

CHESTER ZOO NEWS

AND GUIDE

September 1970

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The North of England Zoological Society
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

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COVER: Baby Giraffe Linda born this month; for further details see page two.

By Courtesy of H. Eastwood, Daily Mirror, Manchester.

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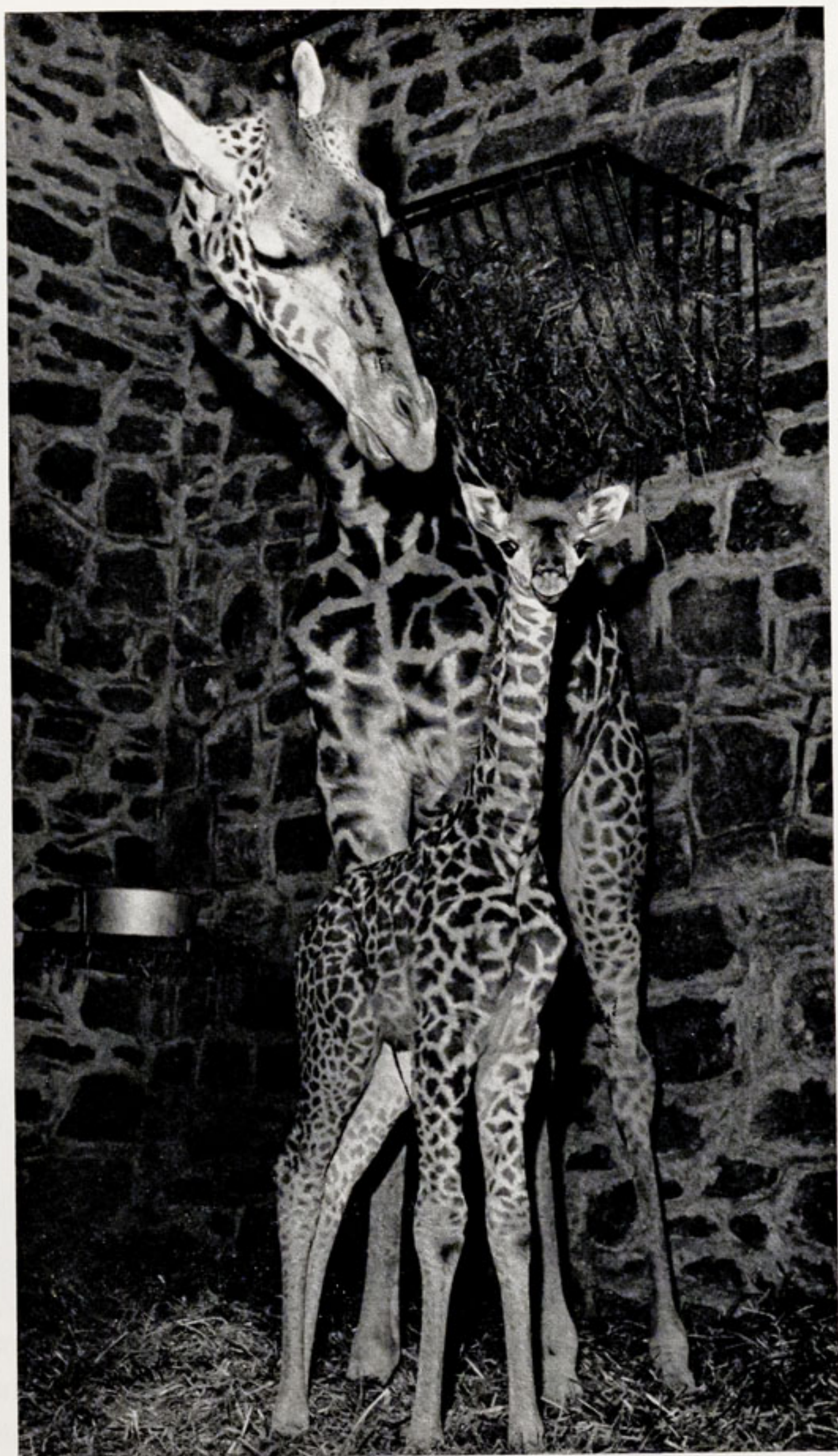
BIRTHS

On the 1st September there was a rather special birth at the Zoo — that of a female Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) which the keepers named Linda. A few days later Linda made her debut before press photographers while mother Debbie looked on. She is a sturdy calf, standing five feet tall and weighing ten stones at birth.

