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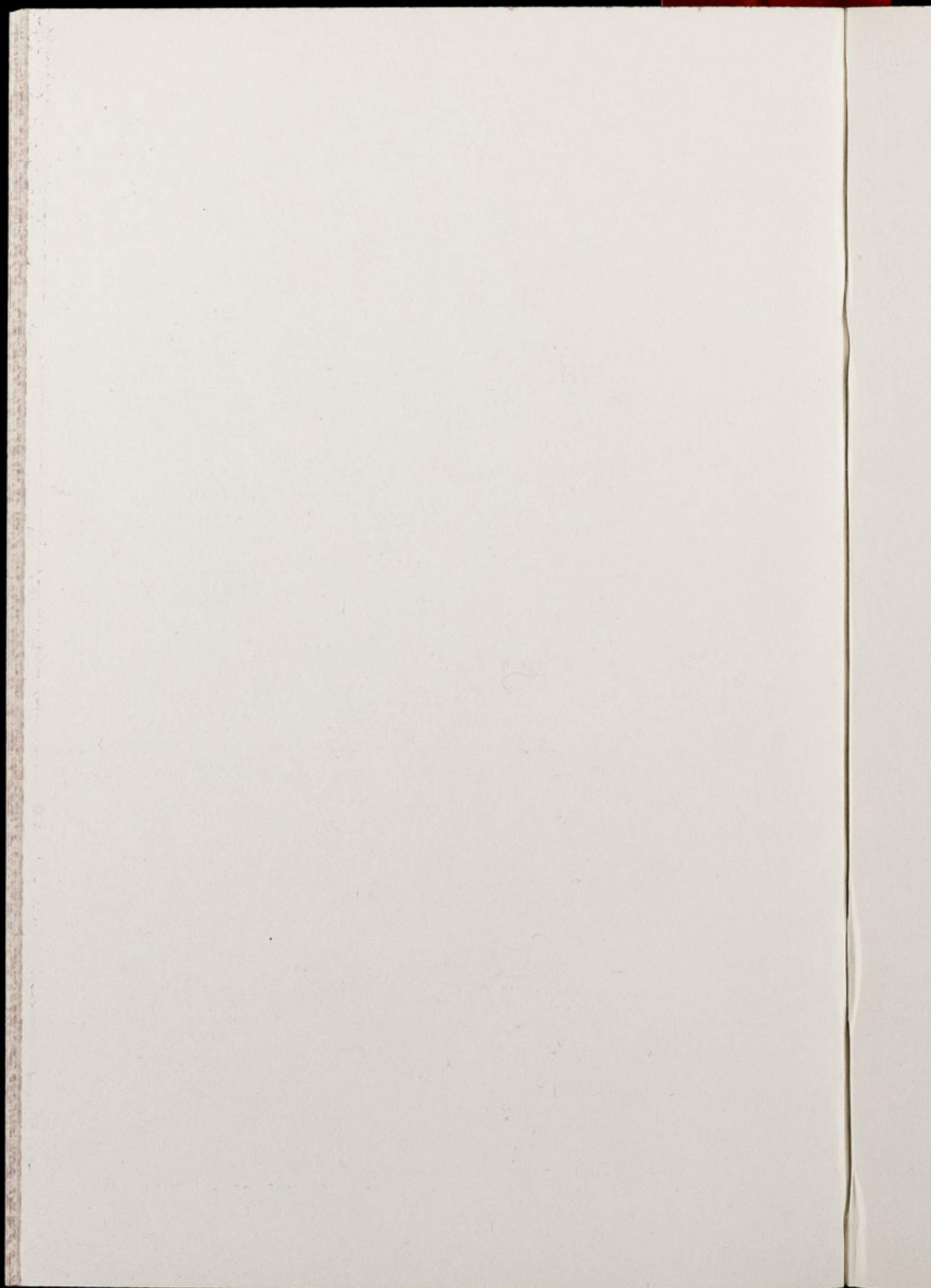
Chester Zoo News

AND GUIDE

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

October, 1965

Price 1/-



Editorial

Another million for Chester Zoo! The millionth visitor to pass through the gates in 1965 did so on Saturday, 18th September. Each year the million is being reached earlier but unless the weather improves in the remaining weeks of the year we will have a struggle to break last years record attendance figures.

