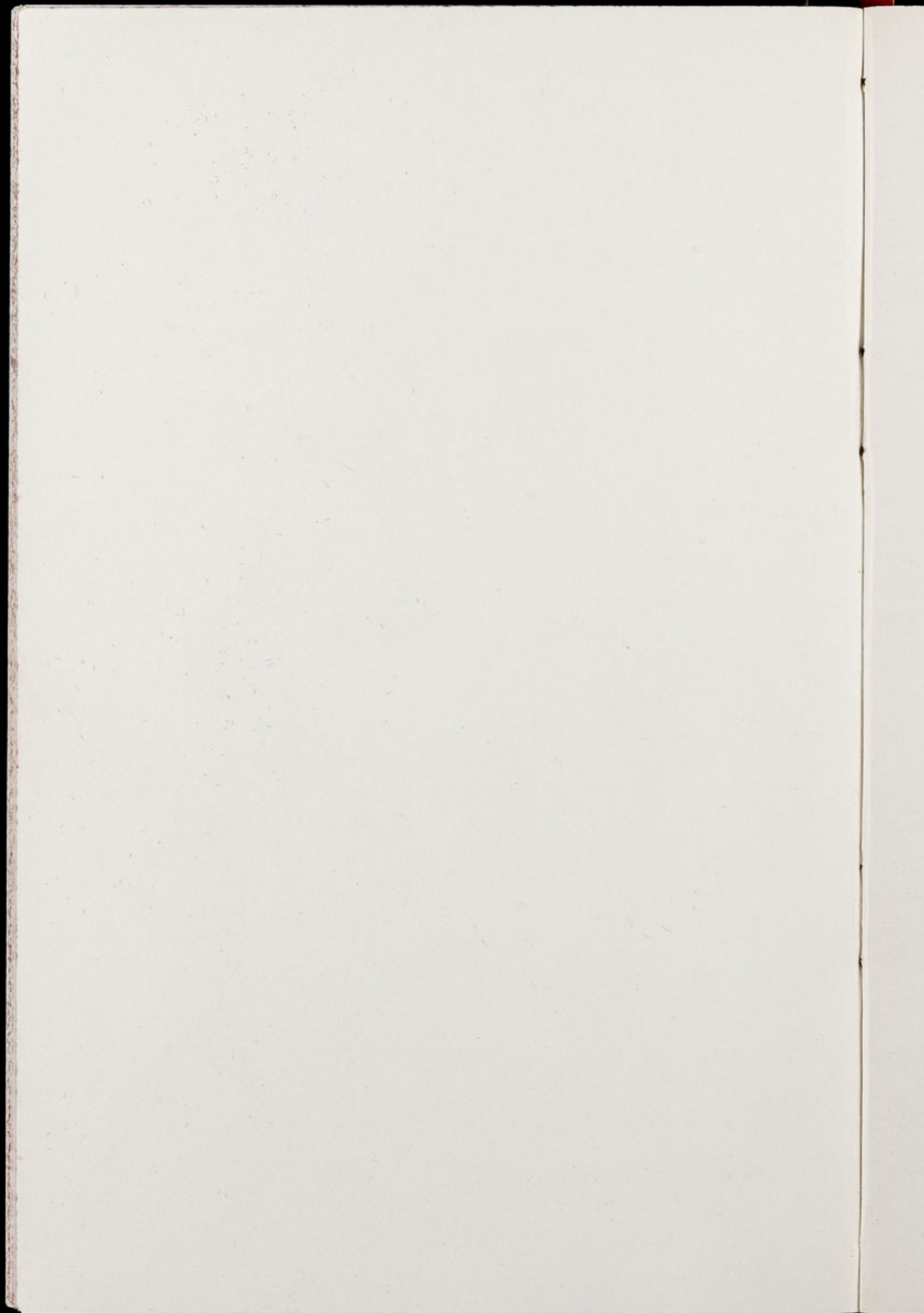




**CHESTER ZOO NEWS  
AND GUIDE**

December 1971

Price 6p



# The North of England Zoological Society

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

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<i>page fifteen</i>	Cockatiel chick.

