

Sandton Sun, Owl Rescue Centre successful in rehabilitation programme

In March this year, the Owl Rescue Centre installed a hacking aviary on the roof of the Sandton Sun Hotel in Johannesburg with the purpose of reintroducing rehabilitated owls that originated from the Sandton area back into their natural habitat. Since the project's inception, a total of 16 owls have been successfully released into their indigenous environment.

Currently the aviary houses three Spotted Eagle Owls; two of which are considered juvenile at seven weeks old. More owls in the final stages of their rehabilitation at the rescue centre will soon be added to the Sandton Sun hacking aviary for release in the next four to six weeks, depending on their progress.

"The juvenile owls are extremely interesting to observe as they are still in a learning phase and curiously mock hunt in the aviary. While these are not yet considered an endangered or vulnerable species, if we are not conscious of the risks their species face this may threaten their current population status," comments Danelle Murray from the Owl Rescue Centre.

A hugely rewarding project

"It is hugely rewarding to see this project take off and know that Sandton Sun has played a part in the owls finding their space back in nature. We commend the Owl Rescue Centre for their tireless work and thank them for the opportunity to be part of this initiative," says Peter Davidson, general manager at the Sandton Sun.

Following the Owl Rescue Centre's 100% rehabilitate and release policy, all the owls that come to the centre are released once they are ready to hunt and survive in the wild. "We visit the hacking aviary on a daily basis to feed the owls and ensure that they are progressing as they should. We observe their behaviour and release them as soon as we are happy that the owls can fly strongly and hunt for their meals. Essentially, we make every effort to give them the best possible chance of survival," concludes Danelle.

This initiative forms part of the Sandton Sun's innovative green focal points which, outside of their extensive energy efficiency efforts, includes everything from environmentally conscious procurement to green conference stationery.

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