

HAWKING/FALCONRY 1



awking and/or Falconry is the sport of training birds of prey, mainly falcons, hawks, eagles and buzzards to hunt small game. Very gifted falconers have even trained cormorants to catch fish and rarely owls to hunt at night.

Although the sport is mainly practiced by nobility, freemen also participate, the prerequisite being that one has a place to keep the bird and the land to fly it on.

The origins of falconry on Lythia are not known though most speculate it originated in the east near Dalkesh and Beshakan.

FALCONRY SKILL

The **Falconry Skill** is a specialty of **Animalcraft**. (See Skills 2 & Skills 14)

FALCONRY AS AN OCCUPATION

Most Lords employ Falconers to look after their mews due to the amount of attention the birds require. Falconer and Austringer are unguilded occupations, but usually still serve an informal apprenticeship of about 6 years with an experienced falconer. Pay varies greatly with the wealth and generosity of the employer but is usually equivalent to that of an animal trainer, about 72d per month. Some falconers are self-employed and make a living by selling trained and untrained birds and eggs. This can be quite lucrative as rare birds and eggs can command great prices on the open market.

BIRD TRAINING

Training a falconry bird is rather time consuming and during the training of a new bird the falconer may not improve or develop any other skills. Divide 360 by the falconer's Animalcraft SB plus the appropriate training time modifiers and round up, this is the number of days in a training period.

At the end of the training period the Falconer makes a training roll, Animalcraft ML + Bird Training Modifier, and consults the following table for results.

- CS** - Add +10 to any of the birds hunting skills.
- MS** - The training is a success.
- MF** - The bird must be trained for another training period.
- CF** - The bird either becomes ill or flies off (GM's discretion)

If the bird is trained successfully, create its hunting skills and add it to the mews record sheet.

Example: The falconer's animalcraft **SB** is **13** and he is attempting to train a Goshawk with a training time modifier of **-5**.

$$360 / (13-5) = 45 \text{ days}$$

45 days in the Goshawks training period.

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THE HUNT

Hunts can be formal affairs with all the splendor of a tournament, or simply a few friends and their birds out for a day of enjoyment. This can last for an afternoon or go on for days traveling about the countryside in search of game. The hunting party will consist of the hunters (mounted or on foot), and a compliment of dogs or beaters used to flush the game. One character (PC or NPC) is designated the hunt master and makes all of the rolls for locating the game.

The birds are typically trained to hunt a specific type of quarry prior to taking them out into the field. The training lure is made from the hide or wings of the quarry, or if a larger quarry is to be hunted, the bird is allowed to attack an example of the animal that has been made lame.

First the hunting party travels to a location that the hunt master feels is a good location to find the appropriate game. The hunt master rolls his Tracking to determine if the proper quarry has been located. If the roll is successful, the hunt may commence normally. If another type of quarry is found instead, it may be hunted but at -10 to the birds hunting roll. The bird must have skills in the appropriate area to hunt the alternate animal.

After the game is located, the beaters or dogs will begin to try to flush the animals. Again, the character leading the hunt rolls his tracking and then consults the following table. Rolls are made every turn until all animals in the encounter group are flushed.

CF - 1 of the animals eludes the hunting party*

MF- No animals are flushed

MS- 1 or 2 animals are flushed*

CS - More than 2 animals are flushed*

*The number of animals encountered should be predetermined.

The roll is modified by the number of dogs (+5 per dog) or beaters (+2 per beater) up to 5, beyond 5 no additional modifiers apply.



Very often nobles often give rare bird eggs as gifts and tithes. A rare fertile Sorkin Eagle egg can demand as much as 400d each.



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Hunting with Hawks

Hawks are known as "Birds of the Fist" because they are launched from their masters hand when their quarry is flushed. To release the birds, the hunters proceed in the order of initiative as in combat, and roll against Falconry consulting the following table.

CF- Bad release, -10 to the hawk's hunting roll and the hawk chooses its target last*

MF- Poor or delayed release, the hawk chooses its target last*

MS- Good release, the hawk chooses its target normally

CS - Excellent release, the hawk chooses its target first*

If 2 or more hawks' results are targets last or target first, the hunter's initiative determines the order of attack.

Next, targets must be chosen for each bird that has been released. Proceeding in the order indicated by the above table and the hunter's initiative, the hunter now chooses the target that his hawk will attack and makes the attack roll vs. the hawks appropriate hunting skill (i.e., **Small Bird Skill** for a **Pigeon**) and check the results.

