

ARKANSAS GAME AND FISH COMMISSION
CODE BOOK OF REGULATIONS

FALCONRY REGULATIONS

Definition: Raptor is defined as any migratory bird of the Order Falconiformes or the Order Strigiformes except bald or golden eagle.

FALCONRY - PERMIT REQUIRED - Raptors may be taken, transported, possessed or used to take game animals and game birds only by holders of a falconry permit, to be issued to residents qualified by passing with a score of at least eighty percent (80%) a written examination meeting Federal Standards and whose facilities and equipment meet requirements specified herein.

REPORT TO COMMISSION - Permittees shall report to the AGFC by July 31, each year a listing of all raptors possessed on June 30 by species, marker number (if any), sex, age, date and source of acquisition.

FALCONRY PERMIT FEE - The fee for the falconry permit shall be \$25.00. Possession of a valid Arkansas hunting license is a prerequisite for a falconry permit.

PERMIT EXPIRATION AND RENEWAL - Falconry permits expire on July 31 of every third year regardless of date of issue. Permits may be renewed by submitting a check to the Commission for \$25.00 with a falconer's annual report.

PERMIT APPLICATION - Applicants shall state whether they are seeking an original permit or a renewal. Application must be made on a form provided by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

Permits are issued by class as follows:

APPRENTICE CLASS - Permittee shall be at least fourteen (14) years of age and shall have a sponsor for a period of two (2) years. The sponsor of an apprentice must hold a General or Master class falconry permit. A sponsor shall have no more than three (3) apprentices at any one time. An apprentice falconer may possess only one (1) of the following which must be taken from the wild and may not obtain more than one (1) replacement raptor during any twelve (12) month period:

American Kestrel (Falco sparverius) Red-tailed hawk (Buteo iainicensus)

GENERAL CLASS Permittee shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age and shall have at least two (2) years experience in falconry at the apprentice level. A general falconer may possess not more than two (2) raptors and may not obtain more than two (2) raptors for replacement during any twelve (12) month period. A general falconer may not take, transport or possess any golden eagle (Aquila chasaetos), or any species listed as threatened or endangered by federal law except when birds of listed species were bred in captivity.

MASTER CLASS - Permittee shall have at least five (5) years experience in falconry at the general class level and shall possess not more than three (3) raptors and may not obtain more than two (2) raptors for replacement birds during any twelve (12) month period. Master falconers may not take, transport, or possess a golden eagle unless authorized in writing by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Master falconers may not take, transport, or possess as a part of the three (3) bird limit, more than one raptor listed as threatened in federal regulation, except when birds listed as threatened or endangered were bred in captivity.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT - Applicant's facilities for the keeping of raptors and equipment shall be inspected and certified to meet the following standards. Permittees must keep all facilities and equipment at or above these standards at all times. Facilities and equipment may be re-inspected by Commission personnel at any time and any raptors removed when it is judged to be in the best interest of the raptor.

INDOOR FACILITIES (MEWS) - shall be large enough to allow the raptor to fully extend its wings and allow easy access for care of the raptor(s) housed in the facility. Raptors shall be tethered or separated by partitions and there shall be adequate perches, as secure door easily closed and at least one

(1) window protected on the inside by vertical bars spaced narrower than the width of the bird's body. The floor shall be well drained and permit easy cleaning.

OUTDOOR (WEATHERING) AREA - shall be fenced and covered with netting or wire or roofed except that perches more than six and one half feet (6 1/2') high need not be covered or roofed. The enclosed area should be large enough to insure that birds flying from a perch cannot strike the fence. Raptors shall be provided adequate perches and protection from excessive sun, wind and inclement weather.

EQUIPMENT - Applicants for falconry permits shall possess the following equipment:

Jesses - At least one (1) pair of Alymeri jesses or similar type constructed of pliable leather or suitable synthetic material for use when any raptor is flown free.

Leashes and Swivels - At least one (1) flexible, weather resistant leash and one (1) strong swivel of acceptable falconry design.

Bath container - A suitable container for each raptor two to six (2"-6") inches deep and wider than the length of the raptor.

Outdoor perches - A weathering area perch of acceptable design for each raptor.

Weighing device - A reliable scale or balance suitable for weighing the raptors held and graduated to increments of no more than one fourth (1/4) ounce or five (5) grams.

TRANSPORTATION, TEMPORARY HOLDING - A raptor may be transported or held in temporary facilities for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days. Temporary facilities shall be provided with an adequate perch protected from excessive temperature and excessive disturbance.

