

# CHESTER ZOO NEWS



15p

Zoological Gardens  
Chester CH2 1LH

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# Polar Bears

Our present pair of Polar Bears (*Thalarctos maritimus*), "Nanook" and "Naju", were purchased from Copenhagen Zoo in October 1980, having been bred there at the end of 1979. They replaced our old group of bears which arrived at Chester in October 1947. The last female, called "Ruin", died shortly after the arrival of the new pair and, at 35 years of age, she equalled the record quoted in the Guinness Book of Records as the longest lived Polar Bear.

Having become accustomed to the lethargy of the older bears, we had forgotten just how active young ones can be and consequently are very pleased at the display these put on. As these bears are very playful, we experimented with various "toys", all of which were very quickly dispatched, until it was suggested that a metal beer barrel might be the thing. One was acquired (empty) and has proved to be a very efficient plaything.

Polar Bears at home live on the shores around the North Pole, their distribution South being more or less

THIS IS THE LIFE . . .  
Courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.



NOW WHAT . . . NOT ANOTHER PHOTOGRAPHER!  
Courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

limited by the extent of the ice floes, their presence being associated with the presence of seals which account for the bulk of their food. They are the most carnivorous of all the bears, varying the seal diet with fish, sea birds and their eggs, as well as any carrion they happen to find. In summer, they will also eat the leaves and berries of the tundra plants, together with algae and grass.

It is one of the largest carnivores, only surpassed in size by the Kodiak and Kamchatka Bears, adult males averaging 900 lbs. in weight (410 kilos), to a maximum of 1,500 lbs. (690 kilos) and a height of five feet (1.5 metres) at the shoulder.

The Polar Bear is a great wanderer, travelling great distances on land, although seldom venturing far inland, and moves freely on ice with aid from its hairy soles covering all but the balls of its feet. Partial webbing of the toes is a great asset in the water and Polar Bears have been seen swimming strongly 200 miles from land.

Front Cover:  
POLAR BEARS "NANOOK" AND "NAJA"  
Courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

The young stay with the females for a period up to two years but the males appear to live a solitary life, only joining the females in the early summer mating season. Considering the size of the adult, the young are very small at birth, approximately ten inches (25 cms.) long and weighing 1½ lbs. (0.7 kilos). They are born during the winter in a snow den, the only heat coming from the bears' own body temperature, and they usually emerge in March or April. A litter varies from one to four, but generally two are born.

Obviously we hope to rear young from "Nanook" and "Naju", but females do not attain sexual maturity until they are four years old, and males a little later, so we will have to be patient and take delight in their antics until this time arrives.

P. A. Wait  
*Curator of Mammals*

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## Conservation Fund

Jeanette Jones, a Secretary in our Promotions Office, has for some time now been known as the "Barbara Woodhouse" of Chester Zoo. Jeanette can often be seen during her lunch break on the Zoo Car Park schooling her Border Collie "Jenny" and, in addition, she is organiser of the Mold and District Dog Club and runs obedience classes in the evenings at Rhydymwyn and Buckley. She recently organised a most successful Dog Show at The Dale, Kinnerton, and was able to present



JEANETTE WITH JENNY  
*Courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.*

the Zoo with a cheque for £70 towards our Conservation Fund. This fund has been set up to provide finance for special conservation-orientated projects within the Zoo and, with so many of the world's animals being threatened with extinction, we need every penny we can raise.

We would be most interested to hear from any readers who would be prepared to donate the proceeds of a show or any other fund-raising activity to the cause of conservation at Chester Zoo.

## Common Civet

Our pair of Civet (*Viverra civetta*) originally came from Jersey Zoo, where they were bred, the female in 1972 and the male a few years later. Our first birth occurred in 1978, when one male kitten was reared by the mother, since then however, we have had little success: although producing young the female killed them within the first few days. She gave birth on the 7th September this year to two weak kittens and one stronger one. The stronger one survived and appeared to be thriving until the mother was seen to be attacking it on the third morning. It was rescued and, although the skin was punctured in a number of places, fortunately no serious damage was done.

I took the kitten home, where my wife has successfully reared it. Using cow's milk, initially diluted with water, it was fed frequently with a premature baby's bottle, gradually decreasing to every four hours. The youngster started taking solid food at three weeks old and is now eating a mixture of fruits and chopped meat. Civets are omnivorous by nature, eating a variety of foods, and they have an interesting feature in two pouches producing a wax-like secretion, formerly highly valued in the perfume trade.

P. A. Wait

*Curator of Mammals*

WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEMES ARE RARELY LIKE THIS—  
KIRSTY WITH BABY CIVET  
Courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.



## Arrivals and Births



JAGUARUNDI AND KITTEN  
Courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

African Civet ( <i>Viverra civetta</i> )	Birth
Alpaca ( <i>Lama pacos</i> )	Birth
Kinkajou ( <i>Potos flavus</i> )	Birth
Jaguarundi ( <i>Felis yagouarundi</i> )	Birth
Patas Monkey ( <i>Erythrocebus patas</i> )	Birth
Onager ( <i>Asinus hemionus</i> )	Birth
Male Wedge-tailed Eagle ( <i>Aquila audax</i> )	Arrival
Blue-fronted Amazon Parrot ( <i>Amazona aestiva</i> )	Arrival
Praying Mantis ( <i>Mantis religiosa</i> )	Arrival
1 pair Red-headed Kraits ( <i>Bungaris flaviceps</i> )	Arrival
3 pairs Purple Honeycreepers ( <i>Cyanerpes cyaneus</i> )	Arrival

# Subscriptions

CHESTER ZOO NEWS is at present being produced every month and readers who would like to receive the magazine regularly can obtain subscription forms at the Souvenir Shops or the Office. The current charge for 12 issues, including postage, is £3.00 per year.

