

ON the TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling
n°6 / 1st July - 30th Septembre 2014

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Introduction

Cruelty to animals is pouring and flooding on each and every one of the 134 pages of "On the Trail" n°6. Rainbows are rare. And for that are all the more beautiful.

Several recent studies suggest that violence on animals and abuse of animal's weakness show predisposition to violence against humans and that witnessing domestic violence or being submitted to parental harassment leads to a predisposition to violence against animals. Violence is a viral and vicious circle.

The FBI in the United States of America now considers that mistreatment, individual violence, organized abuse and torture against animals are crimes against society. To start in 2016, a database listing animal sadists should help - that is the purpose of the FBI's new approach - to predict criminality against humans.

Writers and great thinkers in the ancient centuries had predicted that practice or witnessing of cruelty inflicted on animals would lead to barbaric treatment towards and among humans. "After people in Rome were tamed to the spectacle of murdering animals, it came the turn of men and the gladiators." Montaigne (1533-1592). "Cruelty towards beasts is a natural propensity for cruelty towards men." Montesquieu (1689-1755).

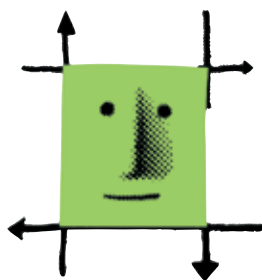
Great naturalists concur and are well aware of such tendencies. "A child cruel to animals in his young years never becomes an honest man or a good citizen." Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon (1707-1788).

Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859), explorer, geographer and naturalist would measure a people's level of civilization by the way they treat animals.

According to Humboldt's scale, we are presently at a zero degree, or even below zero.

ON_{the} TRAIL

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



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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.

ASIA

Seizure of 10 yellow-tailed scorpions wide (*Androctonus australis*, not listed by CITES) ¹ Xiaoshan, Zhejiang Province, China July 2014



This deadly species is native to the Middle East and North Africa. 10-12 cm long, average life span: 50 years. The mail parcel came from the Philippines. Its content was declared as "souvenirs". On the Internet, this dangerous scorpion can be purchased for 200 yuan (32 US\$).

Scorpions traffic is rising in Asia, especially in Pakistan. 2 reasons are put forth to explain this : 1) Foreign workers hired on large-scale works would pay good price for scorpions, for they consider them as bushmeat 2) Foreign pharmaceutical companies manufacturing allegedly anticancer medicines use them in their formulations.

Pakistanis are themselves becoming crazy about scorpions. 2 men have recently been arrested, in the Azad Jammu district and in the Kashmir region, for transporting 4 to 5 dozens of scorpions. A few days ago, 3 people were caught transporting 5 kg of scorpions. They were fined Rs 60.000 (585 US\$).

Seizure of 160 live spiders ² Beijing, China July



After the scorpion's postal package, it is spiders' turn. The 18 largest were locked in round plastic boxes, 14 were in cylinder tubes, the 128 smallest in small cone-shaped tubes. Their species are unknown.

Seizure of 263 butterflies out of which blue morphos (*Morpho helena*, not listed by CITES), Atlas (*Attacus atlas*, not listed by CITES) and genus *Diathria* (not listed by CITES) ³ Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China July 17, 2014



Attacus atlas

The butterflies were in a postal parcel. According to Guangzhou Customs, they belong to species protected by international conventions or national regulations. They are banned from import in China. The specimens were sent to entomology experts for more precise identification. The package came from the United States.

Seizure of 22 tarantulas ⁴ Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, China August 2014

The poisonous spiders were found alive in the 2 postal parcels shipped from Hungary and detected by Hangzhou customs. 22 species of tarantulas are listed under Appendix II of the CITES Convention (see "On the Trail" No. 5, p. 129).



Seahorses Sea

AFRICA

Seizure of 132 dried seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II)¹

Deal Party, Province of Western Cape, South Africa

July 1, 2014

The « goods » worth Rs 100,000 (9500 US\$) were mixed in with candied ginger, dried veggies and kitchen utensils. The seizure took place in the container terminal in Port Elizabeth. The container was coming from Hong Kong. The packages inside belonged to a 76 year old Chinese woman. She is charged with illegal import and breach of environmental law.

ASIA

Seizure of 416 dried seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II)²

Xiamen, Fujian Province, China

July 1, 2014

The flight KA604 from Hong Kong to Xiamen arrived on time. A middle-aged couple tried to go through the “Nothing to Declare” tunnel at the border security, but a border patrol directed them to put their luggage through the x-ray machine. The inspector found odd images in the bags and ordered them to be opened. There was a stinky smell from the opened bags, and the agents found 416 dried seahorses. The couple said that they work in South Africa and brought the seahorses back for their families. They believe that the animals have the medical qualities of “antibiotics and painkillers.”



Seizure of 78 dried seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II)³

Nantong, Jiangsu Province, China

July 30, 2014

The customs at the port of Nantong found 78 dried hippocampus on a ship. The suspect claimed that he bought the animals in Peru and want to bring it home to soak in wine. Hippocampus is often used for Chinese medicine.

Seizure of 67 kg of dried seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II)⁴

Hong Kong, China

August 5, 2014

1115 to 1675 seahorses in a 40-foot container being shipped from Mozambique.

130,000 HK dollars, or 16,770 US\$. Approximately 11 US\$ per seahorse sold.



EUROPE

Conviction for sale of products containing seahorse extracts (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II)⁵



London, England, UK

September 2014

A 46 year old woman of Mongol origin was selling, in a shopping mall and a small bazaar, pills featuring sea horse extracts. Her game was spotted out by a police inspector. The shopkeeper was sentenced to a fine and court costs amounting in all to 1185 £ or 1965 US\$.



Tridacna and Queen Conches

AMERICA

Poaching of queen conches (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II)¹

Off Désirade, Department of Guadeloupe, France

September 12, 2014

Out of a fishing boat, 3 divers were engaged in illegal harvest of queen conches. On arrival, the coast guards verified their presence by surface buoys from underwater cages filled with shells. The boss could only confirm the fault.

One of the divers fled during the operation. He was eventually found after research undertaken by the Antilles Guyane Regional Operational Center for Surveillance and Rescue.

Tracking down illegal queen conches sales continues on land at fishmongers and restaurateurs. Queen conch fishing is strictly regulated. Capture by divers is prohibited.

ASIA

Seizure of giant clams (*Tridacnidae* spp., Appendix II)²

Talisay City, Region of Western Visayas, Philippines

July 2014

The 200 bags of shells used as decorations including giant clams were found near the entrance of an apparently abandoned warehouse used by the manager of used cars store. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) made the count. The garage's lawyer arrived quickly on site and disputed the legality of the operation. Mister Madrigal, director of anti-trafficking in sea products in the Province of Cebu deems the operation legal in that the load was in plain view at the time the truck was unloaded. This vehicle was being followed for over a month. Information had come to the ears of Mr. Madrigal and his team.



EUROPE

Seizure of a dozen noble pen shells (*Pinna nobilis*, not listed by CITES) and 90 kg of fish³

Off Porto-Vecchio, Department of southern Corsica, France

September 25, 2014

Italian fishermen sailors have ties with Porto-Vecchio. These 4 were caught longline fishing with more than 200 hooks. Their home was searched with a warrant from Ajaccio prosecutor. The police got hold of a dozen noble pen shells, strictly protected by European regulations (Appendix IV of the Habitats-Fauna-Flora Directive). The 4 boaters should appear before the criminal court of Ajaccio in January 2015. The market channel of these illegal catches is yet to be uncovered.



Pinna nobilis

Sea Cucumbers

ASIA

Seizure of 600 kg of sea cucumbers (*Isostichopus fuscus*, Appendix III in Ecuador)¹

Mandapam, State of Tamil Nadu, India

July 13, 2014

They were spread out into 29 jute bags. The 2 drivers of the van admitted to having gathered them among fishermen in Mandapam. They intended to deliver them to a wholesaler after having boiled and dried them. The 2 individuals were taken to the local court and set in pre-trial detention. See "On the Trail" n°4 p.107 for an article on sea cucumbers.

Seizure of 150 kg of sea cucumbers (*Isostichopus fuscus*, Appendix III in Ecuador)²

Rameswaram, State of Tamil Nadu, India

July 2014

Again. 150 kg. Still alive. They were immediately dropped back into the sea. Fishermen who unintentionally catch sea cucumbers in their nets must throw them back without delay when the nets are towed up. But some keep them onboard and sell them to traffickers to bring in some extra cash. The suspect was heard by the local court and remanded in custody.

Fishes

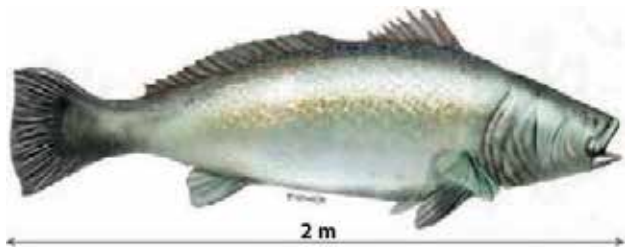
AMERICA

Seizure of 6 totoabas, 12 swim bladders and 7 totoaboa fillets (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I)¹

Baja California State, Mexico

July 20, 2014

4 men were arrested. They were escaping by road with a canoe and fishing nets measuring 600 m and 150 m in a trailer. The loot was intended for the Asian market. It all would have been sold between 35,000 and 60,000 pesos (between 2691 US\$ and 4614 US\$). One of the suspects gave a false identity. And that with good reason, for he had already been sentenced in the past for a similar offense. On July 25, the 2 poachers were sentenced to jail.



Conviction for contraband of 241 swim bladders of totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I)²
California, United States of America
August 11, 2014

Totoabas use their swim bladders to modify their buoyancy and therefore their depth by filling them with gas. They have been on Appendix I of CITES since 1977.

Song Shen Zen had been arrested in April 2013 at the Mexico-US border with 27 of the bladders in his car (see "On the Trail" n°1 p.3). At his house, 214 other bladders were also seized. A totoaba bladder is worth of 5000 US\$ on the US black market. Authorities also found at Shen's home drying ovens and packaging for preparing the bladders to be sent to Asia where the price for each bladder raises up from 7,000 to 25,000 US\$. An adult totoaba weighs around 100 kg and measures 2 meters long. According to convergent information, Mexican drug cartels are abandoning marijuana and "similar merchandise" trafficking to profit from these fish organs on which Asian tycoons attribute regenerative and sexual properties. A boss of "El Golfo de Santa Clara" just by the Cortez sea was disposed of

in June because of a debt of 1 million US\$ linked to this type of trafficking.

The Sea of Cortez in the Gulf of California is the only ecosystem in the world that shelters totoabas. Their habitat has been degraded by diversion of the Colorado River and changes in the salinity levels of the water. The species is also threatened by poaching. Song Shen Zhen was sentenced to a year in prison and 120,500 US\$ in damages and fines, which will be given to the Mexican agency for environmental protection. The relatively weak sentence makes the conversion of drug traffickers to traffickers of animal matter more favorable. If the penalties are less stringent then the illegal act is less risky and more lucrative.

Seizure and conviction of 3 people to imprisonment for illegal possession of 4 totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I)³

San Felipe, State of Baja-California, Mexico

August 17, 2014

The 3 men had their 8 meter long boat checked at the port. Inside it were found 4 totoabas measuring 73 to 99 cm long.



Seizure of 3 totoaba swim bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I)⁴

Guadalupe Victoria, State of Baja California, Mexico

August 2014

The 2 Chinese citizens were transporting them in their Cherokee Jeep. They have been arrested.

Seizure of arapaima fillets⁵

Lagoa de Confusão, Tocantins, Brazil

September 13, 2014

4 people were arrested by the military. They were in possession of 36 kg of game and 63 kg of fish, including arapaima fillets. Their fishing materials were also seized.

ASIA

Seizure of a whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II)⁶

Xianzhi Xian, Fujian Province, China

August 2, 2014



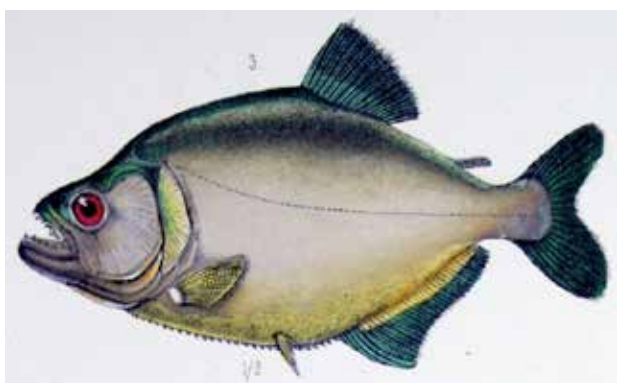
No this is not a parade float at the Carnival in Nice (France) or Baranquilla (Colombia). This is a trolley carrying a 5 meter long whale shark which had been unintentionally caught by a squid fisherman. He was bringing his catch to the fish market. The captain, Chengzhu Cai, said that the shark had been caught at 2 am last night and that "he probably broke into the fish net to eat the small fish." He planned to sell it for 10,000 to 20,000 yuan (1630 to 2260 US\$) but was instead reported to the police.

EUROPE

Discovery of several pacus (family Characidae, not listed by CITES)⁷

**Kaliningrad, Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia
July 2014**

They are related to piranhas and native of the Amazon. Rejected in fresh water by aquarists who were irritated by the growth of the fish (50 cm in captivity, 90 cm in the wild) specimens are regularly caught in the rivers. In August 2013, a pacu was captured in the Seine in Paris. The same year, a pacu was captured and positively identified in the Oresund strait between Denmark and Sweden. Several specimens have just been caught in a pond within the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. Pacus are primarily herbivores and algae enthusiasts but would be a new factor in human infertility. Rumors spread on the internet through fanciful websites pretend that the lack of vesicles or seeds adrift has rendered pacuses hungry for swimmers' testicles. Some media as the Daily Mail consider these legends seriously and some institutions have also fallen into the trap. The Natural History Museum in Copenhagen which identified pacu at Oresund Strait, went so far as to recommend vigilance to swimmers. Bernard Huguéy from the Museum of Natural History in Paris confirms that such legends are common throughout history and across continents.



Expédition de F. de Castelnau en Amérique du Sud

Seizure of 56,2 kg of bluefin tuna fillets (*Thunnus thynnus*, not listed by CITES)⁸

Blanes, Autonomous Community of Catalogne, Spain

September 2014

The 56 kg of chopped up tuna were on board a Blanes trawler. The trawler owner is indicted for this

clandestine capture of a species strictly protected by ICCAT, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas.



Port of Blanes

Seizure of 21 bluefin tuna (1173 kg) (*Thunnus thynnus*, not listed by CITES)⁹

Strait of Gibraltar, Spain

September 2014

A maritime inspection by the Civil Guard uncovered 21 bluefin tunas aboard a vessel weighing 1173kg which were caught in defiance of the regulations of ICCAT.

In August, a speedboat registered in Gibraltar was carrying out recreational fishing 1 mile south of Punta Carnero in waters which, according to the Spanish authorities are unquestionably under their jurisdiction. A Gibraltar police boat and a Royal Navy patrol boat prevented the Spanish maritime police from intervening. A letter of protest was sent to the British Embassy in Madrid.

Gibraltar, an enclave for the British in southern Spain, has no bluefin tuna quota. The Spanish Government considers that this is a "gap" in the international regulations and that the English Navy maneuvers contribute to the fostering of illegal fishing. 186 tonnes of bluefin tuna were seized between June 2013 and July 2014 in Italy, Spain and Tunisia. France is not exempt from reproach or controversy. Recreational fishermen are involved in illegal fishing. The owner of a small-scale fishing vessel landed 5 tunas without a quota. Fishermen are calling for a fairer distribution of quotas to be taken from industrial purse seiners.



Marine Mammals

Opening of a delphinium in Pattaya and a projected opening in Phuket, Thailand ¹

Promoters of the Phuket project put forward all the scientific and humanitarian arguments possible. Being close to dolphins would help heal autistic children, the captive dolphins would be survivors of collisions with boats or accidental catches made by fishermen. Students in oceanography would have there the material to enrich their knowledge of marine mammals and their social life. In short, the goal is not to do a show, the goal is science and soft medicine. According to a spokesperson from Project Nemo, 4 tursiops are being considered "I don't know where they would come from", "I only know they are to be delivered by a Russian company". The construction permit for the grounds near the Phuket zoo has already been granted even before the permits for importing the dolphins has been delivered by the Thailand government. Protests and petitions are multiplying.



Dolphins have been exploited in Thailand since 1986. At the time, one Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin was exhibited in a small aquatic enclosure at Laem Singh. This small venue became the Oasis Sea World which exported 6 Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins to Singapore in 1999. A forceful campaign against dolphin trafficking, led by Thai Animal Guardians Association, Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand and Care for the Wild International convinced the Thai State to prohibit these practices. Oasis Sea World engaged then in a domestic development and has just opened in August the "Pattaya Dolphin World and Resort" where 7 dolphins from the Laem Singh site have been transferred.

Species and number of captive individuals declared in Thailand:

- 7 to 8 Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins (*Sousa chinensis*, Appendix I)
- 14 to 15 irrawaddy dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*, Appendix I)
- 7 to 8 bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*, Appendix II)
- 4 to 5 belugas (*Delphinapterus leucas*, Appendix II)

Origins:

21 to 23 dolphins were captured in the regional sea and considered local species.
10 other cetaceans were imported.

EUROPE

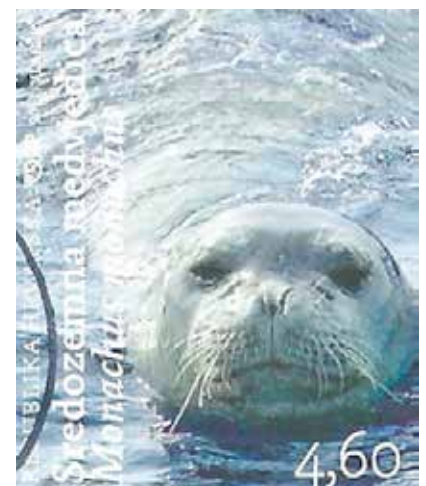
Conviction for mistreatment of a Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*, Appendix I)²



**Gortan Bay, Comitat of Istrie, Croatia
July 2014**

The rude man from Macedonia violently attacked a member of an almost extinct species of which some erratic individuals, since recently, occasionally visit a few beaches of the Istria Peninsula in Croatia. The angry bather hit the monk seal. He received a small fine of 210 € and a restriction of entering Croatia for 5 years. Monk seal colonies disappeared between 1930 and 1935 from the French coast between Marseille and Hyères. The Corsican population would have disappeared between 1974 and 1975. The white bellied monk seal disappeared in 1940. Only 3 of them are left... stuffed at the Bucharest Museum. Unintentional catches in nets, disturbance of reproduction areas induced by

touristic proliferation and intentional killings have breakdowned the monk seals. Known to be opportunistic, they would slide into large nets off the Mauritanian coast to catch the fish captured inside. A strategy that often doesn't end well for the little poacher.



Death of a manatee (*Trichechus manatus*, Appendix I)³

Vincennes, Val-de-Marne, Île-de-France Region, France

August 11, 2014

Tragic loss at Vincennes Zoo, near Paris. The 2 manatees were top of the bills. Tinus, from Arnhem zoo, Netherlands, is still here. He is 24 year old. Barry, 3 years of age, from Odense Zoo, Denmark, is not any longer. He had arrived at Vincennes on July 5. Vincennes Zoo had already been re-opened after a multi-year renovation period. Tinus arrived several months before the official re-opening and had time to adapt to his new prison conditions and the care attendants had time to study his movements. According to the Zoo's enigmatic press release, Barry remained stuck "in a shallow area in a technical cavity between the 2 parts of the basin which enable the medical training of the animals". Barry drowned.

Seizure of a Japanese whaler *Shonan Maru No.2*⁴ The Sea of Okhotsk

August 15, 2014

The *Shonan Maru No.2*, one of many Japanese hunting ships, was boarded and searched by Russian Authorities in the sea of Okhotsk. In the hull of the Japanese scientific ship, the whales "catcher" was seeking Bryde's and Sei whales. The legal precedent set by the International Court of Justice in The Hague on March 31, 2014 only pertained to hunting in the Antarctic. The whaling activities of the Japanese in the North Pacific are not included in the Court's decision.

The *Shonan Maru No.2* along with its 19 people crew was immobilized between August 15th and 25th in the port of Magadan. The reasons for inspecting the ship remain so far unknown. Was there a breach of the Russian territorial-waters navigating rules? Was the ship harassing grey whales? Did the Russian observer on board inform his superiors about another non-compliance of the Japanese? It might have been because of the longstanding dispute between Japan and Russia over the ruling of the territorial waters sailed by the ship.

The *Shonan Maru's* goal was to harpoon baleen and sperm whales. It was also used as a research vessel for visual and statistical studies. From Whale Catcher to Whale Watcher, there is a fine line; one needs only to change one consonant. The *Shonan Maru No.2* was involved in the *Ady Gil's* wrecking on January 6, 2010, in the Antarctic. The *Ady Gil* was part of the flotilla of the Sea Shepherd NGO that is outwardly hostile to whales and other cetaceans hunting.



© Sea Shepherd

Marine Turtles

Total from 1st July to 30th September
5 marine turtles and
21.397 marine turtles eggs seized

AMERICA

Seizure of 254 olive Ridley sea turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)¹

Mazatlán, Sinaloa, Mexico

July 2014

A 48 year old man was arrested. He had in his possession 3 clutches of olive Ridley sea turtles. The eggs were entrusted to the aquarium of Mazatlan where they will receive the necessary care until the hoped-for hatching.

REPEATED OFFENSE

Seizure of 74,8 kg of green turtle meat and 200 green turtle eggs (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I)²

Parismina, Province of Limón, Costa Rica

July 29, 2014

Marine-turtle catching fanatics were caught while approaching the small fishing port. Inside the boat were the gutted turtle and the eggs of which half had almost reached maturity. The beautiful turtle was about to go onshore to lay. One of the fishermen had not presented himself to a court hearing regarding a previous turtle poaching case and the police had come for him to his fishermen village where he was found with a knife in hand.



© Public Security Ministry

Seizure of 90 marine turtle eggs (Appendix I)³ Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, Mexico

August 2014

The shell salesman also sold turtle eggs. Authorities shut down his shop.



© PROFEPA

**Vandalism on marine turtle eggs (Appendix I)⁴
Manzanillo, State of Colima, Mexico
August 2014**



The 2 Manzanillo town policemen were filmed by a tourist as they were taking turtle eggs out of their nests before throwing them to the sea. The video was shared all around social networks. The PROFEPA (the Federal Attorney for Environmental Protection) filed a complaint. They risk 1 to 9 years in prison and a fine.

**Seizure of 10.375 olive Ridley turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)⁵
Santo Domingo Tehuantepec, State of Oaxaca, Mexico
August 2014**

Inside the bus the man and 2 women were traveling with the eggs to Salina Cruz, 16 km away. The poachers have been set at the disposal of the Federal Public Attorney.



Lepidochelys olivacea

**Seizure of 65 olive Ridley turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)⁶
Jalostotitlán, State of Jalisco, Mexico
August 2014**

On the shell salesman's stall there was a plastic bag with eggs. He was selling them to amateurs of exotic cuisine. The stall has been sealed off and the salesman has been brought before the Federal Public attorney. According to the case first elements, the eggs' maturity stage does not enable their returning to a beach.



**Seizure of 838 eggs of olive Ridley sea turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)⁷
State of Guerrero, Mexico
September 2014**

They are not in condition to be put back on a beach for incubation.

They were seized through 2 operations on September 3rd and 10th. In both cases, the people found in possession of the eggs were arrested and handed over to the Federal Public Ministry.



**Seizure of 300 eggs from olive Ridley sea turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)⁸
Pijijiapan, Chiapas, Mexico
September 2014**

300 eggs equal the looting of 4 nests.

A 37 year old man and an infant 15 years of age were caught in flagrante delicto. They were charged with endangered or subject to special protection wildlife trafficking.

The eggs were transferred to a special sea turtles center in Puerto Arista where they will be incubated and monitored.

**Poaching of 12,500 olive Ridley sea turtles eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)⁹
La Flor Natural Reserve, San Juan del Sur, Department of Rivas, Nicaragua
September 9 to 10 night, 2014**

12,500 eggs collected from a hundred nests. One of the soldiers who protected the nests on beaches fired a preventive gunshot. The ball hit one of the poachers in the buttocks, Carlos Alvarez who is still recovering in a local hospital. The others fled with the eggs. They will resell them on the markets 2 US\$ a dozen. More than 30,000 olive Ridley sea turtles were expected to lay between September 4th and 8th.

**Poaching of a green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I) and a hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I)¹⁰
St Martin, Department of Guadeloupe, France
September 2014**

The sea turtle was stranded on the beach in the heart of the Marine Protected Area. She was killed by a submarine hunter. This stranding occurred a few weeks following the one of a hawksbill's shell. It confirms that illegal hunting is active. Turtle meat is sold under the counter.

Seizure of 775 olive Ridley tortoise eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I) and the arrest of 4 suspects¹¹

Guerrero, Mexico

September 21, 2014

The eggs are no longer viable. They were divided into 4 bags. The suspects are under the Federal Public Prosecutor's custody.



© PROFEPA
Around 800 km from there, at Tecomán in the Colima State, PROFEPA agents trekked on foot around 10 km of beach overnight, where they pre-emptively took 7000 Ridley tortoise eggs, one way to

anticipate and counteract potential poachers. The eggs were entrusted to the centre for tortoises "El Chupadero" for incubation and hatching.

Seizure of a live green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I)¹²

Cárdenas, Tabasco, Mexico

September 2014

A telephone call had indicated the precise location of a turtle. She was found in a tub. Her shell measured about 35 cm long. She was taken to a special installation where she will await eventual release into her natural habitat.



ASIA

Chinese fishermen still behind bars¹³

Philippines

July 2014

Endangered turtles are caught in the nets of politics and maritime sovereignty. "On the Trail" n°5 had recounted the boarding of the Chinese fishing ship *Qionghuionghai 09063* at large off the Half-moon shoal in the Spratly Islands area 60 miles west from the Filipino island of Palawan. Filipino customs had followed a national fishing boat that had a meeting set at sea with the Chinese ship. If no fishing equipment could be found onboard the *Qionghuionghai 09063*, no less than 489 sea turtles among which 108 were alive and cruelly immobilized were found. The 381 others were cut apart or stored in a formal solution or even stuffed for decorative purposes. One of the *Qionghuionghai 09063* crew members, who had been released because he was underage at the time of the event, declared that the turtles were part of a bargain exchange with Vietnamese fishermen against water and food. According to Li Xianghui the *Qionghuionghai 09063* was fishing for decorative fish species for the aquarium market. This is not the version put forth by Manila authorities and the regional attorney who are convinced that the Chinese fishing ship was in fact a platform to regroup smuggled sea turtles delivered by fishermen in the region among which some Filipinos. In such hypothesis, the Chinese crew is composed

of notorious traffickers who would in China be liable for several years' prison terms for possession and sale of animals protected under Chinese law. It remains that the captain Chen Yi Quan and his 8 crew members are in prison on the Island of Palawan and cannot be tried without the presence of a lawyer. Nomination of such lawyer depends on a judicial assistance certificate delivered by the embassy of which the suspects depend. The Chinese embassy refuses to deliver these documents and does not accept to comment on the matter. China has spoken at the highest level. The spokeswoman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared that this judiciary procedure is "null and void" and that "China enjoys full sovereignty over the Nansha Islands and the adjacent waters including the Banyue shoal." The 2 last terms are the Chinese names for the Spratly and the Half-moon shoal. China would in such extend by 1000 km off its continental base-ment and would reach 100 km from the Filipino shore. This giant step is challenged by the Philippines before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. Beijing has already announced that it will in no way take part in solving the conflict. According to China, there is no conflict.

Even before the need for lawyers, the Chinese suspects needed translators. All those on the Island who speak Mandarin, teachers, Chinese native people and tourist agents have refused. Even those who used to provide such services for similar cases in the past cleared out. Chinese speaking Filipinos are afraid of suffering reprisals, such as no longer being able to obtain visa to enter China for business trips. The Chinese consulate on the Island of Palawan made it very clear that the detained fishermen should in no way collaborate with local justice. Potential interpreters are weary and yet are an indispensable link in the chain of procedures. Their unavailability has so far paralyzed the course of justice in this case. "This is the first time China has shown such intransigence," says the public prosecutor. "In the past they were for a long time cooperative and even cordial". Maybe, yet it certainly seems as if the cordial atmosphere between the 2 countries with regards to maritime disagreements had already started to become tense in April 2013, when at the time the *Min Long Yu* beached on the coral reefs of Palawan with onboard 10 tons of frozen pangolin (*Manis* spp. Appendix II) and 12 Chinese smugglers



(see « On the Trail » n°1 p. 10).

The *Qiongquionghai 09063*, an old Chinese wooden boat, is certainly permanently stranded in the Puerto Princesa harbour and the Chinese crew risk to be for some time in Palawan cell held hostage to an inextricable conflict. The Spratly Islands are claimed by 6 countries.

Seizure of a marine turtle (Appendix I)¹⁴

Vietnam

July 2014

On vacation on a Northern Vietnam island, she noticed that a marine turtle was held captive in a bathtub. She launched an alert via the ENV hotline. A few days later, the turtle got back to her natural environment.



Seizure of 8500 marine turtle eggs (Appendix I)¹⁵

Nunuyan Island, State of Sabah, Malaysia

July 25, 2014

In the early morning, 2 rubber boats dashing at high speed towards the Island were blocked by a maritime police patrol. The 2 boats coming from the high sea and one of the turtle Islands under Filipino sovereignty managed to escape and landed rapidly on shore. The crew ran away without being able to take with them the 8500 marine turtle eggs.



Nunuyan Island, a smuggling stronghold is under constant surveillance during the summer season. The eggs worth RM 12,500, i.e. 4000 US\$ were intended for local consumption. A sort of maritime curfew between 6:00 pm and 6:00 am has recently been set up in the surroundings of the Islands of the 4th maritime region in the State of Sabah in Malaysia. Maritime affairs are attentive to any information regarding trafficking and can be contacted: 089-221-423/ 089-221-424/ 089-221-453.

It was a call that enabled localization of the traffickers at sea.

Seizure of objects made by Hawksbill turtle's shell (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I)¹⁶

Beihai, Guangxi Province, China

August 2014

The Beihai commerce bureau, the customs house, the forestry department, and the fishery department collaborated in an operation to control illegal trading of wild animals. They raided the seafood market to inspect whether or not the stores have the required license for products such as shark's fin and sea cucumber. The police found many objects made by Hawksbill turtle's shell in 22 different stores, including 479 bracelets, 69 necklaces, 9 hair-brushes, 71 bangles, 262 rings, one fan, 4 belts, 7 ornaments, along with 10 turtle carcasses.

Seizure of 25 kg of sea-turtle meat (Appendix I)¹⁷

Havelock Island, Andaman-and-Nicobar Islands, India

September 27, 2014

A 30 year old man was caught by a coastguards patrol on a coastal path near Elephanta Beach. He was carrying meat and 2 fins divided into 3 bags. To alert authorities on trafficking of endangered flora and fauna, please call 282366, 282350, 9434280218, 9474248400 and 9474293082.



Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles

**Total from 1st July to 30th September
6544 tortoises and freshwater turtles**

AFRICA

Seizure of 24 radiated tortoises and 60 eggs (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I)¹

Reunion Island, France

July 11, 2014

Let's come back to Earth with radiated tortoises, exclusive heritage of Madagascar Island. The Reunion Island (French territory) confirms its role as a transit station for this endangered species. The clandestine breeding farm lacked juveniles, which, according to the prefecture, indicates illegal marketing. The animals were placed by the Indian Ocean Nature Unit and the DAAF (Directorate for Food, Agriculture and Forestry) in a licensed breeding farm. This option is not satisfactory. The solution would be to repatriate the reptiles in Madagascar and hand them over to the care of the Turtle Survival Alliance.

AMERICA

3 soft turtles poachers arrested (family Trionychidae)²

State of Florida, United States of America

July 3, 2014



Apalone ferox

After 3 months of investigation, 2 Asian poachers were arrested for capturing the soft shell turtles in their natural habitat. The combined weight of the animals is close to a ton. The 2 men, aged 48 and 69, were intercepted in Okeechobee and face criminal charges inflicted by a prosecutor from the state of Florida. A third man, the manager of an authorized turtle breeding farm, was also charged for buying the wild turtles.

After the arrest in March of another Asian poacher with 87 soft shell turtles for a total weight of 230 kg, this new traffic displays the complete lack of respect of the 2009 regulations prohibiting wild turtles capturing. "The turtle meat is popular in many parts of the world and therefore over fishing is

rampant in many countries" says an official from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC).

Meanwhile, Karen Thomas of Fish co. from Eagle Lake lamented the banning of turtles hunting in the wild. "Our family made a lot of money with this business. They banned it because they thought we were going to capture all the turtles but it is impossible. It's as if you could pick up all the sand grains on a beach."

The FWC notes that licenses are mandatory for recreational fishing, and only authorize catching one turtle a day.

OPERATION PODOCNEMIS

Dismantling of a trafficking network of giant south American turtles (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II) and yellow-spotted river turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II)³

States of Roraima and Amazonas, Brazil

August 2014



The investigations took 2 years. The turtles were captured from the Rio Branco in Caracarai (State of Roraima) and sold in Boa Vista (State of Roraima 140 km away) or in Manaus (State of the Amazonas 600km away) for the price of 600 R\$ (270 US\$) a piece. The trafficking brought in a weekly income of 1,000,000 R\$ (450,000 US\$). 44 searches, 11 arrests.

Seizure of a live common box turtle (*Terrapene carolina*, Appendix II)⁴

Guadalajara International Airport, State of Jalisco, Mexico

August 2014

It was about to leave for China well hidden in a postal package.

OPERATION HERP SCAM

Arrest of a wood turtle trafficker (*Glyptemys insculpta*, Appendix II)⁵

United States of America

August 2014

The chain was composed of 3 separate links.

1) Tokosh was the gatherer. He would travel Pennsylvania to catch turtles in swamps and forests. His poaching activities has been known to repressive authorities since 1998. He had been arrested in the course of operation "Herp Scam". At the time the testimony of an agent from the Fish and Wildlife Services reported by a local newspaper described Tokosh as a true turtle hazard. "He completely decimated turtle populations in Pennsylvania." He would catch over 500 in one year. Tokosh was the fieldwork man.

In 2006, Tokosh had been sentenced to one year and one day of prison for illegal import into the United States of turtles from India and Myanmar.



© 2009 James H. Harding

During the search of his home, tortuous and incriminating emails were found that had been sent between him and a certain Treigle.

2) Treigle was the intermediary link, as we climb up the chain. The man would receive the turtles by the dozen, would organize the transport, would set up diversions by sending the animals to a contact in California who would be under his orders in charge of sending them to the other side of the world. One of his packages was intercepted by postal inspection services at the beginning of the year. There were 11 adult turtles, each one rapped in tape and all bundled in clothing: mummified turtles difficult to detect through x-ray checks.

Treigle used services of his employer, the US Postal Service to carry out deliveries. After his correspondent in Asia received the packages, Treigle would receive transfers on his bank accounts, withdraw cash and pay Tokosh for his field work. In 3 years, Treigle received close to 300,000 €. The wood turtle can be sold 1000 to 1700 US\$ per individual in Asia and is bought 200 US\$ in the United States. Treigle, caught red handed for money laundering, accepted to cooperate with United State Justice. In the presence of federal agents he made an offer for 100 turtles to his Asian buyer for 500 US\$ a piece, a bargain, on condition that the payment be made in cash without passing through the bank and in the United States on delivery of the turtles.

3) Hon Kit "John" Lau, the Hong Kong buyer, arrived to the United States on August 14. He declared 115,000 US\$ to customs pretending he needed the money to play in casinos of Daytona Beach. Customs detected in his luggage a dozen plastic tubes with holes usually used to transport reptiles. A first meeting took place with Treigle in Orlando. Lau paid an advance of 25,000 US\$, and he refused to take on the turtles right away. He was afraid of a set up. He wanted the "goods" to be delivered to the usual address in California. The conversation between the 2 men was recorded on tape and video by the American federal agents. Hon Kit "John" Lau was arrested just after the meeting and indicted under the Lacey Act that forbids wild animal trafficking without previous authorization from qualified authorities.

Wood turtles measure about 20 centimeters. They feed on plants, mushrooms, worms, slugs and other invertebrates and carrion. Wood turtles live both on land and in water. They are therefore severely affected by the disturbance and fragmentation of their complex habitat. They are exposed to excess mortality due to road kill from cars and farming material. A critical situation has already been noted in Connecticut where 2 turtle populations have already disappeared from a wildlife reserve where leisure activities would regularly cause death to adult individuals.

**Seizure of 2 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II)⁶
Ituiutaba, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil
August 28, 2014**

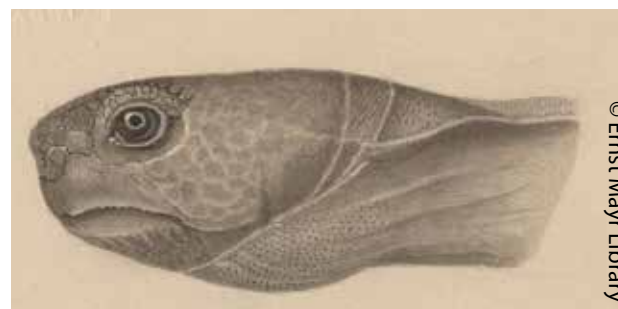


© Portal em Foco

The holder was arrested. He also had birds, saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola brasiliensis*) and bare-faced curassows (*Crax fasciolata*). Hunting equipment was also discovered. A veterinarian examination will determine whether it is possible or not for the animals to return to their natural habitat.

**Seizure of 11 live gopher tortoises (*Gopherus polyphemus*, Appendix II)⁷
Citrus County, State of Florida, United States of America
August 2014**

The individual was caught transferring 11 live tortoises from Citrus County forest to his ATV. Hog or liar, he assured that they were all for his personal consumption. The 3 factors of abnormal high death rate of gopher tortoises are gastronomy, pets mania and crashes on the roads.



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Seizure of 51 tortoises including the eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina*, Appendix II), the diamondback terrapin (*Malaclemys terrapin*, Appendix II), the red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta*, not listed by CITES) and of 1007 tortoises including 700 diamondback terrapin, 16 Chinese red-necked pond turtle (*Mauremys nigricans*, Appendix II), wood turtles (*Glyptemys insculpta*, Appendix II), blanding's turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii*, Appendix II) and albino Florida turtles. 2 suspects have been arrested.⁸ Detroit Metropolitan Airport, Michigan, United States of America August and September 2014



Malaclemys terrapin

The seizures are closely linked.

1 – Xu, a Canadian citizen, was caught at the beginning of August on his way to illegally transport 51 living tortoises to Windsor, Canada. He was carrying them, stuck to his legs, in the inside of his baggy pants. The police on the Canadian border intercepted Xu on approach to Windsor. The tortoises captured in the States were returned to the US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS).

2 – On September 24, Xu who was closely followed by the USFWS, drove to Detroit Airport and dropped off Lin whom authorities would later find to be an accomplice. Airport agents searched their 2 bags destined for Shanghai and found a thousand turtles stuck into rubber boots and in boxes of Kellogg's cornflakes. The value of the reptiles on the market is thought to be at least a few dozen thousand dollars. As an example, a Chinese red-necked turtle, an aquatic species, can reach the equivalent of 5000 US\$ in China.

The results of the investigation and the hearings of the 2 suspects revealed that the day before the aborted departure to Shanghai, the tortoises were packaged in a hotel near Detroit Airport and that Xu had entered the United States thirty times to make deliveries of tortoises to secret breeders or traffickers. Since then, he had sent Lin to Detroit, Buffalo, New York, Hong Kong, Alaska and other places around the world. Lin had received 500 US\$ for taking the turtles to China. Xu also committed to pay Lin 2000 more US\$ upon his return from China. Within the United States, Turtle Man, Xu's apt nickname, sent turtles through the mail. Certain packages carried the message: "Live fish – keep cool." Lin had been released on 10,000 US\$ bail. He is forbidden to contact Xu or to come to the US for any



reason other than the trial. He was recruited by Xu through a small announcement in newspapers offering employment to sell cosmetic products and promising 4000 US\$ per month.

Xu was finding tortoise salesmen through the websites Kijiji and faunaclassifieds.com.

The Detroit zoo has temporarily collected the tortoises that were on their way to China. "They are in various states of health" "Some of them are doing poorly," says the scientific expert from the zoo. "It's not surprising, considering the conditions they underwent."

ASIA

Seizure of 62 live Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)⁹

Dimapur, Nagaland State, India

July 12, 2014

Railway turtles again... They were discovered within 2 cases of fruits shipped from Delhi, after a 2000km trip, and 40 hours of railroad jolting. The Wildlife Crime Control Branch (WCCB) carried out the seizure and is currently conducting the investigation.

Seizure of 84 Malaysian box turtles East Asia (*Cuora amboinensis*, Appendix II)¹⁰

Bagan Datoh, State of Perak, Malaysia

July 17, 2014



1-800-88-5151 and 1-300-80-1010 and the official Facebook page are means for any person having knowledge of traffic or mistreatment of wild animals in Malaysia to alert the Wildlife Department. The man carried his loot in a bag. He faces a maximum

sentence of 2 years imprisonment and a fine of RM 50,000 (15,500 US\$). The case was revealed by the Minister of Environment Datuk Seri G. Palanivel.

Seizure of 175 live Indian softshell turtles (*Nils-sonia gangetica*, Appendix I) and Indian tent turtles (*Pangshura tentoria*, Appendix II)¹¹

Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India

July 26, 2014

The Indian softshell turtle was seen by naturalists of the 19th century as a dangerous animal. It was then called the "ferocious turtle." "When the rivers dry out, these so-called soft turtles bury themselves in the mud until the rains return. Some were caught at sea, driven away from their natural habitat by flooding. At night, they come to lie on small islands, on rocks or trunks carried by the waters, from which they attack men when noises alarm them. They swim to catch fish and amphibians and throw their head and neck with the swiftness of an arrow. They are fished with lines, with nets, or shot with guns, or stabbed with lances... To catch Indian softshell turtles, a long iron fork is used. It is sunk into the soft mud and rotting leaves. Depending on the size of the animals, fishermen who capture one attach a great number of hooks in the back and the cartilaginous parts of the beast. Thus the turtle is extracted, struggling furiously and trying to bite everything within his reach. When a big soft shell turtle is captured in deep water -some weigh more than 100 kg - a sharp spear is pushed in its back with a heavy hammer before it is pulled on the bank. Its flesh is tasty..."

175 Indian softshell and tent turtles, for a total weight of 1.5 ton were discovered and seized in vehicle that was damaged after trying to escape a road side check. The turtles, weighing 5 to 50 kg each, were divided into bags. The load was set to travel to the state of West Bengal before being exported through Calcutta and Bangkok airports to Hong Kong, its final destination. The turtles were probably captured in northern Uttar Pradesh. They had to travel nearly 1000 km to get to Calcutta. They were released in the Ganges river. In the last 2 years, 3000 turtles captured in the vicinity of Varanasi have been released in the holy river. Indian softshell turtles are still hunted for their flesh. They must arrive alive in the kitchen. Their shells are sold to tourists as exotic masks and they are now also popular as decorative pets.

Seizure of 88 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I)¹²

Chennai International Airport, Tamil Nadu, India
August 1, 2014

The 28 year old guy was going to take an overnight flight to Bangkok. The monitors showed something moving inside his suitcase. And for good reason : turtles were crawling into his clothing.

Hussain, itinerant merchant, would have received the equivalent of 166 US\$ to carry the suitcase to Thailand. His passport shows a recent trip to Sin-

gapore. Hussain is suspected of being a link in an organized chain, despite his denials. On flights from Chennai to Bangkok, or Calcutta to Bangkok, turtles abound. Usually, they are tied up and taped and look like gift boxes.



© 2006 Henk Wallays

Seizure of 6 Chinese box turtles (*Cuora flavo-marginata*, Appendix II)¹³

Jinzhai Xian, Anhui Province, China

August 5, 2014

The forest police received reports from the public that Li had in his house 2 outsiders from different provinces who are hunting animals. The police immediately raided Li's home for investigation. The 3 are arrested for illegal trading of animals. At first, they were unwilling to cooperate and said that the turtles were found by Li's parents on the mountains a few years earlier. Through looking at their chat history on social media and phone usage data, the police found evidence of them purposely shipping the animals to Henan province and selling each turtle for 4,500 yuan (735 US\$).

Seizure of 60 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)¹⁴

Chennai airport, Tamil Nadu, India

August 9, 2014

The 60 turtles were traveling in the hand luggage of a 35 year old man.

The latest big seizure of the same species by customs at this airport involved a batch of 420 turtles carried by 6 different people on the same flight.

In the opposite direction, Chennai customs intercepted 9000 baby turtles from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in March 2013.