**COVER:** *Lion-tailed Macaque.*

*By Courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.*

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION — NINETY FIVE NEW PENCE POSTAGE PAID

TELEPHONE :: CHESTER 20106/7/8

### ARRIVALS AND BIRTHS

The most exciting new arrival this month is a seven year old female Orang-utan (*Pongo pygmaeus*) named Lola. Very shortly this important young lady will be introduced to our group of four juvenile Orangs, three males and a female, but for the time being she is accommodated in a separate den in the New Ape House where we are carrying out routine medical checks.

In appearance and build Lola bears a strong resemblance to Dennis, the eldest male in the juvenile group. As soon as she arrived one rather dismal afternoon, she was ushered into the warm den that had been prepared specially for her. She had travelled well and did not seem at all frightened by the strange surroundings, just extremely curious. While the zoo staff studied their new charge, the Orang scrutinized them and then investigated her den, peering into the adjacent enclosure. She accepted a cup of milk eagerly before pouncing on the mound of woodwool provided as bedding, wielding it above her head and throwing it wildly around the den.

When the other four young Orangs were brought into their sleeping quarters they soon spotted the new arrival and so began a session of raspberry blowing, which is a form of greeting between these animals. At present Rajang, the young male Orang-utan which was born at the Zoo, is sharing a den in the Monkey House with two Chimpanzees and we hope to be able to introduce him with Lola to the group in the New Ape House.

Sheba, our elder female Jaguar (*Panthera onca*), has given birth to her third litter of cubs. The three healthy youngsters are being nursed in their den and will not be old enough to venture outside until early in the New Year. However, as they have been born at such a late stage in the year, we will allow them out only on days when the weather is reasonably mild.

The Jaguar is the largest of the cat family found in the Americas and nowadays has a range from the south western United States south into Chile and Argentina to about Lat. 40°, though the distribution in earlier periods is believed to have extended to Tierra del Fuego. This species inhabits both forest areas and open grass lands, pursuing a variety of prey including Peccaries, Agouties, Deer, Capybaras, Tapirs and also, since the Jaguar takes readily to water, Turtles and Fish.

The Jaguar is comparable in size with the Leopard but is a stockier animal. Examination of the body patterning of the two species will reveal another difference, as most of the rosettes of the Jaguar have black spots in their centres. There are melanistic forms of Jaguar but these are not seen in captivity as frequently as the black Leopards or Panthers.

From two to four cubs are born in a litter and Jaguars breed from about three years old. The gestation period lasts for between 100 and 110 days.

Other births this month include those of a Chinchilla (*Chinchilla laniger*) in the Small Mammal House and two Spiny Mice (*Acomys cahirinus*) in the Nocturnal section.

An adult female De Brazza Monkey (*Cercopithecus neglectus*) was also among the new specimens to arrive at the Zoo this month. She spent a short period in an enclosure by herself for observation before being integrated successfully with the resident group.

We have been presented with a female Common Genet (*Genetta genetta*) which is now accommodated in the Small Mammal House.

Genets are carnivores belonging to the Viverridae family which includes Civets, Mongooses, Linsangs and the Binturong, and in the classificatory sense is situated between the cat family and the Mustelids or Weasels, Otters and Badgers, etc. About nine full

species have been described in the genus *Genetta*, including two which were not recognised until 1960. All are found only in Africa with the exception of the Common Genet which ranges into south western Europe, Arabia and Israel.

The general body colouration of the Genets varies from greyish to yellowish with either brown or black spots, there being only slight differences between some of the species. The body is long and streamlined, measuring up to 22 inches in the larger forms, with a tail that is almost the same length and is usually banded in black and white. The legs are short, the ears and eyes fairly large and the nose pointed. The feet bear semi-retractile claws, a factor in classifying the Viverridae closer to the cat family. The Genet also has anal glands which secrete a musky fluid and a line of hairs which are erected along the back if the animal becomes excited.

