

CHESTER ZOO News

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UPWARD TREND TEN YEAR RECORD

Chester Zoo finished the 1980's with the highest visitor numbers of the decade. When the gates closed on New Year's Eve, 904,251 people had visited the zoo.

Since the mid-eighties, there has been a substantial upward trend in visitor numbers to the zoo. In 1985, there were 700,000 visitors, and each year since then has shown an increase.

Last year's success is probably due to a number of factors, including the good Summer weather, the new chimpanzee house opened by the Princess of Wales in April, and the increasing awareness of the zoo's conservation work.

Our twin Siberian tiger cubs are now over a year old. They were voted 'most popular animals' of 1989. Come to see how Korda and his sister Strelka have grown this year!

CONSERVATION CANNOT WAIT

ZOO'S ROLE IN NEW DECADE

MOST of the zoo's advertising and promotional literature now carries the slogan "Conservation Cannot Wait." The rapidly disappearing wild habitat for so much of the world's wildlife is a matter of deep concern to everyone. Zoos across the world are working together to build a "time-bridge" over the next century, to make certain that there will still be rhinos, elephants, orang-utans and many hundreds of other endangered species for future generations to enjoy.

Chester Zoo is very much a part of the national and international programme for breeding many of these rare and endangered animals. We were very proud to be part of the rehabilitation programme for the Pere David deer to China. We hope, in the future, to be one of the zoo's returning Scimitar Horned Oryx to Tunisia. Closer to home, we are co-operating with the barn owl release programme in Merseyside, Cheshire and Staffordshire. About 40 birds, bred in our aviaries, have been released under carefully monitored conditions.

We have 24 species of mammals, 30 species of birds and 20 species of reptiles and fish that are included in the IUCN red data list of threatened species. Without zoo breeding, many of these will become extinct.

"SAVED"

The beautiful tiger cubs, are living examples of successful zoo conservation.

In the wild, the Siberian tiger is very endangered, and its num-

bers are decreasing rapidly. Without zoo breeding, it would probably go the way of the dodo.

Every year, man destroys hundreds of acres of forest land, and dumps millions of tonnes of waste products into the seas. Chester Zoo Direc-

tor, Dr Michael Brambell states: "Until we can learn to treat our world with respect, zoos like Chester have an essential role to play in the breeding of animals and publicising the plight of the animal kingdom."