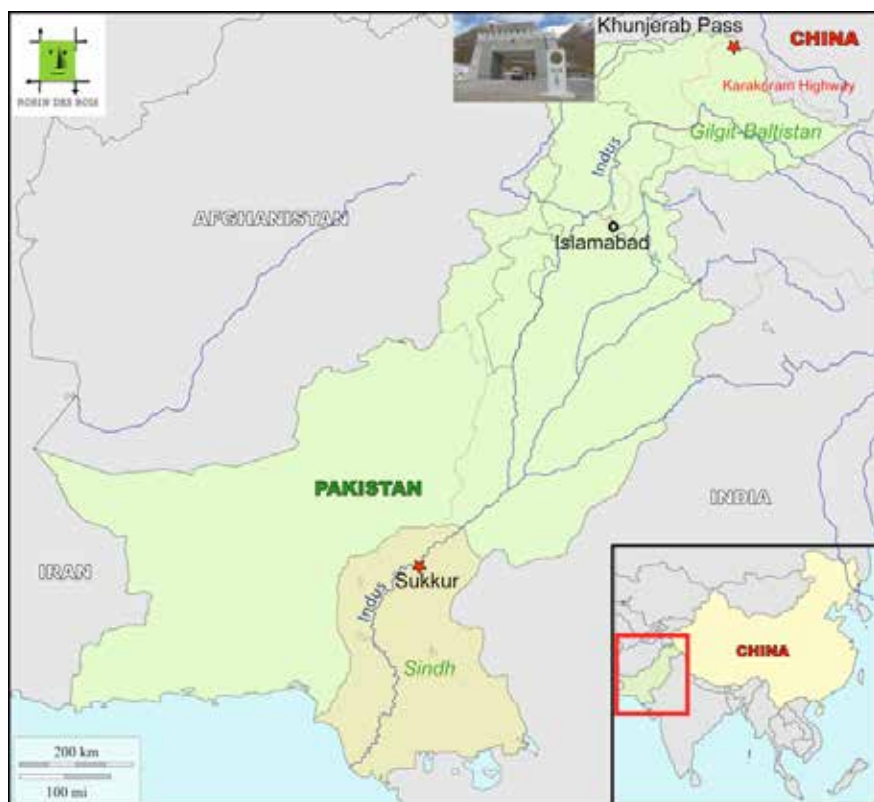


Good news

Return of 200 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) to Pakistan¹⁶ Khunjerab Pass Border Post between China and Pakistan August 18, 2014

A historic first. More than 200 black pond turtles native from Pakistan and seized by Chinese customs have been "repatriated" after consultation between the 2 countries. The turtles were smuggled into China via the cross-border road in **Khunjerab**, Pakistan. The cargo was intercepted aboard a pick-up truck by Chinese customs. This is the first time for China to send CITES endangered specimens back

into their original country. Pakistani authorities expressed their gratitude towards China. A black pond turtle can be sold for about 10,000 yuan (1630 US\$) on the Chinese pet markets. The fate of endangered live animals seized in countries where they have no natural habitat is generally not as positive. In best cases, they end up in zoos, while in worst cases they waste away after the necessary quarantines imposed for health care.



A Pakistani "businessman" had elaborated the business connection with 5 Chinese accomplices and put these aquatic turtles on the road for **1400 km**. The gang's plan was to escape airport controls.

Liu Xiaohui, director of the anti-poaching Chinese customs department, said at the ceremony that the return of the turtles to their country thanks to bilateral cooperation demonstrated China's commitment in the fight against illegal trafficking of endangered species.

The black pond turtles, symbols of Pakistani natural heritage, were released into the Indus near **Sukkur**, where they were captured. 22 turtles at least died on their way back.

Seizure of 360 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)¹⁵

Pargana, West Bengal State, India
August 2014

The tortoise man, closely followed by soldiers of the 40th battalion, took a dive into the river, dropping 2 bags of star tortoises worth about Rs 2 crore (329,869 US\$). On the other side of the river is Bangladesh. Food, decoration, medication, the Indian star tortoise is very popular.

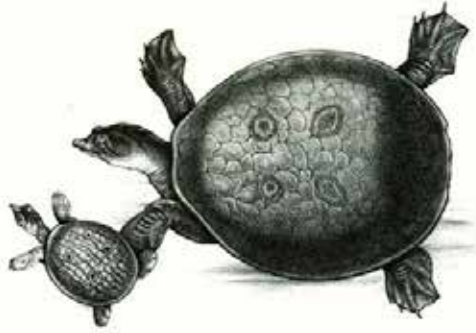
Indian border security forces have already intercepted a few thousand of these reptiles en route to Bangladesh (See "On the trail" n°2 p. 15).

Seizure of 2 Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I)¹⁷

Kannur, Kerala State, India
August 31, 2014

At the very south of the Indian subcontinent, the 2 turtles were bound for the Persian Gulf states. They like the flesh of this turtle over there. In Bangladesh too.

Initially, the WLCCB (WildLife Crime Control Bureau) visited Anas, the suspect, for tracking down a pair of elephant tusks as said on the phone by an anonymous messenger.



Seizure of 3 softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I), one dead¹⁸

**Around Calcutta, State of West Bengal, India
September 7, 2014**

One of them was dead. The holder and turtles were approaching the leather and craftsmanship district in Calcutta.

Seizure of 218 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I), one dead¹⁹

Jinnah International Airport, Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan

September 20, 2014

The smuggler came from Lahore. The batch of black pond turtles had already traveled 1200 km by means of undefined transport. They were detected in the luggage of a certain Sajid already installed in the aircraft. According to initial reports, he was going to deliver them to a member of the Pakistani Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand. The turtles were somehow in diplomatic bags. "They almost escaped us" say the customs at Karachi airport "They were like inanimate objects on the screen, but when we put them in a bucket of water, they pulled their heads and legs out and started to move". 170 survived and were released into Haleji lake, one of the Indian sites listed in the RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands. Aquatic turtles are highly vulnerable during the road or air transports imposed to them by poachers and smugglers. In total, 45 specimens died in this dreadful expedition.

Seizure of 158 Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I)²⁰

Bareilly Road, Kichha, State of Uttarakhand, India

September 25, 2014

3 smugglers, 24, 22 and 21 year old, were driving towards Delhi on Highway 109 in a car bearing the logo of a political party. Thus, they hoped to avoid controls. It did not work.

Seizure of 192 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)²¹

Gaighata, Province of Western Bengal, India

September 25, 2014

Attempted smuggling to Bangladesh. On the international market, each tortoise shell can be purchased for around 900 US\$. The trafficker was also transporting 65 kg of red sandalwood (*Pterocarpus santalinus*, Appendix II). The value is estimated at 3.25 lakh Rs or 5274 US\$.

Seizure of 195 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I)^{21bis}

Guangzhou International Airport, Province of Guangdong, China

September 27, 2014

Madagascar exports towards continental Africa and directly to China via Thailand. The Madagascar-Bangkok – Guangzhou flight was carrying the tortoises and 8 lizards. They were still alive on arrival. They were taken from a passenger's luggage.

Sentencing for the trafficking of 358 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) and 266 Indian roofed turtles (*Pangshura tecta*, Appendix I)²²

Hong Kong, China

29 September 2014

The government of Hong Kong announced that the man with 624 turtles was intercepted upon his arrival at the international airport on August 26. He was convicted a month later and sentenced to a 180,000 HK (23,180 US\$) fine. In India, the habitat of black pond and Indian roofed turtles is situated in the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra river valleys. They are subject to illegal international trade for their flesh, and to the pet decoration markets. For any alert on illegal trade in endangered species, please call 1823.



EUROPE

Seizure of a live turtle²³

Airport Frankfurt on Main, Hesse, Germany

August 11, 2014

The tiny turtle was hidden in the passenger's cigarettes pack.

In 2013, Frankfurt on Main customs have seized 2,221 live animals, 3595 live plants and more than 30,000 objects made from endangered animals and plants.



© German Customs

Seizure of a spur thighed tortoise (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II)²⁴

Motorway near Weil am Rhein, Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany

August 2014

The Germany resident came back from Tunisia. He had nothing to declare, not even a spur thighed tortoise picked up in the dry lands of Tunisia and meant as a pet for his son. The little one was trapped under the driver seat floor mat.

Seizure of 52 live Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) including 9 adults and 43 young²⁵

Argentona, Autonomous Community of Catalonia, Spain

August 20, 2014

The 48 year old man was keeping them in his garden, waiting for them to be sold. They were given for care to the Torreferrusa wildlife center in Barcelona before a possible release. The man has been indicted.



Seizure of 2 red-eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta elegans*, not listed by CITES)²⁶

Franz Josef Strauss Airport in Munich, Bavaria, Germany

August 25, 2014

Red-eared sliders are not subject to special protection. But they are invasive, aggressive and harmful to small worlds of water pools and ponds when they are released into the environment by exotic pet enthusiasts. From 1989 to 1994, 4 million red-eared sliders were imported into Europe. Massive exports were also carried out in Asia.



In this case, the 31 year old Austrian tourist coming from China carried the 2 reptiles in a soap box. "This is for private use" she claimed. The customs spokesman in Munich complained that "This is not an isolated case, more and more travellers return with live animals as a souvenir. It's almost become an habit...».

Seizure of more than 1000 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II)²⁷

At the border between Serbia and Hungary

September 2014
They were starved and abandoned in bags at the border between Hungary and Serbia. They have been treated by the Societas Europaea Herpetologica Conservation Committee and quarantined in Szeged Zoo. Serbian and Hungarian authorities are concerting to find on the best option for their release.



© Societas Europaea Herpetologica Conservation Committee

Snakes

AMERICA

Seizure of a monocled cobra (*Naja kaouthia*, Appendix II), a black-and-white spitting cobra (*Naja siamensis*, Appendix II), 5 snakes of the *Agkistrodon* genus and a green pit viper (*Trimeresurus albolabris*, not listed by CITES)¹

West Palm Beach, State of Florida, United States of America

September 2014

Brian Buchkowski, 29 year old, lived at his parents' with snakes, several of which were venomous. They were found during a search led by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Service. The snakes were hidden in plastic boxes in the villa bathroom under the bathtub. They were confiscated. The man is being charged with illegal possession of wild animals. He is also at fault for not having signaled the presence of venomous snakes with appropriate warnings.



ASIA

Seizure of a sand boa (*Boidae* spp. Appendix I or II)²

Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India

July 3, 2014

The sand boa was locked in a container with a lid pierced to let a little air in. An informant reported these unacceptable conditions to the authorities. Sand boas are used for witchcraft. The alleged miracle maker had been purchased near the border between Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra for 40.000 RS (665 US\$) by a couple claiming to be sick.

Seizure of 11 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II) and 4 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II)³

Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China

July 4, 2014

Ball pythons, boa constrictors, lizards, spiders, cockroaches and hamsters were in his house...Zhang is a 23 year old college student majoring in veterinary science. He said that he first bought 5 of the ball pythons via the Internet. They were not listed on the store, so he needed to actually call the storeowner to buy ball pythons. Later, many of his friends who

wanted to abandon their snakes, or had sick snakes, would send them to Zhang. That is the reason that he accumulated so many in his house. He argued, "I never sold them or bred them because I know that would be illegal. I also do not want to send them to the zoo because I had formal training in veterinary science and China's zoos are not in good conditions. I feel emotionally attached to the snakes." The 15 snakes were sent to the Hongshan Zoo.



Boa constrictor

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Conviction for the smuggling of 37 cobras (family Elapidae)⁴

Huizhou, Guangdong Province, China

July 5, 2014

On December 11, 2013, the 2 brothers had bought snakes from Dongguan to sell in a market in Huizhou. After the first successful sale, they tried to make more profit and came back 3 days later, but were immediately caught as some people had already reported their offence to the police. One was sentenced to a 10 month imprisonment and a fine of 3000 yuan (482 US\$). The other was convicted to 6 months in prison and fined 2000 yuan (321 US\$).



Seizure of 17 python skins (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II)⁵

Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

July 17, 2014

A man from Hong Kong tried to pass by the Luohukou port from Hong Kong to Shenzhen, when the agents discovered 17 pieces of python skins in his bags. They are about 4 m long and 40 cm wide.

Seizure of 200 gall bladders from reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II)⁶

Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

July 20, 2014

A passenger coming from Hong Kong landed in Shenzhen with nothing to declare at the customs control post in Futian. However, the custom officers

became interested in her hand bag. They discovered “dry fruits”. In fact, following an expert analysis it was found to be 200 gall bladders from Royal Pythons.



Seizure of 7 snakes on the eve of Naga Panchami festival⁷

**State of Telangana, India
July 30, 2014**

Naga Panchami is tomorrow, August 1st. Naga means snake in Sanskrit and Panchami means the fifth day after the new moon. Naga Panchami is the worship day of snakes and this is for them a bad time. Before the festival, gangs of snake charmers comb the forests and capture heavily. Then comes for snakes times of hunger. They are deprived of food for several weeks. Their fangs are pulled out. Cobras are the most idolized. A favorite ritual is to pray before a cobra drinking milk. After the forced fasting, a snake drinks anything. Milk is fatal for him. Yet this is the favorite offering of fanatic or naïve believers. Snakes ingest milk throughout the party. The snake charmer gets paid for every sip and finally, when the altars are folded, kill the reptile and sell its skin. A Cobra skin bag sells for 700 US\$.



At least 40 volunteers from local NGOs like Bhartiya Prani Mitra Sangh, Karuna International, Sahayog Organisation, Wildlife Protection Society, Prani Mitra Ramesh Jagirdar Foundation, are already on the warpath to denounce these cruelties and change behaviors. Followers of snakes worship are informed of snake abuses and encouraged to pray in temples before representations of snakes instead of live ones.

An emergency number is available to collect all testimonials on the cruelties on the abuse of reptiles. 7 mutilated wild snakes have already been removed from the clutches of snake charmers who had rushed to Hyderabad for Naga Panchami.

Seizure of 5 snakes, including the Chinese cobra (*Naja atra*, Appendix II)⁸

**Taining, Fujian Province, China
August 6, 2014**

The forest police received reports from the public that there were merchants selling wild snakes in the open air market. The experts identified 5 endangered snakes including the ratsnake, Chinese Cobra, the banded krait and the sharp-nosed viper. The animals were released back to the wild.

Seizure of more than 100 Chinese cobra (*Naja atra*, Appendix II)⁹

**Lichuan, Hubei Province, China
September 2, 2014**

At around 11, the police found a bus with the plate “Shanghai D172XX,” and demanded to search the boxes in the luggage compartment. At first, the driver claimed there to be hotpot sauce inside them, but instead there were more than 100 snakes inside. The animals were seized and given to the forest police for release.

EUROPE

Seizure of 9000 vials (5 kg) of snake venom¹⁰ Moldova

July 2014

9000 vials of viper venom imported from Afghanistan have been seized by the Moldovan police. 6 Moldovan suspects have been arrested: they were trying to sell the lot for 2.8 million€. One gram of venom sells on legal pharmacy markets for 800 to 2000 €. Interpol notes that this is their first case involving this substance. In India and other Asian countries, cobra venom is a component for narcotics.

Discovery of a dead boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II)¹¹

**Ria-Sirach, Pyrénées Orientales, France
July 20, 2014**



A 4 m long dead boa was obstructing an irrigation canal, 10 meters away from National road 116. The bulky body weighing about 40 kg, probably thrown there by an unscrupulous owner wandering how to get rid of his dead pet, must be treated by a rendering plant. According to the law, the mayor of Ria-Sirach (1200 inhabitants) municipality has to undertake the removal as well as the final treatment costs for the remains of the reptile found on its territory. Forsaking living or dead exotic animal is increasing in France. The ONCFS (National Office of Wildlife and Hunting) has published a guide: "What to do with a wild animal found dead or injured" after collision, poaching, hunting, disease or poisoning (in French only) <http://www.oncfs.gouv.fr/Fiches-juridiques-chasse-ru377/Que-faire-d-un-animal-sauvage-trouve-mort-ou-blesse-amp-nbsp-ar1471>

Arrest for illegal use of a cobra (family *Elapidae*)¹²

Tuapse, Krasnodar Krai, Russia

August 2014

In a holiday resort at the edge of the Black Sea, a woman had the bad idea to pose for a photo with a cobra. The vacation photo took a turn for the worse. The venomous snake bit her on the hand. She was only just saved after a race against time in hospital. The man who was showing the snake in an exhibition had neither licence nor skills with snakes, and had just bought the snake on the Krasnodar market. He will only receive a maximal 2500 roubles fine (70 US\$).

Seizure of 2 python skin jackets (*Pythonidae* spp. Appendix I or II)¹³

Brussels Airport, Brussels-Capital Region, Belgium
August 2, 2014



2 Kuwaiti tourists were coming from Istanbul where they had bought 2 snakeskin jackets. They were stripped of their illegal trophies by the GAD, the Belgian customs Anti-Drug Group.

Seizure of a pair of cobra-skin boots (Family *Elapidae*)¹⁴

Friedrichshafen, Bade-Wurtemberg, Germany
August 2014

The pair of cobra-skin boots came from the US postal service and did not come along with the necessary documents. The 12 species of cobra are officially listed in the CITES Appendix II.



Sauria

ASIA

Seizure of monitor lizard meat (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II)¹

**Kancheepuram, State of Tamil Nadu, India
September 23, 2014**

Monitor lizard meat was on the menu of 2 eateries by the side of the express way Chennai–Bangalore. Endangered birds were also on the menu. 11 people are being questioned by the police. Other eateries are under suspicion. Traffic was the source of information that enabled intervention of the State forest services.

EUROPE

Seizure of 23 geckos of which 19 belong to *Naultinus* spp., Appendix II and 4 belong to *Hoplodactylus* spp., Appendix III²

**Bernkastel-Wittlich District, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany
August 2014**

Geckos from New Zealand arrived under dubious conditions in Germany. 2 traffickers were selling the pair of lizards for 8000 € on the Internet. Their residences were searched by Kaiserslautern customs officers accompanied by a zoological expert from Cologne and an expert from the wild animal protection services. The geckos have been placed under sequestration at a suspect's house whilst waiting for the conclusions of the investigation.



© German Customs

Crocodilians

AFRICA

Seizure of bush meat, of which crocodile meat (*Crocodylidae* spp, Appendix I or II)¹

**Montézo, Lagunes Region, Côte d'Ivoire
28 July 2014**

Despite the Ebola pandemic, bush meat, suspected to be one of the virus reservoirs, continues to invade the markets, cheap restaurants and road sides. Sanitary patrols have been reinforced. Yet, hundreds of kilos of smoked crocodile, hedgehog and agouti meat were discovered in a village eatery a hundred kilometers from Abidjan. The owner, a student in new information technologies and communication, claims to be engaged in this business in order to finance his studies.



© Autre presse / DR

AMERICA

Seizure of a Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix I)²

**Municipio del Centro, State of Tabasco, Mexico
July 2014**

1,50 m long. In good health. He was kept in a house courtyard. It will likely be released into his natural habitat.

Seizure of 2 caimans (*Alligatoridae* spp., Appendix I or II)³

**Provincial Route n°10, Province of Chaco, Argentina
July 16, 2014**

It is night. 1:30 in the morning. A small Fiat car is parked by the side of the road. The policemen approach to identify the passengers. They find 4 people, 2 caimans, 2 hunting rifles, 2 flashlights and a knife. The poachers, their equipment and their victims are taken to the police station.



© Chaco Dia por Dia

Seizure of a live Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix I or II)⁴

Motul, Yucatán State, Mexico

September 2014

He had no documents authorizing him to keep wildlife in captivity and no certificates of origin. The crocodile and the 5 turtles (*Rhinoclemmys areolata*, *Trachemys* and *Kinosternon integrum callirostris*) were his pets. They were seized and taken to El Centenario zoo.



Seizure of an American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II)⁵

Rancho Cucamonga, State of California, United States of America

September 4, 2014

A real tear jerking story! The former head of animal control and surveillance tells of it. He had been caring for her alligator for 30 years. "She was a daughter to me." "I don't have any children." "They took Chopper, they put her in a swamp in the middle of the desert. She has never seen another alligator in her life."

Chris Cassaro didn't have any permit to withhold the reptile whose origin is unknown.

"Give her back to me!"



Seizure of a dead caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix II)⁶

Intiyaco, Santa Fe Province, Argentina

September 2014

While being on a surveillance mission on National Route 31, they spotted 3 people out poaching. In the poachers' possession were the bodies of a caiman and 9 wild birds (*Anas platyrhynchos*, not listed by CITES). It could either have been a spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*) or a broad-snouted caiman (*Caiman latirostris*).

ASIA

Appeared in court and released on bail after the seizure of a crocodile (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I or II)⁷

Memnagar, Gujarat, India

16 July 2014

The magistrate did not appreciate the forest guards who carried the 2 year old crocodile to court. "It would have been better to leave it safely at home". In truth, the guards did not know what to do with their exhibit and searched around the court for a possible destination. The judge advised Indroda Park at Gandhinagar. The 2 suspects had bought the crocodile in Mumbai for 10,000 Rs (166 US\$) and had sold it for 16,000 (266 US\$) to a town doctor. During a raid, the crocodile had been found in the house of the doctor who, for now, is worry free. He is away in Singapore. As a result of the audience, the 2 traffickers were freed under a bail of 25,000 Rs (415 US\$) each. Awaiting the trial, they are under judicial supervision and must demonstrate their presence to the police at least once a week.

Sale on crocodile meat (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I or II)⁸

Shenyang, Liaoning Province, China

20 July 2014

Crocodile barbecue. The sale is happening now. Low calorie, light cholesterol, and good for the heart and liver, for 20 yuans (3.22 US\$). At first the people came to take pictures, now they come to eat.



Multi-Species Reptiles

AFRICA

Seizure of hundreds of article made of snake or crocodile skin (*Crocodylidae* spp. Appendix I or II)¹

Libreville, Province Estuary, Gabon

July 28, 2014

The 165 wallets were empty, but made out of crocodile skin. The craft market at Libreville was the target of a meticulous inspection by the DLCB (Directorate for the Fight Against Poaching). Accessories in crocodile and snake skin were seized from 2 merchants' stalls. A little later, searches were



conducted within inventories and a profusion of wallets, bags and belts were seized. The items had been illegally imported. Hundreds of crocodiles were killed for these wallets. Conservation Justice fights against wildlife crimes in Gabon. The NGO is alive and strong. It passes on information to all relevant departments and services.

AMERICA

Seizure of a spitting cobra (*Naja* and *Hemachatus* genus), a monocled cobra (*Naja kaouthia*, Appendix II), 5 other venomous snakes and a Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*, Appendix II) ²

**Sarasota, State of Florida, USA
July 2014**

A 20-year-old young man sheltered in his parents' villa 7 venomous snakes including a deadly spitting cobra. A single drop of its venom in the eye makes you blind. A rhinoceros viper, a pigmy rattlesnake and a banded cobra were part of the family. For the neighbors, he was a charming young man, but the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission does not agree: "he was endangering his neighbors, his family and himself! He had no ability and no license to deal with this kind of reptiles." He faces a fine of 500 US\$ per animal, 60 days in jail and additional penalties for animal abuse. He would have bought the animals in a reptile show out of Florida. The day before in Fort Myers, Florida, a clandestine coral snake had bitten his owner who ended up in a hospital. In Florida, in case you witness any illegal or suspicious possession of reptiles and other wildlife to the competent authorities, please send a report by calling 888-404-3922 or text to Tip@MyFWC.com. An information page on the subject online: MyFWC.com/Wildlife "captive wildlife."

Seizure of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 3 geckos, 2 lizards and 2 royal pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II) ³

**Ponciano Arriaga International Airport of San Luis Potosí, San Luis Potosí, Mexico
July 23, 2014**



In transit, 4 packages are put through the scanner. In the first one, a boa was found traveling from the airport of Guadalajara, Jalisco, in Leon, Guanajuato state. 200 km. In the second package, 3 geckos and 2 monitor lizards came from Monterrey, state of Nuevo Leon, Guadalajara, Jalisco. 750 km. A ball python was found in each of the 2 other packages.

These seized reptiles were all entrusted to the Tangamanga zoo.

ASIA

**Seizure of 52 reptiles⁴
Hamad International Airport, Qatar
July 2014**

The 52 reptiles were carefully packaged in clothes and divided in half a dozen bags. Khalid Hamad Rashid Al Kabi, Director of Qatar Customs, assures the smuggler will be brought to justice. No import permit had been asked to the Ministry of Environment. What will the fate of the little gecko be?

Seizure of 2 crocodiles (*Crocodylidae* spp, Appendix I or II), 19 Indian tent turtles (*Pangshura tentoria*, Appendix II), 15 Indian star tortoise (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) and 15 red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*, not listed by CITES) ⁵

**Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
July 18, 2014**

In his uncle's rickshaw, he carried 2 crocodiles and 49 live turtles. The special transport seemed to be moving towards an aquarium shop in Mumbai. 3 suspects will appear before the judge.

Amphibia

ASIA

**Seizure of 10,000 frogs¹
Shandong Province, China
August 2, 2014**

The highway police conducted a random inspection on a passenger bus and discovered 15 boxes with around 600 frogs in each. The police gave the frogs to the forestry department. Because the frogs were mostly alive, the forestry department quickly released them in the nearby national park to ensure that they survive.

Seizure of 4 poison dart frogs (*Dendrobatidae* spp.)²

**Xiaoshan, Zhejiang Province, China
August 11, 2014**

The custom agents seized 4 poison dart frogs in packages mailed from Hong Kong to Xiaoshan. The sender misrepresented the items as «plushies.» The frogs are fatal and its venom can kill as many as 10 people. It is the first case in Zhejiang Province.



Dendrobates tinctorius

Birds

Total from 1st July to 30th September
4252 seized birds

AFRICA

REPEATED OFFENSE

Court Appearance for the possession of 11 live grey parrots and 30 dried grey parrots heads (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II)¹

**Yokadouma, East Region, Cameroon
September 16, 2014**

Newcomers in the "On the Trail" bestiary, grey parrots are prized for, yes, their dried heads, which are used for cooking or for witchcraft. These particular confiscated heads came from parrots certainly captured alive in Lobéké National Park. The 4 men are accused of illegal trespassing on a protected area and poaching. They will receive one year of prison at the very most. This was not the group's first attempt at poaching and trafficking.



AMERICA

Seizure of 2 parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and condemnation²

**Port San Luis, State of California, United States of America
July 1, 2014**

The 2 live birds were hidden inside an Elmo soft toy. Elmo is a character from Sesame Street, a children's TV program. The couple who tried to pass illegally the parakeets from Mexico to the USA was fined 300 US\$.



Good news

Release of a parrot (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II)³

**Ibarra, Province of Imbabura, Ecuador
July 3, 2014**

The female parrot was found in a home. 20 years ago she had been saved in the town of San Lorenzo (Province of Esmeraldas) 170 km away from Ibarra. She was then in a very bad state. She showed signs of mistreatment, wounds and one of her wings was particularly damaged.

On July 3, when the foster family voluntarily turned her in to environmental authorities, she was in much better condition. Only her wings are still fragile. As the law demands, she is given to the care of the Guayabilas Rescue Center where a veterinarian expertise has confirmed one wing to be deformed. Other examinations and a quarantine period will determine her future: freedom or captivity.

Seizure of a blue-headed parrot (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II)⁴

**Ricaurte, Province of Azuay, Ecuador
July 2014**



Along with him are 3 passerines (family Turdidae, not listed by CITES) and a Peruvian meadowlark (*Sturnella bellicosa*, not listed by CITES). They all seemed in good health and were sent to the nearest rescue center where further examinations

should be able to determine whether they can or not return to their natural habitat.

Within the range of their territory, blue-headed parrots are relatively common. In the East of Brazil, the species is quite scarce and possibly in danger. In this region and in the Cauca valley in Colombia, their decline seems to be caused by degradation of their habitat. This bird is often found in captivity and trade is quite active. The blue-headed parrot is a species endemic to northern South America.

Investigation on poaching of a scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I)⁵

**Palenque, State of Chiapas, Mexico
July 2014**

The PROFEPA is investigating following poaching of a scarlet macaw. The guilty party has not yet been identified. A release program for scarlet macaws into the Eco Aluxes Park is ongoing.



Seizure of 2 yellow-headed amazons (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I)⁶

Actopan, State of Hidalgo, Mexico

July 2014

Police operation in the Actopan market. 2 people have been arrested and kept at disposal of the Federal Public Ministry. One of them was attempting to sell the 2 amazons while the other offered for sale on his stall cactuses of the species *Cephalocereus senilis*, Appendix II, commonly called old man cactus.



Seizure of a parrot (*Psittaciformes* spp., Appendix I or II) and a toucan (family Ramphastidae)⁷

Sumidouro, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

July 15, 2014

0300 253 1177, the direct line for Disque Denuncia enabled 18 wild birds to escape illegal trade. The 3 traffickers admitted the facts. The origin of the birds is suspicious. They have been taken to the wild animal Rehabilitation Center-CETAS- in Seropedica.

Seizure of a macaw and a parrot (*Psittaciformes* spp., Appendix I or II)⁸

Santa Cruz, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

July 15, 2014

Military police entered the favela to intercept a trafficker at his home. He escaped them but at his place the military found weapons, drugs and the birds.



Seizure of 6 lovebirds (*Agapornis* spp., Appendix II) and a Bourke's parrot (*Neopsephotus bourkii*, Appendix II)⁹

Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, Mexico

July 2014

After investigating inside the "El Baratillo" market, PROFEPA inspectors proceeded to an intervention. 28 wild birds were seized including lovebirds, the Bourke's parrot, 5 northern mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*, not listed by CITES), 3 black-headed grosbeaks (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*, not listed

by CITES), 2 northern cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*, not listed by CITES), a slate-colored solitaire (*Turdus migratorius*, not listed by CITES), a yellow headed blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*, not listed by CITES) and 7 birds from the *Myadestes occidentalis* species, not listed by CITES but protected at a national level. The species is listed in the NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010 under the category "subject to special protection". One person was arrested.

Seizure of 81 birds including macaws (*Psittaciformes* spp., Appendix I or II) and toucans (family Ramphastidae)¹⁰

Cariacica, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil

July 28, 2014

An anonymous informant directed military environmental police towards the birds. They also found 2 firearms and 2 false receipts. The bird keeper was arrested. The next day, the birds were transferred to the Reintroduction Center for Wild Animals- CEREIAS- in Aracruz.



Seizure of 37 birds including *Psittaciformes* spp., Appendix I or II¹¹

Pedro Canário, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil

July 28, 2014

They were all in cages. The 2 professional trappers are behind bars. They face a fine and possible jail time that could be between 6 months to a year. The equipment was seized.

Among the birds there are, not listed by CITES, seedeaters (genus *Sporophila*), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), common waxbills (*Estrilda astrild*), chestnut-bellied seed-finch (*Oryzoborus angolensis*), lined seedeater (*Sporophila lineola*) and robins.

They were all taken to the transit center in the National Forest of Rio Preto. They should next return to their natural habitat.



Good news

Release of 2 live red-lored Amazons (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II)¹²

Quito, Province of Pichincha, Ecuador

August 2014

They had been living there for a year and a half. They were turned in voluntarily to authorities. They were then put under the care of the Veterinarian Hospital of the San Francisco de Quito University.

They must pass a health evaluation before being taken to a wildlife shelter.

The Ecuadorian Minister of Environment has opened an administrative procedure. Article 437 F. of the penal code states that to "hunt, capture, harvest, remove or trade in plant or animal species legally protected is punished with up to 3 years imprisonment and in the case of species threatened by extinction, 4 years imprisonment".



Seizure of 85 birds including 6 blue-and-gold macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), 2 hawk-headed parrots (*Deroptyus accipitrinus*, Appendix II), 2 eclectus parrots (*Eclectus roratus*, Appendix II) and 7 lorikeets (*Trichoglos-*

***sus* spp., Appendix II)¹³**

General Bravo, State of Nuevo León, Mexico

August 2014

According to the first known elements, the birds would be from the United-States and were destined to Monterrey, capital of Nuevo León.

Seizure of a live black-chested buzzard-eagle (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*, Appendix II)¹⁴

Riobamba, Province of Chimborazo, Ecuador

August 2014

A call came in on the help line. A young bird of prey has been spotted. He is in a cage and his health is worrisome. His legs are broken. He has been transferred to a center with special certification from the Ministry of the Environment. He will go through a veterinarian evaluation and receive care in aims of returning to his natural habitat.



Good news

Seizure of 3 orange-fronted conures (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II)¹⁵

State of Colima, Mexico

August 2014

The birds were voluntarily turned over to the PROFEPA by their holder. They were examined. Depending on their physical health they will either be released into nature or transferred to a special center for re-adaptation to wild life (CIVS).



Seizure of 4 yellow-fronted amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II)¹⁶

Caracas, Capital District of Caracas, Venezuela

August 2014

They seem in good health according to first expertise and do not show any signs of mistreatment. They were held captive in a grocery store. The owner was denounced.



Seizure of 208 orange-fronted conures 3 of whom were dead (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II), 3 live lilac-crowned amazons (*Amazona finschi*, Appendix I), 4 black-masked lovebirds (*Agapornis personatus*, Appendix II) and a monk parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II)¹⁷

State of Jalisco, Mexico

August 2014

None of the salesmen could present the required documents proving the legal origin of the birds. They were all put at the disposal of the Federal Public Ministry.



Seizure of 2 toucans (family Ramphastidae), 11 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola brasiliensis*), 7 birds of the *Thraupis* genus, and an ultramarine grosbeak of the species *Cyanoloxia brissonii*¹⁸
State of Espírito Santo, Brazil

August 21, 2014

6 toucan species are listed in CITES. These are probably toco toucans (*Ramphastotoxoco*, Appendix II). 11 cages were also taken in.



© Polícia Militar Ambiental

Appearance for the illegal importation of 14 ruby-throated hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*, Appendix II), 3 black-throated hummingbirds (*Archilochus alexandri*, Appendix II), 5 violet crown hummingbirds (*Amazilia violiceps*, Appendix II), 1 Allen's hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*, Appendix II), 38 hummingbirds (*Trochilidae* spp, Appendix I or II), all dead birds¹⁹

Tyler, State of Texas, USA

August 27, 2014

Carlos Delgado Rodriguez about whom "On the Trail" No. 5 mentioned the unsuccessful attempt to smuggle hummingbirds pleads guilty. He has been charged under the CITES Convention, the Treaty on migratory birds (Migratory Bird Treaty Act), the Federal law on smuggling and the law of the State of Texas. The trial date has not yet been fixed.



© Jerry Oldenettel

Archilochus alexandri

Seizure of a red masked parakeet (*Aratinga erythrogenys*, Appendix II)²⁰

Riobamba, Chimborazo Province, Ecuador
September 2014

After a medical examination, it will be taken to the Bosque Protector Cerro Blanco private reserve 200 km away in Guayas province, which ecosystem is adapted to this species.



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Seizure of 14 endangered birds including cockatoos (*Cacatuidae* spp. Appendix I or II) and members of the *Psittacidae* species (Appendix I or II): macaws, parrots, parakeets²¹

State of Mexico, Mexico

September 2014

They were seized in 19 municipalities. They were discreetly being sold on the fringe of markets. Most birds are in poor condition.

Seizure of a bay-winged hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II)²²

Linares, Maule Region, Chile

September 2014

The hawk is in a cage in the garage of an equestrian club. The alert was given to the SAG (Agricultural and livestock Service). It suffered a head injury by banging it against the cage bars. It also showed signs of stress caused by captivity. It was immediately taken to Casa Noah rehabilitation center at Linares where it will receive veterinary care to recover before being released.



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© PACH news

Seizure of an orange-winged amazon (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix II) and a blue-headed parrot (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II)²³

Orellana Province, Ecuador

September 8 to 14, 2014

The family held them as pets. They are transferred to the zoo for veterinary evaluation.

Seizure of a live bronze-winged parrot (*Pionus chalcophterus*, Appendix II)²⁴

Chimborazo Province, Ecuador

Between the 8th and the 14th of September 2014

It was seized during a planned search in private individual's houses. 4 other wild animals were found: 2 red-tailed squirrels (*Sciurus granatensis*), and emerald toucan (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus*), and a red-fronted coot (*Fulica ruffifrons*). They have been transferred to separate zoos, parks, or centres for wild animal services.



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Aulacorhynchus prasinus

Seizure of 36 live wild birds (*Psittaciformes* spp., Appendix II)²⁵

Cusco, Department of Cusco, Peru

September 2014

At a bus station in Cusco, the bus leaving for Lima was inspected. 36 birds were discovered. The planned recipient is unknown.

Seizure of 50 live birds including plan parakeets (*Brotogeris tirica*, Appendix II), campo troupials (*Icterus jamacaii*), and rufous-bellied thrushes (*Turdus rufiventris*)²⁶

**Campina Grande, Paraiba, Brazil
September 24, 2014**



Brotogeris tirica

They were recovered from the market of Campina Grande. They were in tiny cages, without water or food. Some were wounded. The IBAMA has taken them to João Pessoa to bring them back to health.

ASIA

Seizure of 9 parakeets including 7 red-breasted parakeets (*Psittacula alexandri*, Appendix II)²⁷

**Wuhan, Hubei Province, China
July 3, 2014**

When Mr. Chen was visiting the birds market with a friend a week ago, they came across a few endangered parakeets in a parakeet store. He later reported the incident to the journalists. They followed Chen to that parakeet store and asked the owner, who said that the birds were red-breasted parakeets. They could say "hello" and "goodbye." Each costs 4000 yuan (645 US\$). The journalists notified the forest police and the latter sent a team of 4 men who seized 9 parakeets and brought the owner back for further investigation.

Seizure of 260 birds including 80 plum-headed parakeets (*Psittacula cyanocephala*, Appendix II)²⁸

Godagari Upazila, Rajshahi Division, Bangladesh

July 13, 2014

260 endangered birds were seized at the Indian border: plum headed parakeets, Baya weavers (*Ploceus philippinus*), black headed munias (*Lonchura atricapilla*), scaly breasted munias (*Lonchura punctulata*),



Psittacula cyanocephala

Indian silverbills (*Euodice malabarica*)...The nearby

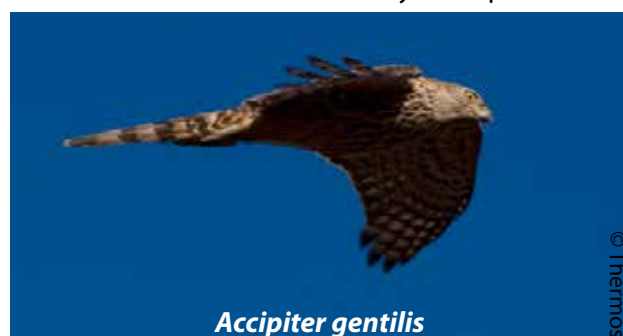


Indian state of Bihar is a platform for caged birds for distribution to Calcutta, Nepal or China. A mobile court sentenced the smuggler to a fine of TK 5000 (64 US\$) and 5 months in prison. The birds were in bad state, sick from the heat, storms and poor transport conditions. They were taken to the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Science department at Rajshahi university.

Conviction of a man for the sale of 5 goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II), 2 Eurasian eagle-owls (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II) and one Eurasian kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II)²⁹

**Qixia Xian, Yantai, Shandong Province, China
July 2014**

In autumn 2013, Qu, a farmer, captured endangered species of birds using large nets and listed them for sale online. He made no transactions before he was arrested. He was sentenced to 5 year imprisonment



Accipiter gentilis

along with a fine of 5000 yuan (806 US\$).

Seizure of 162 birds including silver-eared mesias (*Leiothrix argentea*, Appendix II)³⁰

**Sha Tau Kok, Hong Kong, China
July 15, 2014**

The mesias live mainly in the Himalayas, Nepal, Bhutan and north-east India. The birds were in 7 cages aboard a bicycle leaving Guangdong province and heading towards Hong Kong. Their destination was the bird market in Kowloon. In Hong Kong, the Emergency number for information on wild animal importation and reporting of smuggling cases is the 1823.



Seizure of 131 parrots (*Psittaciformes* spp. Appendix I or II)³¹

**Malda, West Bengal State, India
July 17, 2014**

On the local market, 11 large parrots were seized. In Calcutta Express, 120 parrots huddled in a bag were rescued following the search of a compartment by the Malda Environmental Police. The birds were sick. Some died soon after the seizure. They arrived from Nepal. The same team had already discovered 150 parrots on the same train. The smuggler was arrested and an investigation is ongoing. These birds sell for RS5000 or 83 US\$ a unit.

Poaching of 25 koklass pheasants (*Pucrasia macrolopha*, Appendix III) and 3 Himalayan monals (*Lophophorus impejanus*, Appendix I)³²

**Pakistan
July 2014**

Birds still warm on the hood of the off-road car. A 500 \$ fine was inflicted to a local government member in Dir district. The pictures were posted on his Facebook page.



Conviction for the smuggling of objects made by helmeted hornbill skull and beak (*Rhinoplax vigil*, Appendix I)³⁴

**Futian, Fujian Province, China
September 2014**

32-year-old Chen was a storeowner in Futian who acted as a liaison between the seller and buyer in trading 38 pieces of ornaments made by helmeted hornbill skull and beak. She tried to ship the items in the airport with the help of a flight attendant, but the x-ray machine detected the ornaments as suspicious. The items are worth 133,600 yuan (21,800 US\$). Chen was convicted to 3 years in prison with a 5000 yuan (816 US\$) fine.



Seizure of 16 parakeets (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix II), 2 bulbuls (family Pycnonotidae, not listed by CITES), 3 barbets (Megalaimidae family, not listed by CITES)³⁵

**Kolkatta, State of West Bengal, India
September 7, 2014**

Gallif Street bird market is still a mega-sized cage. 21 birds were set free.

Seizure of 870 birds including 470 parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix II) and common hill mynas (*Sturnidae* family) and 400 spotted doves (*Spilopelia chinensis*, not listed by CITES)³⁶

**Tan Son Nhat International Airport in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
September 8, 2014**

Rattling and cooing in the International Airport in Saigon. The parrots and mynas were bought by Nguyen Viet Dung in a farm that he knows nothing of for the price of 8.5 US\$ per parrot and 1.65 US\$ per mynas. The birds were going to fly by plane to Hanoi where an accomplice would be waiting for them.

The senders of the 400 spotted doves have escaped.



© Hoang Viet

Good news

**Seizure of a Bengal florican (*Houbaropsis bengalensis*, Appendix I)³³
Assam State, India**



© Wildlife Trust of India

August 17, 2014

The Bengal florican was on the wrong track. Survivor of a population that is threatened of extinction and reduced throughout Asia to 1000 individuals, half of which in India, it was captured by villagers who regarded it as a "gift from God", possessing magical powers. We know that idolatry can quickly drift to practices of dismemberment, torture and death.

The alert was issued by the local NGO Naturalist for Rehabilitation of Snakes and Birds (NRSB). Thanks to good fairies (WTI, IFAW, CWRC) and forest services of the State of Assam,

the florican was set free by the villagers and after some recovery time released in a favorable area of the Kaziranga Park.

Bengal floricans are very sensitive to noise disturbance and other human nuisance, avoids urban zones and agricultural activities. Its habitat and perimeters are increasingly fragmented. Its ability to adapt to environmental changes is feeble. In specialists' opinions, they are threatened in the short term, even more than tigers, rhinos and elephants.

Bengal floricans feed mainly on vegetables such as mustard flowers, berries, wild cardamom or ordinary seeds. It may also feed on insects and occasionally lizards or small snakes.

EUROPE

REPEATED OFFENSE

Seizure of 411 dead birds including grebes (family Podicipedidae), swans (genus *Cygnus*), ducks (family Anatidae), eagles, hawks (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II), falcons (*Falconidae* spp., Appendix I or II), waders of Ciconiidae family, flamingos (family Phoenicopteridae), ibises (Threskiornithidae family), owls (*Strigiformes* spp., Appendix I or II) and passerines (order Passeriformes)³⁷

Malta International Airport, Luqa, Malta

July 23, 2014

The Lufthansa passenger was coming from Frankfurt. Customs Airport of Malta caught him. In his luggage, 411 dead birds were found, 120 of which being endangered species. The hunter was returning from Argentina. 10 years ago, the same man had been searched at the same place and 300 birds had been discovered in his luggage from which 8 were endangered species. The hunter was sentenced to a 230 € fine.

After the airport episode, a search was made at the recidivist's home: amongst 575 stuffed birds, 236 specimens were seized after an inventory by the Natural History museum.

Taxidermy is popular in Malta. 2 other recent police searches resulted in the seizure of approximately 200 stuffed endangered birds on the island and around the world, including booted eagles and short-toed snake eagles.

Conviction for possession of endangered stuffed birds³⁷

Gozo island, Malta

July 2014

2 Gozo residents were found guilty by the Magis-



trates' court of Gozo for being in possession of a substantial amount of stuffed endangered birds. A man from Kerċem was fined 1000 € and had his hunting license suspended for a year after he admitted to have kept in his possession a Flamingo carcass, suspected to have been shot in September last year. In a separate case, a man from Xaghra was fined 2,300 euros and had his license suspended for a year after admitting to being in possession of 78 mounted and 8 carcasses of endangered birds.

Poaching of a bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*, Appendix II)³⁸

Department of Lot, Midi-Pyrenees Region, France

July 2014

A second shot fired at vultures in a few months in this south-west department of France. There are only a few dozen reproductive couples in France. Like in echo to mad marksmen, the Ministry of Ecology, lacking rigor and pedagogy when confronted with brutality and superstitions, announced a week later that they planned to authorize warning shots on vultures in the French southern departments of Ariège, Pyrénées-Atlantique and the Lot. After "the wolves are approaching Paris", the rumor that "vultures attack sheep" won ground in the south of France.



Song thrush

The new European commissioner for the environment, maritime affairs and fishing is a member of the majority political party in the Island of Malta. The European Island State in the Mediterranean was until now known to generously harbor under its flag tankers whose shipwrecks regularly darkened waters and shores of the world's ocean. It is now going to become just as well known for hunting migrating birds who find in the Maltese Archipelago a shelter or landmark during their flight Europe-Africa and back. Hunters in Malta don't go half way. Their motto is simple : « If it can fly, It can be killed ».

Chris Packam, a renowned naturalist in Great Britain and host for television documentaries on wildlife was on site during the last spring hunting season. He had been invited by local ornithologists. He was able to testify that turtle doves, quails, swallows, bitterns, song thrushes, brood eagles, Montagu's harrier birds were killed by the thousands. Some sort of National celebration. The government through the word of Sergei Golovkin, in charge of the regulation regarding wild birds, answers that "Malta has the best ratio in Europe for guards dedicated to surveillance of illegal hunting".

