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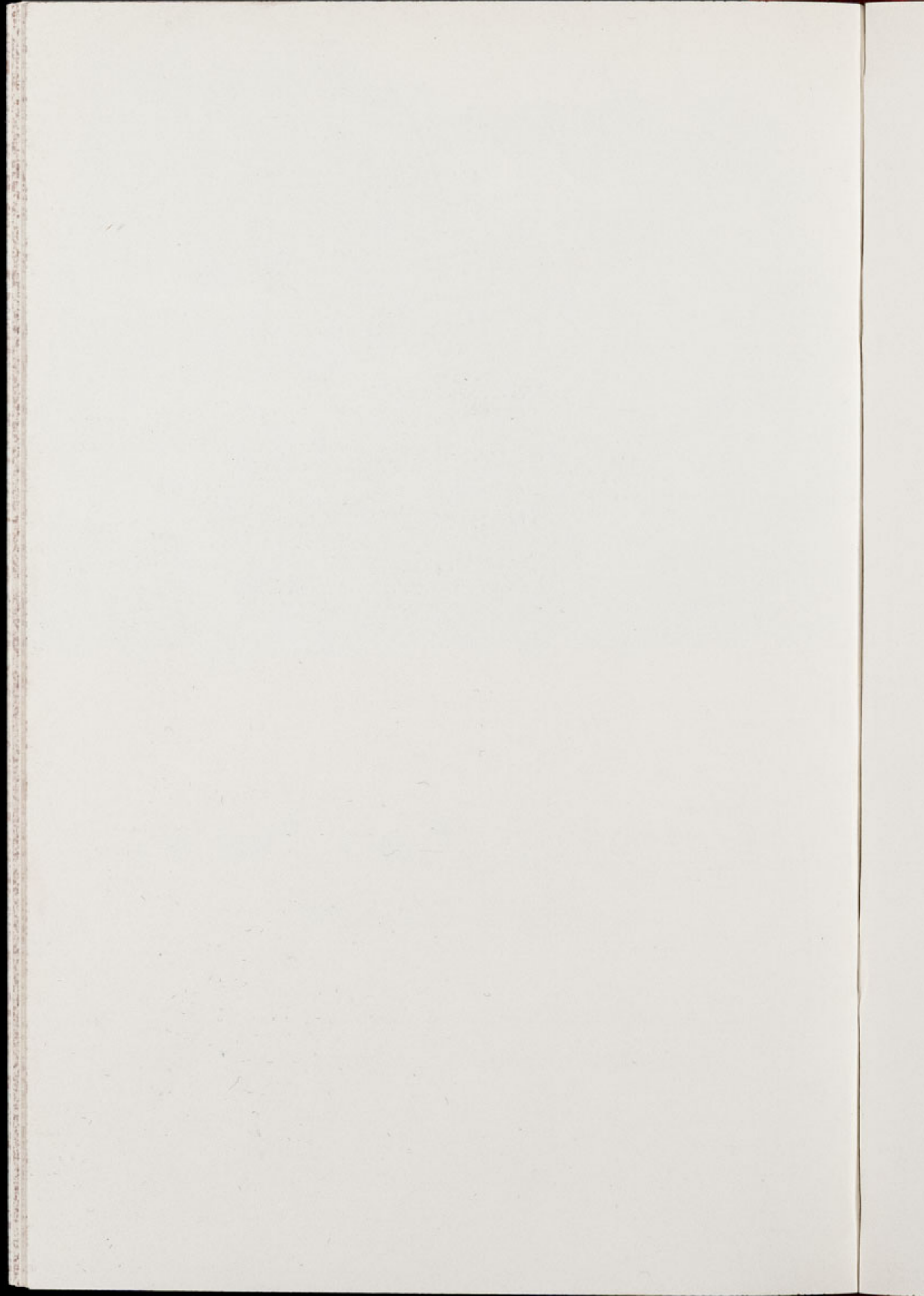
Chester Zoo News

AND GUIDE

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

November 1972

Price 6p



The North of England Zoological Society

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION — NINETY-FIVE PENCE POSTAGE PAID

