

Stuck!



Brown Drilling/Courtesy

Randy Sleep from Brown Drilling in Kingman attempts to free a hawk he and his crewmembers found trapped in the grating of a livestock trough recently.

Drilling crew frees hawk

Improper installation of grate caused bird to get caught

KINGMAN — A red tail hawk probably looking for a tasty treat got a rude surprise June 30. The feathered hunter got its talons stuck in a metal grating in a livestock water trough southeast of Kingman.

The grating is often used as an escape ramp for other small critters that sometimes fall into the troughs.

Luckily, a job crew from Brown Drilling was in the area and was able to rescue the bird.

Amanda Kaufman from Brown Drilling, who was part of the crew, believes the hawk was only stuck for about an hour. The crew had passed the water trough earlier and didn't see the bird.

Fearing the bird would

drown, the crew stopped to rescue it.

The hawk's right talons were completely submerged and it was struggling to keep itself above water, Kaufman said. The crew couldn't find a pair of gloves to protect themselves from the sharp talons and beak, so Randy Sleep, another member of the crew, used a cloth grocery bag.

Surprisingly, the hawk didn't make a noise or attempt to strike at Sleep, Kaufman said.

It took a while for the crew to free the hawk because of the incredible strength of the bird's talons.

Once the bird was free, the job crew and the hawk both went their separate ways.

The crew learned an interesting lesson while freeing the hawk, Kaufman said. The metal escape ramps are a good idea, but they need to be installed in a certain way to avoid trapping birds, such as the hawk.

The grates have a beaded side and a flat side, she said. They need to be installed with the flat side up and the beaded side down. This lets a hawk release its talons from the metal.

If the grate is installed with the beaded side up, a bird's talons can become trapped, similar to a Chinese-style handcuff, she said. Also, installing the grates vertically makes it difficult for birds to release their talons.