CF - Bird misses its prey and flies off or is injured by the prey

MF - Bird misses its prey and returns to the hunter's hand

MS - Bird clutches and holds its prey

CS - Bird kills its prey or the prey is killed by the fall

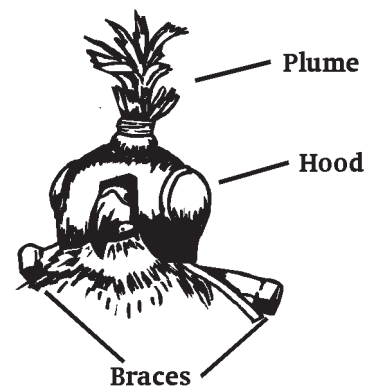
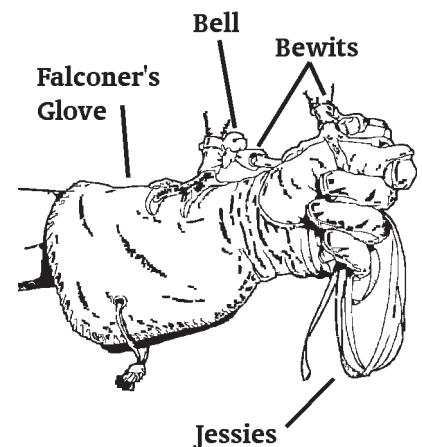
If the hawk succeeds, it will wait with the fallen prey until the hunter or a dog collects it. If the hawk fails, the quarry may be targeted by another hunter's hawk. If no quarry remains for a released hawk, the hunter rolls for attack normally and any result but a **CF** indicates that the bird safely returns to the hunters hand.

Hunting with Falcons

True falcons, sometimes called "Birds of the Tower" or "Birds of the Lure," do not hunt from their master's fist as hawks do. These birds are released before the flushing of the game commences, climb to a great height, and circle above their masters head, this is called **waiting -on**. When the game is flushed, they dive down upon it with great speed and attack.

Prior to making the flushing roll the hunters that wish to fly their birds release them. The flushing roll is then made normally and the birds choose their targets in the order of best hunting skill too lowest (use the hunting skill appropriate for the target animal), ties are decided with a die roll.

Typical Falconry Furniture



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The birds then roll to attack vs. their appropriate hunting skill in the same order as target selection was made in using the following table.

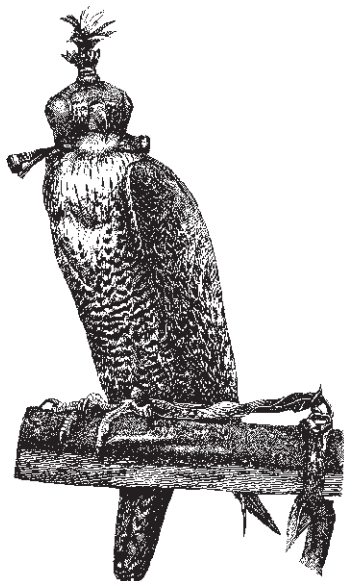
- CF** - Bird misses its prey and flies off or is injured by the prey
- MF** - Bird misses its prey and regains altitude to continue waiting-on
- MS** - Bird clutches and holds its prey
- CS** - Bird kills its prey or the prey is killed by the fall

If the falcon succeeds, it will wait with the fallen prey until the hunter or a dog collects it. If the falcon fails, the quarry may be targeted by another hunter's falcon. If no quarry remains for a released falcon, the hunter rolls for attack normally and any result but a **CF** indicates that the bird continues waiting -on. Birds that are still waiting-on after the quarry is exhausted must be recalled with a lure. This requires a successful falconry roll. A **CF** indicating that the bird has flown off, and an **MF** meaning the bird continues to wait-on and another attempt must be made.

LOST BIRDS

When a bird flies off it is considered lost. The bird may be searched for by the hunters if a successful Tracking roll is made immediately following the birds departure. It will take 1d6 hours to find. If darkness comes before the time is expended the bird will not be able to be recovered. If the bird is found, a successful Falconry roll must be made to retrieve it, if it fails then the bird will fly off again.

Birds that cannot be recovered, by chance may be found by peasants or the like and be returned, but this is up to GM's discretion.



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BIRD TYPES

The tables below depict the birds typically used for Hawking and Falconry on Lythia. They can be used to generate an existing trained bird or a newly trained one. Type is the type of bird. The first set of 3 numbers generated is the birds hunting skills for types of birds classed by size. The second set of 2 numbers is for ground animals. Note that some birds have no skill for some types of animals. This indicates that the bird is not suitable for hunting animals in this classification. Finally the **TM** column is the birds training modifier and **TT** is the training time modifier.