Genets may be found in dense forest or in scrub, but always in places affording plenty of cover where their spotted coats provide good camouflage. They are nocturnal hunters, catching many small animals including nestling and ground birds, mammals, reptiles and insects. They are agile climbers and during the day often sleep in holes in trees or simply along the branches.

In many of the Genet species, little is known of their mating habits and gestation periods. Litters are reported to contain from two to three young, called kittens, and in South Africa Genets are known to produce two litters in a year. Regular readers will recall that we have been successful this year in breeding Blotched X Forest Genets. Recently the three kittens in this litter were sufficiently grown to be separated from the mother and were sexed as two males and a female.

The photograph on the right shows a Blotched Genet (*Genetta tigrina*) which is similar in markings to the Common species.



BLOTCHED GENET (*Genetta tigrina*)

*E. Kirkland, F.R.P.S.*

### REPTILE NOTES

The lizards of Australia fall into five basic types or families as zoologists call them. They are the skinks, the dragon lizards, the goannas or monitor lizards, the geckos and the fascinating snake or legless lizards. The first four of these basic types occur in other parts of the world as well, but the fifth is confined to Australia and New Guinea.

One of the most unusual of the Australian lizards belongs to the skink family and, from an assortment of names, is known more frequently as either the Shingleback or the Stump-tailed Lizard (*Trachydosaurus rugosus*). During the past month we have acquired two of these reptiles which are shown in the photograph on the right, taken shortly after they had been introduced to their new vivarium.

An inhabitant of southern inland Australia, the Shingleback has scales so large that they resemble overlapping tiles on a roof. Another name given to this species is Pine-cone Lizard and from one glance at the photograph, readers will appreciate why. The reptile's peculiar rounded tail is almost the same shape as the head, hence yet another name of Double-headed Lizard, used in country districts of Australia.

Shinglebacks attain an average length of eighteen inches and vary in colour according to the regions in which they occur, though most forms range from greyish to black and may or may not have paler blotches on the ventral or dorsal surfaces. The most colourful of all the Shinglebacks is greyish-brown with cream markings, while the variety found in Western Australia has a more prominent head and is reddish-brown with salmon pink blotches. A point worth mentioning is that this lizard has a pineal or "third eye" which is even more pronounced than that of the celebrated Tuatara (*Sphenodon punctatus*), the "living fossil" found on a number of small islands around New Zealand. The Tuatara is a lizard which has remained unchanged for about 200 million years and Chester is



SHINGLE-BACKED LIZARDS (*Trachydosaurus rugosus*)