CONTENTS:

<i>page two</i>	Zoo Babies.
<i>page four</i>	New Elephant for Chester Zoo. Presentations.
<i>page six</i>	Purchases. Aquarium News.
<i>page eight/nine</i>	Zoo Guide.
<i>page ten</i>	Bitterns.
<i>page twelve</i>	Esmerelda.
<i>page fourteen</i>	Jameson's Green Mambas.
<i>page fifteen</i>	More trouble for George.

COVER: Two Himalayan Bears enjoying a game are the subject of this months cover.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION SIXTEEN SHILLINGS POST PAID

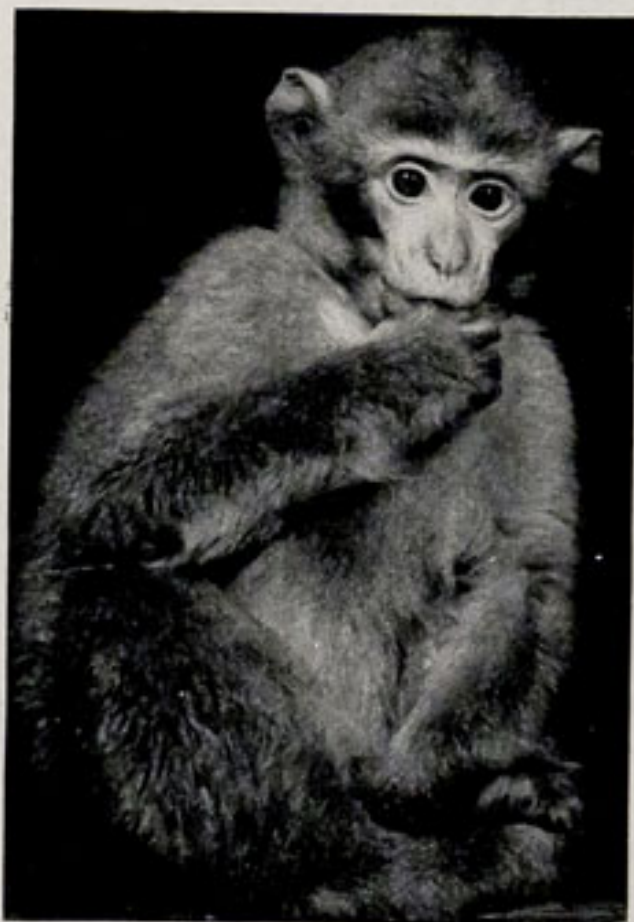
TELEPHONE: CHESTER 20106/7/8

ZOO BABIES

OPOSSUM: A baby Silver-grey Opossum was seen out of its mother's pouch for the first time on the 29th August. This is Chester Zoo's first breeding success with Opossums, as the parents only arrived from Melbourne in April of this year. Unfortunately the mother died soon after the baby was first sighted and it is being hand reared.

The youngster is a beautiful, healthy little animal and caused quite a commotion recently. When its Keeper came to clean out the Skunk enclosure of the Small Mammal House one morning he was surprised to find that the Skunks had been turned out of their sleeping box and were huddled underneath. Occupying the box was the baby Opossum! How he got there will forever remain a mystery.

WEAVERS: Two Half-masked or Vitelline-masked Weavers left their nest on the 14th September.



E. F. Kirkland, F.R.P.S.

"SQUEAKER" — A PREVIOUS
BARBARY APE BABY

BARBARY APE: The first birth — that of a baby Barbary Ape — in the new range of Monkey Pens beyond the Monkey House, was recorded on the 23rd of September.

