



مكتب حفظ البيئة
Office for Conservation
of the Environment



ديوان البلاط السلطاني
Diwan Of Royal Court



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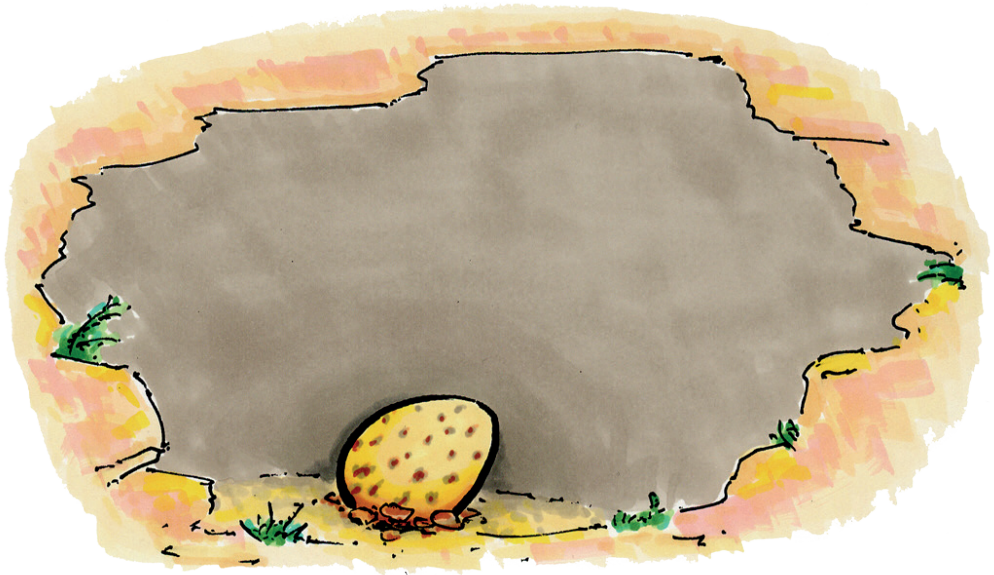
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The little Sooty Falcon



On a small island, far out in the beautiful Sea of Oman, there lies a tiny egg, well protected from the sun, and safely guarded by its mummy and daddy.



One lovely sunny morning, a chick hatches from the egg, picking a hole in the shell with its beak. For the first time, Little Sooty Falcon sees the island, the sea and his parents.



With each passing day, Little Sooty grows. "Am I big enough yet?" he asks his mother. "Not yet," she replies, "but wait until the summer, and then you'll see."

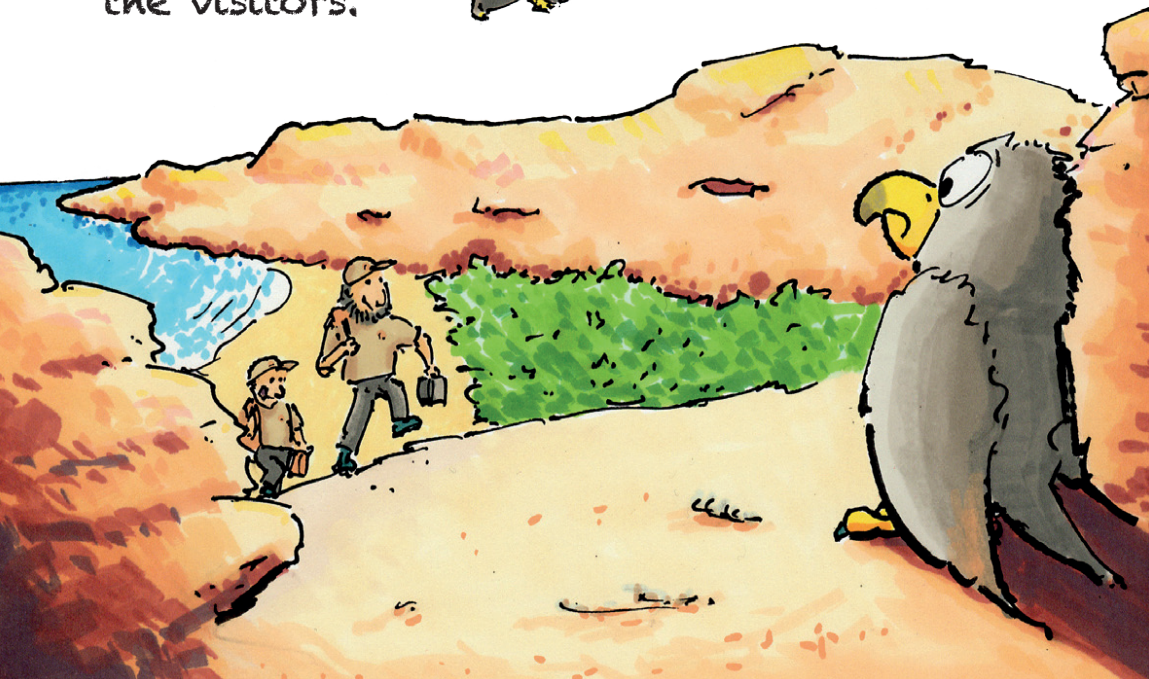
Little Sooty wonders to himself, "Why is my mummy laughing?"



