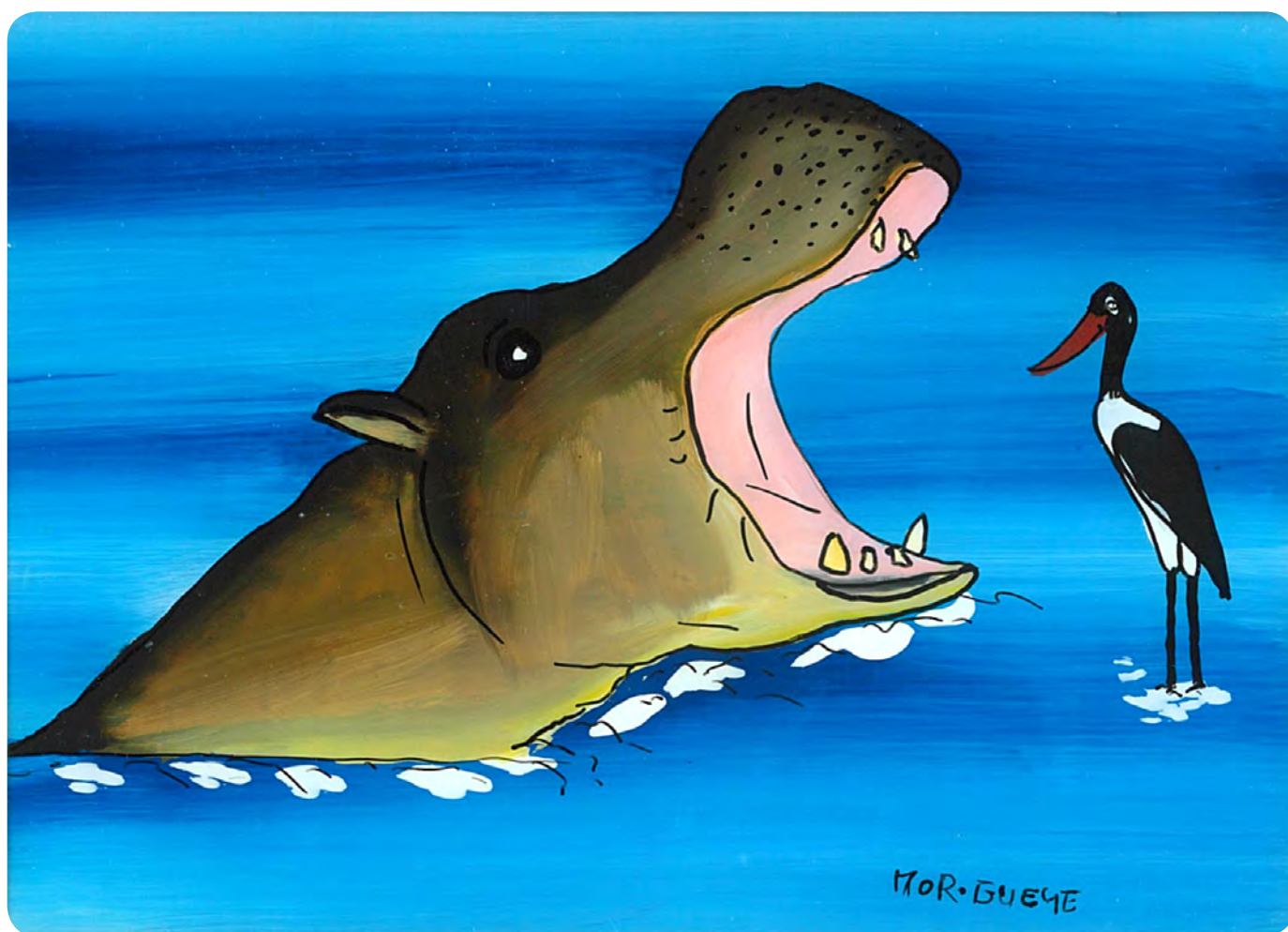


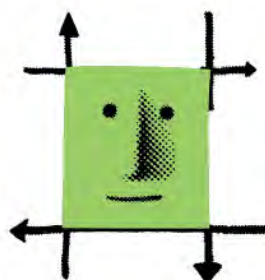
# ON the TRAIL

The defaunation bulletin  
n°33. Events from the 1<sup>st</sup> May to the 31<sup>th</sup> August, 2021



Quarterly information and analysis report on endangered  
animals poaching and smuggling  
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# NOTE AND ADVICE TO READERS

"On the Trail", the defaunation magazine, aims to get out of the drip of daily news and 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" also relates ongoing trials and the evolution of regulations and sanctions.

"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. No continent is spared.

- A single event may refer to several species (e.g. simultaneous seizure of ivory, bear bile and snake skins); it is then analysed in the "Multi-species" chapter, with the exception of events that bring together the following species and which have their own chapter:

- Pangolins + felines / elephants
- Elephants + hippos / rhinos / hornbills / sperm whales
- Felines + elephants / rhinoceroses
- Marine and freshwater multispecies (simultaneous seizure of several aquatic species)
- Multi-species reptiles (simultaneous seizure of several reptile species)

- Geographic regions at the continental scale are based on the UN classification.

- The main sources are indicated at the end of each event. Each event reported and/or analysed is from a recension of one or more articles or press releases. This critical review eliminates inconsistencies in date, price and quantity if necessary, and if possible mistakes or looseness about the description of the species. The original source(s) are sometimes enriched by cross-checking and additional information from previous issues of "On the Trail", by Robin des Bois' investigations and archives, and by international bibliography and iconography. The US\$ conversion rates used are those applicable during the month of the event.

Robin des Bois thanks the Species Survival Network, the NGO Save the Elephants and the Eagle Network for their alerts which enrich the daily monitoring carried out by the "On the Trail" team.

- When a species is CITES-listed, the Appendix is specified after its scientific name.

## 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.

## PICTOS



**Human death.** Guard, ranger, policeman, poacher... by firearm or other means.



**Judgment and sanction.** Condemnation, acquittal, fine...



**Trapping.** Poaching by jaw trap, snare, net ...



**Poisoning.** By chemicals, pesticides and medicines: cyanide, carbofuran, diclofenac, M99 ...



**Full moon.** Moonlight poaching

## ACRONYMS

**EAGLE** : Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement

**ENV** : Education for Nature – Vietnam

**IBAMA** : Instituto brasileiro do meio ambiente e dos recursos naturais renováveis

**IEW** : Iran Environment and Wildlife Watch

**KWS** : Kenya Wildlife Service

**LAGA** : The Last Great Ape Organization

**OIC** : Orangutan Information Centre

**PROFEPA** : Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente

**SAPS** : South African Police Service

**SPCA** : Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

**SSB** : Sashastra Seema Bal

**SVW** : Save Vietnam Wildlife

**SWT** : Sheldrick Wildlife Trust

**USFWS** : United States Fish and Wildlife Service

**WCCB** : Wildlife Crime Control Bureau



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## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**May 30 and 31, 2021  
Pretoriuskop and Houtboschrand  
Sections, Kruger National Park,  
Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**



Two poachers were arrested in the Pretoriuskop section of southern Kruger park after a ground hunt and helicopter overflight.

Rangers and the dog squad found the 3 poachers' footprints in the Houtboschrand section. A clash took place between the rangers and the fugitives, and one of them was fatally injured.

Despite these results shadowed by the death of a man whose age and identity are unknown, Cathy Dreyer, head of the park rangers, expressed her satisfaction at the end of the weekend and her congratulations to all involved.

"Poachers are currently targeting weekends for their misdeeds in the mistaken belief that rangers do not work during that time." "We have members of our teams in the field all day all week 24/7."

News24, June 5, 2021; SA-People, June 5, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

**July 2, 2021  
Kruger National Park, Limpopo and  
Mpumalanga Provinces, South Africa**



Death of a suspected poacher following an exchange of fire with guards. Seizure of a rifle, ammunition and the poaching kit.

Lowvelder, July 2, 2021; Suburban Control Centre, July 4, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



Special poacher's shoes for leaving animal tracks on the ground

### BOTSWANA

**August 9, 2021  
Ditshiping, North West District,  
Botswana**



Death of a suspected poacher in the Okavango delta following a clash with the BDF (Botswana Defence Force).

Echo Newspaper, August 10, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

### GABON

**May 29, 2021  
Mekambo, Ogooué-Ivindo Province,  
Gabon**



Jean François Ndong Aubame was killed

on duty. According to Lee White, Minister of Water, Forests, the Sea and Environment, charged with Climate Change and Land-use Planning, he was heading with 3 other eco-guards towards the home of Rufin Kombatoa, a teaching advisor suspected of ivory trafficking and illegal possession of a firearm.

Info241, May 29 and 30, 2021; L'Union, June 1, 2021; La République, June 26, 2021.<sup>4</sup>





## KENYA

**August 31, 2021**

### **Meru-Nanyuki Road, Meru County, Kenya**

His car was riddled with bullets. He had just driven his daughter to high school. Bajila Obed Kofa was a security officer with the KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service) at the Solio conservancy (also known as Solio ranch), which is home to elephants, Grevy's zebras and rhinos on a 75 km<sup>2</sup> area. Bajila Kofa knew he was under threat and had obtained a permit from his superiors to possess a firearm during his off-duty hours. The first elements of the investigation do not allow to direct the investigation. All hypotheses are open, the murder could be the work of poachers, corrupt colleagues or a mixture of both.



Solio conservancy, cf. "On the Trail" n°10 p.46, n°12 p.74, n°17 p.72, n°20 p.79, n°29 p.58, n°30 p.56 and this issue p. 61 and 62.

Kenyans.co.ke, July 1 and September 4, 2021; Rhino Ark, September 6, 2021; The Standard, September 19, 2021; Breaking Kenya News, October 8, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**June 23, 2021**

### **Obenge, Tshopo Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Two great ape and elephant poachers known as Mopao and Reddy died following an exchange of fire with the regular army.

Adams Cassinga, June 24, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



**July 8, 2021**

### **Butembo, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**



Rodrigue Mugaruka, responsible for the fight against trafficking and poaching in Virunga park, almost lost his life in a riot. Together with 2 armed eco-guards of the ICCN (Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature or Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation), he detained a trafficker and 60 kg of raw ivory in his car. The town's motorcycle taxis considered the vehicle suspicious, and an aggressive, curious and furious population soon surrounded it. The ivory was looted, the trafficker was killed, and the ICCN officers were rescued at the very last moment by a police patrol.



The situation is even more tense than usual in the province. A state of siege was declared on May 6, 2021. The Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo, FARDC) have been deployed and residents are living under an emergency regime. President Tshisekedi wants to put an end to the active armed groups in the region for the past 20 years.

VOA Afrique, July 1, 2021; Actualité.cd, July 8, 2021; Adams Cassinga, July 8, 2021; Topinfos24, July 10, 2021; Mediacongo.net, July 19, 2021; Le Monde, May 6, 2022.<sup>7</sup>



**June 8, 2021**

**Butembo, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**



Virunga National Park eco-guards arrested alleged warlord Jackson Muhukambuto after shadowing him for 6 months. He heads the Mai-Mai Jackson militia, which is suspected of having murdered at least 19 eco-guards as well as civilians and soldiers since 2018 and of funding itself with ivory trafficking. Muhukambuto is a deserter in the regular Congolese army. The Mai-Mai Jackson militia is believed to be at work in half of the 7,800 km<sup>2</sup> Virunga National Park. According to the Kivu Security Tracker, the bulk of its troops is concentrated on the northwest shore of Lake Edward. The Virunga elephant population, estimated at around 8,000 some 50 years ago, has been reduced to just a few hundred. Last year, this residual population got a demographic and genetic breath of fresh air by gaining entry into Virunga from Queen Elizabeth National Park in Uganda. Jackson Muhukambuto has been transferred to Kinshasa under the responsibility of the Congolese army pending trial.

Desknature, June 10, 2021; Mediacongo.net, June 11, 2021; Afrique Centrale, June 11, 2021; Environews RDC, June 11, 2021; Mongabay, June 14, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

## **ZAMBIA**

**August 4, 2021**

**Nyamvu Game Ranch, Eastern Province, Zambia**

Two lookouts are killed in an exchange of fire between a community patrol and poachers near the Lupezi river. Isaac Phiri, 29 years old, and Wanga Kachisa, 28 years old, living in Ziko and Kolwe, were hit by boron bullets fired from a homemade rifle that was found at the scene of the crime along with an axe. The patrol consisted of about ten people. Only one had a firearm. One poacher was injured and taken to hospital. The others are at large.

Zambia Reports, August 6, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

## **ZIMBABWE**

**May 9, 2021**

**Beitbridge, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe**

A man whose anonymity is respected was the victim of an attack on the road to Harare. His car was stopped by assailants, doused with petrol and immediately set on fire. Tango, 28 years old, was able to escape after a few minutes but 30% of his body is severely burnt.



Tango is one of the best investigators of the IAPF (International Anti-Poaching Foundation). He was able to give some details on the trap set for him. After spending a night in hospital in Beitbridge, he was transported to Harare by air. The brutality of the ambush is concerning but it is not uncommon for petrol to be used as a weapon in Zimbabwe. Although Tango's condition is considered to be stable, he will no longer be able to be part of the IAPF on the ground because of the physical and psychological effects. IAPF works in collaboration with ZimParks.

iHarare News, May 11, 2021; The Herald, May 11, 2021; Damien Mander, May 14, 2021; Plant Based News, May 22, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

## **ASIA**

## **INDIA**

**May 21, 2021**

**Rengalibahal Forest, Bolangir District, State of Odisha, India**

Woodcutters and poachers abound in the region. Jatia Rana who was on night patrol with a colleague was killed by unidentified individuals.

Odisha TV, May 22, 2021; Orissa Post, May 22, 2021.<sup>11</sup>





## IRAN

May 26 and July 10, 2021

Ghomishloo National Park, Isfahan Province, Iran



Reza Khosravi was due to retire at the end of the year after 29 years of loyal service in the park. He and his team were trying to arrest 2 poachers of gazelle (genus *Gazella*). He was beaten with a club on the head and face and died after several weeks of suffering.

Iran Environment Watch, July 10, 2021.<sup>12</sup>



## PANGOLINS

All 8 species of pangolins are listed under CITES Appendix I: the 4 African species (the giant pangolin *Manis gigantea*, the Temminck's ground pangolin *M. temminckii*, the long-tailed (black-bellied) pangolin *M. tetradactyla* and the white-bellied pangolin *M. tricuspis*) and the 4 Asian species (the Indian pangolin *Manis crassicaudata*, the Philippine pangolin *M. culionensis*, the Sunda pangolin *M. javanica* and the Chinese pangolin *M. pentadactyla*).

### On the Trail n°33

Value on the black market according to media or official sources  
The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

#### Value of a scale

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Democratic Republic of the Congo	1	10 (2021)
Asia	China	3	53 (2020)
		42.5	8* (2021)

#### Value of 1kg of pangolin scales

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Asia	Indonesia	140	57 (2021)
		490	58 (2020)
	China	9,160	76** (2020)

#### Value of a pangolin

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Zimbabwe	5,000	19 (2021)
Asia	China	1,240	46 (2019)
	Viet Nam	390	65 (2021)

#### Value of 1kg of pangolin meat

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Zimbabwe	500	17 (2021)
Asia	China	83	46 (2019)

\* See chapter Pangolins, Felines, Elephants

\*\* See chapter Multi-species



## WESTERN AFRICA

### COTE D'IVOIRE

**May 22 and June 3, 2021**

**Yamoussoukro, Yamoussoukro Autonomous District, and Abidjan, Abidjan Autonomous District, Côte d'Ivoire**

Arrested on May 22 as they left a cab with 110 kg of scales, 3 traffickers were treated with leniency. One was released immediately, the other 2 were fined 100,000 CFA francs (185 US\$) by judges in Abidjan. Eagle Côte d'Ivoire expresses its disappointment and recalls that the seizure came from at least 550 pangolins. EAGLE, May 27, 2021; EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire, May and June 2021.<sup>1</sup>



### GHANA

**Weekend of July 17-18, 2021**

**Atewa, Eastern Region, Ghana**

Release by the NGO A Rocha Ghana of a male white-bellied pangolin taken from a trafficker in Jejeti a few days earlier.

A Rocha Ghana, July 19, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



## LIBERIA

The director of the Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary near Monrovia, Julie Vanassche, doesn't see a rosy future for pangolins in Liberia and around the world. In Liberia, the sale of bushmeat is banned on paper, but it thrives on the ground and the Covid-19 crisis has encouraged it. When seizures are burned, the women who run the market stalls stage protests and outrage, and they shed crocodile tears as the pangolins' scales dissolve into thin air.

In Gbarpolu County in northern Liberia, 240 km from Monrovia, village chiefs tell Agence France Presse's special correspondent that pangolins are becoming increasingly rare and difficult to catch. Wholesalers were scarce during the pandemic and hunters stored the scales until the revival of business.

Under the responsibility of Julie Vanassche, 42 pangolins who arrived at the sanctuary in poor condition after being mistreated by traffickers were released. That makes 42 drops in the gloomy ocean of animal trafficking, or 42 moments of happiness. France 24 (with AFP), February 28, 2022.<sup>3</sup>

### NIGERIA

**May-July 2021**

**Lagos, Lagos State, Nigeria**

Veterinary doctor Mark Ofua runs the only wildlife orphanage in this megacity of 24 million people. In his modest institution, he can only accommodate newborns. Between May and July, with the help of several competent and selfless volunteers, he took in, cared for, bottle-fed, warmed and vitaminized several orphaned white-bellied pangolins who weighed no more than 100 grams and whose scales were as thin as paper. Their efforts were not always successful, but a few survivors seem to have a future in the forests.

Saint Mark's Animal Hospital, June 15, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



When the mothers are captured for meat and scales, the young pangolins are left to die.



**July 12 and August 14, 2021  
Ajibode, Oyo State, and Ogun State,  
Nigeria**

One time it doesn't work. One time it works. One month after failing to save an adult male pangolin for sale on the public highway in Ajibode (Oyo State) and whose neck was cut by a metal trap, the Pangolin Conservation Guild Nigeria team proceeded to release a young pangolin weighing 2.6 kg a few days after sheltering him. He had been rescued from trafficking in Ogun State. Pangolin Conservation Guild Nigeria, July 14 and August 23, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



© PCWG Nigeria

**CENTRAL AFRICA**

**CAMEROON**

**May 19 and June 21, 2021  
Mbalmayo, Centre Region, Cameroon**



© EAGLE

Raphaël Nsia Ondo and Hélène Ebogo were arrested by the gendarmerie and agents of the Nyong and So'o Forestry and Wildlife Department. They were in possession of 72 kg of scales gathered in the villages of Mengeme, Mengong, Meyo and Mete. Their "trade" did not start yesterday. They were selling the scales to customers in Yaoundé. In the first instance, they were sentenced to one month in prison and 200,000 CFA francs (370 US\$) in damages. The seizure is coming from at least 360 pangolins. EAGLE, May 20, 2021; LAGA, May and June, 2021; Alwihda, June 8, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

**June 3 and July 28, 2021  
Dimako and Abong-Mbang, East  
Region, Cameroon**



Yaya Nfenjou presented himself as a secondhand European clothing seller. But he was engaged in a more lucrative trade. In the villages around Dimako, he maintained a network of pangolin poachers and stored the scales in his home before selling them to other people whose nationality is not known. He was arrested in possession of 60 kg of scales by the Abong-Mbang police and agents of the Haut-Nyong Forestry and Wildlife Department with the technical support of the NGO LAGA, whose mission is to contribute to the application of the wildlife law promulgated in Cameroon in 1994. In the bag are piled the scales of 300 pangolins. He was sentenced in the first instance to 2 months in prison and to damages equivalent to more than 4,000 US\$. EAGLE, June 4, 2021; Alwihda, June 16, 2021; LAGA, June and July, 2021.<sup>7</sup>



© EAGLE

**June 15, 2021  
Mefou National Park, Centre Region,  
Cameroon**



First water, care, cleaning and calm for the female and the 2 males rescued from the traffic in Douala and welcomed by the Cameroonian branch of the Tikki Hywood Foundation. Then night outings in the forest under the supervision of the caretakers to eat ants, and finally, a release for the 3 white-bellied pangolins in the national park with the agreement of the government and under the protection of eco-guards. Tikki Hywood Foundation, June 18, July 5 and 8, 2021.<sup>8</sup>



© Tikki Hywood Foundation



## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

May 31, 2021

### Democratic Republic of the Congo

The return to the Democratic Republic of Congo of pangolin scales and azobe (*Lophira alata*) bark seized in Brazzaville (Republic of the Congo) is causing controversy. It was organised by Conserv Congo and the Interpol office in Kinshasa with the prospect of final destruction once the government had determined the location and elimination process.



Three days later, the ICCN (Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature or Congolese Institute for the Protection of Nature), while welcoming the principle of returning seized live animals or animal parts to their countries of origin, indicates that this transfer was carried out outside CITES procedures, unlike the return of monkeys seized in September 2020 in Zimbabwe ("On the Trail" n°30 p.92 and n°32 p.129) and of 130 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) seized in 2018 at Istanbul Atatürk International Airport, Turkey (see "On the Trail" n°20 p.47).

The ICCN regrets that no certificate has been signed by the CITES authorities of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

There are other divergences in the running of the operation Return. Conserv Congo speaks of 2 tonnes of pangolin scales seized in Brazzaville in 2019, the ICCN speaks of a seizure in June 2018 of around 1,800 kg of pangolin scales and a return of only 700 kg of scales divided into 14 bags. To the knowledge of "On the Trail" (n°22 p.51), the only seizure of pangolin scales in large quantities in Brazzaville from the Democratic Republic of Congo dates indeed from June 2018.

As of July 2022, it does not appear that these scales and bark have been destroyed. Their storage location is unknown.

Azobe scales are known to be analgesic, anti-inflammatory and beneficial against fevers and gastrointestinal disorders, and pangolin scales help prevent and cure nearly everything, according to some traditional healers and deep-rooted rumours in Asia.

Adams Cassinga, June 2, 2021; Conserv Congo, June 2, 2021; Journal de l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature, June 5, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

July 2021

### Mbandaka, Equateur Province, and Kinshasa, Kinshasa Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

In Ngobila, a pangolin scale sells for 2,000 Congolese francs, or 1 US\$. The armor of an adult pangolin is covered with 450 scales. In Maluku, a city 15 km from Kinshasa by the Congo River, private cars and vans from hotels and restaurants rush to receive deliveries of dead pangolins.

The shipments come by raft and the journey takes several days from Mbandaka to Kinshasa.

The rumor in the Democratic Republic of Congo is in full swing. Pangolin meat and crushed scales have the power to boost libido. It follows another rumor that consuming pangolin protects against the Covid-19 virus. Pangolin is miraculous. In the trendy restaurants of Kinshasa, you have to reserve 4 days in advance to eat pangolin.

Around Mbandaka, a villager anonymously admits that he hunts pangolins and sells them on the market to return home with sugar and soap. His wife catches bats and sells them at the market. Ramadhani Mukanda Nkomo, a student at the University of Kinshasa, does not mince his words. "Frankly, it hurts my heart to see this situation. It's like we're still living in the Middle Ages."

Pangolins in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, see "On the Trail" n°15 p.41, n°22 p.55, n°24 p.48, n°26 p.49, n°29 p.16, n°30 p.8 and p.156 and n°31 p.9.

Mongabay, July 24, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

## EASTERN AFRICA

### MALAWI

May 9, 2021

#### Mulanje, Southern Region, Malawi

Luka Bwanali and Daniel Juwalo, aged 25 and 31, are in possession of a live pangolin. They are reported by neighbors. A false buyer came to their home. They start to discuss the price. They were arrested and the pangolin should soon be released. Malawi 24, May 10, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

Week of May 10, 2021

#### Malawi

The Tikki Hywood Foundation reports the death of a pangolin from contact with an electric fence.

Tikki Hywood Foundation, May 14, 2021.<sup>12</sup>



Week of August 23, 2021

#### Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi

Reception of 2 pangolins rescued from trafficking, an adult male and a juvenile weighing barely 3 kg. The cub had been kept in a bag of cornmeal and was still covered with it. Since late 2020, 34 pangolins have been taken in by the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust.

Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, September 2, 2021.<sup>13</sup>



## MOZAMBIQUE

**June 29, 2021**

### **Gorongosa National Park, Sofala Province, Mozambique**

An adult male pangolin and a young female pangolin were taken from the hands of poachers. The animals are now safe and the poachers have been arrested.

Gorongosa National Park, June 29, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

## UGANDA

**May 28, 2021**

### **Kachumbala, Eastern Region, Uganda**

Pangolins are creeping, and so is the trafficking. Three were caught around Teso, 85 km from Kachumbala. Rangers at the Mount Elgon National Park arrested the 4 traffickers.

NTV Uganda, May 28, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

## ZIMBABWE

**Mid-May, 2021**

### **Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**



Release in a confidential location of 2 female pangolins cared for by the Tikki Hywood Foundation.

Tikki Hywood Foundation, May 18 and 24, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

**July 8, 2021**

### **Matetsi, North Matabeleland Province, Zimbabwe**

Give Dube (28 years old) and Cleopas Mlalazi (25 years old), with the assistance of 8 dogs, a spear and an axe, captured a female pangolin weighing 13.635 kg. They faced 12 years in prison but were sentenced to 9 years. They claimed at the time of their arrest that they intended to eat her, but the police didn't buy it. "If they had wanted to eat her, they would have killed her already." It is important to highlight that a kilo of pangolin meat sells for the equivalent of 500 US\$. Therefore, "the poachers keeping the pangolin alive means they had a buyer for it."

Centre for Innovation and Technology, July 9, 2021; The Chronicle, July 13, 2021; Bhejane Trust, July 25, 2021; NewsDay, July 28, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



**July 21, 2021**

### **Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Inspectors from the Minerals, Flora and Fauna Unit arrested Musa Musaniwa Masundasora, Ellen Zindoga and Desia Chikwiro who were selling scales in a public garden at 2 p.m. The 3 suspects will be seeking bail.

NewsDay, July 31, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

**August 20, 2021**

### **Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Tafadzwa Johannes Hlabati remains in custody for the time being. Through his lawyer, he will request bail. He was arrested at Westgate holding a bag, inside of which was a rolled up live pangolin he hoped to sell for 5,000 US\$.

NewsDay, August 24, 2021.<sup>19</sup>

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**May 19, 2021**

### **Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa**



Orateng Mekwe was sentenced to 10 years in prison without the possibility of an alternative fine, making it the longest sentence ever given to a pangolin trafficker in South Africa. Jealous Rungano was sentenced to 3 months in prison, after which he will be deported to Zimbabwe, his country of origin. Both were caught in Pretoria by a joint operation of agents from the Ministry of Agriculture (the Green Scorpions), Stock Theft & Endangered Species Unit, the Benoni Dog Squad and African Pangolin Working Group. They were in possession of an injured and dehydrated female pangolin they were trying to sell. Unfortunately, she did not survive, despite the efforts and care of the Johannesburg veterinary clinic.

African Pangolin Working Group, May 20, 2021; SA PROMO, May 26, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

**May 21, 2021**

### **Midrand, Gauteng Province, South Africa**



A female Temminck's ground pangolin, 8.3 kg, in a very weak condition, was in the trunk of the Toyota intercepted at a Shell gas station. Three arrests. Pangolin K9, May 21, 2021; The Citizen, May 21 and 26, 2021.<sup>21</sup>



**May 30, 2021**  
**Gravelotte, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Arrest of 4 men. In the car there was an injured pangolin who was transferred to the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital. Tzaneen Voice, May 31, 2021.<sup>22</sup>



**June 1, 2021**  
**Rayton, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Rescue of a male Temminck's ground pangolin weighing 2.6 kg. Three arrests. Joint operation of SAPS (South African Police Service) and the African Pangolin Working Group. African Pangolin Working Group, June 1, 2021; Pangolin K9, June 1, 2021; Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, June 22, 2021.<sup>23</sup>



**June 17, 2021**  
**Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Seizure of a juvenile female Temminck's ground pangolin from traffickers and transfer to the care of the veterinary clinic in Johannesburg. Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, June 17, 2021.<sup>24</sup>

**June 23, 2021**  
**Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Four pangolin traffickers, including a police officer, were sentenced to 4 years in prison. They had in possession a pregnant female pangolin who died a few days after the seizure. African Pangolin Working Group, June 23, 2021.<sup>25</sup>



**July 10 and 12, 2021**  
**Morokweng, North West Province, South Africa**

Arrest of Onneile Monnanyane. He was holding a pangolin. Released on bail of 60,000 rands (4,183 US\$). John Power (North West Provincial Government), July 11, 2021; SAPS, July 12, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**Mid-July 2021**  
**Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

A male rescued from traffickers is in the care of the Provett Veterinary Clinic. Rhino Revolution, July 22, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**August 3, 2021**  
**Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Sentence to 10 years in prison of a man caught in flagrante delicto transporting a Temminck's ground pangolin in Pretoria in July 2019. He was trying to sell him in a shopping center. Transferred to Johannesburg, the pangolin died of injuries from his capture a few weeks later. African Pangolin Working Group, August 3, 2021.<sup>28</sup>



**August 3, 2021**  
**Trichardt, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Arrest of a man who was holding a pangolin. Handed over to the care of the veterinary hospital in Johannesburg, the animal died of his injuries. Pangolin K9, August 3, 2021.<sup>29</sup>

**August 4, 2021**  
**Lephalale, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

From Monday to Monday (August 2-9), police arrested 1,538 people on suspicion of alcohol, drugs and bloody crimes, including a farmer who was in possession of a Temminck's ground pangolin who was handed over to specialists at the Johannesburg Veterinary Hospital. In order to protect the pangolins and the nursing staff, the hospital wishes to make it known that the pangolin care unit is located outside of its official premises. Pangolin K9, August 5, 2021; Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, August 8, 2021; SAPS, August 10, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

**August 5, 2021**  
**Midrand, Gauteng Province, South Africa**



Five arrests and the rescue of a pangolin. Pangolin K9, August 5, 2021.<sup>31</sup>



## NAMIBIA

**6 mai 2021**

**May 6, 2021**

**Rundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia**

Arrest of Mukunga Leonard Mwamba in possession of one pangolin armor.

Namibian Sun, May 21, 2021.<sup>32</sup>

**May 7, 2021**

**Kamanjab, Kunene Region, Namibia**

Arrest of an Angolan national for illegal possession of one pangolin armor.

Namibian Sun, May 21, 2021.<sup>33</sup>

**May 14, 2021**

**Oshakati, Oshana Region, Namibia**

Arrest of Merchoir Hamutenya Kayova and Andreas Nsambe Mukisi. Seizure of one pangolin armor.

Namibian Sun, May 21, 2021.<sup>34</sup>

**May 17, 2021**

**Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia**

Sentencing of Kavijenene Kaemui to a 720 US\$ fine, of which 290 US\$ is suspended, or 24 months in prison, of which 12 are suspended, for possession of one pangolin armor.

Namibian Sun, June 2, 2021.<sup>35</sup>



**June 8, 2021**

**Otiwarongo, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia**

Elias Elias, 30, and Petrus Nekaku, 31, were caught trying to sell a pangolin armor. The court refused to release them on bail.

New Era, June 10, 2021; The Namibian, June 8, 2021.<sup>36</sup>

**June 11, 2021**

**Oshakati, Oshana Region, Namibia**

Arrest of a 41-year-old man. Seizure of one pangolin armor.

Informanté, June 16, 2021.<sup>37</sup>

**June 20, 2021**

**Rundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia**

Arrest of Jeremia Kandjuna in possession of one pangolin armor.

Namibian Sun, July 14, 2021.<sup>38</sup>

**June 22, 2021**

**Epalela, Omusati Region, Namibia**

Arrest of 2 men at 9:30 a.m. while they were attempting to sell 2.22 kg of pangolin scales to undercover police officers. They were also in possession of a bag of cannabis, a gun and ammunition. The scales and cannabis came from Angola.

The Namibian, June 24, 2021.<sup>39</sup>

**June 22, 2021**

**Omahenene, Omusati Region, Namibia. Border with Angola.**

Seizure of 22 pangolin armors, a firearm and ammunition in the hands of Fillipus Katjoto and Fillipus Findeinge, Angolan and Namibian. The Angolan national is also charged with illegally entering the country.

Namibian Sun, July 14, 2021.<sup>40</sup>

**Between July 6 and 17, 2021**

**Hochfeld, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia**

An arrest. A live pangolin saved.

Republikein, July 23, 2021.<sup>41</sup>

**July 13, 2021**

**Rundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia. Border with Angola.**

Arrest of Mathews Hamusira and seizure of one pangolin armor.

Namibian Sun, July 22, 2021.<sup>42</sup>

**July 24 and 26, 2021**

**Zigizi, Kavango West Region, Namibia**

Arrest of Andreas Tjiakwiva Sesau at 2:00 p.m. He was in possession of pangolin scales worth 3,500 US\$. The court of first instance of Rundu released him on bail for 210 US\$ on the 26th.

New Era, July 27, 2021.<sup>43</sup>

**July 27 and 28, 2021**

**Rundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia. Border with Angola.**

Arrest of Johannes Makayi and Michael Mutangara. Seizure of a pangolin armor.

Arrest of Laurensia Haingura and Michael Kahare. New seizure of a pangolin armor.

Namibian Sun, August 9, 2021.<sup>44</sup>

**August 13, 2021**

**Ruacana, Omusati Region, Namibia**

A 28-year-old man offered to buy a live pangolin hidden in a yellow bag from a customer. The customer was actually a police officer, who immediately arrested him.

Allgemeine Zeitung, August 17, 2021; New Era, August 17, 2021.<sup>45</sup>

## EASTERN ASIA

### CHINA

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**May 2021**

**Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**

On June 24, 2019, a truck on its way from Zhongshan to Guangzhou is intercepted by the police. In the trailer, 483 frozen pangolins are discovered. The seizure is estimated to be worth more than 19 million yuan (2.9 million US\$) and 8000 yuan per specimen (1,240 US\$).

It appears from the investigation that in February 2019, Tao was importing frozen pangolins from Indonesia through an expatriate "friend" in Jakarta. Frozen pangolins were concealed in the middle of a shellfish shipment. Arriving in mainland China via Hong Kong, 80 frozen pangolins with a total weight of 741 kg were sold to a wholesaler for 400,000 yuan (61,800 US\$).

It was an open secret. In restaurants in Guangdong and Guangxi, pangolin could be bought and people flocked to the doors even though they could be fined between 1,000 and 10,000 yuan. Apparently, this was not enough to ruin their appetite.=>



The court of appeals definitively sentenced the 5 members of the gang, including one woman, to prison terms of 3, 5, 6, 12 and 14 years.



The acts were committed before June 5, 2020, when the pangolin was uplisted from category II to category I of protected wildlife species. Similar acts committed after June 2020 will be subject to increased penalties.

Missed October, May 31, 2021.<sup>46</sup>

#### **May 11 to beginning of June 2021**

##### **Xinyu, Xinyu Prefecture and Xiushui Xian, Jiujiang Prefecture, Jiangxi Province and Foshan, Foshan Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

From May to June, the circle of hunters, trappers, sellers and buyers was surrounded by investigators. Eventually 11 suspects were arrested and handcuffed. "The lure of money has spread its black hand in the forest" says in its colorful language the xian Public Security Bureau. Four pangolins, 950 grams of scales, 7 Reeves' muntjacs (*Muntiacus reevesi*) and 500 giant spiny frogs (*Quasipaa spinosa*) were seized.

Jiupai News, November 7, 2021.<sup>47</sup>

#### **May 27, 2021**

##### **Shimen County, Changde Prefecture, Hunan Province, China**

An individual is sentenced to 10 years in prison and fined 100,000 yuans or 15,460 US\$ for organizing the road transport of 27 pangolins from Guangxi to Guangdong and attempting to put them on the market at the end of 2017.

Red Net, June 1st, 2021.<sup>48</sup>



#### **June 5, 2021**

##### **China**

The Health Times reports that the latest edition of the Chinese Pharmacopoeia excludes from the list of medicines pangolin by-products, plants of the genus *Aristolochia* which are said to have side effects on the nervous system, and Huanglian Yanggan pills which contain bat droppings that have no proven therapeutic efficacy. The magazine mentions the comment of an eminent expert in Chinese medicine that pangolins can be replaced by scorpions, millipedes, di long (earthworm preparation), pig's feet to activate blood circulation, to treat rheumatism and promote lactation. This is similar to how in 1993 an official opinion recommended that all medical use of rhinoceros horns and tiger bones be replaced by buffalo horns and leopard bones.

Health Times, September 5, 2021.<sup>49</sup>

#### **June 22, 2021**

##### **Tai Po, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China**



Chen Mouxian claimed to have "found" the pangolin while begging witnesses and neighbors to remain discreet about it. He was sentenced to one year and 3 months in prison and fined 2,000 yuan or 310 US\$.

Guangdong Radio Touch News, October 14, 2021.<sup>50</sup>

#### **June 2021**

##### **Yulin, Yulin Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China**



© Guangxi News

Two arrests were made, and 2.245 kg of scales and 2.093 kg of pangolin claws were seized in 2 apartments. The merchandise came from Viet Nam via a bypass road that was not monitored by customs, near Dongxing.

Chinese Customs, July 4, 2021; Guangxi Daily, July 5, 2021; China Daily (avec Xinhua), July 7, 2021.<sup>51</sup>

#### **Beginning of July 2021**

##### **Xi'an Xianyang International Airport, Shaanxi Province, China**

518 scales weighing 1.4 kg are confiscated from a traveler from Africa.

Chinese Customs, July 12, 2021; Global Times, July 14, 2021.<sup>52</sup>

#### **July 2021**

##### **Xiaodian District, Taiyuan Prefecture, Shanxi Province, China**

In 2020, a clinic that specialized in Chinese medicine sold pangolin scales without having obtained the approval of authorities. At the clinic, 24 scales were seized, each worth 3 US\$. In a new mediation procedure reserved for minor cases, the manager of the establishment acknowledged the lawfulness of the seizure and commits himself to respect the wildlife law and to promote it within his professional circle.

Taiyuan Xiaodian People's Procuratorate, July 16, 2021.<sup>53</sup>



**August 1, 2021**

**Hanzhong, Hanzhong Prefecture, Shaanxi Province, China**

One arrest and the seizure of 100kg of pangolin scales were made in central China.

Guangming Daily, August 12, 2021.<sup>54</sup>

**August 3 and October, 2021**

**Meizhou, Meizhou Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

A man was sentenced 3.5 years in prison, a fine of 20,000 yuan (3,090 US\$), and damages of 104,600 yuan (16,178 US\$) for smuggling 3,270 grams of white-bellied pangolin scales and Sunda pangolin. Trying to justify his actions, the man claimed to be a victim of aortic sclerosis, gallbladder stones, and other diseases that pangolin scales are supposed to cure.

Nanfang Daily Newspaper, August 5, 2021; Guangzhou Daily, October 31, 2021.<sup>55</sup>



## SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

### INDONESIA

**June 2, 2021**

**Pekanbaru City, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

Seizure of 3.4 kg of Sunda pangolin scales from 2 men on a motorcycle.

GoRiau, June 8, 2021.<sup>56</sup>

**June 21, 2021**

**Batu Gajah, Indragiri Hulu Regency, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

Seizure of 15 kg of pangolin scales. I.R (45 years old) and E.R (31 years old) planned to sell them for 2 million rupiah/kg or 140 US\$/kg.

Harian Singgalang, July 19, 2021.<sup>57</sup>

**August 6, 2021**

**Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia**

Azis Susilo was sentenced to one year in prison and fined 5 million rupiah (350 US\$) for possessing and attempting to sell 284.3 grams of pangolin scales for 2 million rupiah (140 US\$ or 490 US\$/kg). Susilo claims to have picked up the dead pangolin on the side of a road in August 2020 and stripped his scales off at his home.

Borneo News, October 25, 2021.<sup>58</sup>



## MALAYSIA

**Mid-June 2021**

**Similajau National Park, State of Sarawak, Malaysia**

A young woman rescued a pangolin who was promised to die. She bought him from a trafficker and then gave him to the Sarawak Forestry Corporation, which, after a sanitary examination, released him into the national park. The administration was touched by the kind gesture of the Sunda pangolin defender, but it also reminds the public that the best method to help in fauna rescuing would be to call the alert numbers 019-8859996 (district of Kuching) / 019-8883561 (district of Sibul) / 019-8332737 (district of Bintulu) / 019-8290994 (district of Miri) when witnessing wildlife trafficking.

The Borneo Post, June 16, 2021.<sup>59</sup>

## VIET NAM

**June 2, 2021**

**Hung Yen Province, Viet Nam**

The Court of First Instance no longer laughs at pangolin scale traffickers. "On the Trail" n°30 p.16 reported an 11-year prison sentence for a trafficker caught in the act of transporting 116 pangolins. One year later, Nguyen Van Long was sentenced to 5 years and 3 months in prison for having stored 225 kg of giant pangolin scales and 555 kg of white-bellied pangolin scales dispersed in 32 bags at his brother's house.

Moi trong va do thi, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021; Voice of Vietnam, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021; The Star, June 4, 2021.<sup>60</sup>



**June 26, 2021**

**U Minh Thuong National Park, Kien Giang Province, Viet Nam**

After a fun meal in May, Danh Tuan and Truong Van Muoi left at night with a knife, 2 dogs, 5 bags, headlamps, and the desire to capture pangolins. The dogs soon howled at the foot of a tree where 3 Sunda pangolins were hiding. They put them in 2 bags and soon after were captured by forest rangers, alerted by the racket of the dogs and the drunkards. They were sentenced to 3.5 and 4 years in prison, respectively.

Thanh Niên, June 26, 2021; ENV, June 28, et October 21, 2021.<sup>61</sup>





**June 26, 2021**  
**Ha Long, Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam**



Doan Minh Vuong was carrying a male Sunda pangolin with superficial wounds on his motorcycle. SVW, June 28, 2021; Phap Luat Plus, June 29, 2021.<sup>62</sup>

**End of June 2021**  
**Viet Nam**



A pangolin only 3 days old and weighing barely 100 grams is entrusted to the rescue center of Cat Tien National Park by someone who just bought him from a restaurant owner. ENV, June 30, 2021.<sup>63</sup>

**July 6, 2021**  
**Hanoi, Viet Nam**

Seizure of a pangolin inside a beer pub. Nguyen Van Chuan admits that he was about to be sold. Bao Hanoimoi, July 13, 2021.<sup>64</sup>

**Mid July and November 30, 2021**  
**Quoc Toan, Cao Bang Province, Viet Nam. Border with China.**

The bus came from Dak Lak in the south and was heading to Cao Bang in the north, 1,600 km or 30 to 40 hours away. Shortly before arriving at his destination, Hoang Van Dan was stopped. The police found 2 pangolins in his luggage. In Dak Lak, he bought them for 18 million dong (780 US\$) and wanted to sell them in Cao Bang for profit to a Chinese man. He was sentenced to one year in prison.

Bao Tin tuc - TTXVN, July 19, 2021; ENV, July 24, et December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>65</sup>



**July 19, 2021**  
**Hanoi, Viet Nam**

"On the Trail" n°32 p.15 reported the seizure of 3 live and 14 frozen Sunda pangolins found in a restaurant in January 2021. The owner, chef, and supplier of the pangolins were sentenced to 11 years, 5.5 years and 3 years in prison, respectively. ENV, July 19, 2021.<sup>66</sup>



**August 1, 2021**  
**Dien Lam, Nghe An Province, Viet Nam**

A searching operation in a restaurant led to the rescue of 4 live pangolins who were found near the cutting board.

Xa Luan, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021; ENV, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>67</sup>

## SOUTHERN ASIA

### BANGLADESH

**May 12, 2021**  
**Punji, Moulvibazar District, Sylhet Division, Bangladesh**

In Bangladesh, pangolins are called "banruis" as an analogy to a scaly fish known as "rui". A banrui (an Indian pangolin) was seized at the home of Jewel Dafo, thanks to a joint operation by forestry services and the local NGO "Stand for Our Indigenous Wildlife".

The Indian pangolin was released into Lawachara National Park.

The Business Standard, May 13, 2021; The Daily Star, May 21, 2021.<sup>68</sup>



**July 7, 2021**  
**Dhaka, Dhaka District, Dhaka Division, Bangladesh**

Kamrul Islam and Md Selim were sentenced to 6 months in prison each for trafficking wild animals, including at least one pangolin.

The Daily Star, July 8, 2021.<sup>69</sup>



### INDIA

**May 6, 2021**  
**Navghar, Raigad District, State of Maharashtra, India**

"We had been on the trail of the accused for 3 days." The main suspect was arrested with 2 pangolins, a female and her young, in his hands. He is in custody with 3 accomplices.

Hindustan Times, May 7, 2021.<sup>70</sup>



**May 6, 2021**

**Gohirapal, Mayurbhanj District, State of Odisha, India**

The pangolin weighed 8 kg. He was in captivity in the home of Singu Baske who, before being held into custody, tested positive for Covid-19. On the basis of cases of lions infected with the virus, it was decided to test the pangolin. He tested positive. He was quarantined before being released into the forest.

Ommcom News, May 7, 2021; Odisha TV, May 11, 2021; Deccan Herald, May 12, 2021; Times Now, May 12, 2021.<sup>71</sup>

**May 27, 2021**

**Gajoldoba, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India**

1.6 kg of scales. One live pangolin. Three people in custody. Additional seizure of a motorbike.

Asian News International, May 28, 2021; New Delhi Television, May 28, 2021; The Telegraph India, May 29, 2021.<sup>72</sup>

## **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**May 29, 2021**

**Temri, Mahasamund District, State of Chhattisgarh, India**

Sidar, 39, and Sidar, 35, were trying to sell a 1.06-metre-long live pangolin weighing 11 kg. India Today recalls that the organs and the scales of the mammal are mistakenly considered as cures for many diseases.

India Today, May 30, 2021.<sup>73</sup>

**June 8, 2021**

**State of Madhya Pradesh, India**

Mr Irfan and Mr Raza are behind bars. They had been wanted since August 2019 when the large car in which they were passengers was intercepted and the search by the Tiger Strike Force uncovered 8.5 kg of scales. They had fled. At the time of their arrest, they are carrying videos and other documents on pangolin trafficking.

The Tribune, June 9, 2021.<sup>74</sup>

**June 11, 2021**

**Balichua, Mayurbhanj District, State of Odisha, India**

The State STF (Special Task Force) provided with a confidential information intervened at the village exit and nabbed Suren Purty, son of late Dubala Purty, who was carrying nearly 5 kg of scales (4.82 kg). In the year 2020, the Odisha STF seized 3 live pangolins, 10 kg of scales, 14 leopard skins, 2 deer skins, 9 elephant tusks.

Orissa Post, June 11, 2021.<sup>75</sup>

**June 16, 2021**

**Nagpur, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra; Madhya Pradesh State, India**

The federal headquarters of the WCCB Wildlife Crime Control Bureau) coordinated the dismantling of a trafficking ring: in Nagpur, 3 individuals coming from Madhya Pradesh, holding a live pangolin, were first arrested by the Forest Department. Searches of their homes by police from the neighboring state led to the acquisition of scales and arrests of 2 accomplices.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India) June 22 2021 ; WCCB.<sup>76</sup>

**Night of August 7 to 8, 2021**

**Ghaziabad District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Night arrest of a trafficker by the WCCB, Forest Department, and police officers. They acquired only about 20 scales, weighing just 265 grams. A pangolin was dipped somewhere in boiled water.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), August 9, 2021.<sup>77</sup>



**June 21, 2021**

**Jhirlari, Hamirpur District, State of Himachal Pradesh, India**

On the road from Bhota to Una, the taxi was stopped by the police. They were not there by chance. They had been informed that the taxi driver was part of a gang selling wildlife on the Internet. 4.424 kg of scales were seized.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), June 22, 2021; Hindustan Times, June 23, 2021.<sup>78</sup>

**June 24, 2021**

**Golleti, Adilabad District, State of Telangana, India**

Seizure of 200 scales, a knife, a fake gun and 3 arrests. Three accomplices fled. Typical example of a routine poaching act followed by an Internet sale. The Times of India, June 25 and 26, 2021.<sup>79</sup>

**July 6, 2021**

**Boir, Mahasamund District, State of Chhattisgarh, India**

The sports car was heading towards Raipur, the capital of Chhattisgarh, at dusk. Four men were on board, Khoman Diwan, Omprakash Thawait, Dageshwar Sahu and Ramesh Mishra. The live pangolin was hidden under a seat. The car and 4 phones were also seized.

Outlook India, July 8, 2021.<sup>80</sup>



**July 11, 2021**

**Kolkata, Kolkata District, State of West Bengal, India**

Immobilisation of a bus on Bentinck Street. Seizure of 3.11 kg of scales. Arrest of Satish Kumar Chauhan, 37 years old, and Basant Kumar Sahoo, 35 years old. Hindustan Times, July 11, 2021; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 13, 2021.<sup>81</sup>

#### **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**July 16, 2021**

**Manegaon, Jabalpur District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India**

A live pangolin was pulled out of the hands of Rajjan Daheria, 44 years old, Jagdish Daheria, 28 years old, and Ramswaroop Daheria, 36 years old. The 3 men were arrested by 8 police officers who were urgently mobilized after a credible tip-off. The Hitavada, July 17, 2021.<sup>82</sup>

**July 20, 2021**

**Around Ranidanga, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India**



2.120 kg. Three arrests. Joint operation by the WCCB and the 41<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the SSB (Sashastra Seema Bal).

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 20, 2021; Sashastra Seema Bal, July 20, 2021.<sup>83</sup>

**July 24, 2021**

**Damodarnali, Dhenkanal District, State of Odisha, India**



15.2 kg. Two arrests. Joint operation by the WCCB and state forest officers.

Hindustan Times, July 26, 2021; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 26, 2021.<sup>84</sup>

**August 2, 2021**

**Natapada, Balasore District, State of Odisha, India**



3 kg. Arrest of Manibhadra Samal and Choudhury Singh.

Prameya News, August 2, 2021.<sup>85</sup>

**August 3, 2021**

**Lumding, Hojai District, State of Assam, India**



5.8 kg of Chinese pangolin scales. One arrest. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), August 4, 2021; The Shillong Times, August 4, 2021.<sup>86</sup>

#### **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**August 6, 2021**

**Bhubaneswar, Khordha District, State of Odisha, India**

"The STF sleuths masqueraded as clients to apprehend the wildlife criminals", says the official press release. The trap resulted in the rescue of a live pangolin and the arrest of Chitrasen Sahoo, Khageswar Sahoo and Bhagirathi Behera. The Statesman, August 6, 2021.<sup>87</sup>



**August 24, 26 and 29, 2021**

**Hiwra, Ramjan Ghoti, Fulzari, Lakhapur, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Seizure of 21 kg of scales of Indian pangolin, 3 eggs and feathers of Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Vilas Yashwant Jagjivan, Ra Krishna alias Rameshwar Harichand Khandate, Prashant Chachere, Dilip Admane, Ratan Madaye and Sandip Khandate were remanded in Nagpur central jail. A 7<sup>th</sup> man is absconding.

Nagpur Today, August 26, 2021; The Times of India, August 26, 2021; The Live Nagpur, August 30, 2021.<sup>88</sup>

## PAKISTAN

**End of June 2021**

**Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan**

Employees at a petrol station hid a live pangolin in a shed. According to them, pangolin is a dirty beast who digs graves and feeds on corpses. Our beloved little mammal was cleared of all accusations of being an undertaker by Urdu Point, which pointed out that a pangolin consumes 70 million insects per year. He was released in the Baja Wildlife Park.

From 2011 to 2019, 1,800 pangolin poachings were recorded in Potohar Plateau, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, not counting the captures and killings that were not reported to police and forest officials. Pangolins in Pakistan, see "On the Trail" n°3 p.32, n°4 p.42 et p.44, n°6 p.39, n°23 p.159, n°30 p.15 et n°31 p.14

Dawn, May 6, 2021; UrduPoint, June 29, 2021.<sup>89</sup>

# PANGOLINS, FELINES / ELEPHANTS

## AFRICA

### CAMEROON

**May 6, 2021**

**Douala, Littoral Region, Cameroon**

Bertrand Akanze Akonglo, Alphonse Raoul Tegoum, Kamta Francis Bougnia and Francis Romuald Tchamtcheu were arrested on March 14, 2019 in possession of 1,500 kg of pangolin scales and 156 kg of tusks (see "On the Trail" n°24 p.50). On June 3, 2019, Tegoum, Bougnia and Tchamtcheu were found not guilty. Akonglo was sentenced to 6 months in prison, a fine of 945,000 CFA francs (1,600 US\$) and damages of 15 million CFA francs (25,600 US\$). On appeal, the damages increased significantly to 163 million CFA francs, or 301,400 US\$.

LAGA, June 2019 and May 2021.<sup>1</sup>



**July 22, 2021**

**Yaoundé, Centre Region, Cameroon**

Inside 3 stores in the Briqueterie district, 331.55 kg of scales, corresponding to the poaching of approximately 1,600 pangolins and 3 leopard skins (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) were seized. A 24-year-old man was arrested on the scene. Under the guise of trading in cosmetics and shoes, he was the key link in a transnational network. The pangolins are said to be trapped in Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea, and the scales smuggled to Nigeria, from where they were flown or transported by sea to Asia. The operation was planned by the Nlongkak police, forestry and wildlife services' agents, with the assistance of the NGO LAGA.



EAGLE, July 22, 2021; Voice of America, 22 July, 2021; Camer.be, 28 July, 2021; LAGA, July 2021.<sup>2</sup>

## KENYA

**August 11, 2021**

**Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro Park, Kenya**

Big Life Foundation reports that during April, May and June 2021, it arrested 113 suspected poachers, seized 45.5 kg of raw ivory, one live pangolin, 6 lion teeth and 12 lion claws, 869 kg of bushmeat, 4 tonnes and 118 kg of sandalwood and destroyed 55 snares.

Big Life Foundation, August 11, 2021.<sup>3</sup>





## MOZAMBIQUE

**May 3, 2021**

### **Chitima and Tete, Tete Province, Mozambique**

11 tusks, a pangolin skeleton, a leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and lion fangs (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II) were seized. 5 people were arrested. The suspects claim to have bought the trophies from poachers in the Cahora-Bassa and Mágoè (Tete Province) districts.

Club of Mozambique, May 4, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

## NAMIBIA

**June 6, 2021**

### **Kangumbe, Kavango East Region, Namibia**

Two arrests. Seizure of 2 elephant tusks and a live pangolin.

Namibia Economist, June 9, 2021; New Era, June 10, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

## NIGERIA

**July 28, 2021**

### **Lekki, Lagos State, Nigeria**

The post-Covid destocking continues. After the seizure of more than 5 tonnes of pangolin scales and more than 4 tonnes of ivory on January 21, 2021 in the port of Apapa (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.19), Nigerian customs have this time, following information from the Wildlife Justice Commission (WJC), got their hands on 196 bags containing more than 7 tonnes of pangolin scales, one bag containing 4.6 kg of pangolin claws and 29 bags containing more than 845 kg of elephant tusks.

It should be noted that sources, including official ones, differ greatly on the weights. Some say 17 tonnes of scales, 60 kg of pangolin claws and 44 kg of ivory, and estimate that the whole lot is worth more than 22 billion naira or 54 million US\$.

Troare Dja-konba, Isiaka Musa and Mohammed Berete are arrested. Muyribein Bereye and Sediki Berete are on the run. Apart from



Isiaka Musa, a Nigerian citizen, they are all Guineans. On August 26, the 3 men plead not guilty in the Lagos High Court but are not released on bail. Channels Television, August 4 and September 1, 2021; Nigeria Customs Service, August 4, 2021; Nigerian Tribune, August 4 and 18, 2021; Wildlife Justice Commission, August 4, 2021; Politicos, August 5, 2021; The Nation, August 5, 2021; TVC News Nigeria, August 5, 2021; The Punch, August 27, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

## REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**June 23 and 24, 2021**

### **Brazzaville, Department of Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo**

2 individuals are arrested, including a soldier from the regular forces. 2 tusks, cut into 4 sections, of a mother targeted by 5 bullets are seized; so too are a baby elephant tusk, targeted by 3 bullets, and 5 kg of giant pangolin scales. The scales and ivory came from the Pool department 150 km from Brazzaville. EAGLE, June 24, 2021; Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune Sauvage (PALF), June 2021; Panoramik-actu, July 2, 2021; First Médiac, July 3, October 14 and November 13, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## ASIA

## CHINA

**May 6 and June 10, 2021**

### **Guandu District, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**



"Zhu", the seller, is sentenced to 8 months in prison of which one year is suspended and a fine of 10,000 yuan (15,700 US\$). "Zhu" and "Wang" (the buyer) must jointly pay 42,250 yuan, or 6,470 US\$, in ecological damages and publicly apologize in the provincial news media. "Zhu" had sold to "Wang" worked ivories weighing 148.49 grams and worth 6,353 yuan (980 US\$), as well as 2 pangolin scales weighing 15 grams and worth 310 yuan (42.5 US\$), and "Wang" was about to sell them at profit. Metropolis Times, May 9, 2021; People's Information Network, June 10, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**May 2021**

### **Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure in the luggage of passengers of an ivory bracelet and pangolin scales hidden in 2 packs of Marlboro cigarettes. Chinese Customs, May 31, 2021.<sup>9</sup>



## INDONESIA

**August 13 and December 7, 2021**

### **Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

Skins and skin and bone fragments of 3 tigers caught in traps, 9 kg of pangolin scales, a machete and a motorcycle are seized. A.S. was sentenced to 2 years and 10 months in prison and a fine of 100 million rupiah (6,700 US\$), with an additional month in prison for non-payment. Mongabay, September 24 and 27, 2021; Kabar Medan, December 13, 2021.<sup>10</sup>





# ELEPHANTS



African savannah elephant (*Loxodonta africana*). Photo Flowcomm

The African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) is listed in CITES Appendix I, the African savannah elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) is listed in 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°33 Black market raw ivory quotation from media or official sources The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

### Value of 1kg of raw ivory

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Burkina Faso	1,178	2 (2021)
	Kenya	1,215	20 (2021)
		924	40 (2021)
		948	46 (2021)
	Zimbabwe	170	71 (2021)
		182	75 (2021)
		211	82 (2021)
	Botswana	148	94 (2021)
	Democratic Republic of the Congo	600	4* (2020)

\* See chapter Multi-species



## WESTERN AFRICA

### BENIN

**May 18, 2021**

**Natitingou, Atacora Department, Benin**

Sentencing of an elephant ivory trafficker to 48 months in prison. He is also fined 300,000 CFA francs (555 US\$) and must pay 3 million CFA francs (5,547 US\$) in damages.

Matin Libre, May 20, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



### BURKINA FASO

**May 11, 2021**

**Ouagadougou, Kadiogo Province, Burkina Faso**

Arrest of elephant ivory traffickers during an ambush at around 5:00 p.m. after the mobile customs brigade received information that morning. Seizure of 14 tusks weighing a total of 28 kg, which are estimated to be worth 17,550,000 CFA francs (33,000 US\$). Seven African elephants were killed for this bounty. Customs services encourages anyone with knowledge of fraud or illicit trafficking to come forward.

Infokawat, May 18, 2021; Faso7, May 18, 2021; Born Free USA, June 4, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

### COTE D'IVOIRE

**July 2, 2021**

**Côte d'Ivoire**

Sentencing of Mohammed Kalil Touré to 8 months in prison and a fine of 300,000 CFA francs (555 US\$) for trafficking ivory. He was arrested in October 2020 with 3 carved ivory statues and 9 bracelets (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.17). EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire, July 2021.<sup>3</sup>



**July 27 and August 6, 2021**

**Abidjan, Abidjan Autonomous District, Côte d'Ivoire**

Arrest of 3 traffickers possessing 2 elephant tusks weighing 23 kg in total. They were apprehended in their car which was parked in a wealthy neighborhood where they awaited a transaction. The tusks were concealed inside a bag and hidden in the trunk of the car. One trafficker attempted to erase incriminating photos on his mobile phone but was stopped by law enforcement. At least one of the men is suspected of being connected to gold trafficking.

Sentencing of Kossi Francis Koffi and Assouman Outtara to 3 months in prison and fines of 200,000 CFA francs (360 US\$) each for the attempted ivory sale. Kilé Noël Aka was found not guilty and was released.

EAGLE, July 30, 2021; EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire, July and August, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



## NIGERIA

**Beginning of May 2021**

**Omo Forest Reserve, Ogun State, Nigeria**



A poacher killed an adult elephant in the reserve 160 km northeast of Lagos. The veterinarian notes that the wounds were caused by a Dane gun and bullets from this type of rifle imported by Danish and Norwegian traders in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to West Africa were indeed found at the scene. The elephant had no tusks and the motive for the poaching is unclear. Perhaps it was to butcher him and market the meat and other high-value parts.

Naija News, May 3, 2021; The Nation, May 4, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

### TOGO

**May 28 and November 10, 2021**

**Kara, Kara Region, Togo**

Arrest of 3 traffickers for the possession, circulation, and illegal trade of 8 elephant tusks plus bits of raw ivory. They belong to a network of traffickers from Togo, Mali, and Niger who smuggle contraband through Burkina Faso and Benin. Mianam Lamboni, a Togolese living in Dapaong, and Maïga Ibrahim, a Malian trader living in Benin, were caught during an attempted sale of the ivory, which was concealed inside a package and a grain bag on the back of a motorbike. After the seizure, their hotel was searched and authorities found Abiboulaye Nourou, a Nigerian based in Kéto. All 3 men admitted to their crimes and were transferred to the city's civil prison 3 days after their arrest.

Sentencing of Lamboni to 18 months in prison, suspended for 12 months, and a fine of one million CFA francs (1,700 US\$). Ibrahim and Nourou were both sentenced to 16 months in prison, suspended for 10 months, and were each fined one million CFA francs (1,700 US\$). Jointly, the 3 traffickers were ordered to pay 15 million CFA francs in damages, which is equivalent to 25,800 US\$.

EAGLE, May 29, 2021; EAGLE Togo, May 2021; Wakat Séra, June 1, 2021; Vert Togo, December 7, 2021.<sup>6</sup>





## CENTRAL AFRICA

### ANGOLA

**May 10, 2021**

**Bicuar National Park, Huila Province, Angola**

Arrest of 7 alleged poachers and seizure of 7 firearms by Angolan police. According to an official, they intended to kill elephants and sell their ivory. One poacher is a tax inspector and another admitted to killing an elephant and selling the ivory to a Namibian citizen for the equivalent of 354 US\$.  
Televisão Independente, May 10, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

**May 22-23, 2021**

**Chibemba, Huila Province, Angola**

Arrest of a Vietnamese national at the Police post in possession of 6 pieces of elephant ivory weighing 20 kg. He was attempting to cross the border between Cunene Province, where he works, into Huila Province. He had paid a 47-year-old Angolan 50,000 kwanzas (77 US\$) to help him to transport the ivory in a Toyota Hilux pick-up truck. The final destination is supposed to be Namibia.  
Agência Angola Press May 24, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

### GABON

**May 4 and July, 2021**

**Oyem, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon**

Arrest of Mr. Joseph Mba Ella in possession of 5 elephant tusks cut into 14 pieces. After receiving information about an illegal ivory deal, the NGO Conservation Justice collaborated with authorities to set up a sting operation. He was sentenced to 12 months of imprisonment, 8 of which are suspended, and was ordered to pay a fine of 782,500 FCFA (1,420 US\$) plus damages of one million FCFA (1,810 US\$).  
7Jours Info, May 6, 2021; EAGLE, May 7 and July, 2021; Conservation Justice, May and July, 2021.<sup>9</sup>



**May 14, 2021**

**Bifoun, Moyen-Ogooué Province, Gabon**

Arrest of a 54-year-old Gabonese woman for the possession and sale of ivory tips 160 km southeast of Libreville. Her loot included 4 ivory tusks, 2 of which were sawn off, weighing in total 45 kg. She was detained and faces up to 10 years in prison.  
Gabonreview, May 16, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

**May 28, 2021**

**Makabana, Nyanga Province, Gabon**

Arrest of 2 poachers in possession of 6 ivory tips. They were about to go to Libreville, which is 360 km away. The police were informed of their unusual presence by local residents, which led to an investigation and their arrest. They were apprehended with a travel bag concealing elephant organs and the stolen ivory.  
Yeclo.ci, May 28, 2021; China Internet Information Center, May 28, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**June 10 and July, 2021**

**Kango, Estuaire Province, Gabon**

Arrest of Eloge Muoko and Floriant Kombe at 11:00 a.m. in possession of 2 elephant tusks plus another piece of raw ivory weighing in total 8.4 kg. One of the traffickers, a logging company employee, travelled 100 km from Ndjolé to Kango with the ivory.

A court found Mr. Muoko guilty of possession of ivory tips and attempted commercialization, and Mr. Kombe was also found guilty of attempted commercialization. Both were sentenced to 2 years in prison, one year of which is suspended, and to pay a fine of 3,700,000 CFA (6,700 US\$) plus 2 million CFA (3,625 US\$) in damages.

EAGLE, June 10 and July, 2021; 7Jours Info, Jun 11, 2021; Conservation Justice, June and July, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**July 26, 2021**

**Mounana, Haut-Ogooué Province, Gabon**

Arrest of 2 poachers possessing 6 ivory tips by Water and Forestry agents who were alerted by locals of suspicious activity. The duo was about to leave for Libreville, which is 450 km away. Inside a travel bag they were concealing the tusks and some elephant organs.

China Internet Information Center, July 26, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**May 18, 2021**

**Kinshasa-N'djili International Airport, Kinshasa Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**



Arrest of a Chinese national, Mr. Huang, in possession of 0.5 kg of carved ivories hidden in 2 milk cans.

Actu Cameroun, May 18, 2021; Mediacongo.net, June 1, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



**June 6, 2021**

**Oyo, Department of Cuvette, Republic of the Congo**



Bonheur Mafimba, a military officer, was arrested alongside an accomplice on June 21, 2020, in possession of 2 tusks weighing 20 kg in total (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.23). He was sentenced on August 8, 2020 to 2 years in prison, a fine of 500,000 CFA francs (900 US\$), and damages of 500,000 CFA francs.

However, Mafimba's family and colleagues, and even the president, worked hard to get him out. In May 2021, his family asked that he be released on medical grounds. A health check-up requested by the NGO Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune Sauvage (Project for the Application of Law for Fauna, PALF) did not reveal any health problems requiring treatment outside of prison. Then, a high-ranking gendarmerie officer intervened and threatened the PALF counsel with death. Mafimba was released on June 6 by a presidential pardon.

Vox Congo, August 8, 2020; Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune Sauvage (PALF), May 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**June 11, 2021**

**Sibiti, Department of Lékoumou, Republic of the Congo**



Sentencing of Willy Saya and Idriss Ngoulou Saya to 3 years in prison by the High Court. Willy was found guilty of illegal possession and circulation of elephant trophies, and Idriss was found guilty of complicity in these offenses. Additionally, they were each fined 300,000 CFA francs (555 US\$) plus 2 million CFA francs (3,702 US\$) in damages.

