

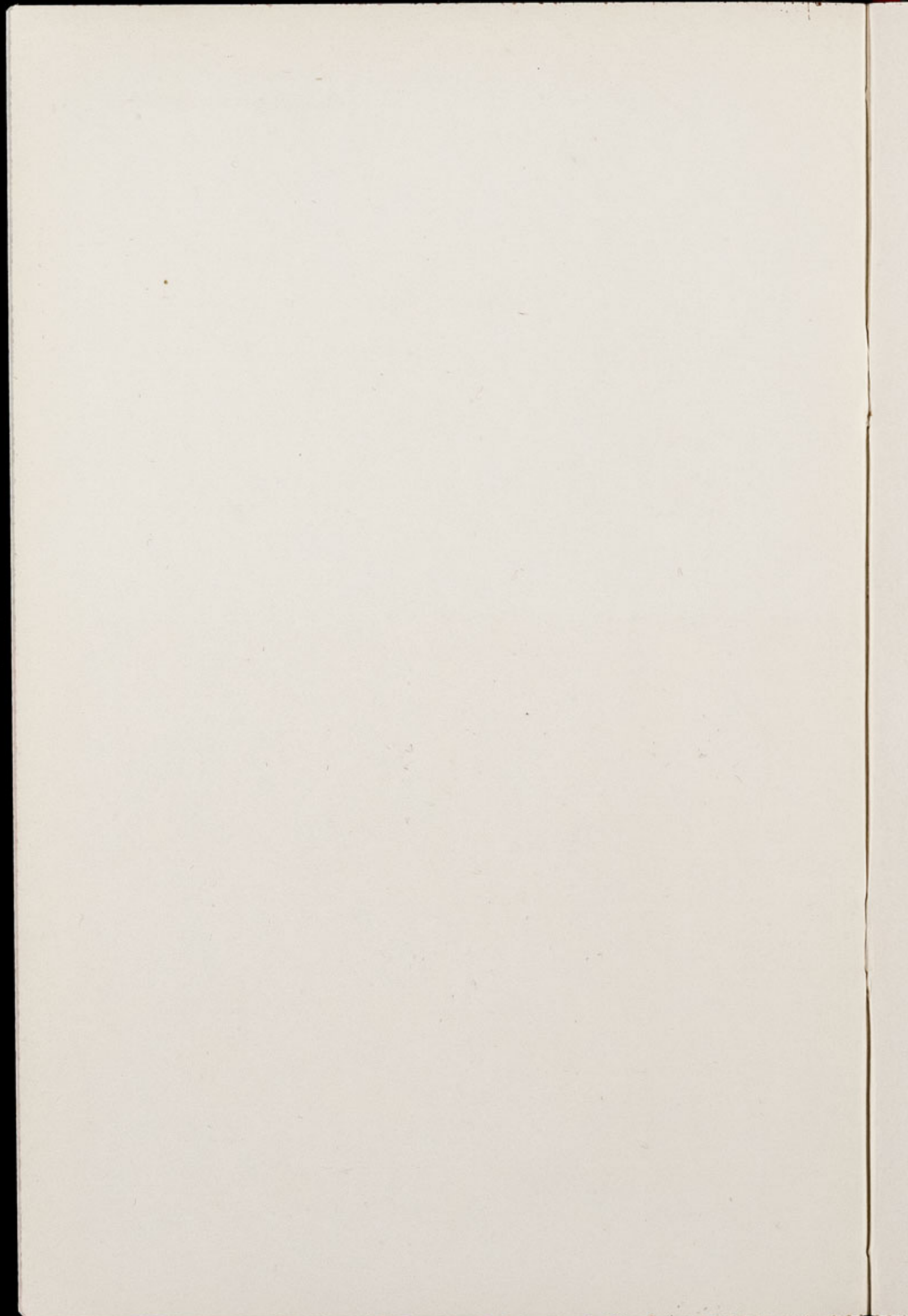
Chester Zoo News

AND GUIDE

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

December 1966

Price 1/-



Editorial

We would like to wish all our readers a Prosperous New Year.

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COVER: This month's cover shows a Lion and Lioness. For further details of our pride of Lions, see page 14.

ARRIVALS AND BIRTHS

The third Vervet Monkey to be born during 1966 arrived on November 23rd. The Vervet Monkey is found in Eastern and Southern Africa and is a race of Grass Monkey, other races being distributed over wide areas of Africa.

