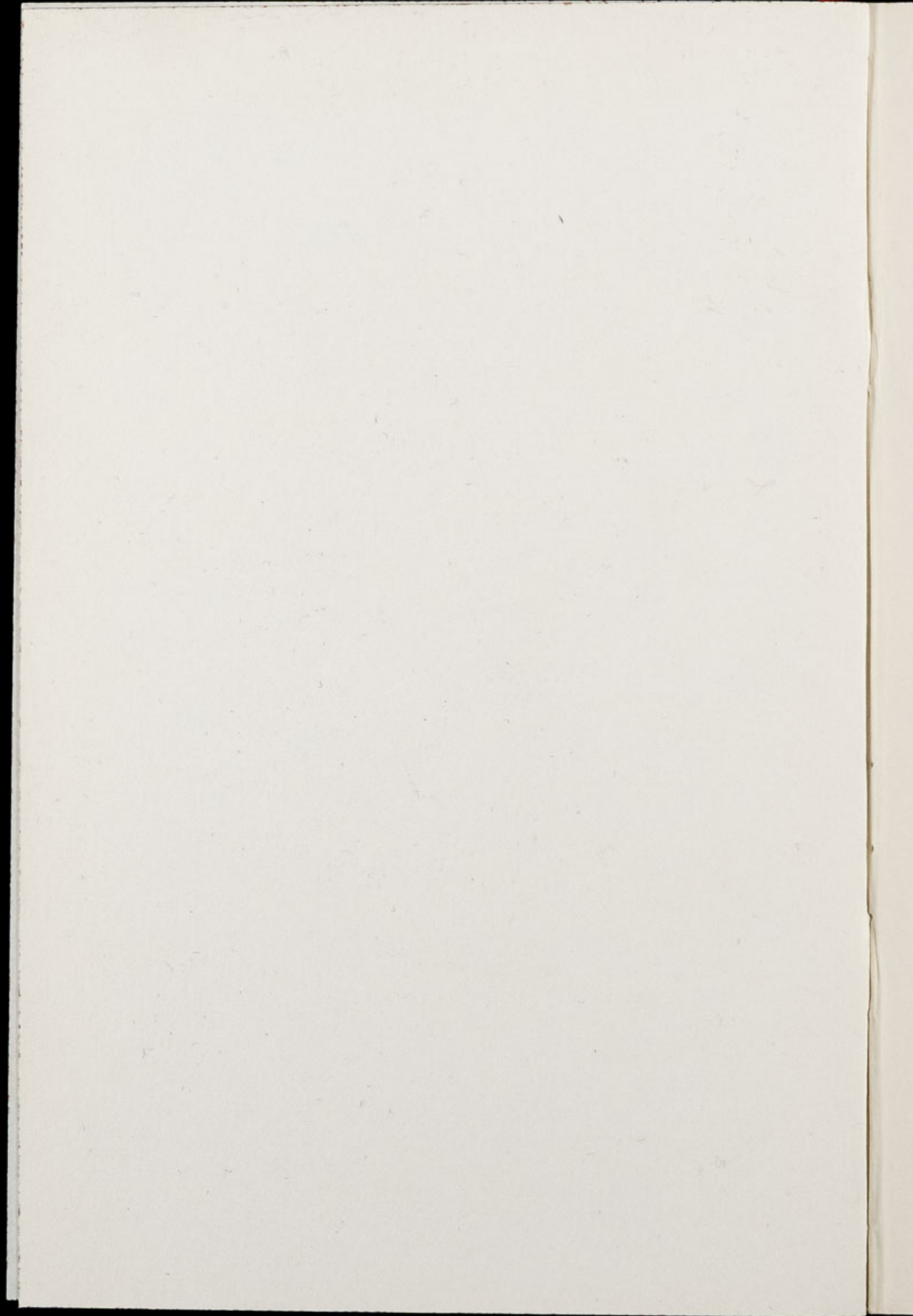




CHESTER ZOO NEWS *AND GUIDE*

April 1969

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The North of England Zoological Society

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

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COVER: This month's cover photograph shows our Oriental Small-clawed Otter and baby. For further details see page 12.

