

Runaway bear cub returns to the wild in French Pyrenees

22 September 2019



Around 50 brown bears live on the French side of the Pyrenees

About 50 [brown bears](#) live on the French side of the Pyrenees mountains that straddle the border with Spain.

France began reintroducing bears from Slovenia about 20 years ago after the [native population](#) was hunted to near extinction.

Their presence has sparked protests among farmers on either side of the border, following a spate of attacks on sheep.

Last month, dozens of mayors and other officials from towns and villages in the French Pyrenees held a protest to demand their removal.

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A runaway bear cub that tunneled its way out of an enclosure in southern France but was eventually recaptured after a chase through the countryside has been returned to the wild, local authorities said at the weekend.

The bear, named Douillous, was first spotted on June 10 wandering alone, malnourished, near the village of Couflens in the French Pyrenees.

He was captured and placed in the care of a person licensed to keep [wild animals](#) while making a recovery.

But he escaped a few days later by digging a hole under his enclosure, despite the wire fence being fixed to the ground with cement.

The flighty eight-month-old bear was eventually recaptured a days later after being chased by [wildlife officials](#) through fields.

He has been released into a forest, officials said, without giving his exact location.

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