RUFIOUS-BELLIED WALLABIES: A young Rufous-bellied Wallaby was first seen peeping from its mother's pouch on the 22nd of September. Movement has also been spotted in the pouch of the second female. The Rufous-bellied Wallabies are exhibited in the long paddock opposite the Cheetahs and Jackals and came to Chester from Melbourne at the same time as the Opossums, etc.

JUDY FOLLOWING HER NEW
CHARGE (see page four) AS HE
TAKES A STROLL WITH SHEBA.



LOOKING FOR A TITBIT
FROM BARBAR.

SHEBA KEEPING A WATCHFUL
EYE ON A GAME BETWEEN
NOBBY AND BUBBLES.



NOBBY JOINS THE OTHERS
IN THE MORNING LINE UP
AT THE HIPPO ENCLOSURE

NEW ELEPHANT AT CHESTER ZOO

On the morning of Monday, 27th September, a firm of animal dealers in the Midlands got in touch with our Director-Secretary, with a plea for help. They wanted to know if we could accommodate a young Bull Elephant. Of course we were delighted to be able to help and "Nobby" arrived on the afternoon of the same day. He is of the Asiatic species and stands fifty-two inches high.

When he arrived Nobby was carefully separated from our four other elephants, at one end of the Pachyderm House. However, this state of affairs did not last for long. Nobby was not prepared to wait for formal introductions and scrambled under the barrier to join the group.

"Judy" took charge of him immediately. She follows him around all day long — pushing "Bubbles" firmly out of the way if he gets too boisterous. The latter is, of course, our three and a half year old baby African Bull Elephant — which until now has enjoyed Judy's undivided attention. He is inclined to be a little jealous of the new arrival and should his jealousy get out of hand he has the advantage of rather more weight and miniature tusks. Fortunately, Judy is more than capable of sorting out any disagreements.

PRESENTATIONS

- 21st August — African Grey Parrot.
— thirteen Agama Lizards — *Agama agama*. These lizards are found in tropical Africa and male specimens can be particularly colourful in a mixture of red, yellow, blue and white. Females are brown and the males also turn brown after dark. In their homeland they often frequent houses, where they make themselves useful by catching flies.
- 28th August — Festive Amazon Parrot.
- 29th August — male Axis Deer — now in our Birkenhead Quarantine Station.



J. Gwyn Jones.

INDIAN HILL MYNAH

- 4th September — three Zebra Finches, one Grey and two Green Singing Finches, a Tri-coloured Nun, one Orange-cheeked and one Golden-breasted Waxbill and four young Californian Quail.
- 7th September — one Black and White Cobra and four Jameson's Green Mambas — see page 14.
- 12th September — three Greek Tortoises, five Budgerigars and a Bourke's Parrakeet.
- 14th September — two Painted Terrapins.
- 15th September — one Archbishop Tanager.
- 19th September — a Bushbaby and two Pekin Robins.
- 21st September — one Japanese Ground Squirrel.
- 24th September — three Green Lizards.

26th September — Indian Hill Mynah and one Grey-headed Mynah.

29th September — Indian Hill Mynah and an Indian Mongoose.

PURCHASES

28th August — two Chained King Snakes.

8th September — six Common Boas.

29th September — a pair of Fairy Bluebirds — now exhibited in an aviary of the new Bird House.

28th September — a pair of the rare Laminated Hill Toucans — also released in an aviary of the new Bird House.

NEW MONKEY CAGES

Large outdoor cages for South American Monkeys have been added at one end of the Monkey House. Our collection of Spider Monkeys live in one and three Brown Woolly Monkeys in the other. The Spiders in particular are much more active since the move.

