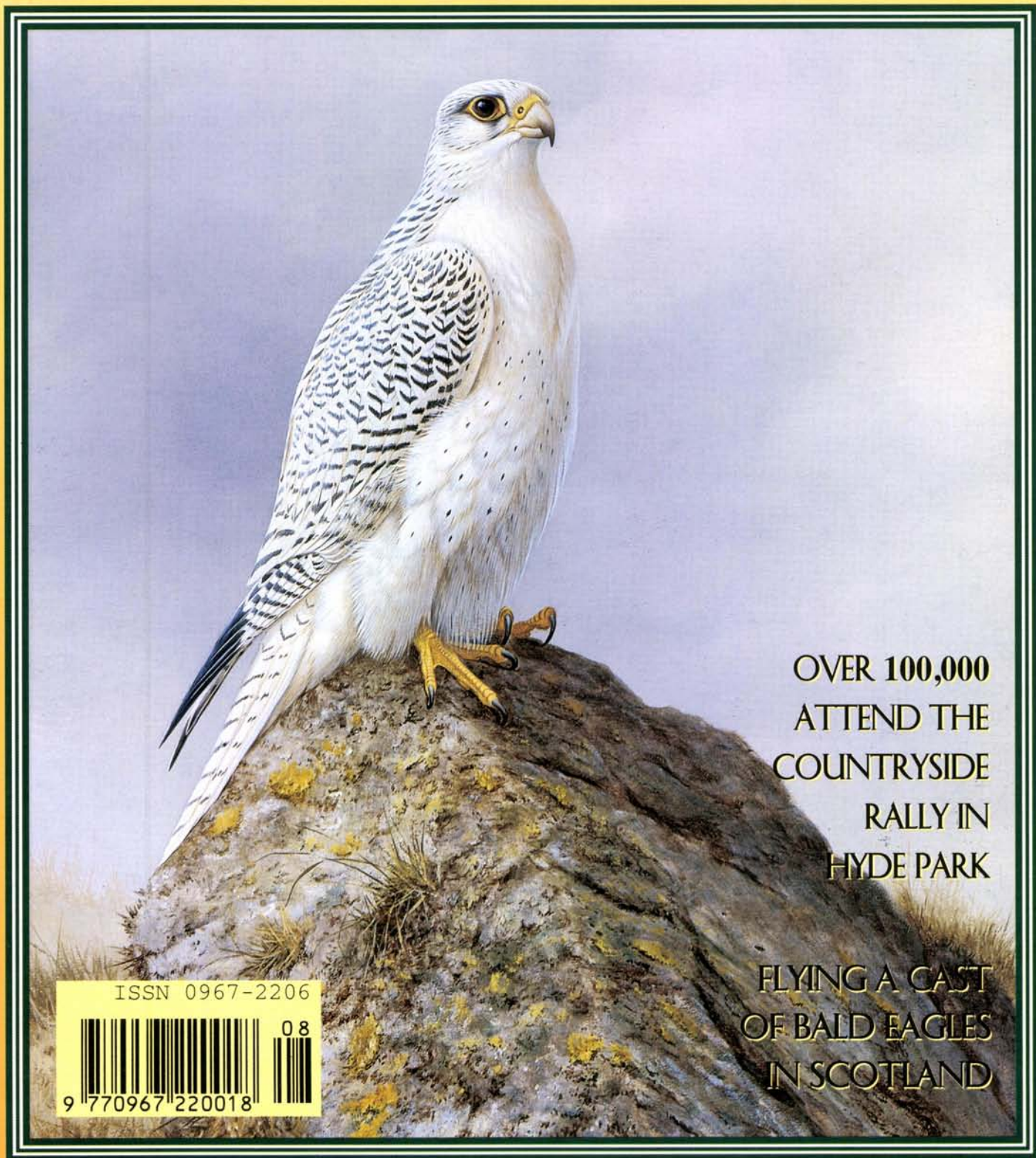


The **Falcons**  
*& Raptor Conservation Magazine*

Autumn 1997 £2.95



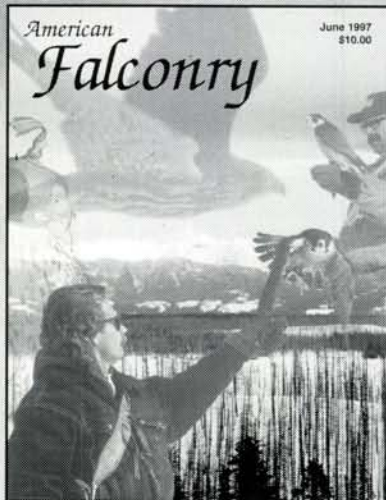
OVER 100,000  
ATTEND THE  
COUNTRYSIDE  
RALLY IN  
HYDE PARK

FLYING A CAST  
OF BALD EAGLES  
IN SCOTLAND

ISSN 0967-2206



9 770967 220018



*American Falconry* is a quarterly magazine that is devoted entirely to the sport of falconry and is produced by practicing falconers. Each issue has 70-100 glossy pages, outstanding full color photos, a color foldout, and is perfect bound. Contents include the latest techniques in training, captive breeding and dog handling. Additional articles contain humor, adventure, conservation news, personal viewpoints and information for both the expert and beginner. Well known authors, and a fine departmental writing staff have set a new standard in falconry publications for the 90's. Our new creative approach will be a welcome addition to your library. Subscribe today!

	1 year	2 years
U.S. Residents	\$32.00	\$59.00
Canada and Mexico (air mail)	\$40.50	\$76.00
Overseas Residents (surface mail)	\$40.50	\$76.00
Overseas Residents (air mail)	\$50.00	\$95.00

Visa and MasterCard accepted

*American Falconry*

PO Box 187

Dayton WY 82836

USA

(307)655-2467

Fax (307)655-9058

Please make checks payable in U.S. funds to *American Falconry*.

## Independent Bird Register

THE LARGEST LOST AND FOUND AGENCY IN  
THE COUNTRY, SO USE US.

THE SYSTEM WORKS AND HAS BEEN  
ESTABLISHED FOR 3 YEARS, FINDING AND  
REUNITING YOU WITH YOUR BIRDS.

WE ISSUE REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS  
CERTIFICATES OF CAPTIVE BREEDING  
& SPLIT TELEPHONE RINGS.

IBR FALCONRY PAGES COME OUT JANUARY  
1998 AND WILL GIVE YOU INFORMATION FROM  
TAIL-MOUNTS TO BREEDERS TO IDENTIFICATION  
AND MUCH MUCH MORE. PHONE NOW TO  
BE IN THIS EXCITING NEW PUBLICATION.

**184 Warwick Road, Kenilworth  
Warks. CV8 1HU**

**Telephone: (01926) 850000  
ibr@samax.u-net.com**

## HARRIS HAWKING

A New Video

Available now, the only comprehensive video  
showing housing, training and hunting with  
Harris Hawks, dogs & ferrets.

**This is the definitive video about Harris Hawking.**

The video features Bob Dalton, a well respected,  
professional falconer of many years standing.  
It contains all you need to know about Harris  
Hawking, whether you are a beginner or an  
experienced falconer.

*The hunting sequences are superb and the  
information included is indispensable.*

The cost of the video (running time 55mins) is just  
**£21.95 plus £1.95 p&p**

To order your own copy of this essential video,  
send a cheque (only) made payable to  
Instinctive Productions for £23.90 to:

**Harris Hawking, Instinctive Productions,  
Unit 8a, Intec 2, Wade Road,  
Basingstoke. Hants. RG24 8NE.**

*Please allow 28 days for delivery.  
Trade enquiries welcome.  
Please telephone 01256 354112*

## features

- 9** One Lump or Two  
Kim Myers
- 11** CITES CONVENTION IN  
ZIMBABWE  
Nick Fox
- 12** FLYING A CAST OF BALD  
EAGLES IN SCOTLAND  
Andrew Knowles-Brown
- 14** THEY CAME FROM ALL  
CORNERS  
Alan Gates
- 15** FIGHTING FOR FALCONRY.  
Nick Fox
- 16** I TAKE A SPADE WHEN I'M  
FERRETING - NOT WHEN I'M  
HAWKING J Pitcher
- 17** A SEASON WITH TARA  
Melvin Batt
- 18** STARTING AT THE BEGINNING  
Pthii  
Neil MacKinnon
- 20** ITALIAN JOB  
Tony Scott
- 24** LUGGERS IN PAKISTAN  
Nick Fox
- 29** WINDS OF CHANGE  
Diana Durman-Walters
- 31** SOMETHING OF VALUE  
Richard Naisbitt
- 35** CHEYENNE & WOVOKA - AN  
UNFORSEEN MARRIAGE  
Hans Dhooge
- 36** PAGAN WARRIOR  
Chris Coleman

## regulars

- 7** RAPTOR RESCUE  
Fly Safe  
Mick Cunningham
- 8** CLUB DIRECTORY  
Make your voice count,  
join an affiliated Club
- 23** FACTS ON FALCONERS  
Adrian Langley from  
Zimbabwe
- 27** HAWK TALK  
John Matcham
- 28** PHILIP SNOW  
Northern Harrier

## up-to-date

- 4-5-6** NEWS Convictions  
- Record fine. 1998  
H.B. Symposium
- 10** Hawk Board  
News
- 10+19** REVIEWS  
Furniture, Books &  
A Video
- 22** CLUBS NEWS.  
Scottish & Yorkshire
- 26** FALCONERS FAIR  
A Good Time Had by All
- 30** Summary of New  
Regulations
- 32/33/34** LETTERS.  
WHO IS SAYING  
WHAT?
- 38** CLASSIFIEDS.



Rally in Hyde Park p14 - 15



Italian Job p20

## COMMENT

Hi Folks,

Well, its nearly 'that' time again. All the birds moulted, and well on the way to being trained. Or if you own the centre the other way round. The main issues in this mag are the new regulations. A copy of these in 'plain speak' is available from us for £2.50.

The other is the Rally in Hyde Park. A big Well Done to all who went. For those who didn't, you must now do your bit by writing to the PM, and your MP. All the addresses are on page 14. So no excuses. There are numerous other things you can do as listed in Nick Fox's article on page 15.

In our next issue we are looking forward to contributions from Bruce Haak, accompanied by a painting by Andrew Ellis and an article on R David Digby, an artist who is well known by most and is well overdue a feature in the magazine.

Hope you all have a fabulous hunting season.  
Keep Falconry Safe.

Lyn & David

## EDITORIAL TEAM

**EDITORS:** LYN & DAVID WILSON

**DESIGN:** D PERKINS

**ADVERTISING:** LYN WILSON

**PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY:**

**THE FALCONERS & RAPTOR CONSERVATION MAGAZINE**

20 Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Kettering, Northants. NN15 5QP

**Telephone:** (01536) 722794 **Fax:** (01536) 722794

E-mail: kbu77@dial.pipex.com

**Subscriptions:** UK & Eire £14.00, Europe £18.00, Airmail £28.00

*Cheque/Postal Order payable to: The Falconers Magazine.*

*For more details phone 01536 722794*

The views expressed in this magazine are the views of the author  
No responsibility for the quality of goods or services offered in this magazine can  
be accepted by the publishers or the printers, and the advertisements are accepted  
in good faith.

All material included in the Falconers and Raptors Conservation Magazine is  
copyright Falconers Magazine 1995, and may not be reproduced in part or whole  
without written permission of the publishers.

**COVER: Painting, Gyr Falcon. R David Digby.**

**CONVICTIONS**

**RECORD FINE FOR  
POISONER OF RED KITES**

During the first three months of 1996 a total of 3 Red Kites were found dead in Oxfordshire. The cause of death was identified as poisoning by a product called Mevinphos. Mevinphos is an insecticide which is banned in this country.

On 21st April 1996, following enquiries by Thames Valley Police, a search warrant was executed at a farm near Wallingford in Oxfordshire. In a locked shed at this farm the Police found approx 50 Gin Traps, ( a number of which were oiled and greased.) Nine Pole Traps, of which one showed signs of being opened and closed recently, one had bird droppings on it and another had fur/feather between the jaws. Also found was a jar of Alphachloralose, two tins of Rodine, (both poisons, both banned) & two chicken eggs beside a box of syringes.

The items were seized by the Police and three of the syringes, which appeared to have been used, were sent for analysis. The analysis result revealed a small amount of Mevinphos in the needle of one syringe. On the 22nd & 23rd of May 1997, the defendant, John Edwards, appeared at Thame Magistrates Court. During the two day trial the Court heard that Edwards believed that Kites should not have been re-introduced and had quoted to the Police that all birds of prey were vermin. Edwards denied using any of the traps and stated that he had never harmed a Red Kite.

The Magistrates returned with a Guilty verdict on all counts. The Chairman of the Bench stated, "We accept the ways of rural life are often steeped in history and may be slow to accept changes in legislation protecting Wildlife, it is the Courts view you have wilfully failed to comply with current wildlife law. The sentence reflects how seriously we view these offences."

1. Killing a Red Kite  
Fined £4000.00
2. Possession of Pole Traps  
Fined £3000.00
3. Possession of Eggs/syringes & syringe containing Mevinphos  
Fined £3000.00
4. Possession of Gin Traps  
Fined £500.00

During an earlier hearing the defendant pleaded guilty to three other offences and the sentence was dealt with at the same time as the others.

1. Unlawful storage of Mevinphos  
Fined £1000.00
  2. Unlawful storage of Alphachloralose  
Fined £1000.00
  3. Unlawful storage of Rodine  
Fined £1000.00
- Total fines £13,500. Costs £500 (28 days to pay)  
All items forfeit.

This was a long and protracted case and the gathering of evidence was, at times, diffi-

cult. A special thanks must go to the RSPB. (Guy Shorrocks), English Nature (Ian Carter & Ian Evans) ADAS (David Mercer & Paul Sayers), the Central Science Laboratory. Pesticides Safety Directive and also to Jemima Parry-Jones, who provided an excellent statement on the habits of the Red Kite and finally to Neil Forbes who spent a considerable amount of time researching Mevinphos and its effect on Red Kites in relation to the quantity taken and the time span until death, which was very relevant.

In May 1997 Leigh Holmes of Maidstone, Kent appeared at Chichester Court and pleaded guilty to the theft of a Peregrine Falcon. The Court heard that it was stolen by Holmes after he was called by pigeon shooters as it was causing them problems. The Court was also told that the birds' leg ring had been removed which in turn had injured the bird.

Due to Holmes being unemployed he was ordered to do 60 hours community service.

In April 1997 Gary Job of Lampeter appeared at Court and was found guilty of offences in relation to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. DNA testing revealed that two Peregrines could not have been the offspring of the pair he owned. For this offence he was fined £450.00 and ordered to pay £700.00 costs.

On Monday 16th June 1997 Mark Gordon Colyer, of Reading Berks, appeared at Reading Magistrates Court where he pleaded not guilty to causing unnecessary suffering to two birds and a registration offence. The Court heard that in September 1996, Colyer had handed both birds, a Peregrine hybrid and a Kestrel to a falconer to care for whilst he was on holiday.

The Falconer Mr Alex Lay, was appalled at the condition of both the birds and the equipment that came with them. The blocks, jesses and leash were in a disgusting condition being covered in mutes and waste food.

The Hybrid was examined and found to be in the following condition:

- (a) Bumblefoot in both feet.
- (b) Upper mandible cracked with the tooth missing on one side. Also deformed and growing to one side.
- (c) Primary feathers on both wings were broken and frayed and the outer primaries were frayed down to the quill.
- (d) Numerous tail feathers broken.
- (e) Talons on both feet considerably worn down.
- (f) The keel bone was very prominent and it was obvious that it was severely underweight and had been so for a considerable time. It was later shown that the bird was 25% underweight.
- (g) The bird was totally un-manned and was unsuitable to be kept on a block.

(h) The bird was filthy, dirty and emitted a strong acrid smell consistent with being kept in contact with its own mutes and waste food.

The Kestrel, although not as bad was assessed as follows:

- (a) Upper mandible overgrown and split on both sides
- (b) Bumblefoot in one foot.
- (c) The same smell as the hybrid.
- (d) Also the jesses fitted to this small falcon would have been more suitable for a buzzard.

During the course of the first day the Court were shown photographs of the bird and heard evidence from two falconers, a Veterinary surgeon and three other witnesses who had seen the birds in the condition they had arrived. The Court heard further that the birds were not trained for Falconry and had been kept in a mews with a concrete floor.

On the morning of the second day the defence capitulated following the overwhelming evidence and changed their plea to guilty in respect of the suffering.

Colyer was therefore sentenced as follows:

1. Causing unnecessary suffering to Peregrine Fined £700.00
  2. Causing unnecessary suffering to Kestrel Fined £300.00
- Ordered to pay costs of £317.50  
Total £1317.50

The court ordered that both birds be forfeit. Colyer was also disqualified from keeping any bird of prey for 5 years.

In passing sentence, Chairperson of the bench, the Honourable Mrs Bayliss stated, following a statement by one of the Falconers "I share the witnesses concern that unqualified people can purchase these birds."

This case was a classic example of a person owning Falcons without having the faintest idea of how to look after them, their requirements and the specialist care needed. The suffering caused was not done through malice or with deliberate intent, it was done through ignorance. As a result two falcons have been caused to suffer over a long period of time. The Peregrine Hybrid is particularly nervous and very highly strung and it's behaviour is out of character with this species. The mental stress caused will never be known. Credit in this case must be given in the main to the two falconers who gave evidence, in particular Alex Lay, who spent four hours in the witness box giving expert evidence on the aspects of falconry and the condition of the birds.

During the trial the defence quoted several times from the book Falconry & Hawking by Philip Glasier. As a result the prosecutor was also able to quote a passage from this book in relation to the opening sentence from Chapter Nine, "Before you start actually training your birds you must realise exactly what you are trying to do, why you are doing it, and how to set about it. It is therefore essential that you understand what is meant by 'condition.'"

## First Announcement and Call for Papers

3rd International Raptor Biomedical Conference.  
August 9-11 1998, Midrand, South Africa.

The 3rd International Raptor Biomedical Conference is the third in a series of which the first one was held in London (1980) and the second in St Paul, Minnesota (1988). The conference will be held on August 9-11, 1998 in conjunction with the V World Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls (August 4-11) at the ESKOM Training and Exhibition Centre in Midrand, South Africa and is planned close to the International Ornithological Conference of Birdlife International (August 16-22).

The main sessions for the symposium are I. Pathology and Microbiology (chaired by J.E Cooper), II. Environmental Disease and Mortality Factors (chairperson tbd), III. Management of Captive Raptors and Falconry Birds (chairperson tbd), IV. Medicine and Therapeutics (chaired by T J Lumeij), V. Surgery and Anaesthesia (chaired by P. T. Redig), VI Breeding and Genetics (chairperson tbd), VII. Rehabilitation and post-release monitoring and survival (chaired by D. Csermely), VIII. Legal Aspects (chaired by M Cooper). Wet labs on orthopaedic techniques and rehabilitation are planned preceding the two day conference on Sunday August 9th.

At the conference an abstract book will be provided. Full length papers will be re-

ceived and published after the symposium in a book format.

Suggestions for papers and practical training sessions (wet labs), including an informative 100 word abstract and suggested presentation time should be submitted to the Chairman of the Scientific Committee before November 15th 1997. Speakers will be notified shortly after the Scientific Committee has decided on the definitive program on December 1st 1997. Deadline for full length manuscripts is March 31st 1998. The referees will notify speakers about major changes which have to be made in the manuscript before May 1st. The deadline for abstracts for the abstract book which will be provided for the conference is June 15th 1998. The referees will give their comments within one week after the conference and authors will be given the opportunity to correct their manuscripts and include information raised during the conference before September 15th, 1998. The conference book is scheduled to be published by the end of 1998.

The Organising Committee is chaired by P.T.Redig from the Raptor Centre at the University of Minnesota ( The Raptor Centre, 1920 Fitch Avenue, St Paul, Minnesota 55108, USA. Fax: 612 624

8740, E-mail: redig001@maroon.tc.umn.edu) and communications are managed by N Forbes from the UK (Clockhouse Veterinary Hospital, Landsdown Veterinary Practice, Stroud Glos. GL5 3JD. England. Fax: 01453 756065. E-mail: drhawk@cix.com-pulink.co.uk).

Those who want to receive further information on registration, hotel accommodation, the social program and field trips, please contact Local Arrangements Manager, Dr Gerhard H. Verdoorn, PO Box 72155, Parkview 2122, South Africa, Tel+27-11-646-4629/8617, Fax+27-11-646-4631, E-mail: neshar@global.co.za.. He can also be contacted for information on the Vth World Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls (August 4th 11th)

For information on the International Ornithological Conference (August 16-22\_ please contact Birdlife South Africa in Durban, Dr Aldo Berutti. E-mail: aldo@birdlife.org.za.

Abstracts for suggested papers should be submitted in triplicate by mail before November 15th to the Chairman of the Scientific Committee, 3rd International Raptor Biomedical Conference, J.T. Lumeij, Department Avian and Exotic Animal Medicine, Utrecht University, Yalelaan 8, 3584 CM Utrecht, The Netherlands. Fax+30-2518126, E-mail: J. T. Lumeij@ukg.dgk.ruu.nl. (Authors should indicate their name, postal address, fax number and E-mail number

### THE 1997 HAWK BOARD SYMPOSIUM

Last year saw the first Hawk Board Symposium, held at Birmingham University in October 1996. This was our first attempt at producing something useful for the clubs that are members and/or affiliated to the Hawk Board, and generally it went very well. We took a survey after the event and the Hawk Board sub committee have just put together the programme for the 1997 Symposium. We looked very hard at the survey and tried to take into account the comments and suggestions put by those who filled them in. I have to say I think we have a pretty good programme for those who attend this year.

There are about 120 places available at the Symposium which is going to be held at Birmingham University on Saturday October 18th, starting at 10.am. The places will be offered to all the member and affiliated clubs first, each of which are allocated a certain number, if these have not been taken up by the first weekend

of September the rest of the places will be thrown open to anyone who is interested in coming, on a first come first served basis. For all those of you who are in clubs - make sure you get to hear about the tickets and if you don't - ASK your club committee. For those of you who are interested, but not a member or affiliated club, write to the secretary of the Hawk Board with a dated letter and he will contact you, if there are places available after the closing date for the clubs. The quicker you get your request in, the higher up the queue you will be!

The program, which is not yet finalised, will include talks from the DOE on the new legislation and how it will affect us long term. Also speakers on the International Falconry Scene, Incubation of Raptor Eggs, Ferreting with Hawks, Wildlife Liaison Officers duties, a speaker from the BFSS on what they are doing for our sport, and probably most important, two hours dur-

ing the day set aside for questions and an open forum, with a panel to include a vet and members of the Hawk Board as well as the speakers for the day.

