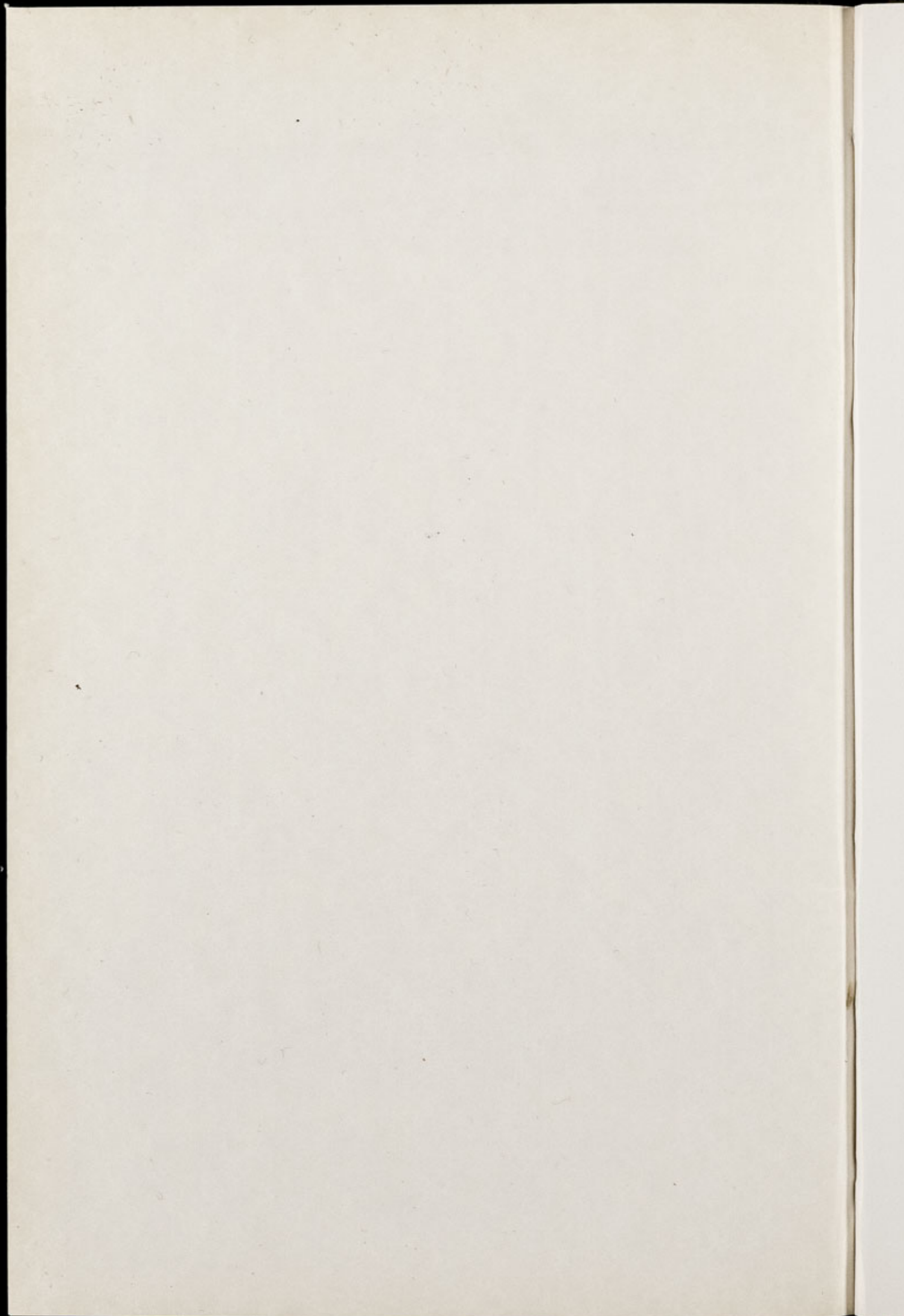




CHESTER ZOO NEWS
AND GUIDE

November 1975

Price 10p



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

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COVER

Sacred Ibis to be seen in the Long Flight adjoining the Ape House
By courtesy of J. Whitworth

Annual subscription — Two Pounds, postage paid
Telephone Chester 20106/7/8

COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Our cover photograph is that of the Sacred Ibis (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*), one of the thirteen Ibises which we have in the collection and which can be seen in the Long Flight adjoining the Ape House. The Sacred Ibis originates from Africa, Madagascar and Arabia. Its general distribution is throughout Africa, east to the Persian Gulf and Madagascar. It became extinct in Egypt about a century ago.

