



Ontario
Hawking Club

Falconry Apprenticeship
Program Guidelines

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1 Introduction

Falconry is the sport of hunting wild game with a trained bird of prey. It is an ancient art that has captivated people for thousands of years in many cultures worldwide. It offers unparalleled opportunities to experience the beauty, power and intensity that raptors embody, but it is not easy or simple. In fact, the sport requires a level of dedication and commitment that is unheard of to most people. Not surprisingly the number of falconers is relatively small.

The **Ontario Hawking Club** is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and protecting the art and practice of falconry, and the raptors that it employs. The requirement for novice falconers to successfully complete an apprenticeship period is nearly universal in North American falconry regulations. We support this requirement and believe that an effective apprenticeship program is essential to the long-term welfare of falconry.

The objective of the apprenticeship program is to produce high-quality falconers that are an asset to the sport and the wildlife on which it depends. The purpose of this document is to set reasonable expectations for both the apprentice and the sponsor. It is not a falconry manual. Rather, it highlights important areas that need to be addressed in the development of basic falconry skills and values, as well as key activities that should take place during the apprenticeship period. The Guide also outlines the preparation and equipment needed BEFORE a hawk is obtained.

The success of the apprenticeship program depends on the commitment of both sponsor and apprentice, and this commitment should not be taken for granted by either party. We believe that these guidelines will help to maximize the benefits of the apprenticeship program not only for the apprentice, but also for the falconry community as a whole.

Why Apprenticeship?

These guidelines go beyond the minimum requirements of provincial falconry regulations. They are designed to help you make the most of your apprenticeship and truly master the art of falconry – **if you follow them!**

Supporting and facilitating an effective apprenticeship program is an important function of the Ontario Hawking Club as it promotes the care, welfare and responsible training of falconry birds. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) recognizes the OHC's Apprenticeship Program Guidelines as meeting Provincial apprenticeship licencing requirements¹.

¹ Please contact your local MNR district office for up-to-date information about the apprenticeship requirements and falconry regulations.

1.1 A Message for the Apprentice

Falconry can be an immensely rewarding pursuit, however, it requires commitment, perseverance, and above all else, a deep respect for the welfare of your hawk. The decision to commit to the care, training, and hunting of a raptor is not one to be made in haste. Careful consideration and investigation into the requirements of the sport is very important. A solid understanding of the time and resources that will be involved on an ongoing basis is vital. Before proceeding with your apprenticeship, you should answer the following questions:

- Do I understand what is involved and what will be required of me?
- Do I realistically have time to devote to falconry, considering my other commitments? (Family, work, school, etc...).
- Can I commit myself to the specialized care that a raptor requires 365 days per year?
- Do I have the resources needed to pursue the sport? (Funds for food & equipment, veterinary expenses, proper housing for the bird, reliable vehicle to travel to and from hunting grounds, etc...).
- Am I legally able to possess a raptor at my place of residence? (Check city/town bylaws, rental/strata agreements).
- Am I prepared to follow the Apprenticeship Program Guidelines? (Read this entire document carefully).
- For what purpose do I want a raptor?

Your objective should be to hunt wild game with your raptor. This is the definition of falconry, and is the only reason the law allows individuals to keep native birds of prey. If this is *not* your intent then you should *reconsider* taking on a raptor. **Falconry is not pet keeping.** In fact, raptors make very poor pets. Keeping raptors as pets is strictly against the aims and objectives of the Ontario Hawking Club, and is in fact, illegal in the province of Ontario.

Your Ultimate Goal:

To be a responsible, ethical, sportsmanlike, law abiding falconer that is an informed asset to the present and future of falconry in the Province of Ontario

1.2 A Message for the Sponsor:

Although there is no legal requirement for you to be a sponsor, as an experienced falconer you have the privilege and responsibility to provide guidance and leadership to novice individuals who exhibit a genuine interest in pursuing the sport of falconry. This responsibility is a part of the tradition of falconry that stretches back through the ages. In order to continue this tradition and uphold the highest possible standard of falconry, the decision to take on an apprentice is one to be made carefully and sincerely.

The welfare of raptors that come into the possession of a novice, the level of proficiency and ethics of falconry practiced, public perception of falconry, and the reputation of the OHC and falconers in general are the main issues at stake with respect to your commitment as a sponsor.

This Guide has been supplied to you as a resource. It is designed to provide a framework within which you can impart your knowledge, experience, sportsmanship, and ethics unto a novice in a consistent manner. Please read it thoroughly. Passing on the values and skills that are part of quality falconry is the best way to ensure that falconry continues to be a legitimate and respected field sport in the Province of Ontario.

Your Ultimate Goal:

To produce a responsible, ethical, sportsmanlike, law abiding falconer that will be an informed asset to the present and future of falconry in the Province of Ontario.

2 Objectives and Responsibilities

The objectives of the apprenticeship program are to ensure that:

- A novice with little or no previous falconry experience will develop proficiency in the husbandry, training, flying and hunting (hawking) of a raptor under the guidance of an experienced falconer.
- Raptors are properly fed, housed, equipped, and are otherwise maintained under healthy, safe conditions.
- Raptors in the possession of a falconer are regularly flown at game when it is safe and legal to do so.
- The apprentice will strive to practice the sport of falconry at a high level of competence, sportsmanship and ethics.
- The sport of falconry and the reputation of the OHC are not harmed by the acts of inexperienced or irresponsible individuals.

