



Penscynor Wild Life Park News

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Humboldt's Penguin — "Happy" hand reared 1981

Spring has arrived at last here in South Wales and this period is one of the most exciting times in our Animal Collection. Lengthening days and (occasional) sunshine brings thoughts of nest building and offspring to most of our birds; this year proving no exception.

Perhaps the most fascinating sight so far this year has been that of the male Great Indian Hornbill dutifully sealing up his mate in her nest box. In order to protect the female from predators whilst she incubates her eggs, the male uses sticky clay to actually close the nest entrance hole, leaving a gap just large enough for him to pass food in to his imprisoned mate. This behaviour is only seldom seen in captivity and was rich reward for the hardier visitors to Penscynor in March. Unfortunately all the hard work of the male and all the patience of the female were in vain as the eggs proved to be infertile; there is every hope however that the birds will 'try again' in the coming weeks.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS A REGULAR PENSYCYNOR PUBLICATION INTENDED TO SUPPLEMENT THE GUIDEBOOK AND BRING UP TO DATE INFORMATION TO VISITORS.

Opening Hours: 10.00 a.m.—6.00p.m.
every day, except Christmas Day.

Admission Price: Adults: £1.30
Children: .70p
Party Rate on application.

The photographs show a few of the sights and resident animals at Penscynor.



Great Indian Hornbill — "Joey", free flying in the park.

Several new bird species came to the Park over the winter. Certainly the most impressive newcomers are the pair of European Eagle Owls (the world's largest owls) who are currently incubating a clutch of eggs. Despite their size it will take more than a casual glance to locate these beautifully camouflaged birds. Much more colourful are the waterfowl to be found on the large pond next to the penguins. This selection includes several European ducks – Tufted, Pintail, Shoveller, Teal, Shelduck, Eider – as well as such 'foreigners' as the Carolina, Mandarin and Ruddy Shelduck. Also there is a family group of Lesser Whitefront Geese which show a social organisation fascinatingly similar to that of human beings and it will be well worth repaying a visit in 12 months time (when they reach adulthood).



Feeding the Penguins

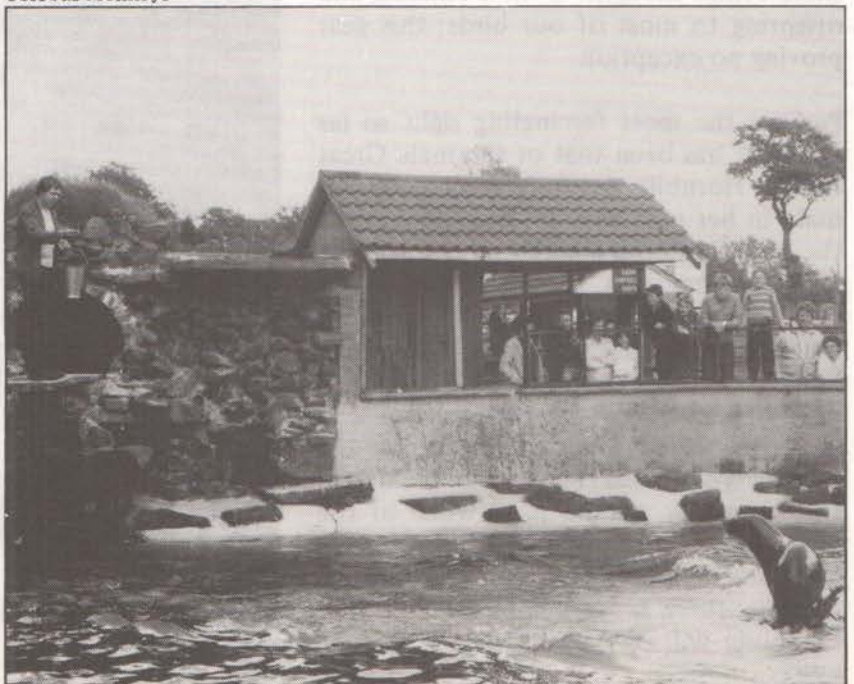
A male Black Swan, which came to us from Whipsnade Park Zoo just before Christmas, has settled so well that he is already the proud father of two families of cygnets on the Gibbon Island Pond – much to the discomfort of 'Cosmo' the Gibbon who has to watch his step with two proud and protective mothers around



Colobus Monkeys

Other nesting activity is continuing at a furious pace – Humboldt's Penguins, Cara-Caras, Blue Pies and nearly all our parrots are producing unprecedented numbers of eggs; everything points to a very busy and interesting summer.

The mammals, less influenced by the passing seasons, have continued to breed through the winter. Particularly successful are the inhabitants of the Marmoset House, three species of which are very close to extinction in the wild. The Emperor Tamarin female which was born here in November is particularly important; a recent survey of world zoos revealed only one such birth in a 12 month period. The Cotton-tops (with twins in September and more expected in the summer) number more in captivity than in the wild, as do the Goeldii Monkeys, so the role of Pencoynor in preserving these beautiful animals is of international importance. Recognising this the zoo has recently become a signatory to an international management plan for Golden Lion Tamarins, another endangered species, thus demonstrating our desire to help the global conservation movement.