Brinsea Incubators are going to be bringing along a stand, as are the BFSS and Martin Jones Falconry Furniture, and possible the Police Wildlife Liaison Officers will have one as well. There will be an excellent buffet lunch, and good company, the day finishes at 6pm. The cost is a very moderate £15 per head, to include lunch.

For those of you who say the date should be changed because it cuts into hawking time - it is one day only, the topics covered should be very useful to all of you and of you can't take one day off hawking to learn something new about your chosen love, well I won't say what I am thinking, but those of you who know me should be able to come up with a pretty accurate guess.

For any further information, either get hold of your club to put your name down for a ticket, or write to Derek Starkie, Hawk Board Secretary. If you could be really kind and put a stamped addressed envelope in

with your letter, then you will not be removing vitally needed funds from what we may well need to fight the sort of problems we expect from our new Labour government in the years to come.

#### PROGRAMME

- 10.00 am** Registration & Coffee
- 10.30am** Welcome - Hawk Board Chair or Vice Chair
- 10.35am** Run down on Hawk Board Business over the last year, list and welcome of new affiliated clubs
- 11.00am** BFSS - How does BFSS protect Raptor Keepers and Falconry with a new government
- 11.30am** Police Wildlife Liaison Officer.
- 12.00pm** Incubation of Raptor Eggs - David Le Mesurier.
- 12.30pm** Question Time
- 1.00pm Lunch
- 2.15pm** Ferreting & Hawking James McKay
- 2.45pm** DOE - New laws and regulations - how they work. Lynn Garvey.
- 3.45pm** Tea & Draw for Raffle.
- 4.00pm** The International Falconry Scene & other topics - Robert Kenward.
- 4.30 - 6.00pm** Open Forum and closing remarks.

## NEW MEASURES TO TIGHTEN ENFORCEMENT OF WILDLIFE CRIME ENDORSED BY ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

New measures to tighten the enforcement of wildlife crime including making greater use of DNA testing were endorsed by Environment Secretary, Michael Meacher today.

Attending a meeting with the Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime in London, Mr Meacher said:

"The Partnership's proposals for changes to legislation to strengthen enforcement have been the subject of a consultation exercise in recent months.

The majority supported the recommendations. Some sought tougher action, others expressed misgivings. I welcome the mainly positive response. The Government is also in sympathy with the majority of the recommendations made by the Partnership, and we hope to make a further announcement shortly."

Following on from the success of "Wildlife Crime: A Guide to Wildlife Law Enforcement in the UK," the Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime has today launched two further publications: "Wildlife Crime: Using DNA Forensic

Evidence" contains practical advice and information mainly for Police and Customs officers using DNA evidence in wildlife investigations. The book explains all the steps which must be taken, from the receipt of information that an offence may have been committed - right through to the testing of tissue samples by the laboratory. It will be invaluable to enforcers using DNA evidence for the first time, as well as serving as an aide memoir for officers who are more familiar with what needs to be done.

A standard blood sampling kit to accompany the advice is also being made available to enforcers today. It contains everything a veterinary surgeon needs to take a sample from a bird, whilst ensuring that the integrity of the sample is maintained.

Wildlife Crime: A Directory of Forensic Expertise lists the institutions and organisations which have forensic expertise or are able to carry out forensic testing techniques. It also lists bodies which can help with species identifica-

tion. Investigations have been hampered by the lack of a central source of information about the techniques available. This publication will begin to bridge that gap.

Mr Meacher said: "Recognising the importance of DNA, my Department has recently entered into a contract with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the University of Nottingham and the Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency (Abu Dhabi, UAE) to develop a DNA test using feather tissue rather than blood. This is an exciting area and once a reliable test has been developed, will greatly enhance enforcement opportunities. As well as plucked feathers, discarded feathers found in or around nests and in aviaries will all be able to be tested.

I thank all the members of the Partnership for the work they have put into developing and taking forward these initiatives, and I hope they will continue to make a positive contribution to the fight against wildlife crime."

### British Birds of Prey Centre to Stage it's First "East Anglia Falconry Day."

The British Birds of Prey Centre at Stonham Barns in Suffolk will stage an "East Anglian Falconry Day" on Sunday September 7th next.

Timed to coincide with the approach of the 1997/8 hunting season, the falconry day is the first of its kind in the region to target the growing number of novice and experienced falconers in East Anglia.

It will host a number of trade stands covering many aspects of falconry and bird management. Well known falconry furniture and hood makers will be on hand selling a comprehensive range of equipment, and a prominent local vet, stick makers, ferret experts, professional falconers and other suppliers will be able to advise visitors and answer questions.

Other events will include flying displays, gun-dog and long-bow demonstrations in the arena, plus artists and wood carvers will demonstrate their skills in a covered area. Childrens activities will also be provided.

The event will start at 10.30 and finish at 5pm. Admission will be £4 for Adults and £2.75 for Seniors and Children. There is a restaurant on site plus a number of craft shops and other entertainments.

The British Birds of Prey Centre can be found at the Stonham Barns Country Shopping and Leisure Complex, on the A1120 between Stowmarket and Yoxford, just off the A140 Ipswich - Norwich road. Travelling times are 10 mins. from Stowmarket, 15 mins from Ipswich, 30 Mins from Bury and Colchester. And 40 mins from Cambridge, Norwich and Yarmouth, and 90 mins from London.

For further information call Mike Raphael on 01449 711425



### ADVANCE BOX OFFICE OPEN FOR MIDLAND GAME FAIR

The Midland Game & Countrysports Fair, held at Weston Park in Shropshire on 20th & 21st September, now in its 15th year and established as one of the most outstanding outdoor events in the country has opened its advanced box office.

Last year the two day event attracted record crowds, establishing it as the premier event of its kind in Britain.

It is the progressive expansion of the event which has led to advance box office being created. The adult admission to the Fair will be £6 on Saturday 20th and £7 on Sunday 21st, with the child price being £2 on both days. There is a reduction of £1 off the adult price on both days for all advance bookings.

Bookings can be made by post to Weston Park, Shifnal, Shrops with cheques being made payable to Weston Park Enterprises Limited or by credit card on 01952 850207.

### RARE BIRDS RETURNED HOME

The six Eleonoras falcons, subjects of a recent court case were returned to Majorca by Britannia Airways on 19th June. The birds will be handed to Spanish conservationists who will assess them to see if they are suitable for return to the wild. Bedfordshire Police Wildlife Liaison Officer, Inspector Phillip Cannings, who led the

investigation accompanied the birds to Majorca. He said "This has been a long investigation and to actually see the birds going back to their rightful home is in many ways the most satisfying part of the case." Kelly Radley, spokesperson for Britannia Airways said "We are delighted to be able to help in returning these beautiful birds to Majorca."



**RAPTOR  
RESCUE**

Registered Charity No. 283733

# Fly Safe

by Mick  
Cunningham

After reading the Hawk Board bulletin in the last *Falconers'* magazine, which referred to the RSPCA report, it would appear that far too many people are unaware of the dangers involved in flying birds with mews jesses. Anybody who gets their bird caught up due to exposed swivel slits in jesses should rightly hang their head in shame. There are NO excuses.

Unfortunately most of the birds we have to deal with which have been caught up in this manner are already dead. However, here are five lucky ones who did survive.

The first, a Kestrel, was spotted by a game keeper. It was hanging at the top of an oak tree and the keeper presumed it dead. Later in the day he saw it flapping and arranged for ladders to be brought to make a rescue. It was extremely emaciated, but managed to make a full recovery. The owner was traced (200 miles away) and I was very pleased that he made the journey to collect his bird! This Kestrel had been wearing traditional jesses – the owner was



advised on the benefits of using Aylmeri's.

A second Kestrel had Aylmeri anklets fitted, but had mews jesses in them and became caught up in a hedge. It was not rung and was also an

ly re-homed.

Probably the most abused of all birds of prey is the Barn Owl. We rescued one which had become ensnared on a fence - by its swivel! The owner was traced and I asked him if the leash had broken. "No...Why?"

came the reply. He was quite proud of the fact that he had been flying the owl loose and that he always flew it with the swivel attached!! *Obviously the breeder who had sold him this bird had made sure it was going to a competent person!*

A species almost guaranteed to get caught up if flown with mews jesses on is the Sparrowhawk. One had to be rescued after it had tail-chased a sparrow in through the open window of a busy office. Much to the horror of the office staff, it then proceeded to get entangled in a typewriter! Again, the owner was traced and advised on the use of flying jesses.

Finally, another Sparrowhawk which surprisingly, was being flown by an experienced falconer; in fact, he had bred her himself. He had fitted traditional jesses because he had run out of brass eyelets. It choked me to see a grown man with tears in his eyes when I had to tell him that his pride and joy had suffered a bad compound fracture of the femur due to being caught up in a tree. **Need I say more?**

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY IBR THREE YEARS ON...

We started in 1994 and we haven't looked back since. We have grown steadily and securely, finding lost and stolen birds and getting them back to you. The satisfaction is enormous when the system proves that it works time and time again.

There have been some wonderful retrievals of birds. Many falconers will do anything to get their bird back, one keeper in Lincolnshire went up in his friends plane and tracked the telemetry signal from the air. He followed the Saker for 2 days until the end of the second day when his wife phoned to say the bird had beaten him home! They even landed near a copse of trees and found a kill the Saker had been on minutes earlier, but the bird had flown.

A Luger went missing in Leicestershire and was reported as lost to us near a police station, we had a phone call from the police station saying a bird

had landed on their rest room windowsill. A PC had opened the window and knocked the bird off. Guess what! It flew round and came back into the room. Gave itself up!!! Strangely the keeper had not advised the police he had lost the bird. Please tell anyone who may be able to help.

Two recent successes, a found Harris in Scotland we traced through three days of phoning. We found the breeder in Yorkshire and through him tracked the last known owner of the Harris who lost the bird while out hunting in December 1995. It was found 18 months later near Edinburgh! No-one has reported the bird lost in Scotland so we presume that it had been found and then sold illegally. We were able to reunite the keeper with the bird he lost a year and a half ago. He never expected to see it again. Next was a barn owl

which flew into the SAS training camp at Hereford! We arranged for an IBR registered keeper to pick the bird up within an hour of the call and to look after it until we found the owner, which we did 24 hours later.

So the system works, even when you think you will never see your bird again, someone else could fly and lose it, so ring and tell us about your lost birds. It costs nothing to add them to our database as lost or stolen. Even schedule 4 birds, you know they are registered with the DOE but the finder probably doesn't so it is still sensible to register them with us as well.

There are lots of happy endings but not enough. We should be able to get many more of your birds back to you but we need your help. We still have over 150 unclaimed found birds. They have not been reported lost to us and we cannot trace the owner by the ring details. Can your birds be returned to you? Does your bird wear any form of identification that enables it to get back

to you? The best solution is to register all your birds with us

We issue FREE split rings with our 24 hour telephone number with registration. All IBR breeder's rings have our telephone number which gives every bird a fighting chance for the whole of it's life to be reunited with you if lost.

We are the largest agency for registering birds, for success with lost and found birds, and issuing breeders rings. It is make your mind up time.

We have proved we can do the job so use us. We will still be around for many more years to come.

We are at the moment creating the IBR FALCONRY PAGES. This will be a reference guide available in January 1998 and contain all the information you need to find anything concerning falconry from tail-mounts to clothing, vitamin powder, identichipping to a comprehensive Directory of Breeders throughout the country. Phone now for more details of this exciting new publication, same number as on every IBR ring, 01926 850000.

## AVON & SOMERSET RAPTOR GROUP

Our aims, much like other clubs, are to promote all aspects of Falconry, including keeping, breeding and hunting Birds of Prey.

**We meet on the first Tuesday of every month between Bristol & Bath.**

For further information contact Guy Whitmarsh on: 01179 660770

## The British Hawking Association

Social Meeting held regularly at the Hogs Head Hotel, Awwsworth, Notts.  
**Regular field meetings, novices welcome (apprenticeship available) and many other Regional Social Meetings are held.**  
**Changing attitudes to improve standards.**

George Roach 01623 751339  
Garry Balchin 01159 300135

## THE CHESHIRE HAWKING CLUB

Meetings:- Held 2nd Tuesday of every month at 8pm. Venue:- Railway Hotel, Mill Lane, Heatley, Nr Lymm. Ches.

We have speakers and Falconry Furniture Manufacturers in regular attendance.

Experienced and novice falconers welcome.

Contact: Phil on - 01204 523622 or 0374 691498 (mobile) or:  
Rob on - 01706 845731 or 0378 609467 (mobile).

## HOME COUNTIES HAWKING CLUB

Affiliated to the British Field Sports Society

**Sandhurst on the Surrey/Berks borders is where the Club meets on the third Wednesday of the month.**

Good husbandry and practices in raptor keeping and flying are promoted by way of education and assistance.

Our programme includes guest speakers, demonstrations, outings and members' issues, and the membership encompasses all levels of experience and knowledge, from novices to seasoned falconers

Ring: John & Laila on 01276503891 or Alan on 01784 250577

## THE LONDON HAWKING AND OWL CLUB

**One of the only Falconry Clubs in London with flying and breeding experience with birds of prey.**

**For more information call:  
Paul Barham on 071 515 7754  
or  
Bill Fiveash on 071 639 9087.**

## NEW FOREST FALCONRY CLUB

Est: 1990, affiliated to the BFSS & NAFA. Membership currently covers the southern counties.

We have access to 98,000 acres of land and organise regular meeting throughout the hunting season. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month in the relaxed atmosphere of a New Forest pub, the forum of the meetings is to get together with like-minded people to discuss and practice methods of falconry & hawking.

**Please feel free to contact:  
Rick on 01202 471388**

## RAPTOR BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1976, the Association aims to facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences relating to the breeding of raptorial species.

Interested persons are invited to seek further details from our membership secretary:

Keith Channing  
Stable Cottage, Pamber Road,  
Silchester, Berks. RG7 2NU  
Tel 0118 9700937  
e-mail: rba@redtail.demon.co.uk

## STH GLOS & WEST WILTS RAPTOR CLUB

We are a fast growing club with members ranging from complete novices to seasoned falconers.

Our informal, friendly meetings provide an opportunity to exchange experiences, arrange field trips and establish contacts with local falconers. Guest speakers and suppliers of falconry furniture regularly attend. We also run beginners' workshops and organise outings to places of interest.

Meetings are held on the first Monday of every month at The Compass Inn, Tormarton - 800yds off M4 J18 (Cirencester direction, then first right).

Telephone  
Martin 0117 9710019  
Gary 01454 201702

## THE SOUTH EAST FALCONRY GROUP

Established 1981

'Supporting & promoting falconry in the south and East of England.'

Based at Tilbury in Essex, the South East Falconry Group continues to provide a forum for falconers to meet, discuss and practice falconry. The club caters for both the experienced and novice falconer.

Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of every month.

For further information please contact:  
Gary Biddiss: 01245 226057  
Dean White: 01375 671302  
or write The Tilbury Community Ass.  
The Civic Square, Tilbury Essex

## THE SCOTTISH HAWKING CLUB

FOR THE DEDICATED FALCONER  
Benefits include:- Individual insurance to £25,000

Affiliation to British Field Sports Society & North American Falconers Assn.  
£2,000,000 Public Liability at field meetings.

For Further details send S.A.E. to:  
THE SCOTTISH HAWKING CLUB  
CROOKEDSTONE ELVANFOOT,  
BY BIGGAR LANARKS  
ML12 6RL

## WELSH HAWK, OWL & FALCON ASSOCIATION

Now approaching our fifth year.  
Meetings every 1st Monday of the month at Penllwyn Hotel, Pontllanfraith. Nr Blackwood Gwent.  
Friendly informal meetings which include guest speakers, films, the sale of falconry furniture, organised trips etc. etc. Non members always welcome.  
for more information contact Paul Spearman 01443 833002 or Ed Hopkins 01495 228397.

## MEETINGS of The Welsh Hawking Club

are held monthly, 8pm at:

**USK** The Newbridge Inn, Tredunnock. 2nd Monday

**CHESTER** The Goshawk, Mouldsworth. 1st Wednesday

**NORTHAMPTON** The Redlion, Kislingbury, 4th Monday

**PLYMOUTH** The Woodpecker, A38. 3rd Monday

The Welsh Hawking Club is Internationally recognised and has members throughout the UK.  
For further information ring Secretary: Adrian Williams on 01443 206333



# ONE LUMP OR TWO?

By Kim Myers

He, she, it, Horatio or my husbands favourite, Agatha. If I don't end up with the first schizophrenic owl in Yorkshire I shall be highly surprised.

It, as we're still not sure what it is arrived on a Monday evening, approximately four weeks old, a European Eagle Owl chick. The ugliest, most lovable ball of fluff, with the most piercing shade of orange eyes and big feet, I'd ever had under my care. It's box (3' x 4') was prepared, food especially procured, only the choicest, plumpest little rats and the fluffiest chicks for our ball of fluff.

I thought midnight feeding was long past but It would seem I was seriously mistaken, this was initially, not going to be my job, but it would appear that the men in my household have had a sudden and serious outbreak of deafness during the night hours. The insistent squeaks of 'feed me...feed me' being ignored soon brought back the 'joys' of a baby in the house.

Now you would expect an owl to vaguely resemble an owl, but over the next few weeks it closely resembled at times, a vulture - shoulders hunched, head dropped, and a penguin! Yes, I know, it's hard to picture, but believe me I've already had this conversation with others and got used to

the pitying looks as they agree that age is finally taking its toll (my excuse is sleep deprivation). It's piece de resistance involves lying flat on its stomach, head to one side and both legs stretched out behind it, closely resembling a bearskin rug.

Things were ticking along quite nicely, thank you, when Murphy raised his head and my ever growing bundle of fluff decided not to produce a pellet for a week.

Nothing wrong with its digestive system - it pooped for England over this period, but no pellet. Frantic phone calls followed and the plethora of advice we received was confusing. So we decided to go with Frank Keens' advice, skinned food, exercise and massage, and so the regime began.

Skinned food; fairly easy, you soon learn not to squeeze the chick too hard, once sprayed twice shy. Exercise, well this all happened in what should have been early Summer days - forget the drought of last year, we were into 40 days and nights, Noah had nothing on us.

So it seemed indoor exercise was the order of the day. Now, my pride and joy is a jade green carpet and I had every intention of it staying that way. So, an old sheet and copious amounts of The Times and

Sunday Times came into their own. Every time the owl sat down to rest I would cajole, call and make a complete and utter fool of myself, getting it to move. Maybe this has got something to do with the bearskin impression when I finally let it sleep. The final step was to massage its' stomach. Now you might like your stomach being massaged, but whether it is owls in general, or just this one, I'm not sure, but it didn't take too kindly to it. In fact at the first attempt it looked remarkably like I'd uttered a rude suggestion. The second attempt caused the owl to stand up straight - (is it really that tall?) - and look me straight in the eye, I'm afraid to say I chose not to read the message, it moved, walked backwards until it came to rest against the Chesterfield with no escape and thus the massage began. That is the way it continued over the next two days, non-stop exercise and endless stomach massage. I'm sure there being no white flag available, for the sake of five minutes peace and quiet it produced not one but two whopping great pellets.

Over the next few days life returned slowly back to normal, although we're keeping to the skinned chicks for a while. It (hopefully we can give it a name soon, it brings to mind monsters under the sand), is growing in leaps and bounds and it won't be long before training starts to turn it into a hunter.

So hurdle number one has been cleared. I wonder what else is waiting around the corner!

## K & N INTERNATIONAL (FALCONRY DIVISION) LTD SOLE UK DISTRIBUTOR FOR CUSTOM ELECTRONICS MERLIN TELEMETRY SYSTEMS

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT  
K&N INTERNATIONAL LTD/CUSTOM ELECTRONICS ARE THE NOMINATED  
TELEMETRY SYSTEM OF THE BRITISH HAWKING ASSOCIATION

Over 20 years we have built up a world-wide reputation for durability and service with our complete range of telemetry systems & accessories.  
Our Merlin Combi system is the first system to offer the complete 'BUY-N-FLY' package.



FOR OUR COMPLETE RANGE/FALCONRY FURNITURE AND  
ACCESSORIES CATALOGUE CONTACT:  
K&N INT. (FALCONRY DIVISION) LTD.  
KINGSFIELD HOUSE, ARTHUR STREET, BARWELL, LEICS. LE9 8GZ.  
TEL: 01455 841949 FAX: 01455 841952  
OVERSEAS ENQUIRIES WELCOME



### FEATURES INCLUDE

1. MERLIN RECEIVER
2. INTEGRATED YAGI ANTENNA
3. RECHARGABLE BATTERIES
4. 220 - 240 VOLT CONVERTER
5. CIGARETTE LIGHTER ADAPTOR
6. TRANSMITTER (OF YOUR CHOICE)
7. SEVEN TYPES OF TRANSMITTER AVAILABLE (SPECIFY)
8. FIVE TYPES OF TRANSMITTER ATTACHMENTS (SPECIFY)
9. LOW. MED. HIGH RANGE FREQUENCIES
10. FREQUENCIES AVAILABLE (150/962 - 151/037MKZ  
(173/200 - 173/275 MKZ) (216/000-216/090 MKZ)  
(NB 173/200MKZ IS THE UK LEGAL WAVE BAND)
11. ALL WEATHER CARRY CASE
12. TWELVE MONTHS MANUFACTURERS WARRANTY

The meeting was held, for the first time at the new BFSS offices which has a nice roomy meeting room and lots of space for the BFSS, much of which was still covered in piles of papers.

After welcoming Bob Ford and Roger Smith from the Department of the Environment to the meeting, various matters arising were dealt with.

1. The DOE said that Quarry Licences for falconry were to be reviewed, so there would be a discussion at a later date.

2. The demonstration of Birds of Prey - Guidance Notes were now complete, with some input from the Hawk Board and were in circulation.

3. The decision by the National Trust to ban falconry and demonstrations on their lands would be followed up at council level by the BFSS.

4. Bob Ford reported that the Bird (Registration Charges) Bill had passed through the government before its demise (!) and Registration fees which had been suspended with May 1996 could now be charged again. He confirmed that for the time being the fees would stay the same, but they would be reviewed in due course.

We then moved on to a discussion from Roger Smith and Bob Ford on the new legislation from Europe that could come into force on June 1st. The British Government fought very hard to have birds of prey exempt from this legislation but were beaten by the other member states. Consequently 'Sales Licenses' or they may be called Article 10 Certificates, would have to be applied for and issued for all Annex A species, which in birds of prey includes all the European species of diurnal and nocturnal birds of prey, and a million other things

## Report on The Hawk Board Meeting April 9th 1997

as well, including hordes of plants!!

It will be a pretty good nightmare for the DOE to implement as it is not just birds of prey, and Britain has been granted some time to get the thing off the ground. So the general exemption licenses that are in force now will stand until they come up for renewal, which will be December for most of them. Long discussion went on as to how the new regulations are going to work, but as the DOE had not yet had time to formulate plans on how they would work, much of the discussion was speculative.

