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NORTH AMERICAN FALCONERS ASSOCIATION    DECEMBER 2018





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# NORTH AMERICAN FALCONERS ASSOCIATION



*Our Mission and Purpose: Is to improve, aid, and encourage competency in the art and practice of falconry among interested persons; to provide communication among and to disseminate information to interested Members; to promote scientific study of the raptorial species, their care, welfare and training; to promote conservation of the birds of prey and an appreciation of their value in nature and in wildlife conservation programs; to urge recognition of falconry as a legal field sport; and, to establish traditions which will aid, perpetuate, and further the welfare of falconry and the raptors it employs.*

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# IN THIS ISSUE

Officers & Directors	4
Presidents Message	6
In Remembrance	7
Canadian Director / Geleynse	10
South Pacific Director / Boberg	12
American Kestrel / Conservation	14
Central Director / Huber	20
A Couple of Tidbits	22
Book Review / McNeff	24
From the Talons to the Table	26
Birds of Prey / Losses in Africa	28
Michigan Hawking Club	32
Mountain Director / Buckley	34
Southeast Director / Shores	36
Belated Tribute - Ken Mesch	38
April Davenport-Rice	42
West Virginia Falconry Club	48
Northeast Director / Kosakowski	50
Understanding Waterfowl	52
Baywing Database	54
Director At Large / Chavez	58
Art & Science of Weight Control	60
Minnesota Falconers Assn.	66
The Archives of Falconry	68
Ohio Falconry Assn.	70
New to NAFA	72
North Pacific Director / Kellogg	74
Oklahoma Falconers Assn.	76
Potomac Falconers Assn.	78
Director At Large / Thomas	80
Colorado Hawking Club	82
~ and much more	

*HAVE A GREAT HOLIDAY AND  
FALCONRY SEASON! - Dan Milner*





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**PRESIDENT**

As the end of the year quickly approaches and another holiday season reaches its annual crescendo, I wanted to take a minute and wish you and yours a happy and safe holiday season. I hope you have a chance to spend time with your loved ones, whether they be human, furred, or feathered.

At the end of December, the director tenures of Jennifer Buckley, Gary Boberg, and Martin Geleyense will come to an end. Martin will, of course, remain on as vice president. I want to personally thank Jenny, Gary, and Martin for their faithful pursuit and dedication to the goals of this organization. They've served NAFA well, and I'll miss working with them so closely. Of course, no one ever really gets away with so many ongoing projects and things to do, so I expect we'll be seeing these folks again. New directors-elect will assume their duties on January 1. They are Jana Barkley, representing the South Pacific Directorate; Roger Tucker, representing the Mountain Directorate; and Guy Rondeau, representing the Canadian Directorate. I'm eager to get started on their new and fresh ideas for NAFA.

Writing this message in the waning days of October, while I try to catch up on some of my responsibilities, has been tough. Things have finally settled down, if only for a short while – NAFA's annual field meet is just a few weeks away. Before you know it, probably as you read this, we'll be getting together in Lubbock for another fantastic gathering the great State of Texas is known for. I'm really excited, as the Texas Panhandle offers a considerable variety of game, and in 2014 it proved to be a record amount. Early indications and reports from meet co-chair Corey Roelke, who is leading land acquisition efforts personally, are that 2018 should be no different. With over 20,000 acres of permission thus far, plenty of water, abundant game, an incredible schedule of speakers, vendors, and the nightly card games, NAFA meets are truly an annual celebration

of North American falconry. I hope to get a chance to see you there.

I continually write about the spirit of our falconry family and their willingness to give back to the sport. It's never more evident than at a field meet, planned, organized, and executed by volunteers and fellow falconers. In early October, I watched and enjoyed the efforts of a handful of falconers at the Saskatchewan Falconry Association's (SFA) 60th anniversary annual field meet in the little town of Swift Current, Saskatchewan. The SFA meet was also the NAFA regional meet this year, helping to give the meet a little more attention. Paddy Thompson, Gail and Rick Bryne, Larry Going, Nayeem Islam, Dale Guthormsen, Martin Geleyense, and few others did an incredible job organizing a fantastic field meet. With speakers like Lynn Oliphant, Ed Pitcher, Bruce Adams, and Shawn Corman, a fantastic raffle, and plenty of game, the meet was a huge success. The icing on the cake for me was getting a chance to witness sharp-tailed grouse and Hungarian partridge taken in phenomenal style. It was a great meet!

A week later I was in Rock Springs, Wyoming, enjoying the annual Eagle Meet. Mike Barker and an incredible team of volunteers – Anne Price, Carina Woodruff, Rich Howard, Chase Delles, John Coffman, and Rocky Connell – put together another fantastic meet. The eagle meets are unlike all others. In the field it's usually one falconer and their eagle and a line of beaters working to scare up game. The flights seem to start off so slow, and then all of a sudden both animals are going at breakneck speeds with the eagle crashing into the ground, ending in a cloud of dust. In most cases the jackrabbit whips around, jumps over, cartwheels, or seemingly explodes like a rocket into the air just out of the eagle's reach. If you get a chance at an upcoming meet, go out and watch one of these incredible eagle flights for yourself. **Continued on page 11**



**JAMES H. FRAZIER 1926-2018** Written by: Paul Mascuch

The falconry community and I personally lost a good friend with the passing of James H. Frazier on June 21st, 2018 at the age of 91. In the weeks before Jim passed many falconry friends visited at his home to talk birds, dogs, and falconry. Jim was still engaged in these conversations and talked about a new falcon this year, right up until the end.

Jim was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1926 and grew up in the area. He was always interested in the outdoors and wildlife. He brought a constant series of birds, snakes, turtles, and other wildlife home much to the consternation of his mother. He became interested in raptors and fascinated by falconry at an early age. There was a picture hanging in Jim's home office that showed him at the edge of an active cooper's nest in 1937. His interest in falconry, and an introduction by his older brother, brought Jim into contact with Doc Stabler who became Jim's mentor.

World War II was raging and Jim enlisted, followed his older brother into the Navy. He served in Japan at the end of the war.

Jim studied accounting at St. Joseph's college in Philadelphia and following graduation entered graduate school at Georgetown University studying political science. He was recruited out of school by the FBI and never finished his graduate studies. Jim served his entire career in the FBI starting in Washington, DC and then Saginaw, Michigan. Jim was active hunting and fishing when he wasn't working. When an FBI opening came open in Alaska Jim jumped at the chance and applied for the position. He got the job and moved north.

Jim covered most of the state of Alaska for the FBI and got to know many people all over the state. He met his wife Millie there. When he retired he continued his Alaskan adven




DR. PAT REDIG AND JIM FRAZIER AT ONE OF THE LATEST NAFA MEETS

tures flying Gyrfalcons, guiding sheep hunters in the Wrangel Mountains, and floating a number of Alaska's wilderness rivers. One of these float trips was over 1,700 miles long. He documented many raptor territories during these floats and provided his note to Alaska Fish and Game.

In retirement Jim split his time spending summers in Alaska doing investigations for a law firm then migrating to Arizona to fly falcons at ducks during the winter. Getting tired of migrating annually between Alaska and Arizona Jim and Millie settled in Emmett, Idaho.

Jim was a long time NAFA member and loved attending the annual field meets. He organized and ran the NAFA meet in Lamar, Colorado in 1992. Jim and I attended many NAFA meets together where he loved catching up with old friends.

Jim and I hawked together often and spent a lot of wind-shield time talking about many varied topics. He became a very close friend who shared many meals and holidays with my family and friends.

I will miss our time together running dogs, flying falcons, and discussing the meaning of life. Rest in peace Jim. 



# BRIAN McDONALD 1927-2018

Written by: Mike Yates

Born in Washington, DC, Brian and younger cousin Steve Gatti roamed the woods together seeking a direction for that compulsion. It came when Steve discovered falconry through a book and infected Brian; the boys never looked back. A screech owl grabbed by hand was traded for two captive kestrels at the Washington Zoo. The pair met John and Frank Craighead briefly, then John Hamlet and Al Nye in their quest. By 1944 they had learned of Assateague Island and at 17 and 15 years of age boarded a bus that would take them to Ocean City, Maryland. Hitching a ride across the inlet with a Coast Guard launch, they walked for miles down the beach and managed to trap two passage tundra peregrines using pigeons and a headset. It was the beginning of a lifelong love of and skill at peregrine trapping for Brian.

After a hitch in the Army post-WWII, Brian hit the beach each fall for 1-2 weeks. Usually with Bill Turner or Halter Cunningham, he honed his skills and developed new and effective techniques. His drive and analytical nature, along with the initial noose jackets (conceived together with Cunningham and built by Brian) made him arguably the most successful beach trapper of the falconry era at Assateague. He and Cunningham were featured in a classic Life Magazine article on November 17, 1952. Staying in derelict buildings on the island, he kept few birds for falconry and banded hundreds of others. In 1958 the number of trapping parties at Assateague prompted a move to the False Cape beach of Virginia/North Carolina, where his obsession continued through 1970. It was there in 1967 (after having briefly met him at a PFA [Potomac Falconers' Association] meet that spring) that I first saw him in his element.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s Brian visited some of the last Eastern Anatum peregrine eyries in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Pennsylvania, taking a 50-ounce female from one. Cunningham instilled in him the interest in hood making, providing tools and advice. Brian was soon making the finest classic Dutch hoods and some very nicely tooled Indian ones, and selling them and other falconry equipment to his peers. He never stopped making those hoods, even after the loss of 1.5 fingers to a shop accident. He traveled to Fort Chimo, Ungava Bay wearing Johnny Mc-



BRIAN McDONALD - JANUARY 1967

Cabe's arctic parka (on display at the Archives of Falconry) and seeking gyrfalcons. Brian also journeyed to Duluth and the Gaspé Peninsula for goshawks. He flew peregrines at game in the Virginia and Maryland countryside with Gatti, McCabe and Sid Sigwald and at meets elsewhere. Success was limited due to career demands and the very nature of the countryside. Much more success ensued with goshawks, which became his true game-hawking calling. Brian hunted cottontails relentlessly with others like Jim Fox, Kent Carnie, Nye and Gatti. He was a founding member of the PFA and an early NAFA member, traveling to the first meet in Reno and to others. There he made lifelong friends across the country and abroad, all of whom embraced the warmth, wit and intelligence of this extraordinary man. In 1970 his principles prompted him to walk away from the active practice of falconry rather than submit to conducting it under federal government oversight...more on that later.

Brian was a police officer in Montgomery County, Maryland, and then a game warden for the State of Maryland on its Eastern Shore. There he met second wife Joanne, at the time a nursing student and later a talented falconer in her own right. In Joanne Brian had met his match; an equal perfectly willing to join him on any adventure but also unafraid to call him on bullshit when that's what he was presenting. They welcomed son Sean and daughter Colleen to the fam-

ily, and loved one another fiercely until her untimely passing in 2001. Brian worked in materials testing and as a museum conservator, cabinetmaker and gunsmith. He was a meticulous craftsman in any endeavor he undertook. Possessed of an ever inquiring mind, Brian was also a Civil War historian, enjoyed metal detecting and shooting antique and modern weapons. After Joanne's passing he moved from Virginia to Texas and connected with the falconry community there, attending meets and sharing his still invaluable perspectives on the art.

Brian was a larger than life figure to a kid just embarking on a lifetime in falconry back in the mid-1960s. In our lifetimes we meet a few seminal individuals; ones absent which the paths of our lives would be entirely different. Brian was the second of these for me. Steve Chitty led me to falconry, which led me to Brian. Brian led me to Dave Jamieson and Bill Shinnars, who led me to my wife Karen and a rich life of hawking in the West. Treating me for all the world like another son, Brian sponsored me as a PFA member. We hawked seldom together in his brief active falconry period after meeting, but in the following years he accompanied me in Maryland and Nevada as I hunted with longwings. We shot black powder, bownetted goshawks on the Virginia and Pennsylvania ridges, drank many beers, and enjoyed Joanne's country cooking with his family. When I joined the Assateague Peregrine Survey in 1977 as Bob Berry's replacement he visited me yearly and brought new and important friends into my life such as Jamieson, Shinnars, and Erich Awender. He liked to tell people he taught me all I knew about trapping peregrines, which was only true in the sense that he taught Doug Mollison and Doug taught me. I liked to tell people that Brian was the best ever until I came along and eclipsed him handily. I visited him in Texas as I could, the final time barely a month before his passing. We laughed, as often, that a guy who smoked three packs of Lucky Strikes a day for so many years before quitting could still be among the living. Alas, we spoke too soon this time.

Anyone who ever truly knew Brian will tell you that he was opinionated, strong-willed, obstinate, and at times infuriating. They'll also tell you that he was warm, loyal, outrageously entertaining, and the best friend one could ever hope to have. Suffice it to say that Brian and I had our disagreements over the years. A major one was his quitting active falconry rather than submit to what he saw as illegitimate federal

oversight. I maintained that he martyred himself to a principle, while I and most others went on to have the best hawking of our lives while enduring that authority. He thought me unprincipled for submitting, and I thought him foolish to allow them to rob him of the experiences he gave up as a result of his quitting in protest. Yet we never let that derail the love we had for one another or the pleasure we took in each other's company. I was privileged to have him as my friend, just as American falconry was to have had him among us for so long. In thanks, I give Brian the final word on the subject, as excerpted below from an interview Carnie conducted in 1990. Thanks for everything, Brian...I'll see you either up yonder or down below.

Brian: I haven't been an active falconer since 1970. Why am I not an active falconer? Two reasons. Number one, as a matter of principle, right or wrong, I refused in my own judgments to participate in falconry under government regulation. I thought about it to a considerable degree. I have a philosophy that falconry is absolutely the type of a sport that will only, can and will only grow through individual effort and not through government mandate or government organization. When all the problems of licensure and government regulations and everything came along, I thought it out pretty carefully. Spent about a year or two, matter of fact, thinking about it. I just decided I couldn't be a falconer under those conditions. I knew I would probably end up in trouble if I attempted to do it. So, therefore, decided to drop it, to let it go. When I did, I dropped it totally and completely.



JOANNE AND BRIAN AT THE FIRST NAFA MEET. 1962 - RENO  
PHOTO BY KENNY STERNER





## CANADIAN DIRECTOR MARTIN GELEYNSE Canadian\_Director@n-a-f-a.com

CANADIAN

I have just returned home after spending two weeks hawking in Saskatchewan and attending the Saskatchewan Falconry Association's 60th Anniversary Meet. The meet was well-attended, with participants from across Canada and the USA, along with several from the UK. I would like to thank our SFA hosts who did such a great job of organizing the event and making sure everyone got out, found game, and had great flights.

The game was mostly cooperative with good numbers of ducks and excellent partridge and grouse numbers. This was several participants' first trip to Saskatchewan, and I have no doubt they'll be back. The meet was also a great opportunity to connect, share ideas, and learn about falconry developments all across the country.

Clee Sealing, Brian Mutch, and Rob Palmer brought birds across the border and were rewarded with excellent flights on partridge and grouse. Unfortunately, Greg Windtberg's CITES permit didn't arrive on time, but he left his birds at home and attended the meet anyway. I would like to thank these falconers for putting in the extra effort required to get to the meet and helping NAFA exercise the cross-border process. Hopefully, we'll be able to continue refining and improving this process to make cross-border meet attendance more feasible for increased numbers of people.

This is my last report as Canadian director, and I would like to take a little time to reflect on my experience as a director and on the role of NAFA in Canada. To say that I learned a lot would be an understatement. I've been a NAFA member since 1984, but as a board member, I've gained a whole new appreciation for what NAFA does

and for the many committed volunteers who work to make it one of the most respected and successful falconry organizations in the world.

One of NAFA's primary objectives is to support and maintain the falconry community, which is a basic and critical function. Our field meets and world-class publications enable falconers to share information, learn first-hand from each other, and build contacts and friendships that last a lifetime. By developing a strong community, NAFA ensures we're all better able to promote a positive public image, advance the cause of falconry, and work for legal changes.

When it comes to public outreach and legislative work, much of the "heavy lifting" falls on the local provincial or state clubs. However, imagine what it would be like if each of those clubs had to stand on their own, without a larger body of experience and successful precedents they could draw on.

For the most part, raptors are not federally managed in Canada, but it's clear to me that without NAFA, falconry would be in much poorer shape across the country. NAFA has played an important role in promoting and supporting falconry in Canada. In 2012, NAFA contributed to helping Canadian falconers staff a booth at the Continental Fish and Wildlife Conservation Congress in Ottawa. In 2015, NAFA was instrumental in bringing about important changes to the Canadian Wildlife Services' management plan for peregrines. In 2016, NAFA consulted with and supported the Canadian government's attempt to downlist the peregrine falcon to CITES Appendix II. In 2017, NAFA supported efforts in Quebec to gain a wild take. And, of

course, just this month NAFA sponsored the SFA's 60th Anniversary Meet, which brought together falconers from across the country and beyond.



PRESIDENT NICOLLE SHOWED UP WITHOUT A HAT - SO WE GOT HIM ONE!

These are recent tangible examples of the important work NAFA does. Additional efforts include years of working with Ontario falconers on our long struggle



NATHAN HYLAND WITH GOSHAWK AND HUN.

**Presidents Report Continued:** On the administrative front, NAFA has been busy. With a lot of help from Dan Milner, we recently deployed a redesigned website and a new membership engagement portal called the "Online Weathering Yard." Your leadership team also continues to work towards the creation of a 501(c)4. A lot has already been said and written about creating this third pillar of the falconry community to compliment the 501(c)3 Falconry Fund and NAFA, a 501(c)7. We're still working with the FWS and state agencies to normalize passage peregrine take and expand access to golden eagles. We'll continue to work tirelessly with state and federal agencies to ensure North American falconry remains some of the best in the world. Planning is already underway for the 2019 field meet in Kansas, the 2019 Squirrel-palooza regional meet, and the 2020 IAF/NAFA meet. There is always so much going on!

for regulations. Canada is very large, and we're thinly spread across it; NAFA helps keep us together. Every Canadian falconer should be a member of NAFA! If you have friends who aren't members, talk to them about it. A community only works if everyone participates!

Also, if you've never attended a NAFA meet, you owe it to yourself to go. It's an eye-opening experience with things to see and learn at every turn. The variety



DUCK STRATEGIES

of hawking is unbelievable, and the vendor tables are unmatched. Personally, I can tell you that after attending the last six years, I don't plan on missing another one.

In closing, I would like to thank all of you for your support over the past six years. NAFA is a great organization, and being your Canadian director has been an honor and a privilege that I've thoroughly enjoyed. Of course, my involvement with NAFA isn't ending, and I look forward to your continued support in my role as vice-president.



On a personal note, after 8½ frustrating days of driving up and down the beach on South Padre Island, I successfully trapped a new hunting partner, a passage tundra falcon, for the upcoming season. Early indications are that she's going to be a good game hawk, and she's got attitude, as evidenced by the scabs on my knuckles. This is shaping up to be a great hunting season, and I can't wait to see her take game. I hope each of you are having a fantastic and successful hawking season!

Thanks to all of you for everything you do for NAFA. Participation through your membership helps NAFA's support of falconry. Remember.... *"Our differences as falconers make us stronger, falconry is what unites us! Falconry makes us family!"*

Thank you all for your continued support!







**SOUTH PACIFIC DIRECTOR**  
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**SOUTH PACIFIC**

**This will be my last Directors report as your South Pacific Director.**

It has been a pleasure representing the falconers of the South Pacific Region. I have enjoyed getting to know and make new friends through this position. We all have a common thread that holds us together and NAFA is working hard to ensure that our sport continues. NAFA has a great group of leaders that are concerned with the future of falconry in our country and the future of NAFA. Continue to support your State and Federal organizations that have your best interest in mind.

