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The **Falcons**
& Raptor Conservation Magazine



Welsh Hawking Club
50th anniversary fieldmeet

The *Falconers*

& Raptor Conservation Magazine



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Front Cover:
Photo by
Peter Eldrett

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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
E-mail: steve@pwpublishing.ltd.uk

Advertising and Marketing:

Sales:

Roger Hall
0845 803 1979

Production:

Peter Eldrett
PW Publishing Ltd., Tayfield House,
38 Poole Road, Westbourne
Bournemouth, Dorset BH4 9DW
Telephone: 0845 803 1979
E-mail: sales@pwpublishing.ltd.uk

ALL
ADVERTISING
INFO TO THIS
ADDRESS

Finance:

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

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Send your details to our Subscriptions Department:

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
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In this issue you will find the last Hawk Board News written by Nick Kester as the communications officer for The Hawk Board. Nick has decided to retire from this post and have a more relaxing and stress-free life, which he thoroughly deserves.

Nick has worked tirelessly on our behalf over the years by attending many meetings with Government bodies and agencies, building up a good relationship between the falconry community and various departments and ministers. His knowledge and expertise in many aspects of falconry in the UK (including filling out the many forms, paperwork and reading the many reams of legislation) will be missed – although probably not by Nick himself. All the best to you Nick, and enjoy the retirement that you richly deserve.

Also, in this issue on page six, you will find a piece about the terrible and tragic events that are happening in Northern India that are affecting the migratory Amur Falcon. I urge you to visit the website www.conservationindia.org where you will find information about the trapping and killing of these wonderful falcons and I hope you will voice your opinion on the massacre that is happening in the area of Nagaland.

In the meantime, have a good read.

editorial



news & products

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

Book Review

LATHAMS FALCONRY & A COMMENTARY

By David Horobin

Published by Coch-Y-Bonddu Books

ISBN: 978-1-904784-51-7

Reviewed by: Paul Manning – Amews Falconry

This is presented as a two book (hard back) box set. The first are reprints of the famous *LATHAMS FALCONRY* or *Falcons Lure, and Cure*: first published in 1615 and *LATHAMS NEW AND SECOND book of FAULCONRY* published in 1618. The second is a commentary on these by David Horobin, the author that gave us the tremendous *Falconry in Literature*.

Most dedicated 21st Century falconers would love to own copies of the great falconry works, published during the “golden age of falconry”. There have obviously been significant changes since these were written, in land management, wildlife legislation, raptor healthcare understanding and treatments, etc. (much of which, most would consider, to be good for the health and welfare of our birds and their quarry alike).

There is also a sense that there has been a great deal of knowledge and understanding which has been lost. Many species appear to have been successfully flown at quarry, that we no longer have the expertise to match and the general quality of some of their birds' hunting abilities is seldom emulated today. Our only access to this wealth and depth of knowledge is through these works.

The drawbacks, always in accessing these writings, are a combination of cost and more importantly understanding. Many of these works are written in a language or form that is unintelligible to a modern reader. Even when this is not the case the contemporary

context renders them all but impossible to understand. In this box set David Horobin has produced the perfect solution.

Latham's original text is a wonderful book to own and read. It concentrates primarily on the Haggard Peregrine (the wild taken mature bird that Latham loved above all others.) It deals with their training and care once first acquired, their feeding, conditioning and training, and fitting them for the field.

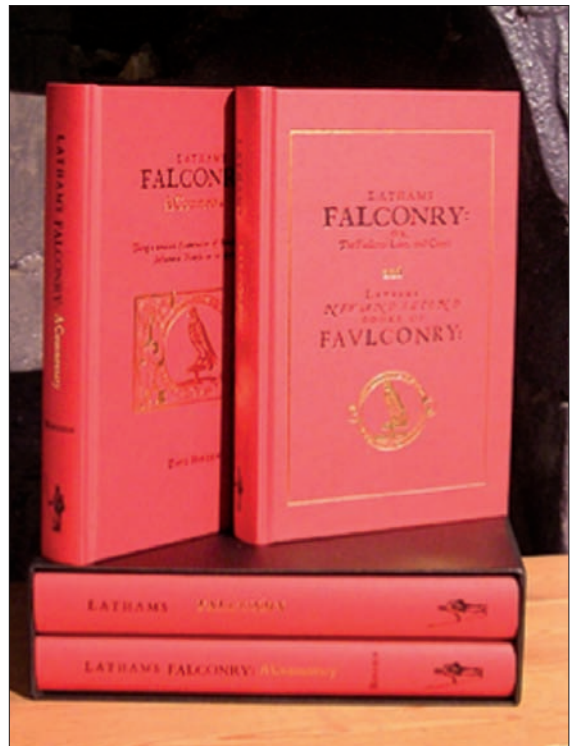
In this he gives his observation on differing temperaments of birds within the species, with a general observation of likely temperaments of birds with different plumage colouring, and the most suitable handling methods required for each of these.

He covers in great detail putting ones bird into the mew out of season and then the very important period when they are recovered from the mews, seen very much as a period of potential danger, for the Haggard's, health and welfare. He also touches on non-haggards, and briefly on other species e.g. the Gyr. Finally, he goes on to deal with the Goshawk in some detail. And much much more.

As said this is a great book to own and read, but even once the layout and spelling/language problems have been overcome (and

with determination, one can adjust and become used to this and even enjoy it), there still remains the huge problem of the context in which it was written.

Issues regarding bagged quarry and live lures etc. whilst illegal and unacceptable today, we can still understand. It's easy to see how captive prey would have aided training in the many specific situations described by Latham. Also how the use of these, (the when and how), would have worked in developing the fitness, motivation and flight style of different birds with different temperaments.



However, much of the book is taken up with the various feeding requirements of birds at different stages in their care and training. Here the modern falconer seems to enter a different world.

This is where the second book *A commentary* takes over. Through Horobin's, extensive research and his excellent writing style this seemingly unintelligible text is explained and illuminated.

Horobin clearly explains the contemporary understanding of the forces that were believed to govern health in all things, "the humours," and how these were believed to be controlled. This not only makes sense of this section but produces a very interesting read.

In Horobin's chapter by chapter commentary; that which would make little or no sense to the modern reader: the use of stones to scour and clean, the use of washed meat, clean meats, Hot meats, artificial casting, live feeds and a myriad of herbal remedies for a plethora of ailment: all give a fascinating insight into 17th century falconry and offer us the opportunity to grow and improve our own.

Not everything written by Latham would inform our husbandry practices today. Much seems counter intuitive to the modern falconer and other

areas are no longer available or considered acceptable. But always when reading a work by someone that has dedicated their lives to the observation, care, understanding and welfare of falconry birds, there is a vast amount that helps to add to our knowledge. Some practices may simply have dropped out of knowledge, but would, if used today, improve our bird's health and performance.

The choice of what to pursue and what to ignore can only be made once the information has been obtained and without David Horobin's extensive knowledge, research and considerable talent, for many of us, this information would remain inaccessible.

Given the "middle ground" that the majority of falconers inhabit, most of the many (some excellent) books dedicated to our sport will contain a vast amount that the experienced falconer in some form will know and with the exception of a few insights their horizons will move little.

In fact there is little that is new, that offers any real advance in our understanding of the training and care of our birds or our sport.

However, when reading Latham's Falconry through David Horobin's illuminating commentary there is a

whole world of information dedicated to the sport we love that comes from a totally different perspective to ours, and this from an eminent falconer, with a proven expertise, at a time when falconry was arguably at its zenith.

Again, you may not agree or be inspired by any of its content, but even then, what a great read and I promise you it will positively add to your pool of knowledge.

I loved this book set. It isn't always the easiest read, and it most certainly isn't for someone just starting out in falconry. But I loved it.

Falconry books like Lathams, were originally written for experienced falconers to improve their knowledge and therefore the quality of their sport.

So my only appeal to David Horobin is that he now goes on to do the same for the many other ancient Falconry treaties. That should keep him busy for a while and provide the rest of us with a wealth of knowledge that will otherwise remain a few tantalising glimpses from the pens of academics.

Needless to say to the experienced falconer, I would wholeheartedly recommend this box set of books.

You can purchase these books from Coch-Y-Bonddu Books
www.anglebooks.com

New Falconry Club in Cornwall

There has often been talk about having a local club that supports and raises awareness of falconry. Also, with the increased number of birds being bred and kept in captivity, there is a need to promote welfare of Birds of Prey and to improve the standard of falconry and protect its future for years to come. Phil and Sharon of Ancient Art Falconry and a few of their friends that live in Cornwall thought of the idea of bringing together like minded people with a passion for our sport to make a real difference to falconry in Cornwall and surrounding areas.

Cornwall is an attractive county which gives falconers access to places like Bodmin Moor and the Glynn Valley. Also,

there are the coastal areas which can give raptors places to soar.

The Cornish Falconers Club meets throughout the year on the last Wednesday of each Month at The Halfway House, Twoswaterfoot, Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 6HR.

Meetings start at 7.30pm and normally conclude around 9pm.

Our meetings are open to all, so whether your experience is vast or very little you will be made welcome. The evenings will start with Club business; this can deal with issues relating to the club or falconry in general and to pass on any relevant news or information within falconry to our members.

There will be workshops aimed at

newcomers and can cover anything from welfare (e.g. coping) and furniture fitting, including tail mounts for your raptor or owl. We also hope to be able to invite guest speakers to a meeting to share their experiences in falconry.

The Cornish Falconers Club welcomes a broad spectrum of members with a general interest in birds of prey and new members will be made to feel welcome and can expect encouragement and advice from falconers within the club.

For further information on The Cornish Falconers Club visit our website www.cornishfalconersclub.com or telephone Phil or Sharon on 0776 601 3346 or 0157 934 0767.

Shocking Amur Falcon Massacre in Nagaland



Amur Falcon caught in a net

Thousands of migratory Amur falcons (*Falco amurensis*) in the remote state of Nagaland in India's northeast are being massacred. It has been estimated that during the peak migration 12,000-14,000 birds are being hunted for consumption and



Hunters with Amur Falcons on poles

Conservation India will continue to monitor and report on the situation.

