



CODE OF WELFARE AND HUSBANDRY OF BIRDS OF PREY AND OWLS.

COMMITMENT OF BIRD OF PREY AND OWL KEEPING

What should first be thought of when considering having a bird of prey or owl (raptor) is a realisation of the time and costs involved in keeping, looking after, training or breeding with them. Apart from the really small species, most can and should live over twenty years and the larger species can live to over 30 years. As they get older they are likely to require more veterinary treatment, which is expensive. Remember too that you have a long-term responsibility for the raptor. He or she will have flown for you, bred for you or just been a companion, therefore he or she deserves to have a decent retirement and not just be dumped or passed on when they are old or past their best.

Cost should be a big consideration because these days the raptor is not likely to be the most expensive cost. A decent aviary that will keep your raptor safe and comply with the 2006 Animal Welfare Act will probably cost you between one and two thousand pounds. There are aviaries that you can buy off the shelf as it were, but most of them are not large enough, not secure enough, not weather proof enough and generally not suitable for most birds of prey and owls.

The minimum good quality equipment required such as glove, swivel, bells, perches, travel box and so on will run into hundreds of pounds. **No one** should fly a bird without the use of good working telemetry, it is extremely irresponsible to do so and many of us believe that it should be mandatory. The amount of stress, time and worry it will save you is enormous; it should also save the life of your bird if it does not know how to hunt for itself. It is a legal requirement to be able to local and retrieve your raptor, as it is illegal to intentionally release raptors to the wild in the UK. This incidentally goes just as much for owls as the diurnal birds of prey. There will be some birds that are too small to wear telemetry, and the very occasional bird that refuses to wear it without damaging it, however almost all will wear a transmitter and it is madness not to use them. You can expect to pay between £700 and £1000 for a good set of telemetry.

There is food, veterinary insurance (very unwise not to insure your bird if you only have one or two), travel box, fridge for food, deep freeze for food, tools, bath, and so on, and all this before you get your bird.

Then there is what bird to get? This is a question that you may well find you can answer yourself if you go on a good falconry course. Once you start to train and fly birds or a good course it becomes much clearer to you as to which species of raptor best suits your needs. It will also be defined by the countryside that you intend flying your bird, whether for hunting or just for fun.

In all seriousness keeping, flying, breeding, or training birds of prey and or owls cannot be a passing fancy. It is a big commitment, but one that can be infinitely rewarding long term.

The time, facilities and funds available to the potential keeper should be carefully assessed **before** a raptor is obtained. Research into how to house, keep, feed, handle and train a bird should be done **prior** to obtaining a bird. Housing, equipment, food and veterinary care should also all be organised **prior** to a bird arriving with a new keeper.

INFORMATION

The following codes and standards have been drawn up by a group of people highly experienced in working with birds of prey. In all cases the welfare of the birds has come first, then the welfare of the people keeping birds, and finally the ability to be allowed to do so. There are many individuals, groups and even governments who would like to see the keeping of any non-domestic animal and that means birds of prey and owls, banned. So not only will you have the responsibility for the bird and any humans you might come into contact with, you will also have the quality keeping of birds of prey to uphold. You need to make sure that you do not put the keeping of raptors into disrepute by your actions, particularly if they might lead to the banning of certain species.

The aim of this document is to assist any potential beginners to falconry or bird of prey or owl keeping; also importantly to remind and aid those already involved in falconry or diurnal or nocturnal bird of prey keeping; to inform anyone who might be interested in what guidelines we set ourselves in our care of birds; and to show to those who may not approve or understand the reasons for keeping birds of prey or owls, that we always will have the birds' best welfare and husbandry in mind.

PEOPLE AND BIRDS OF PREY AND OWLS

1) How to begin in falconry or bird of prey/owl keeping

It is highly recommended that before acquiring a bird, a beginner should obtain some sort of personal "hands on" instruction in falconry and/or the needs of a bird of prey or owl.

The following suggestions are how to go about this. The Hawk Board has lists of useful addresses, including Clubs, which you will find at the back of this publication.

There are a number of ways to research and learn what is involved in keeping any diurnal or nocturnal birds of prey, and how to train them.

- a) Join a reputable falconry or bird of prey club or association, which may well, have an apprenticeship scheme for beginners.
- b) Go on a suitable good quality-training course – this should be a **minimum** of five days - not a single experience day. You need to make sure that it is a good reputable place and suitable for the course you want to take. Which means that you should probably visit several places and judge for yourself which one you find the best and choose that one.
- c) Seek out private assistance from an experienced or willing falconer, living within reasonable travelling distance.

