

# ON the TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling  
n°7 / 1<sup>st</sup> October - 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014

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## Introduction

In the nuclear industry, the cliff edge effect corresponds to the critical and hopeless phase where operators and authorities realize that all is going wrong and full loss of control is imminent, despite that indicators to that point had been overall reassuring and led them to believe that a crisis situation was on the verge to be managed.

The cliff edge effect is applicable to the worldwide crisis that faces land and sea biodiversity. For far too long, it was believed that international treaties of which the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) are at the forefront would be able to protect non-human animal species. Yet, all the dials are red.

Sea cucumbers, pangolins, African and Asian monkeys, elephants, vultures – they are all sacrificed at the altar for the unquenchable space and comfort want of mankind.

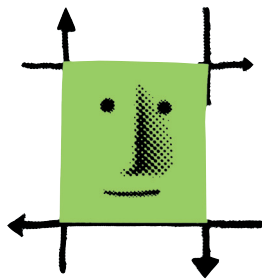
South Africa is a victim of the cliff edge effect. Rhinos are spiraling down in a panic stage for the profit of speculators and fools around the world.

194 countries and governments, 7.3 billion men and women are unable of joining hands to stop 20,000 rhinos from meeting their doom.

At the end of their rope, South Africa is fidgeting and once again it's the rhinos that get the short end of the stick. They are anesthetized, tossed around from Natural Park to private reserve, auctioned off, preventively mutilated and harassed. The fewer there are, the more they are mistreated and poached.

# ON<sub>the</sub> 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



ROBIN DES BOIS



AGIR pour la  
BIODIVERSITÉ

## CITES\* Appendices

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

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

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

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

# Sea Cucumbers and Seahorses

## AMERICA

**Seizure of 3404 sea cucumbers (164.16 kg) (Class Holothuroidea - *Isostichopus fuscus*, Appendix III in Ecuador)<sup>1</sup>**

**Tijuana, State of Baja California, Mexico  
November 2014**

In 4 packages and 33 plastic bags.

Sea cucumbers are key links in marine life. Despite their vast range, they are threatened with extinction in the short term. Humans rake them to take care of their skin, for their rheumatisms and to eat them (see "On the Trail" n°4, p.107).



**Seizure of 58,115 sea cucumbers (783 kg) (Class Holothuroidea - *Isostichopus fuscus*, Appendix III in Ecuador)<sup>2</sup>**

**Tijuana, State of Baja California, Mexico  
November 2014**

The merchandise was bound for California (USA). Irregularities are detected on the export documents. 783 kg adding up to 32,000 sea cucumbers are declared. The customs officers count 58,115 of them.

**Seizure of 116 brown sea cucumbers (Class Holothuroidea - *Isostichopus fuscus*, Appendix III in Ecuador) and 654 mollusks of the *Spondylus cal-cifer* species, not listed in CITES<sup>3</sup>**

**State of Baja California, Mexico  
December 2014**

The Jeep Cherokee and its 4 passengers were checked at 15 km north of San Felipe (State of Baja California). The 4 were arrested.

## ASIA

**Seizure of 70 kg of sea cucumbers (Class Holothuroidea - *Isostichopus fuscus*, Appendix III in Ecuador)<sup>4</sup>**

**Mandapam, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

**October 27, 2014**

It is forbidden to fish these animals in Indian waters. In July 2014, 600 kg of sea cucumbers had already been seized in the city of Mandapam (see "On the Trail" n°6 p.5).



**Seizure of 704 dried seahorses (1.8 kg) (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II)<sup>5</sup>**

**Nanning, Zhuang autonomous region of Guangxi, China**

**December 2014**

## Corals

## AFRICA

**Arrest of 6 divers suspected of coral poaching<sup>1</sup>  
2 nautical miles off the Lahnya beach, Wilaya El Taref, Algeria**

**Octobre 7, 2014**



*Cladocora caespitosa*

10 different species of coral are found in the Algerian waters and listed in Appendix II of CITES. They belong to the Order of Scleractinia and are subject to increasing trafficking that is dangerous for divers. A week before this event the body of a diver with his gear had been toed aboard an Annaba coast-guards' vessel on patrol.

During the 3 first months of the year, 23 divers including one Italian were arrested by maritime police in the Annaba region. The illegal corals would be sold within the European Union.



## ASIA

**Conviction for illegal purchase and sale of 7028.38 g of coral<sup>2</sup>**

**Xiapu County, Fujian Province, China**

**October 2014**

Red branches earned 3 Chinese citizens arrested in 2013 to be sentenced to 8, 7 and 6 months in prison and 30,000 (US \$ 4,876) and 20,000 yuans fines.

## Fishes

### AFRICA

**Seizure of 80 kg of shark fins and arrest of 2 Nigerians<sup>1</sup>**

**Port-Gentil, Province of Ogooué-Maritime, Gabon  
November 30, 2014**



### AMERICA

**Seizure of 2.5 tons of arapaima (*Arapaima Gigas*, Appendix II)<sup>2</sup>**

**Manaus Moderna Port, State of Amazonas, Brazil  
October 20, 2014**

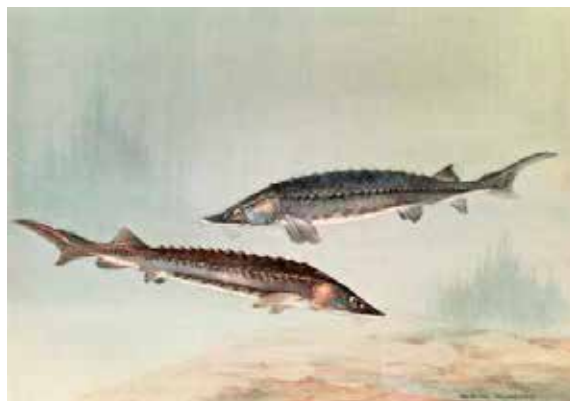
On board the *São Francisco de Assis*. The 4 passengers were arrested. They explained that their catch was to be divided among them. 400 kg for Pinheiro (28 years old), 600 kg for Ismael da Rochas Santos (34 years old), 1500 kg for Leandro Gama (20 years old). The boat owner, Miguel Moreira Lopes (45 years old), says that for his part he only takes care of transportation. They apparently travelled for 4 days (744 km) from Japurá (State of the Amazonas) to Manaus to sell the goods. They were released under bail.



**Poaching 8,2 tons of lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*, Appendix II), seizure of 278 kg of lake sturgeon, caviar and arrest<sup>3</sup>**

**Bécancour, Province of Quebec, Canada**

**October 21, 2014**



Hashime Murayama

The sturgeons, at least 1250 of them, were captured by 28 fishermen, each having their own outlet and sharing only the modus operandi. Every man for himself, sturgeons for all. This was the motto in force between Sainte-Angèle and Bécancour a good hundred km upstream from Quebec. 4 small boats, a snowmobile, registers, computers and only one fishing net were seized along with an undetermined quantity of caviar. An average sized sturgeon produces 3 kg of smoked flesh sold 35 US\$ per kg. Caviar is sold a minimum at 1600 € per kg. The professional and leisure fisherman had certainly found the fish that lays golden eggs.



Restaurant owners, professional fish smokers and the Director-general of wildlife protection in Quebec, Réjean Rioux, explain that fish illegally caught are sold legally on the market. Yet when the restaurant owner, members of the public, the smoke room for fish, fishmongers buy or sell at such a price fish that everyone knows are threatened with extinction and very vulnerable to pollution, they have a duty to demand certificates or information that prove the legal origin, if not they act as accomplices to an environmental crime. Investigations had been underway for 2 years. According to Quebec internal security services, the total amount of fines could reach 358,050 US\$.

**Seizure of 3 bags of shark fins<sup>4</sup>**

**Costa Rica**

**November 19, 2014**

In the San José Airport, 2 tons of shark fins were departing for Hong-Kong via UPS and China Airlines. According to the rules, they should have come from species considered common. Random opening of 3 bags by veterinarian services assisted by the NGO Pretoma (Program for the restoration of marine turtles) revealed the presence of fins from hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*) and oceanic whitetip sharks (*Carcharhinus longimanus*), 2 species threatened by extinction listed under CITES Appendix II. This case has brought to light the weakness of



verifications. Normally in the workshop where the sharks are cut and transformed, a veterinarian is supposed to check there are no fins taken from endangered species.

Experts from Pretoma put their finger on it. "Either the veterinarian certified the delivery as being in conformity with the rules without checking it, or he knew it was illegal and let it go through by looking the other way." "Along the whole chain of formalities and paperwork from the fishery to the airport, several parties are implicated."

The 50 bags were sent back to Puntarenas. The role of Costa Rica in shark fin trafficking is unclear. The Costa Rican export channel was mentioned in the second issue of "On the Trail" p.5.



#### **Seizure of 385 totoaba swim bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I)<sup>5</sup>**

**Mexico City international airport, Mexico  
November 19, 2014**

Customs of the postal section of the airport asked PROFEPA to come and control 3 suspicious packages. They discover black plastic bags containing 385 dry swim bladders. The packages were shipped from Mexicali, Baja California state, and were bound for China. PROFEPA sent Interpol all information gathered on this matter so that they attempt to identify those responsible in the international traffic of this endangered marine species. The totoaba bladder is estimated at 7000 US\$ a piece on the Chinese market (cf. "On the Trail" n°6).



## **ASIA**

### **Poaching of big-eyed tuna (*Thunnus obesus*, not listed by CITES)<sup>6</sup>**

**China**

**October 2014**



China Tuna Industry Group wants to enter the Hong Kong stock market to raise 100 to 200 million dollars. The company's main business is tuna fishing in the West Pacific and Center Pacific. The group's headquarters are in the Caiman Islands. Officially the director is a young woman named Li Li, 24 years old; the head of the board of directors is her father-49 years old. The group owns a fleet of 24 ultra-low temperature long liners.

In their Initial Public Offering to the Hong-Kong stock market, the China Tuna Industry Group shows a cavalier attitude and arrogant cynicism. Admitting to chronically exceeding fishing quotas on big-eyed tunas and yellowfin tunas, the group adds that "China has not been and will not, under any sanction system which may be adopted in the future, be subject to any penalties for such historical non-compliance".

The China Tuna Industry Group is supported in their stock exchange endeavor by the Hong Kong branch of Deutsche Bank.

The Chinese fishing department criticized the group's position adding that "they had actually never delivered authorizations to the China Tuna Industry Group to develop their activities in the high sea."

Greenpeace is satisfied with these official declarations and hopes that China would take measures so that ships under their control will not exceed authorized quotas.

Unlike their usual discourse according to which long lines would be more selective than trawling nets and gill nets, Greenpeace in this specific case highlights the fact that long lines cause many bycatches of turtles, birds and sharks.



*Tian Xiang 16*



**Seizure of 103 kg of gills and 25 kg of cartilage of Manta ray (*Manta spp.*, Appendix II) and arrest<sup>7</sup> Pengambengan, Province of Bali, Indonesia November 7, 2014**



The fight against the Manta ray mafia is still on in Indonesia. A veteran professional of shark fins and Manta ray gills, the known Suhairi has just been caught in the nets. Police were put on his trail as early as last summer. Several bags of gills were found in the trafficker's headquarters. They come from the pillaging of the Manta ray population on the Islands of Nusa Tenggara and Lombok. For his defense, Suhairi has been working for a long time in the gill market and Manta rays only entered the CITES shelter for protected species in 2013. Suhairi had his ways and knows the market very well. He says "the high season for capturing Manta rays is from July to October. I couldn't resist the temptation. I was offered a bunch for 65 US\$ per kilo. The usual price is twice as much."

**Seizure of 226 kg of Manta ray gills (*Manta spp.*, Appendix II)<sup>8</sup> Surabaya International Airport, Province of East Java, Indonesia November 10, 2014**

Manta rays are really making the news, this time in the Surabaya International Airport. The 226 kg of gills correspond to 80 adult Manta rays. The batch was about to be sent to Hong Kong by ways of Air Asia. Gills can cure a great deal of troubles according to the Chinese swindlers. Air Asia, Garuda Indonesia and Lion Air have agreed to no longer transport willingly shark fins. NGOs working in Asia such as Manta trust, Wildlife Conservation Society, WildAid want the embargo to be extended to gills and other parts of the Manta ray.



## Marine Mammals

### AMERICA

**Court hearing for the restaurant owner and mother company for illegal sale of Sei whale meat (*Balaenoptera borealis*, Appendix I)<sup>1</sup> Santa Monica, State of California, United States of America**

**November 17, 2014**

Accountability is being revealed bit by bit. Justice is slow in the American whale sushi scandal. Legal proceedings started in 2009 when journalists undercover managed to order and get served Sei whale at the Hump, a sushi bar now closed near the Santa Monica Airport. After the 2 cooks pleaded guilty (see "On the Trail" n°4 p. 12) as well as the whale meat supplier, now come the turn for the Typhoon company and the leader of the Hump branch. "Yes, says Brian Vidor, I knew my cooks served whale."

5 years after the scandal broke out no one has been sentenced. Each of the indicted risks a maximum of 18 month prison and one year probation, as well as a 2750 US\$ fine.

**Poaching of a bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*, Appendix II)<sup>2</sup>**

**Gulf of Mexico, Alabama, USA**

**December 2014**

The marine mammal was deeply hit with a yellow arrow. He survived it seems 5 days. He died of a generalized infection. Then his body was beached. The Gulf of Mexico, more known for its pollution and oil spills, is noticeable also for its dolphin killers. 17 dolphins found on the beaches were killed by gun or arrow between 2002 and 2014. The rate with which they are being killed has been going up for the last 4 years. A month ago a mother dolphin who would have given birth a few days later was found dead on a Florida beach. The Marine Mammal Act since 1972 forbids harming wild marine mammals, killing them, transporting them or feeding them.



**Teeth stolen from the corpse of a killer whale (*Orcinus orca*, Appendix II)<sup>3</sup>  
Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada  
December 6, 2014**



Extraction of the teeth from the killer whale brought back to the beach in waiting an autopsy was felt as a profanation by public opinion and public authorities as trafficking in dismembered animal skeletons is branching off worldwide and as killer whale teeth are sold on internet. The operation took place at night.

## EUROPE

**End of public funding for seal hunting<sup>4</sup>  
Norway  
Decembre 11, 2014**

State funding represented about one hundred euros for each one of the 12,000 pinnipeds knocked out with a wooden bat and killed by bullet every year.



## Various Marine Species

### ASIA

**Arrest of a trafficker of marine species including 21,169 black coral pieces (*Antipatharia* spp., Appendix II), 163 green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I) and hawksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I), 7340 shells and conches (Family Cassidae, not listed in CITES) and 196 kg of sea fans<sup>1</sup>**

**Zamboanga, Zamboanga Peninsula, Philippines  
October 10, 2014**

The businesswoman, 48, had been on the run for 4 years. She is president of Li and Lim Trading. Her company is directly involved in the smuggling attempt discovered in the port of Manila on May 1, 2011. Ms. Olivia Lim Li was immediately released on bail of 4000P (88 US\$) for



an environmental crime worth 35 million Pesos or 776,507 US\$. The Director of Fisheries regrets that the bail deposit is so low and that in the present state of the code of Fisheries, it is not possible to proportion the bail to the value of the seizure. "I think that in this area the law should be amended but to this date one cannot do anything."

The two 20-foot containers declared transporting rubber were loaded with 41 tons of protected marine species which trade is prohibited by CITES or by the Philippine Ministry of Fisheries.





Olivia Lim Li was identified as the owner of the cargo. She and her husband had fled their home immediately after the seizure in Manila. The consignee said he did not know the true nature of the goods. JKA Transport System, the carrier, said the same thing. Another witness said that Lim and Li Trading containers were not subject to any control given the seniority and good client image. Taiwan is one of the destinations of containers exported by Lim and Li Trading. The warehouse in Zamboanga rented by Lim and Li Trading was searched a week after the seizure and other marine illicit products had been seized.

On 19 May 2011, 168 bags of black coral were seized in the port of Cebu. The container had been discharged from the *Lorcon Manila* owned by Lorenzo Shipping Corp. The ship came from Manila. Instead of black coral, the container was supposed to transport scrap metal.

The seizure from May 1, 2011 on its own equals the devastation in the Celebes Sea of a coral reef almost 2 times larger than the Manila capital city (38.55 km<sup>2</sup>).

*Lorcon Manila* (ex *Prestige Marti*, ex *Cosmed Genova*, ex *CMA CGM Iskendaria*, ex *Cimil*, ex *Mirac B*). IMO 9071648. General cargo. Length 111.6 m. Philippines flag. Bureau Veritas classification society. Built in 1996 in Istanbul (Turkey) by Yardimci; completed by Giza Shipyard in Tuzla. Since October 2007, owner Lorenzo Shipping Corporation (Philippines) specialized in domestic transport of containerized cargo; the fleet of the company serves the main ports of the archipelago, Manila, Bacolod, Iloilo, Cebu, Dumaguete, Cagayan de Oro, Zamboanga, Davao, Cotabato and General Santos. Detained in 1999 in Genoa (Italy) and in 2006 in Napoli (Italy).

**Arrest of a shop owner who sold dried shark fins from whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II), sawfish (*Pristidae* spp., Appendix I) and 15 kg of sea turtle meat (Appendix I)<sup>2</sup>**

**District of Kuta, Province of Bali, Indonesia  
October 31, 2014**



In the touristic region of Kuta on the Island of Bali, she sold "souvenirs from the sea" in her shop.

**Seizure of Manta rays gills (*Manta* spp., Appendix II) and seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II). 600 g<sup>3</sup>**

**Gongbei, Guangdong Province, China  
December 2014**

**Seizure of 20 kg of seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II) and 15 kg of sea cucumbers (Class *Holothuroidea* not listed in CITES) and arrest<sup>4</sup>**

**Thiruppalaikudi, Tamil Nadu, India  
December 26, 2014**

The illegal trade in sea cucumbers abounds in the area. Traffickers are supplied by local fishermen.



*Lorcon Manila* in Cebu (Philippines)  
in the Mactan channel, 4 May 2011



# Marine Turtles

Total from October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>  
4,818 marine turtles and 13,854 eggs seized

## AFRICA

### Poaching of loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*, Appendix I) and arrest<sup>1</sup>

Ponta Malongane, Province of Maputo, Mozambique

October 2014

The sea turtle had just laid her eggs on the beach when she was attacked by one of the employees of the luxury hotel next-door. The part-time poacher tried to kill the turtle to "sell the meat". But he was immediately stopped by "turtle lookouts" who patrol against egg pillaging on this section of the seaside in the south of Mozambique. The turtle was set back at sea but her body was found 2 days later a few km north. The killer was sentenced to a fine of 50,000 meticaïs, that is 1620 US\$. Not having such money at his disposal, he vowed to pay bit by bit. His offer was accepted.

The Ponta de Ouro Marine reserve administrator said that such an agreement was better than a prison sentence, "otherwise he would have lost his job and when he got out he would become a full time poacher".

### Conviction for poaching of a sea turtle (Appendix I)<sup>2</sup>

St. Peter, Reunion Island, France  
December 18, 2014

His main activity is underwater hunting. He dives beyond the reef. He is not afraid of sharks, nor of the law. He did not know that it is forbidden to hunt sea turtles. "Anyway, I mistook it for a conger." Seeing him come out of the sea with a sea turtle impaled on his spear, bathers warned the police. It was in September. The turtle is not dead. He is half-blind and will have to live his whole life in a pool. The young poacher benefited from general indulgence and only got 140 hours of community service.



### Seizure of a green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I) and arrest<sup>3</sup>

Cotonou, Littoral Department, Benin  
December 26, 2014



On December 26, a sea turtle poacher fell into the nets of Water and Forestry agents in Cotonou with a specimen of a fully protected species in Benin. The accused is arrested with a green turtle who was immediately released on the sea side near Donatin in Cotonou. The poacher is known for his collaboration with sea turtle conservation NGOs.

The green turtle is found in tropical ocean waters. It is the largest of Cheloniidae, weighing between 80 and 130 kg. Some specimens can reach a weight of 300 kg for a length of 1.5 m. Its oval shell is flattened for better hydrodynamics. Sexual maturity is reached between 8 and 15 years old.

The female lays her eggs every 3 to 6 years on the beach where she was born or a nearby beach and then swims back into the ocean. She starts by ensuring the safety of the beach from the waterfront. The beach should not be lined with vegetation, should not be too wide or too narrow. Once at the top of the beach, she begins with digging a body cavity, a hole once and a half times as thick as she is: this first phase takes about 20 min. Then she digs a hole to bury the eggs with her hind legs, the second part of the hole is not wide and is about 70 cm deep, this second phase lasts about 20 minutes. Finally, she lays about a hundred eggs (20 to 250), soft and the size of a golf ball. She fills the egg hole after about 20 min of lay. Then she moves about in any direction over about 3 meters throwing sand behind her so that it is impossible to know where she has laid. The remaining holes on the beach are a decoy. The turtle returns to the sea about 1 and half hours after laying. The incubation period is 45 to 70 days depending on the temperature. An adult green turtle can swim 1000 km between nesting and feeding areas, but once on the beach to lay their eggs, turtles often ends in cooking pots. It is therefore a highly endangered species on the shoreline.

From William Gnihatn, environmental journalist. A Cotonou.com.

## AMERICA

### **Seizure of 11,600 green turtles eggs (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I)<sup>4</sup>**

**Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, Mexico**

**October 2014**

The eggs were hidden under basil leaves in 6 bags and 3 cardboard boxes. All on a bus transporting passengers and cargo. The eggs come from Tapanatepec (Oaxaca) destination Comitán de Domínguez (Chiapas). 300 km. Eggs have been deposited on a protected beach dedicated to turtles where they have optimal chances to hatch.

2 men have been arrested. Franci Aníbal Clemente Ramirez, 31 years old, and 19 years old José Eduardo López from Guatemala.



### **Seizure of 2027 eggs and 6,10 kg of Olive Ridley turtle meat de (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)<sup>5</sup>**

**Santa María Tonameca, State of Oaxaca, Mexico**

**October 2014**

The 2 men, 27 and 60 years old, in action on La Escobilla beach were arrested.



### **Seizure of 227 olive Ridley turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)<sup>6</sup>**

**La Huerta, Jalisco, Mexico**

**November 2014**

The poacher was arrested on Tecuan beach. For the poaching of a protected species, he faces 9 years in prison and a fine of 300 to 3,000 times the minimum day wage. The sentence can be worsened to a maximum fine of 10,000 days wage and 3 years prison because the poaching took place in a protected natural area.



## Good news

### **Release of 500 olive Ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)<sup>7</sup>**

**State of Baja California, Mexico**

**November 23, 2014**

In the state of Baja California, olive Ridley turtles were still hunted a few years ago. It was considered a delicacy. Baja California wants to end this bad habit. Today, it is explained to children that one should not eat turtle. "Out of 1,000 baby turtles only one reaches breeding age and if this turtle is eaten, there won't be many left in the sea". One of the released turtles is followed by satellite. Its GPS signal must allow specialists to know the migratory routes of females.

## ASIA

### **FAMILY BUSINESS**

#### **Seizure of 24 sea turtles (Appendix I)<sup>8</sup>**

**South China Sea**

**October 21, 2014**

Chinese maritime police cut the barter short. Sailors from *Qiong Qionghai 03168* who are close since they are cousins, wanted to exchange food against sea turtles caught by a Filipino boat. 22 turtles were released on the spot, one died of his injuries and the last was transported to a specialized shelter. The cousins were detained for illegal purchase and transport of animals in danger of extinction.

#### **Seizure of 3 kg of sea turtle meat (*Cheloniidae* spp., Appendix I)<sup>9</sup>**

**Havelock Island, Andaman-and-Nicobar Islands, India**

**October 22, 2014**

The meat was seized around the fish market. Hotline phone numbers for wildlife trafficking in the archipelago : 282.366, 282.350. For cell phones : 9434280812 et 9474293082.

#### **Seizure of 49 green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I)<sup>10</sup>**

**Balabac, Province of Palawan, Philippines**

**November 3, 2014**

No suspect has been arrested. The turtles, some of them weighing more than 200 kg, were found by a patrol of the Marines and land forces under the government of the province. They were isolated in a mangrove not far from the Half Moon Shoal, a well-known hot spot where illegal Filipino or Vietnamese fishermen and Chinese smugglers meet. The land is claimed by at least China, Vietnam and the Philippines, yet the area actually escapes all of their control.

**Seizure of a marine turtle still alive in a restaurant (Appendix I)<sup>11</sup>**  
**Vung Tau, province of Ba Ria-Vung Tau, Vietnam**  
**November 2014**

**Seizure of 51 green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I)<sup>12</sup>**  
**kabupaten of Karangasem, Province of Bali, Indonesia**

**November 16, 2014**

Tourism in Bali is fueled by turtles. The traditional fishing boat from Madura had set anchor off the coast near Kubu when she was visited by maritime cops. Instead of being delivered to the restaurant, the turtles were seized. Destination unknown, probably back to sea. The 6 fishermen aged from 18 to 32 face up to 5 years prison and a high fine. The value of the 51 marine reptiles is estimated at 150 million Rp, that is 12,346 US\$.

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**Seizure of several thousand marine turtles (Appendix I) kept in formal<sup>13</sup>**

**Nha Trang, Province of Khanh Hoa, Vietnam**

**November 17, 2014**



Police got their hands onto a strange traffic. Hoang Tuan Hai practiced conservation of turtle shells. A chemical handcraft work destined among other outlets to the Chinese market. The future owners could then set a turtle shell under their home to bring to them prosperity and "good vibes". The Formalin Man for the last 10 years has supplied himself in fleshless shells from restaurants in the province. The count is currently being done. It was slowed down by the toxic atmosphere in the 2 workshops that were searched. 7 years ago Formalin Man's brother was convicted for illegal breeding of turtles.

A month later a new stock was uncovered<sup>14</sup>. The dead turtles are in much better state than were the first ones. The heads are held up by a nylon string nailed between the eyes. Once stuffed, the turtle will have the correct posture to be exhibited and sold. This torture is inflicted to the turtles on fishing boat decks belonging to the traffickers (see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 15). These new turtle garages were right next to a pig farm. In the formalin containers, the turtles were intended for China. Several species are found.

The investigation is in progress but judicial procedures are stagnating. Conservation and counting of the turtles present problems regarding hygiene, as well as technical and financial problems. Is it really necessary to keep all the bodies as proof? A full judicial expertise would cost 16,000 US\$. Only half that amount is available. Education for Nature-Vietnam (ENV) fears the case will dangle because it is so big. This trafficking has cost the life of no doubt more than 10,000 marine turtles. It has been ongoing for over 10 years and involves at the beginning Vietnamese and maybe Filipino fishermen and at the end a very well organized and very discreet network that sends the final products to China. The shell of adult individuals can measure up to 1 meter. In several of the shells found, there were geolocalization microchips implanted. They were used to follow the turtles' path. Apparently, the scientific community did not warn that many of the marked turtles were converging for unknown reasons towards the Nha Trang port. The culprit is doubled headed. The 2 brothers always worked together.



Hoang Tuan Hai, 42 years old. Chief trafficker

**Good news**

**Release of a sea turtle (Appendix I)<sup>15</sup>**

**Tien Giang Province, Vietnam**

**November 2014**

The hawksbill sea turtle was captured in the Mekong Delta and kept in a bowl. Put on sale on the Internet, she was released through the joint operation of an ENV informant and the police.





**Conviction for smuggling of 555 marine turtles (Appendix I)<sup>16</sup>  
Puerto Princesa, Province of Palawan, The Philippines  
November 22, 2014**



Diplomatic sentencing. The 9 Chinese fishermen accused, pictures come as proof, by Filipino justice of having attempted a massive and cruel smuggling (see "On the Trail" n°5 p.15 and "On the Trail" n°6 p.11) have each been sentenced to a fine of 100,000 US\$ and in case of non compliance to 6 months prison. This last clause in some ways opens wide the jail doors for the convicted have just spent 6 months there in temporary detention. The 9 fishermen could therefore leave quite soon without the Chinese or Filipino embassy having to open their wallets for 9 times 100,000 US\$. An unconfirmed journalist source says that the 9 smugglers received a penalty of 2700 US\$ and in case of non compliance 12 years imprisonment for harm to a species threatened with extinction and strictly protected. Let's suppose that such a light fine could be paid by the ship owner if he is to be found or by other private parties. It is very much uncertain that such a tailored and accommodating sentence sooth for long relations between Manila and Beijing. Tendency is both of a cooling and boiling hot between the 2 countries all the more that according to the magazine Jane's Defence Weekly, China is presently building an artificial island and a landing zone in the Spratly Islands Archipelago near were the boarding of the *Qionghuionghai 09063* took place. No decision concerning the boat has been made.

**Seizure of 140 hawksbill stuffed turtles and 7 live hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I)<sup>17</sup>  
Balabac, Province of Palawan, the Philippines  
November 30, 2014**

The loot was buried and preserved in plastic bags filled with formalin. It was intended to be used as decoration or to feed superstitious beliefs. Police found close by 7 live turtles and a pukot, a special net to capture turtles from the coast. Police see in this new seizure proof of contraband in direction of China and collusion between Filipino and Chinese fishermen.



Pukot

## EUROPE

**Seizure of a stuffed hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I)<sup>18</sup>**

**Gijon, Autonomous Community of Asturias, Spain**

**November 2014**

The hawksbill turtle is listed on Appendix I of CITES since 1977. He brought it back in 1988 from the Dominican Republic, hidden in his luggage as he returned from honeymoon. Today, he is selling her on the Internet for 225 €. He obviously has no CITES document authorizing the sale.

**A Kemp's Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*, Appendix I) found on a beach in the north of France<sup>19</sup>**

**Bray-Dunes beach, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France  
December 30, 2014**

Their primary nesting site is the Gulf of Mexico. The species was greatly affected by the BP oil spill. When they cross - rarely - the Atlantic Ocean enjoying the currents, it is via the Azores to cross the Strait of Gibraltar and disperse in the Mediterranean. Clearly, some specimens have attempted the passage to the north and did not survive. Smaller than the leatherback and hawksbill turtles, Kemp turtles - 60-70 cm, 30-50 kg as adults - are at risk of hypothermia. 2 other specimens have been found on the same date and in the same state of agony on beaches north west of Britain.



A young on a Texas beach

## OCEANIA

**Seizure of 93 kg of marine turtle meat (Appendix I)<sup>20</sup>**

**French Polynesia, France**

**November 14, 2014**

1) Custom officers in the port of Papeete search a pick-up truck coming in and find 40 kg of meat in iceboxes.

2) At the homes of the 2 suspects in Paea and Pajara, 53 more kilos are found in the freezers.

A regular traffic has just been dismantled. A kilo is sold for 5000 Fcfp (53 US\$).

# Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles

**Total from October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>  
12,589  
tortoises and freshwater turtles seized**

## AMERICA

### Release on bail refused for a turtle smuggler<sup>1</sup> Michigan, U.S.A.

**17 November 2014**

Judge Borman was inflexible. In spite of the pleas of his parents and their promise to move from Windsor-Canada to Detroit-Michigan in order to guarantee the appearance of their 26 year old son at the next hearing, the release on bail of Xu, called Turtle man, was denied. "He is not a student, he spends his time smuggling turtles."

Xu had already been surprised at the U.S.-Canada border with 51 stapled into his "baggy" pants. Several weeks later he was questioned along with an accomplice who, under his orders, was preparing to flee to Shanghai with almost 1,000 living turtles in his baggage (See "On the Trail" n°6 p.15).



### Seizure of 2 red footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II)<sup>2</sup>

**State of San Luis Potosi, Mexico**

**November 2014**

The employee of the courier company raised the alarm. 2 tortoises are in the packages. These were recorded in Monterrey (Nuevo Leon state) as photographic equipment. In good condition, the turtles are transferred to the Tangamanga zoo.

In the state of Campeche, a green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I) was found dead floating on the Campeche port waters. In a state of advanced decomposition, the cause of death is undetermined.

### Seizure of 2500 yellow-headed sideneck river turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II)<sup>3</sup>

**Ucayali Region, Peru**

**November 2014**



2,500 young turtles were poached in the national reserve of Pacaya Samiria (Loreto region) to be sold on the black market in Pucallpa. "Given the amount, it is likely that the mafia is behind this illegal trade". The investigation is ongoing. On the Pucallpa market, each turtle can sell almost 2 US\$. This price can be multiplied by 5 in Lima.

### Seizure of 41 six-tubercled river turtles (*Podocnemis sextuberculata*, Appendix II)<sup>4</sup>

**Oruro Department Oruro, Bolivia**

**November 2014**

The young turtles were captured by a native who wanted to sell them in Oruro. He defends himself: he did not know that the sale was prohibited. For now they have been entrusted to a zoo.



### Seizure of 30 giant South American turtles and 42 eggs (*Podocnemis* spp., Appendix II)<sup>5</sup>

**Tapauá, State of Amazonas, Brazil**

**December 2, 2014**

The 44 years old official extracted them from the Abufari Biological Reserve. According to police, he is liable to a fine of 70,000 Real or 27,869 US\$. He is released pending trial.

### Conviction for attempted smuggling of 26 common box turtles (*Terrapene carolina*, Appendix II) and 20 African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II)<sup>6</sup>

**San Gabriel, State of California, USA**

**December 2014**

Kwong Wa Cheung was sentenced to 2 months in prison and 2 years of probation along with 500 hours of community work that must be fulfilled in an animal shelter. He must also pay a 12,000 US\$ fine. This individual had attempted to send the turtles to Hong Kong by the postal services while not disclosing his real name or address. The US Postal Service, intrigued, had decided to not send the parcels and instead sent them to a sort of pound in Georgia. After some days, a rotting smell alerted agents. When the packages were opened, they found the decomposing turtles stuffed into socks. Investigations led to uncover the identity of this American citizen of Chinese origin aged 36 years old.





**Seizure of 90 giant South American turtles (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II), 33 yellow-headed sidenecks (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) and 17 six-tubercled river turtles (*Podocnemis sextuberculata*, Appendix II)<sup>7</sup>**  
**Caracarai, State of Roraima, Brazil**  
**December 24, 2014**

4 people were arrested. The operation was coordinated by the Viruá National Park. The 140 seized turtles were intended to become Christmas dinner for about ten Brazilians from Manaus or Boa Vista where they're sold 110 US\$ to 200 US\$ a piece. In Manaus, the weekly turtle trade is worth 375,000 US\$. This operation that began in September has enabled to rescue 250 turtles.



## ASIA

**Seizure of 59 turtles<sup>8</sup>**  
**Bilpur, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**  
**October 9, 2014**

They were in plastic boxes in the back of the jeep heading towards Kolkata 1400 km away, meaning a 21 hour drive.

**Seizure of over 100 turtles<sup>9</sup>**  
**District of Thrissur, State of Kerala, India**  
**October 13, 2014**

The 3 passengers' basket was full of turtles. The train's last stop was Chennai in the Tamil Nadu 600 km away. According to observers, "Kerala fills the other states with turtles". One NGO, Heritage Animal Taskforce suspects a hotel mafia in alliance with political parties that provide restaurants and tables with turtle meat.

**Seizure of 7 big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I)<sup>10</sup>**  
**Shenzhen, Province of Guangdong, China**  
**October 2014**

The species was often found on Chinese food markets. Times change. The species is declining. Big-headed turtles are only exceptionally found in dishes. They were found in a cookie box and archive boxes in the baggage being transported.

These aquatic turtles like the clear water of mountain rivers. They are very sensitive to pollutions.



**Seizure of 275 Indian narrow-headed softshell turtles (*Chitra indica*, Appendix II) and Indian Roofed Turtles (*Pangshura tecta*, Appendix I)<sup>11</sup>**  
**Bakhtiyarpur and Mokama stations, Bihar, India**  
**November 1, 2014**

The express train from Benares to Calcutta served as the vehicle for the turtle smuggling. The railways squad retrieved the 7 bags found in different train cars. The main suspect, Raj Lal, from Uttar Pradesh said he had bought the turtles from a nomadic tribe part of the Kandar ethnic group. Three accomplices have fled. A complaint has been filed against them.



**Seizure of 499 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I)<sup>12</sup>**  
**Magura District, Khulna Division, Bangladesh**  
**November 20, 2014**

The police search on the bus from Jessore to Dhaka allowed the seizure of the turtles and 36 kg of hashchich. Rafiqul Islam, 35, was arrested.



**Seizure of over 800 Indian softshell turtles (*Nils-sonia gangetica*, Appendix I)<sup>13</sup>**  
**Venkatapuram, State of Andhra Pradesh, India**  
**December 7, 2014**

The seizure took place on a Sunday. The softshell turtles were stuffed into 13 big bags. Caught from the rivers of Andhra Pradesh, they were awaiting delivery to the States of Bihar and Odisha, first step before export or being served for dinner on plates. They were released into the Kolleru Lake, 308 km<sup>2</sup>, Ramsar wetlands where already a few hundred had been set free (see "On the Trail" n°1, p. 8 and n°6, p.16).



**Seizure of 220 turtles including three-keeled land tortoises (*Melanochelys tricarinata*, Appendix I) and black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I)<sup>14</sup>**

**Benapole, Khulna Division, Bangladesh**

**December 7, 2014**

Near the border between Bangladesh and India, the traffickers were spotted by police and they escaped. The turtles were left in the back of the pick-up truck. They were from India. They were put under the care of wildlife services. The seizure is worth 28,433 US\$.



**Seizure of 13 Indian roofed turtle (*Pangshura tecta*, Appendix I) and 45 red-eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta elegans*, not listed in CITES)<sup>15</sup>**

**Mumbai, Maharashtra, India**

**December 13, 2014**

The former and the latter were kept in two different places in a residential area.

**Seizure of 510 turtles (*Chitra* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>16</sup>**

**Dacca International Airport, Bangladesh**

**December 15, 2014**

They were to fly off to Malaysia. They were uncovered by custom officers and ended up in Gazipur Safari Park. The seizure is worth 14,216 US\$.

**Seizure of 170 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I)<sup>18</sup>**

**Roissy-Charles de Gaulle Airport, Ile-de-France Region, France**

**December 14, 2014**

They were hidden in the double bottom of 6 boxes carrying sea cucumbers which themselves are threatened with extinction in medium term due to high demand on the world market (See "On the trail" n°4 p.107) despite a worldwide range.

Radiated tortoises are originating exclusively from Madagascar. The demand concerns dead specimens for decorative objects or alive ones as pets. The species is critically endangered. The individuals, very young, weighing just 20 g while adults weigh 15 to 20 kg, were probably intended to a breeding farm in Laos before being sold in China. This little crowd so fragile - 15 were already dead - was taken into "Turtle village" in the southern France.

It is not impossible - if such good intention continues - that they will be sent back to Madagascar where good wills are trying to stop the wildlife looting and suppress traffic.

In 2013, the French Customs seized 1,450 live animals among which 336 turtles.



## EUROPE

### FAMILY AFFAIRS

**Conviction for turtle trafficking<sup>17</sup>**

**Indre, Central Region, France**

**November 17, 2014**

The turtle smuggling run by a family, one member of which was a guard for the SNCM ferry lines linking Corsica to Marseille, was a juicy business. Between 100 and 400 Euros per specimen (see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 14). The sale happened online. The indicted, who lived in central France, did not show up at the hearing. She only received a suspended fine of 1,500 Euros, a true incentive to do it again!



# Snakes

## AMERICA

### **Seizure of 5 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II) and 3 Mexican pine snakes (*Pituophis deppei deppei*, not listed in CITES)<sup>1</sup>**

**San Luis Potosí, San Luis Potosí State, Mexico  
November 2014**

San Luis Potosi is at the heart of the traffic. For the third time in this "On the Trail" issue, suspicious packages are detected within a courier company. Employees warned PROFEPA. 3 packages declared as "accessories" contain snakes. They were bound for Celaya (Guanajuato), Aguascalientes (Aguascalientes) and Guadalajara (Jalisco). The snakes are healthy and have joined the Tangamanga zoo.



### **Seizure of 2 boas (*Boidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>2</sup> Sucre, Oropeza Province, Bolivia November 28, 2014**

The men aged 60 sold on the Campesino market skin creams and other products. On his shop front was a live boa 3.5 m long and another one stuffed. He used them to promote its products and to convince onlookers that their use could increase life expectancy. He is questioned: where did he get those boas?

## ASIA

### **Direction Japan from Assam, India<sup>3</sup>**

The NGO Nature's Friends says that snake charmers are behind this historical and folk position to capture cobras, rat snakes and pythons. One of their favorite hunting grounds is the Dhubri district. Dead snakes are skinned after being soaked in cod liver oil. The skins are then sold to specialized go-betweens and via Bangladesh illegally shipped to Japan, where they are transformed into fashion items, food and non-conventional medicine.

This information is confirmed by the Forest Service in Dhubri. 200 to 300 skins would be exported each year. This activity is much more lucrative than to show off snakes in public. A snake skin sells for an average of Rupees 5000 or 80 US\$.

### **Seizure of an Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II)<sup>4</sup>**

**District of Chennai, State of Tamil Nadu, India  
October 7, 2014**

The 20-year-old student was transporting on the back of his bike something wrapped in a blanket. It turned out to be a boa.

"I'm only the delivery boy." "When I deliver a package I don't ask what's inside."

Let's hope police will ask him the address he was to deliver it to and that the student/ delivery boy will remember. The boa was returned to a more suitable habitat.

### **Seizure of 2 brown sand boas (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II)<sup>5</sup>**

**Fulbari, State of West Bengal, India  
November 5, 2014**

The car was intercepted at night on the freeway 31, 50 km away from Bhutan. 3 men were aboard. The 2-headed snake is the subject of an inter Asian traffic. Dead or alive, he would have magical and medicinal properties. In December 2013, another brown sand boa was taking the direction of Bhutan (See "On the trail" 3 p. 35).

### **Seizure of 4 cobras (Elapidae family), 2 Russell's vipers (*Daboia russelii*, Appendix III in India) and a common kukri snake *Oligodon arnensis* (not listed in CITES)<sup>6</sup>**

**Bangalore, Karnataka, India  
November 2014**

In the southern suburbs of Bangalore lived in a house 7 snakes and 3 people claiming on social networks to be mushroom pickers and snake hunters. Probably wildlife traders.

### **Seizure of snakes in a secret restaurant<sup>7</sup>**

**Fuzhou, Fujian Province, China  
November 23, 2014**

The journalists pretended to be customers and went to a secret restaurant in a residential community to eat. They discovered wild snakes in the restaurant, and the waiter claimed that there was pangolin. The pangolins costed 1000 yuans (162 US\$) per 1/2 kg. After hearing the news from the journalists, the forest police seized 7 live snakes and 20kg of frozen snake meat in the restaurant. They did not find any pangolin.





**Seizure of an Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II). 2,7 kg<sup>8</sup>**  
**State of Kerala, India**  
**December 27, 2014**

**Seizure of 3 Indian sand boas (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) and arrests<sup>9</sup>**  
**Palakkad, Kerala State, India**  
**December 31, 2014**

The "2 headed boas" were codenamed "double engine". 12 traffickers were questioned. The sand boa is used by black magic and medicinal swindlers.

## EUROPE

**Seizure of a monocled cobra (*Naja kaouthia*, Appendix II) and 2 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II)<sup>10</sup>**  
**Seville, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain**  
**October 2014**

"I caught a snake at the door of my house, it looks dangerous". Guardia Civil quickly sends emergency services. A monocled cobra is recovered and taken by animal health staff of the city. At the same time, information is collected to try to identify the owner but also to ensure that there is no other cobras in the area. The investigation led officers of the Guardia Civil to the home of a 28 year old man. 2 ball pythons are discovered in plastic boxes.



**Discovery of a dead python (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II) in a river in eastern France<sup>11</sup>**  
**Bourg-en-Bresse, Rhône-Alpes Region, France**  
**November 18, 2014**



## Sauria

### AMERICA

**Seizure of 7 iguanas (Iguanidae family)<sup>1</sup>**  
**Dunes between Pitangui and Muriú beaches, State of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil**  
**October 24, 2014**

The iguanas were blind and had damaged spines. Tourists were having their picture taken with them. A good profit for the exploiters. 8 men were arrested including 3 teenagers.

A species of iguana, the green iguana (*Iguana iguana*), is listed in Appendix II of CITES.



**Voluntary handing over of a green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) to the PROFEPA<sup>2</sup>**  
**State of Quintana Roo, Mexico**  
**October 2014**

**Seizure of 5 lizards of the genus *Abronia* and *Barisia*, not listed in CITES<sup>3</sup>**  
**Nezahualcoyotl, Mexico State, Mexico**  
**December 2014**

Another suspicious package, at FedEx this time. Employees alert PROFEPA who discovers 5 reptiles inside. They were bound to Ciudad Juarez (Chihuahua). These lizards are particularly sought after by collectors in North America and Europe. Ciudad Juarez is on the border with the United States of America. The saurians would probably have quickly crossed it.

### ASIA

**Seizure of 2 monitor lizards and arrest (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>4</sup>**  
**Uliyur, State of Tamil Nadu, India**  
**October 2, 2014**

They were caught all three walking in the forest carrying a bag. A deadly stroll in the forest? The patrol found inside the bag 2 monitor lizards only a few months old. The men were aged 24, 25 and 28 years old.