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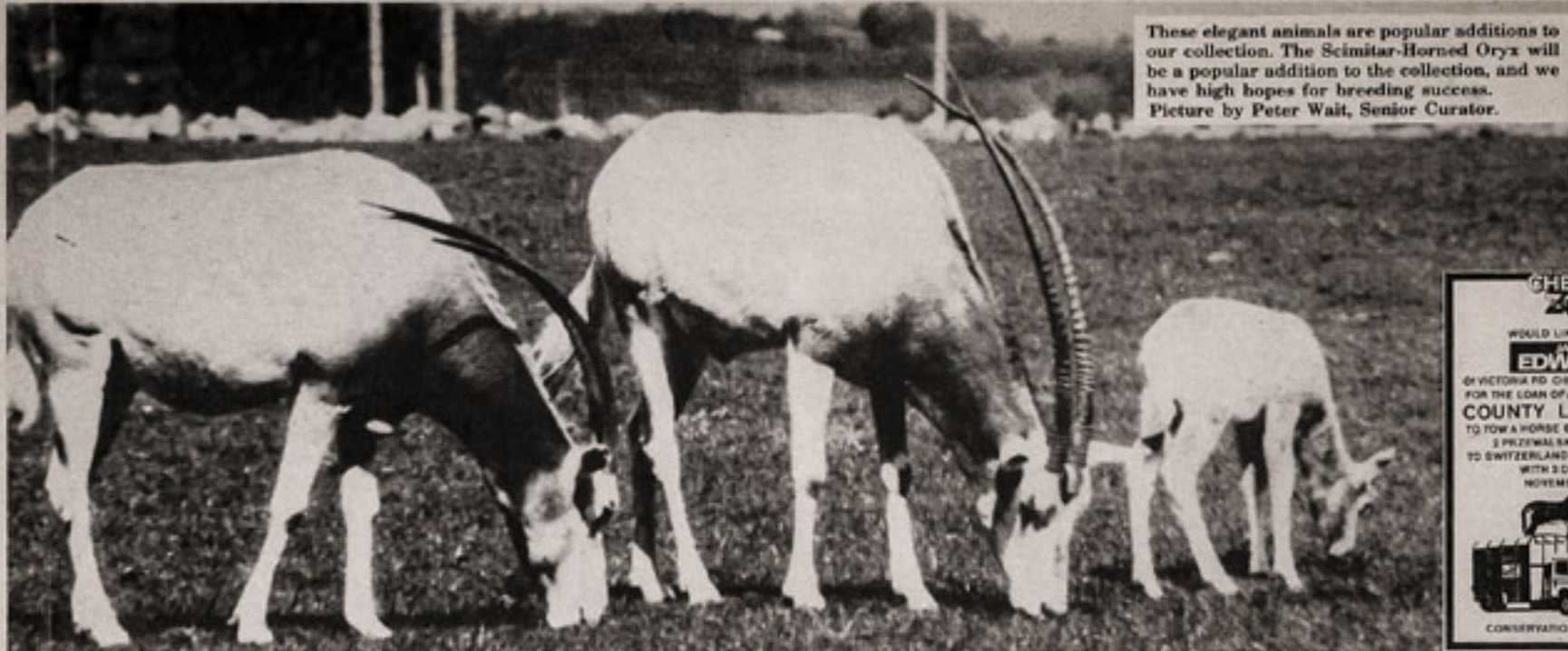
Thanks to everyone who helped build the new Chimpanzee house by collecting Roberts Bread special vouchers.



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These elegant animals are popular additions to our collection. The Scimitar-Horned Oryx will be a popular addition to the collection, and we have high hopes for breeding success. Picture by Peter Wait, Senior Curator.



ORYX AND ONAGERS VIA LAND ROVER

ZOO THANKS JAMES EDWARDS LTD. FOR LOAN ROVERS FOR SWISS AND SCOTTISH TRAVEL

CHESTER Zoo has joined in the breeding programme for the rare Scimitar Horned Oryx. (above).

There are now five British zoos co-operating in the programme, with the long term aim of returning a herd of animals to the wild.

The first re-introduction of this species, from the UK to Tunisia, took place in December, 1985, when ten animals, born in Marwell and Edinburgh Zoos, were released in the Bos-Hedma National Park.

Senior Curator Peter Wait collected a group of female oryx from Edinburgh Zoo to join the male who had previously arrived from Whipnade. The Society is indebted to James Edwards Ltd. of Chester, for the generous loan of a landrover to tow the horse-box.

The help of James Edwards was also appreciated on another of Peter Wait's trips - this time to Switzerland. The purpose was to collect three onagers from a private collection at Oberwil,

near Basle. The newcomers have settled well with the original animals in the zoo, and hopefully these very rare wild asses will breed.



Safe in the Zoo after a trip from Switzerland, the Onagers quickly settled in. Picture Derrick Thompson.



ZOO CHEWS

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BOOKED FOR NOVEMBER!

We can confirm that we have a firm booking for Father Christmas, and his reindeer, in the grotto from mid-November 1990. See local press for details.



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Curator of Mammals, Nick Ellerton and Estate Engineer Steve O'Brien are very relieved to get Kumara's giant transporter safely onto the 'island'.



Welcome to Kumara

THE arrival of Kumara from Whipsnade last year, brought the number of Asian elephants in the zoo to a total of six — four females and two males.

There have been elephants at Chester Zoo since the war years. The first two, Molly and Manniken, arrived in 1941. With their keeper, they had become separated from a review company and were looking for a home. They found one in the garage — now the maintenance yard! It wasn't until 1949 that the first elephant house was built — with the imaginative use of old wartime road blocks.

