

ROBIN DES BOIS

ON the TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling
n°9 / 1st April - 30st June 2015

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Introduction

In Africa and Asia, thefts, “dissipations” and substitutions are multiplying in vaults and Courts where illegal ivory and other animal by-products are kept.

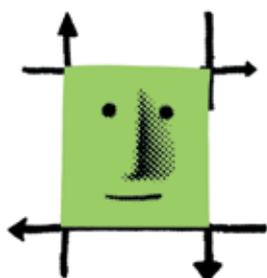
In Europe, official inventories of seized ivory lack transparency and trustworthiness and most certainly hide losses or misappropriation.

Complete destruction of illegal stockpiles is not only a symbolic gesture and a declaration of war addressed to traffickers. It mainly is the way to put out at the heart of States and their servants any blaze of corruption. The fruits of the valiant work carried out by rangers, police, customs will no longer be reaped by networks awaiting the right moment to serve themselves and take back what was removed from them at the cost of courage, honesty and sometimes blood.

ORIGINAL VERSION IN FRENCH

ON_{the} TRAIL

Carried out by Robin des Bois (Robin Hood) with the encouragement
and financial support of the Fondation Brigitte Bardot,
the Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux
and the Fondation Franz Weber



ROBIN DES BOIS



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n°8 / 1st January - 31th March 2015

http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/ON_THE_TRAIL_8.pdf (pdf 108 p. 5 Mo)

n°7 / 1st October - 31st December 2014

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CITES* Appendices

Appendix I : species threatened with extinction. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances and under import and export permits.

Appendix II : export permit required in order to avoid utilization incompatible with the species survival. Import permit if required by national law.

Appendix III : species that are protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling the trade. In the case of trade from a State that included the species in Appendix III, an export permit of that State is required.

* Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. 180 Member States.

Sea Cucumbers and Sea Urchins



AMERICA

Seizure of 17 tons of sea cucumbers (class Holothuroidea) and arrest¹ Cancún International Airport, State of Quintana Roo, Mexico May 2015

In the cargo area of the airport in Cancun, police discovered the boiled sea cucumbers in two trucks. The first cargo, 11 tons, was about to flight to Hong Kong; the second, 6 tons, was about to flight to Florida for the Chinese community in residence and tourism in the United States of America. What is to become of the tens of the thousands of sea-bottom tillers? The value of the 17 tons is \$850,000 US. Cf. "On the Trail" n°4, p.107.

Seizure of 14 kg of white sea urchins eggs, 652 live white sea urchins (*Tripneustes ventricosus*) and 9 persons arrested² Sainte Anne, Martinique Region, France From June 1 to 6, 2015



Confronted with a wave of sea urchin pillaging, the French Directorate for the Sea has set up marine, land and air forces. Over the course of May and beginning of June, 8 reports were filed and 9 poachers caught red handed. 652 sea urchins were seized and set back to sea. Fishing, transformation and commercialization of sea urchins in the island's restaurants are forbidden and entail a maximum fine of 22.500 €. The sea urchin eggs were destroyed.

ASIA

Seizures of 5 tons and 600 kg of sea cucumbers (class Holothuroidea). Arrest of 3 traffickers and sentencing of another³ India

April 2015

Raking sea cucumbers on the seafloor of the Indian Ocean off Tamil Nadu is crazy. 2 seizures in 2 weeks cumulated in 5.6 tons.

-600 kg from a Nagapattinam fishermen's hamlet. They were going to be smuggled into Sri Lanka.

-5 tons in Nagapattina. The worldwide value of the seizures is around 51.2 million rupees, or \$807,200 US.

Sea cucumbers are marine keystones. They are breaking up sandy bottoms and detritivorous.

The fishing of sea cucumbers is prohibited in India. A man from Port Blair, Andaman archipelago - where the trafficking of sea cucumbers is also flourishing- was sentenced to 8 months in prison and a modest -in regard to the value of the cargo- fine of 25,000 Rs (\$394 US) for the illegal traffic of 991 kg sea cucumbers. The packages were bound for Calcutta on an Air India flight to the destination of Imphal. The cucumbers got closer to China.

Seizure of 360 kg of sea cucumbers (class *Holothuroidea*) and arrest

Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, India

May 2015

23, 23, 24, 39 - they had stored the boiled sea cucumbers in 11 barrels stashed on the shore. Global local value Rs 1.5 Lakh (\$ 2365 US). The goods should have been taken to Rameswaram (185 km) before being smuggled into Malaysia.

Seizure of 20 kg and 330 kg of sea cucumbers (class *Holothuroidea*) and arrest⁵

Devakottai and Uchipuli, State of Tamil Nadu, India

June 13 and 17, 2015

The minibus went through Ramanathapuram within fishing boat range from Sri Lanka. There were 330 Kg of sea cucumbers inside. The holothurians have been fished around the Andaman islands and had arrived on the Indian continent through the port of Chennai. The fishing of sea cucumbers is not totally prohibited in Sri Lanka. So, the Indian smugglers prefer to introduce the sea cucumbers on the international market from this country. This seizure follows closely the seizure by the Indian coast guards of 20 kg aboard a fishing boat. There were 5 men on board. This happened in the night, off Uchipuli about fifty nautical miles from Sri Lanka.



Corals

AMERICA

Seizure of 325kg of coral of which elkhorn coral (*Acropora palmata*, Appendix II)¹

Santiago de Querétaro, State of Querétaro, Mexico

Avril 2015

The coral was shipped by a courier company. They were divided in 15 packages per box. They came from Veracruz 500 km away.



Acropora palmata

Fishes

AMERICA

Seizure of 200,000 shark fins¹ Manta, Manabi Province, Ecuador

May 2015

Soups of a very high cost to the ecosystem. A very far trip awaited them. The terminus was Asia. At least 50,000 sharks were killed in 20 fishing days. Arms and preserving agents have been also found on board. The hypothesis of a non intentional catch is out of the question. The fins have a unit value from \$10 to \$60 US but on the international market this price doubles or triples. The seizure is estimated at \$2 million US. 6 people had been arrested, from which there was one Chinese.



ASIA

Seizure of 176 shark fins and arrest² Bali, Indonesia

May 2015

The Chinese restaurants serve with a lot of publicity shark fin soup. Only in Jakarta, are there tens of restaurants. The trafficker was surprised in the port of Gilimanuk. He came from the east of Java. He went to Bali. The sharks were sent to BKSDA for identifying the concerned species. The finning of all sharks species is prohibited. 3 species living in Indonesian waters are listed under CITES Appendix II: scalloped hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*), great hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna mokarran*), and ocean whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*).

Seizure of 10 kg of Manta ray gills (*Manta* spp., Appendix II), 4 bags of shark cartilage and Manta ray, 2 bags of shark cartilage and 4 shark fins³ Indonesia

June 22, 2015

EUROPE

Seizure of one Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) and report⁴

Nice, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France

April 8, 2015

He didn't know the dates of legal fishing: July 13-August 30 and eventually the 12th-25th of September if the quota was not reached. The recreational fisherman risks a maximum fine of €22,500 but in reality they are 10 times less important.

The 50kg Atlantic bluefin tuna was destroyed. The fishing equipment, worthy of a professional fisherman, was not seized.

Seizure of shark fins⁵

London, England, United Kingdom

April 2015

A well-renowned Chinese restaurant in London received again postal parcels from Hong Kong. They contained shark fins. In 2013, the director Paul Keung had yet to declare on television that his restaurant was going to shortly eliminate the fin soup.



A high-end meal at the Royal China Club sells for 2800 £ (\$4300 US) – abalone, sea cucumbers, and shark fins.

The stock was seized and destroyed. Only 1/3 of Chinese restaurants who served shark fins have taken it off their menu, at least officially. The best clients of the Royal China Club are rich Chinese tourists.

Seizure and destruction of 27 Atlantic bluefin tunas (*Thunnus thynnus*) of a total weight of 5 tons, a market value of €80,000 and a €4,000 fine⁶



Portopalo di Capo Passero, Sicily, Italy
June 2015

OCEANIA

A cemetery of sharks in Queensland and conviction of 3 people⁷

Maryborough, State Queensland, Australia

June 10, 2015

3 recreational fishers. One fishing cabin. 3206 shark fins seized, undersized crabs, crates and non-regulatory nets. Finning is prohibited in Queensland. \$5918 US fine for one and a \$2863 fine for each of the two others. The three recreational fishermen had a taste for the dismemberment of the animals. In the stock, the fisheries police also found many crab claws and bodies without shells. This practice of mutilation is also prohibited in Queensland.



If you are a witness of a possible illegal fishing practice or if you spot one on the internet, call the fish-watch hotline at 1800 017 116. Do not enter into contact with the people concerned, this can compromise the investigation. The information given to the hotline is prioritized according to its reliability and the risk for the marine resources.

Marine Mammals

AFRICA

Poaching of a dugong (*Dugong dugon*, Appendix I) and conviction¹

Region of Mayotte, France

June 22, 2015



The dugongs since 2007 were observed grazing on seagrass beds around the archipelago. Mayotte honors them on a stamp but fishermen lead their hard life. They intentionally capture them to cut and sell the meat in clandestinity. One of them has just been given 8 months imprisonment with a 5 months suspension. He had captured a female a few days ago.

AMERICA

Sentencing for the sale of Sei whale meat (*Balaenoptera borealis*, Appendix I)²

State of California, United States of America

April 6, May 4 and 18, 2015

On the menu at The Hump, there was whale (see "On the Trail" n°4 p. 12 and n°6 p. 7). Under the Marine Mammal Act the parent company, Typhoon Restaurant, and general manager Brian Vidor were sentenced to jointly pay \$27,500 US in fines. The Santa Monica restaurant is closed. It is illegal to serve whale meat anywhere in the United States, whatever the species.



ASIA

Special scientific fishing permit 25 Bryde's whales (*Balaenoptera edeni*, Appendix I) and 90 Sei whales (*Balaenoptera borealis*, Appendix I) Japan³

June 8, 2015

Permit n°27-SUIKAN-434. Scientific objective: Research on whale resources and elucidation of their role in the marine ecosystem in the Northwest of the Pacific Ocean)

Research Methodology:

1 - Grenade harpoons. Authorization to catch 25 Bryde's whales and 90 Sei whales.

2 - Non-lethal biological tissue samplings of gray whales, North Pacific right whales, Southern right whales, Bryde's whales, blue whales, minke whale, humpback whales and sperm whales. No quantity limitation. The research ships include the *Nisshin Maru*, *Yushin Maru* and the *Yushin Maru* n°2.



Nisshin Maru. OMI 8705292. Built in 1987.



Yushin Maru. OMI 9197181. Built in 1998.



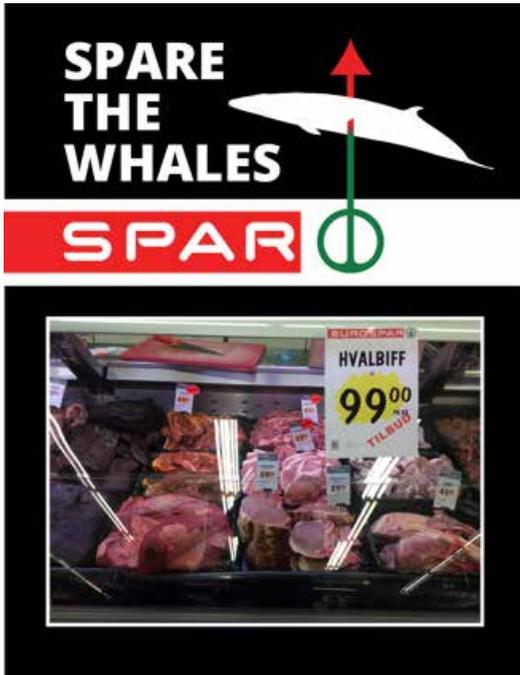
Yushin Maru n°2. OMI 9278040. Built in 2002.

In a letter sent to the Secretary of the Whaling Commission Joji Morishita, the commissioner, informed the Member States that the number and species of whales which may be taken under the permit has been reduced to reflect the judgment of the International Court of Justice on March 31, 2014 based on the disproportion between the scientific results of Japanese whaling and the number of whales killed in the Antarctic.



Fukushima Special Permit

SPAR Norway Under Fire For Its Key Role In Propping Up Norwegian Whaling



SPAR Norway – a part of the international SPAR convenience store chain – is a major enabler and supporter of Norway’s struggling whaling industry.

Meat products from the hunts of protected minke whales killed in Norwegian waters are sold in SPAR Norway stores as well as in other retail outlets also owned by parent company NorgesGruppen.

There are currently 276 SPAR and EuroSPAR stores in Norway and investigations this summer found a variety of whale products on sale. Investigators documented whale meat sales in various locations with prices ranging from 64.90kr/kg (€7.35/kg) for whale meat “strips” and 89.90kr/kg (€10.18/kg) for packaged fillets of whale beef to 99kr/kg (€11.21/kg) for fresh whale meat at the butchery counter.

A coalition of environmental groups comprising Animal Welfare Institute (AWI), the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), CarbonFix Foundation, OceanCare, Pro Wildlife and Robin des Bois released the new briefing Convenience Kills, detailing the company’s whale meat sales and calling on it to stop.

The country can whale legally due to its objection to the global moratorium on commercial whaling and its reservation to the ban on international trade in minke whales, although its quotas are not

approved by the International Whaling Commission (IWC).

Norway’s whaling has escalated in recent years, raising its self-allocated quotas from 549 in 2001 to 1,286 today. The 2015 minke whale season opened on April 1 and, as of July 6, 534 whales had been killed.

Concerning SPAR, see also page 93.

The bad example of Pippa Middleton⁴

**Norway
April 2015**



White teeth and bad breath for the sister of the Duchess of Cambridge... The ecofriendly tune of the royal family is in trouble for one wrong note.

Pippa Middleton gave a tourism magazine her comments on whale meat. She had just come back from a ski holiday in Norway. “We dined on smoked whale carpaccio and a traditional plate of salt cod with fully fresh artisanal bread for soaking up sauce”. “The whale meat, has the same taste as

smoked salmon but it is reminiscent of venison carpaccio.” Pippa ate some Minke Whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*, Appendix I).

One carpaccio is not enough that it can be poisonous but attention Pippa, don’t enjoy it and do not serve it to infants or fragile people! Japan just

destroyed and burned stocks of Minke whale meat imported from Norway. They had concentrations of aldrin et dieldrin exceeding sanitary norms. See “On the Trail” n°8 p. 7.

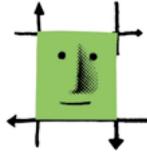
1700 t of whale meat from Island boarded to be sent to Japan (Minke whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata* Appendix I or Fin whale *Balaenoptera physalus*, Appendix I)⁵

**Island- Japan
May 2015**

Japanese researchers’ discovery is an important one. Eating whale meat would possibly help treat senile dementia and Alzheimer disease. A new rumor that has a strong impact in a country where 25% of the population is above 65 years old.

The meat left the island several days late on schedule apparently due to mechanical problems on the reefer *Winter Bay* deflagged to Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis recently and scandalously belonging to a European owner.

Europe mixed up in the traffic of whale meat



Press release. June 19, 2015

ROBIN DES BOIS

The *Winter Bay* left Iceland on June 4 with a little less than 2000 tons of whale meat in destination to Japan. Iceland is with Norway the only country next to the European Union authorizing whaling. The European Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora stipulates that Member States should prohibit the transport of specimens of all cetacean species living or dead or of by-products. In fact, the *Winter Bay* came to be sold by its Norwegian ship-owner to a Latvian ship-owner, Aquaship Ltd. based in Riga. Latvia is a member of the European Union since 2004.

"It is the first time that a European ship owner is directly and voluntarily involved in the traffic of whale meat since the implementation of the Directive. We have informed the European commissioners for transport and for the environment," declares the NGO Robin des Bois. The *Winter Bay* to this day is docked in Tromsø in Norway for reasons that are not known.

Winter Bay, ex-*Nordvaer*, ex-*Victoriahamn*). IMO 8601680. Palletised cargo reefer. Length 79,90 m. St. Kitts and Nevis flag. Classification society Det Norske Veritas. Built in 1986 in Rissa (Norway) by Fosen MV. Sold in May 2014 by her Norwegian owner Nor Lines Rederi AS to British Virgin Islands-based Dalriada Tortola, a shell-company for the Latvian Aquaship Ltd. In the wake, she was deflagged from Faroe Islands to St. Kitts and Nevis.



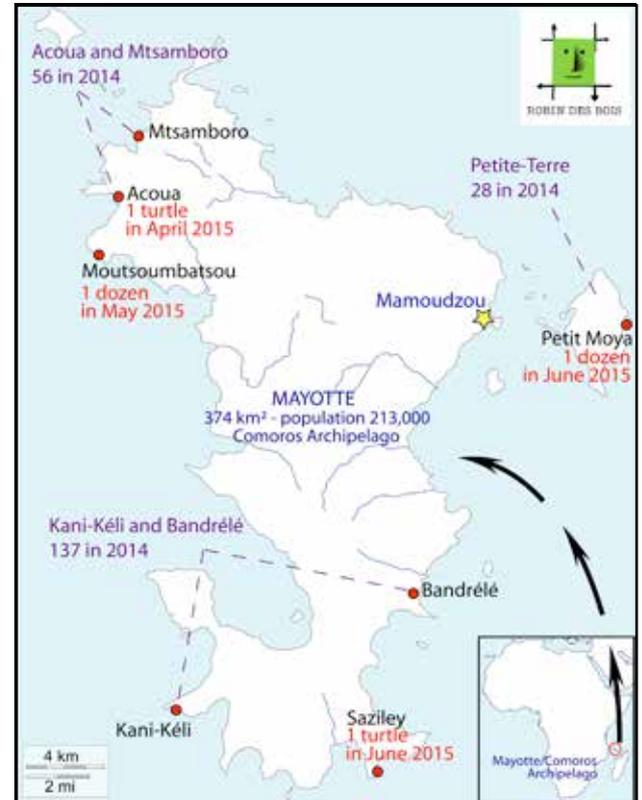
Docked in Hafnarfjordur

Marine Turtles

Marine turtles (Cheloniidae and Dermochelyidae families) are listed under Appendix I.

AFRICA

Mayotte Poaching cases 2014-June 2015



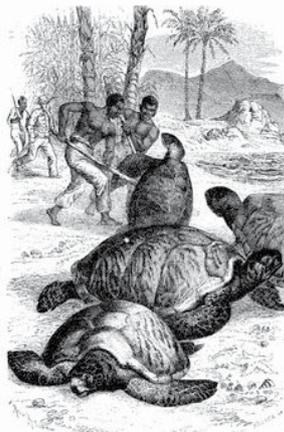
Poaching of marine turtles³

Commune of Mtsangamouji, Mayotte, France May 2015

While cleaning the remote beach on the occasion of the Festival of Nature, the Association of Naturalists found something other than domestic refuse. They fell over several turtle shells and bones indicating intense poaching activity on the nesting beach. Weighted shells were also found about 2-3 meters in depth on the seafloor and anatomical figures in wells some meters away from the village.



Sentencing for the poaching of a green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I) in Acoua to 3 months suspended sentence, € 800 in damages for ASPAS, Association for Wild Animals Protection, € 400 in court fees and a ban from the territory for 2 years. The prosecutor had demanded 6 months firm⁴ Region of Mayotte, France



May 6, 2015
He was surprised by the "Nature" brigade of the police as he was about to overturn a green turtle before cutting her up.

Discovery of several dozen marine turtle bodies⁵ Petite-Terre, Department of Mayotte, France June 2015

"The show was terrifying." The sea turtle slaughterhouse was there, quite fresh, hidden in a cove in the small island of the north of Mayotte. Eating turtle meat was very marginal in the 101st French department. For 2 years, the practice is emerging. It comes from the neighbors of Comoros. In 2014, REMMAT (Réseau d'Echouage Mahorais de MAmmites marins et de Tortues marines) has identified 262 cases of poaching. Almost all remain unpunished. Two species of marine turtles are primarily encountered off Mayotte: the green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) and the hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*).



Eretmochelys imbricata

Discovery of a marine turtle body⁶ Saziley Beach, Region of Mayotte, France June 20, 2015

"To avoid to be shocked by the fins, men begin by cutting the shoulder ligaments. The turtle stops struggling and suffers his fate. The throat is cut sharply and the animal bleeds to death. The men

use their knives to open the shell like a tin can. After opening the shell, the flesh and organs are carefully removed and cut into pieces." "Poachers are trying to erase the traces of their illegal acts by leaving the remains in the sea or in the sand."



* * * * *

Seizure of 10 marine turtle shells and arrest of 4 suspects¹ Cameroon April 28, 2015

Seizure of marine turtle meat and custody for a fisherman aged 30² Mahé Island, Seychelles June 2, 2015

AMERICA

Seizure of 330 marine turtles⁷ Mara, State of Zulia, Venezuela June 2015

Brought from Colombia in a dirty ice-box by a Venezuelan, the small turtles were only one month old. They will hopefully be released into the wild, if everything goes well.

ASIA

Seizure of a living marine turtle in a restaurant⁸ Province of Binh Thuan, Vietnam April 8, 2015

Release of a marine turtle⁹ Province of Bac Lieu, Vietnam April 2015

A Buddhist temple received a gift on the behalf of some fishermen. It was a sea turtle. It was freed and is going to rejoin the ocean in a few days. A visitor to the temple alerted ENV.



**Release of a marine turtle¹⁰
Province of Dong Nai, Vietnam
May 26, 2015**

Still one to languish in a pan in a restaurant in southern Vietnam near to the Pacific Ocean. It was sold for \$1000 US.



Android App:
ENV - Report
Wildlife Crime

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Donation to ENV's campaigns
- Individual membership
- Corporate & foundation partnership

facebook.com/EducationforNatureVietnam



**Seizure of 14 taxidermic marine turtles¹¹
Roxas, Province of Palawan, Philippines
May 27, 2015**

The "pawikan" as they are called in the country, were treated with formaldehyde. Each in a rice bag, they were pending illegal boarding to continental Asia. Balabac is a main hub for trafficking with Malaysia ("On the Trail" n°3 p. 7), Vietnam ("On the Trail" n°4 p. 16) and China ("On the Trail" n°4 p. 16, n°5 p. 15 and n°7 p. 12). The local fishermen are the first links in an international network. "The shells are going to be given to authorities for the purpose of an appropriate destination." The total value is a little more than \$10,000 US.



Sentencing of 2 fishermen to 3 years and 6 months in prison for the trafficking of 24 marine turtles¹²

**Qionghai, Province of Hainan, China
June 5, 2015**

The commander and chief engineer of the *Qiong Qionghai 03168* (cf. "On the Trail" n°7 p. 10) was accused of having exchanged rice, table oil, and cookies with Filipino fishermen for the detained marine turtles. 22 living turtles had been returned to the sea after the intervention of the Chinese coast guard.



Arrest of a restaurant owner for the sale of 56 kg of green turtle meat (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I)¹³

**Kabupaten of Gianyar, Province of Bali, Indonesia
June 5, 2015**

**Release of 9 Chinese fishermen¹⁴
Province of Palawan, Philippines
June 9, 2015**

It's mine, mine, mine, mine, mine. 5 countries are claiming the Spratley Islands. Filipino and Chinese fishermen meet there in secret to exchange marine turtles for money or other bargaining goods. The 9 Chinese fishermen caught on 6 May 2014 by the Filipino "Navy" were released after having served their sentence time. They are waiting in the immigration offices on the Palawan Island for the Chinese consulate to come and take care of formalities for return to their home country.

See "On the Trail" n°5 p.15 and 16, n°6 p. 11-12 and n°7 p.12.

**Seizure of 525 hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I) and 63 turtle eggs¹⁵
Roxas, Province of Palawan, Philippines
June 10, 2015**

The Ecoresort and Development Corporation vacation club property was engaged in an illegal turtle farm.

**Seizure of 2,100 marine turtle eggs¹⁶
Malaysia
June 23, 2015**

089221423, 089221424, 089221453. It is one of these phone numbers that enabled the interception of the speedboat by the Marine Operation Force. The eggs came from the Philippines. The sail-or jumped in the water and escaped.

OCEANIA

**Dismantling of the traffic of marine turtles¹⁷
Koné, North Province, New Caledonia, France
May 2015**

After the bats, here was the poaching of marine turtles.

End of December 2014, launching of the investigation by the police of Pouvoua.

End of May 2015, a fisherman was caught red-handed in his boat.

4 receivers of which 3 were regular buyers were also arrested.

The fishing and destruction of eggs are prohibited in all of New Caledonia. However in the North Province, for certain customary ceremonies, there can be exceptions. A circumstantial demand indicating the exact nature of the ceremony such as the number of turtles, the periods and catching area must be formulated at the Authority and examined by the local Customary Counsel.

Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles

AFRICA

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Seizure of 9 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) and 2 spider tortoises (*Pyxis arachnoides*, Appendix I) and arrest¹

International Airport of Ivato, Région of Analamanga, Madagascar

April 4, 2015

A Taiwanese couple, 40 and 24 years, spent 3 weeks of vacation on the island. They were not going to return empty-handed. They bribed a local guide to steal 11 tortoises from the breeding and rehabilitation center of the Durrel Wildlife Conservation located in the National Park of Ankarafantsika. The extremely rare Malagasy tortoises are in no more safety in the refuges than in natural habitats where they are also the victims of brush fires. In order to escape the eyes of the Air Police, the tortoises had been mixed with phone chargers and cables. The specimens would have been bought for € 10 on the Big Island and resold for €2000 to €20,000 in China. In Madagascar, the sanctions remain paltry in proportion to the possible profits. However, Customs and the Air Police of the international airport have since, for a few months, made more and more seizures.



Seizure of 23 freshwater turtles²
Lomé, maritime Region, Togo
May 12, 2015

Ms. Débora Agouze practices the non-declared profession of turtles seller. They will be released in the Fazao-Malfakassa National Park.



Seizure of 38 tortoises (*Testudinidae* spp., Appendix II) and 4 leather skins and arrest of the trafficker³

Togo

June 2015



Seizure of 453 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) at the International Airport of Ivato and homecoming of 150 radiated tortoises⁴

Madagascar

June 2015

The Kenya Airways flight was about to leave for Nairobi with this turtle colony in the baggage compartment. The Egyptian passenger was in Customs radar since arriving on the island two days before. Her final destination in Africa was Khartoum, Sudan.

The head of the border police did not hesitate to say that China was the final destination and that with the sale of 2 turtles of an endangered species, one can buy a new BMW.

.....
 : For 150 tortoises seized at Roissy airport (see
 : "On the Trail" 7 p. 15), it's time to return home. In
 : transit for several months in the Turtles Village
 : of Gonfaron in southern France, the turtles
 : have taken
 : advantage of the
 : climate, constant
 : care and foods of
 : choice. They have
 : gained weight.
 : They are ready
 : to leave the Big
 : Island with the
 : free help of Air
 : Madagascar. The
 : chief caretaker
 : of the French
 : refuge says
 : proudly: "Our
 : pleasure is not to
 : show turtles to
 : the public but to
 : repatriate home."
 :



**Court hearing for a Kuwait citizen and an airport officer for attempted illegal export of 173 turtles at the Julius Nyerere Airport, Dar es Salaam⁵
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
June 30, 2015**

AMERICA

Seizure of 98 tortoises of the species *Trachemys callirostris*⁶

**Colombia
April 2015**

It's the rush of Holy Week. The tortoises were going to be killed and to be sold. Since the beginning of the year, 464 turtles have been seized.

Seizure of 3000 baby yellow-headed sideneck turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) among them 350 deaths

**Ucayali Region, Peru
May 2015**

Seizure from a private home thanks to the NGO Neotropical Primate Conservation. The survivors were brought to the Esperanza Verde refuge and next were returned to their natural habitats. Peru email alert: denunciafauna@gmail.com.

Seizure of 620 red-eared slider turtles (*Trachemys scripta elegans*)⁷

**New York, State of New York, United States of America
May 2015**

Lorri Cramer, the correspondent for the New-York Herpetology Society and certified for the care of wild animals, is wondering what she's going to do with the 620 turtles seized in Chinatown. "They told me of 52 animals, they brought me 652". For the time being her new protégés are the size of a gulf ball, but when they don't die young they grow fast. 30 have already died at Lorri's.



Luckily, the Humane Society International is searching for more adequate solutions than Lorri's bathtub for these fresh water turtles originated from Florida and now bred in China to feed the world pet market. Red-eared slider turtles can carry salmonella. They are sold by the bucket for close to nothing in Chinese pet shops. They are among the favorite animals used for compassionate Buddhist ceremonies. Releasing animals is supposed to favor one's "karma". Such practices have become commercial ones. Believers buy permits to "free" an animal from monks who turn out to also be good accountants. Red-eared slider turtles are now in the top 10 invasive species worldwide.

Lorri's turtles came from China in crates without water or food addressed to the Yi Bao Produce Group Inc., Vernon, California. The State of New York has a ban on purchase and release of red-eared slider turtles.

**Abuse of tortoises (Testudines)⁸
Santa Terezinha, Mato Grosso, Brazil
May 2015**

Is it Indian culture or capitalist culture? Some Indians use their status to engage in environmental crimes. Along the Araguaia river, turtles are cooked alive and sold to passersby. It is rare that Indian that capture turtles suffer penalties while those who buy the cooked turtles are liable to a fine of about US \$ 1000.

ASIA

Seizure of 2 African spurred turtles (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I) and arrest⁹

**Chatuchak Weekend Market, Bangkok, Thailand
April 11, 2015**

The Malagasy exiles were to be sold in the Chatachuk weekend market. A police officer held out a trap for 3 venders who were prepared to collect in cash the equivalent of \$ 11,000 US. The woman leader of the group did not want to say who had sold her the invaluable reptiles listed under Appendix I since 1975. They would have been stolen from a Malagasy terrarium. The fate of the turtles is not known. In any case, the Thai police must be commended for having found and seizing in Bangkok the 2 African expats of 40cm long and weighing 10kg.



**Seizure of 504 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) and sentencing¹⁰
International Airport of Allama Muhammad Iqbal in Lahore, Pakistan
April 22, 2015**



At \$ 250 US each, the shipment would have brought in more than \$ 100,000 US to the boss, whose identity at this time remains unknown. The two who were taken at the Lahore Airport were two small hands. It is not known how much they would have been paid if the turtles had arrived at the Karachi Airport and left without obstruction. They each received a fine of 300,000 Rs (\$ 2,990 US). A release of 172 specimens occurred in the Ravi River, an affluent of the Indus.

Black pond turtles play a leading part in cleaning Indus waters through eating vegetable rubbish and diseased fish.

Seizure of 183 and 161 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) destined to Malaysia, of 29 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) destined to Malaysia, of 21 Indian star tortoises destined to Bangladesh and arrest of 3 smugglers¹¹

India

April 10, 22 and 25 April, 2015



The wave is getting bigger. India is being emptied of its turtles. Luckily, authorities and customs services hit hard regularly proving to the various links of trafficking networks that business is not all that easy. But following that, is Justice sufficiently severe and deterrent? And those caught red handed are in most cases just the passers. One smuggler lost, maybe 10 more recruited! 237 tortoises have been released in the National Sanjay Gandhi Park or transferred in a refuge to be cared for.

“Over the last 2 months, in several airports, we have noted an increase in attempted smuggling” declared to the press an anonymous high rank official of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau. “Within 2 months, 700 turtles have been seized”. Not to mention peacock feathers and deer antlers, several of which were found in the luggage of a Korean woman travelling from the Bangalore Airport. “Deer antlers can be sold for 25,000 Rs a piece”. All international airports, Delhi, Bombay, Kolkata, Chennai and many others are on the alert.

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Seizure of about 500 Japanese pond turtles (*Mauremys japonica*, Appendix II) and Asian brown pond turtles (*Mauremys mutica mutica*)¹²

International Airport of Chubu, Region of Chubu, Japan

April-May 2015

They had been stuffed into socks, belly to belly. The nationality of the couple was not revealed, nor their destination. The yellow pond turtles live in the rice paddies of the mountainous islands south of Okinawa. A recent inventory counted 30,000 individuals. The legal export topped at 1000 specimens in 2013 and 5214 in 2014. The minister of the Environment has suspended export since April. The species could have disappeared in 8 years at this rate of predation. According to a gatherer in the Aichi prefecture, there is a strong demand in China for the “turtle jelly with cosmetic virtues.”

The legal export of Asian brown pond turtles suffers the same acceleration. 3850 in 2013 and 11,155 in 2014. They live in the rice paddies of the Shikoku, Kyushu, and Honshu islands. They are also appreciated by the art of living: Feng Sui. They “guarantee” wealth in homes.

One specimen could be sold in Japan for 2000 to 8000 yens (16 to \$66 US). 10 times more in China. Already, in April, close to 80 of these endangered turtles had been seized from the bags of passengers leaving from the same airport.

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Toiletries—Street Floor—South. Ask for “S&H” Stamps

Seizure of 130 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) from the Malaysia Airlines flight¹³

Shajjalal International Airport, Bangladesh

May 29, 2015

“They are very popular in Malaysia, Vietnam, Japan and China, where they are used in soups and other recipes” an expert in wildlife from the forest service of Bangladesh specified.



©Ashim Mallick/ Bangladesh Forest Department

Seizure of 100 tortoises among which there were Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) and tricarnate hill turtles (*Melanochelys tricarinata*, Appendix I) and arrest¹⁴

Nagpur, State of Maharashtra, India

June 1, 2015

The New Delhi-Pondicherry express was in Nagpur station. The car n°9 reeked of a strange smell, as a result of the tortoises being on board for several hours. One tortoise is worth almost 5000 rupees (\$78 US). Multiple usages: food, pets, black magic.



Seizure of around 280 tortoises¹⁵

Bongaon, State of east Bengal, India

June 6, 2015

The tortoises were stacked in 20 bags awaiting export to nearby Bangladesh. Seizures of black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) and Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I) were already reported in "On the Trail", however the turtles most exposed to trafficking in Bangladesh are Indian star turtles (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II).

Seizure of 259 tortoises¹⁶

Kiul junction, State of Bihar, India

June 13, 2015

The police railway has again recovered several plain jute bags of young living turtles. The trafficker used the Farraka Express line that connects the capital, Delhi, to the district of Malda (1,422 km) in East Bengal. He escaped through the Kiul rail station. The turtles were released in the Ganges River. They were captured without a doubt in Yamuna, a river close to Delhi.

Seizure of 35 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) and arrest¹⁷

Valmikipuram, State of Andhra Pradesh, India

June 15, 2015

The young 25 year-old woman had specialized in illegal transport of tortoises for at least the past 2 years. This tortoise railroad agent, for tortoises captured from swamps and hills of Madanapalle, was caught red handed at a Chintaparhi bus



stop. She was going to deliver them to Chintamani, 86 km away in the State of Karnataka. The tortoises' sender and receiver were also heard by police, their names and addresses having kindly been handed over by the woman.

Seizure in a restaurant of 5 impressed tortoises (*Manouria impressa*, Appendix II)¹⁸

Province of Nghe An, Vietnam

June 2015

In China, on the black market of pets, they are sold for 150 to 800 yuans (\$ 24-129 US).

Seizure of 4402 freshwater tortoises among which there were 3907 Philippine pond turtles (*Siebenrockiella leytensis*, Appendix II), 168 Asian leaf turtles (*Cyclemys dentata*, Appendix II) and 25 South Asian box turtles (*Cuora amboinensis*, Appendix II) in very poor condition¹⁹

Bataraza, Province of Palawan, Philippines

June 17, 2015

The warehouse belonged to a Chinese citizen known as Peter Lei. He was absent at the time of the police raid. An underling posing as a caretaker was apprehended. His name is Albar Abdurakib. The cargo was clearly destined for China. The value is about 18 million Philippine pesos (\$ 404,000 US). Such a large amount of turtles involves a network of local trappers and complicity between Filipino and Chinese wildlife mafia. They are in very poor condition. They were transported just like cement bags at the beginning of the investigation. "We take care of the young with the support of several students and veterinarians." Turtles were gathered in concrete ponds fitted up in emergency. They are more numerous than the population remaining in the wild as estimated by local experts.

The species was identified in 1920. The only two known specimens, a male and a female kept in a zoo, died during the bombing of Manila during World War II. The species had been spotted again in 2001 when scientists traveled the north of the island of Palawan in search of endemic species.



**Seizure of a tortoise (*Testudinidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and arrest of 6 people²⁰
District of Lalitpur, Central Development Region, Nepal
June 22, 2015**

It could be an elongated tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II), the one species of tortoise present in Nepal.



**Seizure of 72 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) and arrest²¹
Kempegowda International Airport, Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India
June 28, 2015**

The fingers were tied with tape but they still moved a little. This is what saved them at the scanner control in the Bangalore Airport. They were bound for Phuket, Thailand via Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The two smugglers had received the equivalent of \$ 150 US and plane tickets to and from to fulfill their mission. The traffic organizers were aware of increased surveillance at Chennai Airport, so the mules were departing from Bangalore. The two suspects are from Tamil Nadu. They had taken delivery of turtles in Kolkata (State of West Bengal) and had reached Chennai (State of Tamil Nadu) 1600 km, by boat.

**Seizure of 54 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)²²
Chennai International Airport, State of Tamil Nadu, India
June 28, 2015**

**Seizure at a bus stop of 14 freshwater turtles, Indian softshell turtle (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I) or Indian flapshell turtle (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II)²³
Chintalapudi, State of Andhra Pradesh, India
June 30, 2015**

EUROPE

**Seizure of 3 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II)²⁴
Bari, Region of Apulia, Italy
April 2015**

They are between 5 and 15 years old. They were held in a patio inside a house.

