

ON the TRAIL

The defaunation bulletin
Quarterly information and analysis report on animal poaching and smuggling
n°24. Events from the 1st February 2019 to the 31 of March 2019
Published on November 13, 2019

Original version in French





"On the Trail", the defaunation magazine, aims to get out of the drip of daily news to draw up every three months an organized and analyzed survey of poaching, smuggling and worldwide market of animal species protected by national laws and international conventions.

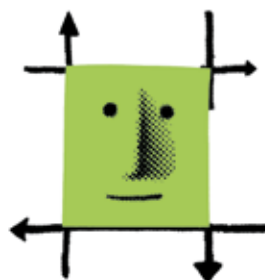
"On the Trail" highlights the new weapons of plunderers, the new *modus operandi* of smugglers, rumours intended to attract humans consumers of animals and their by-products. "On the Trail" gathers and disseminates feedback from institutions, individuals and NGOs that fight against poaching and smuggling. End to end, the "On the Trail" are the biological, social, ethnological, police, customs, legal and financial chronicle of poaching and other conflicts between humanity and animality.

Previous issues in English

<http://www.robindesbois.org/en/a-la-trace-bulletin-dinformation-et-danalyses-sur-le-braconnage-et-la-contrebande/>

Previous issues in French

<http://www.robindesbois.org/a-la-trace-bulletin-dinformation-et-danalyses-sur-le-braconnage-et-la-contrebande/>



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Banknotes "Bank of Extinction" on the cover and in this issue:

Julien Perreaut, extracts from the "Atlas du Business des Espèces Menacées" written by Robin des Bois and published on 9 October 2019 by Editions Arthaud.

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Judgment and sanction

Condemnation, acquittal, fine...



Human death

Guard, ranger, policeman, poacher... by firearm or other means.



Poisoning

By chemicals, pesticides and medicines: cyanide, Carbofuran, Diclofenac, M99 ...



Trapping

Poaching by jaw trap, snare ...



Full moon

Moonlight poaching

CITES Appendices

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

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

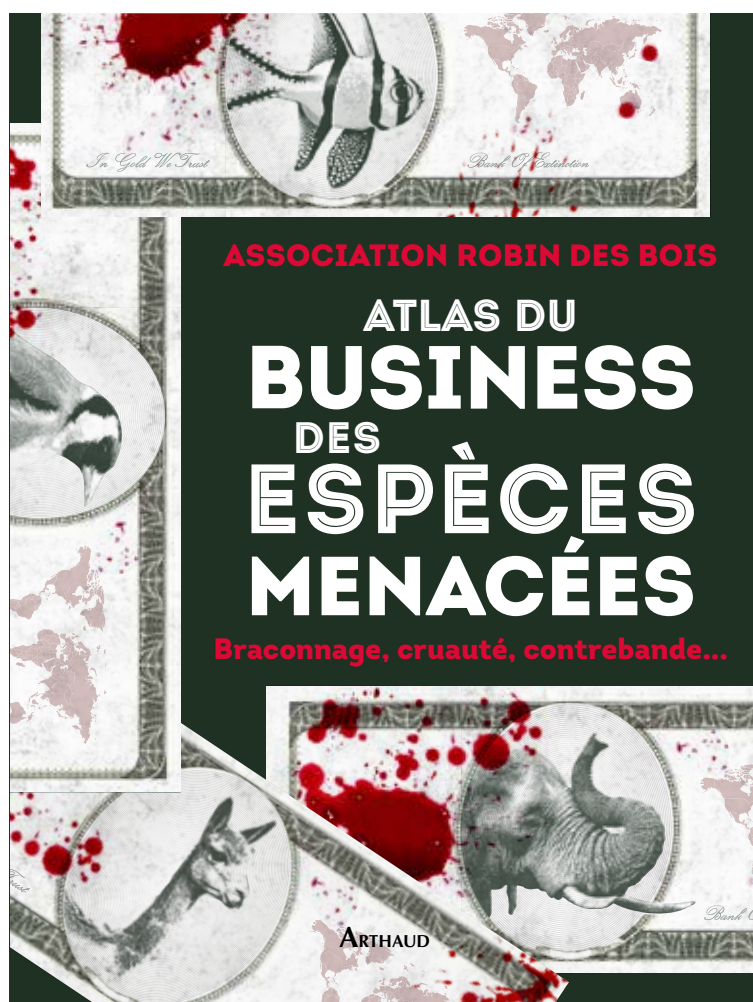
Appendix II : export permit required in order to avoid utilization incompatible with the species survival. Import permit if required by national law.

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.

CITES COP18 – Geneva

The 18th Plenary Conference of States Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) met in Geneva from 17-28 August 2019. 168 governments, 1700 delegates, observers and journalists participated in it. Robin des Bois, which has been a CITES observer for the past 30 years, was represented by Charlotte Nithart and Emilie Courtin. The work of Robin des Bois and its bulletin "On the Trail" were referenced in the proposals concerning Tokay geckos, Indian star turtles and tarantulas, and Robin des Bois's observers made a presentation on sea cucumbers, before the examination of the proposal to include three species in Appendix II, with Arnaud Horellou and Marie Di Simone of the French Natural History Museum, Daniel Fernando of the Sri Lanka delegation and Rosemarie Gnam, scientific authority of the United States of America. The NGO's main press releases issued during CITES are included in this issue of "On the Trail". A summary of all the discussions prepared by the International Institute for Sustainable Development is available in English at the following link: <http://enb.iisd.org/download/pdf/enb21101e.pdf>

In accordance with Article 15 of the Convention, unless otherwise provided, the amendments adopted in Geneva will come into effect 90 days after this session, i.e. on 26 November 2019. The 19th Conference of the Parties will be held in Costa Rica in 2022.



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On the Front Lines



AFRICA

NAMIBIA

March 16, 2019

**Etosha National Park and
Bwabwata National Park, Namibia**

Stress is on the rise in Namibia. The Namibian Defense Force (NDF) is on its guard. A helicopter participating in an anti-poaching operation was targeted by automatic weapons. In Tanzania in January 2016, a helicopter flying at low altitude above elephant carcasses was shot down by poachers; the pilot, Roger Gower, 37, was killed (cf. "On the Trail" n°12 p. 80).

The same day, in a land ambush, a ranger was killed. His identity has not been revealed.¹



NIGERIA

March 7, 2019

**Gashaka Gumti National Park,
Taraba State and Adamawa State,
Nigeria**

Death of ranger Joshua Manman, shot to death by a bullet in an ambush. The Gashaka Gumti park covers 6,500 square km. It is infested by illegal rosewood tree cutters and nomadic breeders.²



UGANDA

March 15, 2019

**Bwambara, Rukungiri District,
Western Region, Uganda**

The attempted arrest of George Sabiiti, ivory trafficker, went wrong. Three accomplices in ambush have fatally shot Philemon Asasira, 33 years old, an Uganda Wildlife Authority agent.



Sabiiti's 3 accomplices would also be agents of the UWA. Sabiiti, Jimmy Kisembo, Nicholas Niwanyijuka and Emmanuel Ewuku were all arrested.³

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

March 7, 2019

**Virunga National Park, North-
Kivu Province, Democratic
Republic of the Congo**

Death of Freddy Mahamba Muliro during a poachers' attack a few weeks after the reopening of the park. He is the 176th ranger in Virunga to die while carrying out his duties.⁴



TANZANIA

February 14, 2019

**Tarangire National Park, Manyara
Region, Tanzania**

Faustine Sanka, mayor of Gijedabung village, was found decapitated. He was a leader in the battle against poaching. He was victim to revenge. Limito Lebangu, living in the village, acknowledges having taken part in the murder. He gave over the names of his accomplices: Hamis Hussein, Miradi Hikidimu and Azizi.⁵



Seahorses and Pipefish



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

ASIA

CHINA

March 3 and 9, 2019

Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Pudong District, Autonomous Municipality of Shanghai, China

- Seizure of an 8 g dried seahorse from the luggage of an Ethiopian passenger.
- Seizure of 10 seahorses, with a total weight of 40 g, from the luggage of a passenger coming from Hong Kong.¹

March 20, 2019

Hong Kong West Kowloon Train Station, Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong.

Seizure of 30 dried seahorses from a passenger's luggage.²

INDIA

February 15, 2019

Manamalkudi, Pudokottai District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

The biggest seizure of pipefish (*Syngnathus* spp.) in India. In Arumugam, a 52-year-old fisherman was caught red handed with 1,600 dried specimens. He is likely to have a fine of 25,000 rupees (360 US\$) and up to 7 years in prison. The consumption of pipefish is presumed to fight against physical aging.³ Pipefish, cf. "On the Trail" n°4 p. 101, n°19 p. 3, n°19 p. 18.



Syngnathus acus

March 7, 2019

Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, Mumbai, State of Maharashtra, India

It is a first in Mumbai: a Chennai (Tamil Nadu) resident got caught at 2:30 in the morning while trying to board a plane headed for Kuala Lumpur with 30 kg of dried seahorses in his luggage. The 52-year-old man was suspected to be part of a trafficking network because 4 recent stamps appear on his passport. In South-East Asia, the price of dried seahorses reaches 2,500 to 3,000 US\$ per kilogram.⁴

INDONESIA

March 27, 2019

Yogyakarta International Airport, Special Region of Yogyakarta, Java Island, Indonesia

Seizure of 7,040 dried seahorses, 26 kg, in 2 cardboard boxes. L.B., 38, intended to bring them to Bangkok, Thailand, via Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on an Air Asia flight.⁵

Corals

ASIA

CHINA

February 20, 2019

Huanggang control station, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.

Seizure of a piece of stony coral (*Scleractinia* order, Appendix II) and a giant helmet (*Cassidix cornuta*). A passenger had brought them back from the Maldives to "make presents."¹

February 21, 2019

Xiamen International Airport, Fujian Province, China

Seizure of 2 branches of stony coral (*Madrepore* spp. Appendix II) and 2 giant helmets (*Cassidix cornuta*), with a total weight of 9.3 kg. They were hidden in the luggage of a passenger entering China.²

March 5, 2019

Yinchuan Hedong International Airport, Ningxia Province, China

Seizure of a 390 g piece of stony corals (order Scleractinia, Appendix II) in the luggage of a passenger arriving from Dubai. He said he found a "beautiful stone" on the beach and wanted to take it home to play with the kids.³

March 2019

Huanggang checkpoint, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.

Seizure of 40 corals (class Anthozoa).⁴

March 2019

Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China

5.2 kg of red coral seized (*Corallium rubrum*) in a package from the United States of America.⁵

March 2019

Dalian International Airport, Liaoning Province, China

Seizure of 100 pieces of red coral (*Corallium rubrum*) from a Japanese national's luggage.⁶

INDIA

March 16, 2019

Magilchi Puram, Thoothukudi District, Tamil Nadu State, India

It is the biggest seizure documented in the region. A fishkeeping store was holding alive 40 brain coral (*Faviidae* family, Appendix II), 10 stag-horn coral (*Acropora cervicornis*, Appendix II), 20 gorgonians (*Alcyonacea* order), 10 sponges and nearly 250 kg of dead coral. The owner was placed in custody, 2 accomplices were indicted, and investigators seek to identify the buyers. The surviving corals have been released in the evening in the Gulf of Mannar marine national park.⁷

Abalones

Haliotis spp.

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

February 1, 2019

Milnerton, Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of thousands of abalone and cooking equipment in a workshop. The value is estimated at 4.8 million rand, that is to say 353,000 US\$. Arrest of 2 suspects, 25 and 34 years old.¹

February 5, 2019

Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

One abalone, 100 abalones, 1,000 abalones, 100,000 abalones ... Through living on the abalones, wallowing in brutality and secrecy and dealing with the Chinese network, Julian Brown ended up driving a Ferrari, timing on one of his 60 collector's watches and getting 18 years in prison. His stooges Eugene Victor and Brandon Turner got 15 years. In June 2015 and April 2016, Julian Brown's charges of money laundering and obstruction of justice had been dropped. In 2019, he was convicted of violating the Marine Resources Protection Act, falsifying administrative documents, driving without a licence and trafficking in abalone. He lodged an appeal.²



During the trial / Before the trial

© The Elite Anti-Poaching Units And Combat Trackers

February 5, 2019

Athlone, Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of abalone worth 370,000 rand (27,200 US\$) in a Ford Ranger. The suspects, who were washing the car, fled upon arrival of police. Only one of them, aged 24 years, was arrested.³

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 4 and 14, 2019

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa

- Seizure order of 2 million rand (142,130 US\$) against Michael Norman (34 years old) and David Michael Bannister (48 years old). They were sentenced on 14 December 2018. They were at the top of an abalone trafficking network (see "On the Trail" no. 23, p. 8).

- Their accomplices André Johannes Minnaar (61 years old) and his 2 sons Rudolf Ibortus (41 years old) and Marthinus Gys (37 years old), were given a suspended sentence of 5 years for abalone poaching, money laundering and racketeering. Andre and Rudolph were also fined 100,000 rand (7,100 US\$).⁴



February 13 and 26, 2019

City of Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa

- Seizure of abalones. Value estimated to be 3,162,300 rand, which is 232,000 US\$. Arrest of Shiping Ye (age 27) and Meifang Lou (age 46), Chinese nationals. Release of Meifang Lou on bail for 60,000 rand (4,400 US\$). As for Shiping Ye, without a residence permit, he stays in prison.

- Sentencing of the 2 traffickers to a fine of 150,000 rand (11,000 US\$) for each and 7 years in prison with a preliminary 5 years probation. As the story goes, they have gone back to their country.⁵



February 18, 2019

Touwsrivier, Western Cape Province, South Africa

- Arrest not far from Cape Town of 2 men aged 31 and 37 who were driving a truck full of abalones on highway N1 headed for



Pretoria (a 13 hour drive). The shipment value is estimated to be 4.3 million rand (300,000 US\$).

- Arrest of 3 other suspects: Izak Strydom (age 42), Huhg Michael Stam (age 45) and Pieter Nel (age 32), released on a bail of 20,000 rand each (1,450 US\$). A warehouse was searched and 3 refrigerated trucks, commercial documents, and equipment were seized.⁶

February 21, 2019

Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

As part of a Phakisa operation ("Hurry-up")

- Seizure of abalones, fish, east coast rock lobsters (*Panulirus homarus*), oysters, mussels, crabs, and shrimps. Value estimated at 86,000 rand (6,320 US\$). Arrest of a 28-year-old man.

- Seizure of abalones from a store's freezer. Value estimated at 72,840 rand, which is 5,355 US\$.⁷

March 5, 2019

Paarl, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Abalone shelling, cooking and drying workshop. Seizure of numerous cases and bags full of abalones, 50 kg of salt, a stainless steel pot, gas bottles, portable stoves, shelves, and ladders.

Three suspects, aged 23, 25, and 27 years, were arrested. The counting of abalones is in progress.⁸



6 mars 2019

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of 983 kg of dried abalone estimated at 406,500 rand (29,000 US\$ or 29.5 US\$/kg), 68.9 kg of fresh abalone estimated at 103,350 rand (9,270 US\$ or 132 US\$/kg), equipment, firearms, ammunition and a luxury vehicle.⁹



Mid-March 2019

Malmesbury, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of abalone worth an estimated 500,000 rand, or 36,000 US\$. A 74-year-old man was questioned by the police but no one arrested.

Since December, at least 5 seizures of abalone worth several million rand have been carried out in the province.¹⁰

March 22, 2019

Hermanus, Western Cape Province, South Africa

Appearance of Tobani Njombela (44 years old) and Thandinkosi Ngqulovu. Both individuals were on the run since the arrest on 5 March 2018 of 20 suspects, including 9 members of the ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) for abalone trafficking (see "On the Trail" n°21 p. 9). Ngqulovu was arrested in October 2018 and Njombela on 21 March 2019.¹¹

March 29, 2019

Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Following up of "Little Rhino" operation (see "On the Trail" n°22 p. 7). Convictions for racketeering and exploitation of a warehouse for fishery products without authorization. Marshelle Blignaut (42) was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment. Jacobus Naumann (57 years old) and Petrus Smith (34 years old) at 24 years each. Frederick Nance (22 years old) at 27 years. William Nance (55) was sentenced to 18 months in prison or a fine of 20,000 rand (1,450 US\$). Morne Blignaut (48), was sentenced in September 2018 to 20 years in prison. Between July 2013 and August 2014, the gang's revenue would have reached 67.2 million rand, or 5 million US\$.¹²



March 2019

Lanzhou Zhongchuan International Airport, Gansu Province, China

Seizure of 3 clam pearl necklaces from flight VJ5126 coming from Nha Trang, Viet-Nam. Two necklaces were worn by tourists, the third was found in their luggage. Total weight: 246 g.²



March 29-31, 2019

Kumming Changshui International Airport, Yunnan Province, China

Seizure of 11 giant clams (*Tridacninae*, Appendix II), weighing a total of 4,529 g, in the luggage of 5 passengers arriving from Da Nang and from Nha Trang in Viet-Nam, from Bangkok in Thailand, and from Yangon in Myanmar.³

SRI LANKA

February 8, 2019

Hambantota, Southern Province, Sri Lanka

Arrest of a 56-year-old individual for illegally possessing about 6 kg of conch shells (*Strombus* genus).⁴

February 20, 2019

Kalpitiya, North Western Province, Sri Lanka

A 43-year-old man was arrested for transporting 24 conch shells (*Strombus* genus) on his motorbike.⁵

Clams and Conches

ASIA

CHINA

February 15, 2019

Guangzhou International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 2 giant clams (*Tridacna gigas*, Appendix II).¹



Tridacna gigas

Sea Cucumbers



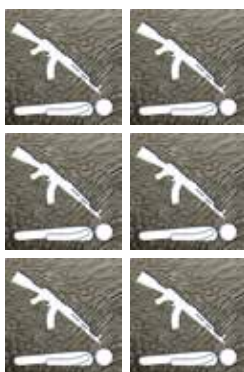
Class Holothuroidea. *Isostichopus fuscus* is listed under CITES Appendix III in Ecuador. See “A Sea Cucumber Ending” in “On the Trail” n°4, p.107.

AFRICA

MADAGASCAR

**March 20, 2019
Saint Augustin, Toliara II District, Atsimo-Andrefana Region, Madagascar**

One hundred looters raided a sea cucumber farm. When the police arrived, they open fired. The police who were called to the scene replied to the fire: 6 dead and one injured among the poachers, 3 arrested, one of which is a female teenager. “The fugitives vanished into the darkness.”¹



AMERICA

GUATEMALA

**February 26, 2019
Las Cruces, Petén Department, Guatemala**

Seizure in a truck among a shipment of corn of 169 bags and 326 crates containing sea cucumbers probably from Mexico. Arrest of the driver.²

MEXICO

FAMILY AFFAIRS

**March 13, 2019
Celestún, Yucatán State, Mexico**

Seizure of 500 kg of sea cucumbers, 500 kg of octopi (Octopoda order) and fishing gear from a warehouse near the port. Four arrests, including a father and his son.³

**Mid-March 2019
Mexico City, Mexico**

Seizure of 1,301 sea cucumbers and other species including seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II) from 2 buildings. Arrest of a foreigner.⁴



**March 30, 2019
Manzanillo, Colima State, Mexico**

12 t of sea cucumbers seized in a maritime container bound for Shanghai. The official shipment was meant to be “peanuts”. Collusion between the port officers and the traffickers is suspected.⁵



NICARAGUA

Mid-March 2019

Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua

Inspection by the National Marine of the *Tiburón*, Honduras flag, and seizure of sea cucumbers.⁶

PANAMA

Beginning of February 2019

Panama City, Panama

Seizure of 23 kg of sea cucumber in a car inside the harbor area. One arrest.⁷

ASIA

CHINA

February 27, 2019

Shuikou, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Vietnam.

1.8 tons of dried sea cucumbers seized from a truck, estimated to be worth 2 million yuan, that is to say 300,000 US\$ and 167 US\$/kg. It is the second biggest seizure of the year (cf. "On the Trail" n°23 page 9).⁸

INDIA

REPEATED OFFENCE

February 1, 2019

Thalaithoppu coast, Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu State, India

152 kg of sea cucumbers (*Holothuria scabra*) seized. Value estimated: 1,064,000 rupees, which is 14,950 US\$, (98 US\$/kg). M. Gope, 40 years old, reported buying them from local fishermen. The batch was intended to be smuggled to Sri Lanka, then to be exported to Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore.⁹



March 12, 2019

Mudivaithanendal, Thoothukudi District, Tamil Nadu State, India

Mansur Ali (30 years old) was on the scene when the maritime police came to seize 1.5 t of sea cucumbers stored in bags and plastic bins. The plot belongs to a certain Ramar. Mansur Ali is questioned by the police.¹⁰



March 12, 2019

Pullandai, Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu State, India

Mr. Samsudeen (36 years old) was heading for the Devipattinam port when his SUV was checked by the maritime police. He was transporting in 13 jute bags 400 kg of dried sea cucumbers that he had bought from Thoothukudi fishermen. The destination of the cargo was Sri Lanka. The trafficker was put in pre-trial custody and his vehicle was seized. The sea cucumbers should have been destroyed.¹¹

SRI LANKA

February 15, 2019

Sinnapadu, North Western Province, Sri Lanka

16 sea cucumbers and one lobster seized from a small inflatable boat. Three people arrested.¹²

February 18, 2019

Kalpitiya, North Western Province, Sri Lanka

598.1 kg of sea cucumbers and a Defender vehicle seized. Arrests of 2 men aged 42 and 44 years.¹³

EUROPE

FRANCE

February 13, 2019

Figari, South Corsican Department, France

A first for "On the Trail": 200 kg of sea cucumbers, a pleasure boat and snorkeling equipment seized. The living specimens were put back into the sea. Three people were heard by the maritime police force.¹⁴



OCEANIA

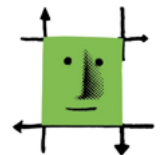
FRANCE

End of November 2018 – additional information to n°23

Nouméa, South Province, New Caledonia, France

Seizure of 2.6 tons of sea cucumbers or "bêches-de-mer" or holothurians at Natural Product Export headquarters. Estimated value of 141,000 € (54 US\$/kg). One of the managers is a Fijian national. Scheme of the traffic: purchase from poachers, many specimens under legal size. Storage and cooking in violation of hygiene regulation.¹⁵

CITES COP18 – Geneva
Press release n°3, August 25, 2019
Sea cucumbers : CITES takes into account the lower class



After 17 years of discussions, pillaging and smuggling, three first species of sea cucumbers were listed this morning in CITES' Appendix II to control their international trade : teatfish.

Found in the Pacific and Indian oceans as well as in the Red Sea, the species which main feature are small protrusions called teats live in shallow waters where they can be easily taken to be eviscerated, cooked, dried, salted or freezeed and then sold under the name of "bêche de mer". They are eaten mainly fried, with a sauce or in a soup in continental China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore as well as in South Korea and Malaysia.

Teatfish are among the most sought-after sea cucumber species because they're the most expensive, up to 400 US\$ a kilogram. Decline of their population leads fishermen to dive always farther to catch them and mortal accidents become more and more frequent. Member States of CITES will now contribute to protect these species essential for sea grass beds, lagoons and coral reefs. The proposal presented by the European Union, the United States, Senegal, Kenya and the Seychelles was supported by Chile and Australia. Tonga, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea made their opposition known, along with China who considers that the main threat to sea cucumbers is global warming and not trade. China asked for a secret ballot.

The proposal was accepted with 108 votes in favour, 30 against and 7 abstentions, with a 12-month delay before the coming into effect of Appendix II.

CITES is often blamed for only caring about powerful and charismatic animals; teatfish were the ideal candidates to prove this wrong. In the future, Robin des Bois wishes that other sea cucumbers species will be taken into account by CITES.

Mako sharks, guitarfish and 10 other ray species were also listed in CITES' Appendix II this morning.



CITES CoP18 - Geneva
Communication of 19 August 2019
Marine ornamental fish

The proposal presented by Switzerland, the European Union and the United States to create a dedicated working group to study the global trade of marine ornamental fish was accepted by consensus despite unfavourable annotations from Canada, Japan and industry members of the NGO Ornamental Fish International. The Franz Weber Foundation reminded that fishing for aquariums is sped up by globalization of trade and this is adding to other anthropogenic pressures on the environment. This business of ornamental fish, which are mostly trapped in tropical reefs, brings in more than 1.4 million € per year. One of the main victims of this practice is the Banggai cardinal fish from Indonesia. Venezuela expressed the interest that in the future, CITES should also be engaged in freshwater ornamental fish issue.

Fishes

AMERICA

BRAZIL

February 11, 2019

Atalaia do Norte, Tabatinga, Benjamin Constant, São Paulo de Olivença, Amaturá and Santo Antônio do Itá, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Seizure of more than 18 t of fish and bushmeat, including 10 t of piracatinga (*Calophysus macropterus*), 4 t of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), 4.6 t of other fish and 100 kg of bushmeat. Some of the shipment was destined for export to Colombia and Peru, the rest was to be sold on local markets. The seizure was given to charities.¹

February 10-15 and 26-28, 2019

Paranaguá, Guaratuba, State of Paraná, São Lourenço do Sul, State of Rio Grande do Sul and Cabo Frio, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Violations of fishing regulations:

- Seizure of 10 t of fish, which included 332 rio skates (*Rioraja agassizii*), one spotted eagle ray (*Aetobatus narinari*), and 3 Brazilian guitarfish (*Rhinobatos horkelii*, not listed under CITES). Among the encountered irregularities: the sale of red grouper (*Epinephelus morio*) and bluefish (*Pomatomus saltatrix*) during the closed fishing period, the transport of endangered species to other States and companies operating without an license. The Brazilian guitarfish *Rhinobatos horkelii* measures about 140 cm long and is endemic to the Southern coast of Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina. Because of their breeding in shallow waters and their tendency to remain at the bottom, she is very vulnerable to trawling. Off the coast of Rio Grande du Sol, the total catch of Brazilian guitar fish was 842 tons in 1975, 1804 tons in 1984, and collapsed to 157 tons in 2001.

- Seizure in 5 cold rooms of 15 tons of fish, which included anglerfish (*Antennariidae*), also called frogfish, tilefish (*Lopholatilus villarii*), sole, mullet, and a 220 kg Atlantic blue marlin (*Makaira nigricans*). Overall fine of 814,100 reais, (207,300 US\$). The blue marlin measures up to 5 meters in length, its upper jaw is sword-shaped. As adult, he is a solitary fish. Off the coast of Brazil, he is targeted by recreational fishing and he is among the by-catches of the small-scale longline flotilla. He has a 20-year lifespan.

- 640 kg of fish taken in a refrigerated truck on the BR-101. Among them, there were catfishes (genus *Genidens*), common meagres (*Argyrosomus regius*), and pompano soles (*Trachinotus carolinus*).

- Seizure off the coast of Cabo Frio of 5 boats, with a total value of 4 million reais (107,800 US\$). 100 kg of sardines were released to the sea.

The edible fish were donated to charities.²

February 15 and 22, 2019

Manaus Port, State of Amazonas, Brazil

- 3.2 t of fish taken on board the *PP Maues*, including arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), pacu (*Myleus pacu*), and sardinas (*Triportheus angulatus*), a fish from the Amazon basin with an average length of 15 to 18 cm. *PP Maues* came from Tapua, 760 km upstream of Manaus. Three arrests.

- Seizure of 965 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima giga*, Appendix II) and 24 kg of blackfin pacu (*Colossoma macropomum*). Interrogation of the boat's boss.³



February 18 and 27, and March 12, 2019

Santana, Amapá State, Brazil

- Seizure aboard a boat of 130 kg of atipa (*Hoplosternum littorale*) known as bosko in French Guiana. The bosko looks like a prehistoric plated fish. Its average length is 20 cm. After veterinary inspection, the loot will be given to charities. Atipa fishing is forbidden during its reproduction period.

- Seizure of 44 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) from the port. The meat is no more edible. It was dropped in a landfill.

- Seizure of 700 kg of fish, including batro manki (*Auchenipterus nuchalis*), threespot leporinus (*Leporinus friderici*), oearl cichlid (*Geophagus brasiliensis*), and gold wolf fish (*Hoplerthrinus unitaeniatus*). One arrest. The fish, after survey, will be given to charity.⁴



Anhinga eating one bosko

March 5, 2019

Manaus, State of Amazonas, Brazil

The van was overflowed with dried arapaima (*Arapaima giga*, Appendix II), divided into 27 bags, on Lourenco Braga Avenue. Arrest of the driver (60 years old).⁵

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

March 19, 2019

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

Appearance of Joshua Seguire, 38 years old.

In July 2017, he was arrested with 5 sharks in a tub at the back of his truck. He was going to deliver them via the platform MonsterFishKeepers.com. One month later, 7 living grey sharks were found in an aquarium at his residency along with 2 dead leopard sharks (*Triakis semifasciata*) and a dead hammerhead shark (Sphyrnidae family) (cf. "On the Trail" n°18 p.10). The 7 sharks were left with the New York Aquarium. A grey shark trades for about 11,500 US\$ on the legal market.⁶

HONDURAS

Mid-March, 2019

Cayos Cocorocuma, Department of Bahia Islands, Honduras

Seizure of shark fillets divided into 20 bags and 12 plastic barrels, of one barrel containing about 100 young sharks and forbidden nets. Arrest of 13 fishers.

In January, the national navy had already seized about 500 kg of hammerhead sharks from this Caribbean sanctuary where shark fishing is forbidden.⁷

ASIA

CHINA

March 10, 2019

Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Pudong District, Autonomous Municipality of Shanghai, China

Seizure of 122 swim bladders of totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) from the luggage of a pregnant woman coming from Mexico. She worked in a Mexican restaurant for 3 months. The shipment is estimated at at least 1.5 million US\$. She was ready to take an internal flight to Jieyang (Guangdong Province). Recruiting pregnant women, who might be less controlled and are subject to a certain leniency in the case of an arrest, is a classic tactic used by smugglers. Shanghai Pudong International Airport, cf. pages 6 and 76.⁸



GANG

March 2019

Jiangmen, Guangdong Province, China

11 people are pursued for having imported and trafficked swim bladders of totoabas from Mexico. The value of the traffic is equal to 119 million US\$. The gang, led by Liang Weihua, was operating for over 3 years and was smuggling items via Cambodia, Laos, and Viet-Nam.

One swim bladder of totoaba can reach 20,000 US\$ on the black market in China. They are deemed to be delicatessen for their invigorating properties. They happen to be framed and exposed in the living rooms.⁹

INDIA

March 25, 2019

Mahul, Mumbai Suburban District, State of Maharashtra, India

A young, 3-m long whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II) was found dead at the bottom of a creek, tail and fins cut. According to N. Vasudevan, head conservator of the "Mangrove" unit of the Department of Forests, it is unlikely that the shark would have washed up and then someone cut its fins. The investigation is directed more towards illegal sea fishing and the casting up of the carcass.¹⁰

EUROPE

GERMANY

GANG

February 2, 2019

Liederbach am Taunus, Hesse Land, Germany

The searching of a local Chinese restaurant that has been closed since 2015 was successful: 210,000 glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) divided into 4 tanks equipped with pumps and filters, accessories for transporting live glass eels, and 50,000 € in cash. The survivors were released into the Rhin. Thousands of dead



glass eels were found in a polystyrene crate. Arrest of two Malaysian nationals and one Chinese national, aged between 27 and 38 years old. The investigation was opened after 2 seizures of glass eels at the Frankfurt airport (cf. "On the Trail" n°23 p. 15).¹¹

BULGARIA

February 15, 2019

Sofia International Airport, Sofia City Province, Bulgaria

Inspection of a shipment of 90 polystyrene containers weighing about 1,010 kg heading to Malaysia. In the middle of the silver carps that were declared in the official documents, customs found 200 kg of 7 to 8 cm silver eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II), that is more than 600,000 specimens. Still living, they were urgently transported to the Varna aquarium. Their future is uncertain.

The shipment arrived from another European country, the name of which remains unknown. The shipper appeared to have been granted a license for glass eel fishing. He would have infringed upon the European regulations by attempting to export them to a third country. A similar case took place in 2015 (cf. "On the Trail" n°8 p. 6). The shipment had been sent from Spain.¹²



CROATIA

February 6, 2019

Zagreb International Airport, Zagreb County, Croatia

Two South Korean nationals (aged 38 and 47 years) attempted to board a plane with 8 suitcases full of 252,000 glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II), about 86 kg. The value is estimated to be 3 million Kuna, that is to say 462,000 US\$ (5,380 US\$/kg). The fry were put under the good care of the Zagreb zoo.¹³

SPAIN

Beginning of March 2019

Comarca Campo de Gibraltar, Province of Cádiz, Autonomous community of Andalusia, Spain

Seizures of 760 kg of Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*)

- 161 kg divided into 31 cases in a refrigerated van on the occasion of a road-side check on highway A-7. Bits of chopped up fish were marked with initials in order to differentiate the fillets and the tuna belly.

