

FALCONRY

Falconry involves the use of trained raptors (birds of prey; e.g. Harris hawk) to hunt small game.

The rules for falconry in Ontario are set out in the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, and associated regulations.

Birds that may be used for falconry

The regulations specify two types of birds that may be used for falconry. One list specifies birds native to Ontario, which are called Falconry Birds. The second list specifies non-native birds, which are called Non-indigenous Falconry Birds. See complete lists at end of this fact sheet. There are different regulations for Falconry Birds than there are for Non-indigenous Falconry Birds.

To keep and hunt with Non-indigenous Falconry Birds you do not need a falconry licence. However, you must have a valid small game hunting licence, apply identification bands to your birds, and maintain a log book as specified by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

To keep and hunt with falconry birds, you must hold one of the three types of falconry licences issued by the ministry, and follow the conditions of that licence.

Falconry Licences

1) Apprentice Falconry Licence

If you are new to falconry and you want to practice falconry with a Falconry Bird, you must:

- have a valid small game hunting licence;
- obtain an Apprentice Falconry Licence;
- apprentice yourself with an experienced falconer; and
- successfully complete the Ontario Hawking Club Apprenticeship Program, which includes undergoing at least 30 hours of instruction in falconry over a period of 15 months, including two Octobers.

Anyone with an Apprentice Falconry Licence may buy a single Falconry Bird and obtain one replacement for it and sell a single Falconry Bird during the period the licence is valid. No more than one Falconry Bird may be possessed at any one time. You can obtain a list of apprenticeship sponsors from the Ministry of Natural Resources district office or the Ontario Hawking Club at www.ontariohawkingclub.org.

2) **General Falconry Licence:**

You qualify for a General Falconry Licence if you:

- have successfully completed the Ontario Hawking Club Apprenticeship Program;
- can prove that you have legally possessed birds used for falconry in another jurisdiction for two consecutive years of the past five years, or
- have held an Ontario Falconry Licence within the past five years.

You must also have a valid small game hunting licence. Persons with a General Falconry License may buy or sell a maximum of three Falconry Birds to keep in captivity in each calendar year. No more than three Falconry Birds may be possessed at any one time.

3) **Commercial falconry licence**

To breed Falconry Birds you must have a Commercial Falconry Licence and a valid small game hunting licence.

You qualify for a Commercial Falconry Licence if you:

- have held a General Falconry Licence for five years, or
- can demonstrate that you have been keeping raptors for five years prior to the date of application.

Anyone with a commercial licence may buy or sell an unlimited number of falconry birds.

Falconry Hunting Seasons

Falconers have specific small game hunting seasons. Please contact your district office for a copy of the seasons table, or visit www.e-laws.gov.on.ca to obtain a copy of Ontario Regulation 670/98 under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act.

Exercising birds during the closed season for hunting

If you exercise your Falconry Bird or Non-indigenous Falconry Bird when the hunting season is closed, you must make every effort to ensure the bird does not kill game wildlife. You can be charged with hunting out-of-season unless you can prove you have exercised due diligence in preventing your bird from targeting game species. Falconers are never allowed to target specially protected wildlife. To obtain a list of species classified as game wildlife or specially protected wildlife, please contact your district office, or you can obtain a copy of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act at www.e-laws.gov.on.ca.

Hunting migratory birds

The hunting of migratory birds is controlled by the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994. For more information, contact the Canadian Wildlife Service, Ontario Region office at (905) 336-6410 or visit www.on.ec.gc.ca/wildlife_e.html.

Non-resident falconry

If you do not live in Ontario, you may bring properly banded falconry birds to practise falconry in Ontario. Before coming to Ontario, you must contact the ministry district office where you intend to hunt. They will require a letter that identifies your name, address, name the wildlife management units (WMUs) in which you will hunt, and identification and band numbers of the birds with which you will be hunting. If in support of your activity, the ministry will issue you a letter approving your hunt. You will need to take a copy of the

ministry's letter approving your request with you when you hunt. You must also hold a non-resident small game hunting licence and a migratory bird permit, if applicable. You should refer to the annual Hunting Regulations Summary to determine the WMU number and the address of the appropriate district office.

If you do not live in Ontario, you may bring properly banded Non-indigenous Falconry Birds to practise falconry in Ontario. You only require a non-resident small game hunting licence.

Note that many Falconry Birds and Non-indigenous Falconry Birds are listed in the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES). The CITES sets controls on the international trade and movement of animal and plant species that have been, or may be, threatened due to excessive commercial exploitation. A CITES permit may be required prior to moving birds across federal borders. In some cases, a CITES permit is required from both the country of origin (export permit) and the destination country (import permit). For more information, visit <http://www.cites.ec.gc.ca/>.

There may also be permitting or other requirements under the *Wild Animal and Plant Protection and International and Interprovincial Trade Act*. This federal act and its regulations control the import, export, interprovincial transport and sale of certain wild animals and plants and their parts and derivatives within Canada. For more information, visit http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/publications/wappa/guide_e.cfm.

Falconry Birds

Bald eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	Red-shouldered hawk (<i>Buteo lineatus</i>)
Golden eagle (<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>)	Red-tailed hawk (<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>)
Peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)	Sharp-shinned hawk (<i>Accipiter striatus</i>)
Northern goshawk (<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>)	American kestrel (<i>Falco sparverius</i>)
Gyr Falcon (<i>Falco rusticolus</i>)	Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>)
Northern harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)	Great horned owl (<i>Bubo virginianus</i>)
Broad-winged hawk (<i>Buteo platypterus</i>)	Northern hawk owl (<i>Surnia ulula</i>)
Cooper's hawk (<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>)	Snowy owl (<i>Nyctea scandiaca</i>)

Non-indigenous Falconry Birds

Prairie falcon	Swainson's hawk
Saker falcon	Bonelli's eagle
Lanner falcon	European kestrel
Lagger falcon	European sparrow-hawk
Harris' hawk	Tawny eagle
Feruginous hawk	Steppe eagle

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Contact your local Ministry of Natural Resources office

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