

ON_{the} TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling

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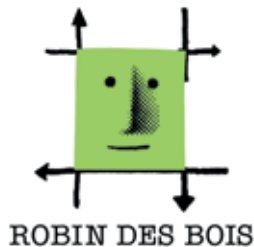
Contents

Seahorses	3	Birds	25
Sea Cucumbers	4	Trees Fall Down, Birds Too	27
Sri Lanka Tackles Looting in the Sea	5	The ex-Glaucous Macaw	34
Abalones	7	Pangolins	36
Corals	7	Pangolins and Elephants	41
Fishes	8	Primates	42
Marine Mammals	12	The Picture	53
Marine Turtles	13	Felines	54
Various Marine Species	15	Nepal, the Bridge between India and China	54
Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles	15	Bears	65
Snakes	19	Hippopotamuses	67
Sauria	20	Rhinoceroses	68
Crocodylians	21	Rhinos and Elephants	77
Various Reptile Species	22	Destructions	78
Amphibians	23	Elephants	80
Arachnids	23	Flight 634 Nairobi - Guangzhou	81
		Other Mammals	98
		Multi-Species	101



ON_{the} TRAIL

Carried out by Robin des Bois (Robin Hood) with the support of the Fondation Brigitte Bardot, the Fondation Franz Weber, the Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux and the Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Marine Affairs.



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Panthera onca (detail)
cf. page 58

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. 181 Member States.

Seahorses

Seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp.) are listed under CITES Appendix II.

AMERICA

April 18, 2016

Pontes e Lacerda, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil



Captured in Peru, sold in Bolivia and seized in Brazil, 30 kg of seahorses were heading to Sao Paulo to be sold in restaurants. A Chinese man of 44 years denied the points and says it was for personal consumption of soup. He would have paid \$ 800 US for the smuggled goods. He tried to bribe the police with R 5,000 (\$ 1,500 US).¹

June 15, 2016

Callao, Constitutional Province of Callao, Peru

Seizure of 648 kg of dried seahorses on board the *NING TAI 17*, a Chinese fishing boat commanded by Li Hui, aged 38. The seahorses were split into 27 bags hidden in one hold. Between 50,000 and 70,000 specimens. The seizure has an estimated worth of \$1,300,000 US.²



ASIA

CHINA

May 14, 2016

Hong Kong International Airport, China

14 kg of dried seahorses. One man arrested. Hotline 24 hours a day: 2545 6182.³

June 21, 2016

Hong Kong International Airport, Hong Kong, China

Seizure of 29.6 kg of dried seahorses in 6 packages coming from South Africa. The seahorses were so-called toys.⁴



INDIA

April 16, 2016

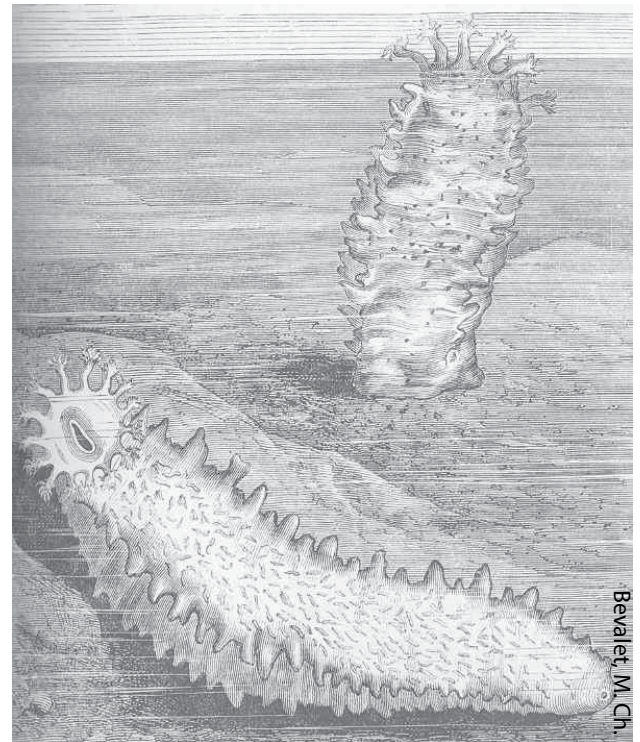
Kalapet, State of Tamil Nadu, India



659 dried seahorses in a small parcel service truck coming from Pondicherry heading to Chennai. Three arrested, the driver and 2 employees of the company.⁵

Sea Cucumbers

Class Holothuroidea. *Isostichopus fuscus* is listed under CITES Appendix III in Ecuador.



ASIA

INDIA

June 1 and 5, 2016

Mandapam, Tamil Nadu State, India

Mandapam is cursed for sea cucumbers (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 5, n°7 p. 3, n°10 p. 6, n°12 p. 3). Fishing season begins. Trafficking increases.

1 – Seizure of 65 kg of fresh sea cucumbers. As police approached, 3 escaped on a two-wheeler and threw the bags on the side of the road. The fourth was arrested.

2 – Seizure on board a boat carrying 55 kg of sea cucumbers in 21 bags. The suspects swam away, escaping the marine squad. They were recruited by a wholesaler who, after cooking them, ships sea cucumbers abroad.¹

June 14, 2016

Thondi, State of Tamil Nadu, India

1- Seizure of more than 64 kg of sea cucumbers and 500 g of seahorses. Six arrests.

2- Seizure of 14 kg of sea cucumbers on a boat. Four arrests.²



Sri Lanka Tackles Looting in the Sea

- April 7, 2016. South Iranathivu Island. North Province

Seizure of 200 sea cucumbers. They were collected from a dinghy all around the island on sea bottom. Four pairs of diving fins, 4 diving masks and the dinghy were seized. Four people in custody.³

- April 21, 2016. Kankesanthurai, North Province

Sea cucumber trafficking. Seizure of 10 compressed air cylinders, 2 pairs of diving fins and one dinghy. Three put in custody.⁴

- April 23, 2016. Between Chundikulam and Vettalakerni. Jaffna District, North Province

The Sri Lankan Navy has caught a poaching gang red handed thanks to the P465 and P437 patrol boats. Seizure of 2264 fresh sea cucumbers, 102 air cylinders, 25 diving masks, 22 pairs of diving fins and 10 GPS's. Thirty arrests.⁵

- April 24, 2016. Kankesantural, North Province

Seizure of 61 sea cucumbers, 30 air cylinders, 6 diving masks, 6 pairs of diving fins and 2 GPS's. Nine arrested.

- April 28, 2016. Kachchativu. North Province

Six fishermen were in the middle of transferring dried sea cucumbers in their 3 boats. It is without a doubt for smuggling into Tamil Nadu, India. Seizure of 1161 kg. Six taken into custody.⁶



- May 3, 2016. Konduchchikuda, Mannar, North Province

Seizure of 1.5 kg of sea cucumbers, a fiberglass boat, one GPS, 4 pairs of diving fins and 5 scuba masks. Four arrested.⁷



- Beginning of May. Sittivilugam, Batticaloa, East Province

Seizure of 1008 conches. One arrested.

The conch holds a very important place in the religions of Asia. When one blows into the conch, it creates a sound that embodies the victory of good against evil. In the villages, the conch allows you to initiate a call to prayer for the villagers. Those who cannot journey to the temples are thus encouraged to meditate and pray for a moment right where they are at the time of the call to prayer. Certain shells are engraved and ornamented.

The conch is a detritivore and an herbivore. It acts as a cleaning agent for the seabed.⁸



299 € on eBay

Sri Lanka Tackles Looting in the Sea - followed

-May 7, 2016. Chalai, North Province

Seizure of 150 sea cucumbers, 2 boats, 20 air cylinders, 4 diving fins, and 4 scuba masks. Six fishermen arrested.⁹

-May 8, 2016. Akkaraipattu. East Province

Seizure of 107 sea cucumbers, 3 pairs of diving fins and 3 scuba masks. Four people arrested.

- May 10, 2016. Kilinochchi, North Province

Seizure of 45 kg of sea cucumbers, 3 mopeds and one tuk-tuk. Eleven people arrested.¹⁰

- May 10, 2016. Oluvil, Ampara District, East Province

Seizure of a whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II) around 200 kg. Three fishermen arrested. One trawler ship seized.¹¹



- May 11, 2016. Mandathivu, North Province

Seizure at sea of 58 kg of fresh sea cucumbers. Six arrested.¹²



- June 24, 2016. Palaikuda Beach, North Province

Seizure of 142 fresh sea cucumbers, and 2 small boats. Five arrested on the Pasikuda beach.¹³



- June 27, 2016. Pedro Point, Jaffna District, North Province

Seizure of 929 fresh sea cucumbers, a fishing boat, diving fins, masks and air cylinders. Three arrested.¹⁴

- June 27, 2016. Vettalakerni. North Province

The body of a whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II) of over 4 m long was discovered being chopped up on the beach. One tractor was seized and 6 people are being followed by the police.¹⁵



Abalones

AFRICA

June 14, 2016
Bellville,
Western Cape
Province, South
Africa



Sentencing of 2 Chinese citizens aged 26 and 35 years old to one year in prison. They had been caught in the act for trafficking and processing of abalones. The seizure has an estimated worth of 5.7 million rands more than \$361,000 US. The day before the ruling, another hidden works abalone processing has been discovered in Cape Town.¹



Abalone and saury, Hiroshige Utagawa about 1832



See also p. 87, South Africa, May 8, 2016.

Corals

ASIA

INDIA

June 6, 2016

Coimbatore, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure of 364 kg of coral including 14 kg of live coral. One owner of multiple pet stores arrested. Live coral is used to create marine atmospheres inside of luxury villas. It's trendy and costs between \$2,000 and \$5,000 US. Coimbatore is 150 km from the Indian Ocean. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau was given information by the local NGO Vanam Trust of India. "Living coral will be kept alive and then released into the sea in a location that suits them," said the wildlife protection service.¹

PHILIPPINES

May 25, 2016

Babuyan Clar, Cagayan Valley
Region, Philippines

The boat, despite being named *Subic* and bearing a Philippine flag, was in fact a clandestine boat serviced by 10 Chinese nationals who profited once again from



The true name of the *Subic* is *Lady Luck 20*



EUROPE

ITALY

April 22, 2016

Reggio Calabria Airport, Calabre Region, Italy

Seizure by customs of 16 stony corals (*Scleractinia* spp., Appendix II) in the bags of several travelers coming from the African continent.³



June 9, 2016

Bosa, Sardinia Region, Italy

Seizure on board 2 vessels and at home of offenders of more than 4.25 kilograms of red coral branches (*Corallium rubrum*) protected by law since 2012. The value would be 30,000 € according to the Italian Treasury.⁴



Fishes

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

May 14, 2016

Legal and naval battle in South Africa, Provinces of Eastern and Western Cape



A pack of 28 fishing boats approach territorial waters. They entered into the Exclusive Economic Zone in South Africa without any fanfare. After having been identified and questioned by police, the fleet dispersed and turned off their geolocation systems. All the navigation lights were turned off too. After a high-speed pursuit, the South African Navy hailed the only *Lu Huang Yuan Yu 186* and escorted her to the Cape's port. The trawler will stay at the dock until a new order from the Fishing Department. She is suspected of illegal fishing in South African waters and fleeing to avoid arrest. As a first offence, a fine of 8000 rand (\$510 US) has been imposed on the captain for smuggling cigarettes and tobacco. And most unexpectedly, 4 dogs were discovered on board. There were kept in conditions described as "cruel" by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF). The Chinese fishermen aren't known for keeping animals in their company. The kennel inquired. The dogs were removed from the ship and left in the care of an animal's refuge.



Lu Huang Yuan Yu 186

May 25, 2016 Cape Town, South Africa



-Several days later, 3 other Chinese ships were identified off the coast of East London. Resorting to regular tactics, they are pretending to comply with authorities initially, while planning their eventual escape. This time, the South African Navy has brought out the big guns. The *Fu Yuan Yu 7880* and the *Fu Yuang Yu 7881* were formally intercepted and driven to the Port of East London, along with a third suspect in an advanced state of disrepair, the *Run Da 617*. The 3 ships are being heavily watched. The port approaches are watched over by a military ship. South Africa doesn't want to relive the humiliating escape of the *Samudera Pasific n°8* and the *Berkat Menjala n°23* from the Cape in 2013 (see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 3).



The new *Run Da 617*



Run Da 617 detained in 2016 in South Africa

Aboard the *Fu Yuan Yu 7880*, there are 36 crew members and 340 tons of squid. Aboard the *Fu Yuang Yu 7881* there are 24 crew members and 60 tons of squid. On the *Run Da 617*, 26 crewmember and 200 tons of squid. An investigation has been launched to find the origin of these cephalopods.

June 23rd, the 3 ships left South Africa. The 3 captains were charged to a fine of around \$144,000 US for the illegal possession of fishing gear, and for breaking environmental protection regulations. The poaching accusation was lifted. Further analyses did not prove that the squid were caught in South African waters. It is hard to believe that the *Run Da 617* was allowed to return to see given her obsolescence and insalubrity for the 26 crewmembers.

As for the *Lu Huang Yuan Yu 186*, it was released much earlier. On June 22nd, she was seen in the port of Pointe Noire in Congo.¹

TUNISIA

June 16, 2016

Téboulba Port, Governorate of Monastir, Tunisia

Seizure during prohibited fishing period of 6.5 tons of fresh bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*).²

AMERICA

CHILE

First week of April, 2016

Tongoy coast, Region of Coquimbo, Chile

Seizure of 212 blue sharks (*Prionace glauca*), 62 shortfin mako sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) and several fins. The trade of all fin's sharks 00is controlled: in the framework of sustainable fishing, one must prove that the animal has been captured in full and the fins were not cut.³

COLOMBIA

April 26, 2016

Barranquilla, Department of Atlántico, Colombia

Seizure of 480 shark fins in the truck of a transport company. Estimated price: \$ 3,416 US.⁴

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

May 13, 2016

Death Valley National Park, State of Nevada, United States of America

1.5 cm long, 2 grams, one hundred specimens, the Death Valley pupfish (*Cyprinodon salinus*) is in survival mode in the United States. They have been classified as endangered since 1967. Out of nowhere, three drunken vandals got off of their off road vehicle and broke into the oasis sanctuary in Death Valley. They pissed, swam, drank beer, vomited and disturbed mud and the clear water. At least one of the micro-fish has been killed. From April to May, the pupfish lay their eggs, and it is probable that this brutal raid has destroyed enough eggs to shorten the future of the species on the North American continent. A reward of \$15,000 US has been promised to those who aid in the arrest of the delinquents. They have already been identified.⁵



© National Park Service

May 15, 2016

Boca Raton, State of Florida, United States of America

Death at a hospital of one young nurse shark (*Ginglymostoma cirratum*), harassed by 4 sunbathers, including 3 men and a woman. They messed around with the shark and held it by his caudal fins. The victim, whose species is not known for being aggressive, finally ended up biting the young woman's arm and 2 teeth remained in her flesh. The woman who was bitten and the shark biting her were driven to the hospital. Surgeons were successful in quickly separating the two. The shark died. Many will regret his loss, which adds to the other 200 million sharks fished each year for the food industry.⁶



ECUATOR

April 10, 2016

Galápagos Marine Reserve, Galápagos Archipelago, Ecuador

Seizure of 70 Galapagos sharks (*Carcharhinus galapagensis*), of the *Maria Tatiana IV* and her six fiberglass skiffs. The 21 members of the crew were questioned.⁷



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

June 20, 2016

Punta Cana, La Altagracia Province, Dominican Republic

Another deadly selfie. This time it has happened in the most well-known sea-side resort in the Dominican Republic. The beach guards and tourists hand captured a blue shark (*Prionace glauca*), tied him with a rope and dragged him to the beach. Then they took a triumphant picture. Some agents of the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Punta Cana also participated.⁸



ASIA

CHINA

April 9, 2016

Sanya, Hainan Province, China

Discovery of 100 scalloped hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*, Appendix II) crammed into a fish market to be sold for 30 yuans per kilo, or \$4.6 US/kg. The case, revealed by the media, shows a large weakness of State's land and sea controls.⁹

May 5, 2016

Beihai City, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China



Four arrested after the capture and sale of a whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II)

He would have been caught unintentionally. The fishing boat belongs to a 47-year-old woman. Police has interrogated the 10 crewmembers. The shark would have been sold for 5 yuans per kilo to the industry to be transformed into fertilizer. It weighed 370 kg. In the spring, the species frequently swims off the shores of Guangxi and Guangdong. See "On the Trail" n°4 p. 7, n°6 p. 6-7, n°7 p. 8, n°10 p. 8, n°11 p. 7, n°12 p. 8.¹⁰

INDIA

April 23, 2016

Erwadi, State of Tamil Nadu, India

10 large shark carcasses, species not yet determined, were recovered from a road after a traffic accident Sunday morning between Poompuhar and Marthandam (550km). This random revelation shows that not everyone has respected the fishing ban put in place by the State's government between April 15th and May 29th to replenish the fish stocks. The fishers in Tuticorin suspect that their colleagues in Kerala have taken advantage of the situation. The truck driver and two passengers, including a minor, have been interrogated by police.¹¹



INDONESIA

May 26, 2016

Kasumba Island, Maluku Province, Indonesia

Seizure in PT. Air Biru Maluku facilities of 2 whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II), each 4 meters long. The company headed by a military officer and a Singaporean partner has a permit to capture and breed ornamental fish. To develop their activities, they have filed a request to open "a conservation center" that would have the job to capture, breed and export whale sharks, dolphins and Manta rays. The 2 "conservationists" are eyeing the Chinese market and its numerous aquatic zoos planned or under construction. The whale sharks that were stored in artificial ponds have been released into the sea. The leaders are still at large.¹²



Whale shark in Okinawa's aquatic zoo, Japan

Sri Lanka : see page 6

EUROPE

SPAIN

REPEATED OFFENSE

June 1, 2016

Vigo, Pontevedra Province, Autonomous Community of Galice, Spain

Seizure of 340 kg of porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*, Appendix II), one 100kg Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) and 10 kg of fins. Wednesday night, during an inspection of the port, police discovered the merchandise hidden in an empty cargo hold. The ship-owner has a bad reputation.¹³



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FRANCE

REPEATED OFFENSE

May 31, 2016

Nantes, Loire-Atlantique Department, France

Seizure of 124 kilos of European eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II), 2.6 kilos of elvers, 2 cars and 330,000 € in cash. Six traffickers had been arrested, 5 have been formally charged. Three other members of the gang were questioned by the police.¹⁴

June 28, 2016

Nantes, Loire-Atlantique Department, France

18 poachers and smugglers of elvers have been sentenced to fines from 600 to 5000 € each. They have been too sentenced to pay 8400 € all-together to Robin's Hood NGO for the ecological damage. Their fishing gears have been seized.

They were caught red handed in the act of fishing a protected species without a permit in forbidden areas, of fishing with forbidden gears and of transporting their poached plunder.^{14bis}



ITALY

April 8, 2016

Fiumicino, Lazio Region, Italy

Seizure, near Rome International Airport, of 6 Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) with a total weight of 200 kg in a refrigerated truck that came from the Adriatic Sea. The violators were given a fine of 4,000 €. The tuna had been donated to a charity.¹⁵



June 5, 2016

Port of Pozzillo, Autonomous Region of Sicily, Italy

Seizure of 11 Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) with a total weight of 1,500 kg on a fishing boat by the coast guard.

Between the sea and the volcano, the small, picturesque fishing village of Pozzillo at the foot of Mount Etna, is known for its lava's beach and fresh fish.

The *Santa Maria La Scala* was controlled at first light. Atlantic bluefin tuna was in the hold. The fishery was shut down at the time. The owner was fined € 4000. The tuna were auctioned. The money is returned to the State coffers. The average price of bluefin tuna is 18 € per kg. The State benefits from poaching.¹⁶



Marine Mammals

AFRICA

GUINEA

May 26 2016

Conakry, Conakry Region, Guinea

Trial for fraudulent export of 4 manatees (*Trichechus senegalensis*, Appendix I). Marine mammals have been exported to China thanks to the complicity of a high-ranking serviceman who is accused of unauthorized assumption of official status. The smuggling of live animals was carried out a few months before the listing of the species in Appendix I of CITES. Others accomplices are suspected. Airfreight cargo transport of manatees mobilized other means than a falsified administrative stamp.¹

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

April 26th 2016

Salt Pond Beach Park, State of Hawaii, United States of America

Some do not like Hawaiian monk seals. "On the Trail" n°6 p. 8 has already recounted the beating of one of them. It was at the edge of the Mediterranean, today it is at the edge of the Pacific Ocean. RK30, a code name, was beaten several times by a single individual who was captured on video and had been arrested the next day. RK30 is around 17 years old. She is pregnant. She has survived many setbacks: shark bites, neck strangulation by nets ... Hotline: 1-800-853-1964.²



May 13th 2016

Okaloosa Island, State of Florida, United States of America

Another big saddle-backed dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*, Appendix II) killed by bullets washed ashore on a beach in the Gulf of Mexico. The phenomenon worsens. Hotline: 1-800-853-1964.³



ASIA

SOUTH KOREA

April 6, 2016

Ulsan, South Korea

27 tons of whale meat in cold rooms. \$3.4 million US, or \$126 US/kg. 40 Minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*, Appendix I). The fishers call it the "lotto of the sea." The demand for whale meat is high. Four arrested.

Hot Pink Dolphin, an NGO new to Ulsan, hopes that the Whale Festival falls into oblivion. "Each year, organizers stir up nostalgia and celebrate the history of whaling in South Korea," "If Ulsan really wanted to become a "whale city" it must stop dwelling on the past port of Jangsaengpo and ask why the blue whales, gray whales, right whales, and humpbacks that used to frequent the East Sea have now disappeared."

The 40 chopped and frozen whales, the 16 people in custody, and the 4 arrested are just the tip of the iceberg. Several hundred whales are captured each year by fishermen with one perpetual alibi. "It is clear that the whales come to be caught in the nets instead of nets catching the whales". This is unintentional whaling, according to the fishermen. More consistent with tradition, the other whale hunting method uses harpoons, attaching buoys to the dead whale so that fishermen can return at night to tow the whale with their small stealthy fishing boats without causing alarm.

All of these practices involve spectacular manipulations on the docks. With an average length of 7 meters and a weight of 7 tons, Minke whales do not go unnoticed.

One whale reportedly sells for \$35,000 US. In Jangsaengpo, there are 20 restaurants that have whale on the menu. Ulsan is right nearby. It is the richest city in South Korea. It is the city of Hyundai and Samsung. Ulsan is building giant global container ships. Officially, South Korea banned whaling in 1986.⁴



Marine Turtles

Marine turtles (families Cheloniidae and Dermochelyidae) are listed under CITES Appendix I, including Ridley Sea Turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*), Hawksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Kemp's Ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys kempii*) and loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*).

AFRICA

BENIN

June 17, 2016

Benin

Seizure of 8 Ridley turtle shells. One arrest.¹

KENYA

May 19, 2016

Mayungu, Kilifi County, Kenya



The abduction of a female green turtle failed thanks to the alert of the hotel's night watchman on the beach. She was returned to the water safely inside of the Watamu Marine National

Park monitored by Local Ocean Trust. Group 911, specializing in assistance and security, contributed to the rescue by providing a team and a vehicle.²

AMERICA

COSTA RICA

May 18, 2016

Province of Limon, Costa Rica

Seizure at night of 64 sea turtle eggs. One of the bikers tried to escape by throwing a bag on the road but eventually the two were taken into custody.³

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

REPEATED OFFENSE

FAMILY AFFAIRS

May 6, 2016

San Diego, State of California,



United States of America

Sentencing by a federal court of Jose and Olga Jimenez to 6 months in prison

for trafficking 911 olive Ridley eggs between Mexico and the United States (see "On the Trail" No. 12, p. 12). Two of their sons were involved in the smuggling attempt. Eggs after a journey of 26 hours by bus in a cooler were no longer viable. Dead

loss. This is the biggest smuggling case of sea turtle eggs ever discovered in the United States. 911 eggs accounted for more than 4.3% of the eggs laid by the green turtles on Mexican beaches of Nayarit. On several occasions, Olga Jimenez had already been caught in the act of smuggling between Mexico and the United States, parrots, fish, shrimp, ...⁴

MEXICO

May 13, 2016

Tapachula, State of Chiapas, Mexico

Seizure of 6,000 Agassizii green turtle eggs (*Chelonia mydas agassizii*) in a bus station. This turtle lives in the eastern Pacific. The *Chelonia agassizii* is close to *Chelonia mydas*, the only difference is its darker color. Controversy concerning the species is still present: the turtle has long been classified as a subspecies of the *Chelonia mydas*, but some scientists consider it a separate species.⁵



ASIA

INDONESIA

April 6, 2016

Karangasem Regency, Bali Province, Indonesia

Seizure aboard *KM Putra Tunggal* of 45 green turtles. Arrest of the 6 members of the crew. Six turtles are dead. The live ones are in a care center on Serangan Island. They are between the ages of 40 and 70 years old. Left for Madura on March 20th to the destination Karangasem -150 nautical miles -, the *KM Putra Tunggal* has without a doubt stopped along the route to catch turtles or to take delivery.⁶



VIETNAM

May 4, 2016

Thai Binh, Vietnam

Rescue of a 60 kg green turtle. She was captive at the home of a pastor who had bought her for more than \$2,000 US from fishermen. She had been caught that morning. She would have been released into the sea that night. The hotline of ENV (Education for Nature Vietnam) worked well.⁷

May 13, 2016

Ha Long, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam

"For sale a beautiful Pacific Ridley turtle, weighing 40 kg. 50 million VND" said the sign on the edge of the expressway. The police, alerted, extracted it a few hours after from the car trunk of the buyer.⁸



Ha Long, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam

1 - June 3, 2016. Seizure in a beached old row boat of 3 green tortoises. They were returned to sea.

2 - June 6, 2016. Seizure of 2 green tortoises in a restaurant.⁹

EUROPE

SPAIN

April 22, 2016

Lleida, Lleida Province, Spain

The police seized one Hawksbill sea turtle put for sale on the internet for 800 €.¹⁰

OCEANIA

FRANCE

April 9, 2016

To'ahotu, French Polynesia, France

Poaching of a green turtle with a speargun and custody of the shooter. He claims that he killed to eat. He will appear in late September before the Court of Papeete.¹¹



April 11, 2016

Tumaraa, French Polynesia, France



Rescue of a green turtle. Turned on the back for 48 hours, she had only to wait for the butcher's knife. She was saved by a phone call and a rush of the State police

force. She was entrusted to the Moorea turtle clinic run by the Association Te Mana o Te Moana. The establishment has hosted 435 sea turtles in poor health, 192 have been released into the ocean.¹²

SALOMON ISLANDS

May 4, 2016

Sikopo Island, Solomon Islands

The PT 16005 and PT 160048 did not respond anymore. The geolocation tags stopped emitting 16 days after fitting. Hawksbill's were killed by a group of poachers landed on the island of Sikopo. They will soon be on sale in the form of bracelets in Honiara, capital of the Solomon Islands or mainland Asia.¹³



Bangles made in shells hawksbill sea turtle to be sold in Honiara.

Various Marine Species

ASIA

INDIA

June 12, 2016

Kanniyakumari, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure in several stores of 92 kg of coral, 125 horned helmet shells (*Cassis cornuta*), 8 nautilus shells (*Genius Nautilus*), a bull mouth or red helmet shell (*Cypraeacassis rufa*), 6 mollusc shells (*Tegulidae* spp.), 36 spider shells (*Lambis lambis*), 2 orange spider shells (*Lambis crocata*) and 860 shells of cono cono or trapezium horse conch (*Pleuroploca trapezium*). Three arrests.¹



The trapezium horse conches are mollusks spread into Indian and Pacific Ocean until 40 m deep.

INDONESIA

April 1st, 2016

Cilacap, Java Central, Indonesia

Seizure in a shop of hundreds of marine animal parts including 8 hawksbill turtle shells, 3 unspecified sea turtle shells, 342 bracelets and 40 rings made of turtle shells, 33 horned helmet shells (*Cassis cornuta*), 42 triton's trumpet shells (*Charonia tritonis*), 68 shells from the pearly nautilus species (*Nautilus pompilius*), 155 trochus shells (genus *Trochus*), 40 fluted clam shells of the species *Tridacna squamosa*, (Appendix II), 25 clam shells of the species *Tridacna maxima* (Appendix II) and 4 snouts from the large-tooth sawfish (*Pristis microdon*, Appendix I).²



Tridacna squamosa

Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles

AFRICA

MADAGASCAR

May 8, 2016

Port of Mahajanga, Boeny Region, Madagascar

Seizure of an Angonoka (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I). Arrest of a paddler. The Angonoka are being plunged into extinction (see "On the Trail" n° 5 p. 16, n° 10 p. 13, n° 11 p. 12, n° 12 p. 16). The latest are transported by motorbike between Soalala and Mahajanga or they depart on speedboat before being transferred to foreign fishing vessels. As for the mesh nets of customs at airports, they are often too loose. It is just a hocus pocus about smuggling. A crisis meeting was held in early April in Mahajanga. Customs, police, and the NGO Durrell struggling for 25 years on site for the conservation of the species were there. The State police force was absent. "Everyone was against us, locals, authorities, businessmen and elsewhere, officials and even pseudo protectors of the turtles" said Richard Lewis expert from NGO Durrell who is at least on the brink of despair.¹



Astrochelys yniphora

MAURITIUS ISLAND

Beginning of May, 2016

International Airport, Mauritius Island

Seizure of 130 baby tortoises (*Testudinidae* spp., Appendix I or II) coming from Madagascar. The species and the destination were not clearly specified but smuggling from Madagascar of the last Radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) and Madagascar tortoises (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I) is unfortunately common (see "On the Trail" n° 12 p. 20).²

UGANDA

May 16, 2016

Mbale District, Eastern Region, Uganda

Seizure of 152 leopard tortoises (*Stigmochelys pardalis*, Appendix II) collected thanks to the favorable rainy season. According to authorities each tortoise is estimated at \$ 5,000 US in the Asian market. Havocscope estimates them at \$ 10,000 US a piece in the Malaysian black market.³



AMERICA

ARGENTINA

June 16, 2016

Darregueira, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina

The torture of the tortoise. A young girl aged 15 years gave a class over the Internet on the art of killing a turtle with a knife and recovering the shell.⁴



BRAZIL

April 20, 2016

São Félix do Araguaia, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Seizure of 56 live tortoises. According to the fishermen, they captured them in the Araguaia River to eat. But in that region, only the Indians have that right. The tortoises were released.⁵

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

April 13, 2016

Ann Arbor, State of Michigan, United States of America

Sentencing of Kai Xu, 27 years old, called Turtle man, of Canadian nationality to 57 months in prison for trafficking more than 1,000 turtles from the United States and Canada towards China (see "On the Trail" n° 6, p. 15). Arrested in September 2014, he had already spent 19 months in detention, his release on bail had been rejected in November 2014 (see "On the Trail" n° 7, p. 13). He will also have to pay \$17,000 US restitution corresponding to the care of the tortoises.⁶



ASIA

CAMBODIA

April 9, 2016

Toul Kralanh, Province de Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia

Seizure of 18 unspecified turtles. The police had been informed by witnesses when the truck stopped in a village and the turtles had been unloaded. With the arrival of the police, only the driver's employee was there. "I did not know that turtles were illegal." "The driver asked me to unload them here, telling me he was coming back but did not return." The "goods" with a total weight of 141 kg would have been loaded at Poipet on the border between Thailand and Cambodia and have to be sent to Phnom Penh. Thai and Cambodian customs had not seen anything. The tortoises were hidden under mattress covers.⁷

INDIA

April 18, 2016

Thanks to the efforts of all parties involved and the Turtle Survival Alliance, the Angonoka (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I) and radiated tortoises from Madagascar (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) seized at the Mumbai airport on March 20, 2016 (see "On the Trail" n° 12, p. 20) took the return flight on Air Mauritius. Of the 146, 17 died during the outward trip and in the Karnala refuge where they were waiting for all the steps for their repatriation. The investigation conducted in Mumbai revealed that they had been imported in India by Lal Bahadur (see p. 54). Arriving in Mumbai by Air Mauritius, he then took the direction of Nepal by a Jet Airways flight. Indian NGO Nisarg Sakha contributed to the protection of the turtles waiting for their repatriation and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals of Thane provided logistical support.⁸

Mumbai Metropolitan Region, State of Maharashtra, India

May 2, 2016. Rescue of 7 star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) abandoned in the Panchpakadi neighborhood.

May 3, 2016. Seizure of 6 star tortoises in the chic Versova neighborhood.

May 11, 2016. Seizure of 6 star tortoises. Arrest of a 24 year old vendor.⁹



May 30, 2016

Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala State, India

Seizure of one Indian star tortoise (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II), weighing 1.5 kg. Arrest of 4 people. They headed to the airport.¹⁰

June 2, 2016

Nabarangpur District, State of Odisha, India



Two conveyors have escaped on a motorbike. They got rid of the sacks. There were 192 trionyx Ganges (*Nilssoniana gangetica*, Appendix I) inside. An accomplice is in custody.¹¹

June 17, 2016

Vikasnagar, State of Uttarakhand, India

Seizure of 3 Indian roofed turtles (*Pangshura tecta*, Appendix I) of 20 years. Collected in Uttar Pradesh and in Uttarakhand, they are sold in Delhi. A young man of 19 years was arrested.¹²



PAKISTAN

April 5, 2016

Karachi, Sindh Province, Pakistan



Seizure in cardboard boxes of 62 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) adhesive-wrapped. 49 of them were asphyxiated. According to the authorities, each of them has a theoretical value

of \$1,545 US in the international market. An air waybill found at the scene of the seizure proves that the cargo was about to fly to Kuala Lumpur. No one was arrested. Colluding in the airports. Missed appointments. Tips-off. Trafficking turtles from Karachi is at the same time intense and muddled. Many packages ready to be shipped are found at the side of the expressways leading to the airport (see "On the trail" n° 11, p. 13).¹⁴

April 27, 2016

Karachi, Sindh Province, Pakistan

Seizure of 170 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I). The gang proceeded to load 2 cars beside the expressway between Karachi to Hyderabad. Four traffickers fled. The turtles had been captured in Punjab. Many of them laid eggs in the police station. The 161 surviving female turtles weigh between 1 and 6 kg. They have subsequently been released into the Haleji lake.¹⁵



SINGAPORE

June 23, 2016

Woodlands, North Region, Singapore. Border with Malaysia

Seizure of 22 star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) in the trunk of a car. One arrest.¹³

SRI LANKA

May 8, 2016

Pahalayaha, Northwest Province, Sri Lanka

25 star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) were in the back of the pickup. They are in the waters of the Wilpattu National Park.¹⁶

THAILAND

June 7, 2016

Si Racha District, Chon Buri Province, Thailand

Theft of 78 tortoises including 6 Madagascar tortoises (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I) and 72 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I). Both are native to Madagascar. The large African island in the Indian Ocean had requested their repatriation. Paperwork and lack of money prevented it. Their seizure at Bangkok airport dates from December 2013 (see "On the Trail" n° 3, p. 11). They had been stolen from their temporary refuge in Bang Phra where waterfowl are bred.¹⁷

VIETNAM

April 7, 2016

Dong Nai Province, Vietnam

Seizure of one Cantor's giant softshell turtle (*Pelochelys cantorii*, Appendix II) put for sale on YouTube. The investigation led to a barracks. The turtle was sequestered there. After a few days of observation in the Cat Tien National Park, she had been transported at night to avoid suffering from the heat and then returned to the Mekong waters at daybreak.

