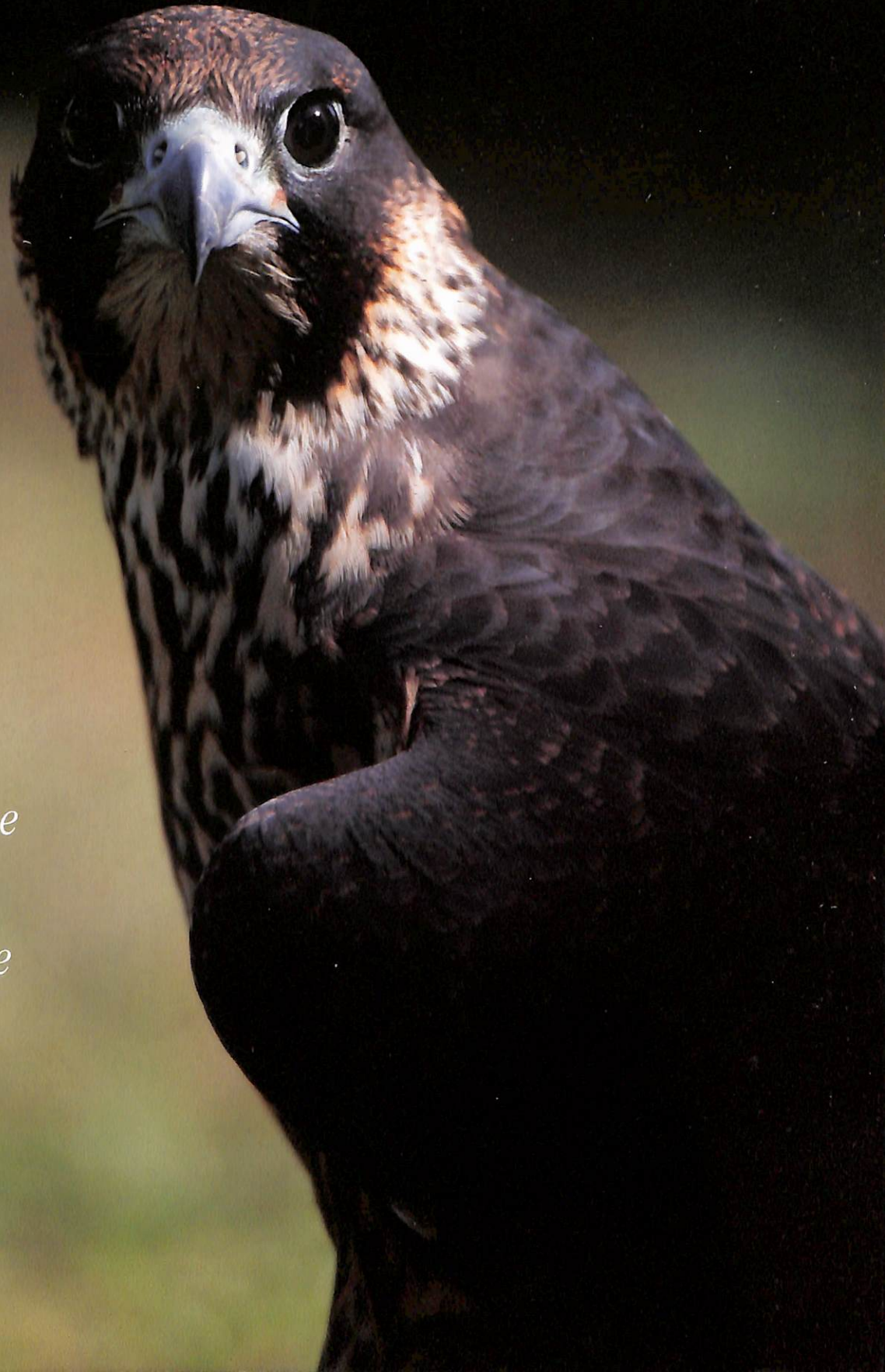


# The Austringer

The Journal of the Welsh Hawking Club

No 39 | 2007



In this issue

*Pie Hawking in the Peoples Republic.*

*A Czech Adventure*

*The LANTRA  
Award Scheme*

*Hawking  
in the U.S. – 2006.*

# President's Preamble



It seems like only a few months ago I was writing my first presidents report, but this issue has come quite quickly after the 2006 issue.

I must first say a Welcome Back to Mike Clowes who has come back onto committee after a brief spell away from committee work (sorry Mike, you can't get away).

There is quite a lot going on in the Falconry world at the moment, the introduction of the Lantra Awards being one of them and I am glad to see our members giving it their full support. We are grateful to David Horobin for taking on the work of looking after Lantra and all its complexities.

There is also a new Festival of Falconry in the not so distant future to look forward to, this is also being co-ordinated by David Horobin, so he is fully occupied looking after falconry related work, but I must thank him for the work he put into the Secretary's position last year.

I must also thank Tony France for taking on the position of Web Master, unfortunately due to no fault of Tony's the web host then decided to shut down and the whole thing had to start again. This was made easier for Tony and all concerned by the help of Kris Ulens from Belgium, so proving that distance is no barrier when help is needed. Thanks on behalf of us all Kris.

Also I must thank Andy for taking on the position of editor for Austringer, not many people would volunteer for the work load involved.

The club continues to go from strength to strength, with people coming in to the sport taking over from members retiring, it's like an ever turning wheel which all the good for the sport.

Anyway, enough of my ramblings, I know you are eager to read the rest of the Austringer, so Good Reading, Good Breeding & here's to the next season and all it brings.

*Dave*

# Chairmans Chatter

I am grateful to all of those who voted me into this position of great responsibility AGAIN.

It was an A G M where several committee positions changed hands. This is always good for the Clubs future and I know those giving up positions will give support and help to the new blood, making the change as smooth as possible. I would like to thank all the out going committee members for their dedication and hard work. I would especially like to thank Leigh Tovey for all his help in running the web site keeping it up to date and interesting. Leigh included some amazing photos for both the web site and The Austringer, we are all very much in your debt.

I would like to remind you all that you can take a more active part in our club. Firstly by helping out at the various shows, big or small. Getting to know the committee members and their duties. Then may be offering to take on a position at regional level.

Finally, please take a look at all the adverts in this year's Austringer; these guys support our club and make the journal you are about to read possible. Please support them, they sell some of the best falconry equipment on the market today.

Now, that's enough from me, have a "great" summer, breeding season, and here's to the next hunting season.

*Paul Dillon*



# From The Editor

When I decided I would like the position of Editor of the Austringer I don't think I really understood the hard work that goes into putting together our magazine the Austringer. My hat goes off to our past editors, Dave Jones, Steve Goldthorpe, Ian Blantern and of course Diana Durman-Walters who has been at the end of the phone and the computer when I have needed her help and advice.

The Hawking season has just finished a couple of weeks ago as I write this my first Editorial I can reflect on the highs and lows of the past season.

I started the season with my 4th seasoned Gamehawk Freya and I had decided at the end of 2005 that I wanted to fly a Gos again and my first female so Boudicca arrived in June as a 3 week old ball of fluff with these two great big feet. By late September she was Hunting and as the weeks past she became wedded to game especially Pheasants but disaster struck in January when in Pursuit of a Hen bird she hit a sheep fence flat out and was killed.

The only saving grace was the fact it was instant and she died doing what she loved Hunting.

We had a good wild game season in Essex and Suffolk but once the sugarbeet was lifted it was a struggle to find a suitable Pheasant slip for the Falcon, it was so warm that the birds never went far to feed except the few frosty days where I could pick my slip. Thankfully not all was lost, the Partridges I released held well and many a fine flight was had and the wild Duck came to the flight ponds regularly in January. Freya ended the season with a respectable 23 head and Boudicca was into her 30+ mainly Pheasant when her life was cut short.

The WHC was invited to attend the South East Falconry Group 25th anniversary of which Ray 'tubby' Hooper and myself attended. The hospitality was second to none, whether you are a WHC member or a member of several clubs there is common bond we all have as Falconers, the enjoyment of seeing a trained Raptor in pursuit of its prey.

I missed the 2006 Fieldmeeting at the Wild Pheasant due to work commitments only the



second time in ten years but I shall be at the 2007 Fieldmeet at the Chainbridge.

For those members who have never been you are really missing something quite special, Fantastic Hawking venues and great social evenings. We are the only large Hawking club in the UK that has a annual Fieldmeeting and that is down to the hard work of Neil Mccann, so come along you might enjoy it.

A big thankyou to Mick Young for helping me with the Austringer and all of those who have put pen to paper and contributed to the magazine and I hope you all enjoy 2007 Austringer.

*Andy Hulme*

# Contents

Presidents Preamble..... 2

Chairmans Chatter..... 2

From the Editor ..... 3

Pie Hawking in the Peoples Republic .. 6-7

Bruce Huxham 1946-2006..... 8

A Czech Adventure ..... 9

My First Hare ..... 10

Review Corner..... 11

It's a gene thing..... 12

The LANTRA Award Scheme ..... 13

Hawking in the U.S. – 2006 ..... 14-15

“Dangereuse Mike!” ..... 16

Welsh Hawking Club 2006 ..... 17-19



Training for Beginners..... 20-21

A celebration of  
the ancient art of falconry ..... 22-23

South East Falconry Group  
25th Anniversary Fieldmeeting..... 25

Hawking with the  
South East Falconry Group..... 26

Regional Reports..... 28-29

Welsh Hawking Club  
Annual Summer Weekend ..... 32

Hatricks ..... 35

South Wales Region Game Supper ... 36

Rules & Constitution ..... 38-39



**Editor** Andy Hulme  
andy\_hulme@hotmail.com

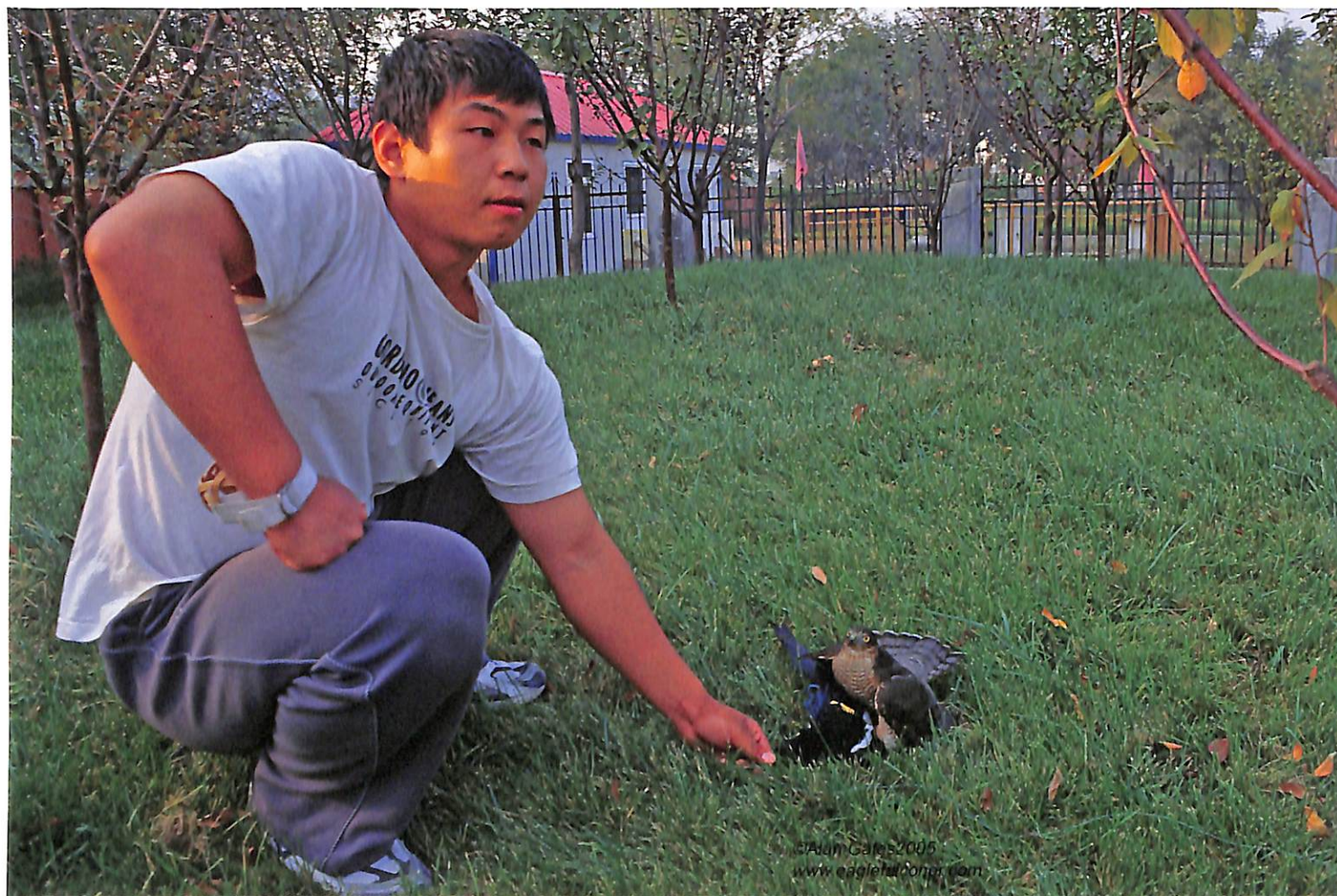
**Welsh Hawking Club  
Field Meet 2007**  
Chainbridge Hotel  
24-27th October

Front cover pic  
courtesy of Dave Scott

Back cover pic  
courtesy of Andy Hulme

Field meeting pictures  
courtesy of Leigh Tovey and Jean Dimond

# Pie Hawking in the Peoples Republic.



©Alan Gates 2005  
www.eaglehawk.com

Alan Gates. ©2007.

As the bus hit yet another bump in the road I was catapulted upward and although it was with a jaw jarring force, it was nothing compared to the impact my buttocks received on landing back in the seat.

I was accompanied by my trusted guide, translator and friend Jane Yeo and we were making our way south to Poyang Lake in Jiangxi province. At first I found it amusing to witness a bus load of passengers all launched from their seats in unison, but as it became repetitive it also became uncomfortable.

As usual we were snug and well packed, for this fifteen seater had at least twenty five passengers. As it slipped and slid on the mud covered road, I was less worried about rolling off the road and into the marsh land, than hitting one of the extra big bumps in the road.

While Jane continued to munch her way through a large bag of nuts without losing any, I just let my mind wander.

We were heading for the lake in the hope of going fishing, I had thought their still might be

some fishing families left living around the lake who managed to make a living from their trained cormorants. It is a dying art in China in these days of massive production growth, but it is a skill not unlike falconry and I love to seek out the last genuine fishermen in these remote village communities.

Although the purpose of this long arduous journey southwards was to go fishing, I had just spent a couple of the previous days pie hawking in one of major the cities.

Falconry in China is one of those pursuits that does not have the full blessing of the Central Government. Those that practice falconry do so wary of the suspicion of any strangers taking notice of them. It can be very difficult to find anything about falconry in China, and then earn the trust of anyone with any knowledge of falconers in any area visited.