2.1 Responsibilities of Apprenticeship

Prior to obtaining a falconry bird, the apprentice shall:

1. Be prepared to put the welfare of any raptor in his or her possession first and foremost at all times.
2. Be at least 15 years of age and in possession of a valid Ontario Small Game Hunting Licence.
3. Have read at least two modern texts on falconry and have a basic understanding of the sport (see recommended reading list in Appendix D).
4. Be familiar with all Federal and Provincial Regulations pertaining to falconry (see Appendix C).
5. Secure a relationship with a sponsor who agrees to this undertaking for the entirety of the apprenticeship period. The Ontario Hawking Club may be able to assist if you are having trouble locating a sponsor. The apprentice must agree to follow advice given by the sponsor.
6. Determine with your sponsor which species of raptor would be suitable as a first bird. The OHC strongly recommends a first bird for an apprentice be either a red tailed hawk or a Harris' hawk, as both of these birds are more easily trained than other species and are relatively hardy.

Any raptor used for the apprenticeship should be an untrained bird. Very little is learned by flying someone else's bird! **Imprinted and/or previously trained raptors are not suitable.**

In order to successfully complete the apprenticeship requirements, a mastery of basic falconry techniques must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of your sponsor. This includes hunting with your bird in several unaided flush and chase situations at wild quarry. Provincial falconry regulations require an apprenticeship period of *at least* 15 months including 2 October hunting seasons. However, a sponsor is not required to sign your apprenticeship form until he or she feels you have adequately proved your falconry competence, whether or not the 15-month period has been reached.

2.2 Responsibilities of Sponsorship

The role of the sponsor is to guide and oversee the apprentice, and to confirm his or her proficiency by the end of the program. It is of the utmost importance that you do not sign off on your apprentice until you feel confident they will practice falconry in the way you see fit. Remember that once a person has held their general falconry licence in Ontario for 5 years they are then able to be a sponsor for someone else. The integrity of the sport therefore rests on your shoulders. A few points to remember:

1. Know the laws governing hunting with and possession of raptors so you can accurately answer any questions the apprentice may have.
2. Lead by example: Model the principles of good sportsmanship and responsible, respectful hunting. Show the importance of maintaining positive relationships with Conservation officers, landowners, fellow falconers, and members of the general public. Demonstrate by your own actions a respect for all wildlife, especially for raptors and their prey species.
3. Discuss with your apprentice various conservation strategies in regards to wildlife and the habitats they occupy.
4. Strive to develop 'game sense' in your apprentice. This will empower apprentices to find their own hunting grounds instead of using yours.
5. Except in extenuating circumstances, the OHC does not recommend that a sponsor oversee more than two apprentices at one time.
6. Novice falconers are not unlike young birds. Both need to build the confidence to achieve a task before they become good at achieving it. As much as being a sponsor entails rules and procedure, instilling confidence and the belief in their abilities is also vital to the development of an apprentice into a falconer.

3 Apprentice Unit

Learning to practice the art of falconry requires a considerable investment of time and attention to detail. The steps outlined in this guide are designed to assist you in making the most of your learning experience. Taking shortcuts or cutting corners, on the other hand, will make success much more difficult to achieve and will be reflected in your falconry abilities down the road. It may even lead to the loss or injury of your bird, yourself or others. Please read and follow the steps in this guide carefully!

This section covers the following topics:

- Research.
- Preparation.
- Your First Bird.
- Manning.
- Early Training.
- Free Flight and Entering.
- Hunting.

3.1 Research

This is the time to learn as much as you can about falconry from as many different sources as possible. You are ready to find a sponsor and prove your genuine desire to hunt wild quarry with a trained bird of prey. By this stage you should have adequately answered the questions posed in section 1.1 of this Guide.

1. Read as much as you can about falconry and raptor care, husbandry, and behavior. Meeting both the physical and psychological needs of your bird is required on a daily basis, whether hunting or not.
2. Get your small game licence! There is much learning that needs to be done long before you are ready to hunt with a bird, but the MNR recognizes your apprenticeship beginning on the date you get your Outdoors Card. If you have never held a Small Game Hunting Licence in Ontario, you will need to take the Ontario Hunter Education Program and pass the exam. Contact The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters for a list of course locations throughout the province.
3. Know all the laws pertaining to falconry and hunting small game including migratory birds.
4. Join the Ontario Hawking Club and participate in Club events. Get out in the field with club members and view their facilities. It's a great way to see different species of raptor in action and a great place to find a sponsor!
5. Scout for potential hunting areas. You will need regular access to hunting areas in order to train and fly your bird. Finding these areas can prove to be a time-consuming task. **Don't expect another falconer to show you areas to hunt!** Even though you may accompany your sponsor in the field, part of undergoing the apprenticeship is to develop your own 'game-sense', or your ability to locate areas with suitable quarry. Put your knowledge to the test and find several areas different to the places you have already seen. Devote the time now so you know where to go once you have a bird.

