

Ancient art of falconry revived with the first group of falconers in the process of qualifying for license

Falconry, which comprises of a set of activities related to the rearing, training and flying of birds of prey, including for the purpose of hunting of quarry species, is a long standing traditional practice that dates back centuries.

Although falconry in Malta has been practiced for millennia, until the coming into force of new regulations there were no dedicated legal provisions that would specifically cater for, and regulate the various activities included in the art of falconry within the modern framework of law. To afford the long standing tradition of falconry and the legal recognition that it deserves under Maltese law, last year, the Wild Birds Regulation Unit conducted extensive discussions with the local voluntary organisations which promote falconry, as well as with the International Association of Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey, and also other NGOs and independent experts. By July 2016, the Conservation of Wild Birds (Falconry) Regulations ([SL 549.106](#)) were adopted and published.

These regulations aim at providing an appropriate regulatory framework for the practice of falconry in Malta and to ensure that the practice is regulated in a manner that would, on the one hand, enable the various activities comprising the art of falconry, whilst on the other hand – ensure that the practice is carried out strictly in accordance with the national, EU and international law on the conservation of wild birds. In this regard, the new regulations lay down clear provisions concerning permitted falconry practices, as well as stipulate the need for a license to keep and fly falconry species for the purpose of training, display of flight or for the taking of quarry species. Thanks to this legal recognition, falconers may practice the art of falconry with ease-of-mind brought about by the clarification of their legal rights and obligations. Persons willing to attain their falconry license have to abide by the provisions laid down in Regulation 4 of the Conservation of Wild Birds (Falconry) S.L.549.106 and pass from the related exams. Falconry exams are divided in 2 main components:

- Practical exam on the maintenance, flight and protection of the falcon
- Written exam concerning the Conservation of Wild Birds Regulation (Falconry) (S.L.549.106) and bird identification

This week the Wild Birds Regulation Unit has established and conducted the practical examination procedures for the first group of applicants, in collaboration with their respective falconry clubs. Twenty four applicants are now in the process of obtaining a falconers license, for the first time in Maltese history.



Malta Falconers Club and Fridericus Rex Malta Falconers representatives assessing their respective falconry applicants in the presence of WBRU officials

More information including application forms and guidelines can be found on: <http://msdec.gov.mt/en/Pages/WBRU/Licenses.aspx>