

Roundworms killing China's wild pandas

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Conservationists say a roundworm called *Baylisascaris schroederi* is killing China's wild pandas.

Peter Daszak of the Consortium for Conservation Medicine told USA Today that a disease most likely caused by the roundworm is the most significant cause of death of wild pandas in the last decade and the problem appears to be getting worse.

The disease can infect the brain and other vital organs, the newspaper said.

The report, which will be published in the journal *EcoHealth*, said the pandas' shrinking habitat has forced the animals to live in closer proximity and increased their exposure to the parasite through infected droppings.

The researchers, led by Shuyi Zhang of East China Normal University in Shanghai, tracked 789 panda deaths over 30 years, the newspaper said.

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