Groupe Congo Médias, April 20, 2021; First Médiac, June 16, 2021; Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF) June 2021.<sup>16</sup>

**August 7, 2021**

**Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park, Departments of Likouala and Sangha, Republic of the Congo. Border with Cameroon.**

The government, the NGO Wildlife Conservation Society, and the logging company Congolaise Industrielle des Bois (CIB), a subsidiary of the Singaporean Olam company, renewed their ongoing agreement to strengthen wildlife protections around the Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park. Under the accord, eco-guards will receive additional training. Another agreement was also signed to establish an anti-poaching unit in the Mimbéli-Ibenga forest area where the CIB operates. The first such tripartite agreement was signed in 1999 and marked the creation of a buffer zone around the park.

A total of 66 poaching-related arrests have been made over the last 6 months through patrols in surrounding areas, including joint patrols with Lobéké national park guards in Cameroon.

Olam, see "On the Trail" n°16 p.81.

Agence d'information d'Afrique centrale, August 17, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

**KENYA**

**May 5, 2021**

**Oi Donyiro, Laikipia County, Kenya**

An elephant was shot in the left hind leg and a bone was partially fractured at the joint of the femur and tibia. He was anesthetized from helicopter and treated with flunixin, dexamethasone and phenylbutazone. The prognosis was guarded.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, May 2021.<sup>18</sup>

**May 10, 2021**

**Shimba Hills National Reserve, Kwale County, Kenya**



The main danger is that the elephant could die of heatstroke. He was given plenty of water during the procedure under anesthesia, and the trap wires that got stuck in his left hind leg were cut with a wire-cutter. They realized the wound was infected, so the elephant was put to sleep with 12 mg of etorphine and later awakened with 12 mg of diprenorphine and 40 mg of naltrexone. The prognosis is favorable.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, May 2021.<sup>19</sup>

**May 16, 2021**

**Maralal, Samburu County, Kenya**



Four tusks are cut into sections to facilitate their transport and concealment. The police and KWS intercept the tusks on Barsaloi-Maralal road. They are worth an estimated 15,800 US\$ or 1,215 US\$/kg. 3 arrests were made.

The Citizen, May 17, 2021; Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, May 18, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

**May 20, 2021**

**Kerugoya, Kirinyaga County, Kenya**

Ronald Reagan, Joseph Kungu, Stephen Mucheru, and Peter Muchiri were in possession of 95 kg of raw ivory when they were arrested on September 4, 2020 (see "On the Trail" n°30 p.24).

Pending trial, they were released on bail of one million Kenyan shillings each (9,284 US\$) and bonds of the same amount.

Kenya News Agency, May 20, 2021.<sup>21</sup>



**May 22, 2021**

**Mount Kenya National Park, Kenya**

An adult elephant was found dead near Mount Kenya. After a body examination, the cause of death was attributed to a gunshot.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, May 2021.<sup>22</sup>

**May 23, 2021**

**Pardamat Conservancy, Masai Mara National Park, Narok County, Kenya**



A spear was stuck in the elephant's back, piercing 1.5 meters deep. The spear went through his muscles and affected his digestive organs. There was a clear risk of peritonitis. The elephant was ambushed. One man stationed himself in a tree to try to remove the spear, and another was in the thicket for the arrow. The top and bottom of the animal were targeted but he managed to escape the attack and was not found by the assailants after his ivory, meat, or body. The spear was finally removed with all the care and expertise of the health care team. Antibiotics and anti-inflammatories were injected and the elephant has successfully stoop up. The prognosis is guarded.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, May 2021.<sup>23</sup>

**May 27, 2021**

**Tsavo East National Park, Kenya**

Very favorable prognosis. An elephant's tusks got entangled in the wires of a trap, but officials removed the wires by hand.

The beautiful male elephant got up 5 minutes after receiving an antidote and headed to a pond for a mud bath.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, May 2021.<sup>24</sup>



**June 2, 2021**

**Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya**

The prognosis is favorable. The elephant was anaesthetized in a rocky and brushy terrain after his left front leg was wounded by an arrow. Thanks to disinfection and antibiotics, the wound was smeared with green clay.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>25</sup>

**June 8, 2021**

**Selenkay Conservancy, Kajiado County, Kenya**

The prognosis is favorable. The elephant was speared in the left front leg, just above the foot.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**June 10, 2021**

**Loisaba Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya**

Once again, the prognosis is guarded. The juvenile elephant was limping and in pain after she was shot in the left front leg. Her wound was narrow and deep. During the operation she was constantly sprayed. It was very hot, so the veterinarians paid attention to maintaining her natural thermoregulation.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**June 10, 2021**

**Kalacha, Marsabit County, Kenya**

On April 26, 2 elephants were poached. They had left the Marsabit forest through Hurri Hills. Police recovered weapons and ammunition from Rage, a nearby village, including an Ak-47, a rifle and 2 magazines believed to have been used in the poaching. A ballistics analysis is underway.



Police continue to search for the suspects who reportedly fled to Ethiopia. According to a KWS spokesperson, the poachers killed the elephants to take the tails and ears which are presented by young men to their fiancées to symbolize strength and virility. In some pastoral communities, such trophies confer heroic stature on their holders and ritual celebrations are held in their honor. Lion skins, ostrich feathers, and leopard skins are also used in boys' rites of passage to enter adulthood. Kenya News Agency, June 10, 2021; Nation, June 11, 2021.<sup>28</sup>



**June 14, 2021**

**Chyulu Hills National Park, Kajiado and Makueni Counties, Kenya**

The elephant had a favorable prognosis. Pictures show the post-anesthesia treatment of a wound caused by a spear throw that barely missed the elephant's spinal cord.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>29</sup>

**June 16, 2021**

**Mara North Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**

A large elephant was shot with 2 arrows on the right flank and near the knee of the left hind leg. To access the wound, it was necessary to put him under anesthesia with the help of ropes and 2 4x4 cars. The arrowheads were retrieved and were barbed but not poisoned.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>30</sup>



**June 17, 2021**

**Kimana Sanctuary, Kajiado County, Kenya**

Spear wound in the right hind leg. The elephant had a favorable prognosis.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>31</sup>

**June 20, 2021**

**Tsavo East National Park, Kenya**



A spear or another similar weapon caused a wound above the foot of the right hind leg. Dr. Poghon's prognosis was favorable.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>32</sup>

**June 23, 2021**

**Laikipia Nature Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya**

Scouts spotted a limping elephant and suspected a gunshot wound. The vet team anaesthetized and treated him in order to reduce pain and inflammation. Prognosis was favorable.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>33</sup>

**June 25, 2021**

**Kitirua Sanctuary, Kajiado County, Kenya**

This is another case of a spear thrown from a high point. It was deeply embedded on the elephant's back. After extracting it and seeing the type of spear, it appeared that the elephant was probably attacked in nearby Tanzania. The prognosis was relatively favorable.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>34</sup>

**June 28, 2021**

**Chyulu Hills National Park, Kajiado and Makueni Counties, Kenya**

One more case of a favorable prognosis. The elephant was hit by a spear below his knee on his right front leg.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>35</sup>

**June 29, 2021**

**Teita Sisal Conservancy, Taita Taveta County, Kenya**

The elephant was injured near a watering hole. He was found motionless and with wounds on his left flank from weapons thrown at him. The medical team rushed on the site and put him to sleep. They administered anti-inflammatories and antibiotics before covering the wound with green clay. The prognosis was favorable.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>36</sup>



**July 8, 2021**

**Kulalu Game/Wildlife Ranch, Galana Conservancy, Kenya**

An elephant already weakened by a previous injury struggled for several hours to free himself from a trap. Often animals in similar circumstances die of thirst, hunger, or pain after several days of struggling to escape.

After treatment and antidote were provided, the elephant did not recover. Throughout the night, the team gave him water and food. In the morning, the elephant was still lying down and the caregivers decided to put him out.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>37</sup>





**July 10, 2021**

**Ithumba, Tsavo East National Park, Kenya**

The elephant was wounded by a spear. Oxytetracycline was injected into the wound, then Opticlox ointment was applied before the wound was packed with green clay for its healing properties. Prognosis was favorable. SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>38</sup>

**July 11, 2021**

**Oi Donyo, Chyulu Hills National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya**

The veterinarian arrived on scene via the Voi Airport and was joined by a field team. They rescued a male elephant with an arrow wound in his upper left leg. Hydrogen peroxide, iodine, ointment, aerosol, antibiotics, and green clay were all applied to the wound. The elephant's prognosis looks favorable. SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>39</sup>

**Mid-July 2021**

**Torosei, Kajiado County, Kenya**

Seizure of 4 tusks with a total weight of 14 kg and an estimated value of 1.4 million Kenyan shillings or 12,941 US\$. Villagers alerted the community leader when they found the tusks hidden in a bush. No arrests have been made to date. Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, July 15, 2021.<sup>40</sup>

**July 19, 2021**

**Ithumba, Tsavo East National Park, Kenya**



This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> poaching in Ithumba in 9 days. The elephant should recuperate just fine. He was hit by an arrow in the left shoulder when he came to drink from a pond. During the operation, he was sprayed with water (it was very hot), and his trunk was held straight to help him breathe. The prognosis was favorable.

He is an orphan as his mother was poached.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>41</sup>

**July 19, 2021**

**Oi Kinyei Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**

To bring him out of hiding in the woods, it was necessary to employ a helicopter. The pain and discomfort made him wary and aggressive. A bullet was deeply embedded just above his foot, cracking some of his bones. Prognosis was guarded. SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>42</sup>

**July 20, 2021**

**Olare Orok Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**

The limping young male was spotted by rangers. He was hit by an arrow on the right shoulder. After his surgery, he joined his herd of several dozen elephants. SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>43</sup>

**July 25, 2021**

**Siana Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**



The young male had a large purulent wound on his left hind leg caused by a spear. Accordingly, he was hiding in a thicket. The prognosis was relatively favorable. The rangers kept monitoring him as a new anti-inflammatory and antibiotic treatment could have been necessary.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>44</sup>

**July 26, 2021**

**Mabera, Migori County, Kenya. Border with Tanzania.**

Seizure of raw ivory (15.8 kg). Two arrests. Mara Elephant Project, August 6, 2021.<sup>45</sup>



**August 1, 2021**

**Kangari, Muranga County, Kenya**

Arrest of Martin Mungai Nginya, 58, Peter Macharia Njuguna, 32, Edward Mwambura Kamau, 55, and Samuel Njuguna Mwirigi, 43. They were in possession of 19 elephant tusks or sections of tusks with a total weight of 100 kg and a value of more than 10 million Kenyan shillings or 94,820 US\$. The ivory was found inside a Toyota Allion and a Toyota Land Cruiser 100 and was hidden in bags filled with cabbage.



K24 Digital, August 1, 2021; Citizen Digital, August 2, 2021.<sup>46</sup>

**August 10, 2021**

**Tsavo East National Park, Kenya**

When found, the body was already in the process of putrefaction, and vermin were beginning to colonize. He died about 4 days ago. The ivory was gone and the head was partly torn off. Part of the abdomen and the mammary glands were eaten by scavengers. The vegetation at the poaching site showed signs of great agitation. It looked like other elephants witnessed the carnage. The carcass was examined by a metal detector and no bullet holes were found. Human-elephant conflicts are common in this area of the park.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, August 2021.<sup>47</sup>

**August 12, 2021**

**Siana Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**

This time, the veterinarians did not have to make a diagnosis. The elephant was already dead. Before the ambush, he was in good condition. 24 hours before the body was found, a spear hit his upper right side, piercing the stomach and part of the intestines. The weapon was thrown from a tree. According to the veterinarians, another wound in the inguinal area was caused by other elephants trying to lift the victim with their tusks. SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, August 2021.<sup>48</sup>

**August 14, 2021**

**Lualenyi Conservancy, Taita Taveta County, Kenya**

Traps are very attractive to looters of the commons. They offer cheap meat and expensive trophies. They cost nothing and can be very profitable. The trap is the poacher's Swiss Army knife. This time a baby elephant got caught in the savannah lottery. A steel wire captured him by the trunk.



It was necessary to anesthetize the mother before intervening on the calf. The 2 got up 5 minutes after the antidote was given and left at their own risk in the savannah as safe as a minefield.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, August 2021.<sup>49</sup>

**August 18, 2021**

**Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya**

Favorable prognosis. The hind leg was entangled in a trap line but the skin was not injured thanks to swift reporting and rapid intervention. The veterinary team was already on the scene to rescue poisoned lionesses.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, August 2021.<sup>50</sup>





**August 19, 2021**  
**Selenkay Conservancy, Kajiado County, Kenya**



It's devastating. Spears killed Ella, 56-years-old, elegant, peaceful. She left behind a one-year old orphan. Several of her descendants will preserve the species and face increasing conflicts with humans.

Amboseli Trust for Elephants, August 19, 2021; ElephantVoices, August 19, 2021.<sup>51</sup>

**August 20, 2021**  
**Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya**

The veterinary team was once again on the scene to rescue poisoned lionesses. The injured elephant was in the park as well. He was injured in the left hind leg by a spear. After receiving treatment under anesthesia, he walked away "majestically". The prognosis was favorable.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, August 2021.<sup>52</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

August 23, 2021  
 Mombasa County, Kenya

In 2019, Ibrahim Samson Ali was caught at Daba Hotel in possession of raw ivory with a total weight of 6.5 kg and worth 650,000 Kenyan shillings. He was fined 13 million Kenyan shillings (120,666 US\$). He had already been imprisoned in Uganda for a similar offense.

The Star, August 23, 2021; Nation, August 24, 2021.<sup>53</sup>



**August 24, 2021**  
**Tsavo East National Park, Kenya**

An orphaned female elephant calf returned to the stockade with injuries on her right flank and rump. Her overall good condition and the condition of the wounds after care led caregivers to issue a favorable prognosis.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, August 2021.<sup>54</sup>

**August 29, 2021**  
**Imenti Forest, Meru County, Kenya**

An abscess caused by a throwing weapon worsened into full-blown sepsis. The exhausted, motionless elephant was reported by a patrol. When veterinarians arrived on the scene, they could only observe the death. The tusks had already been cut out and secured by the KWS.

SWT/KWS Meru Mobile Veterinary Unit, August 2021.<sup>55</sup>

**August 30, 2021**  
**Voi Sub-County, Taita-Taveta County, Kenya**

At night, a car with 2 passengers collided with an elephant crossing the road near Tsavo National Park. The passengers suffered minor injuries as did the elephant. But the police decided to kill him because they were afraid that he would prevent the rescue services from arriving on the spot.

Kenyans.co.ke, August 31, 2021.<sup>56</sup>

**MALAWI**

**Beginning of August 2021**

**Malawi**

After a night poaching event, the dog squad immediately got to work. They discovered an elephant's ear in the branches of a mango tree and 2 guns hidden under corn cobs, 3 pieces of evidence that will help identify the culprits.

Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>57</sup>



**August 27, 2021**  
**Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi**

Seizure from Bin Liu, a Chinese citizen, of 7 firearms and ammunition and an impala skull (*Aepyceros melampus*) with an estimated value of 1.4 million Malawi kwacha (1,715 US\$). He was also in possession of sections of raw tusks and a worked tusk with an overall value of 9.2 million Malawi kwacha (11,300 US\$).

Malawi Police Service, August 28, 2021; Nyasa Times, November 25, 2021.<sup>58</sup>





## MOZAMBIQUE

**Mid-May 2021**

**Maputo Special Reserve, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

Thirteen elephants were relocated after local communities threatened to kill them. They were captured in the buffer zone of the Maputo special reserve and transported by truck 1,000 km north to Zinave national park. The trip took 25 hours. At the beginning, information about such transfers is generally reassuring, but reports of the elephants struggling to adapt to their new habitats emerged in the following weeks. This was a joint operation by The Aspinall Foundation, Wildlife Emergency Fund, Peace Parks Foundation, and ANAC. Derek Milburn, May 22, 2021.<sup>59</sup>



**June 8, 2021**

**Maputo, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

Arrest of 2 men at their home in possession of 11 elephant tusks.

Macau News Agency, June 9, 2021.<sup>60</sup>

## UGANDA

**May 3, 2021**

**Oyam, Northern Region, Uganda**

Arrest of Jimmy Obong, a soldier in the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF). He was caught driving a motorcycle with ivory. The next day, police found the weapon with which he had been poaching.

The Independent, June 5, 2021.<sup>61</sup>

**May 5, 2021**

**Kasese, Western Region, Uganda**

Arrest of Lieutenant Ssekaja Haruna, a Ugandan Army (UPDF) officer. He was in possession of 23 kg of elephant ivory which he intended to sell. Uganda Wildlife Authority, May 5, 2021.<sup>62</sup>

**June 11, 2021**

**Kampala, Central Region, Uganda**



Arrest of 2 traffickers in possession of 4 sections of tusks with a total weight of 25 kg. After 3 weeks, they were released on bail. There was an urgent need to reduce the number of inmates to avoid a peak of Covid inside the prison. EAGLE, June 11 and July, 2021.<sup>63</sup>

**July 19, 2021**

**Kasese, Western Region, Uganda**

Seizure of 19 young elephant molars with a total weight of 5.4 kg. One arrest.

Focused Conservation, August 2, 2021.<sup>64</sup>

**August 3, 2021**

**Kihihi, Western Region, Uganda**

Arrest of Erasmus Donyahika, who was carrying a jerry can filled with elephant fat. He claimed that the fat came from an elephant about to give birth. "One spoonful helps women avoid late deliveries." Donyahika also transported an elephant penis, which could have ritual or charlatan uses.

New Vision, September 17, 2021.<sup>65</sup>

**August 24, 2021**

**Western Uganda**

Seizure of 2 whole tusks with a total weight of 31 kg. Two arrests.

Focused Conservation, August 28, 2021.<sup>66</sup>



## SOUTH SUDAN

**July 2021**  
**South Sudan**

Thanks to the sniffer dogs, 8 elephant poachers and ivory traffickers were arrested and semi-raw ivory was seized.

WCS South Sudan, August 12, 2021.<sup>67</sup>



## TANZANIA

**May 25, 2021**  
**Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania**

"On the Trail" n°3 p.60 and n°12 p.81 exposed the trafficking and convictions of 2 Chinese citizens specialized in the trade of garlic stuffed snails and unofficially versed in raw ivory trafficking (1,889 kg of ivory was discovered at their home in 2013). Eight years later, Huang Qin and Xu Fujie's 2<sup>nd</sup> appeal was considered by the Court. Their prison sentences were lowered from 30 to 20 years, and the 54 billion shillings (or 25 US\$ million as of the date of the judgment in 2016) fines they each have to pay were halved. The 5-year prison sentence for attempted bribery at the time of their arrest was also overturned, as the court found that attempted bribery was not established, noting in particular that no cash was produced as evidence. The Citizen, May 27, 2021.<sup>68</sup>



**May 31, 2021**

**Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania**



Known as the "Queen of Ivory", Ms. Yang Feng Clan's (or Fenglan) appeal case was both successful and unsuccessful. The High Court found that the judgement sentencing her to 15 years in prison was tainted by anomalies. More specifically, "It did not give the points of determination in the case." "The importance of point(s) of determination in the judgment is like a compass in a cruise ship or a dhow in the high seas." "The ship or dhow without a compass is likely to get lost in the deep sea and dock on an unintended or unexpected port due to loss of direction." The Court ordered a new trial but did not go so far as to order the release of Ms. Yang Feng Clan and her accomplices, Salvius Francis Matembo and Manase Julius Philemon.



**December 2021**

Seven months later, Ms. Yang Feng Clan was once again sentenced to 15 years in prison for having organized, directed, and financed the purchase, collection, transport, and sale of 860 tusks or tusk sections without the authorization of the Directorate of Wildlife. The 15-year sentence imposed on her 2 partners, Matembo and Philemon, was also reaffirmed. The court deemed that the investigation file and testimonies proved beyond any reasonable doubt that the 3 suspects are in fact guilty. To be continued! The convicts are again able to appeal.

See "On the Trail" n°11 p.71, n°13 p.80, n°15 p.90, n°17 p.92, n°24 p.71.

Mongabay, June 17, 2021; Daily News, December 8, 2021.<sup>69</sup>



## ZAMBIA

**Mid-August to Mid-September 2021**  
**South Luangwa National Park, Eastern Province**  
**and Lusaka, Lusaka Province, Zambia**



A female elephant calf, about 2 years old, wailed and tried to reconnect with her mother who was nursing her and who is dying after a poacher attack. The mother was finished off and the calf was transferred to the elephant orphanage in Lusaka. After a 15-hour drive, she seems to have come to her senses and was willing to be bottle-fed. The rescue was organized and funded by the Department of National Parks & Wildlife, Lion Camp, Conservation South Luangwa, Proflight Zambia, IFAW, the Olsen Animal Trust, the Elephant Cooperation, and the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation.



Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021; David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, September 13 and 14, 2021; Game Rangers International, September 13, 2021.<sup>70</sup>

## ZIMBABWE

**May 26, 2021**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

22.88 kg of raw ivory with an estimated value of 3,870 US\$ (170 US\$/kg) were seized. Two arrests in the Chisipite Shopping Centre were made. The Herald, May 28, 2021.<sup>71</sup>

**May 31 and October 20, 2021**

**Madzomba and Guruve, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe**



- Patrick Mapfumo and Garinga Mberengwa, ages 44 and 46, were sentenced to 20 years in prison.

- They were in possession of 34.12 kg of raw ivory and were reported by people from their villages. The Herald, June 8, 2021; NewsDay, October 21, 2021.<sup>72</sup>

**June 22, 2021**

**Harare, Province d'Harare, Zimbabwe**

Luckmore Mugobeya, Pearson Chinokoro, Tafadzwa Mkoka and Benias Sambom, all around 25 years old, were caught by police with 3.57 kg of raw ivory. ZimLive.com, June 26, 2021.<sup>73</sup>

**June 25, 2021**

**Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe**

According to a short announcement from police, the victims were super tuskers from bygone times. In the van, 4 men were found with 4 tusks (300 kg). The Chronicle, June 29, 2021.<sup>74</sup>

**June 30, 2021**

**Ntabazinduna, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe**

Five tusks weighing 6.279 kg were seized (182 US\$/kg). This time, very small "tusk carriers" were victims of trafficking. Godknows Nyoni, Admire Gomba, and Promise Lunga are quarelling. Each one of them blames the other 2 and claims not to know what was inside the bag hidden under the back seat of the Polo.

The Chronicle, July 3rd, 2021; DailyNews, July 3rd, 2021.<sup>75</sup>

**July 5, 2021**

**Mary Mount, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe**

Trynos Mposhi was arrested at the Mary Mount Business Centre with a tusk weighing 38kg or so. Bulawayo24, July 6, 2021; Black Media Daily, July 8, 2021.<sup>76</sup>

**July 6, 2021**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**



After a long undercover operation, police arrested 4 men, ages 26 to 43, who were about to sell raw ivory. Tinashe Fiftini, Joseph Tondoro, Kilford Mutandi, and Chamunorwa Mavhunga were sentenced to 9 years in prison. ZimLive.com, July 6, 2021; NewsDay, July 7, 2021.<sup>77</sup>



**July 10, 2021**

**Bulawayo, Bulawayo Province, Zimbabwe**

Bigboy Dimingo and Admire Chivhima were ambushed. A man named Midzi, who they trusted to the point of offering him 2 tusks (16,250 kg) for a good price, betrayed them. The police caught them in a parking lot where the deal was to be executed. ZimNews, July 14, 2021.<sup>78</sup>

**July 13, 2021**

**Umtshibi, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe**

July 2021 was marked by reports from Hwange park that the Elephant Capture Unit was on a warpath and ready to use violence and trickery to capture wild elephants and baby elephants, and later ship them to zoos in China and elsewhere.

On August 4, Tinashe Farawo, ZimParks' spokesperson, denied that any elephant captures were planned and called the reported rumors "fake". "Zimbabwe has no plans to export live elephants and has not initiated any export permit process since the year 2019." "Zimbabwe has no intention, either now or in the near future, of capturing elephants and exporting them anywhere."

PREN (Pro Elephant Network) is made up of 45 lawyers and scientists, some of whom are affiliated with African or international NGOs. The organization says it continues to receive evidence of plans to imminently capture elephants. On behalf of PREN, the environmental and green business law firm Cullinan & Associates has written to 4 key CITES officials in Geneva demanding preventative measures against live elephant captures and to prohibit granting export and import permits until an urgent, transparent, independent, and comprehensive investigation has been undertaken by the Standing Committee and the Animals Committee.

The Presidential Elephant Conservation Project, July 8, 2021; Pro Elephant Network, July 10 and August 25, 2021; Wildlife at Risk, July 10 and 14, 2021; Advocates4Earth, July 15, 2021; Big News Network, July 16, 2021; The Herald, August 4, 2021.<sup>79</sup>

**July 13, 2021**

**Matetsi Private Game Reserve, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe**

Rescue of a baby elephant. The right hind leg was cut by an iron trap. The mother was put under anesthesia for the calf to be operated on. The prognosis was favorable.

Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust, July 14, 2021.<sup>80</sup>



**July 16, 2021**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Desmond Nyamasoka, 36, and Philip Kore, 30, were arrested while trying to hastily sell 2 tusks. NewsDay, July 16, 2021.<sup>81</sup>

**July 25, 2021**

**Mutawatawa, Mashonaland East Province, Zimbabwe**

Perfect Kabunze, Chatseka Mapuranga and Makwanya Kahwiti, aged 29 to 39, and Joseph Kabunze, 67, were arrested while carrying 12.5 kg of raw ivory. Estimated value: 211 US\$/kg.

The Chronicle, July 27, 2021.<sup>82</sup>

**August 2, 2021**

**Mushumbi, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe**

During an intervention at the home of Lazarus Tizora suspected of ivory trafficking, 3 ZimParks officials were beaten with axe handles. Tizora was arrested following a high-speed chase. Two accomplices are still on the run.

NewsDay, August 14, 2021.<sup>83</sup>

**August 9, 2021**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

New arrest of a "servant of God". Kande Ranganai, 37, a preacher of the Apostles' Movement Advent Mission was arrested. Judah Madamombe, 34, and Tatenda Marufu, 29, tried to sell 2 ivory tusks on the outskirts of Harare to buyers who were, in fact, government agents specialized in the control of minerals, wildlife, and plants.

Daily News, August 12, 2021; NewsDay, August 12, 2021.<sup>84</sup>

**End of August 2021**

**Kwekwe, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe**

Elephants in Zimbabwe are tired of being targeted. They don't always know the difference between a gun and a camera lens, and in a way they are right, because in history and in comics, there are several examples of cameras that conceal guns. The wary elephant attacked a man who wanted to take a selfie with him in the background. The men ended up dying in the hospital. The elephant was shot by ZimParks officers, and people from Mbizo 22, Chicago, and Umlala pounced on the corpse in one of those enthusiastic feasts that the country is famous for. There was no traceability of the ivory, tail, trunk, genitals, feet, ears and other fine, high-value parts.

The Herald, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021; NewZimbabwe.com, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>85</sup>



## EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

**June 18, 2021**

**Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia**

The Ministries of Tourism in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Zambia and Botswana are trying to revive an “ivory process” project. It is modelled after the Kimberley Process, which requires participating countries to certify that selling rough diamonds does not finance armed conflict, to control diamond exports, exchange statistical data, or contribute to international market transparency by applying a single certification system.

The objective is to establish an international organization that would free itself from CITES and its constraints on ivory trade. For all other animal and plant species, the countries initiating the project would remain bound by the CITES regulations, to which they are all signatories. Zimbabwe, Namibia, Zambia and Botswana would thus be able to trade seized ivory stocks and improve, they said, elephant management in the Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area.

As it stands, 59 countries are parties to the Kimberley Process. About 10 years ago, South Africa and Namibia took the first similar steps for rhinoceros’ horns (see “On the Trail” n°7 p.70 and n°8 p.59).

Bloomberg Quint, June 18, 2021; The Zimbabwe Independent, June 25, 2021; The Chronicle, July 8, 2021.<sup>86</sup>

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**May 3, 2021**

**Alberton, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Seizure of 2 tusks found inside a car. One arrest was made.

SAPS, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>87</sup>

**May 17, 2021**

**Kruger National Park, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, South Africa**

A male elephant was found with a tire circling his front foot. Thanks to Hope for Wildlife Helicopter Services, the veterinarians on scene were able to remove it.

Hope for Wildlife Helicopter Services, May 17, 2021.<sup>88</sup>



**End of May 2021**

**Malamulele, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Enock Sibanda (31) and Eckson Shirinda (28), originally from Mozambique, were arrested on November 14, 2018 by rangers in the northern part of Kruger Park. They were sentenced to 8 years in prison for poaching an elephant and stealing tusks, 12 months for breaking and entering the park, 12 months for illegal immigration and 8 years for the illegal possession of firearms and ammunition. The sentences were combined. Polokwane Review, May 31st, 2021.<sup>89</sup>



**June 8, 2021**

**Itsoseng, North West Province, South Africa**

Moabi Moribe had been on the run since 2018. In his home, 6 tusks worth one million rand, more than 72,000 US\$, were seized. Since then, he was under an arrest warrant and the 6 people who were arrested at his house during the seizure were not prosecuted due to a lack of evidence of their involvement in ivory trafficking.

Moribe was arrested on June 3, 2021 and sentenced 5 days later to 8 years in prison with a 5-year probational period. At the end of the 5 years, the prison sentence will be repealed if he does not commit any violations of the National Environmental Management Act: Biodiversity Act enacted in 2004. See “On the Trail” n°21 p.88.

SAPS, June 9, 2021; Eyewitness News, June 10, 2021.<sup>90</sup>



**August 9, 2021**

**Kruger National Park, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, South Africa**

This event reported by the Daily Maverick is not dated. A baby elephant tries to reach his mother’s teats and feed, but she is dead in the bush.



Dr. Johan Marais of Saving the Survivors is on the scene with the rangers. He calls Adine Roode, director of HERD (Hoedspruit Elephant Rehabilitation and Development); she replies that HERD has the legal permits to transport the calf and a team available to do so. “Pajero ready. If the calf is small, it’ll fit” she says.

=>



"Very small", answers Marais, "One year old". "We can be there within the hour, we'll stand by for confirmation from SANParks." Marais immediately advised Kruger that HERD would provide transportation at their expense and that Saving the Survivors would pay for anesthesia. He assures, "The baby will be rescued quickly and placed in safe hands." At HERD, everyone knows what they have to do; the protocol is written. The caretakers and drivers are busy. But at the Kruger, things are getting bogged down. The section chief Rendani Nethengwe, who is in place, cannot reach Danie Pienaar, the general manager, on his cell phone. He calls Skukuza's headquarters and requests permission to transfer the elephant. The Pajero has everything it needs.

Suddenly, Marais calls the HERD again and announces in an unusual voice: "The decision is to shoot the calf." It was also to evacuate it as soon as possible. The news came down like a guillotine, leaving everyone in the field stunned. Bureaucrats who learned that the mother had died of natural causes on the side of a road frequented by tourists were afraid that predators would attack the baby elephant and that this would create controversy with the clientele.

Daily Maverick, August 9, 2021.<sup>91</sup>

## BOTSWANA

### FAMILY AFFAIRS

#### Beginning of June 2021

#### Maun, North West District, Botswana

Onkagetse Mbulawa and Oitsile Balapi, now 42 and 33, were charged with ivory trafficking and sentenced to 9 years. They



were arrested in 2012 along with other suspects in possession of ivory tusks of unknown origin.

Mbulawa and Balapi were released on bail and their companions were tried with varying sentences, ranging from acquittal to conviction. The fate of the 2 cousins, on the other hand, has not been settled and even though they are free, they are still on probation and say they are having a difficult time finding a job and even starting a family. Mbulawa also complains that his Honda CR-V was seized even though it was not part of the evidence.

The 2 suspects believe that the time for investigating the case and the trial has passed. The courts agreed and ordered a definitive ending to the proceedings. The 2 cousins will never be tried for this case. The judge specified that abandoning the proceedings also entailed Mbulawa receiving his Honda CR-V.

The Voice, June 8, 2021.<sup>92</sup>

**August 17, 2021**

#### Gumare, North West District, Botswana

One morning, 3 elephants entered the village of Gumare and its inhabitants repelled 2 of them by shouting at them. The third one went on his way, yet the people kept shouting and dogs kept barking at him. The tension rose very quickly. One man did not realize the imminent danger as he faced the road and did not respect the safety zone. He was caught by the elephant, thrown like a piece of wood, and was trampled and crushed. Matlakala Saubabi, who witnessed the tragedy, was traumatized. She no longer sleeps. "Elephants hate noise, so when I grew up I was taught to keep silent when they are around. That is why we quietly snuck into our house when he approached." After the lynching, the elephant moved away and despite the police officers' pleas for calm, people continued to make noise from all sides. As the elephant approached a school, the police felt it was safe to shoot him. As soon as the elephant fell on the ground and sprawled out at the base of a tree, 2 men danced over his body. A close examination of a video taken by a witness showed that the elephant was still breathing and, within minutes, women and men arrived with knives and everything else needed to butcher him.



Oaitse Nawa, founder of the Elephant Protection Society of Botswana, says the death of the man and the elephant were preventable. The man did not respect the safety zone. He got too close. It was, in his opinion, suicidal behavior. According to Nawa, people should have stayed in their houses and kept quiet, and the elephant would have eventually moved away.

According to Mokadi Masedi, a member of the Elephant Development Trust in Habu, the incursion of the elephant (and initially 3 in the village) in broad daylight can be explained by 2 causes. The first is that the elephants were thirsty during the heat wave and looking for water, and the second is that they were fleeing the elephant hunting area near Tubu, 14 km from Gumare.

Chris Sand, August 17, 2021; Elise Tempelhoff, August 17, 2021; The Voice, August 24, 2021.<sup>93</sup>



**August and October 15, 2021**  
**Maun, North West District, Botswana**

Kangootui Kangootui was arrested with 2 elephant tusks (16.8 kg) worth 2,490 US\$ (148 US\$/kg). In court, he said he found the raw ivory in the savannah and contacted the town police station, agreeing to hand over his findings to the proper custodian. He noted with bitterness that he had been arrested on his way to the police station and immediately suspected of ivory trafficking.

He was acquitted. His brother, Timoteous Kangootui, stressed that the misunderstanding caused a lot of emotions in the family, since his brother acted like a responsible citizen.

The Voice, October 19, 2021.<sup>94</sup>



**NAMIBIA**

**May 29, 2021**

**Gam, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia**

Karuhava Kahaka, 23, and Vekotokeraije Keharara, 38, were arrested at night with a "fresh" tusk. They were trying to sell it to a police officer posing as a customer.

Namibia News Digest, June 1, 2021.<sup>95</sup>

**June 2, 2021**

**Mukwe, Kavango East Region, Namibia**

Johannes Nyangana was arrested in possession of 2 tusks. He was taken into custody.

Namibia Economist, June 9, 2021; New Era, June 10, 2021.<sup>96</sup>

**June 24, 2021**

**Oshakati, Oshana Region, Namibia**

Arrest of Faustinus Liyagaya. Seizure of 3 tusks.

Namibian Sun, July 14, 2021.<sup>97</sup>

**July 15, 2021**

**Katima Mulilo, Zambezi Region, Namibia. Border with Zambia.**

Seizure of 4 tusks in the hands of a Zambian national.

Namibian Sun, July 22, 2021.<sup>98</sup>

**July 15, 2021**

**Kahenge, Kavango West Region, Namibia. Border with Angola.**

Arrest of Ndadi Kudomo in possession of 3 tusks.

Namibian Sun, July 22, 2021.<sup>99</sup>

**July 29, 2021**

**Rundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia. Border with Angola.**

Erastus Kashogo had 2 tusks in his possession. He was arrested. Namibian Sun, August 9, 2021.<sup>100</sup>

**July 30, 2021**

**Otjondeka, Kunene Region, Namibia**

Arrest of Chept Tjiveze. Seizure of a tusk.

Namibian Sun, July 27 and August 9, 2021.<sup>101</sup>

**NORTHERN AMERICA**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**May 7, 2021**

**Loogootee, State of Indiana, United States of America**

800 DVDs containing child pornography, ammunition stolen from the Crane Naval Base and a large number of ivory items were seized from 73-year-old Timothy L. Guy's house.

Dubois County Herald, May 6, 2021; WTVO, May 6, 2021.<sup>102</sup>



**May 17, 2021**

**Detroit Metropolitan Airport, State of Michigan, United States of America**

Seizure of a rosary and bracelets made of ivory from a passenger arriving from South Korea.

The Detroit News, May 21, 2021; WDIV Local 4, May 21, 2021.<sup>103</sup>

**July 2021**

**State of Connecticut, United States of America**

There are 3,000 traveling zoos in the U.S. and 70 elephants on the road from city to city. Most do not respect the Animal Welfare Act, which is not exactly a model statute. It requires that traveling zoos provide "appropriate veterinary care for their animals" and humane transport conditions, but does not prohibit the transport or display of sick animals.

The Commerford Zoo, founded in 1970 in Connecticut, committed a typical case of abuse. It allegedly abused an elephant of African descent, who was purchased at age 3 and died at 38, as well as an elephant of Asian descent, who was purchased at age 5-6 and died in her early 50s during an exhibition in Massachusetts in September 2019. The fate of a third elephant, 49-years-old, is of concern to the NGOs Nonhuman Rights Project, Animal Legal Defense Fund, PETA and Animal Defenders International. The USDA (US Department of Agriculture) has found more than 50 violations of elephant management rules, in the form of inadequate veterinary care, soiled bedding in pens and trailers, and more. After multiple documented violations, the USDA may issue a warning or impose a small fine, usually ranging from between 2,000 and 15,000 US\$. National Geographic, July 13, 2021; Nonhuman Rights Project, July 29, 2021 and August 12, 2021.<sup>104</sup>





**July 22, 2021**

**Seattle, State of Washington, United States of America**

The company International Antique & Art Importers Inc., which operates Ming's Asian Gallery & Antiques, was fined 8,000 US\$. Doreen Russell, the owner, was sentenced to 2 years' probation, including 240 hours of community service, and a 6,000 US\$ fine.

In early 2018, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service targeted and searched the gallery. It seized approximately 100 items suspected of being made from or containing ivory or sea turtle scales. The investigators' suspicions were confirmed by



forensics, and the seized items violated WATA, the Washington Animal Trafficking Act that went into effect in 2016. The Act prohibits the sale, purchase, trade, and transportation of elephant, rhinoceros, tiger, lion, leopard, cheetah, pangolin, and turtle parts, as well as species of sharks and rays protected under international law. WATA allows for antiques and musical instruments to be inherited or transferred to museums or other institutions for educational purposes.

Washington's Attorney General, July 22, 2021.<sup>105</sup>

**LATIN AMERICA**

**BRAZIL**

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021**

**Brazil**

The Federal Police along with IBAMA (Instituto brasileiro do meio ambiente e dos recursos naturais renováveis) seized 2 worked ivories with a total estimated value of 500,000 reais (95,000 US\$) in an antique dealer's store and home. Hypeness, May 10, 2021.<sup>106</sup>



**EASTERN ASIA**

**CHINA**

**Total weight of ivory seizures in China in this issue #33: 34.64 kg**

**BEIJING AUTONOMOUS MUNICIPALITY**

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Beijing Autonomous Municipality, China**

144 pieces of mahjong, 8 bracelets, a necklace and a carved tusk section with a total weight of 4.64 kg were seized in 2 incoming packages from abroad. Chinese Customs, June 12, 2021; Chinanews Beijing, July 7, 2021.<sup>107</sup>

**June 2021**

**Beijing Autonomous City, China**

Seizure of 2.3 kg of carved ivory in a postal parcel declared to contain handicrafts. Chinese Customs, June 23, 2021.<sup>108</sup>



**CHONGQING MUNICIPALITY**

**Beginning of May, 2021**

**Port of Chongqing, China**

Seizure of ivory keys on imported antique pianos, 258 grams.

Chinese Customs, May 11, 2021; Cover News, May 11, 2021; Hot City Press, May 11, 2021.<sup>109</sup>





## SHANGHAI AUTONOMOUS MUNICIPALITY

**May 14, 2021**

### **Shanghai Pudong International Airport, China**

Seizure of 10 worked ivories in a parcel declared to contain 1.8 kg of "metallic trinkets" addressed to a company in Shanghai. Total weight, 375 grams. Chinese Customs, May 17 and 18, 2021.<sup>110</sup>

**Beginning of August 2021**

### **Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China**

Seized in 2 periods:

- An ivory pendant weighing 20.14 grams in an incoming package declared to contain a "key ring".



- In an incoming package, 3 umbrellas with ivory handles, 668 grams. Analysis reveals that the ivory of one of the umbrellas is actually mammoth ivory. Chinese Customs, August 13, 2021.<sup>111</sup>

## TIANJIN AUTONOMOUS MUNICIPALITY

**May 2021**

### **Tianjin Binhai International Airport, China**

A necklace made of 67 pearls was found inside a red box and seized. Customs officers predicted that the necklace was made from elephant ivory, and a specialized laboratory confirmed this some days later.

Chinese Customs June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021; Enorth.com.cn, June 2nd, 2021.<sup>112</sup>

**June 18, 20201**

### **Tianjin Binhai International Airport, China**

Seizure in the luggage of an incoming passenger of 2 bracelets and 4 pendants made of ivory. Total weight, 300 grams.

Chinese Customs, June 18, 2021.<sup>113</sup>

**June 2021**

### **Tianjin Binhai International Airport, China**

Seizure in an incoming package of an ivory pipe, 70.03 grams.

Chinese Customs, June 24, 2021.<sup>114</sup>



**Beginning of August 2021**

### **Port of Tianjin, China**

Seizure of 156 ivory keys from a batch of pianos. Customs also seized 162 unmounted ivory keys. Chinese Customs, August 10, 2021.<sup>115</sup>

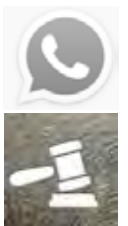


**Beginning of August 2021**

### **Tianjin Autonomous Municipality, China**

A person was sentenced to 7 months in prison with one-year probation and fined 310 US\$ for purchasing 2 worked ivories for 250 US\$ via WeChat.

Tianjin Daily, August 11, 2021.<sup>116</sup>



## GUANGDONG PROVINCE

**May 2021**

### **Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of 3 bracelets and one necklace made of ivory with a total weight of 199 grams. The incoming package was declared to contain "handbags".

Chinese Customs, May 21, 2021.<sup>117</sup>

**May 2021**

### **Zhanjiang International Airport, Zhanjiang Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of 2 ivory brooches.

Chinese Customs, May 28, 2021.<sup>118</sup>

**May 2021**

### **Guangzhou, Guangzhou Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of 2 painting scrolls with ivory tips from an incoming parcel. Chinese Customs, June 3, 2021.<sup>119</sup>





**June 21, 2021**  
**Zhuhai, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**



Secondhand commerce is swarming into China. Four silver smitheries with ivory handles were seized in a package coming from abroad. Chinese Customs, June 23 and 25, 2021.<sup>120</sup>

**Beginning of July 2021**  
**Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure in the luggage of an incoming passenger of 2 ivory bracelets hidden in coffee boxes. Total weight, 175 grams. Chinese Customs, July 15, 2021.<sup>121</sup>

**July 2021**  
**Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**  
Seizure in an incoming package declared to contain "printed material" of 2 painting scrolls with ivory tips. Chinese Customs, July 17, 2021.<sup>122</sup>

**July 2021**  
**Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**  
Seizure of 7 jewelry pieces and an ivory figure in a package coming from abroad, supposedly containing "a cushion". Chinese Customs, July 19, 2021; Information Times, July 27, 2021.<sup>123</sup>

**August 20 and 22, 2021**  
**Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**  
Seizure of 7 painting scrolls with ivory tips (322 grams) in a package coming from abroad that was said to contain "a pillow." Chinese Customs, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021; Guangzhou Daily, October 13, 2021.<sup>124</sup>

## HAINAN PROVINCE

**August 9, 2021**  
**Haikou, Haikou Prefecture, Hainan Province, China**



Li, the cargo handling manager on board *Hui Hai Long 729*, a cargo ship that connects Hong Kong to Haikou, was sentenced to 5 years in prison and fined 60,000 yuan (9,300 US\$), and Huang, a seafood trader, was sentenced to 3 years in prison and fined 30,000 yuan (4,650 US\$). Li, in the name of his friendship with Huang, agreed on June 20, 2018 to load 2 green plastic bags into the general cargo hold stern of the *Hui Hai Long 729*, without respecting customs protocols enforced in Hong Kong regarding reaching a province in mainland China.

Upon arriving in Haikou after 485 km at sea, we entered a cartoon script. A small boat coupled itself to the big one and the 2 green packages changed boats discreetly at the end of a rope. The small boat escaped in the night and its owner, Lin, the third man in this story, delivered the green packages to Huang near the Bridge of the Century in a small port away from traffic. Huang then sent the packages to 2 accomplices in Shenzhen, but they were spotted by a logistics platform and opened by customs. Inside, 2 large ivory tusks worth 500,000 yuan (78,000 US\$) and weighing about 100 kilos were found, according to the quotation of ivory in China in 2018-2019.

Li, on the court stand, tried to get away with saying that he did not know the 2-meter long bags contained ivory tusks. Huang had told him it was wood and indeed Li put his hand in the bag and felt something that looked like wood and had the same weight.

Donnguan where Huang is living and Hong Kong are only 90 km apart and this 970 km ivory trafficking between the 2 towns was likely well established for a long time.

People's Information Network, August 6 and 11, 2021.<sup>125</sup>

## HENAN PROVINCE

**July 2021**  
**Zhengzhou Xinzheng International Airport, Zhengzhou Prefecture, Henan Province, China**

Seizure of an ivory necklace and bracelet found on the person of an incoming Chinese passenger, plus another bracelet and a ring in his luggage. Total weight, 186 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 21, 2021.<sup>126</sup>



**August 2021**

**Zhengzhou Xinzheng International Airport, Zhengzhou Prefecture, Henan Province, China**

Seizure in the luggage of an incoming passenger of 2 ivory bracelets. Total weight, 60 grams. Chinese Customs, August 26, 2021.<sup>127</sup>

## HUNAN PROVINCE

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Changsha, Changsha Prefecture, Hunan Province, China**

A woman was sentenced to 8 months in prison with one year of probation and fined 10,000 yuan (1,570 US\$) for attempting to sell 27 worked ivories (604.5 grams) worth 25,187 yuan (3,740 US\$) in her stall. The seizure dates back to May 2019.

Sanxiang Metropolis Daily, June 8, 2021.<sup>128</sup>



**August 2021**

**Changsha, Changsha Prefecture, Hunan Province, China**

An ivory necklace in an incoming package, 36.4 grams.

Chinese Customs, August 30, 2021.<sup>129</sup>

## JIANGSU PROVINCE

**May 2021**

**Taichang Port, Suzhou Prefecture, Jiangsu Province, China**

Two ivory bracelets were seized from the luggage of a member of the *Corio Bay* crew.

Taichang Daily, May 25, 2021; Chinese Customs, May 26, 2021.<sup>130</sup>



*Corio Bay* in Hobart (Australia), February 2019

**June 3, 2021**

**Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China**

Seizure in an incoming package of 7 worked ivories. Total weight, 106.22 grams.

Chinese Customs, June 7, 2021.<sup>131</sup>

**July 2021**

**Suzhou, Suzhou Prefecture, Jiangsu Province, China**



A 10-kg and 90-cm-long tusk was hidden in clothes and fashion accessories and seized from the incoming package. According to the forensics, the tusk falls under the category of "recent ivory."

Yangtze Evening Post, July 18, 2021; Chinese Customs, July 19, 2021.<sup>132</sup>

**July 2021**

**Nanjing Lukou International Airport, Jiangsu Province, China**

Seizure in the luggage of an incoming passenger of 5 ivory bracelets, 2 pendants and a polished tusk tip. Total weight, 626 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 20, 2021.<sup>133</sup>

## JIANGXI PROVINCE

**Beginning of August 2021**

**Nanchang Changbei International Airport, Nanchang Prefecture, Jiangxi Province, China**

Seizures in 2 stages:

- In an incoming package declared to contain cookies, 2 worked ivories.

- In an incoming package declared to contain porcelain, 2 other worked ivories.

Total weight, 0.18 kg.

Chinese Customs, August 12, 2021.<sup>134</sup>

## LIAONING PROVINCE

**May 2021**

**Shenyang Taoxian International Airport, Liaoning Province, China**

The arriving passenger did not fool the detectives. They seized 2 packages of candies containing ivory beads disguised in lollipops. The ruse has been known for a long time (see "On the Trail" n°26 p. 89, n°32 p. 37). In his luggage, 3 ivory objects painted black, including 2 bracelets, were hidden in a wine case. Total weight: 1,655 kg.

People's Information Network, May 21, 2021.<sup>135</sup>





**May 2021**

**Shenyang, Liaoning Province, China**

Seizure in a postal parcel of 4 worked ivories. Total weight, 1,875 grams.

Chinese Customs, June 2, 2021.<sup>136</sup>



**July 12, 2021**

**Dalian Zhoushuizi International Airport, Dalian Prefecture, Liaoning Province, China**

An ivory necklace in an incoming passenger's luggage, 12.5 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 12, 2021.<sup>137</sup>

**SHAANXI PROVINCE**

**Beginning of July, 2021**

**Xi'an Xianyang International Airport, Shaanxi Province, China**

1.4 kg of raw and worked ivory wrapped in Styrofoam plus a box of wine bottles are confiscated from a traveler from Africa.

Chinese Customs, July 12, 2021; Global Times, July 14, 2021.<sup>138</sup>

**SICHUAN PROVINCE**

**June 18, 2021**

**Chengdu-Shuangliu International Airport, Sichuan Province, China**

Seventy ivory chopsticks were seized from a thermos bottle. Total weight: 1,775 grams (25 g per stick). An analysis determined that they were made of recent ivory. The passenger declared to have bought them as a souvenir and despite his attempt to hide it, he claims not



to be informed on the ban on importing ivory. Chinese Customs, July 12, 2021; Sichuan Watch, July 15, 2021.<sup>139</sup>

**June 2021**

**Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**

Seizure in an incoming package of an ivory mahjong game weighing 1,526 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 6, 2021.<sup>140</sup>



**July 5, 2021**

**Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**

Seizure in incoming mail of 564.2 grams of worked ivories.

Chinese Customs, July 6, 2021.<sup>141</sup>

**July 7, 2021**

**Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**

166.8 grams of worked ivories seized in incoming package.

Chinese Customs, July 8, 2021.<sup>142</sup>

**July 17, 2021**

**Chengdu-Shuangliu International Airport, Sichuan Province, China**

Twelve worked ivories, weighing a total of 245 grams, were found and seized from the luggage of 3 passengers arriving from Cairo, Egypt. Since the beginning of the year, airport customs have seized 19.9 kg of ivory from the luggage of passengers and from packages coming from India, Japan, and the European Union. Xinhua, August 12, 2021.<sup>143</sup>



**July 2021**

**Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**

Seizure in an incoming parcel of a new ivory mahjong game. Total weight, 1,568 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 25, 2021.<sup>144</sup>

**July 2021**

**Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**

273.4 grams of ivory fragments and 94.6 grams of carved ivory including a cane handle.

Chinese Customs, July 27, 2021.<sup>145</sup>

**August 2, 2021**

**Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**

Seizure of 266.4 grams of worked ivory, including a pair of chopsticks and the handle of a walking stick, in an incoming package.

Chinese Customs, August 4, 2021.<sup>146</sup>



**August 11, 2021**

**Shunqing District, Nanchong Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**



After intercepting a package from Japan containing 3 painting scrolls, the police searched the home of the recipient and seized 200 scrolls of different lengths containing ivory tips. Some of them were about to be shipped to buyers in several Chinese provinces.

People's Government of Shunqing District, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>147</sup>



**Beginning of August 2021**

**Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**

Seizure in an incoming package of carved ivory weighing 70.4 grams.

Chinese Customs, August 15, 2021.<sup>148</sup>

**August 2021**

**Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**

A painting scroll with ivory tips.

Chinese Customs, September 7, 2021.<sup>149</sup>

## YUNNAN PROVINCE

**Beginning of May 2021**

**Mohan border crossing, Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Laos.**

Seizure of an ivory bracelet, 73.6 grams, from the hand luggage of an incoming passenger.

Chinese Customs, May 19, 2021.<sup>150</sup>

**May 2021**

**Kunming, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**

Seizure of an ivory bracelet weighing 36.09 grams in an incoming package.

Chinese Customs, May 21, 2021.<sup>151</sup>

**May 2021**

**Menglongzhen border crossing, Jinghong, Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Myanmar.**

Seizure of 2 ivory effigies in the hand luggage of an incoming passenger. Total weight, 33.8 grams.

Chinese Customs, May 31, 2021.<sup>152</sup>

**May 2021**

**Kunming Changshui International Airport, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**

Seizure of an ivory necklace weighing 73 grams, from the hand luggage of an incoming passenger.

Chinese Customs, June 1, 2021.<sup>153</sup>

**End of May 2021**

**Kunming Changshui International Airport, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**

Seizure of 3 carved ivories in the hand luggage of 2 passengers entering from abroad. Total weight, 24.2 grams.

Chinese Customs, June 9, 2021.<sup>154</sup>

**End of June 2021**

**Kunming Changshui International Airport, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**

Seizure of a necklace with an ivory tablet weighing 47.9 grams in the hand luggage of an incoming passenger.

Chinese Customs, July 7, 2021.<sup>155</sup>



**July 2021**

**Menglian Border Checkpoint, Pu'er Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Myanmar.**

Seizure in the luggage of an incoming passenger of an ivory necklace, 74.9 grams.

Chinese Customs, August 4, 2021.<sup>156</sup>

**July 2021**

**Menglian Border Checkpoint, Pu'er Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Myanmar.**

Seizure of 2 worked ivories in the hand luggage of an incoming passenger. Total weight, 13.1 grams.

Chinese Customs, August 9, 2021.<sup>157</sup>





**Beginning of August 2021**  
**Kunming, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**

Of the 10 umbrellas and walking sticks in the incoming package, the handle of one of the umbrellas and one of the walking sticks were made of ivory.

Chinese Customs, August 10, 2021.<sup>158</sup>

**August 28, 2021**  
**Mengban, Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**



Veterinarians tried to save an 85 kg male elephant, born a few days ago and wandering in a banana plantation, from dying. He was later transferred to a clinic in Xishuangbanna where, bottle-fed with goat's milk and medicine, he fights against diarrhea, fever and tachycardia to reverse the faculty's guarded prognosis. If he recovers, he will spend his long life in a zoo which will assuredly gain publicity from his story and benefit from him.

The wandering of the Yunnan elephants, see "On the Trail" n°30 p. 40.

Big News Network (with Xinhua), August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021; Global Times (with Xinhua), September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>159</sup>

**ZHEJIANG PROVINCE**

**Beginning of May 2021**  
**Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China**

Seizure of 9 balls, 4 bracelets and 9 pendants from 4 passengers. The balls were swaddled in knitted wool. The other objects were hidden under several layers of aluminium foil in books or in their pockets.

Chinese Customs, May 14, 2021; Hangzhou Daily, May 13, 2021.<sup>160</sup>



**May 2021**  
**Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, China**

A piano that contained 223.1 grams of ivory in its keys was seized.

Xiaoxiang Morning Herald, May 26, 2021.<sup>161</sup>

**Beginning of July 2021**  
**Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China**

Seizure of an ivory bracelet, amulet and pendant concealed in seed packets from incoming passengers' luggage. Total weight 84.76 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 12, 2021.<sup>162</sup>



**July 2021**  
**Wenzhou, Wenzhou Prefecture, Zhejiang Province, China**

Seizure of a painting scroll with ivory tips found in an incoming package declared to contain a "work of art". Total weight, 141 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 25, 2021.<sup>163</sup>

**August 2021**  
**Wenzhou, Wenzhou Prefecture, Zhejiang Province, China**

The package was full of good intentions containing a card from a caring father wishing his child a happy new year, but it also contained 2 bracelets, weighing 82 grams, that came from the grave of an unknown elephant.

Wenzhou News Network, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021; Chinese Customs, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>164</sup>

**August 2021**  
**Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China**

Four worked ivories, weighing 135 grams, were confiscated from an incoming package.

Hangzhou Net, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.<sup>165</sup>



## JAPAN

**May 13, 2021  
Japan**

Yuichi Hanada, a shoe and content creator, exhibited on a TV channel his new pair of elephant skin shoes which he always dreamed of and which he proposes to sell for 200,000-300,000 yen (1,835-2,750 US\$). He did not give any detail about the origin of the skin, except that he has enough of it to enjoy completing his collection, a worrying fact since he is only 27 years old.

Sports Hochi, May 13, 2021; Yahoo Japan, May 13, 2021.<sup>166</sup>



## TAIWAN

**July 2021  
Taiwan**

Lu Yicun is a swords specialist from the Chinese Shang (1570-1045 BC) and Zhou (1045-256 BC) dynasties. In 1984, his collection, worth an estimated 100 million US\$, was stolen. Again in 2011, 49 weapons, valued at 9 million US\$, disappeared from his home. In February 2021, he negotiated with a Chinese collector to import 3 katanas (Japanese swords) into Taiwan but did not complete the necessary CITES protocols, as the handles were all made of ivory. Customs in Taiwan seized the antiques upon their arrival and Lu Yicun was fined 40,000 US\$. Liberty Times Net, July 9, 2021.<sup>167</sup>



## SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

### CAMBODIA

**August 25, 2021  
Russey Keo District, Phnom Penh Autonomous Municipality, Cambodia**

Seizure of 4.2 kg of raw and worked ivory found in a shop and a workshop.

The Phnom Penh Post, August 29, 2021.<sup>168</sup>

## INDONESIA

**January 15, 2020 – August - September 2021 - January 27, 2022**

**Gampong Tuwi Periya, Aceh Jaya Regency and Banda Aceh, Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

The 28<sup>th</sup> issue of "On the Trail" reported the discovery of 5 electrocuted elephant carcasses in Aceh province in January 2020 (see p. 113). "Several people will be prosecuted," said Bima Nugraha, the local police chief. The promise was kept and at the end of August, 9 suspects, Sudirman, Muhammad Amin, Abdul Majid, Lukman Hakim, Muhammad Rozi, Zubardi, Hamdani, Hamdani Ilyas, and Supriyadi were arrested. Their ages range from 25 to 68 years old. They are the ones who set up the short circuit and built the ivory short marketing circuit. A few days later, the police in turn apprehended 2 ivory buyers.



The 9 criminals were sentenced: Sudirman to 3 years and 4 months in prison, Muhammad Amin to 2 years and 4 months in prison, and Abdul Majid, Lukman Hakim, Muhammad Rozi, Zubardi, Hamdani, Hamdani Ilyas, and Supriyadi to 10 months in prison and a fine.

iNews, September 17, 2021; Centre for Orangutan Protection, September 18, 2021; AP, September 22, 2021; Merdeka.com, January 27, 2021; The Jakarta Post (avec AFP), January 28, 2022.<sup>169</sup>

**July 11 and August 15, 2021  
Banda Alam, East Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

The decapitated carcass of a valuable Sumatran elephant (*Elephas maximus sumatranus*, Appendix I) was discovered on a palm oil plantation. He was approximately 12 years old and the post-mortem revealed that he had been poisoned. The head that had its small tusks removed was found 300 meters from the body in the bushes. According to police, a man was arrested. He admitted to having placed poisoned mangos near a herd and to have executed a dying elephant with an axe 2 hours later. An alleged accomplice was reported on the run. The suspect provided information that led to the arrest of the middleman who bought the ivory and then resold it in batches to 3 resellers, including a craftsman who made a dagger and cigarette holder out of it.



=>



The 5 criminals were sentenced to prison. Jainal, aliases Zainon and Dekgam, the poisoner - claimed 5 poisoning attempts, 2 of which were successful - to 3 years plus a fine of 3,500 US\$. Edy Murdani, the ivory buyer and dispatcher, received the same sentence. Rinaldi Antonius, Soni, and Jeffri Zulkarnaen, who bought the raw ivory from Murdani and transformed it into processed ivory, were sentenced to 3 years in prison and fined 7,000 US\$. In 7 years, about 40 Sumatran elephants died suspiciously in Aceh province.

New Straits Times (with AFP), July 12, 2021; The Straits Times, August 17, 2021; The Associated Press, August 19, 2021; ABC News (with AP), December 15, 2021.<sup>170</sup>

## July 2021

### Riau and North Sumatra Provinces, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

The police discovered Sumatran elephant (*Elephas maximus sumatranus*, Appendix I) skulls and a pair of tusks at the home of 2 suspects in Indragiri Hulu Regency. The poachings are believed to date back to 2015 in the Pelalawan and Bengkalis Regencies. Both suspects were arrested.

Xinhua, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>171</sup>

## MALAYSIA

### May 4, 2021

#### Kluang, State of Johor, Malaysia

Two elephants around 5 and 6 years old died, allegedly from pesticide poisoning. They were part of a herd of 25-30 elephants that move back and forth between the Kluang "protected" forest and the Kahang Dam reservoir. Post-mortem samples were taken before they were buried nearby.

Malay Mail, May 5, 2021.<sup>172</sup>



### May 20 and 22, 2021

#### Kinabatangan, State of Sabah, Malaysia

In the north of the island, the Bornean Elephant Sanctuary (BES) shelters elephants who have been rescued from distress, who are lost, and especially who are recovering from poaching. The BES just welcomed 4 juveniles who were previously housed in Sepilok in a refuge intended for orangutan rehabilitation. Between 2015 and 2021, they were captured while wandering on their own around palm oil plantations or on the road, crossing forests. One of the 4 had even been saved from drowning while struggling at the bottom of a water reservoir. Covering a few hectares, BES houses 7 elephants. The first residents go on excursions into the nearby forest under the supervision of mahouts. There is still a lot to be done to improve the living conditions of the staff and the elephants. The project is co-financed by the Portland Zoo in Oregon, USA and by Japanese and English foundations.

The Star, May 24, 2021.<sup>173</sup>

### July 13 and 14, 2021

#### Tawau, State of Sabah, Malaysia

The judicial decision on the torture and desecration of an elephant and the concealment of his tusks in autumn 2019 was bitter. Jaifol Liun, the wise guy who is the manager of a palm oil plantation, was released. The thugs, Parancoi Nordin and Abdullah Simin, aged 61 and 70, have already served a 2-year prison sentence for carrying and using prohibited weapons and were released from charges of theft and concealing parts of endangered animals. The third, Martin Alok, of Indonesian nationality, was not defended by a lawyer and sentenced to 4 years in prison (from his arrest in October 2019).

The crime scene looked like a horror movie. It was described in "On the Trail" n°26 p. 94. It should be noted that the victim, initially described as a baby elephant, was a male in his early thirties.

New Straits Times July 14, 2021.<sup>174</sup>



### July 16, 2021

#### Lahad Datu, State of Sabah, Malaysia

Farm workers discovered a dead male elephant, approximately 6 years old. The body was not injured. Blood discharge from the trunk, mouth, and anus increased suspicion of poisoning.

The Star, July 18, 2021.<sup>175</sup>





## THAILAND

### May 2021 Thailand

Six swindlers, including a Nigerian couple, were arrested. They worked on the internet and searched for lonely women on social media to contact, presenting themselves as pensioners or foreign industrialists settled or soon to be settled in Thailand. One scam is worth mentioning. It is about a pseudo American industrialist. He gets in touch with a plaintiff, inspiring confidence and romance over e-mail and says he will send gifts to celebrate their meeting. A few days later, a (pseudo) employee of a logistics platform calls the plaintiff and asks for one million baths (32,000 US\$) to pay the customs clearance fees of several packages arriving from the United States. And so on, until the plaintiff realized that she was in the hands of a gang. The Nigerian couple operated a restaurant and a currency exchange shop to cover up their misappropriations. At their home, police seized luxury watches, a sports car, cash, 12 electronic cards, and 2 ivory tusks.

Chiang Rai Times, May 26, 2021.<sup>176</sup>

### May 28 and June 15-18, 2021 Sri Racha, Chonburi Province, and Damnoen Saduak, Ratchaburi Province, Thailand



Eleven domesticated elephants, all trained, young and in great shape, are for sale, alongside their mahouts. "It's necessary for us to sell our animals even though we love them so much. Despite our love and sorrow, we have to be apart," announces the Sriracha Zoo. They specialize in elephant antics, rides, and banana distribution, and sell their services to tourists from around the world. However, Covid has decimated their business and Sriracha is now bankrupt. The management invites interested parties to contact it via Facebook. However, The National Parks Administration restricts the sale of zoo animals exclusively to other zoos, and they must authorize any and all transactions.

In February, Ms. Pimporn Hemmarat, an elephant tourism specialist in southern Thailand, offered 21 elephants for sale at a price of 1.5 million baht per animal or 50,000 US\$. Chinese demand is stagnant. Namibia sold off 170 elephants (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.25).

Concerns are growing in Thailand about the deplorable fates of elephants used in tourism. They are stationed in parking lots, tied to poles and chained by their necks. One business owner attributes this treatment to a lack of money. "Tourists are not coming anymore, mahouts have been out of work since Covid, and we don't have the money to pay them". The camp manager Thavorn Parnkaew rejects the accusations of cruelty. "The elephants had been chained up due to safety concerns."

Sriracha Tiger Zoo, May 28, 2021; Bangkok Post, May 29, 2021; Daily Mail, June 22, 2021; Chiang Rai Times, July 14, 2021; Coconuts, July 15, 2021.<sup>177</sup>

### June 10, 2021 Wang Dong Sub-district, Mueang Kanchanaburi District, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand



Elephants are facing headwinds.

Domesticated adults are being put away in anticipation of resumed trading and elephant rides. Some of them are for sale in batches, just like used trucks for a few tens of thousands of dollars (see above).

On the other hand, baby elephants are being captured in forests and sold for 25,000 US\$ to investors in the animal entertainment industry who speculate the business will rebound after the Covid-19 pandemic.

The National Parks Administration seized a 4-year-old male elephant in the River Kwai camp. A genetic analysis proves that contrary to his official pedigree, he is not the descendant of the domesticated elephants owned by Nimor Satayaruangrong in Mae Ramat district (Tak province). The director of the camp, who according to press reports is of French nationality, has been fined 50,000 US\$, and 3 other people including the seller are suspected of trafficking wild elephants since March 2019.

Chiang Rai Times, June 12, 2021.<sup>178</sup>



## SOUTHERN ASIA

### BANGLADESH

#### FAMILY AFFAIRS

August 31, 2021

**Khuniapalang, Cox's Bazar District, Chittagong Division, Bangladesh**



Nazir Hamed, a policeman, was arrested. He was trying to bury an elephant with the help of his sons (ages 20, 22 and 34) after cutting off 2 of his legs and the trunk. The elephant was electrocuted by an electric fence set in place by the Hamed family to protect crops.