**Seizure of 30 marginated tortoises (*Testudo marginata*, Appendix II)²⁵
Santa Teresa di Gallura, Region of Sardinia, Italy
May 27, 2015**

Nets, bait, adhesive tape, diapers as well as many accessories that are used to capture and transport the reptiles were found in poachers' home. The marginated tortoises are also threatened by forest fires. They live in Greece, Albania, and Turkey. They would have been imported to Sardinia.

**Seizure of 2 marginated tortoises (*Testudo marginata*, Appendix II) and 8 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) and arrest²⁶
Golfo Aranci, Region of Sardinia, Italy
June 1, 2015**

**A Greek tortoise handed over to authorities (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II)²⁷
Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom
June 2015**



They were sold as souvenirs in the streets of Tunisia for 5 to 10 livres (7 to \$15 US). Times are tough for Greek tortoises. Captured in the wild, they became income supplements in countries in economic crisis.

"They are small like the 50 cent coins and the majority dies during the trip." "The people who sell them over there say anything to the tourists." "The advice that we give them is to ignore the street vendors and to keep in mind that bringing back these animals to Scotland is a crime." Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals of Glasgow are taking them in regularly. This specimen had been kept for a long time in a sink while its original habitat is arid. For all alerts, call 03000 999 999.

**Seizure of 8 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II)²⁸
Port of Genoa, Liguria Region, Italy
June 2015**

The Tunis-Genoa car-ferries are becoming tortoise-ferries. Again one van embarked in Tunis with the Greek tortoises on the inside. The driver lives in France.

**Seizure of 4 leopard tortoises (*Stigmochelys Pardalis*, Appendix II) with a global value of €480, presentation of falsified CITES documents and questioning of the holder²⁹
Teverola, Campania Region, Italy
June 21, 2015**



Snakes

AFRICA

Seizure of 103 baby ball pythons, 21 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II), several kilos of pangolin scales (*Manis spp.*, Appendix II), and arrest of 2 traffickers¹

Toffo, Atlantic Department, Benin

April 30, 2015

A Forest and Water Ministry agent is said to have accepted a more than \$ 2000 US bribe to set free the suspects.



AMERICA

Seizure of 3 python skins (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and 3 arapaima skins (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II)

Sao Jose do Rio Preto, Sao Paulo State, Brazil

May 2015

The snake and fish skins will cost him \$ 42,000 US in fine.



Return of 7 albino boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II)³

Brazil

June 2015

He's back! Jeremy Stone, crazed enthusiast and trader of albino boas with black eyes. The first specimen of the line had been captured in a forest of Brazil. With his sister he took possession of the boa through a shady couple at the head of the Niteroi Zoo in Rio de Janeiro. Stone had imported him by deception in Florida, United States of America (see "On the Trail" 3 p. 12-13).

In August 2014, he was sentenced to one year of probation with home confinement and the suspension of all CITES permits for his business Jeremy Stone Reptiles.

The seven descendants of the albino boa have just been returned to Brazil despite the legal obstacles raised by the Stones, husband, sister and wife.

ASIA

India, the heatwave overwhelming wild animals⁴

The heatwave, which hit in May in the States of Andhra Pradesh and T elangana, reached 45   C. At the beginning, birds, reptiles and mammals gathered to waterholes in the national forests and parks. The natural waterholes dried up. Rangers replenished them partially with cisterns and dig artificial pools. Water is lacking. About 20 peacocks died of heat stroke in the forests of Medak.



Afterwards, wildlife drew closer to the villages. A rush of snakes coming from the forest of Nallamala was found in the village of Vataverpally. Leopards came to drink in the cattle's water tanks. The elephants were making tracks for water. The monkeys settled on the outskirts of cities. If this continues, the risks of forest fires will be huge. There was also a red alert for poaching during this time where the wildlife is more vulnerable than in normal conditions. "Many wild animals migrate to nearby villages in the search of water and food. The heatwave of this summer makes life even more difficult for these poor creatures," laments the forestry services.

Seizure of a python (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II)⁵

Amman, Jordan

June 14, 2015

The 20 year old man invited passers-by to pose with the python. Import, detention, purchase and sale of this species has been prohibited in the country for a year. The snake was returned to the Maawa Foundation.



Seizure of 17 cobras (family Elapidae) and sentencing to a year in prison and 50,000 Tk (\$ 642 US) fine and 2 extra months in prison in case of payment default⁶



**Keraniganj, Division of Dhaka, Bangladesh
June 23, 2015**

The man devoted himself to collecting the venom.

Sentencing to 6 months in prison of a pet shop owner for the illegal possession of a ball python (*Python regius*, Appendix II) that a client would have given him in exchange for a monitor lizard⁷
**District of Pudong, Municipality of Shanghai, China
June 25, 2015**



Seizure of 4 liters of cobra venom (family Elapidae) real or fake⁸

**Belakoba, State of East Bengal, India
June 27, 2015**

Three motorcycles were heading to Bhutan. The six passengers are in custody. The mixture is being analyzed in a specialized lab. The alleged venom came from Bangladesh. The possible French origin of the venom is again raised. Already in September of last year, near the border with Bhutan, a significant amount of venom was seized by RAB (Rapid Action Battalion), and investigators said the poison originally came from a French company called the Red Dragon. This new seizure of presumed cobra venom brings back this mysterious "French Red Dragon Company". Cobra venom is known to work on "psychological problems". (Cf. « On the Trail » n°3p. 15).

EUROPE

Seizure of a ball python (*Python regius*, Appendix II)⁹

**Valence, Valence Province, Spain
April 2015**

A dispute between neighbors led to the confiscation of the snake. Originally from Africa, it cannot unfortunately be reintroduced in Spain. The future of the python is uncertain.

Sauria

AFRICA

Discovery of illegal common chameleons (*Chamaeleo chamaeleon*, Appendix II) and wood trafficking¹

**Hauts-Bassins Region, Burkina Faso
June 27-29, 2015**

Several thousand trunks and cuttings of vene wood (*Pterocarpus erinaceus*) were waiting in the area. Twenty-some people, loggers, buyers, carriers were heard by the local police which is requesting the help of Interpol. A shipment of this wood was spotted in a Ghana port to China. This is what triggered

the alert. The vene wood is used in cabinet making, carpentry, interior joinery and for making balafon. Around fifteen warehouses were unmasked in the Bobo-Dioulasso region. Maritime containers were located. The vene or rosewood, would generally be exported under the misnomer of cashew nuts. The vene wood range covers Burkina Faso, Mali, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Senegal, Gambia, Central African Republic, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Gabon, Cameroon, Guinea and Guinea Bissau. As the can of worms of timber traffic of Sudano-Guinean dry forests was opened it also revealed a dried chameleon's traffic. It appears from the initial information that this traffic would be triangular: Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali. 25 people have been arrested, among them Lebanese, Ghanaian and Syrian.



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ASIA

**Condamnation pour le braconnage d'un varan
Sentencing for the poaching of a desert monitor (*Varanus griseus caspius*, Appendix I)²**



**Province of Ispahan, Iran
June 2015**

The desert monitor topped 1.5 m long. They climb trees, they hollow, they swim and feed on small mammals, birds and insects. They travel through the desert every day and find their den at sunset unless they are poached.



© lew

EUROPE



Seizure of 5 common chameleons (*Chamaeleo chamaeleon*, Appendix II) landing from a car ferry from Tunisia in the vehicle of a Tunisian residing in France and indictment for smuggling protected species and animal abuse³
Port of Genoa, Region of Liguria, Italy
May 2015

OCEANIA

Return of 2 jeweled geckos (*Naultinus gemmeus*, Appendix II) in New Zealand⁴
April 2015

They were returned in the Province of Otago. They are from now on in the hands of the Wellington zookeepers who will assess their capacity to be released in their natural habitat. For 16 months, they had stayed at the Cologne Zoo, Germany. The 2 geckos had been seized from the house of a German collector (cf. "On the Trail" n°6 p. 23) who had acquired them illegally. All geckos are protected by the national law since 1953, and the jeweled geckos (*Naultinus gemmeus*) are listed under CITES Appendix II since March 2013. They are in decline because of poaching and the predation of introduced species on the two islands of New Zealand.



Crocodylians

AMERICA

Seizure of 70 spectacled caimans alive (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II)¹
City of San Estanislao, Department of Bolívar, Colombia
April 2015

Two suspects were arrested. They were transporting the animals just outside of the city of Cartagena, about two hours away, using a red Mazda car. The caimans were concealed in bags on the inside. The value is estimated at 12 millions Colombian pesos (\$ 4732 US).

Seizure of an American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) and cocaine²
Long Branch, State of New Jersey, United States of America
April 16, 2015

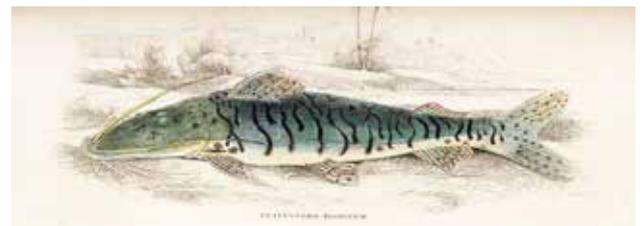
The 3 suspects were handed over to the justice. The alligator was handed over to the US Fish and Wildlife Service.



Seizure of a spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II)³
Cayastacito, Department of San Justo, Sante Fe Province, Argentina
April 2015



He was not alone. Sorubim and tiger fish were also confiscated. The man was poaching on the inside of a rural property when the police arrested him. He has been charged.



Surubi

Seizure of 450 caiman skins (*Alligatoridae* spp., Appendix I or II)

State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

May 2015

For a lack of authentication, the skins could cost him \$ 680,000 US.



Seizure of a dwarf caiman (*Paleosuchus palpebrosus*, Appendix II) in the biggest Brazilian croc farm

Paconé, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

May 2015



A caiman “fallen from the sky”. 60,000 caimans and only one dwarf, all the others are spectacled caimans (*Caiman crocodilus*). The seizure occurred during a routine check in the largest alligators breeding farm in Brazil, supplying several leatherworks. It has 60,000 crocodiles that eat 4,000 t of beef per day, an average of 66 kg each. 6000 are killed every year. The meat is sold to supermarkets and restaurants but the profits are mainly due to the sale of skins. The farm is planning important renovation work: 1 - construction of its own slaughterhouse. Then 10,000 caimans could be killed per year. 2- building of new indoor basins to “protect” the reptiles’ skin from the sun and obtain a better quality of leather. There are very strict regulations regarding this type of establishment but they are not always respected. IBAMA requires authentication of each specimen by a ID tag. Without it the animal is deemed illegal.

Seizure of a 3 year old and 40kg Morelet’s crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II)⁶

Montemorelos, State of Nuevo Leon, Mexico

May 2015

He was found in the garage of a house after a call from a citizen. The crocodile was originally in the lake of a golf complex called “Los Soles”. According to PROFEPA, the captives’ conditions were illegal. Moreover the crocodile fled. He was first returned to a home called “Bioparque Estrella”, a nature reserve open to tourists where the animals are “free”.

Seizure of 6 caimans measuring between 1 and 2 meters of which 4 were injured (*Alligatoridae* spp. Appendix I or II)⁷

Cutias do Araguari, State of Amapa, Brazil

June 2015

ASIA

Seizure of 86 crocodile skins (*Crocodylia* spp., Appendix I or II)⁸

Yantai Airport, Province of Shandong, China

April 2015



Value : 2.58 million yuans, or \$ 415,600 US.

EUROPE

Seizure of a Nile crocodile skin (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix I or II) and arrest⁹

Düsseldorf, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

April 2015

Found at the Düsseldorf airport in the luggage of a 44 year old traveler coming from Maurice via St. Petersburg, one skin with the head bought for \$ 25 US from a souvenir shop as a gift for his mother. Customs confiscated the remains and began proceedings against the perpetrator.



Crocodile Fashion Victims

Kering, the French luxury flagship, is cuddling up to CITES and IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). Kering wants to save crocodiles and make handbags out of them at the same time.

Kering operates the brands Gucci, Saint Laurent, Alexander McQueen, and Stella McCartney. Kering owns the tannery France Croco in the French department of Manche, in western France.

The CITES Secretariat claims to be enthusiastic about how intensely Kering and the IUCN crocodile group are working together. Kering wants to save the Nile crocodiles of Madagascar. At the same time, Kering is aggressively pursuing Asian crocodiles, particularly in the repulsive crocodile farms in Cambodia. These overpopulated and foul-smelling establishments lock up thousands of these necrophagous and omnivorous reptiles wading about in the polluted pools. The rest of the time, they languish on beaten and compact earth. These prison conditions completely disregard and distort the territorial instinct of crocodiles, their interaction with some bird species, and their rituals for courting, for protecting eggs, and for newborns. This is abuse.



There are 100 to 300 remaining wild crocodiles in Cambodia, which is irrigated by the Upper Mekong Basin. There were over 10,000 of them 10 years ago. The eggs and immature crocodiles are collected and caught around Tonle Sap Lake. The breeders look for crocodiles born in natural wetlands. These crocodiles are more resistant to illness and their reproduction rates are higher than farmed crocodiles.

Each year, 4 million snakes are fished to feed around 200,000 farmed crocodiles. "Crocodiles prefer snakes to fish because of their warm blood," claims a leader of the Cambodian crocodile industry. The snakes of Tonle Sap lake are endangered. The snakes are now fished with gillnets. One of the snake species, *Enhydris longicauda*, is endemic to the lake. The water snakes are an essential part of wetland ecosystems. They feed the birds . . . and the last wild crocodiles. The intensive crocodile farms of Cambodia are ecological disasters and significant sources of profit. They supply the market for shoes, bags, belts and wallets, and mobile phone and tablet sheaths.



Snake trade along the Tonle Sap lake

Kering wants to import skins from Cambodia. An initial test on 1,000 skins is planned.

"We have the softest skins," claims the president of the Association of Cambodian Crocodile Farm Development. For this promising test, Cambodia and Kering can count on a favorable opinion from CITES. If Kering continues on this path, this could taint its image in France and elsewhere.

Various Reptile Species

AMERICA

**Seizure of 170 caiman leather pieces (*Alligatoridae* spp., Appendix I or II), 12 lizards skins and 9 python skins (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II) ¹
Sao Jose do Rio Preto, Sao Paulo State, Brazil
May 2015**

The company caught a number of caimans in the wild. A fine of \$ 285,000 US was imposed.

**Seizure of alligator (*Alligatoridae* spp., Appendix I or II) and arapaima fish (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) leather boots and python skins (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II)
Barretos, Sao Paulo State, Brazil
May 2015**



Arapaima leather

Seizure of 101 live wild animals including 2 boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II), a young anaconda (*Eunectes* spp., Appendix II), 60 lizards, 38 turtles and 46 dead animals including 42 lizards and 4 turtles ²

On the road to Corrientes, State of Corrientes, Argentina

May 19, 2015

"It smells like traffic." 30 hours road awaited them. A bus from Sao Paulo to Buenos Aires was stopped on the border between Paraguay and Argentina. Police smelled a strange odor coming from some bags and found the animals wrapped in clothing.

EUROPE

Seizure of one yellow anaconda (*Eunectes notaeus*, Appendix II) and a ocellated lizard (*Timon lepidus*) ³

**Corbières, Provence-Alpes-Côtes d'Azur, France
May 6, 2015**

The reptile-maniac benefited from indulgence. Holder of 10 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II), 4 royal pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II), a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I and II), he was allowed to keep them pending obtainment of adequate permits.

Meanwhile the 2.70 m long anaconda was given to a zoo. The lizard that he claims to have «found» in the wild is said to have been released into the wild under the authority of the ONCFS.

See "On the Trail" n°5 p. 22 and "On the Trail" n°6 p 21-22.

Amphibians

ASIA

Seizure of 18 Indian bullfrogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*, Appendix II) and arrest ¹

Margao, Goa State, India

May 4, 2015

It is a cooking secret closely guarded by head chefs in Margao luxury restaurants. For them, catchers haunt ponds and marshes at night, blinding with torches live male frogs that signal their presence to females - from May to June, it is the mating season for amphibians - and throw their live prey in bags. Others in the sector then tour the restaurants. Frogs are still alive when their legs are chopped, the only part gourmets love.

The frog wholesaler from Karnataka came to deliver them to the Goa wholesaler. The first was caught in his car by a ranger patrol. The second managed to escape on a motorcycle.

Indian pond frogs (*Euphlyctis hexadactylus*, Appendix II) and toads are also poached and eaten. Amrut Singh, animal and frogs defender, finds that neither the law nor the high levels of pesticides in frog legs prevent trafficking. In theory, catching, selling, killing, serving and eating frogs is punishable by 3 years in prison and a fine of Rs 25,000 (\$ 394 US).



Hoplobatrachus tigerinus

© 2010 Dr. Gururaja K.V. Acharya

Birds

AFRICA

Indictment of two people for the illegal possession of 2 owl eggs (*Strigiformes* spp., Appendix II)¹

**Malindi, Kilifi County, Kenya
May 5, 2015**

19 species of nocturnal raptors live in Kenya. They are all listed under Appendix II of CITES. The 2 suspects were arrested in a public garden in the heart of town. They pleaded not guilty and were released out on a bail of 20,000 Sh or \$ 114 US. The owl eggs are subject to intense trafficking in Kenya. They are used in the practices of charlatanism and black magic. Sorcerers ask the families of the sick person to come with at least one owl egg to obtain healing. Healers and gatherers work together.



© Steve Garvie

Seizure of 2 young ostriches (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Central African Republic, strictly protected in Uganda)²

**Lira, Northern Region, Uganda
June 2015**

They were to be sold for \$3,500 US as a pair. The male died after the seizure.



© Eagle-enforcement

Discovery of 40 imprisoned vultures (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix II) of three different species and a hyena (family *Hyaenidae*)³

**Chobe, Northwest Province, Botswana
June 2015**

AMERICA

Sequestration of one keel-billed toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II), one yellow-naped amazon (*Amazona auropalliata*, Appendix I), and one red-lored amazon (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II)⁴

**State of Hidalgo, Mexico
April 2015**

The eight birds were in good health, but 3 were kept illegally.



© PROFEPA

Seizure of a parrot (*Psittacidae* spp. Appendix I or II) and of 4 wild canaries (*Serinus canaria*)⁵

Uberlandia, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

April 8, 2015

The 5 were in captivity. The 2 suspects were allowed to keep birds, but they did not have the IBAMA permits for detaining these specific species. Mistreatments and dead birds were noted in the 2 different addresses.

Sentencing to 4 years of probation and a fine of \$5000 US for the trafficking of 14 ruby-throated hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*, Appendix II), 3 black-chinned hummingbirds (*Archilochus alexandri*, Appendix II), 5 violet-crowned hummingbirds (*Amazilia violiceps*, Appendix II), one Allen's hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*, Appendix II), and 38 other hummingbirds (*Trochilidae* spp, Appendix I or II)⁶

State Texas, United States of America

April 2015



© fixer11

The evil exploits of Carlos Rodriguez were brought to attention in "On the Trail" n°5 p. 35 and n°6 p. 29. The dried hummingbirds under the name of "chuparasas" serve as good-luck charms. The populations

of ruby-throated hummingbirds have declined 62% between 1966 and 2010. Rodriguez adds: he is in violation with CITES, the Treaty on migratory birds, the federal Lacey Act enacted in 1900, the federal law on poaching and the law of Texas. The hummingbirds, light as a feather, play an important role for the biodiversity of plants. They disperse the pollen of wild flowers.

Conviction for the attempted illegal sale of 2 Bali mynas (*Leucopsar rothschildi*, Appendix I) and one buff-banded rail (*Gallirallus philippensis*)⁷

Vista, State of California, United States of America.

April 2015



© Dr. Lloyd Glenn Ingles / California Academy of Sciences

The birds are going to be given to a zoo in San Diego or Los Angeles. Christopher Estep was sentenced to a \$1,000 US fine, to \$1,800 US in damages to the US Fish and Wildlife Service and one year probation. He said at the stand that he had moved into the sale of antiques.

No more birds or reptiles. The average price for a Bali myna is several thousands of dollars on the black market. The Bali myna is the emblematic bird of Bali. It is critically threatened. The natural range of the buff banded rail covers New Guinea, The Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand.

Seizure of 35 animals including parakeets (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II), red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II) and terrestrial and freshwater turtles⁸

**Boa Vista do Tupim, State of Bahia, Brazil
April 10, 2015**



The 35 had been relocated to a CIP-PA center (Protection Police for the environment). A chainsaw and firearms were also seized.

Seizure of 301 animals of which 7 nutrias (*Myocastor coypus*), 35 tortoises, 3 snakes and 255 birds among which common barn owls (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II), red pileqted finches (*Coryphospingus cucullatus*), European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), Puerto Rican spinduli (*Spindalis portoricensis*), hooded siskins (*Spinus magellanicus*) and double collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulescens*)⁹

**Buenos Aires, Argentine
April 2015**

They were discovered in the south of Buenos Aires. They were in horrible hygiene conditions. They were destined to the Pompeya market, also known as the birds' market.

Seizure of a blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II)¹⁰

**Praia Grande, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil
April 14, 2015**



Coryphospingus cucullatus

A macaw was "arrested" in the street. The beak was deformed. A wing was broken. He was forsaken. To give information concerning captive animals call: 199 or 153.

Sequestration of 163 birds including 14 military macaws (*Ara militaris*, Appendix I), 24 scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I) and 5 hybrid macaws¹¹

**Cuernava, State of Morelos, Mexico
April 2015**

They were found in an apartment building thanks to tip-off. According to the suspect, the 163 came from the UMA called "Paraiso", but he could not present the document proving the attachment to the UMA, nor even the origin of the birds.

Seizure of 2 blue and yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) and a red masked conure (*Psittacara erythrogenys*, Appendix II)¹²



**Manchay, Province of Lima, Peru
April 2015**

Put up for sale in an agricultural cooperative, the 3 birds were in cages that were too small. They were stressed and had lost their feathers. The seizure was carried out by the goodwill of SERFOR (The National Office of Forests and wild Fauna).

Seizure of 3 red-fronted macaws (*Ara rubrogenys*, Appendix I)¹³

Department of Santa Cruz, Province of Andrés Ibáñez, Bolivia

April 2015

\$400 US each on the local market. No less than \$5000 US each on the international market.

Seizure of 7 black-masked lovebirds (*Agapornis personatus*, Appendix II), 6 Fischer's lovebirds (*Agapornis fischeri*, Appendix II), 48 rosy-faced lovebirds (*Agapornis roseicollis*), 25 cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*), 14 golden pheasants (*Chrysolophus pictus*), 2 Reeve's pheasants (*Syrnaticus reevesii*), 5 silver pheasants (*Lophura nycthemera*) and 5 common peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix III)¹⁴

**El Llano, State of Aguascalientes, Mexico
April 2015**

112 birds with unknown origins were discovered in one "unit of management of wildlife" (PIMVS). The bird's inventory wasn't updated.



Agapornis fischeri

Seizure of a white cockatoo (*Cacatua alba*, Appendix II), 2 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II), 2 hyacinth macaws (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*, Appendix I) and 9 wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*)¹⁵

Victoria, State of Tamaulipas, Mexico

April 2015

The 14 birds were in a car on the road to the State of Guanajuato an 8-hour drive. The Tamatan Zoo received them.

Seizure of 6 scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I)¹⁶

Bella Vista de Pococí, Puerto Rico

28 avril 2015

Thanks to the call of a neighbor, the police recovered 6 birds of which there were 2 four-months-old chicks of and 4 adults between 3 and 4 years. The wings of the birds were clipped and the police found them in plastic boxes normally used for battery chicken. They were brought to a refuge in San José.

Seizure of 2 blue-fronted Amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and 2 white-eyed conures (*Psittacara leucophthalmus*, Appendix II)¹⁷



Presidente Prudente, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

April 28, 2015

They were found in 3 different cages in the individual's home. Domesticated, they had had the tips of their wings cut. The owner was dealt a fine of 11,000 reals or \$3350 US.

Seizure of 4 orange-fronted conure chicks (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II)¹⁸

Tonala, Jalisco, Mexico

April 2015

They were sold in the market "Tingui". These markets are traditional in Native American areas and are now corrupted by illicit traffics. The rogues fled when the police arrived leaving the birds in their cages.

Seizure of 2 blue and yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), 3 monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), a limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*), 4 pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III) and 2 freshwater turtles¹⁹

Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz Department, Bolivia

April 2015

They were on sale in the street. Since the beginning of the year, more than 600 wild animals have been rescued by the city services.

Court appearance of men of the ages 50 to 67 for trafficking migratory birds among which a red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*, Appendix II) and great horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*, Appendix II)²⁰

State of Texas, United States of America

May 2015

Seizure of 6 cactus parakeets (*Eupsittula cactorum*, Appendix II), a chesnut-bellied seed finch (*Oryzoborus angolensis*), 2 campo orioles (*Icterus jamaicaii*), a creamy-bellied thrush (*Turdus amaurochalinus*), a double-collard seedeater (*Sporophila caerulescens*), and a green-winged saltator (*Saltator similis*)²¹



Souto Soares, State of Bahia, Brazil

May 5, 2015

Another case of corruption... The environmental official of Souto Soares (20,000 inhabitants), detained the 14 birds illegally.



Saltator similis

Seizure of 5 one month yellow-headed amazons chicks (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I)²²

Benito Juarez, State of Quintana Roo, Mexico

May 2015

Found during police control, the chicks would usually have been sold in Cancun for 300 Mexican pesos each, or \$20 US. Not being well, the chicks were brought to one UMA.

Seizure of 4 keel-billed toucans (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II), 34 red-lore parrots (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II), 2 mealy parrots (*Amazona farinosa*, Appendix II), and 4 yellow-headed parrots (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix II) and a Geoffrey's spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*, Appendix I and II)²³

San Juan Bautista Tuxtepec, State of Oaxaca, Mexico

May 2015

The 44 birds were discovered at three different spots by PROFEPA.

Seizure of 17 red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II)²⁴

Barreiras, State of Bahia, Brazil

May 2015

On the highway police stopped a suspicious car that came from the neighbor State of Goias. Bingo: the birds were in small cardboard boxes without water or food. One of them died. The suspects dared to say that the 17 had belonged to them and that they were going to be domesticated.



© Walter Pappalardo/G1

Rescue of an owl (*Strigidae* spp., Appendix I or II)

**Joao Pessoa, State of Paraiba, Brazil
May 22, 2015**

The inhabitants of a house found the bird under a tree in their garden. He was injured

and his feet were attached.

Seizure of a scarlet macaw (*Ara Macao*, Appendix I) and 3 festive amazons (*Amazona festiva*, Appendix II)²⁶

**Manaus, State of Amazonas, Brazil
June 2, 2015**

The four birds were captive. 2 suspects were arrested then released pending trial.



© Claudio Dias Timm

Amazona festiva

Seizure of 2 cages full of birds, including blue headed parrots (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II)²⁷

**David Chiquiri Province, Panama
June 2015**

Traffickers or hairdressers? The blue headed parrots were dyed to look like yellow-headed amazons (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I). Amazons are sold \$ 800 US more than pionus.



© Greg Lasley



© Andres Hernandez

Seizure of 70 birds including yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*, Appendix II), macaws (*Psittacidae* spp. (Appendix I or II) and toucans (family Ramphastidae)²⁸

**Las Talitas, Province of Tucuman, Argentina
June 2015**

Hell on earth for birds. Some had lost feathers, others were desperately trying to fly in their tiny cages, the last ones were dead... They were sold on Facebook for US \$ 230 a head. A better scene awaits them, a natural reserve shelters them now.



Seizure and liberation of 4 greater rheas (*Rhea americana*, Appendix II) and fine of \$150 US²⁹
**Palmas, State of Tocantins, Brazil
June 2015**

Brought in in a hatching box, the rheas were raised on a farm; 3 males and 1 female of 1 year, thereafter released into the wild.

© Secom-TO

Seizure of 2 scaly-naped amazons (*Amazona mercenarius*, Appendix II), a yellow crowned amazon (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II), an orange-winged amazon (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix II) and a Harris's hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II)³⁰

**Maraca and Sozoranga, Province of Loja, Ecuador
June 2015**

They were seized in several private houses. Quarantined, they are waiting to hear of their fate.



© Diario centinela

ASIA

Seizure of 107 birds among which there were blue-rumped parrots (*Psittinus cyanurus*, Appendix II) and 105 white-rumped shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*), one deer body and arrest³¹

**Malaysia
April 2015**

The suspect was about to convoy the birds in a Toyota Hiace, "A single shama sells in our country for 800 to 1000 RM" (\$215 to \$270 US). The man was suspected of being at the head of an international network.

Seizure of 91 Siberian cranes (*Grus leucogeranus*, Appendix I)³²

Wanda Banochi, Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

April 18, 2015

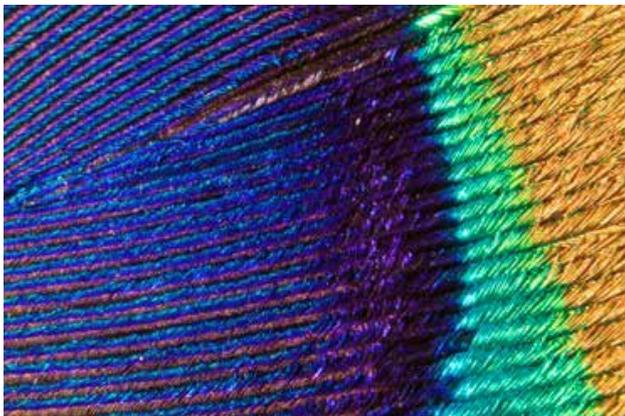
They had been previously caught by nets in different parts of the province. The Siberian Cranes are dependent on wetlands. In their wintering areas in India, China, and Pakistan, they are threatened by the drying out of wetlands converted to agricultural activity or to urban platforms. 91 waders birds were held in a small tip lorry. They suffocated during transport. 13 were already dead. A dozen are between life and death. The truck came from Wana, near the border with Afghanistan, about 400 km south of Kabul. The Siberian cranes were freed after 6 hours on the road. The population is estimated at approximately 3,500 individuals. Alone, this seizure represents nearly 3% of the population. The survivors are going to be released in a natural and protected habitat.

Seizure of 65kg of Indian peafowl feathers (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix II) and arrest³³

International Airport of Cochin, State of Kerala, India

April 21, 2015

After being hunted (cf. "On the Trail" n°4 p. 35, p. 92, n°7 p. 25, 26 et n°8 p. 25), the peacocks in the form of feathers were to fly to a destination of Kuala-Lumpur aboard a Malindo Airlines plane. He, 64 years, and she, 24 years, had taken the delivery of the feathers to the house of a Tamil Nadu inhabitant and had them delivered to a Buddhist temple in Malaysia. Value: Rs 16.25 lakh (\$25,619 US) or \$394 US/kg.



Sentencing to 3 years in prison and a 10,000 Rs (\$160 US) fine for the poaching by poisoning of an Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix II) in the Sariska Reserve³⁴

Alwar, State of Rajasthan, India

April 2015

REPEATED OFFENSE

Seizure of 9 rose-ringed parakeets Turnstone (*Psittacula krameri*)

Tirupur, Tamil Nadu, India

May 2, 2015



In their salad shaker, the birds were mistreated. Tied up beaks. Plucked feathers. They were taken to the Animals Rescuers shelter, an NGO dedicated to the protection of birds in the forest of Coimbatore. These 9 would be released in 3 months. "We have released 400 parakeets in the wild" and "at the moment we take care of 62 in our center." The woman caught in the act of illegal sale near a bus station had been previously arrested in 2012 for trafficking 35 mannikins (genus *Lonchura*) and same rose-ringed parakeets.

Seizure of 23 yellow-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I) and a parrot (*Psittacidae* spp. Appendix I or II) and arrest³⁶

Port of Tanjung Perak, Province of East Java, Indonesia

May 4, 2015

Each cockatoo negotiates around \$1500 US on the black market. The lot of the plastic bottles was found in the suitcases of a passenger landing from a car-ferry near Surabaya. Indonesians are crazy about the new encaged pets. Cf. on the matter "On the Trail" n°3 p. 29 on the odd smuggling attempt by the crew of an Indonesian military plane on the airport tarmac in Darwin, Australia. More than 10,000 parrots, among which there are yellow-crested cockatoos, would be poached in the archipelago each year. The Indonesian NGO Profauna urgently asks for controls to be

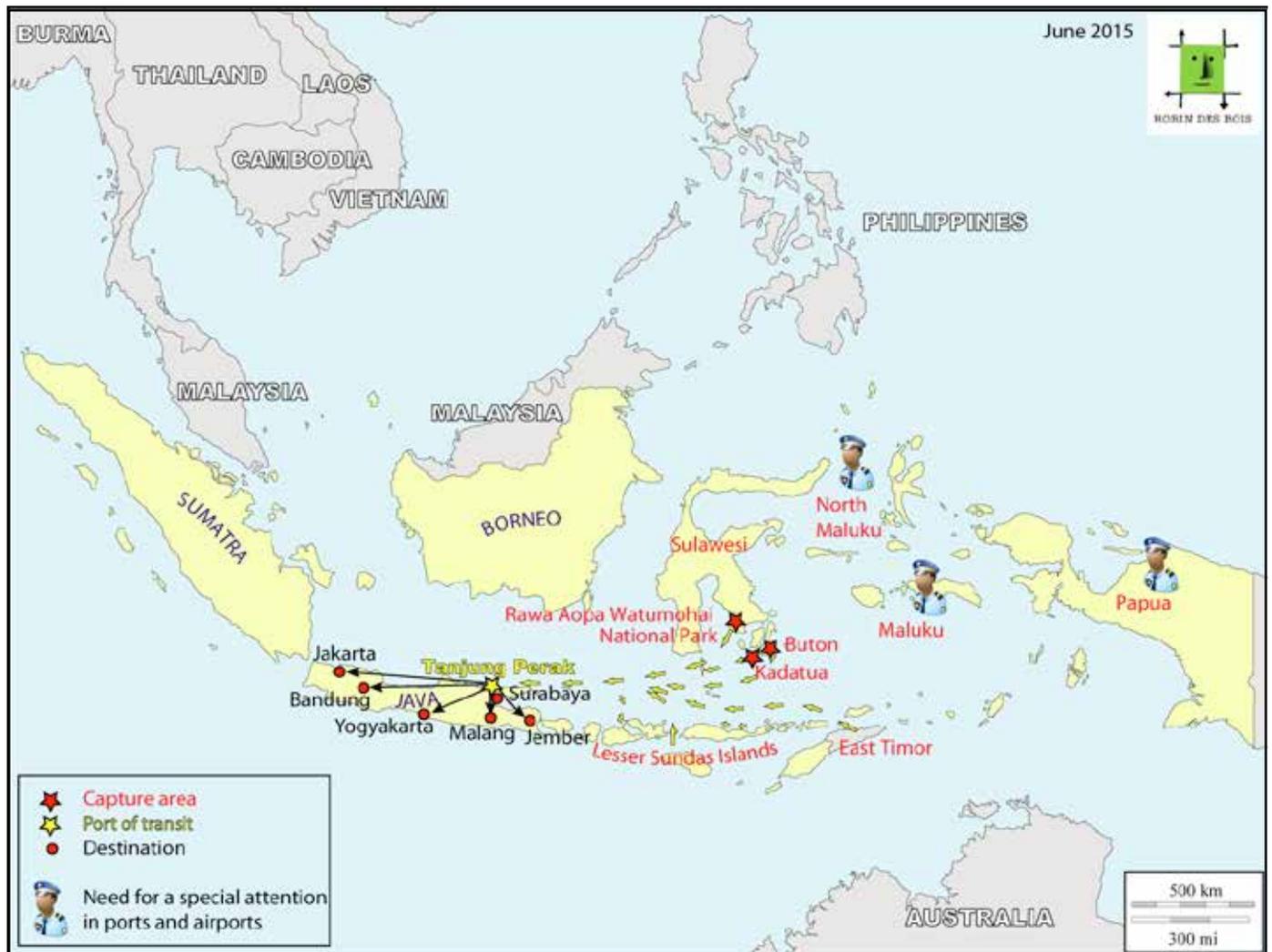


strengthened in the ports and airports in Papua, the islands of Moluccas and Sulawesi and the island of Java. The NGO is also demanding the official ban of transporting specimens of wildlife aboard planes, boats, trains and buses unless they are accompanied by authentic permits. Profauna estimates that 40% of smuggled birds and other animals die during transport or when they are put in quarantine.

Logging destroys the habitat of birds and facilitates their trapping. The forest industry and agribusiness go hand in hand with the poachers. Since the beginning of the year, 5 seizures of parrots were carried out in the passenger port of Tanjung Perak.



© Jeffa Images



Seizure of 59 parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) ³⁷

Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan State, Malaysia May 7, 2015

The hostess housed parrots stolen from Mother Nature in the vicinity of Port Dickson. She was released on bail. Cages, traps and nets were removed from the house.

Poaching of Houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis* spp., Appendix I) and transfer to other functions³⁸

Province of Balouchistan, Pakistan May 2015

Jaffer Baloch was transferred. It was he who, as a forests and wildlife of Balochistan agent, had revealed the impressive game of the Governor of the province of Tabuk (Saudi Arabia) in hunting houbara bustard: 2100 birds killed in January 2014 thanks to a fake permit issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see "On the Trail" n°4 p 35 and n° 7 p. 31.). Pakistani media said that if the Saudi dignitaries benefit from this generosity, it is because Saudi Arabia had accommodated in exile for nearly 7 years Nawaz Sharif today's Prime Minister of Pakistan. This gratitude does not help the case of the bustard.

