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# The *Falconers*

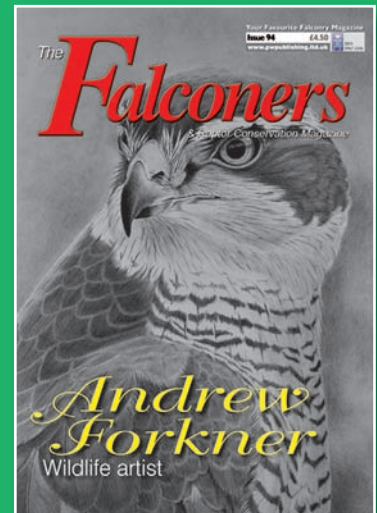
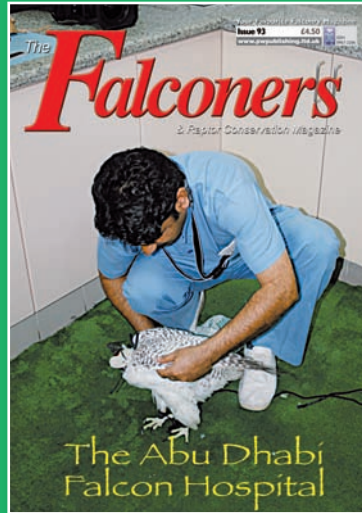
*& Raptor Conservation Magazine*



**ICBP Weekend Report**

# The *Falconers*

& Raptor Conservation Magazine



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**Front Cover:**  
James Morrisson with male  
Tawny Eagle  
by Dr. David Glynne Fox

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After many years service as secretary and co-ordinator of the Hawk Board, Mike Clowes has decided to retire from that position and a new secretary/co-ordinator has been appointed. It is Rachelle Upton – wife of artist Mark Upton and daughter-in-law to famous falconer Roger Upton. I hope to have more information about Rachelle in the next issue.

Mike has worked very hard over a long period of time, not only being secretary and co-ordinator but attending many meetings and taking the minutes for the Hawk Board, organising the falconry village at the annual CLA Game Fair (which is a major task) and has made many new contacts in various Government bodies including DEFRA, Animal Health and Natural England. I hope you will join me in wishing Mike all the best and our thanks to him for all of his hard work. I wish Rachelle every success in her new role and I trust that all falconers will give her their support.

As ever, there is a variety of articles in this issue and a big thank you to Dr. David Glynne Fox for his report on the excellent Falconry Weekend which was held at ICBP in September. I hope that many of you will be able to attend next year when there will another event on the same weekend at ICBP in Gloucestershire, as well as a similar event at ICBP in Yorkshire.

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](mailto:peter.eldrett@tiscali.co.uk)

## New for the 2013 Totnes Show – Falconry Village

**A**s advertised in issue 93 of the *Falconers & Raptor Conservation Magazine*, the Falconry Village at this year's Totnes Show which was held on 28 July encompassed a flying arena, a static display area, specialised falconry orientated stalls, static displays and displays from local falconry providers.

The Falconry Village had several aims; to give visitors the thrill of spectacular flying and static displays, to create an area where visitors could learn about the world of falconry, where they could enjoy and explore all aspects of the sport and to give local falconers the chance to meet up and spend the day together with their birds.

The Totnes Rare Breeds Farm was represented providing a static display of British owl species.

Torbay Owls & Co. added to the village with some 16 members having their birds on display and being available to answer questions and queries.

Martin Whitley (Dartmoor Hawking) provided the show with two flying displays.

Hawkridge Falconry from Exmouth joined us for the day with a wide range of birds for the public to view from Kestrel to Bald Eagle and all proved very popular.

South Hams Hawks & Owls provided a static line-up of Hawks, Owls & Falcons, with Roy Wilson from Plymouth setting up with his range of falconry bow perches, blocks and stands.

There were two downsides to the event. The weekend of the show saw the end of the summer's heatwave, which was actually quite a relief as it would have been far too hot to have birds out on static display, but the torrential rain that hit us during the latter part of the day happened to coincide with one of Martin's flying displays and it simply lashed down which tends to dampen anyone's enthusiasm and the public left in droves simply washed away by the volume of falling rain.

More of a disappointment was the apathy from falconers in general which was an eye opener. When working to get the show off of the ground and established, many were enthusiastic early on and all for a Devon based, West Country show but when it actually came down to committing, taking part and attending that enthusiasm simply dried up which as it turned out was a great shame as we had a really good day with over 40 birds on display, the smallest being Martin Whitley's American Kestrel



and the largest being the Eagles displayed by Martin (again) and the Hawkridge Falconry team.

So will we run it again at next year's show? Quite possibly is the answer to that. The feedback from both the show committee and the public was rewarding to say the least and all the "falconry world" who attended and took part gave it a resounding thumbs up and said they would be back for the 2014 show.

The Totnes Show Falconry Village welcomes new organisations and clubs to the show. If any falconers / falconry providers are interested in becoming a Totnes Show Falconry Village regular, please do not hesitate to contact Steve Hopper direct on 01364 72152 or by email [southhamshawks@owls.entadsl.com](mailto:southhamshawks@owls.entadsl.com)

## Amur Falcon campaign update Nagaland gears up to prevent mass hunting

by Shashank Dalvi and Ramki Sreenivasan

**C**ampaign Update/s — Post Conservation India's reporting of this incident, and the subsequent national and international outcry, a lot of on-ground conservation initiatives have been initiated in Nagaland. Principally, the Government of Nagaland, at every level, are fully committed to end the killings and have geared up to face this season.

The Nagaland Wildlife & Biodiversity Conservation Trust (NWBCT), a Dimapur-based NGO, is leading a comprehensive programme with the support of the government as well as leading conservation NGOs. They have been in touch with various government officials as well as the community members since October last year on ways to stop the killings in 2013.

They recently kicked off their 'Friends of the Amur Falcon' campaign with a conservation education programme covering the important villages in Wokha district.

In a message of support, the Chief Minister of Nagaland Mr. Neiphiu Rio stated "The state government is committed to end the unfortunate killings of the migratory Amur Falcons in Nagaland while they are passing through the state. Further, Mr. Rio added, "It is our duty to protect the Amur Falcons and, in true Naga tradition of hospitality, treat them as honoured and esteemed guests".

In addition, other NGOs like Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) and Natural Nagas have also been active in drawing up innovative initiatives to help prevent hunting of the falcons this year.





## A Saga of Sea Eagles

by John A Love

Reviewed by Marian Eldrett  
ISBN 978-1-84995-080-0

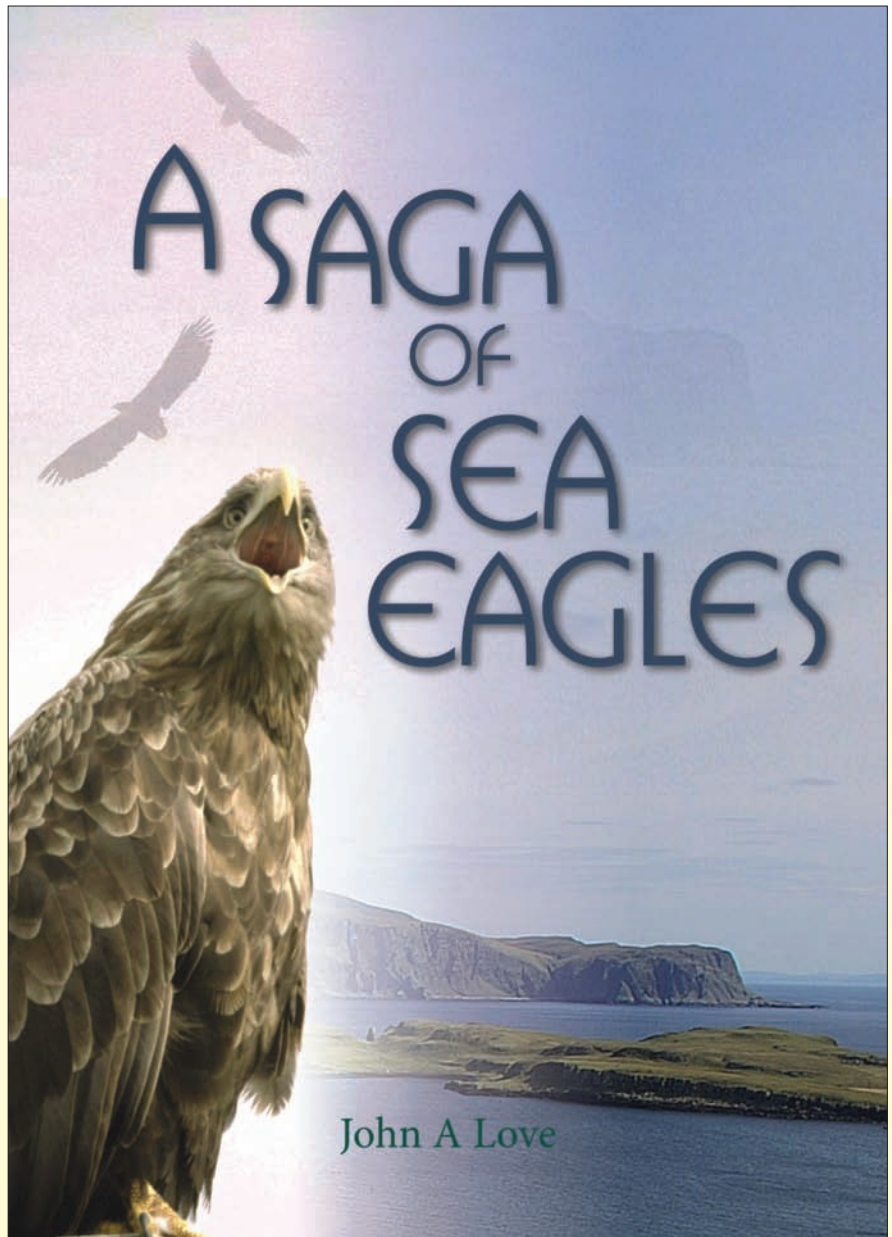
**T**his book is a follow-up to "The Return of the Sea Eagle" which was published in 1983, describing the project to reintroduce White Tailed Eagles to the Hebrides. At that time, young Sea Eagles were still being imported from Norway and the reintroduced birds in the Hebrides had only just laid their first egg. In fact, to quote John Love: "It would be another two seasons before the first Gaelic-speaking Sea Eagle fledged in Scotland."

This is not a repeat of the first book with additional information, but it is more of a personal memoir of the author's quest to further the reintroduction of this magnificent eagle. He relates his experiences of the releases in Rum, and gives information on the subsequent two phases of the Scottish reintroduction, in Wester Ross and East Scotland. He also brings us up-to-date on the current project in Kerry, Ireland.

There are comprehensive chapters covering facts (and fiction) about the Sea Eagle and its history and persecution in this country. Its progress since reintroduction is described and its impact on the lives of those whom it now lives alongside is examined, including the much media-hyped issue of lamb killing.

In Appendices III and IV we are shown the total number of releases to date and their breeding success. As the author states, many people have been involved in this success – "Having started out with a modest cast of characters, the project now has hundreds of people playing a part, and at centre stage, the stars of the show, are the Sea Eagles themselves ..... We are confident that the population will continue to go from strength to strength."

John Love is passionate about his



subject and this comes across on every page. He is modest about the part he has played in bringing about the return of the Sea Eagle to our shores but it is clearly evident that his contribution to this conservation project cannot be overestimated.

This book is a good read for anyone interested in conservation, but it will particularly appeal to those who share the author's enthusiasm for now being able to see the White Tailed Eagle back in the wild in the country.

Price : **£19.99.**

Available from Coch-Y-Bonddu Books

Tel: **01654 702837**

Web: **www.anglebooks.com**

If you are interested in seeing White Tailed Eagles on the Isle of Mull, I have a one-bedroom holiday cottage on the island which is available for let – see **www.craigmorecottage.co.uk** for full information – Ed

# Book Review

## Falconry's Falconer

*The Life and legacy of Phillip Glasier*

by Richard H. Fitzgerald

ISBN 978 1 904784 58 6

Reviewed by Peter Eldrett

**T**his publication runs to just over 80 pages and is penned by Richard Fitzgerald who is a physician and master falconer in America.

