

Annual Report of the Board of Regents

of the

SMITHSONIAN

INSTITUTION



PUBLICATION 4314

Showing the Operations, Expenditures, and Condition of the

Institution for the Year Ended June 30

1957

UNITED STATES

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON : 1958

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Report on the National Zoological Park

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report on the activities of the National Zoological Park for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1957:

This has been a year of many changes in the administration of the Park, as four men in key positions reached the retirement age. The first to leave, on October 31, 1956, was Dr. William M. Mann, who had been Director of the National Zoological Park since 1925. During his term of office the number of animals in the collection increased from 1,600 to 3,000, much of the increase being due to collecting expeditions he headed. Under his direction three modern exhibition buildings were erected and a new wing was added to the bird house. Also built under his administration were the machine shops, garage, a new restaurant, and the building that houses the police headquarters and public restrooms. Dr. Mann's enthusiasm for his institution endeared him to friends all over the world. He remains in touch with the Zoo as Honorary Research Associate of the Smithsonian Institution. On June 11, 1957, the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums honored Dr. Mann at a luncheon in the Zoo, paying tribute to his many years of leadership in zoological park management. Those attending from out of town were Lee Crandall, formerly Director of the New York Zoological Park; Freeman Shelly, Director of the Philadelphia Zoo; Roger Conant, Curator of Reptiles, Philadelphia Zoo; Clyde Gordon, Director of the Staten Island Zoo; and Roland Lindemann of the Catskill Game Farm, Catskill, N. Y.

The Assistant Director, Ernest P. Walker, retired on December 30, after nearly 27 years with the Zoo. As a mammalogist, especially interested in small mammals and wildlife conservation, his services were invaluable. He developed new diets for animals, and devised new methods of exhibiting them. He is continuing to write about mammals.

On February 28, Frank O. Lowe, head keeper, said farewell to the animal charges he had worked with for 48 years; and on April 2, Peter Hilt, superintendent of maintenance and construction, retired after 36 years with the Zoo. Both of these men were remarkably efficient in their fields and were respected and liked by the men who worked under them.

EXHIBITS

Plans for the future of the Zoo are to maintain a well-balanced zoological collection, with special emphasis on the exhibition and propa-

gation of North American animals, inasmuch as this is the National Zoological Park. The exhibition of exotics will not be neglected, but an attempt will be made to feature such animals as Rocky Mountain goats, Rocky Mountain sheep, prong-horned antelope, and other native species. Variety of species will be emphasized rather than numbers of individuals.

This year, for the first time, an outdoor exhibit of trained birds of prey was started. With the cooperation of local falconers, a red-tailed hawk and a Swainson's hawk were taken from the Zoo's collection and trained to a stoop and to the wrist. A duck hawk, or peregrine falcon, already trained, was presented by a falconer. The public has shown much interest in this new exhibit, where the birds are to be seen at close range and with no bars between them and the visitors.

