



CHESTER ZOO NEWS
AND GUIDE

October 1973

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The North of England Zoological Society

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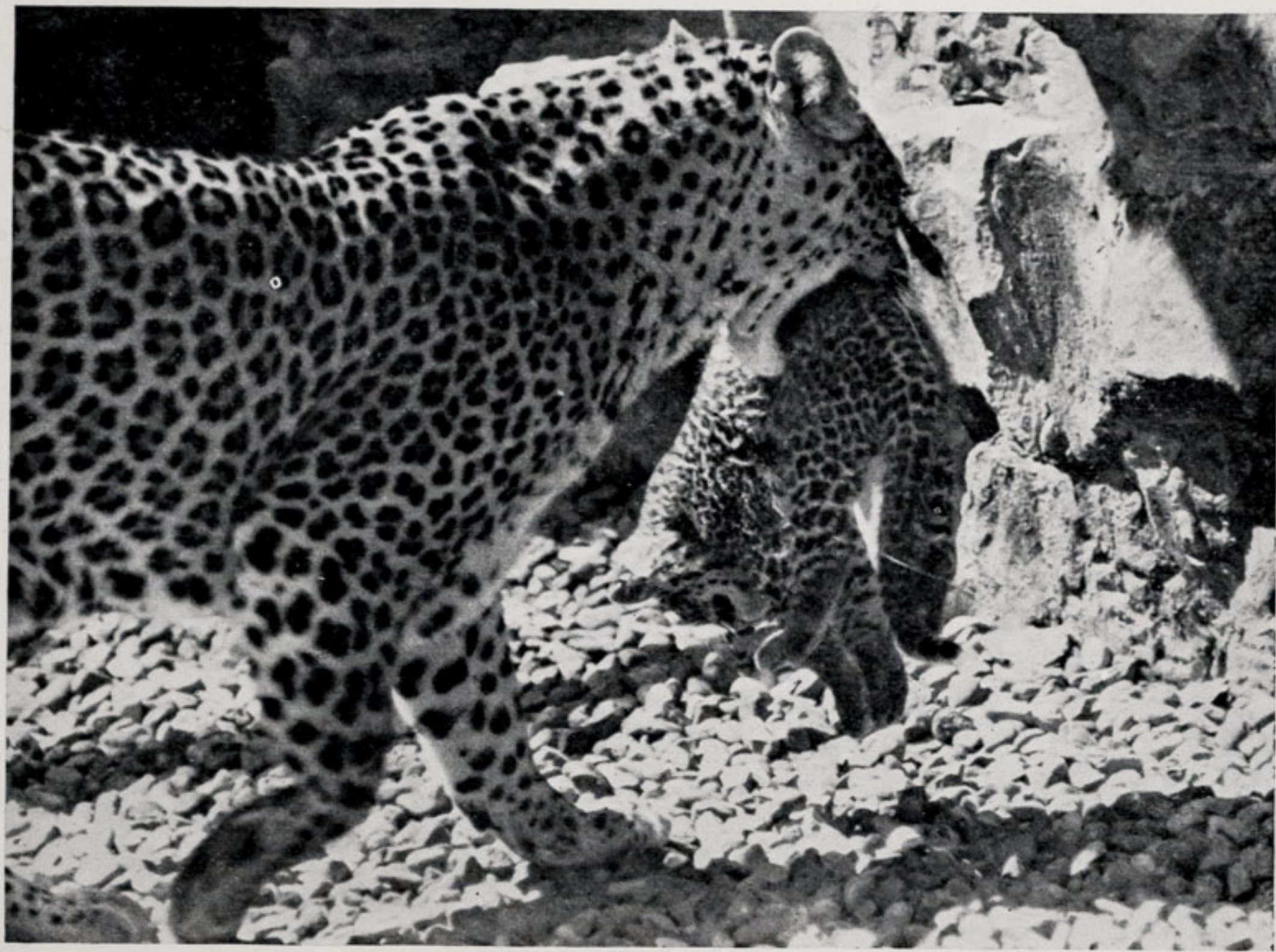
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COVER: *Tiger (Panthera tigris).*

