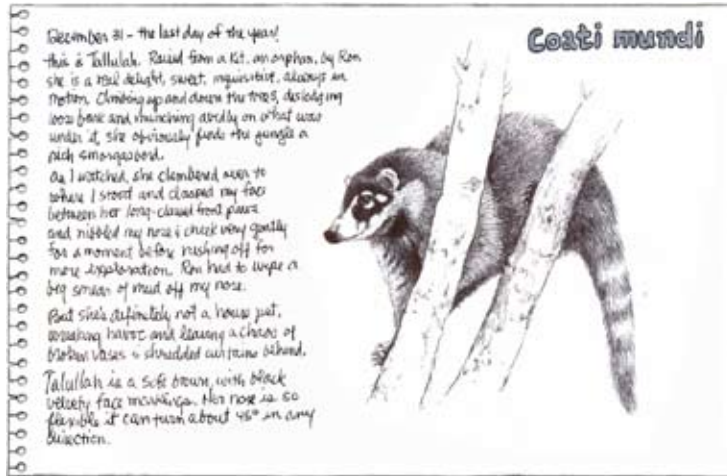


The Original Page



Tallulah pauses to check for danger



Finding insects under bark requires close concentration.

The Process



Drawing in the open doorway of my cabana.

Photographing Tallulah, the coati mundi, was no easy task. She moved so swiftly she left only a blur on most of my photos. This sketch, one of my favorites in this journal, was drawn from two photos that didn't blur, shown above. The right photo was used mostly to help with the tail.

After the photo session, which I journaled about on the page, it began to rain in earnest, so I spent a couple of hours sitting in the doorway of my cabana enjoying the patter of rain, the beautiful scene out the door, and drawing Tallulah from the viewscreen of my camera.

You'll notice that in the photos the tree trunks are very dark, but that they're white in my drawing. I had left them until last, planning

to copy their dark tone as it was in the photos. But on getting this far, I liked the white so much that I merely indicated some texture and put a light shadow under Tallulah to show the trunk's cylindrical nature.

The white trunks contrast sharply with Tallulah's gray and black coat and make the coati stand out as the center of attention instead of drawing the eye to the trunks (if they'd been dark).

An animal looks most alert if the eye highlight is drawn in the upper quadrant of the eye, and is relatively small and sharp. A pale crescent opposite the highlight shows light reflected up from the ground, making the eye look round and lively. Don't overlook this subtle way to make an eye come alive. It works with human eyes, too.

December 31 - the last day of the year!

This is Tallulah. Raised from a kit, an orphan, by Ron she is a real delight, sweet, inquisitive, always in motion. Climbing up and down the trees, dislodging loose bark and munching avidly on what was under it, she obviously finds the jungle a rich smorgasbord.

As I watched, she clambered over to where I stood and clasped my face between her long-clawed front paws and nibbled my nose & cheek very gently for a moment before rushing off for more exploration. Ron had to wipe a big smear of mud off my nose.

But she's definitely not a house pet, wreaking havoc and leaving a chaos of broken vases & shredded curtains behind.

Tallulah is a soft brown, with black velvety face markings. Her nose is so flexible it can turn about 45° in any direction.

Coati mundi

