



Falco

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Compiled and distributed by Merle M. Apo, MEFRG Administrative Assistant

The Middle East Falcon Research Group

The Middle East Falcon Research Group is managed by the Wildlife Veterinary Research Institute in association with the Falcon Management and Research Programme of the Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

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Editorial note

Falco, the newsletter of the Middle East Falcon Research Group, is published quarterly and contains papers, reports, letters and announcements sent by members. However, the contributions included in Falco are not refereed. Although, every effort is made to ensure that the information provided is correct, the Chairman and the Administrative Assistant cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy of contributions. The opinions expressed in the contributions submitted are those of the individual writer and are not necessarily shared by the Middle East Falcon Research Group or the Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency

Letter from the Chairman's office

We were delighted to received in the last couple of months several outstanding contributions for publication in Falco Issue No 11. The content of these articles represent very accurately the most important objectives of the Middle East Falcon Research Group: Conservation, medical research and public awareness concerning falcons and falconry.

One of the most important highlights of last year for falconry in the international arena was the 10th Conference of CITES held in Harare, Zimbabwe. Dr Nick Fox attended the Conference together with a small group of prominent falconers representing the interest of the most important falcon organisations in the world. Dr Fox reports the issues discussed that are pertinent to falconry and some of the resolutions adopted at the Conference.

Mr Christian de Coune, who also attended the CITES Conference in Harare, gives us the background information concerning the creation of the "Falconry Passport". The Resolution adopted in Harare represents a victory for all those who placed so much effort and campaigned so hard to make the "Falconry Passport" a reality.

Mr de Coune also give us an inside view to the work of the International Association for Falconry on the Recommendation of the Bern Convention concerning the "Introduction of Organisms Belonging to Non-Native Species in the Environment".

Conservation work and research on the saker falcon population in Mongolia continued during 1997. Dr David Ellis and his colleagues gives us a brief account of the work conducted in Central and Eastern Mongolia and points out some interesting findings.

Tom Bailey sent an excellent report on the collaborative work between the Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency and the Falcon Foundation International on the conservation efforts on the lagger falcon in Kud Wala and Karesh. Falcon trappers were given a series of presentations and shown a video on medical management of captive falcons. In addition, they were provided with first aid kits for their falcons. Conservation in action is an important issue in Pakistan and we sincerely hope to continue working with Brigadier Mukhtar Ahmed, the working force behind the Falcon Foundation International.

We also include in this issue a small report by Theri Bailey on the first ever Arab Hunting Exhibition held in Dubai in October 1997. In her article Theri points out the role of the Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency in promoting the sustainable use of hunting as part of its philosophy.

The Central Veterinary Research Laboratory in Dubai continues sending updates on their work with Chlamydia and Mycoplasma. We are very grateful to Reena, Sunita and Professor Wernery for their support and for the contribution of the CVRL to further avian medicine.

We welcome a short report on aspergillosis from Michael Lierz, the newly appointed Director of the Abu Dhabi Falcon Research Hospital. In his article, Michael reports his experience with inhalation therapy as an adjunct treatment of aspergillosis. Inhalation therapy has been a favourite method for the treatment of aspergillosis since the late 70' and has seen a revival in its use in the last couple of years. I took the liberty of reproducing a couple of short articles from a book that we will shortly published on falcons and falconry. The book is intended as an awareness tool for falconers.

Theri Bailey also provided an abstract of her MSc entitled "An assessment of the prevalence of Trichomonas sp in the domestic pigeon population in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and its impact on falcon health".

Finally, there is a short contribution by our own Administrative Assistant, Mrs Merle Apo on the usual news and announcements.

On a sad note, my wife and I will be saying goodbye to the United Arab Emirates at the beginning of February. To many of our supporters and friends around the world, this news will come as a surprise. Believe it or not, we are still surprised ourselves! We leave the Emirates to take up a new professional challenge in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We had five good years working for the National Avian Research Centre and the recently established Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency. It is difficult to leave such a beautiful country full of beautiful people, but life has to continue. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who in

one way or another contributed to make our stay in the UAE a happy and a successful one. We will continue discussing with Dr Nick Fox and Mr Mohammed Al Bowardi the future of

our Group and ways of continuing working together towards the same objectives.

Thank you for all your support and encouragement over the last five years.

CITES Conference in Harare

Report by: Dr. Nick Fox, Falcon Management and Research Programme, Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, P.O. Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Five falconers attended the 10th conference of the Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) held in Harare between 9-20 June 1997, to lobby delegates from 138 countries. Christian de Coune represented the International Association for Falconry (IAF); Tim Kimmel, President of North Americans Falconers Association (NAFA) and Frank Bond, legal adviser to NAFA, represented North America; Tony Crosswell represented the British Falconers Club (BFC) and I represented the United Kingdom Hawk Board and interests in the United Arab Emirates.

The Zimbabwe Falconers Club was marvellous and looked after us very well; Gary Stafford kindly provided lake-side chalets and a car for the duration of the conference, and Adrian and Sally Langley and their team from the African Sky Hunters kindly took us out for two and half days hawking during the middle weekend.

The CITES meeting is at the roof of international legislation on the trade in endangered species. Therefore it is important that falconers do their best to ensure that no legislation is passed which would affect the interests of falconers and birds of prey. A number of falconry-related issues were on the agenda, including the definitions within CITES of "captive breeding" and "for commercial purposes", which remained unresolved.

However, after considerable lobbying and uncertainty, a resolution on the trans-border movement of birds of prey was finally passed (see the following article). This would enable a passport system allowing up to two personally-owned birds of prey to be taken across the international borders of two countries which are CITES signatories. This was important issue for NAFA members in terms of movements between the United States and Canada for field meetings and for falconers who live on or near that border. Similarly, it was important for those falconers living on or near Europe's

eastern borders. Those falconers living within Europe who want to move birds already have their own internal system so they are not affected unless they wish to take their birds on hawking trips outside Europe to another CITES country. The passing of this resolution is a step forward to easing some of the paperwork and time delay which prevents us moving with our birds.

The proposed resolution by the Americans to downlist the North American population of the gyr falcon from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II was not tabled. However, in discussion amongst ourselves at the conference, comparing birds of prey with other species such as elephants, we could see that the time has come to propose downlisting of at least some populations of peregrines and gyr falcons from Appendix I to Appendix II. This will ultimately result in an easing of regulations on these species.

Those Clubs which kindly supported the expenses of the BFC and the IAF delegates should be proud of their contribution. It is essential that the voice be heard. Our delegation of five people made quite an impression on a number of governmental and non-governmental organisations present at the conference.