Dhaka Tribune, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021; News Broadcasting Service, September 3rd, 2021.<sup>179</sup>

### INDIA

May 21, 2021

**Kongarpalayam, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



An elephant around 35 years old was electrocuted on the edge of a tapioca farm located 1.5 km from the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve. Police are investigating the farmer suspected of concealing the electrical connection. The evidence is missing. Histopathology experts examined the elephant's heart and confirmed he died of electrocution.

The Times of India, May 22, 2021.<sup>180</sup>

May 26, 2021

**Karachikorai, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



A 35-year-old elephant was electrocuted by an electric fence that protected a banana plantation, 200 meters from the edge of the forest. The tragic contact occurred in the middle of the night. The plantation farmer fled. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup>



35-year-old adult male to die in the district from an electrical attack in a matter of days.

The Hindu, May 26, 2021.<sup>181</sup>

June 6, 2021

**Gobindaprasad, Khordha District, State of Odisha, India**



An electric fence powered by solar panels electrocuted a 15-year-old male elephant. The current was 20 kilovolts instead of the authorized 9 kV. The overvoltage was set in place to kill. The device was intended to protect a plantation, half of which was illegal. The owner is a lawyer and was released on bail. His name is Biswajit Arjend Kumar Jena.

The New Indian Express, June 7 and July 25, 2021.<sup>182</sup>

June 10, 2021

**Babaya Forest, Bankura District, State of West Bengal, India**



A wild elephant was dragging a chain on his right front leg, just above the foot. The chain, probably a remnant of a trap, bit into the flesh, and the lone elephant from Jharkhand was limping more and more. His case became known in the whole region. A caring team was called in and they succeeded in tranquilizing the elephant with a sedative injection to avoid general anesthesia.

The chain was freed with electric cutters. During the extrication and medical treatment, the elephant was held upright with wooden poles on his side.

The Hindu, June 11, 2021; The Times of India, June 11, 2021.<sup>183</sup>



June 11, 2021

**Kothigutta, Chittoor District, State of Andhra Pradesh, India**



A juvenile male was electrocuted near a field around midnight. His small tusks were "sprouting". When he collapsed, he knocked down a fence post. In 2 years, 12 elephants have been poached by firearms or electrocution in the district.

The Hindu, June 11, 2021.<sup>184</sup>







Emperor Shah Jahan put to death the worshipped elephant, perhaps injured in battle.  
India, 18<sup>th</sup> century

**June 11, 2021**

**Gourikon, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India**

A 4-year-old female elephant lay on the dry Teesta River streambed, where villagers used to grow wheat and peanuts and whose small seasonal crops attract elephants. The elephant calf is believed to have been poisoned. The herd stayed in place for several days for a ritual observed in Africa and Asia, and forestry officials discovered the calf's body after the elephants had left for other galleys and pitfalls. The Telegraph, June 13, 2021.<sup>185</sup>

**June 12, 2021**

**Ranibahal Forest, Kalahandi, District State of Odisha, India**

The carcass of a 35-year-old elephant was discovered in the forest. The death dates back about 20 days. The tusks were missing. They were later found by forestry officers at the home of Dana Majhi. Majhi fled, but 2 accomplices were arrested. Since the beginning of 2021, 9 elephants have died in the so-called Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary. The New Indian Express, June 14, 2021.<sup>186</sup>



**June 16, 2021**

**Dalmore tea garden, Alipurduar District, State of West Bengal, India**



At night, an elephant was electrocuted at a tea plantation next to Dalgaon forest. Animesh Bose, an elephant and wildlife advocate, was outraged at the lack of response from police, panchayats, and forest departments. He recalls that 8 elephants were electrocuted in 2020 in the northern part of the state. Food shortages during the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated tensions in rural areas. In a tea plantation in the neighboring district of Jalpaiguri, a worker killed his brother with an axe in a dispute over sharing meat. The Telegraph, June 17, 2021.<sup>187</sup>

**June 19, 2021**

**Raimona National Park, Kokrajhar District, State of Assam, India**

The 31st Battalion of the SSB arrested Martyush Basumatary in the new Raimona national park. He was carrying 2 elephant tusks (12.66 kg) in a rickshaw. Raimona national park was officially established on June 5, 2021, on World Environment Day. It covers 422 km<sup>2</sup> in the foothills of the eastern Himalayas. It is connected to the Phipsoo Wildlife Sanctuary and the Jigme Singye Wangchuck national park in Bhutan. It is home to clouded leopards, hornbills, golden langurs, orchids, butterflies, elephants, poachers, and traffickers. The Sentinel, June 7 and 21, 2021; Sashastra Seema Bal, June 19, 2021.<sup>188</sup>

**June 2021**

**Vazhuthacaud, Thiruvananthapuram District, State of Kerala, India**

A new vault is being built to store all kinds of ivory: ivory from trafficking, poaching and smuggling, ivory from domesticated elephants, and ivory from elephants who have died of disease or electrocution. The quantities stored are confidential. The current vault is full to breaking point with ivory. It is monitored by camera and the simultaneous presence of 3 official guards is required to open the armored door.

In 2014, the forestry department recommended that the ivory be burned to alleviate security and storage problems that worsen over time, but the government preferred the status quo, or to distribute the most spectacular ivories to museums and other institutions. Two years later, the Ministry of Environment has again put forward the need to burn the ivory when cases are cleared of all appeals, but the government is opposed to this and the Forest Department continues to spend a lot of money on reducing the risk of theft, fire, and even more money to build a new vault that will meet all the safety standards.

The Times of India, June 22, 2021.<sup>189</sup>

**June 21, 2021**

**Dilahi, Sonbhadra District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Three men on a motorcycle were carrying 2 tusks, 10.6 kg each. They left from Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh and were on their way to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh (200 km away).

Amar Ujala, June 22, 2021; Outlook India, June 22, 2021; The Times of India, June 23, 2021.<sup>190</sup>

**June 21, 2021**

**Patna, Patna District, State of Bihar, India**

Doctor Jyoti Kumar works in a private hospital. Together with his driver and 2 staff members, he was accused of bringing to his workplace and attempting to conceal in adjoining premises 9 raw ivory tusks weighing 38 kg. He claims that they came from a domestic elephant he owned and who died 4 years ago. In this hypothesis, he would have failed to comply with the wildlife protection law, which obliges him to have a license while the animal is alive and hand the tusks over to the authorities after his death. The Wildlife Institute of India will be conducting forensic tests to determine the age of the elephant and ensure that he is of Asian descent. Dr. Kumar is the president of the Bharatiya Janata Party in the Vaishali district. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), June 22, 2021; The Times of India, June 23, 2021.<sup>191</sup>



**June 22, 2021**

**Banhar, Raigarh District, State of Chhattisgarh, India**



From official sources, the reasons for the elephant's death are mysterious. For the local press there is no doubt: she died of electrocution. "The falling of trees, disappearance of forest cover, food and water shortage, and multiplication of mines and quarries are constantly aggravating conflicts between humans and elephants", laments Degree Chauhan, environmental activist and president of the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) in Chhattisgarh state.

The Free Press Journal, June 22, 2021.<sup>192</sup>

**July 8, 2021**

**Talagada, Angul District, State of Odisha, India**



Batteries, hacking of public networks, wires strung across trees, and animal paths. All the dirty tricks are falling on wildlife.

In the village, forestry agents organized an informational meeting on Thursday evening about the risks of fences and electric traps. These included the risks for themselves, risks for the wildlife, and risks of punishment. The next morning, a 15-year-old male elephant was discovered dead near the home of Joginath Pradhan, which had been set up without authorization in the forest one km away from the village.

The New Indian Express, July 10, 2021.<sup>193</sup>



**July 11, 2021**

**Bahir Kapsan, Lakhimpur District, State of Assam, India**

Two tusks, one 48.7 cm long, the other 34.2 cm long, with a total weight of 4.79 kg, were found in Monu Doley's house. Bolin Kalita and Binod Yein were also present. The 3 men are suspected of poaching and being linked to a trafficking scheme in East Asia via Bangladesh.

The Times of India, July 12, 2021.<sup>194</sup>

**July 18, 2021**

**Mahasamund District, State of Chhattisgarh, India**

Sonu Mittal, an Odisha native, was trying to sell 7 worked ivories worth around 7,000 US\$ when police caught him in the act near a temple. He said he had obtained the ivories from Patnagarh in Odisha, 175 km from Mahasamund District.

Hindustan Times, July 19, 2021; The Times of India, July 19, 2021.<sup>195</sup>

**July 19, 2021**

**Dehing Patkai National Park, Dibrugarh District, State of Assam, India**

This first clash between forest guards from Assam and loggers from Arunachal Pradesh took place at night. Forest officials from Hukanjuri and Kathalguri organized a joint patrol after receiving information that something unusual was happening in the park, specifically in the Basabnala area. When they arrived at the spot, they located a land clearing site. When the smugglers, presumed to be from Arunachal Pradesh, were discovered, they opened fire and a battle began. The next morning, the patrol returned to the scene and discovered a tragic victim. A female elephant, about 18 years old, who was being used to transport illegally cut precious woods, was hit by 3 bullets and died.

The Hindu, June 9, 2021; The Times of India, July 22, 2021.<sup>196</sup>

**July 19, 2021**

**Raba, Keonjhar District, State of Odisha, India**

The 20-year-old female elephant and the 5-year-old calf died very close together. There were no electrical devices nearby unless they had been quickly removed. When the 2 forestry officers and the veterinarian arrived on scene, they noticed that blood was coming out of the mother's mouth. Poisoning is suspected. There were no traces of bullets or fights. The hypothesis of a simultaneous natural death will be difficult to believe. The post-mortem examination will perhaps uncover the truth.

Orissa Post, July 20, 2021; The New Indian Express, July 20, 2021.<sup>197</sup>



**July 22, 2021**

**Sholodanga, Jalpaiguri, State of West Bengal, India**



Hari Krishnan, head of the local forestry administration, speaks of "a natural death". Some villagers are much more incisive. The previous evening, they saw electrical wires hanging in the branches of a jackfruit tree near where the elephant died.

Siliguri Times, July 22, 2021; The Telegraph India, July 23, 2021.<sup>198</sup>



**July 23, 2021**

**Kantamila, Dhenkanal District, State of Odisha, India**



The 8-year-old elephant ran into a 3-km-long power line that pirate poachers connected to the public grid while approaching a kendu (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) plantation. Kendu trees are used in the furniture industry, leaves are exploited by the tobacco industry, and its fruits are consumed. Four people have been arrested. They were involved in previous electrical poaching cases. 120 elephants were electrocuted in Odisha between 2009 and 2019. The numbers of electric deaths are increasing year by year and for the year 2021, the death toll could reach 15-20.

Sangita Lyer, founder of Voice for Asian Elephants Society is calling on Tata Power Limited to barricade all its transformers and other distribution equipment so that they are only accessible to company personnel.

The Hindu, July 24, 2021; The New Indian Express, July 25, 2021.<sup>199</sup>





**Night of July 28 to July 29, 2021**  
**Hosakadu, Kodagu District, State of**  
**Karnataka, India**



This is the 4<sup>th</sup> elephant electrocution in the district in a month. It always happens at night when all the criminals are in bed after putting the juice back into the wires, violating the state electricity law. This time, a man named Chandru was protecting ginger and cashew crops. The approximately 38-year-old male's tusks were secured and he was buried in the nearby forest.

The New Indian Express, July 29, 2021.<sup>200</sup>

**August 1, 2021**  
**Mallenahalli, Chikkamagaluru District,**  
**State of Karnataka, India**



This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> time in a year that an elephant in this village died from electric shocks, which is becoming a weapon of mass destruction. The Hindu, August 1st, 2021.<sup>201</sup>

**August 3, 2021**  
**Dulung Reserve Forest, Lakhimpur District,**  
**State of Assam, India**

The clash took place on the border between the states of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, on the Assam side. Woodcutters were reported in a forest reserve prohibited for land clearing in Ghagar. After a 10 km walk, the forest officials reached the spot. They spotted 7 illegal loggers clearing logs with the help of an elephant and smuggling them into Arunachal Pradesh. They refused to surrender and a gunfight ensued. Four men fled, 3 surrendered. The logs and elephant were seized. Bikash Gogoi, Koheswar Gogoi and Raju Das were taken into custody and admitted they acted under the orders of Tanu, a timber smuggler. Tanu's network is so influential in the region that he has acquired the services of some men of the woods from Assam.

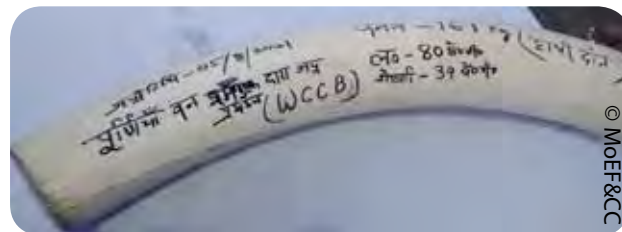
East Mojo, August 4, 2021; The Sentinel, August 5, 2021.<sup>202</sup>

**August 5, 2021**  
**Purnia, Purnia District, State of Bihar, India**



A 16.1 kg tusk piece was confiscated in the Heera Hotel and 5 people were arrested. They were coming from Champanagar, 100 kilometers away, and were about to hand the tusk over to a smuggler. Purnia is about 60 kilometers from the Bangladesh and Nepal borders.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), August 6, 2021; Zee News, August 7, 2021.<sup>203</sup>



**Beginning of August 2021**  
**Ghatkopar, Mumbai Suburban District, State of**  
**Maharashtra, India**

Sub-Inspector Mahesh Shelar and his team of 2 men, 24 and 30 years old, were arrested at the metro station. According to the local press, they were in possession of the tusk of a male elephant and the small tusk of a female elephant, both worth around 2 million rupees (27,000 US\$).

The Free Press Journal, August 8, 2021.<sup>204</sup>

**August 12, 2021**  
**Vattakulli, Viluppuram District, State**  
**of Tamil Nadu, India**



As a counterpoint to World Elephant Day, a 4 to 5-year-old male elephant just out of the nursing period dies from electrocution in the Gudalur forest. Between 2012 and 2017, the elephant population in Tamil Nadu is estimated to have declined from 4,000 to 2,761.

The Hindu, August 13, 2021; The New Indian Express, August 13, 2021.<sup>205</sup>



**August 13 and 14, 2021**

**Chinnakanal, Idukki District, State of Kerala, India**



The post-mortem examination confirmed the elephant died from electrocution. The police heard Palkulamkudiyil Suresh Soman, the farmer of 301 Colony. Conflicts are increasing between elephants and human activities. Only for Chinnakanal and surrounding areas, 3 elephants were electrocuted between 2017 and the first half of 2021. The latest victim, around 45 years old, left behind a 2-year-old baby elephant who now lives with a small herd (6 elephants). Her survival is not guaranteed if there is no other nursing female in the herd.

The Times of India, August 15, 2021.<sup>206</sup>

**August 14, 2021**

**Sado, Deogarh District, State of Odisha, India**



Pabitra Majhi and Manaphula Majhi were about to sell 2, 79-cm-long tusks weighing 4.7 kg. The tusks were confiscated and they were arrested. It is now up to the police to identify the suppliers and buyers. Pragativadi, August 14, 2021.<sup>207</sup>

**August 14, 2021**

**Mettur, Salem District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Two tusks weighing 11 kg were confiscated. The gang has connections in 15 districts across the State. Tamil Nadu's role in spreading animal trafficking to the north of West Bengal, to New Delhi, Kochi, and other Indian and foreign megacities was confirmed. Four arrests were made.

DT Next, August 21, 2021; The Times of India, August 21, 2021.<sup>208</sup>

**August 20, 2021**

**Koroibari, Baksa District, State of Assam, India. Border with Bhutan.**



During the night, 2 adult elephants died from electrocution. They were near a rice field. From 2011 to 2019, 90 elephants were electrocuted in Assam.

The Hindu, August 20, 2021.<sup>209</sup>

**August 21, 2021**

**Turibari, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India**



Burn marks on the trunk indicate electrocution. The juvenile male was struck by lightning near a rice field and his body was found in the Gheesh River streambed. Forestry officers are either powerless or give up in the face of all the thieves' illegal connections in the public network and medium voltage lines. A few public meetings have been held but have not been very successful in terms of attracting an audience or making people listen. Electricity thieves are taking over and getting closer and closer to the forests. "This is our collective failure, we are not able to raise awareness," says Shyama Prasad Pandey of the NGO Society for Protecting Ophiofauna & Animal Rights. The Times of India, August 22, 2021.<sup>210</sup>

**August 23, 2021**

**Thalavadi, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



In the middle of the night, a fence protecting a potato crop electrocuted an elephant. The farmer had confided in the Tangedco (Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited). The illegal line was connected at night and disconnected during the day. "He had been playing this game for months," said the investigating officer, "a game made all the more dangerous by the fact that it was placed on the edge of the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve." The villagers were quick to call forest officials, especially since the elephant was a makna (tuskless elephant) and somehow there was no way to traffic ivory. In these accelerating episodes, forestry officers are seen as knackers and gravediggers at the expense of their investigative missions. They buried the victims in the "protected" forest.

Poaching, transport, electrocution and attacks on elephants in Erode district, see. "On the Trail" n°15 p. 101, n°21 p. 95, n°22 p. 99, n°23 p. 130, p. 131, n°25 p. 94, n°27 p. 107, n°28 p. 111, p. 112, n°30 p. 36, n°31 p. 37.

The Hindu, August 23, 2021; The Times of India, August 24, 2021.<sup>211</sup>





**August 29 and September 2, 2021**  
**Anamalai Tiger Reserve, Coimbatore District,**  
**State of Tamil Nadu, India**

After the post-mortem, the carcass was left in the middle of the forest for scavenging animals to find. The forensic veterinarian recovered 4 air rifle bullets from the elephant's head and believes that they alone cannot be responsible for the super tusk's death. The 1.5-meter-long left tusk was stolen with an axe by "experienced poachers", says the forest administration veterinarian.

After 4 days of tracking, the huge tusk was found near a village 6 km from the carcass. "As of now, we are close to arresting the culprits." "It will be done as soon as possible without any loopholes for the offenders."

The Times of India, August 31<sup>st</sup> and September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>212</sup>

**SRI LANKA**

**May 4, 2021**  
**Sri Lanka**

Army Chief General Shavendra Silva pledged that no domesticated elephants will be enrolled in the army while he is in office. His announcement was welcomed by Rally for Animal Rights & Environment. Rally for Animal Rights & Environment, May 4, 2021.<sup>213</sup>



**June 26-30, 2021**  
**Minneriya National Park, North Central Province,**  
**Sri Lanka**

General Shavendra Silva's good intentions do not seem to be shared by all of his troops. On the night of Friday, June 25, and Saturday, June 26, Minneriya National Park rangers were on alert. They heard of suspected vehicles on the side roads bordering the park and on the crossing tracks.

Several roadblocks were set up in a hurry and they were broken through by 2 army vehicles. A chase started and the vehicles reached the Anuradhapura military camp after crossing Habarana, Maradankadawala, Tirappene, and Galkulama, covering 60 km. A few hours after this incident, soldiers led by General Mohan Ratnayake reportedly returned to the scene and threatened the rangers with death. They would have tried to snatch the cell phones of forest rangers and truck drivers who witnessed the gymkhana to prevent damaging images from being posted on social networks or used as evidence in possible trials.

On June 30, a warrant was issued for Mohan Ratnayake. He was arrested, heard by the magistrates and released on bail of 2,500 US\$.

General Shavendra Silva, army commander-in-chief and avowed protector of elephants, ordered an internal investigation.

Prior to 2015 and the seizure of many elephants captured in forests but whose owners claimed came from domesticated parents, the Habarana area and Minneriya National Park were the main reservoirs of fake domesticated elephants.

The park covers an area of 90 km<sup>2</sup> and is famous for the "gathering" of about 300 adult wild elephants with calves who, from June to September, come to graze on the soft grass in the drying dam's bed.

The Sunday Times, June 27, 2021; Sri Lanka Mirror (with Divaina), July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>214</sup>



Minneriya National Park. Photo Patrick Peter



**August 17, 2021**

**Kataragama, Uva Province, Sri Lanka**

The elephant lay on the dirt at the edge of a forest in Yala National Park. His head was cut off. His trunk and tusks were missing. Bullet holes were found in his ears. The elephant's tail had also been cut off. Thanks to the diligence of sniffer dogs and police, the 2 tusks (each nearly a meter long), tail and murder weapon were found and 3 men were arrested after a 2-day-long manhunt in the park. But the damage is done. A super tusker was massacred. There are only about 50 of them left in an ever-dwindling population. Old estimates of 4,000 to 5,000 wild elephants remaining no longer match reality.

News 1st, August 16 and 18, 2021; The Sunday Times, August 22, 2021.<sup>215</sup>



**August 19, 2021**

**Sri Lanka**

The Official Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka publishes new regulations regarding the protection and welfare of domestic elephants.

Examples:

- If the elephant is in a musth period or subject to exceptional agitation, anesthetics will be injected under the direction of a veterinary surgeon as a last resort, if necessary.
- It is forbidden to carry more than 4 people on the back of an elephant.
- When an elephant is declared ill by a veterinarian or licensed traditional animal caretaker, he must be excused from work, service, or any other assignment.
- Any vehicle transporting an elephant must post a sign outside the vehicle indicating such transportation. Continuous transport must not exceed 12 hours and the speed limit is 30 km/h.
- During hot weather, an elephant should not be forced for any reason to walk on pavement, except during processions or if he is to be taken to a swimming area.
- Night work is prohibited except during [Buddhist] processions
- An elephant's shelter must be protected from lightning by a lightning rod and be kept in good sanitary conditions through a waste disposal system.

- Firecrackers and gunfire are prohibited near an elephant except for the traditional "gunfire", which is essential for religious processions to run smoothly.
  - Every elephant, other than in case of sickness or in period of musth, must be able to bathe during at least 2h30 per day, except in days of religious processions.
  - Elephants must not be allowed or trained to swim across dangerous waterways.
  - Elephants must have a medical check-up every 6 months by a veterinarian or a licensed traditional animal caretaker. This check-up must be recorded in the elephant's health records.
  - Pregnant elephants, elephants raising calves under 2 years of age, and elephants over 60 years of age are exempt from any form of work or activity.
  - Any person who has an elephant in their care must have a plot of land larger than 1.6 hectares to support the welfare and isolation of the elephant if he is in musth. Each additional elephant requires an additional 0.4 hectare.
  - If the roof of an elephant shelter is made of iron or asbestos sheets, appropriate methods must be implemented to reduce the interior temperature.
  - When an elephant is to be decorated with lighting devices for video recording or other activities, only batteries with a minimum voltage are allowed and no other power generating devices shall be used to safeguard his safety.
  - It is forbidden to carry timber or other loads on elephants' tusks and jaws, unless he is equipped in accordance with traditional methods and if load is less than one third of the elephant's weight.
  - If it is necessary to shorten a tusk or canine tooth for the health and safety of the elephant, this must be done under the supervision of a veterinarian or licensed traditional animal caretaker, recorded in the elephant's health records, and approved by the Department of Wildlife Conservation.
  - Mahouts must not consume alcohol or drugs to perform their duties.
  - Any elephant under the age of 5 years old must be allowed to accompany his mother when she is at work and no form of work must be imposed on it.
- The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, August 19, 2021; News 1st, August 22, 2021.<sup>216</sup>





## NORTHERN EUROPE

### UNITED KINGDOM

**July 5, 2021**

**Bekesbourne, Kent County, England, United Kingdom**

Rewild, the return to the wild, between dream and imposture.

After Sea Shepherd chaotically took over the Pont-Scorff zoo in Brittany, western France, which, with the help of other NGOs and a major fundraising campaign among the general public and a few businessmen, intended to prepare the captive animals to return to the wild in their native lands, it is now the English foundation Aspinall's turn to get bogged down in the Rewild mirage and quagmire.

The foundation that recruited Carrie Johnson, the Prime Minister's wife, as its director of communications in January 2021, gave The Guardian exclusive information on July 4<sup>th</sup> about the imminent transfer of 13 elephants, including 3 baby elephants, from Howletts Zoological Park in Kent, where they



were all born (except for one who was born in Israel), to Kenya. The Guardian published on July 5th gives concrete details on this initiative presented as the first one worldwide and cleverly described as "Operation Mammoth". Angela Sheldrick, president of the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, looks forward to temporarily hosting the 13 Kent migrants in her elephant orphanage: "We look forward to offering that same opportunity to these 13 elephants when they step foot on African soil, home where they belong and able to live wild and free as nature intended." To these basic rewilders' talking points, Damian Aspinall adds the participatory citizen touch and the subtle beginning of a fundraiser by adding that "by supporting the project, members of the public will be part of conservation history, helping restore an iconic species to its ancestral homeland." The public relations plan is well made. The risks are mentioned, but they are manageable, especially since the elephant's return has long been the subject of consultation with the KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service). The deal of the century was looking good.

On July 6<sup>th</sup>, the Aspinall Foundation posted an enthusiastic statement on its Facebook page that was full of excitement and removed all doubts: "13 elephants. 25 tons. 7,000 km across the globe." "These animals belong in the wild, no elephant can feel at home when in captivity. Two different sites, both in the south of Kenya, are currently under consideration, both of which provide the perfect natural conditions for the elephants." After the appeal to emotion, the message ends with a plea to donate and a photo of a baby elephant.

The public relations plan was well practiced. Mrs. Carrie Johnson, a specialist of the genre, has done a good job. The English media went crazy. The event jumped from the Guardian to other tabloids.

On July 7<sup>th</sup>, Kenya throws a cold shower on the hot topic of environmental news. The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, in a press release written in English, denied that the KWS had been consulted and stated that it had discovered the subject through an article on the Daily Mail.

On the same day in the afternoon, the Guardian and other media agencies were forced to backtrack. They had to bring in eminent specialists who expressed their strongest reservations about the feasibility of the transfer and elephants' abilities to acclimate to life in the wild in Africa after being confined in a zoo in England, as well as their reservations with the elephants avoiding all the pitfalls such as conflicts with human activities. The media even explored the depths of the Aspinall Foundation's consanguinity and undue financial benefits.

As of August 10<sup>th</sup>, Aspinall Foundation's "Back to the Wild" campaign page on the JustGiving website had raised 4,058 £ (560 US\$), while the foundation is asking for 1 million£ (1.4 million US\$). The public relations plan failed miserably.

The Guardian, July 5 and 7, 2021; The Aspinall Foundation, July 6, 2021; The Times, July 7 and 13, 2021; University of Kent, July 7, 2021; The New European, August 13, 2021.<sup>217</sup>

## WESTERN EUROPE

### GERMANY

**June 9, 2021**

**Dresden, Saxony State, Germany**

54 ivory items including rosaries, canes, rings, and necklaces were confiscated from a 28-year-old man. He attracted customs' attention due to the number of packages that were sent to him from during the last Christmas season. Seven of these packages were opened and seized, preventing the trafficker from profiting from 1,800 grams of ivory divided into 20 necklaces, 2 rings, and a walking stick.

German Customs, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.<sup>218</sup>





## SOUTHERN EUROPE

### SPAIN

**Early May 2021**

**Cambre, A Coruña Province, Autonomous Community of Galicia, Spain**

A ciborium and 2 African-inspired carved ivory tusks displayed on a pedestal were seized in a private home after the Servicio de Protección de la Naturaleza (Seprona) spotted them for sale online. La Voz de Galicia, May 7, 2021.<sup>219</sup>

**June 12, 2021**

**Madrid, Community of Madrid, Spain**

After police checked every stand at the 2021 Antik Passion Almoneda fair, they confiscated 12 ivory items from the seller who could not attest to their age.

Telemadrid (with Europa Press), June 25, 2021.<sup>220</sup>

### ITALY

**May 28, 2021**

**Terni, Province of Terni, Region of Umbria, Italy**



Statuettes, jewels, fans, boxes, buttons, and one engraved tusk, the whole being estimated at 8,000 €, nearly 10,000 US\$, were seized in an antique store in Terni. The manager was unable to provide any documentation to prove that these suspicious objects were genuine antiques.

Il Messaggero, May 28, 2021.<sup>221</sup>

**June 20, 2021**

**Pissignano, Province of Perugia, Region of Umbria, Italy**

The CITES carabinieri unit searched every aisle at the antiques fair and seized from an itinerant seller 20 ivory items whose origins and manufacturing dates are unknown. He wanted to sell them 5,000 € (6,000 US\$). They will be returned to him in the unexpected event that the Spoleto court decides he is entitled to sell them.

TuttOggi, June 28, 2021.<sup>222</sup>

**July 29, 2021**

**Varazze, Province of Savona, Region of Liguria, Italy**



The two 50-cm-long tusks that adorned a luxurious villa and have an estimated value of around 20,000 € (23,800 US\$) were carefully confiscated by the carabinieri. They were handed over to the judicial authority while the owner's trial has not started. The owner was unable to explain the origin of the tusks or justify their possession.

Il Secolo XIX, July 29, 2021.<sup>223</sup>

**August 11, 2021**

**Stefanaconi, Province of Vibo Valentia, Region of Calabria, Italy**

A helicopter first located the dump. Police found 130 m<sup>3</sup> of cemetery waste, marble tombstones, paving stones, and other more ordinary demolition rubble at a farmer's home, whose main tool was an excavator. Mistreated goats were used as a cover for various trafficking activities. Such activities were not limited to waste storage as the police also discovered a carved tusk on the farm worth, according to the local press, around 150,000 € (180,000 US\$).

Zoom24, August 11, 2021.<sup>224</sup>

## OCEANIA

### AUSTRALIA

**August 12, 2021**

**Australia**

Thanks to the shared will of the Minister of the Environment and NGOs, the promulgation of the law that bans ivory trade is slowly but surely advancing (see "On the Trail" n°26 p.79). The most difficult problem remains defining the exemptions and knowing, for example, if the sale of elephant statuettes made of stone or other minerals will remain authorized if the tusks are made of ivory.

Yahoo News Australia, August 12, 2021.<sup>225</sup>





# ELEPHANTS / HIPPOS / HORNBILLS / RHINOS / SPERMWHALES



Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*). Photo s9-4pr

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**May 14, 2021**

#### **Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

A Mercedes-Benz was intercepted by the Hawks near the Table View. Raw tusks and hippopotamus teeth (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) were seized. The total value is estimated at 81,000 rand or 5,700 US\$. One arrest was made.

SABC News Western Cape, May 14, 2021; TimesLIVE, May 15, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



## KENYA

**May 7, 2021**

#### **Busia, Busia County, Kenya. Border with Uganda.**

Arrest of Kennedy Wabwire, a lieutenant in the Ugandan army, in possession of two elephant tusks with a total weight of 9 kg and a hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) tooth with a total value of 3 million Kenyan shillings or 27,851 US\$.

Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, May 11, 2021; Mara Elephant Project, May 2021.<sup>2</sup>

## UGANDA

**July 24, 2021**

#### **Hoima District, Western Region, Uganda**

Thanks to anonymous information, 10 kg of elephant ivory and 34 hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) teeth were seized. Two arrests were made.

Focused Conservation, August 9, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



## AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**August 31, 2021**

**Alexandria, State of Virginia, United States of America**

Between 2015 (possibly earlier) and 2020, Gary L. Cooper sold worked ivory and raw tusks over eBay and Craigslist, including a pair that measured 71 cm long. He also sold sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) ivory in the form of scrimshaw. He told he was valuing the estate of an elderly, unhealthy couple when he was sourcing them on the Internet. He was an online broker. In late 2018, he delivered worked ivories from Virginia to New York to a "client," who turned out to be an undercover US Fish and Wildlife agent. Cooper offered then to sell him lots of ivory, worth between 40,000 and 95,000 US\$. At his home, 136 ivories were seized. He was sentenced to 12 months' probation.

US Department of Justice, June 29, 2021; Medium, August 31, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



## ASIA

### CHINA

**April-Beginning of June 2021**  
**China**

Stitch after stitch, a network specializing in importing, processing and marketing elephant and sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) ivory and rhino horns was dismantled by the police forces in Henan, Guangdong, Fujian and Inner Mongolia. The overall value of the seizures is estimated at 100 million yuan or 15 million US\$. 37 people, including a Fujianese who is said to be the head of the ring, are being questioned by the judicial authorities. The inter-provincial investigation was prompted by information an ivory seller based in Dongtai (Jiangsu province).

Modern Express Post, June 25, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

**Beginning of May 2021**

**Hefei, Hefei Prefecture, Anhui Province, China**



A 25-year-old woman had her assets confiscated and was sentenced to 10 years in prison. The assets were worth 500,000 yuan (77,290 US\$). Between February and December of 2019, sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) teeth concealed in iron packaging were shipped at her request from Japan to several addresses in the Sichuan, Jilin, and Anhui provinces. Elephant ivory, sperm whale teeth, and other parts of endangered animals were photographed and sold through social media. With the help of her brother, she reportedly earned nearly 1.5 million yuan (215,000 US\$) from this illegal trade. Hefei Evening News, May 11, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

**May 2021**

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

Fifty hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) ivory items with a total weight of 775.9 grams and 17 elephant ivory items with a total weight of 120.1 grams were confiscated from a passenger on a flight from Africa. The expatriate worker claimed the items were made of boar ivory. Chinese Customs, June 1st, 2021; The Paper, June 2nd, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

**May 2021**

**Qinghai Province, China**

Sentencing of "Chen Moulin" to 10 years in prison and a 50,000 yuan fine (7,730 US\$), of "Fang Mouqun" to 8 years in prison and a 40,000 yuan fine (6,180 US\$) and of "Chen" to 4 years in prison and a 30,000 yuan fine (4,640 US\$). They were part of a wide buying and selling network specialising in wildlife products dismantled in 2020 after an 8-month investigation. The gang was operating in 10 provinces and autonomous municipalities. More than 3,000 wildlife by-products were seized at the time, mainly rhino horns and elephant ivory, but also hornbill ivory objects, skins, and stuffed animals (wolves, felines, birds of prey, etc.), all worth 800,000 yuan (114,500 US\$).

Chinapeace.gov.cn, May 18, 2021.<sup>8</sup>





## INDIA

**July 1, 2021**

**Dibrugarh, Dibrugarh District, State of Assam, India**

Police confiscated a rhinoceros horn, an elephant tusk, 19 grams of heroin, 130,000 rupees in cash (1,750 US\$) and 2 cell phones while searching the home of Miraz Khan, a drug trafficker well known to the police. Khan and his accomplice Anish Rahman were arrested.

The Times of India, July 3, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

## EUROPE

### UNITED KINGDOM

**August 18, 2021**

**Derby Unitary Authority, England, United Kingdom**

Ngie Law, a Malayan engineer, was sentenced to 2 suspended years in prison and a 6-month curfew period for selling ivory objects worth 65,000 pounds (91,000 US\$) on eBay and shipping them to China between 2011 and 2016. The sentence also punishes him for having held raw or worked ivory (tusks, brushes, cutlery, figures, billiard balls, a cigarette lighter...) in his home for trade purposes. Carbon-14 analysis proved that most of them came from elephants who died between 1970 and 1990, one hippopotamus ivory (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) and several walrus ivories (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada). He bought them in auction rooms, flea markets, and antique shops.

The Mirror, August 20, 2021; Derbyshire Unitary Authority, August 26, 2021; The Star, August 25, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



ebay

Trafficking in hippo teeth, see also page 146.  
Trafficking in hornbill helmets, see also pages 231 and 239.





# RHINOCEROSSES



Black rhinoceroses (*Diceros bicornis*). Photo Jan Ebr

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: the Indian rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis*, the Sumatran rhinoceros *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, and the Javan rhinoceros *Rhinoceros sondaicus*.

## On the Trail n°33 Black market horn quotation from media or official sources The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

### Value of 1 kg of raw horn

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Kenya	17,635	2 (2021)
	South Africa	25,000	23 (2021)
		26,690	26 (2021)
Asia	China	39,500	45 (2018)
		38,000	46 (2021)
		60,000	47 (2019)

### EASTERN AFRICA

#### KENYA

**June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Solio Game Reserve, Laikipia County, Kenya**

The scenario is the following: the rhino was down possibly after a fight with another rhino or another wild animal. He was then attacked by humans, stabbed 10 times, and had his horns cut off. The agony and death occurred several days ago.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>1</sup>

**June 10, 2021**

**Narok, Narok County, Kenya**

Appearance of Marima Ole Pesi, 64 years old. In his car, he was carrying a 1.10 kg horn with an estimated value of 2.1 million shillings (19,400 US\$ and 17,635 US\$/kg) around midnight.

Nation, June 12, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



**June 23, 2021**  
**Solio Game Reserve, Laikipia County, Kenya**



The scenario is the following: a bullet fractured 2 ribs, penetrated the left lung, and triggered internal bleeding. It was recovered with a metal detector and kept as evidence. The victim, who was 7 to 9 months pregnant (gestation period is about 16 months), had her horns amputated by the poachers. The firearm was powerful.

SWT/KWS Meru Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>3</sup>

**June 23, 2021**  
**Solio Game Reserve, Laikipia County, Kenya**

The scenario is the following: a female was hit by a bullet that fractured a rib and penetrated her lungs and heart, leading to massive hemorrhaging. The poachers seized her horns. She was in her third trimester of gestation and a female fetus was removed from her uterus during the post-mortem examination.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>4</sup>

**July 26, 2021**  
**Solio Game Reserve, Laikipia County, Kenya**

It is the terror in Solio and the 4<sup>th</sup> deadly poaching in 2 months. The scenario is the following: the shooting took place at night. The bullet passed between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> rib and went through the rib cage before getting stuck in a muscle. The bullet was recovered with a metal detector.

The horns were cut off by the poachers. The victim was a female. She was carrying a female fetus of about 4 months. Two days before her discovery, it was a full moon. See "On the front lines" p.6.

SWT/KWS Meru Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>5</sup>



## ZIMBABWE

**Report from May 28, 2021**

### Zimbabwe

Human hordes prey on antelope, zebra, and buffalo and steal solar panels near waterholes. " Covid-19 has had a massive effect in the tourism industry across Africa. It is having devastating consequences and we are seeing an alarming surge in wildlife and fish poaching." The Bhejane Trust is issuing an SOS or rather a SOW (Save Our Wildlife). 11 black rhinos are reported to have been poached since the beginning of the year compared to 8, black and white together, during the whole of 2020.

Centre for African Journalists News Zimbabwe, May 28, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

**July 2, 2021 and February 1, 2022**  
**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

On July 2, 2021, Brent Lunt and Nyasha Mutendawafa were driving through Harare when agents from the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) stopped them. In the car, they discovered a bag containing 4 horns. A veterinarian later certified that these horns came from rhinos. They were valued at 240,000 US\$ by the CID.



Initially, the court deemed that the facts provided sufficient grounds for a conviction, even though the CID agents and appointed veterinarian did not know that there are 5 rhinoceros species in the world.

On February 1, 2022, the verdict of the High Court undermined justice. The 2 men were released on the grounds that the investigation file did not specify whether the horns came from white or black rhinoceroses, and did not exclude that the horns could have come from an Asian species. If this were the case, then Zimbabwe's Parks and Wildlife Act would not be applicable. The High Court's verdict was provocative, but it will push investigators to better characterize evidence going forward and provide magistrates with, if not indisputable, then at least better supported cases.

Julian Rademeyer, February 1, 2022; The Herald, February 1, 2022; NewsDay, February 8, 2022.<sup>7</sup>



## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**May 7-26, 2021**

**Greater Kruger National Park, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, South Africa**



Times are very hard. Money is tight. Covid has emptied the parks and reserves. The Kruger Park is infiltrated. "We know that our staff are approached to provide information and the sums of money involved are big," a Kruger Park spokesman tells The Times. "We have suspicions that some of the rangers have been planted there by gangs, but this is difficult to prove if you don't have clear evidence." And there is the moon that reveals the shadows of the rhinos in the savannah and makes their backs shine like a silver spoon. The full moon on May 26 played at the fullest its role as an informant: 12 rhinos were killed over 14 days in and around Kruger park.

Council of Contributors, May 21 and June 6, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**May 11, 2021**

**Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Limpopo Rhino Conservation reports that 3 rhinos were poached on May 10<sup>th</sup> alone, including a pregnant mother and a young adult. Private ranchers in the province note that poaching is declining in the state-run Kruger Park and shifting to the private sector, despite many physical and technological protection efforts. The organization laments that there are "there are some ruthless people out there that are trying to capitalize on the loss of these rhinos for their own fundraising efforts!"

Limpopo Rhino Conservation, May 11, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

**May 13, 2021**

**Buffalo Kloof Private Game Reserve, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

Radioactive rhinos.

Rosatom, the prime contractor and spearhead of the Russian nuclear industry, has found a new way to extend its influence on the African continent in the fight against poaching.

The "Rhisotope project" consists of injecting into the horns of rhinos stable, long-lived radioactive substances likely to be detected by control devices installed in ports and airports. "Rhisotope" would thus allegedly facilitate the traceability of horns and the fight against international smuggling while helping to reduce the demand. In the Buffalo Kloof private reserve near Port Elizabeth, 2 rhinos have just been used as guinea pigs for this initiative. For the next 3 months, the 2 rhinos, one of whom was nicknamed Igor after Igor Kurchatov, the Soviet atomic bomb pioneer, will be monitored radiologically to study the behavior of the radioactive isotopes and their possible migration in the animals' bodies and organs.



Rosatom and its South African, Australian and American partners intend to extend this radioactive labelling to other endangered species. Rosatom's chief executive officer for Central and Southern Africa shows little modesty: "We believe that science and particularly nuclear science will play a fundamental role in not only protecting the rhino but our planet in general." As early as 2010, similar unsuccessful attempts were made in South Africa to deter poachers and consumers by injecting so-called indelible dyes and toxic chemicals into rhino horns.

Rosatom has been supplying enriched uranium to South Africa's Koeberg nuclear power plant since the 90's and has been building its network in Africa since the 2010s. Rosatom company signed cooperation agreements with Burundi and Ethiopia in April 2021.

This animal experimentation is self-promotion for Rosatom.

SABC News, May 13, 2021; Africa Newsroom (with Rosatom), May 19, 2021; SciTechDaily, June 20, 2021; Dr. William Fowlds, July 11, 2021; Sud Ouest (with AFP), September 10, 2021; Forbes Africa, September 10, 2021; Afrik.com, September 21, 2021; National Geographic, September 22, 2021; The Rhisotope Project, October 11, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

**May 14 and 17, 2021**

**Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**



- Nito Mathebula was sentenced to 13 years in prison for immigration offenses, breaking and entering the Tshokwane section of the Kruger Park, and poaching a rhino in January 2019.

- Phineas Dinda, a former Kruger Park ranger, Arlindo Manyike, a Mozambican national, and Alfa Gwebana, a South African national, were sentenced to 16 years in prison for breaking and entering the Tshokwane section of the Kruger Park, possession of an undeclared weapon and ammunition, and conspiracy to poach rhinos. The facts date back to May 1, 2019 (see "On the Trail" #25 p.80).

=>



According to Annerie Weber, Democratic Alliance MP and member of the Committee for Environment, Fisheries and Forestry, "these ongoing incidents raise the very worrying trend of insiders at KNP assisting criminals to poach rhinos. It also speaks to the lack of effective security on the eastern borders of KNP and the Mozambican border." The Democratic Alliance is calling for an audit of all park employees who have been compromised in poaching cases. Some were reportedly reinstated after the routine internal investigation was completed. SANParks, 18 May 2021 ; Newsi, May 20, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**May 18, 2021**

**Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Hugo Ras is a regular in the rhinoceros' section of "On the Trail" (see "On the Trail" n°6 p.67, n°7 p.71, n°10 p. 47, n°13 p.77, n°14 p.64, n°15 p.82, n°17 p.78 and n°20 p.81). He was sentenced to 8 years in prison for fraud, 6 years for theft, and 15 years for possession of a weapon without a license. The sentences are not mixed -- that makes 29 years in total. Ras has been caught casino swindling and in possession of rhino horns, M99s and guns in almost every province in South Africa. Yet, he was able to get away with it thanks to his slew of 21 lawyers. At the age of 53, he was finally apprehended and sentenced to 29 years in prison after a scheme that only earned him a handful of rand; he sold a small boat that did not belong to him.

Wildlife at Risk, May 18, 2021; Specialised Security Services, May 20, 2021; News24, May 22, 2021; National Prosecuting Authority South Africa, May 24, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**May 2021, 2021**

**Northern Cape Province, South Africa**

A one-month-old rhino, whose mother has just been fatally poached and had her horns cut off, arrived at Wild Hearts Wildlife Rehab Centre. Wild Hearts Wildlife Rehab Centre, May 19 and 20, 2021.<sup>13</sup>



© Wild Hearts Wildlife Rehab Centre

**May 19, 2021**

**Limpopo Province, South Africa**



© Saving the Survivors

Rescue of a male rhinoceros with 2 large nasal and frontal horns and victim of an attempted poaching in a private reserve. The bullet that hit his left front leg fortunately did not reach his ligaments and bones. Prognosis is relatively good.

Saving the Survivors, May 19 and 21, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**May 25, 2021**

**Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

The Rhino Court of Skukuza sentenced Solly Ndima, a 34-year-old Mozambican national, to 25 years of imprisonment. His sentence included 3 years for breaking into the park, one year for violating the immigration law, 5 years for possession of a prohibited weapon, 3 years for possession of ammunition, 12 years for illegal hunting and "killing" of a rhino, and one year for possession of an axe. The sentences are combined. Ndima will, in principle, have to spend 12 years in prison.

The South African, May 25, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**May 25, 2021**

**Renosterpan Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa**



Deadly poaching of 2 male rhinos. Bane, the tracking dog, was unable to trace the poachers' tracks in the 11,000-hectare reserve.

Dogs4Wildlife, May 26, 2021.<sup>16</sup>



**May 29, 2021**

**Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Arrival to the orphanage of a young male, about 18 months old, who was hit by a stray bullet and whose pregnant mother just died of poaching. He died a few minutes later. The Rhino Orphanage, May 29, 2021; Roberto Cardella, September 9, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



**June 3, 2021**

**Barberton Nature Reserve, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

A 2-3-month-old orphaned rhino enters the sanctuary's intensive care unit after his mother was poached. The Care for Wild Rhino sanctuary is located within the 280 square kilometer Barberton Nature Reserve. The exact location is not disclosed for security reasons.



The Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains have been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2018. The volcanic and sedimentary rocks in the reserve are over 3 billion years old.

Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary, June 3 and 5, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

**June 8, 2021**

**Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Anesthesia was given by veterinarian Dr. Chris Smith to free a rhino's left hind foot from wires snatched from a trap. The prognosis was favorable. The wire was donated to the NGO Down to the Wire, who will transform them into handcrafted jewelry.

African Wildlife Vets, June 8, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



**June 17, 2021**

**Hazyview, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**



Mister Big, whose real name was Petros Sidney Mabuza, was murdered at 1 p.m. outside a shopping center at the age of 57. His double cab Ford Ranger was hit with 17 bullets. He died on the way to Mbombela hospital. Considered by some

Hazyview residents as a Robin Hood who gave gifts and created jobs, he was on bail, awaiting trial for trafficking rhino horns (see "On the Trail" n°21 p.77, n°22 p.79 and 81 and n°23 p.104). Colonel Leroy Bruwer led the investigation into Mister Big, but was fatally ambushed while driving to work on March 17, 2020 (see "On the Trail" n°28 p.4). Mr. Bruwer was in close contact with the magistrates of the Skukuza Rhino Court.

Mister Big's stronghold was Hazyview, home to a major banana and macadamia nut industry and a population of 5,000 people. It is also a hub for horn trafficking, located about 100 km from the Kruger Park. Mister Big was buried with great pomp.

Hazyview is also the stronghold of another notable horn trader, Big Joe, whose real name is Joe Nyalungu. He too has been on bail awaiting trial for a decade now. Big Joe will no doubt in turn create new jobs by strengthening his personal guard.

Lowvelder, June 17 and 25 and July 19, 2021; Richard Spoor, June 17, 2021; SAPS, June 17, 2021; Sowetan LIVE, June 17, 2021; TimesLIVE, June 17, 2021; News24, June 18, 2021; Rhino Review, June 30, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

**June 18, 2021**

**Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**



Conviction of Alsony Valoyi, a 50-year-old Mozambican man, to 23 years in prison. Along with Siyabonga Freedom Ndlovu, whose trial is disjointed, he had been caught red-handed with 6 rhino horns in the Stolznnek section of Kruger Park in August 2016.

DefenceWeb, June 18, 2021; News24, June 18, 2021; SA-People, June 18, 2021; The South African, June 18, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**June 18, 2021**

**Limpopo Province, South Africa**



The orphans are pouring in. New arrival to the orphanage Friday night of a white rhinoceros, about 7 months old, after his mother was poached. On Saturday afternoon, it was still impossible to approach him and feed him milk. Same attitude on Sunday.

The Rhino Orphanage, June 21, 2021.<sup>22</sup>



**June 19, 2021**

**South Africa**

The Ministry of the Environment is pleased with the statistics, but in truth, they are catastrophic. In 2021\*, for the third year in a row, they might reach their target of fewer than 250 rhino killings in Kruger Park. The Democratic Alliance (DA) believes that this target is driving the state's rhino heritage to irreversible extinction. Just over 10,000 rhinos in Kruger Park in 2011, just over 3,000 by 2021. 7,000 animals lost in 10 years. Out of the 14,000 horns, it is reasonable to estimate, in the absence of reliable statistics, that 12,000 have gone to Asia or are stored in South Africa or neighboring countries waiting for an opportunity or for the value of the matter to rise again. Their price may now be 25,000 US\$/kg on the international market, but 5 years ago, it was 50,000 US\$/kg and more.

The DA believes that the only reasonable target that the government should set and SANParks to meet is zero poachings in the Kruger. This would involve revolutionary advances in the guarding of 20,000 km<sup>2</sup> and security at the Kruger-Mozambique border (about 350 km).

\* The official figure for 2021 is 209 poachings in Kruger Park and 451 in the whole country.

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, July 31, 2021 and February 8, 2022; Daily Maverick, August 1, 2021; SABC News, August 19, 2021; DefenceWeb, September 7, 2021; The Herald, September 21, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

**June 24, 2021**

**Waterberg District, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Arrest of 3 suspected poachers and 2 guards of a private reserve who, since the beginning of the year, would have helped them locate 4 ambushed, fatally wounded and dehorned rhinos. Seizure of firearms, ammunition and knives. SAPS, June 28, 2021.<sup>24</sup>



**June 24, 2021**

**Komatipoort, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

George Vasco Tibane and Joao Matshinga Sithole, Mozambican subjects, sentenced to 3 years in prison for breaking into and entering the Kruger Park, one year for violating the Immigration Act, 10 years for poaching a rhino, 6 years for possession of a firearm with serial number obliterated, 6 years for the possession of a firearm silencer, 5 years for the possession of a firearm with the intention to commit a crime, 2 years for the possession of ammunition and one year for having been in possession in the park of an axe, that is 34 years in prison for 8 counts.

As reported in "On the Trail" n°25 p.77, the trio had stumbled upon a roadblock near Komatipoort after their crime and worst of all, in the car, there were 2 fresh horns. The driver of the vehicle, Thembi Juliegirl Mhangane, pleaded not guilty and her trial is disjointed.

Getaway, June 25, 2021.<sup>25</sup>



**June 24, 2021**

**Vryburg, North West Province, South Africa**

Seizure of 2 horns (4.6 kg and 1.9 kg) with an estimated cumulative value of 2.4 million rand (173.500 US\$ or 26,690 US\$/kg). Two men, ages 31 and 72, were arrested by the Hawks. SAPS, June 25, 2021; SA PROMO, June 25, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**July 17, 2021**

**OR Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Thanks to the nose of an expert dog, 32 horns and fragments of horns with a total weight of 160 kg found in 6 packages supposed to contain "plants" were seized. The packages were addressed to Singapore.

News24, July 17, 2021; The South African, July 17, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**July 21, 2021**

**Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

2 bakkies intercepted near the Mozambique border. 19 horns acquired with an estimated value of 2.6 million rand or 180,000 US\$. 2 men arrested: Abraham Steyn, 48 years old, a cattle and wild animal dealer, sentenced in Pretoria in May 2018 to 5 years in prison with a suspended sentence for trafficking buffaloes; and Dawie Groenewald, under indictment since 2010 alongside a dozen accomplices with more than 1,700 total charges, ranging from international horn trafficking to money laundering to various schemes. He was released on a 50,000-rand (3,850 US\$) bail. The trial is constantly postponed thanks to his lawyers' tricks and South African justice system's patience, which borders on connivance. Groenewald also had problems in the United States of America where he spent 8 days in prison and, for a "damned leopard", was treated "like a serial killer". "On the Trail" traced his path, as well as that of his brother, wife, and band of men and women also seduced by the horn (see "On the Trail" n°6 p.62, n°7 p.71 and 72, n°8 p.65-66, n°9 p.64, n°17 p.78 and 79, n°20 p.81, n°21 p.74, n°22 p.78 and n°32 p.60)

Here we go again. The value of the seizure is 180,000 US\$, the guarantee is 3,500 US\$. On July 23, Steyn and Dawie Groenewald were released with the obligation to attest their presence at the police station once a week. Steyn had to surrender his passport to the police while Groenewald escaped this protocol. He previously surrendered his passport to the Authority when he was first released on bail in 2010.

SAPS, July 22, 2021; Lowvelder, July 23, September 17, and December 10, 2021; Save the Beasts, September 9, 2021 and January 13, 2022.<sup>28</sup>





### **July 30 and August 5, 2021 Vierfontein, Free State Province, South Africa**

Arrest of 2 suspected poachers inside the Letsatsi La Africa Wildlife Park, near the rhino enclosure where the fence had already been cut. A gunfire exchange took place when the 5 poachers were spotted. The first suspect was injured in the leg and in the right arm. He was taken to hospital under police escort. The 2<sup>nd</sup> suspect was arrested nearby. A pistol, ammunition, a .375 caliber rifle, and an axe were seized as evidence. The other 3 accomplices fled.

SAPS, August 5, 2021.<sup>29</sup>



### **August 17-18, 2021 Steynsrus, Free State Province, South Africa**

Deadly poaching of 2 male white rhinos. Their horns were cut off. A 3<sup>rd</sup> male was wounded in the head, but the poachers failed in dehorning him and instead managed to flee. An appeal for witnesses is launched via the Crime Stop alert number 08600-10111 and via My SAPS App. The information can be given anonymously.

SAPS, August 20, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

### **August 27-early September 2021 Greater Kruger National Park, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, South Africa**

September 2. It's getting busy all over the place. The next full moon is on September 21. The vets are not happy to dehorn, but everyone agrees to adopt a preventive attitude rather than end up with 3 large caliber bullets through the ribs and crazy people taking an axe to a head that might still be breathing.

It's the weekend and aircrafts are spotting the dehorned rhinos. 8 days ago, the dehorned rhinos were tagged on their backs with a dye that lasts a fortnight when it doesn't rain. The big males, the ideal targets, the ones who may already have 3 contract killers on their backs, are anesthetized from the air. A few minutes after the etorphine kicks in, they are dehorned with an electric saw or chainsaw in a great whirlwind of keratin shavings. If the Chinese were passing by, they would pick up them with tweezers and send them to the Guangdong province inside a plastic toy. This could bring the recipient the equivalent of about 30 US\$ per gram and significant prestige and influence in his professional environment.



September 4<sup>th</sup>. Dehornings, everyone knows that they are not infallible, but still, dehornings are done in private reserves near the Kruger and the shantytowns where big German sedans drive by from time to time. And dehorning is sometimes the same as healing. On the 4th day of the campaign, the vets and APU (Anti-Poaching Unit) discovered a bullet wound on the rib cage of one rhino to be dehorned who had to be sanitized and disinfected in 5th gear before the animal woke up. Council of Contributors, August 26, 27 and 31, September 2, 3, 4, 6 and 10, 2021.<sup>31</sup>

### **August 28, 2021 Thornybush Private Game Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Faced with the resurgence of poaching, a campaign for preventive dehorning under anesthesia was launched.

Rhino Revolution, August 28, 2021.<sup>32</sup>

## **BOTSWANA**

### **May 7, 2021 Moremi Game Reserve, North West District, Botswana**

Discovery of a rhinoceros fatally poached, with amputated horn stumps. A few months ago, the victim had been dehorned as a preventive measure. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, May 11, 2021.<sup>33</sup>

### **May 13, 2021 Mombo Camp, North West District, Botswana**

8 years ago, Botswana presented itself as a wildlife refuge safe from the onslaught of poaching. Times have changed. Rhinos are under attack. A new victim is found in Mombo, located in the Okavango Delta. Mombo is accessible by boat, horse or helicopter. Within the Moremi Game Reserve, managed by Rhino Conservation Botswana and defended by a BDF (Botswana Defence Force) unit, Mombo appears to be the victim of leaks. A transnational poacher raids during the military's shift; the team before has left and the new team has not yet arrived.

Seretse Khama Ian Khama, May 15, 2021; NewZimbabwe.com, May 16, 2021; Africa Geographic, June 10, 2021.<sup>34</sup>



## NAMIBIA

**May 16, 2021**

### **Farm Ghaub, Oshikoto Region, Namibia**

Deadly poaching of 2 female rhinos. The first, known as Zanna, was found at the crime scene. The second was found 2 days later, 5 km from the crime scene after a solitary escape. The body examination proved that the bullets passed through the stomach. Fifteen days later, the female rhino calf whom Zanna was nursing was found dead after drones, helicopters and field patrols frantically searched the reserve's 5,000 hectares. A post-mortem examination found a gunshot fracture to the left front leg.

Martin Rust, who manages the private reserve, is offering a reward of 3,500 US\$ to whoever leads to the arrest of the culprit and locates the 2 horns. Martin Rust acknowledges the horns may have already left Namibia.

Namibia Economist, May 18, 2021; Informanté, May 21, 22 and 24 and June 7, 2021; The Namibian, June 8, 2021.<sup>35</sup>

### **REPEATED OFFENSE**

**June 4, 2021**

### **Amarika, Omusati Region, Namibia**

Johannes Valombola Kefas (24), Gustav Tukaleni (29) and Ruben David Nuuyoma (28) were arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to poach rhinos. They were in possession of a rifle, ammunition and a machete. Nuuyoma had already been arrested in 2020 on the same charge. Kefas was also arrested in 2020 for possession of 2 horns.

New Era, 10 June 2021.<sup>36</sup>

**June 6, 2021**

### **Oshikango, Ohangwena Region, Namibia. Border with Angola.**

The small group consisting of a policeman assigned to the Etosha National Park (200 km away), a military officer, a civil servant and a shopkeeper was arrested at 10:00 p.m. In their vehicle, 2 horns were hidden in a 10 kg bag of flour.

New Era, 7, 8 and 10 June 2021; Informanté, 7 June 2021; The Namibian, 8 June 2021.<sup>37</sup>

**June 27, 2021**

### **Etosha National Park, Oshikoto Region, Namibia**

A rhinoceros was shot during the night near the Chudop Waterhole. His 2 horns are missing. This is the eighth rhino poached in Namibia since the beginning of the year.

Republikein, June 30, 2021.<sup>38</sup>



**Mid July, 2021**

### **Oshakata, Oshana Region, Namibia**

Uatjesavi Murumba, Richardt Kandjii and Uevisiano Ngovi Muzuma were denied bail. The 3 suspects were arrested while attempting to sell 2 rhino horns to 2 undercover police officers. Murumba was carrying the horns. He was brought to the meeting place by Muzuma. Kandjii was the sales agent. He was the one looking for clients. He was part of the bargaining and fled when Murumba was arrested.

New Era, July 22, 2021.<sup>39</sup>

**July 19, 2021**

### **Gobabis, Omaheke Region, Namibia**

Gerson Kandjii, 56, who was the former caretaker of the Brave Warriors, the soccer team of Namibia, dies from Covid-19 in his cell under the Gobabis police. Since the end of 2016, he had been charged with poaching 4 rhinos, breaking and entering, burglary and homicide of the farmer Reinhard Schmidt (see "On the Trail" n°15 p.84 and n°16 p.69).

New Era, July 20, 2021.<sup>40</sup>



**July 19, 2021**

### **Kamanjab, Kunene Region, Namibia**

Two men, aged 20 and 46, are arrested in a minibus leaving for Opuwo, 250 km away. Among their belongings are 4 rhino horns wrapped in aluminum foil.

Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism Namibia, July 20, 2021; The Namibian, July 20, 2021.<sup>41</sup>

**July 29, 2021**

### **Outjo, Kunene Region, Namibia**

Kanana Liyeekeni arrested for poaching a rhino 4 days earlier.

Nine rhinos have been poached since the beginning of the year.

Namibian Sun, July 27 and August 9, 2021.<sup>42</sup>

**August 17 and 19, 2021**

### **Otavi Constituency, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia**

A car drives north of Otavi. It is checked by the police at the Ohorongo cement factory. Simeon Namene, 51, Gotlieb Wilhelm, 32, and Shimbilinga Mateus, 41, were carrying a knife, a machete, a shotgun, a silencer and ammunition. Suspected of wanting to poach a rhino from a nearby farm, they were arrested and appeared in court in Otavi on August 19.

Namibian Sun, August 19 and 25, 2021; Allgemeine Zeitung, August 20, 2021.<sup>43</sup>



## NORTHERN AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**August 28, 2021**

#### **Aspinwall, Pennsylvania State, United States of America**

A 40 kg stuffed rhinoceros head lay on a sidewalk. It was discovered by a man walking his dog at the intersection of Freeport Road and Western Avenue. Police were alerted and began investigating video surveillance in the area to identify the ex-holder.

Tribune-Review, August 31, 2021.<sup>44</sup>



## EASTERN ASIA

### CHINA

**May 2021**

#### **Fuzhou, Fuzhou Prefecture, Fujian Province, China**

Xie Yanzhang was sentenced to 12 years in prison and the seizure of 200,000 yuan or 31,000 US\$ in assets and Huang Zhaogang was sentenced to 7 years in prison and a 100,000 yuan fine for attempting to smuggle rhino horns into mainland China on March 24, 2018 when disembarking a flight from Johannesburg. Dai Qingu, an airport employee, was sentenced to 6 years in prison and a fine of 100,000 yuan. The 3 men had devised a set up to facilitate the smooth passage of 2 suitcases containing 32.92 kg of horns with an officially estimated value of 8.23 million yuan or 1.3 million US\$ and 39,500 US\$/kg, but the customs officers were not fooled.

Customs Legal Affairs Review, May 22, 2021.<sup>45</sup>



**May 7, 2021**

#### **Fangchenggang, Fangchenggang Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China**



Two Vietnamese nationals involved in fraudulently introducing 4 horn fragments (139.81 grams in total) into Dongxing, whose value is officially estimated at 34,952 yuan or 5,313 US\$ and 38,000 US\$/kg. The people's court, in a large meeting (3 judges, 4 people's representatives, one interpreter), appointed 2 lawyers to defend the 2 defendants in accordance with the rule that any first instance trial must be fair and "show judicial humanism".



The 2 defendants are accused of having violated national law and international conventions by smuggling, and of having damaged wildlife and the environment. "They are likely to be held civilly responsible for repairing the damage and to be forced to make a public apology." The trial will take place at a later date.

Guangxi Court, May 8, 2021.<sup>46</sup>



**May 21, 2021**

**Xiamen, Fujian Province, China**

It is not the first time either that “On the Trail” mentions cargoes of ivory, pangolin scales or rhinoceros horns on board container ships bound for Asia.

But this is the first time that the story of a substandard ship dedicated during her last voyage to the exclusive transport of 250 kg of rhinoceros horn is told and deciphered.



The *Chang Jiang No.8*, March 2010, Kanmon Strait (Japan)

The *Tatsuhiro Maru* n°5, 74 m long, 1,600 tons deadweight, was built in 1988 by Higaki shipyard in Imabari, Japan and started operating in 1989 under the Japanese flag. She connected Japan and China and began to be examined very closely by port State inspectors at the age of 12. Between the year 2000 and 2018, she accumulated 567 deficiencies and 9 detentions. Her bad reputation was well established among Tokyo Memorandum of Understanding member States. The fact that the *Tatsuhiro Maru* No.5, which became the *Chang Jiang No.8* in December 1998 and then the *Shun Fa 16* in April 2013, was deflagged from Japan to Cambodia in 1998 and was flying the Sierra Leone flag in 2013 did not change anything. She even got collared in South Korea and acquired the high risk ship status in 2014. In March 2018 and May 2018, 21 deficiencies were reported in the ports of Chiba and Niigata (Japan).



The *Shun Fa 16*, June 2016, Kanmon Strait

It was then in July 2018 that the destiny of the small multi-sanctioned general cargo ship changed. At the age of 30, she is now called the *Marine Pioneer* and is flying the Belizean flag. Her owner is the Hongkong Zhontuo Shipping Co of Hong Kong (China), founded on July 17, 2018 at the same time as it purchased the vessel. Her manager is Kind Glory Shipping Co Ltd also Hong Kong-based. In addition to the *Marine Pioneer*, Kind Glory Shipping Co Ltd is officially the manager of seven other vessels (three general cargo ships, two bulkers, one tanker and one chemical tanker), mostly since the years 2020-2021.

On January 28, 2019, Xiamen Customs received a tip-off that “Wang”, a Chinese expatriate in Mozambique, was organising an exceptional delivery of rhino horns by sea. The port of Xiamen, Fujian province, was until then used by smugglers to import ivory. Between 2011 and 2015, several tonnes of “white gold” were seized there, in containers from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, officially carrying sandalwood, cashew nuts, scrap metal and bovine hides. In Fujian province, many workshops specialised in the processing of illegal ivory and other animal materials, with downstream sales and distribution channels in other Chinese provinces, have gone through time and defied bans. Considering that in 2019 the price of ivory is falling (2,000 to 2,500 US\$/kg) and that the price of rhino horn is at its peak (60,000 US\$/kg), it was plausible that Xiamen would become a horn hub. The networks are stable but the materials they trade are as fickle as the stock exchange prices. The Chinese customs took the information seriously.





*Marine Pioneer, June 2019*

The *Marine Pioneer* is indeed about to become a pioneer and to our knowledge a unique case. She left Wenzhou, Zhejiang province, on March 5, 2019. This departure was spotted by Chinese investigators with all the more interest as “Wang” resides in Wenzhou when he is in China. The *Marine Pioneer* arrived in Mozambique in mid-April. Mozambique in southern Africa is one of the favourite countries for smugglers to ship ivory, pangolin scales, precious woods and rhinoceros horns by sea to Asia, particularly from the port of Pemba. Most of the horns originate from poaching in South Africa’s Kruger Park.



On May 5, the *Marine Pioneer* left African waters, sailed across the Indian Ocean again and was spotted at the beginning of June in Malacca Strait, thanks to her AIS which was switched on discontinuously.

Chinese customs and police were waiting for her in the wings.

