

Vietnam releases sacred turtle in good health

July 14 2011

(AP) -- State media say a rare giant turtle considered sacred in Vietnam has been released back into a Hanoi lake.

Online newspaper VnExpress quoted the director of Hanoi's science and technology department, Le Xuan Rao, as saying the turtle returned to the cleaned-up [Hoan Kiem lake](#) Tuesday after being treated for [skin lesions](#).

In April, the turtle was removed from the lake and put into a holding tank for treatment after photos showed injuries on its legs and neck.

The giant female turtle has a shell size of a desk and weighs 370 pounds (169 kilograms). It is one of four known living *Rafetus swinhoei* species.

Many Vietnamese believe it is the same mythical creature said to have helped King Le Loi fend off the Chinese nearly six centuries ago.

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