K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

# CHESTER ZOO

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND  
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. SOUTH ENTRANCE  | 41. H.T. Rose Garden                     |
| 2. Peacock Enclosure   | 42. Aviaries                             |
| 3. Wapiti Paddock  | 43. Flamingos                            |
| 4. Lesser Pandas   | 44. Waterfowl Enclosure                  |
| 5. Aviaries  | 45. Waterfowl Enclosure                  |
| 6. Milk Bar  | 46. Capybara and Waterfowl               |
| 7. CORONATION HALL   | 47. Penguins                             |
| 8. CLOAKROOM, FIRST AID,<br>TOILETS, MOTHER and BABY<br>ROOM | 48. Sealions                             |
| 9. CAFETERIA   | 49. Rock Garden                          |
| 10. Picnic Lawn  | 50. Polar Bears                          |
| 11. Bears  | 51. Tigers                               |
| 12. Animal Enclosure   | 52. Waterfowl Enclosure                  |
| 13. Kiosk  | 53. Anteaters                            |
| 14. AQUARIUM   | 54. BIRD HOUSE                           |
| 15. NORTH ENTRANCE   | 55. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT                  |
| 16. PUSH CHAIRS, WHEEL CHAIRS,<br>LOST CHILDREN              | 56. Ape Nursery                          |
| 17. Parrot House   | 57. TOILETS                              |
| 18. Free Flight Aviary                                       | 58. Lions                                |
| 19. APE HOUSE  | 59. SOUVENIR SHOP                        |
| 20. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP                                    | 60. TOILETS                              |
| 21. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn                                 | 61. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT                  |
| 22. TOILETS  | 62. G.P.O. Telephone                     |
| 23. Tuatara Exhibit  | 63. Gibbon Pen                           |
| 24. Peccaries  | 64. Animal Enclosure                     |
| 25. Waterbus Halt  | 65. Cheetahs                             |
| 26. Birds of Prey Aviaries                                   | 66. Ornamental Rock Garden               |
| 27. Owl Aviary   | 67. Malayan Bears                        |
| 28. Jackal and Hyaena Enclosures                             | 68. Animal Enclosure                     |
| 29. Animal Enclosure   | 69. Aviary                               |
| 30. Porcupine Enclosure                                      | 70. Wallabies                            |
| 31. Coypus   | 71. WATERBUS BOOKING OFFICE<br>AND KIOSK |
| 32. Beavers  | 72. Waterbus Halt                        |
| 33. Giraffe House  |  |
| 34. Camel House  |  |
| 35. Waterbus Halt  |  |
| 36. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND<br>REPTILE HOUSES                |  |
| 37. CHIMPANZEES  |  |
| 38. Floribunda Rose Garden                                   |  |
| 39. Zebra House  |  |
| 40. Gibbon Island  |  |

- |                                |
|--------------------------------|
| 73. Fountain Flower Gardens    |
| 74. Rose Garden                |
| 75. Red Lechwe                 |
| 76. Red Lechwe                 |
| 77. Deer or Antelope Enclosure |
| 78. Waterbus Halt              |
| 79. Zebra and Deer Enclosure   |
| 80. Kamchatka Bears            |
| 81. ELEPHANTS                  |
| 82. Hippos                     |
| 83. Tapirs                     |
| 84. Small Mammal House         |
| 85. Waterfowl Enclosure        |
| 86. Ankole Cattle              |
| 87. Gazelle Paddocks           |
| 88. Storks and Ostriches       |
| 89. Baboon Pens                |
| 90. Cat House                  |
| 91. Lions and Tigers           |
| 92. Antelope Enclosure         |
| 93. Antelope Enclosure         |
| 94. Antelope Enclosure         |
| 95. Highland Cattle            |
| 96. MONKEY HOUSE               |
| 97. Waterfowl Enclosure        |
| 98. Wallabies and Waterfowl    |
| 99. Cranes and Waterfowl       |
| 100. Llamas and Alpacas        |

- |                                |
|--------------------------------|
| 101. Zebroids                  |
| 102. Bison Paddock             |
| 103. Pere David's Deer Paddock |
| 104. Eland and Marmots         |
| 105. RHINO HOUSE               |
| 106. TOILETS                   |
| 107. Mpila Snack-bar and Kiosk |
| 108. Antelope Enclosure        |
| 109. Antelope Enclosure        |

Animals may be moved from  
time to time.

FOR A COMPLETE  
TOUR OF THE ZOO -  
Follow Nos.1-109  
from South Entrance  
or Nos.16-109  
from North Entrance  
then return to  
Nos.1-14

## ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES:

LIONS—3 pm except Fridays  
BEARS—3-15 pm  
POLAR BEARS—4 pm  
SEA LIONS 3 times daily—  
2-40 pm, 3-40 pm, 4-40 pm

fortunate in being one of the few zoos in the world exhibiting a pair of these fascinating reptiles.

Another variety of Shingleback measures little more than ten inches long and lives only on Rottnest Island. Situated off the coast of Western Australia, this small island is also the home of an interesting little wallaby known as the Quokka (*Setonix brachyurus*).