The present elephant house was opened in 1961, and recently a number of improvements have taken place. More effective and energy-efficient heating has been installed, making the accommodation more comfortable for the elephants and for the hippos and tapirs who share the house.

We hope to continue breeding elephants at Chester. Regular meetings are held with other UK collections — most of which keep only female elephants. Females Kiraty and Kumara have come to Chester from Glasgow and Whipsnade, and we now have a second male, Chang, on loan from Copenhagen.

The Asian population of elephants is now about 35,000, about half of which are in India. But elsewhere numbers are declining drastically. Kampuchea, a country that used to have 200,000, now has an estimated 2,000. And Laos, once known as "Lang Sang" — the land of a million elephants — now has no more than a couple of thousand.

We hope that in a few years — the gestation period is nearly two years! — we will see babies in the elephant enclosure, thus helping to keep this magnificent animal alive for future generations.

Popular Puppets



WHERE in the zoo can you find a bear called Paddington?

The answer is between the tuatara and the giant Aldabra tortoise! That's where you will find the small wooden chalet that is the puppet theatre. Here the zoo's volunteers entertain younger visitors with stories that are fun, but have a sound educational basis.

HELP WANTED

COME and join the F.E.D.S.! The acronym stands for Friends of the Education Division Services, and they are the zoo's greatly valued volunteer force.

The F.E.D.S. were formed three years ago, and there are about 70 of them. They offer anything from a few hours to a few days each month, and they are fully trained in all the voluntary jobs they undertake. These include guided tours; helping with children's activities such as brass rubbings and crafts; running the puppet theatre; manning "carts" in the animal houses with items of interest to visitors; helping with the special Christmas programme, and a variety of other jobs.

If you have a little spare time, and would like to know more, please ring the Education Division at the zoo.



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Senior Curator Peter Wait showed his skill with his Nikon to get this splendid photo of young Pundu and mother Lola.

ZOO YOUNGSTERS
Conservation cannot wait

SPRING is traditionally a time for new births — and it is a tradition wholeheartedly supported by the animals in Chester Zoo!

The most popular of the '90 babies were twin tiger cubs, Korda and Stivka. They were born on 25 April — the first tiger cubs in the zoo for ten years. Their mother, Natasha, was just three years old when her babies were born, and this was her first litter. They stayed in the den with Mum for the first six weeks of their lives, and zoo staff were very careful to give them total privacy.

Baby apes are always very appealing for visitors, and very important for conservation reasons. Baby Penda, a Sumatran orang utan born last Spring, has been delighting visitors with her habit of spending her days sitting on her mother's head!

The youngest inhabitants of the elephant house wasn't born in the zoo. Eight year old Chang was born in Copenhagen Zoo. He has come to Chester on long term breeding loan. There are just five bull elephants in British zoos, so Chang's arrival is very much for the long term benefit of his species. His father, Cheong Mai, has fathered six calves in Denmark, so we very much hope that when his son reaches maturity, he will follow in father's footsteps.



Chang may be the smallest elephant, but he still makes quite a splash!



A favourite photo from 1980 is Mark Hibbin's study of Natasha and her cubs, Korda and Stivka. As staff photographer for the Evening Leader, Mark knows the zoo well.

DAILY POST

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Juniors make tracks

Saturday in the Lion enclosure

THE annual programme of events for the zoo's Junior Members always includes exciting field trips as well as activities inside the zoo. The tracks and signs sessions is always one of the most popular days. Youngsters spend the day visiting various animal enclosures — when the usual inhabitants are inside — to get plaster casts of the footprints.

Our photograph shows some of the Junior Members collecting their own unique souvenirs of the day, in areas not usually open to the public.