The book has a forward by H.R.H. Prince Philip the Duke of Edinburgh who was introduced to Glasier by actor James Robertson Justice just after the second world war while serving in the Royal Navy. Justice showed Philip a Goshawk flying at Moorhen at Sandringham and then purchased a property in Sutherland, Scotland, near to Balmoral where Justice and Glasier had a grouse moor where Philip watched Glasier fly his Peregrine Falcon. This was the beginning of a long acquaintanceship.

A preface follows in which the author talks about himself and his home in South Carolina, describing how he and his son got into falconry with the help of a sponsor and of course a copy of the famous book by Glasier *Falconry and Hawking* which every falconer should have on their book shelves.

After a couple of pages of acknowledgments we then find the Introduction where the author starts at the end – by which I mean he describes St. Peter's Church in Cliffords Mesne and the churchyard where Glasier is buried. The church contains a number of stained glass windows depicting Glasier with some of his favourite hawks and falcons including Sable, a Golden Eagle, Mozart, a European Eagle Owl and Islay, a Harris Hawk.

This chapter ends with many questions concerning Glasier such as what was he like as a person? Did he have a sense of humour? And what did he do for falconers and raptor conservation that makes him so special? All is revealed in this book.

Next we find a chapter called "Formative Influences" in which Fitzgerald describes how he was influenced by the tragic loss of his mother when he was five and his father who later married Janet Knight, whose uncle was Charles William Robert Knight (Captain Knight) who was already an established falconer and actor. Glasier's early years in falconry are described here and it also has a photograph of young Phillip as a falconer in a Tudor costume drama.

The book then goes on to describe the setting up and opening of The Falconry Centre, which was its original name, but we know it today as the International Centre for Birds of Prey. It was at this time that he had success in

breeding birds of prey and was also involved in the setting up of an association of raptor breeders. He also founded and organised what would later become, The Hawk and Owl Trust and was also the first falconer in the UK to have a Golden Eagle ringed under the new regulations.

Phillip Glasier's writings are also mentioned in the book, namely *As the Falconer Her Bells*, *A Hawk in the Hand* and of course *Falconry and Hawking*. The chapter continues with a description of Glasier's travels through Europe and the Middle East before we learn a little more about his personality, which, at times, is quite amusing.

The book finishes with what legacy and what philosophy made the man. He was the influence of what falconry is today – so much so that his name has been installed on the Archives of Falconry Wall of Remembrance in America. As the author says, "His legacy is in the Hawk and Owl Trust, The Raptor Breeders Association, myriad laws and regulations, the standard of

international protection, the increasing number of generations of falconers, the many zoos and collections that display birds raised in his techniques. He perfected free-flight exhibition. The free-flying displays which educate and present the grandeur of raptors as no static pen-display can are his legacy."

I found this book an enjoyable read and have learnt more about the man who has influenced falconers and falconry not just here in Britain but all over the world. His legacy is still being practised today through his writings, his ability to communicate and his passion for the sport he loved.

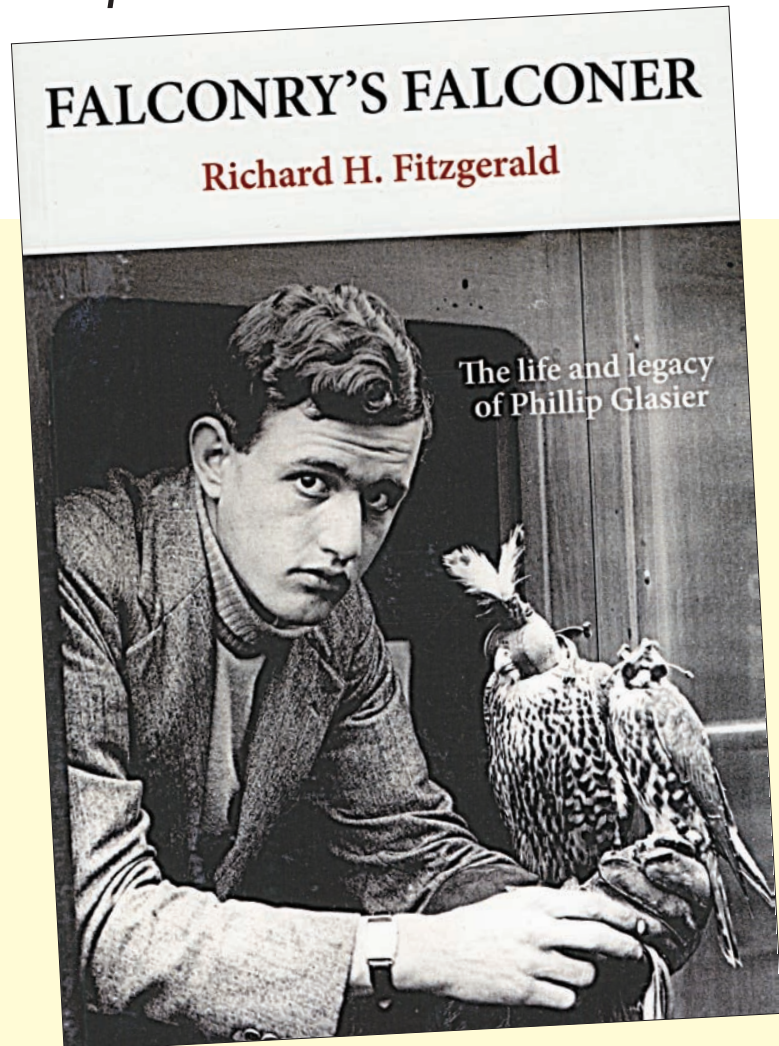
Falconry's Falconer is published by Coch-Y-Bonddu Books.

Price : £12.99.

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Tel: 01654 702837

Web: [www.anglebooks.com](http://www.anglebooks.com)







**Hawk Board Symposium  
February 8th 2014.  
Lantra House, Stoneleigh Park,  
Coventry, Warwickshire CV8 2LG**

**What does the Hawk Board do for you?  
Do you Know?**

**Now is your chance to find out and also tell us what you feel about the Hawk Board and perhaps what you would like it to do for you.**

This is a meeting **open to all who have birds of prey or owls**. The Hawk Board would like to hear from you, wants to know how we can serve the bird of prey keeping fraternity better and understand your concerns. We also want the bird of prey keeping fraternity to understand what the Hawk board can and can't do. An open meeting is being organized on 8 February 2014 to facilitate this. **To cover catering costs there will be a payment of £6.00 per head. Cheques made out to The Hawk Board and sent to Rachele Upton, Plough End, Bath Road, Manton, Marlborough SN8 1PX.**

**Please note we need to know by the 25 January if you are coming as we have to have a minimum of 50 people to get the caterers. Without that number this meeting will NOT go ahead. So if you are interested in this, and you should be, please let us know and pay your £6.00 straight away. The information alone is worth ten times the cost of lunch and coffee!!**

**Start Time 10.00am. Chair – Jim Chick and Jemima Parry-Jones**

**The topics at this point are:**

(These may change a little)

- Introduction to when, why and whom by the HB was formed – Jim Chick (5 minutes).
- What the Hawk Board works on over a year for you, the falconer, breeder, bird of prey or owl keeper – Speaker to be announced (15 minutes). Question time on this topic (10 minutes).
- Protocol for all keepers on how to deal with announced and unannounced AHVLA or police inspections – Mark Parker (20 minutes). Questions on this topic (10 minutes).
- The regulations surrounding birds of prey, Article 10's, Registration Documents, how they change, where you find out how they change, and what you should and should not be doing - Graham Irving (20 minutes). Questions on this topic (10 minutes).
- Veterinary talk on the Peregrine Virus and Wingtip Oedema - Neil Forbes (20 minutes).

**LUNCH**

- Lantra (15 minutes) Questions on this topic.
- Open web based forums and Falconry – good or dangerous? - Derek Stotton (15 minutes).
- Open question time and discussion for all.

# The Falconry Weekender

**T**he British Falconers Club Eagle Group attended both the 2011 and 2012 Falconry Weekenders, both of which were held at the International Centre for Birds of Prey (ICBP) at Newent, Gloucestershire and were again invited to attend for the 2013 event, which the group was proud to accept. Personally, I had been looking forward to this event for some time as I have always held a fond affection for the ICPB site ever since I first paid a visit there when Jemima Parry-Jones's father, the late Phillip Glasier opened the site back in 1967. Back then it was known as The Falconry Centre and I well remember Martin Jones sitting in a corner making his lovely gauntlets amongst a treasure of falconry artefacts. Way back then, I thought this would be a good site for a national falconry museum and therefore I was delighted when Bob



Judith Magill and Brian Bird of the George Lodge Trust



Adam Latham with Lady, his Golden x Steppe Eagle



## d 2103

Dalton told me some time ago that an idea for a Phillip Glasier falconry archive was being contemplated.

A good deal of British falconry artefacts have found their way across the pond to be lodged in the capable hands of Kent Carnie at the American Archives, and there is nothing wrong with this, for they are being cared for properly and as such, have not been lost to posterity. For example, much of George Edward Lodges' estate has gone to America, but enough remains here to render an archive more than worthwhile and in fact, an absolute necessity. I have always been deeply interested in falconry history and am delighted that an archive is finally under way at the ICBP. Additionally, another such venture is also getting off the ground and is in the capable hands of Mark Upton, Paul Beecroft and others to ensure the survival of our falconry past. This is The British Archives of Falconry and already, some priceless objects have found their way into this repository. My sincere hope is that both of these organisations will complement, rather than be in competition with each other, for both are striving to save our falconry heritage for the benefit of future generations.



Eva and Richard Fitzgerald, author of *Falconry's Falconer*

Both will gladly receive any unwanted memorabilia, especially if it has some history behind it. Remember, today's artefacts are tomorrow's history and are thus very important. More will follow about the Phillip Glasier archive later in this article.

#### Journey to ICBP

Friday 30 August 2013 duly arrived and this day saw my wife Gill and myself packing up our motor home ready for the journey to Newent, which lies about a two hour drive from our residence.

My male Berkut Golden Eagle, Star, fresh out of the moulting chamber was the last to be placed aboard in his travel box and the drive southwest began. We arrived about five in the afternoon and immediately sought out Jemima for the webbing and spikes to construct our weathering ground. Once this was complete, Star was placed inside on his bow-perch together with the all-important bath. We were almost the first of the Eagle Group to arrive although Adam Latham and Ian were both awaiting our arrival to join us with



Part of the BFC Eagle Group stand



Adam's hybrid Golden x Steppe Eagle named Lady and who both helped me to set up the weathering arena. Adam's bird is a lovely eagle and I for one am looking forward to seeing her performance during the forthcoming season. Two of our regular attendees, Alan Walker and Geoff Surtees unfortunately couldn't make this year's event, which left me short of three eagles, but Chris Miller arrived with his female Golden Eagle Skye. This made three eagles on the ground ready for the following morning's session. Once the eagles had been secured, the next task was to feed and water ourselves and as usual, this side of the socialising was always a good laugh. We soon had barbeques up and running and again as usual, we always brought an over abundance of food. Chris especially spent a small fortune on such goodies as king prawns, mackerel, trout, kippers, spare ribs and a host of other delicious items. Adam and Ian joined us and we had a lovely evening in anticipation of the morrow.

I was feeling under the weather suffering for the previous month or so with sinusitis and the Friday night was one of the longest I have spent. I didn't get a wink of sleep because I couldn't breathe, being bunged up with mucus, sorry if you are eating whilst reading this. I watched the dawn break and amused myself looking at a buzzard perched in a tree near our camp. We were all up earlier than normal and began adding a breakfast to our previous evening's meal. Oh the hard times! Just before breakfast, Wayne Chesterman arrived bringing his female Golden Eagle named Cuddles, so now the weathering area was beginning to look something. I don't know how Jemima does it, but the weather, as in the previous two Falconry Weekends, was exceptional throughout and as we placed our eagles on the ground, the sun was bright and the sky a radiant blue. Fortunately, Jemima always reserves this area for me as it is under the trees and therefore well shaded. In fact, many of the hundreds who visited our section over the coming two days remarked on how we had chosen the shadiest spot in the centre.

