

# Basic & Ethical Falconry Manual

Javier Ceballos *et al.*



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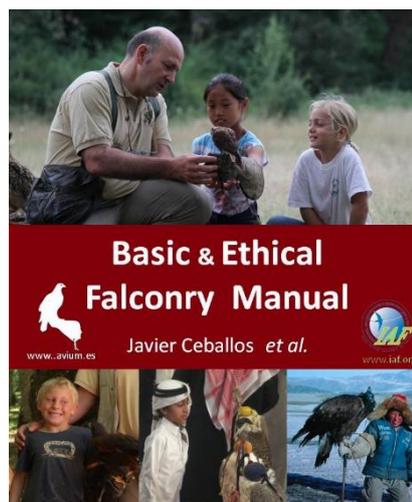
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### FOREWORD BY IAF PRESIDENT

Falconry is currently enjoying a golden age. There are more people flying falcons in more places in the world than ever before. This growth in the popularity of falconry has developed over the past 40 years and is the result of the access to captive-bred raptors and technological advances. The capacity to breed raptors resulted from the need to restore raptor populations, predominantly the Peregrine falcon, which collapsed, due to the ravages of DDT and other pesticides, in the 1950s and 60s. This technology made raptors far more accessible to ordinary people. The breeding of raptors is practiced commercially and as a hobby all over the world. This has allowed many more people the opportunity to practice falconry and experience the incredible thrill of interacting with some of nature's most dramatic predators.

Falconry raptors are living creatures. They have specific requirements if they are to be kept in good health and feather. Falconers need skills to train them and skills to keep them healthy. Falconers also have a duty of care with respect to the creatures which are in their responsibility. Along with these necessary skills, must come an awareness of the ethical responsibility of a breeder to ensure that those whom he supplies can care for the bird provided; that the aspirant falconer ensures that he or she has the necessary skills, equipment time and other facilities; and also established falconers have an ethical duty to ensure that people who use their skills are adequately trained, prepared and equipped. Furthermore, there are ethical concerns relating to the animals which we hunt and which we may use to feed our hawks. Our use of raptors and our hunting must be sustainable. We have a responsibility to ensure that we leave the world in a state where those who follow us may still enjoy the pleasure and excitements of falconry in the future.

We all know that falconry has been recognized as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity. This recognition implies that falconry is an art, treasured by humanity, which must be passed down through generations, from master to apprentice. What is passed down however? What is passed down through generations are the skills and knowledge necessary to keep a hawk in good health, to train it and to hunt it. The ethics of good care, of patience and gentleness and the need to practice sustainably are also passed down. This then is the meaning of intangible heritage.

The book which Javier Ceballos has written, and which he shares so generously, is a valuable effort to teach these issues. It is a resource to help falconers, particularly new falconers, to understand and practice the wonderful living art of falconry.

I wish you good hawking but I do so in the hope that your falconry will be ethical and sustainable.

**Adrian Lombard**

IAF President. November 2017



### FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

Years after the publication in Spanish of the "Manual básico y ético de cetrería" I have the great satisfaction of presenting its English version.

I want to show my gratitude to those who made its appearance possible in 2011. First of all, to the Spanish Ministry of Culture, which in 2010 arranged the public tender that granted Avium, the company I direct, the economic aid that made this collective effort possible.

I am also grateful to the team members; Jorge H. Justribó, who contributed with me in the coordination of the work in the Spanish version, he is also the author of several chapters. Our friends and great falconers Marino García Montijano, Rodrigo García Sigüero and Javier Gómez Pardo also contributed with their knowledge and experience in the rest of the chapters. Manuel H. Justribó accurately illustrated the content we proposed. Manuel Díaz Herrero designed the layout to the digital edition.

The Spanish version can be downloaded for free in pdf format on the Spanish Ministry of Culture official website [www.mecd.gob.es](http://www.mecd.gob.es). It can also be downloaded from the Avium website [www.avium.es](http://www.avium.es) and many others. Whoever wants to acquire it in Spanish can request it from the Cáirel publishing house, [www.clan.es](http://www.clan.es) (ISBN: 978-84-85707-63-8).

We have more than achieved the objectives that drove this effort. Falconry has a relevant space on the official website of the Ministry of Culture of Spain. A space reserved for few initiatives. Once they have read the book, many amateurs decide not to acquire a bird of prey, after noticing the implications and responsibilities that come with it. We promote a responsible falconry. In some places the content of the manual is followed by the administration to evaluate those who want to qualify as falconers. We therefore, facilitate establishing the minimum knowledge that guarantees a common benefit. Many young people may find in it a guide to start a journey in a self-taught way. This way, by providing references and sharing our personal experiences with future falconers, we prevent birds from being exposed to harm or mishandling.

As it has been explained, the manual was originally conceived for a Spanish-speaking audience, mainly in Spain. That is why we please ask Anglophone readers to be a bit understanding as they may find references to Spain that may not apply in their own country. For example, you may find that in your country there may be native species such as the Harris hawk, which in this book appear as exotic, given that they are not part of the Spanish avifauna. The same can happen with some other particularities. It is also important to keep in mind that in each place you have to know and comply with the corresponding regulations.

Overall, this manual can be used by falconers all around the world. We have minimally adapted the original content to make it so. We have also added a few articles I got published



in "The International Journal of Falconry" of the IAF, International Association for Falconry & Conservation of Birds of Prey [www.iaf.org](http://www.iaf.org), which can be found in the Annex section.

The launch of this edition in English in digital format coincides with the celebration of the 5th edition of the World Falconry Day. This initiative, which I proposed to organize to the IAF in 2013 and which I have had the honour of coordinating since its beginnings, in 2017 has a motto that has a lot to do with the approach of the manual: "Learning and teaching. Passing on our cultural heritage ". It is an honour for me that the IAF shows its support for this work by providing its seal and the words of its president, Dr. Adrian Lombard.

Since 1992, I have coordinated the ADAJA Summer Camp, where falconry has step by step become more important and eventually turned into our main focus. Through the Avium Falconry School I was able to establish the ADAJA Falconry Camp a pioneering initiative worldwide [www.adaja.es](http://www.adaja.es).

The printed edition is presented at the Falconry Festival in Abu Dhabi. Under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, the Festival celebrates Youth and the passing of Falconry knowledge to the next generation. ([falconryfestival.org](http://falconryfestival.org)) Avium, as a falconry school has been invited to participate with five of its campers to share with children and young people from other countries our experience when living for 15 days with various birds of prey.

Knowledge is one of the few things one can share and never run out of. This is why, Avium guarantees free access to the manual on the Internet in pdf format. This means that any interested party can make altruistic use of it, provided that he cites the source of the texts and/or images that he uses. In the case of pretending to make commercial use, you must have prior written permission from Avium. If you want printed copies you can buy them at [info@avium.es](mailto:info@avium.es)

**Dr. Javier Ceballos**

IAF's Advisory Committee Member (Ethics & WFD)

MECD's Delegate for Falconry UNESCO Submission

Avium Director



### FOREWORD CULTURE SPANISH MINISTRY

As a liaison between the Spanish Government and UNESCO, the Culture Ministry attempts to ease the outreach not only of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Paris, 2003) but also of the cultural assets recognized as Intangible Cultural Heritage. In this regard, Avium Nature and Training, company awarded in 2010 the aid of the Ministry for the promotion of heritage offers us, through this Manual, the amazing opportunity of getting closer to the art of Falconry.

Although Falconry constitutes in Spain a great cultural heritage, tradition it is barely known. It wasn't until the 16th November 2010 when UNESCO recognized it as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity that Spanish became aware of its existence. Efforts made to obtain the maximum cultural recognition known were extraordinary until reaching the most international Intangible Cultural Heritage in the history of UNESCO and the first Intangible Cultural Heritage recognized in every single Spanish Autonomous Community.

In order to protect this Intangible Cultural Heritage it is essential for these Communities to assume the effort of preserving it as their own. Regarding the practice of Falconry, falconers are the ones responsible of setting a good example and ensuring the maintenance and transmission of this ancestral hunting art. The book you are holding does not only identify and detail the steps required to understand Falconry, but it also presents the first ever falconer ethical code, which is the base upon which it settles. The reason being, it is more important for the authors to maintain the ethics upon which this profession has always been sustained than gaining followers.

Throughout this text, the need to manage Falconry in a more reasonable manner is exposed in several occasions. The singularities of this hunting method along with common sense should encourage the development of a specific regulation differentiated from that legislating the hunt with firearms. It is surprising how the same art can be subjected to such different regulations depending on the Autonomous Community considered. That is why, on top of the commitment acquired by falconers, it is necessary for the different public administrations to listen to the demands and act accordingly. After all, an Intangible Cultural Heritage must find the support and collaboration of all surrounding it for it's enabling.

Finally, it is necessary to emphasize certain characteristics regarding falconry that require some thought. It is remarkable that an activity that has been practiced for the past thousands of years and currently in over 70 countries is barely noticed. The fact that it is such an ancestral tradition and so cosmopolitan implies that there is possibly something very special about the alliance between the bird of prey and the human that escapes the knowledge of those of us who don't live together with a falconry bird. It being so unknown can be blamed on the low number of followers attracted per country, as it is an activity developed in nature away from the city hustle. The high level of demand combined with the poor economic performance could have erased Falconry from modern society; however, we are here faced with a commitment based on values and emotions. These timeless reasons and immaterial



compensations that make Falconry an art that ennobles the human soul, the noble art of Falconry.

The editors and co-authors of this Manual deserve all our gratitude and recognition for their effort, passion and professionalism. Without hesitation, they have committed to this project with the patience and tenacity that characterizes the responsible falconer.



### FOREWORD TO THE SPANISH EDITION

Falconry in Spain awakened due to the impeccable job done by Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente. He was responsible for the book that has guided surely most of current Spanish-speaking falconers, without a doubt, a worldwide reference within the bibliography regarding Falconry.

Anyway, after nearly five decades, the scenery is quite different and it is almost hard to believe that so many years have gone by without the appearance in Spain of a basic, modern and updated manual to guide the new generations willing to discover and practice this art.

In order to fill in this gap, we have created a manual easy to follow, practical, interesting and entertaining with photographs and illustrations designed for the occasion. Any specific vocabulary we believe could constitute a problem for the reader has been written in italics and defined at the end of the document in the section named Vocabulary (Annex).

Falconry has been transmitted from generation to generation for over 5000 years. Values defining it, based upon ethics, have played a big part in its practice being recognized as Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO (2003). We firmly believe that all of us considering ourselves falconers, no matter our experience, should take some time to think about and realise our responsibility in the transmission of this heritage, understanding it should be done in the best way possible based on ethics and an honourable practice.

With this manual we aim to provide a sincere view of the involvements of becoming a falconer these days. We seek to prevent improper practices that could take place due to the ease with which you can currently obtain a bird of prey. As they say, better quality than quantity, meaning it is preferable to have fewer committed falconers, than to have a lot of them following their own criteria away from the ethics and a responsible practice of Falconry.

We are very thankful to the Culture Ministry for the given help to Avium Nature and Training S.L. through public tender to develop the project “Pedagogical Resources and training in order to give value to the Cultural Heritage that Falconry has become” (help N/REF sgpph/AE22/2010) through which the creation of this Manual has taken place.

Of course, we would also like to express our gratitude to all of those falconers who everyday go out to the countryside and hunt with their birds. They are the ones responsible for the transmission of this ancestral practice. A lot of them are friends and fortunately we keep learning from them everyday.

The content of this book has been designed by worldwide experts of recognized reputation in fields related to Falconry, Biology, Veterinary and Environmental Education.



The fact that it is free through the Internet at [www.avium.es](http://www.avium.es) and [www.mcu.es](http://www.mcu.es), encourages its spread and makes it at reach not only for apprentices but also for the curious. However, it was also published thanks to Cariel editorial, making it easy to consult and even with the idea of using it as support material for certain courses.

Madrid, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011

**Javier Ceballos y Jorge H. Justribó (eds.)**



## DEDICATION



*To Aurelio Pérez falconer, naturalist and above all friend of every single author in this Manual. We recognize in him one of the great masters within modern Spanish Falconry.*

*He also introduced the editors.*



# **I** History, evolution and the current situation of Falconry

Author: Javier Ceballos Aranda

### I. History, evolution and the current situation of Falconry

With over five thousand years of history (Canby, 2002), Falconry is the cinegetic art of taking care and training raptors in order to hunt wild preys in their natural habitat. It constitutes a pioneer example of the sustainable exploitation of a renewable resource. In 2011 it was practiced in over 70 countries (Straka, 2009). However, **the IAF currently includes 110 associations from 87 countries worldwide totalling 75,000 members.**

It is based on **the alliance between the bird of prey and the human.** It rediscovers for the modern human forgotten abilities from their past (Ortega, 1942). Frequently, society has an incorrect concept of Falconry. As it is a hunting method, it seems an individualistic activity carried out by reduced groups. That is why it seems difficult to attend a whole day devoted to Falconry.

The **commitment assumed** by falconers when acquiring a bird, is so demanding that it **changes completely their lifestyle.** Their labour schedule, family time, holidays, space in the house or even economy are contingent on their hunting partner, until one of them dies (Ceballos, 2003).

Since the 16th November 2010, Falconry constitutes an **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) recognized by UNESCO** (UNESCO 2003 and 2022; Ceballos 2011). This recognition, relevant by itself, increases its notoriety due to the following reasons:



- It is the **most international ICH in UNESCO history.**
- It is the **first asset of cultural interest recognized by every single Spanish Autonomous Community.**
- In most Spanish Autonomous Communities, it is the **first ICH recognized by UNESCO.**

*1st December 2016 during the 11th Committee for ICH UNESCO declared Falconry as Living Human Heritage in 18 countries: Belgium, France, Spain, Czech Republic, Mongolia, Morocco, Qatar, UAE, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Korea, Austria, Hungary, Portugal, Germany, Italy, Pakistan and Kazakhstan.*

*This list will most certainly keep growing in the near future.*



#### Peculiarities of Falconry as Cultural Heritage

Compared to other cultural assets, Falconry involves certain peculiarities (see “Table for Falconry Singularities” page 20).

From a geographical point of view, it is absolutely inclusive. Unlike other activities recognized as ICH it is not just limited to a region or a country but practiced all over the world (Ceballos 2009a) however, the number of followers is reduced. After all, it is an extremely demanding art.

Unlike other cultural elements, this practice is not limited to certain periods of the calendar. It **affects the entire year**. This is the main reason for Falconry being a way of life.



It takes place in **very different culture towns**. Age, economic status, religion or political inclinations do not matter for the practice of Falconry. In every meeting **complicity between falconers**, can be appreciated.

### I. History, evolution and the current situation of Falconry

When a hawk is flying across the sky, those who watch it are more aware of the points they share than they are of their differences.

The development and survival of Falconry have generated important **contributions to modern society in the most diverse atmospheres** (Ceballos 2007 a, b). These are easily recognizable in the preservation of raptors, in international diplomatic relations, in the development of new academic subjects and in the direct benefit of those practicing it, that could impact not only their physical or mental health but also their spiritual well being.

The skills needed to become a good falconer did not go unnoticed amongst aristocracy. It was considered to be the best possible training for gentlemen and knights (Juan Manuel, 1325, 1326). It trained them as riders, taught them to read the terrain, to coordinate teams, make quick decisions and develop strategies. All of these abilities could afterwards be applied in the battlefield. Currently, **it continues to be an excellent way to teach values.**



In Falconry, **the bird establishes the time frame.** Birds need to assimilate what is taught to them, we cannot go faster than their capability to learn. A lot of **effort and dedication** is needed to obtain the desired intangible results.

Seen from the outside, people may question the profitability of maintaining a bird the entire year in order to capture very few preys during a single season. However, the reward is the overflowing emotion felt **when being part of a slip.**



# Basic and Ethical Falconry Manual

## I. History, evolution and the current situation of Falconry

Singularities of Falconry as ICH			
Time	History	Over 5000 years of history	Practiced somewhere around the world since then, it's basis have barely changed.
	Calendar	365 days a years, 24 hours a day	Commitment until the death od the bird. It becomes a life style.
	Transmission	Generational	Learnt through practice. Transmitted by <i>mentoring</i>
Location	Geography	Cosmopolitan	In all continents
	Situation	Natural Environment	It requires the integration of the human being in the natural environment, not as an observer but as a participant.
Socioeconomic	Age - gender	Not determinant	Practiced by the young and the elderly Frequently men.
	Economic Resources	Not determinant	Practiced by the rich and the poor.
	Religion	Not determinant	Practiced by agnostics, atheists and believers of any religion
	Number of followers	Minority stake	Reduced number due to demanding requirements.



## Basic and Ethical Falconry Manual

### I. History, evolution and the current situation of Falconry

Singularities of Falconry as ICH			
Human	Encounter of the man with himself	Discovery / development of the five senses	The involvement in the natural environment, being a part of the food chain, awakens in humans senses forgotten due to the urban lifestyle
		Spirituality	Different Saints have found divine inspiration through Falconry . Specific recognition to the pride of Falconry in the Koran.
	Health	Maintains physical and mental health	First activity recognized as a “sport” in human history
	Skill development	Directives – leadership, Strategy, Analytical capacity, crafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scheduling and developing a hunting day.</li> <li>- Handicraft manufacture of the equipment</li> </ul>
	Knowledge development	Physics, genetics, meteorology, Chemistry, veterinary	Understanding of atmospheric variables, landscape and animal behaviour interpretation, attention to diseases
	Relationships	Twinning between cultures Complicity of practitioners	Followers from very different cultures can easily find common ground



### Singularities of Falconry as ICH

Singularities of Falconry as ICH				
Contributions	Academic	The beginning of diverse disciplines that can even constitute a university degree	Ornithology, veterinary, the psychology of learning, ethology... have their roots in the practice of Falconry and its medieval treatises	
	Technical	Innovation and development of new technologies	Hoods, Radio tracking, radio location, altimeters... were initially designed to practice Falconry, but they are currently used in other disciplines	
	Environmental	Biology		Better understanding of the bird of prey, their environment and preys
		Preservation		Development of regulations, reproduction in captivity techniques, recovery and reintroduction of species, society awareness...
		Zoology		Origin to diverse breeds of dogs of sample (hunting)
	Social	Wildlife control		Falconry applied in airports can easily save everyday thousands of lives. It also contributes to the management of rabbit populations in golf courses. Avoids interference in space tracking stations.
		Raising awareness on protection of nature		Flight exhibitions of birds of prey are a successful way of attracting the public's attention towards the biology of birds of prey and their protection. Cradle of great naturalists such as John y Frank Craighead, Morlan W. Nelson, Dr. Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente and Dr. Heinz Brüll. Birds of prey used in Falconry have also been of interest for photography and documentaries for cinema and TV.
		Pedagogical resource		In the Middle Ages it was the best school to teach and train gentlemen and knights. Flight exhibitions make the bird of prey more approachable.
	Cultural	Artistic expressions		Uncountable pieces of art in the form of paintings, sculptures, music, tapestries, stained glass...
		Language		Certain Falconry terms are used in the current vocabulary of different cultures.
		Literature		Falconry is one of the first subjects written about during the Middle Ages. Various treaties explain what it is and how it should be practiced. There were other texts that also used Falconry as an inspiration (poetry, plays, novels...)
	Politics	Diplomatic relationship between governments		There are plenty of historical records of state gifts that still remain during the 21 <sup>st</sup> century.



#### Falconry and its beginnings

Hawks are *ornithophagous*, meaning they feed on birds they capture in the air, basing their hunting strategy upon their speed. **Falconry was born of the relation of commensalism** in which the hawk takes advantage of the **human serving the preys** while walking with their herds of cattle. Initially, men would frighten the bird to **take**



**away his prey.** Further on, humans would maintain this relationship in order to enjoy watching the bird fly.

The movement generated by herds in Central Asia or caravans in the desert, just to mention a few examples, encouraged hawks to fly over humans. As human walked by, preys came out of hiding helping hawks save a lot of time and effort.

#### A demanding commitment

The reasons for the survival of this art over the centuries have changed depending on the different motivations of falconers. Originally, **the alliance between the human and the bird of prey allowed hunting** and therefore eating animals that seemed unattainable until then. Shortly after, humans had access to other means that helped complete their diet.



Falconry has stayed alive **generation after generation** until this day. The current urban falconer, when going out to the countryside on a daily basis to train and hunt with his bird of prey, maintains the almost forgotten link between **man and Nature.**

But, what is so special about the alliance between the **man and his bird**, that compensates the first one dedicating much of his life to the second? For sure, it has nothing to do with the insignificant number of preys that can be captured. The answer can be found in the emotional reaction the animal triggers in humans. It helps them develop abilities and values such as confidence, patience, perseverance, observation, sensitivity, global perception of the environment, improvisation ability, humility, strategy planning, unconditionality, commitment, gratuity, respect... Falconry awakens his own humanity, being a **noble art** by developing in him values that ennoble him.

#### A noble art

In the Middle Ages, in the United Kingdom, the nickname "**gentleman**" was created to designate those who trained the "gentle hawk", now known as Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*).



Many centuries later, this term continues to define in the modern world those who have acquired noble qualities, whether or not they care for any falcon.

It is funny how cultures as varied as Chinese, American, Arab or European can reconcile differences and share encounters looking through the eyes of a hawk, discovering the strength of simplicity. As seemingly minor beings, which do not understand frontiers, neither politics nor economic situations, they unite men whose countries may be lacking diplomatic relations, or even at war. The love for raptors relativizes differences by twinning people and strengthening cultures. Falconry transcends the daily life of the falconer, making him a part of the human chain that for 5000 years, found in the free alliance with the winged being his way of life.

Falconry allows men to experience what is known as "**a change of observer**". The falconer becomes a hunter with two legs and two wings; obtaining therefore the third dimension, the vertical, watching the hunting ground through the eyes of hawk that flies over his head.

The **human integrates himself into Nature**, changing his condition from observer to participant. Witnessing and being a part of his bird's wonderful flight, which has accepted him as a companion, delights him. He enjoys the persecution and even the escape of that prey that may deserve to continue living in its territory, after having played better his cards in the game of life and death.

The falconer is **rewarded by the flight and effort of his bird**. He usually prefers an unsuccessful but enjoyable slip, than an easy catch. Therefore, it is understood that even deploying more means and dedication than any shotgun hunter, the falconer is contented with a significantly smaller number of pieces.

Falconry contributes to the mental and physical health of those who practice it. In fact, it is **recognized as the first sport in human history**, as this term was coined in the 13<sup>th</sup> century referring to its practice (Misangyi, 1965).



Falconry is presented as the **origin of significant academic disciplines**. The observation of birds, them being own or wild and the collection of this information in falconry treatises, such as that written by **Frederick II of Hohenstaufen** in 1248, constitute the **beginnings of modern Ornithology**. The attention paid to the diseases of the falconry birds, thoroughly described in these treatises, show off the early **advances of veterinary science**. The intuitive analysis of the behaviour and reactions of the bird of prey before different conditions, laid the foundations of the **psychology of learning** (Loredó, 1995).

It awakens the senses, teaches humility and integrity by providing the falconer unity with nature, criteria and perseverance. The bird of prey forces the man to remain in shape in order to follow him through the field finding preys. It allows him to discover forms of communication that do not require verbal language, but instead use gestures, looks and behaviours. Falconry is, in short, **"the art through which birds of prey use and extract the best of the human being"** (Morales, 2003).

#### Falconry in Spain

In Spain, we count on a **deeply rooted tradition when it comes to the practice of Falconry**. Although we find sources that could lead to think that the **Celtiberians already practiced it in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century** (Marín, 1994), we have to wait until the arrival of the Visigoths to have the certainty of its practice (Ceballos, 2007b).



Falconry in Spain had two entry routes. The first was established with the **Germanic peoples** who arrived to the north of Spain at the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The falconry practiced by the Visigoths, was based on the *low flight*. The leafy hunting grounds of the north of the peninsula and the lack of knowledge about the hood caused hawks being relegated to the background. The goshawks price exceeded the price of hawks as reflected in different regulations and charters until 1252.

The Islamic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 711, led to the establishment of their culture in Spain for hundreds of years. One of their most significant contributions to falconry was the knowledge shared regarding the **handling of the falcons**, which from the past had been part of their culture. By the 6<sup>th</sup> century the poet Imru 'Al-Quays had already composed several verses on Falconry in Arabic, as recalled by Muslim treatises (Kitàb al Bayzara, in Viré, 1967).

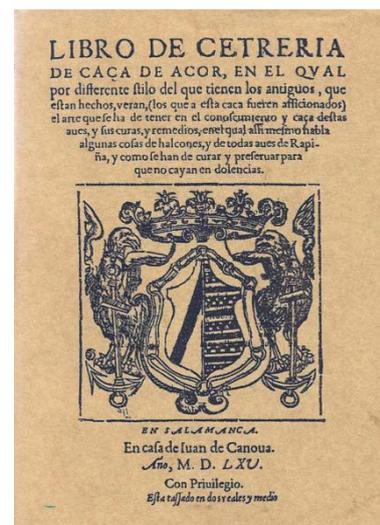
It was throughout the Middle Ages when Falconry reached its peak. In Spain different nobles and monarchs were fascinated by this hunting modality.

The handling of *short and long wing birds* has been **collected in different treaties** that in many ways, continue in force.

If one had to select the most significant works by Spanish authors, those written by Prince D. Juan Manuel, 14<sup>th</sup> century, Pero López de Ayala, 14<sup>th</sup> century, Fadrique de Zúñiga y Sotomayor, 16<sup>th</sup> century, Juan Vallés, 16<sup>th</sup> century, Luis Zapata, 16<sup>th</sup> century, Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente y Andrés López Sánchez 20<sup>th</sup> century, would have to be mentioned. Regarding the **history of Falconry**, the work of **Vera López** (1888) is to be highlighted as being the

inspiration for almost all of those who followed. As a bibliographical recollection, the work presented by Fradejas Rueda in 1991 is remarkable. The Ibero-American Archive of Falconry, dependent of the University of Valladolid, can be interesting to visit as it offers the possibility to consult and download bibliographical falconry funds through the Internet <http://www.aic.uva.es/>

Falconry became such a common form of hunting within nobility that **the term "hunting" was used to reference this art** (Salazar, 1696), existing therefore a **difference between hunters (falconers) and 'monteros'**.



Different saints are responsible for beautiful quotes on Falconry. Thus, the first missionary in History, San Francisco Javier (1506-1552), writes in his letters about the practice of Falconry in Japan. San Juan de la Cruz (1542-1591) was inspired by a waiting on flights in his prayers. San Francisco de Borja (Gandia 1510-Rome 1572) poetically explains the reasons why he practices soar hawking (Ribadeneyra, 1594).

Generally speaking European falconry went into **decline throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries**. A **slow transition** then began. Teams formed by large numbers of birds, taken care of by professional falconers, were replaced. Falconry started becoming a **minority practice**, supported by the enthusiasm of its followers. The way you travelling also changed. Instead of riding horses, hunting parties went on foot.

On top of the enormous expenses of maintaining the falconry equipment, the parcelling of the field and the decrease in the number of preys, another important cause for its recession were firearms. It was clear that they were cheaper than the expensive falconry equipment, easier to maintain, were always on the point and they were not only much more effective but they also did not get tired.



Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, **modern Falconry consolidated in Spain**. Its most representative figure has undoubtedly been **Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente**.

#### **The current practice of Falconry**

Regularly hunting with a bird of prey is so demanding that **the number of falconers is self-regulated**. This happens all over the world. Falconry is present in more than eighty countries, however it is not really popular in most of them.



Currently it is practiced in every single Autonomous Community within the Spanish territory. The level developed by veteran falconers places Spain in the **worldwide elite**.

People who lack the right contacts are most likely to meet fans instead of falconers. There are many who have been seduced by the attractiveness of a bird of prey to maintain it, but who do not have the time and resources to hunt with it. Strictly speaking they should not be considered falconers despite the fact that they might occasionally practice with *bagged quarry* in order to keep their birds in shape. When bagged **quarry stops being a mean and starts becoming a purpose**, we are witnessing a **poor substitute of Falconry**. It is like calling fisherman to who only fishes from a fish farm.

Birds currently come from **captive breeding centres** where many species and some hybridizations reproduce. Removing individuals from the natural environment is no longer necessary for the survival of Falconry.

As we will see in the different chapters of this manual, it is very important to **acknowledge both the circumstances and the resources each one can count on before acquiring a bird**.

#### Getting started in Falconry

The practice of falconry **involves a series of steps**, both in the **personal** sphere, and in the relationship with the **administration**. Even though the circumstances and laws that regulate it in each Autonomous Community are different an approximate relation between them can be exposed. Throughout this manual they will be properly developed.

#### Associations

If we are going to become, or we are already falconers, it is advisable to **become a member of at least one association**. Spanish falconers are provided with a wide offer existing at least two associations in each Autonomous Community.

**Sharing information with other partners** can be useful when taking care of the welfare of our birds. We are responsible of knowing first hand anything that can affect them by the practice of the activity itself or by changes in the regulation of each Autonomous Community.



## Basic and Ethical Falconry Manual

### I. History, evolution and the current situation of Falconry

A list of associations and Falconry regulations in each Autonomous Community can be looked up at [www.cetreria.com](http://www.cetreria.com)

In Spain, there is only **one association of national scope** and it is open to anyone who wants to join them. This is the AECCA, "Spanish Association of Falconry and Preservation of Raptors", with almost 40 years of experience. It is the extension of the extinct AEC, "Spanish Association of Falconry", created in 1975, recast with UEDECA in 2001.

Internationally, we find the IAF "International Association for Falconry & Conservation of Birds of Prey". Created in 1968, it brings together the leading falconry associations from over 87 countries [www.iaf.org](http://www.iaf.org)

#### Falconers encounters

Throughout the year, there are many meetings and falconry events, which are increasing every year. Highlights include the Falconry Days in Northern Spain (León), El Trial Sky (Seville), ACESUR (Malaga), TROREAL (Zamora) and of course the World Falconry Day (WFD) created by Dr. Javier Ceballos who from the IAF coordinates falconer encounters all around the world. The WFD takes place on the 16<sup>th</sup> November, the day Falconry was recognized as ICH by UNESCO. You can find further information on the website [www.iaf.org](http://www.iaf.org) and Facebook.

#### Libraries and publications

As for written sources, the Bookstore Clan is worth mentioning as it has specialized in Falconry for past couple of decades, and the magazine "Top Falconry", which is unique in Spain and can be acquired without being a member of any association at:

[www.cetrero.com/top/topcetreria.htm](http://www.cetrero.com/top/topcetreria.htm)





# Basic and Ethical Falconry Manual

## I. History, evolution and the current situation of Falconry



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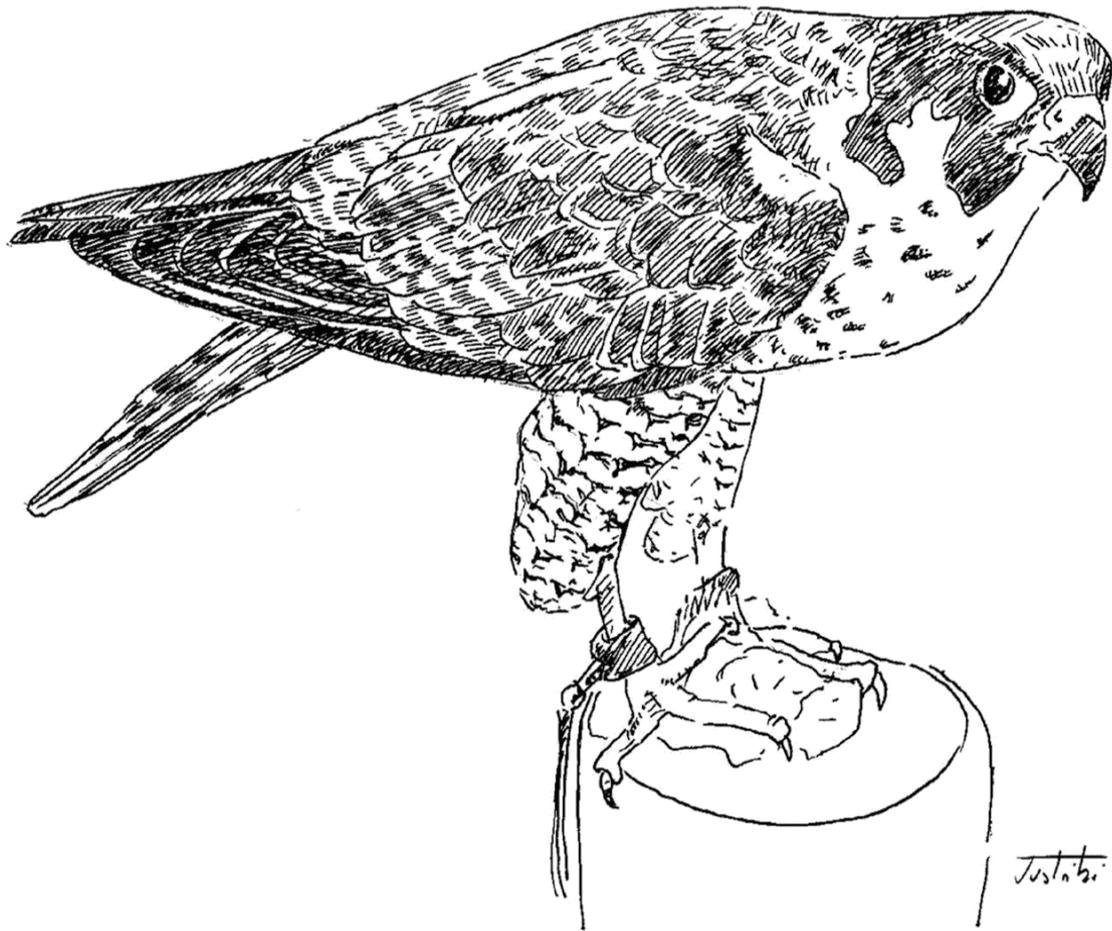


# Basic and Ethical Falconry Manual

## I. History, evolution and the current situation of Falconry







## **II** Falconry Birds

**Author: Jorge Hernández Justribo**

#### Birds and their evolutionary success

No terrestrial vertebrate has ever reached as far as Birds. Their evolutionary success has been enormous, as evidenced by nearly **10.000 species scattered throughout the Globe**, from the most torrid deserts to the polar ice caps.

The ability to fly has given them this triumph because it allows them to exploit temporary, predictable and widely separated resources geographically, making the most of each place at the right time.



The **predecessors of the Birds are small dinosaurs**, which walked on two legs and had the peculiarity of having hips morphologically similar birds (Dorst, 1976).

The scales of these animals started changing and becoming spines that looked like hair (**proto feathers**), which began to expand, forming a strong, flexible and incredibly light structure: **the feather**.

Feathers isolated the bodies of these reptiles, facilitating the **regulation of their own temperature (homeothermia)**, which causes the **acceleration of their metabolism** allowing therefore actions that require high energy doses, such as **flying**, to be carried out (Senar, 2004).

The first flight trials were small jumps or even simple glides. After some evolutionary processes such as an increase of lightness, aerodynamics, and power, they were able to achieve the flight we currently know, that is, the **sustained, rapid and energy-efficient movement through the air** (Dorst, 1975).



**Birds of prey**

In order to **define a bird of prey**, the following concepts must be clear:



We must point out that **diurnal and nocturnal raptors are not directly related** however, they are **both called “raptors”**.

Taxonomy classifies birds of prey in the following taxa (Ferguson-Lees, J. *et al* 2001):

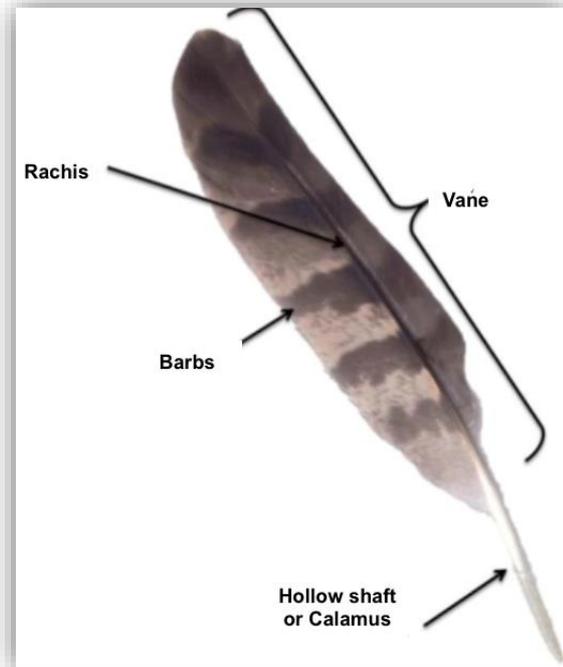
RAPTORS CLASSIFICATION	
Falconiformes Order. Diurnal raptors.	<b>Cathartidae Family:</b> new world vultures: buzzards, condors...
	<b>Pandionidae Family:</b> the osprey.
	<b>Accipitridae Family:</b> eagles, goshawks, kites, buzzards, harriers etc. Usually, any bird of prey not included in the other families named.
	<b>Sagittariidae Family:</b> The secretarybird.
Strigiformes Order. Nocturnal raptors.	<b>Falconidae Family:</b> hawks and kestrels.
	<b>Strigidae:</b> owls, tawny owls, scops owls and little owl.
	<b>Tytonidae:</b> with just one representative: the barn owl.

#### External anatomy of the bird of prey

##### Feathers

The feather is a **keratinized structure of epidermal origin**. It consists of **three parts** (Senar, 2004):

- **Vane:** the flattened structure that appears on both sides of the rachis. **It is composed of barbs.** These barbs are subdivided into **barbules** that have hooklets whose function is to **keep the barbs together**. Many times birds comb their plumage to join the hooklets of a spoiled feather.
- **Rachis:** the **central part of the feather**. It is hollow and provides rigidity and flexibility.
- **Hollow shaft or calamus:** The lower part of the rachis is also hollow and it is **where the feather is inserted into the skin**.



