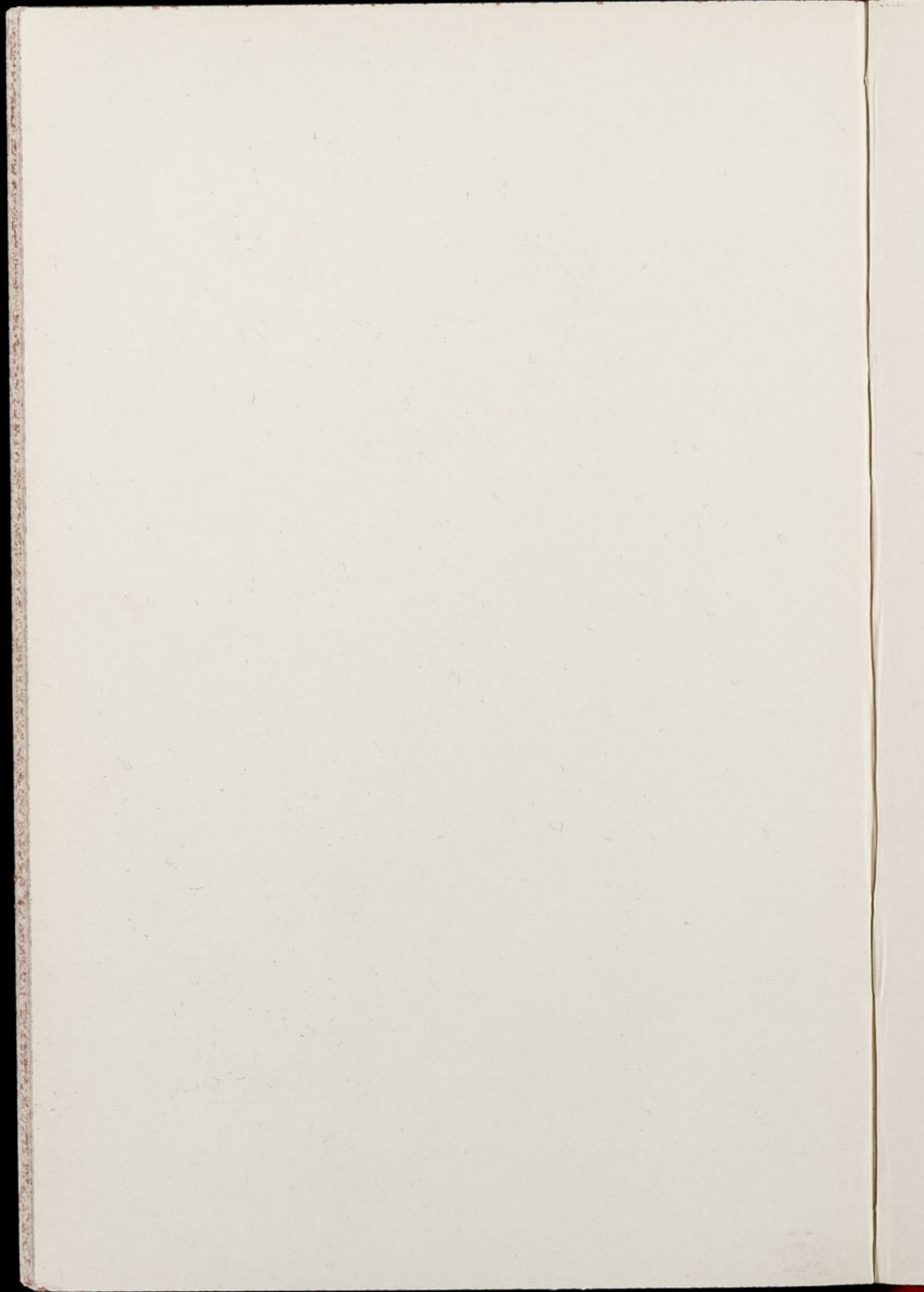




Price 1/-

December 1967

**CHESTER
ZOO NEWS
AND GUIDE**



The North of England Zoological Society

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

As mentioned in the last edition of the "*Chester Zoo News*" the Zoo was closed to the public on the 26th November as a precaution against the Foot and Mouth Disease Epidemic.

