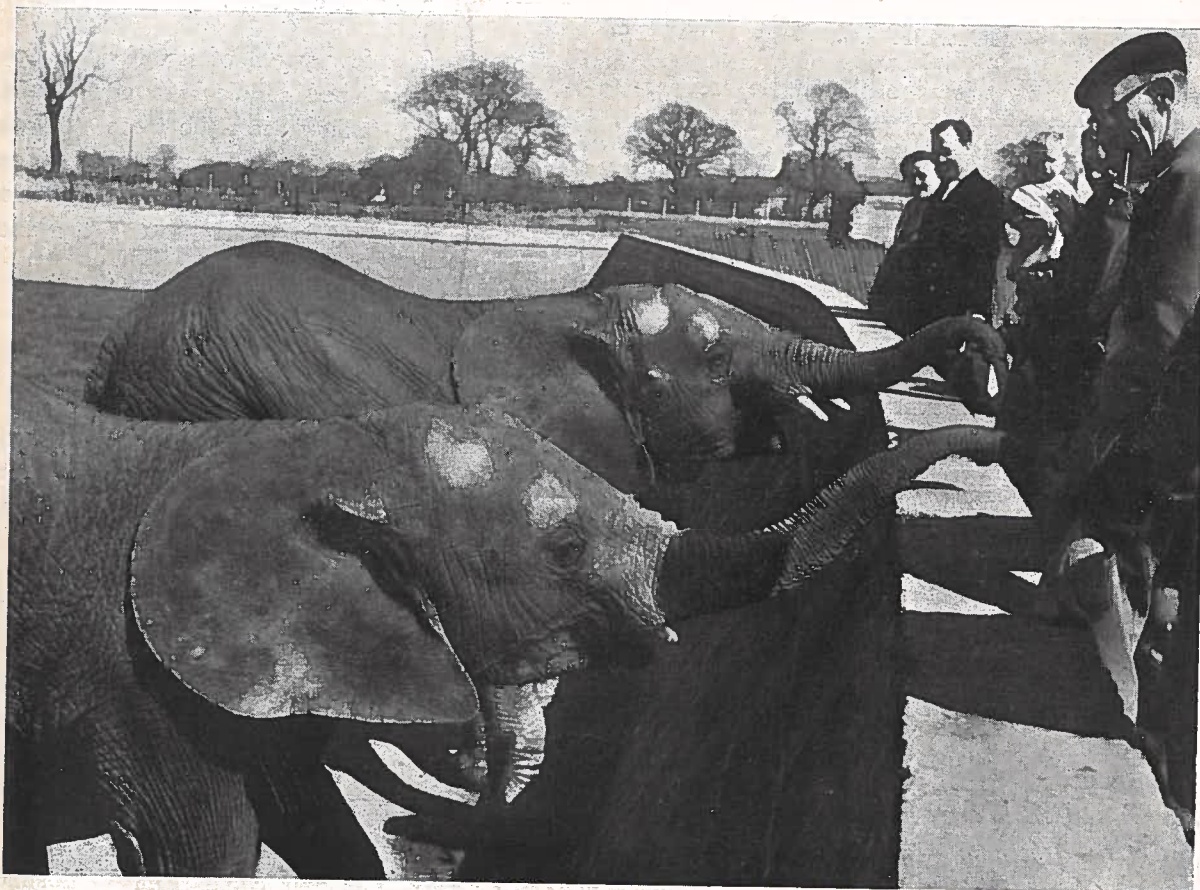


"Our Zoo News"

• A CHRONICLE OF NEWS OF •
CHESTER ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

NUMBER 126.

JULY, 1957.



Two young African bull elephants which arrived at Chester Zoo in 1955 are now growing very rapidly and the time is fast approaching when they will have to be transferred to more permanent quarters. At the present time they are accommodated in our Rhino enclosure and this will shortly have to be vacated because we understand that another black Rhinoceros will shortly be on its way to Chester Zoo. It

is proposed to build a large natural enclosure for these African Elephants on the new land which is situated on the west side of the Zoo and will be approached by the bridge, which is now well under construction. Here we will try to give these animals as much liberty as possible besides providing ample warmth and sheltered quarters for them in the Winter season.

PRICE SIXPENCE

Six copies for 4/- (including packing and postage).

The North of England Zoological Society,

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER.

