

# World's oldest giant panda in captivity dies in Hong Kong

October 17 2016

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According to the Ocean Park Hong Kong theme park Jia Jia, the world's oldest giant panda in captivity, was put down after her health deteriorated over the last two weeks, leaving her unable to walk without difficulty, as well as other complications

The world's oldest ever giant panda in captivity died on Sunday aged 38 at a Hong Kong theme park, officials said.

Jia Jia was put down after her health rapidly deteriorated over the last two weeks leaving her unable to walk without difficulty, a statement from the Ocean Park Hong Kong theme park said.

Born in the wild in China's Sichuan province in 1978, Jia Jia was given to Hong Kong in 1999 to mark the semi-autonomous city's handover by Britain two years earlier.

But as her health declined over recent days, her [food consumption](#) slumped from more than 10 kilogrammes (22 pounds) a day to less than three and her weight also declined.

"Her state became so debilitated that based on ethical reasons and in order to prevent suffering, veterinarians from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and Ocean Park agreed to a humane euthanasia for Jia Jia," the theme park said.

"This is a day we knew would eventually come, but it is nevertheless a sad day for everyone at the Park, especially for the Park's keepers who took care of her over the years," Ocean Park chairman Leo Kung added.

In July 2015 the [giant panda](#) was presented with a towering birthday cake made from ice and fruit juice with the number 37 carved on top in her enclosure.

Jia Jia, whose name translates as "excellence", picked at fruit slices and bamboo around the ice cake to celebrate her big day as a record-breaking bear—becoming the oldest panda panda ever living in captivity.

There are fewer than 2,000 pandas now left in the wild, according to the World Wildlife Fund, as their habitats have been ravaged by development.

Given their low birthrate, captive breeding programmes have become key to ensuring their survival.

According to Ocean Park, Jia Jia gave birth five times to six panda cubs.

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