

A Musk Ox That Nixon Gave China Has Died

Peking

Milton the musk ox is dead.

Chinese officials have disclosed that the animal, one of a pair given to China by former President Nixon in return for the two pandas at the Washington National Zoo, died February 20.

The officials gave the cause of death as reticulitis traumatica, colloquially known as hardware disease. It is defined in veterinary texts as a disorder in cattle and related species that results from the swallowing of

sharp objects, usually metallic, that perforate the stomach wall.

The dead animal's mate, Matilda, remains alive and apparently well in her enclosure at the zoo.

Milton, the male of the pair, was suffering from mange, a potentially fatal skin disease, when he arrived here aboard a U.S. military plane in the spring of 1972. The skin condition lingered and was still visible until a few weeks ago, when he disappeared from the enclosure.

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