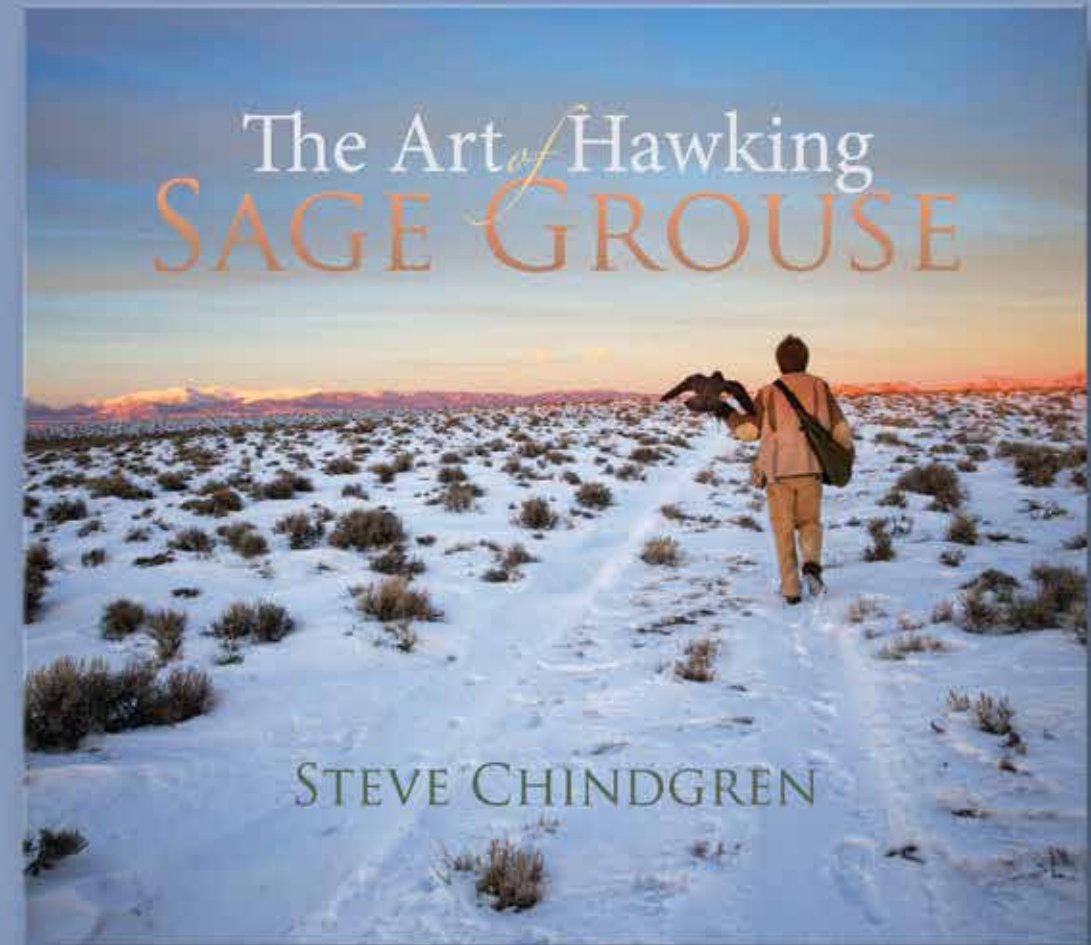
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All My Best,

*Gary Boberg*



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## THE AMERICAN KESTREL



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PHOTO: HAUWEI YU



PHOTO: JIM SHANE



**"A great deal of falconers within the North American Falconers Association got their start in falconry with American Kestrels- for many, these feisty little raptors provided their gateway to the sport of kings."**

BY SARAH SCHULWITZ  
(Director of the American Kestrel Partnership)  
AND ZOE AMBROSE (Student Intern at The Peregrine Fund)

Five decades ago on a farm in Delaware, an American Kestrel flew into a chicken pen and could not find an escape. At just nine years old, Keith Carpenter found this kestrel and was compelled to reach out and connect with it on a deeper level. "I reached up and grabbed it gently and it proceeded to hook its talons into my finger...after that, I had it with me all the time, and that's how I got started with falconry," Carpenter said. Bob Collins, Curator of the Archives of Falconry at The Peregrine Fund in Boise, Idaho, says a great deal of falconers with the North American Falconers Association got their start in falconry with American Kestrels - for many, these

feisty little raptors provided their gateway to the sport of kings.

Catching a kestrel on that Delaware farm was just the beginning of a life-long interest in falconry for Carpenter. Through his childhood and adolescence, he formed a strong admiration for the work of Tom Cade, long-time falconer, lead ornithologist at Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and founder of The Peregrine Fund. Carpenter's interest lead him to visit Cornell University in 1974 to meet Dr. Cade and witness Peregrine Falcon captive breeding operations first-hand. Carpenter was eager to learn about Dr. Cade's

groundbreaking work and to play an active role in saving the Peregrine Falcon from extinction. By the early 1970s, Peregrine Falcons had been listed under the Endangered Species Act following the species' precipitous decline across North America due to the widespread use of DDT. While at Cornell, Carpenter formed what would become a lifelong friendship with Dr. Cade.

"Tom is a giant intellectual - he taught me so much. He taught me to start taking copious notes of everything," Carpenter reminisced fondly. He remembers how impressed he was by Dr. Cade's leadership in

developing a successful method for avian artificial insemination and the mobilization of hundreds of people in conservation action across the continent. In remembering when the Peregrine Falcon was removed from the Endangered Species Act in 1999, Carpenter's face lit up. "I can't say enough about it... it is the most successful restoration of an endangered species - ever, period."

Carpenter's stories are filled with fond memories of raptors and efforts to protect birds of prey important to falconry, particularly the American Kestrel. "When I was a kid, all over Delaware we had kestrels. The fields





PHOTO: NICK DUNLOP

and relies heavily on collaboration between professional researchers and citizen scientists across North America who are working to solve this mystery through active and ongoing monitoring and data collection of nest boxes across the continent. Partners submit their collected data to the American Kestrel Partnership via an online data entry portal at [kestrel.peregrinefund.org](http://kestrel.peregrinefund.org) that is then aggregated and analyzed to identify trends that will get us closer to solving the "why" behind population decline.

Falconers, scout troops, grade school students, and retirees are among the ranks of the American Kestrel Partnership's army of citizen scientists. Participation in monitoring a nest box does not require a scientific background, just a willingness to monitor a nesting box every two to three weeks during the breeding season. A simple reporting protocol has been established by the partnership to ensure the

consistency of collected data.

Additionally, more information and helpful tools, such as where to place and properly observe nest boxes and how to collect and submit data, can be found on the American Kestrel Partnership website ([kestrel.peregrinefund.org](http://kestrel.peregrinefund.org)). The data being collected from citizen scientists across the continent is a critical component for researchers to address kestrel population declines at a continental scale. Managing a kestrel nest box program means that individuals or teams can contribute to the largest American Kestrel conservation initiative in history.

Many falconers have approached the American Kestrel Partnership staff asking how to help. Though putting up a nest box and witnessing the kestrel fly in and out



PHOTO: JIM SHANE

is a massive perk, committed nest box monitoring and subsequent data entry once the box is installed is critical. Evidence shows that just putting up a nest box is not an effective way to help kestrels, and could even be detrimental. A box placed in poor quality

habitat (e.g., by a loud roadway or a in a backyard with unattended cats and dogs) could result in an increased mortality for nesting kestrels, reduced reproductive success, or outright nest failure. Even more alarming, our research also shows that if enough of these

are now developments and you don't see kestrels." In recent years, Keith and his wife, Sharon, have been interested in seeing nesting kestrels on their property in Delaware. "I put out nest boxes on my property... [but] no kestrels."

It's not bad luck, however, that prevented the Carpenters from having a nesting kestrel in Delaware: American Kestrels have been declining in many parts of North America since the 1960s. In fact, American Kestrels are listed as threatened or endangered in Delaware, Connecticut, Florida, and New Jersey. While declines are not nearly as precipitous as peregrine declines back in the 1950s and 1960s, the decline of kestrels is alarming given its steady pace. Since the 1960s, kestrels have declined by 50% on average in the US (according to the USGS Breeding Bird Survey) and some areas of the East coast populations have decreased by 90%.

In 2012, The Peregrine Fund established the American Kestrel Partnership to address kestrel population declines. The partnership is led by The Peregrine Fund

USGS Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) Data Indicate Long-term (left) and Range-wide (right) American Kestrel Declines Across North America

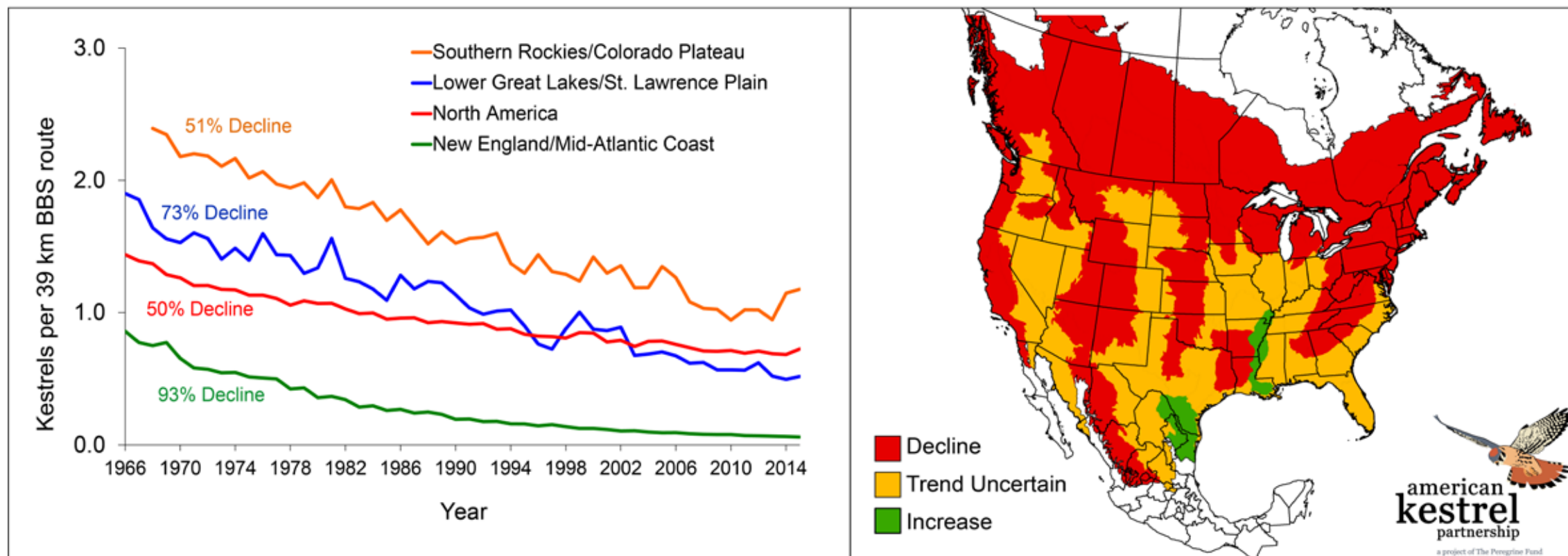






PHOTO: JIM SHANE

"bad boxes" are deployed, it could cause a stable or increasing population to decline. Regularly monitoring the nest box according to AKP's shared protocol, entering data into AKP's database, and removing or relocating boxes that display repeated nest failures is the best way to contribute to a continental partnership to understand kestrel population decline.

Not everyone can or even wants to monitor a box. For people in this category that want to help, the Adopt-a-Box program may be a good option. Every \$100 box adoption (<https://kestrel.peregrinefund.org/adopt-box>) comes with a one-year membership to The Peregrine Fund, updates on a nest box monitored by the partnership's professional collaborators at Boise State University, and the satisfaction of supporting one of the longest running monitoring programs in North America. Additionally, the partnership also hosts the annual KestrelCam streamed live from the World Center for Birds of Prey campus in Boise, Idaho during the kestrel breeding season. Public viewers can watch kestrels raise a clutch of chicks and record their observations, discuss the daily happenings, and learn about kestrel biology. Falconers or local falconry chapters can contribute by watching, submitting data, or fully (\$7,000) or partially sponsoring the KestrelCam for a breeding season.

Fortunately, for kestrels and for the people that love and rely upon kestrels, this charismatic falcon is not declining everywhere and is certainly not at risk of

being considered federally endangered anytime soon. In fact, in some places kestrels are still common. Keith and Sharon Carpenter, for example, have had better luck with kestrel sightings at their ranch in eastern Idaho, where they report regularly seeing dozens of kestrels. And when they put up a nest box on their ranch in Idaho, there's a great chance they'll get to witness kestrel fledglings take flight at the end of each breeding season.



PHOTO: JIM SHANE

If you are a falconer who wants to help American Kestrels, please consider participating as an individual or local falconry chapter in the American Kestrel Partnership. You can contribute through committed nest box monitoring and reporting or as an annual financial contributor. Please contact : [kestrelpartnership@peregrinefund.org](mailto:kestrelpartnership@peregrinefund.org) to ask about sponsorship. Become a partner at [kestrel.peregrinefund.org](http://kestrel.peregrinefund.org).



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## CENTRAL DIRECTOR ROBERT HUBER Central\_Director@n-a-f-a.com

CENTRAL

It is the first of October and cool weather and ducks are just a month away. Today it's windy and warm, so summer is still holding on to that last vestige of the dog days. The beginning of October always makes me hopeful for what the season will bring. I hope all of you had a good start to your season, either getting that new bird going or pulling "old reliable" out of the mew.

My season has been a bit different than I'm used to. I was reminded that old falconers (I'm in that group) can learn or try new falconry training methods, and how nice it is to have other falconers to assist you on the journey.

This summer I started working with "Doc," an imprint Peale's peregrine. This is my first imprint falcon, so I was learning about tame hack, what to watch for and what to expect, the vocalization of an imprint, learning to let



go of my fears of Doc flying off even though I had GPS on him, and learning to use a drone rather than a kite for training. It would've been a lot more difficult for me if I hadn't had the support of several other experienced Oklahoma falconers who were tame hacking new falcons at the same time in different Oklahoma locations. With today's technology, I was reminded again that we're never alone in what we do. While I was flying my falcon



at the hack site in the mornings, we were texting back and forth, commenting on what our birds were doing (or often not doing), how high they flew, or what they chased that morning. So, as I sat on the hill by myself watching Doc fly around, I was surrounded by friends of many years. It was a great summer for me and one that I'll remember for quite some time.

The point is, there's no reason for us to be solitary falconers. Get involved with NAFA or your local club, get to know other falconers around you and in different states, and try

something new. You're never too old to get excited about falconry.


As I stated in my last report, the NAFA board continues to work toward making falconry better, and the last couple of months have been no different. The NAFA Sponsorship Policy proposal that I drafted sets out a process for requesting and obtaining NAFA sponsorship of falconry-related events. The purpose of the policy is to ensure the NAFA board is consistent on how it reviews sponsorship requests, the event is in line with the mission statement of NAFA, and funds are budgeted for sponsorship. I presented the proposal at the July board meeting and it was unanimously approved by the Board. A few other items of note:

The eagle committee continues their hard work to gain access to eagles. It's a slow process and has had its setbacks and disappointments, but the group continues to push forward.

Peregrine take is always a discussion point, and NAFA continues to push toward normalization.

Nick Bickford, Chairman of the Conservation Committee, sent out a survey concerning falconry and the game we hunt. Please take the time to complete the survey and let your experiences be heard. [https://unk.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_egQRUdFrhSbDvA9](https://unk.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_egQRUdFrhSbDvA9)

Have you heard about the Falconry Fund? It's a 501(c)3 formed by NAFA a couple of years ago to support falconry and provide falconers with a tax deduction based on their donation. What better way to support falconry in the future? If every member of NAFA donated \$10 a year for the next five years, the fund would have close to \$250,000. A little bit goes a long way. Please consider donating this year.

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact me at (405) 334-9534. See you at the NAFA meet in Lubbock! 



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# A COUPLE OF TIDBITS




## Falconry is legal again in Denmark!

The 50-year ban came to an end after five decades of relentless fighting. One by one, the emotional – and largely imaginary – arguments against this traditional way of hunting were shot down, and in the end, the anti-hunting campaigners lost.

In 1967, falconry – the ancient art of hunting with trained raptors – was banned in Denmark due to pressure from bird-watching organizations. On Saturday, the 1st of September 2018, trained falcons and hawks will once again fly from the gauntlets of Danish falconers to hunt small game in Denmark.

This is great news for all of us – CONGRATULATIONS to our friends of Dansk Falkejagt Klub! The following

was posted by Rasmus Nielsen on the NAFA Facebook page:


*“The new order is finally here. A long haul finally paid off. Falconry is legal after 50 years’ absence in Denmark. From September 1st, 2018, we can use all birds of prey to hunt partridge, pheasants, ducks, wading birds, crows and magpie, pigeons, rabbits and hares. What an amazing accomplishment for Danish falconers and a great achievement for our UNESCO heritage.”* 

### RAPTOR WILD-TAKE FOR FALCONRY FINALLY LEGAL IN QUÉBEC (CANADA)

After a 35-year long battle, sustainable raptor wild-take for falconry is finally legal in Québec (Canada).

In fact, the province of Québec remained virtually the last place in North America where falconry was permitted without wild-take. Falconry was legalized in Québec in 2008 but unfortunately deprived of this fundamental component of our living human heritage.

At last, the arrival of raptor wild-take will strongly contribute to the authentic emancipation of falconry in the province.

The Québec Falconry Association (AFQ), advocate of the precious “apprentice-mentor” relationship, would like to warmly thank IAF, NAFA, Ontario Hawking Club, and Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs for their exceptional and strong support of our determined efforts, especially in the last three years of this lengthy procedure! 