**Seizure of 27 monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>5</sup>**

**Koothadivayal, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

**October 10, 2014**

It came very close for them. Hunted with explosives by nomads. Talk about collateral damage! The buyers- in fact policemen from Madurai- Virudhunagar and Tiruchi – asked to see the specimens to judge of the quality of the merchandise. After fronting part of the price, 1000 Rs or 16 US\$, the seller Mr. Durairaj took them to the lizard pit.

The man was arrested and taken into custody.



**Seizure of 3 common water monitors (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II)<sup>6</sup>**

**Shanghai Pudong International Airport, China**

**December 19, 2014**

3 reptiles in the briefcase. Gifts for friends.

## Crocodylians

### AMERICA

**Seizure of 10 young Morelet's crocodiles (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II)<sup>1</sup>**

**Mérida, State of Yucatán, Mexico**

**October 2014**

They were shipped in a cardboard package from Jalpa de Méndez (Tabasco) to Merida. 500 km. According to the documents submitted to the courier company, the parcel contained sporting equipment. The young crocodiles were dehydrated and weak; they were taken to El Centenario Zoo.

In the state of Yucatán, PROFEPA strengthens coordination with courier and transportation services to detect and combat illegal traffic.

**Receivership of 2 Morelet's crocodiles (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II)<sup>2</sup>**

**Villahermosa, State of Tabasco, Mexico**

**October 2014**

The 2 crocodiles over 2 m long were in a fenced concrete tank in a refrigerated warehouse.



**Seizure of 19 Morelet's crocodiles (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II)<sup>3</sup>**

**Ciudad Victoria, State of Tamaulipas, Mexico**

**December 2014**

The wildlife management site (PIMVS) is at fault: unproven origins and mistreatment.

14 specimens are young, about 70 cm long. They were placed in a basement in plastic tubs covered with grills and nets. The pools are filthy. 5 are adults. They measure more than 2 meters long. They share a space of 24 m2 and a shallow pool. The whole is enclosed.

## Various Reptile Species

### AMERICA

**Seizure of 3 Nile monitors (*Varanus niloticus*, Appendix II), 2 boa constrictors of the *Boa constrictor imperator* sub species, Appendix II and a Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II)<sup>1</sup>**

**State of San Luis Potosí, Mexico**

**October 2014**

The employee of the parcel service gave the alert. There are reptiles in some packages. In the first one there are the monitor and the python being sent to the State of Mexico. In the second were 2 monitors and the boa constrictor on their way to Mexico City. Both were sent by Monterrey airways. The monitors were in cloth bags, the boas in plastic boxes. There are all in good health. They have been put under the care of the Tangamanga zoological park, under UMA status.



A UMA, Management Unit for the conservation of wildlife (Unidades de Manejo para la Conservación de la Vida Silvestre), is defined as a center where the exploitation of animals, products and by-products of animals is allowed. 2 activities are possible: The first is hunting and harvesting of fauna and flora to feed the pet market, and if necessary the pharmaceutical, food and fashion industries. The second concerns scientific observation, eco-tourism and environmental education. Each UMA must provide the SEMARNAT a management plan. It develops projects, presents the site, identifies the animals, submits a financial plan estimation, "guarantees the survival of harvested species" and the maintenance of natural habitats. These hybrid establishments are difficult to monitor. More than 12,000 UMA exist in Mexico, covering 380,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

## ASIA

**Seizure of 7171 turtles, 29 Burmese pythons (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) and 35 reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II) and arrest<sup>2</sup>**

**Chachoengsao, Chachoengsao Province, Thailand**

**December 24, 2014**

At 36/45 Bang Khla Market Plaza was a meeting place for snakes and turtles. The landlord, Attaporn Dullayapaian, is arrested. The snakes have gone for recovery in Ratchaburi province and the turtles in Chonburi.

## EUROPE

**Seizure of 8300 snake, lizard and crocodile skins<sup>3</sup>**

**Manises, Province of Valencia, Spain**

**November 2014**

The remains were going to be turned into belts, bags and wallets. The underground workshop supplied a network of mobile salesmen and could be active on an international level.



## Arachnids

### AMERICA

**Sequestration of 8 tarantulas, one *Brachypelma kahlenbergi* (Appendix II)<sup>1</sup>**

**Zapopan, State of Jalisco, Mexico**

**November 2014**

An employee of the courier company detects 2 suspicious parcels. Bound for Mexico City, they are supposed to contain electronic equipment. The decision is made to open them. PROFEPA inspectors discover tarantulas inside. One of them is dead. They are entrusted to UMA Tarantulas of Mexico. Value of the seizure: 1,000 US\$ on the black market.



### EUROPE

**Seizure of a Chilean rose hair tarantula (*Grammostola rosea*, unlisted in CITES) and 2 scorpions (*Heterometrus scaber*, unlisted in CITES)<sup>2</sup>**

**Nancy, Region of Lorraine, France**

**October 16, 2014**

The Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage (ONCFS), national bureau for hunting and wildlife, is keeping an eye on "Leboncoin.fr", the French site for private sales over the Internet of anything including Indian scorpions whose sting can cause troubled vision, vomiting and fever. "Leboncoin.fr": for them animals are no more than objects. The student in Nancy in the eastern France was selling them for 80 € a piece. He was holding them without any certificates of professional qualification, license or administrative authorization. The conditions of detention did not guaranty safety for the surrounding neighbors. Unable to find an establishment in capacity of receiving them, the 2 scorpions and the tarantula were killed following a court order.





# Birds

Total from October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>  
1,670 birds seized

## AFRICA

**Conviction of a man for having caused the death of 46 Cape vultures (*Gyps coprotheres*, Appendix II)<sup>1</sup>**  
**Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**  
**October 2014**



Cape vultures live in colonies. The loyal couples build their nests on rocky cliffs and take turns breeding their eggs for 8 weeks. Unpaid undertakers, hygienists by nature, they collide with high tension wires, with farmers' hallucination and gamblers (see "On the Trail" 3, p.35), with ruffling sound pollution and proliferation of bushes caused by overgrazing reducing visibility of carcasses. The cape vulture is in danger, "as much as the rhinoceros" says Mrs Wolter, director of the Vulpro NGO. There would be only 3700 left while there were twice as many ten years ago. The poisoners are not the ones to pay. The latest example confirms this fact. Armand Aucamp was only sentenced to a 20,000 R fine- 1768 US\$- and a mere one year prison term suspended sentence. The farmer acknowledged the poisoning claiming it was aimed at the hyenas who would have gotten into the habit of attacking the herds. The vultures would be some sort of unintentional victims who consumed the flesh of a sheep soaked in carbofuran. This polluting and blind insecticide terrorism, frequent in Africa and Europe, aimed against wildlife and supposedly noxious animals, is not sufficiently repressed. It is encouraged by the weak penalties that are pronounced and the high profits the poisoners can retain.

## AMERICA

**Seizure of 30 birds including a parrot (*Psittacidae spp.*, Appendix I or II) and red cowled cardinal (*Paroaria dominicana*, unlisted in CITES)<sup>2</sup>**  
**Araguaína, State of Tocantins, Brazil**  
**October 1, 2014**

The 30 birds were in 24 cages. Some were still caught in traps. The man will answer to these actions before the court and will anyway pay a fine of 200 to 2000 US\$ per bird.



**Seizure of 130 birds including conures (*Aratinga spp.*, Appendix II)<sup>3</sup>**  
**Garanhuns and Lagoa de Ouro, State of Pernambuco, Brazil**  
**October 1, 2014**

The healthy ones have been released. The others joined a wildlife rehabilitation center.

**Indictment of a person suspected of killing a scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I)<sup>4</sup>**  
**Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico**  
**October 2014**

The investigation on the poaching of a scarlet macaw is ongoing (See "On the Trail" No. 6 p. 26). On June 11, 2014, a red macaw was found dead in the Eco Park Aluxes in Palenque. The bird was part of the macaw release plan. Antonio Díaz Martínez has been arrested and charged.



**Rescue of 4 live keel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II)<sup>5</sup>**  
**Tenosique, Tabasco, Mexico**  
**October 2014**

They were abandoned in a cardboard box on the side of the road. Federal police discovered them while on patrol. Their health is a concern. They were taken to La Venta zoo-logical park museum.





**Seizure of nearly 100 young birds (*Psittacidae* spp, Appendix I or II)<sup>6</sup>**

**Tianguá, State of Ceara, Brazil**

**October 2014**

Routine check by the police. The trunk content is unusual. 100 young birds packaged without food or water. They were captured more than 600 km away, in Barra do Corda (State of Maranhao). The 3 passengers in the vehicle were arrested and sentenced to pay fines.



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**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**Seizure of 4 orange-fronted parakeets (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II), a red-lored amazon (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II) and an American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*, Appendix II)<sup>7</sup>**



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**San Felipe de Jesús, Federal District of Mexico City, Mexico**

**October 2014**

2 men were putting them on sale on the market. One of them had already been arrested in 2011 while carrying 190 parakeets from Veracruz to Mexico City. Now, he faces up to 12 years in prison for the aggravated offense of trading in endangered species.

**Sequestration of 2 keel-billed toucans (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II)<sup>8</sup>**

**International Airport Hermosillo, State of Sonora, Mexico**

**October 13, 2014**

The 2 young toucans had flown 1500 km from Toluca to Hermosillo airport. Sender : a pet shop. The national health and food quality service inspects the package when it reaches Hermosillo and, noting that it contains live birds, asks PROFEPA to take over. Finally, the recipient of the package cannot



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prove the legal origin of the birds, invoices are incomplete and the CITES permit is dated from 2004. "I do not want problems" he says, deciding to leave the 2 toucans in custody at the airport.

The next day, one toucan died of dehydration. The second was tested for salmonella, influenza and Newcastle disease. Transferred to the premises of the PROFEPA in Sonora, he received 14 days of care. He was fed fruits. He did not survive. The autopsy found no physical cause to death. Stress and unsuitable climate are suspected.

**Seizure of 8 birds, one white-fronted amazon (*Amazona albifrons*, Appendix II)<sup>9</sup>**

**Mérida, State of Yucatán, Mexico**

**October 2014**

The seizure also concerns a northern cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), 2 white collared seedeaters (*Sporophila torqueola*), 2 yellow-faced grassquits (*Tiaris olivaceus*), a lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*) and a rose-breasted grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*), none of them listed in CITES. They were offered for sale without regulatory documents.



© Ken Thomas

*Cardinalis cardinalis*

**Seizure of blue and gold macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), 2 blue headed parrots (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II) and an owl (*Strix* spp., Appendix II)<sup>10</sup>**

**Riobamba Chimborazo Province, Ecuador**

**October 2014**

The macaw and the 2 parrots were locked in a cage. They were the family pets. The owl had been abandoned in the streets of Riobamba. Her left wing was damaged preventing her from flying.

Destination for the quartet is a shelter to get better.

**Seizure of 36 birds including 2 very young parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>11</sup>**

**Curitiba, State of Paraná, Brazil**

**October 22, 2014**

Early morning. The police check a car and find 2 baby birds in the trunk. The driver's home is searched and were found in an aviary a chestnut-bellied seed-finch (*Oryzoborus angolensis*), a black-throated saltator (*Saltatricula atricollis*), 3 double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerule-cens*), 4 green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), 3 European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*) and 3 ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*), none of them listed in CITES. The driver and passenger were arrested.

#### REPEATED OFFENSE

**Seizure of 153 parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>12</sup>**

**Bataguassu, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil**

**October 23, 2014**

The 2 men were arrested. The baby birds were hidden in wooden boxes in the trunk of a car. They both were sentenced to pay 5000 R\$ per bird, i.e. 2068 US\$. This means a total fine of 765,000 R\$ each, that is 316,470 US\$. The full amount will probably never be paid. The driver had already been arrested for similar actions 4 times.



**Seizure of 34 young birds including 28 parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and 6 toucans (Family Ramphastidae)<sup>13</sup>**

**Ourinhos, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil**

**October 2014**

Stopped at a roadside check, the Toyota Corolla was hiding the young birds in a secret compartment between the rear seats and the trunk. The military police were not fooled. Passengers were arrested and birds delivered to the APAS, Wildlife Protection Association in Assis city.

**Seizure of a toucan (Family Ramphastidae), a parrot (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II), a macaw (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) and a yellow-faced siskin (*Carduelis yarrellii*, Appendix II)<sup>14</sup>**

**Apipucos, state of Pernambuco, Brazil**

**October 30, 2014**

In all, 49 birds in the condo.



#### FAMILY AFFAIRS

**Illegal sale of a young toucan (family Ramphastidae) and a young macaw (*Psittaciformes* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>15</sup>**

**Maracaibo, State of Zulia, Venezuela**

**November 2014**

The 2 brothers were caught on camera by the La Verdad newspaper. The little toucan was offered for sale for 8000 BsF, i.e. 1271 US\$. The journalists lost sight of the 2 men before the police intervened. They are still on the loose.

**Seizure of a white-fronted Amazon (*Amazona albifrons*, Appendix II), an orange-fronted parakeet (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II) and a monk parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II)<sup>16</sup>**

**Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, Mexico**

**November 2014**

PROFEPA had been informed that the 3 birds were detained on Mezquitan market.

In another operation in the state of Jalisco, a white-tailed deer had been put in sequestration (*Odocoileus virginianus*, not listed in CITES).



**Seizure of a Harris's hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II) and sequestration of a white-crowned parrot (*Pionus senilis*, Appendix II), 2 yellow-naped amazons (*Amazona auropalliata*, Appendix I) and a red-lored amazon (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II)<sup>17</sup>**

**Metropolitan Area of the Valley of Mexico, Federal District of Mexico, Mexico**

**November 2014**



The Harris's hawk was placed in sequestration. Its owner did not have the SEMARNAT documents and was still unable to provide them after one week. PROFEPA intervened again and made the seizure. The hawk was entrusted to an UMA.



**Seizure of a dozen parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) <sup>18</sup>**

**Tarqui, Province of Guayas, Ecuador**

**November 2014**

Routine road check operation. The police stop all vehicles, search them and control the identities of drivers and passengers in order to intercept firearms, knives, drugs, items of dubious origin and prevent environmental crime. Result of the operation: seizure of 60 bottles of liquor, knives and wild birds.



**Seizure of 8 birds : Patagonian conures (*Cyanoliseus patagonus*, Appendix II) and blue fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) <sup>19</sup>**

**Pilar, Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina**

**November 2014**

They were sold in the street. The street vendor is in breach of the 15/88 order prohibiting the exhibition and sale of domestic and wild animals on the road.



**Seizure of 3 toco toucans (*Ramphastos toco*, Appendix II), 4 yellow-chevroned parakeets (*Brotogetis chiriri*, Appendix II) and a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) <sup>20</sup>**

**Jataí, State of Goiás, Brazil**

**November 2014**

The parakeets are in cages, wings clipped so they can no longer fly. The toucans are in a plastic box. They are starved. Abuse is obvious. Managers face a fine ranging from 199 to 1990 US\$ per bird.

**Seizure of 17 parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II) <sup>21</sup>**

**Asuncion, Paraguay**

**November 2014**

At the Mercado Municipal No. 4, huge market in Asuncion, they were sold for 200,000 guaranis each or 43 US\$.

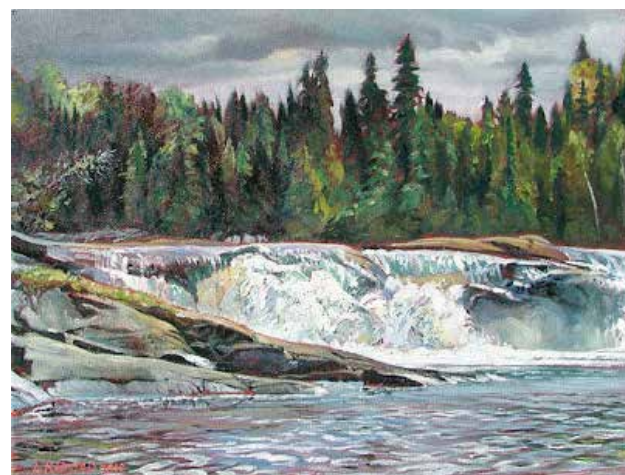


**Conviction for the poaching of more than 300 animals including a sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*, Appendix II) and a great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*, Appendix II) <sup>22</sup>**

**Province of Ontario, Canada**

**November 27, 2014**

John Wade pleaded guilty. 300 m long nets were found at his home near Foleyet on the bank of Ivanhoe River with hundreds of squirrels, bats and birds, northern flickers, pileated woodpeckers, blue jays, hummingbirds, all more or less stuffed or plucked. Fine of 4400 US\$ and 10 years hunting prohibition for infringement to Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act and the Migratory Birds Convention Act passed in 1917.



Ivanhoe river by Aleta Karstad



**Seizure of 2 Harris's hawks (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II), an orange-fronted parakeet (*Aratinga Canicularis*, Appendix II) and a red lored amazon (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II)**<sup>23</sup>

**Federal District and State of Mexico, Mexico  
December 2014**

During the 2 inspections, the owners could not submit the necessary documents.

Birds are entrusted to the wildlife management facility (PIMVS) "El Sahuro" in the State of Queretaro.

**Sequestration of 3 red lored amazons (*Amazona autumnalis*, Appendix II), 2 red-fronted macaws (*Ara rubrogenys*, Appendix I), a common caracara (*Caracara plancus*, Appendix II) and a keel-billed toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II)**<sup>24</sup>



**Iztacalco, Federal District of Mexico, Mexico  
December 2014**

PROFEPA receives a tip off: a private owner detains protected birds.

**Seizure of 4 nanday conures (*Nandayus nenday*, Appendix II), 3 blue-crowned conures (*Aratinga acuticaudata*, Appendix II), 6 monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II) and a toucan (*Ramphastidae* family)**<sup>25</sup>

**San Lorenzo, Central Province, Paraguay  
December 16, 2014**

Natives sold them on the municipal market. A phone call to the authorities gave the alarm. The birds are taken to a wildlife shelter approved by the environmental department.



**Seizure of 27 parakeets (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II)**<sup>26</sup>

**Caucaia, State of Ceara, Brazil**

**December 18, 2014**

Routine check on BR-222 highway. Inside a car, on top of the 2 passengers, 27 parakeets, 16 red cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*, not listed in CITES) and all the necessary equipment for poaching. They explain that they had captured the birds two days earlier. They wanted to sell them on the Caucaia markets. The police has given to IBAMA the 43 birds whose condition is worrying.

**Conviction of a power company responsible for the death of 38 golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) and 336 other birds including raptors (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II), blackbirds (*Turdus merula*, not listed in CITES), larks (*Alaudidae* family, not listed in CITES), wren troglodytes (*Troglodytidae* family, not listed in CITES), sparrows (*Passeridae* family, not listed in CITES)**<sup>27</sup>



**State of Wyoming, USA**

**December 19, 2014**

The electric company PacifiCorp Energy was ordered to pay 2.5 US\$ million in compensation for death inflicted since 2009 to 374 birds by 237 wind turbines of 2 MW spread over the 2 onshore wind farms of Seven Mile Hill and Glenrock Rolling Hills. Wind turbines harm birds and bats in at least 4 ways: collision with turbines and blades, collision with the associated meteorological towers, electrocution or collision with electrical infrastructures, nest abandonment or avoidance of habitat due to physical or acoustic disturbance.

PacifiCorp will also spend 600,000 US\$ per year to comply with the birds mortality reduction plan imposed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.





## ASIA

### Seizure of 17 birds including a hill myna (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II)<sup>28</sup>

Kampung Air Hitam Jelai, State of Perak, Malaysia  
October 14, 2014

Police were watching the home of this small wildlife businessman specialized in birds. A "baby" hornbill with already a large beak was among the prisoners on the verge of being sold on local markets. Expertise identified white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*), blue-winged leafbirds (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*) or lesser green leafbirds (*Chloropsis cyanopogon*) and a stripe-throated bulbul (*Pycnonotus finlaysoni*). This colorful little group is worth 6129 US\$ from a purely financial aspect.



### Seizure of 25 kg of Peacock feathers (genre *Pavo*)<sup>29</sup>

Kochi International Airport, State of Kerala, India  
October 16, 2014

The feathers were going to fly by Malindo Airlines to Kuala Lumpur. Apparently this was not their first trip. The duo seems to be frequent users of these Kochi- Kuala Lumpur flights.

Another passenger about to leave for Singapore had been caught with 29 kg of peacock feathers in September.



*Pavo muticus* is listed in Appendix II

### Seizure of 78 common cranes (*Grus grus*, Appendix II)<sup>30</sup>

Hyderâbâd, Sind Province, Pakistan

October 2014

They came from Siberia. They were going to settle for the winter in India. They were captured by ambushed watchmen in the wetlands. It is said they are to be set free in the Indus delta. They had been uncovered in the baggage compartment on a bus Karachi-Peshawar (1000 km) where all year long is held an international gathering dedicated to illegal birds attracting clients from all around the world and especially from the Middle East.

The 3 traffickers were released after having together paid a 50,000 Rs fine, that is 485 US\$, a pathetic amount as admitted the officials in charge of protection of wildlife in the Sind Province. 'We couldn't request a higher fine. The amount is set by law.'

In Karachi, a couple of common cranes can be sold on the black market for 20,000 Rs, that is 194 US\$.



© Joaquim Maceira Muchaxo

### Sentencing to 8 months prison for poaching 9 birds including an Asian barred owllet (*Glaucidium cuculoides*, Appendix II)<sup>31</sup>

Tiantai, Province of Zhejiang, China  
December 10, 2014

On his way to a marriage celebration in the South of Shanghai in February 2014, Xu Da had decided to mark the event by shooting the 9 birds.



© Dr. Vijay Anand Ismavel MS MCh

## Seizure of 250 kg of peacock feathers (*Pavo Genus*)<sup>32</sup>

**Bongyang, Manipur, India**

**December 15, 2014**

Several bags were in a trailer behind the Mahindra pickup. A road check was conducted on the basis of a tip off. 250 kg of feathers= around 170 peacocks. In January 2014, in the State of Maharashtra, 2 women were each sentenced to 3 years in prison and a fine of 160 US\$ for poaching of green peafowls (*Pavo muticus*, Appendix II). See "On the trail" n°4 p. 35.

## Conviction for poaching of a sarus crane (*Grus antigone*, Appendix II) in the Keoladeo National Park<sup>33</sup>

**Bharatpur, Rajasthan State, India**

**December 2014**

The Court of Bharatpur sentenced to 3 years in prison a man who had killed the bird in June 2002. The Keoladeo National Park is a major wintering area for migrating birds coming from Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, highland China and Siberia. It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985.



## Seizure of 6 pairs of peacocks feet (*Genus Pavo*) and arrests<sup>34</sup>

**Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India**

**December 28, 2014**

The 2 men are part of a network of traditional Siddha practitioners which would be the oldest human medicine born several thousands of years ago in the south of the Indian subcontinent. Even today, mayil leg oil is deemed by the followers to cure joint pain. Mayil means peacock in Tamil language.

## EUROPE

## Seizure of about 10 goldfinches (genre *Carduelis*, unlisted in CITES)<sup>35</sup>

**Meurthe-et-Moselle Department, Region of Lorraine, France**

**October 2014**

These passerines are protected under French law. They were captured in the boscage by the 50 year-old unemployed man and sold on the Leboncoin.fr Internet site for private sales for 70 € a piece. They were more fortunate than were the insects (cf. page 19). The ONCFS, the National Office for hunting and wildlife returned them to nature. "Sometime wild goldfinches are bred with domestic canaries".



*Carduelis carduelis*

## REPEATED OFFENSE

## Conviction for the illegal gathering of protected species eggs<sup>36</sup>

**Bulgaria**

**October 22, 2014**



Eggs of the world! Mr. Ross, passionate collector of vulture and even ortolan eggs had been sentenced several times in the United Kingdom to fines for having stolen from nests and eyries from species rare and protected under national and international law. 1998, 1999, and 2003 have left traces on his police record.

The vandal and nest violator found refuge in Bulgaria, and after a few years is back under the spotlights thanks to the vigilance of ornithologists following closely evolution of the eastern imperial eagle and the saker falcon. In 2011, search of his home in Burgas led to the seizure of 16 eggs including one of a griffon vulture, notebooks and CDs proving that since his coming to Bulgaria, Mr. Ross and his son had taken eggs from cliffs and other places of uneasy access, and put on sale internationally, at least 1000 vulture eggs. He has just been sentenced to 6 months imprisonment suspended sentence and a 2550 € or 3200 US\$ fine. This is a first in Bulgaria. To be said, Bulgarian law did not enable to take into account Mr. Ross' previous convictions in the UK.



**Seizure of a long-legged buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*, Appendix II)<sup>37</sup>**

**Evros, Region of East Macedonia and Thrace, Greece**

**October 2014**

She built her nest in the Balkans and in the North of the Caspian Sea. She is sedentary in Asia Minor. The car was searched at the Evros border control point between Greece and Turkey. The driver was heading for England. He wasn't alone. The long-legged buzzard was with him, without documentation. She was set free. He spent 20 days in prison and had to pay a 2268 € fine. In Greece Birdlife with the support of the European Life program organizes training seminars for the 13 customs officers and 25 policemen in charge of countering wild bird trafficking.



© Sergey Yeliseev

**Poaching of a red kite (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II)<sup>38</sup>**

**St Créac, Midi-Pyrénées Region, France**

**October 31, 2014**

The kite was shot in the Pyrenees where it feels no good to be a vulture or a bear. Taken in by gamekeepers, he had to be killed: veterinarians couldn't save him.

The population of this typical European raptor hopelessly declines. The Pyrenees are one of the last anchorage points for migratory populations from Northern Europe and nesting ones.



© Hansueli Krapf Commonist

**Conviction for poisoning of 11 birds of prey and illegal possession of 9 of them (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>39</sup>**

**Norwich, England, United Kingdom**

**November 6, 2014**

The gamekeeper from the private reserve, Allen Lambert, would put together bait poisoned with pesticides. An RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) spokesperson notes that this is the worst case of poisoning of birds of prey known in the UK "*Finding the carcasses of nine poisoned buzzards in a bag at Lambert's home was truly dreadful.*"



© RSPB

"It's a new trend," he adds "last year we registered the poisoning of 76 wild animals including 30 buzzards and 20 red kites".

Mevimphos and Aldicarb are the poisoners' favorites. The game reserve owner will not be troubled. In England the manager of private hunts can't be held accountable for wrongdoings of his guards, unlike in Scotland.

Courts do not take seriously this sort of offense. Since 1970, 152 people have been brought before justice for poisoning birds of prey. 70% of these offenders were game keepers facing up to 6 month prison and 5000 pounds in fine, that is 8000 US\$. Only 3 jail sentences have been pronounced and they were all suspended sentences.

The National Gamekeepers Organisation condemns the actions of this individual "who must not tarnish the reputation of the NGO that has done so much for the countryside and wildlife."

Allen Lambert was convicted for poisoning and illegal possession of birds of prey to 10 months imprisonment suspended sentence and to 930 pounds in procedural fees, that is 1488 US\$.



© PA

**Theft of 7 birds: gray parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II), Ducorps cockatoos (*Cacatua ducorpsii*, Appendix II) and Roseate cockatoos (*Eolophus roseicapilla*, Appendix II) <sup>40</sup>**

**Echirolles, Region Rhone-Alpes, France**

**November 12, 2014**

The robbers went through the roof of the pet shop Maxi Zoo in the deserted shopping area at night. Each bird can sell at around 2000 euros. An abduction by connoisseurs and/or illegal breeders.



**Judgement of the Court of Appeals concerning a taxidermist in possession of 230 birds <sup>41</sup>**

**Pau, Region of Aquitaine, France**

**November 20, 2014**

The taxidermist had 230 birds in his freezers including 110 who are protected and whose capture and trade is banned by European directives and CITES, such as tauracos (*Tauraco* spp., Appendix II), a scarlet ibis (*Eudocimus ruber*, Appendix II), a black kite (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II), amazon parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II), red-billed mesias (*Leiothrix lutea*, Appendix II), parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II). The Court of Appeals in Pau, southwest France, lessened the penalty inflicted in first instance. The damages to be paid to NGO's including the LPO (League for the protection of Birds) were lowered from 18,000 to 3000 €. The suspended prison term of 3 months was converted to a 3000 € suspended fine. The Custom's fine worth 6700 € was maintained. The Court of Appeals unexpectedly considered the taxidermist was a "passionate collector" not seeking "personal gain".



**Seizure of a green-winged macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II) <sup>42</sup>**

**Brussels Airport, Brussels-Capital Region, Belgium**

**November 23, 2014**

The bird was in a cage in carry-on luggage. The macaw came from Turkey. The smuggler was Belgian.



**Poaching of hawks (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II) <sup>43</sup>**

**Altai Krai, Russia**

**December 2014**

The kettle bell trainer from the Altai University is also president of the shooting club in his town. His favorite hobby is to poach and have his picture taken in various positions, proud and ridiculous, and infamous for the animals. Every form of wildlife in the forest has been through his hands and his thumbs up. Hares, roe deer, whooper swans, squirrels, beavers, grey herons, red deer, hawks... His accomplice holding the camera has not yet been identified.



**Seizure of 114 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II) <sup>44</sup>**

**Hungary. Border crossing with Romania.**

**December 7, 2014**



Customs find that traffic increases by year's end. Were the birds to be sold as Christmas gifts? They were in bad condition, crammed in plastic bundles, legs and beak tied up. Vets think they were captured in Africa. The driver of the car was Bulgarian. Value estimated by the Szeged Wildlife Park between 69,000

and 93,000 US \$.

**Conviction for poaching 11 ortolan buntings (*Emberiza hortulana*) <sup>45</sup>**

**Mont-de-Marsan, Aquitaine, France**

**December 19, 2014**

This time the France southwest judges did not consider as a mitigating circumstance the "passion" of this inveterate hunter trapper. It will be a lot harder for him to swallow the € 1,500 in damages to be paid to the LPO than the ortolans. € 700 fine. His hunting license cancelled for one year.



# Falcons and Houbara Bustards

The bustard is the prey. The falcon is the predator. Due to falconry, bustards and wild falcons are in great danger. In wintertime, bustards and falcons, fleeing Central Asia, migrate to Pakistan in search of mild weather. It's there that they're captured.

## AFRICA

**Seizure of about fifteen falcons (*Falconidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>46</sup>**  
**Rosso, Region of Trarza, Mauritania**  
**December 9, 2014**



The birds of prey apparently followed a long and difficult path with several means of transport. First by plane from the Gulf Countries to Senegal then by road to Morocco via Mauritania. Falconry is active in winter in the North African countries.

## ASIA

**Seizure of 4 falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) and conviction<sup>47</sup>**  
**Bannu, Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan**  
**October 20, 2014**



Khursheed Khan from Peshawar was going to deliver the falcons to Karachi (1000 km) travelling by bus departing from Peshawar. The best falcon specimens can be sold for up to 500,000 US\$.



**Seizure of 19 peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) and 5 Barbary falcons (*Falco pelegrinoides*, Appendix I)<sup>48</sup>**  
**Province of Hormozgan, Iran**  
**October 2014**



The birds of prey had crossed the border to Pakistan without the least problem. Things got bad on the Port of Jask road 400 km away from the Pakistani border. The final destination for the peregrine falcons and Barbary falcons was one of the countries bordering the Persian Gulf facing Iran. 2 birds died because of transport conditions. The 22 others were set free in the plains of Hormozgan where they will participate in controlling populations of reptiles and rodents. The driver who was arrested faces a maximum penalty of 3 years imprisonment, 600 € in fine and 600 € in damages.

**Poaching of houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I)<sup>49</sup>**  
**Thatta and Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan**  
**October-November 2014**

Illegal hunting is done under the guise of special permits. According to hunters, the bustard flesh would have restorative and aphrodisiac properties.

**Seizure of a kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II) and a dove (family *Columbidae*)<sup>50</sup>**  
**Delfan County, Lorestan Province, Iran**  
**November 5, 2014**

The 2 hunters were engaged in the capture of saker falcons using kestrels and other captive birds to bait them. The saker falcons are highly demanded by the Persian Gulf falconers to hunt houbara bustards.



**Seizure of 3 saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) and 2 peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I)<sup>51</sup>**

**Karachi Muhammad Ali Jinnah International Airport, Sindh Region, Pakistan  
November 12, 2014**

Emirates Airlines was about to be involved in raptor smuggling. The 5 falcons were confined in 2 small wooden boxes bound for Dubai. Veterinary services observe that they are in poor condition. Like the houbara bustards, hawks leave Central Asia in winter to fly south. On migratory halts, they are caught with nets. In Pakistan, the birds in good condition sell between 5,000 and 10,000 US\$ to Arab brokers. On the black market in the Persian Gulf, they sell between 50,000 and 100,000 US\$.

**Seizure of 240 houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) and 140 falcons (*Falconidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>52</sup>**

**Sea of Oman, Iran**

**November 23, 2014**

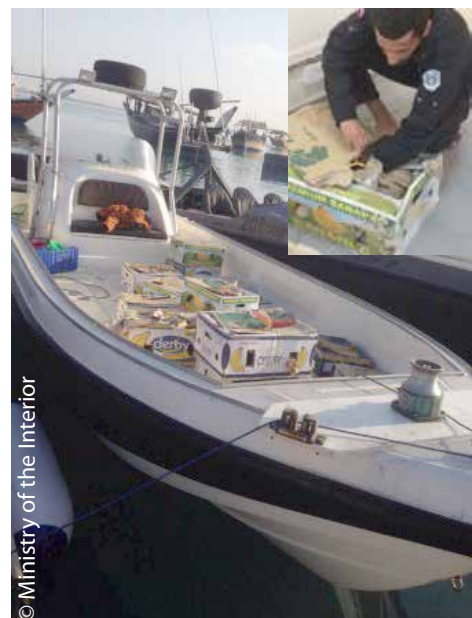
140 birds of prey and 240 preys on board of a dhow leaving Iran for Saudi Arabia and the UAE, chosen land of falconry. In this game of cat and mouse, the cat is the hawk, the mouse the bustard. The chase, ending most often with the killing, lasts for hours. The bustard's flight is unpredictable, super fast, with sudden nosedives, flash rises, sharp turns and large circles in the open sky.

The Iranian captain of the dhow and the Pakistani with him are behind bars. The birds cargo came from Pakistan. In the winter, bustard and falcons fleeing Central Asia migrate to Pakistan in search of a warmer climate. There is where they are caught. Many birds on the boat, hampered by plastic ties, were already dead at the time of the boarding by the Iranian maritime police. The survivors, after receiving care and food, were released in the southern arid provinces.



**Seizure of 157 houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) and 4 falcons (*Falconidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>53</sup>**

**Doha Port, baladiyah Ad Dawhah, Qatar  
November 2014**





Customs and police effervescence in the Persian Gulf. Twice in a week, dozens of bustards and some hawks were seized from 2 dhows in Qatari waters. The 2 boats came from Iran. The Pakistan-Iran-Qatar channel - probably also Kuwait - is confirmed. Bustards were packed in crates supposedly transporting bananas.

Adult houbara bustards have a wingspan of 1 m to 1.5 m. The clear and beige brown plumage is suitable for camouflage in the deserts and dry plains. Is this the sign of an awakening of Qatar with the requirements of CITES to which it is a party since 2001?

These significant seizures occur a few days after an international call by Interpol to arrest several environmental criminals including Ahmed Kamran, presumed Pakistani, accused in 2010 of using a Qatari military plane from Tanzania to Qatar to smuggle live vultures, giraffes, antelopes and many other specimens of protected species (cf. p. 85).

### **Cancellation of hunting permits for rare birds species including houbara bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) <sup>54</sup>**

**Balochistan, Pakistan**

**November 28, 2014**

The Upper Court of Justice of the province ordered the cancellation of bustards hunting permits granted to foreigners amongst whom royal families of Saudi Arabia and the Emirates. Earlier this year, a Saudi prince, governor of the province of Tabuk, and his attendance are said to have killed 2,100 bustards in 3 weeks in the province around Chagai (See "On The Trail" n°4 p.35).

### **Houbara bustard war victim (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) <sup>55</sup>**

**Faryab province, Afghanistan**

**November 2014**

Hard times for the bustard. Afghan security forces fired on a bustard resting in the desert 500 miles northwest of Kabul. The military believed they had detected a war oriented device on the neck of the animal, a kind of portable bomb that might be remotely triggered by the Taliban.

During World War 2 and at the time of the Cold War, experiments were conducted so that pigeons act as guides for missiles or for marine mammals to place underwater mines on enemy ships. The use of animals as suicide bomb carriers is part of the military and terrorist folklore.

Instead of a bomb, the bustard wore a GPS identification collar installed by naturalists of ECCH, an NGO established in Uzbekistan whose purpose is precisely to save the bustard from extinction. After the drone over nuclear facilities hysteria in France, now is the time for bustard time-bombs.



### **Seizure of 26 houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) <sup>56</sup>**

**Ras El Khaimah, United Arab Emirates**

**December 2, 2014**

After a long car drive from the town of Oman tied up in paper and plastic, hidden under the front and back seats, they were unpacked by a custom's officer at the border control station in Ras el Khaimah. The driver of the 4 wheeler counted on taking advantage of the heavy traffic of the national holiday to smuggle in the wild bustards and make a big profit. As luck turned on him his nervousness gave him away.

### **Seizure of 26 houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) <sup>57</sup>**

**Minab, Province of Hormozgan, Iran**

**December 2014**

It is winter time, the houbara bustards have gone south. Trafficking is steady between Pakistan and the Gulf countries via Iran. 19 bustards in good health were set free into the arid mountains.

## **EUROPE**

### **Seizure of 5 saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) <sup>58</sup>**

**Domodedovo International Airport in Moscow, Central Federal District, Russia**

**October 2014**

It looked as if something was moving inside the sports bag that the passenger was carrying with him into the airplane cabin. He was on his way to Armenia. The young falcons were tied up, legs and beak tied, a blindfold over their heads. 128,000 US\$ worth of wildlife stolen from Siberia and destined to falconry in the Middle-Eastern and North African deserts. The falconer risks up to 5 years imprisonment for contraband.

### **Seizure of 3 saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) <sup>59</sup>**

**Chaingy, Central Region, France**

**November 20, 2014**

They were attached by ropes and perched on wooden posts in the middle of the travelers' caravans. The "owner", wanted for theft, could not justify the legal origin of the 3 raptors of which each specimen is worth several thousand euros in the Middle East (See Chapter Falconry in "On the Trail" n°3 p.22).



# Pangolins

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

**The seizure from October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> is equal to 1,109 pangolins**

Taking the average weight of 3 pangolins for 1 kg of scales.

**"On the Trail" n°7**

**The value of scales on the black market, according to media or customs sources**

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Asia	China	1 219	6
	India Manipur	1 148	8
	India Uttarakhand	2 930	12
	India Manipur	1 140	16
	India Karnataka	650	20
	Malaysia	1 494	24

**The value of pangolin on the black market, according to media or customs sources**

Continent	Country	US\$/animal	Ref.
Asia	Indonesia	13	7
	Vietnam	792	23
	China	956	14



A stuffed pangolin sold 1785€ in Lyon (France) on 22 October 2014

## AFRICA

**Seizure of a live pangolin and sentencing<sup>1</sup>**

**Mutare, Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe**

**October 9, 2014**

The female pangolin gave birth at the police station! She was discovered in the trunk of a Mitsubishi filled with 6 passengers. She had been captured in Mozambique. The pangolin and her offspring were entrusted to the Department of Parks and National Wildlife. 3 traffickers were sentenced to 9 years in prison. They pleaded guilty. One of them is a citizen of Zambia. The 3 other passengers denied the charges.



**Good news**

**Seizure and liberation of a pangolin<sup>2</sup>**  
**Province of Western Cape, South Africa**  
**November 2014**

The pangolin was found in the northern suburbs of the Cape where none of the species can be found. The Cape Nature NGO deployed great means for the exiled pangolin to be returned to the Western Cape Province. An airplane owned by the "Bateleurs" transported the pangolin to Pretoria to be put under the care of the African Pangolin Group and the Free Me Rehab Centre. The "Bateleurs" is a group of volunteer pilots who have dedicated an airplane they use to contribute to the protection of wildlife.

While waiting for their flight, the pangolin, at first curled up, unrolled after a few hours and began to explore the premises, realizing that the people there were generally friendly. People from Cape Nature never had before to care for such an animal. "Do not give him anything to eat. They eat mainly ants with a very long tongue that unwinds from the stomach". "But he needs to drink." "For that, don't put the water in a bowl, put it in a flat basin."

The advice from Pretoria was carefully followed. The pangolin climbed into the basin and drank."





**Good news**

**Rescue of 2 live pangolins<sup>3</sup>**

**South Vietnam and Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam**

**October 2014**

Within a week, the ENV hotline enabled the seizure and release of 2 live pangolins. A rare event in view of the scales and frozen pangolins trafficking transiting through Vietnam to end up in China.

The first one had been kept in a cage in a Southern Vietnam jewelry store.

The second was waiting to be scaled and eaten in a restaurant.

In both cases, the animal trainers from Save Vietnam's Wildlife went to look for the miracle pangolins in the south and center of the country to take them to the Cuc Phuong National Park.



**Seizure 3 pangolins, by the tail<sup>4</sup>**

**Haikou, Hainan Province, China**

**October 10, 2014**

Haikou City Police received a call indicating that a suspect was transporting 3 live pangolins in the shuttle from Guangxi to Xiuying Port (Haikou). After on-site investigation, the police found 3 pangolins in 2 travel bags belonging to a woman named Pang, from Hepu (Guangxi). Aged 51, she planned to sell them in Haikou. Pang was put in custody while investigations were conducted. The 3 pangolins (12 to 13 kg) were released into protected areas 2 days later.



**Seizure of 3 kg of pangolin scales<sup>5</sup>**

**Balaghat District, Madhya Pradesh, India**

**October 17, 2014**

**Seizure of 2 kg of pangolin scales<sup>6</sup>**

**Xian, Hekou Yao Autonomous County Hekou, Yunnan, China**

**October 2014**

The seizure is estimated at 15,000 yuans or 2438 US\$. Hekou Yao Autonomous County is at the Sino-Vietnamese border.

**Seizure and release of a pangolin, and arrest<sup>7</sup>**

**Kepahiang, Province of Bengkulu, Indonesia**

**October 21, 2014**

He weighs 5 kg. Bought for close to nothing in the countryside, he was on sale for 170,000 Rp, 13 US\$, on the market place. Police intervened on site and the pangolin was set free into an appropriate habitat after yet having been somewhat mistreated at the police station.



**Seizure of 1.7 kg of pangolin scales<sup>8</sup>**

**Khudengthabi, Manipur, India**

**October 24, 2014**

Acting on special information, paramilitary Assam Rifles stop a car. The woman driver carries scales worth Rs 1.20 lakh or 1953 US\$. The case took place close to the border with Myanmar.

**Seizure of an 8 kg live pangolin and arrest of the trafficker<sup>9</sup>**

**Regency Kaur, Province of Bengkulu, Indonesia**

**October 27, 2014**

**Seizure of 12 pangolins and arrest<sup>10</sup>**

**Beaufort, Sabah, Malaysia**

**October 30, 2014**

The 12 were in 9 bags. 2 were already dead. The roadside check rescued the 10 survivors from pots and stoves.

The driver was sentenced to a fine of RM 10,000 or US \$ 3043. He paid. Warning number for wildlife trafficking in Malaysia: 012-80119289.



**Seizure of 140 kg of pangolin scales<sup>11</sup>**  
**Bakauheni, Province of Lampung, Indonesia**  
**October 31, 2014**

The sender's address in Medan in the north of the Sumatra Island was a fake. The bags were seized on-board a bus in the Port of Bakauheny in the north of the Island of Java. Final destination was Jakarta. 500 to 700 pangolins would have been scales for this. Police say that ground up scales are sold as a supplement to methamphetamine.

**Seizure of 10kg of pangolin scales and an arrest<sup>12</sup>**

**Doiwala, Uttarakhand, India**  
**3 November 2014**

In northern India, the STF, Special Task Force against the traffic of flora and fauna, arrested Mukesh Nath, alias Kanhaiya, with 3 to 4 pangolins reduced to scales.

**Seizure of 3 pangolins, one of which is dead<sup>13</sup>**  
**Nanping, Fujian Province, China**  
**November 2014**

The forest police sent the 2 live pangolins to Zhan-guan mountain to be released to the wild. The car owner was arrested.

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**Conviction for the purchase and illegal transport of 10 pangolins<sup>14</sup>**

**Hengyang, Hunan Province, China**  
**November 3, 2014**

The father and his son were convicted to prison for smuggling pangolins, the former 3 years and the latter 2 years and 6 months. They were charged 15,000 yuans (2443 US\$). The father worked in a seafood market in Hengyan, Hunan Province, while his son worked in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. In 2012, the son heard that pangolins were cheaper in Guangzhou, and bought 10 of them for 58,497 yuans (9415 US\$) to ship back to Hengyang. The truck was stopped on the freeway and the pangolins were seized.



