



*By Courtesy of J. Whitworth, Esq.*

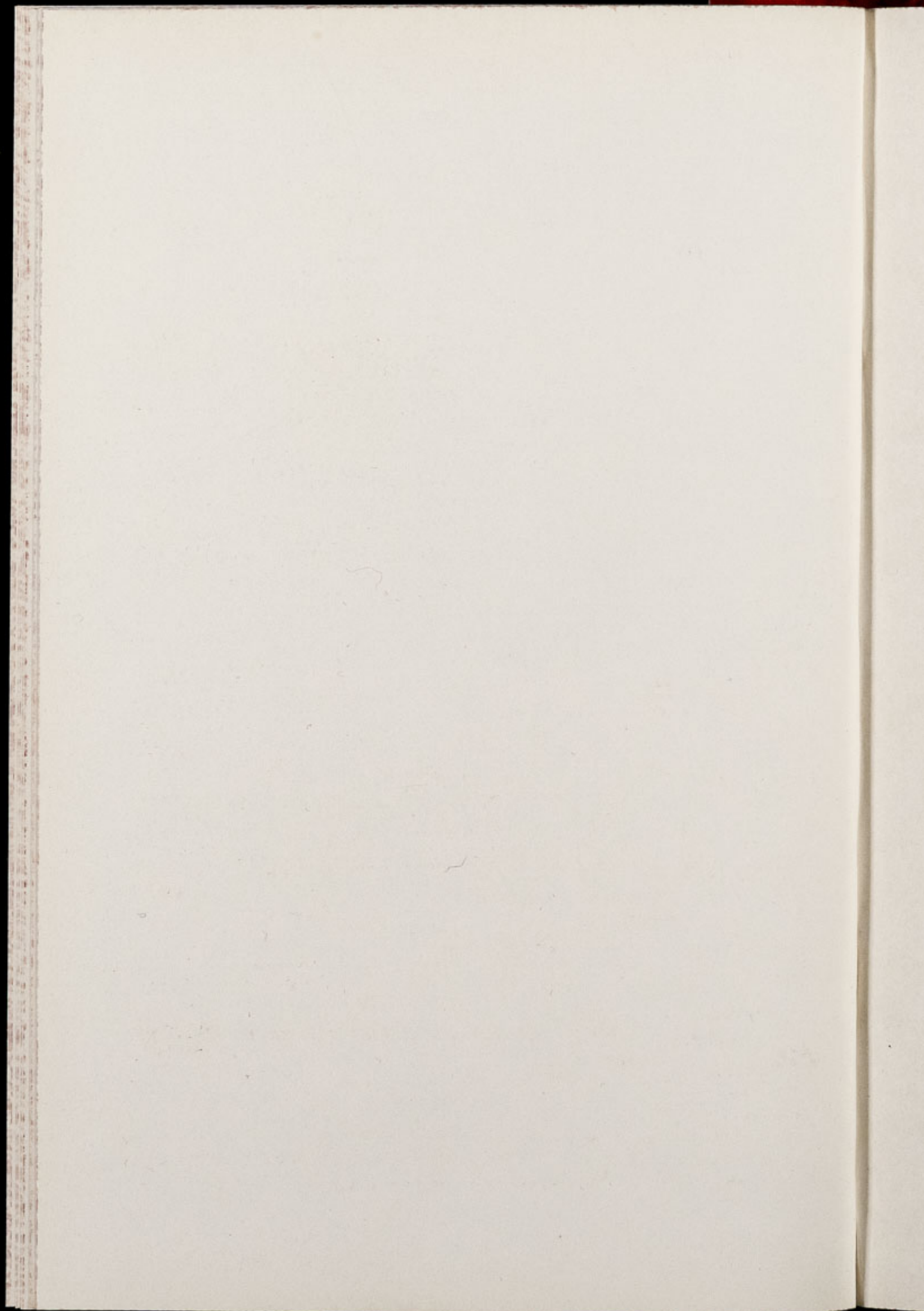
# **Chester Zoo News**

## **AND GUIDE**

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

May, 1965

Price 1/-



## Editorial

The big news this month is the arrival of the Birds of Paradise. All but one arrived in perfect health and already they are very much at home in the Tropical House. There are birds of ten different species in the consignment and next month we will include a few notes on each.

To get to Chester the Birds of Paradise were first transported from New Guinea to Sydney by boat. There they spent three days until they could be put on a plane for London. At London Airport they had a short rest for feeding and watering, before completing the journey to Chester by road. Mr. Ernie Hargreaves, a member of the staff of Taronga Park Zoo, accompanied the birds from Australia and saw them settled into their new home.

