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The

Falconers

& Raptor Conservation Magazine



100th
Edition

The 2014
International Festival
of Falconry

Falconers

& Raptor Conservation Magazine

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Editor: Peter Eldrett

ALL EDITORIAL
INFO TO THIS
ADDRESS

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

Art Editor: Steve Hunt

Telephone: 01202 751611
E-mail: steve@pwpublishing.ltd.uk

Advertising and Marketing:

Sales: Roger Hall
01202 751611

Production: Peter Eldrett
PW Publishing Ltd., Tayfield House,
38 Poole Road, Westbourne
Bournemouth, Dorset BH4 9DW
Telephone: 01202 751611
E-mail: sales@pwpublishing.ltd.uk

ALL
ADVERTISING
INFO TO THIS
ADDRESS

Finance: Alan Burgess

Telephone: 01202 751611
E-mail: alan@pwpublishing.ltd.uk

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

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Peter.



editorial



1989 – what happened?

Emperor Hirohito died. Tianamen square in China saw the student riots. The Berlin wall fell. Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska. George W Bush was elected as president of USA.

Then another major event happened – The Falconers Magazine was launched. Lyn Wilson and her husband David, who are both very experienced falconers, saw a gap in the market. There was no commercial magazine in Britain that catered for falconers and you could only read various articles and falconry related stories through individual club magazines. So The Falconers Magazine was launched, as a subscription only based publication, in the winter of 1989.

Articles in that first issue included Understanding the Saker falcon, a story on hunting with Sparrowhawks, an article on dogs and hawks, a feature on the Merlin falcon and an article about the Cotswold Falconry Centre, with the front cover shot being taken by Bob Dalton.

“A falconry magazine is like most other publications in that it is supposed to be enjoyable and at the same time helpful and informative.” Those were words published in that first edition and the same applies today. I like to publish a variety of articles and stories not only from falconers in Britain but also from around the world. I also like to promote anything new that appears on the market to enhance the pleasure of our sport including new equipment and even new books written by talented falconers – if, that is, they are any good

and do not damage any bird or falconer in any way.

It wasn't long before the words 'Raptor Conservation Magazine' were added. This was done to sell the magazine in shops to the general public as well as falconers, but this was found not to be cost effective so the decision was made to revert to subscription only, which it has remained up to this day.

The magazine went from strength to strength but because of personal reasons, Lyn decided to sell the magazine in 2001. Because I had, at that time, been a falconer for a few years and an avid reader of the magazine, I persuaded the directors of the publishing company which I worked for, PW Publishing Ltd., to buy the magazine. It was issue 45 that was the first Falconers magazine that PW Ltd. fully designed and published. Lyn carried on as editor for a few more issues but found it increasingly difficult to juggle the three balls of producing the magazine, practising falconry and family life. It was then that she decided to step down and I volunteered to be the next editor with issue 52 in 2003.

I have tried to include a good range of articles in each issue. As you would expect, you will be able to read about well-known and experienced falconers, both from the UK and abroad, but I also like to feature the “everyday club members” who are the backbone of

our sport. Also, the young falconers – the next generation – who will inherit the sport from us. It is important to encourage them and to pass on our knowledge – but we can also learn from them. I am always pleased to include an article from a junior falconer, or even an aspiring would-be falconer.

I also think it's important that the magazine covers as many conservation issues as possible because I believe that falconers have the knowledge and experience to look after wild raptors and their habitat probably more than any animal organisation, especially when it comes to rehabilitation. We have published a few articles on subjects including the Cape Verde Kite (Jemima Parry-Jones), New Zealand Falcon conservation project (volunteer Terrie Fisher), Raptors and Rodent control in Mongolia (Dr. Andrew Dixon) and Japanese Falconry and its contribution to the conservation of birds of prey (Keiya Nakajima). I hope to bring more conservation issues to readers in the future.

There is something else that falconers seem to take a keen interest in and that is bird of prey art. This is something that has a keen following – you can see that at various falconry events, including at the Festival of Falconry and Falconers Fair. Falconers are and have been for many years, critical of artwork being shown by the many talented artists who we see

from all over the world. The Falconers Magazine has been a keen supporter of the many artists in the UK including David Prescott, Martyn Brook, Colin Woolf and sculpture Bill Prickett. I hope to publish more articles on different artists in the future - if you are one, please get in touch.

The history of falconry is another aspect we falconers seem to love. I have been very lucky to have had a series of articles about falconers from the early to mid-20th century titled *We Were Falconers*. These articles have been meticulously researched by Peter Devers from the USA and Paul Beecroft from UK. The history of the falconers published include Robert Charles Blockey, George Blackall-Simonds, Kim Muir, Bobby Spens and Captain Knight to name a few. The stories of these falconers are sometimes of a daring-do nature especially during the times of world conflict and how these people achieved what they did is just amazing. I do hope to publish more articles of a similar vein in the future.

Another aspect of the magazine which is very important to all falconers is the health and well being of their

hawks and falcons. I am very lucky to have veterinary surgeon John Chitty writing for me on a regular basis. His column called "Ask Chitty" has been running for a few years and answers many questions regarding various health issues in our birds. Many of you here may know John as one of the top avian experts in Britain and his articles cover a wide range of topics.

I do publish other articles such as News and New Products. These pages concern any new product that I feel should have a mention and any news that is as up-to-date as possible. This can be a bit difficult as the magazine is published quarterly and so it is easy to print a news story that is quickly out of date. On the other hand, this does not apply to new products such as equipment or falconry gloves. As editor, I am very lucky that various book publishers send a review copy of a new book to me. Most of which I try to review myself but occasionally I do ask someone else to do the review.

For the more technical among you, another aspect when we took over the magazine was to brighten up the design and overall look by having every page

in 4-colour and making the publication perfect bound instead of saddle stitch as it originally was, but we have now reverted to the saddle stitch binding as a cost effective way to bring you an excellent product.

I must say a big, big thank you to all those falconers and conservationists who have contributed to the magazine and especially those who have written for me on more than one occasion. Thank you to Bob Dalton, Joe Atkinson, Elizabeth Schultz and Yvonne Taylor, to John Chitty, to Peter Devers and Paul Beecroft for their excellent work on the *We Were Falconers* series and also to Nick Kester who has also written various general articles. My thanks go to all I have mentioned and to those who (with apologies) I have not. Without you, the advertisers and the readers there would be no magazine. I thank you for your support.

As usual, and for this historic issue, have a good read!



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Origin Vets is a veterinary consultancy offering surgeries from many practices throughout south Wales. We deal exclusively with non-domestic species including birds of all kinds, exotic pets, zoological collections, wildlife and fisheries.

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news & products

a review of what's new in our sport

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H is for Hawk book wins Samuel Johnson prize

Author Helen Macdonald has won the £20,000 Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction for her book about how becoming a falconer helped her deal with grief.

H is for Hawk – described as “a book unlike any other” by the chair of the judging panel is the first memoir to win the award. In the book Helen reveals how training her own goshawk helped her come to terms with the death of her father. The historian and poet beat five other titles to win the prize.

Speaking ahead of the announcement Macdonald said she had developed an “obsession” with birds of prey from a young age. After her father’s sudden death, she became “desperate” to train a goshawk – a species, she said, that has “a reputation for being ruffians, psychopathic, bloodthirsty slayers”.

H is for Hawk recounts how she trained a female called Mabel, whom she said represented “all the things I wanted to be in that state of grief. She had no past or future, she just lived in the present. She was incredibly ferocious and full of life. I spent so much time with her I started to forget what it was like to be human at all.

“I ended up feeling like I was more like a hawk than a person. It really made me think very deeply about life and death. The book at heart is a love letter also to nature and the world around us.”

Claire Tomalin, chair of the 2015 judges, praised the book, “about an obsession with a wild creature . . . set in English landscapes observed with a visionary eye”. Writing about wildlife and the environment has never been better or better informed than this,” continued the judge, who is also a journalist and biographer.

It is unusual for the prize to go to a memoir rather than a history or biography, but the fact that it shows the strength of Macdonald’s work.

The author’s success, announced at a ceremony at the Royal Institute of British Architects in London, marks the first time a female author has won the prize in consecutive years.



H5N2 Avian Influenza in USA

An Avian Influenza outbreak has occurred in northern Washington. The same virus has been found in a flock of domestic guinea fowl, ducks and chickens in southern Oregon. These fowl were exposed to migratory waterfowl in a local marsh. It has also been found in another death that has occurred in a northern California marsh, this one was involving wild migratory waterfowl. It has been recommended that a temporary break from waterfowl hunting be taken by all falconers hunting in the Pacific Flyway at least until more information is available.

Talks have been taking place with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Oregon and they have suggested that all falconers in the Pacific Flyway discontinue hunting migratory waterfowl.

The USDA also warns that because freezing does not kill the virus they suggested not feeding any ducks killed earlier in the season to your raptors. This virus thrives in the current cool, wet conditions that they are experiencing in the US and please note the current strain is not transmittable to humans. The USDA believes the current H5N2 virus is a mutation from the H5N8 and this particular mutation is a very deadly form of the H5N Avian strain. The countries of China, South Korea and Japan are, at the time of writing, boycotting any importation of poultry products from the state of Oregon. All falconers in the affected areas are being encouraged to take every precaution in exposing raptors and/or breeding projects to any possible outside contaminants such as pen raised ducks/pheasants and pigeons.

If falconers choose to continue hunting ducks with their falcons and hawks, they should be very cautious about letting multiple birds eat the same duck. The duck can appear perfectly healthy and freezing will not kill the virus. Also, it is recommended that falconers should be cautious of using the same glove with multiple birds creating blood and saliva exchange.

Falconer Joe Atkinson says, “It has had a profound effect on duck hawking, several falconers have lost falcons to this deadly disease. Some think the warmer weather conditions has allowed infected birds such as ducks to live longer and therefore get caught by raptors and spread the disease, whereas normal very cold conditions would have killed off the sick birds quickly. At this point one would be foolish to fly ducks in Washington, Oregon and California and probably Nevada as well. I currently don’t have any falcons that I would fly on ducks so for me the disease has not affected my falconry much at all”.

Silent Bells

Mark Holder

1961-2014

by Nigel King



Dullstroom Bird of Prey and Rehabilitation Centre was established in 1997

and was originally located between Dullstroom and Lydenburg. Two years later in 1999 Mark would take over the flagging business, it was a rented property so it was never really going to get any bigger and after a short period Mark was upset to find out that unfortunately the lease was not going to be renewed.

This was a major blow as Mark had found himself in love with his new surroundings and was happy in what he was doing which included being able to fly his beloved Black Sparrowhawks, a species that as time progressed he was to become an acknowledged expert on. Mark came up with an idea to move forward and with this in mind help arrived in the form of his good buddy from the UK, Mark Bett, who offered to sell his house and move out from England to help out. They became business partners in what was to become a well established and respected conservation project. In 2004 they relocated the centre to their own beautiful 100 hectare property on the outskirts of Dullstroom. On this property they rebuilt the centre to accommodate the now large family of birds and were also able through funding from Sasol, to build a purpose built hospital.

Unfortunately Mark Holder became ill in 2013 and was forced to give up his life and his dogs which he loved dearly to return to the UK for treatment for what turned out to be a very aggressive brain tumour. Sadly this would result in taking

away Mark's amazing life at just 53 years old. Mark leaves behind a legacy that will hopefully continue to bring pleasure to many people passing through the town of Dullstroom. The main aim of the centre is to educate members of the public about Birds of Prey and to provide information on how they live in the wild and their physiology. Unfortunately people needed educating on the threats that confront them in our modern times. These threats include poisoning, shooting, electrocution and the most common injury seen, collisions with motor vehicles. It was also hoped that by seeing the birds at close quarters, it will help them to identify them more easily in the wild.

The Centre now looks after approximately 100 birds of prey at any one time with many of these on display to the public. These birds vary from Bono the magnificent African Fish Eagle and star of the Fish Eagle Brandy adverts, Fergie the Majestic Crowned Eagle and everyone's favourite, the tiny Pearl Spotted Owlets. All of the birds are there for a particular reason. They have either come in as a casualty and are deemed not fit for release due to their injuries or they have been hand raised (imprinted) by members of the public and are again unreleasable due to them having no fear of humans, and some have been bred in captivity and have never lived in the wild. There are several captive breeding projects and since 1997, the centre has bred 16 different species in total. Of these birds bred in captivity approximately 90% are released with the remaining birds either being kept to be used as demonstration birds, put back into the captive breeding project or occasionally they are passed onto other similar facilities to be used for breeding or for demonstrations.

This is what Mark himself wrote about the centre; "Probably the most important part of your experience at the Bird of Prey Centre is the daily shows. Nothing compares to the thrill of an owl flying just above your head or the exhilarating

speed of a Peregrine Falcon as it speeds between members of the audience at over 100Km/hour. If you're lucky you might get invited out during a show to fly one of our Barn Owls. This is an experience you will never forget. During our shows is when we really are able to get across the real message of what the centre is all about."

Stephen Wildman Frank

1929-2014

by Mark Upton



Stephen was born in

Gloucestershire, at Saddlewood, where he was brought up by a very sporting family and encouraged to ride and hunt. He became interested in falconry early on and had his first hawk, a kestrel called Hurbert, while still at school.

He was very successful with sparrowhawks and had a famous female called Olga who is written about in early BFC Journals. He became an energetic and popular member of the Club. He helped falconers by taking eyasses and hacking them on his farm and was very generous with them. After a couple of grouse hawking trips with friends he was invited to go hawking with James Robertson-Justice on Birichin. He later bought the moor and spent the rest of his life there. He lived for hawking and would spend the entire season hawking each year and probably caught more grouse than any other falconer. His most famous falcon "Bitch" killed 177 grouse in one season.

Steve was an early breeder of peregrines and a very famous pointer breeder. He will be remembered as a great falconer and his generosity to other falconers giving them hawks, dogs and days of sport.

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The 2014 International Festival of Falconry



The Parade of Nations



The desert camp



The entrance arch to the festival site

After a seven hour flight to Abu Dhabi and transfer, we arrived at the festival desert camp at 11:00pm and very tired. Registration completed and welcoming information packs given out, we were shown our tented accommodation which seven of us were sharing. Although by this time it was gone midnight, everyone went around the camp exploring before turning in for the night.

Next day (Sunday) we all had a good look around to find such things as the dining marquee, conference marquee, two traditional tents and the toilet facilities which could have been a bit better to say the least - a spirit level would not have gone amiss!

