

Scottish zoo fears panda miscarriage (Update)

September 1 2014



Tian Tian ('Sweetie'), female giant panda, relaxes in her compound at Edinburgh Zoo, on August 9, 2013

Britain's only female giant panda, thought to be pregnant, has passed her due date with no sign of a panda baby appearing.

Edinburgh Zoo's Tian Tian should have gone into labour over the weekend, according to experts, but tests indicated she may have miscarried.

"Giant panda Tian Tian is now past her due date and the evidence suggests that this may be bad news," said Iain Valentine, director of giant pandas for the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland.

"She is still displaying some of the behaviours of a pregnant panda, but the scientific data from the urine analysis of her hormones is becoming more atypical. "

The 10-year-old pandas Tian Tian (Sweetie) and male Yang Guang (Sunshine), on loan from China, are the first giant pandas to live in Britain for 17 years. Tian Tian lost a cub at a late term last year.

Animal protection group OneKind said Edinburgh Zoo should abandon attempts to breed a baby panda.

"Unlike a human mother who makes the choice to undergo artificial insemination, Tian Tian has no say in whether she has these procedures," said OneKind policy director Libby Anderson.

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