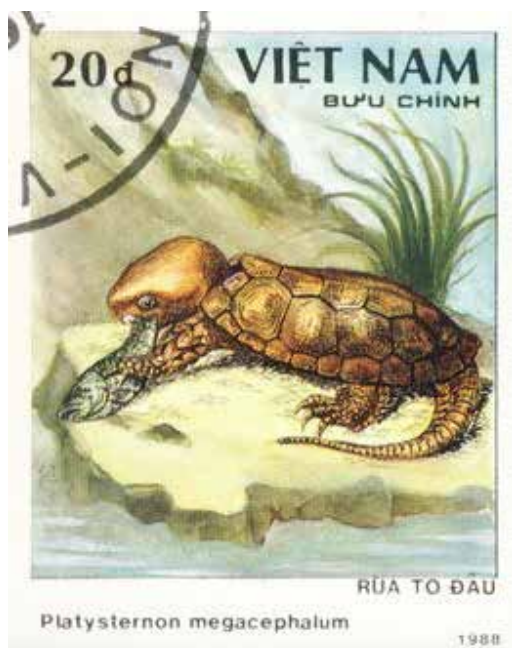
In Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia, where poachers hunt with bamboo traps or hunting dogs, the Cantor's giant softshell turtle, 2 m long for the largest, 250 kg, is an easy target for the markets of meat, decorative animals and alternative medicine.¹⁸



May 16, 2016

Dien Chau District, Nghe An Province, Vietnam

Seizure at the border with Laos of 10 big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I) and 2 pangolins. The animals were destined to be eaten. One arrest.¹⁹



May 24, 2016

Ha Nam Province, Vietnam

Seizure of 72 turtles en route to China including yellow forehead box turtles (*Cuora galbinifrons*, Appendix II). One arrest.²⁰

EUROPE

ITALY

April 28, 2016

Marino, Lazio Region, Italy

Rescue of one African spurred tortoise (*Geochelone sulcata*, Appendix II) with a diameter of 60 cm and a weight of 40 kg wandering the streets of Marino. Authorities are concerned about number of strayings from exotic and set aside animals or escaped.²¹



Geochelone sulcata in the wild

Italy

1- May 13, 2016. Strambino, Turin, Piedmont Region. A large snapping turtle specimen had been found close to the artificial canal "Luva" by Settimo Vittone forest rangers. It had been assigned temporarily to the Nature Reserve while waiting for a specialized center.

2- May 20 2016. San Vittore Olona, Milan, Lombardy Region. A second large snapping turtle specimen found in the north of Italy. This time, it was recovered by a motorist on a road along the river Olona. Particularly excited, the rescuer handled her using a shovel and placed in a plastic box before entrusting it to ENPA (Ente Nazionale Protezione Animali).²²

June 10, 2016

Port of Bari, Pouilles Region, Italy

Seizure of 2 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo Hermanni*, Appendix II) inside of a car from Albania. The driver is Italian. A record was compiled.²³

Snakes

AFRICA

BOTSWANA

June 23, 2016

Maun, North West Province, Botswana

Possession of a South African python by the director of a tourism establishment in Mochaba. It is one of the guides who reported the presence of the snake. The guide, supported by the Botswana Guide Association (BOGA) said that he was fired because of his role in reporting the snake, while the director said that the guide's contract was not renewed for purely professional reasons. The conflict worsens with accusations of racism. The director is white and the guide is black. BOGA claims that now, all of the ecotourism companies commonly managed by whites refuse to hire the guide and that the director of the establishment was not investigated by the Wildlife and National Parks Administration. The python was released in the Olawengo delta. This would not be the first misdemeanor of Wildlife regulation for the establishment's director. He was already caught smuggling between Botswana and South Africa according to the parliamentary commission on wildlife, which has been seized by BOGA and which also mandates the reintegration of the guide into the establishment.¹



Python natalensis

EGYPT

Beginning of April, 2016

Cairo International Airport, Egypt

Seizure in luggage of 60 young Egyptian cobras (*Naja haje*) with the destination of Djeddah, Saudi Arabia. They were placed in 6 cloth bags within two polystyrene boxes with ice to make them "fall asleep" and limit their movements. Their mouths were sewn. They had been entrusted to the Giza Zoo. It is not impossible that they are released in the desert where they had been captured.²



AMERICA

BRAZIL

April 11, 2016

Itatinga, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 2-baby corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*) originally from the United States. They were in a car on a highway. They had been entrusted to the UNESP (Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho).³

June 21, 2016

Pinhais, State of Parana, Brazil

Two young boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) had made a long voyage. More than 12 hours of flight separates Brazil and Canada. They were in packages, strung in tights to deceive customs. The species is endemic to South America.⁴



ASIA

CHINA

FAMILY AFFAIRS **April 5, 2016** **Bobai County,** **Guangxi Region,** **China**

Poaching and barbecue of a Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II). Two arrests.⁵



INDIA

May 16, 2016 **Dhaulta Kuan, New** **Delhi, India**

Seizure of 3 red sand boas (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II). Arrests of three snake charmers, who were displaying the animals openly in the city. Boas with 2 heads - the head resembles the tail - raise up a lot of superstition.⁶



Sauria

AFRICA

UGANDA

May 12, 2016 **Eastern Region, Uganda**

Seizure of 120 live chameleons (family Chamaeleonidae). Two arrests including a student in tourism. On the black market, the value of a specimen is \$ 60 US. The gang specializing in picking chameleons had recently opened a shop on the Internet to attract customers in the Netherlands, Germany, Czech Republic, and Kenya.¹



ASIA

INDIA

April 3, 2016 **Guwahati, State of Assam, India**

Seizure at a bus station of tokay geckos (*Gekko gecko*) in an isolated bag. The geckos are protected throughout the country since 2014. There is a boom in the market for these lizards since the launch of a new rumor that their consumption in one form or another would cure AIDS. Captured in the south or east of India, the geckos would make long journeys by train and bus to the border with Burma. Then the journey would continue on board other vehicles to China.²



Crocodilians

AMERICA

BRAZIL

April 8, 2016

Seizure of 2 skinned yacare caiman (*Caiman yacare*, Appendix I and II) from a country home. The skins were drying in the sun. Fishing lines and harpoons were also seized. Fine of \$ 250 US.¹



June 21, 2016

Macapa, State Amapa, Brazil

Voluntary surrender of a baby caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II). The little reptile was attached by a string. The child of the home fiddled him in all directions.²

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

April 27, 2016

Medford, Suffolk County, State of New York, United States of America

Since 2003, 400 reptiles, most of which alligators and snakes, were seized from individuals in the county. A short time ago, a young alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) was discovered in a thrown over Tupperware container in the middle of a restaurant. There is a large "gator" trend in New York. They are at the same time dangers to public safety and victims of animal abuse. It is prohibited to keep them in homes in the State.³

May 9, 2016

Loxahatchee, State of Florida, United States of America

In Florida, hunting "gators" (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) is allowed only from August 15th to November 1st along with a fee of \$ 272 US. A truck driver was not following either of these regulations. In the cab were scattered animal remains of freshly killed reptiles. Their feet were lined up along the dashboard. Florida Fish and Wildlife Service agents were very taken aback.⁴



ASIA

THAILAND

Beginning of June 2016

Tha Yang District, Phetchaburi Province, Thailand

It was locked in a fish tank in the middle of a garden. Rescue of one Siamese crocodile (*Crocodylus siamensis*, Appendix I).⁵



EUROPE

FRANCE

April 24, 2016

Department of Lot-et-Garonne, France

A village flea market held a surprise: a stuffed caiman (*Alligatoridae* spp., Appendix I and II). It was seized by customs. For economic reasons, the customs division in the department is threatened by possible closure.⁶

GERMANY

June 16, 2016

Braunschweig, State of Lower Saxony, Germany

Interception by the Braunschweig Customs of a package mailed from the United States containing a dice game composed in part of crocodile teeth. The recipient of the game, ordered on the Internet, did not have the proper import permits. The game was destroyed.⁷



Various Reptile Species

AMERICA

MEXICO

May 9, 2016

Zapopan, State of Jalisco, Mexico

He cut the crocodile cage (*Crocodylia* spp., Appendix I or II) and found his way into the enclosure of the Common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*). He captured the animals and fled by jumping over a wall. The police started on his trail. The tortoise aged 11 years old and 60 cm wide had been found alive but injured. The crocodile is dead. He was 15 years old.¹ Dark brown, the snapping turtle can grow up to 60 cm wide and weighing 50 kg, the male is larger than the female. It lives about 30 years. Its reputation for aggressiveness does not correspond to reality, it only attacks when it feels threatened, like many animals. Its diet consists of plants, fish and reptiles. The egg-laying period is from May to September and an average of thirty eggs are deposited. Incubation lasts about 50 days. Its meat is appreciated.

ASIA

CAMBODIA

June 4, 2016

Koh Thom District, Kandal Province, Cambodia

Seizure of 468 rat snakes (family *Colubridae*), 2 Burmese pythons (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II), 2 yellow-headed tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II), 8 yellow-headed temple turtles (*Heosemys annandalii*, Appendix II), 21 giant Asian pond turtles (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II), 178 Asian leaf turtles (*Cyclemys dentata*, Appendix II), and 4 Asian box turtles (*Cuora* spp., Appendix II), all found in plastic bags and still alive for most of them. They were going to be loaded aboard a boat bound to Vietnam by the Mekong Basin.²

Late June 2016

Ambel, Cardamom Mountains, Kaoh Kong Province, Cambodia

23 reptiles entangled in one fishing net inside of a bag were saved just in time by Wildlife Guards. Still alive, the animals were immediately released back into nature. Two men on motorcycles were taken in for questioning.³



THAILAND

May 16, 2016

Non Sa-at District, Udon Thani Province, Thailand

Seizure of 800 tortoises and 500 lizards in a truck which was scattering tortoises along the expressway heading to Nong Khai near the border with Laos. It managed to evade the first roadblock, but not the second. Fearing that he wouldn't reach his final destination, the driver finally abandoned the vehicle on the side of the road, and fled into the woods. Police forces found the tortoises and the lizards in the trailer of the truck. If found, the virtuoso driver will be accused of violating protective wildlife laws and evading arrest. Investigators believe that he was heading to restaurants in China, via Laos.⁴

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

May 31, 2016

Baldivis, State of Western Australia, Australia

Seizure thanks to a search warrant of 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I and II), 4 Burmese pythons (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II), 3 brown water pythons (*Liasis fuscus*, Appendix II), 2 rough scaled pythons (*Morelia carinata*, Appendix II), 2 central carpet pythons (*Morelia bredli*, Appendix II), one ball python (*Python regius*, Appendix II), one Stimson's python (*Antaresia stimsoni*, Appendix II), one scrub python (*Morelia amethystina*, Appendix II), one olive python (*Liasis olivaceus*, Appendix II), 3 corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*), 3 tiger snakes (*Notechis scutatus*), one dugite (*Pseudonaja affinis*), one Mulga snake (*Pseudechis australis*), one eastern water dragon (*Intellagama lesueurii*), one brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*), one coastal python (*Morelia spilota mcdowelli*), and one jungle python (*Morelia spilota cheynei*) and arrest of a 32 year old man.

The eastern water dragon is all terrain, and is just as comfortable in treetops as in rivers. It eats fish, small mammals, insects and birds. This species is exclusive to Australia.

One man was arrested. He was accused of being in possession of wild animals without a permit, and misleading a wildlife protection agent. He is also subjected to an enquiry relating to exotic reptiles import.⁵



Water dragon

Amphibians

ASIA

CHINA

Beginning of April, 2016

Autonomous region of Beijing, China

Seizure of 10 live poisonous frogs (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 25), including the golden dart frog (*Phyllobates terribilis*, Appendix II). The package was shipped from Poland. Only one in the world, the tree snake *Erythrolamprus epinephelus*, has developed an antidote to the frog's venom. The dart frog is indigenous to the Pacific Coast of Colombia. It eats flies, fruits and small invertebrates.¹



Arachnids

AMERICA

CANADA

May 20, 2016

Plane traveling from Punta Cana, Dominican Republic to Montreal, Canada

Panic ensues in an Air Transit plane. Two tarantulas escaped from a bag and roamed between the passengers seats. The first was captured during the flight, and the 2nd after landing. See "On the Trail" n°5 p. 31.¹



10 to 20 cm long

ASIA

CHINA

April, 2016

Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure of 81 spiders of the *Theraphosidae* family and 9 six-eyed sand spiders (*Sicarius hahni*) in 2 parcels sent from Germany. They sell well in pet markets in the country even though they are dangerous for humans and domestic animals. The venom of the *Sicarius hahni* has no known antidote. Importing living animals in luggage and packages is prohibited in China. Yet, postal workers and customs officers often come nose to nose with scorpions, serpents and venomous amphibians. Last year, Sichuan customs intercepted 2 packages containing over 1000 live ants that had also been shipped from Germany.²



Sicarius hahni

PAKISTAN

June 14, 2016

Jinnah International Airport, Karachi, Sindh Province, Pakistan

Seizure by the anti-narcotics brigade of 148 live black scorpions. The package was sent by Abdur Rehman Azeeme, a resident of Mirpurkhas. It was intended for a certain Ching Chun in Hong Kong. The investigation seeks to identify a possible accomplice in the post office. The package was declared as "gift".

The scorpions were housed in pierced plastic bottles. They will be released in the desert of Cholistan or similar habitat after the end of court proceedings, unless the court orders their immediate release. Large landowners employ laborers to hunt black scorpions. They are paid the equivalent of \$ 100 US when they capture one weighing more than 40 g. The demand comes from para-pharmaceutical companies that produce alleged anti-cancer drugs. The highest bidder would be Swedish, Australian and American brokers. Crazy rumors say that the poison is used to make explosives.

The average weight of captured scorpions is 10 to 15 g today. A kilo is trading around \$ 5,000 US. The hunt takes place in summer in the desert or dry forests after sunset. The capture of exceptional specimens reaching 70 or even 100 g caused a stir in the hushed scorpions business world. The lucky holder is contacted by half a dozen major international brokers in the hours following. Weight for weight, the black scorpion of exceptionally large size is sold for more than gold. According to information obtained by Al Jazeera, the traffic is very brutal. Hostage taking and ransom demands are increasing. The rich and wealthy, including politicians, often invest in hunting scorpions.

The transactions are made in the halls of the banks. The funds are transported in Brinks armored trucks. The systematic raking of scorpions endangers desert and arid plain food chains. Scorpions eat insects, geckos feed on scorpions and snakes feed on geckos.

Scorpions in the Indian subcontinent, Pakistan and India are smoked. The dead scorpion is dried by the sun or charcoal. The elderly roast the living and breathe in the smoke. It is in particular the burning of the scorpions tail where the venom lodges that is causing addiction. According to experts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the venom of the scorpion is the most harmful of all drugs. Dr. Jamal adds that "scorpions smoking causes short and long term memory loss." "The person addicted to smoking scorpions also develops sleeping and appetite disorders, and starts living in a constant state of delusion." "This is the worst addiction." The districts of Bannu, Koaht, Karak, Lower Dir, Upper Dir, Charsadda and Batkhela are affected by this tradition that resists and is transmitted. A former agent of the narcotics office of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regrets that there are no statistics on the use of this drug or laws to prohibit hunting scorpions.

In certain States of India, the practice is less secret and the subject of a trade. For a "sniff of pleasure" over a brazier, enthusiasts pay 100-150 rupees, between 1.50 and 2.50 US \$.

Naturalists want scorpions protected by laws on the protection of wildlife. Only 3 species of scorpions are listed in CITES, they all live in Africa: the *Pandinus dictator*, (Appendix II), the giant Senegalese scorpion (*Pandinus gambiensis*, Appendix II) and the emperor scorpion (*Pandinus imperator*, Appendix II). See "On the Trail" n°6 p. 118, n°10 p. 21.³



Birds

AFRICA

GUINEA

May 27, 2016

Conakry, Conakry Region, Guinea

Seizure of 2 ostriches (*Struthio camelus*) coming from Mali where they are listed in Appendix I. The 2 ostriches are in the care of the National Direction of Water and Forests. The two men, a Malian and Guinean are in police custody.¹



Struthio camelus

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

May 26, 2016

Bombo Lumene Reserve, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Reintroduction of 1000 African grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II) in Bombo Lumene Reserve. The "smooth talkers" were quarantined after multiple seizures. They had been entrusted to several zoos and botanical gardens. All human activity is prohibited in the 3000km² Reserve. However, "small" villages that have a natural tendency to grow inhabit the Reserve. Thirteen guards are there for protection. There are paid 3 times less than the national average. They are paid their salary every 3 months. When a crime of prohibited hunting is committed in the park, the fine is subject to bargaining depending on the poacher's means. The lives of buffalos, antelopes and hippopotamuses pay for civil wars and pressing demands for bushmeat. The reserve is about 160 km from Kinshasa (around 11 million inhabitants). The ICCN (Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation) estimates that the Bombo Lumene Eeserve is "the place" to release the grey parrots.²



AMERICA

ARGENTINA

April 28, 2016

Mendoza, Mendoza Province, Argentina

Seizure of 62 birds from a house, including 3 yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*, Appendix II), 4 red crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II), one monk parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), one Harris's hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II), and 2 burrowing owls (*Speotyto cunicularia*, Appendix II).³



Speotyto cunicularia

BRAZIL

April 5, 2016

Tijucas do Sul, State of Parana, Brazil

Seizure of 6 firearms and around 100 birds, including one Amazon (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I and II). The man could be member of a gang active throughout Brazil.⁴



April 10, 2016

Uberlândia, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

A 28 year old woman has "housed" 2 young common toucans (*Ramphastos toco*, Appendix II). She was arrested.⁵

April 15, 2016

Alto Araguaia, State of Mato Grosse, Brazil

Seizure of a female blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) from an individual. The bird lived in a 60 cm cage, with a broken and cut wing, and a mutilated foot. The macaw will never be released back into the forest given its complete dependence on humans.⁶



April 20, 2016

Cascavel, State of Parana, Brazil

Two blue and gold macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) and one parrot (*Psittacidae* spp.) were stolen from a zoo in Cascavel. The 2 macaws were found in a bad state in a backpack that was recovered at a bus station. The parrot is still missing.⁷

April 21, 2016

Nova Olinda do Norte, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Seizure of 2 scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I). Maltreated, their wings and claws were cut. The owner vanished.⁸



OPERATION AZUL COBALTO

April 21-29, 2016

Euclides da Cunha, State of Bahia, Brazil

870 animals seized in Operation Azul Cobalto, including one indigo macaw (*Anodorhynchus leari*, Appendix I) with a gunshot wound.

The indigo macaw (see "On the Trail" n°8 p. 23-24) is very rare. It measures between 71 and 75 centimeters and weighs more than 900 g. Physically it resembles the hyacinth macaw (*Ara hyacinthinus*, Appendix I) but the indigo macaw is smaller, its feathers are less vibrant and the yellow circle around its eye is bigger. The species is indigenous to Brazil where its range is very restricted and is limited to the State of Bahia with a population of a few hundreds of individuals. It is mainly threatened by illegal trafficking, and also by habitat destruction and the regression of its primary food source: the luciri palm (*Syagrus coronata*) - see also p. 34. During the lean years, the macaw is forced to eat corn from the fields.

During mating season, which runs from September to March, couples temporarily separate from the group, but the male and female remain united for life; like other macaw species, they are monogamous. The incubation period lasts between 25 and 28 days, with a maximum of 3 eggs laid. The newborns take their first flight after 3 months. Several conservation projects have been created, principally based in Canudos Private Biology Reserve where a slight increase in the population has occurred.⁹



May 18, 2016

Novo Cruzeiro, Poté, Itaipé, Jequitinhonha, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Seizure of 45 birds and a white-frosted marmoset (*Callithrix geoffroyi*, Appendix II). He had been released into the wild. Overall fine of 67,000 reais (\$ 17,000 US).

The white-frosted marmoset is an endemic species of the Atlantic Forest of Brazil. It feeds on fruits, bird eggs and small vertebrates in the morning and walks the rest of the day. The couple is monogamous and stays together for life. The gestation period lasts 150 days and up to 2 babies can be born. The young are cared for by all group members. The life expectancy is 12 years. This is the species of marmoset that is least studied. The main threats are the logging of primary forests and trade of specimens.¹⁰



June 22, 2016

Autotoute de Cubatao, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 329 birds in pierced milk boxes including green-headed tanagers (*Tangara seledon*). Purchased in bulk for a ridiculous price of 800 reais (\$ 200 US), they would have been sold in an underground market. 62 were dead and 267 were released.¹¹



June 22, 2016

Morrinhos, State of Goiás, Brazil

Rescue of 2 blue and yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II). Forsaken in plastic bags on the edge of a river and in a very bad state. They were spotted thanks to their squawking. What will become of them?¹²

June 27, 2016

Ponta Grossa, State of Paraná, Brazil

Seizure of one blue fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) from an individual's home.¹³

Trees Fall Down, Birds Too

- June 12-22, 2016. State of Rondonia

Seizure of 500 m³ of chopped wood, a majority of which from protected indigenous land. In April 2016 the State of Rondonia lost 182 km² of forest.



- June 16, 2016. Rorainópolis, State of Roraima

Seizure of 300m³ of wood.



- June 23, 2016. Pedre Afonso, State of Tocantins

Seizure of 3 trucks containing 3.8m³, 4.3m³ and 16m³ of wood. The illegal wood came from the State of Pará and was headed to the State of Goiás. Fines of \$ 400, \$ 500 and \$ 1200 US issued to each of the truck drivers. They could not provide DOF's (Documents of Forest Origins).



- June 23, 2016. Ulianópolis, State of Pará

Seizure during the night of 20m³ of wood from a truck heading to the State of Maranhão. No DOF. Price estimated to be 22,000 reais (\$ 7,000 US).



- June 23, 2016. Beruri, State of Amazonas

More than 1000m³ of wood (750 logs from different species) transported by floating down the Rio Purus in the Amazon Basin, 180 km from Manaus. The traffickers fled the scene.



- June 23, 2016. Marcelândia, State of Mato Grosso

Seizure in a lumber yard of 2300 logs and 256.02 m³ of sawn timber including cedar (*Cedrela fissilis*, Appendix III), cambara and angelim. The wood had been bought by traders from the State of São Paulo. Fine of 630,000 reais (\$ 22,000 US).

- June 23, 2016. Anauá, State of Roraima

Seizure of 3000 m³ in a lumber yard.

- June 23, 2016. Jamari Forest, State of Rondonia

Seizure of 2000 m³ of wood and destruction of a secret coltan mine used for aeronautics and electronics exported illegally to China through Bolivia. The Jamari Forest covers 2200 km². It is a National Forest (FLONA).



CHILE

April 11, 2016

Colchane, Tamarugal Province, Tarapaca Region, Chile

Seizure of a blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) and a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II). The birds shrieked out for their rescue. They were hidden in the dashboard of the car.¹⁴



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

June 21, 2016

Anchorage, State of Alaska, United States of America

One of the greatest American bird specialists, an ornithological figure, is caught up in poaching and smuggling from South America to the United States. He would also have provided stuffed specimens to experts in Alaska, Florida and the United Kingdom. Heinrich, alias Henry Springer, 79, is associated with the University of Alaska Museum of the North. This prestigious scholar had a Federal permit granted in the framework of the Treaty on migratory birds, which gives him the power to buy specimens with important monetary value on behalf of and with the exclusive destination of the Museum of the North's ornithology department. It seems as though sometimes, Springer confused the Museums halls with his living room. 28 stuffed birds were seized from his home last October 8th following an investigation and suspicions held since the early 2000's. Suspicions were confirmed in 2010 and 2014 by his repeated Internet purchases of birds protected by the MTBA (Migratory Bird Treaty Act), still thanks to the special University permit. The University has since retired its agreement with Mr. Springer but keeps on praising his encyclopedic knowledge. The ornithological lab at the University bears his name. This Museum provider has also been a generous donor. In 2008, he entrusted to the Museum of Anchorage a stuff American pigeon of a once prolific species, which has since gone extinct in the 20th century and prompted the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (see "On the Trail" n°4, p.39).¹⁵

GUYANA

May 19, 2016

Guyana

Seizure of 21 birds including 7 orange-winged parrots (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix II), 7 red-shouldered macaws (*Diopsittaca nobilis*, Appendix II), 2 parrots, and 5 parakeets (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I and II). Guyana customs are not especially active in this country rich in birds and with porous borders. However, the government commends the supposed vigilance of its services. This is the first seizure since the beginning of the year.¹⁶

HONDURAS

June 9, 2016

Tegucigalpa, Francisco Morazan Department, Honduras

Two women from Nicaragua were arrested in possession of 65 orange-chinned parakeets (*Brotogeris jugularis*, Appendix II) in a car heading to El Salvador.¹⁷



MEXICO

June 7, 2016

Quiroga, La Piedad y Zamora, State of Michoacan, Mexico

Seizure of 76 birds including 3 orange-fronted parakeets (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II), 2 lilac-crowned amazons (*Amazona finschi*, Appendix I) and 27 mayflower orchids (*Laelia speciosa*, Appendix II). All the birds were released with the exception of the 2 amazons and the orchids were transferred to an "orquideario."¹⁸



Laelia speciosa



June 15, 2016
Puerto Juarez, State of Quintana Roo, Mexico
 Rescue of 2 keelbilled toucans abandoned in a cardboard box on the side of the road. They were set free in the "Xel-Ha" Tourist Park.¹⁹

PARAGUAY

May 18, 2016

Paraguay

Seizure of 2 green-winged macaws (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II).²⁰



© Dario Sanches

PERU

May 4, 2016

Selva Central Region, Peru

Voluntary return of 2 blue-headed parrots (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II) in poor condition. They had been rushed in a zoo and quarantined. The public is invited to spontaneously deliver to the authorities wildlife from illegal sources. There is no risk of punishment.²¹



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May 18, 2016

Piura, Piura Region, Peru

Seizure on a bus to Lima, about 1000 km away, of 150 Pacific parrotlets (*Forpus coelestis*, Appendix II) in cardboard boxes.²²

These parrots live in tropical and subtropical forests of South America. As an adult it measures 13 cm. Life expectancy is 15 years. The male is easily distinguished from the female by a blue strand on the eyes and on the wings. Its diet is based on seeds and fruits. The female lays about 5 eggs up to 4 times a year. The incubation period lasts 17 days. The young can leave the nest after 30 days. It is a silent and docile bird, it is very appreciated by breeders, and it is also very threatened.



© Peter de Haas

June 13, 2016

Chiclayo, Lambayeque Region, Peru



Seizure of 10 canary-winged parakeets (*Brotogeris versicolurus*, Appendix II) and 3 orange-winged amazons (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix II) in the "Modelo de Chiclayo" market. The Lambayeque region is still now the "spot" to catch and sell wild animals. Fine of 39,500 soles (\$ 11,900 US).²³



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INDIA

May 8, 2016

Bijnor district, State of Uttar Pradesh, IndiaSeizure of 154 parakeets. One arrest.²⁴

INDONESIA

April 20, 2016

Port of Tanjung Perak, Province of East Java, Indonesia**Bottle network**

Already seen on May 4th, 2015 (see "On the Trail" n°9 p. 26). Seizure of 34 birds including 8 dead poured into bottles and packaged in cardboard boxes: 6 yellow-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I), 21 eclectus parrots (*Eclectus roratus*, Appendix II), one blue bird of paradise (*Paradisaea rudolphi*, Appendix II) and 3 other birds of paradise (*Paradisaea* spp., Appendix II), and 3 wreathed hornbills (*Rhyticeros undulates*, Appendix II) on board the *Gunung Dempo*. Two arrests, regular traffickers. They would have received just under \$ 400 for the conveying. They were to get a \$ 73 US bonus per bird sold. The blue bird of paradise is selling for 25 million rupees (US \$ 1832), the yellow-crested Cockatoo for Rp 10 million (\$ 732 US) and the large eclectus for Rp 5 million (\$ 366 US).²⁵

The *Gunung Dempo* at Surabaya, February 24, 2016.*Paradisaea rudolphi*

May 9, 2016

South Halmahera Regency, North Maluku Province, Indonesia

Seizure by the water brigade aboard a Philippine fishing boat of 212 birds. 150 eclectus parrots (*Eclectus roratus*, Appendix II), 53 white cockatoos (*Cacatua alba*, Appendix II), 3 chattering lorries (*Lorius garrulus*, Appendix II) and 1 lorikeet. Three white cockatoos, 1 eclectus parrot and 1 chattering lorry were dead. Four arrests. The ship had sent a light signal to traffickers based in the village of Rangrang.²⁶



MALAYSIA

May 24, 2016

Kluang District, Johor State, Malaysia

Seizure of 136 birds, including the eclectus parrot (*Eclectus roratus*, Appendix II), the grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II), lovebirds (*Agapornis* spp., Appendix II), the plum headed parakeet (*Psittacula cyanocephala*, Appendix II), the green-cheeked conure (*Pyrrhura molinae*, Appendix II), the ring-necked parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*) and the white-rumped shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*). The total value of the birds was 180,000 Malaysian ringgits (\$ 43,715 US). Arrest of the owner of the two-storey house, which served as a warehouse before exporting the birds to neighboring countries. The police operation was organized in cooperation with Singapore.²⁷

*Eclectus roratus*

June 1, 2016

Jitra, State of Kudah, Malaysia

Seizure in a house and in a motorcycle repair shop of 9 birds, including one white-rumped shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*), one little green pigeon (*Treron olax*), one black-shouldered kite (*Elanus caeruleus*, Appendix II), one blue winged leafbird (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*), one striped-throated Bulbul (*Pycnonotus finlaysoni*), one slaty-breasted rail (*Gallirallus striatus*), and 3 watercocks (*Gallicrex cinerea*) worth a total of over 50,000 ringgits (\$ 12,143 US). The mechanic exposed on Facebook and offered for sale birds that had been captured in the nearby forest of Kedah.²⁸



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THAILAND

April 15, 2016

Thailand

After its owner moved, the brahmyny kite (*Haliastur indus*, Appendix II) was left behind. It was adopted by the WFFT (Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand).²⁹



TURKEY

May 19, 2016

District of Bucak, Mediterranean Region, Turkey

Rescue of a white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I). His right wing was wounded. If all goes well, he should be set free near a lake or a wet zone. White-tailed eagles are fish-eaters.

In the olden days, from 1900 to 1970, relatively common along the Black Sea in the Bosphorus in inner Anatolia, the species is now limited to the administrative Mediterranean Region and only some dozens of nesting couples remain. The nests built at the tops of poplar trees, oak trees and adult pin trees are used several years in a row and strengthened in the hills near lakes and the seaside. White-tailed eagles' life span in 25 years but 90% fall victim of hunting. According to the Lisinia shelter veterinarian where he is in convalescence after a local saved him, the vulture was banded in Finland and later targeted by a hunter during migration.³⁰



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Pants network

April 12, 2016

Ho-Chi-Minh International Airport, Vietnam

Seizure of 18 songbirds, 11 of which are protected at the national or international level, including the melodious laughing thrush (*Garrulax canorus*, Appendix II), the white-rumped shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*), and the oriental magpie-robin (*Copsychus saularis*). The smuggler had 11 of the birds attached to his calves in small hand made pockets with their heads and tails hanging out. Their beaks were taped shut. The other birds were in boxes in the smugglers bag. They all escaped having to take the 3 hour flight to Taiwan. The songbirds can sell for up to \$1,200 US.³¹



© Tan Son Nhat Airport Customs Agency



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Copsychus malabaricus

SPAIN

June 7, 2016

Spain

Release of two booted eagles (*Hieraetus pennatus*, Appendix II). The 2 raptors captured in Morocco had been illegally introduced in Belgium passing through France. Put for sale on the internet, they had been spotted, seized and as part of European Union cooperation sent two years after their North African exile to Spain, where they were released into a nature reserve corresponding to their biological requirements. Their presence in Belgium was reported by the Flemish NGO Vogelbescherming Vlaanderen and Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos.³²



© Luis Barrón

FRANCE

April 7-Mid April, 2016

- Perpignan, Pyrénées-Orientales Department, France

One man sentenced to 15 days in prison, a 2,000 € fine for capturing a European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), and 1,000 € in damages to 2 ornithological NGO's. ONCFS agents (French National Hunting and Wildlife Agency) intercepted the 36-year-old man in December 2013 in possession of capturing equipment, specifically a live decoy bird in a cage and glue sticks. Five goldfinches and 2 songbirds were seized and released. The cost of the birds is between 100 and 150 € each. That price can reach 1,000 € for especially good singers. The prison sentence is flexible, which is never seen for drug traffickers.³³



- Montils, Loir-et-Cher Department, France

Seizure of 32 passerines, mostly European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) and Eurasian siskins (*Carduelis spinus*). The man captured the birds in a garden with cage traps and branches covered in glue. In his home were CD recordings of songbirds and 5 Japanese nets of 8 m each. 23 birds were immediately released. The others are being observed. Goldfinch trafficking is as much profitable as cannabis trafficking, but the sanctions are a lot less dissuasive, even in recidivist cases.³⁴

ITALY



June 20, 2016

Palermo, Region of Sicily, Italy

The bird market is the first in Italy. Seven fowlers were arrested. Several cages were taken by the carabinieri assisted by experts in sparrows. According to the law, the 215 goldfinches (Genre *Carduelis* genus) - 2 died during transport - were released "in a suitable place" happily kept secret.³⁵

June 22, 2016

Avellino, Campania Region, Italy

After a thorough search of the small vehicle Fiat Punto and the sidelining of its three occupants, 15 goldfinch chicks (*Carduelis* genus), 18 eggs and 7 nests looted in the back country of Naples were found under the seats. The capture of these goldfinches becomes a trendy job in southern Europe.³⁶



June 28, 2016

Palermo, Sicile Region, Italy

Seizure of 2 young common kestrels sold together for 200 €. The Internet trader is said to have 5 in stock. The kestrel owes its name to its high-pitched cry. *Tinnunculus* comes from the Latin word *tinnio* meaning "to ring, to give a clear sound." The bird of prey can be seen on land in sparsely wooded, cultivated areas, but also next to the ocean and over mountains, up to 2500 m.³⁷



June 30, 2016

San Donà di Piave, Metropolitan City of Venice, Veneto Region, Italy

Seizure in an illegal breeding farm of 2 kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II), a Eurasian hobby (*Falco subbuteo*, Appendix II) and a peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I). After an adaptation period they should be set free.³⁸



The ex-Glaucous Macaw (*Anodorhynchus glaucus*)

The genus *Anodorhynchus* regrouped at least 3 species of large blue parrots. There are only 2 left. The Caribbean glaucous macaw remains a hypothesis. If it existed, it has left the Earth a few centuries ago.

In the language of Guarani Indians, "Guaa" is the generic onomatopoeia referring to all macaws and "Obi" signifies the color ranging from blue to green. The Guaa obi aka the glaucous macaw was first described in 1767 and located along the Piranhas and Uruguay rivers and later occasionally reported in the forests near Paraguay.

The range of the glaucous macaw was situated between the 27th and the 29th parallel south, a narrow area which does not exceed 200 km in width. One of its strongholds was the Corrientes in Argentina according to the colonizers's testimonies and the recorded origin of 3 specimens preserved in the United States and collected during US Navy expeditions in the 1850s. Then all those who observed the glaucous macaw agreed on a common species. Today some of the best specialists suspect an error of judgment, a sort of optical illusion caused by sedentary birds flying in group, making a crazy racket and traveling in all directions with predetermined flight plans above exiguous preferential territories.

20 years ago, if the observer was in the right place, he could have the impression that the indigo macaw (*Anodorhynchus leari*, Appendix I), a fellow of the glaucous macaw, was flourishing although only a hundred survived in the north of South America, its exclusive domain. As for hyacinth macaws (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*, Appendix I), the observer could believe that the species was prolific when there were no more than a few thousands specimens left. Today, the last living specimens of indigo macaw sell for about US \$ 50,000 (see "On the Trail" n°8 p. 23-24 and this issue p. 26).



Natural range of the ex-glaucous macaw



To explain the unofficial extinction of the glaucous macaw - the uncertainty period of 70 years time is not yet over, the dramaturgy of extinct species still leaves some doubt and the glaucous macaw is still listed under CITES Appendix I - experts neglect the effects of hunting or capture for trade and cage decoration. They blame the slow and inexorable disappearance of palm trees victims of the introduction of cattle in the Chaco area, a typical mosaic of woods and isolated trees on vast dry grasslands.