The desert camp

The camp was set up to house the many falconers (around 800) from 80 different countries and to weather



Robert Musters getting ready to lift off a RobaraTM



the many hawks, falcons and eagles before transferring to the festival site in Al Forsan, Abu Dhabi. There was an advance party of people to arrange the desert camp and festival site who arrived two weeks before everyone else. I have to say a big thank you to those who worked hard to make these events happen.

The first full day also saw the start of the conferences that took place in the welcoming air-conditioned marquee. I did attend some of the talks being given which were organised into various categories – a different one everyday. The first day was headed Practical

Falconry, the second Falconry Heritage and finally Conservation of Birds of Prey and Falconry, the last conference being held on the Tuesday. Of the talks that I did attend, I have to say that one stands out more than the others because of the speaker's enthusiasm for his subject. It was given by Ricardo Padilla Borja and was entitled 'The Passage Merlin', a perspective from Mexico. Other talks that I attended included an excellent one by Martin Brereton from Ireland on Snipe hawking and a talk given by Nicolas Ospina from Colombia concerning the plight of the Isidori Eagle. There were many more conference talks given, too

many to list here but I have to say I enjoyed the ones I saw and was pleased that they took place one after the other and not, as at the last festival, in different rooms of a hotel at the same time.

In the evenings after dinner the conference marquee turned into a cinema or as it was called the 'Dune Cinema' where hawking films from around the world were being shown. This was an excellent idea as many of us do not get to see the various hawking techniques that other countries use when flying their birds.

There was also the opportunity to go hawking on camel back which many



Part of the International Wildlife Consultants and Wingbeat team

of the falconers on site took – some looking a bit jaded after being on the back of a camel for a couple of hours or more. Also, excursions were arranged to the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital and the Grand Mosque which many people took. A Hawking trip by coach into the desert with Harris Hawks was also arranged. Two coaches turned up to go on the trip but one coach driver decided he didn't know where to go and didn't have enough fuel so he just went back to Abu Dhabi with an empty bus. I shall leave the comments about this to other readers.

There was one incident that could have turned very nasty which concerned a bolting horse. One of the horse handlers was putting on a saddle but did not do up the underbelly strap properly so when he tried to mount the horse, the saddle slipped and wrapped around its rear legs. The horseman ended up on the ground and another person who was holding the reins at the head, let go. The horse was very frightened and it bolted through the camp kicking at the saddle all the time. People were quickly getting out of the way (me included) and the poor animal ran into various guide ropes attached to the tents. The horse was eventually caught and thankfully the only damage it had done was a cut on one of its rear legs where it was kicking trying to get its legs free.

Royal visit and the Robara™

On the Tuesday we were informed that a VIP was going to pay a visit and we observed many local workers frantically delivering and arranging settees for the high-ranking guest who turned out to be His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyn, ruler's representative in the Western Region and Chairman of the Emirates Falconers' Club. Many of the falconers who were representing their countries had hawks and falcons on their fists and were presented to His Highness. Also, there were many TV camera crews from local stations filming the event and taking shots of the desert camp which was broadcast later that night.

One of the highlights of the camp was a flying robotic device called a Robara™ (run by a company called Wingbeat) which replicates a Houbara in flight and does not use a propeller as such. All the propulsion is made within the body of the 'bird' and it is radio controlled by a pilot. The Robara™ (which is part brain child of Nick Fox who has set up a company



The Scottish representatives Alan Rothery, Steve Tattersall and Andrew Knowles-Brown

called Wingbeat) simulates the flight of the Houbara and a falcon is flown at it – a different way of training, conditioning and competing a falcon to a realistic flight. Height and agility are tested by both bird and pilot – the Robara™ is only as good as the person who is in control. I understand that a Crow version is going to be developed in the future and it is hoped that a more detailed article will appear in a future issue of this magazine.

De-camp to Abu Dhabi (and a proper shower)

Wednesday saw us packing our luggage before we set off to our hotel in Abu Dhabi. Priority was given to the birdhandlers who were put on the first coach with the various hawks that were going to be in demonstration at the festival. Everyone was working on their various stands which had the countries' names and flags outside so that they could be easily identified.

First of all I helped the England stand getting all the BFC boxes of their publications to their stand and then I helped set up the Welsh stand. After all this hard work, it was off to the hotel for a well earned shower and lunch. We all had rooms to share and I was with Bob Dalton. Thankfully a last minute reshuffle of rooms saved us from the indignity of having to share a double-bedded room!

One the first day of the Festival most people were still getting their stands finished and I popped into the Heritage tent to see how they were getting on when Paul Beecroft said, "Do you want a job?" I was then put to task pinning a



Angie and Jim Chick

box full of badges from around the world onto a cloth which was a time consuming and painstaking job. Still, everything was pulled together in time and the Heritage tent looked great. Well done to David Horobin, John Horobin, Paul Beecroft and Peter Devers.

That evening it was arranged that we go for a visit to the Abu Dhabi Falconers Club which was about a 50 minute drive from our hotel, but no-one told our driver who decided he didn't know where to go. Firstly he took us to the airport and then we ended up at the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital. We went up and down one road about four times and after various phone calls we eventually found the falconers club. It took about two hours to get there so we missed all of the flying displays which were put on. However an excellent banquet had been arranged and soon the disastrous trip there was forgotten. A performance of traditional music and dance followed on and everyone had a good time. Many thanks to all those involved in organising a good evening.



His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan visiting the desert camp

Festival site and main arena

The festival site itself was at the Al Forsan Sports Club and there were many parts to visit. These included the international tents, art marquee, conservation exhibit, rehabilitation, Middle East Falconry archives, heritage tent, kids corner, International Association for Falconry (IAF) and International Wildlife Consultants (IWC) tent.

The festival was now in full swing and the main arena events were taking place. Master of ceremonies was Terry Large and commentary was given by Jim Chick. There were flying displays of eagles, hawks and falcons as well as a demonstration of the Robara™ and all went very well with a very appreciative audience.

Another conference was held in the sports club and I went along to hear Helen MacDonald speak about her book *H is for Hawk*. Helen was given a surprise gift from the IAF of a certificate acknowledging her writing about falconry which was well deserved.

Another banquet was held on the Friday night and this was another success but unfortunately it was over all too quickly as we had to get back to our coaches to return to the hotel.

At the end of every day there was a parade of nations which was very colourful – some participants wearing national costumes and carrying their



national flags as well as hawks and falcons - and this was enjoyed by everyone present.

Saturday afternoon saw everyone taking apart their stands and packing up equipment and exhibition exhibits ready for it all to be shipped back home. So after much frantic activity we were on our way back home on Sunday to a very cold Britain, which was a bit of a shock to the system after enjoying the blue sky and heat of UAE.

A lot of hard work was done before, during and after the festival and a big thank you must go to the organisers,



We Were Falconers writers Paul Beecroft and Peter Devers part of the heritage team

The Welsh stand (l-r Linda Wright, Mick Cordell, Me – a helper, Dr. David Ridpath and Alison Wilson

especially those from IWC – Nick and Barbro Fox, Jo Oliver, Jevgeni Shergalin, Andrew and Nicola Dixon, Robert Musters, Remy Van Wijk as well as Angie and Jim Chick, Mike Hope, The Emirates Falconers' Club, Abu Dhabi and all the other contributors who are simply too numerous to mention here. Finally, a big thank you to the organisers for allowing me to attend this prestigious event - I am very grateful indeed for the opportunity.

Cotswold Falconry Centre - 99 issues later



Main building

Returning to the first issue of this magazine gives a nice base to review some of the developments that have taken place over the following years. We had been approached by the founders David and Lyn Wilson with their ideas of launching a new magazine. We were happy to offer our support to help get things underway. Not only were a number of articles produced

for some of the early editions, but also there was an agreement to purchase all unsold copies from the first print run. So, in part, with this security the *Falconers Magazine* was launched. Yes we ended up with boxes of magazines, though at the time we did not have our own guide book and this alternative proved to be popular with our visitors.

By the time the magazine came out the founding partnership of Chris Tuffrey

and Geoff Dalton had ended. Having been influential in the initial setting up of the Centre, Chris left to take full responsibility for a good number of country show and corporate bookings that the centre had managed to gain during the first open season. With the split and some necessary restructuring of the business a few of the birds highlighted in the article departed the centre. This left Geoff and Naomi Dalton as the

owners and they celebrated the centre's own 25 years a couple of years ago. It is sad to have to write that Chris died last year.

Some changes

Elements of the centre will have changed and evolved over time, though hopefully much of the good early work and intention remains the same. The courtyard weathering of display birds that greets you as you leave the main, beautiful old shire horse stable building remains pretty much the same. It was deliberately designed with suitable room to only hold a limited number of birds. All the tethered birds are flown daily, with occasional exception such as for heavy moulting or a new-comer in the very early stages of being trained. No bird is kept tethered overnight. The four different displays still take place every day during our open season at the same 11.30, 1.30, 3.00 & 4.30 times. Each display lasts approximately one hour.

During the demonstrations the number of individuals flown through the day has increased to typically around 25. These are increasingly being flown directly from their own aviaries and this winter we have slightly altered the bays to hold fewer birds. However, this still leaves an interesting selection to be viewed in the weathering area. One of the developments is that this now includes a number of home bred birds, including a young Bateleur Eagle, Aplomado Falcon, Ferruginous and Swainson's Hawks.

In the early days quite a few of the on view weathering birds would have been taken out hunting during the winter months. They would then do displays or be moulted out in the mews during the summer. This was partly because some of the first birds to arrive at the centre would have been those flown privately by Geoff and Chris before there were any ideas of opening a centre. Maybe also back then decisions taken on which birds arrived as part of the display team were influenced more by an interest in their hunting potential e.g. Hodgson's Hawk Eagle, Red Naped and Black Shaheen....

Part of the reason for the increase in birds being flown has come from the displays evolving from being predominately based on 'how a bird is trained for falconry' towards wild Bird of Prey behaviour, ecology, conservation etc. The range of flying birds has



Weathering ground



Pygmy Falcons

broadened along with the aims of the displays. Back in 1988 the Griffon Vulture might have added a certain entertainment value to a display, today the group of vultures flown help provide a very serious conservation message. They have helped the centre to raise over £10000 for various vulture related charities.

Since the late 1970s Geoff had been privately breeding various hawks and falcons and the breeding of birds in front of visitors has generally been successful. In just over 25 years more than 40 species of birds of prey have been reared at the centre. An African Pygmy Falcon being the 40th. Almost all having been laid, hatched and reared by their own parents on full view to visitors. The footprint of the breeding aviaries has remained largely unchanged.

Breeding success

The Dutch barn remains, but is now four high aviaries with half their original roof intentionally removed allowing both more direct sunshine and some rain in for the birds to enjoy. The now elderly Bateleur Eagles - mentioned in the first edition - have proved to be very good parents rearing a chick most winters. The barn is also currently home to 3 species of Endangered African vultures. The Hooded Vultures successfully breeding a number of times in recent years having been intentionally flown together in the displays. Underneath the White-backed Vultures a small ground floor aviary has been provided for the tiny Ferruginous Pygmy Owl. The end section of the barn is used by a group of Ruppell's and Hooded Vultures who fly out from a tower over the audience across the flying ground in one of the displays. These are often joined by a number of the centre's kites.

In the 'Owl Wood' the original aviaries remain though there has been an expansion built about 15 years ago and the aviaries within the mature oak spinney are home to around 20 species of Owls. The diversity of owls includes rarely seen species such as Barred, Oriental Bay and Milky Owls. The pair of Boobook have lived here now for over 25 years. It's not just owls in the wood. The Ferruginous Hawks and until recently the Red-tailed Hawks have reared many young. More unusual birds of prey include the 5 species of Caracara housed at the centre. The Yellow



Hooded Vulture

headed Caracaras breeding for the first time in the UK at the centre.

Variety of species

Leaving the 'Owl Wood' there are other aviaries providing accommodation for further diversity of the raptor world including pairs of the long-legged Secretary Birds, Turkey and Black Vulture who fly in the displays, Gymnogene, African Tawny Eagle, Palm Nut Vulture, Common Buzzard, Yellow billed and again after many years Red Kites. In the intervening years the return of the wild Red Kite along with the recovery in numbers of other local native Birds of Prey means that visitors can regularly see Buzzards & Kites, Kestrels, Sparrowhawks and Peregrines at some point during the day. In recent years Hobbies have been seen almost daily through the late summer months.

Another section of aviaries first built in the late 1980s are the breeding pens for various falcons and hawks. Initially these were solid walled sky light seclusion, but now having the addition of large high windows to allow the birds access to a much wider, ever changing, view. They still provide the occupants with the greater sense of security and limit the level of potential disturbance for more sensitive birds like Accipiters. They have

proved to be very successful for the housing of a number of breeding birds. In just the past few years Aplomado and Red-footed Falcons, 3 different species of Kestrels, African Goshawks and Swainson's Hawks have all reared young. This winter the centre has been busy renewing the old panels to these aviaries. Hopefully it will all be ready for the birds' upcoming breeding season.

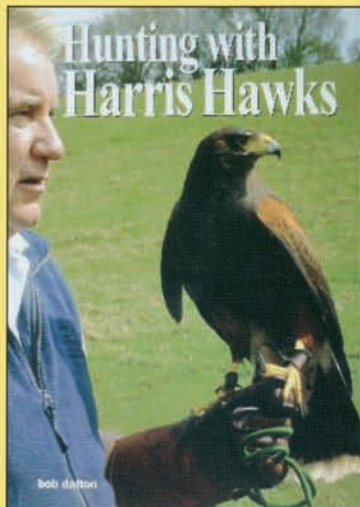
Another bird that it is hoped will be breeding again at the centre is the Barn Owl. In the early days wild disabled Barn Owls were allowed to breed within the building. Their young would then naturally disperse hopefully aiding the repopulation of the local area and beyond. Since those days the building has been altered to provide a suitable roost and nest site for the continued use of local wild Barn Owls and in 15 of the past 25 years they have reared young in the building or other nearby boxes. These are usually rung by the BTO as well as being monitored by the centre.

Being asked to take a look back at the first, Winter'89 Falconers Magazine article about what was very briefly the 'Cotswold Falconry, Eagle and Hawk Park' brought back some great memories. Cotswold Falconry Centre at Batsford Park, Moreton in Marsh opens again on the 14th February 2015.