It is significant to note that India, as a signatory to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), is duty bound to prevent this massacre, provide safe passage, as well as draw up appropriate action plans for the long-term conservation of this bird. In the recently concluded Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), of which India is the president for the next two years, the importance of CMS in conserving species, and especially in stopping bushmeat hunting, was repeatedly stressed.

If you want to find out more on this subject, please log onto www.conservationindia.org where you can find much more information.

commercial sale everyday. It has also been estimated that a mind-boggling 120,000-140,000 birds are being slaughtered in Nagaland every year during their passage through the state.

This is probably the single largest congregation of Amur falcons recorded anywhere in the world and it is tragic that they meet such a fate. A team of conservationists has alerted all the appropriate authorities in Nagaland and the Government officials that were spoken to have committed to put an end to the slaughter and have initiated specific action.



Skinned Amur Falcons

Nick Kester
Communications Officer



This is it. My last update; so if you have been reading, farewell. Someone will be keeping you informed as the rest of 2013 progresses.

It has been fun and rewarding working with so many Hawk Board members dedicated to the continuance of our sport. Looking back there have been more highs than lows.

Submission to the Law Commission

We have submitted what the Board believes is a strong response to the Law Commission consultation on Wildlife Law. It has taken a while to filter through all the paragraphs and to seek expert advice in areas we are not that competent in. I was particularly grateful to Graham Irving for his support at meetings and for bouncing backwards and forwards all the issues. I know much of our submission has been echoed within that presented by the British Falconers' Club. Also to Nick Fox for his more unconventional submission, which highlighted many of the anomalies in the current law, much of it dating back to the start of the 19th Century. Finally, our close links with the Countryside Alliance have given us access

to the wider picture and some valuable legal input.

What we seek is for falconry to be recognised in its own right. The new, or updated, law must acknowledge our singular status as an UNESCO recognised activity. It must accept that falconry is a green field sport with minimum impact on the species that are hawked, and that by breeding our hawks and falcons in captivity we are preserving and contributing to the future success of the species; a species that others, such as the RSPB, says are threatened, in danger and must be more acutely protected. This, despite the incredible population explosion that has occurred in the last couple of decades.

Our captive bred raptors are not wild birds and legislation must reflect this. The old system is so out of date as to be laughable – and it is costly and inefficient. With modern DNA testing it is easy to bring law-breakers to book. But there are risks.

The use of non-natives could bite us in the backside, so unless we want more laws rather than less, we falconers must act responsibly using telemetry in all cases. As a group we must accept that if there are escapees they must be caught without delay and if not more extreme action will be needed.

I am not holding my breath that a new wildlife law will come quickly, but we have started the process. It is up to others to take it to a logical conclusion that benefits us all. The next stage will be to read and prepare counter arguments to all those groups seeking to increase laws rather than simplify them.

Deregistration of species

Something else I am particularly proud of was the decision by the previous Labour government to deregister the final few species from the dreaded blue registration. Sure there were some exceptions (goshawks and eagles) and imported peregrines and merlins, but in general it was a reduction in bureaucracy. And the Minister, Joan Ruddock, did this in the face of some very vocal opposition from the RSPB, who had enlisted support from some intransigent MPs including the previous minister, Elliot Morley. Perhaps we can knock the final paperwork on the head in the next administration?

It was amazing to meet so many world falconers at the first two Festivals of Falconry, and to help in some small part in the UNESCO submission. I did duck out of the last festival in the Middle East; I have been there before! Falconers are a fascinating bunch: diverse and with an inclination to bicker, but their hearts are very much together and when united they are a strength to be reckoned with.

Irritated by Hunting Act clause

What still irks me, and for which I must take the blame, is the clause in the Hunting Act that permits more than one dog to hunt provided a bird of prey was being used. My intention was to protect field meets but little did I realise that the hunts would cynically exploit this exception to circumvent the law. As a foxhunter, I understood, as a falconer I was furious. But what really upsets me to this day was the arrogance of those using a bird of prey for not listening to our point of view, and for not meeting us at least part way. To be fair not all hunts fell into this category, but those that did were depressing caricatures of their type – arcane and arrogant.

A plea for support

I have taken the Hawk Board shilling for ten years and have fended off the media and courted the government to my best ability. Falconry is my sport as it is yours. So I would beg one favour – support those who pick up the baton. It is not easy; it can be thankless. No one, and I really mean this, no one does it for personal gain. If you think you can do better, please help. None of us would refuse. If you have something to offer, please come forward. Farewell and good hawking.

We all owe a big thank you to Nick for all the hard work he has done on our behalf over the years. I would like to thank him for supplying the Hawk Board News page with up-to-date information that affects all falconers in this country.

Happy retirement, Nick.

Ed

Welsh Hawking Club 50th Anniversary Fieldmeet



Getting ready for the group photograph

Last year saw the 50th anniversary of the Welsh Hawking Club (WHC). Their celebrations and annual fieldmeet were held at the Bryn Howel Hotel in Llangollen, North Wales and I was lucky enough to be invited to join in the festivities. If you don't know the history of the club, it was founded in South Wales in 1962 by a few Welsh field-sportsmen under the guidance of the famous Hungarian falconer, Lorant de Bastyai. Lorant became the first president of the club which has over the years gone from strength to strength.

The WHC was invited to attend

many field meetings abroad including Osterreichischer Falknerbund in Austria and the Deutscher Falkenorden, Germany. As the club became internationally known, many more invitations soon followed. Members often returned with Goshawks on their fists, which were gifts from new friends made at the meetings. It is now the second largest club in Great Britain and has a membership of over 350 members.

The WHC has grown so much over the years that they now have four regions where members can attend monthly meetings in South Wales, North Wales, the South West and Essex.

On arriving at the Bryn Howel Hotel

on Wednesday 17 November after attending a Hawk Board meeting in Bristol, I was warmly greeted by many of the members over the evening dinner. That day happened to be Jean Dimond's birthday. She is the club treasurer and membership secretary. Hope you had a happy birthday, Jean. After dinner members retired to a meeting room to have their AGM where members voiced their opinions on various matters which I am not going to write about here but just to say that the committee was re-elected on bloc, except that Dave Jones is now the editor of the club's annual publication, The Austringer. Good luck with that, Dave.



Mike West with his Siberian Goshawk

Thursday at the hawking ground

After a good night's sleep and an excellent breakfast, it was time to gather everyone together for a group photograph outside the hotel before loading up hawks, dogs and equipment and journeying to the pre-arranged fieldmeet sites.

I went out with one of the many Goshawk groups and was chauffeured by Mike West to the flying ground. We

were met by a farmer (who would not be accompanying us) and gamekeeper on whose ground we would be flying and they gave us instructions to get back into our vehicles to travel to another part of the farm. The group was also joined by fellow spectators Dave Jones and his partner Lindsay Graham who joined in the banter especially when I tried to take action shots with my camera – more of that later.

Once we parked up the vehicles, we

were joined by a second gamekeeper and everyone got ready for the day's sport. After a short walk the first falconer to find quarry was Dave Metcalf with his Goshawk, Kelsey. The spectators and rest of the group stood back to allow the dog to work a hedge line and all of a sudden a pheasant got up and was chased by Kelsey. The pheasant made good its escape and then the goshawk flew up onto an electric wire close to a pylon. This was a heart stopping moment for everyone but Dave got his hawk back safely onto his fist.

Next up was Ian Bell and his hawk, Jack. Ian sent his dog on to quarter the ground and flushed out a pheasant which made cover just in time. Another good flight but nothing in the bag yet. When Ian retrieved his hawk it was then Mike West's turn with his magnificent looking Siberian Goshawk. This is really a stunning looking hawk and it flew hard at game but to no avail.

Then Dave Metcalf had another flight near a pond and this time there was success for his hawk as it caught a Mallard duck. First spoils of the day for Kelsey and one in the bag.

As the day wore on there was some great flights but if ever there were someone in the wrong place at the wrong time, it was me. Everytime I got ready to take some action shots with my camera, the quarry flew over a hedge or tree line and I couldn't get to see the full flight of the hawk or the final outcome.

A few more flights later and the bag was getting more full with the success of the hawks, dogs and falconers. We walked a fair way over the hawking ground where the gamekeepers pointed out that the poor crop of maize and lack of Juniper and Sloe berries this year was because of the extreme wet weather we all had to endure in 2012. Still, we had a good day if a little muddy and then came the time to return to the hotel for the evening's events.

Bad news

When we returned to the hotel the WHC committee were getting things sorted for the evening raffle and auction. I joined them, together with Nick and Lynn Havermann-Mart, sorting out what the prizes and auction items could be worth when Roger James' mobile rang. When we saw and heard his reaction with the

words “oh, no” and “criminal damage” we knew things were not good.

A WHC member was out on the fieldmeet enjoying the day when his beloved Harris Hawk was shot.

Here is a brief report of what happened from falconer Dave Sharman whose hawk it was.

We were out on the fieldmeet with the Harris Hawk group when my bird strayed into a garden where there were chickens. I ran as fast as I could to get to the bird but when I arrived the owner of the property was thrashing at the bird with a pole/mop stick. The hawk was alive and no chicken was harmed.

At this point I could have walked in through the gate to pick up the bird – it was two metres inside the fence but the man refused to let me in. I explained that I could get the bird and the quicker I got the bird the quicker I could remove the danger from his chickens. The man was very abusive and aggressive and he said that he had warned me the previous day what he would do if I came in is garden again.

I explained that I was not the person from the previous day and asked again if I could pick up the bird. Note: the hawk was alive at this point and so were the chickens.

As the man was aggressive and threatening me with violence, I decided not to agitate him any more and chose to walk to the other side of his garden and call the bird down wind.

I walked back up the field passing the gamekeeper on the way back, who told me that my Hawk had just flown back into a tree, so I ran around the other side of the property to call her to me.