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

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION — ONE POUND AND FIVE PENCE POSTAGE PAID

TELEPHONE :: CHESTER 20106/7/8



LEOPARD CARRYING CUB (*Panthera pardus*)

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

ARRIVALS AND BIRTHS

Since our last report the following mammal births have been recorded:

- 1 Barbary Ape (*Macaca sylvana*)
- 1 Capuchin Monkey (*Cebus albifrons*)
- 1 Talapoin Monkey (*Cercopithecus talapoin*)
- 1 Vervet Monkey (*Cercopithecus pygerythrus*)
- Sierra Leone Striped Squirrels (*Fumisciurus pyrrhopus leonis*)
- 3 Leopards (*Panthera pardus*)
- 1 Alpaca (*Lama pacos*)
- 1 Greater Kudu (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*)

During August this year we lost our old breeding female Barbary Ape, Trixie. She was born at the zoo in 1955 and up to the time of her death, which occurred soon after she had given birth to a dead youngster, she had produced all the babies in the present troop. The mother of the latest addition is almost certainly the next eldest female which has bred for the first time. The sex of the baby is not yet known but it can be seen with the rest of the Barbary Apes in one of the group of enclosures marked No. 89.

The young Capuchin, Talapoin and Vervet Monkeys can be seen in the Monkey House, No. 96. All three species have good breeding records at Chester Zoo.

The birth of the Sierra Leone Striped Squirrel is welcomed, not because these animals are in any way rare but because this is the first time this group has bred here. A male and five females of the species were obtained from Jersey Zoo in June last year and have since occupied an enclosure in the Small Mammal House, No. 84. The exact number of young is not known — the only baby seen so far was being carried to a nestbox in the mouth of a female. Naturally

the area is not being disturbed and we can only wait and hope that the young Squirrel is reared.

By the time this issue is published the family of three Leopard cubs and their mother will probably have access to their outer enclosure and then there will be eight Leopard cubs in three litters on exhibition in the Cat House. The photograph on page two shows one of the methods employed by the female Leopards for transporting their mischievous cubs.

Still in the Cat House (No. 90), there is good news of the litter of Jaguarundis (*Felis yagouaroundi*) born in mid-August. This litter contained two kittens and the female, Fara, has been an excellent mother. When first observed, the kittens were jet black but gradually their coats are lightening to become more like those of their parents, which are a dark greyish colour.

The kittens have reached the stage when they are permitted outside on fine days but at this time of year we are beset with weather problems and, though the door has been opened a few times, Fara has not yet coaxed the little Jaguarundis from their den. A fairly high step separates the den from the outer enclosure, the reason being to eliminate draughts in the interior of the Cat House, and whilst this can be negotiated by the adult cat, the kittens are so small that we have been obliged to insert a ramp and small platform over the step. As soon as possible a photograph will be taken for inclusion in the magazine.

The Alpaca is the second bred this year and it can be seen in enclosure No. 68.