Completed forms can be handed in to the Souvenir Shops or posted to Mrs. Penny Rudd, Chester Zoo News, Chester Zoo, Chester CH2 1LH.

## "Datu"— Off to Hong Kong

This month there was a sad loss to Chester Zoo and England. Our very own Orang-utan "Datu" sailed for Hong Kong to start a new life for himself with an attractive young red-head called "Bettina" from Twycross Zoo. There were several offers to carry his suitcases for him from the Zoo staff, but to no avail, and he is now probably basking in the sunshine, eating hordes of tropical fruit. Lucky fellow!

"Datu" was born to the Bornean Orang-utan couple "Dennis" and "Martha" here at Chester in April 1978; a healthy three-pound youngster and the fourth to have been born here. Unfortunately, "Martha" was not enamoured with motherhood, and so this was undertaken by the then Curator. Fortunately for "Datu", he inherited "Martha's" gentle temperament but, unfortunately, "Dennis's" "piggy" eyes. How he ever managed to focus was a wonderful feat of Orang engineering. "Datu" always had a strange waif-like appearance, and his orange locks were once described as looking as though they had been set alight and hurriedly blown out! Very punk!

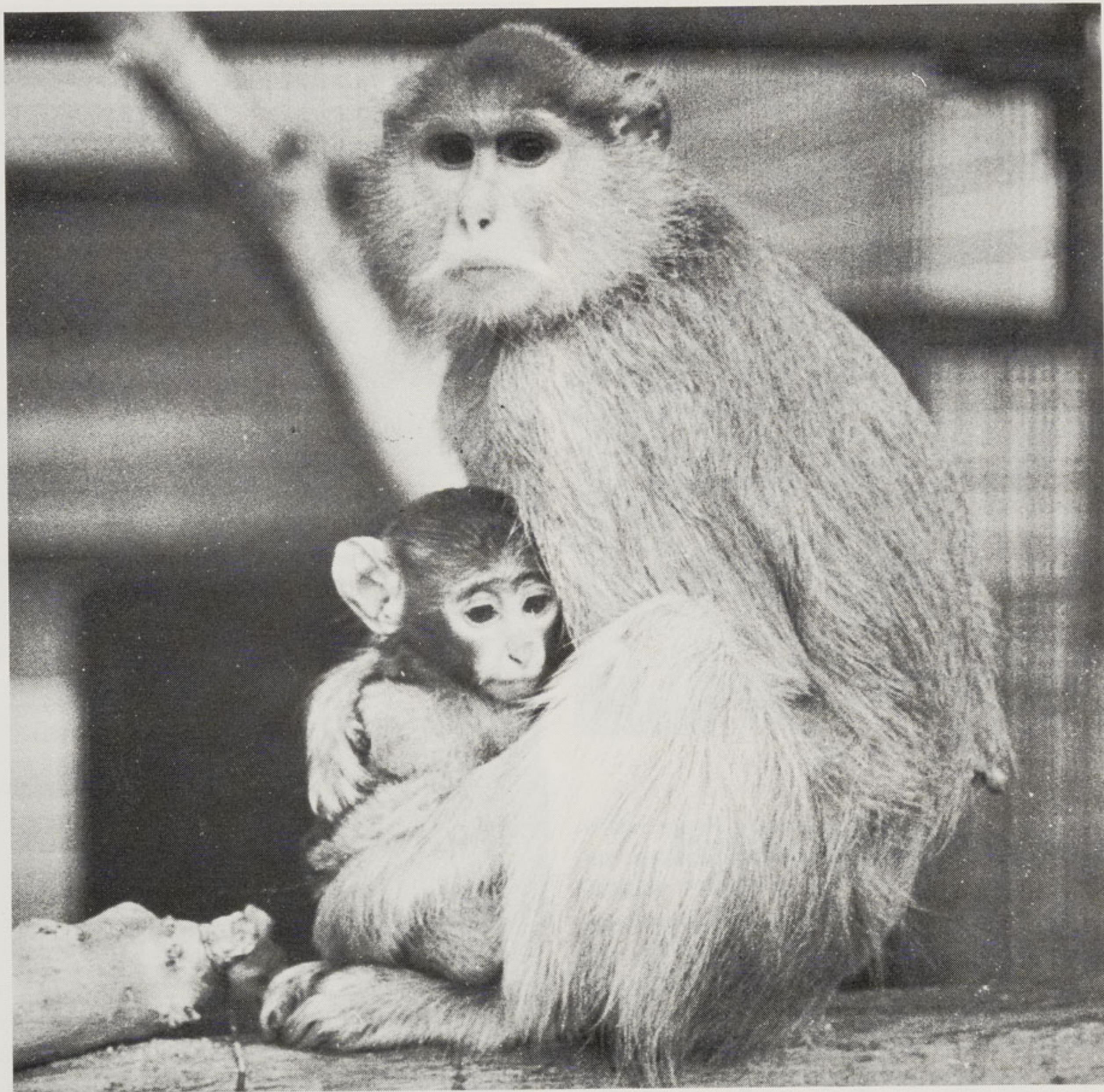
Brother to "Sibu", who is still at Chester, "Datu" has all the breeding and flair to grow into a smashing Orang-utan.

Back here at Chester, we gained another Orang-utan by the name of "Jantan", who has not only brought in a nice new set of genes, but has also settled in well with our other youngsters, "Kapo" and "Sibu".

So we say adieu to "Datu" until we may meet again. Good luck with your new home and may your life be fruitful.



"DATU"  
Courtesy of R. Broome, "The Weekly News"



PATAS MONKEY WITH BABY  
*Courtesy of George Green, "Evening Leader"*

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