

KEEPING TRACK . FOLSOM CITY ZOO SANCTUARY

November – December, 2013

50 Years of Excellence A to Z ---- From Animals to Zoo!

February , 2002 “**Disappearing Animals.** Recently a keeper was working near the digs of badger **Frances.** And didn’t see her. Upon closer inspection, still no badger. So the keeper radioed for assistance and a small crowd of staffers arrived – and they didn’t see a badger either. A shovel was fetched and earth was carefully moved from the top of several of Frances’ tunnels. No badger. But wait. Ear literally to the ground, a keeper heard a *snuffle grunt* that sounded – yes – like a badger. Frances had apparently tucked herself into a *sett* (an underground badger den) and, with a full tummy, decided to stay there. She appeared later in the day, possibly pleased that everyone worried about her ”.

“The next day (see above) a keeper discovered that ringtail **Chaos** had disappeared. Very nocturnal, he usually slept on a shelf high in the **Miner’s Cabin**, but he was nowhere to be found. Not under the miner’s bed. Not in the nest hole that albino skunk **Gardenia** maintains under the miner’s cupboard. Not in the yard. Gone. Again, a staff search ensued. At last it was suggested that the only place no one had looked was in the nest box where snappish raccoon **Emma** day naps. A cautious look – and there he was, snuggled in with Emma. (You know that ringtails, distantly related to raccoons, are sometimes called *miner’s cats*, because gold miners invited these tidy, and fierce, little animals into their cabins to control rodents)”.

Back To 2013: Squirrel & Cat

Two squirrels live at the Zoo Sanctuary: **Nessee**, an Eastern Gray Squirrel and local **Helen** who is named after **Helen Keller** who was also vision impaired. Recently, bite wounds were discovered on Helen’s tail so she’s been moved inside away from her biting roommate.

Nessee was literally smuggled into **California** from Tennessee and fortunately for all involved, was confiscated at the border. Her adventures continued at the Zoo. Recently a bold feral cat was engaged in a serious attempt to catch a tasty squirrel. The project was doomed from the beginning of course because the cat was outside the exhibit and Nessee was inside, enthusiastically running up and down and back and forth playing Catch-Me-If-You-Can. Eventually the irked cat moved on.

Planning Ahead

When planning an exam for ailing Amazon parrot **Luther** everyone was aware that treating a cranky sharp-billed parrot requires substantial forethought which is why a keeper came up with the **Luther Examination Kit** that included meds, labeled syringes, and yes, a toothbrush, plus at least two

strong humans. One human caught up Luther, the other held the toothbrush which Luther, lacking available zookeeper body parts, grasped with his sharp beak. His formidable beak now in open position meds were given without Luther biting syringe or keeper. Diagnosed with arthritis in his neck, he receives daily medication disguised in goodies.

In For The Winter

While native Zoo birds acclimate to cold weather, members of the parrot family have moved inside the comfy **Zoo Trailer**. Although we don’t know his actual age, former pet Blue Fronted Amazon **Luther** came to the Zoo in 1997. Double Yellow Headed Amazon **Larry Bird** was born in ’95 and moved in four years later. While both birds are not fans of humans they are devoted friends.

African Gray parrot **Mesa’s** wild family lives in African rainforests. She was captive born in 1995 and moved to the Zoo a year later. Mesa has a list of sounds she’s picked up on her own: the Classroom door opening and the alarm going off, the beep-beep of backing trucks and lots of whistles. Illegally wild caught **Andy** was confiscated in 1997. His

common name, Mealy Amazon, comes from the flour-dusted appearance of his feathers.

Macaws **Bingo & Rocky** share a enclosed, heated / and air cooled exhibit house that opens out into a caged garden and climbing area. Macaws are the largest members of the parrot family and live in colorful, noisy groups in the forests of **Mexico** and **Central** and **South America**. Like all parrots, macaws have a voice box called a *syrinx* so they can mimic sounds, including human speech: be careful what you say.

Despite the fact that the **Convention on International Trade In Endangered Species (CITES)** has banned the trapping of most wild parrots, these handsome birds are facing extinction.

Attendance: Nearly 8,000 people visited the animals in September, just about two-thousand more than last year.

Gizmo

Neighbors warned that the young skunk wandering in a rural area was rabid. Symptoms included all the markers: staggering, walking into things, not doing well. Fortunately he was observed by a Zoo staffer who recognized that this little guy was a blind baby skunk. **Gizmo** moved to the safety of the skunk exhibit in 2007 where he was cared for and well loved. Sadly, he was diagnosed with an immune disease that could not be treated. Everyone is saddened by his passing.

Love?

Golden eagle breeding season is coming right up in January and continues into August. Zoo eagles may or may not, be planning for offspring. In any case, zookeepers are supplying an extra rat at mealtime to assist these big birds in colder weather. When visitors are invited to guess the weight of the eagles a common answer is 30 pounds. Wrong. Closer to 12 pounds.

In July 2010 male eagle **Pinyon** was found starving near Latrobe Road by a construction crew. X-rays showed an arthritic left wing from an old injury. Female **Sierra** was rescued by **Tahoe Wildlife**

Care. They discovered that although she can fly, she chooses not to. The tall four - section Zoo aviary devotes two middle sections to the eagles.

The Monkey's Own Personal Tool Rack

Designed and created by a talented monkey's uncle, **Wallace & Darwin** now have their own Personal Tool Rack. The 18" x 22" metal rack is sturdily attached to a Trex shelf so the monks can manipulate two big steel nuts, spin the combination lock and rattle and bang two moveable, but not removable, wrenches. Naturally the monks spotted the tool rack immediately and are spending quality time learning the proper use of tools. Years ago a large wooden toy with all the parts attached by wing-nuts was donated to the monkeys. Before the keeper went home for the night she attached the toy to the cage wire so they could enjoy an educational evening. By morning, of course every nut & bolt & movable part was dismantled and scattered.

Really Giant Iguana

Barn owls **Grayson** and **Guinevere** live (no surprise) in the Zoo's **Red Barn** which is bigger on the inside than it is on the outside due to a wall painting that takes viewers on an imaginary trip into the green Back Forty. Like all proper barns there's a weather vane on top. Recently Zoo reptiles have moved in next door. Visitors might see a skink and a snake well-camouflaged inside their private rooms behind a large double-paned window.

Now a really giant green iguana can be seen painted on the Red Barn, joined by a barn owl, a fence lizard, a blue gecko and, cleverly camouflaged high up on a tree limb, a lifesize python. Admire more works of art by **Stephen V. Williams** at svwilliams.art@gmail.com

Wild Nights, Holiday Lights!

Now Until December 23

5 to 8 p.m.

Details at

www.FolsomZooFriends.org

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