

TWO MALE APES AVAILABLE

Kobe gorilla sent to Kyoto to mate

KOBE (Kyodo) Kobe Municipal Oji Zoo has loaned to its Kyoto counterpart Yasuko, a 15-year-old female lowland gorilla, for purposes of mating.

Gorillas in the wild are in danger of extinction, so much is hoped of their propagation in zoos. Unfortunately, captive ones are very selective in choosing a mate.

Keita, 17, Oji Zoo's male gorilla, has never managed to mate with Yasuko.

Zoo authorities thus opted to loan out Yasuko to Kyoto Municipal Zoo for three years in a bid to mate her with one of the gorillas there.

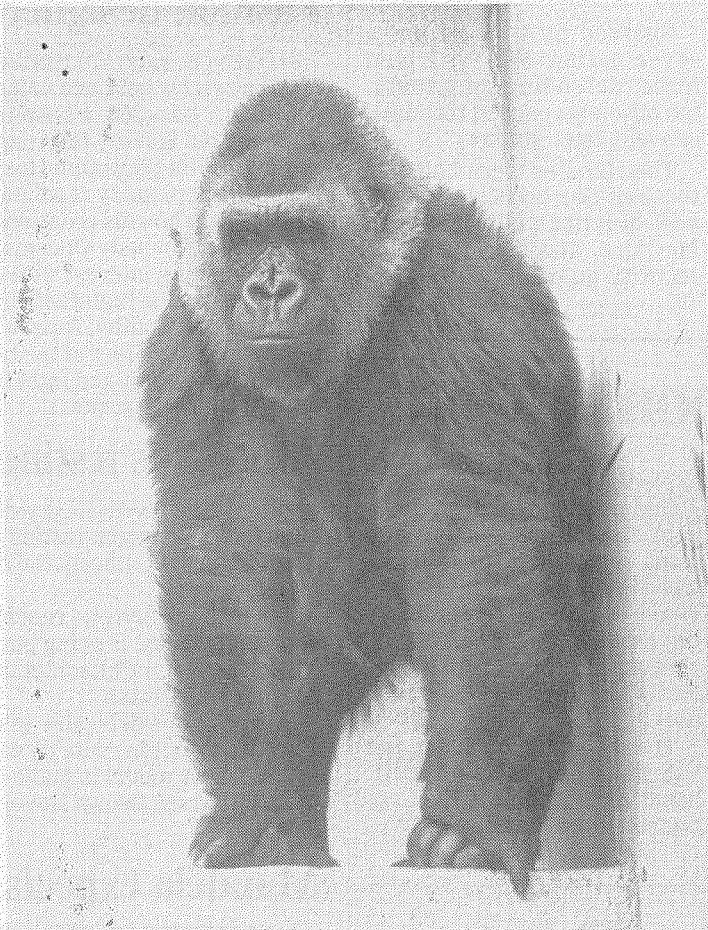
Officials hope Yasuko mates with either Mac, 22, or Kyotaro, 10, while at Kyoto.

Kyoto Zoo, with four gorillas, has the largest number at one facility in the country. The zoo has seen the successful birth of three gorillas.

There are a total of 46 gorillas housed in 25 zoos in Japan, including 25 males and 21 females.

But at present there is reportedly little likelihood of multiplying the species at those facilities.

Meanwhile, zoos are reluctant to loan out their gorillas, because the apes are main at-



YASUKO, a 15-year-old female gorilla, is now in Japan's romantic ancient capital. KYODO PHOTO

tractions.

Oji Zoo authorities said they loaned out Yasuko be-

cause they think gorillas do not belong just to Kobe but to the world.