To avoid polemics and violence between bird hunters and protectors unwelcome at the time that nomination of Mr. Vella was being discussed by European parliamentarians, the autumn hunt season was suspended. Mr. Vella's nomination is seen as a blessing by hunters and trappers striving in France, Cyprus and other European countries to perpetuate culinary traditions and oppose European regulations.

**French state authorises startling shots at griffon vultures in Ariège (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II)³⁹
 Department of Ariège, Region of Midi-Pyrénées, France
 August 5, 2014**

In Ecuador, a guy who had killed a condor was searched for and sentenced to 6 months jail.
 In France, those who kill vultures are not found and even worse the State shows understanding towards farmers who claim they are under siege of bears, wolves and now vultures.
 In some sectors of Ariège in the south of France, in the Pyrenean mountain chain, startling shots against vultures have been authorized. This measure could be extended to the Department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques. Vultures are useful. They play a prophylactic role, that is to prevent or reduce epizooties. Vultures are not birds of prey. Vultures are necrophagous birds who feed off of carcasses, placentas, aborted or born-dead sheep or cows after out-door births. They intervene also second hand after deadly fights between rams or attacks on grazing cattle by stray dogs.
 Vultures are useful after exceptional mortality in herds provoked by panic movements following storms or cliff rock falls.
 To see a group of vultures upon an animal carcass and to accuse them of being the cause of death is pure fantasy, lack of information or aimed to exploit media attention called on by an isolated and misinterpreted event. It is true that vultures stake out wild or domestic animals who are wounded, ill, entangled, isolated from human presence and wait for their death, maybe even test their reactions before feasting. The vulture is no veterinarian. One can't ask too much. They are recyclers of dead flesh, a free undertaker helping out the community and the breeders. Even somewhat they help to reduce the obligatory contribution to the rendering public services.
 It is unfortunate that in parallel to praising biodiversity, the Ministry of Ecology has finally accepted that agents of the ONCFS be allowed to proceed to blank startling shots with a double detonation and teach such deterring measures to supposedly vulnerable farmers.
 In the high and low mountains, vultures should be subsidized by ADEME (Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Énergie). These birds who were endangered 20 years ago and now in the process of a slow and fragile rebuilding contribute to a zero waste policy.



© Luc Watour

**Conviction for illegal possession of European goldfinches (*Carduelis Carduelis*), Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*), old world finches (genus *Fringilla*) and whistling ducks (genus *Dendrocygna*)⁴⁰
 Blois, Centre Region, France
 August 27, 2014**



Aviaries housed the wild birds. They had been identified using binoculars and the ONCFS arrived on the scene. The owner alleged a major family event and asked the officers to come back the next day. The next day, the sworn officers were there but the aviaries were almost empty.
 The birds trapper, despite his hoax, was sentenced to a half suspended fine of 1200 €. He argued the typical pretense of presenting himself as a "healer of wounded birds."

Seizure of 44 birds including parrots (*Psittaciformes* spp., Appendix I or II), owls (*Strigidae* spp., Appendix I or II), cranes (*Gruidae* spp., Appendix I or II), and one Siberian eagle owl (*Bubo bubosibiricus*, Appendix II) and placing them in care of a refuge⁴¹

**East France and South France
 August 2014**

The birds, many of which are in bad condition, have been entrusted to Alca Torda ("torda penguin" in French and razorbill in English), a care centre for wounded wild animals and those seized by government services, with a preference for wild birds. The refuge was created by hunters of the Landes, a southwest region of France, after the oil spills of *The Erika* and of *The Prestige*. The refuge is located in the old hunting complex of Mont-de-Marsan. AlcaTorda works closely with the ONCFS (Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage).



© Sud Ouest

Official opening of the ortolan bunting poaching season (*Emberiza hortulana*)⁴²
Departement of the Landes, Region of Aquitaine, France
September 2014



The famous French author of fables Jean de la Fontaine (1621 - 1695) writes of the field rat who is given ortolan bunting to eat by the city rat, in a quite civil manner. 350 years later, ortolans continue to excite the appetite of those who have no manners at all. The ortolan is protected by the European Directive on Birds and by French law. It is forbidden to hunt, intentionally kill, use, sell and transport them live or dead. Every year thousands of ortolans are captured by a thousand poachers in the Landes, in the south West of France. They claim to cage them only for their personal consumption but on the black market ortolans are sold 100 to 150 € a piece to open or undercover restaurants. Nothing allows to say there is no international trafficking. After capture, the ortolans are fattened for 3 to 4 weeks in the darkness then drowned in Armagnac and finally cooked and swallowed in one shot. Every offense against the protection of ortolans is in theory liable for a one year imprisonment and 15,000 € fine. In reality, a form of tolerance lets it all go by. There is supposed to be some pride in capturing and swallowing them. The LPO (Ligue de protection des Oiseaux) and ASPAS (Association pour la Protection des Animaux Sauvages) have protested and have witnessed on the spot the law breaking at the official opening of the 2014 poaching season. Ortolans are among the most endangered passerine species in Europe.

Prosecution for the illegal capture of Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*) and goldfinches (genus *Carduelis*)⁴³
Outreau, Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region, France
September 2014

These marvellous little birds belong to species protected by French law and the Convention of Bern.



Any type of capture, holding and obviously killing of these birds is illegal and punishable. The 2 capturers were armed with nets and bird lime with which they coated the captured birds, stopping them from escaping.

Each of the two 55 year old trappers who claimed to "love the birds" were fined 200 euros, whilst an additional amount of 200 € was allocated to the Birds Protection League (LPO) who had acted jointly with the public prosecutor.



Seizure of 30 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II)⁴⁴
North-West of Vidin, Oblast of Vidin, Bulgaria
September 14, 2014

The birds were hidden in a car. The driver, a Bulgarian citizen, was heading to the Czech Republic. He gave CITES certificates to customs. After examined by experts of the Bulgarian Ministry of the environment, they turned out to be fake.



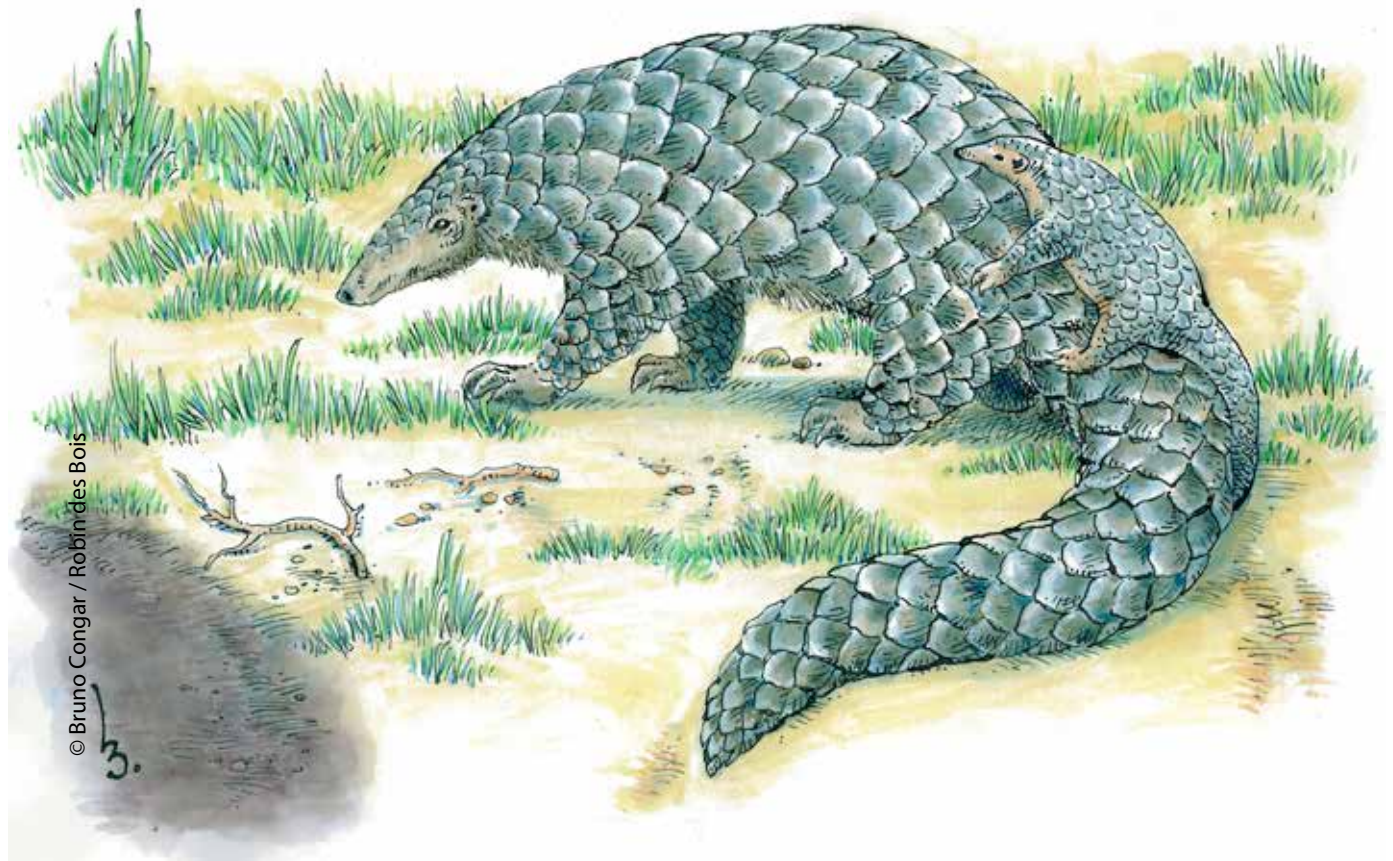
Seizure of 2 booted eagles (*Hieraetus pennatus*, Appendix II) and a common kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II)⁴⁵
Belgium
September 19, 2014

The 2 eagles were very probably captured in Morocco in the Atlas mountain chain. They were on sale under the false name of Atlas buzzard on an Internet site selling a variety of goods. While waiting to be sold, the raptors were kept in unacceptable conditions. The Flemish league for the protection of birds sounded the alarm.

Pangolins

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

The seizure from 1st July to 30th September is equal to 7888 pangolins
Taking the average weight of 3 pangolins for 1 kg of scales.



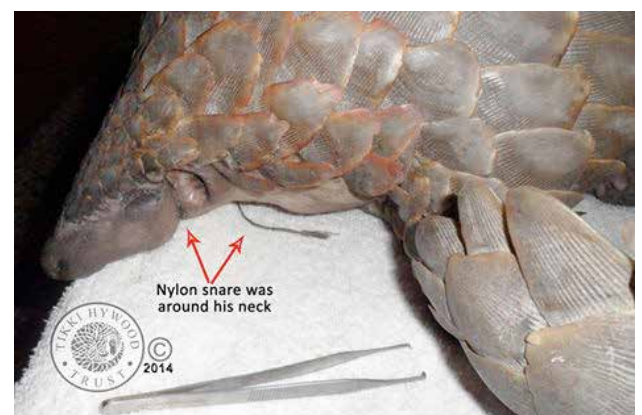
On the Trail n°6
Black market scales price
from media or customs sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Asia	Vietnam	537	13
Europe	France	1 021	25

AFRICA

Rescue of a pangolin¹ Zimbabwe July 2014

A male pangolin strangled by a nylon snare was rescued by Zimparks rangers and ZRP police, and was taken in by Tikki Hywood Trust.



Conviction for capture and attempted sale of a pangolin²
Harare, Province of Harare, Zimbabwe
August 25, 2014



9 years in prison for possessing a pangolin. This is the price, when the law is followed.

ASIA

Seizure of 92 pangolins³
Changlun, Kedah state, Malaysia
July 3, 2014

The "ant eaters" were in a lock-up covered with a canvas. They were hidden from public view and destined to catering in neighboring countries. Since 2010, the services of the Wildlife and National Parks have rescued 1666 poached pangolins. Mr. Palanivel, Minister of Natural Resources, recalled that pangolins are fully protected by national law. "The smuggling of wildlife harms the balance of ecosystems and the image of Malaysia."

OPERATION DEFENDERS

Seizure of 25 kg of pangolin scales⁴
Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region, China
July 2014

The Lhasa customs house seized 25 kg of pangolin scales. If every adult pangolin is estimated to have 0.4 kg of scales, then around 63 pangolins have been killed. Starting June 1, the Lhasa customs house started the operation "Defenders" operation to protect ivories, rhino horns, Tibetan antelope furs, tiger and leopard skins, and other endangered species from illegal trading.

Release of one pangolin⁵
Fuzhou, Fujian Province, China
July 13, 2014

One pangolin overboard! According to Lin, a villager, he was at the dock for his fishing business when he saw an animal fall into the sea from a cliff. He then used his fishing net and a bamboo stick to fish it out. The animal had scales over its body and weighed about 2 kg. Many people wished to buy it, but because Lin thought that it might be an endangered animal, he called the forest police, who came to retrieve the pangolin and release it back to the wild.

Seizure of 400 g of pangolin scales⁶
Chandel District, Manipur, India
July 17, 2014

The car was stopped at a road checkpoint and 400g of pangolin scales were found on board that were to be sold in the city of Morey. The lot belonged to one of the 4 passengers, a 44 year old woman who's a cadre from the PLA, an armed revolutionary group from the State of Manipur, and probably an expert in fabricating improvised explosive devices.

Seizure of 1.4 tons of pangolin scales⁷
Port of Hai Phong, Hai Phong Province, Vietnam
July 24, 2014

The *Med Pearl* landed several containers in Hai Phong. One of them was subject to an unexpected inspection. Surprise, behind some baskets of dried herring, there were baskets of pangolin scales. "10,000 pangolins" reduced to scales. The account is heavy. The recipient was the Giang Import Export Company Cam Mong Cai, 100 km north of Hai Phong city border with China.

The weight of the goods - 1960 kg - inside the container was correct, but there were only 489 kg of herring and 1471 kg of pangolin scales. They release a strong odor due to rotting flesh. Shreds of flesh stick to the scales at the time of extraction after the scalding of live animals. Traffickers often ship pangolin scales with seafood to mask the foul smell.

Since February 1st, 2014, the *Med Pearl* is registered under the Liberian flag



© Vladimir Knyaz / Shipspotting



© Thời báo Tài chính



© Hanoi Moi

**Seizure of 20 live pangolins (99.5 kg)⁸
Bim Son, Thanh Hoa Province, Vietnam
July 26, 2014**

The pangolins were in a taxi riding northward. The trans-Vietnamese pangolins' exodus is never south-bound. It is always directed towards China.



**Conviction for the smuggling of
30 kg of pangolin scales⁹
Changsha, Hunan Province, China
July 2014**



Yao worked in Cameroon and Luo worked in Hunan. They were high school classmates, and from 2012 to 2013, they found out that there is a large price difference for pangolin scales between Africa and China, so Yao tried to mail 30 kg to Luo. The goods were seized at customs at Shanghai. The 2 men were convicted to 2 years in prison with a fine of 5000 yuan (815 US\$) - cf. "On the Trail" n°5 p. 47.

**Seizure of 49 pangolins (196 kg)¹⁰
Mong Cai, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam
29 July 2014**

The pangolins were found in 4 cages on a vacant lot, under the surveillance of 2 guards. Soon after, a man nicknamed Hai "the short-sighted" came to collect the merchandise. He's already known for his involvement in this type of trafficking and was arrested on the spot. The animals were placed under sequestration as evidence of the crime. Their average weight was 3.9 kg. Mong Cai is truly a hotspot for pangolins trafficking. Just behind the city lies China ...



**Conviction for the smuggling of
one pangolin¹¹
Fusui Xian, Guangxi Province, China
August 4, 2014**



By chance, Cheng heard a rumor that pangolin can be used to cure cancer, so he bought one in Ningming Xian for his mother-in-law in October 2013. On his way back, the police who randomly inspected the vehicle discovered the pangolin carcass. Based on his crime, Cheng was convicted to one year in prison with a fine of 2000 yuan (325 US\$).

**Prosecution for fishing in a protected site and for possession of 10 tonnes of frozen pangolin¹²
Puerto Princesa, MIMAROPA Region, Philippines
August 5, 2014**



A Chinese boat had run aground on a coral reef in the middle of a sanctuary inside an exclusive maritime jurisdiction of the Philippines. China in this case did not claim any territory. Along with the boat's mistake of fishing in Philippine waters, the crew's navigational error was coupled with an act of contraband and the fishing boat was seized. The ship's cargo holds were filled with circa 2000 frozen pangolins (10 tonnes) (see "On The Trail" n°1 p.10).



The 12 crewmembers were sentenced to between 6 and 12 years of prison and a fine of 100,000 US\$ by a tribunal on Palawan Island. Echoing the sentencing, the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs urged fishermen to respect regulations and the Philippine authorities to treat the Chinese crew with fairness and humanity. According to the minister, China will continue to provide all assistance necessary to the prosecuted fishermen.

**Seizure of 175 kg of pangolin scales¹³
Thanh Hoa province, Vietnam
August 16, 2014**

The van was heading to China. The scales were in a bag in a compartment under the rear seats. Customs estimate the illicit merchandise to about 2 billion VND or 94,000 US\$. The vehicle was stopped and immobilized during at night and it underwent complete search in the morning.



Seizure of 4 pangolins¹⁴
Kunming, Yunnan Province, China
August 26, 2014

The Kunming customs seized 4 pangolins, including one mature and 3 baby ones. The suspect rode a motorcycle from Tengchong to Kunming, hoping to pass by customs without an inspection.

Seizure of 4 live pangolins^{14 bis}
Yunnan Province, China
September 2, 2014



Coming from nowhere, seized in unknown circumstances, it is not known what happened to them.

Seizure of a kg of pangolin scales¹⁵
Dudhpati, Region Development Centre, Nepal
September 7, 2014

The 2 suspects, 32 and 43 year old, were arrested by plainclothes police officers acting following tipped intelligence.

Seizure of 120 pangolins of which 7 dead and 200 kg of pangolin scales¹⁶
Lang Suan District, Chumphon Province, Thailand
September 9, 2014

7 pangolins died in that accident. 113 survived. The driver was only slightly injured. He lost control of the Isuzu and hit a tree. The cargo was expected to travel 500 km between Nakhon Si Thammarat and Prachuap Khiri Khan. Upon arrival, another SUV would have taken over northbound toward China with breaks in force-feeding stations.



Seizure of 457 dead pangolins¹⁷
Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China
September 11, 2014



The bodies, frozen into a ball and filmed with plastic, were hidden in the freezer. The police searched the garage after the 4 suspects were denounced by anonymous informants. The biggest pangolin weighed 9 kg.

Seizure of 150 kg of pangolin scales and 100 live pangolins¹⁸
Kuala Kurau, Perak State, Malaysia
September 13, 2014



Naval battle in the night. The fishing boat *Kilat 30* was chased by a Navy patrol boat. The *Kilat 30* hid in mangroves and got stuck. It was immediately searched. It was swarming with ant eaters. Live pangolins and dead ones in the form of scales. As everyone knows, there is no pangolins in the sea. One can reasonably conclude from all the wildlife trafficking in this region of Southeast Asia that the Malaysian boat is a link in smuggling pangolins from Sumatra, Indonesia, to China via Malaysia mainland, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. It seems that these countries are linked and crossed by a road and sea bridge dotted with force-feeding stops for pangolins to reach destination if not in good shape at least with a maximum weight at the end of the trip. It is sold by the kilo to restaurants.

Court appearance for contraband of 165 kg of pangolin scales¹⁹

China

September 17, 2014



The 3 Chinese citizens have been accused of trafficking pangolin

scales. They have been sending packages from Pakistan through EMS. The global seizure is estimated at 350,000 yuan, 56,887 US\$, or 344 US\$ per kilo. One of the men is trying to say that he believed the packages to be dried fruit. The scales were sold as retail in China.

Seizure of 1.9 kg of pangolin scales and arrest of a suspect²⁰

Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal

September 19, 2014

Small rivers of scales make a wide river of scalded pangolins. 1.9 kg of scales represents 4 to 5 pangolins.

Seizure of 43 kg of pangolin scales and arrest²¹

Division Nagpur, Maharashtra, India

September 22, 2014

Pangolins move at night. They defend themselves from tigers and leopards by rolling into a ball of scales hard as an armor. They can not defend themselves from men. Forest rangers noticed a boom in the traffic since 2013. 211 kg of scales were seized in 10 operations. The biggest one happened in Assam, 85 kg (See "On the Trail" n° 2 p.23).

The carrier, stopped at night, was taken into custody. Without knowing each link in the chain, he is part of an international gang.

Seizure of 2 kg of pangolin scales and arrested 5 suspects²²

Balaghat District, Madhya Pradesh, India

September 2014

Again! Small rivers of scales make a wide river of scalded pangolins. 2 kg of scales represent 4 to 6 pangolins.

Seizure of 37 frozen pangolins²³

Yiyang, Hunan Province, China

September 25, 2014

The termite and ant eater mammals came from Malaysia. They had been purchased for 89,220 Y i.e. 14,500 US\$ from 4 people from Guangzhou. The suspect picked up pangolins in his car but also bear meat and put them in the freezer. Traffic has been going on since November 2011.

Demand for the restoration of 145 kg of Pangolin scales by 2 Chinese nationals²⁴

Pakistan

September 2014

The 2 Chinese citizens were intercepted at Islamabad airport at the moment they were going to fly home to their country. 145 kg of pangolin scales

were discovered and seized. They had been able to get on their flight after they were interrogated by the police (see "On the Trail" n°4 p. 44). They now demand that the Pakistani customs give back the scales, arguing that there is no established proof that the scales originate from illegal activity.

According to Pakistani naturalists, poaching jeopardizes pangolins future in the short run in their country. The poachers, who are mainly paid by Chinese sponsors, receive 10,000 to 15,000 RS (or 97 to 145 US\$) for a pangolin. To get 1 kg of scales, 3 pangolins must be hunted and skinned. Pangolins are listed on the CITES Appendix II. The trade of live specimens or their various parts is still possible under certain conditions, notably through the issue of an export license by the country of origin. According to many environmental NGOs, the 8 pangolin species will be transferred into Appendix I by 2016 if current trends continue. Then, no trade of these animals will be allowed.

EUROPE

Seizure of 250 kg of pangolin scales²⁵

Roissy-Paris airport, France

July 9, 2014

The customs value is 187,500 €. This is the largest seizure of this kind ever conducted in France. Origin: Nigeria. Destination: Laos. Denomination: fish scales. Here traffickers have evidence that pangolin scales do not protect from bad luck. Customs at Roissy Airport have seized 558 kg of pangolin scales since 2009.



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Primates



**Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
August 24, 2014**



**Sangatta, Indonesia
July 2014**



**Vietnam
August 2014**



**Sungai Ambangah, Indonesia
August 17, 2014**



**Labai, Indonesia
September 2014**



**Sanggau, Indonesia
September 19, 2014**



**Beaumont, California, United States
August 3, 2014**

AFRICA

Dead Gorilla baby (*Gorilla* spp., Appendix I)¹
Cameroon
July 16, 2014



Seizure of 3 chimpanzee skulls (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) and the arrest of a trafficker²
Pouma, Littoral Region, Cameroon
August 22, 2014

This deliveryman took a strange course on his bicycle. He went to the Littoral Region, 20km away from Pouma, to collect 3 chimpanzee skulls. On his return, the police intercepted him as he was getting ready to deliver them. Chimpanzee or gorilla skulls are for sale on "Naturabuy" (see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 104).

Seizure of 2 chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I)³
Kinshasa, Province of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
August 24, 2014

MONUSCO redeems itself after the parrots case (see "On the Trail" n°4, p.30). An Antonov cargo airplane allowed the transfer of 2 chimpanzees from Kinshasa to Bukavu in a 3 hours flight. By road, the convoy would have taken several days, without being sure to reach its destination.

The 2 chimpanzees, aged 5 and 3, had been living in seclusion for a year near a supermarket in the capital city.

The male one limps a little for it was injured at the hip when poachers captured it.

They need care and rehabilitation to wild social life. After a month in quarantine, they will be incorporated into the Lwiro rehabilitation center for primates. The ultimate goal is to return them to where they came from: the jungle.

The Lwiro center hosts 55 chimpanzees and 75 other monkeys of a dozen different species.



Abandonment of at least 5 primates including a baboon (*Papio* spp., Appendix II) and a chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I)⁴
Abidjan, Langunes Region, Côte d'Ivoire
August-September 2014



Those animals are now twofold victims of human behaviour. Formerly, they were captured from the wild to be sold and kept captive in private homes, restaurants or other places of entertainment. Now, in fear of the Ebola epidemic, many residents of Abidjan have dropped their "pets" on the road or in front of zoos. A female baboon was almost killed in the street by stones and sticks thrown at it. Zoo veterinarians, alerted by a passer-by, saved it at the very last minute.

REPEATED OFFENSE

Arrest of a poacher possessing 4 heads and 16 legs of Western gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla*, Appendix I)⁵

Nanga Eboko, Central Region, Cameroon
September 2014

The 33 year old trafficker is a veteran. With his accomplices and using 4 motorcycles, he regularly gets supplies along the Sanga River. The gang meets poachers coming by boat from inside the deep rain forest wherein the last gorillas survive. The heads and limbs are usually stored in a home freezer and then sold to wholesalers in Douala, Yaounde, Bertoua, Ebolowa.

The offender was arrested by a 10-police men squad, game guards and anti-poaching activists.

All the gorilla parts were in a cardboard box. The man had already been arrested 4 times for the same reason. At that time, the «goods» had been seized but he had been left free to pursue his misdeeds. Nevertheless, he was closely watched.



Ebola

In western Africa and Asia the traditional practice of consuming bushmeat, which is to say meat from wild animals, is a substantial amount of the staple diet.

From an environmental standpoint, consuming bushmeat entails on numerous species, on families of iconic animals and on animals considered to be of little importance, a threat which is becoming more and more significant and difficult to handle in the current and future political, economic and demographic climate.

From a health point of view bushmeat carries risks. It is a potential vector of epizooties such as Monkeypox, foot and mouth disease and African swine fever virus as well as epidemics such as the Ebola Virus and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Forests and savannas are vast slaughterhouses. Veterinary checks are non-existent. Conditions of preparing, preserving transporting and the selling of bushmeat on road sides or in city markets add up to numerous defaults and could, in the worst case scenario, end up becoming pathogen bombs.

No matter how much the Nigerian sellers of bushmeat supported by the National Hunters Association of Nigeria have eaten cooked bats, antelopes and porcupines before appointed medias and retailers, industry remains dubious.

The source of a new outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly Republic of Zaire, was identified and described by the International Centre for Medical Research in Franceville (CIRMF): a hunter-trapper had brought a monkey to his home. His wife was contaminated while she dismembered and cut up the animal. She then infected the doctor and her husband; other people in their entourage were infected. Within one month 40 people died from the epidemic.

At least 5 outbreaks of Ebola confined to Central Africa were attributed to the handling of antelope, gorilla and chimpanzee meat.

In Western Africa, the origin and tracability of the current Ebola haemorrhagic fever epidemic is unclear but several governments are using the outbreak in an attempt to regulate trafficking. Bushmeat crosses African country borders with ease and takes flight towards Europe and the United States without any complications. However, the transport of bushmeat is banned for health reasons by the international Air Transport Association (IATA). The United States and Europe prohibits the import of meat, meat products and fish if they are not attributed with or accompanied by a veterinary certificate proving the bacteriological innocuity.

A trial investigation carried out at terminal 2E at Paris Roissy-Charles de Gaulle Airport between June 2nd and 20th 2008 on Air France flights coming from Central Africa and Western Africa between 5 am and 10 am revealed an important continued flow of traffic. Luggage of 134 passengers from 29 flights coming from 14 African countries was searched. Almost half contained meat or fish. From a total of 765 kg, 446 kg was dried fish, 188 kg was bushmeat and 131kg cattle meat. The consignments of bushmeat were the most significant per unit. Following verification by the Museum d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris, the smuggled bushmeat was identified to have come from pangolins, mangabeys, primates from the genus *Cercopithecus*, porcupines, red river hogs, and the greater cane rat (*Thryonomys swinderianus*). When only taking into account the aforementioned flights and taking into account the total number of passengers, the trial investigation suggested that 3287 tonnes of meat and fish are illegally imported every year of which 273 tonnes are bushmeat.

During a parallel investigation, an elephant's trunk was found in the luggage of a passenger coming from Africa landing in Toulouse, in the South of France.

An overall total which regroups smuggled wild meat from China, Asia and Africa could be 10 to 20 times higher in French airports, not to mention trafficking by road and train from neighbouring countries such as Belgium. French Customs do not hunt down smuggled meat. "It takes a lot of time." "It does not create any revenue for the administration." In fact, almost all passengers are exempt from any sanction even a fine. The seizure of smuggled meat, piece by piece, section by section in this spread out airport traffic does not bring about a promotion in a custom officer's career which is the case for drugs or counterfeits. "When we have consignments at the airport, it is extra work and a waste of time; it has to be transported to an industrial burning site." "We only intervene when it really stinks". The traffic is flourishing. It is well organised. One third of the passengers who were transporting bushmeat and surprised by the trial investigation only paid 10% of their ticket because they were family members of Air France personnel. The game can bring in the big bucks. There is no fine and meat that is sold for celebrations such as baptisms, parties, weddings and rituals sells for 20 € right up to 80 or 100 € a kilo. In Paris in 2008, a small monkey weighing 4 kg sold for around 100 €. In Cameroon, 4 kg fetched 5 €.

The problems and the risks are the same in airports in the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom, Belgium and all of Europe. Consumers beware. The fact that this meat be smoked does not prevent it from being contaminated inside by bacteria and various viruses.

Seizure of 4 chimpanzee skulls (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) and one gorilla skull (*Gorilla gorilla*, Appendix I)⁶

Cameroon

September 2014

Since the beginning of the year, 39 chimpanzee and gorilla skulls have been seized. The fate of the bones is unknown. Have they truly and definitively been removed from the market and destroyed?



Seizure of a squirrel monkey (*Saimiri* spp, Appendix I or II)⁹

Picos, State of Piauí, Brazil

August 12, 2014

Inside the car driving to Maceió, State of Alagoas (800 km), there were also 3 yellow-rumped caci-ques (*Cacicuscela*). The driver was fined.



Seizure of a Geoffroy spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*, Appendix II)¹⁰

Mexico City, Mexico

September 2014

The female monkey would be about 39 year old. It was recovered by PROFEPA officers in a private house in the borough of Iztapalapa. She shows obvious signs of abuse. She was temporarily taken for first aid care into PROFEPA facilities.



AMERICA

Seizure of monkeys (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II)⁷

Lima, Region of Lima, Peru

July 2014

They were illegally sold in shops in Lima. The alert was launched on "90 Matinal" radio channel. Overall assessment : dozens of turtles, canaries and monkeys.

Seizure of 2 capuchins (*Cebus* spp., Appendix II) and a tamarin (*Saguinus* spp., Appendix I or II)⁸

Beaumont, California, United States

August 3, 2014

One of the 3 monkeys used for "psychological comfort" a pizzeria manager bit a client as she was taking care of her 3 children. The 3 monkeys were seized and put under quarantine by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. They were being detained without a permit. The restaurant owner has a record in the matter. In 2003, when acting as a veterinarian she had been involved in mismanagement of the Colton tiger reserve. At least 30 baby tigers had been found dead in a freezer as 2 alligators were additionally being kept in a bathtub. John Weinhart, the manager of the refuge had been convicted for animal cruelty.

In 2010, Wendelin Ringel had been sentenced to 3 year imprisonment, suspended with probation, for illegal practice of veterinarian medicine. She converted herself into an Italian restaurant business owner, dragging with her wild animals of unknown origins.

Seizure of 4 live red-faced spider monkeys (*Ateles paniscus*, Appendix II)¹¹

Manaus, Amazonas, Brazil

September 2014

This case involves 2 females and 2 young males. The latter, brothers, are only 3 months old. They are in a particularly worrying state. Their mother supposedly has been killed during their capture. None of the 4 monkeys are in condition to be released into the wild as of yet. They have been sent to a public park in Curitiba where 12 professionals are currently tending them.



ASIA

Rescue of a macaque (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II)¹²

Da Nang, Vietnam

July 2014

The monkey was in a cage exhibited in the bar. ENV (Education for Nature Vietnam) received an alert and the monkey was swiftly rescued by the Danang forest protection lads and put in a safe and hospitable place. Hotline: 1800-15-22.

Seizure of 2 macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II)¹³

Vietnam

July 9, 2014

The 2 macaques were saved by students on holidays and released back to their natural habitat. No vacation allowed in the struggle against monkeys' abuse.

Seizure of a young orangutan (*Pongo* spp., Appendix I)¹⁴

Sangatta, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

July 2014



Always the same story, the young ones get permanently separated from their mothers when the settlers arrive with their war weapons to destroy the jungle and exploit palm trees and coal mines. The young orangutan was rescued by the Center for Orangutan Protection (COP).

Rescue of a macaque (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II)¹⁵

Vietnam

July 2014

One more macaque was saved thanks to the 1800-15-22 hotline after an 8 year long captivity in a restaurant. He is already back in the forest.

Rescue of an astrological macaque (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II)¹⁶

Vietnam

July 2014

1800-15-22 saves again. His fortune teller had told her to have a monkey at home in order to consolidate the health of his son, born in the monkey year. Thanks to an alert by an ENV enthusiast, the macaque is no longer in the house but in the Cuc Phuong National Park wildlife refuge.

Good news

Rescue of a loris (*Lorisidae* spp., Appendix I or II)¹⁷

Da Nang, Vietnam

July 2014

The loris has returned home, to his natural environment, the rainforest. Hopefully after this last glance, he won't see us again.



Seizure of a living macaque monkey (*Macaca* spp., Appendix II)¹⁸

Sapa, Vietnam

August 2014

Tourists, foreign workers and national Vietnamese! Call 1800-152 or download for Android the application at <http://bit.ly/ENVReportWildlifeCrime> if you witness wild animal custodial possession in a restaurant or private home. This macaque is one of the lucky few to have been freed.



Seizure of 2 living macaques (*Macaca* spp. Appendix I or II)¹⁹

Ninh Binh, Ninh Binh, Vietnam

August 2014

2 more macaques are on their way to the CucPhong National Park wildlife refuge. Aged 6 to 7, they were used until then as live decoration at a holiday resort.



Seizure of 3 live macaques (*Macaca* spp. Appendix II)²⁰

Vietnam

August 2014

Yes we all can! These 3 here have been freed and put back into a natural refuge.

Seizure of an orangutan (*Pongo* spp., Appendix I)²¹

Gayo Lues, Aceh Province, Indonesia

August 5, 2014

The about 10 month old baby was removed from a domestic building where it was in agony. It was dehydrated, emaciated, and had wounds on its face and legs. Urgently transported to a specialist veterinarian clinic, he will have the opportunity to heal. The Province of Aceh has been unfortunately subjected to widespread deforestation at the same time as it has been the most prominent home to orangutans relying on the forest for their habitat. Villagers say that the surviving infant ape had been found on the ground, abandoned. The orangutan expert rescuers think otherwise on account of the wounds coming from what was probably its capture and being torn away from its mother. The mother was undoubtedly killed there or wounded in the struggle.



PT Kallista Alam, a big palm oil producer in the Province of Banda Aceh was sentenced in appeal to pay 366 billion Rupiah, that is 30 million US\$ for having destroyed 1000 hectares of peat lands and swamp marshes. The money will be used to restore the Tripa swamp part of the global Leuser ecosystem, one of the last places in the world and in Indonesia where orangutans, rhinos, elephants and tigers can live together. « We demand that the decision be executed immediately » says Fadhila Ibra, spokesperson for the Coalition for Tripa Swamp Rescue.

Good news

Release of a Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*, Appendix I)²²

Sungai Ambang, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

August 17, 2014



She is about 12 years old. She seems 6 to 7. Her muscles are atrophied. Her development was disturbed. She was captive in a small cage by the side of the road. Children gave her food when they passed by. She used an old empty rice sack to shelter on cold nights. Her owner did not want to release her. He was threatened with legal action. Eventually she was freed from the hands of his torturer who couldn't care less about animal welfare, and air-transferred to the IAR (International Animal Rescue) rehabilitation center. She suffers from behavioral problems.

Seizure of 3 macaques and conviction (*Macaca* spp., Appendix II)²³

Vietnam

August 2014

A foreign tourist reported 3 captive macaques to the ENV. After 3 visits from the authorities, the establishment manager still couldn't produce the required valid permits. The 3 macaques were finally seized and taken into a conservation center. The former owner was sentenced to an additional fine of 750 US\$.

Seizure of 4 ebony leaf monkeys from Java (*Trachypithecus auratus*, Appendix II)²⁴

Lumajang, Province of Western Java, Indonesia

August 2014

In western Sumatra and eastern Java, monkey trafficking rages on. The trees fall, and the apes with them. Like fruits they are more or less harvested to be used as pets for the rest of their lives. The 4 small leaf monkeys were discovered and finally taken away from the hands of a wild fauna wholesaler by the Eastern Java Police, with the assistance of "Animals Indonesia" and the Centre for Orangutan Protection (COP).



Good news

2 macaques released (*Macaca* spp., Appendix II)²⁵

Vietnam

August 2014

As he heard about the regular interventions of the ENV on the radio show "Voice of Vietnam," a 85 year old listener decided to call the hotline. The respective services thereafter took possession with all the necessary measures of the 2 apes to bring them to the Chu Yang Sin National Park.



Good news

Release of a gibbon from the species *Nomascus leucogenys*, Appendix I²⁶

Vietnam

August 2014



Inspired by the media-printed portraits of 2 entertainers from the Cuc Phong National Park refuge for lorys, langurs, macaques and other species of apes, the owner of a gibbon decided to turn in his domesticated monkey.

Good news

Release of a Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*, Appendix I)²⁷

Labai, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

September 2014

Orphaned, injured, weakened, held for 2 years with a nylon rope, the little frugivorous orangutan was fed on condensed milk and fried-food leftovers. His owner finally called the BKSDA. The young orangutan is now slowly getting used to the company of other ape mates and to the vegetarian diet. It might eventually be released in the forest, if any remain.



Rescue of a Borneo orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*, Appendix I)²⁸

**Bontang, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia
September 5, 2014**

Another victim of the deforestation conducted for the purpose of the oil palm industry. Many orangutans are killed, some escape and are illegally caged.

Seizure of 4 live macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix II)²⁹

**Binh Duong Province, Vietnam
September 2014**

2 in a café. 2 in a private home. Thank you ENV!

Good news

Release of a Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*, Appendix I)³¹

Sanggau, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

September 19, 2014



Wawa's fate is similar to many Borneo orangutans'. Its natural forest and feeding habitat has disappeared. It was more or less adopted and tended by villagers. It remained chained to a tree, caged, and underfed for at least 5 years, losing his hairs, suffering from skin diseases, being too small for his age, and drinking sodas and coffee. It was freed thanks to Pak Suryadi, a forest officer who convinced Wawa's owner to release him. Pak hosted Wawa at his house - for there was no room in the premises of the Forest Service to keep the animal- before turning it in to the Ketapang orangutan shelter after a 14 hour long road trip. International Animal Rescue (IAR) hosts there 70 of its peers. The IAR aims to release its guests in virgin forest areas after a long rehabilitation. «Our main concern is the need of sufficient rainforest surface to accommodate the orangutangs, while their number at our shelter and in other reception centers in Indonesia is steadily increasing» Llano Sanchez Karmele, head of the IAR rehabilitation center said.



Good news

Release of a young Sumatran orangutan (*Pongo abelii*, Appendix I)³⁰

Indonesia

September 2014



It was recovered from villagers by BSKDA members and the Center for Orangutan Protection.

Seizure of a Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*, Appendix I)³²

Karanggondang, Central Java Province, Indonesia

September 23, 2014

Tita, a female orangutan is about 15 years old. She has been living in a cage since the age of 5 to 6 months. A Dayak had given her as a gift - or an exchange - to a forest company lumberman from Borneo Island. She had then been deported on Java Island just like any pet. She was fed with rice, living in a 2-meter high and 1.5-meter large cage. She is overweight: 100 kg, which is 20 kg over the average weight for an orangutan that old. The owner was unaware of the species' being strictly protected in Indonesia and of the interdiction to keep one in captivity.

Tita was seized by the regional BKSDA unit which is now keeping it in quarantine and rehabilitating in the Ungaran specialized center. She used to drink tea and syrup when she was captive, and now she refuses to drink plain and clear water.



**Sentencing for the illegal transport of 6 rhesus macaques (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II)³³
Mudanjiang, Heilongjiang Province, China
September 23, 2014**



The "Traditional arts and shows" Chinese association has decided to step up after the seizure of tamed monkeys. The monkeys allegedly come from a breeding farm in which they were taught clowning and acting for human-entertainment purposes. In China, monkeys have always been endowed with the roles of cheeky jester characters. In folklore, monkeys have a spiritual king, Sun Wu Kong which is said to upset, in the Heavenly Palace, all the social conventions and privileges of the elites, the gods, and both good and wicked spirits. Back on earth, the sons and relatives of Sun Wu Kong are reduced to riding bikes and mocking their human audience. 6 rhesus macaques and 4 monkey leaders were called in by the police in the middle of the summer. The macaques were seized. They died in custody. Seized animals often serve simply as pieces of evidence during the inquiry process and do not have their biological and social needs taken into account. The 4 animals exhibitors were found guilty of illegal wild animal transport and were released after paying a 6200 yuan fine (around 1000 US\$).

Discovery of 54 ape carcasses (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II)³⁴

**Hardoi District, Province of Uttar Pradesh, India
September 29, 2014**

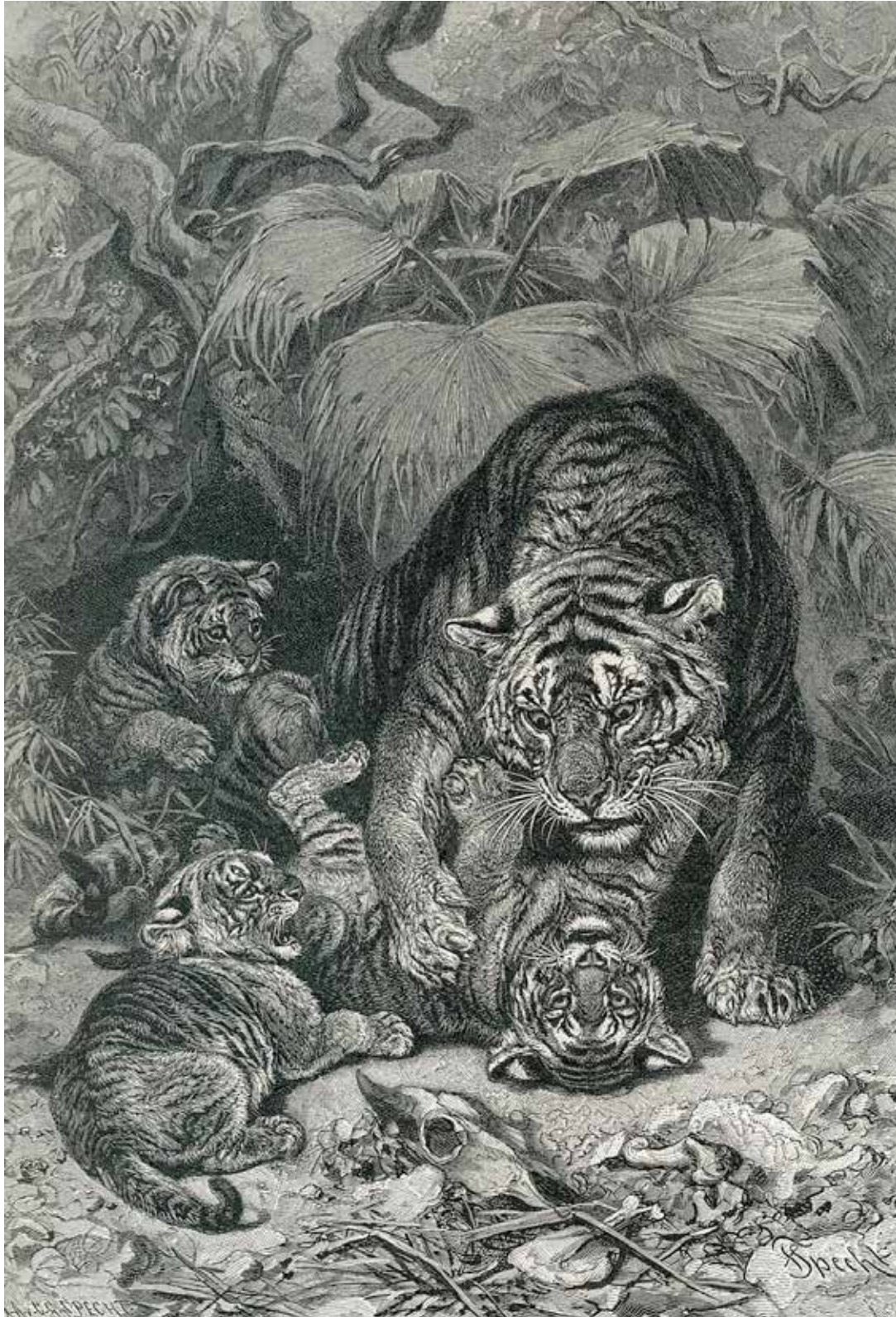
54 dead monkeys scattered in a field. Many were disembowelled. The butchers were possibly organ traffickers. Those who profess to offer alternative medicine are interested in monkey livers to spice up their "miracle solutions." Some villagers fear that it might be an act of witchcraft (see "On the Trail" n° 3 p. 4) designed to jinx the community and its livestock. In their haste, the forestry services buried the corpses nearby before reconsidering. They then called veterinarians and sent the bodies to a laboratory for post-mortem analyses. The monkeys might have been poisoned. 4 monkey species live in the Uttar Pradesh: the langurs of the species *Semnopithecus dussumieri* and *Semnopithecus hector* (both in Appendix I), the Assam macaque (*Macaca assamensis*, Appendix II) and the Rhesus macaque (*Macacamulatta*, Appendix II).