6. Take the OHC falconry exam. The exam is designed to test your knowledge and is an opportunity for your sponsor to go over any weak points. You should be as well-prepared and knowledgeable as possible *before you are get a bird*.

3.2 Preparation

1. Secure a sponsor and enter a sponsor/apprentice agreement. You and your sponsor should discuss and agree on general expectations for supervision, facilities, equipment, and a general training plan.
2. Once you have a sponsor you will need to complete an **Application for an Apprentice Falconry Licence** (form 1003) and both you and your sponsor must complete the **Falconry Sponsor Information and Certification** (form 3001). These forms are available from your MNR district office. You can ask for them in person at the office or you can call and have them mailed to you. **Make sure to get both forms, as you will need to submit both to have your apprenticeship time valid.** Quote the form name and number to the MNR employee and verify once you get them that the form numbers are the same as listed above. The form numbers are found on the bottom left corner of each page. There is a \$20.00 cost for the apprentice licence.
3. Decide on the sex and species of raptor you would like to apprentice with, based on the space you have, where you live, the hunting grounds you have access to and discussions with your sponsor. Take into consideration the type and availability of game in your area. Get into the habit of putting the bird's needs first! **The idea is to get a species of raptor that you will be able to regularly fly at game.** *Note: The Ontario Hawking Club recommends the use of red tailed hawk or Harris' hawk for the apprenticeship period.*
4. Get the necessary equipment and build the mews. Your sponsor will discuss the details of both equipment and facilities requirements with you, as well as vehicle perches and carrier boxes. An equipment checklist and facilities guidelines are included in this Guide.
5. Final pre-bird check. Have your sponsor inspect your mews, equipment, food source, and go over any last-minute questions. You want to be as prepared for your bird as possible before it arrives. Review the basic training steps with your sponsor and determine a schedule of meetings to follow as soon as the bird arrives.

The Do's and Don'ts of Apprenticeship

- Don't start with a bird that is previously trained – you won't learn anything!
- Don't start with an injured bird that can't fly or hunt properly – leave that to experienced falconers.
- Don't start with an older bird. These birds are set in their ways and it is much more difficult to enter them on wild game.
- First get a sponsor and have your facilities approved before you get a bird!
- Ask your sponsor for advise and follow it.
- Falconry requires patience and attention to detail. Short cuts don't work!

3.3 Your First Bird

In consultation with your sponsor, get a healthy, first year, non-imprinted, untrained bird. The reason for these recommendations is to ensure you get the most out of your apprenticeship. Very little is learned by working with a bird that is a human imprint or a bird that has been manned by someone else. Working with a haggard bird will be frustrating, as their window of learning has mostly closed. Having little or no success with your first bird may discourage you from the sport altogether. The same applies to a bird that is not healthy. Discuss the potential bird with your sponsor beforehand.

1. Welcome your new bird home. Check the general condition of your bird including weight, feathers, disposition and overall health. By this time you should be familiar with signs of stress or sickness in raptors.
2. Have your sponsor inspect the bird as soon as possible after it arrives.
3. Record all data in your logbook.

3.4 Manning

Manning starts from the moment you get the bird and is an ongoing process. Socialization is another term synonymous with manning, and is associated with the initial period of time where you get the bird comfortable with its new surroundings and with you. Discuss techniques in detail with your sponsor. This can sometimes be a difficult stage that will test your resolve, but don't give up or get discouraged! Listen to your sponsor's advice, that's what they are for. During this period you may need to re-read sections of books that talk about manning techniques. If you plan to hunt with dogs this is also the time to introduce your bird to your dog(s).

Keep your bird "feather perfect"!

One of the hallmarks of a good falconer is the physical condition and the feather of his bird. Peak physical condition and good feather can only be achieved by vigilant attention to detail with respect to housing, equipment, and good quality food.

3.5 Early Training

Once your bird is comfortable with you and you are starting to understand weight control, it is time to prepare for free flight. The early training is the interim step between manning and free flight where you take your bird outside and fly her on a creance. It is a good idea to have your sponsor oversee this exercise several times. He or she will provide crucial feedback about your handling techniques as well as interpreting the bird's response to you. Often to a novice it seems the bird is responding well and therefore must be "keen", but the sponsor, having had many years of experience, is able to recognize that the bird may not be as keen as it appears. This is not much of an issue when flying the bird on creance, but it can make the difference between keeping and losing your bird when the time for free flight arrives. During this time period:

1. Review your logbook entries and discuss them with your sponsor.
2. Closely monitor the overall health and condition of your bird.
3. Have your sponsor oversee your bird perform on the creance, and follow any recommendations offered.
4. Understand the difference between 'keenness' and 'weight'.
5. Discuss preparation for free flight and use of telemetry.

3.6 Free Flight and Entering

Now that you have become familiar with your bird's response on a creance it is time to remove the swivel and set her free to fly. There are various exercises you can do with your bird at this stage that will help her get into hunting condition. This is the time where you introduce the lure, kite, and any other techniques that aid the bird's physical condition and reinforce your relationship as her hunting companion. Review your logbook entries and discuss them with your sponsor.