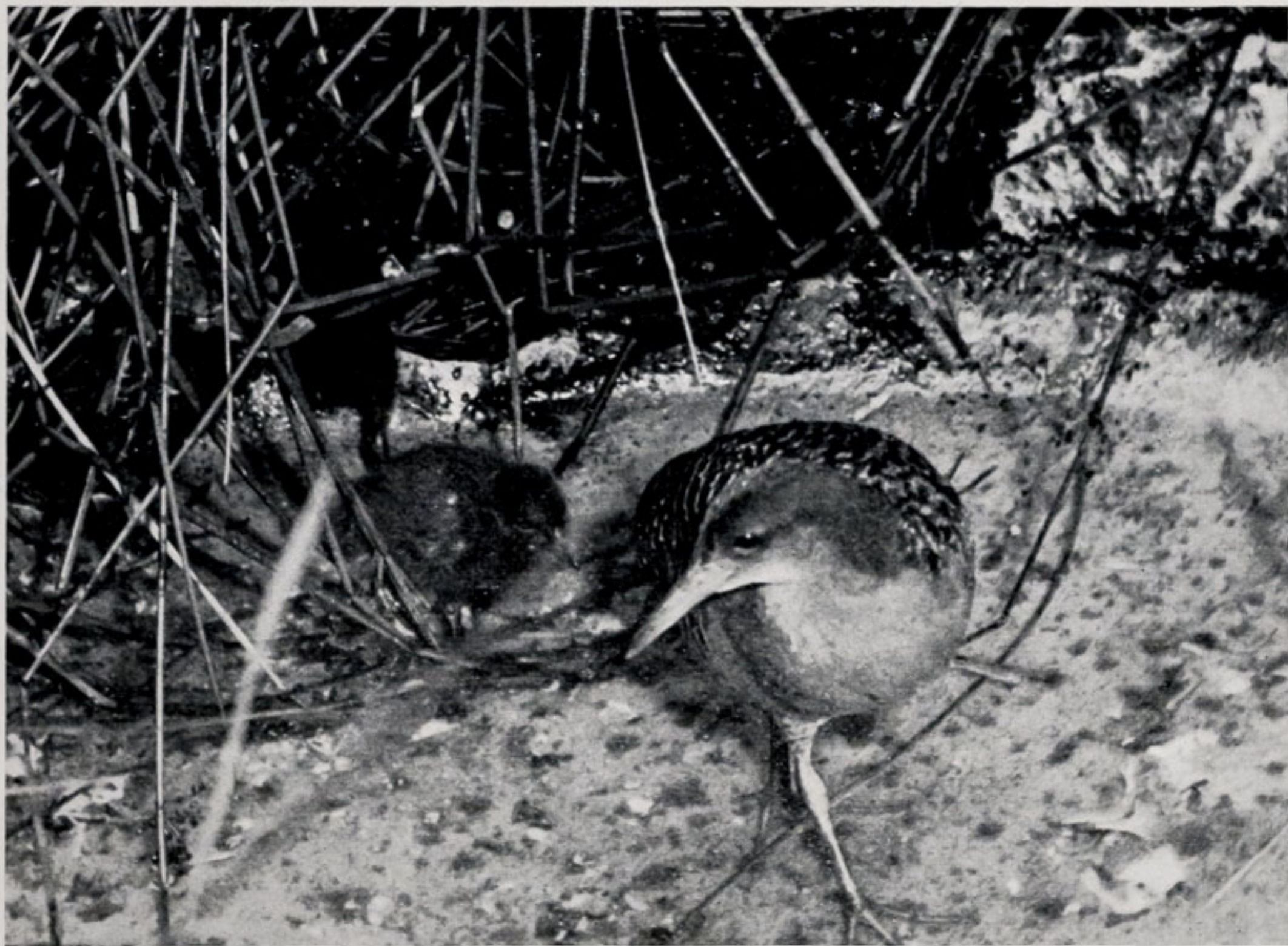
The Greater Kudu calf is accommodated with its parents and the female calf born last year in enclosure No. 92. Like all newly born young of this species, it has kept its distance from keepers and it has not been possible to ascertain its sex.

Amongst the latest arrivals at the zoo is a male Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*) named Cirrhus, but this animal is not destined as a permanent resident. He has been sent to Chester from Edinburgh Zoo on a loan basis and will remain here for four months. The fervent hope behind his visit is that he will mate successfully with the two female Clouded Leopards at Chester.

Cirrhus is about four and a half years old and is one of a pair of Clouded Leopards owned by Edinburgh Zoo. His prowess as a father has been demonstrated already but unfortunately Edinburgh are fairly confident that their female is no longer capable of producing cubs. Our two Clouded Leopards arrived in August 1966 and at that time were believed to be a male and a female of eighteen and eight months old respectively. Subsequently the error was discovered. The status of the wild Clouded Leopard is sufficiently precarious to warrant an entry in the I.U.C.N.'s Red Data Book and so, from the conservation aspect in particular, the most intelligent solution was to provide an opportunity for the male at Edinburgh to mate with the two female Clouded Leopards here. A mutually agreeable arrangement has been concluded between Chester and Edinburgh regarding the disposal of any progeny.

