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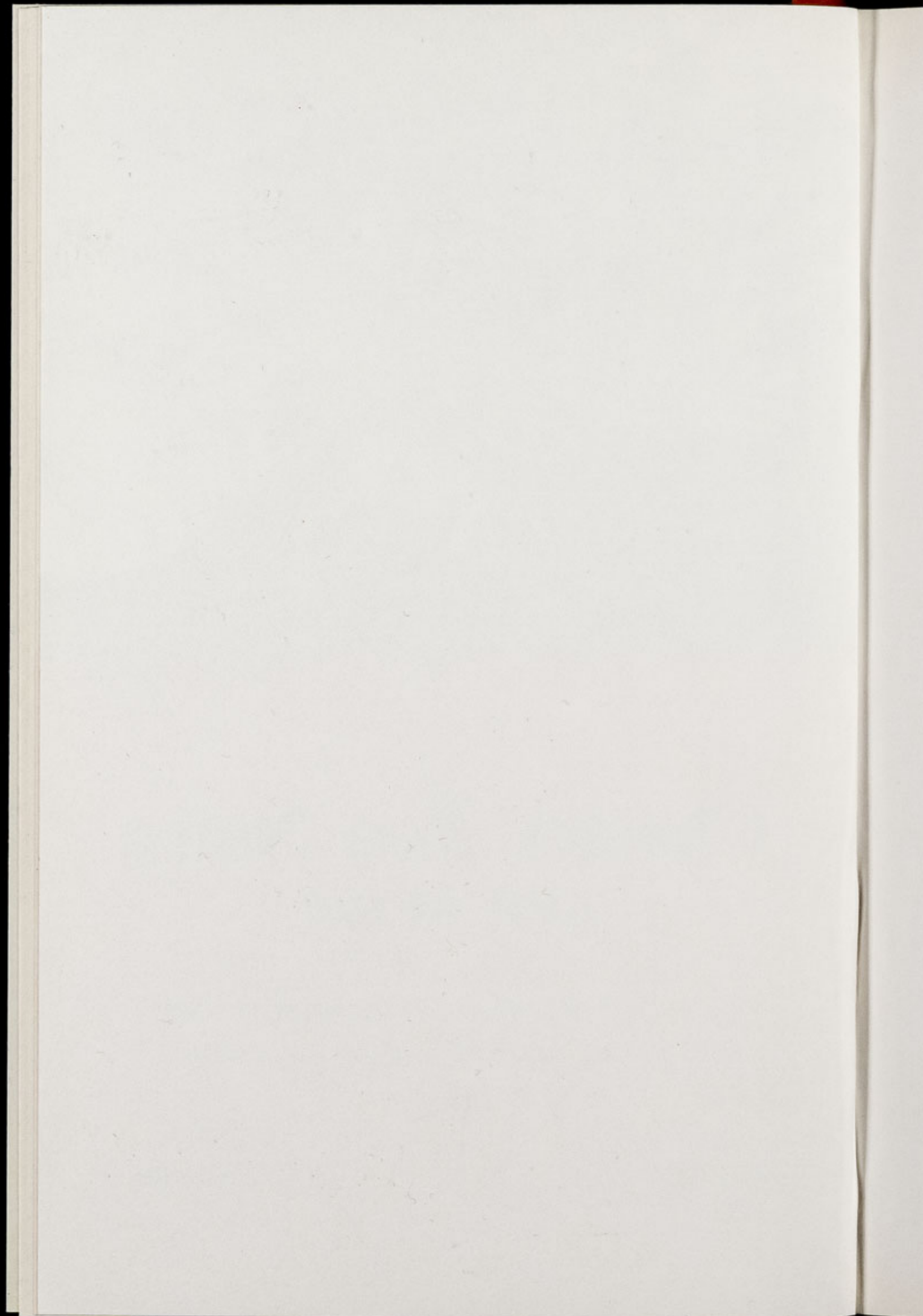
Chester Zoo News

AND GUIDE

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

April 1975

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

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COVER: Pink Skunk Clown Fish (Amphiprion perideraion) with anemone; see page fourteen.

