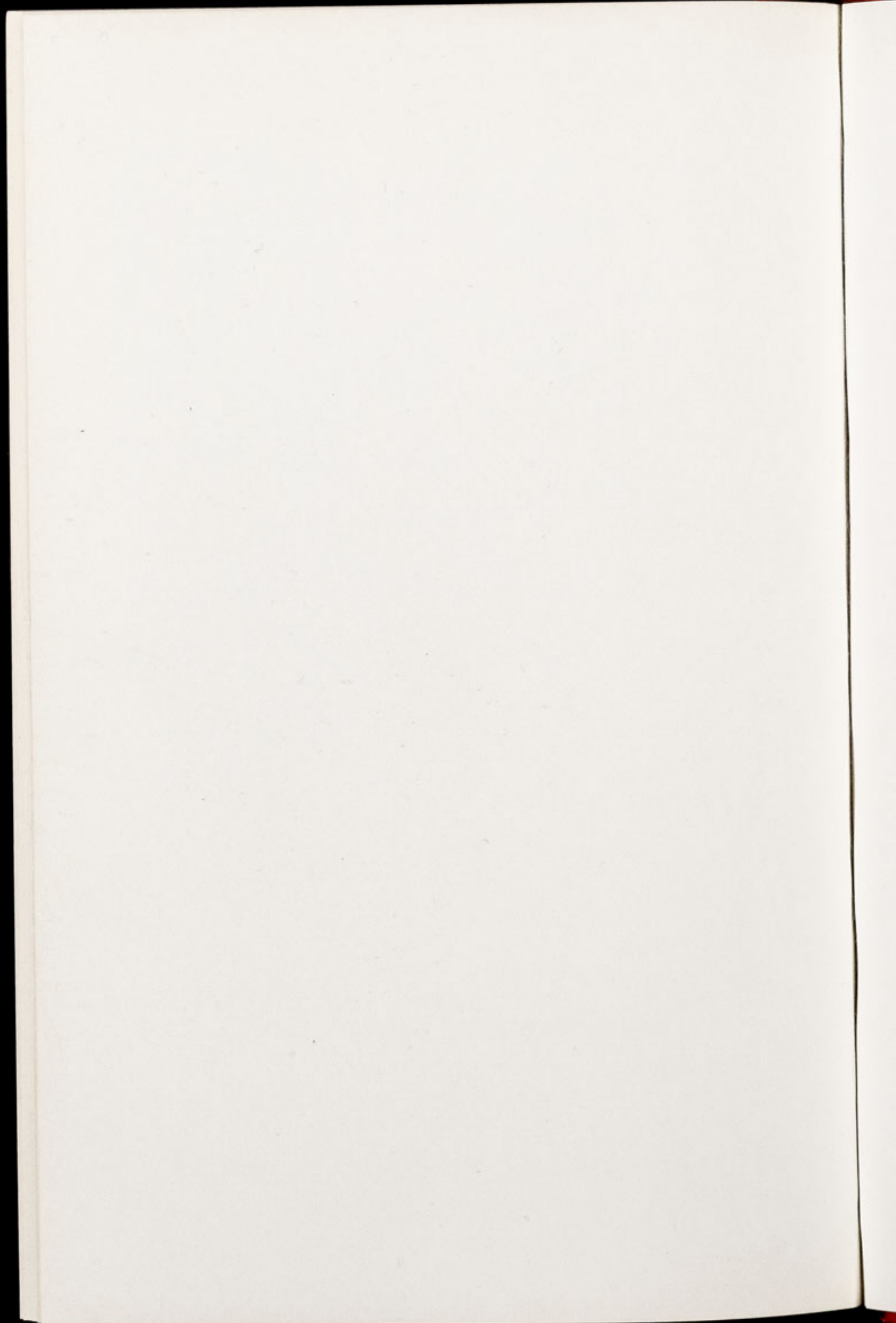


CHESTER ZOO NEWS

AND GUIDE

November 1979

Price 15p



The North of England Zoological Society

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

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COVER PICTURE:

“Chester” baby Giraffe, and mother “Marie”.

By courtesy of Mike Arron, “News of the World”

Annual subscription — Two Pounds and Seventy Pence, postage paid
Telephone Chester 20106

COVER PICTURE

The cover picture shows a male Giraffe born on 6th October which has been called "Chester", in honour of the City's 1900th Anniversary. His mother "Marie" and father "Richie" were also born here. "Chester" is "Marie's" first baby and she is proving to be a good mother.

"Chester's" right foreleg, however, did give us some cause for concern, as it appeared to have been damaged shortly after birth. A constant check has been kept on the youngster and together with the help of splint and bandage the leg appears to be improving. Exactly what happened it is not possible to say, but there is a possibility that in her efforts to keep the youngster close to her "Marie" may have accidentally stood on the leg. "Chester" does not have any difficulty in getting around and we are hoping to give readers more information about him, and other births at the Zoo, next month.

