

MEDIA RELEASE



Adelaide Zoo launches bamboo plantation at Bolivar tomorrow

A bamboo plantation at Bolivar – to be officially “launched” tomorrow (Friday) -- will ensure the Giant Pandas Wang Wang and Funi are provided with sufficient quantities of their preferred diet.

Zoos SA CEO Dr Chris West says the Adelaide Zoo’s giant pandas will arrive in October, but the process of ensuring they will be well fed is underway.

The eight-hectare plantation of bamboo has been planted at Bolivar and should be ready for harvesting within 12 months.

Dr West, Zoos SA President Heather Caddick and Curator of Horticulture Jeff Lugg will inspect the plantation on Friday, 19 June, at 11 am.

SA Water has leased the land to the Zoo under a 20-year agreement and will ensure the necessary infrastructure to water the plantation is in place.

“The importance of this plantation cannot be stressed enough, as without it we would have great difficulty meeting the requirements of the pandas,” Dr West says.

Wang Wang and Funi will each require about 20 kg of bamboo a day after they settle in Adelaide.

Mr Lugg says the large quantities of bamboo are consumed because the plant is very low on nutritional content.

The Bolivar site should be able to provide all the bamboo required by the pandas within two years, he says.

“Until then, we hope the public will continue to support the Zoo and the pandas by allowing us to cut bamboo from their properties,” Mr Lugg says.

Members of the public wishing to contribute to the bamboo collections can register on the Zoos SA website.

The registry already helps maintain a constant supply of bamboo for the Zoo’s four Red pandas.

Dr West says eight species of bamboo have been planted at Bolivar to ensure Wang Wang and Funi have a varied diet. The species are *Phyllostachys aurea*, *Phyllostachys nigra*, *Bambusa old hamii*, *Bambusa multiplex fernleaf*, *Bambusa multiplex Alfonse Karr*, *Bambusa ventricose*, *Shibatea kumasaca* and *Pseudosasa japonica*.

“Bamboo from the plantation has already been sampled by our Red pandas and they have given it the seal of approval,” Dr West says.

SA Water Chief Executive Anne Howe says SA Water is proud to be involved in assisting Zoos SA to supply the bamboo for Adelaide’s Giant Pandas.

“Our site at Bolivar provides a great location to grow the bamboo because of its size and also the availability of treated wastewater from the nearby wastewater treatment plant for watering purposes,” Ms Howe says.

“We have contributed \$40,000 for the infrastructure upgrade to ensure the irrigation system is suitable for watering the bamboo.

“The arrival of the pandas in October will be great for South Australia and the Adelaide Zoo, and SA Water is excited to be a partner in this project.”

WHAT : Bamboo plantation launch

WHERE: Turn Left off Port Wakefield Rd onto St Kilda Rd. Continue down road and pass over Robinson Rd intersection. Entrance gates are 200m on the left. Please wait at gates.

WHEN: 11AM

For information or interviews contact Zoos SA media office Emily Rice on 0417 089 937 or Chris Rann of Rann Communication on 08 8211 7771.