I searched, looking up the tree for 30 minutes for the bird, constantly calling to the man who was still in the garden but he would not speak and kept ducking back in the house. After more searching I found the bird dead hidden under leaves in a hedge. She had been shot. The Police were called and a short investigation was carried out.

“Lawful excuse?”

There are a number of points that could have been actioned to everyone’s satisfaction but I was not allowed to action.

1. The man could have let me pick the



Dave Metcalf and

bird up – he had that choice before any chicken was harmed but he chose not to do that and shouted and threatened me instead.

2. After refusing to allow me to pick up the bird and I had walked around the side, he must have gone to get the gun (as he did not have it before).

3. He then must have shot the bird after the gamekeeper saw the hawk go up in the tree.

4. From the things the man was saying about warning me the previous day and telling me what he said he would do, this is not “lawful excuse” to protect stock property – it was revenge against someone else for something he says they did the previous day. Unfortunately he mistook me for them.

It is my view that the Police investigation so far has been insufficient to ascertain all the facts on which to make a judgement about “Lawful Excuse.” There are still witnesses that have not been interviewed, i.e. the gamekeeper and the other falconer. In fact, a signed statement has not even been taken from me yet (at the time of going to press, ed). Also, once all the facts are gathered if there is at least a 50/50 chance that there was

an act of criminal damage committed without lawful excuse it is my opinion that evidence should be put in front of a court.

(I am sure you will all understand that this did put somewhat of a dampener on what had otherwise been a good day’s hawking. I will try to let you know of any developments that may occur in a future issue. Ed.)

The Evening’s events

After dinner we all retired to the bar where a raffle and auction was organised. Dave Dimond made a short speech thanking the manager of the Hotel for his hospitality and the hard work that was done by his staff to make our stay an enjoyable one. He then proceeded to call me up and as a nice surprise presented me with an engraved whiskey glass for attending the event to report on the fieldmeet. Needless to say, Dave, that I have used it on many occasions. Over £1000 was raised at the auction for the WHC and everyone seemed to have enjoyed themselves because there was a good atmosphere at the fieldmeet and I would like to say a big thank you to The Welsh Hawking Club for inviting me to join in with their celebrations. Here’s to the next 50 years!

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An interview with

Emma and Steve Ford



Part 2



The British School of Falconry at Gleneagles

This is the second part of the interview given by Emma and Steve at their home in Scotland

HOW DID YOU TWO GET INTO FALCONRY, MEET AND THEN BEGIN WORKING TOGETHER?

Emma: When I was eight years old, I looked over the wall into the next door house which had been empty on the Chilham Castle estate and came eyeball to eyeball with a hawk. I climbed over the wall and introduced myself to the man, who was a falconer who had moved there to start doing falconry displays at Chilham Castle – and I never looked back. I was there all the time – I'd rush home from school to spend time with him and his hawks. My mother got me my first hawk out of Cage and Aviary Birds, it was a Crane Hawk which is a funny little grey hawk almost with a purple tinge to its plumage and blood red eyes. (You could get any exotic in those days.) Unfortunately it died of coccidiosis after I'd had it for a few months, which was a horrible lesson to me. Then I had a variety of hawks of my own after that but I also was able to help train the collection next door for falconry demonstrations. I went down to work for Philip Glasier in the holidays and he taught me which was great. I learnt so much from him. I read and read and read, and tried making falconry furniture. So it was always my passion and then when I was 14 years old I looked out of my bedroom window – we had a cottage on the castle estate which looked up to the old stable block of the castle – and there was Steve,

careering around on a black Andalusian stallion. In those days he had blonde locks and I looked at him and I was instantly in love.

Steve: I started flying hawks in 1969 – I went on a sort of falconry course. Basically I was very lucky – I went when I was 12. I used to cycle to the Hawking Centre in CREDITON in Devon every weekend. When I was 13 years old I was doing public demonstrations – all we were flying was eagles. I was flying White Bellied Sea Eagles, Bateleur Eagles – I think the Bateleur I used to train and fly is still alive now – and I was doing the demonstrations and helping out with Jane Laloe, the woman who owned the Hawking Centre in CREDITON. She said to me “When you leave school do you want to get a job as a professional falconer?” This was not a good thing to say to somebody of 13 years of age. So I bumped my way around school and did very little, and then I started flying hawks and hunting hawks and working in that area. We set up a demonstration team - nobody was really doing anything like that. Jane had a fantastic display team with the eagles and we used to do medieval pageantry. Through that I then got into doing film work and stunt work with horses, and then became, for the want of a better term, a professional jousting and falconer. And I then moved from Devon to Sunningdale in Berkshire. I was then riding professionally for jousting at Knebworth House. I went up there for one day – still had a hawk and a kestrel – and the person running the jousting said “I’m moving from here to Kent and do you want a full-time job, permanently. Come down and be my ramrod and train a new jousting team and train the horses – oh, and by the way, they’ve got a falconer down there”. In those days you knew everybody who had hawks and where they were and I knew it was Chilham Castle. I then turned up in Chilham with a full load of jousting horses and my kestrel. I found out that Emma was a falconer, and I was a falconer so that was really that.

Emma: We’ve been together since I was 14 and Steve was 19. He was my ‘knight in shining armour’ which is very corny but it’s true. They had a Norman keep at Chilham where we used to do mediaeval banquets – and we’d earn money from taking hawks up there in the evenings





Emma, Steve and the team out on the grouse moors with spectacular views

and then we'd have jousting tournaments at the weekends and Steve would do displays.

Steve: The first eagle we bought was bought from Graham Dangerfield and it was a female Changeable Hawk Eagle. I've still got the receipt for it – it was £380 and the way it got paid for was every time I got knocked off a horse in the jousting tournament I got paid £10 – called a saddle fall – so I had to do a professional fall-off 38 times to pay Emma's mother back for the eagle. Once we got that, we knew what we were going to do and decided to set up a centre. So we took over Emma's mother's back garden and set up a rescue centre – we were called the Bird of Prey Centre then – that was 1976 – and we started teaching as well.

Then we got a hawk from Philip Glasier – a long legged buzzard, which was £50 and we built the collection up. It was just at that stage when we started doing

a few shows to earn money. The first show that we ever did was at Hawkhurst (we thought that was pretty apt) and we travelled there in a beaten up old Morris 1000 Traveller. Then one morning we were talking and came up with a question - How many eagles and birds of prey were there sitting in zoos the length and breadth of the country, individually in a cage doing nothing? We went to W H Smith and we bought a book with details of every zoo, wildlife park and bird park in the country and Emma wrote to every single one to find if they had any surplus birds of prey at their zoos. And they got back in touch – the first birds we got were a Bateleur Eagle and two Pallisers Sea Eagles (only ever five of these came into the country and Emma and I had two of them).

Emma: There was a conscience just starting in those days about captive breeding and zoos were suddenly coming under pressure for having anything in a

cage or aviary on its own, so the tide was right.

Steve: So we bought eagles left, right and centre – all over the place – and other birds of prey – and we gradually brought the collection up. We were really really lucky. Then the falconer who lived next door to Emma moved on to another place and another falconer took over for about two years and then he moved on. Then one day Lord Massereene (the owner of Chilham) turned up in Emma's mother's back garden - we had more birds of prey in her back garden than they'd ever had at Chilham Castle - and he asked us to do the falconry at Chilham Castle. He gave us a house at the castle and we built a weathering ground and a walk-through aviary, and aviaries for injured birds and breeding pairs of birds and we basically started from there.

Emma: Suddenly we had a steady income, albeit a tiny one, which we supplemented with film work, and with



courses, and with banquets and anything we could do just to make enough money to keep the collection going and to build the collection up.

Steve: Around that time we received a visit from a representative of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International after they had seen a feature on us in the Daily Telegraph. One of their main clients was Sheikh Zaid, ruler of Abu Dhabi and President of the United Arab Emirates, who was a keen falconer. They wanted to fly us both out to Abu Dhabi to meet the Sheikh to show him that there were young people in the world who shared his passion. To cut a long story short, we went and during our trip the Sheikh offered us a job in Abu Dhabi breeding falcons – we couldn't believe our luck! Everything was set for us to go and then a television programme, *The Death of a Princess*, came along. The showing of the programme was highly controversial and governments in the Middle East

were very aggrieved it had been shown on British television. The upshot of the incident was that many British contracts with the Middle East were lost, and from that day we heard nothing further from BCCI. It was a real body blow but it strengthened our resolve to look for a new future. Shortly after we got married, and later we went on to open the school and move to Scotland.

EMMA - DO YOU FIND IT AN EASY PROCESS TO WRITE AND WHAT MADE YOU WRITE YOUR FIRST BOOK?

Emma: To be honest, I hate writing – I absolutely detest it. A photographer used to come down from London to Chilham Castle regularly and take pictures. He was quite passionate about it and had quite a few photographs published in the press and he got some very good shots. He'd been talking to the publishers, Batsford, saying that he'd like to put

the pictures into a book and they were interested in it but wanted to know who was going to write it. He suggested me – at the time I was 16. I agreed because I knew that actually having a book would make all the difference to the business – it would suddenly give us some respectability and hopefully support in the future. So I gave it a shot. I can remember writing my first ever chapter, which was the one I was best qualified to do at the time, on training of the kestrel. My mother typed it because we didn't have a computer in those days, just a typewriter. So she typed it up for me from my awful handwriting and gave it back to me and said "There you are darling" and I looked at it and said that's absolutely wonderful and Steve looked over my shoulder and said "Except you've spelt kestrel wrong" – it had an "A" in it all the way through – "Sorry darling!" So it was very much a kind of homespun effort, but I had the contract to do the first book and I had six



Steve and Emma out on the grouse moors of Scotland

months in which to do it.

Steve: I had already been teaching courses in Devon, so Emma was able to do the writing and I was able to say “This is how you do this” and do some diagrams – I did a lot of the illustrations for it and it was real teamwork.