A few weeks later, Sooty gets his first proper feathers, which will be as beautiful as his parents'. He exercises every day, joyfully flapping his wings. "Am I big enough yet, Daddy?" Sooty asks. "No," says his dad. "But wait for a while, and then we'll see."



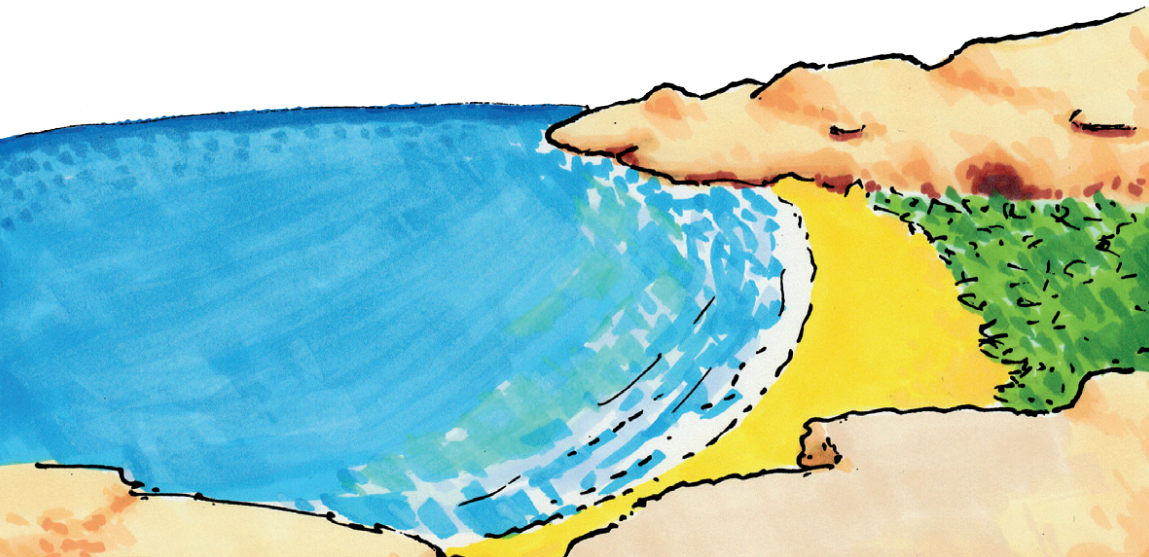
One morning, there is a terrible noise on the island. Some men have landed in a boat, and are climbing towards the nest. "Don't be afraid, Little Sooty, They will not hurt us," his mummy says. "They even protect us," says his daddy, and he flies off excitedly to greet the visitors.



The guests try to catch hold of Little Sooty, and he starts to cheep anxiously. "Be careful!" he shouts. "I am big now, and can defend myself!" The men laugh. And when they leave, Sooty is wearing two beautiful rings on his legs. "Just like Mummy and Daddy," he thinks. "Wow! I must be big like them now!"