# We Were Falconers

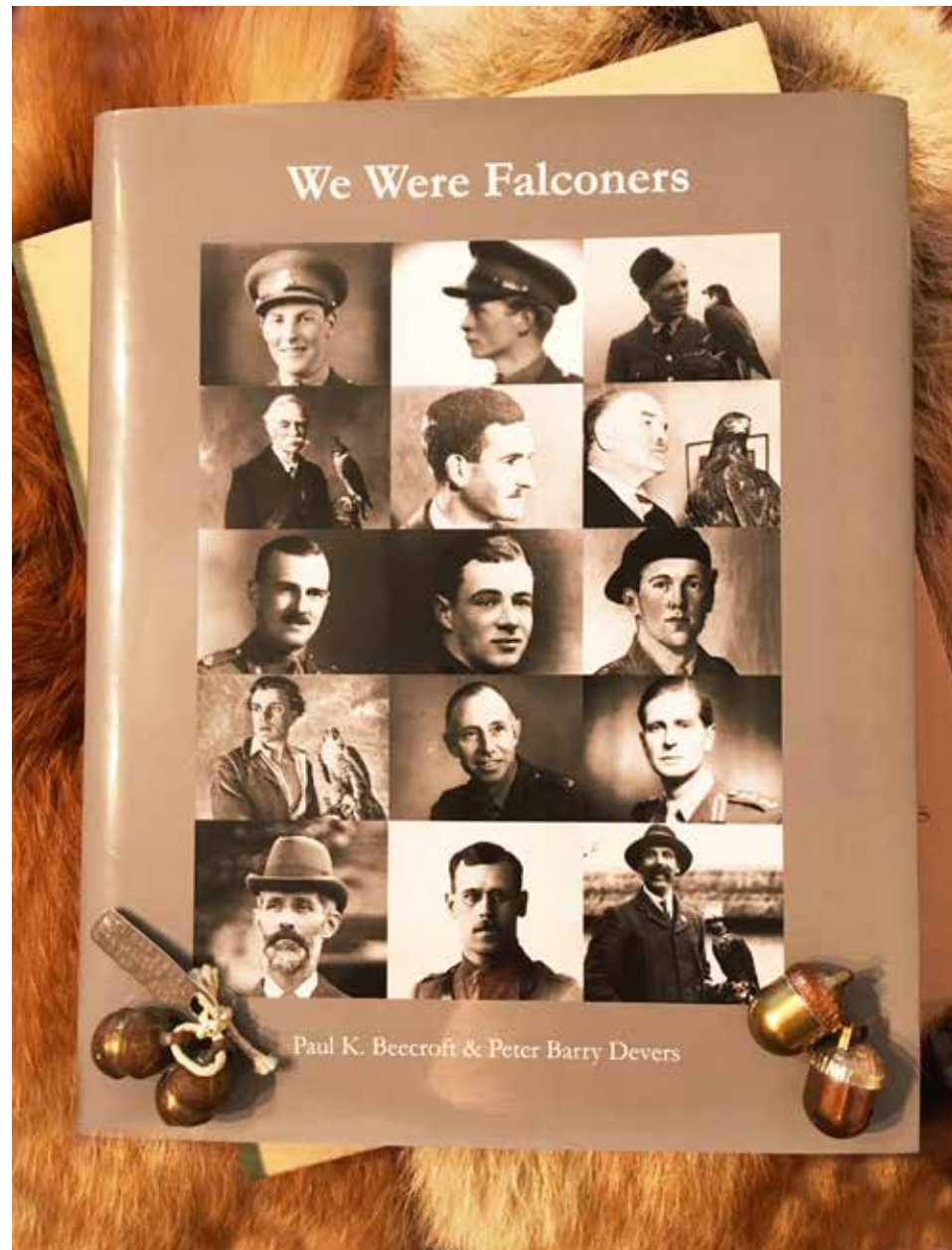
A BOOK REVIEW BY: SCOTT MCNEFF

PHOTOS BY: SCOTT MCNEFF

*"We falconers are kin with those who have gone before us, and they should be welcomed always in our company if only in spirit."*

Want to contribute to protecting the history of falconry and simultaneously receive a really nicely-bound 250-page book that's richly illustrated and absolutely fascinating to read? The British Archives are now offering a book that more than fits the bill. For a book that's ostensibly about "history" – a seemingly ostracized subject in the minds of many – I was pleasantly surprised by how strongly the short chapters held my interest. I only made it to page 12 before I began reading sections of it aloud to my wife. Amazingly enough, she didn't even ask me to knock it off. That fact alone is possibly all the review needed, but allow me to elaborate a bit if you will.

The co-authors invested huge amounts of time in the creation of this book, both in research hours and direct correspondence with families and friends of the 15 deceased falconers brought to life on the

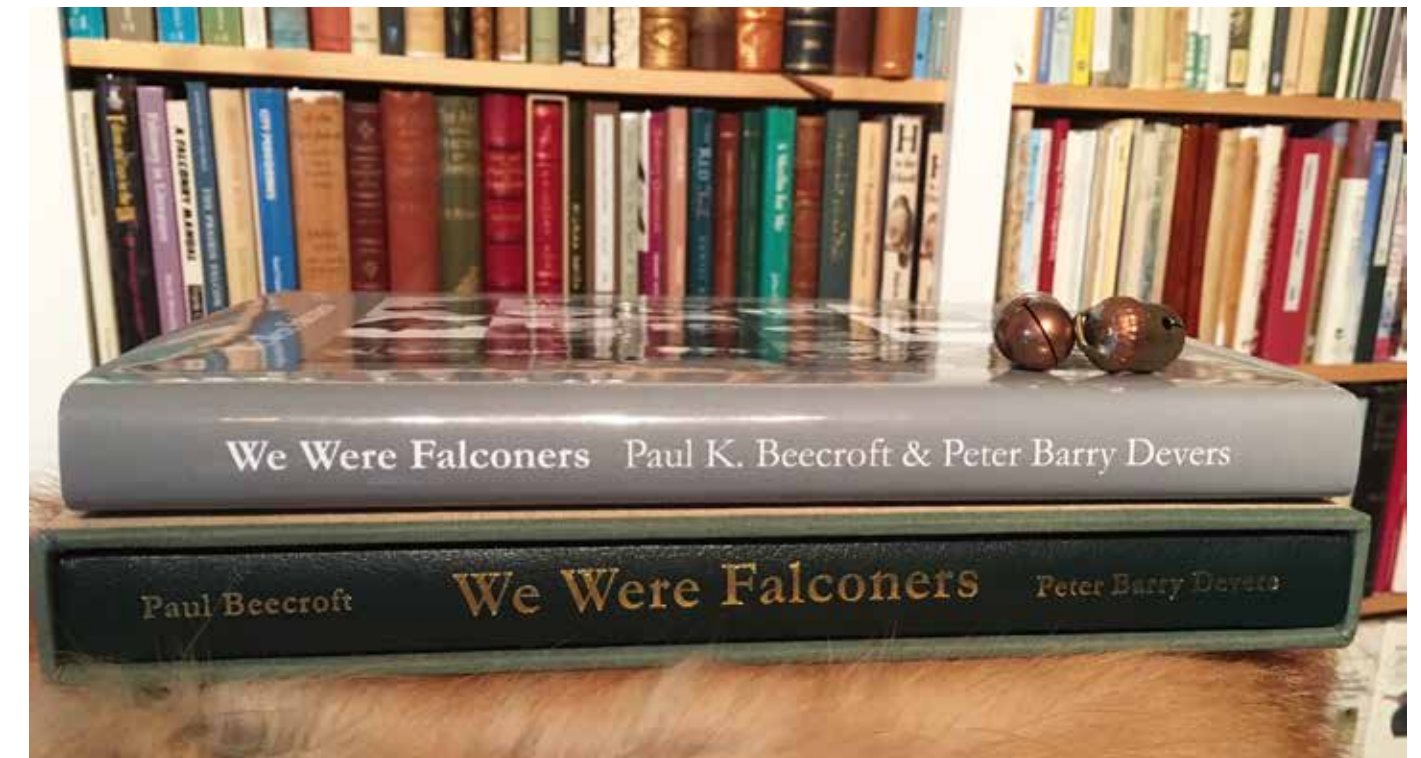


pages of *We Were Falconers*. Many of the late 19th and early 20th century figures were not particularly well-known to the annals of our history until now, and all of them are fascinating characters for various reasons. It's pleasurable to note the majority of them were engaged in all sorts of country pursuits, just as many of us are, and it makes it easier to feel a bond or rapport with them because of it.

Falconry is the shared pursuit that ties us all together, but there is so much more to our lives outside of this art we all pursue. It's those secondary pursuits that often interest me the most when getting to know fellow falconers. In this book, you'll read about falconers who died young in World War II. You'll discover how and where bird-based abatement got its start. You'll learn about the bronze sculpture of a falconer in Manhattan's Central Park. You'll find

*names are known to all. There have been murderers and criminals whose names are known to some. There have also been great-hearted individuals whose boisterous and welcoming personalities have popularized the ancient art, attracting to it younger men and women who carry it forward another generation."*

For a book that's packed with so many old black and white photographs, the co-authors have done a simply



out about a falconer who owned a brewery, and how falconry is intertwined with the James Bond novels. Want to know which falconer from the past is responsible for pioneering tree-top hides to capture footage of birds? Want to read about a blind falconer who was known to drive the hawking vehicle while being guided by the instructions and laughter of his best hawking buddy? Did you know that one of our own was a movie star who worked with the likes of Marilyn Monroe? Who was the manager of a diamond mine? Who was injured parachuting into Burma and won a military cross? Who won the Rhodesian Gun Dog Trials with a pointer? All of these tales and so many more have been laid out for us by expert archivists Mr. Beecroft and Mr. Devers. A quotation from the book:

*"The sport of falconry is rich in its collection of spirited characters who have taken up the art for a brief period or a lifetime. There have been illustrious sportsmen whose*

outstanding job of interjecting the text with so much color. If you've had enough of the "how-to" falconry manuals, I highly recommend spending some time with *We Were Falconers*. I wouldn't be surprised if your copy of this book jumps right to the top of the pile at your bedside table.

Finally, as a parting thought: this book is simply begging for a sequel. Who among you will take on the task of authoring "*We Were Falconers, Too*"? Upon turning the last page of this unique book, I wouldn't be surprised if you were inspired to do such a thing.

## We Were Falconers

BY PAUL K. BEECROFT AND PETER BARRY DEVERS,  
PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH ARCHIVES OF FALCONRY  
IN 2018

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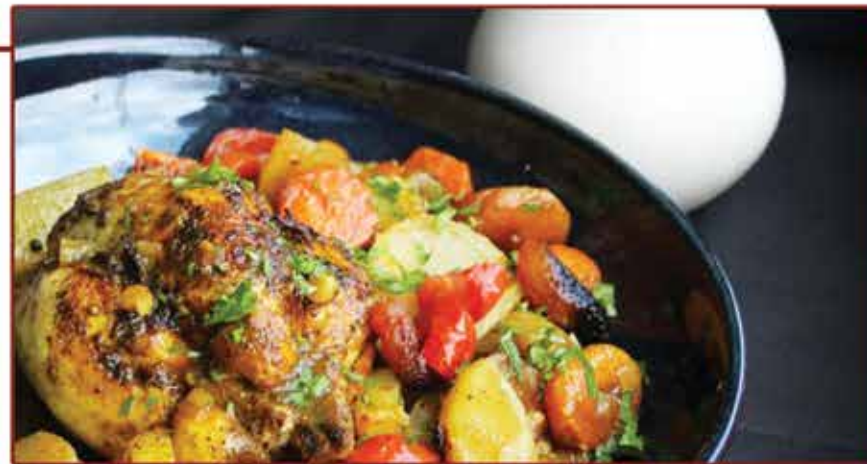


# TALONS *to the Table*

from the

## Savory Quail Tagine

Quail cooked in savory spices with vegetables



Prep Time: 1h 30 m - 2 servings - 493 cal

### Ingredients

- 1 whole quail
- 2 tablespoons ras el hanout
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, or more as needed
- 3 ounces carrots, cut into 1-inch rounds
- 1 ounce leeks, cut into 1/2-inch rounds
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and crushed
- 10 dried apricots 8 ounces potatoes, cut into 1-inch slices
- 5 cherry tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon loomi aswad (dried black lime seasoning)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

*Quail cooked in savory spices with vegetables in a tagine for a change from the usual. The spice goes nicely with a cold glass of fresh milk. If you do not own a tagine, a Dutch oven will work perfectly well.*

1) Rub the ras el hanout onto the entire surface of the quail including beneath the wings and legs. Use all the seasoning. Allow to rest at room temperature for 30 minutes.

2) Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Remove the middle rack(s) and place the lower rack on its lowest position.

3) Place a diffuser over stove burner so base of tagine is not in direct contact with it. Place the tagine base on the diffuser and heat over medium heat; add the oil. When oil is hot, add the carrots and leeks. Saute until leeks are tender, about 5 minutes. Separate the leeks into single rounds using a wooden spoon. Push the vegetables to the sides of the tagine and add the quail and garlic. Cook the quail on all sides until nicely browned, about 10 minutes. You may need to add a bit of oil occasionally, depending on the bird's fat content. Remove tagine from heat.

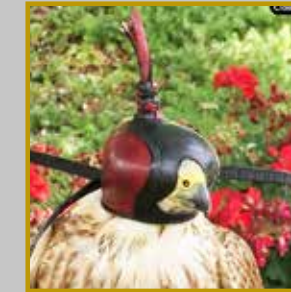
4) Arrange apricots, potatoes, and tomatoes around the edges, leaving the quail uncovered. Sprinkle all ingredients with the loomi aswad.

5) Cover the tagine place in preheated oven. Roast until the internal temperature of the quail has reached 150 degrees F, 35 to 40 minutes.

6) Uncover the tagine and, if desired, brown quail under the broiler 2 to 3 minutes.

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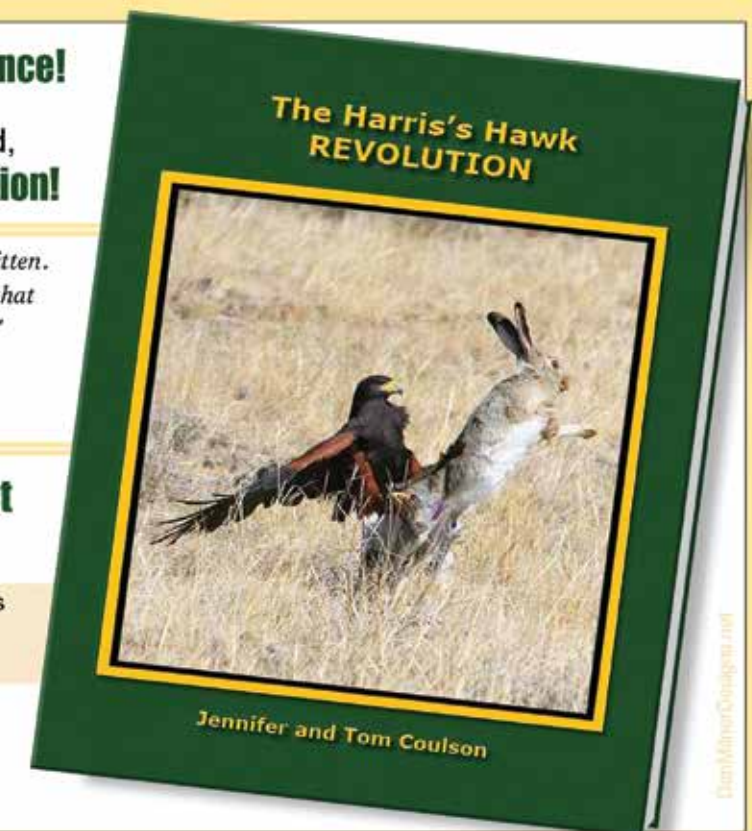
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BY: UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

A TWO YEAR PROJECT TO REPEAT A FAMOUS BIRD SURVEY BY DRIVING OVER 20,000KM IN A 4X4 ACROSS BOTSWANA HAS CONFIRMED RESEARCHERS' FEARS:

## MANY BIRDS OF PREY ARE FAST DISAPPEARING FROM ONE OF AFRICA'S LAST GREAT WILDERNESS AREAS.

Reported sightings of iconic species of eagle and vulture declined by as much as 80% compared with the previous survey, while some migrant species recorded last time have vanished, according to the study published this week in the international scientific journal *Biological Conservation*.

The data is based on a return trip to a network of roads criss-crossing most of Northern Botswana, an area first surveyed over twenty years ago by a former Wildlife Biologist with the Department of Wild-

life and National Parks Botswana, Dr Marc Herremans. Researchers retraced Herremans's route across gravel and tar roads in a similar vehicle to the one he used and driving at the same speeds. They spotted birds with the naked eye, only using binoculars to positively identify bird species -- as per the original survey. The resurvey focussed on 29 raptor species and compared their encounter rate with Herremans's original records. "The main motivation for doing the work was to explore whether vultures and other raptor numbers had declined in Botswana

like they have in many other areas of Africa" says Associate Professor Arjun Amar from the Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology at the University of Cape Town which conducted the study in collaboration with conservation NGO Raptors Botswana.

Amar, who supervised the research, says the sharp decline in sightings is unexpected: "Although declines in raptor populations have been seen elsewhere in Africa, particularly across West Africa, we were not expecting

Botswana which has a relatively low human population size and where nearly 40% of the land is under some form of protection" Species declines were detected for 14 out of 29 species monitored. Eleven of these species declined by over half in the last 20 years.

Some of the species showing the greatest declines are the White-headed and Lappet Faced vultures, African Hawk Eagle, Secretary Bird, Bateleur Eagle, and Red-necked Falcon.

Only three species showed an increase in their abundance: the Brown and Black Chested Snake-eagles and the Tawny Eagle.

The study does not pinpoint the cause of the declines. However, conservationists say vultures in particular are vulnerable to poisoning by poachers for whom the birds' habit of circling carrion is a threat -- because it might draw attention of game rangers inside protected areas.

Another recent study found a third of all vultures caught and tested in a separate Botswana study showed elevated levels of lead in their blood mostly likely due to ingesting bullet-contaminated flesh.

Beckie Garbett, a PhD student who led the latest road transect study, says: "We found declines occurring across species with varying diet and habitat use, which make it hard to pinpoint the main drivers of decline."

"Climate change is one candidate for these declines, but urgent research is needed to better understand the driv-




ers of these declines," Garbett says.

The roadtrip study also found significant declines of many species inside protected areas. In other words the main factors driving species decline transcend habit conservation status. "Our study shows that drivers of decline are apparently indiscriminate, inexplicit and are likely acting jointly, making defining appropriate conservation measures challenging," the authors said in their study summation.

The study findings also highlight the importance of historical data in countries where scarce funding resources result in limited species monitoring. The sharp declines contained in the latest survey would not have been observed without reference to Herremans's original survey, which actually covered a much wider area -- about 50 000km of road. The repeat study concentrated only on the northern transects. Researchers would now like to repeat the remaining routes in the South of the country to explore whether these trends in the north represent the overall trends for the species in the country.

Herremans said he was pleased that his data had proved valuable "and that they contribute to our knowledge of long-term changes in bird populations."

"It is sad though to learn that even in this country with so much of the land devoted to conservation, biodiversity is in steep decline," Herremans said. He said the survey had helped combat fatigue during his epic journey: "It helped us to stay focused (and awake!) during our extensive travels through the country."

Botswana, with a population of only 2.3-million, is considered one of the most scenic countries in the world due to the combination of the Kalahari desert, pristine bushveld, and the world famous Okavango Swamps. However surveying the terrain is not without its challenges; the research team averaged speeds of only 20kmp/h for sand and gravel roads. Individual transect routes ranged from 65km to 585km due to the vast distances involved. In addition distances between the first and second surveys varied slightly due to changes in road networks over time and due to interpretation of original transect route descriptions (no GPS coordinates were available 20 years ago during the original surveys), the study says. 



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"Peregrine w/ Red Grouse over White Grass"  
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"Gyr head Study"  
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by: J. WILDE



"White Gyr"  
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# MICHIGAN HAWKING CLUB

by: Christopher Martello  
MHC Secretary

CLUB UPDATE

Summer has finally reached a close and the hunting season begins anew. Many falconers and falconry raptors have been waiting for cooler days, autumn colors, and the ability to get back out into the field to do what they love. With warmer weather at the start, it's been a challenge to get falconry raptors back into the hunting groove for bunnies and squirrels.

Trapping season will have been well underway by the time of this printing. I know many of the new apprentices have spent long hours with their sponsors to trap the perfect new hunting partner. I'm excited to hear all the trapping stories and watch the progress as the apprentice class begin training their new hawks for the field. Many members of this year's class of freshman apprentices attended the Michigan Hawking Club Apprentice Workshop held annually in June and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, as well as additional details and information presented by many of our seasoned club members. This event could not take place without all the volunteers from the Michigan Hawking Club.

This fall's educational events were well-attended in Michigan. The raptor migration is documented and raptor counts are meticulously kept by a group of volunteers from the Detroit River Hawk Watch organization. "Hawkfest" is held annually at the Lake Erie Metropark in Brownstown, Michigan to observe the great migration of raptors from northern Canada as they fly south through the U.S. The U.S.-Canada border at the Detroit River is a natural hawk migration route through the Great Lakes, where broad-winged hawks can be observed in the tens of thousands on peak migration days. Many other species of

raptors are also documented throughout the fall migration. The participation of the Michigan Hawking Club at this event provides additional raptor education programs for visitors at the main nature center.

