

Critters from page 1A

Take for instance the great horned owl. Someone found it as a baby, tried to raise it and later dropped it off at the Howell Nature Center when it was an adult. But it was too late for freedom.

The same thing happened to Jericho, the red-tailed hawk. Frantz showed the kids. It was removed from its nest by someone who later tried to raise it in his garage.

"It's imprinted on people. If this hawk was copying someone, it would probably be a human being. He thinks he's a human being," Frantz said.

The owl never learned how to hunt its own food. Even when it escaped the center for a short time, he lived in a tree outside the center's office and waited to be fed by staff members. The hawk has weak feathers because its previous owners fed him the wrong food as a youngster.

Believe it or not, it's illegal to even possess a feather from a bird of prey, such as the hawk. No wonder later on when the great horned owl flapped its wing and lost a feather, the kids at Frantz's feet busily panned the feather out of their hands.

"I thought this was good for the kids," said Farmington Hills resident Judy Kozlars, who attended Wildlife Watch last year.



SHARON LAMON/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Undomesticated animals: Kathy Frantz of the Howell Nature Center talks about how they don't tame many of the animals like this opossum, because they eventually are released back into the wild.

"I just didn't realize a lot of this was illegal."

But like many people, Kozlars and her family have had similar experiences with wildlife they have found. "We found a wood-

chuck. We fed it with a bottle. We took it to the vet. Then we had to let it go. We couldn't do anything with it."

Despite the mystery of having a wild animal as a pet or the

need to cuddle a baby ferret or opossum, Frantz told the kids and adults that wild animals must be left in the wild. "We don't want people thinking of them as pets," she said.

New signal is aimed at better traffic flow

Farmington police hope a new traffic signal at Grand River and Grove will improve traffic flow through downtown Farmington.

"The old one was activated by pedestrians," said Farmington public safety director Frank Lauffhoff. "This one is pedestrian-activated and vehicle-actuated. It's coordinated with the light at Grand River and Farmington."

Drivers will no longer be held up on Grove waiting to turn on to Grand River during peak traffic times.

Sensors have been placed under Grove and Grand River, Lauffhoff said.

"The light is always red on Grove until you pull up to Grand River," Lauffhoff said.

However, when an auto on Grove approaches Grand River, a clock begins to cycle. After 35-50 seconds, the light on Grove will turn green.

"This light was put up at the request of the Farmington Traffic Safety Board," Lauffhoff said.

Some 1,000 autos travel through Grand River and Grove in one day, Lauffhoff said.

Bunnies from page 1A

Domestic rabbits don't have the same appetites either. Pet bunnies eat alfalfa, rabbit pellets, apples, grapes and cantaloupes, for example. Wild rabbits have harder digestive systems. They eat broadleaves and clover, Cornell said.

If you no longer want your pet rabbit, Cornell urges that you just

don't turn it loose. Either find an other home for it or you can contact the rescue service of the Detroit Humane Society at 872-0026. The service has a truck that can pick up animals. You can take the animal to the center at 7401 Chrysler Drive, off I-75, north of west Grant, Detroit.

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