I had a quick wander round before the crowds began to arrive and renewed many friendships. In fact, this weekend was pervaded by a really friendly atmosphere which not always easy to



Two of the many equipment stalls at the event

achieve when this many falconers are gathered in one spot. There is always a lot of friendly banter, but it is always tongue in cheek with rarely any offence meant or taken. As usual, there were a number of good falconry equipment stalls and it was good to welcome Keith and Barbara Royle of the Independent Bird Register on their first appearance at the Weekend. Both falconry magazines were present, namely Bob Dalton's "World of Falconry," and Peter Eldrett's *The Falconry & Raptor Conservation Magazine*, with copies of their excellent journals for sale. The hawk food suppliers and sponsors of the event, Keizebrink, were present and many of us, including myself, used the opportunity to stock our freezers for the forthcoming season. Paul Morgan and his now famous Angle Books (Coch-Y-Bonddu) was there and on this occasion, two special treats were in store.

### Books launched

Two books were being launched at the Falconry Weekend; one being produced by Brian Bird of The George Edward Lodge Trust, and which was a facsimile of Lodges only book entitled "Memoirs Of An Artist-Naturalist." I already had a 1<sup>st</sup> edition copy of this in my library but I just had to have a copy of this new venture, for not only was it enlarged with many more of Lodge's magnificent pictures, but it was also being launched in the presence of Judith Magill, who is George Lodge's great niece and an accomplished artist in her own right, (see the frontispiece portrait of George Lodge drawn especially by Judith.) It

was a great pleasure to meet Judith in person and I know she enjoyed the weekend that she had travelled so far from Australia to attend. It was good to see Brian Bird again, for we have got along so well over the years and I have nothing but admiration for his drive and energy in running the Trust. More than anyone else, Brian has kept alive and at the forefront, the memory of this great artist, George Edward Lodge and I was proud to have them both sign my copy of this magnificent new tome, which is very reasonably priced at £35-00. I took the accompanying photographs of Judith and Brian to accompany this article. As an aside, Brian has invited the BFC Eagle Group for a two day eagle meet in Wiltshire for next season, for which I cannot wait.

The second book to be launched has been over long in its appearance. This was a small monograph about Phillip Glasier, who, as aforementioned, began this, the very first falconry centre in Britain. This was at a time when there were nothing like as many falconers around as there are today and we all had to make our own equipment and train our birds as best as we could from books and suchlike. Phillip was instrumental in changing all of this because, for the first time in British falconry history, a novice now had somewhere to go to learn this difficult and exacting art in the correct fashion. Today of course, falconry centres of varying degrees of competence, dot our landscape, but all have their origins in Phillip's first and, if I may say, risky venture, for this period in time. Phillip had a great vision, but



many were sceptical. I am more than pleased that he has long since been quite rightly vindicated. So, the point of all this rambling has been to give a small background to this lovely new book, "Phillip Glasier, Falconry's Falconer," by Richard H. Fitzgerald, who was also present with his lovely wife Eva, signing copies. What I didn't know until this early Saturday morning, was that a limited edition of this book, hard bound and in a slipcase, and in a signed and limited edition of but thirty copies, was also being sold at £95-00. Number one was already headed for the library of a very good friend of mine, so by the time I arrived back breathless at Paul's tent, numbers two, three and four had gone, so I purchased number five, as well as the standard edition, both of these Glasier volumes being published by Paul Morgan himself. The day was getting costly, as it always does when I venture into Paul Morgan's fascinating stall. I don't know how he does it, but if one needs a particular falconry book, either new or antiquated, check out the Angle Books website first, the chances are, it will probably be available.

My old friend John Murray also arrived and we had a great time catching up with events, especially as he had the opportunity of handling a Steller's

Sea Eagle and seeing the kilt that once belonged to his old friend, the late Walter Joynson, about more of which later. John Murray and I go back over half a century and so it was with much pleasure that I was able to inform him about the kilt.

After this, I had to skip back to the eagle weathering ground to take up my duties speaking to interested members of the general public which were beginning to gather in some numbers. The day soon wore on and it was soon barbeque time again with a further main barbeque also running. Wayne's head falconer, James Morrison arrived with Wayne's male Tawny Eagle to complete our weathering ground. Many falconers gathered around the bar after dark and story swapping was in abundance. This is a great social event and I know there were a few sore heads by Sunday morning.

### Second day

The Sunday dawned bright and cheerful and turned out to be even hotter than the previous day. Adam was manning the Phillip Glasier Archive stand and I wanted to investigate the artefacts on show. Much to my surprise, I noticed a large picture frame, which contained a Scottish kilt with an inscription stating

that it belonged to the late Walter Joynson, the well-known, ample bearded Scottish falconer. Well, in actual fact, it turned out that he was not Scottish at all, for he was descended from Irish and English parentage. I never knew that the kilt had survived, but it has been kept in pristine condition by Adrian Williams, who donated it to the archives. I couldn't wait to inform John Murray, as both he and Walter were great friends.

Also in the archives were many hoods, one or two being made by the Mollens, a famous Dutch family who not only made equipment, but trapped hawks and falcons for many European falconers, including the Old Hawking Club (precursor of the British Falconers Club). The Mollen family trapped these raptors at a place called Valkenswaard in Holland and there is a small museum to their memory today at the latter. Therefore, anything connected with Karl or Adrian Mollen is of great significance to anyone interested in falconry history. For the record, in the natural history museum at Wollaton Hall in Nottingham, is a clutch of five Montagu's Harrier eggs, one of which is inscribed "Adrian Mollen." I doubt if anyone at the museum is aware of the significance or is even aware of its existence. Also in the archives is a painting of a young Lorant



Skye taking a bath



De Bastyai (who was a good friend of mine) posing with a Saker Falcon in one hand and a Heron in the other.

### More artefacts

Another artefact, which held my attention, was of a framed Harpy Eagle feather, which had been over-painted by a rather nice head study of a Harpy. Even more interesting was a DVD which Adam played for me and this featured Captain Charles Knight, uncle to Phillip Glasier and great uncle to Jemima, flying his world famous Golden Eagle, Mr. Ramshaw, and also featured Miss America, which is almost certainly the first Bald Eagle ever to be trained for falconry purposes and some unique footage of Charles Knight climbing a rickety old rope ladder into a huge tree to secure Coronation, his stunning African Crowned Eagle. The film shows all of these birds in flight and it is remarkable that we still use, more or less, the same techniques today. I have had a great fondness for the Crowned Eagle ever since I saw Tiara, David Reid Henry's Crowned Eagle many years ago and have since had the privilege of being out in the field and watching Isis, Andrew Knowles-Brown's Crowned Eagle taking two hares. My interest in this species has, if anything, increased.

There were many fine flying demonstrations on both days being conducted ably by such well-known falconers as Gary Biddis, Nigel King and of course, Jemima Parry-Jones and her staff, so the audience were able to view some stunning stoops from a number of different falcons. The Stellers's Sea Eagle aforementioned, flew above the trees screening our eagle weathering ground, her huge wing spread casting a great shadow over the ground. She landed in a farmers' field just behind us and had to be retrieved by the falconer. Bob Dalton's Gyr Falcon flew well and this is again, another species that I would love to fly, but have never had the opportunity. There were four seminar sessions but unfortunately, I was unable to get to any of them as I was so busy with the eagle section, but I understand they were well received.

One of the reasons that I love these events is due to the fact that we can all meet up with friends both past and present, and this occasion was no different. During the late 1960's and early 1970's, I had formed the



Holly Cale at the coping demonstration

East Midlands Hawking Club and only just recently, I had viewed a group photograph taken at this time and it was with dismay that I could recount that almost everyone in this image had either given up falconry or had died. All except for three, that is, myself included. So it was with great delight that my old friend David (Slim) Symons, an ex Royal Army Veterinary Corps farrier came to see us, followed closely by fellow eagle falconer Murray Simmonds. Murray was so surprised to see Slim as he thought he might have passed away with the rest. This was too good an opportunity to miss, so I grabbed my camera and recorded the three of us together for posterity. It was like having the old club back again, only this time with more grey hair than brown and more than a few aches and pains between us. There

followed of course, much memorable discussion on our antics back then, some I had forgotten all about.

The crowds began to dwindle away during the late afternoon and this gave us more free time to visit other stalls, such as Mac Falconry, Predator Logistics, U. B. Falconry, Masters of the Mews, The Hawk & Owl Trust, The Welsh Hawking Club, Carl Bass and his lovely art work and a number of others, who were all selling fine quality merchandise.

The weekend seemed to slip by so rapidly, and before we knew it, we were packing up our gear in preparation for the journey home. I personally, thoroughly enjoyed this event, as I know did the rest of our group and plans are already afoot for the 2014 Falconry Weekend.



# LANTRA AWARDS!

## Lantra Award in Hawking with a Bird of Prey



### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What is the Hawking with a Bird of Prey Award?

The Hawking with a Bird of Prey Award has been developed in conjunction with the Hawk Board and is specifically designed for those who wish to demonstrate their competence in hawking quarry with a trained bird of prey.

The Award has a number of parts:

- The natural history, conservation and identification of quarry species
- Access and use of hawking land
- Good practice and legislation
- Field craft and practical hawking
- Treatment of quarry

The Hawking with a Bird of Prey Award is stand alone/separate from the 'Beginning Falconry' Award which is not required as a pre-requisite (although completion of the Beginning Falconry Award is recommended).

#### How do I access the Hawking with a Bird of Prey Award?

This award is only accessible through Hawk Board affiliated Falconry Clubs and is administered through Hawk

Board. See the Hawk Board website for a list of Clubs

<http://www.hawkboard-cff.org.uk>

#### Are there any pre-requisites to the Award?

You must have trained a previously untrained bird of prey for hawking and be prepared to allow your Assessor to accompany you on one or more hawking sessions.

#### How is the Award assessed?

Your Assessor will observe you out in the field flying your hawk at its chosen quarry. You will also be given a workbook that contains a series of questions/exercises to assess your knowledge.

Responses to these may be written in the workbook or spoken verbally to your Assessor.

#### Who are the Assessors for the Award?

The Assessors for this award are from Hawk Board affiliated Clubs selected by their Clubs already an Assessor for the Beginning Falconry Award.

# A Risky Recovery

**A**s we all no doubt know, this year the UK had its coldest and wettest spring for half a century. Besides impacting travel, growing crops and Bank Holiday fun, it also cut down on the number of hawking days.

Therefore I decided that this year I would stagger the moult for my three falcons, and see just how long I could keep flying the last one before I had to stop, and for what reason. In a 'normal' year (looking back at my records) the deck feathers would fall out around the first week of

May, conveniently around the time of the UK Falconers Fair. It must be pointed out though, that my falcons are not gamehawks, they fly crows, gulls or some days nothing in particular!

The first falcon to stop flying was my male black Gyr x Saker on 3rd April. As of the time of writing (1 July) his moult is going the slowest of the three, despite being allowed to start the earliest.

The second bird I stopped was a male 7/8 Gyr x Saker on 17 May when both his deck feathers fell out one morning. Until then I had been flying him minus three pairs of primaries and one pair of secondaries. Even at this date, the morning temperature was averaging 6 degrees Celsius (more like February!). I record when the deck feathers fall out each year, and this was three weeks later than 2012. He was stopped flying and as at the time of writing his moult is well progressed.

And so to the character of this plot; a four year old female Peregrine x Saker inclined to knock down gulls and the occasional crow from a stoop. She dropped a few secondaries in May, and her decks came out on 31 May, four weeks later than in 2012. As the morning temperature was still only about 10°C I decided to continue flying her with a leg mounted transmitter. Weight-wise I was flying her towards her upper limit, but still experiencing good response from her. There was no evidence of thermals in the mornings yet.

## **The Ordeal - Day 1 and 2**

Everything went fairly normally until the 19 June. It was a breezy day, about 14°C and fairly sunny with some white cloud cover. I let her off at 11.00am. She spent about 30 minutes climbing and trying to knock corvids out of the air, and off the tops of some trees. After this proved fruitless she turned into the wind and started to climb seriously. I stood and watched her at about 1,000ft above gulls, crows, buzzards and had to use binoculars to keep an eye on her. (*I on the map*).







