



Yuma. JULIE LAWRENCE PHOTO.

TRIBUTE

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Yuma – the well-mannered wolf

As I'm sure all pet owners can attest to, every animal has their own unique personality and character. The same is true for the wolves who reside here; some have dominant personalities and others are mellower. Yuma certainly fell into the latter group, yet he showed us that even a wolf with a modest nature could make a lasting impression.

Yuma always looked up to his sister Ukiah, with whom he had lived with his entire life. Yuma and Ukiah were a perfect little “ying and yang.” While Yuma was more cautious and reserved, Ukiah was outgoing and curious. Often it seemed as if Yuma would wait to see how Ukiah handled a situation before reacting to it himself. It was a blessing that his sister was confident, because I believe this helped bring Yuma out of his shell. If it wasn't for Ukiah, I think Yuma would have been much more hesitant to investigate new situations and we may have not been able to see his more confident side.

One of the most unique things

about Yuma is that he was one of the first wolves we've had with what we called 'table manners'. In Yuma's enclosure, there was an old tree stump. During feedings, Yuma would grab a chunk of food, go over to the tree stump and eat off of it like a table. It got to the point where anytime Yuma had something to eat, he would walk it over to the stump. Those manners must have rubbed off on his sister Ukiah, because soon she began eating off of the stump as well! The funniest scenario was Yuma chewing his food on the stump – with Ukiah standing patiently behind him, chunk of food in her mouth, awaiting her turn at the table.

Often, when asked how Yuma was doing, I'd reply 'Well, he's Yuma'. Sometimes I thought it was hard to give any newsworthy updates on wolves who were so quiet and consistent. It's unfortunate that sometimes you don't realize how big of an impact a quiet personality can have until their gone. We'll miss you Yuma.

