

For Immediate Release
March 31, 2011

Immediate Action Needed to Save Red-tailed Hawks Attacking Windows at Consilium Place



Left image: Mirrored glass causing female Red-tailed Hawk to attack her own reflection at Consilium Place (Photo: Ann Brokelman)
Right image captures a disoriented and distressed posture (Photo: Chris McConnell)

Toronto – A few weeks ago, a magnificent pair of nesting Red-tailed Hawks started to repeatedly slam against their own reflection in the mirrored windows at Consilium Place, an office complex in Scarborough. The hawks perceive their reflection as an intruder threatening their territory. The risk of serious injury, exhaustion and dehydration is high. The female Red-tail is heavy with eggs.

“The windows that the hawks are attacking could easily be temporarily covered with barriers such as a tarp or a banner to hide their reflection,” says Michael Measure, Executive Director of FLAP. “They’re the roof-top windows of a mechanical room. No tenant’s view would be compromised.”

“These are incredibly beautiful birds and I’d hate to see them killed or seriously injured because someone doesn’t bother to put a tarp over the window during the breeding season,” says Toronto City Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker, Ward 38 Scarborough Centre.

Windows, and especially mirrored windows, pose a serious threat to migrating birds. During the day, birds see their habitat reflected in windows and crash into the buildings with fatal results. Numerous species of birds including Red-tailed hawks and other raptors are confused by their reflections and collide with the glass to defend their nesting sites.

Ann Brokelman, a wildlife photographer and volunteer with the Canadian Peregrine Foundation, has documented the hawks attacking the windows on film. “These magnificent birds hit the windows with outstretched legs, full wingspread, splayed talons, and considerable speed,” said Ms. Brokelman. “It’s their instinctive attack-mode posturing and behavior. It’s sad, dangerous and futile.”

Ms. Brokelman alerted the Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP); a charitable organization concerned with the safe passage of migratory birds through urban areas.

FLAP volunteers regularly patrol Consilium Place during bird migration seasons for dead and injured birds from window collisions. The mirrored exteriors on the three office buildings at Consilium Place are already the subject of an impending prosecution against Menkes Development Ltd., the owners and operators of the triplex. Ontario Nature alleges that 800 migratory birds were killed or injured at Consilium during the 2008-2009 spring and fall migration seasons.

Menkes managers have notified FLAP that they “will investigate this matter further.” We have yet to hear back from them on how they will help this pair of Red-tailed Hawks.

For more information:

Michael Mesure, FLAP Executive Director: 416-366-3527 flap@flap.org

Ann Brokelman , 416-265-0242 abrokelman@gmail.com blog: www.redtailnest.blogspot.com

Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker, 416-392-0204 councillor_debaeremaeker@toronto.ca