A fine lion's paw print



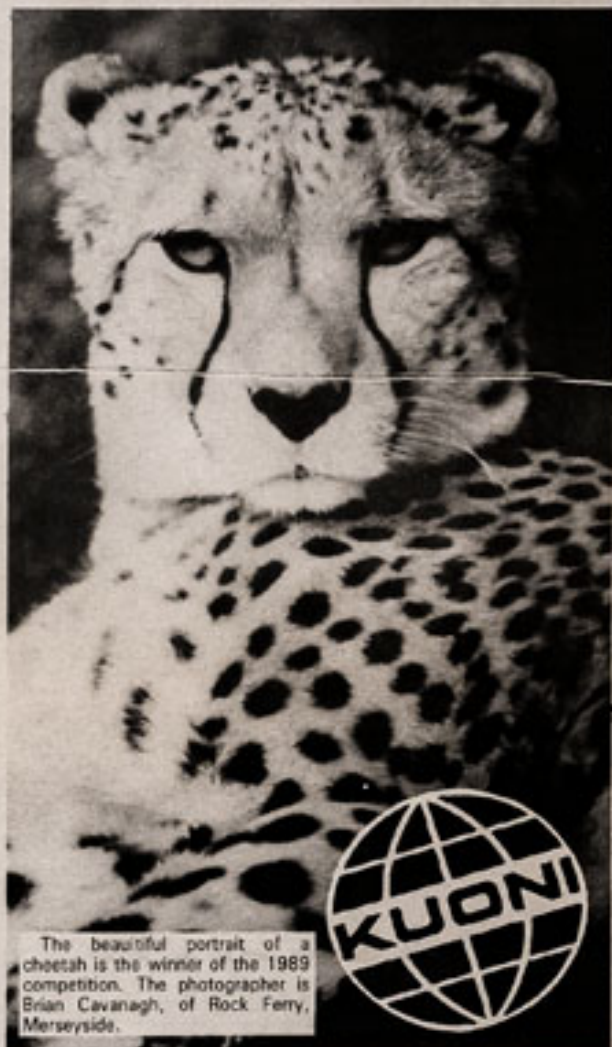
WIN AFRICAN PHOTO SAFARI FOR TWO

FOR ZOO PHOTOS

Almost every zoo visitor comes with a camera. The zoo is a great place for photography, and for capturing memories of a great day out.

If you feel that one — or more — of your 1990 zoo pictures is extra special, why not enter it in our annual photographic competition? Top prize (and what a prize!) is a Kuoni luxury seven day photo safari for two in South Africa, with flights from Manchester or London. Runner up wins weekend for two at The Lord Daresbury Hotel (with dinner at the nearby Lymm Hotel) courtesy of De Vere Hotels. There are £50 vouchers from Ness Photo Labs and Fishwicks, and British Rail Rover tickets, Kodak film prizes and BR day rovers every month too!

Entries should be 6x4 or 5x5 prints or 35mm slides. The competition runs right through the Summer, and the closing date is the end of October. All entries must have been taken at Chester Zoo during 1990. Entry forms are available in the zoo, or by post from the Marketing Office. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.



The beautiful portrait of a cheetah is the winner of the 1989 competition. The photographer is Brian Cavanagh, of Rock Ferry, Merseyside.



BUS STOP

IF you travel to the zoo by bus from Chester City centre, you may well come on our own painted mini-bus.

Seeing it as a passenger or pedestrian, you will notice the silhouette paintings of animals. Seeing it as a car driver, you'll see the goldfish who star in our TV advertisement on the back. But it is only top-deck passengers on double-deck buses alongside who see the footprints and giant spider on the roof!



LOCAL FEDERATION MEMBERS

MEMBERS of the National Federation of Zoological Gardens of Great Britain and Ireland work closely together.

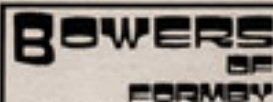
Visit our neighbours — each makes a special contribution to conservation.

Welsh Mountain Zoo, Colwyn Bay, Clwyd, L28 5UY. 0492-532938/531660
Knowsley Safari Park, Prescot, Merseyside, L34 4AN. 051-430 9009.

The Wildfowl Trust, Martin Mere, Ormskirk, Lancs. L40 0TA. 0704 895181.

Blackpool Zoological Gardens, East Drive, Blackpool, Lancs. FY3 8PP. 0253 65027.