This terrible malady has had a severe toll of live-stock in Cheshire and at the time of writing there seems to be little sign of abatement. We do not know how long the outbreak will last but if it continues much longer it will become an ever increasing burden on the Society. Whether or not we are open to the public, the stock has of course to be fed and cared for; although we have retrenched to the utmost, our expenditure runs into thousands of pounds per week and our income is negligible. We are hoping that we can escape the disease in the Zoo; apart from the immediate loss in animals to the Society there is also the factor that it would take many years to build up the stock to our present position. All cloven-footed animals imported into this country have to undergo a period of twelve months quarantine before they can enter the Zoological Gardens. This would place a tremendous strain on our Quarantine Station at Birkenhead because it would be impossible to accommodate at one time anything like the quantity of stock we would require.

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COVER: This month's cover photograph is of a South American Tapir and young.

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ARRIVALS AND BIRTHS

The most interesting birth during November was a South American Tapir. The first of this species to be born at Chester Zoo arrived during May 1966 and was followed during August by another youngster. Subsequently both Tapirs were sold to other Zoos. The latest baby is looking very healthy and we are pleased to say is a female. The photograph on the cover is of last year's baby but all Tapirs are virtually identical in their markings which obviously act as some form of camouflage and are gradually lost as the Tapir becomes older; adults are uniformly dark brown, almost black.

There are only four species of Tapirs known to science; three of these come from South America and one from South East Asia. The species bred at the Zoo (*Tapirus terrestris*) is the most common of all but we also have a pair of the less common Malayan Tapirs (*Tapirus indicus*) which have not yet bred.

Another important birth was an Arabian Gazelle at the Birkenhead Quarantine Station. These beautiful fawn coloured Gazelles have been greatly persecuted in their native Arabia and are now much reduced in number. We are particularly anxious to breed these animals, due to their rarity in the wild state.

The latest birth in the Monkey House is a Vervet Monkey which is to be seen with both parents and a previous youngster in one of the small enclosures to the right of the entrance. We often breed this species and they are commonly imported into this country and sold as pets. They are, however, completely unsuitable as pets; when young they are destructive and when older they turn extremely vicious and will even attack their owner who has shown them only kindness.



VERVET MONKEY AND YOUNG

J. Gwyn Jones

New arrivals in the Mammal House were four Asiatic Ground Squirrels or Siberian Chipmunks, which joined the other two already in the collection. These little Squirrels have been imported into this country in great numbers during the past few years. They are called a variety of names from Korean or Japanese Squirrels to miniature Striped Squirrels, and are very small, with a bushy tail, appealing features and longitudinal striped fur. Asiatic Ground Squirrels are closely related to the Chipmunks found in North America.

A female Indian Mongoose was recently presented to the Zoo and brings our total of these animals to three. The Indian Mongoose is a silver-grey colour and is renowned for its ability to kill snakes, which are overcome by the dexterity of the Mongoose. They also eat rats and will attack poultry and other birds but are readily tamed and often kept near houses in their native land in order to keep down the snakes.

ROADSIDE HAWK

In the July 1965 edition of "*Chester Zoo News*" we mentioned the arrival of two South American Hawks — a Roadside Hawk and a Crane Hawk. Unfortunately the Crane Hawk, a rather delicate species, died after being in the collection for a year. As can be seen from the photograph, the Roadside Hawk is in excellent condition.

The Roadside Hawk is found in Central and South America and our specimen was presented to the Zoo by our good friends Col. and Mrs. Rubenstein who live in Paramaribo in the Guianas. As its name implies the Roadside Hawk is a bird which is often seen perched on a tree or post close to the road. From this position the Hawk has a good vantage point and can easily swoop onto any small mammal or lizard, the favourite food of this species; it will



ROADSIDE HAWK

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

also eat any mammals, reptiles or birds which have been killed by passing cars. In addition to often being seen in the vicinity of roads this Hawk can be found over a wide variety of countryside but generally adopts the method of hunting called "still hunting", where the bird waits for its prey to come fairly close and then swoops on it. It also soars and especially if very hungry, will chase its quarry at great speed.