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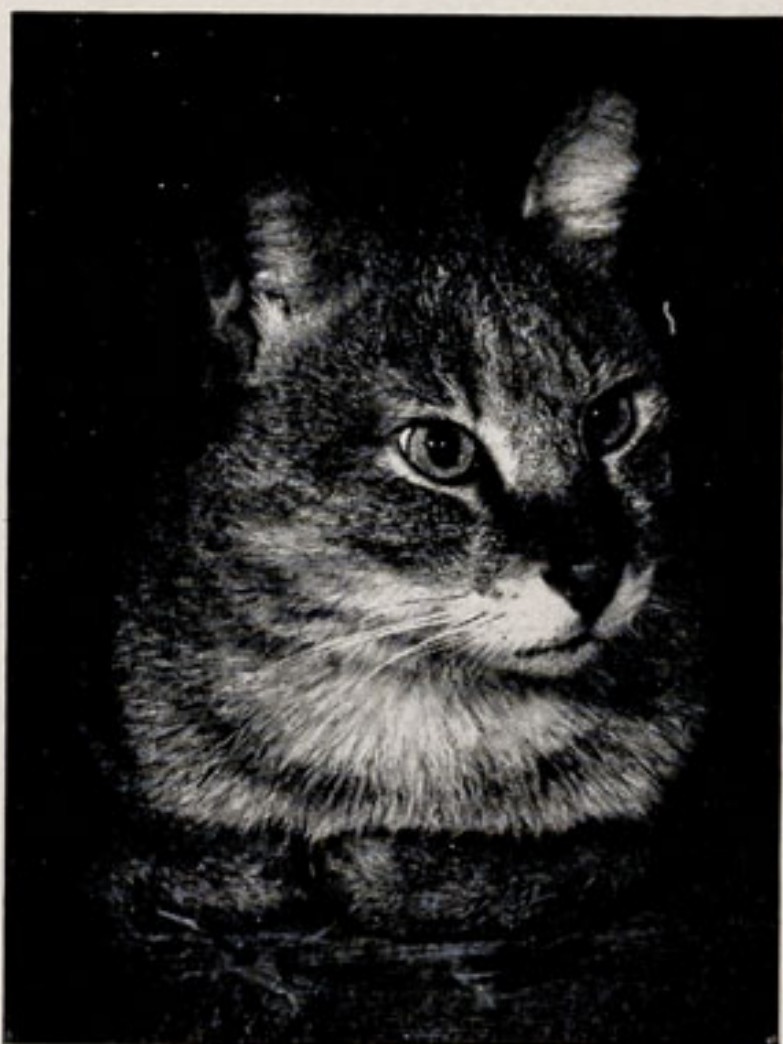
*COVER: "Udong", Chester Zoo's Lion relaxes in his large, open-air paddock.*

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## ZOO BABIES



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

JUNGLE CAT

CATS: We are happy to record the first breeding success in the new range of Cat cages beyond the Monkey House. On 6th May five kittens were born to one of our two female Jungle Cats.

The three Jungle Cats only arrived on the 26th of February, so their new home is obviously very much to their liking. It will be some time before the kittens venture into their outdoor enclosure, but they have their eyes open and are already very active "behind the scenes".

