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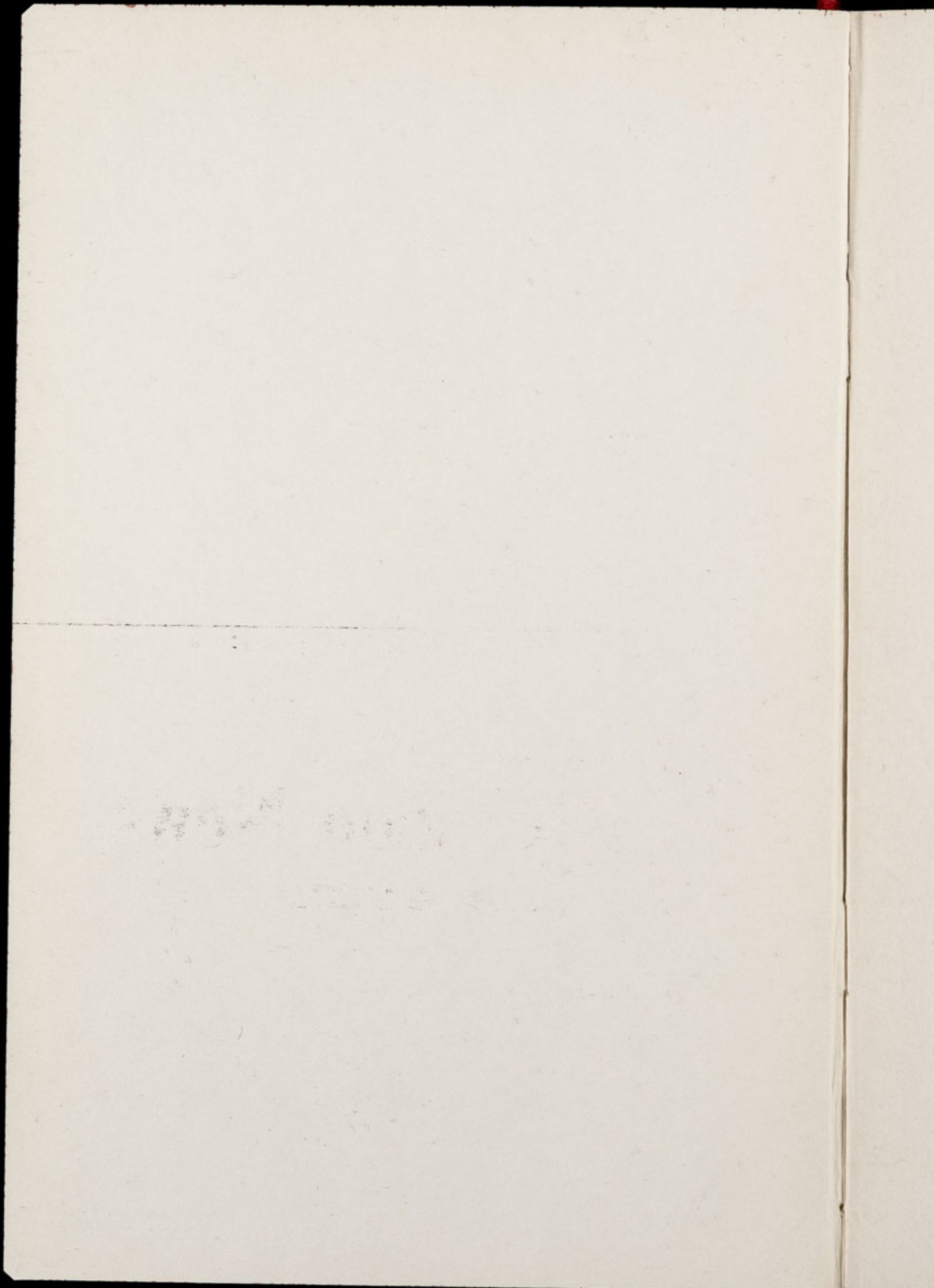
Chester Zoo News

AND GUIDE

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

January 1969

Price 1/-



The North of England Zoological Society

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

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CONTENTS:

<i>page two</i>	Arrivals.
<i>page four</i>	Births.
<i>page six</i>	Progress report on Orang-utan 'Rajang'. Aquarium News.
<i>page eight/nine</i>	Zoo Guide.
<i>page ten</i>	Stocktaking.
<i>page eleven</i>	Bird Notes.
<i>page fourteen</i>	News from Various Sections.
<i>page sixteen</i>	Reptile Notes.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

<i>page three</i>	Binturong.
<i>page five</i>	Ocelot.
<i>page seven</i>	Baboon and young.
<i>page thirteen</i>	Crowned Crane.