- 16 Atlantic bluefin tuna in a fishing boat off the coast of Tarifa.

The captures, after veterinary inspection, were handed over to the region's food bank.¹⁴

End of March 2019

Hormigas Islands Marine Reserve, Carthage, Region of Murcia, Spain

Arrest of people caught in the act of illegal fishing. Seizure of octopi and several tons of common dentex, a species considered vulnerable by the IUCN. The seizure was given to one charity.¹⁵

FRANCE

February 12, 2019

Departments of Loire-Atlantique and Charente-Maritime, France

Seizure of 20 kg of glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II), which is about 66,000 specimens. A nocturnal operation coordinated in Loire-Atlantique and Charente-Maritime resulted in 18 inspections and 8 reports against professional fishers. They held a license to catch eel glasses but they failed to meet their declarative obligations (date, amount of catches,...). They will be prosecuted. These actions should be renewed during February and March to maintain pressure on the poachers. Cf. "On the Trail" n°23 page 16.¹⁶

March 8 and 11, 2019

La Faute-sur-Mer and Les Sables d'Olonne, Vendée Department, France

- New operation against glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) poaching. Five individuals fled when caught red handed. One of them crashed into a police vehicle. He made an immediate appearance, and was given an 18 months suspended prison sentence and a 5,000 € fine.
- Seizure of 5 kg of glass eels from another poacher. They were put back in the water. The man should be tried on September 4.¹⁷



March 20, 2019

Nantes, Loire-Atlantique Department, France

Seizure of 6kg of glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II). Two men, aged 39 and 36, caught red-handed at the Saint-Félix lock.¹⁸

March 20, 2019

Gironde Department, France

Dismantling of a glass eel trafficking (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) between France, Spain and Morocco, with Asia as its final destination. Arrest of 5 poachers, a professional fisherman and a fishmonger. Seizure of 150,000 € of criminal assets (cars, cash,...) and a small quantity of fish larvae. This is the epilogue of an investigation that brought together the Spanish, Portuguese and French police forces. They used the usual methods of drug networks tracking.¹⁹

Marine Mammals



AFRICA

GABON

February 19, 2019

Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Seizure of 26 humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*, Appendix I) bones and a jar of whale fat.



Moungonga Aurélien ordered the whale bones from Mavoungou Célestin and Moukagni Hugues, habitants of Mayumba, which is 200 km south of Libreville on the Atlantic Ocean front. To the south of the little village, which is also home to a new industrial port, the Mayumba marine national park takes pride in the presence of humpback whales between June and October. The transporter Mambary Christ Junior, following a financial dispute with the 3 dealers who refused to pay him, got in touch with the police to settle the dispute. The 4 individuals were arrested.¹



AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

March 21, 2019

Anchorage, State of Alaska, United States of America

Lee John Screnock (58) is charged with selling, under the name of "Arctic Treasures", hundreds of objects allegedly carved by Alaskan native tribes when he was actually the one making them and illegally selling a polar bear skull (*Ursus maritimus*, Appendix II) and an oosik, the penis bone of a walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada).²

CANADA

February 2019

Madeleine Islands, Quebec province, Canada

Each professional herring fisher could be allowed to kill 6 grey seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) per season. The ministry of Fishing and Oceans currently studies the idea. Fishers accuse the seals of being primarily responsible for the shortage of herrings.

"Fishers raise the nets as quickly as possible. If we leave them in the water for too long, we might only have fish heads in them." says a representative of fishers in New Acadia.

In addition to the opposition of a part of the national and international opinion about seal hunting, herring fishers come up against an unexpected difficulty: there are not enough "sustainable seal-hunting" trainers. One is a butcher, and the other is an entrepreneur. They do not have the time to share their knowledge.³



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

March 2019
Alaska State, United States of America

Some parliamentarians tabled a federal bill that prevent the



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States from banning the trade of walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada) ivory and other marine mammal products. According to them, the trade of walrus and mammoth ivory, whale bones, and other parts of marine mammals were wrongly associated with elephant ivory trade. When a federal law was promulgated in 2016 forbidding the trade of elephant ivory, many States went further and included the other types of ivory. Alaskan artisans say they have been negatively affected by these decisions. Through elected officials, they hope to put an end to the "confusion created by other States' laws" and to send the message that "the walrus population is healthy and does not warrant the qualification as a protected species."⁴

March 20, 2019
Canal Lynn, Juneau, Alaska State, United States of America

Beaching of a male sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) who was 14.6 m long. No plastic in his stomach, only squid beaks. It seems to have been victim to a collision with a ship. When the officials from Alaska's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration showed up for a second autopsy, they observed that the lower jaw supporting about thirty ivory teeth had mostly been cut out. It is the third sperm whale beaching in Alaska since 2006.⁵



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MEXICO

March 9, 2019
Le Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico

Poaching of 4 California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*) in the Parque Nacional Archipiélago de Espíritu Santo.⁶

ASIA

CHINA

February 11 and 22, 2019
Chanxing Peninsula, Liaodong Bay, Liaoning Province, China

- One hundred young spotted seals (*Phoca largha*), including some that were not yet weaned, were discovered by the police in a remote chicken breeding farm in the mountains on the peninsula. 61 survivors and 39 dead. The appraisal is not definitive. They come from the bay's wild population. Knowing that about 200 spotted seals are born per year in the bay, this taking could have grave consequences for the resilience of the population. Eight arrests and 4 search warrants. All are local fishermen.



© Zhou Jinfeng/CCTV

- On February 22, Liu Mingshu and Liu Yan Hui surrendered to the police. Male seals were hunted for their genital parts, which supposedly increase sexual performance. These genital parts were sold for 10,000 to 30,000 yuan, which is 1,500 to 4,466 US\$. Recently, females and babies were also taken from their natural habitats by poachers to respond to the rising demand from aquatic zoos, which multiply in cities.⁷

March 2019
Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, China

Seizure of a package coming from Canada containing 34 sperm whale teeth buried in foam and described as "crafts". The next day, a package also coming from Canada and sent to the same destination contained 14 other sperm whale teeth. In total, the 48 teeth weighed 7.157 kg.⁸



© Chinese customs

EUROPE

GERMANY

February 6, 2019
Taucha, State of Saxony, Germany

Seizure of a South American fur seal (*Arctocephalus australis*, Appendix II) skull in a postal package coming from Uruguay.⁹



© W. Dumbleton

SPAIN

March 6, 2019

Bermeo Port, Biscaye, Autonomous Community of Pays Basque, Spain

Inspection of a boat at the Bermeo Port. Marine mammal meat, in all likelihood from dolphin (*Delphinidae* family), as well as firearms that are forbidden aboard were seized. During the inspection, the captain tried to get rid of his suspicious cargo by throwing it overboard. He will likely face fines and a penal sentence. The interrogation is in progress. In France, such an offence is punishable by three years' imprisonment and a fine of 150,000 €. ¹⁰

FRANCE

End of February, March 10 and 18, 2019

Concarneau and Trégunc, Finistère Department, France

-Discovery of a seal head attached to a rope in front of the harbor master's office in Concarneau, of a decapitated body 2 weeks later in the Cabellou cove, then of another beheaded bodies in Trégunc. "It could be a matter of seals taken in fishing nets, but that does not explain the decapitation" says the head investigator. A call for witnesses was launched.
- Court summoning of a fisherman and a ship owner. The sailor recognizes to have decapitated 2 seals and to have kept their heads to naturalize them. The ship-owner is prosecuted for not declaring his unintentional seal fishing. The hearing will take place in January 2020. ¹¹

ICELAND

February 19, 2019

Iceland

New whaling quota: 2000 fin whales (*Balaenoptera physalus*, Appendix I) and Minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*, Appendix I or II) in 5 years, which is 209 fin whales and 217 Minke whales each year until 2023.

The consumption of whale meat is anecdotal. The meat is sold in Japan. It is transported between Iceland and Japan through the northeast passage, aboard the *Azure Coast* (ex-*Winter Bay*) operated by a European ship-owner. The pursuit of whaling may have a negative impact on tourism. ¹²

Various Marine Species

EUROPE

SPAIN

End of March 2019

Tenerife Island, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain

Seizure, from a farm, of a stuffed loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*, Appendix I), 2 sea turtle shells, one of which was painted, one seahorse (*Hippocampus spp.*, Appendix II), several fragments of different species of corals and fragments of shellfish. A 65 year old man is investigated. ¹

ITALY

March 21, 2019

Guglielmo Marconi International Airport, Bologna, Province of Bologna, Emilia-Romagna Region, Italy

Seizure in the luggage of 2 passengers of 1.65 kg of sturgeon caviar (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) and 5 stony corals (order Scleractinia, Appendix II). The first was a Russian national coming from Moscow, the second arrived from Havana, Cuba. They were each fined 5,000 € (5,693 US\$). ²



See also the Multi-species chapter:

- p.89, 25 February and 7 March 2019, Mannady, India: syngnaths, gills of mantas and mobulas rays, shark fins, seahorses and sea cucumbers in particular.
- p.88, 24 February 2019, checkpoint Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong: abalone, sea cucumbers and swim bladders....

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*), loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) and leatherback turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*).

AFRICA

FRANCE (MAYOTTE)

March 30, 2019

Saziley Beach, Mayotte Department, France

Discovery of 4 poached sea turtles on an egg-laying beach. The turtles were tied up and chopped up alive. "This is not a small scale activity" according to Michel Charpentier, president of the Mahoran naturalists. "To sell 250 kg of meat, there must be a good network." The value of the meat is estimated to be between 4,000 and 10,000 €, which is between 16 and 40 €/kg (18-45 US\$/kg).¹



AMERICA

MEXICO

Mid-February 2019

Salina Cruz, Oaxaca State, Mexico

Abandonment of at least 700 olive Ridley turtle eggs on the roadside of Pinotepa Nacional-Salina Cruz road. The poachers fled upon arrival of the police.²

End of February 2019

Tehuantepec, Oaxaca State, Mexico

Seizure of 3,000 olive Ridley turtle eggs. A 36-year-old woman transported them in cardboard boxes and buckets in a bus.³

End of March 2019

Salina Cruz, Oaxaca State, Mexico

Seizure of 900 sea turtle eggs in a passengers van, also on Pinotepa Nacional-Salina Cruz road. The eggs were buried again on the beach.⁴

NICARAGUA

February 23, 2019

Perlas Lagoon, Autonomous region of the Southern Caribbean Coast, Nicaragua

During an investigation aboard the *Capt Tucker*, a patrol seized a hawksbill turtle. Maltreated but still living, she was released into the sea.⁵



ASIA

CHINA

March 6, 2019

Luohu District, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province

Customs seized a broken hawksbill turtle shell (4,390 g) from a woman's luggage.⁶

INDIA

REPEATED OFFENSE

February 11, 2019

Off the coast of Ekakula, Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, Odisha State, India

Boarding and search of a trawler for illegal fishing in a "no fishing zone." Seizure of 3 olive Ridley turtles, one of which was dead, 200 kg of fish, of the vessel with 16 fish nets, a GPS, communication devices, and a sonar fish detector. Arrest of 10 fishermen. Release on bail was denied.

The trawler belongs to Niranian Mandal, a member of the "Dhamara fishing mafia." He operates 14 trawlers. He is accused of regularly violating the Wildlife Protection Act. His boats were seized several times in the last 2 years.

The 2 living turtles were released.

According to official sources, 1,368 turtle carcasses were found on the beaches of the marine sanctuary between 2017 and mid-February 2019.⁷

INDONESIA

March 13, 2019

Ketewel, Gianyar Regency, Bali Province, Bali Island, Indonesia

Seizure in a SUV of 13 green turtles aged between 30 and 50 years, on Ida Bagus Mantra road. The owner is searched for.

The turtles were sent to the Serangan conservation center.⁸

MALAYSIA

February 6 and 18, 2019

Ligitan and Tawau Islands, Sabah State, Malaysia

- Arrest of 3 Filipino poachers without identification papers. Six green turtle shells seized.

- Conviction of the traffickers, whose identities are at last known: Kismary Rismaru (18 years old), Butlayan Tabiyanan (19 years old), and Abdu Gahni Awan, to 2 years in prison and a 60,000 ringgits (15,000 US\$) fine.⁹



SRI LANKA

February 14, 2019

Delft, Jaffna District, Sri Lanka

Seizure of a living turtle in a bag. Arrest of the man who was transporting her by bicycle.¹⁰

February 23, 2019
Wellamadama, Southern Province, Sri Lanka

Seizure of 60 eggs. A man arrested (50 years old).¹¹



THAILAND

March 26, 2019

Bang Saphan District, Prachaup Khiri Khan Province, Thailand

Beached green turtle measuring 60 cm tall, 64 cm long and weighing 18 kg. In a state of decomposition, she was suffocated to death by a fishing net.¹²

VIET NAM

March 14, 2019

Con Dao National Park, Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, Con Son Island, Viet-Nam



81,137 nest baby sea turtles were released on nesting beaches after hatchery incubation. Con Son Island is situated about 70 km south of Viet-Nam.¹³

EUROPE

SPAIN

February 6, 2019

Gran Canaria, Canary Islands Autonomous Community, Spain

Seizure of a loggerhead turtle shell (*Caretta caretta*, Appendix I) in a restaurant. The owner had used it as "decoration".¹⁴

ITALY

March 17, 2019

Pellaro & Le Castella, Province of Crotone, Calabria Region, Italy

Attempt to rescue a loggerhead turtle entangled in a fishing line, with bits of wood and a bicycle wheel. Life prognosis pessimistic.¹⁵

A loggerhead turtle was found dead, its mouth full of plastic.¹⁶

OCEANIA

FRANCE (FRENCH POLYNESIA)

February 23, 2019

Motu Uta Port, Papeete, French Polynesia Overseas Collectivity, France

35 kilos of frozen turtle meat were discovered on a boat by a customs patrol. A kilo of turtle meat sold at a local market wavers between 4,000 and 9,000 pacific francs (38-86 US\$).

"Despite the prevention campaigns aimed at the general public and high fines for poachers, turtle hunting does not seem to diminish on our islands," regrets the regional Direction of customs. Poachers' most commonly used technique to capture turtles consists of tying a female to the sea surface in an egg-laying area to attract males and capture them. At the traffickers' homes, customs also seized 84 kg of Komo Puaka, a clandestine alcohol made from fermented yeast and seasonal fruits.¹⁷

Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles



CITES COP18 – Geneva

Press release n°6, 28 August 2019 - Extracts

Positive!



Indian star turtles

The proposal of Bangladesh, India, Senegal, and Sri Lanka to transfer the Indian star turtle from Appendix II to Appendix I of CITES was accepted by consensus. More than 200,000 star turtles are poached in India every year and smuggled to Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh and China. They are thought to bring prosperity as pets.

Cumulative quarterly seizures: Examples

- 10,577 pig-nosed turtles
(*Carettochelys insculpta*, Appendix II)
- 800 juvenile back-bellied slider turtles
Trachemys dorbigni

AFRICA

MADAGASCAR

REPEATED OFFENSE

March 4, 2019

Antananarivo, Analamanga Region, Madagascar

Seizure of 24 young radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) in a 39-year-old Chinese national's hotel room. The police visited him following information about cannabis and amphetamine trafficking. Immediately after his arrest the drug squad discovered that the individual, well established in Madagascar, had already been sentenced to a term of imprisonment in 2016 for turtle trafficking and possession of illicit weapons.¹

AMERICA

BRAZIL

February 5, 2019

Aracaju and Nossa Senhora do Socorro, State of Sergipe, Brazil

Voluntary handing over to ADEMA (Administração Estadual do Meio Ambiente) of 6 wood tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II) and one blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II).²

Early February 2019

Luciára, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Ibama (Instituto brasileiro do meio ambiente e dos recursos naturais renováveis) hunts for videos promoting poaching. In 2 of them, 3 individuals capture a turtle and then they chop it up. In another video, one of the 3 individuals claims to be living off of poaching animals and to be primarily interested in jaguars. Fifty cases of poaching exhibitionism have been discovered by Ibama in Mato Grosso alone. The fine is 5,000 Brazilian real (1,240 US\$).³



REPEATED OFFENSE

February 26, 2019

Eldorado do Sul, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

Seizure of 800 baby back-bellied slider turtles (*Trachemys dorbigni*) from inside an isothermal box. They were a few days old. They were in precarious states. Two were already dead. They seem to come from a clandestine breeding in a marsh.

One 49-year-old man was arrested. He was going to Santa Catarina, 500 km north by the BR 290, in a Kia Cerato. He is a repeated offender. The traffic police let him slip away without a ticket or fine. The offense is considered to be minor.⁴



COLOMBIA

Mid-February 2019

Momil, Department of Córdoba, Colombia

Seizure of 162 Colombian slider turtles (*Trachemys callirostris*). Arrest of a 63-year-old man. He intended to sell them during Holy Week.⁵



March 6, 2019

Bogota bus station, Department of Cundinamarca, Colombia

Seizure of 4.743 kg of Colombian slider turtle (*Trachemys callirostris*) meat from a polystyrene box. Arrest of a man who was arriving from the Bolivar Department.⁶



ECUADOR

February 12, 2019

Esmeraldas, Esmeraldas Province, Ecuador

Seizure of 38 Colombian wood turtles (*Rhinoclemmys melanosterna*), 3 kg of meat, and one shell from a burlap bag in the trunk of a car. One arrest.⁷



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

February 4, 2019

Pennsylvania State, United States of America

David Sommers (62), pleads guilty to trafficking diamondback terrapin turtles (*Malaclemys terrapin*, Appendix II) (cf. "On the Trail" n°22 p.21). He admitted to smuggling 3,500 baby turtles between New Jersey and Pennsylvania from 2014 to 2017 and, in 2014, shipping a package to Canada containing 11 baby turtles listed as "books".⁸

February 27, March 1 and March 12, 2019

Columbia, South Carolina State, United States of America

Sentencing for trafficking in turtles, among which were spotted turtles (*Clemmys guttata*, Appendix II) and diamondback terrapin turtles (*Malaclemys terrapin*, Appendix II), (cf. "On the Trail" n°20 p. 24 and n°21 p. 20) :

- Logan Brooks (29 years old) to 5 months in prison and 5 months of house arrest.
- Matthew Tyler Fisher (26 years old) to 6 months of house arrest and 2 years of supervised release.
- William Fischer (48 years old) to 2 years of probation and a 1,000 US\$ fine.
- Steven Verren Baker (38 years old) to 2 years and 3 months in prison and a 263,225 US\$ fine. He was the gang leader.
- Matthew Harrison Kail (30 years old) to one year in prison. "Passionate" about wildlife, he met Baker at a "reptiles show." He was responsible for collecting the turtles from their habitats.
- William Thomas Gangemi (26 years old) pled guilty. He is waiting for the sentence.

The financial assessment of United States-Hong Kong bilateral trafficking and vice versa approaches 500,000 US\$.⁹

MEXICO

March 20, 2019

La Paz International Airport, Baja California Sur State, Mexico

Seizure of 3 grooved tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II), which were about to be sent by parcel to Mexico City.¹⁰

CHINA

March 11, 2019

Wuhan Tianhe International Airport, Hubei Province, China

Seizure of 56 yellow pond turtle shells (*Mauremys mutica*, Appendix II) from a passenger's luggage. The smallest was the size of the palm of hand, and the biggest was twice that size. The shells were dry and still carrying shreds of flesh, insects, and insect eggs. They were potentially carrying sanitary risks.¹¹

INDIA

March 12, 2019

Haldwani, Nainital District, Uttarakhand State, India

When the police wanted to search his car, Raju Mandal (age 37) avoided them and kept on driving. He was quickly caught. He was transporting 25 Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonia gangetica*, Appendix I) to deliver them to an intermediate, trusting him to transport the turtles to Delhi. According to IUCN, no less than 40 t of Indian softshell turtles are illegally sold each week on the international market. One juvenile Indian softshell turtle is weighing between 400 g and 20 kg.¹²

REPEATED OFFENSE/ GANG

March 14, 2019

Sagar District, Madhya Pradesh State, India

The investigators are knocking out one by one the members of an international trafficking network of turtles led by a cinnamon dealer, Thamim Ansari (cf. "On the Trail" n° 19, p.21, n° 20, p. 25 and n° 22, p.23). Now it is the turn of Tapas Basak, alias Rony, to be put in handcuffs. "Rony" has a lengthy criminal record. Four cases are pending against him for poaching and trafficking turtles to China, Bangladesh, and other Southeast Asian countries. It was during the questioning of the kingpin Manivannan Murugesan, a Singaporean national that was arrested on January 31, 2018 in Chennai, that the name "Rony" surfaced. The gang was specialized in red crown roofed turtles (*Batagur kachuga*, Appendix II).¹³

March 17, 2019

Balasore, Balasore District, Odisha State, India

The rail squad got their hands on 3 men who were transporting many live turtles in bags. Uttam Mandal (age 19), Ashok Mandal (age 27) and Anadi Samal (age 24) had bought the reptiles near Saskhigopal (Puri district) and intended to resell them in Kolkata, West Bengal.¹⁴

FAMILY AFFAIRS

March 18, 2019

Kattapanna, Idukki District, State of Kerala, India

Mohan A. Kallukootathil (age 59), Lalu S. Onapparampil (age 53), Jaison Joseph Kollamparampil (age 44), Muthuraj Puthenpurakal (age 37) and his brother Mohanan (age 30) were planning to fraudulently sell an Indian star tortoise (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) abroad. Forest rangers did not give them time to do so. They locked them away while they were working out their deal in an inn. The 5 men were charged and put in custody.¹⁵

INDONESIA

March 15 and 26, 2019

Agats, Asmat Regency and Timika, Mimika Regency, Papua Province, Island of New Guinea, Indonesia

Trafficking in pig-nosed turtles (*Carettochelys insculpta*, Appendix II) is well underway.

- Seizure of 3 boxes of 2,227 specimens on a boat. The final destination still remains unknown. One arrest.

- Seizure of 5,050 specimens, 250 of which were already dead. Arrest of Abdul Latif (49 years old) and Abdul Tahir (34 years old).

Cf. "On the Trail" n°4 p. 18, n°8 p.12 et p. 103, n°11 p. 14, n°12 p. 20, n°17 p. 27, n°20 p. 26, n°22 p. 24.¹⁶

MALAYSIA

Batu Pahat, Johor State, Malaysia

February 27, 2019

Seizure of 7 boxes containing 3,300 pig-nosed turtles (*Carettochelys insculpta*, Appendix II) on a boat. Value estimated to be 150,000 ringgit (36,500 US\$). Raiding of the boat in the middle of the night by the coast-guards and arrests of 2 "fishermen." The species lives exclusively in fresh waters in Papua New Guinea and Australia. The turtles were headed for China or its neighboring countries.¹⁷



PHILIPPINES

March 3, 2019

Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Manila, Metropolitan Manila, Philippines

Seizure of 1,529 turtles, among which were Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II), red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II), African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II) and red-eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta elegans*). The value is estimated at 4.5 million pesos (86,630 US\$).



They were found in suitcases discarded by a Filipino arriving from Hong Kong on a Philippine Airlines flight. Some were tied up in adhesive wrapping. There were packed in plastic boxes or cardboard boxes.



In 2018, the airport customs seized 560 specimens of endangered species, including 250 geckos and 254 corals.¹⁸

EUROPE

GERMANY

March 2, 2019

Schönefeld-Berlin International Airport, State of Brandenburg, Germany

Seizure of 3 still-living Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II), from the luggage of a 69 year old German citizen who was returning from Cairo. The man had declared to the customs that they were "chocolates".¹⁹



SPAIN

End of February 2019

Salou, Province of Tarragona, Autonomous Community of Catalonia, Spain

Seizure of 6 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II) that had been put up for sale on the Internet.²⁰

March 8, 2019

Talavera de la Reina, Province of Toledo, Autonomous community of Castilla- La Mancha, Spain

Seizure of 19 Spanish pond turtles (*Mauremys leprosa*) from a passerby's suitcase. They are going to be released into the wild.²¹

March 25, 2019

Almería, Province of Almería, Autonomous community of Andalusia, Spain

Seizure of 2 healthy Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II) from a private home. The origin is unknown. One of which had escaped and headed for a traffic circle at the risk of its own life. Questioning of a 39 year old woman.²²

ITALY

February 16, 2019

Catania, Catania Province, Sicily Region, Italy

Seizure of 18 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II), including very young ones, which had been put up for sale on the Internet after having been stolen from the mountains.²³

Snakes



AMERICA

ARGENTINA

Early March 2019

Río Ceballos, Córdoba Province, Argentina

Seizure of 3 corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*) and a 2-meter-long Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) from a private property. In good health, they were put back into a wildlife rescue center. Originating from North America, they will not be freed. Corn snakes are valued in breeding farms because they reproduce easily, they do not need heat or ultraviolet light, they are very tame and appreciated by pet lovers. "The pet industry is a scourge for the environment" says the head of the province's environmental police.¹

BRAZIL

March 7, 2019

Indaial, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil

Seizure of 22 living corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*) and 2 living boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), who had been put up for sale on Facebook. The snakes will be put back in terrariums. One of the boas died from poor treatment.²

March 8, 2019

Amambai, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

Photos of the collective poaching of a 3-meter-long anaconda (*Eunectes* spp., Appendix II) were posted on the Internet. A 39-year-old merchant was identified. He received a 5,000 real fine, which is 1,271 US\$ and he will have to appear in court for environmental crime and poor treatment of animals. His accomplices have not yet been identified.³

facebook

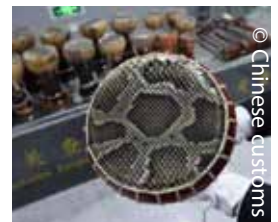
ASIA

CHINA

Early 2019

Linyi Shubuling Airport, Shandong Province, China

When dead pythons (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II) make music. Seizure of 25 tambourines and erhus, traditional two-stringed Chinese instruments which resonance boxes are partially made of snake skin (cf. "On the Trail" n°12 p. 23).⁴



© Chinese customs

INDIA

February 13, 2019

Churu district, Rajasthan State, India

Seizure of a brown sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II). Arrest of Ravindra, age 58. He was planning to transport the boa to Nepal.⁵

February 21, 2019

Panitanki, Darjeeling District, West Bengal State, India. Border with Nepal

Arrest of Bal Bahadur Yava, 49 years old, Nepalese national, while he was trying to introduce a jar of crystallized snake venom. Value estimated to be more than 10 million rupees (144,000 US\$).

The jar is bulletproof. "Red Dragon" and "Made in France" are engraved (cf. "On the Trail" n°9 p. 17. n°14 p.22). Since 2015, several jars of snake venom have been seized in the area.⁶



February 26, 2019

Karvenagar, Pune District, Maharashtra State, India

Seizure of a sand boa (*Eryx* spp., Appendix II) captured in the Ahmednagar District. Dinesh Nimase, 26 years old, was about to sell it for 100,000 rupees (1,400 US\$). According to popular belief already exposed in "On the Trail", a sand boa leads to prosperity.⁷

March 3, 2019

Gazole, Malda District, State of West Bengal, India

Arrested upon denunciation by the Border Security Force and forest rangers, Mohammed Ismil (32 years old) was carrying 1.59 kg of powdered snake venom in a glass jar at night. The Malda district borders Bangladesh.⁸

March 25, 2019

Bangalore, Bangalore Urban District, State of Karnataka, India

Two partners in crime, Shivanna and Krishnappa, were trying to find buyers for 2 sand boas (*Eryx* spp., Appendix II) on the vegetable market. Someone warned the police who came to pick them up.⁹

THAILAND

February 17, 2019

Ban Bang Sai Noi, District of Wan Yai, Mukdahan Province, Thailand. Border with Laos.

Seizure of 2,730 ratter snakes (*Orthriophis taeniurus*) and cobras (Elapidae family) and one pick-up truck. Estimated value of snakes: one million baht, which is 31,205 US\$. Three or 4 individuals fled upon arrival of the authorities. According to experts of the case, the snakes if they had reached Laos would have been killed and infused in bottles of rice wine. The beverage is supposed to be good for health and sex.



Ratter snakes are constrictors and eat mostly rats and mice, which is where their name comes from.¹⁰

VIET NAM

March 14, 2019

Vung Tau, de Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, Vietnam

Seizure of 3 common mock vipers (*Psammodynastes pulverulentus*), weighing a total of 3 kg. A woman was trying to sell them in the street. They were released into the wild.¹¹



EUROPE

GERMANY

March 27, 2019

Achenmühle, Rohrdorf, State of Bavaria, Germany

Seizure on highway 8 in the direction of Salzburg of 15 tubes of ointment containing king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II) venom, cf. "On the Trail" n°20 p. 27. The 2 suspects (54 and 55 years old) were travelling in a car that was purchased in Baden-Württemberg and registered in Bulgaria.



One of them, a doctor, claimed to have bought these "health products" for personal use during a trip to Vietnam.¹²

FRANCE

February 17, 2019

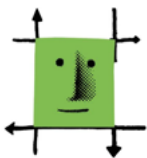
Nice, Maritime Alpes Department, France

Seizure of 4 pythons (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II), one female and 3 males, measuring between 2 and 3.9 m. Two men of Czech nationality were offering to let paying tourists take photos with 2 pythons around their neck. A raid of their hotel room allowed for the discovery of the 2 others, in a plastic box. The pythons, if they survive the cold to which they were subject, will be put in a terrarium registered by the ministry of Ecology.¹³



CITES COP18 – Geneva

Press release n°6, 28 August 2019 - Extracts
Positive!



ROBIN DES BOIS

Tokay gecko

The proposal of India, the United States, the Philippines and the European Union to list the Tokay gecko under Appendix II of CITES was accepted. The range covers 13 countries in Southeast Asia. The gecko's population is in decline. Legal exportation numbers in the millions of individuals each year. Despite the legal protection from which they benefit in several countries, smuggling has a significant impact on the species. The Tokay gecko has the dual ability of darkening or brightening itself to blend into the environment and avoid being caught by predators. Tokay geckos are insectivorous and therefore useful. They are large consumers of cockroaches, locusts and tree insects. Throughout Asia, geckos are considered as providers of luck, prosperity, and fertility by some ready to believe any rumour and by vendors. They are sought for black magic rituals, and as pets, despite their painful bites. The adult Tokay gecko lizard is 35 cm long.

AMERICA

ECUADOR

Early March 2019

Esmeraldas Province, Ecuador

Seizure of 6 common iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix I). They were set free in the mangroves of the Cayapas Mataje reserve.¹

MEXICO

March 23, 2019

Guadalajara, Jalisco State, Mexico



Seizure of 2 rhinoceros iguanas (*Cyclura cornuta*, Appendix I) from a private home. Their name refers to the 3 small horns on their heads. They can measure up to 1.2 m and weigh up to 48 kg. They mostly eat leaves, fruits, flowers, and grains but they will occasionally consume insects, land crabs, and carrions. The rhinoceros iguana is victim to habitat destruction and hunting for its meat.²

EL SALVADOR

March 24, 2019

Pasaquina, La Unión Department, El Salvador. Border with Honduras.

Seizure of 25 black iguanas (*Ctenosaura similis*) and 14 iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II). Arrest of Rodolfo Velazquez, 59-year-old Honduran national. In Central America, black iguanas are hunted and sold on markets for their meat, the consumption of which supposedly allows to fight off sexual impotence.³

ASIA

INDIA

March 27, 2019

Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi, India

Seizure of a bag made out of a Bengal monitor (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) skin, transported by an Algerian national, Abdelouahab Bouaziz, who was about to board a plane headed for Doha (Qatar). Incapable of producing documents proving the legal origin of the item, the man was handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). He is liable to 3 to 7 years in jail.⁴

PHILIPPINES

February 27, 2019

Ninoy-Aquino International Airport, Manila, Grand Manila Province, Philippines

Seizure of 56 iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II), 4 chameleons (Chamaeleonidae family) and 3 bearded dragons (*Pogona* genus). All in one single suitcase. The passenger got off of an unidentified flight.⁵



THAILAND

March 19, 2019

Phu Phan National Park, Sakon Nakhon and Kalasin Provinces, Thailand

Seizure of a dead clouded monitor (*Varanus nebulosus*, Appendix I), a firearm and 5 bullets. Arrest of a 28-year-old man. Poachers are not the only ones killing in the park. Management has just banned plastic packaging. Several animals died of suffocation after eating them.⁶

EUROPE

SPAIN

March 18, 2019

Madrid, Madrid Community, Spain

Seizure, from a container of tires coming from Thailand, of a 27 cm long two-banded monitor (*Varanus salvator*, Appendix II). The company workers called the emergency contact number when they discovered the animal.⁷

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

February 6, 2019

Sydney Airport, New South Wales State, Australia

Seizure in the luggage of a 46-year-old Japanese national returning home of 10 shingleback lizards (*Tiliqua rugosa*). The reptiles were in 2 plastic cases covered with cloths and adhesive tape.