After many trips to China, I have made many friends from the far north to the south west and I have enjoyed their hospitality and shared their love of hawking.

Lü is an athletic student and attends the city college, in fact he is a weight lifter and not the first person I would have expected to fly a "Qi xiong" or Sparrow Hawk. I met him in a bustling market

with his fine female spar on his bare hand. She was a haggard hawk and had been trapped just a few weeks before, but like all Chinese hawks she was as calm as any of the finest imprints of the west.

Unfazed by anything she lived in Lü's dormitory in college and he often hawked her around the playing fields and tennis courts.

Lü has a gentle temperament, with a smiling outlook on life and I soon felt a bond of friendship quickly develop between us. When he asked me to accompany him hawking the very next morning I knew he had felt the same and trusted me.



He had that days bag in his pocket, a black and white magpie, just like the pies we have here in the UK. Lü was pragmatic and hunted the most numerous and available quarry in his vicinity. This included the magpie and the Bluepie, these are slightly smaller than their black and white cousins and a bit more gregarious.

The ubiquitous bicycle was Lü's form of hawking transport, not that he needed it because the pace that he proceeded at was slow and observant. It was more for the fact that most quarry takes little guarded notice of a human on a bicycle.

We cruised the perimeter of the college tennis courts and studied the position of the magpies. We weighed up their possible escape route to determine if the spar could obtain enough surprise before a pie made the sanctuary of cover:

Our main problem was the high perimeter chain link fence, our feathered assassin would have to clear this first, she might as well be fitted with a siren for amount of surprise that would be left once she flashed over the top.

We decided to leave those tempting magpies in the safety their fenced enclosure and look elsewhere. As we biked down the highway, Lü nudged me and nodded towards a line of trees, I could hear some chattering from the canopy as we passed.

The strategy was to mark the quarry, bike on passed, stop and prepare the spar and then casually return. The spar sat quietly hooded on

Lü's hand as he biked, when we readied her, we removed her hood and Lü placed her in the palm of his hand and gentle gripped her wings. She was now ready to be thrown like a spear. A light thread from a woven ball was fastened to her jesses, this ball of thread was contained in a bamboo basket strapped to Lü's throwing wrist. (It is called a Zai Wo Zi). When the hawk paid out all of the thread, it was not fastened to Lü in anyway, it just drifted behind the hawk, without snagging it seemed!

With the spar prepared for attack we returned, this time I caddied a lift on the back pannier of Lü's bike so I was camera ready. We slowly pedalled up the busy highway, armed and ready, as we came near the trees a group of Bluepies took flight as soon as the spar was launched.

The pies shot straight up into the trees as did our spar, and what a commotion this lot made. As we followed the action and noise under the trees, I noticed that none of the passer-by pedestrians took the slightest bit of notice of what we were up too.

The noise reached a crescendo and our spar burst out of the canopy with a foot full of bluepie tail feathers.

With another victim spotted we again started our approach run, two on a bike. This time it was a black and white pie on the grass and fairly close to cover, well what the heck it was worth a go.

Lü launched the spar and she held her wings shut

as his weight lifters muscle propelled her at speed. When she felt the momentum ease she kicked in with a blur of her wings and was within yards of the pie before

it was aware of her attack. Lü and I were off the bike in unison and sprinting across the grass to assist our spar with her prize.

I watched Lü make in to his hawk and assist her break in to her quarry, a practice that all Chinese falconers do with a great deal of care and ritual.

I have watched many of them assist their goshawks break into hare quarry, the falconer would take out the stomach contents with bare hands and hand feed their hawk with heart and liver. Then pick up the hawk from the quarry with a blood soaked bare hand and continue hand feeding up.

I made my way down to the side of the Lake and climbed into a small wooden canoe type boat with Yang Shuyun. His four cormorants perched on the sides of the boat until we were further out and ready to start fishing. Then Shuyun pushed each one in turn into the water and they dived within seconds, soon they were bringing back fish to the boat.

Hawking and fishing in the same week and both methods using trained birds, this beats laying in the sun on a crowded beach. Well it does for me anyway.

## KAREN ROSE

Tel. 01406 364487

If fine quality matters...

A wide range of falconry equipment at [www.karenrosefalconry.com](http://www.karenrosefalconry.com)

Falconry • Deerstalking • Gundog Training Equipment

# Bruce Huxham 1946-2006



Bruce Huxham with young falcon

In the early hours of 16th Sept the world lost one of the good guys and falconry lost a man who followed the true meaning of the word (the art of training a hawk to take wild quarry) to the last. Bruce was an aviculturist long before he got into falconry as he kept and bred a number of different species of parrots very successfully.

This he did only because he totally immersed himself into whatever he did, giving it 100% and his thirst for new knowledge pushing him further to achieve new goals. With his love of birds it wasn't long before falconry caught his eye and upon buying a female Harris the flood gates opened on his passion for everything falconry. He promptly joined the two local clubs the B.F.C. and the Welsh Hawking Club eager for knowledge and keen to do things right! After severely depleting the local rabbit and pheasant populations for a number of years, Bruce finally decided it was time to sink his teeth into long winging. He got himself a gyr /saker tiercel then the fun really began. We all seemed to get into longwings at the same time and together learned the art of telemetry and the greater art of how to drive a truck whilst using it as most days it went pear shaped for one of us. Then there was the building of partridge pens, pheasant pens and the subsequent upkeep of such, through all these things the one bloke you could rely on being there to help was Bruce!! Never first to the bar (I can still hear him say HOW MUCH!!!) and if you wanted to know the cheapest place to buy diesel in a 100 mile radius

Bruce was your man, all things we ribbed him about mercilessly but I'm sure he did it just to get us going, as he was the most generous man with his time and energy. He was diagnosed with inoperable brain tumours on his return from the falconers fair in May and set about planning his last days of falconry his one ambition to catch a grouse with his 2nd yr gyr Peregrine "Floyd" foremost in his mind. The summer passed with excursions to watch the breeding wild peregrines on the cliffs all great memories for those of us that went with him as we wished the moult and grouse season could come quicker. The 10th of August came and saw a small group of us dash up to Scotland by kind invitation of Nick & Lyn Havemann - Mart and try to catch a grouse for Bruce. Sadly we failed in the short time allowed as weather etc. worked against us but we did knock a cock into next week but escaped the finale. Bruce had to come home for more treatment and for the last couple of weeks was bed bound thankfully fairly pain free. Throughout all this I never once heard him moan as his body started to give up on him. He finally slipped away in the early hours of 16th September the very day he was booked in on another grouse moor, the last date in his falconry diary. He will leave a big void at our south west field meets that he attended without fail and I will miss sitting round the table dissecting the afternoons flights with him over coffee and coming up with even more cunning plans for the next days hawking but mostly as I'm sure those of you who new him I will just miss "Good Old Bruce!" Our mate.

Dave Scott

20th May 2006

These are just a few thoughts I would like known, whilst I am still able to get them down.

I did not get into falconry until quite late in life but it's one of the best things I have ever done, but politically its very sensitive and getting worse all the time. Therefore I believe the time has come to be very guarded who you invite to fieldmeets, speak to and behave around others you might not know very well because if you mess up you could lose it forever and if you do I will come back and haunt the perpetrators.

I don't want any sadness at my passing as I've had a great life, the best.

Falconry is known for its very hard Mickey-taking when you cock up but great praise when you do well which is how it should be.

I would like to thank you all for your help and great companionship over the years, I have always been a bit of a wind up merchant, but it was never with any malice.

My last thoughts are this - Life is for living to the full, if there is anything you would like to do - do it now. It can all be gone in a flash whilst you are still thinking about it.

I hope you will all get some pleasure watching my Gyrpere, "Floyd" being flown by my very good friend and mentor, Dave Scott.

Finally I wish you all well in the coming season and have great lives, remember you must keep going forward in life and keep looking to the next challenge, usually a new bird.

My sincerest thanks and best wishes to you all in the future

Bruce Huxham

# A Czech Adventure

On the 21st of November Andy Hulme, Gary Almedia, Kevin Apps and myself flew out to Germany to then travel onto the Czech Republic and meet up with Mick Young and our chairman Paul Dillon who had flown out on the Sunday. We were all in Czech to spend our days out Hawking with Golden Eagles with the local falconers hunting Roe Deer and possibly Fox.

Wednesday got off to a good start with two Eagles flying and first slip saw an eyass Female take on a Roe Deer and she soon caught it up and bound to it but lost it but she soon made up and caught her second slip and was fed up. The second Eagle was a little high but did fly a couple Roe. We also saw two coveys of wild Grey Partridges which made Andy's Day.

Thursday we saw some Shrikes in a bush along the side of the road on our way to Cheb for ham and eggs for breakfast and on to the Hawking venue where we met up with Franta and his Eagle. We saw a few flights then on the way back to the cars she saw two Roe Deer a field away in a long strip of rough cover and she took them on and caught one but no one could get there quick enough to help her out and the Deer broke free.

Friday morning we visited a local Falconer who bred Goldies, Gosses, Peregrines, Sakers and Gyr Hybrids and he kindly showed us around his establishment. He had a monster of an Eagle from Kazakstan which weighed more than 6



kilos sat on a bow. This chap also had an imprinted European Eagle Owl which in the spring incubated and hatched Goldies.

In the afternoon we went out with Zdenyek and his Eyass Female which had caught the Roe

Deer on the Wednesday to a local forest. This bird was flown from tree to tree and she followed us just like a Harris Hawk and she certainly could fly and was unlucky not to catch a Fox. We flushed a few Roe Deer for her but she never connected with one.

We spent one evening in the firing range and got to have a go with firstly a 22 pistol then a 9mm Glock which is what the police use then finally an AK47, that was an experience in its self.

Saturday morning saw us go for breakfast in Cheb and finish off our shopping then we travelled back to Plesna and off to the Hawking Ground with two Golden Eagles. We saw some good flying and one of the Eagles had a hold of no less than three Roe Deer but we just could not get there quick enough to help the bird out. Over the four days we saw Harriers, Spars, Kestrels and so many Buzzards ranging from very light Phase to practically totally black So ended our Czech adventure and Sunday we arrived back in the UK to rain.

David Martin



# My First Hare



I have been Hawking now for a long time but never been able to catch a Hare. A few years ago I was flying my Female Goshawk 'Heidi' she was kicked off about six Hares, she just could not hold them at a flying weight of 2lb 3oz.

One day I was invited to go Hawking at Newbury where the fields are huge. We put up a Hare with the Goshawk quickly catching it up but the Hare reached the end of the field and under a fivebar gate, the Gos nearly binding to it and I thought that was the end of the Gos but she flew straight through the gate

and caught the Hare half way across the next field. By the time I had reached her the Hare had kicked the Gos off, she was exhausted with fur in each of her talons.

This year I was lucky to catch my first Hare with my fourteen year old Female Harris Hawk flying at 1lb 14 oz. I have owned the bird for the last four years. The previous owner was John Cole a WHC member who emigrated to New Zealand he told me Falconry was not allowed over there so he sold the Harris to me.

The bird was bred by my mate Steve Guy in Risca in South Wales and was reared by a pair of Redtails, I remember seeing her in the aviary because I bought a Male Harris the same year from him.

John first flew the bird over in Langibby near Usk where he had a smallholding but he lost his job in Newport and moved to Ireland taking the Harris with him. He would travel back and forth from Ireland to Langibby every fortnight with the bird in the back of his car so the Harris travelled a few hundred miles in her fourteen years.

The day of the first Hare kill was November 20th 2006. It was a lovely day when I picked the bird up weighed her and she was 1lb 14 oz. I walked to my flying ground which is about two miles from my house and to be honest I have not seen a hare for years in this part of South Wales. The Harris started to follow me from tree to tree and I must of walked three miles with the bird following on but we did not see any Game until I headed for home.

I must have been fifty yards in front of the bird when I looked back and went to give the bird a little titbit, she was facing my direction fifty foot up high in an oak tree. The next thing she turned around and stooped into the tall grass under the tree and bound onto a Hare, there was one hell of a squeal as the Hare tried to kick the Harris off but the bird had both feet around the head. I did not know what the bird had caught until I ran over to see her fighting with the Hare in the long grass. The Hare was quickly dispatched and the Harris was given a full crop as a reward for her good work.

By the time I got home I had weighed the Hare and it was 6lb 14 1/2 oz, not bad for a little Female Harris flying weight 1lb 14oz. It goes to show you do not have to have a huge bird to catch a Hare. It was her first kill of the season, not bad for a fourteen year old bird.

*Lyn Palmer*

# Review Corner

## Book Review

### The Last Wolf Hawker: The Eagle Falconry of Friedrich Remmler.

*Author Martin Hollinshead.*

Published by Fernhill Press 2006.

Having read all of Martin Hollinshead's previous publications it was with a certain amount of excitement that I awaited the arrival of his latest book. I enjoy the style of Hollinshead's writing and his childlike enthusiasm for falconry of all genres, be it eagles, goshawks or his beloved Harris' hawks. When the book finally arrived I was somewhat under awed by its cover. However, on delving into its pages, I soon discovered what a gem of a book this is. Hollinshead must be commended for his terrier-like tenacity in researching this book. The information on

Remmler was scant to say the least but the author stuck to his guns where people with less passion and commitment to the sport may have thrown in the towel. In doing this Hollinshead himself was led on an adventure of his own. Leaving no stone unturned, the more he looked the luckier he got until he had almost a full picture of this remarkable individual's life and his work with eagles.

It's unbelievable that Remmler's name is almost unknown in the falconry world. He was the father of modern eagle falconry, and although few know it, many of his methods are now used by eagle falconers across right across Europe.

Astonishingly, Remmler was only fifteen years old when he had his first experiences with these large and power full birds, and this without the benefit of mentor or books to guide him. Over the decades that followed literally hundreds of eagles passed through his hands - mostly acquired from hunters and forest workers. Only those that met certain criteria were retained, the rest were released - making him a conservationist of the highest order.

I have never really been excited by eagle falconry, having never seen it first hand, but from Remmler's vivid hunt accounts I can feel the whole atmosphere: the landscape, the baying of the hounds as the quarry draws nearer; and finally the flight and kill. I also admire Remmler's great respect for his quarry and the compassion he showed. This is particularly obvious with wolf hawking, his main interest. Indeed, a certain hunting experience on 'Wolf Island' led him to abandon the hunting trip, never to return.

The Second World War brought a temporary end to Remmler's eagle hunting; but at the end of the hostilities he move to Canada where he resumed his great love.

To learn more about the incredible Friedrich Remmler - his eagles, horses, hounds and training methods - I heartily recommend this book. You won't be disappointed.

*By Steve Vaughan*

## Film Review

*Andrew Hulme*

Sky Gods and Once Upon A time In The Westcountry are two films produced by Ian Preece of IMP Video. Ian has spent a lot of time filming the Hawking activities of Dave Scott and the Falconers and Austringers of the Westcountry.

