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Milton raptor center releases recovered saw-whet owl

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ANNA MARIE LUX
Tuesday, March 28, 2017



SCOTT WEBERPAL

Margie Duerr, a volunteer at Hoo's Woods Raptor Center, releases a saw-whet owl Sunday near the Rock County and Walworth County line. The bird came to the center in December and recovered from a concussion.

MILTON—Hoo's Woods Raptor Center released a saw-whet owl Sunday near the Rock County and Walworth County line.

Volunteer Margie Duerr released the bird, which came to the raptor rehabilitation and education center in December after it flew into a car during a snow storm.

“He just sat in her hands and then flew off,” said Dianne Moller, founder of Hoo's Woods near Milton. “He landed in a

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tree, where he preened and watched us for a bit, then flew deeper into the woods.”

The bird has been fully recovered for some time.

“We were just waiting for the extreme weather to pass, so he'd have a better start,” Moller said. “The owl flew beautifully and gave us quite a show.”

In a Gazette story about the small bird last year, Ryan Brady of the Department of Natural Resources said people may hear the owl's high pitched “too-too-too” call, especially in spring.

But catching a glimpse of one is unusual.

He said he thought the bird was wintering in southern Wisconsin when the accident happened.

“They only nest in the north, mostly in Canada,” he said.

Hoo's Woods rehabilitated more than 100 raptors last year.

Moller suspects the nonprofit group will surpass that number this year.

“We are getting more calls with the awareness our programs are bringing to the public,” she said.

In addition to rescuing and rehabilitating birds, the center also provides educational programs.

Hoo's Woods is working to secure funding to provide programs to groups, including seniors and school children, that don't have money to pay for them.

“We are trying to find sources like foundations and area businesses with giving programs,” Moller said. “We also want to make our entryway and grounds more accessible to wheelchairs and strollers.”

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