Also it was also pleasant for us, as falconers, during the lunch break to have friends staying at the Sheraton in the shape of a pair of lanner falcons roosted high at the top of the hotel building on the "r" and the "a" of the word "Sheraton". The lanneret had been released some years earlier by our host Gary Stafford, and it was amusing to notice that the other delegates, intent on saving endangered species, never noticed their presence! We were tempted to throw a lure down on the ground in the middle of the outdoor restaurant area just to see what would happen!

The next meeting of the Parties will be in two years time, and we will have a lot of preparations to make before that time.

The falconry passport

Report by: Mr. Christian de Coune, President, The International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey, "Le Cochetay", B-4140 Gomzé-Andoumont, Belgium.

You may remember that at the 9th COP in '94, I addressed the problem of frequent border crossings by falconers, the CITES Secretariat took an official position saying that falconry birds travelling with their owner could be exempted from such formalities.

After several consultations, I drafted a text of a resolution on "frequent" trans-border movements for falconry purposes. This text was taken over by Switzerland and proposed to the Animals' Committee. Tony Crosswell (BFC), Frank Bond (NAFA) and myself attended the meeting of the Animals' Committee in the Czech Republic, 23-27 September 1996.

The President of the Animals' Committee had modified my text quite thoroughly, especially by expanding its scope to all "personally owned live animals". The Animals' Committee approved it.

The approved text has been officially proposed by Switzerland and Germany as a Draft Resolution of the Conference of the Parties to the CITES to be hopefully adopted in Harare.

We were a team of five in Harare to support the German-Swiss proposal, Tim Kimmel, president of NAFA, Frank Bond legal adviser of NAFA, Tony Crosswell of the British falconers' Club, Nick Fox of NARC (Abu Dhabi) and myself.

The draft resolution has been distributed with comments by the CITES Secretariat. Although recognising the repeated formalities would not benefit nature conservation and that the resolution would be a useful administrative simplification, the Secretariat expressed fears that the proposed system might give rise to frauds.

It was obvious that steps had to be undertaken to meet the worries of the Secretariat. In the meantime, we had been contacted by representatives of interested groups that may be considered as to opposed fieldsports: Agentur Wildtierschutz, Animal Defenders, Born Free Foundation, Humane Society of the United States. They proposed to make changes to the text of the proposal. We held a meeting with representatives of the above mentioned organisations and agreed on some amendments to be proposed to Germany and Switzerland.

These amendments were very reasonable and pragmatic: one animal per document, the Customs will have to validate the document. I reproduce hereafter the document proposing the amendments. That document is interesting insofar as it contains side by side "animal rightists" and falconers. This joint document also confirms that in the international circles, whether government or non-governmental, the reputation of falconry has improved very much over the last decade.

The suggested amendments were accepted by proposing countries and a revised version was submitted to the Parties as the very last item on the heavy agenda of the day after. We were hoping that the documents would, like some other ones, pass almost unnoticed and be approved without too much discussion. Being the last point in the agenda of a tiring day, this could well have happened like that.

Our "pass" gave rise to very active discussions. The Chairman intervened pointing out that there was obviously no majority in favour of the document and he proposed to reject it. The Swiss and the German delegates took the floor and defended very strongly their amended proposal. They concluded by proposing to form a small working group to amend once more the text to accommodate the concerns expressed during the discussions and to submit a revised text the day after.

The Chairman decided to vote on the forming of such a working group on the rejection of the document and he added that the votes would constitute an indication on the attitude of the Committee. The results of the votes was 41 in favour of forming a working group and 17 against. A great relief!

The German and the Swiss delegates together with a member of Traffic South Africa and myself held a short meeting and agreed on a few changes. A second revision of the text was proposed to the Parties the day after, no one made a comment and the text was then approved unanimously by the Committee II (the Conference of the Parties is divided into two Committees that prepare the issues to be voted on the Plenary Session).

The draft resolution as adopted unanimously by the Committee II was also adopted unanimously by the Plenary Session of the COP 10. It then became officially a

Resolution of the Conference of the Parties of the CITES. The text of the Resolution is reproduced below.

Not only will this Resolution make things easier for the falconer who travels, it is also the unanimous recognition by 129 countries that falconry has a "legitimate purpose". Falconry has always been so far on a defensive position, now it is becoming much more pro-active.

Reasons behind the success story. Most probably the main reason is the improved acceptance of falconry in international circles, whether political or scientific. The effort of promoting the "falconry passport" itself has definitely played its part in this success.

This started in 1994 at the 9th COP where the idea of facilitating transborder movements of falconers was acknowledged by CITES Secretariat.

Preparing a first unofficial pre-draft resolution and having it endorsed by Switzerland and afterwards by Germany too set the ball rolling.

The work that has been done at the meeting of the Animals' Committee in the Czech Republic by our team of three, Frank Bond, Tony Crosswell and myself made our dreams come into reality.

Our team of five in Harare (Tim Kimmel, Frank Bond, Tony Crosswell, Nick Fox and myself) participated in all the sessions and small working groups where the issues were addressed. This resulted in the fact that we were associated to the amendments of the text. It is far more productive to be there when the text is being drafted rather than criticising it afterwards! Individual lobbying has played a role, which is difficult to measure but which is part of the strategy which has resulted in the improved image of falconry.

This lobby started before the conference: I sent letters and faxes recommending a vote in favour of the

resolution. The World Conservation Trust IWMC sent a letter to all the Contracting Parties. I have handed to my interlocutors over a leaflet in French, English and Spanish as well as 12 page booklet containing the text of the draft resolution, arguments in favour of the adoption: "ten good reasons to vote in favour and five good reasons to vote against" and a few supporting documents in favour of falconry.

The other members of our team have also actively advocated in their corridor conversation in favour of the adoption of the "passport". Since the last three Conference of the Parties the wildlife users' interests have been increasingly well organised (the anti-lobby too). For instance, The World Conservation Trust - IWMC published a newsletter everyday in the three official languages of CITES and held well attended meetings every evening. The American Wildlife users were also well organised and held a meeting every morning under the chairmanship of Safari Club International. To all those who played directly or indirectly a part in the success of the "passport", I give great thanks, we all owe you a lot.

Very special thanks are given to the delegates of Switzerland and Germany. Not only they accepted to officially propose a resolution for falconers' transborder movements, but they defended their draft with energy and talent. The dialogue between them and us was very straightforward. We also owe very much to Mr Jenkins, the President of the Animals' Committee who worked out the text of the draft resolution.

Many thanks to Thomas Althaus, Peter Dollinger, Gerhard Emonds, Dietrich Jelden and Hank Jenkins, falconry owes you a lot.

And now? The resolution will come into force three months after the Conference. The "passport" needs the agreement between parties concerned. Who are the Parties concerned? It is your country. It is then up to the national falconers' associations to persuade their country to adopt an agreement with other countries concerned.

Recommendation No. 57

Report by: Mr. Christian de Coune, President, The International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey, "Le Cochetay", B-4140 Gomzÿ-Andoumont, Belgium.