Shingleback lizard, cf. "On the Trail" n°16 p. 107, n°17 p. 25, n°18 p. 25, n°22 p. 30.⁸

GANG

March 7, 2019

Melbourne, Victoria State, Australia

The inquiry into the smuggling of lizards endemic to Australia, including shingleback lizards (*Tiliqua rugosa*) and blue-tongued skinks continues (cf. "On the Trail" n°22 p. 30). To date, 2 people have been arrested and 3 arrest warrants have been released. Since the discovery of the traffic in the summer of 2018, there have been seizures of over 150 lizards and 400,000 A\$ (287,000 US\$) in cash. Value of the lizards is estimated to be over 550,000 A\$, which is 394,000 US\$. They were exported to continental China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Russia, hidden in toys, bags of chips, cans, and socks. Most of the surviving lizards were set free in sanctuaries or scientific institutions to facilitate the tracking of smugglers and the identification of the species.⁹



March 21, 2019

Sydney Harbour, New South Wales State, Australia

Seizure of 2 Fiji banded iguanas (*Brachylophus fasciatus*, Appendix I) from a cruise ship cabin. One arrest. The passenger, 49 years old, purchased the iguanas during a stopover in Vanuatu. The Australian Border Force was informed of the tentative smuggling by the liner crew.¹⁰



Tiliqua rugosa seized on February 6, 2019 in Sydney

Crocodilians

AMERICA

BRAZIL

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Late March 2019

State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

The federal public ministry calls for the prosecution of Gerson Bueno Zahdi, retired from the Ibama. He had been taken in for questioning in 2011 with his wife and daughter. While he was in charge of the delivery and survey of wildlife breeding licenses at the Ibama, he would have, with his family, illegally sold caiman (Alligatoridae, Appendix I or II) meat and leather. At the breeding farm, 3,460 living caimans, 206 dead caimans, 93 heads, 22 batches of meat, and 84 frozen and salted skins had been seized.¹

COLOMBIA

February 27, 2019

La Apartada, Department of Córdoba, Colombia

Seizure of over 800 spectacled caimans (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix I or II) from wooden cases inside a truck. Arrest of the driver and his passenger. The caimans come from Ayapel marshes and wetlands of La Mojana. They were destined, after consumption of the meat, to supply fashion around the world. They will not be turned into purses, shoes, and belts. They will be set free in the marshes.²

COSTA RICA

Mid-February, 2019

Costa Rica



Seizure of a newborn caiman (Alligatoridae, Appendix I or II) in a plastic box, of a vehicle, a phone, and cash. One arrest. The man had been exposed thanks to his wildlife sales on social media sites. The caiman is examined by veterinarians. He may be set free.³

ASIA

CHINA

March 2019

Shijiazhuang Zhengding International Airport, Hebei Province, China

Seizure of 8 crocodile skin belts (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), a few hundred grams each, from the luggage of a passenger.⁴

INDIA

February 7, 2019

Mela Chinthamani, Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu State, India

A decapitated crocodile found on the edge of the Cauvery River. In addition to its head, it is missing most of its organs. An investigation is in progress to determine if this is an act of poaching or if one passer-by maimed the body after a natural death. Autopsy in progress.⁵

March 27, 2019

Nalitapatia, Kendrapara District, Odisha State, India

Autopsy report of a salt-water crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*, Appendix I in India) found floating dead in the water on March 21 inside the Bhitarkanika national park. The death was due to asphyxia after it got tangled in a fishing net. All fishing is forbidden in lakes and bodies of water inside the park's limits, however poaching is not unusual. Arrests are rare and sentencing is extremely rare. In 7 years, it is the 25th salt-water crocodile with this fate. The natural mortality rate of young crocodiles is very significant, only one out of 500 reaches the age of 15. Illegal fishing therefore destabilizes a threatened population, estimated at 1,742 individuals in the annual census conducted last January.⁶



EUROPE

GERMANY

March 7, 2019

Düsseldorf International Airport, North Rhine-Westphalia State, Germany

Shocking conversion of a baby Siamese crocodile (*Crocodylus siamensis*, Appendix I) into a purse. There are less than 1,000 of them in their natural habitats. All of its parts are real except for glass eyes. The inhabitant of Gelsenkirchen came from Vietnam with transit in Dubai.⁷



Various Reptile Species

AFRICA

MADAGASCAR

February 16, 2019

Ivato International Airport, Analamanga Region, Madagascar

Seizure of Parson's giant chameleons (*Calumma parsonii*, Appendix II) and four-spot day geckos (*Phelsuma quadriocellata*, Appendix II) from the luggage of 2 Chinese nationals. The 2 traffickers are allegedly Ma Xiaokun, a tour guide leading educational trips for children and his assistant. At least that is what an article in Sina Weibo claims. Another source says that the second trafficker is actually a parent who was chaperoning a group of 15 children.



Calumma parsonii

The Parson's giant chameleon is endemic to the humid forests of the island of Madagascar. In adulthood, they are 60 cm long and weigh 700 g. Their eyes are orange, their skin green. Their lifespan will be about 5 years. They live in trees. They capture insects and keep them on their sticky tongues. Due to their completely independent eyes, they have total vision of their environment. On the pet market, a specimen sells for 5,000 to 10,000 US\$. The color variations range from dark brown to bright green. They are prey to hawks and snakes.¹

AMERICA

BRAZIL

February 25, 2019

Itacoatiara, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Seizure in a private individual's home of 3 turtles, 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 9 weapons, 23 g of cocaine, 500 g of marijuana, 16 liter of "cheirinho de lolo", a preparation made from ether and chloroform traditionally inhaled during the carnival period. Francieidy de Castro Pereira, 21, was arrested. His companion, Rafael Da Silva, fled through the window when the police arrived.²

MEXICO

February 17, 2019

San Luis Potosí City, San Luis Potosí State, Mexico

Seizure of 5 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), 8 snakes (*Thamnophis* genus), 3 ajolotes (*Ambystoma leorae*), and 3 turtles (*Kinosternon* genus) from a street market stand.³

PANAMA

Mid-February 2019

Antón District, Coclé Province, Panama

Seizure of common iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) alive or dead, lizard tails, turtles and dead fish. Four arrests.⁴

ASIA

INDIA

March 25, 2019

Chennai International Airport, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Mohammad Abdul Majeed was arriving from Bangkok by a Thai Airways flight on Monday morning. When the customs officers searched his travel bag, they found 9 plastic boxes containing an international menagerie: 22 Egyptian tortoises (*Testudo kleinmanni*, Appendix I), 3 rock iguanas (*Cyclura* spp., Appendix I), genus of lizards endemic to the Bahamas, the Greater and Lesser Antilles, 2 rhinoceros iguanas (*Cyclura cornuta*, Appendix I), endemic to the island of Hispaniola and some small Caribbean islands, a horned pit viper (*Cerastes cerastes*), who lives in the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East, 4 blue-tongued skinks (*Tiliqua* spp.) originating from Australia, Indonesia and New Guinea, and 3 green tree frogs (*Hyla* spp. ou *Litoria* spp.). The authorities note that there is no existing serum in India that combats horned viper venom. Mohammad Abdul Majeed has been detained. It is planned to return the animals to Bangkok.⁵



Amphibians

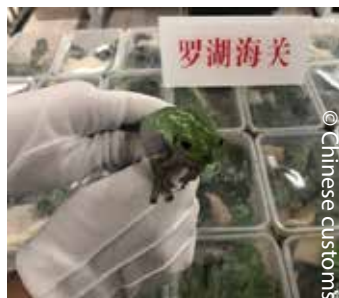


ASIA

CHINA

March 21, 2019
Luohu District, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 67 plastic boxes containing 670 Australian green treefrogs (*Litoria caerulea*). Two arrests. Their natural habitat range includes Australia, Papua New Guinea, and Indonesia.¹



EUROPE

FRANCE

March 20, 2019
Ronchamp, Haute Saône Department, France
 Poaching of European frogs (*Rana temporaria*):
 - Arrest of a man caught in the act of an unlawful possession of 307 specimens.
 - Arrest of a 30-year-old man who was storing live European frogs in his house and trading them. They were released into the wild.
 European frogs in Haute-Saône, cf. "On the Trail" n°20 p. 33).²

Otters

ASIA

CAMBODIA

February 11, 2019
Ratanakiri Province, Cambodia
 Seizure in a cage inside a restaurant of an Oriental small-clawed otter (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix II). It was handed over to the wildlife rescue centre in Phnom Tamao. She is stressed out and has Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).¹

INDIA

Late March 2019
Salvador do Mundo, North Goa District, State of Goa, India
 Two Indian smooth-coated otters (*Lutrogale perspicillata*, Appendix II) were found dead in a snare near a lock. While aquatic pollution and



fishing are primary threats to Asian otters, some fishermen consider them as rivals and want them gone.²

VIET NAM

March 8, 2019
Nam Dinh, Nam Dinh Province, Vietnam
 Sentencing of a taxi driver to 11.5 years in prison for transporting 10 small-clawed otters (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix II) in plastic bags in the back of his taxi on November 15, 2018 (cf. "On the Trail" n°23 p.19). This is the longest prison sentence ever imposed in the country for wildlife crime. Sanctions were increased in 2018.³



Arachnids and Insects



AMERICA

BRAZIL

REPEATED OFFENSE

February 21, 2019

Limeira, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure during a search of 98 spiders, including 73 *Lasiodora kluge* and 25 *Vitalius sorocabae*, lizards and ornamental fish. Arrest of a 41-year-old man. The alarm was sounded by the local post office, intrigued by the frequency of strange parcels being sent to and by the suspect. He said that "breeding spiders is a hobby". It is more like a business.¹

COLOMBIA

Mid-March 2019

El Dorado International Airport, Bogotá, Colombia

Seizure of small plastic boxes containing 10 praying mantises (*Mantis religiosa*) from inside a speaker. They had been sent from Peru and were headed for the United States.²



ECUADOR

March 13, 2019

Marsical Sucre International Airport, Pichincha Province, Ecuador



Seizure of 250 spider and insect specimens, including butterflies, scorpions, bugs, cockroaches, stick bugs, beetles, wasps, and bees, from the luggage of a Japanese biologist. Hirokazu S. intended to return to Hokkaido.

Authorities suspect that he wanted to perform genetic and biological studies without the home country's authorization. He was prohibited from leaving the territory and he must report to the police once a week while waiting for his trial.³



GERMANY

Mid-March 2019

Waldshut-Tiengen, Baden-Württemberg State, Germany. Border with Switzerland.

Seizure in boxes in a parcel of 10 dried tarantulas (Theraphosidae family) and one dried butterfly (order Lepidoptera). The package was coming from Russia. The recipient, who lives in Switzerland, had sent it to his wife living in Germany near the border with Switzerland. He was fined 200 €.⁴



FRANCE

SATANAS OPERATION

February 14, 2019

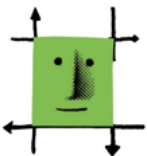
Occitanie Region, France

Seizure in 5 raids of 221 specimens, 204 of which were naturalized: satanas beetles (*Dynastes satanas*, Appendix II), Apollo butterflies (*Parnassius apollo*, Appendix 11), Spanish fritillaries (*Euphydryas desfontainii*), and Spanish moon moths (*Graellsia isabellae*). 11 lawsuits were opened and 24 offenses were registered.

Tourist trips were organized with the sole purpose of capturing protected insects. Apollo butterflies could reach 50 € (55 US\$) each. Spanish moon moths, 150 € (168 US\$).⁵

*Graellsia isabellae*

Press release n°6, 28 August 2019 - Extracts Positive!



ROBIN DES BOIS

Tarantula (or Mygale Spider)

The proposal of the United States and Sri Lanka to list 15 species of the genus *Poecilotheria* under Appendix II of CITES was accepted by consensus. One *Poecilotheria metallica*, or Gooty ornamental tarantula, can sell for 120€ on the Internet. They are totally arboreal and are threatened by deforestation and habitat fragmentation. They are favored for their colors in the ornamental animal market.

Birds



AFRICA

SENEGAL

Early February 2019

Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary, Saint-Louis Region, Senegal. Border with Mauritania.

Busy period in the park:

- Discovery of poached fledgling pelican remains (*Pelecanus* genus). "They especially target the young ones because they say that their meat is more tender" according to commander Mallé Gueye.
- Discovery of a shanty housing 10 poachers. The following chase enabled 2 arrests.
- Seizure of illegal fishing gear.
- Conflicts with local populations who use the sanctuary as pasture land for cattle.¹



TUNISIA

February 8, 2019

Tunisia

The minister of Agriculture, Samir Taieb, confirmed in Parliament that hunting of houbara bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) without a license was conducted by Qatari dignitaries. They had "at their disposal" a natural reserve in the south and were organizing hunting parties with agreement from the Tunisian government. They used falcons, 38 all-terrain vehicles, and a helicopter (cf. "On the Trail" n°3 p. 22-23, 25, n°11 p. 19, n°16 p. 28).²

AMERICA

BRAZIL

Early February 2019

Peruíbe, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Another toucan suffering from mistreatment. He was found thirsty in a cage exposed to a scorching heat. After receiving emergency care from the military police, the red-breasted toucan (*Ramphastos dicolorus*, Appendix III in Argentina) was handed over to a specialized centre in Cubatão.³



February 3, 2019

Iguaçu, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Rescue on a farm on the Prefeito Casemiro Teixeira road of 3 chestnut-bellied seed finches (*Oryzoborus angolensis*) and seizure of a firearm.⁴

February 4, 2019

Teófilo Otoni, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

On the BR116, the express road for bird trafficking, the truck was stopped. The driver and his passenger presented an invoice for salt transport, but in the back there were also 182 birds, double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*), green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocorpus yarrowii*), blue-black grassquits (*Volatinia jacarina*), in several crates without ventilation or food. The 2 salt transporters had bought all the birds in the north of the State of Bahia for 2,000 reais (540 US\$) and were going to deliver them to São Paulo (about 2,000 km and a drive of 25h) where they would have been sold 20,000 to 40,000 reais (5,400 to 10,800 US\$) depending on the number of birds still alive on arrival.⁵

February 5, 2019

Salvador, State of Bahia, Brazil

The escape of 3 suspects as a Bahia military police patrol approached led to the search of a house in which 15 yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*), 15 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), a great-billed seed finch (*Oryzoborus maximiliani*), 9 copper seedeaters (*Sporophila bullfinch*), 5 red-headed cardinals (genus *Paroaria*) and a giant cowbird (*Molothrus oryzivorus*), all of questionable origin, were discovered, seized and treated before ulterior release.⁶

February 7, 2019

Curitiba, State of Paraná, Brazil

Possession in the Novo Mundo district of 60 birds, including cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*) and chicks in a cell lit by a skylight. Additional discovery of 40 nests and 45 eggs undergoing artificial incubation. Fine and an upcoming trial for the 27-year-old man for illegal breeding and animal abuse.⁷



February 8, 2019

Guaratuba, State of Paraná, Brazil

Seizure of 8 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), 3 green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), 5 double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*), a chestnut-bellied seed finch (*Sporophila angolensis*), 5 firearms and about 1,000 ammunition of various calibres.⁸



February 11, 2019

Piracicaba, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure and release of a yellow-bellied seedeater (*Sporophila nigricollis*), 3 lined seedeaters (*Sporophila lineola*), 2 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), a hooded siskin (*Spinus magellanicus*), a burnished-buff tanager (*Tangara cayana*), an Andean sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*) and a plumbeous seedeater (*Sporophila plumbea*). Fine of 9,500 reais (2,560 US\$). Destruction of the cages.⁹



February 12, 2019

Between Mirinzal and São Luís, State of Maranhão, Brazil

The 3 toucan chicks (Ramphastidae family) and 2 conure chicks (*Aratinga* spp., Appendix II) were in boxes. In Cururupu, they did not escape the vigilance of the road patrol. They were destined for the São Luís market and came from Mirinzal (a 5h drive).¹⁰

February 13, 2019

Capivari, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Rescue of 6 birds, one parrot (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), one chestnut-bellied seed finch (*Oryzoborus angolensis*), 2 double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*) and 2 chopi blackbirds (*Gnorimopsar chopi*). The fine for the 50-year-old owner was set at 7,500 reais (2,011 US\$).¹¹



February 15, 2019

Km 896, BR-174, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Roadside sale of birds caught in the wild: a shiny cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*), 3 orange-fronted yellow finches (*Sicalis columbiana*), 4 chestnut-bellied seed finches (*Oryzoborus angolensis*), a lined seedeater (*Sporophila lineola*) and 2 wing-barred seedeaters (*Sporophila americana*). Police are trying to repress the same customs on the BR-319.¹²

REPEATED OFFENSE

February 18, 2019

Brasília–Presidente Juscelino Kubitschek International Airport, Federal District, Brazil

The passenger's suitcase was going in the plane's baggage compartment. The trafficker came from Boa Vista and was on his way to São Paulo. The best singers wore a coloured shoelace on their legs.



The saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) are known for the beauty of their warbling at dawn. In cages, they are trained to lengthen their trills and trigger them at any time of the day. Saffron finches are disappearing in some States such as Minas Gerais but they do not yet get enhanced protection at the federal level. This is the third time in 2 years that this individual has been arrested with dozens of saffron finches in his luggage. Before travelling by plane, he used buses.¹³

February 19, 2019

Araucária, State of Paraná, Brazil

Rescue of 32 captive birds in outrageously degrading conditions: parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*), hooded siskins (*Spinus magellanicus*), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), Atlantic canaries (*Serinus canaria*) and cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*). Destruction of the cages.¹⁴

February 20, 2019

Oliveira, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Rescue in the Dom Bosco district of 17 caged passerines: green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), rufous-collared sparrows (*Zonotrichia capensis*), yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*), double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*) and ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocorpus ypsilophorus*).¹⁵

February 21, 2019

Mamonas, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Arrest of 4 poachers 40 to 58 years old specialized in the trapping of birds. Rescue of 13 birds including 2 parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), red-headed cardinals (genus *Paroaria*) and giant cowbirds (*Molothrus oryzivorus*). They headed for the Triagem Center for Silvester Animation of Montes Claros. The poachers headed for the Espinosa Police Station where they were fined 49,000 reais (13,210 US\$). The habit is to impose heavy fines. It is also customary not to claim payment.¹⁶



February 21, 2019

Barra Mansa, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Another toucan (Ramphastidae family) shot in the heart of the town. He should be able to get by with the help from a veterinary clinic.¹⁷



FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 23, 2019

Mundo Novo, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

A fine of 12,500 reais (3,370 US\$) for a father and his son holding a parrot (*Amazona* spp, Appendix I or II), 7 chestnut-bellied seed finches (*Oryzoborus angolensis*), 2 rufous-collared sparrows (*Zonotrichia capensis*), 2 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), a red-headed cardinal (genus *Paroaria*), a Brazilian tanager (*Ramphocelus bresilius*), a double-collared seedeater (*Sporophila caerulea*) and a thrush (Turdidae family). They are also liable to 6 months to one year in prison or a suspended sentence.¹⁸



February 24, 2019

Afonso Cláudio, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil

Seizures of 44 birds, including 24 double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*), 6 green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), an Andean sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*) and an ultramarine grosbeak (*Cyanocorpus ypsilophorus*). Destruction of the cages. The owners agreed to respond to the court's summons.¹⁹

OPERATION FEIRAS MALDITAS (CURSED MARKET)

February 24, 2019

Recife, State of Pernambuco, Brazil

Morning raid of the Ibama on the Mercado do Cordeiro (lamb market) west of the city. Seizure of 125 birds including red-cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*), plumbeous seedeaters (*Sporophila plumbea*), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), seven-colored tanagers (*Tangara fastuosa*, Appendix II), great-billed seed finches (*Oryzoborus maximiliani*), cactus conures (*Aratinga cactorum*, Appendix II). 23 sellers heard by the courts.²⁰

February 25, 2019

Curitiba and São José dos Pinhais, State of Paraná, Brazil

Seizures of 3 parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), one ara (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) and 2 green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*). Two arrests, a man (52) and a woman (59).²¹

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 26, 2019

Presidente Prudente, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Rescue and release of 9 yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*) and 2 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*). The father-in-law and son-in-law traded tem in the neighbourhood. Fine of 2,000 and 3,500 reais (540 and 950 US\$).²²



March 2, 2019

Umbaúba, State of Sergipe, Brazil

Rescue of 73 birds including blue-winged macaws (*Primolius maracana*, Appendix I), jandaya conures (*Aratinga jandaya*, Appendix II) and 17 green-headed tanagers (*Tangara seledon*) from a unscrupulous man charged with illegal possession of protected species and animal abuse. 14 dead birds were found in garbage cans.²³



Aratinga jandaya

March 8, 2019

Linhares, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil

The prisoners reported themselves to the police with their chattering. They were 5: 4 conures (*Aratinga* spp., Appendix II) including 2 jandaya conures (*Aratinga jandaya*, Appendix II) and one parrot (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II). They were taken to the Centro de Reintrodução de Animais Selvagens in Aracruz.²⁴

March 10, 2019

El Salvador, State of Bahia, Brazil

Clandestine singing competition. First prize: 2,200 reais (590 US\$). Rescue of 90 yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*). 21 arrests.²⁵



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March 11, 2019

Between Jaboatão dos Guararapes and Moreno, State of Pernambuco, Brazil

Voluntary handing over of a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and a bare-throated bellbird (*Procnias nudicollis*). The latter is said to have lived 3 years in captivity. He was reportedly released several times and returned on his own to his jailer's home. They were both presented to the Centro de Triagem de Animais Silvestres of Pernambuco.²⁶



Procnias nudicollis

March 11, 2019

Capanema, State of Paraná, Brazil

A clandestine breeding farm lost in the south-east of the State. Rescue of 300 birds: green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), hooded siskins (*Spinus magellanicus*), red-headed cardinals (genus *Paroaria*) and ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*). Fine set at 45,000 reais (12,070 US\$). The owner is also charged with animal abuse.²⁷



March 11, 2019

Itabaiana, State of Sergipe, Brazil

Acting on information, the police seized 35 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) and 24 cages, one of which was used as an arena for singing tournaments with bets.²⁸

March 12, 2019

Fortaleza, State of Ceará, Brazil

Rescue on the market of 4 cactus conure chicks (*Aratinga cactorum*, Appendix II), 8 grassland yellow-finches (*Sicalis luteola*), 4 lined seedeaters (*Sporophila lineola*), 4 red-cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*), 4 white-throated seedeaters (*Sporophila albogularis*) and 3 chestnut-capped blackbirds (*Chrysomus ruficapillus*). The sellers fled. Birds will be released into peri-urban forests.²⁹

Mid-March 2019

Taquaritinga do Norte, State of Pernambuco, Brazil

Seizure of 129 birds including red-cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*), yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*) and saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*). Two turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II), aviaries and cages were also seized. The inspection of the estate revealed the illegal cutting of trees on more than 10 hectares. Indictment of the houseowner.³⁰

FAMILY AFFAIRS

March 15, 2019

Goiana, State of Pernambuco, Brazil

Rescue in a private home of 93 birds including a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II), 21 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), 13 plumbeous seedeaters (*Sporophila plumbea*), 12 bananaquits (*Coereba flaveola*), 11 yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*), 7 red-cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*), 5 common waxbills (*Estrilda astrild*), 4 copper seedeaters (*Sporophila bouvreuil*), 4 fawn-breasted tanagers (*Pipraeidea melanonota*), 2 ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*), 2 blue-black grassquits (*Volatinia jacarina*), 2 grassland yellow-finches (*Sicalis luteola*), a tanager (genus *Thraupis*), a giant cowbird (*Molothrus oryzivorus*), a chestnut-capped blackbird (*Chrysomus ruficapillus*), a white-bellied seedeater (*Sporophila leucoptera*), a yellow-rumped cacique (*Cacicus cela*),

a purple-throated euphonia (*Euphonia chlorotica*), an Andean sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*), a pileated finch (*Coryphospingus pileatus*). The couple was well organized. The woman took care of the breeding, the disabled man made the cages.³¹



Estrilda astrild

Mid-March 2019

São João da Boa Vista, State of São Paulo, Brazil

A 40-year-old man claiming to be a decorator and craftsman beheaded a toucan (Ramphastidae family) to carve his beak and threw the body into the bushes. He was denounced by passers-by, pinched by the police. An official report was filed and he was provisionally released after being fined 6,000 reais (1,610 US\$). He faces 3 months to a year in prison.³²



Mid-March 2019

Recife, State of Pernambuco, Brazil

Voluntary handing over to the authorities of a parrot (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II) that has been in captivity for more than 25 years and was part of an inheritance.³³

March 15, 2019

Nova Andradina, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

Rescue of a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) by the Polícia Militar Ambiental de Batayporã. A 5,000 reais (1,340 US\$) fine.³⁴



March 16, 2019

Maceió, State of Alagoas, Brazil

Caught red-handed on the market. Rescue of 47 birds: chestnut-bellied seed finches (*Oryzoborus angolensis*), yellow-rumped caciques (*Cacicus cela*), bananaquits (*Coereba flaveola*), red-cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*). Destruction of the cages.³⁵

March 16, 2019

Rio Verde, State of Goiás, Brazil

Rescue of 45 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) and a yellow-bellied seedeater (*Sporophila nigricollis*) given to the Goiânia Silvestre Animation Triagem Center. Seizure of about 30 cages and 22 bird traps. A trafficker is liable to imprisonment from 6 months to one year.³⁶

March 17, 2019

Piancó, State of Paraíba, Brazil

Dismantling of a clandestine breeding farm. Rescue of 230 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*). Eleven arrests. Some of the accomplices fled.³⁷

OPERATION SÃO PAULO MAIS SEGURA

March 21, 2019

São João da Boa Vista, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Rescue of 9 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), 6 double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*), 4 chopi blackbirds (*Gnorimopsar chopi*), 3 green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*) and a rufous-bellied thrush (*Turdus rufiventris*). Seizure of 6 firearms and 3 small pistols. Arrest of the householder.³⁸



March 31, 2019

Vitorino, State of Paraná, Brazil

Rescue of 11 birds including a parrot (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) and green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*). Seizure of weapons and ammunition. Upcoming trial. Immediate fine of 10,000 reais (2,700 US\$).³⁹



CHILI

Early February 2019

Buín, Santiago Metropolitan Region, Chile

Seizure of 59 slender-billed parakeets chicks (*Enicognathus leptorhynchus*, Appendix II) upon the occasion of a roadside check. They were going to be sold for 24,000 Chilean pesos (35 US\$) each. The first 29 were found in banana crates in the trunk of a taxi. The following 30 were found in identical crates at the house of the driver of the intercepted vehicle. The healthiest chicks were given to the

Comité Nacional Pro Defensa de la Flora y Fauna (Codeff) to be released into the wild. The others, injured or stressed, were put under the good care of the Metropolitan Park Zoo. One arrest.⁴⁰



February 12, 2019

Chimbarongo, O'Higgins Region, Chile

Seizure of 2 toucans (Ramphastidae family), 2 rosellas (*Platycercus* spp., Appendix II), one macaw (*Ara* spp, Appendix I or II) and one parakeet (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II). Arrest of the housekeeper.⁴¹

Mid-February 2019

El Loa Province, Antofagasta Region, Chile

Seizure in the cab of a truck of 9 parrot chicks that had clearly been drugged. They were 9 to 45 days old. Arrest of the driver, a certain A.S.V., 36 years old.⁴²



End of February 2019

Los Huemules Border checkpoint, Aysén Region, Chile. Border with Argentina.

Seizure of a rhea (*Rhea* spp., Appendix I or II) foot converted into a candlestick from the luggage of a Chilean national.⁴³

COLOMBIA

February 20, 2019

Trujillo, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia

Seizure of 5 tropical mockingbirds (*Mimus gilvus*) and a trap. They sell well because they are good singers. They are healthy. They were transferred to Centro de Atención y Valoración de Fauna (CAVF) San Emigdio de Palmira. Arrest of a 52-year-old man.⁴⁴

End of February 2019

Bogotá, Department of Cundinamarca, Barranquilla, Department of Atlántico, Melgar, Department of Tolima, Valledupar and Bosconia, Department of Cesar, Magangué and Carmen de Bolívar, Department of Bolívar, El Plato and Fundación, Department of Magdalena and Department of La Guajira, Colombia

Seizure of 184 animals including aras (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II), American flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber*, Appendix II), rheas (*Rhea* spp., Appendix I or II), Venezuelan troupials (*Icterus icterus*), green jays (*Cyanocorax yncas*), Northern screamers (*Chauna chavaria*), partridges, ducks, turtles and raccoons. Dismantling of a gang led by a man named Ivan. Twelve arrests.⁴⁵

Mid-March 2019

Melgar, Department of Tolima, Colombia

Seizure of 10 yellow-headed amazons (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I), 3 scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), one hyacinth macaw (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*, Appendix I), one yellow-headed amazon (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I), and one black guan (*Chamaepetes unicolor*). Value estimated at nearly 92 million pesos (29,600 US\$). A 49-year-old man was keeping them as pets and undoubtedly as sources of profit, too.⁴⁶

ECUADOR

February 6, 2019

Chunchi Canton, Chimborazo Province, Ecuador

Seizure of a distinctive black-chested eagle (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*, Appendix II) from a home.⁴⁷



February 11, 2019

Loja Province, Ecuador

Sentencing of 3 individuals to 3 years in prison and a 1,576 US\$ fine for trafficking 46 grey-cheeked parakeets (*Brotogeris pyrrhopterus*, Appendix II) and 3 red-masked parakeets (*Psittacara erythrogenys*, Appendix II). They were arrested on November 14, 2018. They will also have "to put up 10 signs referencing the crime for which they were sentenced in the area where these birds mate".⁴⁸

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

March 28, 2019

Virginia State, United States of America

A laughing kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) for sale in a pet store gets the Australian community emotional.

The wild bird, coming from the Australian savanna and typically living in groups, was photographed in his cage dressed up as a businessman and as Santa. The Australian community bombarded the pet store's Facebook page with angry comments, prompting the Australian General Consult's intervention, who sent a report to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). The pet store claimed to have legally obtained the bird from a breeding farm.



Potentially carrying dangerous diseases contracted on the American continent, the laughing kookaburra cannot be sent back to the island-continent. However, an online financing campaign was created in hopes of transferring him to a sanctuary that would offer him an environment that's more adapted to his way of life.⁴⁹

GUATEMALA

End of February 2019

Mazatenango, Suchitepéquez Department, Guatemala

Seizure of a sparrowhawk (*Accipiter* spp., Appendix II). He could not be released into the wild; he had his wings cut.⁵⁰

MEXICO

Early February, 2019

Tijuana, Baja California State, Mexico

A military macaw (*Ara militaris*, Appendix I) was voluntarily handed over to the Tijuana zoo by its owner. Too accustomed to the human presence, he cannot be set free. He will join the 8 other lodgers of his species who are already residents at the zoo.⁵¹

February 5, 2019

San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato State, Mexico

Seizure from the Las Pulgas market of 10 house finches (*Haemorrhous mexicanus*), 4 brown-backed solitaires (*Myadestes occidentalis*), 4 black-headed grosbeaks (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*), 2 streak-backed orioles (*Icterus pustulatus*), 2 Aztec thrushes (*Ridgwayia pinicola*), one orchard oriole (*Icterus spurius*), one northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) and one Inca dove (*Columbina inca*), all dehydrated and stressed. The solitaires and the orioles had their feathers plucked.⁵²

March 29, 2019

Colima City, Colima State, Mexico

A grey-lined hawk (*Asturina nitida*, Appendix II) was released in University of Colima's UMA (Unidad de Manejo para la Conservación de la Vida Silvestre). The UMA covers 30 hectares and has the biological capacity to host this new guest. She had been handed over to to Profepa (Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente) officers a few days before by a Colima resident who claims to have found her looking distraught in a waste land.⁵³

PERU

OPERATION MERCURIO 2019

February 20, 2019

Tambopata Province, Madre de Dios Department, Peru

Two red-bellied macaws (*Orthopsittaca manilata*, Appendix II) were seized during a new shantytown eviction attempt in the Tambopata Province, within the La Pampa reserve, which is declared to be natural but is actually ravaged by illegal gold mining. Poaching is one of the perverse effects this activity. 100,000 hectares are devoured by the gold rush in an area originally covered with lakes, forests and crossed by a multitude of tributaries of the upper Amazon basin. The alluvium is dredged, excavated, sieved, amalgamated with mercury, distilled and heated to obtain gold powder. Thousands of tonnes of contaminated wasteland are left on site. Lagoons full of mercury residue poison animals and humans.