##### Plumage

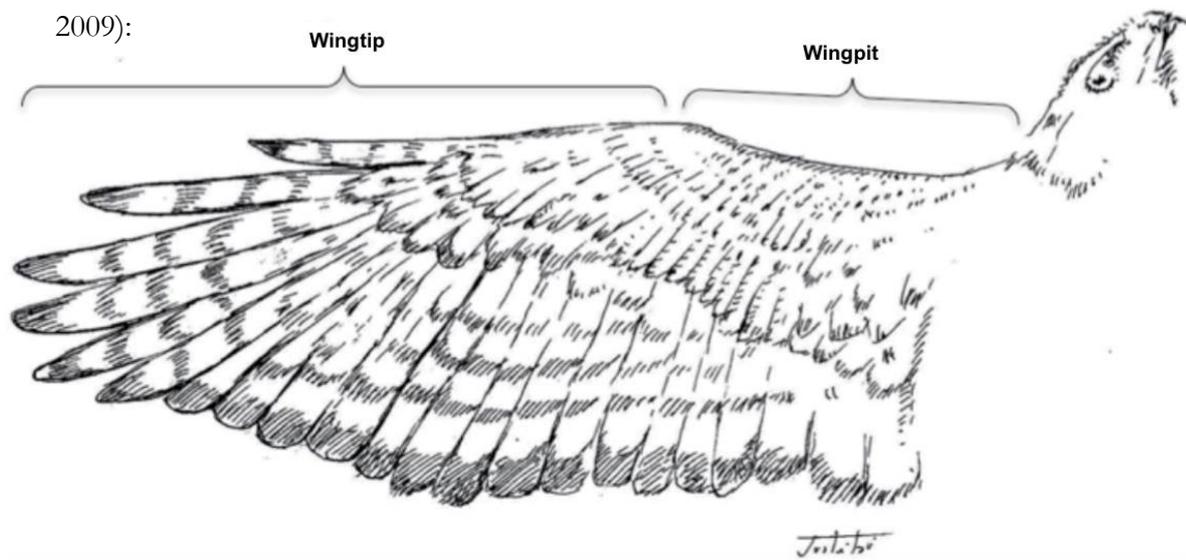
This is the name given to the **set of feathers of a bird**. It can be divided into **down and contour feathers**. Contour feathers overlay the **down** covering the bird's body (Jonsson, 1993). **Contour feathers** are divided into:

- Covert feathers or tectrices, **body, head and wing covert** feathers.
- Flight feathers include **wing feathers** (*remiges*) and **tail feathers** (*rectrices*) (Baker, 1993).

**Flight feathers** can also be divided into two groups:

### 1. The **wing**

Bird wings have **two areas where feathers that sustain the flight can be inserted** (Fox, 2009):



- **Wingtip:** Formed by the fusion of the **vestiges of old fingers**. It is the part of the wing where the feathers called **primary remiges** are inserted; in Falconry they are known as "**knives**". There are usually ten knives.
- **Wingpit:** part of the wing where the **secondary remiges** are inserted. Their number varies between 10 and 13 depending on the species. Vultures or big eagles can have many more.

### 2. The **Tail**

Inserted in the tail are the feathers known as **rectrices** or **rudders**, there are usually 12 and serve to manoeuvre.



### Main physiological processes for the well being of the plumage: the moult and preening

#### The moult

The plumage is **subjected to wear**. The causes are wind, water, sun, and other events that can take place during the daily life of the bird: hunting, accidents...

Moulting is the **change from old and worn feathers** to new ones. **The good condition of the plumage is vital** so that the bird can move, feed, perform courtship, etc. (Ginn and Melville, 1993).

In birds of prey, it is a **slow and sequential process**, as they cannot afford to lose many feathers at the same time. If this happened, they would lose power in the flight and their chances of success in hunting would be very small.



Moult in falconry birds occurs **once a year**. It starts during February-April and usually ends two or three months later, although it depends on many factors such as food, atmospheric conditions, weather, etc.

During this critical period, they need to be in a **peaceful place and fed** with plenty of meat with high caloric and nutritional value. Keeping high weights helps the plumage renew quicker and with better quality. Otherwise, the new plumage will have low quality and stress lines or fret-marks could appear in the flight feathers, which are lines that show growth interruption.



It is essential that **no new feathers break** during the growth period, which is why it is so important for our bird not to be startled. In Falconry a **feather is said to be "in blood"** when it is **growing**, as it is irrigated by blood vessels that lead the blood that feeds the feather for its development. **A rupture "in blood"** can cause the follicle from where the feather is born being **damaged for life**. There are cases in which the follicle is so damaged that the feather never grows again.

#### Preening. The oil gland

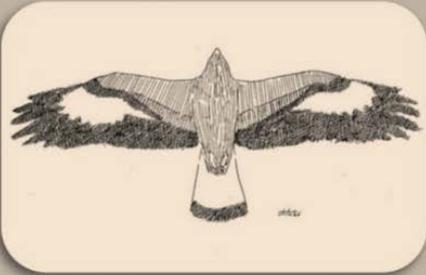
- Birds devote a lot of time during their life to the preening which is the spreading with the beak of an oily substance secreted by a gland located in the rump, called the **oil gland** (Dorst, 1976).
- It is an essential process for the **maintenance of a good plumage** as it provides protection, **especially against water**. The bird takes small doses of this oily substance and applies it on its feathers, which stay covered by a very thin layer of this substance. This way the plumage is waterproofed and water literally slides through the bird without it getting wet.



- **We should not be touching the birds all the time.** They are not dogs or cats that appreciate and thank our caresses, in fact, it usually bothers them, causing them restlessness and the **alteration of the good state of their plumage**, removing the oil that covers it. Always dissuade people from touching your bird.

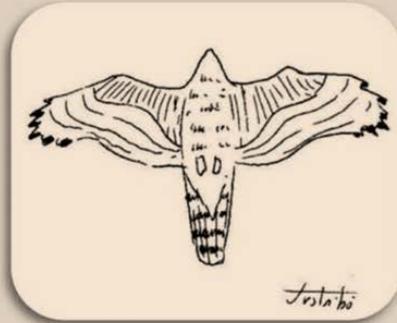
#### Raptors' morphological design

Generally speaking, raptors can be included within a series of morphological typologies, as a result of their adaptation to the environment. **The birds of prey used in falconry respond to the following shapes** (Forsman, 1998):

RAPTORS' MORPHOLOGICAL DESIGN (Forsman, 1998)	
<p><b>Eagles</b></p> <p>Birds of <b>medium to large size, long and broad wings, long tail</b>. They can glide through the air for hours looking for their prey, although they can also hunt from watchtowers. Claws usually have <b>short and thick fingers</b> with strong, sharp nails for hunting mammals.</p>	

### Accipiter

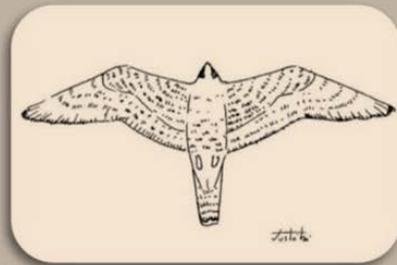
Birds with long tails to manoeuvre and short, rounded wings. This morphology is due to the adaptation to forest environments with dense vegetation. Fingers may have intermediate thickness and length, indicative of a "generalist" species that can hunt both birds and mammals, but they can also be long and thin typical of birds such as hawks.



### Falcons

Long and pointed wings and short tails compared to the wings. Birds used to high-speed attacks.

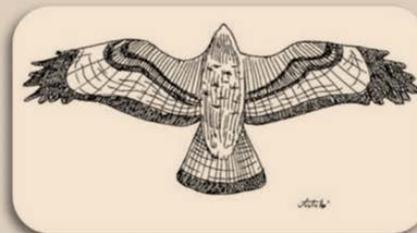
Normally, fingers are long and slender because they are omnithophagous, although there are some species whose fingers are shorter and thicker, without becoming like those of the accipiter.



### Buzzards, Harris Hawk

Broad and relatively short wings and wide tails. These birds are very generalists; they can usually soar for a long time looking for preys but can also hunt from watchtowers. Fingers are of intermediate length and thickness, although variations can be found.

For example, an eagle may have an Accipiter shape because it has adapted to forest environments. In Biology this is known as adaptive convergence. Two different animals can have the same shape when they adjust to similar ecological habitats. Great harpy eagles that live in some South American forests, have a long tail and short, rounded wings like the Accipiter, as a result of their adaptation to the forest environment.



#### Reversed sexual dimorphism



**Female** raptors used in Falconry are generally 1/3 **larger than males**.

This is a very **important fact to take into consideration when choosing our future bird**.

In many occasions depending on whether we have chosen a male (tierce) or a female, we will be **able to hunt one type of preys or another**.

**Females tend to be more powerful** while **males** from certain species have **more agility**. A male goshawk will be unable of hunting a hare, but a female is perfectly capable of "*holding it*". However, as male goshawks are lighter, they will more easily reach a partridge.

Reversed sexual dimorphism in raptors has been rewarded by natural selection by **dampening intra-species competition for preys**. With this strategy they also take advantage of diverse trophic resources and occupy a greater number of **ecological niches**, key processes to the evolutionary success and the durability of a species.

In species that exploit very abundant trophic resources such as insects, sexual dimorphism is noticeably less pronounced or even non-existent since "there is food for all". Competition for food is minimal. For example, within **American Kestrels** (*Falco sparverius*) **both sexes have the same size**.

Another reason why **females** tend to be bigger is because in the early stages of reproduction they are the ones who **incubate the eggs** and they very rarely go out hunting. It is the male who does it, taking the food to the female. This time of year coincides with many **young and small preys that the male can easily hunt**.

When chicks grow, both parents can go out to hunt. By then many preys have grown and it is the female who exerts its predatory pressure on them, while the male can continue hunting its usual small preys.

#### Internal anatomy of the bird of prey

We will only expose some **very important aspects for the falconer** and obviously for the bird, belonging to the **Digestive System** and the **Muscular System**. For more information about the internal anatomy of birds, we refer you to bibliographic sources such as: Fox, 2009 and De Iuliis, 2007.

#### Digestive System

##### - The crop

The crop is a membranous bag where **food is stored once ingested**, and then gradually passes through the rest of the digestive system (de Iuillis, 2007). For the falconer it serves as an **immediate indicator of the amount of food** his bird has eaten. A large crop means that the bird has copiously eaten; this can be appreciated as a bulge under his neck.

##### - The pellet

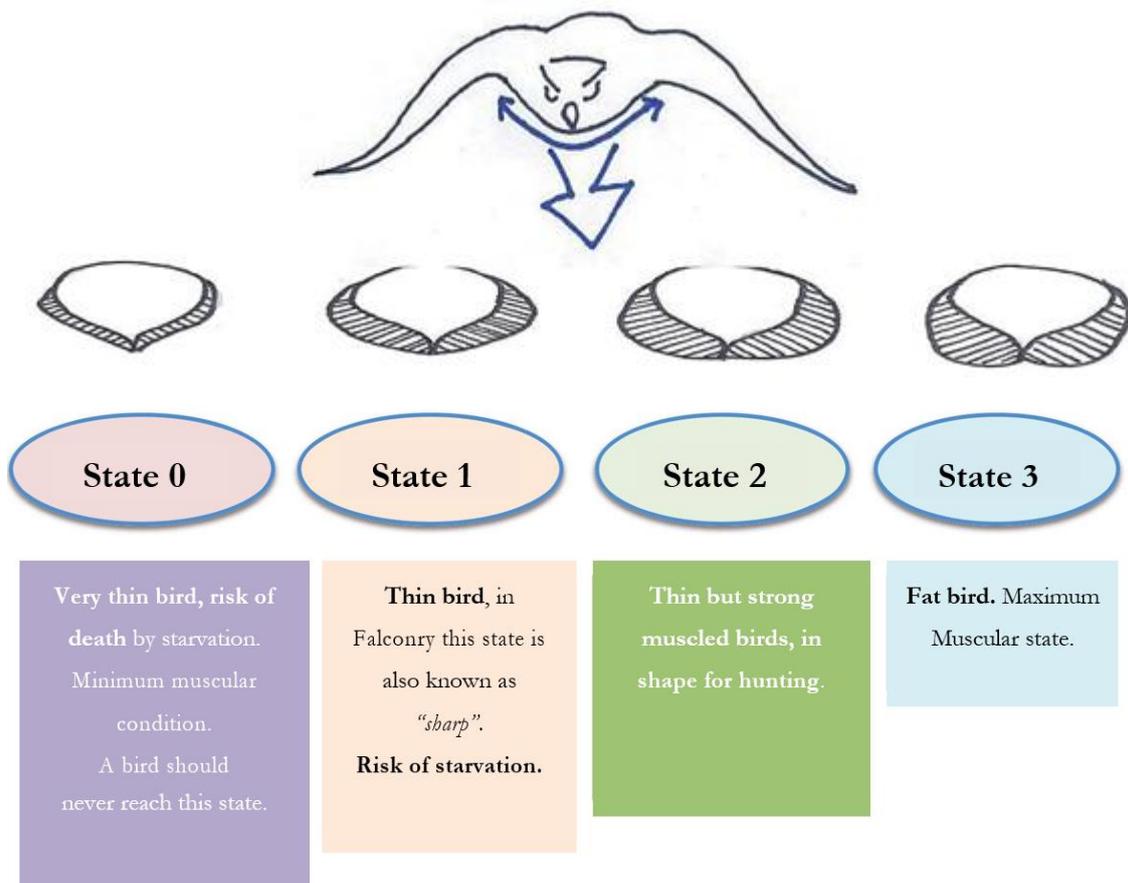
The pellet is a **small ball of undigested food remains** (hair, feathers and bones mainly) that birds regurgitate daily. It is advisable to watch that our birds expel the pellet, as a failure to do so may be indicative of health problems. **We should never feed our bird if it has not expelled the pellet from the previous day** (Fox, 2009).



### Muscular system: the pectoral muscles

They offer the falconer an excellent way of measuring the birds thinness and they also act as **indicators of their health condition**. These muscles are placed in the breast on **both sides of the keel**.

The image below shows the imaginary cross-section of a bird and its **different states according to the development of the pectoral muscles**. This figure was inspired by one used in the Bander Manual (Clarabuch en Pinilla, 2000).

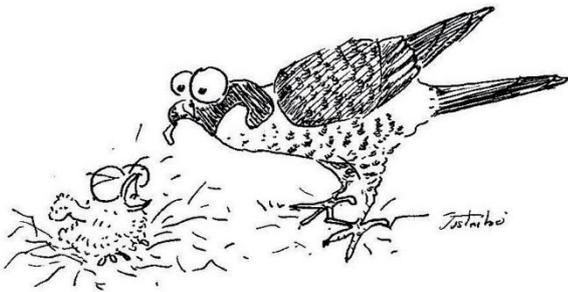


#### Breeding types. Imprinted and parent reared

In Falconry you will hear on countless occasions "this bird is *parental*" or "this bird is *imprinted*". In Ethology, imprinting is the process in which the chicks identify with the adults of their own species (Lorenz, 1949).

#### Imprinted

An **imprinted** bird is a bird that has been raised by humans and not by other raptors therefore it will tend to identify with humans. In other words it **“has been imprinted with men”**.



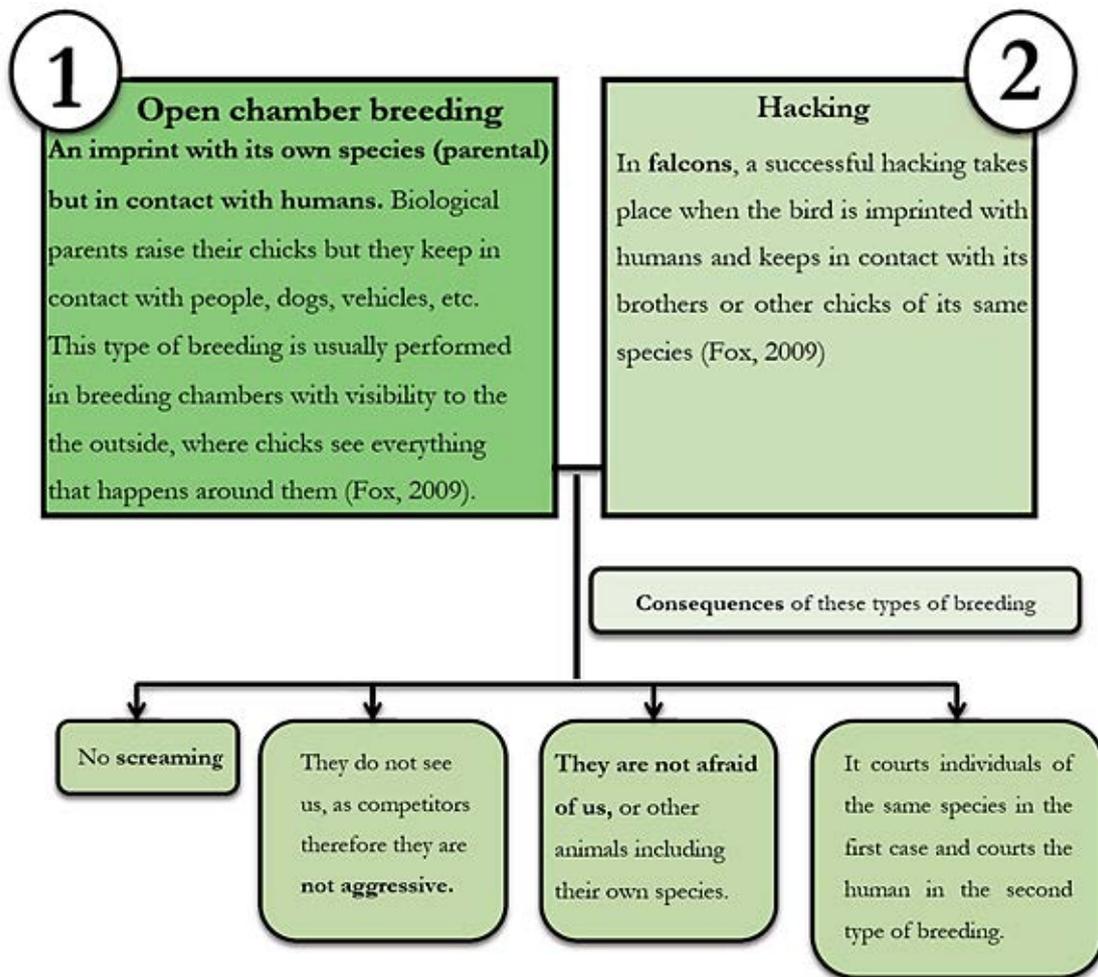
#### Parent reared

A **“parental”** bird is a bird that has been raised by its own parents. “This bird has been imprinted with its own species”.

The type of imprint carries with it a series of consequences in the behaviour. If the bird is **imprinted with the man without contact with individuals of the same species** (Fox, 2009), the following occurs:

1. They **scream for food**.
2. They identify with humans therefore **they can see us as competitors and sometimes be aggressive**.
3. Both **male and female** can get confused during **the breeding season**, as they identify themselves with humans.

The two ideal types of breeding in falconry birds are:



There are other methods based on the imprint as the so-called "**Mc Dermott method**" (2002) for Accipiters, which obtains very good results, but as it is complex and long to explain, we will not treat it in this manual.

### How can I make sure the bird I buy meets all the legal requirements?

Currently, in Spain, Falconry birds are those that have not been extracted from Nature, having been **born in captivity**, logically from **legal parents**. Falconry birds must come accompanied by a series of **documents** that prove their legal provenance. Each bird must carry a **unique and unalterable identification**.

These identifications are like our ID number, **personal and non-transferable**. They are used to avoid possible "changes" between raptors and making sure that the same documentation is not being used for several birds at a time.



Currently birds carry two types of marking: **closed metal band and microchips**.

#### Closed metal band

They are generally made out of aluminium and placed through the **raptor's leg** when it is still a chick.



Without being a compulsory rule, the initials of the breeder, or of the hatchery, the year and the order in which the bird was born can be inscribed in it. Example: A chick born in third place in 2010, raised by JHG, could have the following inscription on its ring: JHG 2010-3.

Chicks are usually **banded when they are nine days old** (Fox, 2009). There are several models and sizes. It is obvious that an American kestrel of 30cm and 100g will carry a different band than a four-kilogram owl.

When the bird is fully-grown, you can **complementarily put on them open bands** that are closed with a pair of pliers specially designed for that. In them, the **name and telephone number of the owner** can be included. This type of marking is very **useful in case the bird gets lost**.

#### Microchips

It is a small oval "device", about 8 mm long by 2 mm wide, which is **inserted either under the skin** or in the pectoral muscles of the bird (Fox, 2009).

They have an alphanumeric code that is read with a **special reader**. Its use is becoming widespread in many groups of animals and pets.

They have the disadvantage that they cannot be seen at first sight, and many times the Authorities (SEPRONA Agents, Forestry Agents) do not have readers with them in the field, reason why they sometimes cannot verify "in situ" the legal status of the bird.



**Necessary documentation the breeder must provide you with.**

**Captive breeding certificate (Certificate of registration in the SOIVRE)**

It is necessary to **certify** that specimens of species included in Regulation (CE) 338/97 have been **bred in captivity** or artificially propagated in accordance with Chapter XIII of **Regulation (CE) 865/2006**. This document must of course include the band number of each bird.

**Genetic test:**

This type of analysis is very similar to the paternity tests that are performed in humans. A feather or a **small blood sample** is taken from each bird, usually from the brachial vein, to isolate its **DNA** and extract its **genetic fingerprint**, which is unique to each individual (such as fingerprints). DNA or deoxyribonucleic acid carries all the genetic information of living things.

The genetic footprint of the chicks has to **correspond in a determined percentage** with the **genetic footprint extracted from the parents' DNA**, if this is not the case, the illegal origin of chicks may be suspected. They may have been extracted from Nature **All native species must undergo a genetic analysis** in order to be listed in the register of captive breeding of SOIVRE and obtain the CITES certificate if they are included in it.

**CITES Document:**

**CITES** stands for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Some species used in Falconry are included in this convention, so **the breeder** in these cases **must provide the new owner with the CITES document** stating that the bird has been born in captivity.

The species included in the CITES Convention are divided into three categories according to their conservation status in Nature (Appendices I, II and III).

CITES is a document that has to be **processed by the breeder.**

**ASSIGNMENT Document:**

It is that by which the breeder or previous owner, **"yields" the bird of prey to the new owner.** This document certifies that the bird has been delivered. In absence of it, an invoice can be issued.

**Documentation you must request once you buy the bird. REGISTRATION document in the corresponding Region.**

You must **register your bird** in your Environmental Department. **Without this record you will not be able to take your bird to the field.**

This is useful, since if your bird gets lost and ends in a Fauna Recovery Centre the band number will appear in the database of the Department and you will be able to **locate it to retrieve it.**

Detailed fact sheets about birds of prey used in falconry

**HAWKS: SHORTWINGS, BROADWINGS, EAGLE-OWL AND EAGLES.**

**Genuses Accipiter, Buteo, Parabuteo, Bubo and Aquila.**

NOTE: Lengths and wingspan data are based on ranges obtained from wild birds and not from birds born in captivity.

### Shortwing

#### GOSHAWK (*Accipiter gentilis*)



In the past this bird was recommended to beginners, today it is considered a **difficult bird**.

Autochthonous bird.

Eight subspecies spread throughout Europe, Asia and North America.

#### Character

**Strong and nervous.** Very impetuous. Great hunter.

#### Health

**Feathers are very delicate.** Especially tail feathers that break easily if they are not correctly handled. The use of tail-guards and suitable blocks is strongly recommended.

#### Physical Characteristics

##### Female:

- Size: 58-64cm.
- Wingspan: 108-127cm.
- Weight: 820-1500g.

##### Male:

- Size: 49-56 cm.
- Wingspan: 93-105cm.
- Weight: 510-1170g.

#### Type of preys

Males are valid for hunting both **feather and fur**. Females are especially suitable for rabbit and hares.

#### Where can they fly and hunt?

It does not need large spaces to hunt or be trained. As a forest bird, it develops magnificently in areas with scrub and woodland, although clearer areas are also valid.

Shortwing

EUROPEAN SPARROWHAWK (*Accipiter nisus*)



**Not at all recommended for beginners.**

It is one of the most **difficult birds to handle** and care for in Falconry.

Autochthonous bird.

Five subspecies.

**Character**

Very nervous, aggressive and enormously brave.

**Formidable hunter.** Pure predatory instincts.

Tends to carry in hand.

**Health**

**Very delicate for weight control**, since it has a very fast metabolism so if we are not careful it can lose weight quickly being in danger of starvation. Its' **feathers** are very delicate. Tail feathers break easily if the handling is not appropriate.

**Type of preys**

Purely ornithophagous. Indicated only for the hunting birds.

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

It **does not need large spaces** to hunt or be trained.

**Forest bird**, it develops perfectly in lands with thick vegetation. It prefers areas with scrub and woodland although areas clear of vegetation are also valid.

**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: 35-41cm.
- Wingspan: 67-80cm.
- Weight: 185-340g.

**Male:**

- Size: 29-34cm.
- Wingspan: 58-65cm.
- Weight: 110-200g.

Broadwing

### HARRIS HAWK (*Parabuteo unicinctus*)



**Strongly recommended for beginners** due to its good character, intelligence and being easy to handle.

Allochthon bird coming from South America and Central America.

Two subspecies.

#### Character

**Sociable and quiet. Grateful and easy to train.**

Very good hunter.

#### Health

**Very resistant.** Slow metabolism, so it gives a lot of room for reaction to mistakes in weight control. The feathers are not as delicate as those of the *Accipiter*.

#### Type of preys

**Very good hunter, agile and fast**, although the wind reduces its' effectiveness in hunting. Very suitable for **fur** (rabbit and hare). Introducing them to feather is difficult but not impossible.

#### Where can they fly and hunt?

It does not need large spaces to be trained or to hunt.

It can fly and hunt on all types of terrain.

#### Physical Characteristics

##### Female:

- Size: 50-60 cm
- Wingspan: 103-125cm.
- Weight: 750-1200g.

##### Male:

- Size: 50-60cm.
- Wingspan: 103-125cm.
- Weight: 450-750g.

**Broadwing**

**RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*)**



These birds can be recommended for beginners although Harris is better due to their character and easiness for the training.

Allochthon bird distributed throughout Central and South America. 14 subspecies.

**Character**

Intermediate between goshawks and Harris hawks.

**Health**

Generally very resistant.

**Hunting Skills**

Less agile than Harris and even less than Goshawks, however it is still a good hunter.

**Type of preys**

Valid for hunting fur (rabbit and hare).

**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: 50-65cm.
- Wingspan: 105-135cm
- Weight: 900-1460g.

**Male:**

- Size: 45-56cm.
- Wingspan: 105-135cm.
- Weight: 690-1300g.

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

It does not need large spaces to be trained or to hunt.

It can fly and hunt on land with and without trees.

**EAGLE - OWL (*Bubo bubo*)**



It is **not too suitable for beginners** given their large size and their usual stubbornness. Autochthonous bird.

14 subspecies.

**Character**

**Peaceful** if it is imprinted with humans. It is often stubborn and therefore it is difficult for them to learn our lessons. (Parry-Jones, 2001)

**Health**

Very **resistant** to everything.

**Hunting skills**

Adapted for the night although it can hunt during the day as verified by falconers who manage them daily. Its **agility and acceleration in flight** are surprising. It is very powerful, with great force in the claws.

**Type of preys**

Especially valid for hunting **fur**.

**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: 60-75cm.
- Wingspan: 160-188cm.
- Weight: 1750-4000g.

**Male:**

- Size: 60-75cm.
- Wingspan: 160-188cm.
- Weight: 1580-3000g.

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

It does not need large spaces to be trained or to hunt. It can fly and hunt on land with and without trees.

**GOLDEN EAGLE** (*Aquila chrysaetos*).



**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: hasta 80 cm.
- Wingspan: hasta 200 cm
- Weight: 3600-4600 g.

**Male:**

- Size: hasta 80 cm.
- Wingspan: hasta 200 cm
- Weight: 2650-3800 g.

**Not at all recommended for beginners** because of its **large size, difficult handling and training** in addition to needing large spaces to be flown.

Autochthonous birds, widely distributed through America, Asia, Europe and Africa.

6 subspecies.

**Character**

**Temperamental.** Sometimes aggressive. Huge strength and power.

**Health**

Very resistant. **Very slow metabolism** compared to other Falconry birds. They can go several days without eating. This occurs in all great eagles.

**Hunting skills**

**Great hunter.** In Falconry only the experts get to handle and hunt with these birds in flights from hand to hand.

**Type of preys**

**Always used for hunting fur.** The most hunted preys are hares, foxes, and even roe deer. The captures of wolves that are made by the Kazakh people are absolutely exceptional, occurring very rarely.

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

It requires big spaces to hunt and to be flown.

**LONGWING BIRDS. *Falco* genus.**

**NOTE:** Some species are not proper long wing birds, but are included here because they are included in the genus *Falco*.

		Longwing
<b>PEREGRINE FALCON (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)</b>		
	<p><b>Hawk less suitable for beginners</b> than other falconidae, given the time you must dedicate to them and the large spaces needed to get the most out of their flight.</p> <p>Cosmopolitan species.</p> <p>19 subspecies.</p>	
	<p><b>Character</b> Excellent. Peaceful.</p> <p><b>Health</b> Average delicacy, certainly <b>not the toughest of hawks</b> but not the most delicate either.</p> <p><b>Hunting skills</b> Excellent hunter. Good at <b>waiting on</b>. They can achieve impressive dives at great speeds. Always clutch their preys in the air.</p> <p><b>Type of prey</b> Ornithophagous. <b>Only hunt preys with feathers.</b></p>	
<p><b>Physical Characteristics</b></p> <p><b>Female:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Size: 46-51cm.</li><li>- Wingspan: 104-113cm.</li><li>- Weight: 850-1300g.</li></ul> <p><b>Male:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Size: 38-45cm.</li><li>- Wingspan: 89-100cm.</li><li>- Weight: 600-700g.</li></ul>	<p><b>Where can they fly and hunt?</b> It needs <b>large open spaces</b> to be trained and hunt, almost everyday.</p>	

**GYRFALCON** (*Falco rusticolus*)



Bird **not suitable for beginners** given its complicated training, large size, high price and difficult maintenance.

Allochthon species coming from northern Europe, America and Asia.

Four subspecies.

**Character**

**Strong**, it does not have the sweetness of the Peregrine, it is a bit rugged.

**Health**

Special care must be taken if they are fed with pigeons, as they are sensitive to aspergillosis. More than with any other hawk you must be careful with high temperatures.

**Hunting skills**

Very **good hunters**. Great persecutors. Without standing out they can achieve considerable heights.

**Type of preys**

Generally they hunt animal with feathers.

**Physical Characteristics**

The biggest falcon there is.

**Female:**

- Size: 56 cm.
- Wingspan: 120-130cm.
- Weight: 1300-2100g.

**Male:**

- Size: 53 cm.
- Wingspan: 110-120 cm.
- Weight: 850-1200g

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

It needs **large open spaces** to be trained and hunt.

SAKER FALCON (*Falco cherrug*)



**Bird suitable for beginners** who want to start flying hawks because of their austerity and resistance. Allochthon species coming from Asia, Africa and Europe where the falcon is very threatened. Two subspecies.

**Character**

He does not have the sweetness of the Peregrine. They are **impetuous** birds.

**Health**

**Very resistant**, Spartan hawk, not very delicate with food and its slow metabolism gives the falconer reaction margin if making any mistakes in weight control.

**Hunting skills**

They can hunt both in the air and on the ground.

**Type of preys**

They generally hunt preys with fur such as rabbits and hares if the terrain allows it.

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

It needs **large open spaces** to hunt and be trained; although it can also fly to the lure in smaller spaces.

**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: 55 cm.
- Wingspan: 120-130cm.
- Weight: 970-1300g.

**Male:**

- Size: 45 cm.
- Wingspan: 100-110 cm.
- Weight: 730-990g.

LANNER FALCON (*Falco biarmicus*)



**Highly recommended for beginners** who want to get started on the flight of falcons.

Allochthonous species although centuries ago it was bred in the south of Spain. Currently found in some areas of southern Europe and North Africa.

Five subspecies.

**Character**

**Excellent.** Very peaceful.

**Health**

Very resistant.

**Hunting skills**

It is not a great hunter when compared to other falcons. He is not the best, but he has the ability to ascend, though not as much as other falcons.

**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: 45-50 cm.
- Wingspan: 100-110cm.
- Weight: 700-900 g.

**Male:**

- Size: 35-40 cm.
- Wingspan: 90-100 cm.
- Weight: 500-600g.

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

It does not need large spaces to be trained.

**MERLIN** (*Falco columbarius*)



**Not at all recommended for beginners** given its difficult weight control and handling. This species does not reproduce in Spain but comes as wintering. Nine subspecies.

**Character**

**Nervous.** Impetuous. Tends to carry food in hand.

**Health**

Delicate birds with a **very fast metabolism.**

**Hunting skills**

It is an excellent hunter, very fast. Hunting small and medium-sized birds from hand to hand.

**Type of preys**

Ornithophagous. Only valid **for hunting preys with feathers.**

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

Being a tenacious persecutor, it needs **broad and clear spaces** to hunt and be trained.

**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: 25-30 cm.
- Wingspan: 50-62 cm.
- Weight: 150-300 g.

**Male:**

- Size: 25-30 cm.
- Wingspan: 150-300 cm.
- Weight: 125-250 g.

Longwing

**COMMON KESTREL** (*Falco tinnunculus*)



**Traditionally, an ideal bird to get started in Falconry**, especially to later leap to the flight of falcons. Autochthonous species.

11 subspecies.

**Character**

**Peaceful** and brave.

**Health**

Very **resistant**, its metabolism is "comfortable enough" allowing us making small mistakes.

**Hunting skills**

They almost never **hunt in Falconry**.

**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: 32-35 cm.
- Wingspan: 71-80 cm.
- Weight: 220-300 g.

**Male:**

- Size: 32-35 cm.
- Wingspan: 71-80 cm.
- Weight: 190-240 g.

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

Preferably cleared spaces. They do not have to be very large.

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*)



Very suitable for beginners because of its easy training, handling, low price and excellent character. Allochthon species widely distributed throughout the American continent.

**Character**

Very calm and peaceful. Brave.

**Health**

Although we must be very careful with weight control, it allows us more margin of error than other species such as the Sparrowhawk or the Merlin.

**Hunting skills**

Good little bird hunter in hand by hand although it does not reach the level of the Merlin or the Sparrowhawk. Tends to carry its food in hand.

**Type of preys**

Little birds.

**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: 25 cm.
- Wingspan: 55 cm.
- Weight: 90-120 g.

**Male:**

- Size: 25 cm.
- Wingspan: 55 cm.
- Weight: 90-120 g.

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

It adapts to all types of environments. It does not need large spaces to hunt or be trained.

APLOMADO FALCON (*Falco femoralis*)



**Beginners can start** with this bird but there are others more recommendable due to its **high price**.  
Allochthon bird spread throughout broad areas in South America.

**Character**

Very peaceful, calm and brave bird.

**Health**

**Resistant.** We must watch the weight although it is not as delicate in this aspect as other species of the same genus.

**Hunting skills**

Excellent hunter for **feathers**. Fast and with a great capability to manoeuvre due to its long tail. He is very tenacious in the persecutions.

**Type of preys**

Specialists in the hunting of birds. Excellent for hunting common magpies (*Pica pica*).

**Physical Characteristics**

**Female:**

- Size: 41-45 cm.
- Wingspan: 93-102 cm.
- Weight: 310-460 g.

**Male:**

- Size: 35-39 cm.
- Wingspan: 78-84 cm.
- Weight: 208-305 g.

**Where can they fly and hunt?**

It does not need large spaces to be trained, although for hunting it needs wide areas as it can carry out long chases.

HYBRIDS



An individual descended from **two different species** is what we call hybrid.

We could write another manual just by talking about hybrids, so here we are just going to give some generalities.

The different **hawk hybridizations** have been more or less successful for hunting. Gyr x peregrine hybrids became very popular amongst longwingers because they are **excellent pursuers and have a great heart in the hunt.**

Some of them have a special character and can play tricks on us during the training as they seek their skills to take us to their land.

Well managed they are magnificent for hunting.

Many hybrids require **less investment in time** to the falconer than some pure species when training them and are in optimal conditions for hunting.

They are generally used for hunting preys with feathers and are quite health resistant.

Short wing hybridizations have also been performed but are less popular, perhaps because they have not been as successful as hawk-produced hybridizations.



# **III** Implications of becoming a falconer

**Authors: Javier Ceballos Aranda**

**Rodrigo García Sigüero**

If you want to become a falconer above all you need to feel **passion for this way of hunting**. It does not only does it have to attract you but **it has to excite you emotionally**. At first, **it may seem attractive** to have a bird of prey, go out to fly it and hunt, but without the passion we are speaking about, after months, when you really realize the **sacrifice** it implies, it can become a nightmare. At the end you are discouraged and sadly, the bird ends up being the most impacted.

**Before acquiring a bird of prey, you should look in the mirror and answer a series of questions:**

**Do you know the characteristics of the bird you intend to have?**

It is crucial to **know and understand the way of life** of their wild relatives. This way we can assure their well-being.

**Do you know the characteristics of the preys you intend to hunt?**

To be a falconer you must have **naturalistic spirit** and know the fauna surrounding you.

You must **perfectly identify the species that you can hunt** in accordance with the regulations in force in your Autonomous Community.

On the other hand, in hunting slips, the falconer acquires an important role. He has to **help his bird**, since the prey are in their natural environment and they know their environment perfectly, they know where to hide, where and how to escape... Everyday they pass the survival test.

As a falconer you must **analyse the terrain** and in many occasions, **develop a strategy** within seconds, to hit the right moment and catch the prey. You also have to ensure the safety of your bird during the slip. If preys run towards a fence or light pole, etc., **it could get injured or killed by a miscalculation of yours**.

**Do you know all the needs your bird has?**

The fearful character of the raptors makes them **delicate in their handling and care**. They need shade, high quality food, *sunbathing* and bathing to take care of their plumage.

All the necessities of a raptor require **important logistics** in the form of infrastructure, diverse material, food and time.



**Are you sufficiently ready to handle your bird?**

This is a question you must answer to yourself. **Always look through the bird** to make such an important decision and always keep in mind that **the bird is not at your service, but that you are at the service of your bird**. If you do not agree with this sentence we recommend that you do not consider being a falconer.

Respect for the bird is one of the great pillars on which Falconry rests. Their handling must be extremely careful throughout their lives, 365 days a year. These good practices will build the character of your bird, its happiness and its effectiveness in hunting.

**Do you have the logistics and the time?**

The falconer needs certain equipment (*falconry glove, whistle, vest, lure, receiver unit, box cage...*) and tools for the bird (*jesses, bells, hood, leash, transmitter, bench / perch*).

There must be a space in the house that gives the raptor excellent conditions (garden, terrace or similar) where it can sunbathe, have some shade and be able to bathe regularly in clean and fresh water.

You must have access to an **area where it can fly** daily.

It is essential to have a **conditioned way of transport** to bring birds and equipment to the flying site.



It is necessary to establish contact with owners of estates or hunter societies and to argue (if applicable) that your training and hunting activity will not have any negative impact on the distribution, abundance and density of available preys.

During the time of moult (spring-summer) it is convenient for the bird to stay in a quiet place (mew). Throughout the year, you will daily have to provide him with fresh food with feathers/fur and bones. You will need a reliable supplier and a freezer cabinet for storage.

Regarding your economy you will have to reserve a certain amount for veterinary checks and unforeseen (illness, accidents, etc.)

The **availability of time** is absolutely key. It is impossible to have a bird of prey in optimum conditions without devoting daily time to it. The number of hours required depend to a great extent on the species we are training/hunting with. At the beginning of the training any bird will demand some extra time from us. Do not forget to clean and maintain the facilities.

Are you aware of how being a falconer can condition your life?

The decision to become a falconer should not be taken lightly or in a hurry. The best way to justify the existence of Falconry is that anyone who practices it will keep its bird in the best conditions, and this means going out to fly on a daily basis. It is better to act as a **falconer apprentice**, accompanying, for a season, a falconer in exercise than to jump into acquiring a bird to see what it implies.