1. Observe the bird's flight and discuss physical conditioning. Introduce exercises that build the bird's strength and endurance, and relationship to you.
2. Review safety issues when free flying the bird (roadways, hydro wires, other raptors or predators, etc.).
3. Have a strategy in place in the event your bird becomes lost or injured. Your sponsor will help you with this. Although it is not nice to think about, you need to know what to do if this does happen.
4. Introduce the bird to live game in a timely manner. Your sponsor will again be able to guide you through this process. Your bird will need some early successes in order to build confidence in his ability to catch wild quarry.
5. This is also the stage where the regulatory requirement of 30 hours of in-field instruction with your sponsor will commence.

3.7 Hunting

Hunting with your bird in the field will make use of all the knowledge and skills you have acquired up to this point. The hours of research, preparation, manning and early training will begin to pay off as you accompany your bird in flush and chase situations.

1. Be sure to make daily entries in your logbook.
2. Observe the field response of your bird to you, its surroundings, and to flushed quarry. Make adjustments to weight and training methods as needed.
3. Maintain regular contact with your sponsor. They will need to see you in action with your bird and give instruction in the field. This is a requirement of your apprenticeship.
4. Continually provide your bird with as many opportunities as possible to take wild game. Consistency is the golden rule of falconry and your bird will perform better with each success.

The end of the hunting season does not mean your bird is left to sit alone for several months. Continue the manning process and be aware of the health of your bird. By August or September of the second season once your bird has finished his moult, you will need to start the re-training process. Go through the same steps as in the early training section. This may not take as long as it did in the first year, as your bird will remember its successes of the previous season. Consult with your sponsor throughout this stage.

4 Sponsor Unit

The sponsor unit is designed to act as a companion to the Apprentice Unit. If you are a new sponsor or have an apprentice who is following the OHC's Apprenticeship Program Guidelines, you will be better prepared to help your apprentice by reading this section. Being a source of knowledge and support for your apprentice throughout their learning process will benefit the apprentice, their bird, and the sport of falconry.

The Sponsor Unit covers the following topics:

- Research and Preparation.
- The Bird.
- Manning.
- Early Training.
- Free Flight.
- Entering and Hunting.

4.1 Research and Preparation

It is the responsibility of the apprentice to read at least two modern texts on falconry. You may have several books in mind to recommend and this is the time to do it. Be available for the apprentice to answer any questions during this period. Take on an apprentice who exhibits a genuine desire to hunt wild game with a trained bird of prey.

1. Enter into a sponsor/apprentice agreement. Make your expectations of the apprentice clear. Sign and date the **Falconry Sponsor Information and Certification** form.
2. Recommend books for the apprentice to read. See our attached reading list. Be available to answer any questions the apprentice might have.
3. Verify the apprentice has a valid Ontario Small Game Hunting Licence. If they do not have one, now is the time to get it.
4. Stress the need for the apprentice to scout for hunting grounds. Go over qualities of areas that are likely to hold game versus areas that are unlikely to hold game. Teaching the apprentice how to find their own fields is the best way to keep them out of yours.
5. Invite the apprentice into the field when hawking your bird. Demonstrate with your bird the proper handling techniques (positioning on fist, safe carriage, bate recovery, etc.).
6. Discuss in detail the facilities and equipment requirements with your apprentice (see attached documents).
7. Have the apprentice take the OHC's falconry exam. It will give you an idea of any weak points in the apprentice's understanding and allow you to focus on areas needing improvement.
8. Final pre-bird check. Inspect the completed mews, weathering yard, equipment including scales, food source, and address any last minute details before the apprentice obtains a bird.

4.2 The Bird

Review potential bird choices with your apprentice. The OHC recommends the use of an untrained, non-imprinted, healthy, first year bird, preferably a Harris' hawk or red tailed hawk. Discuss the value of learning with a bird in this condition. Recommend a list of reputable breeders to the apprentice where the bird of choice may be purchased. Review and make suggestions where necessary on:

1. The general health, feather condition, and weight of the raptor as soon as the apprentice obtains it.
2. Attachment of equipment.
3. Basic bird handling techniques.
4. The apprentice's logbook.
5. Weight control and the bird's metabolism.

Encourage the apprentice to contact you immediately if the bird becomes injured or appears ill.

4.3 Manning

Review the manning process with the apprentice. Give them direction on how to proceed from this point. Be as supportive as possible since your encouragement of the apprentice will be the best thing for the bird's sake. Stress the importance of patience and consistency with your apprentice. Be readily available for your apprentice.

4.4 Early Training

1. Review logbook entries with your apprentice.
2. Inspect the overall health of the bird and observe the relationship between the apprentice and their bird.
3. Oversee the bird's performance on the creance.
4. Explain the difference between 'keenness' and weight.
5. Discuss preparations for your apprentice to fly their bird free for the first time.