Emma: I went up to the publishers midway through the writing process just to have a review and they wanted to know if I would do another small coloured paperback, which was *Birds of Prey*. I had been adopted by an agent by this time and it turned out that he actually took a massive chunk in advance for the book and gave me a relatively small amount. But the fact of the matter was it was still quite a lot to us. So the books came out and from then on it really changed the face of what we did because suddenly you have a book out and you’ve got a degree of respectability. The other books then followed later.

Steve: Frank Ainsworth’s book – the very first book – *Falcons and Falconry* – had been going round for years and years

and the publishers stopped producing it, and then asked Emma to do another book and that’s how *Mews and Field* came about. And then Philip Glasier’s excellent book – *Falconry and Hawking* – came out and Batsford decided that they wanted to have another book on falconry and that’s how *Art and Practice* happened.

Emma: I then did the little coloured paperback book called *Birds of Prey* (which is wrong because it was actually a falconry book) and the others have just kind of fallen into my lap. Some of them have been sponsored, e.g. *Peregrine* and *Gyr Falcon*, which is the only way you could really get that quality and that amount of colour into a book, certainly in those days.

Steve: *Peregrine* was quite interesting. A gentleman from Hong Kong got in touch with us and his company was Peregrine Investments, a finance company. He wanted a corporate gift to give to people and so therefore he sponsored the book – the lettering “Peregrine” is his corporate logo. So then we approached Anthony

Rhodes, who is a good friend of ours, to do the illustrations. We had to chase him like nobody’s business to get the paintings done – deadlines are a nightmare.

So once *Peregrine* was finished and sold, the next thing that happened was Robert Bagley from Marshall Electronics Telemetry was over at one of the falconry shows. Anthony had a stand there and he had three or four of the original paintings from the *Peregrine* book which were up for sale and Bagley came in and bought every single one of those paintings from him. He asked whether Anthony still had contact with Emma and whether he thought she would be interested in writing an accompanying book on the Gyr falcon. Once contacted, Emma said “Yes” – we’d been flying Gyrs by then so we had experience of flying them.

Emma: To write a book you have to do it methodically. You have six months, you have a number of words to produce and you’ve got to do a certain amount each day and if you miss a day you’ve got to do double the next day. I found it a discipline

that I must admit I didn't particularly enjoy, but I just got on and I did it. But now when people say "Are you going to do another book?", I'm like "NO!" We've had suggestions of Merlin and Saker and all sorts of things to accompany *Peregrine* and *Gyr Falcon*, but I honestly have to say I have no intention of doing another one at the moment.

Steve: Emma wrote *Fledgling Days* which is an auto-biographical book up to us leaving Chilham, and I've always said that she really should do the next stage because so much has happened since. I've even suggested titles – one is *Wings Across the Water* (going to America) – but I can't persuade her. Emma would write 500 words a day during her writing time – 10.30am – 12.00 noon and then she'd peak. If she missed a day, the next day it had to be 1,000.

Emma: You kind of have to – or you should do – because you're being paid in advance and then you're paid the other half when you're finished. I think it was too much too long – I did a lot of the books almost nose to tail and books don't

end just with the writing. You've then got the whole editing process and you've got the indexing and everything else and it comes back at you and back at you and back at you.

Steve: But you do get asked to do interesting and fascinating projects. Emma was asked to write the whole of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme for falconry – she did their set up. And the other one which was fascinating for me to do with her was when Emma did the whole of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on falconry – that was just fascinating to sit down and do that. To see it come from just sheets of paper to now see it on a computer screen is just an amazing situation.

Emma: You never know, one day I might muster up the diligence to write again.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR YOUR BOTH ? WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE?

Emma: I think it's fair to say that our ambitions have been fairly well satisfied at this stage. We are not looking for other projects. If something comes up and

feels right at the time then we'll do it. At the moment we are working so that we can get our eight weeks a year grouse hawking. It takes quite a lot to organise your year around that work-wise and I think at the moment we just want to enjoy that for a few years. And we've reached the stage where we can do that. Then if something comes up we might do it – but we've got absolutely nothing on the cards at the moment that we want to do.

Steve: It's exactly what Emma is saying. For me my hawking season starts the day that we finish hawking. So the day we finish grouse hawking, we drive back home and we offload super-fit dogs, falcons and everything. We feed up the falcons and they get turned loose in the aviary and that's the season finished. And at that point I'm scrubbing, cleaning, getting everything ready for the next year – playing 'getting ready games' Emma calls it. And for me, from then on it's working out any problems we've had in previous years and getting ready for the next season - it's just one continuous thing. For us it is a 24 hour falconry



Pick a glove, any glove. The glove rail at the British School of Falconry



Steve getting his falcon ready for flight

business – it’s our hobby, it’s our passion and, with the two businesses in different time zones, you just do not stop. People might think that the Fords are never around, but that’s because the Fords are always working!

Emma: We’ve been very lucky to have met young and been able to do what we do together, certainly for the most part of it.

Steve: And the lovely thing about it is that when we used to hawk with the birds regularly up in the Cairngorms and that area, we’ve had some absolutely fantastic evenings. Emma and I really like it where we live here – it’s a convenient stop off point.

So regularly for years and years Roger Upton would come up from Wiltshire and this is where Roger would stay before he travelled further north. They had pointer trials on the hills around us and Stephen Frank would come down and stay here on the way south. We have a lot of contact with a lot of the old school – the old established falconers. Tony Walker is a very good friend of ours, Fritz Cline, etc.

Emma: So when they’re here we’re saying that the grouse numbers have dropped off and it’s such a shame and it’s not the same as it used to be when we started. And they’re saying “Gosh, when we were hawking we used to be able to take out a team of 10 hawks and they’d all get flown a couple of times in the afternoon and we didn’t feed up on a kill because there were so many grouse.” So you hear stories from the different eras and I think it’s part of the magic of falconry and a big part of the reason we started teaching was because you can hand this passion down through the generations. The only thing we really have to worry about in this country – I don’t think we’re going to run out of captive bred hawks to fly – is the forest and the land to fly on. It’s the opportunities for sport and that’s what we have to work to protect and that’s what we have to worry about for the future.

Steve: It may sound really pompous, but I also think that it’s an etiquette thing as well. You look at people like Roger and

some of the older generation and there’s a certain etiquette and a certain way that you do things – the way that you dress and the way that you talk – and I think we really ought to try and maintain that and I think it’s something that we’re starting to lose. We need to make sure that people coming into the sport, particularly the younger generation, maintain these standards.

At the end of our week-long courses, Emma produced a written examination for everybody. They were given an hour to do it and they had to write an essay at the end of it. Once we had that, we’d assess them and the final thing we used to do is give them a complete checklist – every bit of equipment that they were likely to need. We used to list different equipment suppliers showing their varying prices and we’d get them to add it all up at the bottom so they’d know exactly how much financially they were going to get themselves into before they’d even got a hawk. And if we thought that they were up to that stage, we gave them a list of questions to ask the breeders and we used to supply them with names of two or three breeders. We had a great reputation at that time because what happened was that some of the breeders wouldn’t sell them birds unless they’d actually been on a course with us and that was a really nice situation.

YOU’RE BOTH VERY BUSY – DO YOU HAVE ANY INTERESTS OUTSIDE OF TRAINING GUN DOGS, FLYING BIRDS AND HAWKING?

Emma: Cooking – we both really love cooking.

Steve: In the morning, we decide what we’re going to eat in the evening. We decided early on that, whatever happens, whatever the day, come 5.45pm everything stops – the answer phones go on, and any cell phones and mobile phones we’ve got are switched off. Everything gets switched off and Emma and I will normally pour a glass of wine and prep our food, cook it and then we eat.

Emma: I think a lot of that has come about because if you’ve caught a pheasant with your hawk, certainly in the early days, you can eat that and you don’t have to go down to the butchers. We do a

fair amount of game cookery and we absolutely love it – it's a shared passion which is not totally unrelated, but pretty much unrelated, to anything else we do.

Steve: Nothing for us ever gets wasted. So when we're out hawking and catch a grouse – the falcon's caught it, and is sitting on it in the heather – biting the back of the neck and taking the head off – and then what we do is call the Pointer in and that Pointer comes and sits down beside the falcon and gets the head of the grouse to eat. And he crunches it up – we can tell how old it is then – if it's really crunchy we can tell it'll be a tough one. The falcon will feed up on the neck, with the dog sitting there.

We then pick up the falcon and put the grouse into the bag. When we come back home we normally put the grouse in the fridge for about a week – do all the grouse prepping at the end of the week – dress them out and get the breasts, get rid of all the guts and then we freeze up all the carcasses. And then when we come back home here, all the falcons in the aviaries get the carcasses – so not one thing is wasted. When we're on shoot days we take an outside griddle pan and we slice off the grouse breasts – three slices per breast, so we get six slices off a grouse, and then we just put them in a hot pan and flash fry with salt and pepper, put them on French bread and butter and we eat that in the shooting field.

Emma: I swear that we get many more invitations because people want to sample our grouse cooking in the field.

Steve: It's a great way of life.

Emma: If we can be up on the hill, we're at our happiest – happier than we are doing anything else.

Once again I would like to thank Emma and Steve for their hospitality and taking time with this interview.

Images of Emma and Steve on the grouse hawking moors courtesy of Angus Blackburn.

British School of Falconry telephone 01764 694347.



UK Vets and Falconers Support Global Effort to Save Asia's Vultures from Extinction

At the end of September Richard Jones of Avian Veterinary Services, Knutsford accompanied Chris Bowden of the RSPB and Jemima Parry-Jones and Simon Brough from the International Centre for Birds of Prey to offer veterinary support to the S.A.V.E vulture project in India and Nepal.

S.A.V.E. - Saving Asia's Vultures from Extinction is a consortium involving a number of international organizations and individuals, all acting together with the aim of reversing the dramatic decline in Asia's vulture population.

To date a number of UK vets have been actively involved, both in investigating the cause of the decline and in addressing the issue. Andrew Cunningham was involved at the very beginning investigating the mortality and was instrumental in finding funds to establish the breeding centre in India and both Yedra Feltrer and Romain Pizzi carried out initial investigations and treatment of sick vultures as early as 2003.