As early as 1790 Félix de Azara who was mapping out the area serving the King of Spain reports the existence of the glaucous macaw noting at the same time that during his explorations, his teams feed on armadillos and already cows. Since then, the whole glaucous macaw range has been under pressure from livestock and industrial agriculture. Since the beginning of the 20th century (1919), forest experts were concerned that the wild palm trees of the Chaco don't regenerate anymore and the remaining specimens were over 200 years old.



Butia yatay



The massive hooked beak of the glaucous macaw was suitable for cutting and crushing seeds of 1.5 to 2 cm in diameter, exactly the size of the seeds of the *Butia yatay* palm tree or Chatai that the colonists felled first because they were indicators of a fertile soil. Not only the size of the Chatai seeds was perfectly fit to the beak of the glaucous macaw but moreover the endosperm is free of lignin a substance that macaws do not tolerate. Cows defeated glaucous macaws.

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Pangolins

The four African pangolin species (*Manis gigantea*, *M. temminckii*, *M. tetradactyla*, *M. tricuspis*) et the four Asian species (*Manis crassicaudata*, *M. culionensis*, *M. javanica* and *M. pentadactyla*) are listed under CITES Appendix II.

The seizure from April 1st to June 30th is equal to 21,146 pangolins
Taking the average weight of 3 pangolins for 1 kg of scales.



“On the Trail ” n°13
The value of scales on the black market, according to media or official sources

Continent	Country	\$US/kg wholesale price	Ref.
Africa	Benin	60	2
	Togo	90	2
	Uganda	50	2
	Cameroon (bushland)	50	2
	Cameroon (city)	100	2
Asia	China	312	13
		300	22
	India	240	25
		320	27

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

June 14, 2016

Hoedspruit, Province of Limpopo, South Africa

Arrest of a woman and 2 men who were going to a market to sell a live pangolin.¹



BENIN

May 11 and 31, 2016

Cotonou, Sub-division Littoral, Benin

- **May 11th**. Seizure of 70 kg of giant pangolin scales. Three arrests.

- **May 31st**. Sentencing of 3 traffickers. Adama S., Guinea, to 12 months in prison, O. Diawara, Guinean, and D. Rogatien, Benin, 24 months suspended imprisonment and a fine of 200,000 CFA francs (€ 305).²



KENYA

June 10, 2016

Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi, Kenya

Seizure of 500 kg of pangolin scales by the Kenya Wildlife Service canine unit. Since the beginning of the year, the sniffer dogs have accomplished 5 detections of scales, 200 g to 500 kg, a nice result! The cargo was destined for Nigeria, West Africa. Curiously, its supposed origin was Guinea, West Africa. What was it doing in Kenya, East Africa? It was accompanied by a fake Guinean export permit signed by M. Ousmane Diallo, an impeached CITES focal point officer (see “On the Trail ” n°2, p. 26).³

UGANDA

Beginning of April 2016

Uganda

Seizure of 45 kg of scales. Arrests of 2 traffickers linked with the Smiko Skin Craft Company, which in June 2015 had obtained from the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) an export permit for 7,310 kg of scales (see “On the Trail ” n° 8, p. 42 et n° 9, p. 31).⁴

Mid-April 2016

Kitgum District, Northern Region, Uganda

Seizure of 2 live giant pangolins. Four arrests including a police officer. The gang has been at work for several years. The question is whether the police officer will remain behind bars.⁵

SOUTH SUDAN

May 25, 2016

Juba International Airport, Central Equatoria State, South Sudan

Amelia, one of the sniffer dogs recently deployed in the airport has fulfilled her first operation. The passenger is a Chinese worker from the northern oil fields. The flight was coming from Paloich. (See ivory in South Sudan p. 85 of this issue).⁶

ZAMBIA

April 17, 2016

Eastern Province, Zambia

Seizure of a live pangolin. Arrest of a Chipata villager, 32 years old, at the same moment that he sold the animal to a Chinese national.⁷

ZIMBABWE

April 19 and 20, 2015

Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Seizure of a live pangolin. Arrest and sentencing finalized in 24 hours, 9 years in prison for the trafficking of pangolins and ivory.⁸



**FAMILY AFFAIRS
REPEATED OFFENSE**

April 20, 2016

Harare, Zimbabwe

Henry Makunde involved once in an ivory trafficking case now finds himself in a matter of pangolin hidden in his neighbor's refrigerator. Makunde would be the instigator of the capture and seller of pangolin slices. He was sentenced to 9 years in prison, his nephew whose youth was used as a mitigating circumstance, to 2 years in prison. Since the beginning of the year, justice dealt 20 pangolins trafficking offenses. 41 people including 16 defendants have already been sentenced to 9 years imprisonment and 4 were acquitted. Both are subject to an arrest warrant.⁹



End of April 2016

Gokwe, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe

Court appearance for possession of a pangolin skin. On intelligence, police arrested the suspect in a business district, he had in his bag pangolin skin, it was in a flour sack. The previous week, a 34 year-old woman was sentenced to 9 years in prison for the same charge in the same court.¹⁰



ASIA

CHINA

Beginning of April 2016

Autonomous Region of Guangxi, China

Seizure of 7 live pangolins hidden underneath the seat of a scooter. One arrest.¹¹



FAMILY AFFAIRS

Beginning of April, 2016

Jingjiang, Jiangsu Province, China

Sentencing to 6 months suspended sentence and a fine of 4,500 yuans (\$ 695 US) for the transport of frozen pangolin.¹²



REPEATED OFFENSE

April 10, 2016

Zhongshan, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure on a speedboat in the estuary of the Pearl River.¹³



76 bags. 1.6 t. \$ 500,000 US

April 15, 2016

Dongxing, Autonomous Region of Guangxi, China. Border with Vietnam

Seizure of 56 live pangolins (247.88 kg) in the trunk of a car. They had been turned in to the forest department. The driver fled.¹⁴



4.43 kg in average per pangolin

April 30, 2016

Bao'an District, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

A pangolin trafficker taken hostage by 4 customers. A ransom of one million yuans (\$ 150,000 US) was demanded. They threatened to disclose his trafficking to the police. The kidnappers and the kidnapped were arrested. Three pangolins were released.¹⁵

May 11, 2016

Futian District, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China



What was inside of the passenger's backpack looked like frozen chips on the control screen. It was pangolin scales. 18 kg, or about 30 to 50 individuals.¹⁶

May 13, 2016

Qingdao, Shandong Province, China

Seizure by postal customs agents of a stuffed pangolin weighing about 2.8 kg and 74 cm long. The package came from Japan.¹⁹



May 17, 2016

Dongxing, Autonomous region of Guangxi, China

Seizure by customs of 15 live pangolins. The boat was inspected by China Customs. Pangolins are good swimmers. There, they were on the river in a boat. The Ka Long crossing Vietnam becomes the Beilun in China. This is a logistical link between the two countries.²⁰



May 12, 2016
The night of scales

-Lau Fau Shan, Hong Kong, China. On a speedboat, seizure by customs of 5 boxes of pangolin scales weighing 130 kg and 15 bags of animal skins. Estimated value: \$ 2 million HK (\$ 257,811 US).¹⁷



- Tuen Mun, Hong Kong, China. Another speedboat bound for Mainland China, again in the dark of the night, frozen pangolins and 16 kg of scales (about fifty individuals) mixed with hundreds of mobile phones. The crew fled at the approach of the Water Patrol. Hotline: 2545-6182.¹⁸



May 23, 2016

Luohu District, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 32 live pangolins imported from Vietnam. Arrest of Wen. He faces 10 years in prison.²¹

June 23, 2016

Sham Shui Po District, Hong Kong, China

Seizure of 4 tons of scales in a container coming from Cameroon. It is the biggest seizure in the past 5 years.²²



201 bags of "sliced plastic" for \$ 300 US per kilo, once again fake plastic to be recycled

April 9, 2016

Bhimgad Wildlife Sanctuary, State of Karnataka, India



They had with them arrows, bows, meat and scales. Nomads and rejected, sellers of trinkets and virtuoso hunters, they are at the service of an international line without even knowing it.²³

April 15, 2016

Balaghat, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Madhya Pradesh is in the center of India. It is also the center of the pangolin predator's web. The epicenter is in Chhindwara district.

Amir Hussain Laskar has been kept in custody for 5 days. Confession after confession, from small seizures to large hauls, 80 people were arrested. Investigations have lasted since May 2015 (see "On the Trail" n°9 p. 33). The forest's Special Task Force believes they have made a big splash.²⁴

INDIA



May 5, 2016

Thingdawl, State of Mizoram, India

Seizure of 123 kg of pangolin scales and arrest of a 44 year-old Burmese national. The scales came from Assam. They were close to Burma before taking the road to China. The value of the loot is \$ 240 US/kg.²⁵

May 25, 2016

Gwalior, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure of 3 kg of scales corresponding to 6 or 8 pangolins. Arrests of 3 poachers.²⁶

June 2, 2016

Champhai, State of Mizoram, India. Myanmar border

Seizure of 93 kg of pangolin scales. Estimated value: Rs 20 lakh (\$ 29,788 US) or \$320 US/kg. One arrest.²⁷

June 27, 2016

Pench National Park, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

He killed it with an axe. They were in the midst of cooking the pangolin after having removed its scales. Two arrested. Two other guests fled the scene.²⁸

INDONESIA

April 9, 2016

District of Sabak Auh, Riau Province, Indonesia

The road is long for pangolin smugglers and they often fall asleep. The driver quickly regained consciousness after driving off the road. Pangolins had been transferred to a following car. Witnesses attest to this. The Indonesia, mainland Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, China line has struck again.²⁹



April 12, 2016

Medan, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Sentencing of 4 crewmembers of a fishing boat to 2 years and 3 months in prison and a fine of 50 million rupees, or \$ 3,790 US. The prison sentence is greater than the penalty sought by the prosecutor. They convoyed 103 pangolins in Malaysia (see "On the Trail" n° 11, p. 32 and n° 12, p. 38). They were working on behalf of an Athiam who promised everyone a reward of Rp 1.2 million (\$ 91 US).³⁰



June 18, 2016

Medan, Province of North Sumatra, Indonesia

In the backseat they had 8 pangolins, and of the 2 passengers, one was military.³¹



June 22, 2016

East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

Discovery in a bog on the side of the road of 18 descaled pangolins in the process of rotting. The villagers were alerted by the foul smell. It was probably ages ago that their scales were shipped to Singapore or China.³²

NEPAL

April 2, 2016

Chainpur, Sankhuwasabha District, Eastern Development Region, Nepal

Seizure of 1.6 kg of scales during a control in a bus destined for Khandbari. One arrest.³³

FAMILY AFFAIRS

May 9, 2016

Katmandou, Central Development Region, Nepal

Seizure of 2 kg of "salak" scales, the local name of pangolin. Two brothers arrested, Tirtha Shrestha (28) and Ashok Shrestha (23) residents of the Buddha neighborhood.³⁴

See also p. 54.

PHILIPPINES

April 27, 2016

Clark Freeport, Angeles, Central Luzon Region, Philippines

Seizure at night in the car of a Chinese business woman of 4 live pangolins and 4 golden spitting cobras (*Naja sumatrana*, Appendix II) taken from their natural environment of Palawan Island. Clark Freeport is a former US military base converted into a broad industrial and tourist shopping area. The businesswoman left Clark at midnight with her 8 passengers headed to an unknown destination.³⁵



VIETNAM

June 6, 2016

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Trial of 4 people involved in pangolin trafficking (see "On the Trail" n°11, p. 35). The instigator had been sentenced to 18 months in prison, 2 accomplices to 5 months and 11 days, which is the time they have spent in custody. The supplier of pangolin was sentenced to one year suspended.³⁶



June 19, 2016

Ninh Binh, Province of Ninh Binh, Vietnam

22 pangolins, weighing an average of 4 kg each, took the train to Hue under the watch of a woman and 2 men. After travelling 600 km there were picked out by the police and freed in Cuc Phuong National Park which, with the NGO Save Vietnam's Wildlife, is leading the Pangolin Conservation Program. Rescue operations are not simple affairs. Many pangolins refuse to eat. They suffer from digestive troubles from being force fed a kind of mashed corn flour, which makes them weigh much more than usual at the time that they are sold in Vietnam, before their final destinations in China. Pangolins eat ants and termites, but only when they are still alive.³⁷



Pangolins and Elephants

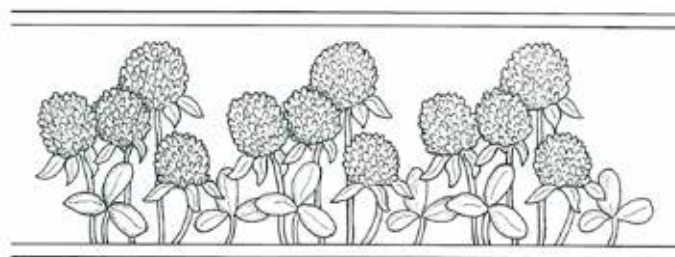


NIGERIA

June 10, 2016

Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos, Nigeria

Seizure of 678 pieces of ivory and 8 bags of pangolin scales weights more than 381 kg. Arrest of 2 Chinese nationals. 387 sections of raw ivory, 271 combs and bracelets. They tried for the lucky strike. Too much confidence in the absent-mindedness of control services. Customs officers had "eagle eyes" gets enthusiastic their director.¹



Primates

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

AFRICA

CAMEROON

Mid-April 2016

Kumbo and Nkambe, North-West Region, Cameroon

Seizure of 6 gorilla skulls, 15 mandrill skulls (*Mandrillus sphinx*, Appendix I) and other parts of primates and 2 buffalo horns (*Syncerus caffer*). Two arrests. Damian was responsible for sale in the town of Kumbo of some skulls and horns. During his interrogation he eventually denounced his accomplice stayed in Nkambe with other macabre pieces. Nkambe and Kumbo are key cities of wildlife trafficking between Cameroon and Nigeria. They are 80 km apart. In September 2015, a trafficker had been arrested in Kumbo with one live Mona monkey (*Cercopithecus mona*, Appendix II) and 3 mandrill skulls (see "On the Trail" n° 10, p. 31).¹



Village and road between Nkambe and Kumbo

May 9, 2016

Ayos, Central Region, Cameroon

Seizure of 4 gorilla skulls and 6 chimpanzee skulls. Two arrests.



The gorilla skulls have a sagittal crest at the top. The formation of the crestal bone comes from the chewing muscles of exceptional strength. Its utility is to fix the temporalis muscle which is one of the major muscles of chewing.²

May 24, 2016

Mefou, Yaounde, Centre Region, Cameroon

Taking care of a female baby chimpanzee by the NGO Ape Action Africa. Initially, 2 expat teachers had bought her from 2 kids who carried her around in a backpack. She was covered in parasites. The 2 adopters gave first aid and spent long hours delousing before entrusting to AAA.³



End of May, 2016

Cameroon

Rescue of a male gorilla. Five years old. It is an orphan after indescribable horror under the cover of forests in eastern Cameroon. Had he continued to prowl near the village, he would have ended up being killed outright or be martyred. There was no choice for IDA (In Defense of Animals) as the capture and transport of the shelter Ape Action Africa to Mefou. It is assumed that he was captive in a village and was abandoned because he was becoming cumbersome or he escaped. Gorillas brought up by humans lose their instinct for survival, their feeding habits and unfortunately for them are no longer afraid of human activities. The forests where they could be released safely are virtually unobtainable. The newcomer to Mefou may live peaceful and sociable years but what he lost when he was captured and lonely is unrecoverable.⁴



June 9, 2016

Abong Mbang, East Province, Cameroon

Seizure of 13 chimpanzee skulls collected in the Dja Wildlife Reserve. Arrest of 2 men aged 35 and 25 years. They also regularly transported chimpanzee meat.⁵



GUINEA

June 2016

Boké, Boké Region, Guinea

The 2 captors of a baby chimpanzee at the end of last year (see "On the Trail" n° 11, p. 37) are no longer in preventative detention. "One has heart problems, the other diabetes." "They profited from provisional freedom to be treated," said the deputy prosecutor of the Boké Court.⁶



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

June 3, 2016

Dzange Sangha Protected Area, Central African Republic

Poaching of a lowland gorilla by two bushmeat hunters. The park would house according to the census of WWF that deserves to be consolidated more than 2,000 gorillas, 500 chimpanzees and 700 elephants.⁷



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

April 7, 2016

Kalole, South Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rescue of a young chimpanzee. It had been captured several months ago by soldiers who have since searched to sell it for several thousand dollars. Meanwhile, it lived attached to the waist with a rope in a dark room in the middle of its waste. Suffering from severe psychological trauma, it ripped the hair of forearm. It's the colonel of the garrison whom surrendered it to the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature and Primate Rehabilitation Center of Lwiro. A German cooperation organization GIZ (Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) acted as an intermediary. It is recovering from martyr, suffering from various infections and to date cannot be allowed in the compound of his fellow orphans.⁸



Mid-April 2016

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The work of wildlife and nature education of ICCN (Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature) is bearing fruit. Three caged red-tailed monkeys (*Cercopithecus ascanius*, Appendix II) were voluntarily handed over to the Institute and then entrusted to the refuge Lwiro Primates.

The red-tailed monkey has a white spot that adorns its snout. Males and females weigh about 4 and 3 kg. They are mainly fruit-eaters but supplement their diet with insects, flowers, buds, and leaves. They fill their cheeks with fruits and will eat them far away sheltered from the theft of their peers, they play a role in seed dispersal.⁹



April 29, 2016

Mbandaka, Equateur Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Seizure of a bonobo (*Pan paniscus*, Appendix I) on board a sailing boat on the Congo River towards Kinshasa, 600 km from Mbandaka. It was delivered to the Eala Botanical Garden, located 7 km from Mbandaka and was subsequently transferred to Kinshasa Zoo.¹⁰

June 20, 2016

Lwiro, South Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Release of a diademed monkey (*Cercopithecus mitis*, Appendix II), to the Lwiro refuge by a friend of animals that had bought from a trafficker. The director of Lwiro welcomed the monkey with open arms while saying loud and clear to her savior and to everyone that you should never buy here or anywhere else an animal from a trafficker. "This gesture of compassion feeds traffic," he adds. "Instead, you must immediately inform the local authorities."¹¹



An hour later, 2 other diademed monkeys arrive at Lwiro in their beautiful traveling wooden boxes.¹²

SIERRA LEONE

May 24, 2016

Moyamba District, South Province, Sierra Leone

Seizure of 2 female chimpanzees less than a year old. They had been bought from a hunter. They are recuperating well and staying close to each other as if they shared something horrible. They are drinking milk and eating a little bit of fruit.¹³

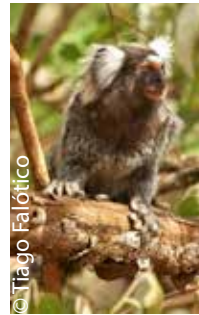


AMERICA

BRAZIL

May 7, 2016

Mogi das Cruzes, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil



Seizure of 2 common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II), made popular on social media and put up for sale on Facebook by a couple for 450 reais (\$ 150 US). The director of Projeto Adote Suzano, an NGO for the protection of animals condemned the act. He set a trap by pretending to be a buyer, and the police went to the rendezvous.¹⁴

facebook

May 12, 2016

Campinas, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

The tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, Appendix II) fled into the woods, the neighbors called the fire department. They asked for his papers. They were fake. However, Charlie had been bought at a high price of 36,000 reais, or \$ 10,000 US. The family was the victim of a scammer. His "mother" is inconsolable. Charlie was seized. His welcome in a shelter or zoo is problematic. The species is territorial. It will be difficult to be accepted by his peers.¹⁵

May 22, 2016

Tocantínia, State of Tocantins, Brazil

Anonymous call: seizure of a black-striped tufted capuchin (*Cebus libidinosus*, Appendix II). Unjustly condemned to prison terms for 4 years, he remained attached all day! It is already very domesticated, its reintroduction in the forest is compromised. The species is endemic to Brazil. Its distribution is wide enough. Life expectancy is 40 years. The female gives birth to a baby after gestation that lasts 150 days on average. The monkey measures an average of 55 cm with the tail and weighs 3 kg. They eat fruits, insects, plants and small vertebrates. It is threatened by habitat dispersion. It is very bright and easily tamed, which contributes to the traffic of the species.¹⁶



June 14, 2016

Manaus, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Rescue of a Humboldt's Woolly monkey (*Lagothrix lagotricha*, Appendix II). He had been found by residents who called the police. He had tied a red rope around her stomach. He probably escaped from prison. Alert Number: (92) 98842-1547.¹⁷ See also p. 26, May 18, 2016 in Brazil.



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

May 22, 2016

Brentwood, Suffolk County, State of New York, United States of America

Seizure of a white-faced Capuchin monkey (*Cebus capucinus*, Appendix II). Wild animals kept in homes are numerous in the State of New York. This couple has been keeping the monkey for 20 years. "Tonight, the capuchin is behind bars," reported CBS Radio. The Suffolk County Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty To Animals announced that in the coming days, the monkey will be driven to an appropriate refuge, while insisting that given the unpredictable behavior of this species, an individual can instantaneously transform from small teddy bear into a formidable biter and scratcher (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 43). State authorities recommend that all those keeping dangerous exotic animals in their homes come forward to the SPCA. Voluntary relinquishments will not result in any judicial prosecution. The couple that illegally housed the capuchin monkey possibly faces a \$250 US fine despite their cooperation (see p. 21 in this edition).¹⁸



May 24, 2016

Portland, State of Oregon, United States of America

He was closely linked with 2 Malaysian nationals staying in the United States, and today he is in prison for the international trafficking of wildlife products (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 106 and in this issue p. 106). This US Air Force veteran specialized in the sale of primate skulls as small as that of the loris, and as big as that of the orangutan. The investigation proved that between May 2011 and July 2014, Gary Roy Holstrom had sold close to \$ 10,000 US worth of animals parts as "unimaginable works of art from Asia, Oceania and Africa," on his website, "Esoteric Stuff." He sold the pair of orangutan skulls for \$ 4700 US and the loris skull for \$ 155 US. He pled guilty and cooperated with investigators.¹



May 28, 2016

Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens, State of Ohio, United States of America

The meeting between a gorilla and a child ended badly. Taking advantage of the inattention of his mother and of a flaw in the protection system of the enclosure, the child gains entry into the gorilla's home. He was immediately spotted and taken up by a 17-year-old male. The management of the zoo fearing a voluntary or involuntary brutality of primate decided in the absolute urgency to shoot him dead. The alternative of the anesthetic syringe has not been selected for 2 reasons: the effect would have taken several minutes and at the time of impact, the gorilla could have had a violent and dangerous reaction to the child. Ian Redmond, President of Gorilla Organization regrets that the trainers of the zoo did not undertake a diversion for example by bringing Harambe his favorite food.²⁰



PARAGUAY

May 12, 2016

Nemby, Central Department, Paraguay

During the night, he left his cage and took to the roof, pulling off tiles. The neighbors reported him. Lucas the monkey was taken to the police station. He spent 2 weeks behind bars until his "owner" came looking for him.²¹

ASIA

CAMBODIA

April 26, 2016

Memot, Tboung Khmum Province, Cambodia. Vietnam border

43 monkeys (*Primates* spp., Appendix I or II) each ghostly draped in a plastic bag were seized at the border between Cambodia and Vietnam. Native species, according to a military source they are going to be released into a national park.²²



CHINA

May 2nd 2016

Dongxing, Autonomous Region of Guangxi, China

Seizure of 20 slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) and 17 macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix II). Arrived on site for a drug case and adultery, police came across lemurs and monkeys still alive despite particularly cruel detention conditions. They were among the trash. The police got hold of notebooks with records of accounts. Each primate was sold several thousand yuans. They were shipped to the provinces of Anhui and Liaoning. One arrest.²³



Kunming, Yunnan Province, China

-May 20, 2016. Routine inspection at a tollbooth. Several slender lorises (*Loris tardigradus*, Appendix II) were inside of a car. The driver and his passenger were apprehended. One thing leading to another, the police searched the cache of the 2 traffickers and got their hands on other wild animals. Police in turn visited the buyers, many of which were minors, in Kunming and Chongqing.

-May 23, 2016. Three days later, in the same place, police blocked a vehicle. White handed gibbons (*Hylobates lar*, Appendix I) were inside. They came from Hekou, a border city with Vietnam. The driver and his 2 passengers were arrested in turn. Police suspect them to be connected to the network exposed 3 days earlier.²⁴



Hylobates lar

SOUTH KOREA

May 11, 2016

Goyang, Gyeonggi Province, South Korea

Seizure of 2 common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II) 5 to 6 weeks old. Trafficker arrested. These two dwarf monkeys from Brazil were smuggled into Korea from Thailand. According to police a marmoset can sell for 7.5 million won (\$ 6390 US) in the country. They were temporarily placed at Korea's National Institute of Ecology. In 3 days, they have grown to 10 grams. They spend their time sleeping and climbing trees. See also the art of conversation marmosets in "On the Trail" 4 p. 46.²⁵



INDIA

June 23, 2016

Mumbai, State of Maharashtra, India

Mistreatment. Bound and tortured after having stolen fruits and vegetables to eat, the macaw wasn't welcomed. Storekeepers went to capture it. Consequently, they tied up and exposed the monkey, publicly mocking it. City police intervened. The monkey was transported near Pune city and was released into an area where it will be less exposed to conflicts with humans.²⁶



INDONESIA

ORANGUTANS

April 6, 2016

East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

On the last February 20, 3 orangutans females had been found burned alive in Belimbing, Bontang (see "On the Trail" n° 12, p. 45). A suspect was arrested.²⁷

April 8, 2016

Aceh Tamiang Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia

Rescue of a baby orangutan by SOCP (Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Program). He suffers from malnutrition and a skin infection due to parasites. The vets are fussing over him.²⁸



April 8, 2016

West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

See "On the Trail" n°14, p. 45. Two months later, they were freed at 3 hours half from de Simpang Tiga village.²⁹

April 11 to 20, 2016

Bukit Batikap, Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Coming back in forest for 12 orangutan who have been trained in social and wildlife habits in the Nyaru Menteng "school". Bukit Batikap forest is covering 400 km². It is thought to be inaccessible to mining, logging and large scale farming activities.³⁰



April 26, 2016

Peunaron Village, Aceh Province, Indonesia

Rescue of a young male orangutan around 3 years old by SOCP. He was in a chicken coop. He had been captured in the Leuser nature Reserve. From January to April, SOCP rescued 10 orangutans.³¹



May 1, 2016

Bakongan Village, Aceh Province, Indonesia

Another rescue of a trapped orangutan in an oil palm plantation. This was a large male of approximately 30 years. After having conducted an exam of his health, the members of HOCRU (Human-Organutan Conflict & Rescues) and BKSDA (Nature Conservation Agency Indonesia) allowed him to recover freedom in Leuser forest, Rantau Sialang sector.³²



From May 3 to 6, 2016

Kandolo, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Martyr. Left for dead. Wounded by bullets. One-eyed. Foot infection caused by a rope. In truth dead despite intensive care. The neighborhood conflict with the men escalated into lynching. He was about 20 years old.³³



May 3, 2016



May 6, 2016

May 11, 2016

Aceh Tamiang Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia

Rescue of a male orangutan around 1 year old. Would have been "found" on the side of the road.³⁴



May 16, 2016

Batang Serangan Sub district, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia



The mother and her 2 year old child were stuck in a thicket within an oil palm plantation. They were transferred in the Leuser Park at 3 km.³⁵

May 20, 2016

North Penajam Paser Regency, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Rescue of a male baby orangutan aged 1 or 2 years old. He was under house arrest at an individual's home.³⁶

May 27, 2016

Gunung Tarak National Park, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

After 5 years of learning to live in the wild, 2 female orangutans who had been found as babies chained or caged by villagers were released within the National Park. After walking for several hours - local porters dodging swamps, fallen trees and rivers - the cages were opened and they came out for a new life.³⁷



May 30, 2016

Kabanjahe, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Rescue of a male orangutan around 20 years old in a military camp. Orphaned, he arrived here when he was a few months old. He leaves at 20 years old. He is under observation.³⁸



June 1, 2016

Bereng Rambang, Pulang Pisau Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Rescue of a 4 to 5 month old female orangutan. Injured right arm, torso and hip. Mother killed in the forest. 2.5 kg, should weigh 2 times more. Found in the forest by a wood collector.³⁹



June 8, 2016

Sampit, Kalimantan Central Province, Indonesia

She was 2 years in the hands of a countrywoman who had "found" her in a field and raised her as a child. She began to cause problems in the neighborhood. Sampit is the center of the oil palm industry in the province and many orangutan orphans end up there.⁴⁰



June 15, 2016

Sandai, Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Rescue of an orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*) around 18 month based on the length of its teeth. The severely wounded of the great oil palm war is slowly recovering thanks to International Animal Rescue Indonesia.⁴¹



June 15, 2016

Semboja, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, Province of East Kalimantan,

Rescue of an orangutan one to two years old. He was in a dungeon. Its nest was a rice bag on a carpet of leaves.

June 18, 2016

Tumbang Koling, East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province

This one here is a few days old and weighs 1.7 kg. It has a small wound to the navel. The vets think he was brutally snatched from its mother and the umbilical cord. In the forest, small orangutans stay with their mother for 6-8 years. It is uncertain that bottles and the competence of BOS (Borneo Orangutan Survival) are enough to save the little Bumi, which means "land" in Indonesian.⁴²



June 21, 2016

South Barito Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Discovered in December 2015 on the edge of the Barito River, in an area ravaged by forest fires and gold mining sites, the orphan was put in a 50x50cm cage dressed as a schoolboy, eating rice and leftovers, exposed on the side of the road for the curiosity of everyone. He was about 1.5 years old. Finally, after much discussion and a reminder of the law, his "adopter" accepted to surrender the animal to BOS.⁴³



June 28, 2016

Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Police and forest agent reinforcement was necessary. The villagers didn't want to separate with their hostage. The APE Crusader Team is on its 5th rescue this June.⁴⁴



It is a female. She was handed over into the good care of the COP.

June 28 and 29, 2016

Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Return of 3 survivors to the forest

- The male, around 25 years old, was recovered in March 2016 in a precarious nest atop a banana tree near a village and palm oil plantation. His forest was destroyed by fire. After a journey of 2 days by river and by foot, he left his cage in the heart of the National Forest on June 28th. He immediately climbed to the top of a large tree. It's a good sign!



- The 2 others, aged 2 and 3, were recovered in 2011 in industrial plantations. The orphans were put in "a forest school" where they learned to climb, make nests and feed themselves autonomously. They were released on June 29th after one night in an habituation cage in the middle of the Park. As the door opened, they also immediately climbed to the treetops to examine their new territory and find food. Very encouraging! ⁴⁵



Indonesia, except orangutans

May 28, 2016

Banyuwangi, East Java Province, Indonesia

Seizure of 4 ebony leaf monkeys (*Trachypithecus auratus*, Appendix II) near a gas station. One arrest. The trafficker, 28 years old, has a healthy address book. His hunter-gatherers work in the regency of Jember, Banyuwangi, Bondowoso, Probolinggo, Situbondo and in national Parks of Baluran and Alas Purwo.⁴⁶

June 9, 2016

Tanggamus District, Lampung Province, Indonesia

"Cuddling, it is torture." The International Animal Rescue campaign works well. It wants to deter people from buying slow lorises as pets. Eight slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) delivered from captivity in August 2015 (see "On the Trail" No. 10, p. 34) are released into an enclosure in the forest. After a month of habituation and verification of their ability to feed themselves, the enclosure will be opened. Most captive lorises suffer from dehydration and nutritional deficiencies. The teeth of some are extracted to avoid bites.⁴⁸

June 28, 2016

Borneo Island, Indonesia

Rescue of a slow loris. Police snatched it from the grasps of a trafficker and released 2 days later into the care of COP, which also cares for lorises. It was extremely stressed, injured and undernourished.⁴⁹



LAOS

May 5, 2016

Laos Wildlife Rescue Center, Laos



No one knows how long the long-tailed macaque spent in the drum of an old washing machine boned.⁵⁰

The long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) lives in humid forests on the banks of rivers and mangrove trees. Its home range is more than 1 km².

THAILAND

April 7, 2016

Thailand

Rescue of a Bengal slow loris (*Nycticebus bengalensis*, Appendix I). Trauma common in captive lorises, he was wounded in front of the skull. He tried to force his way between the bars. In the care of the WFFT.⁵¹



Beginning of April 2016

Southern Islands of Thailand

Rescue of a 4 year old, female Northern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II). Chained to a tree, injured by the metal at the abdomen. Ouch. Collected by the WFFT.⁵²



April 22, 2016

Thailand



Four weeks. Orphaned. It's mother should have to breastfeed it for months. WFFT is its surrogate mother. To be continued.⁵³

April 25, 2016

Thailand

The NGO Hand to Paw, specializing in the protection of dogs, are out of their usual perimeter. They convinced the monks of the Buddhist temple to let go off the Northern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II), which was locked and isolated for 15 years. WFFT will ensure a better future.⁵⁴



The rescue day

June 13, 2016

Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, Tha Yang District, Phetchaburi Province, Thailand

Release of 6 domesticated slow lorises (*Nycticebus bengalensis*, Appendix I), out of cages and rehabilitated to the wild. The timing is not accidental. The rainy season starts and there is abundance of food in the forests. The slow loris is a frugivore and also eat insects, leaves, bird eggs. When the cages were open, 4 immediately climbed trees, 2 took a few minutes to do the same.⁵⁵

**Mid-June, 2016
Thailand**

Another victim of the pet monkey market was voluntarily surrendered by his owner to WFFT. Too big, too aggressive, and increasingly difficult to monitor. It was no longer the baby of a few months that one could play with as a doll.⁵⁶



**End of June 2016
Phetchaburi Province, Thailand**

Voluntary surrender to the Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand of a baby spectacled langur (*Trachypithecus obscurus*, Appendix II) by a reformed owner.⁵⁷



**End of June, 2016
Pran Buri District, Prachuap Khiri Khan
Province, Thailand**



Found wandering in an hotel, sent to a veterinary clinic, and finally released into a protected natural habitat. Better known under the name langur, the spectacled leaf monkey (*Trachypithecus obscurus*, Appendix II) is vegetarian, which disperses seeds and activates regrowth in forests and green corridors. They are eaten by leopards.⁵⁸

VIETNAM

The pig-tailed macaw is found in Indonesia and on the Indochinese peninsula. They live in groups of 15 to 40 individuals and they eat fruit and leaves.

- April 19, 2016. Cam Lam, Khanh Hoa Province

A baby set free. A Canadian tourist reported that it had been chained to a tree.⁵⁹

- May 17, 2016. Da-nang, Danang Province

Seizure in an individual's home.⁶⁰

- May 27, 2016. Hanoi

Two seized. Evident maltreatment. The 2 victims of abuse were miraculously saved by a tourist passing by and by the ENV (picture page 53).⁶¹



May 6, 2016

Da Lat, Lam Dong province, Vietnam

Seizure of a yellow-cheeked gibbon (*Nomascus gabriellae*, Appendix I) from a souvenir store.⁶²

May 31, 2016

Hai Phong. Hai Phong Province

Seizure of a slow loris thanks to a tourists' report.⁶³

June 4, 2016

Hoan Kien District, Hanoi

Voluntary handling over of a pygmy slow loris to a rescue center in Cuc Phuong.⁶⁴



June 5, 2016

Tan An, Long An Province, Vietnam

Seizure in a house of 2 baby long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) weighing a total of 500 g. They were taken to the animal rescue center in Cu Chi.⁶⁵

June 8, 2016

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Rescue of a pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II) by the NGO Education for Nature – Vietnam in a worker's dormitory, Lo Lu road. The same day, the macaque was transferred to Cu Chi refuge.⁶⁶

June 14, 2016

Son Truong, District of Huong Son, Province of Ha Tin, Vietnam

Seizure in a house of a white-cheeked gibbon (*Nomascus leucogenys*, Appendix I). He had held it 10 years behind bars. He faces 7 years in prison but he will not even be sentenced to 8 days. The former border guard said he had recovered it during a patrol. "At that time, he was seriously injured." "I took it home and since then I have kept it." The gibbon would have been released quickly into the forest.⁶⁷

Vietnam from June 15 to the 22, 2016

Bac Ninh Province

June 15- Rescue of a slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) wandering near a home.

