



Santa Barbara Audubon Society Eyes in the Sky

Quarterly Newsletter

Fall/Winter
2011



Great Horned Owl
Max



Red-tailed Hawk
Ivan



American Kestrel
Kachina



Western Screech Owl
Puku



Peregrine Falcon
Kisa

HAPPY NEW YEAR! LOOKING BACK AT 2011

This has been a banner year for EITS/SBAS!! Here just a few of the accomplishments:

- ***The completion of our new aviary*** at the SB Museum of Natural History, which turned our small, home-based program to a public wildlife education program.
- ***An increased # of school and community programs***, on and off-site due to the public exposure.
- ***The beginnings of collaborative education projects*** with the SB Museum of Natural History.
- ***The acquisition of three new birds***: Kisa, a Peregrine falcon, Puku, a Western screech owl, and MAK (short for Male American Kestrel - his temporary name).
- ***The sad loss of our 10-year long avian partner Tecolita***. She had been ill with a brain swelling, and finally died from a seizure. We miss you very much, Tecolita..
- ***The increase of our bird volunteer staff*** - from 12 to 32 (!).
- ***Consistent outdoor time for our birds*** and public interactions from 2 and 4 pm each afternoon.
- ***Our first ever flight demonstration*** with Max and Kachina.
- ***Enough community support*** to make all of this happen during challenging economic times. Thank you very much for contributing through the recent chapter Annual Appeal or the EITS Appeal to match the \$5000 pledge from an Audubon board member—providing over \$10,000 to support EITS programming.

And special gratitude to SBMNH's Director, **Dr. Karl Hutterer**, who brought up this idea back in 2004, and the Museum's wonderful staff that encouraged and assisted us at every step along the way - and still does. Many thanks also to **SB Audubon's President Darlene Chirman**, the **SBAS Board**, the **SBAS Development Committee**, and **all of YOU** that have supported us along the way:



VOLUNTEER PROFILE: ZOE STEVENS



As you can see in this picture, Zoe and Ivan have a very special bond. Zoe joined Eyes in the Sky in December 2009. She has cared for animals and plants all of her life, and manages her own landscaping business. Zoe exemplifies the dedication, and love all of our volunteers feel for our birds. Without people like Zoe, our birds' quality of life would be greatly reduced. All of them (except for Max, who prefers staying indoors to being harassed by Crows) eagerly anticipate their daily outdoors time.



One truly outstanding thing Zoe does during some of her afternoons is to take our "sun birds" Ivan (Red-tailed hawk), Kisa (Peregrine falcon) and Kachina (American kestrel) along with their volunteers to the San Marcos Foothills in her spacious van. There the birds can spread their wings and truly enjoy full sunshine and a great "raptor's" view. During late fall and winter our aviary does not get much sun and the lighting indoors is not very bright. This suits our two owls just fine, but our other three really miss the sun. Afternoon sun has also retreated from the area surrounding the aviary, so on the other afternoons, the birds are sun-bathing near the whale skeleton by the big iron gate, one of the few open areas that currently get afternoon sunshine at this time of year.



Kachina peeks out of her door's window in anticipation of her "field trip"



Save the Date: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 **Santa Barbara Audubon's Monthly Speaker Program**

"Owls In The Family"

with Speaker **Gabriele Drozdowski**

at **Farrand Hall**

Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Doors open at 7 and program starts at 7:30 pm

Free to the public



Max at six months old.

Max, Santa Barbara's famous Great Horned Owl, who is almost 14 years old, has lived with Gabriele Drozdowski since he was six months old. Gabriele will share what it is like living with an owl that thinks he is human, using personal pictures, stories and knowledge collected over the years. She will also talk about rehabilitation of wild owls—from tiny Pygmy Owls to Sawhet Owls, Barn Owls, Long-eared Owls, and a rare local Spotted Owl. The birds suffered from a variety of maladies such as broken bones, starvation, poisonings, abandonment and oil spill complications.

Max and Puku (Western Screech Owl) will be present at the program.

MEET **MAK**, OUR NEW **MALE AMERICAN KESTREL**



*MAK on his first day at the Museum
With volunteer **Richard Nordli***



Back view of wild male American Kestrel

“**MAK**” (his temporary name) was just adopted from “Desert Wildlife Services” in Tucson, AZ. This year’s hatchling, MAK has spent most of his short life in rehab. Just out of the nest and learning to fly, he collided with a car, and fractured his right wing at the shoulder. He spent a full 9 months in rehab (3 months of healing, and 6 more months waiting for his transfer permit). Although it is tragic that he cannot live out his life in the wild, it is the best possible scenario for adjusting to a life as an educational bird. The longer a bird has lived in the wild, the longer it takes for it to adapt to living with humans.

This explains his incredible progress in just 4 days (fastest training of any bird we’ve ever had). After two days of being very afraid of me, he began taking food from the glove, and the next day, his fear completely vanished after I took him outside, on the glove, to catch some sunshine. He puffed up, relaxed, and totally enjoyed the hour we spent basking in the sun.

That same afternoon, Monday, Dec. 26th, a bit anxious (was it too soon?), I took MAK to the aviary. He excelled in public, sitting quite comfortably on the glove, puffing up in the sun, preening, and even eating in front of people. People immediately were attracted to his spectacular beauty. American Kestrels are the only North American raptor species where both sexes have distinctly different plumage, with the males outshining the females. Our two kestrels’ sizes are reversed: females are usually about one third larger than the males, but in our (rare) case, it’s the opposite: Kachina is an unusually small female, and MAK is larger than your average male kestrel.

MAK and Kachina have been introduced to each other, but mostly ignore each other, without any animosity. We think we can safely house them together in the next few weeks.

A NEW YEAR’S WISH LIST:

- Oil-filled electric radiator-type heater (it’s COLD in our aviary)
- Two-step step ladder
- **Old fur coats and stuffed animals (natural colors) for raptor “toys” and enrichment activities** (especially for Kisa who gets bored easily)
- PC Scanner (last item needed to complete our office)
- 3 Full-spectrum lights for our open sky birds (to supplement the limited winter lighting in the aviary)
- Bleach (always needed)
- Paper towels (always needed)
- Floor mop

You can drop items off at the aviary any day between 2 and 4 PM (and receive a “backstage” tour), or we can come pick them up from you. Call Gabriele **805-898-0347**. Every bit helps. Thank you so much.

BIRD HUMOR



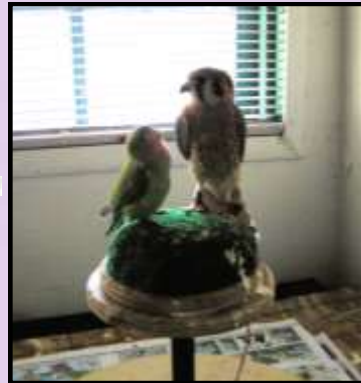
Jaegermeister Crow



Hawk Fail



Territorial Dispute



*LB (Lovebird)
introducing herself to MAK*



Love!

*The beauty of the trees, the softness of the air,
the fragrance of the grass, speaks to me.
The summit of the mountain, the thunder of the sky,
The rhythm of the sea, speaks to me.
The faintness of the stars, the freshness of the morning,
the dewdrop on the flower, speaks to me.
The strength of the fire, the taste of salmon, the trail of the sun,
and the life that never goes away, they speak to me.
And my heart soars.
Chief Dan George*

Thank you all, for your support - in all of its shapes and forms!

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