

June 2004



#### Puppies!

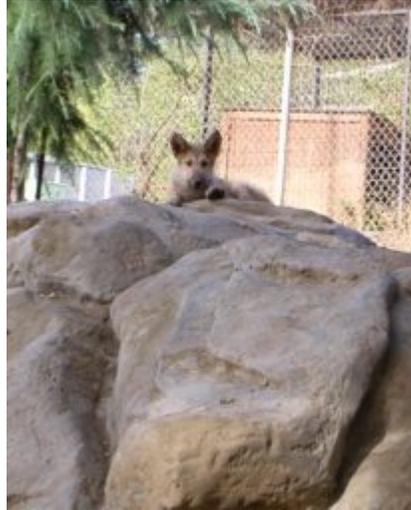
The Folsom City Zoo Sanctuary wolf pack is rejuvenated by the arrival of wolf pups Joshua and Yucca. They were born in late April at a southern California facility that breeds animals for the entertainment industry. Both are "surplus" from "accidental breeding" and come from two separate litters.

Zoo Supervisor Terry Jenkins fostered the pups for a few days, and slowly introduced them to the senior members of the pack; alpha female Redbud, alpha male Granite, and He Who Is Without Status, three year old black wolf River.

In the wild, generally only the alpha pair will be parents. Wolf culture is very strict, and has lots of rules and customs. And as it is with all cultures, survival of the young is paramount. Babies are special. For example, if the pack goes hunting, a wolf will stay behind to pup-sit. As you know, when

the hunting wolves return, they will whine a puppy call and regurgitate food for darling (and often begging) wolf pups. Folsom wolves haven't been able to resist the urge, and have provided more delicious, warm, partially pre-digested baby food than they really wanted to for the fat-bellied puppies. Joshua and Yucca, whose appropriate wolfy behavior has been nicely hard-wired, were welcomed by all the members of the existing pack. But after a few days, the thrill seemed to be gone and Granite and Redbud would move away when besieged by pups. But River! River has taken over the important job of puppy uncle. He plays with them, and chivvies them away from the other pack members. River lifts the struggling pups up stairs with his nose. If Joshua or Yucca dens up, River hunts them down. But he teaches wolf rules too. Early on, River snagged a small lamb chop bone and the puppies were using all their formidable begging skills to make him give it up. It wasn't to be. River dropped the bone - and just when the pups were thinking they had won (again) he bristled up, growled mightily and showed the pups every one of his big, white, sharp teeth. Wolf rules are the strength of the pack, and this was a lesson about possession.





*Wolf pup pictures courtesy of Lynn Dowling*

#### Jane

Folsom's zoo family is further enriched by the arrival of another animal, a Black-tail female, or doe, deer named Jane. Previously kept as an illegal pet and very imprinted, Jane was confiscated by the California Department of Fish and Game. For a short time Jane lived at UC Davis, where she was going to be involved in nutrition studies. Except for her one little drawback: Jane knew how to open the latch on her pen. She would let herself out - and then move down the row of pens and free all the other animals!

Upon arriving in the zoo pasture, she became fast friends with livestock guarding dogs Chelsea and Harrison. Harrison, in fact, at one point thought she was somewhat more than a friend and made unmistakable moves on her, which she rebuffed by standing on her back legs and pounding him with her sharp little front hooves. These social adjustments made, dogs and deer still hang out together.

The other pasture animals pretty much ignore Jane, except for a recent incident at meal time, when pygmy goat George butted her off her feet pushing her away from food. Keeper Donna DiMeglio has worked this problem out. Jane grazes all day on pasture grass

and at night she is locked safely away in the barn with good things like alfalfa pellets and hay, and pushy goats outside.

### Saddling Gus

Big, golden Premarin gelding Gus has been traveling to Blue Mule Ranch with keepers Lynn Dowling and Carole Garrett to work with trainer Lesley Neuman. This is a continuation of a slow, gentle process of teaching horse and zoo humans the art of saddling, bridling and other schooling necessities. Back home in the pasture, it's practice time for all involved. Recently Carole gathered up the loaner roping saddle, saddle blanket, etc. and prepared to saddle up the waiting Gus. She'd been told that the saddle was heavy, and had this firmly in mind as she hefted the saddle up - too strongly - and it landed in the pasture on the other side of this very tall horse. Good Gus didn't startle, but Carole thinks he might have rolled his eyes just a little! The saddle was eventually in place and Gus looked very spiffy.



### Zoo Camp

Fifteen stalwart Campers, ages 6 to 8 year old spent five hours a day for a week at the Folsom Zoo Sanctuary learning about animals and the art of zoo keeping.

There was valuable classroom time with teacher Jennifer Tousseau and the zoo sanctuary's education animals.

Just like real zookeepers, they started the day observing and evaluation zoo residents. They used shovels and rakes and garbage bags and hoses to clean cages with keepers. They prepared meals for the animals, and learned to deal gracefully with some of the foods the animals prefer. Raw meat, wiggly live meal worms, and formerly frozen rats! They measured dry food, and prepared veggies and fruits. And washed their hands many times a day!

They learned to work cooperatively together and to think about how animals think. The Zoo Sanctuary thanks the following kids for excellent zoo keeping and too much fun! Emarie, Amber, Dylan, Victoria,



Rachel, Carole, Heidi, Katie, Jessical, Apsara, Kahill, Helene, Matt, Reed and Madolyn.



Attendance has been impressive, with 11,681 visitors. This is more than 2,500 than last June. Classes were sell-outs and the Father's Day overnight had more than forty participants. Life is good!



#### Emma and Chance

When three nocturnal animals shared the Miner's Cabin there existed a certain equilibrium: raccoon Emma spent days sleeping in the box on the miner's sink marked "salt." In winter, ringtail Chaos tucked in beside her. Albino skunk Gardenia dozed in the box under the miner's sink - or tucked away in a corner under the miner's bed. But the arrival of opossum Chance brought changes. Slow moving and seemingly innocuous, Chance has broken the routine. Keeper Karrie Kolodziej has noticed that upstart Chance seems to make a point of shoving Emma out of her favorite nesting spots. And if she

moves to spot #2, Chance will be there the next day, etc. No fighting takes place. Apparently just the bulky and unwelcome presence of a very big opossum can move anyone out of bed.

*Picture courtesy of Lynn Dowling*

#### Fisher's Carrot

All five Zoo Sanctuary bears eat very well. A little meat and fish, and lots of veggies and fruits, most of them organically grown. But there are realities here. Offer a child the choice between a carrot or an apple, and it's going to be the apple most of the time. So it

is with bears! Keeper Amy Van der Molen had just finished feeding black bear Fisher and was walking to the far end of the bear exhibits. She noticed Fisher lying by his nearly empty bowl, flapping a carrot back and forth between his front feet. Clearly not his first choice. As Amy returned, apparently Fisher took heart that she was bringing him something good. Alas, she passed him by - and he finally ate the carrot - as a last resort!

Don't forget about our Wild Wednesday's and Show and Tell Saturdays. 12 noon - keepers and docents give a brief talk about an animal and you have the chance to ask questions.