Thai Binh Province

June 20 – Voluntary handling over by a tourist of a gray-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix cinerea*, Appendix I) to forest agents.

Dong Nai Province

June 22 – Voluntary handling over of a pygmy loris (*Nycticebus pygmaeus*, Appendix I) after being kept in captivity for 6 years to the primate refuge in Cat Tien National Park.⁶⁸

June 22, 2016

Bu Gia Map National Park, Binh Phuoc Province, Vietnam

Park rescuers welcomed a yellow-cheeked gibbon (*Nomascus gabriellae*, Appendix I) into their rescue. She was kept captive for years and it is not sure that she can adapt to life in a forest setting.⁶⁹

EUROPE

FRANCE

April 2, 2016

Marseille, Bouches-du-Rhône Department, France



Seizure of a female baboon at Olympic Circus. The NGO Code Animal and the 13th and 14th wards' mayors instigated the rescue. The baboon was transferred to the Belgian rescue center Natuurhulpcentrum. The Olympic Circus has also attracted anger from a part of the population for having chained a dromedary and a camel to a busy traffic circle with lots of traffic jam and pollution.⁷⁰

ITALIA

May 29, 2016

Salerno, Region Campania, Italia

Rescue of one macaque (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I ou II) tied to a kitchen trolley in a gloomy backyard in 2 famished looking dog's company.⁷¹



27 May 27, 2016. Hanoi

Nepal, the Bridge between India and China



- April 1, 2016. Sharada, Mid-Western Development Region

Seizure of 2 leopard skins. The 4 traffickers, including one woman, were arrested in the midst of negotiations. The starting price for a skin was fixed at 1.5 million rupees (\$14,180 US). In the region, poaching is flourishing. 126 poachers and traffickers have been arrested in the past few months in and around Bardia National Park.¹



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- April 4, 2016. Jhalari, Far-Western Development Region

Seizure of 3 leopard skins and 15 kg of bones. Two arrested. The courier gave up the organizer of the line. He was told to transport the "merchandise" from Shantipur to Jhalari, about a 12-hour drive over 500 km.²



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- April 7, 2016. Bardiya District, Mid-Western Development Region

Seizure of a tiger skin that would be 39 years old near the Bardia National Park. One arrest, 4 people on the run. Four tigers have been poached since the beginning of the year, mostly in the Park buffer zone. In 2013 the tiger population was estimated at 50 individuals.³

- May 10, 2016. Dadeldhura District, Far Western Development Region

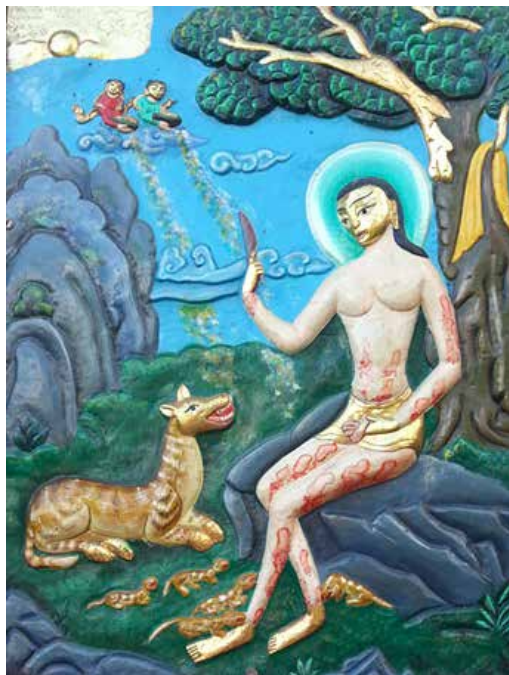
Seizure of 2 leopard skins and 8.5 kg of bones. The 2 suspects arrested had admitted to having bought the leopard parts in the Kanchanpur district 50 km south near the border with Uttar Pradesh. One skin measures 2.13 m long and 66 cm wide and the other 1.96 m long and 56 cm wide.

- May 11, 2016. Dhading District, Central Development Region

Seizure of 2 leopard skulls and bones and 2 kg of pangolin scales (*Manis* spp., Appendix II). Two arrests.⁴

- May 12, 2016. Kanchanpur District, Far Western Development Region

Arrest of Lal Bahadur aka Raj Bahadur on the run since 2011 after poaching in Namo Buddha, this young tiger of 2 and a half years, the first of Nepal to be fitted with a radio collar, was killed 4 months after his transfer from the Chitwan National Park and stripped of some of his natural wealth. Its mutilated body was found alongside of 2 cows whose meat was poisoned (see India April 18, 2016 p. 16).



Representation of the Mahasatwo Prince from the Nepalese village of Namo Buddha who gives his life to save one tigress and her 5 cubs.

Nepal, the Bridge between India and China - followed



- May 12, 2016. Nepalganj, Mid-Western Development Region

Arrest in the same night of Sher Bahadur Lama, a senior poacher with one foot in the Bardia National Park in Nepal and the other one in the Pilibhit National Park in Uttar Pradesh, India. Tragically, he hang himself during his custody.⁵

- May 16, 2016. Gongabu (5km from Kathmandu), Central Development Region

Seizure in a hotel of a skin. One arrest. The main bus station in Kathmandu for long distance coaches is Gongabu.⁶

- May 17, 2016. Amargadi, Dadeldhura District, Far-Western Development Region

Seizure of 4 leopard skins and of 8 kg of bones. Two arrests.⁷

- May 23, 2016. Bungamati, Central Development Region



Two skins. Three arrested near Kathmandou.⁸

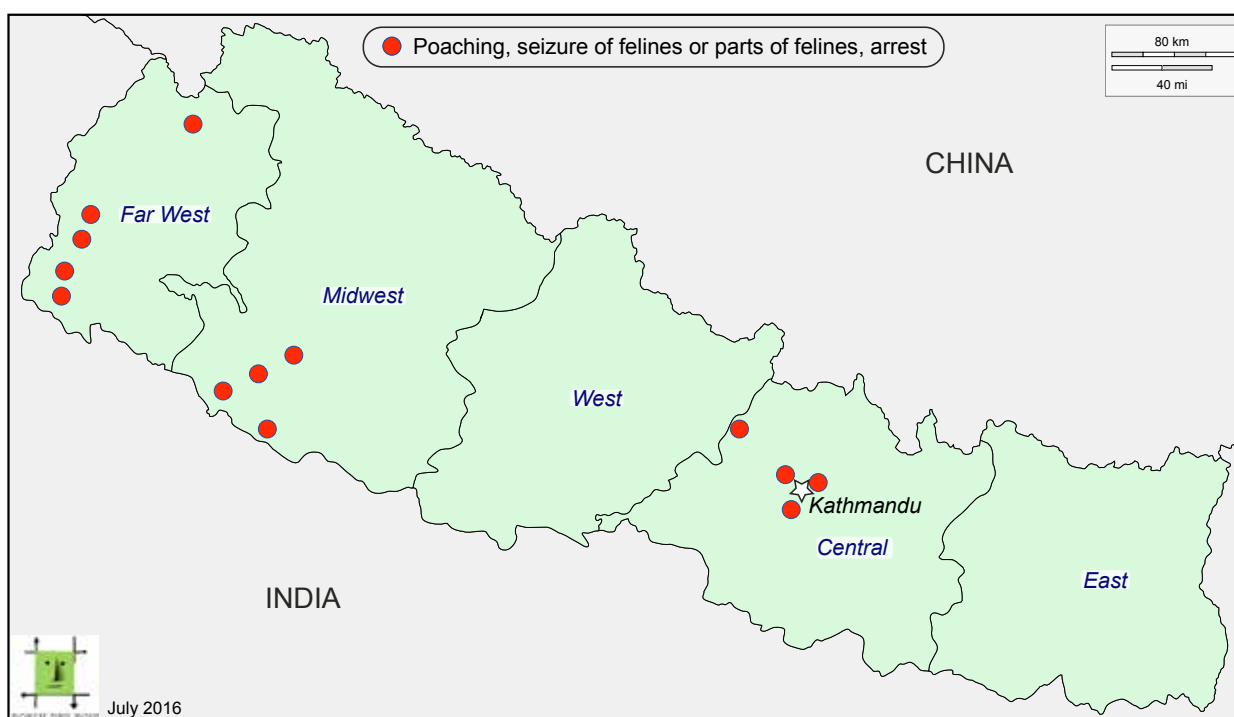
- May 29, 2016. Budhanilakantha, Kathmandu

Seizure of 3 leopard and clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I) hides. Three arrests in a hair salon.⁹

- June 25, 2016. Babai, Bardiya District, Mid-Western Region

One skin, 2 arrests. 18 and 19 years old.¹⁰

- See also p. 111



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.

LEOPARDS



AFRICA

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

June 11 and 12, 2016

- Seizure of 3 leopard pelts. Two arrested.
- Consecutive seizures of one leopard tail and one elephant tail. Four arrested.¹¹



TOGO

May 21, 2016

Lomé, Maritime Region, Togo

Abdou Ramane, 63, Nigerian, with his merchandise. In his long experience, how much more has he sold?¹²



ZAMBIA

End of April 2016

Lusaka, Province of Lusaka, Zambia

Seizure of a skin in a shopping center in Makeni, 3 men arrested (22, 38 and 39 years old).¹³

AMERICA

GUATEMALA

June 23, 2016

Guatemala

Two "docile" leopards, both one year old, sold on Facebook for \$ 8,000 US each. The pet shop keeper affirms that they were born in the country of a couple that came from Africa. The young felines did not possess a "visa." An investigation is underway. The notice has been taken back.¹⁴

facebook

ASIA

INDIA

April 6, 2016

Kondagaon District, State of Chhattisgarh, India

Seizure of a skin estimated by police to be worth Rs 5 lakh (\$ 7,500 US). Two men arrested. They had bought the skin in Odisha State and brought it back to Chhattisgarh to sell.¹⁵

FAMILY AFFAIRS

April 25, 2016

Lakhipur, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure of a leopard skin, sambar antlers (*Cervus unicolor*) and teak. The leopard war is spreading in Madhya Pradesh. 200 non natural deaths in 8 years, 30 over the course of the last 2 months. The 2011 record, 43 deaths, will be broken in 2016. Trapping to sell the skin and claws, lynching in so-called reprisals, electrocutions, accidental or intentional road collisions, causes for disappearance of leopards who have an incredible capacity to adapt to the close range of humans are plenty. Because of forest guards' inexperience or lack of motivation, investigations after acts of poaching or cruelty are not correctly carried out and only lead to sanctions in 5% of cases.¹⁶

April 29, 2016

Pothoragarh District, State of Uttarakhand, India

Seizure of 3 skins estimated to be worth Rs 8 lakh (\$ 12,030 US) and several bones. One Nepali citizen arrested. He admitted to killing 3 felines in Nepal and transporting their parts to India via the Kali River, which separates the two countries. 70 leopard deaths have occurred in Nepal in 2014 and in 2015, and 10 since the beginning of 2016 (see p. 54 and 55 of this issue).¹⁷

LEOPARDS - FOLLOWED

May 2 and 5, 2016

New Delhi, National Capital Territory, India

Seizure of a leopard skin and a white leopard pelt (*Uncia uncia*, Appendix I) estimated to be worth Rs 10 lakh (\$ 15,000 US). Three members of an inter-State gang were arrested. The leader was intercepted with the white leopard skin at a bus terminal.¹⁸

May 13, 2016

Jalpaiguri District, West Bengal State, India

Seizure of a skin 3.4 m in length. The trio was located thanks to secret information. He was heading to Nepal. One man has been detained by police.¹⁹

June 7, 2016

Chamoli district, State of Uttarakhand, India

Seizure of 3 skins in 2 bags. Two arrested. The traps were set in the Almora forests.²⁰



June 8, 2016

Nabarangpur District, State of Odisha, India

Six arrests. Seizure of 4 leopard skins, one live pangolin and 4 motorcycles.²¹

June 19, 2016

Pimpri Pendhar, State of Maharashtra, India

Three arrested. Between 25 and 32 years old. Seizure of a pelt and claws. It happened on a Sunday, 100 km from Pune.²²

June 22, 2016

Pandalur, Nilgiris District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Strangled in the noose of a trap.²³



Around 6 years old

June 29, 2016

Ahwa, District of Dang, State of Gujarat, India

Seizure of a pelt in a plastic bag under the back seat of a car. It is the first time that the local brigade has come across such a loot. Four arrested.²⁴

Lynching

State of Rajasthan, India

May 17, 2016. Kachhabali. Rajsamand District.

We will not be going to Kachhabali anymore. They have suffocated him with a huge rock. They bound his legs and strangled him to death, laughing all the while.



- June 11, 2016. Jhali-ka-Guda, Udaipur District

We won't be going to Jhali-ka-Guda anymore. The leopard was beaten and quickly burned. When police arrived at the scene, they found only ashes, and blood stained rocks.²⁵



Jawai Bandh Leopard Reserve

Leopard phobia has reached the Reserve known also for its crocodiles. Local naturalists says that people in the surroundings block the entrance of cave networks where leopards find shelter. These obstructions excite panic among the leopards by separating mothers from their young.

IRAN

April 18, 2016

Yazuj, Province of Kohkiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad, Iran

Mystery surrounds the death of a female pregnant with 4 babies in an area where poaching is active. No traces of gun shots. The head was burned, the tail was cut. There are many superstitions. The whiskers are considered evil. To burn them would prevent the leopard's ghost from coming back to haunt the villages or homes of those who killed them.²⁶

LEOPARDS - FOLLOWED

June 23 and 25, 2016

Geno Biosphere Reserve, Province of Hormozgan, Iran

Three forest guards were shot dead by unknown poachers in the Geno reserve and the National Bamu Park in the south of the country. These 2 protected areas are mountain regions and particularly harbor Persian leopards (*Panthera pardus saxicolor*, Appendix I).²⁷



AMERICA

JAGUARS

ARGENTINA

May 18, 2016

Salta and Jujuy Provinces, Border between Bolivia and Argentina

Seizure of 105 jaguar teeth by Bolivian police. They were wrapped in aluminum foil, stuffed into teddy bears which are then sewn back on.

18,000 km separates China and Bolivia. The distance isn't a constraint for traffickers. On the contrary, it can make for a good bargain. Coming with 7 Chinese companies who do public works in the region, some of the travelers diversify their activities. At least 26 jaguars were killed. The teeth are usually hidden in soft toys through postal parcels or flight luggage heading to China. Which fate for the skins?²⁹



June 18, 2016

Salta, Salta Province, Argentina

Rescue of 2 baby jaguars. They were abandoned in a cardboard box beside the road.³⁰



BRAZIL

April 11, 2016

Alta Floresta, Mato Grosso State, Brazil

Seizure of 4 firearms. It was not in Africa, but Brazil. It was not lions, but jaguars. A type of hunting inspired by that of an African safari. A property owner of 59 years leased his farm for hunters. He denies this fact however, and assures that he killed the animals himself for the sole reason that they were targeting his flock. He did not specify how many "onças" were killed. He did not give details on the fate of the jaguar corpses. He was arrested but released on bail.³¹



Mai 16, 2016

Novo Mundo, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Improbable affinities. "Found in a bad state" by a guardian of the property was a young jaguar being raised with the dogs of the house. The videos that the property owner put on Facebook and Whatsapp led to the seizure of the feline.³²



June 13, 2016

Marcelândia, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Rescue of a female jaguar cub aged around 2 months. She was domesticated and anemic. Her mother was probably hunted down. Everything will be done to increase its chances to be released into the wild.³³



TIGERS

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

April 22, 2016

Tau Thaba Game and Lion Lodge, Free State, South Africa

A tiger attacked a child. Clash over the responsibilities between the zoo's Director and the French parents.³⁴

ASIA

CAMBODIA

April 6, 2016. Cambodia

Can the shortage give birth to the abundance?

The WWF Cambodia is trying to convince the government to take in imported tigers. "This presents a huge task," said the director of the National Wildlife Rescue, adding that the global cost of the operation could reach 50 million dollars. "One would need to start with 2 males and 5 or 6 females." Contacts have been made in India, Thailand and Malaysia to explore the possibility of transferring wild tigers. The last tiger sighting in Cambodia was in 2007. The best habitats would be in protected forests in Monduliri, sanctuaries in Lomphat, and Phnom Nam Lyr. Cambodian officials gave a mix of unfounded declarations - "the transfer of wild tigers to zoos in Britain and the USA has gone well" - and realistic statements - "Suitable habitat for the tigers will have to be protected against poachers by strong law enforcement," "The key point is the prey," and "If the tigers get their food, then they will thrive."³⁵

INDE

Tigers in Pench

April 4, 2016

Pench Tiger Reserve, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure of 4 tiger paws. Two residents arrested. They said to have shot the tiger in December of last year, but the paws are fresh. Tigers in Pench are abused (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 57 and 58).³⁶

April 21, 2016

Seoni District, Pench Tiger Reserve, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

The forest ranger assigned to monitor the buffer zone of the Park was accustomed for several months to poison water points with endosulfan, an organochlorine insecticide. Virpin Varmiya was not acting alone. A reward of 25,000 rupees (\$ 375 US) is offered to who provides crucial information about his accomplices.³⁷

April 21, 2016

Kondagaon, State of Chhattisgarh, India

Seizure of a skin, and one arrest.³⁸



Living in this district is a bad idea for felines (see "On the Trail" n°7 p. 54 and p. 56 of this issue).

April 21, 2016

Ram-Lok Temple, Kandaghat tehsil, State of Himachal Pradesh, India

New controversy over the practices of a religious establishment. Seizure of 4 feline skins in a Hindu temple. A follower would have given them to the congregation, but nobody there is remembering who and when. The temple is poorly looked upon by the neighborhood. It has grown without the necessary building permits.³⁹

TIGERS - FOLLOWED

May 3, 2016

Chandrapur, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure of a skin estimated to be worth Rs 15 lakh (\$ 22,500 US) on the international market. The skin includes the head, paws and 18 claws. The murder allegedly took place 15 years ago. They were all on a motorcycle and came from Telangana. They wanted to sell their trophy in Chandrapur, about 280 km away. It is said to have been bought for Rs 3000 (\$ 45 US)! It measures 3m55 long from the snout to the tip of the tail.⁴⁰

May 15, 2016

Raiqala, Dehradun District, Uttarakhand State, India

Seizure of one skin, a skull and 25 kg of bones, estimated to be worth Rs 30 lakh (\$ 45,112 US). The skin measures 3.35 long and 1m52 wide. Arrest of 4 traffickers on 2 motorcycles on Haridwar-Dehradun road. The ex-tiger would have been poached in Rajaji National Park or in Jim Corbett reserve.⁴¹

June 5, 2016

Shivamogga, Karnataka State, India

Arrest of a 45-year-old woman. Seizure of 22 claws.⁴²

June 11, 2016

Geleky, State of Assam, India

Seizure of 10 tiger claws and 2 firearms at the home of Golap Talukdar.⁴³

June 17, 2016

Kannivadi, State of Tamil Nadu, India

A routine patrol paid off. Seizure of a car and a carpet made of tiger skin with its claws attached made in 1970 by the Van Ingen taxidermist dynasty (see "On the Trail" n°8 p. 42). Five arrested.⁴⁴



INDONESIA

May 24, 2016

Regency of Langkat, Province of North Sumatra, Indonesia

A meeting between 3 poachers and undercover police occurred in a plantation. The price for pelts, internal organs, teeth and bones of a tiger was set at \$ 3,100 US.

The traffickers did not resist at the moment of their arrest. Between 25 and 28 years old, they bought the skins from a certain Buketi Sembiring for 25 million rupees a piece (\$ 1,896 US). Sembiring is poaching in Mont Leuser National Park.

End of June 2016

Bengkulu and Aceh Province, Indonesia



- Sentencing of one man to 4 years in prison, and a fine of 60 million roupees (\$ 4500 US). A record for Indonesia. See "On the Trail" n°12 p. 58.

- Sentencing of one man to 3 years in prison for tiger smuggling. A record for Aceh Province.⁴⁵

THAILAND

Tiger Temple – follow up

April to June, 2016

District of Sai Yok, Province of Kanchanaburi, Thailand⁴⁶

- 40 tiger cubs, a bear, a binturong and several other choice pieces have been found in freezers.

- Police stopped a pick-up truck at the exit of the temple. A monk and 2 civilians were inside. The vehicle was searched. Inside there was 2 tiger skins, 9 tiger teeth and 2000 ta krud and other talismans. Ta kruds are small vials containing a small piece of tiger skin. They are most often carried around the neck as a pendant and superstition says that he who wears one is invincible.



- 40 tiger embryos were found in glass jars at a veterinarian's home who works with the Tiger Temple.



- 50 km away from there, a tiger slaughterhouse was circled and searched by police. 4 tigers still alive were inside. According to first information, the meat and bones were sold to restaurants in Bangkok or sent with the skins to neighboring countries. The Tiger Temple was one of the underground enterprise's clients. There would be other tiger breeding farms in the region.

TIGERS - FOLLOWED

As a reminder, the Tiger Temple had been running since 1992. It attracted millions of tourists and its Buddhist administrators reaped from it millions of dollars (see "On the Trail" n° 8, p. 46, n°9, p.50 and n°12 p. 60).

VIETNAM

April 6, 2016

Nghe An Province, Vietnam

A woman obtained an import permit for 9 tigers "for the purpose of preservation, education and reproduction of the species". In her establishment, there are already 15 tigers. The possible arrival of 9 new tigers is very worrying. The woman is the wife of Phan Van Tuan, condemned to 9 months suspended sentence in prison in 2000 for stealing and killing a tiger from a zoo, and given 30 months in prison with 5 years probation for having illegally obtained a tiger skeleton and a frozen tiger. Now, he is suspected for smuggling pangolins, ivory, and rhinoceros horns across Vietnam. According to the accounts of ENV Vietnam, there are 30 wild tigers in the country, and a little less than 200 in captivity. Mrs. Pham Van Tuan wanted to add wildlife watching to her "ecotourism" establishment.⁴⁷

May 8th 2016

Nam Dinh, Nam Dinh Province, Vietnam

Four frozen tiger cubs have been bought for \$90 US a piece in Laos, and sold on Facebook for \$360 US each. In Vietnam, there were hundreds of wild tigers in 2000. Today, there are less than 5. Like the WWF said, tigers are getting better and better.⁴⁸

facebook

May 10, 2016

Dien Chau District, Nghe An Province, Vietnam

Seizure of 680 claws torn from 37 tigers. They came from Laos and had been bought for \$ 15,250 US, thus \$ 23 US a piece, a wholesale price. At retail price, they sell for between \$ 150 and \$ 400 US.⁴⁹



EUROPE

SPAIN

June 13, 2016

Guardamar del Segura, Alicante Province, Spain

Bianca and Drac, 2 tigers descendant of a couple who worked in a circus were seized from private property by the NGO AAP Primadomus dedicated to the rescue, the assistance and the rehabilitation of animals from traffic.⁵⁰

FRANCE



June 17, 2016

Saint-Ouen, Department of Saint Denis, France

Seizure of a tiger cub. He was found in a neighborhood north of Paris. Several days earlier he has been seen near the Paris flea market. Like in Thailand, he posed with people for selfies. € 5 (\$ 5.5 US) for each picture.⁵¹

LIONS

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

June 1, 2016

Limpopo Province, South Africa

Seizure of 2 lion heads and 8 lion paws. Three arrests. The Temik has struck again for the lions. The suspects are from Mozambique. People in Asia have a high demand for lion teeth, claws and bones to replace tiger bones for traditional medicine or for charlatans. The African-Asian current has been well established (see "On the Trail" n°1 p. 28, n° 3 p. 72, n°4 p. 101, n°5 p. 113, n°6 p. 103, n°8 p. 40, n°9 p. 61, n°9 p. 93, n°10 p. 76, n°11 p. 51 et 90, n°12 p. 66, 75 et 111).⁵²



LIONS - FOLLOWED

June 10, 2016

Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

A band of lions got under the fence of the Park in this very place where a stream is flowing. Shortly after a farmer complained of having lost a cow, a calf and 2 pigs. Gunmen hired by the Tourism Agency and National Parks of the province tended night a trap for wild animals. They have baited with a carcass and started in ambush. A lioness and 2 cubs approached. They were shot to death. The rest of the band would have come back in the Park through the same breach. A very unlikely scenario. Further conflicts between lions and humans are to be feared. Local NGOs complain that the lions were not anesthetized and taken back smoothly and with certainty in the Park. From Shabalala to Mkhu-lu, all populations are on the lookout. The police is on the teeth. The agency Tourism and National Parks said anesthesia is a complicated procedure. The administration of the Kruger Park emphasizes that his rangers are not involved in the hunt for fugitives lions.⁵³

June 20, 2016

Namakgale, Province de Limpopo, South Africa

Poaching of 2 white lions. It happened at dawn on Sunday at the Letaba River Lodge. The next day, 10 km away, a Toyota pick-up was intercepted with 3 individuals inside, and one backpack. Inside, there were the 4 paws, head and tail of 2 lions. Lodge personnel might have been double-dealing. This year, Letaba also caught the attention of the public and NGOs by renting a 5 weeks lion cub to an Australian TV crew shooting in South Africa an episode of the reality show "I'm a Celebrity". Once more the lodge confirmed its reputation of lions exploiter through breeding and canned hunting. The episode was aired on Channel 10. The NGO For the Love of Wildlife revealed the scandal.



In a way, Letaba River Lodge and Tiger Temple (see p. 60) are twinned.

KENYA

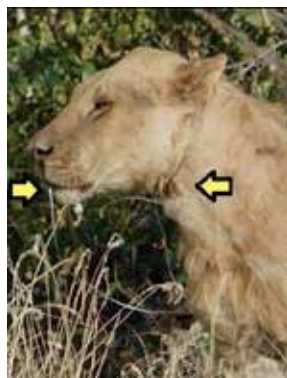
See p. 81

ZIMBABWE

June 16, 2016

Bumi Hills, Province of Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe

For the second time in the past few months, a young lion was found in a snare. He had to be anesthetized to be released from the metal jaws. With his brother, this lion is well known for his crocodile hunting techniques. One makes a diversion while the other attacks right at the throat. The director of Bumi Hills Safari Lodge thinks that this is an acquired behavior passed down by elders. They have killed 3 in 2 weeks.⁵⁵



AMERICA

BRAZIL

May 1, 2016

Itapetinga, State of Bahia, Brazil

The zoo has gone bankrupt



"Hulk" doesn't have any more strength. The lion agonizes. He can no longer stand up and lacks the strength to eat. That is what the citizens and zoo guardians report at "Matinha" zoo, which has been closed to the public for 3 years. The lion is headed down the road to death by starvation. He follows the route of other animals like a jaguar and a golden lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus rosalia*, Appendix I). Beyond abandonment, lack of financial resources and bad health conditions are adding the vulture attacks on tapirs, threats of forest fires and wildlife traffickers who are roaming around. More than 7 animals have disappeared for reasons that are not clear. The justice authorities have a hard time accounting for the dead because the zoo didn't have necessary registration papers for the animals. While the residents, friends of the animals, and caretakers have reported the catastrophic state of the zoo, the officials have more temperate views. A vague rescue project for the Park has been mentioned. It would cost about 15 million deals, or \$ 4 million US.⁵⁶

LIONS - FOLLOWED

CHILE

May 21, 2016

Santiago Metropolitan Zoo, Centrale Valley, Chile

He jumps into the lion's den but things didn't quite happen as in the Bible. Two lions were killed and he was critically wounded.⁵⁷

ASIA

CHINA

May 2016

Xiamen, Fujian Province, China

One man sentenced to 3 years and 6 months in prison, with a fine of 30,000 yuans (\$ 4,632 US). He was arrested in May 2015 at the International Airport in possession of 343 lion claws coming from about 20 lions, 4 canine teeth, and 10 leopard canines.⁵⁸



INDIA

May 2016

Gir Forest National Park, State of Gujarat, India
***Panthera leo persica*, Appendix I**

The last lion habitat covers 1412 km². It has been the subject of enhanced protection since 1965. Today, the population exceeds 500 individuals. From October 2015 to June 2016, the "Lion Watching" would have attracted more than a million curious people. Visits are prohibited from mid-June to mid-September during the monsoon and reproduction season. The lion industry is a part of the economic development of the region but it is not exempt from excesses and adverse effects. The lion bands are followed by trackers and pushed by screaming and threatening with sticks towards car parks where the visitor's Jeeps rented by the Park are directed. Sometimes there is only a lioness and her cubs. The show begins, photos and selfies multiply. Everything has to be paid. Celebrities like the cricketer Ravindra Jadeja and his wife contributed recently via Instagram to this dangerous proximity to the lions. Bhikubhai Batawala, a member of a local NGO, confirms these uses. He said that within the sanctuary there are fake policemen and rangers who are staging encounters of tourists and lions.



Yet are these lions wild? No. They get used to human presence.

At the same time they are disturbed by forced displacement while they have a territorial instinct. On March 19th, April 10th and May 21st in full day light, 3 isolated people, including a child, were attacked in their sleep by one or more lions. "Habituation" is not the only disturbing factor that lies on relationship between lion and mankind. Govind Patel, former head of management of wildlife in the State of Gujarat, said that the ecosystem of Gir sanctuary cannot house and feed more than 270 lions and surplus lions are obliged to establish themselves outside of boundaries and so are in contact with human activities. The Indian Supreme Court ordered the transfer of some lions to other parts of the State or to other States to prevent an outbreak that would ultimately eliminate the lions of the Indian subcontinent and Asia.⁵⁹

EUROPE

FRANCE

May 3, 2016

Coutances, Manche Department, Normandy, France

Sentencing of the director of the International Circus to a € 1,741 fine and damages and interest. The young, 25 year-old man had exploited 2 lion cubs whose civil status was falsified and the terms of acquisition questionable. The two beasts were transferred to a specialized institution in Spain.⁶⁰



PUMAS, SNOW LEOPARDS AND LEOPARD CATS

AMERICA

BRAZIL

June 25, 2016
Sao Paulo, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Disfigured! Rescue of a puma (*Puma concolor*, Appendix I). He was captured and kept in a cage.⁶¹



ASIA

KIRGHIZISTAN

June 16, 2016
Ak-Suu District, Province of Issyk-Koul, Kirghizistan

Despite little resemblance between them, he claims he mistook the snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*, Appendix I) with a wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II). There are between 100 and 200 remaining leopards in the country. The 48-year-old man was arrested at the beginning of the year at a road check. The fresh snow leopard skin and his head were in the car. 500.000 soms (\$ 7400 US) in fine.²⁸



VIETNAM

April 7, 2016. Danang, South Central Coastal Region, Vietnam

Seizure of a newborn leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II).⁶²



April 14, 2016. Gia Lai Province, Vietnam.

Seizure of a leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II). She was allegedly bought on Facebook for 5 million dong (\$225 US).⁶³

facebook

May 10, 2016.

Hue, Thua Thien Province, Vietnam.

Seizure of a leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) put up for sale on Facebook for more than \$ 100 US.⁶⁴

Leopard cats prefer forest habitats close to water. They are solitary. They feed on lizards, rodents, birds, and sometimes fish.

VARIOUS SPECIES FELINES

AMERICA

BRAZIL

April 28, 2016

Asuncion, Capital District, Paraguay

Seizure of 5 animals skins in a restaurant: one puma skin (*Puma concolor*, Appendix I and II), one jaguar skin (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), 2 tiger cat skins (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I), and one caiman skin.⁶⁵

ASIA

INDIA

June 30, 2016

Amritsar District, State of Punjab, India

A guy in the town gardens was trying to sell a tiger skin and a leopard skin. When sworn agents from the SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) started to approach, he fled, without the skins.⁶⁶

Bears

AMERICA

CANADA

May 26, 2016

Edson, Alberta Province, Canada

He traveled 40 km each day to eat berries, hunt for small mooses and find a mate. But he was killed outright by 2 idiots from Fort McMurray and Edson who were arrested. "At their third year they are kicked out. It's like in humans — we have to go find our own apartment or place to live. In bears, they have to go find their own home range, which is usually outside the mother's home range where they grew up," recalls a specialist. Since 2006, except for self-defense, brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) hunting has been prohibited in Alberta.¹



One day before his death. He was aged 4 to 5.

Bears in Alberta have an enemy other than hunters. They are also chased from their territories by flames, smoke and ashes from forest fires. Starving, they moved close to Fort McMurray completely deserted, or almost, of its inhabitants yet full of waste and other food resources. Black bears are opportunists. Already 2 of them have been captured and transferred far away from the ghost town and 2 others have been voluntarily shot to death. After the 2011 fires near the Great Slave Lake in the North-West Territories, 40 bears had been too killed. They had gotten into the habit of rummaging in the trash cans, food storage and any other place their remarkable flair could lead them to find food.



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

May 2, 2016

Hillsboro, State of Missouri, United States of America

A brown bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) poached and skinned. According to the Wildlife Code of Missouri, bears should not be hunted unless he violates private property. In this case, a clearance is required. If the bear attacks a man, cattle or other domestic animals, he may be slaughtered without waiting for a permit. In this case, no evidence or testimony suggests that the shooter was in self-defense position.²



June 1, 2016

Young, State of Arizona, United States of America

Death warrant of an American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) by Arizona Game and Fish Department officers. He had bitten the buttocks of the sleeper through his sleeping bag. Arizona Game and Fish offers the following advice to hikers:

- Put all food, dirty grills, unwashed dishes, and food away safely.
- Keep a clean camp with food and waste far away from the tent and the sleeping area.
- Wash before sleeping. Bears have a smell seven times finer than the best bloodhounds and 100 times more than humans.



More information on www.azgfd.gov/urban-wildlife.³

CHINA

April 11, 2016

Xishuangbanna Prefecture, Province of Yunnan, China

Seizure of 8 bear paws and 6 teeth (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and porcupine entrails aboard a car coming from Laos. Arrest of the Chinese driver.⁴

June 8, 2016

Hulun Buir, Autonomous Region of Inner Mongolia, China

Sentencing to a fine of 40,000 yuans (\$ 5,456 US) and deportation of a Russian trafficker stopped by Chinese customs in November 2015 while he was trying to bring 7 brown bear paws (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) into China (see "On the Trail" n 11 p. 54). Bear paws sell for 10 times more in China than in Russia.⁵



KAZAKHSTAN

April 12, 2016

Makanchi, East Kazakhstan Region, Kazakhstan, border with China

He crossed the border on foot between Kazakhstan and China. The Kazakh, 45 years in age, came as a neighbor. In a trash bag, there were bear paws.⁶

LAOS

June 16, 2016

Vientiane, Laos

Kindhearted motorcyclists rescued a young female sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I). They convinced its owner not to sell her to a Chinese businessman. The bear was taken to the Wildlife Rescue Center in Laos, escorted by at least 20 motorbikes.



VIETNAM

June 8, 2016

Mong Cai, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam

A Chinese citizen hired a Vietnamese citizen for 500,000 dong (\$ 22 US) to transport 32 bear paws (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I and II) on his moped and cross the border between Vietnam and China. Arrested in Vietnam, he risks up to 500 million dong in fines, or \$ 24,000 US, and 7 years in prison.⁷

RUSSIA

April 30, 2016

Omsk, Siberian Federal District, Russia

The corpse (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) was found in a ditch. Its 4 paws were missing.⁸

May 26, 2016

Iakoutsk, Far Eastern Federal District, Russia

Seizure of brown bear paws (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II). They had been exchanged against fishing nets and hunting clothes. The Chinese citizen was stopped at the airport. Bears of central Russia are threatened by the force of Chinese attraction (see "On the Trail" n°11 p. 9).⁹

May 27, 2016

Vaigach Island, Nenetsia, Federal district North-western, Russia

One polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*, Appendix II) pelt exchanged for a tank full of gasoline in August of 2015. They were arrested. Will they be convicted? Around 10 to 15 skins would be poached each year on and around the island.



Hippopotamuses

Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, are listed under CITES Appendix II.

