



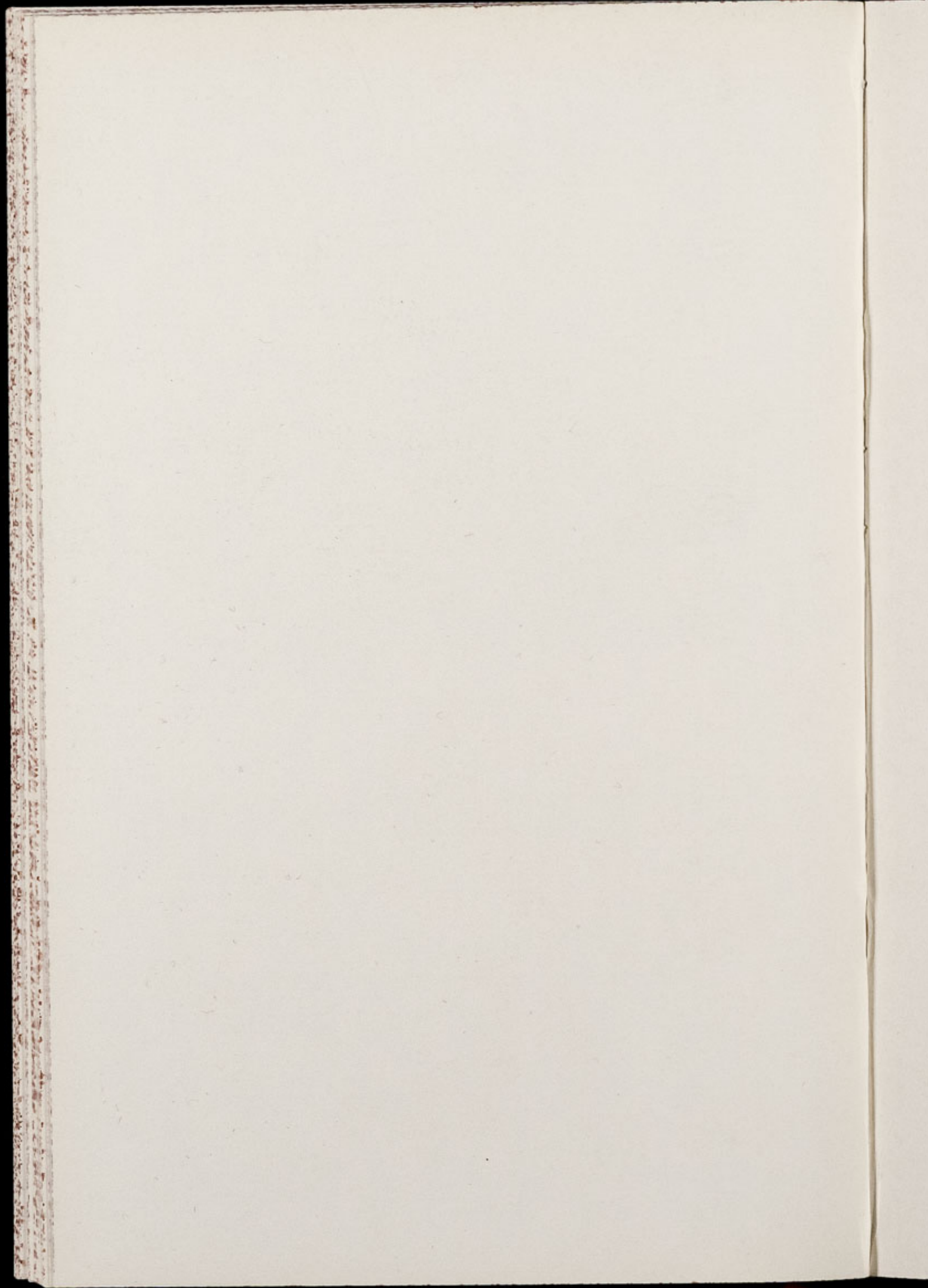
By Courtesy of J. Whitworth, Esq.