ARRIVALS AND BIRTHS

During the past month the following mammal births have been recorded:

- Common Leopards (*Panthera pardus*)
- Ring-tailed Lemur twins (*Lemur catta*)
- Bagot Goat (*Capra hircus*)
- Arabian Gazelle (*Gazella arabica*)

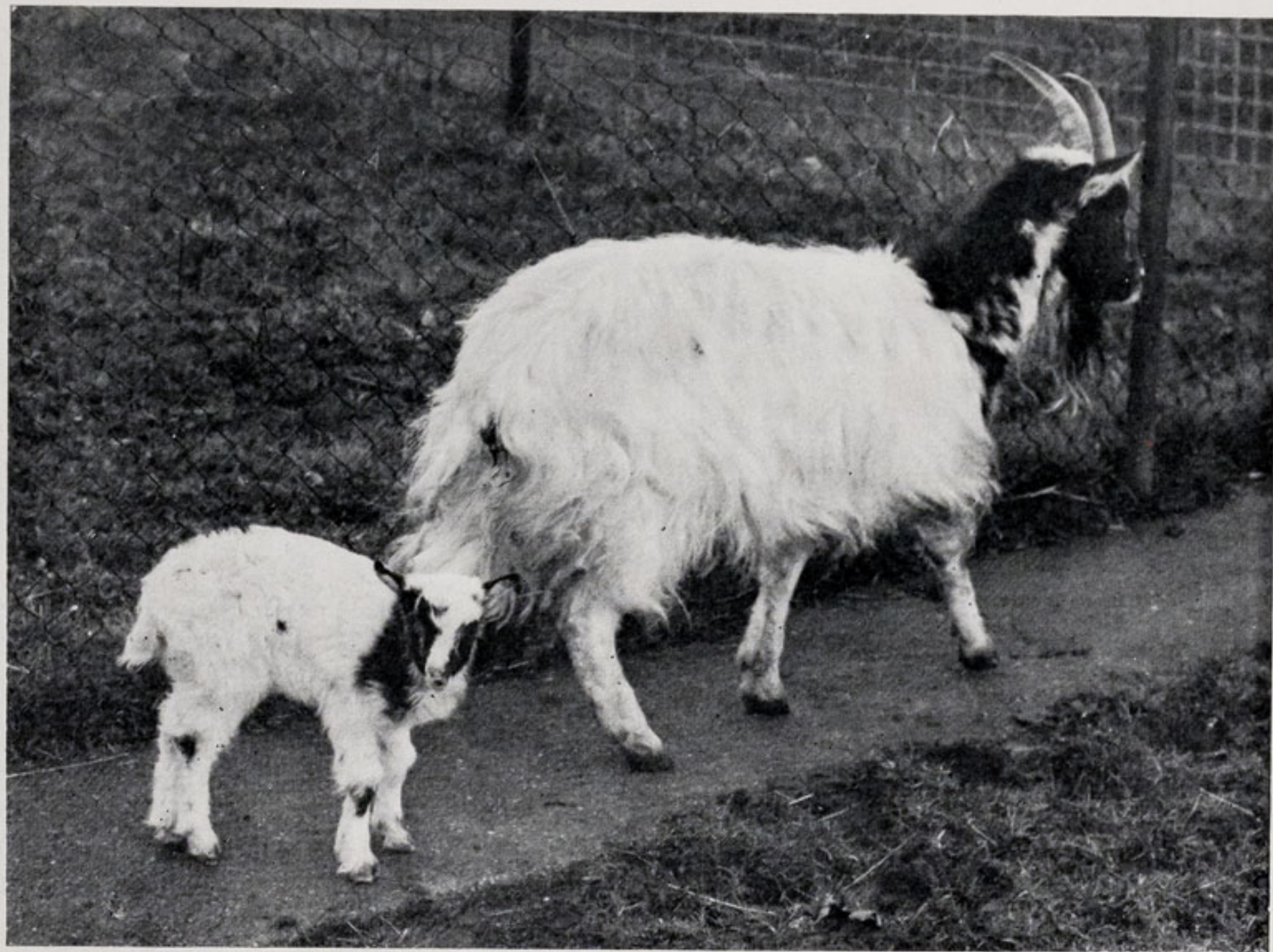
Common Leopard cubs have been born to Susie and Marlon. They are housed with their mother in the inside den which is screened off from the rest of the house. We hope that Susie will show them to the public in about a month's time but as yet we do not know how many cubs are in the litter.