"Cranefest" is another bird migration event that focuses on the migration of sandhill cranes in Michigan. Over the past decade, sandhill cranes have made a comeback and the Sandhill Crane & Art Festival, sponsored by the Michigan Audubon Society, celebrates these very large birds. The Michigan Hawking Club's participation provides a unique opportunity for attendees to



THE MICHIGAN HAWKING CLUB TENT AT CRANEFEST 2018.  
PHOTO BY CHRIS WYSOCKI

get close and personal with raptors as part of the festivities. Thank you to all of our attendees and volunteers for these events, which would not be possible without their experience and expert knowledge.

Look for the Michigan Hawking Club field meet on February 2, 2019. More information is available on our club website at:  
<http://www.michiganhawkingclub.org>

Yours in Falconry,  
Christopher Martello



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## MOUNTAIN DIRECTOR JENNI BUCKLEY

Mountain\_Director@n-a-f-a.com

MOUNTAIN


It's finally the hunting season! I know I can speak for most, if not all, that the best time of year has finally arrived. I started in early September and I'm very pleased with how my season is going so far. My little male Harris's hawk even recently caught a black-tailed jackrabbit!

At the NAFA teleconference board meeting back in July, I invited Chris Parish, Director of Global Conservation for The Peregrine Fund, to introduce us to the North American Non-Lead Partnership. The scope of this organization is to inform hunters about ecological impacts on wildlife when using lead ammunition, and to encourage hunters to voluntarily switch to using non-lead alternatives. Chris plans to attend the Lubbock field meet in December for anyone who's interested in learning more about this important organization.

The election for mountain director ended in August, and while I wasn't voted to continue on as mountain director, I'm very pleased that Roger Tucker (Colorado) will be serving as

the new mountain director for the next term. Roger has served on the Board for the Colorado Hawking Club for many years, and he's hardworking, knowledgeable, and passionate about falconry. Thank you to Michelle Losee for running for this position as well. It's wonderful that so many people are stepping up to serve NAFA and its membership.

If you're looking for a field meet to attend this winter, Arizona is holding theirs January 24-27, 2019, and Colorado's is January 18-20, 2019. If I can make my schedule work with it, I'm planning to attend FEMEHA's Championship of Champions (Sky Trials) in Mexico on February 1-3, 2019. I attended this event last year and I highly recommend it.

NAFA's leadership has its next board meeting at the field meet in December. I'm very excited to see everyone in Lubbock, and I hope you all have a great season! 

*The following page has some images sent in from the mountain directorate - Cheers!*



DARRYL BARNES - IDAHO



JENNIFER CAMPBELL-SMITH - COLORADO



MISSY WARDLE - UTAH



MARK HURD - WYOMING



JAMAICA SMITH - ARIZONA



KAREN GREEN - COLORADO



SHANTELL DAHLBERG - ARIZONA



MIKE SAYAMONTY - NEW MEXICO

## LOOKING FOR SIGNED 'DUCK STAMPS' FROM FALCONERS!



I'm making a collection of falconry-themed stamps and other philatelic materials to be donated to the Archives of Falconry. One category of stamps I would like to collect more of is Federal / State Waterfowl Stamps ("Duck Stamps") that are signed by falconers. If you have saved any of your signed Duck Stamps and are willing to donate them to become a part of falconry history, I would be happy to add them to the collection. If you wish to sell them---we can talk!

**M. Alan Jenkins, NAFA member since 1962 • alanjenkins@ou.edu • (541) 895-2254 (Pacific Time Zone!)  
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**SOUTHEASTERN DIRECTOR**  
**RICHARD SHORES**  
 Southeastern\_Director@n-a-f-a.com

SOUTHEAST

A tale of two Bills. Bill Harry is a member of the Virginia Falconers Association, and Bill Davis is a member of the North Carolina Falconers Association. As founding members of their local falconry clubs, both have been practicing the art of falconry for many more years than most. Bill Harry has been flying birds since 1950 with 68 years of experience, and Bill Davis has been flying birds since 1986 with 33 years of experience. Bill Davis was 14




BILL HARRY & VAPA / BILL DAVIS AND HIS RED-TAIL

years old, hunting rabbits in West Virginia with Beagles, when someone with him told him about training a hawk to hunt rabbits. It would be many years later, but he never forgot that conversation. When the time came, he found a falconry book and began to read. Bill Harry was a long-winger right from the start and today flies a 14-year-old peregrine named "VAPA." Of course, the name has a back story – the bird took off and flew from VA to PA! Bill Davis had flown a collection of birds throughout the years, but he always returned to the red-tail hawk and today flies an RT intermewed three years. Both Bills have stories to tell that could only belong to passionate falconers. Bill Harry told me his falcon had a duck in a hot tail chase,

flying straight at him, when he instinctively turned around and the duck hit him on the backside! South Carolina falconry season opens earlier than the North Carolina season, and the North Carolina season stays open longer than the South Carolina season. Bill Davis, being a resident of North Carolina, can lay claim to being the first falconer in North Carolina to put a squirrel in the bag before the North Carolina season opened – legally! These long-time falconers have a significant impact on future generations of falconry. Bill Davis has sponsored nearly 40 apprentices. There are, of course, many long-time falconers supporting their local falconry clubs. I, for one, am very appreciative of their dedication and support of falconry today – thank you.

Joan Marie, member of the Alabama Hawking Association, brought it to my attention that some changes needed to be made to the NAFA code of ethics. As your southeast director, I'm very interested in representing your membership to the NAFA Board of Directors. As one can expect, there are procedures to follow, but it begins with an agenda item being added to the NAFA Board of Directors meeting. Typically, a decision can be made during the meeting to act on the agenda item or continue it for further discussion. A proposal was prepared and submitted to the Board of Directors for consideration, and the outcome was there will be some changes made to the NAFA code of ethics. I want to thank Joan for bringing this to my attention and for her ownership of NAFA. NAFA is here to support its membership. If there's ever a concern, please bring it to my attention.

I'm looking forward to our NAFA meet in December, and as always, please find time to search me out and introduce yourself. 



THE FALCON IS LAUNCHED. SHE PUMPS FOR THE HORIZON. BUT, SHE DOESN'T MAKE HER NORMAL TURN? SHE SEES SOMETHING. IN NO TIME, SHE IS OUT OF SIGHT!



HOWEVER, WITH MARSHALL'S GPS 4.0, THE FALCONER IS CALM AS HE CHECKS THE APP. AHH, YES. IT SHOWS SHE'S JUST TURNED AND IS COMING BACK - READS "904" FEET AND CLIMBING. THIS SHOULD BE GOOD...



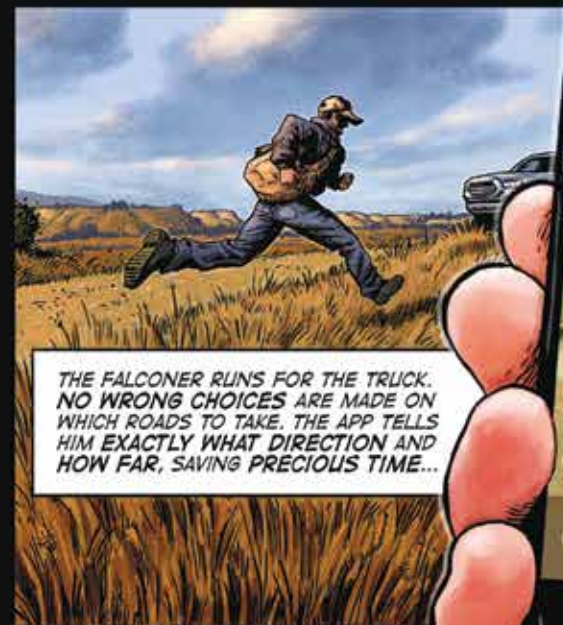
SHE'S 1239 FEET HIGH. HE MAKES HIS WAY TO THE POND, LOOKS UP, BUT DOESN'T SPOT HER? A QUICK LOOK AT THE APP SAYS SHE'S IN PERFECT POSITION. TIME TO FLUSH. DOWN SHE COMES!

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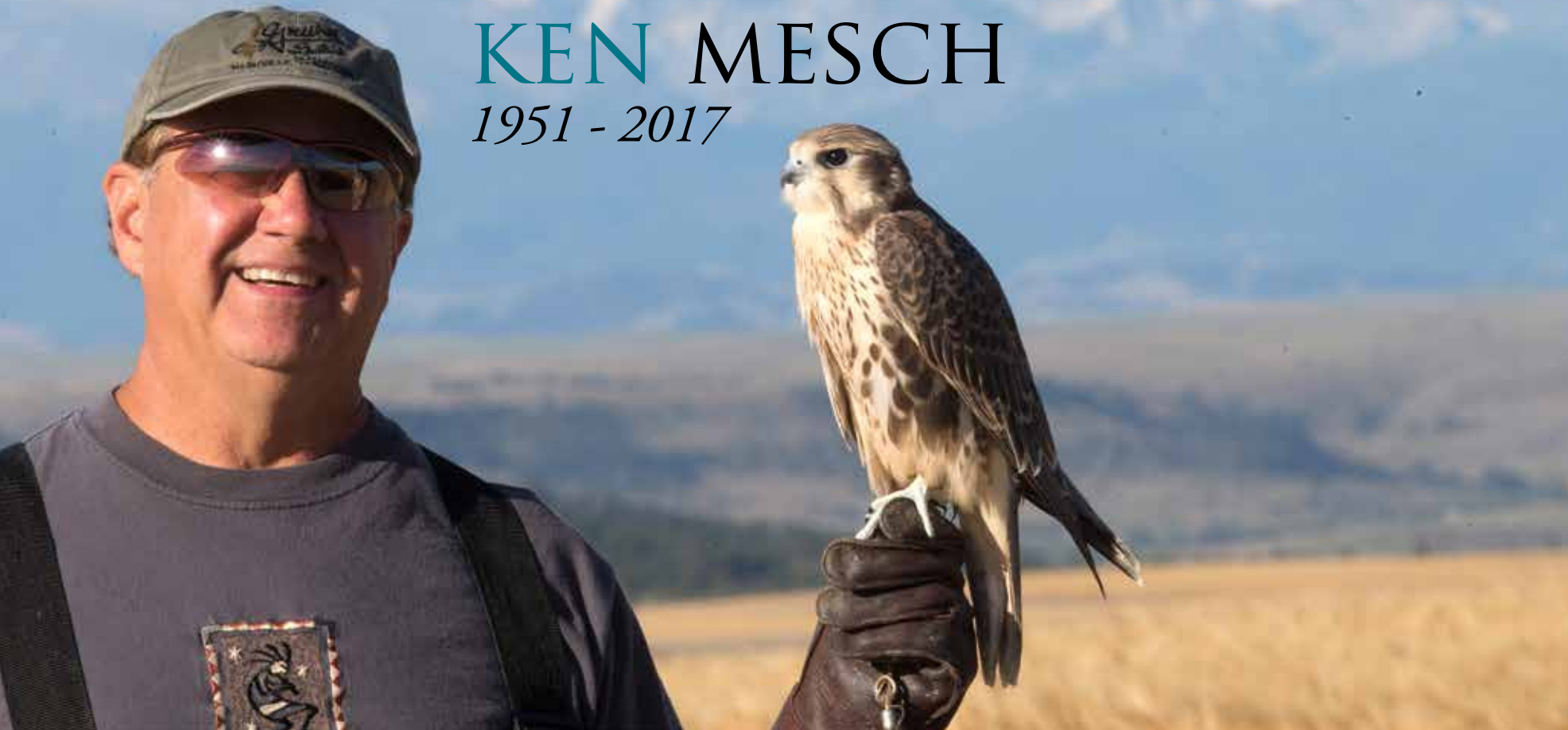
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## A BELATED TRIBUTE TO OUR LATE FRIEND

# KEN MESCH

1951 - 2017



I honestly don't remember exactly when I first met Ken. I'm pretty sure it must have been while I was still in college, when Chris Curts was my sponsor. He and Ken were best friends for over 40 years and I'm sure our paths crossed in the 80s, either in Denver or Longmont, where Chris lived at the time.

What I do remember, were the fabulous, fun parties at his house off Monaco Boulevard in Denver. I know I met several CHC members for the first time at his place, either during a party or at one of the many, many meetings that he generously hosted. I've never met anyone, before or since, who seemed to enjoy having folks in his house, more than Ken. There was always music playing, of course, and more often than not, Ken was the one playing it.

Perhaps the only time he looked as happy as he did while hawking, was when he had a guitar in his hand. He had a bright, tenor voice, and it seemed to me that when he sang a country song, it poured out of his very heart and soul. The first time I ever heard

him play in public, was at the Little Bear up in Evergreen. He sang an older country song by Hal Ketchum; fast, danceable, with searing lyrics. I'd never heard it before and afterwards Ken told me the name of it. I fell in love with that song and nearly 20 years later, Ken sang it just for me, at the opening night of the 2013 NAFA meet in Alamosa. That's the kind of friend he was. I loved listening to him sing and play; it's one of the things I will miss most about him.

Ken was very good at staying in touch, and made sure that those he loved and cared about, always knew how he felt about them. He jumped with both feet into the ocean of social media, because it helped him stay close to his numerous friends around the country. He would often text me out of the blue, sending a photo of where he was, or what he was doing, just to check in...and he did the same thing with many of his friends.

He was devoted to falconry, his family and friends, and I consider myself extremely fortunate to have had him in my life.

- Anne Price

## *"When I die, don't mourn... Celebrate my life."*

I met Ken in North Pole, Alaska in the early 1980's; our friendship continued with my return to Colorado and eventual move to Wyoming. I am grateful to have had Ken in my life for 30 years. Ken always saw the good side of people and his loyalty to the people he loved was strong.

His laughter and passion for life was infectious. He was nomadic in his travels, which caused me to deem him, "Where's Waldo". Ken was falconry, as well as a musician; he never left his guitar behind. His hawking vehicle had a clear list of priorities: falcon, dog, guitar, M&M's and Mountain Dew. Ken also enjoyed seeking out the local pawn shops looking for the next "great deal" on a Gibson guitar.

I will miss his daily texts on his whereabouts and timelines, the family photos of his daughters and grandchildren whom he loved deeply, as well as his usual sign off: "I love you Kristie Brown."

During my last visit to his Columbus, Montana home, we engaged in a conversation about our lives and mortality. He told me, "Kristie, I have had a wonderful, fulfilling life. When I die, don't mourn... celebrate my life."

This is what I have learned from our friendship: Find your passion and live it, give without expectation of return, and tell your family and friends how much you love them.

- Kristie Brown

I met Ken in 1975 at the NAFA Meet in Yankton, South Dakota. My father took my twin sister and me to our first NAFA Meet that year. We met Ken at the weathering yard and began a lifelong friendship. He told me many times that I was family, and he was always there for me. My sister and I traveled here for a visit with Ken, when we were 16 years old. He took us down to a Castle Rock, where we made our first rappel into a prairie falcon eyrie. We didn't even tell Dad about this until many years later, when the pictures resurfaced!

Later, when I graduated from college, my husband and I decided to move to Colorado. Ken invited me to come live with him, his wife Chris and his daughters Melanie and Becky while my husband was at ROTC officer basic training. Ken even helped me get my first job in Colorado. He provided huge support during the key points in my life when I needed it the most.

I am sure that I would not be where I am today, without his influence and support. He just did these kinds of helpful, generous things for so many people. Ken had a special

way of including everyone and had a heart of gold. He was fun-loving, generous, and kind. He influences me every day still, as his kind soul whispers words of encouragement. He was our cheerleader...and he is still cheering us on with quiet words. I love you Ken.

- Joe'l Robinson Lambe





Ken and I worked together in the public health field for 15 years. He began his career working out of the Boulder County Health Department as an Air Pollution Control Officer. He later moved to the Colorado Department of Health and Environmental Health where he served the citizens of Colorado for over 20 years in several key positions. He was Assistant to the State Veterinarian in Zoonosis Control where he ran the Pet Shop Inspection Program, and where he also became well-versed in many other aspects of animal-related disease control. He worked for several years as a special project assistant to the Assistant Director of the Health Department. He also served as the Legislative Liaison for the Health Department to the State Legislature. Additionally, Ken served as interim Director of Emergency Medical Services, after which he became the Director of the Consumer Protection Division. Later on, he was appointed the Director of the Information Center.

When he retired from the Health Department, he moved to Montana where he continued his efforts to protect people. He served as the Emergency Response Coordinator for Stillwater County and later for the entire state of Montana, working from Billings. Ken's need to be constantly learning and contributing was a great example to his colleagues. He always left things in better condition when he departed, than they were when he arrived. He was perennially upbeat and optimistic, and I and the public health community will miss him greatly. *-Russ Rickard, with contributions from Pam Shillam*

I first met Ken in 1975 when I moved to Colorado. In those days we flew mostly red-tails and Harris' hawks so we spent many hours hawking by the Denver airport and nearby Rocky Mountain Arsenal. I think we spent more time in the Village Inn eating breakfast and lunch than we did hawking, but many jackrabbits and cottontails were caught in the adjacent fields. We both participated in the almost-monthly Colorado Hawking Club mini-meets and our favorite was always the October trip to Alamosa to hawk white-tailed jackrabbits. Ken was a CHC officer and in 1976 the CHC was asked to co-host the 1977 NAFA Field Meet in Alamosa. Ken's reply was "sure, if it will be non-competitive", which was a radical



TOP: KEN AND JOE'L HAWKING, LEFT: KEN AND ANNE IN SANTA FE, RIGHT: KEN AND KRISTIE 2002, BELOW: CHRIS, KEN AND JOHN IN 2014.



departure from the prevailing attitudes of the time. He wanted the meets to be more social, with more time spent discussing falconry issues rather than just hunting. His suggested change continues today: NAFA meets are still non-competitive. He later served as a NAFA Meet chairman and he began implementing family activities at meets, a feature which also continues today.

Ken believed that anyone should be able to fly any hawk or falcon that they wanted to, provided they met the state and federal standards to do so. The decision as to who got to fly what should not reside with other falconers based on friendship or their attitudes towards any given falconer. As a result, Ken was an active supporter of all captive breeding efforts, and was one of the early falconers to legally purchase falcons from Canada and

import them into the U.S. His efforts, along with others, eventually resulted in all falconers being able to obtain any hawk or falcon they desired and could afford to purchase.

Ken also served as NAFA Mountain Director. Always a diplomat, but often having strong opinions of his own that he was willing to press forward, Ken was able to gather enough support from other falconers to make significant changes in NAFA, and the state and Federal attitudes and policies regarding falconers. The most recent example of these changes was the clarification of the Federal policy regarding the private ownership of both captive and wild-caught hawks and falcons. The common belief of many falconers was that ownership of our birds rested with the Federal government. However, a small but growing group of falconers began to voice a radically different opinion that we owned our birds. Since falconry enjoyed an accepted status among wildlife officials, few falconers were willing to risk upsetting the "status quo". But after years of discussion NAFA decided to press forward with legal representation to finally obtain an ownership status

determination in court. This required a substantial commitment that few were willing to make, either personally or organizationally. Despite significant opposition, Ken was able to cobble together enough NAFA Director votes to pass a resolution instructing NAFA to make a \$5,000 contribution toward the \$25,000 legal representation goal. The result was a legal opinion favorable to all falconers: we actually own our hawks and falcons, not the government.

Ken also enthusiastically encouraged many apprentice programs and often had several apprentices at any given time. He was always available to them for trapping, training and counsel should they desire it. As a result, he has many close friends all over the country and many still regard him as their "best falconry friend".

