

Chester Zoo News

AND GUIDE

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

July 1978

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The North of England Zoological Society

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

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COVER

African x Indian Elephant "Motty" with Mother "Sheba" and Aunt "Judy".

By courtesy of Kevin Fitzpatrick, Daily Mirror

Annual subscription — Two Pounds and Thirty Pence, postage paid
Telephone Chester 20106/7/9

NEW BABY ELEPHANT

Chester Zoo is proud to announce the birth of another baby elephant. He is also a very special baby as he is an African x Indian. This is so rare that so far as we know there is no record of this ever having happened before.

At about 9 a.m. on July 11th, Sheba was let out into the paddock adjoining the Pachyderm House along with the other elephants, and, to everyone's amazement, gave birth to a young male; it was a premature birth.

For some time Sheba had been under veterinary observation by the Zoo Vet, Mr. D. Lyon, for a large lump that had appeared on her stomach, giving it a swollen appearance. Nobody had considered the fact that Sheba could be pregnant because the only adult male was Jumbolino, an African elephant, and, as detailed above, it was not expected for the two to mate.

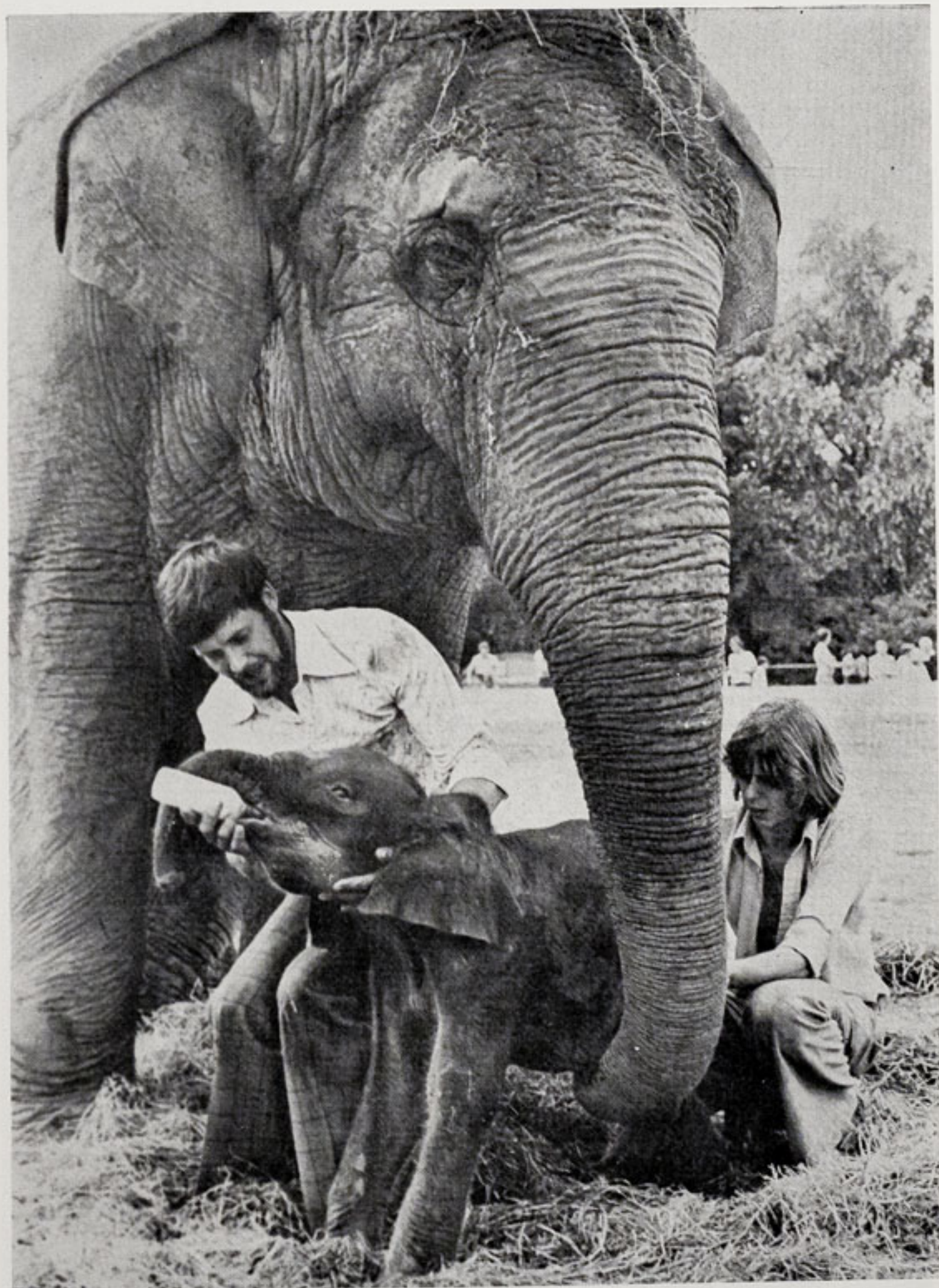
Sheba is aged twenty-one and Jumbolino, affectionately known around the Zoo as "Bubbles", is seventeen. Great interest in the new arrival is being shown by the other elephants; they have accepted the baby and we now have a happy family group.

