



PRESS RELEASE

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Visitors at the Ähtäri Zoo Take Part in Wildlife Conservation

Ähtäri Zoo has representatives at the Matka 2019 travel fair, at section 6f38, to introduce people to tourism services in the Ähtäri area, the animal park, and its pandas. The park's panda couple, Jin Baobao and Hua bao, known to Finns as Lumi and Pyry, left China's panda center and came to Ähtäri precisely one year ago, on January 18. To honor this anniversary, a 12-person group from Ähtäri's partner city in China, Dujiangyan, visits the travel fair. Ähtäri Zoo is part of the international giant panda conservation effort and works in cooperation with the [CCRCGP](#), China's Forestry and Grassland Administration's nature conservation unit, and several research centers. Every Ähtäri Zoo visitor helps support the work done at the park.

Visit Us and Care for Animals

Several zoos and animal parks around Europe work together to protect and conserve animal species. Ähtäri Zoo is also involved in various partnership projects and does its part to fund these efforts. The zoo has a key role in Finnish forest reindeer conservation, and this conservation project has shown positive results. The first Finnish forest reindeer calves were born in the wild. Another good example of the park's work is the European mink, a species that is extinct in the Finnish wilderness but has reproduced at the Ähtäri Zoo, in the park's natural conditions. Furthermore, Ähtäri Zoo takes part in the international efforts to protect snow leopards and has its role in giant panda conservation. A project that aims to protect the giant panda in its natural habitat in China has proceeded well, and pandas have been reintroduced into the wild. People often ask how they can support the Ähtäri Zoo and its conservation efforts. The answer is simple: every Ähtäri Zoo visitor helps support the work done at the animal park. Visit us and you care for the animals.

The Aim of Environmental Education Is to Achieve Sustainable Development and a Sustainable Way of Life

The Ähtäri Zoo as a whole is a unique site, where you can study and learn about the flora and fauna in Finland's vast forests. Environmental education has been given a larger emphasis in the park's operations. Since December last year, Ähtäri Zoo has employed an environmental educator, who drafts an environmental plan for the park and oversees its realization. The information provided on our tours is also being developed to support environmental education efforts. Our environmental educator is in charge of cooperation with various educational institutes and, for example, making sure that school study trip services match the teachers' and students' current needs, with the new multidisciplinary focus in the general curriculum in place. The main goal of environmental education is to achieve sustainable development and a sustainable way of life.

A Popular Travel Destination All Year Round

The Ähtäri Zoo is open daily all year round. All the animals in the park, except for brown bears, are as energetic as ever in the winter, and they even enjoy it. The park looks exquisitely beautiful with its winter look and snow cover, and the pandas do not hibernate, so you can see them play as usual. The Ähtäri Zoo and its surrounding areas are a wonderful destination at the heart of Finland for any traveler who appreciates clean nature, animals, and wide-ranging activities. The city of Ähtäri is only a few hours' car ride away from Finland's biggest cities. You can also take a train or bus to visit the area. In 2018, ca. 275,000 visitors heard the call of the pandas and visited the Ähtäri Zoo. These travelers boosted the visitor numbers and tourism in the whole Southern Ostrobothnia area. Overnight stays in the Southern Ostrobothnia area increased by 7% in January–November of 2018, whereas Finland as a whole had a 2% increase in overnight stays. Source: [Visiittori.fi](#) | © TAK Travel Research Company. The Ähtäri Zoo expects a conservative 5–7% increase in visitation for this year.

ÄHTÄRI ZOO

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Ähtäri Zoo on toiminut vuodesta 1973 ja se on Suomen vanhin luonnonmukainen eläinpuisto. Puistossa on nykyään yli 50 eri eläinlajia, joista suurin osa on havumetsävyöhykkeelle tyypillisiä lajeja. Kansainvälinen eläinsuojelutyö on tärkeä osa Ähtäri Zoon toimintaa. www.ahtarizoo.fi



At www.ahtarizoo.fi/kilpailu you can find a raffle that is open during the travel fair. You can win a holiday in Ähtäri and a chance to experience what it is like to work as an animal keeper for a day at the Ähtäri Zoo.

Requests for interviews and pictures:

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