Andrew Routh, SAVE's current veterinary advisor first became involved in 2004 and Neil Forbes of Great Western Exotics has

Captive Oriental White Backed vultures at the breeding centre at Pinjore, India.
(image courtesy of John Entwistle)





Oriental white backed vultures in one of the 100ft long breeding aviaries. As a colony nesting species they are much 'happier', and as has been proved at Pinjore much more likely to breed in a large group.

also been involved more recently in an advisory capacity. As recently as 1990, the total number of Oriental White Backed vultures, Long Billed vultures and Slender Billed vultures in India and Nepal was about 40 million. Indeed oriental White Backed vultures were thought to be the most numerous large bird of prey in the world. Now the total vulture population is probably below 10,000 – an astonishing drop of 99.9% in 20 years! The situation is so dire that the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has listed all three species as critically endangered. Intensive research identified the Veterinary NSAID 'Diclofenac', used to treat livestock across Asia as the cause of the vulture's dramatic demise. It is highly toxic to vultures causing acute renal failure and visceral gout. If a vulture feeds on an animal that has died within a few days of being treated with Diclofenac, there is a very high chance it will die and as they feed in flocks a single carcass can kill many birds which is why the vulture population has fallen so incredibly quickly. The disappearance of vultures from Asia's skies is not just a conservation concern, it is also impacting negatively on humans – populations of feral dogs have increased as they feed on the large numbers of carcasses left lying around. This has led to an increase in the incidence of potentially fatal diseases such as rabies. The Parsi community is now unable to carry out

traditional 'sky burials'. These involved placing the body in a special tower to be consumed by vultures. The SAVE recovery plan has four main strands that are already showing some success. It helped persuade the governments of India, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh to criminalize the manufacture, import and use of veterinary Diclofenac. It has constructed vulture conservation breeding centres in India, Pakistan and Nepal and vultures

reared at the centres will be re-introduced to the wild once Diclofenac has been eradicated from the food chain. The centres hold all three critically endangered 'Gyps' vultures, which are breeding for the first time ever in captivity. It has identified a replacement drug for Diclofenac. Meloxicam is effective in livestock and tests have shown its safety in vultures. Fortunately it is also out of patent and so being manufactured by an increasing number of companies in the region. Finally 'vulture safe zones' with support feeding have been created around surviving colonies in Nepal and SAVE is working to create additional safe areas in India. "It really was inspirational to see the work carried out by such dedicated staff at the centres I visited, often with quite limited resources" said Richard on his return "I am really hoping we can be of continued support to the centre's vets and just to be involved in such an important project is a real honour for us" If you are interested in supporting SAVE, or just want to find out more, please contact Chris Bowden (SAVE Program Manager) at chris.bowden@rspb.org.uk or on 01767 680551. This is a unique opportunity to help save three critically important species from extinction through a single program.



Richard performs a routine health check on one of the juveniles bred at Pinjore last season. In addition to a full physical examination, blood and swabs are taken from each bird for DNA sexing and to assess their overall condition as well as compiling useful data on these species.

Returning the Saker Falcon to Bulgaria

A brief history of the Saker in Bulgaria

The Saker Falcon was numerous in parts of Bulgaria in the late 19th century, when travelling ornithologists and hunters described it as being one of the commonest birds of prey they encountered, especially in the lowlands of Dobrudja. However, this favourable situation changed during the 20th century as a result of persecution; records from the National Hunting Society show that 70,000 birds of prey were killed in 1957 alone! In addition, habitat loss played a role, especially after the Second World War, through abandonment of lowland grazing pastures or their conversion to arable land and the drainage of native wetlands. Habitat loss affected Sakers primarily by reducing the abundance and distribution of their favoured prey, especially the European Sousek. Agricultural intensification saw the introduction of organochlorine pesticides such as DDT and Dieldrin in the 1960s, though their effect on Saker Falcons is not well documented.

By the 1970s the diminished Saker population of Bulgaria amounted to just 30-50 breeding pairs, restricted mainly to the uplands of the Balkan Mountains. The 1970s and 1980s saw young Saker Falcons and Peregrines being taken from many nests in Central and Eastern Europe to stock the newly established breeding centres that were being created to meet the demand for falcons from European falconers. The exploitation of wild Saker Falcons increased in the 1990s when the collapse of communism resulted in political and social changes that led to a period of economic instability in Bulgaria with lax enforcement of conservation legislation. The scale of nest robbery



Saker Falcon at a hack site

in the 1990s was probably sufficient to reduce recruitment into the breeding population to the extent where it did not compensate for adult mortality, and the Saker was driven to extinction in Bulgaria with the last recorded breeding attempt in 1998.

The first steps towards returning the Saker

In 2006 the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research (IBER) and International Wildlife Consultants (IWC), with financial support from the Environmental Agency-Abu Dhabi (EAD), launched a long-term Saker Falcon conservation programme in Bulgaria. The project now includes the Wildlife Rehabilitation and Breeding Centre of the Green Balkans organization, one of the largest and most proactive conservation organizations in the country. The first four years of the programme were mainly spent surveying former breeding areas and suitable looking landscapes in the hope that a few remaining breeding Sakers could be found. Though these surveys recorded more than 600 nests of other birds of prey, not one Saker nest was found. In parallel the field teams were assessing the current suitability of the surveyed areas for Saker Falcons as part of a formal 'Feasibility Study' in preparation for a potential reintroduction project. The feasibility study showed that suitable habitat for Saker Falcons still exists in parts of Bulgaria.

The first question we needed to ask ourselves was "is reintroduction necessary"? If Sakers are able to return to breed in suitable habitats of Bulgaria unaided, there is no need for reintroduction. However, only three fragmented breeding populations exist in the countries around Bulgaria, one is located in Central Europe with an estimated population of 300 pairs, another is in Eastern Europe with an estimated population of 325 pairs and a third, much smaller population, exists in Turkey with an estimated 40 pairs. The nearest known breeding pairs are c. 150km from the Bulgarian border in Romania, but the centres of the three discrete population fragments are approximately 400km, 500km and 1000km away respectively. Sakers have not been recorded breeding a long distance from the site where



Hack site with feeding tube

they were hatched and this is unlikely to occur in areas without an existing breeding population. The limited extent of range expansion in the Central and Eastern European populations, despite increasing numbers, indicates that natural re-colonisation of Bulgaria is unlikely within the next few decades.

What can be done to return Sakers to Bulgaria?

A key element of Saker conservation management in Central Europe (Hungary and Slovakia) is installation of artificial nests in order to increase breeding success. Certainly, the population of Sakers has increased in Central Europe, though the extent to which this is due to the provision of artificial nests has not been examined. This technique has been duplicated in Bulgaria by the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of the Birds (BSPB/BirdLife Bulgaria) and many nests have been installed on electricity pylons and trees in Bulgaria since 2007. However, by 2012 there is still no evidence that this technique is useful for

attracting breeding Sakers to Bulgaria and none have yet settled to breed in the new homes provided for them. It's likely that the technique has failed because there is no existing Saker population in Bulgaria to occupy the nest platforms unlike in Hungary and Slovakia. It should also be mentioned that in Hungary and Slovakia artificial nests were mainly placed in Saker Falcon breeding territories that were already occupied.

The partner organizations IBER, IWC and Green Balkans with the financial support of EAD have embarked on a different approach to restore breeding Sakers in Bulgaria – reintroduction. This involves releases of young Sakers in pre-selected sites in Bulgaria with the expectation that the birds will recognize the release area as their natal site. In order to estimate how many birds need to be released each year we need to estimate survival rates from release to breeding age (three years old). Survival data is also important for us to estimate how many birds we need to start breeding in Bulgaria in order to establish



Saker Falcons wearing satellite tracking tags

a viable, self-sustaining population. The intensive satellite-tracking study of Saker Falcons undertaken in the Central European population in recent years suggests that only about 10% of young Sakers survive to breeding age. This preliminary assessment (analysis of the survival of satellite-tagged Sakers in Central Europe has not been published yet), indicates that we need to release at least 22 young birds each year to expect two birds to survive to breeding age.

Following the feasibility and assessment stage of reintroduction, we implemented a pilot release programme with satellite-tagged captive-bred Saker Falcons in order to: determine the most effective methods of release, estimate survival of the released birds in comparison to the wild Central European juveniles, and to study their movements, migration and habitat use.

The first pilot release in 2011 was not very encouraging, when six young birds were placed in a closed hack box in the Central Balkan National Park. All the birds left the area within a week of release and none survived more than a month after dispersing as far as Serbia, Ukraine, Greece and Turkey.

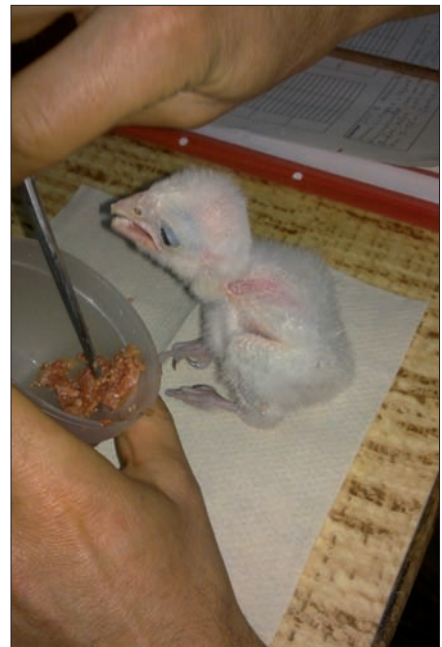
A contributory factor for this poor

survival was the fact that the young captive-bred Sakers were released late in their development and did not develop their hunting skills in the natal area. Learning from this experience, a further four captive-bred birds were released in 2012 at the same site but using an open hack, so that they could 'fledge' from the 'nest' when they were ready. This time, all the birds spent about a month in the release area developing their hunting skills. After dispersal one travelled as far as Moscow and at present (November 2012) two birds are still alive in Romania and Turkey. One of the young Sakers stopped transmitting in Romania and probably died, whilst another was found electrocuted at a power line in Bulgaria.