DEATH OF BABY ELEPHANT

We regret to inform our readers that "Motty" died unexpectedly this morning, 21st July. He was found to have been suffering from a severe intestinal disorder.

THE SIBERIAN TIGER

Lotus and Chang, a pair of Siberian Tigers at present on breeding loan to the Zoo became the proud parents of four very fine cubs on 26th April 1978. They are now on show. At present, these cubs have neither been sexed nor named, but it will be possible to sex them when they receive their feline enteritis injections at twelve and twenty weeks.



By courtesy of Steve Cartwright, Mel Grundy Photographic Agency
KEEPERS RAY AND PAUL FEEDING "MOTTY"

The Siberian Tiger, (*Panthera tigris altaica*), is the largest of all the big cats at nearly ten feet long including the tail, and approximately 3 ft. 9 ins. at the shoulder. The size of this beautiful beast is again exaggerated somewhat by the long thick coat. The Siberian Tiger is easily distinguished from the other tigers by the colouring of the coat, which is yellowish rather than red, fading to cream on the belly, inside of legs, tail and a small amount on the neck ruff.

Extremes of heat and cold, including snow, are easily withstood, and the major requirements for the tiger to survive in the wild are a sufficient amount of large prey, water and cover. The diet consists of deer, wild boar, badgers, hare, hens, elk and fish, but they can make do with small animals and eggs if required to do so. When the tiger has made a large kill it will eat what it needs and then cover up the remainder with leaves, twigs and other foliage. Hyaenas and Jackals are driven off if they should try to interfere with the tiger's hidden store. The prey is generally very young, very old or occasionally, heavily pregnant, and is caught by stealthily creeping within the distance to either leap or make a short chase. If the prey is not caught by that time, the tiger tries elsewhere, but will not stalk the same animal or herd immediately after failing, as the cat is intelligent enough to realise that the herd is aware of its presence, and therefore, extra alert.

The tiger is a solitary animal and not generally found near human habitations. A "man-eater" is an old or sick animal that will have no trouble catching Man, who is an easy and weak prey. The only time a "man-eater" is a healthy animal is when there is a lack of wild or domestic prey.

Males have individual territories which are marked by tree scratches and the excretion from a gland beneath the tail. Several



By courtesy of Fred Williams, Evening Leader

"LOTUS" AND HER FOUR PLAYFUL CUBS

females may occupy smaller areas within the male's territory and consequently, the male will mate with any of these females when they are on heat. The female does not, however, defend her own territory. Another male will be allowed to pass through a tiger's area, but on no account will the resident male allow the travelling male to stay.