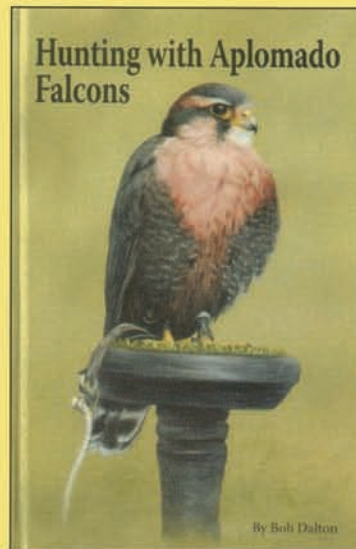
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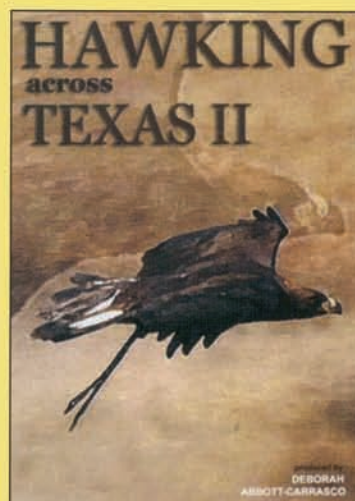
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An Interesting Year

When Peter Eldrett asked me to contribute something to this very special issue of the magazine, congratulations on the achievement by the way, I wanted to do something a little different. I reflected that due to circumstances beyond my control, mainly as a result of health issues, last season for me was more or less written off before it had even begun in terms of me hawking as I normally would. I would have to accept the fact that for several months I would be below par and have to take things easy when hawking or accept a far more spectator orientated role. Initially this was very hard, especially so when normally I hawk practically every day of my life and have done

so for more than 40 years. However, given the choice between spectating and no hawking what-so-ever then an enthusiastic spectator is what I became – quite literally overnight. At the year end now I reflect on what the previous twelve months have brought and have to say whilst I have hawked very little personally I have been in the field and enjoyed some incredibly varied and very high quality falconry.

Off to Germany

January saw me flying off to Munich to join my good friend Leo Mandelsperger for some Heron Hawking under licence from the Bavarian State Government. It is not a well known or publicised fact but Bavaria has a large and intricate network of fish farms and Herons cause millions

upon millions of Euros damage each year. The Heron is protected in Germany but Leo has a licence to hunt them with falcons as a control method. Obviously the idea is to scare far more Herons than can ever possibly be taken with falcons. The fish farms that Leo is responsible for helping to protect will often be visited by up to forty Herons at a time and the falcon is undoubtedly the most effective deterrent of all that have been tried over the years. I was fortunate enough to witness some really excellent flights and can only imagine what Heron hawking must have been like in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when falconry in Europe was at its zenith.

Having returned to England it was a case of repacking my bag and off to Belgium to join some friends for a couple



Belgian falconer takes up his Goshawk from a rabbit

of days rabbit hawking with Goshawks. I have been made a member of the Belgian club The SVB and accordingly get invites to all their field meets. With the channel tunnel making access to Belgium so easy now it is quite literally easier to attend a meet there for me than it is in North Yorkshire. As well as my Belgian friends the party was also joined by a lady falconer from the Czech Republic flying an intermewed male Goshawk. The hawk has only ever flown pheasant as there are no rabbits where this particular falconer lives and she was very keen to see if her hawk would fly rabbits. The trip ended successfully for her with her hawk taking a rabbit in fine style towards the end of the meet.

Back home again it was time to get things sorted as a three week trip to South Africa was next on the agenda and this was spent watching wild raptors, as well as other wildlife, and visiting falconers I had the pleasure of meeting during several previous trips to that country. It was lovely to see such a wide variety of raptors with one particular day sticking in the memory as ten different species of eagle had been seen in a matter of just nine hours. This is not to mention hawks, falcons and vultures as well as sightings of Lions and Rhinos and all the other wildlife you would associate with such a beautiful country. Coming from an English winter into African sun certainly did a great deal to lift the spirits.

Another visit to Belgium

In March it was back to Belgium for a one day meet and the quarry was rabbits being hawked with Harris Hawks and Goshawks. The sport was fairly good and the companionship excellent. Back home it was time to get my team of bird control falcons going as my yearly contract was about to begin. This is a contract that is a real pleasure to participate in, even when my health is not as it should be. Flying six falcons each and every day, albeit only to the lure, is still a superb way to pass the working day. Also flown were a male Harris Hawk and a stunning little male Kestrel. It has to be said that going to work is never ever dull and I really don't need any encouragement to do so.

April saw me back in Belgium for the annual SVB club dinner which this year saw the celebration of the club's twenty fifth anniversary, so the evening was a little special. What made it particularly special for me was that my good friend



Cast of Tiercels at the Irish Snipe meet

Tom Embrechts, an excellent young falconer and breeder of superb Saker Falcons, brought me a present of a stunning eyass Saker, from the previous season, as a gift. It was a very large eyass he had kept back for an Arab client and when that client messed him around he decided to forgo the large sale price and give the falcon to me. I was touched and extremely pleased to receive such a magnificent falcon.

May saw the Falconers Fair, held once again at Chetwynd Park in Shropshire, run smoothly and was considered a success by those that attended. The flying was varied and the stalls' giving a really good cross section of what is available to the falconer in terms of equipment and falconry furniture. The Fair itself always takes up a very considerable amount of my time in the pre event publicity and helping with some of the organising. I am always grateful when another event has passed off without too many glitches and we can forget about it for a while. However my free time was still not my own with another event looming large on the horizon.

Raptor Fair at Duncombe

Charlie Heap had asked for my help in

organising the premier Raptor Fair to be held at ICBP Duncombe, in Yorkshire. So what energy wasn't being channelled into my bird control work and new falcon was being utilised to help ensure his event went as smoothly as possible. So days leading up to mid June were somewhat hectic and problems that arose dealt with as quickly as possible. Training with the new falcon progressed nicely and once the event at Duncombe was out of the way it was time to try and enter her at the sable quarry. Fortunately for me the Saker, now called "Romy" after the daughter of a friend, was exceptionally late in starting to moult and we managed to get her entered and have fourteen kills with her before she eventually dropped a feather. The state of my health meant that flying her at quarry took a tremendous amount out of me but it had to be done and I have to say the pain was worth it without a shadow of a doubt.

Once my Saker decided she was going to moult I stopped flying her and fed her up on very high quality food. She showed she approved of this treatment very much by resembling an explosion in a pillow factory each time she was put out to weather. My bird control contract was coming to its agreed end and I had

made plans to do some more travelling in an effort to see some different falconry. Nigel King at Imperial Bird of Prey Academy very kindly offered to look after "Romy" for me whilst I indulged in my travelling.

Late August saw the Falconry Weekend take place at The ICBP Newent under the watchful and all seeing eye of Jemima Parry-Jones and another incredibly successful weekend was enjoyed by exhibitors and participants alike. This is an event that has rapidly grown in stature and is fast becoming a very firm favourite with most people connected to the world of falconry. There were several guests making cameo appearances flying various hawks and falcons and these included Nigel King with his eyass male African Goshawk.

Off to Russia

September saw me heading for Russia to join some falconers for Black Grouse and Partridge hawking. To cut a long story short the Black Grouse managed to avoid being flown although we did see and hear them but never managed to get a point

on them. Partridge were another matter entirely and these we had tremendous sport at with an intermewed Peregrine Falcon and a male Barbary being flown over Gordon setters at them. The Partridge were Greys and completely wild, not put down stock. They flew really well and offered some really quality flying. Quite simply this was Falconry at its finest. Hawking Red Grouse in Scotland has always been what I considered the pinnacle of Hawking even when compared to Sage Grouse Hawking in Wyoming and Prairie Chicken Hawking in Montana. But Partridge Hawking in Russia ran it a close second in terms of quality flights and pure falconry.

I felt like this for a matter of three weeks or so until I turned up as a guest at an International Snipe Hawking meet held in Ireland and hosted by the Irish Hawking Club under the chairmanship of Don Ryan. Here I was fortunate enough to witness some of the finest hawking I have ever seen and a form of falconry that was clearly an out and out rival to grouse hawking. The dog work, pitch and position of the falcon and moment of

flush are equally as important with regard to Snipe as they are to Red Grouse. The discipline required by the falconer, his hawks and dogs are very exacting and any part of the combination that falls short will mean failure will inevitably be the result. I became hooked on the sport and am going back before the end of the season to enjoy some more and look into the possibilities of flying this exciting quarry myself next season.

November saw me back in South Africa for a couple of weeks and on my return from there had four days at home before heading off for a weekend meet once more in Belgium. Great contrasts, in terms of hawking, terrain, quarry and weather. But both were highly enjoyable none the less. It has to be said though that by this point in the season I was starting to feel that airports and seats on planes were actually becoming too big a part in my life and as my health was gradually improving and I was feeling more like my old self with much higher energy levels I longed to be hawking myself once more and not merely spectating.

Falconers and spectators at the Irish Snipe meet



Finally in Abu Dhabi

The final trip of the year was to the Falconry Festival in Abu Dhabi. I, as well as Peter from this magazine, were fortunate enough to be sponsored as part of the media and we ended up sharing a hotel room once the Festival moved into the city of Abu Dhabi. So my spectating year finished on a warm and highly colourful note in Arabia surrounded with good company. I am glad to say however that next year will contain considerably less travel and a great deal more of hawking at home. The difference this coming season being that my recovery means I will be highly active and not passive as had been the case these past 12 months. Without my spectating holidays however I would have enjoyed precious little falconry so in the final analysis, it was still highly enjoyable and an experience I was happy to be involved in.



Nigel King at Jemima Parry-Jones event with eyass male African Goshawk



Problem Hawks Part 2



Gyronimo on his pebble block



Five years on from my adventures with 'Zero' the Finnish Goshawk whose story appeared in part 1, I became involved with a problem Gyr/Saker called 'Gyronimo.' Just like my time with Zero, I knew well in advance that this was going to be a struggle and I was mentally prepared for what was likely to be a long process of recovery. And just like Zero, he had been the subject of an aborted project but unlike Zero, he had been idle for the greater part of his life and this proved to be a very critical factor in his reclamation.

Although a veteran of two seasons, Gyronimo had only been flown free on a handful of occasions and of course, he was not 'entered.' He proved very difficult to handle and had involved his owner in the worst kind of telemetry chasing, which, if you have not experienced this, is the infuriating situation where the hawk flies off each time it is approached and you know it's going to be a very long day. When all this became too much and with no prospects

of things getting better, his plans for the Gyr/Saker were abandoned.

Believing that he might wish to make a second attempt to get the bird going, Gyronimo was not sold but just held free-lofted for another year. The fresh attempt didn't happen and in retrospect, I think it was this second year of no work and no handling, plus a pattern of over-eating that caused the bulk of his problems. And when he came to me in the early spring of 2014, they were more deep rooted than I ever thought possible.

Getting to work

My initial reaction on seeing Gyronimo, my third Gyr/Saker, was that he was quite small and I guessed there and then, that his flying weight would probably be sub 2lb (less than 908g). Imagine my surprise then, when I learned that his owner had attempted to fly him at 34ozs (964g) and already, I was getting an inkling of how things might have gone wrong. 34ozs was way too high for this bird and when I suggested that 31ozs (879g) or even less,

might have been more appropriate, I'm not sure if he accepted what I was saying.

As you would expect, most of Gyronimo's annoying traits were in some way connected to food and he was not above threatening violence in order to get it. A life of idleness and gorging had not prepared him for the rations I would serve and his disappointment at this was only too obvious. In order to make a meaningful start, I reckoned that his 36ozs (1020g) weight at collection would need reducing to below the 33ozs (946g) mark, so there was no point in me doing anything until that happened.

And weighing Gyronimo became the first of many problems. He could not be hooded unless restrained in some way and seemed to think that my shiny white Salter was an electronic springboard to freedom. This problem was solved by standing the digital scales inside a 'Gamehawk' with the perch removed. So with four possible escape routes blocked off and my body blocking the fifth, he finally stood to attention long enough for me to get a weight reading

Once I started working with Gyronimo, it dawned on me just how many negative traits he actually had. His previous owner warned me he would be a handful and he was not wrong. From my perspective as a falconer though, public enemy number one was an almost suicidal tendency to snatch at food and attempt to fly off with it, whether it be on the glove or attached to the lure. My falcons have to eat their food where they find it, so this was obviously the most important lesson for day one. This was the stage also, when I had to remind myself that none of Gyronimo's faults were of his own making. This I find, helps a lot and should keep you inside the limits of your patience.

First day back at school

I skewered a garnished lure down to my lawn with a metal tent peg and covered it with a towel. Gyronimo was placed on a block close to the lure and the towel was then removed, revealing the food. I



Gyronimo's improved table manners

was not surprised that he immediately set about dragging it towards the block but of course it couldn't be moved even 1mm. What did surprise me though, was the voracity and duration of his effort. Wow! I'd never seen anything like this.

One full minute later, he still had a foot on the lure desperately trying to haul it up to the block. After what seemed like ages, he stopped struggling and I can still picture his chest inflating and deflating as he sucked-in oxygen through a wide open beak. "Welcome to the real world Gyronimo," I said when he stopped panting and started to eat from the lure. I traded him off the lure with a chick and no surprises when he attempted to wrench it free and fly off with it.

It seemed pretty plain to me by this stage, that Gyronimo had an abnormal interest in food. Even though his measures to get it were at times desperate, I didn't see anything that made me think he was particularly hungry. It struck me at the time, that food was the only thing in a boring life that brought him any pleasure and that this, along with a lack of stimuli, were probably the main reasons why this intelligent falcon is such a problem now.

Something else about Gyronimo that struck me as being strange, was his inability to hold food in the crop. One or two minutes after eating about 4.5ozs (128g) of food, his chest would be flat as if it had been 'put over' almost right away. I can only imagine that this is in some way connected to the abnormal attitude he has towards his food.

Progress was being made though because two weeks down the line, he



The carry hood

thinks that my lures are heavier than the family car and knows that food cannot be ripped out of my grasp. He is quite content to eat off the ground without carrying now and his behaviour on the glove is also much improved.

I concentrated on correcting as many of his bad habits as I could and four weeks into the project, I felt he was ready for retraining on the creance. This spelled trouble for me though, because although I'd managed to trick the hood on him a couple of times, he would throw his head backwards and was very skilled at avoiding it. I had to accept the fact that just like Zero, he was 'hood-shy' and likely to remain so. So it was time to move on and manage without it.

He would be creance-trained directly

out of the 'carry hood.' I'd used this with hawks in the past and knew that in some circumstances it can be used as a straight substitute for the leather hood, but of course it is not as convenient. In some respects though, the carry hood is superior to the leather hood but given a free choice between the two, I would choose the conventional leather hood because it solves so many potential problems.

