



# The Austringer

The Journal of the Welsh Hawking Club No. 48 2016



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The Journal of the Welsh Hawking Club

No 48 2016

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Front cover photograph: Harris' hawk at a South Wales Region Field Meet in January 2009, by Linda Wright

Back cover photograph: 'Chalky', African Tawny Eagle, by Linda Wright

## President's Preamble

Welcome to the 48<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Austringer*. This is my second year as your President and the time has flown by, I have enjoyed meeting members old and new throughout the year at the regional meetings in Usk. I will endeavour to get round to all regions in the coming year.

This year has seen the worst weather I can remember, without doubt my worst season ever. Day after day of driving rain and wind, even when I went to Spain the bad weather followed only allowing two days flying in fourteen. Everyone I have spoken to has had a similar season, we can only hope for better this year. I hope everyone has finished the year with hawks in good health and wish all a clean moult.

Our membership has remained stable but is still well below our best, your committee has been working hard to respond to the challenges faced by all small clubs. However we still need your help in ensuring that the club reflects the desires of the membership. We can only react if members supply feedback, how can we improve the benefits of membership?

We are facing a crisis in funding, our current funds are well below the amount required to ensure the successful continuation of our club. We have only just the funds to cover this year's Field Meet, Hawk Board and IAF subs and the publication of the *Austringer*, no surplus. Nothing, nada, if anything unforeseen happens we cannot respond. I am therefore going to ask, at the AGM, that the membership approve an increase in next year's subscriptions to £55. Without this increase the viability of the club will be in doubt. Your committee has already reduced the expenses by a substantial amount, no-one is paid any expenses and everyone gives their time and efforts free.

We now have a Welsh Hawking Club Facebook page which is currently a closed



page, to post you have to register with the moderators who check membership status. It is proposed to alter this to an open to view page with postings still closed to members only. This is a new venture into the modern world of social media and one which we hope will be of benefit to all members. I anticipate that the Facebook page will take over from the web page as the place to find details of current events at the club. It has the potential to grow into a useful resource for members, putting members in touch with members from other areas. It may be possible to increase the hawking opportunities by advertising field meets to members from other regions. As with all social media there are risks as well as benefits. Whilst all posts are moderated it is up to members to remember that their posts should reflect best practice and behaviour. We are a friendly hawking club and abuse of members will not be tolerated.

The club will be attending the Falconers Fair at Chetwyn Park and the Falconry

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Kim Humphrey, and both these guys are settling down to their jobs very well, so welcome to both of you.

I hope that all members have a lovely summer and/or breeding season, and look

## From the Editors



Well, that's the end of another season. Neither of us have been able to get our birds out hunting this year for various reasons, not least that every time we put our heads outside the door it was raining cats and dogs or blowing a gale...or both. So we put our birds to moult early and resolved to get them going as soon as they're hard pennaed at the end of the summer. At least the rabbit population may have a chance to increase by next season: they were pretty thin on the ground when last we looked.

We've had some criticism of the paper that the *Austringer* has been printed on for the last two years so we've opted for a

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forward to meeting up with some of you next hunting season.

Roger James.

more glossy magazine this time. We hope you like it. We've also increased the sizes of pictures where possible as some were previously thought to be too small.



As for content, there is the usual mix of officers' reports and members' experiences during the season. Mick has reviewed what may well become a new 'standard' book on falconry by Patrick Morel. For the first time that either of us can remember, we have an article on horses for falconry, from our Chairman, Roger James.

We hope that you enjoy this year's read and wish you all a successful moult. See you next season.

Mick Cordell and David Ridpath

Weekend at the ICBP. As usual we are looking for volunteers to help manning the stand at both of these events, please consider giving up an hour or two to help your committee at these events.

This year's Field Meet is now organised for 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> October 2016 at the Bryn Howell Hotel in Llangollen. Places are limited so please book early. This is a great austringers field meet with good flying on kept ground, good food and great crack in the bar afterwards.

## Chairman's Chatter

Well, that year went quickly, I must be getting old! Once again my thanks to everyone for voting me back on as Chairman.

The Annual Field Meet was very successful, thanks to the efforts of Neil McCann, this was despite the poor standard of the catering at the hotel.

As a reflection of many other clubs (and not just falconry clubs), our membership numbers have fallen somewhat to around 120. In order to rectify this it has been decided to take some positive action with a "recruitment drive" in several ways. The main region is going to hold an Open Day for members of the public in and around Usk, to encourage not just new members, but in the hope of arranging some new flying ground locally. If successful, we may hold other days in other areas.

We have also resurrected our Facebook Page and although open for anyone to peruse, only paid-up members will be allowed to contribute articles and photos/videos etc, and these will be at the discretion of the committee. This new page will hopefully attract more members to the fold.

Several would-be speakers have let us down over the last few months, but strenuous effort will be made to ensure regular entertainment in future months,

2018 will see the 50<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Austringer* perhaps this would be a good time to reinstate the concept of an International Field Meet in celebration, any ideas welcome.

My thanks go to all members of the committee for continued support and a welcome to Ceri Davies. It is the same small group who work for selflessly everyone's benefit, if you can help in any small way please come forward.

Nick Havemann-Mart

and now that it's stopped raining, it seems as if we are beginning to attract a few more new members.



Our new Hawk Board representative is Nick Havemann-Mart, who I know will do a sterling job on our behalf. Our *Austringer* editors, Mick & Dave, (sounds like Chas & Dave), are about to produce another wonderful magazine for us, so make sure your subs are up to date or you'll miss out!

Our new Membership Secretary is Ceri Davies, and our new Regional Secretary is

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## South Wales Region Report, March 2016

The South Wales region had a good year with attendance and a smattering of new members to bring fresh blood to the Club.

We were without a secretary until September when I took the plunge, having never done anything like this before I'm still learning so thanks for your patience, guys and dolls. At this point big thanks must go to Roger and Dave Sharman for all their work in the club and the South Region meetings after Dave Barber had to resign due to work commitments.

We had a mixture of activities throughout the year including speakers and a quiz, although the club is only what the members put in so hopefully this year encouragement can be made for all members to contribute to activities and for all to get involved in making the meetings as enjoyable as possible.

The AGM and field meet was great fun and three days of good hawking was had, although attendance by South Wales members was a bit sparse. Hopefully this can be addressed by some changes for this year's event.

There seem to be quite a few members threatening to try falcons this year. Having been out with a few members already this season and seen some great flights on partridge and snipe this will be great as there will be a wide range of birds being flown and only enrich the club.



Moving into this year the south Wales region will carry on providing a range of activities at the monthly meetings, and organise field meets to promote the club and "go hawking" which after all is what it's all about.

Hopefully this next season will provide us with some better weather as the second half of this one has left a lot to be desired. Wishing you all a great moult and a fantastic 2016.

Kim Humphrey, SW Region Secretary

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## North Wales Region Report for 2015

Another season has come to an end. I cannot remember such a wet and windy season for years, a few of our field meetings had to be cancelled and rearranged.

We have had field meets on Llandegla, Wynstay and Bryn-a-pys. The falcons were on Llandegla with Ellis' falcon as usual always flying well (even if it is chasing pigeons a few miles away).

A few members have struggled to find rabbits this year as numbers seem to be well down on previous years, I don't think the rainfall has helped with many farms having standing water for months on end.

Anthony Roberts had a disaster on Llandegla when flying his parent reared male goshawk which took a cock pheasant after a long chase only to be dragged down a rain water gully where both birds were drowned. It always seems to happen to the best birds!

Peter Houghton's red tail was flying well taking rabbits and pheasants...and Dave

Rhodes' chickens! Mark Herberts has been flying a hybrid falcon well this season. He is pleased with the head of game it has taken this season in some strong winds.

The region has seen a fair few new members joining this year attending the monthly meetings with our belated Christmas party and auction raising nearly £300 on the night. We have not had many guest speakers this year as we have put most of the subs back into field meets, but Steve Lloyd gave a very informative talk on hood making. It was that good he is doing another in a couple of months.

Let's hope all members have a good moult, and bring on next season.

Cheers

Neil McCann, North Wales Region Secretary

### Dates for Your Diary

The Club Field Meet will be held at the Bryn Howel Hotel, Llangollen, on 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> October 2016.

The Club AGM will be held at the hotel on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016. (see WHC website for further details in due course).

