

**WAC 220-420-050 Master falconer classes of permit.** (1) An applicant for a master falconry permit must attest and/or provide evidence of having practiced falconry with his/her own raptor(s) at the general falconer level for at least five years, or provide proof of previously holding a valid master falconry permit.

(2) A master falconer may not intentionally capture a raptor species that this permit classification does not allow the falconer to possess for falconry. Any raptor captured, that a master falconer is not permitted to take, must be released immediately.

(3) A master falconer, may take raptors less than one year of age from the wild during any period. However, an American kestrel or great horned owl of any age may be taken from the wild during any time of the year.

(4) Regardless of the number of state, tribal, or territorial falconry permits a master falconer may have, he/she may possess no more than five wild taken raptors for use in falconry, including golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*). A master falconer may possess any number of captive-bred raptors; however, the master falconer must train them in the pursuit of wild game and use them in hunting.

(5) A master falconer may take the following species of raptors from the wild in Washington: Red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), and barred owl (*Strix varia*).

(6) A nestling, or fledgling peregrine falcon may be taken by a master falconer who possesses, at the time of capture, a permit from the department authorizing the capture. The number and age class of peregrine falcons to be captured in Washington will be determined by the director in accordance with federal regulations or implementation guidance may vary annually in response to population and productivity data, and as a participant in actions of the Pacific Flyway Council. The director will establish permit issuance procedures, requirements for monitoring capture, and open areas for the capture of peregrine falcons.

(7) A master falconer may possess any species of Falconiform or Strigiform except a bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). A master falconer may possess any captive-bred individual, or hybrids of any species.

(8) A master falconer who meets the requirements in this section may possess up to three wild taken eagles of the following species for use in falconry: Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), or Steller's sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus pelagicus*).

(9) The department must have the following documented before approving a request from a master falconer to possess an eagle to use in falconry:

(a) Experience in handling large raptors, such as eagles, ferruginous hawks (*Buteo regalis*), goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*), great horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*), red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*), or others. Include information about which species have been handled, the type, and duration of the activity in which experience was gained.

(b) At least two letters of reference from people with experience handling and/or flying large raptors. Each must contain a concise history of the author's experience with large raptors, which can include, but is not limited to, falconry, propagation, abatement, handling of raptors held by zoos, rehabilitating large raptors, or scientific

studies involving large raptors. Each letter must also assess the master falconer's capability to care for eagles and fly them in falconry.

(10) A wild taken golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), or Steller's sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus pelagicus*) in possession will count as one of the five wild taken raptors a master falconer is allowed to possess for use in falconry.

(11) Species of raptors that are not listed in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regulations at 50 C.F.R. § 10.13 are not covered under these regulations. Master falconers may practice falconry or hunt with exotic raptors unless otherwise prohibited. Possession, import, and export of exotics may be subject to other state and federal regulations.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-420-050, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.210, and C.F.R. Title 50, Part 21, Subpart C, Section 21.29; Migratory Bird Treaty Act. WSR 10-18-012 (Order 10-214), § 232-30-153, filed 8/20/10, effective 9/20/10.]