One word of warning - Renewal of Individual Exemption Licences - particularly those allowing birds to be displayed to the public should be renewed on time and not left until December when most of the general licenses will cease to exist.

FACE - Jeremy Read reported that FACE was considering having a web site which would give general information on FACE, access to National and single-sport web sites and status information on European legislation.

The treasurer then gave his report on the financial status of the Hawk Board - we are more or less in balance, but as usual not flush with funds.

Peter Voute, representing the BFSS then gave us a political update. Falconry on National Trust land had been somewhat

pushed into the background with the new report of Stag Hunting. He then went on to mention the election and that (should Labour get in!!!) it was unlikely that any bills which threatened falconry would be introduced at least for the first two sessions. (On a personal note I reckon we will probably have a Labour government for 10 years and we are going to be seriously under threat at some stage, so please don't get complacent.)

The BFSS are organising a countryside Rally in Hyde Park and I really hope that many of you attend (or have attended by the time this gets published) The date is July 10th and it is vital not only that as many people as possible attend, but that we all behave impeccably.

The meeting then looked at changes in the Hawk Board constitution, which were mainly being put in place to make it easier for new clubs to affiliate to the Hawk Board in the future. These were discussed, voted on and passed.

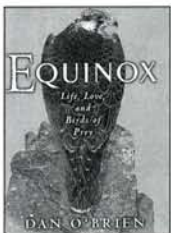
The BFSS falconry committee which meets the morning of the same day as the Hawk Board reported that Lord Mancroft (Deputy Chair BFSS) had received a number of complaints that the BFSS was not paying enough attention to possible threats against falconry, BFSS had decided to appoint a falconry consultant to attend BFSS council meetings.

The next Hawk Board Symposium was then discussed, (see further on for details).

After a short discussion of other matters the meeting closed. The next meeting, for anyone who wants to have a topic brought up is October 15th.

Best Wishes for a good Summer JPI

## EQUINOX Dan O'Brien



Equinox by Dan O'Brien is the story of a man who feels his Autumn equinox approaching and wants to fulfil some

ambitions before he is too old.

A writer by profession, his is an ongoing story of the life and loves of a falconer. Living in South Dakota on a farm consisting of eleven hundred acres of brushy draws and grassy flats', hot Summers and cold Winters, and to us a relatively harsh way of life.

Covering his relationships with his wife - Kris, his friend and co-worker, Erney, his dogs Moose, Spud and Mel and his birds.

The tale begins with Kris planning to take a year out of her job, she is a nurse, to travel many miles from home to care for terminally ill children. It is agreed that Dan will stay at home for a

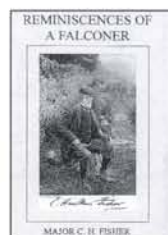
time, as he has three peregrines to hack, one of which he proposes to fly. Unfortunately as the season progresses things don't quite go to plan, causing problems for Dan's relationship with his wife

There are some wonderful moments during the hack as they are pestered by a young Coopers, eventually dubbed Alice. Also some fun is had with Dundee, an Australian Peregrine tiercel. This bird refuses to hunt, until one day a kill is the last thing Dan wants and Hey Presto' away he goes. This is warm, light-hearted tale, which will strike a chord with anyone who has flown birds, especially longwings.

**The book is available from  
Nicholsons Books and Prints,  
6935 Shorecrest Drive,  
Anaheim, CA 92807.**

**It may also be available from  
Peter Mulholland,  
Tel: 01652 678492**

## REMINISCENCES OF A FALCONER Major C H Fisher



Available from Coch-Y-Bonddu  
Books Price £30 + p&p.  
Tel: 01654 702837

First printed in 1901 and reprinted in 1997 by Coch-y-Bonddu books, and limited to 1000 copies.

The book starts in 1858 when, by chance, Major Fisher of The Castle, Stroud, Gloucester, met John Pells, professional falconer for the Duke of St Albans.

Major Fisher goes into great detail about the flights, successes and failures, with Merlins, and Peregrine Falcons, especially those birds which came from the Isle of Lundy, which he seems to have a soft spot for. He flew many of these, proving them to be exceptional birds. Living in Gloucestershire, he also hawked in Norfolk, on Salisbury plains and the moors of Yorkshire and Scotland. Taking a variety of quarry, including, rooks, crows, magpies, grouse, wild duck and pigeon, partridge, and peewits, the latter being the ultimate quarry for a tiercel peregrine.

If you have one of the earlier copies then hang on to it as they are very rare, as I am sure this book will be very shortly. £30 is not much to pay for a piece of Falconry history.

# CITES MEETING, HARARE, ZIMBABWE 1997

## Nick Fox

The 10th Conference of the Parties of the Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species was held at the Sheraton in Harare in June. Five falconers attended, to lobby delegates from 138 countries. Christian de Coune represented the International Association for Falconry; Tim Kimmel, President of NAFA and Frank Bond, legal advisor for NAFA, represented North America; Tony Crosswell represented the BFC; and I represented the Hawk Board and interests in the UAE.

The Zimbabwe Falconers Club was marvellous and looked after us very well: Gary Stafford kindly provided chalets next to a lake and a car for us to use during the fortnight of the conference; and Adrian and Sally Langley and their team from the African Sky Hunters kindly took us out for two and a half days hawking during the middle weekend.

The CITES meeting is at the root of international legislation on trade in endangered species, which leads to the European interpretation of CITES: which in turn leads to the UK implementation of CITES, and ultimately legislation such as our Wildlife and Countryside Act and so on. Therefore it is important that falconers do their best to ensure that no legislation is passed that would affect the interests of falconers and birds of prey.

A number of falconry-related issues were on the agenda, including: the definition of captive breeding; the definition of for commercial purposes - these were not resolved. However, after considerable lobbying and uncertainty, a resolution on the trans-border movement of birds of

prey was finally passed.

This would enable a passport system allowing up to two personal birds of prey to be taken across the international border of two countries which are CITES signatories. This was an important issue for NAFA members in terms of movements between the US and Canada for fieldmeets and for falconers who live near the border. Similarly in Europe, it was important for those living on or near its eastern borders. Those of us within

from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II was not tabled. However, in discussion amongst ourselves at the conference, comparing birds of prey with other species such as elephants, we could see that the time has come to propose downlisting of at least some populations of peregrines and gyrfalcons from Appendix I to Appendix II. This would ultimately result in an easing of regulations on these two species.

Those Clubs which kindly supported the expenses of the BFC delegate and the IAF delegate should be proud of their contribution. It is essential that the voice of falconry be heard. Our delegation of five people made quite an impression on a number of governmental and non-governmental organisations present at the conference. Also it was pleasant for us, as falconers, during the lunchbreak to have friends staying at the Sheraton in the shape of a pair of lanners who roosted high at the top of the

and the a of the word Sheraton. The lanner had been released some years before by our host Gary Stafford, and it was amusing to notice that the other delegates, intent of saving endangered species, never noticed their presence! We were very tempted to throw a lure down on the ground in the middle of the outdoor restaurant area just to see what would happen!

The next meeting of the Parties will be in two years time and we will have a lot of preparations to be made before then. More details on CITES will become available through the Hawk Board as it comes on-line.



Outside the Sheraton, Harare, CITES venue. l-r: Nick Fox (Hawk Board, UK; ERWDA, UAE) Christian de Coune, Tim Kimmel (NAFA, USA) Tony Crosswell (BFC, UK), Frank Bond (NAFA, USA)

Europe wishing to move birds already have our own internal system so we are not affected unless we wish to take birds hawking outside Europe to another CITES country. The passing of this resolution is a step forward to easing some of the paperwork and time delay which prevents us moving with our birds.

The proposed resolution by the Americans to downlist the North American population of the gyrfalcon

## ANDERSEY QUAIL

Whether you are flying or breeding Birds of Prey, Quail are recognised as being an excellent quality food source.

We can supply any number of Top Class Quail at 50p each, plus delivery.

*Sorry, no live birds.*

**Tel: (01235) 772040**



**FALCONRY  
FURNITURE  
BOOKS  
VIDEOS**

PHONE OR WRITE FOR PRICE LISTS

MOURNE FALCONRY

15 CRIEVE ROAD

NEWRY N. IRELAND.

TEL 01693 68207

FAX: 01693 68860

# To Fly a Caste of Eagles

Andrew Knowles-Brown

"To fly a caste of eagles" looks good, sounds good, and is guaranteed to impress at parties, (or field meetings ) well if those are the reasons you are thinking of giving it a try then forget it. Apart from the difficulty in obtaining two eagles in the first place the practicalities of flying them together is another problem. The only reason I flew the 2 birds I am about to describe was to settle them down before placing them in an aviary for breeding.

Firstly let me point out I don't profess to be an expert (and after this article you'll probably agree with me ) but what I can offer is my experiences, though not necessarily the right way of doing it. What I can say is that over the years prior to me having eagles, is that all the "experts" I have questioned regarding eagle behaviour and their suitability usually gave different answers.

The eagles concerned are a male and female Bald Eagle. The story starts in May 1992 when the two Bald Eagles arrived very bedraggled after their month in quarantine, they were 4 years old and had apparently been kept together in an open aviary, and boy weren't they wild!! After a weeks assessment, during which time they had blood and mute samples taken for testing, I decided the best thing was manning. Although they were primarily for breeding I felt they might do themselves damage if placed straight into a strange aviary with strange people about.

I also wanted to give them a chance to moult as they both had dirty white heads and tails, with badly tipped and broken



*Female Bald Eagle standing her ground*

primaries as well as generally a very poor feather condition. I felt it better to put the moult off for a month now, rather than leave them to settle, and then handle them later and possibly not have them moult at all.

I started by giving 10-15 minutes manning twice a day, with walking to a gate post, offering some food, and if not eaten walking back and putting the bird down, and trying again later, the first week was hell with both birds being determined not to accept me.

The female settled first in just under the week, though nervous she only bated

at anything strange, but she would come up back to the fist unaided, her demeanour from the beginning was one of superiority even though she was nervous she had the look that said "you come any closer and I will have you", though she never has, she has always been the most confident of the pair. By

**Her manner was still one of disdain and she wouldn't allow me to touch her,**

the end of the second week you would think she had been manned all her life when with me, if a stranger appeared she became nervous. After a month she would stand her ground when approached on the block and would step onto the fist if offered a tit bit. Her manner was still one of disdain and she wouldn't allow me to touch her, biting me with her massive beak if I even attempted to put an ungloved hand near her.

The male was quite different always nervous and very rarely settling down, it took me almost the full month for him to come up on the fist unaided, though he didn't bate that much. After the month he would only just step onto the fist grudgingly, but he would allow me to run my hand all over his body and feet without any reaction, this was more down to his nervousness than anything else.

After the 4 weeks I left them for the rest of the summer, only picking them up to move them, which I did as little as possible. They started moulting in mid June,



*Ready for the off.*



*Female Bald Eagle*

2 weeks after I stopped the manning, the female dropping 3 prs of secondaries, 2 prs of primaries and 5 tail feathers as well as many body feathers. The male moulted, 3 & 1/2 prs of secondaries, 1 pr of primaries and 8 tail feathers all in 12 weeks.

I picked the 2 birds up again at the end of September the female weighed about 10lbs and the male 7.5lbs. Bearing in mind I hadn't cut their weight when I first manned them, I didn't know how amenable they would become in serious training. I was extremely surprised at

**I realised my unthought of problem, how was I to get two eagles down to me separately.**

how quickly they responded, they were both flying free 4 weeks later each with a weight loss of only 8oz. Their fitness was an obvious problem as they were 4 years old and hadn't been flown before, so I tried to fly them when and where the weather conditions helped rather than hindered them. With me also trying to get my Golden Eagle fit at the same time it was at this time that I tried flying them together, I had been flying them free separately and they had responded well so off they were cast together and all seemed well. The wind was right and they waited on quite well, when the time was right to bring them down I realised my unthought of problem, how was I to get two eagles down to me separately. I was unsure of the answer so took the bull by the proverbial horns and held my fist aloft holding some food, both eagles responded immediately and started stooping towards me, both pumping hard, trying to beat the other to my fist. I must admit to a touch of panic as two huge eagles came hurtling towards me both intent on getting their morsel first, I bottled out with them about 30 yds from me,

and hurled the food to the ground ducking in the process. The two missiles shot past me and squabbled over the food on the ground, after which they both looked at me menacingly. Plan B quickly came into action (not that they had even been a plan A) and I got out more food, both birds took off towards me, but the male was a little quicker, so I allowed him to land on my fist and threw some food down onto the ground for the female, great I thought success. But no, with one gulp she downed her food and headed back up to me, the male, and the tasty morsel that she felt was hers. Plan C came even quicker, I threw the male off

my fist, quickly accepted the female to land and secured her flying jesses, then threw some more food down for the male. Fortunately I got out of that unscathed, and learnt an important first lesson, always bring the female down to the fist and the male to the ground, he would then usually fly off to a nearby favourite 'sitty' tree while he waited for me to jess up the female, hood and place her on the cage, then I could do likewise to him at my leisure.

Now they were both flying quite well together, sometimes waiting on, as well as doing a few acrobatics and talon claspings I thought the time was right to introduce them to quarry, big mistake!! When I started dragging a rabbit lure, even 2 of them so they would have one each, the female became very aggressive

towards the male. She would bag her rabbit then leave it to go and push the male off and keep him off both of them. In the end the male, if he caught anything would proverbially leg it as fast as he could so the female couldn't take his prize, he found the best thing to do was head for the nearest thickest forest, land at the edge and then run as fast as he could into the trees going in as far as 25 yds. Invariably by the time I had brought the female down jessed and hooded her it was a good 10 minutes since the male had disappeared, and by the time I tracked him with the telemetry and belly crawled to find him, he had gorged on what he had caught, and so couldn't be flown again for a few days. So I gave up flying them together at quarry, exercising them was fine. I fed them up for the moult in February 1993 to allow them plenty of time to change their feathers, which they did well. I started flying them in the 1993/4 season but by Christmas 1993 I felt that they were settled enough to go into their aviary, and I found that with me and those they had got to know we had 2 very laid back eagles, but they were still very nervous of strangers.

In 1996 they laid 2 fertile eggs of which only one hatched, the chick was a female which I flew last season. She has a totally different temperament to that of her parents, but that's probably because she was handled in her first year. And would I do it again probably not, but who knows, I still think I did the right thing for this pair, although with hindsight I might do things slightly different again, but as all eagles temperaments are different I would assess the situation as it arises



*Baby Bald Eagle, bred in 1996. Eight months old*

# They came from all corners of the Kingdom.

by Alan Gates.

We moved in an orderly fashion, small groups chatting quietly as we walked from the tarmac and onto the sandy lane. To my right and to my left I could see equally long processions all filing in the same direction. As we moved onto the parkland grass we passed a smartly dressed couple, the lady, her plummy voice filled with emotion as she blurted out to her companion in the Panama hat "Oh how wonderful, where are they all coming from".

Well, we came from bloody Yorkshire on a coach at 4.30 this morning, I thought to myself. Along with 950 other coaches, 11 special trains, five planes and countless thousands of cars we have come from every corner of the Kingdom.

As we walked over the small hill, the full impact of what we were part of suddenly dawned, this was the Countryside Rally, we were in London's Hyde Park and it was the 10th July. Over 100,000 like minded, peace loving, country people, who felt that this time, they have been pushed too far. The catalyst for this opposition was the Wild Mammals (Hunting with Dogs) Bill proposed by Labour MP Mike Foster.

Our opponents have cleverly hoodwinked the public and the mass media into focusing this Bill as a ban on fox and deer hunting. I do not ride to hounds or follow on foot, in fact in no way do I have any connections with fox or deer hunting. It is true that these two sports have taken the brunt of the antis vile propaganda. I, and the thousands of country people who took the time away from our work, our animals and our land to travel to London's Hyde Park to stand and be counted, know that this Bill, if passed, not only criminalises us if our dog hunts for a hare or rabbit, or our sheep dog

breaks the neck of a rat, it also takes away our personal freedom to partake in legitimate country sports.

This Bill is being forced upon us by the mass urban population who's lifestyle has isolated them from the realities of living in the British countryside, a countryside which has evolved over many centuries, and find the emotively biased view of hunting distasteful to their Disney created idea of nature. The Countryside Army had gathered 100,000 troops together to listen to actors, politicians, writers, conservationists, television and radio personalities, sporting and country men and women.

A delegation was sent to Downing Street to deliver our official opposition to this Bill, they left the Park with the huge support of the assembled crowd ringing in their ears. A highlight of the Rally was the welcome to the army of marchers who had travelled to the capital on foot from the far corners of the country. Hundreds of miles they had walked through hamlets and villages, market towns and cities, buoyed up along the way by the encouragement and support they had encountered throughout their journey. As the foot weary walkers entered the park a massive roar of three cheers went up from 100,000 people, which has to be felt to be believed; they were the returning heroes and the crowd showed their appreciation.

Throughout the afternoon the crowds cheered, they clapped and they sang, they were moved, some to tears, but above all they were motivated, they have been prodded out of their slumber. 100,000 took the time to travel to London, and impressed all who saw them, it was one of the biggest gatherings to assemble in Hyde Park, it was peaceful, it was fun and it was deadly seri-

ous. The organisers claimed it a great success, a huge show of strength to our opponents and to the Government, but was it really??

Sure 100,000 is impressive by any body's standards, but my local paper tells me that 4.2 million people nationally take part in country sports.

## So where the hell were you?

What feeble excuse did you use if any, for not being part of the Army.

Don't tell me you were taken in by the anti manipulated media into thinking this was just about fox and deer hunting. Or you could not afford a day off work, well don't you get holidays where you work? I bet you take time off to visit a fair or to participate in your sport.

Well its time you stood up to be counted, stop hiding behind other sportsmen and women, get off your backside and open your wallet. Join the organisations that are fighting on your behalf and donate money to the fighting funds. Time is rapidly running out, the writing is on the wall, our opponents smell victory in the air. For them it is a blind obsession, they will try to divide us and conquer us one by one.

If the Rally taught us one thing, it demonstrated that if a few country sporting people from each area of the land gathered together, it would be noticed. Now imagine if you, yes you, who made excuses came along next time, think of the impact that would send to the enemy.

The roar of the crowd was unanimous when asked, if needed would the Countryside Army return to the Park. The mood was different now. Now 100,000 motivated troops would ensure that next time it would return - **ten fold**.

## Make your voice heard!

\* Write to the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon, Tony Blair MP, House of Commons, London. SW1A 1AA. Tell him of your concerns for the future of your countryside.

\* Write to your MP - also at the House of Commons. Ask him or her to oppose Michael Foster's Private Members Bill on November 28th.

\* Write to the Editor of your local paper. Explain why you went to London on July 10th.

\* Volunteer your help with local constituency lobbying. Just one hour of your time per week will make a BIG difference.

\* If your job or business relies on country sports, join the **Union of Country Sports Workers** and encourage others to do the same - P.O. Box 43, Towcester. Northants NN12 7ZB.

\* The Rally, and all the lobbying initiatives needed to protect country sports are expensive.

Please support the Fighting Fund - 367 Kennington Road, London. SE11 7PZ. Tel: 0171 582 5432, Fax: 0171 793 8899 or e-mail: info@bfss.org



## 'DONE PROUD'

In the Hawk Board release in this issue Jemima says she hopes everybody would behave impeccably. Well, they did her proud!

As did her Lanner, which was on the fist from 8.15 am 3pm, was unhooded as much as possible and only bated three times.

They both, along with lots of other field-sports representatives, went on a bus to Downing Street.

Jemima said she was, "pleased to be able to make a difference and make press aware of long term effects of the antis".

And also commented that the language of the 50-60 protestors outside Downing Street was "Worse than mine!!!"

# Fighting for Falconry

## Dr Nick Fox

The Countryside Rally in Hyde Park was a milestone in the history of the fight for fieldsports, and a real experience for those of us who were there. Jemima Parry-Jones took a well-behaved lanner to Number 10 Downing Street as part of the representation on falconry; and for my part, I found speaking to 100,000 people an amazing experience.

Our message really did get through: subsequent reactions show that despite their large majority the Labour Government is having second thoughts about this contentious issue. There are many MPs who will fight this Bill hard in the Commons and unless the Bill gets extra time allocated to it by the Government it will be unable to get through. At present Labour has indicated that it would be unwilling to give the Bill extra time. Of course, events could change before the Bill is heard.

I think the best solution on this Bill would be a good old British compromise - another Royal Commission. Many years have elapsed since the Scott-Henderson Report. It is now possible to study animal welfare issues and animal suffering on a more scientific basis, although this is still a very young science. It is in the interest of Fieldsports people and in the interests of the animals themselves that any legislation is effective in limiting animal suffering as measured properly by scientific methods, rather than simply being an emotionally based Bill which seeks to remove the splinter of foxhunting but leaves the plank of other, much larger animal welfare issues

untouched. We have been pushing for three years now for some type of cross-Party wildlife and welfare Working Group; I believe that falconers, who are very close to their animals, would strongly support such an outcome.

Meanwhile the fight must go on: and the Hawk Board has been looking at improving its internal communications and its external communications to other national and international bodies such as the International Association for Falconry (IAF), using the Internet and email. We hope that going on-line will not only enable us to spread the workload amongst the Hawk Board more evenly, but will greatly improve communication from the regions to the Hawk Board and back again. By the time you read this we hope there will be a link-person appointed to act as an electronic telephone-operator for Hawk Board communications. This will help each individual falconer to play his or her own part in the fight for falconry. Each affiliated Club will have their own email link to the Hawk Board, enabling us to have far greater access to the media.

When you come across any item in any newspaper or magazine referring to falconry, we would like you to send it either to your Club Representative or to the Hawk Board direct. This material will be archived. Wives and children and non-falconers can do this too because we need to scan not only the fieldsports newspapers

and magazines but a broad range of media, including the general and popular press. In this way we will have an unprecedented store of information on falconry as represented, positively and negatively, by the media. This material will be disseminated by the Hawk Board so that it is available for all of the Club Representatives. At the same time, we will make factual information about falconry available on-line, which members can use at a local level to write letters and articles either to defend falconry against controversial features and reports or to make more widespread any good news relating to falconry.

We cannot afford to spend £40,000 on a whole-page ad in *The Times*. But that would not be the most effective way of spending money. The voices of ordinary people, ordinary falconers, need to be heard. If all of us, with the support of our Club Representatives and the Hawk Board, begin to write in a wide variety of newspapers and magazines we can slowly improve the public perception of falconry in a long term, enduring way.

I stayed at the Countryside Rally until 4.30. By then Hyde Park was empty. But there was no sign of litter. No-one would have known that an hour before, 100,000 people had been standing shoulder-to-shoulder on the grass. We showed the people of London that we are responsible people, people who know how to look after our countryside. Now it is our turn. We must show the world that we are responsible people who know how to look after falconry.

