The Giant Panda

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# Intriguing Giant Panda Mysteries

While most adore their fluffy fur and round heads, which help give them their cuddly bear quality, others are fascinated by the many mysteries of the giant panda. Did you know that the giant panda may actually be a raccoon, they have an opposable pseudo thumb, and that they’re technically a carnivore even though their diet is primarily vegetarian? These things and more have baffled scientists and naturalists for hundreds of years.

## Opposable Pseudo Thumb

A characteristic of the giant panda that has mystified scientists is their movable, elongated wrist bone that acts like an opposable thumb. This human-like quality that helps give them even more of a cuddly-bear appearance enables the giant panda to pick up objects and even eat sitting up.



**Quick Fact** Giant pandas have five clawed toes and one pseudo thumb.

Their pseudo thumb, along with pads of skin, help the giant panda strip the more nutritious small bamboo shoots and leaves while holding the stalk in their mouth.

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