COVER: This month's cover photograph shows 'Rajang', the Orang-utan, playing with Craig Timmis, son of the Curator.

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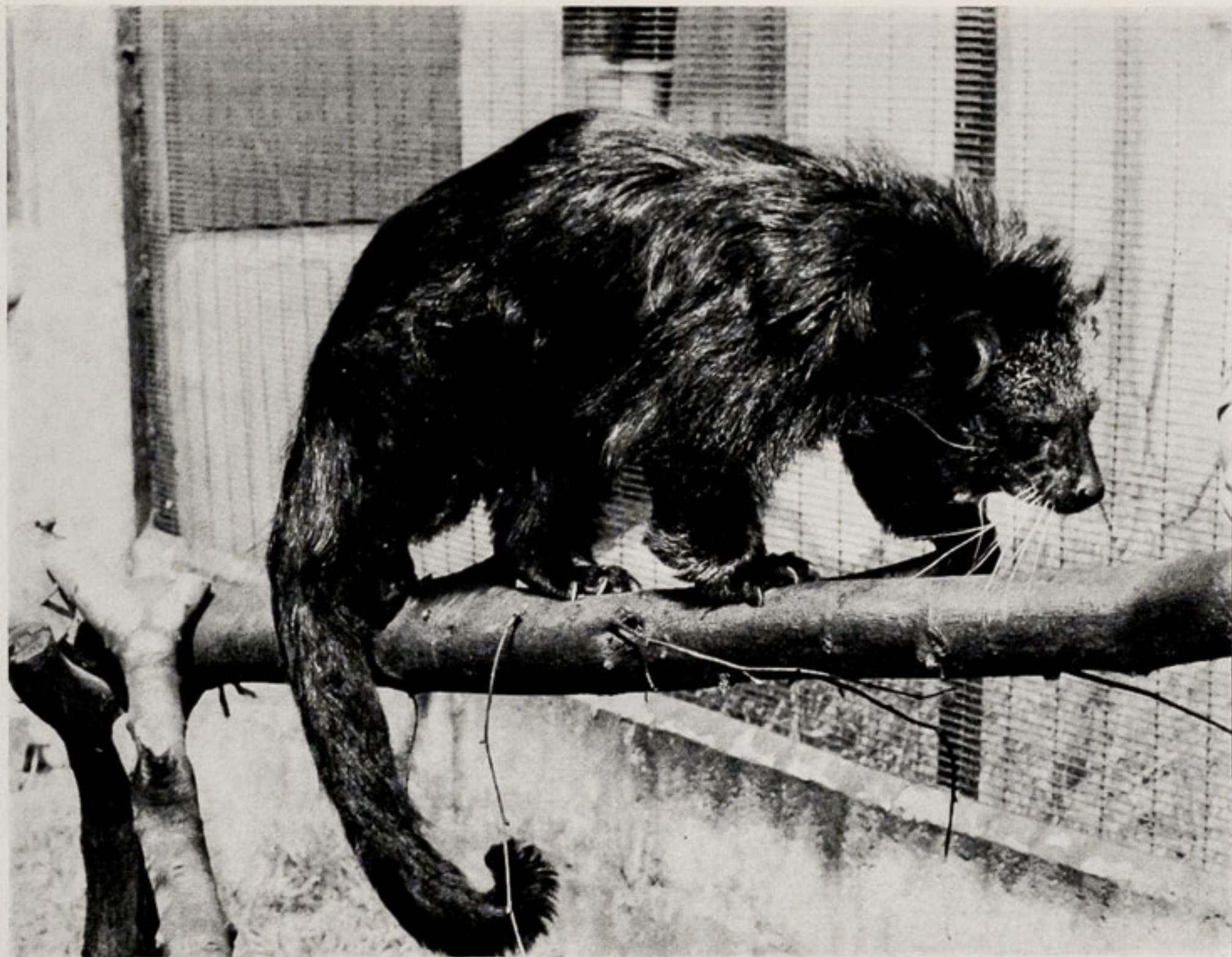
ARRIVALS

