

# Friends of Phoenix Falconry

Scotland's finest falconry  
experiences

April 2010, issue 1.



## Welcome to our first newsletter!

Hello friends,

Welcome to our brand new monthly newsletter which we hope to send to you by the power of "t'internet".



There have been many, many changes at Phoenix falconry over the past 12

months, and many more to come so we hope that this newsletter will keep you better informed of the wonderful world of the professional falconer.

Since Christmas we have been feverishly finishing off our outside bird accommodations to allow us to move the entire collection onto site and into their new luxury home. And it's thanks to our hard working team of apprentices as well as Tom, Lynn, David, Darren and Lee that we were able to realize that goal on the 12th Feb 2010.

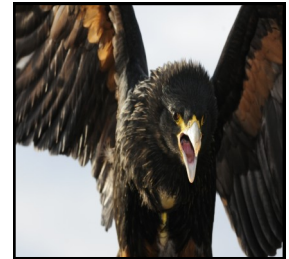
So a new business premises, some new birds and new faces in the Falconer team. We are invigorated to

be able to work in such superb surroundings, with a diverse collection of amazing raptors. March brought us some real up's and downs, ranging from "Pilgrim" our Male Bald Eagle disappearing for 24 long hours to the production of our first eggs of the season.

So hopefully we can look forwards to welcoming our first new arrivals around the 25th of this month!

If you have a few moments please take the time to check out some of the articles enclosed, hopefully something for everybody.

So enjoy a quick read, maybe with your feet up and a cup of coffee.....



Edna-Striated Cara-cara

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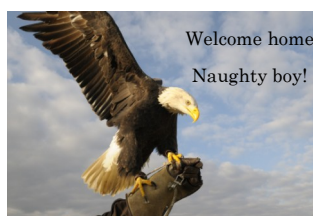
## Who's a naughty boy then....

The 22nd of March was a day like any other, any other that has 30mph winds that is!

Tom, our hard working, underappreciated and overpaid (ha, ha) assistant decided it was perfect condition to allow Pigrim some air time, and off he went. That air time became almost 27 hours as he was chased away by nesting local Buzzards to destination unknown? After a man

hunt, nationwide media coverage, and a long sleepless night, he was recovered over on the hill range opposite to his release (around 5km) at 5pm in the afternoon with no harm done. The subsequent nationwide coverage heralded calls from all points of the compass to say he had been spotted in Carlisle, run over on a motorway in Fife, hit by a train in the Grampians and been spotted .....

scavenging in a bin in B&Q car-park in Dundee! We had some lovely calls from well wishers and appreciate the interest and concern that so many people showed. Had he not come home I'd be a nervous wreck by now.....



### Did you know?

- **The largest bird of prey in the world is the Andean Condor**
- **The fastest bird of prey in the World in the Peregrine falcon, with a top speed in stoop (dropping with wings closed) Of over 200mph!**
- **The best sense of smell of any creature on this planet belongs to a Vulture!**

## New birds: Whisper is a Hoot!....

Say a big hello to a new team member! “whisper” the barn owl came to us last month from a home south of the border in Cheshire.

Although a little shocked by the colder weather here in Perthshire she is settling in nicely to her new home.

It has been a few years since we last trained and flew a Barn Owl, but popular demand dictates the types of bird we fly, and who could be blame for not wanting to fly such a stunning creature!

The barn owl (tyto alba) was once relatively common around rural Britain . An abundance of warm and sheltered agricultural building makes as good a nest site as a cliff hole and so they got their name “Barn Owl”. This

predatory Owl feeds mainly on rodents such as short tailed voles and field mice in he wild. It hunts typically by flying low to ground in it’s silent buoyant flight listening intently to the ground. Still very common in rural area’s with an abundance of prey habitat such as hedge rows and sett-asides.

Two unfortunate problems which effect wild barn owls in the wild are both man made I’m afraid!

The first, modern roads with unkempt grassy verges are Mecca's to rodents, and therefore their predators, and so Car collision is the Barn owl’s no. 1 killer in this country. The second is their fondness for bathing in livestock drinkers, in which they frequently drown...



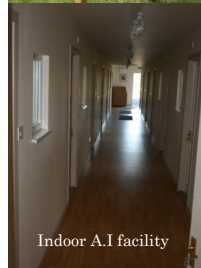
Hopefully whisper will never need to worry about either of these hazards as she will be free flown at the centre every day. So come along and meet whisper on our popular “phoenix Experience” and learn more about these beautiful small British owls.

April’s the breeding season, so look out for wild barn owl parents busily hunting the meadows and hedgerows near you right now!

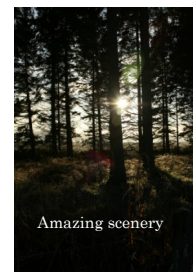
## Welcome to a brand new phoenix Falconry.



*“finished in December 2009 and open for business”*



Otis on reception



State of the art heated accommodation



## A very special thank-you



Last June the phone rang and a voice from the past said

*“Adrian? How you doing?”*

*“Old Rockies coming back to Scotland, find me a house!”*

Steve and Jean Rothrock are two very special friends who hail from South Carolina! We first met through mutual friends over 15 years ago and we hit it off immediately!