You can see from the picture of the 'carry hood' that one of the two doors can be tripped open from a distance. This enables the trainee hawk, which is already hooked up to the creance, to be held inside until I am ready to make the call. I started out by calling him to the glove but as I can operate the trip

line with my foot, he sometimes sees me already swinging the lure. When the door falls down, the hawk, even wild and scatty ones, will react to whatever is seen through the open door.

Gyronimo was the model student on the creance but only because it gave him no chance to play up. There was trouble brewing up back at home though. His sedentary lifestyle had not prepared him for the shock of being at flying weight and he hated it. As a result, progress on the creance proved to be a 'false dawn' and his tantrums at home became more frequent and more violent. He shredded his new permanent jesses in less than one week and when I fitted replacements, they got the same treatment. In view of this unusual behaviour, I allowed weight to rise again to see if it would calm him down, which it did.

About a week later, I reduced his weight again and picked up the creance work where we had left off. It all went well to the extent where he could be flown free. Flights on the first two days went okay but the third day was a little sticky and the fourth even worse. In theory he was ready, but in practice he was bad tempered and very impatient. When things didn't go exactly the way he wanted, he would fly into a rage and at one point, I thought he was lining-up to do a runner. Clearly he was not ready, so he was grounded again and his weight allowed to rise for a second time.

At this stage, I felt we were back at square one and with hardly any progress made. I was more convinced than ever though, that Gyronimo was suffering greatly from his many months of idleness and over-eating. Added to this, were the frustrations of not being entered and you see exactly where he's coming from. I took the decision to hold him at 1 oz (28.5g) above flying weight and suspend all training work for a couple of weeks, or at least until his humour and behaviour at home improved.

This he did not like at all. He became more vocal and would stomp around his chamber like a caged lion and to make matters worse, I got careless one day and he managed to get a hallux talon deep into the palm of my free hand. Another disappointment during this period, was that he tipped most of his primaries and broke two tail feathers at the mid shaft position. These were the visible manifestations of his bad reaction to being at a lower than usual

weight. Well that's how it appeared to me anyhow.

I turned a 'blind eye' to all this on the grounds that it was much the lesser of two evils. The second evil, if you haven't already guessed, is that if I cannot turn him around, he would be fit for no other purpose but eating and muting. So although I didn't like it, the feather breakages were of secondary importance to me. A further complication was that he had started moulting. This was ok for the immediate present but it put a time limit on what could be done. So in addition to all the other difficulties, there was now an element of 'hurry up' as well.

His tantrums persisted for around two weeks then one day while he was eating a chick on the weathering lawn, he started to plume it. I took this as a sign that his severe food craving was beginning to subside and that at long last, he was getting used to being a more normal weight. And 'hallelujah,' he could now retain food in his crop because a bulge was very evident. On seeing all this good news, I started to think that we could take a third bite at the cherry and restart our work on the creance.

Flying on the creance (act 3)

Our creance work went smoothly but that doesn't mean a great deal with a falcon like Gyronimo. The big question was though: would I be able to turn him back once he left the glove? This had been the sticking point on the last occasion he was flown free and I was lucky then, not to have finished up chasing and waving the yagi aerials around. He was 31.3ozs (887g) on that day so I was aiming for a little less this time.

I couldn't guarantee that he would remain calm when brought down to the target weight so to avoid damaging any more feathers, he spent quite a bit of time boxed-up in the cottage prior to going free again. This he did not mind at all and seemed to love the cool darkness of the Gamehawker, as they all do. This is a great way to put a hawk into 'suspended animation' because it stops any nonsense immediately and gives you time to think about your next move.

I'm normally very confident at the flying free stage because responses on the creance usually tell us most of the things we need to know. This time however, and also because I had become so emotionally involved with this project,

I felt quite nervous. "Don't you let me down after all I've gone through," I said as he roused and muted before leaving the glove. "And don't lose that brand new tag either!" I shouted as he sailed away on the light afternoon breeze.

Well it was not what you would expect to see in the skies over Newent, but for an awkward so-and-so like Gyronimo, it wasn't too bad. I didn't get the feeling this time, that he was eyeing up the horizon and my original guess that his flying weight would be less than 31ozs (879g) proved to be correct. At 30.5ozs (865g) he behaved as a falcon should, so this puts him very near the bottom of the 30 to 36ozs (850 to 1020g) range of flying weights for male Gyr/Sakers, and may explain some of the confusions in his early life.

It's a case of 'so far so good' but the job is only half done. The next task will be one of entering onto the 'black stuff' but that will be a task for autumn. There's time for me to take a breather now while the Apache Chief is growing his new feathers and boy, do I need it. It has been a marathon, the gains have been hard won and it was all much harder than I anticipated. He was much further down the 'road of no return' than I originally thought so I started working with him not a minute too soon.

At the time of writing, Gyronimo is much better at home now and I think he will continue to improve. The anxieties of his former life have not vanished altogether and he still throws the occasional tantrum when things don't go the way he expects but all things considered, I'm pleased at the way things have turned out. Another cause for celebration is that most of his trashed feathers have been dropped and I cannot tell you how much of a blessing that feels.

He will be handled and weighed every day throughout the summer and every now and then, I will give him the odd reminder about his eating habits. This may be the pattern for the rest of his life now because if he is ever allowed to revert to his habits of old, it's going to be an awful lot harder next time around.

The only element that is missing in Gyronimo's life now is the first kill. This is the last piece of the jigsaw which I hope will turn this 'no hoper' into a useable falcon. Whatever the result though, he will have a meaningful life because this is the very least that he, and all the other problem hawks have a right to expect.

Looking Back

This magazine first saw the light of day in 1989, the year when the Berlin Wall collapsed (It didn't fall; it was pushed). The world has changed since then, for worse or better. If you have all our back-numbers you can thumb through them hoping to discover, for interest's sake, what the care of birds of prey in general and our sport in particular were like then and what changes may have occurred during the last 25 years.

The next best source might be the minutes of all the Hawk Board meetings — if you had several days free to read through them. But, to work just from memory, I would say that in those years the two great advances in falconry have been the ability to breed our own hawks in aviaries and to keep track of them with telemetry, and we can surely attribute the present flourishing of falconry (in its widest sense) to those two discoveries. We could just manage without the others.

In 1989, breeding had become almost common-place, and telemetry was widely used but by no means universally. In both activities we were about halfway between their introductions and their current widespread use and success. In the same year the relevant Ministry introduced the compulsory licensing of all imported birds of prey and had been demanding for some time that they must be quarantined. If you were lucky and dedicated enough to find a hawk to import, there were those hoops to jump through and if you were a continental falconer wanting to go grouse-hawking in Scotland you had trouble. Restrictions have changed, but not improved. Listing the regulations now in force would take some doing.

Just compare our situation with that in the first twenty years of the last century. Then you could help yourself to a wild hawk without breaking the Law. The only ones you had to watch were the Game Laws. You couldn't buy equipment of any kind, apart from Indian bells: you made your own. The only food you could buy came from the butcher (not good for hawks) or from shooting, or catching, it. There were next to no books on the subject, and what there were weren't much use. Veterinary medicine didn't know much about birds.

Sick poultry, if presented, could always be put down. Finally, unless you were a toff, you couldn't spare the time or the money to dedicate yourself to training and flying a hawk. That is why all the very few falconers at the time were either Oxbridge graduates or commissioned officers in the Army or Navy (The R.A.F hadn't appeared then).

By the end of the Second World War there had been two minor innovations: the first was the use of a weighing-machine to judge a hawk's condition: and the second was the introduction of anklets and interchangeable jesses. (Of the three men involved in these developments two were University and the other was Army). The arrival of domestic refrigeration and the freezer was such a blessing to falconers that they might almost have invented them themselves.

What may have started the spread of falconry through the land was the setting up of the first Game Fairs with the first-ever demonstrations of how to fly a hawk given by (You've guessed it) the same gents who had managed to keep the candle burning. At the same time, television was beginning to do what it's been doing ever since — bringing pictures of the outside world into our homes. It's difficult nowadays to appreciate just how divorced urban people were from the countryside and the creatures living in it. It was a revelation for them when they saw that it was possible to carry a hawk on your hand and let it fly free, but it was not until some countrymen, with initiative, practical ability, and imagination started to fly hawks for themselves and show the rest of the interested people it could be done, that the first wave of would-be falconers started to roll.

The rest of the story should be familiar to readers. Falconry spread through the land. Falconry centres sprang up to exhibit and instruct. The growing interest created a demand and the demand created a supply. The suppliers competed to provide the best products, whether the birds themselves, their food, their furniture, their housing, or their medical needs. And, most importantly, increasing prosperity gave to nearly everyone the money and the leisure they needed.

To put it plainly, on a tricky subject, falconry moved downmarket. Answers to

the ongoing question of how to improve hawk management in any way were now being asked by a great number of people with common sense, practical experience, and not too much respect for tradition. Modern falconry has evolved because of their dedication

I owe most to the men who wrote the first instruction books, but am not naming their authors, nor any of the other heroes who made the greatest contributions to the advance of falconry. I don't know who some of them were. Several people must have been involved in the development of the system for imprinting shortwings so that they became exceptional performers instead of the screaming horrors of earlier times. More than one technical boffin produced and later perfected (perhaps?) the apparatus for radio-tracking. It was a single inventor who put up the first sunlight-and-seclusion aviary and made the vital discovery in the search for the way to breed our own hawks. And someone must have put up the first see-through partition between male and female of goshawk pairs. On a lower level it must have been just one person who spread the news that day-old cockerel chicks were being dumped by the hatcheries, and another who broadcast the news that surplus mice and rats could be had for nothing at medical research centres (Yes, we do have to buy them now).

Another falconer must have been the first to breed quails for hawk-food. Who made the first travelling-box, the tall ring-perch for shortwings, or the shelf-perch? Who first dressed bumblefoot with Germolene and greatly reduced the workload of the vets? Which came first; hybrids or AI? The outlandish (and pointless) hybrids were made possible by a proved method of artificial insemination, but the first peregrine x saker was accidental when male and female of the different species were left loose together. Whatever its beginnings, the production of custom-built hybrids gave access to wonderful new fields for sport. Finally, consider the ingenuity and the machinery involved in sending up those kites, those balloons, and now those quadcopters that have followed on from someone's bright idea of sending up a lure towards the clouds and the summit of ambition.

Looking back seems to have brought me to the present. Looking forward I leave to others. Go hawking today!



John Loft at Woodhall Spa
(picture by David Glynne Fox)



askchitty

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

25 Years of Raptor Medicine

Happy Birthday to Falconers Magazine – 25 years is a long time and much has changed in that time: having graduated the year after the magazine, it is interesting to review just how much has changed and developed in that time:

Anaesthesia. For me this is the biggest single development in avian medicine—the advent of isoflurane has meant the advent of safe anaesthesia. While the adage that “there is no such thing as a safe anaesthetic, only a safe anaesthetist” still holds true, it was extremely hard to be a safe anaesthetist with the drugs

available 25 years ago. Halothane and methoxyflurane were the gas anaesthetics available and neither was easy to work with. As a result, birds were only anaesthetised when there was no choice and sometimes we used injectable sedatives that were not much safer! Isoflurane gave us an anaesthetic



Use of tie-in fixators in repairing fractures has markedly improved success rates

that meant rapid induction and recovery. It also caused less heart depression than halothane and so was much easier to control. As a result we have anaesthetised many more birds and it is now routine to use isoflurane for even short procedures such as bandage changing. This is a major help - if you have never changed a foot bandage for a conscious aggressive eagle then you may not appreciate just how good it is to be able to worry more about the quality and fitting of the bandage and less about keeping your fingers. A good indication of the degree of change is to compare textbook anaesthetic chapters then and now - 1989 concentrated on sedative doses (a range of combinations was a sure sign that there was no single ideal technique!) while these days there is much more on monitoring and ventilation techniques- i.e. how to control the anaesthetic over a long period. As you will read throughout this list of advances, the ability to anaesthetise birds and to expect them to recover almost every time has enabled most of the other advances we have seen.

- Education – this has also increased dramatically in 25 years: there is just so much more information available now and this has enabled more vets to work in the field and to be more comfortable working with raptors. 25 years ago there were only 1 or 2 texts on avian medicine while there is now a plethora of such tomes. The development of avian veterinary organisations (notably the Association of Avian Veterinarians and the European Association of Avian Veterinarians) has given further stimulus for research and presentation of findings to colleagues. And of course there is the internet...exchange of information and advice has never been simpler: to think we used to fax questions to colleagues!

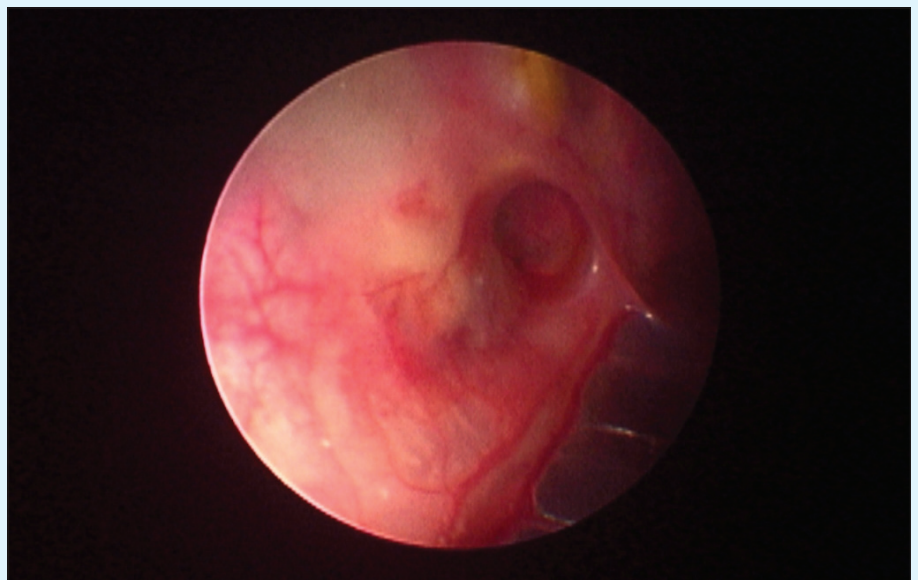
- Diagnostic techniques – being able to anaesthetise birds, even sick ones, has really facilitated diagnosis. Radiography is greatly helped by being able to position the bird correctly rather than pinning them down. If the bird is asleep we can perform endoscopic examinations of many different parts, including accessing the internal organs- 25 years ago endoscopy was primarily used for sexing birds; these days this is normally done by checking DNA of blood or feather cells, and the endoscope is reserved for diagnostic work. New techniques have come along- ultrasonography is



Wing tip oedema is still a mystery . . . fortunately a treatable one!