You can also organise to do your LANTRA Award for Beginners in Bird of Prey Management. However as this is NOT a course, it is an award given after you have shown what your knowledge and practical experience is, so you will almost definitely have to have done one of the three options above prior to this.

Some sort of personal experience of the species which the beginner is going to use is very important and can help towards deciding the species of bird that is suitable for you and what you want to do.

It is unlikely that sufficient understanding will be gained from videos or books; although these are a most valuable tool, they cannot substitute for hands on experience.

2) Suitable Quarters.

These must be made available well before the arrival of the bird. However it is sensible to wait until you have had training before building anything. It is suggested that any individual quarters, either aviaries or weathering areas should be ideally a minimum width and length of three times the wingspan of the species to be kept. Wherever possible more space should

be allowed to give the bird maximum room and comfort. If an individual bird is showing physical signs of stress or damage, it should be obvious that the accommodation is not satisfactory, and should be altered.

With climate change and more extreme weather conditions, housing should allow for heated perching in the winter, and enough shelter in extended periods of rain. Also be built well enough to withstand strong winds.

As no bird should be flown continuously year in year out, any potential falconer or keeper of birds of prey or owls must have a suitable aviary for those times when the bird is not being flown, e.g. moulting, and therefore should not be tethered.

It is crucial to have all weathering's protected by a weld mesh front to keep birds safe from dogs, foxes, rats, mink, cats, badgers, stoats, unwanted humans and the like. If a bird is to remain tethered in a weathering during the winter then the weathering should have well fitting insulated doors with a double glazed window so that should the temperature remain below freezing during the day and the doors have to remain closed for most of the time, the bird is able to see out.

The smaller owls should not be tethered, but instead kept free lofted in a suitable pen.

All pens should have adequate protection from all weather conditions. They should be free from damp, fungal spores and easily disinfected. All parts of the pen should be viewable from the outside (if a seclusion pen, by means of spy-holes or mirrors, although we would recommend that there is at least one window in a seclusion pen as all raptors like and need to have a view other than just sky).

It is illegal to keep birds in small boxes over-night, unless they are under veterinary care. So bear that in mind when thinking about what you want for housing.

Pens containing loose raptors (diurnal or nocturnal birds of prey) **MUST** have a double door system to prevent escape. Windows, roof and fittings should be designed to prevent injury to the bird. Old fashioned wire netting is **not** suitable.

A fresh, clean supply of water should be available daily to all tethered birds and all those which are loose in pens.

3) Food

A suitable, varied, hygienically stored, continuous supply of food must be located before obtaining a bird and must be available to the owner at all times. Food must be healthy, from a known source and free of lead shot.

4) Veterinary Care

Potential owners, or those already owning birds of prey and owls should check with their local vet to see if he or she is prepared to take on exotic species (those other than dogs or cats etc.) or will take specialist advice when needed. If a vet feels that he or she will not go for advice to an avian specialist then a suitable vet who will do so should be found. This should be done before any problems arise as afterwards may be too late. Most falconry or bird of prey clubs have a list of suitable vets as will any decent bird of prey centre should know the name of at least two specialist avian vets.

5) Furniture/Equipment

High quality, suitable furniture/equipment should be on hand for the new bird. Cheap equipment can cause the death of a raptor and may well turn out to be very expensive if it fails and your bird is lost, and there is a lot of poor equipment about. Particular emphasis should be placed on comfort as well as safety. Regular inspection and overhaul of furniture is essential. Leather jesses, and any perishable equipment should be removed prior to the moult and thrown away. New equipment should be placed on the bird at the start of retraining after the moult or an extended period of rest.

6) Source of Bird

Ensure that the legal requirements are met before obtaining a bird, as these change over time, your best course of action on this is to contact the correct government department, who at the moment are APHA, but this will probably change. In the last four decades this government department has had more name changes than the decades of existence. They should

be able to tell you about any legal requirements and changes that might have been made.

Proof of breeding of all birds is only sensible regardless of a legal requirement – without it the onus to prove origin is with the keeper. Schedule 4 birds should be ringed and registered in accordance with the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and should have the appropriate registration document. Annex A birds should have the correct rings or unique marking and CITES permits. The pitfalls are numerous and the potential new keeper must find out what is required prior to obtaining a bird

Those who take on injured wild birds from their vet, either for eventual release or permanent homing, must have written authentication of the source of the bird from the vet. If the source is not a vet, then a record of who found the bird, where and under what circumstances, plus what injuries sustained and the prognosis for future release if any should be made. Technically non vets are allowed to keep an injured wild bird for two weeks without informing the authorities, and a vet can keep a bird for six weeks, however as most vets send recovering raptors to rehabilitation places, that stipulation does not make much sense. But if the raptor is still under the care of the vet but at the rehabilitation centre the six weeks can apply to the centre. After that time the bird will need to be registered and the resulting release or death must be informed to the authorities.

