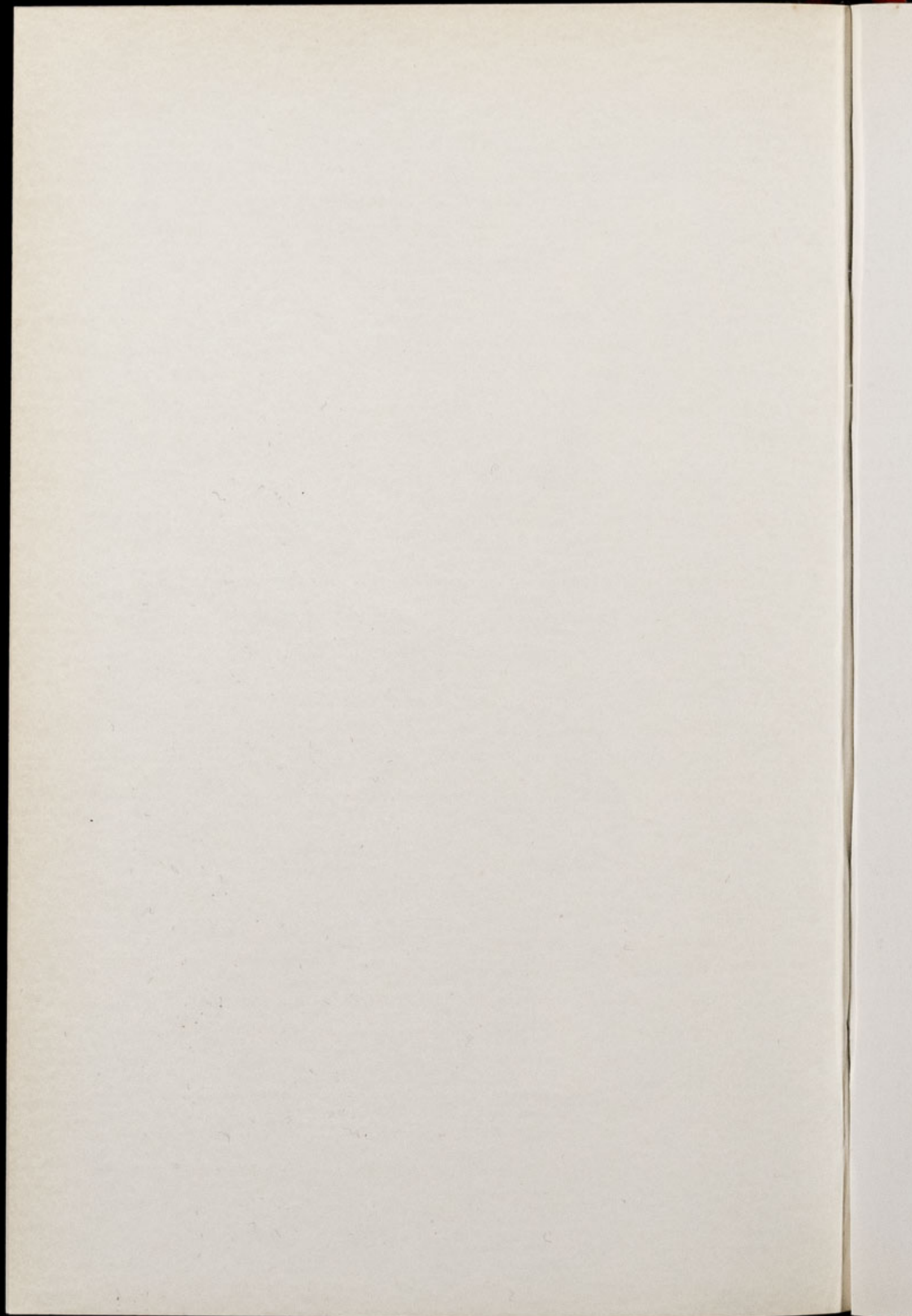




CHESTER ZOO NEWS *AND GUIDE*

November 1977

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

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COVER

San Blas Jay Chick

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

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

COVER PHOTOGRAPH

In 1976 we bred two San Blas Jays (*Cyanocorax sandblasiana nelsoni*), and this year we have bred one. These are the first breedings in the British Isles. The photograph is that of this year's chick at 25 days old.