The Roadside Hawk reminds most people of a more robustly built Sparrow Hawk, a species found in this country; the lovely yellow eyes and horizontal barring of the underparts give rise to this similarity. Although superficially resembling a true Hawk, this bird is actually a species of Buzzard, thus the Latin name *Buteo magnirostris*. The predominant colouration is a beautiful dove-grey and the underparts are white, horizontally barred with orange. Its overall size is about the same as a female Sparrow Hawk but the Roadside Hawk is a much thicker-set bird, although less powerful, with relatively small feet and claws.

At Chester Zoo we keep our Roadside Hawk in one of the aviaries (No. 5 on the Plan) which has an open flight area and a shelter at the far end; similar aviaries are used to house and breed our Owls. The Roadside Hawk shares the aviary with a Kestrel and a Little Owl, and all three birds live quite amicably, although the Roadside Hawk is definitely the boss.

As mentioned several times previously, the diet of Birds of Prey in captivity consists to a large extent of freshly killed animals which are essential to their well being. Quantities of fur, feathers and bones are swallowed and are regurgitated in the form of a cylindrical pellet about 9 or 10 hours later.

PROPOSED NEW ORANG-UTAN HOUSE

Early in 1967 we committed ourselves to the erection of a new Orang-utan House; plans were passed for the frame-work many weeks ago and a contract has been entered into.

As readers know, our Lowland Gorillas are at present accommodated in the Chimpanzee enclosure, which of course is not ideal for Gorillas, and we propose to transfer them to the Tropical House where our Mountain Gorillas have done so well. At present the enclosure into which they will be transferred is occupied by the Orang-utans; furthermore we also have a young pair of Orang-utans in the Monkey House which we want to move into an open enclosure. It is hoped that the erection of the structure will be commenced during the next few weeks and thus help to provide employment for many members of our staff who otherwise would not be retained due to the closure of the Zoo.

The indoor quarters of the structure will measure approximately 106ft. by 80ft. by 28ft. high, and outside islands will be constructed similar to those for the other Anthropoid Apes. The Orang-utans will have plenty of climbing facilities both indoors and out of doors. As in most of our large houses, we will introduce tropical vegetation which does so much to improve the appearance of the buildings. In this particular case the indoor quarters will provide a simulated jungle as a background for the animals.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

We were very pleased to receive from the Avicultural Society a Certificate of Merit in recognition of our success in breeding and rearing in captivity the Sclater's Crested Curassow.

GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES

LIONS—3 p.m. except Fridays

SEA LIONS—2-40, 3-40, 4-40 p.m.

