticpetconsultancy.co.uk

E-mail:

enquiries@jcexoticpetconsultancy.co.uk

The **Falconers**
& Raptor Conservation Magazine



Binders

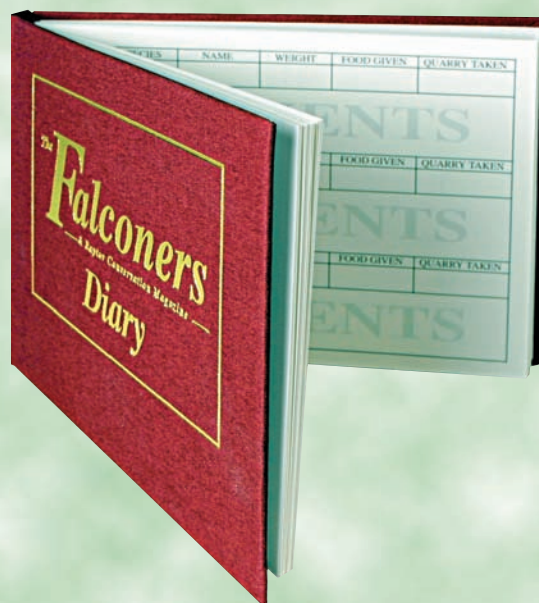
Keep your treasured magazines neat, tidy and safe in a *Falconers Magazine Binder*.

Only: **£8.00**
P&P FREE

Falconers Diaries

Keep track of your bird's progress in a quality, hardback diary. Weight, food given, quarry taken and also keep note of your valuable comments for future reference.

Now only: **£5.00** P&P FREE



For credit card orders telephone

0845 803 1979

Most credit cards accepted

Between the hours of 9.00am - 4.30pm.

Outside these hours your order will be recorded on an answerphone.

FAX: 01202 659950 or write to:

The Falconers Magazine,

PW Publishing Ltd., Arrowsmith Court, Station Approach,

Broadstone, Dorset BH18 8PW.

Cheques/Postal Orders made payable to PW Publishing Ltd.

THE FOUR WEEK WINDOW

By Lynn
Oliphant

Realizing Your Bird's
Full Potential



PART ONE:

THE THEORY

The concept of critical periods

PART TWO:

THE APPLICATION

How Prairie Sky Falcons develops great gamehawks

PART THREE:

THE BIRDS

Accounts of outstanding gamehawks written by the falconers that flew them

The book that will change your whole approach to developing an outstanding gamehawk!

ORDER ONLINE @ PRAIRIESKYFALCONS.COM

OR SEND 27.- EUR (cheque or money order) TO:

**LYNN OLIPHANT, BOX 80 SITE 600 RR6
SASKATOON, SK. CANADA S7K 3J9**