At last we have been fortunate in acquiring a female Onager as a mate for our male which arrived in June 1964 and the female will be introduced to the male in the Spring. At the moment she is not on show to the public and is occupying accommodation at the rear of our Giraffe House, where she will remain for the winter.

We hope to breed Onagers in the future as this species of Wild Ass is very rare in its native haunts. They are found in a nature reserve in Turkmenistan, in North-eastern Persia and also in parts of North-western Afghanistan.

A female Binturong is a new arrival in our Small Mammal House. Binturongs are found in the thick forests of South-east Asia and are nocturnal in their habits. A fully grown male can measure up to 5 feet in length including its two foot long tail. Binturongs are closely related to the Civets but have long rather coarse hair and are rather slow moving. They are the only Old World mammals to have a prehensile tail but this is not so well developed as in many of the South American animals. Binturongs feed principally on fruits and berries, but have been known to catch small mammals and birds, which obviously are caught whilst sleeping, as the Binturong does not leap, but moves with great deliberation.

The most recent arrivals in the Monkey House were two Squirrel Monkeys which have been housed with our original two of this species. These Monkeys are found in Northern areas of South America and live in the forests bordering a river. Their diet consists mainly of fruits but they catch insects and sometimes feed on small birds. Squirrel Monkeys are gregarious and as many as a hundred have been counted in one troop. Their colouration is olive-green on the back, the underparts are yellowish-white and the face is white



BINTURONG

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

with a dark area around the nose and mouth. Due to their small size, agility and colouration they resemble squirrels at a glance and are often kept as pets. However, they are not the easiest of animals to keep in captivity as they are very susceptible to cold and draughts.

A female Ocelot has arrived at the Cat House and is now undergoing her six month quarantine period. We were very pleased to receive a female as our other two Ocelots are both males. This new specimen which is about a year old, has already started calling to our male Ocelots but will have to wait until out of quarantine before she can be introduced. Ocelots are the third largest member of the Cat Family to be found in South America, being surpassed by the Jaguar and Puma. Ocelots hunt for small mammals and birds during the day time when undisturbed but in areas where they are hunted for their fur they are generally nocturnal in their habits. It is ironic that the Ocelot's beautiful coat which is perfect camouflage in the jungle is so sought after by man to make fur coats, with the result that a large number of these animals are slaughtered each year for this purpose.

BIRTHS

Few animals are born during the winter months at the Zoo, but a Red Lechwe calf was a recent birth. Despite their tropical origins these interesting antelopes often produce youngsters at this time of year. The latest baby is proving to be as hardy as its parents and is thriving despite some snow and hard frost.

Another recent birth is of a Baboon in one of the pens at the far side of the Monkey House. We now exhibit five Yellow Baboons in this enclosure and also one Olive Baboon, a similar species, in the Monkey House.



OCELOT

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

PROGRESS REPORT ON ORANG-UTAN 'RAJANG'

'Rajang', the Orang-utan deserted by his mother, is now seven months old, and is still a popular attraction of Curator Bill Timmis' household.

During the summer, 'Rajang' was on show to the public in a specially constructed Ape nursery but has been kept inside the Timmis home all the time during the cold weather. In the cover photograph, he can be seen playing with the Curator's son Craig Timmis who is his constant companion during the day.

When first born, Rajang had to be bottle fed every two hours, day and night but is now feeding on solids and baby food and has increased his weight to 20lbs. He is now extremely active and has ten of his first set of teeth.

During the summer, 'Rajang' will again be on show to the public in our Ape nursery, close to the main entrance of the Bird House. We are sure that he will prove as much of an attraction as he was last year.