Shinglebacks are viviparous, usually producing two young at a time. At birth these are about half the length of the female and are completely independent, being able to forage immediately for food.

Their diet is largely vegetarian, with a preponderance of berries and soft fruits. There are also reports that toadstools are eaten. In captivity Shinglebacks thrive on banana, apple, pear and other fruits, and take small snails quite freely. At Chester we also feed chopped meat and raw eggs, plus vitamins. In some areas of Australia the Shingleback is regarded as a pest because of its partiality to strawberries and tomatoes. Individuals are often found in strawberry patches where they gorge themselves on the fruit.

Few potential enemies of the Shinglebacks maintain interest long enough to penetrate these lizards' heavy scales. Their only real adversary, apart from man, is the python and on several occasions Shinglebacks have been found in the stomachs of these snakes which would have no difficulty in picking up the lizards and swallowing them whole. The Shingleback's sole means of defence is to open its mouth and make a hissing noise.

They do have another, rather different, enemy of more recent origin. In Australia wire netting has been used extensively in rabbit control and is responsible for a great many fatalities among these reptiles. As can be seen from the photograph, the Shingleback has a large triangular head suddenly contracted to the neck and in

attempting to push its way through the wire, the Shingleback becomes stuck by the neck. Because of the shape of the head, it is unable to reverse and the body is too bulky to allow it to move forwards, so the unfortunate creature dies slowly from starvation.

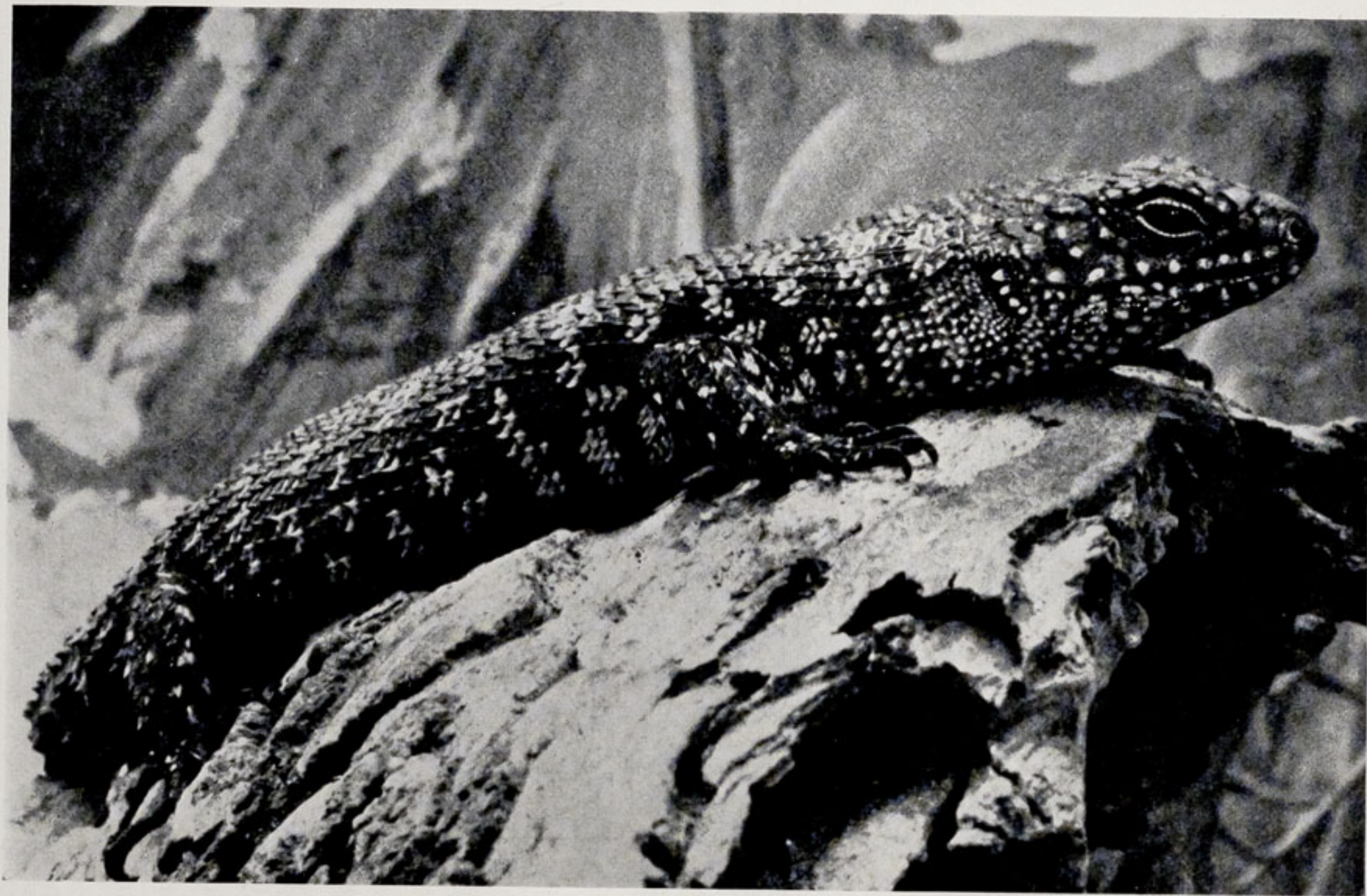
These lizards are not particularly agile and it is fairly common to see dead specimens on the roads where they have been hit by cars. In the Australian climate the hard road surface gives off considerable heat and it is feasible that the lizards are actually basking there.