Reviewing three testimonies we can get an idea of **what becoming a falconer means**:

**Vital Aza**, pioneer of modern Spanish Falconry, responded this in the mid-XX century when asked for its' advice for the new generations:

"... I would tell the future falconer that this is a very difficult art. If he does not have a true vocation, he will not obtain anything, except for destroying a bird. The true falconer has to devote a lot of time to its' bird. Falconry requires space near home to hunt and train. But above all, the falconer must acknowledge that a bird demands constant attention 365 days a year".

**Miguel Delibes** (1987), explains how in a falconry event he was invited to, his host defined Falconry as a **"Voluntary form of slavery"**.

On his side, master falconer **Aurelio Pérez** (1997) stated:

"Who is insane enough to mortgage his free time for life, trying to find the difficult balance between his hobby, his work and his married life or family?"



Caring for a raptor and keeping it in good conditions for hunting requires **high doses of perseverance, patience, time and effort**, 365 days a year.

Vacations, trips, dinners, work, family, expenses, everything is conditioned by having a Falconry raptor. Behind the falcon's gratifying stoop or the goshawk's impetuous persecution, there are **many hours of hard work and effort** on the part of his human companion and often his family as well. That is why it is good to know what goes on behind the scenes, which is not appreciated in a day of flight exhibitions in which everything goes smoothly, to assess if you are willing to face the necessary sacrifice.

#### **The profile of a good falconer**

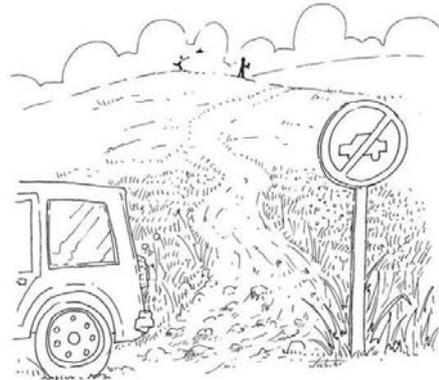
The "**Code of Honour of the Falconer**" can be considered as a foundation, collected in the Madrid *Falconry Club* presided by Vital Aza in 1954:

1. Consider your bird as a friend and not as a server.
2. Ensure its' health and well being.
3. Respect and defend its' wild relatives.
4. If your falcon gets lost, persevere in the search.
5. If, for some reason, you have to abandon your bird, never hand it to someone with no experience.
6. When hunting, shorten the prey's pain.
7. Respect the laws, be noble a good sport and loyal.

At the **roundtables held in May 2011**, under the Ministry of Culture grant (sgpph/AE22/2010), the **"FALCONER ETHICAL CODE"** was drafted. It is a good reference to develop **good practices on the road to excellence in the practice of Falconry**. It is structured in 5 sections:

1. **Before acquiring a bird of prey.**
2. **The falconer and his bird.**
3. **The falconer and hunting.**
4. **The falconer and everyone else.**
5. **The falconer and the law.**

This code can be consulted at the end of this chapter.



The current falconer must **be aware of the history that precedes him and his responsibility** to maintain the cultural heritage that Falconry constitutes for generations to come. Responsibility is even higher now that UNESCO has recognised Falconry as cultural heritage. **Ethics in the practice of this art is the best argument for its survival.**

#### **Bird choice: long wing and short wing birds**

The choice of the species with which you are going to share a large part of your life should be preceded by the **assessment of a series of points**:

1. Your **experience**.
2. If the **species in question is legally accepted as a Falconry bird** in the Autonomous Community where you are at. Regarding sex, remember that in the case of allochthonous birds, there are still some Autonomous Communities that only allow the practice of Falconry with female specimens. For example, to date, it is forbidden to fly males of Harris hawks in Castilla y León.
3. Availability of **time and hunting area** not only in the short but also in the long term. Take into account that the life expectancy of a Harris hawk, a falcon or a goshawk, exceeds the decade by far.
4. What do you **intend to obtain from the bird in question**; hunting partridges, hunting magpies, hunting hares or rabbits, breeding.



The **type of breeding is a factor to be taken into account** as many birds are susceptible of screaming and developing aggressiveness when **incorrectly imprinted** by men. As soon as they are hungry, they will **not stop screaming and claiming for their food**, in some cases, bothering the neighbours. If you decide to take on a bird imprinted with the man, make sure that this type of breeding has been carried out by someone expert, if not, you run the **risk of acquiring an aggressive bird**.



In choosing the bird you have to take into consideration **the genetic lines and the type of breeding**. These two aspects can not be changed, so you have to be sure when deciding. You must remember that in the end, **the bird is made by the falconer**, and the defects that it may carry from its training will be his fault in 99% of the cases. When you see someone excusing himself for the defects of his bird, suspect he is almost certainly not a good falconer.

According to Fox (1995), **factors that determine the behaviour of a bird of prey** are of four types:



To know about the learned factors **it is not enough with a quick observation on the day of the purchase**. It is necessary to count on the **information collected by the breeder**.

The on going question about whether long wing or short wing bird flight is more beautiful and rewarding, can be answered with a single sentence: **Each one has its tastes**. The best way to get to know your preferences, is to **observe these two modalities**, accompanying **experienced falconers** during several hunting days.

Only then, experiencing it first-hand, can you really know what attracts you the most. As we will see, many times in Falconry **what we like most is not always what we can practice**.

Preferences aside, the **determining factors for getting started in one modality** or another are:

**Type of hunting grounds** available.

**Preys** you may want to pursue.

The **time and space** available.

**Previous experiences**.



As an example, partridge-hawking usually requires more time and dedication than hunting rabbits with a Harris.

#### **Satisfactions and commitments of a falconer**

If you are considering the idea of becoming a falconer you can **contrast the advantages/satisfactions and the commitments/difficulties** it involves:

#### Advantages/Satisfactions

- **Direct contact with Nature.**
- Create a bond of **friendship and complicity** with your bird.
- Being able to daily **contemplate the flight and the form of hunting** of predators with high degree of specialization.
- Share **unforgettable moments with other falconers**. You can admire with intensity the other birds' slips, sometimes, as if they were your own, due to the great companionship created.

#### Commitments/difficulties

1. **100% DEDICATION.** Once you fully enter the world of Falconry, you realize that your life starts revolving around it.

When you **gain experience** and things start going your way, that is when Falconry begins to be a **lifestyle**, it then seems impossible to separate your "normal facet" from your "falconry facet", both become a fusion that nothing and no one can undo.

When you reach this emotional level, even if you stop having birds, **you will always feel a falconer**. You will always long for the moment to go out on the field with your birds, imagine impossible slips and during the moult your biggest desire will be for the hunting season to arrive.

**Immediately go to the vet.** A **sick bird** can die in a matter of hours so it will **need to be treated immediately**, we cannot wait until the next day to go to the veterinarian. You will probably have to drive long hours at inconvenient times in order to save its life. The truth is, very few veterinarians know about birds of prey.

**Lost and stolen.** Birds can **get lost** in hunting slips or due to by carelessness. They can also be stolen. If the loss was caused by carelessness we must learn from it, so that it does not happen again. If the bird got lost in the field we must **do the impossible to find it**. You will probably have to keep searching for it for days, no matter the hours it may take.



### Recommendations

- If when you acquired your bird, your veterinarian certified that it was a **healthy specimen** and now it has **health problems, responsibility is most certainly yours.**
- If you purchased an untrained bird ("untouched") and now it carries food in hand, it mangles the food, it is disobedient and/or a bad hunter, sure it is your responsibility.
- Falconry has to be your **passion**, if not, you should avoid owning a raptor.
- **A raptor is not a pet.** If you have made the decision of owning a bird of prey you must be very aware of the commitment you acquire.
- **Get in touch with Falconry step by step.** Books, falconry events or associations can help introduce you into this world.
- **Share your concerns with a falconer** who can introduce you into his day-to-day activity.
- **Be humble and accept advice.** Long tradition falconers always continue to learn from their **peers.** Do not ever think you are already a great falconer for having flown a bird in a more or less successful way.
- **Make sure you can afford becoming a falconer** so that no innocent living being has to "pay" for your mistakes.

If you have read this and still feel passionate about the idea of becoming a falconer, wanting to overcome all the difficulties that it entails, you are on the right track. If you have had the slightest doubt, better have patience and wait until you are more prepared.

*ETHICAL CODE OF THE FALCONER*

*"Falconry is the traditional hunting art of caring for and training birds of prey to hunt free wild animals in their natural environment."*

*The following ethical code was written by a group of people experienced in Falconry, during the round tables organized by the Falconry Delegate of the Ministry of Culture. It intends to advance in the way towards the excellence in the practice of Falconry.*

*This document helps any beginner in Falconry or in the handling of birds of prey. It serves as a reminder to those who already practice Falconry or who already own birds of prey. It also informs anyone who is interested in knowing the main rules that we establish in the care of our birds. It shows those who do not approve or do not understand the reasons why birds of prey are handled, that we always have in mind the greater welfare of the birds.*

*Due to the dynamic nature of Falconry, this text is subjected to future updates.*

*The present Falconer Ethics Code, whilst serving as a reference in the path to excellence in the practice of falconry, it does not pretend to be binding or obligatory for its practice.*

*I) Before acquiring a bird of prey*

- 1. Accompany someone with experience in the management of birds of prey to know the implications of maintaining a healthy bird. Evaluate for as long as necessary if you are prepared and resourceful enough to purchase a bird.*
- 2. Learn and inform yourself. Attend a good falconry course, become a member of an accredited association and seek the advice of an experienced falconer. As a complement, research in books and videos on the subject. Distrust and contrast the information you can find on the Internet.*

3. *Anticipate. Have everything ready (tooling, vehicle, hunting ground, schedule work in order to have available time...) before acquiring a bird.*
4. *Prepare facilities ahead of time. They must be protected against dogs, foxes, cats, rats, etc. and humans. They must have adequate protection considering the weather conditions, be free of humidity and have easy disinfection. In the case of isolated chambers, all areas must be visible from the outside through hatches or mirrors. The rooms for loose or untrained birds should have a double access door system to prevent leaks. Windows, roofs and equipment should be designed so that they do not injure the birds. During moulting it is preferable that the birds remain loose. Facilities should be designed in order to minimize contamination of the food by droppings. The danger of birds eating ancient remains of meat should be noted.*
5. *The equipment of the bird must be appropriate to its species and size, prioritizing comfort and safety. The use of Aylmeri wristbands is recommended. Hunting jesses will be worn in the hunting season without an eyelet. Regular inspections and examinations of Falconry tools are essential. The danger of handling and prematurely equipping young birds whose bones have not yet calcified should be considered. Make sure that the hood does not cause discomfort in the eyes or while eating.*
6. *A clear and fresh water supply should regularly be available for birds.*
7. *A varied, hygienically preserved and continuously available meal must be prepared before acquiring a bird. The food should be fresh and free of pellets (lead). Evaluate if you need the usual freezer cabinet.*
8. *At any time (apart from hunting season), a bird may need to be transported. The shuttle or transport box should allow the bird to remain upright in a relaxed manner, without touching the walls. You must maintain enough darkness to allow the bird to calm down. During hot seasons, it is essential to avoid birds being*

*Exposed to extremely high temperatures. It is better to transport them with an empty stomach. A fat and nervous bird is more susceptible of suffering stress.*

- 9. Select the species and the sex of the bird depending on the regulations in force in your Autonomous Community, your experience, and the hunting ground you may have available.*
- 10. Before acquiring your bird locate a veterinarian specializing in birds of prey. As soon as you purchase it you must perform a complete check-up to verify the state in which you receive it from the breeder/previous owner.*
- 11. Contrast the origin of the bird you are going to acquire. Make sure it meets all legal requirements and is perfectly identified (closed band, microchip, ...) and documented.*
- 12. If you are breeder be aware of the needs of the market and do not produce unnecessary birds. Strive to produce healthy, quality birds. Make sure that potential buyers are properly prepared and experienced to maintain their own birds.*

#### *II) The falconer and his bird*

- 1. Have the utmost respect for your bird, putting his well-being ahead of your own.*
- 2. The stress in the initial manning stages should be minimized to the maximum.*
- 3. Inform the competent authorities you are in possession of a bird. Keep it well identified and if possible include your phone number too; in case of loss, it will speed up its recovery.*
- 4. Minimize risks to avoid losing your bird. If that is the case, do everything in your power to get it back.*
- 5. Do not have more birds than those you can attend in optimum conditions.*
- 6. Periodically check the tools of each bird. Clean and disinfect the perch, check wristlets, jesses, swivel, leash.*

*III) The falconer and hunting*

- 1. Before flying a bird you must always obtain the permission of the landowner, as well as all the documents required by current regulations. Make sure you do not disturb third parties.*
- 2. Efforts must be made to ensure that the bird catches allowed preys.*
- 3. Falconer groups will take appropriate precautions when one bird is flown in the vicinity of another. Usually only one bird should be released at a time. Find out if there are other falconers flying in the area.*
- 4. Enjoy the slip even if your bird ends up losing the prey.*
- 5. Admire and respect the preys that manage escape and learn from it for the next time.*
- 6. Shorten the preys' suffering.*
- 7. Be noble in the hunt, being fair to the prey, giving them a chance. Dignify your bird and its prey, looking for the difficult slip, which is usually the most beautiful.*
- 8. It helps to preserve the natural environment in its broadest sense. Leave the field better than you found it.*
- 9. Learn to identify the species that populate your hunting ground.*
- 10. At the end of the day of hunting, birds should be fed, if necessary dried and placed in a safe place before attending other needs or to oneself.*

*IV) The falconer and everyone else*

- 1. Falconry constitutes in Spain, and many other countries, a Cultural Heritage recognized by UNESCO. Take responsibility as a transmitter of good practice to future generations.*
- 2. Help other falconers when they need it. Be proactive in your falconry association. Provide your time, work and experience for the sake of Falconry.*
- 3. It seeks to maintain traditions, being also open to technical improvements.*
- 4. Take care of the image you give of Falconry. Look after its well being rather than your visibility. If your bird is not in good*

*conditions avoid presenting it publicly. Try to derive the public declarations towards an agreed spokesperson. Take care of both the way you express yourself and your outfit.*

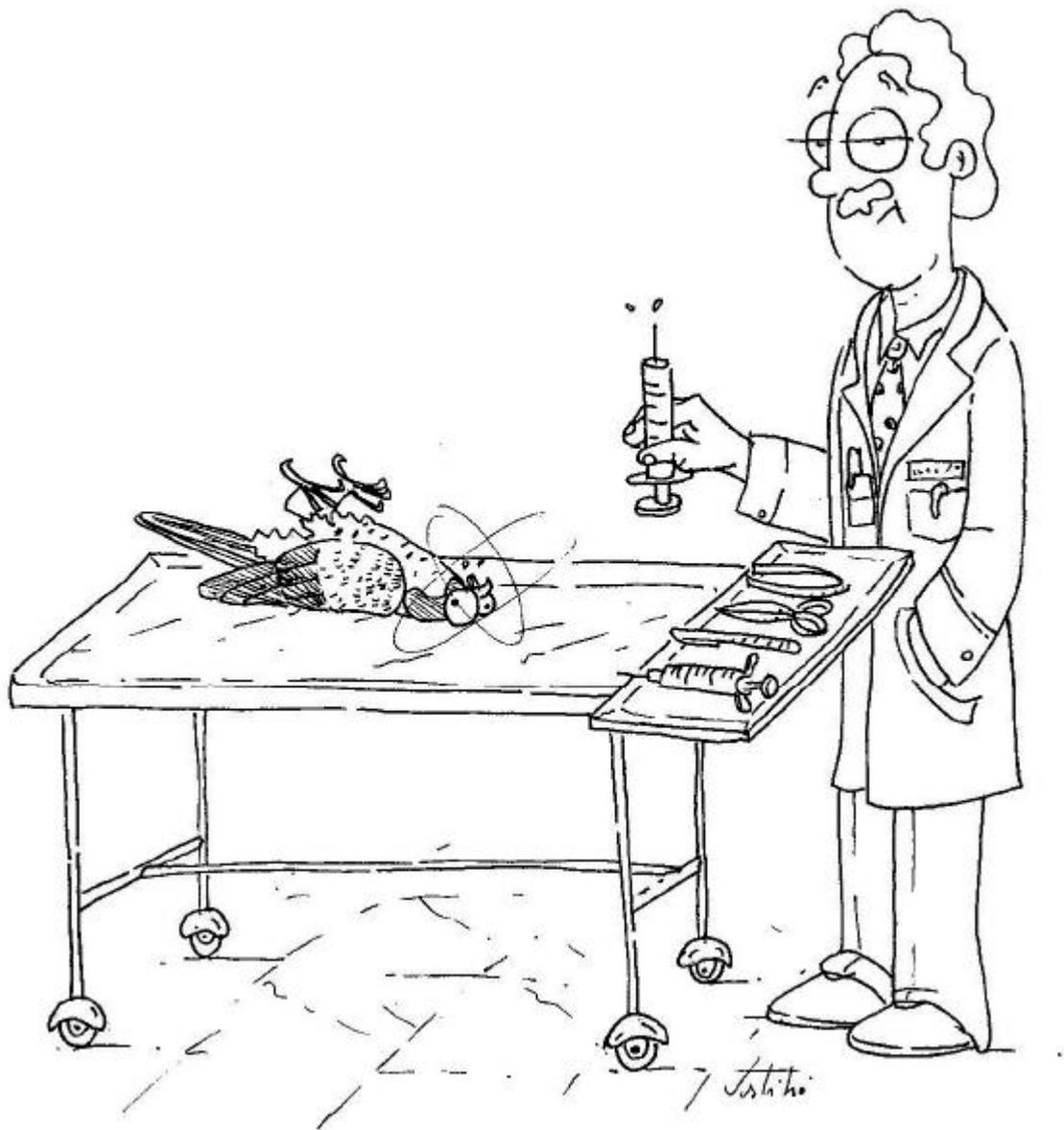
- 5. In case of using bagged game, try to make it as close as possible to the real hunting experience, giving him options of escape.*
- 6. Do not encourage the inexperienced to be a falconer. Guide and instruct those who have decide it for themselves after deep consideration.*
- 7. Be kind and educated with the people you meet in the field.*
- 8. Be conversational and conciliatory with falconers and other people who do not share your ideas.*
- 9. Collaborate with other colleagues to improve the image of Falconry, while at the same time disseminating this ethics code among all those who do not know it.*

#### *V) The falconer and the law*

- 1. Know, respect and enforce the laws, denouncing their non-compliance.*
- 2. Collaborate with the competent authorities.*
- 3. Defend your rights as a falconer without forgetting your duties.*
- 4. Report deficiencies in the management of birds.*
- 5. Ease the examinations your birds must have before the administration.*
- 6. Suggests new ideas that help practicing Falconry in the framework of Excellence.*



One of the group of falconers involved in drafting the ethical code



# IV Bird's health in Falconry

Author: Marino García Montijano

**Birds of prey have evolved for millennia as specialized predators, forcing them to be very demanding in maintaining their health and fitness. Any alteration of your metabolism can lead to health problems.**

You must know **the biology and management of your bird** in order to interpret what you observe in them every day. Diseases and other **health problems are often linked to inadequate management and/or deficiencies in hygiene or food**, fundamental pillars of health. If we do not make mistakes in these three aspects we will avoid many future problems.

This chapter does not provide detailed information about diseases and their treatments, but instead, it provides the falconer with basic rules on **disease prevention** and other health issues in our birds. After all, it is better to be safe than sorry.

### **Nutrition**

**During the hunting season**, birds of prey have a **very high caloric requirement**, a characteristic that must be taken into account by the falconer especially in adverse climatology situations.

**During the moult** the **nutritional requirements will have to be completely covered**. The **quality of the feathers** will depend on many factors (a **very important one is the diet**) during its development ("blood feathers"), reason why in this period we must pay special attention to its growth. Raptors need a **good plumage to develop their full potential** in the field.

It is very important to provide them with a **balanced and varied diet of high quality food**. If it is offered as **"live" or freshly slaughtered food**, it is **not necessary to supplement it with vitamins or minerals**, but attention must be paid to the transmission of diseases, especially parasitic diseases.



Our advice is to feed the birds with **food that has been frozen** (between 24 and 48 hours) and **supplement their diet with adequate nutritional complexes**. This way, by achieving low temperatures, we will eliminate most of the parasites, which constitute one of the main affections in Falconry raptors.

#### **Fresh food**

The animal destined as fresh food must be **sacrificed immediately before offering it as food**. In case of being a bird, it is important to remove the flight feathers, head, legs and crop, especially when we use pigeons. We will have to **open the abdominal cavity of the quarry and check for any symptoms of disease** (white spots in the liver, nodules in the intestines, or any other anomaly).

If you see anything that makes you **suspect of an illness**, it is preferable to **dismiss the piece**. If the inspection is satisfactory, the intestines and the digestive tract must be removed, leaving the liver and the heart.

#### **Frozen food**

You have to **avoid feeding your bird on offal products and poultry prepared for human consumption** (chicken, quail...). This diet is **very poor in essential nutrients**. In addition, you run the risk of infecting your bird with bacteria that usually disappears when cooked for humans.

There are specialized companies that provide frozen food of good quality. You must realize that freezing food over a long period of time reduces its vitamins content, so we strongly recommend keeping the food frozen **for up to 2 months at -20 °C**.



**Food should be defrosted a certain way**, and not by leaving it in the sun or heating it. These procedures carry a **dangerous increase in the number of bacteria** and sometimes the production of lethal toxins caused by them. **Defrosting should be done slowly** in the refrigerator at 4 ° C or very quickly in boiling water.

#### Nutritional deficiencies

The usual diet offered to raptors normally provides sufficient levels of protein, carbohydrates and fats, so most of the deficiencies are due to **lack of vitamins or minerals**. If this occurs, we will see a **loss of colour in the skin** (poor feather condition, beak or toes).

On many occasions these deficiencies are responsible for the illness of our raptor since its first barrier of the immune system (mucous, skin ...), does not work effectively, because of its poor conditions.

For example **vitamin D is essential for the absorption and utilization of calcium**, as well as to provide calcium to the bones. A poor diet in this vitamin leads to weak bones and an increased risk of bone fractures. Birds of prey acquire this important vitamin when exposed to **direct sunlight**.

It is necessary to **expose birds to the sunlight a few hours every day**. Raptors that stay indoors, without direct exposure to sunlight, require a regular supplement of this vitamin D in their diet.

#### Water

Birds lack *sweat glands* so water evaporation is mostly done through the mouth and the skin. They need a **daily supply of water**, especially in periods of stress and exercise.

Get the birds a **bath with drinking water** and keep it in proper hygiene conditions. On hot days, you can spray your birds with water, and even wet your their for better hydration.

To check the degree of hydration, **take a pinch of the back of the claw**. If the skin is bent for more than 2 seconds, the bird needs to hydrate. If this condition persists for more than 24 hours, in spite of having offered water to the bird, it is advisable to take it to the veterinarian before the problems become worse.



### **Pellet**

Pellets are considered a mechanism of defence of the organism to be able to **expel indigestible remains of their food** (feathers, some bones, cereal of the crop of the prey, exoskeletons of insects, fish scales...).

A raptors diet should include feathers and bones, just as it happens for their wild relatives. **Before receiving a new meal, the bird must have expelled the pellet.** Some will refuse to eat, if they have not expelled the pellet previously. If the day before we have administered a large quantity of indigestible remains, it is preferable to leave the raptor without hood, or with a very large one, to allow the passage of the pellet.

Do not feed skin, feathers or bones to weakened or dehydrated birds as they are usually weak and we will complicate their digestion. In these cases, we will provide our bird with "lean" food (quail's breast...) or even one day old bare chicks with no head and no legs but keeping all their yolk.

If the pellet **spends too much time in the digestive tract**, there can be a dangerous increase of the bacteria population, even production of toxins that could kill the bird.

### **Rangles**

The stomach mucous of the birds, is covered with a **koilin** cuticle, a layer that prevents the acidic *pH*, typical of raptors, from damaging their digestive tract. This layer sometimes grows excessively reducing the feeling of hunger in the bird.

To **reduce the thickness of this cuticle**, provide the bird a few rangles (6-8) the size of a chickpea (for peregrine falcons) after a light meal. These **small stones clean the digestive tract** during the night and the bird will expel them the next day. After this process, you can give them indigestible material again, so that they can form the pellet. This practice should not be performed more than once every 15 days.



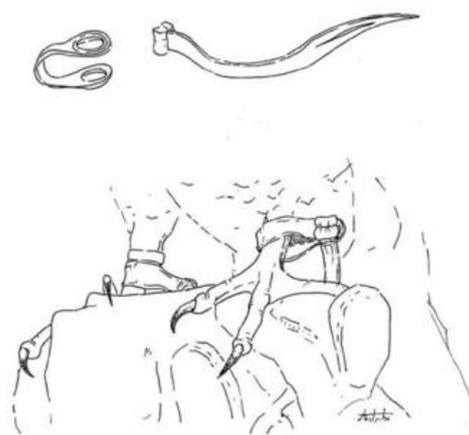
### Recommendations on the management of raptors

#### Falconer's equipment and material

It is strongly recommendable to use a **different glove for each of your birds of prey**, in order to prevent possible transmission of diseases. After the bird eats in the glove, you must clean it and apply an effective and safe disinfectant.

Use a **suitable hood**, which will not damage its eyes, or its beak, or produce excessive condensation. **We will never use one bird's hood for another bird.**

**Jesses must properly fit the tarsus of the bird, be soft and with rounded edges** to prevent injuries in the legs. The state of the jesses will have to be reviewed often for several reasons. One very important reason is to avoid leaks, and the other is to prevent old hardened jesses from damaging the delicate skin of the legs.



Aylmeri jesses

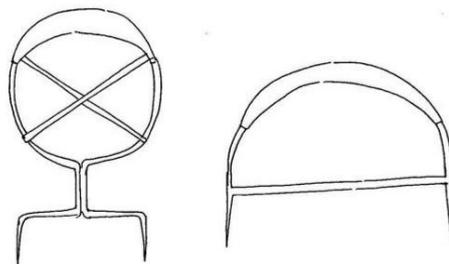


Classic jesses

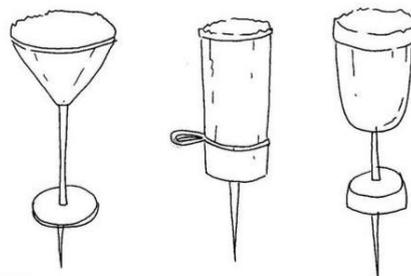
If you see any injury caused by jesses, remove them as soon as possible and assess the severity of the injuries, to decide whether or not it is necessary to go to a specialist veterinarian. Infections in this area can damage the tendons, with loss of functionality of one or several toes.

The use of **Aylmeri jesses** is recommended in order to **minimize the risk of hooking** with any elements that could be found in the field.

The falcon blocks should be **appropriate to the type of bird** we are handling. You always have to keep them in the best conditions. They should be **cleaned of organic remains and disinfected** at least once a week.



Tie the bird properly to the perch, to prevent it from becoming entangled and damaged, to escape, or to injure other birds of prey. There are several methods and we recommend consulting expert falconers on this important topic.



It is also recommended to have an **"anti-loss system"** when birds are in the garden. The meshes used for scaffold construction are very useful.

### Facilities



**Good ventilation** is essential to avoid excess of dust and moisture that could cause our bird breathing problems. Keep the birds in clean and clear places to avoid entanglement, either in the garden or in a *mew*.

**Dense population of birds should be avoided in the same facility**, unless it allows it due to its large size and resources.

Always check the area where you place the birds to avoid the presence of sharp objects (nails, wires, cement remains...) that can cause injuries.

If any bird shows **symptoms of illness you have to isolate it from the others** and handle it once you have finished working with the rest.

During the **resting season**, it is advisable to keep the **raptors loose in their mews** so that they can exercise. This method has proven to be effective in preventing *bumblefoot*.

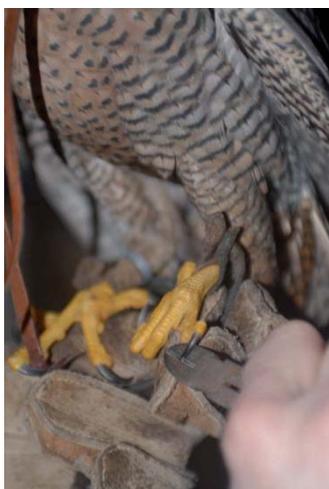
#### Beak and claw maintenance

Most captive raptors need **periodic beak and claws maintenance** to keep them in good conditions. A long beak can make very difficult the food intake for the bird as well as cause it to fracture.



In order to avoid excessive beak growth, it is recommendable to periodically provide the bird with

*tiring* that **naturally wear it away**. Excessive nail growth can lead to bumblefoot, difficulty when catching preys and even the loss of the nail sheath.



If the bird loses the nail keratin sheath you should clean the wound immediately, apply slight pressure to stop the bleeding and put a dressing before taking it to the vet. Depending on the severity of the injury and if there is no excessive damage to the bone and epithelium, the nail will regrow after a few months.

**Nails that are excessively short or rounded**, are often an indicator of **problems in the handling**, usually caused by excessive bating due to inadequate soil. If this happens, the bird will suffer and it will have **difficulty holding its prey**.

#### Imping

The **good condition of the feathers is essential for the flight**. If the plumage is damaged, the bird will have to make an extra effort to obtain the same effect that it can achieve with a perfect plumage. Every aspect of their flight will be affected by this, therefore their effectiveness will not be the same. The **plumage of our bird speaks volumes about its handling and its physical state**.

Every falconer should **take good care of the plumage** of their bird (entrance in the car, return to his perch, correct "gardening", feeding, baths of sun and water).

When flight feathers are damaged, **imp them as quickly as possible to avoid damage** and the breakage of the neighbouring feathers, since a broken feather can produce a "domino effect" on the rest as they protect each other. In addition, you will achieve more effectiveness in the flight. Given that the feather is a dead element, imping it **does not cause problems** after all, this **technique has been used for centuries**.



#### Special handling during adverse weather

##### High temperatures and humidity

These conditions **can generate great stress**, especially in species from cold and dry climates (gyrfalcon, snowy owls...).

A "**heat stroke**" means that the bird has not been able to cool properly and maintains a very high temperature. It will appear with the **open beak, raised respiratory rate and fallen wings**.

If we see our bird in this situation, we must act quickly, wetting it (mainly the inner down) and placing it in a cool place to enable the lowering of temperature. Wetting the claws also helps in these situations.



In times of excessive heat you have to exercise extreme caution when traveling. You cannot leave a bird inside a car in the sun or with high temperatures. A "**heat stroke**" can occur **in as soon as 5 minutes**.

##### Low temperatures and humidity

This is not usually a problem for most of the northern hemisphere raptors, but it is for some species from the southern cone (*Falco deiroleucus*...).

During the really cold days, you may have the misfortune of your bird getting wet, by falling in a pond with the prey, fight on wet ground when capturing... existing the risk of hypothermia.

A **first symptom of hypothermia is observed when the bird shivers**, being drenched exposing much of its skin. In these cases, you **must stop the flight** and take the bird as quickly as possible to the vehicle, where you must **turn on the heating** to dry it as fast as possible.

During winter nights, temperatures can reach several degrees below zero. Under these conditions, birds can drain their caloric reserves suffering the consequences of hypothermia.

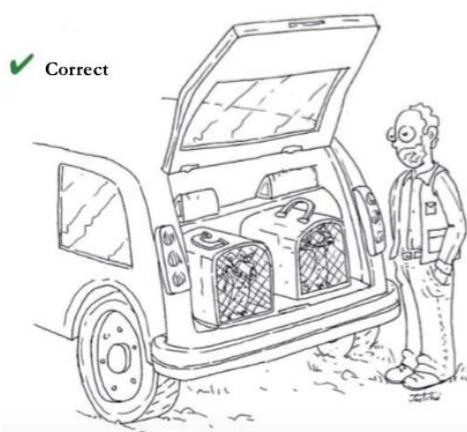
This **problem is far more pronounced within species of fast metabolism**, such as the European Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*), the Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) or the American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*). A rigorous control of the weight is essential in order to avoid problems.

### Transportation



Fix the **block inside the car parallel to the line of movement** in such a way that it can not move. It is vital to maintain adequate ventilation and temperature inside the vehicle.

Birds should **preferably travel hooded and tied**, inside **individual transport boxes**.



Any bird that does not travel hooded, must be placed in dark opaque transport boxes, very well ventilated. To avoid leaks, it is advisable keep the tip of the leash available in order to secure it when the boot opens.

**Never carry birds in a way that can affect the driving of the vehicle.**

### Disinfection and hygiene

The place where your bird lives must be **kept clean everyday**. This includes removing leftover food, cleaning faeces, and making sure there is always clean water for drinking and bathing.

A **periodic disinfection**, with disinfectants of proven use in raptors (weekly or biweekly) helps preventing infectious diseases.



Remember that the more you extreme the hygiene measures, the lower the likelihood of illness. An **annual microbiological review of the facility and drinking water** is an excellent method to control possible disease agents and vectors of disease, and you also ensure that the hygiene measures you are taking are the right ones.

### Diseases and prevention

The **choice of a healthy bird of prey** (good genetics, correct breeding...) is the first step towards disease prevention.

The purchase agreement may be subject to a successful examination by a specialist veterinarian. **Veterinary checks are recommended at the beginning and end of the flight season**. This will prevent health problems resulting from incorrect weight management or poor handling.



### Vaccination

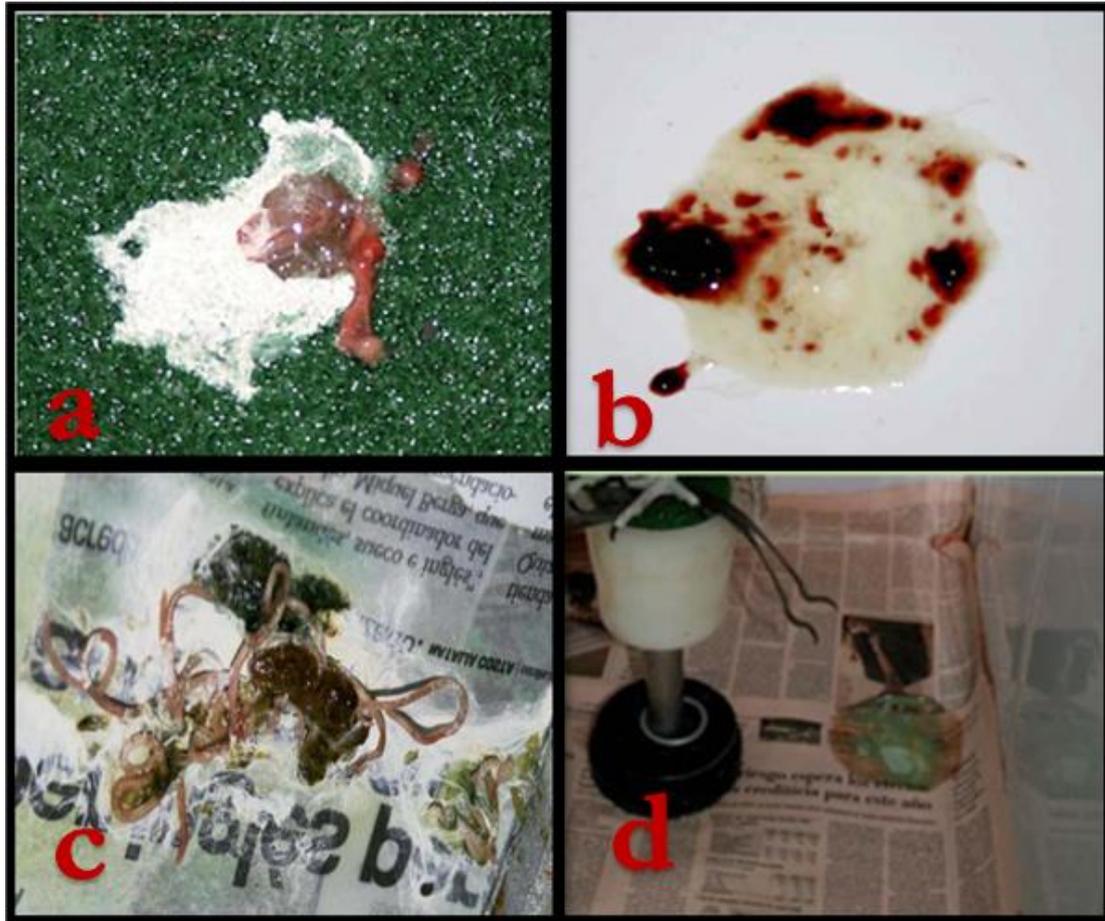


Unfortunately, **there are few safe and effective vaccines** for birds of prey. Newcastle disease (*Paramyxovirus*) has an effective vaccine. Check with your veterinarian and remember to vaccinate your bird annually against this disease that is usually lethal when it occurs.

### Diseases

In order of importance, in Spain, the most common diseases in birds of prey are:

- Parasites (Coccidiosis, trichomoniasis...).
- Bacteria (Bumblefoot, arthritis, wounds...).
- Fungi (Aspergillosis, candidiasis...).
- Virus (Newcastle, avian herpes...).



*Recognition of different diseases through droppings/excrements: a)Coccidiosis (protozoa);b) Salmonella (bacteria); c) Ascaris (parasitic worm) d) Aspergillosis (parasitic fungi)*

We recommend **not to medicate your bird without having previously consulted the specific case to a specialist veterinarian.** Similar cases do not always have the same treatment. Distrust the recommendations from close friends without proven experience.

First-aid kit

Raptors **can suffer accidents** both during the hunting or the resting season. We recommend you to have a **first aid kit and make a first cure** before visiting your veterinarian.

Basic first aid kit for our bird	
	
Bandages	Disinfectant or antibiotic cream
Gauze	Liquid disinfectant (preferable chlorhexidine)
Self-adhesive dressings	Hydrogen peroxide (to stop bleeding)
Cotton	Claw disinfecting cream
Cotton swabs	Sterile saline solution
Gloves	Scissors
Syringes of 1, 10 and 20 ml	Tweezers

**We will not get tired of repeating that prevention is what is essential for the health of our birds, and not treatment.** If our bird gets sick, or has an accident, a quick and correct diagnosis can be vital to save its life. **If you have the slightest doubt go to a veterinarian of your confidence to try and tackle the problem from the beginning.**



A daily analysis of the excrement of this gyrfalcon would have saved him from dying from clostridium bacteria.



# V

## Management of Falconry birds

**Authors: Javier Ceballos Aranda**

**Rodrigo García Sigüero**

**José Hernández Justribo**

### Parental or imprinted?

Before acquiring a bird of prey it is a good idea to decide whether you would rather have a parental or an imprinted bird.

Take into account when choosing a parental bird that its **behaviour will be similar to that of a wild individual**, meaning, it will get frightened of you as it will not see you as a congener but as a predator.

On the other hand, **imprinted birds will recognize you as a member of their own species**, so they will **not be afraid of you** from the beginning, saving you some time in the taming phase.