The World authority on these Blue Jays of Central and South America is Professor John William Hardy. He is Chairman and Curator of Ornithology at the Florida State Museum, University of Florida, Gainesville. Mr. W. H. Timmis, our Curator of Apes and Birds, was extremely lucky in June this year in being able to spend a full day with Professor Hardy who was kind enough to allow him to see all the available literature, and to examine their fine skin collection.

The distribution of the San Blas Jay (*Cyanocorax sandblasiana nelsoni*) is from south-western Mexico Guerrero in Mayarit, Jalisco, Colima, and Michoacan. Its food consists of insects, lizards and the pericarp of palm nuts. It inhabits tropical deciduous woods and open palm wood plantations of foothills and lowlands of the Pacific slope of Mexico from Mayarit.

These birds nest in trees, shrubs, or vines, making their nests of sticks and twigs, lined with coarse plant fibres. The nest of the San Blas Jay is much more strongly built than that of the Bushy-crested Jay. Incubation and brooding is by the female only, a second female taking over for short periods. The females are fed by the males at the nest, but both sexes bring food for the young. The species occurs in flocks throughout the year, and it is communal in its breeding habits. The clutch in captivity would appear to be one to two eggs.

Juvenile *C.s. nelsoni* have a yellowish horn-coloured bill, dark

iris, a tall erect frontal nasal crest, and a greyish cast to the plumage. Yearlings have a parti-coloured bill, the tall crest, and a dark iris. Three-year olds appear to have dark irises but these begin to change and may be slightly lighter than iris-colour in two year olds. Although the bill is black on the outside, it is pale, or parti-coloured, inside.

Adult females have pure yellow irises, whilst the males have brownish or greenish-yellow. The males are larger than the females. The head, neck and underparts of the adult bird are jet black, with the exception of the under-tail coverts and tibial feathers which are dark purplish-blue. The upper parts are a deep rich and slightly purplish blue becoming deeper and more hyacinthine on the upper tail coverts and a darker and more definitely purplish-blue on the tail. The underwing is a dark silver grey, the inner webs of the wing quills and underside of the tail are blackish. The irises are olive brown to yellowish olive-green in fully adult males, yellow in adult females. The bill is black.

The field characteristics of the adult bird are its black and blue plumage, its head being entirely black.

GENERAL NEWS

We are pleased to report that two female Greater Kudus (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) have been received into the collection. They are named "Loppy" and "Lucy". We already have a male which has been in quarantine for some time and will soon be able to join the two females. The Greater Kudu Paddock is in Enclosure 92.

The Greater Kudu is one of the best known of the large antelopes. The male stands 5½-ft. tall at the shoulder and weighs about 650-lbs. fully grown. This animal carries its head high in the manner of the Red Deer. Its horns can grow up to 5-feet in length. Cows are

smaller and do not have horns. The coat of the Greater Kudu is a reddish-brown colour, displaying four to nine vertical stripes on the body; its eyes are a dark brown. The bull has a dark mane on its neck and back, and long hair on its throat.

In the wild cows and immature bulls exist together in small herds, the adult bulls joining the herd only in the mating season. The gestation period of the Kudu is seven months, young being born in mid-summer. Greater Kudu bulls have the loudest bellow of any antelopes.

The distribution of the Greater Kudu is from Cape Province to Kenya and the Sudan. Its natural habitat is in bushy or tree-covered plains; it also favours broken hilly country. This is not a forest animal but during the day it is sometimes to be found in thick cover, emerging in the cool of the evening to feed. It lives near to water.

Tragelaphus imbertis, the Lesser Kudu, now exists only in a corner of North East Africa, its distribution having been throughout Somalia, Kenya and Eastern Ethiopia. This animal stands about 4-feet tall, and although its appearance is similar to the Greater Kudu it is more colourfully marked. The natural habitat of the Lesser Kudu is wood, forest and thick jungle on the banks of rivers.

MORE ABOUT THE GORILLAS

"Jo Jo", the Lowland Gorilla on breeding loan from Bristol Zoo, and "Gogal" our female, are getting along very well together. Readers will be relieved to hear after our last report on the gorillas that "Jo Jo" can be contained on the island—maybe "Gogal" has been showing him the way—it did seem to the writer the other day that she was explaining to him her "here's mud in your eye" trick with the visitors!