Links between Saker conservation and falconry

There is a moral obligation to restore the Saker as a breeding species because its extinction was caused by human activity and the final coup de grâce for the species resulted from trapping and nest robbery for falconry. This is why falconers in Bulgaria have a bad reputation among the conservation community. However, falconers can win back credibility and play a pivotal role in the return of the Saker.

The work we have described here is financed by the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi because the Saker is such a culturally important species to Arabian falconers. The open hack release technique for reintroduction was originally developed by falconers and has been used to great effect in previous reintroduction projects for Peregrines in Europe and the USA. European Saker breeders have supplied captive-bred Sakers of European origin for the pilot releases and to establish a captive breeding programme at the Green Balkans breeding facility in Stara Zagora. Advice on setting up a breeding project and training of staff has been provided by the IWC falcon breeding centre in Wales through an internship programme. Staff at the Wildlife Rehabilitation and Breeding Centre now take care of seven pairs of Saker Falcons and in 2012 the first captive-bred Saker Falcon chick was reared in Bulgaria. Additionally, we have developed a working relationship with one of the falconry clubs in the country, regularly consulting with the Bulgarian Falconry Group.



Young chick being hand fed

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Environmental Agency-Abu Dhabi for their continued support for Saker Falcon conservation in Bulgaria since 2006.

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By Lynn
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Golden Eagles and White Gyr Falcons

It's not what you think ... this time!

There is just something about Wyoming..... with its endless oceans of sage brush on table top plateaus that stretch as far as the eye can see; not seeing another human for days and knowing that if you make a mistake nobody will be there to help you; this sense of being out in the wilderness, the wild, wild west, if you will, on your own . . . that all adds to the thrill of hawking in Wyoming. For this is where flying big falcons at big quarry all come together in the truest form. Falcons just seem to fly bigger and higher in Wyoming; the fresh, crisp air somehow brings out the best in a falcon.

Hunting sage grouse is more than just the flight, it is the journey. Just getting there is half the battle and then there's finding the elusive sage grouse, the master at hide-and- seek. However, Wyoming has its down side as well. Each time your hunting partner leaves your fist it could be for the last time because, as beautiful as Wyoming is, it is also very unforgiving.

The thrills and unbelievable highs of seeing your falcon take down a huge sage grouse is something a falconer never forgets but, just as quickly, any flight, at any time, can end in disaster with the death of a falcon from a golden eagle. Flying falcons in Wyoming will separate the men from the boys!

Flying falcons in Wyoming

I have been flying falcons and eagles for, well, a very long time. I've made many



My truck loaded with eagle and equipment

trips out to Wyoming with my hybrid falcons and I have experienced both the highs and the lows of hawking sage grouse there. So there was one thing I had been wondering for years – could one fly sage grouse with a golden eagle that waits on? Eagles catch sage grouse as part of their regular diet so they have the ability, we know that. And anyone who has had an eagle come after their falcon knows all too well how fast eagles are, frighteningly so.

Hunting sage grouse with a golden eagle brings on its own set of problems and, conversely, eliminates others. The

obvious problem that is eliminated by flying an eagle at grouse is the constant threat that long-wingers have from eagles eating their falcons. I'm flying one of their own kind . . . so take that, wild eagles! I have no worries about perching my eagle out in the open and taking a little siesta while she weathers. But, as I said, there are some things to worry about when flying an eagle.

My eagle waits on anywhere from 500 ft to 4,000 ft plus. At that height an eagle can go anywhere she wants to, the sky is the limit and, in this case, the unlimited miles and miles of the Wyoming



Widow waiting on over us while we hunt

landscape is her playground. When an eagle is a pin dot in the blue sky I have been told that she is more than 4,000 feet in the air. Now, when she specks out of the range of my binoculars she could possibly see the curvature of the earth. Regardless of how high she is, as a pin dot she could cross at least one mountain range, maybe more, very quickly.

I have tracked my share of falcons up in Wyoming and it can be very nerve wracking, not to mention problematic. Finding a two track road that goes in the general direction of your signal can be worrisome. You are, I am sure, beginning to see my point. Following an eagle at a great height could be a challenge. So this is why I did not want to bring just any eagle to Wyoming. I wanted a very steady eagle that is very confident at going up to tremendous heights while still focusing on Thistle, my German Wire Haired Pointer and little old me. I have been flying a female golden eagle called Widow for a few seasons now that has shown this ability. She will mount up to a ridiculous pitch, many times going out of binocular range which is, as I said, in anyone's book, really up there. Truthfully, way too high for any sort of workable hunting but still neat to see, for sure.

This was to be my first attempt to hunt sage grouse with a waiting-on eagle. So I looked at this trip as a "get my feet wet" sort of thing, knowing I would have to make adjustments as I went along. I prepared my eagle as best I could beforehand, looking for large open areas with little, or better yet, no hills.

This, I thought, would better prepare her for the conditions we would find out in Wyoming. She would have to find her own thermals without the aide of any hills. I would go to different locations each time I flew her, again in an effort to get her ready for Wyoming. The point of taking her to different places was so that she wouldn't be shocked or put off by suddenly finding herself in an unfamiliar place. By constantly changing locations new places would be the norm. Over time I conditioned her to stay overhead upwards of two hours, which sounds like an impossible task but, for an eagle, is not that difficult. Eagles can maintain a pitch for hours quite effortlessly, that's what they are made to do.

Grouse hunting season in Wyoming starts 1st September so that's when I planned to be out there. The weather is still warm and, therefore, still optimum soaring conditions, unlike the conditions later in the season when temps can go down well below zero and will not be as favorable for soaring. Now, I do realize that the wild eagles soar in the winter but, as well conditioned as my female is, she is not a wild eagle and therefore needs warmer air to aide in her ascent into the sky.

My wife, Cordi, and I pulled away from our house early in the morning for the long 14 hour drive to Wyoming. We were to meet up with our friends Sam and Jennifer Crowe who would be our guides for the next two to three days. Sam flies two spectacular Gyrfalcons. The female is white and the male is silver, both stunning

falcons and very accomplished at catching sage grouse. Eagles and Gyrfalcons are mortal enemies; many a falconer's bird has fallen prey to golden eagles so our falconry hunting party, right from the start, was breaking new ground.

I would say it's reasonably safe to say that white Gyrs and a golden eagle have never traveled in the same hunting group, both hunting sage grouse, before. I think if the falcons knew what was riding in the other truck they would not have been too happy. On the other hand, if my eagle knew that falcons were close by, well..... best we don't go there.

High winds

Wyoming and wind go hand in hand. I think wind is formed in Wyoming and then spreads out over the planet. It sure seems that way. Typically, there is a short two hour window in the morning when the wind is calm. By ten o'clock it starts to build and can go from breezy to blustery to blowing in just a very short time.

Now, let me translate these terms into what non-Wyomingites can understand. Breezy is 10-15mph, doable for non wind-conditioned falcons but, for some, still a good wind. Blustery is 15-25mph which is enough to ground any falcon not used to flying in wind. Oh sure, they can fly, but the quality of your flight is terrible. And having your falcon clipping along one hundred feet off the ground, you're not going to have any chance at sage grouse from that height. But I, on the other hand, can still fly my eagle. When the locals say that "it's blowing" (and that's how they refer to the wind, as "it"), you're talking 25-35mph with higher gusts to 50mph. To the rest of the world that is serious wind, even the wild eagles will be seen sitting on the ground, not wanting to fly in "it". See, now I'm calling the wind "it".

Being the extremely kind and generous falconer I am, I allowed the Gyrfalcons to fly first, as they like the cooler temps of the mornings and the Wyoming desert can still warm up into the mid 80's in September. Eagles, on the other hand, don't mind flying anytime of the day and will hunt during the hottest of times. In the winter, eagles do not get up and move about in the cold mornings. I recall a time I came to Wyoming with a male golden eagle named Jackhammer



Sam Crowe with his Gyr Falcon and me with Widow, a 9.5lb female Golden Eagle

to look for white tailed jack rabbits. It was around eight in the morning and very cold, single digits as I remember.

I was hunting a large area of short sage and flushed a cotton tail rabbit that ran like an arrow, straight away from me. Jackhammer normally explodes off the fist, he is well known for his reaction and speed, but on this cold morning he looked to be in slow motion and could hardly bring himself to close on the cotton tail.

I was a little concerned. Jackhammer had never been one to do anything slow, but as the sun warmed up the air and Jackhammer warmed up as well the cotton tails started to fill up my hawking vest. I do realize hunting cotton tail with a golden eagle is a slight overkill and is something I do not normally do, but try telling Jackhammer that! On the other end of the scale I have hunted a molting eagle in 98' and it never showed any effect of the heat. I did, however..... I'll freely admit.

Seeing that I fly not just eagles but a wide range of falcons, from Gyr/ peregrines to the small perlin, I find it an odd feeling going from watching every move my falcons make while on the wing

for fear of one of those blasted eagles showing up, to, when flying an eagle, finding myself worrying about what my eagle is going to eat. It is a strange switch to make in the course of a day. After both Gyrs were flown and some grouse brought to bag we looked for a good place to hunt our eagle. Now I don't know how to explain it or why this happens each and every time I am in Wyoming hunting my birds, but the second it is my turn to fly my bird the wind seems to magically double in strength. It will have been dead calm all morning and someone will say "Joe, it's your turn, you have the next slip" and suddenly we have wind. Like some kind of signal, when the words "Joe, it's your slip" are spoken the wind takes off. I have witnessed this strange occurrence on each and every trip out to the windy state.

However, all the previous trips have been with falcons and I thought on this trip, having an eagle, I would have the upper hand on the wind, sort of trick it, if you will. Eagles love the wind and therefore have a greater range in which they can still effectively hunt. Well, it seems I was wrong about that because

by the time we found a good looking area to fly, "it" was blowing (refer to my Wyoming wind guide). We were joined by four other falconers and everyone had trouble standing on the hill tops.... not good.