AQUARIUM NEWS

In common with most sections of the Zoo, the Aquarium is rather quiet in the winter. However, this gives staff a chance to clean out and re-decorate many of the tanks; recently the Piranha tank was completely drained and the whole layout altered.

One species, the Axolotl, will only breed during the winter months in our Aquarium. This amphibian is found at high altitudes in Mexico where the temperature is always low. The eggs take about six weeks to hatch at a temperature of 40°F. Last year we hatched



BABOON AND BABY

J. Gwyn Jones

GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES

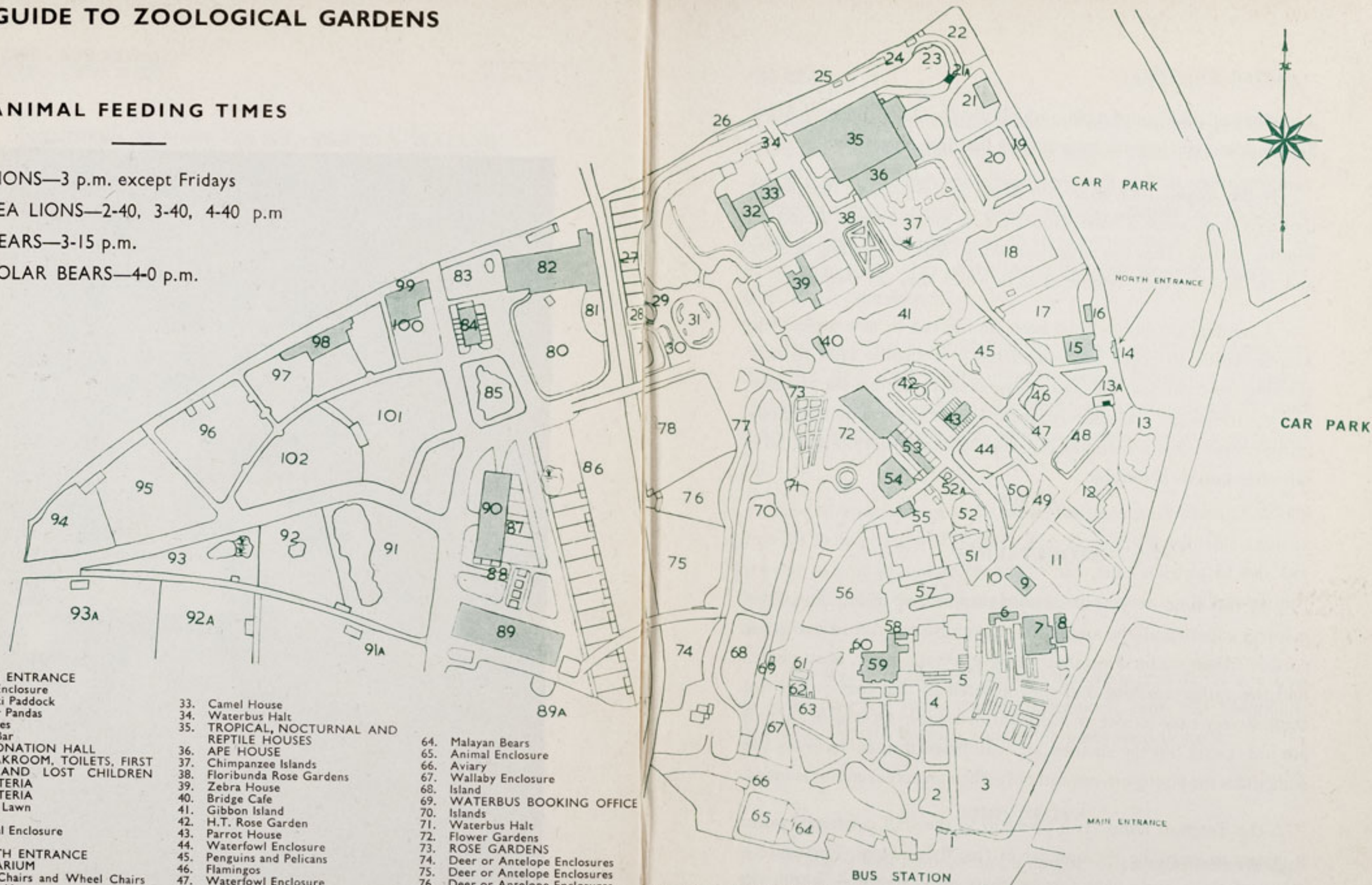
LIONS—3 p.m. except Fridays

SEA LIONS—2-40, 3-40, 4-40 p.m.