The Giraffe is found only in Africa where, although it is in no danger of extinction, its range has diminished considerably in recent years. There is a single species of which from eight to thirteen races are recognised by various authorities. The gestation period lasts from 420 to 450 days and the calf usually suckles for about nine months, although from observations of herds in the wild it appears that the bond between mother and calf is not strong and after a time the latter may be nursed by other females. In some instances calves have been seen browsing long before they are supposedly weaned. Like all young Giraffes, Linda was able to stand and walk very shortly after birth. This is an important survival factor in the wild since if the calves did not keep up with the herd they would quickly fall prey to Lions or Leopards. Lions kill some adults also but older Giraffes can often defend themselves effectively by kicking out with their powerful legs.

In the past a number of Giraffes have been bred at Chester Zoo and the present group includes a young male which was born last year.

Another Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*) has been born, the second this year and the twentieth since 1956 when they were first bred in the new Chimpanzee House. The mother, Meg, is a veteran of Chester Zoo and the baby is a female.



D. Thorpe, Daily Mail, Manchester.
GIRAFFES DEBBIE AND LINDA (*Giraffa camelopardalis*)

The gestation period of the Chimpanzee lasts from 202 to 261 days and in the wild the young are dependant upon the mothers for about two years. Although there are exceptions most females are competent mothers and the discipline of the young is good. Chimpanzees become fully mature at twelve years of age and have lived for over forty years in Zoos.

A very popular exhibit in the Monkey House at the moment is that of the De Brazza Monkeys (*Cercopithecus neglectus*) since both females now have young. The second baby was born last month.

Last year Arabian Gazelle (*Gazella arabica*) Thamooda defied the theorists by rearing a fawn successfully after she herself had been hand reared. She has just produced another which is progressing as normally as the first.

In enclosure No. 78 visitors can see the first of this year's Common Zebra foals (*Equus burchelli granti*) which is a female. Our breeding record for Zebras has been very good, with some eighteen Common Zebras and eight Grevy Zebras being born within the last ten years. The gestation period is from 345 to 390 days; in the wild the foal remains with the mother for about two years, suckling for the first six months.

In enclosure No. 3 another Wapiti calf (*Cervus canadensis*) has been born. Both this and an earlier calf born in June are females.

EXCHANGES

In an exchange with Montevideo Zoo we have received three Capybaras (*Hydrochoerus capybara*), three Black-necked Swans (*Cygnus melanocoryphus*), three Coscoroba Swans (*Coscoroba coscoroba*) and two Rheas (*Rhea americana*).



RHEA (*Rhea americana*)