Placing a tube into the airsacs allows the bird to be anaesthetised and the surgeon to operate on the head and trachea



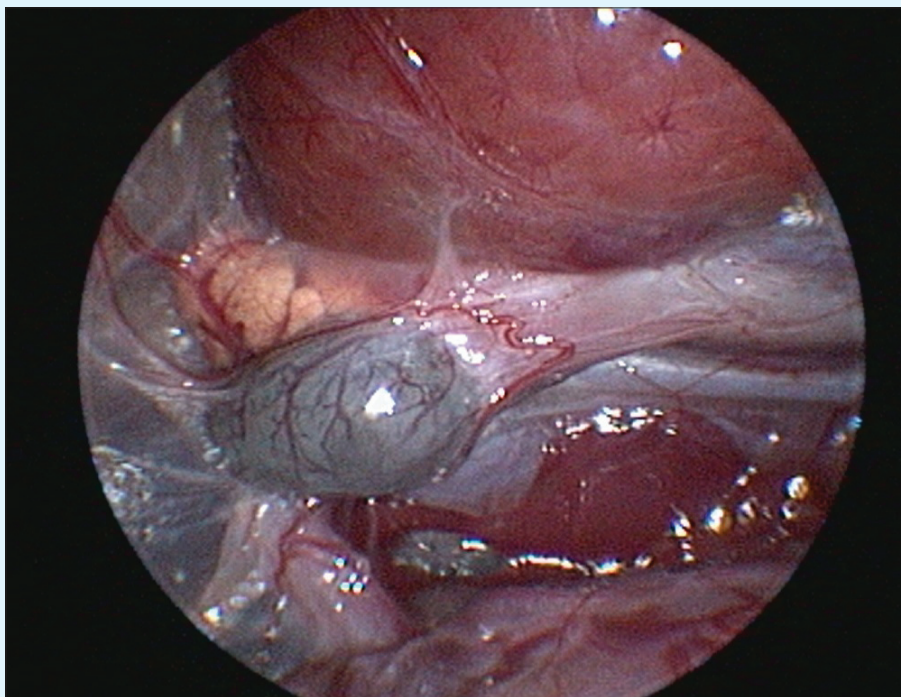
Newer anti-fungal drugs allow for much better success in treating aspergillosis

now routine and advanced techniques such as CT and MRI are beginning to be used. The ability to diagnose and to see the advantages to treatment success have helped change attitudes too - 25 years ago very few falconers were keen on a blood sample being taken; now it is expected as a routine part of an examination.

- Fluid therapy – as in all fields of medicine we have realised the importance of fluid therapy and electrolyte balance. Who would have thought that the greatest single life-saving device in human medicine would be a solution of salt and sugar? This realisation has entered veterinary medicine too and it is unusual not to give our birds fluid therapy alongside medical treatment. This may take the form of subcutaneous injections or even intravenous/ intra-osseous drips. The importance of oral fluids has certainly not escaped falconers - when I first started I remember being told that birds died after being tubed fluids and only the sickest birds were tubed (the prophecy was thus usually rendered true!). Now many falconers carry a stomach tube and will tube sick birds themselves which gives us a huge advantage in treatment as our patients are nowhere near as dehydrated when we first see them.

- Surgical techniques. With anaesthesia comes the ability to operate....surgeries that were just not deemed feasible 25 years are now performed regularly. We have had the opportunity to develop and refine new techniques from internal gut surgery to tendon repair. An appreciation of microsurgical technique and techniques that reduce blood loss (radiosurgery, laser surgery, harmonic scalpels, etc) has also given us much better success rates.

- Aspergillosis treatment – in many areas, drug development has not advanced at the same rate as other techniques. This is not the case in fungal disease where new drugs (especially voriconazole) have really increased our chances of success - many fewer birds will die of aspergillosis now, with the main limitation being how much damage and compromise has been caused to the respiratory system in terms of a return to athletic flight. Hopefully the next quarter century will see us learn more about how to prevent this disease and how to detect



Endoscopy has been a great advance in investigating avian disease allowing the chance to look at and sample internal organs and lesions. These are the kidneys, adrenals and testes of a Wood Owl

it earlier – even now many cases are far advanced when presented.

- Bumblefoot – safe anaesthesia has again enabled us to develop better surgical approaches to this problem and also better bandaging techniques. Certainly we expect a better result now than 25 years ago. We also understand more about the development of this problem both in terms of husbandry and the blood flow changes at the end of the flying season which does appear to have begun to reduce the incidence of this difficult syndrome.

- Fracture repair - fracture repair techniques have advanced tremendously and many more injured birds return to full hunting activity. This has been achieved through better understanding of how avian bone works and repairs (it is different to mammal bone!) and thus how to provide repair methods that do not compromise the natural repair process.

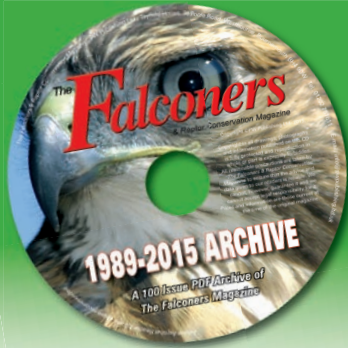
- Pain relief – analgesia is an essential part of medicine, especially post-injury and post-surgery. We are much better now at appreciating that these birds do feel pain even if they do not often show overt signs of this. We also appreciate that controlling this pain contributes hugely to treatment success, especially surgical success. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and opiates

developed in the last 25 years appear much safer and with fewer side-effects than the older drugs.

- Wing-tip oedema – it is a shame to end on a slight negative! Research and understanding in the last 25 years appears to have unearthed many “new” diseases, though few are quite as dramatic or had such an impact as wing-tip oedema. Sadly we appear no nearer to understanding what causes it, and therefore how to prevent it. However, at least we can and usually do treat this successfully and that in itself is an illustration of how far we have come in 25 years where we have improved understanding of providing symptomatic relief in cases where we may not be able to address the primary cause.

This has been an incredible period in avian medicine – probably the most active period of development in the history of this particular field. While it is unlikely that we will see such an explosion of knowledge in the next 25 years, it is clear that the field is still developing with many very active veterinarians researching and working in this area. It has been a great quarter century to be an avian vet working with raptors and the greatest pleasure is seeing new generations of veterinarians taking up the challenge of developing our knowledge still further.

This issue of The Falconers & Raptor Conservation Magazine celebrates reaching number 100.



To celebrate this milestone, we have published a 100 issue archive CD-Rom of PDF files going right back to issue 1.

Full details on page 47 of this Issue.

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ANTON VETS



JOHN CHITTY

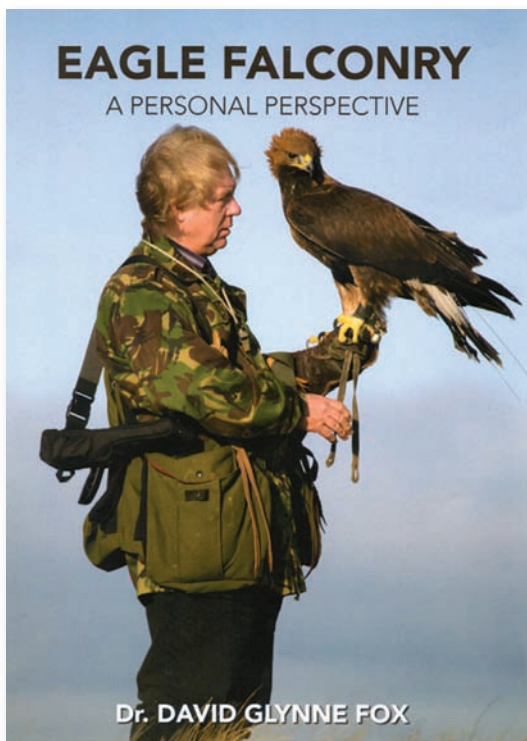
BVetMed CertZooMed CBiol MSB MRCVS

**Anton Vets
Unit 11, Anton Mill Road
Andover
Hants SP10 2NJ**

**Telephone
01264 729165
Fax: 01264 324546**

**E-mail: exotics@antonvets.co.uk
www.antonvets.co.uk**

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

Falconry and Veterinary Medicine in the Middle East

I am a veterinarian specialising in birds of prey and wildlife who moved back from the Middle East to Wales three years ago. In the 1990's over a nine year period I worked for the Abu Dhabi government developing a breeding and rehabilitation project for houbara bustards, establishing a large falcon hospital and conducting fieldwork on various types of wildlife. For nine years, from 2002 to 2011 I was a Falcon and Wildlife Veterinarian working at the Dubai Falcon Hospital and the Wadi al Safa Wildlife Centre.

For three years I was Head of Aviculture and Health at International Wildlife Consultants (IWC) responsible for the falcons and the avicultural team that breeds commercial falcons for Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan on behalf of Dr Nick Fox.

It was a privilege working with and learning from two wonderfully experienced falcon breeders at International Wildlife Consultants, Diana Durman-Walters and Sandor Sebastian and in 2014, my last year at IWC, our team bred over 250 Gyr Falcons and Gyr Falcon hybrids, over 100 of these pure gyrs, probably the largest number of pure gyrs ever bred in captivity. Currently, I work with Lance Jepson who established Origin Vets, a veterinary service based in South Wales that deals exclusively with non-domestic species. Falcons, exotic pets, birds, zoological collections, wildlife and fisheries all come under the care of Origin Vets. My role is to develop a veterinary service for falconers, breeders and small zoos in our part of the UK. In my spare time I am learning to farm an environmentally friendly small-holding near the Pembrokeshire Coast and I



Dubai Falcon Hospital Staff 2010

teach courses on animal welfare and wildlife rehabilitation at Carmarthenshire College one afternoon a week.

Life in the Middle East

Dubai was a great place to bring up a young family, warm, sunny and friendly. As a vet with a passion for wildlife and birds of prey, I flew buzzards and kestrels as a child, working for a ruling family was tremendously exciting. You never knew what animals you might see, when you might be asked to see them or where you might be asked to go. Driving into a palace to see my various Arabic bosses never lost its appeal.

There is something out of *One Thousand and One Nights* - palm tree lined palace walls, high security gatehouses with uniformed machine gun toting

guards and kitsch palace rooms that rudely shout wealth and power. Versailles in the Gulf? The latent revolutionary in me thinks of Madame guillotine and the usual fate of those who hoard up so much and forget reality. I'll never forget some advice from an old Middle East hand who reminded me early on in my time in the UAE that being a vet for a ruling family in the Middle East was like being a lawyer for the Mafia. While we might all wish we could be better off than we are, from what I have seen too much wealth brings with it a darker side to the people it touches. Very few people are transformed for the better by touching so many riches.

But I digress, this article is about falcons not ethics or social revolution. I loved working at Dubai Falcon Hospital.

It was well equipped, had a friendly team of Asian falcon technicians, some great Arabic falconer clients and it was exciting to be at the cutting edge of falcon medicine and research. The hospital was established by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, in 1983. Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid al Maktoum is the older brother of Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum (who is the 'face' of the city-state of Dubai) and both brothers are well known internationally in horse racing circles as the founders of Gololphin Stables, one of the leading racing stables in the world.

Dubai Falcon Hospital was the first specialist hospital for falcons in the Middle East and over the years it has established an international reputation for excellence in the field of falcon medicine. A British connection was developed by Dr Nigel Barton, a falconer and raptor biologist who worked with the first American Director, Dr Remple in the hospital in the 1990's. The Hospital has always been at the forefront of developing the discipline of raptor medicine and has pioneered important research into the diagnosis, epidemiology, pathology, prevention, surgical correction and therapy of diseases of raptors. Dr Remple contributed to many of the Raptor Biomedicine conferences and Sheikh Hamdan was a generous sponsor of falcon research. Additionally, important contributions over the years have been made to the understanding of Arabic falconry, wildlife diseases and to the management and conservation of captive and wild populations of raptors.

Providing a service to falcons

The main focus of the Hospital was and still is to provide a clinical service to the hunting falcons and the wildlife collection of Sheikh Hamdan. I was fortunate to start work when the hospital was being modernised and we were one of the first bird hospitals to use digital radiography and fluoroscopy in falcons. One of the first research projects I was involved with was conducting trials on a new antifungal drug called voriconazole. In 2003 we started using the drug after conducting trials on cases and working closely with Liepzig University in Germany conducting pharmacological trials to establish a safe dose. We reported dramatic results demonstrating that this new drug was highly effective in the treatment of



Fluoroscopy at Dubai Falcon Hospital



Endoscopy at Dubai Falcon Hospital

aspergillosis in falcons. It was interesting that initially our work was treated with skepticism by a number of internationally renowned vets, but now voriconazole is widely used by avian vets the world over and in the Middle East it has probably been one of the most significant treatments contributing to healthier falcons and significantly lower mortality in pure gyr and gyr hybrid falcons.

About 1,700 falcons are seen at Dubai Falcon Hospital annually. Since the hospital was opened in 1983, tens of thousands of falcons have received treatment. Dubai Falcon Hospital also initiated the first falcon micro-chipping programme in the Middle East in 1987 and microchipping falcons is now part of standard operating procedures in the large falcon hospitals in the region. Microchipping has also been used by raptor biologists studying the population dynamics of free-living falcon populations. Through the delivery of veterinary care in combination with raising the awareness of disease issues amongst the falconers Dubai Falcon Hospital and the other dedicated hospitals in the region have certainly contributed to the improved health of captive falcons in the region. In the early days of falcon medicine in the Middle East in the 1980's bumblefoot, aspergillosis and parasite infections, such as the air-sac worm *Serratospiculum*, were the most important conditions afflicting falcons. Many of the conditions seen were linked to the source of the birds. In those days most were wild caught, so trapping injuries and issues with eyes caused by 'seeling' were also common. Infectious viral diseases such as pox and Newcastle disease were also particular problems. Since the introduction of vaccination programmes initiated by the falcon hospitals in the late 1980's, the frequency of these particularly deadly diseases declined dramatically.

As the proportion of captive bred falcons has increased during the 1990's, the type of diseases seen in falcons has changed. Aspergillosis is still a particularly feared condition. Gyrfalcons are adapted to cold, clean environments and in the warm humid desert environment of the Gulf states they are acutely susceptible to aspergillosis. Amyloidosis, coccidiosis, clostridiosis and diseases linked to conditioning and training are important causes of poor health in falcons in the region.