Seizure of 12 beaks of helmeted hornbills (*Rhinoplax vigil*, Appendix I) and arrest of 2 alleged traffickers³⁹

Langkat Regency, Province North Sumatra, Indonesia

June 12, 2015

"Yellow Ivory" of the beaks of helmeted hornbills is subject to intense trafficking from Indonesia to China. ZMS and ALB supported a team of 30 poachers on the northern island of Sumatra. Each beak is sold in China around \$1000 US. In six months, 124 hornbills died in these poaching then smuggling operations. Some guns with silencers were supplied to the hunters for "work" in the forests of Leuser, 25,000 km². Yokyok Hadiprakarsa, an expert in hornbills, estimates that in 2013 in the one province of Kalimantan 1800 specimens were poached and 1000 beaks were seized.

In January 2013, 4 Chinese were stopped at the Soekarno Airport in Djakarta with 248 hornbill beaks and 189 pangolin scales in their suitcases.

Seizure of 3 falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II)⁴⁰

Khomeynishahr, Province of Isfahan, Iran

June 16, 2015



Seizure of 3 parakeets (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix II or NC) and arrest⁴¹

Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India

June 20, 2015

They were perched on WhatsApp. 4500 Rs (\$71 US) per head. The cellphone number of the vender was analyzed to reveal contacts in the sector. A certain Ravi would be the leader.

Seizure of 28 hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II) and 2 ring-necked parakeets (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix II) and sentencing to a year in prison of a wild bird wholesaler⁴²

Tongi, Division de Dhaka, Bangladesh

June 27, 2015

EUROPE

Seizure of a blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) without stamped papers at the house of a vendor⁴³

Molfetta, Region of Apulia, Italy

April 2015

Malta: Is the referendum really a defeat?⁴⁴

"They are so obsessed and passionate that they will take any risk to continue their addiction"

Each year the month of April is critical along the island of Malta. From the 14th to the 30th, the hunt for quails and doves is open. No more than 2 birds per day and no more than 4 during the 17 days that it's open. It is illegal to hunt less than 200 meters from a house, 50 meters from main roads and beaches and on private land without permission from the owner. But the 14,000 hunters formed a block. Under the fire of critiques from a good part of the 500,000 Maltese and tourists, some hunters continue to shoot at anything that fly's and wherever they are.

The storks leaving their wintering place in Africa to come back to the wetlands of Northern Europe are shot to death. In this case, it is difficult to plead confusion with a European turtledove.

The poaching is indeed a calamity for the 170 species of birds that in the spring leave Africa and cross the Mediterranean to come back to Europe and in the fall make the same trip back.

On April 11, 2015, the citizens were invited to vote yes or no on the spring hunt. The participation was high. The yes vote prevailed only by a little: 126,434 against 124,214. The hunters took the cake with 50.4% of the vote. Obviously joy and beer flooded The Valette and the island of Gozo when the hunters' side learned the "good news".

Good news that can also be interpreted as a fair warning.

-The hunters hard-worn victory is thanks to their extremist groups on the island of Gozo.

-It is not sure that in the long term the bad faith campaign conducted by the hunters lobby in Malta on the supposed eradication of all island traditions will pay off.

-The Maltese prime minister immediately declared that the Republic and the public had given one last chance to the hunters. "They should understand that everything has changed for them." "Practically half of the people turn down the spring hunt". "The hunters should without fail respect the law".

-This very short victory obtained thanks to support of the 2 most powerful political parties, which were scared, put the hunters and their allies in front of their responsibilities. A short defeat would have made them martyrs and no doubt that they would have shot the birds like fanatics expressing the anger of the minority.

Poacher in the morning of April 15, shortly following the vote, judged by the afternoon.

The 43 year old hunter was sentenced to the maximum fine of €2,500 and the suspension of his hunting permit for 3.5 years. He had, he says, confounded a cuckoo with a dove. The gun and the ammunition were confiscated.

The hunters of the St. Hubert Federation demand more serious sanctions for the poachers. The FKNK – Federation for Hunting and Conservation – barred the poacher and asked Birdlife, the main Maltese NGO involved in the struggle to report to the phone number of the police (119) all hunting abuse and illegal acts. "If there are other incidents of this type, the closing of the hunt will be anticipated," warns an official statement.

**Conviction for poaching of finches (genus *Carduelis*)⁴⁶
Lille, Nord-Pas-de-Calais
Region, France
April 21, 2015**



From the south to the north of France, the enchanting and singing passerines are threatened by glue, traps and nets. 2 odd guys by a canal were hard at work trying to trap them using one specimen stuck in a cage. . « It can be sold 20 € » said one of them to the Court. "It" at the end of the trafficking chain can reach 200 €. Both were sentenced to an 800 € fine suspended sentence and to pay 300 € in damages to the LPO (Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux).



**Seizure of 43 protected bird species divided up in 19 cardboard boxes aboard the car of a German citizen⁴⁵
Santena, Piedmont Region, Italy
April 24, 2015**

REPEATED OFFENSE

**Seizure in a pet shop of 2 blue-and-yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), a hybrid Harlequin macaw, 38 yellow-headed amazons (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I), 2 yellow-naped amazons (*Amazona auropalliata*, Appendix I), 7 rainbow lorikeets (*Trichoglossus haematodus*, Appendix II), 3 long-billed corella (*Cacatua tenuirostris*, Appendix II), a sulfur crested cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*, Appendix II), a moluccan cockatoo (*Cacatua moluccensis*, Appendix I), 5 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and 4 Jandaya parakeets (*Aratinga jandaya*, Appendix II) exposed illegally for sale⁴⁷
Westerlo, Flemish Region, Belgium
April 28, 2015**

**Seizure of 21 goldfinches and 2 greenfinches (genus *Carduelis*)⁴⁸
Department of Corrèze, Limousin Region, France
May 12, 2015**

The traffic of passerine singers takes hold in the countryside and suburbs of France. Fortunately, the police officers and ONCFS did not keep their arms crossed and are sensitive to the melody of the goldfinches.

**Seizure of 2 tawny owls (*Strix aluco*, Appendix II) and conviction⁴⁹
Clayton Crescent, England,
United Kingdom
May 19, 2015**



He will appear shortly before Court. The small prisoners were freed. At 20 years old, Martin has a bright future in trafficking if he is not harshly sentenced and watched. On June 17, he was sentenced to 12 month of community works.



**Seizure of exotic birds including yellow-napped amazons (*Amazona auropalliata*, Appendix I)⁵⁰
Aversa, Region of Campania, Italy
May 23, 2015**

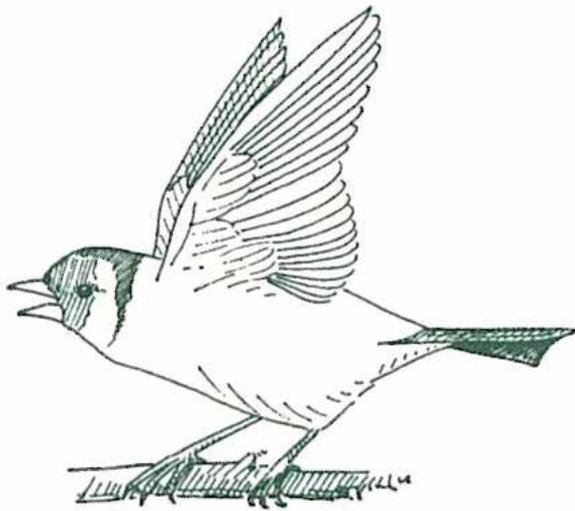
A couple of exotic birds were on sale on the Internet for €1,400, that started this investigation.

Dismantling of a traffic of European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*)⁵¹

Ajaccio, Corse Region, France

June 2015

The car, the cages, the birdlime and other capturing accessories were seized. When there is one, there are several. They like the bushes and live in groups. The nests are only a few meters away from each other. They tolerate close human proximity. They sing endlessly throughout the year. They are thus easily identifiable and trapped. They sell for between €75 and €200 each. The trafficking builds up. See "On the Trail" n°3 p. 26-27, 4 p. 99, 6 p. 33, 7 p. 22 and 26 and 8 p. 26 and 27. For any suspicious behavior towards a protected species in Corsica, call these numbers: ONCFS 04-95-38-13-36 or DREAL 04-95-51-79-80. Nocturnal birds, goldfinches and tortoises will thank you.



A European golfinch in defense position.

Sentencing of 7 people to fines from €1000 to €3000 for the sale and possession of European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*)⁵²

Ile de la Cité, Paris, France

June 22, 2015

L'île de la Cité about 200m from the Palais de Justice of Paris is also famous for the bird market of which a lot of species are illegally sold.



The bird's market at the beginning of the XXth century. Paul Géniaux.

Pangolins

The 8 pangolin species *Manis* spp. (4 African and 4 Asian) are listed in CITES Appendix II.

AFRICA

Seizure and nursing home for 2 pangolins, arrest of 9 poachers and sentencing of one of them to 9 years prison term¹
Zimbabwe
April 2015

She is slowly gaining some weight back at the Tikki Hywood Trust. Soon to come, the trial of the 2 accomplices.

The young male is in really bad shape. Tikki Hywood Trust took him in. Origin : Mozambique.



Sentence to 9 years in prison for poaching and trafficking pangolins
Zimbabwe
May 2015



Acknowledging no mitigating circumstances to the 2 accused, the court sentenced them to 9 years in prison. On a market in Harare, they sold a pangolin in a plastic bag (see "On the Trail" n°8 p. 29).

The 4 bandits band (23 to 37 years) was selling pangolin on Facebook and on the public square. One pangolin for \$ 20 US.

Since the beginning of the year, in the country there has been 26 arrests and 12 convictions to 9 years in prison for possession and sale of pangolins.

Permit granted by the Court for the export of 7,310 kg of pangolin scales³

Kampala, Central Province, Uganda

June 2015

The famous taxidermist Maku (cf. "On the Trail" n°8 p. 42) managed to obtain the export license for the 7 tons of pangolin scales that he said to have patiently collected from the villagers after natural events like death, forest fires, or artificial like deforestation or human encroachment. Maku was powerfully assisted with 4 lawyers. The NGO Greenwatch was disallowed in his request for the prohibition of exportation. Everything carried to believe that it would win because of the doubtful and multiple origins of the scales and the not very clear past of the one who is going to become if the course of justice stays there, one of the richest men in East Africa. On the Asian market, at \$400 US per kilo, he could earn a \$3 million US.

Sentencing of 2 people to nine years in prison for the illegal possession of a pangolin body⁴

Harare, Province of Harare, Zimbabwe

June 18, 2015



Seizure of 50 kg of pangolin scales and arrest of 9 traffickers⁵

Uganda

June 2015



Seizure of 6 kg of pangolin scales and 23 kob horns (*Kobus kob*) and arrest of a teacher⁶

Uganda

June 2015

He had a former policeman and a local notable as accomplices.

ASIA

Seizure and release of pangolin (*Manis spp.*, Appendix II) weighing 3 kg and 80 cm long⁷

District of Jiangbei, Chongqing Township, China

April 2, 2015

Seizure of 50 pangolins (175.4 kg) and arrest of 2 traffickers⁸

Hai Phong, Vietnam

April 4, 2015

The PC46 brigade was rewarded with praise ceremony. It had managed to target a suspect Mazda BT-50 circulating on the N10 with a fake license plate. The shadowing demonstrated that the driver made everything to cover up tracks. Thanks to the traffic jam, the car was stopped and searched. Inside, the 34 year old man and more surprising, 50 live pangolins confined in bags and weighing in total 175.4 Kg or 3.5 kg on average per pangolin. Another accompanying car was also intercepted. The pangolins were loaded in a warehouse in Thái Bình and should have reached Mong Cai (300 km), city border with China. It is planned to release the saved animals in selected natural habitats.



Seizure of 34 live pangolins⁹

Kuala Kurau, State of Perak, Malaysia

April 6, 2015

New proof of pangolin smuggling between the Island of Sumatra, Indonesia and Malaysia. At the mouth of a coastal river, River Trong, a maritime patrol began chasing a fishing boat that went into the mangrove to hide. Classic technique. The crew escaped. Search of the boat uncovered 34 plastic bags wiggling among the nets. The pangolins were still alive. They were given for care to the Department of Wildlife and Natural Parks (DWNP). According to the word on the docks, a "big" Indonesian boat delivers the pangolins to "small boats" before they are then dispatched within the mainland Malaysia and further.

Seizure of 274 kg of pangolin scales¹⁰
Shanghai-Pudong International Airport, China
March 27 and April 7, 2015

On 27 March the baggage of 2 passengers, a man and a woman, carried 249 kg. A few days later, another passenger was carrying 25 kg. All 3 scale smugglers say they work for Qiu, master mind in Nigeria of a large network, and that they were given the task of delivering the scales to China. Customs in Shanghai seized 496 kg of scales between January 2014 and end of April 2015, which represents about 1500 pangolins.

Arrest of one person for poaching a pangolin and a cobra (*Elapidae* family)¹¹
Wuzhou, Zhuang Guangxi Autonomous Region, China
April 2015

The head cook of the Yunlong hotel used his position to kill the mammal and the snake and put them once frozen for sale on the Internet. Pangolin meat can be sold in the country for about 2000 yuans (\$ 300 US) per kilo.

Seizure of 13 frozen pangolins (45 kg) and arrest¹²
Hanoi, Vietnam
April 10, 2015

They did not have any chance of getting out. They were frozen. At 13 in total, they weighed 45 kg, or on average 3.5 kg per pangolin. The driver of the motorcycle says to have bought the lot for 200,000 per kilo (\$9 US), or \$420 US and to have waited the best time to bring them to China. The man on the Suzuki was arrested in Hanoi.

Good news for the pangolins¹³

The Ministry of Health of Vietnam decided that pangolin scales will no longer be considered by health insurance. Thanks to Ms. Vu Nu Anh of the Ministry of Health and to Save Vietnam's Wildlife who campaigned for a longtime for this measure. Traditional medicine is still dominant in Vietnam. The therapeutic effects of the pangolin scales are nil.

Seizure of 36 live pangolins and identification of 85 kg of scales¹⁴
Hanoi, Vietnam
April 2015

These are from Asia whereas analysis of the scales seized in a bus in March 2015 show those had come from African pangolins.

Seizure of 5 t of frozen pangolins, 77 kg of pangolin scales, 96 live pangolins, 24 bear paws (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and arrest¹⁵
Medan, Province of North Sumatra, Indonesia
April 23, 2015

The warehouse in the industrial area of the Medan port seemed perfectly fine. Except that after an investigation that lasted several months, criminal police found a pangolin mass grave, the largest uncovered in the country since 2008 when a 13.8 tons stock had been found in Palembang, 1300 km away from Medan.



The warehouse belongs to a certain Soemiarto Boediono. He claims to be involved in this activity for 6 months. The variety of the seizures made-frozen pangolins, scales, live pangolins-leaves open the question as to whether the warehouse served only as a cold room or if it was also a slaughterhouse where the pangolins stolen from the wild in Sumatra would arrive still alive.





According to the first elements of the case, the frozen ones were destined to China by sea with transiting through the Haiphong port in Vietnam and the alive ones were also shipped by boat to nearby Malaysian mainland.

Head of the criminal police force evaluates the global value of the seizure to be worth \$115.000 US. The official term "pangolin" comes from a Malaysian root word meaning rolled up in a ball. This actually is the position of the pangolin when he feels threatened or while sleeping. A rolled up pangolin will stay rolled up no matter what in order to protect himself from leopards, tigers and man. To escape the latter, this trick is quite insufficient. The pangolin roll is quickly picked up and shoved into a bag and it's all over.

Several of the live females seized from the warehouse had babies who just after birth will climb onto the bottom of the motherly tail thus letting themselves be carried and protected: when the mother curls up, the baby is wrapped in close to the mother's belly, the only body part not covered in scales. The frozen pangolins were thrown into a pit, burnt and buried on the premises of the Medan port.



Pangolins are shown so little consideration that seizures of frozen individuals are counted in tons and not by unit. With an average of 3 kg per individual relieved of his scales (the scales represent 20% of their total weight), the seizure concerns 1700 individuals.

The survivors, big and small, were set free into the forests. Placid as always, they rapidly learned to climb out of the crates and go back to their ancestral habits.



FAMILY AFFAIRS

Arrest of a father and son for trafficking pangolins and monitor lizards¹⁶
Zhuzhou, Province of Hunan, China
April 29, 2015

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Arrest of 7 pangolin trappers¹⁷
Province of Hunan, China
April 2015

From the seizure of the 2 pangolins that the father and the son attempted to sell at a restaurant (cf. "On the Trail" n°8 p. 32) and some of their revelations, the pangolin hunters-gatherers were apprehended in the regions of Guangdong, Guangxi, and Yunnan.

GANG

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Dismantling of a crime ring, 15 arrests, seizure of 41 kg of scales¹⁸
Calcutta, State of West Bengal and the State of Madhya Pradesh, India
May 2015

"The arrested businessman is a key link between local poachers and south Asian smugglers. We want to get to the bottom of the international ring. They are brutal gangsters, who dip pangolins in boiling water to extract scales."

It's the climbing prices. The trappers receive 400 to 500 Rs per kilo of scales (\$6-8 US), from the scale wholesalers settled in Chandameta, several dozens of kilometers from the National Park of Saptura, one of the pangolin areas in the State of Madhya Pradesh. The scales were sold for 6000 Rs per kilo (\$94 US) in Kolkata to a leather manufacturer and to his respectable student son. Jamal, the father, and his son then resold them for 60,000 Rs per kilo (\$946 US) for export to an exclusive destination: China. 2 routes were used, the North route through Nepal and Tibet and the East route through Burma. The "Chuan shan jia", Chinese pangolin scales, could

according to the gossip, purify the blood, make the pus run out, stimulate lactation and cure paralysis. Other legends say that the blood of a pangolin treats asthma, cancer, and infertility.

The district of Chhindwara seems to be a major reservoir of the international pangolin smuggling. In September 2014, a man at a roadside check was arrested with 43 kg of scales on the border between Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. "The scales come from Chhindwara" he told the police. It was the second largest catch of scales ever seen in India (cf. "On the Trail" n°6 p. 39). The seizure made a huge ruckus but as it is unfortunately often the case in India, the scandals started off strongly and bogged down in quarrels muted interstate procedures to the point that the bosses after being held 14 days in custody were released on bail. That's what happened to Jamal Ansari who could leave free after paying the paltry sum of Rs 4,000 (\$63 US) even though one of his cronies had been arrested with 40 kg of scales and large sum of money with it. There is no surveillance and conservation programs of the pangolins through the country (close to 3 million km²). A number of States are concerned. It is in Assam in July of 2013 that the largest seizure of scales, 83 kg had been operated (cf. "On the Trail" n°2 p. 23).

In Madhya Pradesh though attacked by pangolin robbers, two tribal forest ground searchers were arrested on May 20 with a kilogram of scales. They were a part of the network organized from Kolkata by father and son Jamal.

**Seizure of 43 pangolins
Yen Thuy District, Hoa Binh Province, Vietnam
May 8, 2015**

The coal man also delivered pangolins. An assortment from 1.8 to 8.9 kg. Some of them were in very bad shape. Save Wildlife Vietnam has a small local specially dedicated to treatment. Water first, ants preferably fresh and live or failing that, frozen. 35 rescued pangolins have been released on June 15 in the Cat Tien National Park. Another story of pangolin made the news in the province. He was crossing the road near a village, exposed to two dangers: being run over and being caught and eaten. A local guy took him in. After consultation between the villagers, the survivor was released in a forest. Living *Manis javanica* have become very rare in Vietnam these years.



© Vietnamnet

**2 pangolins released²⁰
Sultanate of Brunei
May 2015**

Seizure of 7 pangolins and 1 kg of scales from a vehicle²¹

**Kabupaten of Banyuasin, Province of South Sumatra, Indonesia
May 29, 2015**

Seizure of 8 kg of pangolin scales and 520 kg of rootstocks of *Paris polyphylla*²²

**Kohima, State of Nagaland, India
May 29, 2015**

The convoy came from Himalaya and was heading to Burma.

3 men, 3 women. Value of said medicinal herbs: Rs 25 lakh (\$39,400 US). Value of the scales in Vietnam and in China: Rs 15 lakhs (\$23,500 US). The 3 vehicles, of which there were 2 large ATV, were stopped along the river Dzu-u.

The *Paris polyphylla* is a perennial plant originating from the regions of the Himalayas (China, Bhutan, Nepal, and the State of Uttarakhand in India). It is known for its spider-shaped flower. The Nepalese communities use it in traditional medicine as an anti-parasite and for deworming. In India, in the foothills of the Himalayas, the roots are crushed and the powder is used for treating diarrhea. In China, it is said to have antipyretic, anti-viral, decongestant, and hemostatic virtues.



© Wen Jun

Sentencing to 5 and 10 years in prison and a 30,000 yuan fine (\$4800 US) and a 50,000 yuan fine (\$8000 US) for the transport of 21 live pangolins in the harbor area in September 2009²³



**Fangchenggang, Region of Guangxi, China
June 5, 2015**

Seizure of 15 dead pangolins in the trunk of a car and a few days later burial of the corpses (59 kg)²⁴

**Ha Long, Province of Quang Ninh, Vietnam
June 27, 2015**



After fake rhino horns, here are fake pangolin scales pangolins²⁵

**Farkawn, State of Mizoram, India
June 11, 2015**

End of May, forest and wildlife services note that within its stock of 848 kg of pangolin scales representing all seizures in the region since 2012, 292 kg had been replaced by fake scales. On June 11, 6 bags are intercepted in a liner bus by the Assam Rifles. They contained 216 kg of real pangolin scales. Forest services say the total weight is 183.5 kg. It is remarkable that Indian institution in charge of counter trafficking in wildlife shoot themselves so often in the foot.

Whatever the exact weight, the true problem is whether or not these scales come from the State of Kolasib's stockpile. Will we ever know? The woman, a certain Hmangaihthangi, admits to having put the bags in the bus. According to her they belong to a certain "Paliana" which mean "big boss" in the Mizoram dialect. Paliana would be settled in Myanmar. She would have met him by chance in a hospital. He would have asked her do him this small favor, to take on the bags and load them with the driver's agreement onto a bus bound to Farkawn near the border to Myanmar.



Primates

Gorilla (*Gorilla* spp.), chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*), orangutan (*Pongo* spp.) are listed in CITES Appendix I. Macaque (*Macaca* spp.) is in Appendix II.

AFRICA

Seizure of a young chimpanzee¹ Cameroon April 5, 2015

This young male chimpanzee 2 or 3 year-old, was rescued in a hotel, alone, malnourished, traumatized. The Ape Action Africa team has welcomed him in its shelter and is working to reinvigorate him physically and psychologically.



© Ape Action Africa

Rescue of a chimpanzee² Bondo, Province Orientale, Democratic Republic of Congo April 10, 2015

Purchased still a baby from poachers by a Russian pilot who had "taken pity" on her, she actually spent 6 years in such a narrow cage that her legs have atrophied. She was transferred to the Lwiro Primate Rehabilitation Centre.



© Lwiro Primates

Rescue of a red-tailed monkey (*Cercopithecus ascanius*, Appendix II)³ Democratic Republic of Congo April 13, 2015

A new small boarder at Lwiro center. This one was abandoned by a rebel group running away.



© Lwiro Primates

Seizure of 4 gorilla skulls and arrest⁴ Yaoundé, Center Region, Cameroon April 2015



© Ofir Droti

Bottom right, this might be a chimpanzee.

Seizure of a bonobo (*Pan paniscus*, Appendix I)⁵ Democratic Republic of Congo April 2015

Illegally detained in northern Congo, a young female 2 year-old nicknamed Lalia, after a river in the north of the country, was transferred to the Lola ya Bonobo sanctuary in Kinshasa.



Seizure of a young chimpanzee and conviction⁶ Doumbafé, Faranah Region, Guinea April 17, 2015



He was in a box. The 2 predators let it out on the adults so they could sell the young one on the market for animal curiosities. Mamady Cissé is a professional hunter. "He has sufficiently proved by the skill and professionalism with which the live animal was captured without the least incident that this was in no way his first experience" said the general attorney. Along with his accomplice, Daouda Condé, he was swiftly sentenced. 6 month

prison term for Mamady. 3 months for Daouda, and for each of them 150.000 GNF (\$ 21 US) in fine and 10 million GNF (\$ 1395 US) to pay together in damages to the Ministry of the Environment.



The baby chimp was taken to a shelter for orphans, the Somoria Chimpanzee Conservation Center in the Upper Niger National Park.

Questioning of a regular forces soldier going to sell a young female chimpanzee of about one year who was handed over to the Center of Rehabilitation of the Primates of Lwiro⁷
Democratic Republic of Congo
May 2015



Seizure of a mandrill (*Mandrillus sphinx*, Appendix I) exhibited in front of a pharmacy and indictment of the chemist⁸
Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon
May 12, 2015

Seizure of 2 dead olive baboons (*Papio anubis*, Appendix II) and arrest⁹
Fazao-Malfakassa National Park, Togo
May 29, 2015

The Lama Tessi police are on alert. In cooperation with the Foundation Franz Weber that manages the 2,000 km² park since 1990, a man was surprised with 2 dead monkeys and 4 hunting rifles. 3 accomplices escaped. The 40 year-old poacher was remanded to the Sokodé prison.



Seizure of 4 chimpanzee skulls and a mandrill skull (*Mandrillus sphinx*, Appendix I)¹⁰
Bafia Region, Cameroon
June 2015

Rotten threads of flesh were dangling from the 2 skulls. A whole family of chimpanzees was massacred. The little one followed his parents to the absolute end. The trafficker is known to raise awareness in the local communities about the protection of the environment. Behind this favourable fame, he was taking part in poaching.



Liberation of an owl-faced guenon (*Cercopithecus hamlyni*, Appendix II)¹¹
Democratic Republic of Congo
June 2015

She is an orphan. After the quarantine, she is going to rejoin her likes in the CRPL (Lwiro Primate Rehabilitation Center). She was freed by ICCN rangers (Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature).



Seizure of 2 chimpanzees, a black mangabey (*Lophocebus* spp., Appendix II) and a crocodile (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and transfer to the Kinshasa Zoo¹²
Matadi, Province of Bas-Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo
June 2015

Welcome to the Lediya Flats hotel.

Seizure of 6 chimpanzee skulls et arrest¹³
Yaoundé, Central Region, Cameroon
June 2015

AMERICA

Seizure and liberation of a golden-mantle saddle-back tamarin (*Saguinus tripartitus*, Appendix II)¹⁴

**San Miguel, Province of Bolivar, Ecuador
April 2015**

Measuring 40cm and weighing 1kg, he was in good health and has been freed into the wild. He was saved thanks to a tip-off.



Seizure of a spider monkey (*Ateles spp.* Appendix I or II), and a lemur (*Lemuridea spp.*, A. I¹⁵)

**Tulum, Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico
May 2015**

A well-deserved holiday. The two animals “worked” in Mayan archeological sites where they posed for tourists. They are now under the protection of PROFEPA.

Seizure of a black howler monkey (*Alouatta caraya*, Appendix II)¹⁶

**Empedrado, Province of Corrientes, Argentina
June 2015**

The animal lived in a private home. His sad and distrustful face shows how domestication is a sad practice.



Seizure of a monkey¹⁷

**Dourados, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil
June 2015**

Tied by the neck like a dog, the monkey was brought to CRAS center and the offender to the police. He must pay a fine of about 200 €.

ASIA

Vietnam The downfall of gibbons and langurs¹⁸

With 24 endemic species of monkeys, Vietnam (94 million inhabitants, 331,211 km²) has the richest biodiversity of Asian countries. All of the species are protected from hunting, trade, detainment, and all domestic or commercial uses by a regulatory shield. From a legal perspective, 94% of prosecutions concern keepers. The poachers are rarely arrested. 60% of suspects are acquitted. 6% of cases culminated in prison sentences. If the country's judicial system persists to be as lenient, the gibbons and langurs will be condemned to extinction in a dozen years. Between 2008 and 2013, 721 cases of illegal possession of langur meat or living and stuffed langurs and 134 cases of detention of gibbons were identified by ENV. The sale by classified ads and internet is active.

Gibbons

The case of the gibbons is critical. The young ones are much appreciated pets. To capture them, the poachers shoot to death the mother. One young is sometimes hurt on this occasion. All of the siblings fall from the trees. 10 females and 10 babies die to capture one healthy young according to poachers, unfortunately experts in the field. On this account, more than 2000 individuals died for the 132 identified detention cases in Vietnam between 2008 and 2013, a grim record that does not take into account the unreported captivities and exportations.

Langurs

Vietnam protects 6 species of langurs. Red, gray or black, the langurs are very popular in the cages. 2 reported detentions in 2008, 231 in 2013. The black ones are from now in great demand. The langurs do not support a longtime in captivity. They are quickly turned into smoked meat, bedspreads, or stuffed specimens. 13% of cases are reduced to prison sentences with parole, 12% strict prison sentences. “It is clear from this study that the current level of law enforcement is having absolutely no discernable effect on the protection of primates in Vietnam, particularly for those highly endangered species” said authors Jasmin Beyle, Nguyen Van Quan, Douglas Hendrie and Tilo Nadler (Primates in the Illegal Wildlife Trade in Vietnam).



Seizure of 13 Hatinh langur skins (*Trachypithecus hatinhensis*, Appendix II) and arrest of 2¹⁹
Minh Hoa District, Quang Binh Province, Vietnam
April 3, 2015

Rescue of 2 macaques²⁰
Da Nang Province
Dan Nang Thanh Hoa, Thanh Hoa Province, Vietnam
April 2015

They were kept as attraction in shops. Through 2 informants, ENV was able to rescue them.



Rescue of an orangutan²¹
Indonesia
April 14, 2015

Bought on the black market to “rescue” him from traffic, considered a familiar, given human food and showered every day by his former owner, Unyil, 4 years old, lived in a wooden cage in the bathroom of the house. Sadly a common case in Indonesia.



© Centre for Orangutan Protection

Rescue of a macaque²²
Tuyen Quang, Vietnam
April 2015

Reported on the phone to ENV by a tourist, the caged macaque was seized and brought to safety by the federal police. The NGO keeps his former jailer under surveillance as he used to trap protected animals.



© Hoang Chien

Arrest of a trafficker and seizure of a baby orangutan²³
Medan, Sumatra, Indonesia
April 2015

The man was arrested as he was offering for sale online a baby orangutan. The young ape was saved and the trafficker confessed to resell on Facebook animals and animal parts supplied by a network of hunters from northern Sumatra and Java. The macabre traffic included tiger skins and fangs, hornbill beaks and a wide range of live animals such as orangutans, javan gibbons (*Hylobates moloch*, Appendix I), siamangs (*Symphalangus syndactylus*, Appendix I), Asian golden cats (*Catopuma temminckii*, Appendix I), sundae slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) or crocodiles (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I or II). He faces 5 years in prison and a \$ 7,600 US fine.



© WCS Wildlife Crimes Unit

Seizure of 3 live monkeys and 13 frozen ones weighting 69 kg and arrest²⁴
Dien Chau district, Nghe An Province, Vietnam
April 16, 2015

Through an informant, Tang Van Duc, 45, was arrested on his motorcycle with a sad load in his cart. According to the trafficker, a market had been set on the phone with an unknown buyer. Duc and the apes carcasses ended up at the police station for investigation.

Seizure of a Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*, Appendix I)²⁵
Island of Borneo, Indonesia
April 2015

24 years in prison. Just let out. Now in quarantine. Cannot be released into the forest. There is a call to ameliorate as much as possible her new living conditions.

<http://www.gofundme.com/pleaseHELPdebbie>

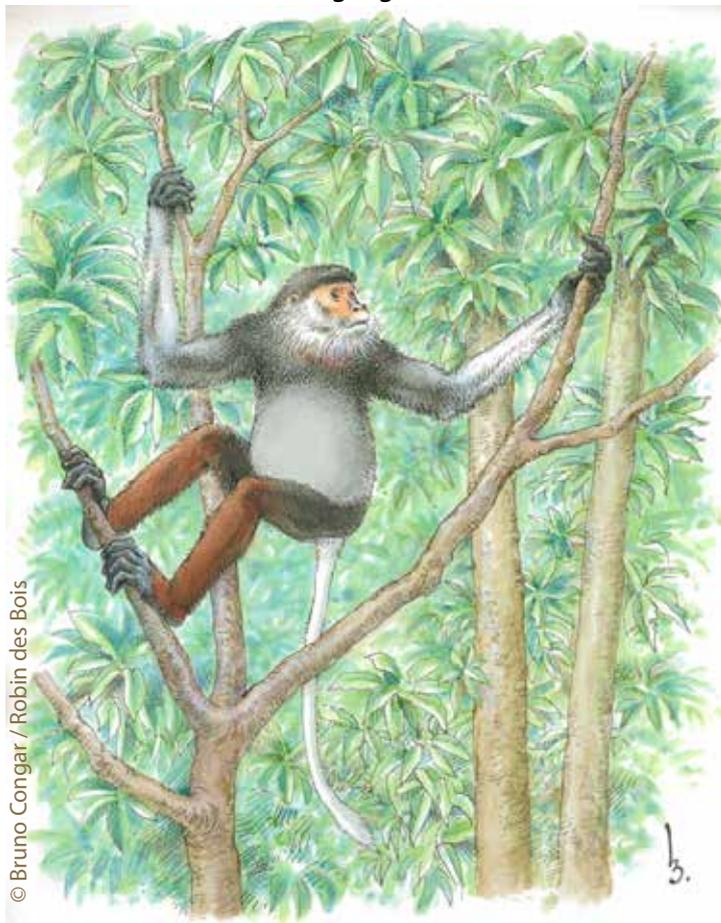


© COP

Investigations on poaching of a red-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix nemaeus*, Appendix I) and charge for poaching ²⁶

**Son Tra à Da Nang Natural Reserve, Vietnam
April 2015**

The quintet would at night sneak into the Son Tra Mountain that 38 years ago became the biggest douc reserve in the world. The poachers were then go after monkeys and other wild animals. Just like at home they would eat the meat on the spot managing somehow to not be noticed by the 12 guards who take turns watching over the 40 km². The gang leader and 4 assistants come from the Nghê An province 400 km away. The guards finally uncovered them. A whole bunch of survival equipment and poaching material were seized on site among the trees along with a few kilos of meat and 2 dead doucs. The main profit expected from these activities was from making douc bone wine deemed a "tonic" to say it politely, that means a sexual stimulant in real language.



Red-shanked douc langurs are only a few tens left in the reserve and less than 2000 in their preferred range that spreads over Vietnam and Laos. Colored monkeys from the langurs family, arboreal, vegetarian, they live in united social group, popular as pets or ornamental, but also as main dish in some Vietnamese restaurants. The curtain would be brought down on the species in 2030.

Release of a gibbon (*Hylobatidae* spp., Appendix I) and a macaque ²⁷

**Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
April 2015**



Release of a baby gibbon (*Hylobatidae* spp., Appendix I) ²⁸

**In the National Park buffer zone of Bu Gia Map, Binh Phuoc Province, Vietnam
May 2015**

Seizure of 3 young Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*, Appendix I) ²⁹

**Sebomban Kampar, Province of West Kalimantan, Indonesia
May 2015**



Release of 3 orangutan orphans in the village of Kampar Sebomban near a cut down forest and a future palm oil estate.

Conviction for illegal traffic of 1,600 macaques

**Shaanxi Province, China
May 14, 2015**

Monkeys traffickers struck between March 2000 and December 2002. The macaques were not sold as pets. They were sold to hospitals, medical research institutes and laboratories engaged in animal testing in Shanghai, Beijing, Suzhou and Guangzhou. The macaque was selling around 2,000 yuan (320 US \$). At least 1600 specimens collected in forests perished on researchers and torturers lab benches. Shikui and Bi Xu Tao, the 2 leaders of the network, took 13 and 10 and a half years in prison; their accomplices had been sentenced to 4 to 14 years in 2004. Xu was finally arrested in May 2014 and Bi surrendered to the police in September.



**Rescue of a baby Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*, Appendix I) given over to authorities³¹
Kutai National Park, Province of east Kalimantan, Indonesia
May 19, 2015**



Will George be able to see the jungle once again? "Adopted" by a family that found him close to a coal mine, he was freed after 3.5 years. He is today in a refuge of the BOS foundation (Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation). His health checkup is in progress. At the end of

the quarantine, he will be admitted into a nursery for orphaned orangutans and will readapt to the social life of his likes.

**Seizure of a baby orangutan³²
Province of Kalimantan, Borneo Island, Indonesia
May 2015**



This one was freed thanks to a local representative of the Dayak tribe. He was in his wooden cage for 3 months. His owner found him when he was working in a palm oil plantation. "I spoke to the management about him, but they didn't want to know anything." "For my wife and me the orangutan is a burden. It's expensive to feed and it takes up a lot of our time." The veterinarian doctor Adi Irawan expresses his gratitude to Bapak Deka, the Dayak. "If we do not stop the deforestation of the orangutans' habitat, we cannot prevent people for taking them as pets."



**Seizure of a Sumatran orangutan³³
Medan, Province of North Sumatra, Indonesia
May 2015**

The misfortune is in his eyes. He had undergone at least 2 years in a bamboo cage at the back of a kitchen in a village. He is now in the good care of the Sumatran Orangutan Conservation

Program. If not, he would have been sold by his breeder to a wildlife trader in Medan.