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

"GOGAL"

"Jason", the former mate of "Gogal", is on his own in the new Ape House, and when on the outside island he really is quite the entertainer, showing the visitors how far he too can throw the bits of turf which he picks up from the edge of the moat. The children love it and one can hear shouts of delight at each occurrence.

Metal climbers have been installed on each of the other two islands outside the Tropical House. Whenever "Gogal" hears the the crowds cheering "Jason" she keeps an eye on him from the topmost rail. These structures are designed to give the gorillas plenty of exercise.

The Lowland Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla*) has a distribution in the forests of Central West Africa. An adult male stands 5½-feet high, with a weight of 400-lbs. or more. In the wild some males have a weight of 600-lbs. Scientists have found difficulty in obtaining details of the habits of these animals in dense tropical forests. It is known, however, that a great deal of their time is spent on the ground, where they roam about in family groups during the day, sleeping in their "beds" or "nests" at night. These are made of twigs and leaves, either on the ground or in the trees.

Gorillas have enormous canine teeth; they are, however, mainly vegetarians. The species is one of a group of four primates known as the Great Apes, the other three being the Chimpanzee, Pigmy Chimpanzee and the Orang-utan. The Lowland Gorilla still exists in fair numbers in the wild. Leopards are the predators of their young, but otherwise it is thought that the Gorilla has no natural enemies.

YOUNGSTERS IN THE CATHOUSE

We are pleased to report the following youngsters in the Cathouse (Enclosure 90):—

- 1.1 Common Leopard (*Panthera pardus*)
- 2 Common Leopards (*Panthera pardus*)
- 1.1 Tiger Cubs (*Panthera tigris*)
- 1 Black Leopard (*Panthera pardus*)
- 1 Lynx Kitten (*Felis lynx lynx*)



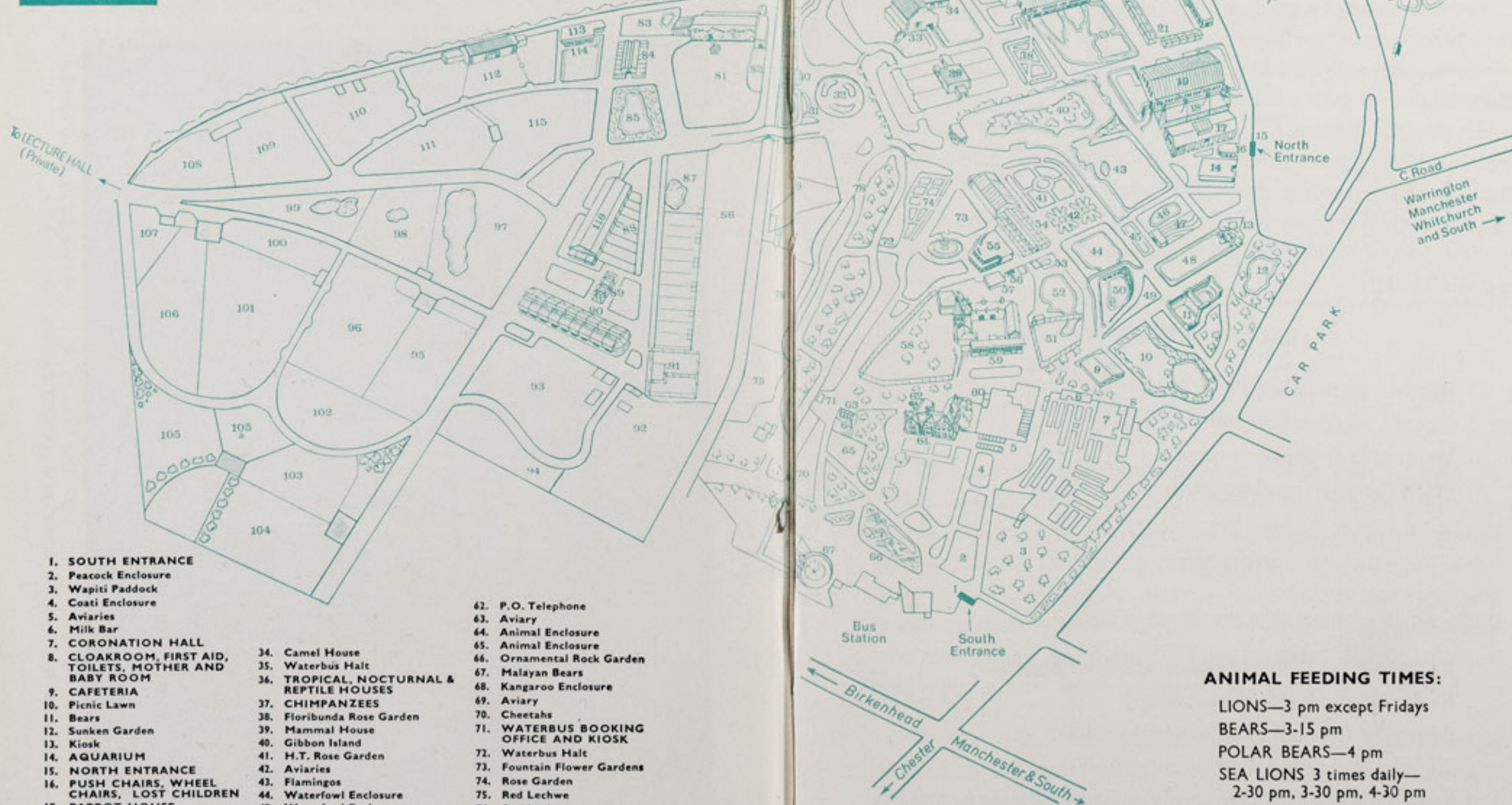
By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.
TWO OF OUR BENGAL TIGERS BORN ABOUT TWELVE MONTHS AGO

