



Meet & Greet: Willow and Kia

Meet and Greet

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=ymkynbwUXZw>

<https://nerdfighteria.info/v/ymkynbwUXZw>

Hi guys. So, we have this video series going on where we meet animal ambassadors, we get to know their background, and then we learn about who they are as individuals. It's called Meet & Greet, and then the animal's name, and since you've already read the title to this video, you should know that today, we're going to Meet & Greet: Willow and Kia and since there's an adorable picture of them in the thumbnail, you probably already know that today, we're going to meet some birds. So let's do that!

(Intro)

This is Willow and this is Kia. They're ring-necked doves and they're a bonded pair. Willow is a male and Kia's a female. We can tell that not because of their color, that has nothing to do with it, but if you observe them for a while, you'll be able to see Willow cooing and putting on a courtship display for Kia, and if you observe them for even longer, you'd eventually see Kia lay eggs.

Both are pretty good signs that Willow is male and Kia is female, but we didn't always know that. Willow came to us on May 5, 2012. He had been brought in to a local pet store, where his owner had requested to trade him for some kind of animal food. The pet store owner declined the offer and so the man left. Five minutes later, he came back, set Willow on the counter, and walked out. The pet store owner set him up with some food and water, but then after three days of no eating, she was at a loss. She called us up to see if we could take him in and give him whatever care he needed.

Once back at Animal Wonders, we observed him to see if we could figure out why he wasn't eating. I spotted the problem almost immediately. I had set him up next to a family of pigeons that I had been training for shows. Willow was really interested in them and when the babies started begging for food from their mother, I saw Willow's wings start to wiggle slightly meaning that he was begging, too. I took this to mean that Willow was still a baby, an older baby, a fledgling, big enough to look like a small adult but baby enough to still need his parents to help him survive.

I offered him some hand feeding with mushed up dove pellets from a syringe and after a bit, he was readily taking them from me. He was hungry. Once he had eaten enough and his strength was up, he started begging whenever the pigeon babies started begging from their mother, so I decided to see how the pigeon mother would react to him directly and it was a perfect adoption. She started feeding him along with her other two chicks. Within a week, Willow was mimicking her eating pellets out of the food dish and a couple days later, he was eating on his own. It was awesome.

Willow grew up to be calm and gentle and he doesn't mind being handled or visiting new places and meeting lots of new faces. One time, Willow got the urge to fly during one of our presentations at a senior living center. The audience was quite entertained when he flew off my hand and landed on the railing of an upper balcony. We had to climb up and fetch him and he easily stepped up, but he sure got the audience riled up when he bombed them with poop. He didn't come near any of them, but they sure talked it up. I was told the whole place was talking about it for weeks. You sure made a scene, huh, bud?

Kia came to us on July 8, 2014 when we got a call to pick up a family of white doves that someone just didn't want anymore. I don't know her history, just that the owner said that they had had them for a while and they were tired of cleaning up after them. I don't know how old Kia is, but when we got her, she was still only eating pellets when her parents did.

After a month of quarantine, we tried introducing Kia's family to Willow because we really wanted Willow to have a dove companions. Unfortunately, Kia's father did not appreciate having

another male in his territory, so it wasn't gonna work out. So we tried introducing just Kia to Willow and it was exciting because it was a perfect match. You see, we didn't know that Kia was a female and we didn't know that Willow was a male because they were both too young and neither of them had had a chance to go through courtship yet. It was so cute watching Willow coo and dance for her. Kia wasn't very impressed at first, but after a couple days, she allowed him to sit next to her on the perch and since then, they've been inseparable.

Kia has a partially malformed wing. You can see it sticking up there a little bit. She also has trouble balancing sometimes, so I'm thinking she either fell or was improperly held at some point when she was a baby. Kia started laying eggs about a year after we rescued her and they're all infertile, which I'm not upset about because ring-necked doves are notorious for having lots and lots of babies. I'm glad we don't have to figure out what to do with dozens of baby doves each year. Instead, they get to enjoy each others' company and I also get to enjoy just them.

Willow and Kia aren't very adventurous. They're kinda reserved, but they do enjoy picking up seeds that I scatter on the ground and it's nice to get them outside enjoying the sunshine. These two make me really happy because their story is just such a perfect happily ever after. Two displaced animals that found their partners and get to live out their life in comfort.

I hope you enjoyed meeting Willow and Kia today. If you'd like to go on an adventure with us every week, subscribe to our YouTube channel! AnimalWondersMontana. If you have any questions for me, you can leave them in the comments below and we'll see you next week.

(Outro/Credits)

The training sessions can happen at any time and really can be just moments. Sometimes, the shortest ones can be the most meaningful.