

SUPPORT THE MOON BEAR RESCUE

Please sign up to help Animals Asia end bear farming in China



Asiatic black bears (known as moon bears because of the golden crescents on their chests) can spend up to 25 years in coffin-sized cages where they are milked daily for their bile, often through crude, filthy catheters. The process is agonising. The bears are also milked through permanently open holes in their abdomens. This is the so-called “humane” free-dripping technique. It is the only permitted method of bile extraction in China, but still causes constant pain and the slow death of the bears.

The bile is used in traditional Chinese medicine, even though cheap and effective herbal and synthetic alternatives are readily available. In fact, the Chinese pharmacopoeia lists more than 50 herbal alternatives to bear bile.

Animals Asia is working with the Chinese authorities to rescue bears from the hellish farms and bring them to our Moon Bear Rescue Centre in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. Our goal is to end bear bile farming. The sanctuary, which is a collaborative effort of the Animals Asia team, two levels of government and, importantly, our wonderful supporters, has to date taken more than 245 suffering and endangered bears into its care.

In July 2000, after years of negotiating and lobbying, Animals Asia Founder and CEO Jill Robinson signed a landmark agreement with the Chinese authorities to rescue 500 moon bears and work towards ending bear farming. The farmers are compensated financially so they can either retire or set up in another business. Their licences are taken away permanently. Officially, 7,000 bears are still trapped in farms throughout China, but Animals Asia suspects the figure is as high as 10,000.



The rescued bears leave the farms in an appalling state, many suffering from crippling ailments, such as arthritis, peritonitis, weeping ulcers and ingrown claws. They need surgery to remove their damaged gall bladders, many have broken teeth from years of biting the bars of their cages, a third are missing limbs and all are in a state of severe psychological trauma. Remarkably though, nearly all of these intelligent, forgiving bears are able to put the past behind them, learning to walk, run, swim, climb and interact with the other rescued bears.

We, the undersigned, congratulate the Chinese Government for closing down bear bile farms and releasing bears into Animals Asia's care. We are, however, concerned about the slow pace of the rescue and the lack of progress in ending this barbaric industry. Please make this issue a priority by setting a firm date by which bear farming will end in China. In the meantime, please promote the use of herbal and synthetic alternatives to bear bile.

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