CHESTER ZOO

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

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

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



1. SOUTH ENTRANCE

2. Peacock Enclosure
3. Wapiti Paddock
4. Coati Enclosure
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. 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. Ceypus
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. 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. Malayan Bears
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. 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. Big Cat Enclosures

92. Antelope and
93. Antelope Enc
94. Antelope Enc
95. Zebras
96. Zebras
97. Waterfowl
98. Waterfowl
99. Waterfowl
100. Blackbuck
101. Wallabies
102. Animal Enc
103. Wallabies
104. Pere David's Paddock

105. Llamas
- 105a. Llamas
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—
2-30 pm, 3-30 pm, 4-30 pm

ANIMALS MAY BE MOVED
FROM TIME TO TIME

These youngsters will be on show in two to three weeks' time. Of the two Common Leopards one is Common and the other Black. These two youngsters are from the mother "Lucy" who has a recessive black colouration. From a first mating of a Spotted Leopard with a Black Panther the cubs would be spotted Leopards, and the Spotted would then be dominant. Hybridization would however become apparent in the second generation when Spotted was mated with Black and in succeeding generations where this occurred if the Spotted female is carrying Black as a recessive. The recessive factor out of a litter of say four, would in all probability be two Spotted and two Black.

RECENT BIRTHS

- 1 Hamadryas Baboon (*Papio hamadryas*)
- 1 Jaguar Cub (*Panthera onca*)
- 1 Blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*)
- 1 Black Panther (*Panthera pardus*)

BIRD NOTES

The following birds have been bred in the zoo:—

- 1 Red-whiskered Bulbul (*Pycnonotus jocosus peguensis*)
- 3 Nanday Conures (*Nandayas nanday*)
- 1 Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus falcinellus*)
- 1 Straw-necked Ibis (*Threskiornis spinicollis*)
- 2 Swainson's Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus moluccanus*)
- 2 Red-sided Eclectus Parrots (*Eclectus roratus goodsoni*)
- 2 Sun Conures (*Aratinga solstitialis*)

Those birds listed below have been received in exchange:—

- 1.1 Senegal Parrots (*Poicephalus senegalus*)
- 1.1 Stanley Parrakeets (*Platycercus icterotis*)

Birds received in exchange—continued

- 0.1 Bateleur Eagle (*Terathopius ecaudatus*)
- 1.0 Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)
- 1.1 King Vulture (*Sarcorhamphus papa*)
- 1.1 Celestial Parrotlets (*Forpus coelestis*)
- 0.1 Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Aquila audax*)
- 2 Boobook Owls (*Ninox boobook*)
- 4.4 Crested Bronzewing Pigeons (*Ocyphaps lophotes*)
- 4 Rothschild's Mynahs (*Leucopsar rothschildi*)

One male Scaly-breasted Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*) has been received on breeding loan.