Then something else came down from above her and started an aerial “dog fight” with her: a wild tiercel (Peregrine)! After what seemed several minutes he bailed out north and my falcon headed east. She had been up for over 45 minutes, and after five more minutes she was out of sight and the signal came to rest. Receiver out, signal located, not far away about a mile or so, she was definitely sitting. After the short car ride, I found her but she was not interested in coming down to the lure, especially as the only ground around her was 10 inch (25cm) high oil-seed rape. I tried getting her to follow me to a different field (with some grass), but she was steadfastly refusing.

By the end of day one (2 on the map) I had achieved nothing with her despite some half-hearted attempts at passing the lure around 8pm, which was dusk.

With all that exercise and a night out, I was sure she would be recovered at first light. I went home to nurse the first of several large bruises (metal gate), eat and formulate a plan.

Day 2 dawned at 5.30am and I set off to regain the signal. She had moved (3 on the map). Not by much – two miles south-east. What I had noticed over the last two weeks of flying her, was that she always favoured flying into the wind, even when it was strong. Today the temperature was forecast to reach 25°C – nearly 10 degrees higher than the previous day, such is the crazy state of our weather.

The signal appeared to come from a small group of houses – so I parked and walked around with the receiver as early morning dog walkers took their charges out to a local park. 30 minutes later I was past all the houses and dog walkers,

and into a forest. Great – unlikely to get her down in a forest! She spent most of the day in this forest with no intention of moving. I could see no crop on her so she had not eaten. After seven hours of waiting, I needed some food so went back to the car, and of course she moved then.

On my return she had moved about 1/4 mile into some farmland (4 on the map). Again I found her in a tree, but she was being seriously harassed by a Buzzard (*Buteo Buteo*). Twice it knocked her out of the tree, and it was continuously calling – for over three hours! I managed to fend it off by standing close to the tree and waving my arms about in a scarecrow fashion. After the second knock out, the falcon came out of the tree and sat on a small telegraph pole. For the rest of the time she was out she always sat as much in the open as she could – thus being



able to get away from such attacks more easily. It also made it easier for me to see her! I stayed with her trying to coax her down, and although she made a few attempts at about 8pm she remained reluctant to come to ground, even after I had flattened an area of long grass for a landing strip.

### **Frustration on Day 3**

Out at 6.00am again, and I located her about a mile away from her last position, again apparently in woodland. I trekked through the hilly woodland (so that's why they haven't built houses here) for over half a mile. It had rained a little overnight so hopefully she was keener today, even if my feet were getting damp. Signal getting very loud now, so must be close – yes I can hear a bell! How to get her down though. Through the trees I can see some grass in the distance so I headed there and called the bird who leaves the tree top and starts to follow me. Good, I thought, she's keen enough. I emerged onto the grass swinging the lure only

to recognise where I was, and I was no longer alone. It was the 5th fairway of a local prestigious golf club with some early morning players already there. I quickly retreated to the woods under their glare. (5 on the map).

So it was that the next seven hours consisted of me explaining to every group of golfers that passed me, playing their day-long competition, and the course marshal why I was there and what I was trying to achieve. Interesting for them, frustrating for me. I did get one gap at lunch time where I could swing the lure with no-one about and the falcon did about 10 passes and one strike at the lure. Getting there, I thought. And then the giant lawn-mower came round the corner and she went off down the valley (6 on the map).

Again hunger got to me and by 3pm I was heading back to the car for my food. As at other times when I had left her, she had followed me but I had not noticed. When I regained the signal she was about ½ mile further up the road where I had

parked, this time on the edge of a farm (7 on the map). Another falconer joined me then and we walked through fields of bracken, and then cows to reach the stand of pine trees we thought she occupied. True she was there, and when she saw “the stranger” so close she left. Another two mile shift, this time up to a free range pig farm. More walking, more disappointment and so it continued as long as I was accompanied (which was normal for her, she always stayed still when I was alone).

### **The Recovery**

At 7pm on this third day I had asked to be alone when trying to get her down to the lure, and for 20 minutes she kept trying from the top of a telegraph pole behind someone's house (more explaining!) (8 on the map). By 8pm still no luck and so the three falconers put their heads together and came up with the “risky solution”. One falconer was to bring another falcon out and have it eat on the fist, whilst I present a three-chick garnished lure to throw at my falcon the second she took to the air. The falconer with the eating bird stayed behind a hedge, and was ready to duck down the second mine took to the air. We thought of all the risks and the possibilities, and all parties agreed to go ahead. It all happened so quickly, as you would expect with falcons; my falcon left her pole 30ft away making a straight line for the feeding falcon. The falconer holding it turned as she approached and hid behind the hedge. I shouted and threw the lure AT her, which she grabbed and landed on a small concrete area. I presented her a pickup chick and she stepped up as per normal. Quickly grabbing her flying jesses and threading the field leash to secure her I then gave her two chicks. Heart rate well above normal level!

Once home I weighed her. Allowing for the food she had just eaten, she had lost three ounces in three days. Despite being a very capable crow and gull hawk, she had just not had the opportunity to hunt given the amount of harassment she suffered from wild birds.

At the CLA Game Fair I learnt that a local falconer had a young tiercel killed on its first flight by a wild tiercel peregrine, such is their strong defence of territory during the summer.



## The Consequences

We only took the action we did because we were all experienced falconers, with both hawks and longwings. We know this method works for the very social Harris Hawks, but when it was suggested to do it with falcons I was sceptical. One falconer had done it before, but stressed you always need to have at least one person per bird present in order to intervene.

Being alongside the falcon for each day has shown me what wild raptors must suffer, and life is not easy for them. They can easily be prevented from hunting by mobbing crows especially (this happened almost hourly), and breeding raptors are positively dangerous.

I think the falcon also learned some things, especially not to sit hidden in trees. Being out in the open is a better place to defend yourself. It will be interesting to see if she has been adversely affected when I take her out next season, but she showed no side effects the day afterwards except being very hungry. It took four days of quail to regain her previous weight. Close examination of her feathers showed no damage, nor was she injured in any way.

Flying this late into the spring/summer she definitely gained a higher level of fitness, it didn't affect her moult process or the growth of the new feathers. In fact it showed that her moult rate is faster

than the bird which I stopped flying first.

Once the dust had settled, so to speak, I plotted her travels and the wind direction. As stated, she always flew into the wind, but it was interesting to see that she didn't travel that far each day – she wasn't motivated to thermal or travel a great distance even though she was fit enough to do either. She may even have found her way back to her original starting point with the wind the way it was, as another of my birds has done in the past.

Will I fly a bird this long next year? Possibly, but I will be more sensitive about the presence of breeding raptors that's for sure.





# The Mongolian Artificial Nest Project School Links Programme



Andrew Dixon and Bayan students visiting an artificial nest near their school



**T**he Mongolian Artificial Nest Project School Links Programme gives an opportunity for children from Mongolia and other countries to exchange knowledge, culture and language using the Artificial Nest Project as a means of introduction. 5000 artificial nests have been erected on the Mongolian Steppe to increase the wild population of Saker Falcons, the only falcon species to be classified by the IUCN as Globally Endangered. This project is funded by the Environment Agency, Abu Dhabi and implemented by International Wildlife Consultants, UK and Wildlife Science and Conservation Center, Mongolia.

The School Links Programme has had a successful start, with 10 schools participating in the link from Mongolia, UK and USA. Each school is encouraged to use the educational resources written specifically for this project which are currently available in English, Mongolian and Arabic (see [www.mefrg.org/slpLessons.asp](http://www.mefrg.org/slpLessons.asp)). Presently there are five topics: falcons and falconry, falconry in Mongolia, falconry in the UAE, falcon conservation and the Artificial Nest Project. New sections are planned for the future which will be written by the students themselves. Each topic has a PowerPoint presentation, student



Saker chicks in the nest

worksheet, questions, extension activities and a set of teachers' notes which gives extended knowledge. There are also films available and suggested web links. The educational resources give an introduction to the topics; it is hoped that students will be encouraged to research the topics to further their knowledge.

Students have exchanged information about their schools, towns and countries and are starting to communicate directly with each other using an extensive list of English and Mongolian phrases provided

by the programme.

The project aims to link a further seven Mongolian schools to international schools in September 2013. The programme is aimed at 9-12 year olds, but the resources can be adapted to suit any age group. New schools will be given full support for the first year, providing letters and presentations for parents and governors, ideas for communication, translation of English to Mongolian and co-ordinating correspondence.

In order to facilitate communication between schools, the Artificial Nest Project staff in Mongolia have been working hard to translate materials and have helped to deliver some of the resources to schools. The project works best if a falconer is involved as this injects passion and experience into the programme. All USA schools involved in the School Links Programme have been introduced by Master Falconer and certified teacher, Craig Hendee, who founded The International Heritage Conservancy organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the worldwide intangible cultural heritage of the art of falconry. We are very grateful for his hard work and dedication. Craig has visited schools with his falcons giving lessons and falconry demonstrations.

For further information, to join the school links programme or to offer a falconry experience to students, please contact Nicola Dixon.

**E-mail: [nicola@falcons.co.uk](mailto:nicola@falcons.co.uk)**



Emma Johnson and Grace Bounds from Frederrick School



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# Manning by Association



**M**anning by association has been practised here in the UK all the time I have been a falconer. It may have been around

for longer, but I think it owes its existence mainly to the successes of captive rearing, the increased demand for bird control and the proliferation of large hawk collections. Conventional manning works well in most circumstances but there are times and situations where it becomes impractical. If you were suddenly faced with the task of training six new hawks before the end of September, how much time could you devote to the processes of manning?

All the patience in the world is not going to help in that situation. So unless you are prepared to recruit the help of others, and some aren't, 'manning by association' provides a viable alternative. In terms of the total days used up it is somewhat longer, but in terms of the time spent with each individual hawk, it is considerably less.

## **Simple association**

As the name implies, the hawk is manned in degrees simply by associating with the falconer over a period of time. As the days pass by, the hawk gets used to being picked up at the same time, then asked to do a little work in order to get fed. And because it all happens so fast, typically 5 – 10 minutes, there's hardly time for the hawk to become unsettled.

In recent times, I found myself dealing with Hierofalcons which according to my experiences, respond very slowly to the early stages of manning. This is what set me off thinking about taking a different direction and when I looked at the way I'd done things in the past, I began to question the validity of it all.

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Thinking about it logically, it occurred to me that we man our hawks at precisely the time they are least able to cope with it. Freshly taken from the hack pen and facing a new life of isolation, it's hardly surprising that the eyass reacts so negatively to the early stages of manning. Birds of prey have very long memories and it's just possible that they never forget how they were treated as babies. So from my perspective, it begged the question: can I do better?

With reference to the previous paragraph, my game plan was to switch round the order of manning and training which meant train first then do the manning, if indeed any was needed, after

the falcon was flying free. Another part of my plan was to put the eyass falcon un-hooded into a travel box (giant hood) to 'chill-out' every day for about 2hrs after working with it.

As luck would have it, I manned a Lanner Falcon last season by conventional means but was now the proud owner of an as yet untouched 10 week old crèche-reared Lanneret, and he was as wild as they come. This gave me the perfect opportunity to compare the two different approaches. Well I tried 'manning by association' and this is my account of how it all went:

Manning in all of its forms was totally ignored and perhaps the only

conventional things I did on the day of collection, were fitting the anklets and some rudimentary hood training. The Lanneret was then placed in his chamber and apart from the occasional check for snags, he was left undisturbed and unfed for three days though he did have access to water. Weight on the day of collection was exactly 19ozs and on the 4th day I dropped a chick through the chute, which went totally ignored. It was the 6th day before he ate a chick completely.

It was the 8th day at 16.4ozs before he fed off the glove and the following day he stepped up for food. It was not until day 14 at 15.8ozs that he jumped across a small gap to the glove. He was still quite nervous at this stage but aided by a chick leg, he could be picked up in the chamber without too much fuss. Day 15 saw us outside on my 'T' perch and as expected, he wouldn't do anything, but at least we had made the transition to outdoors and on the plus side, he sat calmly without bating.