AFRICA

One hippopotamus, anglers, and high-powered weapons

May 3, 2016

Okavango River, East Kavango Region, Namibia

Hidden by a thick curtain of reeds, poachers shot from the north bank of the Okavango in Zambia at a hippopotamus splashing around on the south bank of the river in Namibia. Nine poachers, both local and foreign, had taken fire. They heard a burst, and rapid high caliber bullets flew threw the air. Immediately, witnesses could hear cries of agony coming from the hippopotamus hidden in the aquatic plants, lasting 10 minutes. This international affair was bordering on diplomatic accident. It took place in the middle of KAZA (the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area), which supports the immense hope of bringing together all the countries along Okavango and Zambezi Rivers to preserve wildlife and develop compatible agricultural, touristic and cultural activities.

In Namibia, local police and authorities from the capital, Windhoek, have said that they know nothing about the event, and have not received any reports of the poaching: "There is nothing in our records."

In French language it is said "move along, there is nothing to see here". Except for a dead hippopotamus which if recovered by poachers and accomplices has been stripped of its ivory teeth. "There are only a handful of hippos there," "Mowing them down in a brutal fashion is just wrong," "They have it all wrong," says a witness on condition of anonymity.¹

May 5, 2016

Busongola, Katavi Region, Tanzania

Acting on intelligence, the police found themselves nose to nose with 3 heavily armed men in the village. One of them was suspected to be a senior poacher. During the exchange of gunfire, one died. Another fled. 2 kg of hippopotamus meat, ammunition and automatic weapons were seized from the site.²



Western Region, Uganda

- **May 4, 2016, Kasese District.** Seizure of 49 kg of hippopotamus ivory. One arrested. The 40-year-old man has for a long time played an intermediary role with traffickers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.³

- **June 14, 2016. Bushenyi District.** Seizure of 50 kg of hippopotamus ivory. Three arrested. As elephants disappear, hippopotamus ivory is scoring as a substitute for elephant ivory.⁴

Hippopotamus fever

June 2016

- Zambia

The "river horses" are subject to a slaughter plan. The Zambian Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) puts first the fight against the spread of anthrax likely to spill over on farm livestock and other wildlife. NGOs including Born Free are of the opinion that this is a disguised and lucrative form of trophy hunting. Anthrax is an alibi. Shoot down 400 hippos per year for 5 years falls very bad when the species has been classified as vulnerable and when the global population declined by 20% in 10 years. Hippos are no more than 80,000 in southern Africa.

"The alluvial plains of the Luangwa, a tributary of the Zambezi, will become killing fields", says Born Free more especially as the slaughter of hippos is concomitant with the reopening of sport hunting of lions in the country.



A South African professional hunter poses in front of the carcass of one hippo killed in the fight against anthrax. Theo De Marillac bought the license to kill and then legally

sell the trophies. The hippopotamus ivory tusks sell for at least \$ 250 US per kilo.

Before the public outcry and protests right inside of the DNPW, the program was suspended. The situation remains tense. In the dry season, flow of the Luangwa would be insufficient to irrigate swamps and floodplains. Drought, more than anthrax, is the worst enemy of the hippopotamus.

- South Africa

The culling began in the Kruger Park. Amongst the 8000 individuals in the Park, 300 have already died of hunger. Despite heavy rains in March, the wetland grass is skim. The meat is now sold to Park staff. A regular slaughterhouse will soon distribute the meat to charities around the Park. The plan is to kill 159 hippos by the end of the year and 200 buffaloes.

There is a lot of information on the fair distribution of meat, nothing about the future of the worldwide marketable ivory : the hippopotamus is listed under CITES Appendix II and with few formalities, ivory teeth can legally cross borders.⁵

June 23, 2016

Maasai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

Arrest of 8 poachers. The gang came from Tanzania. They were butchering a hippopotamus and a waterbuck (*Kobus ellipsiprymnus*) when they were surrounded by county rangers.⁶

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*.

"On the Trail" n°13

The value of horn on the black market, according to media or official sources

Continent	Country	\$US/kg	Réf.
AFRICA	South Africa	14,000	15
ASIA	Hong Kong (China)	25,781	39
	China	300,000 (sales per gram)	5*

* See chapter Rhinoceroses and elephants

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

April 16, 2016

OI Pejeta Wildlife Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya

Poaching during the night of a 7 year old female black rhinoceros. Its horns were stolen. OI Pejeta lost 5 black rhinos in 6 months.¹

MOZAMBIQUE

May 2, 2016

Maputo International Airport, Maputo, Mozambique

Flight Q870 to Nairobi was unknowingly on the way to transport a war chest. The Vietnamese citizen was caught in the act. This is the 2nd large seizure in Maputo Airport this year (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 66): 11 white rhinoceros horns weighing 19.5 kg, 376 horn slices (2.8 kg) and 907 shavings from the horn slices cutting (1 kg).²



ZAMBIA

May 13, 2016

Lusaka, Lusaka Province, Zambia

Two air force members and one Namibian were arrested in a shopping center. Seizure of 2 horns (3.9 kg). The operation was commended in Zimbabwe where public and private anti-poaching forces are concerned about the growth of transborder wildlife trafficking in the Zambezi river basin.

About 10 days later, the pair of horns vanished from the vault where evidence is kept. The trial had been scheduled for June 27. An intelligence agent from the Zambia Wildlife Authority is suspected of having stolen them to destroy evidence and render impossible conviction of the suspects. This agent was released under bail for 100,000 kwachas (\$ 10,600 US).³

ZIMBABWE

April 11, 2016

Monts Matobo National Park, South Matabeleland Province, Zimbabwe

One 8-year-old female rhinoceros was put to death after a week of suffering. She had been discovered dying several days after the gunfire. She was hit in the paws. She was one of the central characters of a TV series in 2010. Her calf of 13 months has disappeared.⁴

June 11, 2016

Mazowe, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe

Poaching of a 37 year old female rhinoceros in a private reserve near Harare. She was killed by a single bullet to the heart during Saturday night. Her horns would not have been uprooted.⁵

June 28, 2016

Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe

220 kg of rhinoceros horn disappeared from government stocks. The weevils are not to blame (see "On the Trail" n°7, p.62). The director of National Parks, Edson Chidziya, was put on leave from his office for 60 days and is prohibited to interfere with the ongoing investigation. He was appointed in 2013.⁶



SOUTH AFRICA

April 1, 2016**Great Fish River Reserve, Grahamstown, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

Poaching of 3 rhinoceroses. Two died. The 3rd was injured. Poaching has intensified in the province. They were killed by bullets. Anesthetized arrows are used more so in the region.⁷

April 3, 2016**Bloemfontein Zoo, Free State Province, South Africa**

- 2 white rhinoceroses killed in the dead of night. Poachers shot 6 times and stole their horns.⁸

April 6, 2016**Carolina, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

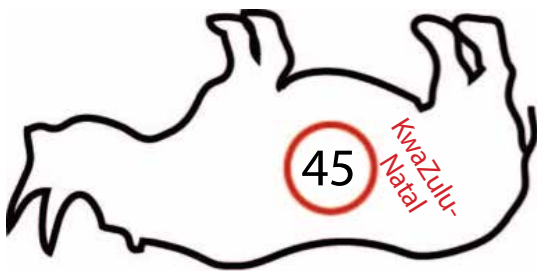
Five suspects, between the ages of 26 and 42, are appearing in court for the possession of rhinoceros horn. An undercover agent in the Hawks met with the suspects who showed him the horn. With a value of 60,000 rands (\$ 4,172 US), it was seized as well as one car.⁹

April 8, 2016**Kimberley, Northern Cape Province, South Africa**

Fruitless poaching of a white rhino. The horns were still on the rotting carcass. Death occurred one week beforehand.¹⁰

April 20, 2016**Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

Poaching of 3 white rhinoceroses. -45 in KwaZulu-Natal since the beginning of the year.¹¹

**April 21, 2016****Mkhuhlu, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Two vehicles were along the road side. They were heading towards Kruger National Park. In the first was a firearm wrapped in clothing along with a silencer, ammunition, a knife, and an ax. In the second, which belongs to a soldier, was his service weapon.

The 4 suspects were arrested. Three, including the soldier, were released on bail. The 4th was already involved in a similar case and will remain in prison until trial.¹²

**April 21, 2016****Thabazimbi, Province of Limpopo, South Africa**

Auctions open. Shopping time. The Thaba Tholo ranch covers 360 km². The Thaba Tholo livestock made up of rhinos, caracals, lions, hyenas, selected leopards, bred and genetically enhanced by translocated specimens. Rhino auctioning took place this year.

Prices:

1 female white rhino pregnant and followed by a young one = 750,000 rands (\$ 50,100 US).

1 female rhino pregnant and with a 68.6 cm horn = 670,000 rands (\$ 44,800 US)

Average price of a pregnant female rhino = 535,000 rands (\$ 35,700 US)

Average price of a young male = 112,500 rands (\$ 7500 US)

Next sale on 15 and 16 September.¹³

April 22, 2016**Tam Safaris Game Reserve, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

Poaching of a female white rhinoceros. She was dehorned. Her female calf, 3 months and 141 kg, was found alive next to its mother. This is the 2nd orphan found in one month. 400,000 rands (\$ 25,363US) for any key information.¹⁴

**April 25, 2016****Vanderbijlpark, Province of Gauteng, South Africa**

The suspects aged 27 to 32 were caught red handed with 25 kg of horn in a sports bag. Value on the local market, \$ 14,000 US/kg. Two of them were released under a modest bail of \$ 335 US each.¹⁵



April 26, 2016

Sabie Game Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa



Seizure of a hunting rifle, ammunition and one car without a license plate. Two arrested. The International Anti-Poaching Foundation (IAPF)/Sabie Game Park and Kruger National Park have worked together to follow and apprehend 2 criminals. Jurg, a tracking dog helped with the hunt. The two men are accused of poaching, illegal border crossing (Mozambique/South Africa) with the intention to commit a crime, and illegal possession of a firearm and ammunitions.¹⁶

May 1, 2016

Tshukudu Private Game Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa

It is the first tragedy for the reserve, its hosts, leaders and guardians. The rhino suffered from a moonless night and was not recovered before the following morning. He had previously and voluntarily been dehorned. The poacher's persevered in cutting the stumps.¹⁷

May 3, 2016

Madadeni, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa



For their first patrol, two novice military officers have been very lucky. They identified and followed 2 suspicious looking armed men and found 2 horns in their bag. The 2 suspects might also have been involved in the theft of horns seized from the inside of a strong room near Ladysmith.¹⁸

May 5, 2016

Stilfontein, North-West Province, South Africa

Arrest of 5 poachers suspected of killing 2 rhinoceroses in April in a reserve in Hartbeesfontein.¹⁹

May 7, 2016

Wintershoek Game Reserve, Northern Cape Province, South Africa

Poaching of a male rhinoceros and theft of his horns. They were chopped off with a knife.²⁰

- 6 in the province in 2 months

"For the past 3 years that rhino poaching has been occurring in the province, no arrests have taken place," said the owner of the Reserve.



May 10, 2016

Klaserie Nature Reserve, Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Guided by echoes of gunfire, park rangers quickly arrived on the crime scene in the middle of the afternoon on Tuesday, and got a hold of the binational trio, including one South African and 2 Mozambicans, their rounds of ammunition, one undeclared fire arm and one horn.²¹



May 5, 2016

Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

21 years and six months in prison for 2 men. Six months for trespassing in Kruger Park, 10 years for illegal possession of a weapon, 1 year for the illegal possession of ammunition and 10 for the possession of a weapon with the intent to commit a crime. Sentences run concurrently.²²



May 21, 2016

Marakele National Park, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Is it possible that with a .458 caliber gun, a silencer, 8 rounds of ammunition, 2 knives and 8 cellphones, the 5 suspects arrested in the night between Saturday to Sunday aboard 2 vehicles heading to the National Park could have had any project other than to poach rhinoceroses?²³



May 25, 2016

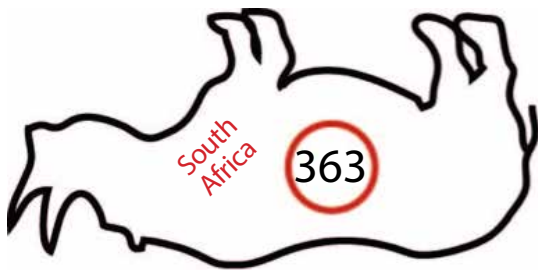
Kruger National Park, South Africa

Escalating violence has been confirmed. Helicopters have proven to be the best defense for rhinoceroses. In this case, it succeeds to land smoothly. The team was safe. The engine was in the poachers' line of sight. Four of them were arrested. Seizure of 3 firearms, ammunition and poaching equipment. At the beginning of the year in Tanzania, Roger Gower lost his life while in these same circumstances (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 80).²⁴

May 26, 2016

Rietvlei Nature Reserve, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Two rhinoceroses poached, including one pregnant female. -363 rhinoceros from January to April 2016 in South Africa, versus -404 in 2015 in the same period. The environmental minister calls that "progress". There is only one known rhinoceros left near Pretoria. The preventative removal of its horn has just been announced loud and clear. The reserve management has nicely stated that "in one night, we therefore lost three rhino, whereas only two rhino will be sent off to be statistics in this horrible war."²⁵



June 2, 2016

Pongola, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Sentencing of Musa Sibiyi, 36 years old, to 10 years in prison for possession of a firearm and ammunition without a permit, and to 2 years for violation of property. The sentences will be served concurrently. His arrest dates back to October 2015. He had binoculars, an ax, and a hacksaw, all equipment typical of a black and white rhinoceros killer.²⁶



REPEATED OFFENSE

June 4, 2016

Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

The traffic agent from Mkhuhlu was released on bail for poaching in Kruger National Park in October 2015. His freedom is conditional. He doesn't have the right to enter any wildlife reserve or any part of Kruger Park, yet he was arrested at an outpost of the Park. He was let in with an access card lent by a ranger also suspected of poaching. Appearing before the same Court in Skukuza for identity fraud and conspiracy to commit a crime, his request for release on bail has been refused this time.²⁷

June 6, 2016

Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Severely injured in the lung. The prognosis isn't good.²⁸



June 7, 2016

Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

No no! He went to the edge of the Kruger Park to pick medicinal herbs to heal the children. Not finding anything good, he scaled the fence to continue his search inside of the Park. When night fell, he went to sleep in safety at a treetop. The next day, he climbed back down and all of a sudden was targeted by Park rangers. "I wasn't carrying a weapon," "I only have a small pickaxe to uproot plants." With that, the 33-year-old man pled not guilty for rhinoceros poaching and illegal possession of a firearm and ammunition.²⁹

June 9, 2016

Rustenburg, North West Province, South Africa

A police agent released on a bail of 1000 rands (\$ 67 US) after being arrested for attempting to sell a rhinoceros horn. His 5 accomplices released on bail of 2000 rands (\$ 126 US).³⁰

June 16, 2016

Bela-Bela Private Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Violence gets worse and worse. The Protrack Anti-poaching team (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 63), which was patrolling in the buffer zone of the Bela-Bela Reserve, was ambushed at midnight. Seven poachers drew on one of the rangers, seriously injuring him in the leg. They tied up the 2 others with metal wires. Two suspects stayed behind to guard them. The others left to hunt rhinoceroses. They killed one 2 km away from the first crime scene. The injured ranger died at the scene. The 2 others succeeded in freeing themselves in the early morning. This is the first time that Protrack has lost a man. He was 20 years old. No one has been arrested.³¹



Grahamstown, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

June 17, 2016

When they were arrested at 10 pm in a motel, they were in possession of a 72 cm horn, a hypodermic rifle, sedative drugs, rations and other camping equipment, several cell phones and 2 rental cars. Everybody has reason to believe that it was them who, several hours beforehand, had killed a venerable and peaceful rhinoceros, and left it to die in a pool of blood in Buckland's Private Reserve. The 3 suspects, one South African and 2 Zimbabweans, were 37, 38 and 40 years old. A spokesperson for the police of the province is not excluding the possibility that they are involved in at least 10 other poaching cases in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Mpumalanga provinces.³²

June 21, 2016

Polokwane Game Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa

One mother and her son poached to the death and dehorned. What's more, the mother was butchered with a part of her intestines and eyes removed. The tail of the infant was cut and skin patches were taken. Police are investigating but not making much headway. To counter rumors, the president of the traditional healers of Limpopo has condemned poaching and mutilation. "Doctor" Sylvester Hlati said that traditional healers do not use parts that were removed in such a brutal way. "We have an agreement and arrangement with the Department of Environmental Affairs, as well as the Kruger National Park that when we do need things for our practice such as skin or bones, we get permission from authorities, which allows us to get what we need from animals that are already dead."³³



June 22, 2016

Rhino and Lion Nature Reserve Krugersdorp, Gauteng Province, South Africa

They have caught him when off his guard. The young orphan of 18 months was adopted by the Reserve 16 months ago when its mother was poached to death. He was comfortable with humans and grateful, so to speak. In the early morning, poachers called from the other side of the closure. He came to them. They started shooting and left with his horns.³⁴

June 2016

Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Kruger Park personnel are prey to suspicion and treason.

- June 8. Suspension of 2 rangers attached to a special operations unit.

- June 8. Ranger arrested in Satara.

- June 9. Technical services director arrested.



- June 18. Two rangers arrested. Interrogation at the police station in Skukuza. They were in possession of 4 horns worth \$127.000 US. The poaching would have happened 2 days earlier.

- June 21. Loyal rangers are chasing 3 poaching rangers. One of the latter was injured. Another drowned in the Nsikazi River. The 3rd escaped.³⁵



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NAMIBIA

June 6, 2016

Namibia

Here we go again! The Ministry of Environment and Tourism has published invitations to tender for the hunting of 3 black rhinos. These males are too old to reproduce. These individuals, coming of age, became territorially aggressive and represent a physical threat for young males, according to the president of the Namibia Professional Hunting Association. The director of the Namibia Nature Foundation adds: "hunting the 3 males is justified from an economic and ecological sense." The Duke of Cambridge does not say better. The funds are financing conservation actions of wildlife and its habitats. Poaching, explains the defenders of the practice, puts tremendous pressure on the department and there is a growing need for financial resources to combat it.

Written bids are expected until the end of June.

Last year, an American hunter, Cory Knowlton had acquired the right to hunt a black rhino for \$ 350,000 US with the help of several trackers and professional hunters recruited by safari operators duly licensed by the Ministry (see "On the Trail" n°9 p. 63).³⁶

June 15, 2016

Windhoek, Region of Khomas, Namibia

Seizure of 4 horns. Two Namibians arrested. Released on a bail of \$ 50,000 Namibians (\$ 3,170 US) for each of the numerous conditions.

They have to surrender their passports, promising not to ask for new ones until the end of the trial and they have to demonstrate their presence at the police station 3 times week. Additionally, Namwandi, 32, known under the name of Mox, has been asked not to leave Windhoek District. Shaalukeni, 32, has been asked not to leave Kunene, Omusati, Oshana, and Ohangwena Regions without advising police.³⁷



From March to June, 2016

Etosha National Park, Kunene Region, Namibia

Minus 81 rhinos since the beginning of the year, most of them lost in Etosha or around there. Eight suspects have been arrested. In Zambia, genetic analysis on one horn seizure proves that the rhino came from Etosha Park.

Despite corporatist protest, park personnel and certain services of the Ministry of the Environment and Tourism were subject to imposed transfer. The Mister call this a reshuffle.³⁸



ASIA

CHINA

May 14, 2016

Hong Kong International Airport, Hong Kong, China

Seizure of 10 kg of horn declared as “resin crafts”, worth 2 million HK\$ (\$ 257,811 US, or \$ 25,781 US/kg). One 61-year-old man arrested. In waiting for the results of the investigation, he was released on bail for which the value has not been released.³⁹

June 19, 2016

Beijing, China

Beijing Airport employee sentenced in appeal to 6 years in prison and a fine of 60,000 yuans (\$ 9,114 US) for attempting to fraudulently smuggle a rhinoceros horn into China. The suitcase that contained the offending material in question departed from the airport by the circuit reserved for employees. The owners of the suitcase, a so-called businesswoman from China but staying in Johannesburg and her associate were sentenced to 11 and 6.5 years in prison, with fines of 110,000 yuans (\$ 16,500 US) and 60,000 yuans (\$ 9,114 US).⁴⁰



INDIA

April 10, 2016

Brahmaputra Chapari, State of Assam, India

Eight poachers arrested between the ages of 21 and 37.⁴²

April 10, 2016

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

Poaching shooting of a female 2 days before the visit of Kate and William, the princely couple of the United Kingdom. She was dying and unrecoverable. The horn was cut and skull fractured. It takes a minute or less. The experienced forensic veterinarian said that most of the time, when the horn is cut, there is a skull fracture. “This means that the rhino’s final hours are spent in such excruciating pain that you and I cannot even begin to comprehend.”⁴¹



April 13, 2016

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

Hours after the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, a rhinoceros reached by 105 bullets of the type Kalashnikov had been found dead. The Duke of Cambridge, close to the WWF said recently that, “If an endangered animal was old or infertile it was acceptable to kill it for cash as long as the fee went back into conservation work.”⁴³

April 16, 2016

Jorhat District, State of Assam, India

Arrest of 3 poachers, including one Railway Protection Force agent, on the road between Mariani and Jorhat. Seizure of a one-kilogram horn from a car and 3 cell phones.⁴⁴

May 2, 2016

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

Forest guards and poachers hand in hand. The guards didn’t report a rhinoceros poaching in November 2015 and buried the carcass 100 meters from their camp. As proof, the carcass –without its horn- is being exhumed. Seven arrested: 4 forest guards and 3 villagers. Among the rangers, Mahat Chandra Talukdar was in charge of Agoratoli and Bagori, 2 important sections of the Park from 1989 to 1993. During this period, 184 rhinoceroses were poached in both sections.⁴⁵

May 2, 2016

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

Poaching of one male. He was dehorned. It was in a buffer zone around the Park. Seven rhinoceroses have been killed in and around Kaziranga since the beginning of 2016. A total of 16 were killed in 2015.⁴⁶



May 6, 2016

Manas National Park, State of Assam, India

Let us be pessimistic: this is the 9th poaching in the Park since 2011. Let us be optimistic: it is the 1st poaching in the Park in the past 2 years. Manas is home to around 30 rhinoceroses. The population in the National Park is in danger of going extinct there within the next 15 to 30 years. The rhinoceros was shot in the neighborhood of the main ranger's camp. The first local extinction due to an increase in poaching happened in 1992. The rhinoceroses then rose from the ashes thanks to the transfer of several individuals from Kaziranga. Horn smuggling is suspected to fund activities of rebel groups.⁴⁷

May 8, 2016

Lakhimpur District, State of Assam, India

Arrest at daybreak of 4 poachers. They were being pursued for having killed a rhinoceros in 2015. Seizure of a hunting rifle and a silencer.⁴⁸

May 22, 2016

Burachapori Wildlife Sanctuary, State of Assam, India

One female is dead. Her horn is still attached. Cause of death unknown. She just came with her baby to undergo a translocation from Kaziranga National Park. Change of air, new diet, poisoning, an aborted horn theft attempt, all are viable hypotheses. Rhino Vision 2020, the translocation program, is under the authority of the WWF. Kaziranga National Park is considered as a reservoir, which can replenish rhinoceros populations in other parks in Assam. According to the IUCN, this shouldn't pose any problems as long as the population in Kaziranga keeps increasing, and as long as no more than 30 to 30 animals are transferred out each year. It remains that the rhinos often support badly these displacements that furthermore are likely to create new hotbeds for poaching. Burachapori and Kaziranga are 60 km apart.⁴⁹

May 28, 2016

Kaziranga National Park, Assam State, India

Shooting death of a poacher. Seizure of one .303 rifle and ammunition. Two other poachers escaped.⁵⁰



Mrs Minister ensnared

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

June 2016

June 7, 2016. The horns of naturally dead rhinos according to the forensic veterinarians must be carefully stored in vaults. Noticing that some of these horns are missing, the new Assam's Forest Minister states that an inquiry will soon be launched. This may risk putting into question the practical sense of storage or even the honesty of some forest agents⁵¹

The same day, Mrs Brahma, Minister for the Forests for now a week, in company of the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Water Resources and the chiefs of police from the 4 districts surrounding the park made an official visit. The Minister at the head of the popular Front of Bodoland is part of a governmental coalition led by the BJP (Bhatatiya Janata Parti) that has made ending rhino poaching in the State of Assam a major electoral issue. On the same day as this visit, a rhino was poached around 3:30 pm somewhere in the 430 km² of the Park. Later it was known to have happened in the Agoratoli sector. Villagers heard the gunshots but rangers did everything they could all afternoon and night to hush up the case and hide the body by burying it after covering it with salt and also, it is said, chemicals. Informed via separate channels of the poaching, the 9th this year, the minister demanded to be taken to the crime scene while the de-horned carcass was still visible. "I don't know why the incident was not reported to me. The forest officials should have told me. As it was still daytime (the time of the incident), I could have activated NGOs and community people and we could have tried to nab the poachers."

The next day, June 8, Mrs Minister could only promise what had already been promised by her predecessors such as to provide quality weapons and extra ammunition to the forest guards in the Park.

On June 14, one of the alleged poachers, Megha Bora, is arrested at night at one of his parents' home where he was hiding. He had with him 2 large caliber weapons.

On June 16, Mrs Brahma announces that Mister Muffaker Ali, the Park director, is suspended from office. This decision was made with the support of the Prime Minister of the State of Assam.

On June 20, Mrs Brahma takes a step back from initial electoral promises and admits "It is impossible end poaching completely because their network is very big".⁵²

June 10, 2016

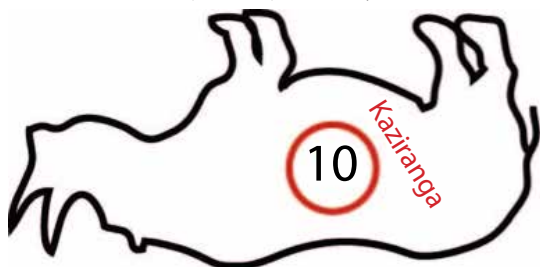
Jakhalabandha, State of Assam, India

Arrest of 2 women, 45 and 50 years old, who were accomplices to a fugitive poacher, Hemsing Kramsa. They got off a bus, they had large caliber ammunition on them and the equivalent of \$ 37,000 US in their clothes.⁵³

June 18, 2016

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

Poaching of a female, theft of its horn
-10 since the beginning of the year.⁵⁴



June 27, 2016

Orang National Park, State of Assam, India

A first for the year in "mini-Kaziranga" park. Guards heard the sound of a rifle muffled by a silencer. The body was found 3 days later. Three arrests. Among them, the brother of one Park employee. A fourth one is wanted. One horn, weapons and ammunition have been seized. The last instance of rhinoceros poaching was in 2014. Orang is on the northern shore of Brahmapoutre, 150 km from Kaziranga.⁵⁵

June 29, 2016

Border of India and Nepal

Seizure of a rhinoceros horn. Estimated value: \$ 27,000 US. One man arrested. He said that he came from West Bengal. He was headed to Nepal.⁵⁶

INDONESIA

April 6, 2016

West Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Death of a Sumatran rhinoceros (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, Appendix I). There is still a dozen or so in the province and on the entire island of Borneo. The cause of death is not clear. Perhaps an infection after having been caught in a snare.⁵⁷

MALAYSIA

April 10, 2016

Johor Bahru, State of Johor, Malaysia

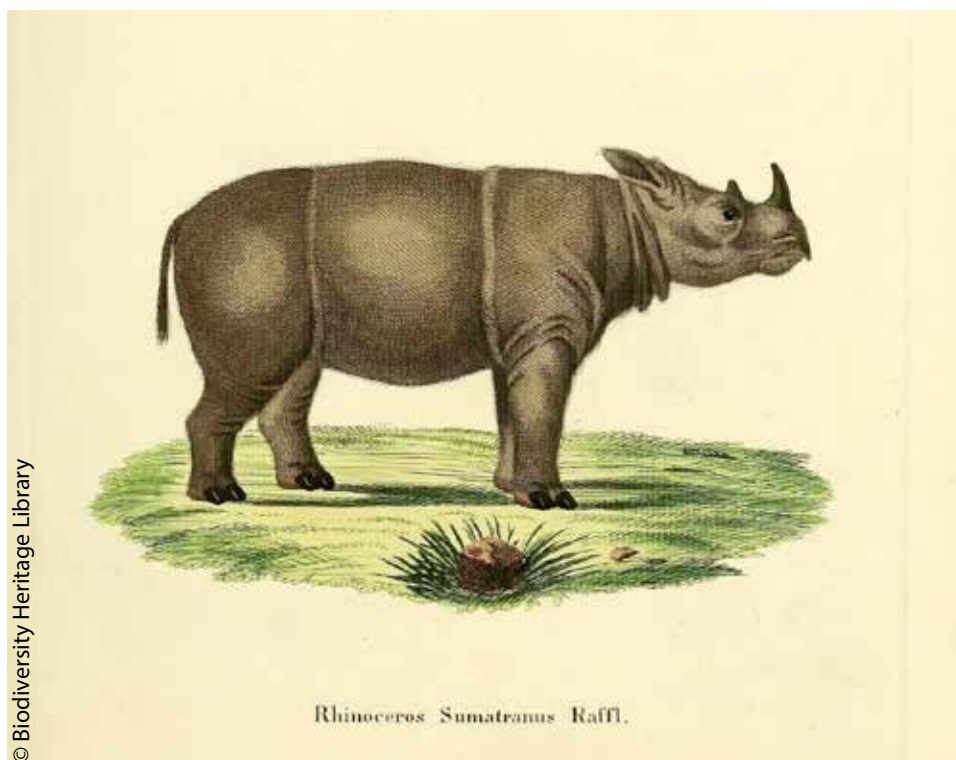
The former director of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks was accused stealing a rhinoceros horn in the Royal Museum (see "On the Trail" n°11, p.63). Prosecutors have now withdrawn their charges. The fine, equivalent to \$ 1,214 US, has been refunded. "In this case, it had been my job to move the horn and put it elsewhere." "There was a misunderstanding," explained Yusoff Shariff, who has now been transferred to Kuala Lumpur.⁵⁸

NEPAL

April 24, 2016

Kailali District, Far-Western Development Region, Nepal

It's a big one; 48.26 cm long and 33cm diameter at its base. It came from India. The Far Western regional investigation team worked with the Wildlife Animals Protection Society of India.⁵⁹



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Rhinoceros Sumatranus Raffl.

June 28, 2016

Chitwan District, Central Development Region, Nepal

Sentencing of Rajkumar Chepang already mentioned twice in "On the Trail" (n° 3, p. 50 et n° 8, p. 64) to 15 years in prison.⁶⁰



EUROPE

April 4 and 5, 2016

Birmingham, England, UK

Sentence of imprisonment for theft and attempted theft in organised group of rhino horns and Chinese antiques in UK museums and auction houses for 13 members of an Irish gang called the Rathkeale Rovers (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 72) after the



name of a town in Limerick County. The Rathkeale Rovers are composed of fathers, sons, cousins, men and women without fixed abodes, with multiple homonyms family names like Slattery, Hegarty, Flynn, O'Brien or Sheridan. At least 3 members of the gang have already been convicted in the US for rhino horn trafficking. The Rathkeale are also strongly suspected of stealing horns in several European museums. After the arrests and during the trial, they often put forward depression problems incompatible with jail with the support of united and bereaved families. One member of the Rathkeale Rovers, Robert Gilbert-Smith, has already been sentenced April 27, 2015 to 15 months' imprisonment. A Chinese accomplice helping to smuggle objects acquired by fraudulent means has also been sentenced to jail.



© Durham Police/PA Wire

Top from left to right : Paul Pammen (5 years and 6 months), Donald Chi Chong Wong (5 years and 6 months), Richard Sheridan (5 years and 6 months), Robert-Gilbert Smith (15 month), Ashley Dad (5 years and 3 months), John "Kerry" O'Brien (6 years and 6 months), Terrence McNamara (4 years).

Bottom from left to right : Richard «Kerry» O'Brien (5 years and 6 months), Patrick Clarke (5 years and 6 months), - Daniel «Turkey» O'Brien (6 years 8 months), Danny Flynn (4 years), John «Cash» O'Brien (5 years and 3 month), Michael Hegarty (6 years and 6 months), Alan Clarke (5 years and 6 months).



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Rhinos and elephants

AFRICA

ZIMBABWE – SOUTH AFRICA

Two disturbing jurisprudences !

Zimbabwe, April 21, 2016

Two women had been arrested in December 2015. In the trunk of the car, police, who intervened thanks to anonymous information, found 25.9 kg of ivory. The lawyer referred the High Court and called for the investigation to be suspended on the grounds that the informant's identity was not revealed, despite repeated requests, and that the client's right to information under article 62 of the Constitution was not respected. Pending the decision of the High Court, the trial of the 2 defendants has been suspended. To be continued!¹



South Africa, June 28, 2016.

Two of the defendants in the Hugo Ras scandal, who are charged with the illegal hunting of 24 rhinos in organized gang, or to have partaken in such and held, transported and sold the horns, have presented on the day before the collective trial a request before the Constitutional Court. The 2 plaintiffs consider that out of the 300 charges of their indictment, 103 are unconstitutional, since the moratorium on transport and sale of horns has been judged illegal by the Supreme Court of Appeals in May 2016. The Minister of the Environment for her part has also seized the Constitutional court and requested the Court of Appeals decision be overturned. According to the Minister, the moratorium stays in force until the Constitutional court has not rendered its decision, which could not be before several months. This judicial mix-up is going to postpone the trial of the Ras gang and could lead to him being let out on bail. Hugo Ras is the only one of the 10 accused to remain in detention since the arrest in 2014 of this white collar gang made up of ranch owners, their wives, a veterinarian, a lawyer and a pilot, who by their collusion, their relations and connections with hunters around the world and buyers in Asia were able to profit with cynicism, cruelty, inventiveness and cupidity of this crazy horn business. OSCAP (Outraged South African Citizens Against Poaching) points out that this procedure may have strong implications on all prosecutions for rhino poaching.² See "On the Trail" n° 6 p 67, n° 7 p 71, n° 10 p. 47.



AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

May 9, 2016

Minneapolis, State of Minnesota, United States of America

The well respected university professor at Saint Cloud University, now ex-professor, who purchased an antique cup made from a rhino horn at Christie's in Paris and is an international trafficker selling via the Internet, otherwise also a specialist of the French writer Jean-Paul Sartre (see "On the trail" n° 8 p. 66) was sentenced to a \$ 500,000 US fine, 3 years parole and 150 hours of community work. Zheng, 43 years old, illegally imported to the US and exported over one million US\$ worth of ivory and rhino horn antiques.³



June 22, 2016

New York, State of New York, United States of America

Sentencing of Joseph Chait, aged 38, prestigious auctioneer of Beverly Hills, to one year and a day in prison and a fine of \$ 10,000 US for having organized the trafficking of ivory, coral and rhino horn objects, declared as bone, wood and plastic, to China (see "On the Trail" n° 12 p. 90). At his release from prison, he will be on probation for 3 years.⁴



ASIA

CHINA

April 8, 2016

Guangzhou, Province of Guangdong, China

Seizure in 2 shops in the Hualin International palace of elephant ivory, mammoth ivory and fake ivory, 6 pieces of rhino horns and hornbills helmets (*Rhinoplax vigil*, Appendix I). DNA analysis is in progress for the rhino horns. They could be fake. One arrest.⁵

Destructions

AFRICA

April 19, 2016

Yaoundé, Central Region, Cameroon

Destruction of 2000 tusks (3510 kg), and 1753 pieces of carved ivory (2613 kg) that had been seized from poachers and traffickers. Samantha Power, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations was present for the incineration ordered by the President of the Cameroon Republic.

"This event along with the presence of international dignitaries shows the willingness of the international community to make a common effort with Cameroon to fight against poaching" according to the presidency.

