

Hong Kong welcomes birth of first giant panda cubs

August 15 2024



Men wearing panda costumes stand outside food stalls in Beijing in July 2024.

Hong Kong on Thursday announced the birth of a set of giant panda twins, the first cubs to be born in the city.

Ying Ying who delivered the male and female cubs on the eve of her 19th birthday, has become the oldest giant panda to successfully give birth for the first time, the park housing the pandas in the Chinese city said.

The cubs were born in the early hours of Thursday after a nearly five-month pregnancy.

"The city's beloved giant panda, Ying Ying, gave birth to one female and one [male offspring](#) at Ocean Park on 15 August 2024, just one day before her 19th birthday," the city's [theme park](#) said in a statement.

Ying Ying and the twins' father Le Le, were first gifted to Hong Kong by Beijing in 2007 and successfully mated in March at Ocean Park, the theme park that houses them.

"This birth is a true rarity, especially considering Ying Ying is the oldest giant panda on record to have successfully given birth for the first time," Ocean Park said in a statement.

Hong Kong leader John Lee welcomed the birth saying "this year marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, which makes the [birth](#) of the first lovely Hong Kong-born pigeon pair of cubs ...even more special".

The mother and her cubs will be monitored around the clock by the park's veterinary teams and experts from the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda, the government added.

Giant pandas are notoriously reluctant to mate, which zoologists say contributes to the dwindling population of the species—with an estimated 1,800 of them left in the wild.

Last month, Lee said that China will send another pair of [giant pandas](#) to Hong Kong to mark its 27th year under Chinese rule.

They are expected to arrive next month.

© 2024 AFP

Citation: Hong Kong welcomes birth of first giant panda cubs (2024, August 15) retrieved 16 August 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-08-hong-kong-birth-giant-panda.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.