The Standing Committee of the Bern Convention (of which IAF is a permanent observer since 1986) has been working out since 1993 a "Recommendation on the Introduction of Organisms Belonging to Non-Native Species in the Environment".

This Recommendation endorse that Contracting Parties :

1. Prohibit the deliberate introduction of organisms belonging to non-native species.
2. Endeavour to prevent accidental introduction of organisms belonging to non-native species.

The Preamble of the Resolution states:

"Species in the sense of this recommendation refers both to species and to lower taxonomic categories, subspecies, varieties, etc." (thus, for instance, the release of a different non-native subspecies into a given territory should also be considered as an introduction).

At the beginning of the negotiations, someone claimed that falconry could be a source of such introductions. Since an early stage of the discussions, I had been drawing the attention of the Council of Europe to the fact that falconry is not a source of accidental introduction.

The Council of Europe agreed in writing to my arguments. The draft

Recommendations gave rise to discussions at every meeting of the Standing Committee since 1993.

This time again, there were discussions, amongst others about the fact that the Recommendation would exceeded the powers of the Standing Committee, several other remarks were made and the Committee decided to form a working group. The Delegate of the European Commission asked me personally to be a member of the said working group, which I of course accepted with gratitude.

After a few changes proposed by the said working group, the Recommendation was at long last adopted, it contains in its preamble the following: "Considering that this Recommendation does not apply to or the use of birds of prey in falconry".

It is easy to imagine the excessive use that could have been done of this Resolution to unduly create difficulties to the falconers if falconry had not been explicitly "immunised" from the prohibitions contained in the Recommendation. This sentence is also almost welcomed recognition by the Council of Europe of falconry as an accepted fact.

This recommendation is a very good one insofar as it addresses the serious problem of "invasive organism". Everyone knows of the case of rabbits in Australia, muskrats in Europe, American mink in Central Europe, water-hyacinth in tropical waters and others.

If you are not happy with what you have got now, what makes you think you will be happier with more?

Saker falcon research and conservation efforts in Mongolia, 1997

Report by: Dr. David Ellis, P. Tsengeg, Peter L. Whitlock

This past summer, our small field team followed a 4000 km route through central and eastern Mongolia. Even though there was a population crash underway for picas (*Ochotona* sp.) and voles (*Microtus* sp.), we found 38 new saker nests and visited 60 eyries found in previous years. Many of the former eyries were unoccupied. Others were occupied but without young. Productivity was good at eyries with large young, and southeastern Mongolia seemed unaffected by food shortages.

The main goal for 1997 was to create new eyries and enlarge, stabilise, or otherwise alter marginal eyries. We created 65 eyries as follows: 8 on wooden powerlines or telephone supports, 8 on metal power line towers, 3 in trees, 3 on boulders, 11 on cliffs, 17 on abandoned buildings, 9 on metal geological survey towers, and 6 on miscellaneous structures. We also enlarged or repaired three

established eyries and did a minor repairs on several others.

Lesser accomplishments includes what may be the first observation of siblicide for the saker falcon (please contact us immediately if you have other records of saker chicks attacking or killing their nest mates) and the description of a new saker flight display. We also documented an unusual golden eagle eyrie containing the remains of nearly 30 foxes, several predatory birds, and a number of gazelle.

In 1998, we plan to return to Mongolia to see how many of our “fake eyries” attracted falcons.

Our work in 1997 was supported by Mr. Howell, another philanthropist (anonymous), and the Institute of Raptor Studies.

Falcon conservation in Pakistan in collaboration with the Falcon Foundation International

Report by: Mr. Tom Bailey, Wildlife Veterinary Research Institute, Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, P.O. Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

In late November I visited Pakistan to work with the Falcon Foundation International (FFI). I visited falcon trappers and dealers in Multan and Peshawar to participate in the filming of a documentary by Mr Yatzik Strek, on the saker falcon. Later I travelled with Brigadier Muhktar Ahmed, President of the FFI, and his team to the areas in the Punjab where lagger falcons are trapped at Kud Wala, near Yazman Mundi and Karesh, near Fort Abbas, to participate in a series of lagger falcon workshops that had been organised by the FFI. These visits gave me an opportunity to see first hand the way that wild falcons are trapped in Pakistan, the conditions that they are subsequently kept in, and the socio-economic importance of this trade to the people living in remote rural communities.

Lagger falcon trappers and falcon dealers

In general most falcon trappers and dealers kept their birds on unsuitable perching material. It is not surprising that they complain of foot problems in birds kept for greater than 1 month. It was also evident from the birds that we saw, such as lagger falcons, that they have very poor quality jesses put on their feet which are a cause of abrasive injuries. The material

most commonly used was string. If further workshops are organised to improve the awareness of falcon health with the trappers I would recommend that Astroturf or a cheaper substitute and jesses should be distributed to them

From discussions with the lagger falcon trappers other medical problems in recently trapped birds appear to be;

- traumatic injuries that occur at trapping.
- stomatitis, probably trichomoniasis.
- acute deaths after trapping - no details on this, but it is a problem and may be related to feeding, perhaps enteritis, but this is purely speculation.

Conversations with the large falcon dealers in Peshawar suggested that the following health-related problems contribute to morbidity and mortality in birds before they are sold;

- traumatic injuries in newly trapped birds, especially toe injuries, these often become infected.
- bumblefoot in birds kept for > 1 month.

- respiratory problems (usually leading to death, probably aspergillosis) in birds > 1 month.

Lagger falcon workshops

These one day workshops were attended by over 100 trappers, some of whom had attended the workshops in February (see an earlier issue of *Falco*). We were able to distribute 75 falcon first aid kits, show videos illustrating common conditions of birds of prey, discuss the treatment of common medical problems, to get feedback from the trappers themselves and members of the FFI were able to distribute conservation awareness material. Each kit contained cotton wool, cotton buds, a toothbrush (for cleaning feet!), bandage, antibiotic eye cream, antibiotic skin ointment, iodine tincture, gauze swab, Dettol antiseptic, electrolyte powder, fenbendazole anthelmintic tablet, and a wound ointment. The trappers commented that they found the kits useful and we were also able to demonstrate on an unwilling chicken that had been 'volunteered' as a patient the correct way of giving medications to birds!

The trappers requested that ERWDA/FFI makes a leaflet (in Urdu and/or English) explaining the common diseases of falcons through colour pictures, with a few lines on the causes and most importantly what medicines they should treat the bird with. The trappers enjoyed watching a home-made video that I had put together on medical aspects of birds in the UAE including footage of medical work on falcons and bustards at NARC/ERWDA. Perhaps a more comprehensive video could be made to cover care and health issues of falcons and shown at future workshops.