Southport Zoo, Princess Park, Southport, Merseyside. PR8 1RX. 0704 38102.



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As well as having a great day out, you'll go home knowing that your visit has contributed to the conservation of the world's waterfowl and their natural habitat — the wetlands.

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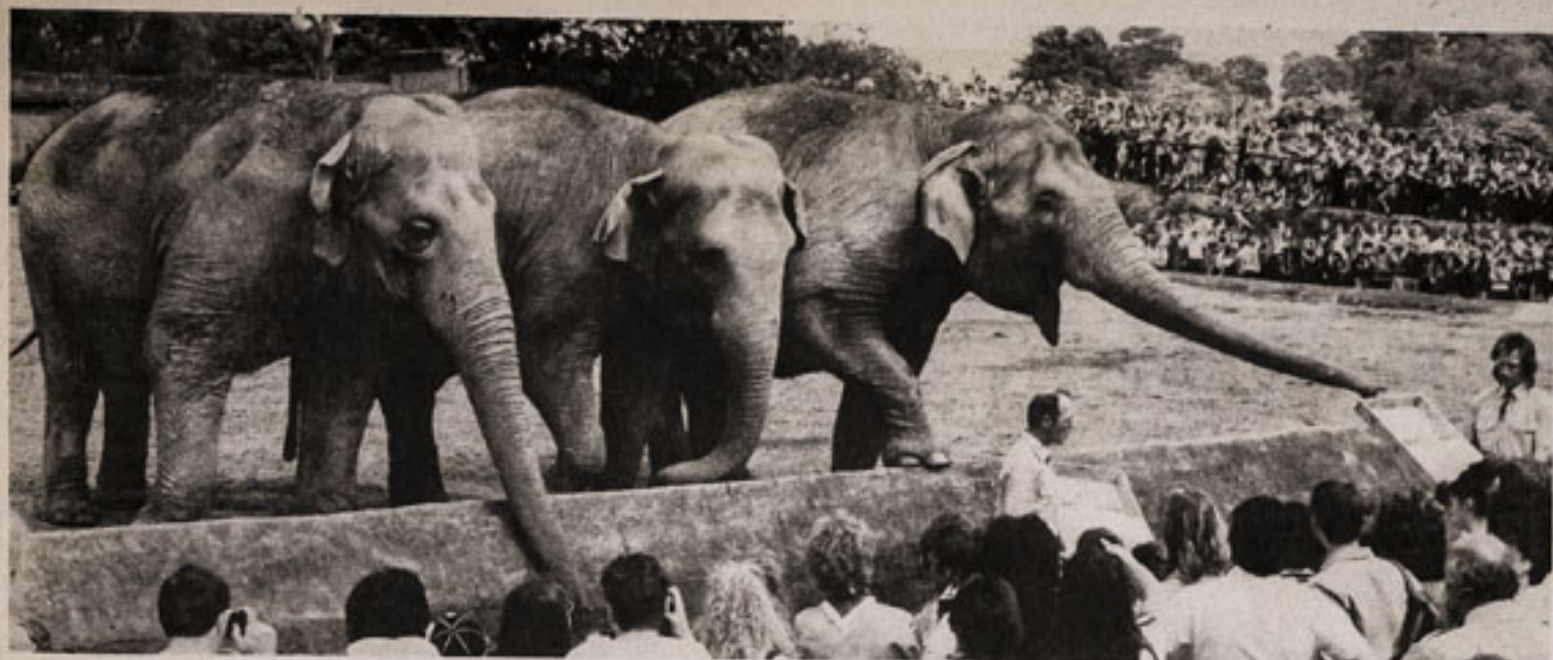
SMITHS



CHEESE FLAVOUR CURLY POTATO SNACK

LITTER FREE ZOOS ARE GREAT NEWS





Thank you Suzuki

THREE scimitar-horned oryx had a smooth trip from Edinburgh Zoo to Chester — thanks to the loan of a Suzuki Vitara 4x4 vehicle — which pulled Peter Wait's horsebox with the greatest of ease! The zoo thanks Genson Motors of Crewe, who can give more details of the Suzuki range on (Crewe) 0270 71378.