The WHC will run stands at British Falconry and Raptor Fair, Chetwynd Park, Shropshire, 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> May 2016 Falconry Weekend at ICBP, Newent, Gloucestershire, 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> September 2016 Volunteers to man the stands please make yourselves known to the Club Secretary.

Other events that you may be interested in are: Midland Game Fair, Weston Park, Telford, Shropshire, 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> September 2016 Usk Show, Usk Monmouthshire, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016 Royal Welsh Show, Builth Wells, Powys, 18<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> July 2016 Note that there will be no CLA Game Fair this year.

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#### A typical day out with the dog.

The model behaviour continues. I am on my way to a farmer's field which has just been left fallow for the year. An assortment of old crops from previous use, and weeds, provides a huge area of ideal cover for pheasants, rabbits sitting up and the occasional hare. To get to this field I have to walk through some open grassland and a small wood. Both of these provide good, distraction free training opportunities. We walk across the open grassland and her quartering, recall and stop are all working. We go into the wood and again the hunting, recall and stop are all practiced, even with a few retrievers thrown in. My confidence is getting higher. It's the best she's been for a while, more attentive, looking to me for the next command. We get to the 'field', positioned in the far corner with the wind blowing towards us. Perfect. I send her in one direction, then back, then the other, then back. She is still looking to me for commands. We step further into the field and then she goes on point. Too late, as the pheasant is spooked, and makes a

break for it. Well, Rosa's composure disappears and she behaves like a pinball, yelping with excitement and bouncing around at very high speed for about 5 minutes, randomly flushing everything in her path, which only adds to the excitement. I have learned from the past that trying to give any command at all during this period is useless. I have to wait until she has recomposed herself. It's only then I know she has heard the whistle. She used to look round, but she has learned that that gives the game away, as I would know she has heard it. Her latest tactic is to not even flinch and carry on regardless, on the basis that I'll think she hasn't heard it. So even at this point she won't come back. She knows she has done wrong but also knows that a 50-something year old man in wellies has no chance of catching her and telling her off. I'm also convinced she knows that I can't tell her off when she does decide to come back so her tactic now is to gradually wind down and then sneak back and sit by my side with a 'what a good dog am I look!!!!'.

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## Who's Training Who? by David Barber

Everybody was telling me I should get a dog. You will find so much more game. Your bird will soon get used to it and you will wonder what you ever did without one. Your bird and your dog will become hunting companions.....a team.

My bird at the time was a 4 year old male Harris Hawk which had hitherto resisted any attempt to make friends with dogs. He had persisted in staying in trees until any dog had been removed from sight and even, it seemed, not only removed from sight but had been given enough time for the dog's very presence to have faded from his memory.

All this was going to change. It would be my dog. They would get used to each other and our trips in the country would turn into the stuff of hunting dreams!!!

So, I bought a dog, a Korthals Griffon. We used to have an Italian Spinone and my wife has always liked this type of dog so the Korthals Griffon for her was a 'sensible sized' Spinone and it could also do the business from a hunting point of view for me. After all a hawking dog only needs to quarter, point, flush, stop and come back, a fraction of the things a working gundog needs to do.

2 years on, and Rosa, our dog, has settled down into a mode of planned (from her point of view) unpredictability.

In the garden I normally use a high rotating ring perch but I am now using the old bow perch so the bird and dog can be at the same height. They have got used to each other. The dog ignores the bird and I can quite happily leave them alone together. I can easily leave the dog sitting next to the bird for up to 30 minutes with no problem. She doesn't like it though, and as soon as I release her from command she moves to what she considers a more comfortable distance.



But all the early bating, squawking, over excited dog wanting to chase etc. has all gone. All the behaviour is perfect.

A typical day out with them both. I make the dog sit. And she is still, perfectly still, doesn't even flinch when the bird flies over her from a nearby fence post to my glove. Only short distances but always with confidence. Something then takes over the bird's mind and he remembers that his natural reaction to dogs is to go into a tree and stay there, so that's exactly what he does. He is however getting a little braver and will fly down if I'm at least 50m from the dog, but it's very slow progress and not the dynamic team work I had been dreaming of. Still, I'm working on the principle that things are improving albeit very, very slowly, so I'm persevering. Any tips will be gratefully received.

Rosa has been the model dog during all this. She didn't use to be, but she could very easily be mistaken for a perfectly trained dog?

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She then works on rebuilding my confidence again; the model dog, before we go through the whole thing again. I then decide we should go back to basics and really ensure they are bedded in ....in less exciting environments.

So, back to basics again before we progress....and you can guess what happens. It's our cycle of life at the moment.

I'm convinced I've now been properly trained by Rosa and she has it all planned out. It's worth lulling me into a false sense of security and putting up with some of the more boring training routines so she can have her moments of mad excitement chasing rabbits, squirrels, pheasants and whatever else.

Who's training who? Again I am open to any tips. Not answering the question, but solving the problem.

If the bird keeps out of her way in our set piece routines I clearly have no chance in this sort of scenario. Not quite the dream I had in mind, but having said all that I'm still having loads of fun with both the dog and the bird .....just not together!!!!



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## Snipe Hawking and My Observations by Tony Adams

When I was approached at the Club Christmas meal to write an article for the *Austringer*, I wasn't really sure what I was going to write about.

The following morning I had a nice little hour out on the hill, so I thought I would compose an article on the morning's events, plus a few observations of the escape tactics of the snipe.

It was a misty day with drizzle and a slight breeze. Gwen, my German wire-haired pointer bitch, was working the rush bed up ahead which was dotted with the odd puddle here and there. Eventually, she came on point at the edge of the rushes. It was Llew's turn to fly. He's a peregrine tiercel in his sixth season on snipe.

Llew is quite predictable in his flying style. On leaving the glove, he'll do maybe half-a-dozen passes over the dog's head, often causing the dog to flinch before mounting into position over the dog. He's learnt he can catch the snipe from a

fairly low pitch, as long as his positioning is good. On this occasion I didn't head the point, as there was only a slight breeze, and a downwind flush wasn't essential. In went Gwen and it was a clean flush. Out went the snipe, climbing and jinking in the process. A split second later, I heard a 'whoosh' as Llew flew over my head in pursuit.

Llew has learnt that snipe has a blind spot behind the bird and slightly underneath. A lot of his successes are a carbon copy of each other, but on this occasion the snipe evaded him and I watched as a short flight ensued out over the valley.

I looked around to see where Gwen was and she was locked up on point obviously very close to her snipe.

The vegetation was very short in this particular area, mostly mosses and short grass.



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will see them bounce as they hit the ground through sheer force. Sometimes, after a 'throw-up' the falcon will land on his snipe, but often the snipe keeps its composure and will make a break for it as the falcon comes in. My young tiercel, has a short 'throw-up' after the snipe 'dumps', and comes down quite heavily on the snipe. He's caught quite a few this way. Not the style I'm looking for, but something he has learnt.

I've come to the conclusion, large rush beds are to be avoided, especially when entering a young bird, as the snipe has got a 'get out of jail' card to use up its sleeve (when it suits him), by dumping.

8. The next method of escape, could just be a coincidence or my imagination. But, either way it works for the snipe. On flushing, the snipe will head straight for the falcon especially if the bird is wide.

I don't think any bird likes taking quarry which is heading straight at them. I've noticed in past years, and three times this season, whilst flying my young tiercel. Whether the snipe recognises it's a young bird and tries to intimidate the predator I don't know. Anyone else seen this tactic?

9. Other things that can go wrong, include, wild peregrines, kites and buzzards which can often spoil a perfect set-up. Then you have 'wild check' (more so with a young bird), and of course you have the irresistible allure of a nearby stream.

So, there's a few of 'my observations' while out "Snipe hawking". Probably more evasive tactics from this slippery quarry to come ..... hopefully I will be privileged to witness in the future.

I have the utmost respect for this quarry – weighing in at a little over 100grams. It's a stunning bird, whether in full flight, feeding or going about its daily activities.

Long live – GALLINAGO GALLINAGO



Tony's tiercel on its 130<sup>th</sup> snipe

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Gwen was right down on her belly, the concentration showing on her face. Glancing back to check where Llew was. I could see him, racing back to get into position. Sometimes when he does this, I look ahead of him as he looks as though he is 'locked-on' to something in the distance, only to turn when he gets above the dog, a sign of intelligence of the bird anticipating 'being served'.

