

Panda cubs doing well in Atlanta zoo, video streamed online

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These are Lun Lun's cubs when they were newborn. They are 25 days old now and can be seen live on Zoo Atlanta's PandaCam via EarthCam.

Lun Lun gave birth to them on July 15 at Zoo Atlanta. They are the first set of giant panda twins born in the United States since 1987.

Zoo staff was expecting a single birth and were thrilled by the extra bundle of joy.

Zoo Atlanta maintains a daily blog with the livestreamed EarthCam video about Lun Lun and her cubs.

"Now that Lun Lun is leaving the cubs uncovered more and more, if you watch closely on PandaCam you might be able to see a cub nursing. Lun Lun nurses in a variety of positions. Sometimes she is lying down and it's very hard to see the cub at all. But one of her nursing postures is sitting up and that's when you are most likely to get a glimpse," said Dr. Rebecca Snyder, Zoo Atlanta curator of mammals on the blog.

Snyder added that Lun Lun "often licks the cub while in this position. She does a great job keeping the cubs very clean. She often licks them while they are nursing. That increases the difficulty when we are listening for nursing, because it's hard to hear the quiet sound of suckling when the louder sound of her licking is also occurring. It's much easier now that we can see the cubs better."

During a video chat, Snyder said the noisier cub is the one born first. The cubs are unnamed as of yet but they are referred to as "Cub A" and "Cub B".

The cubs will get their names in a naming ceremony when they turn 100 days old. The ceremony will be done following Chinese tradition, zoo personnel said.

Here's the video of the cubs' birth.

Fifteen-year-old Lun Lun is a veteran mom, and has already had three babies here with her partner Yang Yang, both on loan from China.

While pandas do give birth to twins in the wild they are physically only able to raise one, and leave the second cub behind to perish.

But that of course will not happen here, and zoo staff will swap the cubs out so that Lun Lun can have a chance at successfully raising both. — with Reuters/ELR, GMA News