AQUARIUM NEWS

During the past months many new specimens have been added to the collection. These include Snakeskin, Honey, Blue, Thick-lipped, Giant and Dwarf Gouramis; Hawaiian Mouth Brooders; wild Angel Fish; various Dwarf Cichlids; Albino Clarias Catfish, Plecostomus Catfish; Snapper Barbs, Botia Lucas Bahi, Botia strigata and many others.

The entire collection now numbers well over two thousand five hundred individual fish. With the increase in size of many of these, the tanks are becoming very full indeed — although of course they are not overcrowded.

The Marine Green Turtles are still increasing their size and weight at a phenomenal rate and may cause quite a housing problem in future months.



Two healthy Spanish Terrapins were presented by a member of the staff and have been placed with our collection of Red-eared Terrapins — one of which is illustrated above. We were also presented with two Axolotls which are now settling down very well with our existing specimens.

Recently a collecting trip was made to the North Wales coast and many marine fish brought back to the Aquarium. These included Whiting, Cottas, Blennies, Fifteen-spined Sticklebacks and various invertebrates. Many interesting rocks were also collected, together with quantities of shingle and sand. These enable us to display local fish and invertebrates in their correct setting.

The only members of our tropical marine section are nine healthy specimens of the ever-popular Sea Horse and a solitary Chocolate Clown Fish.

GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

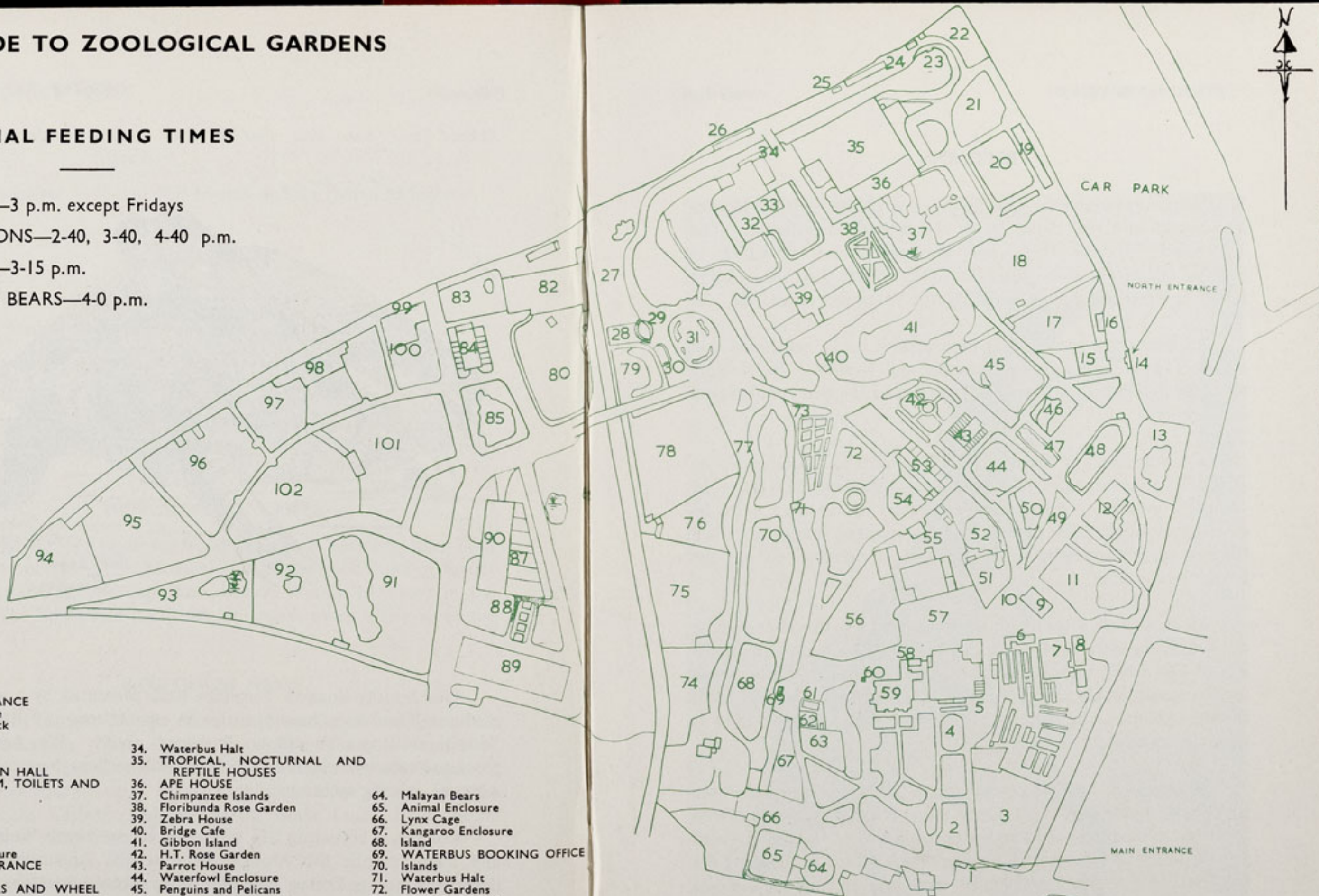
ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES

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

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|-----------------------------|
| 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 |

†—Under Construction.

Animals may be moved from time to time.

BITTERNS

Bitterns belong to the same family — *Ardeidae* — as the Herons and Storks and like them are of world wide distribution. The Variegated Bittern — *Ixobrychus involucris* — one of which is pictured opposite is wide-spread throughout South America — being found in Paraguay, South Brazil, North Patagonia and Chile.

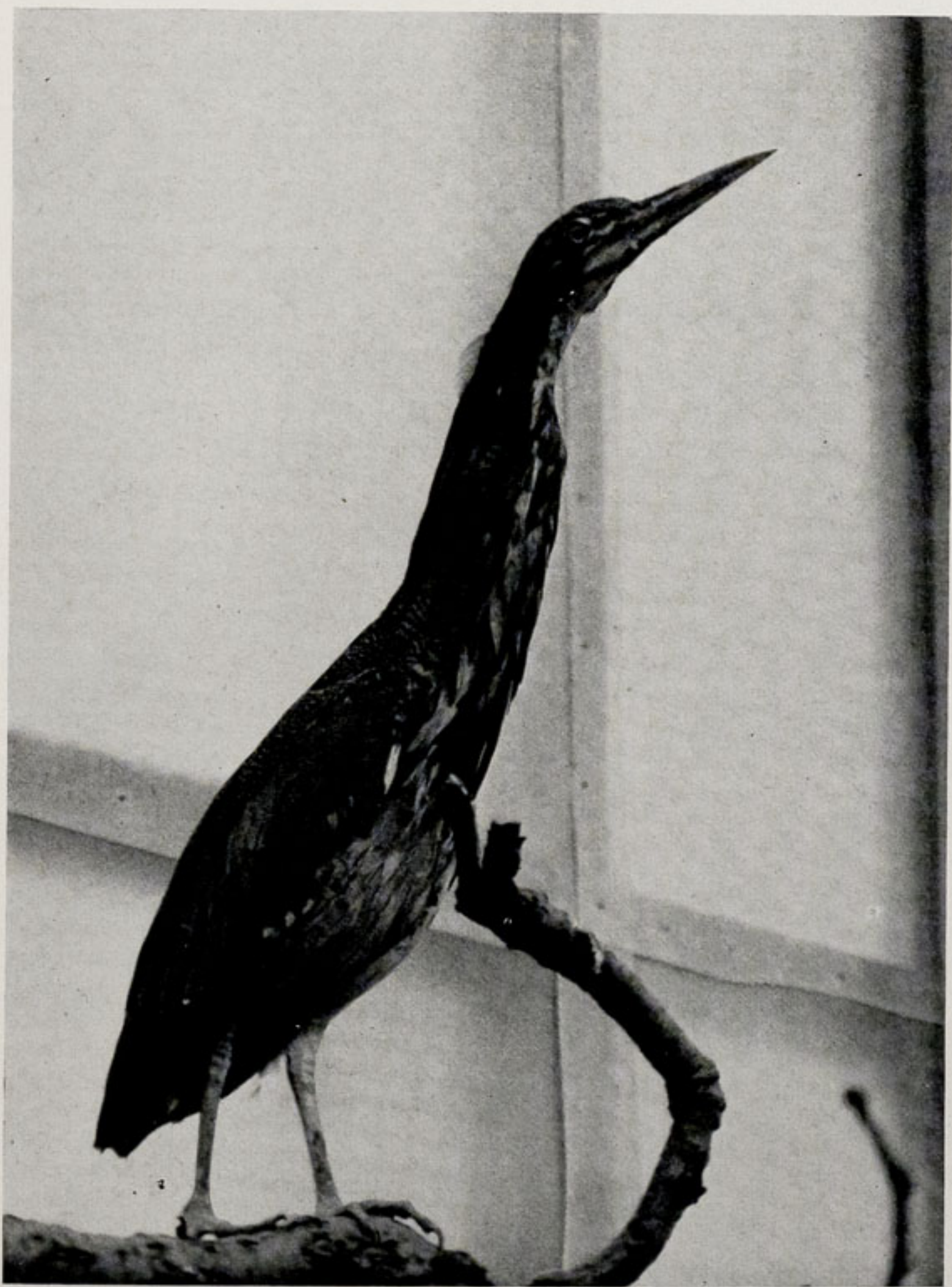
All the twelve species of Bittern inhabit reedy marshland and all have brown plumage with streaks and speckles — resembling the reeds in which they live. They are among the best comouflaged of all birds.