However, imprinted raptors may have some problems such as **aggressiveness** (they see us as competitors of the same species), or they may **scream excessively** constantly claiming for food whenever they see us. This does not necessarily have to happen but they are relatively common defects in birds whose imprinting process has not been correctly done.

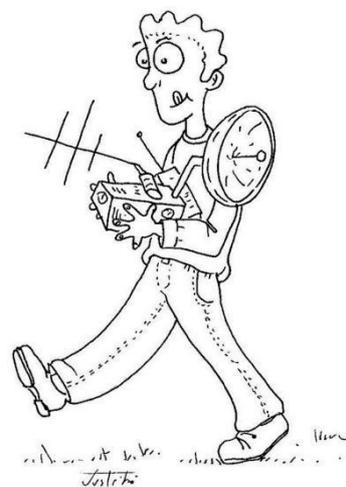


### Attitude towards the bird

Once again, it is worth reminding that in Falconry **you are at the service of your bird**. By thinking about it rather than yourself, you will be able to bend your impatience, or wanting to progress at a different pace.

### Tools

The equipment used in Falconry has **hardly evolved since its inception**. They are crafted pieces that have been incorporating advances of the technique. There have been more changes in materials than in designs.



V. Implications of becoming a falconer.

When acquiring adequate equipment, it is enough to **know the needs of the bird and to contact an artisan.**

When talking about **tools, the following elements must be considered:**

**For the bird:**

Jesses, swivel, leash, perch, bells, hood, bath, attachment element for the transmitter (tail, leg, body), open band with the owner's phone number written on it.



**For the falconer:**

Glove, hawking bag, whistle, lure, receiver unit, documentation, transport box/box cage, vehicle, freezer, scale, mew.



**Bird care material:**

Glue and y needles for imping, files and pliers for cutting beak and/or nails, leather and grommets to replace jesses, climbing rope to replace the leash, cleaning and disinfection material.



### Everyday management

It is well worth remembering that the **bird is carried on the glove**, sitting in the hand we use the least. For this reason almost all the gloves correspond to the left hand. We can differentiate a series of proceedings (Parry Jones 1994). Below we display the most common.

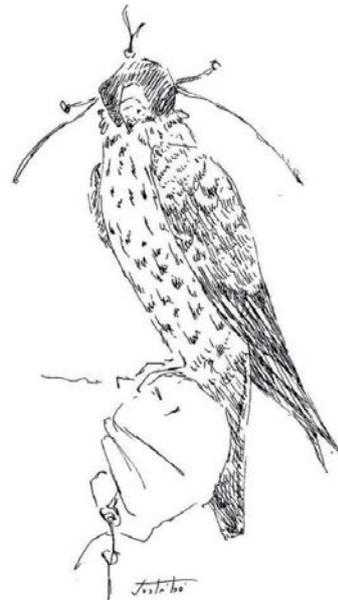
#### - Approaching the bird

This action must be carried out **smoothly, without sudden or exaggerated movements**. This is especially important in species of nervous character like most *Accipiters* or in wild individuals or on the taming process.

In nervous birds it is advisable, if necessary, to **bend down to get to their height**. Sometimes, raptors that are below our height level can see us as a threat.

#### - Getting the bird on the glove

Once again, it must be done without abruptness or rush. **Slowly drag the glove down its breast, down to the legs and push them gently** so that it loses a little balance. It will be enough for him to climb up to the glove. Quickly secure the jesses between your fingers.



- **Carry the bird on the glove (manning)**

As soon as the bird is up on the glove, **secure it**, either by the jesses or by using a falconer knot.

The bird **has to face you**, perfectly positioned on the glove, without any signs of discomfort. Hold it properly by the jesses so that both you and the bird go comfortable.

**Arm position:** The forearm should go in the **horizontal plane next to your body**, that way you will get less tired of the raptor's weight. This means that you have to bend it at a right angle, with the forearm perpendicular to the rest of the body.



Birds **tend to perch on the highest point**. If you lower your arm it will probably rise to your shoulder or head with the consequent danger of being injured by its claws.

Falcon and falconer must be **comfortable and perfectly synchronized**. Keep in mind that it is very possible that you have to carry the bird on your fist during long hours on a hunting day, especially shortwingers.



- **Hooding birds of prey**



It is **essential to carry out this action correctly**, as it will determine to a large extent whether they accept the hood willingly or hate it.

Hooding a bird must be done in a **smooth, fast and decisive** manner. The process is summarized in the following steps:

- **Prepare a adequate size hood** for your bird, opening the braces.
- With the bird on the fist, **grab the top part of the hood with your index finger and thumb.**
- Gently bring it **close to the bird's face.**
- **Position the hood by passing it through the bird's beak.** This movement must be decided but never violent.
- **Close the hood by pulling both braces** (longer straps). Grab one of the braces with the fingers of your free hand, the one on which the bird is not sat, and the other brace with your teeth.
- **Check that the hood has been perfectly positioned**



since otherwise it may bother or even damage the bird in the eyes or *nare*. If the hood is new, check that it really prevents the bird from seeing and that it does not feel uncomfortable even if it is correctly placed.



V. Implications of becoming a falconer.

- **Feed the bird on the glove.**

The glove must be a **comfortable place for the bird to sit** when eating on it. You must **hold the food firmly** so the raptor will tear it apart. Do not hold the bird very tight with short jesses, as it will lose manoeuvrability to eat.

The bird must always **stand facing you**. If while eating, it turns around and turns its back on you, gently push it through the base of the tail so it regains a correct position.

It is a mistake to let your bird take the food out of the glove, becoming the owner of it. This situation could trigger bad habits on your bird as it will **begin to mantle the food or to acquire other vices**, such as trying *to carry it in hand* to eat elsewhere.



Needless to say you should **never try to snatch the food**. If you do, the next time it will *mantle* the food and try to carry it in hand.

- **Leaving the bird at the perch**

It is essential **to tether birds before lowering them from the glove**, to their blocks or perches, **avoiding this way many escapes**, often due to inopportune scares.

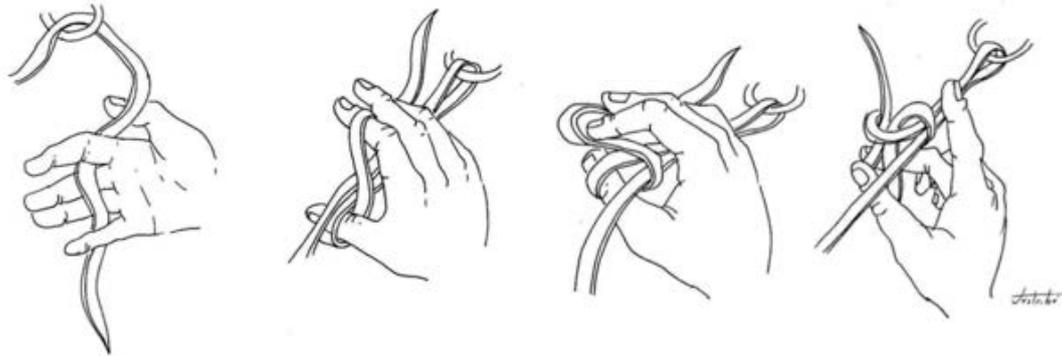
If the bird is hooded, **tether it first and then lower the fist gently**, so that the part of its tail next to the legs is the first thing that touches the perch. Help yourself with your non-gloved hand, **raising its tail a little** while you lower the glove with your bird perched on it. Then it will step back, as it instantly recognizes its perch. **Once tethered you will be able to unhood it, if convenient.**

**Never place birds**, even when hooded, **close enough to each other** so that they are at reach.

If the bird is not hooded, it will usually try to reach the perch as soon as you place the glove close to it.



**Do not forget to tether it in advance!**



The falconer knot is very useful as it can be performed with just your free hand. (drawings inspired by Upton, 1991)

**- Bating**

Falconry birds can **bate for thousands of reasons**. We should try to avoid this and react quickly to minimize stress and the risk of feathers breaking.

The first thing to do is to **hold the fist firmly without lowering it**. In many cases the bird rises again by itself. If it does not, it is necessary to **help him by pushing him by the back or by the breast**, with **jesses hold tightly**. You can also gently pull the jesses, impelling the bird so that it **recovers its position upright** on your hand.



- **Weight control**

It is one of the **pillars for the correct handling and training** of your bird.

The weight is a basic way of measuring the physical state and the appetite of raptors in Falconry. We will try to weigh the bird in an **adapted scale, always at the same time and with the same equipment** (jesses, hood...). Remember that your raptor goes out to the field to "make a living" and if there is no appetite problems can arise such as failure to hunt or not wanting to come to our call.



**Be very careful!** They must not be "starving" because in this state, their health and therefore their life, when manifesting symptoms of weakness and indolence are at stake.

Falconry raptors destined to fly and to hunt **must have an appetite** (hunger of the day). We will never allow them to be weak because of poor diet.

The **symptoms of weakness** due to a **state of starvation** are diverse depending on the severity. Listed here are some that should never happen (**Fox, 2009**).

- a) **Weak flight**
- b) **Weakening of the pectoral muscles** (The keel protrudes too much and is easily pinched)
- c) **Loss of appetite**
- d) **Frizzy feathers**
- e) **Green coloured excrements**
- f) **Oval and dull eyes**
- g) **Weak bating and hanging wings**

The main objective is to **find the appropriate weights** for each action that we are going to carry out and for each moment of the annual cycle.

V. Implications of becoming a falconer.

A falconry raptor does not fly in the same weights at the beginning of the hunting season, after the moult, or at the end of the season. **As the season progresses they tend to fly in heavier weights** because they become more muscled.

**Weight control combined with proper training** through positive reinforcement and mechanization will lead to **success in flying and hunting**.

We can differentiate different **type of weights depending on the activity** the raptor is going to perform:

- a) **Flying weight:** It is the weight raptors have during **training flights and bodybuilding**. The bird must **stay on high weights** since all that excess weight will transform it into muscle, which is vital for it to have power and resistance in its flight.
- b) **Hunting weight (in Yarak):** Usually it is **a little under the flying weight**, which makes the raptor **sufficiently hungry to respond to the falconer's control and willing enough to go after wild preys**. Remember this requires not only **weight control** but also, **routine and mechanization**.



- c) **Fat weight:** It is the weight the raptor has when it **eats all it wants**. This is the weight you have to maintain **when the bird is stopped, without flying**, either because it is moulting or because it is sick or injured.

The fat weight can be used as a **reference to know approximately how much weight reduction** the bird needs during the training.

**It is completely under your control to keep your bird at its correct weight throughout the year**, both for training flights, for hunting or moulting. By gradually lowering its weight you can examine its responses. If they are correct there is no need to keep reducing the weight.

**Never suddenly lower the weight**, consequences can be really counterproductive, even tragic. To avoid this you must follow the premises below:

- Feed your bird correctly according to the **energy and nutritional value of the meat** you are providing. For example: It is not the same to feed 100g. of "day-old chick" than 100g. of pigeon, since the first one is a lot less energetic.
- Be careful on the **long, cold winter nights**. An incorrectly fed raptor may have problems burning energy to maintain his body temperature and metabolic rate.
- Be extra careful with **small raptors** such as kestrels, sparrowhawks, merlin, etc. They have an **extremely fast metabolism** so they burn energy at high speed. Proportionally, these birds, eat much more than larger birds.



The size of your bird determines the precision required for its weight control.

### First stages of training

#### Manning

The taming phase **begins from the first contact with the bird**. Working with any animal that is afraid or considers us an enemy makes it difficult to establish a friendly relationship. Basically, **manning in Falconry is a key process as it conditions the relationship of complicity between the raptor and the man** (Upton 1991).

For the first few days keep the bird **hooded to avoid unnecessary and exhausting bating**. By being in the dark it will become accustomed to noises, movements and other elements that in normal conditions would have frightened it.

Almost all the **lessons** you are going to teach your bird are **related to food**. It is your main bonding asset, which you will use to mechanize the bird through **reflex conditioning**, leaning on a **fixed feeding schedule and making a soft noise (always the same) while it eats**. If it does not eat, stay calm, eventually appetite will have an effect.

After several days of repetition we **achieve a routine, getting it to wait for its meal time** and associating that soft noise with food. This way, it will only focus on food, forgetting everything else that happens around it. When this moment arrives we can **start removing the hood**, always in a room with little light and making very smooth movements.

The manning process **ends with the carriage phase** in which the falconer carries the bird of prey **on his fist through crowded places** so that it ends up getting used to everything surrounding us. During this phase it is advisable to carry a tiring to keep the raptor concentrated and entertained in the fist.



### Jump to the fist

When your raptor is able to eat with little distractions, place it in a **perch and show him your fist with food** from a very short distance. The bird will have to take a minimum step to climb and access the meat.

As days go by, the bird will **increasingly trust you and you will be able to increment the calling distance**, until that small step to reach the glove becomes a short flight to "the tip of the leash".



### Flights on a creance

Once we fly at a greater distance than the leash length, we **must use a creance**. It is a **string of variable length** used to keep the bird under control, preventing it from flying away unexpectedly or losing it.

Flying on a creance is closely related to the mutual trust that must exist between the falconer and his bird. The faster the response is to your call and the longer the flights, the more confidence is building between the two of you. This degree of confidence must reach a point where you decide to remove the creance and release your raptor. The creance is not usually needed for more than a week.



### Lure

The lure is usually **very attractive for Falconry birds**. Although we have decided to use the fist as a call, it is interesting to have this resource. To do this you have to **introduce the lure during training**. It is enough to train this on alternate days, letting the bird capture the lure in the first swing.

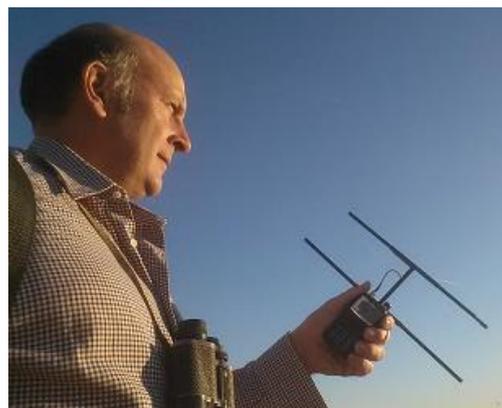


**The lure is an indispensable instrument for the training**

**of broad wings**. It is the resource we use to get falcons to return to us. It is advisable to carry a live pigeon in the backpack in case it does not obey our call with the lure.

### Flying loose

The **bird flies totally free**. It is advisable to always fly the bird with a **telemetry system**, in fact it is obligatory in most of the Spanish territory. By means of a transmitter attached to our bird we will be able to receive the signal in the receiver unit that we take in the backpack. The falconer himself, depending on his needs, will choose the type of frequency and how to attach the transmitter to the bird (tail, back, or leg).



### Flying at a pitch

**Flying at a pitch is typical of long wing birds**. It refers to the bird of prey ‘waiting on’ at a certain height while **describing circular paths** above the falconer.

It is at this point of the training when we begin to define the flight aesthetics. The **reward lessons** will start to be given more by the **type of flight carried out** and less because of it coming to your call. Meaning, that if you want the falcon performing waiting on flights, you will have to reward it the day it reaches more height than others or the day it bates its wings more impetuously.

Little by little you will notice the behaviour you want to establish on your bird starts sinking in, enabling you to reach the real aim of Falconry, hunting.

### Bagged game

Bagged game or live lures are preys that the falconer releases, so that the bird can recognize them and capture them. This is the stage previous to real hunting. When the raptor captures his first bagged game we will feed him up, so that he learns that capturing the prey means maximum reward.

Pigeons are very used as bagged game in soar hawking so that the falcon learns to achieve a certain height, since if it does not, its capture would be very complicated.



With the **supervision of an expert falconer you will progress with fewer setbacks** and achieving better results for your bird.



### Routines for the correct handling of a falconry bird

#### Daily routine at home

- Prepare food;** take it out of the freezer/fridge/other
- Supervise whether or not it has expelled the **pellet**
- Take the **bird from the block/perch**
- Garden your bird;** make sure there is no possibility of hooking, direct sun on hot days, inclement weather, presence of predators, access of children that can disturb the birds...
- Check the **bird's general condition;** faeces, tools...
- Check the facilities** (cleaning droppings, food waste from the previous day, equipment, water...)
- Record in your **bird's journal** its weight, what you feed him, environmental temperature and whatever catches your attention from its behaviour.



Daily routine on a flying day

- ❑ **On top of the previous routine**, you will have to:
- ❑ **Hood it** (in case of having trained a hooded bird)
- ❑ **Weight the bird**. Do it before flying. The fact that the bird has not eaten does not mean it maintains the same weight. A cold night, for example, can make a bird drop many grams.
- ❑ **Prepare the hawking bag** with what is necessary for the field (food, lure, whistle, telemetry, bagged game such as pigeon, rabbit...)
- ❑ **Prepare the necessary documentation** (CITES, registration in the corresponding Autonomous Community, hunting ground card and/or training flight permit, hunting license, RC insurance where required)
- ❑ **Transport the bird** to the hunting ground
- ❑ **Before releasing the jesses**; Note that in the flight field there are no dogs, comrades flying, or other elements that can affect the good development of the flight
- ❑ **Set the transmitter**, checking the good state of charge of the batteries and the tuning with the receiver unit
- ❑ Be aware that the greatness of Falconry is to **enjoy a day of flight** returning home **without suffering setbacks**



Periodic general routine

- Check for **droppings**
- Change the jesses/bewit/leash/swivel/transmitter harness**
- Disinfect facilities**
- Check their claws/beak/feathers**
- Visit the vet
- Keep your **bird's journal** updated



Unhooded birds travel more comfortably in box cage. It must be spacious, dark, have good ventilation and be easy to clean. Take care of the feathers by using tail-guards so that they are in perfect state.



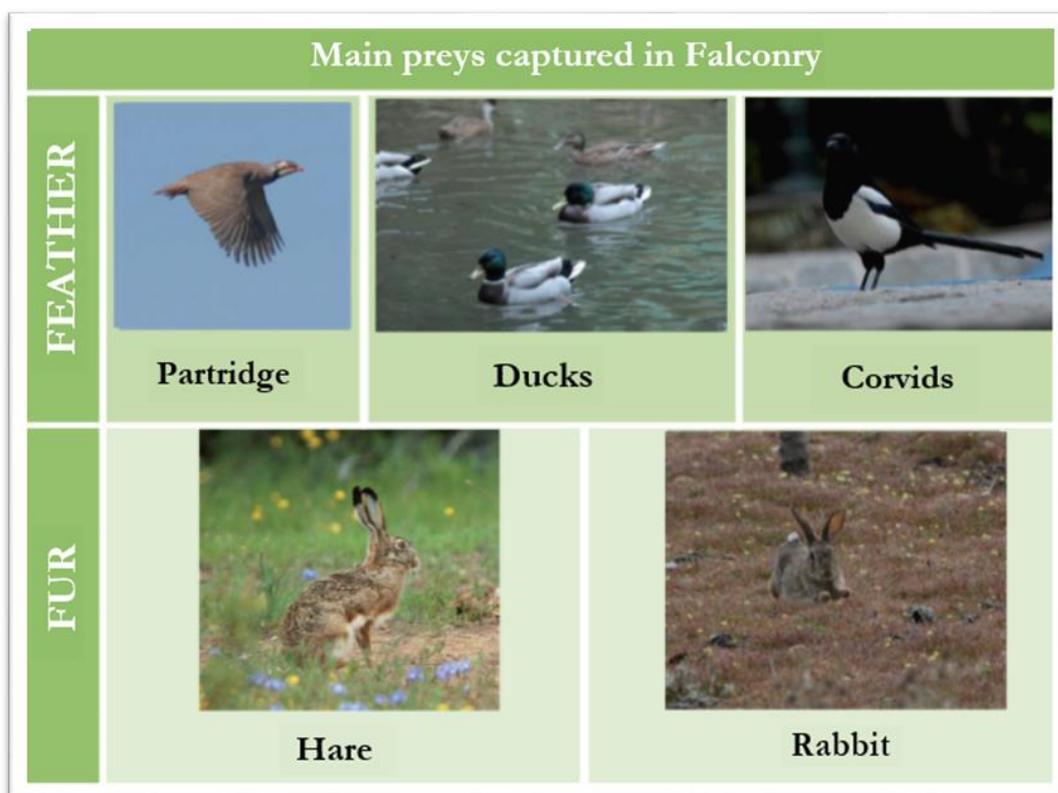
# VI Hunting

**Authors: Javier Gómez Pardo**

**Jorge Hernández Justribo**

Falconry is focused towards **HUNTING**, so the care and training of the bird should be oriented towards this end if we want to **practice this art in all its purity**. Man and raptor join together for hunting as one, where **neither can miss nor fail**.

Falconry is a **modality of small game**. Falcons "**fly at feather**", meaning they usually hunt birds like red partridge, gulls, corvids, ducks, etc. **Short wing birds**, in addition to the above, can "**fly at fur**" hunting hares and rabbits (López Sánchez, 1997). The list of **species that can be hunted** in each Autonomous Community is exposed each year in the corresponding **closure order**.



**Preys in the natural environment are well aware of the danger** a bird of prey implies, so they will try to escape the attack, using the knowledge of their territory, **their cunning and their agility** to escape. In fact, they daily engage in efforts to pass the survival test.

Falconry birds require **great training in order to succeed** in the field. With our help, they must **outperform the prey** in order to capture it.

**Hunting is the best of indicators to know if a Falconry bird is healthy.** A sick bird will never be able to hunt because it will be unwilling and weak. A **raptor that is almost starving, will never be able to hunt** because it will be too weak.

It is an **absolutely false belief that falconers keep their raptors on the edge of starvation** for them to hunt. **A hungry bird does not have the strength, endurance and bodybuilding required to hunt.**

You should never think about capturing a large number of preys every day, in fact, many days **you will return home empty-handed.** If that is what you want, you should buy a shotgun, considering it does not get tired, nor does it require daily attention.

Any predator hunts when it is hungry and birds of prey in Nature are no exception. **Birds of prey used in Falconry usually eat only once a day.**

Like their wild relatives, Falconry birds **are neither physically nor psychologically prepared to capture a large number of prey in a single day.** If they hunt 2-3 pieces (which is already a lot) and we subject them to the psychological wear of continuing to hunt, without **giving them their deserved**



**reward in the form of food,** they may even refuse to hunt for finding little or no benefit in the face of so much effort. In Falconry this situation is called *losing faith or being discouraged.*

Another consequence of this situation is that it may hunt, but it **"carries food in hand"**



because the raptor guesses that we are going to **remove the prey away from them, and once again, it will not get rewarded after its effort.**

The energy balance is the priority, and the raptor weighs in the cost-benefit ratio. **If the effort is far greater than the profit,** it loses the desire to hunt

with us, as **it does not find it advantageous.**

Imagine you worked for many hours a day charging a misery that does not even help you fulfil your basic nutritional needs, does the effort pay off? It surely does not. Something very similar happens with raptors... **hunting and hunting for long hours and not eating, does not make sense to them.**

Needless to say, **that a bird still in the training phase** or with little hunting experience, should be **generously rewarded when it captures its first prey** in order to avoid being discouraged or what is the same, so it does not lose faith in hunting.

The **maximum number of preys that can be hunted per day** with a Falconry bird is not easy to determine, since it **depends on many factors**. As a guideline, take into account that many falconers would immediately sign an average of 1 piece per day. And they would sign because the average is usually much smaller. It is very common for a falconer to **return home the same way he left, and sometimes even worse** as he may return without his bird.

The **number of catches may be conditioned by the following factors:**

**Hunting modality:** Waiting on, shortwings, etc. Generally **short wing birds** allow us to **push them a little further**.

The **species we are flying:** There are species with more skills for hunting than others.

The **prey we are hunting** and its population density: There are certain species whose capture entails greater difficulty requiring much more effort from the bird of prey.

The **characteristics of the hunting ground**, land features... the time available, the inclement weather conditions, the time of day in which we are going to fly...

The **demand level and difficulty of the slips that the bird has carried out**

**during the day:** If our raptor has successfully executed an extremely difficult slip, we should not demand more from them that day, however before less complicated catches we can always push our bird a little more.

### Hunting modalities with birds of prey

The characteristics of the flight, hunting strategies and species of the birds used in Falconry define **different hunting modalities** (Rodríguez de la Fuente, 1965) depending on the height usually reached by the birds in their pursuit:

#### FALCONS:

##### WAITING ON

**Waiting on flight.** It is practiced with falcons, and usually also with the collaboration of a pointing breed dog. They leave the fist and take height before even sighting the prey. They **attack by diving at high speed from the air.**



##### FLY AT BOLT

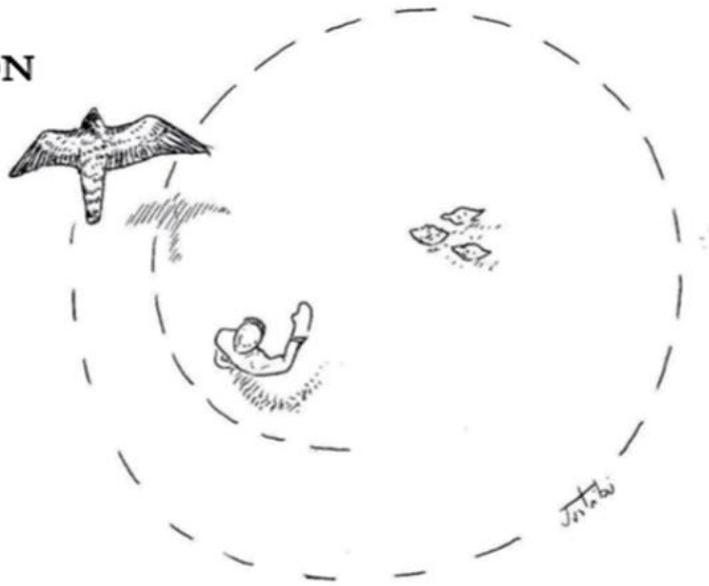
**Bolt slip.** In this type of slip the bird **starts the pursuit directly from the falconer's fist.** If it reaches a great height, as in the case of crows hunting with falcons, we can consider it soar hawking. Bolt slips are most commonly used with short wing birds.

#### HAWKS.

They can perform **two types of slips: Flying at bolt and still-hunting.** It is common of *Accipiters*, *Parabuteos*, *Buteos* and Eagles.



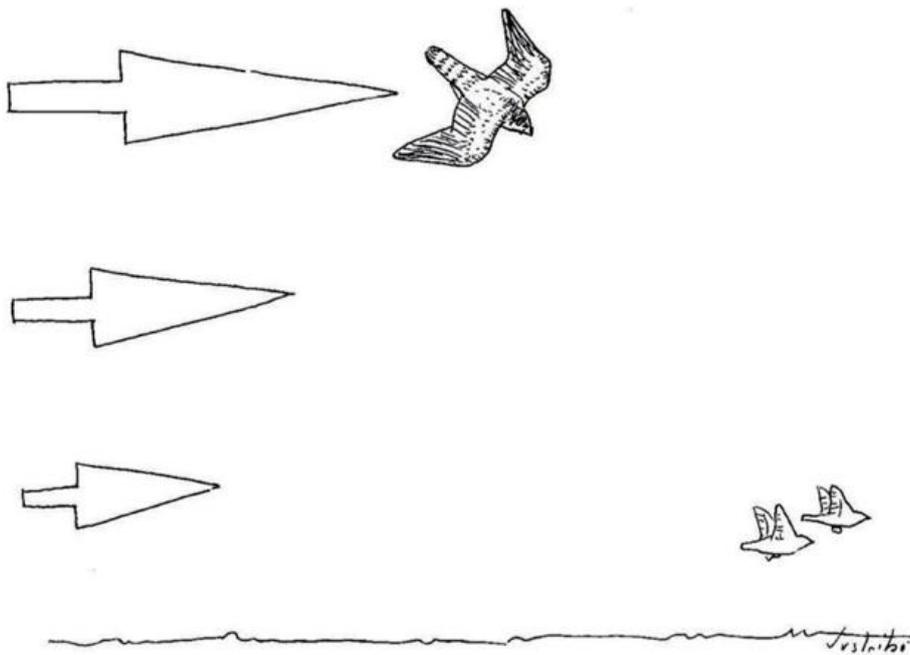
### WAITING ON



Drawing inspired by Upton, 1991

The bird leaves our glove and begins to **gain great height following a circular path** before the prey even comes out of hiding.

Waiting on is **mainly reserved for falcons** but not to all its species since some can reach higher than others. This modality is destined to the **hunting of other birds**, being partridges and ducks the most appreciated pieces in the Iberian Peninsula. It is one of the **most difficult and beautiful modalities of Falconry**.



The falcon's dive achieves greater speeds if initiated downwind.

The sequence of a waiting on slip is as follows:



We locate a possible prey and move back a certain distance to avoid it escaping ahead of time.



We take the bird and we place it on our gloved fist.



We put on the transmitter (making sure it works). Take off the swivel and the leash, some falconers even take off the jesses.



We unhood the bird.



We position the falcon upwind. It is the natural position for the bird to feel comfortable.



We raised our fist and let our falcon scan the field, so it can calm down and rouse its plumage. It will usually lighten weight by defecating.



The bird starts flying by itself or slightly thrown from our wrist, bating wings and gaining height.



The bird reaches its maximum height. Well trained falcons reach really considerable heights (200-400m.). Once they peak, many appear to be a small point in the sky.



We head towards the prey (in some cases with the help of dogs), while the falcon follows us from above.



When the falcon is in the vertical of the prey, we flush it. This will preferably be done downwind that way when the attack starts, the falcon has more speed.



When the falcon spots the prey, he does a stoop (a high speed dive towards the prey from high altitude).



The falcon reaches the prey. At this point the following situations can take place:

When **the falcon reaches the prey** one of these **three situations can take place**:

1. **The falcon fails to catch the prey.** Reasons for this can be varied. In this case we must **call the bird with the lure** to get it back.
2. **The falcon stoops towards the prey**, killing it or leaving it badly injured but without grabbing it, after this, **the falcon comes back for it and picks it up on the ground.**
  - We must run towards the falcon, which will start to peel the dead piece and carefully remove it from it. We will feed up our bird if it is the last prey of the day.
3. **The falcon holds the prey**, meaning, **it grabs it in the air and falls to the ground with it.** We will carefully remove the piece and feed up the bird if it is the last prey of the day.

Waiting on flights **can be accompanied by a pointing breed dog.** In these cases the slip sequence may be altered, as **you can release the falcon without having previously located the prey.** While the falcon is flying with the help of our dog, we beat bushes or plants to flush preys out of cover. When the dog finds the game, it will point it and flush it to an order of yours, which will be when the falcon is prepared vertically to it.



The falcon **comes to recognize the dog as a great ally** and does not lose sight of it in the field, given that after several slips, he realizes it is him who will find and flush the prey. The man is just the slip director.

You can beat the ground without a dog but it is less effective, being in this case advisable to locate the prey beforehand, by for example travelling the roads by car and observing the land with binoculars.

A good **falcon gains height by bating its wings upwind without gliding.** And **avoids being helped by *thermals*** or rising hot air currents. If you want to practice soar hawking in its purest form, you must fly your falcon when the presence of thermals is scarce or null.

**If it gets accustomed to flying at check (with thermals), the falcon will become lazy** and will not rise when these currents of hot air do not appear.

All these may sound simple but there are **many difficulties that can arise during the training and hunting** with falcons. These setbacks are usually the result of poor training and incorrect weight control, but also of the **circumstances that may occur on the field**. For example:

- The **falcon does not gain height** even though we try training for it.
- The **falcon gains height and then loses it**. This action is called *diving*.
- It **does not fly centred over us**.
- It may **attack the prey lacking conviction**.
- It may **not want to attack wild preys**. This occurs with falcons that are used to flying to bagged pigeons. The falcon waits for the moment to *serve*, ignoring for example the partridge that starts flying in the field.
- It may **spoil the slips**. Many young and less experienced falcons can be distracted by small birds that are not our goal.
- It can **carry its food**. It can be a big problem if when the falcon sees us approaching him, he wants to take the prey (or the lure) so that we do not remove it. Carrying food is often the result of mismanagement.
- The **falcon may not want to come down** to the lure at our call.
- We may **lose the falcon when pursuing the prey after the dive**, because it may not want to leave a thermal and gets lost in the sky or because it pursues small birds, etc. **Telemetry is absolutely essential in a waiting on flight** taking into account, falcons are lost sight of too often.

## FLY AT BOLT



Drawing inspired by Upton, 1991

In this modality the **raptor flies off our fist when the prey has already been flushed**. This type of slip is mostly done by short wing birds, and sometimes by falcons.

We can **fly at fur or feather** depending on the raptor that accompanies us, generally falcons and sparrow hawks will only hunt feather while Harris hawks and goshawks hunt fur (hare and rabbit) even though experienced falconers sometimes also come to hunt feathers.



Broadly speaking, the **sequence of a flying at bolt slip with hawks** is as follows:



We take the bird on our fist



We remove the swivel and leash. It is advisable to use hunting jesses to avoid hooks with fences, cables, branches of trees etc. We put on the transmitter making sure it really works.



Unhood your bird when it is hooded.



We begin to walk while beating the ground, dogs can help us. Experienced birds will remain on the watch for possible preys that may be flushed out of cover.



The game is flushed and comes out of hiding, for example a rabbit or a hare.



We shout. The raptor decisively starts the persecution. It is advisable for it to fly off downwind whenever possible.



The prey is reached and grabbed.



We quickly run towards the bird, holding the prey and helping to kill it if necessary (especially in hares and rabbits), this way we relieve its suffering.



We take the prey from our bird carefully. If it is the last slip of the day we will feed up the bird.



It is very common for our bird to fail a slip.



If our raptor misses the slip, we will have to recover it by calling it to the fist or to the lure. If the dam has hidden we can restart the slip.

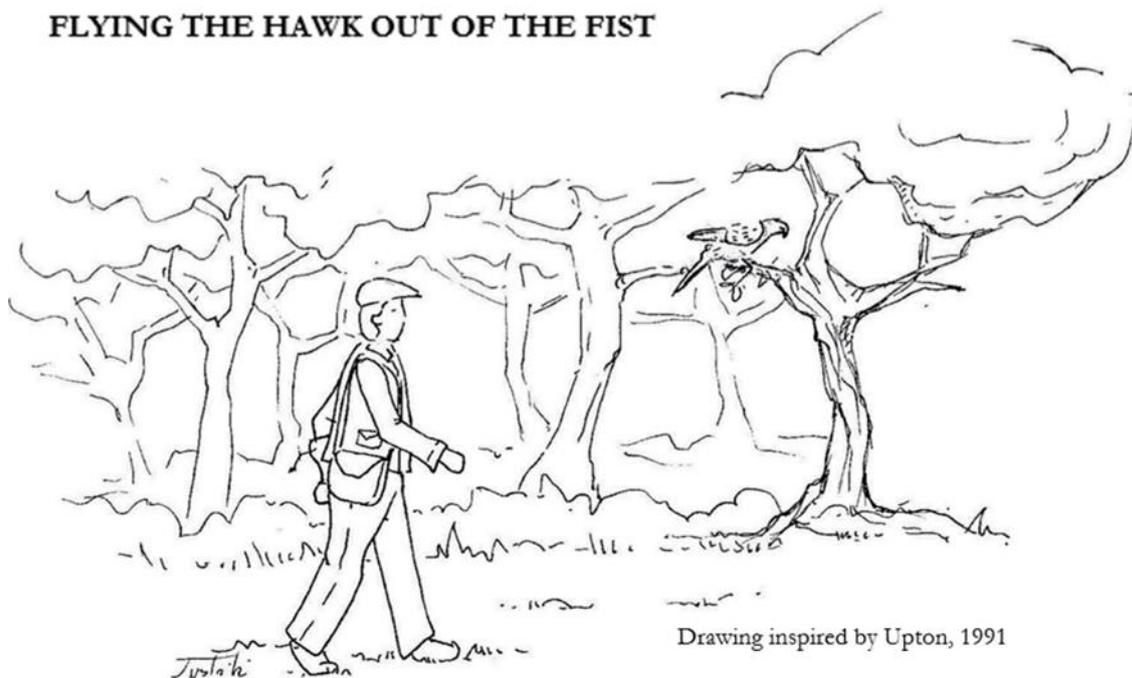
This is the **sequence of a flying at bolt slip** where it is the falconer or dog who flushes the prey.

In flying at bolt slips you can count on the **collaboration of a ferret**. This carnivorous mammal is a part of the mustelid family and is used to **remove rabbits from their burrows**. When the rabbit comes out of its burrow, running away from the ferret, the bird is released to capture it. Harris hawks and goshawks are the most used birds in this type of slip.



Take into account that in order to **hunt with a ferret it is necessary to have a specific permission** for it.

### FLYING THE HAWK OUT OF THE FIST

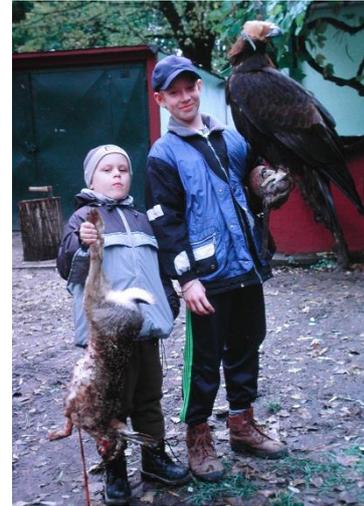


Drawing inspired by Upton, 1991

**Another variation on the fly at bolt slip** is that in which the bird does not start the slip from the falconer's fist, but instead does it from other **natural watchtowers present in the environment**. This style of hunting is usually carried out by Harris Hawks.

The ground is tracked while the bird is flying free. **It follows us** by taking advantage of anything it can sit on such as trees, posts, etc. When **the prey is flushed by the falconer or the dogs**, the Harris hawk chases after it and captures it.

The flying at bolt modality carried out by short wing birds is **not exempt of setbacks or difficulties**, which generally emerge as consequence of an incorrect handling, lax weight control and due to peculiarities that can take place during a day of hunting. The following situations may occur:



- The **bird does not want to attack the prey** or attacks without conviction.
- **After a failed slip the raptor does not want to return to our fist** and/or the lure.
- The bird **carries its food**. This mainly occurs with small accipiters| such as sparrowhawks. Little raptors tend to flee when they hunt a prey to avoid other predators taking it away from them or even to avoid themselves being captured.

### FLYING AT BOLT WITH LONG WING BIRDS

**Flying at bolt with long wing birds**, is very different from that done with hawks. The catch is not carried out in a few seconds, as is often the case in short wing birds, and **attacks usually start from the air** when the falcon leaves the falconer's fist.

When the prey hides we must **flush it out of cover**, as the falcon needs to capture in the air.

The **hunting sequence** could be as follows:

1. We take the **falcon on our fist**.
2. We put on the **transmitter** and make sure it works. **We remove the leash and swivel**, even the jesses if necessary.
3. **Loosen the hood slightly**, without removing it.
4. We beat the ground **searching for preys**.
5. When the prey is flushed, we **quickly unhood** our falcon and release it.
6. Usually, the **prey finds a place to hide** when it sees a falcon flying around.
7. In the case of magpie hawking, the **falcon will mark the prey**, overflying it, or making pendulum moves by drawing characteristic “Vs” in the air through its flight. If when released from the falconer’s glove, the falcon has not noticed where the prey is, we will guide him to it by calling him.