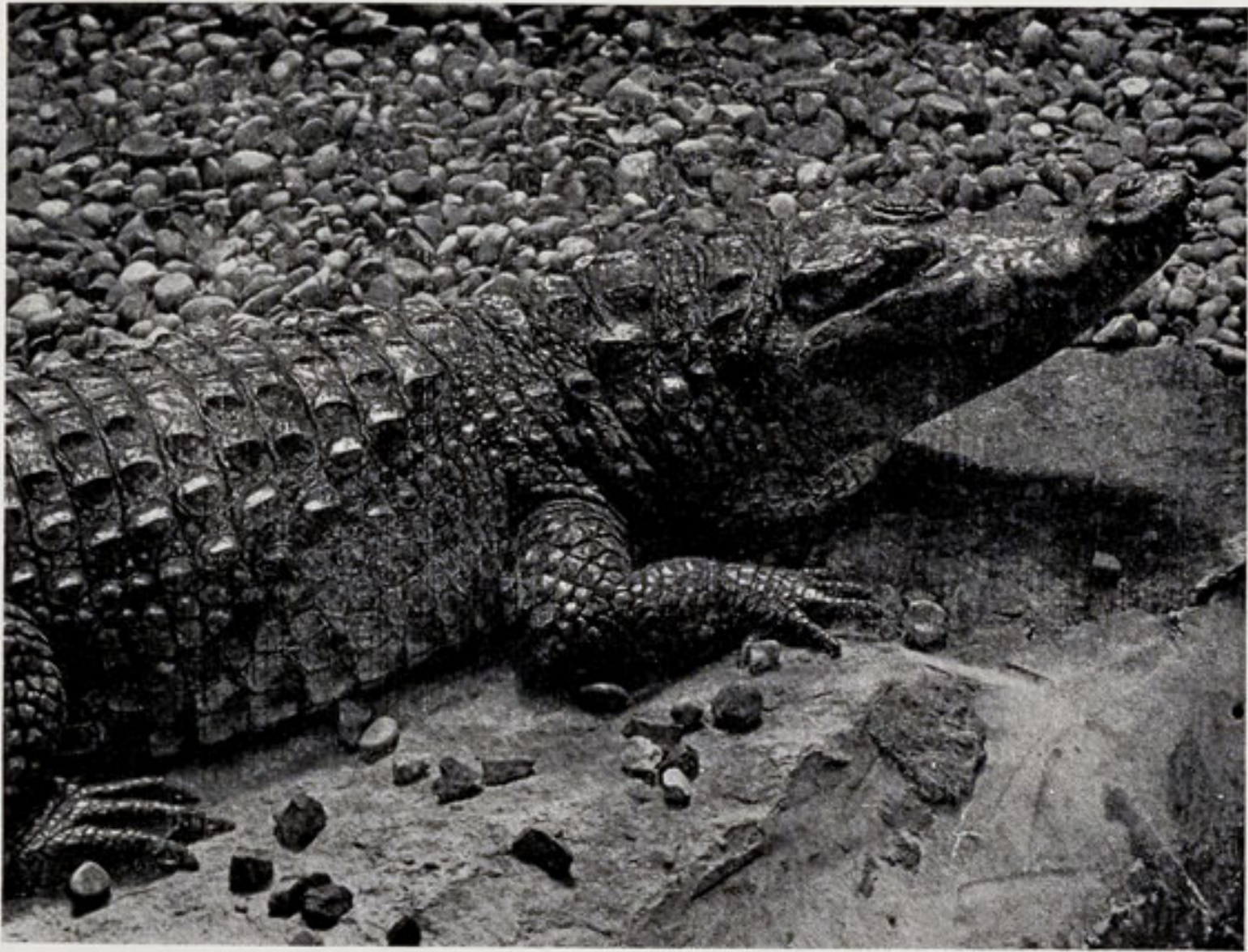
Scattered throughout the territory are several dens, and these are used according to whichever is the nearest. The dens are usually in covered areas, beneath fallen trees or rocks, or in earth cavities.

Tigers generally breed in the Winter or the Spring when the tigress is on heat. This mating period usually lasts for twenty to eighty days, but the female is receptive for only three to seven days of this time. Occasionally, fights break out between males at this period but these are very rarely fatal.

