



Parenting - A Bird's Eye View!

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

Published

February 13th, 2010

One of my clients who has a disability never leaves her house except to come to her appointments with me. I asked her what she does with all the hours during the day and she told me about a website that has captured her attention.

There is a seven year old hummingbird in Santa Ana California that has for several years been building nests in a rosebush six feet above the ground. The owner of the property set up a webcam in 2007 and has been broadcasting live video of her activities over the internet for the past three years.

Phoebe is a beautiful and devoted mother. She is approximately three inches long and builds strong and delicate nests which are each the size of a golf ball for her babies. In January she laid two eggs and from these came her chicks. Storm died shortly after birth and Sassy is developmentally delayed.

It is amazing to watch Phoebe care for her baby who does not have feathers or the strength to leave the nest within the expected timeframe. In fact, she is just able to lift her head after 19 days of faithful feeding and care from her mother. Phoebe flies off into the neighbourhood and returns with food for Sassy. Then she spreads her body over the nest to warm the chick that cannot do so for herself.

Almost five hundred viewers from around the world tune in every day to see the progress in the nest. Many of them blog about the situation and brag about the devotion of the mother bird. Some state that her reproductive cycle might be changed because of the demands she has in raising this helpless little chick. She might not actually be able to have the four or five clutches of a normal year.

Well, life for humans can be very much like this. Sometimes you don't get what you expect. There can be problems in childbirth. Children die. Some are handicapped.

When you are a parent, especially of a small, helpless baby, you become tired and neglect your own needs as you focus on meeting the needs of the child or children. All this might give you a feeling of being isolated without any support.

Even though humans are much more complex than birds (and not nearly as consistent in our patterns), there are similarities in the way that we live. We strive to protect those we love and do what we can to help them grow and thrive. Others are watching us as we do this. They may not tell you but you are likely setting an example for someone else.

If you want to get back to the simplicity that nature offers and remind yourself about what is important in life, tune in to the reality show being put on by Phoebe and Sassy!