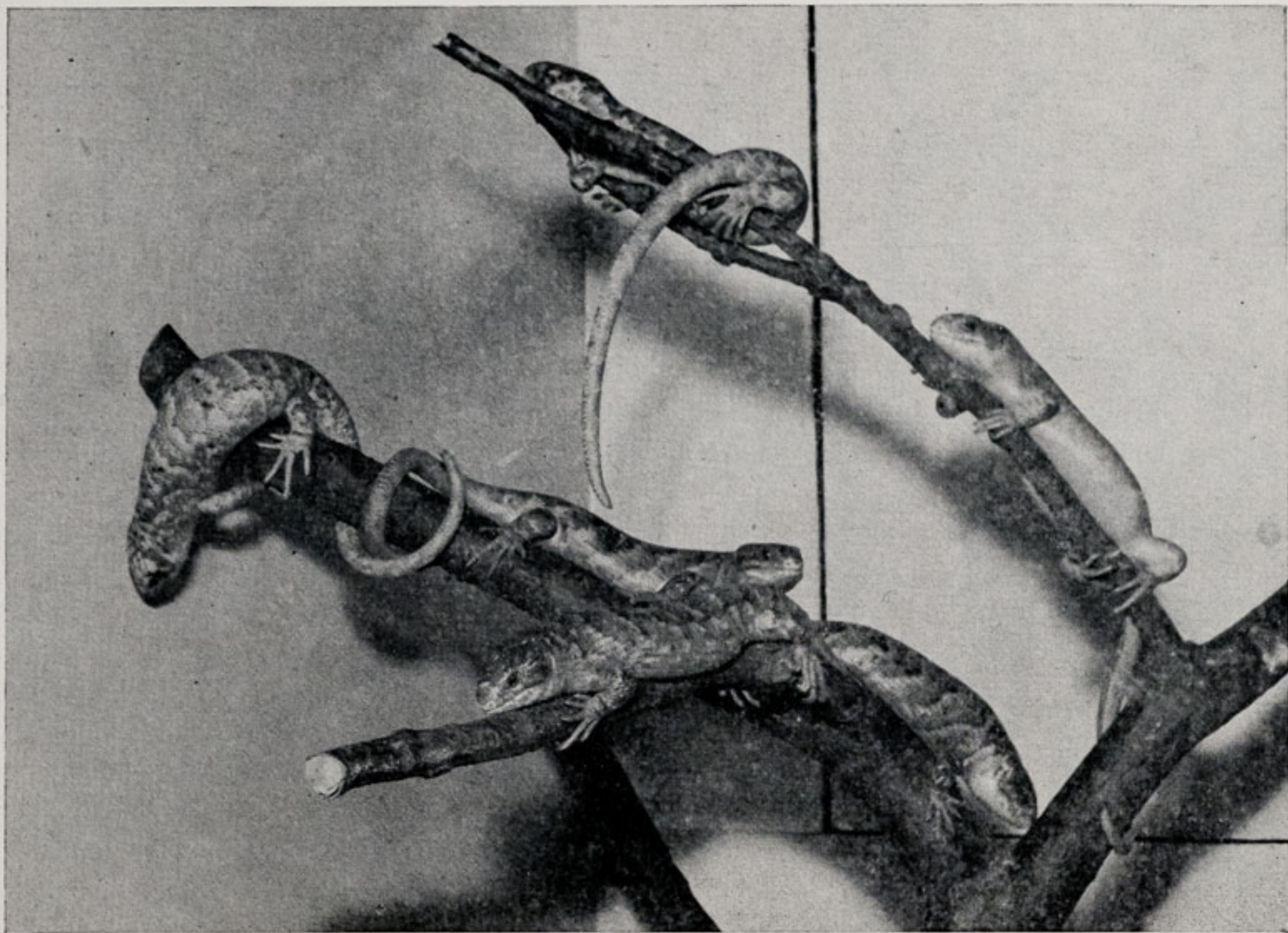
REPTILE NEWS

Over the years we have established a large breeding group of Prehensile-tailed Skinks (*Corucia zebrata*). We have bred them for the last three years, having achieved a breeding of six youngsters this year with the chance that there may be more before the end of the year. The six young ones are thriving, and we are hoping eventually to separate them and form two groups for future breedings. We now have more young than we have adults. Prehensile-tailed Skinks are born alive. A photograph of the six youngsters is on Page 12.