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.

Seizure from 1st July to 30th September
20 skins and stuffed animals seized
26 live animals seized



AFRICA

Seizure of 67 lion teeth and 447 lion claws¹

**Julius Nyerere International Airport in Dar es Salam, Region of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
July 2014**

This amounts to 15 lions killed for the teeth and 22 for the claws. The discreet trophies were hidden in the luggage but it didn't fool the cunning security services of the Julius Nyerere International Airport. The Tanzanian airport police commander notices that, since ivory smuggling is under strong scrutiny, traffickers are tending to swap to lions.

Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest²

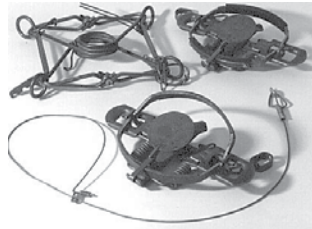
**Siavonga, Southern Province, Zambia
Week of September 8 to 14, 2014**

The leopard was reportedly killed in May near the Lower Zambezi National Park. 2 suspects have been arrested.

10 villagers were each fined 1800 K (296 US\$) for having extracted 10 padauk logs (*Pterocarpus soyauxii*) from the park. A Ford truck has been seized.

Poaching of a lion³ Zambia Kafue National Park September 2014

The young male lion is irreversibly mutilated. It fell into a metal trap that had been set by bushmeat hunters. It dragged for several days the 2 m long trunk that had been used as a support for the trap. It had lost half of his right rear leg when it was found and treated by a veterinarian. It has good chance of survival. In total, Zambian national parks possibly host about 1,000 lions. The use of traps within the Kafue National Park is considered as a scourge by the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA).

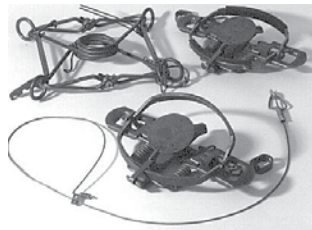


Poaching of a leopard⁴ Magaliesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

September 2014

Her detection tag reported total immobility. She was released 4 months ago after a period of rehabilitation. With another leopard, she had been seized from a farmer who kept them captive.

Rescuers found her caught in a trap of steel wire. After being put asleep, she was transported by helicopter to the Johannesburg Zoo. Veterinarians are trying to save her a particularly vital rescue as she bears 3 baby leopards!



AMERICA

Seizure of one live tiger⁵

**Chilapa de Álvarez, State of Guerrero, Mexico
July 2014**

150 kg. 1,60 m long. 0,60 m high. The female tiger seems in good health. In the abandoned house, her cage left her but little space to move. No water. The PROFEPA has placed the feline under sequestration and set it under the care of the Zoológico de Chilpancingo pending its final destination is decided.

PROFEPA encourages the population not to keep tigers as pets.



Seizure of a tiger and a puma⁶

State of Mexico, Mexico

July 2014

The 2 males were at a person's home. No documents state their origin.

Seizure of a jaguar⁷

Culiacán International airport, State of Sinaloa, Mexico

July 23, 2014



It was transported on a plane from Mexico to Culiacán (1200 km to the north-west). Hidden in a cardboard box, it is barely a month-and-a-half old, and in good health. Culiacán zoological park employees are temporarily tending it. Investigations are ongoing with the sender and recipient to find out in what conditions the sale was carried out.

Seizure of 2 live lions⁸

State of Yucatan, Mexico

August 2, 2014

The 2 year-old male and female lion were abandoned by a circus when it was denied the necessary authorizations to use them in the show. They were left on the spot, in the heat and with no food or water. Their claws had been cut off. A local citizen gave the alert.

After sanitary examination they were handed over to the El Centenario zoological park with special accreditation from the Secretariat for the environment and natural resources (SEMARNAT).

Sequestration of a lion⁹
Nezahualcoyotl, Mexico State, Mexico
September 2014

The 5 year old male lived in a private house. It is healthy. Its owner cannot present official documents, so the lion is under sequestration until the end of the investigation.



Sequestration and seizure of a Bengal tiger^{9bis}
Mineral de la Reforma, State of Hidalgo, Mexico
September 22, 2014

When agents of the PROFEPA went to an individual's home in Mineral de la Reforma, they found a Bengal tiger in a wheel cage. His "owner" presented copies of bill for purchase and a report from the SEMARNAT in which was specified the marking system used for the animal.



Yet, the microchip is unreadable, nothing proves that this is the same feline mentioned and the documents are unclear and non certified copies. The tiger has been put under sequestration and left to the "owner" who must warn the PROFEPA if ever the feline is to be moved. He must also transfer him to a larger cage.

2 weeks later, a Bengal tiger offered for sale was signaled in the Federal District of Mexico. It's the same one. This time, the PROFEPA seized the tiger. The owner is accused of fraud and tabling fake documents.

The animal was taken to the Bioparque Convivencia Pachuca shelter for his physical and sanitary state to be evaluated. He is 3 year old and weighs 200 kg.

ASIA

Seizure of tiger parts (65 kg)¹⁰
Stretch of the road between Phatthalung and Hat Yai, Thailand
July 8, 2014

We were shocked by the episode with living tigers thrown by night onto a Vietnamese national road (see « On the Trail » n°5). This time tiger meat has been found by the side of the express way in southern Thailand, 15 km away from the Malaysian border. The 3 bags filled with 65 kg of meat were thrown away by traffickers nearing a road block. On the local market, tiger meat sells for 4000 bath (123 US\$) per kg. Meat smuggled into China raises up to 5380 bath (168 US\$) per kg.

Sentenced for illegal transporting 2 Siberian tigers (*Panthera tigris altaica*)¹¹
Wuhan, Province of Hubei, China
July 14, 2014



38 year old Zhan was from Suzhou, also known in China as "circus city". He had been an animal tamer since he was very young. In October 2012, after the birth of 2 Siberian tigers, he contacted the Jingzhou zoo management to offer his services. He backed his proposal with photocopies of his training permits forgetting to specify he had no qualification to train tigers. Since 2005 he had mainly worked at small jobs as wild animal caretaker and had no longer been directly in charge of their taming and training. After several months of negotiation Zhang and the zoo came to an agreement: Zhang will "educate" the 2 little ones for 2 months. Transporting tigers between 2 Chinese provinces is subject to many formalities. Zhang preferred not to undertake them. The 2 small tigers were put in the car trunk to travel over 1000 km from Jingzhou in the Hubei province to Suzhou, near Shanghai, in Anhui province. Zhang was stopped on the way by customs officers.

He has just been sentenced to 10 years prison and 30,000 yuans fine, i.e. a bit less than 5000 US\$. His lawyer has lodged an appeal.

Seizure of a Bengal tiger¹²
Sanmenxia, Province of Henan, China
July 16, 2014



Yes I'm in a busted old cardboard box. I was sold on the Internet for 40,000 dollars. My 6 new Chinese masters are trying to sell me for much more. As a pet or for my meat? I don't know. Even my whiskers are expensive. They are used as dental floss in traditional Chinese medicine. I belong to the Bengal tiger species.

Investigations opened on a man suspected of the poaching of a leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II in Cambodia)¹³
Pailin, Province of Pailin, Cambodia
July 20, 2014



The photo is on Facebook. This is a pretty compromising position especially for the son of the director for Pailin Province rural development. On the pictures, the young man is posing with a gun and the remains of a leopard, several squirrels and 2 mouse-deers. The general attorney in the province has requested police to carry out a preliminary

investigation. The young man claims he has not taken part in the hunt. He says he only took part in the culinary preparation of the animals. Sor Monny Roath, the suspect's father says his son never hunts wild animals. He was only about to share of the meat with some friends.

Sentencing for poaching and trafficking in tiger skin is confirmed in appeal¹⁴
Chitwan National Park, Central Development Region, Nepal
July 21, 2014

In July 2012, Mr. Thing had been caught selling tiger skins. He was indicted for poaching and trafficking and sentenced to a 5 year prison term under the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act that states 5 to 15 years imprisonment for such offenses. His conviction has just been confirmed while 2 of his accomplices who had managed to escape from prison, have just been caught back by the police. 100 to 120 Bengal tigers presumably live in and around the grand National Park of Nepal.

Seizure of a leopard skin¹⁵
New Delhi, State of Delhi, India
July 21, 2014

A leopard skin sells 8500 US\$ on the international market. The skin was in the hands of a middleman who was about to negotiate the price near a roadside station. The AATS (Anti Auto Theft Squad) was told of this meeting. It immediately got in contact with other relevant services and the offices in charge of wildlife management enabled to immediately identify the skin. The 40-year-old man caught red handed had reached an agreement 2 months ago with the holder of the fleece. He took on the task of finding a buyer.

FAMILY AFFAIRS
REPEATED OFFENSE
Court hearing for a tiger poacher¹⁶
Amravati Division, State of Maharashtra, India
July 25, 2014



Chacha, 67 year old, the elusive nightmare of Bengal tigers (see « On the Trail » n°2) is trying by all means to be released on bail. Why not him? His buddy Lala with whom he has been working for years has already been granted such a measure, just like 2 Baheliya nomads freshly set free by the Mumbai High Court. But things aren't going as well for Chacha. The Amravati chief judicial magistrate has rejected his bail application, deeming that the seriousness of the tiger poaching offense is not compatible with such a decision. Chacha's request had been rejected in May by the police court in the same town. Chacha has lodged an appeal.

The representative of the government declared to the district court that indeed Chacha was not the only one to lay the traps but that he was in the same shoes along with the other poachers and, additionally, has financed the whole traffic and sold the tiger skins in the neighboring countries. M. Ganorkar also reminded that Chacha's cell phone bills showed many calls to China and Nepal and that Chinese currency equivalent to RS 50 lack (83,200 US\$) had been discovered at his home.

Finally he reminded the court that Chacha was in direct relation with Sansar Chad, head of the tiger trafficking gang, his name being cited several times in the CBI files (Central Board Investigation).

Some of Chacha's assistants, now imprisoned, have revealed that, following his instructions, tigers were poisoned.

Will Chacha and his lawyers appeal to the Mumbai Supreme Court ?

Seizure of a tiger skin and 22 tiger claws¹⁷
Bhandara District, State of Maharashtra, India
July 27, 2014

The skin of an 8-month old tiger and 22 claws were seized and 7 traffickers arrested in an operation led by forest police with the support of an NGO in Bengaluru. Seizure of these 23 parts of Bengal tiger parts - a species benefiting from the highest level of protection in Asia- could lead to exposing a large scale trafficking network originating from Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha and set up by Baheliya nomads and settled residents. The police judge designated Kartik Shukul, an anti-poaching specialist as expert for the case. Priority is to prevent releases on bail of Vikas Maraskolhe, who would store the tiger remains at his home, of Kavish Bomanwar, a retired inspector for the State Treasury and of Manos Mahasan, financial provider for the gang and adamant witchcraft practitioner.

According to the expert, releasing the accused might affect the investigation conducted on national and international scales, and would entail pressure upon witnesses and loss of evidence. A Tibetan trader is suspected to be the link enabling the skins to be sent to China and would be in contact with Keru, the well-known poacher who escaped a police trap in November 2013 (see "On the Trail" n°3).

Released on bail without caution

Bail releasing is weighing down repression of trafficking in wild animals in India and its neighboring countries. Poachers and in particular those who work in the tiger and other felines branch know very well how to pull all judicial strings and with the help of specialized lawyers to knock at the doors of many lower and higher courts that could possibly grant them release before any trial takes place or any judgment is pronounced.

Once they are freed, poachers belonging to communities such as the Bahelyia request through their lawyers authorization not to attend the trial hearings for medical reasons. Convenience medical certificates are provided. In some ways, the tiger skin network includes lawyers and doctors. Poachers from the Bawaria and Bahelyia clans never come to court once they have been let out. The interview of one of the poachers made by the Wildlife Trust of India and reported in "On the Trail" n°4 show that these strategies to avoid sentencing and imprisonment are perfectly mastered.

In 2004, 4 men and 9 women were caught red handed in possession of tiger traps. They were all released on bail. Investigations linger due to the lack of witnesses and statements, the suspects having vanished in thin air. Relocating the poachers is all the more difficult that they previously had provided fake birth certificates and false addresses. Even fake death certificates can be produced as demonstrated by the story of the Nepalese poacher let out for health reasons so as to receive specialized treatment in India and declared deceased through a fake death certificate delivered by an Indian hospital (see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 78). When the Indian Justice loses track of recidivists, the latter find tigers. Such is the case of famous mister Keru, arrested with others at Bagpur train-station in November 2009 for illegal possession of 2 tiger skins and 30 bones. He was released on bail in 2010 and since then has never responded to court summons. In 2013 concurring testimonies proved his direct involvement in recent 2-tiger trapping and he is today once more both involved and missing in a new tiger skin and claw trafficking case revealed in his home state of Maharashtra.

Seizure of a Bengal leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II in Vietnam)¹⁸ Vietnam

July 30, 2014

He was on sale on Facebook. Leopard cats are hunted for their fur and captured for the pet trade.



Seizure of tigers skins and bones¹⁹ Dong Nai Province, Vietnam August 11, 2014



The skin and bones divided into 2 lots for a total weight of 69 kg were seized late at night in the back kitchen of a dog-meat-specialized restaurant. Another tiger skeleton (11kg) has supposedly been delivered elsewhere in the city.

The 2 suppliers, the restaurant owner and 6 other persons found at the time of the search making tiger wine - a kind of bone glue obtained after hours of cooking which traditional Asian medicine assigns antirheumatic virtues to - have been arrested. Superstition also claims that tiger wine boosts libido. Most of the travel between Ha Tinh province and the city of Bien Hoa was carried out by ambulance, a mode of transport favored by animals smugglers (see "On the Trail" n°3, p. 31)

Seizure of 2 leopard skins²⁰ Lanzhou, Gansu Province, China August 12, 2014

The 2 furs value is estimated at 600,000 yuan (97,521 US\$).

3 subspecies of leopard are currently present in China:

- The North China leopard (*Panthera pardus japonensis*), living in the forests and grasslands in China's northern regions. There are probably a few more than 2000 left in the wild today. Their habitat is heavily fragmented.

- The Amur leopard (*Panthera pardus orientalis*). It formerly occupied the entire basin of the Amur river and the surrounding mountains to the north of China and the Korean peninsula. Today, a handful of leopards survive in the wild, around 50 in fact, isolated in the extreme east of Russia and in the province of Jilin in the northeast of China.

- The Indochinese leopard (*Panthera pardus delacouri*). It lives in south-eastern Asia (Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and southern China).

**Mystery of 18 dead leopards in a year²¹
Pokhara Forest, Western Development Region, Nepal**

From August 2013 to August 2014

The death toll rises in the absence of adapted wildlife emergency veterinary care. Cohabitation between Pokhara forests felines and nearby residents is increasingly tense. The local authority suspects that leopards are in most cases victims of poisoning or trapping capture attempts. On the black market, leopard skin sells for 10,000 US\$. Poaching a leopard is liable to a fine of 164 US\$.

Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest of 2 suspects²²

Jaharsing Pauwa, Region Development Centre, Nepal

August 28, 2014

The 2 Tamang, aged 38 and 44, rode a motorcycle. In a bag, there was the skin, almost 2m long. The Tamang, a Nepalese ethnic group, live to the north and east of Kathmandu. Their culture and traditions are similar to those of neighboring Tibetans.

Sentenced to 3 years in prison for poaching and sale attempt of a leopard skin²³

Province of North Khorasan, Iran

August 2014

The leopard was killed last winter. Iranian courts are becoming more severe as leopards and panthers are less and less numerous in the country.

Persian leopard (*Panthera pardus saxicolor*) are present in most of the country except in the Great Salt Desert (Dasht-e Kavir) and the Lut Desert (Desht-e-Lut). There are 550 to 850 individuals in Iran, according to the latest estimations.

The Asiatic cheetah's (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*, Appendix I) presence has been proven with certainty only in Iran. The population is estimated to a few dozens.

A group of Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II) is supposedly still present in the country.

Protection zones of desert lynx (*Caracal caracal*, Appendix I) have been implemented by the Iranian Cheetah Society (ICS) following several poaching in the east.

The last sighting of a lion in Iran dates back to 1942. The Caspian tiger (*Panthera tigris virgata*) is extinct. The last sighting dates from the early 70s.



Seizure of a leopard skin²⁴

Division of Amravati, Maharashtra, India

August 31, 2014

All 6 of them accuse the leopard. It was the one which started the fight. It attacked a cow. We were only responding to the aggression. We waited for it to return to the carcass and killed it with an old gun. Thereafter, the criminal was skinned and his skin went from Madhya Pradesh to Maharashtra. It was seized at the border between the 2 states. The skin of the leopard is at least worth 10,000 US\$. It was going for export.

Release on bail or no for poachers and traffickers of tigers²⁵

Maharashtra, India

August and September 2014

War is declared on releasing suspects on bail. The results are mixed. On the one hand Bhajan and Dalbir Bawaria, trappers, tanners, and seller of skins and also of claws and whiskers have faced denial of their bail application by courts declaring that "the poaching of tigers cannot be considered a small offence."

On the other hand, Siri, a.k.a. Prakash Bisen, was granted release on bail at the very first hurdle. The judge justified his decision by citing the fact that Siri had been in prison for 14 months pending trial. The Maharashtra Department of Forests has made an appeal.

Siri has a heavy "anti-fauna" record. Reliable sources testify of his being accused of poaching tigers, bears, and leopards in the forests of Melghat. Last May he finished off, with a spear, a tiger that had been caught in a villagers' trap near Ghatang. He is also accused of having made homemade bombs with powder to try and drive off wild boars that might have ruined the villagers' crops. Siri is indeed at the heart of all testimonies of poaching networks. He is a regular buyer of steel traps made by Jiyalal, an unfortunately specialized metal-smith. Siri delivered the bombs he had made to a mister Madhu Sawalkar, a tiger tracker living in Melghat, host of nomadic poachers, and accomplice in acts of poaching. Sawalkar was denied bail release.

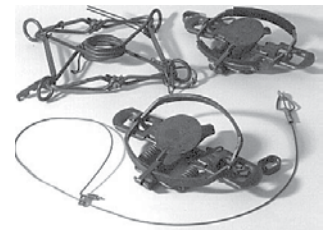
Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest²⁶

Bhiwapur, Maharashtra, India

September 12, 2014

The leopard was aged 8 to 10 months when it fell into a trap. Umred

Karhandla sanctuary is a few kilometers from Bhiwapur, where the skin was seized. The suspect was a middleman. He, in turn, fell into a fake buyers' trap. His supplier, a man named Waghmare, barely escaped arrest and is now a fugitive. This is the third leopard skin to be seized in Nagpur region in 4 years. A fourth fur coat was discovered a couple of days later. Its origin is subject to speculation. Perhaps Waghmare got rid of it while he was making his getaway.



2 leopards poached²⁷

Mandya district, Karnataka state, India

14-15 September 2014

One was shot in the neck, back and chest. He was lying in a field. Its claws and teeth had been removed. He had been dead for several days.

The second one, 11-months old, was presumably poisoned.

Seizure of a tiger skin and arrest²⁸

Sallaghari Region Development Centre, Nepal

September 17, 2014

The house was searched. The tiger coat was hidden under a ladder.

Seizure of a Bengal leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II)²⁹

Hanoi, Vietnam

September 22, 2014

The feline on sale in a pet shop must have had lost one of its leg in the trap that caught it. It was taken to a shelter where it will receive all the necessary care.



REPEATED OFFENSE

Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest³⁰

Haridwar, State of Uttarakhand, India

September 23, 2014

The 2 poachers are experienced. One of them is an inveterate forest leghold-trap setter.



Poaching of a wild cat³¹

Srikakulam District, Province of Andhra Pradesh, India

September 27, 2014

The villagers were arguing over the feline's meat (perhaps a panther or a tiger). Forest guards arrived and stopped the hustling. 3 people were arrested. The cat's head was buried in a field while its hide and claws disappeared. Its remains have been sent to the Hyderabad molecular biology laboratory (CCMB), for accurate determination of its species. The cat was electrocuted by a battery-powered metal wire.



Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest³²

Baripada, Odisha State, India

September 29, 2014

The 2 skins measured 1.60 m for the leopard and 71 cm for the chital deer (*Axis axis*, outside CITES). The seller wanted 80,000 Rs or 1300 US\$ for them.

EUROPE

Seizure of a live leopard and lifting of seizure³³

Moscow, Central Federal District, Russia

August 1, 2014

Next to the metro station Polezhaevskaya, a leopard lived in an apartment. On behalf of the Ministry of leopards- Ministry of Natural Resources - a special team intervened to release the leopard and prosecute its master. The leopard was taken into a shelter pending the experts' conclusions. It therefore refused to eat and started some sort of hunger strike until decision was made to temporarily turn it back to his former holder who's liable for a million rubles fine (28,000 US\$) and up to 5 years imprisonment for illegally trafficking endangered wildlife.

Amur leopard skin seller is sentenced³⁴

Russia

August 19, 2014

A 32 year old man was convicted under article 258.1 of the Russian criminal code (poaching, capture and sale of endangered wild animals). The criminal court of Vladivostok sentenced him to 7 months of mandatory community service for trying to sell a leopard skin.

In 2004, a man had received a fine amounting to 4700 US\$ for poaching an Amur tiger.

In 2012, the same offence had resulted in a sentence of 14 months of disciplinary work and a 18,500 US\$ fine.

In February 2014, a man convicted for killing a tiger was sentenced to a 2 year and 5 month imprisonment and ordered to pay 20,000 US\$ as ecological-damage compensation.

Ought it be concluded that Amur tigers are more important than Amur leopards? There remain 2 or 3 dozen Amur leopards in the wild. There is more or less the same number living in captivity in the Primorye region in eastern Russia.

Seizure of a dead lion³⁵

United Kingdom

September 2014

The lion's corpse was in the restaurant's freezer. The owner was saving the meat for his dogs. The deceased had come from a nearby zoo. The sanitary inspector of Chichester district (West Sussex) refuses to reveal the date and place of discovery.

Red Pandas

Red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) is listed in CITES Appendix I



ASIA

Seizure of 2 red panda skins¹ Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal August 20, 2014

The Kathmandu Police got their hands on the 2 red panda skins while searching in a forty-year-old man's backpack. They also found 2 cell-phones and 2 SIM cards. Traffickers take care to cover their tracks.

Seizure of a red panda skin² Boudhanath, Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal September 2014

20 x 84 cm. The red panda was an adult. The 20 and 26 year old holders are being interrogated by police.

Seizure of a red panda skin³ District of Rasuwa, Central Development Re- gion, Nepal September 2014

In the bus headed for Kathmandu, the potato bag also contained a red panda skin. The smuggler was a member of the Tamang ethnic group. He was arrested by a road check police patrol.

Adult red pandas are 50 cm tall, plus 30 to 50 cm with the tail. They are mainly vegetarian, feeding on young leaves, bamboo sprouts, fruit, roots, thick grass, lichen but also bird eggs, insects and worms.

Seizure of a red panda skin and arrest⁴ Charikot, District of Dolkha, Nepal September 21, 2014

Red panda skin trafficking is common around Kathmandu. This is the fourth occurrence in this "On the Trail". 2 men have been arrested. One of them, Chandra Tamang, owns a hotel near the Gaurishankar reserve where traffickers find their supplies. The red panda population there is said to be lesser than 40 individuals.

Bears

AMERICA

Appearance in court for the poaching of 36 animals including a black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II)¹

**Province of Alberta, Canada
July 2014**

The 10 poachers are accused of having killed the black bear, deers and mooses. The carcasses had been found spread out in the forest around Edson. 5 of the poachers are underage. Poaching is increasing in Alberta. The Alberta Conservation Association estimates that only 10 per cent of poaching acts are discovered. Wild sheep are also among the target species.



Discovery of a bear carcass (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II)²

**Pitt Meadows, British Columbia, Canada
8 September 2014**

The mutilated corpse of a bear was thrown out at the end of a field. Well done, sir! The paws were already cut off. And how, everyone loves a good bear-paw soup! Bear hunting season was open from April 1 to June 15 in British Columbia. However, it is not permitted in the area where the bear was dumped and found by a farmer a few days later. In Japan, bear soup is served at lavish business dinners. In Seoul, Korea, a bowl of bear soup fetches the equivalent of 1000 US\$ at the most exclusive restaurants. The cost of a bear's gall bladder is relatively modest on the American Continent – 235 dollars in Canada, 600 in the United States. In Asia, demand is on an entirely different level. It is said to cure everything, from diabetes to erectile dysfunction. The scale starts at 40,000 US\$ a piece.

In British Columbia, confrontations between bears and humans happen on a regular basis. Bears are increasingly taking on the habit to come and search trash cans for food. "This year we've had fewer problems" a Pitt Meadows police officer said. "Probably because nearby forests are full of berries."

Poaching of an American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II)³

State of Colorado, USA

September 2014

Wanted! A 2000 US\$ reward is offered to anyone who will help to stop the poacher who killed the bear with several poisoned arrows at the entrance of Dawson Ranch. The female weighed a hundred pounds. According to wildlife rangers, too many people mix hunting and poaching together.

ASIA

Conviction for the smuggling of 213 bear paws (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I ou II)⁴

**Hulunbuir, the autonomous region of Inner Mongolia, China
July 14, 2014**



On May 22, 2013 (see "On the Trail" n°1 p. 21), the Manzhouli customhouse seized 213 brown bear paws and captured 2 Russian suspects. After a series of questioning and investigation, the police discovered 2 other suspects, Chinese citizens Lu and Jin. Jin, convicted to 6 years in prison and a fine of 300,000 Yuan (48,340 US\$), was in charge of contacting the suppliers and retrieving the products once it reaches Chinese soil. Lu, sentenced to 7 years in prison and 300,000 Yuan (48,340 US\$) fine, organized the transportation of the products. The 2 Russian drivers are each sentenced to 5 years in prison, a fine of 100,000 Yuan (16,113 US\$). One kilo of bear paws costs 400 Yuan (65 US\$) in Russia and can reach 8000 Yuan (1300 US\$) in China.

Seizure of bear bones (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II)⁵

**Bhairabsthan, West Development Zone, Nepal
July 20, 2014**

2 people carrying bear bones have been arrested by plain-clothed policemen.

4 species are present in Nepal : sloth bears of India (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I), Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I), brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) and Himalayan brown bear (*Ursus arctos isabellinus*, Appendix II).

Seizure of 22 bear paws (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II)⁶

**Vinh, North Central Coast Region, Vietnam
August 27, 2014**

A passenger gets off the bus. A police patrol comes his way. The guy runs away leaving his mess on the sidewalk. There were 22 bear paws in the 2 bags which were emitting a strong smell despite the ice. The bus came from Laos.

**Seizure of a skin of an American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II)⁷
Qingdao, Shandong Province, China
August 2014**

"Its mouth and eyes were wide open with intact teeth and tongue".

"You could have thought it was alive!" the Chinese Customs officer uttered, blown by the content of a package sent from Alaska (USA). Officially, there was a "carpet" inside.



**2 forest agents suspended for illegal sale of animal or animal parts or by-products notably bear bile (*Ursidae* spp, Appendix I or II)⁸
Province of Dong Nai, Vietnam
September 2014**

The 2 forest agents in charge of protecting the fauna and flora heritage were caught selling endangered animals and animal parts. They were in uniform. They were selling bear bile from Malayan Sun Bear (*Helarctos malayanus*) or Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*). Those 2 species are listed in Appendix I of CITES. The buyer lives near Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City). The 2 sellers have been suspended from their positions.

The state agents actually did fall into the trap set by Tuoi Tre newspaper. They offered to the investigation team 5 vials of 5 ml of bear bile for 130,000 VND, i.e. 6 US\$. With the complicity of local suppliers and restaurant owners they offered also snake and mouse-deer meat. More than just the implication of 2 state agents, Tuoi Tre uncovered a whole network. Cobra meat is sold around 1- 1.4 million VND per kg, that is 52 to 66 US\$. At the source of the network chains, the animals are trapped by local hunters. Delivery to large cities such as Ho Chi Minh City is made by means of public transportation. « Public buses are the easiest. No one checks them when they arrive at stations. » That is the advice given to the fake buyers by a member of the

network, a guy called Thu. Feeling the need to confide in someone, he admits that he hunts from time to time and that he has captured some pregnant female monkey and female boar. The embryos were set to seep in jars and he intends to sell the supposedly tonic beverages for some few million VND that is a few hundred US\$.

Among the illegal meat the gang puts up for sale there would be giraffe meat, therefore implying international connections.



Illegal Stock Management

Gift of 420 tusks to Defense forces, Karnataka, India ¹

Patrols in the forest of Karnataka are so effective that they have resulted in a large stock of ivory collected from elephants dead from natural causes or from poachers.

2200 pairs of tusks are stored in Mysore and Shimoga secure deposits. Are they secure enough?

In 6 years, 210 pairs were given to the army to decorate the mess and lounges. Several garrisons as Madras Regiment and the Rajputana Rifles have benefited from these donations. The practice is not about to expire. Previously, the Ministry of Defence had the sole authority to request ivory gifts for a military establishment. Now, the formalities are simplified. Officers of Colonel rank and upper can directly apply to the government of Karnataka state. This would be consistent with the doctrine of the Federal Ministry of Environment and Forests, which, in 1994, had asked for the destruction of seized ivories, however not discarding donations to institutions.

A senior military officer said on condition of anonymity that he does not agree:

1. It is unethical to display as decoration goods that have been seized and are declared illegal.

2. These high value items can one way or another go back to the black market.

R. Sukumar, elephant expert and professor at the Centre for Ecological Sciences, however feels that the ivory stock merging under the Ministry of Defence eases traceability. «How is it possible to manage these seized ivories by dispersing throughout the country without setting up a centralized system?»



Ivory flying to museums ²

The Science Museum of Laval, department of Mayenne western France, will receive this autumn a gift from customs, notably carved ivory and coral ornaments. Thanks to this practice, which contradicts the new doctrine of destroying seized ivory, the Laval museum has become, so to speak, a receiver of organized wildlife crime.

During the month of August, the curator of the "Musée Vert" in Le Mans did a little shopping choosing from the Saint-Nazaire and Le Mans custom's collections. He chose a fruit salad made from ivory (apples, pineapples, mangoes) seized in a container coming from Africa in the port of Nantes-Saint-Nazaire in February 2014 and a globe on a stand seized in a car the day before a flea market in Le Mans, region Pays de la Loire, western France. Seizure therefore does not mean destroyed. Museums have the right to pick and choose between the process, leaving open the possibility in the future for loss, theft or embezzlement.

Pangolin scales from Manipur (India) go up in smoke ³

The Forest Department of Manipur burnt 115.5 kg of pangolin scales and 1.25 kg of deer hides. Congratulations!

Horns in zoos burn ⁴

On September 21 approximately 60kg of rhinoceros horns were reduced to ashes at Dvůr Králové zoo situated 150km from Prague in Czech Republic and Bratislava zoo in Slovakia. These fires were not accidental. They were lit to show the good will of Central European countries and their determination to not be used as a hub of this heinous traffic. (Cf. "On the Trail" n°3 p.55). At Port Lympne Reserve in Great Britain were burnt 2 horns from rhinoceroses that died of natural death.

At Zoo Wrocław in Poland a symbolic amount of horns were burnt.

The Zoo Tallinn in Estonia played a small role. They burnt... a replica.

Singapore Zoo played it with flair and humour. At the entrance, visitors are invited to clip their finger nails as an alternative for rhino horns.

The country of "religious" tusks ⁵

In Sri Lanka, the fate of 359 elephant tusks poached in Tanzania and seized in the port of Colombo is pending. The president Mahinda Rajapaksa officially announced that he wanted them to be placed in a Buddhist temple. The overall value is estimated to be 2.9 million US\$. The only authorised uses of ivory seized on the international traffic network are scientific research, the fight against fakes and for the general public's education. The use for religious purposes is illegal according to numerous experts such as the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) and the Clinton Global Initiative.

The Sri Lankan presidency remains silent on the issue and the 359 tusks remain under lock and key. Hopefully they will not break out.

To burn or not to burn ⁶

I am thinking about burning ivory stockpiles.

I am about to burn ivory stockpiles.

I am going to burn stockpiles of illegal ivory.

On the edge of the runaway, on July 11, the Tanzanian government announced that they would preserve what was left of their ivory stockpile from theft and embezzlement for at least 10 years "enough time to study the impact of poaching (Cf. "On the Trail" n°XX)

Tanzania made an agreement with the United Kingdom who will guarantee the security of the stockpile. The United Kingdom's Minister for Foreign Affairs qualified the agreement: "The purpose of the UK's support to Tanzania is to complete an inventory of Tanzania's ivory stockpile and to review stock management procedures. This will be carried out by Stop Ivory and CITES monitors in order to help prevent its theft and as a first step towards Tanzania meeting its commitment to put its stockpile beyond economic use."

Does the Tanzanian "study" include monitoring the increase on the ivory market while elephant stocks fall?

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*.

844 rhinoceros killed in South Africa,
Namibia, Kenya, Nepal and India
from 1st January to 30th September 2014

On the Trail n°6
Black market horn price
from media or customs sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	Kenya	17 174	39

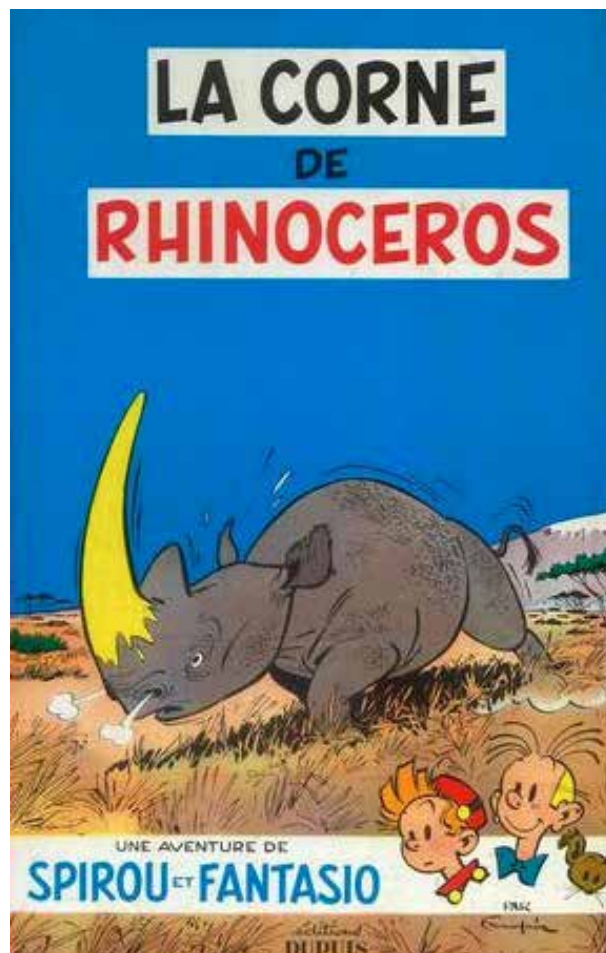
AFRICA

Arrest of a suspect for the theft of 112 pieces of rhino horn¹

Kanyamazane, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

July 1, 2014

Regular readers of « On the Trail » can recall the outlandish theft of 80 kg of rhino horn one weekend from the vault in the Mpumalanga province Agency of the Tourism and Parks (See "On the Trail" n° 5 p.71). A 4th suspect has been arrested, M. Selby Khoze. Just like his predecessor, he claims to be an informer for the Anti-rhino-horn-trade police force. According to his statement during the bail application hearing, at least 2 police officers are involved in this trafficking. M. Selby Khoze said he organized a meeting in 2011 with a horns supplier from Mozambique. This happened in Nkoma. A policeman came with him. After 24 hours, the price is set at R30,000 (about 2800 US\$). At this stage, normal procedures would be to arrest the seller, caught red handed. But the policeman accompanying M. Khoze said that one of his colleagues had the money and they could sell the horn for extra cash. The alleged colleague, named captain Xabase, indeed came to them with the money, in cash of course. He was arrested shortly after, for M. Khoze had given all needed



information to his entitled correspondent. What is most disturbing in this case is that the cop who was accompanying in 2011 M. Khoze in the deterred red-handed catching operation is now the police superintendent who's in charge of investigating on the theft of 80kg of rhino horn from the government vault in Mbombela, Province of Mpumalanga, on April 23.

The 4 suspects in this nebulous and quite tragic case of the holdup and rhino horns part of the governmental stock held in the supposedly safe vault in Mpumalanga were let out on bail at the end of august. Christa du Plessis, the judge, followed recommendations of the public attorney. Bail was set at 20,000 R each, that is 1880 US\$. All 4 must every day present themselves to local police, turn in their passports and other legal documents that could let them go abroad and vow to in no way attempt to intrude on investigations, to not intimidate any of the witnesses and to not disturb law and order. To be continued!

Conviction for the poaching of a white rhino²
Nelspruit, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa
July 8, 2014



16 years in prison term for the 2 men from Mozambique. 10 for the white rhino, 4 for breaking and entry and for illegal activities, 6 for possession of a fire arm without a permit. The 10 and 4 year sentences confused. The 2 had sneaked into Kruger Park at the end of April 2013 (see "On the Trail" n°1). A third one, the whole deal's big boss according to the 2 convicts, disappeared after having been let out on bail. He is called Lucky. The 2 condemned tried to call on the court's indulgence, saying that they were dragged into it by Lucky, that they have real jobs to support their families. One of them is a charcoal salesman, the other transports cattle to slaughterhouses.

Seizure of a fake rhino horn³
Beitbridge, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe
July 8, 2014



9 years of prison for being on the verge of selling a rhino horn to a compatriot living in South Africa. The smuggling network was real, only the horn was a fake, so says the Zimbabwe national parks and wildlife management authority. What if it was a fake imitation, i.e. a real rhino horn released back into parallel circuits through counterfeit certificates. The horn smuggling world is so inventive !

Poaching of 4 black rhinos⁴
Ol Jogi conservancy, County of Laikipia, Kenya
July 9, 2014

The mystery is thickening in the Ol Jogi conservancy, 200 km north of Nairobi. In 7 months, 9 rhinos disappeared. That night, it was 4 rhinos' turn. They were killed by 2 different gangs. Only 3 horns out of the 8 were cut. This is the most murderous attack since 1988 when 5 white rhinos had been shot in the National Meru Park.

A regional commission was launched in charge of investigating possible accessoriness between poachers and guards from the ranch, parks and other protected areas in Lewwa, Solio, Borama, Ol Pejeta and Ol Jogi. The commission's work will be fulfilled within little delay.

Ol Jogi is home to less than 45 black rhinos and less than 20 white rhinos.

So far 22 rhinos have been poached since the beginning of the year. There would only be 1037 rhinos alive in all of Kenya.



The average price for horns is 65,000 US\$ per kg. It can raise up to 100,000 US\$ if the horns are considered to be good quality be the final buyers. In comparison, the average price of gold and platinum are 43,000 US\$ per kg and 48,500 US\$, respectively.

Appearance before the court for the poaching of a rhino⁵

Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa
July 2014

Bail wasn't granted for the 3 people involved in the attempted murder of a rhinoceros in Kruger Park during the month of May. The 3 suspects' resumes are worth some attention: 2 of them are policemen and the 3rd is a former Kruger Park guard(see "On the Trail" n°5).

Poaching of 3 rhinos⁶
Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
July 2014

After a brief ceasefire, the war is back. In 24h, 3 rhinos have been killed. A fourth one should survive. It still has its horns.

Poaching of a rhino⁷
Ol Pejeta Conservation zone, County of Laikipia, Kenya
July 17, 2014

Winner of the 2012 Eco-tourisme grand prize, the 360 km² sanctuary that had celebrated a month ago the birth of a baby black rhino is now in mourning. The mother was killed for its very valuable horns and the lost unprotected baby wandered into the clutches of a band of lions.

Arrest of 6 people suspected of rhino poaching⁸
Islington village, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa
July 18, 2014

Next to 2 firearms, an ax and ammunition, the 6 young men from Mozambique, ages 19 to 34, were in the process of dividing the money between them. The total amount was close to the equivalent of 1000 US\$ in the Mozambique and South African currencies. This is the typical poacher profile. They applied for release on bail.

Arrest of 5 rhino poachers⁹
Phinda private reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
July 19, 2014

The youngest is only 17. When a patrol squad approached, they started shooting to clear their escape. That is the story as told by the military who shot back. One poacher was wounded. All 5 were arrested. Ammunition, the fire arm and silencer, an



ax, were gathered as evidence. At the beginning of the month of July, 558 rhinos had been killed since the beginning of the year in South Africa of which 48 in Kwa Zulu Natal.

Court hearing for charges in relation to rhino poaching, illegal hunting and fraud¹⁰

**Pretoria, Province of Gauteng, South Africa
July 21, 2014**



It's rare to see suspects in court suspects wearing neck ties, white shirts and elegant dresses. Veterinarians, helicopter pilots, professional hunters, safari hunt organizers, all got their hands dirty reaching for the rhino keratin jackpot. 1872 charges are weighing on the shoulders of 11 suspects. Procedural maneuvers led to setting back the trial for a few weeks. The cases of David Groenewald and his wife Sariette will be reviewed in a next issue of « On the Trail ».

Conviction for the poaching of 3 rhinos¹¹

**Nelspruit, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa
July 22, 2014**



The 77 year sentence is composed as follows:

- 15 years for attempted murder
- 10 years for each rhino killed
- 8 years for the theft of a horn
- 15 years for illegal possession of a fire arm
- 7 years for illegal possession of ammunition
- 2 years for breaking and entering into Kruger Park.

One male had been killed. A female had been mortally wounded and a baby had been hit by lost bullets. Crossfire had broken out between the rangers and the 3 poachers. One was killed on the spot, the second escaped, the third one Mandla Chauke has just been convicted.

Poaching of one rhino¹²

**Mapungubwe National Park, province of Limpopo, South Africa
July 23, 2014**

This is a first ever in the savanna of this world-heritage classified National Park. The hopes of the national park's spokesperson (SAN Parks) were not met as the heavy sentencing pronounced the day before did not entail the expected deterring effect, at least for the time being.

Discovery of 2 rhino carcasses¹³

**Etendeka, Region of Kunene, Namibia
July 17 and 27, 2014**

A hornless rhinoceros skeleton was found by Save the Rhino Trust, during an observation track conducted in the Kunene desert. Things are moving in Windhoek, the capital. A call for a demonstration against poaching, planned for the early august, has been launched.

Poaching of one rhino¹⁴

National Kruger Park, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

July 27, 2014

Tourists gave the alarm. 4 shots were heard around 6 o'clock in the evening. 380 rhinos have been killed since the beginning of the year in Kruger Park.

Arrest of 3 poachers¹⁵

National Kruger Parc, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

July 29, 2014



Man hunt was conducted in the savanna. 3 poachers were arrested. Shotguns, ammunition and poaching kits were found on site.



Trial postponed for a rhino horn trafficker¹⁶

South Africa

August 2014

Who is protecting Big Joe and who is Big Joe protecting?

Big Joe Nyalungu is the caricature of a dishonest and violent guy taking advantage of a privileged position in the ranks of the police to meddle in ordinary trafficking then turn to environmental criminality that pays better and presents less risk. Nyalungu served in the Komatipoort police, south of Kruger Park, near the border to Mozambique. He quit in 2009 after having been suspected of being part of a gang of smugglers organizing trade in cigarettes and cars with Mozambique.

In 2010 he was involved in the murder of a man beaten to death in Hazyview whose weighted body was thrown into a dam reservoir.

In December 2011, Big Joe was arrested on an express way driving his Range Rover. In the back there were 3 million Rand in cash, that is 270,720 US\$. Forensic search of the vehicle revealed traces of 2 white rhinos poached in Kruger Park. He was let out on bail.

In March 2012, Big Joe was arrested in Hazyview. 4 rhino horns and a large amount of "dagga" (marijuana) were found on him. Searches of his 4 hideouts led to the seizure of knives, hunting daggers, silencers for strong caliber guns, devices for nighttime hunting and 5 million Rand in cash. In his camera there was a footage of a terrorized man, handcuffed and in the process of being tortured.

In May 2012, for the scheduled court hearing in this latest case, he was driven to the court in an armoured truck escorted by armed policemen. Investigators received death threats and an escape attempt was suspected to have been planned.



In August 2014 an unexpected turn of events occurred. As the trial opened in Middleburg -Mpumalanga province - the regional court's President announced the trial would be transferred to Thulamahashe, near Hazyview, right in Big Joe's chiefdom. The date of the hearing is still unknown. 13 people are now indicted in this complex case of trafficking of 21 rhino horns, money laundering, theft and violence, illegal possession of fire arms, corruption and complicity in illegal immigration: one of Big Joe's accomplices who also is a former policeman, a Kruger Park guard, 2 Vietnamese, and several Mozambicans. Big Joe's counsel is a former high official for South Africa's national parks administration.

This gang leader is fearless. He already beat a journalist at a past hearing. Many are surprised that his trial will take place "at home". The accused from Mozambique for long benefitted from the legal aid system for their defense but have now fired their lawyers and reached for the services of a new law firm. No one knows where their money comes from.

Poaching of a 3 year old rhino¹⁷

**Sonpark, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa
August 8, 2014**

At the heart of Big Joe's territory, a 3 year old rhino who was healing from his wounds in the Care for the Wild orphanage was found early in the morning dehorned and mutilated. Full moons are pretty useful to poachers. This is the 37th rhino to be killed since the beginning of the year in Mpumalanga province. The 3 year old rhino- an average individual has a life expectancy of 50 years- had been hit by lost bullets when his mother was killed.

