



PRESS RELEASE 18 January 2018 at 11.00 am

Ähtäri Zoo giant pandas' flight to Finland goes successfully

The much awaited Ähtäri Zoo's snow panda couple Lumi (Jin BaoBao) and Pyry (Hua Bao) arrived at Helsinki-Vantaa Airport this morning. The pandas' journey from China to Finland went as planned.

The pandas' journey started at the Dujiangyan Panda Centre on Wednesday, 17 January. They first went to Chengdu Airport, from where they travelled 6,500 km to Helsinki. The pandas were transported to Finland by DHL, which has participated in several panda transport operations.

The pandas did not have to make the long trip to Finland alone. With them were Ähtäri Zoo's panda keeper **Anna Palmroth** and veterinarian Heini Niinimäki. A Chinese veterinarian and a panda keeper were also on board. "The flight was peaceful, as the presence of familiar people keeps pandas calm. During the trip, the pandas also got food and drink, naturally. Their packed lunch included their favourite foods: bamboo, carrot, apple and panda cakes," Anna Palmroth says.

Festive reception for Lumi and Pyry

In Finland, the pandas were greeted with a welcoming event, attended by invited guests from China and Finland. From Helsinki-Vantaa Airport the pandas continued towards Ähtäri Zoo.

"When the pandas arrive at Ähtäri, they get to go to their own indoor enclosures where they have fresh bamboo to make their adaptation easier. During the first few days, we will monitor the pandas' behaviour and appetite intensively," Palmroth says.

The Chinese veterinarian and panda keeper will stay in Ähtäri for a month. "They will guide us Finns in all panda-related things and make sure that we have enough expertise in caring for the pandas."

The public can admire the Snowpandas Pyry and Lumi for the first time on Saturday, 17 February. Tickets to the Panda House are on sale at the Ähtäri Zoo website and www.lippu.fi.

Video of the pandas' arrival to Finland (available at the latest at 3.00 pm):

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qhx84srt90id3fb/AAB6YdtdXaGqounPfO_My1Uja?dl=0

More information

Ähtäriin Eläinpuisto Oy – Ähtäri Zoo

Kari Vainio, acting CEO
kari.vainio@ahtarizoo.fi
tel. + 358 40 560 8455

Requests for interviews and pictures

Ähtäriin Eläinpuisto Oy – Ähtäri Zoo

Lea Lahtinen, Sales Manager
lea.lahtinen@ahtarizoo.fi
tel. +358 44 752 5979

Ähtäri Zoo

Ähtäri Zoo was founded in 1973 and is the oldest natural zoo in Finland. There are presently over 50 species at the zoo, most of which are typical species of coniferous forest zone. International animal conservation work is an important part of Ähtäri Zoo's operations. www.ahtarizoo.fi