If a bird is being obtained as a captive bred bird from a breeder, it is suggested that a short guarantee will give the new owner time to have a new raptor checked either by a vet or an expert. However, any raptor that does not come up to the required physical standard must be very swiftly returned in the same physical condition as when received, before a full refund can be expected.

It is sensible to find a recommended breeder and pay special attention to the quality of the bird rather than to the price.

7) Transport of a bird

There are legal requirements for travelling birds, as these change, it is advisable to find out what is required from your local APHA.

At any stage in a bird's life it may need to be transported, either on collection of a new bird or to visit the vet, or to go to a flying ground or hunting grounds. Therefore it is advisable to have a well-constructed box at hand at all times.

The box should be of suitable size such that the bird can stand up in a relaxed manner without touching any sides or the top whether sitting on the floor of the box or on a perch. The box should be constructed so that it is dark; this will keep the bird calm, but with large ventilation holes towards the bottom of the box rather than the top as this prevents flying upwards to the light. There should be a nonslip surface on the floor such as clean, fitted open-weave carpet or clean AstroTurf. If the bird is trained then a perch can be placed in the box, if untrained they do better on the floor with the right covering.

These days there are commercially produced travel boxes for raptors, make sure you get the right size for your bird and that it will go into your car!

The door to the box should be well secured. Cardboard boxes should only be used in emergencies.

During periods of warm weather it is advisable to travel birds early, or late, avoiding the heat of the day. **No bird in transit should be left in a position where it can overheat.**

Be aware that all birds are particularly susceptible to fumes - car exhaust fumes can easily leak imperceptibly into vehicles and kill birds in minutes. Birds should never be transported in the boot or a car.

Untrained birds are better transported unfed; fat, nervous birds are more easily stressed. Sometimes spraying the birds with a mist of water and getting them wet will help to keep them calm. It is a very bad idea to travel a bird in a box

hooded as you can't see what is happening and the bird could be sick and choke, or get over heated.

These days it is safer for a bird to be travelled out of sight in a box, rather than sitting in the open on a cage, hooded in front of all to see. Indeed we suspect that this form of travel may actually be illegal as the bird moving around to balance could distract the driver, or other drivers.

For particularly nervous birds and species veterinary advice should be sought prior to travelling.

Always take your bird out of the box in a safe area, one that is enclosed and if there are windows – draw the blinds or curtains. Raptors have been killed flying out of boxes into a large window.

8) Training methods

This is probably the most stressful period in a bird of prey or owl's life. Having said that, all living creatures are subject to stress in their lives and it is not always a very bad thing. It is important that raptors can learn to deal with stress, however minimising the amount of stress is a wise and kind thing to do. So bear in mind that your new raptor is removed from surroundings that it knows, transported, often jessed and tethered and handled immediately. This is not a sensible approach however keen you are to start. In the last 5 decades falconers have learnt a great deal and reducing stress by slowing up the training is a sensible and safe thing to do.

Stress in training should be minimised; for example - aspergillosis is a stress-related condition known to affect Golden Eagles, Red-tailed Hawks, Merlins, Gyr Falcons and Goshawks, also Great Grey Owls and Snowy Owls – to name but a few. In this particular disease, incidence is almost invariably within a month of taking up a bird from an aviary to fly, or subsequent to some other major stress factor such as transporting or changing homes. If you are concerned that this may happen to a species that you are going to obtain and train ask a specialist vet what is the best thing to do. A prophylactic treatment can be given to the raptor, however it is important that this is done under the direction of a specialist vet and for the prescribed time frame.

The danger of early tethering of young, immature birds whose bones are not fully formed must be understood and avoided.

To reduce stress a settling down period for a new bird can really help. Do not immediately start to train a young bird, but give it a settling-in period before starting to handle and train. That either means putting it into a new aviary and letting it settle to its new surroundings, or tethering it, but not trying to pick it up and train it until it has started relax a little, to sit up on its perch and to feed on its own by its perch.

