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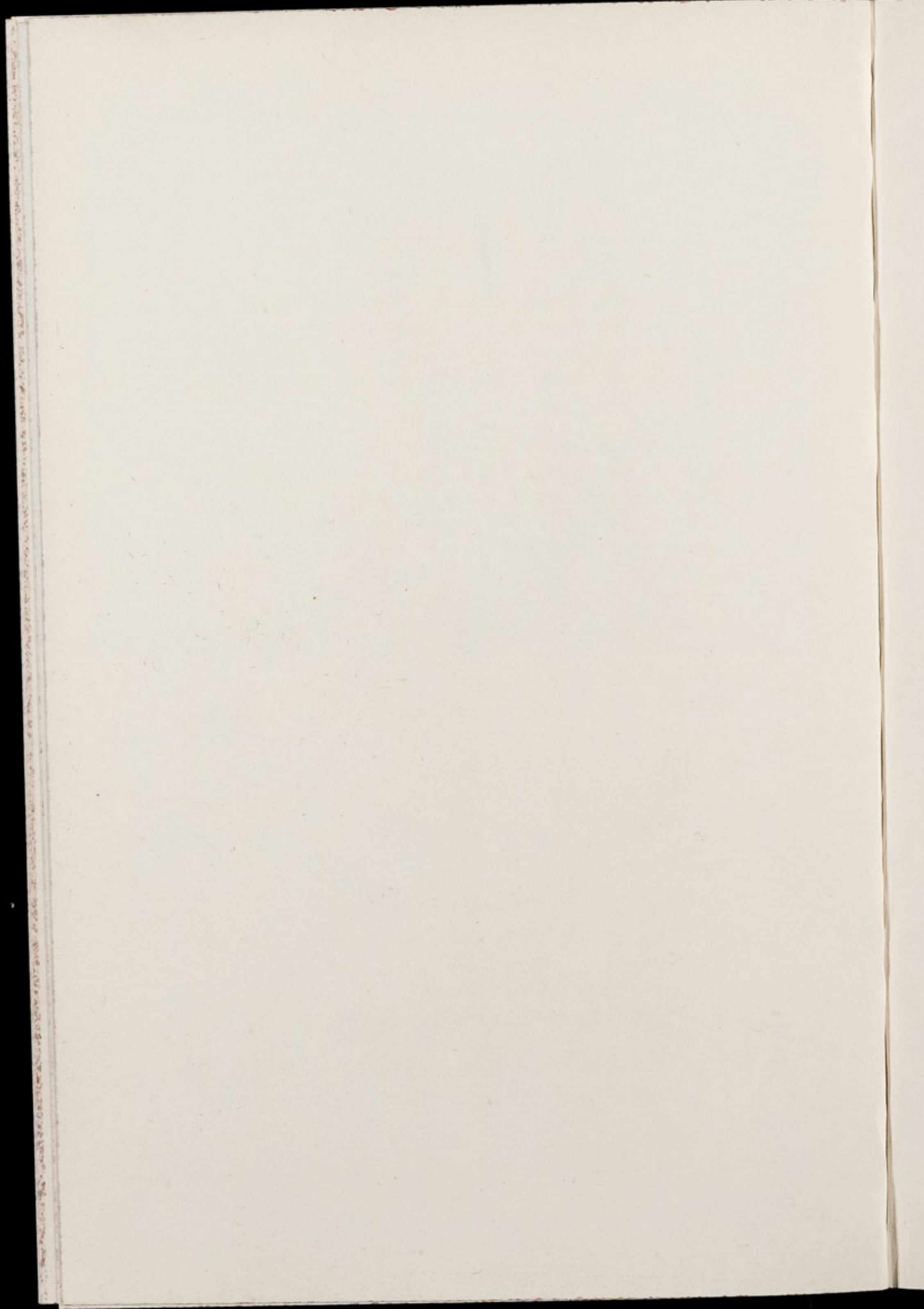
Chester Zoo News

AND GUIDE

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

August 1966

Price 1/-



Editorial

The increased admission charges came into operation on the 1st July and it was expected that there would be some decrease in the attendance figures. However, during July there has been a substantial increase in the visitors compared with the same period last year.