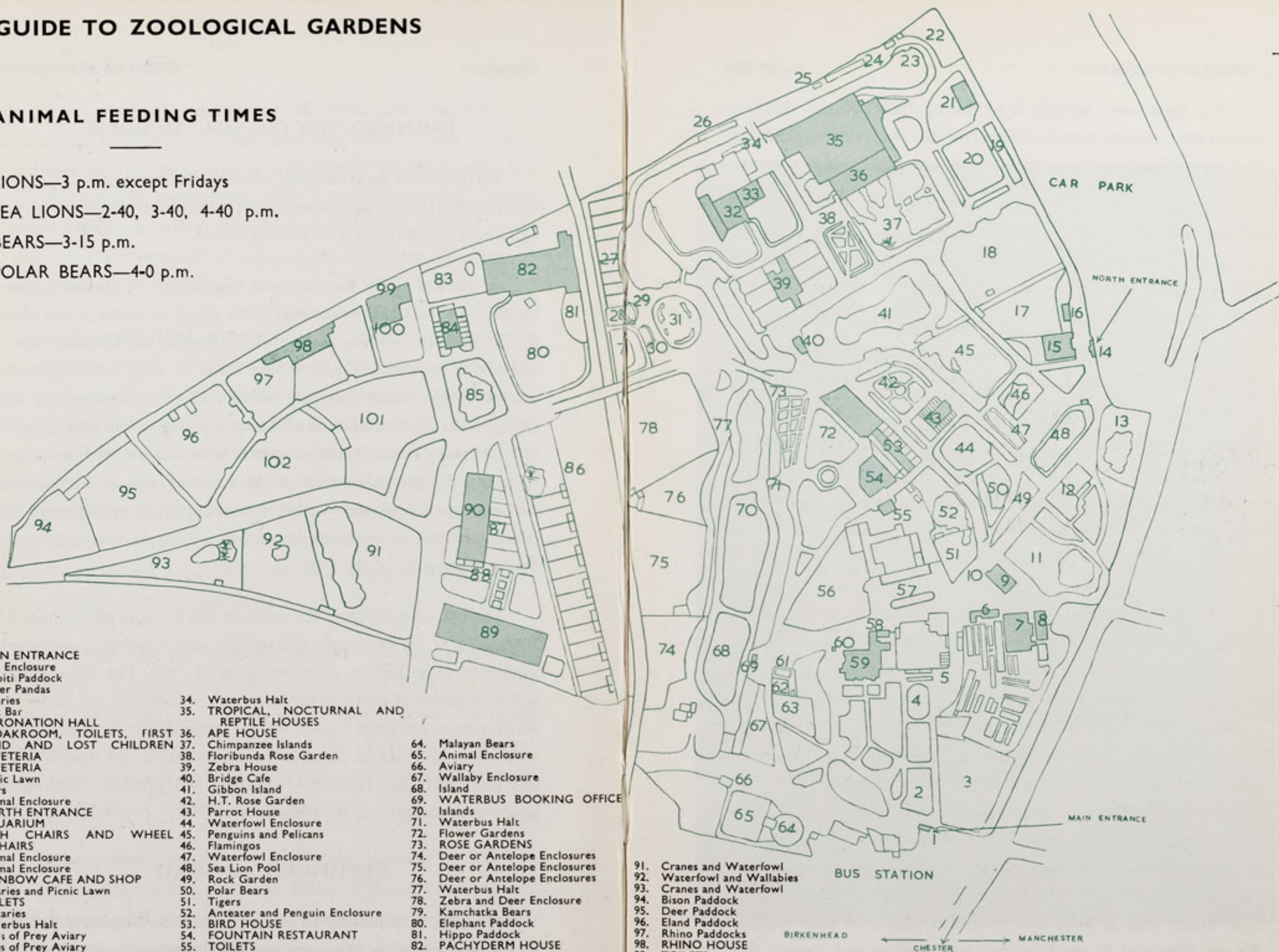
BEARS—3-15 p.m.

POLAR BEARS—4-0 p.m.