Shinglebacks were fairly abundant over most of their range at one time. However, because of their comparative slowness, it was possible in some places to pick up quite a number of specimens in the space of a few hours with the result that they were reduced to a minimum. Re-introduction schemes have now been implemented in such areas as Flinders Chase with a high degree of success.

In captivity, Shinglebacks are especially prone to endemic diseases and parasites and upon arrival have to be checked thoroughly. In fact, they require a lot of care, more so than most other types of lizards.

At the present time we are showing two Australian skinks, the Shingleback and the Cunningham's Skink (*Egernia cunninghami*) shown in the photograph on page twelve. The particular specimens of the latter species now on exhibition were collected on the outskirts of Sydney where they are very common in the sandstone outcrops.

The Cunningham's Skink is found in rocky, boulder country, mostly in high altitudes, in southern Queensland, eastern and southern New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and south Western Australia. It grows to fourteen inches in length and is one of the most numerous of the larger skinks.



CUNNINGHAM'S SKINK (*Egernia cunninghami*)

W. H. Timmis

The Cunningham's has spines on the surface of its body which, by letting air out of the stomach, may lie flat, or can be erected. When alarmed the skink scampers into a narrow crevice in the rock and inflates its body, thus erecting the spines, and so makes it impossible for the assailant to dislodge it. Any attempt to pull out the skink by its tail will more often result in this breaking off.

The breeding of the Garden Tree Boa (*Coralla hortulana*) is a rare occurrence in captivity so we were especially pleased when fifteen young were born recently. Of the few breedings on record, several have been from females which were gravid when captured, but without any doubt our success resulted from a mating in captivity as both parents were obtained as very young specimens and reared at the Zoo. They are now about three years old.

The Garden Tree Boa is a non-venomous species reaching an average length of about four feet and is found in the Guianas, northern Brazil, Ecuador and northern Peru. It is strictly arboreal in habits and as would be expected, has a diet consisting chiefly of birds. There is a fairly wide range of colour variation within the species. One of the parent snakes is a reddish-brown colour while the other is brownish-black and in the litter we obtained young of both types, seven of the former and eight of the latter.

An interesting feature about the Garden Tree Boa is that sometimes it adopts an unusual technique when moving along branches and this has been labelled the "concertina" method. The snake extends its body and coils the front part around the branch, next drawing up the rear part and anchoring this to the branch before reaching forward again.