Although the FFI and ERWDA do not support the trade in wild falcons that occurs in the Middle East and Asia, it is a reality that this trade exists and will continue to proliferate in the near future. Falcons represent a valuable resource for impoverished communities that have few other options for economic improvement. Our involvement enables information to be gathered on the trade and on welfare grounds alone this work to improve the awareness of falcon health with the trappers and dealers may be able to reduce some of the suffering and mortality of birds entering the trapping cycle. I think it is important to recognise the importance of these workshops as an opportunity to promote a conservation message through literature, posters and videos. In this respect I have nothing but praise for the dedication of the staff of the FFI and Dr Toosi

from Lahore zoo who enthusiastically participated in making these workshops such a success.

At the end of the workshops we were given two lagger falcons and a white-eyed buzzard by the trappers. These birds were in good condition and we were able to release them into suitable habitat. To see the birds fly off after their traumatic period of captivity was on pure emotional grounds one of the most rewarding aspects of my time in Pakistan. Of course with my "*veterinary hat*" on I know that ideally these birds should not have been released by us without proper health checks, treatments, quarantine and pre-release training (fitness). However, reality in Pakistan is very different from the medical ideology that was so much a part of my medical training. There was no alternative to releasing the birds because there are currently no falcon rehabilitation facilities where this can be performed in Pakistan.

Just to get the lagger falcon trapping and trade into perspective, it is estimated that each year approximately 2,200 lagger falcons are trapped in the Yazman-Fort Abbas region alone. The trappers estimate that 90% of these birds die during the saker falcon trapping season. This leaves about 220 birds (10%) that are left with trappers at the end of each season which may be released, regardless of the condition or health of the birds. I have not mentioned the trapping and trade in other wild raptors, such as the white-eyed buzzards, so the scale of this problem is considerable and there is clearly an important health and welfare problem here that could be dealt with by the provision of some facilities and trained staff in Pakistan to rehabilitate and medicate these birds before they are released back into the wild. Ideally birds that would be released at such a centre should be monitored post-release to assess survival and migration. Such facilities would also be useful for the rehabilitation of the small number of 'other' falcons that are currently confiscated in Pakistan each year. Once again these birds should not just be confiscated and released, such birds need to be assessed so that only healthy, fit birds that have a good chance of surviving are released.

In conclusion there are a number of important projects between ERWDA and FFI relating to health and welfare of falcons in Pakistan that should be considered and these include.

Materials

- distribution of first aid kits.
- distribution of health awareness leaflet.
- distribution of suitable perching material and/or jesses.
- provision of a comprehensive video on falcon management and care.

Training

- falcon health awareness at Peshawar where the majority of dealers are during or before the main season.
- training local vet at the site where most falcon dealers are located in Peshawar.

Research

- survey of causes of morbidity and mortality of falcons at dealers in Peshawar in September-October.
- survey of causes of morbidity and mortality of lagger falcons after trapping which would allow the collection of biomedical samples from lagger falcons after trapping.

Facilities

- design of a small rescue and rehabilitation centre for lagger falcons.
- design of some aviaries for a small captive breeding programme of lagger falcons.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr Nick Fox and Dr Jaime Samour for helping get to Pakistan in the first place, thanks to Brigadier Mukhtar Ahmed and his FFI team for organising a rewarding trip and Yatzik Strek and Dr Toosi for being a great travelling companion. Special thanks to Mohammed Al Bowardi for his continued interest and support of this work.

The Arab hunting exhibition

Report by: Mrs. Theri Bailey, Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, P.O. Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

From 14th to 17th October 1997, the first ever "Arab Hunting Exhibition" to be held in the Middle East took place in Dubai. The four day event featured 45 companies from 10 countries and was designed to serve the ever-growing hunting market in the UAE, the Gulf region and Asia. The event was billed as:

"An ideal venue to promote both existing and new product lines to a highly influential and affluent audience which is steeped in the tradition of hunting".

As staff of the Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency (ERWDA), whose National Avian Research Center (NARC) is involved with research and management on houbara and falcons, we were keen to be involved with the exhibition right from the start to promote the concept of sustainable hunting that does not indiscriminately destroy wildlife and the

environment. We tried to emphasise that ERWDA supports well-managed hunting believing that this practise can be beneficial to individual species, wildlife communities, hunters and local people on whose territory hunting takes place.

Fortunately, the organisers of the event were very pleased to support the Agency's stance and sponsored the Agency a free stand! In addition, they accepted the suggestion that a section of the exhibition space be designated specifically to falconry. As a result, the Middle East Falcon Research Group (MEFRG) had a poster board on ERWDA's stand and Merle M. Apo, the MEFRG's co-ordinator, was able to hand out leaflets on the Group and sign up many new members. Dr. Jaime Samour, the MEFRG's Chairman, was able to offer a lot of advise to visitors on falcon health and management.

The falconry section of the exhibition was also shared by Northwoods', one of North America's finest falconry outfitters run by Brad Woods, Martin Jones with 'Falconry Equipment and Hunting Falcons', Bryan Paterson with 'Wildlife Tracking Systems', and Nick Fox's team from 'Hunting Falcons International'. Nick Fox's prototype rubber houbara lure was of enormous interest to the visitors.

Although the exhibition had several "teething" problems, on the whole it was a

success and was well attended especially by some very influential local hunters. The organisers have recently announced that the 1998 Arab Hunting Exhibition will be held from the 29th September to the 2nd of October. Anybody wanting further details about the exhibition should contact Abdullah Abulhoul, Mediac Communications and Promotion, PO Box 5196, Dubai, UAE. Tel: 00 971 4 692004. Fax: 00 971 4 691296. E-mail: mediac@emirates.net.ae.

Chlamydia infection in avian species

Report by: Ms. Reena Zachariah and Professor Ullie Wernery, Central Veterinary Research Laboratory, P.O. Box 597, Dubai, UAE.

Chlamydiosis in falcons and other avian species seems to be a persistent problem in the United Arab Emirates. This chart is a follow up of the previous article published in Falco Newsletter issue no. 9, June 1997.

We have now resorted to testing pharyngeal swabs as cloacal swabs gave false positive results. It would be interesting to know from falconers and falcon veterinarians about the symptoms of Chlamydia infection and the success after treatment.

Chlamydia ELISA results from avian species (November 1996 - December 1997)

Species	Total No. of swabs tested	Positive Cases	Percentage positive
Falcon	874	101	11.5
Parrot	5	2	40.0
Houbara	155	65	41.9
Pigeon	23	8	34.7
Others	25	6	24.0
Total	1082	173	17.4

Others: Toucan, Kori bustard, Heuglin's bustard, Stone curlew, Quail, Rhea

Mycoplasma infection in captive falcons in the United Arab Emirates

Report by: Ms. Sunita Joseph and Professor Ullie Wernery, Central Veterinary Research Laboratory, P.O. Box 597, Dubai, UAE.

