

## **The International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey**

The IAF was founded on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1968 in Zweibrücken Hof, Düsseldorf. A few of the European Falconry Clubs thought there was a need for falconry to be represented internationally as well as by the National Clubs and got together to form the IAF. The British Falconers Club was one of the founding members and the first President was Jack Mavrogordato of the UK. It quickly was recognized by other hunting and conservation groups and in 1969 joined the Conseil International de la Chasse and in 1970 became falconry representative for International Council for Bird Preservation (now Birdlife International).

At this period there was a great deal of new legislation coming in to protect birds as governments became aware of conservation issues and started to control the use of birds of prey and their trade. The IAF was able to fight the cause for falconers and at the 1972 Conference of the European Section of the ICBP the IAF accorded its own separate status and got through an exemption for "approved purposes" in the resolution to prohibit trade in birds of prey. In 1975 at the ICBP first World Conference on Birds of Prey the IAF formulated resolutions to avert an international campaign to ban falconry. 1977 saw the IAF hold a joint conference on Bird of Prey Management Techniques with the British Falconers Club, which enabled incorporation of Falconry in EEC Birds Directive.

Since these early days the IAF has represented falconry at a huge number of events and has supported many member states when proposed national legislation has looked like affecting falconers. It has vastly widened its members from the original European Clubs to now represent Clubs from all the continents. The IAF currently represents 81 associations from 57 countries worldwide on behalf of 30,000 members.

The objectives of the IAF are:

- 1.** To represent falconry throughout the world. Falconry is the traditional sport of taking quarry in its natural state and habitat by means of trained birds of prey. It is a hunting art.
- 2.** To preserve and encourage falconry within the context of sustainable use of wildlife.
- 3.** To encourage conservation, the ecological and veterinary research on birds of prey and to promote, under scientific guidance, domestic propagation for falconry.
- 4.** To develop, maintain and amend national and international laws, treaties and conventions to permit the pursuit and perpetuation of falconry.
- 5.** To require the observation of falconry, hunting, conservation and welfare laws, regulations, traditions and culture with regard to the taking, import, export and keeping of birds of prey, the taking of quarry species and the right of access to land in the country concerned.
- 6.** To promote and uphold a positive public image of falconry with specialist organisations, which regulate or otherwise affect falconry.

7. In recent years the IAF has seen the need to adopt a business plan and to running in a more professional manner as similar agencies and their opponents become more professional. This has involved the setting up of a new office in Brussels where the administration of the IAF is now based and employing an Executive Officer. The present President of the IAF is Adrian Lombard from South Africa and he is backed up by Vice Presidents from America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia and a Board consisting of the Executive and the Advisory Committee.