Eight patrol boats and 288 sailors and customs officers were on the alert. On 17 June at 2 p.m., the *Marine Pioneer* was spotted off Guangdong. During the night, she was boarded and arrested off Xiamen. The 11 Chinese and Burmese crew members were gathered on deck. Fourteen sports bags were finally discovered in a lubricant oil tank. They contained 145 horns and horn sections with a total weight of 250 kg. The value of the seizure was 100 million yuan, i.e. 14.85 million US\$ and 59,400 US\$ per kilo. Also seized from “Wang” and his accomplices were an elephant tusk, a leopard skin and worked ivories.



The investigation is not over. The *Marine Pioneer* was moved from Xiamen to the port of Longhai in the Jiulong River estuary, west of Xiamen Bay. She is still docked there.

Chinese Customs, May 21 and 25, 2021; China Central Television, May 22, 2021; Ersanli, May 22, 2021; China News Weekly, July 18, 2021.<sup>47</sup>



**Beginning of August 2021**

**Daluo Border Post, Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Myanmar.**



Seizure of 39.8 grams of rhino horn chips in an incoming package.  
Chinese Customs, August 11, 2021.<sup>48</sup>

### **SOUTHEASTERN ASIA**

#### **VIET NAM**

**June 1, 2021**

**Viet Nam**

Viet Nam is handing over the genetic analysis of 56 horns seized in ports or airports to South Africa via its embassy in Hanoi. The 2 parties to CITES are demonstrating their willingness to cooperate in the fight against trafficking. The DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acids) should allow investigators in South Africa to specify the age, sex, species, and origin of the rhino victims of trafficking.

VietnamPlus (with VNA), June 1, 2021.<sup>49</sup>

### **SOUTHERN ASIA**

#### **INDIA**

**May 9, 2021**

**Karbi Anglong District, State of Assam, India**

Welson Teron, Dereshang Rengma and Alo Rengma are arrested. 2 AK47s, ammunition, 2 flashlights, bags and foodstuffs of the authentic poachers are seized. They were approaching the park of Kaziranga. They were betrayed by a confidential information.

India Today, May 10, 2021.<sup>50</sup>



**July 3, 2021**

**Kaziranga National Park, Golaghat District, State of Assam, India**

As a result of some sort of trickery, 2 park employees in the Bagori section were in possession of a broken rhino horn and were trying to sell it, an unsuccessful attempt in this Covid-19 period when the park is deserted by tourists. It is known that wildlife traffickers slip in from time to time to buy directly from corrupt agents. The 2 men, Sonia Orang and Dipen Kumar Nath, ended up in a quarrel and their illicit agreement reached the ears of the Authority. They were arrested by Officer Ramesh Kumar Gogoi. Northeast Now, July 4, 2021.<sup>51</sup>

**July 11, 2021**

**Seitheke Basa, Dimapur District, State of Nagaland, India**



Arrest of an NSCN (National Socialist Council of Nagaland) activist. He was in possession of 3 AK47s, 4 magazines, a 22-long rifle, 87 rounds of ammunition and a horn worth an estimated 10 million rupees (134,624 US\$).

DY365, July 13, 2021; India Today, July 14, 2021.<sup>52</sup>

**July 13, 2021**

**Gangpimual, Churachandpur District, State of Manipur; Panbari Reserve Forest, Golaghat District, State of Assam, India**

Arrest of Thangouchin V Khamkhopau, alleged member of the Zomi revolutionary army and suspected head of the poaching gang of the district of Biswanath ("On the Trail" n°27 p.90, n°29 p.50, n°30 p.50 and p.87, n°31 p.61 and n°32 p.66). He tried to seize the weapon of a police officer escorting him to his weapons' hiding place. In the scramble, he was shot in the leg. He was taken to Dibrugarh Hospital in critical condition.

Guwahati Plus, July 13, 2021; Imphal Free Press, July 13, 2021; GP Singh, July 14, 2021; Indian Today, July 14, 2021; News Live, July 22, 2021.<sup>53</sup>



## REPEATED OFFENSE

**August 8 and 11, 2021**

**Nilbagan, Hojai District; Kuthari Village, Kaziranga National Park, Nagaon District, State of Assam, India**

Arrest of Bimala Saikia, an employee of Kaziranga Park. This "enemy of the interior" provided (the terms of the transaction are unknown) 2 horns to Abdul Ali (Asian rhinos have only one horn) who gave them to a businessman in the Hojai district, 200 km from Kaziranga Park. "It is a big racket which has been running for last many years and some forest officials of Kaziranga National park were involved in the racket. The smugglers lured the forest officials with money and got them involved in the crime" said an anonymous senior official. This is not the first time Bimala Saikia has been caught in such a case. Whether in South Africa's Kruger or in India's Kaziranga, authorities have a hard time getting rid of rogue agents.

The Times of India, August 10, 2021; News Move, August 11, 2021; Northeast Now, August 11, 2021; East Mojo, August 13, 2021.<sup>54</sup>

**August 26, 2021**

**Morigaon District, State of Assam, India**



Arrest of 3 men ages 24-65 in possession of a horn by police and Assam Forest Protection Force in Seconi.

Time8, August 26, 2021; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), August 27, 2021.<sup>55</sup>

## NEPAL

**May 21, 2021**

**Thulechaur, Tanahu District, Gandaki Province, Nepal**

Sagar Praja alias Birendra Singh has just been arrested. He had been on the run for 4 years. He had been sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined 100,000 rupees (840 US\$) for poaching a male rhino.

The Rising Nepal, May 23, 2021.<sup>56</sup>



**June 27, 2021**

**Kawasoti, Nawalpur District, Gandaki Province, Nepal**

Rajman Thapa Magar is in custody. He is suspected of poaching 4 rhinos in the Chitwan park. Until now, he had evaded all the summons of justice. He has in a way surrendered by contacting the defenders of the rhinos.

Scirling, June 28, 2021; Tukhabar.com, June 28, 2021.<sup>57</sup>

**August 24, 2021**

**Chitwan National Park, Bagmati Province, Nepal**

A rhino was shot in Bandharjhula. His horn was stolen. 6 people are being interviewed by the police.

The Rising Nepal, August 24, 2021.<sup>58</sup>

**July 26, 2021**

**Batulichaur, Chitwan National Park, Bagmati Province, Nepal**



A dead rhinoceros. Its gender is unknown. The body is decomposing at the edge of a swamp. He or she was about 20 years old. The head is pierced by rifle bullets. The horn is missing.

Online Khabar, August 15, 2021; The Himalayan Times, August 16, 2021.<sup>59</sup>

## EASTERN EUROPE

### POLAND

**July 1, 2021**

**Opole, Opolskie Voivodeship, Poland**

A Polish hunter was going to shoot rhinos in South Africa. The total cost of the expedition was between 40,000 and 60,000 US\$. He returned home with their horns, weighing between 5 and 10 kg, and sold them to a Vietnamese man who lived in Poland. Another Polish hunter would do the same, and so would a 3rd, a 4th, and so on.

The network was composed of travel agencies specialized in sport hunting and taxidermists. 33 people were arrested and charged. 23 have settled with the courts and have agreed to pay fines of up to 40,000 zlotys (10,520 US\$).

The trial of the other 10 suspects will take place in Rybnik.

Prosecutor's Office in Opole, July 1, 2021.<sup>60</sup>



## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**May 2, 2021**

#### **South Africa**

Barbara Creecy, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, has presented the first lessons of the High Court Panel appointed in October 2019 and responsible, under the presidency of Pamela Yako, for reviewing the regulation, the uses, the management, the hunt and the trade of species as emblematic as rhinos and lions.

For lions, the prospects are clear: in the medium term, all lion farms that eke out a living by offering to bottle-feed cubs and hunt lions cut-rate in enclosures should be closed. Sport hunting, which is considered to be authentic and attractive, is not affected by this sweeping change.

For rhinos, the High Court Panel's vision is hazier, but in vague terms it advocates an end to rhino farming, which, despite its cautious words, immediately caused an angry reaction from the Private Rhino Owners Association.

Daily Maverick, May 2, 2021; Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, May 2, 2021; Independent Online (with AFP), May 2, 2021; Mail & Guardian, May 9, 2021; Conservation Action Trust, June 10, 2021; Africa Geographic, June 14, 2021; Elizabeth Margaret Steyn Foundation, July 6, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

### GABON

**May 21 and July, 2021**

#### **Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon**

Shi Guibin, a Chinese national, was arrested in possession of 3 elephant ivory bracelets and 4 leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) fangs. 2 months later he was sentenced to 2 years in prison, one of which was suspended, as well as a fine of 2 million CFA francs (3,625 US\$) and 2 million CFA francs in damages. Conservation Justice, May and July 2021; Non au commerce illicite d'espèces de Faune et de Flore, May 28, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



## REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**May 20 and August 3, 2021**

#### **Pointe-Noire, Department of Pointe-Noire, Republic of the Congo**

Ibayi Koumba and Landry Ngoma Sota were caught carrying a black opaque plastic bag that contained a piece of elephant tusk and a carefully rolled leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I). They came from Kotovindou, a small village in the neighboring department of Kouilou. Koumba was sentenced to a 6-month suspended prison term and Ngoma Sota to 18 months in prison. The 2 partners also have to pay one million CFA francs (1,800 US\$) in damages and a fine of 300,000 CFA francs (540 US\$).

EAGLE, May 21 and August 2021; Groupe Congo Médias, May 24 and June 7, 2021; Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), May and August 2021; First Médiac, August 17, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



## AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**June 23, 2021**

#### **Tampa, State of Florida, United States of America**

Sentencing of Steven Phillip Griffin, 36 years old, to 1 year and 1 day in prison, followed by 2 years of supervised release. After 2 years of talks with an undercover US Fish and Wildlife agent, he travelled to Texas in May 2019 and paid 9,750 US\$ to buy 2 pairs of white rhino horns, 4 elephant tusks, 3 leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) skulls and one lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II) skull. The authorities searched his home immediately afterwards and confiscated the trophies as well as 10 illegally held firearms and ammunition.

US Department of Justice, June 23, 2021.<sup>4</sup>





## ASIA

### CAMBODIA

**August 11, 2021**

#### **Phnom Penh, Phnom Penh Autonomous Municipality, Cambodia**

Confirmation on appeal of the conviction of Dang Van Minh and Nguyen Van Nam on January 26, 2020. The 2 Vietnamese were each sentenced to 3 years in prison and fined 10,000 US\$. They had been intercepted while receiving 1,000 kg of ivory and tiger bones at the landing of a flight from Mozambique. They explained that the packages did not belong to them and that they had been hired by a fellow countryman, a certain "Nguyen Soeung Thanh", to recover the goods at the airport and then travel to Viet Nam by bus. They had been paid 500 US\$ each for this purpose.

Khmer Times, July 28 and August 12, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



### VIET NAM

**July 18, 2021**

#### **Port of Da Nang, Viet Nam**

Successful interception by customs. They had considered a MSC (Mediterranean Shipping Company) container coming from Durban, South Africa, and bound for Da Nang as suspicious. On arrival, the box was isolated. It was declared as containing wood. It contained 138 kg of rhino horns and 3.1 tonnes of lion skulls, bones and teeth, which, based on an average of 9 kg per skeleton, corresponds to the death of 345 lions. The South African newspaper Daily Maverick attributes this massive smuggling of lion bones to the anticipated liquidation of farms after the prospects of closure raised by Barbara Creecy in early May. Farmed lion bones are used in Asia to make fake tiger wine. The Vietnamese and Chinese channels are ready to take advantage of this golden opportunity.

Elizabeth Margaret Steyn Foundation, July 18, 2021; Ho Chi Minh City Law Journal, July 18, 2021; Ho Chi Minh City Police Newspaper, July 18, 2021; Daily Maverick, July 19, 2021; ENV, July 22, 2021.<sup>6</sup>







Snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*). Photo romainbaujard

**On the Trail n°33**  
**Black market feline parts quotation from media or official sources**  
**The values were estimated at the time of the seizures**

Animal	Part	US\$	Country/region	Ref. (year)
Tiger	Skin	40,397	India	10 (2021)
		5,185	Indonesia	18 (2021)
	Bone ointment	7,800 (/kg)	Viet Nam	23 (2020)
Lion	Butchered	2,300	China	42 (2020)
Leopard	Skin	1,300	Senegal	54 (2021)
		29,700	India	61 (2021)
		6,900 -13,800		62 (2021)
		13,460		76 (2021)
		40,000	Democratic Republic of the Congo	4* (2020)
	Claw	67	India	113* (2021)
Clouded leopard	Skin	2,800	Indonesia	91 (2021)
		240	Thailand	92 (2020)

\* See chapter Multi-species



## AMERICA

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

May 9, 2021

**Houston, State of Texas, United States of America**

Another tiger wandering in a residential area has reignited the debate. Some 20 States prohibit the keeping of tigers in private homes. In Alabama, Nevada, North Carolina and Wisconsin, there are no regulatory restrictions on keeping tigers in private homes. In Texas, a registration certificate is required, as well as a 100,000 US\$ insurance contract to compensate for possible injury or damage to private property. Houston and other cities ban the keeping of tigers, but in most towns, having a tiger at home is still allowed, and the tiger breeding industry makes its way through the regulatory patchwork. "People something showy or flashy," says Adam Reynolds, chief cruelty investigator for Houston's SPCA. Perhaps they also see their tigers as a means of defending their property in the same way as firearms.

New York Post, May 10, 2021; The Guardian (with AP), May 11, 2021; KAKE, May 13, 2021; Houston Chronicle, May 14, 2021; Cable News Network, May 16, 2021; NBC News, May 28, 2021; KPRC 2, August 4, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

## ASIA

## BANGLADESH

## REPEATED OFFENSE / FAMILY AFFAIRS

May 29, 2021

**Sonatola, Bagerhat District, Khulna Division, Bangladesh**

Habib Talukder, who went under the aliases Bagh Habib or Tiger Habib, had been wanted for 20 years. The 50-year-old man was arrested in his sleep at 2:30 am. His legend, which he maintained with pride, claims that he poached over 70 tigers in the Sunderban mangroves, often with the help of poisoned bait. He more modestly concedes to having poached 32. The son of a local bandit, Tiger Habib started out as a simple fisherman, and then moved on to the more lucrative business of poaching spotted deer (*Axis axis*), marsh crocodiles (*Crocodylus palustris*, Appendix I), and eventually tigers. He became the leader of a gang cited by suspects in numerous seizures, and involved his son Hasan (20) and stepson Mizan (25) in his crimes. Dhaka Tribune, May 30, 2021; The Business Standard, May 30, 2021; The Independent, June 1, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



May 25, 2021

**Xichuan County, Nanyang Prefecture, Henan Province, China**

A circus in Anhui rented 2 tigers to an amusement park in Henan. The tigers had been moved from province to province and eventually tried to escape. They attacked their keeper, Jia, and seriously injured him. He later died in the hospital and nearby residents were evacuated. The tigers were soon spotted but were not captured due to a lack of adequate resources and trained personnel. They were shot.

Global Times, May 25, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

## INDIA

May 7, 2021

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

Mysterious death of a tigress, 18-24 months old, whose carcass was found floating on the surface of the "Rajiv Gandhi" irrigation canal. Her stripes do not match any of the tigers registered in the State. The authorities forwarded the photos to the Forest Department of neighboring Maharashtra, whose border is 20 km away. After dismissing the poaching hypothesis too quickly, the forest guards had to reopen the investigation: the necropsy revealed a "blunt force injury".



New Delhi Television, May 8; The Times of India, May 8 and 9, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

May 2021

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

On October 17, 2020, Premal was arrested in possession of 2 skins, 5 claws, tiger bones, and other pieces of wildlife and sandalwood (*Santalum album*, classified as "vulnerable" in the red list of the IUCN and forbidden to be exported by India) (see "On the Trail" n°31, p.15). He pleaded for a conditional release to the Nagpur Division of the Bombay High Court, but the court rejected his request. In his arguments, Judge S.M. Modak disregarded Premal's idle justifications regarding the trophies' origins: "Tigers are protected animals and a part of our nature, so we must protect them. If an offense is committed against a human being, there is someone to file a complaint. When an animal is killed, no one is there to come forward except the forestry officers. Thus, the court must be aware of these realities."

The Times of India, May 24, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



**May 30 and June 28, 2021**

**Warora and Bhadrawati Forests, Chandrapur District, State of Maharashtra, India**



India's Forest Department used a photo trap to identify a tigress walking around with her neck in a snare, but did not manage to anaesthetize or treat her within a month. The feline then vanished. She reappeared in June looking weak in images taken by several of 60 total photo traps installed to follow her movements. Unfortunately, monsoon rains complicate interventions on the field and the 2 district veterinarians who specialized in wildlife were not available. Dr. Ravikant Khobragade was recovering from injuries inflicted by another tiger rescue, and Dr. Kundan Podchelwar was held up a family member's health problems. Several NGOs invited to a meeting on June 28 successfully pressured the administration to call in a livestock veterinarian. To be continued !

The Times of India, May 31 and June 29, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

**Night of June 7 to 8, 2021**

**Dhanora, Chandrapur District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Nagendra Wakde came across a tiger carcass while collecting Coromandel ebony tree leaves (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) which wrap tobacco in "beedis" in the Maregaon forest. He opened up to Sonal Dhadse, a professional exorcist, who convinced him to bring the canines, claws and 2 bones from the front paws to perform a ritual designed to uncover hidden treasures. But someone in the village told the forest rangers about it. They arrived at night when the black magic was about to be performed. Nagendra Wakde led them to the carcass, which was cremated on the spot in accordance with legal requirements. The collector and the exorcist were put in jail.

The Times of India, June 10, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

**July 1, 2021**

**Tilakpur, Banke District, Lumbini Province, Nepal**

Two hides seized from Dan Rmber Budha and Nanda Bahadur Budha. The Banke district is an easy passageway for poached animal parts into India. The border is porous. In 10 years, 48 tiger skins have been seized there and hundreds have probably made their way into China, via Kathmandu, Nuwakot and Rasuwa.

The Himalayan Times, July 2, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**July 7 and 11, 2021**

**Lakhimpur Kheri District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**



It was while investigating a tiger poaching 2 months ago that forest rangers unearthed one of the 14-year-old crimes committed by the "Lambu" gang. Ramkumar alias Lalla was arrested on July 7 in possession of canines. He confessed to having extracted them from the jawbone of a tiger trapped in 2007 near the Sharda river in Pilibhit, the neighboring district. He also gave the names of 2 gang members, Satish and Shivkumar. At the latter's house, investigators found 2 more canines. Satish, who was in charge of selling the animal parts to Nepalese traffickers, was arrested soon after.

The Times of India, July 12, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

**July 29, 2021**

**Mullakatta, Warangal District, State of Telangana, India**



Thirumalesh and Satyam intended to sell an adult tiger's skin for 3 million rupees (40,397 US\$). They were intercepted by police while riding their motorcycles on the bridge over the Godavari River. The Hindu, July 29; The Times of India, July 30, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**July 29 and August 1, 2021**

**Bichhawasani, Chhindwara District ; Chhindwad, Betul District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India**



The Maharashtra Forest Department had its eyes on Motilal Keja Salame, suspected of trying to sell tiger parts in Nagpur. After missing several engagements,



he was finally arrested at his farm in Bichhawasani, located in the neighboring Madhya Pradesh. Forest officials seized a skin and 4 paws. Salame claims that 2 members of his family, Ramdev Marskole and Rambhau Marskole, poisoned the cat 3 years ago in retaliation for a cattle attack. The 2 men were arrested in their village. However, the case is complicated: the 4 paws do not appear to come from the same tiger, as 2 paws appear smaller. The exhibits are going to be genetically analysed.

The Indian Express, July 30, 2021; The Times of India, July 31, 2021; East Mojo, August 3, 2021.<sup>11</sup>



## TIGERS - followed

**August 1, 2021**

**Sarola, Pune District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Dinesh Farande, Hassan Mulla, Ganpat Jungare and Sunil Bhilare were sought after by the Pune police local branch. The cops came across them and seized a tiger skin, a motorcycle and their 4 cell phones. The suspects gave differing stories regarding the skin's origin.

The Indian Express, August 2, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**August 16, 2021**

**Karad, Satara District, State of Maharashtra, India**



Simultaneous raids conducted in the city by the WCCB and Melghat Tiger Reserve cyber cell. Dinesh Babulalji Rawal was lured by a fake buyer to whom he came to deliver 2 claws, while the jewelry store of his supplier, Anup Arun Rewankar, was raided. Investigators seized 8 feline claws plus a tiger claw mounted as a pendant. The 2 men would be trafficking regulars. A few days later, a more thorough search of the store revealed 9 other claws. The claws were sent to the Wildlife Institute of India to determine whether they belonged to a tiger or leopard species. In the meantime, the traffickers' custody has been extended.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), August 17, 2021; The Times of India, August 19 and 22, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

**August 17, 2021**

**Raighar Forest, Nabarangpur District, State of Odisha, India**

Traffickers and buyers scattered throughout the forest in the pouring rain, according to forest rangers who could only seize the hide.

KalingaTV, August 18, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**August 24, 2021**

**Tingipadar, Kalahandi District, State of Odisha, India**

Krishna Kandiri was in possession of skin and claws. Forest guards arrested him in the village thanks to an informer.

Yahoo News (with ANI), August 25, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**August 27 and September 16, 2021**

**Bandhavgarh National Park, Umaria District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India**



The magnificent 14-year-old tigress T-32, nicknamed "the tigress of Amanalabali" for having often been seen in this section of the park without ever attacking the villagers and appreciated by tourists for her photogenic stripes, was found on September 1st at the bottom of a well, wrapped in a weighted bag with stones. Deep gashes marked her face. Public outcry over this treasonous crime spurred investigators to catch the criminals within 2 weeks. Shivalal Baiga, Babulal Baiga and Kailash Baiga confessed to setting an electric trap connected to an 11,000-v line on August 27 to poach a wild boar. When they discovered the tigress, they extracted 2 canines, her vibrissae, and cut her paws with an axe for occult practices. They then threw the body into a well near another village to cover their tracks. Their accomplice Kalyan Baiga is on the run with the stolen contents.

The Times of India, September 3 and 17, 2021; Hindustan Times, September 16, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

## INDONESIA

**June 19, 2021**

**Central Bengkulu Regency, Bengkulu Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**



A man carrying a tiger's skin, skull, tail and bones in 2 boxes was arrested. Based on the condition of his fur, the animal was believed to have been killed by a snare trap.

The Newcastle Herald (with AAP), June 21, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

**August 20, 2021**

**Ujung Gading, West Pasaman Regency, West Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

Darmenra, from the north of the island, agreed to pay Fahman Nasution 12 million rupiahs (830 US\$) for a batch of tiger bones in a bar. If the deal was successful, Darmenra would then purchase 2 skins for 150 million rupiah (10,370 US\$). But the BKSDA (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam) and police heard of the transaction. They caught the traffickers in the act, confiscating the bag full of bones and a motorcycle. During a search into Nasution's house, an accomplice escaped.

Antara News, August 21; SINDOnews, October 21, 2021.<sup>18</sup>



**August 24 and 26, 2021**

**Le Buboh, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

In a forest filled with traps near the village, a tiger and her 2 cubs could not escape. The mother and daughter were discovered first, both strangled by snares. The young male was found the next day a few meters away with his 2 left paws wrapped in a cable.

Garda Animalia, August 26, 2021; ABC News (with AP), August 27, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



## NEPAL

**Beginning of May 2021**

**Dhunche, Rasuwa District, Bagmati Province, Nepal**

Kunjok Lama's lawyer tried everything, mobilizing the country's 3 levels of jurisdiction. The sanction finally fell: Kunjok Tsering Tamang alias Kunjok Lama was sentenced by the Supreme Court to 7 years in prison and fined 100,000 Nepalese rupees (840 US\$) for trafficking animal parts, including tiger and leopard skins and bones. Kunjok Lama led one of Nepal's largest wildlife trafficking gangs (see "On the Trail" n°29, p. 68). Nepali Times, May 7, 2021.<sup>20</sup>



## VIET NAM

**May 21, 2021**

**Ninh Bình, Ninh Bình Province, Viet Nam**

Mr. Nguyen Khac Thiet operated a gambling joint in his house. During a late-night raid, police caught 4 players and seized 13 million dong (560 US\$), and in a freezer they found tiger bones and other animal parts. Mr. Thiet said he bought the bones for 300 million dong (13,000 US\$) in order to "cook" them. He was put in jail.

VnExpress International, May 24, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Son La Province, Viet Nam**

Arrest of 4 men in possession of a tiger skeleton, 14.5 kg.

ENV, June 15, 2021.<sup>22</sup>



**July 23, 2021**

**Ha Tinh Province, Viet Nam**

In January 2020, Dinh Nhat Nghe was arrested at his home in possession of a 250 kg tiger carcass. He was preparing to extract his bones and cook them to make ointments from the gelatin. 100 grams of tiger bone ointment is worth about VND18 million (780 US\$) on the black market. Lower quality ointment made from monkey bone sells for 400,000 to 500,000 dong per 100 grams (17.4 to 21.7 US\$). His trial was held today. The court showed great leniency to Dinh Nhat Nghe, whose family has rendered "meritorious services to the nation" and has himself "contributed to the development of his hometown, Covid-19 and natural disaster prevention activities." He received a 2-year suspended sentence and 4 years of probation. Outraged by this verdict, the NGO Education for Nature - Vietnam plans to appeal.

VnExpress International, July 23, 2021; ENV, July 27, 2021.<sup>23</sup>



**August 1, 2021**

**Dien Ky, Nghe An Province, Viet Nam**

A night time police chase ended when the suspect hit the police car.



Inside, police discovered 7 live tiger cubs, each about 2 months old and weighing 4 to 5 kg. They were transported in 4 differently sized plastic crates. The driver and his passenger were arrested. They explained that a Laotian national paid them 5 million dong (220 US\$) to drive the cats from Huong Son in the Ha Tinh province to Dien Chau district in the Nghe An province. The cubs were in good health and transferred to Pu Mat national park.

Tien Phong, August 1, 2021; VietNamNet, August 1, 2021; ENV, August 2, 2021; Nghe An TV, August 8, 2021.<sup>24</sup>





**August 4, 2021**

**Do Thanh, Nghe An Province, Viet Nam**

After a long investigation, the police carry out a raid at 2 private properties. In the first, an 80 m<sup>2</sup> barn belonging to a certain Nguyen Van Hien and a certain Ho Thi Thanh, they discover 14 adult tigers. In the second, a 120 m<sup>2</sup> basement belonging to a certain Le Van Hau, a municipal policeman, and a certain Nguyen Thi Dinh, they discover 4 more adult tigers. They are overweight. They weigh between 200 and 265 kg. They were force-fed to produce more meat. They are evacuated to a zoo. Eight of them quickly died. Their carcasses have been handed over to the Natural History Museum. Four arrests. The suspects explain that the tigers were smuggled in from Laos when they were just tiger cubs.

Bao Dân Viet, August 4, 2021; ENV, August 4, 5, 9 and 20, 2021; VietNamNet, August 4 and 6, 2021; SVW, August 7, 2021; Dân tri, August 10, 2021; VnExpress International, August 10 and October 12, 2021.<sup>25</sup>

**EUROPE**

**CROATIA**

**July 11, 2021**

**Between Hvar Island and Split, Split-Dalmatia County, Croatia**

On a 35°C Sunday on a Jadrolinija ship, passengers discovered a tiger suffocating in a trailer registered in Križevci (Koprivnica-Križevci county, more than 500 km from Hvar). The NGO Animal Friends immediately called State services. They identified the sender as Ivan Gospodnetić, a private zoo owner on Hvar island, and the recipient as Zlatko Budin, a tiger breeder in Križevci.

A veterinary inspection did not identify any mistreatment by Gospodnetić. He is still accused of violating article 161 of veterinary law, concerning animal marking and registration. He claims, however, that he has all the CITES documents and that he sent the tiger to Budin to live in better conditions. HRT Vijesti, July 13, 2021; Balkan Insight, July 14, 2021; 24sata, July 20, 2021.<sup>26</sup>



**RUSSIA**

**May 27, June and September 6, 2021**

**Lazovsky District, Primorsky Krai, Russia**

Between February 2020 and May 2021, a man bought Siberian tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*) by-products and resold them for 430,000 rubles (5,800 US\$). He stored the tiger parts in a garage in Artyom (250 km away). When he traveled there after identifying a customer, FSB agents were alerted, searched the place and seized his products. The transactions did not stop. The seller sold the same customer more tiger parts for 350,000 rubles (4,750 US\$) between March and June 2021. Again, the FSB intercepted the tiger parts.

On September 6, the FSB announced that they had arrested the 2 men. They are suspected of belonging to a poaching network and smuggling Amur tigers into foreign countries for several years. VladNews, November 21, 2021; Izvestia, September 6, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**July 8 and September 14, 2021**

**Svobodny District, Amur Oblast, Russia**

"On the Trail" n°30 p.56 reported the tragic discovery on September 23, 2020 of a Pavlik tiger with his paws and head amputated. The 2 poachers were sentenced to 5 years and 2 months in penal colony and to pay 2.3 million rubles (31,600 US\$) in damages to the State.

Izvestia, September 6, 2021; Port Amur, September 14, 2021.<sup>28</sup>



**TIGERS AND LIONS**

**AFRICA**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

**May 23, 2021**

**Mossel Bay, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

The NGO Ubuntu Wildlife Sanctuary, founded in 2015, decided to move from Groot Marico in the North West Province to the Western Cape after poachers and poisoners threatened 10 lions and 2 tigers. The Western Cape's "low crime statistics pertaining to poaching" made it a more appropriate and serene retreat for the big cats. The tigers were rescued from South African breeding farms, the Seaview Predator Park (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.94), and Ukrainian and Argentinian zoos. On this new 16.5 km<sup>2</sup> site, the team hopes to welcome 2 more big cats and build a rhino orphanage.

Mossel Bay Advertiser, May 23, 2021; SABC News Western Cape, May 26, 2021.<sup>29</sup>



**AFRICA**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

**August 3, 2021**

**Free State Province, South Africa**

A series of distressing findings by the NSPCA and DESTEA (Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs) highlights the frequent abuse of lions in South Africa. Deaths in cold storage, unexplained deaths, polluted water for the survivors, skins covered with parasites... And what is it all for? To end up as tiger bones in Asia?

National Council of SPCAs, August 22, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

**August 7 to 8, 2021**

**Djuma Private Game Reserve, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

A lioness with a trap around her neck undergoes anesthesia. Fortunately the metal did not cut her skin. She is free but has a very bad cut under her front paw. Experts clean the wound and give her antibiotics and antidote. After 10 minutes, she wakes up and proceeds to join her herd.

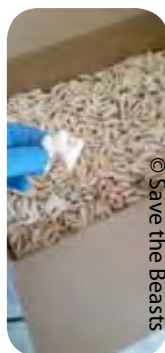
Sabi Sand Wildtuin, August 18, 2021.<sup>31</sup>

**August 12, 2021**

**Bela-Bela, Limpopo Province, and Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

A Vietnamese breeder who specialized in lion processing had 60 bars of bone gelatin, dozens of claws and 4.19 kg of teeth seized at his home and in Pretoria. He was released on bail for 10,000 rand (686 US\$).

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, August 14, 2021; TimesLIVE, August 14, 2021; Save the Beasts, August 20 and 25, 2021; Simon Bloch, August 20, 2021; Polokwane Review, August 30, 2021.<sup>32</sup>



**EGYPT**

**May 2021**

**Cairo, Governorate of Cairo, Egypt**

In Cairo, a city with 9.5 million people, there is a guy who shows up and takes over, and has traded lions and cubs for the past 30 years.

Hounds of Actaeon, May 24, 2021.<sup>33</sup>



**KENYA**

**May 16 to August 31, 2021**

**Amboseli National Park and Mbirikani Group Ranch, Kajiado County ; Mpala Wildlife Conservancy, Laikipia County ; Meru National Park, Meru. County and Chyulu Hills National Park, Kajiado and Makueni Counties, Kenya**

In Kenya there around 2,000 lions, 60 of whom live in Meru Park. There are increasingly more poisonings and traps.

- A spear punctured a sub-adult lioness's spinal cord. Paralyzed, she died of thirst and hunger.

- A lioness is dead from poisoning.

- A trap strangles a cub. The herd, 3 females and 7 cubs, is waiting near a waterhole. The cub is calmly removed from the trap by vets.

- Three lions are poisoned and in desperate condition.

2 died 24 hours after receiving treatment. Another one was transferred to the Nairobi National Park infirmary. 15 days later, a lioness from the same herd was rescued. She survived the collective poisoning; she was treated and will be fine.

- A spear hit a lioness on the shoulder above her left paw. Her prognosis is favorable.

- Vets remove a double metal lace around an old male's neck. This is the third time within 2 years that he has been caught by a trap.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, May and August 2021; SWT/KWS Meru Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021; SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021; SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, August 2021; Born Free Foundation, September 3, 2021.<sup>34</sup>





**August 10, 2021**

**Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya**

It's World Lion Day and Born Free unveiled a 2-hectare boma (enclosure) with a 2-meter-high wire mesh fence along with the Maasai community, Amboseli Park officials and herders. The fence is lined with dried acacia branches. The NGO's goal is to protect the lion herds from attacks at night and to stop the cycle of retaliation.

Born Free Foundation, August 10, 2021.<sup>35</sup>



© Born Free Foundation

## MOZAMBIQUE

**July 25 and early November, 2021**

**Niassa Special Reserve, Niassa and Cabo Delgado Provinces, Mozambique**

In July, 2 individuals were caught poaching lions in the savannah. They set 11 traps and in one of them there was a fatally wounded lion. In November, they were sentenced to 20 years in prison, 12 for killing a lion and 8 for doing it in conspiracy.

Jornal Domingo, November 13, 2021.<sup>36</sup>



**Mid-August, 2021**

**Coutada 11, Sofala Province, Mozambique**

A lion caught in a leghold trap is successfully rescued.

Zambeze Delta Conservation and Anti-Poaching, September 5 and October 13, 2021.<sup>37</sup>



© Zambeze Delta Conservation and Anti-Poaching

## ZAMBIA

**July 5 and 16, 2021**

**South Luangwa National Park, Eastern Province, Zambia**

Traps are burgeoning. They are the worst of the weeds. A lion caught in the mouth - very guarded prognosis - and a puku (*Kobus vardonii*) - guarded prognosis - are rescued. On the bright side, 47 lions have been freed from traps in the valley over the past 5 years, and thanks to these rescues, several dozen cubs were born. South Luangwa Conservation, July 5 and 17, 2021.<sup>38</sup>



## ZIMBABWE

**August 5, 2021**

**Antoinette Concession, Gwayi Reserve, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe**

A bow hunter killed a 12-year-old male lion, who co-headed a litter of 6 cubs, on the edge of Hwange Park at the same location where Cecil was killed in 2015 (see "On the Trail" n°10 p. 41).

Getaway, August 7, 2021; Daily Maverick, August 11, 2021; Africa Geographic, August 13, 2021; The Mirror, October 18, 2021; World Heritage Species, October 21, 2021.<sup>39</sup>

## AMERICA

## MEXICO

**End of June 2021**

**Ciudad Juarez International Airport, State of Chihuahua, Mexico**

An undocumented lion cub was seized in a package from Guadalajara, Jalisco State. He was transferred to the San Jorge Zoo.

Infobae, June 27, 2021.<sup>40</sup>



© Twitter/GN\_MEXICO



ASIA

CAMBODIA

June 27, 2021

**Autonomous Municipality of Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

An 18-month-old male lion with no canines or claws was confiscated from his Chinese "owners". He weighs 70 kg and eats 7 kg of meat per day. The case made a lot of noise. Raising a lion in a garden within a supercity of more than 2.2 million inhabitants is not common. It is even forbidden, but Prime Minister Hun Sen disavowed the military police, deputy prosecutor and forestry administration who all requested that the lion be seized. After a brief stay in the Wildlife Alliance shelter, the lion was returned to his Chinese adoptive family on the basis that he posed no risk to the neighborhood. Wildlife Crime Hotline, June 27, 2021; Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, June 28, 2021; The Phnom Penh Post, July 5, 2021.<sup>41</sup>

CHINA

August 2021

**Wenling, Taizhou Prefecture, Zhejiang Province, China**

"Zheng" ran a snake meat stall in a vegetable market and was suspected of also selling pangolin scales. The police tried to catch him in the act but instead came across 3 lion paws in July 2020, in the midst of the Covid crisis. It turned out that these paws came from a circus lion who died of pneumonia. His trainer sold him to a butcher for 16,000 yuan, or nearly 2,300 US\$, and afterwards the lion was sold in parts. Five people involved in the illegal butchering were convicted. Hangzhou Net, August 27, 2021.<sup>42</sup>



INDIA

July 14, 2021

**Mehsana, Mehsana District, State of Gujarat, India**

Ravi Kashyap and Tanmay Punj, 30 and 23 years old, were remanded in custody for attempting to sell 4 lion claws. The claws were sent to a laboratory to verify their authenticity. The Indian Express, July 17, 2021.<sup>43</sup>

PAKISTAN

August 2, 2021

**Karachi, Province of Sindh, Pakistan**

A lion cub who tried to escape through the barred window of the flat where he was kept caused concern on the street. The SWD (Sindh Wildlife Department) acted indifferently, however. It cited a lack of appropriate shelters to justify its inaction. The SWD merely said that it is illegal to keep "big cats" in the capital, and yet there are at least 100 leopards, lions and tigers locked up in the capital. The Express Tribune, August 3, 2021.<sup>44</sup>

YEMEN

July 7, 2021

**Sanaa, Sanaa Governorate, Yemen**



In Phnom Penh, a lion eats 7 kg of meat a day in a garden, and in Sanaa, 3 lions are dying in the zoo's dungeon.

Friends of Yemen Zoos, July 12 and August 9, 2021.<sup>45</sup>

**LEOPARDS - *Panthera pardus*, Appendix I**

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

June 22, 2021

**Riviersonderend, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

A farmer discovers a 34 kg male leopard caught in a trap on his property. He immediately notifies the Landmark Foundation. The young leopard is quickly released, with an extra GPS collar.

Landmark Foundation, June 22 and July 11, 2021.<sup>46</sup>





## LEOPARDS - followed

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Nkomazi Private Game Reserve, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**



Two leopards rescued from traffickers a year and a half ago underwent 3 months of rehabilitation at the Care for Wild sanctuary and spent 14 months in an enclosure in the Nkomazi reserve. Finally, they were deemed fit

for the wild and released, wearing GPS collars.

TimesLIVE, July 13, 2021.<sup>47</sup>

**End of July 2021**

**Blyde River Canyon, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**



A female leopard was caught in 2 traps, one in the abdomen and the other in the paw. At the cost of a severe injury, she managed to escape the first one. The Moholoholo Rehab Centre veterinarians freed her from the second one and, after administering first aid, transported her to a quarantine service where she underwent a 4-hour surgery.



Moholoholo Rehab Centre, August 6 and 9, 2021; African Wildlife Vets, August 10 and September 10, 2021.<sup>48</sup>

**August 1, 2021**  
**Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Right next to a village, a leopard is strangled by a trap. He is exhausted but the wounds are not too deep. He is quickly put back on his feet and regains freedom.

Umoya Khulula Wildlife Centre, August 1, 2021.<sup>49</sup>



## GABON

**July 7 and August, 2021**

**Cocobeach, Estuaire Province, Gabon**



Engoang Ayong and Obiang Ndong were arrested in possession of a leopard skin and 4 fangs. They were charged with hunting, possessing and attempting to sell products from a protected species.

They were acquitted of the attempted sale charge but sentenced to one year in prison, fined 250,000 CFA francs (450 US\$) each, and ordered to jointly pay one million CFA francs (1,810 US\$) in damages for poaching a leopard and possessing his skin and claws.

Conservation Justice, July and August 2021; EAGLE, August 2021.<sup>50</sup>

**August 21, 2021**

**Lambaréné, Moyen-Ogooué Province, Gabon**

Edmond Malebe came from Mbigou, 375 km from Lambaréné. Police caught him in a hotel with 3 leopard skins. The prosecution requested 6 months in prison and a fine of 500,000 CFA francs (900 US\$). EAGLE, August 26, 2021; Conservation Justice, August and September 1, 2021.<sup>51</sup>

## MOZAMBIQUE

**Mid-August, 2021**

**Coutada 11, Sofala Province, Mozambique**



A leopard dragged a trap from which he had managed to escape receives anesthesia and emergency care. His right front paw, which plunged into the snare, may have been saved.

Zambeze Delta Conservation and Anti-Poaching, August 17, 2021.<sup>52</sup>





## LEOPARDS - followed

### REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**May 28, 2021**

#### **Pointe-Noire, Department of Pointe-Noire, Republic of the Congo**

Under a bed in the home of one of 3 traffickers lies a human skull in a bag, a quarter of a leopard skin, and a stolen cross from a cemetery. Human bones are in high demand in Central Africa; they are used in black magic rituals.

EAGLE, May 29, 2021; Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune Sauvage (PALF), May 2021; First Médiac, June 4, 2021.<sup>53</sup>



### SENEGAL

**June 1 and 17, 2021**

#### **Tambacounda, Tambacounda Region, Senegal**

Truck driver Mansour Boye was detained. He took advantage of his job and brought clandestine goods into Senegal, in this case 2 leopard skins worth 1.4 million CFA francs (2,600 US\$) that he purchased in Mali. On Tuesday, June 1 at 12:51 pm, Boye was arrested at the Gueye Service restaurant, a well-known stop for traffickers and regular drivers, as well as for police and the NGO EAGLE's Senegal branch. On Thursday, June 17, he was fined one million CFA francs and sentenced to prison. Le Quotidien, June 3, 2021.<sup>54</sup>

**June 12 and 24, 2021**

#### **Tambacounda, Tambacounda Region, and Kédougou, Kédougou Region, Senegal**

Three traffickers in possession of 2 hides were arrested in a restaurant on Saturday, June 12. They were also allegedly involved in wood trafficking. On Thursday, June 24, Barou Diallo, Daouda Diallo, and Seydou Diallo were sentenced to 3 months in prison and fined 500,000 CFA francs (925 US\$).

EAGLE, June 13, 2021; Dakaractu, June 15, 2021; EAGLE Senegal, June 2021; Le Quotidien, August 5, 2021.<sup>55</sup>



**August 2 and 26, 2021**

#### **Kédougou, Kédougou Region, Senegal**

Diba Camara, Mamadou Diagne, Gabriel Boubane and Ndaba Cissokho are sentenced to 3 months in prison and to jointly pay 2 million CFA francs (3,620 US\$) in damages to the National Parks Department for having held, transported and attempted to sell 2 leopard skins on Monday, August 2 at 12:44 pm, at the La Noblex hotel. The deceased leopards were either trapped or poisoned; the skins do not have bullet holes.

Since the beginning of the year, police have seized 11 leopard skins; 11 traffickers have also been arrested and 7 convicted, according to EAGLE's Senegalese branch and the National Parks Department. Le Quotidien, August 5, 2021.<sup>56</sup>



### ASIA

#### **SAUDI ARABIA**

**May 2021**

#### **Saudi Arabia**

Her parents face 10 years in prison and a 30 million riyal fine (8 million US\$). The photo of a leopard pulling a child out of a car is causing a stir in Saudi Arabia.

Gulf Today, May 23, 2021.<sup>57</sup>

### INDIA

#### **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**May 11, 2021**

#### **Ghogarghat Forest, Gondia District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Criminals amputated the paws and teeth of a poisoned leopard.

The Times of India, May 12, 2021.<sup>58</sup>



**May 19, 2021**

#### **Malhi, Gondia District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Leopards are not welcome in the district. The badly decomposed carcass could not receive a full post-mortem examination. The veterinarian found a hole in the chest and reported that the animal died of a hemorrhage.

Outlook India, May 20, 2021; The Times of India, May 21, 2021.<sup>59</sup>



## LEOPARDS - followed

**May 22, 2021**

**Belavadi, Mysuru District, State of Karnataka, India**



A deceased female leopard lay beside 2 dead leopard cubs, and the remains of a dog sprayed with insecticide were found nearby. The poisoning was believed to be intentional. The small feline family was found 2 km away from the BEML complex (a factory manufacturing civil and military railway vehicles) where people had filmed and shown the mother and her leopard cubs on social media a few days before. The area around Mysore is attractive to leopards. There are forest reserves, thickets, stray dogs and open dumps where expired poultry meat is dumped.

The Hindu, May 22, 2021; Star of Mysore, May 23, 2021; International Business Times, May 23, 2021; The Times of India, May 23, 2021.<sup>60</sup>

**May 24, 2021**

**Bandra, Mumbai Suburban District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Manoj Shridhar Badwe claims to have been the owner for a long time. He was looking to sell the leopard's skin 2.2 million rupees or 29,700 US\$.

Mid-Day, May 27, 2021.<sup>61</sup>

**June 6, 2021**

**New Shimla, Shimla District, State of Himachal Pradesh, India**

From pangolin scales to Himalayan monal (*Lophophorus impejanus*, Appendix I) feathers, wildlife trafficking incidences have risen during the Covid-19 pandemic. 3 leopard skins, 2 claws and 5 teeth were seized from a tailor. An accomplice who owned a tourist accommodation admitted that all the leopard ornaments had been transported by bus from Uttarakhand. "The animal hide trade is highly organized. A leopard skin changes many hands before it reaches the international market. In India, it can fetch between 500,000 (6,900 US\$) and 1 million rupees, while it can fetch triple the amount in the international market" according to Rajeshwar Singh Negi, Secretary General of the NGO Nature Watch.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), June 6, 2021; The Tribune, June 8, 2021; Hindustan Times, June 24, 2021.<sup>62</sup>

**June 10, 2021**

**Sudrukumpa, Kandhamal District, State of Odisha, India**

Kabi Chandra Kanhar hid a leopard's skin, claws and bones in a tree while waiting to find a buyer. At his house, a rifle, 9 bullets, black powder and an axe were confiscated.

Orissa Post, June 10, 2021.<sup>63</sup>

**June 13, 2021**

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



Two electrocutions are suspected. Locals discover a pair of leopards in the early morning and alert forestry officers. They stepped on an electric cable stretched across the dirt and died within 5 to 6 meters of each other.

The New Indian Express, June 14, 2021.<sup>64</sup>

**June 15, 2021**

**Kamli, Solan District, State of Himachal Pradesh, India**

Patrol officers were observing National Highway 5. When they saw a man on foot with a backpack approaching, they sensed trouble. In his backpack was a full leopard skin, 1.46 meters long, plus the tail.



The Tribune, June 17, 2021; The News Himachal, June 26, 2021.<sup>65</sup>

**June 28, 2021**

**Kansar, Balangir District, State of Odisha, India**

Officers of Saintala's forestry sector seize a 76 cm long, 3 kg skin and arrest Rana Biswamitra.

The Pioneer, June 30, 2021.<sup>66</sup>

**June 30, 2021**

**Vemulawada, Chittoor District, State of Andhra Pradesh, India**



A 10-year-old female leopard died from a trap. "The big cat seems to have struggled a lot while escaping from the snare, during which her body got open", says an official. She died about 10 days ago and was buried in the Yerravaripalem forest.

The Times of India, June 30, 2021.<sup>67</sup>



## LEOPARDS - followed

**July 2, 2021**

**New Delhi, National Capital Territory of Delhi, India**



Seventeen teeth and 11 claws that presumably came from a leopard are seized. The individual claims to have “found” them on a carcass in the Shimla district 2 years ago.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 2, 2021; The Times of India, July 3, 2021.<sup>68</sup>

**July 5, 2021**

**Suranai, Sikar District, State of Rajasthan, India**

A leopard is lynched with a stick and an iron bar. He was seen prowling in the millet fields after leaving the Jhadli forest. Villagers, stirred up on social media, surrounded the “criminal”, who then tried to escape after scratching a child. Forest patrol rushed to the scene only to witness the animal in agony. The Times of India, July 6, 2021.<sup>69</sup>

**July 10 and 11, 2021**

**Bafra, Narla, Junagarh and Madanpur Rampur, Kalahandi District, State of Odisha, India**

8 leopard skins and canines, 2 tiger claws, and a golden jackal skin (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India) disguised as a tiger skin are seized. 7 people are arrested under a joint operation by Chhattisgarh and Odisha forest officials and the WCCB. The New Indian Express, July 10, 12 and 13, 2021; Hindustan Times, July 11, 2021; Orissa Post, July 11, 2021; The Pioneer, July 12, 2021; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 13, 2021.<sup>70</sup>

**July 14, 2021**

**Hosadoddi, Ramanagara District, State of Karnataka, India**

A leopard was shot at close range in the stomach. A single bullet passed right through him. It happened silently and without witnesses in a mango orchard 500 meters from the forest. The Hindu, July 15, 2021.<sup>71</sup>

**July 15, 2021**

**Jothi Nagar, Nilgiris District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



A forest patrol officer rescues a 3-year-old juvenile leopard caught in a wild boar trap early in the morning. “He struggled to release himself from the snare the whole night and thus he hurt his hind paws badly. It took nearly 8 hours for our team to release him from the snare. However, the animal died within half-an-hour after he was released”, says Saravanakumar, deputy forest conservator.

The Hindu, July 15, 2021; The Times of India, July 16, 2021.<sup>72</sup>



**July 19, 2021**

**Deogarh District, State of Odisha, India**

Ratia Kido, 29 years old, was tricked by fake swindlers interested in a 1.52-meter-long leopard skin. When the police revealed themselves, Kido tried to flee and was eventually arrested along with his 3 companions.

Pragativadi, July 22, 2021; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 24, 2021.<sup>73</sup>

**July 20, 2021**

**Sarkaghat, Mandi District, State of Himachal Pradesh, India**

Two leopard skins, 14 claws and 12 teeth are confiscated. Ram Singh is arrested in a hotel. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 20, 2021; The Tribune, July 20, 2021; Hindustan Times, July 22, 2021.<sup>74</sup>

**July 21, 2021**

**Kapasira, Boudh District, State of Odisha, India**

A single barrel muzzle loading gun, ammunition, black powder and a leopard skin with holes in the chest and neck are seized at Hara Rana's home. The New Indian Express, July 22, 2021.<sup>75</sup>





## LEOPARDS - followed

July 28, 2021

### Mana, Raipur District, State of Chhattisgarh, India

Nikhil Kumar and Manish Kumar are arrested. A leopard skin is seized and valued at one million rupees, or 13,460 US\$. They bought the skin from Vikram alias Manoj Kumar Kushwaha in the Koriya district 250 km away.

Naidunia, July 29, 2021; The Hitavada, July 29, 2021.<sup>76</sup>

August 11, 2021

### Peruvaje, Dakshina Kannada District, State of Karnataka, India

A leopard was stuck in a trap. A veterinarian arrived on the scene at noon.

He administered a sedative to the injured feline. The delivery lasted over 2 hours. Curiously, the leopard chose not to struggle when he was caught. After some superficial care, he was transferred by car to the Bile hilly forests. The other challenge was keeping the growing and curious crowd at bay.

The Hindu, August 11, 2021; The Times of India, August 11, 2021.<sup>77</sup>



August 24, 2021

### Meghdaun, Chhindwara District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

An adult leopard carcass floats in a pond near the village, on the edge of the Pench Tiger Reserve. According to villagers, he was thrown into the water after being electrocuted in a field. The Free Press Journal, August 24, 2021.<sup>78</sup>



## IRAN

June and December, 2021

### Razavi Khorasan Province, Iran

Two young men slaughter a leopard and run to the clinic because they got scratched. Guards rush to the scene of the lynching. The leopard cub is transferred to veterinarians. The general director of the environment wants the judicial authority to deal with the perpetrators in a dissuasive manner. The 2 aggressors were initially condemned ...to be released! Civil parties lodged an appeal. The rangers protest: "this kind of decision favors poaching and encourages cruelty towards animals."

Shahrara News, June 28, 2021; Iranian Students' News Agency, December 29, 2021.<sup>79</sup>



## SRI LANKA

June 28, 2021

### Walapane, Central Province, Sri Lanka

3 arrests and 3 releases on bail for 100,000 rupees or 495 US\$ for capturing a leopard in a trap in a tea plantation, killing him and butchering him to sell his meat.

News 1<sup>st</sup>, June 28, 2021.<sup>80</sup>

## YEMEN

July 2, 2021

### Lawdar District, Abyan Governorate, Yemen

A shepherd killed 2 Arabian leopards (*Panthera pardus nimr*) with a rifle. He justified it by saying that the 2 victims had attacked his herd several times. Photos of the shepherd, a small boy and the 2 dead leopards were shared on the Facebook account of the NGO Protect Yemeni tigers endangered. The local environmental protection

officer says the shepherd's statements are both unacceptable and unjustifiable. A team, he says, will visit the scene to try to collect testimonies. "Unfortunately, this takes time, because the security situation in this region is so unstable. The protection of animals just isn't a priority considering the chaos in the region at the moment."

Yemen has been at war since 2015. The regular troops of the government recognized by the international community and Saudi-backed are in conflict with the Shiite-oriented Houthi movement, and in recent weeks, Yemeni forces have also dealt with the Southern Transitional Council's autonomist rebels. In any case, "the ministerial decision sets out that any person who kills an endangered animal should receive a fine of 60 US\$. It's too small a sum", notes Abdelislam Al Jaabi, head of the environmental protection authority.

France 24, July 13, 2021.<sup>81</sup>





## LEOPARDS - followed

### EUROPE

#### FRANCE

**August 3, 2021**

**Saint-Martin-la-Plaine, Department of Loire, France**

A private person voluntarily handing over of 3 leopards, including an 8-year-old sire, 2-year-old black coated female and male from the same litter, to Tonga Terre d'Accueil, a specialized shelter, after not being able to house them. The mother is missing and the different parties involved are keeping quiet on these 3 felines' histories and origins.

Tonga Terre d'Accueil, August 4, 2021.<sup>82</sup>



## CHEETAHS - *Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I

### AFRICA

#### SOUTH AFRICA

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Dinokeng Game Reserve, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Rescue of 5 cheetahs who lost their mother to poaching. In hope of their release, they are under the care of the Kevin Richardson Foundation refuge, specialized in the protection and rehabilitation of big cats. Kevin Richardson, June 11, 2021.<sup>83</sup>



**July 8, 2021**

**South Africa**

"On the Trail" n°29 p.57 exposed how volunteers who believe they are helping release captive lions do not realize that the cubs they bottle-feed will later be sold to be killed in hunting pens.

Volunteering with captive big cats is not limited to lions. Amandine Lequime, a Belgian national, was "doing a service" in one of the country's 60 captive wild animal facilities, which welcomed volunteers. Her experience ended abruptly when a cheetah jumped on her while the cheetah's enclosure door was open for feeding. Injured, Amandine was transferred to the hospital. The cheetah had already injured the manager of the establishment 2 years earlier.

Amandine Lequime left stating: "Although the facility pleaded with me to keep the incident quiet, I don't want other volunteers to go through similar frightening experiences. People need to understand that to be close to wild animals is appealing, but not safe." According to the NGO Blood Lions, at least 50 big cat attacks have been reported over the past 10 years in the farms where they were bred and in the houses where they were detained, a third of which resulted in death.

Nivashni Nair, July 8, 2021; The Witness, July 9, 2021.<sup>84</sup>

#### SOMALIA

**End of July 2021**

**Somaliland Autonomous Region, Somalia**



The Ministry of Environment and Rural Development confiscates a 3-6-month-old cheetah from the hands of traffickers. They had acquired him from a farmer who had captured him. According to the farmer, he posed a threat to his livestock. The cheetah cub died shortly after his confiscation. Cheetah Conservation Fund UK, July 29, 2021.<sup>85</sup>

## CARACALS - *Caracal caracal*, Appendix II except for the Asian populations listed in Appendix I.

### EUROPE

#### FRANCE

**August 23, 2021**

**Department of Côte-d'Or, France**

Confiscation at a private individual's home of a caracal held without authorization.

Gendarmerie de la Côte d'Or, August 25, 2021.<sup>86</sup>



**AMERICA**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**June 30, 2021**

**Brookhaven, State of Georgia, United States of America**

When Kristine Frank wakes up in the morning, 2 eyes are watching her just 15 cm from her face. A female serval is right next to her in bed. Once the shock is over, she and her husband manage to get the serval out of the house. She may have come in during the night, when the dog was coming out. They notify the authorities.



After a few days, the serval is caught. Since it is illegal to keep a serval in Georgia, she is given to a sanctuary. Her owner, Anna Fyfe, had come with her from South Carolina, where it is legal to detain a serval in a private home.

Cable News Network, July 4, 2021; People, July 7, 2021; WGXA (with AP), July 10, 2021.<sup>87</sup>

**August 7 to September 18, 2021**

**San Diego County, State of California, United States of America**

Wanted. The owners of "Pharaoh", a serval, are desperately looking for him since he ran away. They say they bought him 4 years ago, believing him to be a savannah cat, a hybrid of a serval and a house cat. Owning a serval is illegal in California. "Her family understands Pharaoh might be seized by the authorities if he is captured and found to be a full-blooded serval, but they still hope the cat is found." After 6 weeks of concern, the serval was captured in the Rancho Peñasquitos neighborhood and returned home. The justice system does not seem to have looked into the case.

United Press Agency, September 10, 2021; Newsweek, September 13, 2021; CBS 8, September 21, 2021.<sup>88</sup>

**SNOW LEOPARDS - *Panthera uncia*, Appendix I**

**ASIA**

**CHINA**

**May 17, 2021**

**Aksay Kazakh Autonomous County, Jiuquan Prefecture, Gansu Province, China**

Seizure of a freshly poached snow leopard skin and bones. Two arrests.

Gansu Public Security, May 25, 2021.<sup>89</sup>

**ASIA**

**CAMBODIA**

**Mid-July 2021**

**Preah Monivong Bokor National Park, Kampot Province, Cambodia**



When he arrived at the wildlife rescue center in Phnom Tamao, the male clouded leopard had just spent at least a week without eating or drinking, injured by the trap where he was found. Despite all the veterinarians' efforts, he died after 2 days. From January 2020 to June 2021, 70,000 traps were removed from national parks and other protected areas in the country.



Khmer Times, July 24, 2021; Wildlife Crime Hotline, July 24, 2021; The Phnom Penh Post, July 26, 2021.<sup>90</sup>

**INDONESIA**

**June 29, 2021**

**Jambi, Jambi Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**



Sulaiman had "accidentally" caught a clouded leopard in a boar trap. He had recovered the skin and bones and disposed of the remains. His accomplice Syamsudin was in charge of selling the skin. A client offered to buy it for 40 million rupiahs (2,800 US\$). The transaction never took place. Syamsudin was arrested on February 6, 2021 in Paal Meral and Sulaiman the next day.

The poacher is now sentenced to 2 years in prison, the middleman to 1.5 years in prison, and both must pay a fine of 20 million rupiahs or 1,400 US\$. Garda Animalia, June 29, 2021; Traffic, July 6, 2021.<sup>91</sup>



## THAILAND

**May 28, 2021**

**Sam Phran District, Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand**

facebook

In December 2020, 2 clouded leopards had been filmed in Erawan National Park, Si Sawat district (Kanchanaburi province). A few months later, one of them, or rather his skin, was found 200 km away, at the home of Thirasak Chaiphuthongt (40 years old). The man was offering a bedside rug for 7,500 baht (240 US\$) on Facebook. The scratches on the live clouded leopard's photos and skin are similar enough to deduce that it is the same individual. Chaiphuthongt was arrested. Authorities searched the home of his alleged supplier, Prakop Chosanap (74), in Tha Sao, Kanchanaburi Province. They found shaft and other tools for carrying wild animal carcasses, but he was not present. Bangkok Post, June 3, 2021.<sup>92</sup>

## FISHING CATS - *Prionailurus viverrinus*, Appendix II

ASIA

INDIA

**Night of July 22 to July 23, 2021**

**Badamanitira, Kendrapara District, State of Odisha, India**



Electrocutions do not spare fishing cats. This one died while trying to enter an orchard. The farmer had installed a fence and powered it with a high voltage current. Again, the purpose was to kill animals who would dare to approach his crops. The New Indian Express, July 24, 2021.<sup>93</sup>

SRI LANKA

**July 16, 2021**

**Dolluwa, Central Province, Sri Lanka**



Explosives do not spare fishing cats. This one died mutilated by a "hakka patas", a type of homemade explosive concealed in fruits. Elephants are regularly victims of this type of explosive (see "On the Trail" n°18 p. 105, n°21 p. 97, p. 99, n°22 p. 98, n°25 p. 94, n°29 p. 38, n°30 p. 36, n°30 p. 38, n°32 p. 52). The Morning, July 20, 2021.<sup>94</sup>

## ASIAN GOLDEN CAT - *Catopuma temminckii*, Appendix I

ASIA

VIET NAM

**May 19 and October 9, 2021**

**Thanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam**



Two Asian golden cat carcasses (25 kg) were confiscated from a woman transporting them on a motorcycle to sell to wild meat lovers. She was sentenced 5 months later to 15 months in jail with a 30-month probation period. ENV, May 19 and October 9, 2021.<sup>95</sup>



## LEOPARD CATS - *Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II except the Asian populations which are listed under CITES Appendix I

ASIA

VIET NAM

**May 10, 2021**

**Tieu Dong, Ha Nam Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure of a leopard cat whom the hunter was trying to sell to a police officer posing as a buyer. SVW, May 17, 2021.<sup>96</sup>





**June 14, 2021**  
**Trang Dinh District,**  
**Lang Son Province, Viet**  
**Nam. Border with China.**

Seizure of 3 leopard cats from individuals who explain that they bought them 3 months earlier on the Internet.

SVW, June 18, 2021.<sup>97</sup>



**Mid-June 2021**  
**Viet Nam**



Seizure of a leopard cat sold on the roadside. He is entrusted to the Ho Chi Minh City Forest Protection Department.

ENV, June 19, 2021.<sup>98</sup>

**JAGUARS - *Panthera onca*, Appendix I**

**AMERICA**

**FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)**

**March - May 2021**  
**Territorial Collectivity of Guiana,**  
**France**

The 2-month-long investigation conducted by OFB (Office Français de la Biodiversité or French Biodiversity Agency) agents led to the discovery of a man selling 14 jaguar teeth on WhatsApp. He was fined 600 € (710 US\$). None of the teeth were retrieved.

French Biodiversity Agency, September 2021.<sup>99</sup>

**June 2021**  
**Territorial Collectivity of Guiana,**  
**France**

OFB agents receive information and identify the salesman of a skull and fangs that undoubtedly came from a jaguar. He recognizes the facts. A 150 € (180 US\$) settlement is planned.

French Biodiversity Agency, September 2021.<sup>100</sup>



**EUROPE**

**ITALY**

**May 13, 2021**

**Milan Malpensa International Airport, Varese**  
**Province, Lombardy Region, Italy**



A jaguar skin blanket was confiscated from a package from Naples to China.

Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata, May 13, 2021;  
 VareseNews, May 13, 2021.<sup>101</sup>

**JAGUARUNDIS - *Herpailurus yagouaroundi*,**  
**Appendix I**

**AMERICA**

**COSTA RICA**

**August 2021**

**Nosara, Guanacaste Province, Costa Rica**

An abandoned young jaguarundi was brought to the Nosara refuge by the people who found him alone and forsaken, they said. Jaguarundis usually live in the forest. Urban development is slowly eroding their habitat. The refuge is receiving more and more injured or orphaned specimens

to the point that it does not have room. The jaguarundi was transferred to another rescue center. International Animal Rescue reminds us that it is common for wild animals to leave their offspring alone to get food and that before determining a young animal has been abandoned, it is advisable to wait a while to see if the mother returns.

International Animal Rescue, August 24, 2021.<sup>102</sup>





AMERICA

VENEZUELA

July 9, 2021

Caracas, Capital District, Venezuela

Properties occupied by members of the "Koki" gang were raided. The gang controls Cota 905, one of the largest neighborhoods in Caracas. A bazooka, a sniper's rifle, 1,000 rounds



of large caliber ammunition, numerous rounds of assault rifle ammunition, and an ocelot were confiscated.

La República, July 10, 2021.<sup>103</sup>

**PUMAS - *Puma concolor*, Appendix II, except for the populations of Costa Rica and Panama which are in Appendix I**

AMERICA

COLOMBIA

May 26, 2021

Bogota, Colombia



In a family home north of the capital, a juvenile female puma weighing barely 7.1 kg and in very poor health is seized. She was transferred to the city's rehabilitation center. 3 months later, she is back in shape and well grown. She should join a sanctuary closer to her natural living conditions in order to finish learning to live in the wild.

La Prensa Latina (with EFE), August 26, 2021.<sup>104</sup>

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

June 25, 2021

Swan Valley, State of Idaho, United States of America

A woman sees a female cougar in distress, struggling to cross the Snake River Road. She immediately contacted Idaho Fish and Game. The agents discovered that the animal had numerous bullet marks and put her out of her misery.

NPG of Idaho, June 30, 2021.<sup>105</sup>

End of June 2021

Santa Ana Mountains, State of California, United States of America

A puma is killed by a bullet. The NGO Cougar Conservancy reminds the public that it is available to help all inhabitants and breeders facing problems with puma cohabitation.

Cougar Conservancy, June 30, 2021.<sup>106</sup>

August 26, 2021

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

Handing over of an 11-month-old female cougar weighing 36 kg in the Bronx. Her (illegal) "owners" realized that she could hardly live in their apartment. After a weekend of care at the Bronx Zoo, she went to the Turpentine Creek (Arkansas) wildlife shelter where she will spend the rest of her life.

News4Jax (with AP), August 30, 2021; Yahoo News, August 31, 2021; The Peak (with Global News), September 2, 2021.<sup>107</sup>

August 26, 2021

State of Utah, United States of America

Utah declares war on pumas

Step by step, quota after quota, Utah has returned to the big kills of the 1990s. Without mentioning poaching, 650 pumas (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II) were hunted within the rules and the law in 2020.

The trend seems irrepressible. Also known as the mountain lion, the puma is gradually replacing the African lion in the collective imagination. He is the focus of the trophy collectors' passion and is rising in the hierarchy, becoming the 6<sup>th</sup> of the Big Five.

Some basic accusations make the hunting of pumas a great and legitimate cause. The pumas are responsible for the decline of Mexican bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*, Appendix II in Mexico) and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), which is all the more reprehensible as these 2 agile herbivores are the favourite targets of ordinary hunters. Road collisions, forest fires and habitat fragmentation allegedly count for nothing in the disappearance of deer and bighorn sheep. Only pumas are thought to be responsible. The only available study on this subject was published in 2020 and found that deer populations in States where the pumas are not hunted are no different in density and abundance from populations in States where the pumas are hunted.

=>



The puma is caught between the hunters' front and the sheep farmers' front. There are less than 1,500 pumas in Utah, 220,000 km<sup>2</sup>. They live in the mountains and are reportedly coming more and more down to the plains to the point of jeopardising the production of 285,000 sheep and the economic balance of the sheep sector.