By Courtesy of R. Broster, Liverpool Echo.

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ARRIVALS AND BIRTHS

A Père David's Deer fawn was a recent birth and looks most attractive with its spotted fur. We are especially pleased as this animal is a female and will be used to increase our breeding stock of these rare animals. Including the latest youngster we now have ten Père David's Deer and several are born each year at the Zoo. This species is found only in captivity and is now to be seen in most large zoos due to the efforts of a Jesuit Priest, Père David who sent specimens out of their native China and to the then Duke of Bedford, who assembled them into a breeding group at Woburn Park.

There are six Bennett's or Red-necked Wallabies with young in their pouches. Four of these are fairly well grown but the other two are only just starting to come out of the pouch and dive back inside again at the slightest provocation. In the photograph Mother and baby can be seen examining the photographer's case.

At our Mammal House, the young American Martens can be heard giving voice to loud noises from the interior of their breeding box. It will be some time before we are able to tell exactly how many young Martens there are as obviously we will not disturb them by looking into the box at such an early stage. In previous years we have had either one or two youngsters from our Martens and now have five adults and an unknown number of youngsters. American Martens are members of the weasel family which are at home in the thick coniferous forests of North America. To a large extent they prey on Squirrels, but they will also eat rabbits, chipmunks and partridges and other mammals and birds. The fur from this species is highly prized in the fur trade, being known as American



BENNETT'S WALLABY AND YOUNG

Associated Press

Sable or Hudson Bay Sable. In common with some other members of this family the American Marten has a very long gestation period of 267 days. Mating takes place in the summer; the egg cell does not develop immediately but remains inactive inside the female for some months. This process is called delayed implantation — the young being born during the following spring.

We are pleased to report that our Jaguars have produced three youngsters in their enclosure close to our Cat House. This is the first time these animals have bred since their arrival at the Zoo during the spring of 1965. It will be some weeks before the youngsters will be large enough to venture out into their outside pen where they will be on view to members of the public. When they are larger we will include photographs of them in the '*Zoo News*'.

Our Black-backed Jackals have given birth to cubs, two of which are venturing into the outside enclosure at the moment. There is at least one other youngster in the breeding den which should follow suit in the near future.

Latest arrivals in the Nocturnal House are a small group of Gerbils. Some of these are on show to the public but the others have been housed at the rear of the building as a temporary measure. Unfortunately these placid looking animals, which seldom bite even if caught hold of, are very vicious towards other Gerbils. Due to this ferocity we have found it very difficult to introduce new specimens into the original group. There are many species of Gerbils found in desert regions of Africa and Asia, all of which are very much alike—a fact which does not make identification easy. Another arrival in the Nocturnal House which also has been found temporary accommodation at the rear of the building, is a Coastal Bushbaby.

THE EASTER HOLIDAY

From Easter onwards the Zoo becomes very busy and we term this the beginning of the season, although of course Chester Zoo is open to the public throughout the year. Easter this year was at the beginning of April and with the warm and very sunny weather people flocked to the zoo in their thousands. Our total attendance figure for the four days holiday period was in excess of 101,000. Despite the number of visitors there was still plenty of room inside the zoo and our catering arrangements were adequate. The new Ape House was a very great attraction and of course 'Noelle' our pregnant Gorilla caused a great deal of interest as did the young Giraffes, Père David's fawn and our many other new arrivals.

NEWS FROM VARIOUS SECTIONS

A local Chester newspaper ran a competition to choose a name for the baby Chimpanzee born during January which was deserted by his mother and is being hand-reared by the Curator. Janet Greenhalgh, aged four, of Runcorn chose the name 'Nicky' which was selected as the winner as it was topical due to the visit of President Nixon. Janet, two runners-up and all their parents were invited to the Zoo to see Nicky; they were given a conducted tour of the Zoo and entertained to tea at our Fountain Restaurant.