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

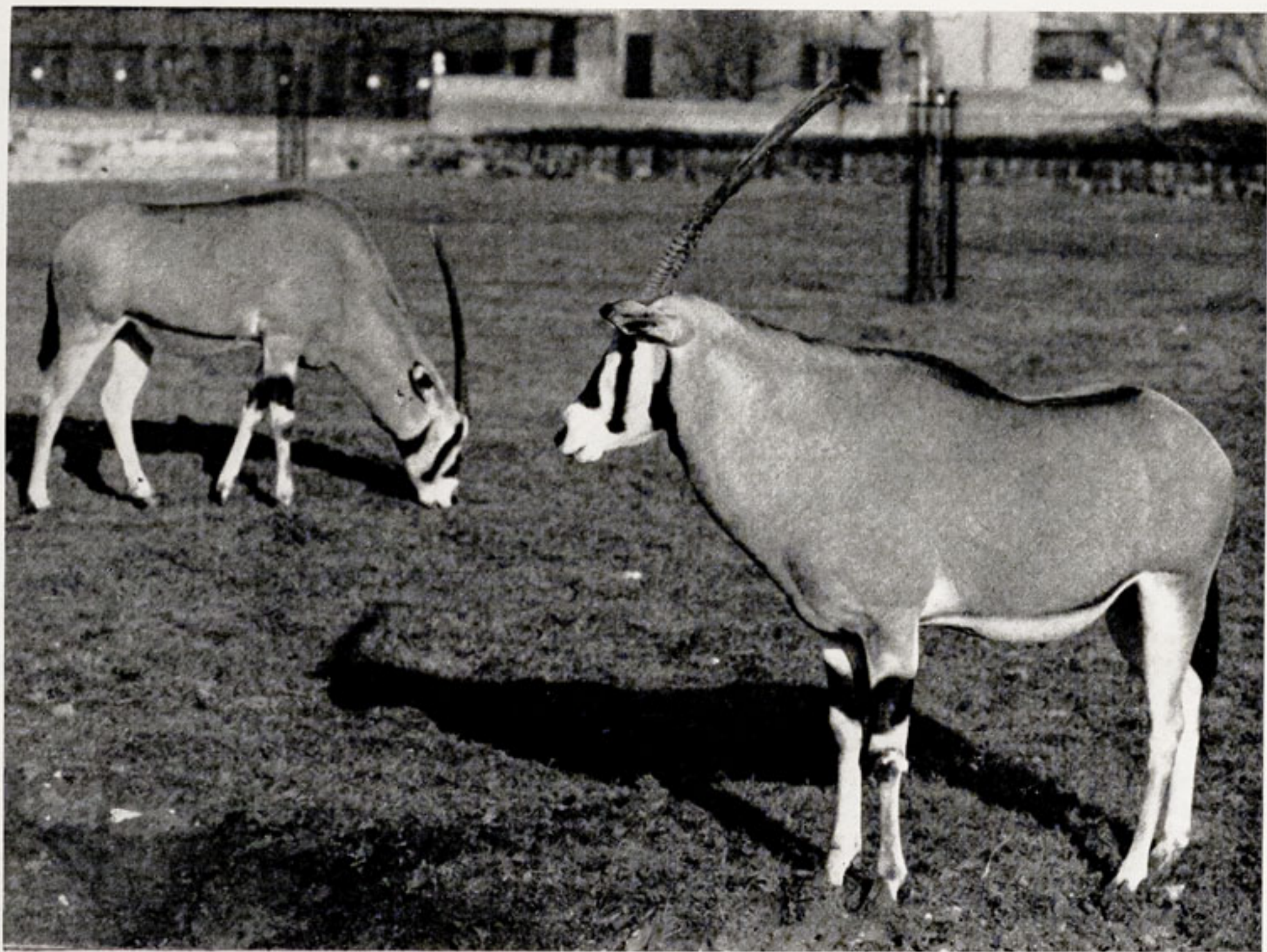
The Black-necked Swan must surely be one of the most elegant and beautiful of all birds, with its white body, contrasting silky black neck and head and the bright red fleshy knob or caruncle above its beak. It is found on lakes and marshes in South America from southern Brazil to Tierra del Fuego and also in the Falkland Islands, though in the northern part of the range it is a winter visitor only.

The single species of Coscoroba is not a true Swan but bears resemblances to both the Swans and the Whistling Ducks and is therefore placed in a separate genus. Apart from the long neck, the body of this bird is rather duck-like. The plumage is white, the beak a beautiful crimson pink and the legs and feet a light pink. Like the Black-necked Swan it is found in southern parts of South America, in Tierra del Fuego and the Falkland Islands.