The adult birds have bare black skin on the head and neck. Their plumage is mostly white, with the flights tipped black glossed with green; the scapulars and innermost secondaries end in ornamental fluffy plumes of varying shades of violet. The bill, legs and feet are black, the iris brown and the periothalmic ring crimson. In young birds the head and neck are covered with white feathers mottled with black. They do not have the ornamental plumage of the adult bird. The nest is built of sticks lined with grass or reeds. Both male and female share in the building of the nest, and in the incubation and rearing of the young. Their clutch is two or three eggs, and the incubation period 21—23 days. Unfortunately we have had two birds and about 8—10 eggs stolen this year, but in a large aviary such as ours the birds breed freely, and they did in fact do so later in the season. When the birds are mating it is most interesting to watch them adding quite large sticks to the nest until it becomes enormous.

GENERAL NEWS

In our two previous issues of the magazine we have described the enclosure in the Elephant Paddock (now completed) which we have provided for the male elephants when they are "in musth," *i.e.*, in season. The animals are very difficult for the keepers to handle when in this condition, and we hope the new enclosure will

make it safe for them. So far the enclosure has proved successful.

However, we did not foresee that our twelve-year old male elephant "Nobby" would escape from a small enclosure in the Pachyderm House where he had been housed temporarily whilst his own was being cleaned out. He decided to take a walk, and the keepers were unable to turn him back into the Pachyderm House. As many readers would see from the national and local newspapers, "Nobby" was first of all given three doses of a tranquilizing drug, which had very little effect on him. By this time he had wandered some distance from the zoo, and had become a danger to the public. We had no alternative but to have him humanely destroyed. We have many sad moments when passing his grave which is in one of the paddocks opposite the Brown Bear Enclosure No. 89. However, we are sure visitors to the zoo will have happy recollections of "Nobby" who has been so entertaining to the public over the years. He was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ years old when he came to us in 1965.

We still have our African male "Jumbolina" who came to us in August 1964, having been found abandoned in 1963 when it was estimated that he would be about three years old. Although we have not had much luck with the breeding of an elephant at the zoo, first of all as a result of the anthrax, and then the death of the calf (the child of Sheba and Nobby) we are still hopeful. Our two females are Sheba aged nineteen and Judy aged eighteen.

Readers will be pleased to hear that the Puma and Leopard cubs can now be seen occasionally when the mothers allow them out of their respective dens.

Unfortunately we lost the two lion cubs born about the end of September, but we now have to report that lioness "Cathy" has given birth to two cubs, and "Ingrid" to three. This is "Cathy's" first litter, she herself having been born in the collection. These cubs are at this time doing well, and we look forward to having them on show soon.

The two brown bears born in April this year are on their own now in Enclosure No. 11 opposite the Sealions (Enclosure 48).

This is a very interesting part of the zoo, especially at feeding times, as nearby are the Polar Bears, and a little beyond two Lion enclosures. There is also a very pretty area where the Penguins play happily in pools and on the rocks. This area was where the reptiles were housed in the early part of the development of the zoo and where they remained for about twenty years. The beavers were housed in front of the Reptile House. They were, however, building underground and were a danger to the surrounding paths. The Reptile House is now incorporated in the Tropical House.

Our Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) has been coming out of the water (Beaver Pond—Enclosure No. 32) at about 3 o'clock each day but is now seen more and more at different times, repairing its lodges, seeking food and grooming itself. The Beaver is remarkable for its long flat tail.

ARRIVALS AND BIRTHS

Since our last report the following mammal births have been recorded:

- 5 Lion Cubs (*Panthera leo*)
- 1.0 Ring-tailed Lemur (*Lemur catta*)

A female Ring-tailed Lemur has been sent to us from Naples Zoo, and we have sent one of our males to them in exchange. At present the new arrival is housed in the Small Mammal House (Enclosure 84) where it will remain in quarantine for six months.

