

October 2005

Seeing Inside



Besides being the right thing to do, it's prudent to be proactive about the health of the animals who live at the zoo sanctuary. Predators keep close watch for any show of weakness, so wild animals mask any sign of illness. The first keeper job every day is to take a good look at each individual animal. As the work day progresses, keepers note if an animal doesn't eat, has a runny nose or eyes, or just seems grumpy and distant. All this is written up in the Daily Journal which everyone needs.

Zoovet Mira Sanchez provides routine periodic health exams for all zoo residents. There are vaccinations for every malady you can think of, and for some you can't imagine. What the animal leave behind is checked frequently for parasites. And the twenty officially "senior" animals receive a little extra scrutiny always.

Senior Bobcat BJ

Thanks!

The zoo sanctuary clinic is a work in progress. Recently, there was a giant leap forward with a very generous donation by the Dyer Family Foundation for the purchase of both a portable x-ray machine and a portable ultrasound machine. Now the zoo will be able to accomplish a lot of diagnostic procedures on site. Far better for the animals and the long-term savings will be substantial. Many Thanks!



Inside Ventura

Mountain lion Ventura's insides have been discontented lately. For weeks the Daily Journal has vividly described his intestinal distress. (Don't ever eat lunch with a bunch of zookeepers.) Tests showed that he was afflicted with giardia lamblia. These little trophozoites can make

your small intestine miserable and are just one of the reasons that campers shouldn't drink out of streams.

There were vet conferences, medication prescribed and given and special food like ground raw chicken, etc. Because of this problem, Ventura rested in the privacy of an off-exhibit area so keepers could monitor his - um - intestinal output, so to speak. Watchers also found evidence of little bits of ingested sisal rope from a BE toy. (Yes, animals, like humans, eat the weirdest stuff.)

Ultimately, it was decided to pack up Ventura and his problematical gut and visit Loomis Basin Veterinary Hospital. A tracheal tube identified a wad of sisal and part of it was plucked out. The next day, back home, he gagged up more rope. At this point it seemed like a good idea to do a surgical biopsy and check to make sure all foreign objects were indeed gone. This done, Ventura is back home, tummy shaved, intestines appropriately free of foreign objects, and so far doing much better. (When the new portable x-ray and ultra sound machines are set up at the zoo, we can save a lot of traveling for the animals.)

Inside George

Pygmy goat George has had some of his own intestinal issues lately, too. He's been back and forth to Loomis Basin Vet and spent a lot of time with his lovely companion Tammy off-exhibit, where they've enjoyed very regulated diets and some time away from the hustle



and bustle - and the gustatory temptations - of the pasture. Currently, he and Tammy have returned to the pasture under close watch by keepers. The goat duo was checked head to toe by the other pasture animals too!

Inside Toothless

Grey squirrel Toothless has always been a little ample, despite careful dieting. Recently he was just not feeling good and took a trip to the vet. Non-technically speaking, a fatty area was inflamed and infected. Surgery cleaned up the area and he's better (and slimmer.)



Inside Peanut Brittle

Squirrel Peanut Brittle has a permanent sinus injury from a fall as an infant, and like humans, with the weather change he can have sinus issues. His tender stuffy little nose is improved with daily steam treatments and medication. Small as they are, squirrels are opinionated and fearsome and only the brave are willing to gather PB up for the twice daily dose of nose drops.

Toothless - eating!

Darwin

Year-old baby monkey Darwin grows more excellent each day. His 40-year old roommate Claudia might even agree. She seems to be OK with Darwin riding on her head. And several times recently she's been seen carrying Darwin as he clings to her chest. They cuddle more and even though he still annoys and vexes, she and he seem to be forming an affectionate bond. Interestingly, Claudia, who has always seemed rickety, seems a little more robust. A monkey on your back will do that!



Increasingly, Darwin's a daredevil, leaping farther and farther from rope to rope and sliding upside down from great heights by his back feet. He shows

off shamelessly for crowds of visitors, whose presence seems to drive him to ever-more inventive aerial interpretations.

Darwin's a long-tailed monkey a.k.a. crab-eating macaque. This is a family that gleans edibles - both animal and vegetable - from swampy areas where mangroves grow. Recently, Darwin's been seen engaging in what his wild ancestors have done for generations: prowling around in the shallow pool and washing fruit that's fallen out of his dish.



Bumpy
Ancient grey squirrel Bumpy (he's 13 years old) is very fond of the tiny nutritional muffins made especially with TLC for the squirrels.

Since we've known him he hasn't had a really good sense of balance due to a fall from his natal nest. Either his equilibrium is diminishing, or, to look on the bright side, he's decided that lying on his side to eat a muffin makes good sense.

The New House

For young coyote Wild Iris, anything new is a tribulation. Like her new house. Since some assembly was necessary, keeper Carole Garrett and assistant Trish put the parts together: the redwood colored wooden siding, the architecturally pleasing arched door, the removable slat flooring, all topped by the green shingles of the composite roof. A lovely



house. Iris, of course, being a coyote, knows it to be a trap! On the first day, she remained in the catch pen all afternoon and most of the night even though the door was open. She shunned the tasty formerly frozen quail that were placed just outside the pen door. Several days passed before she would go close enough to the little house to snatch up the sweet scented aspen excelsior that's used for bedding. (this she usually puts in her pool.) So far there are no coyote tracks inside the house.

The Deer

Occasionally the zoo sanctuary receives fresh road killed deer. They're frozen for 30 days to kill parasites and then either partitioned by keepers into leg 'o deer, etc. or served whole. Which is why the wolves recently received a whole deer carcass.



You can compare what transpires in the wolf pen to the human event of holiday dinners. While the food is nice, what's really important is the social interaction this festive meal occasions. Wolves are very focused on social order. There's the hierarchy - in this case alpha male Granite, and alpha

female Redbud. Then there's black male River - and the "pups" Joshua and Yucca. In a pack each wolf thinks a lot about #1 maintaining status and #2 moving up. A special get-together allows each family member an opportunity to reconnoiter socially. Or not. Granite lay, one foot on the deer carcass, while the other wolves analyzed their chances to move in. This process usually goes on for hours: sometimes Granite will eat his fill and let Redbud have a go at the carcass. Or not. In this case, Granite didn't eat - or relinquish the carcass. At mealtime the next day all the wolves came into the holding pens for food and the deer was hauled away by a keeper.

The Little Helpers



Recently, an Eagle Scout Project provided spiffy transport/feed crates that were attached with carabineers to the wire at the rear of the raccoon exhibit. (Next door neighbor coyote Iris, of course, considered the crates to be scary for several days.) Not so the raccoons: they clambered up immediately to investigate. Scout and Autumn are often fed in these crates to make it easy for keepers to catch them up for weighing or a trip to the vet. With all this action, the floors of the crates get muddy.

So keeper Kaye Banyard brought a bucket of warm, soapy water and some brushes to the exhibit for a little extra housekeeping. Nothing could have pleased the raccoons more. They patted the bubbles with black raccoon paws. They wrestled away the brushes. And ultimately they tipped over the bucket of soapy water, in which they sat and snarled when Kaye tried to retrieve it!

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" (in the spot for "first name") "Folsom Zoo Sanctuary" (in the spot for "last name")

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