These are the first Coscorba Swans to be exhibited at Chester Zoo and both they and the Black-necked Swans can be seen in the Sitatunga enclosure, No. 86 on the Zoo plan. Each group consists of a male and two females.

The old Flamingo enclosure, No. 46, is being adapted as a new home for the Capybaras. This species is the largest rodent in the world and is found in South America in areas east of the Andes Mountains. Although its body does not appear to be adapted for an aquatic life the Capybara swims very well and is always found near water, usually in marshy areas. It feeds on various water plants and grasses.

From Chester will be sent a male Beisa Oryx (*Oryx beisa*), a Black Panther (*Panthera pardus*), a pair of Hill Mynahs (*Gracula religiosa*) and a pair of Ringneck Parrakeets (*Psittacula krameri manillensis*).



BEISA ORYX (*Oryx beisa*)

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

GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES

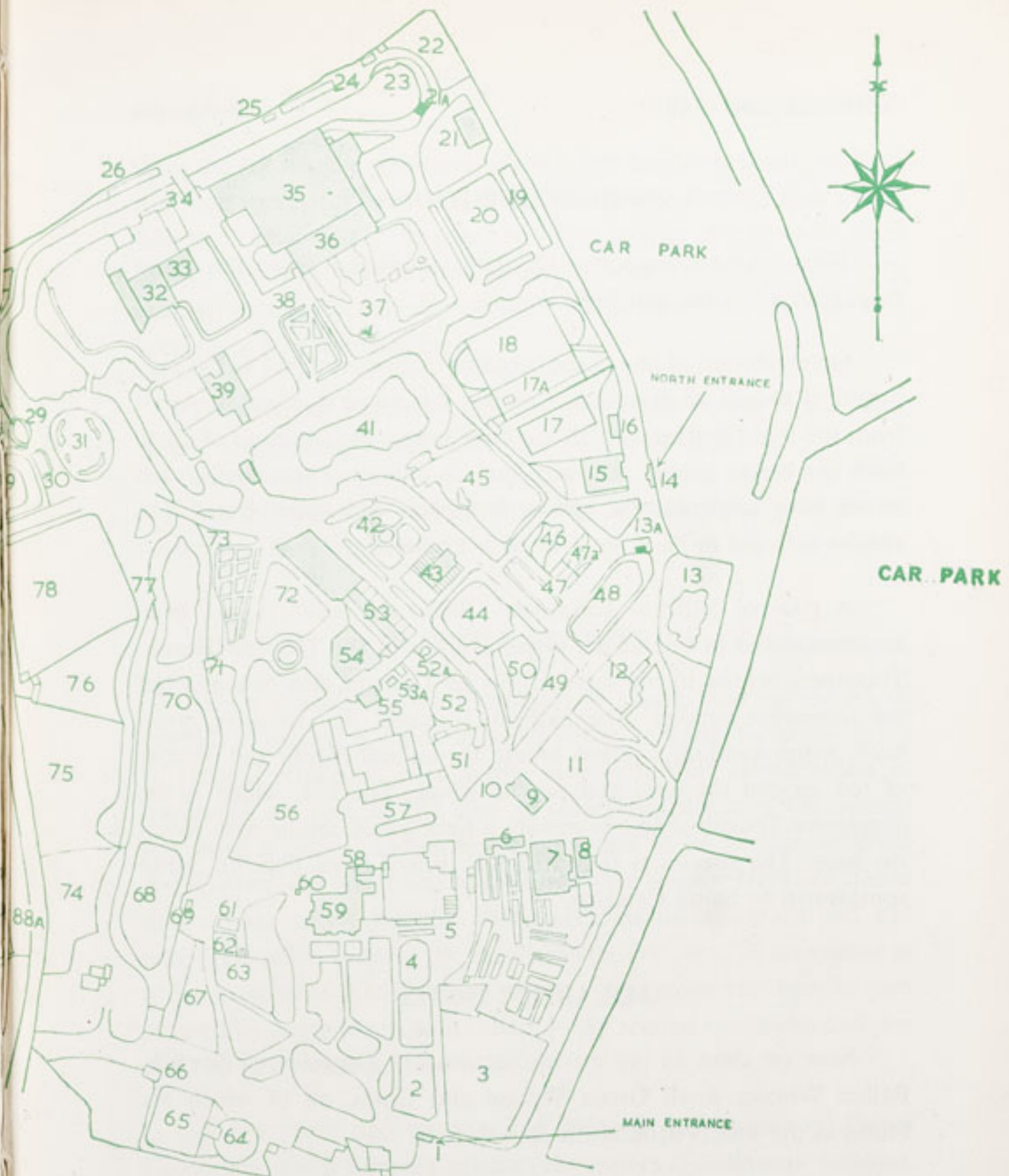
LIONS—3 p.m. except Fridays

BEARS—3-15 p.m.

POLAR BEARS—4-0 p.m.



- | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. MAIN ENTRANCE | 31. Beavers | 63. Cheetahs |
| 2. Bird Enclosure | 32. Giraffe House | 64. Malayan Bears |
| 3. Wapiti Paddock | 33. Camel House | 65. Animal Enclosure |
| 4. Lesser Pandas | 34. Waterbus Halt | 66. Aviary |
| 5. Aviaries | 35. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND REPTILE HOUSES | 67. Wallaby Enclosure |
| 6. Milk Bar | 36. Chimpanzee House | 68. Island |
| 7. CORONATION HALL | 37. Chimpanzee Islands | 69. WATERBUS BOOKING OFFICE |
| 8. CLOAKROOM, TOILETS, FIRST AID, MOTHER AND BABY ROOM | 38. Floribunda Rose Gardens | 70. Islands |
| 9. CAFETERIA | 39. Zebra House | 71. Waterbus Halt |