This scenario is my favourite, when the falcon is already warmed up on an unsuccessful chase and is more determined.

No low swoops over the dog this time, he just circles, keeping the dog within his 'killing cone'.

Again, a nice clean flush and I could hear the thud as Llew connected with his snipe.

He hadn't hooked it from behind this time, but hit it in the stoop, and carried it a short distance to a grassy tump to dine.

I let him eat his meal whilst I took a few photos on my phone.

On this day everything went perfect, but it's amazing the amount of things that can and do go wrong.

Escape tactics:

1. Snipe don't sit to point to the extent that they break as you're jumping the gate. I find this happens if there is less ground cover.
2. Dog getting too close and 'bumping' them up. I sometimes feel this is a real problem. I'm not sure whether this is in part to the wind and scenting conditions, the breed or temperament of the dog ..... Or my dog training skills!! Just to elaborate on this a little: We'll say that the snipe is happy with an escape distance of 25ft., and sits to point, but when the falcon is circling the dog can creep on another 10ft or so, without the snipe breaking. I'm wondering whether or not the dog is trying to get

into the 10ft position too early, and without the falcon in the air, the snipe break ..... Oh well, enough of that.



3. Presuming the dog is on point, sometimes the snipe will break just as the bird is taking off or when it is circling out wide.
4. Again, presuming you have a 'good point', the bird has a nice pitch and is in position. When the dog runs in the snipe will sit tight, so tight the dog will actually run over the top of the snipe. With my older tiercel, the moment the dog starts to flush, he will start to stoop. So, in this scenario, the snipe will 'escape' through the 'back-door'.
5. As well as the infamous twisting and turning flights (which the snipe are renowned for). I've also seen them, whilst in level flight do a slight hover or fast wing beats to slow their flight path down, causing the falcon to overshoot the snipe, thus avoiding the 'hit' from above.
6. Another tactic I've seen, which I had seen before whilst watching video footage on 'Grouse' hawking - as the falcon comes in from behind and is going so fast it's obviously going to connect..... the snipe will jink upwards sending the falcon underneath empty handed ..... how this is done is a mystery to me.
7. I guess the one I find most annoying is when the falcon is obviously winning the aerial battle and the snipe dump into reeds, hedges or water ..... Occasionally, if the ground is hard you

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## IAF and what is happening in Europe

by Gary Timbrell



Gary Timbrell is IAF Executive Officer

The IAF, the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey, now represents 110 hunting falconers' organizations in 80 countries including all of the EU's 28 countries. This is why IAF, although being a global organization, needs a European office. Europe block votes in all international conventions so that in most law where the drafts originate with international NGOs, one side already has up to fifth of all votes. So IAF has opened its first professional office in Brussels, the centre of European Government. There is currently one full-time professional, Gary Timbrell, who has been involved with IAF since 1999 and was formerly secretary. Gary is in charge of day-to-day operations. IAF also uses professional part time researchers and specialists in EU machinations.

IAF is using professionals, but remains, an essentially an amateur organization, with an amateur Board, an amateur AC and amateur National Delegates. Here "amateur" is used in the French sense of the word, 'lover'. IAF's Latin motto is borrowed from the Emperor Frederick QUOD TOTUM PROCEDIT EX AMORE - "Because it all comes from love". So much came from love for so many years that it restricted IAF officials to those rich enough to afford that love. Now there is a professional office to back them up.

Here is the new IAF team for 2016 -2018:

### The Executive

- President: A Lombard (South Africa)
- VP Americas: Ralph Rogers (USA)
- VP Europe: Janusz Sielicki (Poland) - Also Conservation Officer

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- VP Asia: Keiya Nakajima (Japan) – Also Officer for Rehabilitation and Conservation
- VP MENA: HE Majid al Mansouri (UAE)
- Executive Treasurer: António Carapuço (Portugal)
- Executive Secretary: Adrian Reuter (Mexico) + Officer for CITES

#### The Voting AC

- **Chairman:** Bohumil Straka (Czech Rep.) – UNESCO and ICH
- Véronique Blontrock (Belgium) – Representative for Belgium, PRO
- Bakyt Karmakbeyev (Kazakhstan) – Representative for Central Asia
- Patricia Cimberio (Italy) – Officer for Communications and Events
- Thomas Richter (Germany) – Officer for Animal Welfare
- Zayed al Maadeed (Qatar)
- Mark Upton (UK)
- Dan Cecchini (USA) – IAF Data Base – also Special responsibility for Electrocutation of Raptors
- Fernando Feás (Spain) – Officer for Ex-Situ Conservation
- Frits Kleyen (The Netherlands) – Officer for Culture

The Executive and the Advisory Committee constitute IAF's Board

#### Extended Advisory Committee:

- Karl Heinz Gersmann (Germany) – CIC Liaison.
- Matt Gage (UK) – Special Advisor – Science
- Laco Molnar (Slovakia) – Veterinary Liaison
- Dick Ten Bosch (The Netherlands) – Editorial Committee and Fund-raising.
- Yukio Asaka (Japan) – Eastern Asia.
- Willem Vrijenhoek (The Netherlands) – Interpol Liaison
- Henrique Rezende – Representative for Latin America
- Philippe König (The Netherlands) – IAF General Counsel

- Stephan Wunderlich (Germany) – Biodiversity Working Group and Perdix Portal
- Kamran Khan (Pakistan) – Officer for the Indian Subcontinent
- Javier Ceballos (Spain) – Officer for Falconry Ethics and WFD
- Tony Crosswell (UK) – Editorial Committee
- Jevgeni Shergalin (Estonia) – Officer for Northern Eurasia. FHT Liaison
- Patrick Morel (Belgium)

#### Additional Advisors:

- Robert Kenward (UK) IUCN/CMS
- Elisabeth Leix (Germany) – 2018 Council of Delegates Meeting

**What is happening in Europe** is that Europe is now recognising the importance of falconry. The physical building of IAF's European office is on the ground floor of la Maison Européenne de la Chasse, the headquarters of FACE. We used our gala opening to invite MEPs, commission officials and other NGOs to come to us and we publicly signed a MoU with FACE. This physical situation and alliance gives falconry direct access to people that count in Europe, including the MEPs' Intergroup for Hunting and Biodiversity, who had arranged the Great Falconry Exhibition inside the Brussels Parliament Building in 2012 to celebrate UNESCO recognition. We are also very near the IUCN European offices on Blvd Louis Schmidt, which gives us access to one of the most important conservation organisations which affect falconry laws. FACE and CIC, the main shooting organizations, and IUCN, the main conservation organization are actively courting the falconers now they see the success that UNESCO has brought to us.

IAF's most important professional service is the Dod's Agency, both as a communication system for stuff coming in, alerts on Invasive Alien Species legislation, Biodiversity, trafficking, useful conferences, MEP opinions etc. etc. Many

European clubs contribute to the expenses incurred by the contract and receive the information by email. We also use the Dod's service for press releases favourable to falconry and are regularly contacted by the press to comment on falconry related matters.

Under the presidency of Adrian Lombard IAF thinking is like a Tripod – Falconry (Hunting) is supported by Conservation, Culture and Education. The IAF has been able to establish its standing as a significant conservation organization taking part in various projects in Europe – the tree-nesting peregrines, saker nests in Hungary and, outside of Europe, the funding and management of the first of the Saker Global Action Plan Flagship Projects. We are in direct joint partnership with the IUCN, CMS and BirdLife International. This project is of huge importance to falconers, particularly those in the Saker Range States. It promotes the concept of sustainable use as a conservation tool. It is essential that we win the support of falconers in those countries that utilize wild taken Sakers. This is significant step and, although not seeming to have direct impact on European falconers, the credibility it has already given to the falconry community in our contacts with all the international, law-making NGO's (all those initials) has skyrocketed. Now, instead of us begging for seats at the CBD (Convention on Biodiversity), the CMS (Conference on Migratory Species), CITES (you all know this one), they are asking us to give speeches and make presentations.

Everyone is familiar with promoting falconry Culture from the ongoing UNESCO related stuff, World Falconry Day etc., but Culture is also Education and this year there have been academic conferences in Białystok (Poland) and in Lisbon, both very favourable to falconry, and there is cross-over exhibition in the Spanish National Science Museum in Madrid (well worth seeing). In March

spoke about how falconry is depicted to the general public, at Museum Curators' Conference in Paris.