In this month's issue we have included an article on keeping Hill Mynahs: these birds are becoming increasingly popular as pets and we are constantly being asked for advice on them.

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COVER: *This month's cover shows one of the young female Leopards which arrived in December 1965.*

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ARRIVALS AND BIRTHS

Two species of Tamarins arrived over the past month; they are Two Red-handed Tamarins (*Tamarin midas*) and a White-faced Tamarin (*Tamarinus species*). These animals are being housed in the bird hospital whilst suitable accommodation is found for them.

One of the most interesting new arrivals this month was a young Margay Cat from South America. We estimate this youngster to be twelve to eighteen months old. It is a beautifully marked animal being very similar in general colouration to the Ocelot but of smaller size and less robust build, and seems to have settled well in the Cat House. Although in quarantine the public are able to view it through the plate glass window. We hope to include a photograph and more information about this animal in next months "Chester Zoo News".

The Reptile House had several new arrivals during the past month. Two Snakes from America — a Crossed Viper (*Bothrops alternatus*) a venomous species from South America and a Brown King Snake (*Lampropeltis rhombomaculata*) from North America. Two South American Side-necked Turtles also arrived and have settled well.

Two Brindled Gnus were born — the second and third this year. Their addition brings the herd to nine. All three youngsters are to be seen in the photograph on the opposite page.

A young male Fallow Deer was purchased during April 1965 to provide a mate for our four female Deer. The first young one from him is a female, born on July 7th and looks very healthy.

The Fallow Deer can be seen in enclosure (No. 78 on the plan); they share their enclosure with the Grant's Zebras during the summer. The Zebras are moved to warmer quarters during the winter but the Deer are very hardy and remain outside.

The natural home of the Fallow Deer is Asia Minor, Palestine and Southern Europe, but they have been introduced into many other countries. In Britain they thrive in a semi-domestic state in some areas and are fairly common in large parks.



BRINDLED GNU CALVES

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

WREATHED HORNBILL

In March this year, three young Hornbills arrived with the consignment from New Guinea. They were rather difficult to identify but after exhaustive enquiries we came to the conclusion that they were *Rhyticeros dampieri*. Unfortunately one died suddenly during April, but it had never looked fit since arrival.

The Hornbills quickly settled down and appeared tame right from the start. In the photograph on page five they can be seen taking food from the fingers of their keeper, Mrs. Murray, wife of Head Bird Keeper, Jim Murray.

