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Critter Creek Wildlife Station
36710 Sand Creek Road
Squaw Valley, CA 93675

Members receive our quarterly newsletter



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OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, January 19th -- 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Last tour begins at 1:30 p.m.



Project Completion— Heron Creek

Heron Creek construction has been completed. Our permanent residents (Betty White the egret, Mr. Blue the blue heron, and Patch the Red-eared slider turtle) have moved in. There is still some landscaping remaining.



Heron Creek is an extension of the Web Foot Wash enclosure. Water flows from the organic filter into Heron Creek and then into Web Foot Wash.

Critter Creek Chronicle

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Solstice at Critter Creek is a joyous occasion full of toys and special treats for our permanent residents.



The fox received barbecue bones, which they immediately felt compelled to rub against and then once suitably slobbered on to bury.



The coyotes received bigger barbecued bones and wasted no time gnawing on them.



Dusty, the young bobcat enjoyed a hunk of short rib, which he flung in the air and pounced on for well over an hour, practicing his best hunting techniques.

Aspen, on the other hand, shed her usual friendly personality, and snarled and growled while devouring hers.

The exotic cats, Achilles, Simba, and Zeke were experiencing their first solstice. They

went their separate ways with their hunk of short ribs like brothers with their toys on Christmas morning.

The raccoons received their usual tube toys full of trail mix. It took little time for them to dunk them in water and start shaking and nibbling, their dexterous fingers probing for the treats inside. Also part of their treat was frozen mackerel. Bandit especially enjoyed chewing the heads off and sucking the rest like a fish popsicle.

Cheena, the capuchin, is always a challenge, but he enjoyed his tube toy as well. Being brighter than the raccoons he worked at the holes for awhile, but then spent the rest of the day trying to unscrew the end of the tube to get easy access.



Shasta enjoyed two new “squash” toys. The acorn squash was the easiest to bat around but the harder and larger kabocha squash faced the harsher treatment. It was in several pieces by the end of the day. We also tried an orange but one bite and Shasta’s face puckered up like a prune. Citrus must not be his favorite taste.



Some of the permanent residents in the infirmary weren’t forgotten. To alleviate the loneliness of cage life, we got the kestrels and Jasper the barn owl small mirrors. At first they assumed defensive postures but in time decided that the companions were fun to torment.



Newton, the great horned owl, enjoys playing with hemostats and other bright silvery objects during his outings in the infirmary. He received his very own silver bell attached to his cage door. He has yet to learn to ring it.

We shared fish, meat, and other treats with everyone. It is the shortest day, but one full of fun and the promise of longer days to come as winter heads for spring.

PERMANENT RESIDENTS

Cheena, the Capuchin

Early in March of 2007, we received a visit from the Selma Police Department. The officer had found a small monkey roaming Selma. After days of effort, the officer was finally able to trap it on top of a roof. Cheena was friendly and happy to arrive at the relative calm of Critter Creek. Once we reported Cheena to Fish and Game, quite a story began to unravel. The Sanger Police had been plagued with a series of “breaking and entering” reports. However the residents found nothing missing, just their houses ransacked. Finally one day a police officer spied the culprit...a small monkey sitting on a neighbor’s roof. The monkey’s owner was not at home and once contacted claimed the monkey had disappeared. The police contacted Fish and Game and an APB went out for the whereabouts of one small monkey. The Fish and Game warden came and visited Cheena and declared the case solved. Cheena did, indeed, fit the description of the perpetrator.

Long term care of a primate is quite a financial commitment. He requires as balanced a diet as a small child complete with a daily vitamin tablet. The biggest challenge in caring for a monkey is keeping him from getting bored. This requires a weekly environmental enrichment program including grubs, toys stuffed with goodies like raisins and nuts, and tree limbs he can strip and bang around. Being a capuchin, a monkey originally found in tropical South America, Cheena does not appreciate Critter Creek’s winters. He has an insulated bedroom with a heater that helps to warm him on those especially cold nights. His antics are quite entertaining, but he has his preferences when it comes to people. During Open Houses it is necessary to keep people at a distance from him.