After a while, Sooty can fly. He discovers the sky. His wingtips are still brown, but he is now "almost grown up as you will be," his mummy tells him. "Now you have to learn how to hunt," says his daddy. "Phew! Being big is great, but sometimes quite exhausting," thinks Sooty.



As the days get cooler,
mummy and daddy begin to talk
about a big city, and a long journey
to the south.



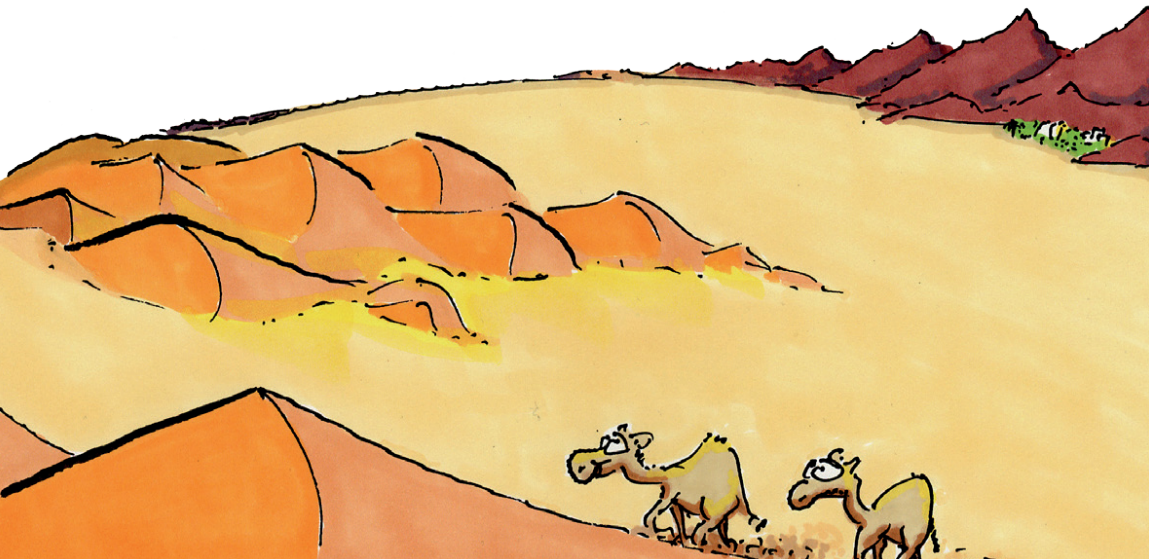
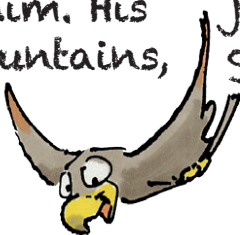
Sooty listens
in excitement.
And at night he dreams
of the city. "We can hunt
there, too," his daddy
tells him.



One calm day, with a good tailwind behind them, the journey begins. "We'll fly to the south," says Daddy. "You're big enough now." "YES, I AM!" shouts Sooty, as he flies over the vast sea towards the shore, and finally sees the wonderful city he has seen in his dreams.



After the city, Sooty and his family have to fly an even longer distance. Again and again Sooty is amazed by all the different and beautiful things he sees in the world below him. His journey takes him over high mountains, green valleys and huge deserts.



Several days later, the landscape changes. Little Sooty has reached Africa. Great forests appear, and lakes and rivers sparkle beneath him. "When will I reach my destination?" he wanted to ask, but Mummy and Daddy flew a different route.



Now exhausted, Little Sooty arrives on an island. He sees Mummy and Daddy in a big tree, sitting with other falcons. "I'm tired," Sooty calls to them. "Don't worry," says his daddy.

"For the time
being our
journey

is over," says
his mummy.