**This inspired the idea for a European Cultural Routes Project.** IAF has an obligation as an Advisory NGO to UNESCO, to develop and promote the culture of falconry. The vision of developing a Falconry Route which celebrates both the active living culture of falconry as well as the historical culture is inspired. This culture of falconry is particularly rich all over Europe, but also in countries which border the European Union and which encircle the Mediterranean Sea and extend to Persian Gulf and beyond. We are aware of the significance of falconry during the Middle Ages as it bridged the gulf between enemies in the conflicts of the Crusades and allowed a sharing of knowledge, literature and culture even in those troubled times. We can see falconry providing a common link in today's areas of conflict. Thus the IAF, as the coordinating partner organization in this project, can seek to enhance the concept of a common European identity as well as extending the hand of friendship beyond the confines of Europe. This project will enable us to promote the cultural aspects of falconry, specifically encouraging those with an interest in falconry, history and natural sciences to visit places of interest, but will also allow us to publicise events, such as conferences, festivals and field-meets and enhance attendance.

**More on Education: The Establishing of Falconers as the experts on Animal Welfare** relating to Falconry Raptors. Our Guidelines for the General Welfare of Falconry Raptors (approved at the 2014 Council of Delegates Meeting in Doha) have been available on our website since then and have already been used (at the request of national clubs) to develop welfare regulations in Flemish Belgium and, most recently, in Malta, where the government even mentioned them by name in national law.

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We are moving forward with a proposed online **Welfare Self-audit** (a project whose development was approved in Argentina last month) Self-audit principles will be available, (though not compulsory) for hunting falconers, pest control operators, rehabilitators and breeders. We are an international body and recognise that in different countries, traditions and methods are quite different, but there are some principles that are universal.

There are several sections in the self-audit: General requirements, Legal requirements – may be very different around the world, Veterinary requirements, Housing requirements etc. etc., even special requirements for the keeping and managing of living food animals (if kept). Particularly important is the request for back-up photos and document uploads to back up the information given. The actual working form is online and was shown to Council (request link from [info@iaf.org](mailto:info@iaf.org)).

There are three important things to remember when looking at this online form:

1. It will still show the authorities we have responsibility and expertise; if they decide to do make welfare law they can use this set of criteria, rather than a set given by someone with no knowledge of birds of prey.
2. If someone fills it in and registers they get a certificate so if an SPCA inspector comes they can show it (of course, if they have lied it is invalid). Even if they lie through their teeth, it is still educational because they learn what they should really have in place.
3. If they don't lie and are still going to be prosecuted, then IAF can link them up with an expert witness to dispute in court if the case is unjustified.

This service will be available free to members of IAF Member Organizations and to IAF Subscribers and will be available shortly. There is also proposed an online course, IAF Animal Welfare for

Falconers. Animal welfare is especially dangerous because there is neither a clear definition of what "welfare" means, nor clear knowledge even among the falconry community. This proposed course is online based, entirely free paying and is two flagships in one: to educate falconers and to take control of the political discussion.

**The final big IAF project for this year is a Breeders Forum, Pedigree System and DNA Banking:** responsible falconers want to be able to prove they deserve freedoms through registration; responsible falconers want to be able to move between national boundaries more freely with their birds; discerning falconers want to know what they are buying / getting. It's becoming increasingly evident that "lines" exist that are predisposed to certain types within falconry, and some breeders are producing "known" lines which are sought, as well as having rearing conditions that are sought.

Banks are proposed through DNA storage. Biotechnology is constantly improving so we now need less DNA, can store more efficiently, and have more cost-effective methods to ID individual / species parentage. We are aiming for a guaranteed DNA bank with long term contractual obligations and a similarly guaranteed database acceptable to CITES enforcers. A system of species-level identification is being developed: this is a bit tricky and new for some species – but wanted by the Arab and related markets for proving 'pure' gyrs etc) and very useful in forensic cases where a legitimate breeder of a key species may be being put under pressure by the authorities to definitively prove parentage.

A system of individual level identification that can allow parentage tracing will be a bit sparse to start with, but will build through generations as the bank grows; in the meantime, it will allow registered breeders to lodge their own breeding stock in the bank, mark it, and start to create their own accredited pedigrees. Small back yard breeders who produce for

themselves and friends are already volunteering to use this scheme.

#### So what is the Brussels Leviathan doing?

We have seen that Welfare is the biggest issue, with a new Parliamentary Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals. This is a reasonable group, which includes many members of the Hunting Intergroup as well. Unfortunately it is backed up by a much more radical group that includes both MEPs and outsider radical organizations – the Eurogroup for Animals – this doubles the press release capacity and slews it back to the hard-core. These people are the advocates of the "Positive lists": proposed lists of animals that may be kept, that is restricting pet keeping to a few species like dogs, cats and rabbits. IAF is closely monitoring this issue.

The most important of the European Conventions that channel legislation is the Berne Convention, which has most recently accepted the IAF Guidelines with regard to Invasive Alien Species and Falconry (see IAF website). Expert groups in Bern Convention also cover the illegal killing of Birds, for example extensive netting along the southern Mediterranean coastline and spring hunting. This all links on with Trafficking and Illegal trade in Wildlife, which we are all against, but we

must be vigilant we do not lose the baby with the bath water, for example a blanket ban on spring hunting would stop spring rook hawking and a blanket ban on netting would stop the traditional Tunisian and Black Sea falconers from catching their passage spars. We have therefore attended many workshops and seminars on this in the past months to make small interventions where we can "sowing seeds" and put things in perspective. For example Facebook pictures of the seizure of 16 smuggled sakers in Iran were being lauded as a major win in conservation, yet this 16 is only the equivalent of 20 miles worth of electrocuted sakers on Mongolian power lines. To make these distinctions we have to be present and use examples from outside Europe as well as from inside it. With the Birds and Habitats Directives the key words are Biodiversity, stakeholder interest and community stewardship. We use them as often as we can.

IAF is about Communication, we communicate the needs of the individual falconers, via their clubs and individual involvement in IAF, to the International Agencies who make the laws that affect us all. We do this so that you don't have to and so you can spend time in the field, the mountain, the forest and the desert.

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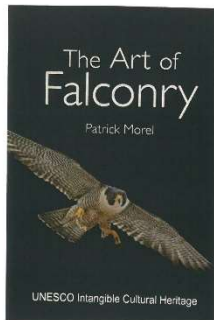
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## Book Review: *The Art of Falconry*

by Patrick Morel reviewed by Mick Cordell

Published by Medina Publishing, ISBN: 978-1-909339-68-2, Cover price £40.00.

All illustrations taken from the book by kind permission of the publishers.



How often do we pick up a book about Falconry, or any other subject for that matter, take a glance through it and then either decide not to buy or if we do we then take it home, read through and then put it on the shelf to collect dust alongside all the others?

I am prepared to wager that if you were to purchase this book it will be a long time before it will collect any cobwebs through lack of use.

Let me start at the beginning. Back in late January I had a phone call from Jessica at Medina Publishing. She asked if I would be interested in reviewing a new Falconry book for our club magazine. I was told that the title was 'The Art of Falconry' by Patrick Morel. The book was due for release in February. The title seemed to ring a bell somewhere in the rear-most of

my memory but agreed to review the book with pleasure. As you are aware we are always struggling for different items for the *Austringer*. Jessica said she would send me an office copy by next day delivery.

I looked on my vast bookshelf and found the book that I thought had a similar title. Indeed it was entitled 'The Art of Falconry' but this was a copy of The Hon Gerald Lascelles which was first published in 1892. It was a small book (A5 size) of about 160 odd pages. 'That's fine' I thought to myself I will be able to read a similar sized book in plenty of time before the *Austringer* deadline date. It would also be interesting to see where this new book would stand amongst others.

The next morning the book arrived with the post lady... What a shock! I eagerly opened the package. The book is around A4 size but it is over 460 pages weighing in at a hefty 5lbs. The cover (see left) is very pleasant to look at being mainly black with white typeface and a picture of a peregrine with wings outstretched and feet poised as if in attack mode.

As we all do, I flicked through the first 20-30 pages to give me an idea of the layout. My initial reaction was that this was going to be a very good book with quality pictures, both paintings and photographs in abundance. Would this book be able to compete or even compare to books we all know from authors as Phillip Glasier, Dr Nick Fox, Jemima Parry-Jones and others. Later that day I made time to sit down and really start to look through the book.