### Sky Gods

This is a film of not only Falconry but of some of the wildlife found in the Westcountry with Barn owls, young Rabbits playing around and the Pheasants in early summer after been released from pens, Roe and Fallow Deer. This film is an introduction into the Falconry been practised with some good footage of Longwing Gamehawks, Harris Hawks on Pheasants and Rabbits and Goshawks at Pheasants.

There is some great filming of Fieldmeetings with members of the WHC and some old faces such as Nick Farrant and John Rundle.

Running time of this film is 26 minutes



### Once upon a time in the West Country

As a Falconer I have been waiting a long time for a British Hawking Film to match the films from the USA and finally it is here. The filming is exceptional with Longwings stooping and either binding or striking the Gamebirds and the whole lot is captured on film. My favourite flight is Dave Scott's Pere/Saker hitting a Cock Pheasant which you think has recovered and as the Falcon comes in to bind to the bird it falls out of the sky dead. The footage of Gosses at Pheasant, Harnises and

Redtails at bolted Rabbits is again first class with many great flights. The two flights that I enjoyed where Dave Fielder Male Gos taking a nice hen Pheasant and my old mate Mike Tucker's Female Gos flying a Hen Pheasant flushed from Kale and flying it down as it tries to put into the wood. There are many slow motion flights and a complication of the best flights at the end of the film. Running time of the film is 50 minutes.

Both films have a great soundtrack, fantastic footage of flights and are professionally put together. I liked what I saw and bought both copies which Ian kindly sent me. I look forward to the next Hawking film from Ian and IMP Video

# It's a gene thing...



This season I decided to fly a parent reared eyas goshawk, I ordered a finnish X german female from Lee Featherstone and Mick Wynn this meant the annual trip to scotland there would be four females bred by Lee. Including this years imprint club bird (2lb 12oz) flown by Colin Askquith, and her sister which was parent reared (2lb 8 oz) to be flown by Gordon Curry. Lee flew the sister to mine I collected the hawk as everyone will remember on a very warm day. She was caught up weighed (2lb 13 oz and thirteen tail feathers) jessed, tail bell and guard put in a box a fast trip home.

She was left in a shady spot in the garden to adjust to her new surroundings. The next day she stepped on the fist wings out weighted, did not bate and fed within ten minutes & roused. This was a five or seven day advance. She was named lucky number thirteen! I never had a goshawk do that ever!

The training went well she caught her first rabbit in three weeks. She was kept on single kills for the next few weeks.

The trip to Scotland where the eyas sisters caught plenty of rabbits, their fair share of over 180 rabbits in a week and 30 blue hare although Garath flew John Simcoxs old finnish female she caught 9 in two days, and lucky number 13 caught 5.

The next test was to catch a pheasant. She caught 3 on the three day field meet, but lost a brown hare, I was just a bit to slow, could not have asked for a better slip, right over a point with Mick Kanes brit. But it was not to be, she lost her foothold and was kicked off.

The next Sunday she held her first brown hare of the season 7lb, she was overweight for the rest of the week!

At Xmas, Gordon asked if I wanted to hawk a few rabbits in North Yorkshire as Colin was visiting family up there we could all meet up.



I did not need asking twice. The weather was still and mild. The rabbits were plentiful. I don't think Colins gos missed one that day, Gordon had double figures in a couple of hours and I was pleased as they bolted well and the shovel was not used much that day.

The ferrets worked well, we caught 30 rabbits in less than three hours between the 3 sisters (same father different mother).

*Neil McCann*

# The LANTRA Award Scheme

## From the Students point of view.

*By Martin Philpott, Member of the Welsh Hawking Club South West Area.*

I should imagine by now that anyone who has an interest in Birds of Prey could not have failed to have heard of this award scheme covering Bird of Prey Management and Falconry Basics. This article has been written with the intention of giving my views as a student who has recently completed the Award and to hopefully give inspiration to those undecided or thinking of taking the Award.

I guess as with anything new in Falconry this scheme was always going to be treated with a certain amount of doubt and suspicion. This is why as a club the South West branch of the Welsh Hawking Club decided to use one of our monthly club meeting nights to discuss the issue and to ascertain where as individuals and as a club we stood with this initiative.

The S.W. branch of the W.H.C. is very fortunate to have a wide spectrum of knowledge and experience ranging from those like myself just beginning in the sport to those that have been involved for many years at the highest levels. We have members that fly Broadwings, Longwings and shortwings in a variety of disciplines and our field meets are always well organised and attended through the season.

With all of this in mind it would be fair to say that as a club and as individuals we were able to look in depth at the Award Scheme objectively and constructively.

The Candidates Workbook was made available for us to look through and every possible aspect of it was scrutinised. After much talk and debate the decision was unanimous that as individuals and as a club we would give our support and all members in the S.W. Branch would be more than happy to take part in the Award.

At the S.W. branch we are lucky enough to have two members who are trained LANTRA Assessors in Kevin Mosedale and Nick Farrant both highly experienced and long time members of the W.H.C.

Having spoken to Kevin at the meeting that night I enrolled on to the scheme having paid my subscription and thus received my Candidates Workbook which contains all of the relevant learning material required to complete the course.

The Award is in a modular form and covers all of the "Basics" of Bird of Prey Management and Husbandry. Being modular means that the candidate is able to work in stages at a pace that suits and that allows for other commitments.

There are many methods you can adopt to complete the course and you will soon discover which is the best method for showing your assessor you have the knowledge and ability to complete each section to a satisfactory standard, with some sections requiring theoretical skills and others requiring practical skills.

So that I would have a source of reference after completing my award I decided to put all of my work including sketches, photos, equipment brochures and written work into a photo album and I would then present this to my assessor.

I arranged to meet with Kevin and we were able to complete the theory part of the award over two short evenings before meeting again to complete the practical sections.

None of the contents in this award are designed to catch us out or to undermine the knowledge and skills we may have already learnt, it is designed to show that we have the required levels of competence to enable us to continue with the privilege of caring for and working with our Birds of Prey, the award is able to provide these required levels of competence to beginner, novice or experienced Falconer alike.

All in all I was able to complete the whole scheme in less than 15 hours, not a lot to ask of anyone thinking of taking the award. A few weeks ago at our monthly club meet I was presented with my pass certificates and it was a feeling of contentment to know I had successfully passed and completed the award. Every time we take our birds out we are put in a situation where we can be monitored by members of the public which includes individuals and organisations that have no interest or desire to see the sport we love so much continue. These people have no idea of the commitment honest and loyal Falconers give to their birds, we have to be seen to be knowledgeable and respectful of our birds and the land on which we fly them. By taking part in this award we can show these people we have the forethought and desire to implement such measures BEFORE they are thrust upon on us by agencies who are more interested in seeing Falconry disappear rather than prosper.

What we have to remember is this, the only people that can protect Falconry are those that partake in it. This award in my view should be adopted by individuals, clubs, breeders, falconry schools, and equipment suppliers and manufacturers indeed any one who has any interest in Falconry that way we will have a much better chance of confronting the threat of drastic restrictions and legislation that may shortly be put upon us, surely it makes sense to show we are able to supervise and control our sport from within?



Anyway I hope this article has helped you decide in a positive way that you should take the award but if not here are ten good reasons why you should,

- 1) Its fun
- 2) Its informative
- 3) It shows we care for the welfare of our birds and our sport
- 4) It's a great way to source information for future reference
- 5) It helps to improve the image of the sport through positive publicity
- 6) It helps you question if there are aspects of your own skills that you can improve on
- 7) It is practically beneficial to those new to Falconry helping to decide if this really is for them BEFORE they buy their first bird
- 8) It helps individuals, clubs, breeders and falconry schools etc unite as one to help guard against the threat our sport faces from those that would like to see it disappear
- 9) It should mean that we will still have a big say in how our sport is managed in the future
- 10) It does not discriminate or restrict us as individuals; it sets the same standards for someone who is happy flying a Barn Owl to the glove as it does someone flying Falcons at game.

# Hawking in the U.S. – 2006.



My wife Julie and I had already arranged to visit the NAFA meet in Kearney, Nebraska in late November which, co-incidentally, was hosting the AGM of the IAF, when we received a phone call from Andrew Knowles-Brown of the Scottish Hawking Club to say that there was a meeting of the IEAA the week before in Garden City, Kansas. What is the I.E.A.A. I asked and he replied the International Eagle Austringers Association. I learnt that this group was formed in 2004 and consisted of those flying eagles and those who had applications submitted to trap an eagle for falconry.

As we had visited the Czech and Hungarian eagle meets over the years I thought it would be interesting to see how the Americans flew their eagles so I contacted the organiser, Chase Delles, and he invited us on the spot. This meant that the first week of our holiday, the relaxing part, was now to be taken up with travelling from Chicago to Garden City and hunting with the IEAA.

We arrived in Garden City, after a stop over in Dodge City on Monday afternoon to find that Chase had just arrived with 'Sage' his female Ferruginous so, within 30 minutes we were on our way to the hunting land, rolling grassland with a large amount of prickly tumble weed. We saw some exciting flights from Sage and more Jacks and cottontails than I had ever seen in one area.

That evening others arrived and we met Joe Atkinson from California and his lovely wife Cordi. Joe rehabilitates eagles and with him he had a huge 4-year old male Golden Eagle named Jackhammer, a name we found that was not only appropriate but also which illustrated Joe's sense of humour. Jackhammer flew at 8 ? lbs. from the fist. The only other eagle present was a beautiful female, Natishka, flown by Mark Kilby at 10 1/2 lbs. Other birds present which caught quarry were a cast of Harris's Hawks flown by Bill Ahern which were 'red hot' and the Ferruge already mentioned. Also a redtail owned by Geof Douville which caught a Jack at its first attempt after only being trapped in poor condition 6 weeks earlier and two Gyr/Pere hybrids owned by Joe.

For the 4 days of the meet the weather was fine and sunny but windy and I am pleased to say that Jackhammer caught 6 Jacks, Natishka 1 Jack and a Prairie Dog (much to Marks disgust. Mark stayed on after we left and caught several more Jacks), Sage caught 2 Jacks, Bill's cast of Harris's caught 3 Jacks and 2 Cotton Tails and as already mentioned, Geof's Redtail caught a Jack. There were also plenty of pheasant around and in one flight Joe's hybrid, Blackie caught 2 pheasants. He knocked down a cock pheasant, breaking its wing, then before he could deliver the 'coup de grace' a hen flushed and he caught it after a chase of 200 yds.

The social side to the meeting, as is always the case in US meets was first class and Julie and I look forward to attending the IEAA meet again in the future.

On the Saturday after the meet had closed we drove the 5 hours up to Kearney, Nebraska for the NAFA meet. We were joined by Joe, Cordi, Chase and Geoff. What a difference from the meet of a dozen to the meet of four hundred +. As is usual at any large meet the race was on to arrange to accompany falconers when they set off to the

hunting grounds the next day. Having tentatively organised to follow a group flying a Coopers hawk we retired to the bar, sorry coffee shop. We were sitting relaxing, enjoying our drink when we were joined by a group of the usual friendly, chatty Americans. After the usual introductions we were fascinated to learn that Jeff Ross and his daughter both flew those fierce little birds, American Kestrels. An invitation was forthcoming to accompany Jeff early the next morning with his female bird CP.

We couldn't resist the opportunity to observe one of the smallest raptors in pursuit of quarry.

It was a very cold start to the day but the knowledge that we would be sitting in our warm truck and not standing in a freezing field was welcoming. We set off at a slow but steady pace, following Jeff who drove with CP on his fist, scrutinising the area for starlings on the ground. We couldn't believe that we were driving around a residential area looking for quarry. After a few mesmerising but unsuccessful flights out of the window and rapid returns to the fist, again through the window, we found ourselves driving around a large Hypermarkets' carpark. Camping trailers parked to the rear, shoppers with trolleys heading for the store and our entourage hunting between parked cars. I'm sure that Wal-Mart has no idea what sport they enabled that morning.

Our little star had still not managed to bind to any prey but not for the want of trying.

We headed back towards the rear of a group of shops and like lightning CP flashed from the fist into the midst of a flock of starlings, pandemonium ensued until CP was eventually spied on the ground fighting aggressively with an equally powerful opponent, within seconds Jeff was there lifting both birds off the ground and returning them to the car.

What an exciting and enjoyable morning, for us the highlight of the meeting. On our return we



contacted Jeff and requested more details concerning his bird. The following is the reply from Jeff:

CP (Cannibal Parakeetus) is a 1 X intermewed passage female American Kestrel. She was trapped in an urban area (shopping mall) on 29 September, 2005.

One advantage of trapping a bird in an urban area is that they are already used to people, traffic, and the bustle of an urban environment. Her first hunt took place on 14 October, 2005. First kill was 19 October 2005.

Our birds are primarily flown from a vehicle although they are field hawked in a conventional manner at times. CP's preferred slip distance is

from 50 to 100+ yards although she will take quarry at a closer distance if nothing else is available. Her closest slip to kill was no more than 20 feet, her longest slip to kill was just over 200 yards. Their hunting technique is much like that of a small accipiter, preferring a very low approach on the deck, and the use of any cover in their environment to cover their

approach. But the style of attack is where the similarity ends, they do not have the blinding speed of the small accipiters and do require some sort of advantage, cover or initial speed to become successful bird hawks. Having said that their maneuverability in the final few feet of a slip is superior to that of the small accipiters, very quick, but certainly not as fast in regard to pursuit speed.

If you provide them with what they need in terms of a proper slip they are capable of taking large numbers of small birds, and they make the most loyal and charming of hunting companions. Tame as kittens to their handler but a terror to any small bird.

CP took 396 birds in her first season, 370 Starlings, 5 English Sparrows, and 21 Grackles. The Grackles she took ranged in weight from 125 grams for a Common Grackle male to 250 grams for a Boat-Tailed Grackle male. Considering her hunting weight averages 96 grams it's easy to see how big of a heart these little ones

actually have. American Kestrel's are not a beginners bird, if for no other reason than the precise weight control required to hunt them. Their hunting window has a range of

approximately 3 grams. They are not the easiest bird to enter but once they understand the program they always seem to give you 110% effort, in short these little ones love to hunt.