Very little is known about Mycoplasma infections in Falconiformes. Few publications are mentioned in Heidenreich's Birds of Prey, Medicine and Management (1997). This year the CVRL has established a method for the isolation of Mycoplasma organisms. To isolate Mycoplasma use Mycoplasma transport

medium. After placing a swab into the transport medium, the samples should be sent to the CVRL on the same day with no cooling and container should not be exposed to direct sunlight. Please take note that growth and identification of Mycoplasma will take minimum 7 to 15 days.



Mycoplasma isolates from avian species in Dubai

Lab. No.	Species	Sample	Symptoms/lesions
2303-97	Gyr falcon	Trachea	Rales
2351-97	Gyr falcon	Air sac	Pus, air sacculitis
2353-97	Peregrine	Choanal slit	Pus, air sacculitis
2361-97	Pheasant	Eye	Swollen, discharge
2422-97	Gyr hybrid	Trachea	Pus, air sacculitis
2499-97	Peregrine	Trachea	Weak, poor flying
2464-97	Gyr hybrid	Trachea	Normal, routine
2445-97	Gyr hybrid	Trachea	Weight loss
2509-97	Peregrine	Trachea	Pus, air sacculitis
2536-97	Gyr hybrid	Trachea	Sick
2570-97	Gyr falcon	Trachea	Sick
2591-97	Gyr hybrid	Trachea	Sick
2592-97	Gyr falcon	Trachea	Sick
2657-97	Pheasant	Eye	Swollen, discharge
2678-97	Gyr/peregrine	Trachea	normal, routine

Identification of the above mentioned isolated Mycoplasma spp. will be reported later.

Aspergillosis

Report by: Dr Michael Lierz, Director, Abu Dhabi Falcon Research Hospital, P.O. Box 77, Al-Khazna, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

“At the Abu Dhabi Falcon Research Hospital we have started using inhalation as an adjunct therapy in the treatment of aspergillosis” reports Dr Michael Lierz the newly appointed Director of the facility. “In addition to the standard and well-known aspergillosis treatment, we are using a nebulizer (Omron C1) to treat affected birds. The falcons are placed in a glass cage with a connection to the nebulizer. The connection is as high as the nose of the standing falcon. We use diluted Imaverol (1:50) as the drug for the inhalation

therapy. We treat birds two times a day using 5cc of the diluted drug. After inhalation the falcon is left for sometime in the cage. The treatment time is at least for three weeks. The falcons wear the hood during treatment. It is interesting to see that the falcons enjoy the inhalation. We treated already 20 falcons using this method and all the birds recovered. The birds that were treated in an early stage of the disease recovered totally, but falcons in a late stage of aspergillosis remained with breathing problems”.

Traditional Arab hunting methods

Report by: Dr. Jaime Samour, Wildlife Veterinary Research Institute, Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, P.O. Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

The traditional way of Arab falconry has remained almost unchanged throughout time. The relatively new introductions, such as four-wheel drive cars and telemetry equipment, are just modern innovations of the 20th century. The hunting method is simple. As a general rule, a group of 6 to 8 falconers gets into 3 to 4 cars and drive across the sands. Commonly, there is a leading car carrying an expert tracker. He will be looking for the characteristic foot prints of the houbara bustard impressed on the fine sand. When tracks are found, a “spotter” falcon is taken out of the car, its hood is removed so it can scan the ground in front of the vehicles. When the “spotter” falcon sees a houbara and locks on it, a second falcon is

released and the chase begins. However, very often there is no experienced tracker in the group and the party has to rely on the “spotter” falcon to do the task of finding the evasive houbara.

The houbara bustard is a cunning species that poses a number of tricks in its arsenal and will not hesitate of using them in trying to outwit its formidable predator. While on the ground, if the houbara knows that the falcon is too close, it will try to scare him away by performing a ludicrous display. When approached by the falcon, the houbara lifts half-way its partially opened wings, lifts its tail creating a triangular fan and starts flapping the

wings in short beats in order to scare its menacing opponent. The falcon, completely unimpressed by this behaviour, normally catches and kills the bird on the spot.

If the falcon is still far, the houbara will try to get away by flying. When the chase is on, the houbara could choose several strategies to outmanoeuvre the falcon in full flight. One of the favourites is to fly in the direction of the sun knowing that the sunlight shining straight into the large eyes of its adversary could dazzle him. The houbara is also a master in aerial acrobatics and could decide to fly downwind and execute sudden changes of

direction with the most astonishing speed to lose its contender. The last resource is a biological and very effective weapon. When the falcon is approaching dangerously close, the houbara can evacuate its terminal intestines containing a thick, sticky and foul smelling substance that has an almost immediate deterrent effect. Occasionally, some of these tricks have the desired effect and the falcon will be beaten. However most of the time, even with this ingenious array of weaponry, the houbara bustard inevitably succumbs as it stands very little chance of escaping from the much stronger and faster falcon.

Veterinary considerations during the hunting season

Report by: Dr. Jaime Samour, Wildlife Veterinary Research Institute, Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, P.O. Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

During the hunting trip, falcons are exposed to numerous medical conditions. When struggling with a houbara on the ground, falcons very often break some of their feathers. Feathers are also commonly broken when falcons are taken carelessly in and out of cars. Although this is not a serious problem, it can be a nuisance and represents unnecessary delays. Most cases of broken feathers can be repaired, even in the field, and many parties carry a skilled person that can do this. The procedure is called imping.

The most common problems with falcons during hunting trips are associated with extreme weather conditions and management. We have pointed out how variable the temperature is during the winter months on the hunting grounds. When organising the hunting trip and setting up the camp, a lot of attention is paid to the comfort of falconers and other party members, but very little or no attention is given to the comfort of the falcons! It is highly recommended to include some extra tents for the falcons. The ideal type are square tents measuring 5 x 5 m provided with windows and

four doors. One of these tents can accommodate easily 10 to 15 hooded falcons overnight to protect them from the cold, rain and wind. During the day, the windows and doors of these tents can be opened and provide an ideal shelter for falcons from the baking sun. Spraying falcons with water, to help them cope with the midday heat, is also a good idea and most falconers do this routinely. You could also provide basins for falcons, in particular peregrines, to take a bath.

During hunting trips, falcons sometimes fail to make a kill or show no interest in chasing a houbara. Falconers usually assume that the stomach of the falcon contains a thick layer of fat accumulated during the summer and therefore the falcon is not interested in food. Crystals of ammonium chloride forced down the crop of the bird provides the answer for many falconers. This practice is very dangerous and is completely unnecessary. Ammonium chloride is a toxic agent that can kill a falcon in minutes, even if administered by an experienced falconer.