Doctors themselves are threatened with death when they seek to publish official statistics. The number of illegal goldwashers is estimated to exceed 20,000. Several ghost cities built out of plastic, tin and wood with the evocative name of Mega-12, Mega-13, Mega-14, Mega-15 have emerged in this hell. They provide food, entertainment and sex to the workers. The exploitation of women is a major collateral effect of illegal gold panning on an industrial scale in South America. Alfredo Ernesto Neuenschwander, a defender of the old growth forest, was shot and killed in 2015 between kilometres 98 and 115 of the Interoceanic Highway. The opening of this highway, which was supposed to bring prosperity to the region, brought a surge of violence and corruption and imported new contingents of gold miners. All efforts by successive governments to eradicate or at least regulate activities have so far been unsuccessful.⁵⁴

Early March 2019

Between Pucallpa, Department of Ucayali, and Lima, Lima Department, Peru

Seizure from the luggage compartment of a bus making a Pucallpa-Lima trip of 1,122 birds: 1,097 parakeets (*Brotogeris* spp., Appendix II) 51 of which were dead, 14 parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I and II) and 11 macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I and II). Arrest of the driver, Arturo Flores Guevara. The Movil Bus company received a fine of 50,000 soles (15,000 US\$). The birds were transferred to the Mundo Verde wildlife rescue center. The majority of them will be released after veterinary treatment. Others had their wings clipped and must be kept in captivity.⁵⁵



Brotogeris pyrrhoptera

URUGUAY

End of March 2019

Uruguay

Seizures by DINAMA (Dirección Nacional de Medio Ambiente) officers of 200 birds, including yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*, Appendix II), chestnut seedeaters (*Sporophila cinnamomea*), marsh seedeaters (*Sporophila palustris*), and rusty-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila collaris*). The healthy birds were released, the others were transferred to Lecocq park.⁵⁶

CAMBODIA

March 27, 2019

Takéo Province, Cambodia

Seizure of 528 lesser whistling ducks (*Dendrocygna javanica*) from a truck coming from Thailand and heading for Vietnam. Arrest of the driver. The survivors were released in the Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Center.⁵⁷



CHINA

March 2019

South Qingdao Port, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of 40 eclectus parrot eggs (*Eclectus roratus*, Appendix II). Some eggs hatched soon after the seizure. The eclectus parrot is endemic to Australia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands.⁵⁸



March 25, 2019

Zhongshan Checkpoint, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 2 mesias (genus *Leiothrix*, Appendix II). The passenger claimed to have bought the birds in Hong Kong and counted on bringing them back to his house. He was transporting the birds in a small cage, without hiding them.⁵⁹

INDIA

February 2, 2019

Pungro, Kiphire District, Nagaland State, India

A grass owl (*Tyto capensis*, Appendix II) saved from the hands of a poacher by the Pungro Area College students association. They released him in the Fakim natural reserve.⁶⁰

February 3, 2019

Himayat Sagar Lake, Ranga Reddy District, State of Telangana, India

Participants of Big Bird Day, a day for bird observation, came face to face with 2 men who were beating bushes with sticks. "It's to drive away the cats", they explained to the bird lovers, hoping to find a common ground with them. In fact, upon closer inspection, they had spread 200 m of fine-mesh synthetic nets on the vegetal covering at the edge of the lake and were looking to capture passerines. The scene is 30 km from Hyderabad, 7 million inhabitants.⁶¹

February 11, 2019

Devbhumi Dwarka District, State of Gujarat, India

Nocturnal poaching of 39 common cranes (*Grus grus*, Appendix II) in the reservoir of a dam. Arrival to the site of some inhabitants from the inter-villages vigilance committee (Gram Rakshak Dal). Flight of the poachers. Electrocution of one of them, Iqbal Patelia, by an electric fence keeping wild animals from accessing cultivated plots.⁶²



March 14, 2019

Chennai International Airport, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Muthukani (age 36) thought he had fooled the controls. His suitcase was checked and he had nothing more to do than to board the plane headed for Colombo (Sri Lanka). But the Air Intelligence Unit found his behavior to be suspicious and his answers to be evasive. They called back his luggage and found 18 kg of peafowl feathers (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix II) packed by sheaves in cloth and concealed in the middle of artificial flowers. Muthukani frequently travelled internationally. Investigators are trying to find out if this was for the same trafficking.⁶³



March 16, 2019

Mallasamudram block, Namakkal District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

An investigation is opened after the discovery of 15 peacocks- 6 males and 9 females- dead in a field. Samples were taken from the carcasses for an autopsy. The forestry administration suspects that they were poisoned because they were eating crops.⁶⁴

March 29, 2019

Bam Rajabari, Sivasagar District, Assam State, India

Hecatombs of hawks around a cow carcass full of pesticides near the village. The poisoner(s) targeted stray dogs. Alerted, the Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre (VCBC) specialists counted 37 bodies, primarily of Himalayan griffons (*Gyps himalayensis*, Appendix II), but also oriental white-backed vultures (*Gyps bengalensis*, Appendix II) and slender-billed vultures (*Gyps tenuirostris*, Appendix II). 37 other vultures that were in bad shape were transferred to a veterinary clinic. The prognosis is reserved. It is the second time that such a massacre has taken place in the village. In April 2018, the same method caused the death of 20 vultures.⁶⁵



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INDONESIA

February 3, 2019

Cemagi, Badung Regency, Bali Province, India

Seizure of 2 green peafowls (*Pavo muticus*, Appendix II), one cassowary (*Casuarius* genus), one eagle (Accipitridae family), and one hornbill (Bucerotidae family) from the home of Ketut P. Taking into account his cooperative attitude and the birds' healthy state, he was not kept in custody. He is, however, charged for violating the 1990 Wildlife Protection Act.⁶⁶

February 6, 2019

Jayapura, Papua Province, Island of New Guinea, Indonesia

Seizure of a white cockatoo (*Cacatua alba*, Appendix II), 2 parrots (Psittaciformes order) and one palm cockatoo (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I). Arrests of L.R., 34 years old, and G.E., 60 years old, while they were transporting the birds on a motorcycle.⁶⁷

February 19, 2019

Mamuya, North Halmahera Regency, North Maluku Province, Maluku Island, Indonesia

- Seizure of 78 yellow-and-green lorikeets (*Trichoglossus flavoviridis*, Appendix II) and one violet-necked lory (*Eos squamata*, Appendix II). Arrest of Darmin Parasaja.
- Seizure of 31 yellow-and-green lorikeets (*Trichoglossus flavoviridis*, Appendix II), 7 violet-necked lories (*Eos squamata*, Appendix II) and 2 chattering lories (*Lorius garrulus*, Appendix II). Arrest of Ikhsan Himo.⁶⁸

February 20, 2019

Medan, North Sumatra Province, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia

Seizure of 18 birds: 5 palm cockatoos (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I), 5 Pesquet's parrots (*Psitttrichas fulgidus*, Appendix II), 3 southern cassowaries (*Casuarius casuarius*), 3 concave-casqued hornbills (*Buceros bicornis*, Appendix I), one Moluccan cockatoo (*Cacatua moluccensis*, Appendix I) and one yellow-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I). Arrest of Robby (37 years old) and Adi Aulia (28 years old), employees of the regional water distribution company.⁶⁹



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Psitttrichas fulgidus

February 2019

Jambi, Jambi Province and Batam, Riau Islands Province, Indonesia

Shut down of a bird trafficking network:

- Seizure of 13 cockatoos (Cacatuidae, Appendix I or II), 11 birds of paradise (Paradisaeidae, Appendix II) and one golden snub-nosed monkey (*Rhinopithecus roxellana*, Appendix I).
- Seizure of 10 red-winged parrots (*Aprosmictus erythropterus*, Appendix II), 6 citron-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua sulphurea citrinocristata*), 5 umbrella cockatoos (*Cacatua alba*, Appendix II), 4 yellow-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I), 4 parrots (Psittaciformes, Appendix I or II), and one palm cockatoo (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I).

Four arrests. The suspects are only known by the initials E., B., W. and T.⁷⁰

February 22, 2019

Bakauheni Port, South Lampung Regency, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

At the car ferry terminal, 211 sunbirds (*Nectariniidae* family) and several dozen bulbuls (*Pycnonotidae* family) were seized in an SUV on their way to Jakarta. The shipment had arrived by bus from Pekanbaru.⁷¹



© Kumpanan

March 11, 2019

Bakauheni Port, South Lampung Regency, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Seizure of 322 birds, passerines, prinias (genus *Prinia*) and picidae (Picidae family). After negative tests for the avian flu, they were taken to a specialized shelter and their release is being considered. They had been captured in the Palembang area, 430 km from Bakauheni.⁷²

March 15, 2019

Cilegon City, Banten Province, Island of Java, Indonesia

Seizure from under a cloth in the back of a minibus of 570 birds: 472 prinias (*Prinia* genus), 42 great tits (*Parus major*), 17 sunbirds (*Nectariniidae* family), 16 flycatchers (*Cyornis* genus), 12 lesser green leafbirds (*Chloropsis cyanopogon*), 4 blue-winged leafbirds (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*), 4 Asian fairy-bluebirds (*Irena puella*), 2 shrikes (genus *Lanius*) and one oriental magpie-robin (*Copsychus saularis*). Five arrests.⁷³

March 15, 2019

Padangbai Port, Karangasem Regency, Bali Province, Bali Island, Indonesia

Seizure at the disembarking of the car ferry *KMP Swarna Kartika* from Lombok Island of about 1,500 songbirds, including black-naped orioles (*Oriolus chinensis*) and streaked weavers (*Ploceus manyar*). They were stored in plastic and cardboard crates covered with leaves. Arrest of the truck driver and the shipper.⁷⁴



The *KMP Swarna Kartika* in Lembar, Indonesia, 2015

March 16, 2019

Bakauheni Port, South Lampung Regency, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Seizure before boarding of a car ferry of 200 sunbirds (*Nectariniidae* family) and lesser green leafbirds (*Chloropsis cyanopogon*) from Pekanbaru (1,100 km). They were destined for the Jakarta pet bird market.⁷⁵

March 21, 2019

Panularan, Surakarta City, Central Java Province, Island of Java, Indonesia

Rescue of a young male green peafowl (*Pavo muticus*, Appendix II) who was stuck on the roof of a house. He was clearly domesticated. The owner has not been identified. The bird was released in the Taru Juruq animal park. On the black market, a green peafowl is sold for between 5 and 10 million rupees (350 to 715 US\$). This specimen was estimated at at least 7 million rupees (500 US\$).⁷⁶

March 21, 2019

Dumai Port, Dumai City, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Seizure in a Suzuki and a Toyota of 12 palm cockatoos (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I), 7 lesser birds-of-paradise (*Paradisaea minor*, Appendix II), 3 celebes hornbills (*Aceros cassidix*, Appendix II), 2 twelve-wired birds-of-paradise (*Seleucidis melanoleucus*, Appendix II), 2 king birds-of-paradise (*Cicinnurus regius*, Appendix II), 2 Wilson's birds-of-paradise (*Diphyllodes respublica*, Appendix II), 10 other unidentified birds and 2 agile gibbons (*Hylobates agilis*, Appendix I). The value is said to be 3 billion rupees, or 214,000 US\$.

Arrests of S.W. (36), T.R. (20), A.N. (24) and Y.E.S. (29). They intended to smuggle the batch into Malaysia via Rupert Island, an island 2 km from the port of Dumai and 75 km off the coast of Malaysia.⁷⁷



Paradisaea minor

March 25, 2019

Port of Tanjung Emas, City of Semarang, Central Java Province, Island of Java, Indonesia

Seizure from a truck of 296 birds, including white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*), greater green leafbirds (*Chloropsis sonnerati*), oriental magpie-robins (*Copsychus saularis*), and grey-cheeked bulbuls (*Alophoixus bres*). 30 of them were dead. Value estimated at 300 million rupees (21,400 US\$). T., considered to be the owner, is being held in custody. The truck was arriving in Kumai and was headed for the City of Semarang. It was supposed to be transporting scraps.⁷⁸

THAILAND

February 7, 2019

Bang Khun Thian District, Bangkok Province, Thailand

Seizure upon raiding of 48 cages and one common hill myna (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II), 37 red-whiskered bulbuls (*Pycnonotus jocosus*), 3 black-throated laughingthrush (*Dryonastes chinensis*), 2 white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*), 2 Asian koels (*Eudynamis scolopacea*), one white-crested laughingthrush (*Garrulax leucolophus*), one white-vented myna (*Acridotheres grandis*), and one oriental magpie robin (*Copsychus saularis*). Value estimated at 72,400 baht (2,307 US\$). The owner of the place is questioned by the police. He claims to have raised the bulbuls for singing competitions.⁷⁹

February 14, 2019

Thong Lan, Mueang Pathum Thani District, Pathum Thani Province, Thailand



Seizure of a common hill myna (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II) and an Indian pied hornbill (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II) from the home of Isara Lertdee (39 years old). He claims to have inherited the bird on his mother's death.⁸⁰

March 27, 2019

Sinbodee Village, Nonthaburi Province, Thailand

Seizure of 63 red-whiskered bulbuls (*Pycnonotus jocosus*) from the home of Sittipong Kirta Mekin (45 years old). He had put them up for sale on Facebook.⁸¹

facebook

EUROPE

BELGIUM

February 11, 2019

Dessel, Antwerp Province, Flemish Region, Belgium

Seizure of 20 birds from a breeder, including bohemian waxwings (*Bombus garrulus*), greater short-toed larks (*Calandrella brachydactyla*), corn buntings (*Emberiza calandra*), ciril buntings (*Emberiza cirilus*), red-headed buntings (*Emberiza bruniceps*), pine buntings (*Emberiza leucocephalos*), pine grosbeaks (*Pinicola enucleator*), and Siberian rubythroats (*Luscinia calliope*). The police suspect a capture from the wild and the use of fake identity rings.⁸²

SPAIN

February 10, 2019

Marjal de Pego-Oliva Natural Park, Provinces of Alicante and Valencia, Valencian Community, Spain

Discovery of 6 glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). The autopsies revealed shards of pellets in their bodies. The culprits have not been identified.



The Accio' Ecologista Agro' group reports a lack of vigilance and discipline in the park. Several weeks ago, cattle egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) had been spotted with green paintball paint on their feathers. In October 2018, bird's heads, legs, wings, and viscera were found on a path.⁸³

Late February, 2019

Almeria, Almeria Province, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain

Sentencing of M.R.L., pet store owner, to a 1,200 € fine and to a 2 year prohibition from fishing and hunting, for having poached 16 house sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) and one black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochrurus*). The birds were caught in the mesh of a vertical and undetectable Japanese net, the use of which is forbidden.⁸⁴



OPERATION ANTITOX

Early March 2019

Autonomous Community of Asturias, Cáceres, Autonomous Community of Extremadura and Ciudad Real, Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain

Second episode (cf. "On the Trail" n°23 p. 55). 201 interventions in 21 provinces. Discovery of 70 poisoned animals, including a female lammergeier (*Gypaetus barbatus*, Appendix II), 5 red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II) and an Adalbert eagle (*Aquila adalberti*, Appendix I). Seizure of 875 poisoned traps and bait. 21 police reports.⁸⁵



Mid-March 2019

Montoro, Province of Córdoba, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain

Seizure of 138 dead birds, 112 of which belonged to protected species, and more than 250 bird traps. Arrest of a 48-year-old man.⁸⁶

March 26, 2019

Santa Lucía de Tirajana, Province of Las Palmas, Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, Spain

The last day of open hunting was fatal. Death of a Barbary falcon (*Falco pelegrinoides*, Appendix I). S.R.L., 29 years old, is accused of having shot it in the presence of 3 other hunters.⁸⁷

FRANCE

February 14, 2019

Salernes, Department of Var, France

The persistent presence of an eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II) in the streets for several days attracted the curiosity of the residents. 3 kg, 1.5 m long, he was saved by the people and driven to a veterinarian. The prognosis is uncertain. He was riddled with pellets. In France, there would be between 1,000 and 5,000 couples. The person who shot to kill the miraculously saved eagle owl without the ability to advance a so-called species confusion risks 2 years in prison and a 150,000 € fine.⁸⁸



March 6, 2019

Landes Department, France

Seizure from a private home of 43 passerine birds, including bullfinches (genus *Pyrrhula*), European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), ortolan buntings (*Emberiza hortulana*), common linnets (*Linaria cannabina*), European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*), and Eurasian siskins (*Spinus spinus*), 179 traps, and 7 scales. The raid followed an investigation that took nearly a year. The individual had been poaching for years. The birds were released into the sky.⁸⁹

March 11, 2019

Pau, Pyrénées-Atlantiques Department, France

Sentencing of 2 poachers (aged 35 and 37) to a 1,440 € fine for having captured 2 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) in February 2019. They were using twigs coated in glue deposited in the snow called "gluaux". They had been caught red-handed. One of the goldfinches had flown away. The second died after 24 hours. A specimen sells between 50 and 200 € on the black market.⁹⁰



ITALY

February 2019

San Donaci, Province of Brindisi, Region of Apulia, Italy

Seizure of a live grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) as a result of confidential information.⁹¹

February 16, 2019

Province of Palermo, Sicily Region, Italy

Seizure of 2 common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), one of which was in a birdhouse, the other in a freezer. Arrest of a young man. The living buzzard was transferred to Centro Recupero Fauna Selvatica in hopes that it could be set free in the wild the next day. The lure of profit kills birds of prey. There are more and more egg thefts and clandestine breeding farms in Sicily. A living common buzzard sells for around 1,000 €.⁹²

February 25, 2019

Montecorice, Province of Salerno, Campania Region, Italy

Seizure of 50 Java sparrows (*Lonchura oryzivora*, Appendix II) and 17 monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II) after an investigation of the electronic trading sites.⁹³

FAMILY AFFAIRS

March 2019

Capoterra, Baccalmanza and Uta, Province of Sicily, Italy

Caught red-handed setting up net traps for birds:

- Arrest of a 53-year-old man working in the building trade.
- Arrest of a father and his son. Seizure of 25 birds, including true thrushes (genus *Turdus*) and part of a Corsican red deer (*Cervus elaphus corsicanus*).
- Arrest of a 70-year-old man. Seizure of 396 birds, including European robins (*Erithacus rubecula*), in his home. They were frozen, packaged, ready to be sold and roasted.⁹⁴

March 12, 2019

Palermo, Palermo Province, Sicily Region, Italy

Seizure of 160 birds, including European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), European serins (*Serinus serinus*), and common blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) from market stalls. The police remind purchasers of poached birds that they are receivers and accomplices.⁹⁵

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 I.

"On the Trail" n°24

Value of 1kg of pangolin scales on the black market, according to media or official sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Réf.
Africa	Uganda	2,500	3*
Asia	Malaysia	73	13

* Cf. chapter "Pangolins and Elephants"

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

Continent	Country	US\$/animal	Réf.
Africa	South Africa	36,800	1

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Late February 2019

A motorway service area on the R21, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Seizure of a pangolin from an Engen 1 gas station. It was hidden in a yellow bag in the trunk of a Nissan Primera. It had spent about one week in captivity. Arrest of the 4 passengers, aged to 27 to 36. They were trying to sell the animal for 500,000 rand (36,800 US\$).¹



CAMEROON

February 18, 2019

Yaoundé, Centre Region, Cameroon

Seizure of 42 kg of pangolin scales from a taxi. Two arrests. The 2 traffickers have been working in the Nkolndongo neighbourhood for several years. They would have recruited poachers around the city of Nanga Eboko which is about 160 km away from Yaoundé. Whole pangolins are on display and for sale in the streets of this neighbourhood, which is a hub for wildlife trafficking.²



UGANDA

March 23, 2019

Near Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Western Region, Uganda

Seizure of a pangolin. He was captured by villagers in a coffee plantation. He has been released during the day.³

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

March 2, 2019

Northeast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On the Ugandan border.

Seizure of a live pangolin. He was up for sale.⁴

ZAMBIA

Mid-February 2019

Chipata, Eastern Province, Zambia

Sentencing of Mangani Phiri to 5 years in prison with hard labor for illegal possession of a pangolin.⁵



ASIA

CHINA

February 19, 2019

Shenzhen Checkpoint, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.

Seizure of 4,300 g of pangolin scales from a passenger's backpack.⁶

March 2019

Shenzhen Checkpoint, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.

Seizure of 3,000 g of pangolin scales from the luggage of a passenger entering the country. It is the third seizure of scales this year at this control point.⁷

March 24 and 25, 2019

Foshan, Qingyuan and Heyuan, Guangdong Province, China.

Seizure in the Vietnam border area of 5 frozen pangolins, 5.5 kg of pangolin meat, 1.5 kg of pangolin scales and some lizards.⁸

March 28, 2019

Zhongshang Checkpoint, Guangdong Province, China.

Seizure of 1,025 g of pangolin scales.⁹



GANG

March 29, 2019

Dongxing, Guangxi Province, China. Border with Vietnam. Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China.

Huge operation against Vietnamese-Chinese pangolin trafficking. Seizure of a total of 155 specimens, 103 of which were alive, and of 20 kg of scales. Arrest of 34 traffickers belonging to 9 different bands.

- Seizure of 67 live pangolins in a grocery store.

- Seizure of several frozen young pangolins. Smuggling from Vietnam is done on roads that are known not to have customs.

There are many pangolin meat lovers in the region, especially near Jiangmen and Shantou. Pangolin restaurants are usual.¹⁰

March 31, 2019

Daluo, Fujian Province, China

Seizure of pangolin skins and an all-terrain vehicle. Three arrests.¹¹



INDIA

March 26, 2019

Near Khalapur, Raigad District, State of Maharashtra, India

One 10 kg pangolin, 7 arrests. The Panvel Forest Station mobile squad was warned that a transaction was to take place in the city and carried out an ambush at the edge of the road. Two vehicles were intercepted, one transporting the 3 purchasers coming from Goa, the neighboring State, the other had the 4 sellers arriving from Dapoli in the Ratnagiri district. In their Jeep Bolero, at the bottom of a burlap bag, the pangolin was dead from heat or suffocation.¹²

MALAYSIA

February 7 and 9, 2019

Tamparuli, State of Sabah, Island of Borneo, Malaysia

Seizure from a slaughterhouse, a cutting up workroom and the trunk of a car of 361 kg of scales, 61 live pangolins, 372 frozen pangolins, 1,860 boxes of 15 kg of frozen meat, 2 sun bear paws (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) and of 4 frozen flying foxes (*Pteropus* genus). Total value estimated to be 8.4 million ringgits (2.05 million US\$). One kilogram of scales sells on the local market for about 300 ringgits (73 US\$). Arrest of the leader, 35 years old. These fraudulent activities date back more than 5 years. They were supplying domestic and international markets.¹³

February 15, 2019

Kamabong, State of Sabah, Malaysia

Seizure of 23 pangolins from the trunk of a Proton Waja. They were hidden in blue and black nylon bags. Arrest of the driver. He was coming from Lawas in Sarawak and heading for Keningau, 150 km away.¹⁴

NEPAL

March 6, 2019

Katmandou, Katmandou District, Region n°3, Nepal

Seizure of 1.7 kg of scales leaving for China. Two arrests.¹⁵

THAILAND

February 28, 2019

Songkhla, Mueang Songkhla District, Songkhla Province, Thailand

Seizure of pangolins with a total weight of 228 kg. Value estimated at one million baht (31.867 US\$ which is 140 US\$/kg). A Malaysian police officer was appointed to transport them from Kedah in Malaysia to Songkhla in Thailand, 130 km to the north. From there, they would have been sent to China. The pangolins should be released into the wild after a period of quarantine.¹⁶

March 2, 2019

Sam Roi Yot District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand

Seizure of 76 pangolins in 18 bags hidden under a wood load in a pick-up. Arrest of Sompol Mekchai (45 years old). He claimed to have been recruited to transport the pangolins from Tambon Khlong Wan to the Prachuap Khiri Khan's Muang District, 15 km away. He had already made 2 deliveries, each paying 8,000 baht (260 US\$). The pangolins were entrusted to the Wildlife breeding station in Huay Sai before their release.¹⁷

VIET NAM

March 16 and 20, 2019

Quảng Nam Province, Viet Nam

Arrival of 2 pangolins saved by Save Vietnam's Wildlife. They are both healthy even though they are dehydrated and have been cracked. They were transported in metal nets.¹⁸



March 25, 2019

Hai Phong Port, Viet Nam

The biggest seizure of pangolin scales in the history of Viet Nam: over 8.3 tons hidden in a 20-foot container ship with 120 bags of seeds loaded in the front. In the back, there were 311 bags of pangolin scales. The cargo was coming from Africa. It was unloaded from the German container ship *Mia Schulte*, on behalf of the Hoa Binh International Forwarding Co. based in Hanoi.



Mia Schulte arriving in Vladivostok in 2016.
IMO number :9676735, Singapore flag, owner
Binjai Park Shipping, Hamburg, Germany



In January, a seizure of more than 2.5 tons of scales hidden in ships officially loaded with wood already took place (cf. "On the Trail" n°23, p. 70).¹⁹

March 30, 2019

Nghe An Province, Viet Nam

Seizure in a bus of 11 pangolins, weighing a total of 58 kg, and a Chinese soft-shelled turtle (*Pelodiscus sinensis*) of 10 kg. They were handed over to the rescue centre in Pu Mat national park.²⁰

EUROPE

SPAIN

Mid-March 2019

Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas International Airport, Spain

Fragrant seizure in the middle of clothes in the suitcase of a 35-year-old woman: a pangolin and 4 dead porcupines (Hystricidae family). She was coming from Casablanca, Morocco. This is the first time the Guardia Civil has found a dead pangolin in a suitcase. The 5 bodies are in an advanced state of decomposition. They are going to be incinerated. The offender, born in Equatorial Guinea and living in Torrejón de Ardoz (Community of Madrid), intended to cook dishes from her country.²¹

Pangolins and Elephants



AFRICA

CAMEROON

March 14, 2019

Douala, Littoral Region, Cameroon

Seizure of 2 tons of pangolin scales and 200 tusks. Value estimated at 150 million francs CFA (260,000 US\$). Four arrests. They were buying the goods from small traffickers in Central Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and several cities in Cameroon located in the East, the Center and the South: Batouri, Messamena, Ngoyla, Abong-Mbang Yoko and Ayos. The ivory and scales were hidden in bags of pepper and djansang, a seed that is highly valued in African cuisine for its hints of peanut but also for its supposed therapeutic properties (constipation, ocular infections, female sterility). The gathering of scales, preparation of smuggling into Nigeria and fraudulent exportation to Asia are done behind the cover of reputable telephone shops and grocery stores.¹



NIGERIA

February 2019

Lagos, Nigeria

Investigation following the seizures of 2,500 kg of pangolin scales and 600 kg of ivory by Vietnamese customs. (cf. "On the Trail" n° 23 p. 70) and 8,200 kg of scales and 2,000 kg of ivory by Hong Kong customs (cf. "On the Trail" n° 23 p. 69), in ships coming from the Apapa port near Lagos. The minister of the Environment, Mr. Zarma, claims that Nigeria can only be a transit zone. According to him, the country's pangolin and elephant populations are nearly extinct, and in any case, they are out of proportion with the current amount of seizures made in Vietnam.²

UGANDA

March 4, 2019

Kampala District, Centre Region, Uganda

Arrest and indictment of Anesio Kayanja Turyahikay (36 years old) for possession of ivory and of 47.96 kg of pangolin scales. The scales are estimated at 444 million shillings (122,000 US\$, which is 2,500 US\$/kg) in reference to the price on the international market. The businessman denies it, claiming that he fell down in a plot and demands to be released on bail.³



REPUBLIC OF CONGO

February 27, 2019

Impfondo, Likouala Department, Republic of the Congo. Border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Arrest of 7 traffickers from Central Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Congo-Brazzaville. They were in possession of 9 raw elephant ivories, a bag of pangolin scales and a leopard skin. The 3 species have been fully protected in the country since April 2011.⁴

Primates



AFRICA

MALAWI

February 4, 2019
Near Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi

Rescue of a vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) hardly a few weeks old. Kids were intending to sell it to passers-by. He suffers from malnutrition, cold, and stress.¹



AMERICA

BRAZIL

March 11, 2019
Osasco, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 68 monkeys (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II) aged 10 days to 3 months and of more than 120 birds of several species, of which about ten had already died. The monkeys came from the State of Bahia and were about to be sold for 100 reais (27 US\$) each. Three arrests. Pending their trial, they were reportedly fined 2 million reais (536,450 US\$) for wildlife trafficking and animal abuse, according to the *Estado São Paulo* newspaper. The monkeys were taken to Itu in the shelter of the NGO Projeto Mucky.²

MEXICO

March 18, 2019
Tapachula International Airport, State of Chiapas, Mexico

Seizure of 2 white-faced capuchins (*Cebus capucinus*, Appendix II) in parcels making for Mexico City.³

PERU

End of February 2019
Yurimaguas, Alto Amazonas Province, Loreto Department, Peru

Seizure on the Rio Huallaga aboard the San Antonio of 350 kg of spider monkey (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II) and red howler (*Alouatta seniculus*, Appendix II) meat. Arrest of Walter Lancha Silva, 72 years old.⁴

ASIA

CAMBODIA

March 21, 2019
Cardamom National Park, Cambodia

Seizure of a living Indochinese leaf monkey baby (*Trachypithecus germaini*, Appendix II) and a turtle. The coat of the monkey is a bright orange at birth and turns grey 3 to 5 months later.⁵



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

March 10, 2019
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Forsaking of a slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) in a box. He was placed in The Green Planet Dubai, a miniature tropical forest under a dome in a shopping mall.⁶

INDONESIA

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 6, 2019

Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan Province, Island of Borneo, Indonesia

Clearing out of several monkeys, including lorises (*Nycticebus spp.*, Appendix I), Müller's gibbons (*Hylobates muelleri*, Appendix I), and pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca nemestrina*, Appendix II). The owner, Iwan Na'in, had bought the monkeys from local vendors. He claims to have wanted to turn the primates in to authorities for a long time. He puts forth "technical reasons" to justify the deterioration of the situation.⁷

February 6, 2019

Koto Kampar Hulu, Kampar Regency, Riau Province, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia

After one bite on a 2-year-old child, voluntary handing over of an agile gibbon (*Hylobates agilis*, Appendix I) who had been captive for nearly nine years.⁸

February 9, 2019

Jember Regency, East Java Province, Island of Java, Indonesia



Exhibiting masked long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) in the streets of the island has been a method of attracting passers-by attention and earning a living for a long time. The practice was prohibited in 2017 but old habits die hard. Tens of macaques have been seized. Others have voluntarily been handed over to the authorities. The NGO Jakarta Animal Aid Network (JAAN) takes care of the survivors. 25 of them have just been transferred to a relearning center to be set free. However, before being set free on the island of Nusa Barong, they will be vaccinated and sterilized.⁹

March 12, 2019

Marisa, Pohuwato Regency, Gorontalo Province, Island of Sulawesi, Indonesia



While on his morning jog, Agus Widodo, the chief of local police, noticed a Heck's macaque (*Macaca hecki*, Appendix II) attached to a tree. He was set free in the afternoon and left with BKSDA (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam). "The province has extraordinary natural resources. We should

protect them to avoid their extinction" Mr. Widodo declares with the macaque in his arms.¹⁰

INDONESIA - ORANGUTANS

Orangutans (*Pongo spp.*) are listed under CITES Appendix I.