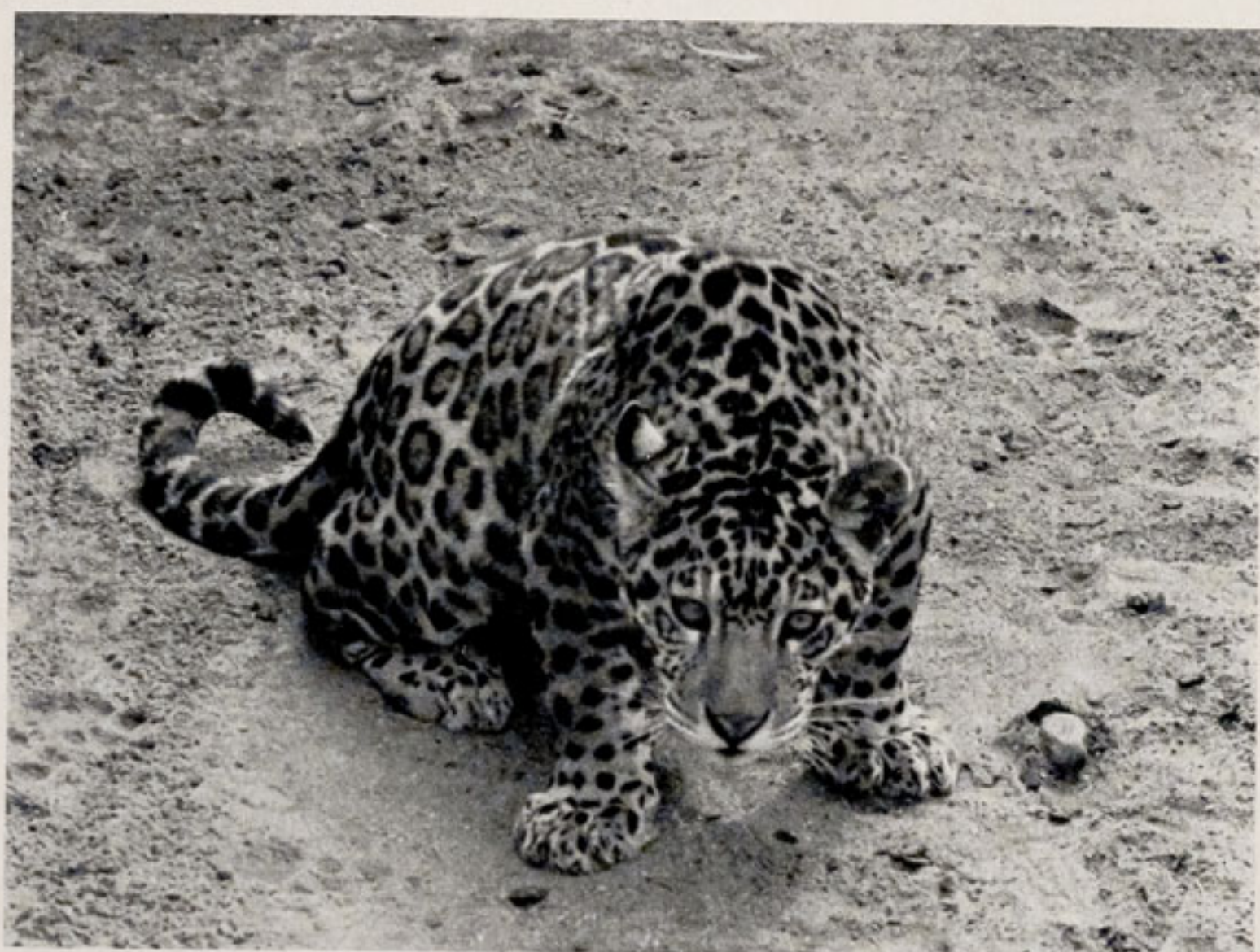
ORYX: A baby Beisa Oryx born on the 8th of May is making good progress. He amuses the staff of the Mpila Cafe by racing round his paddock, chased by his harrassed mother. Of course the Oryx paddock is only one of the many interesting enclosures which can be viewed from this Cafe.

BIRDS: The latest youngster to leave the nest in the Tropical House is a tiny Tri-coloured Nun.

In February we had to catch up the Kiskadees in the Tropical House, because they were destroying so many nests in search of material for their own. Transferring them to an aviary did not discourage their nesting attempts because they have now hatched youngsters — a chick has been spotted at the entrance of the nest-box and we believe that there is at least one other.

Several of the Zosterops are sitting on eggs, which should hatch very soon.

In the range of Owl Aviaries three Great Eagle Owl chicks hatched on the 12th of May. In the next enclosure the Spotted Eagle Owls have eggs.



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

THE YOUNG MALE JAGUAR WHICH ARRIVED ON MARCH 18th



*J. Gwyn Jones*

GREAT EAGLE OWL CHICKS

**HIGHLAND CATTLE:** A female calf born on the 12th of May brings their number to five.

**AMERICAN BISON PADDOCK:** The male Bison born on the 11th of April has been joined by another baby — born on the 21st of May. This latest youngster is also a male.

**WILDEBEESTE PADDOCK:** The first Wildebeeste (or Brindled Gnu) to be born in the new paddock arrived on the 21st of May and is a female. Further additions are expected in the very near future.

**ANKOLE PADDOCK:** Also born on the 21st of May was a little male Ankole Cattle calf.

**RING-TAILED LEMUR:** "Tweet", the Ring-Tailed Lemur presented to the Zoo in March 1963, had her first baby on the 19th of May. Before coming to Chester, Tweet had been a house pet and it was many months before she could be persuaded to accept the other Lemurs. She is still a very friendly little animal towards humans and seems proud of her achievement now that she has recovered from her initial surprise. In fact she is proving to be an excellent mother.