BIRD NOTES

The following birds have been bred in the zoo:

- 1 Mexican Green Jay (*Xanthoura yncas*)
- 3 Java Sparrows (*Padda oryzivora*)
- 6 Peacocks (*Pavo cristatus*)
- 1.0 Grand Eclectus Parrot (*Lorius roratus*)
- 1 Blue-eyed Cockatoo (*Kakatoe ophthalmica*)



By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

SPOTTED HYENA (*Hyaena crocuta*) DESCRIBED IN OUR OCTOBER ISSUE

As far as we know this is only the second breeding of the Mexican Green Jay (*Xanthoura yncas*) in this country. Our pair nested in the Tropical House in thick vegetation on the wall over the Gorilla Moats. The first indication that they had young was when we noticed the amount of food being taken, *i.e.*, large numbers of locusts, locust-hoppers and mealworms drenched with multi-vitamin solution. They were also taking new born mice, these being pulled into small pieces by the parents who fed them to the youngster. Both male and female fed the young bird. Because of the height of the nest it was impossible to make any real observations. The chick left the nest 25 days after hatching. It was able to fly quite strongly around the Tropical House, but still continued to be fed by both parents. It started to feed itself at about 35 days old.

Early on in the season the pair actually built a nest in the vicinity of the Alligator Pool, but unfortunately this was visible to the visitors; the sitting bird was disturbed by children and the hen abandoned the nest.

The distribution of the Mexican Green Jay is California and North West Mexico. These birds are about 10ins. long, and the male plumage colouration is a beautiful grass-green with paler underparts. The crown, nape and facial stripe are pale blue. The black parts are the bill, the bib and the legs. The female is lighter in colour, and its bib smaller. The normal clutch is 3—4 eggs, and the incubation period 17—18 days, as far as we could judge from our pair.

This is the third consecutive year that we have bred the Blue-eyed Cockatoo (*Kakatoe ophthalmica*). We have two youngsters at the moment, one of which is in the nest and the other has now left the nest. These are from two separate breeding pairs, and we are hoping very much that they will be male and female. This will give us a third unrelated breeding pair.

The Blue-eyed Cockatoo originates from New Britain which

lies off New Guinea, and ours were collected from the Gazelle Peninsula which is in the vicinity of Rabaul at the eastern side of New Britain.

In 1964 the Curator of Birds and Mammals was in the vicinity of Rabaul, and Blue-eyed Cockatoos were abundant in the tropical rain forest, usually being observed in pairs flying above the forest and screaming all the while. These birds are rare above an altitude of 3,000ft. They feed on seeds, nuts, fruit and berries.

An interesting point regarding our captivity breeding is that one pair took quite a large amount of insects and their larvae to feed the youngsters. This was in the form of maggots dusted with multi-vitamins, mealworms, and locusts with their wings removed.

We now have an accurate incubation period of 31 days. The young birds vacate the nest at ten weeks, but will dash into the nesting hole as soon as anyone approaches.

We have recently bred six Peacocks (*Pavo cristatus*). These birds are found in a temperate and tropical distribution, the general range being Asia and the Himalayas.