After a gestation period of approximately sixteen weeks the litter, consisting of two to four, and occasionally up to seven cubs, is born. They stay in the den until they are able to walk with the female when she is hunting, usually at about two months old. At six months, the cubs are left alone for long periods, and permanent teeth are present at about one year old. By the time the young tiger reaches sixteen months it is quite able to attack and kill an adult buffalo. Although the cubs can kill for themselves, they stay with the female for two to three years. Sexual maturity is reached at approximately four years old and it is an interesting point to note that Zoo tigers reach sexual maturity at two years old! Average life expectancy for a tiger, either in a Zoo or in the wild, is twenty years.

REPTILE NEWS

Recently we were presented with a male Nile Crocodile (*Crocodilus niloticus*), to replace the specimen which died earlier in the year.



By courtesy of Dr. S. Szinai

NILE CROCODILE

This prehistoric looking reptile can be found in the wild from the Cape of Good Hope, ranging northwards to Senegal, and is abundant in the Nile. Occasionally the distribution is scattered up to the coast of Palestine, the crocodiles entering rivers in that country. They are also to be found in Madagascar, and at one time in the Seychelles.

Before these reptiles were hunted for their skins they were found in much greater numbers. Man has killed many of them in his search to claim praise and admiration for having killed a large specimen or one having a particularly fine skin, usually displayed as a trophy. For this reason many of the larger specimens cannot be found and now a crocodile reaching sixteen feet or more is a rarity. They are slow-growing creatures and during the first seven years develop at a rate of approximately 6-8 inches, reaching sexual maturity at about twenty years old, by which time they are usually about 10 feet long.

CHESTER ZOO

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

FOR A COMPLETE TOUR OF THE ZOO — Follow Nos 1-116 South Entrance,
or Nos 16-116 from North Entrance then return to Nos 1-14.

**Chester Zoo is Open Daily
from 9.00a.m. until dusk.**

To LECTURE HALL
& CLASSROOM
(Reservations only)



1. SOUTH ENTRANCE

- 2. Peacock Enclosure
- 3. Wapiti Paddock
- 4. Coat enclosure
- 5. Aviaries
- 6. Milk Bar
- 7. CORONATION HALL
- 8. CLOAKROOM, FIRST AID, TOILETS, INVALIDS' TOILETS, MOTHER AND BABY ROOM
- 9. CAFETERIA
- 10. Picnic Lawn
- 11. Bears
- 12. Jubilee Gardens (Noah)
- 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. Shop and Kiosk
- 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 Hyena Enclosures
- 29. Animal Enclosure
- 30. Porcupine Enclosure
- 31. Coypus
- 32. Beavers
- 33. Giraffe House

- 34. Camel House
- 35. Waterbus Halt
- 36. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL & REPTILE HOUSES
- 37. CHIMPANZEES
- 38. Floribunda Rose Garden
- 39. Mammal House
- 40. Gibbon Island
- 41. H.T. Rose Garden
- 42. Aviaries
- 43. Flamingos
- 44. Waterfowl Enclosure
- 45. Waterfowl Enclosure
- 46. Waterfowl Enclosure
- 47. Penguins
- 48. Sealions
- 49. Rock Garden
- 50. Polar Bears
- 51. Big Cat Enclosure
- 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. P.O. Telephone
- 63. Aviary
- 64. Animal Enclosure
- 65. Animal Enclosure
- 66. Ornamental Rock Garden
- 67. Wallabies and Kangaroos
- 68. Kangaroo Enclosure
- 69. Aviary
- 70. Cheetahs
- 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. Brown Bears
- 81. ELEPHANTS
- 82. Hippos
- 83. Tapirs
- 84. Small Mammal House
- 85. Waterfowl Enclosure
- 86. Ankole Cattle
- 87. Emus, Cranes and Flamingos
- 88. Outside Monkey Enclosures
- 89. Baboon Pens
- 90. Cat House
- 91. Tiger Enclosures