Our eagle flew around and gave a respectable effort to get up in the air but I could see it was not going to happen. Oh, and naturally, while my eagle was keeping a low profile on the sides of the hills, sage grouse were flushing at my feet. I nearly stepped on more than one as I walked along. I did not realize the presence of a golden eagle would cause the otherwise very flighty sage grouse to hold so tightly. We needed to find somewhere that would be workable, so off we went heading towards Casper, some fifty miles away. Sam knew of an area that has sage grouse and mountains which would give our eagle the advantage she needed in the wind. Winding our way up into a sizeable mountain range we finally reached the top. Sam pointed out that nearly this entire tabletop flat area would not be accessible later in the winter due to the steep gravel roads that lead you up the mountains.

Snow and ice keep everyone out, therefore most hunters don't go there even in good weather, which is all the better. With the wind still a factor we started to look for valleys or bowls ringed with large hills or small mountains. Sam took us to a place that he knew of that has had sage grouse in it many times and is ringed by some sizeable hills. We drove across the top bench working our way towards the steep canyons that quickly flattened out into a magnificent bowl covered in sage brush. Looking down we could see a spring with running water off on the far right, some half mile away. Standing on the top, looking down at the sheer beauty that lay before us, was stunning.

The descent down onto the valley floor was not all that easy as the hills shot up rather abruptly from the valley floor. I readied our female eagle for the second time that day, the frustrations I felt earlier in the morning all vanishing as I stood on the hill overlooking the valley below.

With the wind in my face, I struck the hood. I felt her weight lift off my arm and watched as she gained speed, being pulled up into the biggest sky I have ever

seen. I thought to myself, this is why a came to fly an eagle in Wyoming. With Cordi filming us, Sam and I, along with Thistle, started the long trek off the top of the hill, making our way down into the valley below.

Checking position

Once on the valley floor we spread out and began to work the cover as best we could. Just like when I fly my falcons I would, from time to time, look up to check on her position. Her pitch would fluctuate from five hundred feet to well over a thousand feet. What a sight to see – a female golden eagle hanging in the air directly over us as we worked to flush game under her. I have to admit that I was getting just slightly giddy, walking along, saying to Sam “look at that pitch” or “look at that position” with a school boy’s excitement, knowing that the next step could flush something. Seeing her in perfect position drove us to hunt at a feverish pace. We were astounded that we got nothing up, not even a cotton tail... nothing.

We hunted for more than an hour with the eagle overhead and not one thing

flushed. From her vantage point overhead if something was to try and sneak away she would most certainly have spotted it and given chase. We made our way back up the hill as dusk was just starting to reveal itself. I called our eagle in who was making a wide circle out over the valley some half a mile away. She banked sharply, folded her wings and came in, feet dropped as eagles do, and landed on the lure.

With the sun dropping low in the sky the sunlight was casting a soft glow on everything. The greens of the different sages looked more alive; the air seemed fresher and somehow alive as well. Looking at my eagle standing on the side of this hill it was amazing to me that I had just called this huge winged predator down from the heavens to the lure. But falconry is like that, isn’t it. Falcons and eagles go thousands of feet up into the sky, they can go anywhere they want, yet they choose to return to us, somehow not aware of the power they possess.

Epilogue:

My goal is to hunt sage grouse with an eagle that waits on, and I am more than

halfway there. I have an eagle that is steady overhead; I just need a few things to go in my favor. I did not totally take into account the wind, despite the fact that I am familiar with Wyoming and I realize that I need to have the eagle out on the wing in the morning when it is calm so she can get in the air and adjust to the daily build up of wind.

Also, I realize two days is not enough time to make any significant adjustments, but that was all we could manage this time. Probably the biggest thing I was surprised at was how intimidated sage grouse are when there is an eagle in the area.

At one point, with our eagle sitting on the side of a hill, I spotted a grouse pinned under a sage bush and I had to walk up to the grouse to within inches and kick at it to get it to flush. I would have never thought that could ever happen.

I looked on this trip as a learning experience, to see if it was possible and what changes would be required to accomplish my goal. Yes, it is very possible to hunt sage grouse with a waiting-on eagle and yes, I was oh so close, but that’s falconry, isn’t it.



Widow looking over the vast Wyoming sage brush, sage grouse are out there somewhere.

Famous Last Words



Mark Williams with his eyas Peregrine Falcon

Most days while hawking things go pretty routine and like clockwork and just as well as I have a fine line of time between getting into the field, finding quarry and flying my birds and back home in time to change and head off to work. It is challenging at times particularly if flights are hard to find but it is what it takes in order to get almost daily flying for my birds throughout the season.

Well, this morning did not go quite to plan – something I can now look back on and laugh at, but at the time was pretty tense for me and my guest. It was so unusual an experience that I thought I'd share this with you as something remotely similar has only happened once before in 36 years of hawking. A few

days back a local friend, John Campbell, asks if he can come out hawking with me this morning (Saturday) before work. I am always happy taking people out and weather permitting we were going. We set off at 8am and as it turns out this morning was a crisp -17c day, no real wind to speak of and the sun finally out after seemingly weeks of snow, fog and whatever else mother nature can fling at us. We've just had 15-20cm of snow the day before and conditions were ideal but it was certainly one of the coldest days I have flown my eyas peregrine in this season and she'd just had a day off for bad weather. As we turn off the highway into the beginning of my southern area hawking route I spot a covey of huns. I turn to my guest and say, "well John, this looks as if it is going to be over in no time

and will be a short hunting trip today".
FAMOUS LAST WORDS! Here begins a very unusual morning hunt.

Photograph and flight

I get John to release her so I can finally get a photo of her taking off. She heads out in a straight line in the crisp morning air and the sun is not long up over the horizon.

She heads out into the sun and does not turn and just keeps going climbing all the way. Hmmm this is strange I think and I try waving her back over. She heads out until she disappears from vision. Most uncharacteristic – granted she is 20-25 grams heavier than normal but I always thought I had her on the low end as at 760 grams she is no big female peregrine and with the cold -17c weather I thought

she could do with a little extra. We jump back in the truck and head south over a mile and I see her circling high over a farm yard and think she may have checked on pigeons or something. She comes straight down to the lure and I tidbit her and put her away.

Meanwhile we previously spotted another covey of huns en route to her and in an even better setup so we wait a short while before putting her up again. This time she takes off half heartedly and does her first turn and I get the impression that she is not liking the cold and will want to land so I had better end the flight now. Then she makes a second turn and starts to climb and heading off into the distance I think she is chasing after a distant wild prairie falcon that was flying by. The intruder keeps going, meanwhile so does she ... but in a different direction and straight south ... while climbing all the way. I watch her in case she turns but she disappears out of our sight and of our binocular range. We jump in the truck, turn receiver on and start south to track her. This is when it gets real weird.

Tracking a strong signal

We head at a casual pace in the direction she has flown thinking we'll catch up to her within a mile, maybe she'll give up whatever she may have checked on and will be sitting on a grain bin or something. The signal is strong but constant and we don't seem to be closing the gap. Now I

find myself driving 110km/70 miles per hour in a 4x4 down snow laden gravel roads just to keep up and the ride gets a bit hairy at times as I look at John grabbing something to hold onto.

No snow plough has travelled these roads since the snow fell and we have two tracks to follow in deep snow and I'm trying to scan the sky and at the same time keep an eye on the road. We go into a deep valley and lose the signal momentarily.

Not sure if we passed her so we slow down as we come over the rise to check and see if she is behind. Then panning and visually scanning ahead we see a pickup truck take off from the side of the road and blaze south. I turn the receiver back to the fleeing truck and it is pounding! Turn it to the right, left and behind but it is not as strong. We think she has to be in the truck but how did he get her, was she beside the road on a fence and he picked her up? Did he shoot her and was speeding off? All these crazy thoughts run through our minds as we speed down this gravel road keeping within snow ruts of the truck ahead and trying to avoid getting sucked into the ditches. It is all I can do to keep up with the truck in our 4x4 and following a very strong signal. We keep chasing for several miles all the while still doing speeds up to 110km per hour.

The signal remains strong using the new Marshall UHF 433 system and Turbo transmitter on the backpack combined

with a Micro on the tail for insurance. Eventually the truck slows and turns east and we swing the receiver in it's direction but the signal is still showing to the south. The truck driver wonders who the hell is racing after him for so long and I see him glancing in his rear view mirror as he pulls away to the east. John and I have an equally puzzled look as we can't believe we were so wrong. So now we know it is not in the vehicle we wonder how can this bird be travelling this fast for so long without even deviating a degree or two from a straight south path. We have not waited for a minute before heading off after her when she started heading out and we have been travelling very fast after her ever since ... except for a few brief stops to check signal direction from stood outside the vehicle. Then we get a slightly stronger signal to the west and so head one mile west before the signal shows south again. We continue following a clear loud beep when all of a sudden it stops! I mean not fading out but just stops, not a beep ... complete silence. I jump out of the truck and spin in all directions, nothing! I look at John puzzled. How does it go from loud and clear to nothing instantly. In times of stress your mind plays tricks and goes off in tangents and I think maybe she is electrocuted or maybe she went into a grain bin in the nearby farm after a pigeon. I switch to the second (micro) transmitter, nothing. I can't believe it and try to fathom what has just happened all the while doing a system check, to make sure receiver is working and on the correct channel, etc.

Following the signal South

Suddenly the micro lets out a faint beep. I switch to the Turbo transmitter and get a louder beep. We continue south until we have to turn west to a major highway to continue heading south in the direction of the signal. We still can't understand how she is travelling so fast and so far without a stop or significant deviation. We reach the small town of Nanton some 34kms from where we just released her and had covered that distance in a mere 16-20 minutes at speed. We drive through the main street of the town before realizing she is now slightly west and in the old well established residential area of the town. I go too far south realizing I had overshot her position



Peregrine Falcon in flight



Falcon with her prize – a Mallard Duck

and we turn back and coast slowly in the side streets following the signal as it gets louder. Wires, power, poles and all the rubbish you hate to be within a mile of now surround us. I see magpies circling and switch to instinct mode and look for clues all the while the signal gets stronger. We turn right and at the second house down she is on the ground in the front yard just administering the coup de grâce on a mallard! Fortunately she was the right side of the 4ft fence as a huge Pyrenees mountain dog barked from the other side. We are both stunned at the last 20 minutes of non-stop high speed “racing and chasing” and how it has thankfully come to a happy ending.