#### Progression with short creance

The next day he stepped up to the glove outdoors at 15.4ozs and I switched to the short creance. Things progressed as normal with the dropping out of the lure and ultimately coming to the full length of my longer creance, which for me is not really all that long. As creance work progressed, I observed him very closely for signs that might indicate problems for later but saw nothing to worry about. I lost quite a bit of time with unsuitable weather, mainly high winds and it was day 29 at the same 15.4ozs before he went free. He could have gone free sooner than this but I was in unknown territory and treading very carefully.

The first free flights told me that he was too sharp and I think this was the psychological consequence of me knowing that I had not given him one minute of conventional manning. I had to get this out of my head though and believe that the things I saw on the creance were genuine. The downside of his over-keenness was that he would anticipate the dropping out of the lure and kept me in very close company by hovering above my head. When his weight was a little higher (16ozs) he would fly past me as he waited for the lure to be shown.



Despite the fact that he had not been conventionally manned, everything seemed perfectly normal and without any real concerns on my part. It seemed pretty obvious to me at the time though, that the twin distractions of the creance flights and food were working wonders for his demeanour. I could see that the nervousness and tension was just falling off him. It was also obvious, that the 2hr 'chilling-out' sessions where he was just left in the travel box each day after flying were having a pronounced calming effect on the young falcon.

At some point though and I don't know exactly when that was, he must have made the connection that in spite of his worst fears, things were not going to be all that bad. Probably because apart from a very minor disagreement over hooding, we had not had what you would call a real argument. So you could say almost from day one, he was never forced to do anything against his will. The things he did do, he did of his own accord and in his own time and if I had to put 'manning by association' into one sentence, this would be it.

### Light winds

When I did finally get around to manning, I was lucky to get one of the few days of light winds and he sat calmly on the glove for 10mins in the afternoon sun. When winnowing turned to head bobbing, I returned him to his chamber for the day but was well satisfied by this brief first manning session. Within a few days 10mins soon became 30mins and I was considering at this point that the falcon was largely made. I could see no advantage in continuing on with manning and did very little after that. My two Lanners get flown almost every day anyway.

I should say at this point though, that I have not told the complete story because I did do a few other things with him along the way. To get him used to riding on the glove, I occasionally took him for a walk in the fields un-hooding and re-hooding in different locations as I went. When his 'chilling-out' session in the travel box was over he was blocked-out on the weathering lawn for 1hr hooded, then 5-10 minutes with the hood removed before returning him to his chamber, where he was tethered and standing on a semi-circular shelf perch.





I was generally pleased with the way things had gone and the exercise was not as difficult as I thought it might be. It took me longer than normal to reach the flying free stage but then I was hampered by many days of strong winds, so maybe there's not much difference in that respect. Exercising and stooping the lure progressed pretty much as expected and by late September I had a very nice falcon.

I do not consider 'manning by association' to be an appropriate course of action for an inexperienced falconer. It does require some recognition of the signs and conditions that give rise to nervousness and bating. If you can anticipate and pre-empt a negative reaction, it helps the cause a lot. And of course, if the un-manned falcon was allowed to escape, it's retrieval could be very difficult.

Another important aspect perhaps, is that novices find it difficult to leave any new hawk undisturbed during the first few days of ownership. When the intention is to miss out the manning element though, I really do think that the eyass needs peace and quiet in the early

stages. And when the falcon is eventually picked up for training, it is at a more manageable weight anyway, so it's not time wasted.

It is only fair to point out that this process was helped in no small way by the fact that I am retired. Doing all the things I have outlined in this report, although possible, would have been more difficult if I'd still been working for a living. And of course the ones that practise it most, the professionals, can easily accommodate it.

### **Conventional manning**

From my standpoint though, I would certainly do it again. To take a crèche-reared falcon from collection to free flight without the tedium of conventional manning was like a breath of fresh air. And what a bonus it was to find out that hardly any was needed later on anyway. So now that it is all done and with time to reflect, I think I am justified in saying the plan and the experiment worked very well.

I don't say manning by association is better and I cannot say if it works equally well for all species. The overriding impression I got from this experiment, is

that it is almost totally free of stress for the hawk. Less stress means less heat and for species that have a leaning towards the dreaded "asper", like Gyrfalcons or their high percentage hybrids, that must be a good thing. And to date, the Lanneret is the only one of my falcons that has never bitten me; a bonus which is most gratefully received.

But all this leads me to an intriguing question: could I have handled several falcons at the same time like some of the professionals do? The question is purely academic because I am never likely to find out. But in view of the large amount of time saved by cutting out the manning stage, it does seem likely that I could have handled more than one at the same time, maybe even three or four. A more pertinent question for me as an amateur though, is the question I posed earlier: can I do better?

It's hard to draw any firm conclusions on the basis of one experiment but I think I have genuinely raised my game. At this early stage in his development, the Lanneret is more advanced than any of my previous falcons, so I look to the future with great hope.

# Two Short Stories

**H**ere are two short stories that my translator and I translated while in Kyrgyzstan, January 2013. There is a famous book called Kara Shumkar (or “Black Hawk”) which probably every Kyrgyz falconer has read, or heard about. It is a collection of various hunting stories. Several are centered around eagles. Many of the Kyrgyz words used in Kara Shumkar are “old Kyrgyz,” with which my highly-accomplished translator had difficulty and wasn’t able to grasp but their implied concept from the body of the text. This translation is not a word-for-word translation, rather stories are reconstructed in English following Ryskulov’s writing style.

## PROLOGUE:

**KARA SHUMKAR** (Black Hawk) written by Sardarbek Ryskulov, published 1991 in Bishkek, (known as Frunze at that time), is the 4th book by Sardarbek Ryskulov. In his earlier books the author talks about Kyrgyz national heroes, powerful people, jockeys, munushkor (falconers working with any raptor other than eagles) and burkutchulor (eagle falconers.) The translation made herein is not word for word, though the meaning is similar. The Kyrgyz language used in Kara Shumkar is old and often obscure; effort has been made to convey the author’s concepts and story flow, though the words are not what the author wrote.

In Kara Shumkar, Sardarbek Ryskulov writes about three types of golden

eagles used in hunting. He says: Very good eagles are divided into three types. These three types are good for hunting. (“Chegir” is a very old Kyrgyz word with no known literal translation.)

**Baatyr Chegir:** the feathers of this bird are quite tough, they are glossy and the eagle is beautiful. When you take the eagle onto your fist, the rays of the sun catch the feathers and they gleam. This type of eagle, when standing on a perch, is not calm. They are always trying to go somewhere, always jumping around. In hunting they are very brave. If they see a wolf or wild pigs they try to catch them. They are very brave.

**Bai Chegir:** this second type of eagle has very long feathers, and the head feathers are always partially raised up.

On the perch they are calm. Falconers think this type is always bringing profit to the family, even if they are not hunted, this type brings good luck.

**Kuu Chegir:** this is the best of the three types of very good eagles. Only a very experienced Burkutchu (eagle falconer) can hunt with this type of eagle. During hunting if the eagle doesn’t catch the prey, they will attack the Burkutchu. When they are standing on the perch they are always shaking their wings and their feathers. These birds transmit some substance onto the glove. The gloves become covered with a substance such that when the glove dries, it becomes hard and difficult to use after having this substance on it.



Ruslan hunts Karakuz





Eagle's feet wrapped for protection from bites

TWO SHORT STORIES FROM KARA SHUMKAR (BLACK HAWK) by Sardarbek Ryskulov

## SARY BARCHYN: AN EAGLE STORY

From *Kara Shumkar (Black Hawk)* by Sardarbek Ryskulov

(Literal translation of "Sary Barchyn" is: "Yellow Year", referring to the age of the eagle, that is approximately ten years old.)

**T**wo Burkutchulor, famous in Naryn Oblast (province) in the Kachkor Region of Kyrgyzstan, are nephews. Kudaibergen thought his nephew Syranchy was a very good falconer. When people asked why, Kudaibergen answered, "Because he knows how to cut eagles' feathers." People wanted to know: what is it to cut eagles' feathers?

Kudaibergen explained that in hunting, eagles break feathers and Syranchy takes feathers from dead eagles, splicing them into the broken feathers of a hunting bird with such mastery that no one can tell which feathers had been broken and replaced.

Syranchy hunted with eagles for years. One day he was gifted an eagle from Jungal Region, in Naryn Oblast. People were saying it was a beautiful, big, very nice eagle! The popularity of this eagle

grew, and one day Kudaibergen decided to go to Syranchy to see the eagle. When he arrived, Syranchy was not at home, but there was Syranchy's assistant, Jakyb. When Syranchy went hunting, Jakyb went to flush prey.

Kudaibergen took Syranchy's glove from the wall, then took the beautiful eagle onto his glove. He took off its hood and began to examine the eagle. He checked the muscle, the feathers, the beak, the talons, the feet. He looked at the eyes of the eagle. Then he replaced the hood, returning the eagle to its perch.

Jakyb saw Kudaibergen examine the eagle and wanted to ask questions. "Do you like the eagle? What did you find? Do you think the eagle is brave and can catch everything?"

Kudaibergen did not answer Jakyb's questions. He told him, "When Syranchy returns home, he has to give this eagle

to me. Syranchy has never hunted with passage eagles, he's only hunted with nest birds. This eagle is about 10-12 barchyn (years old). Syranchy and you cannot train this eagle, it would be a waste of your time. Syranchy has to give this eagle to me." After that he left and went home.

Jakyb went to Syranchy when he returned home and told him Kudaibergen had come to see the eagle that afternoon. Syranchy wanted to know, "What did Kudaibergen say?" Jakyb told him the words of Kudaibergen.

Syranchy was really disappointed and upset. He wasn't happy with Kudaibergen's opinion. After forty days of training, he prepared the eagle for hunting. Two or three times he showed foxes to the eagle and trained him to return to the glove. In his opinion he was then ready for hunting.





Pano hunting near Burkut

So he told Jakyb, “We have to try this eagle hunting. For sure we can find fox. We have to hunt for foxes.” The next morning Jakyb came early and together with Syranchy, they went hunting.

Half way to the mountains where they intended to go, there was Kudaibergen’s village. When they saw the village, Jakyb said to Syranchy, “Why don’t we visit Kudaibergen?” Jakyb was thinking not only of visiting, but wanted to hear Kudaibergen’s opinion of the bird’s condition, and of its training. Syranchy said, “OK.” So they went to Kudaibergen’s house.

When they arrived at Kudaibergen’s house, Kudaibergen asked, “Did you prepare your bird? Are you going hunting today?” They said yes, and Kudaibergen asked them in for tea. Kudaibergen asked, “Why didn’t you start earlier? Foxes run around at night and early in the morning they return to their holes, so at this time they are in their holes.”

Then he asked Jakyb to take the hood off. When Jakyb took the hood off, the eagle was quite curious, looking around, looking at the sky; the eagle seemed to be very ready for hunting. Kudaibergen watched the bird a few moments and asked to have Jakyb replace the hood.

Jakyb asked Kudaibergen, “How is the eagle? Is the bird ready for hunting?” Kudaibergen answered, “You did a good

job, the bird is ready for hunting. But you must catch something today, otherwise the eagle will fly away, and it will be difficult to catch it again.”

When Syranchy heard this he became nervous, and said to Jakyb, “Let’s go!”, and they moved on. When they came to the hunting place, Jakyb went among the bushes, making sounds to get the foxes out. Suddenly he cried, “Here! Over here!”

Syranchy galloped his horse there and took off the eagle’s hood. Just after he took the hood off the eagle flew away, and then he saw the fox running down the valley. The eagle flew down the valley, approaching to attack the fox. The fox was running. It seemed unafraid of the eagle. The fox rose up on two hind legs, watching the eagle fly at him. When the eagle was close, the fox jumped very high. The eagle missed and hit the ground, hard.

The fox was very glad with that, and ran away. It took the eagle a few minutes to recover after the impact of hitting the ground. The eagle was not able to fly, it barely walked, then jumped onto a stone.