Coata, our Ring-tailed Lemur, has again given birth to twins (in March this year) one having unfortunately died.

Twins Sherry and Shandy were born to Coata in March 1974. Jack the father is also a twin, from Tweet, and was born in 1968. Tweet is in a separate pen with the remainder of her family, namely male and female twins born in 1967, and one female twin, the sister of Jack.

Coata came to us in 1973, from Bristol Zoo, in exchange for Lisa. The introduction of new blood in 1973 would therefore appear to have stimulated breeding again. Twins would seem to be the rule rather than the exception with this family. The lemur breeding season is limited to once or even twice a year and progeny is said to be one or two.

Coata has been holding the baby lemur very close, and is surrounded by her family. They have all been huddled together on a platform, but now the lemurs are quite active in the enclosure. The new arrival can be seen clinging to its mother's underside continuously. Its sex has not yet been determined. Sherry and Shandy have now grown so large that they are difficult to distinguish from the parents. Only by looking closely is it possible to discern one from the other.



YOUNG BAGOT GOAT (*Capra hircus*)

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

The Ring-tailed Lemur is black and white, with a long face. The ears are partially haired and fairly short. The back legs are longer than the front ones. They have heavily furred tails and slender bodies and legs.

In Madagascar, where the lemurs come from, they generally shelter in rocky crevices and caves, and are very active. The noises they make are grunts, loud piercing whistles and shrieks. They fight with their hands and teeth. The young at birth have their eyes open, and are covered with short, thick hair, only the tail being sparingly furred. Their heads are large in comparison with their bodies. The mother and father watch over their young for several months.

A male Bagot Goat has been born at the zoo. This goat is descended from the herd of wild goats kept at Blithfield Hall, Staffordshire. The herd was named after the Bagot family and was presented to them by Richard II for excellence in hunting.

In general, male Bagot Goats have large beards. Both male and female goats have horns. They are excellent climbers in the natural state. A photograph of the delightful young Bagot appears on page three.

The latest baby Arabian Gazelle is the second born this year. The first youngster was produced in January by an eight year old female named Thamooda. We are pleased to report that this three months old Gazelle is growing strongly and has been sexed as female.

The mother of the recent baby was bred at Chester Zoo two years ago and has given birth for the first time. The sex of her youngster will probably not be determined for several weeks yet but its birth brings the total number of Arabian Gazelles in the collection to fifteen.

During the past twelve months we have gradually integrated various smaller groups of Arabian Gazelles into two herds and these now occupy paddock No. 106 and a smaller adjacent enclosure. In previous years it was always necessary to transfer these delicate animals to special quarters for the winter. However, in their present

accommodation the Arabian Gazelles will have adequate protection during the worst of the winter and happily they will no longer be subjected twice-yearly to the upheaval of a move. It was always our intention to provide the Arabian Gazelles with all-the-year-round accommodation and we are very pleased that at last this goal has been achieved.

RECENT CONSTRUCTION WORK

Owl Aviaries

The new owl flights near to the Oakfield Restaurant, which were mentioned in the February issue, have now been completed. They comprise one large flight measuring approximately 18ft. by 15ft., and four smaller flights each 9ft. by 15ft. The rear portions of these flights have been enclosed on three sides for several feet and a roof built over this area to provide shelter. All the birds occupying these flights will be protected against the elements.

Various specimens of owl, including Barn, Tawny and Great Horned, have been accommodated in the four smaller flights. The African Barn Owl which was previously accommodated with the two European Barn Owls was removed for a short period for examination. On being returned to the aviary it proved to be incompatible with the other owls, and it is now being housed with the Vermiculated Fishing Owl.