4.5 Free Flight and Entering

1. Review the logbook entries of your apprentice.
2. Check the overall health and condition of the bird.
3. Observe the bird's flight and response to the apprentice.
4. Review safety issues with the apprentice.
5. Discuss a plan for the apprentice to follow in the event his or her bird becomes lost or injured.
6. Guide the apprentice through introducing the bird to live game.

4.6 Hunting

This stage of the apprenticeship will show how much knowledge your apprentice has retained and give you an opportunity to view their skills in action. It is important to get out with your apprentice regularly so you can make suggestions and correct mistakes you see in progress. The apprentice needs at least 30 hours in the field with you in order to fulfill the obligations of their apprenticeship. If in the 30 hours you do not see the level of behaviour and understanding from your apprentice you will have to continue their training until you feel confident of their falconry abilities.

1. Regularly check the apprentice's logbook.
2. Observe the bird's response in the field to flushed quarry and to the apprentice. Make recommendations on training and weight control as necessary.
3. Maintain regular contact with your apprentice. Stress the importance for the apprentice to continually provide their bird with opportunities to take wild game. Discuss hunting strategies that will help them achieve this.

Other issues to cover during the course of the apprenticeship are: Prevention and treatment of raptor-specific ailments and injuries, avian veterinarians, coping and imping, use of dogs in the field, safety, etiquette and sportsmanship in the field (see attached document).

Appendix A: Falconry Equipment Checklist

- Food Supply - a varied diet of whole food (e.g. quail, rodents, poults, etc)
- vitamin supplements
- Bath Pan - suitable size and material
- Aylmeri Anklets and Jesses
- equipment required (2 piece grommets, pliers)
- appropriate leather types (*Kangaroo leather is recommended*)
- non-toxic jess ointments to keep leather supple and strong
- Swivels - falconry swivels or ball bearing "sampo" of the appropriate size (closed welded rings)
- no quick disconnect snap attachments
- should have at least two swivels
- Leashes - have at least two suitable leashes of appropriate strength and length
- Falconry Bells - have at least two pairs of bells
- Glove - should incorporate a safety snap to secure raptor
- Perch - for hawks use a simple bow design incorporating a strong, lightweight, closed ring for securing leash
- for falcons use a block perch with appropriate closed leash ring.
- suitable perching surface materials.
- indoor perch designs and considerations
- Weigh Scales - triple beam or counter balance type (*spring type not recommended - inaccurate*)
- properly mounted perch
- Lures - optional for hawks, required for falcons.
- have a spare two lure
- Hoods - properly fitting hoods and a smooth hooding technique are important.
- have a spare hood
- Giant Hood - designs, travel perches if bird hooded, other travel considerations
- Whistle - plastic/no pea - for cold weather conditions
- Creance - suitable materials - strength, weight, and length considerations
- Bag or Vest - considerations/field items required
- I.D. Tags - assist in the location of lost birds/suppliers
- Telemetry - not a necessity if flying a Harris' or Redtail, but a worthwhile topic for discussion
- Tail Protector - important for accipiters

Check your equipment regularly!

It is imperative that your equipment be maintained in good order. Nothing lasts forever. If you don't regularly check your leashes, jesses, swivels, etc., for wear you are risking the safety and/or possible loss of your hawk.

Appendix B: Mews and Facilities Checklist

The sponsor should allow the apprentice to view his mew, and with permission perhaps those of other members, so that the apprentice can begin construction of appropriate housing in preparation for the raptor.

The following subject areas should be noted and discussed:

- Dimensions, designs, materials for mews construction.
- Windows – positioning and use of vertical bars, provision of adequate natural light and ventilation.
- Mews Perches – types, sizes, positioning of surface coverings.
- Door - double door system to prevent inadvertent escape of raptor when entering or exiting the mew.
- Protection from the elements, i.e.: excessive sun, rain, wind or snow.
- Flooring - pea gravel, rodent and other predator proofing and drainage considerations.
- Sanitation.
- Tethering versus free lofting in the mews – considerations.
- Weathering Enclosures:
 - Dimensions and design considerations.
 - Raptors should always be tethered inside a weathering enclosure.
 - Raptors should never be left unattended or unprotected outside of either their mews or weathering enclosure; otherwise, they may be injured or killed (dogs, cats, wild raptors, other predators etc.).

Broken feathers and damaged feet or ceres are usually a sign that something is wrong with the way the bird is kept. The apprentice, under the guidance of his sponsor, must make every effort to otherwise determine the cause of a particular problem and to implement, as soon as possible, an appropriate solution.

Keep your bird “feather perfect”!

One of the hallmarks of a good falconer is the physical condition and the feather of his bird. Peak physical condition and good feather can only be achieved by vigilant attention to detail with respect to housing, equipment, and good quality food.

Appendix C: Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act

The practice of falconry in Ontario falls under the auspices of the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997*. Included below are excerpts from the *Act* and *Ontario Regulation 668/98*, which govern the sport of falconry in Ontario. Complete and up-to-date copies of the legislation and regulations are published on the Internet at <http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca>

Part II

Hunting, Trapping, Fishing and Related Activities

Safety and Methods

27. (1) A person shall not hunt with a specially protected raptor or any other bird of prey.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not apply to a person who hunts in accordance with the regulations with a specially protected raptor or other bird of prey that belongs to a species prescribed by the regulations for the purpose of this subsection.