BEARS—3-15 p.m.

POLAR BEARS—4-0 p.m.

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|--|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. MAIN ENTRANCE | 33. Camel House | 64. Malayan Bears |
| 2. Bird Enclosure | 34. Waterbus Halt | 65. Animal Enclosure |
| 3. Wapiti Paddock | 35. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND REPTILE HOUSES | 66. Aviary |
| 4. Lesser Pandas | 36. APE HOUSE | 67. Wallaby Enclosure |
| 5. Aviaries | 37. Chimpanzee Islands | 68. Island |
| 6. Milk Bar | 38. Floribunda Rose Gardens | 69. WATERBUS BOOKING OFFICE |
| 7. CORONATION HALL | 39. Zebra House | 70. Islands |
| 8. CLOAKROOM, TOILETS, FIRST AID AND LOST CHILDREN | 40. Bridge Cafe | 71. Waterbus Halt |
| 9. CAFETERIA | 41. Gibbon Island | 72. Flower Gardens |
| 10. CAFETERIA | 42. H.T. Rose Garden | 73. ROSE GARDENS |
| 11. Picnic Lawn | 43. Parrot House | 74. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 12. Bears | 44. Waterfowl Enclosure | 75. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 13. Animal Enclosure | 45. Penguins and Pelicans | 76. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 13a. Kiosk | 46. Flamingos | 77. Waterbus Halt |
| 14. NORTH ENTRANCE | 47. Waterfowl Enclosure | 78. Zebra and Deer Enclosure |
| 15. AQUARIUM | 48. Sea Lion Pool | 79. Kamchatka Bears |
| 16. Push Chairs and Wheel Chairs | 49. Rock Garden | 80. Elephant Paddock |
| 17.† Parrot House | 50. Polar Bears | 81. Hippo Paddock |
| 18.† Orang-utan House | 51. Tigers | 82. PACHYDERM HOUSE |
| 19. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP | 52. Anteaters | 83. Tapir Enclosure |
| 20. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn | 52a. Penguin Pool | 84. Small Mammal House |
| 21. TOILETS | 53. BIRD HOUSE | 85. Waterfowl Enclosure |
| 21a. Tuatara House | 54. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT | 86. Antelope Enclosure |
| 22. Peccaries | 55. TOILETS | 87. Stork Enclosure |
| 23. Waterbus Halt | 56. Lions | 88. Monkey Enclosure |
| 24. Birds of Prey Aviary | 57. NEW ZOO SHOP | 89. Cat House |
| 25. Birds of Prey Aviary | 58. TOILETS | 89a. Jaguars |
| 26. Owls | 59. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT | 90. MONKEY HOUSE |
| 27. Jackal Enclosures | 60. G.P.O. Telephone Kiosk | 91. Cranes and Waterfowl |
| 28. Wolverines | 61. Animal Enclosure | 91a. Highland Cattle |
| 29. Porcupines | 62. Animal Enclosure | |
| 30. Coypus | 63. Cheetahs | |
| 31. Beavers | | |
| 32. Giraffe House | | |



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|-----------------------------|
| 92. Waterfowl and Wallabies |
| 92a. Llamas |
| 93. Cranes and Waterfowl |
| 93a. Ankole Cattle |
| 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

†—Under construction.

a number of these amphibians, which are the larval form of Tiger Salamander and they are spawning at the time of writing.

In the August 1968 issue of '*Chester Zoo News*', we mentioned the arrival of some Dwarf Gouramis, a small species found in south-east Asia. They are already showing signs of breeding activity and are building their bubble nests in which they lay their eggs.