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| 1. MAIN ENTRANCE | 34. Waterbus Halt | 64. Malayan Bears |
| 2. Bird Enclosure | 35. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND REPTILE HOUSES | 65. Animal Enclosure |
| 3. Wapiti Paddock | 36. APE HOUSE | 66. Aviary |
| 4. Lesser Pandas | 37. Chimpanzee Islands | 67. Wallaby Enclosure |
| 5. Aviaries | 38. Floribunda Rose Garden | 68. Island |
| 6. Milk Bar | 39. Zebra House | 69. WATERBUS BOOKING OFFICE |
| 7. CORONATION HALL | 40. Bridge Cafe | 70. Islands |
| 8. CLOAKROOM, TOILETS, FIRST AID AND LOST CHILDREN | 41. Gibbon Island | 71. Waterbus Halt |
| 9. CAFETERIA | 42. H.T. Rose Garden | 72. Flower Gardens |
| 10. CAFETERIA | 43. Parrot House | 73. ROSE GARDENS |
| 11. Picnic Lawn | 44. Waterfowl Enclosure | 74. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 12. Bears | 45. Penguins and Pelicans | 75. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 13. Animal Enclosure | 46. Flamingos | 76. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 14. NORTH ENTRANCE | 47. Waterfowl Enclosure | 77. Waterbus Halt |
| 15. AQUARIUM | 48. Sea Lion Pool | 78. Zebra and Deer Enclosure |
| 16. PUSH CHAIRS AND WHEEL CHAIRS | 49. Rock Garden | 79. Kamchatka Bears |
| 17. Animal Enclosure | 50. Polar Bears | 80. Elephant Paddock |
| 18. Animal Enclosure | 51. Tigers | 81. Hippo Paddock |
| 19. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP | 52. Anteater and Penguin Enclosure | 82. PACHYDERM HOUSE |
| 20. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn | 53. BIRD HOUSE | 83. Tapir Paddock |
| 21. TOILETS | 54. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT | 84. Small Mammal House |
| 22. Peccaries | 55. TOILETS | 85. Waterfowl Enclosure |
| 23. Waterbus Halt | 56. Lions | 86. Ankole Cattle |
| 24. Birds of Prey Aviary | 57. NEW ZOO SHOP | 87. Stork Enclosures |
| 25. Birds of Prey Aviary | 58. TOILETS | 88. Monkey Enclosures |
| 26. Owls | 59. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT | 89. Cat House |
| 27. Jackal Enclosures | 60. G.P.O. Telephone Kiosk | 90. MONKEY HOUSE |
| 28. Wolverines | 61. Animal Enclosure | |
| 29. Porcupines | 62. Animal Enclosures | |
| 30. Coypus | 63. Cheetahs | |
| 31. Beavers | | |
| 32. Giraffe House | | |
| 33. Camel House | | |

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|-----------------------------|
| 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.



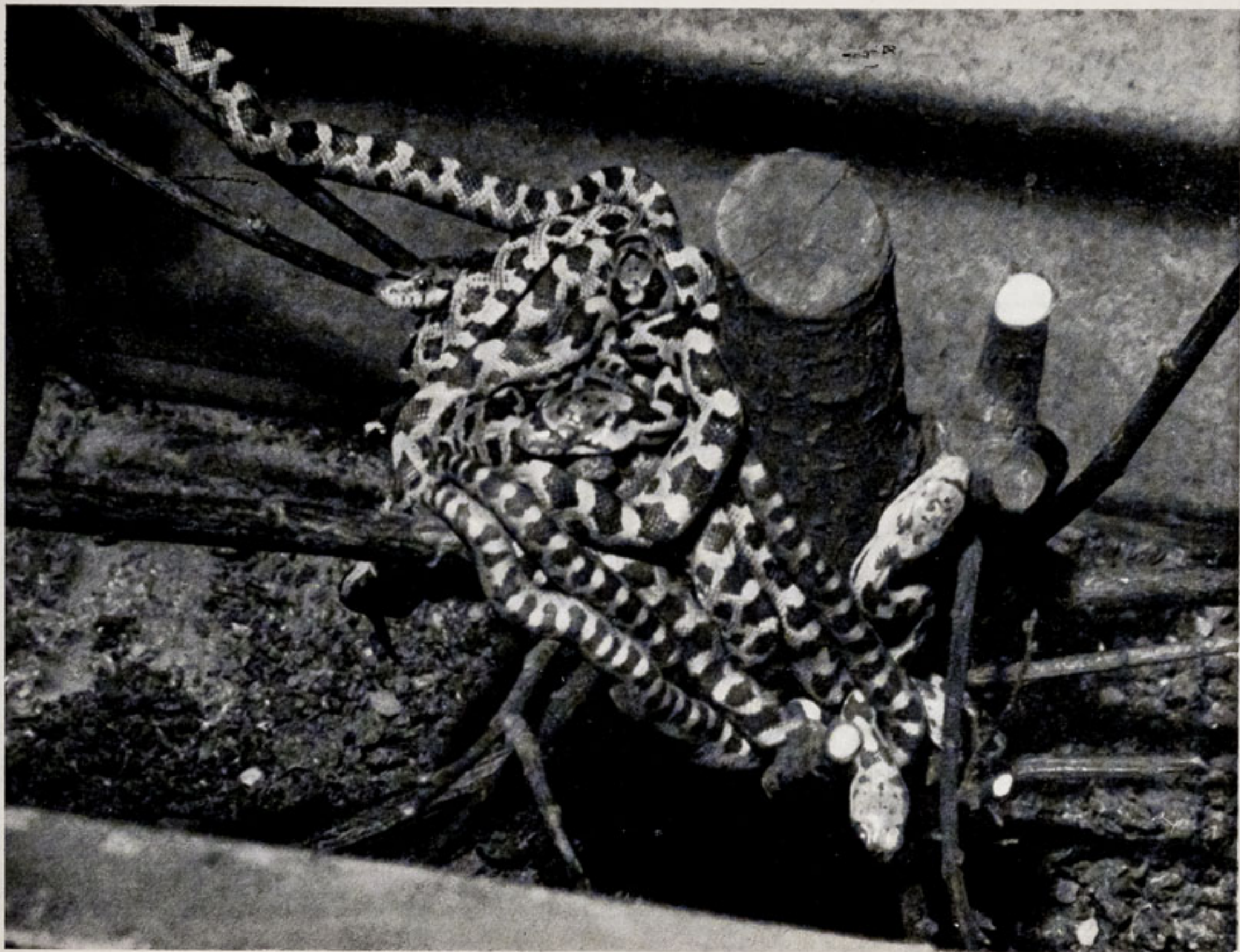
The birds were actually bred during 1966 but the delay in issuing the certificate was due to the fact that the Avicultural Society had to verify that ours was the first breeding success of this species.