February 2019

Indonesia

Indonesia, 11,500 km from Brussels, is competing against the RED II European Union directive applicable in 2030. RED II considers that industrial oil palm plantations contribute to deforestation and global CO2 emissions and that palm oil should therefore be banned in biofuels. The president of the Indonesian Palm Oil Association (GAPKI) wants to bring the dispute before the World Trade Organisation if no mediation with the EU is possible.¹¹

February 2, 2019

Kaperas, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia

A male orangutan, about five years old, secured by villagers. He has a wound on his forehead. He was handed over to the SOCP (Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme). He should be released after a period of care and relearning the wild lifestyle.¹²

February 5, 2019

Kaperas, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Transfer on Mount Leuser of a 30-year-old male orangutan wounded by a bullet.¹³

February 9, 2019

Lhok Pawoh, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia

Evacuation of a 4-year-old male orangutan. He was a pet for 2 years. He was placed in a center for relearning the wild lifestyle.¹⁴



February 9, 2019

Punai Jaya, North Lampung Regency, Lampung Province, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia

Freeing of a female orangutan. For 4 years, she was confined in a box that was 1.5 m long and 2 m tall. The owner had found her orphaned in a palm oil plantation. He claims to have been trying to free her, but she would have come back on her own. She is healthy.¹⁵



February 12, 2019

East Kalimantan Province, Island of Borneo, Indonesia

Rescue of a female orangutan after one or 2 years in captivity. Minimum duration for relearning the wild lifestyle: 5 years.¹⁶

February 14, 2019

Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park, Sintang Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Island of Borneo, Indonesia

Release of 6 orangutans

- Maili, who arrived to the Orangutan Conservation Centre in 2015 after having been kept as a pet, became pregnant during the rehabilitation phase. It is the first time that a mother and her offspring followed the same program before being set free.
- Obi, an 8-year-old male, and Muria, a female, had also been used as pets.
- Zoya, a female baby separated from her mother in 2017, was adopted by Muria. This is also the first time that a baby and adoptive mother were released into nature by the Orangutan Conservation Centre.
- Lady, a 10-year-old female, was evacuated from a bauxite mine in 2010. She could be set free after 8 years of relearning about life in the wild.¹⁷

February 12, 2019

Aceh Singkil Regency, Aceh Province, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia

Clearing out of an orangutan. About 25 years old. Five bullets in his face.¹⁸

February 2019

Pulang Pisau Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Island of Borneo, Indonesia

"Pre-release" of 4 orangutans, 2 males and 2 females, from the Island of Salat. The island was purchased in 2017 by the Foundation Borneo Orangutan Survival and Sawit Sumbermas Sarana, a palm oil producer. The island is expected to provide land for initiation to life in the wild and restoration of survival instincts for primates that are traumatized by captivity or the expropriation of their habitats by agro-food industries. Secondly, they should have access to larger and more diverse forest areas. Now 31 orangutans share the island (6.55 km²).¹⁹

February 18, 2019

Mendawai Seberang, West Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Island of Borneo, Indonesia

Rescue of a 30-year-old female orangutan weighing 35 kg and her 7-year-old daughter weighing 14 kg from a palm oil plantation. They are healthy.²⁰

February 23, 2019

Tapak Tuan, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia

Clearing out from a palm oil plantation of Lumtuha, a 25-year-old male orangutan weighing 60 kg, to the Jantho natural reserve.²¹

March 10, 2019

Bunga Tanjung, Subulussalam Regency, Aceh Province, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia

Transfer of a female orangutan and her baby who was hardly a month old to the sanctuary of Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Program near Medan (a 10 hour drive). They took refuge in a villager's orchard for 2 days. The baby died of malnutrition. The state of the mother is worrisome. She has cuts and hand fractures from 74 bullet wounds in her back and eyes. She is now blind. There are over 400,000 hectares of palm oil plantations in the province and clearing by fires continues.²²



March 12, 2019

Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park, Sintang Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Island of Borneo, Indonesia

Release of 6 orangutans, 3 males, including Borneo, and 3 females, including Buntok, Borneo's mother.²³

March 20, 2019

Namo Buaya, Subulussalam City, Aceh Province, Island of Sumatra, Indonesia

Another orangutan saved from a palm oil plantation. Suffering from malnutrition, the female is 7 years old but only weighs 5 kg. Her right hand is immobile.²⁴

THAILAND

February 6, 2019

Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya District, Ayutthaya Province, Thailand

Seizure of 2 slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) put up for sale on Facebook for 5,000 baht (159 US\$). Arrest of a 22-year-old man, known by the name of Tibetan Rabbit. The animals were a couple, and the female would be pregnant. The veterinarians draw this conclusion based on the mutually affectionate attitude of the 2 specimens. In "normal" circumstances, lorises are often quarrelsome.²⁵



March 9, 2019

Pattaya, Chonburi Province, Thailand

Rescue by the WWFT (Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand) of 2 northern pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II) from a horse riding school. The smallest was in a 1.2 m by 1.7 m cage full of garbage. The biggest is obese. The 2 are victims of OCD, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.²⁶



23 mars 2019

March 23, 2019

Chumphon, Chumphon Province, Thailand

- Seizure of a 3-year-old female dusky leaf monkey (*Trachypithecus obscurus*, Appendix II) with behavioral disorders. She had been kept as a pet on a farm since she was a few weeks old.

- Seizure of 2 northern pig-tailed macaques, one male and one female. They lost their natural survival instincts. Captured by villagers for so-called land-use conflicts, they had since been prisoners in a temple.²⁷



VIET NAM

March 18, 2019

Pu Mat National Park, Nghệ An Province, Viet Nam

A slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) handed over to the authorities by those who had captured it 2 days before.²⁸

EUROPE

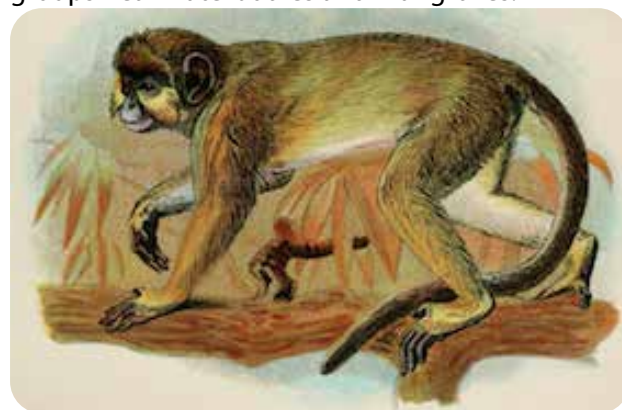
SPAIN

OPERATION AMEDIO

Mid-March 2019

Aguilas, Region of Murcia, Spain

Seizure of a talapoin (*Miopithecus talapoin*, Appendix II) during the Carnival festivities. His owner offered for passers-by to pay for a picture with him. The talapoin is the smallest African monkey. He can measure between 32 and 45 cm and weigh between 0.8 and 1.9 kg. He lives in groups near waterbodies and mangroves.²⁹



Felines

"On the Trail" n°24

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

Tigers	p.55
Lions	p.57
Leopards	p.57
Cheetahs	p.60
Snow leopards	p.60
Clouded leopards	p.61
Bengale leopard cats	p.61
Jaguars	p.61
Ocelots	p.62
Pumas	p.62
Lynx	p.62
Multi-felines	p.62

Continent	Country	Animal/part	US\$	Ref.
Africa	Uganda	Leopard skin	10,000	19
Asia	India Uttarakhand State	Leopard skin	7,015	28
	India Odisha State		14,000 42,000/ 56,000	32
	India Gujarat State	Tiger skin	7,015	7
	India Karnataka State	Tiger or leopard claw	1,440	53
	Pakistan	Living Bengal leopard cat	325	45
	United Arab Emirates (seller in Europe ?)	2 living baby jaguars	27,225	49
Europe	Spain	Stuffed Leopard	9,150	56*

* cf. chapter « Multi-species »



TIGERS

Tigers (*Panthera tigris*) are listed under CITES Appendix I.

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

February 11, 2019

Houston, State of Texas, United States of America

Bad trip. A man who had broken into a forsaken house to smoke marijuana found himself face to face with an overweight female tiger (160 kg). The feline was in a very small cage that wasn't even locked. Several packages of meat were found next to the cage. The big cat was transported to a transitional shelter by the Livestock Animal Cruelty Unit. The Houston Zoo said it could not accommodate him. It already hosts 2 tigers from Malaysia and does not have the means to host a third one.¹

ASIA

INDIA

February 13, 2019

Maharashtra State, India

Death of the famous tiger skin and bone trafficker Suraj Pal alias Chacha, 73 years old. The legal proceedings related to his case are therefore dropped. In prison since 2013, he was released on December 18, 2018 (cf. "On the Trail" n°7 p. 51, n°9 p. 46, n°10 p. 39, n°11 p. 48-49, n°12 p. 56). Some forest officials still doubt the reality of his death despite confirmation from the highest judicial authorities. His accomplices, Suraj Bhan a.k.a Sarju and Naresh Lala, are still waiting for their judgment.²

February 21, 2019

Chauradadar, Dindori District, Madhya Pradesh State, India

Seizure of the skin, legs, claws and canines of a male tiger that had been electrocuted by a trap. The victim's skinned carcass and tail were exhumed. Arrests of Umesh Valre, Pankhu Singh, Santu Singh, Jagmohan Singham, Bhagwanta Singh, Sukhram Walre, Pandit Walre and Pool Singh. An accomplice managed to escape. Two of the suspects are specialists in black magic and alternative medicine.³



GANG

March 7, 2019

Dudhwa National Park, Lakhimpur Kheri District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Dismantling of a group of poachers specialized in laying snare traps targeting tigers. Their misdeeds were brought to light in March 2018, when a census of the tiger population was organized in the reserve with the help of photographic traps. From the images, numerous felines showed traces of injuries caused by traps. The investigation opened by the Forestry Department first resulted in the arrest of a suspect, who turned in his stooges. Members of the Tharu ethnic group, all living in the villages of Farenda, Baburam, Gurunaam, Bariya and Ramchandra, they have been remanded in custody.⁴



March 17, 2019

Tipeshwar Wildlife Sanctuary, Pandarkawada District, State of Maharashtra, India

The T4 tiger had been dealing with an injury caused by a trap since at least September 11, 2017, the last time she had been spotted. Efforts undertaken by the Forestry Department to locate and care for her remained useless, when suddenly T4 reappeared this weekend on the photographic traps in the forest, looking very weakened. A rescue operation was launched on Sunday. But the exhausted tiger did not survive the dose of sleeping pills contained in a dart shot by a veterinarian.⁵

TIGERS - FOLLOWED

March 18, 2019

Harihara, Kodagu District, State of Karnataka, India

A one-year-old male tiger cub died entangled in a trap on the outskirts of a plantation. Intended for killing wild boars that are considered pests, the traps are a recurring plague in the region. A tiger had already died because of those in 2017 and about 400 traps had been dismantled during a Forestry Department Operation. The local wildlife defenders feel that the administration is too lenient towards the owners of the coffee plantations on the edge of the Nagarhole national park. The tigers hunt the wild boars and should be considered as auxiliaries of farming. Setting up traps is forbidden by the Wildlife Protection Act.⁶



©The Hindu

March 23, 2019

Ahmedabad, Ahmedabad District, State of Gujarat, India

Rajiv alias Lalit Soni was arrested following a tip-off. An Anti-criminality Brigade raid on his house discovered a tiger skin with its claws and an handmade pistol. He wanted to sell the skin in town for 500,000 rupees (7,015 US\$). He had obtained the weapon for 10,000 rupees (140 US\$) from Singh Rajput and Kalpesh Gajjar, also caught. But the skin supplier, Narendra Soni, established in Bikaner in Rajasthan, fled. The suspects seem to be part of a gang with ramifications in several States.⁷

March 28, 2019

Lakhimpur Kheri District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Another tiger strangled by a trap near an agricultural plot. This time it is the owner of a wheat field, Sarabjeet Singh, who had requested the poachers to set the traps to capture the wild boars. One of the poachers, Lalaram, was a forest ranger. When a 3 to 4-year-old male tiger was found trapped around midnight, Lalaram abstained from telling his superiors. The animal struggled for nearly 10 hours roaring in pain before the villagers alerted the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve management.



As the reserve lacked veterinary expertise, it was finally specialists of the Wildlife Trust of India and Lucknow Zoo who arrived on the scene. In vain, the tiger was dead of strangulation upon their arrival. Eight people were charged and 6 incarcerated following this pathetic occurrence, including the forest ranger. Two others fled.⁸

INDONESIA

March 11, 2019

Padang City, West Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Seizure of a Sumatran tiger skin (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*), tiger bones, a knife and a Honda Megapro motorcycle. B.J. (33), S. (45) and R.S. (23) were arrested while trying to sell the skin. The police are still looking for the owner, a certain L. The 3 accomplices were in charge of marketing.⁹

March 24, 2019

Teluk Meranti, Pelalawan Regency, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Rescue by a veterinary team from the Dhamasraya Sumatran Tiger Rehabilitation Centre of a Sumatran tiger (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*) about 3-4 years old and weighing 90 kg that has been caught in a trap for 3 days. The wound has become infected and he may need to have his left front leg amputated. In 2018, 3 specimens were fatally injured in traps (cf. "On the Trail" n° 22, p.68). The Sumatran tiger population is in steady decline.¹⁰



© Jambi Independent

VIET NAM

March 21, 2019

Nghe An Province, Viet-Nam

Seizure of 2 frozen tiger cubs for sale on Facebook. Lô Văn Tuấn had taken care to use a fake account, but Education For Nature managed to trap him. The tiger cubs come from Laos.¹¹



© ENV

TIGERS - FOLLOWED

EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM

February 9, 2019

London, England, United Kingdom

The chief keeper at the London Zoo had a positive opinion. "Asim is a handsome, confident cat who is known for being very affectionate with the ladies in his life – we're hoping he'll be the perfect mate for our beautiful Melati." Asim arrived about 10 days ago from Ree park Safari in Denmark. The positive signs of possible mating had been noticed by zoo staff, including very encouraging mutual growling from the 2 nearby cages. The first physical contact started well but it worsened in a few minutes. Asim killed Melati even before staff deployed emergency flares and loud alarms to divert the male from his fury. Too late! Melati, 7, had already succumbed to the assaults of Asim, 10. The fatal encounter was part of a European inter-zoos plan to save the Sumatran tiger species from extinction.¹²

LIONS

African lions (*Panthera leo*) are listed under CITES Appendix II, Indian lions (*Panthera leo persica*) under Appendix I.

AFRICA

ZIMBABWE

March 4, 2019

Tsholotsho District, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

They killed a lioness. "Justice is running its course," says the district chief. She was part of a pack that is accused of having killed - propaganda or reality - more than 200 heads of cattle in 2 months by chasing them into their pens. In addition to lions, hyenas and wild dogs would also attack herds. Officials of the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Authority (Zimparks) are informed but are slow to find a solution. More and more farmers are taking the law into their own hands.¹³

AMERICA

MEXICO

February 26, 2019

Iztacalco, Mexico City, Mexico

Seizure of 3 lions, one male and 2 females aged about 3 years old, at the mayor's private home.¹⁴

ASIA

PALESTINE

Early February 2019

Rafah, Gaza Strip, Palestine

Rafah Zoo director Mohammed Jumaa (53) has decided to cut off the claws of Falestine, a 14-month-old lioness. He hopes to attract more visitors by having children play with the lioness through the bars of the cage. "I try to reduce the lioness' aggressiveness so that she is friendly with visitors."

There are no more veterinary clinics in Gaza. Veterinarian Fayyaz al-Haddad therefore conducted the operation inside the zoo. Falestine lives there with 40 other animals. The blockade decreed by Israel and economic difficulties reduce the attractiveness of the zoo. Mr. Jumaa sees this mutilation as a way to increase the profitability of the zoo, which is almost bankrupt. The NGO Four Paws accuses the director of mistreatment and reminds that 4 cubs died of cold in January in the Gaza zoo, which opened in 1990 and is owned by the Jumaa family.¹⁵

EUROPE

LUXEMBOURG

March 6, 2019

Luxembourg

Cargolux, a specialist of air freight, commits to refusing to transport trophies and lion bones.

"These objects are closely linked to poaching and lion breeding. "This does not correspond to our society's commitment to nature." The South African NGO EMS Foundation welcomes this decision. Cargolux already refuses to transport ivory, dolphin meat and animals intended for animal experimentation. The company has 27 aircraft.¹⁶



LEOPARDS

Leopards (*Panthera pardus*) are listed under CITES Appendix I.

AFRICA

GABON

February 10, 2019

Assock Begue, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

Four arrests: Mr Bi Nzé, Mr Evoung, Mr Moukala and Mr Lembouandza. Seizure of 2 leopard skins and a rifle.¹⁷

LEOPARDS - FOLLOWED

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 19, 2019

Ovan, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

Two brothers, Narcisse and Dieu-Merci, were caught by the police in a hotel with cut leopard skins.¹⁸

UGANDA

March 27, 2019

Adjumani District, Northern Region, Uganda

Arobako, a fisherman, and Obuojah are friends but do not agree. The first admits to being involved in the illegal possession and transport of a leopard skin (estimated by experts at 10,000 US\$), a genet skin (200 US\$) and a rodent skin (50 US\$) while the second pleads not guilty.¹⁹

ZAMBIA

Mid-February 2019

Kalulushi, Copperbelt Province, Zambia

James Zulu, Harrison Chongo and Mathias Muowowowo were each sentenced to 5 years' with hard labour for illegal possession of a leopard skin.²⁰



ASIA

INDIA

February 2, 2019

Chennai International Airport, Tamil Nadu State, India



The leopard waited in the suitcase of 45-year-old Kaja Moideen, disembarking in Chennai from a Thai Airways flight coming from Bangkok. The call for help was heard by airport customs officers who immediately delivered and rescued the cub with milk bottles, on the advice of a zoo's veterinary team. An agreement at the highest level would be on the point to be reached to send the young migrant, aged 40 to 50 days and weighing just over one kilogram, back to Thailand. Genetic analyses guarantee that he originates from there.²¹

February 6 and 12, 2019

Bistan, Khargone District and Umariya Pani, Barwani District, Madhya Pradesh State, India

The bad smell came out of a ravine. Alerted by villagers, the forestry agents quickly arrived on the spot. They brought the leopard's carcass to the surface, with its head, legs and tail amputated.²²

February 7, 2019

Puthoorvayal, Wayanad District, State of Kerala, India

Coffee, tea and rubber kill leopards; they are drawn to plantations by the presence of -more or less- stray dogs belonging to farm workers. Sharp traps made with 2-wheel brake cables are multiplying to capture felines. The last victim is an adult aged about 8 years. The 2 poachers are in custody. Without taking into account the conflicts between wildlife and human activities, industrial plantations surround Wayanad nature reserve. The decision was made to set up patrols to track the traps. The owners will be held liable even if the traps were set without their knowledge.²³



February 9, 2019

Mandhata, Pratappgarh District, Uttar Pradesh State, India

First caught in a trap, the 10-year-old leopard had the terrible fate of being attacked and killed by a gang of madmen armed with sticks and projectiles. In a few years, the collective attitude towards leopards has turned to infinite cruelty. At the end of 2017 in Budepur, 170 km from Lucknow, other lunatics filled a well into which a thirsty leopard had fallen with dry grass and dead wood. They then set it on fire to burn the poor creature alive.²⁴



FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 10, 2019

Dhulkot, Khargone District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

The 2 brothers were camping in the forest. In their pack, the police found a leopard tail, boar hair and jackal meat. They had been in the sights of forestry officers since the recent poaching of a female leopard in the area.²⁵

LEOPARDS - FOLLOWED

February 14, 2019

Parm, Sindhudurg District, Maharashtra State, India

Violent death of a leopard. Prosecution says that he had been harassing the village and the farmers for quite some time, that he had finally broken into a house and injured a 70-year-old man and that it is normal that villagers who came to the rescue strangled him. The defense says that the habitat of the Parm leopards is taken over by quarries, agricultural burns and clearing.²⁶

February 18, 2019

Lakhimpur Kheri District, Uttar Pradesh State, India

Fifteen years after the illegal possession and attempted commercialization of the leopard's skin, Bharose was sentenced to 4 years in prison and a fine of 5,000 rupees (70 US\$). Bharose had implicated 2 Nepalese accomplices, Hori Lal and Munna Lal, but since the Indian courts failed to authenticate their identity and nationality, the proceedings against them were dropped.²⁷



March 2, 2019

Near Dehradun, Dehradun District, Uttarakhand State, India

Vivek Kumar and Khajan Singh attempted to flee when a patrol officer wanted to search their vehicle, but after a high-speed chase, they were caught. They were transporting the skin of a leopard estimated at 500,000 rupees (7,015 US\$). An investigation was opened to trace their supplier and their client.²⁸

March 4 and 6, 2019

Surat District, State of Gujarat, India

-At daybreak, Dinesh Vasava came face to face with a 2 and a half-year-old leopard in his house in Dhamdod. Having fears for his nephew, he rounded up his neighbors. Together, they killed the feline by hitting it with sticks and shovels.



- On the evening of March 6, in Juna Umarpadam a 4-year-old male is accused of having attacked 3 farmers in a field. Two of them will be brought to the hospital for slight injuries. Alerted by their cries, the habitants of the village came to the rescue, haphazardly armed, and hit the feline who managed to flee. The next morning, the forest rangers discovered a dead leopard nearby, killed by a fracture to the skull. Autopsy in progress.

That is 2 leopards killed in 2 days by villagers in the electoral district of Mr Ganpat Vasava, Minister of Tribal Development, Tourism, Forest and Women and Child Welfare.²⁹

March 7, 2019

Jeur Haibati, Ahmednagar District, Maharashtra State, India

Rescue of a 3-year-old male caught by his left forefoot in a jaw trap set up by poachers. Upon the request of the Forest department, the Manikdoh Leopard Rescue Center mobilized a team of 4 people, including a veterinarian, to be able to put the feline to sleep and free him. He was then brought to a Forest Department Center to be put under observation before being released.³⁰



GANG

March 9, 2019

Batlagundu, Dindigul District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Hectic arrest of 2 traffickers who were looking to sell a skin to undercover Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) agents. The result of the operation is mitigated: a third man fled with the leopard skin. The gang was suddenly suspicious during the meeting and tried to flee. One of the traffickers was restrained but the other 2 rushed to their car after one of them bit an officer in the hand. A chase ensued, after which only one could be arrested.³¹

GANG

March 15 and 24, 2019

Kuchinda, Sambalpur District, State of Odisha, India

Raid of the criminal brigade in an inn. Well informed, the police seized 4 leopard skins and arrested 7 traffickers. Sanjaya Bag, Jasraj Patel, Kailash Majhi, Jhasaketan Naik, Minaketan Munda, Kumud Bara and Sunil Kumar Kalo. The latter is a truck driver in the army. One week later, the police arrested 3 accomplices: Narendra Ping, Manful Pradhan and Akhaya Bhoi. The gang was intending to sell the skins in Calcutta or in Mumbai. Purchased for around 1 million rupees (14,000 US\$) each in the district, they can be resold at 3 to 4 million (42,000 to 56,000 US\$) in the big cities.³²

GANG

March 23, 2019

Town of Karanjia, Mayurbhanj District, State of Odisha, India

The trio was under surveillance. Md. Ashan and Md. Rahimuddin fell first, in the act of transporting a 1.22-m long skin on a motorcycle during the night. They denounced Sirish Chandra Mohanta, who was picked up the next day. The sex of the 5 to 6-year-old leopard was not determined. The 3 men went to court, other accomplices are sought for.³³

LEOPARDS - FOLLOWED

GANG

March 29, 2019

Chennur, Mancherial District, State of Telangana, India

Good catch by the police, who caught a band of poachers who had electrocuted a leopard on March 1, stretching a cable connected to an electric line in the forest near the village of Bronda, on the bank of the Pranahita River. The gang had cut it up on the spot and set the skin to dry in the forest. They had found a buyer-Alam Raju- and were on their way for the delivery when the police intercepted them. Pendem Ramesh, Pendam Vasanth, Allam Dilip, Porthati Nagesh, Porthati Suresh, Porthati Anil and Allam Vignesh were transporting the skin, 12 claws, 3 teeth, wire and sharp knives. Six other accomplices are sought for.³⁴



IRAN

March 1, 2019

Choram, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, Iran

Discovery of 2 dead leopards with their legs amputated in a protected area 5 km from the city (20,000 inhabitants).³⁵

NEPAL

February 2, 2019

Timurdaha, Doti District, Province No. 7, Nepal

A leopard shot and killed. About 3 years old. Amputated of his legs and tail.³⁶

PAKISTAN

February 4, 2019

Islamabad, Islamabad Capital Territory, Pakistan

Seizure in the shopping mall of a palace of 24 leopard fur jackets and 3 decorative objects made of leopard and snake skin. The felines were reportedly poached in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This is the first time that the MCI (Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad) has been confronted with such a crime. The consequences of the seizure create controversy. The MCI is considering auctioning the clothes.³⁷

February 16, 2019

Mansehra, Mansehra District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan

Discovery of the carcass of a female leopard female about 3 years old on the construction site of a road attributed to a Chinese company.³⁸

February 26, 2019

Margalla Hills National Park, Islamabad Capital Territory, Pakistan

Release of a leopard cub retrieved alive from the clutches of a trafficker. The government is viewing to increase sanctions for poachers, traffickers and smugglers of endangered species. Margalla Hills National park is subject to poaching (see p. 61).³⁹

CHEETAHS

Cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*) are listed under CITES Appendix I.

AFRICA

KENYA

March 31, 2019

Isineti, Kajiado County, Kenya

A male cheetah found dead. He was poisoned in retaliation. His body was burned to prevent scavengers from being poisoned themselves.⁴⁰



SOUTH AFRICA (rectification)

March, 2019

North West Province, South Africa

Riding to hounds! Seizure of 2 cheetahs, one dead and one dying. Two arrests. The 2 poachers hunted the felines on horseback with dogs.⁴¹

SNOW LEOPARDS

Snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*) are listed under CITES Appendix I.

ASIA

MONGOLIA

Early February 2019

Emeelt, Songino Khaikhan District, Mongolia

Seizure of a skin and frozen meat of a snow leopard. Two arrests. They were trying to sell the meat on a market in the suburbs of Ulaanbaatar. At the beginning of the millennium, an approximate census indicated the presence of 1,000 snow leopards in the country (1.56 million km²).⁴²



CLOUDED LEOPARDS

Clouded leopards (*Neofelis nebulosa*) are listed under CITES Appendix I.

ASIA

NEPAL

February 6, 2019

Kathmandu, Kathmandu District, Province No. 3, Nepal

Seizure of several clouded leopard skins. Arrest of Indra Kumar Tamong (16) and Raj Kumar Tamang (17). The recruitment of minors for the transport of poached species is a well-known method. It prevents the police and the justice from keeping suspects in prolonged police custody.⁴³

BENGAL LEOPARD CATS

Bengal leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) are listed under CITES Appendix II, with the exception of the populations of Bangladesh, India and Thailand which are in Appendix I.

ASIA

INDONESIA

March 30, 2019

Stabat, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

The Bengal leopard cat injured in the stomach by a sharp object as a result of some unknown conflict with human activities was taken to the Sibolangit refuge where he was treated before being released into the jungle.⁴⁴

PAKISTAN

February 23, 2019

Faizabad, Islamabad Capital Territory, Pakistan

Rescue of a leopard cat. Arrest of 2 traffickers living in Rawalpindi who were about to deliver the feline to an unidentified buyer for an amount equal to 325 US\$. They had placed an ad on Facebook. The small feline had been captured in Margalla Hills National park, which would host no more than 5 or 6.⁴⁵

facebook

VIET NAM

March 16, 2019

An Duong District, Hai Phong, Viet-Nam

Rescue of an injured leopard cat from an individual. He was transferred to the wildlife refuge of Soc Son.⁴⁶



JAGUARS

Jaguars (*Panthera onca*) are in Appendix I.

AMERICA

ECUADOR

Early February 2019

Loreto, Orellana Province, Ecuador

Seizure in a private home of a 2 m long jaguar skin with bullet holes.⁴⁷

MEXICO

Mid-February 2019

Merida International Airport, Yucatán State, Mexico

Seizure of a 5-month-old jaguar. The specimen, due to genetic originality, has a dark coat close to black.⁴⁸

ASIA

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

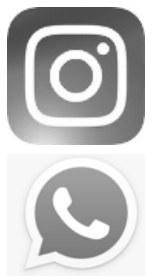
February 21, 2019

United Arab Emirates

Publication on Instagram of a video showing 2 jaguar cubs and their mother. It is accompanied by the mention: "Jaguar cubs available on serious request. Not pets, only for zoos!". The pair is on sale for 100,000 dirhams, or 27,225 US\$.

The seller introduces himself as Oliver.

He is believed to live in Slovakia. He communicates via WhatsApp. He is also trying to sell clouded leopards, black leopards, mountain lions, white lions, meerkats, white wolves, etc. He offers to export them to the United Arab Emirates via Oman. This announcement could be linked to the clearance of a public or private zoo. It could also be an attempt at fraud. The choice to focus on the United Arab Emirates comes at a bad time. The country's zoos are saturated with wild animals whose private owners are getting rid of. For safety reasons, citizens are now forbidden from keeping wildlife specimens. Recalcitrants are liable to heavy fines.⁴⁹



OCELOTS

Ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*) are listed under CITES Appendix I.

AMERICA

COLOMBIA

March 4, 2019

Tuluá, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia

A young female ocelot abandoned at the entrance of a veterinary clinic. She is handicapped by a fractured femur due to a calcium deficiency. She was poorly fed after she was poached when she was still breastfeeding. Her mother's fate is unknown. She was transferred to the Centro de Atención y Valoración de Fauna (CAV) San Emigdio de Palmira. Prognosis reserved.⁵⁰



PUMAS

Pumas (*Puma concolor*) are listed under CITES Appendix II, with the exception of the subspecies *Puma concolor costaricensis* which is listed under Appendix I.

AMERICA

MEXICO

March 16, 2019

Anáhuac, State of Nuevo León, Mexico

They were posing with their feet on a dead puma. A complaint was filed by PROFEPA with the Attorney General. They are not yet identified.⁵¹

LYNX

Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) are listed under CITES Appendix II.

EUROPE

GERMANY

February 6, 2019

Palatinate Forest, Rhineland-Palatinate State, Germany

Project "LIFE Lynx Pfälzerwald" aimed at reintroducing the lynx continues. The first female of the year, Mala, was brought from the Canton of Vaud, Switzerland. She weighs about 18 kg.

Since the beginning of the project in 2015, lynxes from Slovakia and 7 lynx from Switzerland have been relocated in the forest.⁵²

MULTI-FELINES

ASIA

INDIA

February 7, 2019

Bangalore, Karnataka State, India

Seizure of 142 tiger and leopard claws. The 3 suspects, Kavith Kumar (23), Gopiraj a.k.a Gopi (25) and N. Sanjay (21), had a night appointment at the flower market with potential buyers who escaped the bust. At the end of the line, each claw can be sold for 100,000 rupees or 1,440 US\$. This is the price for an amulet known to bring happiness, prosperity and sexual power. Except that sometimes, tiger claws are skillfully made "fakes". In any case, the suspects are affiliated with a gang of Hakki Pikki, a tribe that is expert in poaching and wildlife trade. Several members of the clan travel to Malaysia via Singapore to sell tiger teeth, claws and skins.⁵³

February 13, 2019

Rajaji Tiger Reserve, Saharanpur, Dehradun and Pauri Garhwal Districts, Uttarakhand State, India

Publication of a report by the Chief Conservator of Forests Manoj Chandran. He is accusing 11 officers of the Forest Department and Rajaji Tiger Reserve of being involved in poaching, circulating false information and withholding evidence related to tiger trafficking. The director of the reserve, Sanatan Sonkar, is among the suspects. The report also identifies 14 poachers. They come from a community of snake charmers who claim to have been attacked by leopards and to have acted in retaliation. The report states that witnesses who refused to cooperate with poachers and corrupt officials were tortured, including by electric shocks. This investigation follows the finding of meat, bones and skins of 2 leopards and 2 tigers buried in 4 holes near the Reserve on March 22, 2018 (cf. "On the Trail" n°20 p. 65, n°21 p. 70).⁵⁴

INDONESIA

February 10, 2019

Pelabuhan Ketapang Port, Banyuwangi Regency, East Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia

- Seizure of a leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), a tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) and a bird of paradise (Paradisaeidae, Appendix II), all stuffed. Two arrests.