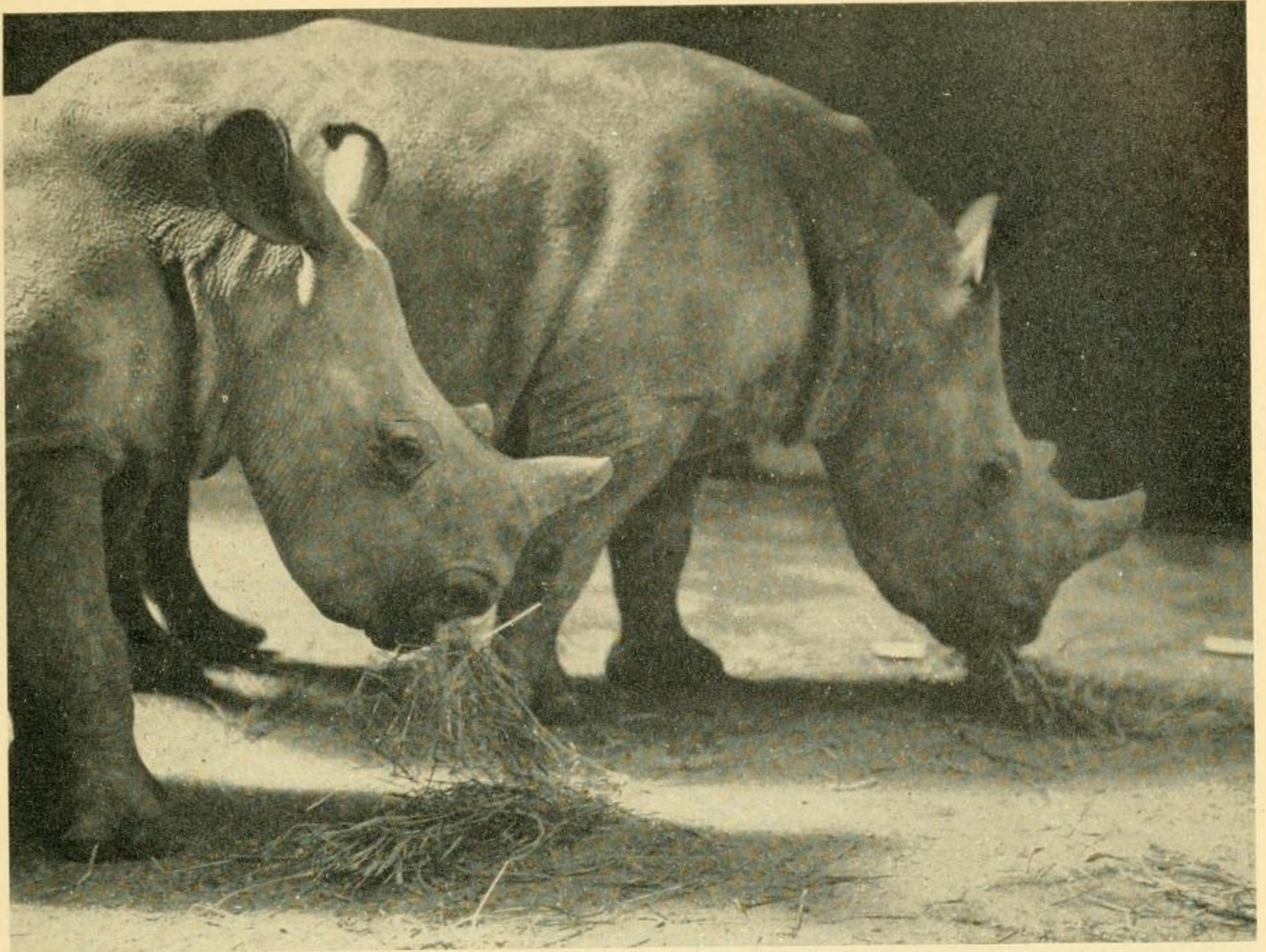
Albinism, a curious phenomenon, has been prominent in 1957, and an unusual number of birds, mammals, and reptiles have their pink-eyed representatives within the present collection—in fact, to an extent seldom seen in zoos. The mathematical improbabilities of a male and female albino black snake meeting in their natural habitat are staggering, but such might be possible under zoo conditions. It is hoped that some interesting genetic implications may develop from these exhibits.

