

KEEPING TRACK . FOLSOM CITY ZOO SANCTUARY

June – July 2013

Folsom Zoo Sanctuary - Fifty Years Old And Just Getting Started

SEPTEMBER, 2000. Raccoon Dredger. “Raccoons are never easy. They are smart and inquisitive. And very agile, being able to climb right up even tall humans with very little effort. This is one reason that keepers scatter copious amounts of chow before entering the exhibit that is home to big male **Dredger** and females **Scout** and **Autumn**. Recently, a keeper entered with a bucket of sand to replenish the latrine area. Dredger (true to his name) immediately left the chow. Headfirst into the bucket, little black toes gripping the bucket’s edge, front paws digging feverishly in the wonderful sand. This activity is, of course, Quality Behavioral Enrichment. And after ten minutes of digging, this activity was taking a Long Time. So the keeper gently gave a little squirt of water from the cleaning hose to Dredger’s tail. Bang. He was out of the bucket like a shot. Fastened his outraged teeth around the keeper’s leg (fortunately encased in jeans) and accomplished a very toothy reminder that squirting a working raccoon was Not Acceptable. A week later another zookeeper received a similar reminder for some unknown human transgression. So far there have been no new incidents, humans being Trainable.”

Yikes

The **Zoo Sanctuary** is home to one and possibly two small frogs. They are rarely seen, but often heard. Recently young black bear **Henry** was minding his own business, paddling around in his big pool when – *yikes* – there was a frog swimming beside him. Three hundred pound Henry observed, but did not annoy his small wild visitor. As far as we know both frog and bear survived.

Fence Hopper

Livestock Guarding Dog **Marcus** *once again* jumped over the pasture fence at his Secret Jumping Over The Fence Spot. The next morning he happily greeted Zookeepers from his hangout behind the aviaries which leads us to.....

Bang!

Folsom Rodeo has come and gone. As with many noisy outside events – helicopters, fire engines – fireworks – it seems as if Zoo animals *get it* that their homes are safe havens, but since the pasture is so close to fireworks, **Marcus & Annabelle** spent Rodeo evenings hanging out in the separate enclosed back area of the exhibit where wolf **Yucca** is in charge.

Taking Pills

As human caregivers do with recalcitrant patients, kids, dogs, cats, etc. they watch to see that meds are consumed. Ditto a Zookeepers comment about Yucca’s heartworm pill consumption abilities: “After

gleefully rolling on it for a few minutes, he nibbled on a few pieces. The rest is in the den closest to the horses. Please check in the morning to confirm that Yucca ate all of it. “

Dirofilaria immitis

Heartworm is a type of *filaria*, a small thread-like worm that spreads from host to host through mosquito bites. The definitive host is the dog, but it can also infect lots of other animals many of which live at the Zoo. The monthly heartworm pill list includes skunks, raccoons, wolves, coyotes, foxes, wolf dog hybrids and Livestock Guarding dogs. While sea lions are on the official list humans are rarely infected. Heartworms can damage lungs, arteries and occasionally the right heart ventricle.

At one time heartworm was confined to the southern United States, but has spread where mosquitoes are found including all of the U.S., Alaska and the warmer regions of Canada, South America, southern Europe, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Australia, Korea and Japan.

Stubborn!

Excellent Zoo Campers learn a lot about how to behave appropriately toward all animals (including other humans.) Working with **Zoo Camp Staff** each Camper was able to walk mini-donkeys **Rosarita** and **Spicy Jalapeño** around the corral. Theoretically both

donkeys would be happy to walk with the loving and well-intentioned Campers. The reality was that each donkey stopped many times, possibly playing a game called “Let’s get the Zoo Campers to do what we want.” Campers prevailed.

Truffles

Prior to moving to the **Zoo Sanctuary**, young ram **Truffles** was neutered. Upon arrival this handsome Iceland-Suffolk sheep certainly attracted the attention of Barbados ewes **Princess** and her mother **Maggie**. For keepers dealing with **Truffles** this big, strong, opinionated animal took some devoted effort, but with perseverance solid friendships were formed. Staff and Vets were able to assure a good life for him until recently when it was apparent he had urinary blockages and kidney failure which, sadly, are not uncommon in neutered male sheep and goats. **Truffles** was gently euthanized.

Theodora

Picked up as a baby rabbit in the wild, **Theodora** was dropped off at a rescue facility where she spent 3 years as a well-loved pet. She came to the **Zoo Sanctuary** earlier this year and moved in with rabbit **Kevin**. Sadly, during recent morning rounds keepers discovered that she had died during the night. A necropsy showed that she had been bitten by a rattlesnake. Over the years, rattlesnakes have been known to come into **Zoo** areas, possibly seeking water and shade and are carefully removed by Keepers.

Attendance: Reaching a high of 108 degrees (plus the days that were Just Over One Hundred Degrees, there was a reason that attendance numbers were down a bit from last year’s 10,562. Amazingly a lot of regular visitors (and those with Groupon certificates) braved warm mornings and left the afternoons to the animals that were stretched out, stomachs down on cool damp concrete den floors.

Rats!

Generations of rats are nesting in the walls of the fox exhibit. It’s likely that they come out at night to munch on leftover food morsels in coyote **Maggie**’s area and the bird chow Amazons and Macaws scatter around. Rodent nesting materials and even a dead baby rat have been found in the area. The rat control specialist who came to the Zoo had no suggestions other than poison which under no circumstances is a

Zoo option because of secondary poisoning. Zoo Staff blocks entrances & exits.

Rodenticides are marketed to control rats and mice, but the poison is toxic to all mammals, birds and reptiles. If a mountain lion eats a coyote that has eaten a poisoned rat all three are exposed to the poison. This effect has been documented globally and includes primary, secondary and even tertiary poisoning of non-target animals. A study in **New York** between 1996 and 2010 found that 81% of tested great horned owls were positive for anticoagulant exposure. **Rachel Carson**’s book ***Silent Spring*** facilitated the ban of the pesticide **DDT** in the United States in 1972 and the creation of the **Environmental Protection Agency**. Thanks Rachel.

More Henry & Friends

Young black bear **Henry** and next-door neighbor bears **Marty** and **Woody** have been spending time together. Recently spotted was Marty paddling around in Henry’s nice deep pool with Henry pacing at the pool’s edge. Henry would pause, lean down, feet braced and appear to be ready to jump. But not quite. Occasionally Marty would come to the side and rise up, possibly playing. Henry’s response was to swat at Marty with his big paw. Harassment? Yep. With a Keeper nearby, these play sessions may lead to a time when all three bears can share both exhibit areas.

Folsom Zoo Sanctuary is 50 Years Old! Celebrate With Us!

Saturday October 5 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Regular Zoo Admission!

Check Out Zoo Animal Residents

Plus

Meet a Ferret

Wish a Donkey Happy Birthday

Face Painting

Root BEAR Floats by Friends of the Zoo

Biofact Tables with Animal Stuff

Test Skills at Tracks Board Game

Special Birthday Treat for You

Happy Birthday Zoo!

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