| 10. CAFETERIA | 41. Gibbon Island | 72. Flower Gardens |
| 11. Picnic Lawns | 42. H.T. Rose Garden | 73. ROSE GARDENS |
| 12. Bears | 43. | 74. Red Lechwe |
| 13. Animal Enclosure | 44. Waterfowl Enclosure | 75. Red Lechwe |
| 13a. Kiosk | 45. Pelicans | 76. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 14. NORTH ENTRANCE | 46. Flamingos | 77. Waterbus Halt |
| 15. AQUARIUM | 47. Waterfowl Enclosure | 78. Zebra and Deer Enclosure |
| 16. PUSH CHAIRS, WHEEL CHAIRS, FIRST AID, LOST CHILDREN | 47a. Penguins and Otters | 79. Kamchatka Bears |
| 17. Parrot House | 48. Sea Lion Pool | 80. Elephant Paddock |
| 17a. Large Flight Aviary | 49. Rock Garden | 81. Hippo Paddock |
| 18. APE HOUSE | 50. Polar Bears | 82. PACHYDERM HOUSE |
| 19. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP | 51. Tigers | 83. Tapir Enclosure |
| 20. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn | 52. Waterfowl Enclosure | 84. Small Mammal House |
| 21. TOILETS | 52a. Anteater | 85. Waterfowl Enclosure |
| 21a. Tuatara House | 53. BIRD HOUSE | 86. Antelope and Cattle |
| 22. Peccaries | 53a. Nursery | 87. Storks and Ostriches |
| 23. Waterbus Halt | 54. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT | 88. Monkey Enclosures |
| 24. Birds of Prey Aviary | 55. TOILETS | 88a. Lion and Tiger Enclosure |
| 25. Birds of Prey Aviary | 56. Lions | 89. Cat House |
| 26. Owls | 57. NEW ZOO SHOP | 89a. Jaguars |
| 27. Jackal and Hyaena Enclosures | 58. TOILETS | 90. MONKEY HOUSE |
| 28. Animal Enclosure | 59. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT | 91. Waterfowl |
| 29. Porcupines and Raccoons | 60. G.P.O. Telephone Kiosk | |
| 30. Coypus | 61. Animal Enclosure | |
| | 62. Animal Enclosure | |



