



**An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtas Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta**
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

CIRCULAR: 1 / 2022

January 2022

BIRDS OF PREY LICENCE APPLICATIONS AND INSPECTIONS 2022

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am directed by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to refer to the above matter.

All current Bird of Prey possession and Falconry licences issued under the Wildlife Act 1976 (Birds of Prey) Regulations 1984 (S.I. No.8/1984) will expire on **31st January 2022**. It should be noted that it is an offence under the above Regulations to be in possession of a bird of prey or to engage in falconry without a licence.

A licence application form to facilitate the renewal of your licence(s) is attached and this form should be completed and emailed to wildlifelicence@housing.gov.ie (A separate application form for use by out of State applicants, including Northern Ireland, is available at <https://www.npws.ie/licences/possession/birds-of-prey>)

Completed application forms and the appropriate fee should accompany your application, which is €12.70 annually for Possession and Falconry licences. This office will issue an acknowledgement to all applicants confirming receipt of their application. Payments can be made directly into the Departments bank account, or by cheque (payable to Dept. of Housing), or postal order. Details of this Departments Danske Bank Account is on page 7 of the Application Form.

Licence to Take a Bird of Prey from the Wild

If you wish to apply for a licence to take a bird of prey from the wild during the coming breeding season, your application must reach this office **not later than 5pm Monday 31st January 2022**. Appendix 2 sets out the conditions regarding participation in the Peregrine Falcon draw 2021. The Department will keep the 2022 Peregrine Falcon draw under review in the context of Covid-19 restrictions in place during 2022.

Please note that late applications for wild-take licences will not be considered.

There is no fee for the licence to take a bird of prey from the wild. Therefore, if you have no birds in your possession at the moment and are applying (**only**) to take a bird of prey from the wild, you should not send any fee with your application. However, if you are granted a wild-take licence and are successful in taking a bird of prey from the wild, you must apply for a possession licence to keep the bird and the fee will be required at that point. Again, an acknowledgement will be issued to all applicants confirming receipt of their application.

Inspection of Premises

Part of the licensing process involves an inspection of the accommodation that you provide for your birds of prey and an examination of those on your licence application form. Current licence holders are required to assist National Parks and Wildlife Service staff in this inspection process. It is recommended that you should contact your local Conservation Ranger and arrange an inspection as a matter of priority.

It should also be noted that on the day of inspection, licence holders will be required to make themselves or their representatives available at the premises. They should present their birds of prey in such a manner as to facilitate the easy identification of all birds on the licence application form and comply with the requests of National Parks and Wildlife Service staff.

To Possess an Injured Wild Bird

An application under Sections 22(9) (g) and 22(9) (h) of the Wildlife Acts should be applied for when an injured wild bird has come into your possession. This should be applied for immediately and your local Conservation Ranger should be contacted.

It is considered that generally all injured wild birds should be eventually rehabilitated and released back into the wild. In the event that a bird cannot be released back into the wild, you should apply to have the bird micro-chipped by a registered veterinary surgeon and make an application to the Department for it to be added to your possession licence.

PLEASE NOTE: *If the wild bird is CITES listed, you must also apply for a CITES (Article 10) Certificate. A wild taken specimen may not be used for commercial purposes. However, subsequent generations may be used for commercial purposes, subject to CITES certification. See appendix 3 for more details.*

Adding and Removing Birds of Prey from Possession Licences

When acquiring a bird of prey, it is important to remember that you must have the bird added to your possession licence **before** you take possession of it. To ensure this, you should complete Appendix 1 of the application form and forward it by e-mail to wildlifelicence@housing.gov.ie or by post to the Wildlife Licensing Unit with all the relevant details (species, sex, identification number and details of proposed provider). Your request will be referred on to the relevant regional NPWS staff for consideration. Applicants should ensure that adequate time is allowed for this process to be completed.

Upon approval, your possession licence will be amended and an updated licence will be issued to you. It is only at this stage that you can take possession of the bird. It is also recommended that you indicate to the prospective provider that you hold a current possession licence with the bird listed on it.