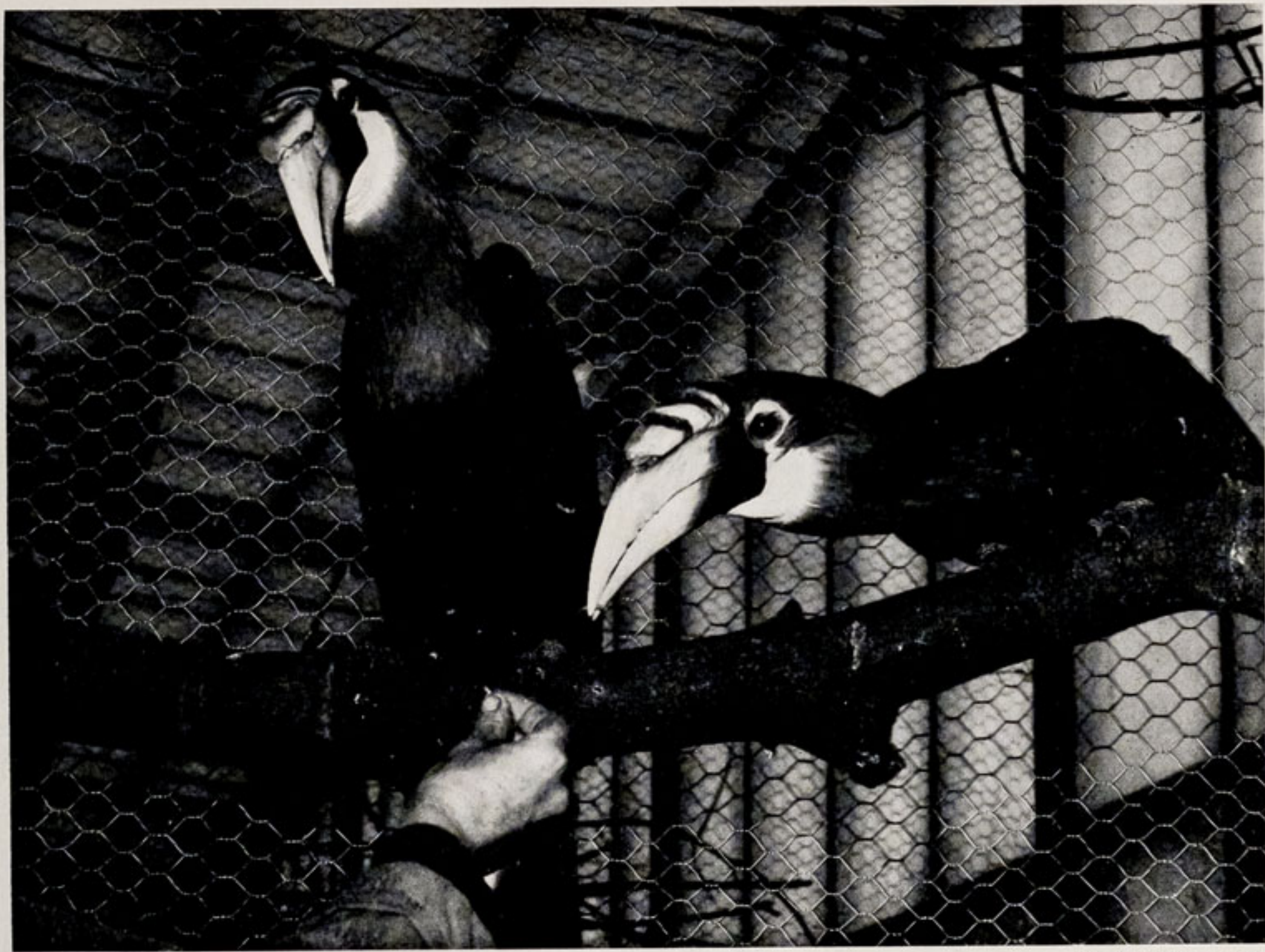
These two Hornbills can be seen in the first aviary on the right in the Temperate Bird House. They have become very noisy and robust; a favourite pastime is to shake a branch with their feet and give voice to loud raucous shouts at the same time.

In recent weeks they have found another, for them, enjoyable past-time — keeper biting. This became gradually worse until Mrs. Murray could not enter the aviary without being attacked. Fortunately, it was an easy matter to cut a special trap door between the Hornbill aviary and one of the original Bird House aviaries, now occupied by a pair of Port Lincoln Parrakeets. The procedure now is to lock the Parrakeets into their inside flight, open the door between the two aviaries and drive the Hornbills into the outside Parrakeet aviary. The Hornbills can then be cleaned out in safety and afterwards can be let back into their own aviary.

NEWS FROM THE BIRD SECTION

A number of new arrivals were presented to us over the past month; probably the most unusual was a consignment from Col. and Mrs. Rubenstein from Paramaribo, South America.

Two very nice Grey-winged Trumpeters (*Psophia crepitans*) arrived and after being kept in the bird hospital for two days were then transferred to an aviary in the Temperate Bird House. These birds are very tame as are all Trumpeters after being in captivity for a comparatively short length of time.



WREATHED HORNBILL

Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

Little is known about the Trumpeters in the wild state. There are three species in South America — Grey-winged being the most common and widely distributed, found in the Guianas, parts of Venezuela, Brazil, Columbia and Ecuador.

The Trumpeter is given this name because of its strange, long drawn-out call note; however, in the normal way they make a very soft whistling noise.

Three Grey Ground Doves (*Columbigallina passerina griseola*) and four Rufous Doves (*Columba cayennensis cayennensis*) also arrived in this consignment. Both these species are scarcely larger than a sparrow and are truly miniature Doves. They have now been transferred to the Bird House and share an aviary with the Turquoise Parrakeets and Canaries.

