



Falconry and the bird trade

Falconry involves the use of a trained bird of prey to hunt for wild prey. It has been popular in Europe for centuries and remains a popular pastime in Ireland. Falconry is practised using falcons, eagles, hawks, owls, and other birds of prey.

Background on falconry trade

Trade in birds for falconry is carefully regulated to ensure that wild populations do not become threatened. However, illicit trade continues which, combined with naturally low populations, can threaten species in the wild. As such, CITES is crucial to help safeguard birds of prey threatened by trade.

Regulations on trading birds of prey

All birds of prey (including hybrids) are listed in CITES and the EU Regulations. This means that an import, export or re-export permit must be issued before any bird of prey enters or leaves the EU.

In addition, for an Annex A bird of prey, such as a Peregrine falcon, an EU certificate (known as an “Article 10 certificate”) is required for any commercial use i.e., selling, keeping for sale, breeding or educational display for commercial gain.

EU Birds Directive and Wildlife Act

Under the EU Birds Directive and Ireland’s Wildlife Act, all wild birds native to Ireland are protected from hunting, injury and disturbance. It is illegal to sell native birds except in certain circumstances. A licence is required to take a bird of prey from the wild and for the possession and use in falconry of birds of the Order Falconiformes.