The Middle East is probably home to



Imping at Dubai Falcon Hospital



Intensive care of falcon at Dubai Falcon Hospital



Falconer on hunting party in Pakistan

the largest population of falconers and captive falcons in the world. It also has the largest number of dedicated falcon hospitals in the world. There are at least 10 specialised falcon hospitals employing avian veterinarians across the Gulf region and at least six are in Dubai alone! There is no doubt that the falcon hospitals in the region have raised standards of veterinary care for large numbers of captive falcons in terms of improved health and lowered mortality. Having a 'long view' of history is important when looking at the contribution made to health by hospitals – just 15 years ago a diagnosis of aspergillosis was a virtual death sentence to a falcon because there were no effective treatments. How times have changed and modern diagnostics by endoscopy and new antifungal medicines such as voriconazole have made what was the most feared disease of Arab falconers into a readily treatable condition.

Advancement in falconry medicine

So in 15 years time what conditions will the next generation of falcon vets working in the Middle East look back on with satisfaction, knowing they can readily cure conditions once feared by their predecessors? I would hope that amyloidosis would be one such condition? This is a condition that also concerns many breeders in the UK and I will write



Falcon Races in Dubai

about this disease in a future issue of this magazine.

Falcon races have exploded in popularity across the Gulf in the last five years and it is very apparent that this phenomenon will be an important driving force in the evolution of falconry in the Gulf. Falcon races will affect the demand for captive bred falcons, the manner these birds are trained and performance medicine will start to become an important discipline of falcon medicine. Falcon breeders will need to become more professional in their approach becoming more like horse stables where clients will be more discerning in the selection of their birds from winning lines. Future trends in falcon medicine will be the development of techniques to monitor falcon fitness physiology.

While the interest in falconry in the Middle East has contributed to many positive developments, not least the advancement of falcon and indirectly avian medicine, falconry in the Middle East does have an 'Inconvenient Truth'. Just what happens to all the wild and captive bred falcons that are shipped every year to the Gulf? Falconers, veterinarians and responsible falcon breeders should be concerned about this 'elephant' in the room. Traditionally Arabic falconry has a good history of sustainable practice. Wild falcons were trapped on passage, used for a season and released at the

end of the season. The impact of this traditional falconry on wild falcon populations was probably negligible. Regional falconry associations should be concerned about this issue. Indeed they are the only organisations that can gather the relevant data. How many falcons go into the region? What is the mortality rate and lifespan of falcons? What falcons are best suited to the hunting styles and environment of the region? What is striking is the lack of even basic information on the number of falconers and falcons kept in each country. Cynics may say that no one cares. I believe that if Arabic falconry wishes to promote a positive and sustainable image to the rest of the global falconry community then it must care.

Dr Tom Bailey is an avian specialist recognised as an active member of the European College of Zoological Medicine. For more information on the veterinary services offered by Origin Vets please see <http://www.originvets.org/>

Training the Golden Eagle



David Glynne Fox with Star, male Berkut Golden Eagle. © Alex Hyde.

It has become apparent that during the last decade or so, more and more Golden Eagles have found their way into the hands of inexperienced falconers and this concerns me deeply, as I know it does other experienced eagle falconers. There are basically two sources for the acquisition of Golden Eagles, namely breeders in the United Kingdom, of which there are very few, or, and this seems to be the most common source, breeders in Europe. Despite being an avid eagle falconer for more than fifty years, I am beginning to question as to why there has been such a meteoric rise of interest in this species, especially as for

decades, I was ridiculed for flying “such a huge useless lump.” There is a myth going round that if one has flown, say a Harris’s Hawk, then this is all the experience that is required for taking on a Golden Eagle, for after all, isn’t a Golden Eagle just a larger version of the Harris’s? Well, actually no, and nothing could be further from the truth. However, this does not seem to deter inexperienced falconers from acquiring eagles.

Fly a Golden Eagle for the right reasons

The question such people should ask themselves is why they want a Golden Eagle in the first place? One suspects

macho-ism in many instances. A Golden Eagle requires very serious commitment on many levels and if one cannot accept this, then the relationship between eagle and falconer is likely to become a very unpleasant one for both parties. I will state right here and now that owning any of the smaller raptors for even many years, in no way prepares one for taking on a Golden Eagle, because while the training side is very similar to that of other raptors, the sheer size, power and often extreme aggression of the Golden Eagle has to be experienced to be believed. It takes a very dedicated falconer to become successful at flying this magnificent raptor properly and there are now a good number of eagle falconers in the UK doing just that, with no problems. But there are those who do not wish to learn and do not listen to the voice of an experienced eagle falconer, they already think they know it all and do not give a thought for anyone else, and these are the one’s that this article is aimed at. True to form however, some probably cannot even read the text.

The methods I use may well vary from others, and this is fine, but they work for me and so I offer them only as guidelines to help those having difficulty and if this article helps just one individual, then my time has been well spent, for at the end of the day, I am far more concerned about the welfare of the eagle than I am of the falconer and also for the good reputation that eagle falconry has enjoyed for a number of years now. All this could so easily be upset by one stupid mistake and possibly have eagles placed on the Dangerous Animals Act. This is not necessary, all it takes is common sense and a willingness to learn, but of course, as already hinted at, there are some who appear to have no more than a single brain cell.

There is no great secret in flying a Golden Eagle because, as you will see,



Hoods, like this Mongolian specimen are an essential aid in eagle falconry



Hooding is vital when training eagles for use on field meets, and also for other reasons. © Alex Hyde



The feet of an Eagle can be dangerous to the inexperienced falconer. © Alex Hyde

the training methods are much the same as for flying a Goshawk or a Red Tail, or any other short or broad wing. However, as aforementioned, the great bulk, power and aggression are something to be reckoned with. I cannot emphasise enough, how different these aspects are from any other raptor and I will take each point in turn, as these are very important and I will deal firstly with the weight factor.

Carrying an eagle all day is hard work

A Golden Eagle can weigh from around six pounds to something around seventeen pounds, depending on the sex of the eagle and the geographical race. The smallest tend to originate from Japan and the largest from Mongolia and Kazakhstan. Even the smallest is still much heavier than the average Goshawk or Harris's and this is a factor that should always be borne in mind, for one has to carry this bird, often for hours at a time out in the field, assuming of course that the tyro ever gets this far. I have heard of some would-be falconers desiring the largest and heaviest that can be obtained. What on earth for? Unless one is planning on taking very large quarry on a regular basis, which is very difficult in the UK due to hawk-able numbers over a season, a male eagle will take everything that a female can and is more manoeuvrable. We do not have wolves in this country so we do not need huge female eagles, the brown hare being the main quarry species for most eagle falconers.

So, one has to carry this huge bird around the fields all day and bear the weight and I can tell you that as the hours tick by, the eagle seems to become heavier by the minute, believe me, I know from first hand experience. There are also those who mock others for using aids to help carry their eagles, such as a stick or an arm brace. This attitude totally escapes my comprehension. Why struggle when help is at hand. Or are we seeing the macho man again? An arm brace, such as that manufactured by Jim Moss of Crown Falconry, easily takes much of the strain from long hours of carriage in the field. I know for a fact that since using Jim's arm brace, I no longer suffer from aching arms, shoulders and lower back strain, which surely has to be a step in the right direction. The advice I would give is to ignore such detractors and get yourself an arm brace of some sort,

preferably before you obtain the bird. In the meantime, try carrying twelve, one pound bags of sugar at arms length and see how you get on and bear in mind, that bags of sugar are not likely to shoot out a foot and grab you.

Power and aggression

Which neatly brings me to power and aggression. Not every eagle is aggressive,

wool experts who know how to handle imprints. Obtaining from a UK breeder will mean that you may have a choice of obtaining a parent-reared bird that you know is the genuine article. This is not to denigrate European breeders in any way, far from it, but with British bred birds you can be more certain as to their background, especially if the eagle is over a year or so old.



Eagles in England are far more safely flown at low elevations. © David Carr

this is a fact, but many are and the chances of obtaining an eagle with aggressive tendencies are high, especially with imprints from the Continent. Personally, I would not entertain an imprint of any sort, not least because of the screaming. They can yap for England and often sit on their perch, especially young eyasses and yap all day long. One would think it would wear out their vocal chords, but not a bit of it. The call of a Golden Eagle is far carrying and I would seriously suggest that if you have close neighbours, you will sooner or later, receive complaints.

This is not to be taken lightly. Neighbours can give you unimaginable grief, so think long and hard about this aspect. I know of several prospective eagle falconers who have ended up with no choice other than to pass on their beloved eagle because they could either not stand the yapping themselves, or serious neighbour complaints have forced their hand. You need to think very carefully about this and also as to where you intend to procure your eagle. If you still desire an eagle, then think about a parent reared bird and forget imprints. Some will argue this point, but I am thinking solely here of newcomers to the sport of eagle falconry, not dyed in the

Additionally, imprints are more likely to become aggressive. Nobody really knows why and some have even suggested that the root cause is the owner. This may well be true, but we will never know, because it is impossible to say that the same bird, in different hands would have behaved differently, the moment has already been lost. It is as well to remember also that eagles, just like humans, have wildly different characteristics, We know for sure that even siblings vary enormously from each other and if you don't believe me, ask George Mussared. He has bred over thirty Golden Eagles to date and I have had the good fortune to not only own one of George's eagles, but have also been out flying with others from this pair and I have seen differences, not only in outward appearances, but also in their characters. The point being, do not let anyone tell you that obtaining a bird from so and so will behave in such and such a way, because not only is this untrue, but until one has the bird, it is not possible to determine the outcome of its character, only time will do that. However, inexperience on the part of the falconer is certainly a deciding factor as to how the bird's future development will pan out and almost certainly not for the

better, hence the strong requirement for a willing mentor. This latter statement is very important for a newcomer.

Aggression in Golden Eagles can be frightening, indeed terrifying. I know, they have intimidated me on numerous occasions, but I also know from past experience that this will pass, given time, but many new to eagles become so shocked and traumatised by an assault upon their person by an eagle that they give up instantly, and who can blame them? After such an assault, a Harris's Hawk seems a far more promising spectacle and of course, the eagle is passed on. I hate having to describe the damage an eagle can inflict, but it seems to be the only way to deter those who are sitting on the fence as it were, thinking that owning an eagle would be cool. If that is your viewpoint, then stop right now. An eagle is not for you and likely never will be. It takes a special mentality to become an eagle falconer and I hope my eagle owning friends will not take exception to this statement. Actually, they already know this. You need a special mindset, which is difficult to put into words, but everything about a Golden Eagle should mean everything to you. And although an eagle looks huge and sluggish, believe me, this is far from the case.

Preparation is key

So, assuming you are still with me and still believe this is the route for you, we need to discuss how to get to the happy state of flying your eagle at wild quarry. First and foremost, ask yourself the question, do you have sufficient land at your disposal that has sustainable amounts of quarry and is fit for purpose? This is vital, for without it, there is no point in obtaining an eagle, or any other raptor for that matter. If the answer to this question is yes, do you then have a willing and experienced eagle falconer who will act as your mentor? Again, this is indispensable for having such a person will hugely enhance your chances of success. If this is in place and you have all the necessary housing and equipment and you already have some experience with other hawks (very important), then we can move on to training.

Hooding. This in my opinion is vital, especially if you intend to take part in organised eagle field meets. If your eagle does not wear a hood, it will bate at every quarry species that shows itself



All raptors flown should be fitted with transmitters.

and this can be very annoying for others out in the field. A bating eagle is likely to startle hares and suchlike and you will not be popular if you keep on ruining good slips. Additionally, your eagle will suffer too, for all the bating will cause it to lose stamina and when the turn comes for you to have your slip, the eagle may well be too exhausted to bother. Besides, hooding calms the bird in times of stress and is a very useful tool for changing equipment, whereby the eagle can simply be hooded and placed on a perch instead of casting in a towel, causing unnecessary stress. The hood should be as light as possible and fit correctly around the beak to the rear of the gape. Hooding techniques can be found in any half decent falconry book and the same principle applies whether one is hooding a Merlin or a Golden Eagle.

Quality equipment is essential

Obviously, the eagle's furniture must be strong enough, but supple. I use false aylmeri anklets with the smooth side always on the inside close to the leg in order to save chafing of the tarsal feathers. I also never grease anklets for the simple reason that if sand or small pieces of grit end up between the anklet and leg, any oil used to keep the jesses supple will become a medium for sticking the foreign bodies to the anklet and this will soon cause chafing. Dry anklets do not cause these problems and when they begin to become stiff through constant bathing, it is a simple matter to fit a new

pair. I always keep a few pairs handy for this reason. Also, if for some reason an anklet snaps, you can bet your life it will happen just as you are about to set off for work or some other destination and not leave time to cut out a new pair, so having some in stock is sound practice. Obviously, big eagles need good quality and strong leather, so great care is needed when selecting such.

Chris from Mac Falconry of Belgium stocks good quality leather and this is virtually unbreakable but very supple. I also use a triangular swivel obtained from Mike's Falconry in America. These swivels are very strong and beautifully made but just as importantly, the jesses always remain at the apex due to the wide angle and thus prevent tangling of jesses. After three or four years of using this single swivel, I can happily report that I have not experienced a single tangling incident. I also use very strong nylon loop leashes as opposed to the more common button jesses, simply because they are stronger. One may also ask why I do not use braided nylon jesses?

I did try them on Star, my male Golden Eagle, but he turned them into a bird's nest in minutes. He never bothers with leather jesses, but takes great delight in shredding braided nylon one's. This is just one of many little idiosyncrasy's, which helps to make up each bird's individual character. I always use radio telemetry (about more of which later) but also use bells too, or should I say bell, because I only fit one. It does not follow that because an eagle is a large bird, it needs a large bell. This is rubbish. If a small bell can be heard on a Peregrine at a thousand feet, it can also be heard on an eagle, so large so-called eagle bells are not required.

Next we come to perches and here, everyone has their own favourite. The choice is yours of course and there is a good range available, including the swing perch with which many eagle falconers are finding favour. However, and this is simply my preference, but I always use the rubber topped stainless steel bow perch because I firmly believe this type to be the safest of all. Others may well disagree of course, which is fine, it is often down to personal preference, so long as the welfare of the eagle is not compromised. So, assuming all this, plus a good set of scales and a good food supply is in place, the real training can begin.