Our colony of Quaker Parakeets has been introduced into the bigger aviary, where these birds are in the process of constructing their communal nest, which is a quite remarkable structure. It is built of twigs and includes several tunnels and nest chambers, each pair of birds occupying a nest chamber. These nests get quite large, and the birds add material continually to them. The parakeets were most unfortunate in their first attempt as the nest collapsed but they have started to build again. To help them we are going to fix up one or two wire mesh panels which will provide a strong basis into which they can weave their twigs. We now have a well established breeding group of Quaker Parakeets and we look forward to another good season with them.

Birds of Prey Aviary

This aviary is large and measures approximately 24ft. by 30ft., with a height of something in the region of 15 feet. It is situated behind the Giraffe House and extends over the canal for a short distance, so that people passing in the Waterbus will have an excellent view of the birds in this aviary. At the back, cliffs have been fashioned from blocks of sandstone and there are large logs to use as perches. The new aviary can be seen in the photograph on the right. At the present time we accommodate the following African birds:

Bateleur Eagle

White-headed Vulture

White-backed Vulture.

Beaver Pond

The Beaver Pond is No. 32 on the Zoo Plan. The original concrete wall is now being faced with sandstone and will look more attractive. The Beavers tend to be rather nocturnal and, as we want to create more interest for visitors at this point, we are planning to introduce various species of waterfowl to the pond. It has therefore been necessary to construct a short mesh barrier on top of the wall in order to confine the waterfowl.