Vervet Monkeys are often sold as pets when young but unfortunately they turn vicious when adult even if reared from a few days old and they are not recommended as pets for this reason. The adults look harmless but they are very strong and have long sharp teeth.

Vervet Monkeys feed on various fruits and nuts; insects and lizards are also eaten. They are not strictly arboreal Monkeys, spending a great deal of time on the ground searching for food.

A recent presentation to the Monkey House was a two year old Spider Monkey. This animal, a male, has joined our other Spider Monkeys and has settled well. These Monkeys have both inside centrally heated cages and an outside open air enclosure.

Spider Monkeys are found in forested areas of Central and South America. With their extremely slender limbs and long prehensile tail, they are adapted to their arboreal way of life.

A very welcome addition to the Mammal House was a young pair of Oriental Small-clawed Otters. We have always exhibited Otters in the Mammal House but the remaining two died last summer. One of these Otters had been at the Zoo since 1959.

This is the first time we have kept the Oriental Small-clawed Otters (*Aonyx cinerea*) at the Zoo. They are found in India, China, Malaya, Sumatra, Java and Borneo — in fact almost everywhere in South East Asia. Their diet is said to consist of a far smaller proportion of fish than that of the Common Otter (*Lutra lutra*) which is found in the same area. The two species do not therefore compete for food and live happily in the same area. Small-clawed Otters are also known to feed to a large extent on mussels, snails and crabs.



VERVET MONKEY AND YOUNG

J. Gwyn Jones

As its name implies, this species has very small claws — in fact, they do not project beyond the digital pads in adults. However, the actual toes and paws are very sensitive and this enables the Otters to locate prey in mud or under stones.

The two Otters have settled well in their new home; they have not been allowed outside so far, as it will take some time for them to become acclimatized to our weather.

The Otter enclosure which is on the right of the Mammal House entrance, consists of an inside glass fronted enclosure provided with a good-sized pool. Outside is a larger pool and the public are able to view the animals over a low wall.

Our two new Otters are quite young and look a great deal smaller than the Otters we have exhibited previously, but Small-clawed Otters never grow as large as Common Otters. In general colouration they are dark brown and their fur is very sleek and shiny; they have an area of paler fur on the throat extending to just beneath the eyes and in front of the ears.

Another recent addition to the Mammal House was an Indian Mongoose.

Mongoose are famous for their attacks on Cobras. They are not immune to the snake's venom, but rely on extra speed to kill their enemy.

A young pair of Hamadryas Baboons arrived during the month. The male is $2\frac{1}{2}$ years old and had been hand reared. His mate was obtained from a local Aden S.P.C.A. and is just over $1\frac{1}{2}$ years old.

When fully grown, these animals will grow a mane or cape of silver-brown hair on their shoulders and heads. This is most prevalent in adult males and they are most spectacular animals.

Another name for this species is Sacred Baboon, due to the fact that the ancient Egyptians regarded these animals as sacrosanct. They are no longer found in Egypt, but inhabit rocky hillsides in South West Arabia, Eastern Sudan and Abyssinia.



HAMADRYAS BABOON

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

AQUARIUM NEWS

Recently a check list was completed of the fish collection in the Aquarium. We were amazed to discover that although the list was made at the worst time of the year, we have no less than 174 species of fish on exhibition. The number of individuals now exceeds 2,500.

Amongst the more recent additions to the collection are the following:—Moonlight and Snakeskin Gouramies, Monkhausier, Scitharinus, Hemiodus, Flying Fox, Tinfoil Barb, Spotted Leporinus, various species of Catfish and Barb and several as yet unidentified South American fish, probably Characins.

An experiment commenced at the beginning of the year to find the most suitable planting medium for our large range of aquatic plants and has reached a very satisfactory conclusion. It is hoped to start early next year on plans to grow some of the more exotic aquatic plants in specially set up show tanks. New species of plants are constantly added to these show tanks and the collection on the whole is even beginning to rival the fish in colour and diversity of shape and size.

Preparations are being made at the time of writing to obtain large quantities of wood and root and render them suitable for display in the fish tanks in March or April. The use of natural wood in the tanks has proved most successful, particularly when they are carefully planted with various species of *Cryptocoryne*. Given time, the roots of these plants creep through the wood and then quite suddenly start sprouting young shoots, making the whole thing look most attractive and natural.