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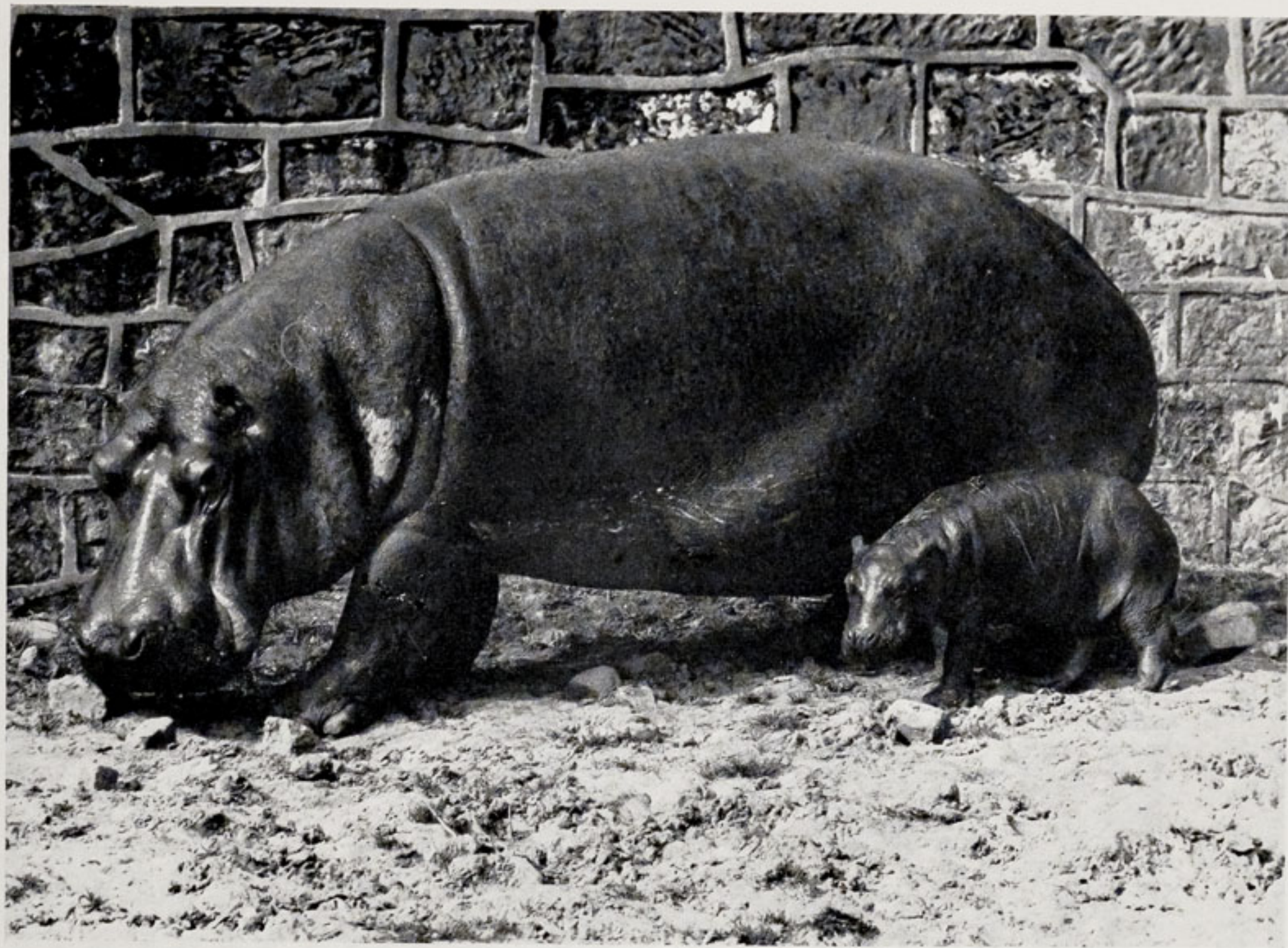
ARRIVALS AND BIRTHS

In the Pachyderm House a baby Common Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) has been born. This is welcome news, especially as last year the mother, Myra, was seriously ill. She produced a calf which died at a few days old through an infection and subsequently was found to be suffering from this herself. However she made a complete recovery and the recent baby appears quite healthy and active. Its sex has not yet been determined.