- 92. Antelope Enclosure
- 93. Antelope Enclosure
- 94. Antelope Enclosure
- 95. Llamas
- 96. Zebras
- 97. Zebras
- 98. Waterfowl Enclosure
- 99. Waterfowl Enclosure
- 100. Blackbird
- 101. Wallabies
- 102. Animal Enclosure
- 103. Wallabies
- 103n. Reindeer



- 104. Pere David's Deer Paddock
- 105. Przewalski's Horses
- 105a. Onager
- 106. Arabian Gazelles
- 107. Musk Oxen
- 108. Bison
- 109. Pere David's Deer Paddock
- 110. Prairie Marmots, Alpacas
- 111. Antelope Enclosure
- 112. RHINOS
- 113. TOILETS
- 114. Mpila Snack Bar
- 115. Antelope Enclosure
- 116. MONKEY HOUSE

ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES:

- LIONS—3 pm except Fridays
- BEARS—3-15 pm
- POLAR BEARS—4 pm
- SEA LIONS 3 times daily—
2-30 pm, 3-30 pm, 4-30 pm

ANIMALS MAY BE MOVED
FROM TIME TO TIME



CAR PARK

CAR PARK

North Entrance

South Entrance

Bus Station

C. Road

Warrington
Manchester
Whitchurch
and South



The diet of the crocodile depends on the abundance of the immediate food available. If they can find plenty of fish they prefer that to larger mammals, although it has been known for some crocodiles to actually lie hidden in the water waiting for some antelope to venture too far whilst drinking; the hidden crocodile then makes its presence known by lunging forward and grabbing the unsuspecting animal by the muzzle or leg. Thrown off balance, the prey is then dragged under water to drown. Crocodiles are very fast in the water, and although some local tribes do not seem to be too anxious about their presence they must be treated with caution rather than contempt. They are useful for the reason that they eat carnivorous fish such as catfish, and maintain a balance between the species.

Surprisingly, crocodiles are good mothers. The clutch of 30-40 eggs is laid in a hole beside the river and covered with sand, grass or mud, and then closely guarded for the incubation period of approximately ninety days. The eggs are not incubated although the female does stay near to the nest most of the time.

The main predator if the mother moves too far away from the nest, is the Nile Monitor Lizard, which will dig up and eat the eggs. Very often the remains are then devoured by birds such as Marabou storks and vultures. If the incubation period goes successfully the baby crocodiles can be heard crying when they are ready to hatch and at this signal the mother digs up the covering of the nest so that the babies can climb out easily once they have hatched from their shells.

When they are hatched, the mother carries the baby crocodiles on her back and in her mouth to the water's edge where they take to the water in much the same fashion as ducklings, following the female. These young crocodiles are about a foot long and exact replicas of the adult. Once in the water, they are protected in a communal fashion by a group of females as they can easily fall prey to carnivorous fish, other reptiles and some birds.

MULTI-COLOURED SWAP SHOP

On June the 8th a visit to the Zoo was made by the film crew and presenter of the popular television programme, "Multi-coloured Swap Shop".

Mr. Peter Wait, Curator of Mammals, was filmed in conversation with the presenter at a few of the enclosures. Sequences from the film taken will be used in various programmes starting in September.

The Arabian Gazelles, "Omar" and "Salome", seemed to be particularly photogenic. The presenter bottle-fed them as Mr. Wait answered questions about the hand-rearing and natural habitat of this beautiful and rare gazelle. The cameraman was very pleased with them, and it took some time for him to decide that his filming was complete.

Purely by chance, when the crew filmed "Lotus", a Siberian Tiger, she took one of her cubs out of its den. As soon as the cub was put down it got to its feet and unsteadily made its way back to its brothers and sisters. "Lotus" was aware that she had company and did not stray too far away from her four cubs, who for much of the time, stayed curled up in the corner of their den.

A very large crowd gathered during the filming of the elephants, and children in the gathering became very excited when they realised what was happening. It was possible for the cameraman to film in such a way that he took in a large section of the spectators. No doubt anxious Saturday mornings will be spent scanning the screen for familiar faces. The Zoo's elephants, popular as always, were a natural choice for filming, especially as Jubilee was the first baby elephant to be born in the British Isles.