A pair of Red-headed Buntings — a species found in Southern Asia — have been liberated in the Temperate Bird House. The cock bird has a red-brown coloured head, throat and chest and yellow underparts but the hen is very dull, being mainly sparrow coloured. These birds tend to remind most people of the African Weavers in general colouration.

A very colourful cock Splendid Parrakeet was presented to the Zoo and has been accommodated in the long Oakfield flight; this brings the total number of species in this aviary to thirty two.

The R.S.P.C.A. brought us a young male Kestrel, still with down on the head, pale feet and cere, a sure sign of its youth. Of course Kestrels are quite a common wild bird around the Zoo and nest in the nearby countryside. From time to time they are brought to us either as youngsters or injured adults. This particular youngster came from Liverpool's Dock Area, where these birds nest on some of the tall buildings. The Kestrel is the only bird of prey to adapt itself to modern man-made conditions in our towns. The town Kestrel feeds on Sparrows, Starlings, Rats and Mice whilst the diet in more rural areas consists mainly of Mice, Insects and a few small Birds.

For the time being this bird is being kept behind scenes but will be transferred to an aviary later on.



M. F. Coupe

KESTREL

During May 1964 we purchased a pair of Spreo Starlings and released them in the Tropical House, but unfortunately the cock bird was eaten by a Crocodile shortly after the House was opened. Since this time we have been trying to purchase a mate for our hen Starling, which spent most of the time nest building since being transferred to the Temperate Bird House. Eventually we located a good specimen and purchased it; although we are unsure of the sex we are hopeful now of having a true pair.

In last month's *Zoo News* we reported the incubation of a number of Geese in the Zoo incubator. The Goslings are thriving and recently were transferred to enclosure no. 93 where they joined the adult Geese.

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.

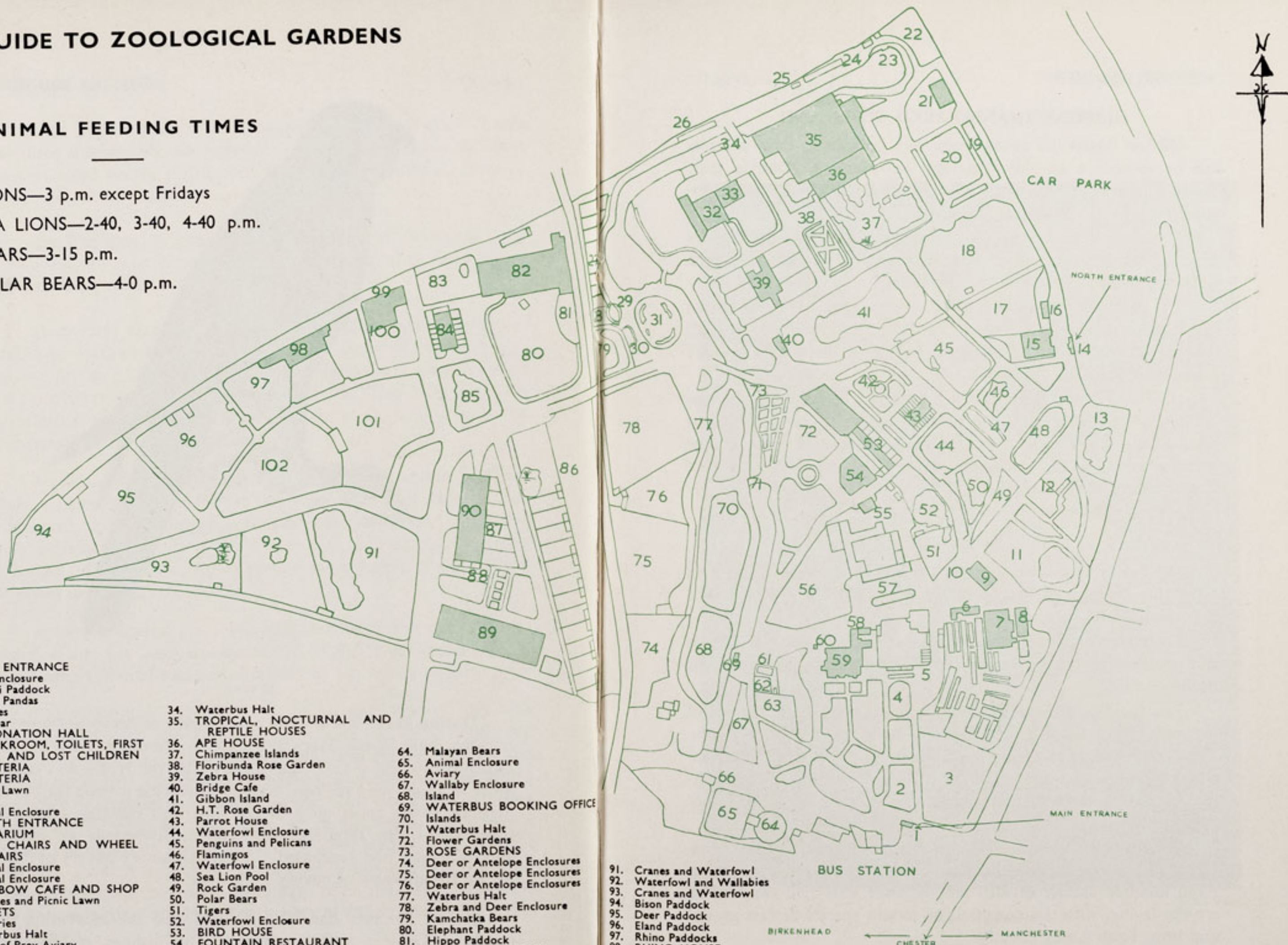
1. MAIN ENTRANCE
2. Bird Enclosure
3. Wapiti Paddock
4. Lesser Pandas
5. Aviaries
6. Milk Bar
7. CORONATION HALL
8. CLOAKROOM, TOILETS, FIRST AID AND LOST CHILDREN
9. CAFETERIA
10. CAFETERIA
11. Picnic Lawn
12. Bears
13. Animal Enclosure
14. NORTH ENTRANCE
15. AQUARIUM
16. PUSH CHAIRS AND WHEEL CHAIRS
17. Animal Enclosure
18. Animal Enclosure
19. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP
20. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn
21. TOILETS
22. Peccaries
23. Waterbus Halt
24. Birds of Prey Aviary
25. Birds of Prey Aviary
26. Owls
27. Jackal Enclosures
28. Wolverines
29. Porcupines
30. Coypus
31. Beavers
32. Giraffe House
33. Camel House