Chester Zoo News

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON - BY - CHESTER

May, 1964

Price 1/-



Editorial

There is ever increasing activity in the Tropical House as the opening date draws nearer. New animals, birds and reptiles have arrived and next month we will include a full report on the planting of the house. We feel sure that visitors will share our enthusiasm over this ambitious project, when they are able to view the results of several years work in only a few short weeks time.

The most exciting additions to our collection in recent months are "Boko" and "Gogal", who arrived on Thursday, 23rd April. You can read about these youngsters on page two.

CONTENTS:

<i>Page two</i>	Zoo Babies. New Arrivals.
<i>Page four</i>	Consignments from South America
<i>Page six</i>	Winnie. New Homes.
<i>Page eight</i>	Cat House.
<i>Page nine</i>	Gardening News.
<i>Page ten</i>	Threesome.
<i>Page fourteen</i>	Aquarium News.

COVER: *Our Cover Picture this month shows "Pixie", "Dixie" and "Alf", Chester Zoo's three Spot-nosed Monkeys (Cercopithecus ascanius).*

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FIFTEEN SHILLINGS POST PAID

TELEPHONE · CHESTER 20106/7/8

ZOO BABIES

Babies have been arriving in all corners of the Zoo during the last few days of April. Between Saturday 25th and Thursday 30th April, eleven youngsters put in an appearance. Finding names for all the newcomers is becoming quite a problem.

BABOON: "Belinda" and Harry", a pair of Olive Baboons, were the first to become parents on Saturday morning. Their offspring is a little male which we have named "Ricky".

MONA MONKEY: On page twelve you can read about "Charlie" and "Minnie", parents of the baby Mona Monkey born on Sunday morning.

PÈRE DAVID DEER: Two of the three female Père David Deer have had fawns, thus bringing the strength of our small herd of these animals up to six. The first baby was born on Sunday the 26th and the second on Wednesday, 29th April.

COMMON ZEBRA: "Nellie" and "Charlie", two of the Common Zebras had their sixth foal, a female named "Renee", on Wednesday, 29th April. Renee is our first Zebra foal this year.

OWLS: The Spotted Eagle Owls have hatched two chicks and the Greater Eagle Owls, four. This is the third year in succession that we have had breeding successes with these Owls.

HIMALAYAN BEARS: "Peter" and "Gordon", the twin Himalayan Bear Cubs made their first public appearance in mid April, much to the delight of our visitors. Gordon is the more adventurous and is already imitating the actions of his mother as she begs for forbidden titbits.

NEW ARRIVALS

GORILLAS: Zoo Staff turned out very early on the morning of Thursday, 23rd April, to meet two of our most exciting acquisitions for some time. The newcomers, two beautiful little Lowland Gorillas arrived at Manchester Airport from Holland at four in the morning.



GREATER EAGLE OWL

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

"Gogal", the female, is three years old and weighs forty pounds and is considerably bigger than "Boko", who is a baby of eighteen months, weighing only twenty pounds. Their approximate heights are thirty-three inches for Gogal and twenty-six inches for Boko. Both animals are extremely strong and healthy and are feeding well.

The afternoon of Friday, 24th April was warm and sunny and both youngsters were taken out onto one of the islands for an hour. The little male spent the time eyeing his new surroundings from the safety of Keeper Colbourne's arms, but his more adventurous companion gave the enclosure a thorough inspection. Each day, if the weather is warm, the young Gorillas will be allowed outside for longer periods.

With the arrival of Gogal and Boko we have both races of Gorilla represented at Chester. "Mukisi" and "Noelle", the Mountain Gorillas, are now in their new accommodation in the Tropical House.

WEKA RAILS: A pair of Weka Rails (*Gallirallus australis*) were presented by Auckland Zoo, New Zealand, on the 22nd of April. These are flightless birds, approximately the size of a guinea fowl.

In the wild the greater part of their diet consists of small mammals and frogs and their main enemies are cats and stoats. Many Rails have become extinct, but Wekas have escaped this fate and are quite common in some areas of New Zealand. Indeed they are being reintroduced into mountainous areas from which they had disappeared. The plumage of the Wekas is mainly reddish brown, with patches of blue/grey feathers on the breast and head.