'Nicky' the Chimpanzee and 'Rajang' the Orang-utan both hand-reared by the Curator and his wife, can now be seen by members of the public at our Ape nursery close to the Fountain Restaurant. This nursery was specially constructed for our very young anthropoid apes, which make a very popular exhibit.

Two Blesbok have been transferred from our Quarantine

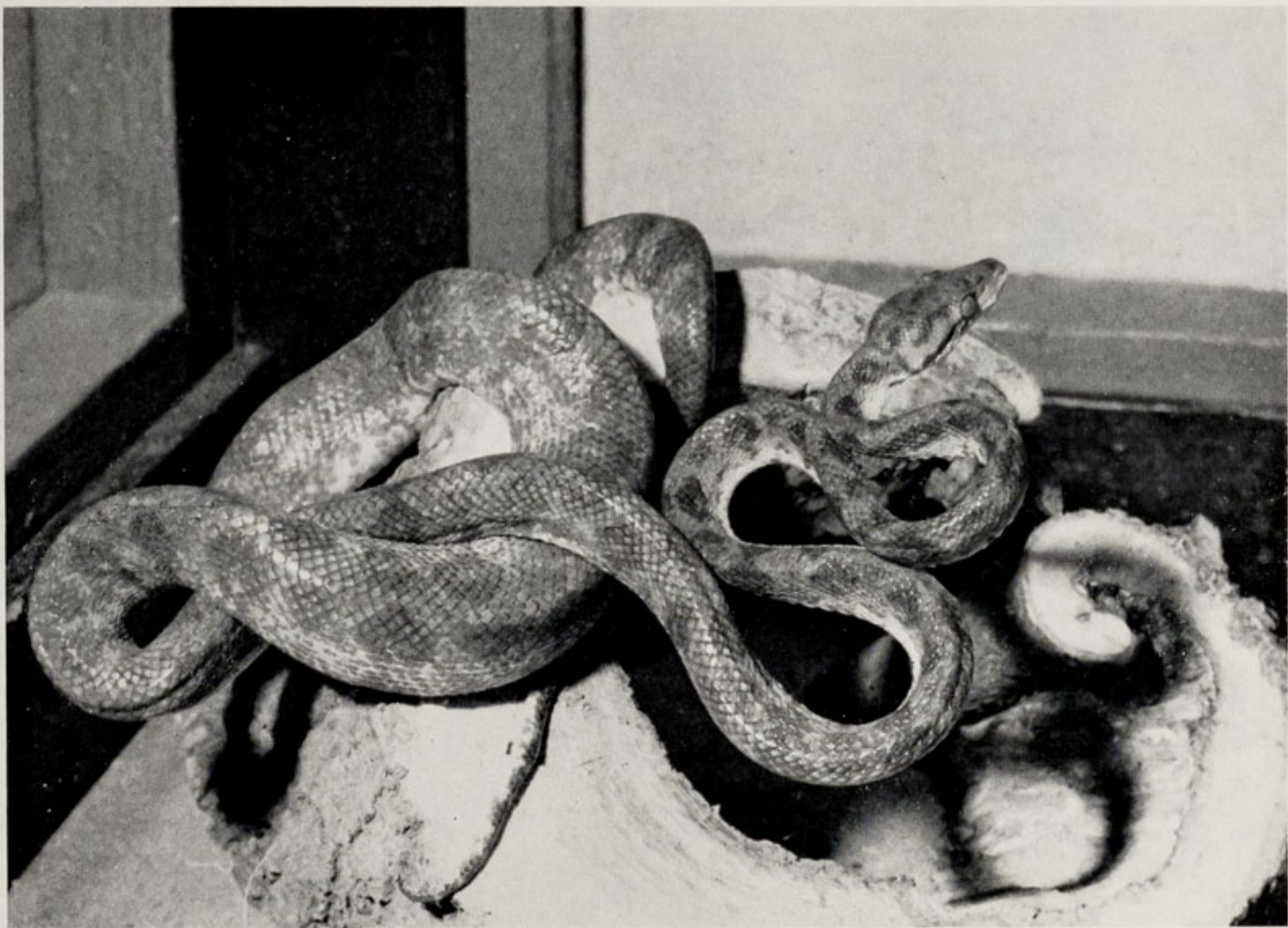
Station to accommodation at the Zoo, previously occupied by our Oryx. These South African antelope are proving a most popular exhibit and visitors can gain a completely unimpaired view of them as their paddock is one of the dry moated type. We are pleased to report that the Blesbok have settled very well in their new home.

