

2021

IDAHO FALCONERS ASSOCIATION

JOURNAL



Editor's Page

Wow, what year huh? I do hope this finds everyone in good health and ready for the new season. I'm certainly ready for the new season. This season I will be flying my four-year-old male Harris Hawk. I'm excited to be back out beating brush for him and watching him chase rabbits out in the desert!

This was quite the project, but it was a fun challenge. It tested my abilities and knowledge but I think I came up with something that everyone will find pleasing. I enjoyed reading everyone's stories, they're all a bit different and I think they highlight the wide range of falconry that is out there.

Thank you to everyone that contributed!

Happy Hawking!
Casey



Please feel free to contact me in regards to submitting articles and/or pictures for upcoming newsletters and journals: caseyrobinsonart@gmail.com

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WIN, LOSE OR DRAW

Darryl Barnes

The hawking season 2019-20 was full of excitement and promise developing “Two Moons”, a wild-hacked Peale’s falcon from Pete Widener. She was my third female from Pete and a standout from the beginning. A wonderfully strapping and extremely athletic falcon who had a lot of fly in her and the level speed to match that of a gyrkin. She whizzed through initial training, entered quickly on wild game and subsequently did very well early in the season.



She was the first juvenile peregrine I've flown in 40 years that could succeed on big water flights with hundreds of waterfowl in her first season. She managed to catch many ducks in the fall and became very proficient on them. Her innate intelligence and speed facilitated her catching ducks spectacularly in ways even a seasoned game hawk might not.

When it started freezing up in the late fall, I switched to grouse hawking as is my annual custom. In the first week of December on day one, Two Moons struck and grounded the first sage grouse she saw. She wrestled with it in the tall grass on the shore of a small frozen pond, but it managed to slip from her grip. Intimidated, the grouse flew low a short distance and put into a large sagebrush. Despite being clearly demoralized, the grouse survived,

thanks in part to the falcon's naiveté and a relentless raven that mobbed and distracted Two Moons. The grouse, never losing its wits totally, made good of the opportunity and rocketed away while the falcon was otherwise engaged.

On December 10th she was flying a large pond of about 3 acres that appeared to host a couple hundred waterfowl, both ducks and geese. I was joined by a friend, Jim Younk and we watched her mount. Just as the falcon was reaching her pitch, a Golden eagle suddenly appeared and slid across the sky from the west then swung up to her. They appeared to touch, just for a second, then separate. The eagle continued to slide eastward and joined up with another smaller eagle. Jim and I stood there, slack jawed in utter astonishment, as the falcon kept flying and appeared

unharmful! It was a long flight where she had four big stoops and remounts but was ultimately unsuccessful.

Two Moons appeared totally well on the pick-up, without sign of a wound or any blood on her. She took a full crop before being hooded and placed back on the cage. She spent the next two hours riding along without any apparent discomfort as we drove around to find a slip for Jim's peregrine, "Dragon". Likewise, she appeared well that evening upon returning home and when I checked on her in the mews just before bed she looked positively blissful sitting on her perch, with a bulging crop, relaxed and loose feathered with a foot tucked up. I thought we/she dodged the bullet. The next morning however, I could smell a sour crop through the door of her mews and when I opened it she was

lying down on the shelf perch panting with a still full crop. She wouldn't stand and as I was trying to untie her and carry her into the house, she died in my hands.

The spring of 2020 brought a welcome salve in the form of number five Peale's from Pete, a large Aleutian tiercel I named "Pedro" as well as my first home-bred Anatum, also a tiercel named "Rojo". The three of us had quite the adventure throughout the summer performing the Four Week Window (4WW) tame-hack here at our place in Mayfield. In 40 years of falconry this 4WW tame-hack was one of the highlights. Pedro and Rojo were out 12-13 hours every day and there was very little stress and no major mishaps.

I was in constant contact via

telephone and email with Lynn Oliphant the creator and author of the Four Week Window the entire time. He was particularly helpful in the beginning, and thanks to him we pulled off a successful hack. Initially, I did

fore I began. To my mind it is best to think of the 4WW as a "trained-hack" vs tame-hack, particularly for those who have experience tame-hacking imprint falcons. The young falcons in the 4WW need to be full-



not fully understand the full conceptual scope of the 4WW hack despite reading the book twice and very nearly failed be-

ly geared up and trained to the basic falconry routine before fledging. The young falcons must be jessed and accustomed to stepping to the glove, coming to, and eating off the lure and accepting the hood, all before they can fly. This happens quite easily and quickly in a matter of 3-4 days, but it is paramount to complete this step prior to the young learning to fly so they can safely and reliably be recovered each afternoon. There is little time between 35 days old and fledging with a peregrine to accomplish this. Therefore, it is critical to not be too casual about the process and get the



daily handling routine well established quickly. By contrast, wild-hacked and passage hawks for that matter, there is no urgency to this phase of becoming acclimated to life as a falconry bird. Wild-hacked and passage falcons of course learn all these things after they have been trapped up and their adolescent flying is over. In the case of imprints at tame-hack, the daily routine and the mechanics of husbandry occur gradually throughout the rearing process, and again without urgency or a definitive timeline. Within a couple of intense days of handling my tiercels were jessed up and fitted with transmitter attachments, taught to step to the glove from a perch and off the lure, made to the hood, and became accustomed to feeding off the lure and from the glove. It was remarkable how quickly they picked it all up.

The next wrinkle in our hack experiment was a significant delay in the actual fledging. Lynn says peregrines should fledge between 37 and 42 days old and my two tiercels fledged at 44 and 45 days old. The Anatum, Rojo, fledged first from the third rung of a ladder placed out for that sole purpose and promptly spent his first night out in the top of a neighbor's Cottonwood tree. I put his GPS transmitter to sleep for

the night but did not sleep too soundly myself! The tree has a line of sight to the roof of my house so the following morning I put Pedro the Peale's on the eaves of the roof, and he scrambled to the peak in short order. As suspected, this quickly drew the attention of Rojo who soon came flying in to land beside his hack-mate. When Rojo made his next flight, he took Pedro with him, and thus they both were fledged.

Lynn was initially perplexed by the late fledging but soon worked it out and shared his insight. In the wild, peregrines fledge from cliffs and need only step off the porch as it were, to be airborne. Likewise, from Lynn's deck and roof of his home some 30-40 feet above the ground the young falcons have the advantage of height, and like wild peregrines his hawks can take the leap at a much earlier stage. With the assistance of height, they then can develop enough airspeed to create lift and fledge at a younger and perhaps more natural stage. Alternatively, Rojo fledged from near ground level and Pedro from a height of about 16 feet. By the time they did take to the air they were quite a bit more developed and never looked clumsy in the air. Lynn and I discussed this phenomenon without really coming to any conclusions – a good

topic for future investigation and discussion I think.

Pedro and Rojo's daily routine during the hack was as follows. I would get up between 6:30 and 7:00 and go out to the mews where the two had spent the night tethered to their shelf perches. They were usually eager to start their day and leaning forward to step to the glove for a large tidbit, typically a whole quail leg as a little breakfast. They were then hooded, weighed and fitted with both a leg mounted UHF and GPS transmitter. I then walked the short distance from the barn to the center of our back lawn where they were put out each day. Initially, especially prior to fledging I simply stepped them off the glove onto the hack table. Later, when they had been flying a few days I would stand in the center of the lawn, unhood them and after 30 seconds or less they would either launch or I would cast them off with a preparatory "ok let's go". This latter step is recommended by Lynn in The 4WW and like many of his recommendations, has proved to be very handy when it came to formal training and hawking. After the hack they both spent little time on the fist once the hood was removed, and if they were cast-off, they mounted directly and never landed.

The tiercels would fly around the house and over the desert in the back and through the neighborhood for 30 or so minutes then find a place to sit and preen and perform other self-care. Quite naturally and on their own, they found places to stand out of the wind and shady spots out of the heat and direct sunlight during the day. While they were most active in the morning and for about an hour or so in the early evening, I would occasionally find them active in the middle of the day, particularly on windy days and during the last week of hack. I would put their GPS transmitters to sleep after initializing them in the morning before release, then check on them every 2-3 hours turning on the UHF receiver and making sure I had a strong signal. As a re-

assurance to myself, a couple of times each day I would look for the tiercels to get a visual.

In the last week of the hack, it was all at once alarming and exciting to check on Pedro and Rojo several times, finding them with the GPS very far away and very high in the sky. The first time linking up with the GPS transmitter, Pedro was 1.4 miles to the southeast, 1600 feet above me! To my relief, he was back on the roof within the next half of an hour. There were several instances in this last week of the hack where I watched them on the GPS screen up to 2.2 miles away and 2700 feet above me zooming across the sky.

Based on conventional UHF and VHF telemetry data and

visual observation alone, one might have concluded they did not really fly that much during the hack and may question its utility. You hear this a lot from those who are not proponents of a hack of any kind. Here, thanks to Marshall GPS telemetry, we have evidence they can, and do fly a lot more than can be easily observed. Having documented them flying great distances and heights from the hack site even with sporadic monitoring has provided good evidence these young falcons did a lot more than "sit around all day".

The theoretical case for superior development in young hacked falcons has been made by several, including Lynn Oliphant, Ed Pitcher, Pete Widener, and others. I agree with them in



photo provided by Darryl Barnes

most instances. In addition to theoretical argument however, I can offer this GPS telemetry data as empiric evidence as to why these 4WW hacked tiercels have been two of the most successful and well-adjusted young falcons I've known in 40 years of falconry. For what it's worth, I would say I now prefer the 4WW to wild-hacked eyasses primarily because of the lack of stress to the young hawks and the decreased risk of loss or predation while at hack. Further, I

four having been wild-hacked at Pete's.

Both tiercels did well in their training, transitioning near seamlessly from the hack to formal training. Before I ended the hack, they were "entered" to both live pigeons and the drone, so the switch to focused training for waiting-on was simply a matter of changing locations.

Despite the two being a day apart in age, and having the

two subspecies. In my opinion their differences were primarily individualistic and have little or nothing to do with their subspecies or gender. They were similar in aloofness, though the Anatum was a little more standoffish initially. I suspect their wary attitudes was somewhat a result of my handling (or lack thereof) as much as anything else. I was very concerned about over-socializing them, resulting in unwanted behaviors such as vocalizing and covering, etc. Therefore, the time I spent handling and manning them was kept to an absolute bare minimum to allow pick-up in the evening. In a nutshell then, their surprising differences are as follows.

Essentially, Rojo the Anatum was not nearly as aerial and took much more effort to pick up his lessons from the beginning. In particular, he was reluctant to stoop the lure and grab it in the air, chase the drone, etc. He got there eventually but it took two or three attempts more than Pedro. Conversely, Pedro the Peale's was naturally aerial, enthusiastic about learning and generally a bright, quick study. For example, after the first introduction to the lure pole and stooping to it, Pedro would leap from the roof and start ringing upon seeing me walk out from the barn with the lure pole in



photo provided by Darryl Barnes

am of the opinion with just the right amount of handling and socialization, the 4WW hacked hawks are just as independent and aloof as the wild-hacked hawk. I will go one step farther by saying this 4WW Widener Peale's was the most tractable of the five I've had, the other

same exposures and experiences, their differences were immense. Of course, I'm comparing Peale's and Anatoms, but the differences between these two tiercels were not archetypal, and do not mirror what one would expect with what we (think) we know about the



photo provided by Darryl Barnes

my hand. Several times while I was stooping both of them to the lure, Pedro would swing around behind me and "steal" it while I had my eyes on Rojo preparing to pull him through a pass.

Rojo started to really shine with the introduction of bagged quarry. From the first, he came

ripping in to pound the first sealed pigeon given and showed a lust for a high-speed strike. To this day, he seems to relish recklessly hitting his quarry. Pedro on the other hand, despite his pealei heritage and aerial flight style, had no interest in slamming into targets, and always put on the brakes

to tap or cautiously bind to any offering, even sealed pigeons. Though somewhat frustrating for me, it ultimately led to his demise.