THE HOOPOE

Of the many birds in our Collection here at Chester, one of the prettiest is the Hoopoe (*Upupa epops longirostris*). Measuring 10-12 inches in length, this small bird has been known to man for many years, cropping up in folklore and in Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Hoopoes belong to the Upupidae, which also includes the Tree or Wood Hoopoes. The family is divided into two sub-families (some authorities treat them as separate families); the Upupinae which contains only one species which we have, and the Phoeniculinae, which have short claws and live on the ground. There are nine sub-species of *Upupa epops*, which are found distributed over Central Europe, South Africa, Madagascar, Asia, Eastern Siberia, China and Malaya.

The plumage is a lovely pinkish-brown against which the



By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

THAILAND HOOPOE

striking black and white bars of the wings stand out and catch the eye when this bird is in flight. The erectile crest is the same colour as the plumage but tipped with black, whilst the beak is long and curved. These various physical characteristics make this bird unmistakable. The Latin *Upupa epops* and the English Hoopoe are all words derived from the males' Spring-time call of "oop oop oop".

The Hoopoe is very fond of open pastures, orchards and cultivated areas, it is a pretty bird to watch as it looks for food, as it walks, its head bobs up and down rather like a pigeon and it probes the earth with its sickle-shaped bill for all manner of prey. Larvae, caterpillars, beetles, large insects, spiders, worms and sometimes even lizards. It is a fussy eater, taking great care to get rid of hard parts on insects, such as the legs, wings and head and then, as the tiny tongue is not able to move the portion to the rear of the mouth, it throws each morsel up into the air and catches it deftly, the beak wide open!

Nesting sites include a wide range of areas, buildings, old trees, holes in walls, cliffs and soil banks are all favoured. During the incubation of the clutch (5-8 pale-blue to yellow-green eggs) the male feeds the female and for about ten days after hatching he still cares for the group. The nestlings are practically naked, except for a sparse fluffy down on the upper part of the body; however, despite their helpless appearance they are endowed with a most unpleasant and extremely effective defence mechanism. At first, if threatened, the tiny chicks will hiss a warning, this is rapidly followed by a shower of liquid faeces and at the same time a distinct musk-like stench can be smelt. This comes from the preen gland which normally secretes oil for preening and grooming the feathers. The female appears to have an "oil-change" as when the breeding season begins the preening oils seems to undergo a change and the smell is then on both herself and all of her brood. If the bird should become extremely excited or frightened it is believed that drops of this liquid can be released and humans may find the strength of the smell unbearable.

This bird is occasionally a visitor to Britian and, although we are not inside its normal breeding range, they have been known to nest in England.

CAPYBARA

The Rodents are the largest order of mammals, consisting of about 2,000 species. The largest rodent is the Capybara (*Hydrochoeris hydrochaeris*) which comes from South America.

These heavy, thickset animals can weigh up to 100lbs and attain a length of about 4 feet. The coat is thick and coarse and the toes are connected by a web-like membrane, which may have evolved to help during swimming. There is a large bump on the bridge of the nose, which is larger in males of the species, which appears to be a scent-gland; the precise function of this, however, is not known.

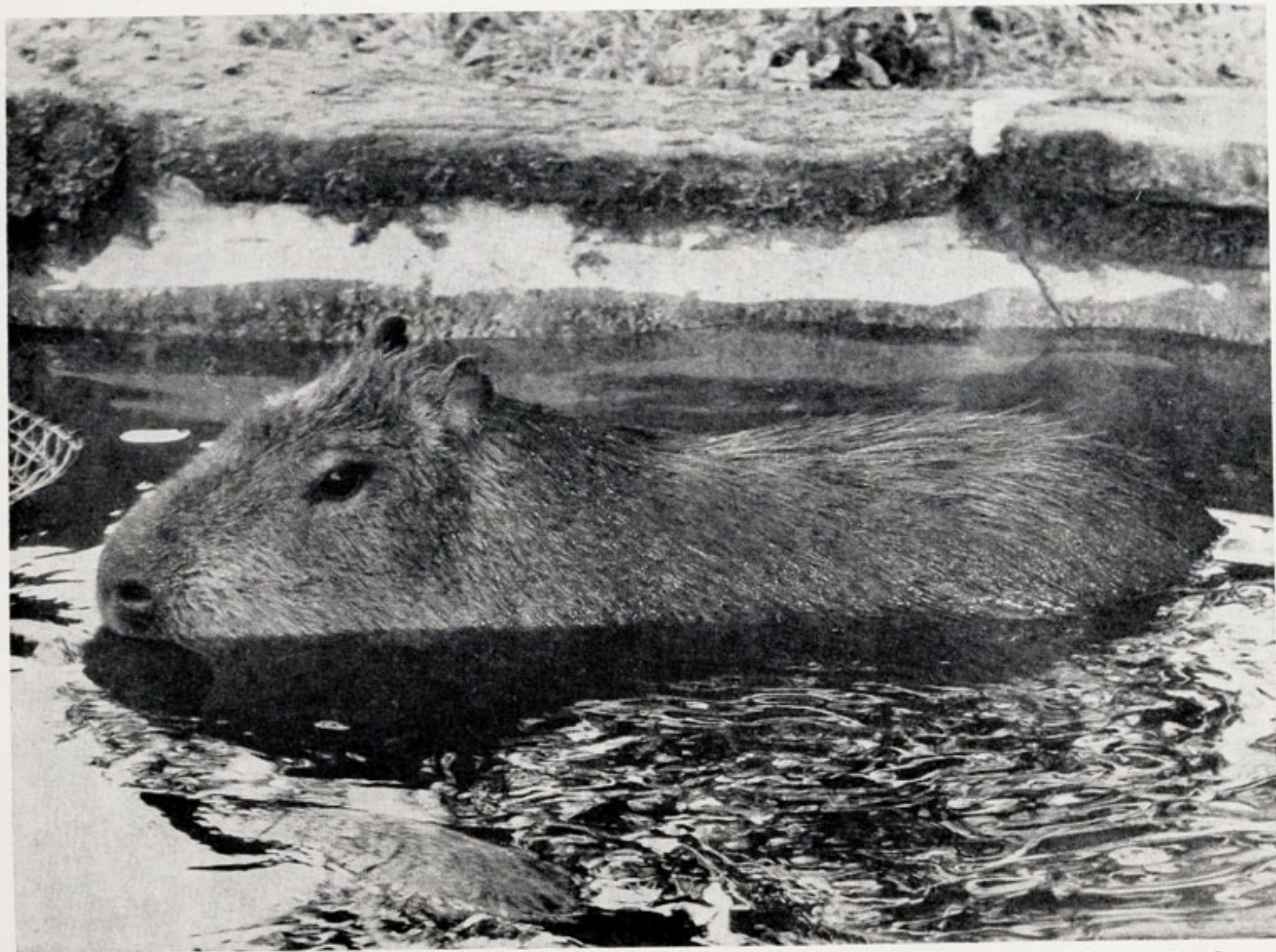
The name Capybara comes from the Portuguese capyvara, meaning "master of the grasses"; Spanish-speaking Americans usually refer to the Capybara as the Carpincho.