Syranchy saw all these things, shouting to Jakyb, “Get the chyrGAR (lure) out and do chyrGAR!” Jakyb got the chyrGAR out and went to the eagle. Jakyb called the eagle to come to the chyrGAR. But the eagle did not come, he did not even look at the chyrGAR.

The eagle jumped into the air, tried to fly and landed on the next little hill. This happened three times. Each time Jakyb came close, the eagle tried to fly away.

The last time Jakyb was close to the eagle, Syranchy said, “STOP! The sun is rising higher, the air is warmer, the eagle’s muscles are warmed up; if the eagle flies again, we won’t be able to get it.” So, Jakyb stopped chyrGAR, and let the eagle rest a couple hours. After that Syranchy asked Jakyb to try chyrGAR again. This time the eagle came to chyrGAR, so then Jakyb caught the eagle.

Syranchy came to Jakyb, threw his glove and baldak to him, and said, “Take the eagle!” Syranchy got on his horse. He told Jakyb to give this eagle to Kudaibergen. Jakyb took the eagle to Kudaibergen’s house.

When Jakyb came to Kudaibergen’s house, Kudaibergen said, “What? You didn’t?” Jakyb said, “Yes, we did.” Kudaibergen asked, “So, did you catch anything?” Jakyb said, “No, we barely caught the eagle!” After that, Jakyb gave the eagle to Kudaibergen and went home.

After that, Syranchy never hunted with eagles; he said, “Kudaibergen is a better Burkutchu than me,” and he only hunted with hawks and falcons.

After that, Kudaibergen trained and hunted very successfully with the beautiful eagle.

## HUNTING FOR FOXES

Another eagle story from Kara Shumkar (Black Hawk) by Sardarbek Ryskulov

This story takes place somewhere near Suusamyр Valley, in Naryn, between Naryn and Talas regions of the Kyrgyz Republic. The people who lived in that valley recently saw one very big fox. That fox was very beautiful. Everyone wanted to catch it.

There was one man named Kanat, who

was a “bolush” (a type of official) in the village. He wanted to get this fox. He asked all of the hunters, all of the taiganchi (hunters using Taigan hounds, the Kyrgyz breed of deep chested hunting hound) and all of the Burkutchulor (eagle falconers) to catch it for him, but no one could catch this fox. One day Kanat decided to send a

person to call on Kudaibergen, so he could ask Kudaibergen to come and catch this fox for him. Kudaibergen answered, “I will come to your place after it becomes colder and has snowed twice.” So Kanat eagerly waited for the weather to snow twice. He was expecting Kudaibergen’s eagle to catch that fox.



One day in winter, Kudaibergen called together four other men who were taiganchi. When they came, Kudaibergen told them, "Tomorrow you have to come to me with your Taigans and we will go to Kanat's place. We will hunt for fox. We will try to catch this one large, really beautiful fox."

The next day, those four taiganchi and Kudaibergen with his eagle went to Kanat's village. This place was called Akchiy (Kyrgyz word for a bush characterized by dense white, thin branches.) Kudaibergen showed these bushes to the other men and said, "Really clever foxes regularly change their holes, and live among these bushes." He explained to them, "The fox will not come outside these bushes because he is very clever. He must know that there are eaglemen trying to catch him."

He told them that they must encircle the area and draw inwards from all four directions. "When the dogs find the place the fox lives, they will start barking. When you hear the dogs start barking, do your best to make as much loud noise as you can. When the fox hears dogs barking and people making loud noises, the fox will come out from the bush and try to run away. Let's start."

So they let their taigans go into the bushes. They started making loud noises, trying to get the fox to come out from its hole. The fox came out from the hole and tried to run away, but on all the sides there were dogs and hunters, shouting and making loud noises. When the fox was tired, he decided to come out from the bush and run away on a flat place.

The fox came out from the bushes and started to run. The dogs started chasing the fox. When the dogs were very close, almost ready to catch the fox, the fox turned around, facing the dogs. The dogs were afraid and stopped their pursuit. At that moment, Kudaibergen took off the eagle's hood. His eagle flew up into the sky, flying in the direction of the fox.

The fox saw the eagle and tried to run back to the bush. The eagle came very close to the fox. When the eagle was close, the fox stopped running and rose up on its hind legs. When the eagle was actually attacking, the fox jumped up. The eagle came very close to hitting the ground, but did not, and flew high up again.

While the eagle flew high, the taigans were close to the fox. They tried this time to attack the fox. Again the fox

stopped and faced the dogs. The dogs were again afraid and stopped their attack. The fox ran toward the bushes.

The eagle circled back again, attacking the fox. At that moment, the fox was very close to the bushes. Suddenly, one taigan came close to the fox and tried to attack. At that moment the eagle struck, taking the fox with her feet and flew higher. The eagle circled a little way, then landed with the fox in her feet.

Kudaibergen and the other men came to the eagle. When they arrived, Kudaibergen's eagle had already killed the fox. The hunters saw the fox. It was really big, it was the same size as a wolf! The pelt of the fox was extraordinarily beautiful.

After some time, Kanat heard the news that Kudaibergen's eagle caught the fox. Kudaibergen did not go to Kanat's place, he took the fox and went home to his own house. Kanat sent one of his assistants who told Kudaibergen, "You must give the fox to Kanat. Kanat will make a Tebetei (a Kyrgyz national hat made with a fox pelts.)"

Kudaibergen answered, "If the tebetei made of fox skin fits Kanat's head, it will also fit Kudaibergen's head, so I will not give the fox to you."

The next day, Kanat sent another man. In his message, he said that he would give one horse to Kudaibergen for the

fox. Kudaibergen answered, "I am not a person who goes on foot, I have my own horse." After that, Kanat was really upset and angry. Another day Kanat sent five, respected old men to Kudaibergen. Kanat told these elders, "Kudaibergen came to my place and caught a very beautiful fox in my valley. If Kudaibergen does not give the fox skin to me he will be in a lot of trouble."

When Kudaibergen heard these words, he answered, "Akchiy was not made by Kanat. It was made by God. Akchiy is not Kanat's property, it is the property of the people. There are so many foxes, Kanat can come to my valley and catch a fox." The old men told him, "Kudaibergen, you have to give the fox to Kanat. As you know Kanat is a bolush, and if he gets really angry he will come with his soldiers to your village and take all your animals; your village will be in trouble. Kanat will even attack your village!"

Kudaibergen answered, "Get out of my house. If Kanat is really brave he can come and attack my village. If Kanat has power, and soldiers, so I also have these same things: I am the son of a Kyrgyz hero, and I can protect my village."

After that, the old men went home. After that, Kanat never tried to get the fox from Kudaibergen, and Kudaibergen never gave the fox to him.



Karima in pre-dawn light waiting for foxes



Spirit the European Eagle Owl



Spirit and the author Lee Hall



A young Spirit

# Spirit

**E**ver since my days as young boy spending holidays with my brothers and parents in the Lake District, I was in awe when admiring the Buzzards and Kestrels during the day and the Barn Owls and Tawny Owls by night. I would read any magazine or book which would have even the smallest caption or picture of a raptor. However, living in the city in the north east of England did not exactly prove the perfect place to even consider keeping a raptor of my own, so I was reduced to keeping and breeding budgies with father, which in fact was very interesting and fulfilling at the time, but my passion for the highly efficient hunters of the sky burned deep inside.

Over the years my interest for birds of prey never went away and just like the boy before would read and research anything that I could find on birds of prey. It wasn't until I had the opportunity to move to a small village near York due to work that I thought I may finally get the opportunity to consider keeping and flying a bird of prey of my own. But first I needed to get some help and advice before even considering keeping one of these magnificent birds. Being new to the area I didn't know many people never mind someone who kept or flew birds of prey, so this looked like it may still be just a childhood dream that may never be fulfilled. Then one day I was out on a call for work and I arrived at a house which looked just like any other on the street and made my way to the front door. I knocked at the door and was greeted by a gentleman who introduced himself as Neil and he then led me through to the boiler (I forgot to mention I am a self employed heating engineer). As I began working on the boiler I looked out of the kitchen window and noticed a rather large owl sat on the lawn, it was a European Eagle Owl, and I could see that there were other birds of prey on the lawn too! After finishing the job in hand I called through to Neil to let him know I had finished the work.

## Questions asked

Once the work stuff was out of the way I quickly asked him about the birds on the

lawn. It was then that I discovered that this was Neil who at that point ran the Independent Bird Register (IBR). He led me outside and introduced me to some of his birds, and we talked for a good while and he told me if I was considering keeping a bird of prey of my own that he would be only too happy to help with any information or assistance. I told him that my real passion was for owls and in particular European Eagle Owls. He gave me the titles of some good books on keeping owls, like *Jemima Parry Jones*' etc. (who I have since had the honour of meeting and seen her flying some of her fantastic birds at the falconry weekend at her centre in Newent).

Over the next few months and some serious reading and research I began to build my aviary and flight. Once this was in place, I then installed a fridge, first aid quarters along with all the necessary vitamins, minerals etc. and began my search for my very own bird of prey. I eventually found a breeder that bred specifically owls in Barnsley and contacted them to enquire about the baby Europeans they had for sale. They informed me that they only had one left for sale, and that it was a little over four weeks old, so I arranged to go and see the set up, parents, and baby bird to see if this could be the one for me. I set off with my wife in the car with my new transport box on the back seat and very excited at the fact that soon, finally, I may have my very own baby European Eagle Owl. When we finally arrived and were taken through to see the parents and the set up I was hugely impressed - a large female European in fantastic condition along side a male in just as fantastic condition. This was looking good! We were then taken through to the house and they brought down a big bundle of fluff, big orange eyes and beak, clacking and looking for food and attention. This bird had been hand reared and was perfect in every sense of the word. I held the bird and inspected for condition and health to the best of my knowledge at that time, and agreed that I would most definitely be taking this bird away with me.

Once we got home we placed it in its large indoor box I had built prior to its



arrival for it to stay in while it was kept in the house. Now for a name - my wife's late granddad knew about my passion for these birds and had insisted before he died that he gave me the money for when the time came to get my own bird, so we decided to call her Spirit. Raising her indoors for around six weeks gave her and me a bond and along with interaction with my wife and any one else who came to visit us. We would take her out into the garden and let her run around, calling her with a whistle and a wave of a small piece of food, and she would immediately turn and run towards me with a clack and a screech. I won't bore you with the long process of her training, but I will say that I think Spirit loved being near me almost as much I enjoyed being with her. The bond between us was plain to see by anyone who ever saw us together and she was a bit of a celebrity around the village too.

### Experience gained

I have since had the pleasure of being involved in training and raising a very large number of birds of prey, from hawks to falcons along with a very wide range of owls, and I have to say you can get a huge pleasure from flying and training hawks etc. but to me if you are looking for a bond or feathered friend then owls are by far more rewarding, but this all depends on what you are wanting from your birds or sport. Spirit was a very healthy, well conditioned bird and always bright eyed and keen, however when she was around two and half years old I went into her aviary and she was sat quiet, and plainly not herself so I placed her onto my gloved hand, which was unusual as she was always keen to fly or hop to the glove. As I tried to leave the aviary she began to lean onto me as if not being able to support herself and at every attempt to stand her up she fell forwards every time. This was extremely worrying, and I immediately took her back to the aviary and placed her down on the ground to see if she could support herself on a flat surface, but unfortunately she failed to stand and fell forwards with wings spread out and I had to catch her. I then grabbed the carry box and rushed her to the local vet who had placed her onto their books when she was only four weeks old informing me that they were more than capable of caring for her if I ever needed them. Arriving at the vets I found the gates locked shut, and I rang the emergency number and was informed that there was a vet on site



Who's looking at you?

who would come out to meet me asap. The female vet walked out of the main doors and upon seeing Spirit, laughed and told me they and the practice had no knowledge of birds of prey and could look at her but would be cheating me and just taking my money. She turned and walked away and I was left with a sick bird and nowhere to turn. My dad arrived and told me to get the bird along to the falconry centre where I had started to volunteer and see if they could help. They did what they could and told me that, unfortunately, it did not look good. After trying to get hold of a vet from over five different practices with no joy I returned home with Spirit and sat with her indoors on my knee trying my best to nurse her but her breathing was becoming more and more laboured. I stood and took her outside to see if a little fresh air would help but within around thirty seconds she had a massive fit in my arms and died.