Pedro was killed by a haggard red-tail on what was to be his last training flight in the first week of October. I had been flying one tiercel every other day on alternate days. They both were flying consistently well and had been given bagged mallards and pheasants. Where Rojo was slashing and ripping, Pedro would tap and chase and eventually bind to his, then struggle to control it on the ground. To build Pedro's confidence, I switched back to using sealed pigeons and let him sit and extra day. On his last flight, I gave him a sealed homing pigeon from a great pitch. He made a blistering



photo provided by Darryl Barnes

stoop but as usual tapped the pigeon, followed by a towering throw-up with great panache, then tapped the pigeon twice more unsealing it. The two then raced to the North right down to the deck then started climbing out. As they faded from vision, I watched the action on my phone. At a mile away they were at 1200 feet, then started dropping rapidly. The flight ended 50 feet above me and 1.2 miles away in a stand of pines. I drove directly to him and arrived in less than 15 minutes. Pulling up, I saw the red-tail flapping in the top of one of the pines. I thought to myself, it was lucky I got there so quickly, not realizing it was already too late. I found

Pedro dead, lying on his belly, and already partially eaten. I was flabbergasted how quickly this all transpired. The recording of the flight revealed a total duration of just 26 minutes. I assume the red-tail had roosted in the stand of trees the night before and not yet set off on her morning foray when she was served breakfast in bed. Pedro was a well-built peregrine with a beautifully black-capped and pleasantly rounded head, a broad back, large feet, and muscular physique. He had a curious and insightful young mind and was naturally aerial. I'm confident he would've developed into a great gamehawk as his confidence improved given a bit more time.

Like Two Moons, the falcon Pedro ostensibly replaced, the loss was hard to take, but this is the price we pay to be able to see and experience the things we do living this way of life. After some time for reflection, we heal, and move on. If we are honest with ourselves the risk of catastrophe, juxtaposed with the potential of seeing things few humans get to, has a lot to do with the allure of the lifestyle. In addition to the bond most of us form with our hawks, I suspect for many of us, this all or nothing wager is why we do it. Win, lose or draw, we acquiesce to the seduction, place our chips on the table, and embrace the uncertainty.



photo provided by Darryl Barnes



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Goose Hawking in Southwest Idaho

James McKinley

Snow Geese have changed their migration patterns in recent years. They now stage in southwest Idaho in greater numbers. B-1 and B-2 are my two female Gyr/Pergrine hybrids. B-1 caught her first snow goose three seasons ago. B-2 caught her first snow goose last season. In the aggregate my falcons have taken more than 30 geese, mostly snows and several white-fronted (the filet mignon of geese). Some geese

are dispatched quickly others put up a fight. Both falcons grabbed Canada Geese (a mistake) and did not prevail. Canada Geese are usually in family or related groups and when one is in trouble they will render assistance. White-fronted Geese when under attack tend to close ranks and make a stand. Snow Geese seem very aloof when a comrade is attacked and offer little or no help. Female snow geese and juveniles don't put

up much of a struggle, but the ganders are a different story. There is quite a spread in mass, females average just over four pounds while the males can be six pounds plus. White-fronted average about the same.

My falcons (the twisted sisters) flying weights are 1100 grams to 1150 grams, higher when colder. To encourage aerial flights I set up on flocks of geese ¼ to ½ miles away.



photo provided by James McKinley

B-1 (the dark one) had more waiting on flights than B-2. I usually flew the same flocks and they quickly learned to respond to attack by taking flight. This did result in aerial flights lasting many minutes and covering lots of territory. Both falcons struck geese in the air, knocking them to the ground, and both grabbed geese in the air and rode them to the ground. For every goose caught two or three



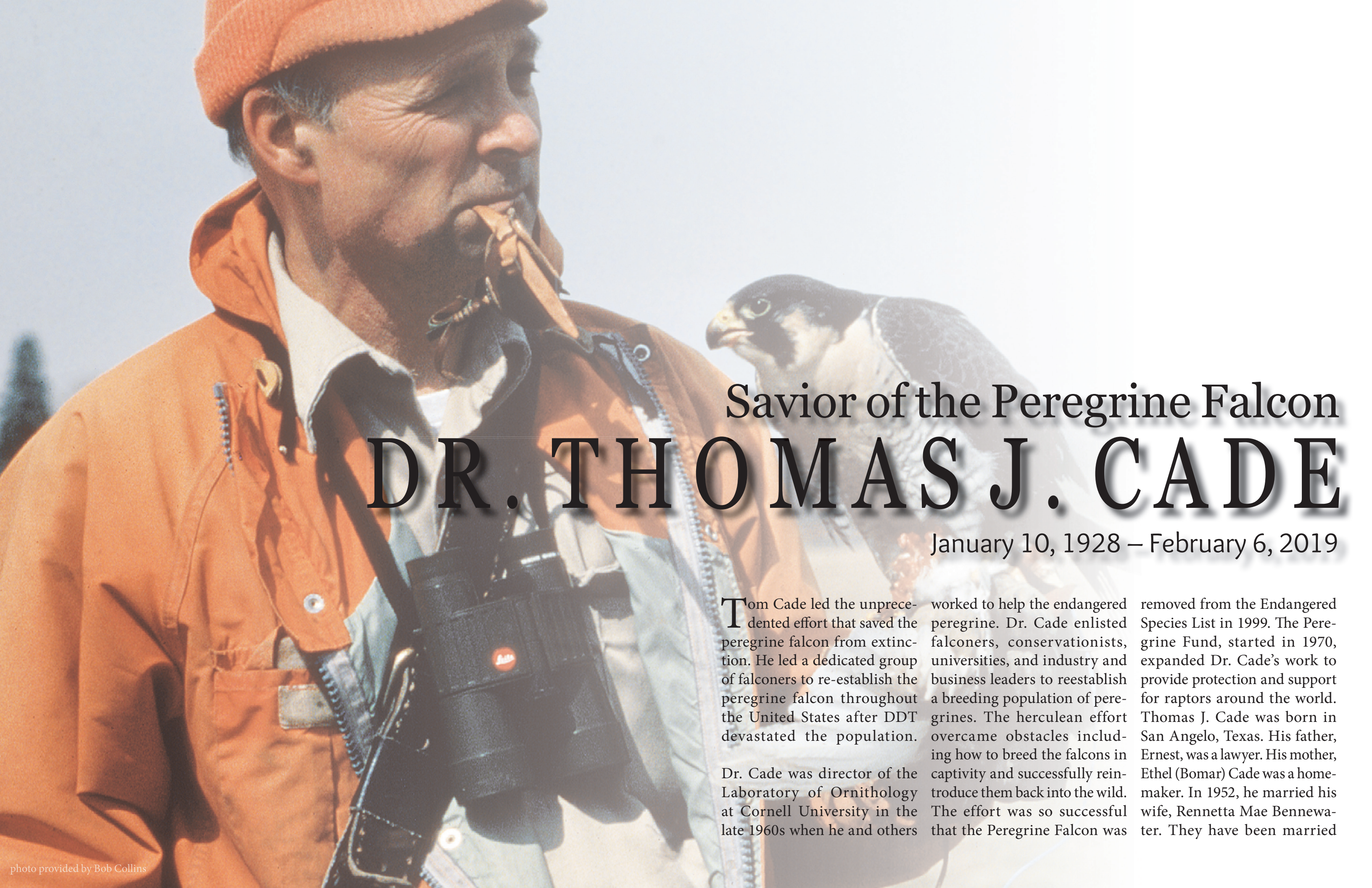
photo provided by James McKinley

were bound to but broke loose and escaped.

There are dangers involved with goose hawking, one needs to be aware of gun hunters, especially on the weekends, and having your bird grab the wrong goose.



photo provided by James McKinley



Savior of the Peregrine Falcon DR. THOMAS J. CADE

January 10, 1928 – February 6, 2019

Tom Cade led the unprecedented effort that saved the peregrine falcon from extinction. He led a dedicated group of falconers to re-establish the peregrine falcon throughout the United States after DDT devastated the population.

Dr. Cade was director of the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University in the late 1960s when he and others

worked to help the endangered peregrine. Dr. Cade enlisted falconers, conservationists, universities, and industry and business leaders to reestablish a breeding population of peregrines. The herculean effort overcame obstacles including how to breed the falcons in captivity and successfully reintroduce them back into the wild. The effort was so successful that the Peregrine Falcon was

removed from the Endangered Species List in 1999. The Peregrine Fund, started in 1970, expanded Dr. Cade's work to provide protection and support for raptors around the world. Thomas J. Cade was born in San Angelo, Texas. His father, Ernest, was a lawyer. His mother, Ethel (Bomar) Cade was a homemaker. In 1952, he married his wife, Rennetta Mae Bennewater. They have been married

ever since and have five children, Maria Jo, Brian, Cheryl, Thomas Alan and Ernest Drew.

After serving in the Army in 1946 and 1947, Tom studied peregrines at the University of Alaska where he received his Bachelor's Degree in biology in 1951. He earned a master's degree at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1955 and his PhD there in 1957.

Tom began experimenting with breeding kestrels and peregrines after joining the faculty at Syracuse University. Cornell recruited him in 1967 and accepted his condition that Cornell builds a falcon breeding barn to further his

“No one who sees a peregrine falcon fly can ever forget the beauty and thrill of that flight!”

goal. Meanwhile, Dr. Cade, with Frank Bond, Bob Beery, and Jim Weaver, started the Peregrine Fund, which has since worked helping scores of species in 65 countries.

Tom was the organization's founding chairman. In the 1980s, the Peregrine Fund relo-

cated to Boise, Idaho and established the Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey. Dr. Cade finished his career at Boise State University, retiring in 1993.

In a 1980 interview with the New York Times, Dr. Cade gave a simple explanation

for his life's work: “No one who sees a peregrine falcon fly can ever forget the beauty and thrill of that flight!”