A falcon that is trained well and is fed well, performs well

During the hunting trip remember:

- Do not feed your falcons only and exclusively on sheep meat.
- Variety is the key of success in feeding falcons.
- Be careful with the feathers of your falcon.
- Provide shelter during the day and evening.
- Spray the falcons during the midday heat and provide baths, in particular for peregrine falcons.
- Do not use ammonium chloride. It is unnecessary and dangerous. Seek alternatives.

An assessment of the prevalence of *Trichomonas* sp. in the domestic pigeon (*Columba livia*) population, in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, and its impact on falcon health.

Report by: Mrs. Theri Bailey, Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, P.O. Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

In partial fulfilment for the degree of M.Sc. in Environmental Science, conducted at the UAE University, Theri Bailey conducted a thesis entitled: ‘An assessment of the prevalence of *Trichomonas* sp. in the domestic pigeon (*Columba livia*) population, in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, and its impact on falcon health.’ The abstract to her thesis follows:

A survey of 250 captive (animal market) and free-flying (trapped at a sheep farm) pigeons was conducted to assess the prevalence of *Trichomonas* sp. in the domestic pigeon (*Columba livia*) population, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Oropharyngeal swabs demonstrated that 52% of all pigeons were found with *Trichomonas* sp. in their oropharynx, of which 60%, 68% and 35% of pigeons were *Trichomonas* sp. positive in the Al Ain and Abu Dhabi animal markets and Al Ain sheep farm respectively. Captive birds had a significantly higher infection rate than the free-flying pigeons. Inspection of the oropharynx of live pigeons positive for *Trichomonas* sp, revealed that 1.2% of pigeons had trichomonosis lesions. There was a statistically significant difference between pigeons held in animal markets having trichomonosis lesions compared with free-flying pigeons. Post-mortem examinations of 45 pigeons positive for *Trichomonas* sp, showed that 11% had oropharyngeal lesions. Survival trials in pigeon carcasses positive with *Trichomonas* sp., frozen at -20 °C, showed that no trichomonads were alive after 6hrs of freezing. Identification studies (morphological identification using a Scanning Electron Microscope) conducted by the Central Veterinary Laboratory, UK, concluded that the *Trichomonas* sp. isolated in the pigeons was *Trichomonas gallinae*.

To assess the impact of *Trichomonas* sp. on falcon health, a review of hospital records for falcons treated for trichomonosis was conducted. Additionally, fifty falconers were questioned to determine their awareness of falcon health, and trichomonosis in particular. The review of hospital records at the Sulman Falcon Hospital in Bahrain and the UAE’s Dubai Falcon Hospital and Abu Dhabi Falcon Research Hospital, over a ten year period (1986 - 1996), showed that the UAE hospitals treated significantly less falcons for trichomonosis compared with the Bahraini hospital. In addition, there was a 1.68% decrease in the number of falcons treated for trichomonosis at the Dubai Falcon Hospital over this period. In 1995 and 1996, fewer falcons were treated for trichomonosis at the private Abu Dhabi Falcon Research Hospital, than were treated at the public Dubai Falcon Hospital. This is presumed to be because most of the falcons attended to at the Abu Dhabi Falcon Research Hospital are fed pigeons that have been medicated against trichomonads. Hospital records of the two years, 1995-1996, showed that immature, female sakers are the category of falcon commonly treated for trichomonosis at the Dubai Falcon Hospital and that most falcons (80%) are treated for trichomonosis in the months of October to March. This period equates well with the

training and hunting period of the falconry year, when the use of live pigeons in feeding and training increases.

The results of the questionnaire also indicated that trichomonosis is a decreasing health problem amongst falcons held in the UAE. As 78% of falconers did not know the cause of trichomonosis, and since all feed pigeons to their falcons, this decrease may be due to falconers feeding their falcons frozen quail, in preference to pigeons, for economic reasons. Feeding frozen quail is most dominant during the moulting season (April-September). In addition, their general understanding that removing the head, neck and internal organs of

pigeons is important, is beneficial to falcon health. Finally, it is recommended that, as well as falcon health awareness on trichomonosis given by staff at the falcon hospitals, television programmes and literature could help to reduce the prevalence of the disease further.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Ullie Wernery from the CVRL Dubai, Dr Jaime Samour from ERWDA, Dr David and Mrs Cheryl Remple from the Dubai Falcon Hospital and Dr Mark Hitchcock from the Abu Dhabi Falcon Research Hospital for their support to this study.

News Bits

By Mrs. Merle M. Apo

1997 MEFRG PIT database completed

The MEFRG 1997 PIT database has been updated and copies were circulated together with the recovery report form to all the falcon veterinarians in the Middle East. Dr. Nick Fox also offered to lend microchip readers to all Falcon Hospitals and Clinics in the Middle East for them to be able to take and report microtransponder recoveries from falcons taken to them for treatment.

The MEFRG PIT implanting scheme was first initiated with the study on saker falcons in Kazakhstan in 1993. After two years, Dr. Robert Kenward and Dr. Ralph Pfeffer

reported that 10% of the young falcons microchipped in Kazakhstan reached the United Arab Emirates after rings had been removed by trappers.

The MEFRG members are helping NARC's Falcon Programme in UK which is responsible in coordinating an extensive conservation programme on falcons in the wild used by Arabs falconers. The PIT recovery reports are important in determining the direction of the conservation efforts in the protection of saker falcons undertaken in Mongolia, China, Siberia, Pakistan and other parts of Central Asia.

Dubai Falcon Hospital reported in August, a female saker with ring #111925135A also ringed in Kazakhstan. Two female peregrine falcons from the Yaimyr peninsula in Russia, one with ring #DS006377 and the second with PIT number 121111270A were found in Abu Dhabi. These two peregrine falcons were tagged by Chris Eastham from the Falcon Management and Research Programme of the Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

PIT recoveries

We have at least four PIT recoveries reported this year. Three of which were recovered in the United Arab Emirates and one in Saudi Arabia. A saker falcon with ring # HT56089 ringed by Robert Kenward in the Kazakhstan was found in Saudi Arabia. The

A visit to the Sharjah bird market

We went recently to Sharjah and took the opportunity to visit the bird market. Much to our surprise, we could not find the bird

market we used to visit. We drove further down towards the creek when we saw the sign "Bird and Pet Market". It was indeed a better place than it used to be. The move by the Sharjah municipality to build the bird and pet market is highly commendable. We went around and we were happy to see that the condition of the animals has improved a lot. The place is clean and tidy. We gather that there is also a veterinarian who over looks the management of the market. We saw different kinds of birds, there were some tortoises, rabbits, etc. We saw at least 70 wild caught saker falcons. There

were some peregrines but very few hybrids. When we saw how many wild caught saker falcons were there in the Sharjah bird market we started to think, how many of those birds may have been microchipped in the wild. How and where were they trapped? How many of them will be purchased and used for this hunting season and what will be the fate of the unpurchased ones? It is difficult to know, but we strongly believe that something has to be done about the welfare and conservation of these birds.