OPERATION FULL MOON

**Seizure of rhino horns and arrest of 6 suspected poachers¹⁸
National Kruger Park, Province of Limpopo, South Africa**

August 9-10, 2014

6 outbreaks between rangers and poachers occurred during "operation full moon" in the midst of this beautiful August week-end in Kruger Park. 6 suspects were arrested. 2 of them have been wounded. 3 high caliber guns, a pair of horns and the full poaching equipment have been seized.



Arrest of a group of poachers¹⁹

South Africa

August 10, 2014

Somewhere in South Africa, Protrack has announced having arrested poachers. Protrack produced evidence. Protrack is an anti-poaching private institution headquartered in Hoedspruit. It employs 200 to 300 wildlife guards. Some companies protect banks; Protrack protects hunting reserves and private farms from poaching. Groups of at least 2 men are sent in full-immersion patrolling for 1 to 2 weeks. They camp in tents at night, spot and remove old traps, put themselves on stakeouts near new traps, inspect gaps useable for break ins, geolocalize every proof, and search employees and visitors. Illegal fishing and wood theft are also part of Protrack's targets. Training sessions for the use of weaponry, for survival in the wild and for anti-poaching techniques are offered. 10-week trainings cost 2580 US\$ and 6-month ones cost 3073 US\$.



Arrest of 9 suspected rhino poachers²⁰
Rankin's Pass, Limpopo Province, South Africa
August 17, 2014

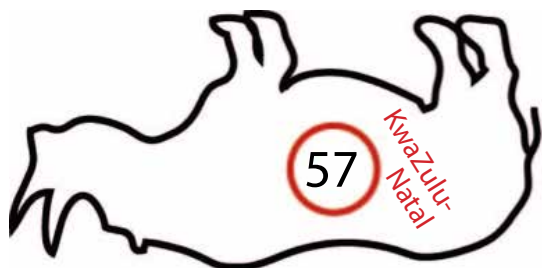
This is the "Austral-Africa Connection". The 10 suspects are from South Africa, Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe. The parity is not respected: only one woman's in the package. Dishonor is safe: there is a police officer in the band. The 2 cars, stolen gun, silencer and ax are confiscated. Some landed the poachers. The latter had trespassed into the reserve to do the dirty job while others were waiting for them a few kilometers away.

Arrest of a rhino poacher²¹
Tonga, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa
August 19, 2014

The horn was a fake. The bag really did have a horn inside but after verification it turns out it was an imitation made of synthetic materials. Artificial keratin is a substance newly invented by chemists. The man had to pay a 1500 Rand fine before being sent back to his country, Mozambique.

Poaching of one rhino²²
Ithala Game Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
August 20, 2014

Rhinos in the Ithala reserve can be counted on the fingers of one's hands and feet. This is the second one poached since 2010.



Conviction and sentencing to 7 years in prison for rhino poaching²³

Opuwo, Region of Kaokoland, Namibia
August 20, 2014

The average monthly income of a farmer in the Namibian desert of Kunene is of about 50€ (81 US\$). The fine that this one got is deterring. It's the equivalent of 1220 US\$. More seriously, he has been sentenced to a 7-year prison term that could turn to 11 years if he doesn't pay the fine. He was arrested for poaching in December 2012. The mother and its baby had been killed. "Tourism is one of the local economy's pillars and rhinos are a first rank attraction," the court stated. "Rhinos' disappearing jeopardizes the whole region's jobs and income."



Arrest of 3 traffickers of fake rhino horns²⁴
Masvingo Province Masvingo, Zimbabwe
August 2014

The 3 crooks were heading towards Beitbridge, border post between Zimbabwe and South Africa, to negotiate 3 fake up rhino horns - actually cattle horns - which had been more or less faked up by a local healer.

Somewhat tipsy, they were checked by policemen who searched their vehicle and found the 3 fake horns inside.

Agreements for the privatization of 260 rhinos from Kruger Park for transfer to the Northern Cape province and cancellation of the agreements²⁵

South Africa
August 2014

On 12 August 12, Minister of the environment Edna Molewa announced at a press conference that 260 Kruger Park rhinos were going to be transferred to private ranches in the Northern Cape province where poachers are still rare whereas 1827 rhinos have been killed in Kruger Park since the beginning of the Year 2010. Kruger is besieged and the Northern Cape Province seems to be a good alternative. This is a full turn around in governmental doctrine that until now refused any form of reduction of their "rhino capital" in the largest South-African national park.

Except that now 260 rhinos would be taken to private hunting reserves that use for publicity pictures of hunters beside collapsed killed rhinos. The benefiteres will be Chapungu Safaris Africa, Steyn Safaris and Wintershoek Safaris. The contract is worth 80 million Rand (7,5 million US\$). It was specified during the press conference that the transaction is only in the aims of guaranteeing the species' future. The financial profits are said to play small parts.



Chapungu Safaris Africa

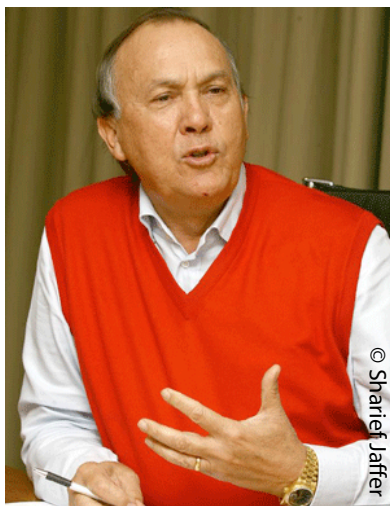


Wintershoek Safaris



Steyn Safaris

According to "Killing for Profit", an investigation book written by Julian Rademeyer and published in 2012, Steyn Safaris was involved in embezzlement of hunting licenses attributed to Vietnamese citizens who were not particularly attached to their trophies and would have sold the horns for quite a lot of money as soon as they got back home. In 2012, the South-African Minister of the environment apparently asked his Vietnamese counterpart to verify that the "hunters" coming by the dozens to shoot rhinos in South Africa were still in possession of the trophies according to requirements of the CITES Convention. Similar suspicions linger upon the flow of Polish and Czech hunters, as well as on Thai hunters (see "On the Trail" n°2 page 47). Christoffel Wiese is co-owner of Chapungu Safaris. This company notably manages the Kalahari Oryx Game Reserve that covers 728 km². Wiese is one of the wealthiest men in South Africa. His wholesale company Pepkor has branches in Australia and Europe and is well present in Africa. The other owner of Chapungu is Jacques Hartzenberg, a professional hunter.



Christo Wiese

On August 21, in reply to a parliamentary request, Edna Molewa stated that since 2010, 354 rhinoceroses had been sold by SAN Parks for a total of R 80 million i.e. US\$ 7.25 million. She refused to name the places where the rhinos were transferred to "for security reasons". She underlined the fact that the money from the sales is used in diverse projects at SAN Parks, such as extending the boundaries, social research, scientific reports and the development of activities for the benefit of local populations.

On the end of August, a new turn of events occurred, the 260-Kruger-park-Rhinos sale's contracts with the hunting industry's facilities were cancelled for vice of form.

GC Dry, member of the SAN Parks directors' board declared to the Bloomberg press agency that the agreement was an isolated initiative of one of the directors made without consulting the board. The director in question is probably Hector Magone, in charge of protecting of animals inside the SAN Parks. He had been removed from his position in June.

Trial adjournment for 3 traffickers of 14 rhino horns and a leopard skin²⁶

Namibia

August 6 and September 11, 2014

The saga of the fraudulent export attempt of 14 rhino horns from Namibia to Shanghai continues. 3 Chinese citizens have been arrested at Windhoek Airport in late March this year. Bail was denied on May 22. The trial was scheduled for September 11. It has been postponed to October 11. See "On the Trail" n°4 page 66 and "On the Trail" n°5 page 73. There was also a leopard skin in one of the 3 accuseds' suitcases.

Discovery of 5 carcasses of poached rhinos²⁷

Northeast of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

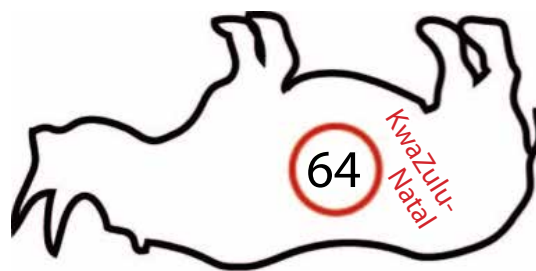
September 2014

Dismay:

- 5 rhinos dead, including 1 black rhino

- 64 rhinos have been killed in KwaZulu-Natal since the beginning of the year.

A call is sent to the public. "There must be more cooperation of civil society. We must reinforce our air surveillance methods. Indeed, we need more money. Each systematic inspection winds up in the discovery of leopard and crocodile skins, traps, elephant ivory. Everything that is found or seized is destroyed."



Seizure of 2 rhino horns (4 kg) and arrest of 2 suspects²⁸

Komatipoort, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

September 3, 2014

Komatipoort is where it all happens. It's the cornucopia or "hornucopia". 2 rangers from Kruger Park have just been arrested there with 2 nice rhino pieces for a total weight of 4 kg. They were going to sell them to a man from Mozambique who escaped. His car was seized.

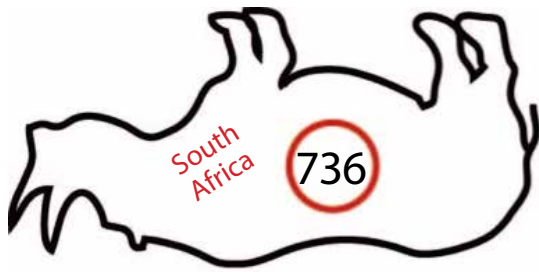
2 other rangers have been arrested shortly after. A trial is yet to come. The suspects are already pulling all strings. According to them the horns were taken from a rhino who died a perfectly natural death.

Poaching of one rhino²⁹

Glen Afric Country Lodge, North West Province, South Africa

September 8, 2014

The guys jumped over the fence. The rhino was shot twice. At the first shot it charged, at the second shot it collapsed. An accomplice came to the body and cut off the horn. All 4 ran away, each in a different direction. It was all caught on video.



**Death of 3 poachers³⁰
Chyulu National Park, County
of Makueni, Kenya
September 2014**

Violence between guards and poachers is rising. Popped tires, patrol-cars windshields smashed and worse yet, men dead on both sides are reported. This time death struck on the wildlife pirates' side. 3 died in the Park's volcanic mountains. Only poachers, not exactly moved by the pleasures of hiking, dare to go there. Axes, ammunition, machine guns were found on site. This event comes a week after the admission of 500 new rangers who had been trained for their mission by the special KWS school in Manyani.



**Arrest of 3 persons suspected of rhino poaching³¹
Klaserie Private Nature Reserve, Province of
Mpumalanga, South Africa
September 12, 2014**

A vehicle prowling in the reserve was asked to stop. The 3 passengers were questioned by police about the presence in the car of tools used for rhino poaching. The private reserve is an enclave surrounded by Kruger Park. It covers 600 km². The suspects were sentenced to 5, 10 and 15 years in jail.



Training of the specialized anti-poaching unit in the Klaserie Private Nature Reserve.

**Arrest of 3 people suspected of poaching³²
Madikwe Game Reserve, North West Province,
South Africa**

September 14, 2014

The Madikwe Game Reserve was established in 1991 on 750 km² of agricultural grounds degraded from overgrazing. African wild dogs, cheetahs, lions, white and black rhinos were introduced. The reserve is run by the State, local groups and private companies.

The suspected poachers 'trio' were found carrying an axe, ammunition and a gun. Their presumed targets were rhinos.

Poaching of one rhino³³

National Kruger Park, South Africa

September 2014

The peaceful Vietnamese delegation had seen this male on his favorite territory west of Pretoriuskop. He was then alive. 4 days later he was dead. The present rate is of 4 rhinos killed per day in Kruger Park. Nhung Hong, a star singer in Vietnam, was present at the autopsy. She is leading a campaign along with a few other celebrities against the use of rhino horns in her country. Horns are really hype in Vietnam, even more so than a Rolex. At the same time, investigative journalist Hoang Do demonstrated in a television documentary that the use of horn powder by the sick is absolutely useless.

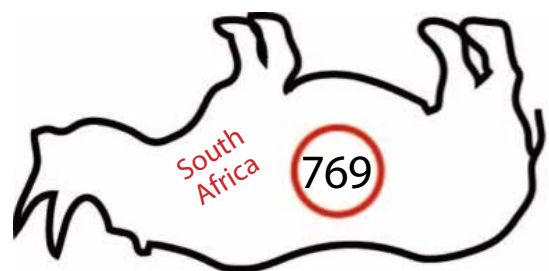


Poaching of 2 rhinos³⁴

**Kwantu Private Game Reserve, Province of
Eastern Cape, South Africa**

September 16, 2014

Both of them were drugged with dart guns and had their horns surgically removed. The Reserve is 80 km from Port Elizabeth. The 2 rhinos are now fighting for their lives.



Arrest of 4 people suspected of rhino poaching³⁵
National Kruger Park, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

September 16, 2014

3 women were on a walk in Kruger Park. They spot a suspicious car. They call East Coast Radio (ECR). "A car with 4 guys inside has stopped near a water hole where there was a black rhino and some lions." "They seemed interested in the rhino."

An hour later, the 3 witnesses stumble onto the car again. There were only 2 left in the car. A call to the hotline and a discrete shadowing enabled the Kruger police to get their hands on the 4 friends very strongly suspected of rhino poaching.

Hotline : 0800 205 005, 08600 10111.

Crime-Line : 32211.

GANG

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Dismantling of a gang of poachers³⁶

South Africa

September 19 2014

The 9 members of a presumed gang were simultaneously arrested in 4 different provinces of South Africa. The boss of the gang, Hugo Ras, his wife, his brother, a lawyer, a pilot, and a chief warrant officer of the crime prevention unit of Pretoria are among the accused. The dismantling of the gang began 2 weeks ago with the arrest of Abraham, a.k.a. Arno Smit.



Hugo Ras

The 10 gang members were mixed up from 2008 to 2012 in the poaching of 24 rhinoceroses of which one female and her infant on private reserve and national parks. In all, they were responsible for the contraband of 84 horns of a global value of 22 million rand or 2.06 million US\$. They appeared on the 22nd of September before one Pretoria's court for theft, malicious injury to property, attempting to defeat the ends of justice, fraud, money laundering and deceit, illegal possession of firearms and ammunitions and intimidation. The battle over the bail order has begun.

In 2004, the Kruger Park Reserve sold 4 elephants to Hugo Ras. The contract specified that the elephants could be transferred to a reserve and were not to be hunted. At least one of these elephants was killed by a wealthy man from Texas who paid to kill the animal on the private reserve of Rustenburg just a few hours after his arrival and one 400 km journey from Kruger Park.

In May 2011, Hugo's luxury apartment was searched. Found there were huge amounts of M99, the powerful anesthesia used by veterinarians and poachers to put rhinoceroses to sleep. Ras was then charged with breach on the Medicines and Related Substances Control Act. He was in this business in association with Douw Grobler, a shady veterinarian who worked with Park Kruger until 2001.

Ras has also been implicated in many nefarious acts without any direct link with wildlife trafficking, and up to now had gotten away pretty well with it.

Abraham Smit is for his part under mandate of an international arrest warrant issued by Interpol. He is the brother of Hugo Ras' wife. He is wanted in 4 states of the U.S. for financial fraud.

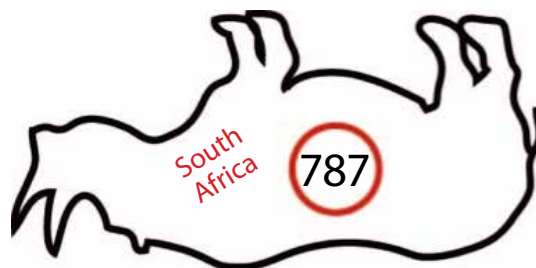


Poaching of a rhino and arrest of 3 employees of the South African National Parks suspected of rhino poaching³⁷

National Kruger Park, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

September 21, 2014

The armed branch of SAN Parks and South African police arrested 3 employees... of SAN Parks who occupied the positions of ranger, gardener and guide in Kruger Park. They were caught just after the death of a rhino in their Lower Sabie sector near Crocodile Bridge with guns and ammunition hidden in their vehicle. They are in charge of protecting the heritage bestowed on to us by our ancestors, yet they are the pillagers. It's awful. That is in substance what the director of SAN Parks has declared.



Mitigation of penalty for trafficking of horns³⁸

Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa

September 25, 2014

A second mitigation for Lemtongthai. The trafficker from Thailand was initially sentenced to 40 years in prison, then to thirty years having benefited from an appeal to the original sentence. The Supreme Court of Appeals has now reduced his imprisonment to just 13 years. The Court judged that the previous penalty was disproportionately severe in relation to other sentences handed out for similarly serious offences.

Under the cover of rhino hunting licence assigned to 26 Thai women, Lemtongthai supplied the Asian market with many rhino horns and also participated in the direct sale and dissemination of the horns, certainly contributing to the speedy rate of species decline. The Thai kingpin of fauna trafficking had acted in compliance with administrators of many private reserves in South Africa and with professional hunters who were killing rhinoceroses by setting up false hunting permits using young Thai women who officially were the false permit owners.

Mr. Lemtongthai furthermore has to settle a fine of 84.000 US\$ or an additional punishment of 3 years in prison in case of non payment.

Seizure of 2 rhino horns (6,5 kg)³⁹

County of Nyeri, Kenya

September 2014

They were arrested on the Chaka market. The horns and their motorcycle were seized. In Asia, the 2 horns can be sold for 300,000 US\$ at least.

They were let out on bail of 22,000 US\$ each.

Arrest of 5 suspected of poaching rhinoceroses⁴⁰

Phalaborwa, Limpopo, South Africa

September 26, 2014

Wildlife at Risk – WAR – is fighting a battle against rhino horn hunters. 5 suspects were arrested with equipment for murdering rhinoceroses.

Rhino sale⁴¹

Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

September 26, 2014

The manager of a safari reserve has bought 10 rhinos. The sale of 26 rhinos has brought in close to one million US\$ to Ezemvolu! The giraffes went for 928 US\$ a piece, the nyalas for 2000 US\$ a piece, the buffalos for 4400 US\$.

The Ezemvolu board of directors says it is satisfied. "The prices are a testimony of safari managers' trust and recognition of the quality of the animals."

Escape of 2 people suspected of poaching rhinoceroses⁴²

Vaalwater, Limpopo Province, South Africa

September 2014

2 men suspected of poaching escaped from police custody at Vaalwater.

Arrest of 3 suspected of rhinoceros poaching⁴³

Sabie Game Park, Maputo Province, Mozambique

September 2014

3 men suspected of poaching rhinoceroses have been arrested. Guards in the private reserve Sabie Game Park tracked the suspects down with the assistance of an airplane. The reserve encompasses 280 km² and is adjacent to Kruger Park in South Africa. One of the 3 suspects is a notorious poacher known for many raids into Kruger Park.



© IAPF - International Anti Poaching Foundation

Seizure of a .375 caliber rifle and a silencer

Seizure of a rhinoceros horn and the arrest of 2 suspects in rhinoceros poaching⁴⁴

National Kruger Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

September 30, 2014

The horn was fresh. The 2 armed suspects were being tracked by aerial surveillance of SAN Parks.

Theft of rhinoceros horns⁴⁵

Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa

September 2014

The uncle of Oscar Pistorius, the champion in sprinting and in leaping judicial obstacles, works in the tourism and hunting industry and the wholesale distribution. A safe of his company Twin City was broken into in Pretoria and an unknown number of rhino horns were taken from within. The rhinos of Arnold Pistorius were de-horned to prevent them being poached.

AMERICA

Court hearing for illegal trade in black rhino horns⁴⁶

State of Florida, United States of America

July 2, 2014

His fall came at 76 year old. The old wildlife veteran held a famous store in Miami. Behind the windows of Art by God, one could see whale vertebrae, stuffed bears and other macabre curiosities imported or brought back by Gene Harris from his frequent travels abroad. His lawyer says he is "very remorseful" and that "this is totally out of character of what his whole life has stood for".

During the summer of 2011, Mr. Harris had used his address list and experience to put in contact the sellers in Phoenix of a black rhino trophy with a buyer living in California. A meeting took place in Phoenix attended by a fake buyer living in Arizona to whom, at the end of the reunion a fake receipt was delivered. American law allows the sale of such antique objects under 2 conditions, one being that it has a legal origin, the second being that the sale takes place between residents of a same State.

Reality is that the horns were sold to the Californian buyer, who then smuggled them to China, on the basis of 60,000 US\$ in cash. Mr. Harris received from the actual buyer a commission of about 10,000 US\$. For having in full knowledge ignored legal obligations, the director of Art by God faces up to 5 years imprisonment and 250,000 US\$ in fine.

Participation of Mr. Harris in this business was uncovered within Operation Crash that brings together the efforts of several American agencies and focuses on rhino horn trafficking. On the Asian market, one kg now reaches up to 100,000 US\$. 2 years ago, in a long article written about him in the local newspaper Biscayne Times, Mr. Harris had declared that sculptures made by nature surpassed all imagination and his gallery had an educational purpose.

This Miami case reminds one of the artwork by Mr. Enrique Gomez De Molina, another artist in Miami specialized in animal chimeras, some sorts of puzzles made of pieces and bones of cobras, pangolins, calaos, babirusas and orangutans, slow loris and birds-of-paradise. All these animals parts were illegally imported. Mr. De Molina's works are worth between 10,000 US\$ and 80,000 US\$.

Charges dropped in the case of a sale of a rhinoceros head⁴⁷

Concord, New Hampshire, United States

September 29, 2014

After 2 years of procedure, Ari Goldenberg left the office of US Fish and Wildlife Service with a rhinoceros mount with its 2 horns in Concord, New Hampshire, the birthplace of Henry David Thoreau, author of the famous treatises *Civil Disobedience* and *Walden*.

The trophy was seized in May 2012. Initially, Goldenberg had bought it at an antique dealer in New Hampshire for 800 US\$. A few years later he tried to sell it through a middleman of an auction house in Maine, which would have constituted a violation of the regulations. This option failed. Bought in New Hampshire, the mount could only be sold in New Hampshire.

Hence Mr. Goldenberg contacted the administration to get all the necessary information on the regulations and a copy of the law itself. He then put his rhinoceros mount for sale on Craigslist emphasizing that the buyer must reside in New Hampshire. A potential buyer contacted him with much interest, accepting the price of 35,000 US\$ and agreeing to pay in cash but specifying that he did not in fact live in New Hampshire. Mr. Goldenberg was accommodating, knowing full well the consequences of this development. Immediately after the transaction, he was arrested and his trophy seized. The buyer was in fact an agent of US Fish and Wildlife. The reasons why Mr. Goldenberg was able to get his trophy back are not clear. The Department of Justice refused to comment on the matter.



ASIA

Death of a poacher⁴⁸

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

July 2, 2014

The man was killed in the early morning. According to the rangers, he was an experienced poacher. A modified AK47, ammunition and supplies were found nearby. At least 3 other poachers escaped. The rise of the river Brahmaputra and partial flooding of the Park would have made their entry easier. Since the beginning of the year, 9 poachers have been killed in the area.



Poaching of a rhino ⁴⁹
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
July 9, 2014

Minus 21. The rhino was killed during the night. At this rate there will be twice as many victims in 2014 than in 2013 in the State of Assam in northern India.



Poaching of a rhino ⁵⁰
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
July 17, 2014

Guards found the dead adult rhino during a routine patrol. This is the 22nd killed since the beginning of the year. "The horn is missing". AK47 machine guns and makeshift handguns were used. « National Parks are considered to be the safest shelters for wild fauna and flora but Kaziranga National Park is gaining the dubious distinction of being the most sought after destination for poachers. » remarks Indileak.



Death of 2 rhino poachers ⁵¹
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
July 19, 2014

The 2 poachers were killed after a half an hour of shooting between them and guards who had been trailing them for 24h.



Seizure of 16 rhinoceros hoofs ⁵²
Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh, India
August 1st, 2014



New! Somewhere, the hoofs of rhinoceroses are considered aphrodisiac. The man was going to resell them to a band of Bawaria nomads moving between Rajasthan and Haryana.

The hoofs or parts of the hoofs are also said to cure cancer, stress, and tuberculosis. The hides of the 4 rhinos were already on their way to China via Nepal. The whereabouts of the horns are unknown.

Appeal formed by the public attorney in a case of conviction for rhino horn trafficking ⁵³
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
August 2014

Is this man sane? In 2007 he was caught at the airport in the capital city with the 2 horns estimated at the time worth 60,000 US\$. Today their value has tripled. Shortly after his arrest, the man escaped. Despite an arrest warrant, he remained at large until 2010 when he voluntarily turned himself in to police. At the end of a trial held in 2 stages separated by a period of psychiatric treatment, the man has just been sentenced to 2 years probation with regards to his medical file, a sanction deemed insufficient by the public prosecutor who has formed an appeal.



10 August: full moon



REPEATED OFFENSE

Death of 2 poachers ⁵⁴
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
August 10, 2014

One of the poachers would be Amar Bori, a veteran and expert poachers out on bail. One of the 2 criminal hikers were carrying with them back packs, ammunition, firearms, some food and 2 cell phones. At least 17 poachers and 22 rhinos have been killed in the park since the beginning of the year.



Disbanded Justice

136 poachers have been arrested for their participation in rhino horn trafficking in the Kaziranga National Park since 2009. None have been convicted. What's going wrong?

-lack of rigor in the gathering and keeping of evidence.

-lack of coordination.

-ill knowledge of wildlife laws.

Crime scenes are not sealed off. Fingerprints vanish. Poachers' footprints are not recorded. Ballistic surveys are inadequate. The rhinos' DNA is not sampled.

The different agencies in each state and between states do not share and register information on the poachers, on go-between and on mechanisms of faunistic networks. When a poacher is arrested, his criminal past remains unknown. His lawyers will describe him as newcomer to wrongdoing and he will easily be granted bail.

Death of 2 poachers⁵⁵

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

August 28, 2014

The poachers were reported. They were surrounded by rangers.

The confrontation took place at midnight. 3 poachers managed to escape. 2 died. The target species is not known. Given the caliber of the weapon, it was big game.



Settling of scores and arrest in a case of fake rhino horn trafficking⁵⁶

Karbi Anglong district, State of Assam, India

August 28, 2014

Counterfeiting of rhino horn is growing. Rafiqul Islam has paid the price. He got hit by a bullet in the stomach while trying to sell a fake horn to 4

traffickers. Realizing the deceit, the 3 men did not take it lightly. Nagaland, a hundred miles from Kaziranga Park, seems to be a transit area for poaching products.

Seizure of 2 rhino horns (6.8 kg)⁵⁷

Pingxiang, Guangxi Province, China

August 30, 2014

At the inspection point, a white van quickly turned around to drive the opposite way. Police chased him. The Pingxiang police seized 2 rhinoceros horns weighing 6.8 kg and arrested one suspect, Zheng.



Conviction for poaching and rhino horn trafficking⁵⁸

District of Chitwan, Central Development Region, Nepal

September 2014

15 years for Khati and a 100,000 Rs fine (1030 US\$). Same for Ram Sharan BK.

Both come from the same village. Khati was specialized in horns. Bk was more into rhino feet. He would also transport Yarsagumba or cordyceps, the "miracle" mushroom gathered from the Tibetan plateau and sold all around the world for nearly 2000 US\$ a kilo.



Return home from hunting in Nepal 1930



Rhinoceros exterminatis (France)

Cannes : tusks on the red carpet



Readers of "On the Trail" will remember the suspicious ivory sales in Cannes. The investigation started in the setting of an auction led to the arrest of 3 people from the travellers community and to the seizure of 3 tusks and diverse carved ivories, including a dildo. Despite disputes and debates, the Cannes auction house had kept moving by its momentum and multiplied its calls for potential vendors of "colonial ivory." The Cannes auction associate Mr. Debussy's motto is that "millions of tons of ivory and rhinoceros horns" sleep in attics and villas of the French Riviera. This prophet claims to torpedo the global price of illegal ivory by flooding the world market with legal stocks from France. Cannes auction offers to take care of necessary administrative formalities. Robin des Bois notes that the publicity and exposition of these tusks or carved ivory objects set for sale by the Cannes auction are not or have not been systematically accompanied by the obligatory CITES certificate number. From now on, the Cannes auction will gather rhinoceros horns with the hope of auctioning them off at the next sale.

Robin des Bois has written to the Cannes Auction with a copy for the Minister of Ecology, for French Customs, and for OCLAESP (Office Central de Lutte contre les Atteintes à l'Environnement et à la Santé Publique).

http://www.robindesbois.org/dossiers/A_LA_TRACE/lettre_CannesEncheres-octobre2014.pdf

Paris get into auction

The Rossini auction house across from the Drouot auction rooms intends to place 9.96 kilograms of rhinoceros horns on sale on the 20th of December 2014. The 11 horns "benefit from the preconvention statute (sic) permitting their commercialization in national territory." This affirmation is however premature as the Rossini house and its clients were not at the end of October, prior to advertising the sale, in possession of the obligatory CITES certificates to be delivered by the competent management authority of the French State.

Robin des Bois has written to Rossini with a copy for the Minister of Ecology, for French Customs, and for OCLAESP (French only).

http://www.robindesbois.org/dossiers/A_LA_TRACE/lettre_Rossini-octobre2014.pdf

**ENSEMBLE DE CORNES
DE RHINOCEROS D'AFRIQUE**
VINS
(liste sur demande)
TABLEAUX
OBJETS D'ART - MOBILIER



Immediate purchase
13,000 €, 700g," CITES isn't
useful since the horn had
been worked on before
1975 "

Naturabuy continues

Naturabuy, an affiliate of the press company Mondadori, which is the editor of among others Closer, Science et Vie, and Télé Poche, persists in posting for sale on its website both raw and carved pieces of ivory along with rhinoceros horns.

The advertisements are almost never accompanied by CITES certificates. The Comments of sellers for which Naturabuy acts as an intermediary are particularly evasive on this subject. The announcement according to which "every seller of a wild animal (or parts of an animal) asserts that he has knowledge of and that he respects the enforced regulation" is null and void. The responsibility of Naturabuy as a carrier, disseminator, actor and co-beneficiary of the commercial transaction is completely committed by the fact that it offers and advertises for sale items that must be accompanied by mandatory certificates.

Robin des Bois has written to Naturabuy with a copy for the Minister of Ecology, for French Customs, and for OCLAESP (French only).

http://www.robindesbois.org/dossiers/A_LA_TRACE/lettre_Naturabuy-octobre2014.pdf

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, *Elphas maximus*, is listed in Appendix I.

The seizure of ivory from 1st July to 30th September is equal to 408 elephants

Using the average weight of 4.5 kg per tusk. The 1979 seized ivory articles of which the weight was not communicated have not been included in the total.

**On the Trail n°6
Black market raw ivory price
from media or customs sources**

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	Kenya	1 117	66
	Kenya	1 416	23
	Kenya	562	72
	Kenya	1 459	18
	Kenya	1 120	69
Europe	Czech Republic	2 680	127
Asia	China	6 744	91
	Vietnam	2 830	123

AFRICA

Death penalty cancelled and release of a ranger¹
Zimbabwe
July 2014



He was to be hung on 17 September last year. The Supreme Court overruled the primary court decision and ordered the release of the convicted. Maxwell Bona, a ranger by profession, had shot and killed a man attempting to escape. With his colleagues and a police officer, they had circled the home where suspected poachers had retreated. The Supreme Court Judge declared that « in the present matter, the killing of the deceased, though unfortunate, was a result of a bona fide attempt to apprehend persons who were believed to be armed and involved in poaching activities. »

« In view of the conclusion I have reached above, it becomes unnecessary to consider whether the appellant successfully demonstrates that he was acting in self-defense. »

« The court was clearly in error in finding that no extenuating circumstances existed. »

« The incident occurred on the spur of the moment during the execution of official duty, in poor visibility and in circumstances in which the appellant may have genuinely believed that harm was likely to befall him. »

Re-appointment of 3 KWS agents²

Kenya
July 2014

3 of the 6 high officials of KWS (Kenyan Wildlife Service) who had been suspended in waiting for light to be shed on their management have retrieved their functions. Conclusions of the investigation have not been made public. Among them are Patrick Omondi, responsible for the Kenyan delegation to CITES meetings and Wesley Isanda, financial director.

Poaching of 5 elephants³

Sankuru Nature Reserve, Virunga National Park, Kasai-Oriental, Democratic Republic of Congo
May - July 2014

Investigations are underway and the poachers run faster. Hunted elephants tally 5 since the month of May. There are no guards in the Sankuru area. The good news is rapidly spreading in the small world of black market ivory. The killers from the north of Kivu leave the elephants no chance of survival.

Seizure of 5 kg of ivory⁴

Bloemfontein, Province of Free State, South Africa
July 3, 2014



The Hawks, the elite force of the South-African police, acted at the outcome of a month long investigation. The

5 were arrested in the street near the Bloemfontein zoo. They are all around 30 year old. 2 are from Zimbabwe, 3 from South Africa, province of Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Bloemfontein. Elephant poaching is sliding into South Africa, proof of the lessening of elephants in equatorial Africa.

Conviction for trafficking and illegal possession of 2 tusks⁵
Ouéso, Department of Sangha, Congo

July 3, 2014

Mr. Zoula, Gabonese national arrested in late April, clandestine goldwasher in Congo, was sentenced to 3 years in prison by Justice in Congo.



Seizure of 4 ivory tusks (13,5 kg) ⁶
Ntoun, Estuaire Province, Gabon
July 4, 2014



Ntoun, everyone off. Controllers on the Franceville-Libreville express had just inspected the luggage of a traveller that, according to the Gabonese press, emitted a strong smell. The tusks were fresh and cut into pieces. Kevin Bondouaboka presents himself as a gold digger in the Gabon-Congo border region. He declares to have by chance discovered the 2 dead elephants in the forest while on a stroll with some friends. He was brought into custody awaiting report and to be presented before court. Ntoun is 40 km from Libreville. Libreville is confirmed to be a hub where is gathered the ivory from Gabon before a first export towards Togo, Benin, Cameroon, Nigeria and then the big leap towards Asia. Railroad police in Gabon have received training on criminality against fauna from LAGA.

On August 24 Mr. Bondouaboka was sentenced to 1 month prison suspended. The public attorney has formed an appeal deeming the punishment to be to clement. The penal code states a maximum penalty of 6 months imprisonment. For comparison, Benin, Burkina Faso, Congo plan a 5 year prison term, 3 years in Cameroon and 2 in Togo.



Seizure of elephant bones including a skull ⁷
Djoum, South Region, Cameroon
July 9, 2014

Usually it was during the night from Saturday to Sunday that they would travel by motorcycle between Mintoum in the East of the country to Djoum, a well known place for trafficking in ivory and bones.



During the 10 hour ride, they would be regularly be warned by lookouts that would call on their cell phones and inform on the road police movements. A sort of African version of the Coyote application. The 2 of them had bought a

shining new motorcycle with the benefits of the sale of 2 elephant tusks. They were being followed by Services since the failed attempt to sell a serval, a "savanna cat". They are 2 genius specialists in endangered animal or animal parts transport, all the way to the bone. They were picked in the early morning in a hotel where they had just dropped off their bags.

Slaughter of an elephant ⁸
Uukwaluudhi conservation zone, Region of Omusati, Namibia
July 2014

No mercy for the elephants in extreme conditions. In northern Africa in the Sahel desert, the last survivors are killed for their small tusks by rebel groups and bandits and must fight over the last water spots with increasingly invasive nomad cattle.

In southern Africa, in the mountain deserts of Namibia- a hundred elephants according to NGOs, over 300 according to Government- adapted to the hyper-drought face insane hunting permits aiming at reproductive males who would be no more than 20. Not enough to ensure the future.

Elephants in the Namibia desert are all-terrain. Mobile and excellent meteorologists, they rapidly converge to feed on outbursts of vegetation after rainfalls, patient and vulnerable, they follow up river beds and content themselves without haste with the occasional tributary water spots or digging wells in the right places. They are water diviners.

7 hunting permits for male desert elephants were delivered by the government for this year. Hunters of course only aim for the largest ivory tuskers. A decision that according to many observers is intended to earn the votes of a few thousand inhabitants of the region at the next elections scheduled for the end of the year. Nothing could be less certain. The promise to give out the meat of the killed elephants to the village communities is insignificant and one can hope that their votes will not be bought with a few grams of meat. Whatever the motivations be, delivery permits to hunt such scarce populations triggered as early as June a wave of protest from biologists, geographers, southern African authors, photographers such as Don Pinnock or NGOs such as Desert Lion and Elephant Conservation.

On Saturday 23 June when the first desert elephant was killed, protests doubled from elephant protectors such as Elephants Voice or even pro-hunting persons such as Garth Owens Smith. Upset was all the more stronger that the shot was fired 200m from a Sorris-Sorris school. The slaughter was organized by Nick Nolte Hunting Safaris that had for the occasion left its 1000 km² reserve in the Erongo mountain to go hunt elephants in the North-West desert. Nick Nolte Hunting Safaris is a family business that has been attracting European and American hunting enthusiasts for over 20 years. 35 species are available on catalogue including lions, giraffes, zebras, ostriches, antelopes, panthers, leopards and at the high luxury end elephants and white rhinos. The hunting season opens from February to November. Its offers a peaceful and family-like atmosphere.



The Nolde family

Mid July there was a new strike. First a desert elephant just barely missed a German hunter. Only his guide from Namibia was hit and he recovered. The elephant was actually acting only in self defense. Without taking into account the direction of the wind, the armed duo approached too close to its target and a group of about 20 individuals in search of water in a dry riverbed. At the precise moment he was going to be shot, the elephant charged the hunter and his guide. He was afterward put to death. The meat was given out to charity and the tusks have gone away, no one knows where, probably in the luggage of the German survivor.

These troubling events follow the poaching of several rhinos in the same region dedicated to the protection of wildlife and ecotourism. Except that the Namibian Ministry of the Environment and Tourism (MET) doesn't have the same definition of ecotourism than have naturalists, sightseeing tourism promoters and most NGOs.

The MET is playing with words. According to them, there is no such thing as desert elephants. There are on its territory only African elephants (*Loxodonta africana*). Genetically speaking that is correct. At the same time this isolated population has specific trails and especially develops and transmits to next generations strategic behavior adapted to the climate and topography of the area. Elephants who live in the North West Namibian desert would be 391 according to the MET with a male/female ration of 50/50.

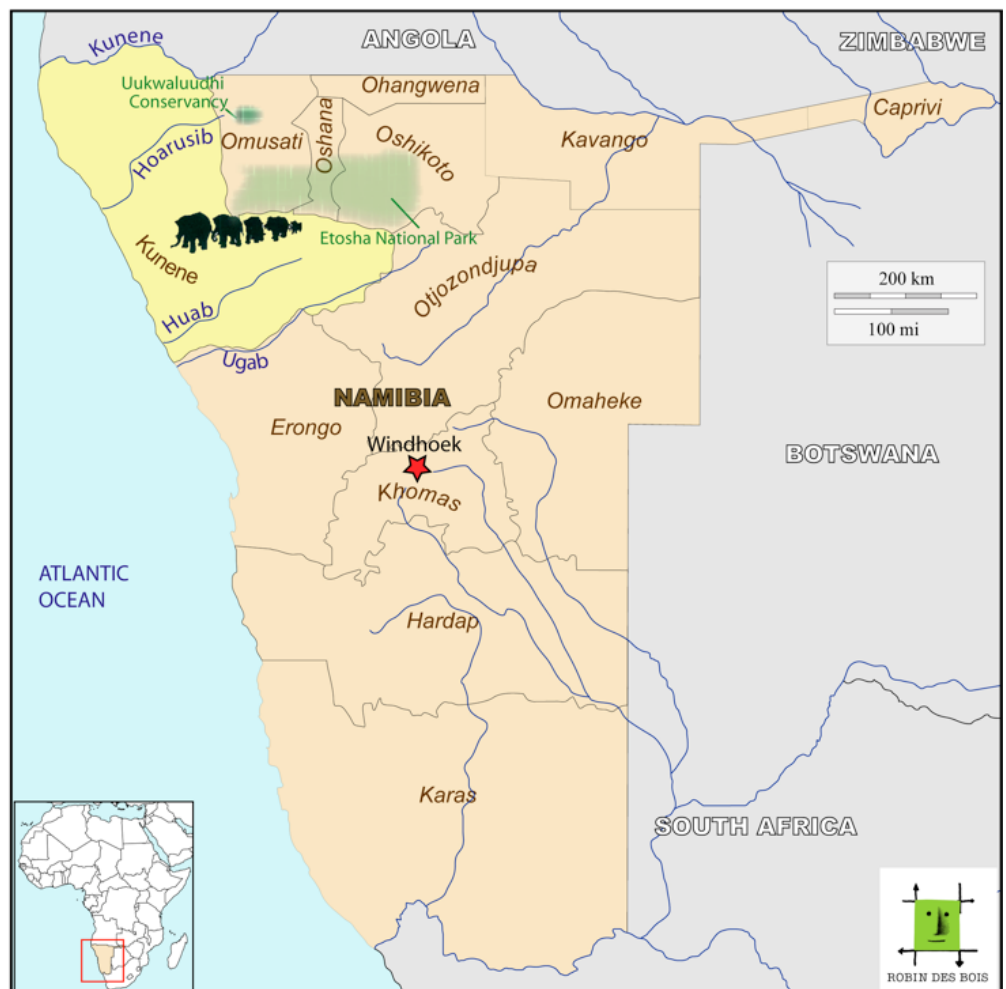
In 1900, there were 3000 of them roaming northern Namibia. Before 1980, elephants lived in the far North and would undertake a night time migration 150 km long between the Kunene River in southern Angola and the Hoarusib River in Namibia. This sub-population was exterminated between 1980

and 1990 because of the civil war in Angola and intensive regional poaching, ivory being for Unita and its allies one of the 2 exchange currencies for buying weapons, the second being teck logs driven by truck to South Africa.

Total population in Namibia would be over 20,000 elephants including 4000 in the north in the Etosha National Park. "There has never been as many elephants in Namibia for over 100 years." Launched on this path, the MET is even considering the possibility of removing elephants from the list of species protected from hunting. Recognizing the economical importance of tourism in general, the MET is heavily insisting on the contribution made by these hunting permits to the national economy and to the well-being of rural communities.

The Government of Namibia reveals threatening towards NGOs and people who are carrying out "illegal" work on the status of elephants in Namibia and request they "cease their irresponsible behavior before action be taken against them". For the MET, modification of elephant trails in the desert particularly along the Ugab river "are caused mainly by irresponsible ecotourism and the increase of motorized vehicles than by any other event."

The MET's ranting sounds very much like a warm welcome addressed to poachers and Asian gangs that are weaving their web in the country and neighboring countries and for which now the rhino is the priority target while waiting for the value of ivory to reach the highest ranks. Yes, Namibia seems to be a good investment.



Poaching of one elephant⁹
OleSukut conservation zone, County of Narok, Kenya
July 2014



The dying elephant lay between the trees. He died before the veterinarians arrived.



The spear had pierced him all the way through.



The spear was removed. It will be kept as evidence. Villagers will be able to help identify its owner.



The poachers didn't have the time to take the tusks. "We cut them with the help of KWS guards. They will be taken to the governmental stockpile." Witnessing from Care for the Wild Kenya.

Seizure of 22 pieces of ivory¹⁰
Gilgil, County of Nakuru, Kenya
July 2014

Value: 3.5 million shillings, that is 40,000 US\$. 2 suspects were arrested.

Poaching of 4 elephants¹¹
Zambezi National Park, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe
July 2014



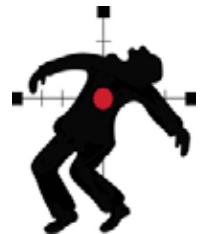
Another trap set with white cyanide in salt pits. The poison hit other species also. The first reported dead: a cape turtle dove, a sandgrouse and a vulture. Poachers coming from Zambia across the river are suspected. But the hundreds of elephants poisoned in Hwange Park, a year ago, shows that Zimbabwe nationals master the use of cyanide. "Our house is not in order." stresses Johnny Rodrigues, spokesman of the Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force. « There are many Chinese nationals who were given mining contracts in the Hwange area » Mister Rodrigues suggests that cyanide destined for gold mining is deterred to be used for ivory mining. Samples of poisoned flesh have been sent to Harare for further analysis.

Seizure of 2 ivory tusks (34 kg)¹²
Messok, East Region, Cameroon
July 2014

The ivory was in the hands of 2 poachers. A new anti-poaching plan is being implemented in and around the Park since the beginning of the summer. The first campaign also enabled the destruction of 600 traps and the seizure of a submachine gun.

Death of a poacher¹³
East Tsavo National Park, County of Taita Taveta, Kenya
July 2014

Rangers had spotted human footprints near a water point used by the elephants. They followed the trail that led them right up to a group of poachers following closely an elephant herd. Both sides opened fire. One poacher died bringing the death toll to 6 for this year in Tsavo Park. An Ak47 machine gun and ammunition were found on site. 2 poachers probably wounded escaped.



Poaching of an elephant and rescue of a baby elephant¹⁴
Rimoi National Reserve, Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya
14 -16 July 2014

The poaching and mutilation of the mother took place near the Kerio River. The 2 months elephant was found by the KWS who was trying to follow the poachers' trail. He was slumping, dehydrated, and burnt by the sun. He was admitted to the care of the David Sheldrick Foundation orphanage. His condition is life threatening. Four suspects were arrested. They were placed under temporary custody.

Downstream there would be a certain Zhao Chu-cong, who has his hands on many ivory sculpture workshops.