During 1967 we again bred Sclater's Crested Curassows after a set-back during the first clutch, when the eggs were stolen by children just prior to hatching. The next clutch were incubated successfully and two young were reared. All our Curassows are on exhibition in the Temperate Bird House.

Previously Chester Zoo has received two certificates from the Avicultural Society — one for Cross-bred Hanging Parrots and one for Kiskadee Flycatchers.

REPTILE NOTES

The Head Keeper in the Reptile House, Roger Ainsley, has managed to successfully breed Hybrid Chicken Snakes. The species with which the Chicken Snake (*Elaphe quadrivittata*) was crossed is a species from China having no common name and of a predominantly black colour. Mating took place on July 23rd and 29th and on the 10th September, 9 eggs were laid in a depression previously excavated in the sand by the female. She proceeded to coil around the eggs to incubate them, a habit prevalent in some species of snakes, notably Pythons. It was felt that she would be disturbed during incubation by the other species in the same vivarium, so the eggs were removed to the incubator at the rear of the Reptile House. The first egg hatched after nine weeks on the 7th November, "a short incubation period" said Mr. Ainsley. Two more eggs hatched on 8th November, and a further four on 9th November and the final two on the 10th November. The young snakes were approximately eight inches long at birth and resembled neither of their parents. We are interested to see how they will develop and already they have shown an increase in size.



