

AMERICA'S FIRST ZOO

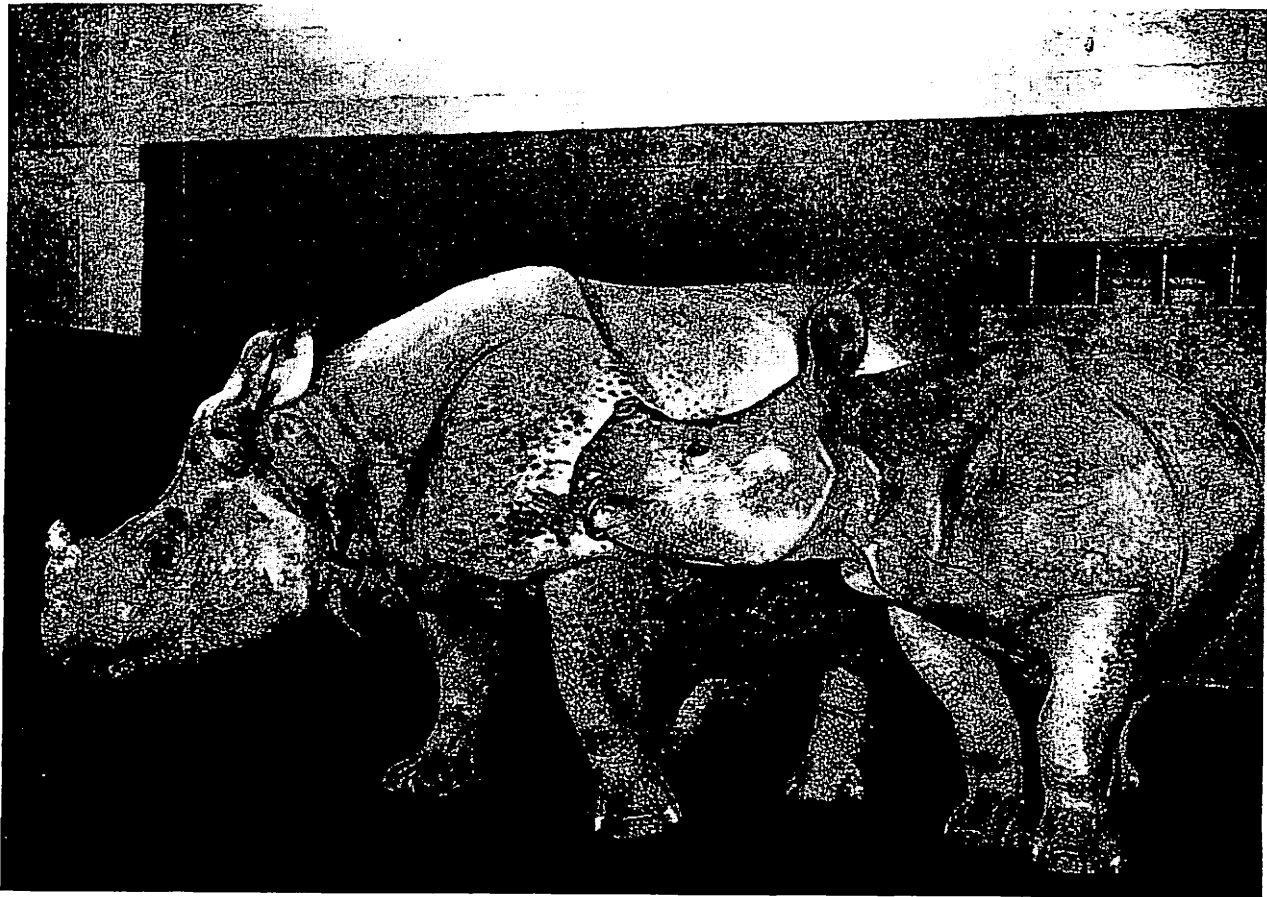
Philadelphia Zoological Garden

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SUCCESSOR TO FAUNA

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THE ARRIVAL OF KANAKBALA, the Golden Boy, was the biggest news story of the fall season at the Zoo. A male Indian rhino, Kanakbala is the long-awaited mate for the female specimen, Kanaklota, that we acquired two years ago.

Additional excitement surrounded the event because of a series of freakish mishaps involved in the capture and delivery of the rare one-horned pachyderm. Peter Ryhiner, the Swiss animal collector who captured both rhinos for us, had to contend with a flood along the Brahmaputra River, riots in Far Eastern cities, and a dock workers' strike that faced him when the ship carrying Kanakbala arrived at Wilmington, North Carolina. The stevedores, however, agreed to unload the rhino and other animals destined for various American zoos.

