

## The Propagation of Snow Leopards in Zoological Gardens.

The Snow Leopard, a cat of average 120 cm body length, 75 cm tail length, & 60 cm height, lives in the mountain masses of Central Asia (Himalayas, Hindukush, East Tibet). In the USSR we meet it in the Middle (Asian?) mountains. It is a typical mountain animal and does not go lower than the ~~poor~~ needle tree (evergreen?) zone. The Snow Leopards subsist on sheep and mountain goats; however, they also eat ~~foxes~~ birds and birds.

They live (live) mainly in the cracks of cliffs. Normally they show 2 cubs, occasionally three to five. In the literature available to me, one finds little about the raising (care) of Snow Leopards in the zoological gardens of the world. There are many factors which contribute negatively their maintenance in captivity. As a rule, those snowleopards arriving from the wild are caught with some sort of defect (the animals are wounded in the traps when captured) besides that they are quite sensitive and susceptible to disease, especially <sup>of gut?</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ of the colon (Stromboli water disease). Therefore there is very little hope for their propagation in a zoo. Besides that, the animals when they come from the wild, have great difficulty in adjusting to the new climate; to that is added the often unobtainable diet and the difficulty of selecting a suitable partner.

The Zoo of Leningrad in Krimm has sought for a long time, explored various ways to offer the Snow Leopard optimal conditions. The food ration, feeding of the animal, the maintenance & care, and other factors, were subjected to proof several times. We began with the development of one compatible pair. The zoo received the first leopardess on 6/24/55, the second on 5/23/59, and the third on 9/14/1960. On 12/17/61 we received a male from the Central Zoo.

The male arrived so late that the females' heat had already begun. He did not adjust to the new surroundings fast enough and regarded the females as his enemies. In the first 5 days he ate nothing. (Usually newly caught snow leopards are offered live rabbits) Even though the ♂ had no appetite these first days, and besides that was aggressive, we admitted him to the ♀♀ on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. He behaved very quietly and did not react to the cat [♀♀].

Later we found him lying in the midst of all 3 ♀♀. On 3/16/62 the male paired with one of the females. The females displayed estruses in various intervals between December and February; this was noted especially by vocalizations (mooing). During estruses the females ate little or nothing, they perspired a lot and lost weight. (How do they know?)

From estrus on we gave the snow leopard a rich variety of nourishment, plus vitamin preparations and (?) Tinct combaidis (tincture of?). The latter was given 4 days with 3 days' interruption thereafter. During this time we offered no cod liver oil nor yeast. The basic diet consisted of 3K horse meat, 1L milk, 20g "gunzeig" (bone meal?) 10g cod liver oil or 10g yeast. Twice a week we fed ground meat and twice live rabbits, with the meat we mixed 5g. chalk (Ca?). The room was irradiated daily with a Quartz lamp, beginning with one minute, then one minute longer daily. After an irradiation of 20 minutes was reached, we desisted treatment for 2 weeks [before beginning again].

After the mating, we installed one denning area. The box, 1 m above ground, is built of 2 cm thick boards, 103 cm long, 58 cm wide and 78 cm high; the entrance measures 38 cm x 38 cm. This den was filled [not filled] with hay. ~~Here~~ this box found immediate acceptance

by the snow leopard and they [the pair or all 4? doesn't say?]  
are used with the twins.

On 6/21/62, after ~~68~~ 98 days, the ♀ delivered 1/1 young.  
The birth lasted 2 hours. The newborn arrived blind  
and opened their eyes on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. The ♀ weighed  
320g., the ♂ 350. The coat of the young showed the  
same color as the parents, only somewhat lighter & grayer. After  
10 days we let the mother out (in the open) in a separate cage.  
The young crawled around in their hole (den) and squealed  
like little pups. After 15 days the voices changed; they  
became shriller and resembled that of birds. After 1 month  
the ♂ weighed 1.45 K, the ♀ 1.14K. At this age we fed  
the cubs some chopped meat, which we put into their  
mouths, & which they immediately consumed. At 2 months  
the young ran about well. In order that they not fall,  
we put the box on the floor. The mother did not  
want to rise and lay down with the young to nurse  
them as usual. At this time the young 5L began  
to eat meat ~~on their own~~, and ~~did not~~ lap milk  
on their own, even though the mother still nursed  
them. Soon they ate everything that was offered  
the parents. They are growing wonderfully and look  
well. They are not a bit shy of the keeper or  
visitors of the zoo.