Myra arrived at the Zoo from Nairobi in September 1961, when she was between two and three years old. Since then she has bred four times, the two earliest offspring being a male produced in 1965 and a female in 1969. The father, named Generino, was bred at Naples Zoo and arrived in June 1963 when about three years old.

The baby was born underwater after a gestation period of seven to eight months. Hippopotamuses can give birth both in water and on land. The young have greyish pink bodies and as can be seen in the photograph on the right are remarkably small in comparison with their mothers. We have not been able to weigh the baby but the average at birth is given as 80lbs. with a length of three to four feet. The young grow fairly swiftly but remain with their mothers for two to three years, often until there are new babies.

Even in recorded historical times, the distribution of the Common Hippo was much wider than it is today. They lived on the lower reaches of the Nile during ancient Egyptian dynasties but now their range commences much farther south into Central Africa and they exist only in national parks in South Africa. However, Hippos breed well and in some areas their numbers have had to be reduced. They are grass eaters and whilst one Hippo is a very effective mowing machine, many thousands can devastate vegetation over a wide area, therefore, culling is in their own interests as well as those of other species. The meat, most palatable and rich in protein, is sold in local native villages.



COMMON HIPPOPOTAMUS 'MYRA' (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) WITH BABY

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

An adult male Hippopotamus may stand five feet high and weigh four tons while the female is somewhat smaller. Cows become sexually mature at about seven years old and Hippos have been known to live for thirty five years.

A Hippo with its mouth open is an awesome sight. The huge lower canines can reach two feet long while the long incisors are straight like tusks and point outwards rather than upwards. These grow throughout the animal's life. What may appear to be an innocuous yawn in fact could be an attempt to intimidate another Hippo. Whereas in many species fighting is ritualised, male Hippos mean business and often combats lead to the serious injury or death of one of the opponents. They fight with mouths open and attempt to slash each other with their tusks.

The Hippopotamus has very little hair on its body and its skin is extremely thick. Periodically drops of moisture containing red pigment are exuded from glands in the skin and this gave rise to an early belief that the Hippopotamus sweated blood. Its nostrils and eyes are set on top of the head and are on a level with its ears. This enables the Hippo to submerge until only the top of its head is visible.

On land the Hippo may appear a lumbering creature but nevertheless can travel at a fair speed if it wishes. In water though, where its vast bulk is supported, the Hippopotamus manoeuvres with amazing agility. It is not really an expert swimmer, preferring to submerge and walk along the bottom, and does not like fast-moving currents. Hippos are seen usually in groups of ten to twenty and much of the day is spent bathing or basking in the sun on a convenient sandbar. At night the Hippos leave the water and make their way along well worn trails to their feeding grounds. In threat of danger they head for water and are able to submerge for up to five minutes, closing their ears and slit nostrils when doing so. Young are suckled underwater and as the pool in the Hippo enclosure at the Zoo is adjacent to the public pathway, visitors will be able to watch Myra nursing her baby.

A baby Llama (*Lama glama*) born in early October can be seen in the photograph on page six. It is accommodated with the rest of the Llama herd, a male and four females, in one of the new Grevy Zebra enclosures, No. 95.

In the Small Mammal House four Coatis (*Nasua nasua*) have been born. This is a species which breeds well at Chester Zoo and the new arrivals make a total of eighteen Coatis in the collection.

Currently undergoing a period of six months in quarantine in the Cat House are two very exciting new exhibits. They are a pair of Jaguarundis (*Felis yagouaroundi*), small, lithe members of the cat family. The existence of these two animals, the male named Charaleta and the female Fara, was first made known to us in the summer when we learned that their owners, Mr. and Mrs. David Herd of Kingston, Ontario, wished to place them in a good home. Actually Mr. and Mrs. Herd had four Jaguarundis whose history is most interesting.

Six years ago they obtained their first animal from a pet shop, primarily because it was in such a distressed condition. This was a female named Piada, the mother of the two Jaguarundis now at Chester. About a year later they obtained an unrelated mate for her which was named Toro. Jaguarundis are not easy animals to breed but in the care of Mr. and Mrs. Herd, Piada has reared four litters.