In 2020, the House Bill 125 was passed, directing the DWR (Division of Wildlife Resources) to reduce the number of pumas where there are not enough deer.

On August 26, 2021, the Wildlife Board allowed the hunting of pumas throughout the year in 33 of the 53 hunting units. The only limit is that a hunter doesn't have the right to kill more than 2 per year. Laundré JW, Papouchis C (2020) The Elephant in the room: What can we learn from California regarding the use of sport hunting of pumas (*Puma concolor*) as a management tool?. PLOS ONE 15(2): e0224638; The Salt Lake Tribune, August 27, 2021; Focusing on Wildlife, September 17, 2021.<sup>108</sup>

### August 30, 2021

#### **Kennewick, State of Washington, United States of America**

The Mountain Lion Foundation has lost a legal battle, but it may take the fight to the Supreme Court. The Court of First Instance considers that the Klickitat county sheriff's use of packs of hunting dogs to pursue to death pumas (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II) considered to be dangerous to sheep herds or human life is not illegal. The 1996 law prohibits the hunting of pumas with dogs unless human life is in imminent danger. However, Bob Songer, the county sheriff, summoned the hound handlers and their dogs when a goat was found dead near a house, when a puma was seen near a meadow where sheep were grazing, when a puma was seen about 30 metres from a house, when a resident saw a puma while walking. In 2 years, 23 pumas have been hacked by the dogs after calls that have not been checked for accuracy or loyalty. In the majority of the hound hunts triggered after alerts, the dogs are unable to detect the scent of any puma.

Bob Songer says it is his responsibility to protect residents and also livestock and pets from puma attacks. According to him, a puma who kills a goat can kill a child. There is the same excess in the fear of pumas as in the fear of wolves.

The hound handlers have to cut off the puma's ears to prevent the trophies from being displayed or traded.

There are reportedly about 2,000 pumas aged over 18 months living independently in Washington State, 184,800 km<sup>2</sup>.

Northwest News Network, February 24 and August 31, 2021.<sup>109</sup>

## FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

### July 2021

#### **Saint-Laurent-Du-Maroni, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France**



"Puma for sale, killed just now." The author of the ad on WhatsApp, who had not hesitated to provide his phone number, grew quickly disillusioned about his possible profits when he saw agents of the French Biodiversity Agency (OFB) arrive at his home. The feline's frozen remains (head and tail) were confiscated and the suspect was arrested.

French Biodiversity Agency, September 2021.<sup>110</sup>

## BOBCATS and LYNX - *Lynx spp.*, Appendix II

### EUROPE

#### LITHUANIA

### June 4 and End of October 2021

#### **Šiauliai, Šiauliai County, Lithuania**

S.P. was fined 625 € or 760 US\$ and 7 bobcats were confiscated. During inspections on September 8 and November 7, 2020, authorities discovered that S.P. only had a possession permit for 2 bobcats. The suspect had not declared the cubs' births and therefore held them illegally. In addition, he tried to sell them, even though he did not have the required marketing permit. Finally, he kept them in conditions inconducive to their welfare.

S.P. contested the verdict, arguing that he had been breeding lynx for 10 years without any problem. The conviction was confirmed on October 21.

Environmental Protection Department, October 21, 2021.<sup>111</sup>

#### CZECHIA

### Beginning of July 2021

#### **Klatov District, Plzeň Region, Czechia**

Following a customs investigation, a lynx was found in a freezer at the home of a 60-year-old hunter.

Deník, July 13 and September 1, 2021.<sup>112</sup>



## ASIA

## INDIA

**July 13 and 15, 2021**

**Nandura and Jalgaon Jamod, Buldhana District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Ten tiger and leopard claws are seized and 3 suspects are arrested; 2 days later, 2 more suspects are arrested.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 15, 2021; Outlook India, July 15, 2021.<sup>113</sup>

## EUROPE

## THE NETHERLANDS

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Almere, Province of Flevoland, The Netherlands**

Three caracals (*Caracal caracal*, Appendix II), 3 servals (*Leptailurus serval*, Appendix II), birds, snakes, reptiles and 13 domestic cats were found at a private home. The caracals were seized by the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA).

Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority, June 4, 2021.<sup>114</sup>

**July 27, 2021**

**Rotterdam, Province of South Holland, The Netherlands**



A caracal (*Caracal caracal*, Appendix I in Asia or II) runs on a viaduct over the A15 freeway near Rotterdam. He is spotted by a driver. The alert is given. The feline is captured a few hours later. The police and the veterinary services searched the home of his "owner" and discovered 2 servals (*Leptailurus serval*, Appendix II) and a spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II). National Police, July 28, 2021.<sup>115</sup>

**July 28, 2021**

**Plzeň, Plzeň Region, Czechia**

Josef Novotný, 62, raised 2 lions and 2 pumas in the middle of a residential area. Veterinary services had previously granted him permission to breed pumas, but in 2016 he bought his first lion, wrongly thinking he would be granted permission again. He still bought a second lioness 2 years later. That was the last straw; all of his licenses were revoked. Novotný filed a lawsuit with the Pilsen court to challenge this decision. The court recently rejected his request, and he must now find a new legal home for the felines. Otherwise, he faces a fine and the animals could be euthanized.

Novinky.cz, July 28, 2021.<sup>116</sup>



# WOLVES, HYENAS AND AFRICAN PAINTED DOGS



## AFRICA

### KENYA

**May 28, 2021**

#### **Tsavo East National Park, Kenya**

The rescue attempt of an African painted dog (*Lycaon pictus*) injured in the neck by a trap was unsuccessful. He did not wake up after anesthesia.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, May 2021.<sup>1</sup>



**July 15, 2021**

#### **Oserian, Nakuru County, Kenya**

A male spotted hyaena (*Crocuta crocuta*) was released from a trap that had cut into his skin at the abdomen. The prognosis is good.

SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>2</sup>





## AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**May 25, 2021**

#### **Bozeman, State of Montana, United States of America**

Let's face it, the scene at the Pioneer Bar in Virginia City is high art in the Jack London, Western, Folk and Nostalgia repertoire. The waitress in her cleavage and taffeta dress, the trappers with otter hats, the one-eyed whale hunter stranded by who knows what current in Montana, and the grey wolf who sits on the bar.



The casting was perfect. But it caused Troy Hide to have his menagerie license revoked and his company Animals of Montana Inc (AMI) to leave the scene. AMI rented tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), American black bears (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) and grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) and also porcupines (family Hystricidae or Erethizontidae) and badgers (family Mustelidae) for clips, fashion shows, and shocking photos. AMI was the queen of the event business even though it did not have eagles. Its license was withdrawn because of numerous breaches of animal safety and welfare: cages without fresh water, unhealthy, hot in the summer, soiled by waste. But what prompted the Montana administration to revoke AMI's license and outlaw it was the wolf lying on top of the Pioneer Bar.

Troy Hide admitted that contrary to the requirements of the administration, he did not have a tranquilizer gun on site and that the wolf was not in an electrified enclosure (the required voltage is not lethal) during shooting preparations and rehearsals. Nothing was done to prevent the wolf from escaping and roaming around Virginia City (population 800).

Montana is also known for its persecution of wolves (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.96). Fierce hunters can kill up to 20 wolves each per year if they combine gun and bow hunting and trapping licenses, and the governor who signed the law relaxing hunting rules, Greg Gianforte, poached a wolf himself.

Supreme Court of the State of Montana, May 25, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

**May 26, 2021**

#### **Stevens County, State of Washington, United States of America**

Discovery of a female grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) poached with a firearm in the Sheep Creek area. She had unweaned cubs, who likely starved to death. This poaching signals the end of the "Wedge" pack, which consisted of only a pair of adults and their cubs. The Stevens County Cattlemen's Association criticizes this act: "Most of the wolves are good wolves, and they're not out there depredating. And [the poached wolf] wasn't one of the bad ones."

Officially, 12 wolves were poached in Washington State between 2010 and 2018 (see "On the Trail" n°10 p.69). The last known poaching occurred in May 2019, also in Stevens County. According to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, as of April there were 178 wolves in 29 packs.

WildEarth Guardians, June 17, 2021; High Country News, July 9, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

**May 27, 2021**

#### **Stacy, State of Minnesota, United States of America**

Four grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) escape from a facility known as the Wildlife Science Center. Taking advantage of the heavy rain, they dug through the mud under the fence and got lost in nature. A week later, they were all recovered except for one who unfortunately collided with a car and had to be terminated. According to the facility's staff, the 4 wolves, who formed a captive pack, were looking for a cub who had just been taken from them to be bottle-fed at the International Wolf Center (Ely, Minnesota).

The International Wolf Center, opened in 1993, hosts an "exhibit pack" currently composed of 3 wolves. The youngest member, according to their website, is a female grey wolf cub born on May 23, 2021, undoubtedly the one whose disappearance caused the escape of the 4 wolves from the Wildlife Science Center. The International Wolf Center's purpose is allegedly to raise public awareness about wolves in order to support the species' survival in the wild. This episode provides a brief glimpse into the hidden world of wolf trafficking covered by the magic word "science".

Newsweek, June 1, 2021; CBS Minnesota, June 4, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

**August 12, 2021**

#### **Madison County, State of Montana, United States of America**

Jeffrey Scott Wood was sentenced to a fine of 500 US\$ and to 1,000 US\$ in damages to the State for poisoning and killing a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II). He put strychnine in a cow carcass. In addition to the wolf, a domestic dog and several small mammals and scavenging birds died. US Department of Justice, August 12, 2021.<sup>6</sup>





## ASIA

### UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

#### Beginning of June 2021

##### Dubai, Emirate of Dubai, United Arab Emirates

In its first-ever case, Dubai Police's Environmental Crimes Division prevented the illegal sale of a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II). The seller was arrested. In 2020, a wolf illegally held by a private individual had already been seized in the neighboring emirate of Sharjah (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.159). The Environmental Crimes Division was established in late 2020 as a result of accidents involving exotic animals. Its purpose is to combat wildlife crime, particularly the breeding and trafficking of wild and exotic animals, both to protect the animals and for public safety reasons. It is also responsible for maintaining a registry of all legal exotic animal owners.

The National, June 10, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## EUROPE

### GERMANY

#### June 21, 2021

##### Potsdam, Brandenburg State, Germany

A 61-year-old Dutch hunter charged with poaching a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) in spring 2019 near Fläming was acquitted. The man admitted the facts, while arguing that he had done so to defend his dogs attacked by the wolf. The prosecutor has appealed.

On the same day, Julia Klöckner, Minister of Agriculture, said she was in favor of targeted wolf killing to protect flocks.

According to authorities, 19 wolves have been poached with firearms in Brandenburg since 2017. In 2021, the State parliament approved a new law allowing wolves to be hunted in the event of an attack on a herd and until the attacks stop, without waiting for the wolf responsible to be identified.

Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg, June 21, 2021; Deutscher Jagdverband, June 28, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

### SPAIN

#### End of July 2021

##### Autonomous Community of Cantabria, Spain

The Autonomous Community government establishes a quota of 34 grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) to be killed between August 1, 2021 and July 31, 2022 in response to the death of 1,210 heads of cattle attributed to wolves between July 2020 and April 2021.

Spanish News Today, July 30, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

## NORWAY

#### July 9, 2021

##### Oslo, Eastern Norway Region, Norway

A pair of grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) and 2 wolf cubs were killed on January 1, 2020 in Elverum (Innlandet County, Eastern Norway Region) under the terms of an illegal decree. This is the Oslo court's judgement after the NGO NOAH filed a complaint. The Ministry of the Environment is also ordered to pay NOAH 640,000 kroner or 74,700 US\$ for its legal costs. The court held that the threat posed by a pack of 6 wolves around Elverum was overestimated and did not justify the culling authorized by the Ministry. Nettavisen, July 9, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



### POLAND

#### May 2021

##### Wałbrzych County, Lower Silesian Voivodeship, Poland

The image of a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) with a missing leg appears on Powiat forestry inspection camera traps. The officers believe that he lost it in a hare trap. Fortunately, he recovered from his injury and even regained the ability to follow the pack to hunt. Naszemiasto.pl, November 5, 2021<sup>11</sup>



#### July 23, 2021

##### Katowice, Silesian Voivodeship, Poland

Confiscation of a fur coat, presumed to be from a Mackenzie Valley wolf (*Canis lupus occidentalis*, Appendix II), offered for auction on the Internet. The seller claims to have offered the coat for sale on behalf of his mother-in-law, who had allegedly owned it for many years. Examinations are underway to certify that it is indeed a wolf fur. Polish Police, July 23, 2021.<sup>12</sup>



## RUSSIA

**May 2021**

### **Ulan-Ude, Republic of Buryatia, Russia**

A team from the newspaper Arigus.tv spotted an online advertisement offering 2 grey wolf cubs (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) for sale. It costs 20,000 rubles (270 US\$) to buy a wolf cub. A quick inquiry with local residents revealed that the woman who posted the ad had already sold other wolves. The journalists pretended to be buyers and were immediately given additional photos and the exact address. They immediately notified the authorities and went to the site together on Sunday evening. In her garden, an adult wolf is chained. In the house, there are 2 male wolf cubs behind fences and dozens of pedigree cats. The woman boasts that she also sells lynx (*Lynx lynx*, Appendix II) and introduces them to her "protégés": "they don't bite or growl." "They are not toys, they will grow up and they are wild animals. They need room." "You don't need CITES papers if you don't breed them." When she realizes she's facing the authorities, the seller says she bought the cubs from hunters on the side of the highway a few days ago but has no regrets, "If I hadn't, it would have been someone else, and what would have happened to them?" The agents leave with the cubs. They will go to a sanctuary but won't be able to return to freedom. The seller is charged with the illegal sale of red-listed wildlife.

Arigus.tv, May 17, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

## SLOVAKIA

**June 1, 2021**

### **Slovakia**

German and French hunters who killed a grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) and brought back his skin will have to find another country than Slovakia. The conflict between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of the Environment has turned to the latter's advantage. For the 2019-2020 season, the hunting quota was 35 wolves, and for the 2020-2021 season, 50 wolves. For the 2021-2022 season it is zero. The Ministry of the Environment has issued a decree making wolves a protected animal throughout the year.

The Slovak Spectator, January 15, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

## SWEDEN

**June 17, 2021**

### **Göteborg, Västra Götaland County, Sweden**



"On the Trail" n°31 p.186 mentioned the 16-month prison sentence of a man who sold, among other wildlife products, grey wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) skins and golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) feathers. On appeal, his sentence was reduced to one year in prison. The appeal court based its verdict on the fact that there was no trade in live animals and that the procedure was too slow. Opened in 2016, it closed in January 2020.

Aftonbladet, June 17, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

## SWITZERLAND

**August 30, 2021**

### **Cantons of Vaud and Valais, Switzerland**

According to the Swiss Farmers' Union, "it is becoming clear that the increasing number of wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) and wolf packs is endangering the Alpine economy." 300 to 500 sheep and goats are reportedly killed by wolves every year. The Swiss Minister of Environment has just granted the canton of Valais a permit to kill 2 wolves, and the same goes for the canton of Vaud. The 4 wolves must belong to packs considered the most dangerous for the herds.

SWI swissinfo.ch, August 30, 2021.<sup>16</sup>



## AMERICA

### CANADA

**May 13, 2021**

**Kenora, Province of Ontario, Canada**

A small noise was heard at Cate Chant's door. No, it wasn't someone who couldn't find the doorbell, but 3 American black bear cubs (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) looking at her. She immediately calls the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and learns that 2 weeks earlier, a "problem bear" was put to death by the authorities. "I think they hadn't realized at the time that she had cubs. When they do things to inadvertently attract bears, there can be unintended consequences of that." The cubs were retrieved by department officials for rehabilitation, if it's possible. CTV News, May 14, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



© Cate Chant

**May 23, 2021**

**Anglemont, Province of British Columbia, Canada**

Sunday's walk turned into a horror movie. On Forest Service Road 695, a family came across 80 to 100 clawless American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) and brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) paws, most of them skinless as well. The resemblance to human hands is uncanny, but the family's mother, a hunter, is not impressed and examines the pile in more detail. It contains adult and cub bear paws, as well as some skulls. According to her, there is no doubt that it is the work of poachers, and not the most experienced. She also rules out the possibility that they are local residents. "These remains were dumped in a waterway culvert...and we all know where our water comes from, it comes from the [Shuswap] Lake."

In British Columbia, the possession and sale of bear parts is illegal. But the lure of profit is strong: a bear claw sells online for between 12 and 165 dollars (10-135 US\$).

CBC/Radio-Canada, May 24, 2021; Vancouver Sun, May 24, 2021; Q107, May 25, 2021; Bear Defenders, May 26, 2021; CTV News, May 26, 2021; The Province, May 27, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



© PNG

**May 25, 2021**

**Grandview, Province of Manitoba, Canada**

Law prohibits killing a female bear with cubs. Yet this did not prevent 3 4-month-old American black bear cubs (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) from being brutally orphaned. Two of them were found next to their mother's body, shot to death. The third, the smallest, was found later. He had been hiding. They will grow up at Black Bear Rescue Manitoba in Stonewall.

Black Bear Rescue Manitoba, May 25 and 26, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



© Black Bear Rescue Manitoba

**June 1, 2021**

**Cochrane, Province of Alberta, Canada**

Starting its operations in 1985, the Cochrane Ecological Institute (CEI) was one of 2 rehabilitation centers for American black bears (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) in Alberta, along with the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation. However, the situation now is quite different. "Alberta Environment and Parks have no choice but to remove CEI's authorization to rehabilitate black bear cubs at their facility."

The rescue conditions of a 3-month-old asphalt-coated bear cub discovered by a hunter were ambiguous. He may have been too close to a shale gas lagoon. Clio Smeeton, the president of CEI, acknowledges that she did not notify the authorities within the legal 24-hour time limit. Too busy, she did not do so until 40 hours had passed. Furthermore, the bear was not examined by an approved veterinarian. Finally, the hunter helped transport the bear when only CEI personnel were authorized to do so. As a result, about 10 days after his arrival, the bear cub was seized, turned over to the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation, and CEI's license was revoked. According to Smeeton, the administration is going after her because she has repeatedly criticized their protocols regarding orphaned cubs.

CBC/Radio-Canada, June 7, 2021; Calgary Sun, June 8, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### FAMILY AFFAIRS

May 13, 2021

#### State of Florida, United States of America

Continuation of the case where 9 people lured American black bears (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) with baked goods before unleashing their dogs and then posting photos of their exploits online (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.75). In November 2020, a suspect, Haley Reddish, pleaded guilty. Her sentence, still undetermined, will be reduced because of her cooperation.

Now it is time for Charles L. Scarbrough, 32, and his wife Hannah Weiner Scarbrough, 29, to plead guilty. Like Reddish, Charles Scarbrough will receive a reduced sentence because of his cooperation with authorities. Hannah Scarbrough, on the other hand, was sentenced to 5 years and 3 months of probation. She must also pay nearly 26,700 US\$ in court costs for the trial and investigation.

Ocala Star-Banner, May 15, 2021; Daily Mail, May 19, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

June 2021

#### Gardiner, State of Montana, United States of America



The brown bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*, Appendix II) n°394, 25 years old, is dead. He may have drowned. His carcass, found on the banks of the Yellowstone River, quickly becomes a tourist attraction. Neighboring residents and passing kayakers stop to take pictures of it. Alerted, authorities prepare its removal by helicopter or boat. But they arrive a little late. Someone has already cut off the bear's head and paws. Kevin Frey from Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks takes the matter seriously: "It makes no difference if a person poaches a bear to kill him or to take his hide and claws as trophies or comes upon a dead grizzly and decides to help themselves to the parts. Grizzlies are a federally protected species and it's illegal." The investigation is ongoing.

Mountain Journal, June 30, 2021; The Daily Beast, July 5, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

Beginning of June 2021

#### Polk County, State of Tennessee, United States of America



Mark Anthony Hall, 34 years old, killed a 17-kg American black bear cub (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) when the minimum legal weight for hunting is 34 kg. He was fined 5,500 US\$ and had his hunting license suspended for one year. His accomplice Jeremy Harris, 36 years old, was charged with placing the bait that attracted their victim. His hunting license is also suspended pending sentencing.

WDEF News 12, June 11, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

June 16, 2021

#### Staten Island, New York, State of New York, United States of America

A dead male American black bear cub (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) lies in the parking lot of a shopping center. Fresh Kills on Staten Island is home to the world's largest rubbish dump. The debris from the September 11, 2001 attacks was dumped there. Closed in 2002, it has been transformed into a sports course and a place for walking. To get the complete story of Fresh Kills dump, please refer to // Voir avec Charlotte

Help Asheville Bears, June 16, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

Week of June 21, 2021

#### Ashe County, State of North Carolina, United States of America



"On the Trail" n°32 p.102 reported the alert launched at the end of March 2021 by the NGO Help Asheville Bears regarding the number of American black bears (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) losing their paws in traps in the Great Smoky and Appalachian Mountains. In total, 24 incidents have occurred in 1.5 years. The list continues to grow, and 31 victims have now been identified. The last one identified was amputated in a beaver or otter trap. The NGO has launched a Poacher Strike Force to try to identify the persons at fault. WLOS, June 26, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

July 1, 2021

#### Anchorage, State of Alaska, United States of America

A Hillside resident couldn't stand to see a family of brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) rummaging through his garbage. He pulled out his rifle. The mother and a cub died, and an orphaned cub ran away, leaving behind him a trail of blood. He should get through. An investigation began. According to the spokesman for the authorities, "whenever brown bears start going this route, we typically have to kill them. Even though for the most part, it's a human-caused problem (people have left out their trash...) we still have to, for public safety reasons, "remove" those bears."

Anchorage Daily News, July 2, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



**July 15, 2021**

**Asheville, State of North Carolina, United States of America**

An American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) ventured into a garden. It didn't do him any good. The 70-year-old neighbor across the street, Robert Buchsbaum, shot him with his rifle. Killing a bear on private property is only allowed in self-defense. This was not the case here. Buchsbaum was indicted and his gun was confiscated. WLOS, July 16, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**July 23, 2021**

**Tawas City, State of Michigan, United States of America**

James M. Svoboda and Barbara J. Svoboda have a permit from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to operate a zoo, the Sunrise Side Nature Trail and Exotic park. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been closed to the public. The zoo is home to bears, a lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), a bobcat (*Lynx rufus*, Appendix II), wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), and foxes (genus *Vulpes*), and since 2014 is known for several compliance violations. On July 19<sup>th</sup>, USDA agents show up for an inspection. New non-compliances were noted, including a general lack of care, and most importantly, the health condition of a 21-year-old brown bear, Grizzly. He had an ulcer above his left eye since October 2020. According to the Svobodas, no veterinarian was willing to come. Two days later, the agents went to check if the owners have corrected the situation. Faced with their lack of response, the USDA deemed it necessary to confiscate the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II). This was done 2 days later, despite the owners' refusal.



On August 5<sup>th</sup>, James Svoboda relinquishes his zoo operating license. At the same time, the couple begins transferring their animals to other facilities. On September 16<sup>th</sup>, the Svobodas agreed to transfer their American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) and 3 foxes to a sanctuary of the NGO PETA in Colorado. The couple certifies that they will permanently renounce keeping wild animals. MLive.com, August 19 and September 22, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**July 26, 2021**

**Woodland Park, State of Colorado, United States of America**

The carcass of a shot female American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II) was discovered in the Ranch Estates neighborhood. Two male cubs approximately 7 months old were found in a nearby tree. They were taken to the Wet Mountain Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Wetmore. After successfully adapting to the wild, they were released on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

The Gazette, September 8, 2021 and February 5, 2022.<sup>13</sup>

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**August 2021**

**Rexburg, State of Idaho, United States of America**

Deseret News reporter Erica Evans reported on Yellowstone Bear World, "a private animal exhibit", founded by Michael Ferguson in 1998. Visitors drive around the 50-acre park to see 75 brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) and throw food at them. Here, no bear is wild, no freedom is foreseen. The director introduces his establishment as a way to make visitors aware of the beauty of bears, while making an honest profit. In fact, the park recommends that visitors of the nearby national park keep a safe distance from wild animals. "That doesn't mean you can't see or feed a bear during your Yellowstone vacation. That's what Yellowstone Bear World is all about!"

This year, 6 cubs were born at Bear World. But the picture is not a happy one. The cubs were confiscated from their mothers early on so they could be bottled by visitors for the sum of 55 US\$ in addition to the entrance ticket. The establishment does not have the means to maintain all these bears in the long term, so adults are regularly relocated. In 2013, one cub was sent to Joe Exotic (see "On the Trail" n°23 p.150, n°28 p.74, n°29 p.53 and n°32 p.76), and several others to facilities known to violate rules. 65 cubs and 19 adult bears ended up at Gregg Woody's, an animal broker, even though his license was suspended. Woody was not against sending bears to slaughterhouse.

Deseret News, August 9, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



## ASIA

### ARMENIA

**July 2021**  
**Armenia**



International Animal Rescue is calling on the Armenian government to pressure Armen Tadevosyan, the "owner" of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) who has been held captive for 30 years, to entrust him to the care of the Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets (FPWC). Blind and suffering from arthritis, the unfortunate animal has no taste of freedom. The Mirror, July 27, 2021; International Animal Rescue, August 4, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**August 9, 2021**

**Elpin, Vayots Dzor Province, Armenia**

A seriously injured, 3-year-old female brown bear, (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) was discovered. At the Ararat Rescue Center, veterinarians found that a bullet had passed through her head, that she suffered a concussion and that, due to the stress, she gnawed her paw and exposed her flesh. Despite the efforts of the FPWC, she died a few days later. News-Armenia, August 10, 2021; International Animal Rescue, August 12, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

### CHINA

**May 10, 2021**

**Hunchun Station, Yanbian Prefecture, Jilin Province, China. Border with North Korea and Russia.**

A person named "Wang", who was carrying in his luggage 3 frozen Asian black bear paws (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I), was caught. He explained that he had bought them in December of 2020 at a market in Hunchun and that he was going to a friend's house to eat them. Legal Daily, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



**May 27, 2021**

**Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China**

The transfer of 101 bears from a farm in Nanning to the Animals Asia shelter in Chengdu, 1,240 km away, took 8 years to finalize. The new farm owner contacted the NGO back in 2013. One Green Planet, June 8, 2021.<sup>18</sup>



**Early June 2021**

**Chongqing Municipality, China**

"Zhuo" hunted an Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) in December 2018 with an electric battery. He cut off all 4 paws and kept them safe at his friend "Wu"'s house until he could sell them. In March 2019, "Moujia" and "Mouyi" bought a pair for 8,000 yuan (1,200 US\$). A few months later, in May, "Zhuo" was caught red-handed while trying to sell the second pair for 9,000 yuan (1,330 US\$).

The court sentenced "Zhuo" to 1.5 years in prison, 10,000 yuan (1,570 US\$) in fines, 40,000 yuan (6,275 US\$) in ecological damages, and a public apology in the local media. "Moujia" and "Mouyi" were sentenced to 7 and 8 months in prison, respectively, and fined 8,000 yuan (1,250 US\$). "Wu" was sentenced to 6 months in prison and fined 5,000 yuan (785 US\$).

People's Information Network, June 3, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



**July 2021**

**Ning'an, Mudanjiang Prefecture, Heilongjiang Province, China**

"Zhu", "Wang", and "Chen" were arrested for trafficking Asian black bear bile (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I). "Zhu" had asked "Wang" to help him find bear bile to treat himself. "Wang" approached "Chen", bought 8,300 yuan (1,286 US\$) worth of bear bile from him, and sold it to "Zhu" for 10,600 yuan (1,642 US\$), profiting 356 US\$. Life News, July 15, 2021.<sup>20</sup>



**July 2021**

**Siming District, Fujian Province, China**

A misleading video is seized and a pharmacy is fined 200,000 yuan (31,380 US\$). A man presenting himself as a retired medical expert explained in an advertisement that he suffered from colon cancer in 2009 and was cured by taking bear bile powder (Ursidae, Appendix I or II) on a regular basis (the prescribed treatment lasts for one year), while at the same time chemotherapy had no effect. Several boxes of powder were also seized.

The bear bile powder distributor or manufacturer also claimed it was an effective remedy for high blood pressure, diabetes, anaemia, kidney stones and pulmonary nodules.

Taihai Net, January 28, 2022.<sup>21</sup>



**SOUTH KOREA**

**July 6-October 2021**

**Yongin, Gyeonggi Province, South Korea**

A farmer sounds the alarm: 2 of his 3-year-old Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) escaped from his farm. A few hours later, one of the 2 is found about 1 km from the farm. He is shot. The second cannot be found despite exhaustive search efforts. 50 or so police officers searched the area for 20 days in vain. The investigation reveals that in reality only one bear had escaped. The 70-year-old farmer shot the bear falsely reported as missing to extract his bile and recover his meat. He is arrested. According to the Korean Animal Association, the man is allegedly raising a stock of 100 bears divided between the farm in Yongin and another near Yeosu. He had already been caught in June 2020 for the unauthorized breeding, bile extraction and slaughter of bears. He had been sentenced to 4 months in prison with one year on probation. The Korea Times, July 10, 2021; Yonhap News Agency, October 21, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

**INDIA**

**May 25, 2021**

**Shanamangalam, Wayanad District, State of Kerala, India**

Rescue of an approximately one-year old sloth bear cub (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I). He was caught in a trap in a teak plantation, allegedly used to catch hares or wild boars. According to the villagers, this is the first time that a bear has fallen victim to this situation. Without serious injuries and visibly in good health, he was released.

The Hindu, May 25, 2021.<sup>23</sup>



**August 10, 2021**

**Vazhaithottam, Tirunelveli District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



Electrocution of an 8-year-old male sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I). The 86-year-old property owner was questioned by the police. He is said to have complied with the requirements of the authorities for the installation of the electric fence. The bear remained trapped in the wires without being able to escape and received dozens of continuous shocks that eventually killed him. The Hindu, August 11, 2021.<sup>24</sup>

**INDONESIA**

**May 21, 2021**

**Hutauruk, North Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

A 60-kg female Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), held in captivity for 12 years, was given anesthesia and transferred to the Sibolangit Rehabilitation Center. Scorpion Foundation Indonesia, May 25, 2021.<sup>25</sup>



**MALAYSIA**

**July 10 and 11, 2021**

**Ladang Sungai Tekai, State of Kedah, Malaysia**



A 3 to 4-year-old Malayan sun bear cub (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) who was caught in a trap in an oil palm plantation was released.

The Star, July 11, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**July 19, 2021**

**Kota Kinabalu, State of Sabah, Malaysia**



Cheryline William Muyuk, 48, was sentenced to a 15,000-ringgit (3,600 US\$) fine or 4 months imprisonment in default of payment for keeping a Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) in a cage in her home for 4 years, from 2015 to 2019. She explained to the court that she didn't want to keep him and wanted to turn him over to authorities but couldn't find the time to start the process. Cheryline pleaded guilty and paid the fine.

Daily Express, July 20, 2021.<sup>27</sup>



## PAKISTAN

**June 3, 2021**

**Islamabad, Federal Territory of Islamabad, Pakistan**



A conservationist had bought a one-month-old Asian black bear cub (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) 2 months ago from a poacher for 70,000 rupees or 440 US\$. The cub's mother had been shot in front of him. He was starving and one of his ears was partially mutilated and infected. After a month of care, as he was about to be handed over to the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board, the authorities came to confiscate him and handed him over to the Lahore Zoo (Punjab province). After a public outcry regarding Lahore Zoo's very bad reputation, the cub quickly left and joined an enclosure in the Margallah Hills national park, managed by the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board, while waiting to join a bear sanctuary. Gulf News, June 4, 2021; The Jakarta Post (with Reuters), July 14, 2021.<sup>28</sup>

**July 20, 2021**

**Gujranwala, Province of Punjab, Pakistan**

Seizure of an Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) who was only a few months old and was being exploited as a dancing bear. His front teeth were broken and his claws were cut. He was handed over to the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board. His "torturer" tried, unsuccessfully, to get him back through the courts 2 months later. UrduPoint, July 20, 2021; ARY News, September 17, 2021.<sup>29</sup>

## TAJIKISTAN

**May 7 and 8, 2021**

**Dushanbe, Capital Territory, Tajikistan**

Two "students" showed off and mistreated 2 brown bear cubs (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) in the streets. Pro-animal activists alerted the police but were sent from department to department. They eventually contacted the "students" via Instagram offering to buy the cubs. The initial selling price was 7,000 somoni (620 US\$), later dropping to 3,000 somoni (265 US\$). The sellers put an end to the haggling. After an appeal to the mayor and the Minister of the Interior, the cubs were seized. In critical condition, they were treated at the city zoo. Two months later, the cubs disappeared. The management of the zoo said that they had no information on their whereabouts. ASIA-Plus, May 11, 2021; Halva.tj, May 11 and July 23, 2021.<sup>30</sup>



## VIET NAM

**May 26, 2021**

**Lai Chau Province, Viet Nam**



Arrest of Giang A Mua, 36 years old. He was transporting an Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) on his motorcycle and was going to meet a buyer. Sale price: 80 million dong or 3,470 US\$. He acknowledged that he had poached the bear cub when he weighed only 3 kg and waited until he reached 30 kg to profit from him. ENV, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>31</sup>



**May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Da Huoai District, Lam Dong Province, Viet Nam**

An Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) breeder was fined 700 million dong (nearly 30,000 US\$) for having sold 2 bear paws (see "On the Trail" n°30 p. 74). He justified himself by saying that the paws came from a bear who had died of natural causes on his farm. ENV, June 9, 2021.<sup>32</sup>



**June 15, 2021**

**Hanoi, Viet Nam**



Four female Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I), aged 5 to 7, were transferred to the Tam Dao national park refuge. They were being held by the Central Circus of Hanoi, which, thanks to the work of ENV, agreed to hand them over. They were no longer used in per-

formances.

VnExpress International, June 16, 2021; ENV, June 20, 2021.<sup>33</sup>

**June 25, 2021**

**Lang Son Province, Viet Nam**

Handing over to Animals Asia of 3 Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) who were being held by a family since the year 2000. They are 2 females and a male weighing 150 kg each. Two of them are missing a paw. They will be transferred to the bear rescue center in Vinh Phuc, about 200 km southwest of the province.

VnExpress International, June 26, 2021; ENV, July 25, 2021.<sup>34</sup>

**July 14 and End of November, 2021  
Nam Nhun District, Lai Chau Province, Viet Nam**

While searching a drug trafficker's house, a 5-kg Malayan sun bear cub (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), cocaine, and other prohibited substances were confiscated. The bear cub was transferred to the Hoang Lien national park rescue center. ENV hypothesizes that he was imported from Laos, neighboring the district. Two arrests were made and the criminals were each sentenced to one year in prison.

ENV, July 15 and November 26, 2021.<sup>35</sup>



**August 20 and November 19, 2021  
Lai Chau Province, Viet Nam**

Phan A De and Thao A Tenh, aged 28 and 30, were each sentenced to 2 years in prison. They had been arrested 3 months earlier while carrying the fresh body of an Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) weighing 30 kg on their motorcycle. They confessed that they had bought him for 30 million dong (1,300 US\$) and were on their way to Lai Chau to sell him. ENV, August 27 and November 19, 2021.<sup>36</sup>



**EUROPE**

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

**End of June 2021**

**Zenica-Doboj Canton, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Several carcasses of bears and brown bear cubs (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), including one decapitated, are discovered. The area is known to be frequented by deer and game poachers. Dnevni avaz, June 29, 2021.<sup>37</sup>

**FINLAND**

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Joensuu, Region of North Karelia, Finland**

Authorities are trying to catch a female brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) injured by a trap with a baited cage. The operation involves the police, the Finnish Wildlife Agency and the Natural Resources Institute. The bear is in the company of 4 cubs. If she does not survive, their future will be compromised.

Maaseudun Tulevaisuus, July 22, 2021.<sup>38</sup>



**August 24 and 31, 2021**

**Lieksa, Region of North Karelia, and  
Sonkajärvi, Region of North Savo, Finland**

A female brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) with a trap deeply embedded in her paw was killed out of "compassion" by a hunter. Three cubs over a year old were with her. Two of them have since been shot by hunters.

A week later, a male brown bear with a trap on his paw was also shot.

Yle Uutiset, August 24, 2021; Maaseudun Tulevaisuus, August 31, 2021.<sup>39</sup>





## HUNGARY

**July 27, 2021**  
**Budapest, Hungary**



A stuffed brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) was for sale on-line for over 2 million forints (6,770 US\$). The advertisement attracted the police's attention, who then identified the 53-year-old seller and confiscated the trophy at his home in the Óbuda area.

Hungarian Police, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>40</sup>

## MONTENEGRO

**May 2021**  
**Dragisnica and Komarnica Natural Park, Municipality of Savnik, Montenegro**

Discovery of the carcass of a poached brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II). The NGO CZIP (Center for Protection and Research of birds of Montenegro) has no illusions about the outcome of the investigation: "as usual, there will be some dialogue of the deaf between institutions, the prosecution will fail and the justice system will turn a blind eye." Dan, May 25, 2021.<sup>41</sup>

## POLAND

**July 8, 2021**  
**Medyka Border Post, Subcarpathian Voivodeship, Poland. Border with Ukraine.**



A 30-year-old man came from Ukraine and allegedly had nothing to declare. An inspection of his car resulted in the seizure of a brown bear skin with head (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II). Nowiny 24, July 8, 2021.<sup>42</sup>

## ROMANIA

**May 6, 2021**  
**Valea Uzului, Harghita County, Romania**



A brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) was caught in a trap on the banks of the Barzauta river, a tributary of the Uz river. Forestry agents and veterinarians went to the place to free him, but, seeing them approaching, the frightened bear redoubled his efforts and managed to release himself. But at what cost? Acum TV, May 6, 2021.<sup>43</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**  
**Borșa, Maramureș County, Romania**



Seizure of a 4-month-old brown bear cub (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) who was held captive by a man in his yard. Police also confiscated 40 kg of bear meat and a trap. The bear cub will be transferred to the bear orphanage in Bălan (Harghita county), 215 km away. Digi24, June 10, 2021.<sup>44</sup>

**July 5, 2021**  
**Maramureș County, Romania**



The authorities released a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) about 4 years old who was caught in a trap, a 3.5 meters long wire rope. Digi24, July 5, 2021.<sup>45</sup>

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**  
**August 21, 2021**



**Runcu, Dâmbovița County, Romania**

Two poachers were caught in the act of butchering a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II). They left the scene with the carcass in a car after threatening the witnesses with a knife. The police arrested them, seizing the carcass and the car. It was a bear aged about 3 years and weighing 150 kg. The home of the poachers was searched, resulting in the further seizure of bear meat, an axe, and knives. The investigators do not rule out the possibility of a poaching by order. One of the poachers admits to having set another trap nearby. Indeed, groans were heard by villagers. On the scene, the gendarmes and a veterinarian moved apart the crowd and freed a bear cub. România TV, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021; Realitatea.net, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021; Stirile PRO TV, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>46</sup>



## UNITED KINGDOM

**May 21, 2021**

**Whipsnade, Bedfordshire County, England, United Kingdom**



After a section of fence collapses from a fallen tree, 2 female brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) managed to leave their enclosure. They entered the wild boar enclosure and began attacking one of them. The alarm was sounded. The guards rush to the scene. They are unanimous: no other choice than “euthanasia” because of the “immediate threat to human life”. Tranquilizing them would take 20 minutes and that is too long. Result: 2 bears killed, one wild boar wounded, no human touched. A third bear that had not left his enclosure is still alive. The Guardian, May 21, 2021; Zoological Society of London, May 21, 2021.<sup>47</sup>

## RUSSIA

**May 19, 2021**

**Between Yelizovo and Paratunka, Kamchatka Krai, Russia**

The remains of 2 brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) were discovered in a forest one kilometer off the road. Moskovski Komsomolets Kamchatka, May 22, 2021.<sup>48</sup>

**May 26, 2021**

**Chebarkul, Chelyabinsk Oblast, Russia**

“I thought it was a dog when I found it,” explained the “owner” of a 5-month-old brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II). Informed, Karen Dallakyan, a veterinarian and founder of a wild animals’ refuge, immediately contacted the authorities. When questioned, the suspect told his story: he found the cub on his own, he fed him day and night to allow him to survive, he didn’t know that it was forbidden, and he intended to release him. A story heard so often that Dallakyan and the Ministry of the Environment agents had serious doubts about its veracity, especially since the accommodation of the bear seemed to be built to be long lasting. The bear cub was seized and temporarily entrusted to a shelter in Chelyabinsk. The “owner” was charged with illegal transport and possession of a wild animal.

74.ru, May 26, 2021; URAL1, June 8, 2021.<sup>49</sup>

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021**

**Between Khabarovsk and Vladivostok, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia**

Workers and tourists discovered the carcass of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) at dawn. He died because of a night-time collision as the road passes right next to a reserve. The perpetrator fled, but first, he took the time to cut a claw from the left front paw.

DV Novosti, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021; Izvestia, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021; RIA Novosti, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.<sup>50</sup>

**June 8, 2021**

**Perm, Perm Krai, Russia**

A young brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) was seized, once again with the support of Karen Dallakyan. The “owner” claimed that he had not “thought” about notifying the authorities. The cub will go to a sanctuary in Khabarovsk Krai (more than 6,000 km away) together with a fellow cub confiscated on May 26 (see above).

URAL1, June 8, 2021.<sup>51</sup>

**Beginning of July 2021 - February 2022**

**Republic of Dagestan, Russia**

A shelter for cats and dogs is doing its best to care for abandoned brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), but it lacks the material and financial capacity. Two bears, aged 4 and 7, were taken in as abused cubs and are now far too big for their cages. In anguish, the owners of the shelter contacted the Bears in Mind project who in turn contacted Killian McLaughlin, founder of the NGO Wild Ireland. He agreed to repatriate the bears to his 9-hectare sanctuary in Inishowen (Donegal County, Ireland). The time needed to obtain the CITES permits, the Covid-19 restrictions and the cost of transport delay the operation.

Just when it looked like the situation would be unblocked, war broke out in Ukraine.

Irish Daily Mirror, July 5, 2021; Donegal News, March 11, 2022; Wild Ireland.<sup>52</sup>

**August 2021**

**Khuchni, Republic of Dagestan, Russia**

A brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) is in a cage in front of the restaurant Tabaristan. He has no food or drink. It is over 40°C. A tourist contacts the authorities. A shelter in Khassaviourt offers to take in the bear. The owners of the restaurant agree. All’s well that ends badly. On the transfer’s day, the bear is killed by the forestry officers. He had allegedly managed to escape and the decision to kill him was made because of his alleged aggressive behaviour. This was not the first time the Tabaristan restaurant had done this. Another brown bear and a wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) had also been displayed in a cage to attract customers. No one knows what happened to them.

Change.org, August 11 and September 6, 2021; Novaia Gazeta, September 16, 2021.<sup>53</sup>



**August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021**

**Ozernovskiy, Kamchatka Krai, Russia**

After a drunk evening, Igor Redkin, a Kamchatka deputy, went to a dump where brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) are said to be prowling. He has no hunting permit. He shot the first bear. Shortly after, he saw a silhouette on his thermal camera and shot several times. Andrey Tolstopyatov, 30 years old, was recovering scrap metal into his truck. He died of his injuries. Redkin admitted to the facts the next day and resigned from the United Russia party. He was placed under house arrest for a while. The murder charge was reclassified as manslaughter. He was still charged with poaching. Kommersant, August 10, 2021; Kam 24, December 17, 2021; Lenta.ru, December 17, 2021; Kamchatka-Information, February 3, 2022.<sup>54</sup>



**August 12, 2021**

**Kirovskiy, Primorsky Krai, Russia**

Joint operation between the Border Guard and the National Guard. Seizure of 48 paws and 18 gall bladders of Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) from the refrigerators of a food storage warehouse and 155 ginseng roots (genus *Panax*). TASS Russian News Agency, August 12, 2021.<sup>55</sup>



**August 24, 2021**

**Ust-Ilimskiy District, Irkutsk Oblast, Russia**

A brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) was found thirsty and hungry in a trap cage in the middle of the forest. As soon as the report was received, the authorities went to the scene and released the bear. Fontanka.Ru, August 25, 2021.<sup>56</sup>



**UKRAINE**

**June 22, 2021**

**Skole, Lviv Oblast, Ukraine**



Rescue of 3 brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II), a male and a female both 13 years old and a 5-month-old cub. After negotiations, the operators of a former hotel-restaurant agreed to hand over the 3 captives to the NGO Four Paws. The small family joined the Domazhyr sanctuary.

About 100 brown bears are reportedly held in captivity by individuals in the country. The practice is legal if the bears were not born in the wild or if they were "rescued" from the wild.

Daily Mail, June 25, 2021; Four Paws, August 18, 2021.<sup>57</sup>



**Beginning of July 2021**

**Gogoli, Khmelnytskyi Oblast, Ukraine**

A family of 5 brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) is seized at the Serhii Paliokhin "rehabilitation center". A strange rehabilitation center where bears are held without a permit, abused, and where cubs are separated from their mothers and used to shoot paid photos with visitors.

Eco-Halych: Wildlife Rehab, June 24, July 1<sup>st</sup> and 14, 2021.<sup>58</sup>



# GAZELLES, ANTELOPES, SEROWS, MARKHORS ...



Kirk's dik-dik (*Madoqua kirkii*). Photo Karthik Thrikkadeeri

## AFRICA

### KENYA

**June 19 and July 5, 2021**

**Galana, Kilifi County, and Voi, Taita-Taveta County, Kenya**

This was not the first time the 5 men had done this. Their nocturnal escapades in Tsavo East national park had provided them with bushmeat for several years. However, this time, things did not go as planned. Between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m., the KWS and the Galana Agricultural Development Corporation caught them in a joint operation. Two of them managed to escape. But the game was over for Kaviha Charo, Katana Unda, and Bugo Suluhu. In addition to their torches,



batteries, machetes, hunting gear, and motorcycles, the agents seized 187 dik-diks (genus *Madoqua*) carcasses, 25 dik-dik roasted heads, 3 kori bustard (*Ardeotis kori*, Appendix II) carcasses, and 2 generuk (*Litocranius walleri*) carcasses, weighing 596 kg in total.

Suluhu, according to his parents, is 16 years old, which allowed him to escape prosecution. After a week of searching, it turns out that he is actually 21 years old.

The 3 poachers were sentenced to 10 years in prison each for transporting carcasses, 2 years for the possession of trophies, 2 years for transporting hunting equipment in a protected area. They were fined a total of 2.2 million shillings (more than 20,300 US\$). The sentences run concurrently. The Star, June 19, 2021; Kenya Wildlife Service, June 21, 2021; Nation, June 22 and July 5, 2021.<sup>1</sup>





**July 6 and 8, 2021**

**Didima Bula, Tana River County, Kenya**

Sharif Ngala (39), Kingi Charo (25), and Baraka Thoya (20) were arrested with 140 dik-diks (genus *Madoqua*) and porcupines (family Hystricidae) poached in the Malkahalaku Community Conservancy. They were sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined 3 million shillings (27,700 US\$). The sentences run concurrently. Nation, July 8, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



**AMERICA**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**July 10, 2021**

**Gillespie Dam, State of Arizona, United States of America**

A 5,000 US\$ reward was offered to anyone who could identify those responsible for the death of a desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*, Appendix II in Mexico). Authorities suspect 5 Asian men who were seen leaving the scene of the crime in an SUV.

ABC15 Arizona, July 16, 2021; FOX 10, September 22, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

**ASIA**

**SAUDI ARABIA**

**June 2021**

**Baljurashi Governorate, Al-Bahah Province, Saudi Arabia**

Three poachers were filmed hunting a Nubian ibex (*Capra nubiana*). The video circulated on social media. Two Saudis and an Afghan around 20 years old were identified and arrested.

Nubian ibexes are primarily threatened by hunting, illegal or not, and by habitat loss. There only remains less than 5,000 individuals distributed throughout the Arabian Peninsula, eastern Egypt, and Sudan. It is the only ibex species living in the desert. Gulf Online, June 21, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

**CHINA**

**Beginning of May and May 20, 2021**

**Tieling, Tieling Prefecture, Liaoning Department, China**

"Liu" offered Mongolian gazelle horns (*Procapra gutturosa*) for sale online. Once the ad was detected, it didn't take long for police to visit his art studio and arrest him. There, other items made of Mongolian gazelle horn, Przewalski's gazelle (*Procapra przewalskii*), Tibetan gazelle (*Procapra picticaudata*), and elk antlers (genus *Alces*) were spotted. However, once information was obtained in Changzhou and Wuxi (Jiangsu province, 1,700 km away), it turned out that "Liu" was only "Guo's" henchman. In "Guo's" store, police found 1,471 Mongolian gazelle horns and 10 items made of Mongolian gazelle horn (total weight: 63.4 kg). "Guo" was arrested. The total value of the seizures is 10 million yuan (1.55 million US\$).

Northeast News Network, June 10, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

**INDIA**

**May 12, 2021**

**Bida, Desert National Park, Jaisalmer District, State of Rajasthan, India**

Life is hard for Indian gazelles (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Urs Khan, from the Ecology, Rural Development & Sustainability Foundation (ERDS), explains that when it's not wild dogs chasing them, it's poachers. This time, rangers found only the legs and some shreds of an Indian gazelle killed by poachers.

The Desert national park (3,162 km<sup>2</sup>) in the Thar Desert is known to be home to Indian gazelles and great Indian bustards (*Ardeotis nigriceps*, Appendix I).

The Times of India, May 13, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

**May 15, 2021**

**Shivara, Buldhana District, State of Maharashtra, India**



"Local farmers could have poisoned the animals as they are a major threat to crops. This is not a new situation, but such a large group of blackbuck deaths is quite unusual." These are the words of a forest officer presenting the death of 10 blackbucks (*Antelope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Nepal and Pakistan), 4 males and 6 females, 2 of whom were pregnant, near a farmland.

Vijay Pinjarkar (The Times of India), May 15, 2021; Hindustan Times, May 17, 2021.<sup>7</sup>





**May 18, 2021**

**Bori, Pune District, State of Maharashtra, India**

It was 10 or 11 p.m. when forest officers saw lighted dots moving in the darkness. They managed to approach them without being noticed. Mahesh Janglu Mane, Dattaray Popat Pawar, and their motorcycle were responsible for the lights. Among their belongings were flashlights, a rifle, ammunition, and a bag containing a dead bloody Indian gazelle (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III in Pakistan). They say they killed him for food. Their nightly run ended at the police station.

Hindustan Times, May 19, 2021; The Times of India, May 20, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**May 24, 2021**

**Jawandh Jooni, Jaisalmer District, State of Rajasthan, India**

According to Radheyshyam Pemani and Sumer Singh Bhati, poachers killed a nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III in Pakistan) near the village. Forest officials took away the carcass for a post-mortem examination.

The Times of India, May 26, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

**May 27, 2021**

**Shikarpur, Kutch District, State of Gujarat, India**

A male nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Appendix III in Pakistan), or "roz" as he is locally known, had a disabled leg. He was an easy prey for poultry farmer Rafique Traya (23 years old) and farmer Umraddin Traya, alias Amku (43 years old). After killing him with a knife, they were about to cut him up, but were surprised by "maldharis" (shepherds) and ended up escaping on a motorbike. However, it was only a temporary setback. The police arrested them afterwards. They claimed to have killed the nilgai for food.

The Indian Express, May 29, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

**End of May 2021**

**Neemba, Jaisalmer District, State of Rajasthan, India**

Remains of 2 Indian gazelles (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III in Pakistan) were discovered.

The Times of India, May 26, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**July 2, 2021**

**Between Chakan and Shikrapur, Pune District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Sachin Gajanan Rathod (22) and Sagar Ramrao Matre (23) have crops in Darwha, Yavatmal district. They have carefully surrounded them with electric fences. This is not a totally selfless protection as they collect the horns of the blackbucks (*Antelope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Nepal and Pakistan) who regularly get electrocuted there.



Currently, the 2 men are living in Shikrapur and are maintenance workers on the Pune-Ahmednagar highway, 580 km from Darwha. They intend to take advantage of this opportunity to sell their horns stock near Pune (a city of nearly 4 million inhabitants). Their attempt was short-lived. The police caught them red-handed while they were looking for customers for 5 pairs of blackbuck horns valued at 500,000 rupees (6,731 US\$). The Times of India, July 4, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**July 22, 2021**

**Srinagar, Srinagar District, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir; New Delhi, New Delhi District, National Capital Territory of Delhi, India**

An investigation opened against Cashmere Fine Arts, its owner, Shabir Ahmad Gogeree, and Craft Harvest for exporting 36 shawls made of shahtoosh, the wool of Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*, Appendix I). The first company was accused of exporting 26 shawls valued at 2,636,000 rupees (35,486 US\$), which were confiscated at the Indira Gandhi International Airport on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019. The second company had attempted to ship 6 shawls worth around 1,097,000 rupees (14,768 US\$) on June 7, 2019. The premises of both companies were searched and 4 more shawls and incriminating documents were confiscated.

Greater Kashmir, July 26, 2021; Central Bureau of Investigation, July 29, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

**August 19, 2021**

**Hastinapur, Gwalior District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India**

The police received a report about 2 men on a motorcycle with a rifle and a dead Indian gazelle (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III in Pakistan) in their bag. Once they arrived at the scene, Kamal Singh was arrested but Rakesh was already missing.

The Free Press Journal, August 19, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**IRAN**

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Kelidar and Ziarat, Razavi Khorasan Province, Iran**

An urial (*Ovis vignei*, Appendix I) was poached in the Heidary Wildlife Sanctuary. The guards recovered the carcass from one suspect and the hunting equipment from an accomplice.

Irib News Agency, June 7, 2021.<sup>15</sup>





### Beginning of July 2021

#### Nahavand, Hamadan Province, Iran

A person was fined 250 million rials (5,950 US\$) for possessing an illegal weapon and poaching a Cyprus mouflon (*Ovis gmelini*, Appendix I for Cyprus populations) between March 2019 and March 2020.

Iranian Students' News Agency, July 4, 2021.<sup>16</sup>



## ISRAEL

### Mid-July 2021

#### Haifa District, Israel

Abd al-Salam Mofid Elaisa killed at least 21 mountain gazelles (*Gazella gazella*) in 3 hunting expeditions between 2015 and 2020. At his home, in October 2020, 17 mountain gazelle quarters and 14 frozen partridges were seized. The court expressed its "disgust" at the cruelty of some of his methods: he injured juveniles to lure the mothers and shoot them. He was sentenced to 20 months in prison and was fined. Israel Nature and Parks Authority, July 22, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



## KAZAKHSTAN

### Mid-July 2021

#### Oral, West Kazakhstan Region, Kazakhstan



1,178 saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) were found hidden in a compartment under the floor of a truck. One arrest was made. At this time, no information is available on the source and destination of the contraband.

Kazinform, July 15, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

### July 8, 2021

#### Almaty Region, Kazakhstan. Border with China.



A saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) horn smuggling ring less. The 3,144 horns (700 kg) were about to be transported to China at the time of the suspects' arrests.

National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, July 13, 2021.<sup>19</sup>

### August 3, 2021

#### Togisken, Kyzylorda Region, Kazakhstan

Inspectors from Okhotzoooprom, the State Wildlife Protection Service, arrested a man. In his bag, there was a dead goitered gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*). They called the police. Two other poachers arrived and shot at the inspectors' car. The suspects fled with the carcass and were arrested after a chase.

The goitered gazelle population have been steadily declining due to poaching for meat and trophies. It was estimated at 120,000-140,000 in 1990 and 42,000-49,000 in 2016. Their habitat extends from Mongolia and northeast China through Central Asia to Iran.

Kazinform, August 3, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

### August 4, 2021

#### Yekidin, Kostanay Region, Kazakhstan

The police are on patrol in the steppe. It is 3 a.m. Two motorcycles roll towards Yekidin. The policemen follow them. A few minutes later, the police are in the village, spot the motorcycles and knock on the door of a house. Two men are arrested and 4



saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) horns seized. Since the beginning of the year, more than 100 saiga antelope horns have been seized in the region.

Kazinform, August 6, 2021.<sup>21</sup>



**August 10, 2021**

**Kostanay, Kostanay Region, Kazakhstan**

You can find astonishing things in rubbish bins. Two men told the Kostanay police the saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) were found in the garbage. They were arrested and 4 horns were confiscated.

Kazinform, August 11, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

**OMAN**

**May 18, 2021**

**Ras Ash Shajar Nature Reserve, Muscat Governorate, Sultanate of Oman**

The reserve guards were threatened with guns. They managed to subdue one of the killers of 6 Arabian gazelles (*Gazella arabica*). His accomplices left the vehicle to flee into the mountains.

Arabian gazelles' main habitat is the Sultanate of Oman, but due to poaching for meat, skins, and trophies, there are now reportedly less than 10,000 adults left in the country. They are also prized as "wild" pets.

Times of Oman, May 19, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

**UZBEKISTAN**

**End of May 2021**

**South Ustyurt National Park, Republic of Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan**

Two men had shot 11 goitered gazelles (*Gazella subgutturosa*) when officers of the Karakalpakstan Environmental Protection and Ecology Committee and park inspectors arrested them. The authorities estimate the wildlife damage at 134.75 million soum (13,000 US\$).

The South Ustur national park was inaugurated on November 11, 2020. It covers 14,470 km<sup>2</sup>. It is home to saiga antelope, among other animals.

Sputnik Uzbekistan, 28 May 2021.<sup>24</sup>

**PAKISTAN**

**Beginning of May 2021**

**Zamran Area, Balochistan Province, Pakistan. Border with Iran.**

Environmentalists are calling for an investigation after dozens of Suleiman markhor carcasses (*Capra falconeri jerdoni*, Appendix I) were discovered. Inhabitants hypothesize that they were poisoned by insecticides used to kill locusts. Suleiman markhors are unique for having straight horns.

The News International, May 9, 2021.<sup>25</sup>



**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**MAY 12, 2021**

**Cholistan Desert, Pendjab Province, Pakistan**

As Eid approached, on the evening of May 12<sup>th</sup>, wildlife patrols were more present in the area. The holidays do not bode well for the animals. Late on May 11<sup>th</sup>, after several complaints, a team went to the Cholistan desert. An all-terrain vehicle was seen. After a chase, authorities arrested 6 suspects, including Ahmed Shah Hamdani, a businessman known for his repeated poaching attempts. Three Indian gazelles (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III) were rescued.

Dawn, May 13, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**June 28, 2021**

**Toshi Shasha Reserve, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan**

The 6-year-old female markhor (*Capra falconeri*, Appendix I) was drinking in Garam Chashma valley (Chitral district) when a bullet hit her. She fell into the water and witnesses immediately informed wildlife protection authorities. The victim was taken to a veterinary clinic in critical condition. The poacher was identified.

Wildlife at Risk, June 29, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**TURKEY**

**May 2021**

**Denizli Province, Turkey**

Six poachers were fined 166,660 liras (20,215 US\$) for the killing of 4 wild goats (*Capra hircus aegagrus*, Appendix III in Pakistan).

Diken, May 21, 2021.<sup>28</sup>



**June 2021**

**Derebucak, Konya Province, Turkey**

They too had killed 4 wild goats (*Capra hircus aegagrus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Three people were fined 120,000 liras (13,960 US\$). Three skins, heads, horns, and meat were confiscated. The wild goats were 3 to 4 years old. Beyşehir Göl Radyo Televizyonu, June 13, 2021.<sup>29</sup>



**VIET NAM**

**July 6, 2021**

**Chu Yang Sin National Park, Dak Lak Province, Viet Nam**

Forestry officers spotted 4 men carrying 2 bags. When arrested, they said they had killed 2 Chinese serows (*Capricornis milneedwardsii*, Appendix I) in Chu Yang Sin park to trade their meat. Chinese serows, see "On the Trail" n°5 p.122, n°29 p.80, n°30 p.77 and n°32 p.109 and p.240.

Nguoiduatin.vn, July 6, 2021; ENV, July 7, 2021.<sup>30</sup>



## EUROPE

### BELGIUM

**July 8, 2021**

**Ronquières, Hainaut Province, Walloon Region, Belgium**



In 2020, around 20 European mouflons (*Ovis aries musimon*), a protected species in France, were smuggled into Chimay (on the border with France) by a landowner. He allegedly bought them in Charente, western France, to breed them or to organize hunting parties. He was denounced. When the police intervened, the European mouflons were now 43 in number and were seized and placed in an approved park.

The case resurfaced 2 years later, after a European mouflon weighing nearly 80kg and around one-meter at the withers appeared in the Ronquières forest, 70 km from Chimay. He had escaped and acclimated himself to life in the wild. The authorities are considering shooting him. Faced with protests from residents, a "non-lethal" solution is sought.

The European mouflon is one of the smallest mouflons in Eurasia (65 to 85 cm at the withers). He links back to a variety of domestic sheep who were introduced in Corsica 8,000 years before our era by Neolithic herders. The species has been on the list of protected species since March 1, 2019 because of its "excessive and uncontrolled hunting."

RTBF, May 29, 2019; Sudinfo, July 7, 2021; La Nouvelle Gazette du Centre, July 8, 2021; France Bleu, August 4, 2021.<sup>31</sup>

### RUSSIA

**July 22, 2021**

**Zabaykalsk, Zabaykalsky Krai, and Grozny, Chechen Republic, Russia**

E.A. Butin and A.J. Mutsalkhanov were sentenced simultaneously, each in their place of residence, to 1.5 years in suspended prison and 1.5 years of probation. They were arrested together while transporting 105 saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II), weighing 20 kg, to China.

Grozny-Inform, July 22 2021.<sup>32</sup>



**July 23, 2021**

**Belgorod, Belgorod Oblast, Russia. Border with Ukraine.**

Two "foreign nationals" were sentenced to 5 years in prison for smuggling saiga horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II). They were arrested in November 2020 in the middle of an attempted sale. A search into their garage resulted in the seizure of 2,647 horns.

Bel.ru, July 23, 2021.<sup>33</sup>



**July 2021 and Early February 2022**

**Tobeler, Republic of Altai, Russia**

A 33-year-old man collected 3 Altai argali skulls (*Ovis ammon*, Appendix II) while walking in the mountains. It was not to keep them as a souvenir. A few days later, FSB agents showed up at his house and confiscated the skulls. His classified ad on the Internet was apparently not very discreet. The man pleaded guilty. He was sentenced a few months later to one year and 2 months in prison and a 30,000-ruble (385 US\$) fine.

News of Gorny Altai, October 25 and November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021; Regnum, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 and February 9, 2022.<sup>34</sup>



**Mid-August 2021**

**Bykovsky District, Volgograd Oblast, Russia**



Ten saiga antelopes (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) died on a field between Katrichiev and Volga river (just outside Volgograd) while being pursued by 2 poachers in a car. One was driving and the other was shooting. The 2 friends' amusement ended abruptly when police arrived at their bivouac while they were butchering the animals. There were 3 heads in their trunk.

The 2 men pleaded guilty and paid 1.8 million rubles (24,500 US\$) in damages. Additionally, they will not be exempted from a proper trial.

Volgograd News points out that "if in Volgograd, advertisements for the purchase of saiga antelope horns are hanging on every other pole, most of these advertisements are very old".

V1.ru, September 23, 2021; Volgograd News, October 16, 2021; Riach34, November 26, 2021.<sup>35</sup>



**August 15, 2021**  
**Saylyugemsky National Park, Republic of Altai, Russia**



Two of the poachers came from Gorno-Altai (200 km away) and the other 2 from Moscow (3,500 km away). A local resident accompanied them on the scene. They were arrested with a Siberian ibex carcass (*Capra sibirica*, Appendix III in Pakistan) and weapons. The ecological damage is estimated at 400,000 rubles (5,500 US\$).

Poaching in the Saylyugemsky national park, see "On the Trail" n°31 p.84.

Bankfax, August 23, 2021.<sup>36</sup>

**August 2021**  
**Volgograd, Volgograd Oblast, Russia**

This advertisement was not on a pole, but online. A 51-year-old man posted pictures of saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) for sale for 4,000 rubles (55 US\$). He was arrested after the transaction.

V1.ru, November 14, 2021; Novosti Volgograda, November 22, 2021.<sup>37</sup>

**August 30, 2021**  
**Belgorod, Belgorod Oblast, Russia**

Three "foreigners" were arrested in Severny with 496 saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) at the end of October 2020 (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.84). Today, they were sentenced to 3.5 years in prison and 500,000 rubles (6,800 US\$) in fines, 3 years in prison and 350,000 rubles in fines (4,780 US\$), and to 2 years and 8 months in prison and 300,000 rubles in fines (4,000 US\$), respectively.

Regnum, August 30, 2021.<sup>38</sup>



## GIRAFFES

*Giraffa camelopardalis*, Appendix II

**AFRICA**

**KENYA**

**June 26 and 30, 2021**  
**Enkusero Sampu Conservancy, Kajiado County, Kenya**

Enkusero Sampu Conservancy rangers and KWS officers are in pursuit of a group of poachers who have shot at least 2 giraffes. All that remains are bones, shreds of skin, legs and arrowheads. Another giraffe killed by an arrow was discovered a few days later.

Paul Kilelu (Enkusero Sampu Conservancy), June 26 and 30, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



**June 30, 2021**  
**Naboisho Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**

The juvenile giraffe with the funny scarf aroused the curiosity of the other giraffes as well as the rangers. Because of his young age, he was not anesthetized. The veterinarians gave him a sedative while they removed the cloth, tied around his neck by young shepherds.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>2</sup>

**NAMIBIA**

**June 6, 2021**  
**Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia**

Mateus Iileka, 49, is arrested with a giraffe skin he was trying to sell.

Namibia Economist, June 9, 2021; New Era, June 10, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



## ASIA

### TAIWAN

#### Beginning of July 2021

##### Taiwan

The Wanpi World Safari Zoo caused a stir when it imported 18 giraffes from Eswatini (formerly Swaziland). The Taiwan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Taiwan SPCA) and the Environment & Animal Society of Taiwan (EAST) raised their voices. They are calling on the government to withdraw the import authorization, which they say was granted in haste and without considering the recent listings of every giraffe population in Appendix II. The rise of giraffes to the endangered species pedestal forces states contemplating importation to ensure they do not originate from organized poaching and that their removal from the wild does not endanger local populations. These precautions have not been taken and the Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) expresses its doubts. The giraffes *Giraffa camelopardalis* have been listed in Appendix II since 2019 but Eswatini has entered a reservation to this listing.