A number of species have been transferred to new tanks. The Marine Turtle has been accommodated in a smaller tank to help cleaning-out problems. This is a saltwater tank, whereas the previous one was freshwater and although these Turtles can live quite happily in freshwater, this sometimes can lead to shell deterioration, so a saltwater tank is preferable.

STOCKTAKING

At this time of year stocktaking has to be undertaken. This involves counting all the animals to make sure our record books are correct. When we mention that we have to take stock, most people find this rather amusing and generally tell us that they would not think it very easy to lose an Elephant or a Lion. Of course animals are not 'Lost', but the smaller ones can breed in their burrows and sometimes the young are noticed only when an actual census is made.

The Tropical House is a problem to the staff concerned when it comes to assessing the number of free flying birds. Fortunately, many of these birds have formed their own territories within the confines of the building and stay in the one area. We have found that a number of species, especially the smaller Waxbills, have increased their numbers or remained constant. Generally these birds have a short life span and if they maintain their population are obviously breeding sufficiently well to replace those which have died.

It is especially difficult to count the Prairie Marmots which were liberated on to the Eland Paddock in August 1966. Only eight were liberated then but they have bred very well and we estimate their numbers to be in the region of 80. All these animals cannot be seen above ground at the same time as some remain down their burrows which have made parts of the Eland Paddock look very moon-like with all the deep craters.

The main reason for making an accurate count of our animals is so that their total value can be assessed as this figure is required by our auditors. In addition, the figures are used to check our card index and ledger systems and any discrepancies have to be accounted for.

For those interested in statistics, the total stock value of all our animals is in excess of £100,000. The Zoo's most valuable animals are our pair of Mountain Gorillas which are valued at £7,500, but it is very doubtful that such magnificent specimens could be obtained at any price.

The actual number of animals has remained fairly constant over the past few years. On 31st December, 1968, 634 Mammals, 924 Birds and 216 Reptiles and Amphibians were in stock.

BIRD NOTES

Winter is well upon us and a number of precautions have been taken to protect the birds during the cold weather. Many birds are extremely hardy when acclimatised, even those which come from the tropics but most are unable to stand a very hard frost. The Flamingos with their long slender legs are very susceptible to frost bite and are therefore transferred into their shelter whenever the weather is cold. The same precautions are taken with our Cranes

which occupy large grass covered open paddocks. When the Cranes were being transferred into their shelter during a recent cold spell, one took to the air and cleared the high mesh fencing which surrounds the enclosure. Obviously he did not think much of the outside world as he returned within a short space of time. Many of our especially delicate species have already been transferred to more sheltered aviaries or indoor quarters. The two long Rainbow Flight aviaries are in rather an exposed situation and all but the very hardy have been transferred to warmer quarters. Fortunately, we have a number of well sheltered aviaries close to our Oakfield Restaurant, which are ideal for winter use.

Foxes are another hazard to our birds, especially the waterfowl, and lanterns are positioned around our waterfowl pools to frighten away any marauding foxes.

Since the last issue of '*Chester Zoo News*', a number of species have been added to the Bird Section at the Zoo. These include Cockatiels, Red-rumped Parrakeets and a Red-eared Bulbul. Another interesting arrival was a Golden-crowned Conure, a native of South-eastern Brazil. This bird has been accommodated in the Bird Hospital but will be transferred to an open flight when the weather becomes warmer.

During the past few weeks, the Tropical House has received the usual care from the Gardeners. They have been pulling out dead and old plants, the borders have been manured and the large foliage has been washed down. This work is necessary because the droppings of the larger birds make the leaves, etc., very unsightly. Everything is now almost ready for the many birds at liberty to start thinking of building their nests. We have seen one or two signs of this lately and it is hoped that previous successes will be maintained this year. At one time we thought all our *Zosterops* had vanished but recently



GREY-NECKED CROWNED CRANE, A SPECIES WHICH
REQUIRES SHELTER IN COLD WEATHER

J. Whitworth

quite a flock of them were seen by attendants and the Curator. It is amazing how these birds disappear and then suddenly re-appear in larger numbers.