Mr. and Mrs. Herd still have the parent cats but for various reasons they decided that they could no longer manage four animals. One increasing problem was that as Charaleta matured he began to fight with his father. We were delighted to accept the younger pair offered to us and both have settled in their new home. They have free access to their outer enclosure but as they are rather sensitive to cold, visitors will only be able to see them when the weather is fairly mild. Charaleta and Fara are three years old and it is hoped they will soon breed. Fara was mated in August but if she had become pregnant on this occasion the kittens would have been born by now. The gestation period is from 72 to 75 days.



LLAMA (*Lama glama*) WITH YOUNG

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

Never before exhibited at Chester Zoo and a rare animal in zoos generally, the Jaguarundi is found from the south western United States south to Paraguay. It has been described as the most weasel-like of the cats and has a long, slender body, comparatively short legs and a long tail, the latter measuring one and a half of its four feet length. Jaguarundis may be tawny reddish or greyish black, the animals we have acquired being the latter shade. However it was interesting to learn that Toro, the father of our pair, has turned a reddish colour.

In its natural habitat the Jaguarundi is found never far from water and an alternative name for it is Otter Cat. Mrs. Herd informed us that Piada dropped an eight week old kitten into her dishwater and it swam readily. When she provided them with a pan of water, the kittens entered spontaneously. Diet in the wild includes small mammals and birds, ground species in particular. Charaleta and Fara have been fed a varied diet of poultry, beef, vegetables, eggs and fish, and apparently were not averse to helping themselves from Mrs. Herd's goldfish pond.

Piada came into heat for the first time when she was two years old, Fara when she was three. Heat lasts for five to seven days and would seem to occur every six months. When she was due to give birth Piada sought a low sheltered place and eventually produced and reared her kittens under a bed. Litter size varied from one to four and by their tenth day all the kittens had opened their eyes. For the first three days after the birth, Toro was not allowed near the kittens. Then Piada permitted him to stay for short periods until by the third week he was more actively involved. At three weeks old Piada offered the kittens their first solid food, in one instance a chicken wing, to which Mrs. Herd added baby food. By the sixth week they were eating meat and starting to fight over it.

As soon as practicable, a photograph will be taken of the Jaguarundis for inclusion in the "Zoo News".

Other new arrivals include a pair of Crested Porcupines (*Hystrix cristata*) which originate from Africa. At the present time they are

CHESTER ZOO

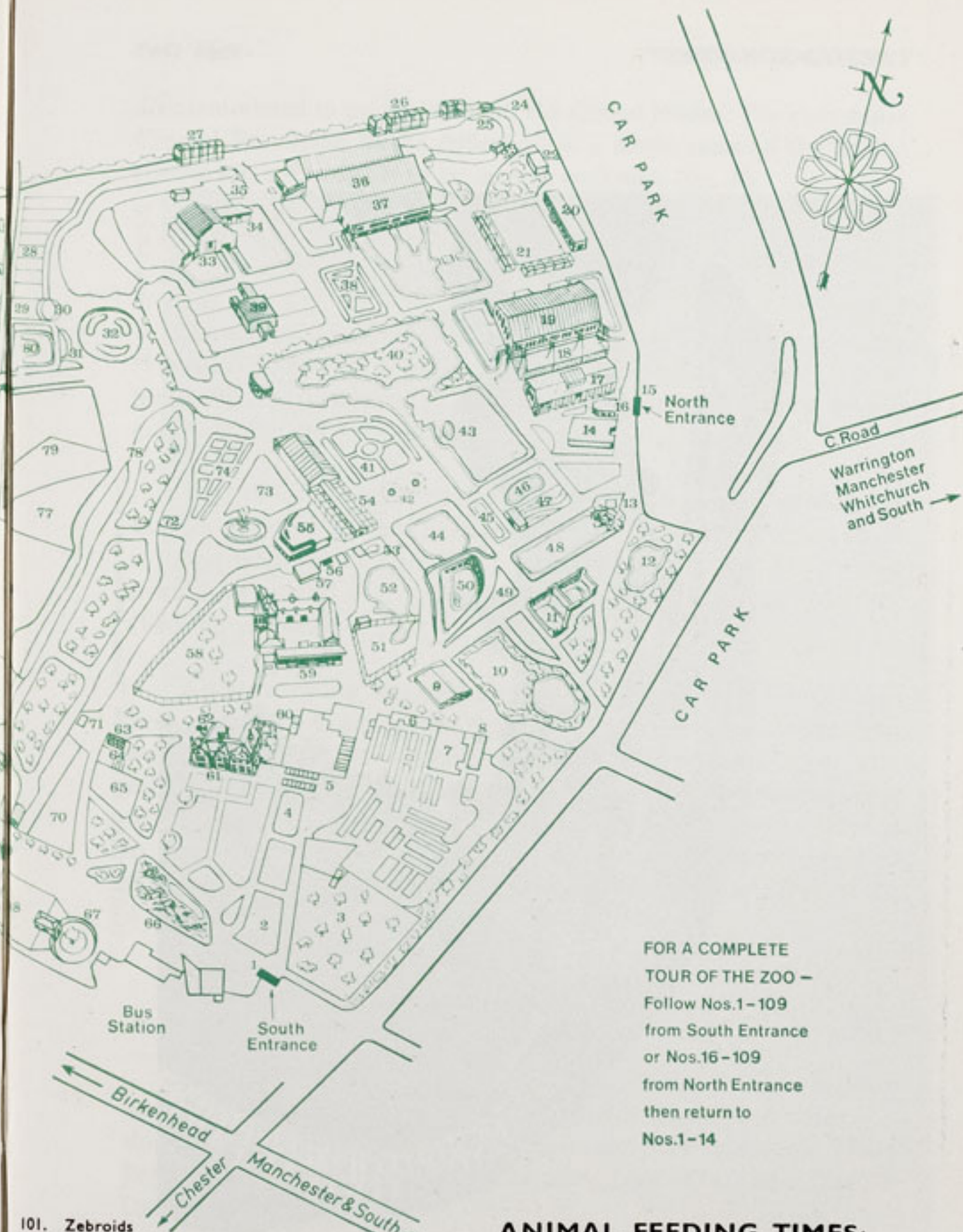
THE NORTH OF ENGLAND
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