Groups of these animals are generally found alongside ponds, lakes, rivers and swamps where they may be seen standing in the water eating the lush plants that grow in and around such areas.

The Jaguar is the principal enemy of the Capybara, taking it on the land and near the water's edge. Man is also an important enemy, killing it when it strays onto plantations of watermelon, maize, rice and sugar cane, or occasionally, when it grazes alongside his domestic stock. Other predators include the Puma on land and the Alligator in water.

The Capybara is a very good swimmer and can make an escape by swimming away from its attacker, the nostrils showing above the surface of the water. When out of the water, it prefers to lie in shallow depressions in the ground, or it may be seen sitting on its haunches, rather like a dog.

One litter (2-8 youngsters) is born a year. These are well developed at birth, their eyes being open and the coat is already grown. They stay with the parents for some time and an average lifespan is 8-10 years; the captive lifespan often exceeds 12 years.



CAPYBARA

By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

A pair of these unusual rodents arrived at Chester from Kilverstone Wildlife Park in June of this year. where they were born. Although we have had these animals in our Collection before, we have not had them since 1973.

GARDENING NOTES

During October the flower beds were planted with the Spring flowering plants and bulbs. This year, all of the beds had to be watered before planting and again after planting to settle the plants in and give them a good chance to make fresh roots. The working conditions were ideal as the temperatures were around 60°F each day and on a few days over 70°F.

The last area to be planted is in front of the Fountain Restaurant Zoo Guide No. 55, this is at the end of October. Even at this time it seems a pity to be pulling the Summer plants out as they are usually still looking good. However, we feel that late season visitors have had a chance to see what the Summer bedding is like and November usually brings a sudden change in the weather, so it is preferable to plant the Spring plants and bulbs before the change.

The Spring bedding plants grown this year were a good quality, especially the Pansies and Wallflowers. The Polyanthus suffered from being too dry in June and July but the rain in the middle of August helped considerably. Although we are growing these plants on the same area of ground each year, (and have been doing for the past 24 years) we do plant on a rotation basis and apply a potent non-poisonous soil fumigant called Terrafumite which is dug or ploughed in to a depth of 9 inches during the Winter. This helps to keep the land free from pests and eel-worm. It is only suitable for outdoor use and, although quite expensive, could mean all the difference between having a good lot of bedding plants and a poor lot and when growing around 90,000 plants as we do it is well worth it.

The groups in the Tropical House are staged with Cyclamen just through the door and Winter-flowering *Begonia* and *Anthuriums* just inside. There are still plenty of flowers to be seen on the *Bougainvillea* and *Hibiscus*.

CHESTER ZOO

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

FOR A COMPLETE TOUR OF THE ZOO — Follow Nos 1-14 from South Entrance, or Nos. 16-116 from North Entrance then return to Nos 1-14

**Chester Zoo is Open Daily
from 9.00 a.m. until dusk.**



1. SOUTH ENTRANCE

2. Peacock Enclosure
3. Wapiti Paddock
4. Coati Enclosure
5. Aviaries
6. Milk Bar
7. CORONATION HALL
8. CLOAKROOM, FIRST AID, TOILETS, INVALIDS' TOILETS, MOTHER AND BABY ROOM
9. CAFETERIA
10. Picnic Lawn
11. Ornamental Garden (under construction)
12. Jubilee Gardens (Noah)
13. Kiosk
14. AQUARIUM
15. NORTH ENTRANCE
16. PUSH CHAIRS, WHEEL CHAIRS, LOST CHILDREN
17. PARROT HOUSE
18. Free Flight Aviary
19. APE HOUSE
20. Shop and Kiosk
21. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn
22. CLASSROOM
23. TOILETS
24. TUATARA EXHIBIT
25. Peccaries
26. Birds of Prey Aviaries
27. Condor Aviary
28. Jackal and Hyaena Enclosures
29. Animal Enclosure
30. Porcupine Enclosure
31. Coypus
32. Beavers
33. Giraffe House