The author, Patrick Morel, pictured here, is a very well-known and well regarded Master Falconer who was once the President of the Belgian Falconers Association and a former President of the IAF (International Association of Falconry). This book was published in French in 2013. Patrick gives an interesting introduction into the English version at the beginning of the book. There are also introductions from the current President of the IAF and the current President of the BFC.

The book is divided into several sections with main headings including:

- The Hunting Hawk
- Longwings; the High Flight
- Different Types of High Flight
- Hunting Stories
- Shortwings; the Low Flight
- Falconry Around the World
- Ultimate Quarry
- Reflections on the Philosophy and Ethics of Falconry

Each section is then subdivided into more bite sized articles.

The author has been very clever in the way the book is arranged as it is not a step by step guide to falconry but a true and personal insight into the art. Admittedly he goes through the usual types of birds and equipment used in Falconry throughout the world but there seems to be a little bit more information that other books don't give. To some British Falconers it may seem pointless to give details of Capturing wild hawks and Hacking but I found it very interesting. After all Falconers in the US have had to trap the hawk of their choice for many years before being able to proceed further.

All aspects of Falconry are dealt with in this book including up to date details on Telemetry, Drones (to get falcons to climb, NOT for eagles to catch), dogs in Falconry, Hoods and much more. The detail in which each part of the book is put over in such a way as to make you want to read on and learn more. After all we never stop learning in our sport.



Red-naped Shaheen:  
An illustration from the book







What I also liked about this book was that the author has given some space for contribution from other falconers, whilst some might think this odd I firmly believe it adds greatly to the content of the book and give yet another viewpoint. I especially like the section by Gilles Nortier on the Philosophy and Ethics of Falconry. Perhaps the thing that struck me most when reading this book was the quantity and sheer quality of the pictures, I say pictures but some of them are paintings of such superb craftsmanship that the layman would be hard pressed to tell whether it is painting or photograph.

One other aspect of this book which I liked was the way it has been set out. Each page of text is easy on the eye with two columns per page.

I have no doubt this book will be well received by both Falconers and non-falconers alike and will take a very important place on the bookshelf, bedside cabinet or coffee table.

Our centre page spread is a photograph of a peregrine in hot pursuit of a snipe taken from the book.

## The International Centre for Birds of Prey

by David Ridpath and Mick Cordell



The International Centre for Birds of Prey at Newent, Gloucestershire, celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary over the next year, being established in 1966 and opened formally in May 1967 and since this is the last *Austringer* before then, we thought it timely to share some thoughts on the Centre, its foundations and its development.

The Centre's founder, Phillip Glasier, pictured above and at left (note the leash) will be well known to most readers of the *Austringer* for his book *Falconry and Hawking*, now a standard book on the keeping and flying of diurnal birds of prey. After service as an instructor in the army, he had been a professional photographer until, in 1954, he was appointed falconer to the late James Robertson Justice, a well-known actor at that time who had an interest in falconry and a large estate in Scotland on which to practice the sport. He spent 3 years, with his family, including daughter Jemima who subsequently took over the Centre, on the estate on the Black Isle training and flying birds for the actor who was too busy to undertake that work himself. Phillip was well qualified for

this job as he had been a keen amateur falconer since childhood when he spent much time with his uncle, Capt. C.W.R. Knight, known to Phillip as 'Unc' – and there were no 'professional' falconers then. He had played various parts requiring the handling birds of prey in historical films.

After Scotland, the family moved south to Dorset, where he wrote *As the Falcon Her Bells*, an autobiographical account of his early year's escapades with 'Unc'. His expertise as a trainer, bird photographer, performer and falconer prepared him well to run a centre dedicated to educating the public in the behaviours of birds of prey and the techniques of husbandry and falconry. In 1966, he bought Bouldon House near Newent, Gloucestershire, for that purpose and moved there with his family, 10 pigeons, 5 dogs, 2 cats, a donkey, a goat and a tame deer fawn. His own nucleus of birds of prey were supplemented by buzzards, peregrines, goshawks and merlins donated by Egan Muller.



The Zone, an educational resource



The new hospital, caring for the collection and for wild injured birds



The Owl Courtyard entrance



The Hawk Walk, displaying birds from the flying team

By May 1967, the attraction, then known simply as The Falconry Centre (as there were no others anywhere in the world) was opened with admission prices at 2/6 (=12p) for adults and 1/3 (=7p) for children! In 1968, courses were offered at £15 for the five day and £25 for the ten day course.

Even in those early days, the Centre had significant success at breeding birds of prey, breeding birds never before born in captivity. To date, 68 species have been bred at the Centre, which gives the staff the expertise to assist in conservation work throughout the world. One special bird was a European Eagle Owl, imprinted and called Mozart, given to Gemima as a 21<sup>st</sup> birthday present: she took him to college with her. He survived until 2012 and is buried in the Hawk Walk.

The Centre has had its ups and downs. An outbreak of foot and mouth disease closed the Centre during its first year. In 1997, Newcastle disease (otherwise known as Fowl Pest) came to within a mile of the Centre: all the birds had to be vaccinated within 24 hours. Foot and Mouth hit the Centre again in 2001 and although the Centre stayed open, visitor numbers were hard hit. The biggest 'down' was the failure of Gemima's abortive enterprise to merge much of the collection with the South Carolina Centre for Birds of Prey.

But under Phillip's and, from 1982, Gemima's, direction the enterprise overcame all these difficulties and, on Gemima's return with the birds that had been taken to the USA, the Centre reopened as the International Centre for Birds of Prey. The breeding successes, the publication of various books on raptor and owl husbandry, provision of trained birds for films, conservation work including the India vulture project, all added to the day-to-day work of maintaining the collection, running courses and giving demonstrations both at the Centre and at country fairs. All these achievements led

to an MBE for Gemima in 1999 for services to bird conservation.



Boulton House

The Centre has, to some extent been a victim of its own success. In the early days, being the only such attraction in the country, individuals and groups, Clubs and schools, travelled considerable distances to see the collection and the flying demonstrations to say nothing of attending courses. As more and more Bird of Prey centres opened up however, it was easier for people to get similar experiences more locally to their homes.

Phillip Glasier died in 2000. He is buried in the churchyard at Cliffords Mesne, the parish in which the Centre lies. The memorial window in the church attests to the reputation of one of the sport's most influential characters. The monochrome original artwork for the window is on display in the café at the Centre.

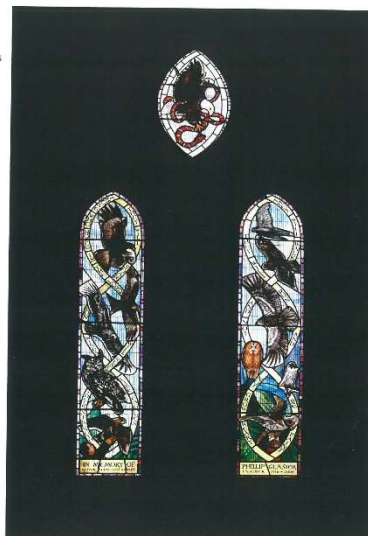
The Centre has aspirations to further enhance the visitor experience as well as its services to wildlife and ensure that it stays 'ahead of the game'. There are plans to build a new entrance and café and cabins to accommodate staff and students. A gallery and museum will augment the cultural aspects of the Centre as will a block of aviaries dedicated to British birds of prey and owls. One of the barns will be rebuilt to enhance the visitor view and provide better environment for the birds. Gemima's greatest aspiration is probably to create a TV series.

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So why not plan to visit this internationally acclaimed Centre in its half-centenary year to see the new facilities. In the meantime, you can visit the website at [www.icbp.org](http://www.icbp.org), to find out more about the work and history of the Centre – enjoy!

The authors wish to thank Gemima Parry Jones MBE for submitting to an interview for this article and for giving us access to the Centre and to her photographic archive.

This photograph (courtesy of Linda Wright) is of the memorial windows dedicated to Phillip Glasier in the church at Cliffords Mesne.



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## The Falconry Horse by Roger James

My wife, June, and I have been professional Falconers for nearly 30 years, and early on in our careers we decided to try and offer something different with our Falconry Displays. Because we met at a local saddle club (June was the secretary, and I was asked to give some instruction), displaying horses and falcons together was an obvious choice.

