General Falconry and Transportation of Falcons and Birds

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History of Falconry in Ancient Times

- Falconry: Ancient art of taking wild quarry with a trained bird of prey.
- 1700 BC: Originated in the Far East, earliest written sources about falcons used for hunting purposes is the historical source of Martial in the 1st century AD.
- 4th century AD: Falconry in Europe.
- 700 AD: Earliest written manuscript about falcon medicine: Adham ibn Muhriz Al Bahili: “Manafi’a Al Tair wa Ilaqt Da’iha” (The Use of Falcons and the Treatment of their Diseases).
History of Falconry from the Middle Ages until Today

- Middle Ages: Europe: high peak of falconry, sport of kings and aristocracy
- 1250 AD: Frederick II of Hohenstaufen: "The Art of Hunting with Birds" De arte venandi cum avibus
- End of 20th century and beginning of 21st century: high peak of falconry in the Middle East
- 2010: Falconry is added to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO
In Arabia: traditional hunting of the Bedouins

- Falcons were used in winter to get meat to nourish the families
- In spring the falcons were released in the wild again
**Falcons**

- Most hunting falcons are female
- Female falcons are one third bigger than the males
- Some falcon species became almost extinct due to illegal trapping for falconers worldwide
- Shk. Zayed Falcon Release Program to release falcons back in the wild
Training and Hunting

- Training with an artificial lure, kite or helicopter
- For successful flights pieces of meat are given to the falcon as reward
Code of Ethics in Falconry

- Never chase a prey which has already escaped
- Never overwork your falcon
- Never chase too many prey per day
- Practice a sustainable hunting
- Respect areas where falconry is forbidden
- Falconry is not a competition
Falcon Passport

- In 2002, UAE signed the CITES convention and implemented a new law for falconry
- Only captive-bred falcons are allowed in the UAE
- All falcons have to be registered with ring and microchip
- Falcon passport is mandatory for traveling
Saker Falcon – Falco cherrug

- South-East Europe (Hungary, Balkan)
- Russia, from central Asian countries up to China
- National emblem of the United Arab Emirates
Gyrfalcon – *Falco rusticolus*

- Arctic, northern European areas (Iceland, Siberia etc.)
- Largest falcon
- Was always considered as the most precious and valuable falcon
Peregrine Falcon - *Falco peregrinus*

- Cosmopolitan – on all continents on earth
- In large parts of Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, America
- 18 subspecies
Nutrition and Prey

- Small mammals like mice, rats, hamsters, lemmings and rabbits
- Small birds like pigeons, ducks, partridges
- Favourite prey in Arab Falconry: Great Bustard
Falconry Equipment

Mangalah
- Cotton muff
- Used traditionally in Arab hunting
- For carrying a falcon on the fist

Glove
- Leather
- Western Style
- Used for carrying a falcon on the arm
Falconry Equipment

Burqa / Hood

- Made of leather
- To tame a falcon
- To keep a falcon calm
- To avoid fights between two or more falcons
Falconry Equipment

Lure
- Fake prey
- Lure with fur resembles a mammal prey
- Lure with feather resembles a bird prey
- Used for training a falcon to hunt a specific type of prey
Falconry Equipment

Subuq / Jesses
- Jesses around the feet of the falcon
- To tie a falcon on the mangalah, glove or perch
Falconry Equipment

Wakir / Perch

- Sitting place
- Different types: covered with astroturf, cloth
- Fixed or portable perches
Falconry Equipment

Telemetry
- For tracking a falcon during flight
- Transmitter fixed in tailmount on the middle tail feather
- Transmitter gives radar signal to transponder
Special Certificates for Transportation

- EU-Certificates for birds traveling to EU countries
- Specific certificates for some countries e.g. Morocco
Falcon / Bird Identification

Closed identification ring with individual number

Microchip
Quarantine before Transport

- Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital as official place for quarantine and laboratory testing for avian travel and import

- All falcons and pet birds have to undergo their quarantine at Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital

- Duration of quarantine varies
  - Birds traveling accompanied by their owners: 10 days (Pet Bird Scheme)
  - Birds traveling as cargo without owners: 30 days
Quarantine before Transport

- Individual quarantine room for each bird
- Birds in quarantine cannot be visited or taken out from the quarantine facility until the date of travel
- Upon collection, the birds must be transported directly from the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital to the airport
Quarantine for Falcons
Quarantine for Birds
Laboratory Testing Requirements

- Testing for travel is performed at Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital Laboratory
- Exporting country (UAE) requirements
  - Testing for H5N1 Avian Influenza by PCR and ELISA methods at arrival in the quarantine
  - Testing for H5N1 Avian Influenza by PCR and ELISA methods maximum 72 hours before the travel
Laboratory Testing Requirements

- Importing country requirements
  - Usually H5 and H5N1, sometimes H7 and H9 according to OIE manual
  - Some countries require other tests such as Newcastle Disease Virus
  - UK: requires testing in special UK laboratory
Health Certificates

- Health certificates are issued upon negative laboratory test results.
- Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital prepares the international documents and issues the valid UAE Health Certificate.
- Ministry to officialize and stamp the travel documents.
- After completion of all documentation requirements from Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital and the Ministry, the bird is allowed to travel.
- In case of a delayed travel date, the procedure has to be repeated partly or completely again.
Travel Preparation

Important points to consider prior to traveling

- Carrier: new or appropriately sanitized
- 1 bird per carrier
- Feeding
  - Falcons must be without food and water during travel
  - Birds like parrots need to have food and water in their containers especially for longer travel
Types of Carriers
Types of Carriers
Special Travel Requirements for Falcons

- Hoods
- Jesses
- If required tail or/and wing guards
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