



■ TRACKING device . . . Martin Turner with the antenna and, inset, fitting one of the ultra lightweight transmitters to a bird

## Rescued bird dies after return to wild

A BIRD of prey fitted with a tracking device has been found dead after being released back into the wild.

Martin Turner, 40, rescued the female sparrowhawk from a garden in Hale Barns, near Altrincham, after it flew into a window and broke its wing.

Martin, of Cranford Road, Wilmslow, works for South Manchester Wildlife Rescue and, after he found the bird, he took it to the RSPCA. The bird was fitted with the miniature transmitter so Martin could help test new tracking gear for the RSPCA when it was released back into the wild. Martin said: "The antenna allows you to track the bird's

movements so you can see how well they are doing and how they are coping. She had fractured her wing bone and once staff were satisfied she was healed they attached this tracking device and she was released."

The miniature transmitter weighs less than one per cent of the bird's body weight. In spring the transmitter falls off when the bird moults.

After two weeks, Martin tracked the sparrowhawk to a nearby stream – where it lay dead. Martin said: "She probably starved to death. She had a broken wing and we did the best we could for her but she's a bird of prey. She has to be fast and I think she just couldn't catch her prey."