The Californian Sealions were also fed by the presenter, and Keeper Alan Woodward was kept busy answering all the various questions put to him.

Baby Hippopotamus, "Samantha", was filmed with her mother, "Myra", who promptly tried to investigate the proceedings by putting her forelegs against the side of her indoor pool to take a closer look at the rapidly retreating cameraman. Baby Tapir, "Joy", also appears along with the Squirrel Monkeys, Rhinos, Wallabies, Polar Bears and Grevy's Zebras.

AVIARY NEWS

The Zoo has recently bred the following birds:

- 3 Peach-faced Lovebirds (*Agapornis roseicollis*)
- 2 Maned Geese (*Chenonetta jubata*)
- 2 Firefinches (*Lagonostica senegala*)
- 3 Spice Birds (*Munia punctulata*)
- 2 Java Sparrows (*Padda oryzivora*)
- 2 Jerdon's Starlings (*Sturnus burmanicus*)
- 4 Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*)
- 2 Bar-headed Geese (*Anser indicus*)
- 6 Blue Eared Pheasants (*Crossoptilon auritum*)
- 2 Swainson's Lorikeets (*Trichoglossus haemotodus moluccanus*)
- 1 Guiana Parrotlet (*Forpus passerinus passerinus*)
- 3 Chiloe Wigeon (*Anas sibilatrix*)

The following birds have also been received into the Collection:

- 3 Boat-tailed Grackles (*Cassidix mexicanum*)
- 1 Sacred Ibis (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*)
- 1 Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)
- 2 Slender-billed Conures (*Enicognathus leptorhynchus*)
- 1 White-crested Laughing Thrush (*Garrulax leucolophus*)

AQUARIUM NEWS

The Aquarium is busy at the moment, having bred a number

of fish of various species. Approximately 200 Goldfish (*Carassius auratus*), are among this number, a quarter of them being Fantails. The Goldfish is a freshwater tropical fish, as are all the following recent breedings, and a domesticated sub-species of the *Carassius auratus*.

The keeping of these popular fishes originally started in China during the 16th and 17th centuries, and by that time many varieties had been developed. By about 1728, the Goldfish had become universally known after being imported to Portugal, via Java, and being gradually distributed from that point.

Splendid specimens are a red-gold colour on the back, graduating to golden on the sides and a deep yellow coloured belly, the fins are red-gold to yellowish. Varieties from perfect stock also produce some individuals which are mottled white-red-gold and black-red-gold, and there are also pale-pink coloured specimens known as "Silver Fishes".

China also has produced the White Cloud Mountain Minnow, (*Tanichthys albonobes*) which is from the the White Cloud Mountain area of Canton, where it inhabits fast-flowing streams. This fish is easily cared for and may be kept in garden pools during the summer months. With its olive-brown back and white belly divided by an iridescent blue-green band running the length of its body, the White Cloud Mountain Minnow rivals even the Neon Tetra in beauty, and is often enchantingly known as the "Poor Man's Neon". However, as the fish becomes older and larger, the colours lose their glow and fade.

Australian Rainbow Fish (*Melantonaenia species*) have also been bred. These are good community fish and there are three sub-species; at the moment it is not possible to tell to which species the fry belong, but when they are a little larger the staff at the Aquarium will be able to identify them.

Zebra danio (*Brachydanio rerio*), from India, are another delightful addition. The name is very descriptive as these fishes are basically olive-green with alternating blue and silver stripes. When the male is in breeding hue they take on a beautiful golden sheen all over the body.

A characteristic of this particular fish is that the female is generally larger than the male, the average length being $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

For the first time since September 1976, the Aquarium has bred Tilapia Maria. From Africa, Central America and tropical South America, these fishes have different colour phases according to their emotional condition and life-phase.