Mike and Julie Clowes



# "Dangereuse Mike"!!

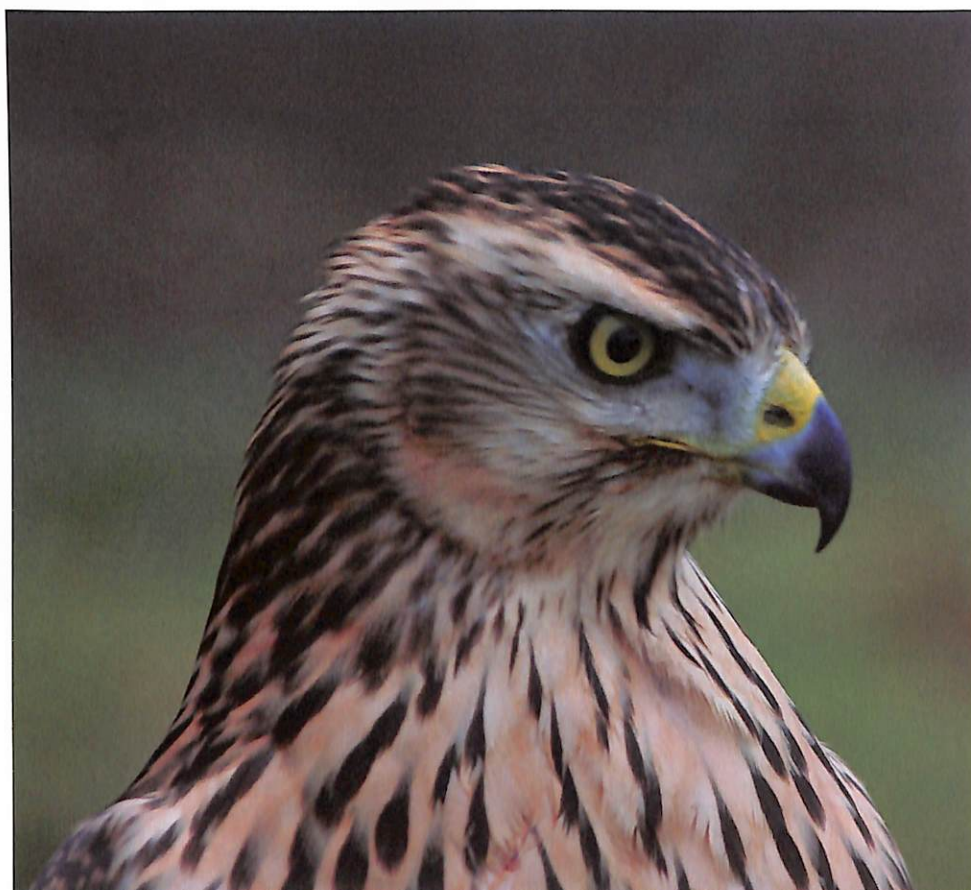
It's May, 2005. Mike and I have at last finalised our greatly anticipated move to France. On a previous visit with Jan and 'handyman' Tony France, the time was spent erecting an aviary in readiness for our 7 year old male Harris's Hawk, 'Buster'. Having completed all of the paperwork and arranged our journey via Euro Tunnel, we were on our way.

Upon our arrival in Poitou-Charentes we made it a priority to inform the authorities that we had imported our Harris, we visited the Departement d'Agriculture and completed the necessary forms in triplicate which included full details of the aviary. Within 3 weeks we had an unannounced visit on a Sunday morning from the 'Gardes Nationaux de la Chasse', uniformed and armed. My first thought was that Mike had committed some misdemeanour or traffic offence during our first weeks in our new home. Not guilty - it was just a friendly but official call to check out the information we had supplied and to tell us that Buster must be kept at our premises in his aviary until one of us had obtained a permis de chasser. At this point I absolved all responsibility for my precious bird and transferred the ownership to Mike. His ability to speak French far surpassed mine.

This precious bit of paper called 'Permis de Chasser' is not easily acquired by anyone not speaking fluent French. The exam is divided into 2 parts, "L'examination Theorique & L'examination Practique". Following the purchase of the bible, "Le nouvelle examen du permis de chasser", we set about ploughing our way through all the unintelligible chapters. Organisation de la chasse, Legislation, Armes et munitions, Securite & Modes de Chasse not to mention page upon page of species that are huntable and those that are not. Our bi-lingual dictionary became dog-eared but could not divulge all the translations required. Mike's exciting Xmas gift of the previous year, an English/French translation programme for the PC was useless but provided much hilarity during the process due to it's literal translation.

The date for the first examination approached and I don't know who was the most nervous, Mike or myself. We had been told by our English speaking hunting electrician that the theory examination was the hardest, you must surmount this obstacle before you could attempt the practical. Out of 300 possible questions only 21 would be chosen and the mandatory pass mark was 16.

Mike set out for the Federation Departementale des Chasseurs in Poitiers, one hours drive away, in the early evening leaving me at home in a state of turmoil, not knowing how he was progressing. For Mike the experience was equally traumatic. His second question was one regarding a canard (duck), was it a plongeur (diver) or a surface duck, tres difficile? He guessed that one!! Didn't know what sort of duck it was! All the questions were connected with hunting in general, only 5 were associated with the art of falconry. Naturally none of these materialised.



Four hours later he returned to our home and myself, who was a little more relaxed after imbibing a few glasses of vin rouge. He had a broad grin on his face, yes, he had passed. Twenty out of twenty one, that damned canard had prevented his 100%.

Mike was much more relaxed concerning the practical exam, after all, he had spent the previous 10 years prior to his retirement as a Police Firearms Instructor and the exam was based on safety when hunting. He had to dismantle a 12 bore shotgun, re-assemble it, shoot safely at clays and set up a safe shooting area to use a .223 rifle to shoot at wild boar. No problem!

The day arrived, I accompanied Mike as the examination area could be viewed from the car park and we had an appointment in the afternoon. I relaxed in our car doing a little Sudoku waiting for Mike to appear on the field. At last he emerged followed by the instructor and examiner. The first target went well, he walked towards the second with confidence and purpose, raised his rifle, re-assessed the safety aspect----before he could respond further the examiner demanded that he decharge (unload) he deemed that Mike considered shooting in a dangerous situation.

## Dangerous, Mike !!

No amount of justification in his defence was listened to. He had failed!! I was watching and a few expletives escaped my lips.

His gun was taken from him and he was escorted from the field. I couldn't believe it, this was supposed to be the easy part. Poor Buster was destined to spend even more time behind bars (poetic licence). It was difficult to organise a date for re-examination as we had prior engagements in the UK, but it needed to be within 12 months of the theory exam.

I was unable to accompany Mike on his subsequent exam date as we had family visiting, it was a very different man who left that morning, feigning confidence, very nervous inside, surely the same thing could not happen a second time.

We had arranged to meet following his trial at a neighbouring village with the family. The stress levels were high, Mike drove up, no expression on his face, my worst fears were overcoming my optimism, had he failed again. No!!! 21 out of 21, passed with honours.

He is now the very proud, and relieved, possessor of his Permis de Chasser and on our second day out hunting with Buster he caught his first "lapin de francais"

Was it all worth it? I think so.

Julie Clowes

# Welsh Hawking Club 2006



## International Field Meeting

It does not seem twelve months have gone by, and I am putting pen to paper to write the annual field meet report.

This season it was held at the wild pheasant in llangollen north wales, giving members time to relax in the hotel spa bath, sauna and steam room to perspire the beer from the night before and relive the flight from the day in hand.

This is the four days to meet friends old and new, its' good to meet the foriegn members that have travelled far and wide to enjoy flying pheasants and other game with there hawks and falcons.

This year the groups were small but the game count was good, as the weather was a little wet. The Essex boys flying there Harris hawks, getting a great head of game. Ray Hooper (tubs) and his merry men showing how versatile the Harris hawk is as a hunting bird.

The long wing group who mostly commuted each day saw Ellis's longwing flying hard and wide. I believe a 5 mile telemetry lesson, but he soon made up for it taking two head of game on Llandegla with the keeper Dave Rhodes (I have been informed Ellis now barred from there as no game is safe with him and his falcon about!!!)

The goshawk groups with a mixture of parent

reared and imprints, also some good strong flying eyes birds being flown this season. The southern group taking a fantastic head of game.

Its been a regular event now to get a redtail to come along and fly, but this season we had two. Chris Klens had a smile again as he took a duck this year, well worth the trip for him and his girlfriend.

I hope all members enjoyed there sport this season, as the group I was in did, I wonder if Mick Kane brings the ultimate lure this season as I bring one every year, guaranteed to get your gos out of any tree!!!

Regards neil

Total Game	
67	PHEASANTS
5	PARTRIDGE
4	RABBITS
3	DUCKS
3	MOORHENS
-----	
81	

### Falcon Group 1

M Coupr (FL)  
A Armstong                      E Phythian  
K Briseden                      K Whittle

Wed      Carrog  
            2 PH      1 Part

Thurs     Bagor  
            1 PH      1 Part

Fri        Bryn A Pys  
            1 PH      1 Part

### Harris Group 2

R Hooper (FL)  
T Peplow                      S Vaughan  
P Dawson                      S Byers  
A Watson

Wed      Llandegla  
            7 PH 1 Duck 1 Rabbit  
            1 Moorhen

Thurs     Bryn A Pys  
            5 PH 1 Rabbit

Fri        Llandegla  
            6 PH 1 Rabbit

### Harris Group 2

B Higham (FL)  
A Watson                      A C Watson

Wed      Bryn A Pys  
            1 Moorhen

Thurs     Llandegla  
            1 PH 1 Rabbit

Fri        Bryn A Pys  
            1 PH 1 Part

### Goshawk Group 1

N McCann (FL)  
J Simcox                      K Simcox  
R Smith                      M Kane

Wed      Foelas  
            6 PH

Thurs     Carrog  
            3 PH

Fri        Llandegla  
            7 PH 1 Duck

### Goshawk Group 2

C Freerson (FL)  
P Worby                      D Fielder  
H Gilbert

Wed      Llandegla 7 PH  
Thurs     Bryn A Pys                      9 PH  
Fri        Foelas                      7 PH

### Goshawk Group 3/Redtail

W Duncan  
R Thejin                      K Ulens  
K Molesdale

WED      Bryn A Pys

THURS    Foelas  
            1 PH 1 Duck

FRI        Carrog  
            3 PH



# Training for Beginners



Picture yourself walking along a quiet right of way adjacent to your flying ground on a warm morning at the end of August. Your tiercel gos is nearly ready again after the moult: pleased with his performance on the creance, which it's now time to dispense with, you give him a tiring to occupy him for the pleasant stroll home. The hypnotic ringing of bells as he plucks away lull your senses into a false sense of security, a wish-fuelled reverie about the coming months when, suddenly, something subconscious makes you look up to see a male Harris' making for you.

The agricultural contractor in the field now turns out not to be a workman, but a would-be "falconer" resplendent in fluorescent field coat, strolling over to where the inquisitive Harris' is now perched a few feet above you. "Oh, that's where she is!"

Your subsequent conversation fills you with every confidence – but only that the hawk is no threat you your own now you've hurriedly removed the tiring. It doubtfully ever associated living quarry and food with its previous owner who, presumably disappointed with the whole thing, passed him on to the current custodian three days ago with the advice not to feed "her" for a couple of days then

just throw "her" in the air and away you go: you're a falconer: "A transmitter? Waste of money – get a new hawk for less." I could continue but you've all got the gist now. The great tragedy is that this little story is quite true. It happened to me, and we've all heard worse. Falconers seem to delight in knocking everything, slating everyone else's methods, etc. I've just done it myself, however justified my rant. It's also easy to knock the LANTRA award: doesn't go far enough, it's voluntary, won't make a difference, can't work. Well, it will make a difference – the anecdote above shows why we need it to – and, within the WHC at least, it is working, and working well.

I must say that as Education Officer only since the last AGM, I can't take any credit for this and extend my thanks to everyone that's made it work so far, and in particular Kevin Mosedale who, along with the able assistance of others in the South West Region, really got the award up and running for the Club. Most of you will have seen Kevin's article in last year's Austringer which detailed how some of the most well-known personalities in British falconry voluntarily underwent the assessment, both to help our assessors learn their trade and to lend support by example to the whole process. Since then, we have been granted Approved Administration Point status, and again I must thank Kevin and the South West Region (pathfinders for the Award since before it even officially came into

being) for acting as the main contacts in all of this. This basically means that the WHC is able to independently enrol candidates, administer and keep records of assessments and award certificates on behalf of LANTRA. We now have at least one qualified assessor in each region, two in most, and I have recently been appointed as External Verifier. All this jargon! Let's try to clarify how the Award works.

The candidate taking the Award may be an absolute beginner or an experienced falconer. Their objective is simply to demonstrate to the assessor that they are proficient in handling and maintaining hawks according to the standards set out by LANTRA, the awarding body. The role of the assessor is basically to judge the candidate's performance against these standards, ensuring that they are not only able to, for instance, secure a hawk to a perch safely, but can do so consistently under varied conditions (the range). Thus whilst the candidate being assessed with a fully trained hawk might theoretically get away with putting the hawk on the perch and tying a knot with both hands, s/he should be failed by the assessor because it is very seldom a safe thing to do, and never with a newly trained hawk. Of course, if the candidate has taken his/her learning about raptor handling seriously, whether through a book, a course or an apprenticeship, this should be old hat by the time the assessment is carried out.

This amply demonstrates the need for experienced falconers to act as assessors. There are plenty of people with the relevant bits of paper to say that they are competent assessors but most lack the specialist knowledge and experience (occupational competence) to assess this Award. For instance, many Further Education lecturers have assessor awards but, as they say, those who can't do, teach (I know – I'm one of 'em!) and few of my assessor colleagues would have the faintest idea that it's a bad idea to tether a hawk with two hands, etc. To any experienced falconer, however, it's just a matter of common sense. It is therefore far better that we train experienced falconers with no prior knowledge of the relatively simple world of assessment to become assessors than to attempt to train experienced assessors in the mysteries of falconry. After all, it's been going on for 4,000 years and how many people do you know who agree on every single point?

The role of the External Verifier (EV) in this is to act as "quality control" for the assessors rather than to assess the candidate. In many educational fields there can be lucrative financial awards for high success rates and so there is potential for corruption. Verification therefore samples an assessor's work, sometimes on a random basis, to ensure that assessment is fair and valid, has been carried out to the standards set down by the awarding body and that there is sufficient quality evidence to justify certification. Fortunately, within the WHC we are lucky in that our assessors are committed falconers who wish to see competent

raptor handling as the norm for newcomers and indeed as a reward for their work, ensuring that the sport continues to maintain high welfare standards. There would be no reason, therefore, to pass a candidate who did not merit the award as this could potentially harm the sport and, worse still, a hawk. The EV's main role here is to monitor the assessment process and, where appropriate, to offer support, advice or training to assessors on any aspects of the process that need clarification. Overseeing the External Verifiers is a Lead Verifier; in this case Dr. Mike Nicholls, who will accompany new verifiers on their first visits and ensure that the highest standards are maintained throughout.

The WHC's role as an AAR and ability to ensure that we maintain these standards within our own ranks, depends not only on assessors and verifiers, but also on the support of all members. We could all lead by example and take the award for a start, but you might also think about mentoring a new would be falconer. When many of us started falconry the opportunities for learning through courses were few, but however you learned, I would guess that field experience taught you far more than any other source of information. Newcomers need to see what it's all about and again I can say from experience that, through simply letting interested parties come out and see the bad as well as the good, we can all help with the transition of a suitably motivated person from novice to falconer. My "apprentice" not only saw quarry flown and taken, but also stood with me under trees in cold and wet conditions when it all went wrong and in fact probably contributed

more to my last full season a couple of years ago than he learned from me. After a rather boring, if hopefully instructive, article, therefore, let's finish by getting back to what it all should be about.