### AN HONOUR AND A PRIVILEGE

The protest in Hyde Park has got to be the most civilised ever. To be amongst so many people, all of whom were polite, friendly and extremely well behaved (not to mention tidy) was an honour.

In the car on the way down I read a piece in one of the National papers that said:

“When fox hunting is banned our 250,000 foxes will be able to roam the countryside freely.” Do these people honestly believe that farmers are going to be happy to leave them to their own devices.

It also leads me to wonder where exactly all our wildlife is going to end up living when all the woodland and rough ground has been levelled to accommodate either arable or stock farming, or many more housing estates.

Also do these people still



deem themselves worthy of the privilege of seeing, in the wild, the birds of prey returned there by the skills of our so-called 'barbaric' hunting fraternity.

An RSPCA press release sent to the magazine contains the results of a Mori Poll where 71% of people think that hunting with dogs should be banned.

Cindy Milburn, spokesperson for the Campaign for the Protection of Hunted Animals comprising IFAW, RSPCA and

the LACS, said: “This poll proves once again that the vast majority of people want hunting with dogs banned.

“Those who do attend tomorrow's rally (July 10th) will only represent a “hard core” of those who feel the need to kill wild animals for fun”.

I do wish these people knew what they were talking about before they made such ridiculous statements.

**Lyn Wilson**



# "I TAKE A SPADE WHEN FERRETING - BUT NOT WHEN HAWKING"



We set off at nine o'clock on a lovely, frosty December morning, with hopes of a good morning's hawking. We didn't have to wait long as my Redtail Tess spotted a rabbit some distance away. She set off from the top of an oak tree and with the sun coming over the hill behind her I felt sure she would catch the rabbit. But it was not to be as it jinxed to one side at the very last minute, and although Tess turned well they both reached the hedge at the same time and unfortunately Tess bounced off the hedge as the rabbit disappeared down the hole.

We decided to go up over and around the hill to one of our favourite spots. As usual Tess follows well, trying to find some updraught coming up the side of the hill so that she can circle and follow at the same time. As I am going along the top of the hill she obviously sees something down by the gorse. With wings folded right in she plummeted out of sight. Rabbits went in all directions! I nearly broke my neck running towards her, down the hill! When I arrived at the spot where she disappeared I was amazed to find I could neither hear nor see her, nothing not even the sound of her bells. I rushed around whistling and calling - nothing. Then I saw rabbit fur on the ground outside the largest of the holes. I threw myself down on the ground, still nothing, but then I heard bells and a lot of thumping from within the hill!

I crawled as far as I could and tried to reach into the hole but to no avail, so I sat back up, used a whole lot of swear words, then whistled and called her again. The sound of the bells faded. Silence! I waited for three-quarters of an hour or so, calling and whistling. I thought to myself "I take a spade when I'm ferreting - but not when I'm hawking". Home is a mile or so away, so I decide to run to the nearest farm. The farmer is very understanding and drives me straight home in his landrover. I must add at this point that I had left some food outside the hole so that hopefully I would know if she came out in my absence. At home I collected the wife and deposited our three year old son with a neighbour, throw spades and telemetry into the back of the van and we hastily drive back to the farm. The food is still there and there is no sound. The telemetry reveals nothing and we start digging, producing a hole into which I was fast disappearing. We dug until we reached a point where the single tunnel went in three different directions, and not a sound from any of them! At this point we began to fear the worst - dusk was falling so with sunken hearts we returned home. By torchlight our next door neighbour's daughter helped us catch up and jess the last eyass I still had from my breeding pair, but I did not have the enthusiasm to even find a name for him.

A sleepless night followed. At first light I set off again with the telemetry in the hope that Tess had found her own way out. Mu spirits were getting lower and lower as Tess seemed to be nowhere in the area.

I climbed the hill towards the hole - at last, a definite bleep from the telemetry, coming from the inside of the hole - could she still be OK, or was it just the transmitter producing a signal?

This time I ran the mile or so home, collected wife, deposited child with another neighbour, grabbed spades and neighbour's daughter and set off again.

We started digging where the bleep was the strongest - fifteen yards or so downhill from the entrance to the hole. The landowner spotted us on the side of his hill and came up and offered his and his son's help. With five of us there digging progressed faster and soon the hole seemed big enough to bury an elephant in!

The telemetry signal was getting stronger and the sweat was running well. Then the landowner shouted "Something's there", and as I got down inside this now six



foot wide by six foot deep hole to take a closer look there was a burst of life and a rattle of bells, the landowner shot out of the hole, completely startled.

I bent down, widened the tunnel and put my fist down with an offering of food. Out crawled one, unscathed, perfectly feathered, Redtail. We both emerged triumphant from within the crater just as the neighbours arrived with my son in tow.

Tess has been stuck down a stop end, six foot into the hill and yards away from the hole entrance. She had been unable to turn around and but for the telemetry, my refusal to give up and my team of willing helpers, she must surely have perished. My thanks go to all concerned in her rescue

## J PITCHER

THIS IS NOT THE FIRST INSTANCE WE HAVE COME ACROSS OF THIS HAPPENING. ONE GENTLEMAN ENDED UP GETTING A JCB TO DIG HIS BIRD OUT, UNFORTUNATELY HE WASN'T SO LUCKY, SO IT IS SOMETHING OF WHICH WE SHOULD ALL BE MORE AWARE. WE MUST SAY HOWEVER THAT WE ARE EXTREMELY PLEASED FOR MR PITCHER AND TESS.



# A SEASON WITH TARA

**MELVIN BATT**

Tara is a female Harris Hawk who will be two years old in April '97. We have just finished our second season together. To recap our season I'll go back to the middle of August.

## August

Tara has finally finished her moult. Why is it that the last tail feather seems to take twice as long to grow as the rest? Her fat weight was 2lb 4oz, she's not a large female. Towards the end of last season I was flying her at 11lb 15oz, 11lb 15 1/2 oz when it was cold (size isn't important so my wife Tina says!)

I won't bore you all about manning and getting her weight down, but basically we just carried on from the season before. The first thing I had to do was to get Tara's beak looked at. I took her over to Keiths, he coped it for me (thanks mate) and I put the equipment on her. By the end of August Tara was flying free and had made a couple of kills, I was surprised by how fit she was. I thought that she would be totally unfit.

During this time Gareth got his bird going, a male Harris called Blake and we were flying them together during the long summer evenings, right up until the end of September. Tee shirt weather, unless your hawk caught a rabbit or pheasant in brambles, as Tara frequently did!

## September.

At last the leaves are falling off the trees, and we are looking forward to the Scotland trip in November, which Gary has arranged for the club.

## October.

Wet and windy. Tara has become quite an expert at soaring, it's lovely to watch, beats hunting. Sometimes she just hangs in the wind, like a falcon waiting on. Tara and I have been out with various members of the club, Gary, Martin, Andy and Gareth, taking it in turns to go out on each others land. Watching the different birds being flown, taking the mick out of each other and having a good time, that's what it's all about. By the end of October Tara had caught her first Duck, I flushed a couple off the pond, Tara dived out of a tree and knocked it to the ground, stooped down again and caught it, brilliant!

Tara has also had her fair share of rabbits, pheasants and her first (and probably last) Woodcock.

## November

The Scotland trip. Twelve members of the South Glos and West Wilts

Raptor Club travelled to the beautiful scenic Glen Cova with Harris Hawks, Redtails and Goshawk.

We were lucky with the weather, cold and dry all week. Not many rabbits about so we had to work hard to get flights, Tara didn't have much luck during the week, caught a few rabbits but also got kicked off a few times, which has never happened before. Some of the flights we had, you just don't get back home. This being my first trip to Scotland I really enjoyed it, as I know the other club members did. There were some good evenings at the bar and a few headaches the following mornings. The only low was the sad loss of Marks' Gos. On the long trip home I was dreading going back to work, but we'll be back next season.

A couple of days later I had to take Tara to the vets, she has sinusitis which she must have picked up in Scotland, probably due to the extreme conditions. Tara's on antibiotics for 14 days, which unfortunately involves flushing them into her nostrils.

## December

Cold and windy, then came the high point of the season, Tara caught her first hare! I was so pleased for her, as she had come close so many times. This time she'd had two foiled attempts at a hare and had come to rest in a tree. As I walked towards her she dived but because of the lay of the land I couldn't see what at, I ran over and there she was, struggling with the Hare, which was twice the size of her. It weighed 6.5lb, (a young leveret) and yes Gary it was alive! To cap it all, that day as we walked back to the car, Tara caught a duck by the lake. By the end of December Tara had caught a couple of

moorhens, a few rabbits and another two ducks.

## January.

Disaster. Tara has broken her wing. A trip down to Dick Bests' Surgery where an x-ray confirms that the metacarpus has been broken in two places. Tara had to have her wing strapped so I put extra perching in her aviary so that she could hop about. Three weeks later back to Dicks, the wing is healing well. Dick said that the strapping could come off and I can start giving her some gentle exercises in the garden. I flew her in the garden for a couple of weekends, she was struggling a bit as she had by now dropped a few primaries, but she was using the wing so I knew that she would be OK by next season, thanks again Dick. So even though the season has been cut short because of her injury, we have still had a good time, and I'm glad to say there's no permanent damage. Tara ended up with just over 80 head which is pretty good considering we rarely use ferrets (as some of you know I don't have much luck with ferrets!! Also I find it boring, all that standing about). I have built up some good land with various quarry, and with my limited knowledge of field craft (you're always learning) and a lot beating we do OK. It's not all about kills, as long as Tara is obedient and has flown well then I am happy.

Well that's about it. I hope you enjoyed an insight into our season. I've got to go now as Tina has plenty of jobs lined up for me around the house, and I can also start on my other passion, Barbel fishing.

Roll on next season.



# Starting At The Beginning

## Pt III

Neil MacKinnon

We were onto the creance in the last episode of 'One man and his Hawk'. Well, Jax took to the air like...well a bird really.

I started with long jumps of about 10 to 15 feet and he very quickly got the message. Within a couple of days I was having to take him to a field just at the back of my house and in two days he started to come the entire length of a 30 yard creance, and then double the length.

I paint a rosy picture here. All was not quite so smooth. At the point where I was starting to push Jax's confi-

**Jax had become totally reliable at any distance on the creance and it was time to fly him free!!**

dence by taking the distance further and further, he would occasionally 'make a break for it'. I would then plod over to the bush he was clinging to, or the ground where he had landed, retrieve him and start again. This was a mistake.

He knows I have food, he can see where I am, he is on the creance which means I know where he is. So unless I have allowed him to tangle the creance, there is no reason why he should not fly to me. This was Dave's advice when I mentioned the problem to him, easy when you think about it.

The time arrived when Jax had become totally reliable at any distance on the creance and it was time to fly him free!!

Dave said he would come along for support and we agreed to meet at a local sports field. I had fed Jax lightly the day before so his weight was right. We tried a long creance flight, which was fine. It was now or never. "Are you nervous?"

Dave asked, too right I was.

I put Jax on the perch, walked back 30 yards and called, he came no problem. Same again, a bit further, last time about 80 yards, no problem, we were on our way. "Now his training really starts", I was told. WHAT?! I thought we were there.

I suspect that if you are unfortunate, you can lose a bird at any time, but I would put money on the fact that more birds are lost in the first few weeks of flying loose, due to over confidence, than at any other time.

I was warned to keep a careful eye on his weight. To watch for falling, steady or rising weights and to fly and feed him in an appropriate manner, depending upon which situation I found myself in. This is another reason to keep a daily record of weight and food intake.

For the first week of flying free I paid careful attention to the way Jax reacted to me and his surroundings, I kept the food supply flowing and the flying time short. More or less flying him from tree to food and back to tree, from tree to tree and then back to the fist for more food.

I am lucky as I have some woodland and fields in a deep valley behind my house. There are plenty of trees and to get out you have to go up over 80 feet. This means I can vary my route around the area, fly into or out of the valley and generally work Jax quite hard for his food. I was also fortunate to be lent an American book called Desert Hawking, which talks about training your bird to follow on to one type of whistle or call, come to the fist to a different command and to use another to alert the bird to any game. I have used these techniques with Jax and so far they have worked well.

One word of warning that was given to me came true.

After about two weeks of

flying free, Jax decided one day to train me. When called to the fist he would fly down, grab at the meat and fly into a tree. I decided to end the session early and called him to a chick that I was holding tightly by the legs. He came down low and FAST, struck at the chick and was up into a high tree. I was left with the two amputated legs gripped in my glove.

On the plus side he was not going too far away, so I turned the situation around by moving from field to field at a much faster pace. He was then forced to follow on just to stay with me. When I was ready I produced another chick, held tightly by the feet and head and down he came.

I can't be sure if this would work for any other bird, but by reading the situation it was clear that Jax was not keen for me to get too far away, after all I had the food and he knew it, and although he was attempting to get me

**... as soon as the lure was introduced was that he was very keen to attack...**

to come to him, I had the ace, well the chick actually, but you know what I mean.

As we got to understand each other better, the time came to introduce the Rabbit Lure. Something I noticed as soon as the lure was introduced was that he was very keen to attack, showing no sign of apprehension, even the first time it appeared.

On the down side, he became fairly aggressive after its use during training and can sometimes be a bit of a loony for the next ten minutes.

Our time in the field is getting longer and longer, he no longer gets fed every time he lands on the fist and he is expected to follow on for a few trips before he gets his reward. He still tries it on

from time to time, for instance, while following on he will fly very close to me, sometimes clipping me with a wing tip when he feels he should be fed, to no effect I should add.

He flies much faster than other Harris' I have seen, and is as happy one hundred feet up as he is two inches off the ground. He has yet to be entered to game but in the last couple of days has made a couple of mock attacks at squirrel, not a prey I favour, but at least he's becoming more aware of his potential, and I hope to get him going at rabbit in the next few weeks. He even chased a local sparrowhawk, but I think he was getting his own back, as the same bird chased him out of a tree a couple of weeks ago.

Well, that sums it all up so far. We both still have a fair way to go, but I think we're off in the right direction. I wish I had found the clubs and people I am now involved with five years ago, when the bug first bit.

To those of you contemplating your first bird, my advice would be to find a club and find people willing to answer questions, no matter how stupid, with a smile, and who remember what it was like for them when they were starting out.

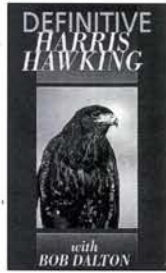
Take some time to really think it through, the time required, the level of commitment necessary to just own a bird of prey for the next twenty years, the room to keep it, and the patience to train it, the empathy to understand it and the heart to love it. If you are sure in your mind about it, then jump in with both feet, because there is nothing like it.

Lastly and to repeat myself, many thanks to Dave and Gill for their help, support and patience and to the many other people who have helped, advised and generally taken the micky.

# REVIEWS

## Definitive Harris Hawking Bob Dalton

This video is filmed in Grantown-on-Spey, Moray, Scotland, at Craggan Falconry. Taking a look at the superb housing with the use of shelf perches. The video shows how to attach anklets, jesses, bells and tail-mount, and imping. Unfortunately they use a pin to imp a wing feather, which is dated and very very dangerous. There are better and safer materials on the market.



A brief look is taken at food showing only rat and day old chicks, more attention should have been shown to other types of food.

A lot of the video was shot out in the moor/woods, flying Harris Hawks at rabbits. With some enjoyable flights. Ferrets were used to bolt rabbits from their warrens, two pointers were also used to find rabbits laying out in cover. However, the dogs wanted the quarry as much as the hawks and refused to stop to the whistle.

This video is not meant to teach falconry, it is just an insight into keeping and hunting Harris Hawks.

The video is well shot and edited but unfortunately lacks continuity. Available from Instinctive Productions, Unit 8a, Intec 2, Wade Road, Basingstoke, Hants. RG24 8NE.

## NEW BOW-PERCH COVERING & BATH

At the end of 1996 I was sent a free standing bow-perch by Jim Moss of Crown Falconry. This perch has a revolutionary new covering. It was sent for me to try to see if there were any problems. Firstly the bow-perch was of an excellent quality, made from stainless steel. The top of the perch is covered with vulcanised rubber, which is moulded onto the finished bow. It is durable and hard wearing and very easy to keep clean. It is very hygienic and is lasting



longer than any other covering I have used, due mainly to the fact that it is not porous and blood, and water cannot soak in.

Having been sat out in all weathers (Winter & Summer) it is showing no signs of wear or shrinkage.



These perches are also available with spikes and come in a variety of sizes.

Crown Falconry are also the suppliers of a new Aluminium bath, one of which I have been

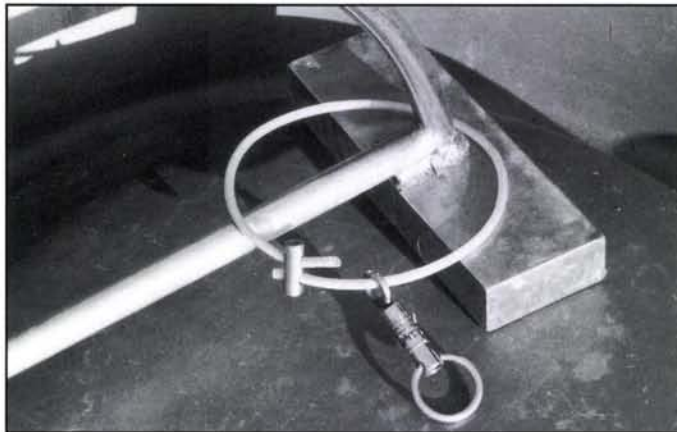


using for some time. When new they are very shiny and reflect the bright sunlight. This goes dull after a short time. With mismanagement you could get sharp edges, so inspecting them regularly is a must. Birds that have been used to other types and colours look at them a little warily at first, but soon get used to them. The design of this bath is such that the top is completely rounded, therefore minimising damage to feathers and wingtips.

For more information contact Jim Moss on: 01246 237213.

## Jess Cutting Tool and Bungee Spring Swivel

Rob & Rita Lippard of Double R products have been busy over the last 12 months firstly they have put together a complete anklet and jess making set, which has all you need to make any size for any bird. As you can see from the photograph it contains a punch with various sizes, with half die cutters, cutting board, template for feathering edges of the anklets, leg size gauge, so as to get the correct fit for your bird, with full instructions on how to use all the tools shown. The complete set is £75 and is well worth it. To help spread the cost items can be purchased individually.



Due to the problems with birds spraining, bruising and sometimes breaking a leg, Rob & Rita have designed a bungee, spring swivel. This is a barrel containing a spring attached to one ring end, with a ring on the opposite end welded to the barrel. The whole thing is made from stainless steel. The spring swivel can be fitted to the original ring on your block or bow-perch, with a suitable connector. Alternatively the leash can be tied to both ends of the swivel

bar, with locking alan grub screws in the end. Unfortunately this looks a bit messy but no problems have occurred with it to date. I have found that the steel cable, replacement ring was pliable enough on its own to give sufficient bungee effect on its own for birds up to 1. lbs in weight.

Another falconer is using the bungee swivel for his eagle and has found it very successful. For more information please phone Rob or Rita on: 01582 615741

and then to the ring on the block or bow. This utilises the bungees advantages to their fullest extent whilst leaving you with the security of having the bird tied directly to the perch.

A replacement ring is also available from Double R Products, this is plastic covered, steel cable joined at either end by a steel

# THE ITALIAN JOB

## TONY SCOTT



It was early March when I was first asked if I could provide and fly a Golden Eagle for a British Natural History film. As I had just finished filming with one in Scotland my reply was "No problem." "Where is the location?" I asked, expecting to hear Scotland or the North of England. "The Matterhorn in the Swiss Alps" was the reply and suddenly no problem became a big problem. As I suffer from vertigo, flying and heights are non starters as far as I'm

concerned. "Sorry, I can't do it". I told him, "you will have to find someone else."

It had been 10 years since I had worked with the producer concerned and it was disappointing to turn him down. However two days later he was on the phone again offering me the opportunity to travel overland to Switzerland and before the full implication of this had sunk in I found myself agreeing to go. The following day even more problems. I discovered from the researcher that the only way up the mountain where we would be filming was by cable car or helicopter. Neither being acceptable I again declined the offer. Not to be beaten however the film company came back offering to accommodate me by changing the location to the south side of the Matterhorn which is in Italy and where snowcats could be provided to ascend the mountain. The trip was back on.

Having acquired all the necessary licences and health certificates for the eagle, myself and a friend left along with the eagle for Italy by car on the 10th April. Two days and over 1,000 miles later we found ourselves at a village called Cervinia in the

*Above: The Eagle and myself, ready for the off.*

north of Italy. Cervinia, which is 2,000 metres above sea level is a ski resort situated at the base of the Matterhorn. It was here that we were given one day to acclimatise the eagle and ourselves to the surroundings and the altitude. The village, nor surprisingly, was full of skiers brightly clothed and most of them carrying skis. The eagle, which was weathering in the hotel grounds, liked neither and was becoming more unsettled by the hour. When it stopped bating at the local cat population I became seriously concerned as to whether or not it would be ready for filming the following day.

The next morning soon came and at 7am I found myself and the rest of the film crew being transported up the mountain, no turning back now I thought. The sun had not yet shown and the temp was several degrees below freezing. By 8am we had arrived at a relatively flat area about 3,000m above sea level which was to be our base for the weeks filming. Within 30 mins of being dropped off, the sun came up and with it a significant rise in temperature. The views of the Matterhorn and the surrounding area could now be fully appreciated and it was easy to see why the producer had picked this location for the film. The filming started with easy shots first, such as close ups of the eagle and flying it in and out of trees, but as the day and week progressed the flight became longer and longer. On several occasions during these long flights the eagle drifted off over the valley but much to our relief, came back to a swung lure. We were using telemetry with the transmitter having a shortened



*Alternative transport*



*Eagle being fed up on Mountain Hare at the end of filming*

antenna so that it could be hidden in the eagles tail to avoid detection when filming. This gave a range of 12 miles but had we had lost the eagle I am not sure whether it would have been any good as most of the surrounding areas were inaccessible.

Often we would be sitting around waiting for the camera position to be changed, as a result the eagle was getting plenty of rest and not being worked continually. The tricky part was having to feed the eagle at the end of filming at 7pm and still having it keen enough to fly at 8am the following morning. The middle of the week was mostly taken up by filming using a camera fitted to the eagles back. Having been the first to accomplish this in the early 80's it had not unduly worried me. The eagle would be hooded first and then a harness with a camera, transmitter, and power pack

*Below:*

*Isn't she gorgeous?*

*The eagle at the ready.*



*Above: Filming in wooded area in Valley bottom*

attached would be fitted to it by means of velcro strips. This would enable the eagle, in the unlikely event of it becoming lost, to pull the harness off, so freeing itself from any restrictions. Once the eagle was unhooded it was immediately flown over the desired route to a

flew the eagle. Eventually without a flap of its wings it gained height and disappeared over the Matterhorn and into Switzerland.

