

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING A FALCONRY PERMIT

Introduction

You cannot become a licensed falconer until you are 12 years of age, but you may work with a sponsor prior to your 12th birthday. (Refer to new 2010 Washington falconry regulations.)

Steps to take to become qualified for a Washington State falconry permit:

- 1. Find and work with a sponsor.** A list of sponsors in the state is included in this packet. A sponsor must hold a valid Washington state general or master falconry license and permit.
- 2. Study new WDFW regulations that became effective September 20, 2010.**
A copy of the regulations is included in this packet.
- 3. Become familiar with the care of raptors, the art of falconry, and the natural history of raptors.** References are available at your library, or bookstore, which will acquaint you with caring for a raptor, as well as how to go about training it for falconry. Particular attention should be directed to the diseases and sanitary problems you will face in keeping a bird of captivity. It is also important to know as much as possible concerning identification of hawks and owls, and their habits. Much can be learned from reading, but nothing replaces many hours in the field in observation of birds in the wild. Some of these books are out of print but may be available on loan by other falconers. The asterisked books are highly recommended and are the best sources for Pacific Northwest falconry.

Austing, G. Ronald. The World of the Red-tailed Hawk.

Beebe, Frank L. 1992. The Compleat Falconer. Hancock House Publishers.

*Beebe, Frank L. and H.M. Webster. 2000. North American Falconry and Hunting Hawks. Ft. Benton, MT, privately published, pp. 315.

*Beebe, Frank L. 1984. A Falconry Manual. Hancock House Publishers, pp. 197.

*Beebe, Frank L. Hawks, Falcons, & Falconry.

Brent, Arthur C. 1937. Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey. Denver Publications, Inc., NY, pp. 409.

Brown, Leslie and Dean Amadon. 1968. Eagles, Hawks, and Falcons of the World. Country Life Books, 2 vols., pp. 945.

*California Hawking Club, Inc. Oct. 2000, Apprenticeship Manual.

Craighead, John J. and F. Craighead. 1940. Hawks, Owls, and Wildlife. Dover Publications, pp. 443.

Cooper. Veterinary Aspects of Birds of Prey.

*Dunne, P., D.A., Sibley, and C. Sutton. 1988. Hawks in Flight. Houghton Mifflin Company, NY, pp. 272.

Evans, Humphrey. 1960. Falconry for You. John Gifford, Ltd., London, pp. 206.

Ford, Emma. 1992. Falconry, Art and Practice. Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., NY, pp. 200.

Fox, Nick. 1995. Understanding the Bird of Prey. Hancock House Publishers, pp. 368.

Grossman, Mary L., and John Hamlet. 1964. Birds of Prey of the World. Bonanza Books, NY, pp. 496.

Harting, James E. 1898. Hints on the Management of Hawks. 2nd ed. Horace Cox, London, pp. 268.

Heidenreich, Manfred. 1997. Birds of Prey, Medicine & Management. Iowa State Press, pp. 284.

Michell, E.B. 1962. The Art and Practice of Hawking. Metlacen and Company, London, pp. 268, 291.

Mavrogordato, J.G. 1960. A Hawk for the Bush. Charles T. Branford, Co. Newton, MA, pp. 144.

Mavrogordato, J.G. 1966. A Falcon in the Field. Knightly Vernon, Ltd., London, pp. 123.

McElroy, H. Desert Hawking I & II.

North American Falconer's Association. 1993. A Bond with the Wild. pp. 180

Oakes, William. 2002. The Falconer's Apprentice. EagleWing Publishing, pp. 178.

Oakes, William. Rabbit Hawk's Dogs.

Peeters, Hans J. and E.W. Jameson, Jr. 1970. American Hawking, a General Account of Falconry in the New World. Privately published, Oakside, Davis, California.

Peterson, Roger T. 1941. A Field Guide to Western Birds. Houghton Mifflin Co. MA, pp. 240.

Redig, Patrick. 1993. Raptor Biomedicine. University of Minnesota Press.

Robbins, C.S., B. Bruun, and H.S. Zim. 1966. Birds of North America. Golden Press, NY, pp. 340.

Sibley, David A. 2000. The Sibley Guide to Birds. Knopf, NY, pp. 544.

Stevens, Ronald. Observations on Modern Falconry.

Woodford, M.H. 1960. A Manual of Falconry. Adam and Charles Black, London, pp. 192.

4. **Submit your application**, which must be signed by your sponsor (a person holding a valid Washington General or Master Falconry permit) to WDFW's Falconry Permit Coordinator at the address listed on the application.
5. **Written Examination**: Persons applying for their first falconry permit are required to pass a written examination designed to test their knowledge of the laws pertaining to falconry, competency in caring for raptors, knowledge of the life history of birds of prey, and knowledge of techniques of falconry. Applicants will be notified to contact the nearest WDFW office for an appointment to take the written examination once their application form has been approved. You may not schedule an appointment until you are directed to do so by WDFW. Examinations are sent to the Falconry Permit Coordinator for grading, and you will be notified of your score. If you do not pass the examination with a score of 80% or better, you can make an appointment to re-take the test after a 60-day waiting period has elapsed.
6. **Construct a facility to house your raptor**. Proper housing is one of the most essential ingredients of successful falconry. Mews, or hawk houses vary in size and construction (refer to new 2010 WDFW and 2008 USFWS Federal regulations on aspects of variability). References on falconry contain descriptions and provide specifications. To be adequate, your housing will require ample space, protection from excessive heat and cold, water, adequate perches, and provide protection from dogs and cats. Totally unacceptable are birdcages of the pet store variety and facilities that do not provide the birds with ample space. Birds that display body injury, damaged flight feathers, and disease are indicative of poor housing. An inspection form is included in this packet, along with specifications on adequate housing. Please have it available for your inspector.
7. **Inspection**: You will need to assure WDFW that you have constructed adequate facilities to care for your raptors. Contact the Falconry Permit Coordinator when you are ready for an inspection. Inspections can only be arranged through the Permit Coordinator. A representative of the Washington Falconers Association, a local WDFW Enforcement Officer, or Wildlife Biologist (if specifically requested, and depending on their workload) will contact you to schedule an inspection of your raptor housing.
8. **Permit Fee**: At this time there is no permit fee. Legislature may consider a direct fee to the Department at a later date.
9. If you fail to pass the examination, or are found to have facilities inadequate to care for a bird, your permit will be denied. Nothing precludes you from reapplying for a permit.