In the case of **crows or seagulls**, they will seek their escape by **gaining height**.

8. When the falcon is properly positioned, we must **run towards the prey and flush it out of hiding**.
9. When the prey comes out of hiding, **the falcon attacks**, performing a stoop towards the prey and bating its wings to gain speed.
10. If we are fortunate enough, the **falcon will capture the prey** before it hides again. However, if it hides again we must repeat the complete operation.
11. We carefully take the prey away from the falcon’s claws and if it is the last flight of the day, we must feed him up accordingly.



This type of slip is **enormously demanding and requires a great physical effort from both the falcon and the falconer**, and usually both end up exhausted, mainly the falconer. Collaboration is always appreciated.

During a single slip, the prey can repeatedly hide in different locations due to the terror the falcon causes him. **We will have to run back and forth to flush** the prey out of cover. The prey may find hiding in a large tree where it will be almost impossible to force it out of cover. The falcon will **attack the game over and over again** every time it is flushed from one cover to another. If we are not effective enough when serving the prey to the falcon, it will get excessively tired.

Other **difficulties** that can emerge when flying at bolt with falcons are **those inherent in long wing birds**.

### STILL-HUNTING



Drawing inspired by Upton, 1991

Hunting slip in which **the bird of prey is let out of the fist whenever it wants**, usually without the prey noticing. It is usually done with **short wing birds**. It is the **most natural slip of all of those existing in Falconry**, since the falconer is limited to serve as a perch and observes the outcome without intervening. Many wild raptors such as goshawks and sparrowhawks, hunt using this method.

The **sequence of a still-hunting slip** is detailed below:



We locate the prey trying not to be discovered with the bird in our fist already prepared without the swivel, leash and hood.



The bird sets its target on the prey and heads towards it with decision, taking advantage of the vegetation and the geographic features of the land not to be detected.



The prey remains calm since it does not know that a predator flies quickly towards it.



The bird reaches to the dam and grabs it. We must run to help our raptor and minimize the suffering of the prey.



We carefully remove the captured prey away from our raptor. If it is the last prey of the day we will feed up our bird.



When hunting, the falconer has to be aware of the current regulations, different according to the Autonomous Community where we are at. Each year regulations are updated. **You can look up these regulations on the Internet** in the Official Gazette of the corresponding Region.

On the other hand, the falconer must maintain at all times a **behaviour in accordance with the ethical code** displayed at the end of chapter III of this manual.

**Must have documentation in order to practice Falconry**

1. **ID card**
2. **CITES** of our bird
3. **Transfer chain** to prove the ownership of our bird
4. **Written Authorization from the hunting land Holder/Hunting land Card**
5. **Authorization by the Environmental Department** of the corresponding Autonomous Community (in case Falconry is not included in the hunting land plan).
6. **Unarmed hunting license**
7. **Insurance** (it is enough with the one issued by the Royal Spanish Hunting Federation)
8. In the case of carrying **bagged game**, **purchase invoice** proving its origin.



**Note:** It is advisable to **be aware of the laws that regulate Falconry in each Region**. It may happen, as it still does, that in one region you may only be allowed to hunt in hunting grounds on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, and on the other hand, other regions may allow hunting every day of the week.

Something similar happens with **training flight fields**. At the moment, in some areas falconry birds can only be flown in hunting grounds.











**Annex**

### Vocabulary

The term "Falconry" comes from the Latin *Accipiter* (Vallés, 1556) which means bird of prey. *Accipitraria* is the art of hunting with these birds, from which "Falconry" is formed.



Other etymologists believe that "falconer" and "Falconry" come from "acetrero", "acephor" (archaic form of goshawk). They even expose (with little credibility) that "Asturias" comes from "Astor", meaning goshawk land.

In Spanish, the term "cetrero" is used for those who train shortwing or longwing birds. "Halconero" specifically corresponds to longwingers, and "azorero/harrisero" to shorwingers.

In ancient texts the term "volatería" (Spanish) has sometimes been used as a synonym for Falconry. Today it is in disuse.

This glossary, produced by the Dr. Javier Ceballos, aims to be more practical than exhaustive (for more detail, Ceballos 2007). The terms most frequently used are collected here, recovering some already in disuse but significant and adding others that may be interesting, although they may not be exclusive to Falconry. When published definitions have been considered correct, the appointment is included next to them. In other cases, the meaning of the term is explained according to the author's criteria, without any reference. Please take into account that these vocabulary has been translated from Spanish, therefore references have been taken from Spanish publications. Next to the English term, you will find the Spanish translation.

Various authors have worked on the terms used in Falconry and its meaning. The most practical studies correspond to falconers who seek to facilitate the understanding of their expressions. The most academic correspond to scholars and linguists who in many cases, based solely on books, do not provide a current vocabulary. The purpose of the present vocabulary is halfway between the two mentioned cases. The sources from which some of the definitions of the selected terms have been selected are listed below. They are chronologically ordered, so if identical definitions are found reference is made to its first publication.

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## A

Accipiter (Accipiter)

This term refers to any short-winged hawk with short, rounded wings and a long tail, typically found in forests and woodland. Traditionally used for goshawks and sparrowhawks. (9)

Aerodynamic (Aerodinamismo)

That is able to overcome the force of the air. (19)

Alula (Alula)

Small feathers on the edge of the wing which control the flow of air during the flight. (16)

Anklets (Polaina)

Leather straps which go around the bird's leg. (3)

Arm a bird, to (Apiolar)

Put the jesses, bewits and bells on to a bird of prey. (16)

Aviary (Halconera)

Outdoor enclosure conditioned for Falconry birds. Spot inhabited by falcons. (3)

Aylmeri (Pihuelas Aylmeri)

They are an alternative to the traditional jesses, these leather anklets, with a wide grommet. Its name recognizes its inventor, Major Guy Aylmer. (18)



## B

Baffles (Ventana/orificio nasal)

See Nare. This allows raptors to breathe while diving at great speeds.

Bag, hawking bag (Morral/zurrón)

Comfortable bag, with good attachment to the falconer's body, where he carries what is necessary to fly the bird in the field. (16)

Bagged game or bagged quarry (Escape)

Pre-captured or bred in captivity animals that are released to birds of prey so that they can learn to hunt or train. (14)

Bate (Debatirse)

When a bird attempts to fly while being attached by a leash to either a perch or a glove. (11)

Bath (Baño)

Container with water for the hygiene, refreshment and/or hydration of the bird. (16)

Beat, to (Batir/golpear)

The act of moving the undergrowth and beating bushes, plants, etc. to flush the prey out of cover propitiating the slip. (16)

Bechins (Picaditas)

Small pieces of meat given to the hawk as a treat or reward. (11)



Bells (Cascabeles)

Traditional music instrument, extraordinarily light that with its sound helps locating the bird in flight or knowing its bates and movements in the perch. Usually there is a bell fixed to each tarsus, one of a deeper sound and another with a higher pitch, increasing its sound effect. (16)

Bewit (Correones)

Small leather strips which attach bells or telemetry transmitters to a bird's leg. (3)

Bind or clutch (Trabar/enganchar)

To grab or hold a prey in the air. (3)

Bird (Pájaro)

This is how the Falconry bird is called. Fadrique de Zúñiga (1565) already used this term when speaking about goshawks. However, according to modern ornithology, it has been incorrectly used, since the term “birds” is better used to reference any small bird from the Passerine family. Its use is so widespread that the term is accepted as part of the falconer glossary. (16)

Bird of prey (Ave de presa)

Any bird that hunts. Not all raptors are birds of prey (such as vultures), and not all birds of prey are raptors (such as shrikes). (16)

Birder (Pajarero)

Someone who has raptors but does not hunt with them. (16)



Block (Banco)

Perch for falcons. (14)

Box cage (Alcahaz)

Box to transport birds. (3)

Braces (Cerraderos)

An alternative name for hood-braces. These are leather straps which when pulled, open and close the hood. (16)

Breastbone (Quilla)

Often called keel by falconers. It is a crest located on the outer side of the midline of the sternum. The higher it is, the higher the flight capacity of the bird is. (18)

Bring back up (Engordar, subir de peso)

Expression used when referring to the increase in the amount of food or calories the bird of prey receives, to make it gain a little weight. (3)

Bumblefoot (Clavos)

An infection of the bottom of the hawk's foot, with the form of a dark granule. (16)

## C

Cadge (Varal)

A wooden frame traditionally used to carry several birds at once. (16)



Captive breeding (Cría en cautividad)

The breeding of birds of prey in captivity as opposed to the wild.

Carriage (Placeo) The carrying on the fist of a bird of prey during the early stages of the process of manning. The bird accompanies the falconer in his everyday activities, getting used to its surroundings. (6)

Carry, to (Llevar en mano)

This expression is used to refer to a hawk that flies away from the falconer with its food, whether it is freshly caught quarry or food on the glove or tied to the lure. (3)

Cast-off, to (Lanzar)

To throw or gently push a hawk forward, encouraging it to fly from the fist towards the prey with a small movement of the hand. (16)

Cere (Cera)

The smooth, featherless, wax-like skin at the base of a hawk's beak, surrounding the nostrils. (3)

Chamber, mew (Cámara, muda)

An indoor facility where birds change their feathers. (16)

Chick (Pollo)

Name with which a falconry bird is known until it has its first moult (6). Once the first moult is finished, it can be called intermewed (if there are still some chicken feathers left) or moulted. Therefore, it is possible they have completed its development, and they are still called chicks.

On the other hand, "chick" is not a synonym of immature or young. All chicks are young and immature, but not all young and/or immature are chicks (18).

Circular path (Redondo)

Circles described by the falcon when gaining height or in order to maintain it. (3)

Clamp (Brida)

Modern disposable straps. We take advantage of the plastic toothed strips sold in hardware stores to embrace several cables. In order to avoid friction in the tarsus, they can be sheathed in plastic tubes. (16)

Courage (Corazón, valor)

In Falconry it is said that a bird has courage (heart) when in its flight it strives to discover, to persecute and to capture its prey. (16)

Coverts (Cobertoras)

Small feathers covering the bird's body. (6)

The two central rectrices that cover the other feathers of the tail. (3)

Creance (Fiador)

Thin and strong string with which the jesses are tied during the first flight lessons of the bird in the field. (16)

Crop (Buche)

When eaten, the food is first temporarily stored in the crop, before moving into the stomach. This is where the digestible is separated from the indigestible. (5) When the crop is filled we say the bird has been fed up. (16)



## D

Deplume (Desplumar)

Action of plucking feathers from a kill, carried out by a bird of prey, just before eating its prey. (6)

Dive (Caer en picado)

To drop with folded wings from a great height towards the ground. (3)

DNA (ADN)

Deoxyribonucleic acid. Biopolymer containing the genetic material of cells and the information for the biosynthesis of proteins. (19)

Down feathers (Plumón)

Fluffy, soft white feathers that cover the chicks of birds of prey when they are born. (15)

Downwind (Rabo al viento)

Flying with the wind, using the wind in its favour. (3)

Droppings (Deyección)

Excrements. (16)

## E

Ecology (Ecología)

Studies the relationship between living beings and between them and their environment. (10)



Endew/Endue (Gastar, digerir)

To digest food. (3)

Enseam (Desainar)

This usually refers to the process of getting a bird back in shape and to its proper weight after the moult or a period of rest, by managing her food intake and controlling her weight and exercise. (3)

Enter (Trainar)

To introduce a bird to a particular quarry or type of prey. (3)

Ethology (Etología)

Academic discipline which is a part of biology that studies animal behaviour. At the time of training a raptor we must look at their behaviour.

Evolution (Evolución)

It is the continuous process of transformation of species through changes produced in successive generations (19). It implies a change in the genetic stock of a population of individuals, which may lead to the appearance of new species.

Eyass (Niego)

A hawk that has been taken from the nest before it can fly. (5)

## F

Falconer's knot (Nudo de halconero)

A secure knot, which can be done and undone with just one hand, to tie the bird's leash to its perch. (18)

Falconry (Cetrería)

The noble ancient art of training falcons to capture wild game or flown by humans.

Falconry skills (Técnicas cetreras)

A set of resources used for stress reduction, taming and the training of birds of prey. (18)

Feather (Pluma)

Epidermal structure that covers the bird's body and is formed by an axis (rachis) from which a series of barbs emerge laterally and are joined together by barbules. (10)

Feed up (Cebar)

Introduction to hunting. A bird of prey that has had its full ration of food, normally after performing well in training or on the field hunting. (3)

Filanders (backworm) (Filandras)

They are filiform worms that parasitize the intestines of birds, even colonizing the respiratory and circulatory systems. (5)

Flight feathers (Cuchillos)

Primary remiges in Falconry birds. (3) Usually there are seven of them.



Fly at bolt (Mano por mano)

Falconry slip in which the bird is launched in direct pursuit once the prey has been sighted

Foot (Manos, pies)

Terminal part of the leg of a raptor, also referred as hands or claws. (6)

Foot, to (Enganchar, trabar)

To grab something with the foot and talons. (16)

Fret-marks/Hunger traces (Hameces)

Lines of imperfection in feathers, sometimes corresponding with the malformation of the shaft. Usually the result of stress or a bad diet while the new feathers are developing. (16)

Full crop (Gordo, con buche lleno)

Term used to refer to a falcon that has been feed up and is no longer hungry. (16)

## G

Garden a hawk (Enjardinar)

To place the bird outside, on the lawn, on a perch next to a bath. (3)

Gender (Género)

Classification in groups of species that share certain characteristics. (19)

Set of organisms with common characteristics and that can be divided into several species.



Genetic fingerprint (Huella genética)

They are the variations in DNA unique to each individual. It is used, among other things, to calculate the relation between two different individuals.

Glide (Planear)

To fly without strongly bating the wings, rising by using thermals (columns of hot air). (3)

Glove/Guantlet (Guante)

Gloves made out of leather worn to protect the hand in which the bird is carried. (16)

Gorge (Gorga)

A complete ration of food for a Falconry bird. (3)

## H

Habitat (Hábitat)

The area or environment where an organism or ecological community normally lives or occurs. (1)

Hackles (Copete)

Also known as a crest, this refers to the feathers on a bird's head, which are raised, when the bird feels threatened or angry. (16)

Harness (Arnés)

A frame of straps and buckles that attach to the body and serve to fasten something or someone (19). In the case of Falconry birds, it is a frame of straps that transports the transmitter on the back without causing the bird any pain.



Hawk of the fist (Ave de puño)

This term is mainly used to refer to goshawks, eagles and sparrowhawks due to the convenience of carrying them on the fist. (16)

Hawks (Ave de bajo vuelo)

Originally used for the traditional shortwings belonging to the genus Accipiter. (16)

High (weight) (Alto de peso)

Above its flying weight. (16)

Homeothermia (Homeotermia)

Metabolic regulation ability to maintain body temperature constant regardless the environmental temperature. (10)

Hood (Caperuza)

The leather head covering used on hawks and falcons. The hood is an Arabic contribution and is used to keep the bird calm and reduce stress that could result from its surroundings. (6)

Hooder (Caperucero)

A bird of prey who is not problematic when hooding. (16)

Hooding/Hood up (Encaperuzar)

To hood a bird of prey. (3)

Hovering (Cernirse)

This is the action of a bird of prey beating their wings quickly against the wind, appearing that it is not moving and just staying 'still' in the air. (16)

Hunting land (Coto)

Area reserved exclusively for hunting purposes. (1)

Hybrid (Híbrido)

A raptor bred and produced as a result of artificial insemination, cross-breeding different species or subspecies. (10)

## I

Imprint (Improntar/troquelar)

A bird raised by humans and not by other raptors; the bird will also tend to identify with humans, and will in general be a screamer for both food and attention. Generally, imprinted birds can never be released into the wild and will not recognise other birds as part of their species, as they have been reared by humans. (11)

Imping (Injertar una pluma)

Cutting a broken or damaged feather and replacing it with an undamaged feather. The shaft of the bird's broken feather is cut, and the feather is trimmed to the right length. Then the shaft of the replacement feather is glued to the shaft of the broken feather on the bird. (16)

Intermewed (Entremudado)

A bird of prey that has completed at least one moult in captivity and may have some chick feathers left. (3)



## J

Jesses (Pihuelas)

These are leather strips which go through the anklets so the falconer can hold the bird attached to the leash. (6)

## K

Keen (Quilla)

A bird that is eager, hungry and ready to hunt or 'in yarak'. (3)

Knurl (Botón)

The leather buttons at the end of a leash, to avoid the swivel from falling out. (6)

## L

Leading edge (Borde de ataque)

The part of the wing that first contacts the air. (16)

Leash (Lonja)

Leather strap, of about 150 cm. long with a button on the tip. It passes through the swivel in the jesses, securing the bird to its perch or bench. (18)

Length (Longitud)

Distance between the edge of the beak and the edge of the tail. (16)

Longwinger (Halconero)

A falcon that hunts by waiting on or soar hawking. (16)



It has the ability to rise and wait above the falconer's head until it receives a signal. (17)

Lose faith (Perder la fe)

The falcon does not want to attack the prey or attacks without conviction because he feels he does not profit from his capture, or because the slips are so difficult that he never succeeds. Usually it happens due to the errors of the falconer.

Lose heart (Descorazonarse)

See lose faith.

Low/Underweight (Bajo de peso)

Weight below the bird's flying weight. (16)

Lure (Señuelo)

It is usually a leather piece of equipment used by falconer to train their birds. By placing food (sometimes with feathers) in the lure and swinging it we manage to attract the attention of our bird of prey. (16)

Lure, to (Señolear)

The act of luring a bird in or calling him by swinging the lure. (14)

## M

Make in, to (Recoger, acorrer) The act of approaching a hawk or falcon that has caught a prey. The falconer must come as quickly as he can in case his bird may need assistance but also to make sure the bird does not fly away. (16)

Malar stripe (Bigotera)



The dark streak of feathers beneath a falcon's eye, at the sides of the chin. Also known as whisker, moustache and malar streak. (3)

Management and control of wild fauna (Gestión y Control de Fauna Silvestre)

Management of wildlife through studies and actions, framed within scientific and technical protocols, carried out by specially qualified people. The objectives of these studies are varied; One of the most common is the increase or decrease in abundance and/or density of the species under study by adjusting the number of individuals of a given species to the local capacity. Other objectives are the improvement of the genetic quality of the populations and the solution to problems derived from the environmental impact generated by Men.

Manning (Amansar)

To tame a hawk or make a hawk or bird of prey. This is one of the first stages before its training and requires for the bird to get used to the presence of the falconer (human) and be comfortable eating on the fist in any surroundings. (14)

Master falconer (Maestro cetrero)

Falconer that due to its experience and behaviour is a reference for other falconers and is key for the survival of this art. (16)

Metabolism (Metabolismo)

A set of chemical reactions constantly performed by the cells of living beings in order to synthesize complex substances from simpler ones or degrade those to obtain them. (19)

Moult (Muda)

1. Period in which the fall and change of feathers occurs. When talking about the age of a bird, we do not talk about years, instead we talk about the number of moults.
2. Peaceful chamber where birds are placed during the change of feathers (moult).



3. Place where a pair of wild raptors live and breed. (16)

Moulted (Mudado)

Bird that has completed its first moult. After this, they are no longer called chicks and start being recognized as moulted birds. (16)

## N

Nare (Narina)

The nasal opening or nostrils of a raptor, found in the cere of raptors. (16)

Nictitating membrane (Membrana nictitante)

A translucent, vertical fold under the eye lid or white membrane that can function independently to the eyelid. It is sometimes called the third eyelid or the 'haw'. The purpose is to have a form of protection over the eye while still retaining some amount of vision. (16)

## O

Observation points (Oteadero)

Cleared and elevated place from which raptors watch. (16)

Oil gland (Uropigial)

This is a gland located at the base of the tail that produces oil which is important for the health of the beak and feathers as well as waterproofing. The bird spreads this oil over the feathers and body through preening actions using the beak.



Ornithophagous (Ornitófago)

Animal that feeds on birds.

## **P**

Parent-reared (Parental)

Captive-bred birds of prey, reared by their own parents. (10)

Passage (Pasajero)

This is the name given to a hawk captured before making his first moult and after having emancipated himself from his parents (5). Its handling is currently forbidden in Spain.

Paternity test (Prueba de paternidad)

Verification of paternity by blood group analysis, based on the mechanisms of inheritance. (10)

Nowadays, irrefutable evidence has been established by DNA analysis.

Peak (Techo)

Maximum height reached by a falcon when practicing soar hawking. (16)

Pellet (Egagrópila)

The indigestible fur, bone, and other material that a bird casts up in the shape of a small ball. (18)

Pendant feathers (Calzas)

Feathers covering the tibia and tarsus of each leg. (16)



Perch (Perchas)

A perch or falcon block mainly used for falcons with a circular shape in order to avoid getting the leash tangled. (16)

Pick-up piece (Roedero)

Bone with little meat that entertains the Falconry bird. (6)

It is also useful to keep the beak in good condition and eases the taming process.

Plucking, feather (Picarse, arrancarse plumas)

Action of plucking feathers or fur from a prey in order to eat the meat. (16)

Point, to (Muestra)

Also known as 'to make point', this term refers to when a dog points out a prey by maintaining a static posture. (14)

Preening (Olearse)

The action of spreading oil from the oil or uropygial gland over the feathers and body through preening actions using the beak. (3)

Proto-feather (Protoplumas)

Epidermal structure derived from reptilian scales, predecessor of bird feathers.

## Q

Quill (Cañón)

The hollow stemlike main shaft of a feather. Also called a calamus. (3)



## R

Raptor (Rapaz)

Belonging to either the Falconiformes family (diurnal raptors) or Strigiformes family (nocturnal raptors). (16)

Receiver unit (Receptor)

It is a unit that receives radio waves from the bird's transmitter, which helps tracking the bird down and calculating the distance from the bird. (16)

Rectrices (Rectrices, timoneras)

Feathers forming posterior margin of tail. (16)

Remiges (Rémiges)

The longest wing feathers or flight feathers. Include the primaries and secondaries. (3)

Retrieve (Recazar)

This name is given to birds that repeatedly attack difficult preys. (3)

Reversed sexual dimorphism (Dimorfismo sexual)

Females and males of the same species usually have different shapes and sizes. (10) Generally, females are larger and heavier than males.

Rutting season (Celo)

Period of time in which birds start their reproductive cycle. (16)



## S

### Scale (Balanza)

An important piece of equipment for falconry used to accurately weight the bird everyday making sure it maintains a healthy weight which will allow him to hunt. (16)

### Screamer (Pión)

A bird that screams for food or attention when it sees its caregiver. (16)

### Serve, to (Servir)

Release the bagged quarry so that the bird can hunt. (16)

### Sharp (Afilado)

Referring to the feel of the keel. A bird is sharp or low in weight if keel is protruding and the bone is easily felt. (16)

### Siblicide (Cainismo)

Survival strategy followed by the chicks, when in the nest the parental contributions of food are insufficient. It consists of the large eat their younger siblings (16). It is common in goshawks.

### Slip (Lance)

A flight at a quarry, since it is released until it captures the prey or abandons it. (16)

### Soar hawking or Waiting on (Altanería)

Hunting slip in which the falcon is released so it can gain height before the dam is flushed. (3)



In this hunting technique the falconer is usually accompanied by a dog which helps flushing the prey. (18)

Species (Especies)

Category of taxonomic classification the bird of prey belongs to. (10)

Still-hunting (Empuesta)

This is a hunting technique in hawking in which the hawk waits immobile in a high or concealed perch to ambush prey. (16)

Stoop, to (Cuchillada, picado)

Hunting technique in which a bird of prey flies high in the sky, folds her wings back and drops with great speed towards a prey hitting it with her claws but without grabbing it. (16)

Strike, to (Afeitar)

When a bird of prey binds to a quarry with its feet. (16)

Subspecies (Subespecies)

Taxonomic level below species, recognized in the international code of biological nomenclature, which is used in the case of polytypical species. The subspecies differ from each other by morphological characteristics and by their geographical or chronological distribution. (10)

Sunbathe (Solear)

This is the exposure of the plumage to the sun, usually by spreading the wings and tail while weathered outside. (16)



Sweat gland (Glándula sudorípara)

Tubular organ located on the skin that secretes sweat. (19) It is typical of some mammals.

Swivel (Tornillo)

A small metal device or double ring used in between the leash and the jesses. It helps to avoid the birds getting entangled in their own jesses. (16)

## T

Tail-mount (Emisor montado en cola)

Particular way of rising, typical of gyrfalcons, which rise in a straight line, almost at right angles. (3)

Tarsus (Tarsos)

Part of the leg between the knee and the toes, usually unfeathered. (19)

Taxonomy (Taxonomía)

Ordered and hierarchical classification of living beings, using morphological, embryological, biochemical and genetic criteria. (10)

Telemetry (Telemetría)

A radio-tracking system where a small transmitter, attached to the bird, sends out a signal to the falconer's receiving unit. Telemetry is used to locate lost birds. (11)

Territory (Territorio)

A specific area on which, in an ecological sense, an animal or a pair of animals establish their domain with a preferential nutritional purpose. (10)



Thermals (Térmica)

Vertical upward air, produced by the earth's heating, which birds use to gain height or support their glides. (16)

Tiercel (Torzuelo)

A male raptor. (3)

Tomial tooth (Diente tomial)

The tooth in a falcon's beak specialized for snapping the neck of their prey. (16)

Tool (Uillaje)

Set of necessary equipment for our Falconry bird.

Train, to (Adiestrar)

Process by which the bird is tamed and is taught how to hunt. (14)

A set of falconry skills aimed at the development of the psychology and musculature, the bone system or both at the same time, in order to obtain an adequate physical and mental state for the individuals, as well as the development of abilities to provide them well being, physically and mentally prepare them for the hunt or to make them acquire skills for exhibitions, competitions, scientific investigations or other purposes. (A. Madero)

Transmitter (Emisor)

Part of modern-day telemetry systems, this carries a battery and sends out a signal to the receiving unit to locate the raptor. It can be mounted on the bird's leg or tail. (16)

Transport box (Transportín)

A transport box used for carrying birds of prey in darkness and avoiding unnecessary bating.



Trophic resource (Recurso trófico)

Source of food determined for a living being.

## U

Unhood, to (Desencaperuzar)

To take the hood off a bird of prey. (14)

Upwind (Pico al viento)

As opposed to flying downwind, flying against the wind. (3)

## W

Weathering lawn or ground (Jardín)

The lawn where birds of prey are kept or weathered on, secured to the perch. (14)

Wingspan (Envergadura)

The distance from the left wingtip to the right wingtip. (16)

## Y

Yarak, in (En Yarak, templado)

A state of complete focus on the hunt. This word has an Indian origin. (3)



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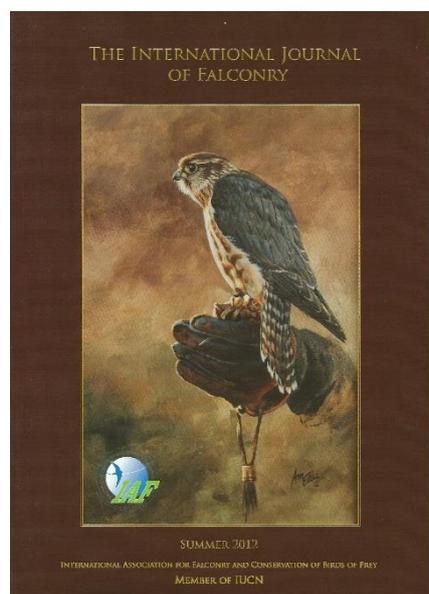
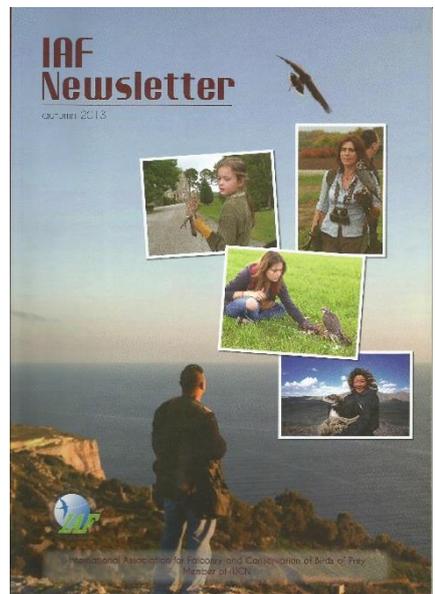
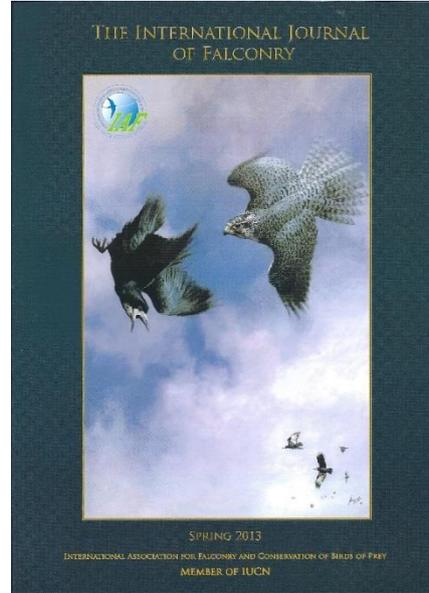
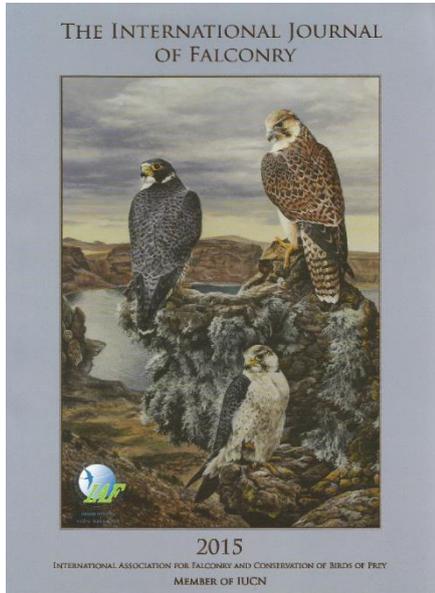
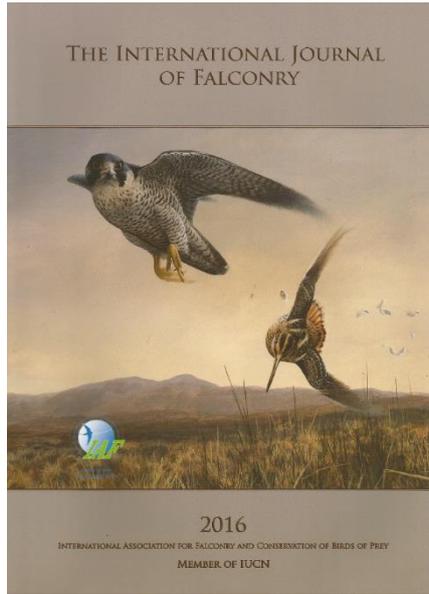
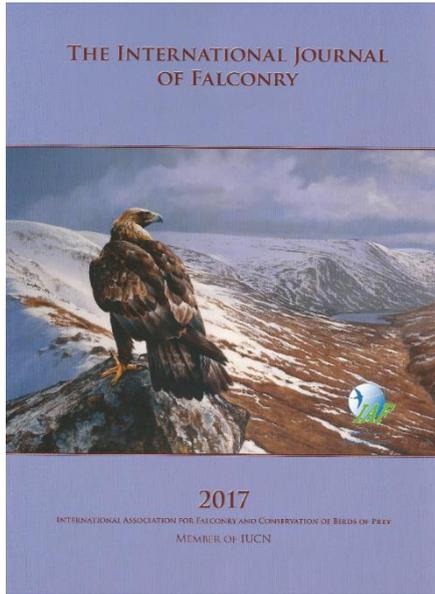
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# Falconry

*without borders, for everybody*

*by Dr. Javier Ceballos, World Falconry Day Coordinator*

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World Falconry Day is important for the visibility of falconry. Right from the beginning it received a warm welcome, both from the falconry community and international civil society. Each year has seen a greater variety of activities and a larger number of countries involved.

World Falconry Day (WFD) is a great showcase for the IAF and a good opportunity to send out messages worldwide:

- politically, by increasing the visibility of falconry in the European parliament and UNESCO
- financially, by increasing membership of associations like NAFA
- generally, by strengthening the sense of belonging to a worldwide falconry community.

Most participating falconry associations and individuals are satisfied with the impact of the WFD activities at an international level. WFD serves those with few possibilities to make themselves known, and we have been happy to see initiatives coming from countries on all continents.

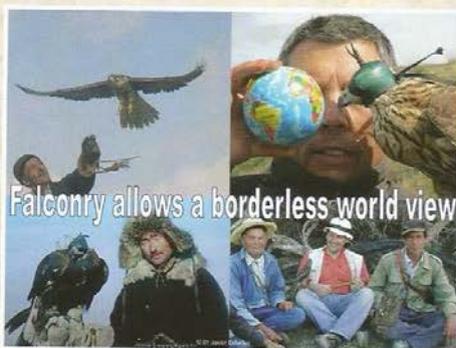
### Approach

The date chosen for WFD is November 16th, which is the anniversary of the recognition of falconry by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Some activities are more academic, while

others are more at family level and rather playful. World Falconry Day had been recognized in schools and museums, in the countryside as well as in cities.

### The beginnings

As I wrote in the Spring 2013 Journal, World Falconry Day was conceived in a communication between members of the IAF Advisory Committee. Subsequently, I presented my ideas at the AGM in June 2013 in Valkenswaard, Holland. The WFD Working Group was born with the participation of Adrian Lombard (South Africa), Véronique Blontrock (Belgium), Yukio Asaoka (Japan), Dan Cecchini (USA), Gary Timbrell (Ireland) and Patrizia Cimberio (Italy).



The concept is simple. Each year a theme is agreed upon. Falconers and associations from all countries who wish to participate can participate. They may do so within the IAF's official program or as independent initiatives. I reiterate my gratitude to Andrea Villa for his invaluable collaboration in promotion, and to Patrizia Cimberio for her creativity in the design of the logo.



**Activities**  
A great variety of activities have been carried out, mostly altruistic.

The 2013 IAF WFD program recorded activities in the following 20 countries: Germany, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Slovenia, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Portugal, Russia, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe. In 2016 we surpassed that, with 50 participating countries. We are confident that we can maintain the quality of the activities and, above all, continue supporting the feeling of belonging to the international falconry community. Independent activities tend to be private initiatives prepared with fewer resources. Their number is increasing, since the realization is rather easy and the WFD logo may be used freely. It was a pleasant surprise, the enormous creativity that was developed in the first four years of WFD.

**Slogans**

For each annual WFD, slogans are carefully thought out. In 2013, we focused on the 10th anniversary of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of ICH. In 2014 and 2015, we wanted to emphasize the importance of preserving and sharing our knowledge for future generations. In 2016, the motto was based on the recovery of peregrine falcon populations. This year, the focus is on young people, and the Festival of Falconry later this year has been inspired by a message of present and future falconry.

- 2013 "Celebrating ICH constitutes falconry for over 4000 years"
- 2014 "Sharing our knowledge and expertise"
- 2015 "Falconry for future generations"
- 2016 "Celebrating recovery of the Peregrine Falcon"
- 2017 "Learning and teaching. Passing on our cultural heritage"

Falconry associations: open doors for the general public, organization of hunting parties, workshops, conferences...  
 Academic institutions: conferences, seminars, exhibitions...  
 Cultural institutions: exhibitions in museums and cultural centers of works of art related to falconry, design of itineraries to discover the falconry and/or works of art of a certain region.  
 Schools: workshops, drawing contests, photography, literature, research, visits of falconers to the classroom...  
 Social groups: visits to airports where falconry is used to ensure the safety of airplanes, participation in hunting days...  
 Visibility: presence in TV, radio, and press through reports, interviews, news, articles...  
 Reviewing the hundreds of activities developed, I find it difficult to highlight the most significant ones. Consequently I limit myself to some of the activities of the past two years.  
 The School Links Programme, now funded by the IAF but initiated by the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi, International Wildlife Consultants, and the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia, actively participates every year, highlighting the enthusiasm of Project Manager Nicola Dixon. On WFD 2015, 560 students took part, and 61 paintings and 58 poems were created by students for the 2016 calendar competition.





In November 2015, the conference “Falconry in the Mediterranean Context” was organized in Abu Dhabi by the NYUAD Institute, the Warburg Institute and the IAF. On 16th November, workshop attendees traveled to the Mohammed bin Zayed Falconry and Desert Physiognomy School, where H.E. Majed Al Mansouri met with the falconers and their falcons, and had kindly arranged a traditional Arabic dinner afterwards.

During that visit, the films once made by Roger Upton during his many hawking trips in Abu Dhabi with His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, were ceremonially handed over by Dr. Adrian Lombard and Mark Upton, and some clips were shown.

In 2016, we celebrated the recovery of the Peregrine falcon, recognizing the work of emblematic figures in the conservation of this species: Dr. Tom J Cade (USA), Dr. Christian Saar (Germany) and Dr. Carl Jones (UK).

Falcons Bridge, which organizes duck-hunting trips for falconers in one of the best places in Europe (Extremadura, Spain) developed

an interesting initiative. On 16th November they filmed waiting-on flights at ducks, and showed them on their website, [www.falconsbridge.com](http://www.falconsbridge.com). In this way they made known one of the most impressive sights that can be observed in modern falconry.

The Irish Hawking Club organized in 2016 in Sneem, Ireland, the most international meeting in the brief history of World Falconry Day. More than 50 countries were represented at the event, which coincided with the IAF AGM. The good work developed by Hilary White made it possible for WFD to be featured in the national press.



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#### Improvement points for future editions

We expect the next WFD, the fifth, to have the greatest participation in its history. Not long thereafter, the Festival of Falconry will take place in Abu Dhabi with the participation of young people from all over the world.

The success of World Falconry Day depends on its promotion. We need National Delegates to cooperate more in reaching all the collectives of each country.

Each National Delegate is expected to send at least one proposal for the celebration of WFD and, before 31st July 2017, to send to [wfd@iaf.org](mailto:wfd@iaf.org) a compilation of WFD activities held over the last four years, for an album marking the 5th anniversary.

From these lines my thanks are conveyed to all those who find falconry a heritage worth preserving and who have actively been supporting this initiative.

# Adaja's falconry camp for children



Pioneering initiative of international coexistence sharing the Intangible Cultural Heritage that falconry is.

Words and photos by Dr. Javier Ceballos

## Introduction

Falconry has a lot to say in areas such as education in values, the Intangible Cultural Heritage ICH, art, the encounter with nature, species conservation, etc.

I think that the easiest way of returning falconry to where it belongs in society is through children. Getting adults attention usually requires a huge effort and a lot of time and even then, there are no guarantees. Children tend to be more open-minded, without so many prejudices as adults have. On top of that, they can act as prescribers to their parents.