TAKING FROM WILD - Raptors may be taken from the wild by Permittee for the purpose of falconry only, and then only as follows:

YOUNG BIRDS NOT CAPABLE OF FLIGHT (EYASSES) may be taken only by a General or Master class falconer on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays only, from March 1 through July 31. No more than two (2) eyasses may be taken by a falconer during this period. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (Falconry Coordinator) must be notified in writing of the exact (including a detailed map) location of Cooper's hawk and Sharp-shinned hawk nests no less than 24 hours prior to taking of an eyas. Falconers must leave at least 2 chicks in the nest when taking an eyas of either of these two species. Only eyasses of the following species may be taken: red-tailed hawk, red-shouldered hawk, broad-winged hawk, Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, American kestrel, great horned owl.

FIRST YEAR (PASSAGE) BIRDS may be taken on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays only, from September 1 through January 31, except that marked raptors or jessed raptors held under permit may be retrapped at any time.

ONLY AMERICAN KESTRELS AND GREAT HORNED OWLS may be taken when over one (1) year old, except that raptors other than threatened or endangered species taken under a depredation or special purpose federal permits may be used by general and master falconers. No more than two (2) raptors can be taken during any twelve (12) months in the two combined taking periods except for the retrapping of escaped falconry birds.

NONRESIDENT FALCONERS - will be allowed to take one (1) legal raptor per year in Arkansas provided the state of their residence reciprocates such approval for Arkansas falconers. Non-resident falconers must first purchase an Arkansas non-resident hunting license. The taking of a legal raptor by a non-resident must comply with Arkansas regulations.

METHODS OF TAKING RAPTORS - Raptors must be taken only in a humane manner. Any device used to take birds of prey shall be labeled with the name, address and phone number of the falconer, and must be attended to continually by the falconer. No eggs may be taken from raptor nests.

REPORTING ACQUIRED/DISPOSED - Permittees must submit a properly completed federal form 3186-A (Migratory Bird Acquisition/Disposition Report) to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife regional office within five days of taking, acquiring, purchasing, receiving, losing or disposing of any raptor. No raptor may be possessed under a falconry permit unless the Permittee has a properly completed form 3-186-A for each bird possessed.

SALE AND TRADE OF FALCONRY BIRDS - No Permittee shall purchase, offer for sale, sell or barter any native raptor acquired from the wild. Permittees may transfer raptors obtained from the wild to other Permittees within the state when no money or other consideration is involved. Falconers may purchase captive bred raptors that are banded with a numbered seamless, permanent federal leg marker. Such captive bred raptors utilized for falconry shall not be treated as threatened or endangered.

CARE OF FALCONRY BIRDS BY ANOTHER PERSON - Another federally permitted person may care for the birds of a Permittee for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days, if written authorization from the Permittee accompanies the birds when they are transferred. If the period of care exceeds fifteen (15) days, the Commission must be informed of this action within three (3) days of this transfer, who is caring for them and approximately how many days they will be in the care of the second person.

LOSS OF FALCONRY BIRDS - Falconry Permittees shall notify the Commission in writing of the death, loss or release of their raptors within fifteen (15) days of occurrence. Each dead bird shall be frozen and surrendered upon request to the Commission along with the band, if any, from that bird. Dead birds may be buried or burned thirty (30) days after written notification of the death to the Commission, provided that the Commission has not requested disposal by other means.

RELEASE OF NON-INDIGENOUS FALCONRY BIRDS - A falconry permit holder must obtain written permission from the Commission before intentionally releasing into the wild any species of raptor not indigenous to Arkansas.

FEATHERS - Feathers from captive falconry raptors may be possessed, retained and exchanged by Permittees for pinning purposes only.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS - TAKING OF GAME - Resident falconers may take wildlife only within the specific seasons and bag limits, except that non-migratory game species, with the exception of bobwhite quail, may be taken outside of the specified falconry seasons with a daily limit of one(1) per raptor per day.

ACCIDENTAL KILLS - Except as provided above, the Permittee must leave any accidentally killed animal where it lies, except that the raptor may feed upon the animal prior to leaving the site of the kill.

USE OF RAPTORS BY NON-RESIDENTS - A non-resident falconer with a valid Non-resident Arkansas Hunting License, and holding a valid falconry permit from another state, may use raptors to take wildlife during open seasons. It is also provided that such a properly permitted non-resident falconer, without further permit, may enter and use raptors to take wildlife in any regional or national falconry- field trial authorized by letter from the Director of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.