TO LECTURE HALL
(PRIVATE)

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. Animal Enclosure
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 Hyaena 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. CHIMPANZES
38. Floribunda Rose Garden
39. Mammal House
40. Gibbon Island

41. H.T. Rose Garden
42. Aviaries
43. Flamingoes
44. Waterfowl Enclosure
45. Waterfowl Enclosure
46. Capybara and Waterfowl
47. Penguins
48. Sealions
49. Rock Garden
50. Polar Bears
51. Tigers
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. G.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. Gazelle Paddocks
88. Storks and Ostriches
89. Baboon Pens
90. Cat House
91. Lions and Tigers
92. Antelope Enclosure
93. Antelope Enclosure
94. Antelope Enclosure
95. Zebra Enclosure
96. MONKEY HOUSE
97. Waterfowl Enclosure
98. Wallabies and Waterfowl
99. Cranes and Waterfowl
100. Llamas and Alpacas



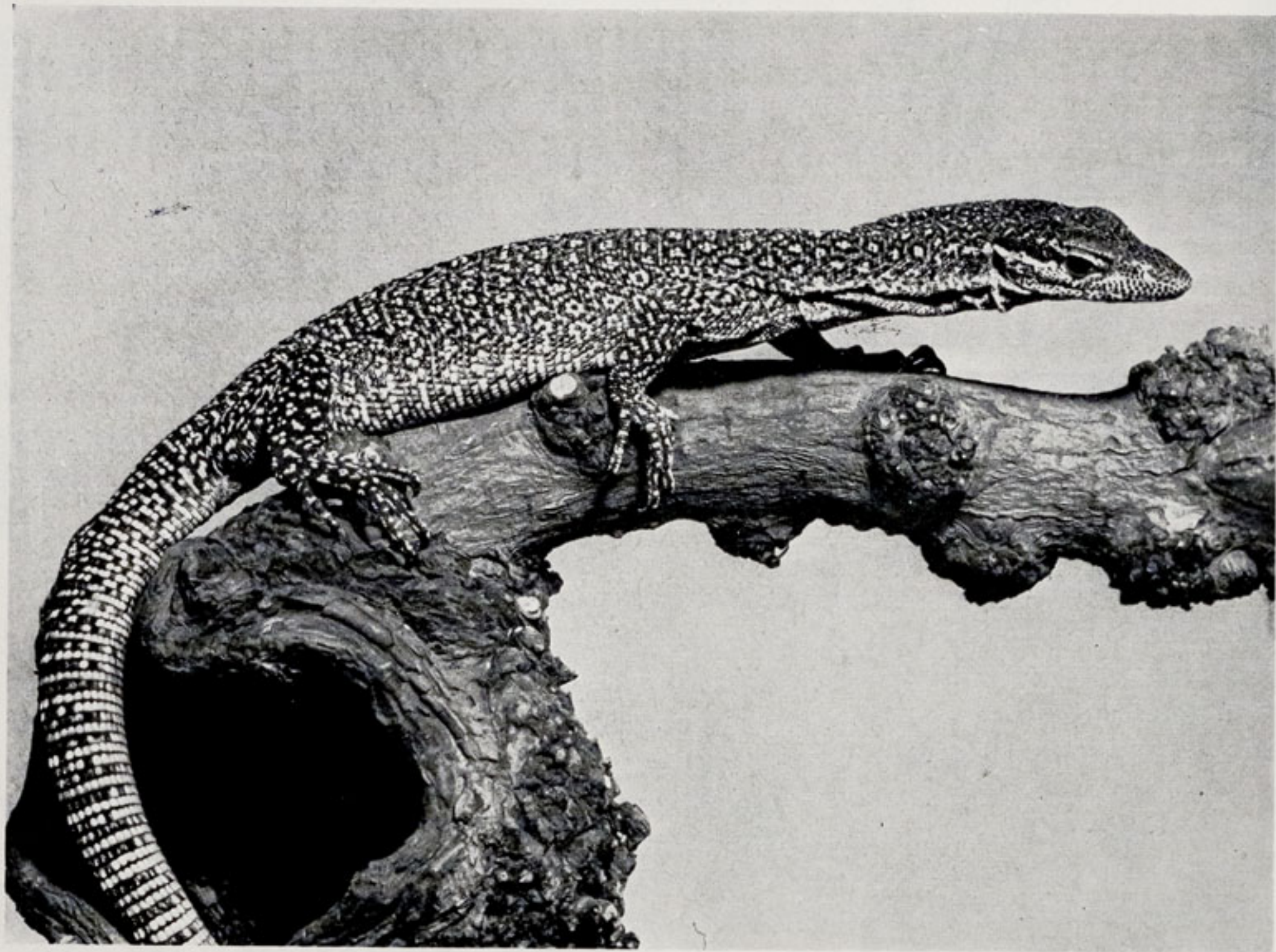
FOR A COMPLETE
TOUR OF THE ZOO -
Follow Nos.1-109
from South Entrance
or Nos.16-109
from North Entrance
then return to
Nos.1-14

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

101. Zebroids
102. Bison Paddock
103. Pere David's Deer Paddock
104. Eland and Marmots
105. RHINO HOUSE
106. TOILETS
107. Mpila Snack Bar and Kiosk
108. Antelope Enclosure
109. Antelope Enclosure

Animals may be moved from
time to time



TIMOR TREE MONITOR (*Varanus timorensis timorensis*)

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

accommodated in an enclosure in the Camel House. The only other Crested Porcupine in the collection is a single male of the Indian species (*Hystrix indica*) to be seen in enclosure No. 30.

REPTILE NEWS

Among the latest arrivals in this section is a Timor Tree Monitor (*Varanus timorensis timorensis*) from Indonesia and the Torres Strait Islands. It has settled well in its vivarium, where the photograph on the left was taken.

Two other members of the Varanidae are now resident in the Reptile Section. One is a Salvator Monitor (*Varanus salvator*) which is found from South East Asia to Australia. The other has a range from Java to India and China and is called a Clouded Monitor (*Varanus nebulosus*).

Another young Bearded Lizard (*Amphibolurus barbatus*) has been acquired and has joined the young specimen which arrived and was described in last month's magazine. The second lizard is a little larger than the first. The Bearded Lizard is a native of Australia where it is known also at the Statue Lizard. It has a pouch of skin at the throat which becomes inflated when the lizard is excited. This pouch is covered with short spines of skin which become erect when it is distended, thus forming the "beard".