Ring-tailed Lemurs are found only on the island of Madagascar and resemble monkeys in many ways. In the wild they feed on small birds, fruit and insects and usually one young is born at a time. However, twins and even triplets are not unknown. The babies travel clinging to the soft fur of their mother's stomach — *see photograph opposite.*

#### **PURCHASES, PRESENTATIONS AND EXCHANGES**

May 12th — twelve Green Tree Frogs purchased and released with the other Tree Frogs in the compartment of the Reptile House shared with the baby Chameleons.

14th — one Festive Amazon Parrot presented.

14th — Birds of Paradise, four Victoria Crowned Pigeons and six Green Tree Pythons received from Taronga Park Zoo, Australia — more about these next month.

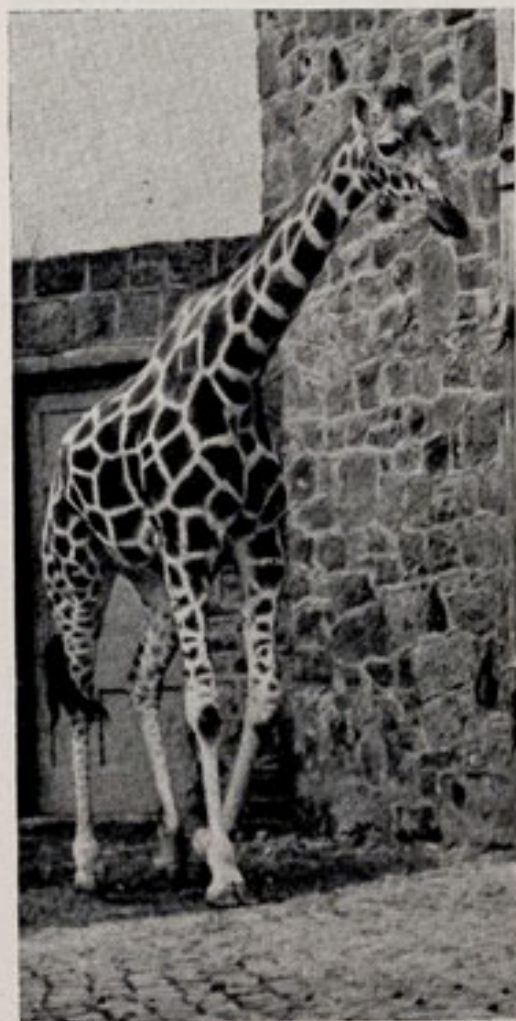


RING-TAILED LEMUR AND HER TWO DAY OLD BABY *K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.*

- May 20th — young female Jaguar purchased. She has been successfully introduced to the male which arrived in mid March (see photograph on page three) and the two young animals spend hours playing together.
- 21st — four-months old male Clouded Leopard purchased—a mate for him is already on its way to Chester.
- 21st — three Java Doves presented by a Magician.
- 21st — Cock Fairy Bluebird received from Frankfurt Zoo and released in the Tropical House.
- 23rd — three Plated Lizards added to the Reptile Collection and four Clawed Frogs to the Aquarium.

### SEQUEL TO LECHWE ESCAPE

The male Red Lechwe whose escape we recorded last month has now been transferred to an enclosure in the Zebra House. Sharing the enclosure are two other younger males. Since the dominant stag no longer has any rivals, we anticipate no further trouble in the original Lechwe paddock.



*Associated Press*

"MAUD"

### LOFTY GUMBOIL

Poor "Maud", the senior member of our Giraffe group, suffered a painful swelling on her upper jaw recently. However, daily injections of antibiotics soon brought down the swelling and she quickly recovered her usual large appetite and placid disposition.

### CONSIGNMENT FROM MELBOURNE

Last month we recorded the arrival of a consignment of Australian wild life, which came from Melbourne Zoo in exchange for three Chester bred Common Zebras. The thirty-four crates contained



Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

TWO OF THE NEW KANGAROOS FROM MELBOURNE

Silver-grey Opossums, Mallee and Red Kangaroos, Rufous-bellied and Bennett's Wallabies, also the following Birds and Reptiles.

Kookaburras — *Dacelo gigas* — these birds are quite common throughout Australia and have been given a variety of names such as Giant Kingfisher, Laughing Jackass and Settler's Clock. They are well known for their characteristic "laugh", which is best heard at sunset or early in the morning.