I have since found out that Spirit probably had an underlying respiratory problem from birth. After laying her to rest the following day and a long drawn out battle with the local vets I received a letter from the vets informing that the vet had refused to look at Spirit because I had been threatening and abusive and that my dad had also been abusive. This was all fabricated, and anyone who knows

me knows that just is not my nature and even if it was I never had a chance to become threatening or abusive as the vet had walked off into the surgery quite sharply and was already inside when my dad arrived. This then prompted me into thinking that help and advice especially from vets is very limited, and that I needed to do something for myself for any future birds I may have, and maybe even be able to help other raptor owners with advice and help. So I have just completed a diploma in birds of prey: biology, natural history and conservation and a diploma in caring for wildlife: animal first aid and rescue. With these diplomas and my experience working with raptors and attending falconry courses and experiences at the bird of prey centre I volunteer at, I hope I may be able to offer some help and advice to others and maybe even save or prolong the life of wild and captive birds of prey.

I now have at home a very large female European eagle owl named Bambi who is almost two and a half years old and a Bengalese eagle owl named Amber who is five months old. I am also looking to start writing a small handbook for falconers etc. with simple easy to follow advice to try and prevent some of the more common diseases and illnesses that are encountered.



Nick Kester giving Baldrick a helping hand

# The Pheasant

## A true challenge and an even better meal!

*refusnik* goshawk, was un-entered in her first season and this accounted for her future reluctance.

The other problem is access to good pheasant hawking, which we will address later. But first a bit about this magnificent bird, the staple of game shoots up worldwide. Every autumn some 38 million are released in Britain just for that purpose. Under the game laws there has been a carefully designated season since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. So they are off limits from February 2<sup>nd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September – the closed season. The open season is currently the subject of much debate as the government is re-examining this along with other wildlife law. In truth, few shoot pheasant until November and many would like to see the season extended into February – and that probably includes falconers.

The home range was originally Georgia (Central Asia) and their eventual arrival on our shores has been attributed to both the Romans and the Normans. Whatever, the common pheasant – he of the ring neck – has been here forever and managed by man for man. Managed is the key. Whilst rabbits and hares can be said to be controlled by man to stop them getting out of hand, and grouse and wildfowl, being wild, are aided by man to encourage their success, we certainly manage pheasant and partridge (red leg, for grey partridge cross into both disciplines: aided and managed). Aiding a species includes predator control, habitat management and the provision of supplementary feed and grit where necessary. Management encompasses all of this but on the basis of a captive bred and released stock that is replenished each year. Released birds have a habit of wandering off so must be

lured with food or dogged back to the home woods on a regular basis. Public disturbance can be real nuisance with uncontrolled ramblers and their dogs being a particular menace. If, as a falconer, you have tried to manage your own game birds you will know how time consuming this all is. Obviously some released birds make it through into the summer and breed, thus providing a naturally wild reserve. It is on estates such as this, taking pride in not releasing game for many years, that 'wild bird' shoots are offered, usually cocks only.

So what is the attraction for falconry? To start with they are delicious and in our case lead-free, so our teeth don't suffer from biting onto shot. Talking of which, be very careful if you feed pheasant to your hawk as certain bits may contain the occasional lead pellet which, when taken into the chemical soup that enables hawks to digest bones, can enter the system and prove fatal. It only takes one. So when I secure a pheasant, if it has flown strongly I may feed up on the head and neck (any shot there usually means curtains for the bird, so if it is still flying then it is usually ok) but rarely on any other part. When I have got home I will check the rest of the carcass and if it passes muster will put the wings in the freezer as tiring but only if I am one hundred percent sure there is no residual lead. Any birds that have been 'mugged' are never fed as they could have been 'pricked' on an earlier shoot and not picked up.

Eating pheasant can be simple or a ritual. It's up to the chef. I do everything with them from roasting and casserole to throwing a cheat's curry sauce over the breasts and washing it down with a beer. It is healthy and nutritious. For the more adventurous there are heaps of recipes

**T**here are two quarry species that are the subject of most bar room falconry stories: the rabbit and the pheasant. As the rabbit was the subject of my last article, it is time to concentrate on the pheasant.

All falconers love to fly pheasant, sparrowhawk or merlin excepted, and for short and longwings alike this substantial prey is a regular if not in the bag then at least in one's dreams. There is a theory promulgated by some that a hawk should always be made to fur before feather if you want good varied sport. I have tested this and found it wanting. My second goshawk was great on rabbits but wouldn't look twice at pheasants, and I have seen the same in Harris hawks. Much of the problem, and the solution, is in the training and in what they are shown in their first year; young hawks will chase whatever moves and if you are able to show variety then you have a chance. Phaedra, said



in *Shooting Times* penned by sometime falconer Mark Hinge. And there is no need to hang modern pheasants until the heads drop off. Sure, you should hang older birds for a couple of days to ensure they become tender and a little bit gamey, but in the main they will be this year's release and can be eaten on the same day.

But the real reason for hawking is their flight. Cocks are particularly exciting because they shout when flushed adding to the adrenalin buzz. The first time I saw a hawk take a pheasant was when apprenticed to my old tutor, Ken Wood. His redtail was really only entered at rabbits and moorhen: he never got fit enough to chase pheasant effectively, so it was a bit of a mugging. Sitting in a tree the hawk espied a cock clamped down in a stick pile. We poked the heap and out he came, but before he took off he was secured. Of course I was thrilled but Ken thought it, justifiably, rather poor show. Muggings are also so-called if your hawk fails to secure in the first flight and then either does exactly as the redtail did, or wanders off for a look-see and bags one out of sight in the wood. As mentioned, mugged birds should not be fed although sometimes this cannot be helped as you may take a while to track them down. But you should still exercise caution.

For all hawks, and falcons, for we mustn't forget they are equally prized by longwingers, a pheasant's exit from cover is like an Exocet rocket going off. During the first few seconds there is a chance your hawk will stand on his tail, climb vertically and snatch it from the air, and everything will be over in a flash. This is super spectacular, especially for those who have never seen hawking. Equally impressive, in fact possibly more so (and as an austringer it pains me to say it), is when a stooping falcon intercepts the climbing bird, hits a deadly blow and then drops to the ground in full view of the assembled company. Applause always follows.

Often the pheasant will climb over the trees and head for the denser cover where it will be almost impossible to find. A good hawk will maintain the chase and even overhaul it when it reaches the tops of trees. Here it will roll over and grab the escaping bird leaving both to tumble over and over to ground. But if this fails the pursuit will carry on for several hundred yards until the pheasant sets its wings and starts to glide. A shooting man will tell you that this is when they are moving at their fastest and drawing a bead on them is



Baldrick on quarry after a successful flight

hardest. For the hawk this is when it has to put on the afterburners because it knows that once cover is reached the game could well be over. During the seconds when the pheasant has to put on the brakes to land safely the hawk will strike, seeming to throw caution to the wind in the effort to secure a kill.

Shooting is an expensive business. *Shooting Times* calculates that it costs between £30 and £35 per pheasant shot. So for a top end day with eight guns shooting 250 birds, each gun has to find £1,000, which is why I am a falconer! For this is where we differ from the shooters who fund, directly and indirectly, our sport. Sit with a shooting man and tell him that you only want to take one or two a day, and that an empty bag is not a cause for despair and he will look at you in disbelief. Explain that multiple flushes are a disaster and you are only looking for single birds such as in rough or hedgerow shooting and the lights will come on. Talk about marginal land being sufficient and that by hawking these un-shot areas you will return birds to cover, and you have a common cause.

But there is still prejudice. Currently, gamekeepers are plagued by buzzards and shoots struggle to get a licence even for some limited control – the first having been granted for nest destruction only. Illogical, because there are fewer cormorants than buzzards and licences are issued for their control. Gamekeepers are wonderful countrymen, but by definition live a solitary life interacting with their boss and his guests but also waging war on

poachers and keeping intrusive, inquisitive public out of the woods at release time. They are very focused on providing good sport that ensures they keep their jobs in these fragile times. As a result they can be blinkered. Old traditions die hard. The thought of a hawk 'rampaging' through the woods is often impossible to accept and every shoot owner will defer to his 'keeper on your desire to hawk the estate. It can be a long process and once gained is easily lost.

Having a reference point is a good start. The Welsh Hawking Club has a paid-for syndicate on a shoot in the Welsh Marches with a tremendously supportive owner (who does his own keeping). We have been there for two years and hopefully will enjoy several more. It is not expensive because we take so little and there are rabbits plenty for those preferring ground game. We succeed because we are very disciplined. Slips are managed turn and turn about. We don't hawk near the release pens until the latter part of the season. No one is permitted more than one head without paying an overage bounty. Thank you's are rigorously observed, with a bottle or two in support. And we all have tremendous fun.

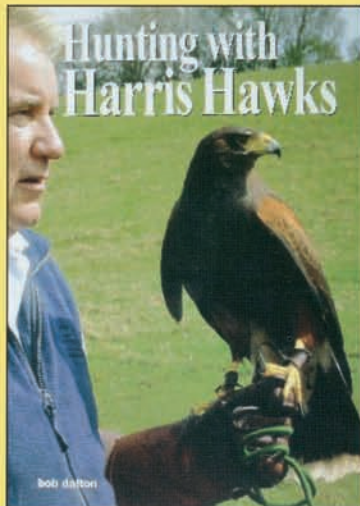
Because of where I live, where the shoots are few and far between, hawking pheasant is a rare pleasure. For some it is the norm, but they, like I, do not take it for granted. No question that for a shortwinger, the pheasant is the king of the lowground game birds. Or is it? What about the partridge?





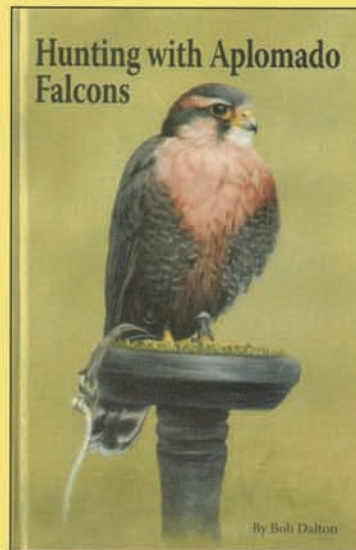
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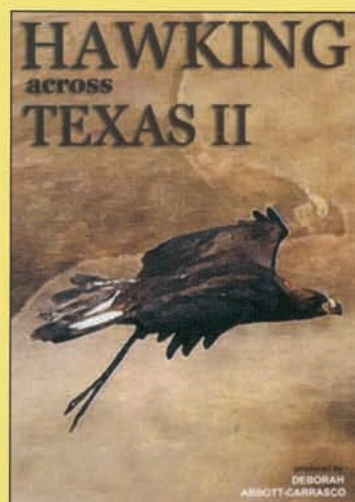
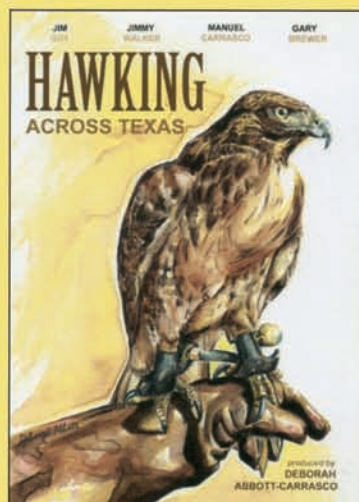
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# Club Directory

## The South East Falconry Group

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

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

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

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

For further information or an application form please contact -

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

E-mail us at [enquiry@sefg.org](mailto:enquiry@sefg.org) or visit our web site [www.sefg.org](http://www.sefg.org)

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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.



