



River Wonders Red Panda Yaffa Debuts This National Day Weekend

Description

There is a new face at **River Wonders** this National Day weekend, and he is every bit as photogenic as you would hope. **Yaffa**, an 11-year-old male **red panda**, makes his official public debut at a brand-new, purpose-built exhibit in the Yangtze River zone. He arrives from Taipei Zoo under an animal exchange programme, and he is the first new red panda to join River Wonders in twelve years, joining long-time resident Karma over at Giant Panda Forest.



Yaffa explores his new purpose-built home. Image: Mandai Wildlife Group

Meet Yaffa, River Wonders's newest red panda

Yaffa touched down in Singapore in the early hours of 11 June 2026, then spent a month in quarantine while the care team ran a full health assessment, including weight checks, a physical examination, ultrasound, X-ray and blood tests. All pointed to a red panda in good health. "Yaffa is here to be an ambassador for his species," said Azmi Amzah, Curator, Animal Care (Operations), Mandai Wildlife Group. "When he first arrived, he was quite wary of us. We let him set the pace. He's got a lot of personality once you get to know him, and we can't wait for guests to see that for themselves."



The new red panda exhibit sits in the Yangtze River zone. Image: Mandai Wildlife Group

A home built for a tree-dweller

The exhibit was designed around how red pandas actually live. It mixes natural and artificial logs, tree trunks and elevated platforms, with perches set at gentle gradients so Yaffa can move about comfortably. The whole space is enclosed and climate-controlled, kept below 25°C year-round to mimic the cool, high-altitude forests red pandas call home in the wild. Two connected areas are linked by an overhanging log crossing, and guests can watch him from an indoor viewing area with no glass barrier in the way. The exhibit is being built in two phases, one red panda per phase, with a second enclosure currently under construction.



The team putting finishing touches to Yaffa's exhibit. Image: Mandai Wildlife Group

Senior care and a conservation story

At 11, Yaffa is considered a senior red panda, so his care programme includes regular health and mobility monitoring to keep him comfortable. His arrival is more than a crowd-pleaser, too. Red pandas are listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List, with fewer than 10,000 estimated to remain in the wild as habitat loss, poaching and the illegal pet trade take their toll. Yaffa's move supports ex situ conservation and strengthens genetic diversity among managed populations in the region.



Dr Trent Van Zanten conducting a health check on Yaffa during quarantine. Image: Mandai Wildlife Group

How to visit

Locals can save with **WildPass**, Mandai's complimentary digital membership. From now until 31 August 2026, there is up to 30 per cent off the 2-Attraction Pass, from S\$44 for children and S\$59 for adults. Seniors aged 60 and above pay S\$25 per attraction across Singapore Zoo, Night Safari, River Wonders, Bird Paradise, Rainforest Wild Adventure or Exploria. For unlimited visits, the Friends of Mandai membership starts from S\$265. It makes for a fuss-free long-weekend outing, especially if the kids have been asking to meet a red panda up close.

Planning more for the long weekend? See our guide to the [Flower Dome National Day outing](#) and what's on at [Jewel Changi Airport this August](#).

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