AgriHarvest, July 7, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

## EUROPE

### NORWAY

#### August 2021

##### Husøysund, Eastern Norway Region, Norway



This classified ad on finn.no is so unusual that it attracted media attention. "African solid wood table. Giraffe bone. Giraffe skin at the bottom of the drawer. There are only 2 in the world. Sold because of moving." Price 20,000 kroner (2,300 US\$). The police explain that transporting giraffe parts into Norway could be done without a permit before November 26, 2019, and the entry into force of the CITES Appendix II listing of the giraffe. Telemarksavisa, August 25, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



# ZEBRAS AND DONKEYS



Zebras (genus *Equus*). Photo flowcomm

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**August 16, 2021**

**West Rand District Municipality, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

A female zebra (genus *Equus*, *Equus zebra hartmannae* and *Equus zebra zebra*, Appendix II, found in South Africa), whose mother was killed a few days ago for her meat, is rescued. She needs milk. The NGOs VulPro and Umoya Khulula Wildlife Centre coordinated the rescue alongside the Broederstroom veterinary clinic. "She isn't out the woods just yet, but the young zebra is 300% better than she was earlier."

Owl Rescue Centre, August 16, 2021.<sup>1</sup>





## GHANA

**Mid-June 2021**

**Walewale, North East Region, Ghana**

### THE WAR ON DONKEYS IN GHANA

"On the Trail" n°21 p.121 cited when 1,800 donkey skins were discovered in a wrecked truck in 2018 in southern Burkina Faso, near the Ghana border. It proved that Ghana was still a regional donkey skin bastion, extending its influence from Senegal to northern Nigeria, even though a Chinese-owned slaughterhouse in Walewale, northern Ghana, was ordered to close in January 2017, and Burkina Faso banned donkey skin exports. In 2013, a donkey slaughterhouse in Walewale, Blue Coast Abattoir, opened and slaughtered 30 donkeys per day. By the end of 2014, the rate reached 150 donkeys per day. The hides and meat quarters were exported to China. In 2016, farmers and families who were victims of donkey theft began protesting, and the Ministry of Agriculture and veterinary services began voicing their concerns, as in 2012, when the Walewale slaughterhouse obtained its operating permit after months of controversy. In 2017, Walewale was forced to close, but Chinese investors did not stop. They discreetly supplied illegal slaughterhouses. Taking advantage of good relations with Ghana's Vice President Muhammadu Bawumia, a native of the Walewale district and advocate of the "One District, One Factory" program, they were again granted an operating license. With expansions to the intake capacity and slaughter line, the daily slaughtering capacity is 300 donkeys.

Oxpeckers, May 20, 2019; Wildlife at Risk, June 16, 2021; Ghana News Agency, February 11, 2022.<sup>2</sup>

## KENYA

**May 6 and November 2021**

**Kenya**

Will the decision to close the 4 donkey slaughterhouses be implemented, effective and final? This was the question posed in "On the Trail" n°28 p.135. The Ministry of Agriculture decided to close the slaughterhouses in February 2020 under the pressure of the rural population and veterinary services who predicted that at the current slaughter rate, donkeys would be extinct in Kenya by 2023. Chinese investors at the Star Brilliant slaughterhouse in Naivasha County brought the case before the High Court. They asserted that the Ministry of Agriculture's legal notice does not have the force of law and that the slaughterhouse managers had not been asked to present their defense and justify sustainability in their business plan. The High Court ruled in their favor.

Star Brilliant has a capacity of 200 donkeys per day, Goldox Slaughter House in Baringo County a capacity of 400 donkeys per day, Silzha in Turkana County a capacity of 200 donkeys per day, Fuhai Trading Company Slaughterhouse in Machakos County a capacity of 200 donkeys per day, i.e. 1,000 donkeys per day + the illegal slaughterhouses. To be continued, the Minister of Agriculture may not have said its last word.

Nairobi News, May 6, 2021; Mwakilishi.com, May 6, 2021; Kenya News Agency, July 12 and November 17, 2021; The Star, May 6 and 10, July 16 and 21 and August 9 and 30, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



**May 31 to August 19, 2021**

**Soysambu Conservancy, Nakuru County, Kenya**



There is nothing more graphic than a zebra belly (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya) and unfortunately, summer 2021 verified this as numerous zebras were found lying on the ground from anesthesia or death.

- May 31, 2021: a male is injured in the right front leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.

- July 1, 2021: a female is injured in the right hind leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.

- July 1, 2021: a female is injured in the neck by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.

- July 15, 2021: a male is injured in the left hind leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis but risk of limping.

- July 16, 2021: a female is injured in the left hind leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.

- August 19, 2021: a female is injured in the left hind leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.

The Soysambu Conservancy was founded in 2007. It covers 194 km<sup>2</sup> on the edge of Lake Elmenteita in the Great Rift Valley. It is known for housing 140 Nubian giraffes (*Giraffa camelopardalis camelopardalis*, Appendix II) and the only colony of great white pelicans (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) in Kenya. See "On the Trail" n°27 p.112.

SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, June, July and August 2021.<sup>4</sup>





**June 1 to August 27, 2021**  
**Naivasha and Marula Estates, Nakuru County, Kenya**



- June 1, 2021: a male zebra (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya) is found with a metal trap around his neck. Favorable prognosis.
- June 2, 2021: a female is injured in the left front leg and chest by a metal trap. Guarded prognosis.
- June 2, 2021: a male is injured in the left hind leg by a trap. Favorable prognosis.
- June 4, 2021: 2 females were strangled by a metal trap. A favorable prognosis. A guarded one.
- June 10, 2021: one female has her right hind leg cut off by a metal trap. Veterinarians decided to terminate her.
- June 11, 2021: a male was strangled by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.
- June 18, 2021: a zebra (whose sex is undetermined) has been dead for several days after being strangled by metal traps. Scavengers eviscerated his body.
- June 21, 2021: a female had her right hind leg cut off above the hoof by a metal trap. Very guarded prognosis and she will suffer a mobility handicap if she survives.
- June 22, 2021: a male has his right hind leg cut by a metal trap. Guarded prognosis.
- June 22, 2021: a male has his right front leg cut by a nylon trap. Very guarded prognosis and he will suffer a mobility handicap if he gets out.
- June 22, 2021: 2 females are caught in the neck by metal traps. Favorable prognosis.
- June 28, 2021: a female is caught in the right hind leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.
- July 13, 2021: a male is strangled by a metal trap around his neck. Guarded prognosis.
- July 27, 2021: a male is injured in the right front leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.
- July 27, 2021: a female is injured in the right hind leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.
- July 27, 2021: a male is injured in the left hind leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.
- July 27, 2021: a female was injured in the neck by a metal trap. The anesthesia was delicate. It happened very close to Navaisha Lake and she was in danger of running into the lake before collapsing. Favorable prognosis.



- August 3, 2021: a male was injured by a metal trap on his left hind leg. Guarded prognosis.
  - August 4, 2021: a male at a watering hole is severely injured on the rump by a thrown weapon. Guarded prognosis.
  - August 4, 2021: a male is seriously injured above the hoof on his left front leg by a metal trap. The prognosis is very guarded and if he survives, his mobility will be impaired.
  - August 18, 2021: a male is injured in the right front leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.
  - August 18, 2021: near the Jaguar gas station on Oasis-Mahimahu Road, a male is injured by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.
  - August 21, 2021: a male is injured in the left front leg by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.
  - August 27, 2021: a female is caught in the neck by a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.
- Naivasha is known for its agriculture, particularly floriculture. Several zebras have been caught in traps on the grounds of Aquila Farm, Manera Farm and Oserian Flowers, which grow roses and export them worldwide. Naivasha is close to Hell's Gate national park. Naivasha, see "On the Trail" n°1 p.26, n°2 p.49 and p.50, n°6 p.86, n°13 p.98, n°16 p.91, n°18 p.121, n°21 p.122 and n°22 p.125.
- SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, June, July and August 2021.<sup>5</sup>



**June 8, 2021**  
**Endana Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya**



A zebra (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya) is limping. He was injured by a trap on his right front leg. Prognosis is relatively good. SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>6</sup>

**June 14 to August 11, 2021**  
**Olarro Conservancy, Olare Orok Conservancy and Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya**



- June 14, 2021: A trap was shining on a young male zebra's neck (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya). During anesthesia, it was removed and the zebra ran away.





- July 27, 2021: a male had a metal ring around his neck. Anesthesia, dislodging, and revival. Very favorable prognosis.



- August 11, 2021: the male zebra was injured in the right hind knee by a metal ring. Favorable prognosis.  
SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, June, July and August 2021.<sup>7</sup>

**July 1, 2021**

**Lake Bogoria, Baringo County, Kenya**

A zebra (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya) had an arrow on his right flank. Prognosis is somewhere between guarded and favorable.

SWT/KWS Rift Valley Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>8</sup>



**July 16, 2021**

**Sirimon, Mount Kenya National Park, Meru County, Kenya**

A female zebra (genus *Equus*, *Equus grevyi*, Appendix I, found in Kenya) had her right front leg severely cut by a trap rope. She was limping and struggling to graze. Prognosis looks relatively favorable.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, July 2021.<sup>9</sup>

## NIGERIA

**July 14, 2021**

**Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria**

Several women are selling "jaki", or donkey meat, in the market even though its consumption is forbidden in Edo. Donkey meat is not subject to any sanitary control and may transmit diseases like bushmeat. The Association of Edo State Practicing Butchers says that the donkey meat sold in Benin City comes from Agbor in Delta State, 70 km away. Nigerian Tribune, July 14, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

**End of August 2021**

**Apapa, Lagos State, Nigeria**



12,500 donkey skins in 2 40-foot containers bound for Asia are seized. The containers were not refrigerated. The smell of rotting drew the attention of customs officers; shreds of flesh remained attached to the skin after the raw skinning. It should be noted that the containers in question could have been carrying clothes or tea when they left Asia. Containers can be bacteriological hotbeds.

Nigerian Tribune, September 1, 2021; NCBN, September 2, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

## ZIMBABWE

**May 18, 2021**

**Victoria Falls, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe**

A female zebra (genus *Equus*) was reported with a double trap wire around her neck. After ZimParks officers and Victoria Falls anti-poaching units and volunteers searched for her for several days, they located, extricated and treated her.

Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust, May 18, 2021.<sup>12</sup>





## AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**August 31, 2021**

**Prince George County, State of Maryland, United States of America**



At the end of August, 3 or 5 zebras (genus *Equus*) escaped from exotic animal dealer Jerry Holly's enclosure, according to sources. Three weeks later, they were still on the loose and seen from time to time. In late September, a zebra was found dead in a trap next to Jerry Holly's ranch. The zebra's body was decomposing. A helicopter located another corpse inside the ranch. Holly was clearly hiding something. The US Department of Agriculture inspectors found 100 Animal Welfare Act violations on his properties in Micanopy, Florida and Croom, Maryland. Specifically, they cited a lack of water, food, shelter and veterinary care, not just for zebras but also for lions (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II) and vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II). A hundred infractions yet no bans or activity suspensions. As long as there are people who can afford a zebra in their backyards or rent one for their birthday parties, people like Jerry Holly will go on with business. Beware, a zebra kick can send you to the hospital and zebras have an innate sense of escape.

The New York Times, September 9, 2021; Fox 5, September 23, 2021; NBC4 Washington, October 14, 2021; WAMU 88.5, October 20, 2021; PETA, October 21, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

## OCEANIA

### AUSTRALIA

**June 2021**

**Northern Territory, Australia**

"Ejiao", or donkey skin gelatin, is intensively and excessively promoted by China worldwide. It has a particularly effective and harmful press agent in Australia. Ms. Li, director of a traditional Chinese medicine clinic in Parramatta, does not mince her words. She says ejiao, which she considers a medicine, cures painful menstruation, prevents miscarriages, addresses infertility and other reproductive cycle conditions including low libido, fights anemia, helps prevent leukemia, and boosts the immunities of certain cancer patients treated with chemotherapy.

In 2018, Australia was already the 8th largest importer of ejiao, and HSI's Australian chapter (Humane Society International) was concerned (see "On the Trail" n°21 p.122).

In 2021, Eric Wong, who imports the miraculous substance into Sydney, is rubbing his hands but he is more discreet about its therapeutic benefits than Ms Li. To date, the TGA (Therapeutic Goods Administration) has not begun validating ejiao as a medicine.



A tablet of ejiao retails for 400 dollars or 300 US\$. No country has scientific evidence to support that ejiao can cure any disease. Wong only says that ejiao is made in the province of Shandong, which according to him is a haven of nature, an ecological paradise free of pollution. See "On the Trail" n°15 p.119, n°18 p.121, n°21 p.122 and n°31 p.186.

Australian investors take advantage of the rumor and the public's credulity. Tex McGrath in the Northern Territory organizes wild donkey drives, rounding up 20, 30, 50, sometimes as many as 600 donkeys. "We then sell them to other companies who make ejiao and export it to Hong Kong." McGrath's goal is to set up a donkey slaughterhouse in North Queensland. In a diplomatic flourish, he claims that ejiao can help improve Australia's relationship with China. This is not the first time that "On the Trail" mentions McGrath's ambitions and visions (see "On the Trail" n°19 p.132).

Voices are raised against this massacre and imposture. According to May Dodd, a doctor and donkey sanctuary director in Victoria for 20 years, "donkeys have a magnetic attraction to people and they love you and see them die in vain is the thing that upsets me the most."

SBS, June 1, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



# BANTENG AND GAURS

## ASIA

### CAMBODIA

**End of June 2021**

**Phnom Aural Wildlife Sanctuary, Cambodia**

Emergency veterinary intervention on a female gaur (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I) severely injured by a snare. She can no longer stand. She has not survived anesthesia.

Wildlife Crime Hotline, June 29, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



**August 13, 2021**

**Kampong Speu Province, Cambodia**

Traps are a real problem in Cambodia, too. This time, a banteng (*Bos javanicus*) died after a long agony. The male was discovered several days after his death by a routine patrol. The female he was seen with in July is being sought. One of her legs is reportedly injured. In 2020, 25,000 snares were removed from the forests of the Cardamom Mountains.

Khmer Times, August 16, 2021; Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, August 16, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



### INDIA

**July 12, 2021**

**Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, Wayanad District, State of Kerala, India**

The forest ranger's night patrol surprises 6 gang members poaching a roughly 8-year-old male gaur (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I). T. Moidu, 48 years old, was arrested. His 5 accomplices fled.

The Hindu, July 13, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

### THAILAND

**June 23, 2021**

**Ta Phraya National Park, Sa Kaeo Province, Thailand**

Discovery of a 15–20-year-old male gaur carcass (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I) weighing approximately one tonne. The collar around his left front leg leaves no doubt as to his cause of death. The rangers incinerated the carcass on site.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, June 24, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



## EUROPE

### UNITED KINGDOM

**May 4, 2021**

**Nottingham, Nottinghamshire County, England, United Kingdom**

Russell Oxley, 52, a professional taxidermist based in Ilkeston, Derbyshire, is ordered to pay a fine of 1,000 £ and 1,100 £ in costs, or 1,415 and 1,560 US\$. Police had confiscated 6 gaur skulls with horns (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I) at his home in September 2018. He admitted in court that he bought them and tried to sell 3 of them on the internet without having the necessary permits. National Wildlife Crime Unit, June 1, 2021.<sup>5</sup>





# MOUSE-DEER, DEER AND ELKS



White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*). Photo David Ratledge

## AMERICA

### CANADA

**June 25, 2021**

**Smithers, Province of British Columbia, Canada**

Sentencing to a fine of 4,000 dollars or 3,300 US\$ and a hunting ban for 2.5 years for poaching a mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*). In November 2017, police receive the photo of a man posing with the entire body of a deer.

The scene of the crime was found. There was only the decapitated carcass left. The investigators immediately made the rounds of the local taxidermists, found the presumed antlers of the deer, compared the genetic analysis of the carcass and the antlers and knocked on the poacher's door with a photo of his achievement.

Conservation Officer Service, June 25, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### REPEATED OFFENSE

**May 10, 2021**

**Capital City Airport, Harrisburg, State of Pennsylvania, United States of America**

In September 2020, a homesearch of Zachary L. Scheffel, 41, resulted in the discovery of 2 white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) antlers and other deer parts, raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) carcasses, Virginia possums (*Didelphis virginiana*), chipmunks (genus *Tamias*, *Neotamias*, *Eutamias*) and muskrats (*Ondatra zibethicus*). His hunting privileges are already suspended for similar violations. Rather than return to court a second time, Scheffel fled. His trail was found in May 2021 in Kentucky. He was immediately arrested, flown back to Pennsylvania and placed in jail because he could not pay his 10,000 US\$ bail. He now faces 72 charges. This is the first time a Pennsylvania fugitive has been extradited from another State for hunting violations.

MyChesCo, June 2, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



## **FAMILY AFFAIRS / REPEATED OFFENSE** **May 11 and 25, 2021 and February 2, 2022**



### **Newfane and Woodstock, State of Vermont, United States of America**

The investigation into the poaching of at least 5 deer (family Cervidae) in the Rockingham area began on December 5, 2020, in the middle of the Covid lockdown. Six months later, 7 individuals, including a juvenile, were identified, and 3 trophies seized from a New Hampshire taxidermist. Before the courts, the reactions are varied. There were those who pleaded guilty: Dominique Brough, who was fined more than 1,000 US\$, and Stephan Brough, who was fined more than 600 US\$; and those who pleaded not guilty: Christopher Brough Sr and Christopher Brough Jr, both of whom were already known for similar offenses. The Brough family has not finished with the law.

The trial of Diana Brough has been postponed.

Christopher Brough Sr finally pleaded guilty on February 2, 2022 to 6 of his 34 charges and was sentenced to 120 days in prison and a fine of 1,000 US\$.

EIN News, May 17, 2021; Bennington Banner, February 2, 2022.<sup>3</sup>

## **Beginning of June 2021**

### **Old Fort, State of Tennessee, United States of America**



- 50-year-old hunter fined 6,500 US\$ for poaching a 10-point deer.
  - 23-year-old Tristen Lowe was fined 9,500 US\$ and had his hunting privileges revoked for one year for poaching an 11-point deer.
- WDEF News 12, June 11, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

## **August 30 and September 6, 2021**

### **Douglas County, State of Oregon, United States of America**

Jeremy Pritchard, 39 years old, had a valid bow hunting license on the Powers hunting area. However, he killed an elk (*Cervus canadensis*) with a rifle on the Tioga hunting ground. He recorded him on his bow hunting registry. This fraudulent "regularization" would have gone unnoticed had someone not witnessed the poaching. Pritchard was tracked down by Oregon State Police Fish & Wildlife officers. The elk's antlers, meat and a gun were seized.

KQEN, September 9, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

## **ASIA**

### **CAMBODIA**

## **Mid-July, 2021**

### **Kratié, Kratié Province, Cambodia**

Market seizure of 10.2 kg of Indian muntjac (*Muntiacus muntjak*) meat and 3.7 kg of wild boar meat.

Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, July 22, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

## **CHINA**

## **May 2021**

### **Mengdingzhen Border Post, Lincang Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Myanmar.**



Seizure of 228 boxes of Angong Niuang, traditional Chinese medicine pills containing musk deer extracts (*Moschus* spp. Appendix II, except for the populations of Myanmar listed in Appendix I). Chinese Customs, May 31, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## **May 24-early August 2021**

### **Chifeng and Hexigten Banner, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Anguo, Baoding Prefecture, Hebei Province, China**

The tractor with trailer parked on the side of the road attracted the attention of the police. They discover 169 pairs of red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) antlers weighing 176.75 kg under a tarpaulin. "Chen" confesses that he is part of an organized gang with branches in Anguo, Hebei province and Hexigten banner, Inner Mongolia. Fifteen arrests after 2 months of investigation.

People's Information Network, July 10, 2021; Xinhua, August 12, 2021.<sup>8</sup>



**End of June 2021**  
**Menglian Border Post, Pu'er Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Myanmar.**



196.6 grams of sliced deer antlers confiscated from an inbound passenger's luggage. Chinese Customs, July 8, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

**August 2021**  
**Kunming, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**



Ten sika deer (*Cervus nippon*) antler carvings confiscated in a parcel said to contain "toys" Chinese Customs, September 7, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

## INDIA

**June 16, 2021**  
**Sanghaipurwa, Giridih District, State of Jharkhand, India**

Farooq was arrested on his way to Nepal to sell 8 antlers of swamp deer (*Rucervus duvaucelii*, Appendix I), weighing a total of 4.5 kg and estimated to be worth "tens of millions of rupees" by local authorities. In February 2021, a man tried to sell a pair for 300,000 rupees or 4,106 US\$ ("On the Trail" n°32 p.123). Swamp deer antlers in India, see "On the Trail" n°6 p.100, n°10 p.69, n°13 p.108, n°18 p.49, n°23 p.140 and n°32 p.123. Outlook India, June 16, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**July 3, 2021**  
**Goriakhona, Dhemaji District, State of Assam, India**

Three overnight arrests for poaching an Indian hog deer (*Axis porcinus*, Appendix III in Pakistan). Sixteen accomplices are wanted. Time8, July 4, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

## THAILAND

**August 22, 2021**  
**Ched Khot Waterfall, Kaeng Khoi District, Saraburi Province, Thailand**



Arrest of 2 poachers butchering the carcass of a female sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*). The carcass, 3 shotguns and knives were confiscated. An accomplice fled. Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, August 22, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

## EUROPE

### ROMANIA

**Beginning of June 2021**  
**Sărmaș, Harghita County, Romania**

The 49-year-old man had attracted suspicion by the police. Three of his properties were searched, 2 trophies, 50 kg of meat and several bones of red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) were seized. Evenimentul Zilei, June 14, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



# GUANACOS AND VICUNAS

## AMERICA

### ARGENTINA

**May 21, 2021**

**Río Grande Department, Province of Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica and South Atlantic Islands, Argentina**



Miguel Benitez, 48, Ricardo Moglio, 35, Lautaro Romero, 21, and Gustavo Talabera, 24, were travelling on Road 3. A roadblock stopped them at kilometre 2,866. The search of the vehicle revealed 2 air guns, knives, cellphones, and 3 plastic bags containing the meat of 3 guanacos (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II). Each bag weighed 50 kg. The meat was spread with chemicals to make it unfit for consumption and dumped in a landfill. Actualidad TDF, May 22, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

**July 1, 2021**

**Between Las Plumas and Trelew, Chubut Province, Argentina**

At night, a driver was on his way from Plumas to Trelew on National Road 25 when the police stopped his pick-up truck. When searching, the police found a total of 300 kg of guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II) meat. There were 7 guanacos, all butchered in 14 quarters, 14 ribs, and 7 loins (300 kg).

Diario Jornada, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

**July 21, 2021**

**Near Rincón de los Sauces, Neuquén Province, Argentina**



Two hunters were detained at Road 6. They killed 3 guanacos (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II), 2 male and one pregnant female. The police searched their vehicle and seized remains of the guanacos and large caliber guns. "The guanacos were from a conservation site in the Auca Mhuida protected region", highlighted Lucía Redondo, regional director of the ANP (Áreas Naturales Protegidas). Rio Negro, July 22, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

**July 2021**

**Alto Andina de la Chinchilla Provincial Reserve, Riconada and Susques Departments, Argentina**

A ranger found 2 dead vicunas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II) without their skin. The ranger spotted tire tracks in the area but the vicuna wool prospectors were not found.

Todo Jujuy, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

**End of July 2021**

**Cerro Tinte Mountain, Province of Jujuy, Argentina**

Seizure of 45 vicuna skins (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II) found inside bags, one tent, ropes, 86 22-caliber cartridges, and knives. The first poacher, a Bolivian, was arrested, and the second fled the scene. The woolly vicuna skins were transported by donkey.

Todo Jujuy, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>5</sup>





Mountain gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*). Photo Virunga National Park  
<https://virunga.org/fr/support-us/donate/>

## NORTHERN AFRICA

### EGYPT

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Alexandria, Governorate of**

facebook

The house of a man offering birds and other animals for sale on Facebook was searched and 20 mona guenons (*Cercopithecus mona*, Appendix II) and 2 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) were seized. They were handed over to the Alexandria Zoo. One arrest was made. Al-Masri al-youm, 5 June 2021.<sup>1</sup>

## WESTERN AFRICA

### LIBERIA

**May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Marshall, Margibi County, Liberia**

A female chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) chained in the garden of her "owners" was released. She was transferred to the Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue & Protection (LCRP) sanctuary. Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue & Protection, May 3, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

**June 26, 2021**

**Kpan, Margibi County, Liberia**

A sooty mangabey (*Cercocebus atys*, Appendix II) and a lesser spot-nosed guenon (*Cercopithecus petaurista*, Appendix II), both of whom were used as toys, were rescued and transferred to the Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary.

Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, June 26, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

**End of July 2021**

**Marshall, Margibi County, Liberia**

A female baby chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) was seized from suspects who flee. She was turned over to the LCRP. Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>4</sup>





## Beginning of August 2021

### Gbarma District, Gbarpolu County, Liberia

Legal proceedings were initiated against an unnamed man who held a baby chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) in his home for trade. The chimpanzee was rescued and transferred to the LCRP sanctuary.

Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue & Protection, August 10, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

## August 28, 2021

### Kpan, Margibi County, Liberia

The Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary is now the keeper of 3 patas monkeys (*Erythrocebus patas*, Appendix II) who were for sale on the side of a road. The patas monkey are not native to Liberia even though they happened to enter after a long run-up (they can reach up to 50 km per hour in case of lion attacks).

Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, August 28, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



## SIERRA LEONE

## August 4, 2021

### Port Loko District, Northern Province, Sierra Leone

Father Ignazio, an Italian national, confessed he bought 2 baby chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) at a local market. He claims he was entitled to open a sanctuary for wild animals in the ecolodges he has operated for the past 15 years. Faced with a national law that prohibits anyone from keeping chimpanzees, Father Ignazio finally decided to hand his 2 guests over to the care of a specialized sanctuary in Tacugama, in the Western Zone's urban district.

Sierra Express Media, August 10, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## CENTRAL AFRICA

## CAMEROON

## May 9, 2021

### Limbe, South West Region, Cameroon

Arrival of an orphan Preuss's monkey (*Cercopithecus preussi*, Appendix II) at the Limbe Wildlife Center. He is estimated to be only 8 weeks old, and his mother was most likely killed.

Limbe Wildlife Centre, May 9 2021.<sup>8</sup>



## May 10, 2021

### Bonis, East Region, Cameroon

Seizure of a stock of chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I), monkey, and small rodent meat, in Koumé-Bonis, located 10 km from Bertoua, the regional capital. To avoid waste, authorities organized an auction for locals to purchase the fresh and smoked meat. The profits were returned to public funds in accordance with the law.

Arrest of 4 poachers suspected to be responsible. The fertile department of Kadey in the East Region attracts many poachers, particularly in the forest management unit of the French Société Forestière et Industrielle de Doumé (SFID) in the Mbang district. Criminals engage here in illegal logging and prohibited hunting of endangered species including giant pangolins. Poachers then smoke the meat and sell it to bushmeat vendors in Bertoua, Yaoundé, and Douala.

SFID, see "On the Trail" n°3 p.72 and n°6 p.104.

Actu Cameroun, May 12, 2021; EcoMatin, June 9, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

## REPEATED OFFENSE

### May 10 and October 27, 2021

### Nanga-Eboko, Centre Region, Cameroon

Rescue of a 10-month-old baby chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I), and arrest of the poacher who took him captive in a tiny cardboard box after killing his mother for the bushmeat trade. Following a first attempted rescue, an investigator from the EAGLE Network was also held hostage by the criminal for 3 days on the banks of the Sanaga River, about 6 km from the town of Nanga-Eboko. He was exfiltrated via a canoe, and later on the trafficker was finally arrested and the chimp brought to safety. He was transferred to a rescue facility where he was found to be malnourished and dehydrated, to have an intestinal infection, and to be constantly scratching at mange and a fungal skin infection, both diseases transmitted by humans. At the police station the trafficker attempted to escape but was caught. He is a repeated offender.

EAGLE, May 11, 2021; Alwihda, May 19, 2021; LAGA, May and October 2021; Do the Right Thing, August 5, 2021.<sup>10</sup>





### Mintom and Djoum, South Region, Cameroon

Arrest of Josiane Nkolo on the side of a street. She was attempting to sell a baby mandrill

(*Mandrillus sphinx*, Appendix I). She regularly traffics in mandrills with her father, a traditional chief, who supplies local poachers with guns.

In November, she was sentenced to 3 months of suspended imprisonment and 2 million CFA francs (3,535 US\$).

EAGLE, June 30, 2021; LAGA, June and November, 2021; Camer.be, July 8, 2021; Cameroon Magazine, July 13, 2021; Actu Cameroun, August 25, 2021.<sup>11</sup>



### July 7 and December 13, 2021 Kribi, South Region, Cameroon

Arrest of a Dombé council worker Rene Koumba at his home for possessing a female mandrill (*Mandrillus sphinx*, Appendix I) and attempting to sell her. The mandrill was chained at the home's entrance. Koumba bought her in the village of Bipindi, which is located about 78 km away. He had been advised to give her to wildlife authorities but insisted on keeping her. In December, a court sentenced Koumba to pay 25,000 CFA francs (40 US\$) in fines and 200,000 CFA francs (340 US\$) in damages.

EAGLE, July 8, 2021; Camer.be, July 22, 2021; LAGA, July and December, 2021.<sup>12</sup>



### July 14, 2021 Djoum, South Region, Cameroon

Rescue of a baby female mandrill (*Mandrillus sphinx*, Appendix I) and arrest of the trafficker, who intended to sell her. She was malnourished, and a cord tied around her waist left a gaping wound. This is the fourth baby mandrill rescued by the EAGLE Network this year.

EAGLE, July 15, 2021; LAGA, July 2021.<sup>13</sup>



### August 13, 2021 Bitjel, South Region, Cameroon

Seizure of 4 butchered gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla*, Appendix I) and 2 hunting weapons in the morning. Later in the day police detained the 2 suspected poachers.

Gorilla heads and skulls, see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 52 and 53, p. 113, n°6 p. 41, p. 43, p. 102, p. 103, n°7 p. 36, p. 37, p. 38, p. 116, n°8 p. 35, n°9 p. 36, p. 101, n°10 p. 31, p. 71, n°11 p. 37, n°12 p. 40, n°13 p. 42, n°15 p. 110, n°17 p. 113 and n°27 p. 129.

Cameroon Customs, August 13, 2021; MENAFN, August 14, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



The meat is for the markets or restaurants but the heads and hands are sold at a high price to international buyers as ornaments.



## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

May 6, 2021

### Bunia, Ituri Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Rescue of a chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) named Tarzan who was illegally held hostage by a family for nearly 25 years since he was an infant in the 1990s. He was found by an investigator working for Conserv Congo chained on the engine block of a truck. The family charged tourists 10 dollars to take photos with Tarzan, and as he became more aggressive and less cuddly as an adult, they neglected him and left him in filth. He was also regularly given alcohol and cigarettes, which he developed addictions to.

During the 2-day negotiations, the entire neighborhood demanded that Tarzan remain with them, but eventually Conserv Congo gained custody. He is the largest and oldest chimp they have rescued. Four days after his release, Tarzan made his way to Lwiro where he will spend the rest of his life in a semi-wild environment surrounded by other chimpanzees.

Conserv Congo, May 6 and 10, 2021; World Animal News, May 7, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

May 6, 2021

### Bunia, Ituri Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Lwiro Primate Rehabilitation Center (CRPL) was founded in 2002 by the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) and the Centre de Recherche en Sciences Naturelles. It spans 4 hectares. In this peace haven in the midst of armed conflict, chimpanzees, gorillas, bonobos and other orphaned monkeys rescued from poachers or former pets are cared for, both physically and psychologically. Every day, the adults have access to 6 kg of bananas and other fruits, vegetables and cereals, while the orphans are bottle-fed.

In this environment, Tarzan gradually regains his health. But the process is very long. At the beginning of 2022, he still bears the marks of mistreatment on his body and in his behavior. He is still not fit to leave the quarantine zone to live with the 110 other chimpanzees.

The CRPL takes care of other species. For example, it participated in the rehabilitation and release of 39 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) in November 2020 (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.114). The returns to the wild have not been renewed due to safety concerns. "The animals feel trapped", lamented the caretakers. But they are safer in the shelter than outside.

Lwiro Primate Rehabilitation Center, see "On the Trail" n°6 p.41, n°8 p.35, n°9 p.36 and p.37, n°11 p.37 and p.38, n°12 p.27 and p.41, n°13 p.43 and p.44, n°14 p.37, n°15 p.50, n°16 p.41, n°17 p.45, n°19 p.56, n°20 p.57, n°23 p.72, n°25 p.54, n°27 p.64, n°28 p.67, n°30 p.90, p.91 and p.97, n°31 p.114 and n°32 p.128 and p.129.

Conserv Congo, May 6 and 10, 2021; World Animal News, May 7, 2021; L'Express (with AFP), February 21, 2022.<sup>16</sup>





## **Sankuru Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Seizure of a female baby bonobo (*Pan paniscus*, Appendix I) from traffickers who were attempting to sell her online.

Friends of Bonobos, July 6 and August 4, 2021; Adams Cassinga, July 9, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



## **July 2021**

### **Kinshasa City-Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Lola ya Bonobo rescues orphaned baby bonobos (*Pan paniscus*, Appendix I) from the illegal trade. Recent rescues include a male from Tshopo Province, a female from Basankusu, a male less than a year old from Boende, a male with several injuries and a damaged eye, and another young female. In total, by early August 4 orphans were being quarantined and 12 were in the nursery. Friends of Bonobos, July 7, 19, 20, 23 and 30 and August 5 and 7, 2021.<sup>18</sup>



## **August 4, 2021**

### **Buroko, North-Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Discovery of a dead primate, potentially a colobus (*Piliocolobus* spp., Appendix II), shot by hunters in a community forest. Numbers of this species have been declining.

Justin Lumoo Paluku, August 4, 2021.<sup>19</sup>

## **REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

## **June 24, 2021**

### **Tchimpounga Sanctuary, Department of Kouilou, Republic of the Congo**

Arrest of Johnny Oyaga after reports of several chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) slaughters on the reserve. Authorities are still searching for 2 accomplices.

Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), July and August 2021; EAGLE, August 2021.<sup>20</sup>

## **August 2021**

### **Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park, Departments of Likouala and Sangha, Republic of the Congo**

Seizure by ecoguards of 2,113 kg of poached meat, including that of chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I).

WCS Congo, September 2, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

## **EASTERN AFRICA**

## **ETHIOPIE**

## **August 20, 2021**

### **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**



With the help of the Born Free Foundation, authorities rescued 5 grivet monkeys (*Chlorocebus aethiops*, Appendix II). They were chained up in an amusement park, without shade or proper food, at the mercy of anyone who wanted to play with them. They are now being cared for at the Ensessa Kotteh sanctuary.

Born Free Foundation, August 23, 2021.<sup>22</sup>



## MALAWI

**July 2021**

### **Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi**

An orphaned yellow baboon (*Papio cynocephalus*, Appendix II) begins a new life at the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust sanctuary with the care and affection of an adoptive mother, also rescued from trafficking. A man was trying to sell him on the roadside. Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>23</sup>



## ZAMBIA

**Beginning of June 2021**

### **Luampa District, Western Province, Zambia**

During a night operation, a vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) was rescued from the home of Mwendoi Sishekano, a 36-year-old teacher. The cub, completely malnourished, was kept in total darkness, in a concrete block tank covered with a wooden trap door.

Zambia Primate Project, June 3, 2021.<sup>24</sup>

**July 10, 2021**

### **Kaoma District, Western Province, Zambia**

A one-year-old vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) who was held captive since February was seized.

Zambia Primate Project, July 10 and 12, 2021.<sup>25</sup>

**July 23 and 24, 2021**

### **Jojo, Eastern Province, and Michael Chilufya Sata Toll Plaza, Copperbelt Province, Zambia**

- A 2-year-old female vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) was seized from Joseph Banda. He had her for one year and 7 months.

- A vervet monkey who was abandoned by his "owners" after allegedly biting children was rescued. Unable to fend for himself, he spent 2 months wandering around; he was chased with stones and, in the end, tied to a pole.

Zambia Primate Project, July 23 and 24, 2021.<sup>26</sup>



## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**June 14, 2021**

### **Badplaas, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

The NGO DIY Wild rescued 2 young vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) for sale in a cage on the side of the road. Fortunately, the police were passing by.

DIY Wild, June 9 and 14, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

### **Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

A female mohol galago (*Galago moholi*, Appendix II) was handed over by her owner. She was obese due to an unbalanced diet. She suffered from her right eye.

Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, June 13, 2021.<sup>28</sup>





### **Beginning of July 2021**

#### **Letsitele, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

A juvenile female vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) went from bad to worse. A few days after a dog bit her, she received an anonymous bullet in the head.

The Vervet Forest, July 14 and 16, 2021.<sup>29</sup>

### **July 1, 2021**

#### **Kommetjie, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

A female chacma baboon (*Papio ursinus*, Appendix II) was found too late. She was lying on the side of the road with a pellet wound. She was finished off.

Baboon Matters, July 1, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

### **August 26, 2021**

#### **Knysna, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

The City Council is recruiting 2 qualified and experienced volunteer hunters to shoot 2 chacma baboons (*Papio ursinus*, Appendix II). They are believed to be dominant males. "The city is experiencing an increase in wildlife activity (baboons) within certain residential areas, resulting in excessive damage to property and potentially compromising the safety of residents."

Esmé Beamish, advisor to the Cape Town Baboon Management Program, and Justin O Riain, director of the ICW (Institute for Communities and Wildlife), denounced open sky dumping. According to them, killing baboons without prior attempts to scare them away is illegal in Cape Town (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.131).

They point out that prevention is the key to the problem. When baboons first explore a suburb, they can easily and permanently be put off by acoustic devices. When they have become accustomed to feeding in bins and gardens, or even being fed by residents, conflict with humans is only a matter of time. "Killing 2 males will not change this."

Wildlife Animal Protection Forum South Africa, August 24, 2021; Ban Animal Trading, August 25, 2021; Daily Maverick, September 6, 2021.<sup>31</sup>

## **NORTHERN AMERICA**

### **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

#### **June 9, 2021**

##### **State of Texas, United States of America**

A 5-year-old female vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) arrived at the Born Free sanctuary (70 hectares in South Texas). Her owner, who acquired her when she was 3 months old, handed her over on her own initiative. She will join more than 400 primates who have lived or survived in zoos, laboratories or private homes. There are currently an estimated 15,000 primates held in USA homes.

Born Free USA, June 10, 2021.<sup>32</sup>

#### **June 22, 2021**

##### **Pendleton, State of Oregon, United States of America**

Buck, a chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I), had been part of the family for 17 years. When he was a baby, his "adoptive mother", Tamara Brogoitti, diapered and bottle-fed him. On June 22, 2021, the beautiful story of a close-knit family came to an end. Buck bit Tamara's daughter, who takes refuge in the bathroom. She was injured in the chest, arms and legs. Tamara Brogoitti calls the police and asks them to shoot Buck. He dies on the spot from a bullet in the head.

Since 2010, it is forbidden for individuals to own chimpanzees. However, people who previously owned them were allowed to keep them under the "grandfather clause."

New York Post, June 22, 2021; The Humane Society of the United States, June 23, 2021.<sup>33</sup>

#### **Week of July 19, 2021**

##### **State of Texas, United States of America**

A 5-year-old rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II) arrived at Born Free. His owner purchased him as a baby and placed him in the care of parents who, overwhelmed, locked the macaque in a parrot cage as too aggressive.

Born Free USA, July 27, 2021.<sup>34</sup>

## **LATIN AMERICA**

### **BRAZIL**

#### **May 12, 2021**

##### **Vargem, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

Wildlife traffickers always have funny stories to tell. This time, a man explained that the 2 tufted capuchins (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) kept in a cage in the cab that would take him to Bahia (23h drive) came from a house in São Paulo. The owner had decided to donate the 2 primates to a wildlife protection organization in Bahia, they said. The letter from the owner attests to this! Police officers were disbelieving. The 2 drivers who had to take turns throughout the journey and a passenger were arrested.

G1 Vale do Paraíba e Região, May 13, 2021.<sup>35</sup>

#### **End of May 2021**

##### **Luis Eduardo Magalhães, Vida Cerrado Park, State of Bahia, Brazil**

Two black howler monkeys (*Alouatta caraya*, Appendix II) rescued from wildlife trafficking arrived at Vida Cerrado park. They are females, 6 and 7 years old, both unfortunately too habituated to humans to be released. They are in quarantine for the moment but should soon join the 4 other black howler monkeys living in the park, 3 males and one female. It is said that in case of mating, the offspring will be released into the wild.

G1 BA, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>36</sup>



**May 27, 2021**

**Nossa Senhora das Dores, State of Sergipe, Brazil**

A tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) who was chained to a tree was seized.

G1 Sergipe, May 27, 2021.<sup>37</sup>

**June 30, 2021**

**Ribeirão Pires, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

A family handed over a marmoset (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II) to the authorities. They said they did know the species is protected. The marmoset was transferred to a zoo to undergo a series of tests that will determine whether or not he can be released.

ABC do ABC, June 5, 2021.<sup>38</sup>

**FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)**

**May 19, 2021**

**Saint-Georges, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France. Border with Brazil.**

Three skinned and eviscerated spider monkeys (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II), an adult male, a female and a juvenile, were seized from the trunk of a car. The only spider monkey species present in French Guiana is the red-faced black spider monkey (*Ateles paniscus*, Appendix II). French Biodiversity Agency, July 2021.<sup>39</sup>



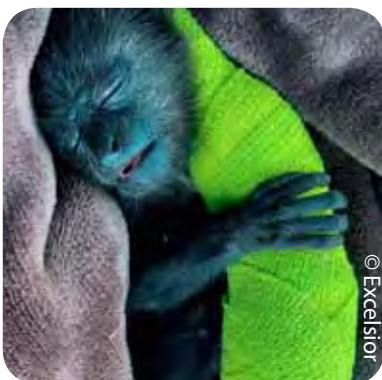
**MEXICO**

**April 29 to June 29, 2021**

**Calakmul Biosphere Reserve, State of Campeche, Mexico**

A young Guatemalan howler (*Alouatta pigra*, Appendix I) is found in the arms of his dead mother who was shot by a poacher, his left arm was fractured when he fell from the tree. In this state, there is nothing to get from him in the town markets.

The orphan was transferred to the Akumal shelter where he underwent surgery. He still risks losing his arm. The Akumal shelter is asking for donations to continue the treatment and help rehabilitate the young Guatemalan howler at [www.savemuuk.com](http://www.savemuuk.com). Excelsior, June 29, 2021.<sup>40</sup>



**PERU**

**May 12, 2021**

**Moyobamba, Province of Moyobamba, Department of San Martín, Peru**

- A tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) stuck on the roof of a house was rescued.

- A squirrel monkey (*Saimiri* spp., Appendix I or II) who was allegedly "found" was handed over.

The 2 primates are too habituated to humans and will not be able to be released.

Neotropical Primate Conservation, May 13, 2021.<sup>41</sup>

**May 12, 2021**

**Moyobamba, Province of Moyobamba, Department of San Martín, Peru**

A lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus* spp., Appendix I) chained to an avocado tree was rescued.

Neotropical Primate Conservation, June 1st, 2021.<sup>42</sup>



**End of July 2021**

**Reserva Ecológica Taricaya, Department of Madre de Dios, Peru**

"Maruja" is a female spider monkey (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II) seized in 2017 in Lima while tied to the top of a motorcycle cab, dressed in a wedding dress, promoting a circus. According to the vet, she was about 3 years old, and it was decided she would join the Taricaya reserve rehabilitation and release program. Deeply permeated by her many years as a circus animal, she had a greater affinity with humans than with her fellow animals. Under these conditions, her release was in question. But when orphaned spider monkeys arrived, she took care of them and regained her instinct. Today, "Maruja" has got her freedom with her adopted offspring.

Animal Defenders International, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021; One Green Planet, August 12, 2021.<sup>43</sup>

**August 29, 2021**

**Moyobamba, Province of Moyobamba, Department of San Martín, Peru**

Regional authorities rescued a small 4-month-old tufted capuchin (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) after his mother was shot by poachers. The Neotropical Primate Conservation reminds us that in the wild, the tufted capuchin is dependent on his mother until the age of 2.

Neotropical Primate Conservation, September 15, 2021.<sup>44</sup>



## EASTERN ASIA

### CHINA

May 2021

**Ning'er Hani and Yi Autonomous Country, Pu'er Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**



Bai is convicted for buying a macaque (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II) in October 2017 for 4,000 yuan or 600 US\$ and lugging him by motorcycle in May 2020 from Simao District to Ning'er xian, about 40 kilometers away. Bai pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 3 months in prison and fined 6,000 yuan (930 US\$). The macaque was valued at 10,000 yuan or 1,410 US\$.  
The Paper, June 2, 2021.<sup>45</sup>

## SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

### CAMBODIA

Beginning of May 2021

**Cardamom Protected Forest, Cambodia**

Release of a slow loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I) found in an abandoned bag.  
Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, May 11, 2021.<sup>46</sup>



Début juin 2021

Beginning of June 2021

**Autonomous Municipality of Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

Seizure of a long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) kept chained by individuals. He is in quarantine at the Phnom Tamao shelter.  
Wildlife Crime Hotline, June 3, 2021.<sup>47</sup>

## INDONESIA

### ORANGUTANS

June 15, 2021

**Mendawai, Katingan Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia**

#### THE EARLY MORNING VISITORS

The forest remnants around Mendawai are haunted by ramin (*Gonystylus* spp., Appendix II) and meranti (genus *Shorea*) cutters and almost all the natural forests have been replaced by oil palm plots.

Two resident orangutans no longer have homes or nests and begin visiting houses and orchards at dawn to see if there are any fruits and seeds to eat. The housing estates on Mekar Tani road are part of their begging route with the banks of the Bengkulu river. Locals describe the tired old couple as "ferocious" and some farm workers staying near the Sub-District House complain that they have been "robbed by the 2 bandits".



Some brave people would like to take their guns to get rid of them but self-defense would be difficult to prove. For the time being, they prefer to call the police to expel the 2 sweet potato thieves.

"Finding" a baby orangutan and adopting him before selling him may be seen by some as an opportunity and a source of pride, whereas no one thinks of "finding" an old female and feeding her from time to time.

Berita Sampit, June 15, 2021.<sup>48</sup>

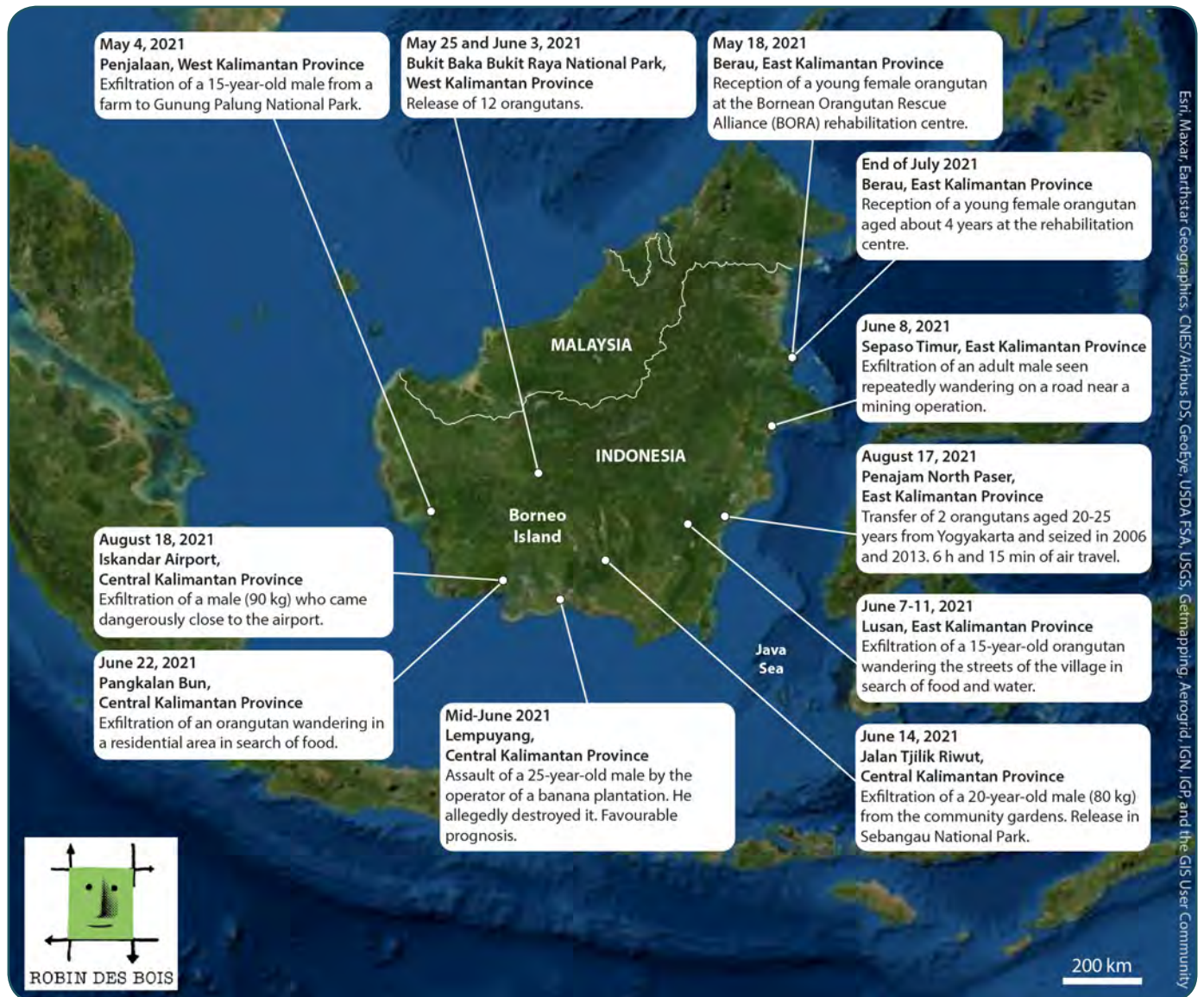


# Orangutans in Indonesia May 1 - August 31, 2021





## Orangutans in Indonesia - zoom on Borneo May 1 - August 31, 2021



August 19, 2021  
Sungai Tuland, Upper Indragiri Regency, Riau Province, Indonesia





May 4, 2021  
Penjalaan, North Kayong Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia



July 15, 2021  
Titi Poben, South Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia



August 1, 2021  
Berau Regency, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia



June 2, 2021  
Jabi-Jabi Barat, Subulussalam City, Aceh Prov., Indonesia



August 17, 2021  
Penajam North Paser Regency, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia



August 19, 2021  
Kualanamu International Airport, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia



**Beginning of May 2021****Riau Province, Indonesia**

Handing over to the BKSDA of an agile gibbon (*Hylobates agilis*, Appendix I). He was purchased 6 years ago at a market when he was just a baby.

Antara News, May 10, 2021.<sup>49</sup>

**July 2, 2021****Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

Fourteen slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) are released after a long rehabilitation program. There are 5 males and 9 females. To prevent the spread of Covid-19 to wildlife, tests were performed on each loris. They all tested negative.

International Animal Rescue, July 2, 2021.<sup>50</sup>

**July 12, 2021****Pekanbaru, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

Arrest of R.A.F and K.I.S, 30 and 55 years old, in the underground parking lot of Pekanbaru Hospital. They were trying to sell 8 live lorises (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I) for 2.5 million rupiahs per specimen, or 170 US\$. They reportedly bought them from villagers in Tanah Datar regency (West Sumatra Province) more than 200 km away.

Pekanbaru Tribune, July 20, 2021.<sup>51</sup>

**August 30, 2021****Batu Horing, South Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

Seizure of an agile gibbon (*Hylobates agilis*, Appendix I), approximately 2 years old, previously kept in a cage. Joint operation of BKSDA, Scorpion and HOCRU-OIC. The 54-year-old jailer explains that he "took him in" a little over 2 months ago.

Scorpion Foundation Indonesia, August 30, 2021.<sup>52</sup>

**May 19 and July 2021****Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan State, Malaysia**

The Perhilitan, Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia, is in a bad way. The photos of dusky leaf monkeys (*Trachypithecus obscurus*, Appendix II) shot by this governmental body are a scandal. Public opinion and environmental experts demand explanations. The Perhilitan reports that 7 dusky leaf monkeys who acted aggressively with local residents were indeed shot after unsuccessful attempts to capture them. Witnesses speak of about 20 individuals including babies. The Malaysia Wildlife Rights Association (Hidup) and Nurul Azreen Sultan, who witnessed the slaughter, are filing a complaint. They are represented by the lawyer and animal rights activist Rajesh Nagarajan. They are not claiming any damages. They want Perhilitan to acknowledge that the slaughter was illegal and to bring those responsible to justice. "We demand that Perhilitan investigate and prosecute every agent complicit in this barbaric killing of poor defenseless creatures," Nagarajan comments. Dusky leaf monkeys are not known to be aggressive. The Malaysian Primatological Society and Langur Project Penang points out that, unlike macaques, they prefer to stay in the forest away from humans. The Star, May 25 and July 24, 2021; Free Malaysia Today, May 27 and June 28, 2021.<sup>53</sup>

**June 26, 2021****Air Itam, Penang State, Malaysia**

Nine long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) were found dead near a residential area. The likeliest cause of death is poisoning.

New Straits Times, June 27, 2021.<sup>54</sup>





## THAILAND

May 27, 2021

Si Maha Phot, Prachinburi Province, Thailand



The police were surprised when a suspected stolen truck with false number plates was checked. The officers were discovered long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II), 102 to be precise, in blue nylon bags. Fifteen were already dead, 7 are in critical condition. Three others died before they could be treated. A makeshift “hospital” is set up to care for the survivors. Each of the specimens undergoes a cursory examination and a Covid-19 test. Some of the females are pregnant. The driver, Panupong Jusing (25), was arrested. He explains that he has been paid 3,000 baht (96 US\$) to transport them from Phichit to Sa Kaeo at the border with Cambodia, where a correspondent was to wait to pick up the “goods”. This was his 3<sup>rd</sup> transport. The seized cargo was definitely travelling towards animal testing.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, May 28, 2021; Daily Sabah (with Reuters), May 29, 2021; New Straits Times, May 29, 2021; Bangkok Post, June 18, 2021.<sup>55</sup>

Beginning of June 2021

Koh Samui Island, Surat Thani Province, Thailand



Handing over to the WFFT (Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand) of 2 chained macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II) engaged in coconut harvesting. One of the 2 had been working for over 20 years. Their boss wants to get rid of them for their retirement.

Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, June 16, 2021.<sup>56</sup>

## VIET NAM

Beginning of May 2021

Da Nang Municipality, Viet Nam



Handing over of a privately held juvenile long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II). ENV, May 9, 2021.<sup>57</sup>

May 2021

Long An Province, Viet Nam

- The long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) who was handed over to ENV has been purchased by one of its supporters. ENV again reminds that buying an animal from a wildlife trafficker is tantamount to supporting the trafficker financially and that it is better to notify the authorities.



- Another macaque (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II) is seized in a café. ENV, May 24, 2021.<sup>58</sup>



**June 2021**

**Dong Hoa, Quang Binh Province, Viet Nam**

A protection zone prohibiting rock extraction and mining in and around a 710-ha perimeter is established to protect 22 groups of Hatinh langurs (*Trachypithecus hatinhensis*, Appendix II) or 156 individuals.

The Hatinh langur lives in the limestone forests of central Viet Nam and eastern Laos. The largest population resides in the Vietnamese province of Quang Binh, notably in the Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park. The Hatinh langur lives in groups of 2-15 individuals which usually consist of one male and 3-4 females, accompanied by their offspring. An adult specimen weighs between 6 and 9 kg. The main threats to the species are poaching for food, traditional medicine and deforestation for road building and quarrying (Delacour's langurs, see "On the Trail" n°32 p.230).

VietNamNet, June 21, 2021; Nguyen Manh Ha "Some Observations on the Hatinh langur, *Trachypithecus laotum hatinhensis* (), in North Central Vietnam," Primate Conservation, 2006(21), 149-154, (August 1, 2006).<sup>59</sup>



Hatinh langur (*Trachypithecus hatinhensis*). Photo Christoph Moning

**August 22, 2021**

**Nghe An Province, Viet Nam**

Provincial forestry authorities visited a family's home with a long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II). They agreed to get rid of him. He is transported to Pu Mat national park the same day.

ENV, August 22, 2021.<sup>60</sup>

**SOUTHERN ASIA**

**BANGLADESH**

**August 17, 2021**

**Sreemangal Upazila, Moulvibazar District, Sylhet Division, Bangladesh**

Seizure of a stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*, Appendix II) held in a clandestine zoo. He has been entrusted to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib safari park.

Dhaka Tribune, August 21, 2021.<sup>61</sup>

**INDIA**

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**July 28 and August 2, 2021**

**Chowdanahalli, Hassan District, State of Karnataka, India**

A good Samaritan notifies the authorities. Monkeys are abandoned in bags near the village. When they arrive, the forest agents and vets can only see the disaster: about 30 macaques are already dead and 2 are between life and death. Only one will survive. The forestry officers count exactly 38 bonnet macaques (*Macaca radiata*, Appendix II). Inhabitants of a nearby village, whose crops were coveted by the group, allegedly contacted a couple known to be monkey trappers. They were arrested along with 5 of the farmers.

The Hindu, July 29, August 3 and 17, 2021; The Indian Express, July 29, 2021.<sup>62</sup>

**WESTERN ASIA**

**TURKEY**

**Beginning of May 2021**

**Gürbulak border crossing, Ağrı Province, Turkey. Border with Iran**

Seizure of 12 juvenile macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix I or II) in a car from Iran. They were handed over to Gazantep Zoo.

Sputnik Türkiye, May 29, 2021.<sup>63</sup>



## NORTHERN EUROPE

### UNITED KINGDOM

**July 22, 2021**

**Grays, Essex County, England, United Kingdom**

Rescue of an orphan infant marmoset (*Callithrix* spp., Appendix I or II) found by the RSPCA in a bird cage. Estimated to be 5 or 6 months old and weighing just 110 g, his breeders were attempting to sell him on Facebook for 2,000 £ (2,766 US\$). The marmoset was named TikTok because he often appeared in videos on the social media platform. Small monkeys are commonly exploited on TikTok by their owners who post videos bathing them and feeding them sugary snacks like lollipops. The marmoset was transferred to the Monkey World sanctuary in Dorset.

Monkey World, July 22 and 30, 2021; The Sun, July 31, 2021.<sup>64</sup>

## WESTERN EUROPE

### GERMANY

**June 14, 2021**

**Erfurt, Thuringia State, Germany**

Seizure of 3 cotton-headed tamarins (*Saguinus oedipus*, Appendix I) during a fake sale between a trafficker and police officers. The criminal was a 44-year-old woman who was also caught with common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II). Bild, June 15, 2021 ; Mitteldeutsche Rundfunk, June 15, 2021.<sup>65</sup>

### FRANCE

**June 12, 2021**

**Monteux, Department of Vaucluse, France**

At around 5 p.m., a ring-tailed lemur (*Lemur catta*, Appendix I) was on a third-floor balcony. Authorities were alerted by neighbors. Fire-fighters rescued him with a ladder then brought him to the zoo of La Barben.

It appears that the "owners", an 18-year-old man and his mother, had been away for a few days and left the lemur alone in the cage, which was covered by a blanket and placed in direct sunlight. Police are investigating how they obtained the lemur.

France 3 Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, June 14, 2021; La Provence, June 12 and 15, 2021.<sup>66</sup>

**August 5, 2021**

**Saint-Priest, Department of Rhône, France**

Rescue of a 10-cm-high supposed pygmy marmoset (*Callithrix pygmaea*, Appendix II) by fire-fighters in the afternoon. A local woman spotted him in her garden. He was entrusted to a zoo and an investigation to determine his origin is ongoing. There is allegedly a clandestine breeding operation in south-eastern France.

Le Progrès, August 6, 2021 ; Lyon Mag, August 6, 2021.<sup>67</sup>

**August 22-23 and 29, 2021**

**Upie, Department of Drôme, France**

During the night, 10 ring-tailed lemurs (*Lemur catta*, Appendix I) and 2 white-lipped tamarins (*Saguinus labiatus*, Appendix II) were stolen from the Zoo of Upie. When the staff returned in the morning, only one lemur remained. The commando was well organized. On August 29, 8 of the primates were found in a van trying to evade a road checkpoint. The primates still missing include the 2 white-lipped tamarins and 2 baby ring-tailed lemurs.

A couple was arrested, but the woman was released due to health condition. While in custody, the man, who was charged, implicated an accomplice from Grenoble (South East France) who was also arrested. France Bleu Drôme Ardèche, August 23, 2021 ; France 3 Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, September 1, 2021; Franceinfo, September 1, 2021.<sup>68</sup>

## SOUTHERN EUROPE

### ITALY

**May 6, 2021**

**Montecorvino Rovella, Province of Salerno, Region of Campania, Italy**

Seizure of a Japanese macaque (*Macaca fuscata*, Appendix II) by the carabinieri from a private residence. He was kept in a small and unhealthy cage. Local vets will ensure his transport, quarantine observation, clinical diagnostic tests and microchipping. During his entire life, he will be tracked.

SalernoToday, May 7, 2021.<sup>69</sup>

## EASTERN EUROPE

### POLAND

**July 26, 2021**

**Korcowa Border Post, Subcarpathian Voivodeship, Poland. Border with Ukraine.**

Seizure of a capuchin (*Sapajus* spp. synonymous with *Cebus* spp., Appendix II) found in a cage inside a vehicle entering Poland from Ukraine. The Ukrainian citizen would have hoped to sell the capuchin for 36,000 zlotys (9,500 US\$). The capuchin who avoided to be smuggled was transported to the Rehabilitation Center for Protected Animals in Przemyśl.

National Revenue Administration, July 26, 2021.<sup>70</sup>

### RUSSIA

**May 1, 2021**

**Svetloyarsky District, Volgograd Oblast, Russia**

Seizure of a long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) in a bus traveling from Moscow to Makhachkala, Dagestan (1,800 km). He was in a cage inside the luggage compartment. The "owner", a 21-year-old man, claims he bought the macaque on the Internet and was bringing him to his home to keep him as a pet.

Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia for Volgograd Oblast, May 2, 2021.<sup>71</sup>



# ARMADILLOS, PACAS, CAPYBARAS, AND PECCARIS

## LATIN AMERICA

### BELIZE

**June 5, 2021**

#### **Chiquibul National Park, Cayo District, Belize**

Raul and Victorino Rivera, marauding Guatemalans, were arrested by rangers in possession of forest meat and a live young white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*, Appendix II).

Breaking Belize News, 7 June 2021; Love FM, 7 June 2021.<sup>1</sup>

### BRAZIL

**May 2021**

#### **Jaciara, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil**

Military police were informed about a pick-up truck parked near a farm. When they arrived, some passengers fled. The troopers discovered a collared peccary carcass (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II), 6 dogs caged in the trunk, a revolver, a rifle, cartridges, 2 talkies-walkies, 2 cell phones, 2 knives... and an ID. G1 MT, May 30, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

**June 12, 2021**

#### **Chapadão do Sul, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil**

Two men, aged 18 and 42, were arrested at the intersection of the MS-306 road and the "wildlife" BR-060 highway. In their Fiat Uno 2, they were transporting carcasses of freshly killed collared peccaries (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II). A rifle, ammunition of different calibers, and a machete were seized. They were each fined 1,000 reais (200 US\$).

O Correio News, June 15, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



**June 26, 2021**

#### **Miracatu, State of São Paulo, Brésil**

A poacher was arrested and a paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), a rifle, several dozen cartridges, an aluminum boat, a fuel jerrycan, an onboard motor and poaching equipment were seized.

Portal da Cidade Registro, June 28, 2021<sup>4</sup>

**July 12, 2021**

#### **Campo Grande, State of Río de Janeiro, Brazil**

Search at home of a 54-year-old man suspected of abusing his dog. In the freezer, the police discovered a capybara head (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) and 20 kg of wild meat. Several homemade weapons and an armadillo trap were seized in the house.

Campo Grande News, July 12, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



**Beginning of August 2021**

#### **São Pedro do Ivaí, State of Paraná, Brazil**

Arrest of a man who held 2.5 kg of capybara meat (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), a rifle, a crossbow, a trap and ammunition at his house. Fine of 1,500 reais (275 US\$).

RIC Mais, August 2, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



**August 24, 2021**

#### **Brumado, State of Bahia, Brazil**

A man posted a picture of a dead armadillo (family Dasypodidae) on social media. At his home, police seized a gun, ammunition, poaching equipment, opossum meat (genus *Didelphis*), and a mobile phone in which videos of his hunting trips were decrypted.

G1 Bahia, August 24 2021.<sup>7</sup>





# OTHER MAMMALS INCLUDING HIPPOPOTAMUSES AND HEDGEHOGS

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**August 4, 2021**

#### **Kragga Kamma Game Park, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

The Anti Poaching Unit is on alert after an armed robbery in the park. All the exits are blocked. It was a bad day for poaching. Three passengers in a blue Toyota Corolla quickly realize it. In their trunk, a carcass of ratel (*Mellivora capensis*, Appendix III in Botswana). In their car, knives and hunting dogs. The car, the dogs and the dead ratel are confiscated. This is only the beginning. The 3 men are suspected of being responsible for many other acts of poaching.

Tac Net APU, August 4, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

### KENYA

**End of July 2021**

#### **Lake Ol Bollosat, Nyandarua County, Kenya**

In just one week, 10 hippopotamuses (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) died. Five were killed on land and cut open, and 5 died in the lake from wounds inflicted by sharp objects. The KWS has reportedly not reacted to the hippo's intrusion into the crops. Domestic herds graze on the shores of the lake to the detriment of the hippos. The lake is home to an estimated 800 hippos and is a major tourist attraction.

Nation, July 30, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

### LIBERIA

**August 2021**

#### **Kpan, Margibi County, Liberia**

Arrival of a Bourlon's genet (*Genetta burloni*) injured by a trap. He did not survive his injuries. Bourlon's genets are endemic to West Africa (Ivory Coast, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone). They are threatened by habitat destruction and hunting for their meat and skin.

Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, August 25, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



## UGANDA

**July 17, 2021**

#### **Kiryandongo, Western Region, Uganda**

Seizure of 32 kg of hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) teeth in the middle of the Covid-19 lockdown. Two arrests.

Focused Conservation, July 24, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

## AMERICA

### BRAZIL

**June 8, 2021**

#### **Guarapuava, State of Paraná, Brazil**

Seizure of 57 four-toed hedgehogs (*Atelerix albiventris*), an exotic species native to Africa, from a man who sold them on the Internet for 3 years. He explains that he bought them from a farm in Sao Paulo. Fine of 13,400 reais (2,710 US\$). The police explain that the buyers risk the same fine as the sellers, i.e. 2,000 reais (405 US\$) plus 200 reais (40 US\$) per specimen. Fines are too rarely paid.