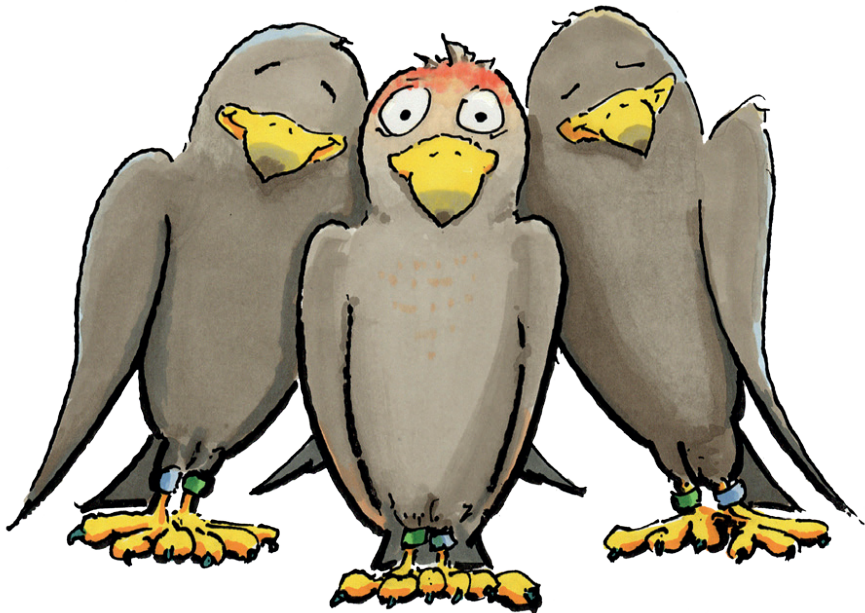
"We adults
stay here only for
the winter. You
remain here a
little to improve
your skills."



After gaining some more life experience, the young birds start to migrate northwards and Little Sooty bids farewell to the island. "Bye bye, Madagascar!" he cries. (His new friend, the aye-aye, has taught him the name of the island.) "Bye bye, Aye-aye!" shouts Sooty. "Bye bye, Sooty!" shouts Aye-aye, waving his long fingers. "See you next year!"



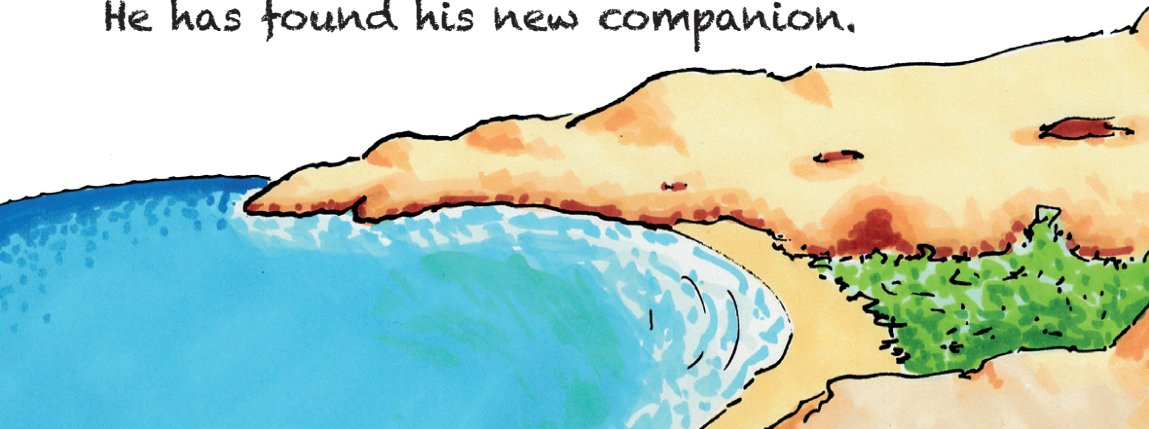
Back on the island in Oman, Mummy and Daddy meet Sooty, again, smile at him and say "Now you are grown up, and you have proved yourself by flying with us on the long journey. Soon your brown feathers will have gone, and you will look for your own nest." Sooty feels very proud - and also a little bit sad.