The final days filming arrived and at 6pm we were still trying to get one of the shots the producer required. But with only 15mins of light left we were successful and the weeks filming had come to an end. It was a good feeling, we had accomplished all we had set out to do, in difficult circumstances. I considered it had been worthwhile for the experience and the scenery alone, not to mention the financial rewards. Two days later, having driven over 1,000 miles in 17hrs, I was back home in England trying to take it easy when I was summoned to the phone. "We are making a film about European mountain ranges and wondered if you could fly a Golden Eagle for us this weekend", a voice asked. "What is the location?" I cautiously enquired. "Aviemoire", was the reply, "Ah, Aviemoire" I repeated, "no problem."

rabbit lure where the harness would be removed. The resulting shot would be viewed at the same time on a monitor so the producer could evaluate it immediately. We had seen many buzzards and Kites on our journey to Italy but at this altitude we saw little bird life apart from the occasional Alpine Chough and one Sparrowhawk. However towards the end of the week, whilst flying the eagle a large raptor that at first we thought was another eagle came into view. I quickly threw out the lure and brought my own in to avoid any confrontation. By this time the other raptor was only 80ft above us and we could see from its diamond shaped tail that in fact it was not an eagle but a Lammergeier. This impressive and rare vulture stayed with us for several hours effortlessly circling around, coming in closer each time we

## YORKSHIRE FALCONRY CLUB

Since I last wrote life at Yorkshire Falconry has been very busy. Our membership is now standing at 87, and still rising. We are getting a steady number of people joining us at each of our meetings, members now come to us from five counties.

Breeding season has been very successful for members, with help and information available either at the end of a phone line or at the meetings for all those needing it. One of the major highlights of the year is the member who has reported breeding 4 pure Gyrs, and having seen them I can see why he is justifiably proud.

April brought the club its first visit from a committee member of the Hawk Board, and who better to speak than Jim Chick. The club became affiliated to the Hawk Board early this year. The timing of the talk was fortuitous as it was given just prior to the new regulations coming into force and he was able to give members all the latest information. Members had the opportunity to ask Jim how the Board helps and represents falconers. The club gave Jim a donation for the Hawk Boards Fighting Fund as thanks.

May was chosen as a social night with just a small demonstration by a supplier of CCTV cameras. The club also helped raise funds for the Barnsley Animal Centre, by supplying a static display. Although the day was wet those manning the display were kept busy answering questions.

Our speaker in June was Eunice Lambert from Bestobel Brittanys. She spoke to members on the history, bloodlines, choosing and training of 'Brittanys' (not Brittany 'Spaniels', it appears the name has been amended). Eunice helped with a number of problems that members had come up against, and her talk was appreciated by all. There is a Brittany Club of Great Britain for people who wish

to join and she left details with me and I would willingly pass them on.

Many members went to The Falconer Fair at Althorp House and it has been agreed that all being well the Yorkshire Falconry Club will be represented at next years Fair. So we finally get the chance to meet the many people who have written to us over the year.

At the end of June a trip down to the National Birds of Prey Centre took place. The highlight of this was the display that included the burrowing owl. Congratulations to whoever was responsible for the training. I am sure it was long but in our eyes worthwhile. The next trip we are arranging will be to the Hawk Conservancy in Andover.

Following on from the last Falconers, a joint field meet has been arranged with Welsh Hawking (Cheshire Branch) for them to send over two parties of six. We would still like to arrange others, so please in the first instance contact Richard Hill on 10226 360353. The club will, once the flying season starts, be arranging two field meets a month.

Forthcoming events include a Barbecue for all members in July, a practical night in August where members can see practical demonstrations of Imping, Making of Jesses and Anklets, Tail belling, & Telemetry, Casting & Coping and finally Hood Making. September will be our AGM. Also in September the club is holding an all day vets course, to be run by Neil Forbes, at the time of writing there are still a few places to fill. For non-members the day will cost £20.

The club's new membership starts on October 1st. If you would like any further information about the club or any items in the article please send an SAE to Kim Myers, 8 Belford Drive, Bramley, S Yorks. S66 3YW. or Tel/Fax: 01709 549896.

## SCOTTISH HAWKING CLUB

Well, it only seems like yesterday that we were preparing for last season, they do say that time flies when you are having fun. So here we are again, the new eyasses are already entered, the intermewed hawks are waiting for that last primary or tail feather to come down and all that anticipation waiting to be deflated yet again. But there are always those black clouds on the horizon, the anti-hunting bill due to be read at the end of the year, will hunting with dogs or hounds cover our own hawking dogs? Who knows, if it does it will cause us major problems. Then there is the threat from Europe, the new legislation introduced in June was upon us before anyone knew about it, and what a mess everyone is getting in. We are a country standing alone with our captive breeding, so we have very few allies when it comes to the voting on hawk related matters, so no wonder the anti falconry countries in Europe can band together and out-vote us. What will be next, the standing committee of Berne, has yet to report, will we end up only being able to fly indigenous species of

hawks in their naturally occurring areas? A very frightening thought. So although things may look rosy in the near future it is now up to every falconer or hawk keeper to put their money where their mouth is, or should be, and join their local club, as well as the BFSS. This shouldn't cost you more than £1 per week and it must be better than no hawking at all, even if you don't agree with joining clubs, still join, the campaign needs your support, you can always tear up the newsletter when it arrives and pretend your head is still in the sand.

One of the good things to have come about with the new regulations is that with the new article 10 certifies, we can travel to other EU countries with our birds without having to undergo quarantine, as well as foreign falconers being able to come over here, so look forward to some truly international field meetings in the future. The Scottish Hawking Club will still continue to put on its monthly field meets so maybe we will see you up here.

Good Hawking.

To have your clubs' news on this page just send it to our usual address,  
20 Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Kettering Northants. NN15 5QP.  
Fax: 01536 722794,  
E-mail: kbu77@dial.pipex.com  
Deadline for the next issue is 30th September.  
Around 400 wds, photo's welcome.

# FACTS ON FALCONERS



Whilst here for the Falconers Fair this year Adrian Williams brought Adrian Langley of African Sky Hunters to see us and we asked him about Falconry in Zimbabwe.

We tried to establish what were the main differences between Falconry in Zim and Falconry in GB. As you will see the regulations there for Falconers are much more stringent than over here.

## **How long have you been practising Falconry?**

17 years.

## **What was the first bird you ever flew?**

A Nevambo Sparrowhawk. It flew at 140g (5oz) and hunted Button Quail. I released it at the end of the season.

## **What are you flying at the moment?**

Black Sparrowhawks and Lanners.

## **Have you ever had a bird you couldn't train?**

Yes. I once had a haggard Lanner but she was totally unsuitable as a captive bird.

## **What changes have you noticed since you started Falconry?**

All our equipment had to be made by hand. Telemetry was very hard to come by until the mid 80's.

Now International visitors are common from other falconers. There is more literature and we are able to buy furniture. More interest is shown in the training of dogs and the quality of Falconry is better.

## **If you could fly any bird, anywhere, what and where would it be?**

A passage female Peregrine at grouse in Scotland or a Gyr Falcon at Sage grouse.

## **If you could go hawking with anybody past or present who would it be?**

Steve Shingren.

## **How many birds of prey species are there in Zimbabwe?**

sixty-one. Eight species can be flown. Five accipiters, two falcons and one eagle.

## **What are main differences between Falconry in the UK and Falconry in Zimbabwe?**

In Zimbabwe we have freedom of choice. We can take birds from the wild, most of them are released at the end of the season. We also have easy access to quarry. Also the regulations are much tighter in Zimbabwe.

Falconry is controlled by the ZFC (Zimbabwe Falconry Club) and all new clubs must affiliate.

To become a falconer you must find a nest and take your bird from it. You are allowed an African Goshawk, or a Gabar Goshawk.

You are encouraged to join the club.

We will help and teach you. You must

take a B Grade exam. Then you can fly a Black Sparrowhawk, Lanner or African Hawk Eagle.

Then you have to take an A Grade exam. For this you must have a pointing dog and a pigeon loft. This is a practical exam. This is done by two 3rd A Grade Falconers. Also you must have an inspection.

Then you can fly a Peregrine. Passage, not haggard.

## **How many members does the club have?**

There are around 150 members. 40-50 of these are overseas members. Overall there are about 30 active falconers as members in Zimbabwe. Falconry is promoted with a large emphasis on conservation. We monitor the Peregrines in the wild. In the mid 70's there were 18 Peregrine sites. There are now 30 pairs. We breed them in captivity and release 50% of what we breed.



# The Luggar falcon in Pakistan

**Dr Nick Fox**

Every job has its downside. For me, one of this springs worst moments was being accosted by an elderly transvestite prostitute in the Cholistan desert. When I

sively in Pakistan. They are not used for falconry, but as barak or decoy birds for trapping sakers and peregrines. However, while saker and peregrine have large, multina-

pers, and arranged two workshops in the Punjab near Bahawalpur. Bahawalpur is a bustling town of around a million people - and no hotel. So we stayed at the District Commissioners. From there we held workshops in Yazman Mundi and Fort Abbas; small towns with donkeys, horses, buffalo and camels as the main means of transport.

At first the trappers wouldn't come to the local school for the workshop. They hung back, waiting at a teashop in the bazaar, suspicious that we were Government officials

programme in Pakistan. We found out from them the main causes of mortality in the trapped falcons: traumatic injuries received during trapping, some of which became infected; death during transport, often on the back of donkeys in sleeves or in fertiliser sacks; feeding poor quality or decomposed meat; and starvation when numbers of birds are kept together in small pens. Newcastle disease, avian pox, trichomoniasis and bacterial enteritis, aspergillosis, upper respiratory tract infections and eye problems related to seeling the eyelids



*That bloody Nick Fox gets all the good looking ones!*

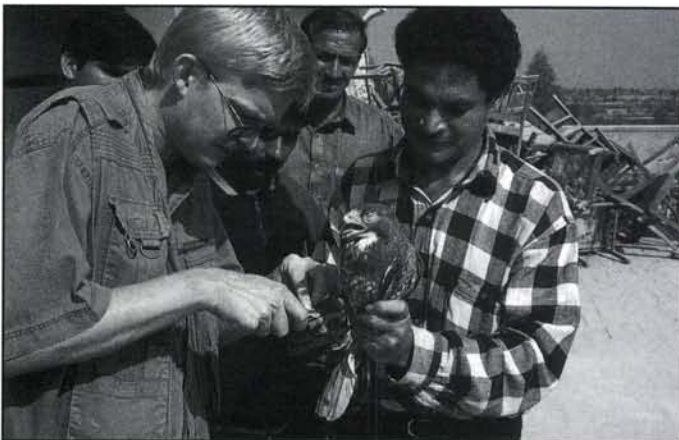
finally escaped the clutches of his henna-ed hands and got back to camp I found the driver had rolled one of our two vehicles over off the road. It was a write-off.

Tom Bailey and I were in Pakistan working with Falcon Foundation International, Pakistan (FFIP) run by Brigadier Mukhtar Ahmed. I

tional breeding populations, the luggar is confined to the Indian subcontinent and is on Appendix I of CITES. Formerly common and widespread, its population has slowly dwindled for reasons which are as yet unclear. I went over to train up a team of five Pakistani biologists. Our first surveys in the



*Luggar falcon: in Pakistan large numbers are trapped each year as decoy birds to trap sakers & peregrines*



*Tom Bailey demonstrates first-aid techniques on a seeled White-eyed Buzzard. The bird was released at the end of the course*

planning to arrest them. Eventually the local landowner, acting as a go-between, persuaded them to come and about 25 nervous trappers trooped into the schoolroom. We showed them videos and slides of the falcon projects in Asia and of the Luggar falcon

were also common.

One trapper admitted to losing 150 out of 200 luggar falcons that he was keeping. We provided them all with veterinary medicine packs for treating these ailments although we are fairly convinced that these medicines

had travelled from darkest Wales, Tom is a vet for the National Avian Research Center (NARC) in Abu Dhabi.

In 1995 NARC and FFIP signed a raptor research agreement because of concerns about the status of the luggar falcon in Pakistan. Luggars are trapped exten-

Punjab and Sindh regions were not encouraging. Few luggars were nesting in these areas and we estimated that in 1996 between 1200 and 2500 luggars had been trapped. Large numbers die at various stages in the trapping, dealing and selling process.

Brigadier Mukhtar made contact with a number of trap-



*Dr Nick Fox & Tom Bailey (NARC/ERWDA), Brigadier Mukhtar Ahmed & staff (Falcon Foundation International, Pakistan) and trappers after the workshop at Fort Abbas, Pakistan.*



will be used on humans rather than birds.

We explained and discussed new methods of feeding, housing, capture, handling and transporting falcons - which, if put into effect, should reduce the need for such a high take of luggers every year. If fewer die in captivity, fewer need to be trapped.

We then sought to establish what sort of numbers of luggers were caught every year and how many people relied on falcon trapping for a living. Brigadier Ahmed esti-

mated that across the whole of Pakistan, for all types of falcons, about 600,000 people were dependent on the falcon trapping trade. Bearing in mind the very poor quality of life for many people in Pakistan, there is a real conflict between trying to achieve what is best for the falcons without increasing the suffering of the people. So, for the first time these people had explained to them the concept of sustainable use. By the time we had moved on to Fort Abbas, word of our presence had gone before us;

and this time 70-80 trappers attended the workshop, no doubt tempted by the prospect of free medicines.

As a result of these workshops, they set up falcon trappers associations, to co-ordinate the activities of trappers, improve management and to demand that the government no longer issue trapping permits to outsiders. They are also calling for the abolition of the post of honorary game warden, which is essentially a licence for corruption.

This year we are surveying Luggers in the Thar desert

and last month we signed a research agreement in Kirghizstan so I will return in the autumn to train about 16 biologists to widen the surveying of sakers and luggers into Kirghizstan and Uzbekistan.

Working in Central Asia has its bad days but it also has its rewards. Western solutions are seldom appropriate and often it is very difficult to see a way through the tensions and to try and work out what is the best and most effective thing to do for wildlife and the people.

## Westweald Falconry

We rarely stand still for long so.....

New - Double thickness ladies elk gloves @£43

New - Childrens size split mitten glove £18 (single)

Eagle/Eagle owl gloves in elk. Full length £59.00

New - Paj Mitchell hand crafted knives now in stock

New - 21" green fibreglass baths @£17.50

Two new videos - Harris Hawking £17.99 and B.O.P.

Managemet and Training £15.99.

Dr Nick Fox's new book still £35.00 (Superb)

All other books discounted - some heavily!

Pay me a visit - you'll be surprised at the stock I carry.

Telephone or send *SHE* for our current price list to:

'Wildcobs' Long Barn Rd. Weald, Sevenoaks, Kent  
TN14 6NJ or visit the shop, but do telephone first to  
avoid disappointment if I'm out.

Tel/Fax: 01732 463218 and ask for Brian.



## East Anglian FALCONRY DAY

Sunday September 7 1997

For novices & enthusiasts at the  
start of the 1997/8 Hunting Season

Falconry Furniture • Hoodmaking • Stick Making • Veterinary • Ferrets  
Bird Management & Falconry Courses • Hunting Days • Flying Displays  
Wood Carving • Fine Art • Gun Dog & Longbow demonstrations  
Meet Lyn & David Wilson from "The Falconers Magazine"

BRITISH BIRDS OF PREY CENTRE  
STONHAM BARN, PETTAUGH RD, STONHAM ASPAL  
SUFFOLK IP14 6AT TEL: 01449 711425

## Cotswold Falconry Centre

### Falconry Courses:

Join us for a day on our  
very popular introductory  
course.

### Hunting Parties:

Early booking essential for  
96/97 Hunting Parties

### Falcon Leisure:

Here with a full range of Falconry Equipment.  
Books & Videos.

We now sell Honeybrook Farm's best quality  
Hawk Food.

Cotswold Falconry Centre,  
Batsford Park,  
Moreton-in-Marsh,  
Glos. GL56 9QB  
Telephone: 01386 701043



## Falconry

Exciting All  
Absorbing Holiday  
With A Difference

Scotlands renowned  
centre offers holidays  
in which you will be  
flying falcons and  
hawks, in scenic and beautiful Border  
countryside

From Novice to Advanced courses including  
falconry from horseback.

Fully residential status. We can cater for all  
age groups.

Send now for full colour brochure or telephone  
L. & D.M. Durman - Walters,  
The Scottish Academy of Falconry &  
Related Studies, Hyndlee, Bonchester  
Bridge, Hawick TD9 9TB  
Telephone 01450 860666

THE SCOTTISH ACADEMY OF  
FALCONRY



& RELATED STUDIES

# FALCONERS FAIR 1997 WAS AS HIGH AS A KITE!!

As was promised, a new approach to the Fair for '97. Bryan Paterson, Terry Large and friends were there as usual to show the layman and novice the correct way to go about starting falconry. The instructions were very clear and easy to understand and I am sure that many beginners over the years have learnt a great deal from them.

Some recognised clubs and associations were invited to do something in the arena over the two days. There were numerous birds flown, Diana Durman-Walters flying a Tawny Eagle and Lanner Falcon together, showing how the two different birds go about getting the best lift from thermals. The lanner falcon raking out looking for thermals, whereas the Tawny Eagle stuck to what he knew best, the trees.

Terry Large flew one of his falcons, which was very well trained (or so he tells us) which after a very good flying display took the lure in the air and flew straight into his tent, (or was this a fluke?). We will just have to see if he can do it again next year. We had a rare glimpse of a local pair of Hobbys, and a buzzard, who had come to see what all

the commotion was about.

The use of kites and balloons to get your bird to fly high is now becoming very popular in Britain, and so The South East Falconry Group, said they would be delighted to give a demonstration at the Fair. On the first day a female peregrine was flown to a balloon which was put up to approximately 800 feet. A lure was attached very close to the top of the line (near the balloon) which should have released when the falcon caught it, unfortunately when the falcon mounted up to and caught hold of the lure this did not happen. The balloon was then quickly brought down but the peregrine had to be retrieved from the top of a very large Oak tree. We were told that flying these balloons in enclosed countryside is not ideal.

The bird that stole the show on the second day was a Kestrel. This kite this time was put up to approximately 400 feet. Due to the lack of time before the sky divers arrived the lure was released prematurely, this was done just as the Kestrel, which mounted at astonishing speed, reached it. The Kestrel

then put in a stoop which would rival any Peregrine. Everybody who saw it, I am sure, will never under-rate a Kestrel again.

Shortly after the Kestrel was picked up the sky-divers appeared in the sky with their flares and made perfect descents into the main arena.

The Fair was visited by even more overseas visitors than ever before, with people such as Giancarlo Pirrotta, NAFA, Hans Dhooze, (who has kindly written a article for this issue), returning to make themselves regulars.

The art marquee was, again, a great success, with the usual class of artists, and several others such as Ron Digby, Asaad Raouf and Rob Fuller having tents of their own.

Ron Digby has kindly donated the front cover for this issue and will be featured as a Falconer and artist in the next issue.

On a personal note, we thoroughly enjoyed this years Falconers Fair and we offer our congratulations for a sterling job to Ron Morris and Peter Wainwright, and we look forward to seeing everybody again next year.

## 'World of Raptors.'

VHS PAL Video Running time 56 minutes.

Echo Film Productions,  
407 W.Bannock,  
Boise, Idaho 83702.  
Reviewed by Alan Gates.

The first time I experienced the remarkable cinematographic talents of the Nelson family was a short piece of footage broadcast by the BBC. It was part of "The Natural World" series entitled 'Battle for the Eagles' and the most dramatic footage was produced by these instinctively talented falconer/ raptor filmmakers. As the camera follows in such a precision close framing sequence of first, a Golden Eagle in hot pursuit of a jack rabbit down the desert canyon hillside, then our sensors are treated to another equally superb pursuit by a Prairie Falcon expertly controlling her stoop as she rolls and rocks, using her feet as braking, following the contours of the land like a cruise missile until the climatic impact extinguishes the life of a chukar partridge.

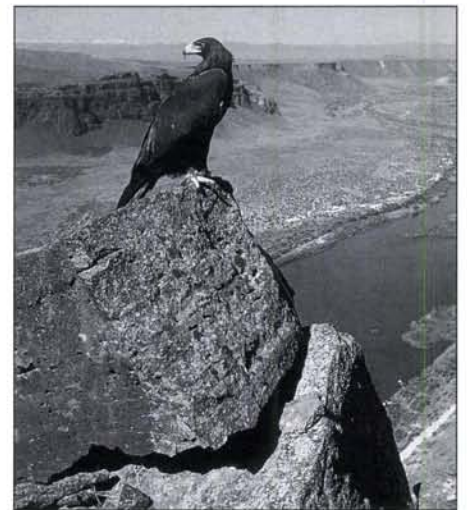
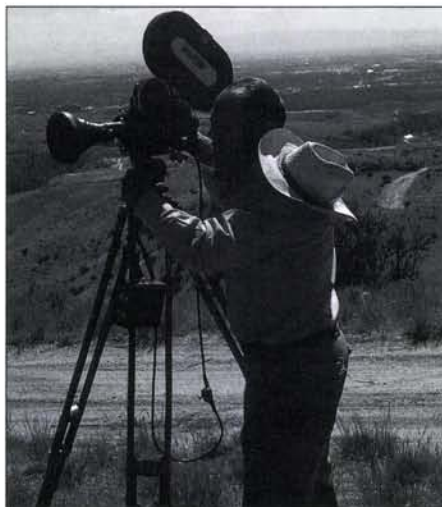
These incredibly filmed images coupled with an equally superb soundtrack have the effect of a spine and scalp tingling sensation for the viewer.

The 'World of Raptors' is a new video packed with excellent footage of eagles, buteos, accipiters, falcons and owls. Following the intimate lifestyles of each

group of raptors, this film offers information on how to observe them in their natural habitat. It explores how different species of raptor have evolved to the top of the food chain in such varied terrain as desert canyons to coastal sea cliffs and the snow packed Arctic.

For me it is still the superb flight action sequences, so expertly filmed that rank this film at the highest level of natural history filming. As falconers, many of us have seen some dramatic flights, after all that is what attracts us to the art, but to capture these wonders of nature on film is a special talent.

The film premier for the 'World of Raptors' was held on Tuesday evening 26th June in Boise City, Idaho. A fitting venue



as Boise is the Raptor capital of the USA and home to the Echo Film Production company of the Nelson family.

The Nelson brothers specialise in sports and wildlife cinematography. They won an Emmy award in 1989 for their work on "Tim McCarver's World of Adventure for ABC." "World of Raptors" is narrated by Academy Award winner Joanne Woodward with the original soundtrack by Steve Eaton.

It is 56 minutes of superb footage and highly recommended to interest both falconers and raptor enthusiasts.