YELLOW-SHAFTED FLICKER: Captain Chaloner of the S.S. *Sylvania* was the donor of a Yellow-Shafted Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) which arrived on the 25th of April, and is now accommodated in the Tropical House.

The Flicker (a member of the Woodpecker family) landed on the *Sylvania* in mid-Atlantic and thrived on a diet of raw meat and eggs for the remainder of its journey to England. At Chester we are feeding the bird on softbill food, maggots and mealworms.

CONSIGNMENTS FROM SOUTH AMERICA

We seem to have been paying regular visits to Manchester Airport in recent weeks, to collect a variety of new exhibits. On Wednesday, 22nd April, three cases of reptiles arrived there from



Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

KEEPER MICHAEL COLBOURNE WITH HIS NEW CHARGES
"GOGAL" AND "BOKO"

Surinam. Once again our good friends Lt. Col. and Mrs. C. R. Rubenstein are responsible for presenting a number of very interesting additions to the Collections.

On opening the cases we found they contained five Common Iguanas (*Iguana iguana*), two Cayman (*Caiman crocodilus*), a three and a half foot long Common Boa (*Constrictor constrictor*) and a four foot long Anaconda (*Eunectes murinus*). The Anaconda will be the first to be exhibited at Chester for ten years.

Two further specimens arrived from Lt. Col. and Mrs. Rubenstein on Tuesday, 28th April. These were a young Black-pointed Teguxin (*Tupinambis nigropunctatus*) and a female Tamandua (*Tamandua tetradactyla*). Tamanduas, or Three-toed Anteaters are extremely rare exhibits in Zoological Gardens, so we were particularly pleased to receive this fine young specimen.

DEPARTURES

After several weeks of doing nothing but eating and resting on the pool at the rear of the Polar Bear enclosure, the Greater Crested Grebe has regained its strength and flown off. This bird, as reported last month, was presented by the R.S.P.C.A. after being found exhausted on a main road on the 25th of March.

"Blackie", a young Zebra stallion, bred at Chester on the 18th of April, 1963, left for his new home at Bristol Zoo a few days ago. So many Zebras are bred here every year that it is impossible to keep all our youngsters.

WINNIE

The young Giant Anteater has always been an inquisitive animal, poking her long nose into everything. Now she has developed a strong interest in wellington boots. Any Keeper wearing these in her enclosure has only to stand still for an instant to have Winnie giving the inside of his or her boots a thorough inspection.

NEW HOMES

As the Tropical House nears completion the first exhibits are being moved in. The Mountain Gorillas and Orang Utans are already quite at home in their new quarters. "Jimmy" gave his



"WINNIE"

Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

Keeper a nasty moment during his first night in the Tropical House. The Orangs' sleeping den is particularly high and when Keeper Dixon made his nightly check he could only count four Orangs. Where was Jimmy? A shower of concrete chips and dust answered his question. Jimmy had climbed up the bars at the front of the den and flattened himself against the wall above, almost out of sight.

Several birds have been transferred to the Tropical House, including Cocks of the Rock, Scarlet Ibis, Bitterns, Emerald Doves, a Great Indian



G. L. Owen
GREAT INDIAN HORNBILL

Hornbill and many others. When all the exhibits have moved in, the Tropical House will be a complete Zoo in itself.

NEW CAT HOUSE

Now that the Tropical House is virtually completed, construction staff can turn their attention to the new accommodation for small cats. The pre-cast concrete framework has already been completed. It is two hundred feet long by fifty-five feet wide and will be divided into various sections, to house cats up to the size of leopards. The smallest of the enclosures will be fifteen feet square and the largest, something over thirty feet square.

Visitors will view the enclosures through armour-plated glass and the whole of the roof over the cages will be open. Looking through the glass, visitors will see the animals exhibited against a background of rockwork, concealing the sleeping dens. Each den will be heated by warm air blown through ducts, so that the animals will have comfortable sleeping quarters as well as ample fresh air.