Cirrhus arrived here on the 3rd September and on the 7th he ventured into his outer enclosure at the Cat House for the first time. The two females were accommodated in an adjacent enclosure. A day or so later one of the females came into heat and a successful introduction ensued. The other female has since been introduced also. No evidence of mating has been observed but we are not despondent as this will probably take place at night anyway.

It would seem that considerable research into the life of the wild Clouded Leopard is still required. There is no doubt that it inhabits dense forest but there are conflicting views as to whether it is mainly a tree dweller or a terrestrial creature.



SLATY-BREASTED RAIL AND CHICKS (*Rallus striatus*)

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

It is a medium sized cat with a stocky frame and belongs to the group of "purring" felines. At six feet long, about half of which is a thick tail, the male Clouded Leopard is slightly larger than the female. One unique feature about this species is its upper canine teeth which are longer than those of any other cat and, it is said, reminiscent of the Sabre-toothed Tiger. The coat of the Clouded Leopard is also distinctive and extremely attractive, a fact which sadly has not escaped its hunters. Its legs and head are spotted and striped while the back bears large patches, pale in the centre with dark borders, against a rich brown body. Dark broken rings encircle the tail.

Its range in South East Asia extends from the eastern Himalayas into Burma, Thailand, China and the Malay Peninsula and also into Borneo, Sumatra and Formoso. The population seems always to have been thinly scattered but now there are strong indications that pressures are reducing the number of Clouded Leopards further. Being a rare species, it is relatively uncommon in zoos and captive breedings are important.

Since our last report, two male and three female Chinchillas (*Chinchilla laniger*) have also arrived in the collection. These animals were a presentation to the Society.

BIRD NOTES

During the past month the following chicks have left the nest:

- 4 Slaty-breasted Rails (*Rallus striatus*)
- 1 Blue-eyed Cockatoo (*Kakatoe ophthalmica*)
- 3 Jerdon's Starlings (*Sturnus burmanicus*)
- 2 Jungle Mynahs (*Aethiopsar fuscus*)
- 2 Green Singing Finches (*Serinus mozambicus*)
- 3 Java Sparrows (*Padra oryzivora*)
- 1 Red-billed Weaver (*Quelea quelea*)
- 2 Little Masked Weavers (*Ploceus luteolus*)

