

Lovelorn koala nabbed after zoo escape in hunt for mate

October 5 2017



A handout photo shows Irene the koala, who escaped from her enclosure at the Australian Reptile Park at the start of her first mating season, impatient to find a partner

Australian wildlife staff needed a crane to rescue a lovelorn female koala who escaped from her enclosure at the start of her first mating season, impatient to find a partner.

Irene the koala was discovered missing from her holding yard at the Australian Reptile Park outside Sydney early Thursday, [park](#) officials said.

The two-year-old was eventually found stuck in a nearby tree after a "Houdini-style" escape through an opening in her pen, they said.

General manager Tim Faulkner said Irene had only recently reached [sexual maturity](#) and this week marked the start of the annual koala mating season.

"It's not the first time we've had a young female koala keen on finding a mate, and it's no coincidence she made her way out of her yard to find a mate's yard," he said.

Park officials insisted Irene's desires would be satisfied, but more prosaically.

She "will be introduced to the correct male after 'selective pairings are made' managed by a stud book," the park said.

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