Tel. Chester 20106/7.

Our Zoo News.

EDITORIAL.

During the past few months we have experienced many difficulties with our Zoo News as we have been extremely busy here at the Gardens and also with shortages of staff. Now, however, we are hoping to publish "Our Zoo News" much more frequently and make it far more entertaining and interesting to all concerned. It is now nearly twenty years since our Zoo News was first published; the actual first copy was published in November, 1937, and consisted of three pages of typescript. Since those early days our Zoo News has had a very chequered career, for like the Gardens itself it has grown far beyond what it was in its infancy.

No. 1 contained many interesting items, the first of which was the publication of the birth of a Mandrill in the Zoo, which was considered probably the first to be bred in this country. It also contained a short account of the lion house, which is now completely out of date and has not been used as a lion house for several years, and the programme of the proposed lion enclosure, which was not completed until another ten years later.

Another interesting paragraph in this first issue was the announcement that work was in progress on the construction of a new tropical aquarium. This aquarium refers of course to the one which used to be in the basement of the main building. It was a very successful aquarium and very popular indeed, but as time went on, as the Zoo grew, it became too small

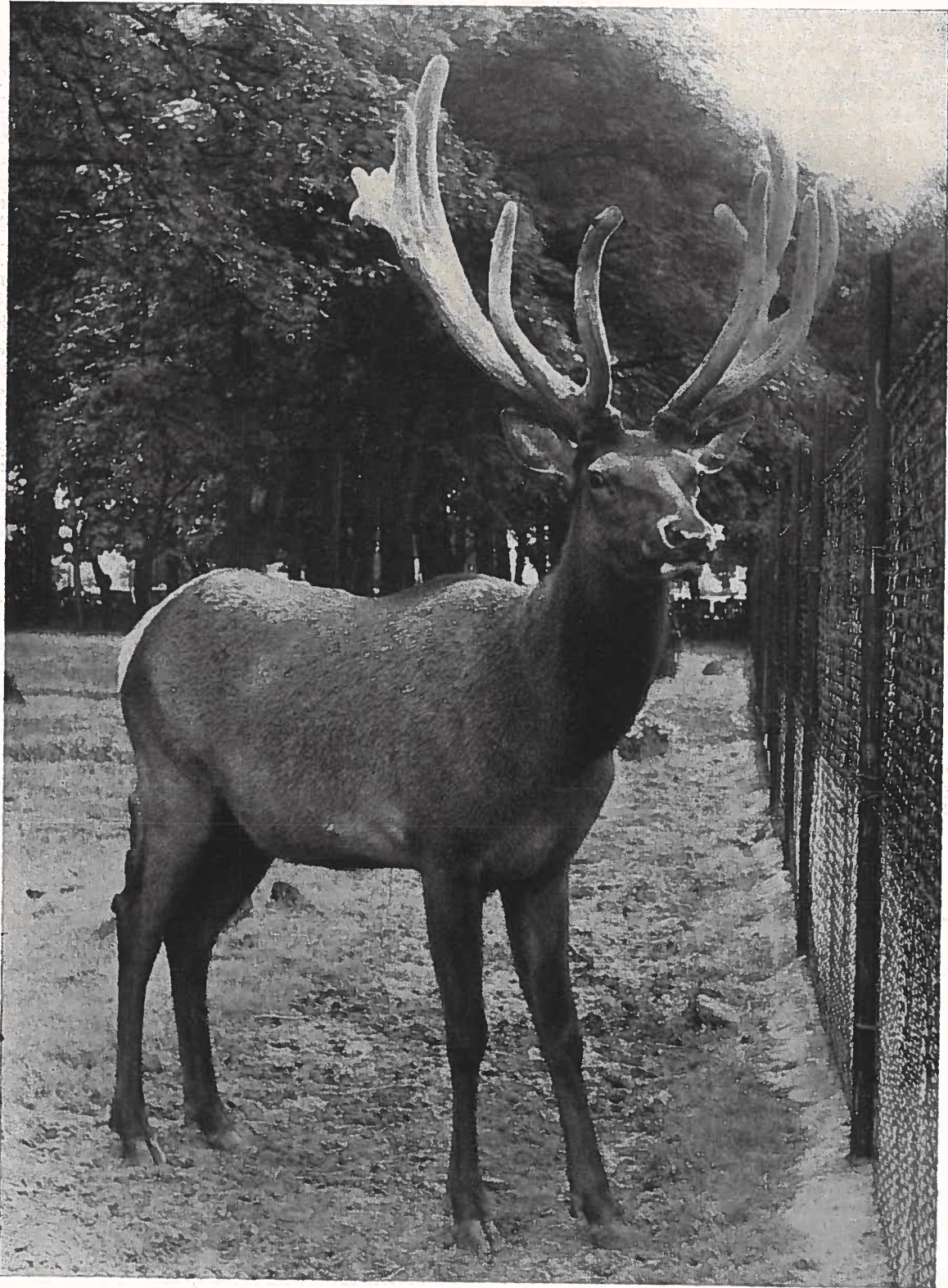
and a new, more pleasant aquarium, was built near the new entrance, and the old aquarium converted into public toilets.