CHESTER ZOO

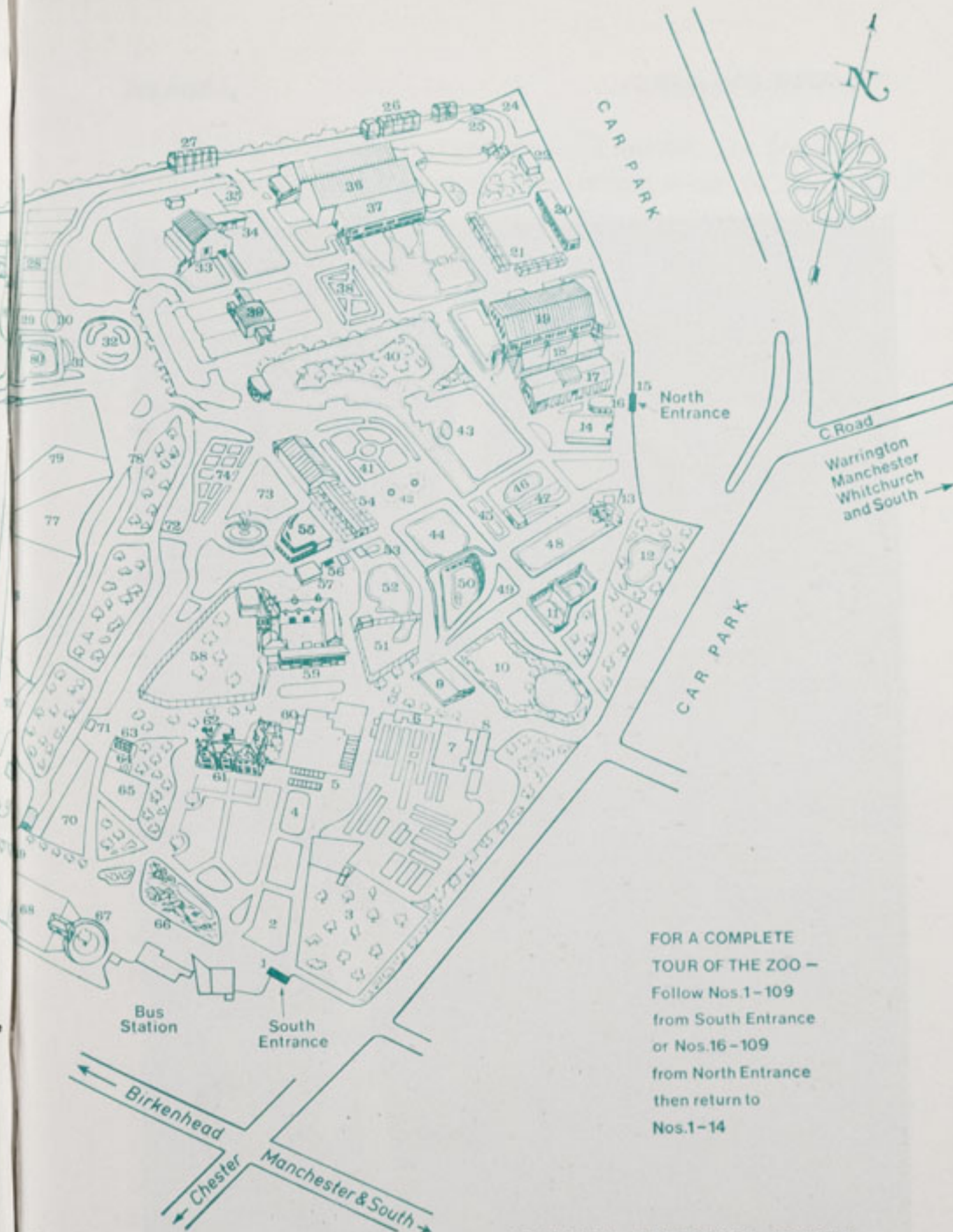
THE NORTH OF ENGLAND
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS



1. SOUTH ENTRANCE
2. Peacock Enclosure
3. Wapiti Paddock
4. Lesser Pandas
5. Aviaries
6. Milk Bar
7. CORONATION HALL
8. CLOAKROOM, FIRST AID, TOILETS, MOTHER AND BABY ROOM
9. CAFETERIA
10. Picnic Lawn
11. Bears
12. Animal Enclosure
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. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP
21. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn
22. TOILETS
23. Tuatara Exhibit
24. Peccaries
25. Waterbus Halt
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. Waterbus Halt
36. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND REPTILE HOUSES
37. CHIMPANZEES
38. Floribunda Rose Garden
39. Mammal House
40. Gibbon Island

41. H.T. Rose Garden
42. Aviaries
43. Flamingoes
44. Waterfowl Enclosure
45. Waterfowl Enclosure
46. Capybara and Waterfowl
47. Penguins
48. Sealions
49. Rock Garden
50. Polar Bears
51. Tigers
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
62. G.P.O. Telephone
63. Gibbon Pen
64. Animal Enclosure
65. Cheetahs
66. Ornamental Rock Garden
67. Malayan Bears
68. Animal Enclosure
69. Aviary
70. Wallabies
71. WATERBUS BOOKING OFFICE AND KIOSK
72. Waterbus Halt

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. Zebra Enclosure
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



MALE OSTRICH (*Struthio camelus*)

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

Of these breedings, two are of special interest. The first is that of the Slaty-breasted Rail chicks, two of which can be seen with the hen in the photograph on page six. From preliminary enquiries it seems likely that this is the first time this species of rail has been bred in the British Isles.