Ken will be missed for his diplomacy, friendship and leadership. He has made a lasting contribution to the entire falconry community and to each of us individually. He will be remembered! *John R. Swift*



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# APRIL

NAFA'S BELOVED TREASURER

# DAVENPORT-RICE



April and her rescue hunting partner Benny

## My Falconry Journey

As a girl growing up on Long Island, New York, I didn't see or know of any raptors. Yes, they were probably all around me at the time, but

between sports, school, part-time job, boys, etc., my outdoor time was limited. But I did love birds. We had robins, seagulls, starlings, and cardinals, but the only

**April is the person who keeps NAFA in check.** I've had the pleasure of working with her for over 2-1/2 years now, creating and producing NAFA's publications, and April is on the front line with me each and every issue. She's the person who pays all of NAFA's bills and sends out our invoices, and she's integral to the success of this organization.

Not only does April handle all of our finances, she also works full time and yet still finds time to be

an excellent representative of our sport, teaching classes about falconry to those interested and flying her own birds like a good falconer should. It's easy to say, "I don't know what we would do without her," but in this case, it's absolutely true! Thank You, April, for all you do for us!

owl I knew of was on the Wise potato chip bag, and the only other large bird I knew of – the bald eagle – was our national symbol. It lived out in the middle of the country somewhere. I had no knowledge of raptors or birds of prey. My first bird was a pretty blue parakeet named Tootsie,

which was a present for having my tonsils out when I was about six years old. My mom was deathly afraid that it would stick in her hair if it got loose, so she would put it out on the porch in the cage so I could clean it. One day, my little brother, Ken, decided to open the cage door and poor





Tootsie flew away. No more birds after that; we stuck to dogs and hamsters. I really missed Tootsie, so I promised myself I would get another bird one day when I was older – a lot older.

In 1995, I moved from Long Island to Charlotte, North Carolina, with my two parrots – a blue and gold macaw and a gold-capped conure (they're 25 and 30 years old now). A step-up from parakeets, these parrots are for life, but I guess the plan for me was for some very different kinds of birds?

One day, I wanted to become more familiar with the area I lived in. While driving around near Huntersville, I happened to see a small sign that read Carolina Raptor Center – Living Museum (CRC). I thought, "Oh boy – animals and maybe some birds!" and went in. I was mesmerized. There were these BIG birds in display cages along the nature trail, and a volunteer had one of the bigger birds on his arm in the "weathering area." That day, I learned all about real owls, hawks, falcons, vultures, and eagles. I was hooked and became a volunteer. From that day on, I worked my way up the ladder, handling and caring for little screech owls on up to bald and golden eagles. I became a master level handler and trainer of the two non-releasable golden eagles.

My passion grew for the preservation of these new-to-me creatures, in between work and work. I worked full time for Duke Energy, and I traveled with the CRC education van to local schools and organizations. I set the birds out on perches for all to see up close and personal. I taught the public about the importance of raptors in our environment, while soliciting donations and memberships to continue CRC's mission for the conservation of birds of prey.

One day behind the CRC rehabilitation building, while I was holding a non-releasable hawk and waiting to do her health check, I met Cynthia and Larry Dickerson. I was so happy to meet bonified falconers! Soon after meeting them, I attended the North Carolina Falconers Guild workshop and was later invited to go to their field meets where they hunted with their hawks and falcons. WOW! A hawk snatching a squirrel off a tree and a falcon taking a pitch on a duck! I could have



APRIL'S CURRENT RED-TAIL RIO AND HIS FIRST SQUIRREL  
BELOW HER "HAWK-ON!" LICENSE PLATE



been dreaming. I always brought along one or two non-releasable falcons or hawks from CRC to the field meets for folks to see. I still remember a comment made jokingly to me about "Why don't you get your falconer's license so you can have a real bird that can fly!" All in due time. I knew my work-life schedule wouldn't allow me to practice falconry yet. So, when it did, I first needed a sponsor. I was very, very fortunate to have Cynthia Dickerson as my sponsor. I lost sleep over how I was going to ask her,



APRIL AND RIO OUT HUNTING SQUIRRELS

and if she said "no," then what? She's a wonderful lady and friend, and she was an excellent sponsor. I learned so much from her about the falconry side of the raptor species and how to "man" the bird for reasons other than for educational purposes. With her help and guidance, I was able to reach my goal as a Master Falconer.

In 2003, I met my wonderful husband, Garry Rice, who worked at Carolina Raptor Center. He's a master carpenter/builder who built most of the display cages on CRC's nature trail. For my engagement present, I opted out of a ring for a house, and so he built us one. When I was ready to pursue falconry, he built me the "Taj Mahal" of a mew to house my hawk. He told me it would never fall over and I would be old and broken down before it was.

In 2008, as an apprentice falconer, I flew a 28-ounce tiercel (small male) red-tailed hawk that I named "Rookie." Although I was the rookie, he fit the bill. In the spring of his second year, he started to shy away from squirrels and



started hunting chipmunks and rats. I released him back to the wild and had a nice summer off – no feeding or cleaning for five months! In the fall of 2010, I trapped a 44-ounce female red-tailed hawk. I named her "Cazzadora," which means "huntress" in Spanish. We hunted for seven seasons together. As the years go by, pulling vines and beating brush while hunting with a hawk is getting harder for me to do. The year before I released Cazzadora, I rescued a five-year-old Jack Russell Terrier named "Benny" that I hoped to hunt together with Cazzadora. Benny has a battery that never shuts off when he picks up a scent on the ground or up a tree! He proved to be an excellent squirrel and rabbit dog. However, I didn't get to train them together as Cazzadora was more interested in him as a meal. I released her in the spring of 2016.

Back to 2010 – it was a great year. I was appointed treasurer for NAFA, replacing Sue Cecchini. I guess my professional background as a tax accountant and working in corporate finance put the big stamp on my head (LOL). I had some important shoes to fill, so I was a little nervous about the scope of the job. I remember Larry Dickerson – the current NAFA president – "reassuring" me that all I had to do was "Write a few checks, pay a few bills..." Well, it ended up covering MUCH MORE than that! It must be the "tax accountant" sickness I have, but I was overjoyed to take over the responsibility of NAFA's finances





TEACHING FALCONRY WORKSHOP FOR NCFG AT THE NCWRC CAMPUS

and work together with the whole NAFA Board. Serving as treasurer opened up a whole new view of the organization that's responsible for the sport I'm so passionate about. In my early life, I was fortunate to have traveled to faraway places in the world – Canada, Europe, Japan, and South America. But never have I been so lucky as these last nine years, when I traveled to such exotic places in my own country as Dodge City, Kansas; Elk City, Oklahoma; Kearney, Nebraska; and Lubbock, Texas – to name a few!

During this same timeframe, I also served as secretary and then president for our local club – the North Carolina Falconers Guild. I've now stepped down, passing the job to

some very talented falconers who will keep NCFG going to secure good falconry into the future for the state of North Carolina. I now have some "me" time to fly my new hawk, Rio. He and Benny trained together and are ready to take down the squirrel population for the second year.

So, where were all those falcons, hawks, and owls in the neighborhood where I grew up in New York? Hiding in plain sight, I suppose, with the gulls in the sand dunes off Jones Beach. What about the barred owls? Was that sound of "who-cooks-for-you?" not some muskrat love? And as I trudged along Central Park South in Manhattan to work every day, I never looked up. No one looks up who

isn't a tourist. The two "red-tails in love" were keeping the pigeon population in check that whole time, but I never knew they were there.

I'm sad I didn't realize how close raptors were to me growing up, but I'm very thankful now that they and NAFA are a part of my life.

I inherit my independence and strength from my mother, Janice. Although she's not quite fond of birds – especially parakeets – she supports everything I do for the love of falconry and NAFA.

In closing, I would like to offer a poem my 83-year-old mother wrote for me shortly after my father passed away:

**To April from Mom**

*To give of yourself  
is a gift of love  
From God and his angels  
sent down from above  
The feeling of joy in  
your head and soul  
Will always be an endless goal  
To offer each day  
a small good deed  
To a person unfortunate  
or is in need  
This gift comes to those  
who in God abide  
The door to heaven  
is open wide*



APRILS CURRENT RED-TAIL RIO AND HIS FIRST RABBIT



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## WEST VIRGINIA FALCONRY CLUB

by: Jason Caldwell & Matthew Frey

# CLUB UPDATE

**G**reetings from the Mountain State. As that certain calm stillness in the air peculiar to autumn heralds the approach of a new season, we want to take a moment to reflect and provide a brief account of falconry in West Virginia.


The sport here continues to grow incrementally. We're slowly and circumspectly adding new members to our ranks with skill sets that should prove gainful to both the club and the sport we serve. We've endeavored to keep our focus on cultivating our current apprentices, some of whom will graduate to general this forthcoming year, assuming they're successful in leveraging the lessons learned this past year into a fruitful season. Our mindset as a club continues to be rooted in a commitment to raising quality, hard-hunting game-hawkers to carry on the legacy of the giants in the sport on whose shoulders we've stood. As a state and as a club, we want to be profitable to the sport that has imparted so much to us.

WVFC held a picnic this past September with the intent, as always, to foster fellowship among our ranks and establish the course and expectations for the coming year. Jason availed his home in Berkeley Springs for the gathering, which – given Jason's expansive campus of mews, coops, and breeding chambers – proved to be the perfect venue for the event. It gave apprentices an opportunity to investigate a multitude of successful solutions for raptor housing and husbandry.

We're very grateful for the largess of the vendors that serve our community. We specifically want to thank Northwoods, Mike's

Falconry, Larry Counce, Mike Craig, Rodent Pro, Western Sporting, Doug Pineo, and NAFA for their generous donations to our raffle. Your contributions to our club keep the lights on, and we appreciate it.

Matt and Jason concluded the business meeting with a report on their prior meeting with the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, to refine the current falconry code in certain sections that are still somewhat unresolved from the 2014 update and re-codification. We're a long way from where we started in 1998, but there's still some ground to cover moving forward as we exercise the relatively new laws in the daily practice of the sport. Fortunately, we've developed a very good working rapport with WVDNR's Wildlife Resources Section, and we're confident the areas of concern in the code will be resolved in the 2019 legislative session.

We wish everyone a good conclusion to their molt and a very joyful season in the field. 



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## West Nile Virus (WNV)

THE VIRAL INFECTION WHICH IS TYPICALLY SPREAD BY MOSQUITOES CAN CAUSE NEUROLOGICAL DISEASE AS WELL AS DEATH.

Most falconers have some level of awareness of WNV, but I suspect most who haven't experienced it first-hand haven't really thought much about it. I first became aware of it about seven years ago when I read about it on the NAFEX forum. At the time I had just purchased a male North American goshawk, and I decided I wanted to be proactive and have it vaccinated. Finding a vet to do it turned out to be a challenge, but after aggressively pursuing it, I convinced an equine vet to help me out.

I've never had one of my birds experience WNV, but this year a good friend of mine lost his 56-day-old female Finnish goshawk to WNV, and this prompted me to address this subject in my director's report.

In the case of my friend, he observed a problem with his bird and took it that day (which was a Friday) to a vet who had experience with birds and exotics. The vet at that clinic checked the bird out and took a fecal sample and throat swab for analysis, injected the bird with 15 mg of fluid as well as an antibiotic, gave him six doses of the antibiotic to use over the following three days, and told him they would get the lab

work results back to him the next morning. The next morning, which was a Saturday, he made several attempts to contact the clinic – to no avail. The bird's condition was getting worse, so he decided to take it to another much larger specialty clinic that Saturday afternoon. They told him the bird's white blood cell count was good. They did some other tests, X-rayed the bird, and gave him three alternatives, including leaving the bird with them, euthanizing it, or taking it home and hoping for the best. Up to that point, he had already paid out over \$1,200 in vet fees within a 24-hour period, and the history associated with the larger clinic with respect to the cost of their services was notoriously high. My friend decided to take his bird home, and it didn't make it through the night. Following its death, he sent the bird's corpse to The Raptor Center and they confirmed the cause of death was WNV.

The moral to this story for me is since vets seldom see raptors, as falconers we need to be proactive. By being proactive, I mean we need to share the available protocols for dealing with WNV with our vets in advance of our needing services associated with WNV.

In preparing this report, I contacted Dr. Pat Redig, and he provided me with the following for use in my report:

### Various West Nile Vaccine Recommendations: From The Raptor Center University of Minnesota

We've reverted, after considerable comparative evaluation of the various extant vaccines, to the Fort Dodge Innovator killed equine vaccine product for all of the captive raptors we choose to vaccinate. Our belief (not to be conflated with evidence-based knowledge) is that in the absence of injury, it's better than nothing. That said, vaccine or not, efforts need to be made to protect birds from mosquitoes – vaccination may provide a secondary level of protection.

We (The Raptor Center) are currently using West Nile-Innovator Equine vaccine from Zoetis. It's important to note the product contains only the killed West Nile virus. Don't use products that contain vaccines for other viruses (so called 3- or 4-way vaccines) such as Eastern Equine Encephalitis.

### Protocol

- For new birds (not previously vaccinated) – single dose (1.0 ml) intramuscular; repeat every three weeks for a total of three doses.
- For established birds with a previous vaccination history (regardless of type of West Nile vaccine) – single dose (1.0 ml) intramuscular annually.
- The vaccine dose is the same regardless of the size of the bird, except for smaller ones (under 300 grams or so). In other words, a 550-gram tiercel falcon receives the same dose as a 1500-gram red-tail. One-half cc is typically used for small birds (kestrel through 450 grams or so).
- For single-packaged doses, use a 22-25G needle instead of the 20G needle that comes inside the package (the latter is for horses).
- Pre-warm the loaded syringe before administering the product by gently holding it in your hand until it reaches room temperature.
- Ideally, birds should be fully vaccinated (three doses) prior to the beginning of mosquito season. If mosquito season in your area begins early in the

spring and extends late into the fall, you should consider a booster vaccination in late summer. This vaccine has been used in many, but not all, species of raptors. It appears to be safe, but its efficacy is not scientifically established. West Nile virus vaccines may not completely prevent the disease, but there is some scientific evidence in a few representative species that shows vaccination may decrease the severity of the disease.

Dr. Redig also told me falconers can contact TRC at (612) 624-4745 to speak to a clinician who can advise them on vaccination and clinical management of raptors with West Nile virus – there's no fee for this. Also, The Raptor Center encourages falconers (prefers, actually) to have their veterinarian call them with any questions.

### Potential Post Infection Protocol

In addition to the above, provide your vet with Dr. Meg Robinson's article entitled "Ivermectin as a Possible Treatment for West Nile Virus in Raptors," which appeared in the April 2018 issue of HawkChalk. Again, there isn't a lot of clinical data supporting this treatment; however, it's the best we have to work with should your bird become infected with the virus.

Earlier I mentioned that I had a hard time finding a vet to vaccinate my bird. The issue in part is the average vet doesn't stock the above-mentioned vaccine, and it's my understanding the minimum order for this vaccine is 24 doses.

One way to overcome this issue is to identify an equine vet that carries the vaccine and put your vet in contact with this resource.

Another option is to suggest to your state falconry club that they identify a vet, and working with the club's membership interested in having their birds vaccinated, agree to the purchase of a supply of vaccine so the vet can vaccinate club members' birds.

Don't find yourself experiencing what my friend experienced. Take action and have your birds vaccinated, screen your mew to keep mosquitoes out, and share Dr. Robinson's paper with your vet.

**Hunt Hard, Kill Swiftly & Make No Apologies.**

*Joe Kosakowski*





# Understanding Waterfowl:

## WHAT'S WRONG WITH EASTERN MALLARDS?



BY JOHN M. COLUCCY, PH.D. - DUCKS UNLIMITED

### DECLINING NUMBERS OF THIS POPULAR SPECIES WILL LIKELY RESULT IN CHANGES TO HUNTING REGULATIONS IN THE ATLANTIC FLYWAY

The mallard is far and away North America's most abundant duck, and this highly adaptable species is found year-round throughout almost the entire continental United States. Historical accounts suggest that breeding mallards were once rare in eastern North America, although they were common seasonal visitors along the Atlantic coast during migration and winter. Today, nearly 1 million mallards breed in the northeastern United States and eastern Canada, but surveys indicate that this population has been declining in recent years.

How did mallards gain a foothold in the East? During the 20th century, millions of captive-reared mallards were released in eastern states to supplement wild populations. Coupled with changes in habitat conditions caused by farming and urbanization, breeding mallards became well established from the mid-At-

lantic states north to New England and across much of eastern Canada. Recent advances in genetic techniques have confirmed that eastern mallards are more closely related to Old World mallards (the source of captive-reared stock) than are their counterparts in other flyways.

The Status of Mallard Populations Overall, continental mallard populations have been doing well. In 2017, breeding mallards in the traditional survey area (including the Prairie Pothole Region, Western Boreal Forest, and other breeding areas) numbered 10.5 million birds (a level 34 percent above the long-term average), and have been trending upward over the long term. Mallards are counted separately in the eastern survey area (encompassing eastern Canada and parts of Maine) and in the northeastern United States from Virginia to New Hampshire. Over the past 20 years, this

population—which numbered just under 900,000 birds in 2017—has been gradually declining at a rate of about 1 percent per year. While breeding mallard numbers have been largely stable in eastern Canada, they have decreased by about 38 percent in the northeastern United States. Data from the independent Breeding Bird Survey also suggest that breeding mallards have been declining in this region.

### IF MALLARDS ARE DOING SO WELL CONTINENTALLY, WHY SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE EASTERN POPULATION?

To answer this question, we must examine how source populations contribute to the mallard harvest in different areas. This is accomplished by calculating harvest derivation using data from mallards banded on specific breeding areas, band recovery data from mallards harvested in different states, and breeding population data. In the northeastern United States, an estimated 79 percent of the mallards harvested by hunters are produced in that region. In Pennsylvania, 75 percent of harvested mallards are raised in the state, while in New York, 69 percent of harvested mallards are homegrown. As you move south in the Atlantic Flyway, the proportion of locally raised mallards in the harvest decreases. For example, in the mid-Atlantic region only 39 percent of harvested mallards are produced locally, although 72 percent are derived from the eastern mallard population.

### WHY ARE EASTERN MALLARDS DECLINING?

Waterfowl managers are not sure what has caused the decline of the eastern mallard population. There are many theories, including the loss and degradation of breeding and nonbreeding habitat, lower survival and fitness caused by winter food shortages, and the adverse effects of hybridization between wild birds and released game-farm mallards. But none of these hypotheses have been formally tested.

The size of the annual mallard breeding population is largely influenced by two factors: adult survival and production of young. The long-term decline in eastern mallards suggests that there is a problem with either survival or production, or perhaps both.

However, survival estimates from banding data have changed little since the 1990s, when the population was stable. Over the same period, estimates of mallard production obtained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Parts Collection Survey have not decreased either. This suggests that there might be an issue with the accuracy of one or both of these data sources.

### PROPOSED CHANGES TO HUNTING REGULATIONS

Since 2000, the status of the eastern mallard population has been used to set hunting seasons and bag limits for ducks in the Atlantic Flyway. Given that mallards make up only 20 percent or less of the total duck harvest in the flyway, this is no longer considered an optimal strategy. As a result, the Atlantic Flyway Council and USFWS have developed a new approach to harvest management based on the status of four other common species (wood ducks, American green-winged teal, ring-necked ducks, and common goldeneyes). Moving forward, hunting regulations for eastern mallards will be developed like other species that are currently below their population objectives, such as northern pintails and scaup. Based on our current understanding of eastern mallard population dynamics, recent harvest rates for these birds may no longer be sustainable. Consequently, waterfowl managers have recommended a reduction in the mallard bag limit from four birds to two (in the Atlantic Flyway only), beginning in the 2019–2020 waterfowl season. Hen restrictions within the two-bird mallard limit are still being considered. Managers are hopeful that a bag-limit reduction will stabilize the eastern mallard population while a new harvest strategy is developed using the best available science.