To the great relief of Zoo officials and employees, the newcomer has been completely compatible with the bigger, older Kanaklota from the moment they met. The pair get along much better than their African counterparts. Kifaru and Kenya, two-horned black rhinos who have been longtime residents in the Pachyderm Building. Curator of Mammals Fred Ulmer has been putting the rarer Indian animals together daily for short periods. At present, there is considerable disparity in size: the five-year-old female is estimated to weigh nearly twenty-five hundred pounds. Her new mate, approximately three years of age, tips the scales at a mere seventeen hundred pounds. He is about the same size as Kanaklota was upon her arrival here in 1953.

Being able to exhibit a pair of Indian rhinos is a



A snarling Siberian Tiger (one of a pair), two female Siberian Lynxes (center), and a pair of heavily-furred Snow Leopards from Central Asia are new additions to the cat collection. All are extremely rare in zoos.

matter of considerable prestige. There are fewer than three hundred specimens alive in the world today, and we are one of the only two zoos in America with a pair in its collection. With its thick, leathery hide arranged in large plates over its body, and with bumps on the skin that look like rivet heads, the Indian rhino is a colorful and popular attraction. Most visitors think the animal's skin is bullet-proof. Actually, a sharp knife could pierce the hide.

Additions to the Cat Collection

October brought more than cool weather to the Zoo. Two great cats, believed to be the only pair of pure-blooded Siberian tigers west of the Iron Curtain, were delivered here from New York, after a journey that started from their birthplace in the rugged Russian northland and included stop-offs in Prague, Czecho-Slovakia, and Hannover, Germany.

The new carnivores, nearly two years old upon arrival, are already impressively large, and still have a full year's growth ahead of them. Upon maturity, they may attain a weight of more than six hundred pounds and an overall length, from tip of nose to tip of tail, of nearly eleven feet.

The tigers, valued at ten thousand dollars for the pair, were acquired in an arrangement made by Mr. Freeman M. Shelly, Director of the Zoo, when he saw the beautiful beasts in Germany during the summer.

Another exchange resulted in our acquisition of two female Siberian lynxes. They were received from an animal dealer in trade for one of our pairs of black leopard cubs. The lynxes, which closely resemble the better known Canada lynx, are fully grown and in excellent health. They are most unfriendly, and it appears they are going to stay that way. Officials consider the new cats to be most desirable, since few zoos in this country have them. The addition of the Siberian lynxes raises the number of different varieties of cats in our collection to a total of eighteen.

The pair of snow leopards whose arrival preceded that of the tigers and lynxes by a few weeks, are

very much at home in the new Carnivora House. They were presented to the Zoo by Mr. and Mrs. Ellice McDonald, Jr., of Wilmington, Delaware. Rated among the rarest and most expensive of all the great cats, the snow leopards are exotically lovely with their thick soft grey fur growing down to the tips of their tails. The dense coat is ideal protection for the snow leopard, since it lives at high altitudes—up to eighteen thousand feet—in the Himalayan Mountains of Central Asia. The heavy fur makes them look much larger than they really are. The new male weighs an estimated eighty-five pounds, and the female, sixty-five.

The Zoo has had another snow leopard on exhibit since 1950, an impressive cat known as "Prince Igor." Perhaps the comforts of the Carnivora House have softened the "Prince"; his coat is noticeably thinner than that of either of the newcomers.

A Rare Crocodylian

A Malayan gavial, a crocodylian with an extremely narrow snout and a head that (viewed from above) looks like a frying pan, is a recent arrival at the Reptile House. It is a gift from Mr. Gerald Iles, Director of the Bellevue Zoological Gardens in Manchester, England.

There are two kinds of gavials, and both have snouts adapted for quick sidewise motion through the water. This apparently enables them to catch fish more readily than their larger-snouted relatives. Both are rather rare in captivity, and this is the first one we have ever had. Two others that were sent to us at different times within the past few years were dead upon arrival.

Crocodyles, in general, are far less hardy in zoo collections than are alligators. They require more and steadier heat, and are apt to drown if the temperature of their pools cools off too appreciably during the night. Further, they often have to be penned separately to prevent them from fighting. The newcomer has sustained an injury to its lower jaw that came as the result of combat with a cage-mate while it was still in England.