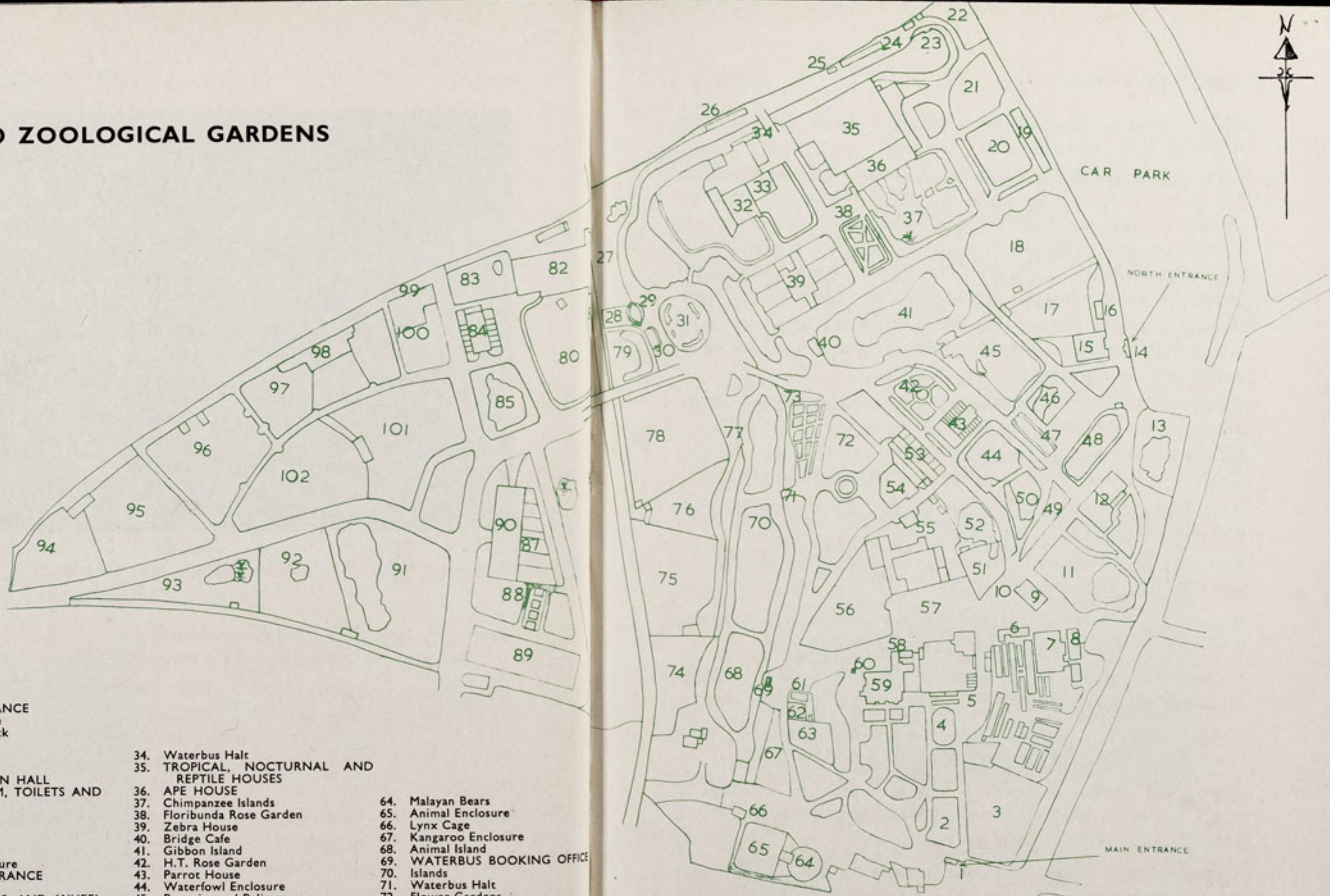
Barnard's Parakeets — *Barnardius barnardi* — also called Ring-neck Parrot, Mallee Parrot or Buln-Buln.

Pennant Parrakeets — *Platycercus elegans* — of which we already have breeding pairs at Chester.

Roseate Cockatoos or Galahs — *Kakatoë roseicapilla* — unfortunately these attractive birds have to be shot as pests in Australia because they do so much damage to crops.

Red-rumped Parrakeets — *Psephotus haematonotus* — found in Queensland, Victoria and South Australia are more often seen on the ground than in trees.

# GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS



1. MAIN ENTRANCE
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10. ZOO SHOP
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90. MONKEY HOUSE

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92. Waterfowl and Wallabies
93. Cranes and Waterfowl
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95. Deer Paddock
96. Eland Paddock
97. Rhino Paddocks
98. RHINO HOUSE
99. TOILETS
00. MPILA SNACK BAR
01. Antelope Enclosure
02. Antelope Enclosure

†—Under Construction.