photo provided by Bob Collins

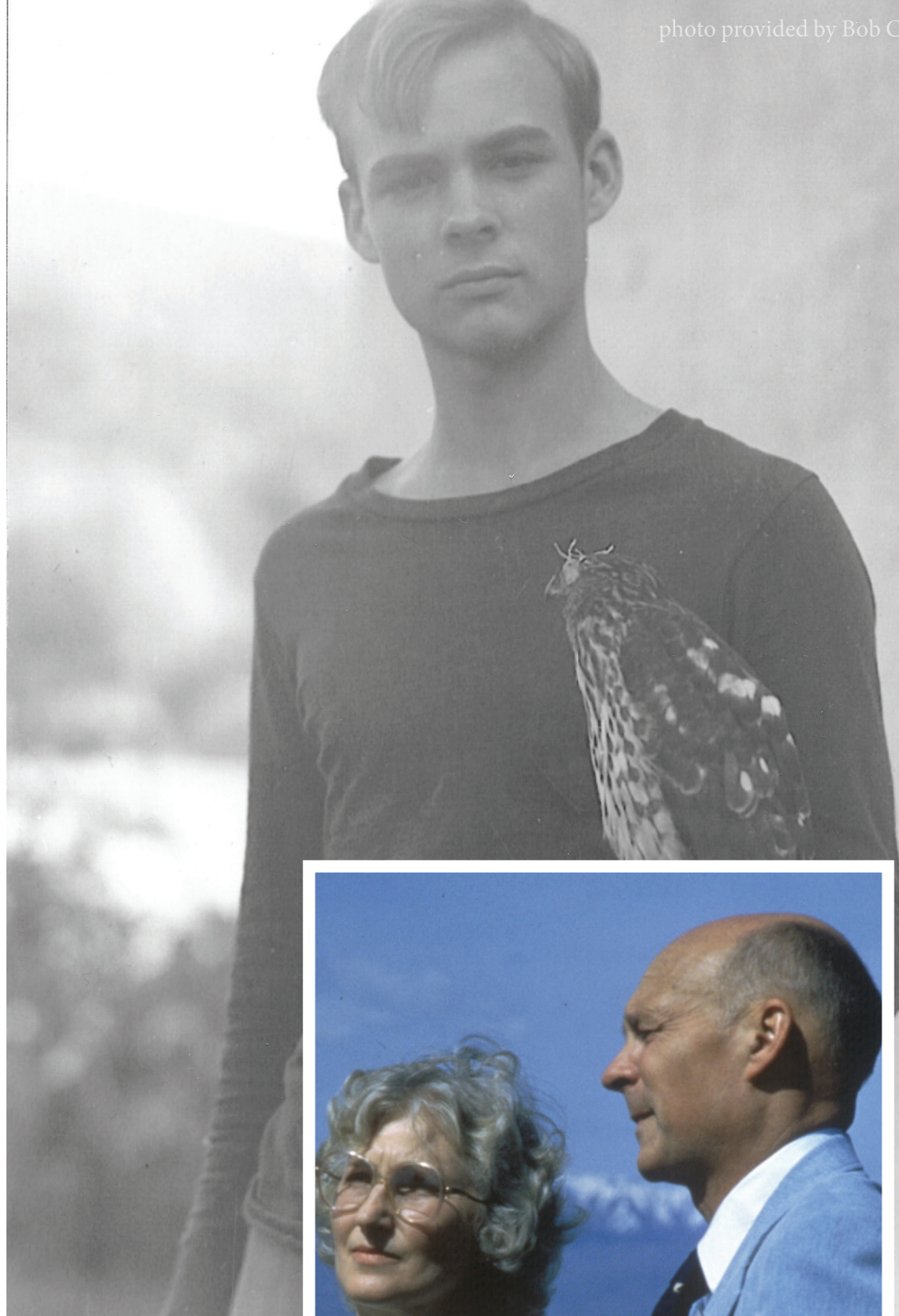


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Tom Cade

A LIFE IN SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION

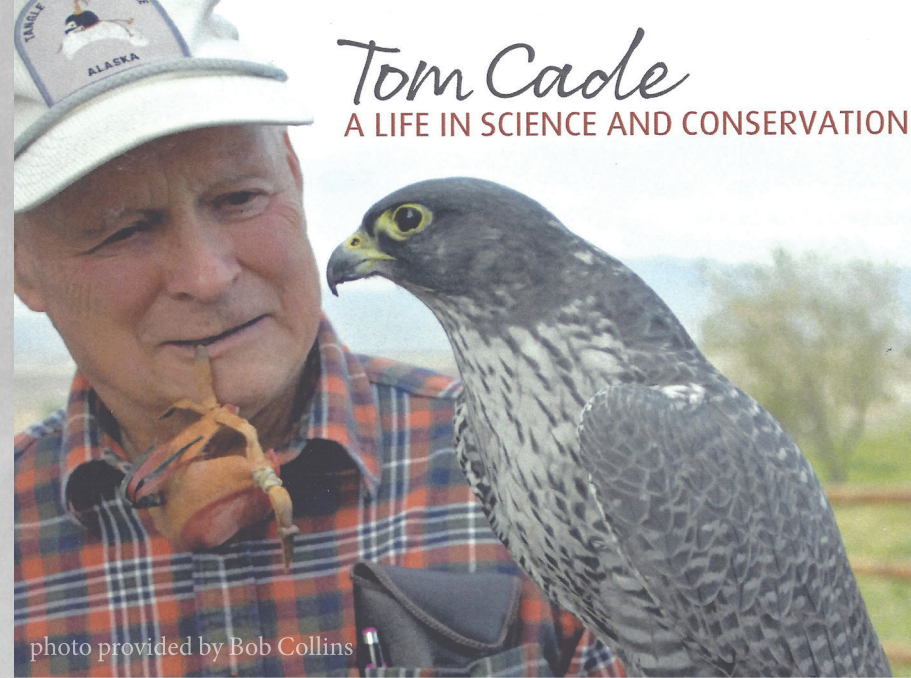


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“Once you float the Utukok, you can never forget it!”

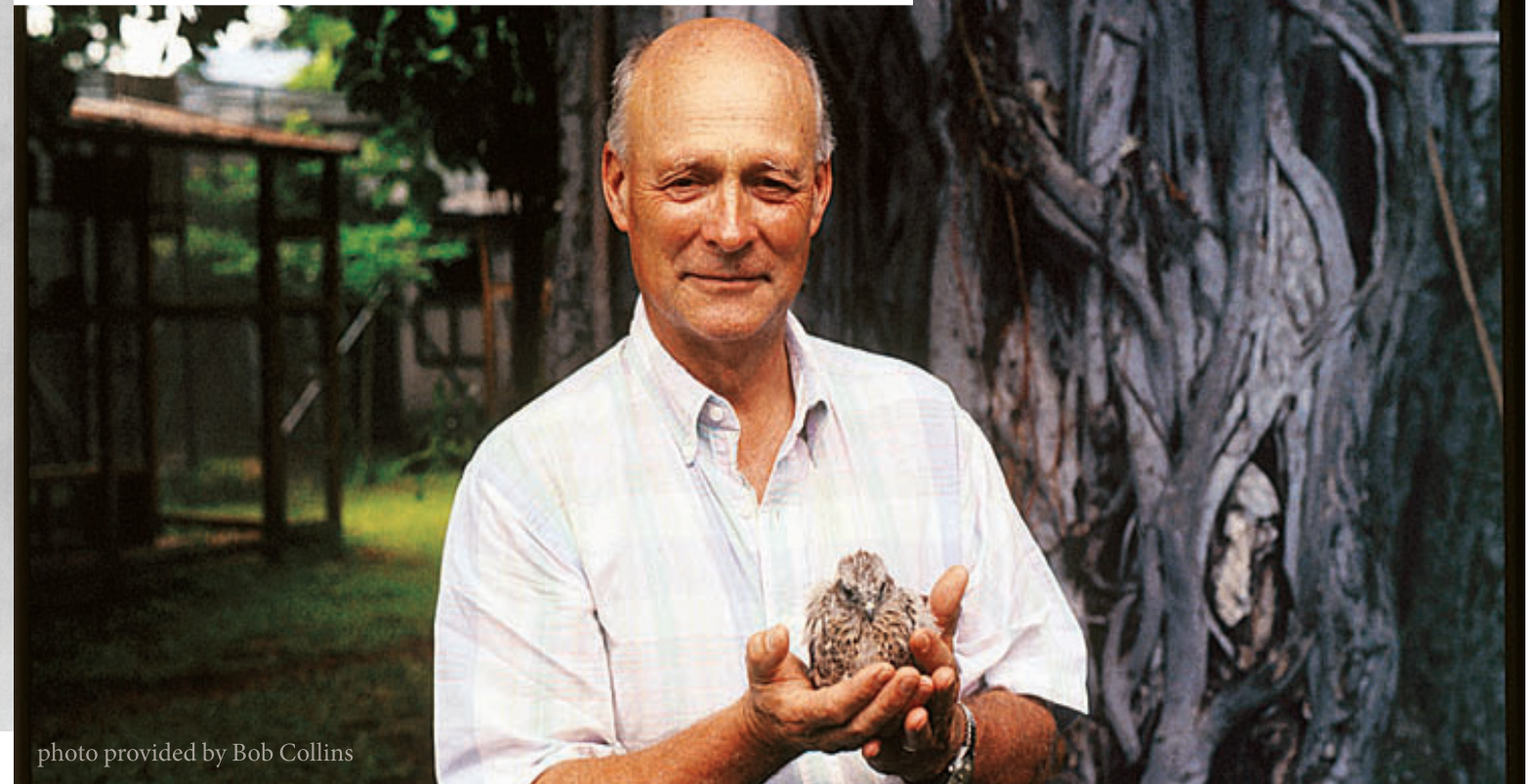


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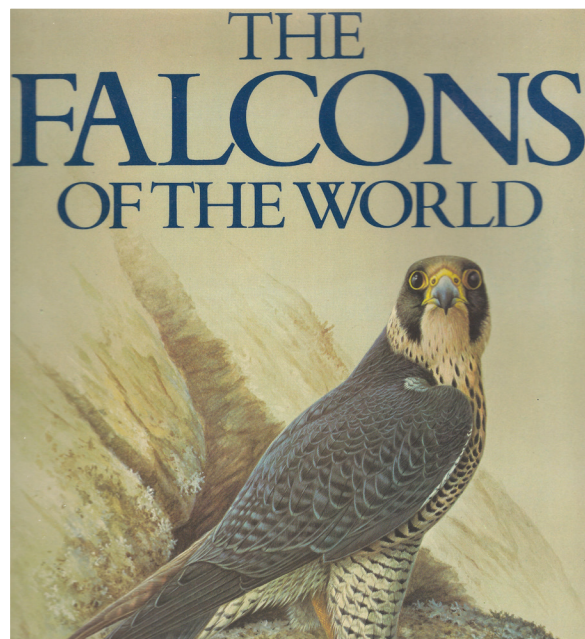
Tom Cade loved Alaska. At a recent dinner during a meeting of The Peregrine Fund's Board of Directors, Tom remarked that he enjoyed his time in Alaska so much that, but for family and educational opportunities, he likely

would have remained in Alaska for the rest of his life. In his autobiography, *A Life in Science and Conservation*, Tom fondly describes his float trip adventures on the north slope despite their life-threatening dangers. He writes “Once you float

the Utukok, you can never forget it!” Tom's float trips along the Yukon and the Colville established benchmarks for peregrine and gyrfalcon research. This book is worth reading for the Alaska adventures alone. In his recent book *Peregrine*



Peregrine Fund is conducting a long term study of the effect of climate change on raptors, principally the gyrfalcon. During that trip, John Earthman hosted Tom and an experienced talented team of raptor biologists for a memorable crab feast. the failure of the local guide to return for him caused him to hike over 40 miles overland across the island back to Gambell while eating dried sealskin and seabirds. He had received his first scientific grant, \$500, from The Arctic Institute of North America for his bird study of the island. He, with others, published approximately six scientific papers as a result of that grant – which, he writes, was a better dollar for dollar value than anything he had done since.



Falcons of the World, co-authored with Clayton White and James Enderson, Tom describes peregrine populations, or lack thereof, on Diomed Islands, St. Lawrence Island, the Pribilof Islands, the Seward Peninsula, North American Tundra Peregrines, Anatum Peregrines, and Peale's Peregrines.

Tom returned to the Seward Peninsula in 2015 where the

Tom talked about that dinner for months! Tom's adventures on St. Lawrence Island in the early 1950s were remarkable. His study of the seabird colonies,

The first publication Tom ever did was on the Peregrine. While a student at the University of Alaska – Fairbanks, he found an eyrie at Chena Bluffs. He published a note in the Auk in 1951 on the diet of the Peregrine on the Tanana River. Tom was hooked on the study of Peregrines in Alaska.

One might say that his love of Peregrines in Alaska led him, eventually, to save them from extinction.

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KENT CHRISTOPHER

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David Skinner

I feel totally ill prepared to write anything about the late Kent Christopher. He was simply an amazing person and one of my heroes. Kent was an artist of life, a poet, and a gentleman. I enjoyed his company very much. While I only became close to him a few years before his death, we shared a bond of common interest of many things, but most poignantly sage grouse and falconry.



photo provided by David Skinner

Kent moved to Idaho in 1980. I did not meet him until the early 1990's, and by then, his reputation as a sage grouse hawker was well established. He was more than just a sage grouse hawker though. He was a sage grouse conservation icon. Like so many other dedicated sage grouse falconers, he gave freely of his time to help where he could. His accomplishments in the conservation arena were

numerous. He was responsible for the Dubious Grouse Days which for over a decade brought bird enthusiasts, hunters, and scientists together to watch sage grouse strutting on leks and participate in educational activities. He helped form the North American Grouse Partnership (NAGP) and was the Idaho Chapter Chairman of that organization. Through NAGP, he helped get a grant to fund the inclusion of forb seeds in areas being planted

for sage grouse. He and Hubert Quade helped to bring awareness to a powerline proposal that would have impacted an important sage grouse wintering area. Ultimately through multi-

Kent had an affinity for English setters. He gave me a male setter named Jack that he had trained. What a gift! On the day he gave me the dog, he first ran Jack on grouse, and I flew my bird over him! Seriously, who does that? That was the kind of man Kent was. Jack was the center of my sage grouse hawking for many years. Kent's dogs were simply amazing, a reflection of the man.

Kent also had an affinity for gyrfalcons. I have since that time followed in those footsteps. I was fortunate enough to get to watch both his gyrkin, Donny, and his female gyr-prairie, Maggie, fly in thermal conditions on ducks! High beautiful flying. The kind of flights long wingers strive for. I so much appreciate having a

copy of his and Vic's book, "High Flying Gyrfalcons." I think it has some of the best descriptions on how to raise imprint gyrfalcons there is. Quality over quantity seemed to be Kent's motto. Very few falconers I have known had more respect and interest in the quality attributed to historic falconry, particularly that of Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen.