Final decisions regarding the change in the mallard bag limit and a new multispecies harvest management approach will be made this fall. The Atlantic Flyway Council will make a final recommendation to the Service Regulations Committee following their September meeting. The USFWS will then make a recommendation to the assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, who makes the final decision on the regulations. (See "How the Seasons Are Set" on page 48 of the printed magazine for more information about this process.)







# FOCUS ON CONSERVATION

A SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM FUNDED BY NAFA TO FURTHER OUR OVERALL UNDERSTANDING OF BIRDS OF PREY AND WHAT IS REQUIRED TO ENSURE THEIR FUTURE WELL-BEING IN THE WORLD.

## PEDIGREES ARE THE FUTURE

BY: JENNIFER AND TOM COULSON

What we're going to say pertains to all falconers, regardless of the species flown, and also to those developing dog bloodlines for falconry. We focus on the Baywing Database, the Harris's Hawk pedigree and hunting performance registry, as our starting example and model.



Pedigreed raptors are the future of falconry, and the Baywing Database is a blasting off point for this new directive. Those of us breeding and hunting with captive bred raptors recognize the need for selective breeding and pedigree tracking (Fox 1995, Bradshaw 1999, Coulson and Coulson 2012). At the very least, we need to track parentage to maintain a diverse gene pool and avoid perpetuating genetic defects. The farther removed from the wild the captive offspring become, the more important it is to know whether the breeders are related, and, if so, what you are selecting for. A growing number of raptor breeders are selecting for falconry field performance, especially those breeding Harris's Hawks.

Pedigree of <b>CB Banshee</b> (F), RW102493			
[Pedigree] [Pedigree w/o Links] [Vertical Pedigree] [Siblings] [Offspring] [Reverse Pedigree]			
Generations: [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8]			
CB Tank RW093646	WC Adrian AZ R0113010	CB My Male RW080719	Bobby's mom R0000000
	CB Sage RW091158	CB Lola RW081577	WC Anna R0000000
	CB Rooster RW093723	CB My Male RW080719	CB Marlene R0000000
CB Sky RW096385		CB Lola RW081577	WC Anna R0000000
	WC Ariel CA R0013110		CB Marlene R0000000

Thanks to a small grant from NAFA, the Baywing Database achieved a new milestone recently, making it more accessible and appealing to falconers and breeders. The Baywing Database is now available as a free, user-friendly website with multiple search options. Type in a hawk's name (or band number) and instantly generate its pedigree, a list of siblings and half-sibs, a list of offspring by each mate, and also produce the pedigrees of hypothetical offspring from trial matings. The pedigrees themselves contain exciting new features: ancestors are hyperlinked and duplicated ancestors are color-coded. When photographs have been provided, the image of the hawk appears on its pedigree as well as images of its recent ancestors (parents and grandparents). Pedigrees may also contain one or more color-coded "marks" which denote individuals known to be carriers of recessive genetic disorders. Give it a try by visiting the "Pedigrees" page at <http://baywingdatabase.com>.

The web-hosting platform for the Baywing Database is capable of hosting an unlimited number of pedigree databases, so we are hoping that breeders of other species will jump on board! Others may adapt this database and web-based pedigree publishing software for other falconry species and even falconry dog bloodlines and breeds.

The technology behind the scenes, which anyone wanting to develop databases for additional species would use, includes two types of breed management

software: *Pedigree Publisher* and *PedigreePoint*, both by BreedMate or Wild Systems of Australia. *PedigreePoint* is the web-based report generator that allows the web searches which return pedigrees, trial matings, etc. These programs are inexpensive and relatively easy to use.

A database is only as good as its data, which in this case consists of individual hawk records. The Baywing Database now has 2,159 registered Harris's Hawks. We hope that falconers and breeders will recognize the utility of the new website, and feel compelled to register their hawks. To submit data, visit <http://baywingdatabase.com> or e-mail: [jennifercoulson@baywingdatabase.com](mailto:jennifercoulson@baywingdatabase.com).

Breeders also can snail mail photocopies of their annual reports, as long as the parents of the offspring are noted, to: **Jennifer Coulson, 64340 Fogg Lane, Pearl River, LA 70452**. Passage birds are of interest too, especially because many of these end up becoming breeders when retired from falconry due to injury or advancing age.

Just for fun, we'll highlight one of the hawks in the Baywing Database. This hawk was selectively bred by David Bowman of the U.K. and flown by Bohumil Straka of the Czech Republic. The mother, Amy, was bred by Dan Pike of Washington. In her first year, Bohumil's hawk followed in Amy's footsteps by taking a roe deer and a hare at the Opočno falconry meet. (See below)





A bonus of the *Baywing Database* is that it has helped reunite lost Harris's Hawks with their owners. Washington falconer Lee Tostevin, contacted Jennifer twice in the last two years about lost hawks that were reported to her. In one case, the lost hawk was in the database, so we quickly located the owner. The hawk was found more than 200 miles from where it was lost, in a neighboring state! It was thin and trying to get into a pen to attack a rancher's dog. Fortunately, the rancher contacted Missouri falconer, Bob Payne, who happened to be working in the area, and Bob rescued the bird.

In the other instance, Jennifer was able to guess who the breeder might be because there was a similar band number in the database. After leaving the breeder, this hawk changed owners four times in five years. Lee found the current owner thanks to the help of former owner, Gil Kentoff of Tennessee. The falconer who lost her wishes to remain nameless, but he wants to pass on a lesson learned. He did not put telemetry on this hawk because she was so dependable about coming back to him. He lost her while hunting on a windy day when a strong gust took her across a large river. She was hit by a car and found by a policeman who brought her to a wildlife rehabilitator. Fortunately, she only suffered soft tissue injuries and is recovering at home. Once she is ready to resume hunting, she will be wearing a Scout transmitter!

Although newbies to falconry's ancient world, Americans can still make important contributions to falconry's worldwide "living human heritage." U.S. falconers pioneered the use of the Harris's Hawk in falconry and introduced this falconry raptor to the world. This may be the greatest contribution that U.S. falconers have provided the global falconry community. Perhaps it's only natural that the creation of the first pedigree website for a falconry raptor, the *Baywing Database*, has followed suit.

**Acknowledgments:** We thank Toby Bradshaw for creating the Baywing Database, BreedMate for technical support, and NAFA for funding. NAFA funds were used to purchase and upgrade software, transfer the domain name, pay for a hosting plan with PHP scripting and MySQL database capabilities, and hire technical support.

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LEE TOSTEVIN USES *BAYWING DATABASE* TO FIND OWNERS OF LOST HAWKS

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## DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE

ADAM CHAVEZ

Director\_At\_Large\_2@n-a-f-a.com

DIR-AT-LARGE

Well I hope everyone's season is off to a great start. I'm writing this report from the House of Grouse, so it may be a little briefer than normal. I was finally able to check this trip off my bucket list. I've always wanted to get up to Wyoming and hunt sage grouse, and the trip was everything I'd hoped for: good company, great hawking,

as I came in to assist, I fumbled the transfer. The scenery is spectacular with antelope in every field. Small duck ponds and creeks were easy to find as well. My falcon needed a little more airtime before the trip, but she did manage to knock down a grouse, although she somehow didn't end up with it.



and libations, and I was able to witness sage grouse taken in fine style. My goshawk caught a rabbit and a duck on the same day. She also connected with a white-tailed jackrabbit, but

The Eagle Committee is still working diligently on pursuing the resumption of access to eagles, which has been a slow, frustrating process. I feel their pain. Here in California, we're trying to get legislature introduced to



allow for a California take of peregrines – stay tuned. If you want to hunt jacks, you should consider coming to the California Hawking Club field meet.



### The 2019 CHC 48th Annual Field Meet

**When? Wednesday, January 16th through Saturday, January 19th, 2019**

**Where? Topaz Lodge and Casino, just over the Nevada/California border on scenic Highway 395.**

The hotel appears to have it all for us: lots of rooms at reasonable "discounted for us" per-night rates (\$53 plus taxes), with many animal-friendly rooms, a

great meeting room for the vendors and speakers, a restaurant and bar/lounge, and plenty of room for all of us to hang out and share hawking stories with old and new friends.

Lake Topaz Lodge is approximately 80 miles south of Reno and 350 miles north of Victorville. So, come join us in making new memories with new friends and old acquaintances.

Remember to save the dates and reserve your room early. You may make reservations with the hotel by calling the lodge at (775) 266-3338 or the RV park at (775) 266-3337. Be sure to mention you're with the CHC to receive the discounted room rate. A refundable pet fee will be collected up front: two pets or less at \$10/day, or three or more at \$10/day per pet. You must request to have your room inspected prior to checking out. If no damage or additional cleaning of any type is required, a refund will be issued. As a special perk, you'll receive a "Hawking Club" coupon book upon check-in!



**Happy Holidays**

**Your NAFA Directors & Officers Wish All Of You**

**A Glorious Season filled with Family, Good Friends & Good Health!**



# THE ART AND SCIENCE OF WEIGHT CONTROL

BY: DON HUNLEY

*You are so excited to be a falconer! Every time you take your new female red-tail into the field, it's a new experience. She trapped at 46 ounces, and although it's new to you, your sponsor has been telling you that her progress is right on track.*

.....

She ate on your fist on the second day, jumped to the fist two days later, and would come 50 yards on a creance by the 25th day since you caught her. She flew free on day 27 and caught her first wild rabbit (with you) a week later. Her weight loss since trapping was around 15 percent, and she's flying at 39 ounces. She's had pretty consistent success, and her weight has crept up slightly to 40.5 ounces. Her response has slowed very slightly, but she still responds pretty well, following above you over the thorn patches.

Today she was 41.8 ounces. She caught a rabbit yesterday, and you didn't give her a huge crop, but you fed her quite a bit because she made a super effort and finally crashed through amazingly thick cover and caught a very wily bunny. You throw her up into a tree. It's about 11:00 am, the sun is out, and it's turned into a really nice day. A bit warmer than you expected, but a welcome change from the normal chill in the December weather.

She hits her perch and then drops her wings and almost appears to be sunning after a bath. You thrash the brush with your walking stick, but she's not paying you any attention – she's facing the sun and looking at a far-off woodlot. You continue to work to get her a flush, with no luck. She's not following along like usual. Fine! If she's not going



WEIGHT CONTROL IS CRITICAL IN EARLY STAGES OF TRAINING, NOTE THE TAIL GUARD ON A NEW BIRD

to hunt, you might as well just call her down and hunt her later today.

You pull out a tidbit and call her to the fist. She doesn't even look. Hmmmm. So, you resort to a whole rabbit leg and she shoots you a glance but continues to eye the distant woodlot. Now your guts seem to clench a bit and you get a bad feeling about how this is going. You pull out the lure, the guaranteed

way to get her down, and swing it. Nothing. Hmmmm. You throw it out and away from you; this always works on her. She finally brings her wings in, turns toward your offering, leans over, and flies toward the lure. Yes! She then swings low over the lure, banks slightly, then continues to wing over to the woodlot she has been eyeing 300 yards away. OK, now it's time for a little outright panic!!! You are now officially concerned. As you jog your way over to the bird's new perch, you pull out your cell phone and try to call your sponsor for a little advice. No answer; he's probably flying his bird or watching the Packers game. Dang!! You get under your hawk's new perch and show her the lure again. This time you drag it along behind you, giving the game call, "Ho, ho ho!"

Nothing. She seems to be eyeing yet another far-away woodlot. You wish you had put another transmitter on her. Your thoughts run along the lines of "You %&#\*\$ – I wish I had a shotgun right now!" or "What was I thinking flying her so fat – I KNEW better!" In a moment of inspiration, you grab the rabbit from yesterday out of your hawking bag, split it wide open like an Aztec sacrifice, tie it to your lure line, and throw it out as a desperate offering. Your errant bird actually looks at this and even turns slightly to see the rabbit better. You grab the end of the line and start pulling it along again with the game call. She sits and watches semi-interestedly.

Finally, you grab the bunny and throw it as high in front of her and as far away from you as you can. She checks your position relative from the bunny, decides she can beat you to it and swoops down, snatches the bunny, and tries to fly off with it. You walk up to her and

prepare to pick her up and realize that in all your earlier lure work or on the jog over, you left your glove somewhere behind! Great! This is gonna be good.

"Freaking bird," or something very like that courses – no, rages – through your mind! The real fault, though, lies with the guy that looks at you in the mirror every morning. "Well, next time that fat %#\$@\* is going to be a lot lower in weight!"

Almost every falconer has had this or a variation of this story happen to them at some point in their falconry "career"/journey/obsession. Yep, me too. It makes it a lot easier to use real weight control when the near loss of your hawk is motivating you. Some falconers can let this lesson swing them so far to the other side of weight management that they have their feathered charges in a dangerously low physical state, which makes the hawk susceptible to other health issues.

***First the disclaimer: This article is not the end-all of weight management. It is a common-sense guide that has worked for my friends and I for a long time, flying short-wings and buteos primarily. If you don't agree with my thoughts, don't do it. Have these ideas just come to light for the first time, being discovered in a long-lost treasure trove of falconry scrolls? Nope. These are ideas that have worked for me, that I've adjusted and tweaked as I get better at flying my birds.***

A new falconer, Mike Radford, is a friend of mine, and I know he'll be the guy above at some point, but I hope he learns something from my mistakes and doesn't make them.

(Went hawking with Mike and yup, he made the same mistake!)

## 1. LET THE BIRD CONTROL ITS WEIGHT BY ITS BEHAVIOR

Let that thought sink in; read it again. If there is a golden rule about weight control, this, I believe, is it. This is easier to achieve with a short-wing because the hawk is closer and less likely to be making you chase it for miles than a falcon. BUT these ideas work for long-wings as well. When you jump a bird to the fist for the first time, it's starting to shape its OWN behavior. It can also start shaping yours. Steve Layman is an expert at shaping a bird's behavior and should really write a book about it, but till he does, here goes. If the bird jumps to the fist 20 feet and gets rewarded at 1000 grams today, but tomorrow refuses to jump the 20 feet at 1010 grams, there are two options: #1 you withhold food and try later when the hawk is at a lower weight, OR you creep up to 10 feet and offer a larger reward and the hawk jumps to you. Either way, somebody's behavior was shaped! So, yours or the hawk's?

What does the hawk want? It wants to be fed. What do you want? You want to have instant response from it, whether hunting or calling it back. So how can we get both of us what we want? Weight control. If its behavior (what you want) doesn't meet your expectation (immediate response), then you cannot reward its behavior and give it food (what it wants)

I know this is a simple principle, but if you allow it to shape your falconry, then you can hunt your hawk at healthy, athletic hunting weights without worry of hurting the bird or having it ignore you. If



the hawk's behavior is correct when it gets rewarded, basically, the hawk is controlling its own flying weight, not you. You are simply responding to what the bird is telling you where it's willing to start working for you.

## 2. WEIGHT CONTROL – THE SCIENCE.

There have been multiple articles about this in varying degrees of specifics. One of the best was written by Mike McDermott in his book about training accipiters, *The Imprint Accipiter*. In this book, he writes about a very precise way of flying a hawk, based completely in caloric burn by the hawk and how to manage it in a very precise way. IT WORKS!

I'm not going to go into great detail because others have done it better and more thoroughly, but it looks something like this:

- Hawk weighs 500 grams.
- In a controlled environment (consistent temperature) with a consistent type of food (quail), the hawk burns "X" grams of weight per day.
- Pre-weigh "X" grams of food before training or hunting so you do not overfeed the bird. It also allows you to see how much food you have left to give the bird as you train/hunt.

This system works on all birds, but my impression is Mike designed it for smaller birds. They're easier to house inside your home. This requires an understanding wife and family as well. As the birds get larger, their mutes fly farther (short-wings and buteos), and my wife gets understandably more stressed about the feathers, mutes, and mess.

The key to the above system is CONSISTENCY. My lifestyle/situation makes me unable to perform weight control in this manner (it takes work and an indoor mews in Alaska) so I'm unable to follow it.

## 3. WEIGHT CONTROL – THE ART.

The things that I have to contend with here in Alaska are:

- Wildly changing temperatures. Can be 35 degrees Fahrenheit one day and 15 below zero the next.
- Different types of foods: quail, rabbit, duck, geese, etc. Each type of food has a different caloric value per gram/ounce of food – not consistent!
- The bird's body language and behavior. The bird's body language can be one of the strongest

determiners of how it will act (behave) toward you and what you want (like yarak).

Changing temperatures are difficult to predict; weather professionals get it wrong all the time. But the falconer must take this into account when he decides how much to feed the hawk. If it's getting colder (like a 20- to 40-degree drop) and your hawk is housed outside, you MUST take this into account when feeding the bird. Weighing the hawk food will tell you precisely how much you're going to feed the bird (and is the right thing for a beginner and a long-time falconer to do), but I usually gauge how much food the hawk is going to get by going off of how full the crop is.

For example, a big, blow-out, Dolly Parton crop is a full (10/10ths) crop. A half-full crop is exactly that – 5/10ths full. A quarter full is 25 percent, etc. The point is, as I learn the bird and its behaviors while it's in training, I'm able to see how fast it burns through this crop when I weigh the hawk the next day before more training. Now sometimes the hawk's behavior or body language tells me it's going to hunt well, but I still weigh the bird each time before hunting, even though it doesn't seem necessary, because I want to be able to see her response in relation to the outside temp, the type of food I fed her yesterday, and her body language today before hunting.

Different types of food for hawks have different food value or caloric count (just like chocolate cake has more calories than a salad). For example: if I was going to feed my goshawk a 4/10th crop of duck to be about the same hunting weight she was today, I would feed it a 6/10th crop of cottontail to get the same weight and response. Ingested bones or organ meat of game are usually surprisingly rich and must be accounted for when feeding up. If I'm going to hunt in two days (not tomorrow, but the day after), I'll feed a 9 or 10/10ths crop when the weather is cold. My hawk will almost always turn over the food and be ready to go. If not, I'll wait a couple hours and hunt her near dusk when her biological clock tells her she'd better eat pretty soon or she won't eat till tomorrow.

The bird's body language can tell you a lot. If your hawk weighs 1000 grams when she's on fire and ready to hunt, and she leans over toward you as you come to pick her up and she does this day after day, you can bet that when you walk by and she leans over to be called up to the fist she's going to hunt well, regardless of her precise weight. That rule of thumb has to be checked against the fact that most birds are more aggressive and have different body language in their mews or on their



HAVING THE HAWK AT THE CORRECT WEIGHT ALLOWS FOR CONTROL IN THE FIELD AND SUCCESS

perch than they might in a strange field that has distractions.

THAT is why I always weigh the bird before I take her hunting. It's feedback from temperature, amount and type of food, AND her behavior. All that information, plus an accurate weight, tells me how I can expect her to behave in the field.

Remember, her BEHAVIOR is going to ultimately control her flying weight. If she passes on a duck at 1025 grams, then she needs to be closer to her normal 1000 grams to bother with hunting her on ducks to get a consistent BEHAVIOR from her. She has just told me she needs to be lower in weight to be willing to tackle a big drake mallard. No problem – her decision.

## 4. FLYING YOUR HAWK FAT AND FRUSTRATION.

The title pretty much says it all:

if you're flying your hawk at a fat weight, you're bound to be hounded by frustration. Remember: what does she want and what do you want? She wants to be fed. You want instant response. If you don't hold out for the correct behavior, and if you shape YOUR behavior to what she wants, then you're not only going to be frustrated but will likely lose a hawk, or the bird will develop all kinds of other weird or bad behaviors.