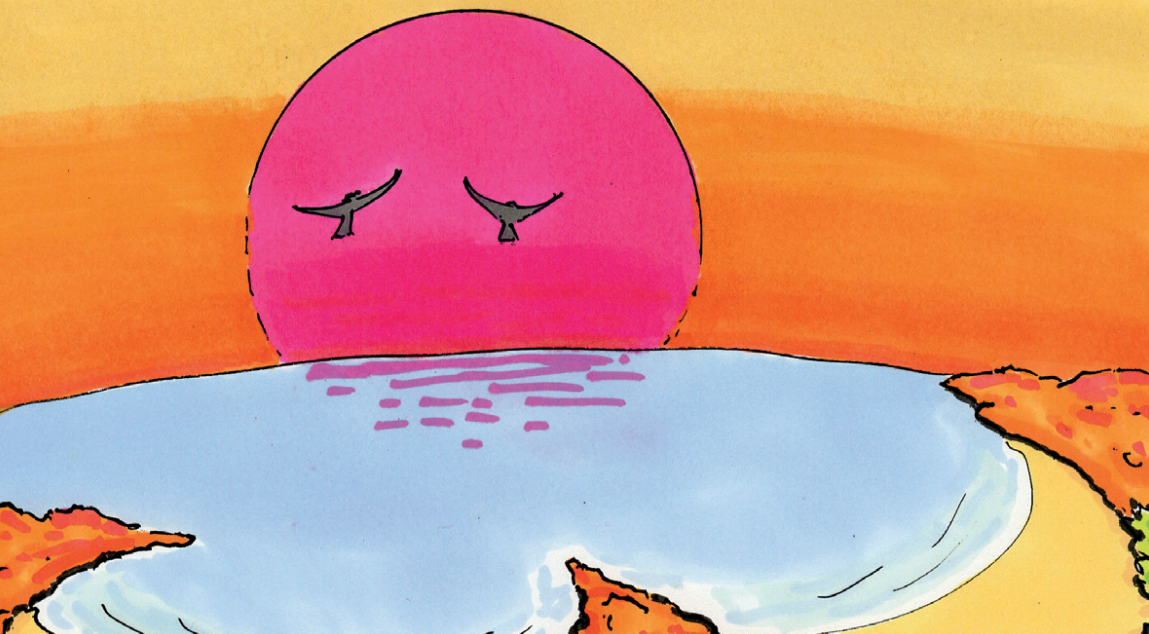
A few days later, as he is looking for his own territory, Sooty meets a beautiful girl-falcon. "Hello there! What a handsome big falcon you are!" she cries. Did she say, "big falcon"? Yes, she did! Little Sooty's heart starts beating fast.



He has found his new companion.

