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INTERNATIONAL

**March 2010 eNews**



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*At the Black and White Level:*



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**CORRECTION:**

In the previous newsletter we mistakenly represented Tai Shan's lineage.  
Yong Ba is Tian Tian's mother and not Mei Xiang's.  
Tai Shan's grandfather is the great Pan Pan, who is also back in Bifengxia.

**News from Zoo Atlanta**

**It is weaning time for Atlanta's giant panda toddler**

*By Keisha N. Hines*

Atlanta, Georgia — There's a big milestone approaching for Atlanta's favorite toddler! Giant panda cub Xi Lan, who will be 18 months old on March 2, will soon be weaned from his mother, 12-year-old Lun Lun.

The Animal Management Team will use the same stepwise process used with Xi Lan's sister, 3-year-old Mei Lan.

"We are committed to Xi Lan's and Lun Lun's best interest and will monitor Xi Lan and Lun Lun's behavior throughout the process," said Dr.



Rebecca Snyder, Curator of Mammals. "The stepwise process was very successful with Mei Lan, and there is no reason to expect otherwise during Xi Lan's transition."

[Full story >>](#)

[Xi Lan in action by Panda News >>](#)

## American Panda Gets Chinese Lesson

### Mei Lan, a U.S.-Born Panda Headed to China, to Receive Language Tutor, Special Diet and Blind Dates



*Mei Lan (AP Photo/Gene Blythe, File)*

**(AP)** Ni hao - hello - Mei Lan! Chinese zookeepers are advertising for a tutor to teach Chinese to an American-born giant panda arriving this week in her parents' homeland.

The language lessons, a special diet and even blind dates are also part of the red-carpet welcome being rolled out for 3-year-old Mei Lan, or Beautiful Orchid, by Chinese caretakers ahead of her arrival Friday on a special FedEx flight from the U.S.

Under a deal between China and the U.S., all giant pandas originally from China are only lent out to foreign zoos for scientific study for several years. They and any cubs they produce must all return to

China eventually.

Determined to help Mei Lan adapt more quickly to her new life, the caretakers at her new home, the Chengdu Panda Breeding Research Center in the southwestern province of Sichuan, are recruiting a language teacher via the Internet. Mei Lan has lived at a zoo in Atlanta, Georgia, since her birth in 2006.

[For complete story >>](#)

## Special Mei Lan Update

*Tuesday, February 9*

Heather says that Mei Lan is a little calmer today. She seems to be growing more accustomed to the sounds around her and is reacting less. She shifted into the adjacent enclosure today for cleaning while Heather was there and Heather was pleased to see that all of Mei Lan's feces were normal. It might sound like a strange thing to note and be happy about, but stool quality provides information about how an animal is eating and about its health. Normal, well formed stools are a good thing!

Heather said she also had a good conversation with Mei Lan's new keeper, Duan Dong Qun, through a translator. Ms. Duan had



*Photo Gallery of Mei Lan from Chengdu Base*  
[http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_49246d360100h76a.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_49246d360100h76a.html)

lots of questions about Mei Lan: her personality, her favorite foods, how to train her, and communicate with her. Heather said she couldn't ask for a better person to care for Mei Lan. Ms. Duan is being very sensitive to Mei Lan and is doing everything she can to make her comfortable. She told Heather that she is really looking forward to building a good relationship with Mei Lan. We are all happy that Mei Lan is in such good hands.

Rebecca Snyder, PhD  
Curator of Mammals  
Zoo Atlanta

**Other big news for Mei Lan** is that she has been chosen as this year's "Earth Hour" ambassador where on March 27th at 8:30pm the WWF calls on everyone to turn off the lights for one hour. This symbolic action is to pass on the world's determination to tackle climate change.

## US-born pandas doing well in new home in China

*Xinhua*  
February 23, 2010

Tang Chunxiang, director of China conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda in Wolong Nature Reserve, where Tai Shan is kept, said on Tuesday the 4.5 year old male panda likes the food and environment in his new home.

Tai Shan keeps himself busy climbing trees, running around and eating bamboo. He is very energetic and has put on weight, according to Tang.

Chengdu's sunny weather seems to have calmed Mei Lan down. The 3 year old female panda was quite upset when she first arrived at her new home at Chengdu Research Base for Giant Panda Breeding. She lost her appetite and snarled at people she didn't know. But Mei Lan is now used to her new home and eats at least 30 kilograms of bamboo and 300 grams of fruit everyday, according to Huang Mingxiang, director of the animal management department at the Chengdu Base.

[For complete story >>](#)

## Elsewhere in China

### Stranded panda lured to safety in China

February 9, 2010

BEIJING – It was like getting a cat out of a tree — Sichuan style.

Villagers in southwestern China's Sichuan province discovered a panda stranded on a steep mountain face, apparently too scared to climb down, state media reported Tuesday.

Villagers didn't dare attempt a rescue of the endangered animal but called animal conservationists and fed the panda bananas while they waited for help, the China Central Television report said. "The panda is a national treasure, so everyone's scared to hurt it," a local forestry official was quoted as saying.

The giant panda, estimated to be about 3-4 years old, was eventually lured from behind a tree with more bananas and managed to scramble off the mountain, it said.