Part III

Live Wildlife and Fish

40. (1) A person shall not keep live game wildlife or live specially protected wildlife or live specially protected wildlife in captivity except under the authority of a licence and in accordance with the regulations.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not apply to,
- (c) a person who keeps game wildlife or specially protected wildlife in captivity for any educational or scientific purpose, or for any other purpose, if the person has authorization of the Minister.
- (3) Subsection (1) does not apply in the circumstances prescribed by the regulations.
42. A person who keeps a specially protected raptor in captivity, or who keeps another bird of prey prescribed by the regulations in captivity, shall mark it in the manner prescribed by the regulations and shall keep the records prescribed by the regulations.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act
Part III (continued)
Live Wildlife and Fish

45. (1) A person shall not propagate or offer to propagate game wildlife or specially protected wildlife, or possess it for the purpose of propagation, except under the authority of a licence and in accordance with the regulations.
46. (1) Except with the authorization of the Minister, a person shall not release,
1. a farmed animal; or
 2. game wildlife or specially protected wildlife that is kept in captivity.
- (2) A person who keeps a farmed animal or who keeps game wildlife or specially protected wildlife in captivity shall ensure that it does not escape.
- (3) If, despite subsection (1) or (2), a farmed animal or game wildlife or specially protected wildlife escapes or is released without authorization, the person who kept it in captivity,
- (a) shall immediately notify the Minister; and
 - (b) unless otherwise directed by the Minister, shall return the farmed animal or wildlife to captivity or kill it as soon as practicable.
48. (1) A person shall not buy or sell game wildlife or specially protected wildlife or specially protected wildlife, including pelts, except under the authority of a licence and in accordance with the regulations.
- (5) Subsection (1) does not apply in the circumstances prescribed by the regulations.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act
Part III (continued)
Live Wildlife and Fish

54. (1) Except with the authorization of the Minister, a person shall not release wildlife or an invertebrate that has been transported into Ontario or has been propagated from stock that was transported into Ontario.

(2) A person who possesses wildlife or an invertebrate referred to in subsection (1) shall ensure that it does not escape.

(3) If, despite subsection (1) or (2), wildlife or an invertebrate referred to in subsection (1) escapes or is released without authorization, the person who possessed it,

(a) shall immediately notify the Minister; and

(b) shall capture or kill the wildlife or invertebrate as soon as practicable.

ONTARIO REGULATION 668/98: WILDLIFE IN CAPTIVITY

PART III

SPECIALLY PROTECTED RAPTORS AND OTHER BIRDS OF PREY

10. In this Part,

"falconry birds" means Peregrine Falcon, Northern Goshawk, Gyrfalcon, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin, American Kestrel, Bald Eagle, Great Horned Owl, Northern Hawk Owl, Golden Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Snowy Owl and Northern Harrier; and

"non-indigenous falconry birds" means Prairie Falcon, Saker Falcon, Lanner Falcon, Laggar Falcon, Harris' Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, Bonelli's Eagle, European Kestrel, European Sparrow-hawk, Tawny Eagle and Steppe Eagle.

11. A person may keep falconry birds in captivity under a general falconry licence, a commercial falconry licence or an apprentice falconry licence issued under subsection 40(1) of the Act.

12. (1) A person may be issued a general falconry licence if, during the year following the day this Regulation comes into force, the person provides proof of having possessed a specially protected raptor or other bird of prey continuously for two years during the five-year period prior to the date of applying for the licence.

(2) The following persons may be issued a general falconry licence more than one year after the day this Regulation comes into force:

1. A person who provides proof that he or she possessed, in a jurisdiction other than Ontario, a specially protected raptor or other bird of prey continuously for two years during the five-year period prior to the date of applying for a general falconry licence.
2. A person who has successfully completed an apprenticeship describe in section 12 as certified by the person's sponsor.
3. A person who has held a general falconry licence or a commercial falconry licence issued under this Regulation at any time in the five-year period prior to the date of applying for the licence.

(3) The holder of a general falconry licence may keep up to three falconry birds in captivity and may, in addition, keep any number of falconry birds for a person who holds any licence under this Part for a period of up to three months for each falconry bird.

13 (1) The following persons may be issued a commercial falconry licence:

1. A person who propagated specially protected raptors or other birds of prey continuously for two years during the five-year period prior to applying for the licence.
2. A person who has held a general falconry licence issued under this Regulation for a period of at least five years.
3. A person who provides proof that he or she has kept specially protected raptors or other birds of prey in captivity for at least five years prior to applying for the licence.
4. A person who has held a commercial falconry licence issued under this Regulation at any time in the five years prior to the date of applying for the licence.

(2) The holder of a commercial falconry licence may keep any number of falconry birds at any one time.

14. (1) A person who receives instruction in the care and handling of falconry birds from a sponsor may be issued an apprentice falconry licence to keep a single falconry bird in captivity during the period of the sponsorship for the purpose of receiving that instruction.