G1 PR e RPC Guarapuava, June 10, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



### COLOMBIA

**Beginning of August 2021**

#### **El Dorado International Airport, Bogota, Colombia**

Seizure of a package bound to the United States of America. It contained strips of mammal skins and tails. This would include skins of Procyonidae, 2 species of which are present in Colombia and listed in CITES: white-nosed coati (*Nasua narica*, Appendix III in Honduras) and kinkajou (*Potos flavus*, Appendix III in Honduras). Since the beginning of the year, the customs authorities have seized 1,359 matamata turtles (*Chelus fimbriata*), 218 poisonous frogs, 32 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), and 1,431 unspecified animal parts.

Semana, August 5, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



**July 31, 2021**  
**Virgen de Fátima, Guayas Province, Ecuador**



A woman bought 2 of the 3 orphaned anteaters from a street vendor and handed them over to the police. A few days old and in a state of hypothermia, they were cared for and placed in an incubator. Their future is uncertain.  
 El Comercio, August 3, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## ECUADOR

**End of August 2021**  
**Sucumbíos Province, Ecuador**

The Ministry of the Environment filed a complaint against an as yet unidentified poacher who killed a two-toed sloth (*Choloepus didactylus*), took pictures with the dead animal, posted a video and pictures of the massacre on social media, and put the sloth for sale online.  
 La Hora, August 30, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**June 6, 2021**  
**Emmett, State of Idaho, United States of America**  
 Discovery of the carcass of a freshly shot male pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*, Appendix I in Mexico). Any helpful information should be reported to the Idaho Fish & Game "Report a Wildlife Crime" department.  
 Big Country News, June 21, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

**July 15, 2021**  
**Sagadahoc County, State of Maine, United States of America**

Addison Cox and Michael Rolerson were dismissed from their duties as police officers after acts of cruelty to North American porcupines (*Erethizon dorsatus*) in June 2020. Cox, who killed 3, was sentenced to 10 days in jail, a fine and community service. Rolerson, who killed 8, was sentenced to 20 days in jail, a fine and community service. A third officer was placed on administrative leave for filming Rolerson beating a porcupine to death with a stick. Their sentences were reduced because the court estimated that the 2 porcupine killers were suffering from the post-traumatic stress disorder of soldiers mobilised in Iraq and Afghanistan.  
 Cable News Network, July 16, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



## PARAGUAY

**June 24, 2021**  
**Capiatá, Central Department, Paraguay**

A neotropical otter (*Lontra longicaudis*, Appendix I) up for sale for 800,000 guaranías (120 US\$) on social networks has been seized.  
 Hoy, June 24, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

facebook

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**June 24, 2021**  
**Kelly Village, Tunapuna-Piarco Region, Trinidad and Tobago**

Seizure of a 5-month-old South American tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II). He was in a box in the back seat of a Nissan Tiida driven by a 30-year-old resident of Penal (66 km from Kelly Village). The tapir went to the Emperor Valley Zoo in Port of Spain.  
 Trinidad Express Newspapers, June 25, 2021.<sup>12</sup>



## ASIA

## CAMBODIA

**Beginning of May 2021**  
**Phnom Penh Autonomous Municipality, Cambodia**



Seizure in private homes of a small Indian civet (*Viverricula indica*, Appendix III in India) and a yellow-throated marten (*Martes flavigula*, Appendix III in India).  
 Wildlife Crime Hotline, May 10, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

© Wildlife Crime Hotline



## INDIA

**July 10, 2021**

**Pune, Pune District, State of Maharashtra, India**



Raid by federal agents of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), assisted by the Forest Department, on a hardware store in the city. Seizure of 720 paintbrushes made from mongoose (*Herpestes* spp., Appendix III in India) hair.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 13, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**August 1, 2021**

**Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, Lakhimpur Kheri District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Laxman, Banwari and Rajaraj were arrested for possessing 2 dead Asian palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India). They intended to sell the skins. They were taken into custody at Lakhimpur jail.

The Statesman, August 2, 2021; The Times of India, August 2, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**August 25, 2021**

**Hanumanthapura, Tumakuru District, State of Karnataka, India**

When forest officials stopped a rickshaw for a check, the 3 passengers ran away.

Only the driver, aged 34, was arrested after the discovery of 25 carcasses of fruit bats (order Chiroptera) and a nylon capture net. The suspects came from Haveri, 270 km away. They were going to deliver the meat to Tumakuru or Bengaluru (80 km away).

In India, only bats of the species *Latidens salimalii* and *Otomops wroughtoni* are protected. Fruit bats are considered as pests. In Tumakuru district, they are regularly poached and sold to restaurants.

Bats in India, see "On the Trail" n°4 p.37, n°23 p.50 and p.140, n°26 p.99, Covid-19 Special Edition p.5 and n°28 p.58-59.

The Times of India, August 27, 2021.<sup>16</sup>



## NEPAL

**August 13, 2021**

**Banganga, Kapilvastu District, Lumbini Province, Nepal**

Arrest of Khagendra Puri, Asish Jogi and Saurav Rajwansi in a hotel-restaurant. Seizure of a tail and 2 skins of red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I). myRepublica, August 13, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

## SINGAPORE

**May 20, 2021**

**Bedok, East Region, Singapore**

This Thursday morning, in the residential area of Kembangan, Martin Yeoh has the unpleasant surprise of finding the carcass of a small animal killed by a blowdart in front of his house. It's the first time he's seen such an animal around here. He posts the photo on Facebook. The NGO ACRES (Animal Concerns Research and Education Society) identifies the animal as a civet (family Viverridae) and files a complaint. In March, ACRES had called for a ban on the sale of blowdarts and blowpipes. Several birds had been victims of them.

Channel News Asia, May 20, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

## THAILAND

**July 12, 2021**

**Chaloem Rattanakosin National Park, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand**

Seizure of a dead banded linsang (*Prionodon linsang*, Appendix II) weighing 2.4 kg and logs inside a vehicle. They had just been purchased from villagers. Three arrests.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, July 12, 2021.<sup>19</sup>

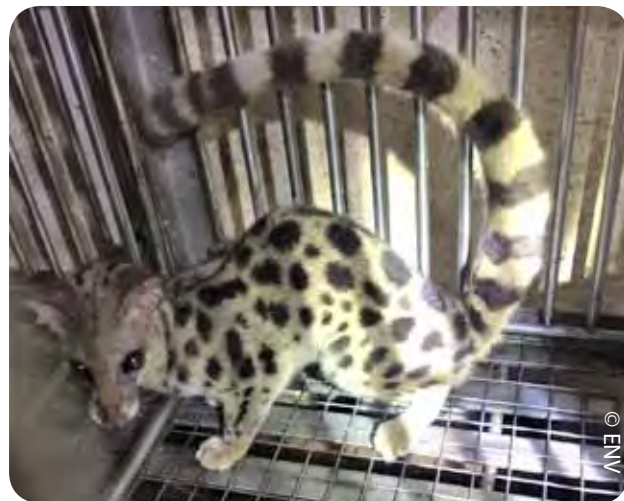
## VIET NAM

**Mid-June 2021**

**Hanoi, Viet Nam**

Seizure from a private individual of a spotted linsang (*Prionodon pardicolor*, Appendix I).

ENV, June 13, 2021.<sup>20</sup>





**July 12, 2021**  
**Binh Phuoc Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure of 2 otters (Lutrinae, Appendix I or II), one male and one female, offered for sale on TikTok. They were transferred to Bu Gia Map national park. Joint operation of ENV and the Environmental Police.  
 ENV, July 12, 2021.<sup>21</sup>



**August 2021**  
**Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam**

Handing over of a small-clawed otter (*Aonyx cinerea*, Appendix I) to the authorities by a repentant keeper. He has joined the shelter of Cu Chi.  
 ENV, August 15, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

**EUROPE**

**ITALY**

**July 8, 2021**  
**Sciacca, Province of Agrigento, Region of Sicily, Italy**

Following a report of poaching in the San Marco area, the carabinieri go to the site. They discover 5 snares for crested porcupines (*Hystrix cristata*), a protected species. The setter, a 66-year-old Tunisian man, is charged. Crested porcupines are hunted for their meat and for their quills.  
 NewSicilia, July 8, 2021.<sup>23</sup>



**UNITED KINGDOM**

**May 18, 2021**  
**Newarthill, North Lanarkshire Council, Scotland, United Kingdom**

Violent attacks against European hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) continue (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.109, n°31 p.111-112 and n°32 p.148). Once again, the aggressor was young, 13 years old. The victim, a female, was kicked and stabbed multiple times in Brannock High School. She did not survive.  
 Daily Record, May 18, 2021; UKNIP, May 21, 2021.<sup>24</sup>



**June 22, 2021**  
**Bridgend County Borough, Wales, United Kingdom**

There are those who torture them, and those who want to make them their pets. This European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) was no longer of interest to his owner. He put him up for sale online. The rescuer of Hedgehog Cabin found him locked in a small yard. He was suffering from multiple problems.  
 Hedgehog Cabin, June 22 and 23, 2021.<sup>25</sup>



**June 29, 2021**  
**Sheffield, South Yorkshire County, England, United Kingdom**

A female European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), probably a mother of young, was sprayed with polyurethane foam on Erskine Road at about 10 p.m. There was no other solution but to finish her off.  
 The Star, July 1, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**July 26, 2021**  
**Rushcliffe District, Nottinghamshire County, England, United Kingdom**

A European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) is stoned to death. Authorities are concerned because acts of cruelty towards wild animals have been on the rise since the first Covid-19 lockdown.  
 Nottinghamshire Live, August 13, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**July 27, 2021**  
**Fitzwilliam, West Yorkshire County, England, United Kingdom**

This European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) was found in a box on Second Avenue. He was either a deliberate or accidental victim of a firework. He was finished off.  
 West Yorkshire Police, July 28, 2021.<sup>28</sup>

**August 16, 2021**  
**Lakenheath, Suffolk County, England, United Kingdom**

Two young men are wanted. They were seen on North Road kicking a European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) while roaring with laughter.  
 East Anglian Daily Times, August 17, 2021.<sup>29</sup>

**August 22, 2021**  
**Isle of Sheppey, Kent County, England, United Kingdom**

Gloomy discovery on the island near Harty. The police are on high alert. A pile of 10 European hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and 3 kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II) is found in a ditch.  
 Raptor Persecution UK, August 22, 2021.<sup>30</sup>





Advertising poster for the Aiglou cycles by Georges Vallée, 1901

## NORTHERN AFRICA

### ALGERIA

**May 12, 2021**

**Tlemcen National Park, Tlemcen Province, Algeria**

Theft in an eyrie on a cliff at a height of 30 metres closely monitored by scientists and a camera trap of 2 golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) chicks. The chicks were born at the end of April 2021 and should have taken their first flight in a few weeks. They are the offspring of a pair of eagles well established since the 1990s.

El Watan, May 15 and 20, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

### MOROCCO

**May 26, 2021**

**Tiznit, Souss-Massa Region, Morocco**

A 47-year-old poacher was arrested and several European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) were seized.

Hespress, May 26, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

**July 11, 2021**

**Itzer, Drâa-Tafilalet Region, Morocco**

Seizure of 34 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) and limesticks. The suspects fled when law enforcement arrived, but documents found on the spot will make it easier to find them. The goldfinches were released.

Hespress, July 11, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



## WESTERN AFRICA

### LIBERIA

**July 29, 2021**

**Kpan, Margibi County, Liberia**

A grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) that was almost plucked arrived at a sanctuary. Locked in a small cage for more than a year, it tore off its feathers because of stress.

Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, July 29, and August 28, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

### NIGERIA

**May 11, 2021**

**Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos State, Nigeria**

A man went to the airport with a grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) in a cage, in full view of everyone. He was planning on traveling to Lebanon. He did not have a clear conscience, however, because he fled when the Nigerian Agricultural Quarantine Service (NAQS) agents asked him for his CITES permit.

Grey parrots are victims of their ability to talk, which makes them popular companions and guard birds, but also of the rumour that their feathers and organs have therapeutic or spiritual virtues. Against memory loss, bad relationships, to cast a spell or to get rid of it ... a red feather or a grey parrot head would work miracles.

P.M. News, June 8, 2021; Born Free USA, July 23, 2021; Trade in African Grey Parrots for Belief-Based Use: Insights From West Africa's Largest Traditional Medicine Market, February 21, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

**June 7, 2021**

**Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria**

A photo of an African vulture (*Gyps africanus*, Appendix II) tied up somewhere in town was circulating on social media. After a few days of fruitless search, Chad Basin national park agents finally located it. It was entrusted to the care of the University of Maiduguri Veterinary Teaching Hospital. The species is rare in Nigeria.



Vultures in Nigeria, see "On the Trail" n°31 p.113. Ismail Muhammad Alkatore, June 9, 2021; Wildlife at Risk, June 10 and 11, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

**June 18, 2021**

**Katsina State, Nigeria. Border with Niger.**

Seizure of 19 parrots (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II) by customs officers. They were on their way to Maradi (Niger), about 100 kilometers away. According to the initial investigation, their final destination was Europe. The traffickers were arrested and the parrots were handed over to the park management authority for release.

Born Free USA, July 23, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## CENTRAL AFRICA

### CAMEROON

**July 2021**

**Limbe, South West Region, Cameroon**

Two grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) that were previously kept as pets arrived at the sanctuary.

Limbe Wildlife Centre, June-July 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**August 27, 2021**

**Yaoundé, Centre Region, Cameroon**

Sylvester Nkwassi and Bruno Bekombo Guiwa were sentenced to 5 months in prison, ordered to pay 30,975 CFA francs (55 US\$) in court costs and 100,000 CFA francs (180 US\$) in damages for possession, transportation, and attempted sale of at least 5 parrots, including 2 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.114). Celestin Ndzana, an accomplice, was acquitted. LAGA, August 2021.<sup>9</sup>



## EASTERN AFRICA

### FRANCE (REUNION)

**Mid-July 2021**

**Saint-Leu, Department of Réunion, France**

A local resident found a 2-year-old Reunion marsh-harrier (*Circus maillardi*, Appendix II) near a road. It had an open fracture in its right wing and an X-ray revealed 4 shotgun pellets in its body. Given the seriousness of the injuries, veterinarians decided put the bird down.

In 2010, 200 pairs of Reunion marsh-harriers were counted in the department. According to specialists, this number has only decreased since then due to the increased use of rat poison (marsh-harriers eat poisoned rats and poison themselves), deaths from road collisions and electrocution following contact with power lines.

Clicanoo, July 19, 2021; Linfo.re, August 9, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



**August 8, 2021**

**Les Trois Bassins, Department of Réunion, France**

An individual picked up a female Reunion marsh-harrier (*Circus maillardi*, Appendix II) on the road. According to the veterinarians, it was shot and had an open fracture in its left wing. Again, the severity of the wounds compelled the veterinarians to put it down.

Linfo.re, August 9, 2021.<sup>11</sup>



**SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Gauteng Province, South Africa**



Seizure of a southern white-faced owl (*Ptilopsis granti*, Appendix II) weighing 160 grams. An adult southern white-faced owl can reach a weight of at most 240 grams for males and 275 grams for females and a height of 20-24 cm.

Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, July 6, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**August 21, 2021**

**Phongolo Nature Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

Three white-backed vultures (*Gyps africanus*, Appendix II) were rescued by the Zululand Vulture Project's rapid response unit. After successful treatment, the 3 poison survivors were released.

Independent Online, August 30, 2021.<sup>13</sup>



**BOTSWANA**

**Week of June 21, 2021**

**Goo-Moremi Gorge, Palapye, Central District, Botswana**

One martial eagle (*Polemaetus bellicosus*, Appendix II) and 2 Cape griffon vultures (*Gyps coprotheres*, Appendix II) died. Three other vultures were in critical condition. Poisoning is suspected. The Goo-Moremi Gorge is a nesting site for large raptors.

Wildlife at Risk, June 27, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



**NORTHERN AMERICA**

**CANADA**

**May 1st - 15, 2021**

**Salmon Arm, Province of British Columbia, Canada**

In 2 weeks, about 30 nesting boxes that were installed in 2019 were destroyed. Bluebirds (genus *Sialia*), chickadees (genus *Poecile*), and swallows (family Hirundinidae) did not survive. Dianne Wittner, a biologist and member of the local NGOs, pointed out that birds are invaluable: they feed on insects, are essential to forest conservation, and listening to their songs is good for mental and for physical health.

Penticton Western News, May 17, 2021.<sup>15</sup>



**July 2nd, 2021**

**Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, Province of British Columbia, Canada**

The man had good intentions but ended up not doing the right thing. In May, instead of calling the "Report All Poachers and Polluters" hotline, he brought home 2 great horned owl chicks (*Bubo virginianus*, Appendix II) that he thought were in danger. According to him, he wanted to teach them to live in the wild on his own. However, he did the opposite by hand feeding them. He was fined 345 dollars (280 US\$) for illegal possession of wild animals and the chicks were transferred to a proper rehabilitation center.

Williams Lake Tribune, October 21, 2021.<sup>16</sup>





## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**May 12, 2021**

### **Laredo, State of Texas, United States of America. Near the border with Mexico.**

Hummingbirds (family Trochilidae) suffer from their reputation as a good luck charm or a love charm. Maria Guadalupe Garcia, 55, owner of the Herbario Lupita herbalist shop, pleaded guilty to the illegal sale of over 200 hummingbirds on October 28, 2021.

Maria Luisa Garza-Salazar, 57, and Cecilia Castaneda, 63, employee and owner of the Herbario Corpus Christi herbalist shop, pleaded guilty to the sale of 160 dried hummingbirds, whole or dismembered, on January 22nd and May 12th, 2021.

Hummingbirds in the United States and Mexico or going to these 2 countries, see "On the Trail" n°5 p.35 and p.37, n°6 p.29, n°9 p.22, n°25 p.42, n°30 p.105, and n°32 p.162.

US Department of Justice, May 12, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

**May 24, 2021**

### **Albuquerque, State of New Mexico, United States of America**

Amado Martin Vargas Hernandez, 57 years old, was sentenced to one year of probation and must pay a 250 US\$ fine to the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund Account. He was caught on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 with feathers and other parts of sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*, Appendix II), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*, Appendix II), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*, Appendix II), common caracara (*Caracara plancus*, Appendix II), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*, Appendix II), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, Appendix II), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II), barred owl (*Strix varia*, Appendix II) and greater roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*).

US Department of Justice, May 28, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

## **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021**

### **Coachella, State of California, United States of America**

It was just after noon when the Coachella Valley Violent Crime Gang Task Force entered 2 properties, simultaneously, in search of stolen cars. The searches were successful as they resulted in the seizure of at least 6 vehicles, 2 loaded firearms with erased serial numbers, and 3 caged red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*, Appendix II) fed on hot dogs. Eduardo Pantaleon Sr. (48), the owner of the hawks, Eduardo Pantaleon Jr. (18), the owner of the guns, and Andrew Ochoa (41), in possession of drugs, were arrested. The 3 birds were handed over to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for rehabilitation.

Crime Voice, June 6, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



**June 14, 2021**

### **Between San Clemente and Huntington Beach, State of California, United States of America**



"On the Trail" n°31 p.118 reported the discovery of brown pelicans (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) victim of razor cuts. The persecution continues. In the past 8 months, 32 savagely attacked brown pelicans have been found. Among them, 22 suffered from open wing fractures. The NGO Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center collected them and is now working to "repair" the martyr birds.

SFGATE, June 15, 2021; People, June 18, 2021; Voice of OC, July 11 and 22, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

**July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

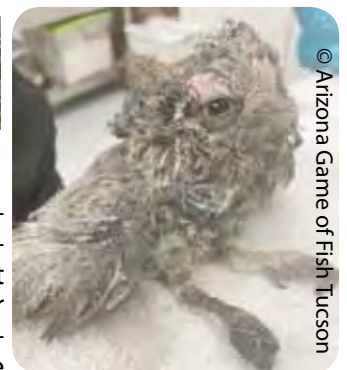
### **Bay City, State of Michigan, United States of America**

Rescue of a young female bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, Appendix II) in the Bangor neighbourhood. It was shot 4 times while perched. WILX News 10, August 10, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021**

### **Tucson, State of Arizona, United States of America**

Rescue of a screech-owl (*Otus spp.*, Appendix II) that was caught in a glue trap made for pests. It is slowly recovering from the torture at the Tucson Wildlife Center. Guarded prognosis. KOLD, August 2nd, 2021.<sup>22</sup>





## LATIN AMERICA

### ARGENTINA

#### Beginning of May 2021

**González Catán, Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina**



Inside a store specialized in the sale of products and food for farm animals, fertilizers and pesticides, 68 native and exotic birds were seized: 6 red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II), 4 double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulescens*), 3 bobolinks (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), an ultramarine grosbeak (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*), a lined seedeater (*Sporophila lineola*), a hooded siskin (*Spinus magellanicus*), a European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), 30 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), 2 band-tailed seedeaters (*Catamenia analis*), 2 dark-throated seedeaters (*Sporophila ruficollis*), a cinnamon warbling finch (*Poospiza ornata*), 3 white-rumped munias (*Lonchura striata*), 10 budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*), and 2 cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*). They were transferred to the rescue center at the Reserva Ecológica Costanera Sur for a check-up. The native species should then be released while the exotic species will be entrusted to a zoo.

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, May 6, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

#### May 10, 2021

**La Tranca Checkpoint, San Luis Province, Argentina**

A total of 14 birds including yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*, Appendix II) and golden-billed saltators (*Saltator aurantirostris*) were rescued. They were hidden in 4 cages under the hood of a car passing through a checkpoint separating the San Luis and San Juan provinces. Eight traps were seized. To report the possession of wild animals, call 0266-4452000, extension 3372, or the Environmental Police at 911. Agencia de Noticias San Luis (ANSL), May 10, 2021.<sup>24</sup>



#### End of July 2021

**Department of Pocito, San Juan Province, Argentina**

Seizure of a double-collared seedeater (*Sporophila caerulescens*) and a cage.

San Juan Government Information Service, June 29, 2021.<sup>25</sup>

#### Mid-August 2021

**Tupungato, Province of Mendoza, Argentina**

Seizure of 25 birds from a home, including yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*, Appendix II), red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II), ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*), and saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*). One arrest was made.

Government of Mendoza, August 20, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

#### August 23, 2021

**Del Viso, Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina**

Fifteen red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II), 32 green winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), 20 hooded siskins (*Spinus magellanicus*), 17 double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulescens*), 12 ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*), 9 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), 6 golden-billed saltators (*Saltator aurantirostris*), 4 creamy-bellied thrushes (*Turdus amaurochalinus*), 3 sayaca tanagers (*Thraupis sayaca*), 3 red tanagers (*Piranga flava*), 3 diademed tanagers (*Stephanophorus diadematus*), and 2 red pileated finches (*Coryphospingus cucullatus*) were seized. They were entrusted to the Centro de Rescate de Fauna Silvestre of Buenos Aires for quarantine before being released back into the wild.

Diario Resumen, August 23, 2021.<sup>27</sup>



## BRAZIL

Mid-June 2021

### State of Bahia, Brazil

Voltalia is an "enterprise à mission", a French legal framework meaning it pursues a social and environmental purpose with sustainability goals. All the Voltalians (900) have one idea in mind, and that is to improve the global environment. One could almost speak of the "French NGO" Voltalia. It is 71% owned by the Mulliez family, owners of the brands Auchan, Decathlon, Leroy Merlin, Kiabi and Norauto. Voltalia sells electricity from natural resources such as wind, sun and rivers. The planet works voluntarily for Voltalia.

In Brazil, Voltalia's philanthropy has raised protests, questions, legal actions and concerns about the future of the Lear's macaws (or indigo macaws, *Anodorhynchus leari*, Appendix I) and other threatened macaws.

The Canudos wind power plant, in the micro-region of Euclides da Cunha, State of Bahia, has mowed the caatinga (1) and set 91 wind turbines over 100 metres high. The blades are 160 metres in diameter. 1,500 Lear's macaws nest and fly in the area thanks to the efforts of the Biodiversitas Foundation which, precisely in Canudos, manages 1,500 hectares serving as "reservoirs" for Lear's macaws. In 2000, there were 228 Lear's macaws, and now there are more than 1,500. The Voltalia wind farm in Canudos is as outrageous as a wind farm in the Camargue of the flamingos. The farm was built without the prior impact assessment required by CONAMA (Conselho Nacional do Meio Ambiente), the environmental services of the State of Bahia gave Voltalia the green light after simply receiving simplified documents, a kind of artist's impression mixed with a theoretical balance of amazing volts. Voltalia initially said that all its projects in Brazil have regulatory permits but in July 2021 the State of Bahia requested the suspension of work. The petition for the cancellation of the project, put online by an 18-year-old activist, gathered 60,000 signatures in a few days. In September 2021, work resumed and the French company promised an investment of 10 million reais (1.6 million € and 1.9 million US\$), which will be devoted to mitigating environmental impacts and better understanding the dependence of Lear's macaws on the seeds of licuri palms (*Syagrus coronata*). Licuri palms were among the victims of the deforestation imposed by Voltalia's eruption into the area. Erica Pacifico, an "independent biologist" who gives advice to industrial companies, has been involved in the capture of juvenile Lear's macaws and the fitting of GPS trackers that will allow a better understanding of their movements and dispersal and possibly avoid or reduce mortality from encounters with wind turbine blades and wind towers. The CEO of Voltalia in Brazil wants to "leave the country a technical and scientific legacy".

In Dom Basilio, micro-region of Livramento do Brumado, also in the State of Bahia, Voltalia is accused of having taken advantage of the occupation of hills by squatters in August 2021 to open a 1.3-km long and 8-metre wide track at the top of which will be installed a measuring tower of the trade winds that Voltalia is seeking to catch at all costs in order to fulfil its mission. The imbu trees (*Spondias tuberosa*) have been cut down. It is prohibited to cut them down since 2005. "The French president Emmanuel Macron is always criticising deforestation in Brazil, but now a French company is doing it here," says a surveyor who is trying to decipher the local land register and who has joined the landowners' grievances. The municipality of Dom Basilio ordered the suspension of work. Voltalia acknowledged the isolated error of a subcontractor, again stating that it respects the environmental and real estate regulations in force in Brazil. "We are in the process of installing 80 wind measuring towers in several Brazilian States and we are doing so in strict compliance with the laws, avoiding any illegal land grabbing."



*Anodorhynchus leari*



*Spondias tuberosa*



The exploit of Voltalia in the State of Bahia is the Serra da Borracha wind complex in the micro-region of Juazeiro. Voltalia has a great affinity for macaws, as if they were lookouts and informants of wind frequency and intermittency. In Serra da Borracha, Voltalia wants to install 48 turbines on the ridges near the federal reserves of Curaçá and Juazeiro, where juvenile Spix's macaws (or little blue macaws, *Cyanopsitta spixii*, Appendix I), a species that became extinct in Brazil in 2000 due to the cumulative action of trafficking for pet birds, deforestation and to a lesser extent opossums and marmosets, are to be released this summer and in the summers to follow.



*Cyanopsitta spixii*

© Cornell Lab of Ornithology

The NGO Save (Sociedade para a Conservação das Aves do Brasil) considers that Voltalia's project is not compatible with the release of the Spix's macaws. "They are all the more fragile because they were raised in captivity and have not yet assimilated all the reflexes of life in the wild." Like the Lear's macaws around Canudos, they have a flight distance of 50 to 60 km. The NGO Salve as Serras (Save the Mountains) points out that the mortality of Lear's macaws after collisions with power lines and pylons is itself significant (50 between 2018 and 2021) and it is concerned about the additional devastating effects of Voltalia's wind turbines. "There is no way to train macaws to change their flight path." "Wind power is considered clean but projects in inappropriate locations are harming traditional communities and biodiversity." About the Serra da Borracha project, Voltalia refused to respond to the media ((o))eco's request for an interview at the beginning of June 2022.

Lear's macaws, see "On the Trail" n°8 p.23-24, n°13 p.26 and n°17 p.30. Spix's macaws, see "On the Trail" n°21 p.38 and n°23 p.54.

(1) Biotope in the northeast of Brazil made up of trees, cacti and grasses that resist the semi-arid climate.

Voltalia, December 20, 2019, February 15, 2021 and April 20, 2022; Mongabay, June 23, 2021; Click Petróleo e Gás, July 22, 2021; G1 BA, August 25, 2021; CanalENergia, November 17, 2021; ((o))eco, June 6, 2022; Power Technology, June 15, 2022.<sup>1</sup>



### 3,310 birds seized in Brazil between May 1 and August 31, 2021 according to official and media sources







Blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II)  
August 20, 2021, Osvaldo Cruz, State of São Paulo, Brazil



31 birds including one owl (*Strigiformes*, Appendix I or II), August 22, 2021, Duque de Caxias, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



Green-rumped parrotlet (*Forpus passerinus*), yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), chestnut-bellied seed finches (*Sporophila angolensis*), white-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila leucop-tera*), Ilhéus, State of Bahia, Brazil, July 15, 2021



225 birds, among them chestnut-bellied seed finches (*Oryzoborus angolensis*), black-throated grosbeaks (*Saltator fuliginosus*), great-billed seed finches (*Sporophila maximiliani*), June 17, 2021 Porto Alegre, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil



Double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*), campo troupials (*Icterus jamaicae*), red-cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*) and green winged saltators (*Saltator similis*), July 22, 2021, Itaquaquecetuba, State of São Paulo, Brazil



Yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanoloxia brissonii*), chopi blackbirds (*Gnorimopsar chopi*) ..., June 7, 2021, Feira de Santana, State of Bahia State, Brazil





Saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*). Photo Aitor

## COSTA RICA

### Beginning of May 2021

#### Upala Canton, Alajuela Province, Costa Rica. Border with Nicaragua.

At a bus stop, 3 parrot chicks (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II) were found inside the bag of a Costa Rican passenger. A week earlier, 2 orange-chinned parakeets (*Brotogeris jugularis*, Appendix II) were also seized from a "foreign national" carrying them in plastic bags.

La Región, May 3, 2021.<sup>28</sup>

### May 21, 2021

#### Toro Amarillo, Limón Province, Costa Rica

Great green macaws (*Ara ambiguus*, Appendix I), red-masked conures (*Aratinga erythrogenys*, Appendix II), white-crowned parrots (*Pionus senilis*, Appendix II), and black-faced solitaires (*Myadestes melanops*) were seized thanks to an anonymous tip. The birds were being held illegally in 2 houses in Toro Amarillo.

La Teja, May 22, 2021.<sup>29</sup>

### May 27, 2021

#### San Rafael, Heredia Province, Costa Rica

Seizure of 29 black-faced solitaires (*Myadestes melanops*) from a private home.

CRC 891, May 28, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

## ECUADOR

### May 9, 2021

#### Otavalo, Imbabura Province, Ecuador

Villagers found a weakened and dehydrated adult male Andean condor (*Vultur gryphus*, Appendix I) of reproductive age. It couldn't fly. It was taken to the veterinary hospital to receive first aid care and to have a X-ray. It revealed 4 bullets, but the veterinarians feared that other bullets had passed through the body, affecting organs in the process. The bird was given a saline solution, vitamins, analgesics, oxygen. The condor was transferred to the Quito Zoo in Guayllabamba for its convalescence. At the end of it, it should be equipped with a satellite tracker before its release into the wild. There are only 100 to 200 condors left in Ecuador.

Teleamazonas (with EFE), May 11, 2021; El Universo, May 12, 2021.<sup>31</sup>



**Morona-Santiago Province, Ecuador**  
**August 2021**

The Ministry of Environment filed a complaint against a person unknown. This person killed a harpy eagle (*Harpia harpyja*, Appendix I) and posted photos of his exploit on social networks. La Hora, August 30, 2021.<sup>32</sup>

**August 16, 2021**  
**Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas Province, Ecuador**

A blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), a Southern mealy amazon (*Amazona farinosa*, Appendix II), a blue-headed parrot (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II) and a red-masked conure (*Aratinga erythrogenys*, Appendix II) were seized. The 4 birds were being kept as pets. They are now under the care of the James Brown Rescue Center. Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, August 16, 2021.<sup>33</sup>

**FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)**

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**August 3, 2021**  
**Saint-Georges, Territorial Collectivity of French Guiana, France. Border with Brazil.**

In the refrigerated van, several hundred kilos of fish and 3 rooster carcasses were found. They were bought to the Saint-Georges de l'Oyapock market, the bill proved it. In reality, these are 3 black curassows (*Crax alector*), a species listed in Article 4 of the Order of March 25, 2015, prohibiting the stuffing, peddling, sale or purchase of specimens taken from Guyana's natural environments. French Biodiversity Agency, September 2021.<sup>34</sup>



*Crax alector*

**MEXICO**

**Mid-June 2021**  
**Guadalajara, State of Jalisco, Mexico**



Law enforcement received a report of a man selling chicks at the Guinea Street flea market. When they arrived, the man had disappeared but had left behind a box containing a parrot chick (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and a toucan chick (family Ramphastidae). They were transferred to Agua Azul park for a veterinary check and to determine their destination.

El Informador, June 16, 2021.<sup>35</sup>

**July 23, 2021**  
**Puerto Vallarta, State of Jalisco, Mexico**

In the morning, Profepa received an anonymous tip revealing some residents owned protected birds. The agents went to each suspected resident starting at 12:25 p.m. As a result, 3 orange-fronted conures (*Aratinga canicularis*, Appendix II) and a lilac-crowned amazon (*Amazona finschi*, Appendix I) were handed over, while the owner of a macaw (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) refused to give it up. A report was written about the situation.

Tribuna de la Bahía, July 23, 2021.<sup>36</sup>

**PERU**

**Beginning of June 2021**  
**Islay Province, Department of Arequipa, Peru**

Two restaurants were raided and 2 red-masked conures (*Aratinga erythrogenys*, Appendix II) and a blue-crowned trogon (*Trogon curucui*) were seized. All 3 birds were in poor state. They were entrusted to veterinarians for an assessment.

La República, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>37</sup>



## SURINAME

July 28, 2021

Nickerie District, Suriname. Border with Guyana.



Two toucan toucans (*Ramphastos toco*, Appendix II) were seized. The suspects, believed to be from Guyana, fled upon seeing the patrol.

Natuurbeheer Educatie en Voorlichting, August 2, 2021.<sup>38</sup>

### THE CARIBBEAN

#### TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

July 24, 2021

Charlieville, Chaguanas Borough, Trinidad and Tobago

Three blue-and-yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), 1 adult and 2 chicks, an orange-winged parrot (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix II), 40 passerines of the genus *Melopyrrha*, 5 ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*), 2 ruddy-breasted seedeaters (*Sporophila minuta*), and 3 capuchin monkeys (*Sapajus* spp., synonymous with *Cebus* spp., Appendix II) were seized from a private property. They were offered for sale on the Internet. Trinidad Express Newspapers, July 25, 2021.<sup>39</sup>

### CENTRAL ASIA

#### KAZAKHSTAN

July 2021

Samara, East Kazakhstan Region, Kazakhstan

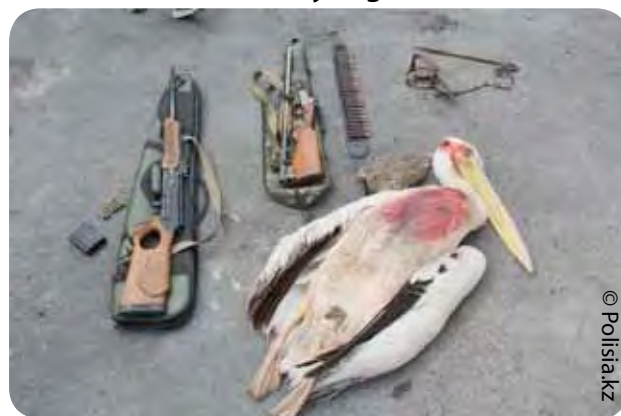
The presence of a demoiselle crane (*Anthropoides virgo*, Appendix II) in Mikhail Sokhin's recreation center on the Bukhtarmal reservoir on the Irtysh River triggered the action of the police. They did not beat around the bush, they confiscated all the birds except the common ostrich (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I in 12 countries). The demoiselle crane was taken in by the center when it was orphaned, and has reportedly returned there despite its release. It was the main attraction.

Sokhin is indignant: "They came without warning. They were only supposed to take the crane but in the end they decided to take all the birds." In response, the police explained that they did not know how to identify the birds on the red list. The demoiselle crane was placed in a reserve.

Khabar 24, October 4, 2021.<sup>40</sup>

August 19, 2021

Sarkand District, Almaty Region, Kazakhstan



A 61-year-old man was arrested, and a live great bustard (*Otis tarda*, Appendix II), a dead great white pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*), and a firearm were seized during a car check on the shores of Lake Balkhash, the country's largest lake (17,000 km<sup>2</sup>). The lake is under the risk of drying up due to China's withdrawal of irrigation water from the Ili River basin.

Vestnik Kavkaza, August 20, 2021.<sup>41</sup>

### EASTERN ASIA

#### CHINA

May 1, 2021

Yingtian, Yingtian Prefecture, Jiangxi Province, China

"Qui Guorong" was sentenced to 1.5 years in prison and 2 years of probation for buying 8 Fischer's lovebirds (*Agapornis fischeri*, Appendix II) and 4 hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II) in Nanchang in April 2018, which he displayed in his aquarium shop to, as he says, attract customers. The search resulted in the seizure of 75 birds, including Fischer's lovebirds, hill mynas and 16 melodious laughingthrushes (*Garrulax canorus*, Appendix II). Lychee Watch, May 2, 2021.<sup>42</sup>



May 9 and 11, 2021

Shangyu, Shaoxing Prefecture, Zhejiang Province, China

Police heard birdcalls coming from a company's dormitories. As they approached, they saw several birdcages hanging in the yard. Inside, 9 melodious laughingthrushes (*Garrulax canorus*, Appendix II), a highly sought-after bird in China. The place was put under surveillance and 2 days later, 7 suspects returned to the place. They were arrested and the birds were seized. They explained that after work, they used to catch birds and breed them to participate in singing contests. Electronic decoys and traps were also seized.

Xiaoxiang Morning Herald, May 14, 2021.<sup>43</sup>





**May 2021**

**Kaili, Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture, Guizhou Province, China**



"Wan" was sentenced to 2 years in prison, suspended for 3 years, and fined 1,000 yuan (156 US\$) for buying 8 melodious laughingthrushes (*Garrulax canorus*, Appendix II) in March 2021 at the Chong'an Village Bird Market. Seven of the birds were seized and the last one escaped on its own. Shaanxi Legal Network, May 31, 2021.<sup>44</sup>

**May 2021**

**Chongqing Municipality and Fujian and Sichuan Provinces, China**

Appearance in court of "Wan", "Zhou", "Sheng" and "Liao". They were arrested earlier this year for parrot trafficking. They had in their possession 7 grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I), one yellow-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I), 18 monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), 7 sun conures (*Aratinga solstitialis*, Appendix II), and 8 green-cheeked conures (*Pyrrhura molinae*, Appendix II). Chinanews Chongqing, June 3, 2021.<sup>45</sup>

**May 26, 2021**

**Guilin, Guilin Prefecture, Zhuang du Guangxi Autonomous Region, China**

"Luo" purchased a grey parrot chick (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I) for 3,000 yuan (445 US\$), 4 sun conure chicks (*Aratinga solstitialis*, Appendix II) for 800 yuan (120 US\$), 5 monk parakeet chicks (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II) for 1,000 yuan (150 US\$), and 7 Alexandrine parakeet chicks (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II) for 3,500 yuan (520 US\$) from a market in 2019. He hoped to sell them at a higher price when they reach adulthood. Kankanews.com, June 8, 2021.<sup>46</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Yanting County, Mianyang Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**



Five men were sentenced to 1-2 years in prison with a suspended sentence of 2 to 3 years. In total, they were fined 11,000 yuan (1,725 US\$) and they will also have to pay 11,500 yuan (1,800 US) in ecological losses. They were arrested in January 2021 with an air rifle, a golden pheasant (*Chrysolophus pictus*), 2 common pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*), 3 Oriental turtle doves (*Streptopelia orientalis*) and 5 Chinese bamboo partridges (*Bambusicola thoracica*), all dead, in their vehicle. Mianyang Daily, June 9, 2021.<sup>47</sup>

**June 4, 2021**

**Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China**

The stream of speed boats in Hong Kong is endless. This time swallow's nests were seized during loading, along with 580 Cuban cigars, electronic products and 200 bottles of expensive French wine. The swallow's nests are valued at 8 million Hong Kong dollars or 1.03 million US\$. Knowing that a kilo of swallow's nest is worth up to 2,000 US\$ (see "On the Trail" n°29 p.118) and that a nest weighs between 3 and 14 grams, this seizure represents between 36,785 and 171,650 nests. One arrest, the rest of the gang fled.

Hong Kong Customs, June 5, 2021; South China Morning Post, June 5, 2021.<sup>48</sup>

**June 17-18, 2021**

**Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China**

Bis repetita! The smuggling method is the same: swallows' nests mixed with electronic equipment and smartphones. This time, the parcels are transported on electric bicycles that shuttle between 2 trucks parked in a car park and the ship waiting to sail to mainland China. A 50-year-old man was arrested. The accomplices fled. Total value of the seizure: 27 million Hong Kong dollars or 3.5 million US\$.

Hong Kong Customs, June 18, 2021.<sup>49</sup>

**June 2021**

**Wanding Border Post, Dehong Dai and Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province. Border with Myanmar**



Seizure in the tool box of a heavy-duty truck of 29 bird nests. Total weight, 270.91 grams. Chinese Customs, June 22, 2021.<sup>50</sup>

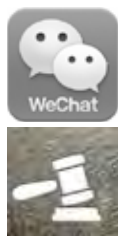


## Beginning of August 2021

### Tianjin Municipal Autonomy, China

"Wang" was sentenced to 6 months in prison and fined 620 US\$ for buying a rosella (*Platycercus* spp., Appendix II) on WeChat.

Tianjin Daily, August 11, 2021.<sup>51</sup>



## August 2021

### Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 300 grams of swallows' nests in a package declared to contain "health food". One nest weighs between 3 and 14 grams.

Chinese Customs, September 6, 2021.<sup>52</sup>

## August 2021

### Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China



Seizure in an incoming package of 700 grams of swallows' nests concealed in a packet of instant noodles.

Chinese Customs, September 7, 2021.<sup>53</sup>

## SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

### CAMBODIA

## May 2021

### Kampot Province, Cambodia

Seizure of a crested hawk-eagle (*Spizaetus cirrhatus*, Appendix II). The "pet" was held down by a rope.

Wildlife Crime Hotline, June 12, 2021.<sup>54</sup>

## June 2021

### Cardamom Protected Forest, Cambodia

Death of an Oriental bay owl (*Phodilus badius*, Appendix II) rescued by rangers while caught in a trap. Its left leg was broken. Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, June 23, 2021.<sup>55</sup>



## June 2021

### Near Phnom Penh International Airport, Phnom Penh Autonomous Municipality, Cambodia

Seizure of 4 brahminy kites (*Haliastur indus*, Appendix II) and 4 Javan mynas (*Acridotheres javanicus*) in the hands of a trafficker who was offering them for sale on the roadside.

Wildlife Alliance Cambodia, July 16, 2021.<sup>56</sup>



### INDONESIA

## May 6, 2021

### Halim-Perdanakusuma Jakarta International Airport, Jakarta Special Capital Territory, Java Island, Indonesia

Seizure of 6 palm cockatoos (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I), 88 black-capped lorries (*Lorius lory*, Appendix II), 44 orange-billed lorikeets (*Neopsittacus pullicauda*, Appendix II), 16 greater birds-of-paradise (*Paradisaea apoda*, Appendix II), 10 eclectus parrots (*Eclectus roratus*, Appendix II), 8 brown lorries (*Chalcopsitta duivenbodei*, Appendix II), 5 Pesquet's parrots (*Psittirichas fulgidus*, Appendix II), 2 twelve-wired birds-of-paradise (*Seleucidis melanoleucus*, Appendix II) and a sulphur-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*, Appendix II) that a 50-year-old private airplane pilot imported from Sentani, Papua province. He was apprehended. The birds were handed over to the Tegal Alur shelter.

Seputarcibubur.com, May 7, 2021.<sup>57</sup>

## May 8, 2021

### Semayang Port, Kota Balikpapan, East Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia



Seizure of 16 greater green leafbirds (*Chloropsis sonnerati*), hidden in a plastic crate covered with tape found in a boat's engine room.

Antara News, May 9, 2021; Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), May 2021.<sup>58</sup>



June 1, 2021

Api Api, Bengkalis Regency, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



A ghost vessel from Malaysia is spotted by the maritime police. Law enforcement observes a suspicious crate being unloaded from the ship. A vehicle at the dock is waiting for it and sets off. Police follow the vehicle to a warehouse. The crate is seized. It contains about 1,500 Oriental magpie-robins (*Copsychus saularis*), several hundred of which are already dead. Arrest of the driver and employees of the warehouse.

Suara Riau, June 2, 2021.<sup>59</sup>

June 3, 2021

Medan, Province of North Sumatra, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Handing over of a crested hawk-eagle (*Spizaetus cirrhatus*, Appendix II) to the BKSDA in cooperation with the Scorpion Foundation. It is transferred to Sibolangit shelter in the hope of release.

Scorpion Foundation Indonesia, June 5, 2021.<sup>60</sup>

June 9, 2021

Cilegon, Banten Province, Java Island, Indonesia



Seizure early in the morning near the port of Merak in a delivery truck bound for Serang (30 km away) and Tangerang (96 km away) of 2,083 birds trapped in fruit crates and cardboard boxes covered with scotch stamped Unilever. They are released.

FLIGHT - Protecting Indonesia's Birds, June 10, 2021.<sup>61</sup>

June 15, 2021

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

2,057 birds are seized including 930 Javan mynas (*Acridotheres javanicus*), 510 prinias (genus *Prinia*), 210 passerines (genus *Lonchura*), 96 white-eyes (genus *Zosterops*), 24 orioles (genus *Oriolus*), 5 sunbirds (genus *Leptocoma*) and 2 ruby-cheeked sunbirds (*Chalcoparia singalensis*). They were found in a grey minivan passing a routine check as the driver was about to board a ferry to Cikande, located on Java island in the Banten province. He was reportedly paid 3.5 million rupiah or 245 US\$ for the transport.

Lampost.co, June 15, 2021.<sup>62</sup>

June 22-October 2021

Near Sidomulyo, South Lampung Regency, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia



Seizure in a truck heading to Banten province of 3,726 birds including hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II), crested jays (*Platylophus galericulatus*), lesser green leafbirds (*Chloropsis cyanopogon*), blue-winged leafbirds (*Chloropsis moluccensis*), greater green leafbirds (*Chloropsis sonnerati*), Temminck's sunbirds (*Aethopyga temminckii*) and red-crowned barbets (*Psilopogon rafflesii*). The driver and his passenger were arrested. They were sentenced 4 months later to 8 months in prison and fined 2.5 million rupiah (170 US\$).

Antara News, June 22, 2021; FLIGHT - Protecting Indonesia's Birds, June 23 and October 20, 2021.<sup>63</sup>

June 25-29, 2021

Samarinda and Balikpapan Port, East Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

Arrest of 3 songbird traffickers. Seizure of 13 hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II), 5 hanging parrots (*Loriculus* spp., Appendix II), 287 Javan mynas (*Acridotheres javanicus*), 222 greater green leafbirds (*Chloropsis sonnerati*), 32 zebra doves (*Geopelia striata*), 20 black-headed bulbuls (*Pycnonotus atriceps*), 17 crested jays (*Platylophus galericulatus*) and an olive-winged bulbul (*Pycnonotus plumosus*). Releases in Surabaya (East Java Province) and Pare-Pare (South Sulawesi Province).

Antara News, July 3, 2021.<sup>64</sup>



**July 1, 2021**

**Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

Seizure of 120 tits (family Paridae), 50 Oriental white-eyes (*Zosterops palpebrosus*) and 20 blue-masked leafbirds (*Chloropsis venusta*) travelling in economy class in 5 fruit crates and 4 cardboard boxes in a bus of the company DAMRI. The tits and white-eyes were released, the blue-masked leafbirds are under observation. FLIGHT - Protecting Indonesia's Birds, July 2, 2021.<sup>65</sup>



**August 1, 2021**

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

Seizure in the trunk of a car of 1,125 bar-winged prinias (*Prinia familiaris*) and 125 Java sparrows (*Lonchura oryzivora*, Appendix II) on their way to Surakarta (Central Java province), 678 km away. Arrest of the driver and his passenger. FLIGHT - Protecting Indonesia's Birds, August 7, 2021.<sup>66</sup>

**August 21, 2021**

**Port of Sorong, West Papua Regency, New Guinea Island, Indonesia**



Seizure by port officers of suspicious boxes about to be loaded onto the *KM Ciremai*. Inside, 3 parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II), 3 palm cockatoos (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I), 4 sulphur-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua galerita*, Appendix II) and a black butcherbird (*Cracticus quoy*), all endemic to Papua. They were released. Kumparan, August 23, 2021.<sup>67</sup>



*KM Ciremai*, Surabaya, September 2015

**MALAYSIA**

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**June 4, 2021**

**Pasir Gudang, State of Johor, Malaysia. Border with Singapore.**

The tip received by the Perhilitan led to the control of a clandestine pet shop. Seizure of 2 melodious laughingthrushes (*Garrulax canorus*, Appendix II), 2 hanging parrots (*Loriculus* spp., Appendix II), 15 white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*) and about 20 cages. Estimated value 13,800 ringgit or 3,340 US\$. The owner of the store has of course no document authorizing their possession and even less their sale. He had already been pinned at the beginning of the year for the same kind of irregularities.

New Straits Times, June 5, 2021.<sup>68</sup>

**June 2021**

**Ulu Tiram, State of Johor, Malaysia**

Overnight search by Perhilitan agents of the home of a 47-year-old man. Seizure of 11 long-tailed parakeets (*Psittacula longicauda*, Appendix II), 10 hanging parrots (*Loriculus* spp., Appendix II), one blue-rumped parrot (*Psittinus cyanurus*, Appendix II), one white-rumped shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*) and a cell phone. Total value: 9,500 ringgits or 2,300 US\$. Arrested and released on bail. New Straits Times, June 25, 2021.<sup>69</sup>

**July 30, 2021**

**Senggarang, State of Johor, Malaysia**

The marine police checked a suspicious van and discovered 206 white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*) and 680 Oriental magpie-robins (*Copsychus saularis*). Estimated value: 110,300 ringgits (26,570 US\$). The driver admits that his mission was to deliver the birds to a neighboring country, probably Singapore. An accomplice surrendered to the police.

Malay Mail, July 31, 2021.<sup>70</sup>

**August 25, 2021**

**Off Alai, State of Malacca, Malaysia**

The police, acting on information, saw a boat being loaded at night. Two suspects fled. They left 55 transport cages filled with 1,100 Oriental magpie-robins (*Copsychus saularis*). Estimated value: about 44,000 ringgit or 10,380 US\$ and about 9.4 US\$/specimen.

Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC - IOR), August 2021; Melaka Hari Ini, August 26, 2021.<sup>71</sup>



**August 30, 2021**  
**Kuala Lumpur International Airport, State of Selangor, Malaysia**



Eight live hornbills (family Bucerotidae) including one helmeted hornbill chick (*Rhinoplax vigil*, Appendix I) are seized from the luggage of 2 nationals about to fly to Bangladesh. Perhilitan, September 13, 2021; Trung tam Con guoi va Thien nhien, October 1, 2021.<sup>72</sup>

## PHILIPPINES

### FAMILY AFFAIRS

**May 3, 2021**

**Baliuag, Bulacan Province, Philippines**

Arrest of Alvin Santos, 48 years old, and his son Rendel Santos, 21 years old, for offering for sale on the Internet 2 white cockatoos (*Cacatua alba*, Appendix II). They had concluded the transaction with a police officer posing as a buyer: 85,000 Philippine pesos or 1,760 US\$ for both. The cockatoos were reportedly smuggled in from Indonesia.

Inquirer.net, May 6, 2021.<sup>73</sup>

**May 6, 2021**

**Ángeles, Pampanga Province, Philippines**

Norman Vee Balili, 22, was arrested while transporting a tarictic hornbill chick (*Penelopides panini*, Appendix II). He was on his way to meet a buyer. Balili is only a deliveryman. Police are looking for Mike Chua, the trafficker who had posted the bird for sale on social media.

SunStar, May 6, 2021.<sup>74</sup>



## SINGAPORE

**June 23, 2021**

**Singapore**

Somasundram Pathumalai, 36 years old, is sentenced to 6 months in prison. He had tried to cross the Woodlands border crossing in the middle of the night on March 14 with 6 sedated puppies and a white-rumped shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*) hidden under the back seat. Customs officials were vigilant. Two weeks after the seizure, the puppies were all dead. The white-rumped shama died nearly a month later. Somasundram explained that he was paid 5,000 dollars (360 US\$) by a fellow countryman to transport them. His brother-in-law was involved, he allegedly asked Somasundram to go to Malaysia to collect the animals.

Channel News Asia, June 23, 2021.<sup>75</sup>



## THAILAND

**June 14, 2021**

**Narathiwat, Narathiwat Province, Thailand**



Arrest near the mosque of a 36-year-old man carrying a great hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*, Appendix I) in a box. Seizure of his cell phone, his pick-up truck and the hornbill.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, June 14, 2021.<sup>76</sup>

**June 15, 2021**

**Moo 5, Sao Sichon District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand**

Seizure of a hill myna (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II), 2 brahminy kites (*Haliastur indus*, Appendix II), a great myna (*Acridotheres grandis*), a yellow-vented bulbul (*Pycnonotus goiavier*), a stripe-throated bulbul (*Pycnonotus finlaysoni*), a blue-throated barbet (*Megalaima asiatica*) and a purple swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) kept in cages in front of a house.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, June 16, 2021.<sup>77</sup>



**July 7, 2021**

**Lam Luk Ka, Pathum Thani Province, Thailand**

facebook

Arrest of a 40-year-old man, an electrician, who had offered for sale on Facebook 3 great mynas (*Acridotheres grandis*).

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, July 7, 2021.<sup>78</sup>



**July 7, 2021**

**Talat Nuea, Phuket Province, Thailand**

Seizure of a brahminy kite (*Haliastur indus*, Appendix II), a purple swampphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*), a white-breasted waterhen (*Amaurornis phoenicurus*), a white-rumped shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*) and a red-wattled lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*) kept in cages outside the house. Authorities were alerted by neighbors who were bothered by the odors and noise.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, July 8, 2021.<sup>79</sup>

**July 14, 2021**

**Phrom Lok, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand**

The man was denounced. A search of his home led to the seizure of 13 blue-winged leafbirds (*Chloropsis cochinchinensis*), 9 black-crested bulbuls (*Pycnonotus flaviventris*), 8 stripe-throated bulbuls (*Pycnonotus finlaysoni*), 4 greater green leafbirds (*Chloropsis sonnerati*), 3 Asian fairy-bluebirds (*Irena puella*), 3 ochraceous bulbuls (*Alophoixus ochraceus*) and dozens of cages.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, July 15, 2021.<sup>80</sup>

**July 23, 2021**

**Phru Tiao, Khao Phanom District, Krabi Province, Thailand**



Police raid at the home of a 35-year-old man who according to anonymous information would hide an illegal breeding. Seizure of 10 red-whiskered bulbuls (*Pycnonotus jocosus*), 10 Asian koels (*Eudynamys scolopaceus*), a red-wattled lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*) and dozens of cages.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, July 23, 2021.<sup>81</sup>

**August 22, 2021**

**Thung Takhrui, Chumpon Province, Thailand**

Seizure of 3 white-rumped shamas (*Copsychus malabaricus*), 16 red-whiskered bulbuls (*Pycnonotus jocosus*) and 15 cages. The man offered the birds for sale on Facebook.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, August 22, 2021.<sup>82</sup>

**VIET NAM**

**May 13, 2021**

**Viet Nam**

facebook  
YouTube



He was using both Facebook and YouTube to sell birds. He had been operating for more than a year. Seizure of 2 Oriental pied hornbills (*Anthracoceros albirostris*, Appendix II), 2 Eurasian hoopoes (*Upupa epops*) and an oriole (genus *Oriolus*) from his home. ENV, May 27, 2021.<sup>83</sup>

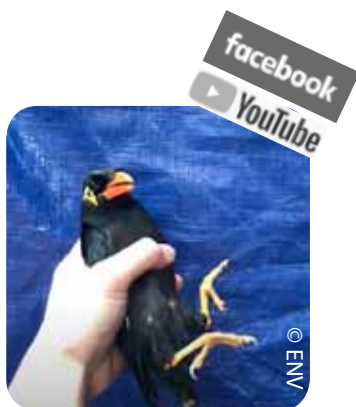


**July 30, 2021**

**Hanoi Municipality, Viet Nam**

Seizure of 12 hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II) and 10 collared laughingthrushes (*Trochalopteron yersini*) in Thanh Tri district after an investigation of several months. The trafficker was selling them via Facebook, Zalo and YouTube.

ENV, July 30, 2021.<sup>84</sup>



**August 6, 2021**

**Mo Duc District, Quang Ngai Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure following a neighbor's report of 3 crested goshawks (*Accipiter trivirgatus*, Appendix II) in a private home.

ENV, August 6, 2021.<sup>85</sup>

**August 18, 2021**

**Ho Chi Minh City Municipality, Viet Nam**

Finally! The great hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*, Appendix I) had been waiting since July for its transfer to the Cu Chi shelter. Covid-19 is still disrupting the work of wildlife conservationists.

ENV, August 19, 2021.<sup>86</sup>

**SOUTHERN ASIA**

**INDIA**

**RETALIATION COVID-19**

**June 24, 2021**

**Tangla, Udalguri District, State of Assam, India**

On June 8, 5 residents received a letter from the city council: "the droppings of egrets that are nesting in the bamboo plants in your premises have caused unhygienic conditions, which could lead to increase in Covid-19 cases. You are thereby asked to cut down the bamboo groves in your premise for a cleaner, healthier surrounding."

On June 10, faced with the lack of reaction, government officials went to the site and cut down the bamboo themselves. The toll was heavy: about 300 cattle egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*), little egrets (*Egretta garzetta*) and little cormorants (*Microcarbo niger*) were killed and many eggs were broken. And that's without counting the many birds that were seized by villagers to feed on. Only 88 chicks were rescued by animal protectors and transferred to the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation in Kaziranga.

On July 1, Santanu Das, head of the municipal council, Sadananda Saharia, who carried out the order, and Milan Sangma, an employee, were arrested and detained for 14 days.

Hindustan Times, June 26, 2021; Outlook India, June 26, 2021; The Times of India, June 26, 2021; The Hindu, July 2, 2021.<sup>87</sup>

**June 25, 2021**

**Navi Mumbai, Thane District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Release of 3 Alexandrine parakeets (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II) seized in a school after a rehabilitation period of 8 months (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.128).

The Times of India, June 26, 2021.<sup>88</sup>

**July 22, 2021**

**Ballabgarh, Faridabad District, State of Haryana, India**

The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI), the official advisor to the Indian Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, recalls that on May 12, 2011, the courts enshrined the fundamental right of birds to fly freely in the open. In its judgment against a caged bird keeper, the Gujarat High Court explained in its considerations that in cases of extreme heat, the option of releasing the birds could possibly be preferred if they had a sufficient ability to be autonomous.

In its statement, AWBI calls on all States and Union Territories to ban the keeping of birds in cages.

Animal Welfare Board of India, July 22, 2021.<sup>89</sup>

**July 24, 2021**

**Gaiden Chowk Border Outpost, Baksa District, State of Assam, India. Border with Bhutan.**

In mid-afternoon paramilitaries from the 24th Battalion of the SSB came across an individual carrying a helmet and 2 legs of concave-casqued hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*, Appendix I), 39 feathers and 2 bones of hornbill (Bucerotidae, Appendix I or II), 20 feathers of Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix III in Pakistan), a head and 2 legs of monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), 2 bows and 12 arrows. The poacher and his trophies were handed over to the Kumarikata forest station. Sashastra Seema Bal, July 2021.<sup>90</sup>

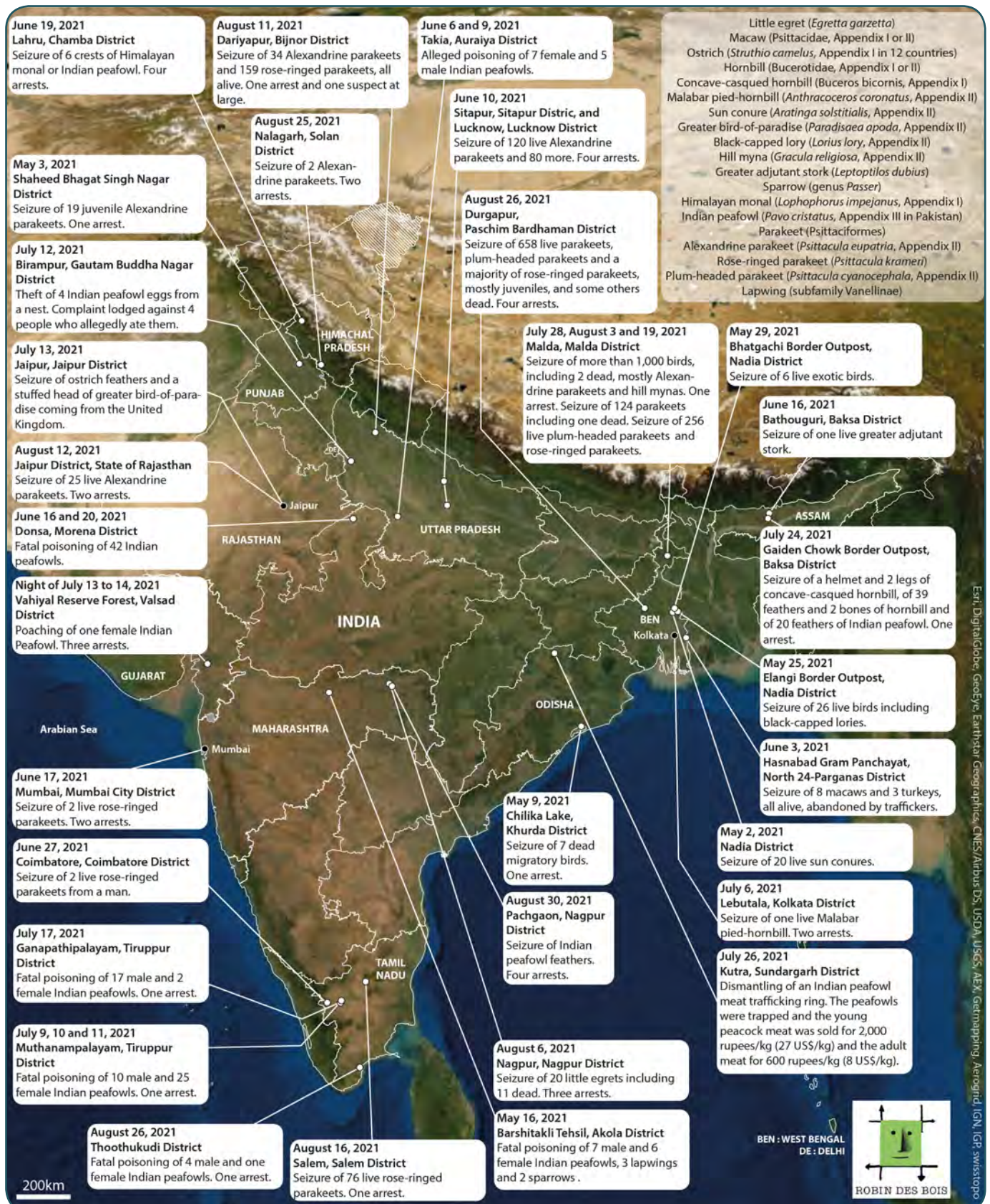
**INDIA**



Fatal poisoning of 4 male and one female Indian peafowls, August 26, 2021, Thoothukudi District, India



## 2,789 birds poached or seized in India between May 1 and August 31, 2021 according to official and media sources







Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*). Photo Rejoice Gassah



658 live parakeets, rose-ringed parakeets (*Psittacula krameri*) and plum-headed parakeets (*Psittacula cyanocephala*), August 26, 2021, Durgapur, Paschim Bardhaman District, India



Greater adjutant stork (*Leptopilos dubius*), June 16, 2021, Bathouguri, Baksa District, India



26 live birds including black-capped lorries (*Lorius lory*), May 25, 2021, Elangi Border Outpost, Nadia District, India



## IRAN

### May 2021

#### **Boroudjerd, Lorestan Province, Iran**

A falcon (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) and 2 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) were seized from a poacher. One arrest was made.

Khabaronline, May 26, 2021.<sup>91</sup>

### June 2021

#### **Nain, Ispahan Province, Iran**

Two saker falcon (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) poachers were arrested.

Iran's Metropolises News Agency, June 22, 2021.<sup>92</sup>

### July 2021

#### **Bandar Torkaman, Golestan Province, Iran**



Five falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) and 35 pin-tailed sandgrouse (*Pterocles alchata*) up for sale were seized in an abandoned factory. The overall value was estimated at 3.5 billion rials (83,300 US\$). Mehr News Agency, July 20, 2021.<sup>93</sup>

## PAKISTAN

### Beginning of June 2021

#### **Karachi, Province of Sindh, Pakistan**

Sardar Mohammad Aslam Gabol and Abdul Rasheed were acquitted for illegally possessing falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) worth over one million US\$. The court recognized they were indeed the raptors' owners and therefore, ordered the birds' restitution. As a reminder, 75 peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I), Barbary falcons (*Falco pelegrinoides*, Appendix I), laggar falcons (*Falco jugger*, Appendix I) and saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) that the duo was planning to sell to falconry enthusiasts were seized in October 2020 (see "On the Trail" n°31 p. 132).

Dawn, June 6, 2021.<sup>94</sup>

### June 2021

#### **Kohat, Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan**

The NGO Mission Awareness Foundation reported an advertisement posted on social media, selling falcon chicks for several thousand rupees or several dozen US\$, to authorities. Law enforcement officials traced the ad to the seller, Ail Khan, and 2 falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II) and 2 black partridge chicks (*Melanoperdix niger*) were found at his house. They are now entrusted to the Peshawar Zoo in hope for release.

UrduPoint, June 23, 2021.<sup>95</sup>

### July 1-12, 2021

#### **Rawalpindi, Province of Punjab and Islamabad, Federal Territory of Islamabad, Pakistan**

"The number of illegal bird sellers in the streets of the twin cities has increased to the extent that we have been ordered by the Prime Minister's House to look into the problem," said district wildlife officer Rizwana Aziz. The birds are caught with nets in Sargodha, Bahawalpur, and Khushab and sold in markets in Lahore, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, or in nearby cities. They are not sold to be eaten. Transported in cages in groups of 50 to 80, the birds are offered at 50 to 100 rupees each (0.3 to 0.6 US\$). In 2 weeks, the Punjab Wildlife Department seized and released 1,300 to 1,500 wild sparrows, mynas and bayas weavers (*Ploceus philippinus*).