34. Camel House
35. Giant Tortoise Paddock
36. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL & REPTILE HOUSES
37. CHIMPANZEES
38. Floribunda Rose Garden
39. Zebra House
40. Waterfowl Island
41. H.T. Rose Garden
42. Aviaries
43. Flamingos
44. Waterfowl Enclosure
45. Waterfowl Enclosure
46. Waterfowl Enclosure
47. Penguins
48. Sealions
49. Rock Garden
50. Polar Bears
51. Big Cat Enclosure
52. Waterfowl Enclosure
53. Anteaters
54. BIRD HOUSE
55. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT
56. Ape Nursery
57. TOILETS
58. Lions
59. SOUVENIR SHOP
60. TOILETS
61. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT & G. S. Mottershead Memorial Gds

62. P.O. Telephone
63. Gibbons
64. Arctic Fox Enclosure
65. Serval Enclosure
66. Ornamental Rock Garden
67. Wallabies and Kangaroos
68. Kangaroo Enclosure
69. Guanaco Paddock
70. Cheetahs
71. WATERBUS BOOKING OFFICE AND KIOSK
72. Rose Gardens
73. Fountain Flower Gardens
74. Rose Garden
75. Red Lechwe
76. Red Lechwe
77. Deer or Antelope Enclosure
78. Zebra and Deer Enclosure
79. Zebra and Deer Enclosure
80. Brown Bears
81. ELEPHANTS
82. Hippos
83. Tapirs
84. Small Mammal House
85. Waterfowl Enclosure
86. Ankole Cattle
87. Emus, Cranes and Flamingos
88. Outside Monkey Enclosures
89. Baboon Pens
90. Cat House
91. Tiger Enclosures

92. Antelope
93. Antelope
94. Reindeer
95. Antelope
96. Antelope
97. Waterfowl
98. Waterfowl
99. Waterfowl
100. Blackbird
101. Wallabies
102. Ostrich
103. Wallabies
- 103a. Animal

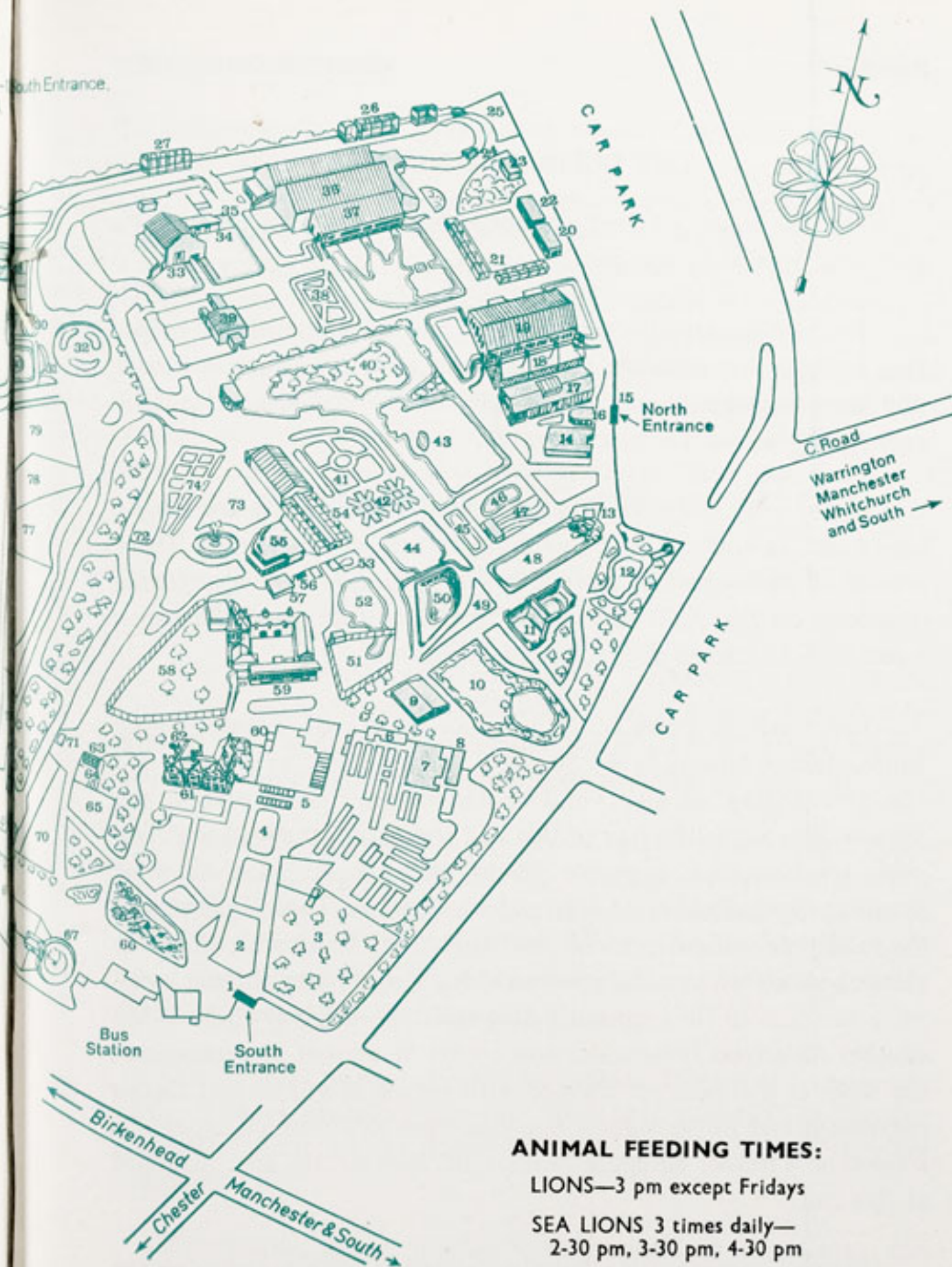
104. Pere David's Deer Paddock
105. Przewalski's Horses
- 105a. Onager
106. Arabian Gazelles
107. Musk Oxen
108. Bison
109. Pere David's Deer Paddock
110. Prairie Marmots, Alpacas
111. Antelope Enclosure
112. RHINOS
113. TOILETS
114. Mpila Snack Bar
115. Antelope Enclosure
116. MONKEY HOUSE

