



North-West Hawking Club

The NWHC is responsible for the ethical practices as well as conduct of its members as well as to ensure all parties are familiar with the policy and procedures that the club adheres to. We have regular meetings and gatherings as well as inspections and a mentoring system that ensures the welfare of the hawks is always the most important objective. The NWHC is committed to the conservation of the raptor community using acceptable methods developed by falconers in order to offer the hawk a quality of life for the Birds Of Prey we love. The NWHCs input in the rehabilitation and monitoring of local raptors only strengthens our standing with the local Nature Conservation department as well as provides justification for certain wild take policies for which we wish to cultivate for future falconry practices.

We have requests for membership from some new falconers and apprentices and these will be investigated and membership issued accordingly. But to date our membership is as follows

- Dylan Freeman *Chairman*, I have continued to fly my Female African Hawk Eagle “Four times intermewed (Able) eyas” with great success and she has taken a large bag as I fly her through the molt, I prefer flights at game birds and diurnal mammals as well as the occasional night hawking scrub hares (under which circumstances she is devastating) and often she supplies the freezer with fresh quarry on a regular basis. I will continue to fly my Female Peregrine Falcon (twice intermewed captive bred eyas) She is flying well and been a true pleasure, she has taken a few head of quarry, as she took longer to moult than usual, but we have already been giving the local game birds and sand grouse a hard time and I hope to have her in fine action at the meet. Can’t wait!!! I have been active in rehabilitation of some falconry species and busy with some breeding birds as well and I hope this is fruitful.
- Ronald *Gorrie V-Chairman* has taken on a female passage Lanner falcon that is finishing her molt and he has been assisting in rehabilitation efforts with Adri and local vet. He is hoping to take on a Sparrowhawk in the coming breeding season.
- Rodger Nielson is our honorary member and is between Scotland and South Africa and has not taken on a hawk but has joined some of us on many hunts.
- Bryan Anderson Has continued to fly his Tiercel Peregrine falcon (once Intermewed eyas) and has taken on another tierce for this season. He has been active in locating sand grouse spots and by all accounts been busy on them.
- Adri du Toit has taken on a female African Goshawk and has been doing well with the bird harassing the Indian mynah population with wonderful results. She has also been involved in assisting in rehabilitation cases at the Aran vet clinic.
- Johan Smith has taken on a rehab eyas Female Black Sparrowhawk that suffered bad frounce and a severely cracked beak as a result was brought to the club for rehabilitation. The training developed well and her instinct to chase is powerful and she will be an efficient falconry bird.

- Oscar Olen has been too busy to take on a hawk but continues to monitor raptor activity in the Potchefstroom area and has been heavily involved in club committee activity. He hopes to take on a hawk in the coming season.
- Theresa Hodgkinson continues to fly her female Rock Kestrel and is bonded nicely with the bird.
- Gareth Norris has recently joined the club from working in bird shows and is flying a Male rock kestrel and has taken on a Male Jackal Buzzard and hopes to have them flying hard soon.
- Danie Huyser has been too busy to take on a hawk but continues to monitor raptor activity in the Potchefstroom area
- Tanya Stone Campbell is a rehabilitator who uses our knowledge for advice on cases she is involved with.
- James Du Toit has recently joined the club from the Free State and I am sure we will see more of him in the future, welcome.

Research activities that will positively impact due to the study of the ecology and biodiversity of raptors include the ongoing monitoring of the local raptor population in order to better understand the effects seen on these Raptors as a result of environmental, economic, natural and human impacts on species. There are a number of falconers involved as well as external bodies working together on a number of projects. We are in the process of setting up an intensive study on local populations and with the assistance of these contributors we hope to better conserve the hawks we love. Ongoing monitoring programs around the province by falconers are essential in understanding the local raptors needs so as to better assist the raptor population and in so doing protect the future of falconry. It was also important that the NWHC must make a concerted effort in the research opportunities in the field of raptor conservation, *i.e.* Sightings, nesting activities as well as prey species accounts. Some species we are actively monitoring are Peregrine and Lanner falcon, African Hawk Eagle, Black Eagle, Fish Eagle, Vulture species, Black Sparrow hawk, Pale Chanting Goshawk, Gabar Goshawk and Roosting habits of migratory Kestrel species.

It is evident that falconry has a major role to play in the rehabilitation of raptors and that the practices developed by falconers can positively influence the rehabilitation community in and around the province. A register of such cases is to be kept by the club so as to include this information in the reports submitted to the North West Nature Conservation. We are lucky to have many members interested in this field and as a result have been able to positively impact individual birds by offering assistance and conditioning them for effective release options. As can be seen by the individual reports, that birds not suitable for release can still undergo rehabilitation under falconry conditions effectively.

We are active in nest site recordings and make regular visits to see ongoing progress of the breeding season and this is in line with research and nature conservation obligations. We have also been able to establish a few breeding pairs of certain species so this will benefit the falconry community if (after a lot of work and effort) we are successful.

The North West Hawking Club has again been invited to sit on the North West Nature Conservation Wildlife Forum and as a result is involved in many aspects effecting ornithology and falconry in the province and is able to have comment on issues relating to birds, raptors and falconry together with role players in the Nature Conservation Community. I see this as a positive step in securing the future of falconry in the province. Pest Control has been an interesting avenue explored as some local farmers and companies have requested assistance in problem bird control and as a result some falconers have been offered quality hawking areas to practice their art.

The annual wild take Quota will be addressed and the falconers wishing to acquire new hawks will be included in this, otherwise captive bred hawks will be sourced. All members receive a certificate of membership of the NWHC as well as the membership card for use as identification and acknowledgement of membership. This will ensure that our membership is able to practice falconry with the correct accreditation and training. The main benefit of the card system is that Nature Conservation has acknowledged this as a pseudo-permit in the field. A membership contact list is published and attached to facilitate communication within the club membership.

Good hawking

Dylan Freeman



Anyone for a Braai?