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GROUP SHOWS EMPEROR PENGUINS COLLECTED BY ADMIRAL BYRD IN ANTARCTIC

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With the recent installation of the emperor penguins in Hall 20, the first of twenty new bird habitat groups was placed permanently on exhibition. All of the most important ecological environments in which birds live are to be shown. This first, the polar ice shelf, will be closely followed by others, including: savanna, mountain rain forest and desert, of north, west and south Africa; lowland rain forest, savanna, and cloud forest of Central America; inundated forest and pampas of South America; moor of Scotland, and fern forest of New Zealand.

These penguins, very strange and exotic birds, are a gift from the Chicago Zoological Society, which received them from the Second Antarctic Expedition (1935) of Rear-Admiral Richard E. Byrd. The eight penguins shown in the group were mounted by Staff Taxidermist John W. Moyer, assisted by John LaBonte. A method unusual in bird taxidermy was employed. Manikins similar to those used for large mammals were modeled from the skeletons in accordance with measurements of fresh specimens. Staff Taxidermist Leon L. Walters cast and reproduced the bills and feet in cellulose-acetate, which gives most realistically the appearance and texture of life. Staff Artist Charles A. Corwin and Mr. Arthur G. Rueckert painted the panoramic background of the great Ross ice shelf.

Six of the penguins arrived alive at the Chicago Zoological Park in Brookfield, although afflicted with an incurable respiratory disease caused by a fungoid infection. Never before had these extraordinary birds

been transported alive to America. The opportunity afforded for study and observation of living specimens was thus unique.

Emperor penguins deserve the extravagant adjectives that are applied to them. They live farther south—nearer to the South Pole—than any other birds. They

is no material from which to build a nest, so the egg is held on the feet and a fold of abdominal skin lowered over it, enclosing it as in a warm muff. The emperors instinctively know that an unprotected egg would freeze solid in a very few minutes. Consequently every unoccupied bird in the

colony makes a rush for an egg when it is released by a hungry parent that is returning to sea after several days of fasting. Fierce squabbles take place over the eggs and even more roughly handled are the chicks—fluffy balls of black, gray and white down—when, after seven weeks incubation, they hatch in early September, just as the sun at last shows over the horizon. Community of interest is essential to these birds. Their success depends entirely on cooperation even if it is occasionally carried too far. Sometimes the poor little chicks crawl away to hide in the ice to escape the bickerings of their foster parents, an escape that often ends in a frozen death.

The infant mortality is estimated at from 70 to 80 per cent, but as an emperor will live twenty-five or thirty years, the mortality of the chicks is not dangerous to the survival of the species.

The principal enemies are killer whales and the spotted seals known as sea leopards. Large blocks of ice falling from the ice cliffs above the colonies at times cause injury. During the summer molting period, in January and February, the emperors sit on the floating ice floes at the northern edge of their range. Their thick waterproof feather clothes are shaggy and unkempt and no longer adequate protection from the cold water and so they fast for a month or so while waiting for their feathers to grow.



Rare Birds from "Little America"

Largest of all species of penguins are the emperors. They are extremely rare in collections. This group, shown amid a reproduction of a scene in the south polar regions, has been placed on exhibition in Hall 20.

never even approach Cape Horn at the tip of South America. They are larger than any other birds except ostriches, rheas and their kin. A fat, full-grown emperor may stand about four feet high and weigh as much as 94 pounds—the size and weight of a ten-year old boy.

Perhaps the most amazing thing about emperor penguins is their nesting habits. They lay their eggs during the long antarctic winter when the sun is continuously below the horizon for five long months. Temperatures from 40 to 60 degrees below zero are normal, and blizzards and storms are frequent. Only one egg is laid by each hen. It is about five inches long, pale green and has a rough shell. On the grounded pack-ice, three to five miles from open water, there

divisions composed of three metals—silver, brass and copper—all covered with beautiful engrossed designs. This is a rare example of a piece of furniture of a type used variously to hold objects connected with rituals in Hindu temples, and also sometimes for decorative purposes in the homes of wealthy inhabitants of India. The skill of the natives in lacquer work is illustrated by a small size cradle, intended either for a child's doll, or for purely ornamental uses. It has pleasing designs in red, gold and green lacquer, and is decorated with carvings of bells and birds. Wood carving of the highest type is represented by a small Indian buffalo, made of teak, which is at the same time naturalistic and artistic in conception. A colorful

tablecloth of intricate design, woven of pongee silk threads of many contrasting hues, testifies to the superior development of textile-making in Baroda. It is planned to exhibit these objects at an early date.

Collecting Alpine Plants

Mr. Emil Sella, of the staff of the Department of Botany, has gone to Wyoming on a collecting trip to obtain material for the preparation of a group of alpine plants planned for one end of the Hall of Plant Life (Hall 29). He will gather a typical representation of the flora found almost in contact with the melting snow above the timberline in the mountains of the region.

The Gaekwar of Baroda Presents Valuable Indian Art Objects

Four of the arts of India—fine embossed metal work, delicate lacquer work, carving in teakwood, and the making of excellent textiles—are represented in a gift received last month through the kindness of His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar Sir Savaji Rao III, ruling monarch of the state of Baroda. In the summer of 1933 the Gaekwar was a visitor at Field Museum, and the present gift is a result of the interest which the institution at that time aroused in His Highness.

One of the objects included in his gift is a remarkable square stool or tablette, with



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