**ANIMALS MAY BE MOVED
FROM TIME TO TIME**

ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES:

LIONS—3 pm except Fridays

SEA LIONS 3 times daily—
2-30 pm, 3-30 pm, 4-30 pm



THE ELEPHANT HOUSE

The first stages of the Elephant House were completed in April 1961 and opened to the public.

The various troughs and borders had been completed before this, however, not all of the plants first put in are still there but those that have survived are now fine specimens. New plantings are done each Spring where it is necessary.

At the main entrance is a foyer with plants which are almost hardy and do contend with low temperatures in the Winter. These consist of *Rhododendron Lady Ella-Fitzwilliam*, *Jasminum polyantha* (climbing on the walls and roof) *Genista fragans* and *Phornium tenax* with an edging of *Chlorophytum capense*.

Just inside is a tree of *Datura suaveolens* with sweet-smelling white trumpet flowers in the Summer. At this end, on the right, is a space for staging pot plants and we use whatever is flowering in the Season. Planted to the rear of this and trained on the wall is *Tibouchina semidecandra*, a purple flower with the common name of Brazilian Spiderflower. At this end are the two Tapir Enclosures; the sandstone walls are double and the cavity filled with soil. The plants here are all out of the animals' reach and parts of them overhang the pen. In the centre dividing wall, the original plant of the climber *Rhoicissus rhomboides* now covers an area of 50 square feet; the walls at the back are planted with yellow *Abutilons* and *Cassia corymbosa* and in the sides a fine specimen of *Plumbago capense* is trained on a frame. Hanging baskets of *Fuchsia* are also arranged at this end.

Going further into the building is a main walk for viewing the Elephants and along here we have a border of green house shrubs and plants. Among the plants used are *Clivia*, *Hedychium* (common name Ginger Lily) *Aspidistra*, *Albuca nelsoni*, *Cyperus alternifolius*, *Daphne odora*, *Nandina domestica* and for the Summer Canna lilies are also planted. This border has glass on one side with pillars every

10 feet; at each pillar there are climbers of *Abutilon*, *Tibouchina*, *Cestrum*, *Malvaviscus*, *Acacia junipernina* and in the border at the end, a tree of *Datura sanguinea*. Above this walk are hanging baskets of *Asparagus sprengeri* and *Tradescantia*. To the rear of the Elephant enclosure itself is a 15 foot high wall and on the top of this is another border of green house shrubs and plants which have an area measuring 8 foot high in which to grow. Among the plants growing in this trough are *Hibiscus*, *Genista fragrans*, *Abutilons* and again, *Canna* lilies are planted in between. The edge of this trough is covered with *Tradescantia* and *Asparagus sprengeri*. The twelve supporting pillars here all have *Bougainvillea*, *Cestrum*, *Passiflora plumbago* and *Asparagus plumosus* trained on them.