34. Waterbus Halt
35. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND REPTILE HOUSES
36. APE HOUSE
37. Chimpanzee Islands
38. Floribunda Rose Garden
39. Zebra House
40. Bridge Cafe
41. Gibbon Island
42. H.T. Rose Garden
43. Parrot House
44. Waterfowl Enclosure
45. Penguins and Pelicans
46. Flamingos
47. Waterfowl Enclosure
48. Sea Lion Pool
49. Rock Garden
50. Polar Bears
51. Tigers
52. Waterfowl Enclosure
53. BIRD HOUSE
54. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT
55. TOILETS
56. Lions
57. NEW ZOO SHOP
58. TOILETS
59. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT
60. G.P.O. Telephone Kiosk
61. Animal Enclosure
62. Animal Enclosures
63. Cheetahs

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

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.



BIRKENHEAD

CHESTER

MANCHESTER

GIBBONS TRANSFERRED TO ISLAND

Gibbon Island has always been very popular as these animals can be viewed in an almost natural environment. Despite their Tropical origins Gibbons can be kept outside in this country provided they have a frost-free shelter.

For some time now our Gibbon Island has been inhabited by only one female Gibbon but we felt that some of our other Gibbons had grown large enough to be introduced.

The pair of Gibbons from the enclosure (No. 61) opposite the Oakfield Restaurant and a female from the Monkey House have all been transferred, joining the original female on the thickly wooded island.

It is always a difficult task to introduce new Gibbons as the first arrivals consider the island to be their own territory and fights often ensue. However, in this case we are hopeful of success. The island is large and has thick vegetation; the three newcomers were all introduced to the new home at the same time and there is only one original resident.

IGUANAS

The family Iguanidae is by far the largest and one of the most interesting families of lizards of the New World, to which it is almost completely restricted.

There are two Genera in Madagascar made up of seven species and one lone species in the remote Fiji and Tonga Islands of the Pacific Ocean.