Animals may be moved from time to time.

King Parrakeets — *Aprosmictus scapularis* — come from Eastern Australia.

Barraband Parrakeets — *Polytelis swainsoni* — are numerous in New South Wales, but are more often seen in pairs than in flocks. Swainson's Lorikeets — *Trichoglossus moluccanus* — are also known as Rainbow Lorikeets and, as this name suggests, are beautifully coloured little birds. In the wild they feed on nectar, flowers and fruit — flowering Eucalyptus Trees being a favourite source of food.

Western Magpies — *Gymnorhina dorsalis* — have been known to swoop and attack humans during the breeding season but are useful in that they destroy insects and small snakes.

Golden-mantled Rosella Parrakeets — *Platycercus eximius* — have a pleasant whistling call but do considerable damage to orchards.

Stanley Rosella Parrakeets — *Platycercus icterotis* — are found in South Western Australia and are often seen in gardens.

Rock Peplar Parrakeets — *Polytelis anthopeplus* — occur in small flocks of up to perhaps twenty birds.

Port Lincoln Parrakeets — *Barnardius zonarius* — are also known as Yellow-banded Parrots.

Bare-eyed Cockatoos — *Kakatoë sanguinea* — or Little Corellas, enjoy the seeds of grasses, etc., bulbs and roots.

Cockatiels — *Leptolophus hollandicus* — can be seen in large flocks in the inland parts of Australia but rarely frequent coastal areas.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoos — *Kakatoë galerita* — are the most commonly seen Cockatoos in Zoos in this country.

Copperhead Snakes — *Denisonia superba* — grow to a length of nearly five feet and abound in the mountainous areas of Victoria and New South Wales. Their bite can be fatal.

Carpet Pythons — *Morelia spilotes variegata* — are considered to be a colour variety or sub-species of the Diamond Python and not a separate species. They are beautifully marked and grow to a length of eleven feet. Although non-venomous Carpet Pythons have long sharp teeth which can inflict a nasty wound. Our two specimens settled down immediately and are already feeding well.

Cunningham's Skinks — *Egernia cunninghami* — can grow to between eleven and fifteen inches long and feed on insects, worms, fruit.

Blue-tongued Skinks — *Tiliqua scincoides* — grow up to nineteen inches long and the newcomers have joined our original pair of Blue Tongues in a compartment of the Reptile House.

### GARDENING NEWS

We had an excellent display of spring bedding this year. Polyanthus were as good as we have ever had them; conditions during the spring really suited them since we had heavy rainfall with cool weather. Other plants such as Pansies and Wallflowers were also very satisfactory, although later than usual.

When the spring display was at its best the gardener's mind had already turned to thoughts of the summer bedding. We wondered if we should be able to clear the beds for the reception of the summer bedding plants at the usual time, as we do like to make a start on this during the last week in May.



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

SPRING BEDDING BY THE FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT

The gardens have looked quite gay recently. In addition to the spring bedding, we had standard double flowering Cherries in full bloom and now it is the turn of the Rhododendrons and Azaleas. There is a particularly colourful display of Rhododendrons alongside the Monkey House and of Azaleas near the Main Gate.

The Rockery adjoining the Polar Bear enclosure has now been fully planted and has a well established look. At the moment Dwarf Rhododendrons, Azaleas and many varieties of Alpine

plants are providing the interest always associated with the Rock Garden. All the Camellias planted against the back wall have wintered well. Having flowered freely earlier in the year they are now making good growth. We feel well satisfied with the fine bushes and will keep our fingers crossed that future winters will not be too severe for them.

The plants in the animal houses are in full growth after their winters treatment. Bougainvilleas are beginning to flower in the Monkey and Tropical Houses, also such plants as Abutilons, Clerodendrons and Stephanotis. Canna Lillies have been planted in the Pachyderm House and some seventy hanging baskets of Fuchsias, Begonias, Tradescantia, Asparagus sprengeri, Hoya bella, etc., have been put in their places for the summer months. These can be seen in all the houses throughout the Zoo.

New landscape work is almost completed and the garden on the site of the old Monkey House has been planted out.

One unhappy note from the Gardener's viewpoint — the free-flying birds in the Tropical House have taken a fancy to the flower buds on the tropical Hibiscus and it would appear that these will always be devoid of flower. We can only hope that the Hibiscus buds are a factor in the healthy appearance of the birds.

Our Greenhouses are filled to capacity with summer bedding plants. These take up so much room at this time of the year that the resident greenhouse plants have to be crowded into any space we can find and so have to survive under conditions not very well suited to them over this period.