JUNGLE CAT

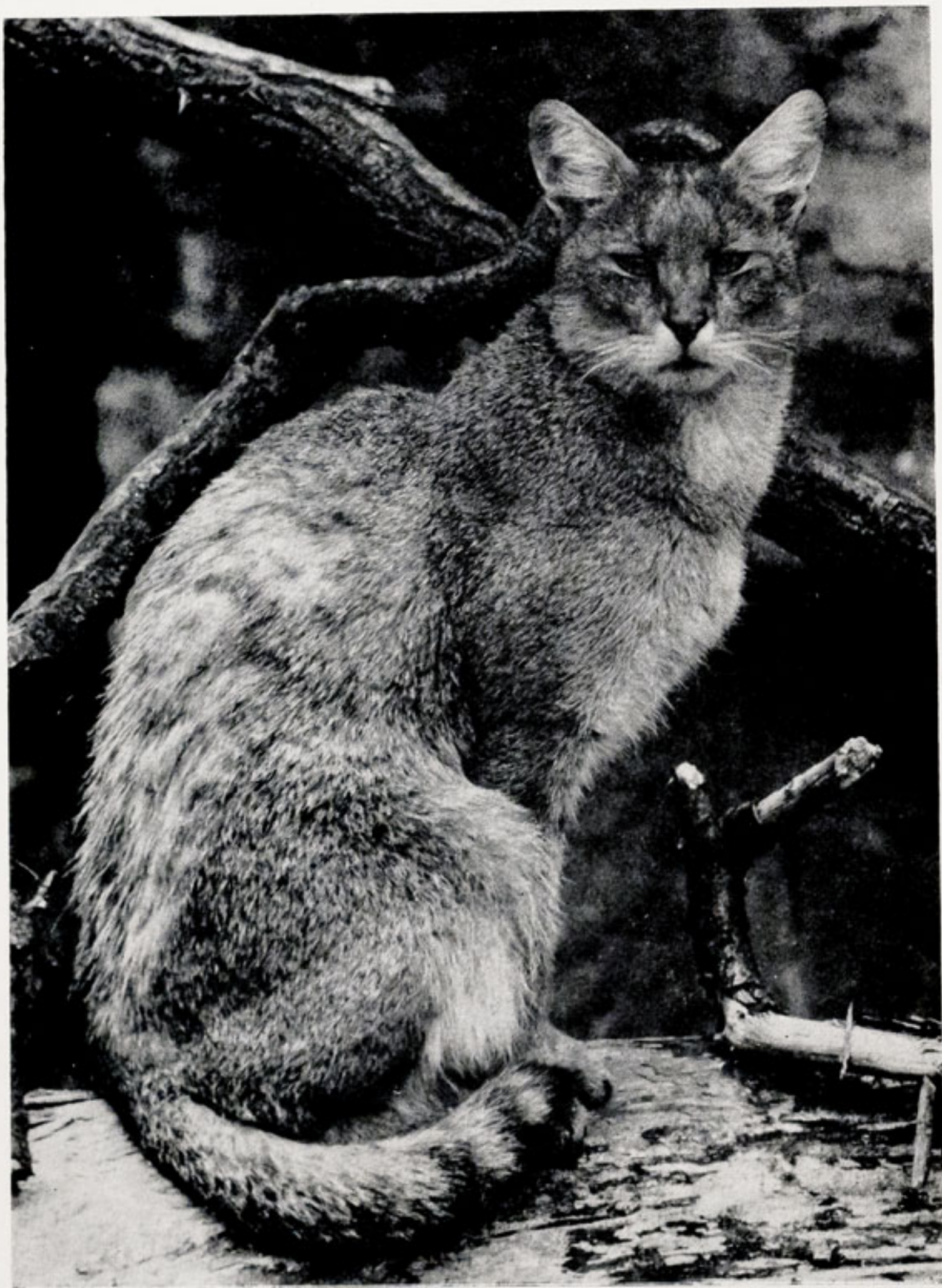
We have recently received into the Collection a male Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*) to join the female we already have. They can be seen in the Cat House, Zoo Guide No. 90. These animals have a wide distribution which can be seen on the map on page 13.

The thick shaggy coat is grey-brown and the short tail and upper parts of the long legs have black rings. The face is unusual in that it is long and narrow, unlike most cats the ears are tufted, giving rise to the name "Swamp Lynx". However, this cat tends to favour vegetation alongside rivers and lakes and the tall grass of fields and dry forest growth, rather than swampy areas.

The Jungle Cat hunts mainly for rodents, frogs, and occasionally birds; in India, peacocks often fall victim to this felid. Their Zoo diet consists of meat; chicks, rabbits and rats are given when they are available.

The mating season appears to vary according to the area, but from February to April is the usual time of the year. A litter of from 2-5 youngsters is born in a den after a gestation of about 66 days. Old badger and porcupine burrows are often used for this purpose.

