

Panda fever - expensive hobby

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July 6 in Atlanta, reported: When the giant panda Ling-Ling Yen came to the National Zoo in Washington in 1972 the American people fell in love with them immediately. 30 years later, Americans on China's national treasures like the giant panda is only reduced.

At first, giant pandas in China and the United States is, "a symbol of friendship"; now, the two countries have begun to study the habits of giant pandas, giant pandas development of protected areas and train professionals to save this endangered species. However, like any period of relations, these changes were expensive.

Now the United States has a total of 13 giant pandas, the zoo in Atlanta, Memphis Zoo, and National Zoo San Diego Zoo. At the National Zoo lies Ling-Ling and Yen, respectively in 1992 and 1999 ushered in after the death of the giant panda Mei Xiang and Tian Tian.

The giant panda is now no longer a "gift." China and the U.S. signed a lease agreement for 10-12 years. Per year the adult pandas are at least 100 million dollars. The funds will be used to China's giant panda conservation and research projects. The president of Zoo Atlanta, Dennis Kelly said, "In addition to the costs of borrowing, the United States would also like to help the zoo's giant panda research funds to provide food and accommodation. We know most of the costs are transferred to the Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding Research Base. The base of a new training center, so that can keep the breeding of giant pandas and take care of their twins. We also know that with our funding, where able to build a new animal hospital."

Giant Pandas eat every day a large number of bamboo, but is limited to several types. In Atlanta, for Lun Lun, Yang Yang and their three-year-old baby Meilan get 80-100 kg per day of food, it is necessary to cut the bamboo for more than one village. "From the food, the giant panda is the most expensive of our zoo animals." Kelly said.

Regardless of commercial farms, family farms are free of charge to provided bamboo, but the need to hire the zoo to spend 5-6 days a week to cut bamboo. Just cut off the giant panda must eat fresh bamboo, Kelly said that after the cut bamboo otherwise lost 36-48 of nutritional value. Similarly, the San Diego Zoo and the Memphis Zoo are on their own land or land near the county of bamboo to feed the pandas. Both the zoo and the human burden harvest the bamboo.

In January, the bamboo species fails to grow in time and the National Zoo suffered a serious shortage of bamboo. Despite their production base from the other bamboo, they are very worried, but held a press conference dedicated to local farmers for help.

According to the National Zoo spokesman Karin Korpowski, the zoo received the help of "unimaginable to many, however, we believe that sufficient quantity of bamboo probably is not enough to eat twice the giant panda." They finally find a road along the bamboo production base, and think of ways to solve their own problem planting bamboo farm.

Giant pandas from southwest China, will be given to zoos in the United States to create a similar habitat. In Memphis, Ya-Ya and Le Le have been carefully protected, living in a area of 3 hectares, 16 million U.S. dollars is the cost of a exhibition hall.

"The whole hall is built to imitate Chinese garden," the zoo spokesman Drew Smith explains. Animals, plants, construction, and even voices comes from China. The Hall was built in 2003, which greatly increased the number, the zoo has become the main source of income.

Memphis, San Diego and Atlanta Zoo mainly rely on ticket sales, membership fees and contributions burden the cost of the giant panda. However, during an economic slump, has become very difficult to raise funds.

Zoo Atlanta later this year lease on the loan agreement expired. They are consensus 5-year extension, lease costs about 21-22 million dollars. But there are still about 500,000 U.S. dollars not put together. In order to get public support, the zoo has a "Pay to Stay so They Can" (www.givesotheycanstay.org) the name of the fund-raising campaign, hoping to rely on people's favorite pair of giant pandas to raise money.

In January, when the zoo closed because of budget constraints, so did the PandaCam. Soon, a patron donated sufficient funds to enable "Live Panda" to return to the network. Now, a so-called [Earthcam](#) makes the sponsor of the Zoo Atlanta panda live to continue to operate.

At the National Zoo in Washington Fujifilm donated a one-time donation of 78 million U.S. dollars to help the zoo study the habits of giant pandas and panda habitat - including the two kinds of trees, the caves and the garden pond. But they also need to find new donors to meet the needs of corporate animal "extravagant" lifestyle.

Zoo Giant Panda remains the most attractive animal, especially the baby's birth. Panda Bai Yun in San Diego Zoo has given birth to four baby pandas in 1999, and is said to about a month after the pregnancy she may have. Her two children have returned to China to bear children. Not only that, but giant pandas are back in China to follow the latest research results.

It is not just cute panda eyes that make them attractive creatures, they have been in the United States for further study. U.S. Wolong, panda expert with China's national protected areas, work closely with Chinese partners to study the DNA sequencing of the giant panda, reproduction, behavior and nutrition topics.

Zoo Atlanta, has a training of experts to explore a set of voluntary blood donation Panda methods, and methods to teach the behavior of experts in China. Invented by a San Diego Zoo panda milk formula has been domesticated to help giant pandas in China will be increased to 99% survival rate.

San Diego Zoo has recently extended the loan of giant pandas for 5 years. It is now an annual payment of 50 million dollars will be used in earthquake severely damaged the Wolong National Nature Reserve Protection and Research Center of China's reconstruction. The last time statistics show that the number of wild giant pandas only about 1600.