When we moved into a house of our own, June thought it was time for her to buy her own horse. After many visits to many stables, she saw a bay gelding called "Mick". He was a Thoroughbred x Cleveland Bay, about 16.2 hands and built like the proverbial out-house. On first sight June fell in love with his enormous posterior! Being cynical, I pointed out to her that he was so pigeon-toed, all he would be capable of would be "turns-on-the-forehand," and would probably screw himself into the ground!

Of course she took no notice and went off on him for a trial ride around the farm. The next thing I knew was an approaching sound like thunder, as she and Mick reappeared over the hill in a flat-out gallop! Boy, he could bolt for Wales!

June managed to stop him after a lot of pulling and huffing and puffing, and several laps of the farm. She jumped off him and proclaimed that she wanted to buy him? What? Huh? We took him home the following day, and for the first year, June spent her time with hacking, schooling, and visiting the local A & E. Mick was a problem horse!

Despite his conformation faults he never went lame, and we even overcame his mental problems. The breakthrough in that department came when we began flying the hawks to him and riding with one hand. He loved it, and became our first Falconry Horse.



A good friend of ours had a Thoroughbred gelding who was pretty steady, and was fine with the birds. So off we went with both horses to our first Mounted Display, (This was about 25 years ago). We turned up at the venue in west Wales to find that the arena was right next to the fun-fair...SH\*\*!

The animals performed brilliantly, and to great applause, (that was a bit of luck). Unfortunately, during our stint in the arena, the local drug addicts had moved in to make camp right next to our stand.

When we tried to ride through them on our way back to the stand, there were about 20 of these idiots, all as high as kites, sprawled over the grass (I mean the green stuff), blocking our path. None of them wanted to move, despite our trying to be polite and tactful. Having lost my rag, I warned them that unless they moved, a half-ton lunatic was likely to stomp all over them. I thought Mick would chicken-out at the prospect of this, but he turned into a Police-cum-SAS horse, and promptly trod on at least three of these clowns with the desired result.

My great friend, Rob Payne, and I were grouse-hawking in Scotland many years

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ago, and the weather was against us for two weeks and the flying of the falcons was dire. I happened to mention to him that we should be in Spain, in shirtsleeves, and riding Spanish horses. He thought it a great idea, but admitted he had a problem with this plan...he couldn't ride!

I suggested he should get off his butt and learn. Well bugger me, he went off and did just that! He then went Spain and ended up buying a PRE colt and mare from Richard and Sue Lust of Yeguada Iberica. P.R.E. is Spanish...Pura Raza Espanola. (Pure Bred Spanish Horse). Rob soon became a very accomplished rider but went to the "Dark Side" and bought himself two lovely Lusitano stallions. (Portuguese Horses).

On the arrival of the PRE's from Spain, I was asked to take on the colt, who was only 3 year's old at the time. A few years' down the line, Rob generously gave me the stallion who was called "Senador". We backed him, he passed his grading with flying colours, and became my passion and great friend. All you owners of these fabulous horses will know what I mean!

Senador was afraid of nothing, but loved girls (typical Spaniard), and also became very protective of June and myself. From the moment he arrived at our place he was introduced to the hawks and falcons, who flew over, past, and under him, and he never blinked once.

It was obvious that he was made to be a Falconry Horse.

His training consisted of being ridden with one hand, and getting used to me swinging the falcons' lure around his head, and of course having the birds fly towards him at high speed, and to land on me and on him! He is an extrovert of course, and loves to passage and pirouette for fun, and makes me look a better rider than I am!

Many of you have watched falcons swing a lure on a long line to produce

"passes" with the bird, similar to a matador with a cape. Now of course I have seen other falconers attempt this on horseback, but the result is rather ugly, with the lure being snatched away from the falcon at the last minute. This is because the lure line has to be short in order to manage it as it is swings around the horse, and the horse's head and neck tends to be in the way so you can't present the lure in a smooth and elegant way.

So I thought of using a "pole-lure", where the lure-line is attached to a light carbon fibre pole about 4 feet long. This allows the rider to swing the lure above and to the side of the horse's head, without strangling the horse! The first time I tried this, I was distracted by June asking me something, and Senador took advantage of my lapse of concentration and promptly grabbed the lure with his teeth. The next few minutes were reminiscent of big-game fishing as I tried to convince him to release the bloody lure!

Getting the horse used to the birds and the lure was no problem, but getting the birds used to him did present a few difficulties.

It seemed that the falcons were pretty laid-back about it all, but the hawks and kites weren't so sure, and it took a bit of juggling with their weights to achieve a good and confident response from them. The Harris's were really wary about landing on the fist when I was on the horse, and to start with had to have their weights cut down quite sharply, but being clever they soon lost their fear of him and became quite cocky.

We flew two hybrid falcons to start with, a male gyrfalcon (Bashir) and a female peregrine x saker (Quack-Quack). The gyrfalcon quickly got into his stride, and would leave the lure to jump instantly to the fist once he had had his reward. The Peregrine was a bit more awkward, because once she had eaten she would leave the lure and run straight to the horse's front hoof. She

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would then attempt a vertical jump to my fist. Sometimes she made it, but other times she ran out of puff half-way up, and then ran up Senador's shoulder. But even as she scrambled up with very sharp talons, he just closed his eyes and put up with it!

Nevertheless, Senador has appeared in some of our displays this year, and has been a real hit with the public, and with the help of Bashir and Quack-Quack, our lovely falcons, has presented some great spectacles of this ancient sport, which of course was originally conducted on horseback, on beautiful horses such as the PRE, "the Horse of Kings".



Lure swinging the hard way!

## My Hawking Team by Eddie Jones



Gretchen is a female Goshawk imprint. She flies at 2lb 10oz. Goshawks are good at flying anywhere – woodland, hedgerow, open land, and rough areas. Their quarry is common brown hare, blue hare, rabbits, pheasant, partridge, and duck.

I also have a male gyr x peregrine falcon hybrid called Harry. He flies at 1lb 15oz. He is a first year bird. He has killed three grouse. Another gyr x peregrine falcon, Rudy, flies at 1lb 12oz. He has taken one grouse this year up in Scotland.

I started flying birds 6 or 7 years ago. My first bird was a Harris' hawk called Fiona – flying weight was 2lb 1oz. She was a great bird. On a learning curve for falconry, I flew her for three years and caught rabbits, pheasants, ducks and partridge with her but never caught a brown hare with her. If going into falconry a Harris' hawk is a great bird to learn with.

I also have two German short-haired pointers. Their names are Lilly (she is five years old), and a seven month old puppy called Lady. They are brilliant when out hawking and they make life a lot easier because they mark well on holes and hedges and they will point quarry.

I also have ferrets – their names are Lazy, Speedy, Dopey, and Dotty. I only keep jill ferrets for working as I find them a lot easier to handle and a lot smaller. Last year I bought some micro ferrets but I found them too small to work on their own, so I used a micro hob over a normal sized jill and they came a lot smaller than normal sized jills and bigger than a micro ferret.

I went to Scotland in 2015 and had a great time. I caught blue hares, one grouse and a lot of rabbits. Up on the mountains it was hard to walk. It was very steep so you need to be quite fit. The heather is deep and you have to walk a lot of miles so

make sure you take plenty of fluids. I must say there are stunning views up there and would certainly recommend it if anyone would like to go. It is a lovely place to walk and go and see.

I used to have a male Goshawk. His name was George – flying weight was 1lb 12oz. I had him for three seasons. He was a brilliant Goshawk – in fact the best Goshawk I have ever owned. He used to catch blue hare, rabbits, pheasant, partridge and duck. Sadly, he died after catching a duck. I always feed my birds off

the catch they kill. I think it makes a better hunting bird. That day the duck he caught had been shot with a shotgun and it still had lead shot in it. It looked fine, but sadly though, shortly after feeding my bird with the kill, he was ill. I rushed him to the Vets but he died. We found out that it was lead poisoning. I had kept the duck in the freezer so I checked it over and found a lead shot in it. Now I always check and I recommend that any game you catch out and about should be checked for lead shot before you feed your bird the kill. Check, and check again.



Eddie's GSP

## From Kestrel to Eagle in 25 Years by Lyn Palmer



It all started when I was driving to the moors one day and saw this young lad with a kestrel on his fist, I stopped the car to talk to the lad. He told me his name was Paul Davies. I explained to him that I flew hawks and there was a Welsh Hawking Club field meeting the next weekend and asked him if he would like to come along and see how it should be done.