Down the centre of the house will be a service passageway, ten feet wide. It will enable the Keeping Staff to service the enclosures and sleeping dens and also act as a double precaution against any animal escaping.

Running the whole length of the service passageway will be a huge trough, ten feet wide and several feet deep, for creeping plants and small shrubs. These will eventually trail over the tops of the cages to provide an attractive natural shade for the animals.

GIANT TOADS

On the opposite page is a photograph of one of the Giant Toads (*Bufo marinus*) which will be on show in the new Reptile House. The Toads share a cage at the rear of the old Reptile House as, at the present time, we do not have a suitable compartment in which to exhibit them.

Giant Toads are found in Central and South America and are among the largest of the approximately seventeen hundred species of Frogs and Toads. Their maximum size is in the region of ten inches. Behind each eye is a particularly large scent gland, which



GIANT TOAD

J. Whitworth

can be seen quite clearly in the photograph. Our specimens have enormous appetites and swallow mice and young rats with ease.

GARDENING NEWS

The gradual build up of plants for summer bedding has increased rapidly since the last issue of the magazine. At the time of writing all potting and pricking off has been completed, with some eighty thousand plants on the way.

This is by no means the end of the preparations. There is staking and tying to be carried out and any amount of weeding of pots and boxes. Although we try to minimise the moving around of these plants, we always seem to be doing this. Many subjects such as Begonias, Heliotrope and Canna Lilies need real warmth in the early stages and so have to occupy hot houses. Between now and bedding out time they require hardening off, which means moving them to the cool houses — at present occupied by half hardy annuals, etc. These in their turn will be moved to cold frames to make room for the plants waiting to be transferred.

Watering is another major operation every day and a very important one. The weekend duty men are always hoping for a dull cloudy weekend, which of course means less watering.

The summer planting of the various animal houses is now complete. Although these houses are permanently planted we do add coleous, tradescantias, geraniums, canna lilies, fuchsias, begonias, etc., to give extra colour and interest over the summer months.

Preparations are now complete for the planting of the new Tropical House. One hundred and fifty loads of soil have been taken in and the beds made ready to receive the plants, with the addition of peat, etc. We have a large and interesting collection of tropical and sub-tropical plants, raised in our greenhouses over the past few years, especially for the Tropical House. It will take a large number of plants to fill the house and the big question at the moment is — have we enough?

We shall be planting next week and what an interesting operation this will be — after so many years of planning. In next months issue of "Zoo News" we shall be able to give a full description of the planting of this house and particulars of the varied collection of plants used.

THREESOME

An interesting threesome share the last cage of the Monkey House. These are "Charlie" and "Minnie", two Mona Monkeys (*Cercopithecus mona*) and "Bebe", a Cherry-crowned Mangabey (*Cercocebus torquatus*).

The monkeys were presented to Chester Zoo on the 31st of May, 1960, by Mrs. Netta Robinson, who had reared them in her own home since babyhood. At one time Mrs. Robinson and her husband lived in Kwale in the Delta Province of Nigeria's Western Region and the baby monkeys were brought to them by African hunters who had shot the mothers for food. Careful nursing transformed them from miserable orphans to the lively, healthy animals they are today.



“BEBE”

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

Charlie has always had the strongest personality of the group and had a habit of stealing small objects and storing them in his cheek pouches. One evening Mrs. Robinson called him for his supper and "before settling himself down to eat he gave both his cheeks a resounding slap and out of his mouth shot a shower of sixpences, shillings and threepenny bits. Having relieved himself of that little lot he was then able to enjoy and concentrate on his supper. Many unusual objects found their way into his pouches; from lead shot to lipsticks, but fortunately he was an intelligent little monkey and never did swallow anything that would harm him".

All the monkeys still retain the amusing habits they had as youngsters. Charlie is a confirmed pickpocket still and if his Keepers do not empty their pockets before entering his cage he very soon relieves them of the contents. He is particularly fond of stealing keys.