At the Dubious Grouse Days event after Kent's untimely death in a skiing accident, I was fortunate to witness so many of my heroes in falconry and conservation speak about Kent. He had touched most anyone connected to the sage grouse hawking and conservation world. He really was the MAN! I miss you sir!

ple partners, money was granted to bury the powerline. When I think of sage grouse hawking and conservation, I think of Kent Christopher.



photo provided by David Skinner

CHARLES SCHWARTZ

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Bruce Haak, Darryl Barnes, and James Younk

On March 9, 2016, Charles H. Schwartz, age 71, lost his battle with cancer. For four decades, he was married to Martha Browne, who shared his passions for falconry, captive breeding, fishing, and travel. He is also survived by his son Alan and daughter Greta from his first marriage. A lifelong outdoorsman, passionate reader, and consummate falconer, he led a unique life and left friends and admirers throughout the worldwide falconry community.

Charles grew up in Ohio. He earned a degree in zoology with a minor in chemistry from Ohio State University, where he also played in the marching band. He was a game warden in Ohio before moving to Idaho to pursue a Master's degree in science at Idaho State University. When I first

met Charles in 1980, he worked as a chemist for the State of Idaho. Later, he managed a research department at the Simplot Corporation in Pocatello.

His father was a butcher and an NRA gun-safety instructor. No doubt, the man was instrumental in instilling

Charles with a love of sport hunting. Each interest that Charles pursued became a discipline to be researched and mastered. These included: photography, scuba diving, writing, upland game and waterfowl shooting and big game hunting. During spring and summer, he preferred fly fishing from his drift boat. One of his great joys was floating rivers

in Alaska to fish with ination techniques,



photo provided by Darryl Barnes

his friends while experiencing the pristine wilderness environment.

As a pioneer raptor breeder, Charles left an indelible

mark on the sport of falconry. He was proficient at artificial insemination

producing the first tri-bred falcon (merlin/prairie/peregrine) and



photo provided by Darryl Barnes

the first merlin/gyrfalcon hybrid. Because of this special skill set, he was hired to breed and train falcons for the Royal Family in Bahrain for five years. Later in life, he successfully bred and flew gyrfalcons.

A gifted trainer of imprinted falcons, Charles flew one of the first prairie/peregrine hybrids produced by Les Boyd with great success. He was also

40 years. He freely shared his knowledge of grouse biology and their winter ecology with the researchers studying sage grouse in eastern Idaho.

A member of the North American Falconers Association since 1971, he served as Secretary in 1978, and Mountain Director in 1989. He was also a founding member of the Idaho

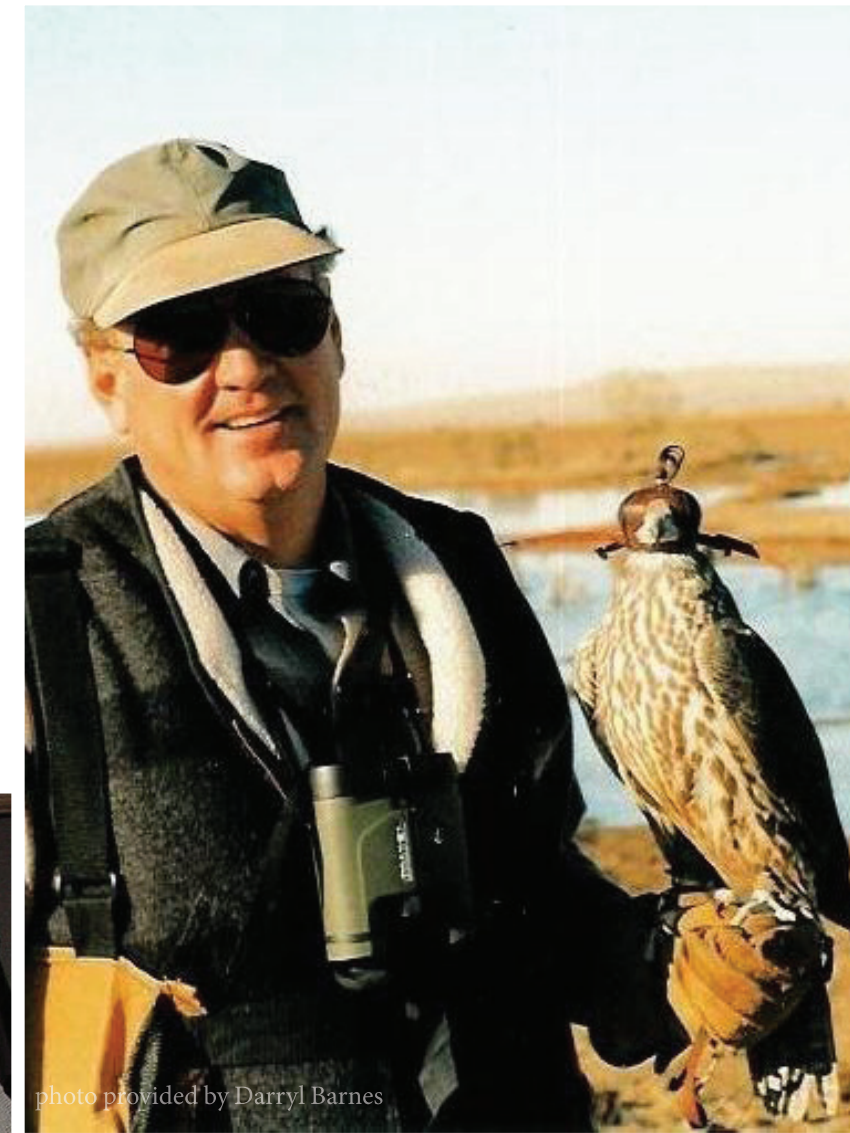


photo provided by Darryl Barnes



photo provided by Darryl Barnes

one of the first falconers to successfully hawk sage grouse in Idaho in the 1970s. Chasing sage grouse with large falcons was his preferred method of hunting, and this ultimately became his consuming passion for

Falconers Association (IFA), holding several offices including president. Charles was the principal author of the IFA constitution. In addition, he contributed articles and photographs on falconry and hunting dogs to NAFA,

World.

I met Charles while on a hawking trip in September of 1980. He and Marty opened their Pingree home to me, and showed me aspects of falconry that I had yet to witness. This was

the IFA, International Falconer, The Pointing Dog Journal, and Dog

the first of many educational experiences that I would glean from their company.

Sage grouse hawking was Charles' passion. His interviewed Peale's falcon, Gemini, was a seasoned veteran and his English pointer knew her job well. On my first drive out to the Big Desert, we stopped the vehicle to let a flock of maybe 200 pheasants



photo provided by Darryl Barnes

leisurely cross the dirt road. That was more pheasants than I'd seen in western Oregon in the past ten years. I remember asking: "Why don't we chase those?" Charles replied in a most patient tone: "No, no, we're going grouse hawking." The first time I saw Gemini punch a big grouse down into the sage, I knew what all the fuss was about. This was next-level falconry: big country, big-running dogs, tough grouse, and high-flying falcons. These were all the ingredients needed to fuel a full-time addiction.

Committed to honing his raptor-breeding skills, he and Marty showed me a young merlin hybrid they had produced. A few years later, after my wife and I had moved from Oregon to the Boise area, Charles convinced me to build a barn and pursue raising peregrines. With his help and advice, I did this for 20 years.

While in Bahrain, Charles sent home red-naped shaheens and Barbary falcons that formed much of the U.S. breeding stock we have today. In addi-

tion, he sent me a passage red-naped shaheen to fly that I named Jasmine. A combination of pupil and teacher, she would show me what greatness is in a game hawk. Ultimately, Charles' gift became a life-changing experience for me.

In many respects, Charles was a Renaissance man: well-rounded, smart, and technically skilled, yet patient with those of lesser intellect and knowledge. He was a natural teacher, an aspect of his personality that attracted individuals from various disciplines and interests into his multiple orbits.

However, my most vivid recollections are of hawking sage grouse with Charles in the dead of winter; bitter cold, eerie blue skies on the verge of crackling, and English pointers leaving contrails of snow far into the distance. The tense anticipation of falcons leaving the glove to mount into the ethers, the white-vapor breath of a motionless dog locked on point, the explosion of grouse flushing from cover, and the lethal collision of a stooping falcon on its quarry, all blend in my mind as the

ultimate memories of a friend who generously shared his world with me.

Bruce Haak

Charles Schwartz, scientist, falconer, pioneer falcon propagator, fly fisherman and big game hunter was a sportsman's sportsman who believed as sportsmen, especially falconers, we are not simply observers of Nature, but an integral part of it. He was the quintessential tender carnivore



photo provided by Darryl Barnes

and demonstrated by example how to ethically infuse oneself into the Natural world. He held, that as true sportsmen, "we should be willing to get elbow deep in the blood of life..."

Charles Schwartz was a complex man whom once you got to know, or more accurately he you – you'd realize he was the most intelligent, unique and engaging individuals you were likely to meet. It was always interesting to speak with him about

virtually any subject because he was so well read with an astonishing breadth of knowledge, and he engaged in conversation like few do.

Charles and his wife Marty Browne, upon returning from working in Bahrain, bought a small acreage in the Mackay Basin along the Big Wood River. They affectionately named their little piece of paradise, "The Thirsty Dog" (TTD). Charles came to know the river as well as his own hands fly fishing it for many years. Likewise, he and Marty both became intimate with all the nooks and crannies of the 6,200 feet Mackay Basin running pointing dogs and hawking sage grouse over the decades. Charles and Marty eventually built a beautiful log home there where they retired.

I was Introduced to Charles by our mutual friend Bruce Haak in 1989. Charles and I spoke many times over the phone, but met for the first time in the winter of 1992 at his and Marty's home in Pingree ID. The following morning Charles and I drove separate vehicles to the TTD. We arrived a little later in the afternoon than anticipated so after a brief unpacking, we got down to business. Ever the gracious host, we headed out to look for a slip for my hawk first. We found a good slip on wintering mallards at "dead duck ditch". It was a picture postcard kind of day with an endless snowscape in all directions and an infinite and brilliant blue sky strewn with puffy white clouds. At times, Charles could seem quite intimidating with an austere, country gentleman aura but he was not immune to the childish excitement of the moment. Nearly snow-blind, I squinted at the scene as described above, and said, "Boy she's gonna be hard to see". And with that, a grin crept across Charles's face as he murmured, "I like the way you think".

While Charles appreciated all manner of outdoor and sporting endeavors well executed, he was a

sage grouse hawkers first and foremost and a winter grouse hawkers at that. Charles loved sage grouse, and few understood and appreciated them more than he did. He dedicated his life to grouse hawking moving to and living amongst them. With the assistance and comradery of Marty and his many beloved bird dogs, he was elevated by the challenge of finding grouse, in a vast and at times harsh country, creating high quality flights on winter sage grouse. In a very real sense then, winter sage grouse hawking defined a big part of who Charles Schwartz was.

Another close and mutual friend of Charles and I is Jim Younk. Jim and I spend a lot of time together in the hawking season and as such have had a lot of opportunity to talk. Over the years, and in our own ways, we had formed a very deep friendship and a personal love for Charles. Since Charles's death, we have reminisced and talked about him often. We talk about a myriad of subjects not only falconry-related and wonder what Charles would have to say on the matter, and of course, how much he would have enjoyed a flight or the dog work that day. It is moments like these that I realize what a force Charles was and is in our lives - surreptitiously influencing us with his insight and wisdom through our collective love of falconry and the outdoors. Charles helped us to see, by example that we need to open our eyes and our minds to be fully cognizant participants in the natural world.

Darryl Barnes

Time passes quickly, and it is hard to believe that it has been five years since Charles left us. I clearly remember the phone call from November of 2015 when he told me the reality of his situation. What do you say when a friend tells you that they have six months to live? I told him I would

help him in any way I could. And so, as he started treatment, I would send him detailed emails about what I was doing. I wanted to convey the images of hunting elk or flying falcons, because I knew he couldn't do those things. I had hoped that my stories would help him endure what he was going through.