GENERAL NEWS

Two female Père David's Deer (*Elaphurus davidianus*) bred here in 1970 have been sent to West Berlin Zoo where there is a single male of this species. With these two new specimens, West Berlin hope to establish their own breeding herd of rare Père David's Deer.

As an experiment, a few months ago a wall was constructed in one of the lower aviaries in the Tropical House to conceal the small alcove and keepers' door at the rear of the enclosure. This wall is designed to resemble a section of cliff, being slightly stepped and

having pockets to hold plants. The experiment has been so successful that it has been decided to continue the modification into all the other aviaries in this section. As there are a number of enclosures, zoo staff have been hard at work. Though the wall appears solid from the front, actually it is supported by a strong framework of wood over which there is wire mesh. Sacking covers the wire which is bent to the desired shape and then the whole structure is covered with several layers of cement, the final coating being tinted brown. Access for the keepers is now gained through doors near the front of the aviaries.

A young female Orang utan named Ramona which has been undergoing a period of six months in quarantine in the New Ape House, at last has been able to join the other young Orang utans. She is now four years of age, as old as Rajang, the male which was born at Chester. Her original home was East Berlin Zoo where she was born and reared.

Ramona was introduced initially to Martha and Rajang, the gentlest of the six Orang utans. When this was found successful her integration with the rest of the group was completed. She is thoroughly enjoying the change of surroundings from her quarantine den and has been accepted by the other members of the group.

DEATH OF INDIAN ELEPHANT

One sad item of news is the death of "Barbar", the old female Indian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*). She was found in a state of collapse one morning by her keepers and died peacefully soon afterwards. She had lost weight during the summer but only showed real signs of illness for about a week. The cause of death was old age.

"Barbar" arrived at Chester Zoo in August 1949 when she was already fully grown. Her exact age is not known but when she died she was certainly over forty years old. She had a happy disposition and was a firm favourite from the time she first came to the Zoo. She was also an accomplished musician and played the mouth organ with great gusto. For many years also, in the days when we

gave Elephant rides, "Barbar" carried her full complement of passengers.

When she became ill the other four Elephants were undoubtedly concerned and tried to help her all they could, especially at feeding times. As she was dying, the Indian bull was attempting to blow air from his trunk into her mouth. Since her death it is quite apparent that they have all missed Barbar.

AQUARIUM NEWS

An Electric Catfish (*Malapterurus electricus*) is one of several interesting new exhibits in the Aquarium. This is an inhabitant of western and central African rivers and is like a typical Catfish in appearance having a plump body and head with three pairs of barbels around the mouth. Its colouration is mainly greyish pink with a paler band visible around the base of the tail, the latter an indication that the Catfish is a young specimen. When fully grown it can be two feet long.

This is one of a number of fishes capable of discharging electric currents through the water. The electric organs are embedded in the skin on either side of the body and are used at will by the Catfish. They can administer a nasty shock even to a human, though this would hardly be fatal. Since it is an aggressive species, the Electric Catfish is being exhibited alone and has settled itself in a cave formed of small rocks in the centre of the tank. Electric Catfishes have been exhibited in our Aquarium before but not for some time.

Six baby Natterer's Piranhas (*Rooseveltiella nattereri*) have been acquired but will be off show until they are feeding satisfactorily. There is a single Natterer's Piranha already in the collection which is fairly well grown and extremely pugnacious. Even though they belong to one species it will not be possible to introduce the baby Piranhas into the same tank.

There are two new Kissing Gouramies (*Helostoma temmincki*), one having an attractive dark greenish body and the other being

pink. At the moment the green Gourami is rather difficult to observe as it is timid and attempts to conceal itself in the vegetation. The species originates from the Malay Peninsula.

In a tank with Red Devil Cichlids there is now a Marbled Bullhead (*Ageniosis maderensis*) from America. Unfortunately this is another rather shy specimen which tends to hide at the back of the tank. It is not yet fully grown but when adult could reach eighteen inches. Its body is mottled with yellow and brown. An interesting fact about this fish is that if touched it makes a peculiar grunting noise. This is scarcely audible unless the aerators in the tank are switched off but the sound is undoubtedly produced by the fish.

