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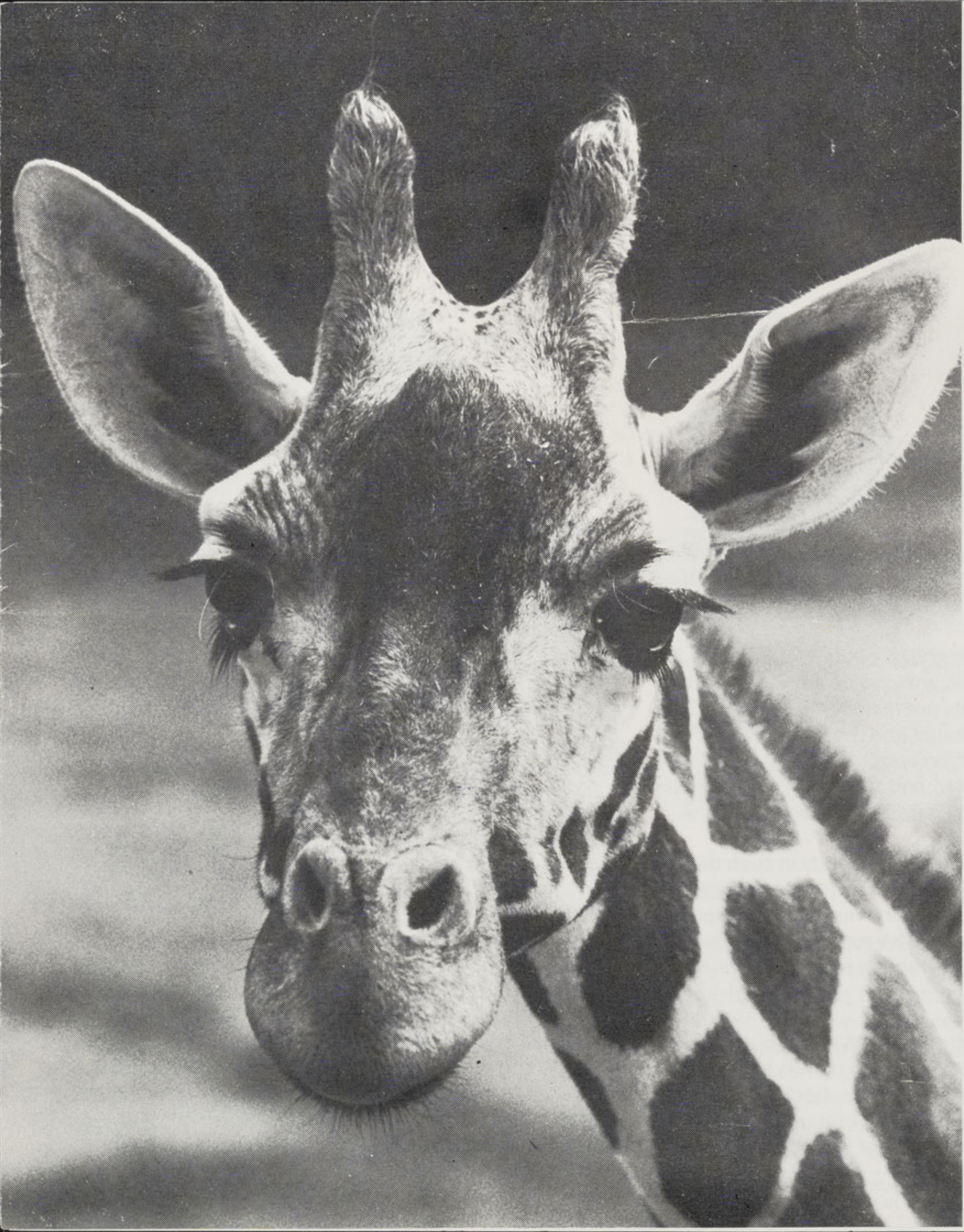
# CHESTER ZOO NEWS



Zoological Gardens  
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# CITES in New Delhi

At the recent meeting at New Delhi of the Convention to Control International Trade in Endangered Species—CITES—it was agreed that all the parrot species except for three should be put on to the Convention's appendices.

This is the way that the international community controls the trade in species which are in danger of extinction, or may become so if trends do not change. There are two groups:—

Appendix I, which is Endangered and cannot be traded in except for special reasons, such as movement between breeding groups in zoos and similar organisations; and

Appendix II, which can be traded in under licence, so that the trends can be followed by scientists watching the way the species are flourishing.