(2) An apprentice falconry licence may only be issued to a person who has the facilities and equipment necessary for the proper care and handling of falconry birds as certified by his or her sponsor.

15. (1) For the purposes of section 14, the holder of a general falconry licence or a commercial falconry licence who has at least five years experience as a trainer, hunter, keeper and handler of specially protected raptors or other birds of prey may sponsor an apprentice falconer.

(2) The sponsor shall, over a period of at least 15 months that includes at least two months of October,

(a) instruct the apprentice falconer in the proper training, hunting, care and handling of falconry birds; and

(b) provide a minimum of 30 hours of field instruction.

- 16.** (1) Despite section 11, a person who keeps falconry birds in captivity on the day this Regulation comes into force may keep the birds in captivity without a licence for 90 days after that day but shall apply for a general falconry licence, a commercial falconry licence or an apprentice falconry licence within the 90 day period.
- (2) An application that indicates, in writing, that it has been approved by the Minister shall be deemed to be a temporary licence of the type applied for, for a period of 90 days from the date of the approval, in accordance with the terms of the approval.
- 17.** A person who keeps a specially protected raptor that is not a falconry bird in captivity on the day this Regulation comes into force may, without a licence,
- (a) continue to do so for 90 days after that day; and
- (b) keep that raptor for its lifetime if the Minister so authorizes under clause 40(2) (c) of the Act.
- 18.** A person who holds a general falconry licence, a commercial falconry licence or an apprentice falconry licence shall hold a current small game hunting licence issued under Ontario Regulation .../98 (Hunting).
- 19.** (1) Despite subsection 27 (1) of the Act,
- (a) the holder of a general falconry licence, a commercial falconry licence or an apprentice falconry licence may, for the purposes of subsection 27 (2) of the Act, hunt with falconry birds or non-indigenous falconry birds in accordance with Ontario Regulation .../98 (Hunting);
- (b) any person may hunt with a non-indigenous falconry bird under a current small game hunting licence issued under Ontario Regulation .../98 (Hunting) and in accordance with that Regulation.
- (2) Wildlife management units 1 to 95 referred to in Regulation 530 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 are areas designated as areas in which a person may hunt with a falconry bird or a non-indigenous falconry bird.
- 20.** A person who keeps a specially protected raptor or any other bird of prey may exercise the bird in an area usually inhabited by wildlife during the closed season for the wildlife if the person exercises all due diligence to prevent the bird from killing the wildlife.

- 21.** A person who is hunting with a falconry bird shall carry on his or her person the licence or authorization pursuant to which the bird is kept in captivity.
- 22.** (1) A person shall not keep a specially protected raptor or any other bird of prey in captivity unless it is marked with a clearly and uniquely numbered band of the type approved by the Minister.
- (2) The band shall be affixed to the leg of the bird in a manner that prevents the band from being removed without destroying it.
- (3) A person shall mark a specially protected raptor or other bird of prey kept by the person within three weeks of it being hatched.
- (4) If the band is lost or accidentally removed, the loss or removal and its date shall immediately be noted in the log book referred to in subsection 27 (1), and the Minister shall be notified in writing within five working days of the loss or removal.
- (5) The person who keeps a bird whose band has been lost, accidentally removed or destroyed shall immediately affix a new band of the proper type in the proper manner.
- 23.** (1) A non-resident hunter who wishes to keep falconry birds in captivity in Ontario for the purpose of hunting shall submit a letter of application to the Minister.
- (2) The applicant shall identify the birds to be brought into Ontario, by species and band number, and shall set out the period of time that the birds will be in Ontario and the area in which the birds will be used for hunting.
- (3) An application that indicates, in writing, that it has been approved by the Minister shall be deemed to be a licence,
- (a) to keep, in accordance with the terms of the approval, the birds specified in the application in captivity in Ontario for the specified period; and
- (b) despite subsection 27 (1) of the Act, to hunt in accordance with Ontario Regulation .../98 (Hunting).
- (4) A non-resident shall not bring a bird into Ontario for the purpose of hunting unless the bird is marked with a uniquely numbered non-removable band.

- 24.** (1) A general falconry licence, a commercial falconry licence and an apprentice falconry licence shall be deemed to be a licence to buy or sell falconry birds under subsection 48(1) of the Act.
- (2) A person who holds a general falconry licence shall not, during the period the licence is valid,
- (a) buy or otherwise obtain more than three falconry birds; or
 - (b) sell more than three falconry birds.
- (3) A person who holds an apprentice falconry licence shall not, during the period the licence is valid,
- (a) buy or otherwise obtain more than a single falconry bird and a single replacement for it; or
 - (b) sell more than a single falconry bird.
- 25.** A person shall not buy or sell a specially protected raptor that has been taken from the wild.
- 26.** A commercial falconry licence shall be deemed to be a licence to propagate falconry birds for the purposes of subsection 45 (1) of the Act.
- 27.** (1) A person who keeps specially protected raptors or other birds of prey in captivity shall keep a log book that contains information respecting the birds, including,
- (a) the name and licence number of the person keeping the bird;
 - (b) the date of the event being recorded;
 - (c) the species and band number of the bird;
 - (d) the description of the event or the business transaction involving the bird;
 - (e) the name and address of the persons engaged in the business transaction or event, if any, and the numbers of their general falconry or commercial falconry licences; and
 - (f) details of any final disposition of the bird.
- (2) The person shall submit an annual return to the Minister in a format established by the Minister for any specially protected raptor or other bird of prey the person keeps.
- (3) Copies of the log book and annual return shall be kept for five years from the date of expiry of the licence that was valid at the time they were kept.