ERWDA WWW

All informations about the MEFRG is now incorporated with the new ERWDA website on <http://www.erwda.gov.ae>

Dr Kenton Riddle

Dr Kenton Riddle is leaving Abu Dhabi shortly after more than 10 years of

directing the operations at the Abu Dhabi Falcon Research Hospital. We wish him well and a long and happy retirement.

National Falcon Hospital

The first ever medical facility devoted to the medical care of falcons has been recently established in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The National Falcon Hospital was open to the public just a few months ago and is now fully up and running. Dr Ian G. McLaren, the working force behind the project informed us that "birds are coming in from all over the Kingdom and there are many promises of more to come. There is a

lot of interest in the project and I am very encouraged by the response". He continues "All bodes well for the future...future prospects greatly enhanced by the presence of Dr Nigel Barton at the helm. Nigel joined us just last week. We have set up a fully equipped facility with hospitalisation capacity for about 50 birds. Having a fully equipped lab, all work is done in-house by a trained technician". We wish all the best to Ian and Nigel and we hope to hear more news from Jeddah in the future.

Many years ago, a large American shoe manufacturer sent two sales reps out to different parts of the Australian outback to see if they could drum up some business among the aborigines. Some time later, the company received telegrams from both agents. The first one said, "No business here...natives don't wear shoes". The second one said, "Great opportunity here...natives don't wear shoes!"

Announcements

3rd International Raptor Biomedical Conference

9 - 11 August 1998

Midrand, South Africa

Final announcement

The Scientific Committee of the 3rd International Raptor Biomedical Conference is happy to announce the preliminary programme

of this conference which is scheduled as part of the Vth World Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls (August 4-11) and close to the International Ornithological Conference (August 16 -22). The Conference will start with practical labs in raptor orthopaedics, ophthalmology and rehabilitation techniques on Sunday, August 9. The main conference is

scheduled for August 10 and 11. On Monday evening August 10 there will be a poster and free communications sessions. Proposal for free communications and posters can be sent to the Chairman of the Scientific Committee: J.T. Lumeij, Division of Avian and Exotic Animal Medicine, University of Utrecht, Yalelaan 8, 3584 CM Utrecht, The Netherlands, e-mail: J.T. Lumeij@ukg.dgk.ruu.nl

For further information on registration, hotel accommodation, the social program and field trips please contact Local Arrangements Manager Dr. Gerhard H. Verdoorn, P.O. Box 72155, Parkview 2122, South Africa, Tel. 27-11-646-462/8617, Fax 27-11-646-4631, E-mail: neshher@global.co.za. he can also be contacted

for information on the Vth World Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls (August 4 - 11).

Please consult the websites of the respective conferences
<http://www.uniud.it/DSPA/wildvet/rapmed/rapmed.htm>
and
<http://ewt.org.za/raptor/conference/> for updates on programme and registration procedures.

For information on the International Ornithological Conference (August 16 -22) please contact Birdlife South Africa in Durban, Dr. Aldo Berutti, Email:aldo@birdlife.org.za. or the website <http://www.ioc.org.za/other-org.html>.

Preliminary Scientific Programme

Sunday, August 9

Practical Sessions (Wet labs)

Ophthalmology of birds of prey and owls (R. Korbel)
Orthopaedics in raptors (P.T. Redig)
Rehabilitation techniques in raptors.

Monday, August 10

Opening by the Chairman of the Scientific Committee (J.T. Lumeij)

Pathology and Microbiology I (Chairperson: J.E. Cooper)

Neoplasms of birds of prey (N. Forbes, J.E. Cooper, and R.J. Higgins)
The pathology and diseases of the Mauritius kestrel (*Falco punctatus*) (C.J. Dutton, J.E. Cooper, and A.F. Allchurch)
Detection of Mycoplasma spp. in raptorial birds in Germany (M. Lierz, R. Schmidt, Gobel T. and Runge M.)
Chlamydia psittaci in Strigiformes and Falconiformes in Austria (U. Pohl)

Pathology and Microbiology II (Chairperson: O. Krone)

Newcastle disease virus in raptors(R.J. Manvell, U. Wernery, D.J. Alexander)
Clostridial enterotoxaemia: an emerging disease in Falconiformes in the United Arab Emirates (U. Wernery, J.Kinne, A Sharma, H. Boehmel, J. Samour)
Endoparasites of raptors: A review and update. (D. Lacina and D. M. Bird)
Parasitological findings in captive falcons (Falconiformes spp) in the United Arab Emirates (J. Samour)

Environmental Disease and Mortality (Chairperson: R.E. Kenward)

The probable reasons for the decline of the greater spotted eagle (*Aquila clanga*) in Russia. (V. Belik)
Diseases and causes of death in captured and free-living bearded vultures (*Gypaetus barbatus aureus*) (A. Scope and H. Frey).
Mortality of nestlings in Bonelli's eagles (*Hieraetus fasciatus fasciatus*) in Algarve, Portugal - A multi disciplinary approach to the problem. (J.M. Blanco, U. Hofle, L. Palma, P. Melo.)
Trichomoniasis in American kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) and two eastern screech owls (*Otus asio*). (S.N. Ueblacker)

Management of Captive Raptors and Falconry Birds (Chairperson: J.D. Remple)

Veterinary implications during the hunting trip. (J.H. Samour)

Medicine and Therapeutics (Chairperson: J.T. Lumeij)

(Patho)physiology, diagnosis and treatment of renal function disorders in birds of prey. (J.T. Lumeij)
Reconsideration of abnormal leukocyte and differential white blood cell counts as aids to diagnosis of different disease conditions in free-living birds of prey. (U. Hofle and J.M. Blanco)
Considerations on the production of a "safe and efficacious" falcon herpes virus vaccine (J.D. Remple)
Serological changes in Snowy Owls (*Nyctea scandiaca*) with aspergillosis (B. Gollob)

Monday evening

Free communications and poster presentations (Chairperson: J.D. Remple)

Trichomonas sp. and falcon health in the United Arab Emirates (T.C. Bailey, J.H. Samour and T.A. Bailey)
Reconciling conservation interests with health and medical issues of the lagger falcon (*Falco jugger*) in Pakistan (T.A. Bailey, N.C. Fox, A. Mukhtar, and J.H. Samour.
Herpes virus infections in raptors (R.E. Cough and U. Wernery)
Raptor diseases in zoological institutions (C. Bertram)
Assessing rehabilitation success of raptors through band returns (M. Martell, J. Goggin, P.T. Redig)

Tuesday, August 11

Surgery and anaesthesia (Chairperson: P.T. Redig)

Advances in treating pododermatitis (bumblefoot) using antibiotic-impregnated polymethylmethacrylate beads. (J.D. Remple and N.A. Forbes)
Osteology of the falcon wing (P. Zucca and J.E. Cooper)
Ophthalmology of birds of prey. (R. Korbel)
Orthopaedic techniques in raptors (P.T. Redig)
Tendon repair and replacement in the pelvic limb in birds of prey I. Anatomical considerations. (N.H. Harcourt-Brown.)
Tendon repair and replacement in the pelvic limb in birds of prey II. Surgical aspects. (N.H. Harcourt-Brown.)