**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**Seizure of 43 pangolins<sup>15</sup>**  
**Bukit Kayu Hitam, Kedah, Malaysia**  
**10 November 2014**

The pangolin persecutor is back for more. He had been condemned for the same reasons in January of 2013, serving four sentences totaling in 36 months in prison. The prison terms were merged and he was freed at the end of 2013.

He did it again immediately. First charge: possession of 8 male pangolins. Second: holding of 23 females. Third: capture of 12 juvenile pangolins. Fourth: mistreatment of the animals. They were all starved, dehydrated and tied up in bags in the trunk of his car.

He risks a fine from 5,000 to 200,000 RM, or 1,500 to 60,000 US\$ and a maximum prison sentence of 10 years. He is an ex-police officer.



**Seizure of 10.7 kg pangolin scales<sup>16</sup>**  
**Manipur, India**  
**November 2014**

The individual, 20 years old, was caught by the elite state troops at the border with Myanmar. He was sentenced to 2 months in prison. 10.7 kg of scales represent 30 mammals killed. The scales smuggler was arrested on November 13 by police who also with the help of IBCN (Indian Bird Conservation Network) volunteers monitor Koktak Lake where illegal catches of great crested grebe are reported.

**Seizure of 4 pangolins including 3 still alive<sup>17</sup>**  
**Province of Ha Giang, Vietnam**  
**November 19, 2014**

Out of the 4 males from the *Manis Javanica* species, one was dying. The 2 smugglers taking them to China were on a motorbike. A third managed to escape with 2 pangolins. The 6 scaly mammals had been bought at the train station in Hanoi. The 3 survivors were put in quarantine. The 3 together weighed 20 kg. If all goes well, they will be back climbing trees before Christmas.





**Appeal rejected for the smuggling of 26 pangolins<sup>18</sup>**  
**Qinzhou, Guangxi Province, China**

**November 2014**

To earn the 800 yuans (130 US\$), Chen shipped 26 pangolins from Guangxi to Guangdong. He was sentenced to 11 years in prison. Last June, Liao called Chen to hire 2 people to ship pangolins from Guangxi to Guangdong, offering 800 yuans (130 US\$) per person for the task. At the Shitan service area, Chen's vehicle was selected to be inspected because he covered up his license plate. Because Chen and Huang were afraid to be caught, they tried to run away during the inspection. Chen lodged an appeal. The first verdict was of 11 years ; however, the second stayed the same.



**Seizure of a pangolin and arrest<sup>19</sup>**  
**Longchuan County, Yunnan, Guangdong Province, China**

**November 30, 2014**

At the bus terminal, the woman's bag was searched. Within was our friend all curled up.

**Seizure of 2 kg of pangolin scales and arrest<sup>20</sup>**  
**Hassan, State of Karnataka, India**  
**December 2014**

The scale collectors were hard at work in the forest. They were hunting down pangolins. According to them the scales are used to make bullet-proof jackets (see "On the Trail" n°1, p.13 and n°2 p. 24). The police officer says that on the black market they are sold for 40,000 Rs per kilo, that is 650 US\$.

**Arrest of 5 men for the smuggling of a pangolin<sup>21</sup>**  
**Foshan, Guangdong Province, China**  
**December 2014**

5 men from the Foshan fishery department were arrested for retaining information regarding an animal smuggling case. In April 2013, Chen, Liu, along with a few other inspectors went to a tea room in Nanhai District and discovered the animals. The owner of the tea room bribed the agents.

**Seizure of 3 live pangolins, civets (family Viverridae) and porcupines (family Hystricidae, not listed in CITES)<sup>22</sup>**

**Hanoi, Vietnam**

**December 11, 2014**



The police followed the suspect on a motorcycle in the center of Hanoi and arrested him. He was carrying 2 pangolins still alive. Going back on the trafficker track, police found a wild animal slaughterhouse and death row. On the ground, bloody guts and on a table syringes to force-feed the victims before delivering them to restaurants. In Vietnam, consumption of pangolin is on the rise. In 2014, 87 official reports for illegal possession or transport of pangolins have been issued.

**Seizure of 59 pangolins<sup>23</sup>**  
**Ha Long Road between Mong Cai, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam**  
**December 20, 2014**



Once again a pangolins cargo stashed in a car coming from the south of Ha Long Bay and heading to the border with China. The animals may be worth one billion dong or 46,750 US\$.

**Destruction of 100 kg of scales and pangolin parts<sup>24</sup>**  
**State of Sarawak, Malaysia**  
**December 2014**

Scales and other pangolin parts were found in 11 parcels supposed to transport fruits. The cargo was going on mainland Malaysia. Headed for China. It was seized by the local customs. A court ordered its destruction. The management of Sarawak forests endorsed the decision. The total value is estimated at RM 50,000 or US\$ 14,940.



# Primates

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

## AFRICA

### Seizure of a chimpanzee<sup>1</sup> Southwest Region, Cameroon October 1, 2014

"Madame" 4 years old, is lucky: she has kept her head. She was a pet for 3 years, probably survivor of the massacre of her family by poachers or other actors and profiteers of deforestation. She lives now without a padlock on her neck at the shelter in Limbe [www.limbewildlife.org](http://www.limbewildlife.org).



## REPEATED OFFENSE

### Seizure of 2 chimpanzee skulls and elephant bones<sup>2</sup>

#### Sangmélima, South Region, Cameroon October 8, 2014

Toothless, shattered, enucleated, they look at us and in their orbits remain traces of amazement. The guy on the left is a bone goldsmith. He has been involved in an ivory case.



### Conviction for trafficking of 10 gorilla skulls<sup>3</sup>

#### Cameroon October 8, 2014

Sentenced to one year prison and 35,000 US\$ in damages. Gorillas are in Appendix I since 1975. There is serious doubt about the enforcement of penalties, especially financial ones.



### Seizure of 5 chimpanzee skulls, a gorilla skull and arrest<sup>4</sup>

#### Ambam, South Region, Cameroon October 2014

The couple has nine children. Bones is their livelihood. They approached a bistro near the border with Guinea and Gabon. The police had been following them for some time.





### REPEATED OFFENSE

**Seizure of 150 kg of pangolin scales, 5 skulls of gorillas, 7 skulls of chimpanzees and an elephant jaw<sup>5</sup>**

**Cameroon**

**October 2014**

The trafficker is behind bars. He's a regular. He's a regular. He also trades in leopard skin. Let's hope the scales have already been burned.



### REPEATED OFFENSE

**Seizure of the head and four members of a chimpanzee and elephant skin and bones<sup>6</sup>**

**Eastern Region, Cameroon**

**October 18, 2014**

Known for ivory trafficking and his relations in Nigeria, the man has a international address book and easy punch even handcuffed. 34, "Angloo" for short.



**Seizure of 9 bone pieces from gorillas (*Gorilla* spp., Appendix I), chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) including an elephant skull and arrest<sup>6bis</sup>**

**Tombel, South West Region, Cameroon**

**October 2014**

According to the size of the skull and other bones, the great apes and the elephant were around 50, 40, and 30 years old. The 2 conveyers were at a hotel. They were dealing with a "business woman" who managed to escape when police intervened.



**Seizure of a baby chimpanzee, 7 heads, 30 hands and feet of chimpanzees and pangolin scales (*Manis* spp., Appendix II) and arrest<sup>7</sup>**

**Cameroon**

**October 27, 2014**

There is a boom of great ape scalps in Cameroon. The ranking is unofficial but Cameroon is poised to be a leader in the field. A small survivor was found in his family's coffin-bag. The presumed destination was China or the Chinese community in West Africa. The 2 suspects risk 3 years in prison. Ofir Drori, director of LAGA, NGO auxiliary to Cameroon services in the war on wildlife trafficking, said that corruption and impunity are the main culprits. He is not far from putting back to back large institutions and international NGOs suspected of wasting money and hiding the extent of the disaster.

Chimpanzees heads and other parts of apes would be used in Nigeria in mystical practices and black magic.

**Seizure of 3 gorilla skulls<sup>8</sup>**

**Cameroon**

**November 2014**



### Good news

**Rescue of 2 young mandrills (*Mandrillus* spp., Appendix I)<sup>9</sup>**

**Central Cameroon**

**November 2014**

The young male was in chains by the side of the road. Rachel Hogan, director of Ape Action Africa, nursed it back to health and organized with the authorities his return into the forest refuge in Mefou. He received veterinary care.

**Seizure of a chimpanzee<sup>10</sup>**  
**Gisenyi, Western Province, Rwanda**  
**November 15, 2014**

The baby was thin, feverish, wounded at the knee and right foot. He is entrusted to the police station in Gisenyi. The smugglers had bought him for 200 US\$ in South Kivu province, Democratic Republic of Congo.

The chief vet of Gorilla Doctors, Jean Felix Kinani, was able to obtain some information from the suspects about transport and life conditions of the young monkey before his release.

After blood tests - Ebola surveillance - and antibiotics, he was transported to the Kinigi orphanage. Soon after arriving, he began to relax and ate 3 bananas.

The government of Rwanda and Congo exchange informations to decide on the rescue center where he will be admitted after full recovery.



**Seizure of 8 chimpanzee skulls and a gorilla skull<sup>11</sup>**  
**Cameroon**  
**November 2014**



**Arrest of a man suspected of poaching of a chimpanzee<sup>12</sup>**  
**Cameroon**  
**November 2014**



Moon was 12 years old. With other babies, he was a survivor of the slaughter of his family group. He had gone for a walk outside the enclosure of the orphanage. Confident in humans who from a very early age took care of him with kindness and competence, he approached a poacher on the lookout. Moon's skull is probably part of the macabre traffic being traded right now in Cameroon.

The Sanaga-Yong large primates orphanage is managed by IDA (In Defense of Animals). It is located in the country's central region. The arrest of the suspected poacher was made possible by LAGA (Last Great Ape Organization).

**Seizure of a baby chimpanzee<sup>13</sup>**  
**Common Ratoma, Conakry, Guinea**  
**December 19, 2014**



The little chimp was dealing with 2 big nasties, his "owner", Moussa Barry, who had bought him from "a friend" to make him his pet, so he said, and Dinos Doré, long time active in endangered species conservation projects. The 2 had agreed to sell the baby for a good price. Just as they were being cornered by the police, they quickly got rid of their live loot and tried to start a riot. "Interventions are always tense." "Traffickers often receive help from passers-by who are against police actions on principle" regrets a GALF (Guinea Application of the Wildlife Act) member who took part in the arrest with the support of Interpol.

**AMERICA**

**Seizure of a woolly monkey (*Lagothrix* spp., Appendix II)<sup>14</sup>**  
**Lambayeque, Region of Lambayeque, Peru**  
**October 2014**

Jeny Facho Polo, a veterinarian, was selling him on internet for 300 soles, that is 102 US\$. The investigation will determine whether she has or not already sold other animals over the Net. The animal should shortly be released.





**Seizure of a common woolly monkey (*Lagothrix lagotricha*, Appendix II) <sup>15</sup>**

**Province of Bolivar, Ecuador**

**October 2014**

The young male appears to have been abandoned on the road between Echeandía and Guaranda. He is dehydrated and suffers from lower limbs. Tests will decide if he can be released into the wild or not.



**Seizure of a monk saki (*Pithecia monachus*, Appendix II) and a common squirrel monkey (*Saimiri sciureus*, Appendix II) <sup>16</sup>**

**Canton Canton Quevedo and Vinces, Los Ríos Province, Ecuador**

**November 4, 2014**

The two primates were recovered at owners' homes who agreed to voluntarily part with them. They should be set free after receiving the necessary veterinary care and a period of observation.

**Good news**



**Rescue of a San Martin titi monkey (*Callicebus oenanthe*, Appendix II) <sup>17</sup>**

**Moyobamba, San Martín Region, Peru**

**November 12, 2014**

The titi was taken to Tarapoto in the new Cerro Verde refuge. The San Martin titi monkeys have been mentioned in "On the trail" n°2 p.75 and n°5 p.117.

**Seizure of a marmoset (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II) <sup>18</sup>**

**Tubarao, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil**

**November 2014**

The police stepped in a garage where offenses were supposed to be committed. A caged marmoset was the only prohibited activity.



**Good news**

**Court orders the release of an orangutan (*Pongo* spp., Appendix I) <sup>20</sup>**

**Buenos Aires, Argentina**

**December 21, 2014**

The female orangutan has just been recognized by the justice of her country of residence where she has been living in captivity for more than 20 years the right to Habeas Corpus. Sandra, 29, has the status of "non-human being" and her right to live in freedom is acknowledged. However, an immediate and unconditional release, even in the island of Borneo, one of the last natural areas where orangutans survive, would mean a quick death for Sandra. Her case was submitted to the Argentine justice by the AFADA, association of officials and advocates for the rights of animals.

First, the orangutan could be transferred to a sanctuary in Brazil, where her living conditions would be significantly improved compared with the rock dungeon in the Buenos Aires Zoo.

Orangutan signifies forest's man in the Malay language.



**Seizure of a spider monkey (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II) <sup>19</sup>**

**Guatemala**

**December 2014**

Panchita lives in endless pain. It cannot be cured. It is the result of 15 years of malnutrition and chains. Her spine is distorted.

This is the third spider monkey seized in recent days which shows the same pathology. The law prohibits the keeping of wild animals: this crime can be punished with 10 years imprisonment. The National Council of Protected Areas has set up a hotline to report similar cases: 2422-6700, Ext. 1615 and [denuncias@conap.gob.gt](mailto:denuncias@conap.gob.gt).



**ASIA**

**Seizure of a gibbon (family Hylobatidae, Appendix I) and a macaque<sup>21</sup>**

**Vietnam**

**October 1, 2014**

The 2 have been pulled out of trouble by ENV (Education for Nature - Vietnam). The gibbon is a female. They lived secluded in the south of the country in difficult conditions.



**Discovery of a Sumatran orangutan carcass <sup>22</sup>**  
**Litur village, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia**  
**October 2014**

10 bullets in the head. His body lay between a rubber trees plantation and an one of oil palms. Farmers consider them as pests.

The Human Orangutan Conflict Response Unit team (HOCRU team) was created in 2010 by 3 local villagers living near the habitat of orangutans. The

HOCRU is collecting data and mapping villages near forests to prevent the incursions of orangutans into crops. It follows the movements of isolated groups. It intervenes when it learns that an orangutan is detained illegally and organizes educational workshops.

**Banishment for 2 monkeys showmen<sup>23</sup>**

**Changsha, Hunan Province, China**

**October 11, 2014**

The prefecture-city of more than 7 million inhabitants is cleaning up. The 4 monkeys were forced, under threat, to perform acrobatic stunts. A passerby warned the authorities.

**Seizure of 2 Bornean orangutans and a gibbon (*Hylobates* spp., Appendix I) <sup>24</sup>**

**Province of Central Kalimantan, Indonesia**

**October 2014**

Stubble burning and clear cut logging are the enemies of free monkeys in Kalimantan even more than elsewhere. The former prisoners are now in a shelter in the Centre for Orangutan Protection, until something better.





### **Seizure of a young Bornean orangutan<sup>25</sup>**

**Kalimantan, Indonesia**

**October 2014**

2 kg. 6 months. He was found by his host in the forest. "He was alone". "He wandered".

He lived in a cardboard box since he was adopted.



© Lisa Burtenshaw

### **Seizure of a macaque<sup>26</sup>**

**Hoi An, Quang Nam Province, Vietnam**

**October 2014**

The foreign tourist drinking coffee in the tavern spotted a chained monkey. He contacted ENV and the macaque was released.

From the fifteenth century, the city of Hoi An (or Faifo in French, the name from the colonial period) is flourishing. It is located on the Silk Road. Wealthy merchants built great colonial wooden houses still present today. The city is a World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 1999.

### **Seizure of a Bornean orangutan<sup>27</sup>**

**Ketapang, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia**

**October 22, 2014**

They had paid 83 US\$ for him and had him used to smoking cigarettes and drinking wine.



© Budi/K3

### **Seizure of a Sumatran orangutan<sup>28</sup>**

**Kutacane, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

**October 2014**

1 year and a half. Illegally detained. Seized by the BKSDA (Sumber Daya Alam Konservasi Broom - Nature Conservation Agency Indonesia) and entrusted to the SOCP (Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme).



© Jess McKelson, SOCP

### **Seizure of a monkey and arrest (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>29</sup>**

**Redhills, Tamil Nadu, India**

**October 2014**

A member of the Narikuvura community kept a monkey, 18 months, protected species. The ambition of the owner, 25, was to "monetize" the animal by teaching him to play acts and other tricks.

The narikuvuras are semi-nomads who roam the States of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. They are hunters.

#### **Good news**

#### **Release of a macaque<sup>30</sup>**

**Quang Nam Province, Vietnam**

**November 2014**

Convinced by ENV, the master of a macaque has decided to give his pet his freedom. This was done through the NGO and forestry services.

### **Seizure of an infant Bornean orangutan and a gibbon (*Hylobatidae* spp., Appendix I)<sup>31</sup>**

**Province of Central Kalimantan, Indonesia**

**November 2014**

The combined action of the Center for Orangutans Protection (COP), the Indonesian wildlife authorities (BSKDA) and the Sampit police enabled their rescue. The 2 monkeys were kept in 2 tiny wooden cages near a palm oil plantation.



© Centre for Orangutan Protection

**Theft of 4 common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II)<sup>32</sup>**

**Johor Baru, Johor State, Malaysia**

**November 11, 2014**

Johor Zoo near Singapore is missing 4 residents, not counting the birds that were stolen a few months ago. A marmoset is worth RM 8000 or 2,434 US\$ or more. 8 of the zoo employees were questioned by the police. 072212999 hotline is available to anyone who has information about this case or other offenses of the same type.

**Seizure of 3 stump-tailed macaques (*Macaca arctoides*, Appendix II), 2 Assam macaques (*Macaca assamensis*, Appendix II) and a reticulated python (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II)<sup>33</sup>**

**Quang Binh Province, Vietnam**

**November 2014**

All in very poor health and covered with wounds, they are now in the care of the Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park vets.

**Rescue of a Bornean orangutan<sup>34</sup>**

**Muara Wahau, Province of East Kalimantan, Indonesia**

**November 24, 2014**

Chained in the slum basement, nothing under his bottom but the shredded pieces of a rice bag, not even safe from the rain, what could he think such a dog's life, his companion in misery? The release of this young male is the joint work of BSKDA and COP.



**Good News**

**Rescue of a stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*, Appendix II)<sup>35</sup>**

**Da Nang, Vietnam**

**December 2014**

He was on sale on Facebook. Thanks to an operation of the type "You are wonderful" set up by ENV, he was able to quickly be located near Da Nang and set free.



**Seizure of 4 slender lorises (*Loris tardigradus*, Appendix II) and arrest<sup>36</sup>**

**Thane, State of Maharashtra, India**

**December 4, 2014**

They were in a bag and according to police they were doing everything they could to try to get out. A single specimen can be sold for 100,000 US\$ in India. Merchants believe they can protect from the devil and from bankruptcy. The 4 trafficker's car was seized.

**Poaching of a Bornean Orangutan<sup>37</sup>**

**Barunang Miri, Province of Central Kalimantan, Indonesia**

**December 2014**

Crippled with 40 bullets, she was dying when she arrived to the Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) shelter. The killers are on the run. She was found by a farm worker on section F37 of the palm oil plantation managed by Sisk, a branch of the oil producer Makin. Despite many operations, vets were not able to save her. BOS managed to "displace" 166 orangutans from the Makin plantations where they are considered as pests. About a hundred have already been released into supposedly protected forests.



**Seizure of 2 siamangs (*Symphalangus syndactylus*, Appendix I) and a mitred leaf monkey (*Presbytis melalophos*, Appendix II)<sup>38</sup>**

**Indonesia**

**December 8, 2014**



The raid carried out by night enabled to free 3 young monkeys (6 and 4 months old). They were intended for the pet monkey trade. Their mothers were most certainly killed during capture. The traffickers face 5 years prison time. The survivors were taken to the Cikananga wild-life shelter in Sukabumi in the West of the Island of Java.



**Rescue of a northern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II)<sup>39</sup>**  
**Vietnam**

**December 2014**

The female macaque was put on sale online. A Facebook group "Animals lovers of Dalat" spotted the ad and alerted ENV so that the animal was set free by the local authorities and then released in the highlands of Lam Dong province.



**Seizure of 47 live monkeys and one dead. 28 lorises (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I) and 19 macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix II)<sup>40</sup>**  
**Nanning, Guangxi Autonomous Region, China**  
**December 12, 2014**

Each monkey was wrapped in a metal wire bag. 2 options were possible for their final destination had they not been removed from the car trunk thanks to a customs check near the border to Vietnam :

1 - Restaurants

2 - Traditional medicine especially for the lorises who, once killed and dried, are used for many different formulas. Loris based products are said to be a tonic for women after giving birth, a cure for stomach pains, to help wounds heal and reduce broken bones and to cure venereal diseases.

The 2 passengers were arrested.



**Rescue of a Bornean orangutan<sup>41</sup>**

**Karya Unggang, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia**  
**December 17, 2014**

The young orangutan about 2 years old was skinny and had burn scars on his body. He was rescued by the police from the village of Karya Unggang and entrusted to the BOS team.

**EUROPE**

**Rescue of a Barbary macaque (*Macaca sylvanus*, Appendix II)<sup>42</sup>**

**Blanc-Mesnil, Ile-de-France, France**  
**November 16, 2014**

The Barbary macaque was on the wall of a garden house near the North motorway. He was captured with a lasso and nets. He will be transferred to the Natuurhulpcentrum refuge in Belgium. In total illegality and contempt of the threat to his species survival in North Africa, Algerian and Moroccan immigrants and tourists visiting Gibraltar often bring them back in their luggage. The northern suburbs of Paris has a population of tens or hundreds of Barbary macaques exiles. Another hypothesis is that the monkey had fled a camp of travellers – some of them enjoy the company of exotic animals or trade them.

**Seizure of a Barbary macaque<sup>43</sup>**

**Costaros, Auvergne Region, France**  
**November 22, 2014**

He was roaming in the garden of a man who bought him for € 600 in Spain. He had as a certificate of origin a note of vaccination against rabies and a dog health record book issued by a Moroccan veterinarian. He barely escaped being put to "sleep" as solitary apes have difficulties integrating into already formed social groups. He was admitted to the zoo in Saint-Martin-la-Plaine, a hundred kilometers from the village where he was seized. The police conducted the investigation in cooperation with the Prefecture and ONCFS.

**Seizure of a Barbary macaque<sup>44</sup>**

**Marseille, Bouches-du-Rhône Department, France**

**December 16, 2014**

The wandering Barbary macaques, also called magots, multiply in the Paris area and some districts in Marseille. Brought back from North Africa then abandoned (or escaped), difficult to capture, they roam around the poor neighborhoods become scapegoats or mascots. This one, 80 cm high, had slipped into a primary school. Local youngsters fed him with "Kinder surprise" chocolate.





## Celebrities are boring



### Monkeys exploitation by celebrities<sup>1</sup> October 2014

Paris Hilton cuddles a baby orangutan participating in the trend of the great apes pets.



The 2 from One Direction are laughing on a music video with a chained chimpanzee – they make him sing "Steal my girl" in the company of actor Danny De Vito. The group spokesman certifies that no animals were harmed during filming. However, readers and viewers are shocked.



### Beyoncé family poses with a baby tiger Thailand December 2014

Beyonce and her daughter are promoting the tiger baby-bottle. The little wild cat was in the Phuket FantaSea cultural theme park. Most of the time, he lives in a cage. He was separated from his mother to be artificially fed by tourists. "Stop this cruelty. Go see the animals in the wild world" said a World Animal Protection expert.





## 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 October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>  
85 skins and stuffed animals  
9 live animals**

### AFRICA

#### REPEATED OFFENSE

##### **Seizure of 4 leopard skins and arrest<sup>1</sup> Mitzic, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon October 1, 2014**

AALF (Appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune) is the result of the association of the NGO Conservation Justice and the Ministry for Water and Forests. This partnership enabled the seizure of 4 fleeces and the arrest of 4 traffickers, 3 from Ghana and 1 from Gabon. It was not the first time that the gang was involved in such activity.

Local culture has an ambiguous relation towards leopards. On one hand, to kill a leopard brings bad luck; on the other hand, leopard furs are part of initiation rituals and traditional dancing.



##### **Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest<sup>2</sup> Makokou, Ogooue-Ivindo Province, Gabon Octobre 15, 2014**

Constant Nganda Baka was found in a motel. He was about to sell the skin. It seems the leopard was killed in the month of August.



##### **Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest<sup>3</sup> Brazzaville, Department of Brazzaville, Congo October 16, 2014**

The 2 nationals were caught red handed during the sale. The police acted with the support of PALF (Projet d'Appui à l'application de la Loi sur la Faune).



##### **Poaching of a lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II)<sup>4</sup> Near Majune, Niassa Province, Mozambique October 2014**

Watchmen in the reserve and Niassa-Lion project managers know that the place is infested with illegal gold diggers and nomads setting traps almost everywhere to catch food. In a single patrol, 40 intruders were temporarily kicked out of the reserve and their traps and equipment were confiscated. The gold diggers had laid hands on an animal gold mine. A lion died, more MGM than MGM itself. Solitary, hard-working and a good swimmer, he paid with his life a long stroll outside of the strict boundaries of the reserve and successful crossing of the swollen river. He fell into a trap.



**Theft of a jaguar<sup>5</sup>**  
**Bloemfontein Zoo, Free State Province, South Africa**

**November 2014**

The theft took place in a zoo. It was a 4 month old baby. Some evidence leads authorities to believe he was killed on site. The zoo's spokesperson estimates the financial value of the animal to be just under 2000 US\$.

**Poaching of the last Arabian leopard (*Panthera pardus nimr*, Appendix I)<sup>6</sup>**  
**Halayeb area, the Red Sea Governorate, Egypt**  
**December 2014**



Representation of a leopard's head from Tutankhamun's tomb (ca. 1332 BC – 1323 BC)

Human beasts.

The excited hunters who finished off, after a long hunt in the arid mountains near the Red Sea, the last wild Arabian leopard in Egypt are morons. The Arabian leopard has long resisted in Jordan, Egypt and Israel. There were still around 20 individuals in the Negev desert in the 1970s. The presence of a few individuals in Saudi Arabia in Sarawat Monts is highly uncertain. The Arabian leopard subspecies is threatened by political turmoil and the needs of rebels in arms. Wildlife products are used as currency. The status of panthers in Oman is more secure thanks to the creation of breeding farms in arid enclaves which have allowed a few new births. But the release in the wild of these captive-born felines would only be useful if wild panthers were maintained in their remaining habitat of the Arabian Peninsula. Genetic diversity is essential to the success of the rescue of this specific subspecies, a plan that the current social and political context makes utopian.

Sesheta, the Egyptian goddess of writing, wears a long leopard skin dress. Remains attributed to the Arabian leopard dating back to 9570 BC have been discovered on the set of Galala (Egypt). The lack of cave paintings of the species could be explained by superstition or religious beliefs prohibiting the representation of the animal. Ammut, another god of ancient Egypt, was represented in the form of a chimera, a blend of crocodile, leopard and hippo. After the judgment of the dead, she was responsible for eating the heart of those who had sinned too much.

According to rumors, the ultimate Arabian leopard attacked sheep and camels... It is true that food shortage and the lack of wild prey sometimes lead

leopards to fall back on to domestic animals, dogs in particular (see Leopards and men p.48). However, unlike the remains of the true victim gloriously presented on a shimmering blanket, no picture of his alleged and exaggerated victims was ever seen on social networks.

The management of the natural reserve of Gebel Elba (4800 km<sup>2</sup>) announced that the former Arabian leopard will be naturalized and exposed in a museum. The area of this natural reserve, if it were strictly preserved, would allow several leopards to be self-sufficient in food.

## AMERICA

**Voluntary handing over to the authorities of a margay (*Leopardus wiedii*, Appendix I)<sup>7</sup>**

**Oaxaca, Mexico**

**October 2014**

It is a male, age five months. He is in good health. The investigation began on Facebook. The student explained to PROFEPA investigators that he welcomed the recently born cat. Fearing sanctions, the student voluntarily returned the animal to PROFEPA. 2 options are possible. Either he will join a UMA or will be released. Veterinary examinations will be decisive.



**Discovery of a jaguar's carcass<sup>8</sup>**  
**Solidaridad, State of Quintana Roo, Mexico**  
**November 2014**

Municipal authorities alerted PROFEPA. The female - 50 kg, 1.5 meters long - was decapitated and its claws amputated. The cause of death has yet to be determined; there is no trace of a knife blow or gunshot wound. The carcass was taken to be buried after being limed to prevent infections and environmental hazards.



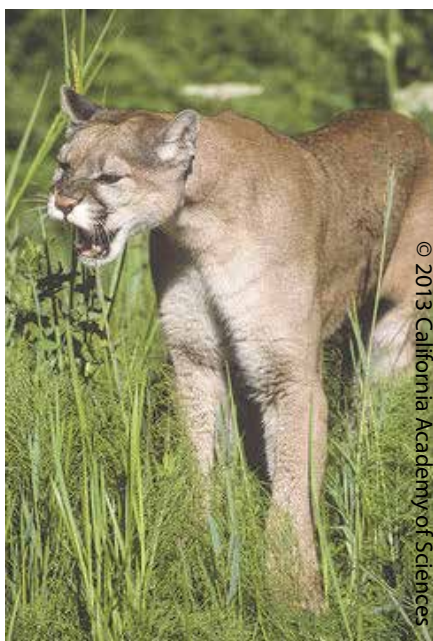


**Conviction for poaching, illegal sale and transport of more than 30 pumas and bobcats (*Lynx ru-fus*, Appendix II) and false documents<sup>9</sup>**

**Colorado, United States of America  
November 2014**

The hunting guide was sentenced to a prohibition of 27 months to 3 years from fishing and hunting. He has been convicted of illegally transporting animal parts, forging declarations and violating the Lacey Act on the protection of wild fauna. Christopher W. Loncarich and his assistants trapped the felines, where they retained them in cages, releasing them at the right place and time, just before the arrival of the clients.

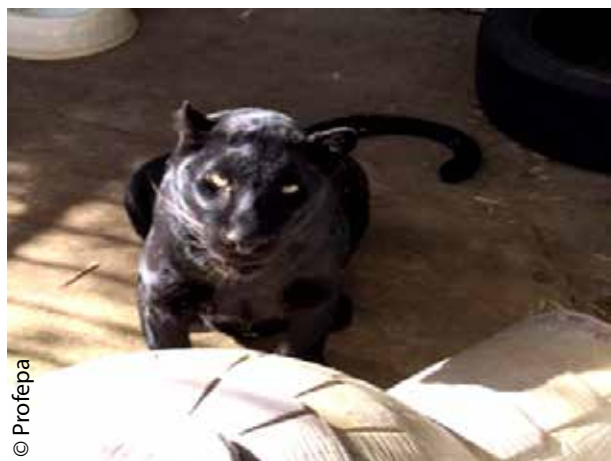
"This form of commercialization of wild fauna is intolerable," said the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. More than 30 felines were mutilated or hurt before getting killed by the hunters.



**Seizure of a leopard<sup>10</sup>**

**Atizapán de Zaragoza, Mexico State, Mexico  
November 2014**

The leopard is 9 years old and lives in a private home. His paws are injured. The owner cannot produce the SEMARNAT authorization to hold the animal and does not have the facilities to ensure the safety and good living conditions of the feline. The leopard is transferred to an UMA.



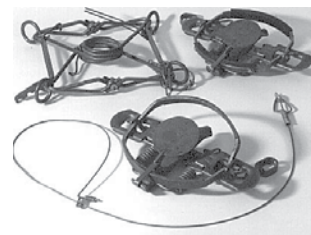
## ASIA

**Discovery of a leopard carcass<sup>12</sup>**

**District of Nagpur,  
State of Maharashtra,  
India**

**October 5, 2014**

He was electrocuted in a trap about 15 days before the body was found. The direction of forest services is being criticized: lack of availability, lack of reactivity. "The officer in charge of the protection of the forest in the district and his deputy are not present enough, which makes such events easier to be carried out."



**Seizure of 2 Bengal leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II)<sup>13</sup>**

**Gia Lai Province, Vietnam**

**October 6, 2014**



Thanks to the joint efforts of ENV and local authorities, they were taken from the clutches of a wildlife saleswoman.

**Seizure of a leopard skin and 5 leopard claws and arrest of 2 people<sup>14</sup>**

**Nagpur, State of Maharashtra, India**

**October 10, 2014**

**Seizure of 2 tiger skins<sup>15</sup>**

**Satkhira Sadar Upazila, Division of Khulna, Bangladesh**

**October 16, 2014**

The RAB (Rapid Action Battalion) arrested 6 poachers and seized 2 adult tiger skins about 3 meters long. The suspects, aged from 25 to 48, "worked" in the Sundarbans, the largest mangrove in the world, spread between India and Bangladesh. They are all from Khulna, 100 km away from the Sundarbans. The mangrove is listed by UNESCO as a world heritage site. Sundarbans come from the Sanskrit word "sundar," a plant that grows in the mangrove and the word "bans," meaning forest. In 10 years, the Indian population has gone down from 232 tigers to fewer than 90. In Bangladesh, the count is currently in progress.

See "To Bangladesh's Aid" regarding the oil spill in Sundarbans: <http://www.robindesbois.org/english/To-Bangladesh-s-Aid.html>



## Leopards and Men<sup>11</sup>



5 leopards equipped with radio collars and GPS were followed in their movements during several months in the States of Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh in India. The study launched in 2010 by Norwegian academics, in cooperation with their Indian colleagues and the support of local authorities, gave among others the following results in terms of observations and perspectives.

The 2 adults, one male and one female, released 52 km from where they had been captured, adopted 2 different behaviors. The male rapidly moved west and reached the Mumbai suburbs 37 days later. He settled within a 42 km<sup>2</sup> range. His collar stopped emitting signals a month and a half later and after having lived in the same area for 2 and half years, he died in a road accident. The female was found after 5 months in the area where she had been captured and settled in a 65 km<sup>2</sup> range. The 3 other leopards, females, were released there where they had been captured and all three went back to their territories 15, 11 and 8km<sup>2</sup> from the city Akole (population 15,000 in 2001). Individuals who settled near the urbanized zones and areas with high population density spent about 5 to 7 more time moving at night than during the day, in other words a nocturnal behavior remarkably more intense than that of individuals living in rural areas. It is at night that the leopards go the closest to homes and their fences. Those who were in humanly dense areas would stay twice as far from the houses during the day than at night. They would often be as close as 25 m by night and very rarely so by day. The female leopard settled in the lesser populated area is the one who would most avoid the houses, even at night.

The 2 individuals settled in a region where human population density is above 30,000 inhabitants per 100 km<sup>2</sup>, and leopard density leveled at 5, did not have in their hunting range very much available food resources. 87% of their prey is domestic animals, mainly dogs. "The low natural prey density that follows a high human pressure on the environment implies that a certain degree of conflict is inevitable due to a lack of alternatives to domestic animals for food." In the course of the study, both females each raised a baby. 2 leopards released into forest habitats directed themselves for unknown reasons toward territories with high human density and even industrial areas.

Authors of the study note the "incredible" plasticity of the species behavior and their capacity to adapt to all environments, including urban settings. They are optimistic and believe that in the specific case of the leopards it could be possible on much large scale territories than those of natural parks and other types of sanctuaries to favor cohabitation between Man and feline. They refer in particular to the historical tolerance that was shown by Indian populations toward wild animals in general. They also mention the leopards' instinct that unless they find themselves in an accident, they are more oriented to make do "with" Man instead of act "against" him. The researchers suggest that a minimum of wild food resources left available in all territories marked by human activity would reduce the risk of conflict and the predation rate on domestic animals. None of the 5 individuals observed over a few months or a year had ever attacked a man, woman or child despite the fact that several times they were in their close presence and were quickly pushed away by all means possible, except shotguns. Not surprisingly, the preferred habitats and shelters are high crop agricultural grounds, such as sugar cane crops, bushes and other areas with a strong vegetation cover, sometimes situated in the areas with the highest human population density less than 200m away from homes. 2 of the leopards were considered to be "problem leopards". One had been pulled out of a well he had fallen into. The other had entered a house.



### **Seizure of a tiger skin and arrest<sup>16</sup>**

**District of Balaghat, State of Madhya Pradesh, India**

**October 17, 2014**

The 2 occupants of the car, 40 and 45 years old, were arrested. In the Maruti Alto there was a tiger skin.

### **Seizure of a leopard skin<sup>17</sup>**

**State of Delhi, India**

**October 20, 2014**

**The Delhi police arrested the trafficker. He had a leopard skin with him. He is from the district of West Champaran, 900 km from Delhi.**

### **Seizure of a Bengal leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II)<sup>18</sup>**

**Vietnam**

**October 22, 2014**

2 leopard cats for sale on Facebook: ENV pounced on the add. One of the felines was saved but the other had already been sold.

### **Seizure of a piece of tiger skin and arrest<sup>19</sup>**

**Bandar Lampung, Lampung Province, Indonesia**

**October 2014**

A square of tiger skin on sale for 4.5 million Rp, or 369 US\$. Measurements 26.5 x 30 cm. Eka Widya Sari was sitting at the restaurant table. She was waiting for a potential buyer. The negotiations were abruptly stopped. The police came also. Eka was arrested. She says she is a cleaning lady. Police believe she is part of a network.

### **2 frozen baby tigers for sale on Facebook<sup>20</sup>**

**Vietnam**

**October 2014**

"I have at home 2 tiger cats that suddenly started hibernating. Is anyone interested? I sell them by the kilo. Be sure you understand they're cats and not tigers."

2 comments, one of them being, "Do you have any that are alive?"

Announcement posted on the page of a certain Khoa Anh Phan Huynk.



### **Seizure of a tiger claw, a tiger skin, 2 stuffed paws and a stuffed head and arrest of 2 traffickers<sup>21</sup>**

**Bandar Lampung, Lampung and Merak Province, Banten Province, Indonesia**

**October 2014**

The 2 traders in various tiger and lion parts would carry out their evil deeds on the Internet and social networks. One was based on the island of Sumatra, 90 km from the Selatan National Park, one of the last tiger habitats in Indonesia. He would promote the supposed medicinal and magical virtues of tiger claws and tiger wine. The other was established on the island of Java in the Merak port by the Sunda strait separating the 2 larger Islands of Indonesia. Merak is known to be an underground import-export port for wildlife "products." A load of lorises departing for Jakarta had been seized there in November 2013. They had been caught on the island of Sumatra (see "On the Trail" n°3 p.37).



### **Seizure of a tiger skin, claws and 100 tiger bones<sup>22</sup>**

**Chamarajanagar, State of Karnataka, India**

**October 2014**

Balu Naik and Muniswamy were stopped while carrying a load of a hundred tiger bones. They were about to sell them to a specialized dealer from Tamil Nadu. The duo's declarations give some explanation about this bone trafficking that, according to observations by custom officers, field survey and "On the Trail," is on the rise in Asia and Africa.

"The bones are ground into powder. They enter the composition of medicinal formulas supposedly aphrodisiac. It happens that the tiger bones are mixed with buffalo bones or other domestic animals to fool police sleuths."

Along with the bones, the tiger's skin, jaw and claws were seized, as well.

### **Seizure of 18 tiger canines and a tokay gecko (*Gekko gekko*, unlisted in CITES)<sup>23</sup>**

**Khudengthabi, State of Manipur, India**

**October 26, 2014**

It happened right near the border to Myanmar. The 18 canines come from 5 tigers. The 5 suspects aged 31 to 85 were also transporting heroin.



### **Seizure of tiger skins<sup>24</sup>**

**Katmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal  
October 28, 2014**

42 years old, the trafficker was arrested at 6 in the morning in the Bagbazaar neighborhood while carrying several tiger skins. The exact number of skins was not disclosed.

**Seizure of 8 tiger claws and arrest of 3 people<sup>25</sup>  
Umaria, State of Madhya Pradesh, India  
October 29, 2014**

### **Seizure of 2 leopard skins<sup>26</sup>**

**Gongabu, Central Development Region, Nepal  
October 2014**

185 cm long and 49 and 55 cm large. The trio was arrested in a guest house.

**Conviction for the illegal possession of 2 leopard skins<sup>27</sup>  
Barkot, State of Uttarakhand, India**

**November 2014**

Without fail, this concerns the next episode of the affaire related in "On The Trail" n2 p. 36. 2 defendants were condemned to 3 years of prison without remission and a fine of about 160 US\$.



### **REPEATED OFFENSE**

#### **Seizure of a leopard skin<sup>28</sup>**

**Narjamandap, Central Development Region, Nepal**

**5 November 2014**

The 2 young men were already, according to the police, experienced fauna traffickers. The skin of the adult specimen is 175cm by 51cm long. The raid did not happen without incident. A police officer was injured.

#### **Arrest for tiger poaching<sup>29</sup>**

**Thalavadi forest, Tamil Nadu, India  
November 2014**

The 2 men admit to having poisoned ponds in the forest, thereby killing the animals that came to drink. In addition to that, with the same method they killed a tiger, whose skin and claws they traded in the neighboring State of Karnataka.

#### **Discovery of a dead leopard in a trap<sup>30</sup>**

**Anikorai, State of Tamil Nadu, India  
November 15, 2014**

The female leopard was in the air in the branches. Witnesses thought that she struggled forcefully to free herself from the steel wires until she died. Her tail and claws were cut off by prowlers. There were no small profits. The Nilgiris forest has bit by bit been colonized by farmers, hunters, gatherers and shepherds. Environmentalists have demanded the removal of the squatters.



### **Seizure of 2 stuffed leopards<sup>31</sup>**

**Masjed Soleiman, Khouzistan Province, Iran  
17 November 2014**

The flickering flame in the dark: underground taxidermists are working to stuff the final victims of poaching. The specimen was hidden in a house. Like the auctioneers, taxidermists have gained from the extinctions.



**Poaching of a wildcat (*Felis silvestris*, Appendix II)<sup>32</sup>  
Khoy, Azerbaïdjan, Iran  
November 2014**

The duo hunted for pleasure, or more surely to make a profit from the hides by selling them to a taxidermist.

Wildcats are rare in the Marakan protected area. The lion and the tiger have therefore disappeared in Iran. At the top of the felines, the small wildcats keep their mysteries. One thing alone is certain: They have become increasingly discrete, menaced by habitat loss and capture for breeding with domestic cats.

#### **Appeal refused for a leopard skin trafficker<sup>33</sup>**

**Delhi, India**

**November 22, 2014**

The Court of First Instance had sentenced him on August 22, 2014 to 3 years imprisonment and a fine worth 10,000 Rs (161 US\$) for unlawful possession of a leopard skin, that being the minimum penalty for such an offense, according to the Wildlife Protection Act. The appellant accepted the conviction but contested the sanction. The judge deemed the appeal to be not receivable, for as the penalty already was the lowest legally possible, it could not be lightened.



#### **Seizure of 10.5 kg of leopard bone**

**Pithoragarh District, State of Uttarakhand, India  
November 24, 2014**

Such an amount equals 4 leopards. The bogeyman was arrested.

#### **Acquittal of 2 persons suspected of illegal possession of a leopard skin<sup>35</sup>**

**Delhi, India**

**November 2014**

Due to the lack of a well-lead and substantiated investigation, the judge finally acquitted 2 poachers from Himachal Pradesh taken in flagrant offense of the possession and transport of a leopard skin.



### **Conviction for the illegal possession of a leopard skin<sup>36</sup>**

**Almora, State of Uttarakhand, India**

**November 2014**

Thanks to a well-lead investigation, the Almora court in the State of Uttarkhand, near the Himachal Pradesh, convicted the holder taken in flagrant offense in November of 2009 to 4 years of prison without remission and a fine of 10,000 Rs, or about 160 US\$.



### **Acquittal of a man suspected of trafficking a tiger skin<sup>37</sup>**

**State of Maharashtra, India**

**November 26, 2014**

Dalbir is quite the handyman, the schlepper of traps and hides, the maker of bivouacs, the Mr. Fix-It in the poaching countryside.

Estimating that Dalbir's file is incomplete and that the evidence of his involvement in the smuggling of a hide in 2012 could only be the gossip of associates searching to save their own hides, the trial judge of Lamptee acquitted Dalbir. Other affairs concern him as well, a bone smuggler in particular. This verdict of justice is a reversal for the anti-poaching teams.

### **Third demand of release on bail refused for the trafficker of tiger parts, Sarju<sup>38</sup>**

**Nagpur, State of Maharashtra, India**

**November 28, 2014**

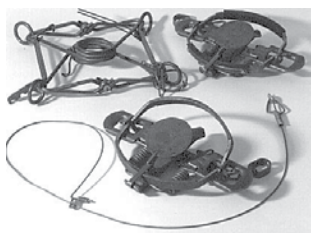
Dalbir laughs; Sarju pouts. For the third time, a court rejected his request to be released on bail. Sarju is a boss. When he was arrested, he had almost 5,000 USD in cash and 18kg of tiger bone in his car. Sarju is the one who gives orders and cash. He is the one who orders the hides from poachers and gives them their down payment. He is the one with the links to brokers and with the connections to the export markets. The trial resulted in sparring between Shukul, legal advisor of the Forest Service, and Sontakke, Sarju's lawyer who argued that other people involved in the tiger industry in Haryana had been acquitted or placed on bail. Under the guise of "fairness," Sontakke reclaimed freedom for his boss of a client. Shukul emphasized that once released, traffickers disappeared and never returned hearing summons. The court held well. Sarju remains in prison. The big boss Chacha, will he have the same fate?