A number of Croaking Gourami, (*Trichopsis bittatus*) have also been bred. These are found in the Malay Peninsula and grow to approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The interesting Mouth-brooder (*Haplochromis multicolour*), is a peaceful fish which does well in community tanks. Fascinatingly coloured, the dull-grey-brown body takes on hues of blue, green and gold according to the lighting present. The Mouth-brooder owes its name to a curious happening during breeding-time. Small pits are dug in the gravel, in which the female deposits her eggs, usually about fifty; these are then fertilised by the male. The female takes the fertilised eggs into her mouth and throat-pouch and incubates them for about ten days. At this time it is wise to remove the male. During the incubation period the mother does not feed. In a tank of Mouth-brooders it is very difficult to pick out individuals, so often do they change their colouring. The changes which take place cannot be associated in any way with breeding or emotional condition but, for this reason, they are a beautiful addition to any collection.

The extraordinary little Half-beak (*Dermogenys pusillus*), is a surface dwelling fish which is found in the Malay Peninsula. Unlike most fish which produce eggs, this one produces live young. They are very small fish which are not easy to keep and even harder to breed from. The males tend to fight and the female often loses her brood of about fifteen, which are normally born after a pregnancy lasting from six to eight weeks.

GARDENING NOTES

All the flower beds have now been planted with the summer bedding. A good watering was given when planting took place.

At the beginning of May, a small heatwave was experienced, with temperatures of up to 32 Centigrade plus, but this lasted for only a week. Planting was then completed under more favourable, cloudy conditions, after which there was a good downpour. The cloudiness suited the Begonias in particular, as in past years they have been scorched when first planted if it has been too sunny. Unless the summer is very wet, it is necessary to water the standard and "dot" plants in flower beds every week.

The rockeries are very colourful due to the *Gazania mesembryanthemum* and *Viola* which were planted last May. While rockery plants such as *Saxifraga*, *Aubretia* and *Alyssum saxatile* have finished flowering for the season, there are others which always seem to have a few flowers; among the latter are plants such as *Gentiana acaulis*, and *Sino-ornato*, *Lithospermum*, *Hypericum gracilis* and *Potentilla*.

Many plants on the Zoo rockeries are grown for their foliage, and most of these are close to the ground and compact. *Antennaria dioica rosea* has a grey foliage and a good spreading habit. During early summer the flowers are three inches high and the seed pods become fluffy, giving rise to the common name *Cotton weed*.

Sempervivum maltby hybrids have a crimson coloured foliage and spread quickly. This plant is of the same family as the *Houseleek*, which will grow on the roofs of buildings. The name *Sempervivum*, comes from the Latin, *Semper* meaning always, and *Vivo*, alive, and virtually explains itself, "always alive".

Sedum spathulifolium purpureum has crimson-purple rosettes

with yellow flowers four inches high. The common *Sedum* is known as *Stonecrop*, and this can be seen growing wild on walls in many places. *Sagina subulata aurea*, has a moss-like appearance, but with its yellow leaves looks well growing over rocks. The common *Pearlwort*, which is a weed in a lawn, belongs to the same family. *Acaena inermis* can get out of hand on a rockery, but is useful in a dry place. *Ajuga reptans atropurpurea* has large purple leaves, about two inches long; this also spreads well, but is useful in that it gives a variety of colour.

The feathery, grey foliage of the *Chrysanthemum poterifolia* is also good for spreading and it is in several places where it survives the winter. All the previously described foliage plants are small, only growing from one to four inches high, and may also be used in other parts of a garden as ground cover.

The *Ceanothus* was pruned in the middle of June after flowering. This may seem an unusual time to prune shrubs, but it is important to keep a bush in shape and the new growth will flower the following year.

Flowering well this year were the *Philadelphus* "Mock Orange", and *Weigelia*. Another fine display was that of the *Buddleia globosa*, with the characteristic orange, globular flowers. This shrub can grow up to ten feet high and can spread widthways the same length; after flowering, this shrub must also be pruned. An interesting point to note is that the *Buddleia* is named after Rev. Adam Buddle, one-time vicar of Farnbridge, Essex.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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 shops. An annual subscription (12 issues) costs £2.30, postage paid, which can either be handed over the counter at the shops 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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