It is available in the UK from Campbell Film & Video, 105, Kelmscott Road, LONDON SW11 6PU. Enclose a cheque for £22.00 incl. postage and packing.

# HAWK TALK

John Matcham

AAAAAAAAAAHHH!! (a very very loud scream, one of those that comes from way down in your belly).

This is the sound of frustration and anger, the disbelief of it all, to realise that we sit somewhere between the Devil and the deep blue sea. A place where no others wish to be, a place that does not exist, a place of multiple issue politics.

Yet another hour and a half on the phone to our illustrious editor mulling over ideas for the magazine, dodging the politics because it's not politically correct, avoiding slanderous statements by not mentioning names but you know who I mean and not wasting paper by preaching to the converted. Yes you our regular readers are we hope completely converted, even though you didn't need converting in the first place.

Have I politically and legally made myself clear? Good! now that everyone realises that I am the three wise monkeys personified and not a lawyer, on your heads be it, I shall tackle 'The Law' and 'Lost Birds of Prey'.

Hypothetically speaking of course, lets just say, you lost your favourite Harris Hawk while hunting at the beginning of this past 96/97 season, it was closed rung, you have an old DOE document proving its origin, although they never proved ownership, it was never registered with an independent registry, you searched high and low and in the end sadly had to give up fearing the worst, time had past by and reporting it lost seemed pointless, you don't read this magazine or any other Bird related publication, and amazingly it has survived the rigours of winter and found refuge in two elderly ladies woodland garden and is happy raiding the nests of England's wild birds and beating up the defenceless baby rabbit population. Whoops!

This seems all to good to be true. Time to call for INTERNATIONAL RESCUE, 5 4 3 2 1 THUNDERBIRDS, well OK some smart Alec and his beaten up old Land Rover who just happens to run a Falconry School. Who watches the bird for an hour tries the lure trick, that didn't work and then realises that the bird is 'following on', in the hope that the idiot in a green coat might scare up some lunch, hang on a minute who's teaching who? Idiot gets smart and goes home leaving the two darling old dears a bag of seven DDOC's and instructions to provide the bird with one chick on the roof of their shed in the morning and one just before dusk. The idea being to fool the bird into thinking we are stupid enough to feed it, so why hunt, and eventually gain its trust. Fat chance I here you cry. Day four, send

apprentice to catch the bird, he also didn't believe and was soon telephoning asking for assistance and a box, (I promised not to mention the motorcycle). Said Harris is returned to base, given a complete medical check (by a vet) and found a safe and secure home and lots to eat.

So far the man in the green coat has done everything by the book which included a brief statement from it's trainers (the elderly ladies) the vet and captor. This has been reported to the various registration agencies and the Police who in turn inform the magazine and any other Bird related publication.

If this had been a Dog, it's off to the local pound, if the owner is not found over a period of time like ASAP, a new home is found and the Dog lives happily ever after.

But it's not a Dog it's a Bird and it has definitely not snuffed it, it is not nailed to it's perch and it's hungry, and the man in a green coat want's his aviary back for nuptials and things, eventually.

The instant the man in a green coat took the responsibility of the Bird he became legally responsible for it's welfare from that point on until it's natural death, unless he hands it to a recognised and suitably qualified agency, we all know how interested they are and not that the laws are any different for them, or the owner shows up.

But of course the owner doesn't show up because he doesn't read this magazine or any bird related publications and believed the worst. A Paradox in the making.

If the Bird had been an inanimate object of any or no value, it would have been delivered to the nearest Police Station and eventually if not claimed or traced, possibly handed to the finder or sold at auction. A case of 'Finders Keepers Losers Weepers'.

The fact of the matter is, as far as I can find out, no law exist for the transfer of title of any animal other than a stray dog. The stray dog law is only statutory in the case of strays collected by county council representatives, who after a minimum period of seven days may dispose of the animal in a manner best suited to them as long as it is humane. This does not include dogs removed by agencies (i.e.. rescued) from cruel keepers. This situation requires a court order after a conviction.

In short the man in a green coat is stuck with the bird until the owner shows up and claims it. From who he may claim reasonable costs for the care of the bird.

The man in a green coat charges £25.00 per call out, in this case the journey was a fifty mile round trip and four call outs were made to trace the bird and eventually capture it, .60p per day housing and

feed. DDOC's cost about .03p each, rats about .30p, quail .50p add to that the cost of the electricity for the freezer, building the aviary etc. and .60p a day is peanuts. Until its been in the man in a green coats aviary for 417 days and the cost amounts to £349.94 and that's not mentioning the two Buzzard that have been in for 452 days and 468 days respectively or the or the Kestrel that has now cost £244.34. All of these cost are recoupable when the owners are found or turn up even if they don't want the bird back. The buck definitely stops with the true owner. Even though the bird may exceed it's true cash value, title still belongs to the true original owner.

The man in a green coat has got used to his new arrival (a male ) and has the thought of introducing a mate but he cannot or dare not, if the female turns out to be aggressive and injures or even kills him, the man in a green coat is liable, if the mating should be successful, half of the offspring belong to the original owner of the male and therefore cannot be sold, increasing the original problems.

Perhaps more of a worry is the fact that if the bird did become seriously ill while in the care of the man in a green coat, he is responsible by law to provide proper care, which technically can be an open cheque book in vets bills, without legal title the man in a green coat cannot consent to the euthanasia of the bird, only the vet can make the decision at the point at which, he or she considers it no longer humane to administer treatment. This decision is not necessarily based on the usefulness of the birds life after treatment. Although I must at this juncture point out that most good vets are a lot more intelligent than that.

The man in a green coats biggest concern is that the DOE holds the key to a door than cannot be opened because of a law that protects humans, the data protection act. When the information becomes publicly available (around the year 2007, well no ones really sure) our Harris will have cost approximately £2409.00 but then of course it will be worth taking the true owner to court to claim the costs.

More and more birds are being lost each year and the numbers of birds that have ended up in a paradoxical loop hole in the recent changes in registration and European laws have meant that some of them are waiting in limbo and technically becoming very expensive birds.

No one wins, the cost of keeping the birds is always higher than the fee charged. One thing for sure is the birds to a degree do suffer. If the man in a green coat loses the Harris while flying it, he is responsible for the loss and therefore reluctant to take the risk, after all this is a bird that has gone AWOL previously.

I for one look forward to the imminent release, into the public domain, of names and numbers, that for now will haunt those who have lost birds and failed to report them.

We know you can hear us Earth Man!

From the TWILIGHT ZONE till next time NANU NANU.

# RAPTORS of Britain and Europe

No 4  
Northern Harrier  
[Circus cyaneus]  
PHILIP SNOW © 1997

♂ immature has similar darker plumage to the American race adult ♂s.



♀ adults ♂



defending ♀

polygamous males in young sold forestry.  
Field sketches.  
Mull, Argyll.

P. Snow

© 2 ♂ Harriers 17 Loch A.M. adult males.

Immature, prob 2nd winter, opportunistically hunting birds & mammals on coastal marsh, Anglesey, 1993  
adult ♂, Mull, spring.  
juveniles in nest, Mull.



The NORTHERN OR HEN HARRIER is one of the few endangered raptors in Britain today. This is largely because of its taste for the odd Red Grouse, & as it disturbs & scatters the covers that the keeper has carefully shepherded together for his financial better to shoot.

The harriers had made good progress, since they spread <sup>back</sup> to the mainland from their last UK stronghold, Orkney, during the unkept days of the 2nd W. War. The proliferation of young forestry provided new home for them, & birds like S.E. Owl & Blackgrouse, but now all of their futures look a bit grim, as over subsidised sheep, overzealous walkers & bikers etc, overbred shooters all conspire to destroy our last moors.

sheep, overzealous walkers & bikers etc, overbred shooters all conspire to destroy our last moors.

# Winds of Change

Diana Durman-Walters

We live in changeable times, in which decisions made by others may well sweep away the life we know. It is difficult to comprehend falconry being conducted without the use of dogs but my mind is fervently on this notion as I am busily training a Tawny Eagle.

Today is hot and humid. There is nothing quite like the vision before me of Border hills and landscape that offers such scope to eagles to practice their art of flying.

The heat is inviting the Tawny to seek a thermal that will take her into the 'blue beyond'. So high that the Americanism "she's specked out" is totally appropriate. The slight turbulence of wind at approx. 800ft. causes her re-think the thermal idea and cruises out looking for hotter, quieter air to leisurely rise into the heavens.

She is doing what comes easily and naturally. Admiring her power to leave

terra firma and explore vast tracts of sky has always created a sense of wonderment in me. She is not hunting and quite probably just simply enjoying herself.

As she wingbeats out to explore the prospects of better updrafts, my mind is drawn to the fact that the Rally in Hyde Park is due to take place the following day and I shall be there with the masses that, like me, want to make a positive statement concerning the future.

The eagle is now responding to the call of the lure, and its invitation to dine brings her once again earthward.

The training that she has been tutored by is identical to that of the hunting falcons and hawks. Is all that to account for nothing, so that falconers from novice to long in the tooth practitioners can never again have a sense of freedom and that atavistic urge to follow a hunting hawk? The Rally may be the wind of change that will keep hunting and hawking firmly

in our rural culture.

Bending to pick the eagle from the lure I notice that she has attracted the attention of our resident nesting pair of buzzards. They circle effortlessly above her then become aware of my presence as well and wheel away. Keeping them in sight two other large raptors are in a spiral of soaring flight above them.

Asking one of the staff to put the binoculars on them we discover that we have an audience of two young goshawks. Not unusual in this locality.

Ten years ago neither of these two hawks would have been in residence here. Both would have been deemed a rarity. Today they are very common as are an increasing number of raptors. This rise in numbers of peregrine, goshawk, Hen Harrier are now being looked at as a cause for concern amongst many land managers, particularly those that manage grouse moors. A dilemma exists which seems to be a contradiction. Now that we have increased raptor levels quite dramatically what will we do if there are too many? Indeed food for thought.

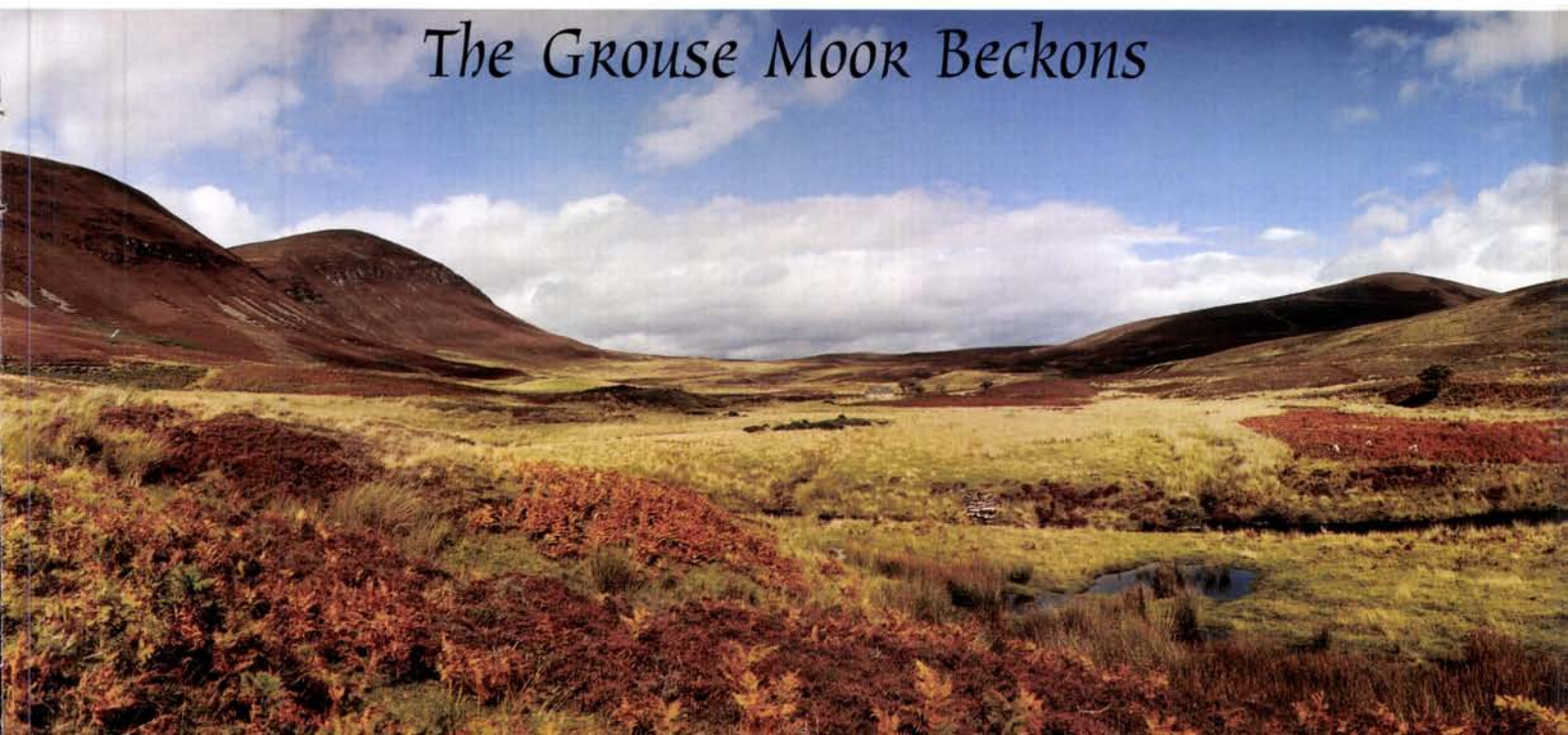
Winds of change, metaphorically speaking, are on the horizon. The grouse hawking season has raced around the corner and

thought as to which falcon will this year be on the moor, prevail. At one time it was a fairly simple case of the intermewed falcon who would be the star of each years beckoning. Now it may well be a chosen hybrid of the year or perhaps one of the straight species, but by and large the seasoned hawk is probably a successful breeder and no longer will be called upon to come grouse hawking.

There is a delight in this aspect as it allows the falconer to test his and the hawks ability to the full when training eyasses. If ( a big if) they realise their potential, it is because they exude that exciting ingredient, which drives falconers ever onward. The will and the need to succeed in hawks so young. The exuberance ( and the memories) of youth are experienced through the reckless, aggressive and determined attitude of hawks of the year and that their company, although often frustrating, can be pleasurable and immensely rewarding.

Each breeding season brings its rewards and it is up to the falconer to keep this level of attainment constantly within the realms of perfection. Not only mimicking nature but to a greater part creating it.

## The Grouse Moor Beckons



# SUMMARY OF NEW REGULATIONS FOR MOVEMENT, SALE OR DISPLAY OF RAPTORS

As of June the first, the regulations will change with regard to the movement, sale and display of some birds of prey. The general licenses that are in force at the moment will be phased out and will probably all of them will be gone by the end of this year.

That means that for us bird of prey keepers/owners/ falconers, they have to be replaced by something else. At the time of writing this, it will be an Article 10 certificate. Although everyone is tending to call them sales certificates in fact they will be needed for movement of birds and for display to the public, or for financial return, i.e. hunting days and the like. This certificate will also be needed for eggs, feathers, or what are more technically called 'parts and derivatives' as yet it is not known what is going to happen about semen.

For us, the birds are divided into two groups Annex A and Annex B. There are 57 species of diurnal birds of prey on Annex A, which include all the European species such as Kestrel, Peregrine, Sparrowhawk, Buzzard and for some extraordinary reason all eight species of the Sea/fish eagles. Then there are a few others such as the two condor species, the Mauritius Kestrel, Philippine Eagle and so on.

There are 19 species of owls, again all the European owls, (yes including the Barn Owl!) but that also covers species such as the snowy and the grey grey that inhabit other continents, such as north America. And then again a few species such as the Norfolk Island Boobook.

All the rest of the species of diurnal and nocturnal birds of prey are on Annex B. So birds like Redtails, Harris Hawks, Great Horned Owls and many of the African species which are not found in Europe do not require Article 10 certificates.

This is a requirement put on our government by the EU and you should all know that our DOE fought very hard to have general licences carry on for birds of prey, but they were beaten by the rest of the EU countries. You should also know that hundreds of species apart from birds of prey are affected, including some parrots (about bloody time too) ducks, many European passerines (LBJ's -little brown jobs!), European mammals and European plants. The list is endless and it will be a nightmare for the DOE to implement.

Consequently, the general licenses that apply now, will continue to apply until they expire - probably December this year. However I would strongly advise all those breeding any of the Annex A species to apply soon to become a recognised breeder and thus be allowed to have partially filled in bunches of certificates to be completed as you need them. I would also suggest that anyone like my Centre apply for the Certificate allowing the birds to be displayed to the general public.

For sales or movement of Annex A birds into the rest of Europe you are likely to need an Article 10 certificate for your bird, so apply now if you are going to export.

For any birds coming in or going out of the EU CITES will continue to apply as it does

now.

There are going to be an awful lot of questions from everyone and I doubt if all of them can even be answered yet as the DOE have had to cope with trying to apply with the new regulations and deal with a new government all in the space of about 6 weeks.

The DOE will be at the Falconers Fair, and The CLA Game Fair and there will be a long session at the Hawk Board Symposium in October.

Just Remember that if you own or breed any Annex A species of diurnal or nocturnal bird of prey, from June 1st legally you can't sell it, move it in Europe or display or receive financial gain without the new certificate, but that for a while the old general exemption licences will apply for some sales.

If like many of us you don't really understand how this is going to affect you and your birds - the DOE have a help line - ring it. Or better still, write to them because you will then have the answer in writing.

Don't all panic though, it would be very unlikely that anyone is going to be taken to court for contravening these new requirements, either by accident or lack of understanding, in the next seven months while it is all made a realistic and manageable requirement for us all.

I hope I have this all correct, I think I have. There are many areas I have not touched, but your best move is to ask the DOE if you are worried.

Best wishes to all of us people who have the misfortune to like birds of prey!

Jemima Parry-Jones

Vice Chair - The Hawk Board.

Chair - the UK and European Taxon Advisory Group for Zoos.

Director The National Birds of Prey Centre.

## Annex A

### FALCONIFORMES (FALCONS, HAWKS ETC)

Andean Condor	Vultur Gryphus
Californian Condor	Gymnogyps californianus
Osprey	Pandion haliaetus
Cinereous Vulture	Aegyptius monachus
Egyptian Vulture	Neophron perc-
Eurasian Griffon	Gyps fulvus
Lammergeier	Gypaetus barbatus

### Eagles

Adalbert's Eagle	Aquila adalberti
Bonnelli's Eagle	Hieraaetus fasciatus
Booted Eagle	Hieraaetus pennatus
Golden Eagle	Aquila chrysaetos
Greater-Spotted Eagle	Aquila clanga
Harpy Eagle	Harpia harpyja
Imperial Eagle	Aquila heliaca
Lesser-Spotted Eagle	Aquila pomarina
Madagascar Serpent Eagle	Eutriorchis astur
Philippine Eagle	Pithecophaga jefferyi
Sea Eagles	Haliaeetus (all species)
Short-toed Snake Eagle	Circusetus gallicus

### Kites

Black Kite	Milvus migrans
Black-winged Kite	Elanus caeruleus
Cuban hooked-billed Kite	Chondrohierax unicolor
Red Kite	Milvus milvus

### Harriers

Montagu's Harrier	Circus pygargus
Northern Harrier	Circus cyaneus
Pallid Harrier	Circus macrourus
Western Marsh Harrier	Circus aeruginosus

### Hawks & Buzzards

Eurasian Sparrowhawk	Accipiter nisus
Goshawk	Accipiter gentilis
Grey-back Hawk	Leucopternis occidentalis
Levant Sparrowhawk	Accipiter brevipes
Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo
European Honey Buzzard	Pernis apivornis
Long-legged Buzzard	Buteo rufinus
Rough-legged Buzzard	Buteo lagopus

### Falcons

Barbary Falcon	Falco pelegrinoides
Common Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus
Eleonora's Falcon	Falco eleonora
Eurasian Hobby	Falco subbuteo
Gyr Falcon	Falco rusticolus
Lagger Falcon	Falco jugger
Lanner Falcon	Falco biarmicus
Lesser Kestrel	Falco naumanni
Mauritius Kestrel	Falco punctatus
Merlin	Falco columbarius
Newtons Kestrel	Falco newtoni
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus
Red-footed Falcon	Falco vespertinus
Saker Falcon	Falco cherrug
Seychelles Kestrel	Falco area

### STRIGIFORMES

Barn Owl	Tyto alba
Boreal Owl	Aegolius funereus
Christmas Hawk Owl	Ninox squamipila
natalis	
Eurasian Eagle Owl	Bubo bubo
Eurasian Pygmy Owl	Glaucopteryx passerinoides
inim	
Eurasian Scops Owl	Otus scops
Forest Owllet	Athene blewitti
Great Grey Owl	Strix nebulosa
Lesser Eagle Owl	Mimozukua gurneyi
Little Owl	Athene noctua
Long-eared Owl	Asio otus
Norfolk Boobook	Ninox novaeseelandiae
ae undulata	
Northern Hawk Owl	Surnia ulula
Short Eared Owl	Asio flammeus
Snowy Owl	Nyctea scandiaca
Sokokes Scops Owl	Otus ireneae
Soumagne's Owl	Tyto soumagnei
Tawny Owl	Strix aluco
Ural Owl	Strix uralensis

**For a complete copy of all the regulations please send name, address and & £2.50 to our usual address.**

# SOMETHING OF VALUE

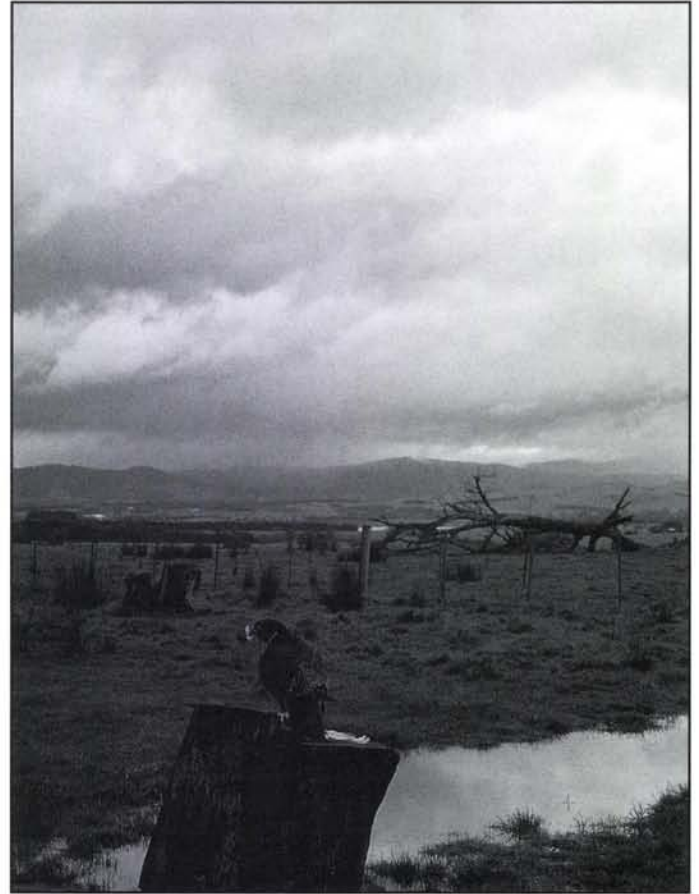
Richard Naisbitt

I often wonder what makes a falconer.... and what drives or feeds the passion and I wonder why do people rehabilitate raptors...why do I do it? Why do I spend long hours running around dusty, fly-infested paddocks trying to locate a released falcon, or why do I spend hours crashing through chest high bracken trying to find a released goshawk and then once I find the bird - go crashing back through it again, cursing all the way.

