

Ollie the bobcat gives US zoo the slip

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This image released by the Smithsonian National Zoo in 2013 shows a female bobcat named Ollie

A dash for freedom by an elusive feline from Washington's National Zoo triggered a three-day cat hunt in the nation's capital—and an online sensation—until the search was called off Wednesday, and Ollie the bobcat was declared free.

The seven year-old, 25-pound (12-kilogram) female went missing early Monday from her enclosure, apparently after slipping through a hole in the fencing.

Ollie's escape sent a team of zookeepers, [police officers](#) and animal rescue workers on her trail, as they took in reports of Ollie sightings—real or imagined—across the city.

A dozen schools near the zoo kept students indoors during recess periods just in case—and social media had a field day, with dozens of memes featuring the runaway cat going viral.

Since bobcats are not aggressive towards humans, and Ollie is not considered to pose a threat, zoo authorities decided to suspend the hunt in the name of common sense.

"I don't mean to be pessimistic at all but, we're looking for a cat who could literally be sitting in a tree right next to us," Craig Saffoe, curator of great cats at the zoo, was quoted as saying by The Washington Post.

The gray-furred, short-tailed feline is assumed to have found a happy new home in nearby Rock Creek Park, a large area of heavily-wooded parkland that cuts through the US capital—replete with rodents, birds and other bobcat delicacies.

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