Bebe has always considered herself to be Minnie's guardian and will not allow anyone near the little Mona. Minnie rather takes advantage of Bebe's affection and often amuses herself by climbing or swinging on her protector's tail. The little Mona usually travels around their cage clinging to the soft fur of Bebe's tummy.

Bebe is the most affectionate of the three monkeys and hates to be scolded for her occasional misdeameanours. If she has been naughty she retires to the furthest corner of the cage and sits sorrowfully peering round her legs, to see if her Keeper is still cross.

Since writing the above notes Charlie and Minnie have become the proud parents of a baby Mona Monkey. This certainly complicated relationships in the group. Charlie behaved like a typical



"HUMPHREY" HAVING A HAIR DO

Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

new father and paced up and down the cage feeling quite left out of things, but poor Bebe did not know whether to mother Minnie or Minnie's offspring. Eventually she decided that the baby was more in need of her attention and stole the youngster. At this point we had to interfere and now Bebe has been transferred to another cage, while Minnie gets on with the task of bringing up baby.

AQUARIUM NEWS

During April we collected an interesting and varied collection of cold water marine fish and invertebrates from Anglesey, off the coast of North Wales. This included many species of Anemone, numerous Crabs, "Pot" Lobsters, Sea Mice, Blennies, Butterfish, Cottas, Prawns, Fifteen-spined Sticklebacks, Mussels and Barnacles.

The Anemones, of which we have five different varieties, always provide a good show and never cease to interest and amaze our visitors. These peculiar animals are often mistaken for some sort of exotic underwater flower. Several of the anemones have thousands of tentacles, many of which bear stinging cells capable of paralysing any small creature becoming entangled in them. Others are used to hold the prey fast and guide it into the anemones mouth.

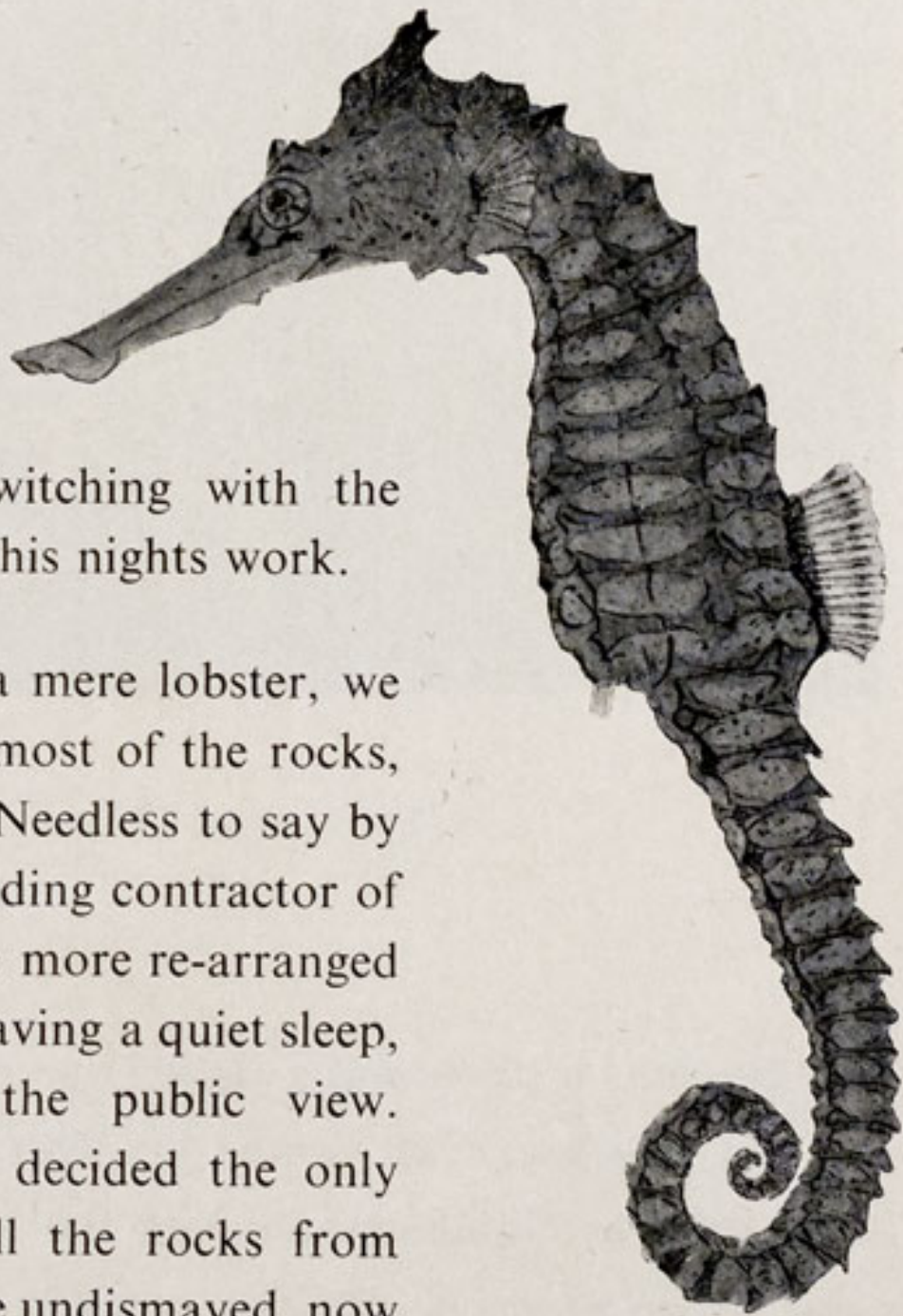
The Plumose Anemones are the largest in the collection and can increase their size many times by pumping themselves full of water. They do this most often when they sense the presence of food in the water and must stretch out from the rocks on which they stand, in the hope of catching the drifting particles.