The adult birds arrived at the zoo at the beginning of the summer and then were described as Slaty-legged Banded Rails. Subsequent investigation revealed that they are representatives of the species *Rallus striatus* which has a wide distribution from India through South East Asia into Borneo, Sumatra and Java. The pair was introduced into one of the long aviaries adjoining the Temperate Bird House, No. 54. This particular aviary has a thick undergrowth of grasses and reeds and therefore is especially suitable for rails.

The nest was constructed in a clump of reeds, a foot or so away from a shallow pool. The rails made tunnels through the undergrowth and so, whilst the chicks could be heard, it was a few days before they showed themselves fully. Newly hatched, they were clothed in fluffy, jet black down but at the time of writing some of the adult plumage is visible. All four chicks appear sturdy and have been supplied with immense quantities of live food, a factor which we feel sure has been of major importance in rearing them successfully.

The other breeding which has generated excitement is that of the Blue-eyed Cockatoo. Though not a "first", it may be a second achievement in this country and the possibility is currently being explored. Even if this proves not to be the case, the event is extremely satisfying as it marks a successful conclusion to three seasons' attempts to breed by the parent birds. In 1971 the Blue-eyed Cockatoos laid an egg which did not hatch. Last year the single egg hatched but the chick died within a few days.

The adult pair occupy an aviary in the Parrot House, No. 17 and at the beginning of the season they were provided with a nest

box in the form of a large barrel with a hole cut about half way up the side. Initially the chick had brilliant yellow down but by the time it was ready to leave the nest, it had developed adult plumage and now its chief distinguishing feature is a lighter coloured bill. It is hoped that this will be the first of many chicks reared by this pair.

As part of an exchange with Jersey Zoo, we have received two female Keas (*Nestor notabilis*), dark green New Zealand parrots. The two birds were bred at Jersey and here they have joined a single male Kea in the Parrot House.

This month's presentations include two Spreo Starlings (*Spreo superbus*), a very colourful East African species now on exhibition in the Tropical House, a Jardine's Parrot (*Poicephalus quilielmi*) from Africa and a Red and Yellow Macaw (*Ara macao*) from South America. The two latter birds can be seen in the Parrot House also.

A fine specimen of a male Ostrich (*Struthio camelus*) illustrated in the photograph on page ten, has been acquired as a mate for our two female Ostriches and all three birds are accommodated in the spacious Kudu paddock, No. 92. The male is easy to spot, as his plumage is much darker than that of the females. For some time the hens have been laying eggs and it is hoped that henceforward these will prove fertile.

The following birds have also joined the collection recently:

- 1.1 Ornate Lorikeets (*Trichoglossus ornatus*)
- 3 Blue-eared Glossy Starlings (*Lamprocolius chalybaeus*)
- 1.1 Red-vented Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus cafer*)
- 1.1 Laughing Doves (*Stigmatopelia senegalensis*)
- 1.1 Emerald Doves (*Chalcophaps indica*)
- 1.1 Straw-crowned Bulbuls (*Pycnonotus zeylanicus*)