The Elephant Trunk Fish (*Gnathonemus petersi*) with a long finger-like projection from the lower jaw is a most peculiar looking fish. Its distribution is from the Niger River through the Cameroons to the Congo where it prefers still muddy waters. For this reason an Elephant Trunk Fish should always be introduced into a tank which has been established for some time. In the Aquarium our single new specimen may be seen with the Freshwater Garfishes.

From the tip of the "trunk" to the tail it measures about eight inches, which is fully grown for this species. The body is dark brownish to brownish purple and there are two paler bands between the dorsal and anal fins. The caudal fin is forked and the mouth small, rounded and situated at the base of the trunk. The trunk itself is very flexible and is used for probing out food such as worms from the bottom. Once the worms are located, the fish sucks them into its mouth.

In previous years we have had small Elephant Trunk Fishes on show, but they have not lived long. A great problem with these fishes is that if for some reason they cease feeding, it is difficult to coax them to eat again and they succumb quickly. Hopefully the latest specimen will do well as it is lively and displays a healthy appetite for the worms offered.

Four *Tilapia zilli* can be seen in one of the larger community tanks. Found in Africa north of the equator and in Jordan and Syria,

this particular species of Tilapia can grow to a foot long though it is doubtful if it will reach this length in captivity. The Tilapia make good eating and are an important source of food in Africa.

Some Tilapia species practise mouth brooding which means that the young fry take refuge in their parents' mouths in specially distended throat sacs until they are ready to become fully independent. However, the *Tilapia zilli* breed like normal Cichlids and may lay up to a thousand eggs. The male clears a nesting cavity in which the female lays her eggs. He takes the greater share of guarding the eggs and when they hatch, draws the fry into his mouth, relieves them of the egg membrane and then ejects them into another cavity. After about four days the fry can swim freely but are still guarded by the parent fishes.

To be seen also in one of these larger tanks are eight Tin Foil Barbs (*Barbus schwanenfeldi*), so called because they have bright silvery bodies. Their fins are orange bordered with black and they grow to about eighteen inches. The natural range of the Tin Foil Barbs is in Sumatra, Borneo and Thailand.

A single specimen of *Geophagus thayeri* can be seen in the same tank. This species was discovered only recently in South America. Basically it is silvery white with lines of iridescent blue dots and a single black dot on either side. When adult this fish will have long flowing fins.

We are pleased to have acquired a true pair of Brown Discus (*Symphysodon discus*). These very beautiful fishes with disc-shaped bodies come from the Amazon and are rather difficult to breed. They are on display in a tank with four Blue Discus and their introduction has resulted in the resident fishes becoming bolder. The Brown Discus are feeding well on daphnia, white worms and chopped earth worms and are almost full size.

In the Tropical House the Koi Carp have bred and the fry are being reared in nursery tanks. Golden Rudd have also bred recently in this building.

BIRD NOTES

This year's breeding list has been enhanced further by the hatching of a Hill Mynah (*Gracula religiosa*), two Barraband Parrakeets (*Polytelis swainsoni*) and another Diamond Dove (*Geopelia cuneata*).

A Blue and Yellow Macaw (*Ara ararauna*) has been presented and has joined other Macaws in the Parrot House, No. 17. There are now five of this species in the collection.

THE NATIONAL PETS CLUB

One organisation with which Chester Zoo is pleased to be associated is the *Daily Mirror* National Pets Club. With a membership of about half-a-million, this Club is undoubtedly the largest of its kind in the world. A nominal fee of 10p is charged for life membership which should be sent to The National Pets Club, *Daily Mirror*, 79, Camden Road, London, NW1 9NT. Members receive full details of membership, a special Club badge and a Zoo Card which entitles them to special concessions at nine of Britain's top zoos, including of course Chester Zoo.

Two recent publications by the National Pets Club are the "*Daily Mirror* Book of Pets" and the "*Daily Mirror* National Pets Club Diary 1973". The diary can be obtained at a cost of 40p, post free, from the *Daily Mirror*, Diary Offer, Box No. 205, London, NW99 4XA. The Book of Pets is available at a cost of 75p, post free, from Book of Pets, *Daily Mirror*, Box 205, London NW99 4XA, but will also be on sale in our souvenir shop.

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 are on display in the souvenir shop. An annual subscription (12 issues) cost 95p, postage paid, which can either be handed over the counter at the shop 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.