After these open air burnings it is necessary that the residues and unburned materials be carefully gathered by the competent services and subjected to definite disposal to avoid the recovery, processing and marketing of what is left behind.¹



April 30, 2016

Kenya

105 t of ivory and 1.35 t of rhino horns incinerated. The presence of Chinese officials was saluted with a certain amount of mockery. 90% of arrests for trafficking in ivory at the Nairobi airport are carried out on Chinese citizens. Kenya has lost 466 elephants in 2 years to the poaching battle fields according to official statistics. Tusks weighing more than 50 kg were removed from the brazier to be exhibited in a future museum. Regarding theft and corruption, the safety conditions of these 7 tons inherited from a closed era has not been specified. Nowadays the average tusks put on the black market weigh less than 5 kg.

Several tusks were spontaneously turned over to the KWS by the Finland Embassy and some other anonymous holders. Local value of the burned ivory is of \$ 150 million US, that is \$ 1428 US/kg. Skins and sandalwood were used at the base of the fire under the ivory. Several m³ of kerosene and fuel were needed to start the fire and keep it blazing. Ivory is not a natural combustile. Fragments and residues, retrievable and proper for sale, polluted the heaps of ashes.²



June 12, 2016

South Sudan

Destruction by incineration of more than 5 tons of ivory and rhinoceros horns following a governmental order. It is the first operation of this kind in the country.⁴

April 14, 2016

Port Dickson, State of Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

Destruction by crushing and industrial incineration of 9.5 tons of illegal ivory. Value: 20.05 million US\$, i.e. \$ 2110 US/kg. Genetic tests prove that the tusks seized in ports and airports came from Gabon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia, Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan, in other words from the whole African continent.⁵

May 23, 2016

Banda Aceh, Province of Aceh, Indonesia

The tigers are burning. They were stuffed. In the bonfire there were skins, ivory, pieces of leopard and sun bears. Dirty money and distasteful luxuries gone up in smoke.⁶



June 13, 2016

Tuas, Singapore

Destruction by crushing and industrial burning of 7900 kg ivory seized by State services in 2014 and 2015. This is composed mainly of 2700 tusks or tusk sections. Price per kilo: \$ 1215 US/kg. The sum of the destroyed ivory comes from 4 major seizures coming from Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo and destined to Laos and Vietnam. Each of the 4 freight forwarders were sentenced to pay a 5000 Singapore dollar fine (\$ 3700 US) for failure to exercise due diligence to ensure shipment does not contain contraband.⁷



June 29, 2016

Tsing Yi, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China Incineration.

The chemical waste incinerator has accomplished its 20th and last batch of destruction of illegal ivory. Since May 2014, 28 tons have been destroyed. The advantage of this radical solution is that the residues of the combustion are not recoverable, identifiable or sortable. The Minister of Agriculture, Fishing and the Protection of the Environment is pleased: in 2015 only 1.6 tons of ivory was seized, versus 8 tons in 2013.⁸



April 30, 2016. Nairobi, Kenya Press release from the Minister of the Environment, Energy and the Sea

Ségolène Royal announces the prohibition of any ivory trade in the French territory

Saturday April 30th in Nairobi, Ségolène Royal participates in the greatest ceremony of ivory destruction organized by the President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, in the presence of the Presidents of Gabon and Uganda.

At this occasion, responding to the requests of African States who are struggling against elephant poaching, Ségolène Royal announces that she intends to ban all ivory trading on French territory, unless exceptional derogations, and that she will bring this measure to the European level.

This measure complements the plans already put in place by Ségolène Royal in the fight against poaching and trafficking of endangered species:

- Immediate suspension of certificates issued for the export of raw ivory in France.

- Calling to the other member states of the European Union to in turn, prohibit the exports of raw ivory, as has already been done in Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

- Enhanced cooperation between the services of the Environmental Ministry and Customs, and relaunching of the interministerial cooperation plan, to improve the synergy between services and to fight against fraud more effectively, particularly on borders.

Finally, the Law for the recovery of biodiversity, nature and landscapes strengthens the sanctions provided for cases of protected species trafficking (elephants, rhinoceroses, tigers, varieties of tropical wood, etc...): fines incurred in the case of a simple offense will be increased tenfold and rise from 15,000 to 150,000 euros. They will be multiplied by five in cases of organized gang trafficking, increasing from 150,000 to 750,000 euros.³

Elephants

EASTERN AFRICA

The African elephant, *Loxodonta africana*, is listed in CITES Appendix I, except populations from South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe which are in Appendix II. The Asian elephant, *Elephas maximus*, is listed in Appendix I.

"On the Trail" n°13 Black market raw ivory quotation from media or official sources

Continent	Country	\$US/kg	Ref.
Africa	Malawi	1,917	20
		1,946	22
	Uganda	3,000	28
	Tanzania	1,650	38
	Benin	588	60
	Kenya	1,428	2*
Asia	Hong Kong (China)	1,287	86
	India	370	95
	Indonesia	1,460	100
	Malaysia	2,110	5*
	Singapore	1,215	7*
Europe	Spain	300	110

* cf. chapter Destruction

TANZANIA AND KENYA

May and June 2016 The gang leaders deny being gang leaders



-Trial for Mrs. Yang, 66 years old, proclaimed "the Queen of Ivory" (cf. "On the Trail" n°11, p.71) and accused of having trafficked between 2000 and 2014 at least 700 tusks with the complicity of 2 Tanzanian businessmen was supposed to begin May 9. It was once more postponed on request from the General attorney who wishes added information. Mrs. Yang denies any implication in the trafficking. She has been in pre-trial detention for a year.¹

-Similarly, Feisal Mohammed's trial is sinking in procedures (cf. "On the Trail" n°5 p. 90, n°6 p. 81, n°7 p. 78 et p. 87, n°8 p.79, n°10 p. 59, n°12, p. 78). Police and witnesses accuse him of being a pillar in the case of the Tudor garage where 413 tusks and tusk sections had been uncovered in 2014. All his accomplices were released on bail. He remains in prison. He claims he has never seen a tusk in his life. "The first time I ever saw one was in the KWS offices during the trial investigations." It will be hard to convince the judges. To be followed!²



KENYA

Beginning April, 2016

Kenya

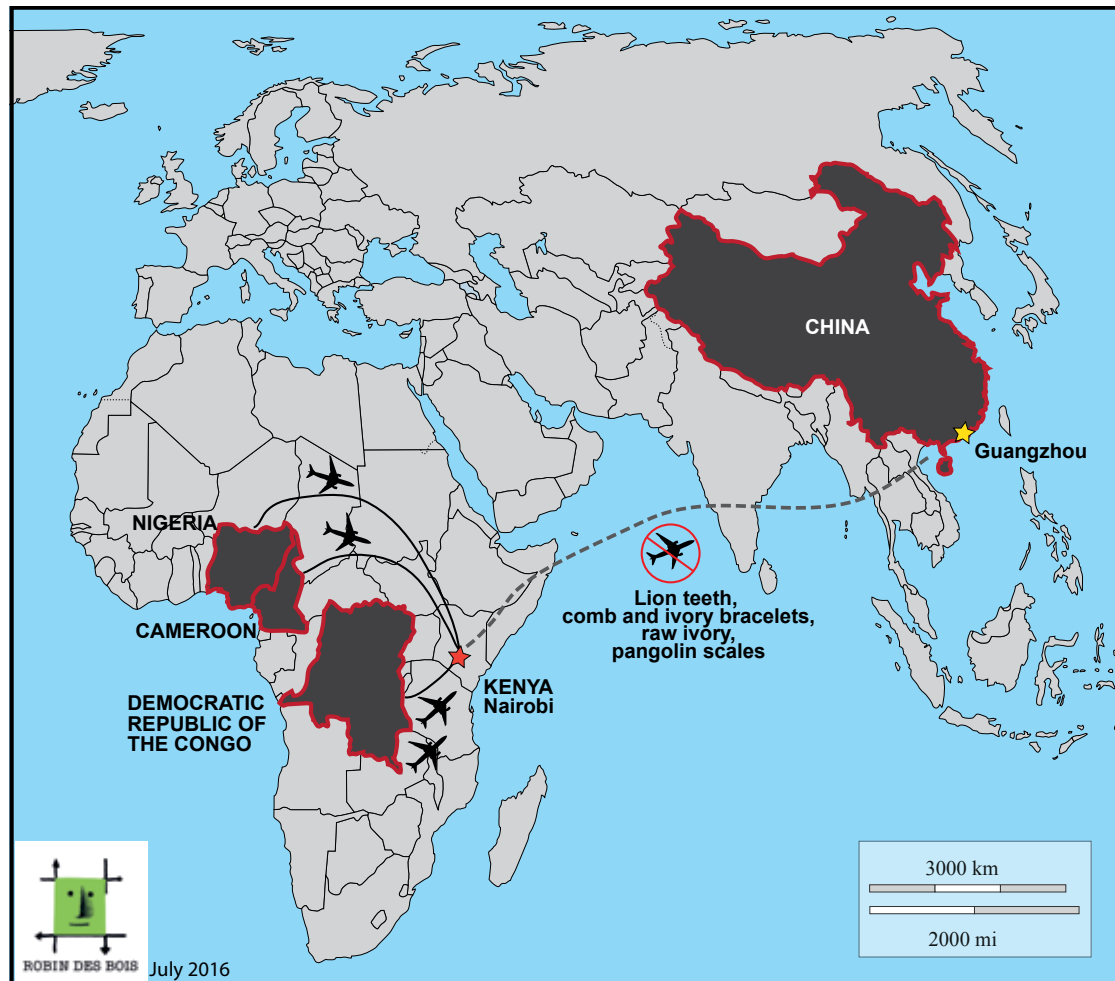
-Narok County. Conviction of Wilson Kiyayooni, sentenced to a fine worth 40 million shillings (\$ 398,834 US) or in case of non-payment to a life prison sentence for illegal possession of a 3 kg tusk. At the time of the crime he was in the company of a second person, under age, whom the judge of the Narok Court acquitted.



-Laikipia County. Conviction of James Aoi Lokigen to a 3 million shillings (\$ 30,000 US) fine or in case of non-payment to a 2 year prison term and another fine worth Sh 20 million (\$ 200,000 US) or in case of non-payment to a life-time prison sentence for having sold a government trophy.⁶



Flight 634 Nairobi - Guangzhou From 3 to 18 April 2016



Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Kenya

- **April 3, 2016.** Seizure of lion teeth (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II) mounted in a necklace and ivory bracelets. The contraband, estimated to be worth Sh 260,000 (\$ 2,590 US) was concealed in aluminum foil and condoms. Three Chinese citizens arrested, coming from Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, heading towards Guangzhou, China.³

- **April 4, 2016.** Seizure of the possessions of 2 Chinese citizens, including one ivory bracelet from one and 2 raw ivory pieces, one ivory bracelet, one ivory comb (total weight of 1.04 kg) and 500 g of pangolin scales (*Manis* spp., Appendix II) from the other. They came from Lagos, Nigeria and were heading to Guangzhou, China.⁴

- **April 11, 2016.** Seizure of ivory belonging to a 40-year-old Chinese citizen in transit between Cameroon and Guangzhou, China. Estimated value: Sh 60,000 (\$ 600 US)

- **April 18, 2016.** Seizure of ivory bracelets belonging to a Chinese citizen. The 56-year-old man was in transit between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and China. Estimated value of Sh 300,000 (\$ 2,990 US).⁵



From April 4 to 10, 2016

Namunyak Wildlife Conservation Trust, Samburu County, Kenya

Poaching's burst. Four elephants are dead. Only one had its tusks removed. A giraffe carcass was found at the scene. It was without a doubt to serve as bushmeat for the poachers. The Namunyak Wildlife Conservation Trust is crossed by an elephant corridor between Mount Kenya and Mount Marsabit. It covers almost 4000 km^{2,7}

April 14, 2016

Nyahururu, Laikipia County, Kenya

Nightmare? It would have been swung into a pit, killed, butchered and consumed by the crowd.⁸



End of April 2016

Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya

Sentencing of a Vietnamese citizen to a fine of 2 million shillings (\$ 19,940 US) or a penalty of 2 years in prison for the possession of a bracelet and 5 rings made out of ivory, with an estimated value of 65,000 shillings (\$ 648 US). He said having bought the jewelry in Cameroon with the intention to give it to his girlfriend.⁹



Beginning of May 2016

Nyahururu, Laikipia County, Kenya

Sentencing of Samuel Emana Ekudongoi and Peter Emajong to a fine of 20 million shillings each, or in the case of defaulted payment, life in prison for having detained, transported and attempted to sell 6.5 kg of raw ivory with illegal origins.¹⁰



May 9, 2016

Kibera, Nairobi County, Kenya

Caught red handed while trafficking ivory worth an estimated Sh 800,000 (\$ 8,000 US), the driver pleads not guilty. He was released on a bail of one million shillings, around \$ 10,000 US.¹¹

May 21 and 22, 2015

Aberdare National Park, Kenya

It ended badly for 3 men suspected of poaching on Sunday night. A spare, an axe, a scale, an automatic rifle and ammunition were found on the spot, park rangers took photographs of the scene. The trio climbed the Park's electric fence. When the suspects were challenged to surrender, they opened fire forcing the rangers to respond. The bodies of the 3 men were transported to the morgue. Lazarus Kanyiri Kaheho, 33, and Erastus Kagara lived in Tetu and Muiyogo. The third one was not immediately identified.¹²



May 12, 2016

Marsabit County, Kenya

Arrest of 5 poachers and smugglers, including 3 Ethiopians. There weren't strangers to the death of a female elephant and her calf in Marsabit County on May 1st in Jaldess. The group possessed, in addition



to 4 elephant tusks, an automatic rifle and ammunition when they were taken by surprise in the middle of the night. The weapon will go through a ballistics examination to see if it hasn't been used in other criminal activities in the region.¹³

May 20, 2016

Tsavo National Park, Kenya

One more severely wounded in the snares' war. The cable was deep in the flesh of his right hind leg. Ten days after the operation, he was barely limping. He is on the right track.¹⁴



May 23, 2016

Ghaheleni, Malindi, Kilifi County, Kenya



Behind the ceiling of the house, she hid 2 very young baby elephant tusks.¹⁵

1.5 kg total

May 23, 2016

Juja, Kiambu County, Kenya

Seizure of 2 kg of ivory inside a Nissan X-Trail. 3 Chinese arrested, 61, 60 and 34 years old. The 2 men in their sixties pleaded for indulgence because of their health conditions. All 3 were released under bail for 3 million shillings (\$ 29,799 US) each. They had to turn over their passports to Justice Officials. Trial is scheduled for August.¹⁶

May 24, 2016

Ntimaru, Migori County, Kenya

Seizure of one elephant tusk and 5 bullets. Three arrested, including one woman. The gang worked in Maasai Mara National Park. Keen observers are fearing that marijuana traffickers thriving thanks to the porous border between Tanzania and Kenya, could be turning into ivory smugglers.¹⁷

Beginning of June, 2016

Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks. Estimated value: \$ 10,000 US. Disguised as household goods, the ivory was shipped in luggage originating from the State of New York, United States of America. Is this a new route for illegal ivory and rhino horns secretly leaving the United States? The direct route from the United States to China is tempting but risky in the financial and penal field. Transit through Kenya is likely to divert the attention of US Customs. To be continued!¹⁸

Rescue of Historical Monuments

April 24, 2016. Buchuma, County of Taita-Taveta, Kenya

Spotting by airways just outside the Tsavo East National Park boundaries of an elephant wounded by an arrow. The following day he was put under anesthetics and his wound cared for. The prognosis is encouraging.¹⁹



June 5. Tsavo East National Park, Kenya

Hit by a poisoned arrow in Tsavo Park, the male elephant once sighted received anesthetics shot from the air by a specialist from Skyvet. Asleep and fallen on the wrong side, he had to be turned over by the team of caretakers with the help of a tractor. The toxic arrow was removed, the wound was cleaned, and antibiotics administered. The prognosis is optimistic.



June 17, 2016. Amboseli National Park, County of Kajiado, Kenya

Tim, 45 years old, is an emblem for Amboseli Park, most distinguished tusker in Kenya and maybe even all Africa after the deaths of Satao ("On the Trail" n°5, p. 89), of Mountain Bull (n°5 p. 86) and of Isilo (n°4 p. 84). Tim is a repeated

victim. This is the second time in 2 years he has been targeted by a spear (cf. "On the Trail" n°7, p.84). Once more he was saved in the shadow of the Kilimandjaro by the teams from KWS, Big Life, the Amboseli Trust for Elephants, the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and Tawi Lodge. Will the third time be fatal? Those responsible for this have not been identified, but all leads to believe Tim was victim of a man/elephant conflict. The Amboseli National Park is irretrievably chipped away by farming. In 2015, 8 elephants died of reprisals after trespassing on formerly wild land newly cultivated. Migration corridors for elephants and other animals leading south towards Tanzania and east towards Tsavo Park are shrinking every year. The eastern corridor is critical. It is now less than 1 km wide. Despite countless consultation meetings, men continue to move forward and the Kimana migration corridor now resembles more a prison hallway and death row.

June 29. Amboseli National Park, County of Kajiado, Kenya

Another grey and white monument has been hit by a projectile weapon in the same Amboseli Park and very probably for the same territorial conflict. After anesthesia, disinfection of the wound, injection of antibiotics and the needed watering down during the entire care time, Ulysses stood up and walk off at a sturdy pace into the savanna, without limping. Prognosis is hopeful.^{19bis}

MALAWI

May 9, 2016

Mwanjati, District of Mangochi, South Region, Malawi

Paul Byson, 40 years old, resident of the Mkungumbe village was arrested in possession of 20 kg of ivory, local value \$ 1917 US/kg.²⁰

May 15, 2016

Liwonde National Park, South Region, Malawi

Since August 2015, Lilongwe Wildlife Trust has removed 13,000 active traps from the National Park. The NGO describes them as "time bombs" and "devils". One of the latest victims is a baby elephant seriously hurt on one paw. After receiving anesthesia, the wires were untangled and the wound was cared for. Without full guarantee of complete healing, the baby elephant was still able to return to his herd.²¹



June 4, 2016

Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve, Central Region, Malawi

Transfer of 500 elephant is confirmed (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 78). The cost of the operation is estimated at \$ 1.6 million US. It's the Netherlands national lottery that is paying. The elephants will be transported by truck. Some scientific authorities express skepticism when not outright concern. "I hope the cumulative impacts of being caught and transported, of the breaking of social links and of the arrival in an unfamiliar territory have been sufficiently taken into account" All Creatures Animal Welfare Group told. "Liwonde is a flood plain and Nkhotakota is mountainous. This means the elephants have to cope with their new territory and to change their diet, the flora biodiversity is different" warns Clifford Mkanthama from a local NGO whose mission is to protect ecosystems and restore the forests.^{21bis}

**District of Machinga, southern Region, Malawi
June 7 and 26, 2016**

-Seizure of 42 kg of raw ivory at the home of James Mwera, 38 years old, and his accomplices. The elephants were poached in the Liwonde National Park with rental weapons. An expert estimates the value of the batch to be 58 million kwachas, that is \$ 81,763 US and \$ 1946 US/kg.

-Conviction of Mwera, sentenced to a 7 year prison term despite the fact he presented himself as the sole caretaker of 4 orphans. The judge Agness Patemba decided on a deterrent sentence. Two years prison for trespassing on a protected area with a fire arm, 7 years for killing protected animals, 6 years for being in possession of ivory and 6 years for selling ivory. The sentences run concurrently.²²



June 20, 2016

Lilongwe International Airport, Central Province, Malawi

A construction worker is returning home to China for health reason, along with an ivory bracelet worth 350,000 kwachas (\$ 494 US). He was released on bail. Malawi displays its strict policy. Trade, imports and exports of ivory are prohibited.

The beginning of June, the vice-ambassador of the USA to Malawi was detained and interrogated for several hours at the international airport for suspicion of attempted export of worked ivory. The object was supposedly plastic, but control services had strong doubts.²³

UGANDA

April 7, 2016

West Region, Uganda

Arrest of 4 poachers including a police agent, and seizure of 4 tusks.²⁴

April 17, 2016

Kampala, Kampala District, Uganda

First hearing of the soldiers and civilians in the Africana hotel deal (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 80). "Yes, it is true that our soldiers were arrested by police," bitterly noted an army official. He denied that the 20 kg came from a theft of government stocks containing one ton of ivory in November 2014. "We label each tusk for example, if from Queen Elizabeth Park, we mark it with QE and a serial number", "the label of these tusks the suspects had did not belong to us."²⁵

April 20, 2016

Mpondwe-Bwera, Western Region, Uganda, Border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Seizure of 4 tusks. The victims were young. The offender, of Congolese nationality, was carrying false Ugandan identity papers, a double game allowing him to easily make transborder transactions.²⁶

April 21, 2016

Kampala, Kampala District, Uganda

Arrest of 2 smugglers and seizure of 4 tusks weighing a total of 30 kg. After a 3 month long investigation, an experienced trafficker, Kagaba Selevest, 48 and Aringi Dan, a student, were apprehended red handed. The police set a trap in the Conrad Plaza business center. The suspects acknowledge that they have been doing business in dealing ivory for some time.²⁷

May 17, 2016

Kampala, Kampala District, Uganda

Seizure of 12 kg of raw ivory. The value is estimated to be \$ 3,000 US/kg. Corruption is a contagious disease and is spreading in the army's Special Forces. A new soldier was caught red handed for ivory trafficking. He served as the bodyguard of a buyer at the moment of police intervention in Makies restaurant; the body guard in turn fled the scene. The NGO Natural Conservation Resource Network criticizes the UWA for slowing the investigations when agents of the State are involved. "They are supporting us but not fully."²⁸



May 19, 2016

Uganda, Border to Tanzania

Seizure of 2 tusks. The electrician and the truck driver were running the traffic between the 2 countries. The fact that one of them had both Tanzanian and Ugandan nationality facilitated their affairs.²⁹

June 2016

Uganda



20 kg of carved ivory in the hands of 2 experienced carriers including one who is a deserter from the Uganda People's Defense Force.³⁰

SOUTH SUDAN

May 24, 2016

Juba International Airport, Central Equatoria State, South Sudan

Arrest of one officer in the Sudan People's Liberation Army. Seizure of 27 sections of tusks coming from 8 elephants. He would have bought the ivory from other soldiers based in Gadiang in the State of Jonglei, in eastern South Sudan. Committed to several months surveying oil operations in the Higher Nile, he said that, not receiving any pension, he had to turn to other sources of income. The plane was headed to Paloich in the heart of the petrol operation, which provides for almost all of the income for the young State. The principal operator is China Petroleum Corporation. A Chinese worker was involved in frozen pangolin meat trafficking at Juba Airport (cf. p. 37).³¹

June 16, 2016

Juba Airport, Juba, State of Central Equatoria, South Sudan

Seizure of 1286 kg in 25 wooden boxes on board an Ethiopian Airlines flight coming from Entebbe, Uganda. According to airport sources, the package was meant to go to Egypt, then Malaysia. The air waybill of the package said it contained "food."³²



TANZANIA

April 3, 2016

Tarime District, Mara Region, Tanzania

Seizure near Serengeti National Park of six elephant tusks, a blue wildebeest skin (*Connochaetes taurinus*) a rifle and ammunition. According to investigators, the suspects were very talkative and gave information on the network.³³

Beginning of April-Beginning of June 2016

Manyoni District, Singida Region, Tanzania

They were taken in their villages of Kiwele and Kambi Katoto in possession of 2 tusks, 9 elephant tails, 3 rifles and ammunition. Two months later, 2 of them were sentenced to 20 years in prison, and the other 2 to 40 years. A 5th was given a suspended sentence. He was 86 years old.³⁴



May 16, 2016

Arumeru District, Arusha Region, Tanzania

The chief warden of national parks is caught up with a preacher on the Tanzania Assemblies of God. The preacher had a tusk to sell. He claimed to have acquired it from a middleman, Genes Shayo, the chief warden.³⁵

May 28, 2016

Leto village, Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania

Seizure of 31 kg of ivory. Two arrested.³⁶

June 2, 2016

Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania

Seizure of 10 pieces of ivory. \$ 100,000 US. Arrest of an army officer and 2 accomplices by police.³⁷

OPERATION USALAMA III

From June 26 to 30, 2016

Tanzania

Seizure thanks to a joint operation under Interpol and police forces of 666 tusk sections for a total weight of 1279 kg and estimated by authorities worth 4.6 billion shillings (i.e. \$ 1650 US/kg). Nine arrested including 2 from Guinea and Uganda.³⁸

ZAMBIA

April 20, 2016

Sioma, Western Province, Zambia

The 6 pairs of tusk, weighing 117.3 kg, had been cut into 12 sections and then buried beneath a hut by a 34 year old man.³⁹

Late April 2016

Lusaka, Lusaka Province, Zambia

Seizure of 12 sections of ivory (86.9kg) at the home of a Congolese citizen in the district of Mandevu. In a second phase, 3 other men were arrested with 2 kg of ivory in a service station in Chaisa quarter.⁴⁰

May 19, 2016

Livingstone, Southern Province, Zambia

Again a taxi driver involved in smuggling! "It all happened when the driver took a bush path avoiding the Zambia Wildlife Authority roadblock and drove into a ZAF (Zambia Air Force) checkpoint." Ten elephant tusks, a disassembled 375-caliber rifle, 3 lights, cartridges and cash were seized. Winter Ngenda, license number 282, 38 years old, was arrested. Two smugglers allegedly named John and Sylvester fled the scene.⁴¹

ZIMBABWE

April 5, 2016

West Mashonaland Province, Zimbabwe

"Fantastic news," said the NGO's for the protection of wildlife. "Two elephant poachers sentenced to 13 years in prison for each". The investigation has been carefully conducted and all evidence stored or preserved.⁴²



Late April 2016

Lion's Den, West Mashonaland Province, Zimbabwe

After an exchange of gunfire, one man was arrested. He was accused of having poached an elephant in Gache Gache and attempted murder. Two other guns were discovered in his home, along with an armory certificate showing having sold him high caliber ammunition.⁴³



May 8 and 9, 2016

Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Prompt law! Caught with 4 tusks in the communal territory bordering Hwange Park, the man who was headed towards Bulawayo was arrested. The next day he was sentenced to 10 years in prison with forced labor by the Hwange Tribunal.⁴⁴



May 19, 2016

Murewa, Mashonaland East Province, Zimbabwe

Sentenced and released. Strictly sentenced to 9 years in prison each, the 4 accused, who were caught red-handed on April 4th while bargaining 4 tips of ivory tusks worth \$ 498 US according to the national press, made an appeal to the High Court.

Their lawyer highlighted that the ivories have not been exhibited at the bar. What's more, his clients would have been physically threatened while in custody. Awaiting the decision of the Court, the 3 were released on bail for \$ 100 US each. They are 27, 35, and 49 years old.⁴⁵

May 20, 2016

Bas-Zambeze National Park, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

New confrontation between poachers under the full moon coming from Zambia and from Zimbabwe. The gang was composed of 2 shooters with an automatic rifle and 8 carriers. The poacher with the AK47 and one carrier were killed. The others fled, 100 kg of flour and personal items were left at the scene (see "On the Trail" n12).⁴⁶



May 23, 2016

Matusadona National Park, West Mashonaland Province, Zimbabwe



Three men and one tusk. Where is the second one ? Buried ? In other hands ? Already sold ?⁴⁷

May 26, 2016

Kariba, West Mashonaland Province, Zimbabwe

Alert! One adolescent elephant was spotted Wednesday evening by a resident near the Nyanyana Bridge and by the KAWFT (Kariba Animal Welfare Fund Trust) with the trunk half-cut by a snare to about 30 cm above the tip. He can no longer drink or eat without suffering. The victim was found between Kariba and Charara. She was seen crossing a route alone and seen in the company of 10 other elephants. The area is infested with snares. In one week, the Special Brigade neutralized 17. Two years ago in the same area a baby elephant was found with three-quarters of its trunk torn off by a snare. Any surgical intervention was impossible.⁴⁸



May 30, 2016
Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Five elephants poisoned by white cyanide powder spread on the salt pan near a watering hole. The carcasses had had their tusks removed. An antelope that had been skinned and butchered was found nearby. Guards believe it served as food for 5 poachers.⁴⁹



May 31, 2016
Bumi Hills Safari Lodge, West Mashonaland Province, Zimbabwe



An 30 year old elephant with a seriously wounded shoulder, likely the victim of an act of poaching, has limped up the path that leads to Bumi Hills Safari Lodge and waited for several hours for the arrival of a veterinarian from Harare by helicopter. In one

hour, the vet and other staff were able to anesthetize, disinfect and administer antibiotics, along with applying a product to repel flies and other flying insects. He was fitted with a GPS chip and will be physically followed for 15 days. Despite the use of a metal detector, the bullet could not be found. The wound is at least 10 cm deep.

In this province, separated from Zambia by the Zambezi River, the elephant population has declined by 75% in the past 15 years.⁵⁰

June 13, 2016
Mana Pools National Park, West Mashonaland Province, Zimbabwe



One week after the episode in Bumi Hills, an elephant of about 25 years approached a ranger base camp in Mana Pools National Park without showing the slightest sign of mistrust or aggressiveness and

allowed guards to see a half healed dirty injury at the top of his head. He was approached by vets when they arrived from Harare, 340 km away. They drained puss and cleared away bone fragments that had broken off from the impact of the bullet. The wound is likely the result of a poacher or hunter in this region, well known for both activities. "Whoever shot the elephant must have been aiming straight for his head," said Lisa Marabini, one of the 2 vets working on the elephant. When he woke up, he showed no nervousness. He went away.⁵¹

June 22, 2016
Guruve District, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe

Sentence to 11 years in prison after a seizure in December 2015 of 16.4 kg of ivory for Patrick Mapfumo and Elizabeth Kuripi. Zimparks thanks the Guruve Tribunal Judge, police and the Tikky Hywood Trust, who helped to everything in their power to be sure that the suspects were brought to justice.⁵²



SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

April 30, 2016
Brits, North West Province, South Africa

Seizure of 4 tusk segments found in the trunk of a car. It is one of the daily news items reported by Brits Cluster Police between April 29 and May 1. Ivory trafficking is an everyday crime there, along with cocaine and khat traffic, drunk driving, illegal gambling, alcohol trafficking, and illegal possession of fire arms and ammunition.⁵³

May 8, 2016
Alberton, Province of Gauteng, South Africa

Seizure from the home of a Chinese citizen of 3 tusks, ivory bracelets, ivory cylinders and blocks of different sizes, 4 kg of abalones, 6 kg of sea cucumbers, a selection of drugs and a stolen car. The ivory is valued at 3 million rands (\$ 208,623 US).⁵⁴

June 7, 2016
Kruger National Park, South Africa

20 elephants lost since the beginning of the year 2016 in Kruger Park compared to 22 for the whole of 2015. "This is an enormous challenge for us" says the Park's chief ranger Nicholus Funda. Most attacks happen in the North of the park. A special brigade is based in Phalaborwa. The elephants are attacked with fire arms of poisoned. "We are being forced to fight rhino and elephant poaching at the same time with the same resource" adds Mister Funda. Wanting to remain anonymous, a Park ranger says that the elephant poaching toll nears 60 since the beginning of the year and Edna Molewa, Minister of the Environment, now clearly speaks of the "emerging threat of elephant poaching".⁵⁵

June 8, 2016

Kruger National Park, South Africa

Traffic jam. A phone app enabling visitors to locate in real time concentrations of wild animals in the Park causes speeding, deadly accidents, human gatherings and disrupts the habits of giraffes, zebras, antelopes, lions, buffalos and elephants. The app can also give useful information to poachers. The Park Administration is thinking of ways to limit its use.⁵⁶

BOTSWANA

OPERATION USALAMA III

June 29-30, 2016

Botswana

Seizure in the trunk of a car of 5 pieces of ivory. Arrest of one healer which "hosts" tortoises, pythons' skins and other illegal products from the wild fauna.

NAMIBIA

May 24, 2016

Manyomdo, Kavango West Region, Namibia

Poaching of one elephant, the trunk and tail were taken. The tusks for their part were still intact. The carcass was hidden under some branches. The poachers intended to come back. With the usual equipment, ax, metal saw, dagger, it takes 1 to 1 and ½ hours to rip off the tusks of a mature elephant.⁵⁷

WESTERN AFRICA

BENIN

May 3, 2016

Kandi, Alibori Department, Benin

Bad news for elephants in W and Pendjari Parks. The 5 bandits arrested in February 2016 with 4 tusks in their possession (see "On the Trail" n° 12, p. 86) are free. There were given a suspended sentenced of 24 months in prison. They risked 10 years in prison.⁵⁸



June 3, 2016

Togo. Border with Benin

The drivers went from Nigeria, had already crossed Benin and got nabbed in Togo with 124 kg of ivory before crossing Ghana and getting to Côte d'Ivoire as the road plan proved the schedule was. Next, Asia, maybe via Dubai, maybe via Europe. When ivory is seized at the Roissy Airport, Paris, it often comes from Côte d'Ivoire.⁵⁹



June 4, 2016

Cotonou, Department of Littoral, Benin

Seizure of 6 tusks (17 kg) coming from the northern Pendjari National Park. One arrest. He was trying to sell the batch in a high standard hotel for \$ 10,000 US.⁶⁰



CÔTE D'IVOIRE

June 8, 2016

N'zikro, Comoé District, Côte d'Ivoire

The bus to pass through Ghana. A canoe to cross the river Tanoé. And the bus again in Côte d'Ivoire to reach Abidjan cushy apart from the fact that between Bonoua and Aboisso the police came to stick his nose in the luggage compartment and under some seats. The harvest was good. 150 kg. 24 tusks. Two arrests. The bus driver is suspected of collusion. The ivory batch was coming from Nigeria.⁶¹



May 23, 2016

Mopti, Mopti Region, Mali

Lieutenant Alhousseine Maiga, 46, was fatally shot. He was probably victim to the rebel militia because of his placement as a Water and Forest officer and a wildlife protector. He left behind 2 wives and 5 children. The ivory from the last Malian Gourma elephants has financed civil and religious war.⁶²



TOGO

May 28, 2016

Pagala, Central Region, Togo

Arrest of a 40-year-old trafficker. Ekpengo Koffi had on him 2 tusks from a baby elephant.⁶³

June 18, 2016

Dapaong, Savanes Region, Togo

Seizure of 30 tusks (40 kg). Four arrested. They have "worked" during a number of years with Emile N'Bouke so called "the boss", and involved in one 715.5 kg ivory smuggling (see "On the Trail" n°2, p. 60).⁶⁴



MIDDLE AFRICA

ANGOLA

April 18, 2016

Angola

Fine words from Angola. "We are determined to build a new Angola in which both people and our emblematic species can thrive." Such is the seductive statement of the Minister of Environment, Mrs. Maria de Fatima Jardim, in Cairo, Egypt at a conference of Ministers of the African Environment. To do this, Angola has joined the Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI), one of the first EPI goals is to close domestic ivory markets. Angola is the 13th member of the EPI with Liberia, Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Botswana, Chad, Ethiopia, Gabon, Tanzania, Gambia and the United Kingdom. It only remains to apply the words on

ground and to close in Luanda the biggest African ivory market, the Benfica market. The merchants were informed of the upcoming closure whose date has not been yet decided. "We must take care to ensure we do not drive the trade underground making it more difficult to eradicate" warns Adias Huongo, director of the National Institute for Biodiversity and Conservation Areas. The law banning the sale of ivory in the country is still in the draft stage. In parallel and synergy with this legislative cycle, Angola wants to strengthen anti-smuggling and anti-poaching cooperation with his KAZA partners (Kawango-Zambezi), first and foremost Botswana and Namibia. Benfica market offers for sale hundreds of carved ivories and tusks. It is frequented by tourists, the inter-african upper middle class and the Chinese or Vietnamese workers or traffickers expatriated in Africa. Hong Kong and other airports in China or on the road to China regularly make seizures of ivory from Angola. It was only in December 2013 that Angola became Party to CITES.⁶⁵

CAMEROON

April 1, 2016

Laro, North Province, Cameroon, Border of Faro National Park

Assassination of an eco-guard in Faro National Park after a shootout. At night, Matthieu Gameying and his colleagues were conducting a routine patrol when they were surprised by poachers. During the unequal exchange of bullets, Matthieu Gameying was shot in the leg. Out numbered and under armed compared to the assailants, the eco-guards retreated, leaving their injured colleague behind. His body was later recovered headless.⁶⁶



April 12, 2016

Djoum, South Region, Cameroon

Sentenced to a penalty of 4 months in prison along with a fine of up to \$ 22,000 US for ivory trafficking, he has made an appeal.