The Appendix 1 form should also be completed and returned when requesting to remove a bird of prey from a current possession licence. The Appendix 1 form is also available on our website <http://www.npws.ie/licences/possession/>

Future Communication by the Department

Future circulars and general correspondence will be issued via email to those who have supplied email addresses. Therefore please ensure that your email address is stated clearly and correctly on your application form. Due to continuing Covid-19 restrictions, your licence will be issued by email.

If you have any queries, please contact the Wildlife Licensing Unit
wildlifelicence@housing.gov.ie

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
National Parks and Wildlife Service
Wildlife Licensing Unit
90 North King Street
Dublin 7
D07 N7CV

APPENDIX 2

Conditions for Participation in the Peregrine Falcon Draw 2022

*The Department will keep the 2022 Peregrine Falcon draw under review in the context of Covid-19 restrictions in place during 2022.

- Applications must be received before the closing date of **5pm Monday 31st January 2022.**
- Applicants who are in possession of more than one peregrine falcon taken from the wild in Ireland (excluding injured) will not be included in the 2022 draw.
- Applicants must be resident within the jurisdiction.
- Applicants who have successfully taken a peregrine falcon from the wild within the previous three years (three draws) may not apply.
- Applications from family members at the same address will be treated as a single application (in the interest of fairness).
- Up to a maximum of five Peregrine Falcons are permitted to be taken from the wild each year.
- Successful applicants in Peregrine Draw will be asked to provide Landowner Permission for proposed taking locations.

APPENDIX 3

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species)

Annex A Birds of Prey - Certificates for Commercial Purposes

The majority of native birds of prey are listed by CITES. Before taking possession of a CITES listed bird of prey, falconers or prospective falconers should ensure that the type of bird in question has been lawfully acquired and is in possession of an EC Trade Certificate (Article 10) from the holder of the bird. You should not under any circumstances take a CITES listed bird without the appropriate documentation provided by the seller **Copies are not sufficient – you should ensure that you are in possession of the original CITES certificate.**

Many different types of birds of prey are kept by Falconers in Ireland. The table below gives CITES details on the birds most commonly held in Ireland. As you can see most of the birds of prey held in Ireland are CITES listed on EC Annex A. This is the list reserved for the most endangered species.

| Common Name | Scientific Name | CITES Appendix | EC Annex |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------|
| Peregrine Falcon | <i>Falco peregrinus</i> | I | A |
| Lanner Falcon | <i>Falco biarmicus</i> | II | A |
| Saker Falcon | <i>Falco cherrug</i> | II | A |
| Gyr Falcon | <i>Falco rusticolus</i> | I | A |
| Northern Goshawk | <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> | II | A |
| Merlin | <i>Falco columbarius</i> | II | A |
| Sparrowhawk | <i>Accipiter nisus</i> | II | A |
| Barn Owl | <i>Tyto alba</i> | II | A |
| Eurasian Eagle Owl | <i>Bubo bubo</i> | II | A |
| Snowy Owl | <i>Nyctea scandiaca</i> | II | A |
| Harris's Hawk | <i>Parabuteo unicinctus</i> | II | B |
| Common Kestrel | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> | II | A |
| Laggar Falcon | <i>Falco jugger</i> | I | A |

Under the relevant Regulations, the purchase, offer to purchase, acquisition for commercial purposes, display to the public for commercial purposes, use for commercial gain and sale, keeping for sale, offering for sale or transporting for sale of specimens of the species listed in EC Annex A is prohibited.

It is possible to obtain an exemption from the prohibitions described above by obtaining a CITES Certificate (EC Trade Certificate/Article 10). A CITES Certificate is required for any commercial activity with any Annex A listed birds of prey. The granting of a CITES Certificate is considered on a case by case basis by the CITES Management Authority of the Member State in which the specimen is located.

Any infringements of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations or the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2012 (as amended) can constitute an offence.

Further information regarding CITES can be found on the Department's website: <https://www.npws.ie/legislation/cites> Queries on CITES can be directed to cites@housing.gov.ie, see also:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/legislation_en.htm

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1976/act/39/enacted/en/print.html>

- any CITES listed trade between Ireland and the UK will be subject to CITES import/export regulations.
- In effect, those companies or individuals transporting CITES listed goods – animal or plant, parts or derivatives, will need to apply for CITES import/export permits in order to move any CITES listed specimen to or from the UK

<https://www.npws.ie/news/brexit-and-implications-cites-trade-ireland>