



WWF

ADOPTION

HK

Pandas

YOUR ADOPTION UPDATE

ON THE UP!

GIANT PANDA
NUMBERS HAVE
INCREASED

ALSO INSIDE



PANDA ROAD SAFETY
YOUR MESSAGES
OF SUPPORT
TIPS FOR TACKLING
CLIMATE CHANGE

YOUR FIELD REPORT



Compiled by Wan Hui of WWF-China's giant panda programme, which your adoption helps support



Main image: A beautiful female panda and her cub. Insets: Some of the survey teams in action. Inset far left: This cute baby takin was also photographed



Enjoying a chomp! Every panda has a different average bite size

POO PROFILING

One method the survey teams use to identify individual pandas is known as the bite-size technique. Here's why:

Giant pandas spend more than 12 hours a day eating, but they digest very little of the bamboo they consume. Much of what they chomp is left in their poo. As it eats a piece of bamboo a panda pushes the stalk into its mouth and bites down, then swallows. It does this time and time again, and Chinese researchers have found that different pandas have different average bite sizes.

By fishing out and measuring the bamboo fragments in a panda's droppings, the survey team can calculate the number of individual pandas in a given area – and even the age of each panda. It's a messy but effective way of estimating the number of individual bears in an area. In some areas the teams also collect samples of the poo for DNA testing.

PECULIAR PANDAS

You may be fascinated to know that your adopted Qinling bears have some distinct physical differences to other giant pandas.

Qinling pandas have smaller bodies and their heads are also smaller and rounder – although they do have big teeth. Their fur is sometimes a mix of light and dark brown, whereas giant pandas are usually black and white. So there you have it. Not only are your adopted pandas amazingly rare, they're amazingly different too!



YOUR NEXT UPDATE >> WE'LL BRING YOU ALL THE LATEST ON YOUR ADOPTED BEARS IN YOUR NEXT UPDATE, SO KEEP WATCHING THE POST.

Great news! Results of China's Fourth National Giant Panda Survey have been released and show a 16.8% increase in wild giant panda numbers

Latest estimates suggest numbers have grown from 1,596 in 2003 to 1,864 today. What's more, the range of these amazing black-and-white bears has expanded by 11.8%. These are really positive signs that conservation efforts you're helping to support are working.

GIANT EFFORT

The survey happens about once every 10 years, and as you can imagine, it's a huge operation. This fourth survey was organised by the Chinese government's State Forestry Administration. We provided funding and practical support, including helping to train and equip the survey teams. We also played an active role in developing the technical work-plans and guidelines.

“ As well as evidence that the population has increased we now have new and vital information about the quality of panda habitat ”

The survey covered over four million hectares in 62 counties across Sichuan, Shaanxi and Gansu Provinces. It included the mountain ranges of Minshan, Qionglai, Liangshan, Daxiangling, Xiaoxiangling and Qinling – where the bears live.

OUT FOR THE COUNT

Identifying and counting giant pandas is a difficult task. The remote mountain ranges where they live can only be reached on foot, and the survey teams had to cover vast areas of steep, rocky terrain.

The teams went out day after day, systematically searching for tell-tale panda signs such as droppings, paw prints, claw marks and scent markings on trees. Of course everyone hoped they'd spot an actual panda too, even though the chances of this are rare! They collected all the panda signs they found

and recorded the locations using a global position system (GPS). It was hard and tiring work, but their efforts were worth it.

As well as evidence that the panda population has increased, we now have new and crucial information about the quality of their habitat. For example, we know more about the condition of the bamboo forests pandas depend on, including the amount of disturbance caused by local people taking fuel wood, medicinal plants and other resources. This will help us identify any links between people's activities and the threats pandas face, so we can introduce measures to tackle any problems.

I hope you're proud to know that funds from your panda adoption help support our ongoing work to give these critically endangered bears a more hopeful future. Thank you! 🐼



CLIMATE CHANGE

FOR THE LOVE OF...

PANDAS

Many habitats and species are already being affected by climate change and more will feel its impact in the coming years. To protect the things we love, we're proud to be part of the Climate Coalition – more than 100 organisations campaigning for action on climate change.



NURTURING NATURE

We're always looking for opportunities to spread the word about protecting giant pandas.

And a newly-opened nature room at Heihe National Forest Park Tourist Centre gives us the perfect opportunity to reach even more people. The centre lies just off the 108 National Road, on the route to Heihe Forest Park and Laoxiancheng Nature Reserve – both major tourist destinations.