In October 2014, 91 kg of ivory had been seized from a truck, camouflaged in bags containing cacao (see "On the Trail" n°7, p. 79). It's the owner of the truck, a rich businessman who was sentenced.⁶⁷



**May 10, 2016
Gauoua, North Region,
Cameroon**

Seizure of ivory tusks, chopsticks and bracelets. Two arrested.

Aged 63 and 55, they worked as a pair. One procured the ivory and the other transformed it into chopsticks and bracelets. This little game lasts for 10 years. Thanks to information provided by the spouse of one of the traffickers, the tusks were recovered deeply buried in a garden.⁶⁸



**June 2016
Djoum, South Region,
Cameroon**

Sentencing of 2 traffickers to 10 months in prison for trafficking 4 tusks and 3 elephant tails and for poaching 2 elephants. They had been arrested last March (see "On the Trail" n°12, p. 87).⁶⁹



**June 9-23, 2016
Ebodjé, South Region, Cameroon**

Seizure of 41 tusks and pieces of tusks weighing a total of 210 kg aboard a ship. The *Cotonou* came from Gabon. It was boarded by the 11th Battalion of Marine Fusiliers in Campo (BAFUMAR) with the support of the Rapid Intervention Coast Guard (BIR Côte). On board, there was around 40 passengers and 3 trunks full of ivory stamped by the provincial Gabonese administrations.



After 2 weeks of investigation, it has been proved that the ivory came in part from burglaries in the premises of the Provincial Directorate of Water and Forestry in Ogooue Lolo and in the Courts where the tusks are stored as exhibits. The tusks that disappeared were not yet listed in the national database of seized ivory, and were not part of the central warehouse in Libreville which is secured by a motion detecting infrared camera. Opening and closing the vault requires the presence of at least 2 members of the General Directorate of Wildlife and Protected Areas and the National Agency of National Parks.

Five Nigerians were suspected to be responsible for the smuggling: the captain of the *Cotonou*, his second in command, the woman owner of the trunks and keeper of the keys, and 2 particularly well informed passengers. If it is confirmed that Nigerian interests manage the export network, it still remains that the accomplices on Gabonese soil are indispensable. The Provincial Directorate of water and forestry of Ogooue Lolo reminds us that it was a "burglary" victim on April 18, 2016. The National Agency for National Parks confirms. A theft has already taken place in the Oyem Court in 2015, see "On the Trail" n°9 p 73).⁷⁰

GABON

**April 14, 2016
Port-Gentil, Ogooué-Maritime Province, Gabon**

Seizure of 2 tusks cut into 4 pieces, weighing an estimated 10 kg, and 2 arrests in the Banco quarter in the 3rd district of Port-Gentil.

Ernest Loundou, 53, and Dieudonné Fity, 47, have been caught red handed in their Toyota. According to their stories, the tusks came from an elephant shot in Ngougou, near Omboué in southern Port-Gentil. They were on the verge of selling them.⁷¹

**April 23, 2016
Makokou, l'Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon**

Seizure of two tips of ivory (8kg) and a chain of arrests.

The State police force of Makokou, Wildlife Brigade and NGO Conservation Justice have acted together and dismantled one trafficking network rooted in Makokou. Five, including 2 Benin nationals, were arrested one after another. Hidden close to a river behind huts in Tchete village, the fresh tusks have been discovered.

Makokou is a well-known location for wildlife trafficking (see "On the Trail" n°7 p. 45, 87 et n°12 p. 88).⁷²



REPEATED OFFENSE

**May 10, 2016
Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon**

Seizure of 31 kg of ivory in a Toyota driving on Triomphal Boulevard. Hassoumi Hamni, Cameroun national, was arrested. He was already arrested for the same crime in 2015. That is why the Court sent him in jail for 6 month with a fine and damages equal to \$ 1,700 US.⁷³

May 24, 2016

Port-Gentil, Ogooué-Maritime Province, Gabon

Seizure of 4 ivory points cut into 8 pieces. Arrest in the Cité Otando neighborhood of Steeve Bissiemou, 42 years old. He lives in Omboué, a true trafficking den. He also was going to sell the "white gold". He claims to have shot the elephants in self-defense. The alliance of the Water and Forest association, the National Agency of Nation Parks, magistrates, police officers and the NGO Conservation Justice, has been useful.

Unfortunately, the legal sanctions predicted by the penal code are too weak. Bissienou only risks a maximum of 6 months in prison.⁷⁴

May 31, 2016

Mitzic, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

Three arrested, a prison guard and his 2 accomplices, one from Mali and the other from Gabon, in possession of 2 tips of ivory weighing a total of 16 kg in the civil servant's vehicle, who was driving to Libreville. He is said to have been trafficking since 2002 and to be a customer of some Pygmies near Minvoul (see "On the Trail" n°5, p. 89).⁷⁵

June 3, 2016

Makokou, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon



Makokou again. Six bush meat sellers and ivory looters, including one woman. One baby elephant is among their victims.^{75bis}

June 8, 2016

Gabon

Voluntary surrender of tusks. Honor to the Bahsoun family! They entrusted their tusks of which they were long time owners to the National Agency of National Parks.⁷⁶



REPEATED OFFENSE

June 22, 2016

Mitzic, Province of Woleu-Ntem, Gabon

Cameroon route! Arrest of a truck driver, attempted corruption, seizure of 10 tusks weighing 34 kg.⁷⁷



REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

REPEATED OFFENSE

April 18, 2016

Ouesso, Sangha Department, Congo



In spite being a relapse, Fulgence Mboka was acquitted while his accomplice was condemned to 2 years suspended sentence and a fine of 500,000 CFA francs (€ 762). Mr. Fulgence, already serving a 2-year deferred sentence for hunting and using firearms in a protected area, came to be acquitted by the Tribunal. Evidence, showing that he was in command and acted as an organizer and principal actor in hunting in the protected forest, was rejected and he was washed of any suspicion. Fulgence Mboka will leave this affair white as snow. The circumstances of the death of one of the hunters during the wild spree are not clear. He may have been assaulted by a furious elephant and thus his body was buried on the spot, being too heavy and too far away from Egniabi village to move. Fulgence Mboka's firstly witness for the prosecution has denied his claims given to police officers, and he's now a witness for the defense. The weapon, the ivory saw, the clips and the ammunition found in Fulgence's home and the true responsibility of the poaching campaign would belong to the hunter left behind in the forest.⁷⁸

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

April 23, 2016

Garamba National Park, Orientale Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Four rangers and the Park director were caught in an ambush set up by prowlers and poachers who were not identified. Three rangers died. One on site, 2 at the United Nations hospital in Bria, in the Central African Republic where they had been transferred in "critical phase". The Swedish park director's condition is described as "stable". The 4th ranger is recovering. In 2015, 5 guards and 3 soldiers from the Congolese armed forces were killed in outbreaks with elephant poachers superiorly armed. Garamba, 4900 km², 12,500 km² including the buffer zone, is squatted by poachers who are militarized and soldiers who are poachers. Giraffes and elephants are targeted. Men also.⁷⁹



Dimba Richard, Anigobe Bagare, Matikuli Tsago

CHAD

June 18, 2016

Chari-Baguirmi Region, Chad

SOS Elephants is taking good care of an orphaned elephant, but fears an increase in poaching due to the rainy season.⁸⁰

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

May 19, 2016

Buffalo, State of New York, United States of America

Sentencing of Ferdinand Krizan, 78 years old, antique dealer on the west coast, to a \$ 30,000 US fine. He will have to turn over to competent authorities 100 carved ivories according to the terms of his plea bargain (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 90).⁸¹



June 7, 2016

Wabasha, State of Minnesota, United States of America

Man aged 66 pleads guilty. The China-bound packet but caught by a postal inspector was labeled "resin sculptures." The true value is estimated at \$ 40,000-50,000 US. The declared value was \$ 30 US.⁸²

June 20, 2016

McAllen Anzalduas International Bridge, State of Texas, United States

Seizure of a whole African elephant skull. The truck, driven by a Mexican citizen living in Guadalupe, was turned back at Mexican customs and the skull was seized by border police in McAllen. An investigation continues in attempt to know the origin of the skull and why the Mexican citizen tried to export the skull from the United States to Mexico.⁸³



© US Customs and Border Patrol

June 29, 2016

St. Louis, State of Missouri, United States of America

Qian Wen Qing, living in the United States, bought toys and cutlery partially made from ivory from auction halls. In 2011 in Miami, another purchaser told him about a trick to easily export to China. He knew a weak link at customs there who would guarantee the safe passage of fraudulent shipments into the country. False street names, false addresses of senders and false origins completed the scheme. It lasted 3 years. The value of the contraband reached at least \$ 150,000 US. He pled guilty.⁸⁴

PANAMA

June 24, 2016

Tocumen International Airport, Panama Province, Panama

Seizure of 6 elephant tusks in wooden boxes heading to Mexico. The tusks were left in the safekeeping of the Environmental Ministry.⁸⁵

CHINA

The tailors network - followed

April 16, 2016**Hong Kong International Airport, Hong Kong, China**

Seizure of 26 kg of crafted ivory hidden in backpacks and in 2 specially hand sewn and tailored vests. Estimated value: \$ 260,000 HK (\$ 33,467 US), or \$ 1287 US/kg. The passenger came from Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire via Dubai, United Arab Emirates.⁸⁶

**May 8, 2016****Fangchenggang, Autonomous region of Guangxi, China**

Seizure of 10 kg of carved ivory, i.e. 766 pearls, 104 necklaces and 11 bangles inside of 4 packages in a parcel delivery service truck.⁸⁷

Beginning June, 2016**Beijing Municipality, China**

Sentencing to 10 years prison time for having attempted while arriving back from Togo to enter onto Chinese territory from the Beijing International airport and with the complicity of an employee there with 24 kg of ivory hidden in 2 computer bags. Yang Moumou had promised 3500 yuans (\$ 530 US) and given clear instructions to his accomplice who is a distant relative to pass fraudulently the merchandise by the employees' service way in the airport.⁸⁸

**June 21, 2016****Hong Kong International Airport, China**

Seizure at the postal center of 3 kg of ivory.⁸⁹



INDIA

Inter-State trafficking in live elephants**April-June 2016**

In the month of April, a mahout and 2 accomplices were arrested in the State of Assam and 2 elephants aged 7 and 8 recently captured were seized. Still wild, they have since been transferred to the Kaziranga National Park.

In June, the trafficking masterminds managed to escape before police intervention. Investigations revealed that the elephants had been captured in Arunachal Pradesh. Another member of the network in Nagaland was in charge of providing a certified domestic origin for the elephants, once their training completed. The wild elephants once domesticated were then sold to touristic attractions or religious institutions. (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 94 et n°7, p. 93).

At the end of June, one of the gang's leader, Mumtaj Siddique, aged 65, was arrested.⁹⁰

**Beginning April, 2016****Lansdowne Forest, State of Uttarakhand, India**

Arrested before things get ugly. Three school dropouts were arrested as they were on a mission to scout out the land before committing their first wildlife crime. A certain Raees, professional butcher already convicted for physical violence had promised them a prosperous future in elephant poaching. After a few lessons in the field to learn to recognize pachyderm footprints and dung, he had provided them with the necessary weapons and material.⁹¹

April 29, 2016**Bagdogra, State of West Bengal, India**

Seizure of a 17 cm long tusk. Two suspects arrested. They are questioned in particular on their possible connection with an international network crossing Nepal or Bhutan.⁹²

May 11, 2016

Kandara Forest Reserve, State of Odisha, India

Discovery of a carcass near the storage basin of a dam where elephants are used to go to drink. The trunk was burned. "The teeth were taken" according to the forest services' communiqué sent to the local press. It is not specified whether this means the 2 tusks, or tusks, 12 premolars and 12 molars.

According to official sources, 39 elephants have died in this State since April 2015. The bodies are found when already in an advanced state of decomposition, which has a double effect of covering up causes of death and covering up the culprits if the death was not natural. The NGO Wildlife Society denounces lack of action from the forest services. "Lakhs of rupees are spent every month on trackers who are supposed to follow elephant herds on a 24x7 basis. A dead elephant should have been detected within hours which is not happening." According to the NGO, 17 elephants would have been poached since the beginning of the year and there would be no more than 100 mature elephant in age to reproduce in the State's forests.⁹³

May 30, 2016

Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala State, India

A female elephant of about 13 years was killed by bullets 5 m away from the side of the road linking Sultan Bathery to Pulpally that crosses the sanctuary. She was no doubt killed by a driver or passenger. The motives for the crime are unknown. No farmer-elephant conflict has been reported to local authorities recently. A 25,000 rupees (\$ 370 US) reward is promised to anyone who will enable for the culprit to be arrested.⁹⁴

REPEATED OFFENSE

June 2, 2016

Phulbani-Athagarh, State of Odisha, India

Seizure of 2 tusks cut into 8 sections. Nine arrests. During a routine patrol aiming at maoist rebels, security forces spotted and immobilized a gang armed with truncheons and rifles. Inside of a bag were found ivory, an ax and gun powder. According to their first confessions, they were on the verge of handing over the tusk sections weighing a total of 19 kg to a local trafficker for the equivalent of \$ 370 US/kg. If the deal had gone through as planned, the raw ivory would have been transported to Kolkata before being sent to Far East Asia. Investigations proved complementarity of the 2 criminal activities, first the poaching organized by a repeated offender by the name of Manoranjan Pradhan and the trade that follows organized by an experienced scoundrel, Gopal Nayak. The poachers are based in Phulbani and the sellers in Athagarh 180 km away.⁹⁵

June 17, 2016

Gurunathanmannu, State of Kerala, India

Arrest of the president of Vana Samrakshana Samiti (Committee for the protection of Forest Villages) and of a friend of him. VSS are designated by inhabitants and are supposed to part take along with forest agents to the employment of resources, fight against poaching and illegal logging, inventory of protected animals, prevention from forest fires and in general to counter any illegal activities. The 2 tusks were seized at the notable's home. The secretary from the NGO Heritage Animal Task Force denounces the Forest Village Committees for misusing of authority. According to him, the VSS would indulge in pillage forest resources, exploitation of tribal people and even poaching. HATF regrets also that the large stock of illegal ivory in the State of Kerala has not yet been destroyed.⁹⁶



June 22, 2016

Region of Kodagu-Mysuru, State of, Karnataka, India

Three male elephants found dead within 24 hours:
-The first one in the Nagarhole National Park. The body was tuskless. According to the autopsy death came from natural causes. The tusks would have therefore been taken post mortem by honey gatherers.

- The second was found in a ditch inside of the Park itself. His death would date back some days. It is unknown what became of the tusks.

-The third was found in a coffee estate. He was apparently shot dead. It is not specified where are the tusks.⁹⁷

June 26, 2016

District of Kodagu, State of Karnataka, India

A former parliamentarian is pressing the local government to seek from the National government authorization to cull elephants in the Kodagu district confronted with increase in conflict with humans and human activities. Last year these conflicts cause about ten deaths, since the beginning of this years, 2 deaths and 2 wounded.⁹⁸

June 25, 2016

Gopanari Nature Reserve, State of Tamil Nadu, India

He limped, crawled and suffered for several days. Veterinarians favor the hypothesis of attempted poaching. The wound was narrow and more than 40 cm deep. His clavicle was fractured. An elephant conflict is excluded as a cause. The male, around 40 years old, was anesthetized by vets who were able to remove several liters of puss from wound next to his right ear, and inject him with antibiotics. After waking, he left and at dawn was found dead 200 m from a river. No projectile was recovered from the autopsy.⁹⁹

INDONESIA

May 20, 2016

Pekanbaru, Riau Province, Indonesia

The evidence was overwhelming. The scene took place in Shushi Tei. At the table there were the 5 sellers and policemen playing the famous role of interested clients. The tusks were imposing in size, all the more so that their origin remains mysterious.¹⁰⁰



2m long, 23 kg each, elephant or mammoth?

MALAYSIA

May 9, 2016

State of Kedah, Malaysia

Borneo elephants (*Elephas maximus* or *Elephas maximus borneensis*) are no longer more than a few hundred and what more their habitat is fragmented and in consequence their health and capacity to reproduce is harmed. In 2013, an elephant herd made in majority of 13 adults was poisoned leaving no survivors near the Gunung Rara forest reserve. The palm oil industry would have gotten into the habit- profits first- of surrounding the trees with rat poison to prevent elephants and monkeys from eating the seeds.

Anglers have recently had the bad surprise of stumbling by the side of Pedu Lake on an elephant carcass. The tusks were gone. Within the present heat wave attributed to El Nino, elephants leave the forest more often to find water. Poachers are on the lookout. "The rarer is the species, the better the game" sums up an animal protector describing the killers' frame of mind." Is there the any hope for wildlife to survive ?"¹⁰¹

NEPAL

May 24, 2016

Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal

He had been on the run since 12 January 2013 ever since had been found in his car parked at Auto Clinic 64 carved ivories and 62 kg of sandalwood. He in turn was found by justice in a street of the Buddha neighborhood. He was sent to the central prison to fulfill the 7-year sentence pronounced against him by a district court at the beginning of the year.¹⁰²

SRI LANKA

June 2 and 13, 2016

Colombo, West Province, Sri Lanka

The Magistrate of the business district of the capital city is still entangled in this story of a domesticated elephant today, but wild yesterday, with no certificate of birth in captivity. Thilina Gamage is put under formal investigation. The lower court released him on bail for \$ 3,430 with 4 additional guarantees of \$ 17,000 US each. June 13, the general prosecutor in Sri Lanka made an appeal against the bail decision. In his indictment, the Prosecutor recalls that the baby elephant is the property of the State and that in this particular case the suspect is not releasable on bail. Gamage has been relieved of his duties pending the conclusion of the trial, is forbidden to leave the country and is also subject to judicial control ("On the Trail" n°6, p. 91).¹⁰³



June 20, 2016

Colombo, West Province, Sri Lanka

Charge of the upper monk of the Alan Mathiniyaramaya temple. A baby elephant of 2.5 years has been discovered by the police inside of the temple's walls. As a defense, the monk said that the animal was abandoned at the temple after a procession 2 years ago. That alibi isn't very strong considering a baby elephant goes for at least \$ 100,000 US in Sri Lanka. After being detained for several days the Buddhist monk was released on a bail of 20 million rupees (\$ 140,000 US).¹⁰⁴



THAILAND

Kenya-Thailand

May 2016

Ivory Quarrels

For the moment, Bangkok refuses to surrender 511 raw ivory tusks discovered in the container FCU5235796 by customs at Laem Chabang port in April 2015 (see "On the Trail" n°9 p77 and n°10 p. 57). 11 Kenyan nationals are indicted for the smuggling. The trial in Nairobi may not start until the exhibits are surrendered. Their value reached 6 million dollars. The suspects are in provisional freedom. They pled not guilty. They are suing the public treasury. They want the 50 million shillings frozen from their banks accounts to be returned. In exchange, they propose their real estate properties be seized at the same amount. Bargaining between the export country and the country where the contraband was discovered continues. The final destination would probably have been Laos.¹⁰⁵

TURKEY

June 13, 2016

Istanbul, Region of Marmara, Turkey

Record breaking seizure.¹⁰⁶



The dagger would apparently have belonged to Mouammar Gadhafi. It had been stolen from one of the Libyan leader's palaces in 2011. The Turkish businessman had bought it 3 months earlier for \$ 4.6 million US and intended to sell it to an immensely rich Saudi for \$ 10 million US.

VIETNAM

April 6, 2016

Noi Bai International Airport, Hanoi, Vietnam

Seizure inside of a suitcase coming from Istanbul via Almaty, Kazakhstan, flight Turkish Airlines TK6562, of 98 kg of ivory made up of 100 sections of different sizes. DNA tests are underway to find out their region of origin.¹⁰⁷

May 21, 2016

District of Lang Giang, Province of Bac Giang, Vietnam

Hong Kong is closing up. Vietnam is opening. Continental China remains the favorite destination. Where else could the pick-up truck be going if not China? It was stopped on the road between Hanoi and the Guangxi Province. Huy, 28 years old, the driver, would have offered 500 million dong (\$ 23,000 US) to the police in return for his discharge. The little more than a half ton was spread among 107 tusk sections inside of 17 bags. Huy, taken by surprise by the road police's intervention claimed he could not open the truck door because he didn't have the key.¹⁰⁸



EUROPE

GERMANY

April 10, 2016

Würzburg, State of Bavaria, Germany

Seizure of 70 kg of ivory, namely 7 tusks, on A3 highway in the night following a tipoff from Hamburg,

The ivory was found in the rental car of 2 men with false transportation documents. Thanks to their foreign nationality, the men were freed after paying a fine. Prosecution and further investigation was ordered.¹⁰⁹



May 31, 2016

Berlin Schönefeld Airport, Berlin, Germany

Customs at Schönefeld Airport seized 11 crates containing 625 kg of elephant tusk ivory from Africa, destined for Vietnam. According to the Berlin sender, the ivory pieces were "clocks."



SPAIN

May 26, 2016

Madrid, Spain

Seizure in an individual's home of 750 kg of African ivory, namely 74 tusks. The suspect tried to justify the legality of the ivory stocks by presenting a hunting certificate from Mozambique from 1970.



Value estimated by Spanish customs: 200,000 € (\$ 224,000 US), for \$ 300 US/kg each, which is much lower than normal quotations in the western world and in Asia.¹¹⁰

FRANCE

May 25, 2016

Saint-Denis, Ile de France Region, France

Seizure of 16 African elephant tusks for a total weight of 212 kg. Searches inside of an export-import company of antiques and various merchandise, a few kilometers north of Paris. Arrest and detention of the company boss. This is the largest ivory seizure carried out in 10 years by French customs. The investigation had started in September of last year when 4 tusks (43 kg) were uncovered in a car with 3 people inside along the route Paris-Poitiers-Bordeaux.¹¹¹

June 1 and 3, 2016

Roissy-Charles-de-Gaulle Airport, Île-de-France Region, France

Seizure from the compartment luggage of a Vietnamese passenger coming from Angola destined for Vietnam of 26 tusk sections for a total weight of 142.8 kg. First brought into customs custody, the individual was sentenced in flagrancy 2 days after the seizure to 18 months prison time and 142,480 € in fine. The pieces of raw ivory come from at least 5 elephants of different ages. They had apparently been recently sawed newly. The modus operandi matches those of organized channels. It was not an isolated act. The man says he accepted to be paid for transporting the illegal goods. The tusks were masked with polyurethane foam. Judicial outcome of this attempted smuggling contrasts with the judicial outcome following the seizure in the suitcases of 2 Vietnamese passengers in the same airport in 2015 (see "On the Trail n°11, p. 86).¹¹²



© Douane françaises

June 6, 2016

Paris-Charles-de-Gaulle Airport, Freight sector, Île-de-France Region, France

Seizure of 50 sections of raw and carved ivory in 3 parcels declared "articles and material for physical fitness and gymnastics". The packages were sent from France destination Vietnam. Their value is estimated 1000 € per kilo. Total weight of the seizure is 125.5 kg.¹¹³

UNITED KINGDOM

April 27, 2016

Dundee, Scotland, United Kingdom

Sentencing of a Lithuanian citizen to 14 months and one week in prison for stealing from the home of the person who was housing him of 2 tusks and 2 ivory statues and for theft from a specialized shop of £ 3400 (\$ 4975 US) worth of cigarettes and £ 30 (\$ 43 US) in cash. Nothing has been found again by police.¹¹⁴



May 10, 2016

Hamilton, Scotland, United Kingdom

Sentencing to £ 1500 (\$ 2188 US) in fine of LS Smellie and Son Ltd, a historic auction house, for acquisition in a commercial aim and offer to sell via internet raw elephant tusks. The ivory had been seized in May 2015.¹¹⁵



May 23, 2016

London, England, United Kingdom

Conviction of Christie's to £ 3250 (\$ 4742 US) in fine for having put to sale a raw tusk mounted on a silver base. Commercial use of raw ivory that have not been transformed in a significant way into carved ivory is forbidden except special derogation given by the United Kingdom CITES authorities. Christie's defends itself claiming it was an "honest mistake".¹¹⁶



CHRISTIE'S



© Radio France A. Bossard

Other Mammals

AFRICA

KENYA

May 2016

Naivasha, Nakuru County, Kenya

Donkeys are not known for their ferocity and are unlikely to create territorial conflicts with humans. And yet, they are chased and dismembered and their meat, just like the 200 kg of zebra meat (*Equus quagga*) recently seized from a clandestine slaughterhouse, is to be sold by butchers in Nairobi after having been packaged hastily on the side of the expressway. See "Donkey too!" in "On the Trail" n° 12 p. 97.¹



Donkeys and zebras, blood brothers

MALI

May 2016

Fana, Region of Koulikoro, Mali

In Mali also! After Burkina Faso, Kenya, Botswana, this time it is Mali's turn to part take in donkey sacrifices. A specialized slaughterhouse has been active since recently near Fana. "The dirty work is done by foreign companies" says local press. Donkeys' skins are exported to China.²

ZIMBABWE

April 25, 2016

Bulawayo, Bulawayo Province, Zimbabwe

Theodore Bronkhorst, tried for the attempted exportation in South Africa of 29 giant sable antelopes (*Hippotragus niger variani*, Appendix I) (see "On the Trail" n° 10 p. 68 and n°11 p. 88), was acquitted by the Court of Bulawayo. Bronkhorst, already involved in the saga of Cecil the lion, is an acquittal's recidivist.³



AMERICA

ARGENTINA

June 23, 2016

Road between Puerto Madryn and Chubut Province, Argentina

Seizure after a routine inspection of 600 kg of frozen guanaco meat (*Lama glama*, Appendix II) in 24 garbage bags. The pick-up was headed towards Telsen, 200 km from where it was stopped.⁴



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BRAZIL

May 17, 2016

Porto Grande, State of Amapa, Brazil

Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio) reported the death of 8 pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III). They were seized on a small fishing boat. The hunt would have taken place in a Unité de Conservation Nationale- FLONA, which is theoretically protected. There are only 2 guards patrolling a 4,000 km² territory.⁵

May 20, 2016

Terenos, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

Rescue of a maned wolf (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*, Appendix II). He was accused of eating hens, and was captured. The police reminded that it is necessary to request authorization for this type of intervention. The wolf was held captive in a triangular hut and hardly had room to lie down. The police transferred him to an 80 km² fazenda where he lives in semi-freedom.

The maned wolf is the largest canine in South America, measuring between 95 and 115 cm long, not including the tail, 80 cm tall, and weighing 30 kg. It has orange fur with black spots on its paws and tail. As an omnivore, it eats fruits and small mammals, and it doesn't hunt humans.

They are solitary, and only pair up as couples during their mating period. They then require about 30 km² of space to provide for the needs of their family. Pregnancies last for 70 days, and up to 5 puppies can be born in one litter. They are threatened by expanding pastures, hunting and domestication. Even reproduction in semi-open and closed captivity can be difficult, indeed impossible. They like the calm.⁶



© Anne-Marie Kaius

May 24, 2016

Bonito, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

Seizure in a farm of 8 kg of collared peccary meat (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix I and II). Fine of 7,000 reais, or \$ 2,000 US, for the manager of the property.⁷



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

May 17, 2016

Yellowstone National Park, State of Wyoming, United States of America

When visiting the Park, the visitor has embarked a young American buffalo (*Bison bison*, Appendix II) in his car. The calf was still sucking. The kidnapper then released the animal far from his herd.



Unable to find his mother and original herd, the Park management has resigned themselves to kill the animal. National Park manager's disdain this type of visitors, who have become increasingly intrusive and disruptive to life cycles of animals, both small and large. Several bears were obliged to be voluntarily shot to death in the Glacier National Park, Montana. They have been abused, visitors that used to give them some delicacies made them dependent and aggressive. The bears broke into cars to get food. The golden rule is to not feed, touch, tease, or frighten the animals and, of course, not to approach or transport them.

June 1, 2016

Lolo National Forest, State of Idaho, United States of America

WildEarth Guardians, Western Watersheds Project, the Center for Biological Diversity, Friends of the Clearwater and Predator Defense, 5 well-known and influential NGO's in the Western United States, have sued the USDA (US Department of Agriculture) for having killed 650 wolves in Idaho during the past decade, including 75 just last year. The NGOs also refute the official argument, which stated that the wolf population needed to be regulated to halt the elk decline. They remind us that the elk decline is, above all, due to the progressive and historic modification of their preferred habitats. "It is long past time that we base wildlife management decisions on the best available science, not on antiquated, disproven anti-wolf rhetoric," said Bethany Cotton, director of the WildEarth Guardians campaign. The hunting methods reinforced the NGO's claims. Packs of wolves are pursued by helicopters to the point of exhaustion, and then riddled with bullets by snipers in the air. The wolves are left to die in the prairies and forests.



The NGO's are calling for an end to the wolf population regulation, and for elaboration of one up-to-date Environmental Impact Study (EIS), a mandatory document that must review all the consequences for the ecosystem stemming from wolf slaughtering. The last EIS in Idaho dates back to 2011.⁸

ASIA

INDIA

April 13, 2016

Magnetic Hill, Leh District, Jammu and Kashmir State, India

Arrest in the middle of the night of 3 men for poaching of Ladakh urial sheep (*Ovis vignei vignei*, Appendix I). Seizure of a telescopic weapon, ammunition and a Gypsy jeep belonging to the army. Ladakh urial sheep are alone in the world, only a few hundred. They live up there in the foothills of the Himalayas. Their horns reach 1 m long. Two of night hunters are members of the 254th Regiment and the third was the guest of the commander of the garrison. The car was stained with blood.⁹



May 31, 2016

Jaisalmer, State of Rajasthan, India

The chinkara, local name of the Indian gazelle (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III) was quenching its thirst at night near a leaky water pipe. The people who passed by or waited for her shot her to death. They began to carve it on site. They fled when they were spotted by a truck driver. The Bolero Camper and the owner are actively sought by the police.¹⁰



June 1, 2016

Tiruppattur, Vellore District, Tamil Nadu State, India

Two men arrested, aged 25 and 37 years old, for attempting to sell musk deer pods (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I). Musk deer live in the foothills of the Himalayas, 2500 km from where the prepuccial glands were seized.¹¹

IRAN

May 18, 2016

Iran

Conviction of 2 men, sentenced to 6 months prison suspended sentence for poaching a striped hyaena (*Hyaena hyaena*, Appendix III in Pakistan).¹²



NEPAL

May 25, 2016

Chabahil, Kathmandu, Nepal

Seizure of the skin of a red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I). Arrest of a man aged 21 years old.¹³



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EUROPE

FRANCE

June 13, 2016

Vemars, Val-d'Oise department, France

Capture of a Patagonian hare (*Dolichotis patagonum*). "You could say it's a cross between a hare and a deer," exclaimed the deputy mayor of the little town, which is 30 km from Paris. One could also call it a cross between a hare and a kangaroo. For several weeks, photos and witnesses of the animal, unknown to France, but well known to Southern Argentina, were abundant. After being quarantined, it will be handed over to a park in Thoiry. It nicely let itself be trapped inside of a warehouse in an industrial area by ONCFS agents.¹⁴



© ONCFS/Cédric Bailleux

RUSSIA

May 25, 2016

Khasan, Far Eastern Federal District, Russia

Seizure of 2 prepuccial glands of Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II) in a perfume box in the luggage of a North Korean traveler on a train from Moscow to Pyongyang. Skyrim, a sniffer dog, smelled something suspicious.¹⁵



© Press service Khasan Customs

Multi-Species

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

May 9, 2016

Nelspruit, Mpumalanga, South Africa

Court hearing of Anton Smit, 38, professional hunter, after a leopard pelt and 4 elephant tusks were seized from his home. He was not aware of his legal duties. He had no certificates and no invoices. He claimed to have bought the tusks in Mozambique and as for the pelt, it was a buddy in Namibia who gave it to him.¹



ALGERIA

Beginning of April 2016

Mascara Province, Algeria

Boom in the poaching of Cuvier gazelles (*Gazella cuvieri*, Appendix I) and crested porcupines (*Hystrix cristata*). The gazelle population is hardly more than a few dozen, and they are also threatened by forest fires. Also known as the mountain gazelle, they live on the Atlas hills and plateaus. Hunting of the Cuvier gazelle and crested porcupine is prohibited under Decree 509 from August 20th 1983. The 2 species, hunted for their meat, are considered to be necessary for ecosystem maintenance.²

May 18, 2016

Sétif, Mount Sekrine, Hautes Plaines region, Algeria

A quarry at bustard's home! Mount Sekrine, its Cuvier's gazelles (*Gazella cuvieri*, Appendix I), sand cats (*Felis margarita*, Appendix II), fennec foxes (*Vulpes zerda*, Appendix II) and golden jackals (*Canis aureus*, Appendix II), Mount Sekrine, its Mt. Atlas mastic tree (*Pistacia atlantica*) and its North African elephant shrews (*Elephantulus rozeti*), Mount Sekrine and its houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) are threatened by what is best in terms of destruction, noise and dust: a quarry. The project was authorized by the central government without the advice of the Forest conservation or the People's Assembly of Ain Lahdjar, the most exposed municipality. The Sekrine Mountains are about 40 kilometers south of Setif.³



Elephantulus rozeti

CAMEROON

April 26, 2016

Eseka, Centre Region, Cameroon

Seizure of 8 marine tortoise shells (Appendix I), 3 chimpanzee skulls (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) and pangolin scales (*Manis* spp., Appendix II). Arrest of a man in a bar. He drank beer after beer. He said he did not know what was in the bag.⁴

June 2016

Cameroon

Seizure of 39 ivory bracelets and 3 leopard skins. Arrest of the store owner.⁵



GABON

May 25, 2016

Mouila, Ngounié Province, Gabon

Seizure of one leopard pelt and 2 elephant tusks weighing a total of 12.4 kg, cut into 4 pieces, kept in a linen bag. One arrested.⁶



Loxodonta africana

GUINEA

June 10, 2016

Kaloum, Conakry Region, Guinea

Court appearance of Water and Forestry engineer and ex-director of the CITES management authority in Guinea, Ansoumane Doumbouya (see "On the Trail" n°10, p. 71), and his 2 accomplices practicing fish farming, Thierno Barry and Balla Doumbouya (see "On the Trail" n° 11, p. 12), for putting manatees up for sale on the Internet. They plead guilty while launching into "incoherent explanations" according to the national press.⁷

KENYA

May 2016

Tsavo Conservation Zone

Seizure by the KWS of 741 live traps and 190 traps seized from poachers. Eight hunters of bushmeat and 2 ivory poachers equipped with poisoned arrows and cutting tools arrested.⁸



MALAWI

April 13, 2016

Vwaza Reserve and Nyika National Park, Malawi

Dialogue between guards, village leaders, political figures and police has led to the voluntary surrender of 40 archaic rifles used for poaching. Perhaps soon it will be the AK-47s turn?⁹



MOZAMBIQUE

June 13, 2016

Magoe National Park, Tete Province, Mozambique

Magoe National Park in the northwest of the country is near the Zambian and Zimbabwean borders. It covers 3500 km². Upon opening in 2013, the Park hoped to counteract the negative impacts of mining activities and of open-air coal mining. However, the actual size of the Park has been reduced by a third of the initial project because of the territorial claims of international mining companies. In the buffer zone, hunting with permits is allowed and even encouraged. Inside of the Park, elephant poaching continues its relentless growth. 29 elephants in 2015. 25 in 2014 according to official statistics. The Director for Land, Environment and Rural Development of the province is concerned about the number of elephants poached and methods of poaching. Water holes are poisoned with concentrated pesticides. Consequently, many other species are affected, including humans. "There is a deadly threat to the villagers who, by lack of information or by negligence, eat contaminated bush meat."