He got finished with his treatment in early December, and Darryl and I went over to visit a few weeks later. Charles had lost all of his hair, and he was quite upset by this. He commented on several occasions that both Darryl and I possessed fine hair. We went out into the snow and sage to look for a flight and got a point just as the sun was setting. The grouse bumped early, but we hoped for a straggler, and I had a pheasant just in case.

Most of you know what usually happens in a moment like this, when you want your bird to fly high and to impress your friends on strange grounds. The bird is almost guaranteed to land on a fencepost and give you the finger. Not today. That falcon disappeared into the blue, and I ran in front of the dogs. There were only tracks in the snow, but I had the pheasant. I could not see the falcon, but Darryl and Charles had her. I threw the pheasant and it flew right over Charles where he could see the whole show. When it was over, he turned to me with a big smile and said "boy, what a flight! That was really something!"

And you knew that in that moment, his fatigue and pain were swept away as he thrilled to the sight that has inspired falconers for thousands of years. Three months later he was gone, and I think

Charles asked if we wanted it. I remember walking around the cabin and breeding building, and as Bruce mentioned, there was a profound sense of emptiness. A few snowflakes were falling, and the



that was the last time he saw a falcon fly. Marty passed away a little over a year later.

In June of 2017, the Camas National Wildlife Refuge in eastern Idaho installed a webcam at the peregrine eyrie on the refuge and dedicated it in Charles' name. Originally, Bruce and I had planned on bringing Marty along for the dedication. On the way back, Bruce remarked that central Idaho now seemed very empty without their presence.

Later that year, Darryl and I made a last trip to The Thirsty Dog. The property was being sold, and after cleaning and selling the contents, there remained a pile of falconry gear, and a friend of

mountains were covered by clouds, but as always, I was struck by what a beautiful place it was.

And so, time marches on, and I think of Charles often. When my setter is given the command to find birds and races away, I remember Charles saying there is no creature on earth that is happier than a dog at that moment. And when the dog goes on point, the falcon flies high right overhead, I time the flush perfectly, and the grouse makes fools of us all, I want to believe he is somewhere watching and laughing.

Jim Younk

WILLIAM "BILL" G. MATTOX

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James McKinley

I had the privileged of working for and with Bill starting in 1990. After the Idaho National Guard Study, Bill and Joan created Conservation Research Foundation and I became one of their main field researchers. Bill and I spent hundreds of hours of windshield time over the years capturing, banding, and radio/satellite tagging numerous raptors, i.e. Prairie Falcons, Golden Eagles, Ferruginous Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, Peregrine Falcons, Coopers Hawks, Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Merlins, Western Screech Owls, Great Horned Owls, Barn Owls, and others.

The next three paragraphs were written by Bill and appeared in the Idaho Statesman dated 29 March 2020.

In June 1972 I (Bill) established the Greenland Peregrine Falcon Survey, leading teams to West

Greenland each summer until 1998 for the purpose of locating nest cliffs of this endangered falcon, banding young, trapping and banding adults, placing satellite and regular micro-radio tags, collecting falcon eggshells and prey samples, and monitoring other related field activities.

With wife Joan, established Greenfalk Consultants in 1990 to carry out part of a 6-year field project for the Idaho Army National Guard in the Snake River Birds of Prey Area (sw Idaho) to determine the effects of training operations on nesting raptors. Worked with Idaho Reps and Senators to add the name of Morley Nelson to the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. In 1994, with Joan, incorporated the not-for-profit Conservation Research Foundation to carry out various studies of raptors in

tion, and longevity. I continued to work up and publish Greenland peregrine falcon data with my colleagues, as well as results of the various raptor studies in SW Idaho.

Bill and I conducted a Winter Site Fidelity Study of raptors in southwest Idaho for 15 years and put up more than 100 man-made nest boxes, the majority for Barn Owls less for Western Screech Owls and A. Kestrel. Bill and Joan were always supportive of my endeavors. I miss Bill and a day does not go by without me thinking of him, especially when going hawking, seeing a wild Peregrine Falcon or visiting an occupied Peregrine territory. Master Bill I know you are up there watching.

Best regards, James McKinley.



photo provided by James McKinley

sw Idaho.

Since 1998, with field research partner James McKinley, collected field data on migrant raptors wintering in sw Idaho; banded many adult and young Swainson's Hawks and Barn Owls; monitored their nests for over 14 years to record turn-over, individual migra-



photo provided by James McKinley



photo provided by James McKinley

JOHN MORAN

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Paul Hutcheson

Falconer, Hood Maker, and Friend

In August, John Moran passed away after a long battle with cancer.

Everyone knew John as a master hood maker. His painted and designed hoods which he call "Dazzlers" were inspired by Native American blankets and beadwork. His hoods always had the impeccable reputation of fitting falcons perfectly and he spent his adult life perfecting the patterns to insure perfect fits. I spent many hours watching John work on hoods while we talked about birds and life.

I met John in a field west of Longmont, Colorado in 1978. John was flying a young tiercel falcon at a duck slip and I was flying an inter-mewed male Goshawk. I had just moved to Colorado from upstate New York to be able to fly falcons and his flight was the first longwing that I'd seen fly at wild quarry. It was a start of a friendship that spanned over 42 years. He took me under his wing and showed me how to train and fly falcons. His requirements for helping me were very specific. I had to pull a Prairie falcon at approximately five weeks and chamber raise it. Once it was hard penned, she was pulled from the chamber and the training began. John met me every day in a field in Lyons, Colorado where we would train my Prairie and he would train two Anatum Pere-



photo provided by Paul Hutcheson

grines. John's first love was Anatum falcons. Bill Burnham had given John a pair of Rocky Mountain Anatum falcons to fly that season. We spent most of that summer training and the fall flying and hunting our birds together. It's was an act of kindness that I've never forgotten. And ever since



photo provided by Paul Hutcheson

then, John and I spent time hawking together almost every year.

John had many adventures as a falconer. He moved to the Middle East and worked for a Sheik for a few years training birds and advising them on falcon breeding. He worked for The Predatory Bird Research Group in Santa Cruz, California {which was affiliated with the Peregrine Fund} for many years. During this period, he was hired to train the passage Peregrines used in the movie, "The falcon and the Snowman" and worked closely with Timothy Hutton and John Schlesinger during the filming. In one of the scenes where Hutton was flying a

falcon, Hutton was wearing John's hawking bag. John made that bag himself which was covered with bead work and his carvings. The bag is on display at the Archives of Falconry in Boise, Idaho.

The birds used for the filming were passage Peregrines trapped in Mexico. Most of the Falconry scenes were shot near Mexico City. Pigeons were used from a local pigeon racer to train the birds. He told me that the owner of the pigeons said that his pigeons were the best in Mexico City and that the Peregrines would never be able to catch them. It didn't take long for the Peregrines to start catching the pigeons. The pigeon owner was distraught about the loss of his best pigeons but he was being paid handsomely for each killed pigeon. John always laughed when he told that story because he knew that the passage birds would be lethal on tossed pigeons.

His experience hunting pigeons began in the 1960's in the Los Angeles basin. He would hunt large flocks of feral pigeons with a passage Peregrine named Maleficent. He once pulled out his 16mm movie film and showed me some of that hawking. It was amazing to see wide open spaces for hawking in the middle of L.A.

Unfortunately, the 16mm film has been lost.

In recent years he lived in Hazelton, Idaho just outside of Twin Falls. He and his two English Pointers were avid Pheasant hunters. We hawked the area together many times and he always showed me great sport and a great time. John was a great friend and I'll miss our long talks on training falcons, hood making and life.



photo provided by Paul Hutcheson

JIM FRAIZER

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Paul Mascuch

The falconry community and I personally lost a good friend with the passing of James H. Frazier on June 21st, 2018 at the age of 91. In the weeks before Jim passed many falconry friends visited at his home to talk birds, dogs, and falconry. Jim was still engaged in these conversations and talked about a new falcon this year, right up until the end.

Jim was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1926 and grew up in the area. He was always interested in the outdoors and wildlife. He brought a constant series of birds, snakes, turtles, and other wildlife home much to the consternation of his mother. He became interested in raptors and fascinated by falconry at an early age. There was a picture hanging in Jim's home office that showed him at the edge of an active cooper's

nest in 1937. His interest in falconry, and an introduction by his older brother, brought Jim into contact with Doc Stabler who became Jim's mentor.

World War II was raging and Jim enlisted, followed his older brother into the Navy. He served in Japan at the end of the war.

Jim studied accounting at St. Joseph's college in Philadelphia and following graduation entered graduate school at Georgetown University studying political science. He was recruited out of school by the FBI and never finished his graduate studies. Jim served his entire career in the FBI starting in Washington, DC and then Saginaw, Michigan. Jim was active hunting and fishing when he wasn't working. When an FBI open-

ing came open in Alaska Jim jumped at the chance and applied for the position. He got the job and moved north.

Jim covered most of the state of Alaska for the FBI and got to know many people all over the state. He met his wife Millie there. When he retired he continued his Alaskan adventures flying Gyrfalcons, guiding sheep hunters in the Wrangle Mountains, and floating a number of Alaska's wilderness rivers. One of



photo provided by Paul Mascuch

Jim was a long time NAFA member and loved attending the annual field meets. He organized and ran the NAFA meet in Lamar, Colorado in 1992. Jim and I attended many NAFA meets together where he loved catching up with old friends. When Millie was alive the door to their room at the NAFA meets was always open and served as a hospitality room for many falconers. Drink, smoked salmon, and caribou sausage was shared by all.

Jim eventually stopped flying Gyrs and moved on to Peregrines and then Gyr/peregrine hybrids. His tiercel hybrid Amos was an amazing game hawk bringing many sage grouse to bag. Jim and I hawked together often and spent a lot of windshield time talking about many varied topics. He became a very close friend who shared many meals and holidays with my family and friends. I will miss our time together running dogs, flying falcons, and discussing the meaning of life.

Rest in peace Jim.

Paul Mascuch



photo provided by Paul Mascuch

these float trips was over 1,700 miles long. He documented many raptor territories during these floats and provided his notes to Alaska Fish and Game.

In retirement Jim split his time spending summers in Alaska doing investigations for a law firm then migrating to Arizona to fly falcons at ducks during the winter. Getting tired of migrating annually between Alaska and Arizona Jim and Millie settled in Emmett, Idaho.



photo provided by Paul Mascuch



photo provided by Gary Moon

MY JAIL BIRD

GARY MOON

Three years ago, Miss Lazer, my first-year imprint Prairie Falcon, being rather independent, did time in the Idaho State Prison.

After her disappearance, I finally got a weak signal from her transmitter verifying my worst fear. She was in prison.

As you all know, there are many lights around the prison, so a friend and I thought we might be able to sneak in close enough to call her to the lure. However, sneaking is not so possible when the lights are shining in your face, but that didn't deter us. Once over the first fence, the going was rather easy as we were used to hiking similar terrain.

Everything was going along fine

until we came across a stone monument. Not thinking too much about it, we walked on past the hidden camera. A few steps later, a loud loudspeaker went off. We shuddered and listened. The message was not to us but to another guard. "Whew."

Thinking everything was still okay, we proceeded on for several hundred yards around to the back or the east side of the prison.

We were about close enough to start swinging the lure when we heard the guard dogs start wildly barking. Now we knew we were in too far and if they turned the dogs loose, we just might not be able to talk our way out of their jaws! It was time to retreat and regroup. We barely made it out

and home for a short night's sleep.

The next morning, another brave friend and I found ourselves outside the north fence, still getting a weak signal. We waited until first light then started releasing homing pigeons to get her attention. "What a girl," she came with little hesitation. She promptly looked at me as if to ask why I had left her there all night when she was so tired and hungry.

Now here is when I made a big mistake, I rewarded her with a full crop of pigeon. I was just so glad that she had returned, I fed her up. Just seemed like the right thing to do.

Unfortunately, the consequence

I rewarded her for: now she just likes prison. This year, Miss Lazer made herself comfortable in jail twice in one day. Three miles away, she strayed after a flock of pigeons. When I had a hard time finding a signal, I knew she had to be on a kill and on the ground. A couple of hours went by. Then as I am finally walking up on her close signal, my receiver battery dies. "No problem", I think.