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For all general enquiries please contact:

**Jan France on 01491 629950**

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e-mail: [secretary@thewelshhawkingclub.com](mailto:secretary@thewelshhawkingclub.com)

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Telephone 0161 790 5613

## IBR registered Lost & Stolen birds plus Found and Reunited birds of prey From 1st July 2013 to 30th September 2013

The IBR would like to thank all of those people that have 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 has a rolling list of lost IBR registered birds (those who have paid to register) and a list of found birds.

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

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

There were no stolen reports between 1st July and 30th September 2013.

### REUNITED x 94

#### SPECIES

AMERICAN KESTREL	2
BARBARY	1
BARN OWL	12
BOOBOOK OWL	1
CONURE	1
EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL	4
FERRUGINOUS	1
GOLDEN EAGLE	1
GOSHAWK	3
GYR/PEREGRINE	2
GYR/SAKER	15
HARRIS HAWK	15
KESTREL	10
LANNER	5
MERLIN	2
PEREGRINE	2
PERE/BARBARY	1
PERE/LANNER	2
PERE/SAKER	5
RAVEN	1
SAKER	3
SNOWY OWL	1
SPARROWHAWK	4

Out of the 94 birds reunited, 61 were NOT registered.

### LOST x 20

BREF	RING	SPECIES	AREA LOST
90053	?727?	RAVEN	Hertford, SG13
92829	?H01?	YELLOW BILLED KITE	Andover, SP11
93877	?037?	HARRIS HAWK	Lincoln, LNS
45069	?285?	LANNER	Woodhurst, PE28
97536	?HC1?	GYR/SAKER	Lincoln
47703	?743?	HARRIS HAWK	Morley, LS27
56478	?206?	HARRIS HAWK	Lasham, Hampshire
56005	?355?	REDTAIL	Mansfield, NG21
71877	?520?	MERLIN	Dover, CT16
96012	?892?	KESTREL	Micheldever, SO21
93723	?044?	HARRIS HAWK	Walsall
89349	?590?	BARN OWL	Liskeard, PL14
93348	?742?	REDTAIL	Scunthorpe
10204	?001?	PERE/LANNER	Burntwood, WS7
68059	?651?	GYR/SAKER	Exmouth, EX8
88536	?554?	REDTAIL	Bletchley, MK3
53861	?472?	BARN OWL	Houghton Regis
97598	?335?	SAKER FALCON	Warkworth
91225	?842?	AFRICAN SPOTTED E.O.	Castle Bromwich
92925	?006?	HARRIS HAWK	Leicester, LE3

### FOUND x 17

BREF	RING	SPECIES	AREA FOUND
88572	?553?	HARRIS HAWK	Leeds
77698	?406?	PERE/SAKE	Ripon
53486	?058?	BARN OWL	WRI5
61326	?965?	HARRIS HAWK	Liverpool, L23
84859	?149?	BARN OWL	Birmingham, B37
97477	?572?	GYR/PEREGRINE	Ludlow
67026	?365?	BARN OWL	Sculthorpe
97629	?HCM?	AMERICAN KESTREL	Wimborne, BH21
97665	????	HARRIS HAWK	Hadleigh
97698	?04?	COMMON BUZZARD	Flecknoe, CV23
97763	?804?	KESTREL	Rugeley, WS15
36670	?651?	HARRIS HAWK	Colchester
84007	?844?	BARN OWL	Middlesbrough, TS2
73123	?755?	BARN OWL	Corfe Mullen
97858	?EN1?	KESTREL	Knowsley
97871	?ASH?	KESTREL	Cramlington
87235	?066?	KESTREL	Stourbridge

### FOUND DEAD X 9

BARN OWL X 3
BOOBOOK OWL X 1
GYR/SAKER X 1
HARRIS HAWK X 2
KESTREL X 3
LANNER X 1
PERE/SAKER X 2
RAVEN X 1

### LOST UNREGISTERED BIRDS X 58

AMERICAN KESTREL X 1
BARBARY X 1
BARN OWL X 7
EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL X 1
GOSHAWK X 4
GYR/LANNER X 1
GYR/PEREGRINE X 1
GYR/SAKER X 4
HARRIS HAWK X 12
KESTREL X 2
LANNER FALCON X 7
LITTLE OWL X 2
PEREGRINE X 7
PERE/LANNER X 2
PERE/PRAIRIE X 1
PERE/SAKER X 4
SPARROWHAWK X 1

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## Eagle Falconry A Personal Perspective

### EAGLE FALCONRY A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE



This new work covers a relatively new branch of falconry, at least, so far as the UK, Europe and America is concerned and fills a long-awaited niche regarding eagle falconry. The author has been flying eagles for half a century with varying degrees of success, but is mostly concerned with the Golden Eagle. This book covers the history of eagle falconry in these islands and more importantly perhaps, takes the reader on a journey into the not too distant past to discover those early falconers who saw merit in this stunning bird despite all the bad press the species received back then. The book also gives short biographies on those eagle falconers who are still with us today, giving insights into the achievements of Ronnie Moore, Alan Gates, Andrew Knowles-Brown, Geoff Clayton, George Mussared, Joe Atkinson and many more.

With the upsurge of interest in eagle falconry, the author, together with Alan Walker, formed the British Falconers Club Eagle Group, a small but passionate and successful group who regularly fly their eagles at organised meets throughout the country. The author has brought together his experiences, and those of others, in a highly readable format to help newcomers to eagle falconry. Although the book is not, and was never intended to be, a "How to," fly eagles monograph, there is a wealth of information within its pages to enable any tyro to get a feeling for the sport of eagle falconry. The author stresses the point that these birds are not toys and can be frightening to those unfamiliar with eagles. He warns that great dedication is required to take on these fascinating raptors and takes the reader through his own trials and tribulations whilst training his own eagles, highlighting the problems that can be associated with eagle falconry.

The book contains over 230 pages of text and 32 pages of stunning full colour photographs, many taken especially for this work and is reasonably priced at **£35.00**. The author will be signing copies of this work at the UK Hawking Event near Evesham on 11th and 12th August and again at the ICBP Falconry Weekend on 1st & 2nd September. Alternatively, copies can be purchased directly from the author by e-mailing [davidfox78@hotmail.com](mailto:davidfox78@hotmail.com)



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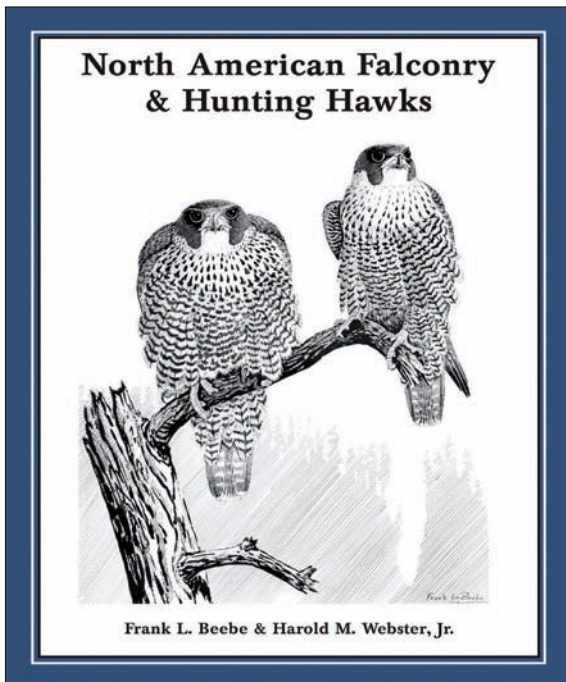


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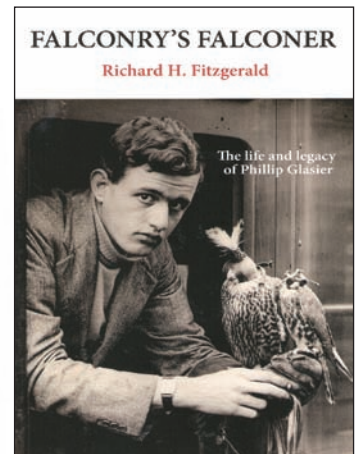
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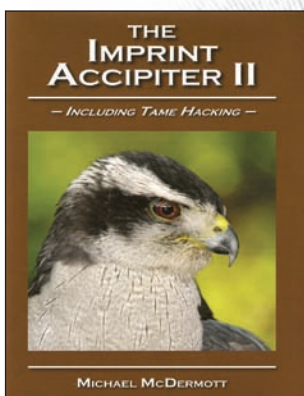
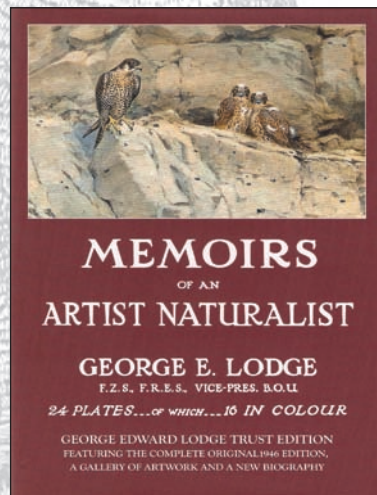


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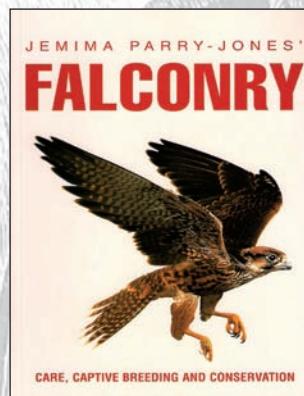
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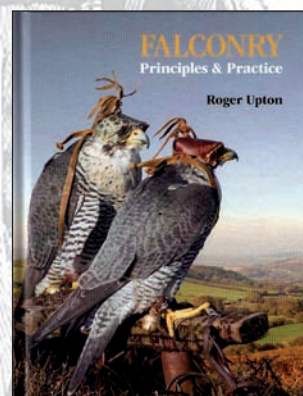
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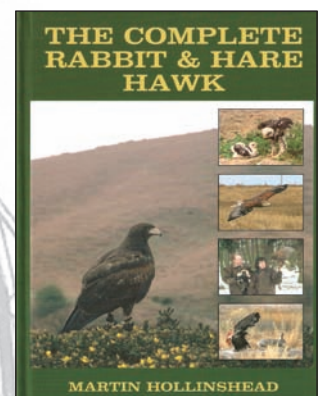
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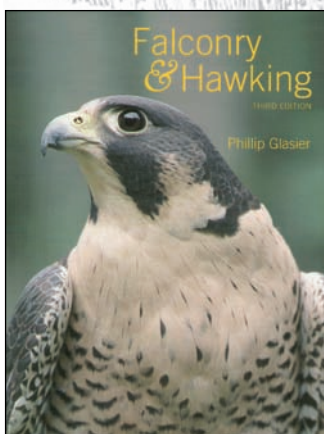
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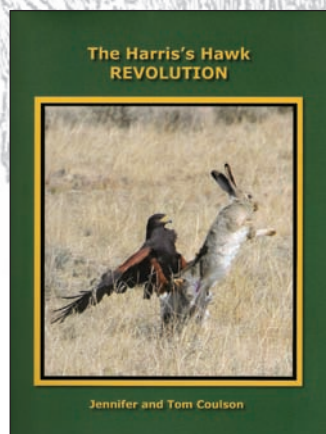
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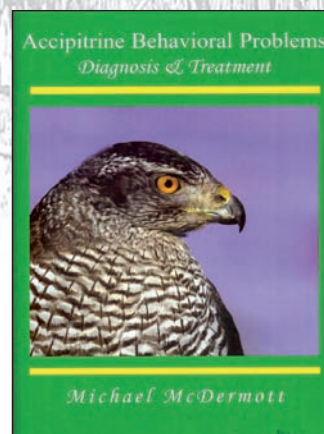
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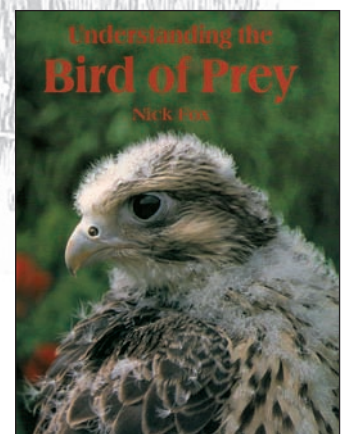
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