There are many good books that give training methods, but as has been stated earlier, beginners to bird of prey or owl keeping should acquire experience of the training methods before attempting these on their own bird e.g. undertaking an appropriate course, accompanying an experienced falconer etc.

9) Perches and Weathering

Diurnal (day flying) birds of prey should not be tethered except when flown daily, in genuine training or under veterinary treatment.

As owls are trained as chicks there is no need to tether them and small owls should not be tethered at all. All owls can be flown very successfully outside whilst being kept loose in aviaries at all other times and it a much better, safer, kinder and more sensible way to keep them. Nowadays many people are keeping diurnal birds of prey free lofted once they are trained.

No tethered birds should be left unsheltered from heat or inclement weather, or unprotected from stress, or possible predators including man, or left without water for long periods.

Perches should be checked for signs of wear and tear, and cleaned and disinfected regularly. Bumble Foot is a disease of the feet that if left unattended can kill. In most cases it is caused by poor perches.

10) General Health

The first principle for keeping healthy birds is the recognition of good health, so that even a slight variation from the norm is rapidly detected and acted upon. Don't wait to get a potentially sick bird to the vet, move swiftly.

All birds must be properly inspected daily.

Aviary design should be such that food contamination by droppings is minimised; keepers should be aware of the dangers of birds eating old or decaying food.

11) Field Etiquette for falconry

Permission from the landowner or tenant must **always** be acquired before a bird is flown, whether for hunting or just exercise.

All birds flown free must be adequately trained. Particular care should be taken when flying raptors that have never hunted free in case they are lost and unable to fend for themselves.

Every effort should be made to ensure that birds are flown only at quarry which may be legally taken. Quarry should be of a size that will be rapidly overpowered by the bird, so that no undue suffering should occur to the prey species. Valid game licenses must be obtained and the game seasons must be respected.

Various laws to do with hunting should be understood and observed. In some places it is illegal to hunt on a Sunday. It is illegal to hunt from a moving vehicle, it is illegal to use bagged game – i.e. release live prey in front of your bird and so on. Lack of knowledge of these laws will not protect you if you get caught breaking them.

Every falconer in the field should be competent in despatching quarry immediately and effectively should the need arise.

A simple first aid kit should be carried in the falconer's bag so that immediate treatment can be implemented should injury occur to bird or falconer

If birds are flown in company, adequate precautions must be taken when one bird is flown in the proximity of others, e.g. only one bird should be slipped at a time.

An awareness of other users of the land, such as the public walking dogs, particularly small ones is important. Harris Hawks particularly can be difficult with unknown dogs.

Jesses

Flying birds should either wear field jesses, e.g. slit less straps, or if traditional jesses are used, the slits should be covered in such a way that they cannot catch in anything.

Birds that get soaked or exhausted while being flown must be attended to immediately. Welfare of the birds must come before sporting aspirations.

At the end of a day's hunting the bird's welfare should come first and they should be fed, dried if necessary (if a hair dryer is used it must NOT have a Teflon coating as the fumes from Teflon WILL kill a bird) and put away safe and secure before attending to other livestock, and only then lastly oneself.

Dogs

If dogs or ferrets are used with birds of prey they must be well-trained. Their welfare is as important as the birds, and suitable provision for their well being should be made at all times.

12) Breeding Birds of Prey and Owls in Captivity

Breeding birds should be kept in sufficiently large, well sheltered, clean, secure aviaries. These should be of a suitable size so as to house not only the breeding pair but also any subsequent young without causing stress.

Birds should be easily viewed, as should eggs and young. Aviaries should be designed so that they can be kept clean and hygienic with the minimum amount of stress to the birds. Baths should be cleaned and water changed once a week at a minimum and more in the summer months. A sliding drawer in which to place the food is an excellent design. The food can be kept off the floor, you can check the food drawer at the end of the day for remains and remove them, which will discourage vermin. The feed drawer can be taken out and cleaned daily to keep a good standard of hygiene with the adults and particularly the growing young. Owls that are fed in the evening can have their food drawer cleaned in the morning.

It is the responsibility of any breeder to be aware of the requirements of the market and not produce large quantities of unneeded, unwanted or unsuitable raptors or owls.

Breeders should make every effort to produce sound birds of quality.

In-breeding should not be done, the relationships of your birds should be known and recorded so that in-breeding is avoided at all times.

Financial gain must not override the production of sound, quality and stable progeny.

Lastly and most importantly, breeders should make sure that prospective owners are suitably prepared and experienced to handle their new bird. It is a legal requirement to ensure that intended recipients of Annex B birds must be vetted for suitability and that this is the responsibility of the original keeper (Art 9.4 of EU Reg 338/97 refers). Equally for an annex A specimen this may require the prior approval of the Management Authority (Art 9.1 of EU Reg 338/97 refers).