Filipe Duarte and the guardians of the Park also find an increase in the use of traps. Many were seized. Many were not. It is possible that staff from the surrounding mines have contributed to different forms of poaching.¹⁰

UGANDA

OPERATION USALAMA III

June 29-30, 2016

Uganda

Seizure of 20 kg of ivory, 3 tortoises, 12 ostrich eggs, leopards' skins, pangolins' scales, shells and other parts of protected animals. Six arrests.



REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

June 9, 2016

Ouesso, Shangha Department, Republic of Congo

Arrested April 10th for poaching and being in possession of a firearm in the ETIC zone (Espace Tridom Interzone Congo), an island of resistance for forest elephants, gorillas and chimpanzees, Brel Mengba, a Congolese national, and Julpon Sidouanne Simsiab, a Cameroonian national, were sentenced to 24 months in prison, a fine of 500,000 francs CFA (\$ 8,490 US) and 500,000 francs CFA in damages.¹¹



SENEGAL

April 12, 2016

Niokolo-Koba National Park, Tambacounda Region, Senegal

Seizure of 150 AK-47 guns. Arrest of 15, including 12 Malians. There are no more elephants in Niokolo-Koba, except for maybe one, but there are a lot of weapons and bush meat.¹²



End of May 2016
Ziguinchor, Ziguinchor Region, Senegal
Crackdown in "tourist traps"

- Seizure of 16 fresh sea turtle shells. One arrest.
- Seizure of 10 lion claws and 2 lion teeth, 797 ivory bracelets, and 200 bracelets made of elephant hair. Elephants are extinct in Senegal.¹³



TANZANIA

May 11, 2016
Ruaha National Park, Iringa and Mbeya Regions, Tanzania

Poisoning of one lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), one male spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*), a female hyena (Hyaenidae family), a black-backed jackal (*Canis mesomelas*), a hooded vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*, Appendix II), a tawny eagle (*Aquila rapax*, Appendix II), 2 bateleur eagles (*Terathopius ecaudatus*, Appendix II) and 55 white-backed vultures (*Gyps africanus*, Appendix II). Two vultures were dying when the mass grave was discovered. Looters took the lions paws and teeth, the tawny eagles' head and neck, and the bateleur eagles' legs. The bodies were burned to avoid further spread of the poison to other animals.



Members of the Ruaha Carnivore Project -RCP- arrived on site after hearing rumors and were guided by the foul odor. RCP's mission is to develop strategies for the conservation of large carnivores threatened with extinction in Tanzania, and particularly in Ruaha Park. The poisoning was probably carried out in vengeance. A wild animal would have attacked a cow. The cows' corps would have been moved and abandoned in the savannah after being sprayed with pesticides. The bodies don't get autopsies. The cremation site is polluted.

The ashes and charred bodies are toxic. Authorities do not appear to have intervened to determine the causes and environmental consequences of the conflict. It is likely that dead carrion-eaters animals are scattered in a radius of several kilometers. Members of the RCP demonstrate their understanding in relation to the suspected dangerous in retaliation actions from breeders. They recall that cattle are their only source of profit, but at the same time, the breeders are encroaching on the territory of the wild animals and the increasing use of snares for bushmeat creates food shortage for the wild fauna.¹⁴

June 2016
Region of Arusha, Tanzania

Green Mile Safari whose hunting license inside the Selous Reserve had been revoked in 2014 because of various cases of abuse and violence such as crashing into animals with high powered off-road vehicles is reviving from its scandals under the name Shangri-La. The hunting circuit remains in the hands of the same interests from Abu Dhabi. See "On the Trail" n° 6, p. 102.¹⁵

AMERICA

ARGENTINA

May 8, 2016
Buenos Aires, Federal District, Argentina

Seizure of a common tegu (*Tupinambis teguixin*, Appendix II), 118 birds, and a tortoise in the tourist district of Pompeya, known for its Sunday markets. Seizures of protected species are not exceptional there.¹⁶

June 13, 2016
Victoria, Entre Rios Province, Argentina

Seizure of 13 firearms, vicuña meat (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix I in this province), and a dead armadillo.¹⁷



BRAZIL

May 6, 2016

Corumba, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

The 61 year old hunter was caught surprised with one pampas deer corpse (*Ozotoceros bezoarticus*, Appendix I), 12 paws and 4 tails from several wild animals, 10 kg of caiman, one firearm and ammunition. The fine added up to \$ 5,200 US.

The pampas deer population has decreased 30% in the past 15 years. The species can be found in Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay and Argentina. Their decline has many causes: infectious diseases transmitted by intensive sheep farming, habitat conversion to supply the soybean and sugar cane industries, and hunting for pleasure, subsistence, and traditional medicine.¹⁸



May 12, 2016

Sao Felix do Araguaia, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Seizure of 135 fish, including pintados and 30 turtles of various species, being held by fishermen on the bank of Araguaia river, Brazil's 7th longest river, measuring 2627 km long. It was for their "personal consumption." The pintados, also called surubi, are carnivorous. Adults weigh 80 kg and measure around 2 meters long. They were fined all together 1,500 reais (\$ 400 US).¹⁹



May 26, 2016

Cruzeiro do Sul, State of Acre, Brazil

At 22 years old, he hunts, films and tortures rare animals. Found on numerous laptops, the star victim was a giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*, Appendix II). Once the animal is tied up, the psychopath hits it, and provokes his dogs to attack it. Other animals, like pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix) and snakes, are also abused. The rascal has admitted to the facts, but affirmed to have acted in a "state of self defense." Incredulous, the police believe they are dealing with a perverted trafficker.²⁰

The giant anteater is a quadruped mammal. Its sense of smell is very strong, 40 times stronger than that of a human. Its tongue is very long, which is essential for it to track ants and other small insects to eat. Its claws are long and very resistant. It weighs an average of 40 kg. Its pregnancies last 190 days and newborns stay on the backs of their mother for 9 months. The species is threatened by hunting and habitat destruction. Forest fires are particularly dangerous for anteaters given their flammable hair.



May 27, 2016

Cabo de Santo Agostinho, State of Pernambuco, Brazil

Unemployed and still living with his parents, he leads an especially ostentatious life: he possesses a sloth with a necklace that drinks beer and a caiman that he wears on his shoulder. On site, he has 6 birds, among them one Harris hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II), which was seized. The highlights of his life were captured on the spot and published on Facebook, which allowed police to locate him. "Trancinha" received a fine of 3,000 reais (\$ 800 US).²¹

facebook



June 7, 2016

Tubarao, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil

Seizure of 135 birds, 9 marmosets (*Callithrix* spp.) and 6 turtles in a car on a highway. The animals were bought in a clandestine market in Sao Paulo, 1000 km away. They were released back into the forest.²²

OPERATION MALHADEIRA

Between June 7 and 17, 2016

Mamirauá Animal Reserve, State Amazonas, Brazil



The operation has been fruitful. More than 3.6 tons of protected fish by national law were seized from boats on the Rio Tefe, including 1.6 tons of giant arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), locally known as “pirarucu,” more 4 brown howling monkeys (*Alouatta guariba*, Appendix II), one giant South American turtle (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II), 3 live pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III), all live, and 6 giant South American turtles (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II), 17 South American tapirs (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II), 8 pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III) all dead. Total fine of 216,760.29 reais (\$ 60,000 US). This confirms that fishing boats in the Amazon basin play the roles of collectors and peddlers of bushmeat or future pets to say nothing of the marine mammals that are captured notwithstanding their protection under national and international laws.²³

OPERATION SAFEWEB

June 13, 2016

Sao Paulo, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Internet sales are closely examined. Seizure of 37 animals including a black tufted capuchin (*Cebus nigritus*, Appendix II) and a broad-nosed Caiman (*Caiman latirostris*, Appendix I), living in deplorable hygienic conditions according to police. In addition, 2 stuffed marmosets (*Callithrix* spp.) and one stuffed green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) were seized. Fine of 103,000 reais, \$ 26,000 US.²⁴



June 13, 2016

Novo Santo Antonio, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Seizure of a tortoise, 4 kg of fish and fishing equipment from a car driving from Rio das Mortes, a major tributary of Rio Araguaia. The municipal councilor denies these facts and asserts that “someone” has put the animals and the equipment in his vehicle. He was released on a bail of 2000 reais (\$ 600 US).²⁵



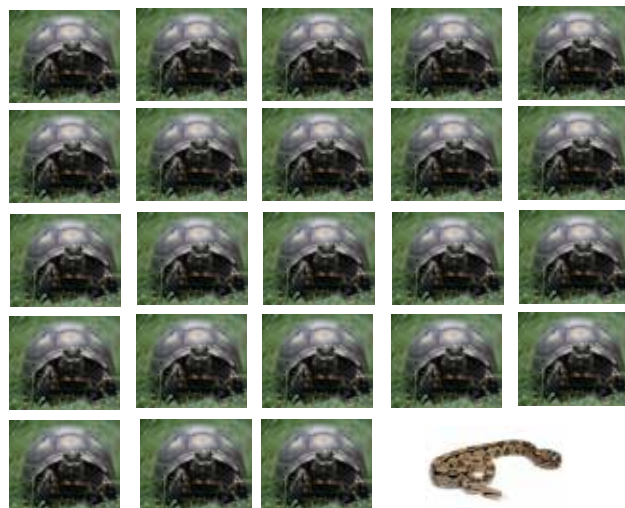
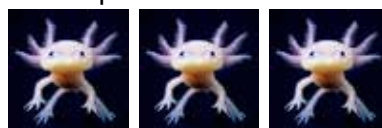
Beer cans are used as reels

COLOMBIA

June 2, 2016

Fusagasugá, Cundinamarca Department, Colombia

Seizure of 3 Mexican salamanders (*Ambystoma mexicanum*, Appendix II), 23 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II), 12 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 2 yellow-fronted amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II), 2 blue and yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), one military macaw (*Ara militaris*, Appendix I), one Colombian woolly monkey (*Lagothrix lugens*, Appendix II), 2 spider monkeys (Atelidae family, Appendix I et II) and one spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II) in the rural “Cutucumay” restaurant. Their fates are not clear. It all depends on their state of health.²⁶



COSTA RICA

May 18, 2016

San Jose, San Jose Province, Costa Rica

Seizure of 2 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana* Appendix II), one boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 6 turtles, 6 black iguanas (*Ctenosaura similis*), and 12 tarantulas. Arrest in the street of 3 young people, including 2 minors. They were intending to exchange the reptiles and spiders for fish.²⁷

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

April 10, 2016

Atlanta, State of Georgia, United States of America

Seizure of an alligator (*Alligator* spp., Appendix II), 2 cobras (Elapidae family), one Gaboon viper (*Bitis gabonica*), one raccoon (*Procyon* genus) and marijuana. The man was released on bail for \$22,000 US.²⁸



OPERATION PONGO

April 27, 2016

Portland, State of Oregon, United States of America

Sentencing of 2 Malaysian citizens to 6 months in prison and \$ 25,000 US in fines for illegally importing orangutan skulls (*Pongo* spp., Appendix I), whale and dugong (*Dugong dugon*, Appendix I) bones, bear claws (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I and II), and other endangered animal parts in the State of Oregon. At the end of their prison sentences they will be placed under probation for a year, and have to complete 240 community service hours. Eoin Ling Churn Yeng, 35, and Galvin Yeo Siang Ann, 33, have operated an online wildlife business since 2004 (see "On the Trail" n° 11, p. 93 and n°12, p. 106). "A lot of people wonder why anyone would want an orangutan skull on their mantel." "The response is that people want what they cannot have," says a US Fish and Wildlife representative also an expert into social sciences. (Cf. also p. 45).²⁹



MEXICO

June 12, 2016

Ocosingo, State of Chiapas, Mexico

Seizure of one Geoffrey's spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*, Appendix II), and one margay (*Leopardus wiedii*, Appendix I) in the 39-D army barrack. They were transferred to Miguel Alvarez del Toro Zoo.³⁰

June 13, 2016

Allende, State of Nuevo Leon, Mexico

Sequestration of a lion without claws or teeth (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), 3 hamadryas baboons without teeth (*Papio hamadryas*, Appendix II), one geoffroy's spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*, Appendix II) and one very skinny guanaco (*Lama glama*, Appendix II). The "Continental Circus" was not immediately able to produce documents proving the legal origin of the animals who made circus games everyday.³¹



PARAGUAY

May 26, 2016

Asuncion, Paraguay

A report in Mercado 4 in Asuncion denounced the sale of illegal animals. The state of certain species is dire. Parrots, monkeys and turtles are crammed like stacks of dishes on shelves.

The vendors try to attract clients by offering them rare species, and "all the species that the client desires." A baby African ostrich (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I) is supposedly selling for the exorbitant price of 500,000 pesos (\$ 80,000 US) while on the Internet, they are 10 times less expensive. After the media's reports, the police launched an operation, seizing the animals.³²



PERU

May 24, 2016

Province of Maynas, Loreto Region, Peru

Seizure in an handicraft shopping center of 5 snake heads, 7 caiman heads, 4 boa heads, one jaguar pelt, 2 bracelets adorned with jaguar skin (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), 3 pelts and a drum with a little spotted cat's skin (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I), 14 snakeskin bracelets, one snakeskin wallet and one snakeskin keychain.³³



CHINA

Beginning of May, 2016
Yunnan province, China

Seizure of 18 live snakes of the genus *Elaphe*, 4 cobras including one king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II) measuring 3 m long, 8 leopard cat skins (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), one Siberian weasel skin (*Mustela sibirica*, Appendix III), and feathers of a Lady Amherst pheasant (*Chrysolophus amherstiae*) found in the suspects' cars and homes.³⁴

**May 5, 2016****Zengcheng District, Province of Guangdong, China**

Monitor lizard liquor (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix I), tokay gecko liquor (*Gekko gecko*) and crow pheasant liquor (*Centropus sinensis*); police seized 24 bottles in a distiller's home in January 2015. Liang, who fled from the police, returned some months later. He defended himself in front of the Tribunal but putting all of the blame on his sister who died in 2014. The Court did not take this alibi seriously. Liang was sentenced to 10 years in prison along with a fine of 50,000 yuans (\$ 7,700 US). He started trafficking in 2012.³⁵

**May 15, 2016****Guangyuan, Sichuan Province, China**

Seizure in a car of 2 bear paws (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I and II) and one dead pangolin (*Manis* spp., Appendix II). Two arrested.³⁶

May 19, 2016**Hong Kong, China**

Inspection of a limousine by customs in Shenzhen. Seizure of endangered animal parts, including 98.65 kg of ivory, 6.82 kg of hornbill beaks (*Bucerotidae* family) and 1.75 kg of agar wood (*Aquilaria malaccensis*, Appendix II). Customs estimate that the seizure was worth \$ 1.05 million HK (\$ 135,155 US). One of the passengers was arrested. He has been sentenced to 2 months jail and \$ 5000 HK fine.³⁷

**May 23, 2016****Wuhou, Province of Sichuan, China**

Sentencing of Yang Xiaoxiao, former actress, to 10 years in prison. She had set up, with the help of a friend, a commerce for wildlife objects, antique cups made of rhino horn, figurines of Buddhist divinities carved in ivory, all had been made recently, and hornbill helmets. Online business was good, for example 320,000 yuans (\$ 51,000 US) of profit could be gotten from one rhino horn cup and 810,000 yuans (\$ 130,000 US) for an ivory statue.³⁸

**Beginnig of June, 2016****Dalian Airport, Liaoning Province, China**

Customs, the Quarantine Bureau Airport Inspection, and airport control have seized from a Chinese passenger, one tiger pelt weighing 2 kg, 2 crafted ivory pieces, and 21 pieces of red coral. The flight came from Tokyo.³⁹

June 6, 2016**Yongjia County, Zhejian Province, China**

32 people with sentences ranging from 3-4 months suspended sentence, to 10-13 years in prison for having eaten or supplied legally protected animals (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 108). Ten restaurant owners are implicated. The biggest sentence of 13 years went to Kan, with his wife getting 6 years. Specialist in the bulk sale of sea products and wild boar meat, he had increased his offering to pangolins, which come illegally to Vietnam by the hundreds, both living and dead. He bought a kilo of pangolin for \$70 US and resold it for \$ 500 US. Other "exotic" products were marketed in secret. Giant salamanders and bear paws were considered delicacies for the customers.⁴⁰

**June 7, 2016****Fangchenggang, Autonomous Region of Guangxi, China**

Seizure in a bus of 60 live monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I and II) and 6 live pangolins (*Manis* spp., Appendix II). The bus driver is in police custody.⁴¹

June 13, 2016

Lok Ma Chau Customs, Hong Kong, China

Seizure in a truck of 2.5 kg of pangolin scales (*Manis* spp., Appendix II), 13 hornbill beaks (family Bucerotidae), 0.9 kg of shark fin, 3.8 kg of swallow nests and 51.9 kg of agarwood (*Aquilaria malaccensis*, Appendix II), with a total value of \$ 550,000 HK (\$ 70,795 US). Arrest of the driver. He had told customs that the back trailer of the truck was empty.⁴²



Cranorhynchus corrugatus

June 20, 2016

Yunnan Province, China

This is the largest instance of selling living and dead wildlife over the Internet ever seen in the province. Three leopard cat pelts (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix I and II) and 96 animals protected by Chinese law and CITES, namely monkeys and lemurs, have been seized.⁴³



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

April 2016

Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Construction of a rescue to house wild animals seized from individuals. The Environment and Protected Areas Authority is overwhelmed by the number of dangerous exotic animals that have been seized by its 18 inspectors since the beginning of this year. Fines imposed on those who resist giving up the right to their lions, tigers, leopards, serpents, alligators, scorpions and spiders during the amnesty period can reach more than \$ 27,000 US. And those who use animals for threatening or intimidation purposes risk a fine of \$ 191,000 US.⁴⁴

INDIA

April 6, 2016

**Ghauntri, Uttarkashi District, Uttarakhand State, India
Rebellion and seizure**

Five poachers were caught red handed with a leopard skin and swamp deer antlers (*Rucervus duvaucelii*, Appendix I) in bags while waiting for a night bus at the side of a road. They react with upper violence when encircled by a special anti-trafficking task force. The elite police first confronted stones, followed by gunfire. One of the policemen, a specialist in dismantling drug, alcohol and wildlife networks, was fatally shot in the chest after one of the bandits stole his firearm. The gang fled the scene.⁴⁵



April 11, 2016

Bhoramdeo Wildlife Sanctuary, State of Chhattisgarh, India

Death by electrocution of a man from the Baiga tribe, after touching a hunting trap. The Baiga tribe said they were there to collect honey.⁴⁶

The Baiga live in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand States. They are nomadic live stock herders, hunters and healers.



May 18, 2016

New Delhi, India

Arrest of one man in possession of an Indian black scorpion (*Heterometrus bengalensis koch*) and a green vine snake (*Ahaetulla nasuta*). He exhibited the venomous animals to entertain people and beg for some money. The scorpion and snake are under observation at Wildlife SOS and will be released back into the wild once deemed fit.⁴⁷



Between June 3 and 6, 2016

Deulti, State of West Bengal, India

The NGO Public (People United for Better Living in Calcutta) went on site to witness the damage and hunting bags following the Jyeshtha Amavasya celebration (the night of the new moon) in the forests of Midnapore district invaded by thousands of hunters and prowlers, an exclusively male crowd armed with knives, axes, bows and arrows and slingshots. Thousands of animals were targeted, captured, eaten or brought back alive to the villages and towns thanks to complicity of the Indian railways. On the roads' home, train stations of the Kharagpur-Howrah line were invaded by overexcited travelers carrying across shoulders their dead or live preys. Scenes of scorching of feasting were photographed on the Panskura train station's platforms. Activists from Public and the forest guards who were trying to retrieve the animals still alive were accused of being trouble makers by the stations directors and train workers. The few policemen called onsite didn't give out any fines of file reports. These kinds of orgies where are mixed together alcohol, violence, cooking and business happen again mid-April for the Boishak celebrations, new year in the Bengali calendar and in May for Budh Purmina celebrating Bouddha Gautama in the Purulia district, the same one where on 20 June 2015 a leopard was horrendously lynched (see "On the Trail" n° 9, p.51). Violence against animals has gone viral in the State of West Bengal.⁴⁸

Species identified by Public NGO (all of them are protected under Indian law).

Reptiles : Bengal monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), water monitor lizards (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II), yellow monitor lizards (*Varanus flavescens*, Appendix I), rat snakes (*Elaphe* spp.), bronzeback tree snakes (*Dendrelaphis tristis*), green vine snakes (*Oxybelis fulgidus*).

Mammals : jungle cats (*Felis chaus*, Appendix II), fishing cats (*Prionailurus viverrinus*, Appendix II), golden jackals (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III), common palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III), Indian grey mongooses (*Herpestes edwardsii*, Appendix III).

Birds : rose-ringed parakeets (*Psittacula krameri*, Appendix I), Indian Pittas (*Pitta brachyura*), bronze-winged Jacanas (*Metopidius indicus*), pheasant-tailed Jacanas (*Hydrophasianus chirurgus*), scaly-breasted Munias (*Lonchura punctulata*), white-rumped Munias (*Lonchura striata*), common Snipes (*Gallinago gallinago*), painted snipes (*Rostratulidae* spp.), painted storks (*Mycteria leucocephala*), green pigeons (*Treron*), flame-backed woodpeckers (*Dinopium benghalense*), jungle babblers (*Turdoides striata*), blue-throated kingfishers (*Halcyon malimbica*), black-hooded orioles (*Oriolus xanthornus*), stork-billed kingfishers (*Pelargopsis capensis*) and striated grassbirds (*Megalurus palustris*).⁴⁹



June 13, 2016

Dhemaji, State of Assam, India

Inside of the two homes of a Divisional Forest officer, anti-corruption police found a lot of cash, ivory in large quantities, other parts of legally protected animals, and incriminating documents confirming that he received from "businessmen" implicated in wildlife trafficking rewards in kind or money in exchange for bad turns or useful information about which the investigators are trying to find details.⁵⁰



June 24, 2016

Nacharam, Hyderabad City, State of Telengana, India

Nalgonda or the village of traps. No less than 160 new traps, with the addition of various materials necessary to manufacture them, have been seized in 20 houses by an anti-poaching team. The traps don't discriminate. They take any one who passes them, from hares to sloth bears. By manufacturing them, one risks up to 3 years in prison and a fine of 25,000 rupees. The owners fled as State police approached.⁵¹



REPEATED OFFENSE

June 26, 2016

Chatrapatti, State of Tamil Nadu, India

The accused are members of the nomadic Narikurava tribe. One of them, Palani, has been wanted for a longtime. According to the local manager of the Forestry Office, he "takes care of a lot of pangolins". He has connections in Burma.⁵²



One leopard pelt, one axis deer pelt (*Axis axis*), 2 elephant tusks pieces and 3 deer antlers.

INDONESIA

April 15, 2016

Sorong, West Papouasie Province, Indonesia

Seizure of 2 yellow-crested cockatoo's (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I), 3 birds of paradise (*Paradisaeidae* spp., Appendix II), 3 wallabies (*Macropodida* family) and 106 animals from the trafficker's warehouse: green tree pythons (*Morelia viridis*, Appendix II), white-bellied sea-eagles blagres (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*, Appendix II), Papuan hornbills (*Rhyticeros plicatus*, Appendix II), palm cockatoos (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I), emerald monitors (*Varanus prasinus*, Appendix II). The suspect has admitted to supplying birds from Java to market sellers for over 20 years. He also supplied reptiles from the Philippines, such as the Mindanao water monitor (*Varanus cumingi*, Appendix II). They stopped at port cities in Bitung and Makassar before reaching Java Island. It was Australia that launched the investigation and reported the case to Interpol. In its report, Australia cited a student from the University of Bogor involved in the smuggling of reptiles in its territory in July 2015.⁵³

April 21, 2016

Singkawang, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Seizure in a store of 3 orangutan skulls (*Pongo* spp., Appendix I), 2 skulls, 24 claws, one paw and a tooth of a Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), pangolin scales, one pangolin cub (*Manis* spp., Appendix II), 2 hornbill beaks (*Bucerotidae* family), one ape skull (*Primates* spp., Appendix I and II), one stuffed turtle with one shell, one giant snail (*Achatina fulica*), 9 sambar deer antlers (*Cervus unicolor*), 2 muntjac deer antlers (*Muntiacus muntjak*), and 111 porcupine needles (*Hystricidae* spp.). Arrest of the trader. The seizure was conducted thanks to a report by the NGO Scorpion (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 110), which follows the sale of protected species in the province.⁵⁴

April 29, 2016

Bukit Pedusunan, Riau Province, Indonesia

Seizure of a tiger pelt, several pieces of dried snakeskin, a mix of tiger bones, a mix of bear bones (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I and II), and 2 bird skulls. Two arrested, including a certain Herman under the alias Man Bobok, 54 years old, who has been active in wildlife trading for at least 5 years. Bobok is a key link between poachers in Riau province, West Sumatra, Jambi and exporters. Estimated value: Rp 100 million (\$ 7,577 US).⁵⁵



April 30, 2016

Riau Province, and Jambi Province, Indonesia

Seizure of tiger skins and bones, bear bones (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I and II), hornbill beaks (*Bucerotidae* family), snake and lizard skins (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I and II). Three poachers arrested. They poached tigers in Jambi province and sold the skins in Riau province.⁵⁶

May 2, 2016

**Jatinegara, Jakarta, Indonesia
Special Capital Region of Jakarta**

Market Rawa Bening had a secret, a small 4m² cache only known by those in the know and full of antiques prohibited from sales: dugong's teeth, sticks, daggers, statuettes made in ivory, deer antlers, shark's skeletons. Rawa Bening is also called Chinatown.⁵⁷

June 22, 2016
Semarang, Java central
province, Indonesia



Sentencing to 9 months in prison of an illegal trader of wildlife species on the Internet. A sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), a binturong (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix III), a langur (*Trachypithecus* spp., Appendix I and II), 3 python snakes (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix II) and 13 peacocks (*Pavo* genus) were seized from his home. He faced a possible 5 years in prison.⁵⁸

MALAYSIA

April 11, 2016
Tok Bali, Kelantan State, Malaysia

Seizure on the port of frozen and living animals; turtles and civet cats (*Viverridae* family) with a value estimated by authorities to be 1,500,000 ringgits (\$ 385,008 US). Four men, including 2 Thai nationals were taken in for questioning while they were transferring the animals onto a fishing boat in the dead of night. The living animals were handed over to the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP). The dead are going to be burned.⁵⁹

April 23, 2016
Bintulu, Sarawak State, Malaysia

Seizure in a market of 6 Borneo short-tailed pythons (*Python breitensteini*, Appendix II), 3 tortoises, 2 tree shrews (*Tupaia* spp., Appendix II) and 2 parakeets. The tortoises were worth 15 ringgits (around \$ 4 US) each, the "ripong," a local name for the python, was worth 30 ringgits (\$ 7.63 US) per kg, the parakeets were also worth 30 ringgits each and the tree shrews 40 ringgits (\$ 10 US) each. Other animal parts like deer antlers and gall bladder were also sold at the market.

The common tree shrew (*Tupaia glis*, Appendix II) has the Malaysian name "tupai," which means squirrel. It is a tree dwelling animal. It sleeps in hollows in trees on dried leaves. The young like to comb their fur with teeth that are almost horizontal.⁶⁰



Tupaia belangeri

NEPAL

April to May 2016
Bajhang District, Far West Region, Nepal

Under the cover of authorized collecting of cordyceps (*Ophiocordyceps sinensis*), the mushroom that will make you intelligent, manly and flexible, cures tumors and deters illness, the gatherers poach snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I) and musc deer (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I) by the dozens. Pillaging of plants and disrupting of the soil is now coupled with pillaging the animal wildlife. Double profit, double trouble. People from the villages perched on the high mountain prairies at 3000 m high and more notice that poaching begins before the snow melts when the animals are quite visible and that their mobility is limited. The poaching season precedes by little the mushroom gathering season. Skins and mushrooms are exported to China mainland via Tibet. The highest quality *Ophiocordyceps* can be sold in Beijing pharmacies for 1000 yuans per gram, that is \$ 150 US.⁶¹



Cordyceps store in Lhasa, Tibet

REPEATED OFFENSE

June 16, 2016
Katmandou, Central Region, Nepal

Seizure of 109 tortoises weighing between 3 and 5 kg, and 162 parrots and parakeets. Mohammad Usman, an Indian citizen from Patna, benefits from the disorder that reigns in Katmandou. In his house were 274 cages, boxes, bowls, and as many utensils as necessary to maintain life for the birds and tortoises captured in the Indian State of Bihar and in Nepal. This is the 3rd time that he has been caught red handed for trafficking in the Nepalese capital (see "On the Trail" n° 6, p. 114).⁶²



THAILAND

April 3, 2016

Cha-am, Phetchaburi Province, Thailand

"Hello, I have collected a bird and 2 lorises from a market in Bangkok. I bought them and put them on a bus to Cha'am. Thank you for coming to pick them up upon arrival." That was the call that the WFFT received from their mysterious correspondent. In effect, the wildlife rescue is situated just a few kilometers from Cha'am. At the bus's arrival after its 6-hour voyage, the animal caretakers discovered that the "saved" from Bangkok traveled in appalling conditions. The 2 Bengal slow lorises (*Nycticebus bengalensis*, Appendix I) were in a dirty cardboard box with breathing holes. The white-crowned hornbill (*Berenicornis comatus*, Appendix II) shared the same fate. It was returned by forceps, wings clipped, in a miniscule cage. It was water-thirsty.⁶³



REPEATED OFFENSE

May 29 and June 8, 2016

Hua Hin, Province of Prachuap Khiri Khan, Thailand

Seizure from the city zoo of a hundred animal including 2 elephants, 2 tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), 5 Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I), 2 sun bears (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), a crocodile (*Crocodylus* spp., Appendix I or II), a fishing cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*, Appendix II) and 2 deers. Official documentation following each animal was blatantly fake and didn't match reality. The physical differences were evident and age differences impossible to not notice. One of the elephants is about 4 years old. His "passport" says he's 10. Another one about 17 is described as not

having tusks, yet he has a splendid pair. Profilers belonging to the "King of the Tigers" as this brigade is nicknamed, are still looking for the hole in the ear deemed a special feature according to the pachyderm identification papers.

The Hua Hin zoo had been suspected since 2014 of purchasing the protected wildlife through unlawful methods. Suspicions grew after theft of extremely rare Madagascar turtles from the Chon Buri rare birds refuge and breeding (see p. 17 of this issue).⁶⁴



June 14, 2016

Phetchaburi Province, Thailand



Two Asian small clawed otters (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix II), one male and one female, and one common palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*) are now cared by an NGO.⁶⁵

VIETNAM

April 8, 2016

Lam Dong Province, Vietnam

Seizure of 2 leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) and one king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II). Police discovered the animals while searching a bus coming from Da Lat to Dak-Lak. The driver pretended that a woman had given him the animals to drive to his destination. He only wanted to do her a favor.⁶⁶



June 2, 2016
Phu Quoc Island, Kien Giang
Province, Vietnam



Fine of \$180 US for the shopkeeper who was selling ivory trinkets and shells from green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I) and hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricate*, Appendix I). Beginning July 1st, the sanctions provided by the law will be reinforced.⁶⁷

June 10, 2016
Dong Trieu, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam
 Seizure of 2 live monkeys (*Primates* spp.) and 5 dead Asian small-clawed otter (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix II). Arrest of the driver, 28 years old.⁶⁸

June 13, 2016
Hanoi, Hoan Kiem District, Vietnam
 Seizure between northern Lang Son province and Hanoi (220 km), of one slow loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I), 4 black-breasted leaf turtles (*Geoemyda spengleri*, Appendix II), 35 frogs and one pangolin (*Manis* spp., Appendix II).⁶⁹

June 14, 2016
Lac Son, Hoa Binh Province, Vietnam
 Seizure of 2 live box turtles (*Cuora* spp., Appendix II) and 3 dead palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*). One woman received a fine of 6,000,000 dongs (\$ 270 US).⁷⁰



June 21, 2016
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
 Sentencing to 5 years in prison with a fine of 50 million dongs (\$ 2,424 US) for Phan Huynh Anh Khoa (23 years old). Nine Asian small-clawed otters (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix II) and one black-shanked douc (*Pygathrix nigripes*, Appendix I) have been seized from his home. He sold one single otter for 3.5 million dongs (\$ 157 US) and the douc for \$ 269 US. He bought the animals from a truck driver.⁷¹



EUROPE

ITALY

May 16, 2016
Milan, Lombardy Region, Italy

Seizure in the home of an Internet vendor, of 16 hunting trophies, including a caracal, and the heads and horns of Oryx's, African buffalos, wildebeests, antelopes, and impalas, put for sale on the website, Kijiji, eBays's branch. Each trophy came with information about its origin, the name of its killer, and a species profile. The only things missing were the sales permits.⁷²



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THE NETHERLANDS

April 29, 2016
Netherlands
Prohibition of Importing Hunting Trophies in the Netherlands

Marijn van Dam, serving as the Minister of Agriculture, informs the parliament of the prohibition to be taken into affect immediately of importing hunting trophies of about 200 species, including the African lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), the African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*, Appendix I and II), the Southern white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum simum*, Appendix I and II), the cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I), the leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), the hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II), and the polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*, Appendix II). This decision follows a recommendation by the national parliament. Europe, after the United States, is the second biggest importer of hunting trophies. Dutch authorities are wishing this measure be extending to the European Union.⁷³

UNITED KINGDOM

April 18, 2016

Thornaby, England, United Kingdom

Her bids were made on Ebay. Thanks to a search warrant, NWCU (National Wildlife Crime Unit) agents along with Cleveland police discovered, in the home of a 56 year old woman, 2 sperm whale teeth (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) and 2 carved elephant tusks which cannot be qualified as antiques. In terms of the tiger claws, the woman pretended that they came from an old tiger skin rug acquired before 1947. The claws have not been transformed into one work of art, and can't benefit from a derogation. The seller recognized her fault. Taking into account her previous history, she has only received a reprimand. All the trophies have been handed over to the police for disposal.⁷⁴

ebay



April 27, 2016

Hampshire, England, United Kingdom

Seizure of a sperm whale tooth (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I), a leopard skull, the skull of a large flying fox (*Pteropus vampyrus*, Appendix II), a caracal skull (*Caracal caracal*, Appendix I or II), and a pair of Dama gazelle horns (*Nanger dama*, Appendix I) being sold on the Internet. The 58-year-old man was interrogated and only reprimanded. Legal importation certificates validated other parts of protected animals.⁷⁵

ebay



Caracal caracal

May 12, 2016

Sedge Drove, England, United Kingdom

A 36-year-old man sentenced to an overall fine of £ 1245 (\$ 1820 US) for selling one saltwater crocodile skull (*Crocodylus porosus*, Appendix I and II), 3 skulls of the crab-eating macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*), and for being in possession of cannabis.⁷⁶



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June 17, 2016

West Cumbria, Cumbria County, United Kingdom

A young man presented himself as a businessman, but of funny affairs. He was charged for the possession and sale of prohibited ivory, and buying and selling one leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I).⁷⁷

OCEANIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

June 26, 2016

Honolulu, State of Hawaii, United States of America

Sentencing of Curtis Wilmington to a fine of \$ 40,000 US, 6 months in prison and to 5 months probation for having organized the manufacturing of necklaces made from tiger teeth and marine mammals. Sentencing of his enterprise Hawaiian Accessories Inc. to a fine of \$ 50,000 US and to 5 years under surveillance. Defenders of the animals say that the archipelago will become the first ivory market in the United States if nothing is done. However, the State's Governor has recently enacted a law prohibiting the sale of elephant ivory, rhinoceros horn, and the teeth and other parts of sharks. Native populations whose ancestral practices are protected by the Constitution may benefit from an exemption. Hawaiian Accessories was referring to this cultural heritage when he crossed the line (see "On the Trail" n°9, p.103 et n°12, p.11).⁷⁸



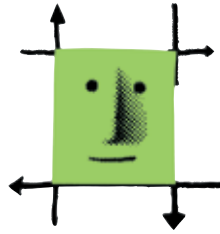
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ROBIN DES BOIS