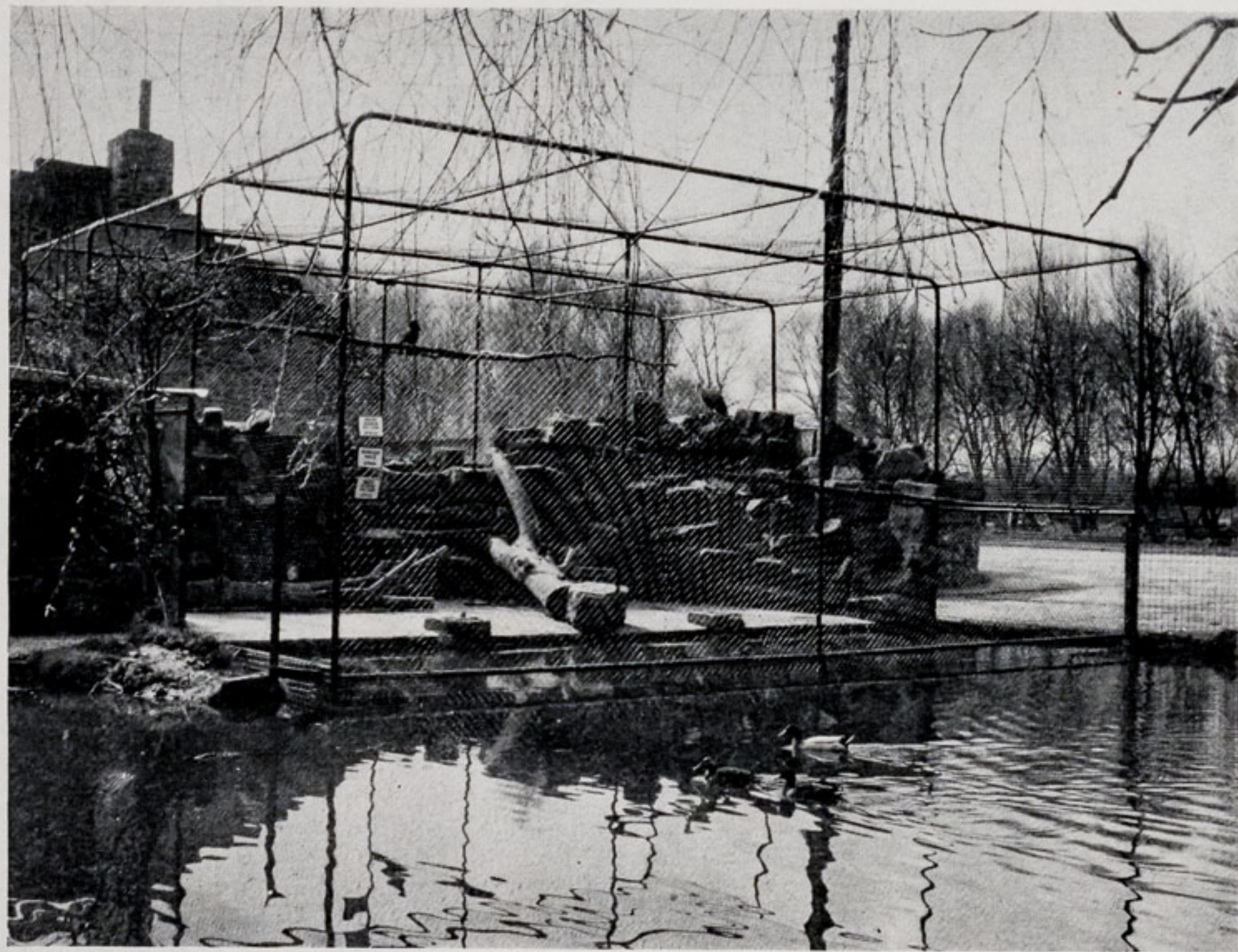
AQUARIUM NEWS

There have been various additions to the Aquarium, some of which are species we have not exhibited for a number of years.

Bumble-bee Catfish (*Leiocassis poecilopterus*)

In all we have acquired three young Bumble-bee Catfish. One has been housed in a tank with a fully grown specimen which has been in the collection for some years, and two in the adjacent tank.

These fish originate from Java, Sumatra and Thailand and when fully grown are 7 to 8in. long. The bodies of the catfish are basically a dark brown or bluish colour. The young have several whitish or pale yellow bands and blotches, which become pale brown in the mature fish.



NEW BIRD OF PREY AVIARY

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

CHESTER ZOO

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS



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 Hyena 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

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.

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

Bus Station

South Entrance



Dwarf or Ram Cichlid (*Apistogramma rammirezi*)

We are now exhibiting a number of Dwarf or Ram Cichlids, a species which has not been shown in this Aquarium for three or four years. Its colour is pink with multi-coloured reflections along the sides according to the light. There is usually a sheen with dark bands on the body. This fish is one of the most well-liked of the small Cichlids. There is also a golden variety with a yellow-orange sheen. Both parents take an active part in breeding care, and about 150 eggs are laid which hatch in two days.

Siamese Fighting Fish (*Betta splendens*)

A number of male and female Siamese Fighting Fish are new. Amongst the male specimens is a beautiful iridescent blue and a brilliant red. The red male and a less colourful female Siamese Fighting Fish are now attempting to breed. The male has started to build the bubble nest and the female has been introduced to his tank. The female is sometimes attacked if she is not ready to spawn when a nest is built, but up to the time of writing we have not witnessed any sign of aggression. The males of the species are aggressive towards one another, but they are peacefully inclined towards other fish unless these are regarded as food.

Harlequin Fish (*Rasbora heteromorpha*)

We have acquired also a quantity of young Harlequin Fish. These are from the Malay Peninsula where they are to be found in great quantities. These fish are not easily sexed, but the males are usually of brighter colours and have slightly slimmer profiles. Fully grown they are about $1\frac{3}{4}$ in.

The colour of the *Rasbora heteromorpha* is a rosy-orange with a blue black triangle-shaped wedge covering most of the hind part of the body. The eyes are a striking red, and when in breeding condition the body takes on a violet sheen.

The eggs of the Harlequin Fish are laid on the underside of broad leaves, three or four at a time. The male follows the female and fertilises the eggs. Eventually about a hundred eggs will have been laid. In the Aquarium when spawning is completed all the fishes are removed. The young hatch after approximately twenty-four hours.

Red-eye Tetras (*Moenkhausia sanctae-filomenae*)

We have obtained new stocks of Red-eye Tetras, most of which are young specimens. There is not a great deal of colour in these fishes, but there is a red patch on the eye and a black bar on the base of the caudal fin. The body displays a faint bluish sheen.