In 1967, we intend concentrating on expanding our collection of Botias and Loaches, housing the entire collection in one or two large tanks containing pieces of pure white Basalt together with white Falspar Sand. This was tried experimentally late this year and the results were so encouraging that it was decided to make it a permanent display.

GARDEN NEWS

Various new plantings have been made in the Zoo Gardens this Autumn and Winter; these consisted chiefly of alterations to existing beds and shrubberies.

The border around the Elephant enclosure which in the past was planted with bedding-out plants, has now been planted with H.T. Roses; this entailed planting 520 bushes in two rows, at two foot intervals. The varieties planted were as follows:—Fragrant Cloud — a wonderful Rose of recent introduction, vermilion scarlet in colour and very fragrant, Kings Ransom, Mischief, Message, Colour Wonder, Grandpa Dickson, Papa Meiland, Mdme. Louise Laperriere, My Choice, Gold Crown, Dame de Coeur and Helen Traubel; these are all scented Roses.

Alterations have also been made to the border at the bottom of the lawn by the Rainbow Cafe. A Laurel hedge was planted here some time ago, to screen toilets which were to be built in this area. As the toilets were in fact built further towards the end of the lawn, we felt we could dispense with the hedge and a border of Floribunda Roses has been planted here instead. 320 bushes were needed, made up of eight varieties of forty. The varieties chosen were, Paddy McGredy, Zambra, Charlotte Elizabeth, Violet Carson, Vagabond, Honeymoon, Evelyn Fison and Elizabeth of Glamis.

The shrub border at the back of the new Rose beds has been improved and new shrubs introduced; these were propagated and grown in our Nursery. The tree and shrub bed at the North Entrance has always had a few rows of bedding plants around the outside, but it became more difficult to plant this each year; as the existing shrubs grew, they required cutting back continually. This bed has now been fully planted with shrubs; small growing plants were used and with the exception of a few evergreen Azaleas, 3 *Ceratostigma Willmottiana*, 3 *Caryopteris Clandonensis* and 3 *Daphne Mezereum*, the border was planted with shrubs from our Nursery.

The circular bed in front of the Oakfield Restaurant is a blaze of colour in the spring with Daffodils, Rhododendron and Azaleas,

GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES

LIONS—3 p.m. except Fridays
 SEA LIONS—2-40, 3-40, 4-40 p.m.
 BEARS—3-15 p.m.
 POLAR BEARS—4-0 p.m.