REPTILE NOTES

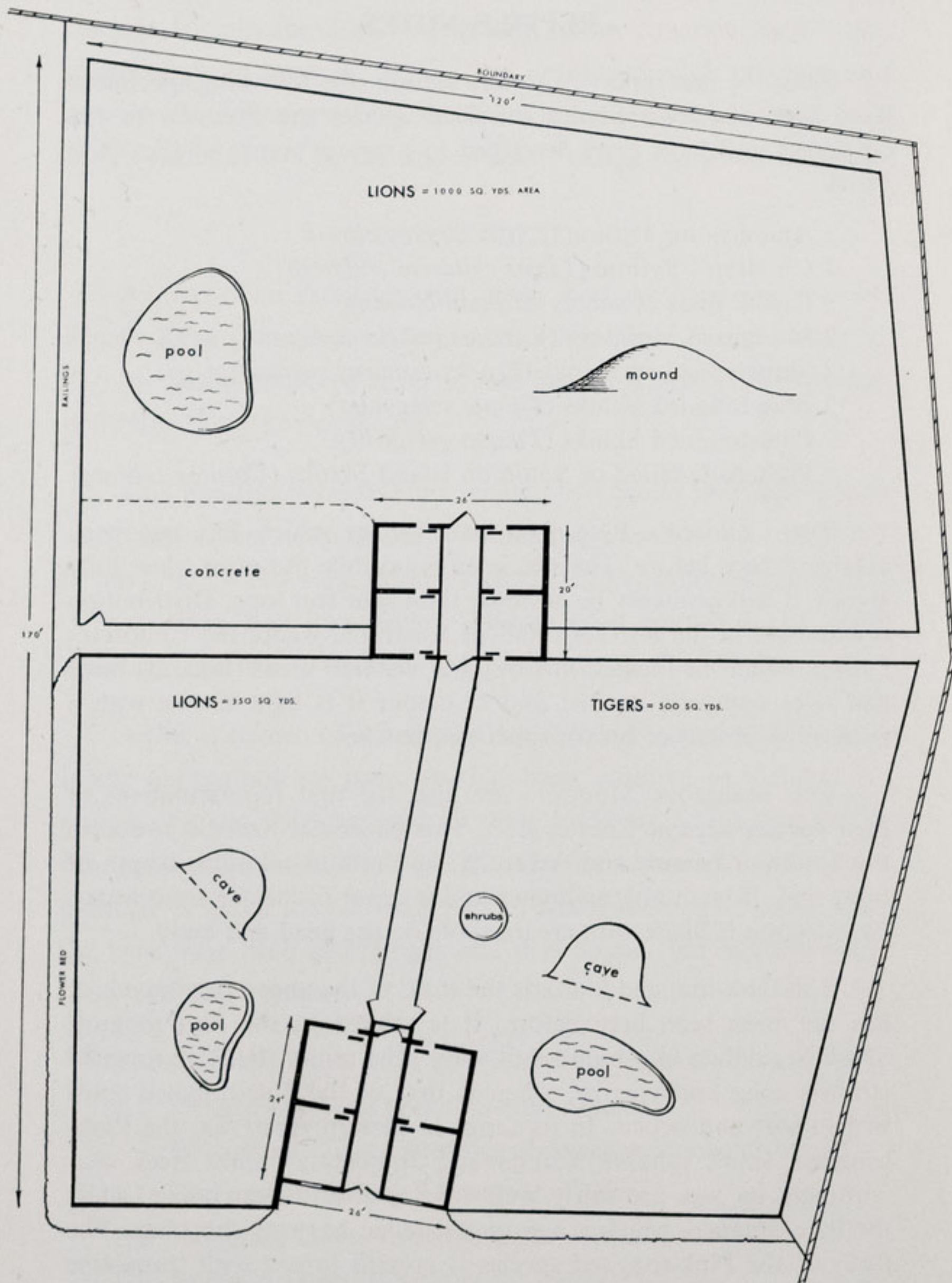
Since the last report from this section, the following specimens have been acquired. Several of these species are not new to the collection and have been described in previous issues of the "Zoo News".

- 1 Amethystine Python (*Liasis amethystinus*)
- 1 Children's Python (*Liasis childreni childreni*)
- 4 Pacific Boas (*Candoia carinata bibonii*)
- 3 Mangrove Monitors (*Varanus indicus indicus*)
- 2 Shingle-backed Skinks (*Trachydosaurus rugosus*)
- 2 Blue-tongued Skinks (*Tiliqua scincoides*)
- 2 Pink-tongued Skinks (*Tiliqua gerrardii*)
- 5 Prehensile-tailed or Solomon Island Skinks (*Corucia zebrata*)

The Children's Python is one species which has not been exhibited here before. The specimen is juvenile but even when fully grown, it will probably be no more than four feet long. Distribution is extensive in the northern half of Australia, where the Children's Python would be located in stony but watered areas. Lizards, birds and mice comprise its diet and in colour it is light brown with a patterning of darker brown spots and patches.

The Mangrove Monitors are also the first representatives of their species kept at Chester Zoo. This particular lizard is found in the Solomon Islands and Australia, and attains an adult length of three feet. It is an able swimmer and is never found far from water. Colouration is black with cream spots on the head and body.