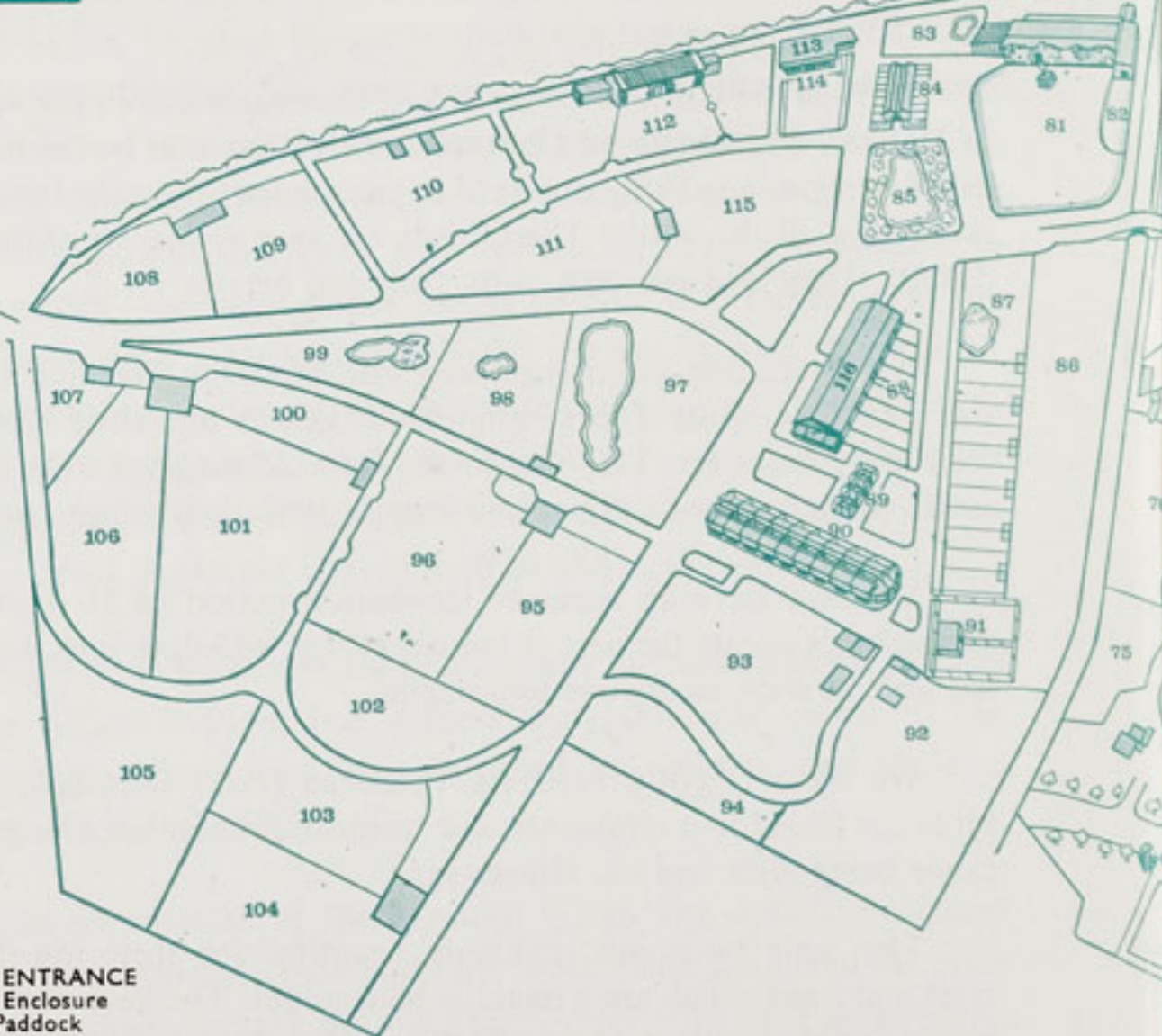
The male birds are strikingly beautiful for their fan-shaped crest and head which are a metallic blue colour. The neck and upper breast are blue with green and purple shades. The upper tail coverts, which number 100 to 150, form the train. These have long metallic green barbs with lilac and purple reflections. The sub-terminal ocellus are formed by a deep blue patch surrounded by two bright rings of brilliant blue and bronze-brown, also two narrow rings of golden-green and bronze-lilac.

* * *

The following birds have been added to our stock:

- 1 Citron-crested Cockatoo (*Katatoe sulphurea citrino cristata*)
- 0.1 Bare-faced or Sclater's Crested Curassow (*Crax fasciolata*)
- 1 Siberian Rubythroat (*Luscinia calliope*)
- 1.1 Cheer Pheasants (*Catreus wallichi*)
- 1 Hill Mynah (*Gracula religiosa*)

To LECTURE HALL
(Private)



1. SOUTH ENTRANCE
2. Peacock Enclosure
3. Wapiti Paddock
4. Lesser Pandas
5. Aviaries
6. Milk Bar
7. CORONATION HALL
8. CLOAKROOM, FIRST AID, TOILETS, MOTHER AND BABY ROOM
9. CAFETERIA
10. Picnic Lawn
11. Bears
12. Sunken Garden
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. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP
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 Hyaena Enclosures
29. Animal Enclosure
30. Porcupine Enclosure
31. Coypus
32. Beavers
33. Giraffe House

34. Camel House
35. Waterbus Halt
36. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND 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. 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. Gibbon Pen
64. Animal Enclosure
65. Cheetahs
66. Ornamental Rock Garden
67. Malayan Bears
68. Animal Enclosure
69. Aviary
70. Wallabies
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. Kamchatka Bears
81. ELEPHANTS
82. Hippos
83. Tapirs
84. Small Mammal House
85. Waterfowl Enclosure
86. Ankole Cattle
87. Emus and Cranes
88. Stork Enclosures
89. Baboon Pens
90. Cat House
91. Lions and Tigers

92. Antelope and Ostrich
 93. Antelope Enclosure
 94. Antelope Enclosure
 95. Zebras
 96. Llamas
 97. Waterfowl Enclosure
 98. Wallabies and Waterfowl
 99. Waterfowl Enclosure
 100. Blackbuck
 101. Wallabies
 102. Animal Paddock
 103. Animal Paddock
 104. Animal Paddock
- } under construction

105. Proposed New Bear Enclosures
106. Arabian Gazelles
107. Animal Paddock
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—
2-40 pm, 3-40 pm, 4-40 pm

Animals may be moved from time to time.