HYBRID CHICKEN SNAKES

Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

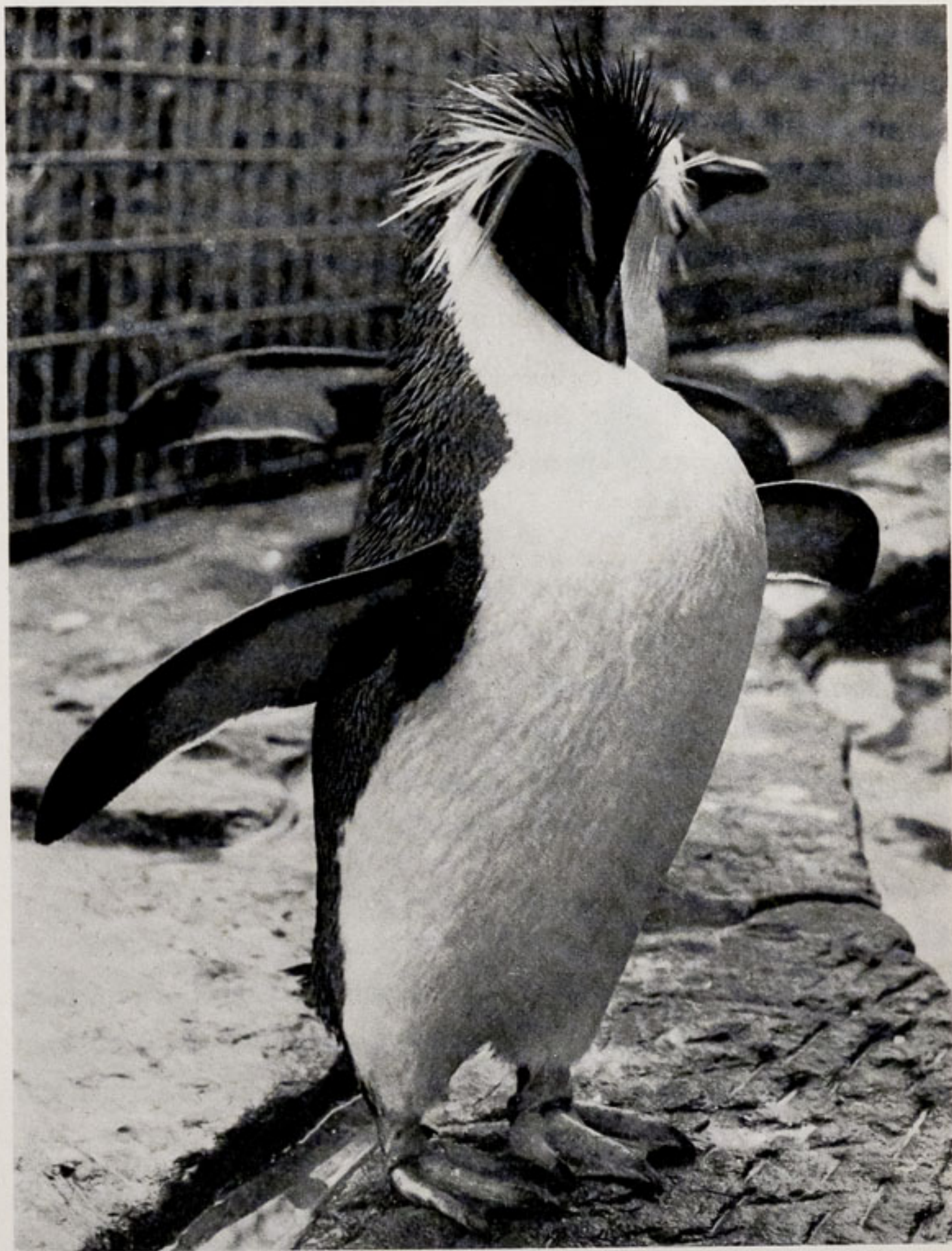
In the September, 1967, issue of "*Chester Zoo News*", we mentioned the hatching of 2 Leopard Geckos. Since then a third egg has hatched and all the young are thriving. The Tockay Geckos also have eggs — two were laid on the 6th and two on the 28th November. These eggs are attached to the rockwork in a crevice and can be seen quite easily. The female can sometimes be found covering the eggs but it is thought that she is not playing any part in their incubation.

A new arrival in the Reptile Section is a Starred Tortoise, a native of India and Ceylon. This specimen was presented to the Zoo by the Granada Television Company who produce the "Zoo Time" series from Chester Zoo, which is transmitted at 5 o'clock each Monday evening. The Tortoise was purchased to illustrate a programme on 'Animal Armour', shown on 13th November, 1967.

Another gift from Granada Television was a 5ft. long African Python. This specimen was purchased to appear in a forthcoming "Zoo Time" programme; all the Pythons at the Zoo are too large to be transported easily to the Television Studios in Manchester.

PENGUINS

In June 1967 we mentioned the arrival of 6 Rockhopper and 6 Jackass Penguins. Since then one of the Jackass Penguins has died but all the others are in excellent health. A recent precaution is the erection of a cedar wood shelter inside the Penguin enclosure so that they can be driven inside at night as protection against foxes which can cause a great deal of damage amongst our Bird Stock. The two Humboldt's Penguins have been transferred from the Pelican Island to the Penguin enclosure and have settled well with the other two species.



