

Japan zoo recovers missing red panda after frantic search

December 31 2015



The red panda, called Sumire, sits back in its cage at the Shizuoka Municipal Nihondaira Zoo on December 31, 2015

A Japanese zoo scrambled all of its staff Thursday to track down a missing red panda, a zoo spokesman said, finally recovering her in a nearby area.

About 20 [zoo](#) workers and three police dogs joined the hunt for the

missing creature, called Sumire, after she disappeared from her enclosure Wednesday.

The zoo had warned anyone who spotted her not to try and catch her themselves.

"Red pandas are not violent animals, but they may scratch you or bite you when they feel threatened," it said in a statement.

They finally captured Sumire in an area behind the zoo, which is on the outskirts of Mount Fuji.

"She was found high up on a bamboo tree in the backyard, munching on its leaves," the zoo spokesman told AFP. "Apples are her favourite food, though".



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Sumire is not the first animal to make a break for freedom in Japan. In 2012 a penguin on the run from a Tokyo aquarium outwitted authorities for 82 days before being caught.

There were more than 30 sightings of the 60-centimetre (two-foot) bird, known only as Penguin 337, who was spotted around various locations, including swimming in Tokyo Bay.

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