The most characteristic feature of the family is the nature of the teeth, which lie in grooves on the inner surface of the jaws. The Old World counterpart of this family (Agamidae), which includes members very much like those of the Iguanidae, is characterized by having the teeth situated on the crest of the bone, rather than on the side.

We have two species of Iguana housed in our Reptile House, the common Iguana and the Rhinoceros. The family has about seven hundred species divided among some sixty five Genera; all are egg-laying, with the exception of certain species of two groups that bring forth young directly.

Common Iguanas (*Iguana iguana*) are large and powerful Lizards sometimes reaching a length of six feet; they have quite



COMMON IGUANA

J. Whitworth

a high, compressed body surmounted by a high crest of lance-like spines which are soft and leathery. This species of Iguana is peculiar in having a large circular shield beneath each ear-drum and a much-developed throat pouch. They feed largely upon tender leaves and fruit, but will not hesitate to eat small birds and mammals, plus insects. Species like the Rhinoceros Iguana (*Metopoceros cornutus*) can quite easily overpower an animal as large as a half-grown rabbit. The animal is quickly torn to pieces by vigorous shaking and large fragments are gulped down.

The Common Iguana is essentially an arboreal animal, delighting to bask on horizontal boughs, even balancing its stout body on quite slender branches while the hind legs sprawl downwards in a fashion indicating utter laziness.

In captivity we feed our Iguanas on lettuce, banana, soft fruits and chopped meat, plus mealworms and small rodents such as rats and mice.

The Common Iguana has a wide distribution area in South America but the Rhinoceros Iguana is confined to Haiti and Puerto Rico.

LEOPARDS

This month's cover photograph shows one of three young Leopardesses, which arrived during December 1965, and were then estimated to be seven months old. They were purchased to enlarge our breeding stock of Leopards for future years. Altogether, we now have seven Common Leopards, two Black Panthers and two Amur Leopards, all resident in the Cat House.

The Leopard is the most widely distributed of the big cats being found throughout much of Africa and in Asia from Syria to Manchuria and Korea including India, Burma, Ceylon, the Malay Peninsular and Java. They are even found in a small area of Europe in Kuban, north of the Caucasus. With such a wide distribution area there is bound to be some variation in size and colour; the Leopard has been divided into many sub-species from time to time but these are generally accepted as being geographical races of the Common Leopard. Leopards from thickly forested areas are normally darker in colour than those from more open country, whilst those from colder areas have much thicker fur. The fur of the Amur Leopards is considerably thicker than that of the Common Leopards and these animals can be easily compared as they occupy adjoining enclosures in the Cat House.

The hunting methods of the Leopards are generally well known. One method is to stalk the intended victim and overcome it with a final spring or short dash. The other method is one of ambush; the Leopard hides in a tree or thick bush and drops onto its prey. It is said to kill by biting through the jugular vein or crushing the vertebrae of the neck with its powerful jaws, then licking up the blood before pulling the carcass into a quiet spot to eat at leisure.

The food taken by Leopards is varied, consisting of almost any animal they can overcome. After the first meal from a large kill they will store the remainder often in the fork of a tree, returning on subsequent occasions to feed. In the tropics a dead animal becomes rather "high" after a few hours but this does not seem to deter the Leopard, although they will not normally eat carrion, unless killed by themselves.

Leopards can become man-eaters at times and have become almost as bad as Lions and Tigers in some places. In parts of Africa the inhabitants are very superstitious about deaths within the village and drive seriously ill and old people out into the bush where they become very easy prey for wild animals. These animals then get the taste of human flesh, lose their fear of man and become man-eaters.

The Leopard leads a solitary life apart from a brief courtship period and when the female looks after her cubs which are eighteen months to two years before they are fully independent. Leopards have no fixed breeding season in the wild state or in captivity. Either one, two or three young are usual; in the wild state it is thought generally that only one cub is reared to maturity although two or three may be weaned.

HILL MYNAHS AS PETS

The Hill Mynah (*Gracula religiosa*) is found throughout India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Sumatra, Java and Borneo. With such a wide distribution area they vary in size of body, shape of wattles, etc., and have been divided into a number of sub-species. However, all are very similar but most often the typical species is imported into this country.