He was thrilled I'd asked him and we went together to the meeting.

He was amazed on seeing so many birds of prey at one time they included goshawks, red tails and Harris hawks, I myself was flying my female goshawk, Heidi, at the time.

The meeting was held at Tredunnock, Newbridge on Ush, near Newport, Gwent, South Wales. The hunting ground was next to the pub where we used to have our meetings every month.

The field master was Mr. Rossiter, there was always about a dozen members with their birds. We all took our turn to slip the birds, eventually

it was my turn with my goshawk. Paul was standing by a five-bar gate, the ferret entered and soon flushed the rabbit who ran right by Paul's feet with my goshawk behind it. The rabbit made it to cover so my goshawk missed it. We all had a good day with a few rabbits and pheasant in the bag.

So it was now time for some liquid refreshment in the pub.

I introduced Paul to my fellow austringers, they all made him feel very welcome. He told me later he would never forget such a great day. In fact, that night all his dreams were about the birds hunting. You could say I took Paul under my wing after that day.

I saw Paul frequently, he was always asking me questions and borrowing books on falconry and wanting to know how to train his kestrel. It all came into place. In the end he was flying his kestrel to the lure.

The following year he wanted a bigger bird to fly so he bought a buzzard, since then he has gone from strength to strength over the last 25 years. In fact he has flown many species including Harris hawks, sparrow hawks, red tails, goshawks, gyr x peregrines, peregrine x saker and has also bred Harris hawks.

He caught a number of species including a fox with his red tail. What an achievement.

One day he told me he always wanted a golden eagle. He contacted a breeder in Scotland who breeds eagles. He paid a deposit of £1000 in 2,014, knowing the bird wouldn't be ready until 2015. In September 2015 Paul and his wife Debbie went to Scotland to collect his bird. He returned to South Wales with a lovely female golden eagle in perfect feather condition. The next stage was to man the

bird and get it flying. At the moment he has got the eagle chasing a lure the full length of the field, so it will not be too long before the first kill will be in the bag with his pride and joy. I wish him all the best in the future on the bird he has always wanted.

Paul with his golden eagle



## Make Your Own Sloe Gin by David Ridpath

For a heart-warming flask to take hawking on a cold day (unless you are driving, of course).

Pick about **half a kilo of sloes**, preferably when they've had some frost. Or pick more and select the best. Remove the stalks, wash and drain the fruit. Prick it all over with a bodkin or similar needle. I aim for perhaps 6-8 holes per fruit. The more holes the better the flavour will percolate into the gin. Place the fruit in a Kilner or similar wide necked jar (with a lid) with a capacity of at least 1.5 litres.

Put **125g of sugar** in the jar and a **litre of gin** over the fruit.

Fit the lid and shake well to dissolve the sugar and place the jar in a dark cupboard for three months, giving it a gentle shake each week to distribute the flavour and colour.

Strain off into small sterile bottles, cork tightly, label and store in the dark for a few more months while the product matures. I decant back into the original gin bottle which should still be sterile if the cap was replaced.

I would not drink the product for at least 12 months. Now I have a stock, I can leave it longer. I have sloe gin made several years ago and it has improved over the years.

Fill your hip flask and enjoy!

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## Scotland in 2015 by Steve Richards

The party: Steve Richards, Darren (Daz) Hughes, Chris (Drewie) Drew

Here we go again off on our wee Scotland Trip. This year we were very thin on the ground: myself with Harris' hawk, Lady, and my pointer Mitzi; Daz with 2 goshawks and 4 dogs; Chris with Harris' hawk, Sky, and ferrets.

Matt and Lee couldn't make it this year due to a last minute hitch and Alan has moved up to Scotland. When we got there Alan was laid up with a really bad leg (through doing too much). Daz went up a week earlier. It was Chris' first trip so we travelled up together in his car.

October 16th: Chris picked me up at 04:00 loaded up and off we went, it was a really good trip up. We got to Alan's late afternoon, stayed the night at his cottage (thanks Alan and Diane for putting us up). On arriving at Alan's Chris' hawk looked a bit stressed out, so we kept an eye on her. Then on to the cottage on Saturday afternoon. The hawk was still not right: she is a young bird and not used to a travel box for long spells. We stopped a number of times on our way up and got them out to get some fresh air and stretch their wings. Anyway after a few days of tender loving care from Chris and expert advice from Daz, Sky was ready and raring to go by Monday.

Daz took up two young goshawks and most of the time he was training them. Sunday 18th: dull and overcast. In the morning we went ferreting and got one



with Mitzi, the pointer, and Lady, the Harris' Hawk

rabbit. In the afternoon, flying Lady, she got three rabbits.

Monday 19th: sunny morning stayed in bed afternoon Lady - 1 rabbit, Sky - 2 rabbits. Now Chris was buzzing. All I've told him about the trips has come true.

Tuesday 20th: overcast and humid. In the morning took Mitzi for a walk. In the afternoon Lady - 1 rabbit, Sky - 1 rabbit.

Wednesday 21st: rain and windy. No ferreting or flying so we went off shopping.

Thursday 22nd: sunny spells and windy. No ferreting. In the afternoon, Lady - 1 rabbit. Then the wind really picked up and we stopped flying.

Friday 23rd: sunny spells and windy. As it was the last day we went out a bit earlier with the hawks, Lady - 2 rabbits. Then the same as yesterday, okay to start off then as afternoon went on we had gale force winds, so we called it a day.

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WHAT A WEEK the wildlife was brilliant. We saw rabbits, grouse, pheasants, snipe, ducks, buzzards, sparrow hawks, kestrels, wild penguin and deer, we think we saw some goldies but too far to tell, we saw the lot. The rabbits were a little bit better this year. We had some great flights. Just being up here hunting is awesome. A total of 15 rabbits is not a lot to show but we had a great time.

We're already looking forward to 2016. Me and Chris are raring to go. Alan is looking for more ground ready for 2016 (don't overdo it Al - wait for us). Daz will go up early again and stay with Al, Matt and Lee are talking about coming up again so come on lads go for it. YES!!

A big thankyou to Alan and Diane, Joan and Rachel and our condolences for the late Jockem RIP.

WE'LL BE BACK.

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## Eagle Group Code of Conduct

The Eagle Group, advertised in last year's Austringer under the leadership of Huw Kirby, has formulated a Code of Conduct for members of that Group:

1. To promote the safe free flying and hunting of all Eagles within the group.
2. To ensure group members adhere to set welfare standards with regards to all aspects of Eagle keeping. The Group Leader (GL), or nominated person, will visit each applicant's home upon membership request, to ensure the applicant understands and agrees to the charter.
3. Members will demonstrate that they have the facilities in place to free-loft their Eagles, should the need arise.
4. Demonstrate to the GL their understanding of Eagle behaviour, and adhere to safe practice when free flying.
5. Demonstrate to the GL that they possess the necessary equipment to ensure the safe flying and good welfare practices.
6. Members will be expected not to dispose of the Eagle/s to any persons not fully conversant with the needs of those Eagles.
7. During WHC EG, field members must agree to abide by the instructions of the nominated Field Master.
8. If an owner knows that his/her Eagle may be unsociable with other Eagles, dogs or certain people, he/she must disclose this to the Field Master.
9. Members are obliged to obtain Public Liability Insurance.
10. Group members will meet annually at the discretion of the GL, to share knowledge and developments in the Eagle world.
11. Members will ensure that if they use social media networks, with any regards to any Eagle or Falconry matters that they do so in a way that will promote our charter, and bring no disrepute to the Club or the Group.
12. Members will ensure that they provide every assistance to potential WHC members who wish to advance to Eagle flying. A nominated mentor will be arranged for this task.
13. Group members who engage in captive breeding projects, will ensure that every reasonable effort is made so that any progeny that are gifted/sold go to knowledgeable home only.
14. Should any group member witness any act of cruelty or mismanagement towards any Eagle, and notwithstanding the law of the land, he/she will report this action to the GL.
15. Group members will ensure that every consideration is given to the safe transport of their Eagle/s, by way of secure and well-ventilated carriers.
16. The GL will hold his/her position for a period of no more than 2 years, whereupon the members will either elect or replace said person.
17. The GL will be answerable to the main committee of the WHC, and will adhere to the Club's rules.
18. Group member must ensure that they are in possession of the correct and current A10's and blue documents. IBR membership will be recommended.
19. Members must only free fly their Eagles when fitted with working telemetry, and should any Eagle be lost, all available members should endeavour to help with recovery of the bird by assisting in the search.
20. Should any member be in a position whereby he/she cannot care for their Eagle/s, due to infirmity or periods of enforced leave, contact should be made with the GL who will instigate group membership assistance.
21. The GL and all members will do their utmost to secure suitable flying/hunting ground, with access for all EG members, and where permission is obtained from the landowner. A courteous and respectful attitude towards these persons will always be shown. Fees that may be required will be sanctioned by the GL.