### AQUARIUM NEWS

Every year during the months of March, April and May, activity in the Aquarium reaches a peak. It is a time when all the public exhibition tanks are given a spring clean and the collection of fish is sorted out. Many fish are found to have outgrown their tanks in the previous year and, therefore, have to be transferred to larger accommodation. New materials for decorating the tanks are moved into place and extensive but judicious pruning of our large collection of aquatic plants ensures a prolific and healthy increase in growth throughout the ensuing season.

The beginning of April saw the culmination of a great deal of thought and preparation in the completion of an entirely new



*Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby*

ONE OF THE VARIEGATED PINEAPPLES IN THE TROPICAL HOUSE

section for the permanent displaying of marine fish — both tropical and cold water. Soon after this we acquired two thousand gallons of filtered sea water to help us start the marine section.

Before the salt water arrived three large reserve tanks made of concrete blocks were built on the roof of the Aquarium and these, together with the two which had already been built there, allowed us to store half the water for future use. To prevent the water from seeping through the blocks, we simply lined the tanks with large sheets of heavy duty polythene, after first ensuring that there were no projections on the wall or floor of the tanks which could puncture the polythene when a weight of water was added.

Before the exhibition tanks were filled they were decorated with shells, rocks and coral and two of the tanks had concrete and rock backs fitted. After allowing the tanks to settle for several days, a trip was made to Portmadoc and Anglesey and a good selection of Plumose Anemonies collected from the piers. A large quantity of dwarf shrimps was also transported to the Aquarium in polythene bags filled with water and charged with oxygen. Not one shrimp was lost on the journey even though several thousand had been placed in each bag and remained there for most of the day.

A few days later a collection of various Wrasse, Cottas and Blennies arrived, together with some particularly fine Fifteen-spined Sticklebacks. Unfortunately, after being placed in their respective tanks, the Wrasse and Sticklebacks were found to be suffering from an "ich" disease (similar to the fresh water "white spot" or *Ichthyophthirius* disease). In addition a minute form of fish louse had infested their bodies and spread to the surrounding tanks. Immediately this was discovered the fish were removed and the fish louse routed. Unfortunately the "ich" remained and all attempts to remove the tiresome disease have so far been to no avail.

The insidious nature of this disease made it imperative that the entire marine section should be emptied, sterilized and filled with clean water before an attempt was made to add further specimens. This was done and the tanks are now stocked with various forms of marine invertebrates. We are very fortunate that this particular disease once deprived of a host — namely the fish — will eventually die off, thus rendering the hitherto unusable water quite clean and perfectly suitable for use in the future months.



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

ANGEL FISH AND KISSING GOURAMIE

We are at present exhibiting a small but beautiful specimen of Triggerfish — *Balistapus aculeatus* — in the Tropical Marine bay, also a specimen of Chocolate Clown Fish — *Amphiprion sebae*. It is hoped in the very near future to get many more of these brilliantly coloured and highly interesting fish which, unfortunately, only inhabit the seas of the tropical hemisphere.

Work of course progresses in the rest of the Aquarium and many new and interesting species have been added. The most notable additions to the collection were four magnificent Brown Discus — *Symphesodon aquifasciata axelrodi*. Their tank was carefully decorated with large pieces of sycamore, plenty of dead leaves and many new varieties of plants. The presence of wood and leaves has had the effect of slightly acidifying the water — a most desirable condition for Discus. They have developed very healthy appetites following a preliminary set back when they were attacked by a virulent form of body fungus and had to be treated in a quarantine tank behind the scenes. After several weeks of close observation we feel confident that we have a compatible pair and hope eventually to breed from them.

Elephant Trunk-nosed Fish — *Gnathonemus petersi*, are again on show. We were fortunate this year in getting some very good specimens from West Africa. Also from the same area are four specimens of Red-eyed Characin — *Arnoldichthys spilopterus* — which are now housed with the African Knife Fish and Glass Characins.

