
What is it Like to Stand at an Impression?

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THE HATCHING EVENT ITSELF

The dragons always know several hours in advance when the eggs are going to hatch, which gives the Weyr time to prepare. On the morning of a hatching, Candidates will be assigned to tasks to help prepare for the coming Hatching Feast. The start of a Hatching is easy to recognize: all dragons within the Weyr will begin to hum. Once the dragonsong has begun, Candidates are to put on their white robes and assemble in the small waiting cavern adjacent to the Hatching Grounds. There, the Weyrlingmaster will have the Candidates line up, and they will proceed out onto the Hatching Sands in a calm, orderly fashion. *(Note: at this time, the Weyrlingmaster has the authority to hold back or restrain any individual Candidate who appears to be disorderly, panicky, or hysterical. Forefront in importance in the minds of the Weyrleaders and Weyrlingmaster at this time is not the personal desires of the Candidates, but rather the safety of all of the infant hatchlings. Candidates are allowed to wear only their Candidate robes and necessary underthings -- no footwear is allowed, nor are any belts or belt pouches. Under no circumstances are Candidates allowed to carry any object out onto the Hatching Sands with them. This goes double for weapons -- NO sword fights are allowed on the Hatching Grounds of the Kadanzer Weyr during a Hatching!!!)*

The candidates will have practiced for this moment; they will have been trained in what to do and in what to expect.

Once they have entered the Hatching Grounds cavern, Candidates form a loose semi-circle around the rocking eggs, to await the hatching dragonets. Once the dragonets begin to break out of their shells, Candidates are not allowed to approach the hatchlings in order to pry them out of the eggs; hatchlings must approach the Candidates, not the other way around! If a dragonet falls, only the Candidate closest to the fallen hatchling is allowed to break rank to aid the beast to its feet. The Candidate must then step back into the ring of other Candidates and allow the dragonet to seek out its soulmate. **NOTE: IMPRESSION CANNOT OCCUR UNLESS A DRAGONET MAKES EYE CONTACT WITH A CANDIDATE!** Please, no disembodied voices bespeaking a Candidate from afar -- the bond of Impression cannot be triggered unless that critically important eye contact between the Candidate and the dragonet occurs!

Candidates are not allowed to force eye contact with a dragonet, nor are they allowed to attract attention to

themselves by waving, yelling, or other forms of extreme behavior. Likewise, forced physical contact with a hatchling (tackling it, wrestling it to the ground, forcing its head to face the Candidate's own) will be tolerated. If the Weyrlingmaster himself isn't within reach of an offending Candidate, rest assured that the mother gold dragon will be... and neither is likely to be gentle in their manner of restraint. Any individual behaving in such extreme manners will be considered a criminal, and will be treated as such within the Weyr. A light sentence would be an unceremonious return to their home hold, hall or cot. A more serious sentence could easily be decided upon by the Senior Weyrwoman.



FOR CANDIDATES WHO IMPRESS

No one knows what makes a dragonet Impress their specific rider -- only that all dragonets at a Hatching will impress a human soulmate, or else die on the Sands. Green dragons will always Impress females or homosexual/bisexual males; blue dragons will only impress males or lesbian/bisexual females; browns and bronzes will only Impress males, and golds will only Impress females. There will be no "Impression from the Stands" at the Kadanzer Weyr; only candidates will Impress.

Once Impression has been made, the new weyrlingpairs are led off the Sands by mature riders and taken to a waiting area where the dragonets are fed, oiled, and allowed to fall asleep of exhaustion, while the new weyrling's friends and family can come congratulate him or her. If the dragonet is strong enough after its first meal, the new weyrlingpair will be escorted to the Weyrling Barracks, where bunk assignments will be made. Once the dragonet is asleep, the weyrling usually loses the feeling of exhaustion they had been receiving from their new lifemate, and they may then join the Hatching celebration.



FOR CANDIDATES WHO FAIL TO IMPRESS

More than half of each groups of Candidates will not Impress at a Hatching. These individuals are led off of the Sands after a Hatching, and if they are not weyrbred, these individuals are given the choice to stand Candidate again, or to return to their home hold or crafthall. It is in no way considered a failure or shameful or embarrassing for a candidate not to Impress, and they are not looked down upon by other weyrfolk for it. Candidates who do not Impress at a hatching will be warmly welcomed by weyrfolk at the Hatching Feast, and care will be taken by weyrfolk to make sure that Candidates will not be left feeling isolated or alone.