Picture yourself now a few days before Christmas. You don't have your own hawk at present, but are hawking with your former "apprentice" and his female Harris' in her second season, and it's as much fun as flying yourself. The pointer, who learned his trade under your last hawk a season before the Harris' came on the scene, freezes. The pheasant's away – and she flies it with gusto, twisting through the trees impressively in a way that only a very fit, highly motivated Harris will, chasing hard for a good distance until – damn! It puts in. As you run in she drops to take her ninth pheasant this season. Not the most spectacular kill, perhaps, but well deserved after an outstanding flight, especially considering she largely ignored pheasants in her first year. I can claim no credit for a very dedicated new austringer's hard work, yet feel a little pride for, in some small way, facilitating this. Contrary to what some might say, there are both potentially excellent Harris and potentially excellent beginners out there: both just need the right guidance and motivation. We have the potential as a club to make the LANTRA Award maintain high handling and welfare standards, and within ourselves, to see to it that all our new members can become proficient falconers too.

David Horobin

**Leigh Tovey**  
**Photo & Digital Imaging**

- ◆ Prints available from fieldmeets
- ◆ Action photography
- ◆ Bird portraiture
- ◆ Commercial photography
- ◆ Commissioned work undertaken

**For more information contact Leigh...**  
**Tel: 01377 271247, Mobile: 07940 581568**  
**Email: info@leightovey.com**

**www.leightovey.com**  
29 Laburnum Ave, Hutton Cranswick, East Yorkshire, YO25 9QH

## Falconry Electronics Ltd

for when reliability matters

Falconry Electronics - a dedicated, professional company supplying quality radio tracking equipment at affordable prices.

We are unique in the fact that we specialise only in the supply and manufacture of radio telemetry and telemetry related accessories.

Our equipment is the choice of the professional falconer, being used by most of the leading zoo's, bird clearance companies and public display teams in the UK.

**You can now shop online 24/7 @**  
**www.falconryelectronics.co.uk/shop**

Most important of all, our customer care does not end with the sale.

- Receivers and transmitters ex stock
- Sterling high power transmitters
- Merlin micro transmitters
- Pointer dog activity transmitter collars
- Telemetry repair and re-calibration service
- Most types of equipment repaired
- Unrivalled first class customer service
- Most major credit cards accepted
- Genuine 21 day moneyback guarantee



Quality at a fair Price

For more details log onto our web site : [www.falconryelectronics.co.uk](http://www.falconryelectronics.co.uk)  
Or telephone : 01422 376127 Office hours 2.00pm - 8.00pm  
e-mail : info@falconryelectronics.co.uk

# A celebration of The ancient art of falconry



## Scheduled for the UK this July

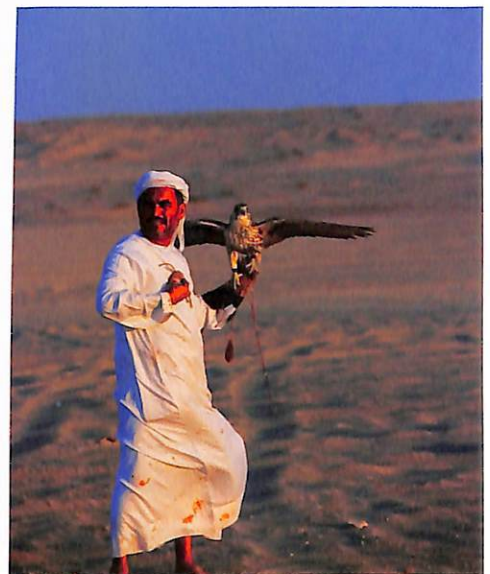
A new date for all field sports' lovers and falconers' diaries is the weekend of 14th & 15th July 2007 when the first Festival of Falconry takes place at Englefield Estate, near Reading, Berkshire. The event is to be run by the Hawk Board, representing the UK's 25,000 bird of prey keepers, and supported by the International Association for Falconry and the Emirates Falconers' Club.

"This is not just another country fair with a falconry section but a very specific celebration of man's ancient relationship with hawks and falcons," says organiser and Hawk Board vice chairman Nick Fox. "We have already received support from all over the world and expect the falconers' village to have participating camps from Japan, the Middle East and North America, and every falconry nation in between."

Demonstrations and workshops will cover such diverse subjects as equipment, art, raptor health and breeding. There will be a display of working falconry dogs from the many hunt, point retrieve breeds to the Arabs' dog of choice – the Saluki.

plus a feature on the conservation of raptors, their game species and habitat. A major parade of nations will take place in the main arena each day and a huge presence of overseas falconers is expected. July is a perfect month for Arab falconers to visit; many are in the UK for their annual holiday, and their thoughts are already turning to the next season's sport. Although no falcons may be sold at the event, the falcon breeders are sure to be taking orders.

Central to the festival will be the application by the United Arab Emirates to have falconry declared as an 'intangible cultural heritage' by UNESCO, which, if successful, will have a global benefit for all falconry nations and contribute massively to the defence of the sport. Many



falconers and field sportsmen and women will focus on this, and the substantial contribution falconers have made to local culture and conservation worldwide.

It is an ideal venue at which to meet falconers, who plan to make this event a showcase for their sport. Most importantly the Festival aims to demonstrate to newcomers and a curious public that falconry 'the green field sport' has a great deal to offer and should be protected at all costs.

"A website [www.falconryfestival.com](http://www.falconryfestival.com) is now on-line in several languages and details will be added as the event grows," said Nick Fox. "For too long falconry has been an overlooked country sport, and by making this a global event we expect the world to acknowledge that we exist, and that we make positive contribution to raptors all over the world."

### STOP PRESS!

Visitors can now book and pay for their tickets on-line. This facility offers savings of £5 on a two-day ticket and there are as some goodies such as badges and T-shirts for sale as well. So get shopping on [www.falconryfestival.com](http://www.falconryfestival.com) and save money and time on the day.



July 14-15  
Saturday & Sunday

# The Festival of Falconry

Englefield Estate, Theale, Nr. Reading, Berkshire, UK. (Junction 12, M4)

## World Falconers United in Heritage & Sport



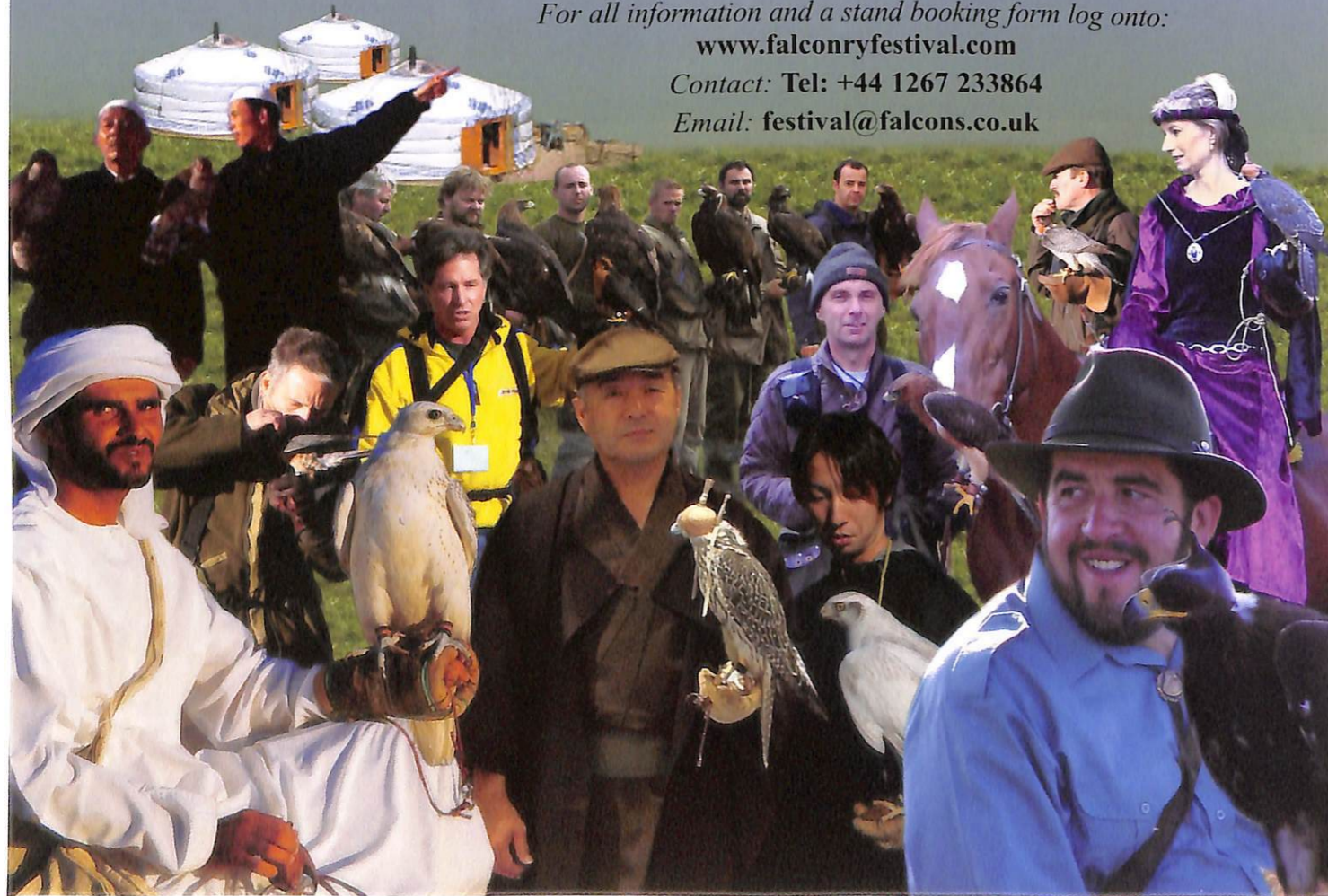
Hosted by the Hawk Board  
to promote and protect falconry for you.  
Supported by the Campaign for Falconry,  
the International Association for Falconry  
and the Emirates Falconers' Club.

For all information and a stand booking form log onto:

[www.falconryfestival.com](http://www.falconryfestival.com)

Contact: Tel: +44 1267 233864

Email: [festival@falcons.co.uk](mailto:festival@falcons.co.uk)



# South East Falconry Group 25th Anniversary Fieldmeeting

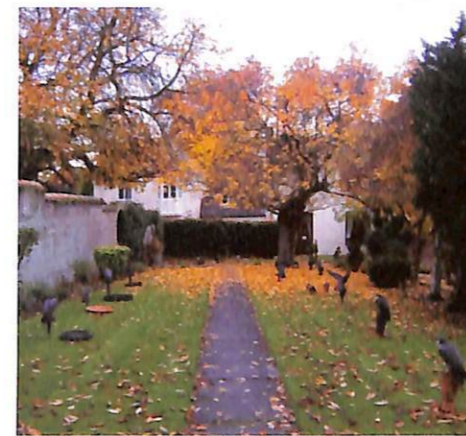
The South East Falconry Group held their 25th anniversary fieldmeeting in the village of Exning in Cambridgeshire on the 16th - 19th of November. Ray Hooper and myself attended on behalf of the Welsh Hawking Club, Tubbs on the Friday with his Harris Hawk and myself with my Goshawk on the Saturday. Here are the accounts of the days we attended.



Saturday morning I arrived at the Rosery in the village of Exning to bright sunshine something Gary Biddis the Chairman of the South East Falconry Group had asked me bring with me the night before. After informal greeting I found out which group I was in and set off following the wrong convoy of Goshawks thankfully Neil phoned Tony Biddis my field Officer and I soon joined the right convoy.

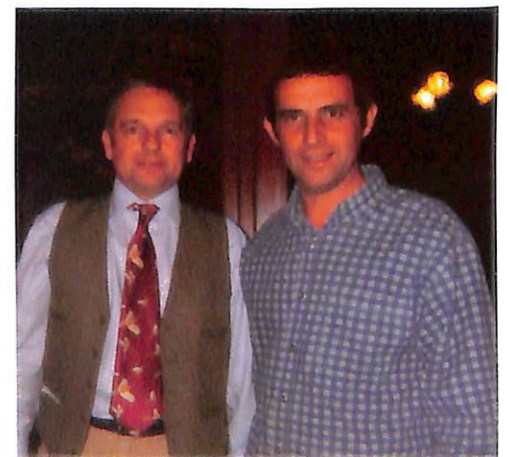
We travelled to the other side of Eley to a place called Littleport where we met up with the farm manager who took us to the venue. The Group consisted of Tony Biddis and John Clare from the SEFG with their Male Gosses, Chris Hinds from the Central Falconry club and his Female Harris Hawk and Paul Worby from the WHC & BFC and myself with both of us flying Female Gosses.

We were here to fly these legendary Fenland Pheasants, birds that are truly wild and boy can they fly not to the nearest cover but cover in the distance. We hunted the dykes which had reeds covering both edges with Paul's fabulous GWP, the Game we hit in pockets and we had some cracking flights but once the Pheasant got to a dyke and into the reeds they very quickly disappeared. On two occasions Paul's Female grabbed cocks as they rose but when they hit the ground she could not hold them, these Pheasants have a bit of fire in their belly. Telemetry on the day was not needed thanks to

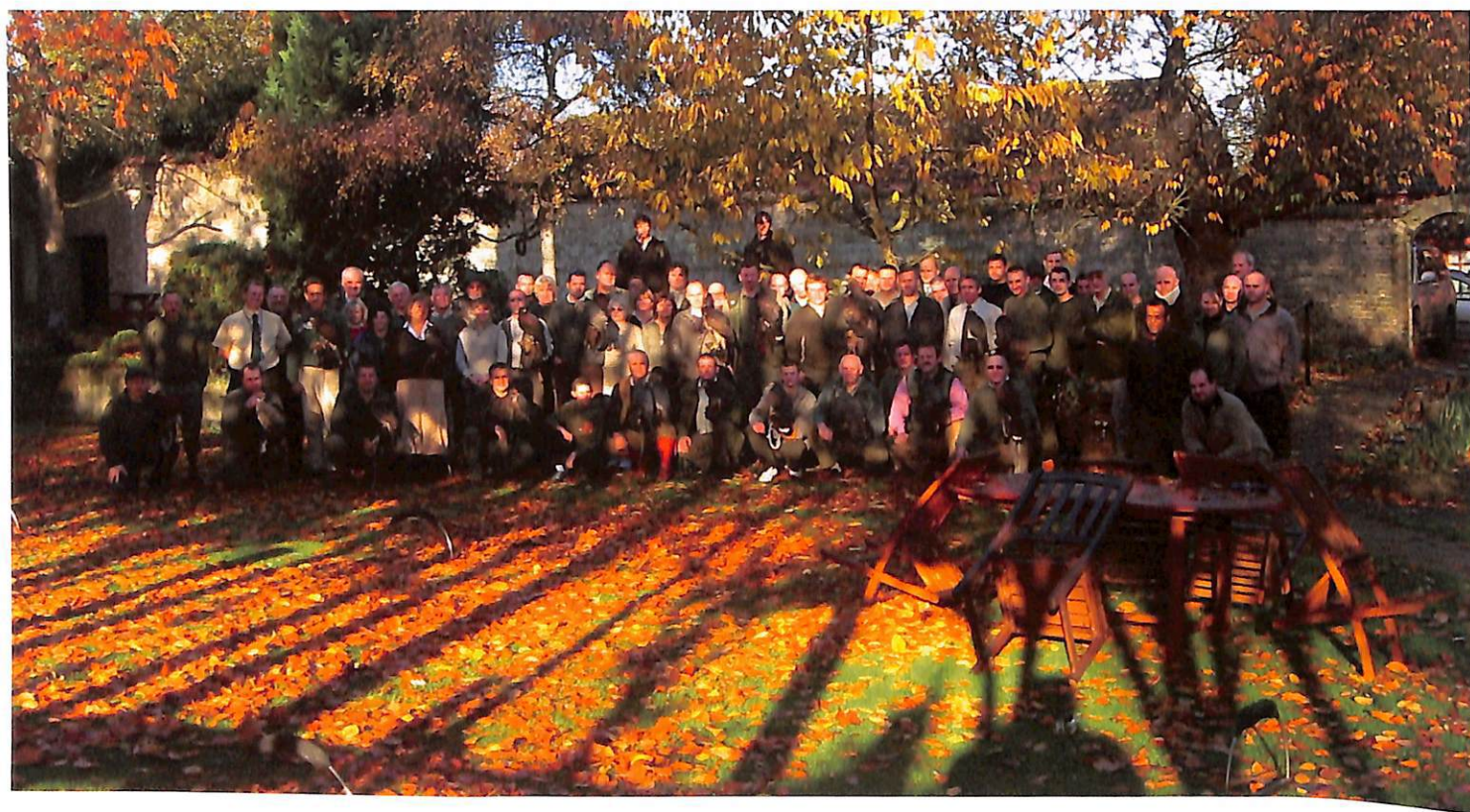


a pair of Kestrels which appeared from nowhere to hover over the Gosses when they had put a Pheasant in. We put nothing in the bag but we all had a great day. Good flying in good company and the only thing caught was Paul's GWP by my goss I could understand why he wouldn't let me feed her up!