The parrots are a large group of birds with about 330 different kinds, or species, making up the order Psittaciformes. The three species not included under CITES are the Budgerigar, the Cockatiel and the Rose-ringed Parakeet. The first two breed exceptionally well in captivity; the third is so widespread and numerous in Southern Asia and Africa that it is regarded as a pest.

There are some parrot species already in such danger that they are on Appendix I, and a few more were added at the Delhi meeting, bringing the number to 24 species with four more sub-species. The remaining 300 species can now only be traded in with the prior approval of the government concerned.

But are all parrots just parrots? Where do they come from? The group includes birds with names like Lorikeet, Parakeet, Lovebird, Macaw, Amazon, Cockatoo, Caique, Rosella, Lory, Cockatiel and Budgerigar, as well as all those called one kind or another of Parrot itself.

KEA PARROT

*By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.*



A great number of species are found in Australia, with more being found in New Guinea, the Pacific Islands, Indonesia and Southern Asia. Africa has relatively few species of parrots and Europe and Central Asia have none. South and Central America and the Caribbean have many species, but only one species—now extinct—colonised North America. Thus they seem to be essentially an Australasian and South American group.

Apart from a few odd species like the Kea, Kaka and Kakapo of New Zealand, the parrots can be divided into a few largish groups.

The Lories and Lorikeets come from Australia and Indonesia. They have brush-like tips to their tongues and feed on pollen and nectar.

The Cockatoos live in Australia, New Guinea and associated islands. They have crests of head feathers, which they can raise to form a vertical plume when they need to impress their neighbours. Cockatoos feed on very hard seeds, nuts and insects.

The remaining Australasian parrots include a wide range from the Budgerigar and Cockatiel to the Eclectus Parrot—one of the few species in which the males and females have different coloured plumage. There are also the Hanging Parrots, which roost upside-down like bats.

In Southern Asia, the few species are all called parakeets—birds with long, pointed tails.

In Africa, there are about a dozen species of parrots (the word is usually restricted to birds with short, broad tails) and parakeets. The African Grey Parrot and the Senegal Green Parrot are perhaps the best-known.

There are nine species of Lovebirds—small birds with short tails, which feed on seeds and are almost always found in pairs—hence their name.

In South America and the Caribbean area live the 27 species of Amazons—large birds with short square tails—and the 17 species of Macaws—also large birds,



BLUE-FRONTED AMAZON PARROT CHICK

*By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.*

but with long tails and bare cheeks. Amongst the others of the group in this region are the two species of Caique and over 40 species of conures, as well as the parrotlets and the several species of the New World Parrots and Parakeets.

The Carolina Parakeet once lived in great numbers in North America, but—like its very distant relative, the Passenger Pigeon—it was not long after colonisation of the New World by Europeans that this species, too, was shot out.

The whole group are renowned for their raucous voices, often able to mimic human voices and even the sound of machinery when kept in captivity. The majority of birds are coloured with green, red, yellow, blue and orange feathers. Some are black and some are white. Parrots are related to Cuckoos and share with that group the position of the toes on the feet. Two toes point forwards and two toes point backwards. The upper bill is short and strongly curved and overlaps the shorter thickset lower bill. The bite of those species which feed on hard seeds is very powerful, quite capable of biting through a person's finger. The upper bill is peculiar, in that it moves in relation to the skull by means of a hinged joint.

Little is known about when they first appeared, but it seems that they probably first differentiated in Australasia and perhaps spread by island, hopping to the rest of their present distribution.

Chester Zoo keeps and has bred very many species of Parrots, especially Red-sided Eclectus, Blue-fronted Amazon, Moluccan Cockatoo, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Ornate Lorikeet, Crimson-winged Parakeet, Derbian Parakeet, Patagonian Conure and Red-capped Parrot. Our most recent successes include the breeding of two Blue-eyed Cockatoos last year.

Dr. M. R. Brambell,  
*Director.*

## Trees in the Zoo

In the Zoo and the surrounding land which belongs to the Society, many trees have needed attention. Dutch Elm Disease has affected almost all of our elm trees. Several of the Lombardy Poplars had rotted trunks and had become dangerous, and there were other trees which were no longer safe. This has meant the felling of quite a large number of trees, so that in one or two places some familiar landmarks have gone.

Also, the Zoo has rather a lot of "crack" willows, which are lovely as young—or recently pollarded—trees, but both ugly and dangerous if let to get too big, so that many of these have been cut back to encourage young growth near the ground.

In spite of this attention, the Zoo is very well wooded. Nevertheless, it is essential that we plant young trees to follow those that have to go because they are becoming unsafe, and we are developing a planting policy to cover the whole of the Zoo's land. We want to concentrate on British species, and we would like to get ourselves into the position of having all trees and shrubs native to the British Isles growing in the Zoo. We also want to continue planting trees selected for their beauty, as well as planting trees of botanical interest.