A considerable amount of tree planting has been undertaken on some of our larger paddocks including the one occupied by the Blesbok. Other paddocks to be planted were those occupied by the Gnu, Eland and Père David's Deer. In addition to improving the appearance of the Zoo, these trees also act as a windbreak which is especially beneficial during the winter months.

Visitors saw some excitement at the Pachyderm House over the Easter Holidays. 'Nobby' the young Indian Elephant was walking on the wall separating the Elephants and Hippos when he over-balanced and slipped inside with the Hippos. Fortunately, our Hippos and Elephants are on very good terms with each other and Nobby was not attacked but to be on the safe side keepers enticed the Hippos inside and returned Nobby to his own paddock.

Staff working at a banana distribution depot in Yorkshire were astonished when a 3½ft. long snake crawled out of a hand of bananas. A local pet shop owner was called in, who thought the snake was a deadly poisonous Fer-de-Lance, but when brought to the zoo it was identified as a non-venomous Garden Tree Boa. Nevertheless, this snake can still give a nasty bite if provoked and very often its teeth break off in the flesh of the person bitten, causing septicaemia. The Boa is now accommodated at the rear of the Reptile House but we hope to introduce it to the others of this species already in the collection.

The large flocks of Fieldfares which correctly heralded our very severe winter have now left their feeding places in the Zoo and



GARDEN TREE BOA

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

GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

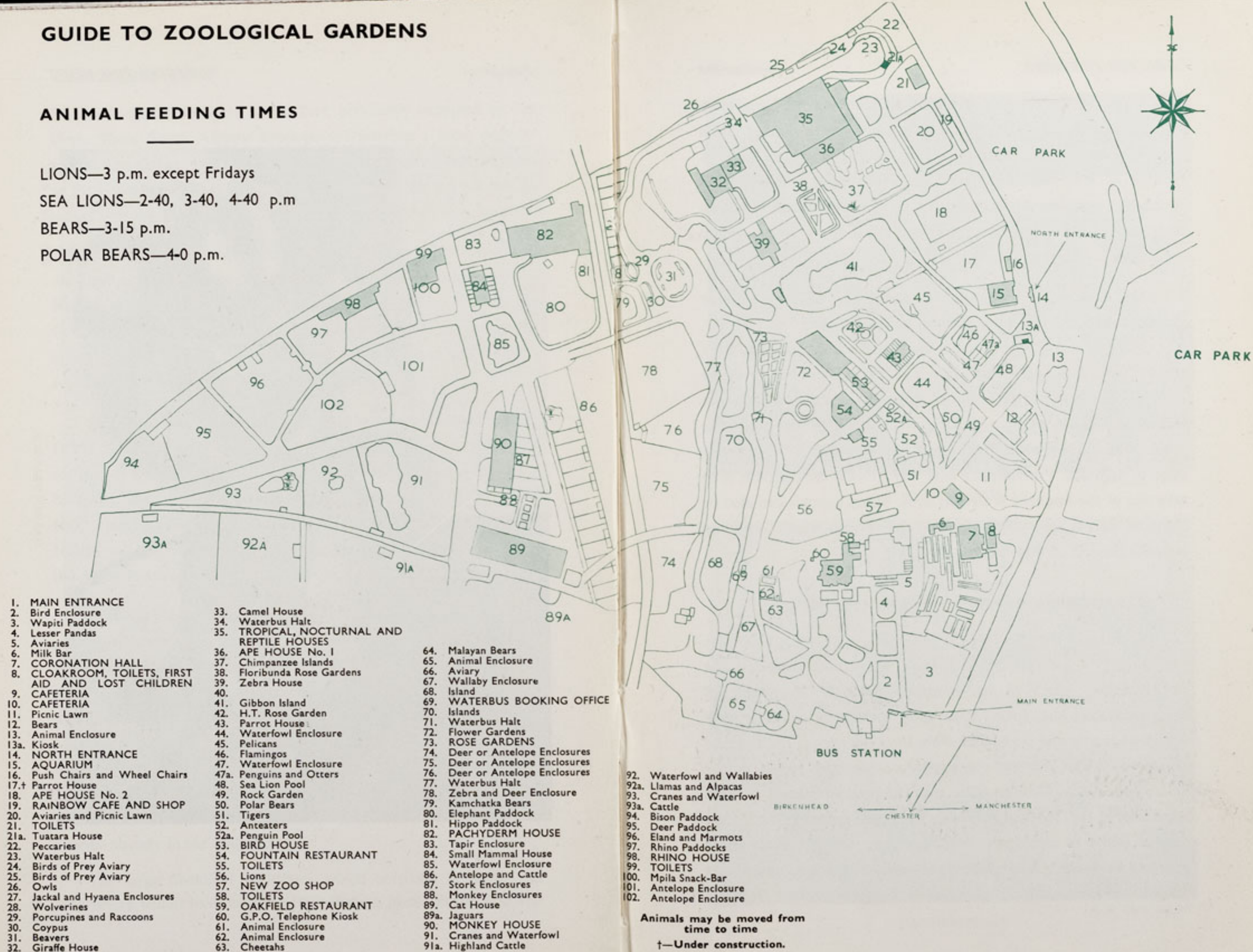
ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES

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
- 13a. Kiosk
14. NORTH ENTRANCE
15. AQUARIUM
16. Push Chairs and Wheel Chairs
17. Parrot House
18. APE HOUSE No. 2
19. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP
20. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn
21. TOILETS
- 21a. Tuatara House
22. Peccaries
23. Waterbus Halt
24. Birds of Prey Aviary
25. Birds of Prey Aviary
26. Owls
27. Jackal and Hyaena Enclosures
28. Wolverines
29. Porcupines and Raccoons
30. Coypus
31. Beavers
32. Giraffe House

33. Camel House
34. Waterbus Halt
35. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND REPTILE HOUSES
36. APE HOUSE No. 1
37. Chimpanzee Islands
38. Floribunda Rose Gardens
39. Zebra House
40. Gibbon Island
41. H.T. Rose Garden
42. Parrot House
43. Waterfowl Enclosure
44. Pelicans
45. Flamingos
46. Waterfowl Enclosure
47. Penguins and Otters
- 47a. Sea Lion Pool
48. Rock Garden
49. Polar Bears
50. Tigers
51. Anteaters
52. Penguin Pool
- 52a. BIRD HOUSE
53. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT
54. TOILETS
55. Lions
56. NEW ZOO SHOP
57. TOILETS
58. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT
59. G.P.O. Telephone Kiosk
60. Animal Enclosure
61. Animal Enclosure
62. Cheetahs

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

92. Waterfowl and Wallabies
- 92a. Llamas and Alpacas
93. Cranes and Waterfowl
- 93a. Cattle
94. Bison Paddock
95. Deer Paddock
96. Eland and Marmots
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

†—Under construction.

Zoo Farm and are on their way back to Scandinavia. These birds always arrive in large flocks before a spell of severe weather and a number were still in evidence during the beginning of April. A number of Wheatears have been observed recently. These birds spend the winter in Africa returning to our moors and heaths to breed and a large number spend a few days feeding and resting before continuing their journey.

Despite a rather cold start to spring, the brilliant sunshine during Easter induced a number of plants to burst into flower. The daffodils make a particularly fine show as $9\frac{1}{2}$ tons have been planted throughout the zoo to give a splash of early colour to the grounds. Depicted in one of the photographs is the view from our Waterbus Kiosk looking towards the Fountain Restaurant. The other photograph shows one of our islands which is a complete mass of daffodils. Probably the best way to view the daffodils is to take one of the frequent Waterbus trips. Many animals can also be seen and visitors are able to alight at the various stages, returning later for the rest of their trip.

