

a couple of *eyyores* amid a cove of birch; the female might be pregnant. Completing the Alaskan group are two porcupines (*Erethizon dorsate*), various birds (including snowy owl, bald eagle, golden eagle, two horned owls and a whistling swan), two soft-eyed lynxes and a female gray wolf. From the Matanuska Valley farm belt each summer, come baby farm animals. Another Seattle friend-of-the-zoo, Mrs. Manson Backus, donated "Mr. Parnell", a burro — favorite of Anchorage school children. Recently he was joined by a Sicilian donkey, "Jenny", who had been living north of Fairbanks. And several ponies will give rides in the summer.

The zoo is gradually taking permanent form. Last year one director purchased 10 adjoining acres of heavily wooded land, part of which, if fenced, would be excellent for mountain goats and Dall sheep. A local asphalt plant created an earthen work dam across a creek, forming a summer pond for Annabelle. Soon, funds permitting, the zoo will build a summer house and picnic tables from where children can watch Annabelle cavort in her "lake." This summer two reindeer are expected from Nome, and a permit has been obtained for a glacier bear, an aberrant strain of the black bear. High outdoor aviaries have been purchased for the three eagles and the snowy owl, and an outdoor home is being built using the ancient Norwegian peeled-log technique. At this writing, the Arctic Research Lab at Barrow has donated a male gray wolf — the son of a pair of domesticated wolves.

Spring break-up at the Alaska Children's Zoo will soon preface another summer of growth and a welcome for Alaskan children and their families. The zoo with its Alaskan animals joins the list of places to visit for tourists.

Pam Coates

WOODLAND PARK ZOO

Seattle Zoological Society

Rare Snow Leopards

Two rare snow leopards arrived at Woodland Park Zoo on March 1, from Moscow, Russia.

The male and female mountain cats, two to three years old, were taken from the wild in the Kazhak S.S.R. (Kazakhstan) in south central Asia during December, 1971, by Soviet wildlife authorities.

Snow leopards, *Leo uncia*, are the smallest of the five "roaring" cats of the genus *Leo*, formerly *Panthera*, which includes tigers, lions, jaguars, leopards, and snow leopards. Adults average about 70 pounds and are covered by luxuriant pale gray fur with black rosettes. They rank seventh in weight among cats — after tigers, lions, jaguars, cougars, cheetahs, and the typical leopards.

The range of snow leopards is confined to the mountains of central and southern Asia including the Altai, Tien Shan, Pamir, Hindu Kush, and Himalayan ranges. In some localities, the cats stay at about 2000 feet elevation year round. More often they follow their hoofed prey along established game trails high into the juniper and spruce belts to 18,000 feet during summer, and return to the lower pine and birch valleys for the winter.

Wild sheep and goats, musk deer, boars, marmots, pikas, and pheasants are the main prey, with a few domestic animals taken during hard times. As with most other cats, snow leopards hunt by stealth or ambush.

Reproductive behavior of snow leopards has not been studied in the wild because of the remoteness of their haunts and nocturnal habits. But captive snow leopards breed in late winter and deliver two to four kittens in April after a 90 to 100 day gestation period. The young stay with their mothers through the first winter and the survivors become independent the following spring or summer.

The most recent figures indicate that only 93 of these great cats were living in captivity in 1970; about a third of these had been bred in captivity. The *Red Data Book* for mammals lists them as Category One — "In immediate danger of extinction." Snow leopards probably never have been numerous and the numbers are decreasing, mainly from poaching by fur trappers. Protective laws have been established in the Indian Himalayas and the Soviet Union. The Soviets are enforcing the law.

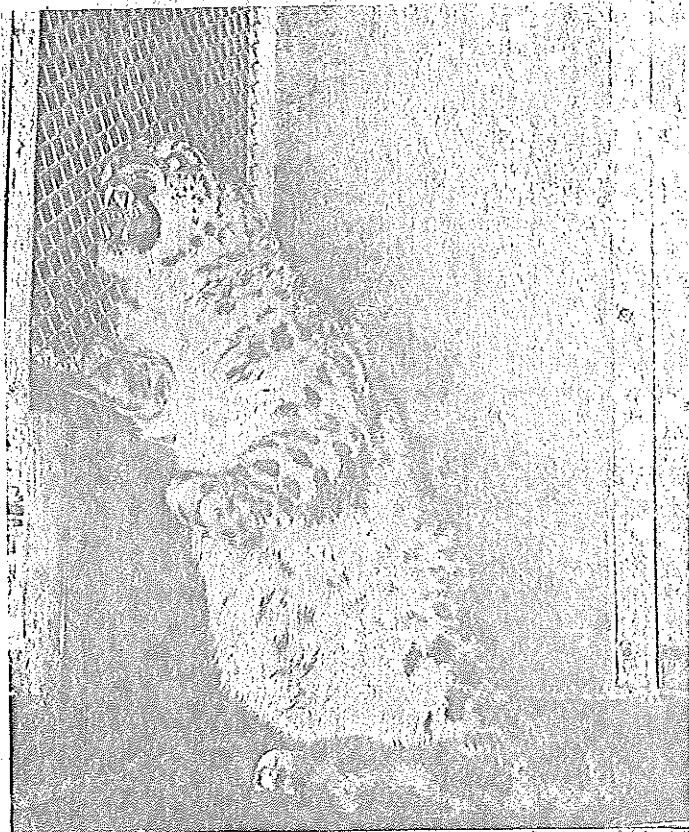
Jack Simmons

Talk.

Except for the dolphin, which can chatter at great length, and the whale which serenades, most creatures get along quite well with a very limited vocabulary. But man, with all the words in the world, is still having trouble being understood. Still, thanks to the telephone, man can at least spread his thoughts over a far, far greater area with the hope that someone, somewhere along the line, will get the message.



Pacific Northwest Bell



Snow leopard "Nicholas" greets his keeper at new home in Woodland Park Zoo. A \$12,000 pair was donated to the children of Seattle by Mr. and Mrs. John M. Kellogg who named them "Nicholas" and "Alexandra." Kellogg is a director of the Seattle Zoological Society. by Joy Spurr