**Seizure of a macaque³⁴
Province of Khanh Hoa, Vietnam
June 4, 2015**

The street vendor wanted to transform the onlookers into buyers thanks to his animal gadget.



**Seizure of a pig tailed macaque (*Macaca spp.*, Appendix II)³⁵
Province of Soc Trang, Vietnam
June 2015**

**Voluntary handing over to the authorities of a sick red-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix nemaeus*, Appendix I)³⁶
District of Le Thuy, Province of Quang Binh, Vietnam. June 2015**

He had been captured in a rubber plantation 6 months ago and had since been in a cage. Noting a declines in his health, the owner decided to get rid of him.



**Voluntary handing over to the authorities of a macaque and 5 sambars (*Cervus unicolor*) by the manager of a small makeshift zoo in Bu Gia Map National Park, Binh Phuoc Province, Vietnam³⁷
June 15, 2015**

**Seizure of a macaque to sell on Facebook³⁸
Province of Ba Ria-Vung Tau, Vietnam
June 16 2015**



**Traffic of an orangutan³⁹
Eluru, State of Andhra Pradesh, India
June 17, 2015**



The car was in the name of Mohammed Abdul Gaffar. In the early hours of the morning it crossed the border post between Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.

It was going toward the north. After a chase, it was stopped. There were 5 people on board. A woman in a burqa escaped. Two little monkeys were in a cage in the back. Photos were sent to the services of Forests and the Vizag Zoo. It would have been answered that these monkeys were not on the list of animals protected by law. The gang left with the monkeys. They were 5 to 6 month-old orangutans. The heart of this international traffic could be in Kolkata if we remind of the discovery of chimps imported from Singapore as well as some marmosets in the East Bengal capital city (cf. "On the Trail" n°4 p. 47).

**Kidnapping (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II)⁴⁰
Varandha Ghat, State of Maharashtra, India
June 2015**

The 5 kidnappers have been arrested.



© Mumbai Mirror

**Release of a living loris (*Lorisidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and questioning⁴³
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
June 24, 2015**

It was on sale on Facebook and to be picked up in Hanoi.

EUROPE

**Slaughter of a female chimpanzee⁴¹
Son Servera, Balearic Islands, Spain
May 2015**

The 2 apes fled from Sa Coma Safari park after breaking the bars of their cages. The female Eva was slaughtered a few hours later. Adam was never really found. It seems that he was slaughtered too. Several NGOs condemn the dilapidated state of the zoo.

Theft of 7 golden lion tamarins (*Leontopithecus rosalia*, Appendix I) and 10 silvery marmosets (*Callithrix argentata*, Appendix II)⁴²

**Zoological Park of Beauval, Region Centre-Val de Loire, France
May 9, 2015**

The golden lion tamarins were exceptionally lent by the government of Brazil for the framework of a reproduction program in captivity. Considering the bare tree on which the unfortunate victims were perched and the small size of their territory, one can seriously doubt that the experiment would have succeeded after completion and that the zoos may contribute to the rescue of endangered species through transfers and lendings of breeding animals.



Seizure of common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II) and cotton-headed tamarins (*Saguinus oedipus*, Appendix I) and arrest⁴³

**Limoges, Limousin Region, France
June 2015**

4 traffickers were put in custody then released pending trial. At least 9 little monkeys were sold on the internet. 5 were seized on site. There would apparently be no connection between the theft in the Beauval zoo and the dismantling of this gang in the Limoges area. Beauval and Limoges are 180 km away. Small monkeys make big profits. The 4 have pocketed at least 20,000 € in their sordid business.

Vicuñas

AMERICA

**Seizure of 158 dead vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, A. I)
Peru, Chile-Peru border
May 26, 2015**

US \$ 500 per kilo of wool. The 158 bodies were transported by donkey. When scoundrels spotted the police, they left behind the whole. Cf. "On the Trail" n°4, p.50.

Felines

Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), jaguar (*Panthera onca*) and ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*) are in Appendix I. Lion (*Panthera leo*) and puma (*Puma concolor*) are in Appendix II.

AFRICA

Rescue of a lioness injured by a trap¹ Bouabandjida National Park, North Region, Cameroon May 18, 2015

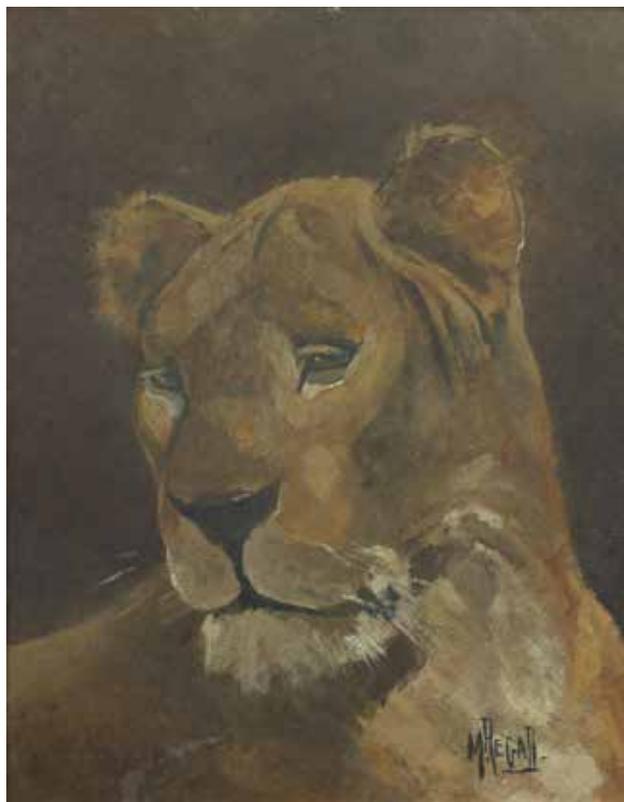
Born Free supports, with the University of Oxford, the Recanati Kaplan Fund and the Lion Foundation a campaign for the protection of lions in central and western Africa. The traps threaten the lions. The vet managed to anesthetize in the brush the lioness that freed herself and bears some serious wounds on her neck. She was able to be looked after. The vet says with confidence that the lioness will survive as well as the 3 cubs. Unfortunately 2 males in the same state were not able to be approached by the team, as they were too wary and too sneaky. "We were able to observe their wounds and at this stage we can hope that they will manage to survive." The countless traps set by locals to supply the traffic of bush meat strike without any discrimination to even the most threatened animals such as lions.



Seizure of 2 leopard pelts and arrest² Province of Woleu-Ntem, Gabon May 22, 2015



Protected by his cassock as much as by his venerable age, 79 years, Fidèle Okoué-Ngou officer to the catholic church of Saint Joseph was left at liberty while he had just bought 2 pelts for 200,000 FCFA (\$332 US). The 2 venders are in police custody.



Seizure of a leopard pelt, 10 traps, and 10 poisoned arrows, and custody of 4 wild animal bandits⁴

Route of Mombasa (A109), Kenya June 6, 2015

The Nairobi-Mombasa route is not a quiet river at 500 km long. It carries every day ivory and a variety of dead wild animals and specimens pulled from the national parks, the savannas and forests of Kenya, Uganda, and other African countries without access to the sea. The Mombasa road is a river of trouble. Thanks to a network of regular correspondents settled on the borders of the route, Big Life Foundation regularly manages to interrupt the natural course of things that come in to the port of Mombasa with the doors wide open alas to Asia. With information arisen during weekend and the cooperation KWS, 4 men are in custody. The bail was set for each of them at the equivalent of \$ 2000 US.



Seizure of 3 fake lion and leopard heads and 3 fake skins and arrest⁵

Lomé, Maritime Region, Togo

June 2015

Fakes are spreading in Africa. The fake feline heads and skins were made from heads and skins from dogs. Penalties for fraud and counterfeiting are in general heavier than those for traffic in endangered species.



Transfer of 7 lions, of which there was one male and 6 females, from South Africa to the Akagera National Park, Eastern Province, Rwanda⁶

Lions have been lacking in Rwanda for 15 years. After traveling 36 hours from South Africa, the lions were quarantined in 2 different enclosures and will later be released in the Akagera National Park on the border with Tanzania (1122 km²). The convoy of sleeping lions was hailed all along the route by schoolchildren. May the awakening, introduction of the lions and their conservation happen in under the best conditions and best intentions!



One of the last lions in Kenya saved from a trap by the vets of the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust⁷

National Park of Meru, Kenya

June 17, 2015



AMERICA

Seizure of a lion cub of 1 and a half months and a young tiger of 2 and a half months⁸

Acapulco, State of Guerrero, Mexico

April 2015

The feline models photographed by clients from a shopping mall were not supposed to be there: the PROFEPA had authorized the show in Veracruz, a city 9 hours away by car.



Seizure of 2 tigers⁹

State of Chihuahua, Mexico

April 17, 2015

In Jesus Salas Aguayo's ranch, leader of the Juarez drug cartel arrested last week, 10 cars, fire arms, uniforms and 2 tigers were seized.

Transfer of 35 felines of which one is a lion¹⁰

Tehuacan, State of Puebla, Mexico

April 2015

She spent the day in a cage 0.65 meters wide, 1.10 high, and 2.78 long, because she "get along" with the other felines. In total 35 felines were removed to the UMA Club of Animals of Tehuacán and put in the Large Mexican Sanctuary of the Black Jaguar and White Tiger.

Seizure of an adult puma¹¹

Bonito, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

20 mai 2015



Caught red-handed. During an inspection on route MS-178, the police heard the noise of a firearm coming from the forest and caught the farm worker who had just killed the feline. He was arrested and sentenced to a fine and to a penalty of 6 months imprisonment.

The puma will be stuffed for educational purposes.

Seizure of a 6-month-old female puma alive¹²

State of Carabobo, Venezuela
June 2015

She was transferred to Leslie Pantin Zoo in Turmero, in the State of Aragua—100 km away.





ASIA



**Leopard skins: seizures, arrests and convictions¹³
Haldwani, State of Uttarakhand, India
April 1, 2015**

The 2 individuals had made a deal. Rs 6 lakh (\$ 9500 US) for the feline skin. They were arrested just before the exchange. The buyer lives in Haldwani. The skin is in good shape. No rips or bullet holes. A professional job. At the top of the network would be a woman from the Nainital district. The trafficking spreads apparently through Haldwani, Almora, Pithoragarth and then leads out toward international branches. One of the 2 suspects escaped.

2 companions who in 2008 had been caught red handed carrying with them another leopard skin, have just been sentenced to 3 years in prison and 10,000 rupees in fine (\$ 160 US).

**REPEATED OFFENSE
Conviction for the poaching of a leopard¹⁴
Dehradun and Rishikesh, State of Uttarakhand, India
April 2015**

The investigation was well carried out. Lab experts proved that the bullets retrieved during the leopard's autopsy had been fired from the suspects'



gun. Mohan Singh and Shambu Singh, 50 and 70 years old, come from the same village near the Rajajii National Park. They were arrested a few hours after the forest-guards, summoned by the sound of gun shots in the night, rushed to the site. A dead leopard was found on the spot and the 2 killers had disappeared using the cover of darkness. The 2 Singhs had been let out on bail. The 2 poachers were probably not expecting solid proof to come from the bullet forensics. They were sentenced to 3 years prison term and a fine of 10,000 Rs (\$ 160 US).

Illegal possession of jaw traps and arrest of 5 suspected poachers in Terai forest near Nepal and Bhutan¹⁵

**State of Uttarakhand, India
April 14, 2015**

Conviction of 4 poachers to 3 years in prison and 10,000 Rs (\$ 157 US) in fine each¹⁶

**Ramnagar, State of Uttarakhand, India
April 18, 2015**



Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest of one person¹⁸

**Dehradun, State of Uttarakhand, India
June 18, 2015**



Sentencing of 4 people to 3 years in prison and 25,000 Rs fine (\$ 330 US) for being in possession of 3 leopard pelts¹⁹

**State of Uttarakhand, India
June 2015**

* * * * *

Seizure of tiger claws, canines and tiger whiskers and arrest²⁰

**Mul, State of Maharashtra, India
April 2015**

Diwali, the lights and fireworks festival is also the occasion for all sorts of wrongdoings. Police forces are on the alert and poaching activities are spreading.

"The tigress was poached in compartment no. 485 in protected forest of Mul range before Diwali last year." She didn't notice the electrical wires attached to a battery.



Her 18 claws, her whiskers and her canines were cut off and ripped out. Poachers also practice dentistry. Part of the body was burned on site, another part was buried in the sand by the river Uma. The carcass raiders were identified thanks to information from the WSPI (Wildlife Protection Society of India). 13 people were called in front of Justice to be heard, trappers, sellers, buyers all together. Only 2 canines and 5 claws were found. The 3 main accused parties claim they intended to catch a deer. They only by chance ended up with a tiger. Electrical traps aren't good at selecting their victims.

Controversy around some Rs 50 lakh (\$78,000 US) found at the home of Chacha²¹

Nagpur, State of Maharashtra, India

April 2015

"On the Trail" has time and time again spoken of Chacha alias Suraj Pal, the banker of a large channel of tigers to China via Nepal, still in pre-trial custody. The search in one of his homes had in September 2013 led to the discovery of Rs 50 lakh (\$ 78,000 US) in cash. The CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) thinks that this money comes from traffic. Chacha says that it comes from the sale of one of his estates and fears that the jackpot could serve his release on bail. The CBI wishes that this money, presently in the hands of a judge in Nagpur, be placed amid the evidence. "First check that it is not counterfeit money." "And the fingerprints on the notes could be used to identify accomplices."

Court hearing for illegal possession of a stuffed tiger and theft of claws in the police station²²

Ghaziabad, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

April 6, 2015

The audience was stunned by the sight of the tiger entering the Court room even though it was stuffed. The Court wanted to witness the evidence itself. An unfortunate detail to be noted, the tiger had been relieved of his claws while in the custody of the neighbor police station. A claw can be sold for between \$ 300 and 400 US.

The stuffed body's owner puts all the blame onto his deceased father. "He loved hunting." "He didn't know that it was illegal to kill a tiger." That was 10 years ago and tigers were already protected by law in India and in the rest of the world.

Seizure of an Arabian leopard (*Panthera pardus nimr*, Appendix I) and arrest²³

Al Mazyunah, Dhofar Governorat, Oman

April 2015

The 5 men inside a 4-wheel drive were attempting to enter a leopard from Yemen into the Sultanate of Oman. The priceless specimen was most probably intended to a private zoo.

Yet, the leopard who has just been seized by the Sultanate of Oman might just have escaped the dangers of civil war and the pain of famine. The Sanaa zoo was home to 2 Arabian leopards, the smallest of the leopard sub-species. Their fur is less bright and draws more toward beige, grey and white tones. The camouflage garment enables the Arabian leopard to blend into the arid and rocky mountains where they hunt for gazelles, dassies, Nubian ibexes, lizards, pheasants... Unfortunately, the Arabian leopard is not sufficiently discrete to hide from hunters and poachers. The last survivor in Egypt was killed in December 2014 (see "On the Trail" n°7 p. 46). Maybe some individuals are still alive in Yemen. Very unlikely in such an environment ravaged by war and without any consideration taken for natural ecosystems. The Arabian leopard needs a stable territory all the more large that his prey is also preyed upon by humans or submitted to the pressure of human development, in particular nomadic grazing.

All considered, if it turns out to be true that the leopard seized by the Sultanate of Oman's customs was stolen from the Sanaa zoo, this could be a good thing. In the Dhofar Mountains near Yemen, about 20 Arabian leopards benefit from reinforced protection, for the time being. After man, the sub-specie's worst enemy is extinction of genetic diversity.



Sanaa zoo, Yemen.

Poaching of a leopard and parade on social networks²⁴

Iran

April 2015



Seizure of a leopard skin and 4 people arrested²⁵
District of Betul, State of Madhya Pradesh, India
April 9, 2015

The skin was taken from a large size adult in the neighbor Melghat forest. The 4 suspects, 3 buyers and the conveyor, are behind bars for the legal custody time.

Seizure of 3 snow leopard skins (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I) and 2 suspects arrested²⁶

Kishtwar, State of Jammu-and-Cachemire, India
April 9, 2015

Seizure of 2 leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) and arrest²⁷
Ho-Chi-Minh-City, Vietnam
April 10, 2015

On the Internet, leopard cats are sold by the pair just like earrings. They were spotted by sharp eyes on the net. The 2 decorative felines were seized by environmental police. Possibilities for release back into their natural habitat are being examined.



Convictions for poaching a tiger²⁸

Katni, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

April 10, 2015

In January 2002, they shot the tiger and skinned him for his fur. At the time one of them was in charge of the Katni forest management board. 13 years later they were sentenced each to 3 years in jail and a fine of 10,000 rupees by the first instance



judge in Katni. The 60,000 rupees (\$ 960 US) will be remitted to the Forest Department.

It is thanks to the determination of Manjula Srivastava, legal counsel of the State of Madhya Pradesh, that this sentencing was obtained. She was particularly diligent in requesting a handwriting expert to confirm the authenticity of the tiger's autopsy report because the veterinarian who had written it was deceased at the time of the trial.

Madame Nature

"I am often threatened by the convicts' parents in the court building. I leave the court often under escort." Ms. Srivastava has earned respect among animal defenders. For the investigation of the case, she references both the law on protection of wildlife and the Criminal Procedure Code. She succeeds in convincing judges to give all or part of fines to the Forestry Services as compensation for the lost animals. She does not back down despite pressure. After that one Forest Services vehicle bizarrely collided with a tiger in the Bandarghat reserve, she obtained the suspension of 3 officials. "I do this work to pay off the debt to our Mother Earth," she says.

42 years old, the lawyer has obtained 121 convictions of poachers in 13 years. The first, in 2001, concerned 2 women from Madhya Pradesh caught on a train who were hiding 4 leopard pelts in the folds of their saris. It is thanks to Ms. Srivastava that the Dariya case saw its judicial epilogue in 2010. With 7 accomplices, Dariya and his wife had been arrested in 1988 with a tiger pelt, bones, 4 claws, 3 boxes of fat, a hyena skin and 8 traps. The whole group had been released out on bail and then disappeared into thin air. 20 years later, Dariya was found in the tiger reserve of Corbett (State of Uttarakhand) with 4 tiger and leopard traps, deer antlers, a panther pelt and a dagger. Once more, within a couple of months, he was released on bail and since then escaped new summons from the justice. Ending March 2009, Dariya and his wife were arrested in the marketplace of Ramnagar. They were disguised as beggars. Ramnagar is on the border of the Corbett reserve where more than 100 tigers still survive. In July 2010, thanks to the diligence of Ms. Srivastava, the man and the woman had been finally sentenced to 3 years in prison each and a fine of 10,000 rupees. Dariya learned the trade with another figure in poaching and wildlife trafficking, Sansar Chand.

Sansar Chand Portrait ²⁹

No remorse. Up until his death by cancer at the age of 59, Sansar Chand constantly repeated that hunting and trafficking of animals was an inherited profession.



Sansar Chand is the Veerappan of the North ("On the Trail" n°5 p. 101). The death of 250 tigers, 2000 leopards, 5000 otters was attributed to him and his clan in over 40 years of poaching. He had accumulated, in the form of shops in the Sadar Bazaar of Delhi, a fortune worth more than 40 crore Rs (\$ 6.2 million US) in properties, without counting the rental fees. Mysteriously, never could an investigation prove that he somewhere had a bank account.

Most of the time, he managed to escape the claws of justice. When in 1990, at his mother's home, he was taken by surprise by a search of which he had not been informed; on the spot a tiger pelt, 17 leopard pelts and 30 kg of tiger bones were found. He escaped by the balcony and afterwards he produced to the investigators, as if a truly poor man, a food stamp card certifying that he did not live in his mother's house.

His lawyers have always mastered the art of making trials drag on after the ritual release of their opulent client out on bail. Through constant non-appearances, lost summons, fake medical certificates, the seals and witnesses disappeared and near some 20 years later, the charges, due to lack of evidence, were dropped.

Sansar Chand had the tiger and the other wild animals in his blood. He was 16 and living with his grandfather when he lived through his first police raid. On the inside of the patriarch's house, there were no less than a tiger pelt, 597 monitor lizard skins, 85 otter skins, and the skin of a red panda. Sansar Chand, thanks to being underage was released.

The reading of the logbooks dating back to 2004 seized from one of his sons revealed some good and some bad surprises to investigators. They contained the contact information of several Delhi police inspectors, of a highly ranked politician but also a list of poachers, traffickers, and a balance sheet: between October 2003 and September 2004, 40 tiger skins, 400 leopardskins and 1.38 crore Rs of revenue (\$ 162,000 US). In addition to the transmission of the knowledge of hereditary know-how of poaching, he was initiated in the field by members of the Bawaria tribe who came regularly to visit his family.

It was in 2007 that things started to get complicated for him with the creation of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau in the line of the Bureau of Narcotics. There at that time, not that long ago, it was commonly said that investigators didn't know how to recognize a cow bone from a tiger bone.

Sansar Chand died in 2014 at the Sawai Singh Hospital in Jaipur. He was transferred at the last moment to the central prison of Alwar. He died of a generalized cancer. His lawyers asked that he be set free for health reasons, but this time bail was denied. He was in custody for several cases of animal trafficking that one by one ended in acquittal. He was 59 years old and other members of his clan and his family are today managers of his fortune and of his know-how.

**GANG
Indictment of 17 persons for trafficking in tiger
bones and ivory³⁰**

**China
April 2015**

This is the largest tiger bone traffic network dismantled by the Beijing police since 1949.

The case was opened at the end of August 2 years ago and ivory was at the heart of the inquiry. Wu had been asked by his friend Zhai to transport the "presents" of which she knew none of the specifics from Nanning, near the border to Vietnam, to Beijing and Tianjin 1500km away. The "presents" were tusks. They were seized by the police during a road side check.

From then on Zhai was under surveillance and the secret investigation uncovered that most of the "presents" from Zhai were tiger bones.

Within 2 years, he and his network would have smuggled 28 tiger skeletons. 17 suspects including Zhai, the leader, the transporters, the sellers and clients were arrested.

Beverages and other potions made from tiger bone are not recognized by traditional Chinese medicine. All 17 face 13 years prison time.

**Seizure of a stuffed tiger and arrest³¹
Kabupaten of Muaro Jambi, Province of Jambi,
Indonesia
April 15, 2015**

The 2 suspects are only known under the code names Y and A. A is a forest guard. A and Y were caught red handed transporting a tiger at the edge of the Berbak National Park. A and Y have a lot at stake, especially A. A 5 year prison term. 100 million rupees fine (\$ 7800 US). Y is apparently close to one of the Park administrators. The tiger would have been stuffed about 15 years ago. The tiger range is rapidly shrinking faced with the fast advance of the army of oil palm trees.



**Seizure of a skin and 150 leopard bones and
arrest³²
Oodlabari, State of West Bengal, India
April 19, 2015**

The car licensed in Bhutan attempted to escape the nighttime chase with the police. The 2 passengers were rushing toward Nepal. The skin and bones were tucked into a bag of ginger. The skin is worth Rs 4 lakh (\$ 6300 US) on the regional market.



**Discovery of a tiger carcass³³
Pilibhit tiger reserve, State of Uttar Pradesh,
India**

April 23, 2015

Another tiger drowned in the canal. The tiger fell victim of poisoning and rushed to the water pit to drink. He drowns and often the poachers will come to fetch the body. That is at least what has noticed a feline specialist. The post mortem examinations will bring further knowledge of how the death occurred. 5 tigers have been poisoned in the Uttar Pradesh State within 3 years. See "On the Trail" n°7 p. 52.



**Arrest of 2 sellers of 8 tiger claws and a buyer³⁴
Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve, State of Tamil
Nadu, India
1 May 2015**

**Seizure of a Persian leopard pelt (Panthera par-
dus saxicolor, Appendix I) on sale in a luxury
store³⁵**

**Tehran, Tehran Province, Iran
May 4, 2015**



**Seizure of tiger skin and bones and arrest³⁶
Mangraghati, Mid-Western Development
Region, Nepal
May 5, 2015**

The skin and bones were in a closet. The tiger could have been poached in India Katarniaghat sanctuary on the other side of the border. The suspect belongs to Banjara nomadic clan. He would have bought the skin to Rs 7,000 (\$ 110 US). He wanted to convey the hide to China by the northern route across the districts of Jumla and Humla. Beyond Tibet, the skin would have been sold 10 times more.

The Banjara tribe is composed of 4 million people in 9 States of southern India and the State of Himachal Pradesh in the north, only a few hundred kilometers away from Nepal. It is one of the best known Indian tribes especially for the colorful clothing and for its many accessories. Some are made of copper, some are silver or gold, but others are in shell, ivory or animal bones.



**Seizure of a clouded leopard pelt (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I) and arrest³⁷
District of Barpeta, State of Assam, India
May 6, 2015**

The clouded leopard is an acrobat. He hangs from a branch by a single back leg. He catches monkeys and birds in the trees. He pounces directly on deer without placing a foot on the ground. He sleeps at night in the branches and makes himself a nest of twigs. He is difficult to kill or to capture. He lives in wet forests up to 2000m in altitude. The man who was found in possession of the hide had bought it near a NHPC (National Hydroelectric Power Corporation) dam construction site on the Subansiri River.



**Seizure of a leopard skin and custody of 7 suspects³⁸
Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh, India
May 7, 2015**

**Seizure of a tiger skin, 16 chital deer (*Axis axis*) and Indian muntjac (*Muntiacus muntjak*) antlers, and arrest³⁹
National Park of Bandipur, State of Karnataka, India
Mai 7, 2015**

At the heart of the tiger's territory (542 km²), there is a pavilion. On the inside, police found the skin and remains of a tiger. B H Lakhani claims that these trophies were from when the plantation was resold to RC Morris, planter, hunter, and alleged naturalist. "Lakhani has taken the bait" say the investigators. "If he wants to be let off the hook, he has only to produce has the certificate and ownership statement." The case is troubling. All of the trophies

come from animals that live in the reserve. Poaching seems profit from some indulgences in this area fertile in biodiversity (cf. "On the Trail" n°6 p. 119). The 4 coffee and tea estates in the reserve had already been named regarding illegal activities other than poaching. The matter concerned illegal houses and underground commercial activities in conflict with the management of the reserve. The forest services have several times called upon the businessmen to cease such doings.

The tea and coffee estates belong to the group TVS (Trust Value Services) and the industrial conglomerate Birla of Calcutta of which there are multiple activities: sugar, textiles, phosphate, banking services and media.

The companies feel quite at home in the tiger reserve where some dozens of tigers, leopards, elephants, deer and no less than 250 species of birds cohabitate. The streams are diverted or polluted by pesticide releases. Extensions of the plantations do not respect the protocol signed with the Forest Services of the State of Karnataka. Elephants are gradually expropriated and can't avoid approaching farmlands on the outskirts of the reserve. Luxury bungalows are located against any common sense across the elephants trail. Estate rents are not properly paid. Trees are felled without the permission of forest guards.

B. H. Lakhani, representative of Birla was released on bail. However he must remain at Justice's disposal, cooperate without restraint with the justice and obtain permission when he wishes to change location.



**Seizure of 2 leopard skins and dismantling of a gang of poachers and traffickers in skins and parts of leopard⁴⁰
Udaipur, State of Rajasthan and Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, India
May 2015**

Kumbalgarh forest leopards often fell in traps at night when they were going to drink in ponds. Satyawan, loyal to the terrible Sansar Chand (cf.p. 47), who in his time emptied the Sariska Reserve of its tigers, had taught guys living on the edge of the forest all the tricks and practices to trap leopards and skin them. Satyawan gave Rs 3000 to 4000 (\$ 50 to 60 US) to subcontractors for each skin delivered. In recent months, trappers started working for themselves and sold the skins \$ 800 US a piece to commercial agents who were caught in Udaipur (600,000 inhabitants) as they waited for a customer. In addition to the skin, bones, claws and whiskers were also sold under the counter.

Seizure of 1 skull and 157 bones of Bengal tiger and arrest ⁴¹

Sharonkola upazila, district of Bagerhat, Bangladesh

May 2015

All this, plus a deer trap, was at the bottom of a small pond near the house. The suspect said the tiger was trapped by a gang in the Sundarbans 6 months before. As for himself, he only stored the loot.



Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest; conviction on appeal in Haryana State ⁴²

Rangamatia, State of the Odisha, India

May 18, 2015

Riding a bicycle in the hills of the Similipal forest, a man had the leopard skin and was arrested by police. The leopard was more or less 8 years old. The hide that showed no trace of bullets or arrows measures close to 2 meters long and 60 centimeters wide. 1500 km from there, in the State of Haryana, the Court of appeals confirms a 5 years prison sentence of and the double fine of 20,000 Rs (\$ 313 US) given by the 1st instant tribunal to the couple of traffickers caught in 2011 with 4 leopards skins.

Seizure of 4 leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) after being put up for sale on social media ⁴³

Province of Thai Nguyen, Vietnam

May 2015



The monks rebel ⁴⁴

“Tiger Temple” Kanchanaburi, Province of Kanchanaburi, Thailand

April 2015

A hundred monks prevented the removal of 6 black bears. Despite a court order in due form, it took a crane, wire cutters and reinforcement of 70 soldiers and several vets to work around the protest and to calm the very excited and agitated bears before their transfer into a truck. The police were looking for clues to the disappearance of 3 Bengal tigers when they came across the plantigrades.



The tigers rebel ⁴⁵

“Tiger Temple” Kanchanaburi, Province of Kanchanaburi, Thailand

May 23, 2015

The head monk of the temple was scratched and bitten by a tiger on the arm and face. He received emergency care at the Thanakarn hospital.

In the Phuket subsidiary of the tiger temple, an Australian tourist was severely bitten on the leg a few months ago during one of its profitable sessions of feline user-friendliness organized every day by the monks in orange dress for several hundred international tourists. Bad time for the tiger temple. It may no longer be a money temple. After looking to capture and remove the 146 tigers, the Department of National Parks Wildlife and Flora finally resolved to let the tigers stay there while banning the breeding and commercial exploitation. A tourist selfie making friends with a tiger was charged \$ 180 US. The lawyers of the temple demand financial compensation of several million baht.

**Seizure of 2 leopard skins(125 cm x 57 cm and 158 cm x 33.5 cm), 4.8 kg of bones and 2 arrests⁴⁶
District of Baitadi, Far West Development Region, Nepal and Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal
May 21 and 31, 2015**

**The fake tiger skin is fashionable⁴⁷
Mysuru, State of Karnataka, India
May 2015**

Even with washing, the dye does not come off. In 2013, police from the area seized 540 fake skins in a Hakki Pilkki slum on the outskirts of Nagarhole. The support skins are calfskin, dogskin, and otter. Nomads claiming to be professional masseurs roam foreign countries - Thailand, Hong Kong, Middle East - and outside their services also offer fake tiger skins, for the price of genuine ones. Similarly, camel teeth are sharpened like tiger teeth and the black market is also flooded with fake elephant tusks made of plaster.



**Seizure of 12 kg of tiger bones and arrest of 3 people¹⁷
Bijnor, State of Uttarakhand, India
June 3, 2015**

**Discovery of a probably poisoned tiger⁴⁸
Bandhavgarh Reserve (60 specimens), State of Madhya Pradesh, India. June 4, 2015**

**Seizure of a clouded leopard skin (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I) and a Nepalese man arrested³
Baikunthapur Forest, State of West Bengal, India
June 5, 2015**

**We will not return to Purulia⁴⁹
Purulia, State of West Bengal, India
June 20, 2015**



Hanged, lynched, burned by the exalted mob, the wretched leopard was trapped in a backyard and overwhelmed under unverifiable rumors and im-

mediately killed by various means. His tail was cut and his claws ripped off.

Rangers arrived in mass in the village to capture him, anesthetize him and put him back in the forest were powerless to stop the furry and hatred far removed from the old Indian culture respectful of animal lives. Who hangs a leopard will hang a man.

**Discovery of 3 dead leopards, a female, a male, and a cub⁵⁰
Forest of North Udaipur, State of Rajasthan, India.
June 23, 2015**

**Seizure of two leopard skin and arrest of 3 men aged 26, 28, and 68⁵¹
District of Darchula, Far Western Development Region, Nepal (at the border with the State of Uttarakhand, India)
June 24, 2015**

The Sundarbans⁵²

The ecosystem of the Sundarbans is shared between India and Bangladesh. This environmental masterpiece, saturated with fresh and marine water, is hemmed by mangroves.

India

The economic and environmental value of the Sundarbans under Indian jurisdiction, 2,585 km², has been analyzed by the Center for Ecological Services Management and the Indian Institute for the Management of Forests. The study is indisputable. The natural renewable resources, the management and the prestige of this world heritage of humanity ensures regular profits to 500,000 people. The Sundarbans Park is useful and a source of wealth. According to the authors, the annual revenue for the local communities involved in the management of the Park is 3.25 crore Rs (\$ 509,224 US). The fishing products inside the park are equal to 160 crore Rs per year (\$ 25 million US). If the mangroves disappeared because of pollution, deforestation and urbanization, the catch would be reduced by 60-70%. The natural purification of used water – 250,000 m³ per day- saves the city of Kolkata a little less than 250 crore Rs (\$ 39 million US). The string of mangroves reduces the effects of cyclones, saving 27.5 crore Rs (\$ 4.3 million US) per year and spares human and animal lives. The 31 million m³ of standing timber is equivalent to the annual revenue of 63 crore Rs (\$ 9.9 million US) and the authors of the study estimate that all these trees store each year 0.43 millions of tons of CO².

Bangladesh

On the 9th of December of 2014, at 5 in the morning, the Sundarbans were victim of an oil spill. 2 ships collided on the Shela River. 360 tons of fuel rich in sulfur leaked into the water.

.../...

24 hours after, the fuel had spread to 20 km upstream and 20 km downstream from the accident site, all this in the recently created Chandpai sanctuary of famous for a small pod of South Asian river dolphins.

A call for volunteers to collect the fuel residues was launched by the Bangladesh Petroleum Production 3 days after the event. Each liter was paid 30 to 40 takas (\$ 40 to 50 cents US). In 10 days, 68,200 or 19% of the leak had been officially retrieved. But the percentage is without a doubt well below as the fuel mixed with a lot of water.

In the beginning, the villagers fearing for the natural heritage and the shrimp larva that enrich the breeding farms each year, and at the same time hoping to catch a by-product of value launched into a frantic collection without hand, foot or lung protection. The liquid mixtures were boiled in order to be refined. The vegetal plant waste were then buried on the spot, burnt or heaped along the banks.



Village and fishing nets stained by the oil spill

The example of one temporary waste deposit which was taken away by the rising tides is mentioned. The use of White Spirit to clean peoples' hands and face was common.

Regarding biodiversity, the international team that stayed a week on site points out the spectacular but supposedly reversible damages in the mangrove. Only a few frogs, crocodiles, monitor lizards, herons and otters were more or less fouled by the hydrocarbons. Experts from the United Nations Program for Development (UNPD), in collaboration with Bangladesh, recommend a long-term follow up of the effects of this oil spill on the dolphins, otters, monkeys, deer and kingfishers. Bangladesh should endow an anti-oil spill plan in the Sundarbans and other fragile areas with minimum anti-pollution booms, intervention equipment and a global waste management plan. The UNPD report also implicitly suggests that tanker navigation on the Shela River should be discouraged. UNPD can send an emergency environment team to countries victims of industrial accidents or natural catastrophes entailing negative effects on public health and the environment. On the occasion experts from Japan, Switzerland, the United States of America and France cooperated with experts from Bangladesh.

EUROPE

Seizure of the skull and skin of a Siberian tiger and arrest⁵³

**Moscow, Central Federal District, Russia
May 2015**

They were at the house of 2 Vietnamese citizens with 59 teeth, 4 bags of bones and 15 kg of meat. The skull was one of an Amur tiger. The teeth could have been extracted from the surviving Amur leopards. An investigation is ongoing to know the exact origin. In "On the Trail" n°8, the Asian market of Cherezikov and Vietnamese have already been cited (p. 52).



**Sentencing for the poaching of 2 wildcats (*Felis silvestris*, Appendix II) at 5750 € and 5 years hunting probation for the ringleader, a month in prison with a suspended sentence and 1000 € fine for the 2 others and 11,000 € in damages for all⁵⁴
Nevers, Burgundy Region, France
May 15, 2015**



They hunted by spotlight in the forest. Blind 'em then shoot! Such was their motto. Their rides lasted 9 months. From their all-terrain vehicle, they would shoot at anything that came their way: badgers, weasels, foxes, deer and wild cats.

**Transfer of an undocumented lion and tiger⁵⁵
Évry-Grégy-sur-Yerre, Region Île-de-France, France
May 21, 2015**

From the village church, one could hear the roar



of the large cats, which is not common in an Ile de France village some kilometers from Paris. "Mondial Circus" went bankrupt a dozen years ago. Since the tamer was busy with the animals with what was at hand and over time with more and more difficulty. The main home of the 4 felines was in a circus truck increasingly ramshackle.

"And so it was necessary to give them 5 to 6 kg of meat each and every day.

The master had the certificates of capacity. On the other hand, the conditions in which they were kept were awful.

In particular, tigers in captivity require a place to swim. Meanwhile the prosecutor did not lodge a complaint. The Dutch NGO AAP (cf. "On the Trail" n°8 p. 33) accepted to take on the circus veterans. With the help of the ONCFS, the animals were anesthetized on the spot and subsequently transferred to Spain in an accommodation center managed by the ONG.