ADOPTIONS HELP WONDERFULLY

IF YOU have £6,000 to spare, you could become the adoptive parent of the three Asian elephants seen above!

For a modest sum of just £25, you may take your pick of any of the mammals, birds, reptiles or fish in the zoo, for instant, painless parenthood.

The enormously popular adoption scheme raised over £50,000 last year — almost a quarter of the zoo's annual animal food bill. The cost is based on the food bill for individual species, and then divided into shares. For example, a chimpanzee costs £500 a year to feed. So one person could adopt one for that amount, or — more usually — 20 people could take a single share each.

In return, the adopter's name is included on the plaque by the appropriate enclosure. Adopters receive a certificate; complimentary tickets (two for each £25 spent); copies of the zoo's quarterly magazine and invitations to annual Adopta Days. They also have the satisfaction of knowing they are helping in the zoo's vital conservation work.

Company adopters are also welcome, and have the opportunity of

displaying a coloured plaque depicting their chosen animal, with a brief advertising message. Fosters Lager have adopted the kangaroo, and opticians Dolland & Aitchison have the Spectacled owls!

Adopters make unique birthday and Christmas gifts — but we don't recommend sending skunk adoptions to friends you want to keep! If you would like to join our adopters, pick up a leaflet in the zoo, or contact Maureen Allsopp in the Adoption Office.



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CHESHIRE DAYS OUT

12 FAVOURITES — ASK FOR THE LEAFLET



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2. Stapeley Water Gardens0270 623868
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4. Erddig Hall0978 355314
5. Chester Visitor Centre, Vicar Lane, Chester0244 351609
6. The Boat Museum, Ellesmere Port.....051-355 5017
7. Cheshire Workshops, Burwalsley ..0828 70401
8. Bridgemere Garden World09365 381/2
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2

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Bridgemere Garden World

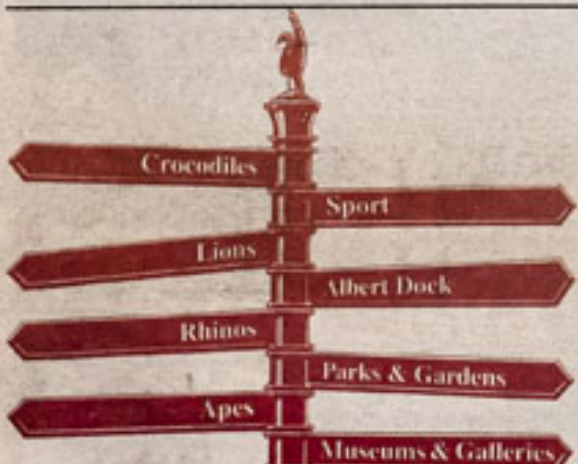
Twenty-five acres of fascinating plants and gardens with more plants and more varieties than anywhere in Europe. Huge selection of houseplants, garden bookshop, coffee house — recommended by Egon Ronay. Open daily. Admission free but charge for Garden Kingdom. On A51 between Woore and Nantwich, 25 miles from Chester. Tel. (09365) 381/2. Also visit our Wildlife Park — from 10.30am (09365 223).

CHESTER ZOO NEWS



WELCOME TO THE CHIMPANZEE HOUSE

THE wonderful chimpanzee house is a great place from which to watch our colony on days when it's too cold for them to go outside. Complete with a 30 foot climbing frame, festooned with ropes (and tested by Royal Marines before the apes came into the house) and a 'termite nest' for using tools to extract 'honey' or similar delicacies — the circular house has a meshed roof which is perfect for climbing round. It is almost like a huge 'inside out' tree. And the house is heated on the human side too!



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Second generation red eyed tree frog — a significant breeding success in the amphibian collection. Picture by Keith Brown, Herpetologist.

TAIL-PIECE

AFTER a great day out at the Zoo there's another exciting day waiting for you on Merseyside. Whether it's the beautiful coastline of the Wirral, the shopping arcades of Southport or the splendour of Liverpool's historical buildings you'll find plenty to see and do.