The hawk WILL NOT like you more if you feed it more. Unfortunately, it doesn't work like that. Equally unfortunately, many new falconers believe that if they just feed their bird a bit more (and then fly it at a higher weight), their hawk will enjoy their company more. Not going to happen. A passage goshawk newly-trapped and eating well on the fist, upon finishing her meal will look at you, instantly wonder where YOU came from, and just as instantly

decide it wants to be somewhere else.

If your hawk is higher in weight than she normally flies, and is new to you and doesn't have a long track record of certain behaviors that she shows you when she's at a good flying weight, be careful about flying her at all. You could be that guy at the beginning of this article, and the ending of the story might not end as well.

Fat hawks act like they're hunting, chase pretty well, and appear to try to catch the quarry – but never seem to. They can get just as frustrated as you are that they're not having success and can eventually refuse that quarry, especially if it's a particularly large or difficult quarry. Stick to the plan; let your hawk's behavior determine what she's going to weigh.

## 5. FINDING A FLYING WEIGHT AND ADJUSTING IT.



What is a flying weight? Well, what do you want? You want instant response, right? A flying weight for instant response on her home turf or from a favorite perch is one thing. It will be different than a flying weight in a strange/busy location or from a very tall perch (like a 50-foot tree). BUT THAT CAN AND WILL CHANGE!

That's why learning how to adjust to your hawk's response in the field while taking into account her weight, body language, experience, and even outside temperature all add together for you to help form a flying weight for your bird. If you've let your bird's behavior dictate her weight, she will tell you where she needs to be. Now this is the part of weight control that falls within the "art" category.



LARGE OR DIFFICULT QUARRY REQUIRE SPECIFIC TRAINING AND EXACT WEIGHT CONTROL


As a point of reference, let's use 1000 grams as the point your female red-tail is giving you an instant response (what YOU want). Depending on the time of year you're training your hawk, as the season progresses and it cools off, you can expect her weight to rise, but it needs to be sloooooow. She needs to earn your trust. As fall turns into winter and the lower temps require more food to maintain weight, your bird should also be building muscle and the habit of returning and hunting with you. This behavior should allow you to slowly raise her weight, and HER BEHAVIOR will tell you if having her at 1030 grams is a good idea or she needs to be cut back a bit. Remember, she's setting her own flying weight by her behavior.

A journal is a great idea, as it can help you spot patterns of behavior where she consistently does her best. It will also help you next season when you start flying her again. A concrete foundation of information will really help you manage your hawk in an optimum fashion. It takes a little bit more time to enter your information, but in the long run, it's worth it.

Back to our 1000-gram red-tail above. Her weight has crept up and she's responding well at 1030 grams. Your season progresses and now it's March, and it's getting warmer earlier in the day. Now thermals are developing, and your hawk's natural propensity to soar will start to be tested. At 1025 grams she's a bit slow to return; no longer instant response. It's time to bring her weight back down, based again on her behavior. At 1000 grams, she's focused again with instant response.

In the spring, birds' hormones start working on them, especially when they're more mature, like 3+ years old. Then flying a hawk in an overweight condition can be a singularly uncomfortable experience. One of my apprentices was flying his female red-tail in April, and she took off and went into a soar. She was at 500 feet with no response to his lure or game calls, and he was getting genuinely distressed. Luckily, I pulled out my secret weapon, a live pigeon, called the hawk down, and we had a happy ending to that outing.

The bird's sex and species will also have an effect on how fast it burns food. A female will always need more food than a male of the same type of hawk. That said, a female peregrine will burn calories faster than a red-tail hawk of the same weight, because they have a higher metabolism and their gut is shorter and less efficient. So many things to consider...

Don't be discouraged. The ART in weight control is tying together your hawk's behavior with interacting with weather, season, type of food, outside temperature, species of hawk, and probably something else that I'm forgetting. You can do this. Whether you decide to use the science or the art of weight control (the scale must be used regardless), just remember your hawk's BEHAVIOR is the ultimate determinate of where its weight needs to be. 

- **Good hawking!**



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† **DB SCIENTIFIC RECOMMENDS:** When you're considering a vitamin read the label. Remember that if it sounds too good to be true, is it true?

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† **VITAHAWK BY DB SCIENTIFIC** has been asked about Selenium (a mineral used in concert with Vitamin E). We don't include Selenium in Vitahawk. Yes, it is needed in very small amounts, but if your bird is being fed a whole animal diet, such as Coturnix quail that were fed a commercial diet or wild game, your bird is getting plenty of Selenium in the diet. Selenium can also be very toxic.

† **VITAHAWK BY DB SCIENTIFIC** was first to IDENTIFY that raptors fed Vitahawk daily fly at higher weights and molt faster. (There is a physiologic explanation for this). This has been verified from correspondence from falconers around the world.

† **VITAHAWK TIP:** Most of the B vitamins in prey and frozen-thawed hawk food diets are contained in the intestinal tract. If you remove the viscera before feeding your game hawk, Vitahawk will provide your bird with all of the B vitamins it needs.

† **VITAHAWK by DB Scientific** assures you that our vitamins are of the HIGHEST QUALITY to help assist you in keeping your prized game hawks healthy.

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# MINNESOTA FALCONERS ASSOCIATION

by: Matthew Lasch, President

CLUB UPDATE



MFA MAJOR MEET 2018 IN MARSHALL, MN

There have been several issues of HawkChalk since I last submitted anything on behalf of the MFA. I've apologized to our members already for the lapse in communication with our friends around North America. At the time of this writing, the weather has been cooler and wetter than normal. We haven't been able to enjoy the beauties of fall as much as a normal weather pattern would allow. The extended forecast is looking a little better, but everyone is dreading the "W" and "S" words – winter and snow – which is understandable, since our winter and snowfall went well into April and May this past year. It feels like the snow just finally melted. By the time you read this, I'm sure we'll be well into winter and hawking in full force, but hopefully not before we get a little more autumn weather and enjoy some more trapping.

I recently attended the Saskatchewan Falconers Association meet, where they were celebrating their 60th year. That's quite an accomplishment, being the oldest known association in North America. I've wanted to attend a Canadian meet for a while, and it didn't disappoint. There

was some great flying, despite the winter-like weather, and the Canadians were more than accommodating to anyone attending. Of course, it might be because they see me as a fellow Canadian, coming from Minnesota. During discussions with folks, I found myself explaining the type of falconry we practice in Minnesota, so I thought I would take some time to familiarize you with the demographics of our followers.

Minnesota is one of the few states with three distinct biomes within its border (technically four, if you include the Aspen Parkland in the far northwestern tip, but who's counting?). The eastern edge of the great plains, consisting of tall grass prairie, covers the western third of the state (running north and south). This transitions to hardwood forests through the central part of the state (again running north and south), which includes the "Big Woods." The north/northeastern third of the state is boreal forest, so we can support a multitude of different types of falconry. Unfortunately, the western part of the state is heavily farmed for corn and soy beans, and the landscape is drained and dotted with farms on

every corner. This makes long-winging very difficult. When upland game bird populations were better, it was doable with the right set-up and the right falcon. There are still a few hardcore long-wingers who give it a try each year with some success, depending on game populations and snow conditions. Main quarry for falcons would be ducks, in the right locations, and pheasants and partridge where they can be found. Needless to say, we're mostly a short-wing state.

Short-wingers do very well in Minnesota. Red-tails, goshawks, Harris's hawks, and a few other random species have a plethora of fur and feather to choose



MFA MEMBERS EDUCATE CROWDS AT GAME FAIR ABOUT FALCONRY AND RAPTOR CONSERVATION. (PHOTO FRANK TAYLOR)

from. The most common is red-tails chasing cottontails and squirrels. We can even find good set-ups for red-tails to chase winter creek ducks and thick slough pheasants. White-tailed jackrabbits used to have good numbers in pockets, but those have now been reduced to a few areas. Goshawks are probably the best suited for our state, and we have more austringers with goshawks now than we've probably ever had at one time before. Goshawks can take the cold and capture all the game any red-tails can, and they're more versatile in certain set-ups. Current goshawks are a good mixture of chamber birds, passage birds, and eyass birds from a couple guys in our area who have a great recipe – well-mannered, kill everything in sight, and tolerate almost anything. Harris's hawks are obviously versatile and a great hawk for Minnesota, but the cold winters can limit hawking to certain times of year.


Numbers fluctuate, but we have roughly 60-80 licensed falconers in the state. Three quarters or more are members of the MFA, depending on who's up-to-date with their dues. Of those licensed falconers, roughly 30-50 are actively flying birds. As I mentioned, most of them are short-wingers consisting of red-tails and goshawks.

Most of our members are middle-aged, and there are some of the "old guard" still around and flying birds. The newer members range from late high school or college age to retirees who have always wanted to participate in falconry and finally have the time. Overall, we have a good mixture of age groups throughout the various permit classes. Social media has certainly taken its toll on attendance for our events as people are able to keep up with the falconry community without needing to see each other. There is some advantage to that, but we still encourage everyone to attend, especially if they're a pre-apprentice looking for a sponsor. One of the most frequent questions I get through our club email is people looking to find a sponsor. I respond with a candid, "Best place to meet people is through the MFA – attend events and you'll have no trouble finding a sponsor," which is very true; people who show the commitment by attending our meetings and meets have no issue finding a willing sponsor. About ten percent of these inquirers actually follow through and show up to our events. Our influx of new apprentices averages about 2-3 every couple of years, so our numbers are relatively stable. MFA events are on the second Saturday of every month. December, January, and February are field meets. April is our annual Game Dinner, the largest attended event and our only



MFA GATHERING AT FRANK AND TRUDI TAYLOR'S 'HAWK HARBOR' ON THE NORTH SHORE OF LAKE SUPERIOR. (PHOTO FRANK TAYLOR)

fundraiser. May has become a kestrel nest box building tradition. July is our picnic. August we have a booth at Game Fair, a big outdoor show and the largest of its kind. All other months are regular meetings held at various locations, including people's houses so we can see each other's facilities, etc.

I know this may not capture our current efforts with the MN Dept of Natural Resources or be a summary of our recent activities, but hopefully it gives you some insight into the falconry practiced in the "North Star State." 





CURRENTLY, THE FOLLOWING FALCONERS ARE BEING NOMINATED FOR INDUCTION ON THE WALL/BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE FOR 2019:

- Donald H. Anderson (IN)\*
- Stephen Boyd (TX)\*
- Thomas L. Boyd Sr. (WA)
- Robert (Bob) Cook (WI)\*
- Jim Burr Cranmer (CA/CO)\*
- James H. & Mildred Frazier (AK/ID)
- Kenneth L. Higgins (CA/ID)
- H. Eugene (Gene) Johnson (CO)\*
- Bill MacBride (PA)
- Robert (Bob) Martin (MT)
- Brian & Joanne McDonald (VA)
- Geoffrey Pollard (UK)
- Jose Soto Sr. (IL)
- Robert (Bob) Winslow (CA)\*

\* may be moved to the following year to accommodate friends and family



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**APRIL 6TH, 2019**

THE ANNUAL SPRING RENDEZVOUS FOR THE ARCHIVES OF FALCONRY WILL TAKE PLACE IN BOISE, IDAHO ON SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2019.

There will likely be an open house at the Archives the evening before. Watch the Archives website for the names of inductees and other information.

If you would like to donate for an individual or nominate a friend/hawking partner, please visit the Archives' website at:

[www.peregrinefund.org/falconers-wall](http://www.peregrinefund.org/falconers-wall)

Contact Bob Collins, Curator, at [taf@peregrinefund.org](mailto:taf@peregrinefund.org) or call (208) 362-8256.

The Oxford Suites has reserved a block of rooms for Rendezvous attendees at a reduced rate. Contact information: [www.oxfordsuitesboise.com](http://www.oxfordsuitesboise.com) or 888-322-8001



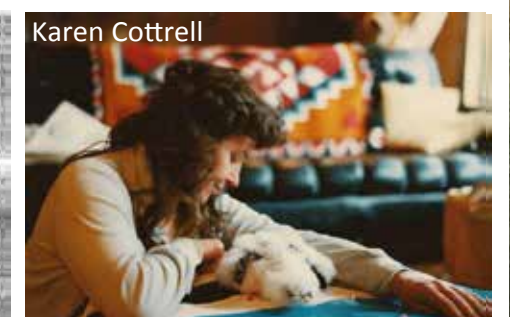
## THE WALL OF REMEMBRANCE INDUCTEES FROM 2018



Bob McCallum



Larry Zuk



Karen Cottrell



Monte Kirven



James Enderson



Ken Mesch



Ken Holkestad



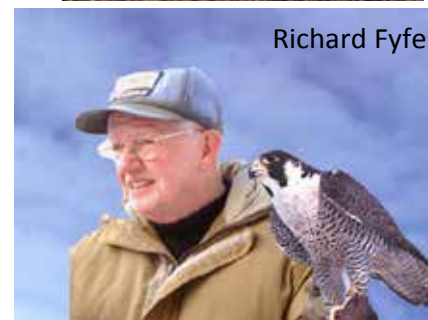
Russell Taylor



Val Fairman



Rande Money



Richard Fyfe



Mike Smith



Wayne Nelson





# OHIO FALCONRY ASSOCIATION

by: Mike Pompoco, Secretary

## CLUB UPDATE

At 12:30, President Mick Brown called to order The Ohio Falconry Association's 2018 fall picnic and meeting. The picnic again took place at Jeff Melsop's outside Columbus. Thirty-one falconers, family, and friends had been gathering for a couple of hours, setting out birds and swapping stories. During the meeting, Mick talked about what's been happening throughout the last few months. He introduced the officers and had Mike Krock tell us he's stepping down as treasurer and Justin Brown will be taking over. Mike did a great job and will help Justin transition smoothly.

We talked about the upcoming NAFA meet and our meet on March 8, 9, and 10. Ohio is also planning a meet for the 12th and 13th of January. Vice President Brandon Hunter talked about things to watch out for if you use a "zip" line type set-up in your weathering. We have 87 members in the club, with four apprentices and five looking for sponsors. Jeff Melsop is once more having the apprentice workshop in June. Brandon set up a nice raffle again, and afterwards we all gathered for a picture, then headed home to start the hunting season.



Alessandra Oliveto

A great photo from Ale Oliveto's instagram page I wanted to share with all of you. Ale is the Chairperson of the Womens Working Group in the IAF and a fine falconer. I LOVE the photo of the young girl with the shirt that shows the change of direction for a new generation! Very cute, and love the attitude! Go Girl!

(Ale designed the shirt!)



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Vitamin D3-----85,000 IU/kg	Menadione-----150 mg/kg
Vitamin B12-----20,000 mcg/kg	Thiamine-----800 mg/kg
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# NEW *to* NAFA

welcome to our new members!

New Members signing up June 29th-Oct 17th

We Are Thrilled You Decided To Join Us



Dianne Best	Manitoba	Canada	Evan Kuehl	NV	United States
Christian Morrisette	BC	Canada	Sherri Larson	WA	United States
Kyle Perrin		UK	Richard Leaphart	SC	United States
George Thomson	Scotland	UK	Alexandra Leigh	AL	United States
Mark Bash	CA	United States	James Logan	KY	United States
Christophe Beusch	SD	United States	Joseph Mashburn	TN	United States
Donna Blanton	GA	United States	John McCormack	TX	United States
William Brazelton	CA	United States	Sarah McLeish	ID	United States
Ruth Buck	WA	United States	Jim Myers	MO	United States
Hunter Comeau	OR	United States	Anthony Nelson	TX	United States
Christopher Duffy	TX	United States	Dan Nielsen	IA	United States
Lauren Dunnells	NH	United States	Erik Peretta	NY	United States
Garrett Dunnells	NH	United States	Shari Rettig	AL	United States
Mike Fauteaux	NM	United States	Mark Rettig	AL	United States
Kevin Foster	CA	United States	Casey Robinson	ID	United States
Heather Freeman	NC	United States	Jessica Rosengren	MN	United States
Jim Fustos	ID	United States	Mark Schibler	AL	United States
Chris Gibson	NM	United States	Christian Shellabarger	GA	United States
Elio Gonzalez	FL	United States	Ty Siemsen	IL	United States
Lauralie Gutschmidt	WA	United States	Bret Smith	TX	United States
Patrick Hageman	AR	United States	Billy Springfield	TX	United States
Everett Headley	MT	United States	Stephanie Stuckwisch	OH	United States
Stephen Heckel	AK	United States	Caren Tackett	CO	United States
Jack Hood	GA	United States	Kevin Taylor	KS	United States
Chris Horton	CA	United States	Neal Thomson	UT	United States
Robert Hubbard	OH	United States	Michael Thorn	MD	United States
Jim Hudson	TX	United States	Albert Wells	IA	United States
Lisa Hutton	GA	United States	Art Wickberg	CO	United States
Barry Jahn	CA	United States	Victor Wilkinson	KS	United States
Michael Kincaid	NC	United States	Christina Zumwalt	NY	United States



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## NORTH PACIFIC DIRECTOR

CLIFFORD S. KELLOGG

North\_Pacific\_Director@n-a-f-a.com

NORTH PACIFIC

I am writing this report at the last possible minute, having requested information from all of you, via email, for content for this news. A number of members have responded to my request and for that I thank you.

### ALASKA

Tim Sell writes from the north. He attended the Alaska Falconers Association field meet in late September, in Fairbanks. Tim is a staunch proponent of non-resident take in Alaska and continues to pursue those goals.

Tim writes that the south-central falconers are getting going. Ken Colley has the Anchorage area to himself right now and is giving the geese a run for their money with his big gyrfalcon. At last report he's up to 8. Tom Doolittle has a new tiercel Finnish goshawk and in his typical thorough fashion has been preparing him for an epic career. They've already taken a duck or two; they will be hard to keep up with in coming seasons. Don Hunley is heading to Africa for some big game hunting and Eric Fontaine has been busy with life so neither have hunted yet this season. Cindy Palimatier is working her kestrel. Tyler Dent drove home from several weeks of trapping all over the state with a 1245 gram passage Harlans socked up on the seat next him. He has really put the effort out there. Congrats! A couple of falconers came through recently from New York, who were lucky enough to get Alaska non resident take permits. Tim promised them some moose stew and several pigeons to aid in their effort. As for Tim himself, he just returned from a trip to Nevada and his big gos is almost down to weight. Warnings out to the local geese.....I heard from Gary Hampton that, in spite of health issues in the family, he plans on a late taken Goshawk this season.

Bruce Gordon writes that the local goshawks again nested in Chitin. His mentor, Dave Scheidt, took one of the 4 and has been coming up to fly about every other week.

### OREGON

Hearing from a number of Oregon falconers is appreciated. Claire Peterson informs me that she had released her Cooper's hawk earlier and is working with her first Goshawk, a Finnish/North American male. He's been catching game and is doing well. I was encouraged to see her bird's immaculate feather condition; something we should all strive for.

Kristin Ebbe writes that she has been flying her young male Harris' Hawk, "Kili". Her female is on track to get out in the field. Kristin is sponsoring her first apprentice Sara McCord of Philomath, Oregon.

Larry Cottrell indicates that the game populations in the SE corner of Oregon seem to be in pretty short supply. Larry is flying a Harris' hawk female, and getting plenty of exercise in doing so. She has been catching jacks lately.