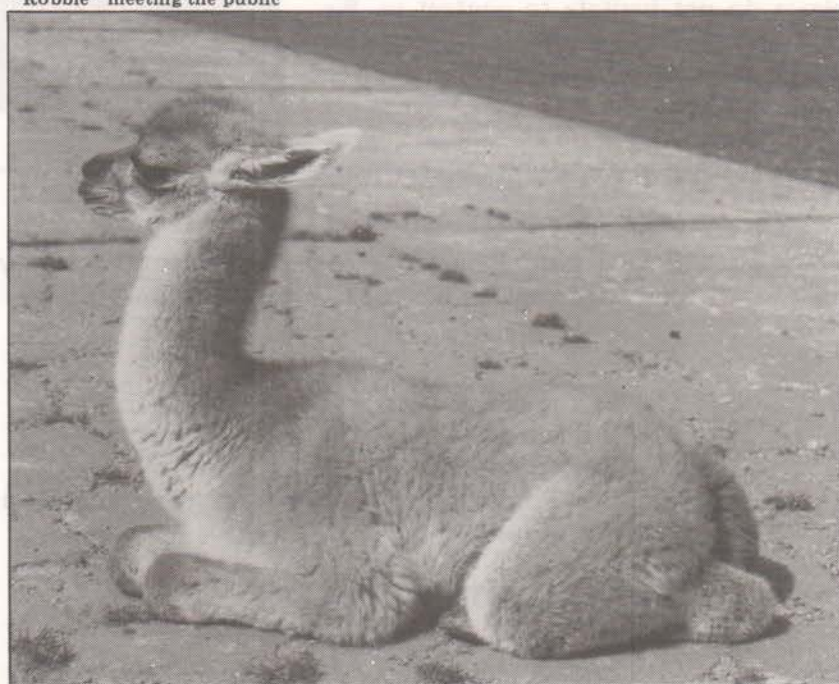
Feeding the Sea - Lions.

A very exciting development in the 'Chimp' house is the confirmation that 'Chico' (our adult female) is pregnant; the happy event is expected around the end of August. The proud father is 'Jeremy', a very good natured male who came to us from Chester Zoo in December. He replaces 'Ben' who has moved to a zoo in Pembrokeshire. We have every hope that this time 'Chico' will rear her own youngster — her previous sons Robbie and Sebco had to be hand reared. Robbie and Sebco of course are the Parks greatest characters whose chief delight is coming face to face with visitors on their afternoon walkabout. Particularly for children the chance to touch and feel a living exotic animal, especially one so closely related, is a thrilling and unique experience.



"Robbie" meeting the public

Both the Bennett and Parma Wallabies currently have youngsters popping in and out of their mothers pouches; look out also for the tiny Munyjac deer fawn born this month, and the appealing Vervet monkey infant born in February. The signs are good for a young spot-nosed monkey, more marmosets and tamarins, young coatis, Sika deer fawns and a Guanaco calf later in the summer.



12 hour old Guanaco

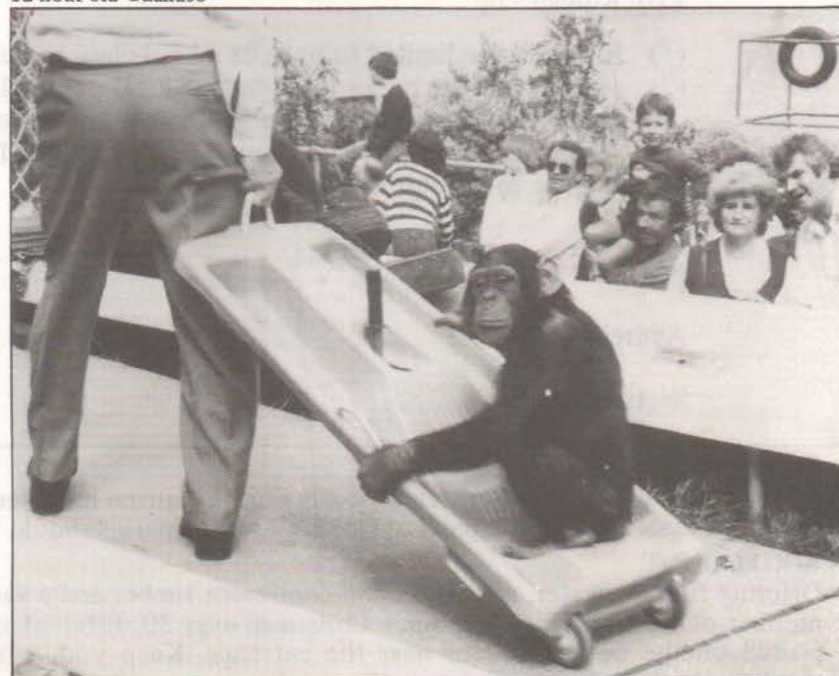
The Gardens themselves are particularly attractive from now until the Autumn. A wide and exotic variety of long established shrubs and flowers crowd around the many different species of both native and foreign trees. Around the lawns and many of the cages several thousand bedding plants have been set out, promising vivid colour throughout the summer.