- Seizure of a stuffed cobra (*Naja* spp., Appendix II) from Surabaya and destined for Bali.⁵⁵

MALAYSIA

March 11 and 13, 2019

Kuala Kangsar, Perak State and Le Raub, Pahang State, Malaysia

- Ho Van Kien, a 40-year-old Vietnamese sawmill worker, sentenced to 6 times one year in prison and 100,000 ringgits (25,000 US\$) for possession of a tiger skin (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), an incomplete tiger skin, a leopard claw (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), a sun bear claw (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), 150 g of tiger meat and 21.15 kg of boar meat (*Sus scrofa*). The 6 sentences are concurrent. The charges against 5 of his colleagues have been dropped (cf. "On the Trail" n°22 p. 120).

- Tran Van Sang, another Vietnamese citizen, sentenced to a total of 19 years' imprisonment on 10 charges for illegal possession of 273 wildlife parts, including parts of tigers, leopards, clouded leopards (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I), sun bears (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) and sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*). The sentences are concurrent. The longest is 30 months. The prosecutor lodged an appeal. He considers that the judgment should have been accompanied by fines.⁵⁶

THAILAND

March 25, 2019

Suan Phueng District, Ratchaburi Province, Thailand. Border with Myanmar.

Seizure at Adul Matleuang's home of 45 fragments of clouded leopard, 13 Asian golden cat (*Catopuma temminckii*, Appendix I) and 9 leopard skins and 2 Indian muntjac horns (*Muntiacus muntjak*). Estimated value of 408,700 baht, or 12,823 US\$. The man was selling the remains on the Internet.⁵⁷



Catopuma temminckii

Felines and Elephants



AFRICA

GABON

15 février 2019

Ntoum, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Seizure of 3 ivory bracelets, 35 ivory pearls and 4 leopard teeth in the belongings of a Chinese national nearing the end of his contract with the forest company TBNI. He says he bought them from a Gabonese craftsman. The Chinese workers in the forest actually have the necessary skills to turn raw ivories or teeth into bracelets and other trifles that sell for a lot of money back home. Li Xingwu and his driver Zhang Guofu were questioned by the OCLAD agents (Office central de lutte anti-drogue – Central office against drug trafficking). TBNI exploits more than a million hectare of forest plots in Gabon, where deforestation and wildlife plundering go hand in hand. TBNI is present in Europe under the name Mont Pelé Bois.¹

ASIA

CHINA

March 9, 2019

Kunming Changshui International Airport, Yunnan Province, China

Seizure in the luggage of a passenger coming from Angola via Hong Kong of 5 worked ivories (256 g) and 2 leopard teeth (25 g).²



Wolves

Wolves (*Canis lupus*) are listed under CITES Appendix II except the populations of Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan listed under Appendix I.

AMERICA

ETATS-UNIS

February 19, 2019
Flagstaff, State of Arizona, United States of America

Conviction of Donald Justin Davis for poaching a female Mexican wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*) in December 2017. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to a fine of 2,500 US\$ and 2 years' probation. During this period, he must give up on all hunting activities and is forbidden to visit Arizona's national forests except to cross them by main and secondary roads. His hunting companion, Jason William Kunkel, also pleaded guilty in November 2018 (cf. "On the Trail" n°23 p. 95).¹



ASIA

CHINA

March 14, 2019
Municipality of Chongqing, China

Seizure by postal customs of a 2 m long and 1 m wide wolf skin.²



IRAN

March 2, 2019
Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, Iran

Sentencing of a poacher to 4 months in prison and a 10 million rials fine (238 US\$) for killing a wolf earlier this year.³



PAKISTAN

February 10, 2019
Sulaiman Range, Dera Ghazi Khan District, Punjab Province, Pakistan

A pack of 6 wolves is said to have attacked cattle. The whole pack is threatened with retaliation. Villagers have already shot one wolf. A team of district forest rangers was dispatched to the area in order to bring back to the equanimity.⁴

EUROPE

FRANCE

February 2019
France

Slaughter quotas are increased every year. The "wolf plans" follow one another and are always based on repression. Wolf shots become acronyms: TD (Tir de Défense - Defense Shooting), TDR (Tir de Défense Renforcée - Reinforced Defense Shooting), TPR (Tir de Prélèvement Renforcé - Reinforced Predatory Shooting). In India, when tigers are poached or killed for safety reasons as a last resort, the authorities, most often in conjunction with local NGOs, communicate their approximate age, gender and worry about the fate of the cubs. In the case of a dead tigress, the autopsy report shall specify whether she was in gestation.

In France, a slaughtered wolf has no age, no gender, no cubs and for an epitaph, he is only entitled to a number. In 2019, at least 60 "numbers" will be slaughtered.⁵

ITALY

February 2019
Poggiorsini, Province of Bari, Apulia Region, Italy

Poaching of a she-wolf about 2 years old.⁶

Bears

ASIA

PAKISTAN

March 18, 2019
Islamabad Capital Territory, Pakistan

The Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) was in a cage in the house of a well-known realtor. After the seizure, he was taken to the Islamabad zoo. Its commercial value is estimated at about 3,600 US\$.¹

VIET NAM

March 12, 2019
Well Hoa, Dong Nai Province, Viet-Nam

Three Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I), each weighing 120 kg, were voluntarily handed over to the authorities by their owners after 20

years in captivity. The 2 females and the male were transferred to the Ninh Binh shelter.

Between 2005 and 2018, the number of bears in captivity went from 4,300 to 750. In 2018 alone, 19 bears were voluntarily handed over to government-approved NGOs.²



Giraffes



AFRICA

KENYA

March 20, 2019

Olarro Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

Veterinary intervention on a male giraffe wounded at withers by a poisoned barbed arrow. Immediately after waking up, he got up and ambled to his group. Favourable prognosis.¹

March 21 and 26, 2019

Laikipia County, Kenya

- The SWT/KWS (Sheldrick Wildlife Trust/Kenya Wildlife Service) mobile veterinary team anaesthetizes an adult giraffe whose right hind leg is caught in a metal trap. Wire extraction. Awakened with an antidote. She gets up after one minute and leaves without any major balance problems. Favourable prognosis.



- Euthanasia of a giraffe wounded by a trap in the hoof of her right front leg and with a fracture to her left front leg. The veterinary team considered the animal incurable.²

March 31, 2019

Amboseli National Park Kajiado County, Kenya

Veterinary intervention on a giraffe whose hind hooves had been entangled in a fence for at least 15 hours. The local community complicated the intervention by claiming compensation for the damaged fence. To save the giraffe it would have been necessary to cut 1 m² of fence. She died of exhaustion. The veterinary unit of Amboseli park considers that without interference from the community, she could have been saved.³



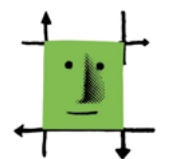
CITES COP18 – Geneva

Press release n°2, August 22, 2019

Giraffes : CITES takes the high ground

The proposal by Chad, Senegal, Niger, the Central African Republic, Kenya and Mali to monitor the international trade of living giraffes as well as skins, paws, hairs, tails, skulls and other parts of the fallen queen of savanna was accepted by 106 votes in favour, 21 against and 7 abstentions.

"The situation is serious for the giraffes. This majestic species was left unprotected", declared the delegate for Senegal during the debates preceding the vote. Giraffe population declined by 40% during the last 30 years. For Charlotte Nithart, Robin des Bois representative in Geneva, "it was time for the international community to react, giraffes are collateral victims of the elephant extinction. Their bones are more and more used as an ivory substitute. They are also a prime victim for those who want to take home a bit of dead Africa as well as for zoos". The main identified markets are the United States and European Union, but the absence until now of protection didn't allow for a detailed knowledge of the trade. The major known exporter is South Africa who, along with Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini (ex-Swaziland), Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, wanted to escape control of this international trade. "Refusing the listing of giraffes to CITES' Appendix II means playing along with illegal trade, it means opposing the transparency and traceability of trade", reminded Senegal. The amendment proposed by Southern African countries with the aim of excluding themselves from international trade control was rejected. "Trade has no boundaries and militias are at work", reminded Kenya. "Unfortunately, this protection comes too late for the already extinct giraffe of Mali", bitterly notes the country's delegate.



ROBIN DES BOIS

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 Eswatini 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°24

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

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Asia	Hong Kong (China)	27,500	7
	Turkey	6,470	12

EASTERN AFRICA

ZIMBABWE

February 28, 2019

Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

The court refuses to drop the charges against 7 Chinese traffickers, as requested by their lawyer (cf. "On the Trail" n°23 p. 101). A search of their home found 20 kg of horns hidden in boxes and plastic bags under a mattress.¹

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Early February 2019

Phalaborwa, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Preventive intervention in the hideout of a gang of suspected poachers. Seizure of a Toyota, a VW Polo, a rifle, a silencer, 9 cartridges and 3 knives. Arrest of 2 individuals 30 and 37 years old. Two accomplices fled in a Toyota Hilux found abandoned later.²

February 16, 19, 21 and 25, 2019

Kruger National Park, Limpopo or Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Arrest of 12 alleged poachers in less than 2 weeks:

- Phillip Gumede, a park employee, Solly Silaule, Oddis Maluleke and Sam Khoza in possession of several freshly cut rhino horns, a rifle and ammunition. Seizure of the loot and 2 vehicles with the assistance of a helicopter landing across a runway to cut off the fugitives' route.



- Phillip Mzimba and Difference Mahlaule charged with illegal possession of a firearm and breaking and entering in the park. Their application for bail is under consideration.

- Arrest and indictment of 3 suspects for trespassing in the park and carrying prohibited weapons. They were also in possession of ammunition and an axe.
- Arrest and indictment of 3 young men for trespassing in the park and illegal possession of a .458 rifle with silencer and ammunition.³

March 9, 2019
Randburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa
 Seizure of 5 rhino horns. Three arrests.⁴

March 27, 2019
Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Funokwakhe Khoza (51), Ayanda Buthelezi (40) and Mduduzi Xulu (51) were sentenced to 14, 10 and 10 years in prison. Buthelezi and Xulu got away with a previous 5-year probation period. They had been arrested 10 years ago in possession of 2 rhino horns, 2 axes and a rifle .303 They had managed to evade justice for 10 years thanks to their lawyers.⁵



March 29, 2019
South Africa

Veterinary treatment for 2 female rhinos attacked during the night. The youngest was shot in the chest. Her prognosis is reserved. The poachers fled with the nasal horn of the elder one. She succumbed to her wounds.⁶



ASIA

CHINA

February 14, 2019
Hong Kong International Airport, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China

Seizure in cardboard boxes of 24 suspected rhino horns, weighing a total of 40 kg. Estimated value of 8 million HK\$, or 1.1 million US\$ and 27,500 US\$/kg. The traffickers, 2 men aged 28 and 33, were arriving from Johannesburg, South Africa. They were in transit before leaving for Ho Chi Minh City, Viet-Nam. Hong Kong Customs has insisted on the tougher sanctions implemented since May 1, 2018. They cite the case of 2 travellers sentenced to 16 months' imprisonment for trying to import 24 and 17 kg of agarwood into their luggage.⁷



February 15, 2019
Dalian International Airport, Liaoning Province, China

Seizure of rhino horns and coral jewels (genus *Corallium*).⁸

INDIA

February 16 and 17, 2019
Kaziranga National Park, Assam State, India

Poaching of a male rhino. The horn was ripped off. This is the first case of poaching in the park this year. Five arrests.⁹



REPEATED OFFENSE

February 25, 2019
Bejimari, Darrang District, Assam State, India

Arrest in the middle of the night and on the edge of the Rajiv Gandhi Orang National park of Sola Guite, 30 years old, a well-known poacher in the region. Two partners in crime fled in the dark. Guite had tried to poach a rhino in Kaziranga park a few days earlier. Seizure of a .303 pistol, ammunition and a hostile environment survival kit.¹⁰

March 6, 2019
Mayang, Morigaon District, State of Assam, India

Akbar Ali is on the run. He made off this night while police and the Forestry Department searched his house. They were well informed: they discovered 2

.303 rifles, 10 cartridges, and diverse other weapons in his house. Akbar Ali is involved in several rhino-poaching cases.¹¹



TURKEY

February 8, 2019
Atatürk International Airport, Istanbul, Yeşilköy District, Turkey

- Seizure, in the luggage of 2 passengers in transit, of 21 rhino horns, several horn fragments and 7 sachets with wild animal claws. Total estimated value of 2.8 million US\$. The traffickers were coming from South Africa and intended to travel to Viet-Nam.

- Seizure in the luggage of a Vietnamese national of 34 kg of horns. Total estimated value of 2.2 million US\$ (6,470 US\$/kg). He was in transit on a Mozambique-Viet-Nam trip.¹²

Elephants



EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

**February 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 16, 17, and 18, 2019
Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Parks, Kenya**

- A male elephant badly injured by an arrow in its front right foot. Swollen and infected wound. The prognosis is reserved.

- A male elephant badly injured. The head of an arrow was removed. The prognosis is positive.



- A male elephant badly injured by an arrow in his left abdominal side. Infected wound, but the prognosis is positive.



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°24
Black market raw ivory quotation
from media or official sources**

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	Kenya	1,150	6
		2,000	7
	Uganda	474	16
		495	17
	Gabon	40/ 190	38
Asia	India State of Assam	1,052	98
	India State of Karnataka	420	99
	India State of Goa	2,109	102

- The body of a male elephant killed by a poisoned arrow. The tusks were intact. The arrowhead was covered in a black product, probably ouabain, a kind of tonicardiac extracted from seeds from a tropical plant (*Strophantus gratus*). A strong dose is poisonous.



- A male elephant badly injured by an arrow. Presence of pus, but the prognosis is favorable.
- An elephant injured by a trap on its front left foot. Shallow wound. The prognosis is favorable.
- The body of an elephant killed by a poisoned arrow for about a week. The tusks are intact. They were removed according to applicable protocol.
- An elephant calf injured by an arrow in its right shoulder. Probably a conflict with men. Presence of pus. The mother was anesthetized at the same time as the child so as not to separate them, but she did not care of him when she awoke. He was brought to an orphanage.
- Near a village, report of the death of an elephant who fell in a non-enclosed septic pit.



- A male elephant injured by an arrow in the left hip. Infected wound, but a favorable prognosis. ¹

February 19, 23, and 24, 2019

Tsavo West and Chyulu Hills Natural Parks, Kenya-

Four male elephants treated for arrow wounds.

- 1. In the stomach. The wound had closed but pus had accumulated. The prognosis is uncertain.
- 2. In the stomach. The wound was continuing to bleed. The prognosis is positive.
- 3. In the back left foot. The prognosis is positive.
- 4. A wound in the right front foot. It is infected but the prognosis is positive.²



February 12 and 25, 2019

Masai Mara Natural Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

- One young, still accompanied by his mother, injured on his trunk by a trap. The trunk was crushed by the cable for a week. The prognosis is positive.



- An elephant injured by a poisoned and barbed arrow. He died before the arrival of vets. The tusks were removed according to applicable protocol. ³

February 2019

Kilifi County, Kenya



Silvia Romano is missing. The mystery is not cleared up. A commando of armed men kidnapped the 23-year-old Italian humanitarian worker on 21 November 2018 in Chakama. She worked for an NGO in Malindi, then as a representative in Kilifi for Africa Milele Onlus, an Italian NGO dedicated to helping children in difficulty. Several rumors exist about her disappearance, including:

- Her abductors intended to hand her over to Al-Shabaab, who then would have negotiated a large ransom with the Italian authorities; the two clans were reportedly unable to agree on the price of the hostage who was killed in gunfire.
- Ms. Romano was reportedly killed in a scuffle between her abductors and shebabs amid ivory trafficking.
- The hostage and her abductors are still, as of February 2019, in the Tana River County forests.
- Ms. Romano has already been forcibly brought to Somalia.

What is certain is that Silvia Romano is nowhere to be found. Two Spanish aid workers kidnapped at the end of 2011 in northern Kenya and transferred to Somalia were released almost two years later. All hope is not lost⁴

FAMILY AFFAIRS

February 2019

Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya

The Assets Recovery Agency (ARA) requests authorization to seize 10.6 million shillings (105,000 US\$) on 6 bank accounts under the name of Joseph Wanjohi and his wife. The ARA also requests to seize their luxury cars and their properties in Nairobi. The couple's earnings are presumed to have come from selling heroine, spirits, and raw ivory (cf. "On the Trail" n°22 p. 86).⁵

February 26, 2019
Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya

Seizure of 23 kg of ivory. Value estimated at 1.5 million shillings, which is 15,000 US\$ (1,150 US\$/kg). Arrest of Moses Leshinga, 24 years old, Frankline Lekashina, 26 years old, and Raymon Wanbui, 32 years old.⁶



March 5, 2019
Nakuru, Nakuru County, Kenya

Seizure of 8 kg of elephant tusks in bags that were supposedly filled with wood at Hotel Bondana. Value estimated to be 1.6 million shillings, which is 16,000 US\$ (2,000 US\$/kg). Arrest of 3 businessmen, James Yegon, Amos Lumet and Jacob Rono. While waiting for their trials, they will be released under a warrant equal to 20,000 US\$ each or a bail equal to 10,000 US\$ in cash.⁷



March 10 and 16, 2019
Olarro Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

-An arrow wound in the back left foot. The elephant is known to regularly go in farmers' fields. He wears a geolocation collar in order to facilitate his removal in cases of intrusion. The collar is defective. It was replaced during the surgical operation.



-A trap around the trunk for one and a spear wound in the hindquarters for the other. The prognosis is positive for both.⁸



March 18, 2019
Kimana Sanctuary, Kajiado County, Kenya

An elephant body is discovered. Killed by a spear. The tusks were still present.⁹

March 24, 25, and 28, 2019
East Tsavo and West Tsavo National Parks, Kenya

- A male elephant injured in the front right leg by a spear. Infection in the knee joint. Reserved prognosis.



-A male elephant died of an internal hemorrhage caused by a spear. The angle of the wound shows that the weapon was thrown from an elevated platform. Tusks untouched and removed according to applicable protocol.



-A male elephant injured by an arrow in his front right foot. Swollen and infected wound. Positive prognosis. After the intervention, the elephant charged the veterinarians for 200 m.

-An elephant injured by a spear in the left hindquarters. Deep and infected wound. Reserved prognosis.¹⁰

March 2019
Kenya

A joint initiative of China and Kenya aims at informing people living permanently or temporarily in Kenya of the sanctions entailed for illegal trade in endangered species and ivory. Poachers and traffickers now face up to life imprisonment and a fine of 20 million shillings (200,000 US\$).

The many cases of ivory trafficking involving Chinese citizens in Africa raise concerns at the highest level of the People's Republic of China. This rampant traffic is damaging the country's image. It is likely to harm its economic expansion and the settlement of its workforce on the African continent.¹¹

MALAWI

February 5, 2019
Nkhotakota, Central Region, Malawi

Sentencing of Master Banda (47 years old) and Philmon Banda (23 years old) for possession and trade of 4 raw ivory weighing 28.5 kg. Master Banda was sentenced to 14 years in prison, 2 of which will include penal labor. Philmon Banda was sentenced to 11.5 years in prison, 18 months of which will include penal labor. Both sentences are concurrent. They are both members of the Mphonde Traditional Authority (TA), a kind of council, looking after respect of local customs and tax collection. They had been arrested on January 24 while they were trying to sell ivory for 35,000 kwachas per kilogram, which is 50 US\$/kg (cf. "On the Trail" n°23 p. 118).¹²



February 23, 2019
Mvera, Central Region, Malawi

Seizure of 2 raw ivories, with a total weight of 4.2 kg. Arrest of Enock Chakalamba, 33 years old. A stooge fled.¹³

MOZAMBIQUE

February 15, 2019

Lichinga, Niassa Province, Mozambique

Sentencing of 2 members of SERNIC (Serviço Nacional de Investigação Criminal) to 2 years in prison or a 154,760 meticaïs fine (2,500 US\$) for the theft of 20 tusks that were put in safety under their watch in 2016. The tusks had thereafter been found in Cambodia (cf. "On the Trail" n°14 p. 89).

Other similar cases are still being investigated.

-In 2015, 11 people had been heard after the theft of 66 ivory tips coming from a seizure and placed in the custody of the police. No sentences to date. Among the suspects, there is Calisto, police investigator, Faustino Artur, head police investigator, Victor Luis Arone, assistant investigator, Tadeu Gaspar, sergeant, and Elias Matusse, officer of the Land, Environment, and Rural Development Department of Maputo Province, and two civilians: Zefanias Aurelio and John Chauque.

- The vanishing without breaking in of 4 ivory tips that were guarded by the forest department in 2017 has not been resolved.¹⁴



Late March 2019

Mozambique

Operation for a female elephant injured by a trap on her back right foot. Positive prognosis.¹⁵



UGANDA

February 7, 2019

Kampala, Central Region, Uganda

Seizure of 9.7 kg of ivory, estimated at 17 million shillings (4,600 US\$, 474 US\$/kg). Arrest of Kiiza Charles, boda boda driver. Accomplices fled. He claims that the owner of the ivory is a certain Champion Joël, who he had met the day before. He admits to having hosted Champion and keeping the ivory while waiting for the latter, who was living in Mukono, an hour drive from Kampala, to find a buyer.¹⁶

February 9, 2019

Kinyamenge, Kasese District, Western Region, Uganda

Arrest of 27-year-old farmer Aaron Asimwe, in possession of 2.14 kg of ivory worth an estimated 3.9 million shillings (1,060 US\$, 495 US\$/kg). Aaron claims to have been appointed by a certain Julius to deliver ivory to a man named Charles Kizza. He says he never met Charles Kizza. Kizza or Kiiza, spelling variants or homonyms? Is the Kizza Charles named here the same as the Kiiza Charles arrested 2 days earlier at 400 km from Kasese District?¹⁷

March 2, 2019

Entebbe International Airport, Central Region, Uganda

Arrest of 2 Vietnamese immigrants who were about to board a Qatar Airways flight. Nguyen Van Thanh and Dinh Van Chung were trying to flee Uganda. They were some of the 18 individuals wanted for having trafficked ivory and pangolin scales after the seizure of over 3 t of elephant tusks and over 400 kg of pangolin scales at the Elugu border post between Uganda and South Sudan (cf. "On the Trail" n°23, p.68). The other 16 suspects are still on the run.¹⁸

March 7, 2019

Elegu, Amuru District, Northern Region, Uganda

New seizure at the control point of the border with South Sudan: a 30 kg tusk. Arrest of Muzamil Hamuza (31 years old), Ali Magidu (32 years old), and Govile Nuru (44 years old). Elegu is located next to an elephant migration corridor which connects Murchison Falls national park and South Sudan. According to the UWA, (Uganda Wildlife Authority), Uganda serves as a transit route for ivory poached in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the South Sudan where political conflicts facilitate wildlife trafficking.¹⁹

TANZANIA

February 19, 2019

Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania

Sentencing of Yang Feng Clan, age 69, known as "Queen of Ivory" (cf. "On the Trail" n°11 p.71, n°13 p. 80, n°15 p. 90, n°17 p. 92), to 15 years in prison, 2 additional years in prison if she does not pay a fine of 3.7 million US\$ and the confiscation by the State of an agricultural property in the Tanga region. Her 2 accomplices, Manase Philemon and Salvius Matembo, were given the same sentences. The trio is found guilty for having organized the smuggling of at least 800 tusks during an unknown time period.

A good connoisseur in Swahili, she served as an interpreter to facilitate the construction of the railroad lines between Tanzania and Zambia, which was financed by China as of 1970. In 1975, she returned to China to work in her government's foreign trade services. Returning to Tanzania in 1998, she opened a Chinese restaurant in Dar es Salaam, which she said facilitating meetings between the Chinese and Tanzanian business communities. The restaurant is overlooked by the "Beijing Great Wall Investment". In 2012, she became the Secretary General of the Sino-Tanzanian chamber of commerce. The 3 convicts immediately appealed.²⁰



February 22, 2019

Morogoro Region, Tanzania

Seizure of 9 tusks. Value estimated at 90,000 US\$. Seven arrests.

The number of poached elephants in the country allegedly fell from 194 in 2017 to 23 in 2018.²¹

ZAMBIA

February 6, 2019 Lundazi, Eastern Province, Zambia

-Sentencing of Lubinda Lay (43 years old) to 6 years in prison with hard labor for the illegal ownership of 6 tusks.

-Sentencing of Moses Nyirongo, 36 years old, to 6 months of prison with hard labor for the illegal ownership of a weapon. He is suspected to be an elephant's poacher.²²



Mid-February 2019 Solwezi, North-Western Province, Zambia

Sentencing of Esther Malata (age 38) to 5 years in prison with hard labor for the illegal possession of 17 kg of ivory.²³



ZIMBABWE

REPEATED OFFENSE

February 15, 2019

Between Mabele and Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Seizure from 2 cars of 96 kg or 76.7 kg of ivory, depending on the sources. Arrest of Aloius Savanhu (38 years old), Ndaba Ncube (27 years old), Inosencia Siwela (42 years old), and Fanuel Luphahla (34 years old), a deserter. Fanuel had already been involved in an elephant poisoning affair in 2013 (cf. "On the Trail" n°2 p. 2).

Family drama, Aloius Savanhu's spouse, Christine Mathe (38 years old), committed suicide by hanging after having been interrogated by the police. She admitted to having removed a poaching weapon from the family car and to have handed it over to her neighbor, Claude Shoko, just after her husband's arrest. Requested by text message, she had acted upon his instructions. She had broken the back window of the Honda to have access to the weapon and pretended that the children were responsible for the broken glass. She was denounced to the police by a witness. The weapon was found hidden near her mother-in-law's grave in the communal cemetery.²⁴

March 7, 2019

Near Gonarezhou National Park, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

A super tusker shot during a legal hunt party. The elephant was clearly identified by all of the good field experts and he was wearing a geolocation collar set by scientists from the Frankfurt zoological society. According to tacit rules, hunters are supposed to avoid hunting elephants under observation "for ethical reasons." The hunting guide, Martin Pieters, ex-president of the National Professional Hunting Association, assures that he had not recognized the animal. Yet, despite the bushes of the savannah, the exceptional tusks of the venerable male were visible. They now reside in the living room of his client, a Russian magnate.²⁵

March 7, 2019

Victoria Falls, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Seizure of 11 ivory tusks weighing 120 kg from the home of the former city mayor, Sifiso Mpofu (42 years old). Arrest of Milton Sibindi (47 years old), Phatiso Sibinda (49 years old) and Mpofu. While waiting for their trial, they were released on bail of 500 US\$. Sifiso Mpofu is from the same family as Obert Mpofu, the ex- Minister of Interior Affairs for Zimbabwe.²⁶

March 22, 2019

Gwanda, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe

Appearance of Norman Dlamini, Vusa Lunga, Christopher Mishoni and Laurence Edward. Thanks to the duplication of the safe key, they had stolen 36 tusks and pieces of tusks from a West Nicholson hunter's home between October 2016 and March 2017 (the exact date is unknown). Three of them had been arrested by the police on January 30, 2018 with 26 tusks and pieces of tusks in their car (cf. "On the Trail" n°20 p. 93). The trio led the police to the fourth accomplice, who would be the instigator and the "owner" of the ivory.²⁷

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

February 2019

Balule Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa

On November 23, 2018, 4 tourists perched on an observation tower near a lodge testified their indignation after having been witnesses to the shooting on sight of a young male elephant and to the relentlessness of a group of hunters. Sharon Haussmann, manager of the Balule nature reserve, had then qualified the event as "completely unethical", "inconsiderate" and "a huge embarrassment for Balule".

The 3 hunters, including a guide, were in a car. The victim was 100 m away. He was grazing under a tree. From the first shot, he cried out and fled but was then riddled with 12 additional bullets until he fell in a ditch.

In February, Haussmann completely changed opinions. The conclusive report produced by the direction of the reserve estimates that aside from the location of the hunt, the shooters could not have been blamed for anything. The Balule Reserve was allocated a license to hunt 22 elephants in the 2019/2020 season by the MPTA (Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency). Balule (cf. "On the Trail" n°10 p. 45, p. 56, n°14 p. 65) is part of the Associated Private Nature Reserves (APNR), which is adjacent to Kruger park (cf. "On the Trail" n°21 p. 61). Arguments arise about APNR and its double game and double profit, which consist of selling vision tourism services and hunting services at the same time. In 2018, 53 elephants were legally hunted within APNR and 71 elephants were poached within Kruger park.²⁸

March 15, 2019

Between Louis Trichardt and Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks in a black sports bag. Arrest of Keswane Simango (28 years old) and Florence Baloyi (35 years old) along route R524. Arrest of Philemon Baloyi later on the same day. All 3 are Zimbabwean nationals. The police suspect that they illegally migrated to South Africa. The authenticity of the ivory has not yet been proven.²⁹

FAMILY AFFAIRS

March 31, 2019

Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Seizure of a meter long elephant tusk from a garbage bag at the back of a Golf. Value estimated at 400,000 rand, which is 28,900 US\$. Arrest of a couple: Altaaf Dawood (28 years old) and Alia Dawood (27 years old). Alia was released on bail of 1,000 rand, which is 72 US\$. Altaaf will stay in prison. He is also sued for the murder of a 17-year-old homeless person.³⁰

BOTSWANA

Early February 2019

Nata Bird Sanctuary, Central District, Botswana

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks. Arrest of a Zimbabwean national (age 36) without a residence permit. He claims to have found the tusks hidden in a bush. He admitted that he was about to sell them.³¹

NAMIBIA

Late February 2019

Katima Mulilo, Zambezi Region, Namibia

Sentencing of Risco Chasunda (age 43) to a 50,000 N\$ fine (3,700 US\$) or to 5 years in prison. He had been arrested on September 15, 2018 (cf. "On the Trail" n°22 p. 93) with 10 tusks weighing a total of 62.34 kg in the back of his pick-up truck. Value estimated at 73,850 N\$, which is 5,400 US\$ and 87 US\$/kg.³²



REPEATED OFFENSE

March 24, 2019

Kongola, Zambezi Region, Namibia

The international gang - 3 Angolans, 2 Zambians, one Namibian - was caught in possession of 4 tusks, 2 elephant tails and a piece of zebra skin. Bail was denied.³³

COTE D'IVOIRE

March 16, 2019

Cocody, Abidjan Department, Ivory Coast

Arrest of Djibril Gueye, 30-year-old Senegalese national, for the possession and sale of ivory. He is specialized in the sale of ivory crafts in the San Pedro region 350 km away from Cocody.³⁴

LIBERIA

March 2019

Sapo National Park, Sinoe County, Liberia

Arrest by rangers of Saturday Jarwee, 60 years old, accused of having killed and extracted the tusks of 4 elephants. He denies all allegations but villagers report that he has been poaching wild animals in the Jleepo forest, inside the park, for 30 years.³⁵

SENEGAL

REPEATED OFFENSE

March 5 and 9, 2019

Blaise Diagne International Airport and Soumbedjonne market, Thiès Region and Dakar, Dakar Region, Senegal

-Seizure of 6 ivory statues, 2 ivory bracelets, and an ivory pendant, weighing a total of 350 g, from packets of powdered milk. Value estimated at 450,000 Francs CFA, which is 780 US\$ or 2,230 US\$/kg. Arrest of 2 Chinese nationals, a woman and a man. The woman is a storekeeper in Dakar. She was about to take a flight to China.