CAR PARK

North Entrance

C Road

Warrington
Manchester
Whitchurch
and South →

CAR PARK

Bus Station

South Entrance

Birkenhead

Chester

Manchester & South

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

We have received one specimen of the Citron-crested Cockatoo (*Katatoe sulphurea citrino cristata*) which is slightly larger than the Lesser Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Katatoe sulphurea*) and in many ways more attractive, having a very deep orange crest. These birds are confined to the island of Sumba in Indonesia, and during 1973 our Curator of Birds and Mammals spent two days on the island and saw large numbers of Citron-crested Cockatoos in the wild state. Most birds congregated around villages feeding high up in palm-trees and occasionally they were observed in the rice paddies and maize plantations. On two occasions young birds were seen at the entrance of nesting holes, these being in large palm-trees. Quite a number of Citron-crested Cockatoos were being kept by natives as pets. The Curator used a native dug-out for travelling along the coast of Sumba from village to village around the island, searching for birds of different species. The photograph on Page 11 depicts one of the villages, with coconut palms, and the high mountains in the background.

We have at last found a mate for our Sclater's Crested Curassow (*Crax fasciolata*), having received a female from Monsieur Jean Delacour of Zoological Gardens, Cleres, France. The pair are now housed together in the Temperate Bird House. Chester Zoo was the first to breed these birds in this country, but the youngsters and the female died, and the male bird has been left on his own for the last five years.

Two pairs of Sclater's Crested Curassow's were purchased for Chester Zoo in October 1961. One cock died in March 1962, and a hen died in March 1963. The remaining pair were housed in various aviaries throughout the zoo, according to weather conditions or stock of birds at that particular time. These birds have an even temperament which enables them to be mixed with a variety of smaller species.

In 1965 eggs were laid but eaten by other birds in the mixed



By courtesy of W. H. Timmis, Curator of Birds and Mammals, Chester Zoo

THE ISLAND OF SUMBA, INDONESIA

The Village on the coast where, in 1973, *Mr. Timmis* observed from a native dug-out the Citron-crested Cockatoo (*Kakatoe sulphurea citrino cristata*)

collection. Neither cock nor hen had shown any signs of incubation or protective instincts. With the coming of the colder weather both birds were transferred to the then new Temperate Bird House. In 1966 they laid two eggs, but took no interest in them whatsoever, so that they were removed to our incubator but unfortunately proved to be infertile. A second clutch of eggs was laid during May that year on the rockwork-surrounding in the Temperate Bird House. Unfortunately these eggs were incubated but stolen, we suspect by children, just before they were due to hatch. A clutch of two eggs was subsequently laid on a three-foot square platform at a height of 15ft. in the Temperate Bird House. The platform was erected and filled with small twigs to encourage the birds to nest. Incubation was undertaken entirely by the hen bird and she came off the nest to feed twice most days. The cock bird did not seem to incubate this clutch at all though he had taken part in the successful incubation in the previous clutch. He did however take a keen interest in the nest and was never far away.

The eggs were large, coloured white, with a rough shell. On the 7th August the two eggs hatched after an incubation period of 29 days. Within hours of hatching the chicks became very lively and were running around on the nesting platform. This posed a problem for the keepers as the youngsters could not fly and were 15ft. above a running stream and a public walkway.

A continuous watch was kept, but it was decided that the hen and chicks would have to be moved. They were transferred to the long open aviary in the Temperate Bird House. In the normal way all the birds at liberty in the Temperate Bird House could fly into this aviary, but we decided to leave the bolt-hole open allowing access to small species only. The following morning it was observed that the cock bird was obviously upset at being separated, and it was decided to move him also into this aviary. A careful watch was kept on him for some time in case he should attack the chicks, but fortunately he proved to be a perfect father.

The young Curassows were very well developed compared with similar species at the same age. When 4—5 days old the chicks easily managed to fly into bushes in the aviary at a height of three-feet, but spent most of their time on the ground during the day.



