

Snowy Owl Becomes Kremlin's Newest Security Recruit

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Don't ruffle this owl's feathers. **Sergei Savostyanov / TASS**

Russia's Federal Protection Service (FSO) has brought in a unique new recruit to beef up the Kremlin security squadron.

A snowy owl named Buran has been hired to safeguard the Kremlin from local crows that can dirty its picturesque spires, bother tourists or "spoil important state events," the state-run TASS news agency [reported](#) Monday.

"Buran's job is to act as bait as snowy owls do not live in central Russia," TASS quoted an FSO employee, identified only by his first name "Denis," as saying.

Crows that spot Buran will assume he is a weak and easy target as a result, the FSO employee told TASS. But any approaching crows will soon be thwarted by Buran's "colleagues," a team of six other birds of prey that guard the Kremlin.

The young and wide-eyed snowy owl has been on staff since he hatched last July. He joins

Astur the hawk, Zeus the peregrine falcon, Hector the saker falcon, Filya the eagle owl and other birds in the FSO's Falconry Service, which has been in operation since the Soviet era.

Each member of the bird team undergoes special training to guard the Kremlin. The birds work in rotating shifts that depend on their physical condition and current mood, the FSO employee said.

Despite his innocent looks, Buran's job is to let all the crows know that the Kremlin belongs to the hawks.

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