

Red Shouldered Hawks Rescued at Red Bug Slough Preserve

On April 26th, 2018, a neighbor of Red Bug Slough, Charlie Moffit, found an adult Red Shouldered Hawk in rough shape on the ground underneath its nest. Wildlife Center of Venice was called and two volunteers came out assess the situation. It was determined that the hawk should be taken into the WCV for rehab as it was in bad shape. After waiting for about two hours, no other adult hawks returned to the nest to take care of the hatchlings who were calling loudly by that point. The volunteers contacted Sarasota County Emergency Services for assistance. They responded (on their own time no less) with a bucket truck and the hatchlings were safely collected to go with the adult to rehab. I've attached photos taken by Charlie Moffit from the rescue efforts.



It was determined that the adult hawk was the female of the mated pair and she was indeed a victim of poisoning. The hawks stayed with the Center for about one month and during that time the mother hawk adopted another hatchling after she was put on the mend. Unfortunately, she later died presumably from remaining poison. However, the hatchlings had progressed to fledglings and were ready for release! Below I've attached the

photos from the release yesterday, May 23rd. The same Sarasota County Emergency Service personnel that were present for the rescue were able to release the hawks back to Red Bug Slough. The fourth hawk that was adopted by the mom was not yet ready for release.



All in all, it was a stellar effort on the part of Wildlife Center of Venice and Sarasota County Emergency Services. All parties went above and beyond to help these hawks and we now have three new (well returning) hawks added to the Red Bug Slough wildlife! Big thanks to the Center and to Sarasota County!

These hawks were from a nesting pair that had utilized that same nesting site for several years. While there's no way to tell if our fledged hawks will return to the same area to nest, we hope to see them again! Oh, and if you are out walking the trails of Red Bug, you will likely hear them calling to each other! I was able to hear two of them just this morning!

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