



3930 West Land Park Drive
Sacramento, CA 95822-1123
sac zoo.org

Media Release

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It's a girl! The Sacramento Zoo welcomes the birth of an endangered red panda cub



On Monday, June 25 one of the Sacramento Zoo's red pandas gave birth to a female cub. The cub was born to seven-year-old mother, Pili, and nine-year-old father, Takeo. The pregnancy was confirmed last month during Pili's annual exam. The expectant mother has been closely monitored over a closed-circuit video system in an off-exhibit maternity den where she gave birth. This birth makes the cub one of approximately 200 red pandas in zoological institutions across North America.

The cub and mother were closely monitored by veterinary and zookeeper staff around the clock. Staff noticed signs that Pili was exhibiting neglectful maternal behaviors, including leaving the cub unattended in the outside area of her den. After roughly 24 hours of observation, the decision was made to intervene and hand raise the cub, giving her cub the best opportunity to thrive. Allowing a red panda mother to attentively care for her cub is optimal in most cases, but when factors including maternal neglect are observed, it is important for animal care staff to intervene. The cub is currently being closely monitored and cared for on-grounds in the ICU area of the zoo's Dr. Murray E. Fowler Veterinary Hospital.

Veterinary staff performed a brief neonatal exam on June 26. At that time, the cub weighed just under four ounces (113 grams) and was hypothermic. Her temperature has since returned to normal and she is vocalizing during her frequent feedings. The cub is and will continue to be cared for in the ICU in a neonatal incubator over the next several months.



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Tube Feeding at 48 hours

The cub is being fed every three hours, around the clock. Veterinary staff are hand-feeding formula with a lactase supplement as red pandas are lactose intolerant. These feedings will continue every three hours and sometimes can be publicly viewed at the window of the Dr. Murray E. Fowler Veterinary Hospital.

Red pandas are generally shy and solitary, except during breeding season. Females give birth in the spring and summer, typically to one to four cubs. Highly sensitive red panda cubs remain in their nest for at least 90 days with their mothers. Male red pandas take little to no interest in their young, as the pair separate shortly after breeding.

Red panda cubs have a high mortality rate with roughly 50 percent surviving to the one-month mark. The zoo's other pair of red pandas, Amaya and Benjamin, who are being housed off exhibit for a breeding recommendation, recently gave birth to a cub who unfortunately didn't survive past 48 hours. Amaya and Benjamin will continue to live behind-the-scenes while Pili and Takeo will be on exhibit daily. Red pandas are listed as Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and are native to Eastern Asia, including Nepal, Myanmar Tibet and south-central China.

The Sacramento Zoo supports the Red Panda Network, an organization committed to the conservation of wild red pandas and their habitat through the education and empowerment of local communities. Support of conservation organizations is increasingly important for this at-risk species whose habitat is threatened due to deforestation through logging and the spread of agriculture. The Sacramento Zoo has been an active participant in the Red Panda Species Survival Plan® since 1999.

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Open since 1927, the Sacramento Zoo is home to more than 500 native, rare and endangered animals and is one of more than 200 accredited institutions of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Located near the corner of Land Park Drive and Sutterville Road in William Land Park, the zoo is wholly managed by the non-profit Sacramento Zoological Society. This Sacramento treasure inspires conservation awareness through education and recreation. Daily admission is 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., zoo grounds are open until 5 p.m. General admission is \$14.95; children ages 2-11 are \$9.95 and one and under are admitted free. Parking is free throughout the park or ride Regional Transit bus #6. For information, call 916-808-5888 or visit sac zoo.org.