For the first few years of its life our Zoo News was published regularly every month, but strange as it may seem the more staff we had and the bigger the Zoo grew the less Zoo News's we were able to publish, but we are trying to rectify this omission and try and publish the Zoo News more regularly.

WAPITI.

The Wapiti, like the Elk, is one of the largest of the Deer family, standing between five and six feet high at the shoulder. It possesses massive antlers and is a very regal animal. The Wapiti, one would say, is a coarse feeder, it takes all kinds of grasses and various weeds and is particularly fond of leaves of most of the deciduous trees. In the enclosure at Chester there are many such trees growing and it is very interesting to watch these Wapiti stand on their hind legs to reach as high as they possibly can to take the leaves from the trees.

Our particular pair came from Whipsnade and the male is an exceptionally fine specimen. A photograph of him appears in this issue. Last winter he was introduced to a hind and from then onwards his temper with the public was not of the best, and this year we have had to place all along the front a very stout rail, to stop him reaching the wire with his antlers, which he charged with great force. We are hoping to obtain for him another hind or two so as to make a small herd.



WAPITI.



ZEBRAS.

We have many Zebras at Chester Zoo, mainly the East African variety or Grants Zebra. We are keeping quite a number of these animals and have bred quite a few during the last few years. The main idea in collecting a fairly large herd together is that we will have a good start when we have completed our African plains which we propose to build on the new land. Here we shall mix Zebras with Antelopes, Giraffes and other African fauna in one large group.

Another breed, the Gravis Zebra, is of course by far the more spectacular, and we have two mares and one young stallion. Unfortunately the stallion is not yet old enough to breed

from, but when he is we hope that we shall be able to establish a herd as large as the East African. Zebras, contrary to the general opinion, are not always the docile animal they appear to be, particularly the stallions, and we have one stallion at Chester Zoo, Charlie by name, who is in fact a very dangerous animal; no-one ever dare go into him and he has to be watched on every occasion. Nevertheless he has proved himself a worthy animal of his kind and has produced several babies during the last few years.

We are hoping, as time goes on, to acquire one or two other varieties of Zebra so that we can show the full range of these delightful animals in the Zoological Gardens.

CHESTER ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

Chester Zoo this spring has been a blaze of colour with the spring bedding and we heard on all sides praise and appreciation of the beautiful display which the gardeners had laid on. Now the summer bedding is almost completed and we look forward to having a wonderful summer display this season. The roses once again look very promising and this year we should have a very delightful show. At the present time we have something like four thousand rose bushes in the Zoo, but in addition to these delightful flowers there is a wealth of variety in other directions, and we feel sure that the gardeners' efforts will once again be appreciated.

LONG BILLED RHEA.

Recently we have received a pair of long-billed Rhea from Northern Brazil. This is a very small form of the Rhea, is darker in colour and has a more flattened head, but is nevertheless a very neat and compact bird. We are hoping that this pair will settle down and breed as our Emus have done.

EMUS:

This year we have succeeded in breeding a further fifteen Emus which now brings our total number of Emus in the Zoo to twenty-six. As last year we incubated all the eggs in an incubator and the chicks of course have been cared for, for the first week or so, in a large "foster-mother", but the Emu grows very rapidly indeed and it is only a matter of months before it is almost half grown.

Visit our Splendid Gardens.