Make sure you visit the Albert Dock for a wander around the shops, the Tate Gallery and the Maritime Museum, plus, of course, the newly opened Beatles Story.

There's lots happening on Merseyside and you'll get the most from your visit if you call into the Merseyside Welcome Centre in Liverpool's Clayton Square Shopping Centre.



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Here's a great chance to save up to £6.30 on an exciting day out at Chester Zoo.

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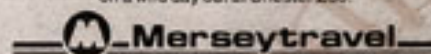
WITH FREE WATERBUS TRIPS (WHEN OPERATING)

You and the child, OAP or adult with you will receive FREE tickets for the Zoo's Waterbus (Normal price - Adults 70p, Children 30p)

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What's more, getting to Chester Zoo couldn't be easier. Simply take the Merseyrail Wirral line to Hooton then catch the Chester train to Bache station. Regular buses take you to the Zoo, or you can walk there in 15 minutes. So take advantage of our super discounts and save on a wild day out at Chester Zoo.



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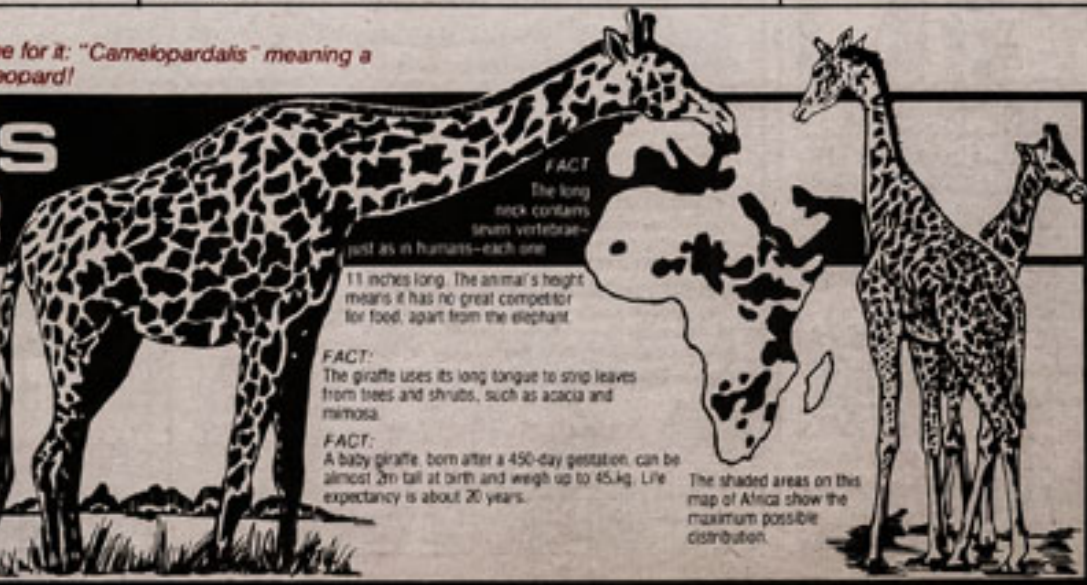
Information Line 0942 44888.

GIRAFFE: The Greeks had a name for it: "Camelopardalis" meaning a mixture of camel and leopard!

KEEPERS CORNER



This is the tallest of mammals—a male is approximately 5.2m. The Guinness Book of Records shows that the tallest ever was George, from Chester Zoo. He was 6m at six years old and almost 6.6m when mature.



FACT: The long neck contains seven vertebrae—just as in humans—each one 11 inches long. The animal's height means it has no great competitor for food, apart from the elephant.

FACT: The giraffe uses its long tongue to strip leaves from trees and shrubs, such as acacia and mimosa.

FACT: A baby giraffe, born after a 450-day gestation, can be almost 2m tall at birth and weigh up to 45kg. Life expectancy is about 20 years.

The shaded areas on this map of Africa show the maximum possible distribution.

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