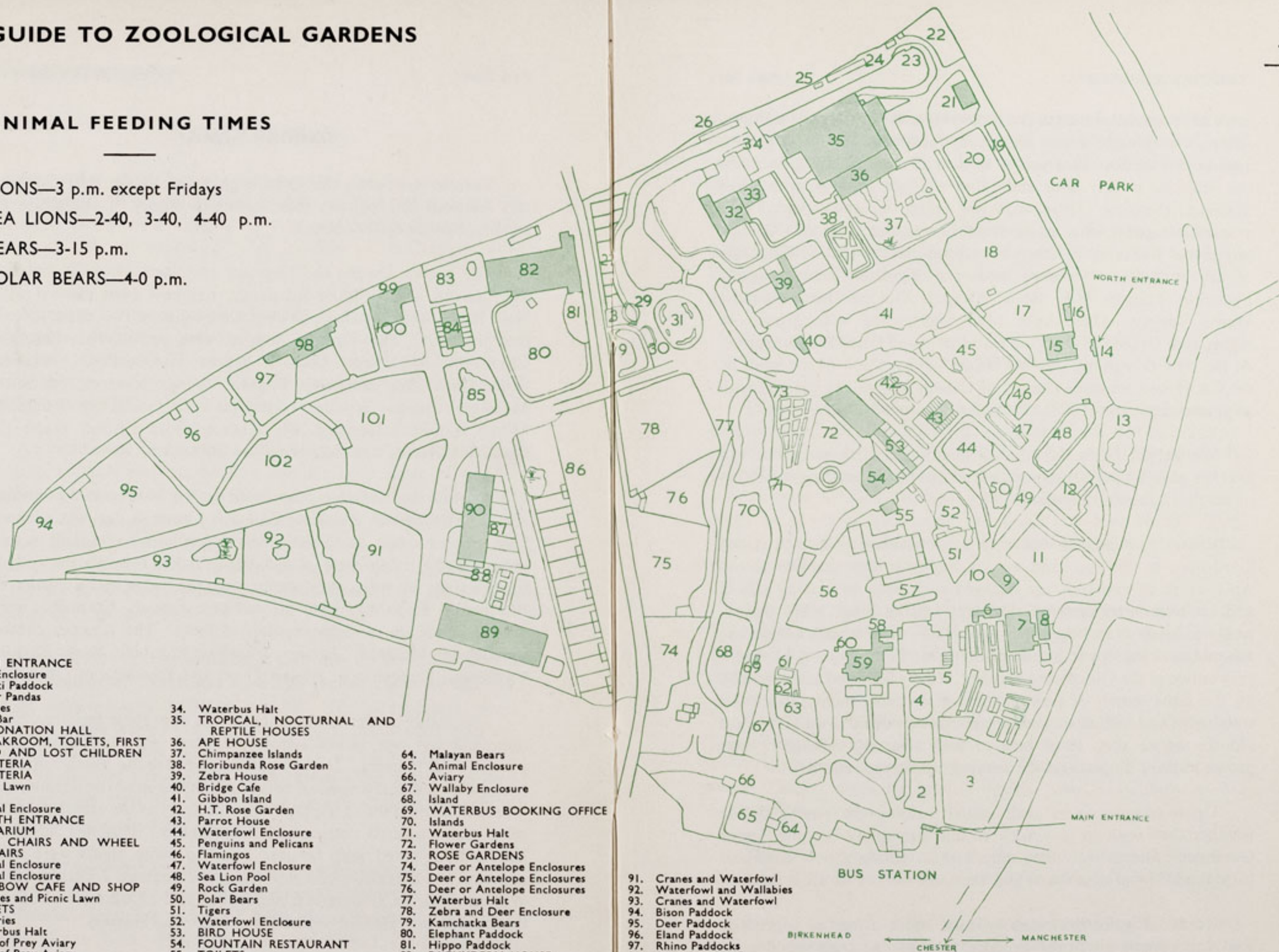
1. MAIN ENTRANCE
2. Bird Enclosure
3. Wapiti Paddock
4. Lesser Pandas
5. Aviaries
6. Milk Bar
7. CORONATION HALL
8. CLOAKROOM, TOILETS, FIRST AID AND LOST CHILDREN
9. CAFETERIA
10. CAFETERIA
11. Picnic Lawn
12. Bears
13. Animal Enclosure
14. NORTH ENTRANCE
15. AQUARIUM
16. PUSH CHAIRS AND WHEEL CHAIRS
17. Animal Enclosure
18. Animal Enclosure
19. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP
20. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn
21. TOILETS
22. Peccaries
23. Waterbus Halt
24. Birds of Prey Aviary
25. Birds of Prey Aviary
26. Owls
27. Jackal Enclosures
28. Wolverines
29. Porcupines
30. Coypus
31. Beavers
32. Giraffe House
33. Camel House

34. Waterbus Halt
35. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND REPTILE HOUSES
36. APE HOUSE
37. Chimpanzee Islands
38. Floribunda Rose Garden
39. Zebra House
40. Bridge Cafe
41. Gibbon Island
42. H.T. Rose Garden
43. Parrot House
44. Waterfowl Enclosure
45. Penguins and Pelicans
46. Flamingos
47. Waterfowl Enclosure
48. Sea Lion Pool
49. Rock Garden
50. Polar Bears
51. Tigers
52. Waterfowl Enclosure
53. BIRD HOUSE
54. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT
55. TOILETS
56. Lions
57. NEW ZOO SHOP
58. TOILETS
59. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT
60. G.P.O. Telephone Kiosk
61. Animal Enclosure
62. Animal Enclosures
63. Cheetahs

64. Malayan Bears
65. Animal Enclosure
66. Aviary
67. Wallaby Enclosure
68. Island
69. WATERBUS BOOKING OFFICE
70. Islands
71. Waterbus Halt
72. Flower Gardens
73. ROSE GARDENS
74. Deer or Antelope Enclosures
75. Deer or Antelope Enclosures
76. Deer or Antelope Enclosures
77. Waterbus Halt
78. Zebra and Deer Enclosure
79. Kamchatka Bears
80. Elephant Paddock
81. Hippo Paddock
82. PACHYDERM HOUSE
83. Tapir Paddock
84. Small Mammal House
85. Waterfowl Enclosure
86. Ankole Cattle
87. Stork Enclosures
88. Monkey Enclosures
89. Cat House
90. MONKEY HOUSE