FAMILY AFFAIRS REPEATED OFFENSE

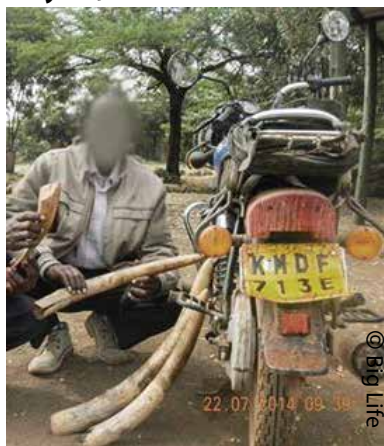
**Seizure of 11,25 kg of ivory¹⁵
Ghardaïa, Algeria
July 20, 2014**

Another ivory convoy coming up from Mali or its neighboring countries is giving evidence of the attack on the last Sahel elephants. On national road 1, the refrigerating truck was stopped by a squad from Ghardaïa. The ivory was in the trailer. Local uses of ivory are evoked. Dental technicians use the ivory to make false teeth or ivory will be used by marabouts for dark magic. Export by ship or plane is more likely.

**Seizure of ivory¹⁶
Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe
July 22, 2014**

33,000 ammunitions of all calibers were discovered in the offices of a Chinese businessman established in Harare. Carved ivory and 3 kg of gold were also seized by officers. Wongai Huo, 51 year old, was arrested. "He had obtained a firearm permit, but that does not explain the presence in his home of an arsenal worthy of a military establishment" commented the police superintendent of the Harare province where the Chinese citizen was operating a gold mine.

**Seizure of 4 tusks and 2 pieces of ivory¹⁷
Kenya
July 22, 2014**



Big Life is playing detective. A meeting was set up with one of the many small traffickers in search of the best price, "free electrons" acting out of organized channels. He arrived on a motorcycle with 6 pieces of ivory in

his bag. Feeling something abnormal during the transaction, he decided to run away, leaving behind him the 2 wheels and the 6 ivories. He had chosen the place of the meeting well easy to escape from. For Big Life it was an experiment, the first before beginning, in partnership with KWS, of a team ready to intervene when and where individuals are in the middle of exposing ivory or selling it. The 6 tusks and the moped were seized and the supplier has been identified.

**Seizure of 260 kg of ivory (1 356 pieces)¹⁸
Jomo Kenyatta Nairobi International Airport,
Nairobi, Kenya
25 July 2014**

Ivory no longer travels only by boat to get to Malaysia from Kenya. It can also take the plane, even the large batches (near 400,000 US\$). Turkish Airlines was the chosen company.



The 1356 pieces of tusks were painted in dark red and black. They were divided into 12 parcels. The investigation will determine the region of origin of the ivory if the DNA analyses are done. The cargo was described as "wood sculptures". Sanctions stated in the penal code are increasingly severe for this type of traffic and at the same time the smugglers are increasingly numerous. Two days before this seizure in the freight zone of the Nairobi International Airport, a Chinese traveller returning to Asia had been caught with several kilos of ivory in her baggage. At the beginning of the inspection she claimed that they were macadamia nuts.



Seizure of 4 elephant tusks, poaching of an elephant and the death of a poacher¹⁹
Tsavu West National Park, Taita Taveta, Kenya
July 25, 2014

The poachers were busy extracting the ivory from the 45 year old tusker with their hatchets. That is why without doubt they did not spot an approaching team of rangers. Seized in the beam of a pocket lamp, 5 fled, the 6th was downed. A M16, 2 AK47, water reserves and 4 tusks were found on the scene. The poachers were Tanzanian and easily got through the informal barrier between the Tsavo Park in Kenya and the Mkomanzi reserve in Tanzania. Poachers, like elephants, migrate.



Poaching of 2 elephants and seizure of 4 tusks²⁰
Uzungwa Mountains National Park, Morogoro Tanzania
July 26, 2014

The Tokomeza operation started back up in Tanzania, on the sly. The minister of Natural Resources and Tourism and his government favor presence and fields observations by keen and as far as possible paid rangers. Home to the tactics and abandon of military parades near the last elephant sanctuaries. Parades that have resulted in degenerations and brutalities, and of which the final invoice is not paid till now although the Tokomeza operation was interrupted in the fall



of 2013. 3.5 million shillings (2.1 million US\$) remains to go to 2000 performers-police officers, forest rangers and soldiers recruited for the operation. 430 forest rangers position were being created. The long lasting campaign is soberly qualified as an "anti-poaching operation". The minister Nyalandu, speaking at an international

conference on sustainable tourism in developing countries, said that if the actions taken by the government and other parties would have not been reinforced and supported over time, poachers would have had free access to the last elephants. There are less than 1,300 living in Tanzania compared to 110,000 in 1976. "If the anti-poaching operation is not maintained, we will lose the last wild elephant in the next few years."

"The eviction of agricultural livestock from the protected areas will also resume with precise instructions so as to avoid any injustice."

In the meantime, 2 new elephants were slaughtered in a national Park that should have been sacred and considered a paradise. A certain Fidelis Mohamed was arrested. For the time being, he admits to have participated in the crime, backing up his consent with the display of a 375 caliber gun and a hunting knife. The 4 blood covered tusks were found in a shrub in the interior of the Park.

Poaching of an elephant²¹
Kruger National Park, Limpopo, South Africa
July 27, 2014

As foreseen for some time by several NGOs, the elephants of Kruger Park have begun to suffer from the pressure of poaching. The north of the Park is vulnerable to infiltrations by gangs coming from Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Furthermore, the shady organizers of hunting safaris facilitate the work of the poachers by providing them with information, ammunitions, and connections with buyers and allowances from political individuals of South Africa and Mozambique.

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks²²
Muthenge Market, Tharaka Nithi, Kenya
July 29, 2014

They were caught in the act; the scene took place east of Mount Kenya. The value of the loot is 2 million Sh, or 22,500 US\$. The trio was released on bail under the decision of a local magistrate. The trial will happen in October. Will they be there ?

Seizure of 12 kg of ivory²³
Isiolo, Isiolo, Kenya
29 July 2014

Value : 17,000 US\$.

3 suspects were arrested at home. Arms and tusks were side by side. The victim had been slaughtered and skinned near Oldonyiro.



REPEATED OFFENSE

Seizure of 9kg (84 kg) of elephant tusks²⁴

Narok, Narok, Kenya

July 2014

Narok County is truly a hill-famed place. The efforts of KWS have still paid off. A shadow of suspects beginning at the entrance of the Massai Mara reserve leads to the home of Danile Kranja Muchemi where the 9 tusks were recovered. The suspect is already under the suspicion for one charge. He had been surprised with 2 accomplices in possession of all of the necessary tools for elephant poaching near the same Reserve, notably a night-vision goggles.



Illustration photo

Poaching and rescue of 2 elephants²⁵

Tsavo National Park, Taita Taveta, Kenya

July 2014

2 new alerts in Tsavo Park. In the east, near where Satao was irreparably poisoned by arrows 2 months ago, a new adult elephant was detected by KWS rangers limping and bleeding from his rear left foot. Arriving at the scene by helicopter, the veterinary team from KWS and the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust darted the injured with anesthetic before proceeding with the surgical extraction of the arrow and securing the awakening with an antidote. The elephant had been injured one or 2 days before the operation.



An identical second rescue was conducted on another elephant in the west of Park Tsavo. If the arrows had reached the thorax and the vital organs, the elephants would have been killed in minutes or the following hours.

Arrest of a man suspected of elephant poaching²⁶

Barwesa, Baringo, Kenya

July 30, 2014

Protest of villagers (30) demanding the release of a suspect behind a series of elephant poaching. His wife said "if he was in that business, [she] would know." John Kaimo was not released.

The poaching of an elephant²⁷

Conservation Reserve Ol Ari Nyiro, Laikipia County, Kenya

August 3, 2014

The tail and the tusks cut-off. The Reserve shelters 500 elephants. Agricultural nomads coming from neighbouring counties handle poisoned spears with more dexterity and discretion than firearms.



Kuki Gallman, the guardian of the places, near the fresh carcass.

Seizure of 11 tusks²⁸

Iten, Elgeyo-Marakwet County and Eldoret, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

Between the 4th and 8th August

1) Arrest of 4 suspects with 5 tusks on the road from Iten to Eldoret. The car was registered in Uganda.
2) Arrest of 2 suspects in Eldoret with 6 tusks. There were on the road to Nairobi with 310 km to go. The ivory would come from the neighbouring Rimoi Reserve where poaching operations abound. Rimoi is at least 4 km from Iten.

Arrest of 6 poachers and seizure of 10kg of ivory²⁹

Mkongani and Kilimandogo, Kwale County, Kenya

5 and 8 of August

A night raid permitted the KWS to find arrows, traps, 5 machetes, 2 axes and coils of wire in the houses of 4 poachers. In the same county, 2 other suspects were arrested for flagrant offense in selling 2 tusks of ivory to 2 potential buyers who were members of KWS on the job in the Shimba Hills Reserve. With one of the biggest coastal forests in West Africa, the National Reserve of Shimba Hills contains a large number of rare animals and plants.

Arrest of a trafficker and seizure of an ivory object (2 kg)³⁰

**Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya
August 8, 2014**

Bandits adapt. The chain between poacher and contraband evolves. Raw tusks more and more often are worked on locally on the spot. It is easier to commercialise and export ivory bracelets than the tusks themselves. The salesman exhibits jewellery and figures in Ganjoni, a neighbourhood of Mombasa. Alerted by passers-by, the KWS seized chopsticks, rings, necklaces and carved figures with a cumulative value of 1 million shillings (11,250 US\$). The salesman, who recoils before no lie, pretends to



have confused ivory works with stones. He set free under 1 million shillings bail. The itinerant dealer indeed has some money! The judicial process will take place in the autumn.

Arrest of 3 persons in possession of 2 small tusks³¹

**Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa
August 9, 2014**

In the Hillbrow neighbourhood nicknamed the Harlem of South Africa, the well-informed police intercepted a vehicle at a service station. Inside there were 4 tusks taken from young elephants. The 3 passengers, 2 men and a woman have been arrested.

Seizure of 35 kg of ivory³²

**Nairobi County Nairobi, Kenya
August 10, 2014**

4 tusks in the Toyota where 2 passengers say they are homeless. The prosecutor opposes their release on bail.

The traffickers were arrested in Nairobi at the place called Tuskys Pioneer.

Investigation on a vicar accused of elephant poaching³³

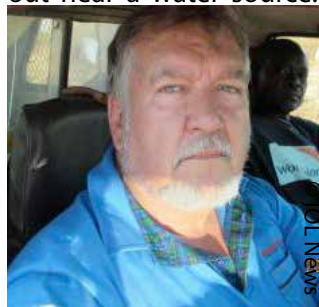
**Zimbabwe
August 2014**

The evangelist preacher is at least an elephant hunter at worst a poacher.

Gerhard Burger, Namibian passport, was watching out for the elephants of Kruger Park who go back up to the south of Zimbabwe at the dry season.

Burger was on the look out near a water source.

This is where he shot and killed. He runs a drilling company. He is a water diviner. He claims, unlike the witnesses and neighbour farmers, that he had a kind of local hunting license. "Yes I hunt, do you have something against that?"



Elephant poaching attempt³⁴

**Slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania
August 2014**



Touched by a spear, anesthetized and cared on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro.

Seizure of 4 tusks (30 kg) and arrest of 3 suspects³⁵

**Cotonou, Littoral Department, Benin
August 12, 2014**

The ivory probably comes from Gabon where there is not much risk for those who kill elephants and convey ivory.

The 3 sellers, 2 from Guinea and one from Benin, were doing business in a hotel in Cotonou. The 30 kg seizure would be only one-tenth of a war treasure hidden somewhere. Lagos (Nigeria) is not far away.

The seizure came just days after the US-Africa summit. One of its conclusions is to strengthen cooperation among States against wildlife trafficking.



Seizure of 15 kg of ivory³⁶

**Ongata Rongai, Nairobi County, Kenya
August 16, 2014**

15 kg and 17,000 US\$ of white gold. 4 accused. 3 days in police custody. Then, perhaps, bail.

Seizure of 2 tusks (62 kg) and arrest of 2 suspects³⁸

Loita, Narok County, Kenya

August 17, 2014

KWS officers were in plain clothes. They bargained the buy of 2 good tips of about 30 kg each. The scene takes place in Narok County, dreary for the elephants.

The 2 suspects fall into the trap. One of them tried to run away when he felt it close in on him.



Seizure of 2 tusks³⁹

Ndaragwa, Nyandarua County, Kenya

August 2014

The trafficker was 22 year old with 20.2 kg of ivory. The fresh tusks were full of blood.

Poaching of 2 elephants⁴⁰

Amollem National Reserve, West Turkana and West Pokot, Kenya

August 18, 2014

The Amollem National Park in east Kenya does not often appear in poaching news. Renowned to host 1000 elephants - probably an exaggerated figure - it was the scene of 2 slaughters and tusks extractions. The rear base of the looters could be Uganda.

Seizure of an ivory bracelet (0.12 kg) and condemnation⁴¹

Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi County, Kenya

August 18, 2014

The Sudanese student (36 year old) Canadian resident was sentenced to pay a fine of the equivalent of US\$ 11,000 or to 12 months imprisonment. He wore an ivory bracelet with a value equivalent to 560 US\$. The jewel was seized.



Summon to appear for the head of the judicial police in the Tudor case⁴²

Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya

August 2014

Feisal Mohammed would be the major owner of the 314 sections of tusks seized in a garage, in the Tudor district of Mombasa, early June (See "On the Trail" n°. 5, p. 90). The total weight of the seizure is 2152 kg. The police is blamed for not taking steps to carry out the arrest of Faisal Mohammed Ali against whom an arrest warrant was issued. His 2 alleged right-hand men were granted bail for 10 million shillings (112,200 US\$) each.

The cars and garage where the ivory was found are allegedly worth several thousands of

shillings. Examining magistrates would like to seize all movable and immovable property. The hearing for this purpose has been postponed at the request of the suspects' counsel.



Conviction for illegal possession and trafficking of 15 kg of ivory⁴³

Kilgoris, Narok County, Kenya

August 2014

The individual was sentenced to one year in prison. A year ago, he was caught red handed trading 5 pieces of tusk by undercover agents of the KWS.



Conviction for poaching and illegal possession of 37 tusks⁴⁴

Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

August 21, 2014

The 44 year-old father of 5 children, "infant" he precised, was pleading guilty for possession and transport of 37 tusks. "I was not the owner." "he died in the clash with the army". "Elephants are killed in Botswana and then taken to Zimbabwe". Poachers cross the border by boat. Makina, injured during his arrest, expressed the wish to serve his time if sentenced in his home country, Zambia. Truly, Zimbabwe's jails are overcrowded and in a miserable state. 100 prisoners have died there of malnutrition in 2013. Makina was sentenced to 10 years.



Seizure of 56 kg of ivory and arrest of 3 suspects⁴⁵

Tanguieta, Department of Atakora, Benin

August 22, 2014

Irruption. Search. Confiscation of ivory tusks in the home of the 3 suspects, aged 20, 31, 46, apprentice welder, shop-keeper, driver. The Pendjari Friends ONG (AAP) that is committed to the protection of the Pendjari National



Park natural resources, had put the authorities on the trail. Pendjari Biosphere Reserve, created in 1961, hosts on 4800 km² elephants, buffaloes, lions, cheetahs and sassabies.

Poaching of an elephant⁴⁶

**Mgeno Reserve, Taita-Taveta County, Kenya
August 2014**

The dead female elephant was discovered by scouts on a hike. She was quite likely followed by a baby elephant as milk spurted from her breasts. The young has disappeared. The mother was hit by a poisoned arrow.



Poaching of an elephant⁴⁷

Between Ndjolé and Bifoune, Middle Ogowe Province, Gabon

August 27, 2014

In Ekoredou, shotgun and chainsaw massacre to clear the trunk and cut the tusks. Middle Ogowe Province is often the scene of such bloody hell. A voice rises from Marc Ona Essangui to denounce the stop of financial contributions from the state for the operation of local NGOs. The elephants corpses are probably thrown into the river.

Discovery of 2 elephant carcasses⁴⁸

Bouabandjida National Park, Northern Region, Cameroon

August 2014

The Park, near the border with Chad, covers 2000 km². Elephants love it. Flash watercourses, the "mayos" run through it. Ephemeral, they appear after torrential rains and thunderstorms. Poachers coming from the east killed 400 elephants there in 2012.

Poaching of an elephant⁴⁹

Amboseli ecosystem, Kajiado County, Kenya

August 2014

2 poachers were arrested a month later due to information received by Big Life Foundation.



REPEATED OFFENSE

Arrest and appearance of 2 suspects traffic cyanide⁵⁰

Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe

August 24, 2014

They sold cyanide near a shopping center. Cyanide discounted = elephant counted out. Hundreds were poisoned in the Hwange park in summer 2013. One is an ex-ranger, the other a bus driver. The 2 are known thieves. Their release on bail was denied.

REPEATED OFFENSE

Conviction for ivory trafficking⁵¹

Ewo Department of Cuvette-Ouest, Congo

August 2014

Issa was carrying on motorcycle in Odzala- Kokoua Park 2 tusks cut into 6 pieces. Issa is one of the aliases that Mr. Sekou Sissakou uses when he deals ivory. Arrested in Gabon, the man of Congolese nationality and Malian origin was sent back to his country by the border post Ekata. Hardened offender, he was sentenced to 5 years in prison. In Gabon, he would have been sentenced to a maximum of 6 months in prison.



Denied bail for a man accused of illegal possession of 34 tusks⁵²

Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia

August 29, 2014

He presents himself as a political refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo. In his house refuge in the Zambezi valley, 17 elephants tusks were hidden. He was arrested, a Namibian accomplice too.

The pair claims that most tusks belong to a certain Titus, Congolese citizen, and to a man from Lusaka, Zambia.

While the Namibian has been released on bail, he remains in prison. Windhoek High Court upheld the denial of bail by the lower court. Namibian Justice is concerned that the political refugee might go seek asylum in another country to escape the trial of which date is not yet fixed. The man has been in prison since March 2013.

Poaching of one elephant and death of 2 people suspected of poaching⁵³

Zambèze National Park, Province of North Matabeleland, Zimbabwe

September 1, 2014

August 23: discovery of an elephant carcass.

August 31, evening: more gun shots.

The next day, confrontation between rangers and police on one side and poachers on the other. 2 of them are killed. The others flee in all directions. Rotting elephant meat is found in what remains of one of the poachers' camps.



Seizure of 197 tusks⁵⁴

Yaoundé-Nsimalen International Airport, Cameroon

September 1, 2014

Breakthrough for poaching in Cameroon. The ivory stock came possibly from the south of Gabon and was about to fly off towards Asia. It was anonymously brought to the attention of customs. The governor of the South wants to put the efforts together. Poaching is harbored in the districts of Dja-et-Lobo and of Vallée-du-Ntem. 140 aquatic turtles and parrots were recently seized in the area.

Conviction for smuggling of 100 elephant bones⁵⁵

Mundemba, South West Region, Cameroon

September 2, 2014

"On the Trail" has been on his trail since last summer (see "On the Trail" n°5 p.91). This elite marine in charge of controlling maritime traffic off Douala had been found in a hotel room negotiating one hundred elephant bones. He has just been sentenced to 3 years imprisonment, maximum penalty for the transport and sale of endangered animals or animal parts.



Seizure of 6 pieces of ivory (18 kg) and arrest of 2 suspects⁵⁶

Ntulelei, County of Narok, Kenya

September 2, 2014

Save the Elephants has published a week ago a sounding report in collaboration with Colorado University and Kenya Wildlife Service. 100,000 African elephants have been killed between 2010 and 2012 and it still continues: 6 tusks were seized. 2 suspects have been arrested. 3 more elephants have been killed. The County of Narok has to be demilitarized, arrows included.



Seizure of 2 tusks (8 kg)⁵⁷

Lemek, County of Narok, Kenya

September 2014

He was caught with 2 tusks not far from the Masai Mara Reserve.

Court hearing for a man accused of illegal possession of 2 pieces of ivory⁵⁸

County of Narok, Kenya

September 4, 2014

9000 US\$ of ivory. 11,250 US\$ bail. Trial set for November.

REPEATED OFFENSE

Conviction for illegal possession of one ton of ivory⁵⁹

Khayelitsha, Cape Town, Province of Western Cape, South Africa

September 5, 2014

Follow up on « On the Trail » n°41 page 95 and « On the Trail » n°5 page 89. Cheng Jie Liang has been sentenced to 10 years prison and a fine of 5 million R that is 469,268 US\$. His prison term will be shortened by 3 years if he pays the fine within a year. This is the heaviest sentence ever inflicted in South Africa for ivory trafficking.

67 tusks had been found in a storage unit in the suburbs of Cape Town in 2012. He was the owner. Liang had been settled in South Africa since 2003. In 10 years, according to official figures, only 3 elephants have been poached there. Liang's loot represents the equivalent of 34 elephants.

Liang was sentenced to an extra 2 years in prison for abalone trafficking. For the same reasons, he had already been sentenced shortly after arriving to South Africa to a R800,000 fine, i.e. 7500 US\$.

REPEATED OFFENSE

Conviction for poaching, possession and transport of ivory and elephant parts⁶⁰

East Region, Cameroon

September 2014

Atangana Jean aka Samedi whose sinister deeds were told of in « On the Trail » n°4 (p. 77) has been

sentenced to 1 and a half years in prison and the equivalent of 2000 US\$ in damages. He had already been sentenced to 50 months prison for similar wrongdoings. In this new ivory elephant meat trafficking case, he remained 9 months in pre-trial detention. He admitted to having killed 12 elephants in the National Nki Park.



Poaching of 2 elephants⁶¹

Ngama Hills, County of Narok, Kenya

September 6, 2014

The 2 dead elephants were found in the bushes near the river, not far one another. One was a male, the other a female.

Poaching of an elephant, death of a suspected poacher and arrest of 3 other suspects⁶²

Chete Safari Area, Province of North Matabeleland, Zimbabwe

September 6, 2014

The rangers circled the poachers. They were resting around a camp fire. According to a police force spokesperson, one of the poachers grabbed a weapon. He was killed on the spot. 3 others were wounded in their attempt to escape. 2 large caliber guns, ammunition and ivory were seized on site. The elephant was killed around 2 o'clock in the morning.



GANG

Seizure of 12 tusks and elephant hairs. 6 suspects arrested⁶³

Niassa National Reserve, Province of Niassa, Mozambique

September 7, 2014

The Park as big as Denmark is on the frontline in the ivory war. That is what its director says. In 2011, the elephant populations there were estimated at 11,000 individuals. A river marks the northern edge of the Park. On the other side is Tanzania. The Park has a rich ecosystem, Cape buffalos, antelopes, wild dogs, zebras and leopards all in one of the poorest countries in the world.

The gang (6 members) that has just been arrested is an expert one. The shooter could boast for 39 elephants killed since the beginning of the year. They would work exclusively by night. The gang was bi-national- with members from Mozambique and Tanzania. Those from Tanzania will not just be sent home with no other form of trial. At least so it is said by the new Minister of the Environment in Mozambique. The new national law plans a penalty of 12 years in prison for charges of poaching and trafficking. Up to now offenders would be let off with a fine or even nothing. Mozambique estimates the seizure to be worth 150,000 US\$. 2 tusks call to attention. Each one weighs 24 kg, they would come from a 40-year-old elephant or so.



The MGM Lions⁶⁴.

The Niassa Reserve is home to 8,000 to 10,000 elephants, rhinoceroses and hippopotamuses, 2,000 buffaloes and 3,000 zebras.

Kudus, impalas and antelopes bring predators such as lions and leopards but also African wild dogs and hyenas to the front row.

The Lugenda Wildlife Reserve (LUWIRE) presents this would be profusion to promote its "MGM lions" of unequalled size and quality. 18 days of hunting MGM lions costs 28,000 US\$. One must add 350 US\$ for an antelope which is used as bait. The tax on the trophy is 15,000 US\$. Additional charges include the work of the taxidermist, the transport of the trophy, the hunting license, the firearms permit and the, and the, and the...

Ethics: it is prohibited to shot lions less than 6 year old.



CORRUPTION

September 2014

Elephants in Mozambique⁶⁵

The Niassa National Reserve spreads across the north of the country over 42,000 km². Over 300 km, it shares a border with southern Tanzania. It is twice the size of Kruger park. The Niassa ecosystem, a mosaic of rivers, forests, and savannahs is cared for by the elephants.

Their numbers are rapidly dwindling: 20,000 in 2009, less than 10,000 in 2013. The northern elephant block is crackling. It is the back bone: it is made of 70% of the elephants in Mozambique. Over the first 2 weeks of September, 22 deadly elephant poaching events were counted. The Director of the Niassa reserve estimates there would be an average of 5 killings a day, most gone unseen for the vastness of the Reserve and the thick plant cover. The poachers are nationals, or from Tanzania, or also Somalia.

Elephant hunting finances the struggle against elephant poaching in compliance with the questionable doctrine hammered over and over for years in southern Africa. That is why it is authorized to hunt pachyderms in the Reserve. Niassa has attractive adds "We have here tuskers with more than 36 kg". "The legendary 45 kg ones feel at home here". 21 days of elephants hunting costs 50,000 US\$, +the permit worth 9000 to 25,000 US\$ according to

the size of the target, +taxes for export of the trophies from 16,000 to 100,000 US\$ according to the weight of the tusks, +the license to carry weapons worth 250 US\$, +packaging and transport of the tusks and possibly other parts to the Pemba airport. In the East of Niassa, the Quirimbas National Park bordering the Indian Ocean in the province of Cabo Delgado is infested of other weapons than AK47. The elephants are called the “problem elephants” who attack farms and children or destroy the possessions of men and farmers. This public fear finds grounds in a few incidents heavily used and misused by village chiefs, district administrators and other state officials in toe with trafficking networks. In the name of protecting the people, the so-called elephants problem are promptly wiped out: “catch, kill and cut”, so is the method. The tusks disappear. The people are supposedly protected but they will never set eyes on any portion of the money coming from the ivory sent to Vietnam and China through the Indian Ocean ports.

The investigation led by a journalist for Oxpeckers has gathered worrying statements on police force members in the port of Pemba, south of Quirimbas Park. All the maritime containers of the forest company MOFID (Mozambique First International Development) escaped checking. In Pemba in January 2011, just before departure, police forces had discovered 126 elephant tusks, a rhino horn and pangolin scales in a maritime container (See “On the Trail” n°2 p.64). Since then, policemen and customs refuse to set up surveillance or search them. They were persuaded to do as such by threats and reprisals. The legal -and illegal- wood would be stuffed with ivory and other animal parts travelling to China. The woman leading the police forces in the Cabo Delgado province is playing a pernicious role. She apparently has more consideration for the interests of certain Chinese businessmen than for those of her own country. In Pemba, her new home with a panoramic view over the Indian Ocean was built by a Chinese Company CN-Balcony Buildings. Times are changing. Until now poaching was compared in Mozambique to the simple act of illegally possessing firearms and those arrested in possession of an old Mauser or a submachine gun would get away with at worst a pitiful fine that they would promise to pay later. And poachers do not always use firearms. Cyanide in water spots, spikes at the bottom of trapped pits, arrows drenched in M99 are also part of their arsenal.

Since the month of June this year, a new law came into force. It has yet to be applicable and applied. Towards that goal, a 2-day training has just been organized to teach magistrates, public attorneys and high rank policemen to “master” the new law. Poachers and traffickers now risk heavy financial sanctions, seizure of their possessions and 8 to 12 years prison in the most serious cases. The new rules are presumably applicable to nationals who go poaching rhinos in the south African Kruger Park then come back home after committing their forfeit.

Seizure of 11 tusks (151 kg) and 4 persons arrested⁶⁶

County of Tharaka-Nithi, Kenya

September 9, 2014

The tusks come from adult elephants. Kenyan officials estimate their value to be of 15 million shillings that is 168,814 US\$. The gang of 4 fought back and apparently even tried to attack policemen with the poisoned arrows they would use to kill elephants. The 4 suspects are “big fish” in the trafficking networks. Their “work” stays in the family. They all are asking to be released. They found their request on serious disease, epilepsy, liver damage or the imperious need to pursue college studies.



Seizure of 115 kg of ivory and arrest of 2 suspects⁶⁷

Lusaka, Province of Lusaka, Zambia

September 2014

Update. This event has been described in “On the Trail” n°3, page 64.

Zambian Safaris⁶⁸

Contradictory information has come to the surface in Zambia. In late August, Jean Kapata, the Minister of Tourism, declared that after a 2-year ban hunting, safaris will be authorized. “We have lost too much income since hunting was prohibited and The Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) has numerous money problems”. Only lions and cheetahs will remain protected. This ministerial statement therefore reopens the door to legal elephants hunting. One week later, a spokesperson from ZAWA dismissed the Minister of Tourism’s claims.

Seizure of 8 pieces of ivory (12,5 kg) and one suspect arrested⁶⁹

Kericho, County of Kericho, Kenya

September 15, 2014

The man was arrested near the service station Oil Libya. 12,5 kg = 14.000 US\$.

Death of an elephant poacher⁷⁰

Matusadona National Park, Province du Mashonaland occidental, Zimbabwe

Septembre 2014

At nightfall he was mortally wounded by the MAAP (Matusadona Anti Poaching Project) that joins rangers from National Parks in Zimbabwe, the Tashinga Initiative Trust, the Changa Safari Camp and the Spurwing Island resort.

The MAAP is fighting elephant poaching and illegal fishing in the Kariba artificial lake that covers 5400 km². This dam reservoir spreads from Zambia to Zimbabwe and harbors around forty different species of fish.

The next morning, the poacher's body was found half devoured by predatory beasts. Ivory, food and clothing were found on site.



Seizure of 2700 cubes of Ivory (50 kg)⁷¹

Lilongwe International Airport, Central Region, Malawi

September 16, 2014

The 50 kg of ivory were divided into 2700 cubes and partitioned in 9 wooden crates. They were going to be exported to China by a DHL cargo plane. The owner of the cargo, a Chinese national who is the co-director of the Golden Peacock hotel in Lilongwe, the capital of Malawi, has been sentenced to a fine of 1 million MK (2440 US\$) or in case of non payment to 2 years of hard labour. The prosecutor had demanded a fine 10 times greater, while the Judge and Jonathan Vaughan, leader of the Wildlife Trust and a part of the defence for the wild animals in court, deplored the lack of rigor and clarity in the penal code.



© Charles Mkoka

An employee of the hotel who at the demand of his boss was the official sender of the cargo has been acquitted. The 9 crates were supposedly meant to be transporting "wood."

Seizure of 8 pieces of ivory and 2 suspects arrested⁷²

Naivasha-Nairobi highway, County of Nakuru, Kenya

September 17, 2014

Road check between Naivasha and Nairobi. 40 kg, i.e. 22,508 US\$. Both were let out on bail for 11,254 US\$.

Seizure of 2 pairs of tusks (13.78 kg) and an arrest⁷³

Bassar, Kara Region, Togo

September 19, 2014

The 2 individuals aged 35 and 25 have been going on a rampage around the Fazao-Malfakassa National Park. They killed 2 elephants in December 2013 and February 2014. They were arrested by the "Office Central de Répression de Trafic Illicite de Drogue et du Blanchiment" (OCRTDB) with the support of the project "Togo Application de la Loi sur la Faune et la Flore" (TALFF). TALFF worked to reinforce the protection of flora and fauna in Togo and in Africa as a whole. The project is notably supported by Pro Wildlife, Born Free, EIA, and the Franz Weber Foundation.



© Vera Weber/FFW

Remains of the elephant poached in December 2013. They have been seized for the sake of the inquiry.



© ANCE-Togo

The 2 tusks seized in September 2014.

Discovery of an elephant carcass⁷⁴

Olarro, County of Narok, Kenya

September 17, 2014

Found dead, pushed dead into the bushes, hit by a poisoned arrow. Guards arrived before the poachers come back.



The tusks were cut and taken, we hope, to a safe place where seized ivory is kept.

Arrest of 5 people suspected of poaching⁷⁵

Dol Dol, County of Laikipia, Kenya

September 2014

5 guys and an AK47. It was ominous for the elephants. The suspects have been interrogated by the police.

Seizure of 26 tusks⁷⁶

Nampula, Nampula Province, Mozambique

September 22, 2014

The tusks were seized in the home of 2 Vietnamese expatriates who ran away as the police came up. Only the 2 Mozambicans who were delivering the ivory have been arrested. The tusks came from the province of Cabo Delgado and Niassa National Reserve 300 km away from Nampula.

Seizure of 8 tusks (43 kg)⁷⁷

County of Meru, Kenya

September 23, 2014

He had put the tusks in potato and corn bags. Police seized at his home a spear and 2 axes that he would have used to kill and mutilate the 4 elephants.

Seizure of 2 kg of tusks⁷⁸

Malindi District, County of Kilifi, Kenya

September 24, 2014

He was released on bail for 100,000 Sh, or 1125 US\$. An accomplice, absent during the trial, was virtually released for 10,000 Sh bail, that is 112 US\$.

Sentencing for possession of 12.5 kg of Ivory⁷⁹

Mumbwa, Central Province, Zambia

September 26, 2014

2 tusks. 5 years in prison. 56 years of age.



Seizure of 9 ivory bracelets and appearance before court⁸⁰

Nairobi International Airport, Nairobi County, Kenya

September 27, 2014

The 2 women from Rwanda and Sudan respectively were concealing the ivory bracelets from customs agents but couldn't from the monitor screens.

One of the women gave before the tribunal the painful reasons for her needing to go to Kenya: her mother is in hospital.

The 2 passengers were released on bail totalling 3349 US\$ each and the judicial process will officially start in October.

Poaching of 2 elephants⁸¹

Lualenyi Ranch, Taita Taveta County, Kenya

September 2014

A team of veterinarians and trainers from HANDS – Habitat Action Network Defence and Support – tried to save the 2 poisoned elephants on the private reserve of 430 km² attached to the Tsavo National Park.



Listen if it rains !

In the north of Kenya, according to a Turkana saying, people from Eastern Africa, to see an elephant at the end of the dry season means that rain is imminent. Further south, the Samburu people share a similar belief. In India, elephants announce the monsoon rain; on land they are considered being the allies of cumulus clouds in the sky. Elephants might be able to detect sound generated by thunderstorms from over 100 km away and could also be capable of localizing the source.

Recent observations of elephants in the Kunene desert in Namibia have led to the theory that elephants are also capable of detecting rain-system infrasound up to 300 km away. They can run this distance in less than 24 hours.

7 researchers of Australian and American origin do not exclude the possibility that under certain weather and geographical conditions the smell generated by storms can also be detected by elephants and therefore contribute to herds movements just before or after the dry season gives way to the wet season.

The authors note that elephants in the Kunene desert do not reply to the "call" of rain in the dry season. That could be the key to elephants' strategic ability to adapt to their particular habitat – male adults drink every 3 to 5 days, females every 2 to 3 days – as well as the demonstration of a cohesive behavior with regard to the external aggressions which they have been confronting for numerous years.



AMERICA

Rescue of an elephant⁸² **Córdoba, Veracruz, Mexico** **September 11, 2014**

Vireky was conceived and born in captivity. She is the first elephant born in Mexico. She is 23 year old and weighs 2 tons. In June, an inspection of the Dak-tari circus by PROFEPA found indications of abuse. She had injuries on her 4 feet. She was chained for 20 hours a day and was in bad condition. After an 8 hours ride, she was welcomed in the Zacango zoo where she is taken care of.



Good news **Release of an elephant⁸³** **India** **July 4, 2014**

After 50 years of servitude and one year of procedure, the elephant who had belonged to several animal trainers was taken to the health center for elephants Mathura, in Uttar Pradesh. The NGO Wildlife SOS is responsible for this rescue.



ASIA

Seizure of 2 tusks (9,5 kg)⁸⁴

Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India

July 2014

How did the 2 farm workers come to be in possession of the 2 elephant tusks worth almost 51 lakh Rs, that is 85,000 US\$ according to the Indian press coverage?

Seizure of 12 pieces of ivory and religious statuettes⁸⁵

Santa Rita, Region of Central Luzon, the Philippines

July 2014

Looting of a sacred place. The infidel stole a crucifix and other religious statuettes made of ivory. His sister in law took care of selling them. Police were led to the case by an informant who even came along for the search and finding of the ivories stolen from the Saint James Apostle Church in Guagua.



Saint James Apostle Church in Guagua

REPEATED OFFENSE

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Poaching of an elephant and seizure of a pair of tusks (19 kg)⁸⁶

Ayutthaya, Province of Ayutthaya, Thailand

July 10, 2014

The elephant might be on the kingdom flag, they are no less tortured and degraded. This one, Klao, the most beautiful domestic elephant of Thailand, respected guest in a sanctuary for active and retired elephants, was poisoned. His tusks were then sawed. Klao had been the star of Oliver Stone's pep-lum "Alexander" with Colin Farrell and Angelina Joly as extras. 50 year old, Klao had arrived to the Park of Elephants in 1999. He would take part in royal ceremonies. He was the incarnation of the Great Elephant. His tusks measured a meter long with a fifteen centimeter diameter at the base. The hunt for the guilty was immediately launched and 3 suspects including a father and son were arrested 6 days later. Cut pieces of the tusks were found at one of their homes. The reconstruction of the crime was cancelled for security reasons, over 300 people and a hundred mahouts had gathered on site threatening the suspects. These are more than just suspects they are repeated offenders. The trio had already

been sentenced for poisoning 4 tigers in the Bung Chawat zoo in 2010. They had been released after 18 months in jail. During the trial, they had admitted that one of the tiger carcasses had been sold for 200,000 bath, that is 6160 US\$, to a wildlife broker in Nakhon Pathom, a city of 120,000 inhabitants near Bangkok.



The sensitive problem of domestic elephants in Thailand has already been mentioned in "On the Trail". Wild elephants, 2000 to 3000 individuals, are less than domestic elephants, about 4000 according to governmental figures. Until the 1960-70 decade, domestic elephants were used for discharging timber and since then they have been mainly exploited by the tourism industry.

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Family sentenced for failing to produce 100 kg ivory articles before the court⁸⁷

Delhi, National Capital Territory of India

July 2014

In May 1999, a debt recovery officer had visited Mr. RK Jain's house to carry out attachment proceedings as his father was part of a firm which had failed to repay credit facilities to a bank.

As per the family, the officer had allegedly found ivory articles and seized them in their absence. The articles were then released back to the family under the provisions of section 451 of the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure stating that, when there's a dispute over the ownership of an item, the latter can be temporarily entrusted to its last holder.



The special CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) judge has upheld the January 2014 order of the trial court, and also allowed wildlife inspectors to assess the ivory-articles market price, so that the remaining amount may be recovered from the accused persons for causing alleged disappearance of the items. RK Jain, his wife Sarita and his mother Sushila, all condemned, had filed an appeal against the trial court order. "The impugned order passed by trial court in the matter suffers from no illegality, as the trial court was left with the only option to ensure the production of the ivory before it to facilitate the continuation of the proceedings in the matter" the special judge said. As per the wildlife inspectors who filed the complaint, the family members never replied to the memo asking them to produce the legal source of the ivory articles and a license to keep them.

Seizure of one tusk⁸⁸
Yanji, Jilin Province, China
July

The Yanji customhouse discovered the carved ivory inside a new package mailed from Japan. The tusk measures around 30 cm long and weighs 810 g.



Seizure of 24 ivory objects⁸⁹
Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China
July 15, 2014



The Hangzhou customhouse seized 2 separate packages containing ivory products on the same day. In the package from Malawi, Africa, there were 23 rectangular objects, similar to mahjong pieces. In another package from Japan, there was a skillfully carved Guanyin statue, goddess of mercy.

OPERATION KEEPER
Seizure of 1.87 kg of ivory⁹⁰
Guiyang, Guizhou Province, China
July 2014

Chinese customs have consolidated the control of the import of forbidden animal materials. Operation Keeper began in June and will go until the end of the year. It is in this setting that the passengers of an airplane traveling from Phuket to Guiyang were searched. In the carry-on luggage of 3 Chinese "tourists" nearly 2 kg of ivory were found. They said they had bought it without knowing that there was a ban.

Seizure of 21.5 kg of ivory⁹¹
Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, China
July 23, 2014

Based on the sources of the Beijing customhouse, the Shijiazhuang customs seized 21.5 kg of ivory, worth 890,000 rmb (145,000 US\$). Zhang, who lives in Ethiopia, is high school classmate with Chen, who lives in Shijiazhuang. Earlier this year, they learned that ivory products have high demand and prices in China, so they decided to directly ship them from Africa to China. To avoid inspection, they made Wang the recipient, their friend who works in a delivery company. After Wang attempted to retrieve the package, the police arrested him and offered him incentive to reveal the truth. Later, Chen was arrested as well.



Conviction for the traffic of 790 kg of ivory⁹²
Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong, China
July 24, 2014

The 16 Vietnamese, 10 men and 6 women, surprised at the Hong Kong airport on the 10th of June transporting 790kg of ivory split between 32 bags (see "On the Trail n°5 p. 101) were each condemned to 6 months of prison. The maximum penalty in the eyes of the law for smuggling ivory or other animal materials is 2 years. The seizures of ivory are at a high in Hong Kong. 8041 kg in 2013, a 43 % increase compared to 2012. The cumulative value of the ivory transported by the 16 Vietnamese is estimated at about 645,000 US\$. The final destination of the cargo was Cambodia.

Conviction for the trafficking of ivory⁹³
Yongkang, Zhejiang Province, China
July 25, 2014



Yanfang Shao was a construction company manager and later became a member of the national committee, a governmental position in the Communist party, in Zhejiang Province. In 2009, she opened a mortgage company with Moulin Shao, but the 2 disputed over monetary issues. Afterwards Yanfang Shao ordered some men to beat Moulin Shao, so the police went to her house to investigate this case. At her house, to their surprise, the police found instead 18 pieces of ivory. They sued Yanfang Shao for illegal possession and trading of ivory, and she was convicted to 14 years in prison with 300,000 yuan (48,850 US\$) fine.

Seizure of 18 tusks and 587 ivory objects (60 kg)⁹⁴
Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok, Samut Prakan Province, Thailand
July 26, 2014

The value of the ivory in the baggage of a Chinese female of 23 years and a Vietnamese man of 62 years is estimated to be the equivalent of 300,000 US\$ by customs at Bangkok international airport. In the attempt to proceed with the smuggling between the Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa and Cambodia via Bangkok and Thailand, the woman was fined 500 US\$ and the man 300 US\$. The sponsor was of Asiatic origins. The 2 mules would have arrived

through Ethiopia. The couple had 60 kg of ivory in their baggage. They risk a fine equal to 1,500 US\$ and a maximum sentence of 4 years in prison. The final destination was Siem Reap near the Angkor temples. Tourists can easily supply themselves with ivory there and the town is linked to a number of Chinese airports. The reinforcement of inspections in bordering countries shifts ivory trafficking to Cambodia.



**Seizure of 112 ivory pieces (39,4 kg)⁹⁵
Macao, China
July 27, 2014**

In day light, a military patrol for customs noticed a rubber dinghy approaching a beach. An attempt of smuggling was immediately suspected. A quick search of the see side resulted in the discovery of 4 bags. They were stuffed of ivory. The skiff of the smugglers successfully fled.



**Poaching of an elephant ⁹⁶
Kandaraghat hillock, Orissa, India
July 2014**

The entire head of the pachyderm had been cut off. It is the sixth victim in the area in 6 months. Arrests of suspects, partial confessions, the dismissal of forest guards has done nothing. It is a stampede. The mutilated carcass had been burnt on the scene.

**Poaching of an elephant ⁹⁷
Dudkakud, Orissa, India
July 2014**

It is the fifth victim in 6 months in the Sambandi forest reserve. 3 people have been arrested. They lived in the area. 2 of them had been in possession of the equivalent of 1015 and 183 US\$. One admitted their participation in poaching. A firearm was seized. The tusks would have been sold to a wholesaler from Jamshedpur in Jharkhand. Authorities are searching for more information. A chief forest

ranger and a game warden are suspended. They could be implicated in these serial murders.



**Poaching of an elephant ⁹⁸
Palamau Tiger Reserve, Jharkhand, India
July 30, 2014**

The peaceful Ganesh, loved by all, 50 years "as cool as a cucumber" according to the kind expression of a friend of the elephant, was killed by a bullet. One of his tusks was cut off. The other was driven into the earth when Ganesh fell and could not be taken by the criminals. "He was nice to everyone." "He was not one to hold anyone back." Homages abound, governmental banalities too. The first minister of Jharkhand contented himself with « Wild fauna is precious and everyone needs to work together to protect it."

**Domestic elephant form Sri Lanka- part 2 ⁹⁹
Sri Lanka
July and August 2014**

In the month of Mai 2002, Mr. Ambewela returned to his home in Kandy by car, a traditional route. It was hot, the windows were down as usual. A motorcycle followed and its twin near the cricket stadium. Mr. Ambewela, commissioner of the general accounting office, received a jet of sulfuric acid to his bare face. Disfigured, burnt nearly to his lungs, nearly blind, he survived. He was the victim on an attack. In a report, he had denounced the diversion of public and international cooperation funds in the central province of Kandy. A sum of 250 million Sri Lankan roupies (1.9 million US\$) covered by receipts to fictive conferences and the purchase of informational material for students delivered to addresses that do not exist.



