



Lake Erie Nature & Science Center

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LAKE ERIE NATURE & SCIENCE CENTER RETURNS BABY RED-TAILED HAWK TO NEST SITE *Shaker Heights City Bucket Truck Helps Return Baby Hawk to the Wild After Fall From a High Nest*

SHAKER HEIGHTS (June 25, 2010) – Wildlife Education & Rehabilitation Program staff with Lake Erie Nature & Science Center in Bay Village returned a baby hawk back to nature in Shaker Heights today using a bucket truck from the City of Shaker Heights Public Works Department. The hawk fell from its nest and was spotted by a passerby who contacted the Center's Wildlife Education & Rehabilitation Program. Rehab staff had been caring for the unharmed bird since June 11.

To return the young hawk to its wild family, Wildlife Rehabilitation Coordinator Amy LeMonds determined where the bird was found, contacted the homeowners and worked with the City of Shaker Heights on a re-nesting plan. LeMonds fashioned an artificial nest out of a laundry basket, attaching rough matting to the top edges to provide traction for the bird's talons. Artificial nests are often successful in reuniting a baby bird back with its natural parent caretakers when the original nest cannot be reached or is destroyed. In this case, the hawk nest was beyond the reach of the bucket truck.

This morning, a City of Shaker Heights Public Works Wildlife crew attached the artificial nest to the tree below the natural nest using a ratcheting harness. Wildlife Director Dave Wolf then made the bucket trip back up into the tree and placed the baby into the secured basket. The hawk grew in the two weeks it was in the nature Center's care and is now reaching 'branchling' stage, when it will be hopping from branch to branch, strengthening its muscles and learning to fly, still under the care of mom and dad. The baby appeared to be in great shape after being placed in the basket, almost immediately eating the food supplied by the rehab staff.

The homeowners were unaware that a hawk nest existed on the property, but today, were more than willing to allow City personnel and rehab staff on the property to reunite the baby with the parents, who have been observed tending to a sibling in the original nest.

Center rehab staff often teaches would-be baby bird "rescuers" to place displaced birds back in their original nests or to use the artificial nest method. For small birds, a milk carton makes an excellent hanging artificial nest.

Lake Erie Nature & Science Center is an independently funded nonprofit organization offering nature and science educational programming, a planetarium, free admission to live animal exhibits and wildlife education and rehabilitation services at no cost to the public. The Center relies on donations to fund these services. To donate or for more information, stop by 28728 Wolf Road in Bay Village, call 440-871-2900, email info@lensc.org or visit www.lensc.org online.

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