A curious habit of bitterns is to freeze, with their necks pointing skywards, when danger threatens. In a reed bed they are then virtually invisible. This protective posture is adopted even by downy young only a few days old. Our variegated Bittern can often be seen in this attitude, which looks most peculiar without the proper background.

Another curious feature of the Bittern family is the odd booming call which the cock bird utters in the breeding season. It sounds almost like a bull bellowing in the distance and can still be heard in this country, in places like the Norfolk Broads where the Common Bittern — *Botaurus stellaris* — is probably more common than is generally imagined.

Bitterns share with herons the use of powder-down patches and pectinated middle claws to clean their plumage. Powder-down feathers are never moulted and keep on growing. They fray continually at the tips and form a powder which is used for dressing the feathers. This powder soaks up fish slime and oil from the feathers and is then combed off by vigorous movements of the claws.

Like all members of their family, Bitterns live on small fish, crustaceans, insects, frogs and the like. In captivity they do well on a diet of cut-up fish, minced meat and such insects, tadpoles and small frogs as can be provided. They are an interesting although not particularly spectacular exhibit.



VARIEGATED BITTERN

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

ESMERELDA

We are sorry to report the death of "Esmerelda", one of Chester Zoo's two Brazilian Tree Procupines. She died of old age on the morning of Thursday, 30th September. We feel that she must have been near to holding the longevity record for her species and below is a quote from the November 1962 issue of "*Chester Zoo News*".

"“Esmerelda” is the oldest member of the Nocturnal House and came to us in August 1957, having originally been brought to England as long ago as May 1950. Although her fearsome quills and large bulbous nose would seem to make her undesirable as a pet, she is in fact a great favourite.

She is the least aggressive of all our Nocturnal animals, affectionate and completely trustworthy, although her affection has been known to lead to trouble. Before we acquired a mate for her, Esmerelda was, on occasions, given a cage companion. Her quills have minute fish-hook-like barbs and after snuggling close to her companion at night, considerable time has had to be spent the following morning removing the quills, unintentionally transferred to the wrong animal.

