

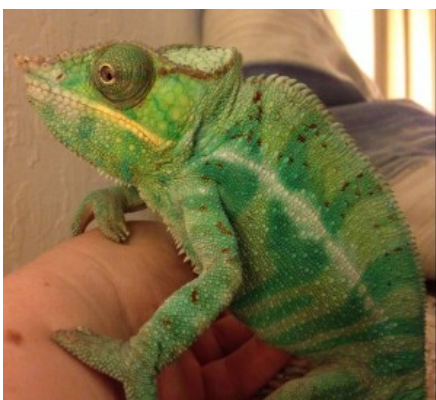
Sad ride after putting a pet down



Pretty nice up on Skyline today, as you can see in the photo, but it took quite some time before there was any enjoyment in today's ride. Something to do with having to put down my daughter's chameleon, Galahad, beforehand. Known as "Sir G", Galahad had been with us for almost 4 years, which apparently is a pretty normal lifespan for a chameleon in captivity. No, he wasn't stolen from the Amazon or anything like that, but raised on whatever passes for a chameleon "farm", something more humane than poaching animals from their native environment.

Let me tell you that chameleons do require a bit more special care than, say, a dog, or a cat. Who knew. This little guy has seen the vet quite a few times for various minor ailments (and if you need a good vet on the Peninsula, by all means consider Adobe Animal Hospital in Los Altos), including surgery. Yes, you can actually do surgery on a lizard.

It had been tough going lately. He wasn't eating like he should (my daughter has a gram scale that she'd regularly weigh him on, same type you use to compare expensive bike parts), he would get a prolapsed something-or-other and need to see the vet occasionally for stitches (and later removal), and the other day, sitting in his very large home (a 55 gallon terrarium), he decided to let his tongue hang out... and I mean really hang out... should have take a photo of it... he was up on a high branch and it reached down nearly a foot. A chameleon's tongue is a bit like a coiled spring it turns out. It was frightening to see this, although he did eventually pull it back in.



Sir G lookin' good a few months ago

So he was brought in to the vet this morning, knowing that sure, he could be pumped full of fluids again and keep going for a while, but this wasn't a healthy happy lizard and it was time to go. You'd not think that a small lizard (ok, chameleon) could elicit so much emotion from people, but it wasn't just my daughter and son who were in tears, but also the vet. Me? Must have been a cold, that's why I was sniffing.

So Sir G was put to rest, after assurances it would be humane (anesthesia first, then the stuff that stops the heart), and an hour later he was taken home for burial in the side yard, alongside other family pets over the years.

So when you see a 30 minute time for going up Old LaHonda, and no trip out to the coast, that's why. It was hard to get Kevin going at all, and it took time to get his mind off the sadness. After scuttling the original plan (which, by the time we left, would have had us finishing in the dark), we turned south on Skyline, descended Page Mill, and wound our way back home. Just 36 miles and not very fast. We'll make up for it next weekend. --Mike--