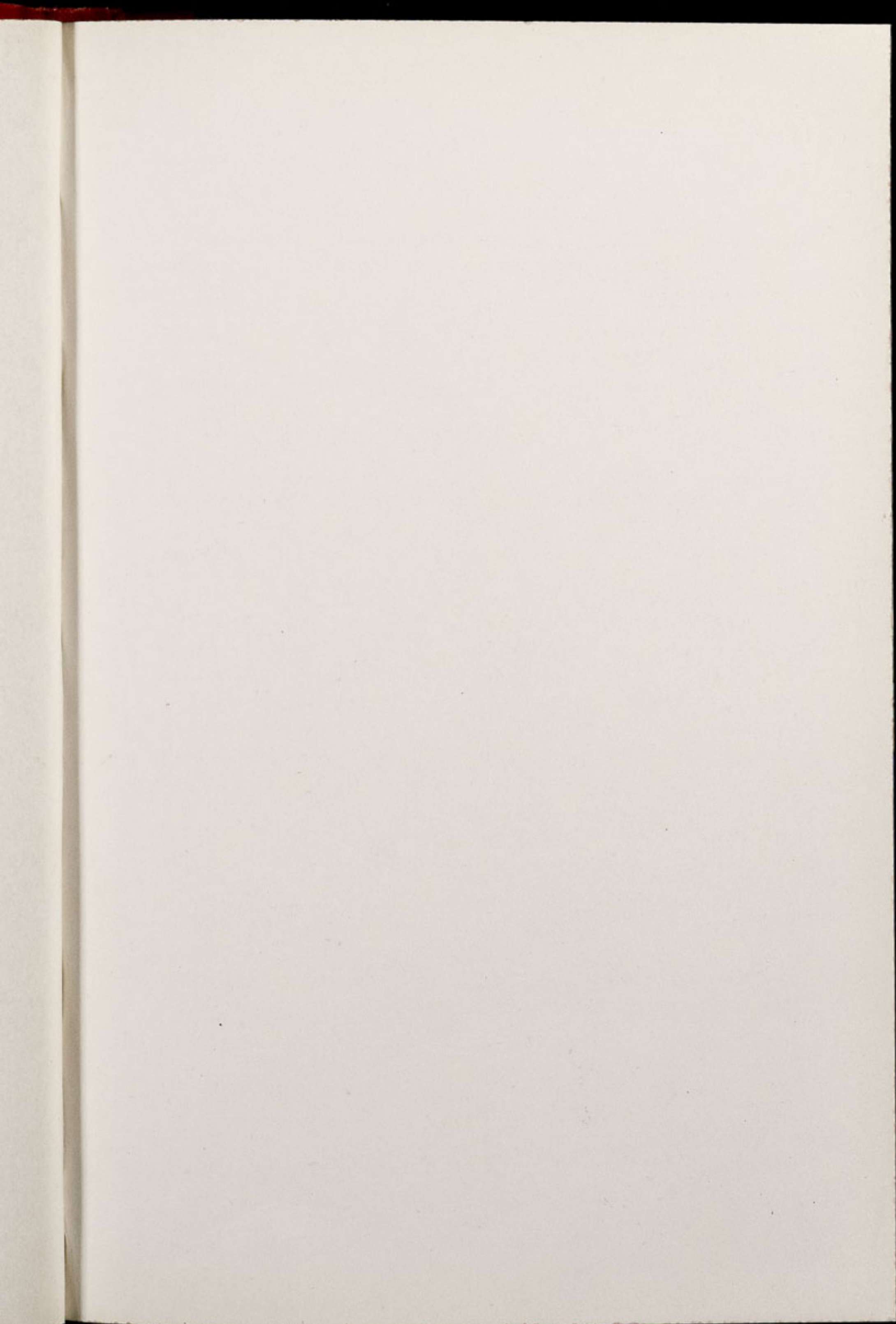
Other recent acquisitions include both Silver and Marbled Hatchet Fish, Albino Tiger Barbs, Black Sailfin Mollies (which have just produced their second batch of youngsters in the past eight weeks, bringing the number to approximately one hundred and fifty young), Black and Silver Angel Fish, Kissing Gouramies and a trio of Green Sailfin Mollies.

The baby Turtles which were presented to the Zoo in July 1964 have again been moved into an even larger tank, where we hope they will stay for the remainder of the year.

Apart from maintaining healthy stocks in the Aquarium we also keep all the ponds in the gardens full of many species of fish. The majority belong to the Carp family and are simply varieties of Goldfish. Several hundred Goldfish were released in various parts of the Zoo earlier this year and large numbers of good quality Shubunkins were freed in and around the Tropical House. There are some very large specimens of Golden Orfe around the Chimp Islands, together with various wild, coarse fish. Many sizeable Mirror and Common Carp can occasionally be seen in the Tropical House, together with several giant-sized Bream — two of which have recently been moved to a tank in the Aquarium.

The main canal system on which the Zoo's waterbus service operates, contains thousands of Silver Rudd, which have established themselves without any assistance from the Aquarium. These together with large numbers of Perch may be seen basking in the shallows under the Willow Trees on warm days.





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