ROCKHOPPER PENGUIN PREENING

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

In the photograph on page 13 a good view can be obtained of a Rockhopper Penguin preening. These Penguins are most spectacular birds with long yellow head plumes and pure white underparts; the rest of the plumage is black.

Rockhopper Penguins (*Eudyptes chrysocome*) breed in New Zealand, Tristan da Cunha, Gough Islands, the Falkland Islands and various islands of the Antarctic and have been divided into a number of sub-species. Outside the breeding season they range over wide areas and those at the Zoo are the sub-species recorded from South Africa as a rare vagrant. In the wild state they are said to be quite indifferent to the presence of human beings and this is certainly true of our Penguins which have proved extremely tame and trusting ever since their arrival.

Jackass and Humboldt's Penguins are rather similar in their colouration and markings of black and white. The Humboldt's Penguin (*Spheniscus humboldti*) breeds in South America from Valparaiso in Chile northwards to Peru. The Jackass Penguin breeds on islands off the coast of South Africa.

BIRD NOTES

There have been very few new arrivals in the Bird Section during the past month and of course only acclimatized birds are purchased at this time of the year.

From the Paignton Zoo in Devon we received three Whooper cygnets which have been accommodated in the Macaw aviary for the time being but will be transferred to one of our large pools at a later date. These cygnets are at present a dirty grey colour in contrast to the adults, which are pure white. Whooper Swans can be found throughout the greater part of Europe and Asia but breed in

the North of Scotland and can be seen around our coast especially in sheltered coves and estuaries during the winter. The Whooper is a truly wild Swan; the far commoner Mute Swans are a semi-wild species.

The Temperate Bird House received the addition of two Bobwhite Quail. This species is native to North America, is particularly common in the Southern and Eastern areas of U.S.A., and prefers rough pasture, thickets and thinnish woods, disliking very thick woodlands. The predominantly brown colouration renders them almost invisible when on the ground and when flushed they take to the air

suddenly, in the same manner as the Partridge found in this country; they are similar in habits to our Partridge but are a little smaller. The name Bobwhite is not derived from the birds colouration or movement, but from the call which is said to resemble a whistled "Bob-Bob-White".

Winter is now with us and a number of precautions have had to be taken. The more delicate birds have been transferred to warmer quarters for the winter months and a thorough check is made on all our heating appliances. Precautions are also taken against foxes which enter the Zoo at night in search of an easy meal. Lanterns with pieces of material attached have been hung on trees in some of the enclosures; the material flaps about in the wind and frightens away the foxes.

A Common Pochard has been seen on several ponds around the Zoo. This duck obviously decided to join our captive waterfowl and



BOBWHITE QUAIL

M. F. Coupe

share their food during the worst of the winter. A large number of wild Mallard are to be seen feeding with our own ducks but wild Pochards have not frequented the Zoo for at least the past five years; they can be seen on the nearby Mersey and Dee Estuaries, where they form large flocks during the winter.

IMPROVEMENTS

Although the Zoo is closed to the public we have taken this opportunity to carry out various improvements. We have replaced the old shelter in the Zebra enclosure with a permanent one for the Grant's Zebras. In the past we have had to transfer these animals to the spare stalls behind the Giraffe House in the winter and bring them out again in the spring. Now they can be kept in their quarters all the year round and although in the summer months they will have access to the paddock they will have in addition a hard paddock which can be used during the winter. The wire fence which surrounded this paddock has been replaced with an Aha which features in so many of our other enclosures. This will give the public an uninterrupted view of the animals and incidentally cuts down the cost of maintenance.

We must apologise to our readers for the delay in the publication of this issue of Chester Zoo News.

This was unavoidable due to pressure of additional work by our printers in connection with the recent Foot and Mouth disease epidemic.

We hope to be able to publish our January edition a little more promptly.

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