Seizure of 2 leopards⁵⁶

Moscow, Russia

June 2015

One of the two escaped from the third floor of a building. He landed on a car. It wouldn't be a suicide. He had a partner in the apartment. The two leopards were domesticated.

Conviction of a jewelry store for the sale of jewels made of claws and teeth of leopard, jaguar, lynx (*Lynx spp.*, Appendix I or II), caracal (*Caracal caracal*, Appendix I and II), and serval (*Leptailurus serval*, Appendix II)⁵⁷

London, England, United Kingdom

June 2015



The jewelry store frequented by Kate Moss and other celebrities or anonymous people sold anti-CITES pendants. A client had alerted Scotland Yard. Annina Vogel, the owner pleaded ignorance of the law. She was given a fine of £ 2,000 (\$ 3,058 US). For her bad taste, she was not punished.

Discovery of a young Amur leopard injured by a trap⁵⁸

National Park "Land of Leopard", Primorsky Krai, Russia

June 2015



The species is in great danger, to say the least. In the wild, it has one less representative. He was found exhausted. He was treated in emergency by a team of specialists. He had definitively lost several claws on the right front paw. Even if the leopard totally recovers, he cannot be returned into the taiga. He no longer has the means to capture prey. He was found by guards inside the national park created in 2012 and devoted to the protection of Amur leopards. The vets assume that after being caught in a trap, he had finally managed to remove himself before collapsing. The National Park of Amur Leopards covers 2,620 km². It is on the border with China.



The ex- Bali and Java Tigers

The tigers have a disastrous destiny. The twentieth century was fatal for them. Three of nine subspecies are extinct: the Bali tiger (*Panthera tigris balica*), the Java tiger (*Panthera tigris sondaica*) and the Caspian tiger (*Panthera tigris virgata*), on which "On The Trail" will cover more later.

Today, there are no more tigers in Java or Bali. The felines, killed and brought back whole or in pieces to fill collections in natural history museums of Europe, are subject of much posthumous attention, travelling with CITES permits and fueling endless taxonomic debates. According to the latest state of the art, there would be only two tiger subspecies: the continental tiger *Panthera tigris tigris* and the Sunda tiger *Panthera tigris sondaica* bringing together the Javan tiger, the Balinese tiger and the Sumatran tiger.

The Java and Bali tigers were harassed by Dutch, German, and English settlers. They were victims of eradication programs. The tiger was considered a pest. Men prefer the tiger's skin to an alive tiger. A reputation of man eater has forever stuck to its skin. The specimen of the Oxford Museum of Natural History was killed in about 1916 in the center of the island of Bali after he "attacked children." From 1915, tigers were victims of incidental or intentional crashes with cars. Hunting safaris and tiger rug sales were organized on the two islands. The number of tigers killed by the Japanese troops during the Occupation of the Dutch East Indies during World War II is unknown.



"A tiger walks 1,000 miles, but always comes back"

Flag offered by women from their village to the Japanese general Shunkichi Ikeda, leaving to fight in the Dutch East Indies.

The end of the Occupation was not the end of the war for the Bali and Java tigers. In the 1960s, refugees fleeing the purges and civil war rushed to remote areas, the remaining habitats of tigers. Indonesian poachers completed the extermination initiated by the settlers by installing traps of various types with or without live bait and using explosives and poison.

The Bali tiger was the smallest. A male measured between 2.2 and 2.3 meters and weighed between 90 and 100 kg. It was distinguished from the Java tiger by its size, wider stripes and 3 pairs of duplicated transverse stripes on the forehead. Almost nothing is known of it. If there are pictures of the animal in the wild, they are buried in colonial attics and memories.

Those who escaped the bullets and other weapons gave in to the fragmentation of their territories. The island of 5,637 km² would never have hosted more than 700 animals, not quite enough to withstand the human pressures. The fall of the tiger was brutal. The Bali tiger was seen for the last time in the wild, west of the island in the 1930s and has been considered extinct since the 1940s. A Dutch forestry officer and a Balinese forest officer claim to have seen one in 1952 and 1972. These "resurrections" are common in the field of extinct species.



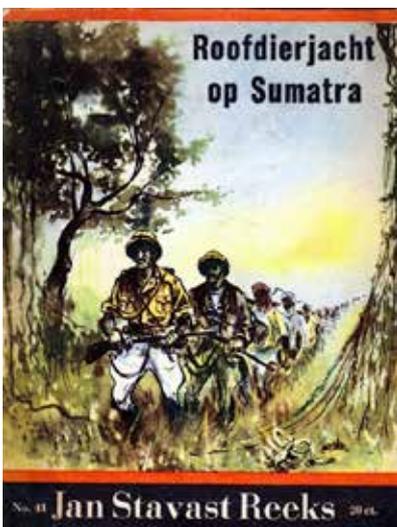
The Java tiger could be seen on beaches, then climbing the cliffs to reach its preferred mountainous areas. It had long whiskers and numerous stripes. In the 1940s, it lived only in the forests and mountains inaccessible to man. Forests and floodplains are often destroyed and replaced with intensive plantations of teak, palm oil, coffee and rice. The tiger prey - deer, bantengs, wild pigs - are becoming increasingly rare. The rivers are contaminated by fertilizers, pesticides, agricultural waste. In the 60s, tigers disappeared from Ujung Kulon National Park where the last Javan rhinoceros lives today. In the 70s they were entrenched in the Meru National Park Betiri southeast of the island, also nibbled by agriculture. The latter would have been seen in 1976. Evidence of the presence of tigers in Java is today still heard of. The animal would have been spotted 1997 during the major Indonesian forest fires then again in 2012.



Rare photos of a living Java tiger. East Java, 1938

Circus games and tigers

To tell the truth Java tigers were captured and driven away before the island was controlled by Dutch settlers. Tiger cages were built in the palace of Amangkurat I, who reigned from 1646 to 1677. The « sima-maesa» fighting between a buffalo and a tiger was organized in the royal courts, followed by «rampogan sima» during which the tigers were released in the middle of a large square of men armed with spears and sometimes poisoned spikes. If he tried to escape, the tiger was impaled. If he refused to flee, he was harassed. The “rampogan sima” persisted until the twentieth century.



Today, the last surviving tigers of the Sunda Islands are the Sumatran tiger (*P. t. sumatrae*). The residual population of 300-400 animals is persecuted by poachers. Since the 80s, the demand for skins, bones, whiskers, claws and skulls is increasing. Stuffed Sumatran tigers are fashionable. Seizures are regular: 2 in Banda Aceh military in October 2013 (see “On the Trail” n°3 p. 75), 3 in the province of Aceh in January and May 2014 (“On the Trail” n°4, p.100 and n°5 p. 123) and another in the province of South Sumatra in February 2015 (“On the Trail” n°8 p. 48).

“Hunting by predators in Sumatra”

Bears

AMERICA

Torture of a spectacled bear (*Tremarctos ornatus*, Appendix I)¹

Eastern Andes Cordillera, Province of Morona-Santiago, Ecuador

April 2015

His death was “celebrated” as if it were New Year’s Day. Dancing, photos and videos of the animal’s death were shown on the internet. The “party” was held in Sangay National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The suspects have not been identified yet.



Sentencing for the illegal possession of a brown bear skin (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), 2 American black bear skins (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II), 3 wolverine skins (*Gulo gulo*)²



Federal Territory of Yukon, Canada

May 8, 2015

A Yukon trapper exported to Alaska stuffed Dall sheep and moose meat and imported from Alaska the bears and wolverine skins. These illegal trades were punished by a fine of 20,000 CA\$ (\$ 16,030 US) remitted to the fund for environmental damage. This fund, in the spirit of the polluter-pay principle, contributes to the betterment of the natural environment of Canada.

Furthermore, the hunting trophies of Roland Leslie Martin were seized, the carrying of firearms and assistance to any hunter in Yukon is forbidden until 2025. However, from 2020, he will be able to hunt with a bow to feed himself.



© 1999 California Academy of Sciences

Gulo gulo

REPEATED OFFENSE

Judicial proceedings against poachers of 5 of American black bears (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II), moose (genus *Alces*) and for possession of bear gall bladders³

Grand Falls, New Brunswick Province, Canada

April 21 and June 16, 2015

Ted Nugent, the former rocker who owns Sunrize Safaris, organizes hunting parties in the United States, Africa and Canada (see “On the Trail” n°8 p. 40).

Sunrize Safaris in conjunction with the well-known outfitter in Plaster Rock, Dyer and sons, which offers its customers hunters and fishermen all you need to hunt bears, moose or catch salmon.

The 5 friends and Nugent followers are charged with dozens of hunting code violations: illegal purchase of licenses, loaded firearms in vehicles, night hunting, illegal transportation of dead moose, failure to wear a phosphorescent action vest during hunting and possession of bear gall bladders. Ted Nugent has already been convicted of illegal bear hunting in Alaska. That was in 2012.



© Acadie Nouvelle

Court hearing for 2 women, Yunhee Kim and Yon Kim, for trafficking, possession and transport of bear paws (*Ursus* spp., Appendix II) and gall bladders on the border to the United States⁴

Port Coquitlam, Province of British Columbia, Canada

June 25, 2015

Hotline : 1-877-952-7277

ASIA

Rescue of two brown bear cubs (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II)

Golestan Province, Iran

April 2015

Both babies, a female and a male, are orphans of poaching in north-eastern Iran, near Caspian sea and Turkmenistan. Too young to be released in the wild.

In Iran, brown bears live essentially in the north and western part of the country, in Zagros and Elbrouz mountain range where the population is estimated between 500 and 1000. About a dozen are killed each year.



Arrest of 2 persons aged 25 and 30 in possession of bear gall bladders 3 (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II) weighing 173, 76 and 21 g

Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal

April 12, 2015

Seizure of a bear preserved in alcohol (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I)

Quang Binh province, Vietnam

April 2015

The 7.8 kg of bear parts were preserved in alcohol. The "medicinal" brew was discovered in a restaurant in the province of Quang Binh, a stronghold of the bear breeding in central Vietnam. "It was made to cure my brother 17 years ago" says the apothecary restaurant owner and chef.



Seizure of a sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I) and arrest

District Giridih, Jharkhand, India

May 8, 2015

"On the Trail" n°8 p. 55 raised the question of whether the practice of "dancing bears" exhibited in public places was really gone. The answer is no.

This sloth bear had a pierced nose to be leashed. He was seemingly exploited in Nepal. His rescuers found him tied to a tree with torn nails and broken teeth. Police reinforcements arrived on site to facilitate removal of the bear and the evacuation of the police, forest rangers and naturalists. A hostile crowd had quickly formed in the remote village near the border with Nepal.

The female bear aged 6 to 7 has been kept in recovery at the rescue center Bear AGRA held by the NGO Wildlife SOS. To its credit, the NGO has released 627 bears in 20 years.



«Les Ours du Pays». Pyrénées, France



Rhinoceroses

The white rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* and black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* ranging in Africa are listed in Appendix I, except for the white rhinoceros populations of Swaziland and South Africa which are listed in Appendix II for trade of live animals and hunting trophies.

The 3 Asian rhinoceros species are in Appendix I: *Rhinoceros unicornis*, *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, *Rhinoceros sondaicus*.

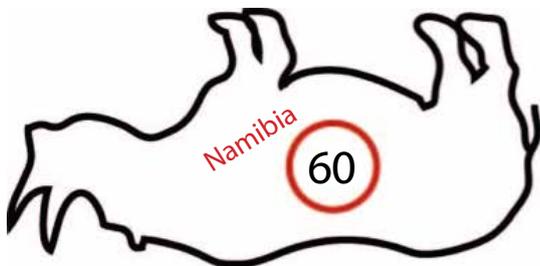
AFRICA

Rhinocrisis in Namibia¹ Kunene Region, Namibia April 2015

31 carcasses in a week in Etosha National Park. Namibia hosts several hundreds of black rhinos. This is the last core of the species. 2 presumed responsible factors are evoked:

1 - The fence, torn, dilapidated, cut down by poachers who want to enter or the comings and goings of elephants. The 824 km fence should be rebuilt. At best, 10 years are needed.

2 - The mood of the park staff is also implicated. More by rumors than facts although several carcasses were found near the guards houses. "They are either negligent or sleeping" said the dismayed Minister of Environment Pohamba Shifeta. "Everything will be investigated and no stone will be left unturned". Namibia lost 23 rhinos because of poaching last year. The counter is at 60 for the first 4 months of 2015. Same acceleration for elephants: 78 in 2014, 28 since the beginning of the year.



Preventive dehorning operations continue with caution. The minister does not rule out the possibility that private volunteers offering their skills and services are actually connected to horn smuggling networks. 57 rhinos were preventively dehorned since last November. The horns were conveyed in Windhoek where they are kept under increased surveillance and held in secret locations. The Director General of Police, Sebastian Ndeitunga, gathered all police chiefs and inspectors of the regions of Omusati, Oshana, Oshikoto in the headquarters of the Etosha Park. According to witnesses, the atmosphere was tense. The lieutenant general expressed his surprise to his subordinates that no arrest of a poacher or suspect had been conducted since the beginning of the year. He wants searches and surprise checks to be carried out inside the park, on airports and border areas.

Coming back to the Etosha case, the senior official lamented about the widespread inertia. "No tracks, no arrests of suspects." He compares the blockage to widespread cancer. So widespread that 5 new carcasses were discovered in early April near Etendenka in southern Kunene desert a hundred kilometers of Etosha.

One year ago, 3 Chinese returning home were caught at the Windhoek International Airport with 14 horns in their luggage. Their trial is scheduled for June.

Poaching of a rhino² South Africa April 7, 2015

The bullet hit him in the head and ricocheted off his left front leg. The vet called by "Saving the Survivors" was forced to finish off the unfortunate.



Rhino poaching attempt³ South Africa April 2015

This time, the rhino was saved by Pro Vet. Wounded in the neck. No vital organ affected. Poachers did not have the possibility to extract the horns.



Arrest of 21 suspected poachers and convictions⁴

Gravelotte, Limpopo Province, South Africa

April 11, 2015

21 suspected poachers arrested since March 1. In almost all cases, they were arrested and rendered harmless before they could do any harm. The tailing of their vehicles on the reserve's stone tracks and the presence on board of large caliber guns, ammunition, knives and axes are overwhelming.

2 men have just been sentenced to 11 years in prison. They had been stopped in February in similar circumstances.

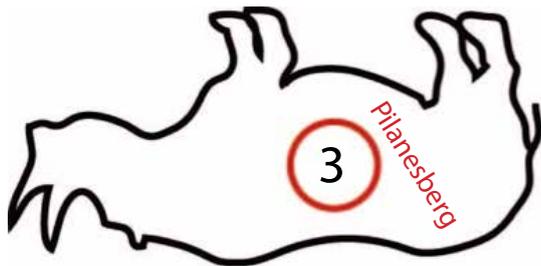


Poaching of a rhino⁵

Pilanesberg National Park, North-West Province, South Africa

April 11, 2015

Nothing could be done. Nageng is an orphan. He was found near his mother killed by a bullet and dehorned. The little did not want to get caught. It took an anaesthetic to take him to the orphanage. A good sign, he grazed the lush grass in the prairie and wallowed in the mud. His mother is the 3rd rhino slaughtered in the National Park since the beginning of the year.



Conviction for fraud⁶

South Africa

April 2015

The real policeman was selling a fake horn. The case dates back to 2003. The Court of Appeal was not sensitive to the condemner's sweet talk. It confirmed the first instance judgment: 6 years in prison for fraud. If the horn was authentic, the sentence would have been less severe.



Seizure of 3.8 kg and 1.8 kg of horn and arrest of 3 Vietnamese men and one woman⁷

Maputo International Airport, Mozambique

April 13 and 18, 2015

Conviction for the theft of 2 rhino horns⁸

Stutterheim, Province of Eastern Cape, South Africa

April 21, 2015

The farm worker has been convicted for stealing 2 horns from Tony Cotterel, a rich business man from London (United Kingdom) also owner of a private ranch in South Africa. The trial did not enable to find out where the stolen horns were hidden or what became of them. They had been taken from the body of a rhino who died of a natural death. An accomplice is awaiting trial to take place in July.

Up to now the Eastern Cape had been spared by horn bandits. It is now in trouble. Poaching is on the rise. Over the first 3 months of this year, 7 rhinos have died for their horns. Guarding of horn stockpiles taken from dead animals or live ones as a preventive measure is causing security issues.



Conviction for attempted rhino poaching⁹

Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

April 22, 2015

28, 26, 31, 29 years old, all from the same village, all buddies, were sentenced to 15 years in prison. The court is concerned about the number of "Rhinoceros" cases it has to deal with. The prosecutor noted 34 cases of poaching in July 2014, 75 in August, 60 in September, 27 in November, 66 in December, 49 in January 2015 and 22 in February. "53 firearms, 228 ammunition, 42 axes, 9 cars and 20 rhino horns were seized at the same time". A 5th sidekick, Bongi Mliba, was killed during the chase with the rangers inside Kruger Park, 2-3 km away from the fence. The convicted claimed to have gone fishing. This would be a misunderstanding. They were all equipped with guns and had in common the axe to tear horns.



**Seizure of 4 rhino horns and arrest¹⁰
National Kruger Park, Province of Limpopo,
South Africa
April 2015**

The Minister of the Environment of South Africa recently declared that her services had better things to do than keep a daily count of the rhinos killed in National Parks. "No rules oblige us to make public such figures". On the other hand, SAN Parks is going to great means to make known the number of poachers arrested in Kruger Park: 28 in the month of April alone, 62 since the beginning of the year. The number of deaths, if there are any, and wounded is not being communicated, nor is the number of horns seized or bodies of dead rhinos discovered. SAN Parks congratulates itself for the efficiency of the joint efforts of Kruger rangers, the canine brigade and 2 anti-poaching helicopters donated by the Howard Buffet Foundation and stationed in Kruger Park.

**Arrest at the border between
South Africa and Botswana of
2 Zimbabwe nationals for horn
and diamond trafficking¹¹
Groblersbrug, Province of
Limpopo, South Africa
April 2015**



**Seizure of 4.6 kg of rhino horn, arrest and release
on bail of 2 North-Korean diplomats¹²
Maputo, Mozambique
May 3, 2015**

One car. Inside it, \$ 93,500 US, 4 men and 4.6 kg of horn. 2 of the men are North-Korean. One is a diplomat from the North-Korean embassy in South Africa, the other is Kim Jong Su, black belt 8th dan and delegate for the international taekwondo federation in the African continent. This combat sport's ambassador travels under such title in all of Africa and supervises training and evaluation events. He was in Madagascar in March. The 2 North-Korean were released on bail for \$ 30,000 US and they immediately returned to South Africa by car with diplomatic license plates. They knew this road well. To pay the bills of the embassy in Pretoria, North-Korean diplomats would regularly practice rhino horn smuggling. They would buy the horns in Mozambique, horns that came from poaching in Kruger Park, then sell them to Chinese interests in South Africa. The 2 other persons arrested present themselves as sculptors. They claim they know nothing about any rhinos. "I don't know these guys". "I was selling them one of my creations." swears one of them.

**Poaching of one rhino¹³
Matobo National Park,
Matabeleland South
Province, Zimbabwe
May 3, 2015**



Maybe 200 white rhinos, 300 black, in any case Zimbabwe has one less since yesterday.

A fence was set up. 52 km long, it is intended to prevent rhinos from leaving and domesticated herds from entering. Poachers enter the Matopos claiming they are looking for lost cattle. The 7 year-old rhino was killed and dehorned near the road leading from the Park to Bulawayo.



**Poaching of a female rhino 9 months pregnant¹⁴
Private reserve, Province of Limpopo, South
Africa
May 2015**

**Arrest and hospitalization of 2 persons
suspected of rhino poaching¹⁵
National Kruger Park, Province of Mpumalanga,
South Africa
May 5, 2015**

Both fights broke out at night. The human death toll is clear. The rhino death toll is still in the dark.

**Seizure of a rhino horn and
arrest of 4 police men on
corruption charges¹⁶
Middelburg, Province of
Mpumalanga, South Africa
May 6, 2015**



This now makes 8 policemen indicted in horn cases since the beginning of the year. The mobile brigade intercepted a vehicle and found inside a horn and money in cash. The horn was "seized" and the suspects set free with a bribe. The most surprising in this case is that the traffickers went to the police station to tell their tail. The horn was finally really seized at the home of one officer and the 5 suspected poachers have pledged to testify at the 4 policemen's trial.

Poaching of 3 rhinos¹⁷
Lombardini Game Farm, Province of Eastern Cape, South Africa
April 29 and May 9, 2015

This night of the 29th of April it was raining, it was windy.

The mother and her baby were killed by professionals. One bullet in the heart and one in the lungs.

All the horns from adult rhinos in the Lombardini Game Farm were cut off 3 years ago, for their safety. The poachers therefore retrieved just some horn crumbs. Yet the value of this loot is not negligible since prices of a kilo of horn have reach the heights (\$ 50 to 100,000 US). The game farm has the reputation of offering hunters- not poachers- the most magnificent experience in the province of Eastern Cape. The director is a member of the association of South African hunters.

According to him, anyone against the project of re-opening the legal horn trade is an accomplice to poachers.

Repeat over the week-end of May 9, a young rhino was killed and dehorned. He was about 400m from the road at the edge of the Game Farm. The fence was cut open. On the week-end, poachers wander on tiptoe and determined.

Poaching of 2 rhinos¹⁸
Province of Limpopo, South Africa
May 2015

They will probably survive despite the 8 bullets lodged in their head and neck. The poachers were interrupted in the middle of their "work". They had begun to saw the horns.



Sentencing of 2 poachers to 30 years in prison¹⁹
Nelspruit, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa
May 14, 2015



At 19 and 33 years old, they were going out to make a fortune in the Kruger National Park. There they found hell, 30 years in prison each, for having shot a baby rhinoceros of 10 days with a horn 2 to 3 cm long that they did not hesitate to cut off with a hatchet. The small orphan miraculously got out of it. Its mother did not survive the attack. The case was adjourned at the beginning of April. The spokesperson of SanParks refused to comment on this new report while the poaching had taken place in October of last year. The discretion of the

spokesperson is in line with the new directives on the communication of the South-African Rhinoceros Ministry. "We have to do better than talking about the rhinoceros deaths."

Seizure of 7 rhino horns, of rhino tails and lion teeth (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II) and arrest²⁰
Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, County of Nairobi, Kenya
May 15, 2015

Vietnamese citizens in Africa have a worrying tendency to practice wild animal trafficking. This one, a 47 year-old, was coming from Maputo (Mozambique) and was on his way to Hanoi. Crossing through Nairobi, his mission "to evaluate relics of African biological heritage", specifically from Mozambique where lions in the Niassa Park fall into many traps (see "On the Trail" n°7 p.45), was interrupted. The horns for their part are the corrupt loot from mercenary poaching activities fulfilled by Mozambique nationals operating in the South African Kruger Park. The seizure is estimated worth \$ 123,000 US on the Kenyan black market. This value raises 5 to 10 fold in Vietnam and in China.



Discovery of 2 dehorned rhinoceros bodies²¹
Okamahoro, Region of Otjozondjupa, Namibia
May 16, 2015

Hit in the head by a .30-06 caliber gun with a telescopic sight and a silencer. The .30-06 caliber was developed in 1906 by the Americans. It had also been used during the 2 world wars. Today the multi-usage of the .30-06 allows some to be still used by hunters of large or very large game.



© Tom Diaz - Fairly Civil

**Suspension of transfer of 20 Eastern black rhinoceroses (*Diceros bicornis michaeli*)²²
Sera Community Conservancy, Samburu County, Kenya
May 2015**

Relocation of black rhinoceroses came to a sudden end due to drama. There were 20 rhinoceroses who were to be transferred for a more sure life and to expand the distribution area from the National Parks of Nairobi, of Lewa and Nakuru up to a Samburu county sanctuary at 100 to 200 km distance. A delicate operation run altogether by the county government, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the San Diego Zoo, the zoo of Saint-Louis and the zoo of Zurich. Captures, partial anesthesia, boarding in a container, and rustic transport by truck, the subjects chosen were 6 to 20 years old. The full transport should have lasted 10 days. The local police had received special information about the surveillance and about the knowledge of the behavior of the newcomers who were awaited with honor and worthy benevolence in the sanctuary of Sera, 3450 km² with a hard-core 120 km² special enclosure. The rhinos to be transferred had in addition suffered a preventive dehorning and fitting of microchips to facilitate tracking and to dissuade poachers. Unfortunately 3 rhinos died at Samburu in the days that followed the transfer, 2 due to intestinal complications and the 3rd to anesthesia related complications. 11 are in observation and seem to have withstood the trip. The operation is suspended. 6 rhinoceroses are staying until a new order from the National Park of Nairobi.



**Poaching and dehorning of a female rhinoceros and rescue of an orphan²³
Province of Limpopo, South Africa
May 17, 2015**



**Poaching of a female rhino who survived²⁴
Province of Western Cape, South Africa
May 18, 2015**

They named her Hope. They could have chosen Miracle. After having been savagely amputated of her horns, she survived and was cared for by a 1st rank vet team working under Saving the Survivors. At her 17th day of convalescence, she can move, she can eat alfalfa and doesn't turn away from the fresh prairie grass. All good signs! Hope will not be included in the poaching statistics as she is not dead.



17th day

**Backup for 3 Chinese horn smugglers²⁵
Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia
May 18, 2015**

A Chinese man arrested at the Windhoek Country Club casino should be at the trial bar with his 3 fellow citizens caught at the airport in the act of transporting 14 big horns and a leopard skin in March 2014.

Wang Huii, owner of the Happy Life Import Export Company, is a regular in back and forth trips between Africa and China. Li Xiaoliang, Li Zhibing and Pu Xuexin, the 3 already charged with horn trafficking have repeatedly called for their release on bail ensuring that, in that event, they would be housed permanently at Huii's pending trial. In fact, they are waiting for him in jail. The Chinese ambassador in Namibia speaks in favor of a strict enforcement of the Namibian law to his fellow citizens.



The rhino saga²⁶

Namibia

May 18, 2015

How was Knowlton, this 36 year-old runt from Dallas, able to raise \$ 350,000 US to have the luxury of shooting dead one of the last black rhinos in Africa?

The hunting permit was delivered by the Namibian Ministry of the Environment and Tourism. In fact, it is the Dallas Safari Club that coughed up the money. The reporting video from CNN shows the hero after a year and a half of preparation scanning the horizon and the desert savanna with sunglasses and powerful binoculars that he seems to be holding by the right side.



He leads a team of Dutch guides armed up to their bush hats and recruited by the Namibian government and points a firm finger, as Genghis Khan or Napoleon, in the right direction. Thus he follows the massive footprints made by the lonely pachyderm, appointed and geo-located several weeks before his arrival, that have been identified in the sand with great difficulty through the ancestral culture of local color trackers. We see him also engaging in the thorny bush, menacing and dense, his Nitro Express over the shoulder, like others would carry a pitchfork, wearing a t-shirt and bare arms in search of further clues that he only would be able to find and understand.

After 5 days of breathless stalking comforted by video surveillance cameras hanging close to the water pits and revealing the size and fierceness of the specimen coming peacefully to quench his thirst just before sun rise- images that we in normal times hope would never fall under the eyes of poachers- it's triumph and bliss. He is there, we do not know where, nearby, like a ghost in the bush. The guides shudder. "Beware, he's angry" they say and Knowlton already has his fingers on the trigger. In 30 minutes, the job is done. "A tracker climbed up a tree and saw the rhino out in the open a hundred meters away." "Knowlton put himself in position and fired the final shots" recounted the journalist from CNN "this story was an incredibly moving experience." "It's like this each time that we take the life of an animal" responding in echo Knowlton knelt close to the victim.

The next day, Texas Hunting announced that the IUCN- International Union for the Conservation of Nature- referent to CITES had admitted among its members the Dallas Safari Club.

Discovery of a rhinoceros body 3 weeks after poaching²⁷

Private ranch, Northwest Province, South Africa

May 24, 2015

Arrest and indictment of 2 suspected poachers²⁸

Nyongane, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

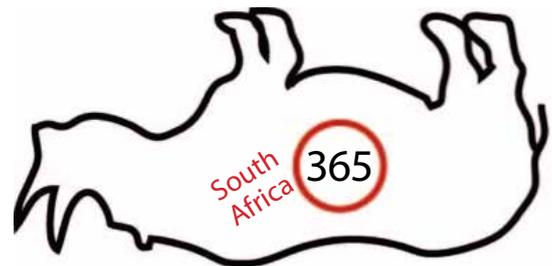
May 26, 2015

Discovery of 6 rhinoceros bodies²⁹

Province of kwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

From May 23 to 27, 2015

Three to four rhinos were poached each day. The last unofficial census by OSCAP mentioned 365 deaths by poaching since the beginning of the year of which 270 were in Kruger National Park.



Arrest of a man suspected of rhino poaching and death of a police officer³⁰

Hazyview, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

May 27, 2015

Mthobisi Lennox Ngwenyama was arrested in the abandoned



house of one of his cousins in Hazyview in the early morning of May 27.



The 33 year-old man who fled on May 13 from the Court of Nelspruit just before his Court appearance for rhino poaching is suspected to have killed a police inspector, Joseph Baloyi, who worked on his case. He was killed by a bullet while he entered the home on the night of May 20. With his profile of a hyper-violent villain, the individual is subject to increased surveillance. His first Court appearance was to take place on May 29.

Arrest of 2 suspected poachers³¹
Hazyview, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa
May 27, 2015

«They are in custody. They will be presented before court shortly.» Hazyview, home land of Big Joe still smells of fresh rhino blood. The 2 suspects indicted for illegal possession of firearms and ammunition were off to go poaching at dawn.

Transfer of 10 black rhinoceroses³²
May-June 2015
South Africa-Botswana

Special and a bit sleepy tourists passed through the Kruger International Airport. After being treated with sedatives, five black rhinos, 2 females, one male and two children, were loaded into a Hercules C130 Botswana plane. They were transferred from a private reserve in Limpopo to the Moreni Game Reserve run by Wilderness Safaris in Okavango Delta. The total delivery will be 18 rhinos. We know that this type of transfer exposes rhinos to risks other than poaching.



Zimbabwe-Botswana

The agreement dates back to 2011. Zimbabwe committed to "giving" 20 black rhinos to Botswana. The first 5 individuals arrived also in the Moreni Reserve. The relocated specimens were captured in the Gonarezhou National Park in the south east of the country from a herd belonging to black rhino line imported in 1998 from KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Since then, the crash has grown. There is a risk of overgrazing, competition for food and ecosystem degradation. According rhino experts from Zimbabwe, it is not at the moment possible to install a new group black rhinos in the country and this for 2 reasons:

- The protection of pachyderms is becoming more and more expensive, public authorities and private institutions do not have sufficient means to curb poaching.
- There could be slight genetic variations between South Africa and Zimbabwe rhinos and until this issue is resolved, experts advise not to mix the two populations. This hybridization may erase the specific adaptations to Zimbabwe habitats.

Poaching of a rhinoceros³³
Polokwane, Province of Limpopo, South Africa
June 2, 2015



Dawie Groenewald weeping crocodile tears. It's the first time that Dawie Groenewald cried about a rhinoceros, he who killed hundreds with his own hands or through his clients (cf. "On the Trail" n°6 p. 62, n°7 p. 71-72, 75 and n°8 p. 65). He broke down in tears," when he realized that bandits of his kind had killed and dehorned a handsome animal, the biggest of his hunting reserve. "The poachers took two horns, one of 71 cm, the other of 25 cm. They weigh between 10 and 11 kg." Groenewald can't swallow this horrid economical catastrophe. He decided to move "his" rhinos to a secret refuge.

Non Court appearance in Court of a Chinese man released on bail of 20,000 N\$ (\$1650 US)³⁴
Opuwo, Kunene Region, Namibia
June 3, 2015

The businessman had sent the court a medical certificate of unavailability. Dejin operates a wildlife products and hunting trophies business in Oshakati. Well informed, the police had nabbed him with 2 rhino horns weighing 6.8 kg.

Seizure of a rhino horn and arrests³⁵
Ekurhuleni, Gauteng Province, South Africa
June 2015

The Chinese man and the local lad had stayed in the vicinity of the hotel for 2 days. The transaction was going to be carried out in the parking lot.



The scheming of policemen and poacher³⁶
Massingir, Gaza Province, Mozambique
June 7, 2015

5 men of Massingir district police had made an arrangement with a poacher in possession of a horn. They part took in the sale for 920,000 meticaís (\$ 26,285 US) to an unidentified man. 50% of the money went to the poacher. The other half was distributed among the 5 policemen. The corrupt police patrol had arrested the poacher as he was returning, so he claimed, from a day of poaching in the South African Kruger Park. The day after the transaction, a denunciation was received at the police headquarters.

South Sudan: dismay of fauna and rhinos³⁷
Juba Airport, State of Central Equatoria, South Sudan

June 8, 2015

This young country is ravaged by conflict. 2 men are fighting for power. The people are starving. Wildlife is the other victim. "There were around 1,000 rhinos before the crisis", "The rhinos are finished", "Teams failed to find any, only footprints" says, bitterly, the director general of the country's wildlife service Philip Chol Majak.

Between January and March of this year 2015, 15 cases of wildlife trafficking involving members of the army are known. On June 8, 2 South Sudanese nationals were caught at Juba airport with rhino horns in their belongings. They were about to fly to Asia.

Indictment of 5 persons suspected of poaching and released on bail³⁸

Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

June 2015

2 men from South Africa aged 30 and 32 and 2 men from Mozambique were arrested at their homes for illegal possession of firearms and ammunition. A woman was arrested after her home was searched where an axe stained with blood, ammunition and a large sum of unexplained money was found.

These preventive arrests are testimony of the police forces' efforts around and in Kruger Park to deter poachers from acting by confiscating all equipment and aiming for convictions on the basis of illegal possession of prohibited weapons.

New charges held against 2 Vietnamese citizens arrested in possession of 41 kg of rhino horn³⁹

Kempton Park, Province of Gauteng, South Africa

June 2015

The Mozambique, South Africa, Vietnam triangle. The flight from Maputo to Qatar was searched in Johannesburg because of the 2 Vietnamese men (see "On the Trail" n° 7 p. 67) and their big package of horns they were travelling with. The 2 men who left Mozambique would be involved in rhino poaching in South Africa.



Poaching of a black rhinoceros, seizure of a horn and arrest⁴⁰

Region of Kunene, Namibia

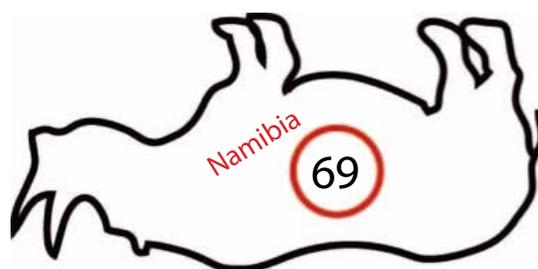
June 13, 2015

On the road between Sesfontein and Opuwo, the car was blocked by a sanitary traffic check to slow down the spread of foot and mouth disease. The car had a flat tire but the 5 passengers aged 22, 28, 30, 31, and 34 years did not care to



change it. As a result the intrigued police officers detected a horn in the spare wheel and a gun on the back seat. After the questioning the poachers drove the police to the poaching and dehorning place. The mother was dead. She had a baby. It has not been found yet. This is the 5th mourning of a rhino in Omatendeka within a few months.

- 69 in Namibia since the beginning of this year.



REPEATED OFFENSE

Arrest of 5 alleged poachers⁴¹

Mfekayi, Province of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa

June 13, 2015

Do these 5 young people aged 23, 24, 27, 30 and 32 years arrested along the Umfolozi reserve with a large caliber rifle and a silencer, appropriate ammunition, an axe and some other specialized accessories may have had other intentions than rhino poaching? Three of them were released on bail. Two more that are considered repeated offenders remain in prison pending trial.

3 deaths in one month⁴²

Private farm in Okamahoro, Region of Otjozondjupa, Namibia

June 18, 2015

This is the third to be put down in a month in this private hunting reserve 150 km from Windhoek, the capital of the country. The female was riddled with 10 bullets. No suspect has been arrested.

Sentencing of a Mozambican poacher to 7.5 years in prison⁴³

Skukuza, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

June 25, 2015



New postponing of the trial of rhino horn traffickers⁴⁴

Thulamahashe, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

June 28, 2015

Big Joe has yet another trial postponement. The big man from Hazyview is at the center of a horn trafficking with Vietnam and a net of violence (c.f. "On the Trail" n° 6 p. 62).

At the opening of the long awaited trial so many times postponed, Big Joe's 5 accomplices had missed the call from the prosecutor. The police in charge of transporting defendants had forgotten to take the 5 from the remote Mbombela prison 150 km away.



AMERICA

OPERATION CRASH

Court hearing for trafficking in 2 black rhino horns⁴⁵

State of Iowa, United States of America

May 13, 2015

Another case of a trafficking taxidermist. James Hess, 39 years old, admitted having ripped off the horns from the trophy and having received a substantial commission (at least \$ 15,000 US) knowing full well that this vandalism would lead to illegal export of the 2 horns towards Asia with the help of 2 handy men working in California.

James Hess, founder and director of the Wildlife Pride Taxidermy and Decor faces a 5-year prison sentence. He is pleading guilty.

Project to import 1000 rhinos to the United States⁴⁶

State of Texas, United States of America

May 2015

Will a special rhino-ship soon be crossing the Atlantic Ocean to transport 1000 horned pachyderms from South Africa to Texas? That's the project carried by the Exotic Wildlife Association (EWA) that believes animal species' conservation must be promoted through international trade and that works as partners with the Dallas Safari Club, the Houston Safari Club and the no-borders hunters from the International Professional Hunters Association.