One of the most interesting things about Tree Porcupines is the prehensile tail. Many of the South American animals have prehensile tails — a portion of the underside of the end of the tail having a leathery surface which enables them to grip hold of a branch or similar object. With the Brazilian Tree Porcupines, the leathery 'pad' is on the uppermost part of the end of the tail and the tail has to curl upwards to grip. It is used mainly as a fifth limb, being twisted round a branch to balance the animal, leaving the front paws free to hold food."

In February, 1960, Esmerelda gave birth to a youngster — a



ESMERELDA

Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby.

very rare event in the Zoo world — but unfortunately the baby only lived a few days.

During her long stay at Chester, Esmerelda became as much a character as any of our larger mammals and she will be very much missed in the Nocturnal House.

JAMESON'S GREEN MAMBAS

On 7th September four Jameson's Green Mambas — *Dendroaspis jamesonii* — arrived at the Zoo and were placed in a compartment of the Reptile House. Their vivarium was specially prepared with a natural curving branch which will be covered with creepers in a short time. In addition other selected plants are growing in this and every other compartment of the Reptile House.

The new Mambas are only five months old and were hatched in captivity in Ibadan, Nigeria. At the moment they average about two to three feet in length but will eventually reach a maximum of eight feet.

In general colouration the Jameson's Green Mamba is medium to dark green, heavily mottled with black and with a black tail. This species inhabits thick rain forests and is mainly arboreal, although it will sometimes descend to the ground in pursuit of small mammals. All species of Mamba are extremely slender, much more so than Cobras and have proportionately longer tails.

Numerous accounts have been published of Mambas attacking men and many people are killed by them each year. However, they are generally only aggressive towards human beings in their breeding territory during the breeding season and at other times only bite if provoked.

In common with those of the Cobras, the needle sharp, venomous fangs of the Mambas are situated at the tip of the upper jaw in a fixed position and can be half an inch long in a large specimen. On the contrary, Vipers and Pit Vipers (*e.g.* the Rattlesnake) have moveable venomous fangs — these are set in a mobile maxillary bone, which allows them to be erected or depressed at will.

Mamba venom is extremely powerful and acts mainly on the nerve centres, resulting in partial or total stoppage of the automatic lung and heart actions. There is little obvious damage around the actual bite. Although Mamba venom is more potent than that produced by African Vipers and Cobras, it is not produced in such large quantities, therefore, it is difficult to ascertain which is the more deadly species.

Mambas are closely related to Cobras and can expand their necks in the form of a small hood. This is not nearly so well developed as in the true Cobras.

In the wild state Jameson's Mambas feed on small birds and mammals, occasionally descending to the ground in search of small mammals. The venom is so quick acting that a mouse can be killed in less than thirty seconds with a single bite. Our Mambas are

fed on young mice, which are just growing a little fur — but they will take food as they grow older.



J. Whitworth.

HEAD REPTILE KEEPER ROGER AINSLEY
AND "GEORGE"

MORE TROUBLE FOR GEORGE

Readers may remember an account, in the April 1965 magazine, of how a growth was removed from the mouth of one of our Alligators. Poor "George" (the Alligator) has had another bout of mouth trouble. He lost a front tooth from his upper jaw recently and an abscess formed in the socket.

Fortunately, Head Reptile Keeper Roger Ainsley soon spotted the swelling and took George out of his pool for treatment.

Each day the jaw is bathed and healing drugs administered. We might add that George accepts his daily dental care with better grace than many a human patient.