For instance, we may not throw a plastic bottle in the plastic container but, if our child is watching us, we think twice and look for the proper container in order to do the right thing in front of them, so that they learn from our example. In the same way, if children return home with a positive opinion on hunting and falconry, parents would at least have to listen to their points of view, and hopefully learn from them.

After all, the survival of an art is assured as long as new generations keep on learning, understanding and practising it. Falconry is no exception. All of this is empowered by the fact that knowledge is an unlimited good: no matter how much you decide to give away, you never run out of it. So my passion for falconry and my teaching vocation led me in 1992 to the creation of the ADAJA summer camp ('Campamento ADAJA'). Throughout the last 25 years I have organized over 47 editions of this camp.





Initially, activities were focused on the awareness of the natural environment, taking into account botany, zoology and geology. Through 19 editions of the summer camp we have also encouraged a cultural exchange between Spanish and Mexican children. However, within the last 11 years, falconry has become unavoidably the big attraction of our camp, leading to what can be considered a falconry summer camp for children. As a matter of fact, the last two summers we have been lucky enough to share the experience with a huge team of hawks that children have been manning and flying, always under the close supervision of experienced falconers. We are proud to say that we have always achieved our goal of getting children involved with nature whilst they learn and enjoy their summer days.

#### **Our motivation**

I have organized a lot of diverse activities in order to publicize falconry worldwide. Just to name a few, the monographic exhibition on falconry at the Natural Sciences National Museum in Spain and the national school contest organized in collaboration with the Spanish Ministry of Education "Falconry as seen by children". I have also carried out more than 100 workshops in schools and in the Natural Sciences National Museum and established, together with the IAF, the "World Falconry Day". I have taken part in the writing of The Ethical Code of the falconer and in the organization of different acts in the day of Francisco de Borja, Patron Saint of falconers. I have also designed and developed teaching programs about falconry for different universities. As an autor, I have written my doctoral thesis about falconry, published three books, dozens of articles and participated in

the creation of TV documentaries filmed throughout four continents. In the Falconry and UNESCO project I have led the Spanish candidacy and advised in the record of various countries... Without a doubt, all of these initiatives provide visibility and are beneficial for falconry. However, through the falconry summer camp I have achieved something else. When you live this experience with children, sharing the same spaces and activities throughout the days, you end up establishing friendly bonds around your common love for falconry. A lot of us, as IAF members, have eventually become friends after years of meetings. Can you imagine if we had met each other when we were only ten years old?

On the other hand, the feeling of belonging to the "worldwide falconry community" is a huge message of peace and understanding between different cultures. Not every falconer accomplishes this, but working in the IAF it is easy to achieve. The flight of our hawks helps us to focus on what joins us instead of looking at what makes us different politically, religiously or economically.

You could think that workshops and courses help achieve a lot of these goals. Even in the last decade, the so-called 'Day Camps' have rapidly expanded and in my opinion they try to offer something they can't really achieve. Spending the night away from home during several days allows children to experience life out of the comfort zone. The effort of living with other children in a tent establishes a common starting point for all of them, which makes their integration easier. The fact that they can overcome small difficulties on their own will help them learn how to cope with different situations in the future. However, some of the best memories children take from our camp are related to our evening games, which



are a big part of the whole experience.

Any child that finds himself out of a familiar atmosphere develops new abilities, discovers new possibilities and confronts unknown situations. They become aware of their resources and use them so that they can adapt to the group. They find in others the passion they see in themselves, sharing interests and knowledge.

Our approach is to try and encourage children, hopefully helping them acquire new knowledge regarding birds of prey and understand their role in the different ecosystems. In other words, help them discover falconry as a source of cultural interest. We would like them to be able to share their experiences taking into account their different hometowns and cultures. Even if their parents or they themselves belong to a falconry association, we encourage them to explain their singularities so that we can learn from one another.

**2017 Adaja's Falconry Camp**

Since 1992, The ADAJA Summer Camp has been held in three different venues; it all started in Valladolid, then we moved to Segovia in the Castilnovo Castle where we stayed for 20 summers and finally, the last three camps have taken

place in Espinosa de los Monteros (Burgos).

In 2015 and 2016 we have received children interested in falconry from different countries such as Italy, France, United Kingdom, Russia or the USA. All of them spoke or at least understood Spanish. However, with the idea of expanding the range of participant nationalities, in 2017, on top of our usual ADAJA Camp in Spanish that takes place between the 1st and the 15th July, we are organising the first English edition that will take place between the 17th and the 31st July.

**Team of camp monitors**

The human team leading the ADAJA Camp is the key to our success. As coordinator, when selecting my team I take into account their experience with children, their personal values, their interest and vocation and their resources. Of course, they have all passed the course needed in Spain to become a Leisure and Activity Camp Monitor or Coordinator. In some cases we even count on former campers that after a few years have returned to the ADAJA family to become camp monitors. But above all, we achieve a great balance between instructors with didactic experience in falconry and summer camp experience. After all, children expect to have fun, and being able to count



on animation technics is nothing but an added value.

#### Activities

If I were asked to describe ADAJA in a single sentence, it would be 'learning while enjoying'. Every single one of our activities has a didactic component but also a playful one. ADAJA's Falconry Camp can be understood as a monographic camp on falconry. Since they wake up until they go to bed, they are continuously in touch with birds of prey. Taking advantage of the diversity of cultures that will coexist we will encourage an important cultural exchange. If for any reason at some point the English level of the participants weren't enough, camp monitors and other campers would help them out making sure they take part in every activity.

The contents explained have not only a theoretical component that campers usually write down in their notebook but also a practical application. Above all, children share experiences and emotions that they remember for a lifetime. We can classify activities in the following groups:

- **Knowledge of birds of prey**

We have a specific tent conditioned for birds where short and long wing birds are separated. We have species such as

Peregrine falcon, hybrids, lanner falcon, common kestrel, American kestrel, goshawk, Harris hawk... and also birds not related to falconry such as eagle owl or barn owl. In this workshop we show children how to identify them, we talk about their biology, how they adapt for each type of flight and for hunting and of course how they are used in falconry.

- **Implications of holding a bird of prey. Falconer ethics.**

Being a falconer doesn't only imply having a bird of prey. This ancient art has been transmitted from generation to generation for over more than 4000 years. The excellence in its practice is the best explanation for its maintenance. For this reason in the Camp we don't try to encourage children to have a hawk, but to learn everything about them and then evaluate if they are able to offer them the attentions they require. Through different dynamics, we agree on our own ethical code. Our final aim is to develop a well-informed and structured discussion, in which everyone is able to share their point of view through respect and finally learn from each other.

- **Falconer crafts and equipment**

Children are able to identify the different types of hoods and the diverse types of leathers used in their making. They



learn how to cut and sew leather as well as how to do jesses, leashes... They are able to identify different types of gloves used in different cultures, lures, balances, and perches, which they learn to use correctly as well as how to keep a bird diary. They familiarise themselves with the manipulation of transmitters and receivers. Through games, they learn how to use them and get a deeper technical understanding of their functioning.

• **Manning of birds of prey**

Each bird has its own daily routine. The cleaning, equipment reviewing, sun and water baths, food... We go through the basic needs of a bird in order to maintain its mental and physical health. We explain children how these birds need to be treated, the veterinary checks they have to go through and how they have to be transported, not only in the fist but also by car.

• **Flights**

Before flying the birds we explain to the children how to keep a falconer diary. In this notebook, every day we write down the weight of our bird. Campers even manipulate birds during their taming. Others fly from fist to fist and some falcons fly to the lure. This means that they get in touch with everything they need to maintain their bird in the best conditions.

• **Lectures on falconry**

In the ADAJA summer camp we develop lectures and project videos, followed by debates and discussions on the following topics:

- Falconry as Intangible Cultural Heritage ICH by the UNESCO

- Falconry and conservation
- The IAF
- Veterinary cares of birds of prey
- Captive breeding of birds of prey
- Wildlife/pest control with falconry birds
- International Falconry; differences and similarities in Europe, Central Asia, Arabian countries, America...
- Debates between assistants and the lecturer will allow everyone to learn and make the most of their knowledge. Without a doubt others' experiences will enrich our own.
- Collateral activities on falconry

On top of all the already mentioned activities we also develop painting workshops in which we use our birds as natural models and activities related to the photography of birds. With these images and the material filmed during the camp we are able to make projections and that way we can identify our mistakes and learn from them, improving our techniques. We also develop a simple newsletter with the kids, so that parents are informed of our daily activities.

**Information and registration**

The registration period opens in January 2017, and it can be done through any of these websites: [www.avium.es](http://www.avium.es) or [www.adaja.es](http://www.adaja.es). If you have any doubts or you are interested in getting more information please don't hesitate to request it at [jceballos@avium.es](mailto:jceballos@avium.es) 

# A MEETING BEYOND THE FE

## OFFERING OF SPANISH FALCONERS TO THEIR PATRON SAINT FRANCISCO DE BORJA (1510-1572)

*By Dr. Javier Ceballos*

In October 2013, the Vatican recognized Francisco de Borja as patron saint of Spanish Falconry. This recognition is the result of the initiative, effort and skill of the Royal Guild of Falconers, led by D. Antonio de Castro.

After almost a year without knowledge of any event to express and share the satisfaction of the falconers for this important milestone, three associations have taken the initiative to make an offering to their patron saint. The idea came from the Madrid Association of Falconry, adopted at its general assembly to delegate to Dr. Javier Ceballos the organization of the event. Soon joined AECCA, the most representative association of Spanish falconry and Asociación Cetrera Amigo Félix SMV the other falconry association that exists in the Community of Madrid, venue of the event. The site chosen was the parish church of San Francisco de

Borja in Madrid, where rest his mortal remains. The date, October 3rd, his name day. In the "Jesuitas de Serrano" as popularly referred to this parish, we have had the warmest welcome. The Revd. Father Xavier Ilundáin SJ, along with the president of the Madrid Association, D. Francisco Uceda, and the delegate of the event, Dr. Javier Ceballos, participated in the review of the falconers's prayer to their patron saint making insightful comments being as follows:

**'Dear St. Francis Borgia, our Patron**

**You found falconry a source of divine inspiration, I beg that you ease the encounter with God**

**Accompany me in my way. Bless my bird. Make me as just as she is and may I demand from her just as much as she can demand from me.**

**Both in the field and in my daily tasks give me a spirit of improvement to flee from the easy task**

**In my mistakes make me learn the lesson rather than being frustrated.**

**You who made yourself small in order to be great in God's sight, teach me humility**

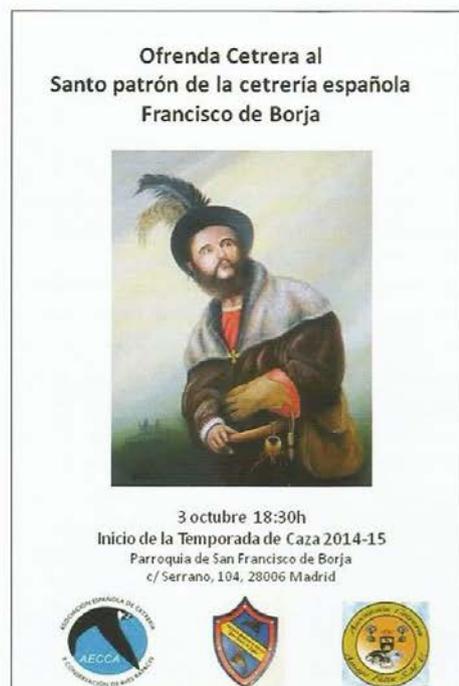
**Help me understand that as the rabbit which hides or the quail which flees, so Nature's laws need to be respected.**

**Make me courageous like the kestrel, noble like the falcon, strong as the goshawk, perseverance like the merlin and swift like the sparrowhawk. Once I've learnt these virtues, may I use them for the good of others.**

**Make that my daily meeting with creation may enlighten my life and may I know how to reflect it to those who are strange to the greatness of God.**

**Take my gratitude to those who, like yourself, went before me in the practice of this noble skill. Do not allow me to forget my responsibility to pass on this heritage of falconry to future generations once I have undertaken my final flight.**

**Guide me so that the feelings and values which you experienced as a falconer may model me to a better self, as a man and as a Christian. Amen'**



Cover of the leaflet distributed among the attendees showing a calligraphy on parchment portrait by D. Pascual Francés



Representation of falconers offering at the altar of the patron saint of the Spanish falconry, Francisco de Borja



Above: Group photo at the end of the Mass  
Below: falconry attendees with their birds



Gathering among falconers

Once agreed upon prayer, D. Pascual Francés, Madrid's veteran falconer and master in the art of calligraphy was commissioned to write text on parchment. The many hours he has selflessly dedicated to the task have certainly been worthwhile. We were surprised and strangers with a huge picture framed double glazed. Simple, stylish and well made. Besides text, written in Gothic former script, representing different birds used in Spanish falconry, like the sparrowhawk, goshawk and peregrine falcon.

D. Fernando Lopez Herencia, legendary falconer and magnificent painter, was comisioned to the task of representing San Francisco de Borja as a falconer. Was a challenge. There is scarcely iconography of the saint. In fact no representation in which you can identify practicing falconry is unknown. Fernando was documented in various sources, some contemporary to the protagonist, others made by renowned painters throughout the centuries. The result has been the work presented in this article. The only portrait that exists of San Francisco de Borja falconer. We hope that after completion of the works in the parish we can exhibit both prayer of falconers as the portrait of the falconer San Francisco de Borja.

Definitely Fernando was wisely not representing a falcon. He has managed to focus on the expression of the saint. Do not forget that through falconry this good man found a way to reach God. In his gesture is sensed that is flying a hawk. In his eyes you read that sees more than two wings ascending into heaven. This reflection on the falconry spirituality of St. Francis Borgia and his passion as a falconer is found in the work of Pedro de Ribadeneyra SJ (s XVI) on the saint's life: Believers and nonbelievers enjoyed a wonderful homily of Xavier Ilundáin SJ. He told us about the gift we have in our birds and how this fascination that we produce it must also generate specific actions to the service of others. Was significant and emotional to see falconers with his bird to the fist, reading or praying beside the altar after Communion. Also there was the final blessing to the birds present. A good start to the hunting season.

We hope that such events continue building bridges between falconry and society as well have been on this occasion. From here my gratitude to all who have made possible this first meeting, certainly the first in a long history. 🦅

# World FALCONRY DAY

Text and pictures by Dr. Javier Ceballos, IAF AC Member  
ceballos@iaf.org, Madrid, Spain

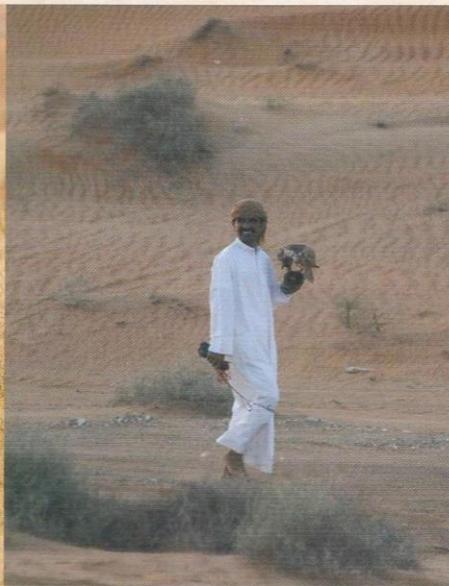
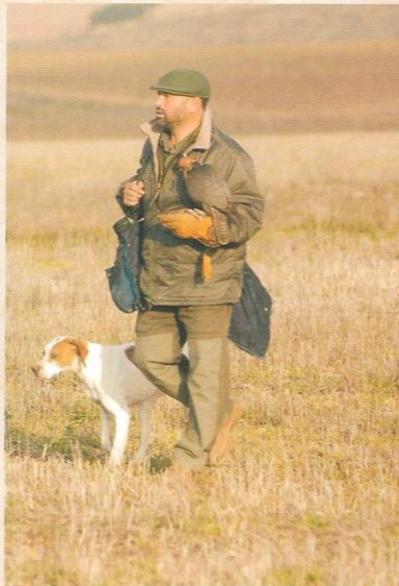
On February 14th, our friend, tireless contributor and Executive Secretary of the IAF Gary Timbrell congratulated members of the Advisory Committee with the following words:

*"A Happy St. Tripbon's Day to all of you. Tripbon, the Eastern Patron of Falconry and of wine, my saint of preference"*

The reaction was immediate, and throughout the day were sent many different messages congratulating the day. Anthony Crosswell presented a long list of saints associated with

falconry, collected from the article written by Christian de Coune in the IAF magazine (2009). However it is clear that not all falconers are Christians. For this reason any congratulations for being the day of the patron becomes meaningless for those who do not believe in saints.

To have a day on which all falconers can celebrate our sense of belonging to the falconry community is an idea that has long been in my head. When a falconer, at sunset, returns home after his hawks' flight on the other side of the world another falconer wakes from his dreams. For 4000 years of



When a falconer goes to bed, at the other side of the world the sun rises to another falconer's dreams. For more than 4000 years the tradition of falconry has kept flying in the skies worldwide

falcons flying in the sky, without borders or human differences, keeping alive the heritage of falconry.

When I received the e-mail from Gary Timbrell I recalled the idea of a World Falconry Day and shared it with the rest of the Advisory Committee. Its reception was unanimous. We agreed that a specific day in which to celebrate recognition of falconry year after year is a feasible project and encouraging.

In June the next AGM will discuss the proposal with the assembly for approval.

In general terms it is as follows:

**WHAT?**

Each year, on a specific date, participants coordinated by the IAF, from largest number of countries, working with a common theme related to falconry.

**WHY?**

It is interesting to concentrate actions on a common platform.



On November 16th, falconry bells will sound in every corner of the world

Synergies are created. We multiply the visibility. IAF is also UNESCO's advisory NGO. As Frank Bond said this "will provide proof to UNESCO that the IAF is fulfilling its role of promoting and protecting falconry as an intangible cultural heritage".

**Aims**

- Identify and promote the Intangible Cultural Heritage that constitutes falconry
- Increase visibility of

falconry to society

- Nourishing a sense of belonging to the falconry community
- Promoting cooperation in different sectors for falconry (academic, cultural, social, political).

**WHO?**

The World Falconry Day will be organized by a committee set up especially for this purpose within the IAF. Coordinator is expected to be Dr. Javier Ceballos, with the help of PPRR Veronique Blontrock (Europe), Yukio Asaoka (Asia),



Falconry has many positive messages to society

Dan Cecchini (America) and our Executive Secretary Gary Timbrell.

**Participants:** Associations and falconers worldwide (whether or not forming part of the IAF), public and private entities (whether or not economic interests), and generally anyone interested in developing activities within the framework coordinated by the IAF.

**WHEN?**

The first edition will take place on November 16th, 2013, the third anniversary of the recognition of falconry by UNESCO. 2013 is the tenth anniversary of the UNESCO ICH Convention.

On November 16th it is also an appropriate date by other factors such as the absence of religious connotations/political, be within the hunting season, coincide with the anniversary of the inscription by UNESCO.

**WHERE?**

The *World Falconry Day* is held simultaneously in all countries

that want to join the initiative.

Each year will have a different venue for the international celebration. This location will be the flagship from slogan adopted annually.

The venue for 2013 will be determined at the AGM.

In the words of Adrian Lombard:

*Broadly the plan would be to encourage all Falconers to mark this day, for our member organizations to plan some action or event and to prepare press releases drawing attention to the positive influences of Falconry.*

The organizing committee, annually will present a theme around which will revolve the global day of falconry. Each **national delegate** will inform to the organizing committee about the activities proposed in their country

**Stamp of quality**

Activities approved by the organizing committee each year will have the "stamp of quality and Logo" given for the occasion. In this way may be recognized easily the activities within the framework of the IAF of the activities organized independently.



School drawings: a great way to spread the knowledge of falconry. A great way for falconers to know how society sees them. This drawing was made by Santiago (aged seven) and shows a falconry day with his father. It shows hunting rabbits with goshawk, with the collaboration of a ferret



On November 16th, our birds will fly over the wish to enjoy our sense of belonging to the falconry community

The activities selected are displayed on the website of the IAF. Moreover, on the website of UNESCO are joining the initiatives of celebration to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Convention:

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00482>

Since Spain have already integrated some initiatives related to falconry.

**Examples of activities:**

**Nationals:**

Falconry Associations: Open Day for the general public, Organization of hunting parties with selected falconers, Workshops/Courses falconry, internal discussions about the slogan.

Academic: Lectures, Seminars, Conferences.

Cultural: Identification and explicit exhibition in museums of artworks related to falconry, documentaries, guided tours in museums to show masterpieces related to falconry, Proposed routes & visits where is possible see falconry's masterpieces (example: falconry Romanesque capitals in the province of Segovia, Spain XIII- XIV centuries, or paintings of falconry in

the Palace of Siena, Italy), falconry exhibitions, expositions.

Schools: Presentations at schools, school competitions writing, drawing.

Social: Visits to airports where falconry is used as a resource to ensure flight safety

Coordination to facilitate participation in hunting parties with falconry birds

Presence in the Media: Debates on tv, radio interviews/press/ tv, articles, reports

Expressly avoided: Displays to the public with bagged game

**International:**

The country to submit its candidature to host the World Day of falconry will send a dossier. It must be supported by the falconry community, and different institutions. Show international activities to develop around the slogan.

All those who want participate in the global day of falconry can find information on the website of the IAF. They may also consult the respective national delegate. Once approved the project in June AGM, may submit proposals for their integration in the global day of falconry. 🦅

Report from Spain: *Dr Javier Ceballos*

Spain has two IAF member associations. Since 1982 the Spanish Association for Falconry (now called AECCA) and since 1999 "Alicantina de Cetrería" the Alicante's Association for Falconry.

The AECCA's new board debuted on 10 November 2012. Its new president, Andrés Lopez, has initiated significant actions. Among other highlights are his interest in improving relations with the IAF and offering collaboration in international cooperation for the benefit of falconry.

Both associations, AECCA and Alicantina de Cetrería, organize hunting days and are working for the recognition of falconry as a way of hunting. It should be remembered that in Spain there has been a proliferation replacing falconry's hunting by the use of pigeons. This is hawk training instead of falconry. Many participate in competitions with numerous public and media people attending. AECCA from the beginning has been organizing a few hunting days per year in different parts of Spain.

In 2012 the Coto was chosen in Villanueva de Alcardete (Toledo). It brought together some thirty birds and a large number of fans. The "Alicantina de Cetrería" organizes a hunting day each month. Members practicing principally short-wings flights over rabbit and hare. They enjoy exceptional permission to hunt all year for damage to agriculture in over 5,000 km<sup>2</sup> of vegetable patches.

During the year 2012 two numbers corresponding to the perch have been published, and an Annual. The publications reaching nearly 1000 members who are already in AECCA. The authors are prestigious falconers at national and international level. The result is a publication reference in the sector.



The Spanish Association for Falconry AECCA organises hunting days



The Gowhawkers' group in the AECCA's hunting day



Participants during AECCA's meeting talks: Jose Souto, Jurgen Nikolaus, Ed Pitcher, Javier Ceballos, Andrés López and Ricardo Velarde



The AECCA Board of Directors, from l to r: AECCA President Andrés Lopez; Rodrigo García; Jorge Hernandez; Ricardo Olmos; Hector Pazos; Antonio Cuartero and Esteban Martin

## FALCONERS FACING THEIR UNESCO ACKNOWLEDGMENT

### ETHICS TO SAFEGUARD THE FALCONRY HERITAGE

*Words and photos by Dr. Javier Ceballos*

For centuries and in countries all over the world falconry has not had any great changes. However, the acknowledgment of falconry by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage ICH is a milestone in history. Due to this, and by stopping and observing the situation, we can identify different results that mark the present and the near future of falconry.

The main objective of this article is as a means of reflection, in the international falconry community, about both the changes that are occurring in our field, falconry, and the concept and perception of falconry.

Falconry can be defined as the art of caring for and training of birds of prey to hunt wild quarry in their natural environment. This means that falconry is hunting and, therefore, if the wild quarry is not captured and killed, the activity performed cannot be considered falconry.

It has been this way for thousands of years. For this reason, the ties between human beings and the bird of prey has remained alive. Neither religion, race, culture nor socio-economic status are important. Whoever has managed to train a bird of prey and hunt with it has experienced emotions and has nurtured values that provide that person with an identity. The person becomes a member of what we could call the falconry community.

The multinational candidacy before UNESCO has made this interesting reality flourish. Through their birds falconers all over the world share a common identity. Falconry can be considered a way of uniting nations. Through history, living beings that are apparently “small” creatures, such as falcons, have been able to stop wars or have served as diplomatic presents between different governments. When one falconer is going to bed, on the other side of the world the dreams of another falconer are rising. The falconry tradition has been overflying the earth without any man-made barriers for more than 4000 years.

Looking at the cultural goods that UNESCO has established as ICH it comes to our attention that most of them correspond to one specific country or even to one specific geographical area. The opposite happens with falconry. It is amazing that



If the goal of our activity is not hunting, then we are not talking about falconry.



UAE, through its leadership in the Multinational Submission to UNESCO, and the organization of the International Falconry Festival has shown how falconry provides a common identity to falconers from many different cultures.

falconers, even though they belong to such different cultures, feel this common identity that has remained the same through time.

While reflecting on the causes I encountered several arguments.

Falconers find happiness while devoting their life to an occupation to which they have a particular vocation. We have discovered and recognized it voluntarily and freely. We practice it more for the satisfaction it provides us with than for the material goods we get from it. That it provides us with happiness does not mean that it constantly gives us pleasure. In fact, those difficulties are what make it attractive. Falconry entails so many sacrifices that whoever practices it immediately discovers the complexities of their encounter with other falconers. The situation can be compared to the encounter of two mothers that immediately connect while talking about their babies.

Falconry rediscovers in human beings their ties with nature. A falconer in the countryside is a hunter with two legs and two wings. We have this concept so fully integrated that when we go out to the countryside we do not say "I am going to fly my bird" but instead "I am going to fly". We reach the third dimension, the vertical one, and see the land we are going to hunt through the falcon that is overflying us.

The falconer looks through the eyes of his goshawk or falcon. Knows its capabilities. Examines the launching conditions fast in order to let the bird fly or wait for a better moment. The falconer forms a team with his bird. Unlike a naturalist

that remains as a spectator behind the binoculars, the falconer is part of a team. The falconer participates in the life cycle of the ecosystem where he is. The falconer is the director of an orchestra in which the symphony is performed differently every day. A Bird, human being (and sometimes dog or/and horse/camel) could read their music sheet themselves but they prefer the harmony of putting all their abilities together. The challenge, and therefore also the greater or less great satisfaction are conditioned by the difficulty of the launch. The falconer does not try to control the variables but instead he tries to adapt to them. The ignorance previous to the result, the uncertainty, creates the motivation to cover hundreds of kilometers in order to reach the reserve and hunt a partridge, hare or rabbit.

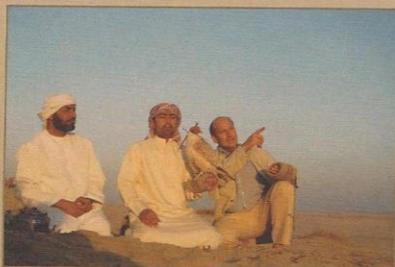
Here lies one of the greatneses of falconry. The person is face to face with nature in its pure state because the difficulty does not come from him but from the ability that the bird of prey has to escape. Thousands of years of evolution have provided each species with the necessary resources to survive the attack of its predator. Both the rabbit that is chased by our goshawk and the duck that escapes our falcon are risking their lives. Our success practicing falconry will be determined by a factor that does not depend on the person, the prey. The specimen dodges because it risks its life daily while successfully escaping its natural predators; it uses all its resources to also escape the falconry bird. The challenge is to manage to coordinate the efforts and the capabilities to win the game. Every time we go out to hunt we undergo, as



It is amazing that falconers, even though they belong to such different cultures, feel this common identity that has remained the same through time.

a team, the test of survival. For the prey being killed means it failed. For the team not having been successful when hunting has consequences that can be easily accepted. We always find satisfaction in the excitement of hunting and in the simple fact of all of us returning home.

A falconer gets to know himself better when he rediscovers his ties with the natural environment. Through falconry a person finds an activity that makes him noble. I do not mean with this that a person reaches a better social status. In fact, the best falconers are usually people that are close to the countryside and who do not like the big cities' ostentations. Falconry awakens and intensifies in a person his more noble values. The relationship with a bird of prey, as we well know,



Falconry entails so many sacrifices that whoever practices it immediately discovers the complications of their encounter with other falconers.

is not based on a hierarchy or in the punishment but instead in the positive subtlety and reinforcement. In fact, it is not the bird that is at a person's disposition but the person who is at the disposition of the bird. This is why falconry is also defined as *the art through which the birds of prey use and extract the best part of human beings*. This attitude towards the service, compromised until death separates the falconer and the bird, says a lot about the altruism and dedication of the falconers, even more when there is no economic compensation. On the contrary, having hunting land, a means of transportation, facilities in which to keep the bird and the most difficult of all, time daily to fly, require a considerable economic effort. The bird of prey builds in a person abilities and values such as confidence, patience, discernment, observation, sensibility, global perception of the environment, humility, planning of strategies, being unconditional, selflessness, compromise, respect, etc. Falconry awakens one's own humanity and therefore it discovers a person's more noble essence. In the Medieval Ages falconry was considered the best field in which to educate gentlemen. It trained them to ride, understand the orography of the land, coordinate teams, make fast decisions, develop strategies, etc. For this reason it is not surprising that celebrities from the International Olympics Movement as important as Carl Diem or Dr. Misangyi have reasoned about how the practice of falconry has given place to the term "sport".

All these abilities could later be applied in the battlefield. Whoever trained a gentle falcon was called a "gentleman",



nowadays this falcon is known as a peregrine falcon. Many centuries later the term continues to define, in the modern world, a person who has obtained noble qualities, independently of the fact that the person cares for a falcon or not.

Gotten to this point, we can introduce a subject to reflect on and that is currently common. In different nations many enthusiasts (now I do not use the term falconers) care for and train birds of prey but they do not hunt with them. They care for the specimen and use techniques that falconers also use. However, what were initially considered temporary resources for the training and bodybuilding of the birds, with the objective of later introducing them into hunting, constitutes an end in itself. With this approach they achieve spectacular ascending flight to lure hung from air balloons or tied on kites and even hunting lure dragged by remote-controlled aircrafts. In other cases they release jesses for their falcons with the only objective of observing bird dives from the highest height possible. The trainer does not need to blend into the landscape and therefore a large crowd of people can see the flights.

However, going back to the topic of falconry, in force for more than 4000 years, falconry is hunting. Consequently, whoever does not hunt or does not have the intention of hunting can be considered a magnificent trainer of birds but not a falconer. That person has preferred to control the flight more than the uncertainty created by the escape of a wild prey. José Ortega y Gasset in his wonderful text about hunting (1942) reflects on an issue that is worth mentioning. *"... Hunting is an imitation of the animal. Therefore we will not be understanding hunting if we take it as a human fact and not as a zoological fact that man takes delight in producing."*

Modern society does not make the life of falconers easy. It encourages us to continuously obtain the greatest quantity of product possible, without much effort, in a little amount of time and if possible with a large public. Falconry does not fulfill any of these requirements. To hunt a few dozens of specimen in a season requires a great effort and a dedication of 365 days a year. The witness of success is oneself and at the most a companion. A falconer enjoys flying alone; the person does not need someone else's acknowledgement to feel fully satisfied. Also, a falconer does not need the judges

Falconry awakens one's own humanity and therefore it discovers a person's more noble essence. For this reason it is not surprising that celebrities from the International Olympics Movement have reasoned about how the practice of falconry has given place to the term "sport".



Every time we go out to hunt we undergo, as a team, the test of survival. The falconer participates in the life cycle of the ecosystem where he is.

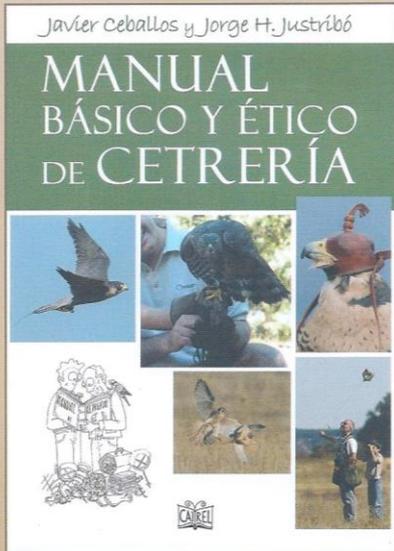
of a competition to verify if a good falconry takes place or not. A falconer's own sport moral, the person's falconry ethics, shows if the launch has been noble with the prey, with their bird and with himself.

Nevertheless, falconry is not exempt from the contamination of the aforementioned values proposed by society.

The media, immediate access to information, breeding centers, the welfare state and other factors, make it easy to buy a bird of prey for anyone who is willing to pay some money for it.

Instead of taking into account all the implications that are present when hunting with a bird of prey the new amateurs first buy it, then train it and then they complain about not having a hunting reserve available. The birds remain in





It is time to identify the good practices of a falconer. To establish a code of ethics that gathers all the common points that must be taken into account by everyone who practices falconry in order to reestablish the basis of the falconry community. [http://www.mcu.es/novedades/2011/novedades\\_Patrimonio\\_Cetreria.html](http://www.mcu.es/novedades/2011/novedades_Patrimonio_Cetreria.html)

establish a code of ethics that gathers all the common points that must be taken into account by everyone who practices falconry in order to reestablish the basis of the falconry community. This does not mean that other ways of understanding the ties with the birds of prey must be left aside, such as training without a hunting purpose or flight exhibitions and competitions. It means that it is important to work on the feeling of belonging to the falconry community. Discover that our passion has also been lived by our ancestors many generations ago and that it depends on us for it to stay this way.

Dr. Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente (1965) captured this message in an extraordinary manner:

*"Falconry is not only a differentiated hunting system but it is also the art that has driven human beings into reaching the deepest and strongest ties with the animal. For this reason, falcon brother, when once more, with the bird on your fist, at daybreak, you go out to hunt that specimen*

*that always seems like the first one and in reality could be the last one, take into account that your emotions reflect one-hundred thousand years of powerful hunters".*

A good strategy to maintain the falconry heritage legacy consists on identifying possible representative figures in each of the communities. In the profession they are known as "masters of falconry". The name is not give to someone who knows a lot but to whoever teaches and becomes renown. When meeting masters of falconry it is not difficult to put to practice the common elements that are specific to falconry. This is how the task of teaching the good practices to the rest of the falconers is significantly optimized and simplified.

It is also adequate to accurately inform society. For this it is necessary to identify the speakers. It is not easy to find people who know about falconry very well and that also know how to talk about it rigorously and in an attractive way. By planning the messages depending on the type of public and the chosen means the efficiency of the presentations is significantly improved.

As the UNESCO Convention (Paris, 2003) states, in order to safeguard ICH it is necessary to identify and start measures such as identifying, documenting, investigating preserving, promoting, value, transmitting (basically through formal and non-formal education) and revitalizing the heritage in its different aspects. This is not invented from one day to another but instead it requires a global strategic plan in each nation. So there is a lot of work ahead. In the case of falconry a specific consulting job difficult for the governments to recognize is necessary. Lets hope that in the end UNESCO demands it. Falconers from different countries face the problems and therefore we are constantly learning from each other. We have many educational resources, texts with a set of rules, experience in creating associations, a background in relations with the administrations, etc. Putting all this knowledge in common in a coordinated way makes safeguarding falconry easier.

In the XXI century falconers maintain their particular style of life in the diverse and varied places in the world. There are, besides the inherent difficulties of practicing falconry, more serious ones that come from the lack of regulations by each government. We are in time of consolidating the acknowledgment of falconry in UNESCO and in society. The concept that people can have about falconry, currently and in the future, is a task that corresponds to falconers. As falconers we must keep on flying high up in order for anyone who does not fly to discover that in falconry there are no frontiers. 

their perches “to use them for breeding” and in less worse cases they fly to hunt game birds. It increases the number of bird of prey before the public, in medieval markets, prey competitions or contests that measure the speed of falcons.

In these cases nature is not the challenge anymore but instead it is the altimeter, speed or the captured prey that almost does not have the possibility to escape. The uncertainty of the death gives place to routine. The task of interpreting the natural hunting environment is substituted by the challenge of achieving more meters of height or fewer seconds in the distance traveled. Now it is not a matter of witnessing nature but the artificial. The goal is to control the situation in every possible way in order to reach a measure or a score in a competition. The rivalry between falconers awakens and at the same time attractive prizes nurture it. The integration of a person in nature is anecdotal. The person looks for the first piece of open land to shorten the travel time, avoid hunting search efforts and not have to pay the hunting reserve.

When switching the attention from what is natural to what is artificial the falconer's gaze is lost. Even though there are many common elements with falconry now we are not talking about the same thing. It is not the same to hunt with than to train birds.

With this I do not mean that I am against the competitions



Falconry transcends our existence. It makes us the link in the human chain that for more than four thousand years has found a style of life in the ties we have with the winged creature.



If by falconry we understand hunting then we are witnesses of the heritage that is acknowledged by UNESCO. We have the privilege and responsibility of maintaining it alive.

of birds of prey in flight. I believe that if they are well organized, with critical speakers and with quarry that are difficult to capture, as carrier pigeons can be, they can carry out interesting functions of bringing the birds of prey close to society. We must keep in mind that society is influenced by whatever is spectacular and involves a large crowd. These activities, such as exhibitions of prey in flight, competitions or medieval markets that come from falconry have such a large public that they have good media coverage. Therefore, to see a man with a bird on their fist is known as falconry. It is apparently difficult to distinguish between who is a falconer and who is a bird trainer. On the other hand, it is as difficult as to presence if a man (or a woman) hunts wild quarry with their bird of prey.