The first step is to reduce the

weight of the eagle. I always do this gradually, over five or six weeks to be more precise and am not a believer in a rapid weight reduction because I feel it is more traumatic for the bird. Some do indeed use the latter method but I never have done so and never found it necessary. There is some evidence that a rapid weight reduction can induce aggression. A good set of heavy-duty scales, digital or standard is an absolute must and the bird should be weighed right at the beginning of the training period in order to ascertain top body weight and the percentage required for reduction. However, the latter will vary with every eagle and if anyone tells you that a male eagle will fly at such a weight and a female at such a weight, ignore them entirely, for the range of variation in shape, size, colour and weight in Golden Eagles is extraordinary. While all this is going on, the hood should be used daily. Whilst hooded, the mounts for radio transmitters can be fitted.

There are several types of mounts for leg, tail or backpack; this is a matter of personal choice. I always use tail mounts and I use two of them, mounted on the top deck feather in the tail or train. Eagles tend to leave these alone more than they do with leg mounts for the simple reason that they are more accessible to that great beak. There are also many types of transmitter and receiver available and in my view, NO hawk should ever be flown free without the provision of a working transmitter. New and ever more sophisticated models seem to appear constantly, which is a good thing, but at the end of the day, the best that one can afford usually fills the gap. I use a digital field Marshall unit together with an RT Plus and a Powermax transmitter and this set-up has served me well over the years. I always change the batteries long before they run down for safety reasons, which is basically pure common sense, as so much is in falconry.

The training process

The training process basically follows the same rules as those for other broad and shortwings. The use of a strong, braided nylon creance is vital and a new aid has now begun to enter the market in the form of a mechanical lure drag. This has revolutionised the training of eagles because a lure can be dragged over long distances at high speeds to mimic



Wide open spaces with panoramic vistas are ideal places to fly eagles. Here the author prepares to fly Star, his Golden Eagle. © Alex Hyde

natural running quarry and my own unit was made by my good friend and eagle falconer Geoff Surtees, and it is now a main stay of my falconry equipment. I would not be without it, for I can operate it alone and the eagle flies away from me at what it perceives to be naturally running wild quarry. Interestingly, my own eagle, the aforementioned Star, can distinguish between a whole dragged rabbit and a dummy bunny. He will not have the latter at any price and refuses to chase it.

There has been much discussion about flying eagles to the glove, many do not agree with it. I am afraid I do agree with it. I fly my eagles both to the fist and ground lure and have always done so. One additional point is that I always use a leather upper arm protector, because some eagles have a predilection for grabbing the upper arm upon landing on the gauntlet. Star always used to do that but now he does not. I still wear the protector on field meets because he sometimes gets impatient before flying and tugs at the protector, without the latter, he would shred my jacket.

Once the eagle is flying strongly, fitness training and weight control need to be observed. A longish length of rope can be used, rather like a creance, and

the drag this causes helps to put on pectoral muscle. Daily weighing needs to be kept up and the bird's weight observed in line with performance at certain weights and either a slight lowering or heightening instigated when and where necessary, generally known as tweaking. Once the eagle responds immediately, and I use the word immediately with good reason, the bird may be flown free and entered to quarry as soon as possible. I offer one vital and very important piece of advice. Please do not fly your eagle in public parks or other such areas where there is a high traffic of humans and their pets. This could easily prove problematic and you could bring eagle falconry into disrepute. Additionally, so far as England is concerned, there are very few places where Golden Eagles can be safely flown at heights. A high soaring eagle, which is a splendid spectacle to be sure, is asking for trouble, because the bird can see for great distances, something the falconer on the ground cannot, so the latter cannot possibly know who and what is about. The only safe way is to use off the fist and out of the hood flights after the quarry has been correctly identified. Please follow these guidelines and you will keep eagle falconry safe for all of us.

The British Archives of Falconry

For a long time it has been discussed in the UK that we should set up an archive of falconry. There was some worry that all our precious falconry history was leaving the country, mainly to the Archives of Falconry in Boise, USA. Several of us got involved with the setting up of the Falconry Heritage Trust, which we originally thought would include a physical archive as well as its web based site. This coincided with the UNESCO bid for Falconry as an Intangible Cultural Heritage, of which the history of the sport was an important part of the proposal. A more international archive was needed to fulfil this role and the FHT took up this role moving to an international digital archive and taking on a role of working with various national archives. The Falconry Heritage Trust does a wonderful job. Its web archive is well worth regular visits at <http://www.falconryheritage.org> and it has sponsored some very worthwhile falconry heritage

projects around the world over the last few years.

Setting up the archive

Because of the FHT change of direction from its originally envisaged role, a few of us got together with a view of setting up a British physical archive to save the individual falconry items for the future. The British Falconers' Club were keen to be involved and we worked with them to start the British Archives of Falconry. Although we were supported early on by the BFC we are an entirely separate body and work with all falconers and clubs. We put together a small committee of falconers who are interested in and work with archives. We asked Roger Upton and Sidney (Kent) Carnie, of the Archives of Falconry in America, to become our Honorary Patrons. And so the British Archives of Falconry was founded. The first thing to do was to find somewhere to store items as we were donated them and I was able to find a purpose built storage facility in a small unit on a farm,

locally to me. The Falconry Heritage Trust kindly donated the first year's rent and we were up and running. We applied and got charity status as a small charity.

At the invitation of Kent Carnie I travelled to see the Archives of Falconry in USA to learn how they stored, recorded and displayed their collection. I also visited the Falconry Museum in Valkenswaard, The Netherlands. We have close ties with both these organisations. It is very important that we work together with archives around the world, as falconry has always been a very cosmopolitan sport and a lot of the falconry items we collect are interesting to more than one nation.

From the very beginning falconers have been very supportive and donated important items. The Archives of Falconry gave us copies of all their publications and an entire collection of North American Falconry Association journals and newsletters. Other interesting items are a huge photographic collection of photographs



Lorant de Bastyai Hawking Glove - Donated to the British Archives of Falconry by The Welsh Hawking Club



Old Hawking Club Waistcoat - Originally owned by Thomas Mann and donated to the British Archives of Falconry by Roger Upton

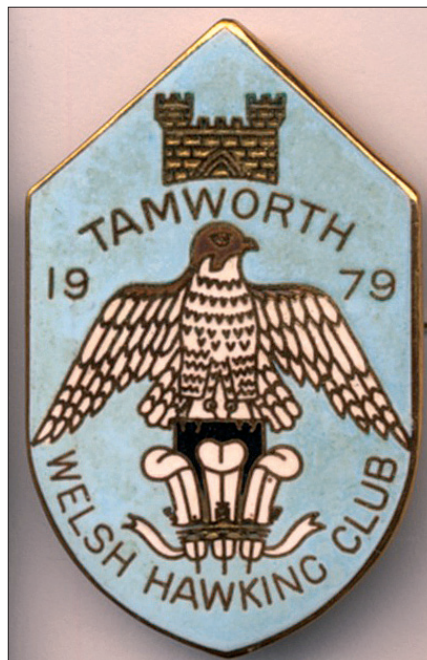


Stanley Allen Photo of Merlins - "Audacity, Mendacity, Velocity, Ferocity"

of Geoffrey Pollard's Grouse hawking in the 1970's; many interesting hoods and other falconry furniture; a hawking waistcoat from the Old Falconry Club; an entire collection of BFC Journals; some falconers' diaries, letters and writings, paintings and books. As items are collected we digitally copy them where appropriate, photograph them and record them in our archive database. Each item is given a unique code number so it can be referred to later in the database and is then taken to our storage where a record is kept in the database of which storage box it is kept in. In this way we are already fulfilling the main object of starting the archive which is to preserve and protect our falconry heritage.

Finding a permanent home for the archives

The next stage we are aiming for is to house the archive in a place accessible to falconers, scholars and the general public where items can be displayed and studied. When talking to falconers about the archives, this is what the falconry community is really interested in. Just saving the items, while important, isn't enough if they aren't available to be seen. We have been in talks with several organisations with a view to having a museum type facility. Some we have turned down, as not being exactly what we wanted and others we are still in talks with. While this is an important



Welsh Hawking Club Badge Tamworth 1979 - From the collection of Lorant de Bastyai

next step, it is also a large one. Receiving archive items and recording them is time consuming but is done voluntary at the moment and so doesn't have cost implications. Even if we are kindly given a museum area, we will then incur running costs which will mean raising more money from both the falconry committee and funding from government bodies and institutions. This is an area we have little expertise in and will have to recruit help.

When we are in a position to display

the archives things will move forward, as we have already agreed to house the BFC library, which presently is stored at Oxford and rarely viewed. We have also been promised other private collections when we are in the position to display them adequately. It will enable us to request loans of falconry material from other museums and estates around the country. There is an awful lot of falconry material still out there, much unknown. We will be in a position to study and record this when the British Archives of Falconry is considered a trustworthy body with standing in the heritage world.

We are doing this for the falconry committee, as we feel it is important for future generations of falconry, also to promote the sport to present day organisations who are sometimes a danger to our sport. Through the archives we are able to show falconry in a positive way and fulfil some of the requirements of the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage agreement.

The archives are already in a position to do small exhibitions of falconry heritage at club meetings and falconry festivals and several of our committee are happy to speak at club meetings. We want to do this as we are fully dependent on you, the falconers, to donate items and help finance us and so hope you feel the British Archives of Falconry is an integral part of falconry in the UK.

www.britisharchivesoffalconry.org

Poems for Falconers

The Falconer

A rare breed of man the Falconer,
Training Eyass, Haggard or Passager,
With hawk or falcon on his glove,
He is a man that has found his love.

Buzzy, my Red Tail for years

When I saw her I fell in love,
She stood confidently on my glove,
She was a baby at twelve weeks old,
Feather perfect and really quite bold.

We hit it off without any fear,
She was soon flying free, over fields
quite near,
She killed rabbits without delay,
Her tally became 170 head of prey.

I kept her for 21 years,
Her death reduced me to tears,
I still miss her after 21 years, she had no
vices or fears,
How I miss Buzzy, my Red Tail for
years.

The Bow Perch

The Bow perch is the best,
For years it has passed the test,
A hawk will stand quite still,
On a bow perch, that is, until,
She wants to spread her wings,
Fly and see a thousand things,
We shouldn't hold this against her,
After all she is a raptor.

The Creance

This really is a tool for need,
The hawk will fly to you for to feed,
It's a staging post in training a tiro,
Dispense with the creance and save the
aggro,
Have the guts to fly the hawk free,
And test your skill to the first degree,
Off she goes free, off she goes,
Will she come back to you, only she
knows?

Oh, for a gauntlet

Without his glove the falconer's in pain,
An unprotected hand again,
Torn flesh, blood and lots of scabs,
Visit the doctor for those jabs.

Antibiotics in the bum,
Helped on it's way with Mount Gay
rum!

A gauntlet will provide protection,
And save the handler from infection.

With buckskin turned and sewn to
double,
A gauntlet will save you all the trouble,
The left hand is the one to cover,
Up to the elbow without any bother.

A thong to hang upon a nail
Protect from mice and slug or snail.

A gauntlet is a worthwhile tool,
Without one you are but a fool.

The Finnish male Goshawk

I owned a Goshawk and lost it,
A lost hawk, oh what a twit,
He had killed a moorhen near a lake,
I lacked experience for heaven's sake.

Friends told me the hawk had been
spotted,
A number of pigeons had been slotted,
We knew the woodland where he had
been active,
Exactly where I could not be positive.

With Bow Trap, decoys and hours
awake,
I lacked experience for heaven's sake,
And then I almost caught the beggar,
But sadly I failed he was lost forever.

A hawk man too

I want to be a hawk man too,
And fly a bird of prey,
To watch it fly clear out of view,
But never fly away.

I can tell what is happening

I can tell what is happening,
By the sound of the bell,
When she's bating and unhappy,
It rings like hell.

When she's preening and rousing it
sounds but a tinkle,
When she is flying past me it's a muffled
twinkle,
When she is eating the bell gives a
knowing ring,
The slightest movement warns of
everything.

Without a bell the hawk could be lost,
Gone forever at a heavy cost,
So use a bell whatever they say,
And enjoy your hawking everyday.

Falconry . . . have I the time?

Have I the time to keep a hawk,
And train as my own?
It's time for action now, not talk,
The seed of ambition is sown.

For years I have wanted to have one,
Since school days it's been my yearning,
Buzzy the Red Tail has set the tone,
For much of my falconry learning.

It won't be easy, it could be tough,
But I will do my best,
Carriage, patience, do not be rough,
Flying free is the acid test.

So now we are hunting as a team,
I have always wanted to try this,
She trusts in me it would seem,
There's a rabbit, alas, it's a miss.

I want to be a hawk man too,
And feed my hawk upon my glove,
Carry it, man it and train it as new,
A cherished possession my one true love.

What have I seen?

I've seen something that I think I could love,
She flies but she's not a Dove,
Against the sky she looks so fast,
I want to own one, yes at last.

She is a hawk, and she will kill,
With devastating speed and skill,
But she will love and have her chicks,
And teach them all the hunting tricks.

That is a hawk that's what I have seen,
I am a privileged human being.

The Harris Hawk

Without a doubt the hawk is an icon,
Neither a hawk or indeed a falcon,
But a Buteo of great repute,
A raptor that likes the pursuit.

Intelligent and graced with charm,
Rabbits plus she will cause them harm,
She is the falconer's friend for life,
No Goshawk problems, or no strife.

She is the Harris's and needs understanding,
But in the field she is quite outstanding,
Own one, train one, enjoy the delight,
Of a Harris's Hawk when she's in full flight.

The Buteo

Buzzards beak, feaked and clean,
Feathers preened, breaks unseen,
Chasing rabbits, hares and prey,
Soaring high throughout the day.

Flying helped by thermal current,
To kill such raptors is abhorrent,
But keepers do still persecute,
With pole traps, poison and just shoot.

I want to be a hawk man too,
And see my hawk show what it can do,
I love to see my hawk show skill,
It matters not that there is no kill.

The weighing scale

When I started in falconry in 1968,
I was told quite bluntly the secret is weight
If you have a hawk and you haven't weighed it,
Then the best you can do is feed it a tid bit.

So how do you weigh a large bird of prey?
And what weight should it be to make some headway,
Much has changed in these past forty years,
Scales, equipment, but still sweat and tears.

The skill is to keep the hawk fit and well,
And gauge the weight daily, on a good weighing scale.

The leash

When in the '60s I became a falconer,
And leashes were all made from leather,
The few books about all said leather, leather,
Finding some was a real terror.

But then I found a simple solution,
Kernmantel was then an evolution,
Nylon covered in a strong, flexible jacket,
Waterproof, easy to handle and easy to knot it.