PROGRESS REPORT ON NEW APE HOUSE

On show in our New Ape House are two Lowland Gorillas and three Orang-utans. These animals were transferred without any difficulty, much to the amazement of the keeping staff concerned. Paul and Jimmy, our fully grown Orang-utans were boxed separately and transferred from their quarters at the Tropical House which were required urgently to provide extra space for our pair of Mountain Gorillas. The two Orangs had started to fight when kept at the Tropical House so have been separated until their outside island is completed. We hope that with the extra space provided they will be more friendly towards each other. 'Jason' and 'Gogal' our Lowland Gorillas travelled the short distance from the



WATERBUS RIDE

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



DAFFODIL ISLAND

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

original Ape House in the same box and after being shown around by their keeper Michael Colbourne, settled well in their new home. Their previous accommodation has been occupied by a pair of Chimpanzees which were transferred from the Monkey House. Martha our five year old female Orang-utan has also been moved to the new building from the Monkey House where she has lived for the past three years. Our four other young Orangs will be transferred during the future months.

As can be seen from the photograph on page 15, the interior of this building is very spacious and as the tropical vegetation becomes more dense, will take on a more natural appearance. The outside moated islands look rather bare at the moment but they have been seeded and in due course will be covered with grass like our other Ape islands.

ORIENTAL SMALL-CLAWED OTTER

In this month's cover photograph our young Otter and its mother can be seen looking from their rockwork cave in the Small Mammal House. The youngster was born in the latter part of January and it is only in recent days that he has been allowed to venture away from the rockwork cave where he was born. Previously, as soon as he began to show signs of independence, mother would grab hold of him and drag him back. At first we thought there were several young otters, due to the volume of noise which was coming from the breeding cave but unfortunately there was only the single cub. Young Otters make a very high pitched almost bird-like noise and even adults give voice to whistling sounds, not at all like what one would expect from these animals.

This species of Otter has only rarely been recorded as breeding in captivity and we are particularly pleased with this youngster. After giving birth the female turned rather vicious towards her



TRANSPORTING ORANG-UTAN

Gary Talbot

keeper and even now is quite liable to give a sly nip. However, the young otter is showing signs of friendship towards his keeper and will approach in an inquisitive manner.

We now have ten Small-clawed Otters at the Zoo, four being on show in the Small Mammal House and the other six at our Otter pool close to the Flamingos. A pair of these Otters arrived during November 1966 and have been housed at the Mammal House ever since. The others arrived during August 1968 and went straight to the new pool but during the cold weather they were transferred to our Camel House. At this time we noticed that a female was pregnant; she was transferred to a pen of her own at our Mammal House and subsequently gave birth to the single cub.

The Oriental Small-clawed Otter is one of the smallest of the eighteen species of Otters, having a body length of about 24ins. plus a 12in. long tail. They vary in weight from 5½lbs. for a small female to 11lbs. for a large male animal. As the name implies, this species has only very small claws — in fact in adults they are only minute spikes which do not project beyond the digital pads. These Otters make up for their lack of claws by having very sensitive toes, this sense of touch being used to locate mussels, snails and crabs amongst the rocks. They are not such avid fish eaters as our native Otters, but are more at home in estuaries, salt marshes and mud flats where a wide variety of food is available. Their diet in captivity consists of 50% fish and 50% minced meat, bread and egg with the addition of bone meal and various vitamins.

Oriental Small-clawed Otters (*Aonyx cinerea*) have a wide distribution area in Asia from Southern India to China, the whole of South East Asia, Sumatra, Borneo, Java and Palawan. We are not sure of the origin of our first two Otters but all our others came from Borneo.

