

BOOK RECEIVED

Urbański J. and Taborski A. (Eds): The Zoological Garden in Poznań. The History and Perspective of Development. Polish Sci Publ., Warszawa—Poznań, 1975. 302 pp. Price 90 zł

Celebration of the centenary of the Zoological Garden in Poznań, founded in 1871, included the publication of a special volume containing first and foremost a short history of the activities of the Garden and also emphasising its role in the cultural life of the city and surrounding region. J. Urbański discusses the history of the Poznań Zoo from the time at which it was founded until 1945, while the present director, A. Taborski, continues the story up to 1974. At the same time he also gives a short outline of the prospects for the Zoo's development under the conditions of its new location. J. Urbański devotes a separate section to the outstandingly important role of this zoological garden and the people connected with it in the work of rescuing the European bison from extinction, Polish initiative in this field at the Nature Conservation Congress in Paris (1923) and the later activities of the strong Polish section of the International European Bison Protection Society.

The anthology of articles and press reports and the extensive (numbering about 340 positions), although only partial, bibliography of scientific papers by members of the staff of the Zoological Garden and articles of an informative nature, guides and other publications provide excellent documentation of the history of the Poznań Zoo.

The book is supplemented by a list of animals kept in the Zoo at different periods of its history that is, up to the First World War, during the interwar period and during the last thirty years. This list includes 320 species and subspecies of mammals, 486 species of birds, 170 species of reptiles, 32 species of amphibians, and 176 species of fish. At the present time the Zoo also possesses about 80 species of invertebrates (these numbers unfortunately differ slightly from those given in the text). This list provides a good illustration of the increasingly important rank of the Poznań Zoo and the range of its activities.

The book itself has been prepared and published with great care, illustrated by numerous black-and-white and coloured photographs, chiefly of animals and the housing conditions under which they live in the Zoo. A particularly beautiful feature of this book is formed by reproductions of watercolours and drawings of animals by the wellknown Polish ornithologist Professor Jan Sokółowski. The book is published practically speaking in two languages, since although the main text is in Polish, the comprehensive summaries (about 30% of the whole length of the different articles) and captions in English widen the accessibility, and appeal of this book to a circle of readers far beyond Polish boundaries.

Z. Pucek