91. Cranes and Waterfowl
92. Waterfowl and Wallabies
93. Cranes and Waterfowl
94. Bison Paddock
95. Deer Paddock
96. Eland Paddock
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.



but it has been mentioned that it looks rather dull during the summer. After some thought it was decided to introduce Liliiums in groups around the shrubs. Our soil is not at all suitable for Lilies, also our drainage is very poor and Lilies will not grow without good drainage; therefore existing soil was taken out and replaced with a suitable mixture after good drainage was put in place. Groups of summer flowering Heathers have been planted around the inside of this border; the varieties used were Vagan's Cream, Vagan's Lyonesse, Vulgaris H.E. Beale, Vulgaris Golden Haze, Vulgaris Mair's Variety. These have been interspersed with groups of Hypericum Gracile, Hypericum Calycinum and Potentilla Tangerine. At the time of writing, the two borders at each end of the lawn by the Cat House are being cleared of Laurels and will be planted with an interesting variety of shrubs from our own Nursery.

We feel that with these recent plantings and those carried out over the past few years, we now have a large and interesting collection of shrubs in the Zoo Gardens.

Recently an enquiry was made as to whether we trained young Gardeners at the Zoo and we are happy to say that we do so. An average of two boys are engaged each year on leaving school and are told on engagement that they will be given every opportunity to learn — and then it is up to them as to whether they take advantage of the opportunities given them. The "Trainees" spend a year or two in the Glasshouse Nursery, closely followed approximately by the same length of time in the outside departments; this latter training period includes a spell in the various Animal and Tropical Houses where they learn how to look after the different plants grown in these houses and the varying conditions required.

Upon completion of their initial training the youths decide whether they wish to stay with us and eventually become Senior Gardeners; alternatively they may wish to obtain a post elsewhere to gain additional experience and we do all we can to assist them.

Readers may be interested to learn about a former apprentice who carried out his initial training with us; he then spent some time at Bodnant and in a local nursery, afterwards obtaining a three year studentship at Edinburgh Botanical Gardens. Another Gardener

completed his initial training elsewhere, came to us to gain further experience and then went to Wisley as a student. The future of these young men is assured and we are very pleased that they are all doing so well.

Recently two young men who came to us for additional experience left to further their careers — one to Hilliers in their landscape department and the other to a local nursery to increase his knowledge of trees and shrubs.

BIRD NOTES

In our August edition of the "*Chester Zoo News*" we mentioned that our hen Great Indian Hornbill had been poisoned by being fed unsuitable food by a member of the public. After her death, the cock Hornbill began to pine, but fortunately we managed to obtain another mate for him. To begin with, the Hornbills were accommodated in adjoining aviaries in the Temperate Bird House. They seemed friendly towards each other through the wire mesh and recently were moved together.

Two male and four female Maned Geese were presented to the Zoo during the month. They have been accommodated in the Macaw Flight but will be moved to one of the Duck and Goose enclosures later on.

The Maned Goose is actually a species of Wood Duck, but being of larger size is normally referred to as a Goose. It is widely distributed over Australia and Tasmania and as with other Wood Ducks, normally nest in hollow trees sometimes several feet above the ground.

The most spectacular arrivals this month were a further consignment of Birds of Paradise received from Sir Edward Hallstrom.

The birds survived the long journey from New Guinea very well and arrived in excellent health. They were accompanied by Mr. D. Bush and were collected from London Airport by members of Zoo staff. The following species arrived:—Magnificent, Ribbon-

tailed, Lawe's Six Plumed, The Carol Six Plumed, Prince Rudolph's or Blue, Count Raggiana's or Red-plumed, Sickle-billed and Superb Birds of Paradise.

Birds of Paradise are extremely rare in this country as they are found only in the tropical forests of New Guinea. Many are killed each year by natives to obtain their gorgeous tail plumes for use in ceremonial head-dresses and other adornments. To the natives these feathers are extremely valuable and are often used as a form of currency. Up to the present time, New Guinea natives have used only traditional weapons in their hunting but conservationists are worried in case guns become readily available. Birds of Paradise can withstand hunting by blow-pipes, etc., but it is inevitable that many species would become extinct if the use of guns became widespread.