### **Arrest of 3 persons in possession of leopard claws<sup>39</sup>**

**State of Madhya Pradesh, India**

**November 29, 2014**

The thieves were sniffed out by the forest guards' dog. His flair led him to a dhaba, a roadside restaurant where the 3 suspects work. They deny having set the electrical traps. They



claim that it was only by chance that they happened upon the leopard's body in the Bandhavgarh National Park and cut off his claws to sell them. Forest police believe the trap was set to catch a tiger. Between 1998 and 2005, 4 tigers were electrocuted in this state and in 2012 and 2013, 5 according to information gathered thanks to the RTI (the 2005 Right to Information Act).

### **Seizure of 2 tiger hides and 2 leopard hides (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and an arrest<sup>40</sup>**

**Kanker District, State of Chhattisgarh, India**

**November 30, 2014**

According to the 5 arrested people, who are trafficking experts, the value of the 4 hides is around 80,000 USD on the international black market.

### **Poaching of a tiger and arrests<sup>41</sup>**

**Sathyamangalam tiger reserve, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

**November 30, 2014**

This makes it 13 in Tamil Nadu since the beginning of the year, the second one in this reserve. The tiger was killed at the end of November; his remains were discovered on December 4. According to one of the 3 farmers questioned, this is actually reprisals. Wild animals would have recently killed a buffalo. But investigators note that the skin, claws and bones of the feline have disappeared. The forest reserve covers 705 km<sup>2</sup>. About 20 roads cross it, which facilitate poaching and other illegal human activities.

### **Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest of 3 persons<sup>42</sup>**

**Dehradun, State of Uttarakhand, India**

**December 7, 2014**

### **Discovery of a leopard carcass<sup>43</sup>**

**District of Kanchanpur, Far-Western Development Region, Nepal**

**December 2014**

It was 1 km from the police station. She had a wound on her head. 1m long and 60cm high.

### **Bail cancelled for 2 tiger traffickers<sup>44</sup>**

**Nagpur, State of Maharashtra, India**

**December 8 and 12, 2014**

Chacha at the top, Sarju in the middle with Lala and on the bottom about ten poachers from father to son: That's the description of the pyramid shaped channel for skin and other tiger parts as described in all its aspects over almost 2 hours of hearings at the Mumbai Supreme Court. Organs, fleeces, nails, bloody clothing, sets of banknotes, all the evidence exhibited and practices used by the gang and the gang leader seemed to be there in the court room. On the opposite side, the lawyers defending Suraj pal, aka Chacha, struggled to uphold their case. "The cash has nothing to do with tiger trafficking." "The nails were fake." The Supreme Court cancelled Chacha's and his accomplice Lala's release on bail that had been granted by the Court of Appeals. (See "On the Trail" n°2 p. 37 and 41, n°3 p. 43 and 44, n°4 p. 57, n°5 p. 62 p. 52).

**Seizure of a leopard cat skin (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) and squirrel skins. The Malaysian giant squirrel (*Ratufa bicolor*, Appendix II) is present in China<sup>45</sup>**

**Mentougou District, Beijing Municipality, China  
December 11, 2014**

The response team arrived on the scene at dusk, in the mountains. The farmer named Ma was engaged in trapping wild animals. He had a soft spot for squirrels and cats leopards. 21 furs were hanging on the wall of the slaughterhouse. On the ground were blood and cages, steel wire and tubes, traps and 4 frozen squirrels.

**Discovery of a tiger carcass<sup>46</sup>**

**Sharda Canal, State of Uttar Pradesh, India  
December 2014**

The unanimated tiger was floating on the canal, carried by the river. Forest agents, warned by a villager, followed the body from the banks over several miles. Thanks to the help of some farmers they finally managed to stop his drifting and tug him back to land. No wounds, no bullet impacts. He was no doubt poisoned. His death recalls the scenes dating back to the 80s when several tigers or tiger bodies were scorched and dumped in the same canal. An expert believes that he recognizes the poacher's modus operandi. "They use the poisoned body of a dead animal as bait. The tiger eats it. Immediately he feels ill and wants water. He goes to the canal, where he loses conscience and falls in. Normally the poachers come right away to scoop him out."



**Discovery of a male tiger poisoned<sup>47</sup>**

**Orang National Park, State of Assam, India  
December 7, 2014**

**One snow leopard saved (*Uncia uncia*, Appendix I)<sup>48</sup>**

**Karakorum Route, Gilgit Baltistan Region, Pakistan**

**December 2014**

There would be 4 to 6,000 left spread over 12 countries. One of them was taken in by locals when he was only a few months old and kept in a cage by the end of the mythical road KKH that goes from Pakistan to China and climbs up to 4,693 m in altitude in the Khunjerab Pass. Since December 31, 2012, he has survived the hot seasons, gas from the road traffic and the sometimes brutally

expressed curiosity of those passing by. It had just been decided to raise a 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> project dedicated to the orphan and in honor of snow leopards. The educational project is funded by international NGOs, the United States of America Embassy in Pakistan and the Administration for Parks and Wildlife in the region. The idea of releasing the young leopard was turned down. Cut off from his natural habitat and those of his kind from birth or near so, he would very quickly have fallen victim to predators or a road accident or would have starved.



Snow leopard range



**Seizure of a leopard skin and a motorcycle. 2 men arrested<sup>49</sup>**  
**Seti area, Far-Western Development region, Nepal**  
**December 11, 2014**

**Seizure of 13 claws and 2 tiger teeth<sup>50</sup>**  
**Machapura, State of Karnataka, India**  
**December 2014**

The 2 suspects were part of a regular traffic between the Southern states. They were arrested when they were trying to sell the tiger products to policemen. They were sent to appear before a local court. Poaching is a flourishing activity in the Wayanad corridor that connects the Bandipur National Park to the Brahmagiri wildlife sanctuary in Karnataka. The Bandipur National Park covers 880 km<sup>2</sup>. It is home to more than 100 tigers. The Wayanad corridor is 200 km long. It is used by the 4,000 to 5,000 elephants still surviving in south India.

**Conviction for the poaching of a leopard<sup>51</sup>**  
**Haviq, Gilan Province, Iran**  
**December 2014**



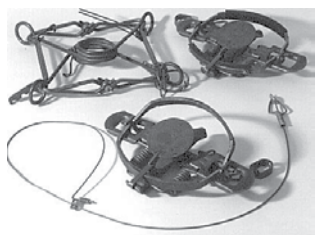
The man was found guilty thanks to pictures taken with a cell phone just after the poaching in the Mount Alborz forests on the south coast of the Caspian Sea. He was sentenced to 36 months jail time for poaching and 6 months for unlawful possession of a firearm and a fine equivalent to 1,600 US\$.



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**Arrest and hearing of a suspected tiger poacher<sup>52</sup>**  
**Nagpur, State of Maharashtra, India**  
**December 2014**

Raslal and Kuttu had trapped a tiger near Tumsar 2 years ago and had sold the skin to the famous Sarju, still behind bars. The CBI (Criminal Board Investigation), working hard to unravel the clandestine network, arrived at Raslal's residence in October 2014 and found a gun and a tiger trap at his home. Raslal has been brought before a judge in Nagpur.

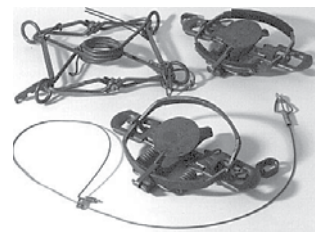


**Release on bail refused for a tiger poacher<sup>53</sup>**  
**State, Maharashtra, India**  
**December 18, 2014**

Ajit had killed 2 tigers with his brother Keru in May 2013. The inspection of his mobile phone revealed numerous incriminating correspondents, and his confession is circumstantial. A metal trap belonging to him was seized. Once the tiger was caught, Ajit killed him with a spear.

The noose is tightening around notorious tiger skins traffickers. 30 gang members are still at large but more than 20 are behind bars despite repeated requests for release on bail filed by lawyers before the Courts of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Bombay. Tirelessly, Kartik Shukul, special adviser to the administration of Forestry, is trying with some success to convince the judges of the danger it would be for the preservation of evidence and integrity of witnesses to release those who are in prison pending the trial.

It seems that in one movement, in the specific case of tigers, Indian police and justice are trying to gain and retain the most complete picture possible of an identified network, its practices and outlets. However, it is necessary that investigations and analysis be rapidly completed and that trials take place in the short term. Some suspects have been in jail for over a year, and if preventive detention drags on, they will certainly file new applications for release on bail.



**Destruction of 2.77 kg of "medicine" made from tiger bones<sup>54</sup>**  
**Thanh Hóa Province, Vietnam**  
**December 18, 2014**

In 2010, a dead tiger was seized by police in the region from the black market. Instead of being destroyed, the body was given to a traditional medicine office that proceeded to extract so called medicine that in the end was finally seized in October 2014. According to ENV, this is the first time that seizures of animal parts led in Vietnam to incineration.



**Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest<sup>55</sup>**  
**District of Kanker, State of Chhattisgarh, India**  
**December 18, 2014**

The 3 people were arrested near a bus stop. They were on a motorcycle. They were on their way to Raipur to sell the skin. They were aged 28 to 35 years old.



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### **Tigers : 66 dead in India<sup>59</sup>**

2014 didn't end very well for tigers. On the last day of the year, one was killed in Bandipur in Karnataka and another in Tadoba Andhari in Maharashtra.

Out of the 66 registered deaths, only one died as a result of natural causes. Fighting among tigers caused 3 victims. 2 tigers suspected of having eaten humans were shot dead by police. Around 60 tigers died from poaching, a sad toll that is worse relative to 2013, proving that the dismantling of a network of trappers and traffickers did not stop accomplices or newcomers to feed into the black market for skin and other by-products.

### **Seizure of a leopard skin<sup>56</sup>**

**District of Kondagaon, State of Chhattisgarh, India**

**December 18, 2014**

The suspect, 35 years old, must have bought the skin in a remote village near Narayanpur 50 km away from where he was arrested. He also was intending to sell it in Raipur. The skin is estimated worth 2.5 lakh Rs (4,040 US\$).

### **REPEATED OFFENSE**

**Arrested of a repeated offender in tiger poaching<sup>57</sup>**

**Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

**December 20, 2014**

The reserve covers 1089 km<sup>2</sup> and spreads along the border from India to China between the edges of the Himalaya and the Terai plains. The Pilibhit forests are home to fewer than 40 tigers. The poacher lives in the neighboring state of Uttarakhand.

### **Seizure of a tiger skin and arrest of 6 suspects<sup>58</sup>**

**Mancherial, State of Telangana, India**

**December 20, 2014**

The tiger was 3 years old. Just like him, the suspects were from Maharashtra.



### **Seizure of a frozen tiger<sup>60</sup>**

**Nghe An Province, Vietnam**

**December 22, 2014**

The 120 kg of frozen meat were in a truck driving towards the north on national Route 1. The driver had received the equivalent of 373 US\$ from "a stranger" to take care of the convoy.



### **Seizure of 3 leopard skins and 8 suspects arrested<sup>61</sup>**

**Rairangpur and Dhungiadihi, State of Odisha, India**

**December 26, 2014**

6 were on 2 motorcycles. 2 leopard skins, one 195 cm long and 41 cm large, the other 287 cm long and 68 cm large. 2 were on foot with a 162 cm long and a 36 cm large skin.



### **Discharge of former deputy prime minister suspected of authorizing the export of 100 tigers in China<sup>62</sup>**

**Thailand**

**December 2014**



The Si Racha Tiger Zoo decided to sell 100 tigers to Sunya Zoo in Hainan Province. This inter zoo transaction was the subject of a request from a service representative of CITES in Thailand. Mr Plodprasop Suraswadi, who was leading the Royal Forest Department in 2002, had finally granted permission.

The National Anti-Corruption Commission had taken possession of the case file in 2007, denouncing the commercial aspect of the transaction between 2 private zoos. The well-known suspect and his lawyers argued that Si Racha zoo tigers had been legally imported from India and that the exportation of captive felines does not harm wild Bengal tigers living free in the kingdom. According to testimonies from China, the tigers originating from the Thai zoo would now be 500. "They live comfortably" and "there was indeed a scientific basis to the export demand."



**Seizure of a leopard skin and arrests** <sup>63</sup>  
**Asifabad, State of Telangana, India**  
**December 2014**



They intended to sell the skin, tail included, to a specialized trader in Maharashtra, the neighboring state.

**Seizure of 2 leopard skins from India** <sup>64</sup>  
**Nuwakot District, Central Development Region, Nepal**  
**December 26, 2014**

**Seizure of a leopard skin and arrest** <sup>65</sup>  
**Chikkamagaluru district, Karnataka, India**  
**December 27, 2014**

Forest officials got grab of a 25 years old guy and of the skin of the leopard he had killed in Aldur forest. He had eaten the flesh with guests. The victim was about 3 years old. Cat-eaters come out of the woods.

**Conviction confirmed for a cat-eater** <sup>66</sup>  
**Qinzhou, Guangxi Province, China**  
**December 29, 2014**



Xu, well known (See "On the trail" n°4 p. 58 and n°5 p. 64) bought 3 tigers for 77,000 US\$ each. Initially sentenced to 13 years in prison for trafficking and consumption of 3 tigers in April 2014, Xu had appealed. The Qinzhou People's Court upheld the original sentence with a fine equivalent to 250,000 US\$. His accomplices and guests were sentenced to 5 and 6 and a half years in prison.

**Discovery of 2 leopard carcasses** <sup>67</sup>  
**Golestan Province, Iran**  
**December 2014**

In less than 10 days, 2 leopard carcasses are found in Golestan National Park. The habitats of leopards are increasingly fragmented. Survival islets are besieged by roads that according to a local expert are traced without impact study on wildlife or information for users.

**Conviction for illegal sale of 2 tiger skins, a leopard and 5 snow leopards (*Uncia uncia*, Appendix I)** <sup>68</sup>



**Tonglu Xian, Province of Zhejiang, China**  
**December 2014**

Shentu had strong political stance. He was part of the local Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and a suspiciously high commercial position. He was the director of a bear "farm" producing bile. In February 2012, his brother in law, a certain Guo was involved in a case of gold trafficking. During the search of his home, the 8 feline skins were found hanging on rods in the attic. Total value: 1,52 million yuans that is 245.000 US\$.

"Shentu gave them to me", he says. Shentu stayed very calm during interrogation. "I didn't know whether the skins were real or fake. It's some inheritance from my father. I gave them to Guo, just like that, to make him happy." "I didn't even know these animals were protected by law."

Pushing searches further, police found documentation on Siberian tigers at his home and, in the bear farm office, notes on what to say to police if ever... and a register of the transaction made between him and Guo. Shentu finally admitted that he bought the skins from Ma and Gao in the Gansu province between 2005 and 2010. Shentu was sentenced to 11 years in prison. Ma to 10 years. Gao is on the run.



## ASIA-EUROPE

### Putin's 2 Siberian tigers migrate to China<sup>69</sup> Province of Heilongjiang, China. October 2014

Nothing to do with the "tiger" prowling around a shopping mall 80 km away from Paris. Tracked down by helicopter and all the land forces available, 24 hours after the alert it turned out on study of the footprints that the animal is at most a lynx and at least a hefty sized cat.

No, here we are speaking of 2 real Siberian tigers, a threatened species that was the subject of a bilateral agreement in November 2010 between China and Russia represented by the 2 Prime Ministers, a document aiming to double populations by 2022. Less than 500 Siberian tigers also called Amur tigers remain in East Russia, North-East China and maybe still north of North Korea.

Also, when in mid-October an orphan tiger 23 months old who had been released in May by caretakers and Vladimir Putin crossed the Amur River and touched onto Chinese soil, the incident almost reactivated the red line.

The Russian party was informed of Kuzia's migration by the radio collar. The feline was located at 500 km about from the place he was set free. Chinese experts immediately converged to the area, set up 60 infra red cameras and removed as many traps as possible that had been set up by trappers. 2 days later, feces and footprints in the snow were reported by the experts and deemed to be those of the young tiger. Remains of deer and boars were also seen as traces left on the animal's trail and pictures taken prove the unprecedented presence of a tiger in the Taipinggou reserve that covers 20,000 ha.

Chen, the director of the reserve pledged to send the pictures to his Russian colleagues as fast as possible. At the same time, farmers were warned of the situation and called upon to protect their interests as well as those of the tiger. An unconfirmed rumor renders Kuzia responsible for an attack on a chicken pen. 5 chickens would have been killed. Mid November, Kuzia's older brother, called Oustine took the same path. Tiger have little consideration for administrative borders. Oustine had been released into the taiga in June. China is increasing efforts to protect these nomads. The campaign to deactivate and remove traps is intensified. "The traps target other species but tigers can fall victim to them," says the spokesman for the Chinese border police. In such circumstances, educational efforts are also called upon to explain the consequences of poaching to local populations and the common interest there is in protecting rare species, not to mention those almost extinct.

Oustine, after having built a solid reputation in China for eating dogs and chickens, re-crossed the Amur River at the beginning of December and was immediately accused in Russia of attacking stray and especially domestic dogs. Oustine was captured by those who in summer of last year had released him. They noted that Oustine was wounded and handicapped. He seemed to have gone through a barbed wire fence. This wound, according to specialist, would explain why he had been feeding off easy prey. "The possibility that once he is completely recovered Oustine be once again released is still open." hopes the spokesperson for environmental authorities in the Russian far West Rosprimordnador.

Trafficking of animal parts between the Far East of Siberia and the Chinese province of Heilongjiang is active. In August 2013 (see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 42) 169 bear paws coming from Russia had been seized near the bordering town of Tongjiang by Chinese Customs. In April 2014, nearly 9 kg of tiger bones and 30 bear paws were also seized in the North East province of China, close up near Siberia. In November 2013, in the neighboring province of Jilin, customs had found in a car the fleece of a magnificent ex-Amur tiger worth at least the equivalent of 10 to 20,000 US\$ (see n°3 p.41).

On the other side of the border between China and Russia, in the Primorsky Krai, an Amur tiger killed by gunshot had been found by guards during the night of November 21, 2013 (see "On the Trail" n°3 p.42).

May cooperation between China and Russia reduce the many poaching activities and help this feline population protect itself from its 2 worst enemies, man and food shortage.



The Primorsky Krai is historically a land of transit for all land and marine species. Organs, limbs, sea products are regularly gathered and sometimes seized as for example in October 2014 when Amur tiger bones (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I), 28 gall bladders, a live bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I), 3000 dried sea cucumbers (Classe Holothuroidea) and jaws, horns and animal carcasses<sup>70</sup> were seized. The tiger ribs were in 3 plastic bags. The 3-month-old black bear was in a cage just a bit smaller than he was. His gall bladder was yet untouched. He was taken to the Ussuri zoo to receive first aid medical care. Hunting rifles, ammunition were seized at the same time and the wildlife loot from 3 places in Ussuriisk, Chuguyivsky and Kavalеровskiy. Only one man is being held in custody. It was a roadside check on the Khabarovsk-Vladivostok expressway and the search of a car where were hidden the bags of bones that triggered it all.



## EUROPE

### Poaching of a Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*, Appendix I)<sup>71</sup>

**Las Viñas de Peñallana, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain  
November 2014**

The lynx is a 5-year-old male. He was caught in a collar trap illegally set by poaching hunters of great carnivores. Las Viñas de Peñallana is historically known for being a "conflict zone" where poaching of carnivores and boars is common. It had seemed to have calmed down. But since the beginning of the year 2014, this is already the third lynx found dead in the autonomous community of Andalusia. A fourth was poisoned in Valencia de las Torres, autonomous community of Extremadura. Lynxes fall often victim to road kill: 19 deaths since the beginning of the year in Andalusia. 2 lynx species can be found in Europe: the Eurasian lynx, with a wide range in Eurasia and the Iberian lynx, confined presently to only southern Spain.

The species is the most endangered carnivorous mammal in Europe. Middle sized (8-14 kg), they live in areas notably a mix of dense forests, bush and pastures. Wild hare that represents 90% of their diet were decimated in 1960 by myxomatosis, after intentional contamination by man to limit prolifera-

tion, then in 1990, by a hemorrhagic virus. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century the lynx could be found in all regions of Spain and Portugal. Since then, the population and range have declined until reaching alarming levels during the last

decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 2000, barely 100 individuals were left in the wild making up 2 separate and unconnected populations in Spain: Andújar-Cardena and Doñana.

As early as 1997, Miguel Angel Simon, director of the Life Lince program (lince meaning lynx in Spanish), gave out warnings. Started in 2003, Life Lince has a double objective: to stabilize and increase the lynx populations in Andalusia, but also encourage their reintroduction to new territories, in particular in Portugal where the animal has now disappeared. Now, the natural habitat of Iberian lynx (703 km<sup>2</sup>) has more than doubled, thanks to a program aimed at raising awareness and encouraging owners to allow passing on their land and to build bridges and tunnels favoring new population ranges.

More than 250 wild lynx have already been counted.



© Programa de Conservación Ex-situ del Lince Ibérico

## Zoomania

Prominent citizens or businessmen and women find it quite chic as personal promotion, decoration, vanity or for protection to possess at their homes wild animals. Private zoos are flourishing. In Armenia, an influential politician, Mher Sedrakian, withholds in his private residence in Erevan several lions whose roars frighten the neighborhood and cause a flood of complaints for disturbance of the peace. Another politician from the party in opposition and prosperous businessman owns 24 lions and tigers. Manvel Grigorian, ex-vice minister of Defense, has a private zoo in the city of Etchmiadzin where felines, bears and birds go around in circles. A small tiger roaming the town last year (2013) had no doubt escaped from the General's house but neither he nor his entourage accepted to take responsibility for that. Bears wandering the streets of Erevan are not a rare feature, it happens at least twice a year. 3 years ago an escaped lion belonging to a retired high-ranking police officer had gravely wounded a 2-year-old child near the border to Turkey. Other than the lions and also the tigers bought from the zoos in Ukraine, Belgium, Chile, Kazakhstan, leopards are also in style, coming from the United Arab Emirates and South Africa. Living conditions of all these expatriates are precarious, their diets and sanitary conditions are uncertain just as their future. What will happen to all of them when they go out of style or their owners give in to a new caprice or pass away? Thanks to animal activists such as those of Go Green and Silva Adamian, the subject is coming forward from the background in Armenian news.

In Sharjah, in the United Arab Emirates, 850,000 inhabitants, the Sheik Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, Supreme Council member of Sharjah, has taken action. Any who illegally possess exotic animals as pets must turn them in to accredited authorities within a month. If not they face a fine of 100,000 dihras (15,000 US\$) and the seizure of the animals from the urban homes or farmlands. A law is currently in preparation that will clarify the respective roles of different administrations in enforcing this decision. Here also lion roars can be heard in town and complaints are pouring in. "Children were scared to hear such a sound, especially during night time." Every month, environmental services of the town seize an average of 25 wandering wild animals and reptiles. "It's a dangerous job and an important financial burden," adds the director general for the environment and natural reserves Hana Saif Al Suwaidi. "People buy them when they are very small and after a while just abandon them." People passing them in the streets are attacked, hurt and sometimes permanently wounded. The animals seized are put in quarantine and in some cases zoos in the Emirates, the Gulf countries and Europe are contacted to know if they could be interested in certain specimens. A large scale media campaign is going to be launched so as everyone be aware of the issue. And already, the number of animals spontaneously abandoned is rising. A leopard has just been found in front of the mosque near the hotel Radisson. After a month deadline before entered into force the ban on keeping wild animals at home, 45 reports were addressed to the town environmental services.

To convince those less willing to comply, authorities use the threat of the fine, of the seizure, and quarantine for the animals in decent conditions then turning them over zoos in the country and abroad. Hot Line : 800 372 27 45 or 06 53 11 999.



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# Bears

## AMERICA

### Discovery of a bear cub carcass (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>1</sup>

New York, NY, USA

October 6, 2014

The female bear cub, 20 kg, about 6 months old, was left dead in Central Park. She had suffered a violent trauma, probably killed in a collision with a motor vehicle according to the animal autopsy. The police is investigating this mysterious case.



### Poaching of a bear *Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>2</sup> Armagh, State of Pennsylvania, United States of America

November 2, 2014

Another Bear murder in the USA. 2 amputated paws, darted with arrows, wrapped in a tarp and thrown into a shale pit. Bears and other endangered species hotline : 1-800-742-8001. In this particular case, a reward is announced for who will help the investigation.



### Charges for the poaching of 9 American black bears (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II)<sup>3</sup>

State of Montana, United States of America

November 25, 2014

This is the largest bear poaching case in Montana. 3 suspects baited the bears before killing them and trading the meat. The trial should

shed light on this case. The actions of the 3 bear killers were discovered through anonymous phone calls that each of them gave to the police to report the other 2. Apparently, the 3 individuals "worked" in the same field but not as a team.

### Seizure of 2 Asian Black Bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I)<sup>4</sup>

Pigeon Forge, State of Tennessee, United States of America

4 décembre 2014

The owners of the "Three Bears General Store" claim the 2 Asian black bears had been there for 25 years. "We're the one who saved them" they say. "They were in a Game reserve in Tennessee." The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) doesn't agree. "They were not rescued it was illegal import from Virginia." People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) took care of transport of the bears to a sanctuary in Colorado. PETA confirms that the bears were locked into some sort of cylinder concrete cage, resembling a sewage tunnel. Nothing protected them from harsh weather or curious passer-bys. The 2 bears were exhibited along with 5 others whose origin is legal for their part according to authorities in Tennessee.



## ASIA

### Charges for poaching, illegal cutting and sale of meat from an Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I)<sup>7</sup>

Sichuan Province, China

November 2014  
4 poachers would feed a network of wealthy businessmen - mine operators, real estate developers... - with bear meat. The carcass of the last victim had been bought for 26,000 yuans or 4183 US\$. "No sooner bought than boiled and eaten" an investigator bluntly sums up.



### REPEATED OFFENSE

### Poaching of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, A. II)<sup>8</sup>

Mount Dena, Iran

November 2014



Iranian naturalists estimate the brown bear population to be of about one hundred spread out over the 16 provinces in the country. There is now one less. He was killed in the Zagros Mountains towering over both Iraq

and Iran. Mount Dena, in the middle of the National Park carrying the same name, is 4359 m high. The 6 poachers were arrested after being tracked down over a long distance. They were heavily armed. 2 of them had been arrested in 2013 for poaching and unlawful use of firearms and released on bail.



### Good news

#### Closing down of the last 2 bear bile farms in Vietnam (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>5 and 6</sup>

##### Ha Long Bay, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam

October 2014

In Ha Long, South Korean tourists flocked by the busload to refuel with bear bile that supposedly treats arthritis and impotence. They even attended the extraction of bile on caged bears. In 2007, 6 farms were in operation and in violation of the law. 4 of them had since been closed, but despite the injunctions of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2 were still operating in the beginning of this year. At last it's over! The ENV teams confirm that freezers and extraction devices were removed by Korean industrial partners. The bears also are gone. Where are they now? Alas, they might be "at work" in Laos or Cambodia...

ENV also found that the many snacks and stalls along the tourist route do not sell and more bile bottles or other bear products. The dedicated store in Ha Long, one of the most visited cities in Asia and the world, has shut down.

There would be 10-15.000 bears raised for their bile in Asia. 2 extraction methods are used:

1 - permanent puncture through a tube fixed in the abdomen;

2 - puncture at regular intervals through a transfer tube.

These bears mostly die of infection or other ailments. They are no longer animals, but bile dispensers.

The 2 main species exploited are Malayan sun bears (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) and Himalayan black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I)

In May 2014, 2 South Korean dealers selling bear bile vials to tourists were arrested in Ha Long (See "On the Trail" No. 5 p. 67).

### Bad news

Animals Asia based in Hong Kong is not as optimistic as ENV. Animals Asia knows the subject. It has been maintaining for several years in Vietnam a shelter for abused bears, the Tam Dao Bear Sanctuary. In 2005, there were 4000 bears living in bile extraction farms in Vietnam. Despite government efforts, there would still be about 2000 today. Bile extraction is illegal, but the activity continues and many bears are kept in farms, as pets or tourists attractions.

According to Animals Asia, 3 farms would still be active in the Ha Long Bay where the bear herd was 280 in 2007. It is now 49. Visiting these 3 farms in November 2014, Animals Asia veterinarian team confirmed the deplorable state of the residents pinned down in cages. In this respect, the Cau Trang Bear Farm situated a few minutes



from the city waterfront is the cruelest. The 27 bears all suffer from painful distortion of the front paws due to constantly leaning on the cages bars, 3/4 are covered with wounds. All are famished. 2 are almost blind. From a legal point of view, all the bears from bile farms or ex-bile farms are owned by the Vietnamese State and farm operators are only their guardians. Animals Asia has officially called out to the Vietnamese Prime Minister. The NGO wants the captive bears in Ha Long Bay to be transferred to its shelter.

On the other side, industry struggles. The bile business was done directly to tourists on the farms. For more discretion, it is now done in hotels and specialty drugstores. The domestic market is shrinking but it resists and becomes more difficult to identify and track down.

The willingness of the Vietnamese government is noteworthy. It allowed the medical visit of the farms by Animals Asia in full knowledge of the consequences, which contributed to turn once again the spotlight on an so called agricultural industry of which the country finds it very hard to get rid of.

Animals Asia has launched a public campaign presented by famous actors who know the subject, including Stephen Fry, Ali McGraw and Olivia Newton-John. Today, bears from the Cau Trang Bear Farm are only 23. 4 died in a matter of weeks. There would 80 bile bears left in the Quang Ninh province.

**Seizure of 4 bear paws (23.45 kg) (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>9</sup>**

**Yuping Dong Autonomous County, Guizhou Province, China**

**December 3, 2014**

The driver had loaded ore in Ruili, a border town with Myanmar. He said he had been shopping on the market on the other side of the border. On the way back to Lengshuijiang 400 km further, he was pulled over for speeding. The 4 bear paws were in the cabin.

**Seizure of 34 bear paws (*Ursidae* spp., A. I or II)<sup>10</sup>**

**Hechi, Guangxi Autonomous Region, China**

**December 21, 2014**

The 2 deliverymen were responsible for conveying oysters and other seafood. In 2 polystyrene boxes, bear paws including 12 front left ones.

**Discovery of a polar bear carcass (*Ursus maritimus*, Appendix II)<sup>12</sup>**

**Chukchi, Autonomous District Chukotka, Russia**

**December 26, 2014**

About 2 years old - so an orphan missing nursing after the mother was poached by aboriginal or foreign hunters. The coat of adult polar bears is highly sought after in air-conditioned palaces of the Arabian desert or in Chinese villas.



Russian Arctic bears are attracted by food opportunities made available by human activities. Polar bears have been known for decades to wander on food waste landfills looking for a pittance easier to catch than seals. This inclination is triggered by the negligence and lack of knowledge of newcomers in the Arctic and sometimes local population.

The opportunistic behavior of these semi-aquatic mammals has been demonstrated again in the Barents Sea and the Kara Sea. The confidence with which the bear is leaning on the nuclear-powered submarine's hull shows an old acquaintance with the management of food waste from Russian submariners. Note that some garbage is still wrapped in plastic and that waste sorting reflexes of persistent solid material packaging are not yet fully adopted by the Murmansk military fleet. In defense of the crews, note also that the Marpol Convention on the prevention of pollution at sea and its Appendix V prohibiting the discharge of plastics and other synthetic materials does not apply, unfortunately, to military ships.

The Russian oil company Lukoil is also struggling with the polar bears appetite for failing to mark the boundary between the wild and the industrial areas. A female bear about 2 years old has made a habit to live near the Lukoil drilling platform with more and more confidence and proximity after the technicians have taken the bad habit of dumping in an uncontrolled landfill partly edible waste. It is planned to capture and deliver the fearless bear to a zoo.

Feeding the Arctic bears and terrestrial or marine wildlife is obviously a bad idea. The gap is too narrow between food quest and addiction.

The 2 aforementioned examples were the occasion for Nikita Ovsyanikov, Russian specialist in Arctic wildlife, to underline the good manners by which men and bears should live by but not together, along with some common sense to not forget in order to not die together. Here is a summary of the *modus operandi* recommended by the eminent specialist.

The advice of Lukoil board to its employees in case of attack or contact approach of a polar bear to lie down and play dead is preposterous. This is the best way to be eaten alive by a carnivore. This reflex behavior may eventually be useful facing a brown bear in Alaska as its diet is mostly plant and fish.

There should not be open waste dumps near an industrial plant or near the base camp of polar tourists.

If one or several polar bears approach a human colony, one should systematically and as quickly as possible try to make them move away. Dogs may be useful, but they should not be fed outside as bears may have the idea to mix in for the meal. Quads, snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles can be useful if they are cleverly driven. Avoid being too far or too close. Avoid encirclement and support deterrence maneuvers by metal and various noises. Absolutely avoid gunshots that can kill a valuable and protected animal and cost you a fine and a prison sentence. Many polar bears are completely insensitive to detonations that remind them the deep and frequent crackling noises from the ice field.

In case of physical proximity due to inattention or failure of previous practices, the pepper spray, on the condition that it is clearly directed to the nostrils of the animal and that the bomb is not frozen, or a handful of freshly ground pepper, is the most effective and harmless tool available. In any case, even the worst, do not speak or raise your voice. Always keep in mind that the human voice attracts the polar bear.

Nevertheless, the development of industrial activities in the Arctic implies knowledge on how to live with the bears or rather not live with the bears. Everything is there, an anthropo-dependent polar bear is a dead bear. Sooner or later, he will be liquidated in alleged self-defense or caged away.



**Arrest of a man suspected of poaching a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) <sup>13</sup>**

**Aliabad, Golestan Province, Iran**

**December 2014**

The suspect was first arrested for drug trafficking. Examination of his mobile phone revealed compromising photos in another area. The man was also a bear hunter.

This last year was a black one for Iranian bears: 18 brown bears and 2 black bears killed. Hunting, poisoning and also collision with cars and trucks.



**Seizure of Asian black bear gallbladders (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) 1.27 kg<sup>14</sup>**

**Haikou, Hainan Province, China**

**December 2014**



**EUROPE**

**Questioning the autopsy of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) <sup>15</sup>**

**Autonomous community of Castile and Leon, Spain**

**December 16, 2014**

The body was found in the Las Fuentes Carrionas Natural Park on December 12. Autopsy is scheduled for the 15. The Regional Council of Castile and Leon ordered its execution on 13. Lobo Marley and Fondo para la Protección de Animales Salvaje (FAPAS) NGOs denounce these dubious methods: no Guardia Civil officer has attended the autopsy and no legal warranty validates the diagnosis. Lobo Marley and FAPAS request that a new autopsy be practiced in the presence of all concerned parties insuring that all legal guarantees are respected. The cause of death of the bear should be clearly determined: poaching or natural death.



# 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*.

**1383 rhinoceros killed in South Africa, Namibia, Kenya, Botswana, Mozambique, India and Nepal in 2014**

**On the Trail n°7**  
The value of horn on the black market, according to media or customs sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	South Africa	10 065	22
Asia	Vietnam	31 350	62
		26 885	65
		47 000	65*

\* cf. chapter Multi-Species.

## Long live weevil !<sup>1</sup>

Geoffreys Matipano, director of Parks and Wildlife in Zimbabwe, told journalists that the government is in possession of 5 t of horns in Harare. This "national heritage" is exposed to the risk of theft and to an invasion of weevil that chew up the keratin from the inside. "The horns are rapidly losing mass," laments Matipano.



## AFRICA

### Seizure of a rhino horn<sup>2</sup>

Swaziland

October 2014

The horn was wrapped in adhesive tape and stuffed into a package for Hong Kong. The recipient did not come and get it. The Hong Kong postal service sent the package back to the Mbabane post office after consolidating it.

The SPTC - Swaziland Posts and Telecommunications Corporation – confirms that, "Yes, it's the non requested package service that uncovered the horn." "Everything is being done to fine the sender." The horn is at the police station. Let's hope it won't be stolen.

### Seizure of a rhino hoof and arrest<sup>4</sup>

Magude District, Province of Maputo, Mozambique

October 5, 2014

The hoof had been in the fridge for a week. It was waiting for its buyer, a South African man who claims he was framed. "I met some young people on Saturday night." "They told me of a good deal." "I didn't know what it was." "I wanted to see for myself in my car."

The 5 suspected Mozambique sellers of the rhino limb probably took it while poaching in the South African Kruger Park.

Police in Maputo believe they are dealing with a well-organized network. Among the sellers, there is a traditional healer.



### Conviction for rhino horn trafficking<sup>5</sup>

Nelspruit, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

October 6, 2014

The Vietnamese citizen had been arrested with 13 other people in May 2013. Ngoc Cuong Pham was the instigator. He had been sentenced to a fine of 1 million R, or 88,444 US\$ with a penalty of 5 years imprisonment.

Pham was in possession of 10 horns, 4 million R in cash, or 353,000 US\$, and an elephant tusk. 2 of the horns had been sold to the sinister Nyalungu, known as Big Joe (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 62).





## Sale and relocation of 500 rhinos<sup>3</sup>

### South Africa

October 2014

500 rhinos were auctioned off in Kruger Park. The plan is to spread out around the country rhinos that are persecuted by poaching in Kruger Park. The principle of precaution is called upon in the face of a failed situation: State authorities, represented on the terrain by rangers and elite forces, are unable to prevent mass poaching in the Park.

All candidates must pledge to buy a minimum of 20 rhinos and include with their offer a safety plan and a description of the rhino's future habitat. Cost and liability for transport will rest upon the buyer. Bids must be posted by letter. The auctioning is open from October 5 to 15.

3.3% of the nationalized rhinos will be sold to the private sector. Yes, but the head of the Private Rhino Owners Association is skeptical. "Our members have already spent 270 million Rands this year (25 million US\$) to protect properties and their 5,000 rhinos." "They are asking us to put down a lot of money for a very risky enterprise."

One analyst notes that from 2011 to 2013, the mean price in an auction for a white rhino has gone down from 277,351 R to 180,247 R (or 25,434 US\$ to 16,529 US\$). Over the same period, the price of cape buffalos has gone from 118,000 R to 502,000 R, or 10,821\$ to 46,036 US\$.

The displacement of 500 animals difficult to handle, weighing 1 to 3 tons, involves a series of medication, maneuvers, manipulations and transport that they don't always come out of unharmed. The first step is to fly over them by helicopter and to inject them with tranquillisers dart gun. The previous sale that concerned only 260 rhinos had been cancelled because of flaws (see "On the Trail" n°6). This was a bad amicable arrangement between South African Parks and some other parties that aren't particularly well known for their ethics and concern for animals well being. Ms. Molewa, Minister of environment speaks of a "mammoth task." "We are considering," she says, "capturing 5 to 6 rhinos per day over the winter." This project concerns only the white rhinos.



## Death of an eco warrior<sup>6</sup>

### Sesfontein, Kunene Region, Namibia

October 7, 2014

Trouble at Save the Rhino Trust (SRT): The NGO, founded 30 years ago, is facing rumors and press articles. Its faithful and effective poachers and rhino carcasses scout was found victim of sudden death. Christmas Day of 2012, after 20 years of poaching truce, a black rhino was found dead near Mbukondja. Boxer, aka Daniel Alfeus Hawaxab, was participating in the identification and detention of a suspect, an ex-soldier turned livestock guardian paid by a certain Efraim Mwanyangapo. For 2 years, the discoveries of dead rhino are multiplying. Killed by an invisible gang, they are identified, without horns and withered, by wandering farmers or Boxer camel back patrols. Boxer died a week after returning from his last ride in the Kunene desert. The death certificate says that the cause is unknown. Yet all the clinical signs point to bacteriological poisoning. Anthrax haunts the stone desert and mountains. In 1992, an epidemic struck the village of OrupemBe close to Skeleton Coast Park during an extreme drought. The consumption of an infected animal had triggered the epidemic. A veteran vet of Kunene desert and Etosha National Park confirmed that anthrax commonly affects livestock and wild animals, but very rarely humans. Favorable periods in the development of the disease are at the end of the dry season or wet season. In January 2013, there were 2 dead in Oshikoto, in the same region. Recovery is possible if the disease is quickly diagnosed and specific drugs are readily available. The anthracis Bacillus can survive for decades and are resistant to heat, drought, and ultra violet rays. In

**INVITATION TO BID**

In terms of Section 55(2) (b) of the PAA, Act 57 of 2003 as amended, South African National Parks, in managing national parks, is mandated to sell, exchange or donate any animal, plant or other organism occurring in a park, or purchase, exchange or otherwise acquire any indigenous species which it may consider desirable to reintroduce in a specific park.

Towards the implementation of SANParks' Rhino Management Strategy, the following are offered for sale on the Best Price Principle:

Bid documents can be downloaded for FREE from SANParks' website from 05 October 2014: <http://www.sanparks.org/groups/tenders/>

Bid No.	Bid Description	Bid Submission Address	Compulsory Briefing Session	Closing Date & Time
SWR-001-2014	SANParks invite prospective bidders to submit offer for the sale of white rhinoceros ( <i>Ceratotherium simum</i> ) – best price principle	South African National Park, 643 Leyds Street, Muckleneuk, Pretoria, 0002	No clarification session	15 October 2 014 at 11H00

Potential buyers who wish to become a strategic rhino management stakeholder with SANParks are encouraged to make a written offer to purchase white rhinos in batches of 20 or more.

Animals will be sold from bomas or directly from the veld to the prospective buyers, subject to buyers' adherence to the sale requirements. All bids will be additionally assessed for functionality, including habitat suitability and security assessment. The sale will be subject to a Memorandum of Agreement and Rhino Management Plan.

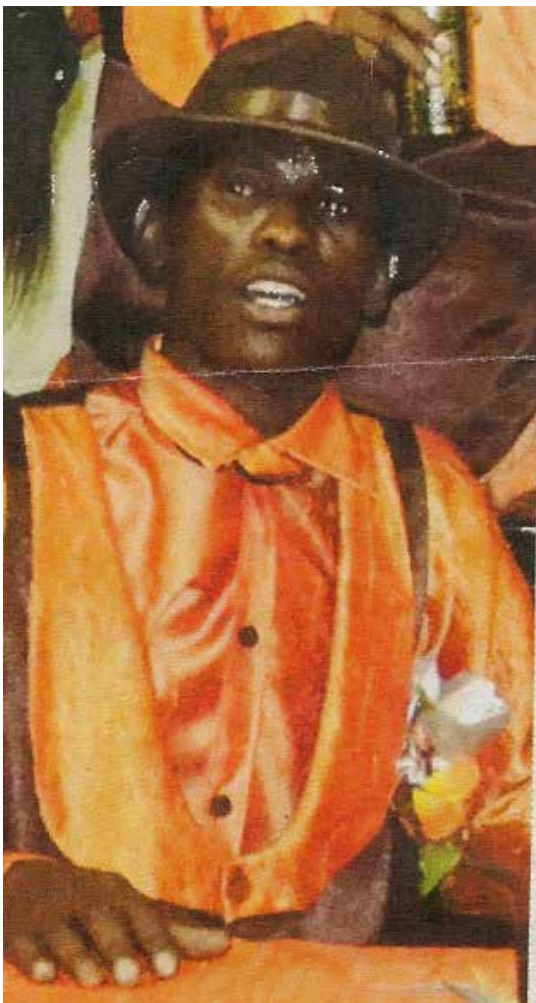
**TERMS:**

- Prospective buyers for the rhino must comply with the provisions of the:
  - National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act No. 10 of 2004 ("the NEMBA")
  - Threatened or Protected Species Regulations promulgated under the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act No. 10 of 2004 ("the TOPS Regulations")
  - SANParks own requirements.
- Prospective buyers will be responsible for their own transport and transport costs, or negotiate with SANParks at a nominal fee.
- Completed sealed bid documents, clearly marked with the specific bid number must be submitted at the above-mentioned addresses, no later than the closing date as stipulated above.
- For more information, please contact: Dr Howard Hendricks (083 646 5296) [howard.hendricks@sanparks.org](mailto:howard.hendricks@sanparks.org)

Income generated from this sale will be used for the Park Development Fund for the purpose of conservation management, including development of national parks system.

[www.sanparks.org](http://www.sanparks.org)

the desert, it is rumored that a black magic expert is able to handle and disperse them in the right place at the right time. Far from black magic and Namibia, the bacilli are now regarded as a possible vector of biological terrorism. Boxer's entourage is convinced that his death is related to his determination to fight against rhino poaching. He would have mortal enemies, maybe even inside SRT. The Ganaseb brothers, two other SRT trackers, served as guides to a South African hunter, Peter Thormählen, known for bad practices and rejected by his peers in South Africa and Namibia. The Ganaseb brothers had been questioned by police for 12 hours a month before the death of Boxer about the brutal increase of rhino poaching in an area they know by heart. The Namibian press does not hesitate to link the eruption of poaching to the case, which is still pending, of the attempt to smuggle 14 horns by 3 Chinese citizens arrested at Windhoek airport ("On the trail No. 4 p.66, No. 5 p. 73 and No. 6 p.65). The Ganaseb brothers are regulars of a local bar operated by Efraim Mwanyangapo with a Chinese partner. One thing that is certain and that reflects a difficulty communicating on the subject in the Board of Directors of SRT is that the tribute paid by the chairman to Boxer, super tracker called "supreme eco-warrior," was published on December 11th, more than 2 months after the tragedy.