By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

OUR MALE SCLATER'S CRESTED CURASSOW (*Crax fasciolata*)

who has been on his own for the last five years, and who now has a mate. The pair can be seen in the Temperate Bird House

At the age of twelve days they began to show aggressive behaviour, chasing a Spree Starling from the food dish. The chicks followed either parent and kept close or underneath the tail, especially when very small.

A good variety of food was offered including maggots, worms hard-boiled egg, diced fruit, grain, green-food and insectivorous mixture. Both parents fed the chicks, taking food in their beaks and calling the young to them. The chicks were very soon able to find food for themselves, but even when they were eight weeks old the parents still called them when some very tasty food was found. To start with, the young proved mainly insectivorous but ate more fruit, etc., as they became older. Peanuts were also eaten readily at a later stage. At a little over eight weeks old they were approaching the Golden Pheasant in body size, and had a tail roughly the same size in proportion to their bodies as the adults. Both became increasingly dark-coloured, and were even beginning to develop the characteristic curly crest.

With the arrival of the frost that year it was decided to transfer all the Curassows to a nesting aviary as these birds seemed particularly susceptible to frost-bite. They were accommodated in one of the aviaries inside the Temperate Bird House, but when the young were older the whole family would be released within the confines of the building.

So far as we know this was the first breeding success of this species in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. A photograph of the male cock is on Page 13.

We have recently added a Siberian Rubythroat (*Luscinia calliope*) to our collection. These birds originate from Northeastern Asia and from Southeastern Asia in the winter months. They are medium-sized birds, the bills being slender and their wings and tails long.

The colouration of the Siberian Rubythroat is mostly brown with paler undersides. The throat of the male, however, is red with a white stripe above and below the eyes, but the throat of the female

is brownish with similar white markings. The young resemble the female. The nest is cup-shaped and in the wild is built in trees or bushes, the clutch being 3—6 eggs.

A pair of Cheer Pheasants (*Catreus wallichi*) has been acquired, and these have been housed in the Rainbow Aviaries. This is the first time we have had Cheer Pheasants, and we hope to breed from the pair. Their distribution covers the Western and Central Himalayas. In their natural state they are found at altitudes between 4,000 and 10,000ft., the birds migrating down from the highest regions in the winter months. They exist in very dry regions as they need very little water. Nesting time is from April to June, the clutch being 9—14 eggs and the incubation period 26 days.

GARDENING NOTES

The planting of the spring bedding has now been completed under very good weather conditions, the ground being moist enough to plant but all the beds have had to be watered after planting. As stated in previous notes the plants suffered in the nursery beds during the very hot dry summer, and we were concerned as to whether we would get good ones for planting in October in spite of almost continual watering. However, with rain coming during the first half of September it has been remarkable how the plants have grown from that time. They are as good as we have had previously, the penses being a mass of flowers even at this time of the year. What a good plant this is for our purpose, and one does not always appreciate the scent that is given from them.

Information has been requested on some of the flowering shrubs which we have in the gardens, and so it is intended to comment on a few of these each month.

In catalogues *Ceanothus* comes under the heading "climbing shrubs." It is certainly excellent for training on walls, but is just as good grown as a free-standing shrub. It grows well in both conditions and we have four varieties. The autumnal blue variety flowers in summer and autumn and its leaves are evergreen. *Dentatus* bears flowers of bright blue in May, and it is also an evergreen. *Glorie*

de Versailles, a lovely variety this, covered with large bunches of feathery flowers of pale blue in summer and autumn, and is deciduous. Veitchianus is evergreen, and more suitable for walls than as a shrub. It has deep blue flowers in terminal clusters in May and June. These are all excellent shrubs and a wonderful sight when in flower, the whole shrub being a mass of flowers. The only pruning necessary is to control the shrubs to the size required. They flower on new wood and so if pruning is necessary early flowering varieties should be pruned immediately after flowering and the late flowering varieties in early spring.

No other shrubs give such a long display of flowers as the Potentillas, commencing early in the summer and continuing through to late autumn. We have the varieties *arbuscula*, which have canary yellow flowers and a spreading habit; *Fruticosa floribunda* has yellow flowers; *Fruticosa Daydawn* and *Catherine Dykes* also have yellow flowers of different shades. *Fruticosa Tangerine* has orange flowers. All are fairly dwarf grown and need hard pruning in early spring, flowering on new growth. These shrubs have the advantage of thriving in almost any soil.

SUBSCRIPTION FORMS

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 £2.00, 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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W. H. Evans & Sons Ltd.
Sealand Road Trading Estate
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