Ask for a letter or email giving details of the prospective owners experience, what they want the raptor for and a photo of the housing that they intend using. All this will give you a decent idea of how good or bad the prospective owner is. If they refuse to give you any information, this should make you suspicious.

Demonstrations

The Countryside Alliance in conjunction with the Hawk Board, has produced guidelines for both demonstrations and shows which are at the end of this document.

In this document we have attempted to give broad outlines on the care and welfare of birds of prey and owls for those people either wanting to, or already keeping, flying or breeding them. Obviously a great deal more detail could have been given; however it is thought that there is much in the way of literature and establishments open to the public that can give the newcomer any further information required.

There are many Acts of Parliament which affect the keeping, feeding, travelling, displaying and hunting of birds of prey. The onus on knowing about and understanding these laws lies with the owner or keeper of the birds. Ignorance of the law is not an acceptable excuse for breaking it. So potential keepers of birds of prey and owls should make sure they know which laws apply to them at all times.

Produced by The Hawk Board.

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Richard Jones BVSc MSc MRCVS
Avian Veterinary Services
16 Dalby Court
Gadbrook Business Centre
Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 7TN

Neil Forbes / Tom Dutton
Vets Now Referrals
Unit 10, Berkshire House
County Park
Shrivenham Road
Swindon
SN1 2NR

Falconry Clubs

British Falconers Club

British Hawking Association

Cheshire Hawking Club

Home Counties Hawking Club
18, Makepiece Road
Priestwood 2
Bracknell
RG42 2HJ

Irish Hawking Club
2 Charleville Manor
Knocklyon
Dublin 16
Ireland

Scottish Hawking Club
Crookedstane
Elvanfoot
Biggar
Lanarkshire
ML12 6RL

South Eastern Raptors Association
8 Hartland Way
Shirley
Croydon
CR0 8RE

South East Falconry Group
C/O 9 Medicott Way
Swanmore
Hampshire
SO32 2NE

Welsh Hawking Club

Wessex Falconry & Hampshire Hawking Club
The Chase
Ampfield Hill
Romsey
Hampshire
S051 9BD

Yorkshire Hawking Club

Yorkshire Falconry Club

Bird of Prey Centres

International Centre for Birds of Prey
Newent,
Gloucestershire, GL18 1JJ

Cotswold Falconry Centre
Batsford
Gloucestershire

The Hawk Conservancy
Weyhill
Andover
Hants

Duncombe Birds of Prey Centre
Helmsley
North Yorkshire

Lost birds – rings/microchips etc for breeders etc

The Independent Bird Register (IBR)

Identichip

THE HAWK BOARD - Guidelines to Demonstration Givers

The welfare of the birds must be the priority and kept under consideration at all times. That will mean taking into account the weather, the bird on the day, the behaviour of the public and any other animals that might be around.

1. **Birds should be accustomed to giving demonstrations and be tame and fit, with good plumage. Birds used for hunting, in general do not make good display birds.**
2. **A flying display may include a static display so that the public can get near to the birds to view and ask questions. We do recommend a static display is not offered unless there is a flying demonstration as well.**
3. **It is recommended that Owls, other than Eagle and Horned Owls, should not be displayed. This is because generally owls do not do well or look content tethered and it is important not to teach the public that tethering is the acceptable way to keep owls**
4. **Hawks showing signs of agitation or distress should be removed from the display. Hoods should not be left on hawks for any length of time.**
5. **It is recommended that no more than six birds (nine if two flying demonstrations are required) should be brought to the shows. Generally more than one vehicle is required if more than six birds are to travel in safety & comfort.**
6. **A suitable shelter is required for a static display. Signs giving the species, should be visible and legible - shade, a solid back & sides & a dog proof, child proof fence are minimum requirements.**
7. **At no time should the static display be left unattended. At no time should birds be left on field cages or perches in or adjoining the flying area in view of the flying birds, even if attended. All birds except the birds being flown at the time should be either in the vehicle, well out of view, or on the sheltered weathering lawn if it is far enough away from the arena, with an attendant at all times.**
8. **Perches, baths & equipment should be in good order. Full bathing facilities should be available to all tethered birds of prey throughout the day except for those about to be flown.**
9. **Article 10's are required for all appropriate *Annex A* birds on display and should be available in your vehicle should they be required.**
10. **No wild disabled birds to be put on display to the public.**
11. **It is strongly advised that children to be discouraged from taking part in displays.**
12. **Flying of the birds should be by traditional falconry training methods; the flying of hawks to alight on the head, face or any part of the body except the gloved fist is absolutely not acceptable and should never be done. At no time should the public handle the birds.**
13. **If possible, there should be two people doing the demonstration so that there is someone to hand should anything go wrong.**
14. **All raptors should be flown with telemetry and field jesses at all times when on demonstration.**
15. **The Demonstrating Team should wear respectable country dress and behave properly at all times and avoid undue sensationalism in act or statement. Any music linked to the demonstration must not give the impression of a circus act. Raptor keeping and falconry should not be brought into disrepute.**
16. **The Demonstration Team will need a Health and Safety Policy, an up to date Risk Assessment and should have *Public Liability Insurance* for at least two million pounds.**