Daniel Alfeus Hawaxab alias Boxer

### **Poaching of a black rhino<sup>7</sup> Solio Ranch, County of Nyeri, Kenya October 7, 2014**

They got in through an electrical fence. They hacked off the 2 horns and left with them. Guards heard the shot but were not able to catch them.

### **Arrest of 6 poachers<sup>8</sup> National Kruger Park, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa October 7, 2014**

The arrest took place in 2 stages.

1- 3 suspects were followed by helicopter. They were armed with a .458 caliber gun, ammunition and an ax.

2- Another trio was also followed by helicopter and was armed with a .375 gun, ammunition and an ax. - 500 rhinos in the Kruger Park since the beginning of the year.



### **Conviction for illegal possession of a firearm and ammunition<sup>9</sup> White River, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa October 8, 2014**



The man from Mozambique was arrested in April. His accomplice escaped. Sifundza was sentenced to 8 years in prison. When he gets out, his gun, ammunition, ax and trekking clothes won't be given back to him.

### **Poaching of a white rhino and a black rhino<sup>10</sup> National Kruger Park, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa October 2014**



Never seen before! The poachers not only killed the 2 rhinos, but they also ripped out the black one's eyes. The park's spokesperson speaks of a superstition according to which the poachers would become invisible and uncatchable by authorities if the victim's eyes were removed.

Another practice used by poachers is to cut the front hoofs beforehand so that the victims cannot escape if they were to ever wake up after being poisoned and before the horns were removed.

- 533 in the Kruger Park





**Poaching of 6 rhinos<sup>11</sup>**  
**KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**  
**Between October 11 and 15, 2014**

2 in iSimangaliso Park by the side of the Indian Ocean: One was caught in a trap; the other was found in an advanced stage of decomposition.

+ Another body – the death must have occurred 2 days earlier – was found hornless near the Phinda Private Game Reserve.

+ A white rhino was also found dead and de-horned in the Double H private reserve.

+ 2 more white rhinos were found in Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The horns were gone.

**Postponing of the trial for 4 people accused of the theft of 112 pieces of rhino horn<sup>12</sup>**

**Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**  
**October 15, 2014**

Follow-ups of the theft of 112 horns from the governmental vaults are weak (See "On the Trail" n°6 p. 71). The second court hearing for the 4 suspects is postponed. The general attorney is sick. The 4 men are out under bail for the modest amount of 20,000 R or 1,768 US\$. The value of the 112 horns is at least 10 million US\$.

**Discovery of 2 rhino carcasses<sup>13</sup>**

**North West Province, South Africa**

**October 14 and 16, 2014**

She was poached while she was giving birth. The newborn was also killed.

The male was found dead the next day. All 3 were killed on a full moon night.

According to the owner, the value of a pregnant female is about 70,000 US\$; the value of a male is about 53,000 US\$.



**Death of one of the last 7 northern white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum cottoni*, Appendix I)<sup>14</sup>**  
**Oi Pejeta Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya**  
**October 17, 2014**

The Ultimate Chance operation failed. The only viable male of the subspecies *Ceratotherium simum cottoni* died at 34 years old. The early death was termed natural. The average life expectancy of a rhinoceros is 45 years.

Suni had been transferred to the reserve in central Kenya from a Czech zoo in Dvur Kralove in 2009, along with another male and 2 females.

The scientific hypothesis assumed that the sex hormones levels of the females would rise in the climate of their African homeland and that mating could become possible. It did not happen, and the surviving male is now 41, too old to breed. The northern white rhinoceros is doomed to extinction. One male and 2 females are sterile in Kenya. A female is at the zoo in Dvur Kralove and an old retired male is boarded at the San Diego zoo.

**Poaching of 2 rhinos<sup>15</sup>**  
**Mankwe Wildlife Reserve, North West Province, South Africa**  
**October 2014**



She had escaped a first attempt just barely 20 years ago. Charlie is now an orphan.



Winnie was 6. In 2 months she would have given birth to her first baby.

**Request for bail from 3 employees of the South African National Parks suspected of rhino poaching<sup>16</sup>**

**White River, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**  
**October 2014**

The 3 suspects worked inside Kruger Park (see "On the Trail" n°6 p.77). They have made a request for bail. 2 of them came to the courtroom staggering. They then collapsed into their chairs, holding their heads in their hands. They say that the security forces were beating them up at the time of their arrest. The 5 members of the intervention team deny these acts of violence. They were proceeding to the usual required observations around the carcass they had just discovered when they heard a distant shot. Helicopter surveillance enabled them to locate a second carcass, yet it did not locate the poachers. That's when Killer came into action. That is the cute name chosen for one of the ranger's German shepherd, also a dog handler. In no time, he tracked down 2 men in the bushes who had been interrupted in the middle of their "work" by the helicopter hovering above. They had with them an A.458 and corresponding ammunition. The ax used to de-horn was found near the dead rhino.

The suspects' lawyer, Hettie Groenewald, demanded that a certified doctor examine them for traces of the beating. Despite the absence of any apparent trauma or wounds, the court accepted the request and postponed the hearing until a medical certificate can be provided.

In the end, bail was rejected for André Mabunda and Shakes Baloyi and accepted for Lawrence Baloyi. He had provided the firearm and had brought the 2 poachers close to the target in a vehicle belonging to the park.



© Low Velder

### Arrest of 11 presumed poachers<sup>17</sup>

**National Kruger Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa  
October 17-18, 2014**

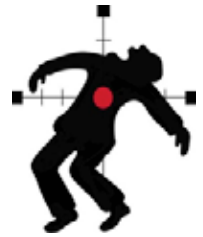
5 poachers were arrested. It happened near the Skukuza section of Kruger Park, one of the most visited areas of the park: administrative center, museums, library, golf course, pic-nicks and rhinos. Skukuza comes from the Zulu word Sikhukhuza, which means broom, in honor of James Stevenson Hamilton, Paul Kruger's assistant who at the beginning of the 20th century had "cleaned" away poachers from the park. Since January 2014, 113 of their heirs have been arrested in the park. That afternoon, 3 more suspects were caught in the Madelane section.

The next day, in the Punda Maria section, shortly after sundown, a fight broke out between security forces assisted by a helicopter and a gang that wasn't there to peacefully observe the pachyderms. 2 poachers got hit. One died from his wounds. All the poaching equipment was found on site. The third turned himself in. They were wearing a military uniform from Mozambique and 2 park rangers' uniforms. The high command of the park responded with a somewhat lyrical statement in order to congratulate Kruger's fair staff: "I will be eternally grateful to these men and women who thanks to their devotion and solidarity face enormous challenges everyday."



### Death of a presumed poacher<sup>18</sup> Solio ranch, Nyeri County, Kenya October 22, 2014

Knives, axes, a flashlight and clothing were found on site. One poacher was killed. His 3 accomplices disappeared.



### Discovery of a black rhino carcass<sup>19</sup> Etosha National Park, Kunene Region, Namibia October 28, 2014

The black rhino had been struck with 11 bullet wounds. "It's a very sad story," said the Minister of the Environment somberly. A 30,000 N\$ reward (2,751 US\$) is promised to anyone who will enable the arrest and trial of those responsible. This year alone, the death toll is 15 while between 2005 and 2013 the death toll was, all told, 10. For the elephants, it's even worse. 40 have been killed since the beginning of this year.



© Eva Ziafedorra

White elephants in the Etosha Park saline desert

### Discovery of 3 rhino carcasses<sup>20</sup> KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa October 2014

2 more rhinos were killed in the Double H private reserve.

Another one was killed in the Mduna Royal game reserve.

- 9 were killed in October. 2014 will be the worst year for the slaughtering of rhinoceroses in KwaZulu-Natal.

### Fighting between rangers and poachers in Kruger Park<sup>21</sup> National Kruger Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa October 2014

1 - In the Crocodile Bridge section, 2 poachers were mortally wounded and the third escaped to Mozambique.

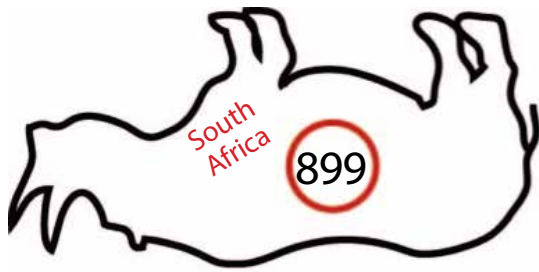
2 - The chase past the western boundaries of the park led to the seizure of 2 cars, ammunition and a firearm.

54 poachers have been arrested in the Park around and during the month of October.

- 581 in the Kruger Park.







**Seizure of 41 kg of rhinoceros horn<sup>22</sup>**  
**Oliver Reginald Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa**  
**October 31, 2014**

The 2 Vietnamese citizens, aged 25 and 26, were flying to Hanoi via Johannesburg and Doha on board a Qatar Airways plane. The one-hour stop in Johannesburg did not go as planned. The passengers were all asked to get off the plane for baggage checks. Mimmo, a dog sniffer, braced himself in front of 2 bags containing 20.8 and 20.6 kg of horns. The 2 traffickers were apparently given help from an accomplice in the Maputo Airport that enabled their luggage, and especially their contents, to remain unchecked. A Qatar Airways agent in Maputo spoke of his suspicions to the South African airport police: a real-time reaction that is worth mentioning. SAPS (South African Police Service) Crime Stop: 08600 10 111.



**Discovery of 2 rhino carcasses<sup>23</sup>**  
**Mozambique**  
**November 2014**

The 2 females were dehorned and had their front paws cut off. They were found in the buffer zone of Kruger Park. One had her stomach ripped open. It seems a fetus was removed.

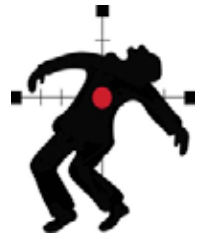
**Arrest of 3 persons suspected of rhino poaching<sup>24</sup>**  
**Phinda Game Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**  
**November 3, 2014**

Another incident in the reserve: The poachers apparently shot at the guards, who then shot back. One suspect was wounded in his arms and legs. He was escorted under close surveillance to hospital. The 3 gang members aged from 31 to 55 are charged with unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition and illegal hunting. A fourth man is said to have escaped.

**Death of 2 persons suspected of attempted rhino poaching<sup>25</sup>**  
**uMkhuze Game Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

**November 2014**

A new incident in the KZN: The guards patrolling on foot came upon 2 suspects. Believing themselves to be in a state of self-defense, they fired. The 2 poachers died. They were carrying on them a .458 caliber gun. The director of Ezemvelo ("related to nature" in Zulu), the provincial establishment in charge of wildlife management, is not in favor of shooting to kill, "but in some cases, there's no other choice."



**Arrest of 2 persons suspected of rhino poaching<sup>26</sup>**  
**Sabie Game Park, Province of Gaza, Mozambique**

**November 2014**

The anti-poaching unit in the game reserve neighboring Kruger Park intercepted 2 poachers. A third one escaped with a bag in which maybe the horns were held. The 2 individuals had their CZ 375 taken.



**Arrest of 3 persons suspected of rhino poaching<sup>27</sup>**  
**Phalaborwa, Limpopo Province, South Africa**  
**November 8, 2014**

The chase lasted all night. The 4 suspects were spotted at dawn climbing into a pick-up truck. They were armed. One of the two escaped. Had they just killed or were they just about to? It's all quite unclear. Analysis of the bullets will be carried out to determine if the gun that was seized was used previously in the park. The 3 men will be charged with at the least unlawful possession of a firearm. They were also carrying an ax and ammunition. One of them, Joshua Sithole, 46 years old, doesn't have a very good reputation. A famous pastor in the region, he was already implicated in 2011 in a similar case but had not been indicted at the end of the investigations.

### Poaching of a rhino<sup>28</sup>

**Mount Camdeboo Private Reserve, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

**November 8, 2014**



She was known under the name "Split horn." She was hit with a poisoned arrow. The dose was very strong. She died. She had already given birth to and raised 3 young. The fourth witnessed the crime. He found protection with a sub adult male. Already in May, a male had been killed in this supposedly safe province.

### Arrest of 3 presumed poachers, 32, 38 and 41 years old<sup>29</sup>

**Acornhoek, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**  
**November 8, 2014**

The ax and the car are kept as evidence.

### Discovery of 3 black rhino carcasses<sup>30</sup>

**Anabeb conservancy, Region of Kunene, Namibia**  
**November 2014**

The official death toll is 18 rhinos in the country since the beginning of the year: 15 black and 3 white. The Ministry of the Environment takes a stand for the reinforcement of sanctions. "Everyone must act as policemen and soldiers when faced with poaching," the minister said. Hotline : 55555. Poachers are active in the semi-desert region of Kunene. Namibia is home to 1,800 black rhinos. A preventive dehorning campaign has mixed results.

### Court hearing for 3 persons suspected of poaching a rhino<sup>31</sup>

**Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

**November 12, 2014**

The case opened in October. The 3 citizens of Mozambique are suspected to have killed him in Kruger Park, in the Lower Sabie section. In the middle of gunfire exchange with the rangers, one of the poachers was killed. The public attorney requested that the hearing be postponed. The case is not yet complete; the 2 suspects need more time to pay the lawyer fees. The case is adjourned to January 27, 2015.



### Appearance of 3 police officers and a ranger suspected of rhino poaching<sup>32</sup>

**Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

**November 12, 2014**

The 4 men responsible for the prevention of poaching in the Kruger Park are compromised in an attempt to poaching. They remain in custody. The trial is scheduled for late January.

### Seizure of 3 rhino horns, poaching of 2 rhinos and arrest<sup>33</sup>

**Private reserve, Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

**November 14, 2014**

They were arrested by police after having shot at, killed, and taken the horns of 2 rhinos. 2 bags. 3 horns. An ax. 3 knives. 2 telephones. The firearm with a silencer. Ages 20, 20 and 22, and merciless. A 60 kg calf- an adult weighs 1.5 t - was roaming near his mother when she was savagely mutilated. He was admitted to an orphanage, the shelter for endangered species in Hoedspruit, the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre.



### Discovery of 2 black rhino carcasses<sup>34</sup>

**Etosha National Park, Region of Kunene, Namibia**  
**November 12 and 16, 2014**

2 more individuals dead in Etosha Park: They have been for some time. The correct word is no longer decomposition. More like mummification. The poaching goes back to July-August for one, February-March for the other. One eland has just been killed in the park. He was cut into pieces. A gang would be active and settled in the area. The general commissioner of the region call upon the suspects at a distance: "The suspects at large are requested to surrender themselves to the police and not to waste government resources, as there is no room for them to survive or to escape the rule of law."



**Appeal from a judgment<sup>35</sup>**  
**Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**  
**November 20, 2014**

The taxi driver and rhino killer on Christmas Eve in 2010 had admitted to the facts before being sentenced to 20 years in prison, a sentence that took into account his resisting at the time of arrest. Ngemfu Khoza had been wounded during the crossfire with the rangers. The date for the new hearing has not yet been set.

**Seizure of 2 rhino horns, death of 2 persons suspected of rhino poaching and arrest of 4 others<sup>36</sup>**

**Kruger National Park, Crocodile Bridge and Malelane gate sections, South Africa**  
**November 20, 2014**

Crocodile Bridge, maybe the most deadly section of Kruger Park: Rangers and poachers meet. 2 dead. A pair of horns, a firearm, and a full rhino-killing kit lay on the ground.

It's the same scene in Malelane, contiguous to Crocodile Bridge, but the poachers' incursion wasn't deadly. They were arrested. The firearm and equipment were seized.



**Arrest of 4 persons suspected of rhino poaching<sup>37</sup>**

**Lephalale Private Reserve, Province of Limpopo, South Africa**  
**November 2014**

**Seizure of 2 rhino horns and arrest<sup>38</sup>**  
**Solwezi, North-Western Province, Zambia**  
**November 24, 2014**

It happened at 10:30 p.m. They were negotiating to sell the horns in a hostel with buyers. A woman, Violent Mwiszyamba, 43 years old, was part of the gang. The first question is whether the horns were real keratin or fake. The potential clients were police officers.

**Discovery of 3 rhino carcasses<sup>39</sup>**  
**iSimangaliso wetland Park and Mkuze Private Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**  
**November 25 and 26, 2014**

The 2 bodies were there, at the edge of the wetlands for 3 or 4 weeks, the third in the Mkuze game reserve 15 km from the first. The time is very bad for the KZN rhinos.

**Arrest of 2 men suspected of rhino poaching<sup>40</sup>**  
**Mahlabathini, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**  
**November 27, 2014**

Police, in cooperation with the Ulundi Tactical Response Team, stopped them in the middle of the night. They were in possession of accessories that told the whole story on their own. The ax has disappeared.



**Arrest of 3 people suspected of attempted rhino poaching<sup>41</sup>**

**Marken, Limpopo Province, South Africa**  
**November 30, 2014**

A new poaching event was avoided. The driver of the vehicle and the 2 guys who had just gotten out with firearms, a silencer, ammunition and an ax, the minimal toolbox for the average poacher, were arrested after being shadowed for several hours.

**A man suspected of poaching of rhinoceroses escapes extradition to Swaziland<sup>41 bis</sup>**

**Ermelo, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**  
**November 2014**

According to an "incontestable" report, the Times of Swaziland Website revealed that Dan Wilson Nkosi was released in South Africa in November 2014 after having appeared before the Ermelo court for theft of livestock. Sentenced to either prison time or the payment of a fine, the livestock thief was acquitted of the fine and was released in spite of the extradition request submitted in June 2014 to South Africa by Swaziland, which accuses the former of trafficking in rhinoceros horns and of being an associate of Bhekumusa Mawillis Shiba wanted by Infra-Terra after Interpol called for his arrest in October 2014.

**3 men convicted of rhino poaching<sup>42</sup>**

**Skukuza, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**  
**December 3, 2014**

10 years in prison each. They had 2 horns in their possession in October 2014. 2 were from Mozambique, and one was Zimbabwean.  
 - 672 in the Kruger Park.



344 suspects arrested

## **FAMILY BUSINESS**

**Conviction for the poaching of a white rhino<sup>43</sup>**

**Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

**December 4, 2014**

51 and 22, father and son on the same boat, in the same prison for the same amount of time: 10 years. With one voice they pleaded guilty. The judge appreciated and ordered the sentences to run concurrently. Otherwise, it would have been 20 years and 9 months. The sponsor had provided arms and ammunition and had promised money after the deed was done. As if talking to him, the judge informed the court that China had announced that all its nationals caught with illegally sourced rhino horns shall be punished with life imprisonment.



**Poaching of 2 rhinos<sup>44</sup>**

**Graaf Reinet, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

**December 6, 2014**

The sanctuary province is becoming unsafe.



**Poaching of 2 rhinos<sup>45</sup>**

**Brits area, North-West Province, South Africa**

**December 10, 2014**

- 2

**Death of 3 suspected rhino poachers<sup>46</sup>**

**Kruger National Park, South Africa**

**December 8, 10 and 11, 2014**

Day, night, dawn, at all times poachers are trying their luck in the Kruger. Some are killed. Some flee. Others are arrested.



**Rhino poaching and death of several rhino poaching suspects<sup>47</sup>**

**Linyanti, North Western Province, Botswana**

**December 2014**

"There are more and more people from Zimbabwe and Namibia that come to Botswana to poach rhinos." The average number of rhinoceroses killed is 7 per month, according to the Minister of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism. The number of poachers killed in the clash with rangers is not specified.



**Rhinos for sale<sup>48</sup>**

**Kruger National Park, South Africa**

**December 2014**

OSCAP (Outraged South African Citizens Against Rhino Poaching), citing a reliable source, reports that 20 rhinos captured in Kruger Park were transported to the Oryx Kalahari game reserve, Northern Cape province, from Kruger Park. 1000 km of road. Kalahari Oryx is a game reserve owned by the fourth largest fortune in South Africa, Christo Wiese (See "On the trail" n°6 p.65).

**Discovery of 2 rhinos carcasses<sup>49</sup>**

**Barab Plamwag Concession, Kunene Region, Namibia**

**December 21, 2014**

Save the Rhino Trust resumes its work. One of the ONG patrols discovered in the desert of the Kunene 2 black rhinos, dead 3 to 4 days before. The female and her young were killed by bullets. The mother had been deliberately dehorned a month earlier but poachers worked hard on the horn stump and the little horns of the baby.

The dehorning campaign was launched in October to counter the resurgence of poaching.

The Governor of the Kunene Region has "declared war" on poachers and asked for additional forces to protect for the wildlife.

Namibia and South Africa wish to install a horn cartel in imitation of the diamond cartel that would be responsible for legal marketing of rhino keratin, which would have the effect of virtually eliminating poaching.



**Arrest of 3 rangers accused of the murder of a person suspected of attempted poaching<sup>50</sup>**

**Jozini, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

**December 25, 2014**

The 3 rangers were on duty Christmas day. They spotted 3 persons carrying with them a firearm and an ax. Shots broke out. One suspect was killed. The others escaped. Police came to the site to investigate and arrested the rangers. According to police, the suspect was unarmed and had surrendered when he was killed and the rangers could not legitimately say that they had acted in self-defense. Apparently the suspect only had on him a knife. Ezemvollo, the administrator of the institution of the Parks and Private Reserves in KwaZulu-Natal is furious, as is the director of the iSimangaliso National Park, inside which the fighting occurred.

"Our rangers act strictly according to law, apply established procedures and are agents under oath."

Charged with murder, the 3 rangers were released on bail for 1000 R (86 US\$). Their court hearing is scheduled for February 25, 2015. There seems to be an internal war between different anti-poaching services.

**Discovery of 2 black rhino carcasses<sup>51</sup>**

**Zululand Rhino reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

**December 25, 2014**

The mother was killed and de-horned. Her orphan had died by her side. According to the press, the cause of death was "natural."



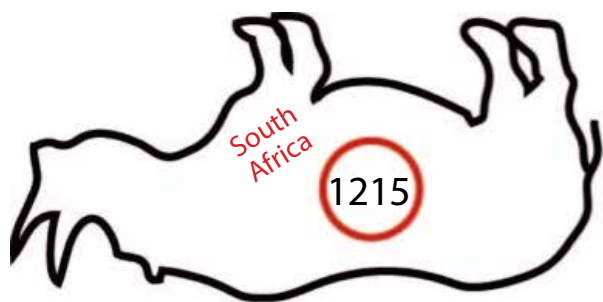
## Release on bail for 6 members of a gang of rhino horn poachers and smugglers<sup>52</sup>

South Africa

December 2014

Good end of the year celebrations for Ras[apopoulos] gang - in memory of the evil enemy of Tintin.

Ras' wife, a lawyer, a pilot, an officer from the Hawks, South African elite troop, and 2 other accomplices were released on bail despite the concealment of the prosecutor and the demonstration organized by OSCAP NGO in front of the Pretoria courthouse. Meanwhile Hugo Ras has not been bailed. He is known to have already tampered with the M99 10 years ago. He is involved in the mutilation of 24 rhinos and the illegal sale of 84 horns. The gang would have derived 20 million rand profit (1.17 million US\$) from its crimes (see "On the Trail" n°6, p.67).



## AMERICA

### Conviction for illegal trafficking of black rhino horn<sup>53</sup>

Miami, State of Florida, USA

October 1, 2014

Gene Harris, 76 years old, has been sentenced to 3 years in jail with a suspended sentence, 6 months on home arrest under electronic surveillance and a 10,000 US\$ fine. In 2011, he was a go-between in an unlawful sale of rhinoceros trophies. For his role in this deal, he received a commission of 10,000 US\$, and he knew that the rhino horns would be exported to China. During the trial, a second illegal transaction dating back to 2011 was uncovered. The self-learned specialist in fossils, founder of the Art By God stores in Miami and Laredo (Texas), has built a fortune by selling pre-historical and stuffed specimens of extinct species. Just before his Miami-based curiosity shop was closed down and he had pleaded guilty to charges of rhino horn trafficking, he had sold a mammoth tusk for 20,000 US\$ and a Barbary lion for 28,000\$ US (see "On the Trail" n°6 p.69).

Why the name Art By God? Because Gene Harris, in 1982, after having worked for a long time in South America, opened his first commercial natural history museum in California. A lawyer who just bought a beautiful ammonite asked him where the artist's signature was. Harris answered that God had forgotten to sign it. That is how the stores in Miami and Laredo were born. The money from the horn swindle and the unknown others did not go to God but instead in Gene Harris' pocket.



## Indictment for sale of products from illegal hunting and horn trafficking<sup>54</sup>

United State of America

October 23, 2014

The Groenewald brothers aren't twins but get along like peanut butter and jelly. Dawie was born in 1968; Janneman in 1970. They come from a hard-working and broken Afrikaner family. The father was a worker in the public domain; the mother was a hairdresser.

20 years later, both joined the police forces and worked for the narcotic bureau and would hunt down marijuana traffickers.

In 1993, they left civil service, more or less implicated in a stolen cars trafficking business towards Zimbabwe.

That's when Janneman, the younger of the two, went to the USA and Dawie started selling bananas in the waiting lines for bus and taxis. One day, he went to see a farmer, bought an antelope, cut it up into pieces and sold them for a small price in the streets. That's where it all started, and since then Dawie Groenewald has never stopped being a hunter, butcher and grocer of large game animals.

In 1997, he started building a small hunting company that rapidly grew into the prestigious and ravaging Out of Africa Adventurous Safari. He then crossed the Atlantic and discovered with marvel the Convention of the Safari Club International that draws every year many thousand selected hunters and trophy collectors to the United States. Every reputable safari organizer holds a stand at the SCI. Dawie, accompanied by his wife Sariette, hit on the clients lingering in the allies, offering them hunting parties in South Africa on bits of land rented from an associate. 3 years later, clients of Out of Africa would also hunt in Zimbabwe near the Hwange Park in ranches deserted by the white farmers now occupied by blacks in accordance with the farm land reform promised by President Mugabe, he also a fervent advocate of marketing elephants and wildlife. Groenewald and Mugabe, same game!



Out of Africa flourished. In 2002, the company bought 2,500 ha in Prachtig, in the province of Limpopo. The hunting reserve is home to sable antelope (*Hippotragus niger*) and slowly but surely to rhinos bought in auctions in San Park. The poor animals are not there to be simply contemplated. Promotional images for Out of Africa are full of hunters towering over felines, buffalos, hippopotamuses,

elephants and rhinos killed by guns or by arrows and even smiling children.

"At that time, I would buy a live rhino for 18,000 US\$ and would sell him dead for 35,000 US\$," says Dawie, during an account to the investigative journalist Julian Rademeyer. Dawie Groenewald is now caught between the



South African and American justice systems, and yet is still free. In South Africa, he is charged with 1,736 various offenses, ranging from fraud to illegal sale of rhino horns (384), since 2010. The trial is dragging on. His wife is co-accused.

In the United States, the Groenewald brothers have just been accused of fraud, money laundering and breach of the law on wildlife. Out of Africa would sell to American clients fake permits for rhino hunting. Sure, the hunters couldn't return home with the horns and other trophies, but they could track down, shoot, look mighty on pictures next to a dead rhino, measure the horn and possibly be listed in the yearly hunting registers or make record book entries. These cheap rhinos were classified "problem" specimens, a generic name used for any of the "big five" said to potentially cause conflict inside the game reserves and national parks. The permits given out in the USA were not notified to the competent services in South Africa. After the killing, the horns were cut up with a chain saw or a knife and sold on the Asian market, mainly in Vietnam. The dead bodies were then burnt or buried into pits somewhere on the 4,300 ha of the Prachtig reserve and its extensions. Benefits of these operations were in part deposited in bank accounts in Alabama and managed by Janneman.

Investigations and indictment of the 2 brothers by the attorney general of the State of Alabama is to be put on the credit of the Operation Crash of which the events and details have been spoken of in "On the Trail" since its first issue. The American justice is going to request extradition of the 2 individuals who presently should be in South Africa. This is a new chance for Dawie to now get to know Alabama's prison cells. In January 2010, as he was about to return to South Africa, he was arrested by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Accused of having sold to an American hunter a fake permit for leopard hunting and of having produced an ante-dated export certificate for the skin, he then spent 8 days in jail and 2 and a half months on home arrest at his brother's house for contraband and breach of the Lacey Act. "The United States is really not the right place to go to jail in." "For a damned leopard, they treated me there like a serial killer."

## OPERATION CRASH

**Court hearing for trafficking of 2 rhino horns<sup>55</sup>  
Manhattan, State of New York, USA**

**November 25, 2014**

Tony Guan pleaded guilty (see "On the Trail" n°6 p.107). "I smuggled into Canada 400,000 US\$ worth of rhino horns and decorative objects made from coral and elephant ivory."

He faces 10 years of prison time. Sentencing will take place next spring.

**Poaching of 3 rhinos<sup>56</sup>**

**Magudu and Makhasa private reserves, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

**December 7-15, 2014**

**Dismantling of a rhino poaching gang<sup>57</sup>**

**Manguzi, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa  
December 18, 2014**

The arrest was hectic. 3 traffickers are behind bars. One of them is injured. The house of the big chief is luxurious: 10 rooms, luxury everywhere, 6 luxury cars in the garage including a Mercedes and 2 BMW, cash everywhere according to well informed people. It's a *nouveau riche* traffic man.

The investigation lasted 8 months. The gang was infiltrated by anti-poaching cops who had 5 rhino horns lent to them by Ezemvolvo KZN Wildlife to deceive the criminals and appear professional. "They will not be released on bail." "The case is well put together," hope those responsible for the operation. "In 2014, there were more than 1,100 rhinos killed in the country and nearly 100 in our province," almost 30% more than in 2013.

## ASIA

**Death of a presumed poacher<sup>58</sup>**

**Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India  
October 4, 2014**

Breaking and entry of at least 4 poachers was expected that night. The rangers were posted in strategic places. At first contact, shooting broke out from each side. One man died.

**Arrest of 4 people suspected of poaching<sup>59</sup>**

**District of Sonitpur, State of Assam, India**

**October 8, 2014**

The 4 poachers, including one 24-year-old woman, were arrested on the north shore of the Brahmapoutre. 3 firearms were seized.





**Appearance for illegal acquisition of rhino horn objects (2,635 g) and corruption <sup>60</sup>**

**Shantou, Guangdong Province, China**

**October 14, 2014**

Zhu Jiadong, former director of Rural Planning Bureau in Shantou, is brought before the Intermediate People's Court of Guangzhou. He is accused of illegal acquisition of 17 items in rhino horn valued at 658,750 yuans ( 107,070 US\$) and for accepting bribes (1.11 million yuans in cash and 440,000 HK dollars from more than 10 real estate companies, a total of about 235,000 US\$). The objects were acquired between 2000 and 2008 on the Beijing, Shanghai, Yuyuan and Zhengzhou antique markets.

**Poaching of one rhino<sup>61</sup>**

**Gorumara National Park, State of West Bengal, India**

**October 17, 2014**

Investigators made the link between the methods used by the butchers of 2 rhinos killed in August in Jaldapara Park. In this park, 70 rhinos have been poached since 1951. Many still remember that in 2009 a rhino trying to escape the harassment of poachers was lynched by a mob of villagers.

**Seizure of 6 kg of rhino horn and arrest<sup>62</sup>**

**Noi Bai Airport in Hanoi, Vietnam**

**October 27, 2014**

The flight was coming in from Bangkok. The Vietnamese woman of 29 was paid to transport the goods estimated by customs to be worth 31,350 US\$ per kilo.

**Arrest of a rhino horn trafficker<sup>63</sup>**

**Nepal**

**October 2014**

This old timer in the horn business was convicted in his absence 3 times and had in total been given 41 years of prison time.

The Chitwan National Park is home to one of the last rhino populations in Nepal. There are only a few hundred of them.

**Discovery of a rhino carcass<sup>64</sup>**

**Manas National Park, State of Assam, India**

**October 31, 2014**

Guards found the mutilated carcass of a male. This finding has occurred just after the theft in the neighboring district of Kokrajhar of 7 firearms from a special armed force in charge of countering trafficking, the Army's Eco Task Force. Autonomists from the National Democratic Front of Boroland could have committed the crime. In the last 3 years, 8 rhinos have been killed in the Manas.

**Seizure of 7 kg of rhino horns<sup>65</sup>**

**Noi Bai Airport in Hanoi, Vietnam**

**November 1, 2014**

Searches carried out on the persons of 3 Vietnamese travellers: 188,000 US\$. This is the second finding of horns in one week.

**Death of 2 people suspected of poaching <sup>66</sup>**

**Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India**

**November 10, 2014**

14 poachers have died since the beginning of the year. While the picture is not completely clear, an ax and a horn appear to be in the background to the left.



**Seizure of a rhino horn (1 kg), arrest of 3 people and seizure of a firearm <sup>67</sup>**

**Balipara, State of Assam, India**

**November 12 2014**

**Seizure of a rhinoceros horn and an arrest<sup>68</sup>**

**District de Jalpaiguri, West Bengal, India**

**November 12, 2014**

After the poaching of a rhinoceros on October 17, the police visited a suspect's house found a horn. It was subjected to genetic analysis.

**Poaching of one rhino<sup>69</sup>**

**Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, State of Assam, India**

**November 15, 2014**

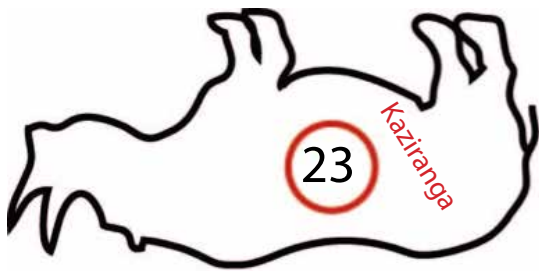
This is the second since January 1, 2014 (see " On the trail " n°4 p.69). He was shot toward the end of the night in the Hahsora Forest. Pobitora covers 38 km2, of which half is a natural habitat for unicorn rhinos.



### Poaching of one rhino<sup>70</sup>

**Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India  
November 19, 2014**

The young adult was found wounded by guards in a very remote edge of the park. The victim could not be treated on site. She died several hours later, at dawn. The horn was not stolen.



### Rhino breeding<sup>71</sup>

**Sun River National Park, Yunnan Province, China  
November 2014**

China observes very closely 7 white African rhinoceroses (*Ceratotherium simum*). "The horns of a female grew 7 cm in 1 year and a half." "In view of the currently identified hormone levels, they could begin to reproduce within 2 years." This rhino breeding test presented as a reintroduction program is experienced in the Sun River National Park in Pu'er. The last China rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is said to have been hunted back in 1957.



### Death of a man suspected of rhino poaching<sup>72</sup>

**Petuli Bari, State of Assam, India**

**December 2, 2014**

The presumed poacher was killed in the night. He left behind a gun, ammunition and a motorcycle.



### Poaching of 3 rhinos<sup>73</sup>

**State of Assam, India  
December 2014**

1 in the National Park Rajiv Gandhi Orang. The post of Divisional Forest Officer has been vacant for several months. The victim is an adult female.

2 in Kaziranga a hundred km from Orang.

At the same time, the Indian Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change answers the question of Shri Ajay Sancheti, a member of the Indian Council of States:

- Special support is given to the State of Assam so that monitoring is ensured 24h / 24 in the state national parks.

- A Rhino Task Force is operational.

- Penalties are now more severe for offenders.

- Rangers are now allowed to shoot if they deem necessary. Their immunity is guaranteed.

- The flow of information between different departments and at all levels is strengthened.

- 7 cases of rhino poaching were sent to the Central Bureau of Investigation.

The Minister also provided a summary of rhino poaching since 2011 in the Park of Kaziranga.

2011	2012	2013	2014 (15.12.2014)
3	11	27	26

### Seizure of a rhino horn (650 g) and arrest<sup>74</sup>

**Bokajan, State of Assam, India**

**December 12, 2014**

650 g were in his pocket. He was caught near the fish market. He told a fib that did not convince anyone, the first stone of an argument which might cast doubt on his trial. "I was going to visit my sick father. A stranger gave me a small package. He asked me to stick around and said he would return in a moment but did not come back."



### Seizure of a horn and arrest of a suspect<sup>75</sup>

**Hanoi, Vietnam**

**December 17, 2014**

### Conviction for illegal trafficking of 7 rhino horns (13.431 kg)<sup>76</sup>

**Zhanjiang, Guangdong Province, China**

**December 2014**

The passengers were returning from Africa. One of them assures that he brings back seafood in his luggage in memory of his trip. In fact, the contents are the profits of crime. He is sentenced to 13 years in prison.





## Poaching of a rhino and death of a ranger <sup>77</sup>

Orang National Park, State of Assam, India

December 31, 2014

Rapidly, the investigation led to the arrest of one of the victim's colleagues. His conflicting versions of the event, his presence at the scene, his scheming to delay the arrival of rescue officials and the work of a tracking dog pose serious suspicions about Giasuddin Ahmed and an accomplice who disappeared.



## EUROPE

### The inseizable Rathkeale Rovers. <sup>78</sup>

In January 2010, Michael O'Brien and his brother Jeremiah O'Brien had been arrested at the Shannon airport with 8 horns worth 500.000 €, antiques. In March 2013, they pleaded guilty and left free the Ennis Court room (County of Clare, Ireland) with only upon them a 500 € fine each for import of antiques to the United Kingdom without their original certificates. According to their lawyer, the O'Brien brothers had brought to the United Kingdom the rhino horns that had been given to them by a Portuguese antique dealer, a certain M. Hernandez, for an in-depth expertise. After having accomplished this part of their mission, their intention was to send them back by the appropriate means to their rightful owner.

On the October 1, 2014, according to the Irish newspaper Herald, Michael O'Brien, 29 years old, was stopped at the Frankfurt Airport along with 2 Chinese citizens with whom he was negotiating the sale of an unknown number of horns. Irish police, warned by Interpol, was not able to immediately confirm the exact identity of the Irish citizen arrested in the lobby of a hotel near the Frankfurt airport – and with reason. Business Week, in a long report published in January 2014, reported that the Rathkeale Rovers had several O'Brien clans, the Kerry O'Briens, the Turkey O'Briens, the Pa Turkey O'Briens, the Bishop O'Briens. Homonyms are plenty inside the Rathkeale Rovers nebula from that fathers, sons, and cousins carry the same names. Michael and Jeremiah O'Brien are from the Bishop O'Brien clan.

On December 1, 2014, 13 members of the Rathkeal Rovers who had been arrested in September 2013 in many different areas in the United Kingdom within the course of a coordinated operation were charged with theft of antique including rhino horns in museums and auction rooms for a total value of 15 million pounds, or 24 million US\$. Right after, the Birmingham Court let out 11 suspects on bail. The trial, which will last 8 weeks, is scheduled for the end of April 2015.

On December 29, 2014, a certain Richard O'Brien filed a complaint for defamation against Business Week and Adam Higginbotham, author of the

report on the Rathkeale Rovers. The complainant is in the article called the "King of Rathkeale Rovers." He claims that Business Week made a mistake in saying that 4 rhino horns were found by British police in his caravan. According to him, it was in his nephew's caravan that the horns were found. Richard Kerry O'Brien notes that his reputation as an expert in antiques has been ruined and demands \$20 million US in damages from Bloomberg Business Week. Richard Kerry O'Brien's son is named Richard Kerry O'Brien. He was arrested in November 2010 in the United States for rhino horn trafficking and put in jail for 6 months.

"On the Trail" recounts the Rathkeale Rovers' International career in issues 1, 2, 3 and 4.

### Indictment of 16 people for rhino horns trafficking <sup>79</sup>

Prague, Bohemia Province, Czech Republic  
December 2014

*Business Day* reveals that 16 Czech citizens are charged in a poaching international conspiracy involving Dawie Groenewald in South Africa and Vietnamese rhino horns buyers (see p.71 and "On the trail" n° 6 p.62). The European citizens were only nominees to fool CITES and its national offices. Instead of a hunt with its stalking and rites, instead of regular trophies brought back by hunters and set out in their funeral homes, only the horns were shipped with a certificate issued by Out of Africa Adventures, South Africa. A clumsy reference to a final destination in Vietnam attracted the attention of Czech customs. In truth, the rhinos were victims of summary executions by fake Czech hunters and local professionals in the Groenewald couple reserve in Prachtig. In South Africa, the trial of Groenewald is scheduled for August 2015.

#### From the crime scene to the courtroom <sup>80</sup>

The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) publishes guidelines on methods and procedures for ivory sampling and laboratory analysis.

These specifications on precautions to take and analyses to realize in order to collect and preserve evidence, fingerprints and ballistic data, identify the origin of seizures and facilitate the identification of ivory trafficking suspects may be used for other animal materials.

The arrest of suspects marks a decisive advance in the course of an investigation. However, the courts often consider that the investigative elements are not totally conclusive and the suspects' lawyers have a good chance to step into the judges doubts. In the worst case, at the end of the investigation, the file seems too weak to the police and to the judge and thus the complaint is not investigated further.

# Elephants

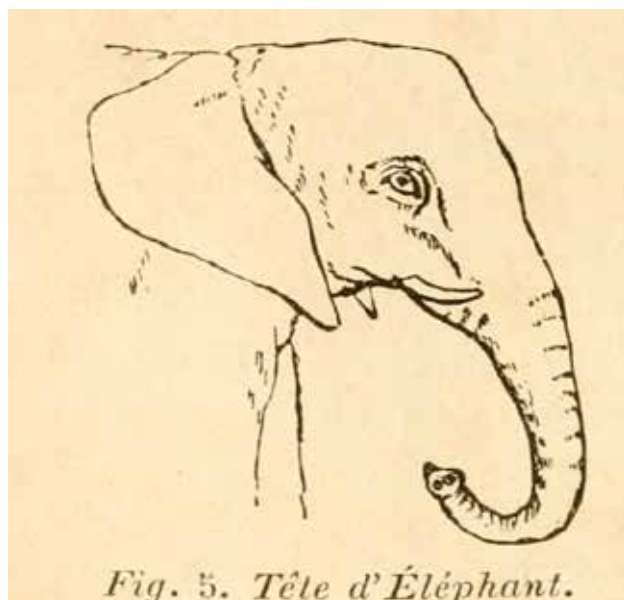
The African elephant, *Loxodonta Africana*, is listed in CITES Appendix I, except populations from South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe which are in Appendix II. The Asian elephant, *El-ephas maximus*, is listed in Appendix I.

## The seizure of ivory in 2014 is equal to 2,750 elephants

Using the average weight of 4.5 kg per tusk.  
The seizures represent 10% of global traffic.  
The 8005 seized ivory articles of which the weight was not communicated have not been included in the total.

## On the Trail n°7 Black market raw ivory quotation from media or customs sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref
Africa	Cameroon	2 087	14
	Kenya	2232	17
	Kenya	1003	18
	Kenya	1 055	34
	Gabon	174	37
	Tanzania	1 000	46
	South Africa	264	58
	Tanzania	1 910	59
Asia	India	3745 to 4993	77
	China	6911	90
	India	236	103



## AFRICA

### Poaching of an elephant<sup>1</sup>

Ol'ari Nyiro Conservation Zone, Laikipia County, Kenya

October 2014

Dark months go by in the Laikipia Reserve under the patronage of the Kuki Gallmann Foundation. This is the second one killed this year. Without a doubt he was poisoned, just like the first one. Recently recognized as a KBA (Key Biodiversity Area), Laikipia is invaded by farmers and roaming herds. Thousands of hectares are burnt down. Erosion begins. The 2 tusks were found by the side of the victim, a 25 year-old female.



© Gallmann Fondation

### Poaching of an elephant<sup>2</sup>

Mara north, Narok County, Kenya

October 2014

An attempted rescue was led by a KWS, David Shel-drick Wildlife Trust team joint team. The elephant collapsed with a spear stabbed into his leg.



© Mara Elephant Project - Escape Foundation

### Conviction for elephant poaching<sup>3</sup>

Natitingou, Atakora Department, Benin

October 7, 2014

The judicial outcome is set after the seizure of 56 kg of ivory (see "On the Trail" n°6 p.81). After the 2 accused were sentenced to 3 years imprisonment, it was the 5 accomplices' turn to receive the same prison term. They will each have to pay a fine equal to 968 US\$ and 3,872 US\$ in damages to the benefit of the Cenagref (Centre National de Gestion des





Ressources de Faune). One of them, Valentin Tankouanou, is a Cenagref agent. He would poach in the Pendjari parc.



#### **Poaching and butchering of 5 elephants<sup>4</sup>**

**Quirimbas National Park, Province of Cabo Delgado, Mozambique**

**October 7 and 8, 2014**

Poachers and villagers, they play the same game. 5 elephants are killed in 48 hours. At least 2 of them were chopped up down to the bone. See "On the Trail" n°6 p.86 "Elephants in Mozambique".



#### **Poaching of an elephant<sup>5</sup>**

**Loita road, Narok County, Kenya**

**October 8, 2014**

Narok County is still a ferocious place. The elephant tumbled down the hill and collapsed, hit by a poisoned spear.