EWA has brought to Texas ranches African gazelles, addaxes (*Addax nasomaculatus*, Appendix I), scimitar-horned oryxes (*Oryx dammah*, Appendix I), dama gazelles (*Nanger dama*, Appendix I). Under this listing they are protected by CITES and United States law since 2005. Indeed, after 7 years of judicial warfare, Texas ranches were allowed to hunt gazelles so far as they would pay a \$ 100 US tax fee per individual killed. A good bargain for Ranches who demand \$ 5000 US per gazelle head from hunters. Charly Seale, director of the EWA says that the rhinos transplanted and raised in the United States will not be hunted. So here we have true rhino body guards willing to give up part of their land and capital to save a species from poaching in southern Africa.

Those who know some about Texas don't believe this. The project would more so be in the line of expectation of a legal rhino horn trade that South Africa and its neighbors are calling for and plan to propose at the next plenary conference of CITES in autumn 2016. The rhinos in their entrenched camp deep in Texas would become a money well. The horns would be regularly cut and sold to the cartel and the rhinos would be submitted to "green hunting", this supposedly ecological hunt in which the target animals are shot with anesthetic syringes, a method deemed non lethal that enables wealthy hunters to have their picture taken in from of large animals collapsed and laying as if dead. Green hunting is vividly criticized. The animals are put to sleep and woken several times which implies delayed risks and immediate ones when they fall lethargic into positions incompatible with their physiology. On this subject see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 105, a "green hunting" story in a United States ranch and the import of 4 rhinos to a United States ranch ("On the Trail" n°8 p. 59).

ASIA

Conviction before the Court of Appeals for illegal transport of 7 pieces of rhino horn (2114g) and sentencing to 5 to 10 years prison term and 18,000 yuans (\$ 2900 US) and 30,000 yuans (\$ 4830 US) in fine. Confirmation of the 1st Instance judgment⁴⁷
Fangchenggang, Province of Guangxi, China
April 2015



Seizure of a rhino horn⁴⁸

Tinsukia, Assam State, India

April 7, 2015

The police has seized what looks very much like a rhino horn. Habibul Hussein assures the trophy had been in the family home for a long time. He was trying to sell the memento for just under \$ 5000 US.

Conviction for rhino horn trafficking to 2 years prison term suspended sentence and to a 80,000 yuans (\$ 12.886 US) fine⁴⁹



**Liuzhou, Province of Guangxi, China
April 13, 2015**

Wang, the antique dealer, sold powder. 370 g here, 218 g there, then another 15 g. Specialized labs confirmed that it truly was ground up horn.

Poaching of 2 rhinos and death of 2 suspects⁵⁰

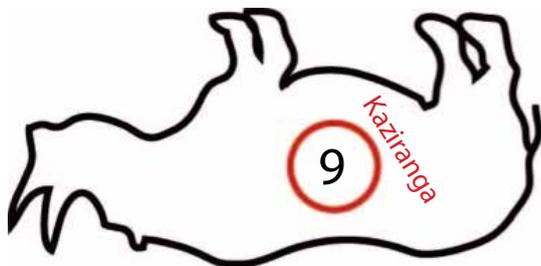
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

From 10 to 16 April 2015

The corpses accumulate in Kaziranga. 9 rhinos and 9 poachers killed since the beginning of the year. The Student Union of Assam has blocked the road NH-37 that runs along the Park for an hour. Slogan : protesting against poaching.



© COPAL



Seizure of a rhino horn and arrest of 9 suspected poachers including a police inspector⁵¹

**Gohpur and Bandardewa, State of Assam, India
May 1, 2015**



© Bui Tho

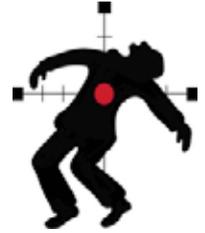
**Seizure of 31 rhino horns (37 kg) and arrest⁵²
Cho Sy, Province of Nghe An, Vietnam
May 8, 2015**

Two young men were followed by the Bureau of Investigation of Economic Crimes. They were immobilized at 11:40 pm near the gate of Nghe An. Crossing South-North of Vietnam, 25 hours on train. Leaving from Ho Chi Minh City. Three travel bags full of horns. One of the couriers declared to have received 40 million dong or \$ 1850 US for transporting the goods. He would have recruited an accomplice to accompany him. The two individuals live in North Vietnam.

Seizure of 2 rhino horns, arrest of 3 suspects and death of one poaching suspect⁵³

**Jorhat, State of Assam, India
May 13, 2015**

The 3 men have started to talk. They were arrested in Jorhat, 115 km from Kaziranga Park. 3 days after shootings occurred with guards inside the Park, a poacher had been killed on the spot. According to the suspects at whose home the 2 horns were found, those giving orders are in Dimapur, almost 200 km from Kaziranga, on the other side of the Brahmapoutre, and are in contact with correspondents in Myanmar obviously in turn in contact with Chinese recipients.



Seizure of 9.4 kg of rhino horn and arrest⁵⁴

**Tan Ha, Province of Tay Ninh, Vietnam
May 27, 2015**

He believed, he says, to transport clothes from

Cambodia to Vietnam at the request of a certain Ha. The value of these so-called clothes exceeds \$ 500,000 US. The 20 year-old man was arrested at the border. The spokesperson of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime reminds that in 2007 a dozen rhinos had been poached in South Africa compared to 1,215 in 2014.



© Baomoi



Seizure of an 800 g of horn and arrest of 5 traffickers⁵⁵

**District of Jalpaiguri, State of East Bengal, India
May 2015**

They sold the horn in Mumbai for 5 million Rs (\$ 78,300 US) i.e. \$ 98,000 US per kilo.

Seizure of a horn and custody of 3 persons⁵⁶
Sonitpur District, State of Assam, India
June 2, 2015

Arrest of a suspected poacher (52 years old)
active in the Chitwan National Park⁵⁷
Kathmandu, Central Development Region,
Nepal
June 3, 2015

Despite enormous difficulties following the earthquake, anti-environmental crime forces are still at work in Nepal.

Seizure of a rhino horn and arrest of a 50-year-old man⁵⁸
Dhangadhi, Far West Development Region,
Nepal, bordering Uttar Pradesh, India
June 9, 2015

Seizure of 3.65 Kg of presumed rhino skin and
arrest of 2 men and a woman ages 17, 40 and
41⁵⁹
Kathmandu, Central Development Region,
Nepal
June 16, 2015

Discovery of a dead rhino with 2 bullet holes
and dehorned near a river on the edge of the
Orang National Park⁶⁰
District of Sonitpur, State of Assam, India
June 23, 2015

Discovery of a rhino carcass⁶¹
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
June 29, 2015
- 12 since the beginning of the year



Arrest of Padam Bahadur Bholan, rhino poacher
who had been wanted
for 16 years⁶²
District of Chitwan,
Central Development
Region, Nepal
June 30, 2015

56 years. Sentenced to 7 years in prison and 50,000 Rs (\$ 731 US) fine in 1999.



EUROPE

Court decision regarding a request to sell a pre-CITES rhino horn⁶³
Karlsruhe, Bade-Wurtemberg Lander, Germany
April 2015

Wishing to part with a rhino trophy brought back from Africa by her grand father in 1903, a woman saw her request to auction it turned down by the Karlsruhe Administrative Tribunal.

Expert estimates say she could have gotten 17,000 € out of this inheritance.

The request to market the item made in 2013 having been refused, she formed an appeal against the Karlsruhe Administrative Tribunal's decision asserting that a 19th century horn didn't enter into the present day inventory of endangered animals and that exemptions are possible.

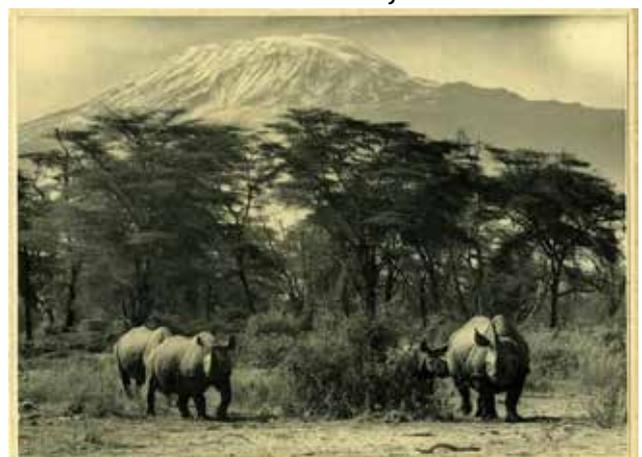
In appeal the judges confirmed the ban, but this decision is not yet a final one.

Sentencing of 3 Vietnamese for
the illegal export of rhino horn
to 3 to 5 years prison (see "On
the Trail" 3 p. 55)⁶⁴
Prague, Central Bohemian
Region, Czech Republic
June 2015



An investigation is underway on the involvement in the trafficking by 16 other members of the Vietnamese community.

Rhinoceros at the foothills of the Mount Kilimanjaro



The Rhino Connexion

John Flynn, under the alias of John Slattery, was questioned when he got off a ferry coming from Ireland. This was in the French port of Cherbourg, on April 6, 2015. The U.S. intelligence services had notified the border police of his imminent arrival. The 25-year-old man was born in the county of Limerick in Ireland. John is a pure product of the obscure Rathkeale Rovers, a group that is more stateless than Irish. John has been an antiques expert ever since he was 18.

He went to the United States for the antiques business, with his brother Michael Slattery Jr., and Patrick Sheridan as well. In September 2010, the trio arrived in Houston, Texas. Michael immediately opened an account at Bank of America. Money was wired in from abroad. Via cash withdrawals, they bought for \$ 18,000 US 2 rhino horns from an Austin taxidermist, through a man who was used as a cover and has passed away. The Irish trio paid this man \$ 500 US to claim that he was the buyer and that he lived in Texas. U.S. regulations prohibit the transfer of rhino horns outside of the State of origin.



The Austin store

The horns were then sawed off the stuffed rhino head, weighed, photographed and put in storage in Texas. In November, the photos were sent to a "collector" in the State of New York who was in contact with an antique dealer of Chinese descent. The 2 horns turned into 4 horns. It is not known where the 2 new horns came from. At the beginning of the negotiation, the Slattery brothers wanted to make \$ 65,000 US out of them. The deal was sealed with \$ 50,000 US, paid in 3 checks—a \$ 25,000 US check for Sheridan, a \$ 12,500 US check for Michael and a check in the same amount for John.

In September 2013, Michael was arrested at the airport in Newark, New Jersey. He was about to take off for London. In January 2014, he was sentenced to 14 months in prison without remission, for premeditating and plotting to illegally trade in a protected animal species, in violation of the Lacey Act, and to use forgery. When the horns were dispatched to the Chinese antique collector, they came with a fake stamp of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In January 2015, Patrick Sheridan was arrested as he was leaving a car ferry in Wales. He too is awaiting extradition to the United States.

John Slattery, using the alias John Flynn, was under an international arrest warrant since May 2014. In December of the same year, he used his mother's maiden name for his wedding. He thus has two identities. According to the extradition request that the United States sent to the French Foreign Affairs Ministry, John Slattery became John Flynn to flee trial. The Slattery/Flynn family has several places of residence. One of them is on a campground near Paris. The Caen Appeals Court responded favorably to the extradition request. According to John, he embarked on his trip to France for a pilgrimage to Lourdes. He said he was in search of a miracle cure to save him from a serious nervous breakdown. He did acknowledge the facts and admitted to playing a minor role in the misdemeanors committed in the United States. Upon the request of the judge, he refused to be extradited to the United States, highlighting his psychological condition and financial situation, at odds with such an undertaking. His family stands behind him and is vindictive, with Michael in the lead. Michael has just returned from his prison stay in the United States and shares in John's plight. His mother fainted at the end of the hearing. He remains on probation. Until the end of the procedure, will he still be available for the French judicial authorities?

This is the 1st time that the U.S.-French extradition treaty is invoked regarding wildlife traffic.

Peter Pueschel
1956-2015

He fought for life and animals with lucidity and diplomacy. He was filled with wonder. He designed solid strategies. He brought people together. He took action. Peter knew how to say no, and how to say thank you. It was a pleasure to work with him during his Greenpeace years, and then his IFAW years.



Peter Pueschel setting down a rhino horn to be burnt in the Czech Republic in September 2014.

Rhinos and Elephants

AFRICA

Endless surprises in Maputo

Seizure of 340 elephant tusks (1126 kg), 65 rhino horns (124 kg), arrest of 2 suspects ; theft of 12 rhino horns and arrest of 6 suspects¹
Matola, Province of Maputo, Mozambique
May 2, 2015

"When I got home that night there were about 10 police cars around my house. I live in the house next door to the Chinese man. I asked the police on the scene and one said there was rhino horns inside. I moved around the house and peeped through the window and I could not believe my eyes, I think hundred and more tusks and horns lined up next to each other! They should give this man the death penalty! I am still in shock!"

The Chinese man lived in this suburb in the south of Maputo for approximately 3 months. Officially, he worked in the can recycling business. He was arrested on the spot. His name was not disclosed. In the corners of the house, the carved ivory was alongside the blood-stained raw tusks.

A few days later a second Chinese man was caught. A good connoisseur of what is commonly done in Maputo until now Maputo, the man presented himself as a member of the Chinese embassy in Mozambique as he walked inside the police station, where his fellow countryman was in custody, and put on the table the equivalent of \$34,000 US in exchange for his freedom. He also was arrested. Carlos Severa, defender of wildlife in Mozambique, had immediately reclaimed the horns and tusks to be burnt. "It would avoid the risk that the ivory and



the horns would fall into the wrong hands. If they were just left in warehouses, the risk that they will be stolen is very high."

Thefts and other embezzlements are often brought up by "On the Trail" to justify the need for destruction of illegal ivory, rhinos horn and other faunistic materials.

In the early morning of May 22, at least 12 rhino horns were stolen from a warehouse where all or some of the extraordinary seizure had been "put in security". The genuine stolen horns were replaced by 12 fake ones. The warehouse was sealed with 3 padlocks. The official press release of the police cut short to the various versions reported by the press or other sources according to which the 65 horns seized from the Chinese and the 120 other pieces coming from previous seizures have disappeared. The spokesperson of the police of Maputo believes it is premature to declare that the 6 people arrested are police agents. "Anyhow, they are people who were entrusted with guarding the horns and had access to the place from which the horns have disappeared."

The 6 suspects are Mozambican nationals. The new president of Mozambique, Filipe Nyusi, declared: "This business keeps me from sleeping." The President's insomnia must have gotten worse for a few

days later, 5 new suspects were arrested and the public attorney of the Maputo Province delivered information that among the suspects would be 4 police inspectors, a high official from the Bureau of Territory and Environment as well as the 2 rhino horn counterfeiters. In the same communication, the general attorney informed that the break in and theft of the 12 horns occurred within one of the Criminal Police buildings.

The rhino horns seized in Mozambique come from poaching in Kruger Park that, over 300 km, marks off the border between South Africa and Mozambique.

The wildlife of Mozambique and its national parks are pillaged by intra-African poachers and gold miners. Chinese expatriates, in connection with the national officials and accomplices in the ports and supply chain, organize the export by sea. Up to now the port of Pemba is the preferred port of exit. The Vietnamese expats also play an important role in the trafficking of ivory, horns, and lion teeth that flow from Mozambique and Southern Africa.

Already in February 2012, 266 tusks and tusk cuttings had been stolen from the main governmental storage right in the heart of the capital, inside the Ministry of Agriculture. The ivory vanished. No suspect has been arrested. The experts recall the famous case of that Vietnamese citizen who, 2 years ago, had been caught at Maputo boarding a Kenya Airways flight to Nairobi with 7 rhino horns and only a few days later was caught again at the Bangkok Airport getting off a Kenya Airways flight coming from Nairobi with 7 rhino horns.

AMERICA

Indictment of a woman for smuggling ivory, rhino horn and coral and custody for an accomplice²

**Concord, State of New Hampshire, United States of America
May 4, 2015**

According to her response to the Boston Business Journal, Carla Marsh, director of a UPS office in Concord, has nothing to do with Carla Marsh citizen of Concord and charged with traffic. This Carla Marsh shipped for at least \$ 700,000 US of precious animal materials to Hong Kong. «The items were repackaged and shipped with false values on the customs documents.»

"I'll send the Ivory to the address in Hong Kong..." " if we send it express mail through the post office, its only somewhat trackable and if it gets lost, its almost impossible to track. However, its less expensive than UPS and does not get scrutinized quite as much as customs and packages do going through UPS... have a safe journey back to China. I hope all the items arrive safely" she wrote in a mail. Marsh had at least one accomplice. Jin Jie Yang sent a mail to an auction house in Texas : "Maybe you don't need to say its ivory, just say its wooden carving or some other material. Then we don't need the paper."

OPERATION CRASH

**Sentencing to 3 years in prison and 2 years of probation for the director of an auction house³
West Palm Beach, State of Florida, United States of America
May 20, 2015**



He hoped for a simple slap on the wrist. He was sentenced to 3 years in prison in spite of the numerous testimonies from his friends, neighbors, and parents.

Hayes, director of Elite Decoration Arts, an auction house in Boynton Beach, Florida admitted to having voluntarily contributed to the export of rhino horns to China thanks to a privileged relationship with



a Chinese resident in Texas, a key link in the horn smuggling network. Hayes also admitted to having falsified some documents and resorted to some middlemen to facilitate the export of ivory and coral items.

Despite his repentance, the Court judge proved his determination to deliver an exemplary and dissuasive sentence. For several years, the police of the United States of America and the US Fish and Wildlife Service have been leading a merciless fight against horn traffickers. Operation Crash resulted in the arrest and indictment of 20 something people in the States of New York, New Jersey, Texas, and California. "Each illegal sale of rhinoceros horns or elephant tusks involves poaching, corruption, smuggling, and is part of organized crime" the prosecutor's case stressed. "The single motivation was money."

OPERATION CRASH

**Conviction for the smuggling of rhino horns and antiques made of ivory and rhino horn⁴
Beaumont, State of Texas, United States of America
May 22, 2015**



Ning Qiu, 43, an appraiser in Asian art, resident of Frisco, Texas was sentenced to 25 months prison followed by 3 years of parole. A fine of \$ 150,000 US was also imposed upon him. It will serve the Lacey Act Reward Fund which allows the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to "reward" its informants and to pay the cost of the management of the plants, fish and wildlife specimens held as evidence.

Qiu admitted to having worked for the account of Zhifei Li of which the bad and ingenious accomplishments are related in "On the Trail" n°3 p. 53 and n°5 p. 76. Li was sentenced to 70 months in prison at the end of May 2014.

Qiu knew Li for 6 years. Qiu, under the orders of Li, searched the sale catalogues at auctions and bought ivory and horns at the best price. Again under Li's advice, the exported objects were smuggled into Hong Kong under false descriptions. Qiu's bank accounts in the United States and in China were regularly fed by Li. Qiu bought particularly from the Elite Decorative Arts in Boynton Beach, Florida (see above). Between 2009 and 2013, Qiu exported at

least 5 rhino horns at a minimum weight of 20 kg. 1kg is sold on the black market in Asia for 50,000 to \$ 100,000 US.

An antique dealer in New York, Quiang Wang also known as Jeffrey Wang, took part in the plot. For his part, he was sentenced to 37 months in prison ("On the Trail" n°3 p. 52.)

ASIA

**Court hearing of a 41 years old man for attempted import of 11 rhino horn sections and elephant tusks through Pudong Airport. Value: 2.15 million yuan (\$ 346,336 US)⁵
Shanghai, China
April 2, 2015**

**Seizure of 18 raw and carved tusks (60.56 kg) and 3 rhino horns (4.86 kg)⁶
Noi Bai Airport, Hanoi, Vietnam
April 16, 2015**

The commercial value of the horn is estimated on the local market at \$ 133 US per gram, that of the ivory at \$ 2.1 US per kilo. Despite the numerous governmental communications and the informational campaigns of NGOs and partner artists, the rhino horns benefits from considerable prestige in Vietnam where the rumor persists that the horn can cure cancer.

The packages were transported by air. The raw and carved ivory are from African origin according to experts. The company used was Vietnam Airlines. The messenger service was EMS, Express Mail Service. The shipper is said to reside in Paris on rue Albert. At 19-19 bis rue Albert, in the heart of the first Asian neighborhood of Paris, the Franco-Vietnamese cultural center can be found.



**Sentencing for smuggling of 2 accomplices to 10 years and 6 years in prison and a 200,000 (\$32,250 US) and 120,000 yuan fine (\$ 19,350 US) following the November 8, 2013 seizure of 4.445 kg of horns and fragments of horn, of 30 raw and carved ivory of a total weight 3.405 kg⁷
Beijing, China
May 2015**



The most heavily sentenced man stepped off a plane from Cairo. Wu Fang, and a woman who worked at the airport and had already facilitated the fraudulent import of ivory before this new attempt. She had in return received 3 pieces of ivory jewelry and a few hundred dollars. The detailed confession of the pair led to the relative leniency of judges.

**Arrest of 4 poachers⁸
State of Assam, India
May 19, 2015**

-The two pachyderm killers alternatively attack the elephants and rhinos. They are also suspected of being involved in the death of a Kaziranga Park guard. They were arrested close to the Pobitora Reserve.

-The bivouac shelter of two other poachers was uncovered in the hills of the districts of Nagaon and Karbi Anglong Districts. There was food, solar heating plates and of course guns and ammunition.

REPEATED OFFENSE

**China: appraisal of ivory seized in Hangzhou, Province of Zhejiang and destruction of ivory in Beijing⁹
May 18 and 29, 2015**

The Hangzhou customs made a count of one year's seizures of ivory (270 kg) and rhino horn (9 kg). They have illustrated their exhibition by citing the example of a woman, called Wang, who was taken in in September 2014 about to pass 8.6 kg of ivory amongst boxes of chocolate and bottles of wine. Her computer revealed that over several trips she has fraudulently imported 220 kg of ivory and 9 kg of horns into the country.

In Beijing, on Friday May 29, 2015, 662 kg of seized ivory was destroyed by order of the government.



Elephants

The African elephant, *Loxodonta africana*, is listed in CITES Appendix I, except populations from South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe which are in Appendix II. The Asian elephant, *Elephas maximus*, is listed in Appendix I.

AFRICA

Arrest of 2 police officers suspected of ivory traffic¹

**Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique
April 1, 2015**

According to "CanalMoz," one of them is studying at the Mozambican police academy. The other is 55 years old. The police spokesman acknowledges that there may be black sheep within the institution. To the point that a member of the Special Forces protecting the President has been arrested for armed assault.

Poaching of 7 elephants²

Gourma-Rharous Cercle, Region of Timbuktu, Mali

April 1, 2015

The last elephants in the African Sahel are dying out. At least 25 of them have been poached since the beginning of the year. The stolen ivory transits through Algeria or Burkina Faso who shares with Mali transhumance of these elephant adapted to living in arid or desert areas. The global population - one or two hundred - is in accelerating decline since instability and war have settled on northern Mali. The latest ambush took place in Tin-Amaghid, east of Timbuktu. Cf. "On the Trail" n°1 p. 32.

Discovery of 2 elephant carcasses³

Kavango Region, Namibia

April 3, 2015

The bandits were interrupted and did not have time to cut the tusks. The body was discovered at 6am. The meat was cut up and given to the villagers. Another elephant was killed the same day in the north.

2014 record: 33 elephants poached in Bwabwata, Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara. 79 elephants in the whole country.

The new Minister of the Environment, Pohamba Shifeta, is acting against poaching. He wants his teams on the ground to show greater dynamism and considers staff turnover to counteract any bad habits among the guards too long installed in the same areas.



Bwabwata Park is on the border with Botswana, Angola and Zambia. On April 18, police arrested 4 men in the same region. They are from Namibia, Angola and Botswana, aged 30 to 48 years. They were in possession of 9 tusks. Bail was refused. The trial is scheduled in June

Seizure of 4 tusks worth Sh 1.5 million (\$ 16,150 US) and arrest of the trafficker⁴

Mwele, Kwale County, Kenya

April 5, 2015

Poaching of an elephant⁵

Olari Nyiro Conservation Area, Laikipia County, Kenya

April 6, 2015



Riddled with 8 bullets, she had managed to escape. She was found dying. This is the 5th deadly poaching since the beginning of the year in the sanctuary of Laikipia County devastated by bushfires, intrusion of nomadic pastoralism and infiltration of rebel groups.

Theft of 300 kg of ivory tusks in Court⁶

Oyem, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

April 2015

Weapons seized from poachers also disappeared. The ivory and weapons were about to be transferred to Libreville. The seals room was robbed after break-in. The Court watchman has vanished. "Dissipation" of ivory in court would be frequent in Gabon, Congo and Cameroon, according to the NGO Conservation Justice.



**Seizure of 31 ivory tusks (61 kg)⁷
Department of Dja and Lobo, South Region,
Cameroon
April 7, 2015**

The new head of Mintom forestry station has good start in his function. After pursuing poachers with his team for 3 days without success, he stopped 2 who were trying to hide a large bag under a tree in the village of Odoumou. Felix Nkambabuh Wabonghua was wounded in the hand during the operation. The 2 suspects fled. In the bag, 31 tusks. 61 kg. Less than 2 kg per tusk.

**Conviction for elephant poaching, detention, transportation and illegal sale of ivory⁸
Franceville, Haut-Ogooué Province, Gabon
April 2015**



The 2 men were sentenced to 6 months imprisonment, 1 million FCFA (\$ 1,653 US) fine and 5 million CFA francs (\$ 8,266 US) in damages. Weight of tusks sections: 18 kg. See "On the trail" n° 8 p. 78.

**Seizure of 8 tusks sections and custody for 5 suspects near Selous National Park⁹
Morogoro, Morogoro Province, Tanzania
April 2015**



**Poaching of an elephant¹⁰
Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya
April 19, 2015**



Omondi in the skylight.



Omondi on the ground.

**Seizure of 2 tusks and arrest¹¹
Mekambo Ogooue-Ivindo Province, Gabon
April 21, 2015**

Ndjone Manelle was selling to Boucary Diallo 2 elephant tusks cut into 6 sections. The 2 men were caught in the middle of the transaction by the police with the support of the NGO Conservation Justice. Mr. Boucary is a chicken and sheep broker well known in the department of Zadie. He was suspected for some time to pay more attention to wildlife than livestock.



**Ivory seizure and arrest of 3 suspects¹²
Mangochi District, Southern Region, Malawi
April 2015**

**Death of an eco-ranger¹³
Garamba National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo
April 25, 2015**

Eco-ranger Agoyo Mbikoyo was shot dead near the bivouac of his patrol by unidentified men, forest marauders. The African Parks helicopter has landed onsite a reinforcement patrol and elements of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The body was brought back to Nagero where he was buried near the headquarters of the Park. Agoyo was part of a team monitoring the elephant herds in the South part of the park, a 10-day mission. The park's area is 4900 km2. Paul



Watson, founder of Sea Shepherd, has committed to a reward of 10,000 € for anyone who will enable the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators. "We have to find, charge and convict these criminals to tell everyone that poaching must be stopped and that the lives of rangers are valuable."

Court appearance for illegal possession of ivory and release on bail of 2 suspected traffickers¹⁴

Watamu, Kilifi County, Kenya

April 27, 2015

Ivory is estimated at Sh 100,000 (\$ 1073 US). Deposit Sh 200,000 (\$ 2,147 US) for Nickson Kambi and Kazungu Mulumba. Trial scheduled on July 22.

Questioning of 12 people involved in the traffic of fake ivory, real bones, and seizure of 50 kg of ivory¹⁵

Malawi

End of April-May 2015

Things are hot in Malawi! From the end of April to the end of May, 50 kg of ivory were seized, 12 people suspected of the trafficking of ivory were heard by police. Experts claimed that the fake ivory was polished and worked elephant bones roughly transformed into the points of tusks. On the 12, 13, and 18 of May, 16 charcoal manufacturers and fraudulent wood hewers were arrested and brought to the justice.

On May 25, 50 kg of real ivory were also seized. These successes occurred thanks to the Wildlife Action Group and the anti-poaching brigade in Kasungu.



OPERATION MONITOR EYE

Seizure of 23 raw ivory pieces (52 kg)

Cairo International Airport, Cairo Governorate, Egypt

May 8, 2015

Painted black, which complicates the visual identification of customs and also olfactory identification by sniffer dogs, raw ivory were in the luggage of a Libyan passenger from Tobruk. Around the port of Cyrenaica, the last elephants were seen thousands of years ago. The Tobruk origin is enigmatic. Tobruk, Libya, port or airport of the ivory traffic from Chad or Mali? The estimated value by the Egyptian services is \$ 280,000 US. Backed by Interpol, Operation Monitor Eye has also lead to seizures of arms, drugs and in a container bound to the USA antiques stolen from museums.

Seizure of 2 pieces of ivory and arrest¹⁷

Karagita matatu terminal, County of Nakuru, Kenya

May 11, 2015

The minibus terminal in Karagita was the end of the trafficking. Despite having covered the two tusks with some banana leaves, he was arrested before handing them over to a middleman.

Arrest of 81 suspected poachers¹⁸

Malawi

May 2015

Rory Young is a specialist of the anti-poaching battle. He joined the French Foreign Legion when still very young and later becomes a forest ranger in Zimbabwe after 5 years of training. Yet he's no warmonger.

On mission in Malawi, he helps the wildlife agents use to their furthest extent the meager logistical resources at their disposal. 33 poachers have been arrested in 15 days during the month of April around Livonde by 30 rangers who have nothing more than a car and a half and an old boat. A true success compared to the 28 arrests made in all of April in Kruger Park watched over by thousands of guards, drones, helicopters and to some extent by thousands of tourists.

"Shoot on sight is stupid. If we had been shooting on sight during this latest sting operation we would have shot a handful of poachers and that would have been the end of it. Every single poacher is an opportunity for information to get more poachers and work your way up the chain to the ringleaders. " " Malawi is in the middle of redoing all its legislation, they know they need to introduce much harsher sentences so that the law actually acts as a deterrent, however in the meantime a committee has been formed made up of judiciary, police, army, parks and wildlife, and intelligence services to make sure they get more convictions." "We teach a complete doctrine, right through to the courts, making sure the dossiers are correctly put together so that the prosecutors have all the information they need. " "In anti poaching you do not have a military structure» «You have to be in the right place at the right time. " " Each park needs its own plan. "



Conviction of a poacher to one year imprisonment and a fine equivalent to \$ 500 US¹⁹
Kenya
May 14, 2015



© Nick Brandt/Big Life Foundation

Only one year in prison for killing 3 wonders in 2012! If the crime had been committed in 2014, Pekei Shoke would have been sentenced to 7 years following the strengthening of the Penal Code. In our opinion and objectively, even this would not be enough.

Death of 3 poachers and diplomatic friction between Botswana and Namibia²⁰
Region Kwando, Botswana
May 15, 2015



Botswana paid a tribute to Namibia for providing information on the movements of the poachers gang. After the death of 3 of its nationals, Namibia protested. "We do not condone poaching but we call for the limited use of force". Until further notice, Botswana now applies shooting on sight when poachers are identified in its national parks and protected areas. The individuals killed were armed and in possession of tusks according to Botswana border patrol soldiers.

Seizure of 3 sections of elephant tusks for a local value of 1.2 million shillings (\$ 606 US) and questioning of 3 young men²¹
Katavi Region, Tanzania
May 2015

The 3 refugees from Burundi had just acquired Tanzanian citizenship. Aged 18, 22 and 34, they unfortunately embody the next generation of elephant killers. They were in cahoots with a 19 year old student from Miele District.

Discovery of an elephant carcass²²
Mundemba, South-West Region, Cameroon
May 2015



"The elephant might have migrated from Korup National Park in search of food before meeting its Waterloo" prints the Cameroon Daily Journal citing forestry services. The Waterloo in question is poaching. The body was rotted but the 2 tusks were missing. The elephant would have approached some wild mango trees. It's the stench that attracted the attention of villagers and caused government intervention.

Conviction for illegal detention of 5 tusk sections for a total weight of 7 kg²⁴
Kilgoris, Narok County, Kenya
May 21, 2015

The convicted woman pleaded guilty to both offenses, illegal possession of ivory and dealing with government trophies without a license. "An offense such as this prescribes a fine of not less than Sh20 million or imprisonment for life" would have claimed Amos Mokoross, prosecutor. She was fined Sh40 million or 4 years jail if she fails to pay the fine.

Mombasa Port reunites with its historical tradition²³

(See "On the Trail" n°2 p. 52).

This is the paradox in Kenya. Kenya has defended with brilliance, bravery and constancy its elephants and by extension all the elephants of Africa and Asia for over the past 30 years and considers National parks to be a touristic resource and a biodiversity reservoir. At the same time, the port of Mombasa, opens its doors wide to ivory poached on its territory and neighbor countries that don't have a maritime outlet.

1 – 20 April. Bangkok, Thailand.
Seizure in the port of 739 tusks and tusk sections.
Origine: Democratic Republic of Congo.
Departure port: Mombasa, Kenya.

Thai customs estimate the 4 tons of ivory are worth locally 200 million baths (\$ 6 million US). The container was destined to Laos which it should have reached by truck after a 500 km drive through Thailand. It was registered as to be carrying dried beans.



2 – 27 April. Laem Chabang, Thailand.
Seizure in the port, south of Bangkok, of 511 tusks.

Departure port: Mombasa, Kenya.

Thai customs say the tusks are of a superior quality and estimate the local value of the 3 tons of ivory to be equivalent to that of the 4 tons previously seized, that is 200 million baths (\$ 6 million US). The container was also destined for Laos. It was registered as to be carrying tea leaves.



3 – 19 May. Singapore.
Seizure in the port of 1783 tusks and tusk sections, 4 rhino horns and 22 canines from big cats distributed in 2 20-foot containers.

Departure port: Mombasa, Kenya.

Customs and the AVA (Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority) estimate that the 3.7 tons of ivory, the 4 horns and the feline teeth are worth 8 million Singapore dollars (\$ 5.9 million US). The 2 containers were destined to Vietnam. They also were registered as carrying tea leaves.



NGOs in Kenya, public opinion and the press have been mobilizing because of this series of large scale seizures. The executive director of Wildlife Direct says that tusks held as sealed evidence in tribunals are stolen, sold and enter the Asian networks. A high official from the ministry of Justice regrets the lack of secure vaults to preserve evidence in cases of ivory traffic. The newspaper The Nation informs the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) made a deal 5 years ago with the East African Tea Trade Association (EATTA) relieving containers carrying

tea leaves of normal verification procedures. The EATTA explains the agreement with fiscal services in Kenya by the need to facilitate export of a product of major importance for the country's economy and to shorten shipment time.



2 brothers, Samuel and Nicholas Jefwa, directors of Potential Quality Supplies and tea exporters are wanted by police. Kenya is asking for the assistance of Interpol. They would be hiding in Uganda. They would have exported at least ten containers of ivory mixed in with tea leaves. Another man with the double nationality, Tanzania-Kenya, could be involved. He would be responsible of one ivory shipment from Tanzania to Kenya under the cover of pineapples.



Several suspects regarded as ivory kingpins, the worm in the apple of the KRA have been arrested or are about to be so. The Mombasa port administrator and customs are singled out. Everybody is fidgeting yet in the end, once the craze is over investigations seem to stagnate. In Kenya just as in South Africa or Namibia, the network organizers' and leaders' trials are constantly postponed as if states and justice systems were afraid to let the truth be known or impose sanctions. The Mombasa Republican Council, demanding autonomy of a portion of Kenya declares it has nothing to do with this traffic.

Dangerous Liaisons

Shipping companies have a responsibility in ivory smuggling—due to negligence prior to and at the time of boarding, or due to failure to take legal action after customs seizures in a transit or destination country.

Shipping companies operating container ships are exposed to passive and active smuggling risks. East African / Asian services in particular are targeted. It is known that the ports of Pemba in Mozambique, Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, and Mombasa in Kenya exfiltrate ivory, rhino horns, wood, and other products derived from plants and animals threatened with extinction.

Shipping companies are key links in the international chain connecting poachers in the field to distributors in the consumer countries. Traffickers rely on the discretion of ship-owners guilty of negligence when caught in the act. Thus ship-owners are indeed trustworthy partners for traffickers. As far as “On the Trail” knows, only one container leasing company pressed charges against a shipper. The shipper was supposed to load wood on board one of the containers of the ship *Kota Mawar*, in the port of Pemba, heading for China. Instead, the shipper slipped in 126 elephant tusks, 1 rhino horn, and pangolin scales (cf. n°2, p.64). Upon departure from East African ports, ship-owners or their subcontractors should require special checks on containers transporting leather goods, food products, wood, and waste to be recycled. The smuggling industry likes these 4 types of cargo. Ship-owners and port logistical chains do not require these preventive checks, as they prefer to avoid delays, administrative complications and conflictual relationships with clients who are always both in a hurry and insistent and looking for simplicity.

It is completely legitimate to wonder if shipping companies are determined to combat wildlife trafficking. Shipping companies are more concerned about cheating with the merchandise weight in each container. For them, this is more about billing than cleaning up intercontinental trade or combating environmental crimes. They couldn't care less if the container is transporting elephant tusks instead of declared zebu skins. The only thing that matters to shipping companies is that they're not transporting tons of illegal items for free.

Ship-owners and charterers also do not want to have conflicts with ports, customs and tax authorities. It is common knowledge that some of their members and departments are corrupt and active partners in trafficking.

