

SO YOU WANT TO BE A FALCONER

Thank you for your interest in Falconry. These are some guidelines – What Your Sponsor Will Expect of You

1. Falconry is a commitment. Your sponsor will be looking for that commitment in you in all phases, at all times.
2. Do not be impatient with your progress, or the seeming lack thereof. Slow and Steady is a virtue in falconry. This will pay dividends in learning, as well as in handling your hawk.
3. Ask Questions. Do not expect to know everything. Do not assume anything. What you think you know, verify with an experienced falconer.
4. Read and reread the books. All the information you need to begin your apprenticeship is in them.
5. Contact and communication with your sponsor is vital. Spend time in the field with your sponsor and other falconers. This is your responsibility.
6. The Washington Falconers Association, (WFA) and the North American Falconers Association, (NAFA) are two falconry organizations of value to new and experienced falconers.
7. Plan on capturing a red-tail hawk or kestrel as your first bird.
8. Consider getting a dog. You will see the value in this as you proceed.
9. Releasing your first hawk is difficult, but training more than one raptor during your apprenticeship is valuable experience.
10. You will make mistakes. Don't hide or cover them, but talk about them and learn from them.
11. A falconer is not a bird keeper; you will be expected to free fly your hawk often.
12. Falconry is a hunting sport. Hawks hunt and kill to eat. While holding a raptor, you have a responsibility to provide hunting opportunities for that raptor.
13. Over the two-year period of your apprenticeship, your sponsor will have to be convinced through observation that you have advanced sufficiently to qualify for a general license before he/she will sign the application.
14. If you still want to make this commitment, welcome to a great sport!

If you have any further questions please contact the Falconry Permit Coordinator by email at falconry@dfw.wa.gov or phone at 425-379-2302.