#### **Poching of 2 elephants<sup>6</sup>**

**Near Aitong, Narok County, Kenya**

**October 10, 2014**

2 days after it happened to an anonymous elephant in Narok, Jacinta was also killed. Her tusks were stolen. 500 m away, the body of a second victim was found, but the tusks were still there. Both were hit in the chest with poisoned spears.



#### **Seizure of 4 tusks and arrest<sup>7</sup> Niassa Reserve, Mozambique**

**October 11, 2014**

2 people, 4 tusks: Set side by side, they evoke an adult female elephant followed by a young one.



#### **Poaching of an elephant<sup>8</sup>**

**Maji Moto Zone, Narok County, Kenya**

**October 2014**

This time he was killed with small caliber bullets. His death was probably very slow. Scars from old gunshot wounds prove that poachers have more than once already tried to get him.

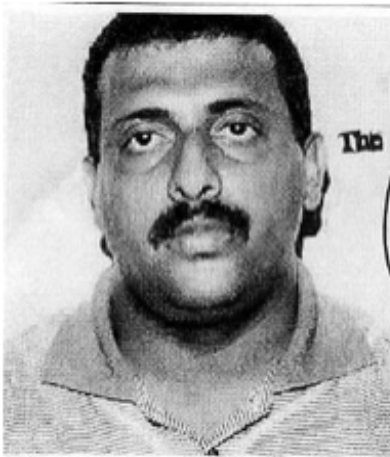


### Arrest warrant for ivory poaching<sup>9</sup>

Finally Kenyan Justice is hunting down the man suspected of being the mastermind of the big case of the Mombasa garage (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 81).

He who calls himself Ali is also the subject of an Interpol red notice, a sort of universal arrest warrant that makes him liable for arrest in the entire world.

Paula Kahumbu, the director of Wildlife Direct, is satisfied: "We know it is the governments' responsibility to call upon Interpol and we are pleased that Kenya has taken this initiative that will facilitate the trial of Ali Feisal Mohamed."



### Conviction for elephant poaching<sup>10 and 11</sup>

Kenya  
October 2014

He had killed the elephant with a spear; released on bail at first, he has in the end been sent to prison for 7 years. He had been arrested with the tusks in his hands in the surroundings of Amboseli Park last year (Cf "On the Trail" n°6 p.103).

Is release on bail condemned? Hopefully in Kenya it will be less and less accepted by judges. An informational working group organized by KWS and AWF (Africa Wildlife Foundation) brought together at least 35 judges, treasury officers and district administrators around the Amboseli and Tsavo national parks in July. They were all informed of the importance of stopping the trafficking of ivory and rhinoceros horns in their areas of jurisdiction, of the complexity of the financial stakes and the new sanctions foreseen by the new fauna laws in Kenya. All of the parties taken for trafficking can receive a maximum of 7 years in prison.



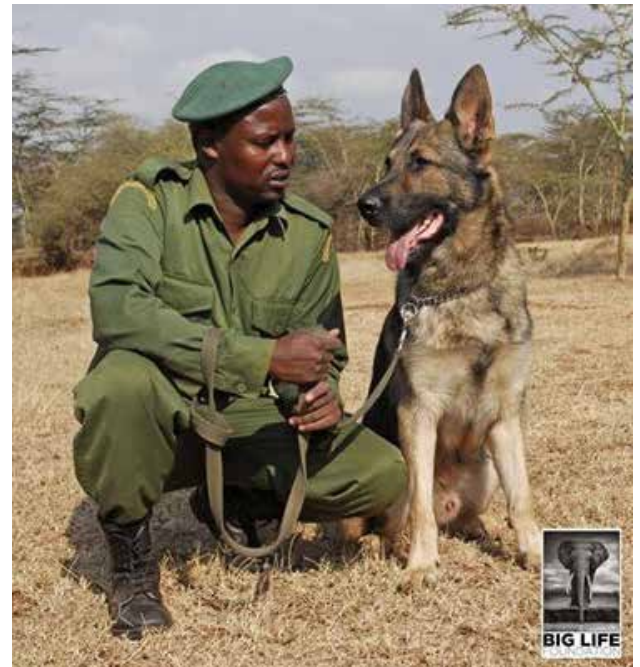
### Poaching of one elephant and arrest<sup>12</sup>

Region of Arusha, Tanzania

October 15, 2014

A shot broke out at the beginning of the night in the hills. Guards from the reserve joined by those from TANAPA (Tanzania Natural Parks) were immediately called in. The German shepherds turned out to make the decisive contribution. Rocky and his new team mate Rosdas were able to follow the trail from the dead body, unfortunately, to the criminals and to lead after several hours up to the home of a villager who ended up having to admit that in the middle of the night two men came to him for help. That needed, he said, to charge their cell phones. Supplementary information led to the arrest of the 2 suspects. They killed for nothing. They didn't have the time to cut the long veteran's tusks measuring 1.7 m and weighing 60 kg each.

Elite sniffer dogs from the Big life Foundation have their headquarters West of the Kilimanjaro. The KDU (Kilimandjaro Dog Unit) can be deployed in the Serengeti, Tarangire and Manyara Parks.



### REPEATED OFFENSE

Conviction for illegal possession of 3 elephant tusks<sup>13</sup>

Windhoek, Region of Khomas, Namibia

October 17, 2014

It's his choice: either he pays a fine of N\$ 20,000, or 1,768 US\$, or spends 3 years in prison. Petrus was involved in the trafficking of 3 tusks. He served as a transporter in exchange for the promise of a reward of N\$ 1,500, or 132 US\$. He pleaded guilty unlike the 3 other mates from Congo. One of them, Mashala, released on bail in 2012 is a repeat offender. He has been caught red-handed in the well-known ivory trafficking case in the northern suburbs of Windhoek on June 11, 2014.





## REPEATED OFFENSE

### Seizure of 39 tusks (91 kg)<sup>14</sup>

Djoudj, South Region, Cameroun

October 2014

The operation set up by the eco guards from MIN-FOF (Ministry of Forest and Fauna) took place 7 km from Djoudj. The trafficker is well known. He had already been arrested twice in the past and ... then released. Will he be let out a third time? The owner of the truck was also arrested.

The value of the seizure is estimated at 190,000 €, or 2,088 € per kilo. Each tusk has a mean weight of 2.33 kg. The elephants that were killed were young. Tusks from forest elephants are straighter than those from elephants in the savanna. They use them to cut through the dense vegetation.



### Arrest of 6 people suspected of illegal possession of ivory and corruption<sup>15</sup>

Gauteng Province, South Africa

October 21, 2014

6 suspects were arrested. 3 of them are police inspectors from the Hillbrow police station. They were caught red-handed, in possession of the ivory after transactions with 3 "civilians," one of whom hung himself in his cell while in custody.

The spokesperson for the provincial police declared that police officials were determined to tackle corruption within their ranks. "All the suspects were arrested by police officers serving public interest."



Hillbrow police station

### Arrest of a former ranger accused of illegal possession of 100 gr of cyanide<sup>16</sup>

Victoria Falls, North Matabeleland Province, Zimbabwe

October 21, 2014

100 gr = 6 beautiful elephants.

The ex-ranger for his defense says it's the police that put the cyanide there. "I was shocked when they told me they found cyanide in my car because I had cleaned it in the morning and there was nothing," claims Fema. The police have quite a different story. The park administration had not long before received in its suggestion box an anonymous letter detailing Fema's habit of transporting cyanide in his car. That's why at the first opportunity his car was searched. The cyanide was under the driver's seat.



### Court hearing for illegal possession of a tusk (2kg)<sup>17</sup>

Kilgoris, Narok County, Kenya

October 22, 2014

His defense is that he had found a tusk in the bush and that he was in the process of carrying it to the local KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service) station as required. The value of the 2kg of findings is estimated at 400,000 Sh, or 4,465 US\$.

### Seizure of 44.5 kg of ivory<sup>18</sup>

Rumuruti, County of Laikipia, Kenya

October 2014

The value of this seizure is estimated at 4 million Sh, or 44,653 US\$, for a mean price per kilo at 1,003 US\$.

### Poaching of an elephant<sup>19</sup>

Maasai Mara, Narok County, Kenya

October 2014

He was nursed but not quite saved. He had 4 open spear wounds, including one on the abdomen and one on the right flank. After waiting a night for the arrival of the veterinarians, a night complicated by the arrival of other elephants, the victim was able to be treated locally. The veterinarians aren't sure the elephant will make it. The lying down position kept for several hours complicates matters for an animal that weighs 2 to 5 tons.



**Discovery of an elephant carcass<sup>20</sup>**  
**Yankari Game Reserve, State of Bauchi, Nigeria**  
**October 26, 2014**

The dried body looks more like an elephant costume than a real elephant. The tusks were ripped off.

Forest elephants (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) live in small groups dispersed in the south. Savanna elephant population numbers have declined by 50% in less than 20 years. There are likely fewer than 500 individuals. One remaining herd is still living in the north. Migrating groups travel between Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon. 3 of them have just disappeared.



**Seizure of 9 kg of ivory and arrest<sup>21</sup>**  
**Bujumbura International Airport, Bujumbura**  
**Mairie Province, Burundi**  
**October 26, 2014**

The man from Mali was hiding the ivory in his luggage. There have been no more elephants in Burundi beginning at least 10 years ago. The smuggler was going to fly Kenya Airways to Asia. The PANA press agency reports that Bujumbura International Airport also registered last year trafficking of some curious items, such as the case of an Italian citizen who attempted to smuggle out about ten human skulls toward Asia. A more usual trafficking of ore and drugs is regularly reported, both at entry and departure points. Bujumbura is at the heart of a Great Lakes sub-region rich in mineral and plant resources. On April 30, 2013, 300 kg of ivory were seized in Hong Kong. The load had arrived by airway coming from Burundi. It was being sent to Singapore.



**Poaching of an elephant<sup>22</sup>**  
**Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya**  
**October 22, 2014**



The mother was poisoned. The female young elephant, 2 years old, stayed with her mum for 24 hours.



Then she followed the elephant had trying to suck on another mother, but to no avail. The plight of orphans is a side effect of poaching, secondary but still critical. The young generation embodies the slight survival chance of the species.

The adaptation of orphan elephants to their new lives and the interruption of breastfeeding are done in 3 phases in Kenya under the authority of the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust:

1 - Emergency nursery: Orphans are nourished by attentive guardians available 24/7. Beware, some make a kind of hunger strike. Total stress. Fatal issue.

2 - Rehabilitation Centre. At the age of 2, orphans are transferred to the Tsavo park where they gradually make contact with the natural environment.

3 - Release a few years later via the integration into a group qualified to "adopt" a newcomer.





**Escape of 2 suspects in elephant poaching<sup>23</sup>**  
**Mecula, Niassa Province, Mozambique**  
**October 27, 2014**

The 2 poacher big wigs arrested in September 2014 (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 104) managed to escape by night through a window in the toilet room in the Mecula police station while they were being transferred to Lichinga for trial. The 2 men who had been wanted for arrest for several years have without a doubt crossed the border to Tanzania. The renewed rigor of the recent anti-poaching and anti-trafficking in wildlife policy in Mozambique is seriously weakened. "These bandits think they are untouchable," laments the local representative of the Wildlife Conservation Society.



Paulo Nyenje



Antonio Bernardo

**Conviction for the traffic of 4 tusks (30 kg)<sup>24</sup>**  
**Cotonou, Littoral Department, Benin**  
**October 27, 2014**

If justice won out in Natitingou at the very north of the country, it was less fortunate at the other end in the capital of Cotonou. The 3 inter-African traffickers arrested in August carrying 4 tusks of a total of 30kg taken from elephants in Gabon, arriving in Benin via Nigeria, were only sentenced to 4 months in prison when usually the Benin penal code dictates 6 months to 5 years for such environmental crimes. The administration in charge of protecting fauna has filed an appeal of this decision.

**Seizure of ivory and arrest<sup>25</sup>**  
**Pointe-Noire, Pointe-Noire Department, Congo**  
**October 30 and 31, 2014**

The ivory held by the 3 dealers was painted, a relatively common camouflage technique used in Africa and Asia but little known in Congo.

**Poaching of 3 elephants<sup>26</sup>**  
**Region of Chari-Baguirmi, Chad**  
**October 2014**

Illegal logging in the troubled region bordering Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon is facilitating an uptake in elephant poaching.

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**Arrest of 2 elephant poachers<sup>27</sup>**

**Dete, North Matabeleland Province, Zimbabwe**  
**October 2014**

Sibanda and Ndhlovu (32 and 26 years old, respectively) were transporting nearly 7 kg of cyanide. It takes 15 g to poison an adult elephant that weighs 3 tons. These 2 small carriers belonging to a larger ivory gang in Zimbabwe were in direct contact with 2 cyanide dealers, Moyo and Saoga. They were paid via Ecocash, a payment platform. To do so, a school teacher would lend his cell phone so as to complicate tracing.



Hwange Park is the favorite terrain for cyanid delivered by the 2 criminals. Moyo had been sentenced in 2013 to 9 years in prison for ivory trafficking but had been released under bail in appeal, a practice that often takes place in Zimbabwe when the convicted party has protectors.

Not long ago, one of the main persons at the head of an ivory gang had been "intercepted" by pro elephant activists. There was a lot of cyanide in his car. The proof and witnessing were given to judicial authorities but the public attorney refused to follow charges. The man was heading to the Deka elephant game reserve (Deka Safari Area). Charlene Hewat, in a way an ambassador for rhinos and other pachyderms in Zimbabwe, is appalled: "There are 2 poachers in Victoria Falls who have just been let out on bail for 200 US\$."

750,000 US\$ have been spent by funders this year 2014 to protect elephants and rhinos in Zimbabwe.

**Discovery of 14 elephant carcasses<sup>28</sup>**  
**Chobe National Park, North Western Province, Botswana**

**Late October-early November**

The dead elephants were found in remote places hardly accessible on foot or with all-terrain vehicles. Yet, poachers have dawdled some time there. Bi-vouac traces were found. The elephants have been shot by semi-automatic weapons of the AK47 type. The Chobe River separates Botswana and Namibia. The Botswana police believe that the gang might have an amphibious vehicle and approach their Namibian counterparts on the case to search the operation's organizer and backer.



#### **REPEATED OFFENSE**

##### **Arrest of an elephant poacher<sup>29</sup>**

**Dedza-Salima Forest Reserve, Central Province, Malawi**

**November 2014**

The man with a dark expression and smooth wooden shoes is a specialist in tracking down wild animals and elephant killing. He was chased for several days and nights by lookouts from the State Reserve that covers 320 km<sup>2</sup>. The reserve is managed by the Wildlife Action Group NGO.

##### **Seizure of 2 tusks (12,5 kg) and arrest<sup>30</sup>**

**Trans Mara, Narok County, Kenya**

**November 4, 2014**

Caught in the act on November 4 with the pair of tusks, they were let out 7 days later on bail for the equivalent of 11,097 US\$. Both traffickers are pleading not guilty and were able to count on the support of a third party to pay the bail. The trial will be held in January 2015.

##### **Release of bombs<sup>31</sup>**

**Conservation Area Ol Ari Nyiro, Laikipia County, Kenya**

**November 6, 2014**

It does not get better in the sanctuary overseen by Kuki Gallman. 3 army helicopters dropped bombs on the hills where rebels suspected to be responsible for the death of 22 policemen in the Kapado sector had found shelter. The bombs set fire to the savannah. "Criminals engaged in poaching hide among the nomadic farmers illegally occupying our protected area."

##### **Theft of 1,335 kg of ivory<sup>32</sup>**

**Kampala, Central Province, Uganda**

**November 2014**

"On the Trail" has been worried for many months now about the security of governmental stocks of ivory, including those in Uganda. What was bound to happen did happen. The ivory was stolen. 5 high ranking officers are suspected. Once again, state vaults have not proved to be strong enough. Total value of the theft is estimated at 1.1 million US\$.

A routine inspection uncovered the wrongdoings. It isn't known whether the disappearance occurred by a single hold-up or if it was done by regular takings. State inspectors are suspected of having used the seized tusks as bait to attract potential traffickers and having then sold them for their own benefit. The executive director of the Uganda Wildlife Authority will be among the personnel suspended until the end of investigations.

##### **4 elephants killed<sup>33</sup>**

**Xinavane, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

**November 11, 2014**

The 4 elephants thought to be a couple and 2 young were crossing a sugar cane field around 4 p.m. This field belonged to the Tongaat Hulett company. Someone conforming to the systematic dramatization of such incidents in Mozambique (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 84 "Elephants in Mozambique") applied pressure despite the fact that the elephants' entry was perfectly calm and in passing, and more so onto land of an industrial nature posing no threat to revenue of valuables of one or more small farmers. According to the company's press release, the employees of Tongaat Hulett unsuccessfully tried to deter the elephants from the nearby river. The elephants then started to show signs of nervousness. The company at that moment then requested the intervention from specialized governmental forces who in turn tried to push the elephants away, which in the end wasn't possible mainly because of the great amount of people coming onsite, wanting to watch the scene. The decision was rapidly made to destroy the 4 rebels "in conformity with international standards of procedure on man-elephant conflicts," adds the sugar company press release. Investigations led by the @Verdade newspaper bring decisive additional information to the proceedings of events. The killing of the 4 elephants was carried out both by governmental forces and 2 excited locals known to practice hunting on large animals and underground bounty hunters, Goulap father and son.

The ivory was "temporarily secured" in the town of Magude. The elephants were butchered by the villagers.

8 more elephants were still present in the surroundings of the Tongaat Hulett sugar cane fields. The South African company has elephant blood on its sugar. Calls for boycott are echoing.

Tongaat Group Limited is listed in the Johannesburg and London stock exchange. The company works in the areas of cotton, restaurants, agro-food, aluminium, public construction work and real estate. The main activity today is sugar, with an annual production of 1.5 million tons. Tongaat considers that sugar is an industry of the future and bets on a rise in consumption rates per capita in all countries of Africa, in particular Mozambique. Tongaat exports its products to the European Union, where it benefits from a zero quota access free of taxes for sugar and other products from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Swaziland. The most known brands are Hulett's, Blue Crystal and Marathon.

By 2018, Tongaat hopes to approach 2 million tons of annual production of sugar. The company therefore needs to annex new wetlands and pass contracts with "small farmers". Except for the ritual mentioning of sustainable development, no policy appears to have been enacted to indicate any sensitivity toward the environment in general and wildlife in particular.





**Seizure of 7.3 kg of ivory and arrest<sup>34</sup>  
Moi International Airport in Mombasa, Kenya  
November 12, 2014**

The commercial sailors were stopped at the airport. They had sailed on the *Kota Hening*. The container ship coming from Pemba in Tanzania was pinpointed as an easy passageway for ivory (see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 64 and "On the Trail" n°6 p. 84). The 2 pillaging sailors were going to fly to Bangkok via Dubai.



Following the arrest of the 2 navigators, the ship was searched thoroughly for 3 days in a Mombasa port. It's unbelievable that the 2 active links of this trafficking chain were let out on bail. Bail guaranteed by whom?



Singapore April 1, 2008

*Kota Hening* (ex-Southern Liliy 2, ex-Kota Hening). IMO 9278909. Container ship, 1080 evp. Length 159.5 m. Singapore flag. Classification society Nippon Kaiji Kyokai. Built in 2003 in Kochi (Japan) by Shin Kochi Jyuko, finished in Onishi by Shin Kurushima. Owner PIL Pacific International Lines (Singapore). Immobilized 34 days in 2012 in Pago Pago (Samoa Islands). Last known voyage Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania) on November 20, 2014, Porto Amelia (Mozambique, December 4), Mtwara (Tanzania, February 13, 2015).

**Africa to Asia ivory traffic  
Tanzania-China  
November 2014**

Either by chance or premonition, EIA illustrated its report and visit to Zanzibar with a picture of the *Kota Hening* from which 2 crew members have just been pinched at Mombasa airport with tusks. Beware of merchant ships and crews returning home after their shift.

The economic partnership between China and Tanzania results in the transitory implantation of thousands of workers involved in major infrastructure projects and the installation of Chinese traders, import-export specialists, in large and medium Tanzanian towns. Chinese communities in East Africa quickly appreciate every traffic opportunity and logistical possibility for exports into China. According to the latest EIA report published in November 2014, titled, "Criminallity, corruption and devastation of Tanzania elephants," even the Chinese military navy is called upon.

In its No. 4 (p. 81) issue, "On the trail" evokes the attempted infiltration of a certain Yu Bo escorted by 81 tusks in the port of Dar es Salaam. He intended to load the cargo on a ship bound for China. According to the EIA survey, the individual was about to drop the tusks aboard a ship of the Chinese military fleet performing an official visit in Tanzania.

In 4 years, the elephant population of Tanzania has dropped from 142,000 to 55,000. In the Selous Natural Park, which is larger than Switzerland, the number of elephants has dropped from 50,000 to 13,000. EIA puts the figure at 30 elephants poached daily. The report confirms that ivory is often associated with plastic waste or goods without value. The intention of traffickers is to reduce financial losses in the case of seizure. One expert met in Zanzibar says that an average of one container on 20 is seized on the road from Eastern Africa to Asia.

Full report: <http://eia-international.org/reports/vanishing-point-criminallity-corruption-and-the-devastation-of-tanzanias-elephants>

**Poaching of an elephant<sup>36</sup>  
Wei Wei Reserve, West Pokot County, Kenya  
November 13, 2014**

Jumbo was killed in Pokot County. Poachers could have come from nearby Uganda but they could also be Kenyan. Last year, 100 kg of tusks were found in Kacheliba and 2 suspects were arrested.

### Poaching of an elephant<sup>35</sup>

**Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya  
November 2014**

Tim, 45, narrowly escaped. The gray and white living monument was saved in 25 minutes. Anesthetic, extraction of the poisoned arrow, wound disinfection, clay plaster: Tim is still among us and has not met yet in the elephants paradise Satao ("On the trail" No.5 p. 89), Bull Mountain ("On the trail" No.5 p. 86) or the late Isilo ("On the trail" n°.4 p. 84).



### Seizure of 8 elephant tusks (33 kg) and arrest<sup>37</sup>

**Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon  
November 15, 2014**

He says, "This bag isn't mine." "I didn't know what was in it." "I was going to Libreville to sell the merchandise."

These 8 tusks on the tile floor are surrounded by shoes. Some weeks ago, they were in the forest worn by 2 lady elephants and their 2 babies.

Toukara Sambou Daouda had come from Koula-moutou 600 km away.



### Discovery of an elephant carcass<sup>38</sup>

**Arabuko Sokoke Forest, Kilifi County, Kenya  
November 16, 2014**

The body was covered with branches. It was 8 days old at least. The poachers used electrical traps. The silence with which they kill gave the victim no time to react. This sort of poaching is new in Arabuko, where the forest is home to a hundred elephants and 261 different species of butterflies.

### Seizure of elephant meat and pieces of partially protected species<sup>39</sup>

**Brazzaville, Department of Brazzaville, Congo  
November 18, 2014**



An officer of the Congolese Armed Forces, a customs officer and 3 accomplices were caught red-handed with a bag full of bush meat and elephant meat. In their pocket was a gun. The soldier's reputation had been tarnished long ago for laundering dirty ivory.

"They believed themselves to be above the law." "The chief tried to intimidate policemen by speaking of his supposed close relations with people of high rank positions," explained Naftali Honig, coordinator for the Project for the Application of the Law for Fauna. The offenders were sentenced to 5 years in jail.

### Conviction for trafficking of 7 kg of Ivory<sup>40</sup>

**Congo  
November 2014**





**Discovery of an elephant carcass<sup>41</sup>**  
**Lamai Wedge, Serengeti National Park, Tanzania**  
**23 November 2014**

Near the crossroads of the Cul-de-sac, the body did not show any signs of injury other than those from hyena teeth. That evening, another dead elephant was found in the Mara Triangle, the northwest section of the Maasai National Park. The Mara Triangle spreads out over 510km<sup>2</sup>, or a third of the national Park.

**Discovery of an elephant carcass<sup>42</sup>**  
**Yankari Private Reserve, State of Bauchi, Nigeria**  
**November 2014**

One more ghost of an elephant without tusk in the Yankari Reserve.



**Seizure of 2 pieces of elephant tusks<sup>43</sup>**  
**December 1, 2014**  
**Wamba, Samburu County, Kenya**  
 2 smugglers for 2 mismatched tusks torn from 2 elephants



**WANTED AND FOUND**  
**Arrest of an ivory trafficker wanted by Interpol and seizure of ivory jewelry<sup>44</sup>**

Zambia  
 December 2, 2014  
 One of the traffickers targeted by Interpol within the framework of Operation Infra Terra was caught thanks to reinforced inter African cooperation. Infra Terra targets known environmental criminals implicated in fishery trafficking and illegal trafficking of products from forests, wildlife and waste.



Ben Simasiku was arrested in Livingstone, Zambia. He is directly involved in the withholding of 17 sections of elephant tusks for a total weight of 115 kg in 2012 in Botswana. He had managed to escape to the other side of the Zambeze River. His photograph had been widely communicated. Information from a source part of the public eased his arrest. In his hideout where he was living, jewelry made of ivory was seized. He is expected to be extradited to Botswana.

**OPERATION INFRA TERRA**  
**Discharge of Qatar in Ahmed Kamran case and others<sup>45</sup>**  
**Moshi, Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania**  
**December 5, 2014**



Interpol is in pursuit of Ahmed Kamran, who in November 2010 organized in Tanzania the theft of 2 falcons, 2 servals, 2 impalas, 2 eagles, 3 elands, 4 giraffes, 4 hornbills, 6 oryx, 7 kori bustards, 5 springhares, 10 dik-diks, 20 Grant's gazelles, 68 Thomson's gazelles and a secretary bird. All these animals were destined to a private zoo and were by night embarked on an airplane belonging to the Qatari air force at the Kilimanjaro International Airport in Tanzania. Karman had been let out on bail and then disappeared. He could be in Pakistan, in Kenya or in Qatar.

Qatar acquitted: the Moshi Court considers that the plane of the armed forces of the emirate had respected all the necessary formalities at take-off from Kilimanjaro International Airport. "The crew of the aircraft is beyond reproach." Only Kamran Ahmed, a Pakistani official organizer of wildlife flight and theft and boarding of the animals on the aircraft, is found liable. In absentia, he was sentenced to 60 years in prison. Ahmed has been missing since his release on bail. 3 Tanzanian suspects were acquitted. This tall tale dates back to November 26, 2010 at dawn. The Qatar cargo plane was leaving Tanzania, bound for Doha. In 2012, Qatar acknowledged that stolen animals were still on its territory.

After this "beastnapping," the Minister of Tourism was disillusioned: "My Department is so rotten that I cannot rule out that giraffes have been exported with fake permits."

**Appearance for illegal possession of ivory <sup>46</sup>  
Magu District, Mwanza Region, Tanzania  
December 5, 2014**

The man referred to the Court is accused, with an accomplice on the run, of having illegally detained in the Serengeti Park tusks for a total weight of 10 kg and a value equivalent to US \$ 10,000.

**Seizure of 28 ivory bracelets and arrest <sup>47</sup>  
Togo  
December 2014**



© Ofir Drori

One can hear the alarm ring of bracelets against each other declaring the death of the elephants.

**Seizure of 2 elephant tusks <sup>48</sup>  
Cameroon  
December 2014**

Only the suitcase and the tusks remained in the hands of the police and LAGA investigators. The trafficker fled.

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**Seizure of ivory bracelets (43 kg) <sup>49</sup>  
Maputo International Airport, Mozambique  
December 8, 2014**

Let's say about 100g per bracelet, this case amounts to 430 bracelets in the little suitcase of a Thai "tourist", Pitak Nengnnyum, 42, bound for Bangkok via Johannesburg. This would not be his first attempt. Illegal processing workshops are at work in Mozambique. It would not be the first time he did it.



© Club of Mozambique

**Appearance for illegal possession of 6 elephant tusks <sup>50</sup>**

**Nyahururu, Laikipia County, Kenya  
December 8, 2014**

Releasable on bail for 2 millions Sh, or US \$ 22,326, the 2 men could not raise the money and remained in custody. The 6 tusks are estimated at US \$ 28,000. The trial will take place in February 2015.

**Conviction of poaching of an elephant <sup>51</sup>  
Mozambique  
December 2014**



2 Europeans are involved in this dirty business. A Frenchman, Julian Raymond, and a Portuguese citizen, Victor Ildefonso Anselmo, are working in conjunction with "Ideal Safari." These 2 professional hunters expatriated in Mozambique in June 2009 had killed an elephant out of season and without a license in Gorongosa National Park. The victim was carrying a radio collar. It was by locating signals from the electronic device that the police and the park officers came to the house of the 2 hunters in the city of Beira. They had thought themselves clever when they kept the collar. At their home, the authorities found an elephant foot, buffalo trophies, 5 tusks and the inability to prove the legality of this wildlife bric-a-brac. They were sentenced to several years in prison under the new law.

**Seizure of 2 ivory tips and arrest <sup>52</sup>**

**Sereolipi, Samburu County, Kenya  
December 2014**

He was on route to a business meeting with 2 tusks in his backpack, probably coming from poaching on Matthews Mountains range.



© Tom Lolosoli

**Seizure of 2 ivory blocks and an ivory bracelet and arrest <sup>53</sup>**

**King Shaka International Airport, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa  
December 2014**

She wore a bracelet and, worse, was carrying 2 cubes of ivory in her luggage. Stopped by customs, she tried immediate bribery, smugglers' last resort (884 US\$). It did not work. The value of the seized ivory is estimated at 1,000 US\$.



© Michael Cookson



### **Poaching of an elephant<sup>54</sup>**

**Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya**

**December 2014**

The victim is a young female, according to first observations made by rangers who rushed to the spot.

**Indictment of the Director General of the National Office for Protected Areas (OFINAP) for the disappearance of 5 elephant tusks (75 kg)<sup>55</sup>**  
**Dédougou, Boucle du Mouhoun Region, Burkina Faso**

**December 10, 2014**

Sibiry Y. Traoré, inspector for the water and forest services, is accused of "dissipation," in other words to have made disappear for his own profit or the profit of accomplices 5 elephant tusks for a total weight of about 75 kg. He had been nominated to this strategic position on April 17, 2013 (see "On the Trail" n°1 p.35).

**Theft of 31 pieces of elephant tusks<sup>56</sup>**  
**Livingstone, Southern Province, Zambia**  
**December 18, 2014**



A governmental stock was stolen. 10 people are suspected: 5 agents from the Zambia Wildlife Authority and 5 civilians, including a taxi driver.

14 tusk sections have not been found. They are on the run, with 2 suspects who are thought to be at the head of the network. Their identity and occupation are unknown.

17 tusk sections have already been found.

Total value on the black market in Zambia is of about 157,220 US\$. The theft took place during the night on the December 18.

They were under seal and kept in a secure place. The main entrance door was broken into. Livingstone smells of ivory and horn very close to Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe.

### **WANTED AND FOUND OPERATION INFRA TERRA**

**Arrest of an ivory dealer wanted by Interpol<sup>57</sup>**

**Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

**December 22, 2014**

A new suspect in environmental crime specialized in ivory was trapped by Interpol and inter-African cooperation. Feisal Mohamed Ali, a businessman, involved in the importation and exportation of

second-hand cars, owns a garage in Mombasa, Kenya, where more than 2 tons of ivory awaiting export were hidden (See "On the trail" n°5 p. 90 and n°6 p. 81). It's not easy to let out a fugitive wanted by Interpol. Feisal's release on bail was refused.



**Seizure of 5.2 kg of ivory<sup>58</sup>**

**Beit Bridge border post, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

**December 23, 2014**

The ivories were not in the luggage compartment but in the engine compartment of the bus coming from Zimbabwe and about to return to South Africa.

**Seizure of 22 pieces of elephant tusk (48,3 kg)<sup>59</sup>**  
**Mpanda, Region of Katavi, Tanzania**  
**December 24, 2014**

Katavi is the third national Park in Tanzania. Local police say the seized ivory is from 7 different elephants and weighs in total 48.3 kg. The tusks were being transported in a bus called Adventure that connects Mpanda to Kigoma.



**Seizure of 21 tusks and 9 sections of ivory (110 kg) and arrests<sup>60</sup>**

**Yen, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon**

**December 26, 2014**

The stock hidden in a Nissan corresponds to the poaching of at least 15 elephants. The 3 major ivory smugglers tried to soften police agents with the money they had on them in cash, a bundle equivalent to 4,300 US\$. Article 92 of the Forest law code sets for these 3 individuals a maximum penalty of 6 months imprisonment and Article 145 of the Penal code sets a maximum penalty of 10

years imprisonment for attempted corruption of a state agent. The road check took place at 3 in the morning on the Makokou-Lalara route.



**Seizure of 4 pieces of ivory (14 kg) <sup>61</sup>  
Kayole Junction, Nairobi, Kenya  
December 30, 2014**

The trio was carrying 4 large tusks on a motorcycle. It was stopped in its tracks by a patrol west of the capital.

**AMERICA**

**Resurrection of destroyed ivory <sup>62</sup>**

A call for proposals is open until March 31, 2015 by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW). It's an idea that has two sides to it. The idea is to conceive an educational and mobile facility, including one fundamental component that is 1.13 m3 of illegal ivory ground up in Denver on November 14, 2013. The goal is to inform the public on illegal trafficking in raw and carved ivory. The USFW's call insists on the following necessary security conditions: the drawings, canvases, models and other objects must imperatively be presented in such a way that the ivory "chips" resulted from their grinding may not be stolen. Also, the project must not present ivory in a decorative or esthetic manner. "On the Trail" believes there is already a sufficient amount of dead and live material for information on ivory trafficking. This sort of initiative could create a third category of marketable ivory: after raw and carved ivory, crushed ivory. Illegal networks already know what to do with it and how to make it into profit. To destroy ivory means to 1) grind it and 2) burn it in high temperature burning plants. That is what was done in Hong Kong and Paris.

Here are some possible uses of crushed ivory:

**ASIA**

**Explosion of the ivory trade in China <sup>63</sup>**

Save the Elephants and Aspinall Foundation prove it in a report by 2 experts of the market, Esmond Martin and Lucy Vigne. "It is China that holds the key to the future of elephants," according to Iain Douglas-Hamilton.

- The wholesale price of raw tusks has tripled in just four years since 2010.
- In Beijing, retail prices increased 13.5 times between 2002 and 2014. In Shanghai prices rose by a factor of 8 over the same period.
- The number of licensed factories and retail outlets in China has quadrupled in the last 10 years. In 2004, there were 9 factories and 31 authorised retail outlets. In 2013 there were 37 factories and 145 retail outlets.
- The most common ivory items on sale in the two cities were pendants and figurines, making up 48% of items in Beijing and 34% in Shanghai.
- Legal outlets are far outnumbered by illegal ones. In Beijing, at least 78% were illegal (121 out of 156 ivory outlets). In Shanghai, at least 89% were illegal (106 out of 119 outlets).
- The number of ivory items displayed in illegal outlets was smaller than that in the legal shops. 26.5% of items surveyed in Beijing and Shanghai were illegal by government definition.
- Mammoth tusk imports to China from Hong Kong (by far the largest source) have gone from an average of 9 tons a year between 2000 and 2003, compared to 31 tons between 2007 and 2013. The price of top-grade mammoth ivory has gone up from an average of \$350/kg in 2010 to \$1900/kg.

Full report:

[http://savetheelephants.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/2014\\_ChinaConservationChallenge.pdf](http://savetheelephants.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/2014_ChinaConservationChallenge.pdf)



Necklace on sale in Hong Kong HK\$685 (88 US\$)



Earrings  
HK\$480 (60US\$).



Bowls with chips encrusted in them seized in Congo



**Seizure of 83 kg of ivory. Arrest of 2 people <sup>64</sup>**  
**Guangdong Province, China**  
**September 2014**

Value: 340 million yuans, or 665,807 US\$.

**Discovery of an elephant carcass<sup>65</sup>**  
**Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary, Mondulkiri Province, Cambodia**  
**October 3, 2014**

10 years old. A bullet to the head. The 2 tusks stolen. The Phnongs go through the Park to collect resin. It is they who gave out the alert. The provincial authorities put the responsibility for the massacre on the park authorities who co-manage it along with the WWF. 2 adult elephants and a calf had been killed in October 2013 and poaching of gaurs and pangolins is very active. The park covers 2,250 km<sup>2</sup> and is home to about one hundred elephants. The Phnongs (also called Buong or Mnong) are a Cambodian ethnic group. It counts a population of nearly 30,000 people. Phnongs live off of farming, hunting, fishing, wood cutting and collecting resin. They practice animal sacrifices.

**Seizure of 300 kg of ivory <sup>66</sup>**  
**Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Malaysia**  
**October 4, 2014**

Formal denial by China: The so-called Pan Huang Lee, sender of the parcels from Bujumbura and seized in Kuala Lumpur, was not attached to the Chinese Embassy in Burundi. This false identity was supposed to ensure the inviolability of the 6 parcels under diplomatic immunity. The Burundi services bought the bait but Malaysian customs did not. "After verification, the name is unknown among the staff of the embassy and the Chinese community in Burundi," said Ambassador Yu Xuzhong in a press conference held in the capital of Burundi.



**Seizure of 4 tusks and 680 kg of elephant skin and arrest<sup>67</sup>**  
**Nga Yoke Kaung, Region of Ayeyarwady, Myanmar**  
**October 5, 2014**

7 members of the gang were caught by police in a forest hut. They had with them 4 ivory tusks and 680 kg of elephant skin to make bags and boots. An arsenal of steel pellets, bows, arrows and other hunting and trapping accessories were found in and around. Their accomplices apparently are on the run.

According to old and uncertain estimations dating back to 2006, there would be about 4000 domesticated elephants in the country for logging forest wood and just as many wild elephants.

**Seizure of 16 sections of tusks <sup>68</sup>**  
**Dubai, Dubai Emirate, United Arab Emirates**  
**October 2014**

The 2 smugglers "of Asian origin" were going home via Dubai and coming from Africa. They say they were asked upon departure by "an African man" to deliver the 2 pieces of luggage to someone he knew. The 2 "imprudent" travelers would have received 500 US\$ per bag.



**Seizure of ivory <sup>69</sup>**  
**Mysore, State of Karnataka, India**  
**October 12, 2014**

The 3 blokes, 40, 37 and 23 years old, were arrested during the night in the city suburbs. They had on them the equivalent of 1,622 US\$ in ivory.

**Arrest of a person suspected to be involved in the poaching of elephants<sup>70</sup>**  
**District of Sundergarh, State of Odisha, India**  
**October 2014**

This is a key link in the ivory trafficking chain. It was he who would procure the poison. He was in charge of covering the bullets with it, so as to be sure that if the elephant survived the gunshot wounds he would not survive the poisoning.

**Seizure of tusks and carved ivory (7,438 g) <sup>71</sup>**  
**Jiangmen, Guangdong Province, China**  
**October 2014**

Services surveying the transit of animals and foods seized the objects in a parcel that was supposed to contain a vase. This is the first time that EMS, a Chinese transport and package delivery company, is implicated in such trafficking. The package came from England and was addressed to a company in Jiangmen.



### **Seizure of 17 pieces of ivory (5.18 kg)<sup>72</sup>**

**Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, China**

**October 2014**

Registered as "pens boxes" from Portugal, the seizure is estimated worth 200,000 yuans (32,507 US\$).



### **Conviction for transport of ivory objects (4.4 kg)<sup>73</sup>**

**Haining, Zhejiang Province, China**

**October 2014**

During 3 days Yang wandered the Jinan flea market in search of ivory. He bought statues, bracelets, necklaces and various objects, spending a total of 24,000 yuans (3,900 US\$). He was arrested during his voyage back from Jinan to Fujian. According to official estimates, the objects he bought had a total value of 183,000 yuans (30,000 US\$). Yang was sentenced to 6 years prison and was forced to pay a fine worth 20,000 yuans (3,250 US\$).



### **Conviction for transporting ivory<sup>74</sup>**

**Kunming, Yunnan Province, China**

**October 2014**

Peng had swapped his watch worth 3,000 yuans (487 US\$) against an object made of African elephant ivory. He had hoped to sell it for a profit. The ivory was seized at the Kunming airport (Yunnan Province) on January 4, 2014, and Peng was accused of illegal transport of rare and endangered species. He was sentenced in the first court case to one year imprisonment and a fine of 20,000 yuans (3,250 US\$) and appealed the decision before the Intermediate popular court in Kunming. The second court suspended the prison sentence taking into account that the family had paid the fine.



### **Discovery of an elephant carcass<sup>75</sup>**

**Xishuangbanna Autonomous District, Yunnan Province, China**

**October 16, 2014**

He was killed with a "military" type firearm. The tusks were cut with a chainsaw. Wild elephants are gathered in the south of Yunnan, near the border to Myanmar and Laos in an area of 2500 km<sup>2</sup>. There were 400 in 2009; today there cannot be more than

200 to 250. To avoid conflicts with farmers, fences are being set up as an experiment and crops that do not attract the elephants are encouraged to be grown. In case of any loss, the farmers receive compensation, an insufficient one, according to them. Known poaching events are somewhat rare. The latest cases date back to 2012, 2008 and 2007. Rewards of 20,000 to 40,000 yuans, or 3,250 to 6,500 US\$, are promised to anyone who will help identify the guilty party. The last elephants' natural habitat in China is damaged by human activity and the elephants are under pressure of the interior market for ivory, the most active one in the world



### **Seizure of 588 pieces of ivory (490 kg)<sup>76</sup>**

**King Khalid International Airport, Riyadh Province, Saudi Arabia**

**October 18, 2014**

The caravan technique already spotted in "On the Trail" (see n°5 p. 101 and n°6 p.90) is here again in a transit airport. 18 passengers on the same flight coming from Africa and going to Asia - the final destination is yet unknown - had distributed the ton and a half of ivory cut into slices of tusk among all their luggage.



### **Seizure of an elephant tusk (6.5 kg) and arrest<sup>77</sup>**

**Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India**

**October 19, 2014**

The 3 young men (23, 23 and 36 years old) were driving in a Tata Sumo. They were coming from the Cittoor District (170 km). They are not poachers. They are dealers. They hoped to sell their stuff for 15 to 20 lakh Rs, which is the equivalent of 3,745 to 4,993 US\$ per kg.



**Seizure of 14 pieces of jewelry made of ivory<sup>78</sup>**  
**Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China**  
**October 2014**

Following the example of the Czech customs (see "On the Trail" n°3 p.55), Chinese customs officials uncovered the ivory inside pieces of industrial equipment. They were wrapped in aluminum foil. The lot was packed into the luggage and travelling with a passenger.



**Seizure of one ton of ivory<sup>79</sup>**  
**Port of Hai Phong, Hai Phong Province, Vietnam**  
**October 23, 2014**

The container was destined for the Huy Tuan Joint Stock Company. It was onboard the *Ability*. The tusks were hidden in bags full of rubber gloves. The port of Hai Phong is a hub. Ivory seizures have already taken place there in October 2013, May 2014 and August 2014 (see "On the Trail" n°3, 5 and 6). The container was to be re-exported to an Asian country, the name of which was not made public; the country of origin was similarly not revealed. Yet Malaysia, an important producer of rubber gloves can rightfully be suspected.



*Ability* (ex-Mol *Ability*, ex-Mol *Admiration*) OMI 9402500. A container ship, 1060 evp. Length 147 m. Under Panama flag. Registered by the Nippon Kaiji Kyokai. Built in 2006 in Hakata (Japan) by Hakata Zosen. Owner MOL (Mitsui OSk Lines) until October 2013 then Southern Route Maritime, S.A. & Nissen Kaiun Co., Ltd., (Japan). She sails in Asia, between Vietnam, China and South Korea. She regularly comes to Haiphong.

**Conviction for illegal transportation of ivory objects (4,392 g)<sup>80</sup>**  
**Haining, Zhejiang Province of China**



**October 2014**

Mr. Yang, 28, was arrested in Haining station in March 2014. He had purchased ivory items (necklaces, bracelets, balls, statues) in Jinan on an antiques market for 24,000 yuans or 3,925 US\$. Their real value is 183,000 yuans or 29,740 US\$. The ivories are African and Asian. He was sentenced to 6 years in prison and a 20,000 yuans (3270 US\$) fine.

**Seizure of 5 ivory statues and raw ivory<sup>81</sup>**  
**Cyprus**

**November 5, 2014**

International and internal smuggling: The ivories came from the north, where the 44 year old suspect "didn't know that ivory was forbidden."

**Seizure of 2 elephant tusks and arrest<sup>82</sup>**  
**Galle, South Province, Sri Lanka**

**November 8, 2014**

In the south of the island, 150 km from Colombo, the small truck was transporting flowers. In the middle of them there were 2 tusks over a meter long. Police estimate the seizure to be worth 7.5 million Rs, or 56,691 US\$.

**Wild elephants calves captured - Sri Lanka (suite)<sup>83</sup>**

After the report written by the Court of Audit warning of the situation regarding registration of domestic elephants in Sri Lanka and captures of baby elephants intended for domestication purposes (see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 97 and "On the Trail" n°6 p. 91), the Ministry in charge of the protection of wildlife and its appropriate direction is on the hot seat. It wasn't until October 2014 that official explanations reached the Court of Audit. These belated answers don't answer anything. On the contrary, they only add to the haziness and are unable to explain why the number of domestic elephants is rising when no birth has been registered, registration that is imposed by law.