- | |
|-----------------------------|
| 91a. Highland Cattle |
| 92. Waterfowl and Wallabies |
| 92a. Llamas and Alpacas |
| 93. Cranes and Waterfowl |
| 93a. Zebroids |
| 94. Bison Paddock |
| 95. Deer Paddock |
| 96. Eland and Marmots |
| 97. Rhino Paddocks |
| 98. RHINO HOUSE |
| 99. TOILETS |
| 100. Mpila Snack-Bar |
| 101. Antelope Enclosure |
| 102. Antelope Enclosure |
- Animals may be moved from time to time



BIRKENHEAD
CHESTER
MANCHESTER

BIRD ACQUISITIONS

Four young Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus falcinellus*) have been released in the new flight aviary.

On exhibition in one of the breeding aviaries is a pair of the very beautiful Queen of Bavaria's Conures (*Aratinga guarouba*). Apart from the flight feathers which are dark green, the plumage of these birds is a bright golden yellow colour. In immature specimens, such as we have acquired, the yellow is flecked with dark green. The species is found in Para, an area of N.E. Brazil.

A pair of Saffron Toucanets (*Baillonius bailloni*) has been accommodated in one of the lower aviaries in the Tropical House. Toucanets belong to the same family as Toucans and Aracaris but are somewhat smaller. The Saffron Toucanet has an olive green back, wings and tail, a yellow breast, throat and cheeks and patches of red around the eyes and on the wings. The bill, which is the distinctive Toucan shape, is mainly a light green colour with red at the base. The species is found in S.E. Brazil from Espirito Santo southwards to Santa Catarina.

AQUARIUM NOTES

Now on show in the marine section are a species of Pipefish, Ballan Wrasse, small Green Wrasse and Cotta, all of which are found in the waters around the British Isles.

Next year we hope to set up a special tank to exhibit local marine life. At the moment specimens of Cuckoo Wrasse, Ballan Wrasse and Dogfish caught at Port Erin in the Isle of Man are being held in reserve for us at another Aquarium and will be brought to stock the new tank when it is ready.

The Yellow-tailed Blue Damsel Fish are spawning regularly but

since the fry require plankton, which is not easily obtained, we have not been successful in rearing them. The female Damsel Fish swims upside down and lays the eggs on the underside of a piece of coral in the tank. She then vibrates her fins backwards and forwards very quickly, setting up currents of water which wash over the eggs and keep them free from sediment.

The Marine Turtles which we mentioned in the April "Zoo News" are growing rapidly and now measure 6 inches.

The Madagascan Rainbows, which always breed well in our Aquarium, have again reproduced.

REPTILE SECTION

When considering the thousands of species and subspecies of animals in existence, many of which differ only slightly in colouring or skeletal structure, it is hardly surprising that identification of specimens arriving at the Zoo is sometimes difficult. On several occasions a new specimen has been found to be a quite different species from the one it was named as by the sender. Here at Chester Zoo we are very particular about accurate identification and will take great pains to trace the exact distribution, etc., of an animal in order to achieve this. Even so, often a subspecies can best be pinpointed by comparison with other closely related specimens and this was the case recently.

A few years ago we acquired some Broad-fronted or Dwarf Crocodiles which were classified as the species *Osteolaemus tetraspis*. However it was thought that they might be a subspecies known as the Congo Dwarf Crocodile and attempts were made to locate the area in which they had been collected. In addition a scute, or scale count and details of the teeth and other features of these reptiles were sent to zoologists at the British Museum of Natural History in London for their comments but it was not until another specimen of Dwarf Crocodile was acquired for the Zoo last month that positive identi-

fication was possible. As soon as this Crocodile was put with the others, the difference was obvious. The new specimen is a West African Dwarf Crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis tetraspis*) while, as was thought, the others are the Congo Dwarf subspecies (*Osteolaemus tetraspis osborni*), which is the smallest living crocodilian. The subspecies was not known before 1919 when it was discovered by Ernest Lang, a member of an expedition from the American Museum of Natural History. It is found in the upper tributaries of the Congo River at relatively high altitudes and specimens are not often seen in captivity.