I used Kernmantel as a climber marine,
Tensile strength, soft and easy to keep clean,
So why not use this to tether the hawk?
The purists would frown and talk the talk.

The swivel

It's a marvel that the swivel is the anchor of the jessed,
But so tricky to man handle when your hawk is at your chest,
Left-hand gloved and hawk suppressed,
Now I have you, you're possessed.

An ode to falconry

by Jo Glover

What about a hobby, a way to spend our time,
One we can do together, as "ours" not "yours" or "mine",
Whatever can our choice be, we think that we can see,
That keeping birds of prey, could really be the key.

We start off with a kestrel and get all the books to read,
The hours we spend on studying to get "info" we both need,
The training started up, the bird did very well,
Step by little step, the patient hours began to tell.

But then the hidden problems, began to cause a strain,
The hours that he devoted, began to be a pain.

As birds progressed in sizes from falcons up to hawks,
So weekends were eaten up with all his hawking walks,
The weekdays also taken, with manning up and training,
As his interest grew and grew, mine was really waning.

For while he went a hawking, spending lots of time with birds,
I baby-sat and cleaned the house now wasn't that absurd!
It caused some rifts, it caused some rows, we really got to fight,
It nearly caused the end of us, until we saw the light.

So we talked and talked and tried to sort the problem out,
He obviously loved his birds, I could see without a doubt.
It could have been them or me, but that could've really cost,
For if he thought and thought it out, I'm sure that I'd have lost.

So, some years on, we've compromised and this is how we stand,
We both have separate hobbies and life really is quite grand.
So, if you're looking for an interest, a game for two to play,
Just think about this ditty, turn to your spouse and say

"Well, if you're thinking about falconry, FORGET IT!"

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 North Stifford in Essex.

For members in our Southern region informal meetings take place near Winchester, Hants. (Please contact Dean White on 01489 896504).

For further information or an application form please contact -

Peter Long (secretary) on 07889 438531

E-mail us at enquiry@sefg.org or visit our web site www.sefg.org



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For more information visit our web page www.yorkshirehawkingclub.org.uk

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FOR THE DEDICATED FALCONER

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Further details from:

Alan Rothery

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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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The IBR would like to thank all of those people that have helped to capture, look after and reunite lost birds.

If you think one of the following 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.

ALL birds that have been found will be placed on the found section of the website if the owner cannot be traced.

ALL birds reported lost whether IBR rung or not will be placed on the database but please note that only those birds whose registrations have been paid for will appear on the website.

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

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

REUNITED x 91

SPECIES

BARN OWL	12
BLACK KITE	1
BUZZARD	2
CARACARA	1
EUROPEAN EAGLE OWL	3
GOSHAWK	5
GYR/ALTAI	1
GYR FALCON	1
GYR/PEREGRINE	1
GYR/SAKER	8
HARRIS HAWK	35
KESTREL	2
LANNER	2
PEREGRINE	6
PERE/GYR SAKER	1
PERE/LANNER	1
RAVEN	1
REDTAIL	2
SAKER	3
SPECTACLED OWL	1
TAWNY OWL	2

Out of the 91 birds reunited, 54 were NOT registered.

STOLEN x 3

BREF	RING	SPECIES	AREA LOST
19509	????	HARRIS HAWK	Benfleet, S57
93495	?998?	HARRIS HAWK	Winchester, SO21
26741	?099?	PERE/SAKER	Carnaby, YO16

LOST x 29

BREF	RING	SPECIES	AREA LOST
88053	?537?	HARRIS HAWK	Denby Dale, HD8
101266	?363?	RED TAIL	Orton, B78
101460	?047?	PERE/SAKER	Higham, Kent
97216	?280?	BARN OWL	Woodhurst, PE28
94220	?401?	JACKDAW	Streat, BN6
08804	?GEL?	PEREGRINE	Clovelly, EX39
64231	?680?	HARRIS HAWK	Ely, CF5
61938	?091?	HARRIS HAWK	Wakefield, WF2
75083	?331?	GYR/PRAIRIE	South Brent, TQ10
85561	?309?	GYR/ALTAI SAKER	London, N19
97663	?333?	HARRIS HAWK	Spellbrook, CM21
101505	?L14?	PERE/SAKER	Kettering, NN16
101164	?606?	BARN OWL	Bromsgrove, B61
95057	?122?	SAKER	Sleaford, NG34
93489	?039?	PERE/LANNER	Litchfield, WS13
44269	?080?	BARN OWL	Halling, ME2
101635	?JH0?	BARN OWL	Maldon, CM9

95498	?185?	HARRIS HAWK	Wrotham Hill, TN15
65291	?304?	PERE/PRAIRIE	Christleton, CH3
101283	?677?	LANNER	Stow cum Quy, CB25
93917	?082?	HARRIS HAWK	Holborn, London
91631	?778?	GOSHAWK	Great Billing, NN3
84896	?850?	PEREGRINE	Esh Winning, DH7
98447	?374?	BARN OWL	Runcorn, WA7
83371	?726?	RED TAIL	Swinford, LE17
81990	?927?	HARRIS HAWK	Keyham, LE7
101717	?2TR?	GYR/SAKER/PEREGRINE	Dorney Common, Bucks.
101669	?765?	HARRIS HAWK	Mosborough
96813	?278?	BARN OWL	Wollaton, NG8

LOST UNREGISTERED BIRDS x 37

BARN OWL x 6
GOSHAWK x 4
GYR/PEREGRINE x 2
GYR/SAKER x 3
HARRIS HAWK x 11
KOOKABURRA x 1
PEREGRINE x 6
PERE/SAKER x 1
REDTAIL x 2
SAKER FALCON x 1

FOUND x 12

BREF	RING	SPECIES	AREA FOUND
101458	????	FERRUTAIL	Medway, ME2
101492	?883?	BARN OWL	Fenton, EX14
101409	?MJT?	HARRIS HAWK	Ketley, Telford
93632	?045?	HARRIS HAWK	Dorking, Surrey
101535	????	HARRIS HAWK	Ossett, West Yorkshire
01937	????	HARRIS HAWK	Chipping, Norton
43390	?240?H	ARRIS HAWK	Keighley, BD21
02007	????	BENGAL EAGLE OWL	Stoke on Trent
101640	????	HARRIS HAWK	North Anston, S25
98690	?409?	BARN OWL	Accrington
29363	?654?	BARN OWL	Rhos on Sea
03264	????	PEREGRINE HYBRID	Leighton Moss

FOUND DEAD x 20

BARN OWL x 9
BLACK KITE x 1
GOSHAWK x 1
HARRIS HAWK x 4
PEREGRINE x 2
RED TAIL x 1
SAKER x 1
TAWNY OWL x 1



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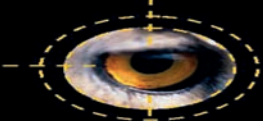
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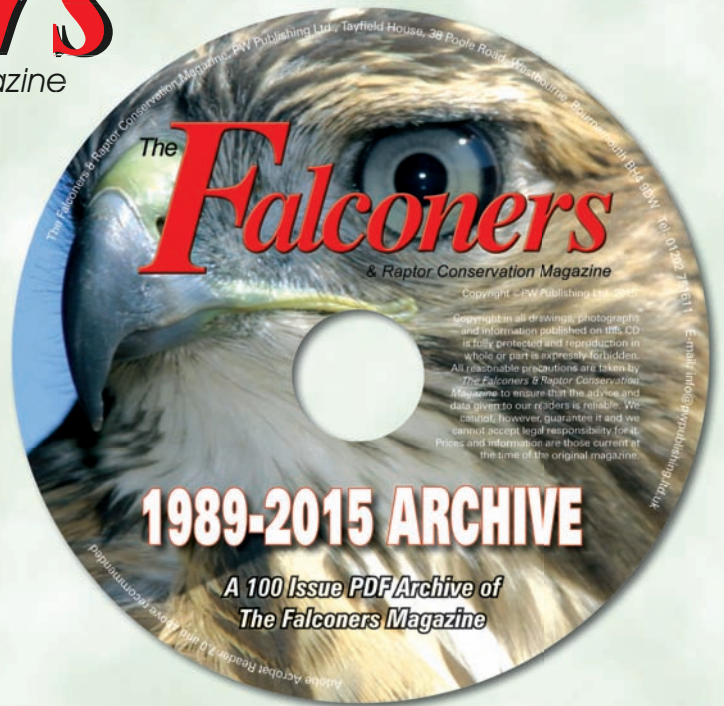
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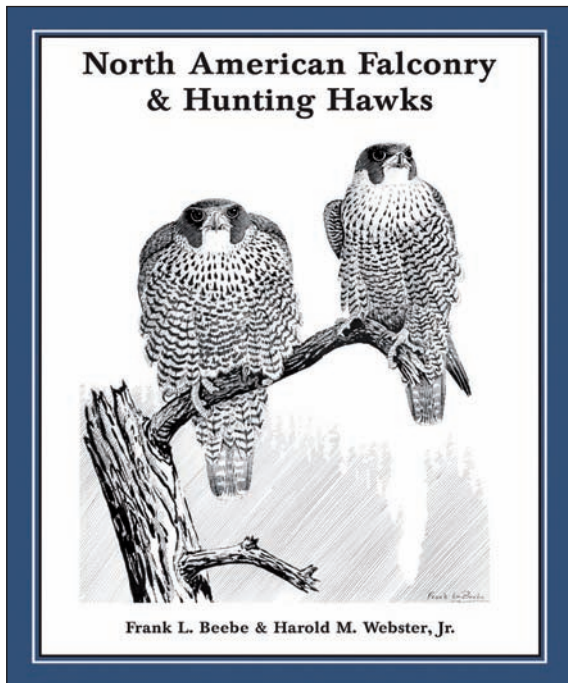


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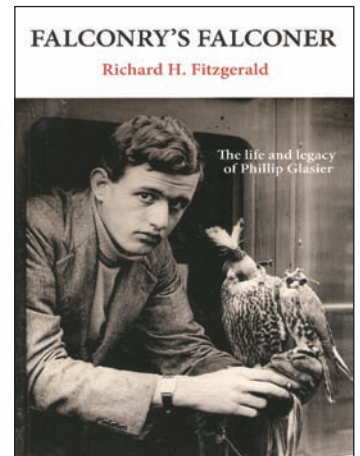
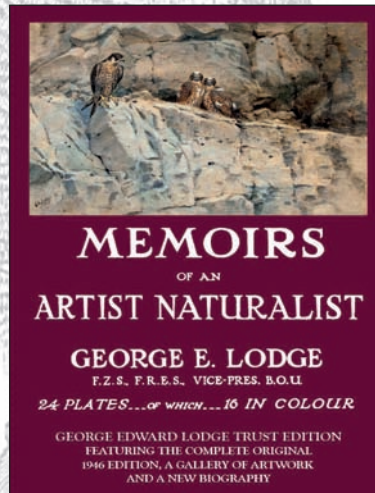
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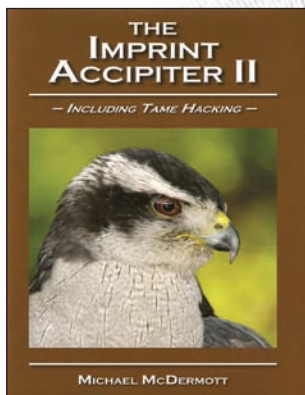


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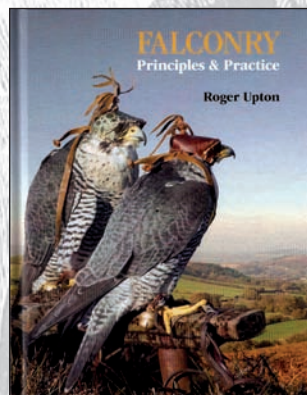
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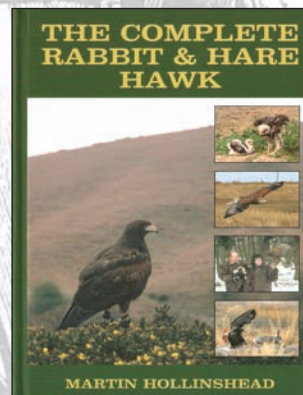
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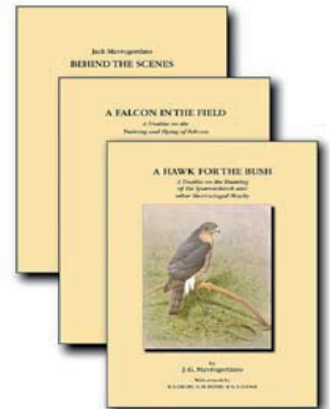
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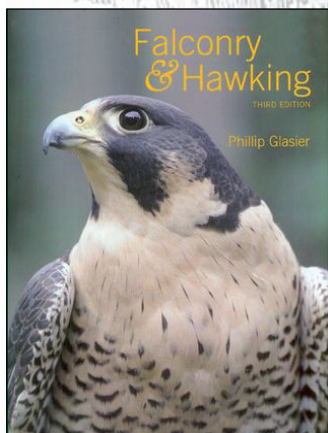
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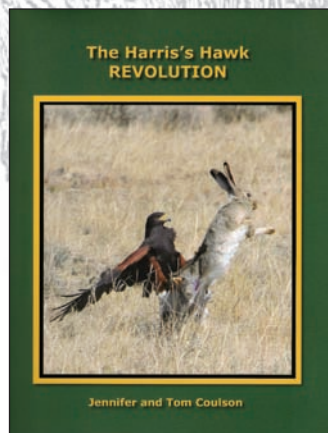
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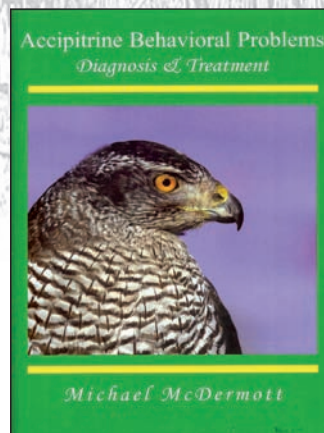
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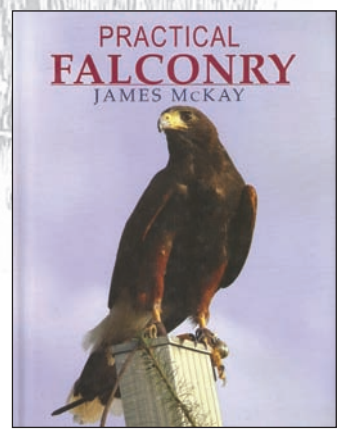
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