ACCESSIONS

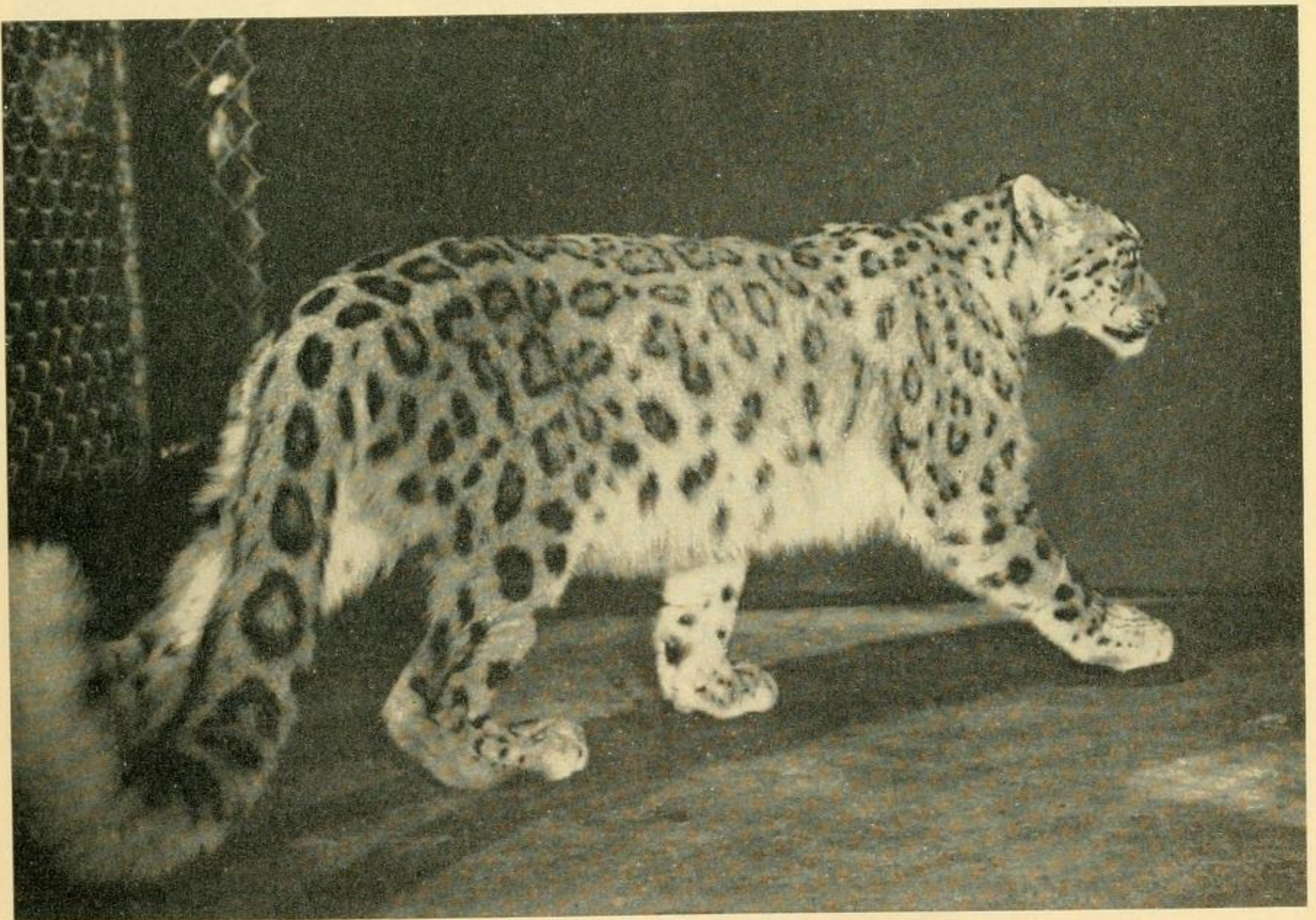
A number of outstanding additions came to the Zoo this year. The most important was a pair of white or square-lipped rhinoceroses, (pl. 5, fig. 1), purchased from John Seago, an English collector, who had been trying for two years to secure them for the National Zoological Park. They were the first ever to come to this country and are still the only ones in the United States. Another purchase was a pair of snow leopards, commonly considered the most beautiful of the big cats. (Pl. 5, fig. 2.)

The Government of the Belgian Congo, through the Minister of Colonies, presented the National Zoological Park with a fine pair of okapis (pl. 6), the first ever to be exhibited here. They were flown from Leopoldville to Hanover, Germany, for a 60-day quarantine and then to the United States Quarantine Station at Athenia, N. J., for a 30-day quarantine. Upon arrival at the Zoo they were formally presented by Baron Leopold Dhanis, Counsel at the Belgian Embassy in Washington. With their glossy, dark-brown coats and striped legs they form an outstanding exhibit.

An inconspicuous small black bird, with red eyes, which was obtained from an animal dealer, turned out to be an ornithological prize. It is a Colombian red-eyed cowbird (*Tangavius armenti*),



1. Willie and Lucy, white or square-lipped rhinoceros, were captured for the Zoo in Uganda. They are the first of their species to be exhibited in the United States.



2. The snow leopard, or ounce, inhabits the high altitudes of central Asia. A pair of these beautiful cats was purchased by the Zoo in the late summer of 1956. Photograph by Ernest P. Walker.



Masudi and Hanadi are the first okapis to be exhibited at the National Zoological Park. Gifts of the Belgian Government, they were formally presented on November 28, 1956. Photograph by Rohland, Washington Post and Times-Herald.