



November 19, 1998

Mr. Lanny Ryder
Manager
J.F.K. International Airport
Building 14
Jamaica, N.Y.
11430

Dear Mr. Ryder,

Subject: Falconry Program

Please find enclosed a preliminary report of our bird control activities J.F.K. Airport.

The report represents an overview of what I will be presenting at the meeting on Friday.

I hope this document is to your satisfaction. Please do not hesitate to contact me if something was omitted.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Adam
President

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**FALCONRY - BIRD CONTROL PROGRAM
FOR JOHN F. KENNEDY (JFK) AIRPORT**

1998 Interim Report

Submitted by:

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Falconry Bird - Control Program

I. Goal of Falconry Program:

The goal of the falconry program is to reduce encounters between wildlife and airport personnel by complementing on-going wildlife control methods such as shooting and habitat manipulation.

II. Length of Contract:

May 15, 1998 to November 14, 1998 (6 Months)

III. Working Hours:

From one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset, seven days a week.

Bird activity after dark is negligible.

Peak bird activity was found to be between 3 hours after sunrise and 3 hours before sunset.

IV. Control Methods:

1. Pyrotechnics	45%
2. Falconry	30%
3. Distress Calls	5%
4. Traps	5%
5. Truck	5%
6. Shotgun	5%

IV. Control Methods (con't):

Note:

Many of the interventions on J.F.K. involved controlling single birds either flying over or loafing on J.F.K. Airport grounds. In these cases falconers often opted to use pyrotechnics to quickly remove the nuisance bird from the airfield.

Falconry was primarily used whenever large groups of birds were required to be removed from J.F.K. Airport. Raptors were flown during peak bird activity hours. Falconry was often used as a pro-active measure to keep gulls and other problem birds from approaching airport grounds. Raptors were for example used to minimize gulls congregating along the bay when the tide was out.

V. List of Birds Controlled:**Gulls**

Laughing, Ring-Billed, Black-Backed and Herring

Waterfowl

Ducks (Mallard and Black)

Geese (Canada and Brant)

Swans (Mute)

Starling

European

Crows

American

Terns

Common

Hérons

Great Blue, and Black-Capped Night

Shorebirds

Plovers (Killdeer and Black Belly)

Yellow Legs (Greater)

Sandpipers (Spotted)

Willet

Doves

Rock (pigeon) and Mourning

V. List of Birds Controlled (con't):**Blackbirds**

Grackle and Red-Winged

Swallows

Barn

Oystercatchers

American

Ibises

Glossy

Cormorants

Double-crested

Raptors

Hawks (Northern Harrier and Cooper's)

Falcons (North American Kestrel and Peregrine)

Owls (Barn)

Osprey

It had already been determined that gulls were the main problem species at J.F.K. Airport so it is no surprise that over 60% of encounters were with gulls.

Starlings were found in abundance on the airfield but were controlled (mainly by trapping). The starling problem would have been much worse had the program not been in place. We observed thousands of starlings staying just outside of the airport grounds - a result of our pro-active falconry methods.

Crows were found in surprisingly large numbers on the airport grounds though they resulted in few strikes. They had not previously been known to be a problem species. However we have found that there is a large rookery east of 22L.

We have found that the goose problem on the airfield is generally under control. This is reflected in their relative numbers seen on the attached chart. However their threat to aircraft should not be dismissed as we have observed them flying over the airfield moving to and from Jamaica Bay.