The situation has reached a dead end. Private owners prefer to face the judicial risks of captures from the wild than to go by the natural cycle of reproduction. During the 5 years of pregnancy and nursing, the female will refuse to be on display and parade. In the presence of tourists, she becomes grumpy and the baby born in captivity cannot be used before 10 years in cultural, touristic, religious or festive animations. It's much faster to separate in the wild a baby elephants from his mother and the group with methods of stunning and panicking, projectors, distress signal rockets, firearm shots, ropes and transport in cattle trucks.

**Seizure of 20 kg of ivory and arrests<sup>84</sup>**  
**Kadamane Tea Estate, Karnataka, India**  
**November 9, 2014**

They work in a tea plantation. They would have discovered the carcass of an elephant in the forest nearby. Indeed, there was in the place described by the ivory inventors the remains of an elephant. An investigation is underway to determine the causes of death dated to about 3 months prior. All ivory found on a dead elephant should theoretically be declared immediately and handed over to the authorities.

**Seizure of silverware with ivory handles<sup>85</sup>**  
**Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, China**  
**November 2014**

The Wenzhou customhouse recently found 10 pieces of silverware with ivory handles in the mail. The excellent carving technique hints that the pieces are antique, more than 100 years old. The customhouse will keep the silverware for further inspection.

**Seizure of 10 kg of ivory<sup>86</sup>**  
**Luohu port, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**  
**November 2014**

At the Luohu port, the inspectors stopped a suspicious-looking woman pushing a baby stroller. Upon inspection, there were 10 kg of golden ivory under the baby's seat. The officials seized only the ivory.

**Indictment of an antique dealer for illegal sale of ivory<sup>87</sup>**  
**District of Xicheng, Beijing, China**  
**November 2014**

The antique dealer would have sold between 2012 and 2013 62,876 yuans, or 10,261 US\$, worth of carved ivory of illegal origin.

**Seizure of ivory<sup>88</sup>**  
**Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**  
**November 15, 2014**

Zhang is a Chinese man who has worked in Mozambique in the past 2 years. He bought one piece of elephant ivory because it was cheap in Africa. To avoid inspection, he cut the ivory in 3 pieces and escaped airport inspection, but he was unable to hide from the train station inspection. On November 15, when Zhang was passing the train station inspection point in the Guangzhou train station, he was stopped by the police. He looked suspicious since he hid his hands in his pockets. The police performed a full-body inspection and seized the ivories.

**Arrest of 2 people suspected of attempted poaching<sup>89</sup>**  
**Rajanapalli, State of Orissa, India**  
**November 17, 2014**

9 elephants had been spotted near where the 2 men equipped with isolators, bamboo stakes, an battery and electrical wires were arrested. 3 accomplices implicated in the aborted poaching endeavor are currently being searched for. The traps were going to be set across the elephant corridor.

**Seizure of 4 tusks and 283 ivory pieces for a total of 66 kg<sup>90</sup>**

**Pingxiang, Guangxi Autonomous Region, China**  
**November 18 and 19, 2014**

2 white cargo came from Vietnam. They were hidden in red wooden furniture. The habit is to import raw wood into China and turn them on hand to use the workshops' qualified skills and to avoid import taxes. Lin's practice, furniture wholesaler, surprised the customs and provoked extensive search in 2 successive deliveries. The catch is estimated at 2.8 million yuans, or US \$ 456,128 - US \$ 6911 per kg.

**Discovery of 2 Sumatran elephant carcasses<sup>91</sup>**  
**Tebo, Jambi Province, Indonesia**  
**November 2014**

Both of them had their brains taken in the middle of the Sumatra Island. Several empty cartridges were gathered on the crime scene near a palm oil plantation. The skulls were found nearby. The tusks are gone. Indonesia Elephant Conservation Forum confirms that Sumatran elephants will be extinct at the latest 30 years from now if nothing is done.

**Conviction for the purchase, transport and illegal sale of ivory<sup>92</sup>**  
**Beijing, China**  
**November 20, 2014**

10 people were involved in the purchase, transport, and sale of ivory worth more than 10,000,000 yuans (1,610,000 US\$). They cooperated to buy the ivory in Fujian, and resale it in Tianjin and Henan. The main suspect was convicted to 13 years and 6 months in prison and had to pay a fine worth 50,000 yuans (8,050 US\$). The other suspects were convicted to 5 to 13 years in prison.



**Discovery of an elephant carcass<sup>93</sup>**  
**District of Parsa, Central Development Region, Nepal**  
**November 21, 2014**

The male was found shot dead near the border with the Indian State of Bihar, 150 km from Katmandu.

**Seizure of 28.13 kg of ivory<sup>94</sup>**  
**Hohhot, the autonomous region of Inner Mongolia, China**  
**November 2014**

The Hohhot airport inspection found 4 suspicious suitcases thanks to the x-ray scans. Upon opening the bags, the inspectors found 100 ivory bracelets and 80 ivory materials, totaling 28.13 kg and worth 1,170,000 yuans (190,596 US\$) or 6,807 US\$/kg.



**Poaching of an elephant<sup>95</sup>**  
**Jajpur District, State of Odisha, India**  
**November 25, 2014**

The male elephant of about 15 years old was hit with many bullets. He couldn't walk anymore. He was transported from Jajpur to Kandar (100 km) to receive care. After 3 days, he died.

In one week, 3 elephants were poached, including 2 by electrocution. Since the month of April, the death toll in the area is 7 dead.

**Conviction for the acquisition and illegal sale of 91 ivory pieces<sup>96</sup>**

**Jing'an district, Shanghai, China**  
**November 2014**

Chen bought 91 ivory pieces from March to April of this year to sell in his own antique shop. The ivory pieces are worth 1.5 million yuans (244,354 US\$). He regretted his acts in court, but was still convicted to 5 years in prison.



**Seizure of ivory<sup>97</sup>**  
**Thailand**  
**November 2014**



Several searches with excavators have uncovered subterranean tunnels concealing hidden treasures in 11 homes owned by Pongpat Chayapan, the former director of criminal investigations of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Searches of the homes of two of his deputies brought to light cars, motorcycles and large sums of money. One of his deputies is said to have committed suicide November 20. 4 other stooges, working for Pongpat or private chauffeurs, were also arrested, as well as were 5 civil servants. The global loot is evaluated at first sight at 40 million US\$. This sum comes from gifts and kickbacks in exchange for promotions at the heart of the police force, complicity in illegal fiscal activities and secret trafficking fuel. Elephant tusks and hundreds of inspirational Buddhist and Hindu statues, stamp collections, bars of gold and jewelry were seized. A second expert

assessment allowed for the authentication of several real Cambodian ancient relics that are more than 1,000 years old. Many of the objects deemed precious are replicas. Pongpat Chayapan, an art amateur, was sold out by those who he and his accomplices had corrupted.



**Seizure of ivory bracelets (1.69 kg)<sup>98</sup>**  
**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**  
**December 1, 2014**

The man was returning from Hong Kong with two large crisps bags. He claimed the bags contained his groceries. In the middle of the crisps, there was ivory.

**Conviction for passive bribery including ivory<sup>99</sup>**  
**Shanghai, China**  
**December 2014**



Wang Jun, former deputy director of Songjiang District near Shanghai, was used to receiving bribes as the head of the tourist office. This passive corruption was done in the form of gold, cash and ivory. In "gifts" he has received at least the equivalent of US \$ 307,000. In return, he was sentenced

to 10 years in prison.

**Seizure of ivory and arrest<sup>100</sup>**  
**Thane, State of Maharashtra, India**  
**December 2014**

The tusks came from the south. The duo (33 and 52 years old) was arrested near the train station and kept in custody for 2 days, as requested by the local magistrate. Thane is 20 km from Bombay.

**Trafficking of wild elephants<sup>101</sup>**  
**Kerala, India**  
**December 2014**

Are Kerala's domestic elephants immortal? In 2008, there were 702; in 2014, 691. The female elephants are a minority in domestic livestock and rarely pregnant. The capture of elephants in the forest has been banned in Kerala since 1972. Maintaining the number of 700 is mysterious to say the least. According to Heritage Animal Task Force, the figures presented by the Minister of the Environment of the state prove that domestic elephants are covertly imported. The board of Animal Welfare NGO is also puzzled: the population of domestic elephants is stable when it should regress.

Assam state could be the purveyor of young wild elephants captured in traps and domesticated then secretly delivered to the "elephant operators."

### **Control of ivory outlets <sup>102</sup>**

#### **Chatuchak weekend market, Bangkok, Thailand December 27, 2014**

See clearly: hot districts of Bangkok are visited by environmental services. This is to see how the ivory retailers apply the new law on the origin and traceability of ivory items sold (See "On the trail" n°6 p. 94). The sale of African ivory is prohibited. The sale of domestic elephant ivories must first be declared. The inspection shows that 4 of the 7 retailers have closed shop. Of the 256 retailers known to the Thai government, 72 have gone out of business. Let's hope they will not all open on the black market.

### **Arrest of an ivory trafficker<sup>103</sup>**

#### **Border between the State of Odisha and the State Jharkhand, India Decembre 29, 2014**

Afzal Beg seems to be a big fish. He is being questioned by federal police. Several Indian States are after him. "We believe the suspect would organize poaching, collect the ivory and then introduce it onto the black market," say investigators. They are asking that custody be prolonged from 3 to 5 days. Afzal Beg bought ivory from poachers for 15,000 Rs, or 236 US\$, per kilo.

### **Seizure of perles and bracelets made of ivory<sup>104</sup> Pingxiang, Guangxi Autonomous Region, China December 30, 2014**

5000 g of pearls hidden in porcelain vases and 300 bracelets more than likely coming from Vietnam.



## **EUROPE**

### **Conviction of an auction house for illegal sale of an ivory piece<sup>105</sup>**

#### **London, England, United Kingdom October 13, 2014**

Follow up in the Chiswick Auctions case, the auction house whose failures were mentioned in "On the Trail" n°5 p.97.

William Rouse admits to an error in dating the "ancient piece carved into an elephant procession." It was not pre-1947, qualification that enabled sale without requesting any certificates. The worked tusk really dated back to the 60s. "We are being

used as a scape goat." "The law should better turn its attention to all those who are actively trafficking modern ivory."



### **Gift of 4 elephant tusks (38 kg) at the Museum of Orleans <sup>106</sup>**

#### **Île-de-France, France December 2, 2014**

It was believed that ivory seized in France was destined for destruction. It was an illusion. The Natural History Museum of Orleans received 4 Christmas gifts. The generous donor is the divisional head of customs from West Paris. The tusks were seized in June 2013 in the cases of an expatriate in Africa stored in an international mover. René Rosoux, scientific director of the Museum of Orleans, is very happy. "They are spectacular. We'll put them in our reserves. The last time we recovered some was 8 or 9 years ago. When the museum will be renovated, we will create a window on the ivory trafficking." Please note that considering the state of the budgets of the Ministries of Culture and Ecology, it's not likely that the Museum of Orleans will be rebuilt with reinforced windows to prevent theft of ivory. By then, the tusks that the Museum of Orleans seems to collect will have time to be lost, misappropriated or stolen. It is a court decision that endorsed after one year of procedure the donation of the ivories to the museum.



### **Seizure of 2 ivory netsuke <sup>107</sup>**

#### **Hamburg, State of Hamburg, Germany December 2014**

The 2 netsukes were bought on the Internet. They were presented as beef bone sculptures, a misnomer well known to ivory collectors that helps camouflage the traffic. The netsuke are kimono accessories. It is from the 18th century that the use of elephant ivory or marine ivory was developed for netsukes. Hornbills beaks and tortoise shells were also used. The package came from the United States of America. International postal traffic has multiplied by a factor of 10 during the year-end.



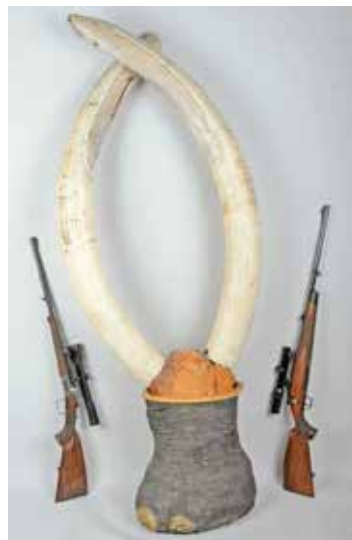
These 2 small pieces of ivory are drops in the flow of prohibited animal materials that cargo planes dump in December at international airports. At the end of the year the priority is the speed and permanent customs teams are not strengthened. This Hamburg customs catch served in the German press as a teaching aid and a warning to those who buy and sell on digital platforms. Judicial proceedings are instituted against the recipient.

#### **62 suspect trophies <sup>108</sup>**

**Sandringham, Norfolk County, United Kingdom  
December 2014**

The royal family has pledged to withdraw from its Sandringham Estate, open to the public between April and November, the trophies of rhinos, lions, tigers or ivory accumulated since 1870 if mandatory documentation proves unavailable. "The European Union has set about this complex legislation that is subject to interpretation." "Until now it has always been considered that to present trophies at Sandringham, no license was required," officials say at Buckingham Palace. British royalty is well known

for its ambiguity in this area. One hand hunts while the other advocates for endangered species threatened by hunting. Some time ago, the Duke of Cambridge expressed the wish that all the ivories from the royal collections should be destroyed.



## **France is listening to the elephants**

118 raw tusks were auctioned off in France between October 1 and December 31, 2014. The buyers are not citizens of the European Union.

**<= Sale in Bar-le-Duc in Eastern France on November 29, 2014**

On January 20, 2015, the French Minister for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy received a letter concerning this matter signed by Robin des Bois and by Amboseli Trust for Elephant, Animal Defenders International, Association pour la Protection des Animaux Sauvages, Animal Welfare Institute, Awely des animaux et des hommes, Born Free Foundation, Born Free USA, Centre for Coastal Environmental Conservation, David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness, Ecologie sans frontière, Environmental Investigation Agency, ElephantVoices, Fondation Brigitte Bardot, Fondation Franz Weber, Gallmann Memorial Foundation, Hong Kong for Elephants, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, International Animal Rescue, L214, Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, Mille Traces, Occupy for Animals,

Outraged South African Citizens Against Rhino Poaching, Pan African Wildlife Conservation Network, Performing Animal Welfare Society, Planète Tigre, Prowildlife, Save The Elephants, Shark Research Institute, Sharkprotect, Société Nationale de Protection de la Nature, Species Survival Network, WildAid, Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand and 30 Millions d'Amis.

The minister organized a meeting for January 28 to which she invited all of the NGOs that had signed the letter. For the most part, those that could not attend sent supplementary letters affirming their views. At this meeting, it was announced that the exportation of raw ivory from France was suspended sine die. Follow-up meetings evaluating the application of this decision will be regularly organized. The signatory ONGs that were present wish that this positive decision were extended to the interior market and that all elephant populations were listed once more under CITES Appendix I. At this meeting it was also announced that France would not import elephants captured in natural environments, which will affect any importation of elephants from Zimbabwe. This information was confirmed in a press release sent by the minister.

#### **For more information:**

On the ministry website (in French only):

<http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/Preserver-les-elephants-Segolene,42070.html>

<http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/Segolene-Royal-n-autorisera-pas-d.html>

On Robin des Bois website:

<http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/France-is-listening-to-the-elephants-call.html>

<http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/against-ivory-trafficking2.html>

<http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/against-ivory-trafficking1.html>

## Other Mammals

### AFRICA

#### **Court hearing for poaching of a duiker<sup>1</sup> Malindi, Kilifi County, Kenya October 2014**

The antelope was hunted without a license. The magistrate in charge ordered the man's release on Sh 20,000 bond or Sh 25,000 bail, 223 or 279 US\$. 6 antelope species living in Kenya are listed in Appendix II.

#### **AIDS is decimating giraffes<sup>2</sup>**

Very bad news for giraffes. After the rhino horn that cures cancer, the giraffe bone marrow that cures AIDS... The national symbol of Tanzania is under threat. The elegant savannah pin-up has feet of clay. Many want to eat her and after suck her bones.

4 brave men had publicly denounced giraffe overhunting in the district of Simanjiro. They were forced to move to escape the death threats. Police try to calm things but is not reassuring : "Yes, poaching is very active in the area, but the giraffe is not the sole target". "Last weekend, we arrested 9 guys. They have been killing all types of wildlife including gazelles, antelopes, zebras and in some cases, giraffes."



### AMERICA

#### **Seizure of 5 live armadillos, 3 stuffed armadillos (*Zaedyus pichiy*, unlisted in CITES) and fox paws (Family Canidae)<sup>3</sup>**

**Ica, Region of Ica, Peru  
October 14, 2014**

In the midst of the Señor de Luren celebration, the armadillos were seized from 12 stands offering purification, a "tribute to the earth", predication with coca leaves and other magic rituals. Bolivian shamans believe live armadillos have "purifying" virtues for the body and can protect from misfortune. Stuffed, they are thought to become the guardian of a home and push away negative energies caused by envy and hypocrisy.

The Señor de Luren celebration is a religious one taking place at the end of October in honor of the Ica holy patron. A procession through the town gathering thousands of pilgrims following the effigy of Señor de Luren is organized for the occasion.



#### **Seizure of a Bolivian three-toed sloth (*Bradypus variegatus*, Appendix II) and a Hoffmann's two-toed sloth (*Choloepus hoffmanni*, Appendix III in Costa Rica)<sup>4</sup>**

**Santo Domingo de los Colorados, Province of Loja, Ecuador  
October 2014**

Diagnosis before release. A South American snapping turtle (not listed in CITES) is also part of the seized lot.



*Choloepus hoffmanni*

#### **Seizure of 2.3 kg of armadillo meat (Family Dasypodidae) and 3.5 kg of capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*, not listed in CITES)<sup>5</sup>**

**Mirante do Paranapanema, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil**

**October 29, 2014**

A .22 caliber rifle was seized with the illegal meat.





**Seizure of a bushy-tailed olingo (*Bassaricyon gabbii*, Appendix III Costa Rica) <sup>6</sup>**

**Dagua, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia**

**December 2014**

Waiting to be sold, the mammal was kept in a bag next to the garbage bin. Veterinary checks are satisfactory, allowing him to be released.



**ASIA**

**Seizure of 8 hares and civet cats (Family Viverridae) <sup>8</sup>**

**Periyanaickenpalayam, Tamil Nadu, India**

**October 2014**

The 2 nomads arrested by forest guards with hares, civet cats and an old rifle in their bag were put in custody.

In the same forest, a feast was interrupted by the arrival of gamekeepers. The 14 guests gathered around the deer and hare grub received a bonus fine of Rs 5,000 or 80 US\$.

**Seizure of 56 chinchilla hides (*Chinchilla* spp., Appendix I) <sup>9</sup>**

**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**

**October 2014**



The little rodent is victim of the textile industry which "darkens up" anoraks, down jackets and other winter clothes with shreds of wildlife. Wild chinchillas are endangered. Chased by men, the species would have gone below the viability threshold. Range: Argentina-Chile-Bolivia-Peru. It is listed on

Appendix I since 1977.



**Seizure of 100 kg of gaur meat (*Bos frontalis*, Appendix I) and arrest of 3 suspects <sup>10</sup>**

**Wayanad District, Kerala State, India**

**October 16, 2014**



**Seizure of 5 red panda hides (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I) and arrest <sup>11</sup>**

**Machhapokhari and Madhyapur Thimi, Development Central Region, Nepal**

**October 18, 2014**

The 2 nasty buggers are involved in poaching and trading of local wildlife. In theory they risk 5 to 15 years in prison and astronomical fines. In reality, they do not risk much.

A few days later near Kathmandu, 3 people, one identified as Ram Kumar Nepali, 23, were arrested with a new bright red panda hide.



**Seizure of a common jackal's hide (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India) and arrest <sup>12</sup>**

**Poonamallee, Tamil Nadu, India**

**October 22, 2014**

The jackal was the victim of a road accident according to the suspected poacher who allegedly found the animal dead in a ditch. The jackal was poached according to the Forest Department. People for Cattle in India (PFIC) had visited a Narikurava camp and found the canine's hide kept for drying. The



nomads would have eaten the jackal for the Diwali festivities and used the teeth and claws to make lucky charms. "Seeing a young jackal first thing in the morning ensures to have a good day" said the Narikurava belief.

## Nobel Prize helps to better know the panda

"It's quiet both inside and outside the shed, but everywhere in the forest there is the sound of water dripping. A mountain wind blows from afar but doesn't reach the mountain and instead recedes and lingers noisily in faraway valleys. Afterwards the planks above me also start dripping and seem to drip right onto my quilt. Is there rain leaking through? Mindlessly, I get up. It's as damp inside as it is outside. So let it just drip, drip, drip... Later on, I hear a rifle discharge. It's clear but muffled and reverberates in the valley.

"Over there near White Cliff", someone says.

"Fuck. Poachers," another person swears.

Everyone is awake, or it might have been that no-one had been asleep.

"Se what time it is."

"Five to twelve."

Then nobody says anything. It's as if they're waiting for another shot, but there isn't one. In the shattered yet suspended silence, there's only the dripping of water outside the shed and the reverberation of the wind imprisoned in the valleys. Then you seem to hear wild animals. This world belongs to wild animals but human beings persist in interfering with it. The enclosing darkness hides anxiety and restlessness, and this night seems to be even more perilous, awakening your phobia that you are being spied upon, stalked, about to be ambushed. You can't get the spiritual tranquility you crave...

"Beibei's here!"

"Who?"

"Beibei!" the university student yells.

It's total chaos in the shed and everyone's up and out of bed.

There's a loud snorting and grunting outside. It's the baby panda they saved when it came fossicking for food, sick and starving! They've been waiting for it to come, they were certain it would come. It had already been ten days and they'd been counting the days. They said it would definitely come before the new bamboo shoots started to sprout. And here is their pet, their treasure, clawing on the timber walls.

Someone opens the door a crack and slips out with a bucket of corn mush and the rest quickly troop out after him. In the murky night this huge dark grey thing lumbers about. Corn mush is quickly poured into a dish and this thing comes up to it, snorting and grunting noisily. The torches are all trained on this animal with black semi-circles around its black eyes. This doesn't worry it at all, it's completely engrossed in eating and doesn't look up even once. They are madly taking photos so there's a constant glare of flashlights, and everyone takes a turn to go up to it, to call it, to tease it, and to touch its fur which is as hard as big bristle. It looks up and everyone runs to take refuge back inside the shed. It is after all a wild animal and a healthy panda can wrestle a leopard. The first time it came it chewed up the aluminum container and ate it as well as the food, and then excreted a trail of undigested aluminum pellets which they had all followed. There was a journalist who kept going on about the giant panda being as cute as a pet cat and got into the enclosure to have his photo taken with his arms around one they'd caught in the ranger station at the foot of the mountain. He got his genitals torn off and was immediately driven to Chengdu, fighting for his life.

It eventually finishes eating and, grabbing a piece of sugar cane and chewing on it, saunters off towards the clumps of Cold Arrow Bamboos and bushes at the edge of the camp.

"I said Beibei would come today."

"It mostly comes at this time, round about two or three."

"I hear it snorting and grunting and scratching on the wall."

"It's good at begging for food, the cheeky devil."

"It was starving. It ate up everything in that big bucket."

"It's fatter. I touched it."

They are very excited and go into minute details- who was first to hear, who was first to open the door, how he saw it though the crack in the door, how it followed him, how it put its head into the bucket, how it sat down next to the pan, and how it really enjoyed eating. Someone even said he'd put sugar into the corn mush and that it likes eating sweet things! Normally they scarcely speak to one another but here they are talking about Beibei as if it's everyone's sweetheart.

I look at my watch, this whole episode took no more than ten minutes but they are raving on endlessly about it. They've got all the lamps on and some are even sitting up in bed. That's just the way it is, life is monotonous and lonely on the mountain and one needs this bit of comfort. From Beibei they go on talking about Hanhan. The rifle shot earlier on had alarmed them. Hanhan came before Beibei and was killed by a peasant called Leng Zhizhong. They had been getting Hanhan's signals from the same location for a number of days and, thinking it was seriously ill, set out to look for it. Finally, under a fresh mound of earth in the forest they dug out Hanhan's carcass and its neckband which was still giving signals. They organized a search with tracker dogs and got to this Leng Zhizhong's house where they found the rolled up skin hanging under the eaves. Another panda with a neckband was Lili but its signal simply disappeared in the wilderness of the forest and was never again heard. There was no way of knowing whether it had been attacked by a leopard and its neckband chewed up or whether it had met a clever hunter who had smashed the neckband with his rifle butt.

Close to daybreak two shots sound from the lower part of the compound. Their muffled echoes reverberate in the valley for a long time, stubbornly lingering like smoke in the barrel of a rifle that's been fired."

*Gao Xingjian. (1990). Soul Mountain. Translated from the Chinese by Mabel Lee. Harper Perennial 2004.*



### Good news

#### **Liberation of a Panda (*Ailuropoda melanoleuca*, Appendix I)<sup>7</sup>**

**Liziping Nature Reserve, Province of Sichuan, China**

**October 14, 2014**

The 2 year old female panda has been released into the Natural Reserve after 2 years training to learn how to live in the wild, how to find food and avoid predators.

Reintroduction of giant pandas into a selected natural habitat has mixed results. Biologists try to learn from failures such as the fatal turn out for Xiang Xiang, a 5 year old male. Not long after his release, he died in a fight with other males. The next introduction to nature will be a double one, it will concern a mother and her baby. Input of these individuals coming from breeding aim to consolidate the wild population in the Reserve and raise chances for the species to survive.



#### **Seizure of 1.43 tons of Mongolian gazelle horns (*Procapra gutturosa*, not listed in CITES) and 5 tons of *Cistanche deserticola* desert plants (Appendix II)<sup>13</sup>**

**Hohhot, Autonomous Region of Inner Mongolia, China**

**October 2014**



One of the largest seizures in number and value of wildlife and wild flora ever in China. 14,597 horns and 5 tons of medicinal cistanche. The total value is estimated at 4 million yuans or 653,000 US\$. The goods were hidden in secret compartments in 3 trucks. 6 people were arrested including 3 Mongolian nationals. Hohhot Customs had already scored the discovery of 1.5 tons of red deer antlers (*Cervus elaphus*) in August 2013 (see "On the trail" No. 6 p. 34). The customs post regularly seizes wolves corpses, teeth and jaws and wild donkey carcasses. The Mongolian gazelle or zeren is not yet protected by CITES. The horns are 25 to 30 cm long. Only males bear them. Between 1940 and 1980 the main range in Mongolia decreased from 780,000 km<sup>2</sup> to 250,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The construction in the 1970s of the fenced Ulaanbaatar - Beijing railway disrupted

migration of herds. In winter 1977, 70,000 gazelles were killed by hunters in the east of the country. His other predators are wolves, foxes, eagles and other birds of prey. In 1940, the total population distributed in Russia, China and Mongolia was 1.5 million, including 1 million in Mongolia. It is estimated today at 2 to 300,000 in the latter. Russia's population is disappearing. The status of the Mongolian gazelle in China is unknown.

Adult, she can run at 65 km / h for 12 to 15 km leaping at intervals up to 2 m high. In the spring when they migrate to the steppes of the north, they travel in groups 200 to 300 km per day. They live on average 7 years, reach sexual maturity at 2 years. The gestation period is 6 to 7 months. They give birth to 1 or 2 young, exceptionally 3. Nursing lasts 6 months. She digs shelters in the bushes to sleep protected from the winds at night. Very heavy snow and frozen grounds on which they slide and deprive them of vegetal foods are disastrous. From a 20 cm layer of snow, they begin to move with difficulty.



**Seizure of a red panda skin (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I) <sup>14</sup>**

**Kharanitar, Central Development Region, Nepal  
November 1, 2014**

The beautiful hide was found on Alaichi Pandey, 33. Punishable by 50,000 to 100,000 NR, or 506 to 1013 US\$ and/or 15 years imprisonment.

**Seizure of 2 antlers (family Cervidae)**

**Nirmalbasti, development Central Region, Nepal  
November 1, 2014**

The antlers were taking the route to India. Swamp deer (*Rucervus duvaucelii*) is listed in Appendix I. It is present in Nepal. The antlers ferryman is an Indian citizen.

**Arrest of two people suspected of poaching 2 mongooses (family Herpestidae) <sup>15</sup>**

**Ankodia, Gujarat State, India  
November 2014**

They hunted them for meat or for hair used in paint brushes or both. A sentinel from a local NGO warned the forest department.

**Seizure of skulls and 8 common jackal tails (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India) <sup>16</sup>**

**Tiruttani, Tamil Nadu, India  
December 5, 2014**

This is not the first time that "On the trail" notes the pretended magical properties of the jackal. Its tail hung on the front door of the housing would bring good luck. 300 rupees each, or 4.9 US\$.

**Poaching of wild goats (*Capra hircus aegagrus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) <sup>17</sup>**

**Tabas, Yazd Province, Iran  
December 2014**

After shooting was heard on the high plateau near the border with Afghanistan, police forces were warned and they discovered in a car trophies and meat, firearms and ammunition. 3 poachers were arrested.



**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**Seizure of 8 prepuce glands of Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix I) <sup>18</sup>**

**Bjizam, Dzongkhag  
Trongsa, Bhutan  
December 7, 2014**



These 4 musk addicts were under surveillance. They were arrested in a taxi and a car that rode together. 3 of them had just been released a few weeks before, after pledging to pay fines later. They then returned in the great National Park to check the traps before they were buried in the snow. They admitted killing 11 musk deer. They had on them 8 prepuce glands, also known as musk pods. The male deer's sexual glands secrete a liquid they reject on the ground. These olfactory tracks left to mark territory and attract females are becoming increasingly rare in the national parks of Bhutan, evidence that Siberian musk deer dies out. (See also p. 111).

**Sales of illegal medicines based on musk deer parts (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I) <sup>19</sup>**

**United Arab Emirates  
December 2014**



The by-products of Siberian musk deer poaching are selling worldwide. The Indian couple travelling through the United Arab Emirates went door-to-door selling potions able to "cure 101 diseases." The vials were selling the equivalent of 1000 to 9000 US\$ depending on the degree of illness. The couple presented themselves to potential customers who were in fact - that's what betrayed them - Xpress journalists as traditional healers from Karnataka, India "It succeeds where everything else fails" "Many patients in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah benefit from our remedies". They had on their cell phones the numbers of customers that if called testified their satisfaction. To join the action to the word, the demonstrator used to get out of his bag dried musk pods and in seconds the scene of bargaining and consultation was swept with the smell, a persuasive argument to complete the case. "Our musk



program costs DH 107" or 29 US\$/g. It takes 35 g to treat osteoarthritis, 40 g to cure allergies. To treat varicose veins, count the equivalent of 7322 US\$. Psoriasis, hypertension, diabetes, cancer, nothing can resist the miracle medication. Only a few grams of musk can be extracted from the prepuccial glands of deer. More than 100 deer must be killed in order to collect 1 kg of musk.



### **Conviction for killing a wild kiang of Tibet (*Equus kiang*, Appendix II)<sup>20</sup>**

**Zanda County, Tibet Autonomous Region, China**

**December 15, 2014**

The facts are so cruel and the motives of the carnage so futile that these sentences for torture and killing of a wild kiang seem much to light (see "On the trail" No. 6 p.100). The leader was sentenced to 3 ½ years in prison and 80,000 yuans (13,082 US\$) fine and his accomplice to 1 year in prison and 20,000 yuans (3,258 US\$) fine.



### **Seizure of 4 blackbucks carcasses (*Antelope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Nepal and Pakistan) and arrest**

**Ahmedabad-Bhavnagar highway, Gujarat State, India<sup>21</sup>**

**December 26, 2014**

According to the confession of the only poacher who did not manage to escape when the pick-up truck was stopped on the Ahmedabad-Bhavnagar road, the bucks were killed at the edge of a small river, 32 km away from Velavadar National Park.

"They often venture out of the park." Police is investigating to find whether other species could be in the gang's sights.

### **Seizure of 2 live civets (*Viverridae* Family) and a live porcupine (*Hystriidae* family not listed in CITES) and conviction<sup>22</sup>**

**Ha Tinh, Ha Tinh Province, Vietnam**

**December 29, 2014**

Thanks to qualified volunteers, the 3 live animals were saved from the worst in a Ha Tinh restaurant. The cook and restaurant owner was fined 3 million dong (140 US\$).



## **EUROPE**

### **Conviction for attempted sale of 12 fake wolf hides (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II)<sup>23</sup>**

**Visby, Gotland County, Sweden**

**November 2014**

Visby, Swedish island in the Baltic Sea, has been organizing for 20 years "the medieval festival in the summer". Everyone dresses in animal skins. A crafty 60 years old man took the opportunity to sell "wolf hides" on a stall. They were in fact coyotes. First acquitted at trial, the fur salesman was sentenced on appeal to a fine of 1,500 kroner or 204 US\$. An interesting judgment arguing that the false advertising may encourage the exploitation of endangered species, in this case the wolf.



### **New decree authorizing the shooting of 4 wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II)<sup>24</sup>**

**Var, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France**

**December 2014**

Between January 2 and February 28, 2015, the shooting of 4 wolves is authorized by decree of the prefect of Var in southeastern France for the locality of Canjuers. There is a military camp close-by where old bombs are destroyed. During official hunts in this vast area last autumn, an "unidentified" animal had recently been killed. It was a wolf.



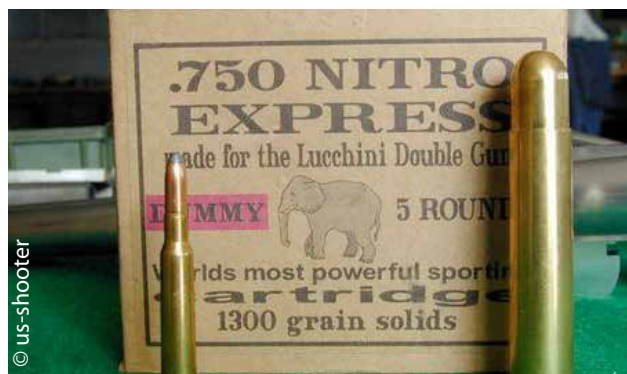
# Multi-Species

## AFRICA

**Seizure of a African python skin (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix II), a fake rhino horn, de queues de buffles (*Syncerus caffer*, unlisted in CITES) and Common wildebeests (*Connochaetes taurinus*, unlisted in CITES) <sup>1</sup>**

**Kariba, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe  
October 2014**

The 3 poachers and traffickers in fake, genuine stuff and tails kill with nitro express.



## REPEATED OFFENSE

**Arrest of 3 people for trafficking 7 zebra skins (genus *Equus*), 2 jackal skins (genus *canis*, unlisted in CITES), one leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and a monkey skin (Primates spp., Appendix II) <sup>2</sup>**

**Windhoek, Region of Khomas, Namibia  
October 16, 2014**

This Chinese man is mad. Hou Xuecheng had just been released on bail in a case of ivory and cheetah skin trafficking (see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 133 and "On the Trail" n°6 p.103).

A few days later, he went ahead and bought 11 wild animal skins. The bodies had just been stolen from Taxidermy Studio in Otjiwarongo. The thieves were 2 employees of the taxidermist. They acted over the weekend.

Hou bought the skins for Ns 10,000 that is 884 US\$.



## Death of 2 rangers<sup>4</sup>

**Mt Elgon Wildlife authorities  
Camp, Uganda**

**Octobre 2014**

The poachers of the extreme or political activists attacked by night the rangers' camp in the Mont Elgon National Park. 2 rangers died. The assailants' goal was to steal weapons according to the director of the UWA, Uganda Wildlife Authority.



## Arrest of 3 suspected poachers<sup>5</sup>

**Salambala Conservancy, Caprivi Region, Namibia**

**October 22, 2014**

GRN 4540, the registration number of the official vehicle of the Minister of Presidential Affairs. The driver works for the Minister. 2 passengers aged 38 and 34 years. In the car, ammunition, a machine-gun, other firearms and a searchlight. The interception took place deep in the Salambala reserve. At the highest level, the regional police are very discrete, walking on eggshells. "Maybe these weapons are used to secure the Minister travels". "This reserve is not like a National Park, there are villages inside and the car was perhaps going from one village to another". "The guards should have waited to catch the suspects in action".

Charged with possession of firearms without hunting licenses, illegal hunting and use of artificial light to this effect, the 3 men were released on bail of 500 Ns or 229 US\$.

17 poaching activities have been recorded in the reserve in one year. 33 arrests were made. A guard was wounded by gunfire after he had stopped a poacher pursuing a herd of zebras. The director, Boniface Saisai, confirmed the increase in poaching. Meat, horns, tusks, everything benefits the traffic. According to the legend, Sala and Bala were 2 illegitimate lovers who have been banned from civilian life and lived confined in the forest that became Salambala reserve.



**Seizure of a baby chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) and 2 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II)<sup>6</sup>**

**Mbal Mayo, Center Region, Cameroon**

**October 2014**

He had been living for 2 years in a hotel room in a cage like dungeon. In another cage there were 2 parrots. All 3 were let out. They are now in the Me-fou shelter under the care of Ape Action Africa near Yaounde.



**Seizure of 2634 skins and animal parts including striped hyena skins (Family Hyaenidae), leopard skins (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), python skins (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix II), lion skins, lion teeth (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II) and bat heads (Chiroptera Order)<sup>7</sup>**

**Senegal**

**October 31 and November 14, 2014**

Two strikes against wildlife trafficking in Dakar in the Medina near the Iba Mar Diop stadium. 5 "merchants" were arrested, 3 from Nigeria, 2 from Senegal. The seized "goods" were all from Niger, Guinea, Mali, Congo. Some sources mention also Kenya. Regular sales are made to foreign visitors in Dakar. Exports towards Lebanon and Europe are also common. The accused confided about their activities. "The lion skin brings me in 1 to 2 million CFA francs that is 1920 to 3841 US\$". "We hide the products in bags to cross the border." "To get by with a lion skin, I pay 40,000 CFA francs to the guy from the railways company."

The canines and lion skins seized by the Criminal Investigations Division are from at least 12 lions while in this same region survive less than 250 lions. No lions in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Gabon, barely any in Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya.

A ban on hunting permits for African lions is urgent. The CITES database shows that 6652 lion trophies have been exported out of Africa between 2000 and 2009.

The crime is a serious one. The penalty is small, yet in conformity with the present penal code. The supposed leader of the network was sentenced to 3 months prison and a fine equivalent to 1920 US\$, 2 accomplices were sentenced to 2 months prison term and a similar fine and a 3<sup>rd</sup> to 1 month in pris-

on and 192 US\$ in fine. The woman got off with 1 month prison suspended sentence. She is deemed to have played negligible role in the trafficking. Let's hope she is not of the same kind as Rose, the unstoppable Gabonese trafficker (see "On the Trail" n°5 p.112).

The wildlife cleanup operation in the medina was led by the Ministry of the environment of Senegal and SALF, Senegal Application of the wildlife law (see "On the Trail" n°5 p.88).



**Bushmeat seizure and arrest of a bootlegger<sup>8</sup>**

**Kindia, Kindia Region, Guinea**

**November 2, 2014**

New Ebola risk bushmeat seized in Guinea. The "disease seller" - as described by the press - tried to bribe police officials at the time of his arrest. The individual is known in the region for its links with hunters of protected species.

In Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, the police "hunt" for bushmeat is strengthened. In Guinea, affected by more than 800 deaths by Ebola since the beginning of the year, the bushmeat trade had been banned 17 years ago by the wildlife code, but the government did nothing until now to enforce the application of this decision on paper onto the terrain.

Saliou Balla Diallo risks 3 months to one year in prison. He is in breach of Article 164 of the wildlife code prohibiting the transport and sale of bushmeat and of Article 161 prohibiting poaching or poaching complicity of animal species protected by the Guinean and international laws.



**Seizure of ivory and elephant and hippopotamus meat (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II)<sup>9</sup>**



**Kazungula, Southern Province, Zambia  
November 6, 2014**

"Elephant is a big business in Zambia. It can bring round 10,000 US\$. Some people are interested in the ivory, others by the tail and the rest by the meat". Thus Mrs Mwale Lusizi, chief ranger, sums up the situation. In view of this, the fines imposed on poachers are very slim. They amount to 15 and 31 US\$.

The underage woman in possession of hippo meat was acquitted. The Zimbabwean citizen in possession of ivory, ammunition, a machine gun and marijuana, has not been judged yet. The poachers were operating in the white gold and rhino horns "triangle" on the border of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia.

**Seizure of poisoned arrows and camping equipment<sup>10</sup>**

**Tsavo West National Park, Taita Taveta County, Kenya**

**November 2014**

Supported by KWS, the anti-poaching team of the David Sheldrick foundation found in a mountain cave poisoned arrows and camping equipment used by poachers.

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**Seizure of 6 elephant tusks, a leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and a golden cat skin (*Profelis aurata*, Appendix II)<sup>11</sup>**

**Oyem, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon**

**November 20, 2014**



Sylvain Mba Owono and Jean-Marie Mezui were staying at the hotel in Oyem. This is where the wildlife looters were preparing to negotiate. In Gabon, traffickers have the privilege to risk a maximum of 6 months in prison for their crimes. The arrest was made in co-operation with the newly installed Oyem judicial police, the local judiciary, the services of the Department of Water Affairs and

Forestry and the NGO Conservation Justice. The duo is a repeated offender and well equipped. With the animal remains, 458 caliber bullets of which possession and use are banned were seized.

The 2 individuals benefited from Justice's indulgence for unexplainable reasons. Confidential Justice. One of the 2 was sentenced to one month prison for unlawful possession of ammunition. In detention since November 20<sup>th</sup>, he benefited from a parole and was let out of prison just after the trial. The NGOs feel discouragement. The traffickers feel encouraged.

**Seizure of 80 bushmeat bags<sup>12</sup>**

**Labe, Labé Region, Guinea**

**November 30, 2014**

Bis repetita in Guinea.

Guinea is one outbreak center of the current Ebola pandemic. Under these circumstances transportation and consumption of bushmeat are hunted down by health and environmental services. Bushmeat is considered to be the initial vector for the transmission and distribution of the virus in Africa. Gobout Lamah claims not to be aware of the ravages of Ebola fever. She said she is out of the world, immersed in the deep Guinea. "I took the meat to the border between Mali and Guinea and I was carrying it to the south in N'Zérékoré region." The transport was done on a bus. This discovery was made thanks to the call of an astute observer allowed to track back an entire criminal branch, to seize and burn 80 risky bush meat bags.



**Seizure of 3 leopard skins (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), 5 pythons skins (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix II), 3 pangolins skins and 2 kg of pangolin scales (*Manis* spp., Appendix II)<sup>14</sup>**

**Benin**

**December 5, 2014**

Caught red handed. Risks 6 months to 10 years in prison. Released one week later. Marcellin B. Akpata should be tried in January 2015. Will he come to trial?







### Exportation from Zimbabwe of young elephants, lions, sable antelopes<sup>13</sup>

Hwange, the cursed park. After massive cyanide poisoning, the elephants and other animals have been captured to be exported to the Middle East and China.

The elephant calves aged 2.5 and 5 years were circled, flown over by helicopter, separated from their mothers, roped and fenced in near Mtshibi inside the Park. Along with the lions and antelopes, it is planned to take them by truck to Maputo, Mozambique, about 1000 km and a 24h drive away. The wild animals would then be embarked onto a cattle transporter cargo ship heading to the United Arab Emirates. These cattle liners usually transport sheep, cows and horses. For a long time this story was known only by unconfirmed bits closer to rumor than fact. They are now confirmed. It corresponds precisely to the doctrine enacted by the still in power President Mugabe according to which wildlife must bring in money. Titus Maluleke, governor general of the Masvingo district sums it up in plain language: "We

don't care for wildlife, what we want is cash."

According to Karl Amman, the price of a live baby wild elephant for public and private zoos is at least 70,000 US\$.

Already in 2013, 3 baby elephants captured in Zimbabwe had been deported to China. One of them froze to death. The 2 others haven't yet. Baby elephants are not the only victims of these exports. The mothers and the whole groups are they also biologically and mentally disturbed. The calves' kidnapping is made possible by rounds of machine gun shooting just over their heads so as to paralyze the group and prevent communication within.

Saviour Kasukuwere, minister of the Environment confirms the capture happened, the variety of the species concerned while refuting that China be the destination. This denial is worth what it is, that is to say not much for once they have been exported say to United Arab Emirates a new export permit can be issued.

The lion population in Hwange Park has fallen from 200 to 80 in 2 years. Lion "coats" and "rugs" and more and more in demand as tigers progressively go extinct, the same for their bones.

The secretariat of CITES alerted by the press and specific messages sent by individuals and NGOs reminds that since the [regretful] decision of the plenary session in 1997 [held in Zimbabwe] the elephant population in Zimbabwe is no longer considered to be threatened with extinction and for that reason international trade in live individuals is not forbidden under the condition that the "receivers be appropriate and acceptable", that the individuals be "well prepared" and transported in such a way to "minimize" risks of wounds, harm to their health and cruel treatment.