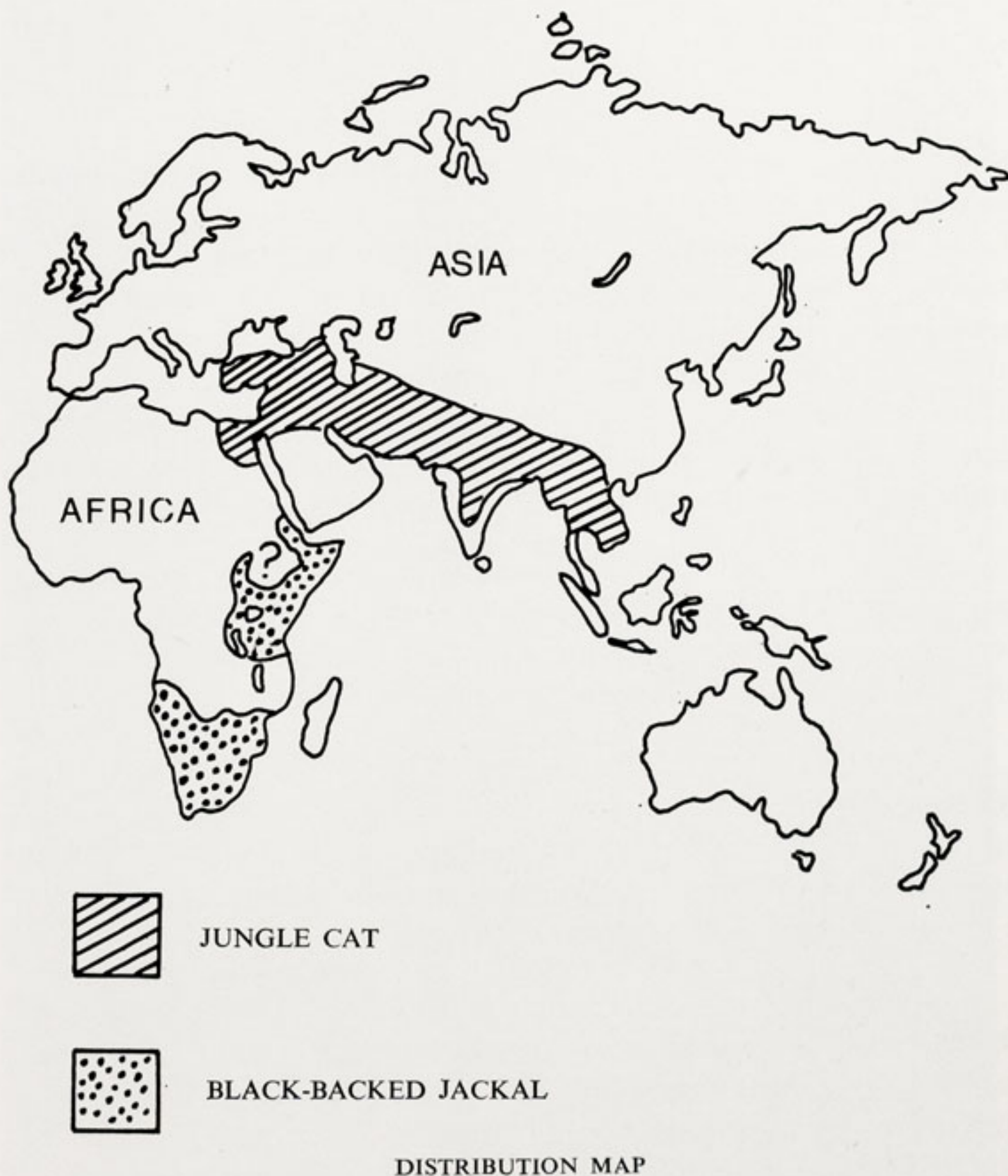
When the youngsters are born the male often helps the female to raise them. We have bred these attractive cats on a number of



By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

JUNGLE CAT

occasions in the past and hope that the pair we now have will produce youngsters in the future.



BLACK-BACKED JACKAL

Of the three most common species of Jackal found in Africa, the Black-backed Jackal (*Canis mesomelas*) is perhaps the most attractive. Standing up to 18 inches at the shoulder and weighing approximately 20-30lbs, this slenderly built canid has a foxlike head

