

Tawny Rescue

A tawny owl in the Wincle area owes its life to the multi-tasking skills of James Stelfox, an apprentice fish farmer at Danebridge Fisheries.



James was giving two Australian visitors an introduction to the basics of trout fishing one morning in February when they noticed a large bird trapped in protective netting above an adjacent breeding pool.

The bird was not moving and appeared to be dead, but on closer inspection James found a tawny owl still alive but exhausted with one leg thoroughly entangled in the plastic net. It was mid-morning so it was reasonable to conclude that the bird had been trapped for several hours.

James spent the next ten minutes standing in the middle of the pool, painstakingly cutting the netting from around the bird's leg, and a further ten minutes in his work station cleaning the wound just above its claw. The leg was bruised but not broken and a few minutes later the owl flew confidently into the nearest woodland.



James was assisted by Roger Langley, an RSPB member and grandfather of the two Australian visitors, Harriet and Eliza Fonti, from Sydney.



Mr Langley is a neighbour of Graham Palmer, a stalwart member of the Macclesfield Local Group.