



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Guidance for Keepers of Birds

This guidance is broken up into the following parts:

Section 1: Guidance on keeping of Schedule 4/Annex A (Birds of Prey) birds in accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Section 2: Guidance on Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) legislation that is implemented by Retained EU Law (REUL) Regulations 338/97 and implementing Regulation 865/2006.

Section 3: Examples and tables to clarify requirements for different scenarios

Section 4: Exporting under purpose code P (Personal)

Section 5: Non-UK Article 10 certificates

Section 6: Supporting Information to be provided by breeders

Section 7: Closed rings

Section 8: Imprint Falcons

Section 9: Gifting birds of Prey

Section 10: Mistakes on permits

Section 1: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Under [Section 7 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981](#), wild birds kept in captivity must be registered with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). This applies to all bird species listed in Schedule 4 of the Act. The bird must be registered at the address where it is kept, and the bird must have a unique identification mark such as a closed leg ring or microchip.

Schedule 4 birds Acceptable registration forms:

Honey buzzards	Blue Bird Reg form	
Golden eagles	Blue Bird Reg form	
White-tailed eagles	Blue Bird Reg form	
Peregrine falcons	Blue Bird Reg form	Or UK A10
Goshawks	Blue Bird Reg form	
Marsh harriers	Blue Bird Reg form	
Montagu's harriers	Blue Bird Reg form	
Merlins	Blue Bird Reg form	Or UK A10
Ospreys	Blue Bird Reg form	

Article 10's issued by the UK Management Authority (APHA) **ONLY** are valid for use as bird registration for Peregrine and Merlin.

There are different requirements around timelines to register your birds depending on the part of the country the birds are kept:

England:

Register captive bred chicks before they are 15 days old except for white tailed and golden eagles where you must register them before they are 30 days old.

Wales:

Register all captive bred chicks before they are 15 days old.

Scotland:

Register all captive bred chicks before they are 20 days old.

Please note that all registrations for new chicks will need to be provided before or at the same time as any export permit applications are made. No export permit will be issued without providing bird registration documentation, as this forms part of the proof of legal acquisition necessary to issue any CITES export documents.

Section 2: Guidance on CITES legislation.

Council Regulation (EC) no. 338/97 (retained EU Law) and Commission Regulation (EC) no. 865/2006 requires all commercial use of Annex A specimens to be covered by an exemption certificate (often known as Article 10 or A10 certificate) prior to the sale of any bird – further guidance on Gov.uk can be found [here](#).

Key Definitions:

Commercial use is hereby defined as: The exchange of any specimen, part, or derivatives thereof, for gain, advantage, or benefit to any party where that gain, advantage or benefit takes place at any time (before during or after).

Gifting is hereby defined as: The voluntary transfer of property to another person or entity or enterprise, completely free of payment in any form.

Payment is hereby defined as: the voluntary transfer of money, equivalent, or other valuable items from one person to another in exchange for goods or services received or to meet a legal obligation.

Personal Use is hereby defined as: Personally owned live specimens, which are legally acquired and held for personal non-commercial purposes.

In relation to wild disabled birds, an “Authorised person” is any person who:

- a. at the date of this licence was a holder of a licence to keep birds issued under section 16(1)(c) to disapply section 7(1)-(2) of the 1981 Act with an expiry date of 31 January 1996.
- b. has been a registered keeper of three disabled wild-bred Schedule 4 birds pursuant to section 7(1)-(2) of the 1981 Act and the regulations made under it, and who has subsequently notified the Secretary of State that such birds have been released into the wild.

- c. is an Inspector of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, or
- d. is an official of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Under the legislation a sale is defined as:

- a. purchasing.
- b. offering to purchase.
- c. acquiring for commercial purposes.
- d. using for commercial gain.
- e. displaying to the public for commercial purposes.
- f. selling.
- g. keeping for sale.
- h. offering for sale.
- i. transporting for sale

Based on the above all Annex A species held on commercial premises are deemed to need an Article 10 certificate issued in addition to any other permits and registrations required in accordance with legislation in the UK. If you are exporting a hybrid falcon, and one or both CITES listed specimens is an Annex A specimen, you will still require an Article 10 certificate prior to export and all hybrids of Annex A specimens will require an Article 10 certificate for commercial use within the UK.