I hiked back to the car and put in new batteries. Still dead. I called a friend, and he heads out with his receiver. I called my wife to bring my spare receiver.

Now, I have no signal, it's late in the day and Lazer will be out all night. "Rats!" I mumble.

The next morning, when I finally got a signal, she was already up soaring. Guess where she decides to come down to rest? Yup, there, in the south prison. I decide to wait her out as I could see that she had a huge crop and was showing no interest in me and any of my antics of trying to call her in.

As I am driving around in the brush on the west side of the prison, I saw some guards talking and pointing in my direction. "Rats."

They had spotted my camo car.

I guessed that they could see Lazer and just want me to get her back. Noooo problem.

Soon, a van comes driving up through the brush, bouncing in and out of the badger holes as if experienced and driving a 4x4. With a little explanation and a few funnies, I talked my way onto their good side. "Whew." With a few radio calls, I had permission to go in and call her down. "Right? Easy."

You would think so, but no. I could get within ten feet of her but she would not drop down to me. She stood me up and embarrassed me in front of my new friends. It was one of those times when I could not call myself a "master" falconer.

It became a long day of tracking her around as she soared, lost from sight among the many raptors and seagulls. Then, guess where she stops to rest. Yup. Back in the same prison area.

By now, I know my way around, so I drive up to the little black gate box and push the red button. They all know who I am: background check, life history and what I had for dinner. Nothing.

The little voice box says, "You are welcome to come in to see if you can get her this time."

Again, no. She has the idea that it is more fun to just soar around.

As I start leaving the prison, I realize that I am now famous. The head officer wants to talk through the big heavy chain link fence. Since the other officers were so helpful, I stroll up and show him my receiver, knife, etc. They all like my dog, Bud. I mention that It was lunch time and I should head somewhere for a bite.

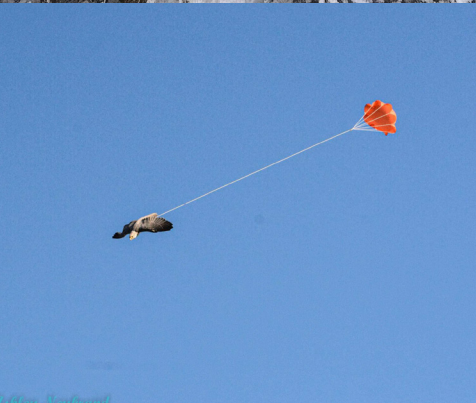
The captain says, "Hey, we would be glad to have you come in for chili."

I think, "Ha. Is he serious?" But I was hungry. Then I think, "No. I must find that darn bird."

Finally, finding her at roost along Ten Mile Creek in some trees with the owls, I head home again for another short night's sleep.

The next day, bright and early, it takes me an hour to get a signal. I just happened to decide to go west where she has often flown. There was the signal. The transmitter was sitting on a sprinkler, just waiting for me to entice her to bring it along and come home with me. We loaded up in time to get to the Archives of falconry for the spring Rendezvous.

Such is the life of a jail bird.





Chukar Hawking

Afshin Mofid DC.



photo by Ken Miracle

There are three imported partridges in North America, the Hungarian partridge, the Chukar partridge and the largest one of all, the Himalayan snow cock. I have never heard of a snow cock falling prey to either an austringer or a falconer's bird, but many falconers in the US and Canada have, and do take Hungarian partridges every season. Most of these birds are taken over a pointer and using a falcon waiting on overhead and it is a spectacular sight to see a prairie falcon swoop down and hit a bird out of a covey in midair. But what about that other partridge with the funny name of Chukar?

My first encounter with a Chukar partridge occurred decades ago at my grandfather's house. Grandpa was a hunter and he loved to keep birds. European goldfinches were permanent members of his collection along with canaries, and an occasional starling or cockatoo. But one day I noticed three new birds in his back yard. They were a gift from a friend. Much larger than any bird I had seen there, they were beautiful, very alert with their necks extended and their legs moving fast, much like Irish clog dancers, running around his back yard. He explained to me that this is the partridge he loved to hunt when he was young and

how physically difficult it was to chase them in rocky and steep terrain, where they live most of their lives. Being the oldest grandchild, I was responsible for any mishap in grandpa's back yard. If a rose bush branch was broken by one of my younger cousins, I would be responsible. If someone picked and ate the mulberries from the mulberry tree before harvest time I would get in trouble. Essentially, I was grandpa's back yard supervisor and my job was to keep an eye on my many younger cousins whom often visited his house or, like myself, lived there. "You should have kept an eye on them" grandpa would say to

me every time a cousin caused damage to his plants or terrified his birds. The chukars I mentioned had their wing feathers trimmed so they could not fly off the ground more than a couple of feet. Since grandpa's yard was enclosed by 7 foot walls, there was no chance of them escaping. One hot summer day while grandpa was taking his afternoon nap, my younger cousin and I went out to check on the newly arrived birds. As

we approached them, they began running and soon they reached the end of the yard. My little cousin rushed towards the largest bird causing the bird to use all his leg power to propel himself upwards and managed to reach the top of the wall and flew out into the street. Panicked at the thought of grandpa waking up and finding out that he was missing a Chukar and its consequences, I ran out just in time to see it crossing the street. Luckily, the street was not terribly

cousin to keep the whole thing a secret in case anyone asked. Since then, I have gun hunted chukars on two continents and in many states. I find the sport addictive, especially when using passage North American goshawks.

When flushed, Chukars typically do not travel long distances. They seek cover on steep rocky hill sides covered with brush, usually at a lower elevation from where they were flushed. This short flight distance generally makes a falcon less desirable to hunt Chukars with since a falcon disables prey by stooping and striking it in midair. By the time a falcon has completed its stoop halfway, the covey of Chukars have already landed and hidden in the brush. On occasion a single old partridge may make the mistake of flying across a canyon in which case a falcon can easily do the job but chukars rarely make that mistake. That leaves the goshawk as the ideal bird when hawking for the chukar partridge.

Falconry, particularly hawking for Chukars with a goshawk has a long history in Central Asia and mountainous regions of the Middle East dating back thousands of years. Here in North America, however, both Chukars as well as the sport of falconry are relatively new. Ironically in the twenty first century, in many



photo provided by Afshin Mofid

Central Asian countries and the Middle East, possession of birds of prey is illegal and falconry is practiced only by a handful of dedicated individuals who are at risk of being fined or arrested. The Chukars however still roam the mountains in those places, often in staggering numbers. This then makes North America one of the best possible places to be a falconer, particularly for hawk-ing Chukars. The inland Northwest has the ideal habitat for chukars, and falconry is alive and well regulated in all states in this region. Best of all, a variety of game, including Chukars is available to the falconer, on millions of easily accessed acres of public lands.

My first attempt at chukar hawking was with a young Finnish tercel goshawk I acquired from a breeder. Many hours of training and hiking up and down hillsides and multiple slips at Chukars did not seem to excite him. I continued patiently by having friends and family hide under rocks and throw baggies for him, but he still did not seem interested in wild Chukars. He did, however, catch many ducks, quail, and even a dove. When it came to

Chukars, he would chase them hard but would not stay focused and give up halfway. I researched the literature for anything specific to Chukar hawking and found an old book by a fellow Persian falconer Taymour Mirza. Written in the mid nineteenth century, Baznameh, as the book is called, is a treatise on falconry. There I found a few references



photo provided by Afshin Mofid

to partridge hunting but nothing specific. However, there was a few amusing instructions in this book, one having to do with a lost hawk. Not having the luxury of telemetry in the 1800s, Taymour Mirza writes “If you lose your hawk and have lost all hope of finding it, face Mecca and say a prayer and your hawk will soon be found, guaranteed!” Frustrated, I consulted with experienced falconers in my

home state of Idaho and got some useful suggestions but I realized only a few had taken Chukars with hawks or falcons and none flew hawks at Chukars regularly and consistently to be able to help. Determined, I contacted some falconers in India and Pakistan, and they told me they mostly fly their hawks at gray francolin on flat terrain, but

one falconer suggested asking a man in a mountainous village in Pakistan who flew his goshawk regularly at chukars. The problem was that there was no internet service in his small village.

My contact suggested I email my questions and send them to him and he would call this man, get the answers and then relay them to me. After many back and forth sessions and waiting a week at a



photo provided by Afshin Mofid



photo by Ken Miracle

time for a response, the village falconer's verdict was, GET A PASSAGE HAWK! The mountain falconer was convinced that the reason my hawk could not keep up with a wild chukar was because he had been raised in captivity and did not have the speed, the muscles and aggressiveness to get the job done. Some experienced falconers may

not agree with that opinion, but I was on a quest to get a Chukar with a goshawk so the next season I acquired a passage female. This was the bird! She had hunted and survived in the cold and was big and strong, a beautiful specimen.

I began working with her with flights at either bagged or wild Chukars and no other birds, to keep her focused. I was between dogs since my old, experienced dog was now too old for the joint punishing Chukar country and the new pup too young to have along yet. I searched for Chukars without a dog. Early

in the season, Chukars are not too far from water and an experienced hunter can eventually locate a covey or two, but it can take some time and a few miles of hiking steep terrain. Eventually, after a few hours, I finally flushed a covey on a steep and shady side of a hill. The covey was a mix of adults and young birds, all headed down the hill into a row of willows. As they flushed, my hawk was instantly off the glove and on their tail. About 30 feet into the chase she abruptly stooped into a bush. Thinking she had given up too soon I walked over and saw that she had a young chukar in her talons! I was overly excited to say the least. The next time out I flushed a covey of chukars at a distance that almost seemed too far for a young bird to give chase successfully, but she was eager to go and

I let her fly after a single bird. I had approached the covey from above and the birds, as mentioned earlier, will always head down into canyons below. I saw the chukar head down to the creek below, disappearing behind a car-size boulder on his way down with the hawk at his tail and closing in and finally stooping almost like a falcon as she cleared the boulder and disappeared. After hiking down and listening for her bell I found her in the row of willows, plucking the Chukar. She continued to be successful at catching wild Chukars in the next several outings. She was beginning to understand the game and really excel at it when an unusually hard winter ended the season sooner than expected. This bird had survived two coyote attacks and was nearly killed by an eagle, but West Nile virus took her life the following summer.



photo by Ken Miracle

My latest attempt at Chukar hawking is with a passage tercel goshawk I trapped last season. At this writing, no wild chukars in the bag yet but I am hopeful and determined and, most of all, obsessed with Chukars and Chukar hawking. I have learned that getting a hawk ready to chase wild Chukars is much like being the hawk's athletic coach. His diet, exercise and mental state must be closely monitored for success. This is also

true for the falconer. Hiking in Chukar country is not easy. The falconer must be relatively fit with good coordination for navigating rocky and slanted ground, using only one hand for balance and grabbing rocks if needed, and also have some knowledge of Chukar habitat; how to approach them as well as having the determination not to give up after a few unsuc-

cessful flights, that may mean hiking up a hill and having to hike back down to pick up your bird several times. If the slant of the hill is on the same side as the arm that is carrying the hawk, the falconer must instantly release the jesses and the hawk if he or she happens to fall, which is usually towards the slant, or he may crush or injure the hawk. And let's not forget about keeping track of your dog who maybe

on point above you on a hill, without being seen. Hawking for chukars can be very challenging, but there is nothing more satisfying than when all your planning and weeks of training, the dog, the hawk, the sun and the moon line up and come together at the moment the birds flush and your hawk disappears into an abyss a thousand yards down the canyon, and you eventually

find him under a sage brush plucking a mature old chukar. Chasing that Chukar down the street decades ago was not easy, and over the decades since that day it has not gotten any easier. I know there are easier prey for both the austringer and his or her accipiter but Chukar hawking over a pointer is one of the most rewarding experiences in falconry. Happy hawking!

ME & FINN

Ashley Neubrand

It was in September when I got my first kestrel... my sponsor Paul Hutchinson, his wife, and I were driving along the back roads between Eagle and Star to find the right one. So far we only had one female hag. All the others were not very interested in the trap. On the way back we took a detour on the side road and spotted a male. We dropped the trap and waited. Within minutes, he was on the trap but was not hitting the nooses. A car drove by and spooked him much to my dismay. But a few minutes later he was on it again, this time he caught by a toe. He was much more well behaved than the female hag, so we released her and kept the male.