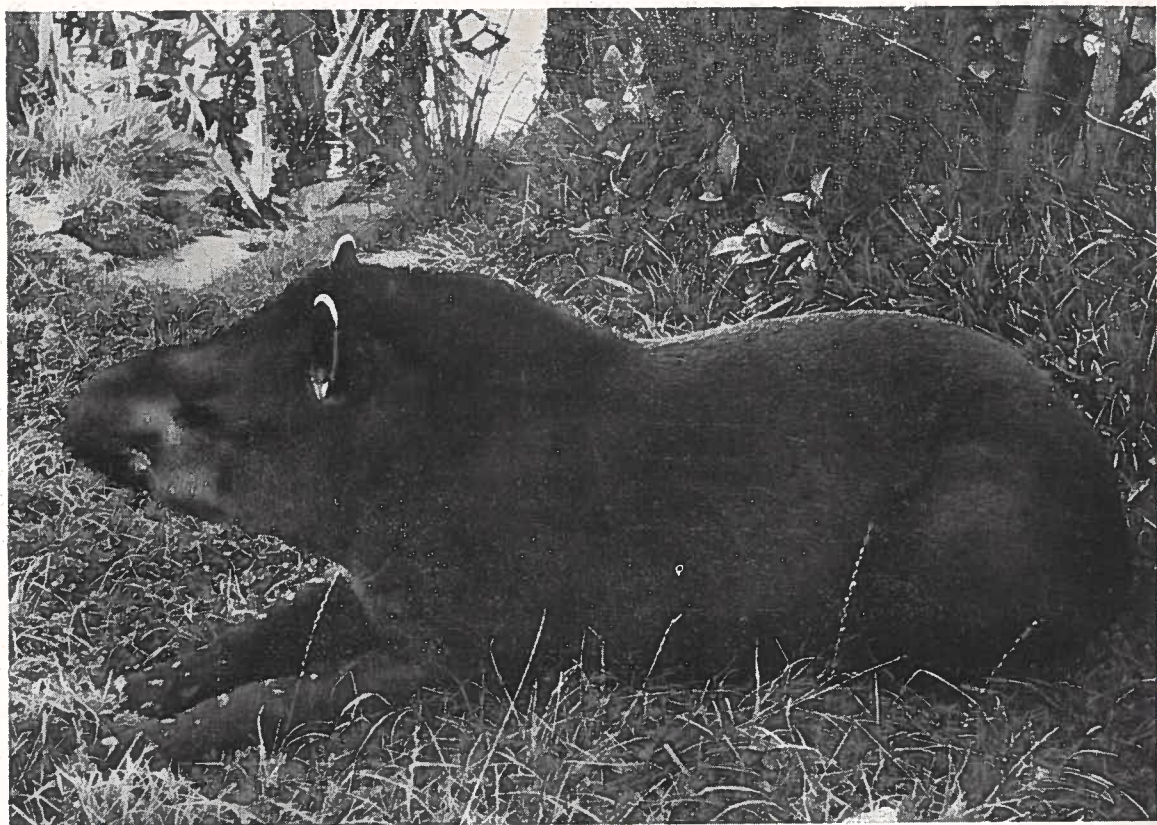
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SOUTH AMERICAN TAPIR.

Our South American Tapir has grown very much during the winter and makes a wonderful show as it walks around its enclosure and suddenly plunges into the water and submerges itself. We are hoping before very long to receive a mate for this Tapir and when we do get one we shall try our best to construct a new enclosure which will provide much more water than that at present supplied. Occasionally this Tapir has gone through the barrier into the lake and although the animal is harmless it has caused quite a commotion as it has gone along the canals through the lake with its nose just protruding above the water, as though it were a submarine. Tapirs are quite harmless but they are very determined and they will press through anything to get to the point which they wish to reach. They

will push a thing over rather than go round it.

Many years ago, in the Zoos very early days, over twenty years ago, we had a female Tapir which was a great pet and permitted children to ride on its back. One day this particular Tapir was missing from its den and could not be found anywhere. Many hours elapsed before it was finally discovered in the bedroom of one of the old Coachman's lodgings on the estate. It was a much larger specimen than the young one we have at the moment and it proved quite a problem in getting it down the stairs, which were most difficult. What made it make such a journey to this bedroom we never discovered, but it was always a very popular favourite and I think it was because of its fondness for human company that persuaded it to go in search of some friends.