In the wild state the Hill Mynah, or Grackle as it is often known, inhabits wooded country, very often near cultivated areas. Out of breeding season they join together in small flocks and spend a great

deal of time high in trees. When they descend to the ground they hop in a sparrow-like manner and do not walk like other species of Mynahs.

The breeding season in India is said to be from February to May but some nests can be found until as late as October. The nesting site is usually a hole in a hollow tree, at a height of anything from ten to forty feet. The nest itself is very untidy, being constructed of straw, grass, feathers and anything which comes to hand. Two or three eggs are normal, their colour being greenish-blue spotted and splashed with brown and purple.

Hill Mynahs cannot be described as particularly beautiful birds being glossy-black with yellow cheek wattles and feet and a yellow-orange beak. They are about the same length as a black-bird but are far thicker set and of more robust build. The main attraction of keeping these birds as pets is their extraordinary powers of mimicry — they are considered by many authorities to be far better than parrots. The Mynah will actually imitate the intonation and dialect of a person's voice — a thing very few parrots will ever do. Another point in the Mynah's favour is that it will talk in front of a crowd, whereas very often parrots will say nothing at all.

At the Zoo we have ten Hill Mynahs in the Temperate Bird House and the Oakfield aviary flight and many of them are excellent mimics. Only recently the Zoo Director, Mr. G. S. Mottershead, was in the Temperate Bird House when one landed unexpectedly on his shoulder, and asked in a loud clear voice "What's your name?"

When kept in a house Mynahs have one big disadvantage — they are very dirty indeed. Their cage floor has to be covered in sawdust, they bathe frequently and also throw their sticky diet all over the place. For these reasons all the Hill Mynahs at the Zoo have been presented to us by members of the public. Mynah cages can be purchased from a Pet shop; the larger the cage the better, as very few people ever let a Mynah fly round the room as they would a budgerigar. Of course when buying a Hill Mynah it is far better to purchase a young hand reared specimen as they are far easier to teach to talk than the older bird.

In the wild state the diet of Hill Mynahs consists of insects, fruits and berries. It is a fairly easy matter to produce a substitute



J. Gwyn Jones

INDIAN HILL MYNAH

diet for use in captivity; normally they are fed half finely chopped fruit and half insectivorous mixture with the addition of a few maggots or mealworms from time to time. A very adequate diet can be made from a mixture of half Saval dog food No. 1, moistened with hot water and half chopped fruit with some live food added.

The food container should be of glass, china or stainless steel and it is necessary to scrub this container each day. The cage itself should be cleaned every day and fresh sawdust (or blotting paper if preferred) placed on the bottom. From time to time it will be found necessary to remove the bird entirely from the cage and clean the sides and top of the cage with hot water. Another very important item is a large water dish so that the bird can bathe each day. A dog feeding bowl made of porcelain is ideal as it is too heavy to be knocked over by the bird.

The Hill Mynah is a very hardy bird when acclimatized and can live happily in an outside aviary even in winter, if provided with a warm shelter. When kept in a cage, care must be taken to avoid draughts or overheating by direct sunshine. However, the majority

of illnesses are caused through lack of hygiene and the importance of cleanliness cannot be stressed too much.

DEATH OF A HORNBILL

The importance of the "No Feeding of Animals Rule" cannot be over emphasized. A recent case brought this home to us after the death of our hen Great Indian Hornbill.

This bird arrived at the Zoo during 1960 and it was not until October 1965 that we managed to obtain a mate for her and they had both settled together very well.

Unfortunately, these Hornbills will take food from visitors' fingers and despite notices and warnings in the Bird House a small minority of the public continue to feed these birds.

The post-mortem examination on this bird revealed poisoning and we can only assume she was given a cough drop or something similar.

We are now looking for a hen Great Indian Hornbill as a mate for our solitary cock.