THE HAWK BOARD - *Guidelines to Static Display Givers*

The welfare of the birds must be the priority and kept under consideration at all times. That will mean taking into account the weather, the bird on the day, the behaviour of the public and any other animals that might be around.

1. **Birds should be accustomed to giving demonstrations and be tame and fit, with good plumage. Birds used for hunting, in general do not make good display birds.**
2. **A Static Display is intended to enable the public to view the hawks at close quarters. If the public has any questions qualified keeper/falconer should answer them. The distance from the public to the tethered hawks should be outside stress or interference distance, but close enough to permit photography.**
3. **It is recommended that Owls, other than Eagle and Horned Owls, should not be displayed.**
4. **Raptors showing signs of agitation or distress should be removed from the display.**
5. **Hoods should not be left on hawks for any length of time.**
6. **It is recommended that no more than six birds (nine if two flying demonstrations are required) should be brought to the shows. Generally more than one vehicle is required if more than six birds are to travel in safety & comfort. The public will be just as interested in six well behaved, well displayed birds as twenty put too close to one another, looking over crowded or stressed.**
7. **A suitable shelter is required for a static display. A solid back & sides, shade & dog & childproof fencing are a minimum requirement. Signs giving the species should be visible and legible.**
8. **At no time should the raptors in the static display be left unattended.**
9. **Perches, baths & equipment should be in good order. Full bathing facilities should be available to all tethered birds of prey throughout the day.**
10. **It is advised that children should not be taking part in displays. Members of the public should not be allowed to touch or stroke a bird, it is extremely stressful for a raptor, damages their waterproofing and gives the wrong impression to the watching public.**
11. **Article 10's are required for all appropriate birds on display. No wild disabled birds to be put on display to the public.**
12. **The Display Team should wear country dress and behave properly at all times and avoid undue sensationalism in act or statement. Any music linked to the demonstration must not give the impression of a circus act. Falconry and the keeping of birds of prey and owls should not be brought into disrepute.**

Falconry and bird of prey keeping

Falconry is the sport of taking wild quarry in its natural state and habitat by means of trained hawks. Any publicity involving birds of prey has a potential for benefit and harm. Benefit comes from increasing appreciation of birds of prey and the art of falconry. Harm comes from stimulating a desire to possess hawks in those who lack the time and expertise to look after them or who may try to obtain them illegally: or by showing birds in a condition that is detrimental to the birds and possibly to the viewing public.

Displays of hawks on perches (static displays) are best undertaken in conjunction with demonstrations of birds in flight. Generally, static displays without a flying demonstration are misleading as no birds are seen untethered or flying free. Therefore those giving static displays must be prepared to explain that the hawks are flown free on a daily basis or hunted regularly.

Objectives

The object of any display of birds of prey should be to educate the watching public with strong emphasis on the need for bird conservation. This can be achieved by clearly stating the role, which birds of prey play in the ecology of the countryside. Sensationalism, incorrect facts, increasing the abilities of the birds should not be a part of displays. What the public see they will learn and take home with them, it is vital that they have true and understated facts.

The Law and Insurance

It is illegal to take from the wild in Britain or import from abroad any species of birds of prey unless approved by the D.E.T.R. Show organisers must, therefore, ensure that anyone giving a demonstration has the necessary licences or can account for the origin of the birds. Show Organisers need to take particular care that Display Givers are not collecting funds illegally or claiming charitable status fraudulently. Both the Organiser and the Demonstrator must check that Display Teams have adequate public liability insurance and are keeping within the law. Handling birds without gloves or encouraging birds to land on people's heads will make insurance policies void as it is against all the welfare guidelines written by the experts.