Section 3: Examples and tables to clarify requirements for different scenarios.

Example	Required documentation to comply		
	Bird registration	Article 10 certificate	Export Permit
A Peregrine hatchling for export (commercial activity) with a parent on an EU A10 issued in 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent bird needs to be registered with bird registration system FIRST • Hatchling needs to be registered on bird registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hatchling needs A10 for commercial use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Export permits required for export of hatchling – if purpose code T then there needs to be an A10 in place prior to the UK MA issuing export permits

	or with A10 within required period from hatching		
Goshawk used for commercial purposes in GB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires bird registration document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires A10 for commercial use 	---
Goshawk not used for commercial purposes in GB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires bird registration document 	---	---
Peregrine/Merlin not used for commercial purposes in GB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires bird registration document or A10 as replacement for bird registration purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires bird registration document or A10 as replacement for bird registration purposes 	---
Peregrine/Merlin used for commercial purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires bird registration document or A10 as replacement for bird registration purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires A10 for commercial use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Export permits required for moving out of GB
Hybrid Peregrine used for commercial purposes	---	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires A10 for commercial use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Export permits required for moving out of GB
Golden eagle used for commercial purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires bird registration document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires A10 for commercial use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Export permits required for moving out of GB
Peregrine x Barbary falcon – now seen as pure peregrine under CITES used for commercial purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires bird registration document or A10 as replacement for bird registration purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires A10 for commercial use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Export permits required for moving out of GB
Permanently wild disabled Peregrine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires bird registration document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot be used for primarily commercial purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

We recommend that you apply for your Article 10 certificate and exports at the same time as we can then process them concurrently speeding up the process. If possible, it makes processing easier to apply for these permits in clutches. When using the online system, you can copy all the information by clutch, and then change the necessary information like closed ring numbers, and hatch dates. Please ensure that this information

is checked and correct. Amendments can only be made to Article 10 certificates within 6 months of issue, after that a new application will be required.

If an Article 10 certificate is being used in place of a Blue registration document for either a Peregrine Falcon or a Merlin the same regulations apply as per applying for the blue bird registration certificate.

Section 4: Exporting under purpose code P (Personal)

If you are importing/exporting birds under purpose code P for personal use you are making a legal declaration that the birds will not be used for commercial purposes for a period of 2 years from the date of import/export, if the birds will be used commercially during that timeframe you will need to apply purpose code T and will therefore require an A10 certificate. Specimens imported under purpose code P may be used for commercial purposes after 2 years only if the specimen would have been issued with an import permit under purpose code T should the applicant have requested it. Where an import permit under purpose code T was refused or would normally have been refused the specimen will not be able to be used for commercial purposes.

Section 5: Non-UK Article 10 certificates

Pre-Brexit – If you have an Article 10 certificate that was issued by a management authority other than the UK prior to the EU Exit, this is classed a valid Article 10 certificate and there is no requirement to issue you with a replacement UK Article 10 certificate. If this specimen is a schedule 4 bird (see list above), you will be required to register the bird under the Bird Registration system. Information on this and an application form can be found at: [Register a captive bird of prey - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/register-a-captive-bird-of-prey)

Post Brexit – if you have imported a specimen with an Article 10 certificate that was issued after the EU Exit, it will not be considered valid within the UK. You will have to apply for a new UK Article 10 certificate, sending the non-UK Article 10 certificate to APHA Horizon House where we will return the document to the relevant management authority.

Section 6: Supporting Information to be provided by breeders

You can only breed Annex A birds commercially from parent birds who have been issued with valid A10 certificates. You cannot breed from wild sourced birds for primarily commercial purposes, nor can you breed from any descendants from wild birds. This includes any wild disabled birds you may hold.

Applications for captive bred birds will be assessed against the criteria set out in Article 54 of Commission Regulation (EC) no. 865/2006 (EU retained law) and therefore, as a minimum, please ensure that you provide the hatch dates, parent A10 numbers and ring numbers with your application.

It would be helpful if breeders could provide a brief explanation of the breeding methodology used to achieve the clutch size and hatching pattern; and any other details you consider relevant to support your application including whether you use natural pairing, incubation, egg pulling, artificial insemination techniques and the average number of eggs laid by the female per year. This information can be added into the Applicant's Comments box.