Appendix D: Selected Falconry Bibliography

- **“Apprentice Manual”** California Hawking Club
Western Sporting
PO Box 939, 18 Kooi Road
Ranchester, Wyoming 82839-0939
Tel: (307) 672-0445
www.westernsporting.com
- **“Understanding the Bird of Prey”**
Dr. Nick Fox, 1995
Western Sporting
PO Box 939, 18 Kooi Road
Ranchester, Wyoming 82839-0939
Tel: (307) 672-0445
www.westernsporting.com
- **“Apprentice Study Guide”** California Hawking Club
F.W. Holderman editor
Western Sporting
PO Box 939, 18 Kooi Road
Ranchester, Wyoming 82839-0939
Tel: (307) 672-0445
www.westernsporting.com
- **"The Falconer's Apprentice - A Guide to Training the Passage Red-Tailed Hawk"**
Oakes, William C. 1994,
Eagle Wing Publishing
Post Office Box 434
Roy, Utah 84067-0434
Telephone # (801) 731-7416
- **"Falconry Equipment"**, Kimsey and Hodge 1992,
Kimsey Hodge Publications
7815 Encinita
Houston, Texas 77083
- **"Medical Management of Birds of Prey"**, P. Redig 1993
The Raptor Centre University of Minnesota
1920 Fitch Ave.
St. Paul, MN, 55108

- **"North American Falconry and Hunting Hawks"**
Beebe and Webster
Western Sporting
PO Box 939, 18 Kooi Road
Ranchester, Wyoming 82839-0939
Tel: (307) 672-0445
www.westernsporting.com
- **"The Compleat Falconer"** F.L. Beebe 1992
Hancock House Publishers
19313 Zero Ave.
Surrey, British Columbia V3S 5J9
- **"Gamehawking...At Its Very Best"** Webster 1988
C/O Windsong Press
P.O. Box 1484
Denver, Colorado 80201
- **"The Hunting Falcon"** Haak, 1992
also from Hancock House
- **"Veterinary Aspects of Captive Birds of Prey"** Cooper, J. E. 1985
Standfast Press, The Old Rectory Charington,
Tetbury, Gloucestershire

Appendix E: Field Meet Etiquette

Safety First

- Ensure your equipment is in good working order Use reliable leashes and swivels
- When raptors are tethered in close proximity make absolutely certain that they cannot reach each other
- Make sure you bird is properly secured at all times in the presence of other raptors
- Never leave a raptor unattended, even for a moment
- Avoid flying near power lines and busy roads
- Scan the hunting area thoroughly for any potential predators before releasing your bird

Hawking

- ALWAYS get permission before entering private property
- Do not fly hawks together unless they have been trained and conditioned to safely do so
- If there is conflict between birds in a group hawking situation, the aggressor should be removed from the field
- Bury or camouflage any entrails or carcasses so as not to distract other raptors
- DO NOT feed your hawk on a kill when other birds are near by - trade off and remove the kill from sight as soon as possible

New to the Field?

- Allow the falconer(s) flying birds to direct the entire hunting situation, including where you go, and what you do in the field
- Don't be further into the field than the falconer; allow him/her to lead
- When walking near a falconer, remain on their right side to avoid stressing their bird
- Refrain from any activities that appear to produce stress in a raptor
- Never touch, feed or take pictures of a hawk without permission of the bird's owner
- Do not rush in on a hawk that has caught game

Dogs

- Dogs should be leashed outside of a hunting situation
- Unless you know that all raptors in the area are comfortable with your dog, DO NOT let it run loose
- Dog owners must honor a falconer's request to remove their dog from the hunting field

Appendix F: Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct for Sponsors

“As a Falconry Sponsor, I will be:

Available, to my apprentice for support and assistance whenever needed.

Attentive, to the progress of my apprentice’s hawk.

Alert, to the activities of my apprentice, to ensure they are ethical, legal, and humane.

Active, in the discovery and correction of problems and situations which might harm my apprentice’s hawk, the legal sport of falconry, or the public’s perception of falconry, and

Accountable, for the health and well-being of my apprentice’s hawk.”

Code of Conduct for Apprentices

“As a Falconer’s Apprentice, I will be:

Legal, following all local, provincial, and federal laws.

Ethical, in my treatment of land owners, property, habitat, raptors, wildlife, and other falconers.

Accountable, for the health and safety of my hawk, and for flying her at wild game.

Supportive, of organizations that promote the conservation of habitat and wildlife, and

Humane, in my treatment of all animals.”

*Reprinted from Oakes, William C., 1994, **The Falconer’s Apprentice**. Eaglewing Publishing P.O. Box 434, Roy, Utah 84067. P. 105,106.*