Richard Hoyer provides a plethora of news, for which I am thankful. He reports that Larry Cottrell's former apprentice, Pat Brewster, of Burns, is getting back into the fray. Suzy Dellets of Burns is getting her female HH "Tala" going. Robert Cummings and Ben Pickett are working Harris' hawks. Chris and Sabrina Fox are working abatement. Richard Hoyer is flying his female Harris, "Conchita". Ian Gimino has had success with his redtail. Brian and Linda Kellogg indicate that the lagomorph populations in their area look good. Brian has had some problems with his knee but it will heal.

The Oregon Falconers Association will hold their 40th annual field meet on November 1-3, in Pendleton, Oregon. Things are looking good for this occasion. 40 years is a significant milestone, and the OFA is to be congratulated for the achievement.

### WASHINGTON

Things are heating up in Washington state. In addition to serving as your North Pacific Director, I have thrown my hat in the ring to possibly become the WFA secretary, as well as continuing on as WFA historian. Also running for WFA offices are Brad Felger, Erin Fleming, and Trevor MacCay. The Washington Falconers Association will hold their annual fall field meet on November 8-11 in Moses Lake, WA. They are looking forward to lots of gamehawking, and a presentation on Cooper's hawks by Ed Deal.

The WFA continues to be concerned about the continued delays, reportedly due to budgetary concerns, to the complete normalization of the Peregrine Falcon.

Dan Pike indicates that his apprentice, Em Burlison, has been catching cottontails with her tiercel Red-tail. Em stopped by our place awhile back to pick up some hawk trapping bait. It was nice to see her.

I received a nice letter from Anthony Potestivo the other day. Having struggled with a number of things including cancer, he has left for the Boise area, but has not left his fond memories of the times and grace he has seen from a number of Washington falconers.

Lee Tostevin is working with "Crash", her new female Harris' hawk, compliments of Tim Ainge who is working on relocating to Harsteen Island. Trevor MacCay is working with his tiercel Peregrine, "Simon".

Doug Pineo writes that he's getting his gyrs and his tundra falcon cranking. He is optimistic about the upcoming season.

We've had a number of talks with Jim Nelson recently.

Jim has been going through some tough times, and we lift him up in our thoughts and prayers.

Larry Ray just returned from two weeks of salmon and steelhead fishing in Alaska, and is preparing to visit the Eagle Falconry Meet in Rock Springs, Wyoming. He will be taking his old goshawk, Maggie (who has recently recovered from West Nile Virus), with the hopes that she may get a jack slip or two, between watching eagle flights. Larry was invited to bring some of his eagle hoods, which seem to find favor in the eagle hawking community.

Larry is also looking forward to a full season with his new beagle, Yummi. She got going late last year as a pup and showed great promise. She is a registered hunting

beagle, very slender with long legs and a very deep chest, and is FAST. The rabbits don't have time to play hide and seek from cover-to-cover with her on their trail!

On a personal note, Janna and I are very busy working on relocating from Western to Eastern Washington. It is a complicated and busy process. During it all, Janna is working with her male merlin, "Black Bart". Bart came from a local rehabilitator, and is an interesting challenge. My 23 year old Harris's, "Hera" is nearly complete with her moult. Due to the potential move, we may be unable to attend the Washington, or even the NAFA meets. I never thought that buying and selling a home would be so complicated!



JANNA AND HER NEW MERLIN "BLACK BART".

### FINAL THOUGHTS

There is much in the national discussion (not just falconry) about sexual abuse. NAFA has been, as we should be, up front in thinking about this issue. NO form of abuse is acceptable, and we hope to get in front of this in a positive way. Having said that, let me also caution each and every one of us: SOCIAL MEDIA is, in part, to blame. It is so easy to hide behind one's keyboard and spout off opinions, innuendoes, and so forth. We must all take care to think about what we are communicating, when, why, and how. Let us ensure that we genuinely lift each other up, and be kind to each other. I thank you for the opportunity to serve you.







# OKLAHOMA FALCONERS ASSOCIATION

by: Robert Huber, OFA Secretary

CLUB UPDATE

Summer has finally ended, and with the cooler weather, everyone is getting birds out of their chambers or anticipating how their new bird will do this season. Oklahoma had an increase in peregrine permits this year, which prompted many to get out and try their luck. Currently, four Oklahoma permits have been filled with four to go. Other Oklahoma falconers drew permits for Texas and are at South Padre experiencing beach trapping and



SCOTT DILLON WITH NEW PEREGRINE

hoping to bring one home. Mark Waller, Tim Jessell, and Robert Huber started imprint falcons this summer; Dan Murray, Scott Dillion, and Perry White are

working with passage peregrines; David Price is working with a passage merlin and prairie falcon; Rob Rainey has his new goshawk going; Phil Salvati and Joel May are working with passage Cooper's; and others have been working hard at trapping new birds.

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Expo was held this past September, and once again OFA had a booth highlighting Oklahoma falconry and supporting conservation of all raptors. Everyone always enjoys seeing our birds and can't believe they're real. In support of conservation this year, OFA gave away kestrel boxes at the expo, which were given to people who lived in areas favorable for nest box placement and were willing to put them up. Joel May did

a great job making sure the booth was set up, and a big thank you to all of the OFA members who also helped with the booth. Special thanks



RON LLOYD WITH RED-TAIL AT EXPO BOOTH



PHIL SALVATI WITH HARRIS'S HAWK AT EXPO

to Chris Kimble for building and donating the kestrel boxes. Phil Salvati and Ron Lloyd win the award of endurance for being at the expo all three days and tolerating all of those questions. Again, thanks to all who helped with this worthwhile event.

The OFA fall meet is scheduled for November 9-11 and the winter meet will be scheduled in the near future. Be sure to keep an eye on the website for additional information. We would enjoy seeing you there.



## California Quail

(*Callipepla californica*)

Their breeding habitat is shrubby areas and open woodlands in western North America. The California quail is the state bird of California. It was established as the state bird in 1932

### DESCRIPTION:

The California quail (*Callipepla californica*), also known as the California valley quail or valley quail. These birds have a curving crest or plume, made of six feathers, that droops forward: black in males and brown in females; the flanks are brown with white streaks. Males have a dark brown cap and a black face with a brown back, a grey-blue chest and a light brown belly. Females and immature birds are mainly grey-brown with a light-colored belly.

### BEHAVIOR:

The California quail is a highly sociable bird that often gathers in small flocks or "coveys". One of their daily communal activities is a dust bath. A group of quail will select an area where the ground has been newly turned or is soft, and using their underbellies, will burrow downward into the soil some one to two inches. These birds forage on the ground, often scratching at the soil. They can sometimes be seen feeding at the sides of roads. Their diet consists mainly of seeds, leaves and occasionally insects. They will roost in trees to avoid danger and to rest.

### HABITAT:

They are year-round residents. Although this bird coexists well at the edges of urban areas, it is declining in some areas as human populations increase. They were originally found mainly in the southwestern United States but they have been introduced into other areas including British Columbia, Hawaii, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, South Africa, New Zealand, and to Norfolk Island and King Island in Australia. If startled, these birds explode into short rapid flight, called "flushing". Given a choice, they will normally escape on foot.



### HUNTING CHALLENGES:

Like other Quail species, this is a highly social bird that lives in coveys. While the California Quail will raise up in flight, it will more often choose to run from danger. If it does elect to fly, be prepared for a fast, explosive, low-to-the-ground flight that inevitably leads toward nearby cover. Falconers who begin their hunt at dawn will find it worthwhile to imitate the "chi-ca-go" call and listen

intently to the direction from which it is returned. Often this will indicate the general location the birds' roost.

- Preferred falconry birds for the hunt are: **Aplo-mado falcons, Cooper's hawks, Sharp-shinned hawks, Goshawks, Merlins, male Harris's hawks.**





# POTOMAC FALCONERS ASSOCIATION

by: David Parks

CLUB UPDATE

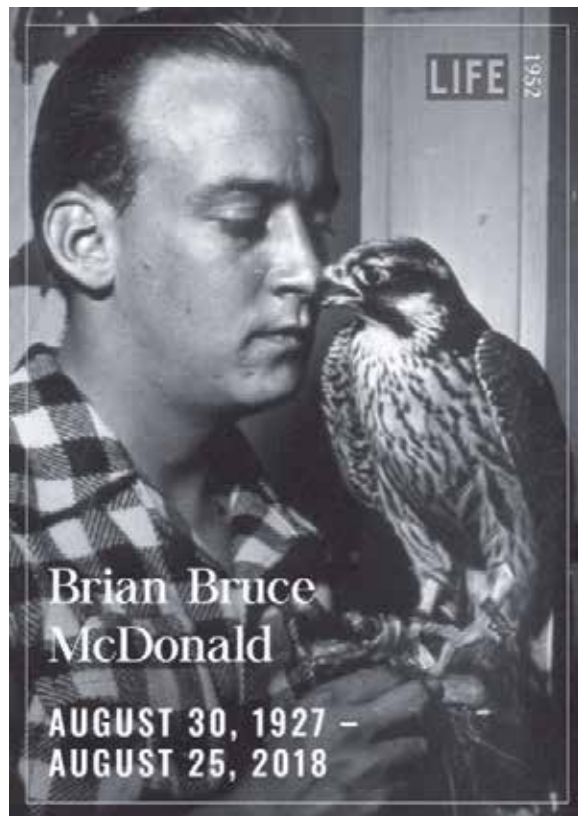
Hello, fellow NAFA members. The Potomac Falconers Association and I would like to extend our warmest hello as the chill of winter sets in. I hope by now you've secured that new charge for the season or your old, faithful hunting companion had a healthy molt, training went smoothly, and you're in the field pursuing game.

The PFA had our annual picnic in late August. We had over 50 people in attendance and were blessed with beautiful weather again this year. PFA member Steve Keil was gracious enough to host the event once again at his beautiful farm. Steve's daughter and son were a huge help – I cannot thank them enough. It was great to see our fellow members, friends, and their families. The day went well with lots of tasty food and engaging conversation. We held a silent auction, which afforded people an opportunity to bid on some highly-sought-after items to add to their collection. It was a wonderful day and a great way to get excited about the impending trapping season.

Speaking of the trapping season, this year has been a mix of both pleasure and frustration. Along the coast, the migration seemed to start early and fast. While early season counts of merlins and peregrines along the coast were high, trapping them proved to be more difficult for members this year. One member told me they counted over a hundred peregrines in a single day but only three gave them any serious looks, of which they netted zero. Despite the frustration, I believe most of the peregrine permits granted to the states in our region have been filled. As they go with the winds, ridge trapping was just the opposite. With no NW winds at all

until the first week in October the western trap sites were all but silent, yet once the winds began the birds were "comin' down the mountain..." It's been a frustrating and moderately fulfilling trapping season all in all.

I'll end with some very sad news. As most of you know by now, Mr. Brian McDonald passed away on August 25, 2018. Mr. Brian was one of the PFA's founding members back in 1961. I had the pleasure of getting to know him over the last few years. Known as a great falconer, an accomplished trapper, and one of our sport's legendary hood makers, Mr. Brian will not soon be forgotten. Words cannot fully express the man he was, nor



MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD IN HONOR OF MR. BRIAN McDONALD ON ASSATEAGUE ISLAND IN OCTOBER

the legacy he leaves behind. I could fill this entire edition of HawkChalk and a few more with the stories I've heard.

Mr. Brian had such a widespread impact on the falconry community. His little twists and turns on the road of life had so many passengers and touched so many lives. If not for him, I may not be sitting here now typing this message, for Mr. Brian sponsored Mr. Bill Lauer and Mr. Bill Lauer sponsored my mentor, Bill Barbour, not to mention his involvement in the beginning of the PFA. They say the measure of a man is not what they take but what they leave behind when they go, or as I've heard before, it's not the start or end date on your obituary that means much – it's the dash in between that matters most!

Well, on a beautiful, sunny, cool, breezy October day on Assateague Island, I witnessed a tidbit of Mr. Brian's "dash." While gathered on the beach, we had friends, family, and falconers from across the country remember Mr. Brian during a memorial. It was an amazing and heartfelt experience which words cannot describe. Mr. Brian was a simple man from what I've gathered over the last few years – a man who loved family, falconry, and his friends, and a man who believed in doing things with respect and to the absolute best of his ability. Mr. Brian and his wife, Joanne, will have a plaque dedicated this spring on the wall of remembrance at the Archives of Falconry. Please join us as we pay tribute to one of North American falconry's legends.



As a NAFA member, this organization is very important to me. NAFA is the driving force that helps keep falconry alive and well in North America. The efforts of NAFA and its members are what has allowed us to form such good relationships with legislative, law enforcement, and environmental groups that all affect our sport. It is what has led to clearer falconry regulations, passage peregrine takes, and so many other positive things. Without NAFA, there would be no unifying entity for our small voices to rally behind and coordinate our efforts to make an impact. We are currently getting to enjoy a golden age of falconry because of what all those falconers before us have done.

– Jeff Suggs





## DIRECTOR AT LARGE

GREG THOMAS

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DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Ancient Greek mathematician Archimedes used geometry to prove "The Law of the Lever", wherein a seemingly small force can move a much larger object by using a long lever arm properly placed over a fulcrum set next to what you want to move. Consider that there are only about 15 falconers for every million people North America. These people's thoughts, attitudes and actions can affect falconry and its resources, for better or worse. Can we agree that the trends in habitat, prey populations, public attitudes toward hunting, access to hunting lands, etc. are not encouraging?

Our numbers are far too small to have serious political influence. Even if we did, legal and/or regulatory measures always breed resentment and anger from those being regulated or legislated against. So, such gains are often temporary, and the backlash against them can leave things worse than we began. No, the only thing that gives us a chance of "winning" and preserving what we love is use the Law of the Lever to change hearts and minds to want to do the "right thing". Consider the following . . .

- Management of rural lands is a generational thing; each generation must have a love of their land that goes beyond crop and livestock production numbers. Many farms and ranches today are being run by younger people whose parents and grandparents may be the only ones who fondly remember having wild game to hunt. And, the trend to corporate farming with absentee ownership that has little or no "connection" with the land

is just about making money.

- Landowner monetary considerations cannot be ignored or belittled; it costs a small fortune to successfully run any ranch or farm today. Shouldn't some form of monetary reward accompany landowner efforts to provide wildlife habitat for game? Especially since land in habitat likely will decrease land put into crop production or livestock grazing. How should that cost be borne?
- Since we don't want falconry to be only for the wealthy, what, besides expensive hunting leases and such, could bring landowners income that would encourage them to provide more habitat?
- Could technology become a friend, instead of a foe, of wildlife habitat? Can "efficient" farming be more than leaving nothing but bare fields after the harvest?

**Ok, now let me throw up some ideas that address how we might put a "Lever" to the above.**

- Establish a partnership with other hunting organizations that we already partner with politically to have a presence at agricultural and livestock trade shows, state and county fairs, etc., where we'd have first class trade show booths, handout literature, seminar programs, videos, etc.
- Indianapolis, IN annually hosts the annual Future Farmers of America Convention. Picture a booth with live raptors, educational materials on wildlife habitat, in booth videos on large screen TVs that attract young and old alike.
- 4H programs focused on providing/preserving wildlife habitat.

- Irrigation and farm chemical seminars at area hotels are another possible venue.
- How about partnerships with ag and ranching communities to "sell" falconry excursions for non-falconers that create community tourist dollar income and landowner income that helps pay the landowners to provide game habitat? Such excursions would could be unique sales contest awards, eco-tourist destinations, and other classes/groups of non-falconers. Everybody wins!
- At the university level, how about a cooperative partnership between the technology, agriculture/livestock and wildlife biology departments to BOTH increase productivity AND maintain wildlife on ag/ranching lands? Here's a fun idea: Satellite geo-fencing technology using cheap, reusable collars to "steer" (pun intended) livestock around land to maximize grazing efficiency, while leaving wildlife habitat ungrazed? Imagine if the landowner could eventually do away with the expense of erecting and maintaining mechanical fencing? Hmmm . . . that latter would put an end to falcons flying into fences, too, yes? Don't say

this cannot be done. And, with time, technology usually becomes better and cheaper.

- Falconer retirement homes where the old timers can pass on their skills and knowledge to visiting new falconers and be an educational resource for schools, etc.

Note that all of the above is intended to develop, build, and enhance a long term landowner/rural community culture that appreciates wildlife and sees the harvest of it as both natural and supportive of the landowners' livelihoods and benefiting their communities as well.

Please let me hear from you on this Director's Report. Am I nuts? Chuckle! Or, are you stirred to see that resting on our laurels is not an option? For future game to fly and landowners receptive to us, our collective passion must be leveraged to achieve far more than expected from such small numbers.

Good Hawking to you all for what remains of our season!



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# COLORADO HAWKING CLUB

by: Matthew Gould, President

CLUB UPDATE

## Greetings from the Centennial State!

The Colorado Hawking Club held its annual "Eyas Picnic" on August 18 at Town Park in the Town of Berthoud, Colorado. The weather cooperated, an auction of great falconry items ensued, and it was an event enjoyed by all. Of special note, Deanna Curtis, who has served the club as president for the past four years, attended this year's picnic as her last major club event serving as president. The International Association for Falconry & Conservation of Birds of Prey has announced that the theme of this year's World Falconry Day is "Women Falconers . . . Wings for Falconry!" This is a fitting tribute to the CHC's first woman president. The Colorado Hawking Club thanks Deanna for her service to the club. Deanna, you left some big shoes to fill.

On the subject of World Falconry Day, the CHC will honor the event with appearances at Jax Mercantile Company stores. Jax is a local competitor to the big chain outdoor stores, and the club looks forward to making the most of this new opportunity. Thanks to Alyssa Reed for connecting us with Jax.

Fall events will mostly be over by the time you read this, but it would still be a mistake not to mention our biggest fall event – the "Passage Campout." As of this writing, the event is days away. This event provides an opportunity for those who are trapping to connect with others who can provide assistance and guidance, and it gives those who are already hawking a chance to gather around a campfire to share stories. Also, we throw a big party. We roast a whole pig on Saturday and enjoy great food and fun in the evening.

The club holds its annual meet on the weekend of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Details remain in flux, but for anyone looking to attend a meet in January, information will be available on the club website at [www.coloradohawkingclub.com](http://www.coloradohawkingclub.com).

Colorado saw regulatory changes affecting falconry in 2018. License fees increased, but more importantly, we now enjoy a season for taking eyass raptors from May 1 through May 31, and a general take season that runs from June 1 through January 31 of the following year.

I'm afraid reports of activity from particular falconers are somewhat limited. Joe'l Lambe and David Messer are out with their two Harris's hawks chasing bunnies again. Joe'l and David introduced the birds last year, and despite a summer apart, they (the birds) remembered each other and are cooperating effectively, to the chagrin of the local rabbits. Isaac Tyrrell just trapped a passage male gos this past weekend and is thrilled with the bird (the location of "Camp Yeti" remains undisclosed by Isaac or fellow trapper Pat Brown). Travis Anderson, my own apprentice, worked hard to trap an early red-tailed hawk and found success with a harnessed pigeon. Travis reports the bird is progressing nicely. Alan Hoskins is getting his second-year tundra female rolling. Alan trapped this peregrine as his first bird after being an apprentice, and thanks go out to him for writing about his experiences on the beach for our club publication, the "Stoop." Alyssa Reed is ramping up "John Wayne," her intermewed passage red-tailed hawk, and Will McDonough apparently has his hands full with a new passage Cooper's hawk. Karen Green reports she now lives in a two-hawk household with her husband, who trapped his first bird in September. Jenni Buckley's Rufio (male Harris's hawk) has already taken one jack and multiple bunnies this season. Finally, Jenni reports that Neil Balchan is in Colorado for school for the next two years and plans on flying a red-tailed hawk while he's here.

In closing, Joe'l Lambe just messaged me about flying the two male Harris's hawks together, reporting, "We are having a great time!"

**Make that your goal, my friends.** 

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