

March 2005

Woody's Amazing Tongue!



Some weeks ago, bear keeper Amy Van der Molen discovered "lots" of blood in black bear Woody's den. On further check, there were spots of blood in the big outdoor exhibit too. Bears play hard, especially young guys Woody and Marty. But no bite marks, scrapes or dings were detected. Until Woody opened his mouth and Amy could see a significant laceration on his tongue.

After consult with Zoodoc Mira Sanchez, the plan was to keep him separated from the other bears for a while and provide gentle food. Now, if this was your tongue, a cool fruit smoothie served several times a day would probably make you feel better. Bears like smoothies too, but Woody ignored his smoothies. Very un-bear like! The reason became apparent, while humans sip smoothies, bears use their tongues to lap up liquids and Woody's tongue just wasn't up to the job. So for about a week he carefully, and successfully, toothed soft but whole foods at mealtime.

But the mystery remained. How was the tongue so severely lacerated? The exhibit fences were checked for protruding wire. All the dens and hallways were examined and reexamined. Toys were reviewed. Nothing was found that could have conceivably injured Woody's tender tongue.

Several weeks had passed, the tongue was healed and Woody was back with the bears. Amy was watching as Woody and little female Tahoe engaged in what has been on-going behavior. For awhile, Woody and Marty and Tahoe and Sequoia all hung out together. And Tahoe, while small, is snippy and would stalk and harass and annoy the younger bears. Finally, to give everyone a rest, Tahoe and big male Sequoia are sequestered in Exhibit III

and Marty and Woody reside in Exhibit II. This works well, Sequoia ignores Tahoe and Marty and Woody can climb trees and wrestle and play in the pond.

And Woody and Tahoe can continue to harass and annoy each other through the strong fence panel. Watching one of these harassment incidents, suddenly it became clear to Amy how Woody's injury came about. Apparently, not having learned from prior bad experience, Woody is playing Tongue Tag with Tahoe. Tahoe hackles up and growls and snaps at him through the fence and as she pulls back Woody shoots out his tongue and - gotcha! - tags Tahoe with his tongue.

Footing



Spring has been a busy time for zoo sanctuary Golden eagles. A total of six eggs have been laid. And incubated! And - as happens every year - stepped on and broken by the birds.

But they persevere. In the past, both female Cirrus and male Nimbus have been very serious about guarding their space at this time of year. They hunch down, spread their wings, and threaten. Keepers have given up daily cleaning and approach the exhibit with great caution to bring meals of formerly frozen rats or quail.

This year, however, there's something new. Both birds - even nearly blind Cirrus - will often "foot" the wire of the cage when there's a keeper outside. This means that the birds leap feet first, awesome talons extended, thrusting forward with their giant wings. All this is aimed at the person standing (wisely) outside!

While keepers are wary, a rooster and a hen have not been so lucky, and have received lightning fast, lethal talon strikes to the neck.

Claudia's Teeth

At age 39, Rhesus macaque Claudia is a very old monkey. And like humans of a certain age, she's a little stiff and creaky. A special heater is located right over her special little bed in the outside exhibit and her night den is heated. Great care is taken with her diet. But even with all this, several weeks ago she just wasn't OK. So she took a trip to the Bird and Pet Clinic of Roseville where x-rays showed that Claudia has some dental issues. Because of her age, dental surgery is not currently an option. She does seem better on a regimen of antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medication, plus an even-more-speical-diet.



Good Scouts

When leader Tracy James set up a tour of the zoo sanctuary for Orangevale Girl Scout Troop 320, she said they also wanted to drop off a few things. The few things included food items like 6 whole chickens, 4 pounds of chicken legs, 133 ounces of mini packs of raisins, 556 ounces of 100% natural peanut butter, 1050 vitamin E capsules, 1040 children's multi-vitamins, and more. Lots more! There were trash bags, laundry soap, a heating pad, water bottles, three new rakes and a shovel, gardening tools, a blueberry bush and a kumquat tree. And still more! Including 331 pounds of assorted cat litter, seven litter boxes, rabbit water bottles, stainless steel feeding dishes, carpet samples. And 68 new toothbrushes!

All of these items are found on the zoo sanctuary's Wish List. As part of Girl Scout Troop 320's Community Service Project to benefit the Folsom Zoo Sanctuary they sold cookies and offered the zoo Wish List outside Albertsons, Ralphs and Bel Air. Cookie sale cash and gift certificates purchased Wish List items, in addition to those donated by passersby. All came to the zoo!

"Everyone at the zoo is so honored by the time and effort the Girl Scouts of Troop 320 put into their Community Service Project. For all of us - and the animals - I want to thank

Scouts Amanda, Ashlyne, Heather, Isabel, Jacie and Kelsey, and troop leader Tracy" said Acting Folsom Zoo Sanctuary Supervisor Jill Giel. "We're very proud of them!"

As for the 68 toothbrushes, they have been greeted with enthusiasm by Amazon parrots Larry Bird, Andy, Chiquita, and Luther, who greatly enjoy grasping the brushes with their feet and chewing on the brush with their beaks. The squirrel monkeys consider things like toothbrushes great treasures. They carry them around like toys. (But they never brush their teeth!)

Flight Risk



Several weeks ago, disabled redtail hawk Phoenix apparently fell from a limb and injured his left leg. X-rays assured that the leg was strained, but not broken. Meds for pain and inflammation are delivered disguised in a formerly frozen mouse. Since Phoenix spent three weeks in the zoo clinic, he was hand-fed the med mouse, along with two others that were part of his regular diet. Now that he's outside in his exhibit again there seems to be one glitch; zookeeper/vet tech Lisa Dowling will present his med mouse by hand, and then

(as usual over the years) leave the other mice nearby. Currently this doesn't work.

Several days in a row Phoenix grabbed his hand-fed mouse and ignored the other two. Until the next time Lisa walked by. Then she would hear the screech - identifiable by bird people as a "feed me" vocalization. It works, too. Lisa has played along and hand fed the two remaining mice several times. (But not for long!)

Egg Control

Kestrel Falca has been laying eggs. Since she's a captive bird, her egg laying efforts were replaced with a white plastic egg. Not at all as wonderful as a genuine speckled kestrel egg. So Falca ignored the faux egg, and moved her nesting activities to the next box. Lisa purchased some wooden eggs and painted and speckled them Just So and replaced the newest real eggs. With good result. Falca now broods - happily one assumes - without laying more. (Ultimately, hens will brood for a while, and then go on about their business.)

The Little Black Hen, companion of handsome rooster Baby Girl's Baby, started up a nice little nest full of eggs too. Like Falca, she disdained the plastic egg. So now the little black hen sits atop the excellent organic non-fertile eggs donated to the zoo by Trader Joe's. Way to go Joe!

The Animals are Registered!

The Folsom Zoo Sanctuary has several on-line and in-store registries. You know. Gift ideas for brides. Gift ideas for zoo animals. The usual.

<http://www.homedepot.com> Go to Gift Center. Then, On-line registry. Then Folsom Zoo Sanctuary (in the spot for "last name")

<http://www.target.com> Go to Gift Registries. Then Club Wedd. Then Friends of the Folsom Zoo (in the spot for "first name")

<http://www.sanctuarysupplies.com> Go to Wish Lists. Then Folsom City Zoo Sanctuary.

SENSORY SATURDAY - MAY 28 10am - 2pm

Pick up your passport and enter the wonderful sensory world of animals. Test your skills against other animal species. Lots of free activities. Lots of Fun! Regular zoo admission.