

Inuka, first polar bear born in the tropics, may be put down

April 12 2018



Inuka has lived his whole life at Singapore Zoo

An elderly polar bear at Singapore zoo, one of the site's most beloved animals, may be put down after its health deteriorated markedly, the zoo operator said Thursday.

Inuka, the first polar bear born in the tropics, has reached the grand old age of 27—well into his 70s in human years and two years older than the [average lifespan](#) of the creatures in captivity.

Zoo operator Wildlife Reserves Singapore said an April 3 examination revealed that the health of Inuka, who has been receiving treatment for arthritis for some time, had declined markedly.

The bear's [activity levels](#) have fallen over the past three months and he now prefers resting over interacting with his keepers, a statement said.

Inuka—who was born at the zoo, which describes him as their "most prominent senior resident"—had been popular with visitors due to his playful antics in his pool enclosure.

But he has now cut back on swimming, his walking is stiffer, and he is less interested in his daily playing sessions involving traffic cones, balls and ice blocks embedded with his favourite food, the zoo said.

Veterinarians have ramped up the bear's daily care regimen and are administering medication, and a second [health](#) check will take place in late April.



Singapore Zoo describes Inuka as its "most prominent senior resident"

"If results indicate that Inuka's welfare is not improving with these intensive treatments, his care team may have to make the very difficult decision not to allow him to recover from anaesthesia on humane and welfare grounds," said the statement.

Inuka's annual birthday celebration is one of the high points for visitors in the zoo's calendar, and last year he celebrated with a special jelly and salmon cake.

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