Both Jean and Steve run very successful businesses. They are amongst the most creative, talented yet understated people we know. They have to be met to be be-

lieved, a real southern Lady and gentleman with impeccable manners and good humored demeanor, interested in everything and anything, and just glad to be alive!

We were able to find them a suitable residence after a few recognition trips, and I am happy to say they now reside in Perthshire for most of the year. We consider ourselves very fortunate to fall into their circle of friends and under their mentorship, we are already planning the success of our new facility. How did we ever manage without them?

So both Lynn and myself would like to say an enormous thank you to you both and know that your help, advice, assistance and friendship is greatly appreciated!

## So what's changed at Phoenix???

3 years in the planning, its finally open.. The brand new Phoenix Falconry premises.

Our state of the art facility offers the very best accommodation for falconry birds to be found anywhere in Europe.

It features several innovative features including a fully interactive insemination unit allowing you or customers into the breeding and rearing world of the captive raptor. You will be able to see relaxed confident parents rearing their offspring just inches from your face, watch eggs hatch in our modern incubator room and enjoy the free flight of all of our birds in our all

weather surface arena.

With a comfortable heated reception area we are able to commence each session with an informal chat, film presentation over coffee before launching you into the world of the Raptor.

Our extensive breeding barns allow us to pair parent reared birds as well as a brand new weathering area allowing the birds to bath on a daily basis.

Finally the full facility is single level with full disabled facilities.

We are waiting for better weather to do an official opening and have penciled a few dates into our diary for the

***“3 years in the planning,  
and it's finally open!”***

summer. We intend to do an open day with free displays and a BBQ, so if you and your family are interested in attending please e-mail me at

[adrian.hallgarth@btinternet.com](mailto:adrian.hallgarth@btinternet.com)

And I'll send you the details.

## Tail-less wonder!

You know try as we might, some birds are just messy! Take for instance Otis our home bred baby Hybrid falcon, who spent the first 6 months of his life bouncing around in one of our chambers. He got so enthusiastic that he broke nearly every tail feather he had and looked like he had been dragged through a hedge, backwards!

Falconers over millennia have experimented with ways to repair broken feathers and came up with a system

we now know as “imping”.

Basically the broken feather shaft is cut (don't worry it has no nerves and is just like cutting hair) and a donor feather is spliced to it using a small carbon fiber rod, which is glued into both feather cavities.

The result is what to all intents and purposes is a new tail!

Sadly, the only donor feathers we had to hand belonged to a common buzzard, so Otis is

even more confused about his identity ??

The addition of his new tail has meant that this 200mph predator finally has some brakes at long last....



April for me has to be one of the most exciting months of our calendar, why? Cause April's the month when we start to get the first sets of our eggs.

We breed several species of falcons and hawks here at Phoenix,. We breed some by the conventional method of putting a male and female bird together and cross our fingers whilst most we breed by artificial insemination.



Our new location allows our guests unlimited access to this facility where you can see how we collect semen from the males and how we inseminate females, all fascinating and highly educational stuff!

Our new incubator room allows you to get close to the eggs and babies and maybe you might even be here on the day a new arrival pops out?



Our all new "Phoenix Experience" incorporates all of this fascinating breeding information and spectacle around a half day free flying several of our prized falcons, hawks, eagles, Owls and exotic raptors.

Our birds breed through out April and May making these months excellent times for you and yours to visit.

So allow us to extend to you our special customers a special offer covering this breeding season and saving you £20!

**Special offer for  
April and May  
1/2 day for just  
£55**

**Buy any one of our phoenix experiences to be taken in April and may and we'll give it to you for the bargain price of just £55!**

*Call our booking office on 01764 682823 and quote FOP 1.*



## Special offers: accommodation in the area

Now we are established at Easterton farm we are able to extend to you our special customers various accommodation deals in the area.

We have tried to incorporate vary budgets from friendly farmhouse B+B to the more grand 4 star.

### **Easterton Farm (by Gleneagles)**

**Tel:01764 682268**

**Travel time to us:** a short walk across the car park

Rates: from £32.50 per head

Rooms, both twin, double and family available...dogs welcome

10% discount to Phoenix

Customers!

**[www.easterton.com](http://www.easterton.com)**

### **Dunblane hydro (Doubletree)**

**Tel: 01786 822 551**

**Travel time to us:** 15 minutes

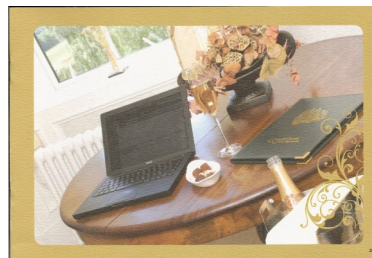
Rates: from £48 per head

Rooms, Single to suite

10% discount to Phoenix

Customers

**[www.doubletreedunblane.com](http://www.doubletreedunblane.com)**



### **Knock Castle Resort (Crieff)**

**Tel: 01764 650088**

Travel time: approx 20 minutes

Rates: from £55 per head

Rooms: luxury

Very special rates to Phoenix

Customers

**[www.knockcastle.com](http://www.knockcastle.com)**

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**visit our new web site at  
[www.falconry-in-scotland.co.uk](http://www.falconry-in-scotland.co.uk)**

**And check out our blog**