We all returned to the Rosery for a beer and a freshen up and sat down to a lovely three course meal and a great evening sadly I had to leave at 11.30 as I had work in the morning. The hospitality I was shown was second to none and I wish the South East Falconry Group the very best for the future.



# Hawking with the South East Falconry Group



By Ray Hooper

The Essex Region of the Welsh Hawking Club received an invitation from Gary Biddiss, to attend the South East Falconry Group's 25th anniversary field meeting.

This was to be a 4 day meet, held near Newmarket, Suffolk. I decided to take a day off work and join them on Friday 17th November.

The weather forecast was not too good, however as I left home the sun was just starting to show itself through the clouds.

I arrived at the venue in Exning, Newmarket in time to put my Harris Hawk out at the weathering ground, and headed into the hotel to receive a welcome pack from Gary (containing a Tee shirt, car stickers, and badges), and a very welcome cup of coffee in the lounge.

After a briefing on the day's locations, I was introduced to my Harris Hawk group, the field captain was Colin Bottle who explained the day's plan. Our venue for the day was a stud farm a few miles from the hotel. The field leader tied a coloured ribbon to his car aerial, which was to help the following vehicles identify him.

Once our group had assembled, we then headed off to our hawking ground. After a while the heavens opened and the rain fell so hard the

wipers on my truck couldn't cope. We travelled for about 7 hour through rainstorms equivalent to a monsoon. Then our convoy pulled into a lay by, it was then apparent we were heading in the wrong direction (quite normal for field meetings). A quick review of the map and we set off again, only this time satellite navigation was employed.

We arrived at the stud farm eventually, nobody was in any hurry as the rain was still lashing down. We took shelter in a barn and started to devour our lunchtime refreshments although it was only 11.30am.

Finally the rain relented and we set off in search of our quarry.

Paul was flying a female Harris over his English Pointer pup and his partner Claire (the falconer's dream) was in charge of the ferrets.

My hawk was screaming at Paul's dog, which is very unusual for her. Claire deployed the ferrets into a warren after a few minutes two of the occupants were bolted. Three Harris hawks in hot pursuit. Jack's male flew hard and fast but that rabbit just made it to another bolt hole.

Colin watched his female strike out at the second, however she was unable to bind to it.

Meanwhile my bird is still adamant that she has no intention of having any kind of relationship

with Paul's dog. After a while Paul decided to put the dog back in the car. As Colin also had trouble with his bird, taking stand until the dog had moved away.

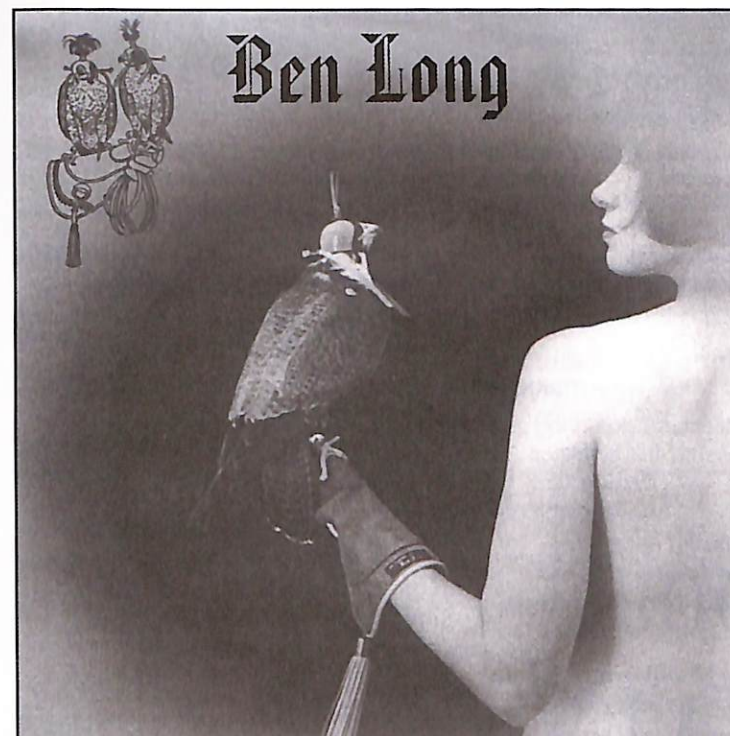
At the next big warren Paul's hawk caught a rabbit in thick cover. We were delayed for a while as the ferrets had killed below ground.

The showers were at this point getting heavier, so we headed for the shelter of the large wood. On entering the wood we disturbed a couple of rabbits, my female was off the fist and twisting and turning through the saplings looking to latch on to the rabbit at the first opportunity. Unfortunately her wing collided with a overhanging branch, which propelled her to the ground. The rabbits ran on through the wood and again made it to safety.

The ferrets were used in the woodland warrens and all the birds flew well.

Paul had caught another rabbit there, however the rain had started to become much heavier and make the hawks feathers wet, it was decided to call it a day and make our way home. Apart from the inclement weather I had a very enjoyable day.

Many thanks to the South East Falconry Group for their kind hospitality.



THE CLASSIC RANGE OF FALCONRY PRODUCTS FROM THE MASTER OF THE ART. ABSOLUTELY UNRIVALLED FOR QUALITY, STYLE AND SERVICE, AND SURPRISINGLY AFFORDABLE.

Ben Long  
P.O. Box 65, Stinchcombe, Dursley GL11 6WZ  
Tel: 0870 609 3069 Fax: 01453 519 710  
e-mail: info@benlongfalconry.com  
www.benlongfalconry.com



THORNTON'S TRAVEL SERVICE

ABTA 97646

YOUR FIRST CHOICE

TRAVEL AGENT  
FOR INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS  
WORLDWIDE

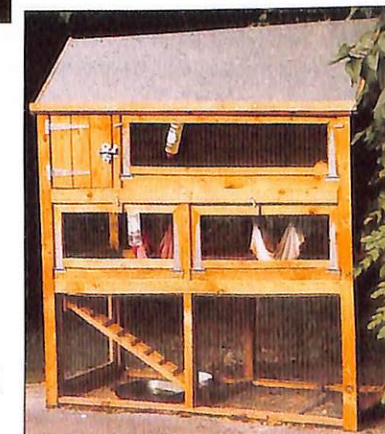
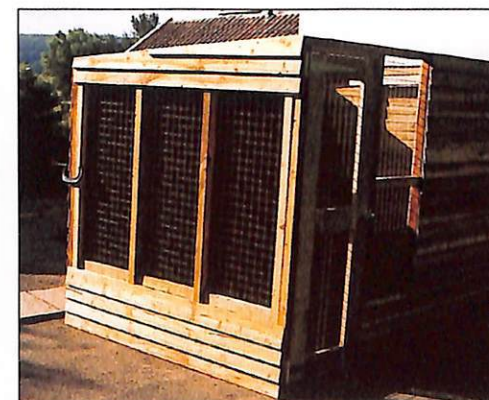
FOR DEPARTURE DATES/VENUES  
CONTACT

JEANETTE FORD (WHC MEMBER)

TEL: 012753 95700 FAX: 012753 94365

E-MAIL: ginf@thorntonstvl.co.uk

## HOUSING FOR BIRDS OF PREY



- Weathering and mews
- Made to your own specification
- Delivered and erected

Telephone Richard on

**01934  
824471**

for more details

Under the auspices of your committee, the WHC had been gently directed towards a regional structure. The need therefore, to inform you of the passion and success of each of the regions has arisen. The rouse gives you such a chance, and the rules of the club have been altered to accommodate this new direction. As part of the new clarified regional structure, it has become obligatory for the secretary to send in a written report to the editor of the Austringer.

## SOUTH WALES

Meetings held on the second Monday of each month at The Rat Trap, Usk. Contact to be elected.

## NORTH WALES

Meetings held on the first Tuesday of each month at The Robin Hood Pub, Helsby. Contact Neil McCann 0151 293 0364

## SOUTH WEST

Meetings held on the third Monday of each month at The Seven Stars, Kennford, Nr. Exeter. Contact Kevin Mosedale 01392 833368

## ESSEX

Meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month at The Whalebone Inn, Fingringhoe, Nr Colchester. Contact Ray Hooper 07885 287218

## YORKSHIRE

Meetings held on the second Monday of each month at The Milton Arms, Elsecar, Barnsley. Contact Terry Cadwallander www.yorkshireregionwhc.co.uk



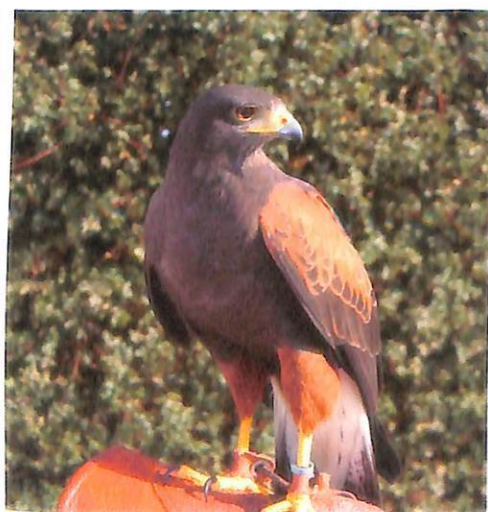
# Regional Reports



## South Wales Region

As I write this report I'm looking out of my window at yet another awful day of high winds and rain. It really has been the most awful season weather wise, with flying days being few and far between. Regional field meets remain a bug bear, with members for whatever reason not wishing to come forward in worthwhile numbers. Come on lads it's not a competition but a chance for your hawks and dogs to work on some different ground.

Our Regional Chairman Mike Cordell arranged a day's hawking for members on his ground in



Ruardean, but "Sod's Law" dictated an awful weather day! Falconers and birds got thoroughly soaked and despondent tramping around the muddy fields. My young GWP bitch seemed not to notice, working with her usual gusto and producing some good solid points. We retired to Mike's garage for some very welcome steaming homemade soup. Refreshed, the consensus was to call it a day and do what all good falconers do in these circumstances..... Yes you've guessed it.....Retire to the pub! Driving home early afternoon "Sod's Law" reared its ugly head again.....the weather clearing and the surrounding fields full of rabbits and pheasants! FALCONERS.....Nil, QUARRY.....I.

Long time member Lyn Palmer brightened my day with an excited phone call about him and his female Harris catching their first brown hare. It's really great to see that having flown birds for nigh on thirty years his passion and excitement hasn't diminished.

We had an excellent Xmas Bash well attended by members and their guests. Our hosts 'The Rat Trap Hotel' really pulled out the stops festively decorating our room and producing an excellent meal for us. Entertainment for the evening was "Splat the Rat" organised by club stalwart Roger James and "Ferret Racing" by Mike Cordell.

Our meeting venue hosts at the "Rat Trap" continue to support us with value for money buffets, the last one a 'Curry Night' with all the trimmings for only £5 a head.

Last but by no means least all members in the region are extremely grateful for Nick & Lynne Havemann-Mart's continued support and generosity.

Hopefully the coming season will see an improvement in weather conditions (Damn Global Warming) I wish all members a trouble free moult and a productive 2007/2008 hunting season.

Regional Chairman, Mike Cordell  
Regional Secretary, Martin Cox  
Regional Treasurer, Mike Tucker  
Hawk Board Rep, Martin Cox



## Essex Region

Ray Hooper

As I write an outbreak of bird flu has hit Holton in Suffolk. This has had an effect on our last two fieldmeetings, at this time of year we finish the season Hawking Rabbits and Hares. One of the venues falls just inside the DEFRA restricted zone.

Back in the Summer a small group of us travelled up to Bryan Pattersons for the Summer BBQ and a great time was had by all.

We had our own annual regional BBQ here at Tubbs Towers in August sadly it was windy and it rained but that did not put us off and the BBQ was well attended.

In September we attended the East Anglian Falconry & Country Fair at Stonham Barns, The weather was great and a big thank you to all members who manned the Regions tent.

Andy Hulme has organised some good fieldmeets again this year, 3 days at Haughley Green, 2 days at St Osyth, 1 day at Great Maplestead and 1 day at Fingringhoe, those who attended had some memorable days Hawking putting Pheasant, Partridge, Duck and Rabbit in the bag. Sadly Boxted and Stonham Aspal had to be cancelled due to bird flu. But it is hoped that we will be able to return to these venues next season.

I was lucky enough to attend the South East Falconry Group 25th Anniversary Fieldmeeting held near Newmarket and enjoyed the company of their members.

The Essex lads who travelled to the Wild Pheasant for the International meet really enjoyed themselves, especially the spa and sauna after a long days Hawking. Thanks again to Neil McCann for organising another great meeting, and to Dave Rhodes at Llandegla for making our group feel very welcome.

We hope to see a few old faces of the WHC at the Summer Fair in South Wales this year, the Falconry fair and various Game Fairs across the country during the summer months as our birds moult in preparation for next season.

## North Wales Region

The region has grown in strength and numbers the past season, we were lacking in guest speakers as we decided to keep as much funds back for the field meets we had arranged, Mike coupe brought along his slides old and new, how falconry has changed over the years, what a variety of hawks and falcons they had flown over the past 30 years or so!