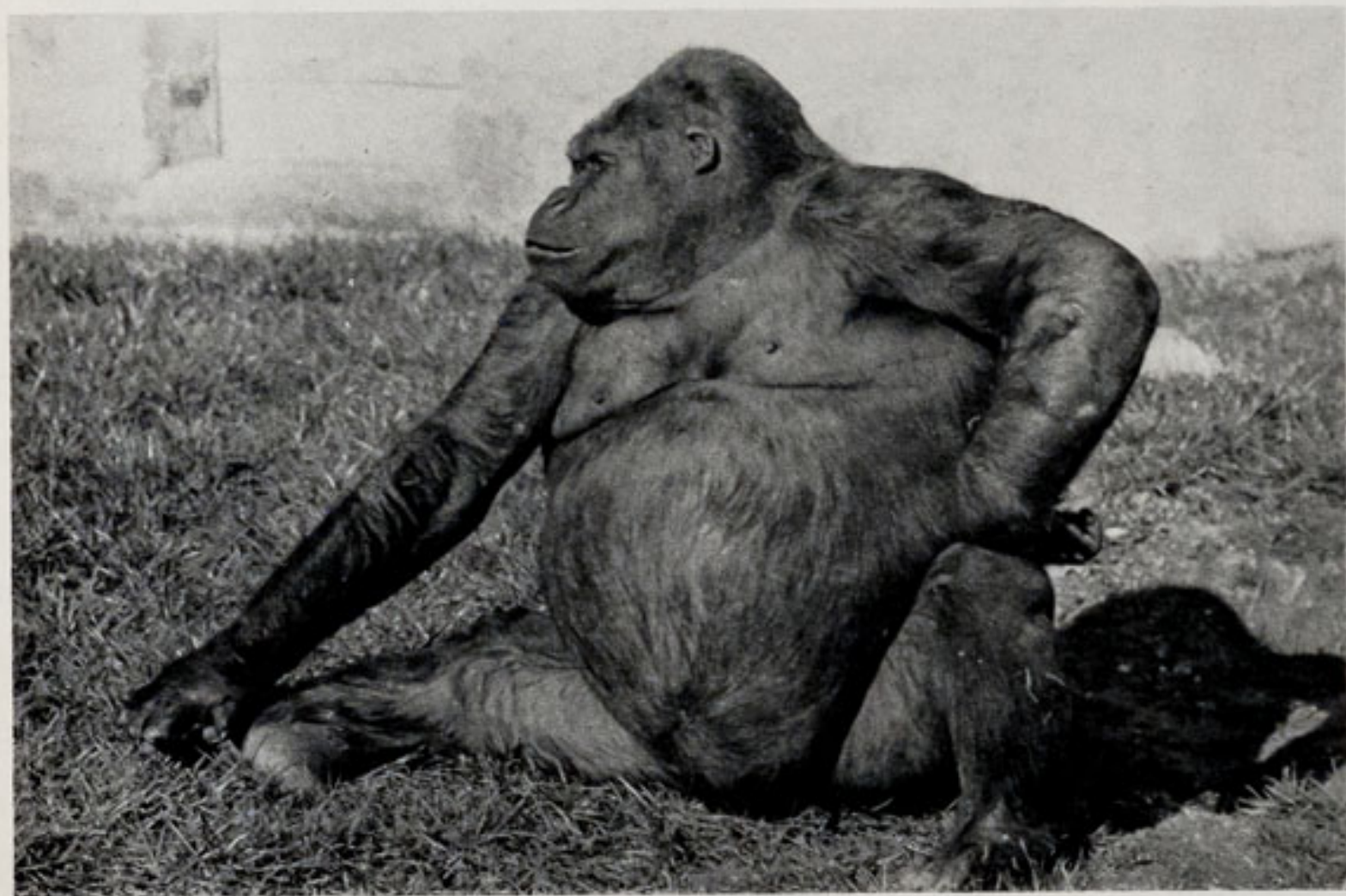


INTERIOR OF NEW APE HOUSE

R. Broster, Liverpool Echo.

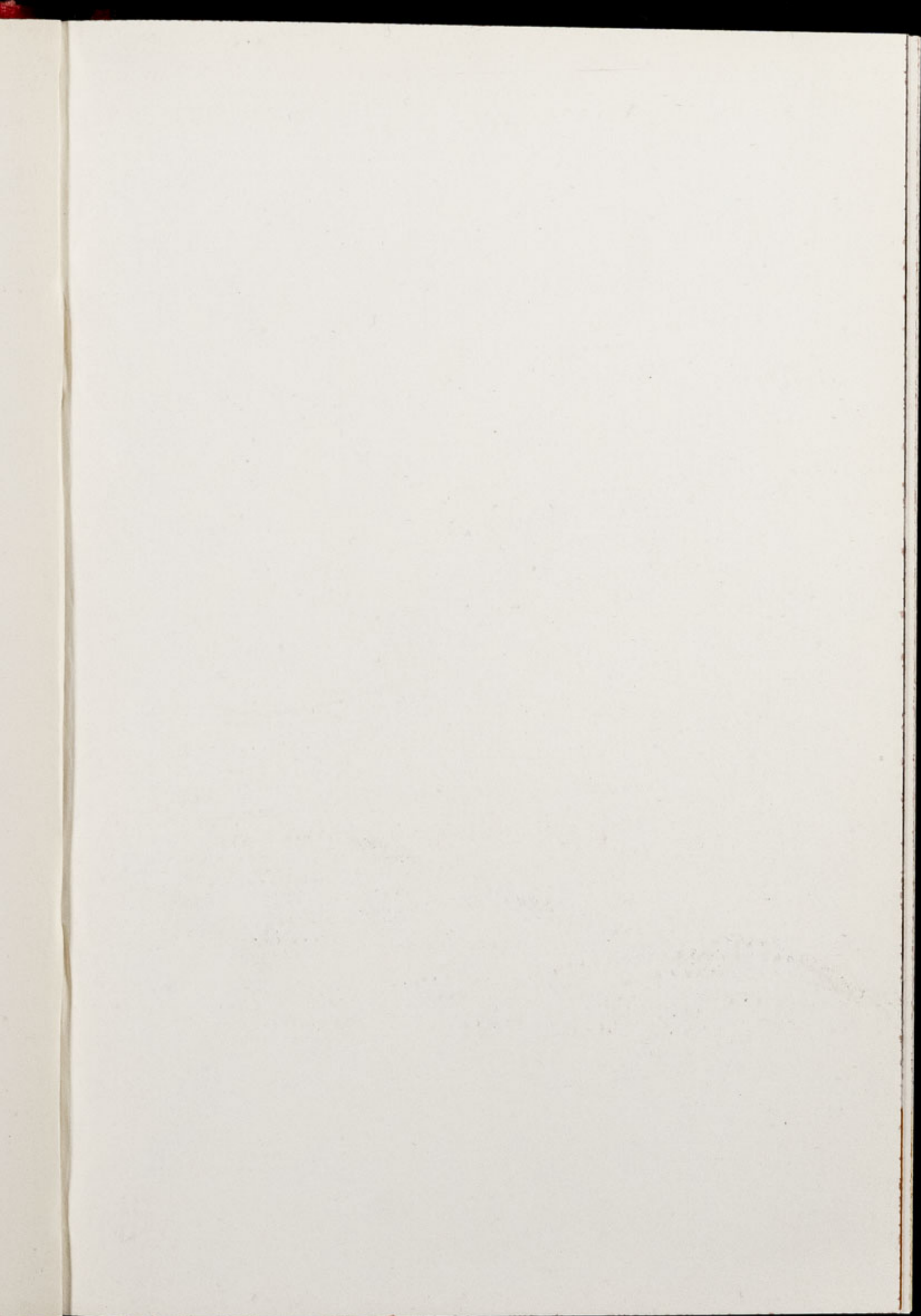
BULLETIN ON 'NOELLE' MOUNTAIN GORILLA

Up to the time of publication of this magazine, our Mountain Gorilla, 'Noelle' has not produced her baby. The point is, no one knows when the Gorillas mated.



NOELLE, MOUNTAIN GORILLA

Gary Talbot.



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