I can see the funny side of it...sometimes...like when I had spent three hours squelching through the mud and soggy undergrowth to locate a released goshawk...it was cold and my hands were white around the knuckles...I gripped the receiver with both hands and tried to shut out the constant drip of rain on my headphones. I looked down and I saw a patch of blood around my groin, the blood was spreading, I could feel it dripping down my

thigh. After a floundering struggle with my belt, two way radio and everything else, I managed to remove my trousers...it was cold and the leeches that hung onto my scrotum had obviously felt it too, hence them hanging onto a warm part of my body...I don't know what I thought at the time but it was a relief to see that the leeches were the source of the problem...the sudden realisation that I could now be emasculated by a hungry Goshawk sped up my actions and I pulled my trousers back on...why do I do it?

Things always go wrong when it's cold or when it's raining or when you would rather stay inside or when you have had enough of hawks for a lifetime...On one very cold wet day during the 1996 winter I spent much of my day off trying to locate one of our released peregrines...I found the bird eventually, perched on a wooden rail just above a



Winter 1996



Arusha - female Peregrine - to be released

small dam. She looked peevish, upset, disappointed and then in the middle of the dam there was a duck, mortally wounded, struggling to stay afloat....“Damn”, I put the receiver down, took my jacket off, took my boots off and my socks and my trousers and waded in ( I had figured the dam to be waist deep, how wrong I was) I ended up neck deep in freezing water but with the dead duck gripped in my frozen hands, I waded ashore and hurled the sodden duck at the falcon who promptly took it and began to feed. I don't think she actually appreciated the effort (the falcon that is).

I can think back and chuckle but I also have scars...I have one on my leg, gained after trying to leap a barbed-wire fence many years ago, in Zimbabwe, trying to save my Gabar Goshawk, who after binding

to a Swainsons Francolin, was getting thrashed. I have been questioned by the police, who have seen me on the side of a country road swinging a leather pad around in circles, whistling...decided to check the sanity of the person doing the swinging and on asking me what I was doing I replied “Calling my falcon” and pointed up into the hazy blue sky...the falcon was there - somewhere.

I begin to worry when I dream about falcons, hawks and raptors in general. When I call out their names in the middle of the night “Jane...where are you Jane”, a swift kick in the ribs from my partner normally puts an end to it but still there is insanity in it, there is total fanaticism and yet, there is something of value in flying a falcon...

**BRIEF REPLY?**

Dear Lyn & David,

May I briefly reply to some of the points raised by your readers:

First of all, to duck some of the coconuts lobbed at me by Steve Williams about hybrids! In my experience, the superiority of the gyr x peregrine and gyr x saker at hunting houbara compared to sakers or peregrines is incontestable. Speaking as a breeder, it is obviously much easier and more straightforward for me to produce purebred rather than hybrid falcons, and indeed one of the aims of our programme is to captive breed new strong bloodlines of pure saker. But Arab falconers are fully aware of the superiority of hybrid falcons - after all, the Altai falcon is essentially a wild form of hybrid - and this is what they demand. It would take a very good second-hand car salesman to persuade them to take an average captive bred British saker or peregrine rather than a hybrid. I breed what the falconers want and I don't breed and try to sell birds which they do not want. Of course I could be mischievous and discuss the pointing abilities of pure bred wolves in comparison with modern pointers.....

On the question of hybridisation with a wild population - as distinct from the use of hybrids - we have formed an International Hybrid Committee. This is a group of experts from among the falconry community in North America and Europe, who specialise in various aspects relating to the introduction of alien species or subspecies to the wild. The discussion is carried out through e-mail networking. By this autumn we hope to have produced a document analysing the facts and figures on hybridisation; an assessment of the different risks and the different solutions which could be used to tackle any problems which might arise. Once completed this document will be submitted to NAFA and the IAF to help national clubs form their own policies on these issues. I am European chair-

man of this panel and would welcome any serious informative input on this issue. For example, one of the dangers in Britain is the loss of Redtails and their subsequent breeding with wild common buzzards. We are also looking for data on survival rates for lost falconry birds and on instances in which lost, purebred falconry birds are found breeding in the wild with their own species.

Turning now to Brian Smith's letter on high-jumping hawks: Brian asks if we have found that high-jumping teaches hawks to land on the ground whilst out hunting in the belief that food may be forthcoming. We have never found this to be a problem. High-jumping is carried out indoors in artificial circumstances. When out in the hunting field, hawks that are high-jumped are normally looking outwards for quarry. The deflated basketball described in Understanding Birds of Prey is an invention of Steve Layman. In this country we usually use astro-turf and foam on a couple of concrete blocks. The nearest I have come to the scenario Brian envisaged was in New Zealand twenty years ago. Some New Zealand Falcons nested on a bluff above one of the sheep station homesteads. In the autumn one of the juvenile females often came down to try to catch the football when the boys were having a kick around in the paddock!

One of the main problems I have found with high-jumping is trainer boredom! High-jumping is not good for my mental health. I manage to get round this problem by delegating it to other people. This is a solution which seems to work well for all concerned! We have also looked at partially mechanising high-jumps, which we have achieved successfully. This allows the routine to be used on untrained birds, for example in the course of rehabilitation. But we haven't taken this further at present because in our circumstances we don't need to.

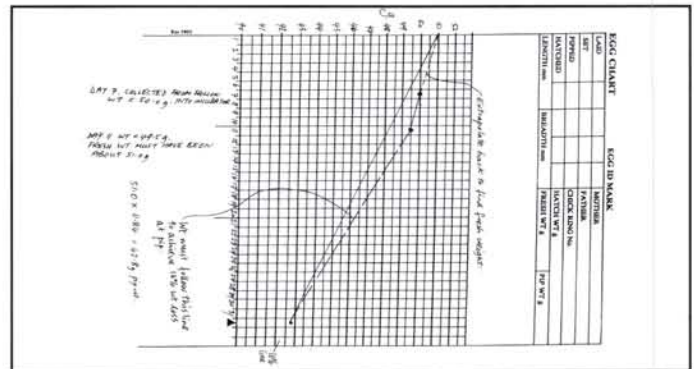
Finally, turning to David Le Mesurier's article on eggs

weight loss: we use a fourth method for determining the fresh weight of an egg. When we take a partially incubated egg away from the mother falcon after, say, seven days incubation, first of all we weigh and measure it, and mark the weight (in this case 50.0g) onto a graph against day 7. (see diagram). We don't attempt to draw a line at this stage. Then we incubate the egg for a further four days under for a bantam or incubator, as the case may be,

we run the incubators dry. We have a dehumidifier running in the incubation room and we take our action according to the weight loss of each individual egg.

If all of this is too much for you, you would be better off not trying to breed but just buy one of my lovely hybrids. I've got a beautiful little runner here, only one careful lady owner, a snip at the price....

Best wishes  
Nick Fox.



weigh the egg again, and make a second dot on the graph (49.5g). Then we join these two dots, drawing the line back to day one. Having extrapolated the line backwards to day one we then have fresh egg weight - because under most circumstances individual eggs tend to lose weight at a steady rate characteristic to that individual egg. Once we have our fresh egg weight (51.0g) worked out we then draw in our 16% egg weight line. The pip weight should be 84% (ie 0.84) of the fresh egg weight (51.0). We can see from our second dot whether the egg is above or below this line and we can see whether it is too heavy or too light. We then draw in a line from the second dot to the pip date, and then for the rest of incubation we attempt to keep the egg weight loss along this line.

We find this method more accurate than the Kw or egg coefficient method, because K varies from egg to egg quite markedly. It is also more accurate than the regression method, because, as David mentions, eggs do not always lose weight at 16% during the first week. We do not normally measure relative humidity - instead

**FIRST CLASS SHOW**

Dear Editor,

In response to your article on the Raptor Rescue Show on the 11th May, I went along to see something which the group was apparently putting on itself, in addition to its attendance at many country fairs.

It put on a first class, and extraordinary value for money, show, at Hertford Castle and it was good to see the event strongly supported by the The British Hawking Association, The International Owl Society, The South East Falconry Group, The Bedfordshire Falconry Group and a whole host of other individuals and enthusiasts.

Ray and Wendy Alikier of Ye Olde Redtail Falconry Display Team provided two first-class performances, as did the Terrier Road Show; and not forgetting the 'Cameo' slot by S E Falconry.

Well done to them all - especially Mick and Rosemary Robins of Raptor Rescue; a truly enjoyable, entertaining and educational day.

When is the next one?

Sincerely  
T R Cobb.



**SIGNIFICANCE OF FALCONRY**

Dear Lyn & David,

I can't tell you how pleased I was to see Alan Gates' article on The Peregrine Fund's World Centre for Birds of Prey in your Summer issue. As a longtime associate of the fund and Center, it is encouraging that word of our efforts is spreading to the raptor community in the UK. In his excellent efforts describing The Peregrine Fund's successes in the area of raptor conservation, Alan failed to emphasise the very significant role of falconry in those successes. Certainly I am not faulting my friend Alan in this regard; he knows us well enough that he probably took the association of falconry and The World Center for granted. Given the trials of falconry in your country these days that relationship may be of more than academic interest to your readers.

First and foremost, Tom Cade who conceived the idea of saving our Peregrines by release of captive-propagated young--and all three of his Peregrine Fund co-founders (Bob Berry, Frank Bond and Jim Weaver)-- are lifelong, dedicated falconers. They all developed their love of and concern for, the peregrine from their initial association with the species as trained birds. Top those falconers, as to the entire American falconry community, the concept of the peregrines extinction in the wild (even if we could breed our falconry needs in captivity) was simply an unacceptable option.

Their devotion and dedication to the species, as falconers, was what made the difference. Their insight as falconers and their use of falconry techniques, both in maintenance and eventually in reintroduction, enabled them to succeed. And it was a stock of peregrines donated by American falconers which provided the nucleus for their captive propagation efforts. For many years their co-workers were drawn almost entirely from the falconry community. Long before any government funding, falconers financed those early breeding and reintroduction efforts. At one point, although only 10%

of The Peregrine Funds major financial contributors were associated with the falconry community, they provided over a third of the funding.

Not only have falconers' efforts significantly served raptor conservation, but The Fund's same conservation successes which Alan described have provided the falconry community with a great deal of credibility - credibility which has paid off generously in times of adversity for the sport. They have required many of our former detractors to view us as more than just "users" of the raptor resource.

With all this association between The Peregrine Fund and our sport it was natural that The Fund founded the Archives of American Falconry in 1986. Dedicated to the collection and conservation of falconry-related materials in order to preserve the history of the sport, its ethical practice, traditional values and social significance in The Americas. This archive is the subject of a future article Alan Gates proposes to write for the magazine. I look forward to the opportunity for your raptor community to become as acquainted with our archives as it now has become with The Peregrine Fund as a whole!

Keep up the good work.

Kent Carnie  
Curator  
Archives of American  
Falconry.

**TRACKING GOOD SERVICE**

Dear Lyn and David,

I feel I must write and tell everyone about the brilliant service we have had from Martin Jones and Jim Chick.

I am a display falconer working from Poynton, Nr Stockport, Ches., where we have a bird of prey centre, we fly everything from peregrines to American Kestrels, obviously using telemetry.

About a year ago I purchased a telemetry set from Martin Jones and I've used it every day for the past 10 months, and everything went well.

One Wednesday afternoon as usual I put the batteries in my Stage 2 transmitter (the

one used for falcons) and nothing happened. I changed the batteries, still nothing. I concluded a faulty transmitter. It was then that I remembered I had been booked for a flying display at Lymm Festival on the following Saturday. We got in touch with Martin Jones who said to post it to Mr Jim Chick for repair.

I sent it first class at 4pm on Wednesday with a letter highlighting the fact that I could do with it for Saturday, it's worth asking I thought. Jim telephoned me on Thursday afternoon to say that he had received it and how much it would cost. I then telephoned Martin with my credit card details to make the payment.

Friday morning 9am, my repaired transmitter was back with me! This must be a record. I can't thank them both enough, without the transmitter I would have cancelled the display as, although I have never needed to track any of my display birds down, I feel that I owe it to my birds to use telemetry for their sake and well-being.

Thanks again

Yours sincerely  
Roger Birchall

P.S. I wonder how long it would have taken with some of the 'non-British makes?'

**LOST.....**

Dear Editors

Despite the fact that wild birds of prey are Raptor Rescue's primary concern, it is inevitable that domestic bred birds will also be taken into care by our rehabilitators.

When first introduced, one requirement of the Wildlife and Countryside Act was that all diurnal birds of prey which were kept in captivity had to be registered with the Department of the Environment (D.O.E.). Any domestic bred bird taken into care at that time could usually be reunited with its owner by enlisting the help of the D.O.E.

A simple phonecall quoting the bird's ring number enabled the owner to be

traced and contacted by the Department.

Changes to this original registration scheme came into effect on May 24th 1994, when the Kestrel, the Common Buzzard and the Sparrowhawk, along with most of the non-native bird of prey species, were removed from the Schedule 4 list and no longer needed to be registered.

It can be seen from our annual surveys that this group of birds were those most likely to be taken into care by rehabilitators - making up 95% of all the lost or escaped diurnal species handled.

These changes to the law made it difficult to reunite the birds concerned with their rightful owners.

In October 1994 Raptor Rescue decided to establish a register of the lost birds which came into the care of any of our members. Paul Beecroft provided his services to co-ordinate the scheme and Lyn Wilson kindly offered to publish the relevant information in the *Falconers* magazine. This soon became known as the "Raptor Rescue Lost & Found Register".

If this venture became successful it would permit valuable aviary space to be made available for wild casualties and would also save on food bills. The Raptor Rescue Committee therefore accepted the financing of this Register to be a justified expenditure.

Since its inauguration the scheme has reunited many lost birds with their owners and credit for this success must go to Paul and Lynn Beecroft and also to the *Falconers* magazine. However, it has now developed into a far larger project than was at first envisaged.

Following discussions with Paul, it was agreed that the Register had now changed direction and was being used almost entirely by falconers who had lost their birds. With the benefit of hindsight this natural progression was inevitable - the Register now provided a completely different service than had originally been intended.

Raptor Rescue wel-

comes any scheme which attempts to reunite falconers with their lost birds, but concerns as to whether or not the Charity could still justify the financing of this Register in its present format led to a recent review of the situation by the Trustees. Following a lengthy debate, the unanimous decision was reached that financial support from our central funds could no longer be justified and would therefore cease as from May 31st 1997.

Now that the foundations have been firmly laid, Paul Beecroft intends to continue running the register independently. The Charity wishes him well with the venture and for the future.

J M Cunningham  
Raptor Rescue Trustees  
Committee. April '97

**...AND FOUND**

Dear Mrs Wilson

I would like to respond to the above article. The Chairman of Raptor Rescue has been extremely tactful in the wording of his letter when explaining that financial support for the Lost/Found Register could no longer be justified. I myself will not be as tactful. Raptor Rescue is a charity dedicated to caring for sick and injured wild birds of prey. The donations received from the public must be used for rehabilitation and care of wild birds and not used to run a free service to falconers who have lost their birds. Tracing the owner of a found bird is not only sometimes time consuming, it can also work out very costly, especially with numerous phone calls all over the country to find the current owner of a bird. During the time the scheme was running approximately 500 reports were received in respect of lost and found birds. Over 150 birds were returned to their rightful owners because of Raptor Rescue. When speaking with the respective owners, most were obviously overjoyed and delighted to hear that not only was their bird safe and well, that it was also in the care of a keeper and was waiting for them to collect it. A request was then always made for a

small donation to be made to Raptor Rescue for this service. It was felt that £5.00 would not be too much to ask to reuniting a bird worth up to £1,000, with a rightful owner. Well - surprise, surprise, it was too much to ask. It is fair to say that 95% of all Falconers conveniently 'forgot' to send their promised donation. Some Falconers have lost their bird more than once. Some Falconers have forgotten their donation more than once.

There is much I would like to say about these people but it is probably best left. The people concerned know who they are, and so do I.

Following this parting with Raptor Rescue, my wife Lyn and I have now formed Raptor Lifeline. The scheme will continue much as before with only slight changes, working with both Phillip & Jenny Wray of the Independent Bird Register.

Raptor Lifeline will also incorporate the Bird of Prey theft Register which, although a separate entity, as from now for convenience sake, all Lost, Found and Stolen Birds of Prey can be reported on one single Tel/Fax 0118 9016990.

Over 150 birds of prey have been recovered and are still waiting to be claimed. If you have lost a bird REPORT IT.

Sincerely  
Paul Beecroft

**GO FORTH AND AFFILIATE**

Dear Editors

By the time you publish this the new regulations covering domestic raptors will have become law. Another piece of legislation in the increasingly nanny state. At the same time the National Trust has banned falconry on its land, in addition to stag hunting.

So what did the rank and file know about this latest cliff-edge? More importantly what can he/she do to prevent it in the future, and what does he/she care?

I think the key is for your readers to realise that the legislation today is written in the assumption that we are now guilty until proven innocent. This means there is no longer any 'purchase in good faith.' No. You the buyer of hawks, must be convinced in your own mind that the vendor is selling you a legitimately bred hawk. How you do this is up to you,

but in extremis this could mean having to DNA test both parents.

Don't blame the poor old DoE for this. They are only the interpreters of the EU legislation and are probably as unhappy with the legislation as you will be; especially the short time they had in which to apply it.

It is a fact that such legislation will not go away. More and more will originate in CITES, filter down through EU, Brussels as law, which the DOE will then have to implement. So the point of action is now CITES, and in 1997 this means lobbying at the bi-annual conference in Zimbabwe. So who pays? Not the DOE. Not the individual falconer, unaffiliated to a Hawk Board club, although selfishly, he benefits. No, the affiliated clubs pay through their Hawk Board levy and that is barely enough; so the International Association For Falconry coughs up a bit and then the British Falconers Club digs deep for the rest.

Now, if I am typical of the falconers in the UK, I must ask what is my sport worth? I make no secret that it is my life - challenges to it are a body blow. I am no hobby falconer, who does it and then moves on to some other macho, image developing recreation. I will fight like hell to keep it. If I cannot find the time or do not have the knowledge to lobby with the legislators in Africa, Brussels or Bristol, then I must fund the few who can. Every falconer who reads this magazine can afford £1 per week in support of the Hawk Board fighting fund. After all, what is he prepared to pay for a hawk, dog or equipment? What does he spend on his sport every year?

If every falconer in the country puts his hand in his pocket to this level, they will save their sport. Otherwise, the next time the crunch comes, forget it. The sport they know will be lost forever and they will only have themselves to blame. Forget all that rubbish about value for money, about snobbishness, about petty rivalries. At least join an affiliated club - there are heaps of them in this magazine - and do something to save the thing you claim to love!

Yours sincerely  
Nicholas Kester.

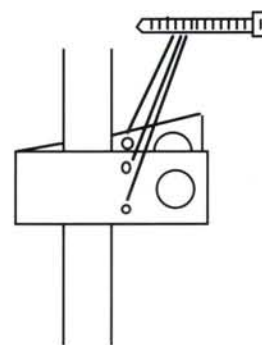
**QUICK RELEASE ANKLETS FOR FILM AND PHOTOGRAPHIC USE**

I thought your readers might be interested in this idea for fitting aylmeri that I saw Andre Groenwald using in Zimbabwe.

He was flying Lundi, the Crowned Eagle for the David Attenborough programme 'Eagles of the World'. Andre needed to remove the jesses and aylmeri each time he flew Lundi and found it a nuisance to keep refitting the aylmeri. You try casting an 8lb Crowned Eagle!

Anyway, Andre came up with the following idea. Fit rivets to both sides of the aylmeri. Next punch four holes in the aylmeri. Place the aylmeri around the leg, then use a cable tie to fix the aylmeri on. (See diagram) So quick & simple. These may be a disadvantage, but none has arisen as yet.

Sincerely  
Adrian Williams.



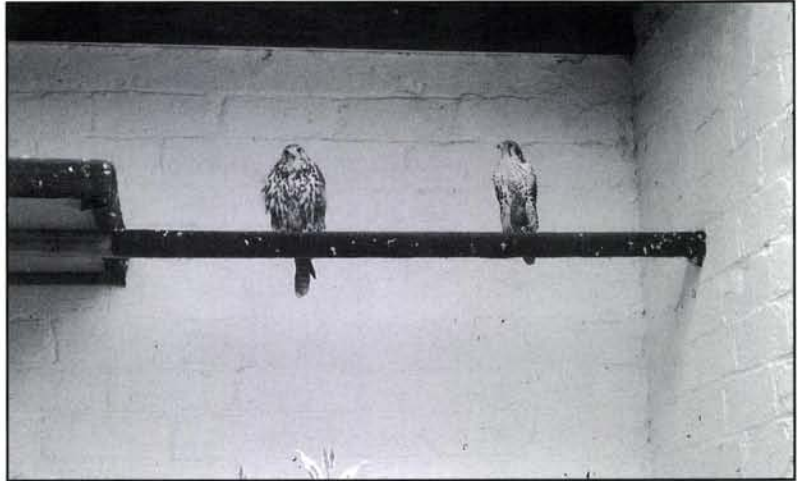
If you wish to send something for our letters page please send it to The Falconers Magazine, 20 Bridle Road, Burton Latimer, Kettering Northants NN15 5QP. Letters for the next issue should be in no later than 30th September.