We intend to transfer all our Birds of Paradise to outdoor aviaries in the near future as we feel that these conditions will be more conducive to them than the humidity of the Tropical House. This building is now looking very much more like a jungle and our birds are doing extremely well.

NEWS FROM VARIOUS SECTIONS

Our male Hippopotamus 'Harold' which was born at the Zoo during November 1965, has now gone to the Chessington Zoo in Surrey. It was quite a struggle to box such a large animal for his journey. In the first place he had to be separated from his mother. This was not such an easy task, as he was always in the habit of keeping close to her. When he was separated, he showed his displeasure by biting at the door; he managed to remove a valve from the oil storage tank and let out all the fuel, down the drain. Fortunately he did not try to drink any of the fuel, which would have made him very ill. The next task was to get him actually inside the travelling crate, which was specially made of metal. This was lifted over the wall of the outside Hippo enclosure by our crane and manoeuvred into position outside the door of the inside quarters. The door was opened and with some persuasion Harold entered the crate. We estimated that he weighed over a ton and with the weight of an iron box as well, the crane only just managed to lift the crate. In fact, it took a number of keeping staff to give the final lift on to the waiting lorry.

We are sorry to announce the death of the oldest inmate of our Monkey House. This was 'Pooh', a Brown Capuchin, which had

lived at the Zoo for over twenty years and was no youngster on arrival. 'Pooh' had not shown any signs of ill health before she died but was becoming somewhat sluggish. During her life she was the leader of our Capuchin Monkeys, which is rather unusual, as normally the dominant animal is a male.

The new Ape House under construction close to our North Entrance is now well on the way to completion and the Gardening staff are starting landscape work on the side adjoining our Chimpanzee island. The whole area will be planted profusely and will help to provide an attractive looking background for our Apes. In the near future, work will start on the construction of outside islands for this building.

Our Bar-headed and Canada Geese which were bred last year are now free flying and return to their large grass covered paddock, situated just past the Monkey House. The parent birds have their wings clipped so that they cannot fly, but we decided to leave the young full winged as they never go far away and always return.

In the cold weather, a number of wild birds join the species resident in the Zoo. This is very noticeable with our Waterfowl and at times in the region of two hundred Mallard visit the Zoo. Also Pintail, Coots, Oystercatchers, Kingfishers and a Lesser Woodpecker have been seen in the Zoo grounds.

During hard frosty weather our Gorillas, Chimps and Orangs are not allowed outside on to their moated islands. This is not due to their dislike of cold weather, but if the moats become covered with thick ice they can escape simply by walking across. In times of deep snow, a careful watch has to be kept on a number of animals, especially the Bears. Snow drifting against the side of a Bear pit can form a ramp which would enable the animals to walk out.

REPTILE NOTES

There has been quite a buzz of excitement in our Reptile House during the past month. Four Western Diamond-backed Rattlesnakes have been hatched and our Rainbow Boas have produced another twelve youngsters; we now have quite a collection of Rainbow Boas. In addition, one of our large South African Pythons has laid a clutch of eggs and at the time of writing is coiled around these eggs, incubating them.

In last month's '*Zoo News*' we mentioned the arrival of two Nile Crocodiles. These reptiles have been housed in a large pool inside our Tropical House. Our original Nile Crocodile is also in this pool but their keeper, Roger Ainsley, put a fence across the pool to keep them apart. However, the smaller of the two new specimens decided to climb the barrier and visit the other Crocodile and we are pleased to say that they get on well with each other. In a short while we hope to have all three together but will have to watch them carefully, in case they start to fight. All three Crocodiles are feeding very well on their diet of fish and meat and certainly enjoy the water, which is heated specially for them.

Our Alligators, which are housed close to the main entrance of the Tropical House, are growing at a terrific pace and the big Mississippi Alligator is now probably the largest we have ever had at Chester Zoo. In spite of her size this Alligator is extremely agile and some time ago a Toucan, which was flying freely, alighted on a palm tree in the Alligator enclosure. The Alligator appeared to be lifeless but suddenly she leaped up, caught the Toucan and swallowed it whole.

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