



## Manzanillo Volunteer\* Blog

01/2018

The first bird that I saw in 2018 was a Great Green Macaw. When I first walked outside the morning of January 1<sup>st</sup>, I found several macaws loitering around the site, just checking things out. And of course, “Sandy” lingered nearby, always part of the mischief.



*'Mischief? What mischief?'*



*Sandy: the macaw, the myth, the legend*

Sandy, for all of his character, is still a young and single macaw. I got a chance to see him try to flirt with a lady bird... He flew over to a branch in front of her, puffed out his chest and arched his neck like he owned the place. He strutted back and forth, full of feathery swagger. He stopped, bowed his head, then held it high, flagging his giant macaw beak from side to side. Finally, he tried to approach the lady, who had watched his whole performance so far. Did he gently sidle up next to her and whisper sweet nothings in her ear? Nope. He clumsily flew directly at her, knocking her off the branch, and scaring her away. Sandy, man, you got to take it easy!

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This morning, I witnessed the beginning of a macaw day, while doing an observation of a nest box. At 5:25 am, I couldn't see much in the dusky light. By 5:30 I could dimly see the shape of a macaw face peeking out from the nest. At 5:35, I heard the first macaw mutter in a tree overhead. By 5:40, a lone macaw made a sweeping round over the entire valley, flying high over the trees and calling for everyone to awake. And that was it—the dawn of a new day.

Each day after the bugler has woken everyone, you can listen to a chorus of macaw squawks, growls, screams, and more, as they conduct their morning meetings. And throughout the discussions of Important Macaw Business, youngsters continually interject with their own comments. Hey, just because they don't know what's going on doesn't mean they have nothing to say!



*Early morning flight*



*8 mo. Juvenile macaw*

Macaw activities are never boring nor cease to daily entertain ...



*Important business, like napping.*



*Preening.*



*Daydreaming.*

Earlier this week, I walked outside in the morning, up the hill overlooking the sanctuary, to look for some birds. While looking at some toucans, a macaw flew past, very close. So here I am in Costa Rica, sitting on a bench within spitting distance of my house, sipping my morning coffee, so engrossed in watching toucans through my binoculars that I don't even notice when a Great Green Macaw brushes me with its wing as it flies past. What a cool moment!



There is no place in the world like this one, where you can live in the jungle among such spectacular creatures as free-flying Great Green Macaws. And not just live near them but also help their species survive for generations to come.

*We can even see the Caribbean from our house!*