However, habits in the shipping sector are starting to change. At the end of March 2014, after 106 elephant tusks were seized in a container that was supposedly transporting coffee, Singapore customs sent a warning to the shipping company “for having facilitated” the transport of the illegal merchandise.

Several experts consider that a good dissuasive measure would be the systematic publication of the names of the ships and companies involved in environmental crimes. According to the data that “On the Trail” has collected since April 2013, companies established in the European Union play a significant role in environmental crime.

When European ship-owners are taking part in environmental smuggling



Cape Moss, November 30, 2013.
Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Cape Moss. IMO 9445916. Container ship, 2758 teu. Length 212.60 m. Marshall Islands flag. Classification society Germanischer Lloyd. Built in Guangzhou (China) by Guangzhou Wenchong. Owned by Columbia Shipmanagement Ltd (Cyprus). Operated on the Asia-East Africa service (Singapore-Tanjong Pelepas-Colombo-Mombasa-Dar es Salaam-Colombo-Singapore).

Involved in ivory smuggling from Kenya to Asia in April 2015.

RHL Felicitas. OMI 9426790. Container ship, 5089 evp. Length 293.80 m. Liberian flag. Classification society Germanischer Lloyd. Built in 2010 in Shanghai (China) by Shanghai Jiangnan. Owned by RHL Reederei Hamburger Lloyd GmbH & Co KG (Germany). Operated since late 2014 on the Asian regional service (Singapore-Tanjong Pelepas-Port Kelang-Colombo-Jebel Ali-Karachi-Mundra-Colombo-Port Kelang-Singapore-Laem Chebang-Singapore).

Involved in ivory smuggling from Kenya to Asia in April 2015.



RHL Felicitas. August 29, 2011.
Valencia, Spain



Cape Madrid, January 22, 2014.
Bluff, New Zealand

Cape Madrid. IMO 9571301. Container ship, 2758 teu. Length 212.60 m. Marshall Islands flag. Classification society Germanischer Lloyd. Built in 2011 in Guangzhou (China) by Guangzhou Wenchong. Owned by Columbia Shipmanagement Ltd (Cyprus). Operated on the Asia-East Africa service (Singapore-Tanjong Pelepas-Colombo-Mombasa-Dar es Salaam-Colombo-Singapore).

Involved in ivory smuggling from Kenya to Asia in May 2015.

Med Pearl. OMI 9449821. Container ship, 1496 teu. Length 180 m. Liberian flag. Classification society Germanischer Lloyd. Built in 2009 in Zhoushan (China) by Zhejiang Ouhua Shipbuilding. Owned by Hermann Buss GmbH & Cie KG (Germany).

Involved in pangolin scale smuggling in Vietnam in July 2014.



Med Pearl. Septembre 5, 2010.
Kuantan, Malaysia



Kota Mawar

An example to follow. Containers belonging to the company Miti were rented to a Chinese loader and taken aboard the *Kota Mawar*. In one of the containers, customs of the Port of Pemba had found in 2011 126 elephant tusks, 1 rhino horn and pangolin scales. Instead of the wood declared it contained. For having tarnished its public image, Miti had sued the Chinese company. A substantial sum of money had been granted in 2013 by the Mozambique Court. This positive precedent unfortunately didn't incite ship owners and other stake holders of shipping to take legal action when involved in faunistic smuggling (see "On the Trail" n°2, p. 64).

**Discovery of 3 elephant carcasses²⁵
Bumi Hills, Mashonaland West Province,
Zimbabwe
23 and May 26, 2015**

Sensitive souls, skip this page! New evidence that poaching slides inexorably to Southern Africa and jeopardizes the last viable populations of the world contrary to repeated statements from several Southern African governments on the inviolability of "their elephant populations", an irresponsible credo that led in 1997 to the downgrading under Appendix II of CITES for elephants in southern Africa and to legal ivory sales.



**Identification of a woman behind live elephant trafficking from Zimbabwe to China²⁶
Zimbabwe
May 2015**

Elephant calves captured there several months ago to be exported are still parked in their enclosure. Some of them unfit to confinement were released, others managed to escape. The negotiations with China and with the CITES Secretariat are continuing. A certain Li Song, who holds dual nationality Chinese and Zimbabwean would be the commercial and diplomatic agent in this operation. She is an industrialist in crocodile skin and leather, shareholder of the Eagle Tannery. She is the head of an association for the promotion of trade with China and lives in Zimbabwe. 2 experts in elephants including ambiguous Rowan Martin would work by Li Song's side. The calves are supposed to be transported by cargo plane to China. Saviour Kasukuwere, Minister of the Environment, continues to claim that the sale of elephants is an important income for the country's economy (see "On the Trail" n° 7 p.105).

Last news: the baby elephants have been sent by cargo plane to China.



© Bakayenko Andrey

**Seizure of 2 elephant tusks and arrest of 2 suspects by Sam police force supported by Conservation Justice NGO²⁷
Sam, Region Woleu-Ntem, Gabon
May 2015**

**Seizure of 53 elephant tusks²⁸
Moloundou, Eastern Region, Cameroon
May 26, 2015**

Under the drive of John Paul Atangana, recently put in charge of public safety in this border sector with Gabon, hundreds of ammunition were seized at someone's house, in his absence. The place could be a poachers den. Avom Dang, sub-Prefect would have received death threats.

**Seizure of 2 tusks and 3 arrests²⁹
Yaoundé, Centre Region, Cameroon
May 2015**

The trafficker would have been robbed. He says that he is not a trafficker. His two long tusks of 2 meters formed part of the family heritage but he has difficulty proving it. Discovering their theft, he went to lodge a complaint at the police station. Two suspects were quickly arrested. The first had just bought a car and a watch after selling the 2 tusks to the second, who is said to be an ivory kingpin on the international market. At last, the first holder of the tusks was also arrested.



© Ofir Dori

Seizure of 4 kg of elephant tusk for a local value of 800,000 Sh (\$ 8141 US, i.e. \$ 2035 US per kilo) and arrest of 4 men including a prison guard and release on bail for 1 million Sh each (\$ 10,738 US)³⁰

**Ongata Rongai, County of Kajiado, Kenya
May 28, 2015**

**Seizure of 2 elephant tusks and custody of 3 people³¹
Mékambo, Ogooué-Ivindo, Gabon
May 28, 2015**

The big local trader Aboubakar Sadili had recently embarked on ivory traffic. He paid 2 suppliers who went to the forest to get the "merchandise"; this could already be their second poaching offense. The 2 tusks were going to sell for 471,000 FCFA (\$ 782 US) to Sadili. The province of Ogooué-Ivindo on the Northeast border between Gabon and Congo Brazzaville is a hot spot of the ivory trade.

Seizure of 258 raw ivory pieces (608 kg) and 24 kg of ivory bracelets and arrest³²

Entebbe International Airport, Central Province, Uganda

May 28, 2015

The 6 wooden crates were about to be loaded on a Turkish Airlines plane to Singapore. 5 airport employees are in custody. The local head of Turkish Airlines is also on hearing. Bonuses equaling or exceeding one year salary would be paid by traffickers so that eyes be closed in strategic locations of the airport. The Air Police uncovered the scheme. The ivory parcels had already crossed the customs gates. They were declared as "video equipment".



State poaching of 4 elephants³³

Hwange National Park, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

May 2015

Zimbabwean Conservation Task Force announced that 4 elephants of Hwange Park were deliberately killed by order of a minister. This State poaching would be intended to pay senior officials' salaries with ivory money.

Johnny Rodrigues, spokesman for the Zimbabwean Conservation Task Force, takes many risks. He is a brave and threatened man.



Seizure of 2 tusks with a possible origin of Mozambique and arrest of one man³⁴

Region of Ruvuma, Tanzania (Southern)

May 2015



Disappearance of 12,000 elephants in 2014 or an incorrect inventory in 2013 ?³⁵
Ruaha National Park, Tanzania
June 2015

The last inventory was completed at the end of 2014, it counted 8,000 elephants. The precedent count had been made in 2013, it counted 20,000 elephants. Everyone has their own hypothesis about the disappearance of 12,000 elephants in a year in the Ruaha-Rungwa ecosystem covering 50,000 km² in central Tanzania.

"Were the elephants killed, stolen or either simply moved?" asked the minister. "Usually, when a large number of mammals are missing without a call, a certain number of carcasses are discovered but there is nothing there."

Admittedly poaching has been out of control for some years now but it is difficult to imagine even in the worst scenarios that illegal slaughter has grown in this region at an average rate of 30 elephants per day without the resident communities, NGOs or qualified services giving an alert. The mystery of the collapse of relatively protected population from incursions of poachers from other countries can be explained by the unreliability of the censuses and the old tendency of officials to draw up a flattering picture of the national management of wildlife. The last census conducted by the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute and the Société Zoologique de Francfort, with a \$ 900,000 US sponsoring by Paul G. Allen, philanthropic investor and founder of Microsoft, is maybe more reliable and close to the truth than the previous ones. Lazaro Nyalandu, the minister of Natural Resources and Tourism intends to launch a detailed mission on the terrain as soon as the rainy season ends.

Seizure of 459 jewelry made in gold, silver and elephant hair estimated worth 1000 to 5000 € per unit. Arrest of 7 people released on bail after 6 days in custody³⁶

Senegal

June 2015

Elephant tail hair have long been believed to bring virility and power.

This seizure is the result of teamwork between the French and Senegalese customs and the authorities and NGOs in Senegal. The hair could come from Central Africa. There would remain one, only one elephant in Senegal, in the Niokolo-Koba. A Moroccan mission caught the attention of customs when it left Dakar by wearing and carrying many magic and criminal jewelry. The 7 makers including 2 sons of Yoro Lam, the famous jeweller were bailed out for 15,250 €.



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© Eagle

Seizure of an ivory jewelry box and questioning of a Senegalese trafficker³⁷

Congo

June 2015



© Ofir Doh

Poaching of 3 elephants and cutting of their bodies³⁸

County Isiolo, Kenya

June 2015

The crime is attributed to tribals from the north. The elephants were dismembered. The tusks, genitals and other anatomical figures have disappeared under a ritual that would not be practiced by local people.

Seizure of 5 tusks and 19 pieces of ivory for seals and arrest of a Cameroonian citizen³⁹

Port-Gentil, Ogooué-Maritime, Gabon

June 8, 2015

He was agout to sell the merchandise to a Chadian citizen.



© Conservation Justice

Discovery of an elephant body⁴⁰

Forest reserve of Bas Imenti, County of Meru, Kenya

June 8, 2015

Typical! The conflicts between man and elephants were exacerbated in this area. In the rainy season, the elephants come from Mount Kenya to the forests plains of the county of Meru.

The elephants were executed as retaliation. The agriculturalists can't stand the damages made to crops and the presumed disregard of the KWS. The elephant is dead. His tusks have disappeared. Is the man/elephant conflict a pretext for poaching?

Mohammed Bulle behind bars⁴¹

Tana River County, Kenya

June 10, 2015

Alias Gosi Garsen, he was wanted since his release on bail after being charged with poaching. That was in 2013. He would be involved in wildlife crime within the parks Tsavo, Taita, Maasai Mara... Those on the run away are always suspected of the worst evils when they are caught by the law. Investigators want to explore his past and whether he is related to the export of 16 tons of ivory from Mombasa towards Thailand and Singapore and if he has links with terrorist groups that would finance part of their activities with money from ivory smuggling.

Care of an elephant injured by an arrow in the front right foot⁴²
Olarro Conservancy, County of Narok, Kenya
June 13, 2015

Arrest of a police officer suspected of trafficking ivory⁴³
Norton, Province of East Mashonaland, Zimbabwe
June 16, 2015

At the wheel of a Mercedes, Tota the police officer met with two individuals who wanted to buy ivory from him. The three then went to Tota's house to weigh the tusks. It was at that moment that he was arrested. The two individuals were police detectives.

Seizure of 42 ivory products, some of them painted, and arrest⁴⁴
Douala, Region Littoral, Cameroon
June 2015

Death of a ranger and of 2 regular forces soldiers. 3 widows and 12 orphans⁴⁵
National Park of Garamba, Eastern Province, Democratic Republic of Congo
June 17, 2015



Seizure of 4 tusks and custody of 4 individuals⁴⁶
Mbuvi, County of Embu, Kenya
June 19, 2015

Seizure of 2 tusks segments (6 kg) and arrest of 3 people released on bail for 1.5 million Sh (\$ 15,260 US) each⁴⁷
Tandare, County of Laikipia, Kenya
June 20, 2015

FAMILY AFFAIRS
Seizure of 4 tusks and arrest of a regular armed forces soldier⁴⁸
Gabon
June 2015

Seizure of 2 carved tusks and 26 ivory objects, and arrest of 2 traffickers⁴⁹
Yaoundé, Central Region, Cameroon
June 2015



Seizure of 45 kg of ivory near the border with Tanzania and arrest of a school teacher⁵⁰
Gwitembe, County of Migori, Kenya
June 2015

Seizure of 6 tusks (150 kg) and arrest⁵¹
Gabon
June 2015

A Gabonese and a Cameroonian have been arrested. A regular forces soldier was questioned but would still be free.



An elephant severely mutilated taken in by the orphanage of the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust⁵²

Forest of Rumuruti, County of Laikipia, Kenya
June 23, 2015

He must be no more than 15 months old. His front right leg was deformed by a rope snare and he had a wound to the head caused by a spear. He is very thin. He wandered for several weeks in the Rumuruti Forest after his mother was poached.



Seizure of 3 kg of carved ivory and arrest of a 42 year old Chinese man en route to China. He was going to fly to Addis Ababa using Ethiopian Airlines⁵³

**International Airport of Maputo, Mozambique
June 2015**

Sentencing of 3 ivory traffickers to 2 years in prison⁵⁴

**Pointe-Noire, Department of Pointe-Noire, Congo
June 2015**

The prosecutor had asked for 1 year in prison. During the deliberations, the 3 accused tried to escape. They were caught by the police. They were sentenced to 2 years each.

Seizure of 2 tusks split into 4 pieces and arrest of 4 people including a soldier⁵⁵

**Oyem, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon
June 2015**

Release of 3 traffickers of 56 kg of ivory by the Court of Appeals⁵⁶

**Parakou, Borgou Department, Benin
June 2015**

This sentence comes after the 1st level Court had decided on 3 years jail.

ASIA

Seizure of 966 grams of carved ivory, value equivalent to \$ 6,500 US, and arrest⁵⁷

**Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, China
April 2, 2015**

The suspect was given away by someone from his entourage. A phone call from a public booth attracted the attention of the cops on him. The raw materials trader known as Moumou invested in the secondary material of the post mortem elephant. Under the cabinet in his office was hidden carved ivory of various origins. "Some friends brought them back from Thailand for him." He sold ivory relics in a small shop in Tianjin and the fairs of Hohhot.

Seizure on the same day of 7 parcels filled with tusks (131.36 kg) including 2 carved ones for an estimated global value of 3,870,000 yuans (\$ 623,405 US) or \$ 4,705 US per kilo⁵⁸

**Qingdao, Province of Shandong, China
April 2015**

They came from Japan. This seizure shows the persistence of trafficking between Japan and China.



Seizure of 22 ivory bracelets and 2 pieces of raw ivory (total 6 kg) and arrest⁵⁹

**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China
April 13, 2015**

Beware of babies. As if a smiling or crying toddler could protect from customs inspections. The woman living in Hong Kong and entering China through Shenzhen border believed so. In the small backpack full of pacifiers and toys, there were 6 kg of ivory.

Smuggler-mother got caught. The second benefit of this scheme is to avoid a long detention. Customs and police offices are not nurseries. The ivory dealer had given the tip to the woman who was to be paid after delivery.

A baby rental service - HK\$ 30 (\$ 3.8 US) per hour - would be available to all traffickers or people who for various reasons want or need to be accompanied by one baby or even several.



Poaching of 2 elephants⁶⁰

**Province of Aceh, Indonesia
April 2015**

Shot dead 150 m away from the oil palm plantations managed by Agro Nusantara Sinergi. A male of about 25 years. The corpse was rotting. The tusks had been snatched. 5000 15 years ago. Less than 1500 today. Since 2012, 200 elephants poached. The Sumatran elephants have been eradicated in the provinces of Riau and Lampung. Deforestation paves the way for the palm oil industry.



**Discovery of an elephant carcass⁶¹
Banspahari, State of West Bengal, India
April 16, 2015**

A baby elephant was mourning over the dead body. Hundreds of people came to witness the scene. They had to be dispersed by police. One tusk had been sawed off.

**Seizure of 15 tusks and 5 carved tusks (total 29.5 kg) and arrest⁶²
Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok, Thailand
April 2015**

In the suitcase of a Vietnamese passenger coming from Angola and going to Cambodia transiting through Thailand. Average weight of the tusks less than 2 kg.

**Seizure of 700 g of ivory and custody of 2 suspects⁶³
Jalpaiguri, West Bengal State, India
April 18, 2015**

**Ivory inventory⁶⁴
Thailand**

From January 22 to April 21, 2015

Deadline: April 21, 2015. On the 20th, more than 22,000 raw or processed ivory owners came to declare their assets. 5 to 700 people a day in recent weeks. Politicians like Anutin Charnvirakul the Bhumjaithai Party leader, with 16 pairs of tusks, monks, individuals, businessmen...

180 t in all. 140 t of tusks. 10 t of sections. 30 tons of jewelry and ornaments.

Dodgers risk a fine of 3 million baht (\$ 91,320 US). For sellers of domestic elephants ivory, the fine is doubled and coupled with a maximum penalty of 3 years in prison. Under the new requirements of the law it is forbidden to sell African elephant ivory and allowed to sell ivory if collected from a registered domestic elephant.

The stocks of illegal ivory could be burned.

**Poaching of an elephant⁶⁵
Karbi Anglong district, State of Assam, India
April 21, 2015**

Several shootings were heard in the early hours of the day. Vets found the target after 10 hours of searching. Kaziranga National Park covers 430 km². The victim died at nightfall.

**Seizure of ivory⁶⁶
Nonthaburi Province, Thailand
April 21, 2015**

The Pongpat scandal is prosperous. See "On the trail" n°7 p. 93. The former head of the Kingdom's criminal police continues to yield his secrets. 18 of its properties have already been searched. Another 4-story building was just visited. As always, it contained a variety of "gifts" among which ivories offered by criminals or police officers appreciative of a dismissed case or of a promotion.



**Seizure of 84 tusks (300 kg)⁶⁷
Dubai International Airport, United Arab Emirates
April 2015**

Origin Côte d'Ivoire, destination Vietnam. Value estimated at \$ 3 million US or \$ 10,000 US/ kg



**Seizure of a pair of tusks (16 kg) and arrest⁶⁸
Madikeri, Karnataka, India
April 2015**

The Maruti minibus, very common in India, can carry 8 people according to manufacturer's instructions and much more in real life. There it was carrying 4 passengers and 2 nice size tusks. At the time of interception near the Valley View Hotel, 2 people fled.



**Customs have the deal in Guangzhou⁶⁹
Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China
April 28, 2015**

One after the other, customs seized on 2 smugglers, 23 and 44 years, carved ivory for a total weight of 10 kg.

**Seizure inside one parcel from Japan of two traditional carvings with complex geometry⁷⁰
Gongbei Customs, Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, China
April 30, 2015**



Seizure of 2 ivory Buddhas and arrest of 2 bearers (aged 46 and 27) ⁷¹
Varthur, Karnataka, India
May 1, 2015

FAMILY BUSINESS

Seizure of 119 elephant tusks, animal carcasses and trophies ⁷²
Tambon Talad Kwan Mueang District
Nonthaburi, Thailand
May 9, 2015

The search was conclusive. It was not a private home. It was a hunting lodge : antlers, skulls under Appendix I or II and more than one hundred tusks. Prasert Sriyanyong claims he inherited all these trophies from his grandfather who worked in the Royal Forestry Department. He forgot to declare his hundreds of kilos of ivory to the government. The last day to complete this formality was April 21, 2015. Someone took on the responsibility to declare it all to the police. As for tens of teak planks also being housed in his 4-storey building, they would have been purchased in Burma 2 years before.



Seizure of 94 ivory bracelets and other trinkets for a total weight of 9.1 kg on the abdomen and legs of 2 passengers ⁷³
Shanghai-Pudong International Airport, China
May 12, 2015



An elephant turned in to authorities and search for 2 bodies ⁷⁴
Sri Lanka
May 12, 2015

The elephant of the Colombo business district judge made the news in Sri Lanka since the summer of last year and the preliminary report of the General Accounting Office prepared by the incorruptible Ambewela ("On the Trail" n°6 p. 91-92). The domesticated elephant n°334 had been registered thanks to false documents. The specimen was not born in captivity; he had been kidnapped from the forests. Meanwhile, just as we feared in "On the Trail" n°8 p. 87, 2 elephant bodies are searched for on the premises of the Vipashyaramaya Buddhist temple. They were said to come from domesticated lines but in reality were taken away from the wild. The excavations operated by the University Archaeological Services followed an accusation from the vice-minister of Tourism and the investigation of the CID (Criminal Investigation Department) on the capture of 11 wild elephants by a certain Ali Roshan today held in custody.



Detention for three smugglers of 8 tusks (100.8 kg) ⁷⁵
Beihai, Guangxi Province, Zhuang Autonomous Region, China
May 14, 2015

They carefully put them away in a car trunk. One of which weighed 25.7 kilograms. They had arrived in the port of Beihai on a pleasure boat that came from Vietnam.

Excavator Massacre ⁷⁶
District de Kendujhar, State of Odisha, India
May 16, 2015

They used the machine available on site for building a road. « The elephant was killed in atrocious circumstances » according to the head investigator. Then they buried him in a hole. 2 months later, the 2 criminals were arrested and the elephant carcass was found. It is clear that in this case, man is the one truly responsible for the Man/ Elephant conflict. Trees and meadows are disappearing to give way to mining activities. A small herd of 9 to 11 elephants and another one of 7 are seeking themselves new terrain and their dismay benefits barbarians. Sources do not mention if the tusks disappeared.

Poaching of an elephant by electrocution⁷⁷
Lailunga, State of Chhattisgarh, India
May 18, 2015

Arrest of 4 smugglers⁷⁸
Nanning, Guangxi Autonomous Region, China
May 2015

The coordinated chase was successful. In the trunk, there were 100 kg of tusks. The longest measured 182 cm and weighed 25.7 kg. African elephant pieces were shipped to Vietnam and landed on Beihai a beach in China.



REPEATED OFFENCE

Arrest of a veteran poacher in animals and plants⁷⁹
State of Odisha, India
May 21, 2015

The poacher is multi-skilled. When not cutting tusks, he cuts trees. He faces 11 poaching offenses. The 40 year-old man known as Isa Miyan had the support of some local populations. He has been marauding in the area for several years.

Sentencing of Ahmad Fariar for the trafficking of ivory to 10 months in prison and 1.5 million IDR (\$ 112 US) fine⁸⁰
Meulaboh, Province of Aceh, Indonesia
June 4, 2015



Seizure of 15 kg of tusks and questioning of a person on the street⁸¹
Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India
June 5, 2015

Seizure of 16 elephant tusks after a traffic accident⁸²
Quang Nam Province, Vietnam
June 7, 2015

After the collision with a bus, the 2 occupants of the car fled with the tusks and hailed a motorcycle cab to flee. The driver refused and notified the police. Several Laos license plates were found in the wrecked car.



Seizure of 46 kg of ivory by a mobile Customs brigade on the border of Burma and Laos⁸³
Mengla Xian, Yunnan Province, China
June 2015

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks measuring 33 and 32.5 cm long and arrest of 2 men on a motor-bike⁸⁴
Kochi, State of Kerala, India
June 10, 2015

Seizure of 14 ivory sculptures purchased in Italy by a Chinese merchant and evaluated at 400,000 Yuans (\$ 64,500 US)⁸⁵
June 2015

Poaching of 20 elephants within 10 months⁸⁶
Forest of Vazhachal, State of Kerala, India
June 2015

According to the declarations of the 62 year old man hired as a chef by the band of elephant killers, 20 among them fell since the month of September last year in the forests of Vazhachal. The tusks were sold to a broker in Thiruvananthapuram. In 1990, Johny Madurai's gang had poached 50 elephants in the same area.

Kalarikudiyil Kunjumon took investigators to where an elephant body was abandoned without its tusks. The young elephant had been killed after the return of a poaching party. The gang had returned to the scene after one month to pull the tusks according to his statements. He added that the gang also poached in the States of Karnataka and Tamil Nadul.



An investigation for illegal possession of an elephant⁸⁷

**Thiruvananthapuram, State of Kerala, India
June 26, 2015**

He himself, KB Ganesh Kumar, the former Minister of Forestry of the State of Kerala and also film actor kept an elephant in hiding for 20 years. He wanted when he "bought" the baby elephant in a State orphanage to offer it as a gift to a local temple. This is in accordance with religious rituals and compatible with the law if the elephant is delivered to the temple in the 6 months following its acquisition. According to the Anti-Corruption Court, the politician has appropriated the elephant for 20 years and occasionally rent him out for shows, religious parades or hauling wood.

Arrest of a Taiwanese passenger, on landing of the Evergreen Airlines flight from Tokyo to Taipei, concealing in his luggage 3 ivory sculptures⁸⁸

**Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport in Taipei, Taiwan
June 24, 2015**



FAMILY AFFAIRS

**Seizure of 6 ivory figurines with a total weight of 3.79 kg, and arrest Zhao in Tianjin⁸⁹
Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, China
June 25, 2015**

The package came from France. It was sent by a cousin of Zhao.

FAMILY AFFAIRS

**An ivory-Inquiry⁹⁰
Yantai, Shandong Province, China
June 29, 2015**

Estimating that the housing market is down, the stock market is at risk and that gold investments are no more profitable, Choi in 2012 had invested his capital in ivory. He bought for 70,000 yuan (\$ 11,274 US) small pieces from a Taiyuan vendor, Shanxi Province, on the internet and set up a family fine jewelry workshop.

Seizure of 387 kg of raw ivory in a truck at the border with Cambodia and originating from Cambodia⁹¹

**Ha Tien, Kien Giang Province, Vietnam (South)
June 30, 2015**



Seizure of 2 African Ivory sculptures (2.31 kg) originating from France⁹²

International Airport of Tan Son Nhat of Hô-Chi-Minh-City, Vietnam

June 30, 2015

Furniture came from France. They were accompanied by "2 decorative statues" according to the wording of the customs declaration. The two statues were made of ivory from Africa, analysis by Vietnamese experts can attest.



EUROPE

**An exemplary auction house⁹³
Cornwall, England, UK
April 2015**

The auction house, reseller of a large assortment of ivories which origin and dating are blurred, decided after consultation to put everything into the hands of competent authorities, the Devon and Cornwall Police and National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU).



Withdrawal of trophies of protected species in the royal palace of Sandringham, county of Norfolk⁹⁴

The contentious trophies of rhinos, tigers, leopards, lions, and elephant tusks were removed from the royal palace of Sandringham. All the souvenirs from Georges V hunting were put in security. Will they be destroyed?
(cf. "On the Trail" n°7).

**Seizure of elephant, sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) and hippo (*Hippopotamidae* family) ivory⁹⁵
Netherlands**

April 2015
During an antiques show in the "Utrecht Fair" exhibition center, 73 raw and carved ivory pieces were seized



including more than a dozen elephant tusks. 3 traders, a German, a Belgian and a Scottish are involved. The Dutch Authority for food products and consumer safety mimics the Avignon Customs in France that regularly seize ivory during international fairs.

In the Province of South Holland, 25 ivory objects including netsukes, were seized. They were offered for sale on the Internet.

Seizure at a collector's home of 14 carved tusks, a lamp, 35 statues 80 cm high, a vase, a cane, 92 small carved ivory pieces, a crucifix, many weapons with ivory handles (total 400 kg)⁹⁶
La Spezia, Liguria Region, Italy
April 2015

Seizure of 12 tusks cut in sections (136 kg)⁹⁷
Paris-Charles-de-Gaulle International Airport, Region Ile-de-France, France
May 27, 2015

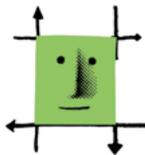
Seizure of elephant tusks, statuettes, pendants, chess games of unknown origin, for a total of 250 items and 25 kg of ivory dispatched on 2 professional stalls at the 3rd International Minerals Fair⁹⁸
Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, Region of Alsace, France
June 26, 2015



Seizure of 129 carved ivory pieces and 2 tusks weighing 14 kg each⁹⁹
Lisbon, Region of Lisbon, Portugal
June 2015



Well spotted!



Press release. June 11, 2015

Robin des Bois congratulates the Roissy airport customs for their large seizure of ivory from Democratic Republic of the Congo that had a destination of Vietnam (136 kg). The packages of "replacement parts" definitely deserved to be targeted.

It is confirmed that Europe and France, contrary to preconceived ideas, are transit areas for the trafficking of ivory and other animal parts between Africa and Asia. The tusks weighing on average a dozen kilos come from breeding elephants whereas it is more common to see today tusks of 2 kg taken from elephants of 3-4 years.



Since May 2013, "On the Trail" has counted 5 seizures of horn or tusks in Vietnam coming from France. See "On the Trail" n°1 p. 24 et 35, n°4 p. 87, n°6 p. 91 and p.88 of this issue.



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OCEANIA

Seizure of 110 kg of ivory¹⁰⁰
Perth, State of Western Australia, Australia
April 5, 2015

The paths for smuggling ivory are unpredictable and all customs must be vigilant. The parcel from Malawi to Malaysia was transiting through Perth Airport during the weekend of April 5. Estimated value: \$ 385,000 US or \$ 3,500 US per kilo.



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Other Mammals

AMERICA

Seizure of 3 armadillos, (family Dasypodidae)¹ Imbabura Province, Ecuador April 2015

By the fish market where the 3 animals were seized, meat from wild animals was also sold.

Seizure of a young South American tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II)² Autazes, State of Amazonas, Brazil May 4, 2015

Hunted, the mother managed to escape but not the baby. He was going to be eaten. Luckily a woman bought him and warned authorities. Hotline : 0055 92 21236774



Seizure of a 4 month old armadillo (family Dasypodidae)³ Quevedo, Province of Los Rios, Ecuador May 2015

To avoid that he was sold on the illegal market, a woman recovered him.

Seizure of 9 agoutis (*Dasyprocta* genus)⁴ Rio Largo, State of Alagoas, Brazil May 12, 2015

An illegal breeding farm was uncovered thanks to a tip-off. The animals were in bad condition.

Seizure of 80 kg of animal wild meat including armadillos (Dasypodidae family)⁵ Bujari, State of Acre, Brazil May 27, 2015



Firearms were also seized from the suspect's home. He was arrested and given a \$ 14,000 US fine.



Voluntary handing over to the authorities of a white lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*, Appendix II) and 3 deers (*Cervidae* family) Prado, Department of Tolima, Colombia June 2015

They were for sale in his shop and the owner returned them "voluntarily" to the police.

Seizure of a dead spotted paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III)⁶ Sao Miguel Arcanjo, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil June 2015

The paca was caught in a backpack as well as the arm. The man has to settle for a fine of \$400 US.



ASIA

Poaching of a Siberian Ibx (*Capra sibirica*, Appendix III in Pakistan) and conviction⁷ Hunza Nagar District, Gilgit-Baltistan Territory, Pakistan. April 13, 2015

He had been poaching in the Bar valley, 400 km away from Islamabad near the Chinese border. The meat was found at his home and auctioned off by district authorities. His gun was seized. He was sentenced to one month jail time. The antlers measured 63.5 cm long.

The Siberian Ibx or yanghir is a species of wild goat ranging in Central Asia. The mean length of the horns is 1 m long for males and 40 cm long for the females.



FAMILY AFFAIRS

Arrest of 10 persons for poaching a panda and trafficking in panda meat and organs (*Ailuropoda melanoleuca*, Appendix I)⁸ Province of Yunnan, China Revealed in May 2015

They killed Beibei (see "On the Trail" n°7 p. 98). On December 3 one of their sheep was apparently killed by an unknown animal. The next day they scoured the area to find the culprit. They shot the panda. He was in a tree. Pandas are not known to slay sheep. They are easy to recognize. At least one of the two brothers shot while being fully aware of the wrong of such an act. The emblematic history and symbolic figure owned by pandas in known throughout China, even by illiterate persons.

35 kg of meat and the paws were sold for 4800 yuans (\$ 800 US). Remains of the panda were found in the freezer. 10 people are involved in the plot. The police found out about the case by a tip\$off on a suspected trafficking in bear paws and meat.



FAMILY AFFAIRS

Seizure of an otter (*Lutrinae spp.*, Appendix I or II) and arrest⁹

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

May 2015

Just like his brother had already done, he was advertising to sell a small otter. She will be turned over to a specialized center.



Poaching of 3 Indian gazelles (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III) and a blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*, Appendix III) and arrest¹⁰

Near Jodhpur, State of Rajasthan, India

May 2015

The poaching of the antelope is credited to members of the Van Baori tribe. The people of the village of Bishnoi heard the gunshot. They ran to the spot and found the antelope shot to death. They want a forest guard to be permanently posted in the village.



Arrest for the poaching of Himalayan blue sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*, Appendix III in Pakistan)¹¹

Autonomous Region of Hui du Ningxia, China

May 2015

A body, 6 heads, 8 hoofs and 3 suspects. The case came up in February but a 4th individual alleged to be the boss of the gang came to be arrested. The wild sheep of the Himalayas live in Nepal, Tibet, India, Bhutan, China, Burma, and Pakistan.



Sentenced to one year in prison and a fine of Rs 5,000 (US \$ 79) for illegal possession in 1996 of 5 shawls in Tibetan antelope wool (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I)¹²

Delhi, India

June 2015



Sentencing for the illegal detention of 1001 Indian grey mongoose hair brushes (*Herpestes edwardsi*, Appendix III)¹³

Delhi, India

June 2015

Since 2002, the Wildlife Act of 1972 imposes a 3 to 7 years in prison sentence and 10,000 Rs (\$156 US) minimum fine for mongoose poaching.



**Poaching of 3 gaurs (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I)¹⁴
Mahasamund, State of Chhattisgarh, India
June 9, 2015**

They were caught with an electrical trap connected by a makeshift appliance to a high voltage line.

EUROPE

**Conviction for wolves poaching
(*Canis lupus*, Appendix II)¹⁵**

**Norway
April 2015**

The 5 wolves poachers were sentenced to 6 to 20 months in prison. They will not be jailed, as long as right of appeal will not be exhausted. However, the sentence makes the headlines in Scandinavia even if echoes are weak in southern Europe. The gang was wiretapped while preparing its wild ride.

Hunting had liquidated wolves in Norway. A joint program of reintroduction with Sweden was launched in 1990. 36 wolves are listed in Norway and a group of 39 overlaps the border between Norway and Sweden.

In the 28 countries of the European Union, the wolves would be 12,000. In Sweden, in Visby on the island of Gotland, a man was convicted for the sale of wolf skins actually coyote skins. The court held that it was wrong to do promotion for wolf fur. See "On the trail" n°7 p. 101.



OCEANIA

FAMILY AFFAIRS

**Attempt to poach and seizure of 3 flying-foxes
(*Pteropus* spp., Appendix I or II), firearms, munitions and questioning of 4 men of which 2 were brothers¹⁶**

**Moindou, South Province, New Caledonia,
France**

May 1 and 2, 2015



Multi-Species

**Encyclical Letter Laudato Si' of the Holy
Father Francis on care for our common
home. 24 May, 2015. Extracts.**



"Frequently, when certain species are exploited commercially, little attention is paid to studying their reproductive patterns in order to prevent their depletion and the consequent imbalance of the ecosystem."

"Where certain species are destroyed or seriously harmed, the values involved are incalculable. We can be silent witnesses to terrible injustices if we think that we can obtain significant benefits by making the rest of humanity, present and future, pay the extremely high costs of environmental deterioration."

"In the absence of objective truths or sound principles other than the satisfaction of our own desires and immediate needs, what limits can be placed on human trafficking, organized crime, the drug trade, commerce in blood diamonds and the fur of endangered species?"

"It may well disturb us to learn of the extinction of mammals or birds, since they are more visible. But the good functioning of ecosystems also requires fungi, algae, worms, insects, reptiles and an innumerable variety of microorganisms. Some less numerous species, although generally unseen, nonetheless play a critical role in maintaining the equilibrium of a particular place."

"Among positive experiences in this regard, we might mention, for example, the Basel Convention on hazardous wastes, with its system of reporting, standards and controls. There is also the binding Convention on international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora, which includes on-site visits for verifying effective compliance."

AFRICA

Arrest of 7 poachers¹

Komanda, Oriental Province, Democratic Republic of Congo

April 10, 2015

Near the border with Uganda, the roaming horde led by a deserter from the Armed Forces was raking forests along Mombasa road, an area very much appreciated by elephants but also haunted by ivory hunters and feeders of the bushmeat network. The 7, including a woman, were armed with machine guns. They were transferred to Bunia for questioning.

REPEATED OFFENSE

Conviction for carrying of 2 pieces and 4 g of powdered rhino horn, 3 lion claws (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), 2.982 kg of Nile crocodile meat (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix II)



**Bellville, Western Cape Province, South Africa
April 15, 2015**

Wu Xiaohui, 36, a Chinese national, sushi chef for the group SPAR supermarkets, was arrested on January 23 with 150 abalones that he attempted to fly to China. Released on bail, he was again arrested at Cape Town airport 3 days later, this time with rhino, lion and crocodile parts. He was sentenced to 5 years in prison, 3 and a half suspended for 5 years, and a R 40,000 (US \$ 3,370) fine. Regarding SPAR, see also p. 7.