Latest news: 26 December 2014

Zimbabwe announces that the elephants are in the process of export to the United Arab Emirates (15), China (17) and France (15 to 20). They will likely be transported by plane.

Robin des Bois, "On the trail" editor, is against the purchase by French zoos of wild elephants, whatever their origin and in particular from the Hwange park where poaching is out of control and where at least 300 elephants have died poisoned by cyanide in 2013. The elephants were captured in cruel conditions. One of them died in the Hwange Park transit pen and the meat was distributed to local people.

In January 2015, the French Minister for Ecology declared to refuse all importation of elephants captured in natural environments (see page 95).

### Poisoning of 11 baboons (*Papio* spp., Appendix II), an eagle (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II), a falcon (*Falconidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and 2 pigeons<sup>15</sup>

Private Reserve Taratibu, Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique  
December 2014

The water hole was full of pesticides or cyanide.

### Seizure of pangolin carcasses (*Manis* spp., Appendix II), duikers (*Bovidae* family), monkeys (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II) and an elephant<sup>16</sup>

Province of Upper Ogooué, Gabon

From 29 to 31 December 2014

The beheaded elephant was found near the village of Kessala lying on the sandbanks of the M'Passa River where elephants often come to drink. 3 days later, an anti-poaching task involving several police force squads, rangers from Lékédi and Batéké parks, forest concessions staff and volunteers from the Conservation Justice and Protection Gorillas Project NGOs raked the area. 11 firearms, 80 ammunition, bushmeat (duikers, pangolins, bush pigs, porcupines, mouse deers) were seized and submitted to Franceville's prosecutor. By order of the prosecutor, the bushmeat was burned in the Franceville landfill under police control.

## AMERICA

Sequestration of 316 animals : scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), military macaw (*Ara militaris*, Appendix I), Geoffroy's spider monkeys (*Ateles geoffroyi*, Appendix II), muscovy ducks (*Cairina moschata*, Appendix III in Honduras), barred parakeets (*Bolborhynchus lineola*, Appendix II), crested guans (*Penelope purpurascens*, Appendix III in Honduras), Mexican curassows (*Crax rubra*, Appendix III), keel-billed toucans (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II), Cooper's hawks (*Accipiter cooperii*, Appendix II), peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I), white-fronted amazons (*Amazona albifrons*, Appendix II), green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and white bellied chachalacas (*Ortalis leucogastra*, not listed in CITES)<sup>17</sup>

Puebla, Puebla, Mexico

From September 24 to October 1, 2014

Ecological Park Revolución Mexicana is under the radar. PROFEPA has received complaints from citizens. The park would mistreat animals and indulge in exotic birds trafficking. The inspection lasts for 7 days. The state of the animals is examined as well as their documents. Assessment: 316 birds, reptiles and primates are placed in custody. The manager of the park has 5 days to come into compliance.



La volière du Parc Revolución Mexicana

Sequestration of a kinkajou (*Potos flavus*, Appendix III in Honduras), a jaguar (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), an ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*, Appendix I), a white-nosed coati (*Nasua narica*, Appendix III in Honduras), a boa constrictor (*boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and 7 furrowed wood turtles (*Rhinoclemmys areolata*, not listed in CITES)<sup>18</sup>

Baca, Yucatán, Mexico

October 2014



Inspection in a UMA in Baca. The animals show signs of malnutrition, injuries and mobility problems. They are temporarily left under the responsibility of the UMA by the administration.

Sequestration of 23 animals among which 2 Morelet's crocodiles (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II), a Mexican Flameknee tarantula (*Brachypelma auratum*, Appendix II), 2 African spurred tortoises (*Geochelone sulcata*, Appendix II), a Patagonian conure (*Cyanoliseus patagonus*, Appendix II), an African lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), 3 reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II) and a Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II)<sup>19</sup>

Municipio de Ecatepec, Mexico State, Mexico

October 2014

23 wild animals are reported living in a private home. Their living conditions are said inadequate. During the inspection, PROFEPA identifies the scene as a Management Unit for the Conservation of Wildlife (UMA). Beware of UMAs!



Seizure of 2 armadillos (family Dasypodidae), a coati (*Nasua genus*), a capybara (*Hydrochoerus Hydrochoerus*, not listed in CITES) and 15 wild birds<sup>20</sup>

São Mateus, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil

October 4, 2014

When the environmental battalion arrives at the alleged poacher's, he flees. His wife shows the police the 2 rifles, ammunition and animal victims of her husband. Only the birds are alive.



Sequestration of a Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II), a wood tortoise (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II), a ball python (*Python regius*, Appendix II), an African spurred tortoise (*Geochelone sulcata*, Appendix II) and 2 veiled chameleons (*Chamaeleo calyptratus*, Appendix II)<sup>21</sup>

Mexico, Federal District, Mexico City, Mexico

October 7, 2014

No documents proving the legal origin of the 13 animals. No SEMARNAT documents authorizing their sale.



## REPEATED OFFENSE

Conviction for illegal import of skulls and animal parts notably orangutans (*Pongo* spp., Appendix I), slow lorises (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I), macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II), pangolins (*Manis* spp., Appendix II) and bird feathers.<sup>22</sup>



Seattle, State of Washington, United States of America

October 8, 2014

The therapist owning a license delivered by the state of Washington practiced non conventional medicine. He would import skulls, feathers, beaks, scales and other unknown parts of species threatened with extinction. In the end he avoided prison despite that in 2005 he had already been involved in a similar case and that he is presently on probation for "improper relations with a vulnerable patient".

Drew Weiden Bacher was sentenced to 2 more years probation and 60 hours of community work. The judge ordered the man to use that time to go speak to kids in schools about the necessity to protect wildlife.

Seizure of a Geoffroy spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroy*, Appendix II), 2 Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix III in Pakistan), a common caracara (*Caracara plancus*, Appendix II), a Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) and 2 African ostrich (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I)<sup>23</sup>

Santiago, State of Baja California, Mexico

October 2014

Irregularities are detected. In total, 27 animals are confiscated. The zoo is fined 12,700 US\$; its management plan as an wildlife management installation (PIMVS, Predio o Instalación que Maneja Vida Silvestre) and its inventory of specimens and species are nowhere to be found.



Seizure of caiman parts (*Alligatoridae* spp., Appendix I or II) and an armadillo (Family Dasypodidae)<sup>24</sup>

Ipixuna do Pará, State of Pará, Brazil

October 20, 2014

A car and the 3 occupants are checked. The animal parts are found in the trunk inside an icebox. Next to it were a gun and 8 rounds of ammunition. The driver was arrested.

Seizure of 2 black-chested buzzard-eagles (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*, Appendix II) and a culpeo (*Lycalopex culpaeus*, Appendix II)<sup>25</sup>

Cochapamba, Cotopaxi Province, Ecuador  
October 2014

The buzzard's wings are damaged and cut. They cannot be released into their natural habitat.

The Andean fox is injured at the neck by the chain that held him captive. His condition is worrying. He is quarantined and could be released later.



Sequestration of an African Spurred Tortoise (*Geochelone sulcata*, Appendix II), 4 Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II), a turtle belonging to the genus *Chelonoidis* spp., Appendix I or II, a ball python (*Python regius*, Appendix II), an African Savanna monitor (*Varanus exanthematicus*, Appendix II), an alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*, Appendix III in the USA), 2 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and a rhinoceros iguana (*Cyclura cornuta*, Appendix I)<sup>26</sup>

Apizaco, State of Tlaxcala, Mexico

November 2014

The pet shop owner was not able to present the legal documents for 14 animals during the PROFEPA inspection.

Seizure of 7 macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II), 4 capuchins (*Cebus* spp., Appendix II), 3 yellow-crowned amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II) and a toucan (Ramphastidae family)<sup>27</sup>  
Tulio Febres Cordero, State of Mérida, Venezuela  
November 2014

They were kept in cages inside a hotel complex. They were taken to the Chorros de Milla zoological park for medical examination before release. The operation was led in common by the environmental police, the Ministry of ecosocialism, housing and habitat, the Biocontacto Foundation and Cormetur (the Mérida touristic corporation).



**Seizure of a spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix I or II), 3 boas (*Boidae* spp., Appendix I or II), a cotton-headed tamarin (*Saguinus oedipus*, Appendix I) and a red howler (*Alouatta seniculus*, Appendix II)<sup>28</sup>**

**Soledad, Department of Atlántico, Colombia  
November 2014**

The people of Soledad alerted the authorities. On the market, wildlife is bargained. During the check, sellers flee. The animals were seized and taken to Megua zoo.



**Seizure of parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), of a Geoffroy's cat (*Leopardus geoffroyi*, Appendix I) and 2 boas (*Boidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>29</sup>**

**Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Santa Cruz Department, Bolivia**

**November 2014**

"We must be thankful to have in the department of Santa Cruz such a rich biodiversity. The only way to keep the animals alive is to keep them in their original habitat" it is said at the State Secretariat of sustainable development and environment.

To report traffic and sale of wild animals, dial 800-142052 or 800-101122.



**Wildlife trafficking on a market place<sup>30</sup>**

**Yurimaguas, Region of Loreto, Peru**

**November 2014**

A horror scene in the market place. No need to look much to find live or dying animals, animal parts or meat from endangered species. The NPC (Neotropical Primate Conservation) managed to film the market with a hidden camera and saw live

brown-headed tamarins (*Saguinus fuscicollis*, Appendix II), live individuals and meat from turtles including yellow-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis denticulata*, Appendix II) and yellow spotted river turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II), live but weak canary-winged parakeets (*Brotogeris versicolurus*, Appendix II) and other parrots. They also found on the stalls eggs of yellow-spotted river turtles, parts and meat from wild animals: deer, South American tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II), caiman, puma (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II), toucan, armadillo, hedgehog, paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), tiger cat (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I), collard pecary (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II), boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), jaguar (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I).

This case is a harsh reminder of the Bellavista market in Pucallpa (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 109). 97 animals had been seized along with large quantities of meat. Pucallpa is 700 km south from Yurimaguas. Let's hope the general attorney in the Loreto province will be as reactive as the one in the Ucayali province whose goal is to close down the Bellavista wild animal market.



**Seizure of 10 Guyanan red howler monkeys (*Alouatta* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 White-throated capuchins (*Cebus capucinus*, Appendix II), a collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II), 3 toucans (*Ramphastidae* family), a paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), a hocco and 3 curassows (*Cracidae* family), a South American yellow-footed tortoise (*Chelonoidis denticulata*, Appendix II) and a red and green macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II)<sup>31</sup>**

**Sinnamary, French Guiana, France**

**November 11, 2014**

Is France waking up in Guyana to protect wildlife in the artificial lake of Petit Saut? The hydroelectric dam was built between 1990 and 1994. The reservoir filling-up was completed in 1998. 370 km<sup>2</sup> of primary forest were drowned. Some interlacing green islands remain. In the water and forest puzzle, terrestrial and aquatic wildlife is threatened not only by the mercury from clandestine gold mining upstream but also almost daily and unpunished poaching. The Company of Guyana Guides denounces the carnage and photographed the drama daily. Caimans, howler monkeys, capuchins, hoccas, parrots, tapirs, tinamous and large rodents, any animal becomes game. Even the fish disappear. The prefecture, the gendarmerie, ONCFS, are hardly moving. The ballet of canoes laden with iceboxes



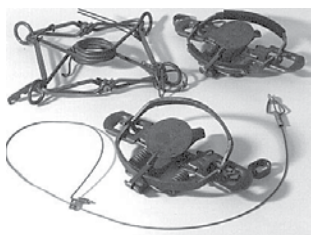
goes on. But on November 21, 2014, a new prefectural entered into force providing for the seizure of vessels, coolers, road vehicles, weapons and live or dead animals. Basic fines increase from 38 to € 750. Poaching of the species listed in Appendix I or II of CITES is liable to a fine of € 15,000 and a year in prison. Hunting is theoretically banned in the largest lake dam in France and its overseas territories. This is the first minutes of poaching compiled in 2014.



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**Seizure of 3 macaws (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and 3 red footed turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II)**<sup>32</sup>  
**Gravatá, State of Pernambuco, Brazil**  
**November 12, 2014**

From pets to wildlife. A report of abuse on 2 Labrador dogs causes the authorities to step into the private home. Inside, 91 wild animals, traps, cages, weapons and ammunition.



**Seizure of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and a parrot (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II)**

**Juiz de Fora, Minas Gerais, Brazil**<sup>33</sup>  
**November 18, 2014**

The young man of 25 was thwarted after a complaint and an investigation on Facebook social network where he showed off with wild animals on pictures. At his home, police discovered a boa, a parakeet, 2 snakes of the species *Erythrolamprus miliaris* (not listed in CITES), 2 salamanders (*Caudata* order, not listed in CITES) and a dead tarantula. The boa is injured, victim of abuse. The police also discovered weapons. The suspect could sell wildlife on the Internet. He was arrested.

**Seizure of 6 kg of spectacled caiman meat (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II), 10 kg of deer meat (family *Cervidae*) and 11 kg of fish**<sup>34</sup>

**Porangatu, State of Goiás, Brazil**  
**November 18, 2014**

Routine road check of the car and its 2 passengers, 29 and 44 years old, has paid off. They receive a fine of 5255 US\$.

2 species of deer found in Brazil are listed in CITES: the pampas deer (*Ozotoceros bezoarticus*, Appendix I) and the marsh deer (*Blastocerus dichotomus*, Appendix I)

#### OPERATION XANDORE

**Seizure of 30 wild animals including spectacled caimans (*Caiman yacare*, Appendix II) and turtles and 21 t of fish including arapaïmas (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) and fish of the family Osteoglossidae not listed in CITES**<sup>35</sup>

**Micro-region of Middle and Upper Solimões, State of Amazonas, Brazil**

**From 17 to 29 November 2014**

Rio Solimões is the part of the Amazon between the triple Brazil-Colombia-Peru border and the city of Manaus. Its length is 1630 km. The operation aims to monitor the area. Authorities suspect poachers to hunt crocodiles and Amazon river dolphins (*Inia geoffrensis*, Appendix II) to retrieve the meat and use it as bait. Chainsaws, fishing nets, shotguns and boats are also seized. No trace of Amazon dolphin. The seized fish will be given to charity and living animals will be released.

**Seizure of more than 870 animals including parrots, macaws, parakeets (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II), monkeys (Appendix I or II), an armadillo, red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II)**

**State of Bahia, Brazil Between**<sup>36</sup>

**November 24 and December 4, 2014**

Animals are injured, weakened. Among the birds, some have wings and feet cut off. After veterinary checks, the healthy animals are released into a natural reserve and the others are entrusted to CETAS - Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre - in Vitória da Conquista. 9 people were arrested.

**Seizure of 12 live animals : a giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*, Appendix II), 6 marmosets (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II) and 5 wood turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II)**

**Caicó and Carnaúba dos Dantas, state of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil**<sup>37</sup>

**December 2, 2014**

3 people were arrested.

They had no permits or IBAMA license for the possession of such animals. A call for abuse gave the alert.



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## OPERATION SUNSET

**Seizure of a marmoset (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II) and a parrot (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II)**

**Picos, Piauí, Brazil <sup>38</sup>**

**December 2014**

This operation is set up to fight drug trafficking and find clues on recent murders. Natanel Cortez Albuquerque and Francisco Carlos Borges are arrested. Police discover 38 caliber ammunition, weapons, cell phones, scales, drugs, lots of money and the 2 wild animals. The animals were entrusted to the Teresina Botanic Park Zoo.

## ASIA

**Seizure of 2 fake tiger skins, 3 leopard skins, 19 clouded leopard skins and 6 paws (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I), 2 Asian golden cat skins (*Catopuma temminckii*, Appendix I), 10 otter skins (Family Mustelidae), 7 kg of animal bones, leopard claws, 4 White-bellied Sea-Eagle feet (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*, Appendix II), sambar antlers (*Cervus unicolor*, unlisted in CITES), 3 live long tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II), 6 live turtles : an Asiatic Softshell Turtle (*Amyda cartilaginea*, Appendix II), 4 Mekong snail-eating turtles (*Malayemys subtrijuga*, Appendix II) and a keeled box turtle (*Cuora* spp., Appendix II) <sup>39</sup>**

**Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

**October 6, 2014**



The Chinese Chamber of Commerce in the capital of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, served as a hiding place for live or dead animals used to supply traditional medicine and local underground markets. Several of the skins were still drying on wooden frames. They were fresh. "There were cages for the animals still alive." "This is a lasting and well organized network," according to Suwanna Gauntlett, director of Wildlife Alliance, a local NGO part of the Wildlife Rapid Rescue Team (WRRRT) along with the forest administration and military police. 3 Chinese citizens inside the building when the search began, according to the words spoken by an official from Cambodian administration, "admitted to their mistakes" and accepted to pay a fine worth 25,000 US\$. On a judicial ground, the case is closed. The building rented by the "Chamber of Commerce" belongs to the wife of a high official working with the Min-

istry Counsel. According to neighbors witnessing, the place would welcome visitors and luxurious car were often parked there. Most species on site are found in Cambodia only in fragmented and almost desperate populations. The Asian golden cat has not been seen in the country for many years. The Chamber of Commerce was more than just a transit place. It was a slaughterhouse, a tanning place, a pet shop where many animals would arrive alive and leave in pieces. A hot spot for wildlife trafficking hooked in to all tendencies, including counterfeiting. 2 fake tiger skins were among the 24 other genuine feline skins.

**Seizure of a Malayan Sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), 24 barn owls (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), a common palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaproditus*, Appendix III in India), a leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), 2 Sunda flying lemurs (*Cynocephalus variegatus*, unlisted in CITES) and a dead Malayan porcupine (*Hystrix brachyura*, unlisted in CITES) <sup>40</sup>**

**South Klang Valley Expressway, State of Selangor, Malaysia**

**October 10, 2014**



The car was zooming on in the middle of the night. In the front, there were the 2 brothers aged 20 and 29. In the back, a bear, a civet, 4 owls and in the middle of the road a team from the Department of Wildlife Protection and National Parks. About 10 hours later, the home of the 2 traffickers was searched. They notably found a leopard cat and 20 owls. The total value of the seizure is estimated worth between 9000 and 10,000 US\$, the Malayan sun bear worth 3000 US\$, the owl 200 US\$ a piece and the Sunda flying lemur around 600 US\$.





### Portrait of Malayan colugo (*Cynocephalus variegatus*)<sup>41</sup>

They are deceptively called Sunda flying lemurs, but these strange mammals, gliding kings, who should not be confused with bats or giant squirrels, belong to a particular order, the dermoptera in which only 2 species are identified : one (*cynocephalus volans*) is present in the southern Philippines and the other (*cynocephalus variegatus*) in Malaysia mainland, on the islands of Sumatra, Java and Borneo, in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar.

From head to tail, the animal is 60 to 70 cm long. The colugo - its common name – unfolds, to glide between the trees of the forest, an integral membrane from neck to tail tip through shoulder blades which serves him as a flying wing. They glide on more than 100 m from dusk through the night despite their weight of 2 kg, plus, for females during lactation, a young or 2 clinging to their belly. The colugos hover in search of leaves and fruits. In trees, colugos fold their membrane in a pocket safe from snags and cold. The dorsal fur is not uniform in color. It looks like the lichen and facilitates camouflage. Singapore naturalists believe that the natural density is of one individual for 2 hectares of forest.



Hunting and deforestation are the main enemies of the genre. The status of the 2 species and diverse populations and their future is unclear. Flying lemurs would be in competition for food with a species in expansion, *Callosciurus notatus* squirrels. IUCN, while saying that the populations are "probably declining," continues to believe that the subject is of minor importance after the last diagnosis published in 2008. "More information is needed on population declines, but at present it is believed that the rate of the decline is probably not fast enough to trigger listing in any category other than Least Concern". Robin des Bois is very worried. The discovery of 2 colugos in the illegal pet shop of the 2 brothers shows that these gliding mammals are subject of capture in natural environment or in plantations and are wanted as pets or food. In the Philippines, the disappearance of colugos would have a cascading effect. They constitute 90% of the diet of Philippine eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*, Appendix I), an endangered species.



### Seizure of 7 musk deer preputial glands (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix I), bear bile and 1.5 kg of bear meat (*Ursidae spp.*, Appendix I)<sup>42</sup> Gelephu, Dzongkhag of Sarpang, Bhutan October 17, 2014



Near the vegetable market, he was in possession of 7 bags of musk pods, a bear's gallbladder and 1.5 kg of bear meat.

He paid the fine of 25,000 NU or 404 US\$ for each musk pod, 20,000 NU or 3,223 US\$ for the bear's gallbladder, a fine of the same sum for the bear hide that he didn't turn in at the police station and lastly a fine of 60,000 Nu (969 US\$) for having hunted in a no-hunting zone. A one-month delay was accorded to him to pay all of the fines. He was then let go.

### Conviction for trafficking 39 kg of ivory items and 2 leopard skins (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) Beijing, Hebei Province, China<sup>43</sup> October 18, 2014



Mr. Luo visited Burundi in December 2013 to buy the stuff and resell it in Beijing. He was arrested on January 30, 2014 in Beijing Airport. He was sentenced in October 2014 to 10 years in prison and 200,000 yuans (32,507 US\$) fine for trafficking in endangered species.

**Conviction for illegal trade of a leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and 2 bear gall bladders (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>44</sup>**



**Purola, State of Uttarakhand, India**

**October 18, 2014**

3 years after the flagrante delicto, the 3 people were sentenced to 3 years in prison and a fine of Rs 10,000 or 162 US\$.

**Seizure of 2 live Indian gazelles (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III in Pakistan) and 60 partridges (Family Phasianidae, not listed in CITES)<sup>45</sup>**



**Pakistan**

**October 18, 2014**

- 1- The bus is about to leave for Peshawar.
- 2 - Services learn that stowaways are on board.
- 3 - The search of the common carrier reveals 60 partridges and 2 gazelles.
- 4 - The wildlife smuggler is presented to the judge. He is sentenced to Rs 10,000 or 97 US\$.
- 5 - The fate of these gazelles coming from dry forests - no one knows how many of them still live in Pakistan - and the birds is unknown. The Department of Wildlife will decide.



**Seizure of 7 stump-tailed Macaques (*Macaca arctoides*, Appendix II), or 3 Rhesus Macaque (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II), of 4 four-eyed turtles (*Sacalia quadriocellata*, Appendix II)<sup>46</sup>**

**Chongzuo, Guangxi Province, China**

**October 19, 2014**

At 8am on October 19, the Chongzuo forest police stopped a suspicious white van at the China-Vietnam border for inspection. They found 5 cages and a yellow bag and seized 7 macaques, 3 stump-tailed macaques, and 4 four-eyed turtles. The 3 suspects, Zhang, Xu, and Xu were arrested. They had purchased the animals in Vietnam and planned to sell them in China.

**Animals for sale at the Sino Vietnamese border: rhesus macaques (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II), common jackals (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India), bears (*Ursidae* spp Appendix I or II), lorises (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I), civets (Family Viverridae), turtles<sup>47</sup>**

**Pu'er City Jiangcheng District, Yunnan Province, China**

**October 2014**

The border post # 3 street is littered with dead or live wild animals. They come from Vietnam. Tourists and locals are able to satisfy their appetite for wildlife in the neighboring restaurants. "First choice products at a reasonable price" say enticing advertisements. The monkey head takeaway sells for 300 yuans or 49 US\$, monkey meat kilo for 90 yuans and the most expensive dish, the bear paw, for 1000 yuans per kilo.



**Arrest of a poacher<sup>48</sup>**

**District of Kodagu, State of Karnataka, India**

**October 2014**

**Seizure of 2 ebony leaf monkeys (*Trachypithecus auratus*, Appendix II) and 2 leopard cats (*Priodonailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II)<sup>49</sup>**

**Indonesia**

**October 22, 2014**

**Conviction for trafficking of a tiger skull and ivory<sup>50</sup>**

**Shandong Province, China**

**October 23, 2014**

He had fraudulently imported from Indonesia all these animals parts banned from international trade since 1987 for the tiger and 1975 for the Asian elephants populations. He was sentenced to 6 years in prison and a fine of 50,000 yuans (8177 US\$).



**Conviction for illegal possession among other of a leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), of live pythons (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and cobra (Family *Elapidae*, Appendix II)<sup>51</sup>**

**Dehradun, State of Uttarakhand, India**

**October 27, 2014**

7 years after the facts, the 2 traffickers are sentenced to 5 years in prison and a fine of 15,000 rupees or 243 US\$.



**Seizure of 6 Asian palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III India), 2 live giant Asian pond turtles and 2 shells (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II) and a hog deer's antler (*Axis porcinus*, Appendix I or III)<sup>52</sup>**

**Ninh Thuan province, Vietnam**

**October 28, 2014**

The living animals have been released immediately into the wild. The deer antler will be exposed in a natural park for educational purposes. On 18001522 hotline, ENV answers in Vietnamese and English. Thanks to the NGO, the trafficker was arrested.



**Seizure of a Sunda slow loris (*Lorisidae* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 Assam macaques (*Macaca assamensis*, Appendix II), 6 macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix II), 4 stump tailed macaques (*Macaca arctoides*, Appendix II) and 8 impressed tortoises (*Manouria impressa*, Appendix II)<sup>53</sup>**  
**Jiangchen, Yunnan Province, China**  
**October 30, 2014**

On October 23 was held an illegal market of wild-life at the border between Vietnam and China. On October 30, 6 suspects were detained and 22 wild animals, live or dead, and more animal parts (116, 8 kg) were seized by the authorities of Jiangcheng. 9 local officials are suspected of trafficking. The live animals kept by the authorities are said to be in a stable condition. The seized bodies and parts were destroyed under the supervision of local authorities and the media.

**Conviction for the sale of animals "elixirs" including lorises (*Lorisidae* spp., Appendix I or II), royal cobras (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II), sun bears (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) and saros (gender *Capricornis*)<sup>54</sup>**  
**Phnom Penh, Cambodia**  
**October 2014**



14 dead animals macerated in jars of rice wine. A specialist in traditional medicinal practices understands that the lorises and snakes are drowned alive in alcohol jars. The elixir is sold 80 US\$ for 250 ml. The quack pretended not to know that these practices were illegal. He was sentenced to a fine of 2500 US\$.

**Seizure of 3.13 kg of pangolin scales, and 4 hippopotamus teeth (family Hippopotamidae, Appendix II)<sup>55</sup>**

**Qingdao, Shandong Province, China**  
**November 2014**

This one was found in the suitcase of a passenger from Hong Kong.

**Seizure of parts of pangolins, elephants, carnivores and arrest<sup>57</sup>**

**Kalmundipuram, State of Tamil Nadu, India**  
**November 12, 2014**

11 inhabitants of the village nearby the Sathyamangalam tiger reserve were set in custody after several teams from the Hindu anti-poaching watchers searched their homes and found all these teeth, claws, scales and ivory. A local elected official got involved on behalf of the villagers during their custody accusing the intervention brigades of breach of law. A high official in charge of anti-poaching was moved to a different position but the custody was not lifted.

**Seizure of 500 animals including a green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I), a hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I), slow lorises (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I), binturongs (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix III in India), gibbons (*Hylobatidae* spp., Appendix I), parrots and lorikeets (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix II), eagles (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II), nocturnal vultures (order of Strigiformes, Appendix I or II), hornbills (Bucerotidae family), Bengal leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) and 2 pythons (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>58</sup>**  
**Kudat, State of Sabah, Malaysia**  
**November 2014**

The slum-zoo was over populated and filthy. It had opened in 2002 with the blessings of public authorities. It is yet unclear what will become of the occupants: quarantine or transfer to the Lok Kawi Zoo, a state owned facility. It is not excluded that some be released.

Another Victory Mini Zoo was run near Matung-gong 160 km away from the Kudat Victory Mini Zoo now closed. The manager is being questioned by police.



**Illegal stocks destruction<sup>56</sup>**  
**National Capital Territory of Delhi, India**  
**November 2, 2014**

Prakash Javadekar, Minister of Environment and Forests, has carried out himself the crushing and burning of so-called luxury items seized by the protection services of the fauna in Delhi. "So, through this gesture we want to show that the Government of India cares for co-existence of flora, fauna, and human beings because it is an inseparable link in our scheme of nature "



**Seizure of pangolins (*Manis* spp., Appendix II), soft shell turtles (Trionychidae family) and snakes<sup>59</sup>**

**Quang Tri Province, Vietnam**

**November 27, 2014**

Everyone out of the baggage compartment! The bus was coming from Laos. Border control. In this country, drivers make a lot of money with smugglers. They seem to never know for who they're working yet still take the money. There was 120.5 kg of wildlife. In terms of individuals, that makes 7 pangolins, 7 common rat snakes (*Ptyas mucosus*, Appendix II), 14 snakes from the *Ptyas korros* species, a Southeast Asian leaf turtle (*Cyclemys oldhamii*, Appendix II) and an Asian softshell turtle (*Amyda cartilaginea*, Appendix II).

The pangolins were taken to the quarantine zone of Save Vietnam's Wildlife that is developing a conservation program for pangolins. The reptiles were transferred to the National Cuc Phuong Park.



Just following the seizure, a polemic broke out between custom officers and the Forest and Wildlife services. The latter accuse the customs officers to have treated the wild animals without the necessary consideration and without giving them the immediate care needed and for that to have caused the death of several of them.

## **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**Arrest of 2 British citizens and an antique dealer<sup>60</sup>**

**Fuzhou, Province of Fujian, China**

**November 27, 2014**



The event took place at the end of July. It was not announced until the end of November. Mrs. Hu and her husband Mr. Hu, British on their passports, Chinese origin, were going to visit family. The couple

was being waited for at the airport. Since 2013, custom officers had discovered that the couple settled in the United Kingdom would regularly send illegal packages to their uncle, an antique dealer in the town-district of Fuqing. The first finding made by customs was a batch of ivory pearls. By the postal service or on the occasion of family visits, a total of 124 carved ivories, a cane made of rhino horn and a gigantic tiger skin were bought goodness knows where in the United Kingdom and illegally smuggled into China. The 3 of them are set under judicial monitoring. Total value of the trafficking is estimated between 1.2 and 1.5 million yuans (200,000 to 244,000 US\$).

**Verdict following the seizure of 2 ivory buddha statues, one statue made by hippopotamus teeth, and 6 pieces of objects made by Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I)<sup>61</sup>**

**Shenyang, Liaoning Province, China**

**November 27, 2014**

Yang, who is a Chinese citizen living in England, bought there the items. He tried to mail the objects back to China by hiding them in a pair of women's boots and in a potato chip can. Although the court saw that mailing items are illegal, it decided to not penalize the man because the amount is little and for personal use only.



**Seizure of 6kg of Nilgau antelope meat (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) and discovery of a tiger carcass<sup>62</sup>**

**Khapri, Maharashtra, India and Pench Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh, India**

**21 and 29 November 2014**



In central India, in the tiger center. He was killed in the Pench Tiger Reserve which covers almost 300 km<sup>2</sup> and is home to tigers, leopards, wolves, sloth bears, deer, primates.

In the same area, a few days before the discovery of tiger remains, a Nilgau antelope had been poached at dawn and butchered. The meat was sold in neighboring villages. The rangers were informed and thus able to arrest 3 poachers, seize 2 guns, 6 kg of raw and cooked meat, poaching tools and the head and paws of the unfortunate antelope.



## FAMILY BUSINESS

### Seizure of weapons, powder, ammunition and bombs and animal remains<sup>63</sup>

Bhisi Forest, Maharashtra, India

December 9, 2014

The discovery of 2 bikes led forest workers to unveil a wild animals poaching and skinning center. Clinging to one motorcycle, a bag containing gunpowder in large quantities, knives and artisanal bombs. Investigators found at Tirathsingh Juni's, 55, a real arsenal, a workshop for skinning and tanning, paws of wild boars, dead birds and feline claws. The suspect fled. With his son, 26, he would supply other poachers in arms and ammunition. Tadoba Andhari tiger Reserve is close by.

### Rescue of 2 slow lorises (*Nycticebus javanicus*, Appendix I) of a pangolin and 2 greater mouse deers from *Tragulus napu* species (not listed in CITES)<sup>64</sup>

Ambarawa, Central Java Province, Indonesia

December 16, 2014



### Seizure of rhino horns, elephant tusks and teeth, claws and horns of other animals<sup>65</sup>

Hanoi, Vietnam

December 24, 2014

102, Le Quang Dao Street. This is where the police got hold of these animals remains of considerable value. 100 g horn = 4700 US\$. The duo had been raging for four years. Accomplices are hunted for.



### Conviction for illegal buying and sale of pangolins (*Manis* spp., Appendix II) and bear paws (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I)<sup>66</sup>



Quzhou, Province of Zhejiang, China

December 26, 2014

The restaurant owner had also a hidden wild animal trafficking activity. He even kept clean accounts for this business. In February 2012 and September 2013, he sold 342 pangolins cut in pieces. 200 US\$ per kilo. He was sentenced to 12 years and 4 months in prison and 200,000 yuans fine (32,236 US\$). One of his employees received 5 years and 2 months prison and 40,000 yuans fine (6447 US\$).

### Seizure of 3 kg of brown bear grease, a brown bear skin (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) and a stuffed leopard (*Panthera Pardus*, Appendix I) and arrest of a hunter<sup>67</sup>

Province of Zanjan, Iran

December 28, 2014



### Seizure of carcasses of 4 hill mynahs (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II), 11 squirrels (*Sciuridae* family) and 143 bulbuls (family *Pycnonotidae*)<sup>68</sup>

Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh State, India

December 28, 2014

The birds and squirrels were for sale on the market. Not really bushmeat rather treemeat, a relatively common practice in this state of eastern India denounced by local NGOs. The corpses were burned on site in Pasighat near the Dering wildlife sanctuary.

## EUROPE

**Seizure of 4 leopard skins (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), one jaguar skull (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), a sperm whale tooth (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) and 2 stuffed snowy owls (*Bubo scandiacus*, Appendix II)<sup>69</sup>**

**Burnley, England, United Kingdom**

**October 23, 2014**

The arrest warrant led to a complete harvest from all horizons and all places, including the sea. A 23-year-old man is being questioned by inspectors from the National Wildlife Crime Unit. Where does it come from and what is it for?



**Mafia and wildlife : crocodile (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I or II), grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II), boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II), python (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and Siberian tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I)<sup>70</sup>**

**Italy**

**November 2014**

The mafia has henchmen and henchanimals. Killer parrots learned to say in Italian "I'm gonna kill you" (Adesso ti sparo) and drug dealer parrots "How much do you need."

Pythons guard the entrance of the cocaine stocks. Crocodiles are presented as willing to digest anyone reluctant to pay the mafia taxes or taxes from some equivalent system.

The boa is a thug.

The domestic tiger can calm things down.

Marco Trapuzzano, high officer in the environmental police has heard and seen it all.

**Conviction for rhino horn powder and bear bile (*Ursidae* spp. Appendix I or II) traffic<sup>71</sup>**

**Newport, Wales, United Kingdom**

**November 24, 2014**

Sun Lui ran a pharmacy near Cardiff. The Chinese Herbal Center is now closed. The alternative therapist became a refugee in Wimbledon. Aged 51, she is struggling with United Kingdom justice. July 22, 2012, while she was returning from Beijing via Amsterdam, doses of crushed rhino horn, bear bile and an herb banned in Europe were found in her



luggage. 5 months later, she was taken into custody and charged with prohibited goods import. She has just been sentenced to a fine of £ 2,250 (3,600 US\$) and £ 1,500 in legal costs (2400 US\$). Sun Lui denied offense, the bear bile and forbidden plant were intended to heal her husband and rhino powder was for her personal use. Ms. Lui has heart problems and high blood pressure. In 2003, the British border police has achieved 569 seizures based on violations of the CITES Convention. The main "articles" are plants and live animals and formulations for therapeutic use. Hotline: 0800 59 5000.

**Seizure of a zebra skin (genus *Equus*), 3 ivory statuettes, coral necklaces, boxes made of turtle shells and a cushion made in python skin (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II)<sup>72</sup>**

**Avignon, Region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France**

**November 26, 2014**

"Still life" composed by the custom officers in Avignon after their visit to an international second hand sale. Most of the things seized come from the Eastern countries. Fines were given out and paid. All the items will be destroyed in an industrial burning site. .



**Conviction for purchase of protected species on internet: 4 chimpanzee skulls (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I), a drill skull (*Mandrillus leucophaeus*, Ap-**

**pendix I), a langur skull (*Trachypithecus* spp, Appendix I or II.), a cheetah skin (*Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I), a leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), a brown bear claw (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix I or II), a lion's claw (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II), shark teeth (Subclass *Elasmobranchii*) and an orca tooth (*Orcinus orca*, Appendix II)<sup>73</sup>**

**Croydon, Greater London, United Kingdom**  
**December 9, 2014**



Peter Prineas was sentenced to 10 months in prison. However if he has a clean conduct for 18 months, he will be exempt from punishment. He bought via the internet and was showing interest in a male



gorilla skull at the time of his arrest in February 2014. Before buying it, he wanted to have 2 photos, one before cleaning the skull, the other after.



Chimpanzee skull



Lion claw



Shark teeth

## OCEANIA

### Withdrawal of elephant tusks and rhino horns from auction<sup>74</sup>

**Sydney, Australia**

**November 11, 2014**

A flood of emails triggered by Australian NGOs pushed the Lawson auction house to withdraw in extremis from its sales the horns and tusks. The total sale price was estimated at A\$ 160,000 (130,000 US\$) by the auctioneers. "This is a precedent for all other auction houses in the country" said the HSI spokesman and "a great victory for the public power" adds IFAW.



## The ex-Hawai'i Mamo

The “honorable” Walter Rothschild in his book on Hawaiian birds published in 1900 in London reports that the “distinguished” American ornithologist H. W. Henshaw sent him a letter dated 9 October 1899 describing in detail what may be thought of as the last and brutal encounter between Man and the *Drepanis Pacifica*, a black colored bird who to his great misfortune has a tufts of gold yellow feathers. Their long curved beaks were adapted to digging out insects in crevices of trees and especially to seeping the nectar from flower calices.



*Drepanis Pacifica* is still a living species, though unquestionably very rare. No doubt it is on the verge of speedy extinction. About a year ago last July I found what, no doubt, was a family of Mamos in the woods about Kaumana. I'm sure I saw at least three individuals, possibly four or five. They were flitting silently from the top of one tall Ohia-tree to another, apparently feeding upon insects. The locality was a thick tangle, and a momentary glimpse of a slim, trim body as it thread dots way through the leafy tree-tops was all I could obtain. After about two or three hours I succeeded in getting a shot at one bird in the very top of a tall Ohia-tree. It was desperately wounded, and clung for a time to the branch, head downwards, when I saw the rich yellow rump most plainly. Finally, it fell six or eight feet, recovered itself, flew round to the other side of the tree, where it was joined by a second bird, perhaps a parent or its mate, and in a moment was lost to view. I need not speak of my disappointment, which was Vitter enough, for I had looked upon that bird as absolutely mine own. Of the others I saw no more, though I have repeatedly visited the locality again."

In one century, naturalists and explorers saw the mamos disappear and fought to get the remains of the last survivors to send them off to museums in Europe and reap glory and consideration for their hunting trophies.

The "Oo", the "Hoohoo", the "Merops jaunoir", the "Great Hook-billed Creeper", commonly named the "Mamo" fell victims to fashion and dress codes. Scott Wilson, the ornithologist and British explorer, is the one who first explained the main cause of extinction of the species in the Hawaiian Archipelago, the "Eden in the Pacific".



From the beginning of the 18th century, the king's court in Hawaii, women, children and men would wear as a sign of status capes and ornaments made of the red feathers from 2 species of passerines that today have survived. But in 1792 King Kamehameha the 1st took the throne and two decades later was acknowledged as federator of the archipelago. He made golden-yellow fashionable, color taken from an animal, the tail feathers of the mamo. His ceremonial cape, 1.20 meters long and 3.35 meters wide entirely yellow required the capture of 60 to 80,000 birds and ripping off 450,000 feathers. Mamo on the island refers both to the bird and the capes and coats made of yellow feathers. Kings and first rank men would wear these prestigious and symbolic garments, a "gift" from the birds supposed to confirm the natural authority of those who would receive them. This dress code was used both in times of peace and war. Women would wear these signs of distinction less ostensively. Only red and gold feather necklaces would hang from their necks or shawls from their shoulders.



Kamehameha I



The princess Nāhi'ena'ena,  
Kamehameha I's daughter

The mamos were captured by the following means : glue, a mix of the juice from the fruit of the breadfruit tree and the perfumed resin from sandalwood trees, was spread on branches of trees holding the Ha Ha, a sort of Hawaiian mistletoe with purple flowers from which mamos would suck the nectar. Ohias (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) were trimmed by the catchers. They would spread the glue on the remaining branches where the birds would perch and a maximum amount of birds were collected. Several endemic plants for which pollination was ensured by the mamos would also have disappeared consequently from the archipelago.

The yellow feathers were also part of the taxes required by the kings but the small folk could not bring in enough. For that reason, a corporation of catchers of red and yellow feathered birds worked under the orders of royal services and noble classes. King Kamehamea himself had demanded that mamos, after ridden of their feathers, be set free. That is at least what is told by Davis Malo, expert of the Hawaiian archipelago history in a local publication *Ka Hae in Hawaii* in 1858. The King wanted for the future that children be able to admire the beauty of such birds in the wild.

Chances of survival and social reintroduction of the glued mamos, stressed and partially de-feathered after the supposed release were certainly very low.

The feathers were sown onto archaic fabric made from the bark of an endemic species of tree, the oloma (*Touchardia latifolia*).

Another species of the mamo family, the Hawaiian moho (*Moho nobilis*) is extinct. The Hawaiian moho also had some yellow feathers but they didn't have the golden glow of the Hawaiian mamo. In 1898, one thousand were hunted. None have been seen since 1934.

The red feathers came from 2 endemic species on the archipelago: the red 'I'iwi (*Vestiaria coccinea*) and the 'apapane (*Himatione sanguinea*). The 2 species still survive today. The red feathers were less sought out than the yellow ones.

## ON THE TRAIL N°7

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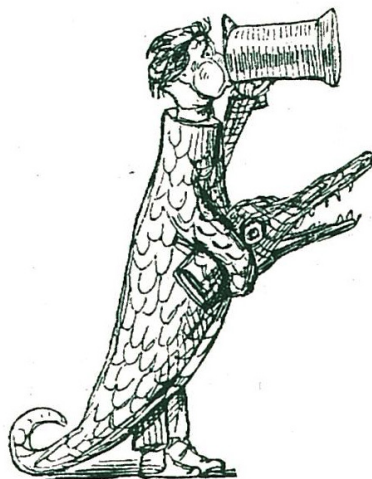
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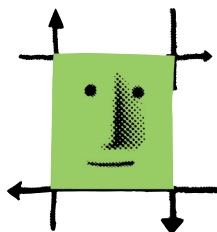
#### Non Gouvernemental Organisations

African Conservation Foundation, Big Life Foundation, Bornfree Foundation, Catalogue of Life (Species 2000 ITIS), Centre for Orangutan Protection, Conservation Justice, Education for Nature - Vietnam (ENV), Elephant Aware Masai Mara, Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), EOL Encyclopedia of Life, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Foundation Franz Weber, Friends of Maasai Mara, Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP-UNEP), Iran Environment and Wildlife Watch, International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Union Internationale pour la Conservation de la Nature (IUCN), Kenyans United Against Poaching, Last Great Ape organization (LAGA), Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO), Limbe Wildlife Centre, Mara Elephant Project-Escape Foundation, Mara Triangle, National Wildlife Crime Unit, Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), Olarro Conservancy, Outraged SA Citizens Against Poaching, Robin des Bois, Save The Elephants, Species Survival Network, Talf-Enforcement, The Wild Foundation, Tiger Time, TRAFFIC, Tsavo Trust, Walk With Rangers, Wara Conservation Project, WildAid, Wildlife Conservation Society, Wildlife Direct, Wildlife Trust of India.

#### Institutions

Agencia Peruana de Noticias (Andina), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), CITES, Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas (CONAP), Corporacion Autonoma Regional Para la Defensa de la Meseta de Bucaramanga, Department of Conservation.nz, Department of Environmental Affairs d'Afrique du Sud, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Philippines, Douanes allemandes, Douanes chinoises, Douanes de Shanghai, Douanes françaises, Douanes de Hong Kong, Douanes tchèques, Douanes turques, Gendarmerie Nationale Française, Gouvernement de Santa Cruz.bo, Gouvernement du Guatemala, IBAMA, Interpol, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Lusaka Agreement Task Force, Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement Durable et de l'Energie (France), Ministère de l'Environnement de l'Equateur, Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, National News Bureau of Thailand, Office Central de Lutte contre les Atteintes à l'Environnement et à la Santé Publique (OCLAESP), Procuraduria Federal de Protección al Ambiente (Profepa), Sistema Nacional de Areas de Conservación, South Africa government online, South Africa National Parks, South African Police Service, South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN), The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions Kenya, The Polar bear Programme Russia, The United States Department of justice, The Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, UNESCO, UK Border Force, US Fish and Wildlife, Zambia Wildlife Authority.





ROBIN DES BOIS

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