After 2 facial surgeries in France and a long period of physical and mental recovery, Mr. Ambewela resumed his position at the Audit Office in 2009. He is respected at the heart of the institution. He leads several novice commissioners and directs a service

more specially dedicated to agricultural and forest questions. 12 years after the first attack, "Do you really want to lose your second eye?" is what his someone speaking to him would have said or warned. Indeed Mr. Ambewela had just presented a bomb of another variety to the public prosecutor. This new report concerned the fiddles by which elephants captured in national parks are registered as domestic elephants born in captivity. Remember that, as in "On the Trail" n°5, it is a reinforced mark of social status to possess and displaying an elephant. Whoever has an elephant is stronger than the elephant. The report alludes to in particular Thilina Gamage, magistrate in the business district of Colombo. It emerges from the investigations of the Audit Office and from the statements of close to 43 government workers and private citizens that date falsifications, faked signatures and frauds have permitted a number of wild elephants to be enrolled as domestic elephants, despite the implementation of new regulations. Since 2009 the FFPO (Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance) requires owners to inform the relevant service of the state of the birth of an elephant.

An assistant director of DWC (Department of Wildlife Conservation) declared to the Audit Office that she must have lied and concealed the facts concerning elephant n°334 belonging to the judge of Colombo. The preliminary report on the scandal of elephants from Sri Lanka who have thus been subtracted from their herds and the natural habitat was published July 22, 2014. It said that "Priyanka Sanjeewani, the assistant managing this file, had been forced to backdate the registration application to November 2008 in order to circumvent the new rules." Following to the letter the instructions from higher up, Priyanka Sanjeewani acknowledged this registration application on November 12, a holiday celebrating Poya Day, a full moon festival.

On August 1st, Mr. Ambewela seemed to have been transferred. In the days that followed, he was unreachable and the secretary of the Audit Office and other bodies of the government all together said he was on vacation. The elephant of Thilina Gamage is still the elephant of Thilina Gamage. In autumn, the ex-director of the DWC gave orders for the n°334 elephant to be given back to his services. This claim was cancelled at the beginning of this year by the new leadership and the n°334 has not been released into the wild.

Environmentalists through the spokesperson and the lawyer of the "Center for the Species Conservation" are asking for the intervention of the CIABOC (Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption).

Seizure of 3 tusks (14.6 kg) ¹⁰⁰

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

August 1, 2014

Another failure by French customs on an air cargo from Paris to Vietnam (see «On the Trail» n° 4 p.87). Fortunately Ho Chi Minh City colleagues made up for it. The 14.6 kg of white gold were going to Da Nang in the center of the country. Vietnamese experts identified the African origin of this contraband.



The controversy surrounding an ivory funeral urn ¹⁰¹

Thailand

August 2014

Scandal around an urn. The ashes of the supreme patriarch of the Buddhist religion in Thailand (Sanghajara) supreme responsible for monks of the country and king's counselor will be collected in an ivory urn carved from one of the 2 tusks of a 70 year old domestic elephant named Thongbai. Tradition sees ivory as the only pure and auspicious material worthy of the ashes of such a dignitary. Gold is reserved for the remains of the royal family, marble, wood and clay are considered profane. Several Buddhist luminaries including a senior monk of Wat Saket, the Temple of the Golden Mount in Bangkok, are no longer consistent with the maintenance of this tradition, saying it harms the reputation of religion and contributes indirectly to the slaughter of elephants. Admittedly the urn was made from a tusk taken from Thongbai while he was alive and the law in Thailand does not prohibit the sale of ivory from domestic elephants, but it is well known that the kingdom has not reliable rules for registration of domesticated elephants. Ivory urns may therefore in some cases come from poached wild elephants.



The controversial urn is worth from 50,000 to 100,000 US\$ on the Asian market. «There is an opportunity to conduct an educational outreach to supporters of elephants and defenders of tradition» is said from the Temple of the Golden Mount. It's next year that the ashes of the great master deceased at the age of one hundred years will be transferred to the ritual urn. Will it be made in ivory?

Poaching of an elephant¹⁰²

Sabah, Malaysia

August 2014

Shot dead. 18-25 years. Lying on a road leading to an oil palm plantation. Killed for trouble or ivory, or both? The photo of the crime scene does not establish it.

Borneo elephants also called pygmy elephants are thought to have been isolated from their Indian brother 300,000 years ago and are considered by some specialists to be a distinct species, *Elephas maximus borneensis*. Population status is unknown, the most optimistic estimates mention figures of 2000 individuals, the most pessimistic say 500.



Seizure of 3kg of objects in ivory¹⁰³

Jiangmen, Guangdong Province, China

August 2014

The first case of ivory smuggling in the Jiangmen customhouse: 12 carved ivory in 4 different packages with shoes, weighing 3kg. The sender is the same person, but the 4 packages are going to different addresses and recipients. "Thank you for using priority mail."



Poaching of an elephant¹⁰⁴

Hambantota, Southern Province, Sri Lanka

August 2014



The last wild elephant south of the island has just died at the edge of the Indian Ocean, killed by gun,

chased by urbanization and sent off his forest remnants by logging. He died in a corridor that is not green. The killers had no time to cut the tusks, the trunk, the tail and genitals.

Seizure of a baby elephant¹⁰⁵

Matale, Central Province, Sri Lanka

August 2014

Another elephant moved in a truck and in unclear circumstances. He was caught in the forest or subject of a clandestine transfer between private owners.

The young elephant was kept in custody in the out-buildings of the police in Matale. Ultimately, his fate is unknown.

Seizure of elephant tusks¹⁰⁶

Vellalore, Tamil Nadu, India

August 12, 2014

These brave rangers seized the tusks and arrested the 3 carriers.



Seizure of 11 ivory billiard balls (2 kg)¹⁰⁷

Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China

August 18, 2014

French Customs got scammed. The 2 parcels indeed contained billiard balls, but in ivory and not artificial stone as stated.



Seizure of a ton of ivory¹⁰⁸

Port of Hai Phong, Hai Phong Province, Vietnam

August 19, 2014



Hai Phong. The 4 containers of peanuts coming by sea from Nigeria also contained 1 ton of ivory. 30 bags were hidden at the bottom of the containers. Hai Phong, ivory port. See "On the Trail" n° 5 p.100

2 elephants struck by lightning and taking of a pair of tusks¹⁰⁹

Forest Jawalagiri, Tamil Nadu, India

August 2014

The 2 males would have been killed by lightning and discovered 5 days later by park rangers. NGOs are surprised and say that in the neighboring state of Karnataka patrols are more attentive to poaching and trespassing in the forests.

Seizure of 14 pieces of ivory¹¹¹

Khuzama, Nagaland State, India

August 27, 2014

Dark traffic. The arrest will perhaps allow the light in. The "mule" was a woman known as Ching Zou.



Seizure of an elephant¹¹²

Mahadevpur Upazila, Province of Rajshahi, Bangladesh

August 30, 2014

The exhibitor extorting pennies to passers-by for a picture or a few steps riding on elephant back was arrested. The fate of the elephant is unknown.

Seizure of Ivory (2kg)¹¹³

Jiading District, Shanghai, China

August, 30 2014

The object that was found during a check on the highway came from Shanghai. It was "white, milky and smooth". Despite the unavailability of experts on the weekend, it was confirmed that the suspected object was indeed ivory.

Project for the registration of ivory shops¹¹⁴

Thailand

September 2014

Bad scare of ivory merchants in Bangkok and other cities. They have a 2 month deadline to declare themselves and their ivory stocks to authorities. "We need to have a better view" is what is being said high up. 2 complementary bodies of rules are being worked on. The first one would outlaw the sale of African ivory, the second would force sellers of ivory taken from domesticated elephants to declare it to the National Parks and Wildlife Department. Thailand is answering to injunctions coming from CITES.

Discovery of 3 elephant carcasses¹¹⁵

District of East Aceh and Aceh Jaya, Province of Aceh, Indonesia

September 5 and 7, 2014

2 near a palm oil plantation in the East of the Province, the third in the West, 300 km away. All were male, tusks ripped off. Old counts mention figures of 500 elephants in the province and 3000 in the Island of Sumatra. Unreliable estimation that seem quite optimistic.

Seizure of 2 tusks (9 kg) and 4 people arrested for ivory trafficking¹¹⁶

Kalpetta, State of Kerala, India

September 10 and 14, 2014

Jamsheer, a policeman, was arrested by his colleagues. Investigations showed he was at the head of an attempted sale of 2 tusks weighing 4.5 kg each, taken from an elephant about 10 year old. He apparently bought the tusks from a medicinal herbs collector. 3 of Jamsheer's accomplices including a woman are also being interrogated by police. The collectors are still at large.

In Kerala, 106 wild and domestic elephants have died according to Nanditha Krishna, a wildlife specialist.¹¹⁷ Quoting a report from Heritage Animal Task Force, a NGO based in Kerala, she noted that 19 of the elephants were young males in captivity. The main reasons behind the deaths are ivory poaching, bad management of protection plans and violation of animal rights. In Kerala, Thrissur famous for its Pooram festival where caparisoned elephants parade in ceremonial dress is where the greatest number of domestic elephant deaths occur.



Poaching of a baby elephant¹¹⁸

Edge of the Uda Walawe National Park, Provinces of Sabaragamuwa and Uva, Sri Lanka

September 2014

When they don't have tusks, their tails are cut off. That is what happened to the 4 year old female baby elephant. The tail hairs are used to make bracelets and other amulets. The legend says that it brings power and happiness. The baby died following the mutilation. Agents of the DWLC (Department of Wildlife and Conservation) all chipped in. A 25,000 Rs reward (192 US\$) has been promised to whoever could give valuable information that could enable to identify the guilty person. This is a first in Sri Lanka where the relationship towards the wild and domestic elephants is complicated.

Seizure of ivory¹¹⁹

Shenzhen, Province of Guangdong, China

September 16, 2014

NEW. The infant milk powder hid ivory bracelets and necklaces bought in Africa. When passed through the X-ray, the milk boxed turned out to be ivory boxes. The mother was aware that importing ivory was forbidden and chose to try to trick customs by putting white in white. All items were seized.

Seizure of 458 Ivory objects (38 kg)¹²⁰

Tianhe District, Guangdong Province, China

September 16, 2014

The police had been well informed. In the safe of the car, there was indeed an ivory tusk and in an adjacent small apartment there were statuettes, penholders, and chopsticks of ivory.



Seizure of 6 kg of Ivory¹²¹ **Xining, Qinghai Province, China**

September 2014

6 kg of ivory contraband in the centre of China. 2 sus-

pects have been questioned.

Seizure of an ivory sculpture (1.2 kg)¹²²

Yantai, Shangdong Province, China

September 2014

The carved tusk had left France in an international postage box without any problem.

Seizure of 59 pieces of ivory (40 kg)¹²³

International Airport of Tan Son Nhat-Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

September 28, 2014

The 40 kg of ivory were cut into 59 pieces. Each of them was wrapped in tin foil. The sections of ivory were "submerged" in a cargo of cashew nuts. The local value of the ivory is estimated at 113,200 US\$.

The parcel had come from an African country.



Appearing for the trafficking of 600 kg of ivory¹²⁴

Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

September 28, 2014

The trial of an ivory traffickers gang began. A very special gang including 2 customs officers from Guangzhou Baiyun Airport and a manager of the airport duty free shops. Between September 2011 and the end of June 2013, about 20 irregular imports occurred from Africa, particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo. Smugglers were recruited at a rate of 5000 yuan (810 US\$) to get ivory in Africa and take it back to China. "No entry areas" where used to avoid ivory goods to be detected.

Discovery of 3 elephant carcasses¹²⁵

Sivasgar Distric, Assam, India

September 29, 2014

Foul play in the rice-fields : 3 dead elephants, one male and 2 female. They could have been intoxicated by pesticides sprayed 2 days before. Had they drank water contaminated by toxic residues? The fate of the male's tusks is unknown. The problem for the authorities from now on is to dispose of the carcasses without damaging the environment and to avoid health risks for the villagers who were gathering by the dozen around the area.



EUROPE

Seizure of 3 tusks (32 kg) ¹²⁶

**Francfort-sur-le-Main Airport, Hesse, Germany
June 8, 2014**

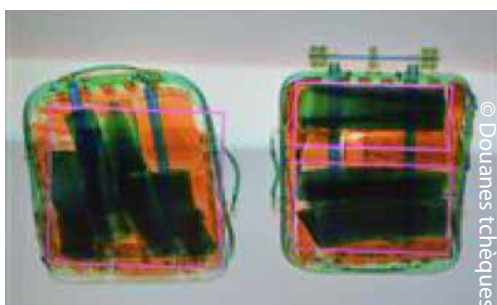
The Vietnamese 26 year old came in a car from the Czech Republic. He was flying for Hanoi. The seizure took place in June. It was revealed at the end of July to not disrupt the proceedings of the investigation. He received a 10 months jail suspended sentence in September.



Seizure of 8 ivory tusks (24 kg) ¹²⁷

**Prague-Václav-Havel Airport, Bohème, Czech Republic
July 23, 2014**

Customs agents perform well again: the tusks were sectioned in 15 pieces, each carefully packaged in gift paper and surrounded in adhesive. The traveler of 25 years was headed for Seoul. The value of the loot is estimated at 48,000 €.



Seizure of 6 tusks (25.22 kg) ¹²⁸

Roissy, Ile-de-France, France

August 12, 2014

Have an eye!

1. Express freight Mozambique → Laos, transit through Paris
2. A wooden box with 2 pompous "wood carved stools"
3. X-ray inspection
4. Sanding by customs
5. Drilling
6. Seizure of 6 elephant tusks



OPERATION GULAK

Continued auction house suspected of selling illegal ivory¹²⁹

London, England, UK

August 19, 2014

Chiswick Auctions in West London was sold a carved ivory authenticated by its experts as dating from before 1947. A datation required by regulations of the United Kingdom under the International Convention CITES in case of sale.

The ivory was seized by a police unit specialized in art trafficking. Scientific analysis revealed that the ivory came from an elephant killed in the 60s.

The director of the auction house will be brought to justice. He admits a professional error, calls for an isolated incident and promises to be vigilant.

He claims he is the victim of a witch hunt: investigators ask him for informations about the seller of incriminated ivory and clients who commonly offer ivories for auction, even when Chiswick Auctions refused to put them on sale when certificates are not satisfactory.

This case is part of the Gulak operation launched by Greater London police. Gulak is meant to clean up the "flea markets" in the London metropolis. "On the Trail» n° 3 p. 68 mentions Operation Gulak.



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Other Mammals

AFRICA

Death threats against a policeman¹ County of Narok, Kenya July 2014

On the road from Narok to Mai Mahiu, David Chumo had arrested poachers transporting 6 tons of giraffe meat inside their truck. He had refused the 60,000 Sh (686 US\$) bribe to hush up the matter. The meat came from Masai Mara, a few km from there, and was on its way to Burma Market in Nairobi, 80 km further.

"Hi Chumo, hope you know us, you have arrested and jailed our brothers who were just trying to provide food for their children", "umesaidika na nini?" ("You're finished, you will die mysteriously"), "Inspector General of Police David Kimayio and President Uhuru Kenyatta will not feed your family, we are coming for your head."

After having been congratulated for his integrity, the policeman in the County of Narok asked for protection. Sinister deeds are underway in Narok County. The message most certainly came from the poachers/bushmeaters' camp.



"Sweetheart I have some bad news to announce, there are only 80.000 of us left in Africa."

Seizure and euthanization of 8 sitatunga (*Tragelaphus spekii*, not listed by CITES)² South Africa August 1st 2014

The Prague zoo had endeavored sending some of their antelopes to the Johannesburg zoo and to a private property by airplane. This export was in fact illegal according to European regulations. Alleging epizootical risks, South Africa refused to accept the illegal antelopes on their soil. Germany, the last European country the animals travelled through, refused to shelter them back.

The trip had lasted 4 to 5 days. The antelopes - locked up in small wooden boxes- were injured, dehydrated, and bloodstained. Upon opening the containers, 4 of the animals were already dead. The ordeal for the survivors was prolonged due to the

fact that many local veterinarians were unwilling to euthanize them.

The methods of the international animal sales and exchanges between zoos are again called into question. The NSPCA (National Council of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) also denounces the fact that one of the recipients was a hunting safari promoter. The NSPCA finally underlined that Lufthansa, the airline company that transported the animals, had already been responsible for the illegal transport and abandonment of reptiles and amphibians at Johannesburg International Airport (Cf. « On the Trail » n°4 p. 94). The cargo there came from Madagascar.

Sitatunga's range of distribution extends mainly in West and Central Africa. They live in tropical forests, especially in swampy and humid regions.



Rugby players from New Zealand kill and pose a zebra³

South Africa August 2014

The try is scored. Their faces are radiant. Success, the zebra is well killed. Team spirit prevails. "We didn't do anything illegal."



Seizure of 300 kg of zebra meat (genus *Equus*)⁴ Kenya

August 31, 2014

The plains zebra meat was in the luxury car on the Narok – Mai-Mahiu express lane. The zebras were without a doubt poached on the Masai Mara game reserve. The butcher was arrested and then released on bail. The trial will take place in October.

AMERICA

Poaching of a Mexican prairie-dog (*Cynomys mexicanus*, Appendix I)⁵

Mexico

July 2014

She was showing off on Facebook with the dead mammal in one hand and a gun in the other. She is liable for a fine worth 200 to 500 days of minimum wage.

The Mexican prairie-dog is considered a key species for the Mexican plateau, contributing to uphold a complete ecosystem with predators, prey, insects and plants. They have a significant impact on soil composition. Excavation of large burrow networks enhances the permanent mixing of the soil layers. This very rare species is endemic to Mexico. The specimens are threatened by habitat loss caused by agricultural expansion and cattle breeding. Many colonies have been exterminated with poison.



Cynomys mexicanus

Seizure of the meat of 2 pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III)⁶

State of Paraná, Brazil

July 2014

Full count: 22 fire weapons, various caliber ammunition, 25 wild birds including saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*, not listed by CITES), ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*, not listed by CITES)

and green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*, not listed by CITES), 8 kg of frozen capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*, not listed by CITES) and paca meat. 15 people have been arrested.



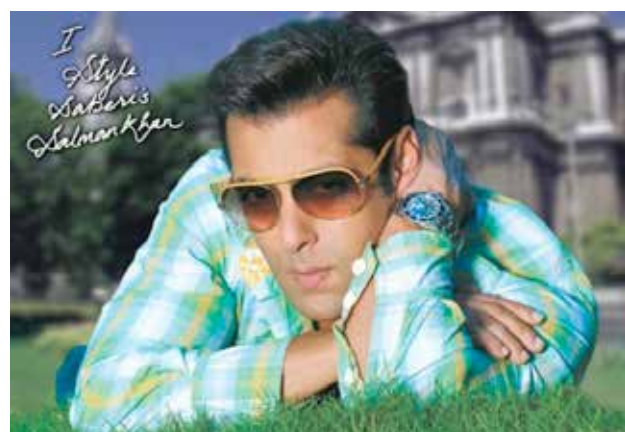
ASIA

Blackbuck poaching case (*Antelope cervicapra*, Appendix III) : The Rajasthan Government filed a plea challenging the High Court's order staying actor Salman Khan's conviction⁷

Jodhpur, Rajasthan state, India

July 9, 2014

The Supreme Court on Wednesday issued notice to Salman Khan, regarding the Rajasthan Government's plea against the High Court's order suspending his conviction. Indeed, the actor, who had poached 2 blackbucks in 1998, had been sentenced to 5 years in jail by a trial court in 2006, before benefitting of a stay on conviction ordered by the Rajasthan High Court in November 2013. The Rajasthan Government, challenging the conviction stay, says the latter had been ordered merely because Khan is a celebrity, in violation of the equality principle, according to which no distinction must be made between citizens when examining a sentence-or-conviction suspension application. Salman Khan -also facing another trial for manslaughter through negligence in a hit and run case -has until August 6 to file a reply.



Seizure of one Himalayan goral (*Naemorhedus goral*, Appendix I)⁸

Beijing, China

July 2014

Fang and Ma wanted to make a good impression in front of their boss. Since wild animals are considered delicacies in China, they bought a Himalayan goral and a Siberian roe deer (*Capreolus pygargus*, not listed by CITES). They knew they were acting from legality. They decided on a "safe route" to avoid patrols, but they were still selected for inspection. The police seized the goods and the 2 men now face criminal charges.



Seizure of 2 slender loris (*Loris tardigradus*, Appendix II)⁹

Wenshan, Yunnan Province, China

July 10, 2014

The police found 2 slender loris during a customary inspection on a car. The driver, Chen, confessed that he had bought the loris for 500 yuan (80 US\$) from a villager from Maguan Xian in Wenshan. He wanted to ship the animals to his hometown in Sichuan Province and resell them.

Conviction for unlawful possession of 49 shahtoosh wool shawls (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I)¹⁰

State of Delhi, India

July 2014

In March 2000, the police, having received serious preliminary information, raided Hilal Ahmad Wani's house and found 49 shawls made of Tibetan antelope wool. The suspect was sentenced to one year in prison in June 2014 by a lower court. The district penal court confirmed the prison time and lowered the fine from Rs 10,000 (166 US\$) to Rs 5000 (83 US\$). Wani hoped for a suspended prison term, putting forward the fact he had never before been convicted. The judge explained his decision: "Seeing the number of shatoosh shawls, we can say with certainty that he practiced trade." "The court does not see any circumstance that could justify that the prison term be suspended." At the time of the search Wani had fled from the house. He was arrested 4 days later.



Seizure of 2 musk deer preputial glands (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I or II)¹¹

Pokhara, Western Development Region, Nepal

July 27, 2014

Plain-clothed police officers raided the room rented by Chandra Bahadur Rawat, 38 year old, and seized.

2 people arrested for killing a Tibetan Wild Ass, or Kiang (*Equus kiang*, Appendix II)¹²

Autonomous Region of Tibet, China

August 11, 2014

The Shaanxi province electricity company has questionable habits. 2 technicians pursued a wild ass (Kiang) in a car, speared it, and brought it back to the site for the rest of the employees to eat. The 2 perpetrators have been arrested.



REPEATED OFFENSE

Seizure of 55 sunda porcupines of the *Hystrix javanica* species (not listed by CITES)¹³

Kabupaten of Langkat, Province of North Sumatra, Indonesia

August 22, 2014

The shipment was on its way from Medan to Aceh. Then, it would have sailed to China. This was not the first load for the chief conveyor. The first time he had delivered pangolins, the second time it was turtles. He earned 36 US\$ for each trip.

Seizure of 100 kg of the antlers of barasingha (*Rucervus duvaucelii*, Appendix I) and of sambar (*Cervus unicolor*, not listed by CITES)¹⁴

Dehra Dun, Province of Uttarakhand, India

August 26, 2014



Rucervus duvaucelii

They say they collected the deer antlers by crossing the forests. Saying one has found antlers at the moment of shedding is akin to others in Africa saying that they collected ivory tusks near elephant skeletons that have died naturally after a peaceful life. The police are sceptical. The 2 suspects were transporting more than 100 kg of antlers to deliver them to wholesale exporters. They both live near Rajaji National Park.

Barasinghas are declining because of their leather's being prized for whip making. They have been listed on Appendix I since 1975.

Seizure of 200 brushes of mongoose hair (family Herpestidae)¹⁵

Guwahati, Province of Assam, India

August 28, 2014

The Anti-Environmental Criminality Office (WCCB) states accurately: "the attention is always put on the trafficking of rhinoceros horns, elephant ivory, and tiger skins." "But the other types of trafficking are too often neglected."

All Asian mongooses are threatened today by the water colourists of the world. Read more about this subject in "On the Trail" n°3 page 78.



Seizure of musk from a musk deer (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I or II)¹⁶

District of Sankhuwasabha, Eastern Development Region, Nepal

September 2014

After analysis, the musk turned out to be authentic. The forest guard was also carrying 435 kg of medicinal herbs.

EUROPE

Conviction of a hunter for having killed 2 mouflons¹⁷

Valencia court of Justice, Autonomous Community of Valencia, Spain

August 2014

It happened in March 2009. The mouflons' heads were found in the man's car during an early morning check near the game reserve. He was transporting binoculars, knives and a silent rifle with a telescopic lens. He didn't have a hunting license. The mouflons' bodies – of unknown species – were found later. 9 mouflon species are listed in CITES.

The transporter was fined 1.800 €, and is banned from hunting for 2 years. He was also ordered to pay 8889 € in damages to the Mola Game reserve of Cortes de Pallas.

Seizure of the meat of a Cyprus Mouflon (*Ovis orientalis ophion*, Appendix I)¹⁸

Kanaviou, Paphos District, Cyprus

September 30, 2014

Poaching is firmly entrenched in Cyprus. The police are trying to put a stop to it. 6 containers of meat, presumably of Cyprus mouflons, were brought to light in a discreet garden in Kanviou, a village situated near the Paphos forest, on the island's western side of the island. The Cyprus mouflon is a national symbol which was introduced to this Mediterranean island from Asia 10,000 years ago. Today, it is being decimated by guns.

Elsewhere on the island, and at the same time, a man was surprised as he carried a net, a gun, and bags filled with birds - 300 it is said. It is unknown how many were dead or alive.



Multi-Species

AFRICA

Withdrawal of hunting licenses¹

Tanzania

July 2014

Green Mile Safari had valid hunting permits for the Selous Game Reserve in southern Tanzania. No holds were barred on this company-managed lands: hunting with silencer-equipped automatic machine guns, hunting for females and youngsters, hunting without a guide, shooting at endangered animals, chasing and hitting animals with off-road trucks. The scandal was revealed by the shadow Minister of Tourism and Natural Resources that political opposition set up in the country.

Green Mile Safari's revoking takes place a few months after 2 high officials from the Ministry's wildlife office were suspended. The Minister has also announced that a new body, the Tanzania Wildlife Authority, was currently being set up. Directorship of the TWA will be ensured by a college of directors.

"Considering the issues we are facing, we need a more rigorous and better organized structure."

In the meantime, the 2 suspended officials have been reinstalled in their positions.



Selous Game Reserve

REPEATED OFFENSE

Transfer of 3 elephants and gorillas (*Gorilla* spp., Appendix I) poachers²

Bayanga in Bangui, Central African Republic

July 13, 2014

The 3 notorious poachers and repeat offenders were transferred to the central prison in Bangui. They had just been sentenced to prison terms of 6 months to 2 years in Bayanga at the end of an audience signing the restoration of the judiciary in the prefecture of the Sangha Mbaéré. The 3 convicts are also banned for 10 years. One of them had already been sentenced twice for poaching in Nola in 2009 and Yokadouma in 2013. Gorillas and elephants were among his victims. The transfer purpose is to reduce the risk of seeing this poachers' trio at work in the area again. Jean René Sangha vowed to fight poaching at the time of his latest appearance. He says he became a poacher after his dismissal from the green guards that he considers unjustified.

Seizure of 2 skulls and other elephant bones, and one gorilla skull (*Gorilla* spp., Appendix I)³

Mamfé, South-West Region, Cameroon

July 14, 2014

The elephants skulls and bones, and the gorilla skull were on sale on the street. They were seized in the course of 2 separate operations 500m away from one another. 5 suspects have been arrested. One of them is a state-fostered child. The gang probably got the goods from poachers operating in the Korup National Park near the Nigerian border. An elephant was recently killed there.



REPEATED OFFENSE

Conviction for poaching⁴

Guiétsou province Ngounié, Gabon

July 17, 2014

Modest, Charlotte and Mireille were caught on June 23 while transporting bushmeat including 11 water chevrotains (*Hyemoschus aquaticus*) and one pangolin. They were remanded in custody. The 2 women and their sidekick were judged on July 17. They were sentenced to 30 days of which only 22 in jail, a tailored made sentence which allowed them to leave the court free.

Jean-Romain, Jean-Olivier and Guy-Roger were driving a small car on the Mandji-Peny road. They were stopped in their tracks by an anti-poaching team. It was not a car. It was a butcher's shop. 5 small crocodiles, 2 monkeys, one pangolin and more small fry. To top it all an ivory tusk 1.6m long. The trio also was spared by the court. 3 months suspended prison sentence, a fine equivalent to US\$ 622. The leader, Guy-Roger Moussavou, prison guard, well known as the 2 others for his wildlife trafficker activities, even escaped conditional sentence.



Conservation Justice deplores these merciful sentences and the absence of the Water and Forests department which usually acts as civil party in this type of trial.

Seizure of 2 pieces of elephant skin and 2 lion teeth (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II)⁵

Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, County of Nairobi, Kenya

July 23, 2014

The Vietnamese citizen was going to fly to Bangkok from Nairobi.

Arrest of an elephant and python (*Pythonidae* spp Appendix I or II) poacher⁶

Kenya

July 27, 2014



Another story of bail which ended in an empty chair at the trial, that of the suspect. After the slaughter of a venerable elephant, guards had followed the footsteps of the poacher home where 2 tusks taller than him and a python skin were found.

Fortunately, 2 months after the failed trial, Big Life Kenya tracked down Kerumpoti Leyian through local information.

His hide out was surrounded by the KWS and he is back in detention without the possibility, at least we hope so, of a second release on bail.

Bushmeat seizure, including 3 black-backed duiker (*Cephalophus dorsalis*, Appendix II), an ape (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II) and a pangolin (*Manis* spp. Appendix II)⁷

Libreville, Province of the Estuary, Gabon

July 28, 2014



Ebola's hemorrhagic fever pandemic requires increased vigilance upon the bush-meat trade and more information for consumers. Dead wild animals are considered as potential carriers of the virus. Awareness campaigns are not enough.

31 porcupines (family *Hystriidae*, not listed by CITES), 10 gazelles, antelopes, pangolins, a genet (*Genetta genetta*, not listed by CITES), and an ape were hidden in flour bags. They were on their way to a bushmeat wholesaler who had been supplying the Mont-Bouët market in Libreville for 5 years. She is facing from 45 days to 3 months in prison and a fine of 25,000 to 1 million CFA francs (about 50 to 2000 US\$).

A road checkpoint at the entrances to the capital city enabled discovery of the shipment that came from Ndjolé in Middle-Ogooué, 3 hours away by car.

Court appearance for the possession of 4 elephant tusks and 2 cheetah skins (*Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I with reservation by Namibia), release under bail⁸

Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia

July and August 2014

Hou Xuecheng is the principal suspect in the case of elephant tusks and cheetah skins in Windhoek (see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 113). With the aid of his lawyer, he requested a release under bail. It is supposedly not as much for him but for the "10 to



15 employees" of the farm he is renting to Swapo, the majority political party of the country and also for the "10 to 20 employees" of his brickyard and transport company. His 3 trucks are immobilised for the time he has been in pre-trial detention. His Namibian wife is alone with 2 children. He is also responsible for 3 other children he had with his Chinese spouse.

At the time the prosecutor was not sympathetic to this outpour. Hou Xuecheng has only the status of an agricultural worker. His marriage with the Namibian woman is a marriage on paper. She wants a divorce. And the prosecutor dealt some ultimate blows: "You have already been sentenced twice in 2007 and 2010 and now you are accused of at least 4 more crimes."

Hou had fallen in an ambush with 2 accomplices on a night time meeting in the industrial quarter north of the capital city while he was examining 4 elephant tusks.

In a dramatic turn of events, 15 days later, the same defendant was freed on bail for 40,000 Namibian \$ or 3,800 US\$. The judicial process will take place in September.

Seizure of a gorilla's skull and bones (*Gorilla* spp., Appendix I) and elephant's ivory and tail⁹

Cameroon

August 2014

This is the 34th great ape skull to be seized by the authorities in Cameroon since the beginning of the year. The 2 undertakers were also transporting ivory, some marijuana and an elephant's tail.

Seizure of bush-meat including 21 blue duiker (*Philantomba monticola*, Appendix II), 2 yellow backed duiker (*Cephalophus silvicultor*, Appendix II), 6 apes (*Cercopithecidae* spp., Appendix I or II), 3 tortoises, 1 dwarf pangolin (*Manis tricuspis*, Appendix II), 6 *Atherurus* brush-tailed porcupines (not listed by CITES), 1 hyrax (family *Procaviidae*, not listed by CITES), 2 sitatunga (*Tragelaphus speikii*, not listed by CITES), 1 gambian pouched rat (*Cricetomys gambianus*, not listed by CITES)¹⁰

**Mbang, East Region, Cameroon
22 and 23 August 2014**

A welcomed blow has been dealt to the Ebola Pandemic. Bush meat is a reservoir for the virus, and the bodies of the animals have been incinerated. The Society of Forests and Industry of Doumé, of which the concession-granted lands are often invaded by scavenging collectors, has requested authorities' intervention (see "On the Trail" n° 3 pg. 72).

The village of Mbang has attracted particular attention. Besides the meat, 200 steel cables, some ammo, and other flora and fauna poaching devices have been seized.

Seizure of bush meat and 8 poachers arrested¹¹

**Surroundings of Kruger Park, South Africa
September 9, 2014**

Protrack and police set up a trap for bushmeaters. 3 of them were wounded.

Weapons, axes and knives were found.

The clandestine camp was then uncovered with help from all local forces. Equipment, bushmeat, traps and their settings were found. The meat was hidden under bushes to keep it from vultures.



Arrest of 2 poachers¹²

Lugenda Wildlife Reserve, Niassa Province, Mozambique

September 23, 2014

A search was carried out in the houses of 2 infamous poachers named Paulo Njenge and Antonio Bernardo. Two 345 calibre rifles, 3 AK47s with 468 unused cartridges and some hippopotamus teeth were seized.

"Thanks to the brand new environmental police and tougher penalties, poachers now feel the pressure," said the delighted anti-poaching team of the LUWIRE reserve (Lugenda Wildlife Reserve) which extends around 7200 km² within the Niassa National Park buffer zones. The Reserve is managed by private investors who commit themselves to protect both flora and fauna.



Seizure of 4 fake rhinoceros horns and 9 ivory tusk tips¹³

Zimbabwe

September 2014



In one week, Zimbabwe police forces seized ivory, fake rhinoceros horns, 19 km of fishing lines, marijuana, illegal beer, firearms, arrows, and gold-washing equipment.

AMERICA

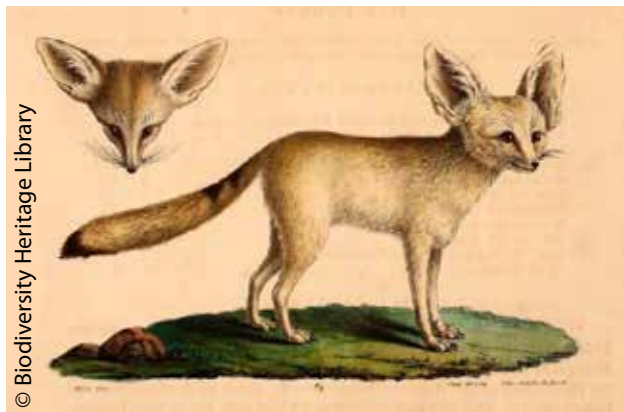
Seizure of white-nosed coatis (*Nasua narica*, Appendix III), 2 ring-tailed lemurs (*Lemur catta*, Appendix I), 3 fennec foxes (*Vulpes zerda*, Appendix II) and a screech owl (*Strigidae* spp., Appendix I or II)¹⁴

Warren, State of Michigan, United-States

July 2014

At first the police didn't believe a word from the voice over the phone saying there was an oryxteropus in the neighbor's courtyard, for the officer who received the call had hardly ever heard of such an individual.

A police patrol came down there and found 30 animals, all equally protected under American and international laws. Lemurs, coatis and at least one vulture, all originating from Africa, South America and Madagascar, were there. A whole world gathered in a yard and a garage! The caretaker from the Detroit zoo who helped identifying the species mentioned appalling captivity conditions. The city's counsel will institute an action at law. The probable charges are mistreatment, and unlawful possession of endangered species, each being likely to result in 10 days imprisonment and a 500 US\$ fine.



Vulpes zerda

Seizure of stuffed animals including a common caracara (*Caracara cheriway*, Appendix II), a scimitar oryx (*Oryx dammah*, Appendix I), an addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*, Appendix I), and waterfowl¹⁵

Calvin, Oklahoma, United States

July 9, 2014

The Triple S wildlife ranch covers more than 1500 hectares (3000 acres). Acting under a search warrant, veterinarian services assisted by the police and the USFWS have been searching the premises and the whole area. Stocks of narcotics were discovered. They are used for "Green Hunting." Clients shoot the animals with tranquilizer guns. Once the hunters have taken photos with their trophy, the animals will be woken up with other forms of medication. The hotel rooms and leisure spaces were decorated with stuffed gazelles, domesticated in ancient Egypt times and now endangered in North Africa. The addax originated from the Sahel region of Africa is also on the path to extinction. Relatively slow, they are easy prey for motorized hunters who pursue them and shoot them at point-blank range.

A scimitar oryx which was clearly stamped by Texas wildlife services has focused the attention of experts. The species that used to live in North Africa is extinct. It was the attempted sale of stolen quads that had initially attracted the attention of police on Triple S Ranch. A few quads were also seized.



The Triple S wildlife ranch offers special rates for children. *Oryx dammah*



The Ranch online store is also selling an elephant head for 4995 US\$

Seizure of a short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*, Appendix II), a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), a green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and 2 Bolivian three-toed sloths (*Bradypus variegatus*, Appendix II)¹⁶

Province of Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Ecuador

From July 7 to 11, 2014

Various verifications and controls led to their discovery. A crab-eating raccoon (*Procyon cancrivorus*, not listed by CITES) was also in the package. Some were in cages. They were all taken to the wildlife rescue center "Carlos Bedach". Veterinarian checks have concluded that 5 of them are in good health. The crab-eating raccoon is currently recovering from a head injury. The results are so far encouraging.



**Seizure of 150 birds and a turtle ¹⁷
Natal, State of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil
July 11, 2014**

They were for sale on the street market. They have been seized early in the morning. Selling wild birds is considered as a federal crime.



Seizure of 240 conures (*Aratinga* spp., Appendix II) including white-eyed conures (*Aratinga leucophthalma*, Appendix II), 32 yellow footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis denticulata*, Appendix II) and 13 giant South American turtles (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II)¹⁸

**Road between Tarapoto and Yurimaguas, Region of San Martín, Peru
July 2014**

The vehicle with the license plate number B4G-426 was inspected. 6 boxes containing the animals were found inside. The driver, the passenger, the vehicle and the animals were all taken to the Police Special Unit.

Giant South American tortoises are land turtles. They are hunted for their meat or to be sold on the pet market. Slow growth rate, late sexual maturity and low birth rate make this species very vulnerable to such catches.



Chelonoidis denticulata

Seizure of 198 kg of bush meat including caiman meat (*Alligatoridae* spp., Appendix I or II), paca meat (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III), agouti meat (family *Dasyproctidae*) and capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*, not listed by CITES)¹⁹

**Macapá, State of Amapá, Brazil
July 12, 2014**

The meat was in a 33 year old man's house. He has been arrested and faces charges of illegal transport and wild-animal meat storage. He is liable for a fine and up to 2 year imprisonment. The meat was seized and will be used to feed other animals.

Seizure of 2 little spotted cats (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I), 2 night monkeys (*Aotus* spp., Appendix II), 2 keel-billed toucans (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II), 2 crested guans (*Penelope purpurascens*, Appendix III), 3 ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*, Appendix I), a jaguarundi (*Puma yagouaroundi*, Appendix I) and a Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II), 18 boars, a groove billed toucanet (*Aulacorhynchus sulcatus*, not listed by CITES), a turtle of the *Staurotypus triporcatus* species (not listed by CITES) and 3 turtles of the *Trachemys scripta* species (not listed by CITES)²⁰

**Ixtacomitán, State of Chiapas, Mexico
July 12, 2014**

The farm they were in might be called an undercover Noah's Ark. In good health, she was transferred to the Miguel Alvarez del Toro zoological park and firstly put in quarantine.

The PROFEPA delegate admits that capture and sale of endangered animal species is a serious predicament in the Chiapas State. "As long as there will be demand, there will be trade. That's the problem."



Penelope purpurascens



Puma yagouaroundi. É. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1803

REPEATED OFFENSE

Seizure of 33 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), 2 red-footed tortoises (*Geochelone carbonaria*, Appendix II), 13 emperor scorpions (*Pandinus imperator*, Appendix II), a blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), a red-and-green macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II), a moluccan cockatoo (*Cacatua moluccensis*, Appendix I), a monk parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), an eclectus parrot (*Eclectus roratus*, Appendix II), a blue headed parrot (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II), an African savanna monitor (*Varanus exanthematicus*, Appendix II), 3 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and 2 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II) ²¹
Mexico, Federal District of Mexico, Mexico
July 2014

Maskota cannot help facing charges! After the cases reported in "On the Trail" n°4, a new warning was reported in "On the Trail" n°5. In issue n°6, 4 branches in Mexico are targeted. The PROFEPA has inflicted fines amounting to a total of 272,000 US\$ (3,541,000 Mexican pesos) and administrative sanctions for illegal sale of wild extinction-threatened animals. Maskota had already been fined 75,000 US\$ (971,000 pesos) last month.



Pandinus imperator

Seizure of stuffed animals including one baboon (*Papio* spp., Appendix II), 2 lynx (*Lynx* spp., Appendix I or II) of which one bobcat (*Lynx rufus*, Appendix II), the skull of a bear (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and an alligator (*Alligatoridae* spp., Appendix I or II) ²²

Los Angeles, State of California, United States
July 23, 2014

The Filipino father, his wife and their 2 children are traveling for the first time in the United States. Seized by a sudden passion for naturalized exotic animals, they toured Texas, Nevada and other states, haunted auction houses, made appointments with liquidators to collect a menagerie that would have in their home country caused much envy and possible financial transactions.

The trophies were seized on the port of Los Angeles at the last minute in a container of goods gathered under the classification of household objects. The main suspect who was able to return to the Philip-

pines claims he acted under an impulse and enjoyed a bargain in Texas where the majority of trophies was purchased. For the moment, the agents of the US Fish and Wildlife Service appear to believe the statements of the family man according to which neither he nor his entourage were informed of the United States and the International regulations on the trade and export of endangered species. The value of the seizure is estimated to 9000 US\$.



OPERATION CRASH

Indictment for trafficking rhino horn, ivory and coral ²³

Manhattan, New York, United States

July 29, 2014

The Canadian-Asian antique dealer Ju Xiao Guan aka Tony Guan has been indicted by the federal court in Manhattan for attempted smuggling of wildlife in the form of ivory, rhino horn and coral. Mr. Guan was caught in the act of buying 2 black rhino horns in a warehouse in the Bronx. Sellers were agents of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In their presence, and with the help of an accomplice acting as an interpreter, he had shipped the 2 horns immediately after purchase to a post office to Point Roberts, Washington State, 2 kilometers away from the Canadian border and about 30 from his antique store, pointing out that, by the way, friends of him would pass the 2 horns from USA to Canada. The parcel was declared as "handcrafted objects worth 200 US\$" while Guan had bought the 2 horns for 45,000 US\$. Tony Guan and his accomplices are suspected of having by similar means illegally traded for 500,000 US\$ of ivory, coral and rhino horns from USA to Canada. Most of these parts of endangered species were purchased in auction rooms in various States, Florida for instance.

At the time of his arrest, Mr. Guan business premises were searched by Canadian services. Canada and United States are working hand in hand in this case, continuation of the successful operation Crash. Guan faces up to 5 years in prison for violating US regulations on trade in endangered species and up to 10 years for smuggling.

Titanium Good News

Sentencing to a 53.100 US\$ fine for wild animal mistreatment²⁴

**State of Yucatan, Mexico
August 2014**

The "Harley Circus" had already faced charges on March 2014 (see "On the Trail" n°4, page 99). Animals were being mistreated. The managers were eventually fined 53,100 US\$. The American black bear's lower jaw was mutilated. A new titanium-made one was transplanted. The bear is currently recovering in the Pachuca Park where it will need to re-learn to drink and eat, and, hopefully, eventually join the Colorado Wild Animal Sanctuary, in the United States.



Seizure of 2 dead collared peccaris (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II) and 9 dead birds of the Columbidae family²⁵

**Road between Sao Gabriel do Oeste and Rio Negro, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil
August 2, 2014**

The 3 men aged 19, 23 and 45 were hunting. They were in possession of 4 firearms and their victims' corpses. One of the guns had its serial number scratched off. Each of the hunters faces 2 to 6 years imprisonment and a 5500 R\$ fine (2500 US\$).

Seizure of 30 kg of paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) and white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*, Appendix II) meat²⁶ **Manaus, State of Amazonas, Brazil August 6, 2014**

A call to an environmental hotline ended up in inspections conducted at the Oswaldo Frota market. The merchant was arrested. To protect the environment, please call: 92 8842-1547.

Seizure of a dead paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) and a dead armadillo (family Dasypodidae)²⁷ **Baixo Guandu, State of Espirito Santo, Brazil August 7, 2014**

The 2 mammals were killed and then frozen. They were uncovered during the search of a suspected poacher's home. The man wasn't home and is still on the run.



Seizure of bear furs (*Ursidae* spp, Appendix I or II), fox furs (family Canidae) and bison furs (genus *Bison*)²⁸

**Los Angeles, Region of Biobio, Chili
August 11, 2014**

The clothing and accessories store would import all goods from

the United States. Some of the furs have not been

identified and are currently being analyzed. The employees knew the store was selling illegal animal furs but were afraid to lose their jobs, in a region swarmed with unemployment.



© La Serena Online

Seizure of 68 trophies of wild animals including a leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), a crocodile (*Crocodylia* spp., Appendix I or II), buffalos (family Bovidae), zebras (genus *Equus*), gazelles (genre *Gazella*), and impalas (*Aepyceros melampus*)²⁹

**Guadalajara Intyernational Airport, State of Jalisco, Mexico
August 2014**

29 skins, 30 skulls, 8 hooves and a full crocodile skin have been found in wooden boxes directly sent from Tanzania.



