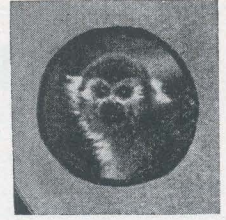


ODD PETS



DUMB ANIMALS???

The following article recently appeared in the *Chicago Times*.

"So animals are dumb. Ha, people should be so stupid. While there is much kerchooing and blowing about of germs among the human population, the zooites, as usual, are their generally healthy selves.

"'Animals,' observed Brookfield Zoo, Illinois, chief Robert Bean, 'keep regular hours. They eat nourishing foods. They're not like people.'

"Guard rails keep sightseers fairly removed from the animals. Keepers who have the sniffles work elsewhere—not in the monkey cages or around animals who might catch anything. At Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago, the monkeys are behind glass—all the better to protect them from visitors who haven't sense enough to be likewise, says zoo director Martin Perkins.

Neither zoo has had anything serious to sneeze about in a long time.

Ailments Negligible

"As far as animals ailments in general are concerned, they're negligible, both zoos report. Outside vets are called when anything needing medical attention happens. But generally they take care of things themselves.

"There's a leopard at Lincoln Park whose tail once was injured. It drags along behind him. This wears off the hair, rubs the skin raw. Presto, he's grabbed by the tail, gets medication and he's okay.

"At Brookfield some of the animals break bones by getting too personal with iron work, turning too suddenly, etc. If it's a simple fracture, they're put in a dark stall and left alone. Food and drink are slid in. Generally the break heals by itself. If you don't believe it, Bean has walking examples of this treatment.

Animals Left Alone

"In compound fractures, casts are needed. But still the animal is left

alone as much as possible in familiar surroundings. He gets nervous if he's in a strange place like a hospital—doesn't rest, and worries.

"'Another thing,' says Bean, 'I don't see why people think animals enjoy any kind of weather that's disagreeable to be out in.' He came upon only one polar bear surveying the seasonal snow with a sneer. The rest were curled up snugly inside, taking a nap.

"'As we said, people should be so dumb.'"

New Gnu Arrives

There's a new gnu at the Philadelphia Zoo, which makes two. No news is supposed to be good news, but in this case two gnus are good news and, incidentally no gnus are good gnus.

No, that's not a tongue-twister, but a report on the latest addition to the Philadelphia Zoo's animal collection. (Something gnu has been added—pardon, please, we couldn't resist that one.) A gnu is a kind of antelope—which won't be news to crossword puzzle fans—about the size of a horse. The Zoo has had a white-bearded gnu for some time and recently it acquired a white-tailed gnu. Both animals have mean dispositions and heavy horns, which they have no hesitation in using as offensive or defensive weapons. Their keepers have learned that one can't trust these African antelopes, which explains the gnus.

In the shipment with the big quadruped, which came from a New York animal dealer, were three birds native to the American tropics. Two of them are Derbian screamers—birds as big as Thanksgiving-fattened turkeys, equipped with sharp spurs on their wings, and capable of emitting a raucous call. The other is a roseate spoonbill—which has a long, flattened beak that looks as though it once had been caught in a vise.

Care and Housing of Mice

By V. M. COUCH

The writer recently interviewed a breeder of white mice, who also breeds cavies quite extensively. The breeder told me that he derives more pleasure from breeding the mice than the cavies, the mice being less trouble to care for and more prolific.

Over 200 breeders are kept, and about 50 males and females are placed together in one large breeding pen. A close watch is kept on the females and very soon after they show signs of being bred, each female is taken from the large pen and placed in a small hutch.

These hutches are about 28 inches square with wire in front. The cover to the hutch has hinges so it may be raised to clean out the hutch without disturbing the mouse. A good sized cigar box or other box of similar size is used for nesting. The box should have a hole large enough so that the mouse can go in and out easily. The box should have a lid that can be raised—that the young may be examined without removing them. If some fine nest material is placed in the large box, the female will make her own nest. About one half inch of dry, clean sawdust is used on the bottom of the hutch to take up moisture and prevent odor.

Two females are never confined together when about to kindle, as one is likely to destroy the young of the other. This breeder states that a young mouse is seldom lost. The young are weaned at about the age of four weeks. The mother is returned to the large breeding pen at this time, leaving the young in the small hutch by themselves until they are two months old. At the age of two months the male and females are separated. No mice are bred until fully matured.

This breeder emphasizes the importance of sanitation with mice the same as with any other small animals. After cleaning the hutches thoroughly, each one is sprayed with a good disinfectant.

When writing to advertisers
please mention ALL-PETS