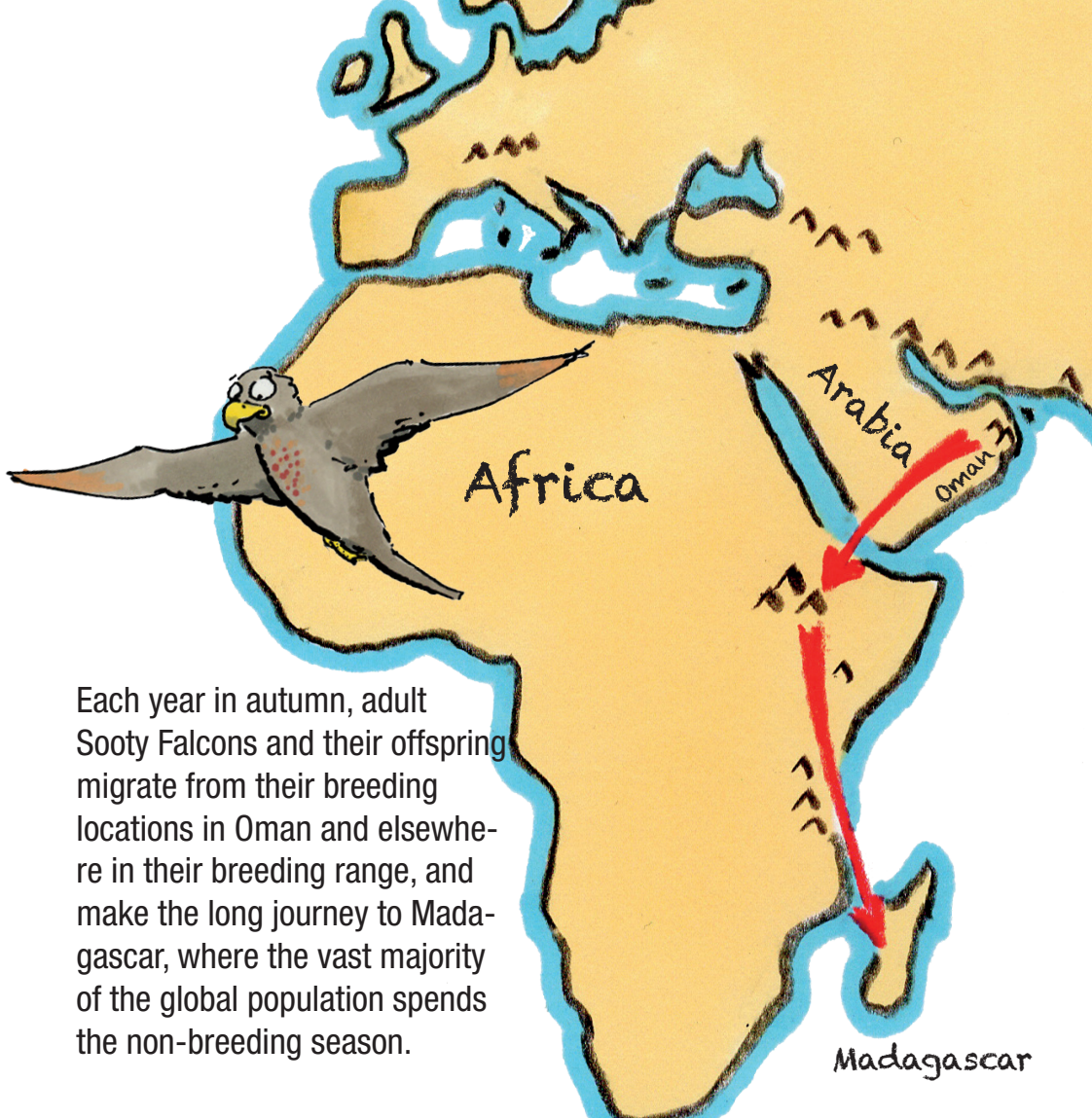


Take care and good luck,
Little Big Sooty Falcon!



The Sooty Falcon Survey Project

The Sooty Falcon (*Falco concolor*) breeds on the islands and coastal cliffs overlooking the Sea of Oman. Studies conducted during the late 1970's suggested that up to 10% of its global population bred in Oman. More recent studies indicate that the sooty Falcon's global population may have suffered a 15% decline since then. In 2007 the Office for Conservation of the Environment (OCE), in collaboration with specialized local and international organizations, initiated a research project on Sooty Falcons on Al Fahal Island and the A'Daymaniyat Islands in the Sultanate (during August to October of each year). The purpose of the project was to gather ecological information about the Sooty Falcon that could be used to develop conservation and protection plans, including information on its numbers, reproductive success and diet. Since 2012, the project has co-operated with international and regional organizations to intensify efforts in the field of Sooty Falcon protection. These collaborative efforts team Oman with neighbouring countries in which the falcons breed, and with countries where falcons spend the non-breeding season (e.g. Madagascar).



Each year in autumn, adult Sooty Falcons and their offspring migrate from their breeding locations in Oman and elsewhere in their breeding range, and make the long journey to Madagascar, where the vast majority of the global population spends the non-breeding season.

Office for Conservation of the Environment

In accordance with the royal concern of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said for the environment and the abundant wildlife of the Sultanate of Oman, which represent an important national wealth that enriches the process of sustainable development, the Office for Conservation of the Environment (OCE) was established in 1974 at the Diwan of Royal Court as a development phase for the institutional construction of environmental work in the Sultanate with the aim of wildlife and biodiversity conservation across a number of Nature Reserves and projects, like the Sooty Falcon Survey Project.

More information about OCE's work is available online at www.omum.gov.om.







www.sooty-falcon-movie.com

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