BEAR FACTS

We helped set up the nature room, which is full of interactive and informative displays about the forest and its wild inhabitants, including giant pandas. We're organising lots of fun activities to help increase people's understanding of the threats pandas face, and hope they'll be as inspired as you are about helping to give these incredible bears a more hopeful future.

USEFUL UNDERBEARINGS

We're pushing for panda crossings and other safety measures in Qinling, to protect the bears

The 108 National Road runs through the Qinling mountains and crosses forests where giant pandas and other wild animals live. In fact it separates two of the largest panda populations. We're working hard to reduce the dangers of wildlife crossing this busy road by testing out protection measures, including panda-friendly passageways called 'ecoducts'.

Building ecoducts under roads enables pandas and other wildlife to move from place to place without setting foot (or paw) in front of traffic. It's safer for them and for people too. Imagine driving along your local motorway and finding a panda right in front of you – it could be disastrous.



place without setting foot (or paw) in front of traffic



An underpass tunnel ecoduct

WILDLIFE WATCH

Using camera traps, we've been monitoring a section of road for over a year now to see whether ecoducts really do work. I'm delighted to tell you that the signs are very positive. We now have camera trap evidence of lots of different animals using them, including leopard cats, takins and serow (both types of goat-antelope).

We'll use this crucial information to push for more wildlife safety measures to be built into road plans. And, although we haven't found any pictures of pandas yet, we'll continue with our monitoring and let you know how it progresses.

Building ecoducts enables pandas and other wildlife to move from place to

YOU'RE AMAZING!

In your last update, we asked you to send your messages of support to Wan Hui and the field team in China, and lots of you responded. Thank you so much! We've passed the messages to Wan Hui, but we also promised to feature some of them in your adoption update. So here are a handful of them:



“ I love pandas and have attached a photo of me with my toy panda called Spot. My nannie knitted him for me. Thank you for looking after the pandas. ”

From
Sophie, age 6

“ A big thank you to all the panda rangers. Your work is so important and valuable. It is so vital that these beautiful creatures are protected. Thank you on behalf of the pandas. ”

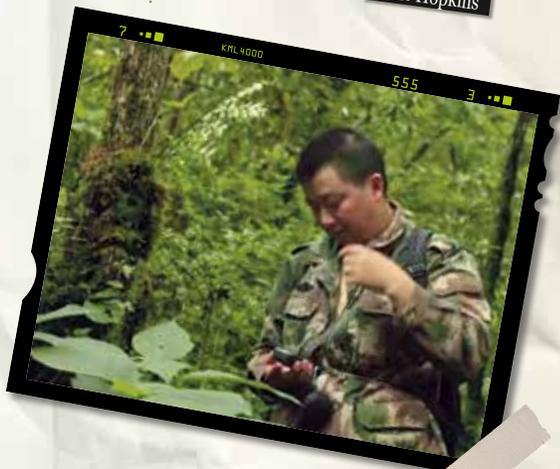
From
Elizabeth Freeman

“ I am so pleased about the recent news on the giant pandas. Thank you so much for what you are doing for them. Pandas are my favourite animals and I can't bear to lose them. One day I want to see a panda in the forest and work for WWF. ”

From Rahera
Greatrex

“ The work you do is truly amazing, you should be proud. You save countless pandas' lives and you're an inspiration to everyone. Without your work the panda population would probably be near extinction. Keep up the good work and thank you for protecting this precious species. ”

From
Josie Hopkins



We want to hear from you

Send us your pictures, messages of support, or tell us what you love about your adopted animal. We'll feature some in future issues. Email us at adopt@wwf.org.hk

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BE A CHAMPION CHOOSER

Pick locally sourced food, environmentally friendly products, and make your home more energy-efficient



CHAT ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Discussion about climate change in other countries: wwf.org.uk/talkclimate

Get involved!

We can all do our bit to help tackle climate change. Here are some top tips for showing the planet (and PANDAS) some love

Find more planet-friendly tips at: wwf.org.uk/tips



MUNCH PLANET-FRIENDLY FOOD

Find out why eating less meat and more veg can help. Check out our green eating plan: wwf.org.uk/livewell



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

wwf.org.hk

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WWF-Hong Kong, 15/F, Manhattan Centre, 8 Kwai Cheong Road, Kwai Chung, N.T., Hong Kong.
Tel: (852) 2526 1011, Fax: (852) 2845 2734, Email: adopt@wwf.org.hk
Registered Name 註冊名稱: World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong 世界自然(香港)基金會
(Incorporated in Hong Kong with limited liability by guarantee 於香港註冊成立的擔保有限公司)



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