-Seizure during 3 raids of 391 pieces of carved ivory, weighing 5.5 kg. Arrest of the 3 traffickers who had sold the ivory to the Chinese national. One of them had already been sentenced in 2017 to 3 months in prison for trafficking ivory.³⁶



TOGO

March 7, 2019

Lomé, Maritime Region, Togo

Seizure of 2 9-kg ivory tips. Arrest of A. Razak, the seller, and O. Idrissou, the supplier. The 2 stooges have ties with gangs in Benin and Burkina Faso. They seem to be also be connected with gold trafficking.³⁷

GABON

REPEATED OFFENSE and FAMILY AFFAIRS**February 23, 2019****Moanda, Haut-Ogooué Province, Gabon**

Seizure of 2 ivory tips with a total weight of 23 kg broken into 8 pieces in a bag of rice in the back of an Izuzu. Arrest of 3 Senegalese brothers. Diack Abou (age 38), Diao Mamadou (age 50) and Sow Babali Amadou (age 61). They say they bought the ivory for 500,000 francs CFA (870 US\$, 40 US\$/kg) and were planning to resell it for 110,000 francs/kg (190 US\$/kg). According to some sources, they were part of a gang acting in the South-East of the country. The client is still being investigated.³⁸

FAMILY AFFAIRS**March 24, 2019****Makokou, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon**

Seizure of 3 ivory tips in a motel. Arrest in flagrante delicto of Pambou, then of Lydia Amba. She drove her brother-in-law to the motel and transported the ivory in a black travel bag.³⁹

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

February 5, 2019**Etoumbi, Cuvette-Ouest Department, Republic of the Congo**

Seizure of 41 tusks weighing a total of 90 kg, which is an average weight of 2.2 kg per tusk. 21 young elephants were victims of poaching! The 6 suspected traffickers are members of a gang that works with the Gabonese.⁴⁰

REPEATED OFFENSE**Mid-February 2019****Ouesso, Sangha Department, Republic of the Congo**

Sentencing of Jouanin Andoula and Michel Anoumzock to 3 years in prison and to a fine of 2 million francs CFA (3,480 US\$) each. Jouanin Andoula admitted to poaching for several years. Backers like Anoumzock regularly hire his services. Anoumzock provided the AK47. An elephant's trunk, tail, and ammunition were seized from his house. He had already been sentenced several times for poaching.⁴¹

**February 17 and 28, 2019****Oyo, Cuvette Department, Republic of the Congo**

Seizure of 4 ivory tips. Arrest of Mefouta Blandain. He used to supply ammunition and provisions to Sangha Department poachers and he was driving back to Oyo, over a 200 km drive, while concealing his loot in a small suitcase. Sentencing to 5 years in prison and to a 10 million francs CFA (6,130 US\$) fine and damages.⁴²

**Mid-March, 2019****Ouesso, Sangha Department, Republic of the Congo**

Seizure of 5 pieces of ivory weighing a total of 23.5 kg. Arrest of Amadou Tidiane Sall, a 28-year-old Senegalese trader. His accomplices fled.⁴³



AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

February 2019**United States of America****-San Diego, California State.**

Sentencing of the owner of Carlton Gallery, Victor Hyman Cohen, and of an employee, Sheldon Miles Kupersmith, to respectively 75,000 US\$ and 60,000 US\$ fines, to 200 hours of community service at the San Diego zoo and to 3 years of probation for trafficking ivory. Sentencing of the gallery as a company to a 75,000 US\$ fine. Estimated value of the trafficking: 1.3 million US\$. The Carlton Gallery is set up in La Jolla. During the raid, officers seized 338 decorative objects containing ivory (cf. "On the Trail" n°23, p. 150).⁴⁴



-New York City, New York State. Rejection of the appeal of 2 antique dealers. They were requesting the invalidation of the law that prohibits the sale of ivory in the State of New York (cf. "On the Trail" n°21 p.92), regardless of its dating. They claimed that this law is unconstitutional in regards to the federal law that authorizes the sale of ivory that is at least 100 years old. The judge found that in the current state of the file the antique dealers did not prove that the law directly affected them. However, he authorizes them to lodge another appeal in the event that they succeed in gathering evidence of the damage.⁴⁵

-Montana State. A bill proposes the prohibition of the sale and purchase of elephant ivory, rhinoceros horns, and their bi-products within the State of Montana. This does not apply to elk ivory, nor to objects that are known to have been produced over 100 years ago, nor to ivory in musical instruments from before 1975. Knives and weapons will be exempt. It will not be forbidden to possess or to give ivory if the acquisition of the items has been done before the proclamation of the law. Contraveners risk fines that are double the value of the ivory sold. The senator Mike Philipp, who filed the project, claims that the trafficking of ivory is at the highest level ever recorded and that it finances terrorist groups.⁴⁶

-Connecticut State. The HB-5394 bill provides for the prohibition of trading ivory and rhinoceros horns, with the exception of historical items. Amendments have been tabled to remove this exemption. Professional antique dealers encourage the Connecticut State Environmental Committee to oppose these amendments.⁴⁷

CAMBODIA

February 25, 2019

Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary, Keo Seima Region, Monduliri Province, Cambodia

Autopsy of an adult male elephant. The death goes back about 10 days in a cashew plantation. His tail and his tusks are gone. The cashews that he ate are currently being analyzed. Voluntary poisoning is not out of the question. A bullet wound was also discovered. The last census conducted in 2010 reported 120-170 wild elephants in the province's protected areas.⁴⁸

CHINA

GANG

March 30, 2019

Fenghua District, Zhejiang Province; Huangpu District, Shanghai Autonomous Municipality; Hefei, Anhui Province, Nanjing, Jiangsu Province; Pékin, Pekin Autonomous Municipality, and Qingdao, Shandong Province, China

The biggest seizure of ivory in the last few years: 2,748 tusks and pieces of tusks with a total weight of 7.48 t, 20 arrests. An international network has been dismantled. The ivory was primarily bought from Africa, notably Nigeria. Then, it was transported in wood shipments to China, where it was hidden in a waste recycling factory. It took 2 months of work and 238 police officers to complete the operation.⁴⁹

CHONGQING

March 14, 2019

Municipality of Chongqing, China

Seizure by postal customs of 40 ivory pendants.⁵⁰

March 2019

Chongqing-Jiangbei International Airport, Chongqing Municipality, China

Seizure of ivory bracelets from the purse of a Vietnamese passenger arriving from Ho Chi Minh. Total weight: 53 g.⁵¹

FUJIAN

March 2019

Zhangzhou, Fujian Province, China

Seizure from packages coming from the United States of America of several ivory crafts or objects containing ivory, including 165 knives, 119 forks, 8 bullets, 8 fans, 4 boxes of jewelry, 5 makeup brushes, and one pair of binoculars. Total weight : 14.9 kg.⁵²



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GUANGDONG

February 2019

Huanggang Control Post, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.

- Seizure of a necklace with 108 ivory pearls, weighing 120 g, from a woman's luggage.⁵³

March 2019

Gongbei Border Post, Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macau.

- Seizure of 5 worked ivories weighing a total of 350 g from the luggage of a passenger coming from Angola.⁵⁴

Luohu District, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China.

- Seizure of a 66.4 g ivory necklace from the luggage of an entering passenger.⁵⁵

Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport, Guangdong Province, China.

- Seizure of worked ivories with a total weight of 120 g.⁵⁶

Huanggang Control post, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China.

- Seizure of ivory bracelets with a total weight of 56.85 g, from a vehicle.⁵⁷

GUANGXI

February 2019

Nanning, Guangxi Region, China

- Seizure of 8 ivory bracelets, with a total weight of 577.1 g, from the luggage of a foreign passenger. They were hidden in 4 coffee packets.⁵⁸

- Seizure from 2 packages coming from Cambodia and New Caledonia of 4 worked ivories weighing a total of 209 g.⁵⁹

March 2019

Dongxing Border Post, Guangdong Province, China

- Seizure of a 35.91 g ivory brooch from a passenger's luggage.⁶⁰

Nanning Wuxu International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

- Seizure of 4 10-g ivory pendants and of a 20-g ivory bracelet from the luggage of 3 women. They were arriving from Bangkok on Nok Air and New Gen Airways flights and from Macau by an Air Macau flight.

- Seizure of a 26.4-g ivory bracelet from the luggage of a British woman arriving from Kuala Lumpur by an Air Asia flight.⁶¹

From 1 January to 6 March, 44 worked ivories weighing a total of 28.698 kg were seized in the Nanning district.⁶²



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HENAN

March 2019

Zhengzhou Xinzheng International Airport, Henan Province, China

- Seizure of a small 6.7 g carved ivory from the luggage of a passenger arriving from Nha Trang, Viet-Nam.

- Seizure of 2 pieces of 73.7-g ivory jewelry from the luggage of a passenger arriving from Bangkok.⁶³

Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China

- Seizure of 47 small ivory cylinders with a total weight of 101 g from a package coming from Japan.⁶⁴

JIANGSU

February 2019

Nanjing, Jiangsu Province

- Seizure of 300 kg of raw ivory and ivory crafts. Value estimated at 11.3 million yuan (which is 1.6 million US\$ and 5,334 US\$/kg). Three arrests. The smuggling from Viet-Nam would have involved more than 560 kg of ivory.⁶⁵

Nanjing International Airport, Jiangsu Province

- Seizure of ivory necklaces and bracelets, weighing a total of 192 g.⁶⁶

JIANGXI

March 5 and 7, 2019

Pingxiang, Jiangxi Province, China

Seizure of 2 postal parcels containing 10 worked ivories (700 g) and a sea turtle shell (60 g).⁶⁷

LIAONING

March 2019

Shenyang, Liaoning Province, China

- Seizure of 4 ivory crafts, with a total weight of 310 g, from a package entering the country.⁶⁸

- Seizure of 2 painted ivories from a package entering the country. It is the 11th seizure of ivory this year by Shenyang customs.⁶⁹

Dalian, Liaoning Province, China

- Seizure of a penholder and of a decorated ivory, with a total weight of 590 g, from a package coming from the United Kingdom. The package should have contained a "plastic pen holder".⁷⁰



Dalian International Airport, Liaoning Province, China

- Seizure of a 61 g ivory bracelet, worn by a passenger arriving from Tokyo, Japan. He claimed that it was a "souvenir" bought in South Africa and it "was not of high value".⁷¹

SHANDONG

February 2019

Weihai, Shandong Province, China

FAMILY AFFAIRS - Seizure of an ivory necklace and of a ring, with a total weight of 143 g, from a package. Arrest of the woman coming to receive the package. Her mother, Lin Wei, had bought the ivory on an foreign website selling second-hand items in the month of January and had designated her as the recipient.⁷²

Qingdao International Airport, Shandong Province, China

- Seizure of 24 worked ivories, among which were bracelets, pendants and other jewelry, with a total weight of 790 g. The jewelry was wrapped in aluminum foil. It was coming from Africa.⁷³

Jinan, Shandong Province, China

- Seizure of forks and knives with ivory handles from a package coming from the United Kingdom.⁷⁴



Qingdao International Airport, Shandong Province, China

- Seizure of 9 ivory crafts, weighing a total of 300 g. Three arrests.⁷⁵

March 2019

Qingdao International Airport, Shandong Province, China

- Seizure of 630 g of ivory.⁷⁶

SHANGHAI

February 2019

Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China

- Seizure of 7 ivory bracelets and pendants, weighing a total of 176 g, from a woman's luggage.⁷⁷

- Seizure of 2 ivory crafts from a package coming from Greece. Total weight: 274 g.

- Seizure of 2 ivory rolls from a package coming from Japan.⁷⁸



March 2019

Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China

- Seizure of an entire carved elephant's tusk from a passenger's luggage.⁷⁹



Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China

- Seizure of 2 ivory pearl bracelets with a total weight of 123 g from the luggage of a passenger arriving from Ethiopia.⁸⁰

SICHUAN

March 26, 2019

Chengdu-Shuangliu International Airport, Sichuan Province, China.

- Seizure of 18 ivory crafts, for a total weight of over 1.7 g, from the luggage of a passenger.⁸¹

TIANJIN

February 2019

Tianjin municipality, China

Seizure of elephant ivory and narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*, Appendix II) ivory from 2 packages.⁸²



YUNNAN

February 2019

Hekou Border Post, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Viet-Nam.



- Seizure of an ivory bracelet, necklace, and earrings, with a total weight of 80.3 g. The jewelry was worn by a Vietnamese passenger.⁸³

- Seizure of a 23-g ivory bracelet from the luggage of a Vietnamese woman.⁸⁴

Mengla County, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Laos.

- Seizure of 7 ivory objects, for a total weight of 230 g, from 2 packages.

- Seizure of a 40-g ivory bracelet worn by a passenger.

- Seizure of 3 ivory pendants and a bracelet, a total weight of 90 g.

- Seizure of an ivory bracelet and pendant, weighing a total of 54 g, from the luggage of 2 passengers.⁸⁵

Kunming, Yunnan Province, China

- Seizure of a 24.5-g ivory bracelet from the book bag of a Vietnamese woman.

- Seizure of a 90-g ivory necklace worn by a man.⁸⁶

March 2019

Ruili Border Post, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Myanmar.

- Seizure of several ivory bracelets and necklaces, weighing a total of 189.7 g, from the luggages of 5 passengers.⁸⁷

Kunming Changshui International Airport, Yunnan Province, China.

- Seizure of 4 ivory crafts, weighing a total of 117.9 g, from the luggages of 4 passengers arriving from Vientiane, Laos and from Chiang Mai, Thailand.⁸⁸

- Seizure of a 50-g ivory bracelet and a 60-g ivory pendant worn by a woman arriving from Laos.⁸⁹

- Seizure of 4 ivory bracelets, weighing 315.4 g, from the luggage of 3 passengers arriving from Laos.⁹⁰

ZHEJIANG

March 2019

Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China

- Seizure of 3 ivory bracelets from the luggage of a passenger entering the province.⁹¹

- Seizure of 3 bracelets, pearls, and 2 cubes, weighing a total of 464 g, from the luggage of a passenger.⁹²

INDIA

February 3, 2019

Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary, Mandya Districts, Chamarajanagar and Ramanagara, State of Karnataka, India

An elephant body with at least 15 bullet wounds was found. About 25 years old, he had been shot about 15 or 20 days before. To facilitate the tusk extraction, the elephant's skin and head flesh were sprayed with sulfuric acid. The poachers took advantage of the Chikkalur holiday to carry out the crime. During this holiday, 100,000 people cross the forest. The "sanctuary" covers 1,000 km². 45 more or less active anti-poaching camps are supposed to be on the watch. Several hundred artisanal weapons are still in the hands of the neighboring villagers. Poaching is a part of local tradition. Predators also come to Tami Nadu.⁹³

February 6, 2019

Banaswadi, Bangalore District, State of Karnataka, India

Seizure of 2 tusks. Arrest of Muruganadam D (age 35) and Balu K (age 60). They were coming from Tamil Nadu. They were responsible, according to their claims, for delivering the tusks to a recipient whose face or identity they do not know.⁹⁴

February 8, 2019

Gadapalasuni, Dhenkanal District, State of Odisha, India

Veterinarians from OUAT (Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology) urgently care for a male injured by bullets who managed to escape the ambush of ivory thieves.⁹⁵

February 26, 2019

Karuvarakundu, Malappuram District, State of Kerala, India

Two elephants, a 26-year-old male and a 20-year-old female, found dead within 400 m of each other in the buffer zone of the Silent Valley national park, near a banana plantation. The corpse of the male elephant was in a very advanced state of decomposition and was missing its 2 tusks. Arrest of Jafeer (age 35), Biju Mon (age 26), Sundaran (age 48) and Kuliyan (age 48). The first 2 are suspected of having shot, killed, and extracted the tusks after having burned the head of their victim, the last 2 would have made the firearm and supplied the ammunition.⁹⁶

March 3, 2019

Alipurduar District, State of West Bengal, India

An SSB (Sashastra Seema Bal) patrol came across Babu Phangcho and Chandra Engti who were transporting 4 pieces of ivory and 4 cell phones. They were handed over to the Hemilton Ganj Forestry Station.⁹⁷

FAMILY AFFAIRS

March 9, 2019

Khatkhathi, Karbi Anglong District, State of Assam, India

Arrest upon information of Ninoka and Jeremi Zhimo in the border zone between the 2 States. They were arriving from Nagaland with 2 30-cm-long tusks, weighing a total of 3 kg, which they were intending to sell for 225,000 rupees (3,156 US\$) in Assam.⁹⁸

March 10, 2019

Shivamogga, Shivamogga District, State of Karnataka, India

The Crime Investigation Department (CID) of the Forestry Administration started up an operation to trick 2 ivory poachers with a respectable cover. One, Poonasha, is employed in writing for a coffee plantation, the other, K. M. Ganesh, is a jeweller. The 2 partners in crime possessed a 2.5 kg tusk estimated at 75,000 rupees (1,050 US\$). Pretending to be buyers, the CID detectives seized their loot. The 2 men were presented in front of a judge and put in temporary custody.⁹⁹

FAMILY AFFAIRS/ GANG

March 11, 12 and 28, 2019

Calcutta, Kolkata District, Murshidabad, Murshidabad District, State of West Bengal, and Thiruvananthapuram, State of Kerala, India

Nice catch made by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB). The investigation lasted for 4 years. In June 2015, following revelations from a Kerala forest ranger who was also employed as a cook by a gang of poachers (cf. "On the Trail" n° 9, p. 87), the "Shikkar Operation" was launched, concluding in the seizure of 464 kg of ivory and the arrest of 73 people. But one of the heads of the network, Sindhu alias "Calcutta Thankachi" (57 years old), was able to flee with her husband Sudheesh Chandra Babu (67 years old), their daughter Amitha (37 years old), and their son Ajeesh. Installed in Calcutta, they had re-launched their trade. They were continuing to supply themselves in ivory from Kerala and elsewhere, having it worked by craftsmen in their Calcutta home and then exporting the finished products by road to Nepal via the Siliguri passageway. But a tip-off finally reached the ears of the investigators: Monday, March 11 Amitha had to pick up his father at the train station. They intercepted them on their way back and, in his suitcase, Sudheesh Chandra Babu was carrying 2 tusks. The raid of their home enabled the seizure of 10 finished statues, 9 in the progress of being finished, jewelry, a comb, and 2

other tusks. The value of the lot is estimated to be 1 million rupees (140,000 US\$). The interrogation of the 2 suspects opened new trails and the next day, one of their suppliers, Gautam Bhaskar, fell in Murshidabad in West Bengal with statues and raw tusks estimated at 420,000 rupees (59,000 US\$). But "Calcutta Thankachi" and Ajeesh remained uncatchable. On March 28, finally, the investigators located and arrested her in Calcutta while her son was caught from a 5-star hotel in Thiruvananthapuram. One of their associates in Mumbai, a certain "Pi Mundi" is still sought for.¹⁰⁰



March 12, 2019

Mettupalayam, Coimbatore District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Singam, Kubendran, Siva and Sentrayan had slaughtered an elephant in 2011 to seize its tusks. They were sentenced to 3 and a half years in prison and a 10,500 (147 US\$) rupees fine each.¹⁰¹



March 19, 2019

Verna, South Goa District, State of Goa, India

Shrikant Kanekar (42 years old) and Vignesh Karapurkar (29 years old) were waiting for a buyer in their car at a crossroads of the city. They were hoping to collect 2 million rupees (28,058 US\$) from the 2 tusks that they had brought with a total weight of 13.3 kg (which is 2,109 US\$/kg). But the police were at the meeting. Vehicle and ivory were seized. Two days later, the 2 traffickers were released on bail by the court of Margao, with the order to appear every 10 days at the police station.¹⁰²



March 19, 2019

Kundkere, Chikmagalur District, State of Karnataka, India

A 20-year-old male elephant was found dead against a fence that had illegally been connected to an electric line. A complaint was lodged by the Forestry Department against the owner - on the run - of the agricultural plot for the death of the pachyderm and against the Chamundeshwari Electrical Supply Corporation for failing to monitor and repress the illegal electricity connections.¹⁰³



March 26, 2019

**Khajurguda, Kalahandi District,
State of Odisha, India**

Arrest of Digambar Sahu, Surendra Ghadai and Naka Patra, 3 poachers who had electrocuted a male young elephant in the Luma forest while installing a drop cable on a 11,000-voltage line. The cadaver had been discovered 2 days before by villagers. The culprits had cut each 1.542 kg tusk and concealed them in the forest.¹⁰⁴



INDONESIA

February 19, 2019

**Gabus and Wedarijaksa, Pati Regency, Central
Java Province, Island of Java, Indonesia**

Seizure of 2 tusks and 14 cigarette holders. One arrest.¹⁰⁵

SRI LANKA

Early February 2019

Kaluwella, Southern Province, Sri Lanka

Seizure of 7 precious rocks, a Gaja Muthu pearl, and 2 ivory crocodile figurines. Arrest of a 34-year-old man. As a reminder, Gaja Muthu are concretions that sometimes form at the base of tusks. (cf. "On the Trail" n°15 p. 101, n°19 p. 112, n°22 p. 100, n°23 p. 134).¹⁰⁶

March 14, 2019

**Kalawewa National Park, North Central Province,
Sri Lanka**

One elephants killed by bullets in the heart of the park. He was around one year old.¹⁰⁷

THAILAND

March 6, 2019

**Thon Hong, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province,
Thailand**

Neighborhood conflict between Somchai Yoothongkham, owner of a young domesticated male elephant in musth period, and Khanit Khunlok, local chef. Somchai had chained up the elephant near a sand pit belonging to Khanit. When Khanit asked him to relocate the elephant, Somchai promised to do it the next day because he had to buy a new chain. The next day, the elephant had 5 bullet wounds in his 2 front legs, on his trunk, and near his mouth. Khanit admitted to the crime. He claims that the elephant had charged his mechanic digger. The elephant survived thanks to veterinary care that had rushed to him, a hectic intervention, as the elephant was agitated and unsettled. He will probably no longer be able to work. Somchai requested 2 million bahts (63,713 US\$) as compensation from Khanit, so that he could buy a new elephant.¹⁰⁸



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VIET NAM

March 26, 2019

Tien Sa Port, Da Nang City, Viet Nam

Seizure of 9.12 t of raw ivory hidden in containers loaded with wood coming from Congo Brazzaville et going to Quang Nam Province. Since 2009, Vietnam has seized 56 t of ivory, a frightening number considering that alike Interpol, only 10 to 15% of smuggled goods are caught by customs.¹⁰⁹



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EUROPE

GERMANY

February 14, 2019

**Bergisch Gladbach, North Rhine-
Westphalia State, Germany**

Seizure of an elephant foot converted into a stool from the home of a 53-year-old man. He put it up for sale on the Internet.¹¹⁰



© Zoll

SPAIN

Late February 2019

**Cuenca, Autonomous community of Castilla-La
Mancha, Spain**

Seizure of 4 ivory figurines. The man had put them up for sale on a website for second hand articles.¹¹¹

OPERATION LOXODONTA

Early March 2019

**Madrid, Autonomous Community of Madrid,
Autonomous Community of Navarre, and Lleida,
Autonomous Community of Catalonia, Spain**

Second phase of the operation (cf. "On the Trail" n°20 p. 128).

Dismantling of a no border network within Spain: Madrid, Navarre, Catalonia, Balearic Islands. The "salesperson" was based in Madrid. He claims to have "donated" naturalized animals. According to him, his approach is not venal, it is educational. 20 stuffed animals and an elephant were seized. He is, one could say, a hybrid pachyderm; the skin is authentic, the tusks are made of resin and the ears of fibreglass.¹¹²



© Guardia Civil

ITALY

February 19, 2019

Genoa International Airport, Metropolitan city of Genoa, Region of Liguria, Italy

Seizure in an acoustic speaker of 13 baby elephant tusks and 4 worked ivories in the luggage of an Indonesian passenger returning from Africa.¹¹³



CITES COP18 – Geneva

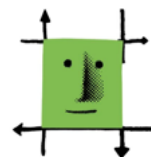
Elephants - Communication of 22 August 2019

- Rejection of the proposal presented by Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe that aimed at permitting the international trade of raw ivory, skins and hair, traditional worked ivories and non-commercial hunting trophy transactions with CITES States Parties after checking by the CITES Secretariat that they have sufficient national legislation and internal trade control measures in place to ensure that ivory will not be re-exported. This proposal concerned the elephant populations of Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe and also of South Africa. 101 votes against, 23 in favour and 18 abstentions.

- Rejection of the proposal of Zambia to delisting “its” elephants from Appendix I to Appendix II. The elephant population in Zambia declined sharply between 1981 and 2015. It has decreased from 200,000 to 20,000 individuals. Zambia had in view to undertake international trade of raw ivory with partners approved by CITES along with the trade in elephant skins, leather items and non-commercial transactions in hunting trophies. 102 votes against and 22 in favour.

It should be noted that if these proposals had been accepted, the southern African States would have met difficulties to find buyers because all domestic ivory markets are gradually closing, except in Japan.

- Rejection of the proposal by Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Kenya, Liberia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic and Togo to include all African elephant populations in CITES Appendix I, including the populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. A vote in favour would have ended the split between elephants from southern Africa and elephants from central, eastern, western and south-Saharan Africa. International trade in African ivory would have been banned. The European Union voted against this proposal (only France and Luxembourg were in favour). China voted in favour, showing great consistency with the closure of the domestic ivory market. 67 against, 51 in favour and 22 abstentions.



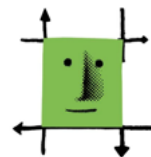
ROBIN DES BOIS

CITES COP18 - Geneva

Press release n°6, 28 August 2019 - Excerpts Positive!

Mammoth

In response to the grousing of the majority of States Parties, Israel withdrew its revolutionary proposal to list woolly mammoth in CITES Appendix II, and took advantage of the plenary session to call for a study on the trade in mammoth ivory and its consequences on the illegal elephant ivory market. This proposal was accepted. However, the Russian delegation pushed on the brakes. At the same time, the Governor of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia, Russia) is concerned about the expansion of mammoth tusks digging and smuggling. This business would bring into the mammoth mafias annual benefits equal to 100 million US\$ or more. Mammoth bones and tusks are illegally trafficked to China.



ROBIN DES BOIS

Elephants and Mammoths

ASIA

CHINA

March 24 and 25, 2019

Haifeng County, Guangdong Province, China

- Seizure of ivory necklaces with a total weight of 4.3 kg from 2 packages. One arrest and house raid. Seizure of an additional 7.9 kg of elephant and mammoth ivory.

- Seizure from another package addressed to the same address of 2,820 g of ivory and 1,900 grams of ivory crafts.

The man was supplying ivory via the internet.¹

Mammoths

EUROPE

RUSSIA

March 27, 2019

Yakutsk, Far Eastern Federal District, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia

Yakutia is said to hold 85 to 90% of mammoth tusks. The annual legal production is about 100 t and would yield 50 million US\$ (500US\$/kg). The unofficial market would be twice as important. Russian federal law does not provide local revenues for Yakutia. The majority of mammoth bones and tusks are exported to China. Prime Minister Vladimir Solodov notes that China is buying more and more mammoth tusks because of the ban on the sale of elephant ivory in the country. The Government of the Republic of Yakutia is showing its determination. "The law should contain a notion of tusk as an object for commercial activities without damage to the environment." "We all are aware of barbarian methods of producing tusks, when the hunters wash off the coast lines, or dig huge caves, thus causing degradation of the nature, of the permafrost, which must be stopped."¹

Other Mammals

AFRICA

KENYA

February 10 and 24, 2019

Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya

- Release of a spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*) injured by a trap around her neck. After waking up, she got up and took shelter in a shaded area. Favourable prognosis.

- A female zebra had been carrying the wire of a trap around her neck for a few days. The vets spotted her on the way back from another rescue operation. They anaesthetized her. She fell asleep after four minutes. They removed the iron necklace. She was immediately awakened with an antidote. After a minute, she got up and joined the other zebras nearby. Favourable prognosis.¹



March 13, 2019

Tsavo West National Park, Kenya

A young eland (*Taurotragus oryx*) released from a tire that gripped his rib cage. He had been observed the day before by a park warden. He was easily found in the shade of a tree. When the veterinarians arrived, he tried to escape. A second hypodermic syringe finally put him to sleep after 5 minutes. The tire was cut with a saw. The bruises were sprayed with tincture of iodine and antibiotics. The prognosis is favourable.²



SENEGAL

March 31, 2019

Kédougou, Kédougou Region, Senegal

A hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) wandered around the city and caused panic. He was shot dead by a gamekeeper on the governor's orders. "This final solution could have been avoided if the Water and Forestry services had used a hypodermic gun to put the animal to sleep and then back into the waters of the Gambia River," protested Mustapha Diakhate, the head of the President's cabinet with a minister rank.³

ZAMBIA

Mid-February 2019 Solwezi, North-Western Province, Zambia

Sentencing of Francis Samanenga (60 years old) to a 45,000 kwacha fine (330 US\$) or 3 years in prison with forced labor if he does not pay, for the possession of 28 kg of bushpig (*Potamochoerus larvatus*) meat. The bushpig originated from the West Lunga national park.⁴



AMERICA

BRAZIL

February 5, 2019 Pirassununga, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Writ of sequestration for an African pygmy hedgehog (*Atelerix albiventris*). Conviction of the owner to a 2,200 reais fine, or 593 US\$. The man had bought it for 800 reais, or 215 US\$, and was selling his offspring on the Internet.⁵



February 3, 2019 Chopininho, State of Paraná, Brazil

Seizure in a private home of 4 capybaras (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), a 32-calibre rifle and 15 ammunition. An arrest. The animals were released the same day into a local reserve.⁶

Early March 2019 Nova Ubiratã, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Seizure in a GM Corsa on the MT-242 road of 3 dead white-lipped peccaries (*Tayassu pecari*, Appendix II), one rifle and 22 ammunition. Arrest of the poacher, a 31-year-old man.⁷

March 9, 2019 Rebouças, State of Paraná, Brazil

Discovery under foliage of the corpse of a male pampas deer (*Ozotoceros bezoarticus*, Appendix I). As a patrol approached, a man fled on a Honda motorcycle without number plates. He got stuck in a soybean plantation. The tank was stained with blood. In the fugitive's home, a hunting arsenal was seized.⁸

March 15, 2019 Cafelândia, State of Paraná, Brazil

Seizure of 25 kg of capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and hunting equipment. An arrest. Fine of 12,500 reais (2,924 US\$). The 51-year-old man makes artisanal sausages. He allegedly used meat from wild animals to make them, at least that's what the local police suspects.⁹



March 31, 2019 Santo Expedito, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 10 kg of capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and a rifle from an individual who claims to have received the meat as a gift. Fine of 500 reais (135 US\$). The "gift" was declared unfit for consumption and destroyed.¹⁰



COLOMBIA

Mid-February 2019 Cundinamarca Department, Colombia

A Hoffmann's two-toed sloth (*Choloepus hoffmanni*, Appendix III in Costa Rica) abandoned on the Paime-Tudela road. The small mammal was handed over to the wildlife refuge at Udca University. On this occasion, the police remind of the usefulness of the wildlife alert number: 350-300-30-34. Thanks to it, a car was intercepted a few weeks ago. In addition to the driver, there were a boa and 68 turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II and *Trachemys callirostris*) on board.

Hoffmann's two-toed sloth is an endemic sloth from South America. Newborns are about 25 cm long. Their weight is about 300 g. They are born with their claws, which they use to hold on to their mother shortly after birth until they are 6 to 9 months old.¹¹



ECUADOR

Early February 2019 Esmeraldas Province, Ecuador

Seizure of 3 armadillos (Dasypodidae family) and 23 kg of bushmeat on a bus from Quindé to Santo Domingo. Those responsible have not been identified. The armadillos were immediately released into the wild and the meat was incinerated.¹²

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

March 18, 2019

Kellog, State of Minnesota, United States of America

Eight mutilated bodies of white-tailed deers (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala) were dumped overnight near the Zumbro River. Almost all of them were males. Their antlers and the tops of their skulls were cut out. An appeal for witnesses was launched.¹³

ASIA

CHINA

March 2019

Jinan, Shandong Province, China

Before their delivery to a zoo, customs quarantined 2 giant anteaters (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*, Appendix II) exported from Suriname.¹⁴

INDIA

February 6, 2019

Tanagebailu, Chikkamagaluru District, Karnataka State, India

Seizure of 2 civets (*Viverra zibetha* or *Viverricula indica*, Appendix III) aged 4 or 5 months. K. Raju had planned to breed them to make Kopi Luwak, the most expensive ristretto in the world (see "On the Trail" n°1 p. 41). He claims to have "found" the civets in the forest. Knowledgeable about local practices, forest officials say that civet urine is used in Hindu temples to season vegetarian food offerings.¹⁵

February 8, 2019

Balapur and Pardi, Chandrapur District, Maharashtra State, India

Poaching of a Nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Arrest of Ravindra Ghyar and Amar Gurnule. They released hunting dogs to exhaust her, then killed her with a spear. Seizure during the search of their homes of a large quantity of meat, axes, torches and poaching accessories.¹⁶

February 27, 2019

New Delhi, National Territory of Delhi, India

Rescue of an Asian palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III) trapped near the northern entrance of the university.¹⁷



PAKISTAN

February 25, 2019

Cholistan Desert, Punjab Province, Pakistan

Caught red-handed hunting deer, 8 poachers opened fire on the police. A ranger was wounded. Haji Tahir was arrested. The other 7 members of the gang fled. Five of them are identified. Two vehicles and hunting equipment were seized. A few days earlier, 6 chinkara (*Gazella benettii*, Appendix III) poachers had been arrested and their weapons and ammunition seized. They were fined 1,660 US\$.¹⁸



THAILAND

March 6, 2019

Kanchanaburi, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand

Sentencing of a monastery caretaker to 3 years and 7 months in prison for shooting and killing a binturong (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix III in India) (see "On the Trail" n°23 p. 142). Man Tata, of the Karen ethnic group, claims to have been recruited by civil servants. Six of them admitted the facts. In their home, the victim's 4 legs, a rifle with silencer, a revolver and ammunition had been seized. Ms. Sriwichit, Mr. Thasdanai and Mr. Prasarn were sentenced to 3 months and 15 days in prison and a 3,000 bahts fine each (95 US\$), Mr. Jarachai was sentenced to 15 days in prison and a 2,750 bahts fine (87 US\$) and Ms. Arun and Mr. Somkiart were sentenced to 15 days in prison and a 750 bahts fine (23 US\$) each. The other 7 officials plead not guilty. Among them is Dan Makham Tia District's Vice President. They are awaiting their judgment.¹⁹



Multi-Species

AFRICA

BENIN

February 13 and March 12, 2019 Comè, Mono Department, Benin

- Two in custody after being caught red-handed selling crocodile skins and a leopard skin.

