
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALGARY, AB — October 6, 2026

Rehabilitated Swainson's Hawks Take Flight Just in Time for Remarkable Migration South

Calgary Wildlife marks the close of another exceptionally busy wildlife season by returning one of the Americas' great long-distance migratory raptors to the wild.

After months of caring for thousands of injured and orphaned wild animals, Calgary Wildlife is marking the changing of the seasons with a particularly fitting release: rehabilitated Swainson's hawks returning to the wild just in time to begin their extraordinary fall migration south.

The hawks are among 14 Swainson's hawks admitted to Calgary Wildlife so far in 2026, part of more than 2100 wild animals cared for by the organization to date this year.

Their release comes as Swainson's hawks across Alberta begin leaving their summer breeding grounds for an incredible journey that can take them thousands of kilometres through Central and South America to wintering areas as far south as Argentina.

Swainson's hawks undertake one of the longest migrations of any raptor in the Americas. Birds breeding in the northern portion of their range can make an annual round trip of more than 19,000 kilometres.

"To watch one of these birds return to the sky is incredible on its own, but knowing the journey that may be ahead of them makes these releases especially meaningful," says Beki Hunt, Executive Director of Calgary Wildlife. "They came through our doors because they needed help at a vulnerable point in their lives. Now they have a second chance to make that remarkable journey and return to the wild where they belong."

The hawks arrived at Calgary Wildlife for different reasons. One was admitted after being found grounded as a juvenile, while another was found injured for unknown reasons. Each received specialized care, nutrition and time to recover and develop the strength and flight skills needed to survive independently in the wild.

Their return to the wild also comes at the tail end of Calgary Wildlife's busiest time of year. Spring and summer bring a dramatic increase in admissions as baby season, severe weather, injuries and other human- and environment-related pressures send hundreds of wild animals through the organization's doors.

(403) 214-1312 📞
admin@calgarywildlife.org ✉️
www.calgarywildlife.org 🌐

11555 - 85th Street NW,
Calgary AB T3R 1J3
CRA: #891088189 RR0001



Members of the public can help Swainson's hawks and other birds of prey by protecting mature nesting trees and native habitat, avoiding unnecessary use of pesticides and rodent-control products that can affect wildlife and their food sources, and contacting a licensed wildlife rehabilitation organization when they find an animal they believe may be injured or orphaned.

"These releases are a wonderful way to close out our busiest season," says Hunt. "So much of wildlife rehabilitation happens behind the scenes — the long days, specialized care and countless hours that go into giving an animal another chance. Then there are moments like this, when you open that carrier and watch a bird fly back into the wild. That's what all of the team's hard work is for."

###

The Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society (Calgary Wildlife) is a registered charitable organization that was established in 1993. Calgary Wildlife provides expert compassionate care to injured and orphaned wildlife in and around the City of Calgary and southern Alberta. As an accredited veterinary hospital (ABVMA), Calgary Wildlife is open 365 days a year and is the only wildlife rehabilitation centre located within the City. Calgary Wildlife also provides valuable outreach and educational services to the community.

For more information, please visit www.calgarywildlife.org

(403) 214-1312 ☎
admin@calgarywildlife.org ✉
www.calgarywildlife.org 🌐

11555 - 85th Street NW,
Calgary AB T3R 1J3
CRA: #891088189 RR0001

