



ZOOLOGY

Electrically Heated Apartments For Toads and Snakes in Zoo

THE TOADS and snakes and other creeping and hopping inhabitants of the National Zoological Park at Washington, D. C., are moving into a new home with all the most modern comforts enjoyed by humans, including separate electrical heating of each apartment.

The new reptile house of the park, which will be thrown open to the public on Saturday, February 28, has a considerable number of its smaller glass-fronted cages individually warmed by automatically regulated electric heating units. Thus valuable but temperamental reptiles and amphibians that prefer a temperature of 70 degrees can have it, while in the next cage equally exacting creatures from the tropics can have 85 or 90 degrees if that will induce them to "look pretty" for the public.

Still other cages will be kept warm but arid, for the greater happiness of desert lizards and rattlers. The climatic preferences of a diamondback from Arizona are quite different from those of his zoological brother from Florida, and for purposes of ready comparison by zoo visitors the rattlesnake cages have all been arranged side by side.

In caring for the comfort of the animals on exhibition, the comfort of the crowds who will look at them has not been forgotten. The heating and ventilating system for the spectators' corridors is entirely separate from that of

the cages. The visitor will be able to stand in the temperate zone and look through a window into the tropics.

Many rare reptiles have been collected for the exhibits, and more are on the way. Those now on hand include several species of the most deadly snakes in the world. There is a king cobra, largest of that very venomous family. With him is a spitting cobra, which jets its poison into the eyes of any person or animal that annoys him, causing great pain and temporary blindness. There are three extremely poisonous African snakes: the sand viper, the Gaboon viper and the rhinoceros viper.

As an interesting exhibit for visitors, and to safeguard the keepers who have to deal with the poisonous snakes, Dr. Mann has arranged to have on hand a complete collection of all the kinds of antivenin manufactured in the world. There is no way for the serpents to get at visitors, Dr. Mann explains, but in spite of all precautions an employee working behind the cages sometimes gets bitten.

For the visiting scientist, who may wish to spend days or weeks where the casual spectator spends only minutes, a research laboratory has been provided on the second floor of the building. Dr. Mann states that several applications from well-known zoologists have already been received.

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Seeks Federal Aid for Crippled Children

CRIPPLED children throughout the United States are entitled to special attention and consideration at the hands of both state and federal governments, in the opinion of Senator Henry D. Hatfield of West Virginia.

Senator Hatfield, who is a physician, has introduced a bill of far reaching significance which would entitle states making special provision and appropriation for providing medical treatment and vocational training for cripples under twenty-one years of age, to an equal amount of money from the Federal Government.

The states at present are doing very little for crippled children, Senator Hatfield has discovered in compiling statistics on the subject. In 20 states, he says, neither state nor local government makes any appropriation for care and rehabilitation of cripples. In 34 states, there is a total of only \$1,339,225 being appropriated for this purpose.

Senator Royal C. Copeland, of New York, who like Senator Hatfield is a physician with wide experience, states that there are in New York City alone some 35,000 cripples, and that throughout the country it is estimated there are 5,000 cripples to every million of population.

Senator Hatfield's bill would authorize the appropriation of two million dollars per year by the Federal Government the first year, to be increased each year until it reaches the sum of five million.

State agencies cooperating with the Federal Board for Vocational Education would carry out the provisions of the bill.

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Camera Catches Rattler's Sinister Beauty

See Front Cover

PHOTOGRAPHING a rattlesnake is not the idea most of us would have of a healthy outdoor sport, especially when it is necessary to stand almost on top of the coiled and angry reptile to get a really good picture. But Walter E. Flowers of Spokane once let his picture-getting enthusiasm conquer his discretion—with the superb result shown on the cover of this issue of the SCIENCE NEWS LETTER.

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