- Sentence to 48 months' imprisonment, including 36 months' suspended sentence for one of the defendants.¹



MOZAMBIQUE

March 15, 2019 Mozambique

Publication of the quotas for the 2019 hunting season, which will take place from April 1 to November 30.

The killing of 19,864 animals is authorised, including 1,483 Nile crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix II), 736 yellow baboons (*Papio cynocephalus*, Appendix II), 545 sable antelopes (*Hippotragus niger*, Appendix I), 103 leopards (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), 61 blue duikers (*Philantomba monticola*, Appendix II), 49 lions (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), 43 hippos (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II), 13 bustards (Otididae family, Appendix I or II) and 25 elephants.

Elephant hunting is allowed in "wildlife restocking areas" for which Mozambique receives animal donations from Zimbabwe and Botswana.

An elephant hunting permit in Mozambique is at least 50,000 US\$. 20% of this revenue would be distributed to local populations.²

NIGER

March 6, 2019 Sambéra, Dosso Region, Niger

The patrol blocked the road at the right time. Seizure of 2 Toyota ATVs, raw ivory, 4 buffalo heads, a Roan antelope head (*Hippotragus equinus*), boa skins (Boidae, Appendix I or II), monkey organs and other bushmeat from poaching in the W park. Seizure of 10 guns, 6 bicycles, machetes, poison vials. Arrest of 3 Nigerians.³

UGANDA

February 19, 2019

Uganda

Uganda is raising its voice and its sanctions. A new law will replace the one from 1996. Poachers and traffickers of protected species face up to life imprisonment. "The penalties in the Uganda Wildlife Act Cap 200 have lost value since 1996 and are not deterrent enough to check the escalating levels of poaching and wildlife trafficking," the new Bill reads. The bill was passed by Parliament. It must now be signed by the President.⁴

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

February 7, 2019

Impfondo, Likouala Department, Republic of the Congo

Two years in prison for the poacher of 5 Western red colobus (*Piliocolobus badius*, Appendix II) and the poacher of a giant pangolin (*Manis gigantea*, Appendix I). They operated in the Lac Télé reserve where traditional hunting is allowed for bushmeat except for species protected by national law and the CITES Convention.⁵



ZAMBIA

Mid-February 2019

Mwinilunga, North-Western Province, Zambia

Japhet Machayi sentenced for possession of 11 traps, ammunition, a rifle, pangolin scales and the skin of a sable antelope (*Hippotragus niger*, *Hippotragus niger varians*, Appendix I) to a fine of 9,160 US\$ or 2 years' imprisonment in case of non-payment.⁶



AMERICA

ARGENTINA

Early February 2019

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Seizure in 9 antique and decoration shops of more than 100 wildlife remains including trophies of red deer (*Cervus elaphus*), wild boars (*Sus scrofa*), foxes and mules, naturalized animals and objects made of ivory and coral. Estimated value of 700,000 US\$.⁷

Early March 2019

Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina

Search and shutting down of the “farm of delicacies” specialized in “unconventional meat”: among other delicacies, the yacare caiman (*Caiman crocodilus yacare*, Appendix II), guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II), llama, and red deer (*Cervus elaphus*). Seizure of more than 7 tons of meat in 9 freezers.⁸

Early March 2019

San Javier, Province of Santa Fe, Argentina

Seizure in the trunk of a Peugeot van of 7 kg of capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and surubi (genus *Pseudoplatystoma*). Arrest of Ramón Feliciano S.⁹

BOLIVIA

Early March 2019

Cochabamba, Department of Cochabamba, Bolivia

Seizure on markets of 774 specimens of dead wild animals or parts thereof: Darwin's rheas (*Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix I), blue-fronted parrots (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II), common barn owls (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), violetears (Trochilidae, Appendix I or II), raptors (Accipitridae family), toucans beaks (Ramphastidae family), flamingo feathers (*Phoenicopterus* spp., Appendix II), southern viscachas (*Lagidium viscacia*), ferrets (*Mustela putorius furo*), armadillos (Dasypodidae family) and 345 lizards. Seizure of 13 live animals, including ducks, wild pigeons and cardinals as well as 28 ointments and oils made from turtles, caimans and vipers.

Hawkers have received a warning and will be fined in case of repeated offence.¹⁰

Early March 2019

Oruro, Oruro Department, Cercado Province, Bolivia

Seizure at the entrance checkpoints of the carnival of rare bird feathers, a fox skin and 38 Bolivian hairy armadillo shells (*Chaetophractus nationi*, Appendix II) transformed into charango, a stringed musical instrument.¹¹



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BRAZIL

Early February 2019

Araputanga, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Seizure in a private home of 8 wood tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II), 2 boas (*Boa* spp., Appendix I or II), a young tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) and 2 guns. An arrest. The animals will be released into the wild after a veterinary examination.¹²

February 5, 2019

Ouricuri, State of Pernambuco, Brazil

A tegu (*Tupinambis* spp., Appendix II), birds including a vulture (Cathartidae family) and dogs were found poisoned.¹³



February 7, 2019

Uauá, State of Bahia, Brazil

Seizure in coolers of 14 dead animals, including 12 birds, a Brazilian guinea pig (*Cavia aperea*) and a large American opossum (genus *Didelphis*). They were being transported to São Paulo in several buses. Three arrests.¹⁴

February 9, 2019

Umuarama, State of Paraná, Brazil

Seizure during a search of 2 blue-fronted parrots (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II), 24 kg of capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and one fish (*Salminus brasiliensis*). An arrest and a fine of 13,760 reals, or 3,709 US\$. The man is also being prosecuted for carrying weapons without permit. He had already been convicted of drug trafficking. Unsuitable for consumption, meat and fish were destroyed. Birds too dependent on human assistance were left with the offenders.¹⁵



February 20, 2019

Macapá, State of Amapá, Brazil

Seizure in the east of the city (400,000 inhabitants) of 50 kg of meat from alligators (Alligatoridae, Appendix I or II), sloths (order Pilosa), capybaras (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and armadillos (Dasypodidae family). A total of 880 kg of wild animal meat has already been seized in the State since the beginning of the year.¹⁶

March 7, 2019

Ubirajara, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure in a private home of 3 kg of capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), 3 kg of armadillo meat (Dasypodidae family), 4 nets, 2 shotguns, several dozen cartridges, gunpowder and other hunting and cutting paraphernalia. They sold wild meat to their neighbours. Fine of 3,000 reals or 804 US\$.¹⁷



© Polícia Militar Ambiental

March 11, 2019

Arealva, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of an anaconda skin (*Eunectes* spp., Appendix II), frozen armadillo meat (*Dasypodidae* family), a rifle and hunting equipment at the home of a 44-year-old man. Pending his trial, he was fined 1,000 reals or 251 US\$.¹⁸



March 17, 2019

Fortaleza, State of Ceará, Brazil

Seizure on a market of a margay skin (*Leopardus wiedii*, Appendix I) and 24 birds, including red-cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*), campo troupial (*Icterus jamaicae*), great-billed seed finches (*Oryzoborus maximiliani*) and yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*). The sellers fled as the police approached. The birds have been entrusted to the Centro de Triagem de Animais Silvestres de Fortaleza.¹⁹

March 27, 2019

Manaus Port, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Seizure on board a boat arriving from Tefé, 520 km from Manaus, of 3 kg of white-lipped peccary meat (*Tayassu pecari*, Appendix II) and a ton of poached fish. Arrest of the boss (69). He was falsifying



his catch reports. Some of the fish were hidden in polystyrene boxes, under a load of acai fruit, a palm tree from the swampy areas.²⁰

March 28, 2019

Itanhaém, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 68 animals in a clandestine kennel, including parrots (*Amazona* spp., Appendix I or II), turtles, doves, rabbits, dogs and a pig. Worrying finding of expired drugs and surgical equipment. At the end of 2018, Senate approved a bill increasing the sentence for animal abuse from one to 4 years in prison.²¹

End of March 2019

State of Tocantins, Brazil

Seizure on the banks of the Rio Formoso of 56 kg of fish, including 51 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), a caiman carcass (*Alligatoridae*, Appendix I or II), a giant south American turtle (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II), a dead guan (genus *Penelope*), 3 fishing nets and a pistol. One arrest and a fine of 9,800 reals, or 2,465 US\$.²²

CANADA

OPERATION CORMORAN GANG

February 13, 2019

Yamachiche, Louiseville and Lake Saint-Pierre, Quebec Province, Canada

The network cast a wide net. They sold meat from poached wild animals, including Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*, *Branta canadensis leucopareia* Appendix I), bears (*Ursus* spp, Appendix I or II), white-tailed deers (*Odocoileus virginianus*), ducks, geese, wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*), moose (*Alces alces*), coyotes (*Canis latrans*), yellow pike-perches (*Sander vitreus*) and yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*). At least 40 arrests. They worked year round and in several places. "It existed 30 years ago and I am convinced that in 10 or 20 years, officers will have to carry out the same type of operation," says Yvan Brisebois, Regional Director of Wildlife Protection for Mauricie and Centre-du-Québec.²³

COLOMBIA

OPERATION RESPLANDOR

Early March 2019

Girardot, Cundinamarca Department, Colombia

A bit of teaching before a seizure. Voluntary handing over to the Centro de Atención de Fauna Silvestre of a parrot (*Amazona* spp., Appendix II), a toucan (*Ramphastidae* family), 4 macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II), 19 wood turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II) and 2 micos (*Mico* spp., Appendix II).²⁴

End of March 2019

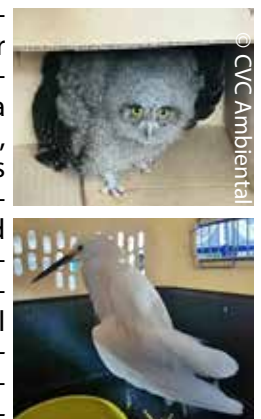
Huila Department, Colombia

Release after being cared for of several animals seized from private homes: 2 jaguarundis (*Puma yagouaroundi*, Appendix I or II), 2 yellow-headed caracaras (*Milvago chimachima*, Appendix II), 2 small tropical screech-owls (*Otus choliba*, Appendix II), a coati (genus *Nasua*), a tayra (*Eira barbara*, Appendix III in Honduras), 5 lowland pacas (*Cuniculus paca*), an agouti (genus *Dasyprocta*) and a sloth.²⁵

End of March 2019

Yumbo, Valle del Cauca Department, Colombia

Seizures or voluntary handing over of a hybrid spider monkey (*Ateles hybridus*, Appendix II), a common iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), 2 yellow-crowned Amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II), an orange-winged amazon (*Amazona aouou*, Appendix II), a buff-backed heron (*Bubulcus ibis*), a tropical screech-owl (*Megascops choliba*, Appendix II), a yellow-headed caracara (*Milvago chimachima*, Appendix II) and a buff-necked ibis (*Theristicus caudatus*). They have been entrusted to the Centro de Atención y Valoración de Fauna Silvestre San Emigdio de Palmira.²⁶



End of March 2019

Cali, Valle del Cauca Department, Colombia

Dismantling of an international wildlife traffic after 6 months of investigation. Seizure from 2 farms of 34 animals including axolotls (*Ambystoma mexicanum*, Appendix II), African clawed frogs (*Xenopus laevis*), caimans (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II), a 3 m long boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), iguanas (*Iguana* spp, Appendix II), Fischer's lovebirds (*Agapornis fischeri*, Appendix II), cockatoos (*Cacatua* spp., Appendix I or II), mantis (*Mantis* spp.), tarantulas and hedgehogs. The majority came from the departments of La Guajira, Amazonas and Orinoco, Venezuela or Ecuador. The network extended as far as Central America. Three arrests. Sales were made via social networks.²⁷

ECUADOR

March 8, 2019

Between El Coca, Orellana Province and Tena, Napo Province, Ecuador

Seizure of 3 kg of black agouti meat (*Dasyprocta fuliginosa*) and nine-banded armadillo meat (*Dasypus novemcinctus*) on a bus line from El Coca to Tena. One arrest.²⁸

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

REPEATED OFFENSE

March 8, 2019

Alexandria, State of Virginia, United States of America

Sentence of 30 days in prison and one year's probation for Keith R. Foster for fraudulently importing and selling between 2014 and 2018 under the name of "The Outpost" sawfish blades (Pristidae, Appendix I), crocodile skin bags (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) and handicrafts made with sea turtle shell. In January 2017, Foster betrayed himself in a recorded telephone conversation. "Rest assured, I'm gonna bring more in, 'cause I'm the only fool in the States that probably wants to risk it", he told a so-called buyer of sawfish blades. Foster, 60, is a landscaper specializing in golf courses. In December 2018, he had already been sentenced to 50 hours of community service and a fine of 275,000 US\$ on the same grounds (see "On the Trail" n°23 p. 150).²⁹



GUATEMALA

Mid-March 2019

Mazatenango, Suchitepéquez Department, Guatemala

Seizure on the market stalls of the former bus terminal of 9 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), a chachalaca (*Ortalis vetula*, Appendix III in Guatemala and Honduras) and a budgerigar (*Melopsittacus undulatus*). The sellers were not prosecuted.³⁰

MEXICO

March 14, 2019

Acapulco de Juárez, State of Guerrero, Mexico

The house of sorrow. Seizure of a female white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), 3 peafowls (*Pavo cristatus*), a Belize crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II) and 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II). They were given to the Chilpancingo de Los Bravo zoo.³¹

PERU

Early February 2019

Marcavelica, Sullana Province, Piura Department, Peru

The fresh fruit merchant also sold stuffed animals. Seizure of 4 common iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and 3 Sechuran foxes (*Lycalopex sechurae*). Total value estimated at 700 soles or 210 US\$.³²



Lycalopex sechurae

Early February 2019

Cajamarca, Cajamarca Department, Peru

- Seizure of a parrot (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) in a bus station.
- Seizure of a black-chested eagle (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*, Appendix II) on sale on social networks.
- Seizure of a colpeo fox (*Lycalopex culpaeus*, Appendix II) at a roadside checkpoint.³³

February 5, 2019

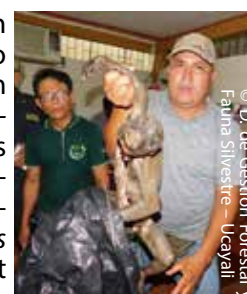
Los Olivos, Lima Province, Lima Department, Peru

- Seizure of an anaconda skin (*Eunectes murinus*, Appendix II) and fragments of boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and anaconda skins on a medicinal products stand.
- Seizure of frogs on the Unicachi market.³⁴

Early March 2019

Ucayali Department, Peru

Seizure in 6 black bags on board the *Davila* on the Río Ucayali of 282 kg of meat from collared peccaries (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II), Cuban boas (*Epicrates angulifer*, Appendix II), weasels (order Didelphimorphia), red deers (*Cervus elaphus*) and primates. Arrest of Eliana Rivers Cahuaza.³⁵



March 26, 2019

Ilave, El Colhao Province, Puno Department, Peru

Seizure of 2 colpeo fox skins (*Lycalopex culpaeus*, Appendix II) and 39 live wild animals including a Eurasian kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II), 2 Andean flickers (*Colaptes rupicola*), 4 bats (order Chiroptera), a snake and 4 lizards. They were going to be sacrificed in healer rituals. Apart from bats with broken hind legs, the animals are healthy. They were released into the wild.³⁶

EL SALVADOR

Mid-February 2019

Apastepeque, San Vicente Department, El Salvador

Seizure of 14 green conures (*Aratinga holochlora*, Appendix II), 10 *Ctenosaura similis* (black iguanas) and one fox. They were for sale by the Pan-American highway. The practice is common. Sometimes the sellers are children. The animals were released into the Tehuacán eco-tourism park.³⁷

ASIA

CAMBODIA

February 2019

Phnom Penh, Phnom Penh Province, Cambodia

Raid of the WRRT (Wildlife Rapid Rescue Team) in a craftsman sculptor's workshop and home. Seizure of elephant



tusks (8 kg), an Eld's deer antlers (*Rucervus eldii*, Appendix I), wild boar tusks (5.7 kg), a wild boar skull and 3



Indian muntjac skulls (*Muntiacus muntjak*). One in custody. Release pending trial.³⁸

CHINA

February 24, 2019

Lok Ma Chau Checkpoint, Hong Kong, China. Border with mainland China.

Seizure in a car of 12 kg of dried abalone, 12.4 kg of dried sea cucumbers, 12.2 kg of swim bladders, 537 g of swallow nests (between 40 and 180 nests) and 315 g of sus-



spected Manta ray gills (*Manta* spp., Appendix II). Total estimated value of 240,000 HK\$, or 30,600 US\$.³⁹

March 2019

Meizhou, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure in the Viet-Nam border area of pangolins, pangolins skins with scales (Appendix I), 9 frozen bear paws (Ursidae, Appendix I or II), 4 hawks (Accipitridae, Appendix I or II), 10 live scorpions and 5 frozen scorpions.⁴⁰



March 2019

Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China

Seizures from postal parcels from Japan of 11 worked ivories (49 g) and 26 red coral ornaments (152 g).⁴¹



March 21, 2019

Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure on 3 passengers of 2 giant clams (Tridacninae, Appendix II), a staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis*, Appendix II), a mushroom coral (*Fungia fungites*, Appendix II) and 4 saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II).⁴²

INDIA

February 26, 2019

Chintalapadu and Chalaman-nagar, Bhadrachal-Kothagudem District, State of Telangana, India

The police and forest rangers, under the authority of District Chief S. Rambabu and Chief Inspector Ramesh, have invaded small remote villages inhabited by members of the Gothi Koya tribe. They were looking for woodcutters and traffickers. They came across the hideout of wildlife poachers whose weapons are archaic and whose catches are numerous. Seizure of sloth bear skins (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I), 2 wild Asiatic buffalo horns (*Bubalus arnee*, Appendix III), 3 chousingha horns (*Tetracerus quadricornis*, Appendix III), 3 Nilgai horns (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III), 7 skins and 28 antlers of spotted deer (*Axis axis*), 3 sambar horns (*Rusa unicolor*), quills of at least 3 Indian porcupines (*Hystrix indica*), 32 snares, 65 bows, 112 arrows, 20 spades, 40 axes, 60 sickles and 2 traps. A patrol had already approached the group but had been welcomed by stones and threats of kidnapping. Back at their station, the intimidated agents had not told their superiors. Government services came back after examining satellite photos showing that the forest cover was rapidly decreasing. 13 in police custody.⁴³



**February 25 and March 7, 2019
Mannady, Chennai District, Tamil Nadu State & Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, Mumbai, Maharashtra State, India**

- Large catch in a warehouse: 111 kg of pangolin scales, 180 kg of dried pipefish (*Syngnathus* spp.), 125 kg of manta ray gills (*Manta* spp., Appendix II) and mobulas rays (*Mobula* spp., Appendix II), 79 kg of shark fins, 60 kg of dried seahorses and 5 kg of sea cucumbers estimated at 70 million rupees (983,429 US\$). The 2 accomplices, Abdul Rahman and Muhammad Abu Bakar, who tried to flee, say they are getting supplies of marine species in the Rameswaram and Ramanathapuram districts in the south of the State and at Kasimedu fishing port in Chennai. The «goods» were flown to Mumbai before flying to Malaysia, where the big shot of the band would be based. The final destination of the smuggling would be China.

- Seizure of 30 kg of dried seahorses from the luggage of a Chennai man about to board for Kuala Lumpur. The individual claims to be in the service of Rahman and Abu Bakar.⁴⁴

March 13 and 14, 2019

Kalipat, Rajkot District, State of Gujarat, India

Divyaraj Shah presents himself as an animal welfare activist. The Assistant Conservator of Forests, Mr. Muni, strongly doubts that. The raid he conducted with his men on Divyaraj Shah's farm was full of incident. Arriving in the night, he discovered 25 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II), 3 nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III) and numerous birds in cages, but also cadavers of owls, cuckoos, and squirrels in a refrigerator. The forest rangers had to beat a retreat when the suspect's family started to protest. Back the next morning with police in support, they arrested Divyaraj Shah and brought the living animals to the Sakkarbaug Zoo. The would-be wildlife defender was able to come out with only a 25,000-rupees payment (350 US\$).⁴⁵

INDONESIA

February 2, 2019

North Hulu Sungai Regency, South Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

Seizure on a market of several animal parts which, after identification by BKSDA specialists, turn out to be a leopard cat skull and skin (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), 4 canines, 9 claws and 3 bear skulls (Ursidae, Appendix I or II), a hornbill beak (Bucerotidae family, Appendix I or II), a gibbon skull (Hylobatidae, Appendix I), 2 pangolin scales (Appendix I), an estuarine crocodile skin (*Crocodylus porosus*, Appendix II), a horned helmet shell (*Cassis cornuta*), 7 skulls, 6 horns and a deer skin (genus *Rusa*). Other parts are still being identified. Additional seizure of 3 mobile phones and a Toyota vehicle. HR (19) caught red-handed selling the animals.⁴⁶



February 12, 2019

Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

Seizure in an individual's home of an estuarine crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*, Appendix II) and 2 monkeys (Appendix I or II). They were handed over to the care of Bukit Alam park.⁴⁶⁷

February 22, 2019

East Tanjung Jabung Regency, Jambi Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Seizure of cockatoos (Cacatuidae, Appendix I or II), birds of paradise (Paradisaeidae, Appendix II), golden snub-nosed monkeys (*Rhinopithecus roxellana*, Appendix I) and other animals.⁴⁸



March 9, 2019

Madyopuro, Malang Regency, East Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia

Seizure of 2 Moluccan cockatoos (*Cacatua Moluccensis*, Appendix I) and one black-capped lory (*Lorius Lory*, Appendix II). Rowdy arrest of M. while he was waiting for buyers. He admitted that he had already sold 2 pangolins to K.E.M., who was also arrested.⁴⁹

March 18, 2019

Kelam Permai District, Sintang Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

Seizure of 283 specimens of plants and wildlife collected and captured in the Bukit Kelam Natural park, including 45 centipedes (genus *Scolopendra*), 96 spiders (order Araneae), 40 beetles (order Coleoptera), 20 milipedes (class Diplopoda), 3 narrow-mouthed frogs (Microhylidae family), one striped kukri snake (*Oligodon octolineatus*), 42 whip scorpions (order Uropygi), 10 cockroaches (order Blattodea), 19 scorpions (order Scorpiones), dendrobium orchids and butterfly plants. Arrests of 4 Polish citizens, O.J. (31), H.F. (44), B.P. (31) and "T6" (46). They face one year in prison and a fine of 3,600 US\$.⁵⁰



uropyges

March 22, 2019

Ngurah Rai International Airport, Denpasar City, Bali Province, Bali Island, Indonesia

Seizure in a braided basket in Andrei Zhestkov's luggage of an orangutan baby (*Pongo* spp. Appendix I), 5 lizards (order Squamata) and 2 geckos (Gekkonidae family). The Russian national is 27 years old. He claims to have bought the orangutan for 3,000 US\$ in a street market on the island of Java to keep him as a pet. He was about to board a Garuda Indonesia flight to Vladivostok with transit in Seoul, South Korea. The 2-year-old male orangutan was drugged with anti-allergy pills (chlorpheniramine) to avoid any agitation at checkpoints and during the trip.⁵¹

March 27, 2019

Semarang City and Surabaya City, East Java Province, Java Island, Indonesia

Seizure of 5 Komodo monitors (*Varanus komodoensis*, Appendix I), cockatoos (Cacatuidae, Appendix I or II), bearcats (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix III in India) and cassowaries (genus *Casuaris*). They were put up for sale on Facebook by V.S. Five arrests. Traffickers admitted to having sold nearly 40 Komodo dragons for 15 to 20 million rupees each (between 1,000 US\$ and 1,400 US\$). Provincial authorities plan to close Komodo Island to tourists from January 2020. This is opposed by part of the population.⁵²



facebook

THAILAND

March 19, 2019

**Thong Pha Phum District, Kan-
chanaburi Province, Thailand**

Premchai Karnasuta was sentenced to 16 months in prison for complicity in poaching and illegal possession of firearms. However, the public works magnate, a major builder of bridges and dams, was acquitted of poaching a black panther whose body was found in the bivouac (see "On the Trail" n°20 p. 126-127, n° 23 p. 134). He was only accused of killing a pheasant. His 3 accomplices, Nathee Riamsaen, Thanee Thummat and Yong Dodkruea, were respectively sentenced to 4 months' jail and a 10,000 baht fine (318 US\$), 3,5 years' jail and a 2 million baht fine (63,173 US\$) and 13 months' jail.⁵³



VIET NAM

March 5, 2019

Dong Nai Province, Viet-Nam

Seizure in a restaurant of 16 stuffed animals, including 2 gibbons (Hylobatidae, Appendix I), a clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I), 6 monkeys (Cercopithecidae spp., Appendix I or II), 3

leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) and 4 squirrels (Sciuridae family). Everything will be burnt. The owner reported that she received the trophies "as a gift" 20 years ago.⁵⁴

March 7, 2019

REPEATED OFFENSE

Ha Dong Urban District, Hanoi, Viet-Nam

Mau Chien was sentenced to an additional 3 months in prison after an appeal judgment. It comes in addition to the 13 months he was sentenced to in 2018 for possession of ivory, rhino horns and 5 frozen tigers (see "On the Trail" n°17 p.87, n°18 p.57, n°21 p.67 and 118). As he had already spent a year in prison, he was released one month after the final decision. Education for Nature (ENV-Vietnam) found the sentence too light and made the prosecutor appeal. "Today's appeal ruling is deeply disappointing (...) we rely on the judiciary to do their bit and impose realistic punishments that will act as deterrents", says ENV.⁵⁵



EUROPE

SPAIN

**OPERATION
TAXIDERALIA**

**Early February 2019
Province of Alicante,
Autonomous**

Community of Valencia, Spain

Seizure in warehouses of more than 200 naturalized wildlife, including white rhinos (*Ceratotherium simum*, Appendix I), tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), lions (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), hippopotamuses (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II), Nile crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix I or II), addaxes (*Addax nasomaculatus*, Appendix I) and giraffes (*Giraffa* spp., Appendix II from 27 November 2019). They were put up for sale on the Internet and then traded via Whatsapp. The price of a dead leopard was 8,000 € (9,150 US\$).

6 people are charged. "They only risk up to 2 years in prison, which makes trade profitable," says Luis Mariano Gonzalez, biodiversity director of Miteco (Ministerio para la Transición Ecológica).⁵⁶



March 6, 2019

Madrid, Community of Madrid, Spain

Seizure in a local store of 186 seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II), 20 kg of sea cucumbers (Holothuroidea class), and one kg of edible-nest swiftlets' nests (*Aerodramus fuciphagus*), which is between 40 and 300 nests. Solidified by saliva, this swallow's nest is edible. In Asian luxury restaurants, an edible-nest swiftlet's nest soup costs about 500 €. Questioning of 4 people, including the manager.⁵⁷

Donkeys



The African wild ass *Equus africanus* is listed under CITES Appendix I. The domesticated form *Equus asinus* was excluded from this listing.

The Indian wild ass *Equus hemionus khur* and the Mongolian wild ass *Equus hemionus hemionus* are listed under CITES Appendix I. The kiang *Equus kiang* and the Asian wild ass *Equus hemionus* are listed under CITES Appendix II.

AFRICA

MALI

March 7, 2019

Bamako, Bamako District, Mali

B.T. caught red-handed cutting up a dead donkey near the main sewage collector in the 3rd district of the capital city. B.T. was under the influence of alcohol. He claims to have acted at the request of B.B., a medicine man in his neighbourhood who wanted to collect bones, ribs and donkey skin for his rituals.¹

ASIA

PAKISTAN

February 3, 2019

Dera Ismail Khan and Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan

As part of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, a macabre silk road may open. Chinese industrialists of ejiao - gelatin made from the steaming of donkey skins - plan to finance at least 2 industrial farms in Pakistan, which should eventually enable 80,000 donkeys to be exported each year.²



MAIN SOURCES

Sources are available on request by email to contact@robindesbois.org indicating the “On the Trail” issue number, section and reference of the event. For instance, for the last event of “On the Trail” n°24 : chapter Donkeys, Pakistan, reference 2.

Robin des Bois especially thanks the Species Survival Network and the NGO Save the Elephants.

Institutions

Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux du Gabon (ANPN), Australian Border Force, Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam (BKSDA - Indonesia), Chinese Customs, CITES, Commission Européenne, Cvc Ambiental, Department of Environmental Affairs (South Africa), Department of National Parks & Wildlife (Zambia), Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (Thailand), Direction Générale des Eaux et Forêts du Niger, Direction Interrégionale de la Mer Nord Atlantique - Manche Ouest, Douanes françaises, Gendarmerie Nationale française, German Customs, Government of Botswana, Hong Kong Customs, Hong Kong Government, Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos recursos naturais renováveis (IBAMA), Interpol, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Lusaka Agreement Task Force, Ministère de l'Economie Forestière (Congo), Ministère de la Transition écologique et solidaire (France), Ministerio del Ambiente (Ecuador), NAIA Customs, NOAA Fisheries, Office Central de Lutte contre les Atteintes à l'Environnement et à la Santé Publique (OCLAESP - France), Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage (ONCFS - France), Policijska Uprava Zagrebačka, Préfecture de la Corse, Premier of Victoria (Australia), Procuraduria Federal de Protección al Ambiente (PROFEPA - Mexico), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), Secretaria do Meio Ambiente e Infraestrutura (Brasil), Servicio Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre (SERFOR - Perú), South African National Parks (SANParks), South African Police Service (SAPS), Sri Lanka Navy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UNESCO, United States Department of Justice, US Department of Justice, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Vietnam Customs, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB - India).

Non Governmental Organizations

African Parks Network, ANCE Togo, Big Life Foundation, Born Free Foundation, Catalogue of Life (Species 2000 ITIS), Centre for Orangutan Protection, Centro Recupero Tartarughe Marine di Brancaleone, Conservation Justice, D'Bone Collector Museum Inc, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, EAGLE Network, Education For Nature - Vietnam (ENV), Encyclopedia of Life (EOL), Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), FERUS, Fondation Franz Weber, Game Rangers Association of Africa, Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP-UNEP), International Animal Rescue Foundation, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Iran's Environment and Wildlife Watch (IEW), Last Great Ape organization (LAGA), Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, Neotropical Primate Conservation, Orangutan Information Centre, Outraged SA Citizens Against Poaching, Pams Foundation Tanzania, Parc National des Virunga, Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), Robin des Bois, Save the Elephants, Save Vietnam's Wildlife, Saving the Survivors, Scorpion, Species Survival Network, Tikky Hywood Trust, TRAFFIC, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, Wildlife Alliance, Wildlife At Risk (WAR), Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand (WFFT), Wildlife Trust of India.

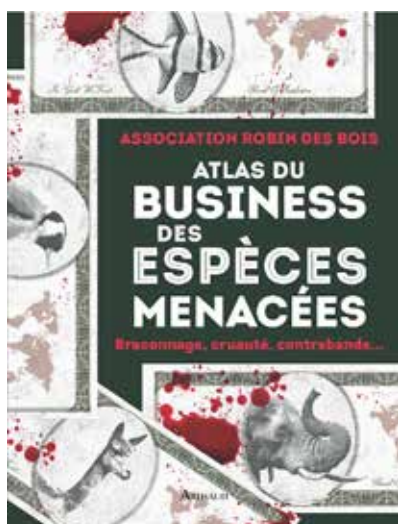
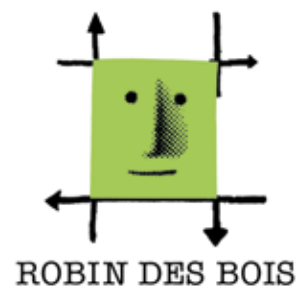
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