NEW LABORATORY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

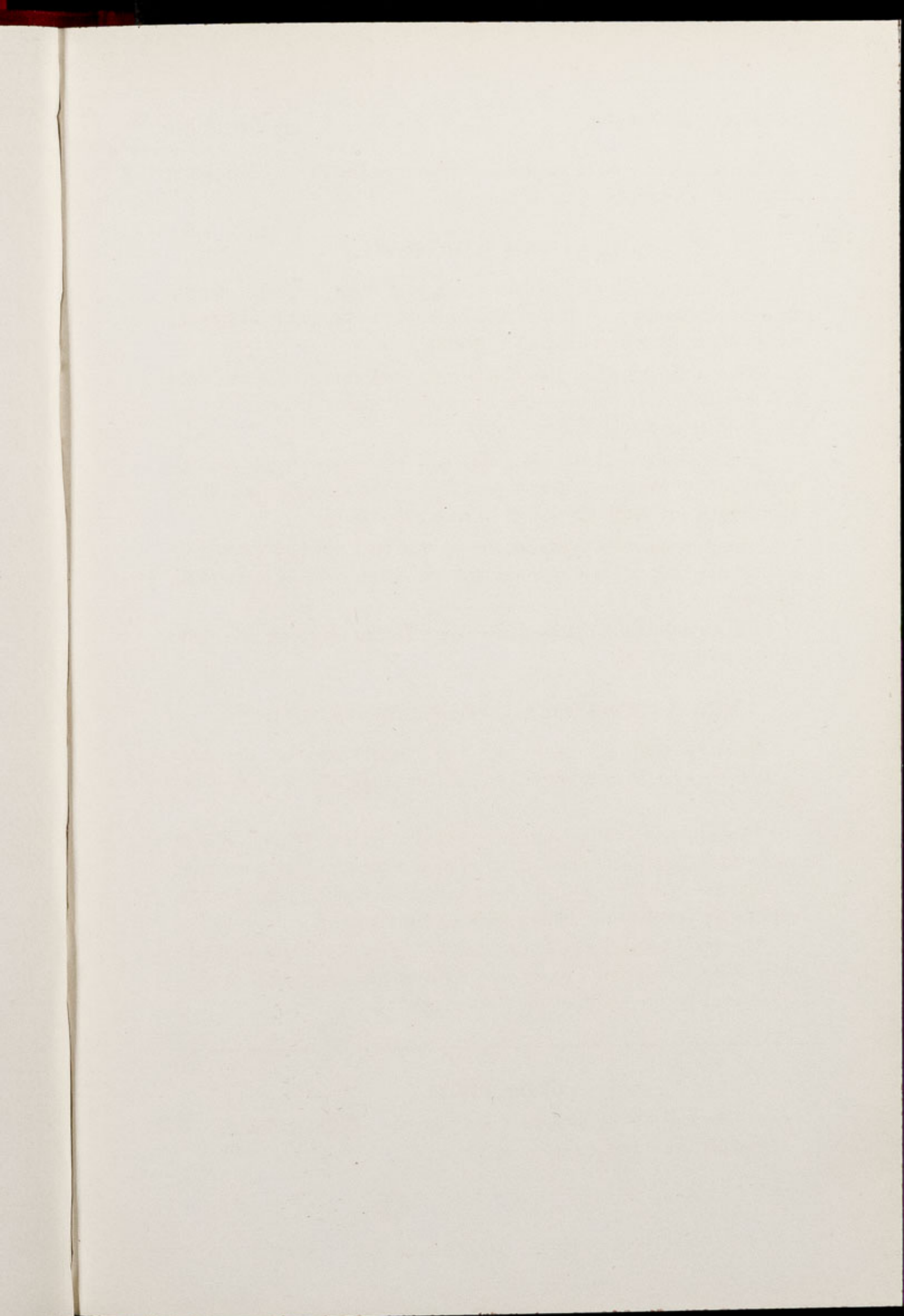
Building staff are busy with the construction of the New Laboratory and have now just passed the stage of completing the roof.

This building will provide our resident Veterinary Surgeon with improved facilities for the study of animal diseases. At the moment his quarters near the Bird House are rather cramped but the new building will provide far better working conditions.

The New Laboratory is situated at the rear of "Green End" Office, near to Chester's outer ring road at Moston corner, and is surrounded by the fields of the Zoo Farm.

STOP PRESS

Recent births include: Red Lechwe, Grant's Zebra, Barbary Ape and Coatimundi.



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