Zoo characters are not confined to the animal and bird sections by any means and perhaps the greatest personality in the Aquarium is the Lobster which we acquired some months ago. He has settled down well and shows an aptitude for digging which would make a coal miner green with envy.

The tank chosen for the Lobster was painstakingly and, we thought, tastefully decorated with large pieces of volcanic rock. Unfortunately the lobster disagreed and decided that the decor was not at all to his liking. He immediately set about altering the position of the rocks — in fact he was so disgruntled with our arrangement that he went on a night shift and by morning had moved every rock in the tank. To add insult to injury he had dug a large cave under one of the rocks and was found having a quiet doze — his three sets of antennae twitching with the exhaustion brought on by his nights work.

Not to be beaten by a mere lobster, we set to work and replaced most of the rocks, but removed one or two. Needless to say by the next morning this building contractor of the marine world had once more re-arranged the rocks and was again having a quiet sleep, completely hidden from the public view. After a week of battle we decided the only thing to do was remove all the rocks from the tank. The lobster, quite undismayed, now began collecting the sand from the bottom of the tank and shunting it into great heaps. Several weeks later the lobster is still indulging his insatiable appetite for manual labour by moving the sand back and forth from one end of the tank to the other.

As readers of last months Aquarium News will know, the long awaited Sea Horses arrived from Singapore on the 27th March. Because they require individual attention only a small number were bought and these are doing well.

*M. D. Murphy*

SEA HORSE



Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

SPRING SCENE AT CHESTER ZOO

The above photograph shows one of the charming corners of the Zoo which can be viewed by Waterbus. It was taken at the height of the daffodil season and the lone Mallard is one of the many which come into the Zoo grounds during the breeding season. Literally dozens of young Mallards have been hatched this year.

A family of thirteen ducklings found themselves in trouble the other evening. They had followed their mother into the ditch around the Camel enclosure and once in could not get out again. Fortunately the worried quacks of the mother duck did not go unnoticed and with the aid of two planks we were able to shepherd the family onto dry land and from thence to the canal system, which is not so escape-proof as the camels ditch.





Printed in England by
G. R. Griffith Ltd.
Castle Printing Works
Chester
