

Weekly Horoscopes

By Mickayla Smith
Staff Writer

Aries: You will receive some information this week that may ruffle your feathers. However, don't be so discouraged from this information. Take the time to think about the pros and cons of the situation. You may then see the silver lining.

Taurus: A warm sense of relief will wash over you this week. Fears about an important relationship will seem to disappear. When this relief comes, take time to think about it and what you can learn from the situation.

Gemini: There was a time when a bridge between you and another person was burned. This week, you may see this bridge being rebuilt. The bridge isn't going to build itself, so you will have to take part in the building process. This will be difficult, but worth the hardship.

Cancer: Don't set your dreams aside. You may have been neglecting your goals lately, and that has taken you out of your element. If you don't seize the moment to act upon a dream, you may never get another opportunity.

Leo: You have helped someone recently with something you may consider small, but this isn't how the other party feels. This small act of kindness speaks volumes to this person, and down the road, you may need to help them again. Helping them has made you feel warm inside, and you may get this opportunity again soon. If you feel inclined to help this person, then do it again.

Virgo: The window of opportunity is wide open for you this week. Take this time to get things done that have been on your plate. However, be careful to not get distracted, because the window of opportunity may close soon.

Libra: There is a lot of positive energy surrounding you this week. You may be in the market for a new job or career change, so take advantage of this energy and put yourself out there!

Scorpio: If information is coming from some place that you're not familiar with, second guess it. Not everything appears as they seem, so always think before you act. You'll thank yourself in the long run.

Sagittarius: Make business your priority this week. If you keep pushing off important business, this will only put you behind everyone else. It is more frustrating to catch up than to do the work in the first place.

Capricorn: You have been praying for a break, but don't get too discouraged yet. Keep working and a break will come naturally. You are at the point where things are getting a little difficult, but don't stop your momentum. Keep pushing yourself.

Aquarius: Sometimes people aren't as nice as they seem. Someone may offer you something that is very generous, but don't be fooled. This person could have an ulterior motive and the sooner you figure this out, the better off you'll be.

Pisces: Your inner light will be shining so bright this week. People will be more drawn to you, and this could lead to a new friendship or romantic relationship. Take the time to get to know these people and don't share too much of yourself all at once.

The Secretary Bird: *Sagittarius serpentarius*

By Solomon Turner
Staff Writer

Sagittarius serpentarius, otherwise known as the Secretary Bird, is one of the only terrestrial birds of prey in the world, spending most of its time strolling its habitat hunting for prey, according to the San Diego Zoo.

These splendid birds, as stated by the San Diego Zoo, stand at 4.1 to 4.9 feet tall, weigh about 5.5 pounds and have the longest legs of any bird of prey. Their body is similar to an eagle which is disproportionately matched to crane-like legs. When in flight, the legs trail behind the body further cementing the comparison to a crane.

The feathering consists of black quills on their head, long gray wing and tail feathers and black feathers resembling a pair of shorts extending a small way down their long crane-like legs. This stylish appearance is what gives them their common name of Secretary Bird. Other notable features are their bare face which has orange to red pigmentation and their blunt, stubby claws which are more beneficial for walloping than manipulating prey.

The habitat *Sagittarius serpentarius* lives in

ranges from savannah to grasslands, including agricultural lands that are studded with acacia trees. Their territory can be upwards to 19 square miles, and while some individuals may be nomadic, this is generally due to scarce food resources. In general, they are found anywhere on the African continent below the Sahara Desert.

They tend to live in loose groups of two to five individuals and spend most of their time earthbound, hunting for their snake, rodent and insect prey. According to San Diego Zoo, these birds use two main methods of capturing their prey. One is by running them down and bludgeoning them with their blunt claws and the other is by striking prey with their beak.

When *Sagittarius serpentarius* decide to mate, the male and female birds perform a mating dance, a common occurrence in birds. This includes aerial acrobatics of circling, dives and occasionally midair locking of claws. Once mated, these lifelong, monogamous birds share all duties required for producing offspring.

Together they will build an extremely large nest that can be eight feet across in the tops of acacia trees and will use it for many years until

the nest is too old or too large for the tree to support. When the nest is complete, the female will lay two to three pale green eggs. While the chicks are in the nest, the parents will feed them a liquefied, regurgitated diet of small mammals and insects.

According to Animal Diversity Web, unlike most birds of prey, parents are generally successful in raising multiple offspring and chicks do not practice siblicide. This is a practice in which one chick will push out other eggs or siblings in order to ensure its survival and the parents' attention.

In terms of conservation, these birds are well known and beneficial to Africans. This is seen in agricultural lands where farmers benefit from the bird's predation on snakes, rodents and insect pests. The IUCN Red List categorizes these birds as vulnerable as their numbers are large but have seen recent rapid reduction in population size. According to San Diego Zoo and IUCN Red List, they are protected under the 1964's Africa Convention of the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, and their home range is found in many National Parks throughout the continent.