

FALCONERS, SUSTAINABLE USE AND CONSERVATION

American Falconers bred and released thousands of peregrines to restore wild populations over the past 40 years. Falconry techniques were essential to the success of the releases.

The mortality of fledged WILD peregrines is 50-70% in their first several years. American harvest of peregrines for falconry is less than 1% of the annual wild population production. The US Fish & Wildlife Service, in peer-reviewed publications, state that with a harvest below 5%, the effect is too small to even scientifically measure.



Falconry is strictly regulated in North America, at the insistence of the North American Falconers Association. There is NO black market in raptors in America.

Leading American Falconers formed the North American Grouse Partnership 15 years ago to protect native grouse and their habitats, working on national conservation policy and habitat improvement.



International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey

IAF is an accredited NGO providing advisory services to UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee (NGO-90006) and an accredited member of IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature.

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- The saker ranges across 80 range states from Austria to China, from Belarus or Poland to Niger, Tanzania and India.
- In some regions its numbers have declined dramatically, while in others populations are stable or blooming.
- The Saker is widely used in falconry, and is important for traditional falconers in Central Asia and in the Arabic world.
- In Mongolia the UAE funded "A thousand nest" project which proved that the numbers of breeding birds can be increased significantly. A Hungarian artificial nest project quickly doubled their population.
- The 11th Conference of Parties of the Convention of Migratory Species created the a Saker Task Force to prepare a Global Action Plan, IAF is an active member of the STF since its beginning.
- The Saker GAP recognizes sustainable use as one of the key elements in Saker conservation.
- It recognizes several significant causes for the decline, especially electrocution, poisoning, changes of landscape and land use, although there is still concern about unsustainable illegal harvesting.
- The IAF will fund and manage the Online Information Portal, one of three flagship projects; this involves monitoring and measurement of the use of these falcons by falconers and is in cooperation with UNEP, BirdLife and IUCN.



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"The most glamorous hobby I know of today is the revival of falconry. The hawk, at the slightest error in technique of handling, may fly away into the blue. All in all, falconry is the perfect hobby."

Aldo Leopold, father of wildlife management and of the United States' wilderness system, - 1949

Sustainable use is fundamental to the Convention on Biological Diversity and is one of its Primary Objectives. It is further defined in the Addis Ababa Guidelines



"Sustainable use is the use of Wildlife associated with a process aimed at ensuring that the use can be continued indefinitely"

-Grahame J W Webb 2014

Incentive driven conservation is Sustainable Use.



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Falconry is practiced in South Africa, Zimbabwe and, most recently, Namibia. In this region, falconers have a sustainable harvest of wild raptors based on consultation with conservation authorities.

As a result:

- Falconers are fully engaged at all stages of conservation management to ensure that there is effective conservation of the resource.
- There is minimal legal trading and NO illegal trade in falconry raptors.
- The wild harvest is seen as a considerable privilege by falconers and this promotes mechanisms which ensure good animal welfare standards and a high standard of falconry practice.



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In Turkey, trapping and flying a first year sparrowhawk at migratory quail is one of the great falconry traditions. The trapping method is intricate and fascinating, a rapid process; quail and sparrowhawks arrive together and the hunting season is thus very short, just a few weeks. At the end of the hunting season the hawk is released back to nature.

This epitomizes a tradition of sustainable use of both quarry and hawk and requires considerable field-craft. Its practitioners are intimately involved in nature and important sentinels to change. It reinforces that essential symbiosis between man, raptor and nature which is the essence of Falconry.

The effects of changing land use on the southern shores of the Black Sea on migratory quail and sparrowhawks are currently being noted by Turkish falconers.



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The National Falconry Traditions of Turkmenistan are a model for Sustainable Use

Nests are monitored and protected by generations of falconers and nowadays all information is shared with the Ministry of Nature Protection.

Falcons are always released back to the wild near to the original nest after 4 or 5 years cooperation.

Traditional prey is the hare and hunting is practiced mostly by shepherds in desert areas, on the move while travelling to distant pastures.

Falconry is officially recognized as one of the most important conservation and research actions for the protection of Saker Falcons in the Red data Book of Turkmenistan