# WOVOKA & CHEYENNE, AN UNFORSEEN MARRIAGE.

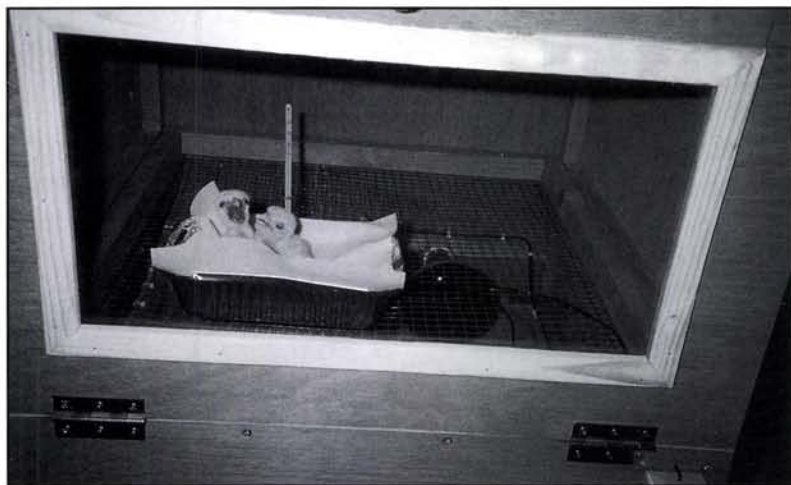
Hans Dhooge

Two years ago I decided to buy myself a male prairie falcon Wovoka, and a female Saker Cheyenne. The saker was meant for hunting crows and I wanted to pair the prairie up with a female the next season for breeding. After the sakers first season I put her in the aviary with the prairie for their first moult. Everything went well except for one thing. After the Saker had eaten a full crop, she always tried to steal food from the prairie, but she didn't often succeed in doing so. I made sure there was plenty of food available so the prairie would certainly have enough to eat. Both birds moulted well without further incidents. In August 1996 I removed the female saker from the aviary and started to train her for the forthcoming hunting season. After a suc-

cessful second season I put her back in the aviary with the male prairie because there was still no female prairie falcon available. We must be at the end of February by now. In that same week the saker started calling to the prairie and he responded immediately, bringing her food. About 8 days after first seeing this behaviour, copulation could be observed several times a day. On the first of April she laid the first egg. A second egg was laid in the third and a third on the sixth of April. I let the female incubate the eggs for about seven days and on the thirteenth of April I removed them for can-



Wovoka (Prairie - Male), Cheyenne (Saker - Female)



Young Hybrids in brooder

dling. All three of them were fertile. I decided to put the eggs into an incubator and all three of them hatched. After hand feeding them for 12 days the youngsters were ringed and put back with the parent birds. All went quite well. After about 15 minutes she started to brood them and soon after that both parents began feeding the three downies. I was delighted to see that everything went so well.

At the time of writing the youngsters are about three weeks old and, as

far as I can see, I think there are two females and one male. I can't yet tell what they will look like, but I know they have a large head. About colour and footsize I can't tell anything yet. I also wonder what they will be like for hunting? Will they have the temperament of the prairie or the easy going nature of Cheyenne? What type of hunting will suit them the best? Waiting-on or flying out of the hood at crows? All these questions will find an answer after I have trained and hunted one of these creatures. Let us hope for the best and I will let you know more about these prairie x saker hybrids after this years hunting season. One thing is sure; these two birds will stay together in the aviary for breeding. So I will have to look for a new pair of prairies.

3 Haughton Mill Cottages Haughton  
Nr Retford, Notts DN22 8DY

**FALCONRY ORIGINALS**

KNOWN THE WORLD OVER FOR  
**QUALITY, WORKMANSHIP,  
FIT & SERVICE.**

DON'T BE FOOLED BY INFERIOR COPIES

ASK FOR

**THE ORIGINAL.**

FOR MORE DETAILS ON HOW TO ACQUIRE  
THE ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT PHONE IAN ON:

01623 836071 or  
Mobile 0589 193779



UNLIMITED SUPPLY OF SALMONELLA FREE

**DAY OLD CHICKS**  
**£25 per Thousand**

- \* INDIVIDUALLY BLAST FROZEN \*
- \* NEXT WORKING DAY DELIVERY \*
- \* HUGE DISCOUNTS ON BULK ORDERS \*
- \* FULL REFRIGERATION CONTAINERS \*

AVAILABLE TO TRADE

**01709 377733 (4 lines)**

**THE DAY OLD CHICK COMPANY**

# PAGAN WARRIOR



Where do I start? Well I suppose the beginning is as good a place as any. I had, the previous summer, placed an order for one Female Finnish Goshawk, and had to wait almost twelve months for the big day to arrive. I had no idea how slowly time passes, each and every day I told myself I was a day closer.

The big day finally arrived, I was to collect my Goshawk, which I had already decided to call Pagan. When I first saw her she looked perfect, as if she was her creators pride and joy, so sleek, built for speed and power. A complete killing machine! Once we were home I left her on a bow perch to settle in for a few days, feeding her at will.

This was probably the hardest time for me because I could see her in the mews but could not do anything. The day arrived when I picked her up for the first time.

Now I had heard from most falconers (that have never flown Goshawks) that she would take days and days of constant manning, would be easily lost in the field and not really worth the effort. Well, how wrong people can be. She was feeding on the fist on the second day of manning and training went like clockwork. When I started flying her to the fist on the creance my breath was taken away. The speed that she flew at was tremendous. She has two gears, stop and flat out. The first time I flew her free she missed her first rabbit but went on to catch a hen pheasant.

The timing of her training was per-

fect, two weeks after her first free flight we were due to go up to Scotland, with my flying partner and his Redtail, we would also meet up with our Scottish partner and his Harris Hawk.

The time came for the long journey from Berkshire to the highlands of Scotland, this year was the seventh year running. It was the biggest test of all my years hunting. I was going to fly a bird with one of the biggest reputations for being moody and unreliable. After we arrived I settled Pagan in by taking her for a walk which seemed to do the trick. The following day for me was judgment day.

The field was set, her weight was right, and all the equipment I needed for the outing ready. We were going to fly over ferrets in a field that was full of warrens, with hundreds of rabbits at home. I took up my position fairly close to the warren, to give her the best chance for her first rabbit. The ferrets were put down and in no time at all three rabbits came hurtling out and running in opposite directions. Pagan suddenly gripped my glove

like a vice, her head bobbing looking intensely at her intended victims. She didn't slip herself at any of the three that had just bolted. I was surprised, but not at all worried. There would be plenty more. Within minutes, two more rabbits bolted out of the same warren, this time she did slip herself and was off like a bolt of lightning, hitting a rabbit after 20 metres, however the rabbit was caught by the back end and struggled free in seconds. This did not really matter because Pagan was off the ground and back in attack mode. This time she really meant business, hitting the rabbit with so much force it caused them both to rise a few feet in the air, only to come down to earth several somersaults later.

The two weeks we were there she went from strength to strength, to the point where I would have to stand 15-20 metres away from the warrens to give the rabbit a sporting chance. Some of her best slips ended empty which really didn't matter to me. She was getting fitter by the slip and gained more experience by the day. It amazed me and my hunting party how well adapted she is to all types of terrain. In particular the best for me was hunting in



wooded areas. This is where she excels herself, and I don't think that she has any competition from any other species. Her speed and manoeuvrability is second to none.

I am sure that those of you who fly Goshawks know that they are so determined that once they have homed in on their quarry the only things that get in their way are walls, fences, gates etc. On this occasion it was a dry stone wall, she was in second gear pursuing a rabbit when it decided to jump through a small gap in the wall, to safety. Pagan, of course, thought she could also get through the gap. Wrong! She came to a sudden halt with a loud thud! Thank God she was alright, standing at the foot of the wall looking extremely annoyed with herself. I checked her out until I was satisfied that there was no damage, then called it a day.

The following morning I noticed she had a slight swelling on her middle left digit. I made sure the area was clean and kept a good eye on it. At the end of the following day I noticed the swelling getting slightly worse, so rather than risk anything I decided to rest her for the remaining few days.

Once home I took her to the vets, he put her on antibiotics. She had two courses which really didn't seem to



have much effect. It was then decided to make a small incision in her toe to extract the cottage cheese like pus that was causing the problem. After a complete rest period she was fully recovered.

All the things I have seen written about Goshawks, I think, refer to ones that used to be flown, wild caught,

passage and haggard birds. This certainly does not apply to my Gos, she is gentle, obedient and a pleasure to work with. As long as you give the time and patience that one of these magnificent creatures need.

I am sure that we will have many seasons of excellent sport together.

## Chris Coleman

### HAWKSWOOP LIMITED

#### DAY OLD COCKERELS

FRESH OR FROZEN INDIVIDUALLY

**PRICE FRESH £17.00 per 1000  
COLLECTED**

*For further enquiries please freephone:  
01800 833038*

### PETER MULHOLLAND

THE WIDEST CHOICE IN  
FALCONRY FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT  
KANGAROO HIDE - ASTROTURF -  
BOOKS (BOUGHT & SOLD) - VIDEOS - FOOD -  
TUITION - HAWKING DAYS - RINGS -  
REGISTRATION - IDENTICIPPING.

EXCLUSIVE VIDEO ON HOOD MAKING  
PLUS HOOD BLOCKS AND PATTERNS, TOOLS  
AND ALL HOOD MAKING SUPPLIES

**BOOK "THE REDTAIL" BY LIAM MCGRANAGHAN**  
(Training & management manual) - £17.50.

LUKSANDER TELEMETRY, INCLUDING THE NEW  
MN-3 RECEIVER - TELEMETRY OUTFITS FROM  
£450

KITES & ACCESSORIES NOW IN STOCK

AMERICAN EQUIPMENT FROM  
NORTHWOODS LTD

**PETER MULHOLLAND**  
BECKSIDE COTTAGE, MOORTOWN, MARKET  
RASEN Lincs LN7 6JA ENGLAND

TEL: 01652 678492

CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS ACCEPTED

CALLERS WELCOME -  
PLEASE PHONE FIRST



### NORTHUMBRIA BIRD OF PREY CENTRE

SEE ONE OF THE LARGEST  
COLLECTIONS IN THE NORTH, INCLUDING,  
GOLDEN, AFRICAN, FISH, BALD AND  
WHITE TAILED SEA EAGLES.

**FALCONRY COURSES FALCONRY FURNITURE**

APPROVED BY THE BRITISH

FALCONERS CLUB.

RESIDENTIAL AND

NON-RESIDENTIAL AVAILABLE

**LUKSANDER**

**TELEMETRY**

AND HAWK FOOD

ALWAYS FOR SALE

Tel: 0191 2366647/0374 636902

## CLASSIFIEDS

### FURNITURE

**RAY PRIOR**  
**FALCONRY EQUIPMENT**  
 A full range of Top Quality Falconry Equipment at affordable prices. Send S.A.E. for '97 price list to:  
 4 Hackney Bottom, Hampstead Norreys, Thatcham, Berks RG18 OTU Tel: 01635 200545

FINE QUALITY HAWKING BAGS AND GLOVES  
 GUNDOG TRAINING EQUIPMENT. Please send s.a.e for Colour Brochure THE SPREAD, SUTTON CROSSES LONG SUTTON, SPALDING, LINCS PE12 9AU Telephone. 01406 364487

**MARTIN JONES**  
**FALCONRY FURNITURE**  
 Full Range of Equipment Available  
 For Colour Catalogue Please Ring 01600 750300 or Write to: The Parsonage, Llanrothal, Monmouth, Monmouthshire NP5 3QJ

**HAND CRAFTED FALCONRY FURNITURE BY IAN VANCE**  
 Renowned for quality workmanship and practicality, all at an affordable price. SAE please for catalogue 80 Ramsey Drive, Arnold, Nottingham. NG5 6QQ (0115) 9203682.

### VETERINARY SERVICES

**NEIL FORBES**  
 FRCVS CONSULTANT  
 Wildlife & Zoo medicine (avian) and Richard Jones  
 CLOCK HOUSE  
 VETERINARY HOSPITAL  
 STROUD GLOS  
 TEL: 01453 752555  
 Full specialist facilities available

The Finest Falconry Equipment available manufactured by master craftsmen with over 25 years expertise. Extensive range with most items in stock



Kangaroo hides  
 Nylon Kites and accessories  
 Falconry tuition and Hawking Days  
 Barbour Clothing and Footwear  
 Sally Mitchell fine Art prints  
 S.A.E. Min size B5 please to: Julian Stevens,  
 Swallowtail Cottage Luton Road Polebrook  
 Peterborough PE8 5LY  
 Tel/Fax 01832 274937

### TAXIDERMISTRY



D.O.E. Licenced  
**Taxidermist**  
 Requires All Legitimate Carcasses  
 R. Marshall  
 01782 281726  
 (commissions undertaken)

D.of.E. Registered Taxidermist requires all legitimate Birds of Prey  
 Best prices paid.  
 tel:01263 822481/01860 219157  
 Fax: 01263 821587  
 For Further Details

### BIRDS

1997 Parent reared. P.U. Superior Harris Hawks & Redtails. Also genuine pair of breeding Harris Hawks & Redtails.  
 Tel 01946 725002

**1997 REDTAILS FOR SALE**  
**TOTALLY PARENT REARED**  
**TEL: 01963 351235**



ORDERS NOW BEING TAKEN FOR PARENT REARED HARRIS HAWKS,  
**PHONE 01708 222333**

**FOR SALE**  
**1997 COMMON BUZZARD**  
**TOTALLY PARENT REARED**  
**TEL: 01536 722794**

### FOOD

**FRED TAMS**  
 Suppliers of Fresh or Individual Frozen Chicks, Rats, Mice, Rabbits, Guinea Pigs, Rat Pups, Mice Pinkies & Quail.  
 Phone: (01782) 550403  
 Barn Farm, Cheadle Rd, Wetley Rocks, Stoke on Trent

### INSURANCE

#### EXOTIC DIRECT

Insurance for Birds, Reptiles, Mammals.  
 Insurance for either individual Birds of Prey or Centres & Clubs. All levels of cover available including Public and General Liability.  
**Please call Paula for further information on: 01444 482946**  
 Exotic Direct, CLock Tower House, Lewes Road, Lindfield, W Sussex. RH16 2LQ

#### BIRD INSURANCE

(UK and Overseas)  
 For your FREE information pack  
 Call:  
 01981 240536 anytime  
**GOLDEN VALLEY FINANCE & INSURANCE**  
 Ewyas Harold, Herefordshire HR2 OES

## Clarence Court Limited

### QUAIL

For large regular supplies of best quality stock from leading quail breeder.

Please contact: 01242 621228



01242 620145 Fax  
 P.O. Box 2  
 Winchcombe Glos  
 GL54 5YA

**COCH-Y-BONDDU BOOKS** Tel: 01654 702837  
 Machynlleth, Powys SY20 8DJ. Fax: 01654 702857

**REMINISCENCES OF A FALCONER.** Major Fisher. New Edition, limited to 1000 copies. A handsome reprint of a very scarce book. £30.00  
**FALCONRY REFLECTIONS.** Bob Dalton. Hbk. £17.95  
**BUTEOS & BUSHYTAILS.** Gary Brewer. Hbk.. £35.00  
**NORTH AMERICAN FALCONRY & HUNTING HAWKS.** Frank Beebe & Hal Webster. Hbk. £55.00  
**GAME HAWKING AT ITS VERY BEST.** Hal Webster. Hbk. £55.00  
**THE FALCONERS APPRENTICE.** Bill Oakes. Pbk. £ 9.95  
**AMERICAN KESTRELS IN MODERN FALCONRY.** Mullinex Pbk. £ 7.95  
**DESERT HAWKING.** Harry McElroy. Hbk. New Edition completely rewritten. Handling Coopers' Redtail & Harris Hawks. £55.00  
**THE HUNTING FALCON** Bruce Haak. Hbk. £19.95  
**UNDERSTANDING THE BIRD OF PREY** Dr Nick Fox. Hbk. £37.50

ACCESS/VISA/MASTERCARD/SWITCH. U.K.Postage Extra up to £3.M ax

**THE LARGEST BIRD OF PREY COLLECTION**  
 IN THE SOUTH-EAST  
 ON VIEW TO THE PUBLIC  
**OPEN 11.00 - 5.00**  
 DAILY EXCEPT TUESDAYS



Nov 30th - 1st March open Weekends

HANDS ON EXPERIENCE 12.00 - 2.00  
 FLYING DISPLAYS FROM 2.30

★ **WHERE TO FIND US** ON THE MAIN A281  
 HORSHAM TO COWFOLD ROAD, 1 MILE SOUTH  
 OF HORSHAM AT HILLIERS GARDEN CENTRE  
**ENQUIRIES 01403 273458**



# Cotswold Wildlife Park

Burford, Oxford OX18 4JW

Tel: (01993) 823006

Why not come and spend a day in beautiful surroundings and enjoy Bird of Prey Demonstrations by Geoff Dalton on:-

\* August 2nd & 3rd, 9th & 10th, 16th & 17th, 23rd/24th & 25th, 30th & 31st

\* September 7th

**OTHER ATTRACTIONS INCLUDE** a large and varied collection of animals from all over the world, childrens playground • train rides • bar • restaurant & refreshments

**OPEN DAILY FROM 10am**

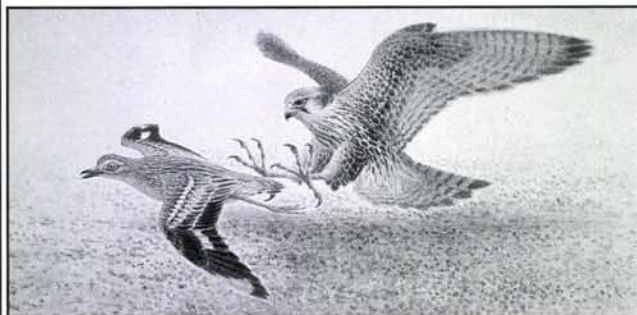
*The park is situated on the A361, two miles south of its junction with the A40*

## PHILIP SNOW BA HONS.

He has been published and has exhibited in many lands and has contributed illustrations to about 50 books. Paintings are in many private, public and some Royal collections and he has exhibited with the ROYAL ACADEMY 'BRITISH ART' exhibition as well as in most of London's top venues, like the MALL and TRYON GALLERIES, SOUTH BANK and BARBICAN, and widely in Wales.

Philip is currently finishing a 16 year project; 'A Hebridean Sketchbook - Birds & Landscapes', done for publication in May 1997, amongst other books

**P. Snow Pensychnant Nature Centre, Sychnant Pass, Conway, Gwynedd. LL32 8BJ Tel 01492 581139**



"Sakerite & Stone Curlew" 12"x10". £20. inc p&p

## SOUTH WALES FROZEN FOOD SUPPLIES

### Raptor Food

Alicia Thompson



Penybont Farm  
171 Waterloo Rd  
Penygroes, Dyfed  
SA14 7PU

Tel: 01269 844610  
Fax: 01269 831593  
Mobile: 0831 221855

CREDIT CARDS WELCOME



All Food Individually Frozen



## THE OWL CENTRE

Situated within the award winning "Baytree Garden Centre"

(On main A151 at Weston Nr Spalding)

One of Britains largest and most varied collections of owls.

**Meet the star of our collection "Grace".**

**And Morticia & Gomez" the Vultures.**

One of Europes' largest under cover flying arenas.

Enjoy the display whatever the weather!

Opening times 9.30 - 5.30 (Sum) & 9.30 - 4 (Wint)

SHOP - RESTAURANT - FREE PARKING

PICNIC AREA - MUSEUM

Tel: 01406 371907

## MOORLAND FALCONRY FURNITURE

**MAKERS OF QUALITY FALCONRY FURNITURE FROM THE BEST MATERIALS, OR TO YOUR OWN DESIGN.**

TEL (01782) 397824 (01782) 536095

Or send an A4 Stamped Addresses Envelope to :  
30, Holdercroft Road, Bucknall,  
Stoke-on Trent. ST2 8LJ

## The Oxfordshire School of Falconry & Raptor Conservation

Our Motto

'The Birds Come First! So learn First!'

1997

School: Introductory Days: Six - Twelve week courses. Your needs fulfilled

Lectures: For Schools, Centres of Further Education & Clubs.

Media: Film, Documentary, Television & Sound recording undertaken.

Entertainment: County Shows to Village Fetes & Corporate visits.

Birds of Prey make the most Pitiable Pets.

Learn to fly them in their world first & respect Falconry!

All enquiries welcome.

Tel. 01844 278951

## International Falconry meet and Sky Trial competition in the North of Spain. December 1997

- ✓ Delivery of the "Cancellor, Pero Lopez de Ayala" reward
- ✓ Competition split into two groups
  - Longwings waiting on
  - Shortwings and Broadwings off the fist
- ✓ First International Falconry fair with falconry equipment, paintings and many International Breeders
- ✓ Seminars on many aspects of falconry all with relevant translators.
- ✓ Falcon Auction

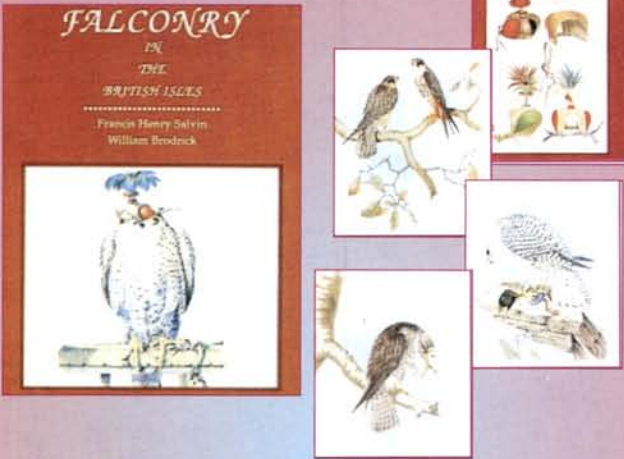
*More than £6,000 in prizes*

For more information see your club president or contact the following address.

Jornadas Internacionales de Cetreria del Norte de España

C/. Calvario, 30 - Tel/Fax 87 - 302089.

24198 Virgen del Camino. León-Spain



**FALCONRY**  
IN  
THE  
BRITISH ISLES  
Francis Henry Salvin  
William Brodrick

**Falconry in The British Isles**  
Salvin & Brodrick  
RRP £30.00  
**SPECIAL OFFER PRICE**  
**£17.00 inc p&p.**

Order a 'Ltd Edition' reprint of this superb, collectors book today!  
24 beautiful colour illustrations.

First published in 1855, it was long regarded as being "the best modern book in English on the art & practice of falconry."

To Order: Send cheque/p.o./card details to  
Falconers Magazine, 20 Bridle Road,  
Burton Latimer, Kettering Northants  
NN15 5QP. Tel: 01536 722794.



**TRACKER**<sup>®</sup>

THE FAMOUS, TRULY COMPACT  
SYSTEM BY FINNTRACKER  
OF FINLAND.

AMAZING  
PERFORMANCE!

COMPLETE SYSTEM  
FROM £594.  
Dog Tracker also available

Exclusive UK distributor:  
KINGSWAY ELECTRONICS  
Gentleshaw Bird of Prey Centre  
Fletcher's Garden Centre, Stone Road,  
Eccleshall Staffs. ST21 6JY  
Tel: 01785 850379 Fax: 01543 676372