Only about 1,600 pandas live in the wild, mostly in Sichuan. Another 120 are in Chinese breeding facilities and zoos, and about 20 live in zoos outside China.

[For full story >>](#)

[Related video >>](#)

## Bones, not bamboo, sate wild panda's appetite

*Monday, March 1, 2010 5:53 a.m. GMT  
Reporting by Reuters Television, editing by Miral Fahmy*

BEIJING (Reuters Life!) — Hunger drove a wild panda to break into a Chinese farmer's pig pen and eat their food, which was meat and bone, rather than bamboo.

State-run China Central Television said the giant panda had apparently descended from the mountains in a region of southwest China's Sichuan province and was spotted in a field before the animal was found inside the pig pen, chewing on bones and spitting out the meat.

After eating its fill, the panda quietly left.

Although classified as carnivores, the giant pandas' diet is mainly bamboo, but it also eats other foods including honey, eggs, fish, oranges and bananas when available.

Scientists believe there are around 1,600 giant pandas living in the wild in China, mostly in the mountains of the southwest.

The endangered species are considered a national icon and its existence is threatened by logging, agriculture and China's increasing human population.

## Around the World

### Panda cub a golden goose for Chiang Mai Zoo

*By the Nation*

The eight-month-old panda cub Lin Ping has generated more than Bt13.5 million in revenue in the first two months of this year, director of Chiang Mai Zoo Thanapat Pongamorn said Monday.

According to Thanapat, Lin Ping's twice daily shows have been the biggest earners for the zoo.

"Last month alone some 545,374 people watched Lin Ping



shows and spent Bt3.4 million on tickets. In February, which has not yet ended, 146,328 people have seen the shows, generating revenue worth Bt1.4 million," he said.

The zoo's income has doubled since the birth of the panda.

[For complete story >>](#)

## Tokyo to receive 2 pandas from China next year

Tokyo Gov. **Shintaro Ishihara** told reporters Friday that two pandas are expected to arrive in Tokyo early next year and would cost \$950,000 a year. "It's quite a costly deal," Ishihara said, adding that Tokyo officials bargained to get \$50,000 off the original \$1 million price tag. The payments will help rebuild a panda sanctuary in China's **Sichuan** province and fund joint breeding projects between Japan and China, he said. The sanctuary was nearly destroyed by a devastating earthquake in Sichuan in May 2008. Nearly 70,000 people were killed.

Zoos often pay about \$1 million a year to borrow pairs of pandas from China. Any cubs produced by the pandas are the property of China. "Pandas are endangered and everyone loves them," Ishihara said. "We've received strong requests from people in Tokyo and around Japan who want to see them in Tokyo again."

[For full story >>](#)

## A Huge Panda Hug to Build-A-Bear Workshop Foundation!

Each year the Build-A-Bear Workshop Foundation continues to advance its mission of improving communities and impacting lives through meaningful philanthropic programs that support children, families, animals and the environment. This year they have chosen to partner with Pandas International and donate \$2000 to our Formula Fund!

Help us say thank you by visiting a Build-A-Bear Workshop to make your own panda friend!

## News from the Panda Center

### The Class of 2009 has been named!



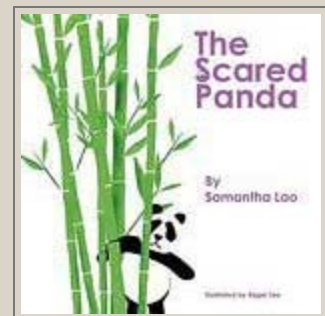
Hua Mei's—Hao Hao  
Gong Zhu's—Yun Yun  
Bai Xue's—Jin Ke  
Xi Mei's—Yin Ke  
Na Na's 1st—Xing Hui & Na Na's 2nd—Xing Rui  
You You's—Xiang Lu  
Hai Zi's—Xiang Lin

Tian Tian's 1st—Shen Wei & Tian Tian's 2nd—Bo Si  
Zi Zhu's—Zi Yan  
Ying Ying's—Shen Bin  
Le Sheng's—Shu Qin  
Ye Ye's—Lu Lin  
Guo Guo's 1st—Yao Man & Guo Guo's 2nd—Yao Xin

## News from A Member

Young author, Samantha, was interviewed recently and they put the interview on youtube. Take a look at this amazing panda lover!

[See the video >>](#)



## ADOPT A PANDA!



The 2009 cubs are in kindergarten and have their official names. They're now ready to be adopted into your home! Well, they can't come live with you (sorry!) but when you



adopt a panda cub or adult from Pandas International you'll receive exclusive updates and pictures of your panda e-mailed directly to you! You'll learn all about their personalities, daily diet (including what they like and don't like to eat) and leisurely activities. And don't forget the adorable, cute pictures. The Wolong Panda Club will take special candid photos of your adopted panda just for you - a real treat for any panda lover! You'll also be recognized for your adoption with an individual adoption plaque that will hang in the Honor Corridor at the Panda Reserve.

Maybe you have a special panda in mind that you'd like to adopt. Maybe even a Mother and Cub. Either way, the pandas are waiting for their new home!

**[Visit our Adoption Center today to see some of the pandas available for adoption >>](#)**

[TOP](#)



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