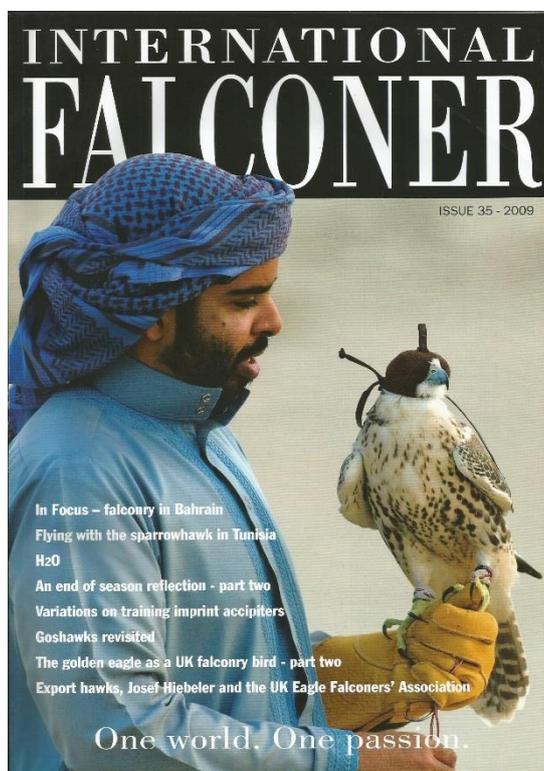
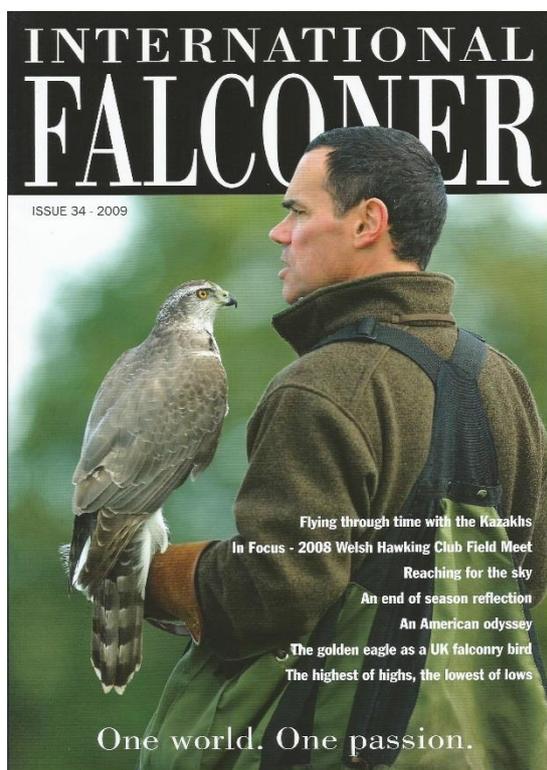
We can apply Hegel's idea of “*in art shape is depth*” to falconry.

In the way we relate to each other and how we fly our birds we experience those values and emotions that counterweigh our efforts.

In every human activity excellence in its practice is the pillar for it to survive.

Our way of understanding falconry is going to determine our behavior. If by falconry we understand hunting then we are witnesses of the heritage that is acknowledged by UNESCO. We have the privilege and responsibility of maintaining it alive. Falconry transcends our existence. It makes us the link in the human chain that for more than four thousand years has found a style of life in the ties we have with the winged creature.

It is time to identify the good practices of a falconer. To



# Falconry & UNESCO

the story so far...

Words by JAVIER CEBALLOS ARANDA

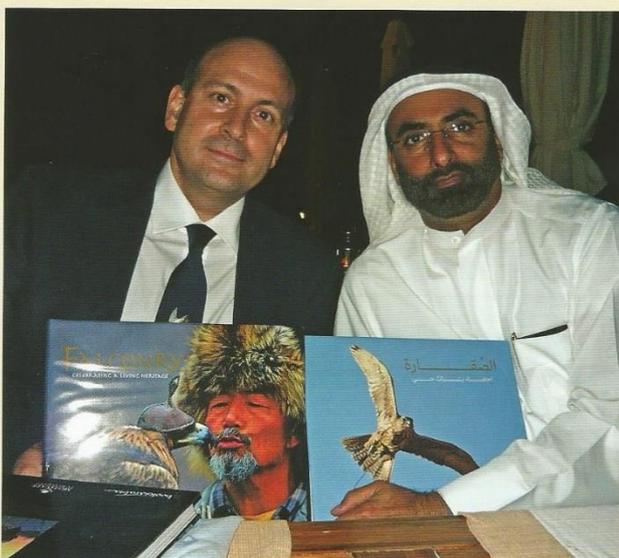


Photo: courtesy of Dr. Javier Ceballos

**HE Mohammed Ahmed Al Bowardi and Dr. Javier Ceballos with English and Arabic versions of the book *Falconry: Celebrating a Living Heritage*.**

**I**N RECENT YEARS, I have dedicated a large part of my work to recognising and publishing the cultural values of falconry. I started by releasing the book, *Soltando pihuelas. Conocimiento y práctica de la cetrería*. Afterwards I made the documentary *Aliados del Aire, (Allies of the Air)*. With what I had researched up until that point and another few years' of effort, I submitted my doctoral thesis on falconry in Spain.

This brief preamble illustrates why I have been involved with international working groups since 2005 to get UNESCO to recognise falconry as World Cultural Heritage. In the beginning I worked as coordinator for Latin America, and subsequently to date, as Falconry Delegate for the Ministry of Culture in Spain.

Encouraged by the editor of *International Falconer*, I shall set out the steps taken until the end of November 2009, interpreting the results obtained and the possible consequences for falconry in the near future.

## FALCONRY AND UNESCO

The United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO), created in 1945, promotes international cooperation with regard to education, science, culture and communication between its almost 200 Member States.

Among other roles, UNESCO identifies cultural assets which deserve to be considered as Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), to guarantee their knowledge, protection and maintenance in the long term. The Convention for their safeguard was held in Paris in 2003.

*“Intangible Cultural Heritage means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.”*

Those nations that have ratified the Convention can put forward candidatures before UNESCO. These candidatures can be national or multinational.

The United Arab Emirates Government, UAE, has confirmed the important cultural heritage that falconry constitutes both in its own country and throughout the rest of the world. In recent years, it has embarked on a series of actions until it managed to put forward an important multinational candidature

before UNESCO. They have been able to bring together 12 countries. The objective is to achieve recognition for falconry by UNESCO as Living Human Heritage.

#### STEPS TAKEN

The Arab people have always lived closely with falcons. In modern falconry, among its main figures HH Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan, first President of the United Arab Emirates (rest in peace) stands out. The United Arab Emirates Government has been the driving force of this important initiative for falconry from its beginnings. Its passion for falconry, financial support and hospitality have been crucial for the success of this ambitious project.

In September 2005, the symposium *Falconry, a World Heritage* organised by Pro-Falcon and the Emirates Falconers' Club, took place in Abu Dhabi. I had the honour of attending as Latin American regional coordinator, sharing sessions with important falconers, researchers and IAF and UNESCO members. Mr. Gadi G.Y. Momezulu, Director of UNESCO Cultural Heritage and Dr. Nick Fox, Director Falcon Research UAE and founder of the Falconry Heritage Trust, laid down the guidelines for the falconry community to follow. In subsequent years, the International Association for Falconry (IAF), with Gary Timbrell's patient coordination, formed an active working group. We changed the initial approach on seeing that UNESCO required

particular involvement from each government. The first step was recognising falconry as an asset of cultural interest in each country. Until that time, it would not have been possible to put a multinational candidature into effect.

Months later, the IAF, as per procedure requirement, broke away from the established working groups. It worked hard until achieving accreditation as advisory NGO of UNESCO at the Third Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, held in Istanbul 4-8<sup>th</sup> November 2008. The year 2008 was crucial for the project. The second meeting of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage took place from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at UNESCO's headquarters.

It was getting closer to the date established to present the multinational candidature to UNESCO and all that was needed was to identify the countries that could be included. With this objective, International Wildlife Consultants Ltd. (IWC), with the support of the UAE government organised the corresponding International Workshop on the same dates. The following countries were represented:

**Austria** - Christian Habich  
**Belgium** Patrick Morel & Kris Ulens

**Czech Republic** Dr. Martin Ptacek & Dr. Bohumil Straka

**France** Pierre Courjaret

**Germany** Karl-Heinz Gersmann ▶

## Falconry &amp; UNESCO

**Hungary** Janos Toth  
**Japan** Yukio Asaoka & Yukihiro Fujita,  
**Kazakhstan** Bakyt Karnakbayev  
**Kyrgyzstan** Almazbek Akunov  
**Morocco** Abdelhak Chaouni  
**Netherlands** Tula Stapert  
**Poland** Janusz Sielicki  
**Russia** Konstantin Sokoloff  
**Slovakia** Dr. Ladislav Molnar & Mr. Lubomir Engler  
**Spain** Dr. Javier Ceballos  
**Turkey** Dogan Simit & Salih Dogursadik  
**Turkmenistan** Atadurdy Eyeberdiyev

In attendance, as representatives from the UAE government, were HE Mohammed Al Bowadi, HE Majid Al-Mansouri, Dr. Awadh Al Saleh and Dr. Dr. Ismail Ali El-Fihail. From the IAF, President, Frank Bond, Vice President José Manuel Rodríguez-Villa and Advisor Christian de Coune attended. Dr. Nick Fox, Barbro Fox, Diana Durman-Walters, Nick Kester, Jo Oliver, Jevgeni Shergalin, Alan Gates, David Horobin and Delphine Delire took part in the organisation developed by IWC.

Those of us participating in the workshop were invited to the reception held for UNESCO delegates at the United Arab Emirates Embassy. It was there that the video, which the UAE had commissioned from me some time ago to show falconry as cultural heritage, was screened.

In the months following, each delegate was working with his/her respective government in order to get falconry included on their nation's assets of cultural interest list. Meanwhile Dr. Nick Fox, Dr. Sulayman Khalaf and Dr. Bohumil Straka were

jointly writing the draft of the multinational proposal.

In July 2009 the second Falconry Festival, the most important gathering of falconers in modern international falconry, took place. It was held in the United Kingdom, hosted by the Hawk Board and financially supported by the Emirates Falconers' Club. Falconers from five continents participated, with national representations from almost 50 countries. It was shown once again that when a falcon is in the air, falconers from around the world come together irrespective of culture, religion, age or whether you are rich or poor. Borders swiftly disappear on discovering that what unites us is much more powerful than what divides us.

During the Falconry Festival, the workshops of countries included in the proposal led by UAE took place. A smaller number of national delegates attended than at the workshop in Paris. The following 11 countries participated in the meeting: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Korea, Mongolia, Morocco, Slovakia, Spain, Qatar and UAE. We knew then that Saudi Arabia and Syria could join.

The Falconry Heritage Trust (FHT) meeting coincided with the Falconry Festival. This organisation, founded in May 2005, works to maintain and publish information on falconry. It has a growing archive of material and documents on falconry on the Internet. The book launch for *Falconry: Celebrating a Living Heritage* also took place.

Shortly afterwards, in the middle of August, the last Workshop prior to sending the documentation to UNESCO took place in Abu Dhabi. Once again its government was generous in inviting us to the meeting. After many hours of deliberation, in sessions moderated by different delegations, we reached consensus on the final document. It was signed by the following 12 nations: United Arab Emirates, France, Belgium, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Mongolia, Korea and Spain.

Once the proposal was received, following the usual procedure, the Secretary from the Convention for Safeguarding the PCI made his first comments in November. Dr. Nasser Ali Al Himiri, as Director of the Department of Intangible Heritage in Abu Dhabi, encouraged each participating country to provide the required documentation. He formed a committee of three representatives (European States, South East Asia, and Arab States) to meet in Abu Dhabi and approve the final version of the candidature in December 2009.

This final version will be subsequently studied by the subsidiary body in May 2010. In July, the Secretary will send the documentation assessment to the participating States Parties and to the rest of the committee members in August. The archives of the proceeding may be consulted online by the States Parties. The committee will assess the nominations in September 2010 and make its decision then.

#### CONSEQUENCES FOR FALCONRY

It is very likely that we will have UNESCO's recognition in the autumn of 2010. Falconry will then have the guarantee of long-term maintenance. Applying the Agreement of 2003, grants Intangible Cultural Heritage legal protection at international level. The guidelines for its maintenance and publication are set out in articles 11, 13, 14 and 15 thereof.

However, as we falconers know, not all the event's success lies in the final outcome: the results already obtained are significant. Motivated by inclusion on the Multinational Submission, each one of the countries listed in the proposal has already recognised falconry as an Asset of Cultural Interest in their respective nations. Governments must be vigilant of its protection, study, consultation and dissemination. Without a doubt, UAE has prompted this important official recognition.

Another success achieved, is the feeling of belonging to the falconry community. The creation of the Falconry Heritage Trust, the excellent reception at the Falconry Festival, the holding of workshops at different times and places, the publication of videos and books...have all given rise to bringing falconers of the most diverse profiles and origins together. Falconry is revealing itself as the art of hunting through which the bird of prey brings out the best in the human being.

I would like to show my recognition and gratitude to all those who have contributed

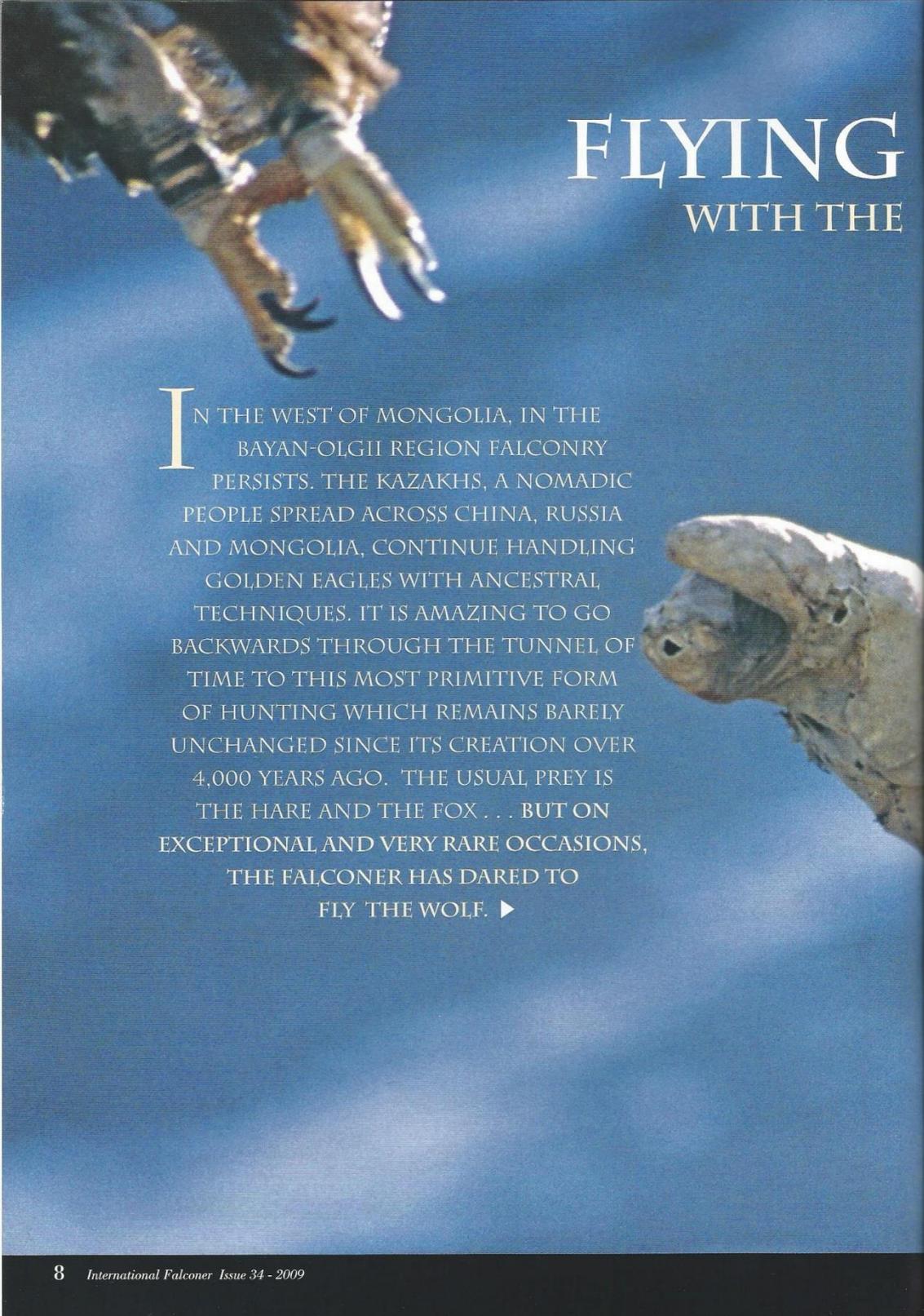


Photo: Linda Wright

**Dr. Nick Fox at the Falconry Festival. Modern falconry flies high largely thanks to his influence, work capacity and dedication.**

to the design, drive and development of this project. In particular, I appreciate Dr. Nick Fox's dedication to the cause. Nick has worked in the service of falconry, cultivating and sharing his knowledge, for a very long time. His leadership, analytical capacity, global vision, gift for training and coordinating

teams, and work, have been quintessential in this challenge. Thank you Nick! Modern falconry flies high largely thanks to you. ■

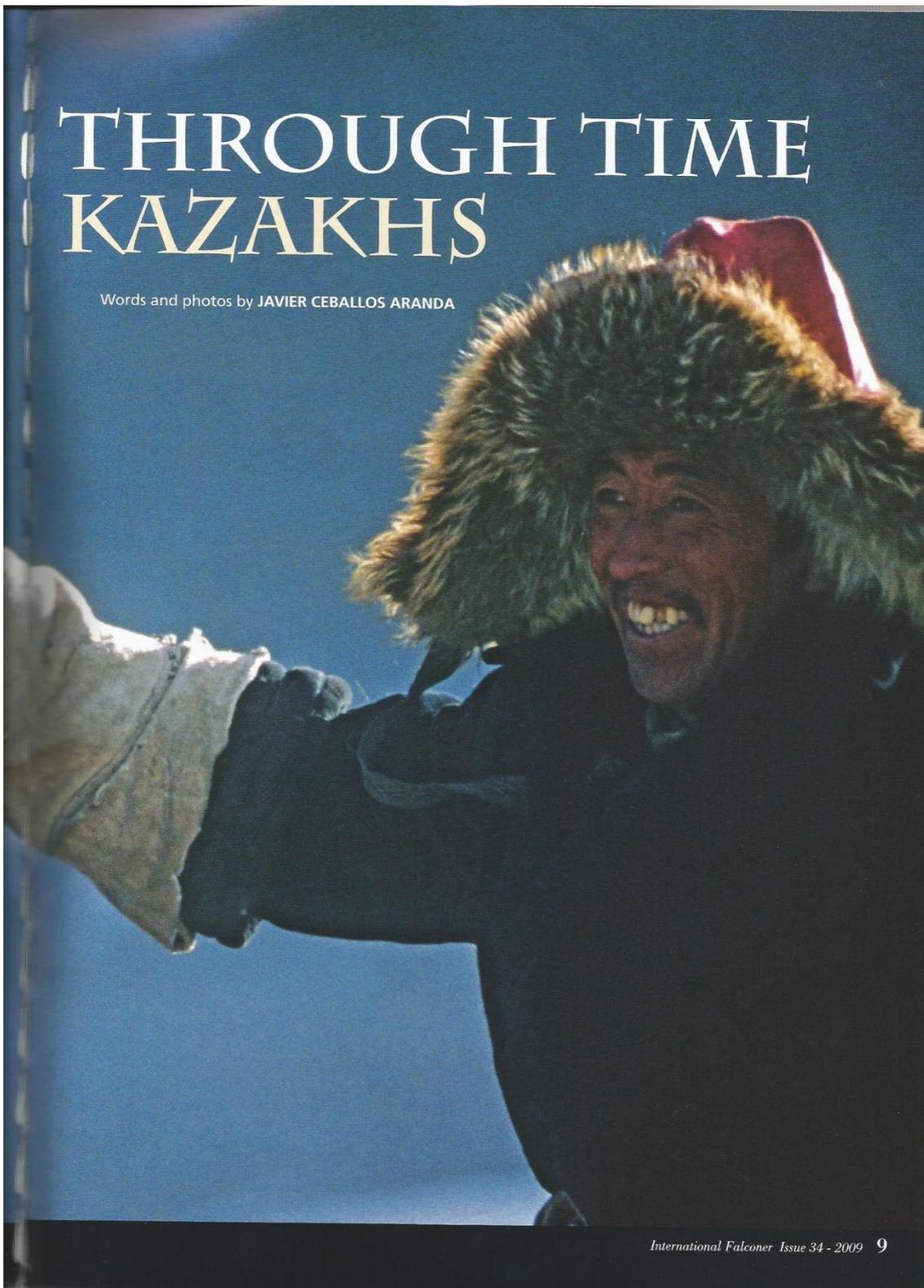


# FLYING WITH THE

**I**N THE WEST OF MONGOLIA, IN THE BAYAN-OLGII REGION FALCONRY PERSISTS. THE KAZAKHS, A NOMADIC PEOPLE SPREAD ACROSS CHINA, RUSSIA AND MONGOLIA, CONTINUE HANDLING GOLDEN EAGLES WITH ANCESTRAL TECHNIQUES. IT IS AMAZING TO GO BACKWARDS THROUGH THE TUNNEL OF TIME TO THIS MOST PRIMITIVE FORM OF HUNTING WHICH REMAINS BARELY UNCHANGED SINCE ITS CREATION OVER 4,000 YEARS AGO. THE USUAL PREY IS THE HARE AND THE FOX . . . BUT ON EXCEPTIONAL AND VERY RARE OCCASIONS, THE FALCONER HAS DARED TO FLY THE WOLF. ►

# THROUGH TIME KAZAKHS

Words and photos by JAVIER CEBALLOS ARANDA



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THE ADVENTURE begins in Ulan Bator, capital of Mongolia. There is good reason why this is the coldest capital city in the world and we are greeted by -25°C upon landing. Olgii, our next destination, is 1,600km to the west. This time we fly by propeller aircraft. The landscape is spectacular: huge areas of smooth mountains with frozen rivers and lakes show us how inhospitable the place is. There is no sign of life, not even trees. Once in Olgii, we continue our journey in a Land-Rover. After almost six hours following tracks and crossing rivers, we arrive at the village where Artak, our host, lives.

During spring and summer the

Kazakhs live in yurts, circular tents that they pitch, dismantle and transport in their nomadic life. When the cold arrives they stay in small adobe houses. The means of family subsistence is mainly based on livestock. The yak is the most copious animal: meat, milk and cover come from this bovine. Its dung is even used as fuel in the fires of their rudimentary kitchens (there is no wood in the area). On the other hand, Bactrian camels and goats provide two important materials to Mongolia's textile industry: wool and cashmere.

In the village, the elderly and the children are the kings of the family. The kindness and hospitality of people is striking,

as well as their curiosity about what they find new, which is almost everything we are carrying: torches, books, gloves, multi-purpose penknives....all are the objects of admiration. They are astounded when they see themselves on the digital camera screens or on the filming team's monitor after being filmed.

The house where we are staying has a passageway-cum-room at the entrance and two inhabitable rooms, one with rickety old beds to sleep in, and the other, larger, serves as a living room and a place to eat. Besides the kitchen, there are two small pieces of furniture, stools and a low table. In this same room, to the left of the door, are the



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FLYING THROUGH TIME WITH THE KAZAKHS

protagonists of our story: two golden eagles.

The golden eagle, *Aquila chrysaetos*, has six sub-species spread out around the world; the one from this region, *A.c. daphanea*, being the largest of them all. It is particularly renowned for its enormous talons. The *berkutchis* (the falconers who handle eagles) only train females, because, like the rest of falconry birds, they are larger than the males, reaching 2.3 metres in wingspan and more than 7kg in weight. They hunt with them between October and April.

The falconry tradition is passed down from father to son and it is the youngest male sibling's duty to maintain it. This son, when

the day comes, will also assume responsibility for looking after his parents when they can no longer manage on their own.

Falconry equipment is totally home-made. A *pihuela* (leather strap) is put on to each of the eagle's legs in order to facilitate its handling. The falconer puts on a thick pelt glove each time he wants to hold his bird. In order to avoid any struggling due to slight shocks or the apparition of prey that it has no interest in pursuing, the eagle's head is covered with a *tomaga* (home-made hood). They fix a wooden *baldak*, onto the saddle in order to support the fist they carry the eagle on.

Additionally, and for merely superstitious reasons, they fix

a tuft of eagle owl feathers onto the eagle's back and onto the hat worn by the hunters. They believe that by doing so they are protected from evil spirits.

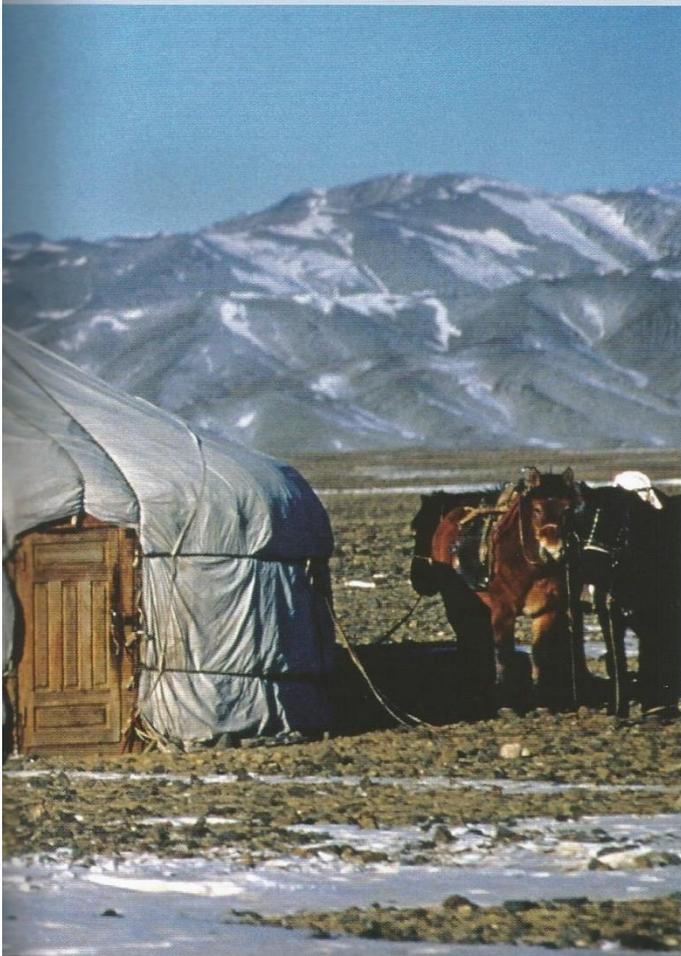
In this region, prey is available and danger is scarce for raptors, which means the population of wild eagles is in good health and a sustainable resource for the *berkutchis*.

Several weeks lapse from the moment of seizing the fledgling until the day in which eagle and falconer share a day's hunting. The taming process is less difficult if the bird has just fledged. Adjusting to new noises, horses, dogs and people requires less attention than when the eagle is a few months old. In both cases, offering food from the fist facilitates this introductory phase.

Once the bird is eating quietly, the first flights to the fist begin. As it continues gaining confidence and strength, the flight distance continues increasing.

A lure, called a *chergá*, is used for introducing the hunt. It consists of a stuffed fox or hare skin. While the *berkutchi* remains still on horseback with his hooded eagle, an assistant rides along dragging the lure. The hood is taken off the bird and its instinct urges it to pursue the piece of pelt sliding along the snow. Words of encouragement from its companion and his extended fist invite it to flap its wings until capture. As a prize, it eats the piece of meat previously tied to the lure.

Gradually the falconer gets to know his bird. He tries to find the point of hunger that provokes its main aggressiveness. In the rest of the world, scales are used



During spring and summer the Kazakhs live in yurts.



craftsperson who made artificial brass talons for those eagles injured from wolf bites.

The *berkutchis*, on horseback, position themselves on the side of a mountain using height as an advantage. Their eyes comb the steppe until they find a potential quarry. Once discovered, they remove the hood from their eagles. Reaching the wolf does

to find out a bird's weight, but the *berkutchis* monitor this without using any such utensil. They just touch the bird's breastbone in order to check it.

Capturing hares, and even foxes, with these eagles with enormous talons is not excessively difficult. Hunting the wolf is another matter. Its size and especially its bite, make it a fearsome quarry for an eagle of scarcely 7kg in weight. The quarry is in clear advantage compared to its adversary. The Kazakhs know it and therefore seldom does anyone encourage this flight to take place. However, there are those who find that their eagle possesses such hunting prowess that they do feel the urge to challenge the king of the steppe.

The battle, although preposterous, is traditional in Kazakh culture. In the Aimag Museum of Kazakh culture, the only representation of hunting by falconry shows the capture of the wolf with the golden eagle. And we had the opportunity to meet a

**Above: High up on a mountain slope, using height to their advantage, the mounted *berkutchis* slip an eagle.**

**Right: After a ferocious battle, the eagle breaks into her prize. Note the bandaged toe after a previous wolf encounter...this is a quarry reserved for only the very toughest of eagles.**



FLYING THROUGH TIME WITH THE KAZAKHS

not entail as much difficulty as overpowering it does. The powerful beating of the wings shortens distances, but once the wolf feels under pressure, it bears its fangs at its small assailant. The first talon reaches the spine, the other one the head, avoiding being bitten. After writhing and wrestling David triumphs over Goliath, technique and bravery

over brute force. The group of *berkutchis* ride incredulous and exultant for the successful outcome. The two eagles in pursuit have not dared to touch the wolf still being subdued by their courageous companion. It is clear that this is an extreme flight, reserved for the bravest and best endowed.

Gathered around the quarry,

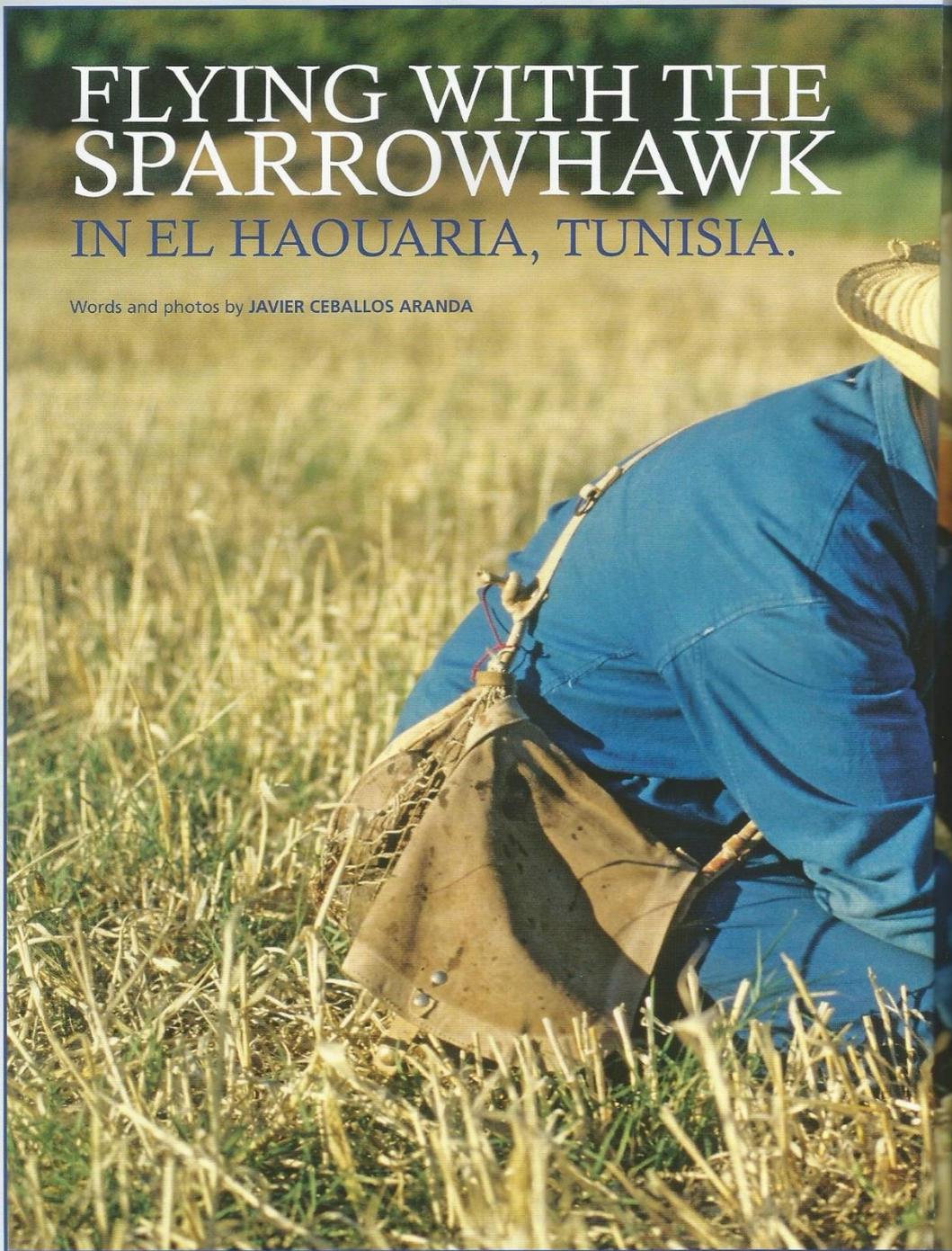
Yaiderkhan is congratulated and praised by his companions. Artak ties the defeated animal to his horse's hindquarters. Alongside his father he rides off merging into the horizon. As we watch them, it truly feels as if we have joined the Kazakhs at the very beginning of falconry's time. ■

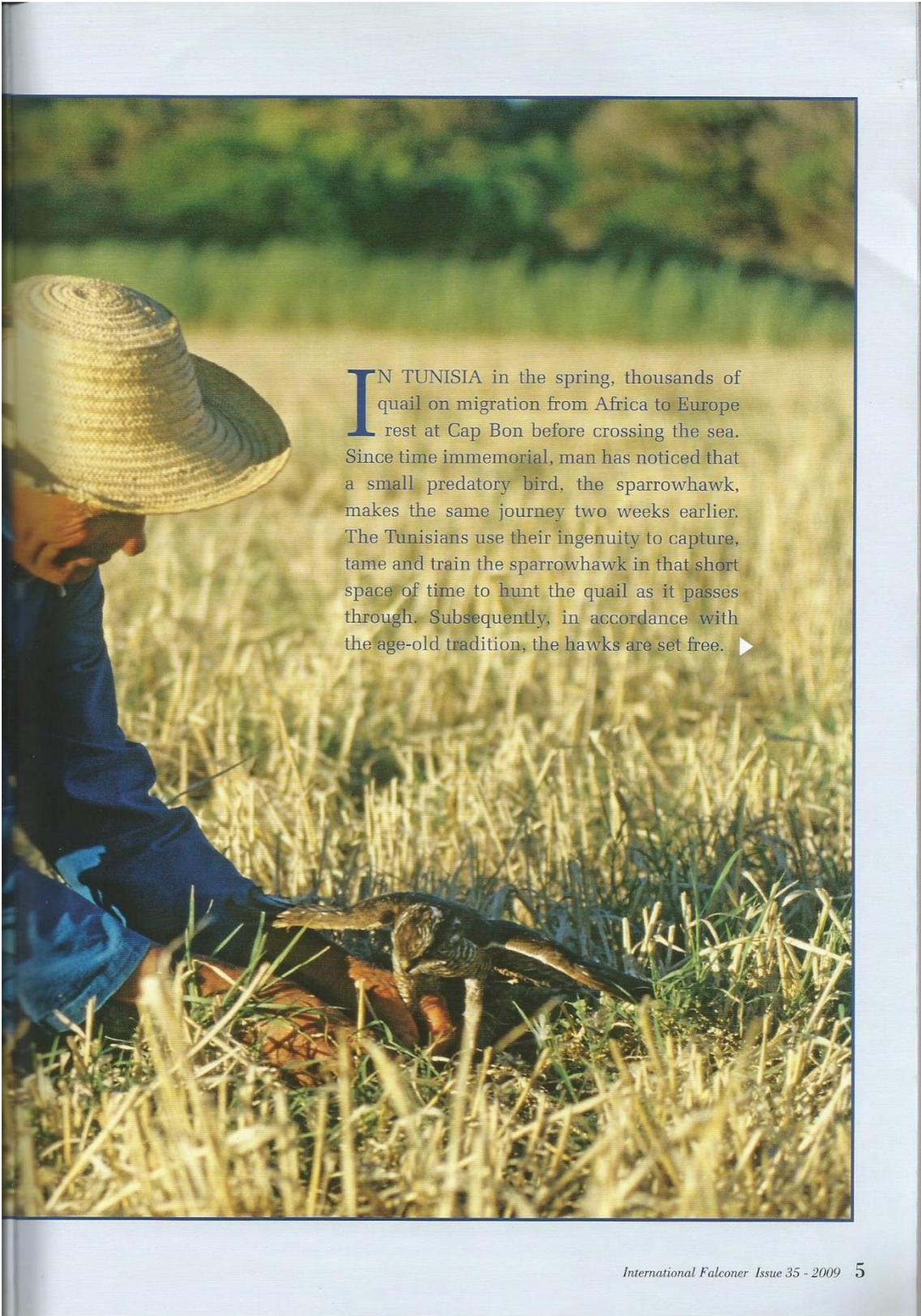


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# FLYING WITH THE SPARROWHAWK IN EL HAOUARIA, TUNISIA.

Words and photos by JAVIER CEBALLOS ARANDA





**I**N TUNISIA in the spring, thousands of quail on migration from Africa to Europe rest at Cap Bon before crossing the sea. Since time immemorial, man has noticed that a small predatory bird, the sparrowhawk, makes the same journey two weeks earlier. The Tunisians use their ingenuity to capture, tame and train the sparrowhawk in that short space of time to hunt the quail as it passes through. Subsequently, in accordance with the age-old tradition, the hawks are set free. ▶

**FLYING WITH THE SPARROWHAWK**  
IN EL HAOUARIA, TUNISIA.

Hassan is restless. For days he has been scanning the heavens. He knows intuitively that the first sparrowhawks are about to make land. He knows that as they arrive, they will look for a treetop where they can rest unseen during their stopover. Looking out for the slightest indication of their presence, he realises that his waiting is now over.

A few have now arrived. Their plumage serves as effective camouflage amongst the foliage. Life follows its course in the fields of El Haouaria. While the farm workers carry on with their customary labour of seeding and planting, there is no outward sign that a man is about to realise the dream he has cherished all year.

Retrieving the basket from the shed, Hassan sets about preparing the trapping gear, then calls his grandson to join him. Unaware that the call is a summoning of centuries of popular tradition, Yissem answers his grandfather. The nets, still kept wrapped up tightly, will be the means employed to capture the blithe spirit of the forest. Several nets will be needed to cover all the gaps which enable the bird to enter the dense foliage of the treetops. Not forgetting to place the cord in the basket, grandfather and grandson set out for the chosen spot.

The location of the trap for the sparrowhawk is well-established beforehand. Indeed, each treetop has been reserved for the same family for generations. The ideal environment is a clearing, such as an area of farmland, in which there is a small copse. Their preference for wooded areas leads the sparrowhawk to venture in. The spot must be clearly observable from a distance. It is vital to watch with



**Hassan and his grandson preparing the trapping equipment.**

great vigilance and without a rest in order to pounce immediately when a hawk falls into the net. With his grandson following close behind, Hassan gathers branches from the bushes all around. Yissem takes an active part in the search, excited by this adventure.

The cord that supports the net is concealed by a latticework of branches. Using rudimentary yet effective techniques, a measure of resourcefulness and the result of centuries of practice, the trap takes shape. Each movement of his nimble fingers shows that Hassan is not a novice at this. Once again it is proved that ingenuity makes use of simplicity to achieve the most difficult of tasks. In a few minutes what was before a plain and ordinary place is now the scene of dream about to come true; the meeting of man and feathered spirit of the forest.