I ring the door bell out of courtesy to the occupants and then go to attend to my bird as John waits for an answer at the door. My bird is not even panting as she sits on her prize.

Feeding from a kill

I give her a chunk of breast meat from a previous kill and she steps up just as a good looking lady in her house coat,

(obviously just gotten out of bed) pops out of her front door to see what the fuss is about. I briefly explain what has just happened all the while realizing she is having a hard time taking all this in, especially having just woken up! We offer our apologies and depart. As we both slump into the seats of my truck we both can't quite take it all in and it felt like we had just been on a fairground ride that you don't expect to be so scary and want to end quickly. It is as if the falcon looked at her biological clock and said “Holy s***. I'm a month late in migration. I'd better get a move on”. I get John to drive home as I feed up my bird.

We were both gobsmacked at the last 20 minutes and John kept repeating had I not reacted as fast as I did we'd likely not have kept up and retrieved her. He had privately thought I was going way too fast and acting too quickly but now sees why. We pondered the scenario if I had waited for several minutes where I released her, thinking she'd turn back . . . or if I had not had such a powerful transmitter on the bird to keep up with.

Having a tiny receiver in the truck to have constantly on and tracking was a godsend. Truly a remarkable telemetry chase and so erratic and out of the norm behaviour from my bird yet one with a happy ending. I have never chased this bird like this before even in early season and we still can't fully explain why she did it. I don't think I can really attribute it to a 25 gram increase in weight particularly in frigid temperatures but I could be wrong. She certainly did not see and chase something that far and I think the passing ducks beneath her probably saved our ass. I have not seen ducks in a hawkable set up in weeks now, the ponds and sloughs are long since frozen. I think she was flying way up but stooped passing ducks near the town and that is why the signal so suddenly disappeared when she went down with it deep in suburbia. So much for a quick flight John jokingly reminds me.

Quite the story . . . and I have a witness that it really did happen! . . . although I am not so confident he'll ask to come out hawking again!

Eagle-Man's Vision

Part 3

I recall Sary talking about an art of taking eagles off prey by using the toe-lift technique. When lifting the toe of a good, strong eagle that can hold large and fierce game, four separate 'clicks' can be heard as the joint is bent back; then all the toes of that foot should release. However, this moment does not seem appropriate to try a precarious technique for the first time.

Even though it means forfeiting one of my two turns at chyrgar because of the time it will take me, I choose to fetch an old-but-useful piece of meat from way back across the parking lot. So this time I'm prepared as the chyrgar horse canters up to where I stand, rider questioning. He wheels his mount away at my nod, kicking to a gallop. Sweeping off the hood, I step back for momentum and throw Ak Jol Toy. With his own push against my fist, the eagle powers off toward the flying fox pelt. However, he lands on a large rock in the field and I direct the rider to gallop around. Ak Jol Toy jumps to attack, and this time binds soon after the chyrgar passes. I sprint joyfully to collect him;

this flight was an improvement over the earlier practice session.

When the moment arrives for flying at wolves from hilltop vantage, Talgar takes an early turn. Tumara appears to go straight for the wolf, but flies far overhead and lands way beyond. A few more eagles are released, each making unsuccessful attempts, before Ruslan's impressive female completes a no-nonsense attack, causing the wolf to fold. After that, a strident announcement is made to release birds en masse.

More than fifteen eagles are tossed above clusters of people. One of Sary's grandsons runs up the hillside to instruct me, "Throw the eagle!" Surprised at this directive, I hesitate; I'm unsure what the benefits for Ak Jol Toy would be. Two Burkuts have flown far down the valley, pandemonium is evident; eagles are landing even within the crowd. I don't allow Ak Jol Toy a turn. Sary's comment afterward is that only two, or maybe three, of the eagles in the competition were ready to be flown at a wolf. He doesn't comment on my decision; he

does tell me that everyone told him during the day how nicely I handled the eagle. Gratitude for Sary's wisdom lifts me; I thought he would be disappointed.

Eagles know their limits

Honored-elder Sary then articulates his truth; "I never trained an eagle to hunt wolves, it is so dangerous. Eagles know their limits and do not hunt wolves in their wild lives. Wolves can easily damage eagles. Every eagle hunter is afraid his eagle will be damaged or die." The desire for money can override common sense, as seen in many Eurasian festivals today, where catering to tourists results in eagles being risked against wolves.

I found this one original Burkutchur with exceptional vision in the Kyrgyz Republic, willing to share knowledge of his Burkutchur tradition with me, a woman from half way around the globe. When asked last year if I could return to train and hunt an eagle under his guidance, Sary Satilganov had turned so that our eyes locked. "You'll be the first woman," he said, "and hopefully not the last."

Lunch break while hunting on donkey back



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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 Village Hall, Station Road, Groombridge, Kent TN3 9QX

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 Alan for information on: **07973 733110**



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Independent Bird Register

Telephone 0161 790 5613

IBR Lost, Found, Reunited & Stolen birds of prey from 16 October 2012 to 6 January 2013

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 0

REUNITED x 70

SPECIES

AFRICAN SPOTTED E.O.	1
BARN OWL.....	8
COMMON BUZZARD.....	1
EURASIAN EAGLE OWL.....	3
FERRUGINOUS HAWK.....	1
GOSHAWK.....	9
GYRKIN.....	1
GYR/PEREGRINE.....	1
GYR/SAKER.....	9
GYR/TRIBRED.....	2
HARRIS HAWK.....	17
KESTREL.....	3
PEREGRINE.....	2
PERE/GYR/SAKER.....	2
PERE/LANNER.....	1
PERE/SAKER.....	1
RAVEN.....	1
RED NAPE/BARBARY.....	1
REDTAIL.....	1
SAKER.....	2
SAKER/ALTAI.....	1
SNOWY OWL.....	1
SPARROWHAWK.....	1

LOST x 16

BREF	RING	SPECIES	AREA LOST
68558	?947?	HARRIS HAWK.....	LL18
31595	?687?	BARN OWL.....	G77
64144	?185?	SPARROWHAWK.....	M23
23719	?150?	COMMON BUZZARD.....	WS13
90958	?755?	BARN OWL.....	HG4
77939	?489?	BARN OWL.....	CH62
93663	?994?	LANNER.....	RG27
81005	?504?	BARN OWL.....	ST9
66150	?323?	HARRIS HAWK.....	RM3
93098	?947?	LANNER.....	DH9
92396	?218?	GYR/SAKER.....	HP14
87571	?485?	BARN OWL.....	NG19
24370	?408?	HARRIS HAWK.....	DL12

89985	?276?	GYR/PERE/BARBARY.....	CF14
89933	?721?	PERE/GYR/SAKER.....	BA3
68204	?515?	HARRIS HAWK.....	BS10

FOUND x 10

BREF	RING	SPECIES	AREA FOUND
93825	?386?	HARRIS HAWK.....	Newtonmearns
69607	?782?	HARRIS HAWK.....	Belgium
93847	?DT?	SPARROWHAWK.....	Southport
93879	?38?	HARRIS HAWK.....	Sheffield
91170	?429?	KESTREL.....	Middlesbrough
44218	?022?	KESTREL.....	Northants
93931	?????	AFRICAN SPOTTED E.O. .	Portsmouth
17475	?756?	HARRIS HAWK.....	Carlisle
94002	?C12?	AMERICAN KESTREL.....	Cardiff
82096	?931?	HARRIS HAWK.....	Pencoed

FOUND DEAD X 8

PEREGRINE X 2
SAKER-ALTAI
PERE/LANNER
BARN OWL
KESTREL
GOSHAWK
HARRIS HAWK

LOST UNREGISTERED BIRDS X 39

BARN OWL.....	4
GOSHAWK.....	6
GYR HYBRIDS.....	6
HARRIS HAWK.....	9
KESTREL.....	1
LANNER.....	2
PEREGRINE.....	4
PEREGRINE HYBRIDS.....	4
RED NAPE/BARBARY.....	1
RED TAIL.....	1
SPARROWHAWK.....	1

IBR web-site
www.ibr.org.uk



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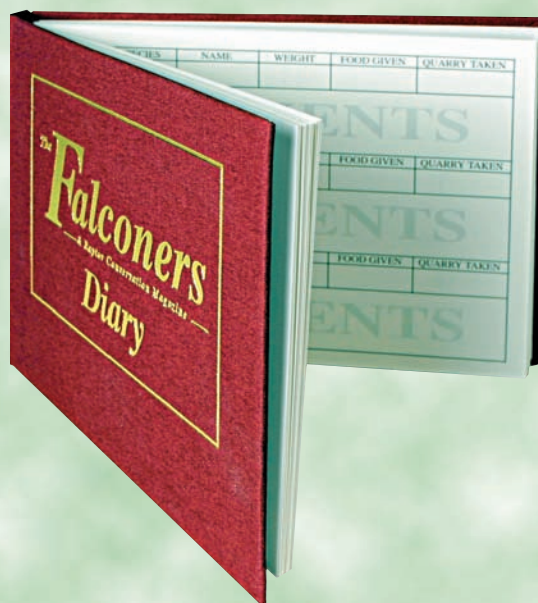
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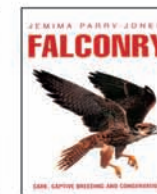
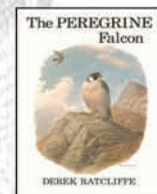
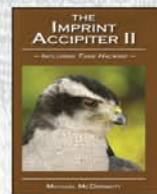
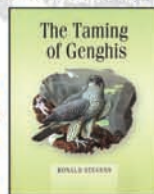
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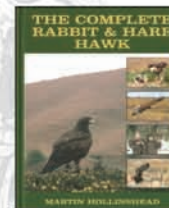


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