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Russian Family Takes Shelter From Coronavirus In the Woods

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The Sverdlovsk region, with a population of 4.3 million, has officially reported 59 of Russia's 10,131 coronavirus cases nationwide as of Thursday. **Stanislav Krasilnikov / TASS**

A family in central Russia tried to wait out the coronavirus pandemic in the woods until they were forcefully returned home, police in the Sverdlovsk region said Thursday.

A relative tipped off the authorities Monday that her brother, his wife and their three children had been gone for more than 24 hours. The family's patriarch later explained to police that they had gone to the woods to escape the Covid-19 outbreak, which has so far infected more than 10,000 Russians and 1.6 million worldwide.

"They took a set of groceries and a cellphone with them and were planning to periodically return to the village for food," the regional police department said in a statement.

"They slept on branches in the open air," it said.

Police charged the parents with failing to perform their parental duties, an administrative

offense that carries a small fine. The three children, one of whom was bitten by a tick, were placed in the care of child protective services.

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