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**Welsh Hawking Club**

**Officers**

**President**  
Nick Hasemann-Mart

**Vice Presidents**  
Jemima Parry-Jones MBE, Ian Rowland,  
Terry Large, Mike Davies, Dave Diamond and  
Jean Diamond

**Chairman**  
Roger James

**Vice Chairman**  
Bryan Patterson

**Secretary and press/publicity officer**  
David Barber

**Treasurer and Membership Secretary**  
David Sherman

**Austringer editors**  
Mick Corbell and David Rutpath

**Field Officer**  
Anthony Roberts

**Breeding Officer**  
Colin Augustin

**Legal officer**  
Tom Jones

**Education officer**  
"Griff" Griffiths, Jnr

**Webmaster**  
Roger James

**Honorary members**  
Dr Nick Fox, Lyn Hasemann-Mart, James Toth,  
Nana Durman-Walters, Harry Robinson, Roger  
James, Jim Chick

All enquiries should in the first instance be made to the Secretary, David Barber.  
Mobile: 07795 762373  
e-mail: a.diamond@welshhawkingclub.com



## Constitution and Rules Of the Welsh Hawking Club

(Revised 2014)

### Name and Objectives

The name of the club shall be **The Welsh Hawking Club**

The objective of the club shall be:-

The promotion of Falconry,  
The provision of advice and information for members and other interested parties.

The promotion and maintenance of the club 'Code of Conduct' amongst its members.

### Constitution

The club shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and other committee members as agreed and elected at an AGM. Each of these members are entitled to attend the committee meetings and to one vote, except the Chairman who does not have a vote. However, in the event of a vote resulting in a tie the Chairman shall then have the casting vote.

A President may only hold post for a maximum of five years. On retiring from that office, they will become Honorary Members of the Club.

Only full members are eligible for election to office. The officers and the committee will conduct the business of the club (hereafter referred to simply as the committee), which

will meet at such times as it thinks fit. A quorum for a meeting shall be five members. Anyone who holds a current conviction under the Wildlife & Countryside Act, The Animal Welfare Act, Cotes or any other offences to a living animal will not be accepted for membership until any ban enforced by a court of law has been spent. They will then be accepted at the discretion of the committee.

### Elections

All members of the committee will be elected individually, annually at the AGM.

During the year should any committee member fail to attend committee meetings regularly then he or she may be asked to give an explanation. If the reason is of insufficient justification, the committee member may be asked to stand down from their post and another member co-opted to fill the position.

### Membership

Members of the club will be approved by the committee.

No person will be accepted for membership without completing a membership application form declaring if he or she has had any convictions under the Wildlife & Countryside Act, Cotes or The Animal Welfare Act. The membership form will state that if an applicant declares a past conviction then a committee member will contact them to discuss the offence and conviction, the committee member will then report back to the main committee for a decision if the application would be approved or not.

The annual subscription rate shall be determined at the AGM each year. Any member whose subscription is more than eight weeks overdue after the end of May shall cease to be a member, but will be eligible for approval as an associate member and will pay the full joining fee as appropriate.

Should the committee have any reason to believe that a member has acted in a manner injurious to Falconry or the club then the member may be required to furnish a written explanation to the Secretary for the consideration of the committee or to appear in person before the committee. The member can claim a personal hearing if preferred: The Secretary must give the member at least 14 days' notice of the committee's requirements.

Should the member refuse to comply, the committee may terminate the membership. They may also terminate the membership should they decide that the member has acted in a way harmful to Falconry and/or the WHC.

Any member wishing to dispose of a bird obtained through the club's breeding project must first offer the bird back to the club at the purchase price.

Only full members are eligible to vote on club affairs.

Proxy and postal votes are not permitted, however email votes are permitted within the committee to ensure the smooth running of the club.

Associate members wishing to obtain full membership may apply in writing to the Secretary for the consideration of the committee. Prior to applying the applicant should normally have completed at least 12 months membership. The applicant must normally have successfully trained and hunted with a pair of prey witnessed by a full member.

All members will be strongly encouraged to complete the LANTRA award beginning with the falconry award during the first 12 months of membership. The WHC will assist with training at regional level.

The WHC will offer junior membership to those in full time education. Junior members will be entitled to attend social and field meetings but not vote on club matters or stand for office. This membership will be offered without subscription charge for those up to 16 years of age and at 50% discount of full club membership for older juniors in full-time education.

The WHC will offer supporter membership to anyone who does not keep or fly a bird of prey. Supporter members will be entitled to attend social and field meetings but not vote on club matters or stand for office. This membership will be offered at 50% discount of full club membership.

### Meetings

The Annual General Meeting shall be held at the main Field Meeting each year.

Meetings shall be presided over by the Chairman, Vice Chairman or in their absence one of the other officers as appropriate.

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### Alteration to Rules

Rules may only be altered by a vote taken at the AGM or at an EGM. Notices of motions for the AGM or EGM shall be sent to the Secretary in writing to arrive at least 6 weeks prior to these meetings. Any member wishing to call an EGM shall inform the Secretary in writing stating the reason for such a meeting. 20 full members must countersign the application.

### Code of Conduct

The well-being of all birds of prey, both domestic and wild together with the continuation of Falconry must be the aim of all members.

Falconry is the flying of trained birds of prey and owls at suitable quarry found in a natural state. No action must bring this into disrepute.

Every hawk must be properly manned and equipped.

Every endeavour must be made to recover a lost bird.

All birds flown free must have mews jesses removed. All birds must wear a working transmitter and it is strongly advised that it is wearing at least one bell. In the case of un-entered or aggressive hawks, eagles, hybrids, exotics etc., special care must be taken when flown free.

Relevant quarry licences must be obtained where applicable.

Permission must be obtained before entering upon ground and it must be ascertained whether another falconer already has permission in which case his/her permission must also be sought. Due respect must be given to landowners and their property.

The club considers that fox, deer and mink are unsuitable quarry for hunting with birds in particular with more than two hounds. (In Scotland it is illegal to kill deer by any other means than shooting).

### Regions

To provide social and educational meetings for members living locally, although any club member will be welcome to attend.

- To arrange local field meetings which the main club field meeting rules will govern. To be made open to all club members.
- To arrange fund raising to assist with paying for speakers and field meets.
- To promote falconry and the WHC.

### Rules

Members will form no new region unless the committee at a committee meeting has agreed it.

All regions must open a bank or building society account in the name of the WHC. It is recommended that the account have two signatories.

Any non-members attending will be made welcome for 3 meetings after this time they will be given the opportunity to complete an application form to join the club. If they decline they will no longer be allowed to attend the meetings, even as a guest of another member.

A register of attendees will be kept at all meetings, primarily to enforce rule 3.

The regional secretary will forward a written report each year to the Editor of the *Austringer*, to reach him no later than the end of February for inclusion in the *Austringer* for that year.

A report must be sent by the regional Treasurer to the club Treasurer showing the state of the region's finances, to reach her no later than the end of September for inclusion in the Treasurer's report at the AGM.

Each region will hold an election at its next meeting following the AGM. It will elect from its full members a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer to run the meetings. One of these may also be elected as a member to attend the main meetings. This representative will have full voting rights.

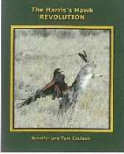
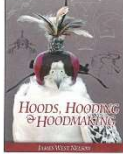










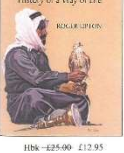

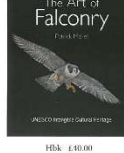

In the event that the Club is wound up either voluntarily by a resolution of the membership or by order of the Court then any surplus assets after discharge of any residual liabilities shall be paid or given to the British Archives of Falconry.

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