
Animals, Conservation

Panda stalking reveals panda hangouts

By Helen Thompson 2:00pm, March 27, 2015



Scientists used GPS trackers to learn about the giant panda lifestyle. They also planted a few cameras across their observation area, and one captured this panda sauntering through the snow.

Giant pandas (*Ailuropoda melanoleuca*) may not be quite the lone rangers they're reputed to be, researchers report March 27 in the *Journal of Mammology*.

A research team strapped GPS collars to five wild pandas — one male and four females — that live in Wolong Nature Reserve in China and sporadically tracked their movements from 2010 to 2012. Compared with other bears, the pandas had smaller individual ranges, probably a result of their low-energy bamboo diets. The pandas also frequented 20 to 30 core areas that may be important for feeding.

Though perceived as largely solitary foragers, the researchers were surprised to see pandas occasionally spend time in the same place at the same time. Understanding how such interactions fit into the panda lifestyle can inform conservation efforts.

View the video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/kKcxuil3scM>

PANDA TRACKERS Using GPS trackers, researchers mapped the movements of five pandas: three female adults, Pan Pan, Mei Mei and Zhong Zhong; a young female, Long Long; and a

male dubbed Chuan Chuan. The video shows the pandas' movements from May 2010 to August 2012 at a rate of roughly one month per second.

Credit: Michigan State University Center for Systems Integration and Sustainability

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