THE ALPINE SLIDE

Installed last summer this exciting ride has proved immensely popular, and not only with our young visitors ! At a time when all animal collections are financially struggling the slide provides some of the income for our conservation efforts — as well as a thrill for our visitors. Needless to say, Robbie and Sebco think it is wonderful and ride the tracks as seasoned veterans.

OTHER AMENITIES

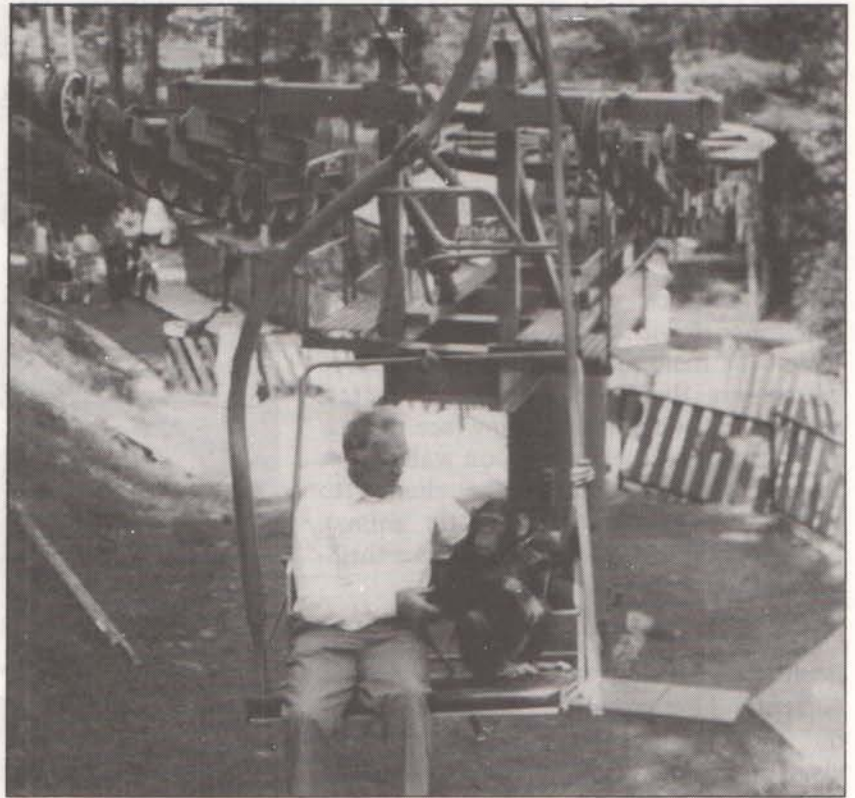
With ever increasing numbers of people visiting the Park, we have installed improved catering and toilet facilities over the winter period. The "Fast Burger Bar" is proving very popular, offering refreshment and sustenance quickly and at a very reasonable cost.



"Robbie" on the Alpine Slide

THE EDUCATION SERVICE

Hoping to show our visitors something of the wonder and delight of the natural world and to gain their sympathy for the conservation of Wildlife, we have converted the restaurant into an Educational Centre, equipped with modern film and slide projection facilities. With seating for 50 people we hope that this building will come to be used for a wide variety of educational purposes, particularly by visiting school parties who are very welcome to see a slide or film show if the weather is inclement during their visit. As an "external classroom" the building should be ideal for any party caring to use it. Also available, again particularly for school-children, is the "Look and Learn" booklet (an activity booklet based on previous worksheets). Should any visiting party have particular interests or requirements please do not hesitate to contact us. We can arrange worksheets, lectures, slide shows on many different topics - if given advance notice.



"Robbie" on the Chair Lift.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND ART COMPETITION

Having seen many of the splendid results obtained by visiting amateur photographers and artists, we are pleased to offer the following prizes for work done on the Park.

ART

- £10 Best under 16 years original art work.
- £5 Runner - up.
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- £25 Best School entry - 5 or more pieces of original art.
- £20 Best Adult.

PHOTOGRAPHY.

- £20 Best Adult photo taken in the Park.
- £10 Runner - up.
- £10 Runner - up.

- (1) Entries to be limited to one per school-class, three per individual.
- (2) Judging will be by an independent local personality during September 1983, and Prizes will be awarded during September at the Park.
- (3) A selection of entries will be exhibited in the Park throughout the summer.
- (4) Fill the entry Form below.

Name

Address

Section Age

STOP PRESS.

Since this newsletter was written 2 Coatis and 2 Guanaco have been born, 2 Ring - tailed Lemurs have arrived from Chester Zoo and 2 pairs of Golden Lion Tamarins should arrive from U.S.A. in the Autumn.

BIRD COUNT.

Offering running water, deciduous and coniferous timber and a variety of other habitat, the Park has a great number of wild bird visitors. Since Christmas over 30 different species have been seen in the Park. A list is posted on the notice - board near the entrance. Keep your eyes open and see how many you can see, maybe you can help us to increase the number.