We feed our Prehensile-tailed Skinks on chopped cabbage, lettuce, kale, and other fresh greenfoods. They are also given chopped grapes, tomatoes, hard boiled eggs, and a little minced beef. Liquid is absorbed from greenfood, and from the pool in the Vivarium. We spray their skins daily for humidity reasons.

Prehensile-tailed Skinks occur throughout the Solomon Islands, Guadalcanal and San Cristoval.

The tail of this skink is long and has a distinct grasping ability.



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

THE SIX PREHENSILE-TAILED SKINKS (*Corucia zebrata*) BRED IN THE ZOO RECENTLY

It has irregular dark brown stripes crossing its greenish-white, or in some olive-brown, back hence the scientific name *zebrata*. There are of course many colour variations. The throat and underside are in general a greenish-yellow. The overall length of this Skink is about 18 inches.

Not much scientific data is recorded of the Prehensile-tailed Skink. It has been established, however, that it is a species of the large Family Scincidae, its long prehensile tail being unique within that Family.

CLASSROOM EDUCATION SERVICE

Regular readers of the magazine may remember that in our July issue this year we reported the development of an Educational Section which was established in August 1976. The section became fully operational in April and has proved very successful.

During the season many schools and college parties have taken advantage of the availability of a classroom in the Zoo. A photograph of a group of youngsters listening to a talk by our Educational Assistant is shown on page 14.

Applications for educational visits and concessionary rates should be made to the Director-Secretary. No extra charge is made for classroom facilities.

GARDENING NOTES

The plants and bulbs for flowering next Spring have now been planted under more favourable conditions than for a year or two. When we started at the beginning of October the soil was so dry that we had to water the ground before we could plant, with another good watering afterwards.



THE ZOO CLASSROOM — SUMMER 1977

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

We had mild weather during the month which was a great help for the plants to make new root and establish themselves after being moved. So far the lowest temperature we have had has been $+5^{\circ}\text{C}$, and on most days in October up to $+15^{\circ}\text{C}$.

For indoor decoration during the winter months we grow a large batch of Cyclamen; this is one of the most popular flowering pot plants for the house. A group of Cyclamen plants is staged just inside the entrance to the Tropical House where it is cooler than in the main part of the building. From stock this display will be maintained until April next. We also stage a group for the winter in the Elephant House along with *Chlorophytum* for foliage effect with a background of *Grevillea robusta* growing in pots.

Just inside the Tropical House with the group of Begonias are some plants of Red Peppers. We grow these as an annual and the fruits are very effective when they start to colour from green to yellow and then red. They are quite easy to grow providing they are sprayed frequently to keep greenfly away. The Red Pepper belongs to the same Family as the Potato which is *Solanaceae*. Perhaps it should be mentioned that the flower is the main guide when plant families are classified. Another pot plant staged is *Gesnera* which has ornamental dark orange foliage and orange bell-like flowers opening off a spike. These plants can be grown from seed but as they have a tuberous root we keep our stock from these. They are dried off for the winter and started off again in March by placing the tuberous roots in a box of peat.

During the winter months we shall check over the shrubs for pruning and re-planting. When the deciduous ones have lost their leaves we shall rake the rubbish out and prick the soil round the shrubs with a fork to loosen the surface of the ground.

Planting shrubberies with evergreen shrubs spaced throughout gives them a brighter appearance during the winter months. Some have a *Cupressus* dotted here and there, and for a low-growing shrub *Senecio Greyi* with its grey foliage is very attractive. This shrub also has a yellow flower in the summer. *Skimmia japonica* has a dark green leaf and although the flower is not attractive it is fragrant and produces red berries like the holly. Male and female flowers are produced on separate plants of this shrub so that one must have a male plant for a pollinator. This plant grows to a height of about 3-feet.

The deciduous *Berberis* have given some lovely autumn tints this year. Amongst them are the *Wilsonae* Hybrids which are planted in many parts of the Zoo as a protection barrier in front of the cages. Some of them have lovely pink berries as well as the autumn tints. *Berberus thunbergii* is planted amongst the shrubs for its rich bronze-red foliage turning to a brighter colour in the autumn. *Vitis coignetiae* growing over the end of the Aviary near the Rainbow Café produced some lovely autumn colouring from yellow to orange and crimson.

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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