Golden Barbs (*Barbus schuberti*)

Another variety which has been re-stocked is the Golden Barb. These are not found in the wild state. The first specimen is believed to have originated from the collection of an American breeder named Tom Schubert. The scientific name, however, is not widely recognised. Apparently breeding is fairly easy, although we have not as yet actually bred any in our aquaria. Their colour is bright yellow with deep orange fins. The male has a row of black spots on the body and these are absent in the female. Fully grown they are 3in. long.

Cardinal Tetra (*Cheirodon axelrodi*)

Visitors to the Aquarium will also be interested to see some new Cardinal Tetra. With its bright blue-green and red body, this species is undoubtedly one of the most colourful kept in freshwater aquaria. The first specimens were sent from South America to the United States in 1956. They were named after a well-known South American aquarist.

The Cardinal Tetra at first proved difficult to spawn, but are now being produced by commercial breeders in Europe and the U.S.A. Very few wild specimens are now imported. Ideal for the aquarium, but a little shy unless in the company of its own species, it grows to 1½in. long.

Banded Cichlid (*Cichlasoma severum*)

One new male has been acquired for two females already in the collection, and they have now spawned. A number of eggs were removed from the exhibition tank and were hatched in a nursery tank. The eggs of the Banded Cichlids take about three days to hatch.

Black Widows (*Gymnocorymbus ternetzi*)

Some new Black Widows can now be seen. When young these look very small and are almost black. They are very attractive, being coated in stripes as they grow older. We have not had any on show for about two or three years. As the fish mature the black fades to grey and they are not then quite so attractive.

Dwarf Gourami (*Colisa lalia*)

The Dwarf Gourami have now been bred. At the present time about one hundred fry are being reared in a nursery tank. This species is fully grown at $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. in the aquaria, but slightly longer in the wild. The Dwarf Gourami is from India. It is a shy fish, and the background colour of the males is red with double stripes of pale green and blue; the end of their fins is a bright red. The females are slightly less colourful.

Discus (*Symphysodon discus*)

We now have some more examples of the red variety of *Symphysodon discus*, which originate from the Amazon region. They are exhibited with a number of Blue, Seven-coloured and Blue-faced Discus.

Elephant Trunk-nosed Fish (*Gnathonemus petersi*)

We now have three young Elephant Trunk-nosed Fish. Their full growth is 9 in. They are strangely shaped and are members of the Mormyridae family. These freshwater fish from Africa have a long mobile finger-like projection from the lower jaw with which to probe in the bottom of the tank for worms and other food. They feed on live foods. Of great interest in aquaria, they like established tanks—they do not like immature water. The colour varieties are dark brown to brownish violet and there are two pale bands between the dorsal and anal fins. These fishes are peaceful but playful, and are not yet bred in aquaria. A single adult specimen has been in the collection since November 1972 and continues to thrive.

Black Moors and Orandas—varieties of Goldfish

New additions to the Goldfish exhibit were examples of the Black Moors and Oranda varieties.

Salvin's Cichlids (*Cichlasoma salvini*)

Two females have been acquired and have been introduced to the single male which was already in the collection. They are showing signs of breeding but as yet they have not spawned.

These fishes are from Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras. They measure approximately 6in. fully grown, and are very colourful being dark olive-green or brown-yellow, with shining blue-green spots and streaks on the gill cover. The iris is blood red. There are however many colour varieties, and all are hardy and peaceful.

Green Velifera Mollies (*Mollienesia velifera*)

These fishes are one of the most attractive of the tooth carps. They originate from the coastal districts and the river mouths of Yucatan and are approximately 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. long in aquaria. The male of this variety has a greyish green body, the female being of a paler colour.

Platies and Guppies

Two species which are very popular with amateur aquarists are Guppies and Platies. We have acquired some new Red Wagtail Platies (*Xiphophorus maculatus*) and also a number of male Blond Guppies (*Lebistes reticulatus*).

We now have the following specimens in our local marine tanks which have been caught recently off the coasts of North Wales:

Mullet and Whiting

Sand Gobies

Prawns.

We also have a large supply of Opposum Shrimps which are used as food for the Sea Horses of which we have two new ones (*Hippocampus Sp.*).