REPEATED OFFENSE

Conviction *in absentia* of a repeated offender to 3 months prison term, 800,000 fca (\$ 1341 US) and 500,000 fca (\$ 838 US) for trafficking in 4 African dwarf crocodiles (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, Appendix I), 2 sitatunga skins (*Tragelaphus spekii*) and 34 live freshwater turtles³



Cotonou, Littoral Department, Benin

April 15, 2015

See "On the Trail" n°8 p.17 !

Burning of 2 tons of bushmeat

Labé, Labé Region, Guinea

April 17, 2015

The 1855 kg of bushmeat from several hundred animals, mostly primates, seized in November 2014 from 4 poachers caught red-handed and convicted since then (one to 3 years in prison), were cremated to prevent their fraudulent recovery and give poachers a «strong and solemn signal of Guinea in its actions against wildlife crime».



Conviction of a trio to 6 months prison term⁵

Yankari Reserve, State of Gombe, Nigeria

May 2015

Seizure of 8 elephant tusks, one leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and 200 g of cannabis, arrest and bail out of 2 of them for \$ 1073 US⁶



Marereni, County Kilifi, Kenya

May 6, 2015

Seizure of 200 kg of elephant meat, pangolin meat, duiker meat (*Cephalus* genus) and other animal meat and 8 poachers arrested⁷

Le Kadey, East Region, Cameroun

May 6, 2015

The guys are being held at the Batouri prison. The bush meat was auctioned. Right in the highest point of the Ebola crisis, the meat was burned! The forest mission scrawled the MBang forest for a week. 7 motorcycles, ammunition, 10 machetes, 10 "handicraft" firearms were also seized.

Seizure of 2 primate skulls (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II), giant pangolin scales (*Manis gigantea*, Appendix II) and one hippopotamus jaw (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) and questioning of 2 traffickers⁸

East Cameroon

May 2015



© Eagle



© Oftr Droni

**Questioning of 5 Chinese citizens for the poaching of a wildcat (*Felis silvestris*, Appendix II) and a gazelle (genus *Gazella*)⁹
District of Moamba, Province of Maputo, Mozambique
May 30, 2015**



They poached with lights and firearms. The overall command was to put pressure on police for them to be released immediately. The same officers demanded that they be taken back in the event of photography. CanalMoz examines the reasons why the hierarchy deals with this matter. The suspects were all close to the border with South Africa.

**Seizure of 7 pangolins of which 3 were dead (*Manis* spp., Appendix II) and 200 kg of bush meat and custody of a trafficker for 3 days¹⁰
Route leading to Pointe Noire, Congo
End of May 2015**



**Seizure of 8 turtle shells and a chimpanzee skull (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) and arrest¹¹
Cameroon
June 4, 2015**

The first rank trafficker was a bus driver, this job made easier his underground activities.



Seizure of 380 kg of bush meat of which there were descaled pangolins (*Manis* spp., Appendix II)¹²

**Republic of Congo
June 2015**

The Chinese forest rangers are at work. The mixed up companies are SICOFOR (Sino-Congo-FORet) and Jiangsu Overseas Partnership. The J.O.C group is the largest importer of wood in China. It is some sort of subsidiary of the Jiangsu province government.



AMERICA

Seizure of a boa (*Boidae* spp., Appendix I or II), a corn snake (*Pantherophis guttatus*), and 2 turtles. Arrest¹³

**State of Alagoas, Brazil
April 1, 2015**

The drug trafficker detained 3 non-authorized species. The local animals were reintroduced into the wild, whereas the corn snake, originally from the United States of America, did not have the same chance.



Seizure of cured meat coming from 8 spider monkeys (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II), 3 central American agoutis (*Dasyprocta punctata*, Appendix III), 4 hens of the family Cracidae, and one central American red brocket (*Dasyprocta punctata*)¹⁴

**Agua Fria Route, Panama Province, Panama
April 6, 2015**

**Seizure of 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), a few fish and 1 turtle¹⁵
Nature reserve of San Cipriano, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia
April 2015**

S o m e misinformed tourists... The police inspected the beaches of the protected area and confiscated some "unusual" s o u v e n i r s belonging to the local fauna.



Seizure of 40 animals of which there were macaws, parrots, parakeets (family Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), monkeys (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II), yellow-spotted sideneck turtle (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II), wood tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II) and some scorpion mud turtles (*Kinosternon scorpioides*)¹⁶

**State of Amapa, Brazil
April 2015**

The doctor illegally detained the animals in his premises. L'IBAMA intervened thanks to a tip-off.

Seizure of 8 spider monkeys (*Ateles* spp. , Appendix I or II), 3 central American agoutis (*Dasyprocta punctata*, Appendix III), 4 horned guan (*Oreophasis derbianus*, Appendix I), and one deer (*Cervidae*)¹⁷

**Between Agua Fria (Province of Coclé) and Panama (Province of Panama), Panama
April 2015**

An anonymous call allowed the police to find 16 dried animal bodies in a bus on the route between Agua Fria-Panama. The traffickers will have to explain themselves in front of the regional environmental administration.

Seizure of 4 turtles, 2 yellow-spotted sideneck turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) and 100kg of south American tapir meat (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II)¹⁸

**Guajara-Mirim, State of Rondonia, Brazil
April 23, 2015**

4 Bolivians, 3 men and 1 woman were arrested in a town on the border between Brazil and Bolivia. In total, 6 turtles were freed. They showed signs of abuse.

Seizure of wildlife meat from paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III), coati (*Procyonidae* family, Appendix III) and armadillo (*Dasypodidae* family)¹⁹

**Madiocaba, Parana State, Brazil
Avril 24, 2015**

A tip-off has denounced some hunters marauding in the area. Frozen meat and firearms have been confiscated at suspects' home.



**Seizure of 6 lion cubs (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I), 3 Bengal tiger cubs (*Panthera tigris tigris*, Appendix I) and 2 baby Morelet's crocodiles (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix I and II)²⁰
Ixtapan de la Sal, State of Mexico, Mexico
April 2015.**

3 people were put into police custody after an anonymous call. In total 11 young animals were recovered. The police do not know where the animals will be sent nor if there are others who are guilty.

**Seizure of 2 marine turtles (*Cheloniidae* spp. Appendix I) and 14 guanay cormorants (*Leucocarbo bougainvillii*) and of 2 kg each²¹
Puerto Casma, Province of Casma, Peru
April 2015**

The Chimbote coast guard fights against of blast fishing. The birds were discovered at an inspection in the city's port. The cormorants were handed over to two charities. The turtles are at the marine institute of Peru.

Seizure of 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I and II), and 2 oncilla skins (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I) and 1 caiman skull (*Alligatoridae* spp., Appendix I or II)²²

**Sauce, Department of Canelones, Uruguay
Avril 2015**

The stars of tourism... Being used for tourist attractions, the 2 boas are in very poor condition. Both of them had bound mouths and one had a wounded eye covered with tape.

**Seizure of a blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) and 2 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II)²³
Itapuirama, Minas Gerais, Brazil
April 26, 2015**

Found thanks to an anonymous call. The macaw does not know how to fly.

**Seizure of a fox (*Canidae* family) and 4 Red-masked Parakeets (*Psittacara erythrogenys*, Annex II)²⁴
Chiclayo, Region of Lambayeque, Peru
April 2015**

They were found imprisoned and abused in a restaurant. They were transferred to a care center. Their fate is still in the balance.



Seizure of 73kg of yacare caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II), 6kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), and a monkey (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II) in a cage²⁵

**Macapa, State of Amapa, Brazil
May 2015**

A 68-year old man was arrested for selling protected wild animals. In total, 79 kg of meat were confiscated. He risks 6 months imprisonment.

Sequestration of 8 fallow deers (*Dama dama*, Appendix I), 7 hanadryas baboons (*Papio hamadryas*, Appendix II), 2 ostriches (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I), 2 lions (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), one white Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), 3 dromedaries (*Camelus dromedarius*), 5 llamas and one zebra²⁶

Serdán (also known as San Andrés Chalchicomula), State of Puebla, Mexico

May 2015

Coming from a circus, the animals were originally legal but the building was not allowed to lodge them. It is belonging to the city mayor,

Seizure of a black vulture (*Coragyps atratus*), and 1 capuchin monkey (*Cebus spp.*, Appendix II)²⁷

Pérola D'Oeste, State of Parana, Brazil

May 2015

They were tied in the back of a commercial enterprise and in dreadful conditions. It will be difficult for them to be reintroduced into the wild.

Seizure of meat taken from a common rhea (*Rhea americana*, Appendix II), from 3 caimans (*Alligatoridae spp.*, Appendix I or II) and from 3 other wild animals²⁸



Aquidauana, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil
May 2015

On the BR-419 highway, in a Ford pampa pick-up truck, the police also seized firearms. The 2 passengers were arrested and received a \$ 1200 US fine each.

Seizure of one red-fronted macaw with a broken wing (*Ara rubrogenys*, Appendix I), one scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), 2 scaly-napped amazons (*Amazona mercenarius*, Appendix II), one titi monkey with a broken arm (*Callicebus spp*, Appendix II), a couple of white-faced capuchins (*Cebus capucinus*, Appendix II), one toucan without claws and 2 17 year-old tortoises²⁹

Sacaba, Department of Cochabamba, Bolivia

May 2015



"I rescued the animals from different places to offer them shelter and food," said Omar Téran, the manager of the illegal refuge where the animals were discovered. The conditions were so bad that following morning of the seizure, an amazon and another bird were already dead.

Seizure of a blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), 3 white-tufted-ear-marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II), a common barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), one European polecat (*Mustela putorius*), 3 spiders of Theraphosidae family, 2 d'Orbigny's sliders (*Trachemys dorbigni*), 15 corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*), 1 king snake (genus *Lampropeltis*), 1 boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I and II), and 2 boa snake skins³⁰



Ilha Comprida, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

May 2015

He must pay a fine of 24,000 reals, or \$8,132 US for having bought 30 animals from a pet shop and keeping them in captivity at home without permit.

Seizure of one oncilla (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I), one armadillo (*Dasypodidae* family), one green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), one squirrel (*Sciurus* genus), one booted eagle (*Hieraetus pennatus*, Appendix II), one common starfish (*Asterias rubens*), one stuffed turtle, the skin and the skull of a collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II), one deer horn, one skin of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II) and one skin of a milksnake (*Lampropeltis triangulum*)³¹

Puerto Vallarta, State of Jalisco, Mexico

May 2015

The living and the dead fauna were exhibited in a store selling leather fashions such as 12 snakeskin belts and 8 pairs of snakeskin boots. Other curiosities: 9 tarantulas set in belt buckles were also confiscated.

Seizure of one false map turtle (*Graptemys pseudogeographica*, Appendix III), one turtle of Rhynoclemmys genus, one tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*), one golden gecko (*Gekko badenii*), one royal python (*Python regius*, Appendix II), 5 parakeets (*Myiopsitta spp*, Appendix II), one hedgehog (*Erinaceinae* family), 7 pond sliders (*Trachemys scripta*), 2 apalone turtles (*Apalone spp.*), one Jackson chameleon (*Chamaeleon jacksonii*, Appendix II), one veiled chameleon (*Chamaeleo calypttratus*, Appendix II), one boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II), one parrot (*Neopsephotus spp.*, Appendix II), and 9 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II)³²

Ville de Uruapan, State of Michoacan, Mexico

May 2015

33 animals of 14 species were seized at "Aqua Land", a city pet shop (320,000 inhabitants).

Seizure of one common squirrel monkey (*Saimiri sciureus*, Appendix II), and one great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*, Appendix II)³³

Santiago de Querétaro, State of Querétaro, Mexico

May 2015

Found in a private home after an anonymous call, the two animals are in good health.

Seizure of 2 tons of wild animal meat including meat from pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), agoutis (*Dasyprocta* genus), Brazilian tapirs (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II), arapaimas (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), armadillos (*Dasyproctidae* family), deers (familie Cervidae), birds and live turtles³⁴

Coari, State of Amazonas, Brazil
May 19, 2015

Hidden behind fish, the meat confiscated from this floating bar was given to low income communities. Concerning the turtles, they were tied up in the basement and are now awaiting release into the wild.

Seizure of 20 kg of collared peccary meat (*Tayassuidae* family, Appendix I or II) and agouti meat (*Dasyprocta* genus, Appendix III), 2 Muscovy ducks of 5kg (*Cairina moschata*, Appendix III), and a dead 8 kg turtle³⁵

Manacapuru, State of Amazonas, Brazil
May 21, 2015

Sold openly on the fish market called "the freedom market place", these animals never experienced the meaning of this word. The suspect was arrested. The meat seized was turned over to the CIGS Zoo that belongs to the army. To turn in any such information: 190, 988421547 or 988023699.

Seizure of one green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), one spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*, Appendix I or II), one white-fronted amazon (*Amazona albifrons*, Appendix II), one South American gray fox (*Lycalopex griseus*, Appendix II) and one Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II in Mexico)³⁶
Leona Vicario, State of Quintana Roo, Mexico
May 2015



In total 5 animals were living at the individual's house. They were brought to different UMA around the city.

Seizure of one puma (*Puma concolor*, Appendix I or II), one deer (family Cervidae) and one coati (family Procyonidae)³⁷

Capitán Bado, Department of Amambay, Paraguay
May 2015

High-level corruption. The vice deputy known as "Chicharõ" was already searched by the police for money laundering. A mini zoo with non-authorized animals was found in his complex including an airport, some bungalows, artificial lagoons, and sports grounds.



Seizure of 6 white tailed deers (*Odocoileus virginianus*, Appendix III), 2 spider monkeys (*Atelidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and 11 black bellied whistling ducks (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)³⁸

Bucztotz, Yucatan State, Mexico
June 2015

Again an UMA out of control. The shelter was unable to prove the origin of animals in distress. 19 were transferred.

Seizure of one peach-fronted parakeet (*Aratinga aurea*, Appendix II) and one collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix I or II), questioning of a young man of 19 years and a fine of \$3,300 US³⁹



Costa Rica, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil
June 2015

Seizure of one 2 year old jaguar (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), one 10 month old jaguar (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), one 5 month old lion cub (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II), one black tufted capuchin (*Cebus nigritus*, Appendix II), one Burmese python (*Python molurus bivittatus*, Appendix II) and 3 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II)⁴⁰

La Bufadora, State of Baja California, Mexico
June 2015



They were exhibited at the restaurant "Habana Banana". Stressed because of the constant contact with clients, the inadequate size of their cages and music. They were taken to a zoo.

Seizure of 45 animals from a pet shop of which they were 20 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II), one titi monkey (*Callicebus spp*, Appendix II), 3 veiled chameleons (*Chamaeleo calytratus*, Appendix II), 3 Mexican prairie dogs (*Cynomys mexicanus*, Appendix I) and one South American gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*)⁴¹
States Nuevo León, Jalisco, Veracruz, Puebla, Yucatan et State of México, Mexico
June 2015

Seizure of one Argentine boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor occidentalis*, Appendix I), one American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*, Appendix II), one black-chested buzzard-eagle (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*, Appendix II), 3 black-backed

**grosbeaks (*Pheucticus aureoventris*), 13 ball armadillos (*Tolypeute stricinctus*), and one southern tamandua (*Tamandua tetradactyla*)⁴²
La Paz/ El Portezuelo/ Piedra Blanca, Province of Catamarca, Argentina
June 2015**

During simultaneous operations in different provincial cities, 20 animals were seized.

OPERATION FLYAWAY⁴³

United States of America
From June 17 to 26, 2015

So as to make an example in the secret world of airways parcel services and sorting centers for international packages, several American federal agencies- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)- cooperated under the World Customs Organization patronage. Agents were appointed in Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Mexico. The US Postal supervised the package opening. 25 seizures were carried out: queen conch meat (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II), turtle shells, elephant meat, tiger teeth (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), ivory jewelry.



Seized elephant meat

ASIA

**Seizure of one red panda skin (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I), one leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), one Asian palm civet skin (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III) and arrest of 2
Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal
April 1, 2015**



**Seizure of 9.7 kg of white rhino horn, 1.8 kg of ivory, a tiger skin and 7.7 kg of tiger bone (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I)⁴⁵
Kunming, Yunnan Province, China
April 2015**

Big and spectacular catch at the airport. It smells northern India. Huge value. Around 700,000 €.



Seizure of 3.68 kg of ivory and 2 bags of pangolin scales (*Manis spp.*, Appendix II) on 3 passengers from the same row getting off a flight from South Africa⁴⁶

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Province of Guangdong, China
April 15, 2015

The wildlife products were hidden in shoe boxes and clothes or tied to their legs

Conviction for poaching Ramnagar, Uttarakhand State, India
April 2015



4 people arrested in May 2014 in the Corbett National Park, with leg-hold steel traps and poaching tools were sentenced to 3 years imprisonment and Rs 10,000 (US \$ 160) fine each.

**Seizure of 82 pieces of ivory, 130 cm of crocodile skin (*Crocodylia spp.*, Appendix I or II), walrus teeth (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada) and 4 kg of red coral (*Corallium rubrum*) with a total value of 500,000 Turkish liras (US \$ 191,845) at the Grand Bazaar in the historic and touristic district of Istanbul⁴⁸
Istanbul, Marmara Region, Turkey
April 21, 2015**



**Release of one slow loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I) and 5 raptors (*Falconiformes* spp., Appendix I, II or III) offered for sale on Internet⁴⁹
Dong Thap province, Vietnam
April 22, 2015**



**Seizure of one python (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I), 14 turtles and questioning⁵⁰
Ba Ria, Vung Tau Province, Vietnam
April 23, 2015**

The Internet trader and his relations were extensively questioned by Ho Chi Minh City police.

**Dismantling of a protected animals traffic network : 589 Burmese pythons (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II), 244 reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II), green tree pythons (*Morelia viridis*, Appendix II), red tail boas (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 79 lizards, 114 iguanas (*Iguanidae* family), 17 frills neck lizards (*Clamydosaurus kingii*), 27 turtles, 3 slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I), one red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I) and 5 macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix II)⁵¹
Shangluo, Shaanxi Province, China
April 2015**

The case is outsized. People involved are mainly second-year students. Suppliers, deliverers, customers are located in 25 provinces. The heart of the traffic is at the center of China. Cui, 24, opened a small wildlife trade to pay for his studies. It had become a big business. For each transaction, he received 2,000 yuan (US \$ 320).

**Seizure of one stuffed brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), one stuffed red deer (*Cervus elaphus*, Appendix II) - a mature head and a whole young - and one shotgun
Noshahr, Mazandaran Province, Iran
April 2015**



REPEATED OFFENSE

Custody for 2 shop keepers implicated in smuggling protected animals or protected animal parts⁵³

**Jaigaon, State of West Bengal, India
May 3, 2015**

The duo would pay the poachers and sell the trophies in neighboring countries. They are based at the border between India and Bhutan. Tigers, rhinos, elephants are over-poached in the Buxa Tiger Reserve and the Jaldapara National Park. These 2

sanctuaries are located in the 2 grocers' range. The 2 suspects will be questioned for 7 days by specialized inspectors. The local poaching community is in frenzy.



**Seizure of 20 kg of bush meat of which there were lizards, turtles, sambars (*Cervus unicolor*) and Indian muntjacs (*Muntiacus muntjak*)⁵⁴
Banlung, Province of Rotanah Kiri, Cambodia
May 5, 2015**

The dealer who was caught in the act of illegally selling on the public market the meat of wild animals protected by the law explains that she is not the only one to do it and she and all her colleagues pay a small monthly tithe to corrupt agents of the anti-corruption brigade responsible for the fight against the black market.

Nouv Dara, the boss of the business, denies the allegations. Only the meat was seized, the vendors left running.

"We will come back to this market," Dara promises.

**Seizure of 79 kg of bushmeat, 49 live parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix II) and one live monitor lizard (*Varanidae* family)⁵⁵
Støeng Treng, Province of Støeng Treng, Cambodia
May 5, 2015**

The five species of Cambodian parrots are listed under CITES Appendix II.



Seizure of 129 kg of pangolin scales (*Manis spp.*, Appendix II), 10 kg of calaos beaks (*Bucerotidae* family), live turtles, lizards and spiders and arrest⁵⁶

**Hong Kong Territorial Waters, China
May 6, 2015**

At night, a maritime patrol caught a gang unloading a cargo from a truck onto a speedboat. The suspects escaped. Only one was arrested. 27 year-old, he faces up to 7 years in jail. There was quite a variety of goods. 229 cameras, 10,000 cell phones, about 30 calaos beaks, live turtles. The 10 kg of calaos beaks are worth \$ 100,000 US (see "On the Trail" n°2 p.8).



Seizure of tiger skins, elephant skins, deer skins (*Cervidae* family) and buffalo skins (*Bubalus genus*) and custody of one woman⁵⁷

**Chennai, State of Tamil Nadu, India
May 2015**

Seizure of 14 newts (Family Salamandridae), one viper (Family Viperinae) and other unknown species and convictions⁵⁸

**Province of Ardahan, Turkey
May 15, 2015**

The 3 German hikers were entering Turkey by the border with Georgia. They were in possession of one viper, fauna and flora species which are not yet identified by the Turkish scientists and 14 punctuated newts protected by the Berne Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats. The trio was given the equivalent of a \$44,565 US fine.

Arrest of a person suspected of tiger, four horned antelope (*Tetracerus quadricornis*, Appendix III), varan (family *Varanidae*), and monkey (*Primates spp.*, Appendix I or II) poaching⁵⁹

**Hirabambai, State of Maharashtra, India
May 19, 2015**

Another hard blow in the reserve of Melghat. The forest services did not expect the Korku, one of the 200 tribes in India, to give up poaching in the same dexterity as the Bahelya. In investing in the 3 huts of the 3 suspects of which 2 had managed the situation, the police seized the steel traps, the pelts, teeth, and also some knives and nets. "We trapped a tiger," confessed the suspect "then we gouged out

its eyes and pierced it and knocked it out with a stick." "After we removed the paws, claws, and teeth and we buried the body on the grounds of Shyanlal, my neighbor." The worst is that Shyanlal worked time and time again with the forest service and that a runaway forest guard today lives within a stone's throw of the drama.

The canine brigade is on the alert to find where the tiger skin was buried.

On the high plateau of China, arrest of a police officer suspected of poaching falcons (*Falco spp.*, Appendix I or II), Mongolian gazelles (*Procapra gutturosa*), Przewalski's gazelles (*Procapra przewalskii*) and Przewalski's horses (*Equus przewalskii*, Appendix I) and revocation of his superior⁶⁰

District of Tianjun, Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, China

May 24, 2015



Sentencing of 8 men to 6-12 years jail for the trafficking of 6 elephant tusks and 38 tiger and lion bone preparations (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I and *Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II) worth 4.2 million yuans (\$677,000 US)⁶¹

**District of Xicheng, Beijing, China
May 2015**



Acquittal in a case of seizure of 8 pelts and 400 kg of tiger bones (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), 43 leopard pelts (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), 3 clouded leopard pelts (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I), and 128 otter pelts (*Lutrinae spp.*, Appendix I or II)⁶²

**Delhi, India
May 29, 2015**

The main offender was Sansar Chand (see p. 47). He died before the trial, in the same way of his accomplice Pema Thinley. The charged survivor, Mohammed Yakood, was acquitted.



Seizure of 3 civets (*Viverridae* family), one non-poisonous snake, 23 turtles, 4 monitor lizards (*Varanidae* family), liberation of animals, and sentencing of the trafficker to a 11 million riels fine (US \$ 2,700)⁶³



Stoeng Treng Province, Cambodia
June 2015

Seizure of 40 horns and animal bones and sentencing of a trafficker to a 9 million riels fine (US \$ 2,200)⁶⁴



Kratie, Cambodia
June 2015

A Pygmy Loris returned to authorities (*Nycticebus pygmaeus*, Appendix I) and seizure of one eagle (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II)⁶⁵



Vietnam
June 4th and 5th, 2015

The young girl had received the loris as a gift from her boyfriend.

The eagle was exhibited in a restaurant.

Seizure of rotten animal organs and of 32 wild animals including 4 pangolins, 4 wattle-necked softshell turtles (*Palea steindachneri*, Appendix II) and 27 big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I) and arrest⁶⁶

District of Yen Mo, Province of Ninh Binh, Vietnam

June 2015

The truck was transporting parts of anatomical figures in the process of rotting as well as cadavers of identifiable and protected animal species. The vehicle was stopped on the road between Da Nang and Hanoi (884 km). An investigation has been opened to find the origin, the use and destination of the morbid cargo.



Seizure of 13 elongated tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II), 14 common palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India), one giant Asian pond turtle (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II), one monitor lizard (family *Varanidae*) and 3 snakes⁶⁷

Seima Protected Area (3,000 km²), Mondulkiri Province, Cambodia (west, near the border with Vietnam)

From June 8 to 14, 2015



Information poster against poaching in Seima forest

Sentence to six months in prison and one year of probation for illegal possession of one stuffed sea turtle (Appendix I), one stuffed Bengal leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), 63 Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix II), 5 shells, one mouse deer skeleton (genus *Tragulus*), one deer skull, 85 skeletons and 100 red-backed kingfishers heads (*Todiramphus pyrrhopygius*), 30 river kingfishers (family *Alcedinidae*), 90 heads of black capped kingfishers (*Halcyon pileata*) and 9 skunks (family *Mephitidae*)⁶⁸

Surabaya, East Java Province, Indonesia
June 17, 2015

The taxidermist had been busy since 2006. He had clients up to England, Sweden and the United States of America. Local NGOs are outraged by the weakness of the penalty. Basuki Ongko Raharjo was liable to a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison and a fine of 100 million rupees (US \$7,576).



Seizure of serpents of which there were Russell's vipers (*Daboia russelii*, Appendix III in India), spiders (class *Arachnida*), chameleons (family *Chamaeleonidae*), turtles and earthworms⁶⁹

International Airport of Cochin, State of Kerala, India

June 2015

The 2 young Japanese have been walking through the forest for 15 days seeking reptiles and insects. After their arrest at Cochin Airport, they claimed not to know about the protective regulations for fauna in India.



They both work in a supermarket in Japan. The air police also seized a video that they had the intentions of selling to Japanese television networks. The Cochin forest cane turtle (*Vijayachelys silvatica*, Appendix II) is found in the Athirappally forest.

Seizure of one dead wildcat (*Felis silvestris*, Appendix II) and one civet (family Viverridae, Appendix III) and custody of 3 for 15 days⁷⁰
Jaloor, State of Karnataka, India
June 24, 2015

EUROPE

Seizure of 108 animals including 55 snakes, 35 lizards, 7 turtles, 6 lemurs (*Primates* spp., Appendix I), 2 apes (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 baby crocodiles (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I or II), one leopard cub (*Panthera pardus*, Annex I) and arrest Domodedovo International Airport, Moscow Oblast, Russia
April 2015

In a 27 kgs suitcase arriving from Jakarta via Qatar, the Russian Customs discovered the incredible menagerie packed in mini-cages, plastic boxes and bags. The animals were hungry, exhausted, terrified but alive, except 2 baby crocodiles. The woman who brought them home was arrested. She faces up to seven years' imprisonment for trafficking in protected species. She claims she purchased the lot for \$ 200 US on an Indonesian market. The exotic pet trade is flourishing in Russia where it is fashionable for wealthy people to own a private zoo. The survivors of this flight (more than 6500 miles) have been placed in the care of the "Exotic Park" of Moscow - a blue nailed caretaker from the Park handled them for the series of photographs intended as exhibits.



Seizure of 33 skulls and bones including several wolf skulls (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), a gorilla skull (*Gorilla* spp., Appendix I), a brown bear skull (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix I or II), a Malaysian bear skull (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), a rhino skull with horns, 5 cetaceans skulls (*Cetacea* spp., Appendix I or II), an elephant foot, a stuffed crocodile head (*Crocodylia* spp., Appendix I or II), a narwhal tusk (*Monodon monoceros*, Appendix II) and 7 hippopotamus teeth (Hippopotamidae family, Appendix II)⁷²
Zoersel, Flanders, Belgium
April 29, 2015



OPERATION COBRA III⁷³
May-June 2015

Participants : CITES, Interpol, UNODC (United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime), World Customs Organization.

In the United kingdom, operation COBRA III claims the seizure of 10,000 seahorses, 400 Afghan tortoises (*Agrionemys horsfieldii*, Appendix II) coming from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, 11 bear claws, a tiger pelt, stuffed crocodiles, tortoises, and a chameleon. In Poland, 500 kg of frozen eels.

In the Netherlands, 16 whale ribs and the head of a rock monitor.

In Bulgaria, 20 kg of medicinal leech and southern medicinal leech (*Hirudo verbana*, Appendix II).

In Croatia, 300 living turtles.

In Spain, 90 kilograms of coral, a Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II), a bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, Appendix II), a Tibet owl (*Athene noctua*, Appendix II), several peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) and a leopard skin.

“European Union remains a source, a destination and transit region for endangered species traffic.”



Seizure of 26,447 counterfeit accessories of which there were items in reticulated python skin (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II) and arrest of 9 Chinese citizens and 4 Italians who own several stores in Italy⁷⁴

**Florence, Tuscany, Italy
May 2015**

Seizure of a grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II), a Hermann's tortoise (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) and European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), a finch that served as a decoy bird, nets and cages⁷⁵

**Afragola, Region of Campania, Italy
May 17, 2015**



Seizure of a chameleon, a tiger head (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), monkey skulls (*Primates spp.*, Appendix I or II), stuffed birds of prey, ivory and reptiles⁷⁶

**Newton Abbot, England, UK
May 21, 2015**

The chameleon preserved in formalin came from the United States of America. It was spotted on April 17 at Heathrow center of international postal sorting. The suspicious package triggered the investigation. The Border Police has investigated the home and the recipient's business. The man was arrested then released on bail.

Court hearing for illegal possession of 387 tarantulas (Order of Araneae) and 10 pythons (*Pythonidae spp.*, Appendix II)⁷⁷

Arlon, Wallonia, Belgium

June 2015

Belgium is seeing proliferation of exotic animals. The mother suffered from arachnophobia and the son, age 26, was addicted to spiders. He was raising 387 tarantulas (Araneae Order) in his bedroom. The mother snapped the day her son brought home 10 smuggled pythons (*Pythonidae spp.*, Appendix II) from an animal rummage sale in Germany.

There was a scuffle and the mother called the police who, with the help of specialists, seized the whole menagerie. « The conditions in which you keep these animals make it possible that they escape. » The small tarantulas could have escaped and invaded Athus. Athus (population 7500) is 3 km from the border to France.



Seizure of 200 animals of which there were macaws (*Psittacidae spp.*, Appendix I or II) and turtles in an overcrowded aviary with life conditions incompatible with sanitary and animal well-being requirements⁷⁸

**Cagliari, Region of Sardinia, Italy
June 2015**

Seizure of ivory carvings, red coral necklaces and a python skin (*Pythonidae spp.*, Appendix I or II) from the monthly Avignon international antiques market⁷⁹

**Avignon, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France
June 29, 2015**

OCEANIA

Seizure of elephant and walrus ivory (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III) and whale bones (*Cetacea spp.*, Appendix I or II) and arrest⁸⁰

**Honolulu, State of Hawaii, United States of America
May 2015**

A jeweller from Hawaii with stores in Waikiki and Ala Moana called Hawaiian Accessories had been receiving for at least the past 3 years packages of elephant and walrus ivory and whale bone, 3 products banned from import in the United States of America. The raw ivory was then transferred to the Philippines where a certain Sergio Biscocho would carve it into hooks and other objects that then, to tie the loop, would return to Hawaii by the postal services or in Biscochos luggage. Biscocho is now in custody in Hawaii. He was refused bail. Federal services say that risk he escapes are too important. 4 accomplices have been charged. Just to make it even harder to trace the ivory, Hawaiian Accessories also sell mammoth ivory of which import is still authorized without restriction in a vast majority of States.

ON THE TRAIL N°9

Sources

Sources are available on request by email to contact@robindesbois.org indicating the "On the Trail" issue number, section and reference in the title of the event.

For instance, for the last event of "On the Trail" n°9 (seizure of elephant and walrus ivory and whale bones, Honolulu), ask for "On the trail" n°9, chapter Multi-Species, reference 80.

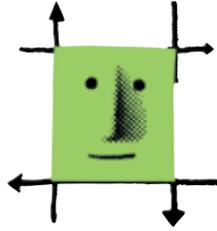
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Non Gouvernemental Organisations

African Conservation Foundation, Big Life Foundation, Bornfree Foundation, Catalogue of Life (Species 2000 ITIS), Centre for Orangutan Protection, Conservation Justice, The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, EAGLE Network, Education for Nature - Vietnam (ENV), Elephant Aware Masai Mara, Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), Encyclopedia of Life (EOL), Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Foundation Franz Weber, Friends of Maasai Mara, Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP-UNEP), Hong Kong for Elephants, Indian Bird Conservation Network, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Iran Environment and Wildlife Watch, International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, Lwiro Primates, Kenyans United Against Poaching, Last Great Ape organization (LAGA), Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO), Limbe Wildlife Centre, Mara Elephant Project-Escape Foundation, Mara Triangle, National Wildlife Crime Unit, Neotropical Primate Conservation, Olarro Conservancy, Outraged SA Citizens Against Poaching, Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), Project Rhino KZN, Robin des Bois, Save The Elephants, Save the Rhino Trust Namibia, Saving The Survivors, Species Survival Network, Talf-Enforcement, Tiger Time, Tikki Hywood Trust, TRAFFIC, Tsavo Trust, Walk With Rangers, Wara Conservation Project, WildAid, Wild Foundation, Wildlife Conservation Society, Wildlife Direct, Wildlife Crime in India, Wildlife Trust of India, Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force.

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ON⁺ the TRAIL^{n°9}

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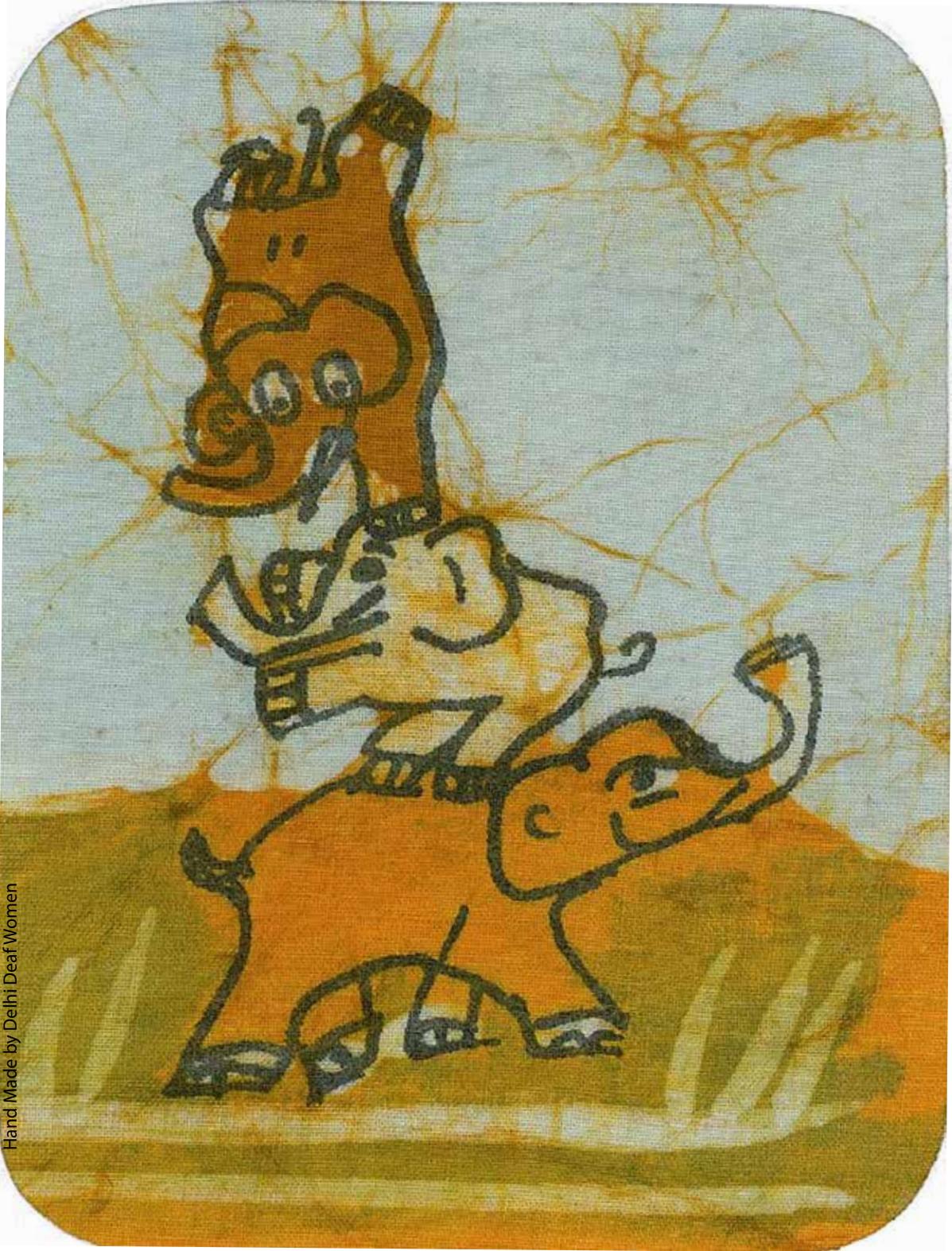
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