Flying a goshawk with no telemetry and hoping on hearing a bell to locate your hawk, being able to fly a falcon from wild stock!



No such thing as a I (the good old days)

I brought along a video showing pr female goshawks chasing and catching bolted rabbits in north Yorkshire, two mature birds and an eyas taking 20 rabbits in a morning.

Again we rely on the regional belated xmas party to raise funds in march, with a hard core turn out, there plenty of food good banter and lots of money raised on the night, you would be surprised what turns up for auction.

The five field meets this season were a little hampered with the weather, and lack of support but with members struggling with time off work, etc, I think a change of day for next season will see the venues full again.

There may be an extra long wing place for next season as Ellis is barred (that falcon he flies kills every time! not once but twice so Llandegla keeper Dave is keeping an extra eye out for him next season)

The harris hawk group chasing rabbits from the hedge rows, Kevin Mills was on stop crouched down I was informed it was a dodgy chinese, he had a hawking vest full of tissue paper!!!!!! (oh and a pheasant)

The region is hoping to book a field meet every month this season it is open t to all members Harry Gilbert, Kevin Brisedan travelled to hawk with the northern region last season there plenty of game to fly. Book your place next season dates will be on the web page.

## South West Region

Well, what a season, short yes, due to pregnant doe's and their young, bolted from ferreted holes, but a lot has happened. Not all positive unfortunately.

I will start on the negative.

We lost a good friend and falconer this year in Bruce Huxham. He had been an active member of the club and the region for some ten years. He will be missed, but not forgotten. We have set up an annual field meet in his memory. This seasons Huxham Memorial Meet raised £400, which will be going to a cancer charity. I am sure he has looked down on us this year with a smile on his face and he will be pleased that his bird is flying well under the guardianship of Dave Scott.

This season has been the worst regards bird injuries. I have been a member now for around 15 years and have never known such a bad one.

It started with the loss of a peregrine, fatally injuring itself stooping into a fence. A goshawk, again, flying through a barbed wire fence, ripping the leading edge of a wing severely. Stitched up and fortunately flying again. Another goshawk with lead poisoning, spotted



early and dealt with, and now back flying. A goshawk with frounce, still under going treatment. It got to a stage where I thought this is the time to get Neil Forbes down for a talk. Little did I know that within a week of Neil coming to our monthly meeting that I would also need his services for my eyass male redtail. Unfortunately, nothing could be done for him; the cause of death was a massive liver insult, possibly due to a toxin. A Harris with a broken toe, and so it went on. Therefore, as you can see, some of us down here will be glad to see the back of this one.

However, there were highs. Our field meets went well, for both falcons and broad/shortwings. Well attended with plenty of quality slips. The weather was generally good for us and the game plentiful.

A couple of new members have joined our group and we now have six members who have gained their Lantra falconry award.

As I have mentioned Neil Forbes attended our January meeting and, as usual, gave an excellent talk on first aid. We took the opportunity to invite some local vets along, this proved a useful exercise, they appreciated it and it gave members contacts for future reference.

The Christmas dinner was well attended and enjoyed by all. I believe this year we managed to win some of our raffle prizes and stop most of them heading up the M5 with our Bristol guests. I wont dwell on this next piece. The Bristol boys thrashed us at our annual skittles match.

Next season can only be better:



*Jeremy Law*  
OF SCOTLAND

We specialise in the production of

## Glove Buckskin & Natural Kangaroo

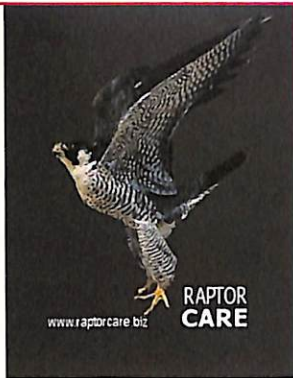


Most credit cards accepted.

Email: jeremylaw@moccasin.co.uk Website: www.moccasin.co.uk

DEPT. WH • CITY HALL • DUNKELD • PERTHSHIRE • TEL 01350 727569 • FAX 01350 728748

Going away?  
Who is going to  
look after your  
Birds of Prey?



## WE WILL

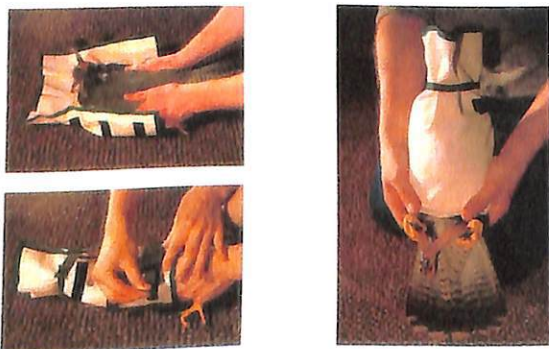
Birds are kept in secure surroundings and specialist feeding requirements can be met. Birds are tethered in weathering during the day and shelf perched in a secure building at night. We also have a superb German Wirehaired Pointer dog available for stud.

For details contact Tony Bryant  
on **01454 294258** (Glos)  
Mobile **07770 580687**  
E-mail: tonshei@aol.com  
www.raptorcare.biz

## The original Bird of Prey Casting Jacket

As seen in Nick Fox's  
Bird of Prey Management Series

*The quickest and safest way  
to cast your hawk or falcon*

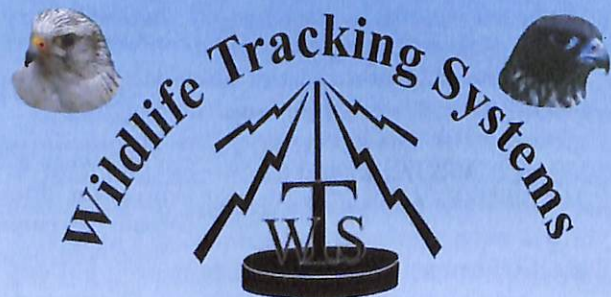


Available in 3 sizes, £25 + p&p

Visit our web site at [www.castingjacket.co.uk](http://www.castingjacket.co.uk)

Tel. 01267 211440

Dandderwen · Llysonnen Rd · Carmarthen  
Dyfed · SA33 5EP



## Tracking the Worlds Wildlife

NEW 2002 product range

White Falcon 10 & 100 Channel Receiver

Black Falcon 3 & 10 Channel Receiver

\* pin-point accuracy \* Lightweight \* telescopic aerial \*

The lightest, most accurate tracking system of it's type in the world  
Now with telescopic aerial for carrying convenience

WT603, WT603X & WMerlin Transmitters

All WTS Falcon Transmitters

are now covered by a lifetime guarantee

www.wildlifetracking.co.uk

e-mail: [wildlifetracking@easynet.co.uk](mailto:wildlifetracking@easynet.co.uk)

Tel. 00 44 (0) 7860 832349

# ALL YOUR FALCONRY NEEDS...

Astroturf® off the roll  
Back Packs  
Bags  
Baths  
Batteries  
Bells  
Binoculars  
Bird Launchers  
Birds of Prey  
Block Perches  
Books  
Bow Perches  
Captive Bred Birds  
Clothing  
Disinfectant  
DVDs  
Eyelets  
F10® Health Products  
Falcons  
Feather Straightener  
Foggers  
Gloves sngl/dbl thickness  
Guns  
Gun Slips  
Gun Cartridges  
Hawk Food  
Hawking Vests  
Hawking Bags  
Hoods  
Jesses  
Jess Grease  
Knives  
Leashes round & flat  
Leathers  
Perches  
Realtree® Jackets  
Swivels  
Tail Mounts  
Telemetry  
Videos  
Vitamins



Marshall® premium telemetry transmitters, receivers and accessories are used by falconers worldwide. Marshall® continues to raise radio telemetry to new levels of performance, design, and safety.



TinyLoc® specialises in the development of radio telemetry systems for falconry, applying the most advanced technology to their transmitters, compact receivers and accessories.



## F10

Aviary Cleaners  
Skin Barrier Ointments  
Wound Cleaners & Healers

F10® Super Concentrate Disinfectant is used around the world by leading veterinarians, breeders and owners in both therapy and biosecurity programmes.



## Astroturf®



As the official distributor of Astroturf® for Falconry and associated sports and hobbies, we always carry stock and can supply to your desired dimensions.

# GARLANDS® ...UNDER ONE ROOF

Trade Enquiries  
Welcome

For a copy of the Garlands Falconry catalogue  
please telephone 01827 383300  
or email [info@garlands.uk.com](mailto:info@garlands.uk.com)

# WHC Annual Summer Weekend

Friday 8th, Saturday 9th &  
Sunday 10th June 2007

## Usk Monmouthshire

This year the responsibility for the organisation of the annual summer weekend falls upon the South Wales region and as the recently elected Regional Chairman along with other regional committee members we are hoping to put on something which will appeal to many of our members and their families.

The weekend is to be held at the former Usk College of Agriculture (now Coleg Gwent) in Monmouthshire. Based in the Vale of Usk on a site of some 650 acres the college is very easy to get to being less than 2 miles from the A449 Monmouth to Newport dual carriageway.

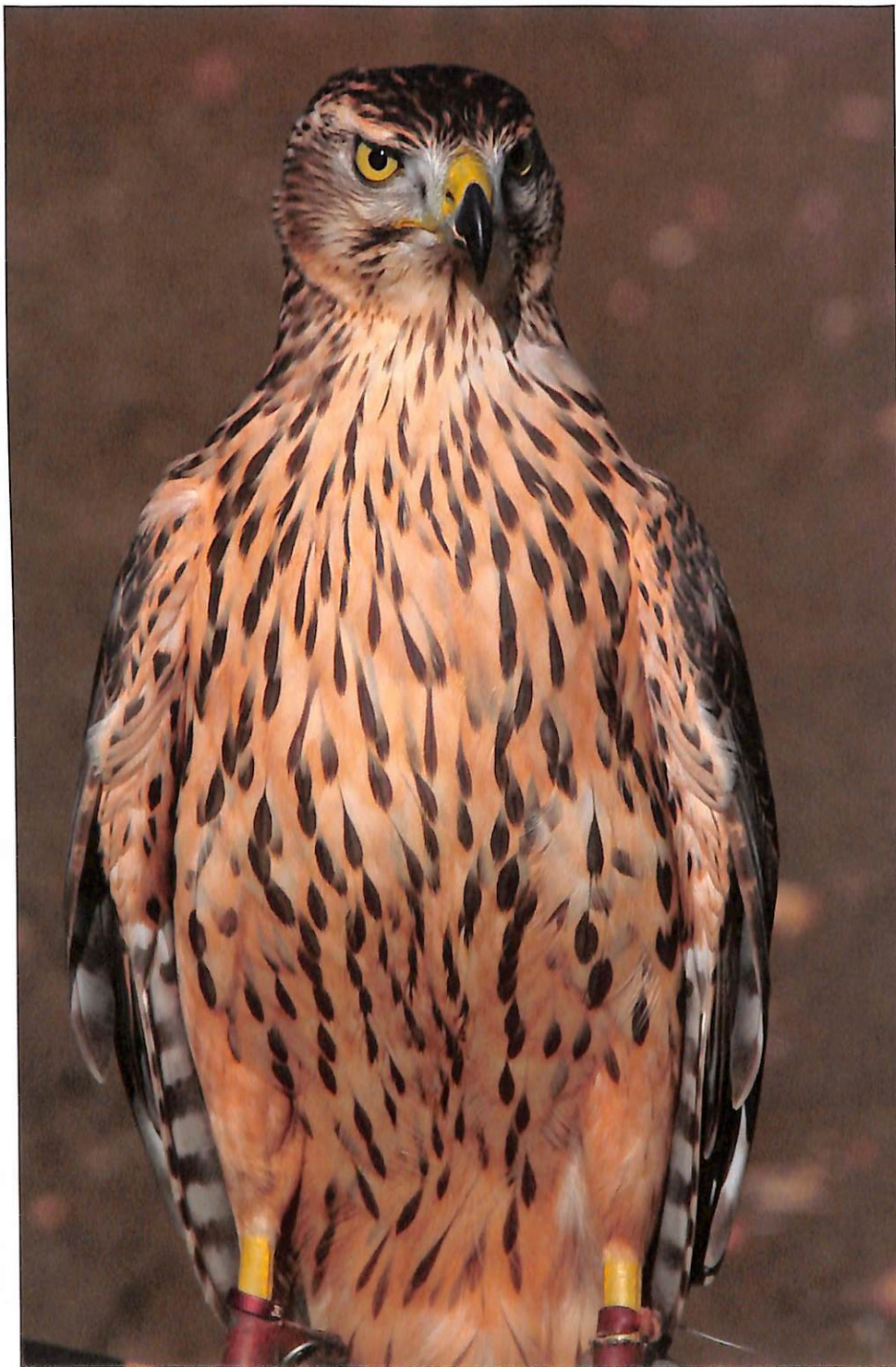
To give our members and their families something different and hopefully appealing we shall be holding the weekend at the same time as the college are holding their Open Day (Sat 9th June).

The college hold many residential and day courses concerning aspects of country life such as Gamekeeping, Forestry, Conservation, Countryside & Woodland Management, Agriculture, Horticulture, Equine, Animal care, Smallholding etc. etc.

During their free entry Open Day which usually attracts crowds of around 1,500 people there will be demonstrations and displays of many things as well as attractions for all the family such as Archery (try for yourself), Falconry displays, Flycasting demos, Armed forces displays, Police Wildlife officers, Bouncy castle, Quad bikes, Clay shooting, Bird of Prey Handling, Heavy Horse display, Ferret racing, 'Splat the Rat' and lots more. Refreshment facilities are also plentiful during the day.

The club weekend will begin on the Friday evening. After you have arrived and pitched your tent or put down the stabilizers of the caravan on the secure site allocated just for club use we will gather in the assembly hall at around 7.30-8.00 for a relaxed get together of acquaintances old and new followed by a musical slideshow, a quiz (not too difficult) and to round things off a guest speaker. At the time of writing negotiations are under way to organise a licensed bar although you are quite welcome to bring your own too.

Saturday is yours to enjoy as you please. You may be an early riser and want the morning newspaper, if so it is a very pleasant walk along the river Usk into the very picturesque town (about 15 mins.) The Open Day starts at 10.00am. Some time during the day (to be



arranged) club members are invited to take part in the Clay shoot and compete for 'The Douglas Morgans Memorial Trophy'.

The Open Day finishes at 5.00pm when the public will vacate the site and leave the club to enjoy themselves further. After a nap to recharge batteries and a freshen-up it's back to the assembly hall where there will be a full barbeque and bar facilities on the lawns whilst inside you can dance the night away to the disco.

The camping and caravan facilities will be situated on a level site (rugby pitch) with a cold water supply within the field and shower and toilet facilities approx 75 metres away. There are also 'Elsan' facilities for those who wish to use it. We anticipate pitches to cost approx

£7.50 per night. (to be confirmed).

Further activities are being planned as we progress to the event.

Members are welcome and encouraged to bring their dogs as there is ample space to exercise them away from buildings and livestock.

Please put this date in your diaries now and make every effort to attend and support your club.