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Aepyceros melampus

Seizure of 16 birds including 3 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II), a dusky-headed parakeet (*Aratinga weddellii*, Appendix II), a tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, Appendix II) and a passerine of the *Dendrocolaptes* genus³⁰

Cochabamba, Department of Cochabamba, Bolivia

August 2014

The operation carried out among the La Pampa market stalls proved to be fruitful. The birds were in cages. The monkey for his part was tied up at a flower shop. Several of the sellers tried to defend themselves with shouts and threats. Of course they hadn't mistreated the animals! In any case Bolivian law is quite clear. It is forbidden to sell, buy or withhold wild animals.

Seizure of 508 kg of paca meat (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), South American tapir meat (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II) and collared peccary meat (*Pecaritia jacu*, Appendix II) and 120 kg of dried arapaima fillets (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II)³¹

**Manacapuru, State of Amazonas, Brazil
August 9, 2014**

The meat was on a boat. In order to fool authorities, the traffickers had hidden it under fish. The 3 passengers were arrested. The total seizure is estimated at 15,000 R\$ (6700 US\$)



**Seizure of 3 live lions and a live white-bellied spider monkey (*Ateles belzebuth*, Appendix II)³²
Santa Rosa, Region of Cusco, Peru
August 2014**

Inspection of the Monaco circus on August 11, 2014, revealed bad living conditions for the animals. The 6 lions' cages were too small. Their behavior was typically that of stressed animals. Hygiene was also insufficient.



Seizure of 95.8 kg of dried arapaïma (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), 1,3 t of fresh arapaïma, 2 turtles, 978 kg of fish (*Colossoma macropomum*), 348,9 kg of paca meat (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), tapir meat (*Tapirus* spp., Appendix I or II), muscovy duck meat (*Cairina moschata*, Appendix III in Honduras) and armadillos (*Dasypodidae* family)³³

**Manaus, State of Amazonas, Brazil
August 2014**

The seizure took place along side quay aboard the *Fantastico* on the Feira da Panair market. The 2 fishermen were arrested. The *Colossoma macropomum*, under sized, were seized.



Seizure of 97 live animals including 2 black spider monkeys (*Ateles chamek*, Appendix II), 82 kg of bush-meat, parts of about 100 animals, stuffed animals and 6 kg of freshwater turtle eggs³⁴

Pucallpa, Ucayali Region, Peru

Between the 19th and 20th of August 2014

A quick sweep was made through the Bellavista animal market, in Pucallpa (center of Peru). Pucallpa is the ultimate place for animal martyrdom. Dead or alive animals are everywhere, in artisanal shops, in courtyards, in restaurants, on the streets, every day and even more on weekends. On the roads to Pucallpa, busses transport more animal passengers than humans. Live animals or parts to eat, to decorate, to accompany, to enchant, to cure so they say, to dress up, to amuse and to show off.

What an extraordinary mess. Pucallpa acts as a Fauna Concentrating Device in the South American continent. Luckily this tendency is fading thanks to the efforts of an NGO, the Neotropical Primate Conservation (NPC) and the determination of prosecutor Patricia Lucano Gomez, who is in charge of environmental matters in the Ucayali province.

Inspections and seizures are growing in number. Bellavista may very soon be closed and replaced

by a market in a dedicated and more easy to watch place where exhibition of animals, wild meat and eggs originated from plunder and poaching will be forbidden.



Ateles chamek

Seizure of a puma (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II), 30 red-and-green macaws (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II), a tapir (*Tapirus* spp., Appendix I or II) and a capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*, not listed by CITES)³⁵

**Linden/Soesdyke Highway, Guyana
September 3, 2014**

On Wednesday the woman driving the Toyota four-wheel-drive provided a veterinarian certificate claiming the animals were in good health and authorizing their delivery to a wildlife exporter settled in the capital city. She had been stopped the day before while on her way towards Georgetown.

Authenticity of this document is uncertain. Shonette Thakurdeen could not only be charged with illegal transport but also with mistreatment. All the animals were dehydrated and weak, especially the puma.



Seizure of a naturalized Geoffroy spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*, Appendix II), a young naturalized crocodile (*Crocodylus* spp, Appendix I or II), 54 bracelets made of crocodile skin, 25 m of crocodile skins, a naturalized red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*, Appendix II), a head and a bag with parts of white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, Appendix III in Guatemala), 3 bracelets of ocelot skin (*Leopardus pardalis*, Appendix I), a northern tamandua skin (*Tamandua mexicana*, Appendix III in Guatemala), 558 Mexican tree porcupine teeth (*Sphiggurus mexicanus*, Appendix III in Honduras) and accessories with green iguanas legs (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II)³⁶



**Mexico City, Mexico
September 2014**

The PROFEPA inspection has been successful indeed.

REPEATED OFFENSE

Suspension of unauthorized commercial activity³⁷

Playa del Carmen, Quintana Roo, Mexico

September 2014

"Animalandia" had SEMARNAT's permission to exhibit wild animals on their premises. In fact, they would offer tourists and other passers-by to pose with wild animals, including cats and monkeys, on the street. "Animalandia" does not meet the requirements for SEMARNAT authorizations: there are no adequate facilities, and animal and human safety conditions are not met.

The establishment was repeatedly denounced by tourists and locals.

In January 2014, "Animalandia" was fined 145,000 pesos (11,000 US\$) and 8 animals were seized. Thus, "Animalandia" was warned.

Later that year, in the state of Yucatan, "Animalandia" was this time fined 100,000 pesos (7,600 US\$). The establishment was exhibiting wild animals in the port city of Progreso.

SEMARNAT permission has been revoked. "Animalandia" business has been suspended. Officials face a fine and jail.



Seizure of 195 kg of bushmeat including caiman (*Alligatoridae* family, Appendix I or II), armadillo (*Dasypodidae* family), agouti (*Dasyprocta* genus) and capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*)³⁸

State of Amapá, Brazil

September 4, 2014

The alert was given anonymously. A machete and a precision balance are also discovered with the meat.

The environmental battalion emphasizes: "Every day, we receive alerts like this, and there are more and more of them".

Seizure of more than a hundred animals, including birds (*Psittacidae* spp. Appendix I or II), monkeys (*Primates* spp. Appendix I or II), forest tortoises (*Chelonoidis denticulata*, Appendix II) and yellow spotted river turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II)³⁹

Pucallpa, Ucayali Region, Peru

September 8, 2014

They were on sale on the Bellavista market. The animals were caged in precarious conditions. They will all join the National Zoological Park of Pucallpa. Merchants fled abandoning some of their goods.

Seizure of more than 3 tons of bushmeat, South American tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II), agouti paca (*Paca Cuniculus*, Appendix III in Honduras) and capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*)⁴⁰

Coari, Amazonas State, Brazil

September 8, 2014

The illegal sale took place on the municipal market in Clemente Vieira. Sellers managed to escape the police. The seizure is estimated at R \$40,000 (17,700 US\$). One part of the meat will be buried and the rest will be donated.



© Foto Amazónico

Good News

Release of an American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*, Appendix I), a Mexican red knee tarantula (*Brachypelma smithi*, Appendix II) and a skunk (family *Mephitidae*)⁴¹

State of Colima, Mexico. September 2014

The American crocodile, a male, is 2.94 m long and weighs 300 kg. It was spotted by the civil protection of the State. Fearing it might get close to a populated area and endanger the population, the crocodile was captured and released in its natural habitat in the Amela Laguna.

The tarantula and the skunk were handed over to PROFEPA in Colima. They were released into their natural habitat after medical examination.



© PROFEPA

Seizure of 235 reptiles, adult amphibians and 203 tadpoles, a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and 57 glass frogs (family *Centrolenidae*)⁴²

Juan Santamaría International Airport, Province of San José, Costa Rica

September 9, 2014

The German tourist was about to fly to Düsseldorf via Panama. The animal goods were in plastic boxes with only some salad leaves for food. Most animals were already dead. Maciej Oksrora, a 31 year old man, is liable for a fine worth 40 times the main income in Costa Rica or 3 years in prison.

In 20 years on the job, the airport chief of security had never seen a smuggling attempt of such a scale. After 3 days in custody, the smuggler went back to Germany as if nothing had happened. Offenders caught red handed in Costa Rica can plead guilty and in return receive only a year's probation so long as the offense they were guilty of is not punishable by more than 3 years imprisonment. This probation is in no way effective in cases where the culprit is a foreigner whose visa has expired.

As says the press in Costa Rica, wildlife trafficking can bring in a lot of money and judicial risks are very low. Last year, services seized from private properties, or during road checks or border controls 239 birds, 8 reptiles, and 159 mammals. Compared to the richness of wildlife in Costa Rica, the amount of seizures is quite low. The inventory is yet incomplete. The turtle eggs are left out.



© Public Security Ministry



© Costa Rican government

Seizure of 2 lowland pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), of 2 armadillos (family Dasypodidae) and a stag⁴³

Araguania, Tocantins, Brazil

13 September 2014

2 firearms. 2 poachers arrested.

2 species of armadillos living in Brazil are listed in CITES: the giant armadillo (*Priodontes maximus*, Appendix I) and the greater naked-tailed armadillo (*Cabassous tatouay*, Appendix III in Uruguay) .

Seizure of 5 red-masked parakeets (*Aratinga erythrogenys*, Appendix II), 3 orange winged amazons (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix X), 1 blue-headed parrot (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II), 1 grey-cheeked parakeet (*Brotogeris pyrrhopterus*, Appendix II), 1 cobalt-winged parakeet (*Brotogeris cyanoptera*, Appendix II), 1 anteater (genus *Tamandua*) and 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II)⁴⁴

Loja, Loja Province, Ecuador

September 2014

In all, inspections led to the saving of 16 wild animals over 2 weeks. They have all been entrusted to the Loja municipal zoo for health exams that will be decisive with regard to their eventual release into the wild.



The anteater is a tamandua (*Tamandua mexicana*, Appendix III in Guatemala) or a Southern tamandua (*Tamandua tetradactyla*, not listed by CITES).

Seizure of a spider monkey (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II), a Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II), 2 badgers (Mustelidae family), 2 white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, Appendix III in Guatemala), 6 turtles, a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), a red-lore amazon (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II) and 8 blue-grey tanagers (*Thraupis episcopus*)⁴⁵

Mérida, State of Yucatán, Mexico

September 24, 2014

The 22 animals were under the responsibility of the Parque Metropolitano del Sur managed by the federal government. They are in bad physical condition. Malnutrition and wounds have been observed. 10 of them are being transferred to the El Centenario zoological park. The others will be taken to the CIVS, a center for wildlife research in Tekax a hundred kilometers away. The spider monkey is most certainly a Geoffroy's Spider Monkey (*Ateles*

geoffroy, Appendix II), the only species of spider monkeys found in Mexico.

The Parque Metropolitano del Sur better known under the name « Yu'um tsil » which means « Guardian of good » was inaugurated in summer 2013. Jogging area, cycle tracks, interactive environmental center, wildlife management unit, bird sighting area, museum, enclosures for wild animals, camping areas... it was presented as the "green lung" of Mérida and cost 28 million pesos, that is 2.5 million US\$.

Seizure of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), a Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II) and a white-nosed coati (*Nasua narica*, Appendix III in Honduras)⁴⁶

Cancún, Quintana Roo, Mexico

September 27, 2014

The man failed to present legal documents upon inspection by PROFEPA. The animals have been entrusted to an agreed treatment facility for the conservation of wildlife.



OPERATION « AMAZON / CREATURE OF THE FOREST »

Seizure of over 700 animals including a turtle, parrots and parakeets (Psittacidae family, Appendix I or II), chesnut-bellied seed finches (*Oryzoborus angolensis*), ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanoloxia brissonii*) and green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*)⁴⁷

State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

September 30, 2014

It's the biggest operation of the year. Police raid into 13 towns in the State. Full toll, seizure of more than 700 wild animals, 8 firearms, drugs and 594 bird cages.

"This is a big blow against wildlife trafficking" says Daniel Colen, chief of wildlife surveillance for the Department of State for the Environment and Sustainable Development.

In Brazil, flows are identified. The animals are poached in the northern, north-east and center-east regions and then sent by land or river to the south-east, in particular the State of Minas Gerais, in the south or to other regions in the north-east.

Seizure of 28 turtles (*Chelonoidis* spp., Appendix II) and 9 birds including a hyacinth macaw (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*, Appendix I), a parrot and 2 parakeets (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II)⁴⁸
Aracaju, State of Sergipe, Brazil
September 30, 2014

The animals were found in a rubble dumpsite. They were not for sale, the owner claims he has a passion for these birds. When the IBAMA men asked him to show documents proving authorization to possess them he was unable to comply. All the animals were seized.

ASIA

REPEATED OFFENSE

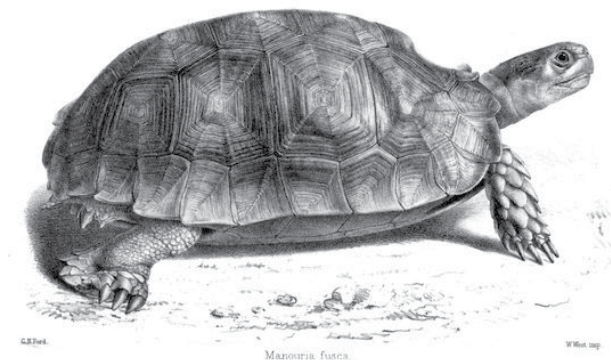
Seizure of 72 cobras (Family Elapidae), 44 turtles, 10 Asian giant tortoises and 2 shells (*Manouria emys*, Appendix II) and 6 turtles (*Cuora* spp., Appendix II)⁴⁹

Sanglang, State of Perlis, Malaysia

July 2, 2014

This suspect has had a good amount of practice in trafficking. He would be part of a reptile-specialized network that gets its supplies from national parks in the State of Kedah and Penang. He was let out on bail for 10,000 RM, i.e. 3170 US\$. He faces charges liable to a maximum fine of 50,000 RM (that is 15,835 US\$) and/or up to 2 years imprisonment. The trial will take place in a few weeks.

4 species of cobras are listed in Appendix II in Malaysia, the monocle cobra (*Naja kaouthia*), the Indian cobra (*Naja naja*), the golden spitting cobra (*Naja sumatrana*) and the king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*).



Manouria emys

Seizure of 5 lion claws (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I), 7 owl talons (*Strigidae* spp., Appendix I or II), and a dead reptile⁵⁰

Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India

July 3, 2014

The lady Vaidhya (the common name for a practitioner of traditional Ayurveda medicine) was selling the claws in her dispensary in a classy part of the city. A snake was submerged and floating in formol. Each claw sold for between 5000 Rs and 10,000 Rs, or 83 and 166 US\$. Another laboratory of the lady Vaidhya was spotted in Anil Nagar city. She had exposed the claws at Van Mela, the herb and plant fair organized by the Department of Forests a few months beforehand. She was then pretending that

the claws were false: "In order to get real ones, one has to come to my clinic," she said. The claws were sent to a laboratory to verify their authenticity. They are used in traditional black magic.

Seizure of 1580 turtles and 34 pangolins (*Manis* spp., Appendix II)⁵¹

Phetsakem road, Province of Chumpon, Thailand

July 6, 2014

Fruits are often used to cover the sight and smell of hundreds of animals in crates. This is indeed international smuggling. The hostages came from Malaysia. The truck had picked up the load of fruits in the Sougai Kolok District at the border between Thailand and Malaysia. It was heading towards Bangkok about 1000 km away. According to investigators, the final destination for the animals was China. The trafficking would have brought in 3 million Bath i.e. 92,300 US\$ to the organizer, had it succeeded. During questioning, the driver received a call on his cell phone. 3000 US\$ were offered to the investigators if they let go the driver and the truck.



Seizure of 400 turtles (*Emys orbicularis*, not listed by CITES) and 700 Chilean rose tarantulas (*Grammostola rosea*, not listed by CITES)⁵²

Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

July 12, 2014

The spiders are landed from a speed boat with the reptiles. The Guangdong province border patrol police in Shenzhen received reports of smuggling activities from Hong Kong to Xixiang port in Shenzhen. The police set up posts near the port and observed a motorboat speeding towards land at night and suspects quickly unloading boxes in a truck. The police raid surprised them before the truck could leave, and seized the turtles and tarantulas, along with 20 boxes of cell phone accessories.



Arrest of one man for the smuggling of 6 products made of ivory and 2 products made of rhinoceros horn⁵³

**Dezhou, Shandong Province, China
July 2014**



From March to December 2013, Fan purchased ivory and rhinoceros products from antique markets in 5 different provinces. On May 16, 2014, the police discovered some products at the back of his car. Fan was arrested at the suit of the Dezhou prosecutor in July for the illegal buying, transporting, and selling of products made with endangered species. Among the seized items were Buddhist statuettes, a pen box and a small libation cup made with rhino horn. The case has been made public in July.

GREEN HARROW OPERATION

Seizure of 480 wild animals including 11 Indian bullfrogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*, Appendix II)⁵⁴

**Yueyang, Hunan Province, China
July 17, 2014**

"The farmers market nearby sells frogs and snakes!" Many people have recently reported incidents of wild animal sales. The forest police sent 19 men, divided into 3 teams, to the 9 farmers markets in Huarong Xian and seized 480 wild animals in 12 stores. Later that day, the police released all the animals back to the forest and ponds.



Arrest of one man for the smuggling of a pangolin and a Ryukyu serpent-eagle (*Spilornis cheela*, Appendix II)⁵⁵

**Ganzhou, Jiangxi Province, China
July 2014**

From 2011 to May 2014, Liu had been a seller in a farmers market in Ganzhou, Jiangxi Province. On

May 22, his friend Zheng, a hotel employee, called him and asked if he could purchase a pangolin. A hotel customer wants to treat a friend. Liu knew a wild animals dealer who worked in Ji' An, Jiangxi Province, who agreed to sell an Indian pangolin at 1500 yuan/kg (241 US\$). In addition, he proposed to sell him a Ryukyu serpent-eagle at 1900 yuan (306 US\$). Liu agreed because he could make a profit as a middleman for the pangolin and wanted to eat the eagle meat. On May 23, Liu went to the bus station to pick up the goods, but the police already seized them. Liu was officially arrested for smuggling wildlife in July.

Seizure of 534 birds and other animals⁵⁶

Kathmandu Valley, Central Development Region, Nepal

July 13, 2014

The birds were seized from 2 small boutiques and a house occupied by Indians native to the Bihar region bordering Nepal. The CIB (Central Investigation Bureau) is trying to counter the market of wild birds in Kathmandu, especially of birds captured in Nepal and in Bihar. The fourth indicted man is of Nepalese nationality.

Seizure of 150 parts of animals: horns, claws, teeth, skins, skulls, furs, bile, elephant sperm, crocodile snouts (*Crocodylidae* spp. Appendix I or II)⁵⁷

**Kajang, Selangor, Malaysia
July 2014**

No stopping in step back. In this cabinet of curiosities 2 innovations are noted: the crocodile's snout and a substance described as elephant sperm. Elephants' genitals are actually often cut along with the tusks in Asia and this practice extends to Africa.

Seizure of 2 live pangolins (*Manis* spp., Appendix II), 3 turtles and 2 macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II)⁵⁸

Vietnam

July 22, 2014

Party day at ENV!

- 2 pangolins exiled in Ho Chi Min City transferred to Cu Chi refuge.
- 1 captive turtle transferred to Cuc Phuong National Park.
- 1 macaque kept under observation in a refuge.
- 1 other tied to a tree is following the same path.
- 2 turtles exhibited in a popular bar released in the natural environment.



Seizure of 4 lion cubs (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), 40 turtles, 25 squirrels (family *Sciuridae*), 120 pythons (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II), 23 goldfinches (*Carduelis* genus) and 4 bulbuls (*Pycnonotus* genus)⁵⁹

**Amman, Amman Governorate, Jordan
July 2014**

The 217 wild animals were destined to be sold as pets. They were exposed and available in a public shop to local clients but even more to purchasers from neighboring countries. Jordan could be a transit platform from which protected fauna and flora would be illegally exported to the Gulf countries, Syria, Saudi Arabia. The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature says that after a period of observation, the animals will be returned to their countries of origin.



**Seizure of ivory and rhinoceros horn items⁶⁰
Changsha, Hunan Province, China
July 25, 2014**



Jiang, 44 year old, had met Lin through a mutual friend. They were doing redwood furniture business together until Jiang decided to trade ivory and rhinoceros horn items. The police arrested her on her way back home with the loot. "We had some financial disputes, but I never thought that he would report me to the police" Jiang said in court. She admitted to her crimes and now faces charges.

**Seizure of 5 pangolins (20.5 kg) (*Manis* spp., Appendix II) and of 25 tortoises (25 kg)⁶¹
Thanh Hóa Province, Vietnam
29 July 2014**

The animals were skilfully hidden in a bus' compartment. The driver admitted having, at an unknown person's request, brought the animals to an unknown recipient 1250 km away from Gia Lai.

Seizure of 16 pangolins (*Manis* spp. Appendix II) and 114 tortoises⁶²

**Ha Long, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam
July 29, 2014**



The vehicle was on its way to Ha Long when it encountered a road checkpoint. The holder had no permit for the 16 pangolins and 114 tortoises. The latter were transferred to forest services after a quick trip to the police station.

Seizure of ivory and objects made by rhinoceros horn⁶³

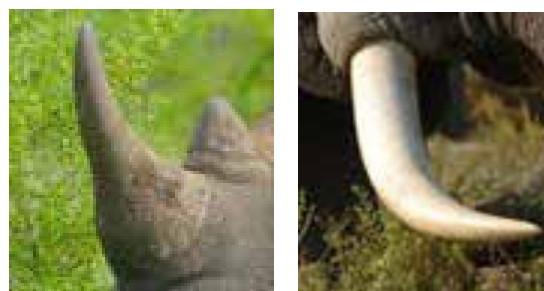
**Baoding, Hebei Province, China
July 29, 2014**

The forest police arrested 4 men for illegally smuggling ivory and objects made of rhinoceros horn and deer horn. 3 of them were running a traditional pharmacy and have illegally traded prohibited products since 1999.



Arrest for the smuggling of helmeted hornbill skulls, rhinoceros horns, and ivory⁶⁴

**Xianyou Xian, Fujian Province, China
July 2014**



Wechat, a popular Chinese chatting application with more than 300 million users, is now being used for illegal trading in endangered animals. 2 sellers of the "Chen Enterprise," Chen and Huang, along with one buyer, Zhang, were arrested by the

police. The items that they were trading were said as “red” for helmeted hornbill skulls, as “black” for rhinoceros horn, and as “white” for ivory. The seizures included cups and ornaments are totaling up to 120,500 yuan (19,600 US\$).

Seizure of 161 snakes including the Chinese cobra (*Naja atra*, Appendix II) and 600 live frogs and 5kg of dead frogs⁶⁵

Xianning, Hubei Province, China

July 30, 2014

The Xianning Forest police, the assistants from the wild animal protection agency, and the Xianning TV station cooperated in a surprise inspection of the farmers market and restaurants serving bush meat. After raiding 5 restaurants, the police seized 161 snakes including the Chinese cobra and the King Ratsnake, along with 600 live frogs and 5kg of dead frogs. The team took down restaurant advertisements and distributed more than 200 copies of the wildlife protection guide to raise awareness.

Arrest for the smuggling of 311 animals, including python (*Pythonidae spp.*, Appendix I or II), boa constrictor (*Boidae spp.*, Appendix I or II), and monitor lizards (*Varanus spp.*, Appendix I or II)⁶⁶

Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China

August 2014

For 8 months, the police investigated this case across 18 provinces in China and arrested 38 suspects. They also rescued 331 animals, worth around 9 million yuan (1.47 million US\$) on the black market. Back on November 14, 2013, the Shaoxing Forest police discovered that a man named Zhou was selling endangered species on the internet. After the raid, they found 150 pythons. From now, they started the investigation along with police forces in other provinces in order to seize all the animals.

Seizure of a black bear and a Cantor's giant soft-shell turtle (*Pelochelys cantorii*, Appendix II)⁶⁷

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

August 2014

After reports from the animal protection association, the police raided a mansion and discovered one live black bear and a 10kg Cantor's giant soft-shell turtle. The owner is a Chinese businessman, but it is unknown whether he kept the animals as pets or for food.



© Sinchew



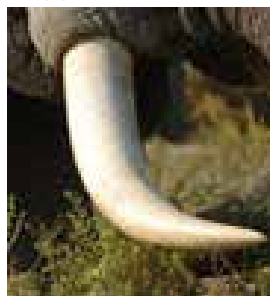
© Sinchew

Seizure of 4 tiger skins and ivory⁶⁸

Raigarh, Chhattisgarh Province, India

5 August 2014

A couple and their 2 accomplices were transporting ivory and tiger remains. They were stopped near a traditional medicine school. “The claws, skin, and other parts of the bodies are used in witchcraft” confided the group's leader, Veer Kishor Acharya, who presents himself as a practitioner of ayurvedic medicine. The forbidden “medicinal drugs” that they were preparing to barter have a global value of RS 13 Lakh, or approximately 21,500 US\$, and were smuggled in from the Indian Province of Odisha.



Seizure of 250 kg of swallow's nests and 550 kg of furs⁶⁹

Hong Kong, China

6 August 2014

This is new evidence of the traffickers' versatility. A sea/river going cargo ship was, knowingly or not, transporting contraband electronic goods and animal material for which international trade is subject to “unfortunate” restrictions. The 2016 packages heaped up in the containers hid swallow nests, furs, as well as 800 tablets and laptops and 200 top-of-the-range cellular phones. Total value: 8 million US\$. 5 crewmembers, of which one woman, were arrested. They each could be fined up to 258,000 US\$. “Members of the public can bring attention to suspected contraband operations at 254-56-182 24/7”.



© Hong Kong Customs

Swallow nests are eaten in soups. They are deemed to enhance the immune system, counter aging and have aphrodisiac properties. Their extortionate retail price, up to 2000 US\$/kg for white nests and 10,000 US\$ for red nests also called “blood nests”, cause the nesting places to be stormed. Built with salivary secretions, each nest weighs between 3 and 14 g. Using the lowest estimate, this seizure in Hong Kong represents 18,000 swallow nests.

Conviction for trafficking 2 gibbons (*Hylobatidae* spp., Appendix I) including one siamang (*Symphalangus syndactylus*, Appendix I) and 2 Asian golden cats (*Catopuma temminckii*, Appendix I) ⁷⁰
Medan, Province of North Sumatra, Indonesia
August 14, 2014



The prosecutor had requested 2 years of prison and a 1024 US\$ fine. The wild fauna trafficker was sentenced to 16 months in prison and a fine equivalent to 426 US\$ under article 40 of the law on protection of resources and natural habitats

The animals were in his car. After a quick bargain in a café, Dede Setiawan had concluded his selling of 2 gibbons and 2 cats at the global price of 25 million IDR, or 2133 US\$. Unfortunately for the seller and fortunately for wildlife, the buyers were agents of a rapid intervention force, the SPORC (Satuan Polisi Reaksi Cepat).

The western part of Sumatra Island, especially North Sumatra and Aceh provinces are animal trafficking hot spots. Since 2013, “On the Trail” has pointed out elephant poachings and many seizures of tigers, leopards, calao birds, panthers, Asian golden cats, lorys, giant natural squirrels and live orang-utans. Pangolins, frozen or living, are also part of the confiscated items. The exportation of animals or animal parts is often done from Belawan, Tanjung Balai, and Sibolga. The network between hunters, sellers, and exporters is well organized.



Arrest of a man suspected of poaching and trafficking of 20 musk deer (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 birds of the *Lophophorus* species and a bharal (*Pseudois nayaur*, Appendix III in Pakistan) ⁷¹

Nepal

August 15, 2014

Pemba, member the Tamang ethnic group and also musk-deer trapper and preputial gland trafficker was arrested. He admitted having killed 20 deers in 19 years. This kind of half-confession surely hides an even bloodier toll. He lives about 10 km away from Tibet, a doorway into China.

Conviction for the smuggling of one pangolin (*Manis* spp., Appendix II) and one Chinese cobra (*Naja atra*, Appendix II) ⁷²



Ruijin, Jiangxi Province, China
August 2014

Zeng was sentenced to one year in prison and fined 10,000 yuan (1300 US\$) for the illegal trading of Chinese cobra and pangolin. He also bought other snake species which are protected on the national and/or provincial scales.

Seizure of 2 elongated tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II), 5 veiled chameleons (*Chamaeleo calyptrotatus*, Appendix II), one monitor lizard (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II), one ball python (*Python regius*, Appendix II), one Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) ⁷³

Fuzhou, Fujian Province, China

August 19, 2014

The police seized the reptiles at the Fuzhou pet's market. Several reporters followed the police in the raid. The animals were smuggled from Guangdong Province each one sold for more than 1000 yuan (130 US\$) each.



Seizure of 13 kg of meat and shells of sea turtles (Appendix I), of 53 sawfish rostra (*Pristis* spp., Appendix I), of 635 kg of manta ray organs including 50 kg of gills (*Manta* spp., Appendix II) and the arrests ⁷⁴

Java and Bali Islands, Indonesia

From 22 August to 26 September 2014

Manta rays have been listed on Appendix II of CITES since 2014. They look like underwater kites, and a fully-grown and healthy specimen can reach a 7 meters wingspan. Manta ray meat is not

an important source of food for Java and Bali's populations. Indeed, Mantas dried gills are worth 400 € per kilo. Demand is very strong in China, where traditional medicine mystifies gills as compounds of invigorating tonics. World trafficking of Manta ray organs is said to amount to 30 million US\$ a year. Appendix II is there to curb trafficking. The *Manta alfredi* and *Manta birostris* reproductive cycles are relatively slow. Over the course of its entire life a Manta averagely brings only 16 youngsters into the world.



© Lesley Clements

Sido Mampir Seafood, a fishmonger from Surabaya has been arrested. In his stocks, turtle meat sits beside Manta ray gills. Seizures and arrests took place shortly after in Bali, Sidoarjo and Indramayu. The agents of MAAF (Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries) have also confiscated sawfish rostra and tortoise shells. This is the first aggressive operation of Indonesian authorities on the Manta Mafia. Regrettably, much more will be needed to avoid illegal fishing in a 6 million km² marine area peppered with over 17,000 islands.



© Paul Hilton for the Wildlife Conservation Society

Seizure of 9 ivory necklaces (355 g) and a stuffed hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I) ⁷⁵
Nanning, Region of Guangxi, China
September 2014

The seizure also included eaglewood (*Aquilaria spp.*, Appendix II). It produces a resin in the South East Asian forests' understages. The resin has a strong smell and resulted in eaglewood being called the "Wood for Gods". It is usually used for incense and jewelry. Eaglewoods are undergoing numerous illegal cutting campaigns in Vietnam, Indonesia, Laos and Malaysia. This seizure by Chinese customs is a strong symbol. It includes plants, land and marine wildlife.



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Exhibit of dead Emperor scorpions (*Pandinus imperator*, Appendix II), crocodile leather goods (*Crocodylidae spp.*, Appendix I or II), python skin (*Pythonidae spp.*, Appendix I or II), an elephant skull, 1158 objects made of elephant and hippopotamus ivory (Family Hippopotamidae, Appendix II) ⁷⁶
Ningbo, Province of Zhejiang, China
September 2, 2014



© China Customs

456,000 US\$. Customs demonstrated their effectiveness. What will happen to all these wildlife remains?

Seizure of endangered animals including pangolins (*Manis spp.*, Appendix II) ⁷⁷
Meitan Xian, Guizhou Province, China
September 4, 2014

As they were raiding an illegal cigarettes trading point, the police found also many dead and live animals, including pangolins, wild goats, wild chickens, and doves. There were more than 100

carcasses. The suspect admitted that he bought 7 boxes of cigarettes and many animals from the villages to sell during the October national holidays in the cities.

**Seizure of 2,5 kg of ivory and 50 kg of sambar horn (*Cervus unicolor*, not listed by CITES), of chital (*Axis axis*, not listed by CITES) and gaur (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I) and 6 people arrested⁷⁸
Near N. Begur, State of Karnataka, India
September 9-10, 2014**

The 6 suspects are used to poaching in the Bandipur National Park, located inside the Nilgiri biosphere reserve. They had harvested the ivory tusks and a whole forest of deer and gaur antlers.



**Seizure of pangolin (*Manis* spp., Appendix II) and masked palm civet (*Paguma larvata*, Appendix III in India)⁷⁹
Lau Fau Shan, Hong Kong, China
September 11, 2014**

The speedboat was intercepted by maritime customs. It was transporting 40 parcels of pangolin and civet meat, 2 small mammals strongly appreciated in dishes and between chopsticks.



Seizure of 2 leopard skins (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and 3 sambar antlers (*Cervus unicolor*, not listed by CITES)⁸⁰



**Oddanchatram, State of Tamil Nadu, India
September 20, 2014**

The jeep contained 5 passengers, 2 leopard skins and sambar antlers. The gang leader managed to escape. A dead chital (*Axis axis*, not listed by CITES) about 10 years of age was found near a water spot in the forest. It had been poached.

Local authorities say leopard skins are sought for in China and Nepal to make coats, and sambar antlers are used for luxury spoons and forks. Kodaikanal is a bad area for felines (see « On the trail » n°5 p.62).

**Attack on 2 guards⁸¹
Chitwan National Park, Central Development Region, Nepal
September 25, 2014**

The 2 veteran gamekeepers were on motorcycles, headed directly for Dasain base camp to relieve novice colleagues. Several shots were fired at Sesh Chandra Chaudhari and killed him. His deputy was wounded. The culprits stole their victims' cell phones and made off with 28,000 RS (290 US\$).



**GANG
Conviction for trafficking of 232 pangolins (*Manis* spp., Appendix II), 57 bear paws and one eagle (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II)⁸²**



**Changsha, Hunan Province, China
September 2014**

The 6 links in the chain were sentenced to penalties ranging from 6 years of probation to 10 years in prison. The case consisted in transport by road from the border between China and Burma to Changsha (about 2000 km away) and sale of live pangolins, bear paws and other animals or parts of animals protected under CITES and edible.

The 6 traffickers confess to having done thus the trafficking of 232 pangolins, 57 bear paws, one eagle of unknown species and salamanders.

The driver claimed not to know the origin and nature of the "goods" he transported. He believed, he said, he was conveying "meat and fish". The illegal goodies were sold in restaurants with a good reputation in Changsha but also in Shanghai and Chengdu.

The beginning of the investigation dates back to the end of the year 2012 and was completed in March 2013. The network worked with a trading company, the Burmese Trade Co Ltd, a pet store which served as a transit station, "the Love Pets Shop" and a warehouse where several animals were found captive or frozen by the police in March 2013.

**Conviction for illegal possession of 41 species of wild animal⁸³
Narayanganj, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

September 30, 2014

Nut Hossain was in a Calcutta prison for illegal entry to India and prohibited weapon possessing. He is wanted in Bangladesh for having organized the kidnapping and murder of 7 of his political and business rivals. In mid-May, the authorities searched his home in Dhaka's vicinity (see "On the Trail" n°5) and seized 41 wild animals or wild animal parts. Many endangered species were involved. He was sentenced *in absentia* to one year in prison and fined 50,000 Tk (642 US\$) for violation of the wild fauna protection regulations.



Seizure of 4 elephant tusks (98.65 kg), 162 ivory items (7.91 kg), 2 saiga horns (240 g) (*Saiga tatarica*, Annex II), 615 g of rhino horn and 40, 6 kg of amber and arrest of 3 people⁸⁴

Jiangmen, Guangdong Province, China

September 2014

The seizure of an express parcel sent from South Africa to Shanghai airport with 3.915 kg of rhino horn inside sparked a wide field survey (see "On the Trail" n° 4 p. 68). 40 investigators were mobilized. 6 months later, the 3 leaders of a specialized gang - Kwong (funder), Chen (seller) and Zhou (carver) - were arrested.



EUROPE

Seizure of around 600 animals including cranes (*Gruidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II)⁸⁵

**Furveau, Region of Bouches-du-Rhone, France
2 and 3 July 2014**

A first, the survivors were handed over to Saint Martin la Plaine's zoological park (in the Massif Central), to the Animal Assistance Foundation refuges (in Ile-de-France), to the Laponia Dream centre (in eastern France), to the tortoise village (in Provence) and also to the Natuurhulpcentrum in Belgium.

The search and seizures took place on the "pedagogical farm of The New World" near Marseille with the assistance of the local police, the ONCFS and

veterinarian services. The animals were suffering from malnutrition and dehydration.

The Brigitte Bardot Foundation and 30 Millions d'Amis participated in the delicate evacuation.

Sentencing for the trafficking animal bones including skeletons and skulls of Ruppel's vultures (*Gyps rueppellii*, Appendix II), macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II), mandrills (*Mandrillus* spp., Appendix I), baboons (*Papio* spp., Appendix II), albatross (famille Diomedidae), giant Brazilian otters (*Pteronura brasiliensis*, Appendix I) and a red lynx (*Lynx rufus*, Appendix II)⁸⁶

Bar-le-Duc, Lorraine Region, France

8 July 2014

The Police judicial research and documentation technical services spotted national and international transactions on the Internet. A search was carried out at the house of a fish-farmer in October 2012. The man was engaged in these illegal activities in the guise of a "hobby" and under the fiscal status of a "auto-businessman". The sentencing of a 1500 € fine of which half is suspended is neither a deterrent nor is it appropriate to stem the trafficking. The fish-farmer was in regular phone contact with others in Cameroon where the trafficking of the skeletons of endangered animal species is flourishing.



Pteronura brasiliensis

Complaint for the mistreatment of a lion (*Panthera leo* Appendix II), an ape (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II) and a snake⁸⁷

Waterloo, Walloon Region, Belgium

July 12, 2014



The Belgian NGO Gaia filed a complaint against the managers of a bar, which to celebrate the 8th anniversary of their establishment had "invited" 3 wild animals to the party. The complaint is also lodged against the animals rental agency. Belgium forbids travelling circuses to hold and/or exploit wild animals. Gaia, considering the exhibition conditions and states of health of the animals, believes that this also was mistreatment of animals.

Prosecution for trafficking 4200 birds including 2 wild long-legged buzzards (*Buteo rufinus*, Annex II) and 168 tortoises⁸⁸



Malta

August 2014

This maritime event, worthy of the Wild West times, took place 10 years ago, but the plot is anything but unoriginal. A Maltese military patrol boat made radio-contact with a powerful speedboat, the *Little Child*, in the strait between Malta and Gozo Island. Upon seeing the approaching military boat the *Little Child*, commandeered by Publius Zammit, hit the gas and escaped. Followed by radar, the *Little Child* was located close to a beach on Gozo Island. On approach, the Maltese patrol boat identified itself and aimed its projectors at the *Little Child* which again fled after just avoiding a collision with the military boat. The chase of the *Little Child* continued up into the bay of Gnejna on the main island of the Maltese archipelago. 10 warning shots were fired and Zammit's accomplice was wounded. The 2 suspects were surrounded on the beach. Zammit finally surrendered. On the island of Gozo at Xatt l-Ahmar bay he had unloaded 180 boxes and cages filled with birds and tortoises captured in Tunisia. Most of the animals were alive. The *Little Child* was covered in feathers and seeds for the birds. At court 10 years later, he showed far less skill than at the helm of his boat. "I was just taking a ride in the boat." "I didn't understand that the assailant was from the armed forces." "I was afraid of being attacked." Taking into account past offences of the plaintiff Zammit, he was sentenced to 2 years in prison.



OPERATION TARAMAS

Seizure of 1500 kg of deer antlers (*Dama dama*, Appendix I) and deer (*Cervidae* family) and hunting trophies of 350 deer, 10 fallow deer, 50 boars (*Sus scrofa*), 20 roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) and Spanish ibex (*Capra pyrenaica*)⁸⁹

Province of Cáceres, Autonomous Community of Estrémadure, Spain

August 2014

The operation was launched in March. The Guardia Civil was informed of the increase of poaching in the Cáceres Province. A group of individuals was shortly noticed. They were gathering antlers without the land owners' permissions, in order to sell them later. 15 buildings and storerooms were visited. 13 men were arrested. The Chinese traditional medicine market creates high demand. The Guardia Civil believes that this illegal trade generates 100.000 € per month and a half.



ON_{the} TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling

N°4/ 1st January - 31th March 2014

(pdf 112 p. 6.4 Mo)

http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/ON_THE_TRAIL_4.pdf

N°3/ 1st October - 31th December 2013

(pdf 80 p. 4.5 Mo)

http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/ON_THE_TRAIL_3.pdf

N°2/ 1st July - 30th September 2013

(pdf 80 p. 4 Mo)

http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/ON_THE_TRAIL_2.pdf

N°1/ 1st April - 30th June 2013

(pdf 42 pages 3,2 Mo)

http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/On_the_Trail_1.html

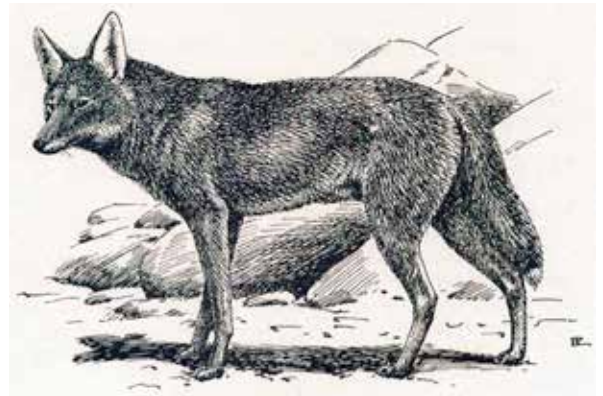
French version available on
<http://www.robindesbois.org/>

The ex-Falkland Islands Wolf

The ex-Falkland Islands Wolf or warrah also known as Zorro-lobo or Zorro de las Malvinas in Argentina and the Spanish range was reduced to the Falkland Islands. The last individual was killed in **1876** on the western island. As early as **1865** they were completely wiped out from the eastern island.

The death knell of the Falkland Islands Wolf rang around **1860** when Scottish shepherds drove the final nail into the coffin. The canids apparently developed a taste for lambs and sheep. They were therefore subject to an extermination campaign which was easy to carry out on the forestless green desert. Their only refuges were their burrows connected through a network of underground tunnels. The colonizers used Greylag Geese laced with strychnine as bait. In **1903**, Robert Rudmose-Brown, a member of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition, collected testimonies from old shepherds. They vividly remembered the canids called wolves by some and foxes by others. They denied the rumours that they attacked the herds. "It never happened." "The reason behind the war on the foxes was because the sheep thought that they were dogs, especially during the night, causing them to panic and to drown themselves in bogs and swamps." Not one of the shepherds could remember a sheep killed or even threatened by the islands wolves. Is it necessary to recall that the dogs in question were imported and abandoned by explorers and pioneers?

The first blow to the species was given by the American Fur Company that imported shipments of fur labelled "Falkland Islands Wolf" from **1839** onwards. A marketable label tagged on the furs hanging in the specialised shops of Mr G.Astor in New York. According to Mr Astor the "wolves" were, in the past, introduced to the islands by "the Spanish" to deter explorers or other foreign looters from coming ashore looking for fresh provisions. To his knowledge "the hunters probably totally exterminated the species."



« Extinct and vanishing mammals of the western hemisphere : with the marine species of all the oceans. New York (N.Y.). American committee for international wild life protection. Allen, G. M. 1942.

Charles Darwin in his *Voyage of a Naturalist Around the World* made, during his stay on the Falkland Islands in March **1834** and March **1833**, the following observations: "The only quadruped native to the island, is a large wolf-like fox, which is common to both East and West Falkland. I have no doubt it is a peculiar species, and confined to this archipelago; because many sealers, Gauchos, and Indians, who have visited these islands, all maintain that no such animal is found in any part of South America." The *Canis antarcticus*, as it was referred to by Darwin, is very curious without apprehension or mistrust and cunning. "They have been observed to enter a tent, and actually pull some meat from beneath the head of a sleeping seaman." They are well known for their "tameless and curiosity". "The Gauchos, also, have frequently killed them in the evening, by holding out a piece of meat in one hand, and in the other a knife ready to stick them." "Within a very few years after these islands shall have become regularly settled, in all probability this fox will be classed with the dodo, as an animal which has perished from the face of the earth" added Darwin who had assessed with accuracy the situation.

The animal with the head of a wolf, the tail of a fox and a soft bark, did not move in packs, was mostly active at daytime and of which the eating habits remain mysterious was observed by Bougainville in **1768**, John Byron in **1765** and Pernety in **1763**. In his travel diary Byron wrote "four creatures of great fierceness resembling wolves, ran up to their bellies in the water to attack the people in the boat" The sailors frightened headed back out to sea. When returning to the island the sailors set fire to "the tussock to get rid of them [...] we could see them running in great numbers." Trapped in their burrows the "wolves" came out of the ground to avoid being burnt. "The country was ablaze as far as the eye could reach for several days."

In fact the Falkland canids were not at all afraid of humans and their disconcerting tameness was interpreted as ferocity. Their approaches were taken for attacks.

The first recorded description dates from **1690**. John Strong, an English Captain, wanted to bring a live specimen back to England. The legend goes that following a couple of months at sea the animal became frightened by the sound of cannons and jumped overboard during a battle with "a French."

It still remains unclear how the "wolves" came to live on the Falkland Islands situated 480 km from the South American continent. Numerous hypotheses have been evoked. The most probable was recently presented by an Australian Professor, Alan Cooper, a specialist in prehistoric DNA. He said that the canids are distant descendants of an extinct species of foxes, the *Dusicyon avus*. Around 20,000 years ago, during the last ice age, they probably crossed the ice caps which linked the South American continent to the Islands to settle on the Falkland Islands.

Whatever their origin, an analogy can be made between the cause of the Falkland Islands "wolves" extinction and that of the Tasmanian tiger also known as the Tasmanian "wolf" (Cf. "On the Trail" n°1 p.37).

ON THE TRAIL N°6

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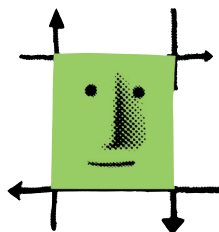
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