Tree planting not only involves selecting what kinds to plant and where to put them, but also in protecting them from over-boisterous children if they are in public parts of the Zoo, and from the attention of animals if they are in paddocks. Indeed, it is as much a problem of special fencing against all possible threats as anything.

Dr. M. R. Brambell,  
*Director.*

## "Homeground" Filming

Recently, the Zoo was almost taken over, when the BBC came with Brian Redhead and Frank Mellor to film the "Homeground" programme. The recording took a full four days at the Zoo and included interviews with the Director, Dr. Brambell, about the aims of the Zoo, the conservation of animals and future projects at Chester Zoo. Peter Stevens (Curator of Birds) talked about the Penguin Pool project and Head Gardener Walter Worth gave a personal insight on working in one of the most exotic areas of the Zoo—the Tropical House. While the camera crew were here, they were able to film the routine trimming of a zebra's hooves after she had been anaesthetised by Derek Lyon, the Zoo's veterinary surgeon, using a projectile syringe.

Peter Wait (Curator of Mammals) was interviewed by Frank Mellor on the Elephant Island, while our three elephants joined in by wrapping their trunks around both Mr. Wait and Frank Mellor. It is normally the person being interviewed who is rather nervous, but our elephants certainly turned the tables on Frank Mellor!

Also filmed was a class of pupils from Acresfield School, Upton, listening to Bella Neate (Education Officer) giving them a lecture on Rhinos, and also hearing how the Zoo buys the food for all the animals from Jim Forrest of our Stores Unit.

The "Homeground" programme about Chester Zoo is due to be screened at 10.15 p.m. on Friday, 24th April, 1981.

### LATEST BIRTHS AND ARRIVALS

#### Mammals

2 Pere David's Deer ( <i>Elaphurus davidianus</i> )	Births
3 Meerkat ( <i>Suricata suricatta</i> )	Bristol
1 Red Kangaroo ( <i>Macropus rufus</i> )	Regents Park—Breeding Loan
1 Hamadryas Baboon ( <i>Papio hamadryas</i> )	Received
1 Talapoin Monkey ( <i>Cercopithecus talapoin</i> )	
1 Tammar Wallaby ( <i>Macropus eugenii</i> )	Birth
1 Bobcat ( <i>Felis rufa</i> )	Riber Castle

#### Birds

1 African Grey Parrot ( <i>Psittacus erithacus</i> )	Breeding Loan
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#### Reptiles

1 Gaboon Viper ( <i>Bitis gabonica</i> )	Purchased
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BRIAN REDHEAD, PRESENTER "HOMEGROUND",  
PETER STEVENS, CURATOR OF BIRDS

By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

## 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. Sandra J. Elliott, Chester Zoo News, Chester Zoo, Chester CH2 1LH.

# Spring Attractions at Chester Zoo

There are lots of new and exciting animals on show at the Zoo this spring.

The pair of young Polar Bears which arrived last autumn have settled well in their refurbished enclosure. Baby Hippo "Caspar" can be seen with his parents in the Pachyderm House, as can baby Tapir "Suki".

Baby Orang-utan "Bella", who was only recently introduced to the public, is on show with her mother in the enclosure near the North Entrance Gate.

Very recent births are three sets of twin Ring-tailed Lemurs in the Monkey House. These babies are cared for by very protective mothers and can be difficult to observe, as each pair clings to its mother's chest.

Two Pere David's Deer are recent births and we expect several more in coming weeks. Visitors will be able to see young Wallabies and Kangaroos—it is well worthwhile observing these animals for a few moments, as the youngsters are not always visible, but will suddenly look out of the female's pouch.

Newly-born Brown Bear cubs will also be taking the spring air, and a Margay kitten at the Cat House will soon be leaving the cubbing den.

Bird enthusiasts will be interested in several new arrivals from Australia, including White Ibis, Scaly-breasted Lorikeets, Kookaburras, Tawny Frogmouths and a Kea.

There has been much building work during the winter. The new Penguin Pool is well under way and the Gharial Pool has been completely refurbished in the Tropical House. Work is starting on our new Cafeteria and we apologise for the inconvenience caused to our visitors during construction.

Last, but not least, garden lovers will find the wonderful horticultural display of spring bedding at its best now. Approximately 80,000 plants, plus daffodils and tulips add the finishing touch to a day out at the Zoo.



PERE DAVID'S DEER AND FAWN

*By courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.*