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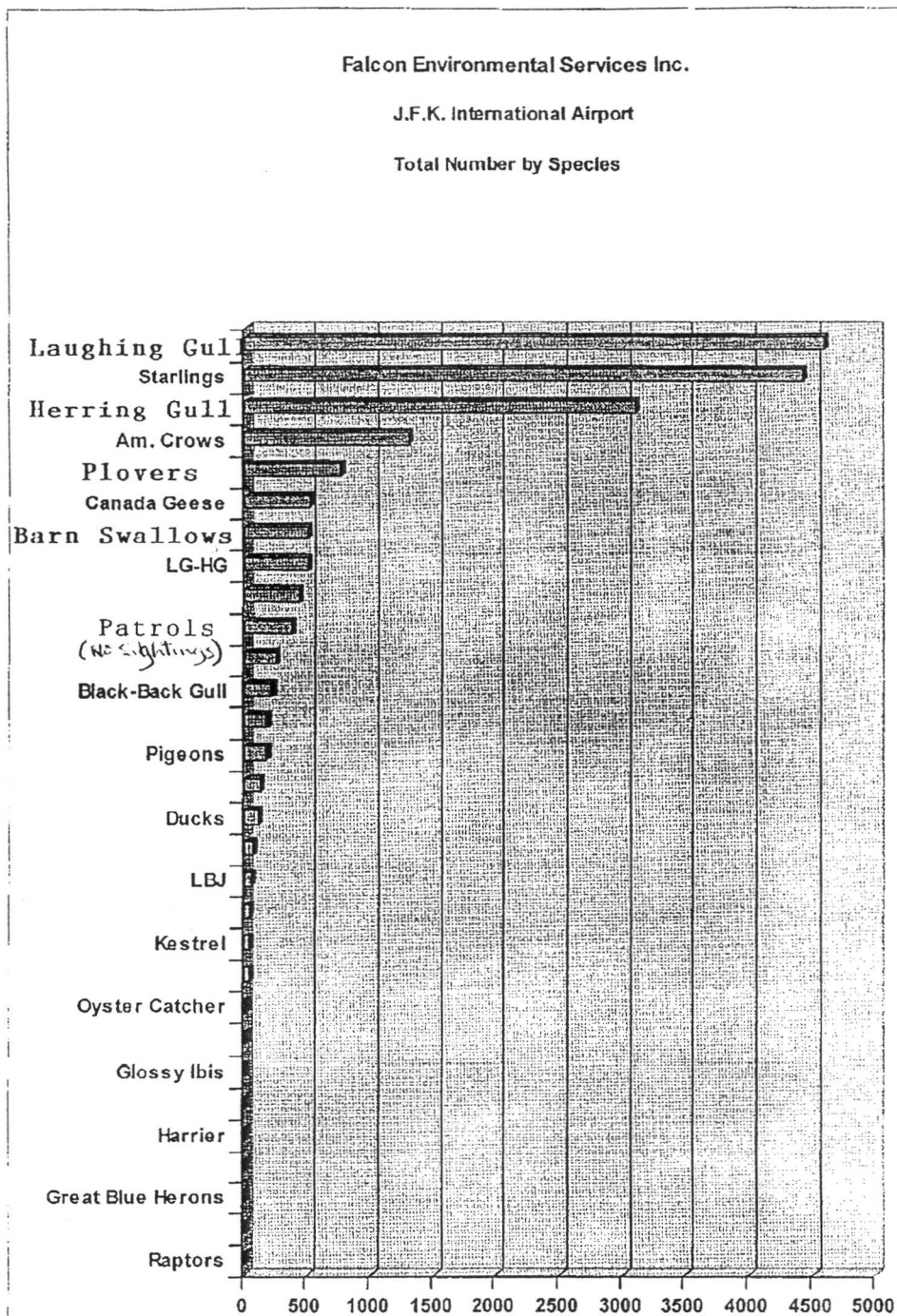
VI. Number of Interventions per Month:

May	398
June	773
July	654
August	860
September	1 071
October	1 537
<u>November</u>	<u>520</u>

TOTAL 5 813

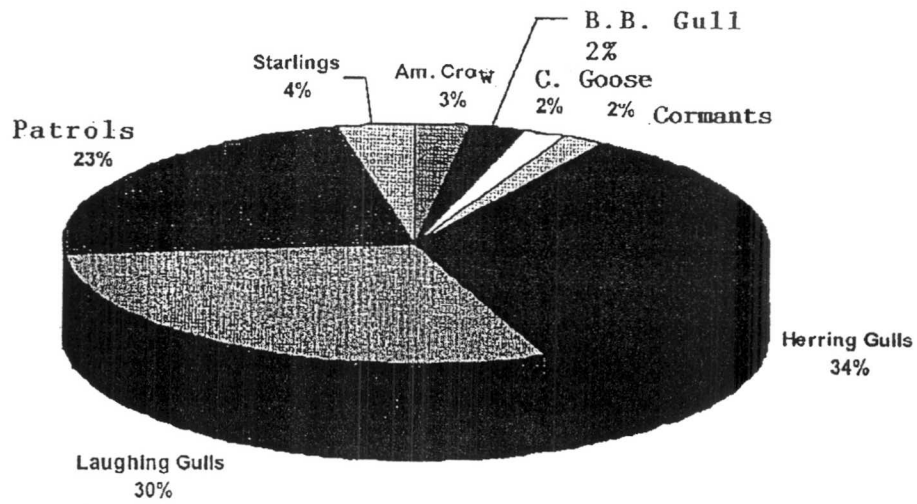
Migration accounts for higher number of interventions in September and October.

During peak hot weather mostly pyrotechnics were used, as strenuous flights would be hazardous to the falcons health.



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Falcon Environmental Services Inc.
J.F.K International Airport
Interventions by Bird Species



Conclusion

Overall the falconry met its goal. However recommendations to improve the program in the future would be to:

1. Have the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issue a Special Use Permit falconry – bird control programs on airports.
2. Work on getting falconers better trained to access more restricted areas on the airport. For example the area around 13L.
3. Have the falconers and falcon mews centrally located on the airfield.