We have been presented with two small Agamas from the Maldivé Islands, where they are reported to be fairly common. As yet they have not been identified but we think they may be a pair.

Both are on exhibition in the Gecko vivarium. The Maldives are a chain of very beautiful coral islands in the Indian Ocean which are relatively unspoiled by man. They extend for some 600 miles, from the equator northwards to Lat. 8°, and at their most northerly point are about 300 miles from the south western coast of India.

### BIRD NOTES

Among the latest presentations to the Bird Section were a Mealy Amazon Parrot and a Blue and Yellow Macaw.

In the Tropical House a Yellow-shouldered Whydah (*Coliuspasser macrocerus*) has been reared to independence.



K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

COCKATIEL CHICK (1) (*Nymphicus hollandicus*)



K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

COCKATIEL CHICK (2) (*Nymphicus hollandicus*)

It has been a bumper year at Chester Zoo for breeding Cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) as the final total of chicks reared is 69. The large colony consists now of some 116 birds which should make a wonderful show when they are liberated in one of the long Rainbow Aviaries.

The rather comical photograph on the left shows a Cockatiel chick at about two weeks old when its first quills are beginning to appear. The chick in the illustration above is at a slightly later stage of development with its wing feathers well formed.

### NEW LECTURE HALL AND LIBRARY

We are very pleased to announce that good progress has been made on the new lecture hall and library. This building will be a

valuable asset to the Society, as in the past we have had to take over a room in one of the restaurants for lectures, etc., which of course has not only entailed a lot of extra work but also meant a considerable loss of revenue when the restaurant was closed for catering to the public. The decorations for the new building have been selected and the seating ordered but it will be several weeks before work is completed.

We feel we ought to correct a statement that appeared in the press a short while ago, which declared that the library would be open to the general public. Unfortunately this was ill founded as the building is intended as a reference library for the Society and only Members will be permitted to use it. The lecture hall will be used for meetings and lectures at the discretion of the Director.

Due notice of when the new facilities are available will be sent to Members.

### SUBSCRIPTION FORMS

New readers of the "*Chester Zoo News*" who would like to receive the magazine regularly may be interested to know that subscription forms are on display in the souvenir shop. An annual subscription (12 issues) costs 95p postage paid, which can either be handed over the counter or posted with completed form to The Director-Secretary, Chester Zoo, Chester.

**WE WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL OUR READERS**

**A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS**

The following notice is displayed on several boards in the grounds

Please comply with it at all times.

## FEEDING OF ANIMALS AND BIRDS

**IT IS AN OFFENCE** for any member of the public to offer food of any description to any Animal or Bird in Chester Zoo.

This regulation is made for the sake of the health of the Animals and Birds. Since the NO FEEDING rule was introduced, the number of deaths has dropped appreciably and sickness, due to wrong feeding has been virtually eliminated.

What you may be offering to an animal may only be a sweet or an inoffensive piece of bread, but it can mean a death sentence for the animal. For example, a cough drop, which may relieve your cough, can cause instant death to many Animals and Birds in the Zoo.

You must not lose sight of the fact that you are only one of over a million visitors who visit the Zoo annually. If for instance an elephant had one bun from only one tenth of a day's visitors during the summer, it would eat between three and four thousand. You can guess the result.

We realise what a temptation it is for visitors, particularly children, to feed our Animals and Birds and this is why we invite members of the public to be present at the official feeding times.

This is a polite warning to you, asking you not to feed the animals. If you ignore it, the Keepers are authorised to ask you to leave the Gardens.

**If you really love Animals and Birds, you will appreciate the wisdom of the ruling — No Feeding by members of the public.**

**PLEASE HELP US TO KEEP OUR COLLECTION OF ANIMALS NOT ONLY ALIVE BUT IN FIRST CLASS CONDITION.**

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