US-born panda gives birth to eighth cub

September 17 2010

Hua Mei, the first overseas-born giant panda to return to China, is pictured in 2004. Hua Mei gave birth to her eighth cub Friday, a rare feat for the endangered species, which has been notoriously difficult to breed, Chinese state press reported.

A giant panda born in the United States gave birth to her eighth cub Friday, a rare feat for the endangered species, which has been notoriously difficult to breed, Chinese state press reported.

Hua Mei, born at the San Diego Zoo in August 1999, gave birth to a male cub at the Wolong preserve in southwest China's Sichuan province, the China News Service said.

All of Hua Mei's cubs -- three sets of twins and two single cubs -- have been born since the panda returned to China from the United States in 2004, it said.

According to most loan agreements, the offspring of pandas loaned by China to zoos around the world belong to China.

After her seventh cub was born last year, Hua Mei -- whose name means "China-America" -- was named a "heroic mother," the report said.

Hua Mei, which means "China-America," was currently busy nursing her latest cub, which was in good health and active, it said.

Giant pandas are the world's most endangered species, with about 1,600 living in the wild and over 300 bred in captivity at zoos. They have a notoriously low libido, which has frustrated efforts to boost their numbers.

According to Xinhua news agency, Friday's birth was the 16th at Wolong this year, with more expected before year's end.

(c) 2010 AFP

Citation: US-born panda gives birth to eighth cub (2010, September 17) retrieved 10 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2010-09-us-born-panda-birth-eighth-cub.html