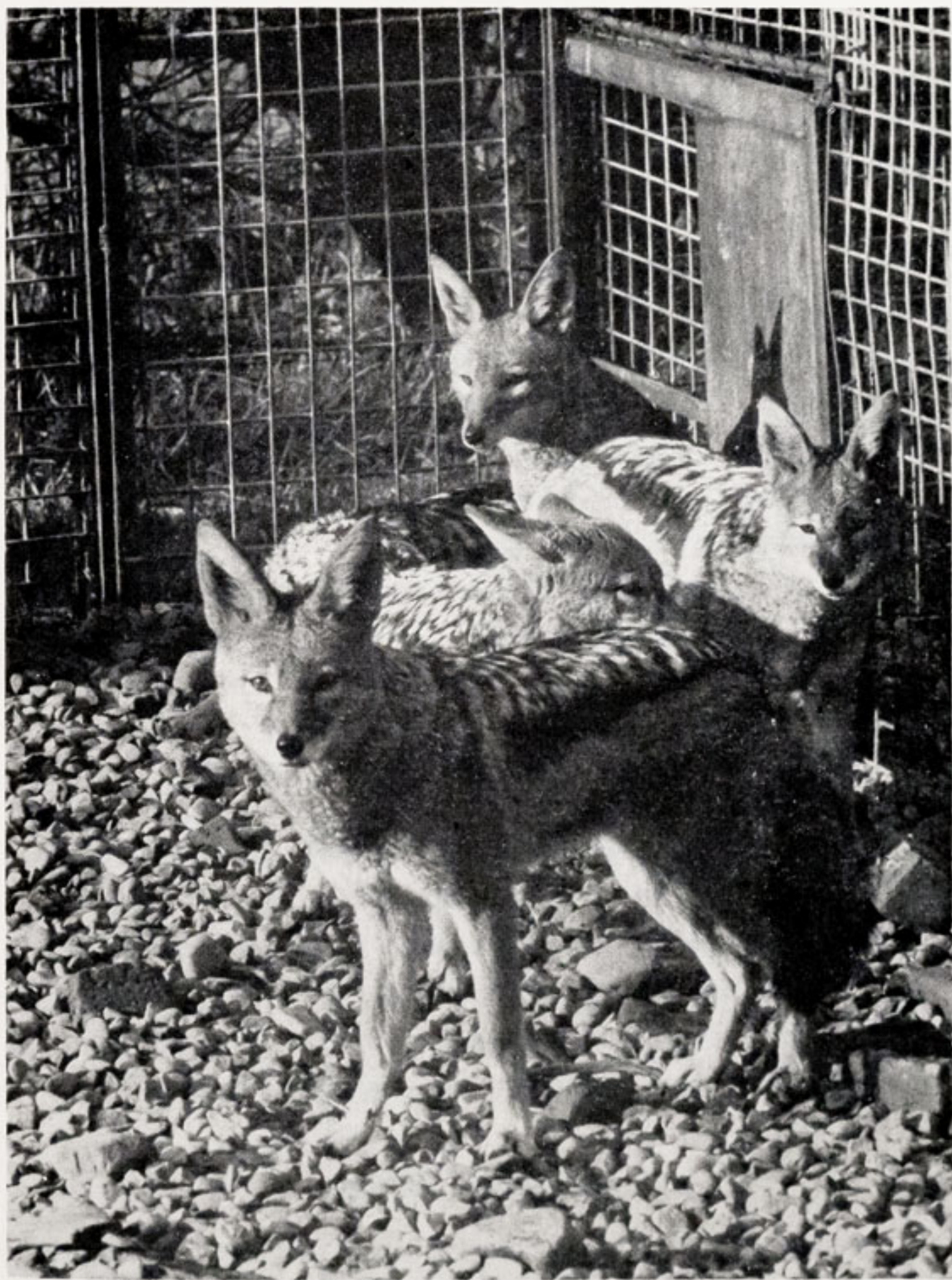
with large ears and a beautifully marked coat. The general colouring is reddish, with a white underside and the namesake, the back covered in dark white-tipped hairs giving the characteristic silvery appearance from a distance. The tail is long, bushy and tipped with black.

Inhabiting open savannah and light woodland in East and South Africa, the Black-backed Jackal is an active capable hunter as well as a scavenger. The diet is wide and varied including rodents, birds, eggs and nestlings of ground-dwelling birds, reptiles, insects, snakes, young and small antelopes as well as fruits and berries. When scavenging, large groups of Black-backed Jackals may congregate and rush in as soon as there is a sign that the original predator is about to move away after eating; the carrion, however, has to be eaten in competition with Hyaenas, Vultures and Marabou Storks, and even Lions will scavenge other predators' kills.

When eating, the Jackal consumes as much as it possibly can, particularly when feeding youngsters, but any item of food found to be surplus to that meal is not wasted but carried away and hidden to be returned to later, usually within 24 hours.

Although mainly nocturnal, these Jackals may be seen during the day, but even if they are not seen, they can often be heard as they call to each other with a variety of yaps, howls and barks. Single animals, pairs or groups may be seen, and obviously, when hunting, a group of Jackals will be far more effective than a loner.

Jackals are territorial in their behaviour and both males and females mark the boundaries with urine. Intruders from other areas rarely stay to fight the established owner, usually giving way to aggressive threat behaviour and retreating. Their dens are usually situated in disused termitaries where a litter of puppies (up to six, but occasionally nine) is born after a gestation period of about two months. At first, the puppies are blind, but can see within about two weeks of their birth. The youngsters are not left alone when they are very young; the male usually goes hunting alone and then regurgitates meat on his return for the female and the pups. However, when they are strong enough to keep up with their parents, they are taken hunting and by the time they are eight months old they can look after themselves, although they do tend to remain with the male



By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

BLACK-BACKED JACKALS

and female until they are about one year old. An average lifespan is about 13 years. Their natural enemies include the Leopard and other large predators.

At present we have three males in our Collection, one Jackal having died last year. However, we have bred these lovely animals in the past and would hope to do so again when we have females once again in the group.

BIRTHS AND ARRIVALS

MAMMALS

- 1 Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) Birth
- 1 Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*) Purchased
- 1 Nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*) Birth
- 1 Arabian Gazelle (*Gazella arabica*) Birth
- 2 Leopards (*Panthera pardus*) Births
- 1 Orang-utan (*Pongo pygmaeus abelli*) Breeding loan
- 1 Axis Deer (*Axis axis*) Birth

BIRDS

- 1 Muscovy Duck & ducklings (*Cairina moschata Domestic*) Presented
- 1 Swainson's Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus moluccanus*) Hatched
- 3 Patagonian Conures (*Cyanoliseus patagonus*) Hatched
- 3 Red-rumped Parakeets (*Psephotus haemotonotus*) Hatched
- 2 Turquoise Parakeets (*Neophema pulchella*) Exchange
- 2 White Cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) Exchange
- 3 Go-away birds (*Corythaixoides concolor*) Exchange

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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