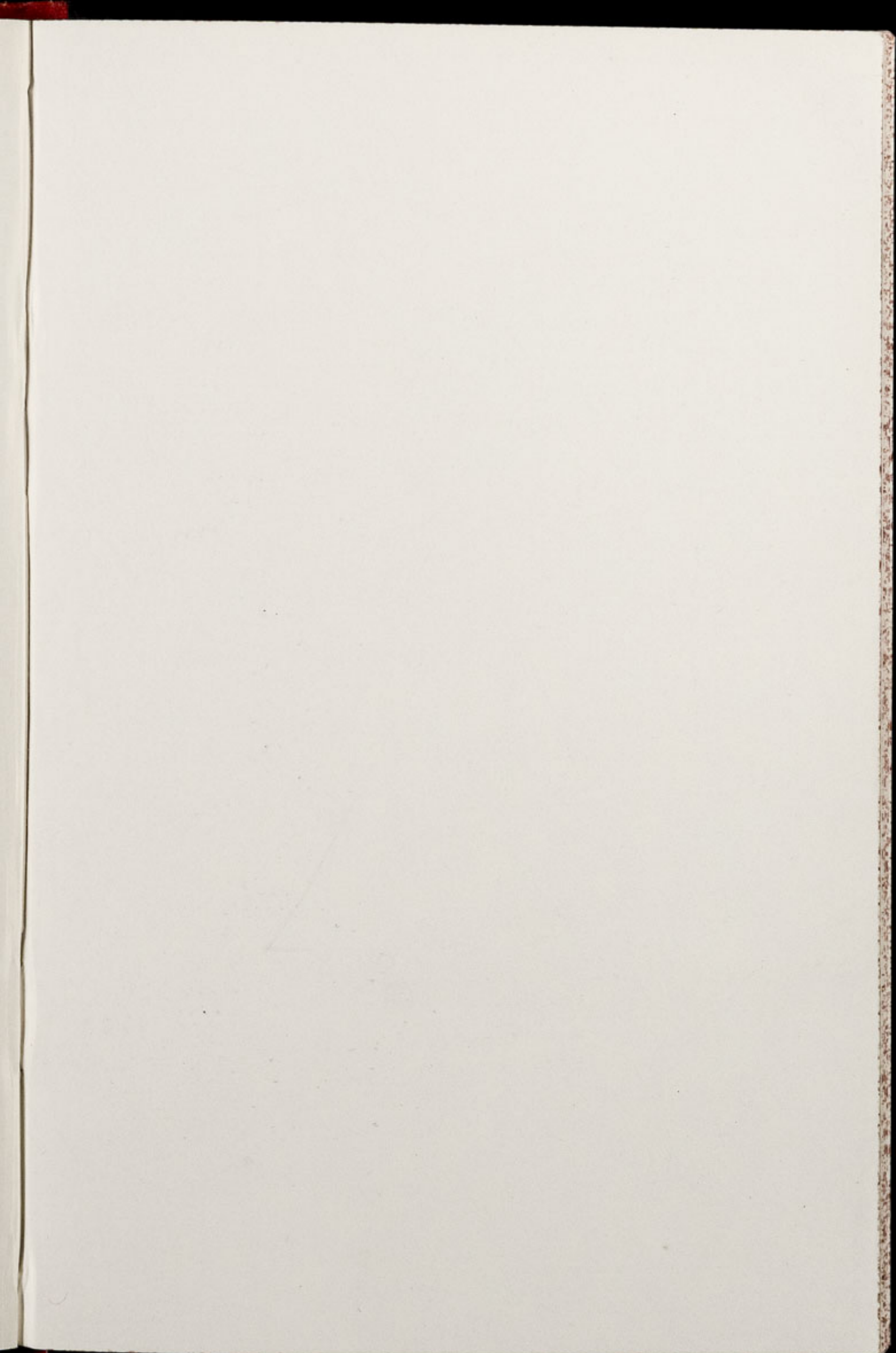
NEW HOME FOR MAXIE

"Maxie", the baby Giraffe born on 21st January, 1964, left Chester for a new home in Flamingo Park Zoo, Yorkshire, on the morning of Friday, 8th October.

STOP PRESS

New arrivals, about which you will read next month, include Chimpanzees, various Monkeys, Night Herons and a Great Indian Hornbill.





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