Rehabilitation and post-release monitoring and survival (Chairperson: D. Csermely)

Aspects of management within the European bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus aureus*) reintroduction project. (H. Frey)
Outdoor housing and release conditioning of raptors. (S.N. Ueblacker)
Fitness levels as a determining factor in the survival of rehabilitated raptors released back into the wild (P.Holz and R. Naisbitt)
Intra abdominal implantation of a multi sensor telemetry system in a free-flying griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus fulvus*). (C. Walzer, R. Bogel, R.E. Karl, G.Fluch and R. Prinzing)
Rehabilitation of birds of prey and their survival after release (D. Csermely)

Breeding and Genetics (Chairperson: N. Fox.)

DNA-sex determination and sex related variation in morphometric, haematologic and biochemical parameters in Iberian imperial eagle (*Aguila heliaca adalberti*) and Bonelli's eagle (*Hieraaetus fasciatus fasciatus*) (U. Hofle, J.M. Blanco and M. Wink)

Legal and ethical aspects (Chairperson: M.E. Cooper)

Legal considerations in the collection and transportation of diagnostic and research specimens from raptors (M.E. Cooper)

Health monitoring of birds of prey - the ethical and legal arguments for non-invasive or minimally invasive techniques (J.E. Cooper)

Closing remarks by Chairman of Organizing Committee.

World Conference on Birds of Prey and Owl

August 4 - 11, 1998

ESKOM, Training and Exhibition Center
Midrand, South Africa

International Ornithological Conference of Birdlife International

August 16 - 22, 1998

ESKOM, Training and Exhibition Center
Midrand, South Africa

19th Annual AAV Conference & Expo

August 25 - 29, 1998

The Radisson Hotel
St. Paul, Minnesota

Registration brochures for the 1998 conference will be available in April, or you can keep up to date by visiting AAV website at www.ConferenceOffice.com/aav.

For further information:

Please contact the Conference Office or a member of the Conference Committee:

Jerry LaBonde, DVM, President

Glenn Olsen, DVM, PhD, Immediate Past President and Conference Chair

Suzanne Topor, DVM, Dipl ABVP-Avian, President Elect

Susan Sattler-Augustin, DVM, Education Program Chair

Joint Meeting of the WAWV with the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians (AAZV) and the Canadian Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians (CAZWV)

October 16 - 22, 1998

Holiday Convention Center
Omaha, Nebraska

MEDIA PA 1906, USA

or

For further information please contact:

Dr. Wilbur Amand, Executive Director AAZV and President WAWV
6 North Pennel Road (Lima),

Dr. David Jessup, Program Chairman WAWV
7945 Amalfi Way, Fair Oaks
CA 95628-5902
USA

5th European AAV Conference with SCIVAC

The AAV, in cooperation with the Italian Cultural Society of Veterinarians for Companion Animals (SCIVAC), is happy to announce the 5th European Conference of Avian Medicine, to be held in Pisa, Italy in May, 1999. The program will include: the European Committee of Avian Medicine and Surgery (ECAMS) meeting, an interesting symposium on a specified subject, practical laboratories, and a three-day main conference. The 5th Conference will take place in the

Palazzo dei Congressi of Pies, is a prestigious structure of the University, located 100 meters from the faculty of Veterinary Medicine. The Palazzo dei Congressi is complete with lecture rooms seating 900, 300 and 150 persons, audio-visual facilities, simultaneous translation equipment, equipment, large exhibition areas, lunch area and bar. An interesting social program will be organised for participants, with excursions for spouses and guests and post-congress tours.

For further information please contact:

Dr. Lorenzo Crosta, Organizing Secretary
Via C. Ghiretti, 2

43100 Parma
Italy
Tel. 39-521-293913
Fax 39-521-294036
Email: Newteam@mbox.vol.it

Books

The Bird Care Handbook and Resource Guide

By: Abramson, Blanchard, Davis, Desborough, Pepperberg & Ritchie.

The Bird Care Handbook and Resource Guide is a condensed manual of practical information on how to take proper care of aviary and companion birds.

Wonderfully beneficial for individual bird owners, it is ideal for veterinary clinics to give or to sell to their clients. The authors take the reader through such topics as nutrition, cages,

household emergencies, first aid, safebird toys, conservation and more

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Birds of Prey - medicine and management.

By: Dr. Manfred Heidenreich

The most thorough and comprehensive guide of the last 20 years to address diagnosis and treatment of raptors. Conditions of ill-health that result from ineffective husbandry, management, and breeding practices are

detailed. Also included: Explanations of new diagnostic, therapeutic, and surgical techniques 334 illustrations and diagrams, including 295 in colour, and more. 1997, 294 pp., 814 x 11, illus., hardcover, #0-632-04186-2, \$194.95.

Middle East Falcon Research Group

The Middle East Falcon Research Group (MEFRG) intends to bring together experts in falcons and falconry, veterinary surgeons, falcon biologists and conservationists working in the Middle East and other professionals interested in falcons and falconry from around the world.

The main objectives of the MEFRG are:

1.- To provide

- A central body for the coordination of research activities related to falcons and falconry.
- A common forum for exchange of information and for promoting collaborative research programmes.

2.- To promote

- Research on health and diseases in falcons, falcon moulting patterns in the Middle East and falcon nutrition, captive breeding programmes and semen cryopreservation and artificial insemination.
- Field studies on falcon migration, taxonomy, morphometrics, reproductive biology, nutritional ecology and behaviour.
- Improved management conditions of captive falcons through educational awareness programmes.
- A better understanding of falconry as part of the Arab cultural heritage.

3.- To hold

- Regional workshops on veterinary medical aspects, falcon biology topics, falconry and conservation issues.

- International Conference on veterinary medical aspects, falcon biology topics, falconry and conservation issues.

- It is envisaged to publish the papers and posters presented at the conference in the form of proceedings.

4.- To publish

- Joint papers on aspects concerning falcons and falconry.
- A quarterly newsletter containing contributions on medical, biological and conservation topics of common interest, new developments and recent medical advances.

- Membership

Any veterinary surgeon, biologist, conservationist or falconer working in the Middle East or any other person interested in medical, biological and conservation aspects of falcons and falconry from around the world

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The Middle East Falcon Research is your Group