

# Kestrels, Merlins, and Micro-falconry

A workshop to explore how to effectively train and hunt with a small falcon



**WHEN:** 17 November 2012 (Saturday)

**WHERE:** Chintimini Wildlife Center (Corvallis, OR)

**TIME:** 9AM to 4PM

**FOOD:** Morning coffee, Lunch, and snacks provided

**COST:** is \$25 (payable @ event, scholarships available)

**REGISTRATION:** Required by November 10 (limited space).

**NOTE:** Please read *American Kestrels in Modern Falconry* by Matt Mullenix before arriving. We will reference the book many times during the workshop, and will be covering some areas quickly. You may purchase this for \$22 from Mike's Falconry or Western Sporting (don't pay more @ Amazon – and support your falconry outfitters!).

## KESTRELS, MERLINS, AND MICRO-FALCONRY WORKSHOP AGENDA:

**9:00 - 9:30AM** – WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

**9:30 - 10:00AM** – EQUIPMENT & WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

**10:00 - 11:00AM** – TRAPPING to FREE FLYING: *examples of kestrel, merlin*

**11:00 - 12:00PM** – PROBLEM SOLVING: *carrying, training vs. weight*

**12:00 - 1:00PM** – LUNCH (provided: carnivore stew, veggie pasta)

**1:00 - 2:30 PM** – HUNTING with a KESTREL: *car-, pole-, and perch-hawking*  
(Trent Seager and Suzy Desllets-Wiltsey)

**1:00 - 2:30 PM** – HUNTING with a RED-TAIL: *how to get started in the field*  
(Richard Hoyer)

**2:30 - 3:30 PM** – HUNTING with a MERLIN: *examples of high flying micros*  
(Trent Seager)

**3:30 - 4:00 PM** – WHAT'S NEXT (advancing to Sharpies, Coopers, Barbaries)

**4:00 PM** – CLOSING

Parallel  
sessions



**TO REGISTER:** RSVP to Trent Seager ([stseager@gmail.com](mailto:stseager@gmail.com)) and please include if you have any special needs, including dietary.

**CANCELLATION:** Because space is limited, we ask that those who RSVP but cannot attend to please cancel on or before November 10 so those on the waiting list can attend. Apprentices will be given priority.

**REGISTRATION FEE:** \$25 is payable at the event (scholarships and sliding scale available).

**NOTE:**

- If you want, you may bring your raptor with you (kestrel, merlin, red-tail, other small falcon) so others can see your raptor. Please bring your hawk box or other set-up that you use in your car so your hawk can be calm and safe throughout the day.
- All apprentices and attendees will be given strips of kangaroo hide that has been split (cut thin) for anklets and jesses. Split leather is great for all falconry birds, but is especially important with the micro-hawks. We will not have time for everyone to make fresh jesses, but we will review how to make them and hand out templates.



## **KESTRELS, MERLINS, AND MICRO-FALCONRY WORKSHOP DETAIL**

### **I. INTRODUCTIONS**

- a. What do you hope to get from the workshop?

### **II. EQUIPMENT & WEIGHT MANAGEMENT**

- a. Perches – indoor housing, placement, Y-system, bating
- b. Scales – balance versus digital
- c. Cuffs & Jesses – thin, rolled, grommet-less, slit-less
- d. Food & Weight Management – 22-hr schedule, wild game, quail, supplements

### **III. FROM TRAPPING TO FREE FLYING**

- a. Reduction in weight – losing weight for each step
- b. Basic Training – being one step ahead
- c. Creating a “non-contradictory system”
- d. Recall + killing bagged game = it’s time to free-fly
- e. Simple steps to free fly, then complex training in the field

### **IV. PROBLEM SOLVING**

- a. What problems are falconers currently struggling with or having?
- b. How do we know when it is motivation vs. expectation (weight versus training)?
- c. Carrying: how to: prevent it, break the habit, and trust on sparrows



## KESTRELS, MERLINS, AND MICRO-FALCONRY WORKSHOP DETAIL CONT.

### V. LUNCH

- a. Vegetarian and Carnivore lunch provided (1-hr break )
- b. Great time to show off your kestrels, merlins, and hawks!

Parallel  
sessions

### VI. HUNTING with a KESTREL (Trent Seager and Suzy Desllets-Wiltsey)

- a. Car Hawking vs. Pole Hawking vs. Perch Hawking
- b. Success builds success – hunt the easy way first
- c. Changing hunting styles to fit your needs & build experience for the future
- d. Exercise that reinforces your training methods & builds muscle
- e. Trading off the kill and When to take multiples

### VI. HUNTING with a RED-TAILED HAWK (Richard Hoyer)

- a. Questions and Answers session about RTHs
- b. Some topics may include:
  - i. Entering on quarry
  - ii. Flushing bunnies
  - iii. Getting to follow-on
  - iv. Trading off the kill
  - v. When to take multiples

### VII. HUNTING with a MERLIN (Trent Seager)

- a. A small falcon that hunts and flies like a large longwing
- b. High flying, lure stooping, telemetry
- c. Jack vs. Female – sparrow vs. starling
- d. Caching, trading off, higher weight management



## VIII. WHAT'S NEXT?

- a. How do I apply these techniques to other small hawks and falcons?
- b. How are the small falcons different from the small accipiters?
- c. What would be the best choice for my next falcon or hawk?



### ABOUT THE SPEAKERS:

**Trent Seager** has been a falconer for 14 years trapping small passage falcons and hawks in the fall, training them in the pursuit of cunning feathered quarry, and releasing them in the spring. Trent has volunteered with Chintimini Wildlife Center and the Cascade Raptor Center in raptor rehabilitation for over a decade, and he currently serves as VP and Webmaster for the Oregon Falconers Association.

**Suzy Desllets-Wiltsey** is an apprentice falconer training her second kestrel, Hermes, to hunt starlings. Her first kestrel, Libby, successfully car-hawked and took multiple starlings. Suzy volunteers for Turtle Ridge Wildlife Center in raptor rehabilitation and education.

**Richard Hoyer** began practicing falconry in the 1940s. He has trained many Red-tails, Harris hawks, and apprentices to successfully take rabbits in the field! Richard has hunted Harris Hawks in casts, and helped many Oregon falconry apprentices take their first head of quarry.

### ABOUT CHINTIMINI WILDLIFE CENTER:

**Chintimini** has been providing wildlife rehabilitation to native wildlife since 1987. They help over 900 animals a year. **Jeff Picton** is the executive director and has been helping falconers learn about raptor medicine and medical needs for many years. CWC is providing us with the training space for free. Please consider donating money or time to them. <http://www.chintiminiwildlife.org/>