If you have any further questions regarding this event please contact me on 07774 472702 or by e-mail on michael@cordellnet.co.uk.

Mick Cordell



# CROWN FALCONRY

**Crown Falconry, probably the leading designer and manufacturer of rubber topped stainless steel bow perches, rubber topped block perches from exotic hardwoods, stainless steel swivels, and much more.**

- HOODS
- STAINLESS STEEL SWIVELS
- HAWKING VESTS
- JESS SETS
- EYELETS
- CLOSING TOOLS
- LUGER BINOCULARS
- CREANCES
- BELLS
- PADDED LURES
- RABBIT LURES
- TELEMETRY
- RUBBER TOPPED BLOCKS
- RUBBER TOPPED BOW-PERCHES

Stockists of  
PUMA hunting  
and sporting  
knives



Tel: Jim Moss  
**01246 237213**

**www.crownfalconry.co.uk**



# INDEPENDENT BIRD REGISTER

THE National Lost and Found Bird of Prey Register

**NEW** IBR Falconry Directory  
Volume 10 2007-2008  
£7 + £1.50 postage  
(available mid April)

Closed Breeders rings  
Documents & Certificates of Captive Breeding  
Split telephone rings  
Registration - £10 for 3 years cover  
Lost, Found & Stolen database for Birds of Prey  
Equipment, Vitamin Supplements & Health Care

Closed Breeders rings  
Documents & Certificates of Captive Breeding  
Split telephone rings  
Registration - £10 for 3 years cover  
Lost, Found & Stolen database for Birds of Prey  
Equipment, Vitamin Supplements & Health Care

**Tel: 0870 60 88 500**

www.ibr.org.uk

email: [Juliana@ibr.org.uk](mailto:Juliana@ibr.org.uk)

The Independent Bird Register  
Tiercel House, Falcon Close  
Scotton, North Yorkshire. DL9 3RB

**Register it BEFORE you lose it!**

# The Falconers & Raptor Conservation Magazine

Subscribe to Britain's Best Practical Falconry Magazine

Published quarterly

For credit card orders

**TEL: 01442 879097**

Most credit cards accepted

**FAX: 01442 872279 E-mail: [falconers@webscribe.co.uk](mailto:falconers@webscribe.co.uk)**

or write to: The Falconers and Raptor Conservation Magazine, Subscriptions  
Department,  
PO Box 464, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2UR.

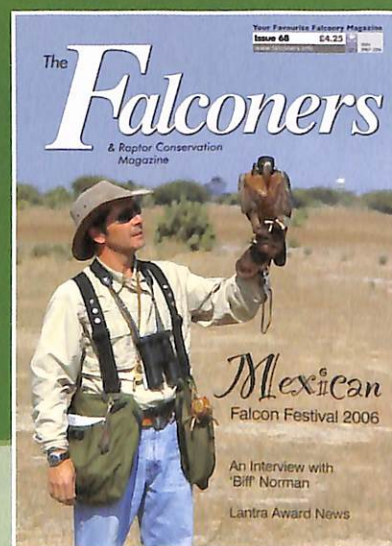
Cheques/Postal Orders made payable to PW Publishing Ltd. please.

Yearly Subscription rates:

UK: £16.50

Europe: £20.00

R.O.W. surface mail: £28.00



# Hatricks

Purist Longwingers usually have one, or at most two flights a day. Multiple flights with a Shortwing are the norm but multiple flights with a Longwing are possible especially With an experienced seasoned bird.

To maintain pitch and strength food in the form of Pigeon breast etc can be given in between flights. If quarry is plentiful as on kept estates a few kills can occur on occasion.

For years I had built up my old Gyr x Peregrine Tiercel, s flights per outing so that two kills were quite the common if the opportunity presented itself. But for some reason I just could not achieve three kills, something always happen to thwart the elusive third kill. Flying the Tiercel a number of times would be akin to what a wild hawk would do, hunting with periods of rest until a kill or kills were made especially during the breeding season.

October found myself and other members of the North Wales Region at the famous Llandegla estate run by Dave Rhodes the Keeper. A small wood headed a sloping valley at the edge of the moor; a ditch ran along the bottom with nettle beds here and there. Mel the Underkeeper had come out with us and suggested we work the pitch first as a number of Pheasants had taken up residence there. A few birds had been marked down by Kevin Brisendon and Mike Coupe just to the side of the ditch in a nettle bed. I put my old Tiercel G.P. up and watched him beat strongly up to a pitch of about 600 ft but he was attracted by the Ducks on the pond in front of Boddri's hall across from where we were flying.

I waved frantically to pull him over and slowly he started to return "tell us when you want us to flush" shouted Mike, G.P. came in a straight



line for us now as he must have recognised the set up. He was in a perfect position so I shouted to Mike and Kev "Now!" Four or five Hens erupted from the cover as they thrashed about and the Tiercel picked one out and turned over on it. He hit the bird hard killing it instantly and he threw up and looked over his shoulder before turning and a lighting on it.

The weather was wet and mild and the Hawks weight was 11lb 14 ozs so only a small feed of Pigeon breast was given. He was at flying weight approximately, as he would fly higher at an even higher weight and I always pushed his weight up as high as possible (he finished the season at 2lb on the last day.)

No one was ready to fly yet so I said I would try him again as he had not expended too much energy with his first flight. We moved further up

the valley and came to some brushwood in the ditch Mel said that it usually held a few Pheasants. I cast off G.P. on the side of the slope opposite and watched him mount over a conifer wood near by as he was coming into position a Hen broke early and he stooped but the Hen made the nearby wood before he could get down to it. He stood on his tail and shot straight back up just as another Hen broke to the side, this one did not make it. Mel was closest and said he saw the strike and whip over; we found him just over the rise mantling over his kill.

Later in the day I decided to try him again nearer the hall. He flew to a tree which did not bother me as he sometimes did this before going up, did he still have enough energy to fly hard and high? After what seemed like an eternity he took off and waited on nicely but the Pheasants had disappeared while he had been sat down I thought if he is willing to fly I will run and try to flush a Pheasant for him. I ran past the hall down onto the ground towards the woods, the odd Pheasant was still out feeding but they made cover. After running 1/4 of a mile I was about to give up when a couple of Hens flushed from the side of the wood and disappeared around the edge and out of sight, I saw a flash of the Tiercel's wings as he stooped over the wood.

I ran around the wood but there was no sign of him so I took out the telemetry which indicated that he was in a field with cattle! I found him behind the gate full of mud on the Pheasant. I was exhausted but jubilant at finally catching the elusive number three.

He went on to make six hat tricks this season and actually bagged four head one day but that's another story. His total bag for the season was seventy one head including those elusive hat tricks.

*Ellis Phythian*



# South Wales Region

## Game Supper



3rd March 2007

At the latter part of last year Regional Secretary, Martin Cox came up with an idea to hold a Game Supper for its members at the end of the hunting season. After a lot of hard work on his part the evening was arranged and took place on 3rd March.

Members, guests and their wives and partners gathered at The Rat Trap Hotel in Usk, Monmouthshire soon after 7.15 and enjoyed a leisurely aperitif before being invited into the dining area. Twenty six people attended with one absentee due to illness.

The dining area had been arranged beautifully with a horseshoe setout to the tables. In the centre of the room a table had been placed which had a fine display of stuffed animals which included Gyr Falcon, Hare, Rabbit, Mink And Pheasant. Also at the corner of the dining tables were more displays of African Peregrine, Peregrine and a couple of Grouse.

The starter course was a choice of either Pigeon Breast or Game Terrine followed by a palette freshening Lemon Sorbet.

The Main course was chosen from Venison or Pheasant Breast served with Potatoes, Red Cabbage, Carrots and Broccoli & Cauliflower Mornay. The taste of all the dishes was superb as was the excellent way in which it was presented.



As coffee was served the guest speaker, Martin Jones was introduced. We all sat back and were enthralled by him and his tales of his introduction to Falconry, his first meeting with Philip Glaser, and how he went to London and sold falconry equipment to the Arabs at the Dorchester Hotel. After a full hour of Martins memoirs the evening drew to a close with a Raffle draw. Rob Cole kindly donated a large print of a Peregrine on the fist and 'Biff' Norman kindly donated a mounted copy of the poem 'Windhover'

This will now become an annual event and will be open to all regions and members.

The venue can cater for 50 people and can also offer accommodation for those who wish to have a drink and not worry about driving home until the next day.

In 2008 the event will take place on either Saturday 1st March or Saturday 8th March.

The cost of this years supper was an astonishing £30, which for 5 courses, wine and Port included represents phenomenal value.

Accommodation was also reduced to £30 per double room inc. breakfast.

If you are interested in attending next years Game Supper please contact Martin Cox, secretary of South Wales region WHC or e-mail him at [m.cox610@ntlworld.com](mailto:m.cox610@ntlworld.com)

Don't delay and be dissappointed.

*Mick Cordell*



Established ten years - family owned.

RUN FOR FALCONERS by falconers.

Suppliers to major breeders, zoos and collections.

Top QUALITY chicks, quail & rodents.

All our products are carefully selected, packed and blast frozen by Honeybrook Animal Foods.

Major sponsors of the CAMPAIGN FOR FALCONRY tirelessly working on behalf of EU falconers and raptor keepers.

Raptor Return - FREE registration, FREE rings, FREE I.D. tags, FREEPHONE for lost and found.

**FREEPHONE  
0800 1971 777**



**Honeybrook Animal Foods for all your raptor's needs**



## Committee of the Welsh Hawking Club

### President & Treasurer

Dave & Jean Dimond, Bristol BS30 9UE  
Tel: 0117 932 4845

### Vice President.

Ian Blantem, Bristol BS6 6RW  
Tel: 0117 973 6130

### Chairman.

Paul Dillon, Newport, Gwent, NP18 1JE  
Tel: 01633 276411

### Vice Chairman.

Bryan Patterson, Bridgnorth,  
Shrops. WV16 4RW  
Tel: 01746 714062

### Secretary & Press Officer.

Mike Clowes, Le Moulin de l'Age, 86390  
Lathus St Remy, France.  
Tel: (0033) 549 917 930

### Webmaster & Membership Secretary

Tony & Jan France, Bee Cottage, Waterloo  
Farm, Fulbrook, Oxfordshire, OX18 4BZ  
Tel: 01993 822847

### Education Officer & Newsletter Editor.

David Horobin, 44, Hilton Road, Willenhall,  
Wolverhampton, WV12 5XE  
Tel: 01922 712090

### Austringer Editor.

Andy Hulme, Colchester Essex,  
CO2 9DZ  
Tel: 01206 520939

### Field Officer.

Neil McCann Merseyside, L38  
Tel: 0151 929 3402

### Breeding Officer.

Rob Cole, Mid. Glam. CF81 8UE  
Tel: 01443 821320

### Legal Officer.

Tom Jones, c/o 6-10 Broad Street, Hanley,  
S-o-T, ST1 4EU  
Tel: 01630 673448 E-mail:  
tjones@woolliscrofts.co.uk

### Honorary Members:

Dr. Nick Fox, Christian de Coune,  
Stephen Frank, Terry Large,  
Gary Morris, Graham Rossiter,  
Mike & Ann Shuttleworth,  
Diana Durman-Walters, Hal Webster,  
Mike Clowes, Harry Robinson  
and Nick & Lyn Havemann-mart.

# Rules & Constitution of the Welsh Hawking Club

## Name and Objects

- 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 members.

## Constitution

The club shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Membership Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Editor, Press and Publicity Officer, Education Officer, Breeding Project Officer, Legal Officer, Mewsletter Editor, Field Officer and a Webmaster. Each of these is 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. Proxy and Postal votes will not be allowed at committee meetings. Only Full members are eligible for election to office. The business of the club will be conducted by the Officers and committee (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. No one with convictions for offences involving birds of prey shall hold office within the Welsh Hawking Club.

## Elections

- All members of the committee will be elected individually, annually at the AGM. Prior to the election the attendance record at committee meetings for the last year shall be given.
- 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 may co-opt a member to fill the position. They may also co-opt any person to the committee if considered desirable.

## Membership

- Members of the club will be elected by the committee.
- No person will be elected without application to the Membership Secretary in writing.
- The annual subscription rate shall be determined at the AGM each year.
- Any member whose subscription is unpaid by the end of May of any year shall cease to be a member, but shall be eligible for election as for new members.

- 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 decide that the member has acted in a way harmful to Falconry or the club.
- No member must give talks, interviews or material relating to Falconry. Domestic breeding etc. to the media i.e. T.V. Radio, Press etc. without advice from the committee and/or the Press and Publicity Officer. Any member giving such talks must make every effort to ensure their accuracy.
- Any member wishing to dispose of a hawk obtained through the club must first offer the hawk back into the club.
- Only Full members are eligible to vote on club affairs.
- Proxy and Postal votes are not allowed.
- 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 application must give details of hawk related experience and should be countersigned by a Full member.

## 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.
- A summer meeting shall be held annually at which reports of the affairs of the Club can be given. General meetings will normally be held monthly. Informal meetings will be held as required.

## 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. The application must be countersigned by 20 Full Members.

## 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 hawk.
- All hawks flown free should be equipped with field jesses, at least one bell and if possible a transmitter and the name and address of the owner. In the case of unentered or aggressive hawks, eagles, hybrids, exotics etc. special care must be taken to prevent loss.
- 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.
- Indigenous hawks that are no longer wanted must either be returned to the wild state in a suitable country or passed on to someone who will treat them in accordance with this code of conduct. Before a hawk is released the falconer must ensure that it is in good

feather, in the highest possible condition, that it can kill for itself and is suitable for release. If there is any doubt that it is able to do so it should be hacked back.

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

## Regions

### Purpose of the Regions

- To provide social meetings for members and potential members living locally, although any member will be welcome to attend.
- To arrange local field meets, which will be governed by the main Club field meet rules
- To arrange fund raising to assist with paying for speakers and field meets.
- To promote falconry and the Welsh Hawking Club.

### Rules

- No new region will be formed by members unless it has been agreed by the Club committee at a committee meeting.
- All regions Must open a bank or building society account in the name of The Welsh Hawking Club. It is recommended that an account has 2 signatories.

- Any non-members attending, other than wives, partners or children of members will be made to 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 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.
- A written report will be forwarded each year by the regional Secretary to the Editor of the Austringer, to reach him no later than the end of February, for inclusion in the Austringer.
- A report must be sent by the regional Treasurer to the Club Treasurer showing the state of the 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 committee meetings. This representative will have full voting rights.

Mike Clowes

Hon. Secretary, January 2007



## M & J Raptors

Hunting Falcons and Hawks



Pure bred Falcons

Hybrid Falcons

Finnish Goshawks

## We breed a number of quality finnish Goshawks and Falcons each season

Mick Kane  
Telephone 01427 848146  
Email [AIgosKane@aol.com](mailto:AIgosKane@aol.com)  
[www.mandjraptors.co.uk](http://www.mandjraptors.co.uk)





Designed and Printed by



Palladian  
PRESS

Tel: 01206 799065 Fax: 01206 799068  
Email: info@palladianpress.co.uk Website: www.palladianpress.co.uk