ARRIVALS IN THE REPTILE HOUSE

This past month has been a record with regard to rare new arrivals in the Reptile House.

The most spectacular rarity was a Lizard known as a Bearded Dragon (*Amphibolurus barbatus*); this species is widely distributed over dry and stony areas of Australia. They are common in Australia, but specimens are not often seen in this country, due to the stringent exportation laws. It is only when excited or threatened that these Lizards live up to their name of "Dragon". When disturbed the Bearded Dragon puts forward the large spiny collar of skin around the throat, which resembles a grotesque beard, flattens its body and turns to face the enemy. They have excellent camouflage and blend well with their environment. Bearded Dragons also have the ability to change their colour and when excited become yellow with orange stripes.

These tactics are obviously used to frighten off a would-be assailant.



ANACONDAS

J. Whitworth

Three West African Rough-backed Crocodiles (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*) were received during the month. They are only young and very small, so they have been accommodated in one of the smaller vivariums in the Reptile House. The Rough-backed or as it is often called Broad-fronted Crocodile is not a particularly large species; a fully grown specimen rarely measures more than five feet from nose to tip of tail.

We also received two more Anacondas during the month. This now brings our collection to three; our old specimen has been in the collection for two years. These Snakes are often very difficult to start feeding in captivity but once established, are long-lived. The Anaconda is one of the World's largest Snakes, reaching a maximum length of something like 25 feet and having an enormous girth. Our two new arrivals are approximately eight feet and have a long way to go before reaching such mammoth proportions.

A Royal Python also arrived during the month. These Pythons are often imported into this country for selling as pets but their natural habitat is Tropical West Africa. They are probably the most reliable of all Snakes, but it is an exaggeration to say they never bite. Unfortunately they are not the easiest Snakes to keep and if they fall into the wrong hands, they quickly die. Another name for this species is Ball Python, derived from their defensive habit of rolling themselves into a ball. Although Pythons are usually considered very large Snakes, there are a large number which are relatively small; the Royal Python is one of these, attaining a maximum body length of five feet.

LIONS

At the time of writing the Maintenance Staff are busy re-wiring the Lion enclosure, and the work is nearly completed.

Chester Zoo was one of the first Zoos to exhibit Lions in this way. The Lion enclosure at Chester Zoo covers approximately

$\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre and is well shaded by large trees. The enclosure is surrounded by a twelve foot high link mesh fence with a two foot inward overhang and this is what is being replaced.

At most other Zoos a heavy protective barrier fence is erected to prevent visitors getting too near to the Lion cages. Our enclosure has a protective barrier but of a completely different type; instead of a fence, a thickly planted flower border is used, which is just as effective and looks much more attractive.

A log platform resembling a huge table has been erected in the centre of the enclosure and the Lions can lie on this when the ground is damp.

Lions, although originating from Africa, adapt themselves very readily to our English climate. Our adult male "Obur" was hand reared by Mrs. Bere in Africa and came to the Zoo during June 1956. "Obur" means 'a child born in a pit'. Our four Lionesses were all bred in the Zoo. Since 1938 Chester Zoo has bred over 700 Lions which have been distributed to Zoos in various parts of the World including Africa.

Our Lions are fed mainly on horse flesh, supplemented by poultry to provide roughage.

In the wild state, most of the hunting is undertaken by the females and when a kill has taken place and the pride has partaken of its meal, they usually sleep it off for a little while before they kill again. It is because of this resting or non-eating period in the wild that we make a rule not to feed our animals on one day during the week. We selected Friday because in the old days Friday was one of the quietest days in the week. Through the passage of time this has changed considerably, but nevertheless, we have kept the Lions to the routine of a meatless day on Friday, as a number of people make trips to the Zoo especially to see the Lions fed and if we were to change the day for public feeding it would be unfair to these visitors.

WAPITI

During 1966, five female Wapiti calves were born; this was a 100% breeding record as each of our females produced a calf. The Wapiti paddock (No. 3 on the Plan) although fairly large is not able to accommodate 11 large Wapiti and so the five youngsters were disposed of to other Zoos.

Wapiti come from North America and are closely related to the Red Deer found in this country. They are larger than Red Deer and the Stag has an enormous spread of antlers.

Wapiti is the Indian name for this species but it is often referred to incorrectly as the Elk in the U.S.A. and Canada.



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