The trapping of sparrowhawks has a long tradition in the region of Cap Bon. The Environmental Protection Agency is well aware that it is the custom of these falconers to release the birds in a

few weeks. Working jointly with the local Association of Falconry, they carry out a scientific ringing of the birds before they are released. If a sparrowhawk is captured later elsewhere, this will provide invaluable data about its migration route, age and the behaviour of the species.

Hassan continues suspending and extending the net. It must be tense enough so as not to be noticeable but at the same time ample enough to wrap itself around the sparrowhawk when it hits the net. Having finished setting it, he goes back to the hiding place, accompanied by his grandson. There is hardly a trace of their passing. From a discreet distance, they spend hours watching various birds of prey riding the warm air currents. With their many years of birdwatching, these falconers are highly experienced field ornithologists.

With an intuition honed by experience, Hassan stands up and approaches the net. A sparrowhawk lies entangled in its folds. It is essential to arrive in time so that the animal does

**A sparrowhawk lies entangled in one of the nets. It's essential to remove her as quickly as possible to avoid any feather damage.**

**FLYING WITH THE SPARROWHAWK**  
IN EL HAOUARIA, TUNISIA.

not become anxious or damage its plumage. With the greatest of care, Hassan extricates his valuable catch. The sparrowhawk is quickly immobilised using a simple but effective tether, which makes it possible to carry it around without spoiling its plumage.

Pleased with the outcome of their long vigil, they set off home in fine spirits. On their arrival, Hassan immediately fits the jesses on the bird. Absorbed in his thoughts, Hassan recalls similar scenes of himself as a youngster and his father the falconer. Yissem is gradually drawn in to his grandfather's annual ritual.

This form of falconry, as practised in Tunisia, has several unique features that sets it apart. The taming process takes place in a very limited time. It has to be quick because barely a fortnight separates the capture of the sparrowhawk from the arrival of the quails. In addition, the hawk is kept only for the duration of the hunting season, and is then released.

As with any other Mediterranean people, the inhabitants of El Haouaria like to be out of doors and in the streets and squares. The hubbub is a useful environment for the taming of the birds. By introducing them gradually to noisy places with a lot of movement, they become accustomed to human contact. A cafe is a good place to start. It is curious to note that no glove is used in this process. The falconers believe that the hawk's talons are not dangerous enough to make a glove necessary and in any case they prefer to carry them around in the palm of their hand. When they are out hunting, they tie a brightly coloured lead of

**Once home Hassan immediately begins making jesses for the new arrival.**

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wool, several metres long, to its leg. On its first flights this will help to locate the bird and to retrieve it if it takes fright. When launching the hawk in pursuit of a quail, they throw it skywards like an oversized dart.

Once the hawk is comfortable in the presence of the falconer, the moment has come to take it out into the countryside. Introduction to hunting is rapid. They are, after all, wild animals that can fend for themselves. The difficulty lies with ensuring in such a short time that they are tame enough to approach when

**Hassan carefully but quickly extracts his catch from the net.**

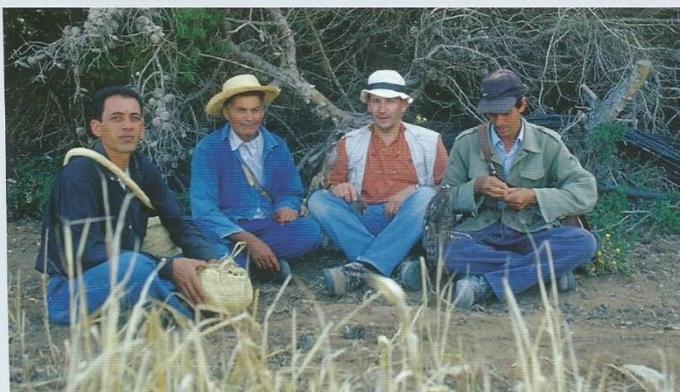




The preferred method is to carry the hawk in the hand ready to be thrown like a dart at quarry.

they have quarry in their talons while also preserving enough of the hawk's independent spirit to enable it to return to the wild later on. Hassan heightens the hawk's predatory instinct by throwing a piece of quarry at it over and over again. Little by little he gains the bird's trust, allowing it to eat from his hand. These training sessions help him measure how willing the bird will later be to let him approach and retrieve the quarry.

The training period has run out and Hassan decides to begin real live hunting. Huge flocks of quails cross the Straits at night on their way to Europe. Many others remain for a day or so in the fields of Cap Bon waiting for conditions to improve for their journey. Hassan has been ready since daybreak. With the help of a long stick, he searches the fields carefully. The quails are



The author (second from right) sits with friends on a trapping excursion.

so numerous that he does not need a hunting dog. With only the sound of his footsteps, a bird is sure to emerge. Others wait stoically immobile, confident that their camouflage will protect them from the intruder, until finally he gets too close and they take flight. The action is short and intense. If the hawk has been successful, it will, like other birds of prey, carry the carcass some distance to hide

it from other predators. Hassan soon locates it with the aid of the red woolen leash. Having safely pocketed the valuable quail, he weaves the leash once again into a ball in the palm of his hand and, holding the sparrowhawk, prepares to catch another.

In a single day they may perform scores of flights, not all of which end successfully, as falconers all over the world know only too well! ■





“Preserving Our Falconry Heritage”

# Heritage

*e-Newsletter*

Spring 2010 • No. 9

## Introducing Dr. Javier Ceballos Associate for Spain

6th in a Series: Archives Associates

— written by Marta Curti, Field Biologist,  
The Peregrine Fund

Armed with binoculars and a great deal of curiosity for nature, a young boy sets out on a journey into the Spanish countryside with his father. Thirty years later, this boy, Javier Ceballos, grew up to become one of Spain's most pre-eminent falconry experts and conservationists. Raised to value both the wonder and the science of our natural world — a tradition that has been passed down over many generations in the Ceballos family — Javier spent his childhood always yearning for more. While watching birds through binoculars and reading about them in books was satisfactory, he wasn't content with being just a spectator of nature. His keen interest (quickly becoming a passion) in the finer details of what makes a bird led him to the ancient art and sport of falconry.

Spending most of his time in his birth-place, Madrid, where he now lives with his wife, Ana, and four children, Álvaro, Borja, Santiago, and Julieta, falconry offered him the opportunity to leave modern-day cares behind, at least for a few hours, and to spend quality



Dr. Ceballos with curator emeritus Kent Carnie at the Heritage Tent at the Festival of Falconry — photo by Peter Devers

time bonding with his Goshawk. But falconry also forges the man. Dr. Ceballos views falconry as a privilege — one earned through hard work, knowledge, patience, passion, loyalty, humility, and determination. These same qualities necessary to becoming a good falconer have guided him in his work as an author, photographer, lecturer, teacher and film-maker.

Armed once again, this time with camera and computer, Dr. Ceballos has dedicated much of his life to the conservation of birds of prey, to teaching new generations about raptors, and to keeping the

tradition of falconry alive. Using striking images he has taken in his journeys around the world, and prose something akin to poetry, Javier has written several articles and contributed photos for many books on the sport, including being the main photographer for the cd-rom collection *Fauna Ibérica de Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente*. He is also the author of two books: *Soltando Pihuelas, Conocimiento y Práctica de la Cetrería* (out of print) — a very well-documented treatise about falconry; and *Falconry: Celebrating a Living Heritage* — published in both English and Arabic. He also wrote and directed the documentary *Allies of the Air* which examines the culture and practice of falconry on four continents. In 2007 he received his Ph.D. from the Politécnica University of Madrid. His award-winning doctoral thesis was entitled *Falconry in Spain: historical evolution of the use of the Falconiformes species in falconry; arguments for its backing and considerations for its management*.

[continued next page...]

## What Is An Archives Associate?

Associates of the Archives of Falconry are those volunteers who wish to promote the mission of preserving the physical history of falconry. They help in any way possible from doing research at libraries and institutions, participating in strategic planning, providing financial support, collecting and evaluating materials, cataloguing acquisitions, preserving historical documents, arranging exhibits, planning social activities, and representing the Archives at international events and festivals. Our Associates represent many nations where falconry was or is currently practiced. 🦅

JOHN R. SWIFT, CURATOR • KENT CARNIE, CURATOR EMERITUS • DAVID WELLS, ADMINISTRATOR  
THE ARCHIVES OF FALCONRY, THE PEREGRINE FUND'S WORLD CENTER FOR BIRDS OF PREY  
5668 W. FLYING HAWK LANE, BOISE, IDAHO 83709 • PHONE 208.362.8256 • EMAIL taf@PEREGRINEFUND.ORG

He is a member of several organizations including the Spanish Society of Ornithology, the Spanish Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey, the Spanish Association of Nature Photographers, the Spanish Royal Society of Natural History, the Spanish Illustrious College of Geologists, the British Falconers' Club, and the Emirates Falconers' Club, among others.

In 2005, he joined an international working group to encourage the United Nations' Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO) to recognize falconry as an Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), which will guarantee its preservation and celebration across continents and generations. Most recently he has become Spain's Ministry of Culture's Delegate for Falconry. Dr. Ceballos has also been heavily involved with the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) in the UNESCO's falconry multinational submission.

An important part of his work focuses on passing his knowledge of and passion for falconry and birds in general to those, young and old, who may not have had the opportunity to experience wildlife and wild places up close. Through the company, Avium, where he is director, he brings expert and novice birdwatchers, adults, families

and children together to further explore the world of birds through photography, bird watching and falconry. Using his skills as an educator, he trains teachers in environmental issues and, since 1992 has worked in the Adaja summer youth camp, which is dedicated to teaching young children about our natural world.

Dr. Ceballos is currently a guest teacher of falconry at the Politécnica University of Madrid's Forestry Engineers School. As a personal challenge, he is looking for resources and partners, to assist with the creation of the Chair of Falconry — a permanent department about falconry which will create an exchange of knowledge and facilitate the relationship between falconers at the local and international level. 🦅



### A Message from J. Peter Jenny, President of The Peregrine Fund

I am very pleased to announce that Bob Collins has joined the volunteer ranks of The World Center for Birds of Prey as On-Site Falconer and Legal Advisor for The Archives of Falconry. Bob recently retired from the State of Alaska's Dept. of Law. For nearly twenty years he served as an Assistant District Attorney in Anchorage, Palmer, and Nome.

Prior to moving to Alaska, Bob practiced law in Illinois for fifteen years where he served as a legal aide to U.S. Representative Henry J. Hyde and as Assistant Attorney General and State's Attorney. In addition to his extensive experience in criminal prosecution and wildlife law, he has experience in Charitable Trusts and Solicitations, real estate, and contract law with an emphasis on art and intellectual property.

Bob has been an active falconer since 1961 and a strong supporter of The Peregrine Fund since its inception. Bob can be reached at his new e-mail address [bcollins@peregrinefund.org](mailto:bcollins@peregrinefund.org). 🦅



### Guess Who? (9th in a series...) Can you identify this falconer?

For answer, see below:

Jim Nelson Rice II, 1913-1989, famous Philadelphia falconer and Assateague legend, here with noosed passage Peregrine. The original Archives of Falconry wing was named after him.

Previous issues of Heritage newsletters are available online: [www.peregrinefund.org/american\\_falconry.asp#heritage](http://www.peregrinefund.org/american_falconry.asp#heritage)

## References

### IAF –International Association for Falconry & Conservation of Birds of Prey

[www.i-a-f.org](http://www.i-a-f.org)

Without any doubt, this is the most international and complete falconry website.

#### Website Sections:

Falconry:	History of Falconry, Falconry today, Women in Falconry, World Falconry Day, Legislation
Conservation:	Falconry and Conservation, IAF Conservation projects, Convention bodies, Electrocution database, Animal welfare & Ethics, Exotics, Veterinary)
Art & Culture:	UNESCO Falconry, Museums and Collections, Online Collections, Past Exhibitions, Education, New books)
Education:	Falconry Education pages, For the General Public, For new falconers, For young falconers
Publications:	Journal of Falconry, e-Newsletters, e- Bulletins, Documents
About IAF:	IAF World Map & Location, Member List, Council of Delegates, Officials, Role of IAF, Education, Statute, Membership, Contact Us

### A few falconry associations & interesting entities links:

The Archives of Falconry

<https://www.peregrinefund.org/falconry>

NAFA North American Falconers Association

<http://www.n-a-f-a.com/>

Emirates Falconer Club

<http://www.efcad.ae/?lang=en-gb>

British Falconers Club

[https://www.britishfalconersclub.co.uk/New\\_Site/](https://www.britishfalconersclub.co.uk/New_Site/)

*Association National des Fauconniers et Autoursiers Français*

<http://www.anfa.net/fr/tunnel.html>



Deutscher Falkenorden

<http://d-f-o.de/>

Irish Hawking Club

<http://www.irishhawkingclub.ie/>

Avian Research Center; Saudi Arabia

<https://www.kfu.edu.sa/en/Centers/ornithology/Pages/Home-new.aspx>

Czech Moravian Falconers

<https://www.tresbohemes.com/2017/01/falconers-of-the-czech-republic/>

Slovakia Falconry

<http://www.falconry.sk>

AECCA Spain

[www.aecca.org](http://www.aecca.org)

Find more falconry associations at <http://www.iaf.org/members.php>



## Journals

Almost all the great falconry associations edit a magazine. However, there are other private initiatives that sell directly to the public.

- Top Falconry

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

[felipe\\_alves23@hotmail.com](mailto:felipe_alves23@hotmail.com)

- Sky Trial Journal by the Royal Spanish Hunting Federation

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

- International Falconer

<https://issuu.com/international-falconer>

## UNESCO

Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Paris, October 17, 2003

MISC / 2003 / CLT / CH / 14

Convention Text:

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00006>

2010 First multinational Submission to UNESCO: 11 countries

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/download.php?versionID=07511>

Spain's documents

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/download.php?versionID=04563>

Film <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRXel1floGg>

2016 Inscription; 18 countries



<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/falconry-a-living-human-heritage-01209>

Film <https://youtu.be/EN0rCuB5gr0>

Forums

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

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

Ibero-American Falconry Archive:

<http://www.aic.uva.es/>

IUCN - The World Conservation Union

<http://www.iucn.org>

CIC - The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation

<http://www.cic-wildlife.org>

FACE - Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the E.U.

<http://www.face-europe.org>

Falconry Heritage Trust

<http://www.falconryheritage.org>

The Archives of Falconry

[http://www.peregrinefund.org/american\\_falconry.asp](http://www.peregrinefund.org/american_falconry.asp)



CITES - The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

<http://www.cites.org>

Falco; Middle East Falcon Research Group

[www.falcons.co.uk/default.asp?id=131](http://www.falcons.co.uk/default.asp?id=131)

Saker Conservation

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

### Libraries

Clan Library- Editorial Cáirel; Glorieta de Campanar, 1 Madrid 28028, Spain

[libreria@clan.es](mailto:libreria@clan.es) [www.clan.es](http://www.clan.es)

Coch-y-Bonddu Books

United Kingdom <http://www.anglebooks.com>

Hancock House Publishers

Canada, USA [www.hancockhouse.com](http://www.hancockhouse.com)

### Dr. Ceballos activities links

World Falconry Day Presentation

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfYyeh8Z\\_zI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfYyeh8Z_zI)

Films

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCcR42ZC82Q>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFnozGciE\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFnozGciE_Q)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XzZoH5MrMNQ>

Interviews

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVeM3pMGnWU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpF9Dqj4gso>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1e9qmR68JY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HGMBamQ4Bw>

<http://fueradeserie.expansion.com/2015/01/14/personajes/1421232167.html>

Falconry exhibition Natural Museum Natural Sciences MNCN-CSIC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNfWUZkmTXM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39INMWv6ItY>

Articles

<http://www.avium.es/publicaciones/>

ADAJA Falconry Camp:

<http://www.adaja.es/activities-falconry.html>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5\\_bVUUmqVA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5_bVUUmqVA)

Falconry Workshops

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Nf8DG\\_C0W0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Nf8DG_C0W0)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWbKQ7WURaU>



### Personal Observations and Contributions

Our main goal is to continuously improve and grow. In order to do that, we would really appreciate your contribution. If you have any suggestions or improvement ideas for further editions please let us know by contacting: [info@avium.es](mailto:info@avium.es)

## Captions

Front cover:

At the top - Dr. Javier Ceballos teaching two campers at the ADAJA Falconry Camp.

Photography: Diego Fuentes Lamas

At the bottom (from left to right) Experiencing the emotion of having a bird in the fist; ADAJA Falconry Camp, Spain.

Photography: Diego Fuentes Lamas

- Since they are very young, Arabs live with hawks. Doha, Qatar.

- Even the youngest Kazakhs maintain Falconry tradition. Bayan Olgii, Mongolia.

Back cover:

Andrés López Sánchez and his son after a hunting day photographed by Berta Peinado, his wife and mother, respectively.

In the words of Dr. Javier Ceballos, "Andrés López Sánchez is the most complete falconer of modern Spanish Falconry, including Felix Rodríguez de la Fuente. On top of his daily practice of falconry, which after decades has reached excellence in all of its forms, we must add other singularities. As humble as can be, he shares his knowledge through publications, talks and meetings. He enjoys hunting alone and accompanied. With a lot of hard work and effort as well as a noticeable criticisms, during his presidency he took AECCA , the Spanish Falconry Association, to its peak. But above all, he has succeeded by transmitting to his son, the values, knowledge and commitment that ennoble this beautiful art. His son, Andres, has been a part of my team of instructors at the ADAJA Falconry Camp and I can assure you that his father's footprint is already recognizable. No further comments on this a unique and brilliant case."

Photography: Berta Peinado

## Chapter I

Page 14: Aurelio Pérez flying a saker falcon (*Falco cherrug*) to the lure.

Page 16: A falcon on top of the UNESCO document which recognizes Falconry as Intangible Cultural Heritage.



Page 17: The Kazakhs have kept falconry alive for thousands of years. Living with them is like stopping time. Discovering an intimate communion with the inherent nature in humans. Bayan Olgii Mongolia.

Page 17: Collage including international falconers.

Page 18: Saint Julián XV century, attributed to Jaume Ferrer II. Episcopal Palace chapel in Aspa, Lérida.

Page 18: Exchange of experiences between Javier Ceballos and falconers from Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Page 22: Flock of sheep. Shepherds were probably the first falconers.

Page 22: Three generations of berkutchis, Mongolia.

Page 23: A gentleman with his falcon, Falconry Festival, Reading, UK 2009.

Page 24: Emperor Feredico II de Hoestaufen, author of *Venandi cum Avibus*. He is one of the most relevant figures in Falconry history.

Page 24: Mr. Castañeda's tomb, 1300, Aguilar de Campoo, Palencia. The falconer is represented hugging his falcon.

Page 25: Front cover of the book written by Fadrique de Zúñiga y Sotomayor "*Libro de Cetrería de caza con azor*", 1565.

Page 26: Manolo Enrile, falconer during the seventies and eighties with his goshawk.

Page 26: Falconer meeting in honour of Sirio Sobrino Madejón. Valladolid, September 2009.

Page 28: Covers of various Falconry publications.

Page 28: Stand at the Clan library in order to promote Falconry and hunting since 1940.

Page 29: From top to bottom:

- Hunting day with AECCA being its president Andrés López Sánchez. Undoubtedly the best organization to date regarding modern Spanish falconry. Socuéllamos. Ciudad Real.

Photography: Nohemi Higuera

- Javier Ceballos in Bayan Olgii. Mongolia, with the Berkutchis.

- Javier Ceballos talking with falconers in the desert at the Arab Emirates.

Page 30: From top to bottom:

- Flying Merlins with Adrian Reuter in Mexico.

Photography: Ricardo Padilla

- IAF hunting days. Left to right Mr. Kent Carnie, Dr. Ceballos, Dr. Tom Cade. Ireland, November 2016.

Photography: Edgar Alvirde

- Meeting during the congress of Falconry and Cultural Heritage in Abu Dhabi, September 2015. From left to right Dr. Javier Ceballos (Spain), HE Majid Al-Mansouri (UAE), Mr. Frank Bond (USA), HE Mohamed Al-Bowardi (UAE), Mr. José Manuel Rodríguez-Villa (Spain), Mr. Gary Timbrell (Ireland), Dr. Tom Cade (USA). Below Dr. Adrian Lombard (South Africa) and Dr. Robert Kenward (United Kingdom).

Page 31: Various photos of children experiencing Falconry first hand at the ADAJA Falconry Camp.

Page 32: From top to bottom:

- Javier Ceballos and some campers enjoying their days at the ADAJA Falconry Camp.

- Snipe hawking in Ireland with Eric Witkowski.

Photography: Avium Archive

- Getting to know raptors in Kenya; Natural Science museum, Nairobi.

Photography: Ana G. Villas-Boas

Page 33: From top to bottom:

- Dr. Autor and Dr. Awadh Al Saleh, representative of the Government of the Emirates to UNESCO. Al-Ain, UAE.

Photography: Avium Archive

- Undoubtedly one of the best ways to know the bird's anatomy is by drawing it. Workshops with Lucía Borque in ADAJA Falconry Camp.

Photographs: Avium Archive

Page 34: From top to bottom:

- Strasbourg, European Parliament. MEPs and Falconers from various countries celebrate the recognition of falconry by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

- Since 1968 the IAF annually celebrates its general assembly. The image corresponds to the meeting in 2013. Netherlands.

- In 2013 Dr. Javier Ceballos proposed to the IAF the organization of the World Falconry Day. Since then he coordinates his celebration every 16<sup>th</sup> November.

Page 35: From top to bottom:

- Children are curious by nature. The best way to convey a cultural element is to make it known from their earliest years.

- World Falconry Day.

### Chapter II

Page 37: The Archaeopteryx, first species recognized as a bird.

Page 37: Peregrine Falcon in its first moult.

Page 38: Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).

Page 38: "Cervantes" Hybrid of gyrfalcon x peregrine falcon, 8 moults.

Page 39: Goshawk feather.

Page 40: Tail feathers. Eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*).

Page 41: Feather growing on a goshawk's tail during it's first moult.

Page 42: Owl's oil gland.

Page 44: Sparrowhawks (*Accipiter nisus*).

Page 49: Closed band in a goshawk's leg. Only by a close look at the scales in the bird's leg we can identify the species.

Page 50: X-ray photo showing the microchip inserted in the bird.

Page 52: Goshawk.

Page 53: European goshawk chasing a quail.

Page 54: Harris Hawk.

Page 55: Moulded red-tailed hawk.



Page 56: Eagle owl.

Page 57: Golden Eagle.

Page 58: Peregrine falcon.

Page 59: White moulted Gyrfalcon.

Page 60: Saker falcon.

Page 61: Lanner falcon.

Page 62: Merlin.

Page 63: Common kestrel.

Page 64: American kestrel.

Page 65: Aplomado Falcon.

Page 66:

Top: Hybrid white gyrfalcon x peregrine. The hybrids of the Bernardo Gyr saheen breeding center, directed by Bernardo López Pinto, show the perfection in the morphology of this hybridization. In the image "Khanish", an example that already flies in the Arab Emirates.

Bottom: Hybrid white gyrfalcon x peregrine. High Quality Falcons hatchery directed by Borja Esteban Marqués and Ilanit Murillo.

Both centers are located in the Balearic Islands and raise the fastest hawks on the planet. In addition to standing out for their seriousness and good praxis, they are the only two centers in Spain with hawks that have won the Copa Presidente, an open speed event held annually in the United Arab Emirates.

Photographer: Avium Archive

### Chapter III

Page 69: Moulded Goshawks.

Page 71: Santiago dreaming.

Page 74: Screaming peregrine falcon.

Page 75: Sharing and passing on tradition from one generation to another (Victor Estrada).

Page 77: Making falconry known in a responsible way is good for birds and possible future falconers. Disappointments are avoided and even more importantly, poorly attended birds.

Photography: Diego Conte Bragado

Page 82: IE University, Segovia. One of the groups participating in the writing of the Ethical Code of the Falconer.

#### Chapter IV

Page 85: A freezer for the bird's food is common to be found in every falconer house.

Page 86: Goshawk drinking water.

Page 89: Mew. Hygiene is easier to maintain by putting a sand floor. With a strainer we can easily collect excrements.

Page 90: Extremely long beak in a kestrel.

Page 90: Shortening peregrine falcon nails.

Page 91: Imping in a goshawk's tail.

Page 91: If it gets very hot you must ensure the availability of water and shade. Desert of the Arab Emirates.

Page 93: Falconer's equipment needed to maintain a bird in a garden. Perch, artificial grass carpet, bath, vaccum to collect feathers, hosepipe for pressure water and a roof to ensure shade.

Page 93: Intervention at the specialized veterinary clinic Altai.

Page 93: Any treatment requires a previous detailed diagnosis.

Page 94: The daily analysis of our bird's excrements is a good reference to help as follow the health of our bird.

Page 95: The sooner we take our bird to the veterinary, the easier the recovery and usually the treatment is cheaper.

#### Chapter V

Page 98: From top to bottom:



- Peregrine falcon, Iberian subspecies.

- Daniel (12 years old) with Audaz, his goshawk, with who he hunts feathers. In the photo he is refreshing him due to the heat.

- Equipment for the maintenance of beak and claws.

Page 99: Getting a goshawk on the fist.

Page 100: Teaching how to carry a bird on the fist.

Page 101: Hooded peregrine falcon.

Page 101: Falconers like nice and good quality hoods. Birds on the other hand, appreciate light and comfortable hoods. This also happens when talking about gloves. That is why, it is usually a good idea to look for a master craftsman such as Adolfo Ruiz. [www.adolforuizartesaniam.com](http://www.adolforuizartesaniam.com)

Photography: Álvaro Mateos

Page 101: Hooding a falcon.

Page 102: Hybrid falcon eating from the glove.

Page 102: Settle the goshawk on the perch.

Page 103: Lifting an eagle owl to the fist after bating.

Page 105: Weighing a peregrine falcon.

Page 106: Saker falcon x white gyrfalcon Hybrid.

Page 108: American kestrel arriving to the fist.

Page 108: Starting off with experienced falconers avoids making mistakes and speeds up learning. Adolfo Ruiz teaching in a workshop during ADAJA Falconry Camp.

Photography: Diego Fuentes Lamas

Page 108: Flying amongst the feathers of our bird. The feeling of any falconer.

Photography: Diego Fuentes Lamas

Page 108: Álvaro with a Harris Hawk.

Page 109: It is difficult to find such an advanced and reliable telemetry equipment and so small and cheap: [www.berkut.es](http://www.berkut.es)

Page 111: White gyrfalcon.

Page 112: Returning home (Manolo Iglesias).

Page 113: Introducing the bird to the box cage.

## Chapter VI

Page 115: Red partridge flying (*Alectoris rufa*), duck (*Anas platyrhynchos*), common magpie (*Pica pica*), hare (*Lepus capensis*), rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*).

Page 116: Goshawk eating his just hunted prey, a rabbit.

Page 116: Peregrine falcon carrying a partridge.

Page 118: Peregrine falcon chasing a partridge after the stoop.

Page 118: European Sparrowhawk starting the chase of his prey.

Page 120: From top to bottom and left to right. Looking through the binoculars, hybrid falcon, leg transmitter, unhood the falcon, peregrine falcon, hybrid falcon, hybrid falcon leaving the fist, searching for the falcon in the sky, directing the dog, ducks fly away, stoop, peregrine falcon catching the prey.

Page 121: The dog is essential to flush the preys.

Page 123: When hunting, it is essential to move as smoothly as possible.

Page 124: From top to bottom and left to right. Female moulted goshawk, female goshawk claws, hooded goshawk, directing the dog, rabbit, goshawk leaving the fist, eagle owl capturing a rabbit during the daytime, female goshawk eating a rabbit, getting the goshawk on the fist after hunting the prey, partridge escaping a European Sparrowhawk, calling an eagle (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*) to the glove.

Page 125: Preys deploy all their resources to escape their natural predator. The fact that capturing them is challenging is an extra motivating factor for falconers.

Photography: Berta Peinado

Page 126: With a good follow-up, children can fulfill their dream of handling a golden eagle. Meeting of eagles in Jakovce, Slovakia.

Page 127: Falcon leaving the fist, Saker falcon chasing a seagull, fight on the ground between a black crow and a peregrine falcon.

Page 128: Daniel Castañeda with his goshawk, Jordi releasing a Harris Hawk, hare (*Lepus capensis*), Goshawk capturing a rabbit, goshawk chasing a red partridge.

Page 130: SEPRONA (Nature Protection Services), ensure the compliance of rules that regulate falconry.

Page 131: from top to bottom:

-Javier Ceballos in Scotland with Fulco Tosti and Umberto Caproni.

-Shortwing slips during the hunting days of the Spanish Falconry Association. Socuéllamos, Ciudad Real.

-The author during a hunting day with Antonio Tejedor and Javier Padrones.

Page 132: From top to bottom:

- With Lorenzo Machín in Tembleque, Toledo.

-The author hunting grouses with Ricky Pratessi. Scotland.

-Goshawk with Red Partridge. Bird hunting is where the goshawks show their maximum potential in flight.

Page 133: From top to bottom:

-Javier Ceballos in Nebraska, USA, with Steve Chindgren.

-With Francisco Capilla, Kiko, falconry companion since the eighties. Hunting ground in Paracuellos, Madrid.

-Javier Ceballos in Ciudad Real with Dr. Christian Saar and Benito Borque.

Page 134: From top to bottom:

-Javier Ceballos in Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates with Obeid Al-Mazrouei.

-Stretching rabbit. Falconers tend to shorten their preys suffering.

-Four Ceballos in the field. Planting falconry in future generations.

#### Annex

Page 136: Birds speak.

Page 164: Oil painting by J. Ignacio Muriel. One of Spain's greatest falconers, breeders and painters for the last 40 years [www.todoazoryhalcon.es](http://www.todoazoryhalcon.es)

## About the authors



From left to right: Rodrigo García Siguero, Marino García Montijano, Javier Ceballos Aranda, Jorge Hernández Justribó y Javier Gómez Pardo.

### **Javier Ceballos Aranda.** Madrid, Spain 1966

Falconer; Teacher; Investigator; Photographer; Author; Falconry disseminator. Director of Avium [www.avium.es](http://www.avium.es)

Bachelor in Geological Sciences by the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM); Master in Environmental Management (IIE); Doctor through his thesis on Falconry in Spain defended at the Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM); Falconry delegate for the Spanish Ministry of Culture for the multinational file before UNESCO. Falconry expert by the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC).

Author of the book, documentary and photographs submitted by the government of the United Arab Emirates in 2010, 2012 and 2016 to UNESCO used as claim for the recognition of falconry as Intangible Cultural Heritage <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/falconry-a-living-human-heritage-01209>. Since 2008 to date, he is a member of different international committees led by the UAE government for the incorporation of new countries to the UNESCO Falconry file.

Consultant & Adviser in the field of Falconry for different administrations and national and international entities: National Heritage (Spain), different departments of the Environment (Spain), Ministry of Culture (Spain), Madrid hunting Federation (Spain), Caïrel publishing house (Spain), *International Association for Falconry & Birds of Prey* (IAF's advisory committee member), *The Archives of Falconry & Peregrine Fund* (Boise, USA), Falconry Heritage Trust

(UK), Culture & Tourism Department Abu Dhabi (UAE), Falconry Associations in Mexico, Colombia, Malta.

Author of various books and articles on falconry (published in Spanish, English, French and Arabic), and of documentaries broadcasted on different televisions. Since 2017, he also has a national radio broadcast program; "*Soltando pibuelas; Cetrería con el Dr. Javier Ceballos*".

Author of the idea, script and technical direction of the documentary series on falconry "Allies of the air", documentary filmed in 4 continents showing the different ways Falconry is understood by different cultures.

Professor and/or guest lecturer in different universities and congresses at both national and international level (Spain, Holland, France, United Kingdom, Italy, USA, Qatar, UAE, Mexico...)

Curator of the temporary exhibition (6 months long) "Falconry; Cultural Heritage and Science" in the National Museum of Natural Sciences - CSIC (Spain). Development of falconry workshops for the general public within the MNCN-CSIC.

He coordinated the debates between falconers from different Spanish Autonomous Communities who drafted the "Falconer Ethical Code".

Responsible for the incorporation of Falconry related documents on the official website of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of the Spanish Government

<https://www.mecd.gob.es/cultura-mecd/areas-cultura/principal/novedades/patrimonio/2011/la-cetreria.html>

Creator and coordinator of the *World Falconry Day* every 16<sup>th</sup> November since its inception in 2013, organized by the International Association for Falconry & Birds of Prey IAF <http://www.iaf.org/WorldFalconryDay.php>

Through Avium he has won two public competitions called by the Ministry of Culture of the Government of Spain for the enhancement of cultural heritage. In both cases, he has managed to bring falconry to society in an effective and exemplary way. In 2011 he developed teaching and pedagogical resources for schoolchildren and young falconers in different Autonomous Communities of Spain. In 2015 he organized the first national school competition on falconry; "Spanish falconry seen by children".



Development of various Falconry photographic exhibitions with its own images at the Complutense University of Madrid, Polytechnic University of Madrid, MNCN-CSIC, and Peñaflores Palace, Écija, Seville.

Avium Director. This private entity develops didactic programs throughout the year. Since 1992 Dr. Javier Ceballos has coordinated 48 editions of the ADAJA Summer Camp during 26 consecutive summers. Children from Spain and abroad, camp for 15 days to learn about falconry. His school "Avium Falconry School" has been invited to the 2017 Falconry Festival in Abu Dhabi with five campers, to share his extensive experience in the training of new generations of falconers. [www.adaja.es](http://www.adaja.es)

His career has earned recognitions such as:

- Extraordinary PhD Award by the UPM.
- Commander of the Order of Civil Merit at the proposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain for his work in the Falconry & UNESCO project developed in the United Arab Emirates.
- Proposed for the National Medal of Fine Arts of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain by AECCA, IAF and the National Museum of Natural Sciences.
- Officially recognized as "true friend of the United Arab Emirates" by The Executive Council - Abu Dhabi (signed 9th February 2012)
- Official recognition of the General Subdirector of Historical Heritage MECD
- Honorary member of the "Madrid Falconry Association Pero Lope de Ayala" and of the "Castellana Falconry Association".

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**Jorge Hernández Justribó.** Madrid, Spain 1973.

Degree in Biology from the Complutense University of Madrid. Since 1999 he has uninterruptedly worked as a zoologist.

His father, Manuel Hernández Enrile ("Manolo Enrile") already practiced Falconry along with Felix Rodriguez de la Fuente. For this reason, he has practically lived his entire life with a bird on his fist.

He is a part of many conservation projects with a technical and scientific nature, related to threatened birds and mammals, under the umbrella of prestigious entities, such as the Ecology Department of the UAM.

He is also a consultant for private companies regarding fauna studies, frequently included in Environmental Impact Assessment Studies.

He has taught banding and ornithology courses within well-known organizations.

As a result of his profile, as a falconer, teacher and conservationist, he is the author of more than twenty publications: scientific articles in impact journals, book chapters for the Administration and scientific/formative articles, as well as various congress communications.

He has regularly collaborated with Avium in projects related to Falconry, Ornithology, *birdwatching*, banding and Environmental Education.

**Marino García Montijano**, Madrid, Spain 1972

Veterinary Director of Veterinary Clinic Taimyr, specialized in birds of prey. He has had professional experience with raptors since 1995.

Graduated from the Complutense University of Madrid (Spain) in 1995, and is now performing his PhD in quinolones pharmacokinetics in raptors at the same university. After spending one-year of zoological and traumatology internship at Bristol Zoo and private practice (U.K.) he worked at Madrid Official Wildlife Rehabilitation centre. From 1998 to 2009 he was Veterinary Director of the Spanish imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*) captive breeding centre for the Ministry of Environment. From 2004 to August 2011 he was the Veterinary Director of Madrid Official Wildlife Rehabilitation centre.

He opened a private falcon hospital in Spain (Altai Raptor Hospital; [www.hospitalaltai.com](http://www.hospitalaltai.com)) in 2007. He has been involved in numerous conservation projects of Spanish endangered species (Great bustard, Peregrine falcon, Lesser kestrel, Iberian lynx, Eurasian wildcat, etc) as a wildlife medicine and conservation consultant. He holds the certificate of “Qualified Environmentalist Veterinarian” since 2003. He has written avian case reports and scientific publications, and presented several lectures, both at national and international conferences. Marino practices falconry since 1989, loves his children, rock climbing, kayaking and bird watching.

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**Rodrigo García Siguero.** Madrid, Spain 1976

He has experience in the management of birds of prey in almost all its aspects. He is active falconer, having hunted for many seasons both long and short wing birds (goshawks flying at hare and rabbit, falcons flying at partridge). It's birds have won different championships and year after year, it is usual to see him among the top ten classified on the national scene.

He has performed flight exhibitions towards the public first in Tenerife (Águilas del Teide park) and later in the Zoo-Aquarium of Madrid, being Head of Raptors Trainers for 5 years (2002- 2007).

He has also been successful at captive breeding, achieving domestic breeding of species such as the Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus brookei* and in collaboration with GREFA the Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraëtus fasciatus*. Currently develops wildlife control and environmental education projects [www.centrodehalconesmadrid.com](http://www.centrodehalconesmadrid.com)

He has collaborated with Avium since 2008, performing exhibitions and participating as a teacher in courses, such as those developed at the Forest Engineering School of Madrid and at the I.E. University (Segovia).

He currently directs in Castilla y León (Spain) the Breeding Centre for falcons (gyrfalcons, peregrine and hybrids) Al Kuwaity Falcon Center.

[alkuwaityfalcons@gmail.com](mailto:alkuwaityfalcons@gmail.com)



**Javier Gómez Pardo.** Madrid, Spain 1960

Since 1979 he has continuously practiced Falconry, hunting with falcons following the fly at bolt and waiting on flight modalities.

Falcon breeder since the year 1993.

He is the Vice-president of the *Association of Falconry bird breeders of the Community of Madrid*.

Author of Falconry articles in various publications. He has participated in various Falconry reports and documentaries broadcast on different television networks.

Director of the introduction project of the Peregrine Falcon in Ocaña, Toledo (2005). He has also carried out various wildlife control projects with birds of prey.

Falconry Professor in different courses, organized by the *Falconry School Alameda*. He has collaborated in those developed by Avium at the School of Forest Engineers of Madrid and in I.E. *University* (Segovia). He has also given lectures on environmental education at various schools. He runs the Javier Gómez Pardo Raptor Breeding Center located in the Community of Madrid. Breeding successfully Peregrine falcons, gyrfalcons, hawk hybrids and Harris.

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Getting started in any discipline requires curiosity and perseverance. In falconry it is easy to make mistakes regarding the choice of the bird, or in its handling. It can also happen, that once we have acquired the bird we realize it entails greater commitment than originally expected.

“Basic and Ethical Falconry Manual” was designed to benefit both birds and falconers. Dr. Javier Ceballos and collaborators have achieved a complete, rigorous and very easy to read work. The International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) understands this, demonstrating its support through its seal on the cover and the foreword of its president.

Any aspiring falconer will appreciate having read it before acquiring a bird. Even those who already have had one for a long time will find in this manual new approaches to maintain and transmit to future generations the Intangible Cultural Heritage that falconry constitutes.