The Pink-tongued Skink is the third of the above reptiles which has not been seen here before. It is related to the Blue-tongued Skink but differs in a number of ways. The tail of the Pink-tongued is fairly long and narrow, whereas that of the Blue-tongued tends to be short and broad. In its range in eastern Australia, the Pink-tongued Skink inhabits forests and frequently climbs trees. Accordingly its legs are fairly well developed and bear claws, while the Blue-tongued, which is a ground dweller, has very short legs. The body of the Pink-tongued species is greyish brown with transverse darker brown bars and of course its tongue is quite pink. Like the Blue-tongued Skink, it produces broods of up to twelve live young.



GROUND PLAN OF LION AND TIGER ENCLOSURES, No. 91
(extension at top of page)

EXTENSION TO LION AND TIGER ENCLOSURES

Towards the end of 1969 two spacious enclosures were completed on site No. 91, to accommodate the then young male Lion, Kim, and a pair of young Bengal Tigers. Soon afterwards Kim was joined by two Lionesses and now, four years later, his pride is eleven strong. Shortage of space was therefore one of the prime motivations behind the decision to extend the existing enclosures. Another was that while the indoor quarters with their large picture windows are excellent for exhibition purposes and popular with the public, they are not entirely suitable as breeding dens and a more secluded block was needed.

The ground plan on the left shows both the original enclosures (at bottom) and the extension. The overall shape of the area is a little irregular but at the rear of the enclosure (top of page) the line of the perimeter fence was governed by the zoo boundary and along one side it followed an existing hedge. This hedge is well established and valuable in that, besides providing an effective screen between the cats and the antelope in the adjacent paddock, it acts as a windbreak and affords shade.

The new section has an area of approximately 1,000 square yards, which is grassed apart from one corner of concrete indicated on the plan. Surrounding each of the three enclosures is a link mesh fence, sixteen feet in height, and along the perimeter adjoining the public pathway there is an additional barrier. In the original section this is a thick border of prickly shrubs and in the extension, a row of waist-high railings. A pool is an essential feature in all three enclosures and each is furnished with various large tree trunks and piles of rock on which the cats can both exercise and rest.

There is an amusing story attached to the acquisition of the two large trunks now in the new enclosure. The search for suitable materials led to one large tree in the Red Lechwe paddock, which was badly split and extremely dangerous. At Chester the policy is to avoid cutting down trees wherever possible but in this case it would have to have been removed anyway for the safety of both animals and keepers and so it was soon being hauled across to the new site. There was another tree in this enclosure which also was damaged, though not as severely as the first, and after some delib-

eration it was agreed to leave this one standing and look elsewhere. Then fate took a hand and, following a night of gale force winds, the second tree was blown down and thus most conveniently presented itself for the new enclosure.

The attractive red sandstone employed in most of the zoo buildings has been used again in the construction of the new dens. In area they are a little smaller than the original block and of course lack the picture windows but inside the basic layout is the same with two sets of double, connecting dens. By operating various combinations of sliding doors, the cats can be moved easily from one enclosure to another.

As soon as the extension was completed, Kim and most of his pride moved in. At the present time the original Lion enclosure is occupied by the younger litter of three cubs and their mother but eventually these will be introduced to the main group.

AVICULTURAL SOCIETY VISIT

On the 19th September Chester Zoo was host to Members of the Avicultural Society. Over forty Members accepted our invitation to lunch and a tour of the gardens and from the expressions of thanks received, they seem to have enjoyed their visit.

The Avicultural Society was founded in 1894 for the study of British and foreign birds in freedom and captivity. The Society is international in character, having Members throughout the world. A bi-monthly publication, the Avicultural Magazine, is available free to Members. Anyone wishing further details should write to Mr. H. J. Horswell, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, The Avicultural Society, 20 Bourdon Street, London W1X 9HX.

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 can be obtained from the souvenir shop. An annual subscription (12 issues) costs £1.05, postage paid, which can either be handed over the counter at the shop or posted with the completed form to the Director-Secretary, Chester Zoo, Chester.

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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