Section 7: Closed rings

We are working on a new format for bird rings this is due to issues we have had with duplication of rings and also to bring the UK into line with rings used throughout the EU incorporating the country code of GB. This is not yet a requirement and requires legislative changes to make it a requirement under UK legislation. We wanted however to bring this to your attention in the hope that some breeders will start to use this as best practise. The new bird ring format will be as follows:



2	4	G	B	#	#	#	X	X	0	0	1	V/W/X
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* Please note if you are not a CITES Registered Breeder contact us and we will provide you with a unique application ID to use instead of the CITES Registered Breeder No.

The rings will have a standard length of 14 digits with no spaces or special characters, we are aware that this will not be feasible for all species and will be looking into the format requirements for smaller rings.

We have had instances where breeders have used rings that are not unique. For example, you apply for 2 specimens with the following rings:

24 John Doe 01 X and 24 John Doe 01 W.

The ring size indicators do not make the ring number unique. In circumstances such as this we could only issue an Article 10 certificate once the specimen had been microchipped by a qualified Veterinarian and we require you to provide a letter from that Veterinarian stating the specimens ring number and providing confirmation that they had microchipped the specimen.

We understand that breeders use rings to identify their brand and there would be no issues with a brand ring also being attached to a specimen, this would however need to be noted on any applications for CITES documents unless that ring were a split ring.

It is acceptable for a bird to have had a ring that shows on a CITES paperwork/ Article 10 Certificate removed on the understanding that the ring that remains on the bird is noted on the CITES paperwork/ Article 10 Certificate. It is not acceptable for a bird to have rings attached that do not appear on the CITES paperwork/ Article 10 Certificate. Please ensure that you clearly state on your application for CITES documents that the ring is a closed ring use capital letters and do not use spaces.

Section 7: Imprint Falcons

Following discussions with a number of breeders about Imprint Falcons and the importance of permits being issued for these birds as a matter of urgency we would like to put a process in place for these applications to be expedited. In order to achieve this successfully, we are requesting that breeders of imprint Falcons provide us with their breeding stock list including A10 certificate and ring numbers of breeding stock, along with an estimate of how many imprint birds they are hoping to breed by the end of the January of that breeding season. We are aware that we have already started receiving applications for imprints for this breeding season. We will make a compensation for this year only to accept the stocklist with the first application, as of next year these applications will only be expedited if we receive the stocklist by 31st January. Any applications for these birds should be submitted through the online system and clearly marked with **“Urgent due to Imprinting”** in the applicant comments.

Section 8: Gifting birds of Prey

The submission of a DEFRA declaration of receipt form has been requested on all applications since November 2023 in cases where a CITES specimen has been gifted.

Gifting a CITES specimen means that at no point before, during, or after changing hands does a cash payment, barter or exchange (no like for like has been given) or any kind of commercial gain occurs for the specimen.

If you plan to gift a bird, we recommend best practice record keeping ensuring compliance, this can be done by both parties completing a declaration of receipt please see below attachment.



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Or both parties obtaining a signed declaration including the following details:

- Date, name, and contact details of both parties.
- Details of the specimen including ring numbers or microchip details.

Section 9: Mistakes on permits

Mistakes can be rectified, however, the details on your permits should be checked on receipt, mistakes on Article 10 certificates can only be rectified up to 6 months after issue and cannot be rectified once passed on to a new keeper. Mistakes on Export/Re-export/Import permits should be rectified prior to the specimens being transported to the border, permits presented at the border with errors could result in confiscation of the specimen, it is therefore essential that these documents are checked carefully, and amendment requests made ASAP. If an error is noticed at the UK border, please contact us and we will endeavour to help, however, we are unable to rectify mistakes once the bird has crossed the UK border.

If you have realised after receiving your permits that there has been a mistake, please contact us at wildlife.licensing@apha.gov.uk. If you have made the mistake, there will be a re-issue charge of £1.50 per permit that requires amendment. This payment should be made via the payment line on 01633 631 800 and the payment reference number provided on the amendment request. If we have made the mistake, we will amend and reissue the permit on receipt of the request. Please be aware that it is a requirement for all erroneous permits to be returned to the UK CITES Management Authority, Centre for International Trade – Bristol Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol BS1 5AH.