Some Texas Ratsnakes (*Elaphe obsoleta lindheimeri*) bred at the Zoo recently and a Black and White Cobra (*Naja melanoleuca*) were given in exchange for a pair of Giant Zonures (*Cordylus giganteus*), a pair of young Bosc's Monitors (*Varanus exanthematicus*), a young Spitting Cobra (*Naja nigricollis*) and a New Guinea Skink (*Tiliqua gigas*).

A young specimen of Gould's Monitor (*Varanus gouldii*) has also been acquired. At the moment it measures about 16 inches but will grow to almost 4 feet, the record length being 4 feet 6 inches.

This brightly coloured Monitor is one of the commonest species in Australia. It occurs almost all over the continent and also in parts of New Guinea, often living in treeless areas where other Monitors of its size are not found. It also inhabits bushlands but does not usually climb trees. The species was named after the famous British naturalist and artist, John Gould.

In the wild the Gould's Monitor excavates a shallow hole in which it lies with its tail across the opening. As with all Monitors, the tail acts as a weapon of defence with which the animal can lash out and cause quite serious injury. When approached, the Monitor will firstly "freeze" but if the intruder gets too close it will rise on its hind legs and run with remarkable speed, a factor which has earned it the name of "racehorse Monitor". The Aborigines catch and eat this reptile as apparently the flesh is quite palatable.



GREATER KUDU (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*)

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

GREATER KUDU

Having completed a twelve months' stay in quarantine last month the Greater Kudu (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) are settling down very quickly in their new enclosure. They were not turned loose onto the paddock immediately but released into the relatively small yard area adjacent to their inside quarters, in order that they could adjust from the confinement of the quarantine station. The photograph on the previous page shows clearly the magnificent horns of the male and also the dorsal stripes and white chevron on the nose.

GERMAN TELEVISION SERIES

One of the programmes in a German Television series entitled "Great Zoos of the World" has been devoted to Chester Zoo. A camera team spent ten days here during which time they filmed many of the animals in the Collection. An interview with the Director-Secretary, Mr. G. S. Mottershead, took place on one of the water-buses. These are a feature of Chester Zoo that the Producer wished to highlight. A large part of the programme will be given to the Tropical House since this is the largest of its kind in the world. Eventually the series will be available for world-wide distribution and we hope that it will be shown in this country.