Finn has been an interesting journey in how to be a falconer so far. I learned about being quick when it came to hunting. One time I was practicing with him in the Eagle foothills when I found myself flushing a mouse. Within moments Finn was on it. Before I could do anything he flew off with the mouse. I was lucky that I was in an area with no power poles, but he was flying around. After 20 minutes tracking him down with telemetry, I spotted him on a fence post looking at me if I had anymore mouse left.

I had to wait for another season before I could start really hunting with

Finn. He broke a tail feather after the 2nd day having him and by the time molting happened, he had broken up to 5 feathers. By September he was full feathered and ready to go.



photo provided by Ashley Neubrand

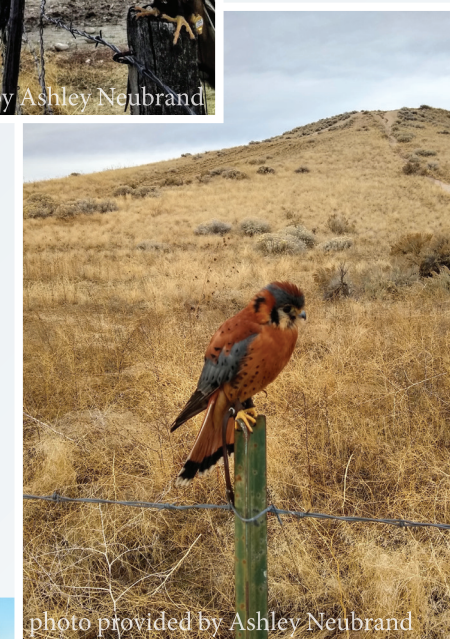


photo provided by Ashley Neubrand



photo provided by Ashley Neubrand

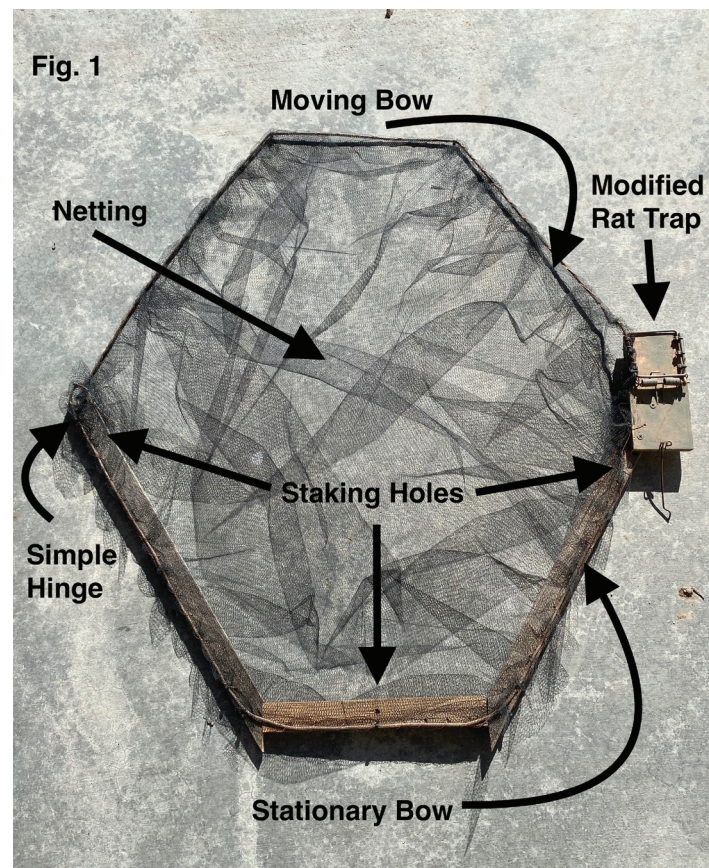
First we started in open BLM land with bushes of sparrows out in the winter. We practice slipping out of the car sometimes he would perch on the wire and try to stoop at them. It was a good start, over time with some weight management, I became more confident to do more urban places.

Memorial Day, I took Finn out with Casey Robinson and Phil B. to find sparrows or starlings. We drove to Initial Point High School and noticed some sparrow activity in a topiary tree. I set Finn up at the tennis court fence and we beat the bush to flush some sparrows. Finn flew in and grabbed a fledged

sparrow in the tree. I tried to crawl in there to catch him but he was too fast. We spent the next hour swinging a lure trying to bring him in. he eventually cashed his prize and returned for something with a bit more meat on the bones.

As my apprenticeship comes to an end, I look back on all the exciting adventures I had with this little falcon and wonder what will come next? All I know is that it will involve wearing pants or at least longer shorts...

The Rat Trap Bow Net (RTBN) is a command-actuated small bow net used for trapping small non-protected bait or food birds. It operates by placing food bait in the center of the trap and pulling a string to activate the trap. The RTBN was inspired by a proposed model in “Trapping Essentials” by Ben Woodruff. Upon attempting the proposed design, there were several shortfalls including the high strength of the proposed twin rat traps and flimsy coat hanger wire. This design improves upon the Woodruff proposal and measures approximately 2' x 2.5'.



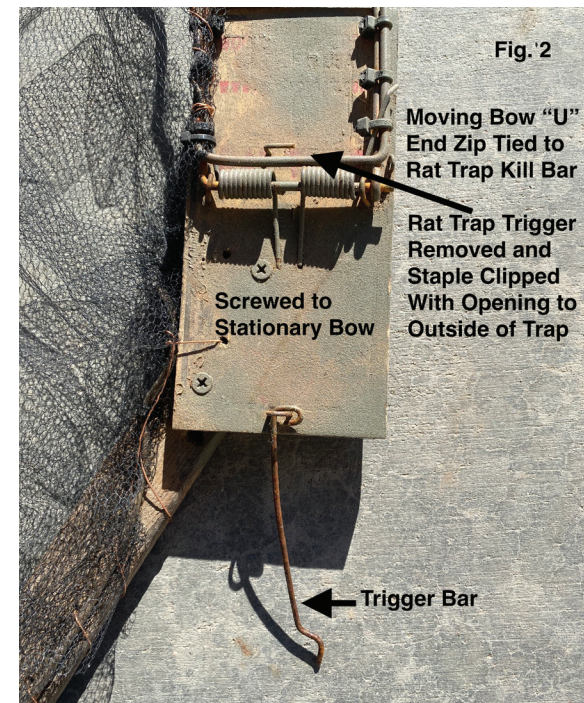
The elements of the RTBN are: 1) Moving Bow; 2) Stationary Bow; 3) Modified Rat Trap; 4) Simple Hinge; and 5) Netting (See Fig. 1).

1. Moving Bow

- The Moving Bow on this example was constructed from 1/8" steel rod salvaged from a political yard sign, hence the straight-sided shape. This bow needs to be a rather rigid, yet not too heavy material that will withstand the closing action of the trap when activated.
- The bow can be of any shape that forms a semi-circular enclosure. At the ends of the rod, it is bent into a “U” shape that mates with the kill bar of the rat trap (See Fig. 2), and an enclosed loop that is used to form the simple hinge (See Fig. 3).
- The “U” end is designed to give the necessary torsion strength to the end of the bow and zip-tied in place along the two sides of the kill bar.
- The size of the Moving Bow dictates the size of the Stationary Bow as the two bows should be the same shape when the trap is set (See Fig. 4).

2. Stationary Bow

- The Stationary Bow was con-



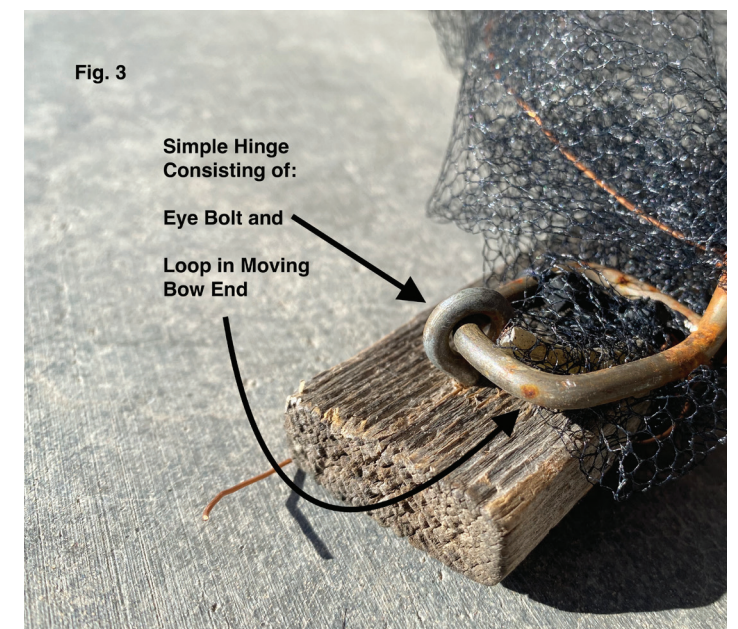
structed from 1/2" x 2" wooden stakes and was matched to the dimensions and shape of the Moving Bow.

- Other materials can be used such as similar steel rod to the Moving Bow, however the ease of mounting the rat trap to the stationary bow with screws and the straight lines of the wooden stakes helps in this design.
 - The Stationary Bow has three holes drilled in it from top to bottom: one at the Simple Hinge, one at Modified Rat Trap, and one at the apex of the Stationary Bow to stake the stationary bow to the ground (See Fig. 1).
- #### 3. Modified Rat Trap
- The rat trap is modified by removing the trigger plate from the trap and clipping the retaining staple so that the inside and top portion of the staple remain, and the outside vertical section of the staple is removed (See Fig. 2).

- The modified staple allows for the trigger bar of the rat trap to move out from under the clipped staple to activate the trap. (See Fig. 6). The “U” end of the Moving Bow is zip tied to the kill bar of the rat trap.
- The Modified Rat Trap is screwed to the Stationary Bow on the opposite end of the Simple Hinge.

4. Simple Hinge

- The Simple Hinge is constructed by screwing an eye bolt to the end of the Stationary Bow and inserting the enclosed loop of the Moving Bow.



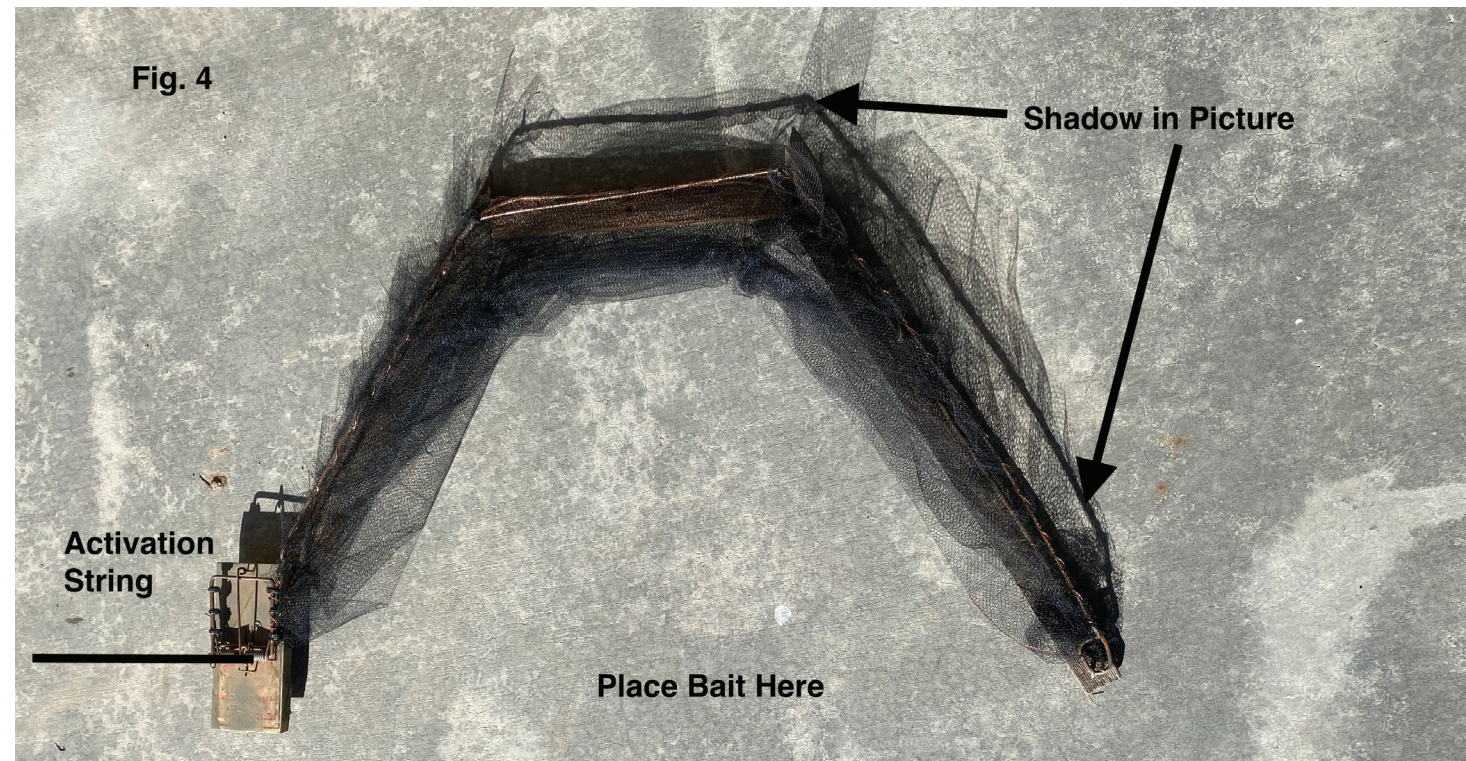
- The hinge should allow for the Moving Bow and Stationary Bow to collapse on itself when the trap is set, creating one semicircular footprint (See Fig. 4).