Falcons (and Eagles)

Type	Sm. Bird/ Med. Bird/Lg. Bird	Sm. Ani./Lg. Ani.	TM	TT
Genin	30+2d6 / - / -	- / -	+20	+1
Gyrfalcon	60+2d10/40+2d10 / 4d6	4d6 / -	-10	-2
Lanner	40+2d10/ 30+2d6 / 4d6*	30+2d6/ 4d6*	+10	-
Peregrin	60+2d10/ 30+2d6 / 4d6	4d6 / -	-	-1
Saker	60+2d10/40+2d10 / 4d6	4d6 / -	+10	-
Sorkin Eagle	60+2d10/60+2d10 / 4d6	30+2d6/ 4d6	-25	-10

* skill that applies only when this falcon is used to attack its quarry in pairs or threes..

Hawks

Type	Sm. Bird/ Med. Bird/Lg. Bird	Sm. Ani./Lg. Ani.	TM	TT
Goshawk	60+2d10/40+2d10 / 4d6	40+2d6 / 4d6	-20	-5
Sparrowhawk	40+2d10/ 30+2d6 / -	4d6 / -	-25	-5



Quarry Size Examples:

Small Birds - Quail, Partridge

Medium Birds - Duck, Grouse, Pheasant

Large Birds - Goose, Swan

Small Animals - Rabbit, Squirrel, Hare

Large Animals - Fox, Vlasta

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GLOSSARY OF FALCONRY TERMS

AUSTRINGER	One who keeps and hunts Accipiters. (Goshawk, Sparrowhawk)	MANTEL	To stand over a kill or food with wings lowered and slightly spread out to hide the food. Young hawks do this in the nest and they tend to continue to do so if they are handled too young. The habit is lost in the wild after leaving the nest, and passage or haggard hawks rarely mantle.
BATE	To attempt to fly off the fist or perch when held or tied, in fright or at the lure or quarry.	MEW	To moult.
BELLS	Small bells, usually of brass, silver or gold.	MEWS	The building or room where hawks are kept. Also the place in which they are put away to moult.
BEWITS	Short thin straps of leather by which the bells are fastened to the legs. Must be put above the jesses but below the ring.	MUTES	The droppings or excrement of hawks.
BIND	To grab and hold onto quarry in the air with the feet.	NAYS	An eyas or eyassa nestling hawk taken from the eyrie or nest.
BLOCK	A truncated cone or cylindrical piece of wood, having a ring in it for the attachment of the leash, and placed out of doors, for the hawk to 'weather'.	RANGLE	Small stones given to hawks to aid digestion. A hawk may pick them up and eat them of its own accord if they are put within reach.
BOWPERCH	A semicircular perch with a padded top, used for hawks out of doors.	RING PERCH	A bowperch. The hawk sits on top of a padded circle, which in turn is attached to a stand.
BRACES	Leather straps used to open or close the hood.	RING UP	To climb spirally in flight.
BRAIL	A narrow strip of thin soft leather, with a long slit in it, used for tying one wing of a restless hawk that bates too much.	SEALING	The act of sewing a hawk's eyes shut to aid in manning or transporting untrained hawks.
CADGE	A portable perch used to carry a number of birds hooded. It is slung from the shoulders by straps and is rectangular, the cadger walking in the centre.	STRIKE THE HOOD	To pull the braces open of a hood, so as to be in readiness to take off hood the moment the hawk is to be flown, or quarry is sighted.
CADGER	The person who carries the cadge.	UNSTRIKE	To loosen the braces so that the hood may be easily pulled off.
CASTING	The pellet of feathers or fur ejected after completing the process of digestion.	WAIT ON	To circle round high up over the falconer, waiting for him to flush the quarry or throw out the lure.
CLUTCH	To seize the quarry in the feet.	WAKE	To tame a hawk by keeping her on the fist day and night, keeping her from sleeping.
COPE	To trim the beak and talons of a bird.	WEATHER	To place the hawk on her block in the open air during the day.
EYASS	A young hawk taken from the eyrie.		
EYRIE	The bird of prey's nest, usually used in conjunction with eagles.		
HACK	A method of rearing young hawks completely free for a few weeks until they are old enough to train.		
HACK BELLS	Large heavy bells put on hawks to hinder them from preying for themselves while 'flying at hack'.		
HOOD	A close fitting leather cap, often tooled and decorated, used to blindfold a bird.		
JESSES	The narrow strips of leather fastened round a hawk's legs to hold her by.		
LEASH	A long narrow thong or strap of leather with a falconry button at one end, which is passed through the swivel and used to tie a bird to its block or perch.		
LURE	An imitation bird or animal used to entice the hawk back in flight. It is usually made from a pair of wings or the skin of the type of quarry at which the bird is to be flown, and sometimes has raw meat tied to it.		
MAIL	To wrap a hawk in a cloth either to tame her, or to keep her quiet during an operation such as coping or imping.		
MAKE HAWK	An old, experienced hawk flown with an eyass, when training, to teach or encourage it.		
MAN	To man a hawk is to make it tame by accustoming it to man's presence, usually achieved by holding the wild bird on the fist for the requisite period of time.		
MANNING	Training a hawk.		