

April 20, 2015

**Please help protect the Fresh Pond red-tailed hawk family -- Boston's *most* beloved hawks – from rat poisons**

Dear Business Owners,

We are a group of citizens concerned about the welfare of wildlife exposed to super toxic rat poisons called SGARs.

The super toxic poisons known as Second-Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs), are designed to kill rodents BUT they also kill birds of prey, pet dogs and cats, and many species of wildlife, including several endangered species. The mate of the famous New York City red-tailed hawk Pale Male died after ingesting a poisoned rat. Ruby, a well-known red-tailed hawk who lived in the Fresh Pond/Alewife Brook Parkway area, died last April and Tufts Wildlife Clinic confirmed that SGARs were the cause of her death, leading also to the loss of the eggs she was incubating.

**The EPA has deemed SGARs unsafe for general use.**

The EPA has determined that SGARs are hazardous to wildlife. They have recently banned the production of SGARs for residential use. We are asking businesses in the Fresh Pond/Alewife Brook Parkway area to protect wildlife and stop using these poisons too.

SGARs are popular because a single dose can kill rodents. However, since it takes several days for poisoned rodents to die, they can continue to eat more poison bait. As a result, they end up with enormous amounts of poison in their tissues and are a lethal meal to hawks, owls and other animals that prey on them. SGARs also can accumulate in liver tissue, so an animal that repeatedly feeds on prey containing nonlethal amounts can store up a deadly dose over time.

**There are safer alternatives to SGARs.**

The goal of the new EPA regulations is to replace the highly potent rodenticides with products that pose less risk to humans and other species. Please **ask your rodent control company to stop using products containing SGARs**. Request that your company not use products containing brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum or difethialone.

We also ask that you **look for an “integrated pest management” company**, one that uses multiple approaches to pest control instead of relying solely on poisons. Integrated rodent management includes: **Rodent-proofing your business** by repairing any exterior areas where rodents can come inside. **Removing or securely containing all trash**. Also **consider using snap traps**. We ask you to minimize the use of ANY rat poison. A safer rodenticide doesn't mean no risk to wildlife. Using NO rodenticides would be safest for wildlife. If pesticides must be used, use one of two FGARs, chlorophacinone or diphacinone, which are believed to be less lethal to birds of prey.

As you know, supporting the beautiful, healthy natural areas, including Fresh Pond Reservation and Alewife Reservation, benefits all business and residents in the area. We are asking for your support in our initiative to remove SGARs from our area now.

Our sense of urgency is because two red-tailed hawks, Buzz, the most famous red-tail (who had been paired with Ruby), and his new mate, Belle, are beginning to nest in our area now. As in 2010-11, they will likely nest in a very public location. This generates a lot of interest from a lot of people. Crowds of people gather and watch them incubate eggs, feed young and they watch the young fledge. In 2011, several television stations and local newspapers aired segments or published articles about these red-tails and the people who gathered to watch them. This year, we watch knowing that either of these hawks or their young could suffer a fate like Ruby's. It is heart breaking to think of another beautiful creature being killed needlessly. Likely there would be a public outcry, as there has been in New York City.

If all businesses in the area use the EPA recommended safer alternates, or use NO RODENTICIDES, we can avoid this. Hawks are an excellent natural rodent control, so it certainly is at odds to kill them as a part of rat control. We hope you will join us in supporting the wildlife in our area. If we can be of any help, please contact Paul Roberts, [phawk254@comcast.net](mailto:phawk254@comcast.net), phone 781-483-4263.

Sincerely,

Kathy Martin, concerned citizen

Ellen Mass, President, Friends of Alewife Reservation

Paul M. Roberts, Founder & Director of Eastern Mass Hawk Watch

Hildy Martus, concerned citizen

Vicki Sr and Martin Bakker, concerned citizens

Victoria Bakker Jr, Wildlife Ecologist

# News publications about Ruby, killed in April 2014 by rat poison

## The Boston Globe

### Demise of hawk at Cambridge pond mourned

Ruby likely ate a rodent contaminated with poison.

By Catalina Gaitan | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT APRIL 11, 2014



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The love story of Ruby and Buzz, two red-tailed hawks, enchanted bird-watchers near Fresh Pond in Cambridge for years. They saw the love birds raise a family together, taking turns hunting and incubating Ruby's eggs, their nest size waxing and waning with the arrival and departure of new chicks.

## The Boston Globe

### Research fund created in memory of hawk found poisoned in Cambridge



Ruby, a red-tailed hawk found dead under her nest near Fresh Pond Mall in Cambridge in April, is being commemorated by the Ruby Memorial Research Fund at the Tufts Wildlife Clinic in North Grafton.

## TuftsNow

April 20, 2015

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### Tests confirm that beloved hawk succumbed to multiple rat poisons

Research memorial fund established in Ruby's name

NORTH GRAFTON, Mass. (June 17, 2014)—A red-tailed hawk named Ruby captured the imagination of many Massachusetts residents who watched Ruby and her mate, Buzz, bear offspring and have daily adventures from their perch near Fresh Pond in Cambridge, Mass. When Ruby died suddenly in April from apparently ingesting rat poison, it was a local tragedy as well as a national warning about the serious dangers these chemicals pose to wildlife.

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### Second-generation rat poisons killed Ruby, the popular Cambridge Red-tailed Hawk

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Red-tailed Hawks Buzz and Ruby (right) sit on their nest in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in January 2013. Photo by Susan Moses.

It's happened again. An urban Red-tailed Hawk that won the affection of many has been killed by poisons intended for rats.

In this case, the victim was Ruby, a plucky female that in the spring of 2010 chose the seventh-floor ledge of an office building across from Fresh Pond Mall in Cambridge, Massachusetts, as her nest site.

Delighting onlookers, she and her mate Buzz raised three offspring that year (nicknamed Lucy, Larry, and Lucky). The hawks nested successfully in the same spot the next three springs, so hopes were high again this year, but Ruby was found lifeless under her nest tree in early April.

[Watch a video of Ruby and Buzz at the nest in 2011.](#)

Susan Moses, a Cambridge resident who made almost daily visits to the hawks' nest since 2010, found the carcass and brought it to the Tufts Wildlife Clinic at Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine in North Grafton for necropsy, where veterinarians detected signs of lethal rodenticide poisoning.

<http://www.birdwatchingdaily.com/blog/2014/06/30/second-generation-rat-poisons-killed-ruby-the-popular-cambridge-red-tailed-hawk/>  
<http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2014/04/11/ruby-popular-red-tail-hawk-dies-watchers-target-rodent-poison-around-fresh-pond-area/EGTXhUFY1rhOptnNC2b1MK/story.html>  
<http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2014/07/15/research-fund-created-memory-ruby-red-tailed-hawk-found-poisoned-cambridge/08oSfVybZk0zBTAHLNMygN/story.html#>  
<http://now.tufts.edu/news-releases/tests-confirm-beloved-hawk-succumbed-multiple-rat-poisons>