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By Michael DeRuyter, Record staff | Thu May 19 2011 | 2 Recommend

Hawks released back to the wild

KITCHENER — It was a good day for hawk enthusiasts in Waterloo Region.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Humane Society, with the help of Hawkeye Bird and Animal Control of Halton Hills, released two red-tailed hawks back to the wild on Thursday morning.

The first hawk, named Skye, was released at the humane society's office on Riverbend Drive in Kitchener. It was discovered last fall by a humane society animal services officer after a collision with a vehicle severed one of her toes. The hawk was taken to the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph, where the toe was successfully reattached.

Skye then spent the winter rehabilitating at Hawkeye Bird and Animal Control, leading to a full recovery.

The other hawk, unnamed, was found with swollen and cut up feet.

"All it needed was a little TLC (tender loving care)," said Amy Gruber, community relations manager with the humane society.

It was released at Shirley and Victoria streets in Kitchener, near where it was discovered by a humane society inspector. According to animal release laws, the hawks had to be released at least a kilometre from where they were found.

The release of the two hawks mean that five red-tailed hawks have been released by the humane society in the last four years.

"The animal habitat is changing with the city," Gruber said. "It's nice to be able to see wildlife, but you have to be aware."

Dan Frankian of Hawkeye Bird and Animal said a hawk getting hit by a motor vehicle is simply a conflict of habitats, but that hawks do learn to interact with their environment.

"Hawks will adapt and learn that they can't go over a highway chasing a rabbit."



Hawk released Dan Frankian, of Hawkeye Bird and Animal Control in Halton Hills, releases a red-tailed hawk named Skye back to the wild during a ceremony in Kitchener Thursday. Peter Lee/Record staff

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Red-tailed hawks are the most common type of hawk found in North America. They can usually be seen near open fields, perched atop telephone poles, on fence posts or at the top of trees.

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