5. Netting

- Netting can be of any lightweight material that is strong enough to hold in the target birds, yet must be flexible enough to fold in on it-

RAT TRAP BOW NET

Brian Sheets



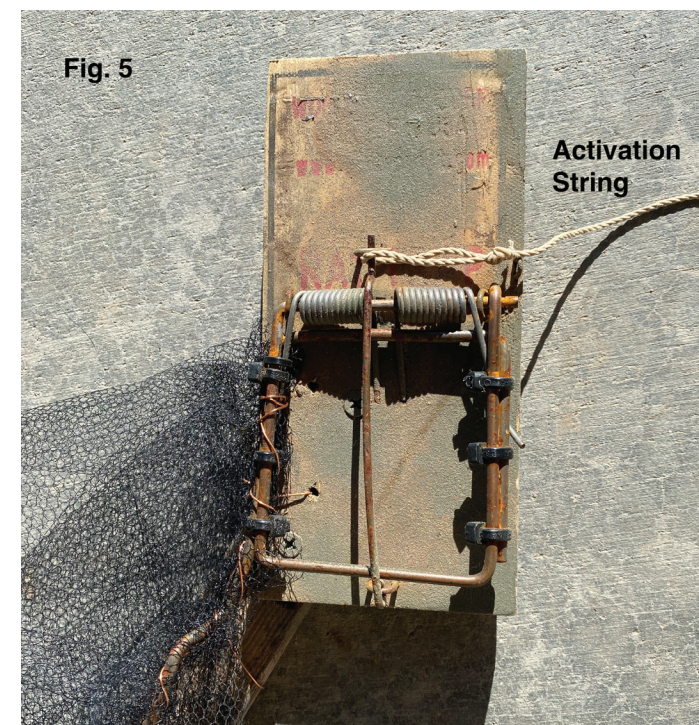
- a. self when the RTBN is set.
- b. This example uses dress material netting obtained from a fabric store.
- c. The size of the netting should be:
 - i. Width: the total length of the moving bow from end to end along its circumference.
 - ii. Length: the total length of the moving bow's arc as it moves during activation.
 - iii. The netting will be the same shape as the RTBN, with only a larger size.
 - iv. These sizes allow for the netting to collapse upon itself when the RTBN is set without material stretched into the bait area.
- d. The netting is anchored to the Moving Bow and Stationary Bow by any method that ensures there are no gaps to allow escape.
- e. This example uses thin wire to thread through the netting and wound around the Stationary and Moving Bows; staples could be used on the Stationary Bow and small zip ties used on the Moving Bow.

Employment:

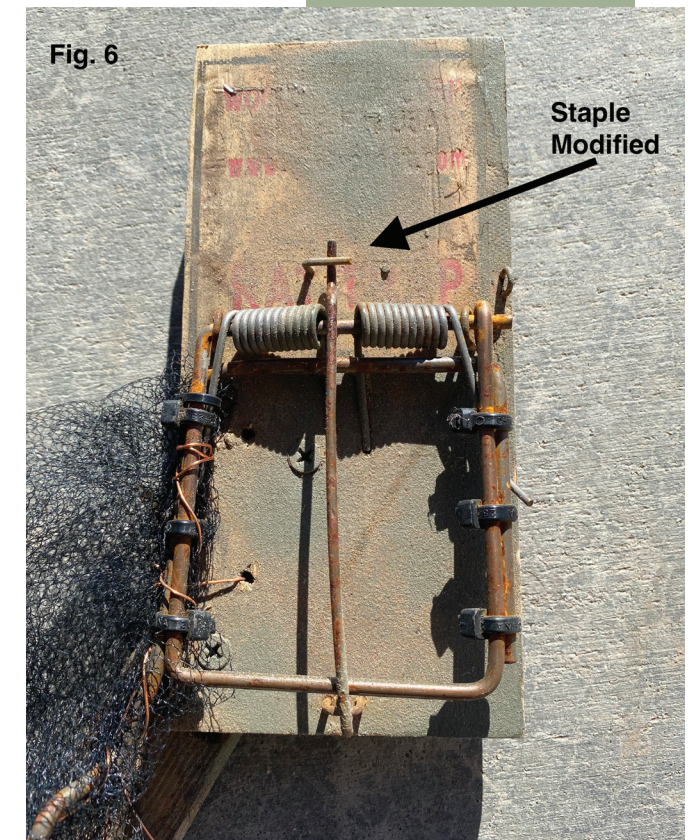
1. The RTBN is used when targeting small non-protected wild birds used for food or for bait.
2. The Stationary Bow should be staked or weighted to the ground, as when the trap activates, an un-staked trap lifts the center of the trap off of the ground from its inertia, allowing for possible escape.
3. The RTBN is set by pulling back the kill bar of the Modified Rat Trap and thus swings the Moving Bow and Netting on top of the Stationary Bow.
4. String or monofilament with a small loop tied at the end is placed around the end

of the trigger bar, and the trigger bar is set underneath the modified staple (See Fig. 5).

5. A long length of monofilament is preferred for its concealability and long length tracing back to the trapper's position.
6. The trapper should be in a concealed position to allow for birds to feed on the bait unaware of the trapper's presence.
7. Bait is placed in the center of the trap, and when a target bird(s) are on the bait food, the string is used to activate the trap by pulling the trigger bar out from underneath the modified staple.
8. Pulling the string releases the kill bar on the Modified Rat Trap and allows the compressed springs to swing the Moving Bow, enclosing the target birds in the Netting.
9. Upon capture, the birds will bounce around in the Netting, which if there are



enough to jar the Moving Bow, some may escape, requiring swift action of the trap-



- per to approach and contain the birds.
10. Approaching the trapped birds from the Moving Bow side will move the birds to the staked Stationary Bow side, allowing the trapper to push down the Netting on the Moving Bow side and allow access to the birds from under the Moving Bow with the Netting pushed down to prevent escape.
11. Conditioning baited birds with a false set-up of sticks that mimic the shape of the RTBN and a bait pile will aid in capturing more birds as the birds become accustomed to feeding in the area with an object resembling the RTBN.
12. Bait can include birdseed or suet, and even waffles and french fries have been successful in capturing groups of starlings.
13. Cold weather and snow cover aid in trapping more hungry bait birds.

An Urban Peregrine Falcon Family in Nampa, Idaho

James McKinley

Every year since 1990, Peregrine Falcons have been nesting at Amalgamated Sugar's Nampa facility. The legacy continues this year, as Peregrine Falcons have returned and have been sighted on top of Nampa's sugar storage silos. The female has been seen laying in the nesting box and appears to be incubating eggs. The Peregrine Falcon territory, of which Amalgamated Sugar's nesting site is a part, has produced more offspring than any other territory being monitored in Idaho.

Experienced birds of prey researcher and master bird bander, James McKinley, monitors the urban Peregrine Falcon population in the Treasure Valley. McKinley has banded the Peregrine adults

and nestlings at Amalgamated Sugar in the past and plans to continue to do so for many years to come. Banding Peregrine Falcons involves placing a silver band (like a bracelet) on one leg and a colored two letter/number band on the other. The bands do not harm or hinder the birds and are very useful to scientists.

The first sighting of the adult female Peregrine Falcon for the 2019 season happened February 7th. The female was perched on the silo near the nest box. On March 22nd the adult female Peregrine Falcon was observed in incubation

position in the nest box, sitting on a clutch of eggs.

On May 22nd, both the adult male and female Peregrine Falcon were observed sitting on the nest box and the color bands placed on their legs were readable. This allowed



photo provided by James McKinley



photo provided by James McKinley

identification of the two adult Peregrine Falcons as the same pair that nested at the Nampa facility in 2018. Four young Peregrine Falcons were observed in the nest box, estimated to be 25-26 days old. At this time, McKinley banded the four young Peregrines (all female) with silver bands on their right legs and color bands on their left legs. By late June, all four of the young female Peregrines successfully fledged.

Peregrine Falcons are a bird of prey found all over the world. Typically nesting on high cliff ledges, the Peregrine Falcon can adapt to urban life. Peregrine Falcons can be found in the city, nesting on tall buildings including three locations in the Treasure Valley: downtown Boise on the Century Link building, on the Fiberon building in Meridian, and Amalgamated Sugar's

Nampa facility. Pairs of Peregrine Falcons often return to the same nesting/breeding territory year after year to raise their young.

Peregrine Falcons are best known for their speed; in a dive after prey the Peregrine Falcon has been recorded at up to 200 miles per hour. The Peregrine Falcon's diet consists primarily of smaller birds, which they catch by soaring on high air currents and diving down to catch these birds midair, or by perching up high and waiting for a bird to fly by then flying out and catching it.

The Peregrine Falcon is generally a migratory raptor. The Peregrine Falcons that nest at



photo provided by James McKinley

Amalgamated Sugar reproduce and raise their young near the Nampa facility, and these birds may stay in the Treasure Valley year-round. As winter comes many Peregrines fly south – possibly as far as South America. Peregrines have been recorded to migrate over 5,000 miles.

Amalgamated Sugar is proud to play a role in the repopulation of Idaho's Peregrine Falcon population and look forward to many more years of Peregrine Falcon families calling the Nampa facility home.

Special Thanks

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge a number of falconers for their recent efforts on two important issues facing Idaho falconers.

We owe thanks to Idaho falconers Jon Young, James McKinley, Paul Mascuch, Phil Bucher and Utah falconers Jeff Broadbent and Arnud Van Wettere for undertaking the task of surveying potential Peregrine nesting sites. Hopefully their work will lead to an increase in the Idaho Peregrine take in the future.

The second issue concerning Idaho falconers are the changes to Sage Grouse regulations. David Skinner, Darryl Barnes, Bob Collins, Nathan Schewe, Hub Quade, Scott Nichols, Rich Howard, Jeff King, Ed Pitcher, Joe Terry, Paul Mascuch and Wyoming falconer John Dalke all participated in efforts to modify the new regulations that will impact Sage Grouse hawking in the future. Thanks to Brad Smoot, Lauren Redig, Hub Quade, Jeff Broadbent, and Joe Terry for their presentations to the Idaho Fish & Game Commission meeting in Pocatello.

A special debt of gratitude is owed to Paul Mascuch for taking the lead on the Sage Grouse negotiations. Paul put a lot of time and effort in organizing the IFA response to the proposed changes.

I would also like to thank Bob Collins for his assistance in our attempt to modify Boise City Council's recent update of the city animal code as it pertains to falconry birds.

Mike Garets