LEOPARD AND CUBS

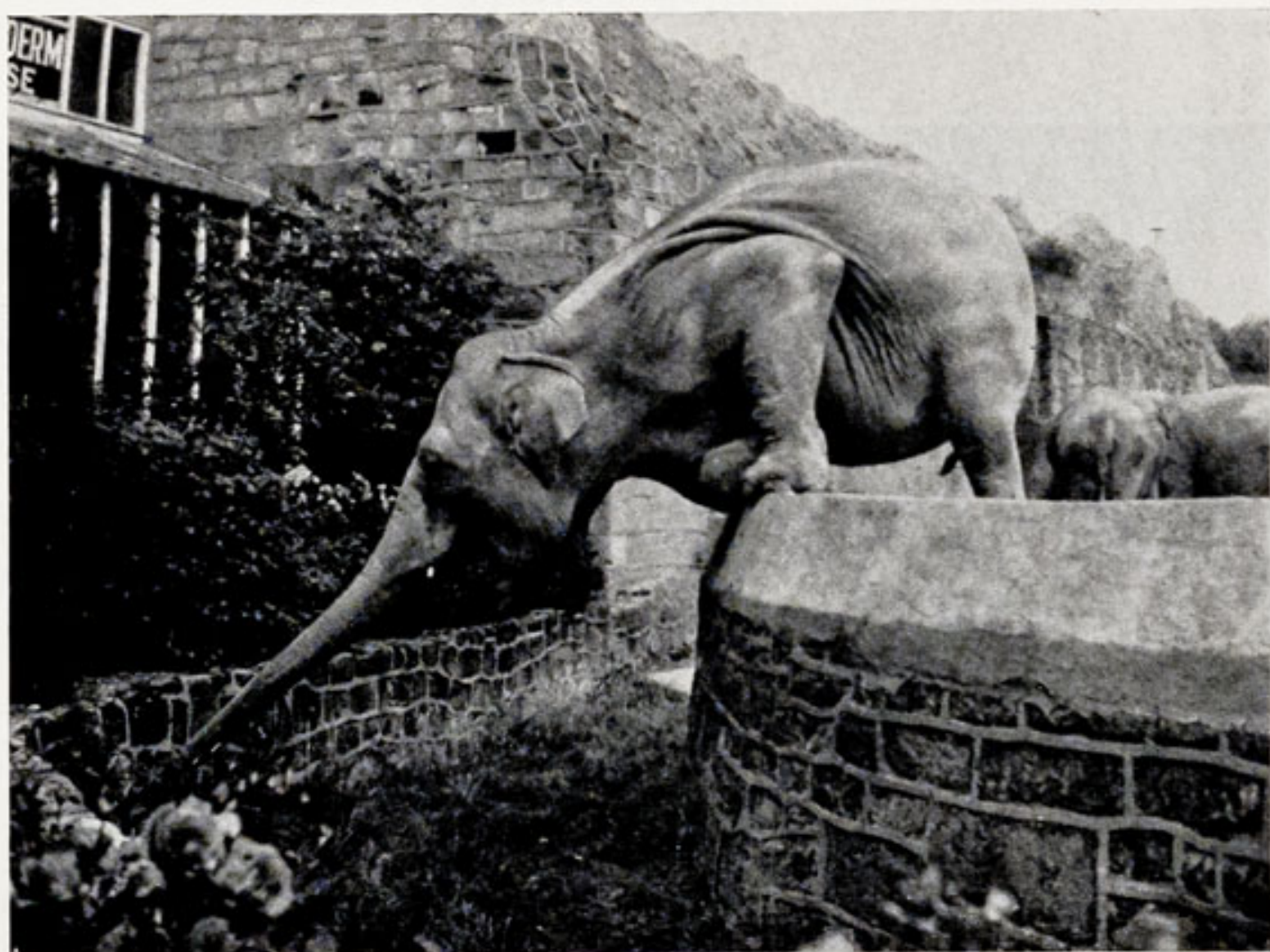
The Leopard cubs were just three months old when they posed for this photograph by Brian Duff. At this age their life is one long rough and tumble, with poor mother Susie usually in the middle of it. A few enclosures away are two more cubs which were born about six weeks after the first litter. In accordance with our normal practice they have just been vaccinated against Feline enteritis.



LEOPARD AND CUBS (*Panthera pardus*)

B. Duff, Daily Express.

ELEPHANT SHEBA



Rudolph Gebhardt.

SHEBA

While on holiday in England a German visitor to the Zoo, Mr. Rudolf Gebhardt, snapped Indian Elephant, Sheba, in the process of taking a quick snack. Despite their size and lumbering appearance Elephants have a remarkable sense of balance and those at the Zoo can often be seen walking along a wall about a foot wide which separates the Elephant paddock from the Hippopotamus enclosure.

AN APOLOGY

We apologise for an error which was made in the August issue of the "Zoo News" where it was stated that "Little Brother" written by June Johns was published by Peter Davis Ltd. In fact Gollancz published both this book and "Zoo Without Bars". Miss Johns' latest book "The Mating Game" is now on sale in the Zoo Shops.



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