The following have been added to our tropical marine tanks:

Domino Damsel Fish (*Dascyllus trimaculatus*)

In one marine tank we have two Domino Damsels and two Yellow-tailed Blue Damsels. The Domino Damsel is a black fish, distinguished by a small white spot on either side of the body and one on the top of the head.

Yellow-tailed Blue Damsels (*Pomacentrus melanochir*)

This species has a mauve to blue body, with a yellow tail. The intensity of the blue varies with individuals, and one of our new specimens is a much deeper blue than the other.

Tomato Clown Fish (*Amphiprion ephippium*)

In the adjacent tank there is a new Tomato Clown Fish. It grows to 6in. It derives its name because it resembles the colour of ripe tomatoes, and in addition it displays a white stripe behind each eye. The Tomato Clown Fish is aggressive if he feels his territory has been invaded and his teeth are quite sufficient to cause damage to smaller fishes. The Clown Fish in general have a spike set in the rear of the mouth but seldom make use of it. Sharing the same tank as the Tomato Clown Fish are two Pink Skunk Clown Fish.

Pink Skunk Clowns (*Amphiprion perideraion*)

This Skunk Clown is a pale pinkish-orange colour and it has a white vertical stripe behind the eye. This particular species is far happier when living in association with an anemone and we have introduced a live one into the tank. The Skunk Clown is immune from the anemone which will kill other fish with the sting from its tentacles if they approach it. Since the Skunk Clown Fish entered the tank they have not strayed far from the anemone.

As a matter of interest, since its arrival the anemone has been creeping very slowly around the tank. The Aquarium Keeper placed it originally on the rockwork near the bottom of the tank but within a few days it had travelled upwards and come to rest just below the surface.

REPTILE NEWS

Green Tree Python (*Chondropython viridis*)

We have not exhibited any Green Tree Pythons for quite some time, but we have now acquired a very fine specimen which is four to five feet long, the fully mature Green Tree Python being five to six feet in length. The *Chondropython viridis* is to be found in the Northern Cape York Peninsula of Australia. It is a very beautiful reptile and is amongst the smaller members of the python family. Its colour is emerald green with a bright yellow belly and white vertebrae markings. The young are a brilliant golden yellow or a brown reddish colour and they change to green when about three years old.

The Green Tree Python feeds on small mammals and birds. In some areas of New Guinea where it is also to be found, it is reported as being caught and eaten by the local people.

Boomslang (*Dispholidus typhus*)

One fully grown, very beautiful and most striking new green phase Boomslang has now been acquired and is in the vivarium with an example of the brown variety of this species and three Puff Adders. The Boomslang is rear-fanged, and the snake originates from Africa.

Puff Adders (*Bitis arietans*)

We have made a straight exchange of a male Puff Adder for a female. As a result we now have a male and two females. The new female is a young specimen and is considerably darker in colour than the other. Our male Puff Adder is an attractive snake with particularly vivid markings.

Green Day Geckos (*Phelsuma cepediana*)

Other arrivals have included four Green Day Geckos and these are in the vivarium with the Gila Monsters and the Beaded Lizards. The Green Day Gecko originates from the Malagasy Republic. The four we have acquired are about fully grown.

Thailand Water Dragons (*Physignathus cocincinus*)

Two Thailand Water Dragons were acquired for the zoo at the beginning of November last year. These are not yet fully grown but we believe they are a pair, and we were very excited when the female laid her eggs. We have not actually witnessed mating, but the Curator of Reptiles has observed courtship display between the pair on several occasions. Furthermore he has noticed that the short crest of spines on the female's neck has been damaged, and as the male would have grasped the back of her neck during mating, this would seem to suggest that mating has actually taken place.

The first signs we had that the Water Dragon was going to lay eggs were small holes in the sand on the floor of the vivarium where the female had been digging. In order to encourage the Water Dragon the Curator of Reptiles provided a box of sand for her, but this proved too shallow and finally he offered a deep bowl of sand where she eventually laid twelve eggs. The Curator has removed the eggs, and they are being incubated artificially. They have been placed in a bed of sphagnum moss, and we are hoping that these will hatch but we do not know definitely how long this will take. The Curator informs us that the incubation period may last from eight to twelve weeks.

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) cost £1.75, 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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