Dawn, July 12, 2021.<sup>96</sup>

### August 25, 2021

#### **Jiwani, Province of Balochistan, Pakistan. Border with Iran.**

Seizure and immediate release into the wild of 35 Amur falcons (*Falco amurensis*, Appendix II).

Samaa, August 26, 2021.<sup>97</sup>

## WESTERN ASIA

## ISRAEL

### July 19, 2021

#### **Jericho Governorate, West Bank Territory, Israel**

Ten European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), 3 namagua doves (*Oena capensis*), 7 European turtle doves (*Streptopelia turtur*), and 10 Indian silverbills (*Euodice malabarica*) were seized. Two arrests were made.

Israel Nature and Parks Authority, July 30, 2021.<sup>98</sup>

### August 8, 2021

#### **Anata, West Bank Territory, Israel**

Forty birds including European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) were seized from the house of a 30-year-old man from Jerusalem. Estimated value: 100,000 shekels (30,820 US\$). An arrest was made, and M-16 assault rifles and ammunition were seized.

Israel Nature and Parks Authority, August 9, 2021.<sup>99</sup>



## TURKEY

**August 2021**

**Toprakkale District, Osmaniye Province, Turkey**



Seizure of 120 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine) shut in cages on the first floor of a Syrian national's house. He was fined 120,000 liras (14,130 US\$).

Sputnik Türkiye, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>100</sup>

**August 2021**

**Gürbulak Border Post, Ağrı Province, Turkey. Border with Iran.**



© Gümrükler Muhafaza Genel Müdürlüğü

Eight ostrich chicks (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sudan) were seized. They were hidden in the trunk of a truck inspected at border control. They traveled inside plastic baskets.

Haber Veri, August 19, 2021;

General Directorate of Customs Enforcement, August 20, 2021.<sup>101</sup>

## NORTHERN EUROPE

### DENMARK

**July 2021**

**Tåsinge Island, Southern Denmark Region, Denmark**



Due to lack of evidence, an investigation into the death of 4 white-tailed eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) from carbofuran poisoning in 2020 has been dismissed. Dansk Ornitologisk Forening notes that most raptor poisonings take place near pheasant hunting grounds.

Since 2008, at least 44 raptors have been poisoned: 13 white-tailed eagles, 12 red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II), 10 common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), 6 kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II), one golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II), one rough-legged hawk (*Buteo lagopus*, Appendix II), and one northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II).

The first conviction for such a crime was in November 2020 on the island of Sjælland. A 72-year-old man, a breeder of pheasants, was sentenced to 40 days' probation for the carbofuran poisoning of a common buzzard. His hunting license was not revoked.

TV 2 Fyn, July 10, 2021.<sup>102</sup>

## IRELAND

**August 2021**

**Between Currow and Scartaglen, County Kerry, Ireland**



Two common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) were victims of poisoning.

One did not survive and the other is between life and death. Between 2007 and 2019, 30 raptors were poisoned in Kerry County.

Extra.ie, September 1, 2021; Raptor Persecution UK, September 6, 2021.<sup>103</sup>

## UNITED KINGDOM

**June 6, 2021**

**Gloucestershire County, England, United Kingdom**



A farmer had to pay 100 £ (140 US\$) to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) as an act of "restorative justice" after cutting down a tree with a northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II) nest. He says he was unaware of the nest's presence, an explanation that Raptor Persecution UK finds implausible.

Gloucestershire Constabulary, July 9, 2021; Raptor Persecution UK, July 9, 2021.<sup>104</sup>

**August 17, 2021**

**London, England, United Kingdom**



Behind the beer, the birds

A search on February 2, 2019 of a pub and its garden in East London by dozens of Metropolitan Police and RSPCA officers resulted in the seizure of 40 cages full of songbirds. The "bird charmers" were sipping Guinness and talking business.

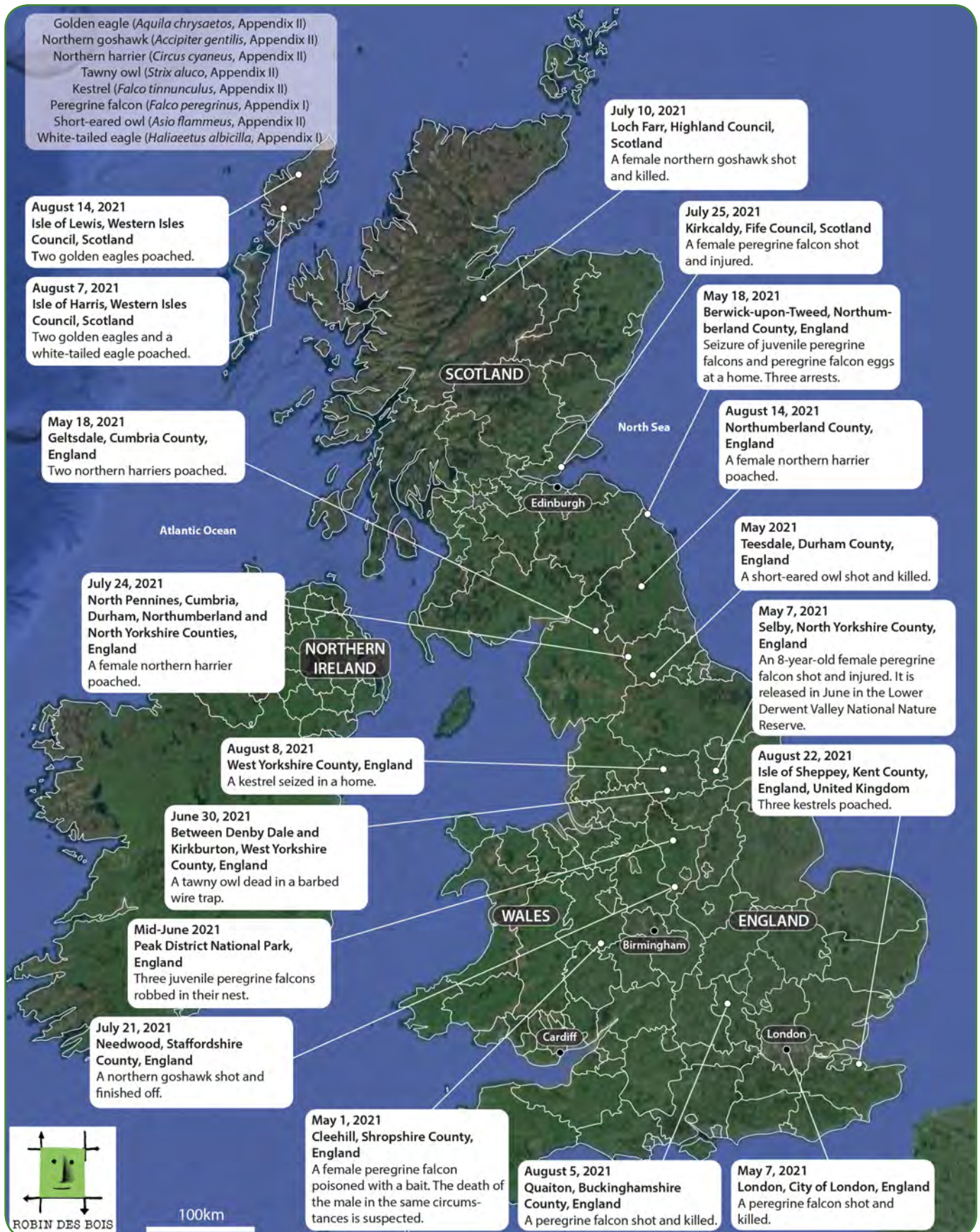
Adnan Icel, the central point of the gang, has just been sentenced to 6 years in prison, suspended for 2 years, and ordered to pay 28,000 £ (nearly 40,000 US\$) in court costs. At his home, the police had seized 190 birds in individual cages in a dark, airless room. The birds were stored like books in a bookcase. After 2 years of investigation, 270 European goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine), linnets (*Carduelis cannabina*, synonymous with *Linaria cannabina*, Appendix III in Ukraine), siskins (*Carduelis spinus*, synonymous with *Spinus spinus*, Appendix III in Ukraine), bullfinches (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*, Appendix III in Ukraine) and parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) were seized and 17 suspects arrested.

Prison sentences are softened by suspended sentences and are not more severe than the penalties for drunk driving. Bans on the keeping of birds are variable.

Clacton and Frinton Gazette, August 17, 2021.<sup>105</sup>



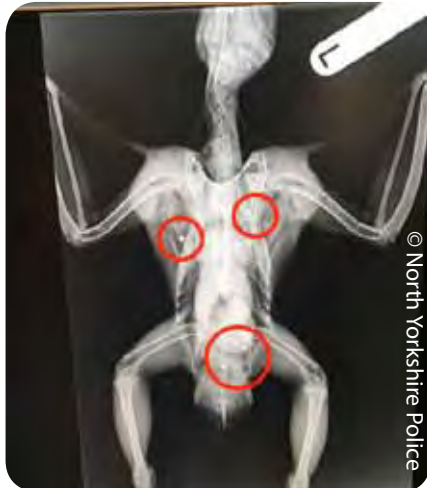
28 raptors poached or seized in the United Kingdom between May 1 and August 31, 2021,  
according to official and media sources







Short-eared owl, (*Asio flammeus*). Photo Валерия Ковалева



A peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), July 25, 2021, Kirkcaldy, Fife Council, Scotland



Tawny owl (*Strix aluco*), June 30, 2021, between Denby Dale and Kirkburton, West Yorkshire County, England



Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), May 7, 2021, Selby, North Yorkshire County, England



## SWEDEN

**August 1, 2021**

**Skåne County, Sweden**

A 75-year-old man accused of illegally possessing 200 birds, including exotic and endangered species, was indicted. He claims to have imported the first specimens before the species protection law came into effect in 1998, which the county administration does not buy. He may have sold illegally bred birds to zoos.

Expressen, August 1st, 2021.<sup>106</sup>

## WESTERN EUROPE

## GERMANY

**May 25, 2021**

**Düsseldorf International Airport, North Rhine-Westphalia State, Germany**

Eight white-eared bulbuls (*Pycnonotus leucotis*) were seized from a 42-year-old man transporting them from Turkey. He did not possess a veterinary certificate. The 4 chicks were stuck together in a transport box while each adult was put in a separate box. The man did not answer customs officers' questions about the birds' origins and fates.

White-eared bulbul's range extends from north-west India to eastern Iraq and Saudi Arabia. They are valued in the Middle East for their songs. German Customs, May 26, 2021.<sup>107</sup>



White-eared bulbul (*Pycnonotus leucotis*)

**January - end of June 2021**

**Lower Franconia, Middle Franconia, Upper Bavaria, Swabia and Upper Palatinate Districts, Bavaria State, Germany**

Raptors are commonly persecuted in Bavaria. The first half of 2021 was no exception (see "On the Trail" no. 32 p.183-184 for cases of poaching in the Lower Bavarian district). Seventeen raptors died of poisoning: a peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I), 7 red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II), 6 common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), 2 northern goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II) and a black kite (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II). Tatort Natur, June 29, 2021; Committee Against Bird Slaughter, Annual Report 2021.<sup>108</sup>



**June 2021**

**Frankfurt am Main, Hesse State, Germany**

The first photo of a trap cage in the Sachsenhausen district was taken in April 2021. It contained an alive European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine). Two months later, authorities identified the person responsible. Suspected of being part of a goldfinch trafficking ring, he was indicted.

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, June 18, 2021.<sup>109</sup>



**August 2021**

**Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Germany**

An ornament composed of 10 blue-and-yellow macaw feathers (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), a red-and-green macaw feather (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II) and 28 unidentified white feathers is seized. It was found in a parcel coming from Switzerland. The recipient said she bought it online for 400 € (460 US\$) under the name "Amazonian style tribal ornament". The seller claimed to have CITES certificates, but they were not valid.

German Customs, November 30, 2021.<sup>110</sup>



## BELGIUM

**June 24, 2021**

**Ronse, Province of East Flanders, Flemish Region, Belgium**

Following complaints from neighbors, authorities searched an individual's home and found more than 200 confined animals. They included dogs, cats, chickens, rabbits, rodents, 53 parakeets (*Psittaciformes*, Appendix I or II), 3 lovebirds (*Agapornis* spp., Appendix II except *Agapornis roseicollis*), and 3 cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*). The entire place was teeming with animals from the cellar to the attic, from the garden to the car wrecks. The associations Animals in Peril, Vzw The Lucky Stars, Help Animals, Bunny Tails and Rambli helped transport the prisoners to shelters. RTL, June 24, 2021.<sup>111</sup>

**End of July 2021**

**Verviers, Province of Liège, Walloon Region, Belgium**

Fourteen people were sentenced on March 9, 2020 to suspended prison terms, ranging from 2 to 6 months, and partially or totally suspended fines of 800 to 1,600 € (880-1,750 US\$). They were accused of catching, selling, buying, possessing, or counterfeiting the rings of 1,322 birds in total, including endangered species such as the common redpoll (*Carduelis flammea*, synonymous with *Acanthis flammea*, Appendix III in Ukraine). They also possessed and used prohibited trapping equipment, including mist nets. Eight of the convicts have appealed. This was a miscalculation. Six of them must now pay 2,400 € (2,850 US\$), without taking into account 440 to 990 € (520-1,180 US\$) in damages to the Walloon Region, Royal Belgian League of Birds and the NGO Natagora. Sudinfo, December 16, 2019; L'Avenir, March 9, 2020; Vedia, July 30, 2021.<sup>112</sup>



## FRANCE

**May 9, 2021**

**Hesdin-l'Abbé, Department of Pas-de-Calais, France**

Nathalie Labaeye, a wildlife refuge director, wasn't expecting this sight when she opened her door. A northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*, Appendix II) lay at her feet. Someone had evidently dropped it there. She takes it to the veterinarian who detects a bullet. There is hope as prompt action was taken. Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, May 21, 2021.<sup>113</sup>



**May 25, 2021**

**Pau, Department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques, France**



A Portuguese woman in her 40s is sentenced to 45 days in prison for illegally breeding 46 parrots (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II). An initial inspection by the Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage (ONCFS, National agency for hunting and wildlife, now OFB) on March 5, 2017 pointed out irregularities in the birds' markings and certificates. During the second inspection in September 2019, it was worse, 17 parrots died due to poor breeding conditions, and some were attacked by dogs or rats. The bodies were still in the freezer. Sud Ouest, May 25, 2021.<sup>114</sup>

**May 26, 2021**

**Blois, Department of Loir-et-Cher, France**



He was accused of having decapitated 3 Montagu's harrier chicks (*Circus pygargus*, Appendix II) in one of his wheat fields. He said he had not known that the birds of prey were the subject of a programme known as the "Petite Beauce special protection area". When, after the harvest carried out by an outside company, he found 10 m<sup>2</sup> of unmown field with a sort of wire cage in the middle and 3 unknown chicks inside, he "became crazy", although he doesn't present himself as an experienced hunter, rather an occasional one, he says. In any case, he knows little about the place and local customs. He lives in Chartres, 90 km from Selommes. He is a farmer from the town. He was fined 4,000 €, half of which was suspended, and ordered to pay 3,100 € in damages and legal costs to 4 civil parties, including the departmental federation of hunters. He undertook to plead the cause of the Montagu's harriers with the other farmers of the "Petite Beauce", thus replying to the volunteer from the Loir-et-Cher Nature association who accused him of "not liking Montagu's harriers". Montagu's Harriers are wrongly accused of hunting partridges when in fact they hunt rodents and are useful to farmers.

La Nouvelle République, March 29, April 3 and May 26, 2021; Ouest-France, March 29 and May 27, 2021.<sup>115</sup>

**May 26, 2021**

**Ispagnac, Department of Lozère, France**

In the heart of the Cevennes national park, a peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) is in bad shape. It was shot in one of its wings. Euthanasia is decided.

Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, August 27, 2021.<sup>116</sup>



### End of May 2021

#### Créteil, Saint-Maur and Bonneuil, Department of Val-de-Marne, France



For some time, thefts of mute swans (*Cygnus olor*) on the banks of the Marne are suspected. The Association pour la Sauvegarde du Bras du Chapitre et de ses Abords (ASBCA) has been aware of this “taking” of small swans for a long time. But this year, the phenomenon has intensified: 2 females and their eggs disappeared. A network must be at play. The Créteil lake collective makes the same observation. The caught swans would be sold for around 1,000 € (1,200 US\$) on the Internet, with their wingtips cut off, to be used as ornamental birds.

The theft of swans goes beyond the Val-de-Marne. The entire Ile-de-France region around Paris is reportedly affected, including the Vincennes lake. In September 2020, a man tried to steal a swan in the Chantilly estate (Oise). He claimed that he wanted to “protect” and release it into the wild. He was sentenced to 6 months in prison and a fine of 500 € (615 US\$) in January.

Le Parisien, June 22, 2021.<sup>117</sup>

### June 8, 2021

#### Cahors, Department of Lot, France



Jacques Duhau, Thierry Picard and Bertino Real are sentenced to fines of 1,000 € (1,215 US\$) each and damages of 1,000 € to the ASPAS (Association pour la Protection des Animaux Sauvages or Association for the Protection of Wild Animals). Eric Laporte is sentenced to a 3,100 € (3,760 US\$) fine and 2,000 € in damages to the ASPAS for catching, trafficking and illegally breeding red-billed leiothrixes (*Leiothrix lutea*, Appendix II), western capercaillies (*Tetrao urogallus*) and European greenfinches (*Chloris chloris*).

ASPAS, Summer 2021.<sup>118</sup>

### June 4, 2021

#### Blois, Department of Loir-et-Cher, France



A 27-year-old man killed a grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*) and a black-crowned night-heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) in Chémery on August 30, 2020. He was fined 500 € (610 US\$). He knew that they were protected species but did not appreciate their fish consumption in a fish pond.

La Nouvelle République, June 8, 2021.<sup>119</sup>

### June 17, 2021

#### Nice, Department of Alpes-Maritimes, France



In 2019, the French Biodiversity Agency receives information that there is a poacher-taxidermist-collector of birds in Bendejun. The man is suspected of being involved in poaching for several years to expand his collection. He is also believed to bring back some from trips abroad. The agents search his home. They find about a thousand stuffed or frozen birds, including falcons (*Falco* spp., Appendix I), a barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II) and other owls (Strigidae, Appendix I or II), an American flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*, Appendix II), a grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), a great black-backed gull

(*Larus marinus*), swallows (family Hirundinidae), hoopoes (*Upupa epops*), European rollers (*Coracias garrulus*), European bee-eaters (*Merops apiaster*), woodchat shrikes (*Lanius senator*) and common kingfishers (*Alcedo atthis*).



French regulations protect 244 of them and CITES protects 14. The man cannot prove that the protected birds were killed before the entry into force of the law of July 10, 1976 on the protection of nature. The protected specimens were seized, as well as 21 illegally held firearms.

On June 17, 2021, he was sentenced to a 3-month suspended prison sentence and ordered to pay 8,000 € (9,700 US\$) in damages to the Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO). He is forbidden to hunt for one year and to own weapons for 3 years.

Ouest-France, June 18, 2021; France 3 Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, June 18, 2021; 20 Minutes (with AFP), June 21, 2021; French Biodiversity Agency, June 21, 2021.<sup>120</sup>

### End of June 2021

#### Nogent-le-Phaye, Department of Eure-et-Loir, France

Twenty-two parrots, including scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), blue-and-yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) and grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I), are now housed at the La Tanière shelter. They were recently seized in Occitania. Their owner lacked their certificates of origin, did not comply with marking regulations, and housed them in conditions incompatible with their well-being.

La Tanière, June 29, 2021; Actu Chartres, July 2, 2021.<sup>121</sup>

### Week of July 5, 2021

#### Villegouin, Department of Indre, France

A farmer allegedly destroyed nests of Montagu's harrier (*Circus pygargus*, Appendix II). The man refused the Indre Nature association's proposal to place a protective cage over the 2 nests, and proceeded to harvest as if nothing happened. Indre Nature filed a complaint and asserted that the chicks died during agricultural work. The farmer admitted to finding a nest and said that inside there were 2 chicks already dead.

France Bleu Berry, July 12, 2021; La Nouvelle République, July 13, 2021.<sup>122</sup>



**July 19, 2021**

**Laines-aux-Bois, Department of Aube, France**

A nest of Montagu's harrier (*Circus pygargus*, Appendix II) was again destroyed in a field. This time, though, the farmer was not to blame. He carefully bypassed the nest while harvesting. A vandal came along and trampled one of the chicks and tore the wings off another. The previous week, another nest had been destroyed not far from there. L'Est Eclair, July 26, 2021.<sup>123</sup>

**July 14, 2021**

**Ganges, Department of Hérault, France**

A veterinary clinic receives 2 short-toed eagles (*Circaetus gallicus*, Appendix II) that were shooting victims. One died upon arrival.

Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, August 27, 2021.<sup>124</sup>

**August 8, 2021**

**Cévennes National Park, Departments of Lozère, Gard and Ardèche, France**

A griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II) carcass, riddled with about 20 bullets, is found. Since the beginning of the year, the LPO has taken care of about 30 raptors wounded by bullets, kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*, Appendix II), Eurasian sparrowhawks (*Accipiter nisus*, Appendix II), common buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), red kites (*Milvus milvus*, Appendix II) and griffon vultures.

Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, August 27, 2021.<sup>125</sup>

## THE NETHERLANDS

### REPEATED OFFENSE

**June 14, 2021**

**Twijzelerheide and Kollumerzwaag, Province of Friesland, The Netherlands**



Two bird traffickers are sentenced to fines of 1,000 € (1,215 US\$) and 250 € (300 US\$). The justice system was not particularly severe.

The first was arrested at Schipol Airport in August 2019 with 2 European rollers (*Coracias garrulus*). He had already been fined 400 € in June 2020 for possessing a northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II), a long-eared owl (*Asio otus*, Appendix II) and a kingfisher, all frozen.

The second was accused of illegally holding 2 European rollers (*Coracias garrulus*), 2 sandpipers (family Scolopacidae) and 12 common sandpipers (*Actitis hypoleucos*). He had already been convicted in 2009 for possessing 9 common kingfishers (*Alcedo atthis*).

Leeuwarder Courant, June 14, 2021.<sup>126</sup>

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Bergen op Zoom, Province of North Brabant, The Netherlands**



A poacher is caught red-handed setting up a trap for raptors (Accipitridae or Falconidae, Appendix I or II), with a live pigeon as bait, and arrested in the Mattemburgh forest reserve.

Samen Sterk in Brabant, July 7, 2021.<sup>127</sup>

**August 20, 2021**

**Nieuwerbrug, Province of South Holland, The Netherlands**



Mute swan (*Cygnus olor*) trafficking crosses borders. Two men, aged 54 and 56, suspected of collecting swan eggs and catching chicks, were arrested. A search of their properties revealed captive swans in poor condition. The eggs were allegedly sold to a middleman in Belgium. The 2 suspects were released after being questioned by police. Dutch Police, August 20, 2021.<sup>128</sup>

## SOUTHERN EUROPE

### BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

**August 24, 2021**

**Miševići, Sarajevo Canton, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Horsemen discovered a griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II) at around 4 p.m. The bird was rushed to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Sarajevo. It had a bullet wound and a broken wing. It died the next morning.

Dnevni avaz, August 25, 2021; Glas Srpske, August 25, 2021.<sup>129</sup>





## SPAIN

**April 26, 2021**

**Granada, Province of Granada, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain**



Three bearded vulture carcasses (*Gypaetus barbatus*, Appendix II) were found in the Sierra de Huétor natural park. There were one male and 2 females. They were born in 2019, one in the wild and 2 reintroduced. About 30 Junta de Andalucía and Seprona agents scoured the park with sniffer dogs and a helicopter flew over the park to look for more bodies. They found poison and believe they have identified the culprit.

Vulture Conservation Foundation, May 13, 2021.<sup>130</sup>

**June 23, 2021**

**Monterrubio de Armuña, Province of Salamanca, Autonomous Community of Castile and León, Spain**



Alerted by a passerby, the environmental protection and Seprona officers went to a field where dozens of dead or dying birds were reported. What they discovered exceeded their fears. 54 griffon vultures (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II), one cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monachus*, Appendix II) and one black kite (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II) were dead; 38 griffon vultures and 3 cinereous vultures were still alive, but the prognosis was very poor. They were taken to care centers in Salamanca and Valladolid, except for 20 birds that already had enough strength to fly away before being caught. There were also the carcasses of 4 bait-sheep on the cornfield. Blood and tissue samples were taken to confirm the suspicion of poisoning.

Vulture Conservation Foundation, June 24, 2021.<sup>131</sup>

**End of June 2021**

**Cáceres, Province of Cáceres, Autonomous Community of Extremadura, Spain**



A farmer used to spray his sheep with 2 prohibited insecticides, chlorpyrifos and sulfotep. He kept the carcasses of his dead animals and piled them up on a dung hill, aiming to kill any vultures passing by. In spring 2019, the mass grave contained about 200 sheep carcasses (*Ovis aries*). It attracted at least 3 griffon vultures (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II). They did not survive.

The poisoner was sentenced to 18 months in prison, fined 3 € per day for 21 months (nearly 1,900 € or 2,300 US\$), and was ordered to pay 18,000 € (21,850 US\$) in damages.

Vulture Conservation Foundation, June 27, 2021.<sup>132</sup>



## GREECE

**May 24, 2021**

**Kallithea, Region of Attica, and Paxi Island, Region of Ionian Islands, Greece**



- A nest of scops owls (*Otus scops*, Appendix II) was saved. Their mother was poached.

- Two juvenile barn owls (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II) were rescued after their nest was destroyed. Those who lived in the house where the nest was saw it as "dirty".

ANIMA, May 24, 2021.<sup>133</sup>





**May 31, 2021  
Missolonghi, Region of Western  
Greece, Greece**

A Dalmatian pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*, Appendix I) showing poisoning symptoms was taken into the care of the NGO ANIMA. With a wingspan over 3 meters wide and 1.6 to 1.8 meters long, Dalmatian pelicans are the largest pelicans. Their range extends from Southeast Europe to East Asia. Currently, their largest colony nests at the small lake Prespa in Greece. They are threatened by illegal hunting, persecution by fishermen, overfishing, habitat destruction, water pollution, and collisions with power lines. ANIMA, May 31, 2021.<sup>134</sup>



© Владимир Панкратов

Dalmatian pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*)

**August 2021  
Kallithea, Region of Attica, Greece**

Seizure of black-headed buntings (*Emberiza melanocephala*) that were being offered for sale. They were transferred to the ANIMA care center. ANIMA, August 25, 2021.<sup>135</sup>



© ANIMA

**ITALY**



© Metropolis

European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), May 12, 2021, Ercolano, Region of Campania, Italy



© Nuvola TV

Passerine birds including one common redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*), May 21, 2021, Barano d'Ischia, Region of Campania, Italy



© Catania News

Juvenile falcon (*Falco* spp., Appendix I or II), all alive, Early July 2021, Catania, Region of Sicily, Italy



© Carabinieri Catania

Barn owl (*Tyto alba*), July 25, 2021, Ragalna, Region of Sicily, Italy



# 1,244 birds poached or seized in Italy between May 1 and August 31, 2021, according to official and media sources





## MALTA

**June 9 and November 12, 2021**

### Malta

In December 2020, the European Commission initiated a procedure against Malta concerning a derogation authorizing the capture of finches (family Fringillidae) for "scientific research" (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.141), violating the Birds Directive. The situation has not improved. The Commission is taking the matter to the European Union Court of Justice.

BirdLife Malta, June 9, 2021; European Commission, November 12, 2021.<sup>136</sup>

**July 2021**

### Malta

A joint operation by the Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS) and police led to the rescue of 20 black-winged stilts (*Himantopus himantopus*), a Eurasian stone-curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus*), common greenshanks (*Tringa nebularia*), sandpipers (family Scolopacidae), plovers (subfamily Charadriinae), and a black-tailed godwit (*Limosa limosa*). The seizure's overall value is estimated at more than 5,000 € (6,000 US\$). Three nets and a trap were also confiscated. The owner is currently being identified.

Committee Against Bird Slaughter, annual report 2021.<sup>137</sup>



© CABS

## EASTERN EUROPE

### BULGARIA

**June 4, 2021**

### Dobrinishte, Blagoevgrad Province, Bulgaria

Blacky Skrill, a female black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*, Appendix II), was released on May 12, 2021 as part of a restoration program for the species. It explored Turkey, Romania, Moldavia, and Ukraine, and returned to its native country on June 3rd. Unfortunately, its return was a death sentence. The very next day, its GPS transmitter indicated complete immobility. Blacky Skrill joins the long list of raptor poisoning victims. The bait was a horse carcass. Blacky Skrill's body was not recovered. The GPS transmitter was thrown into the Mesta River, 4 km away.

Vulture Conservation Foundation, June 8, 2021.<sup>138</sup>



**May 11, 2021**

### Hortobágy, Hajdú-Bihar County, Hungary

A marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*, Appendix II) and a white stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) arrived at the bird hospital. The marsh harrier's talon was broken by a trap and the stork was shot in one wing. Every week, about 10 injured birds are taken to the hospital.

444.hu, May 12, 2021.<sup>139</sup>



© Hortobágyi Madárkórház

**Mid-August 2021**

### Aszód District, Pest County, Hungary

After a report of animal carcasses, BirdLife Hungary's canine unit, environmental protection officers, and volunteers went into action on an approximately 8,000-hectare hunting ground just outside the town of Tura. They found 101 baits sprayed with generous amounts of carbofuran. Initially, 50 dead birds are reported: 44 marsh harriers (*Circus aeruginosus*, Appendix II), one common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II),

one black kite (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II), one white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I), and 2 tree pipits (*Anthus trivialis*) were poisoned. Only one Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*, Appendix II) is still alive. By mid-September, the toll had risen considerably to 76 marsh harriers, 7 common buzzards, 2 black kites, one Montagu's harrier, 3 common ravens (*Corvus corax*), 2 tree pipits, 8 red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), 2 hooded crows (*Corvus cornix*), one Eurasian jay (*Garrulus glandarius*), and a few unidentified animals.

All indications show that the goal was to totally eradicate predators in the area, especially raptors. The amount of poison used was enough to kill 158 people or 158,000 marsh harriers. Analysis revealed the bait contained over 6,000 mg of poison per kilo. This is a record in Hungary and in the European Union.

Pannoneagle LIFE Project, August 16, 2021; HVG, September 9, 2021; Sokszerű vidék, September 30 and October 27, 2021.<sup>140</sup>



© Gábor Deák



## POLAND

**June 2, 2021**

### Kamieńsk, Łódź Voivodeship, Poland

It all started with the “simple” theft of a surveillance camera in the nearby forest. The culprit, quickly identified, had many other things to hide. Investigators found a firearm, 296 rounds of ammunition, old coins and ammunition collected in the forest and an impressive collection of hunting trophies. His collection included stuffed European sparrowhawks (*Accipiter nisus*, Appendix II), antlered skulls of roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) and a Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiber*) skull. In the middle of all these dead animals, there was a northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II) living in a cage. The 27-year-old man introduced himself as a passionate hunter and collector. He claims to have collected the dead animals in the forest to make trophies. As for the goshawk, he trapped it to prevent it from attacking his father’s pigeons. The animal was given to a falconer.

Polish Police, June 4, 2021.<sup>141</sup>

**Mid-July 2021**

### Lublin, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland

It’s summer, the season of abandonment. Two budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*) were found in a small cage next to a dumpster. Their state of health is correct. They are now under the care of the Epicrates Foundation, which takes in 60-80 exotic animals abandoned by their owners each year. Kurier Lubelski, July 20, 2021.<sup>142</sup>



## RUSSIA

**Mid-May 2021**

### Darwin Nature Reserve, Vologda Oblast, Russia

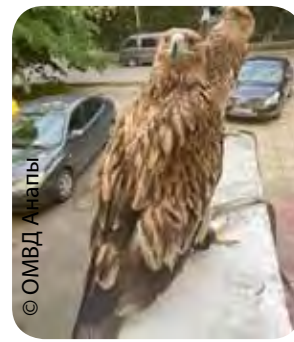
A white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) was shot in early 2020 near Naryan-Mar (Arkhangelsk Oblast). When found, the bird had several wing fractures. No veterinarian was able to treat it in this oblast, so it was flown to Vologda Oblast to be operated. One year later, it regains its freedom with another white-tailed eagle, a female which was wounded in the leg. The poacher, however, has not been found.

29.ru, May 19, 2021.<sup>143</sup>



**May 25, 2021**

### Anapa, Krasnodar Krai, Russia



The warm days begin in Anapa, on the Black Sea coast. Beach photographers appear in the streets. The police confiscate 2 steppe eagles (*Aquila nipalensis*, Appendix II) intended to decorate tourists’ photographs against payment. The 2 survivors

are taken to a zoo in Vityazevo, 11 km away. In August 2020, 2 long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) and 3 macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) were seized under the same circumstances in Sochi, 250 km away.

KubNews, May 25, 2021.<sup>144</sup>

**June 21, 2021**

### Kashtaksky Forest, Chelyabinsk Oblast, Russia

Dead common cranes (*Grus grus*, Appendix II) and common ravens (*Corvus corax*) were found. They were shot by poachers.

Znak, June 21, 2021.<sup>145</sup>

**June 24, 2021**

### Anapa and Supsekh, Krasnodar Krai, Russia

More photographers exhibiting animals. This time, 5 eagles (*Aquila* spp., Appendix I or II) owned by a 35-year-old resident and one eagle owned by a 23-year-old man from the Karachay-Cherkessia Republic, south of Krasnodar Krai, were seized. The birds were moved to a zoo in Vityazevo.

KubNews, June 24, 2021.<sup>146</sup>

**July 5, 2021**

### Zarinsk, Altai Krai, Russia

A female peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) was looking for food for its chicks when it was shot. It fell on the street. Specialists believe it has little chance of regaining the use of its wing. The ornithological society issued a call to the residents to locate the nest and save the chicks.

Vesti Altai, July 6, 2021.<sup>147</sup>

**July 12, 2021**

### Yeysk, Krasnodar Krai, Russia



Two eagles (*Aquila* spp., Appendix I or II), exploited by a 35-year-old photographer to attract tourists on the seafront, were seized. He too came from the Karachay-Cherkessia Republic. The eagles were entrusted to the city’s ecological and biological center.

KubNews, July 12, 2021; Yug Times, July 12, 2021.<sup>148</sup>



## OCEANIA

### AUSTRALIA

**Mid-May 2021**

**Fingal, State of Tasmania, Australia**

A female wedge-tailed eagle (*Aquila audax*, Appendix II) likely died from electrocution or a collision with a car. In any case, the X-rays showed no evidence of a bullet. However, it was missing 2 talons, perhaps removed by a nostalgic of the days when eagle talons were used as rifle holders on walls.

ABC News, May 17, 2021.<sup>149</sup>

**May 20, 2021**

**Birchs Bay, State of Tasmania, Australia**



A resident saw the wedge-tailed eagle (*Aquila audax*, Appendix II) fall from a tree and writhe in pain on the ground. It was riddled with bullets. This one is still alive, but Craig Webb, director of Raptor Refuge, is not optimistic. He expected the eagle to survive, "but there was only a 50:50 chance it would be able to be released back into the wild."

ABC News, May 26, 2021.<sup>150</sup>

### NEW ZEALAND

**May 13, 2021**

**Whangateau, Auckland Region, New Zealand**

A kaka (*Nestor meridionalis*, Appendix II) suffering from gunshot wounds was euthanized. Its right wing was completely fractured, and the treatment undertaken was unsuccessful. This is the latest victim in a series of attacks on wildlife that have affected at least 8 gannets (genus *Morus*) and a tui (*Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae*) in the past 3 months. The kaka is a parrot endemic to the forests of New Zealand. It is mainly threatened by deforestation and predation by ermines and opossums, both introduced by settlers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There are reportedly less than 10,000 individuals remaining.

Radio New Zealand, June 28, 2021.<sup>151</sup>



*Nestor meridionalis*



# VARIOUS REPTILE SPECIES

## AFRICA

### COTE D'IVOIRE

**June 8 and 16, 2021**

**Comoé National Park and Bouna, Zanzan District, Côte d'Ivoire**

Dah Touinité, 55, was sentenced to one month in prison, fined 250,000 CFA francs (463 US\$), and ordered to pay one million CFA francs in damages to the Ivorian Parks and Reserves Office. He was arrested in the park while armed with a machete. He claimed to have gotten lost while looking for bamboo wood. Yet, forest rangers found 2 bags filled with a crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) and a tortoise carcasses at his feet. Five tortoise species live in the park including the African spurred tortoise (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II).

Agence ivoirienne de presse, June 20, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



## AMERICA

### BRAZIL

**May 23, 2021**

**Caruaru, Pernambuco State, Brazil**



A 31-year-old man is arrested. Four juvenile caimans (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II) and 11 snakes are confiscated. He explains that he was selling the caimans for 100 reais (20 US\$) each, and the snakes for 80 to 300 reais each, or 16-60 US\$, depending on their size.

G1 Caruaru, May 24, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

## COLOMBIA

**End of July 2021**

**Meta Department, Colombia**

Release into their natural habitats following rehabilitation of 1,944 turtles including 1,917 matamatas (*Chelus fimbriata*), 15 iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II), a snake and several frogs seized from traffickers.

Cyprus Mail (with Reuters), July 27, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

## ECUADOR

**August 13, 2021**

**Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve, Imbabura and Esmeraldas Provinces, Ecuador**

Two boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II) and 26 turtles, including 12 white-lipped mud turtles (*Kinosternon leucostomum*), previously seized in the Imbabura and Carchi provinces, are released into the reserve.

Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, August 13, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

## ASIA

### CHINA

**End of May 2021**

**Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure in the luggage of an incoming passenger of 2 wallets, one made of snake skin, the other made of crocodile skin (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II).

Chinese Customs, June 9, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

## UZBEKISTAN

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Tashkent International Airport, Tashkent Region, Uzbekistan**

Thirty-five baby reptiles including lizards and geckos (family Gekkonidae), slipped in cigarette packages, are seized from a passenger boarding a flight to Moscow. In his luggage, an additional 16 lizard tails, a muskrat tail (*Ondatra zibethicus*) and 2 dead vipers are also seized.

Sputnik Uzbekistan, July 6, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



## PHILIPPINES

May 28, 2021

Ninoy-Aquino International Airport, Manila, National Capital Region, Philippines



A FedEx package said to contain “Lego toys” was shipped from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Inside, authorities seized 20 African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II) and 8 savannah monitors (*Varanus exanthematicus*, Appendix II) endemic to Africa, 10 razor-backed musk turtles (*Sternotherus carinatus*) and 2 corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*) endemic to North America, and a bearded dragon (genus *Pogona*) endemic to Australia. The overall value is estimated at 280,000 Philippine pesos (5,790 US\$). The addressee who came to collect the package was arrested. The animals are in very bad shape.

Manila Bulletin, May 29, 2021; Manila Standard, May 30, 2021.<sup>7</sup>



## SINGAPORE

July 21, 2021

Singapore

Nonis Randy Amin Amran was fined 8,000 S\$ or 5,950 US\$ for keeping a green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and 2 central bearded dragons (*Pogona vitticeps*) in his apartment, and for importing a black-and-white tegu (*Salvator merianae*, Appendix II) through the Malayan border crossing. He is also required to pay the cost of keeping reptiles in national parks amounting to 900 S\$ or 670 US\$.

Malay Mail, July 22, 2021.<sup>8</sup>



## EUROPE

### SPAIN

End of June 2021

Sevilla, Province of Sevilla, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain



Two-year ban from animal-related activities and a fine of 1,200 € or 1,460 US\$ for the manager of a pet shop who kept in unsanitary conditions and tried to sell a monitor lizard (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II), a Madagascar day gecko (*Phelsuma madagascariensis*, Appendix II), a panther chameleon (*Furcifer pardalis*, Appendix II), 8 pythons (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II), a Harris's hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II), a Mississippi map turtle (*Graptemys pseudogeographica*, Appendix III in the United States of America) and a Guichenot's giant gecko (*Rhacodactylus ciliatus*). Diario de Sevilla, June 30, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

### FRANCE

Week of May 17, 2021

Zutkerque, Department of Pas-de-Calais, France

A 90-cm-long caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II), a 1.5-meter-long boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), a viper (family *Viperidae*), 5 rat snakes (genus *Elaphe*) and their eggs and a tarantula are confiscated from a home.

La Voix du Nord, May 25, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

### ITALY

June 13, 2021

Milan and Cernusco sul Naviglio, Metropolitan City of Milan, Region of Lombardy, Italy

368 belts, wallets, travel portfolios, key rings, and handbags made of reticulated python (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II), Asiatic rock python (*Python molurus*, Appendix II) and crocodile (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II) skin are seized in 2 stores. Those responsible have neither a purchase invoice nor a CITES certificate. The total value is estimated at 27,000 € or 32,783 US\$.

MI-Lorenteggio, June 13, 2021; Green Planner Magazine, June 14, 2021.<sup>11</sup>



## POLAND

**July 2021**

**Olsztyn, Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship, Poland**

About 100 reptiles including tortoises or turtles (Testudinidae, Appendix I or II), geckos (family Gekkonidae) and giant forest dragons (*Gonocephalus grandis*) were seized. They were kept in terrariums and plastic containers in disastrous conditions: overcrowding, temperatures that were too low, and no humidity. Some had already died and were in a state of decomposition.

Gazeta Olsztyńska, November 23, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

## SWEDEN

**June 23, 2021**

**Borås, Västra Götaland County, Sweden**

A man was sentenced to one year in prison for illegally holding nearly 1,000 reptiles, including royal pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II), boas (Boidae, Appendix I or II), monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II), turtles and chameleons, for commercial purposes in a facility that caught fire in 2017. All the animals died from asphyxiation.

Svenska Dagbladet, June 23, 2021.<sup>13</sup>



## REPEATED OFFENSE

**August 30, 2021**

**Lund, Skane County, Sweden**



A 41-year-old man was sentenced to 2 years in prison for animal cruelty, aggravated species protection offenses, smuggling, and Animal Welfare Act violations. In 2018, authorities visited his warehouse in Löberöd, near Eslöv. They seized 2 African dwarf crocodiles (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, Appendix I), 760 saurians including 99 spiny-tailed lizards (*Uromastyx* spp., Appendix II), Moroccan spiny-tailed lizards (*Uromastyx nigriventris*, Appendix II), a lace monitor (*Varanus varius*, Appendix II), at least 600 helmethead geckos (*Tarentola chazaliae*), 27 green striped tree dragons (*Diploderma splendidum*), 67 turtles including 14 diamondback terrapins (*Malaclemys terrapin*, Appendix II) and 53 softshell turtles (family Trionychidae), 18 snakes including 5 Egyptian cobras (*Naja haje*) and 5 puff adders (*Bitis arietans*) and 11 amphibians including 4 red-eyed leaf frogs (*Agalychnis callidryas*, Appendix II) and 3 frogs of the family Rhacophoridae. In the end, 160 survivors were evacuated to zoos in Sweden, France, Slovakia and Hungary.

In 2011, the man had already been arrested while trying to import animals from Tanzania. Later, he was caught selling protected turtles at the Malmö Reptile Fair. During his trial, he claimed to be acting for his personal enjoyment. The investigation file proves that he was also looking for wild juvenile green tree pythons (*Morelia viridis*, Appendix II) and grey monitors (*Varanus griseus*, Appendix I). The man is said to have traveled extensively in recent years, in particular to Morocco, Thailand and Cambodia.

Sveriges Television, January 18, 2021; Nyheter24, August 30, 2021; Sydsvenskan, August 30, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



# TORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES

## Most important seizures of the quarter :

889 African spurred tortoise  
(*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II)

701 Horsfield's tortoises  
(*Testudo horsfieldii*, Annexe II)

## AFRICA

### BURKINA FASO

June 8, 2021

**Koudougou, Boulkiemdé Province, Burkina Faso**

#### RECORD TURTLE SEIZURE IN BURKINA FASO

On Tuesday, June 8, 555 juvenile African spurred tortoises were rescued from international trafficking by customs officers. They were hidden in the baggage compartment of a bus travelling between Bamako in Mali and Lomé in Togo. They were placed in wooden crates, cardboard boxes and canvas and plastic bags. False CITES permits accompanied the shipment. The African spurred tortoises are listed in Appendix II. Their international trade is still allowed. Export permits are required. The seizure is the result of cooperation between Mali Customs and Burkina Faso Customs. Mali and Burkina Faso are the theatre of armed operations. This is a never-ending tragedy. The savannah and the desert are scattered with wrecks and marked by the scars of war. It is likely that adult African spurred tortoises are blown up by landmines like elephants. In this hostile landscape, African spurred tortoises, the biggest tortoises after those of the Galapagos and Seychelles, protect themselves from the world's bursts and great heat in 10-15m long underground dens from which they slink in the early morning or at the end of the day to feed on ephemeral grasses during the rainy season. Males and females do not share their burrows. A "baby" weighs 50 g and an adult up to 100 kg. There is a high intensity international traffic of African spurred tortoises. "On the Trail" has identified seizures of *Centrochelys sulcata* in the United States of America, Mexico, San Salvador, Malaysia, Thailand, China, India, France, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. Buyers who love live furniture in their gardens and their pool decks often kick themselves for having acquired such a bulky creature of which, at the time of purchase in a reptile show, pet shop or via an internet wildlife website, nothing suggested that it would grow in a way that would be incompatible with its captive habitat. In the United States, the NGO American Tortoise Rescue is sorry to see this successor to the iguana fad and is trying to discourage it.



"A fully-grown *sulcata* is strong and aggressive and can easily move furniture and damage or destroy a typical house or apartment wall. When they start to dig up the property, it looks something like a mine field." Not to mention that with its natural digging capacities, the African spurred tortoise can go into the house next door and create serious AND (Abnormal Neighbourhood Disturbances).

The 555 juveniles seized by Burkinabe customs have an overall commercial value of €83,000 (€150 per specimen). When females and males reach 20 cm in length in a clandestine breeding farm as exists in Togo, the commercial value on the black market is €500 to €600 per specimen.

Thanks to Burkina Faso and Mali Customs who, despite very poor working conditions, have struck a heavy blow to wildlife trafficking and deprived who knows which gang of a substantial income. After khaki ivory (selling poached ivory to buy weapons), has the time come now for khaki tortoises? Burkina Faso Customs, June 8, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



An adult African spurred tortoise has just come out of its den



One couple is devoting itself to save future generations. Persecuted by civil disorders, poaching, slash-and-burn agriculture and the development of nomadic agriculture, the pan-Sahelian species is on the verge of extinction. The eggs are appreciated by monitor lizards and mongooses



## MADAGASCAR

**August 19, 2021**

**Ankilibory, Atsimo-Andrefana Region, Madagascar**

124 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I, including 24 juveniles, about to be loaded onto a pirogue bound for Toliara, 150 km away, are intercepted. The smugglers, a man and a woman, are arrested. The turtles are entrusted to a shelter managed by the NGO Turtle Survival Association, located in Lavavolo more than 400 km south of Ankilibory.

Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, August 28, 2021; Madagascar-Tribune, August 30, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

## NORTHERN AMERICA

### CANADA

**August 26, 2021**

**Ottawa, Province of Ontario, Canada**

The company 1041400 Ontario Inc. known as M&A Rentals Inc. is ordered to perform restoration work around a section of Feedmill Creek and to pay 90,000 dollars or 72,000 US to Nature Conservancy of Canada to be dedicated to the protection of Blanding's turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii*, Appendix II).

From December 2016 to May 2017, 1041400 Ontario Inc. cleared a property without permission despite being aware that Blanding's turtles were living there. As a result, a permit from the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry was required prior to undertaking any work. Restoration around the creek is expected to cost the company 400,000 dollars, or more than 300,000 US\$.

Blanding's turtles live in swamps, ponds, small lakes or flooded areas. They can reach a maximum of 25 cm. They are threatened by habitat destruction, vehicle collisions and egg theft.

Government of Ontario, September 9, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

**Mid-June, 2021**

**Kingston, Province of Ontario, Canada**

Turtles Kingston volunteers had carefully surrounded the turtle nests with protection against raccoons and foxes. Five nests were looted, evidently with a spade or shovel. Approximately 125 eggs disappeared.

Around Kingston, Blanding's turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii*, Appendix II), snapping turtles (*Chelydra serpentina*, Appendix III in the United States of America), Midland painted turtles (*Chrysemys picta marginata*), common musk turtles (*Sternotherus odoratus*) and Northern map turtles (*Graptemys geographica*) can be seen. In August 2020, 300 eggs of snapping turtle and Midland painted turtle had already been stolen from nests (see "On the Trail" n°30 p.129).

Canadian Wildlife Federation, September 3, 2020 ; Global News, June 24, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**June 7, 2021**

**Phoenix, State of Arizona, United States of America**



In the United States, it is possible to breed Galapagos giant tortoises (*Chelonoidis niger*, Appendix I) if a permit is obtained. When you know that a specimen can be sold between 20,000 and 70,000 US\$, and even up to 200,000 US\$ on the international black market, it is easy to understand why the property of Jerry Fife, owner of a 27-year-old Galapagos giant tortoise, one of the few to regularly lay eggs in captivity, was stormed by 2 burglars in the middle of the night. The men tried to carry the 91-kg tortoise into their vehicle. Jerry Fife, alerted by the surveillance system, surprised them. The burglars immediately fled, leaving the tortoise behind. In their haste, they crushed the tortoise. The tortoise was rushed to the veterinarian but could not be saved.

Trafficking of live Galapagos giant tortoises, see "On the Trail" n°17 p.17, n°21 p.20, n°22 p.21, n°25 p.25 and n°32 p.202.

Daily Mail, June 16, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

**Beginning of August 2021**

**State of Texas, United States of America**



Return to the wild for 21 adult and 6 juvenile alligator snapping turtles (*Macrochelys temminckii*, Appendix III in the United States of America). They were previously fitted with GPS transmitters. They had been seized in 2016 and, since then, they had been taken care of by the Natchitoches Fish Hatchery (Louisiana) (see "On the Trail" n°17 p.20, n°18 p.19 and n°19 p.21). Alligator snapping turtles are appreciated for their meat.

KLTV, August 9, 2021; US Fish and Wildlife Service, August 9, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



## Summer 2021

**John F. Kennedy International Airport, New York,  
State of New York, United States of America**



US Fish and Wildlife agents intercepted about 100 eastern box turtles (*Terrapene carolina carolina*, Appendix II) on their way to Asia. Most of the turtles were pregnant and were wrapped in socks, without food or water to avoid suspicious noises and odors. The New England Aquarium in Boston was called in to help. The turtles were suffering from severe dehydration and ear and eye infections. Despite intensive care, most of the turtles were terminated. Soon after, the survivors began to show symptoms of ranavirus, an often-fatal virus that causes skin and internal organ damage. They were entrusted in September to a University of Illinois laboratory that is studying the impacts of this disease.

New England Aquarium, November 2, 2021; The Providence Journal, November 5, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## Summer 2021

**Washington County, State of Utah, United States of America**

Since the beginning of the year, 9 captures and seizures of desert tortoises (*Gopherus agassizii*, Appendix II) have been recorded by Utah authorities, a significant increase from previous years. All the tortoises have joined the desert tortoise adoption program. If you want to adopt a tortoise, you must create a suitable environment and apply to the authorities to obtain a permit (cost: 75 US\$). You will be responsible for the tortoise for the rest of its life, which is not to be taken lightly because a desert tortoise can live 80 years.

Desert tortoise, see "On the Trail" n°1 p.39, n°3 p.21, n°8 p.99, n°18 p.19, n°21 p.113 and p.114, n°25 p.110 and n°32 p.229.

Gephardt Daily, November 4, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

## LATIN AMERICA

### BRAZIL

**May 16, 2021**

**Porto Nacional, State of Tocantins, Brazil**

A family going for a swim at Lake Luzimangues found 10 yellow-headed side-necks (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) dead on the shore. The Institute of Nature of Tocantins (Naturatins) suspects that a fisherman caught them in his nets and abandoned them on the spot. Naturatins filed a complaint. TV Anhanguera, May 18, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

### ECUADOR

**End of May 2021**

**Quito, Province of Pichincha, Ecuador**

A 35-year-old man is arrested for carrying 16 3-day-old yellow-headed side-neck turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) in a suitcase. He was going to sell them at a market in the city. He was released under judicial supervision and forbidden to leave the country. The turtles were entrusted to the city's vivarium.

Infobae, May 31, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



**End of May 2021**

**Galápagos Province, Ecuador**

The police officer guilty of the capture and attempted sale of 185 turtles was sentenced to 3 years in prison and fined nearly 640,000 US\$. In March, Nixon P. had been caught with the baby turtles in his suitcase as he left Seymour Airport in the Galapagos Islands (see "On the Trail" n°32 p. 203). 32 turtles had already died.

20 minutos (with AP), May 19, 2021.<sup>10bis</sup>

### FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

**May 22-23, 2021**

**Maripasoula, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France**

The gendarmes seize 150 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II) that clandestine gold miners bred and sold to fund their activities.

France-Guyane, May 25, 2021.<sup>11</sup>





## ASIA

### BANGLADESH

**July 26, 2021**

**Apabari, Bagerhat District, Khulna Division, Bangladesh**

Manoj Roy is arrested for transporting 73 Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II). He bought them for 400 to 500 takas/kg (4.70 to 5.90 US\$/kg) and sold them for 1,000 to 1,500 takas/kg (11.80 to 17.70 US\$/kg). A mobile court fined him 2,000 takas (23.5 US\$). The turtles were released into the Khan Jahan Ali's tomb Complex lake, named after the Muslim saint said to have been responsible for the Unesco World Heritage Bagerhat city-mosque construction. The Business Standard, July 27, 2021; The New Nation, July 29, 2021.<sup>12</sup>



### CAMBODIA

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Cardamom Protected Forest, Cambodia**



Rescue by Wildlife Alliance rangers of 12 Asian leaf turtles (*Cyclemys dentata*, Appendix II) and 2 Asiatic softshell turtles (*Amyda cartilaginea*, Appendix II). The turtles were immediately released. In 2020, 92 turtles were confiscated by the Wildlife Alliance and 262 by the Wildlife Rapid Rescue Team. Wildlife Alliance, July 13, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

### CHINA

**May 2021**

**Gongbei border crossing, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macau.**

A Macau national attempted to enter the country with 2 live common box turtles (*Terrapene carolina*, Appendix II) hidden in 2 plastic lunch boxes. They were seized.

Chinese Customs, June 3, 2021; Zhengguan News, June 3, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**June 2021**

**Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China**

70 turtles with red tagged shells were discovered in the Tai Po River. They had been released by Buddhist followers engaging in the "mercy release" ritual, or "fangsheng" in Chinese, according to which releasing animals into the wild creates a good karma. The problem is that sometimes, non-native animals that endanger local wildlife and spread diseases are released. The SPCA has taken in the turtles and is proposing that families adopt them.

SPCA Hong Kong, June 28, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**June 16, 2021**

**Gongbei Border Post, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macao.**

Seizure of 2 yellow pond turtles (*Mauremys mutica*, Appendix II) from a traveler entering the country. Chinese Customs, July 22, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

### INDIA

#### REPEATED OFFENSE

**June 2021**

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

Sentencing of Manivannan Murugesan, Ajay Singh, Ram Singh, Mohammad Iqar, Thamim Ansari, Mohammad Irfan, Tulsidas and Tapas Basak, Azad Singh, Sampatiya Batham, Vijay Gond, Kamal Batham and Kailashi to 7 years in prison and fines ranging from 20,000 to 50,000 rupees (270 to 670 US\$) The 13 men are accused of smuggling pangolin scales and turtles from Madhya Pradesh, including at least 100,000 red-crowned roofed turtles (*Batagur kachuga*, Appendix II) for 10 years (see "On the Trail" n°17 p.41). The shipments went to Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore or Thailand via Myanmar and Bangladesh. Murugesan, the ringleader, is also wanted in Thailand where he is accused of smuggling 890 turtles in 2012.

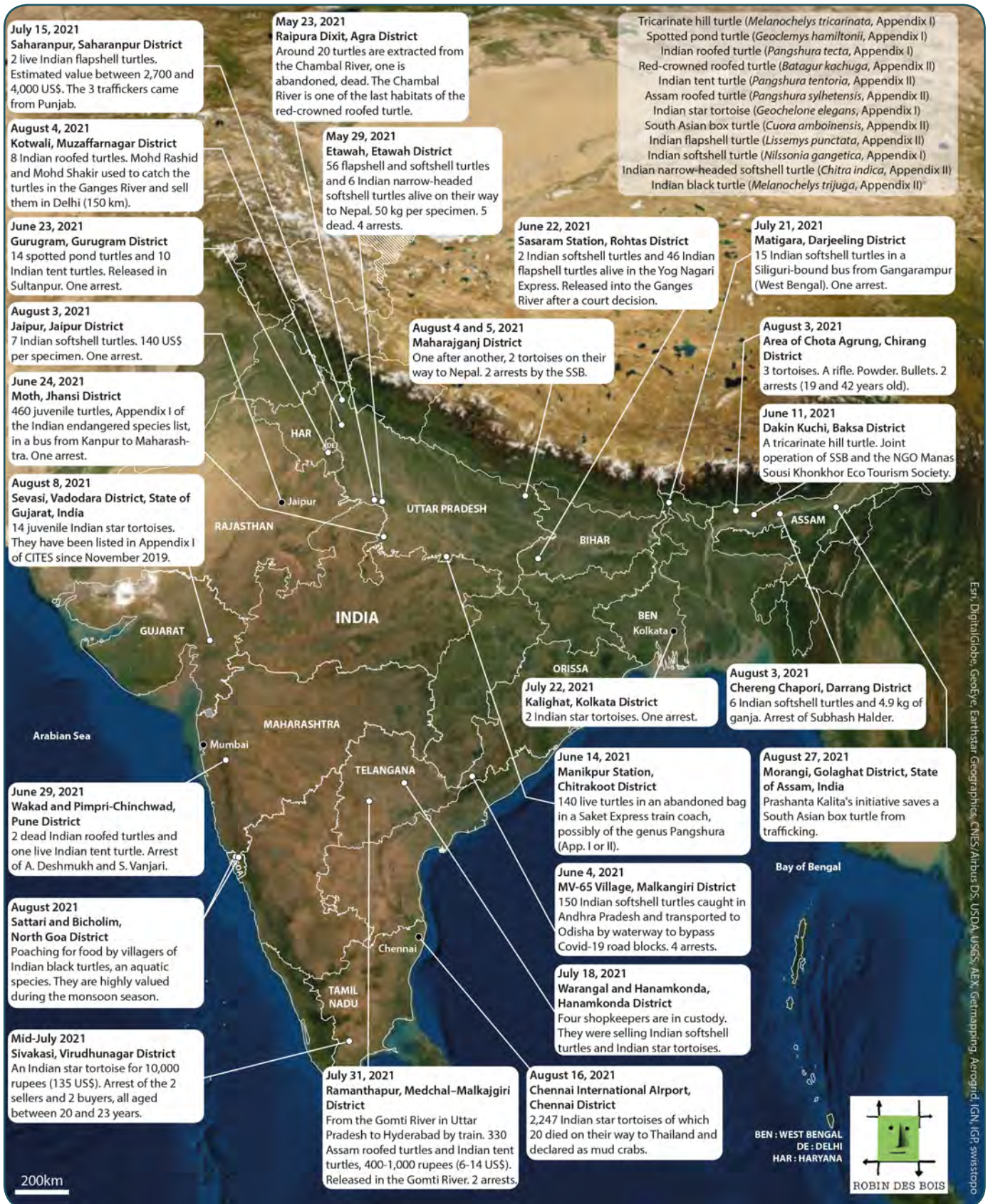
37 people are accused in this case, including 11 foreign nationals (Hong Kong, Bengali, Thai, Malayan, Sri Lankan and Malagasy nationals) and 12 repeat offenders. 21 are still on the run.

The Times of India, July 19, 2021; Hindustan Times, July 20, 2021.<sup>17</sup>





# 3,571 tortoises and freshwater turtles seized in India between May 1 and August 31, 2021 according to official and media sources







Indian softshell (*Nilssoniana gangetica*, Appendix I), July 21, 2021,  
Matigara, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India

## UZBEKISTAN

**May 21, 2021**  
**Umakay, Qashqadaryo Region, Uzbekistan**



The 700 Horsfield's tortoises (*Testudo horsfieldii*, Appendix II) piled up in the truck were rescued at the checkpoint just before entering the region of Samarkand. Perhaps they had to cross Kazakhstan to reach Russia, like more than 8,000 of their congeners seized in Russia in May 2013 and June 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°1 p.7 and n°25 p.28). They were handed over to the ecological center of Jeyran (Bukhara region) which houses endangered species. The traffickers were arrested. Radio Ozodlik, May 24, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

## THAILAND

**July 25, 2021**  
**Lamphun, Lamphun Province, Thailand**

A 64-year-old woman was arrested at the Nong Dok food market for selling snail-eating turtles (genus *Malayemys*) at her stall for 60 to 100 baht each (1.8 to 3 US\$), depending on size. She was caught by police officers posing as buyers. Seizure of 25 snail-eating turtles packed in white bags of fertilizer. Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, July 26, 2021.<sup>19</sup>





## VIET NAM

**May 15, 2021**

### **Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam**

Handing over of a 7-kg yellow-headed temple turtle (*Heosemys annandalii*, Appendix II). ENV, May 15, 2021.<sup>20</sup>



**May 24, 2021**

### **Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam**

Thirteen giant Asian pond turtles (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II), 7 elongated tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II), 6 Southeast Asian box turtles (*Cuora amboinensis*, Appendix II), 4 Western black-bridged leaf turtles (*Cyclemys atripons*, Appendix II), 2 yellow-headed temple turtles (*Heosemys annandalii*, Appendix II), a Chinese stripe-necked turtle (*Mauremys sinensis*, Appendix III in China) and 19 red-eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) are seized from a pagoda and transferred to the Cu Chi shelter. ENV exchanges with the senior monks of the temples to draw their attention to the dangers of wildlife trafficking and to encourage them to educate the faithful. ENV, May 29, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

### **Tra Vinh Province, Viet Nam**



Handing over of 2 brown tortoises (*Manouria emys*, Appendix II) of about 50 cm to ENV. The man had bought them for more than 3,000 US\$ and then decided to hand them over to the NGO. ENV, June 7, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

**June 2021**

### **Can Tho, Can Tho Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure of a giant Asian pond turtle (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II) offered for sale on the market of Can Tho. It has been transferred to the Lung Ngoc Hoang reserve. ENV, June 23, 2021.<sup>23</sup>



**June 2021**

### **Dong Thap Province, Viet Nam**

Monks at a pagoda handed over 89 yellow-headed temple turtles (*Heosemys annandalii*, Appendix II), 10 Mekong snail-eating turtles (*Malayemys subtrijuga*, Appendix II), 8 giant Asian pond turtles (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II), 3 South Asian box turtles (*Cuora amboinensis*, Appendix II), an Asiatic softshell turtle (*Amyda cartilaginea*, Appendix II) and a red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*). ENV was notified in December 2020. The turtles were turned over to the Tram Chim national park shelter, except for the red-eared slider, - an invasive species in Viet Nam. ENV, July 1, 2021.<sup>24</sup>

**July 23, 2021**

### **Hanoi Municipality, Viet Nam**

A 7-kg yellow-headed temple turtle (*Heosemys annandalii*, Appendix II) arrives at the Hanoi rescue center. A local resident had bought it out of compassion from a trafficker. ENV, July 23, 2021.<sup>25</sup>



**August 16, 2021**

### **Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam**

A 4.5-kg giant Asian pond turtle (*Heosemys grandis*, Appendix II) is handed over to ENV by its keeper. He had caught it in the Saigon river, before learning that it was illegal. ENV, August 16, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

## EUROPE

### CROATIA

**End of July 2021**

### **Šibenik, Šibenik-Knin County, Croatia**

Šibenik News reveals that a man is holding dozens of Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) in an enclosure on Put Gimnazije Street. All appearances suggest that they have been residing there for several years. Hermann's tortoises live in the wild in Dalmatia, but it is strictly forbidden to capture them, collect their eggs or keep them in captivity, except for scientific reasons. Šibenik News, July 27, 2021.<sup>27</sup>



## SPAIN

**End of May 2021**

**Carboneras, Province of Almeria, Autonomous Community of Andalusia, Spain**



The Guardia Civil, acting on information, seize 28 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II) from a private individual. The man is unable to present any official documents attesting to their legal origin or authorizing their possession. According to the investigation, he has held at least 300 protected tortoises since 2002.

Europa Press, May 25, 2021; Ideal, May 25, 2021.<sup>28</sup>

**End of August 2021**

**Port Mahon, Minorca Island, Autonomous Community of Balearic Islands, Spain**

The Guardia Civil, thanks to a tip from a local association, seize 61 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) held captive in 2 houses. They are entrusted to a shelter in Ciutadella in the hope of being released.

Menorca al Día, August 28th 2021.<sup>29</sup>

## FRANCE

### FAMILY AFFAIRS

**June 2021**

**Rochefort, Department of Charente-Maritime, France**

It all started with a house move in 2016. A son left his parents 2 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) that he did not want to take care of anymore. They moved them to their home in an enclosure, but the tortoise family grew. The owners decide to give some of them away, and then finally, why not sell them instead? It was without counting on the ex-Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage (ONCFS, National agency for hunting and wildlife), which became the Office Français de la Biodiversité (French Biodiversity Agency), which spotted their ad. Although it was below the market price (70 € or 80 US\$ instead of 250 €), it was still illegal. The ONCFS seized 16 tortoises... and left them in the custody of the couple while waiting to find a legal housing solution. The solution takes a long time to be found. It is only 5 years later that the municipal police confiscate the reptiles, which join 2 animal parks in Morbihan and Deux-Sèvres.

France Bleu La Rochelle, July 7, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

**August 23, 2021**

**Motorway A28, Department of Somme, France**



Breaking down is never pleasant, but even less when you have something to hide and the gendarmes spontaneously stop to offer their help.



The man had no choice but to open his trunk, where 6 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) were stored in cardboard boxes. He left with a fine of 300 € (360 US\$) and without the tortoises, entrusted to an association.

Var-Matin, August 25, 2021.<sup>31</sup>

## ITALY

**May 3, 2021**

**Port of Palermo, Metropolitan City of Palermo, Region of Sicily, Italy**

Seizure of 2 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II) in the vehicle of a Lampedusa resident when disembarking from the *Catania* car ferry from Tunis. They were entrusted to the Bosco della Ficuzza nature reserve. The man is charged.

Siciliaunonews, May 3, 2021; LiveSicilia, May 3, 2021.<sup>32</sup>

**May 14, 2021**

**Mesoraca, Province of Crotona, Region of Calabria, Italy**

Seizure in a house of 5 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II). They were entrusted to the wildlife rescue center of Catanzaro.

Zoom24, May 14, 2021.<sup>33</sup>



**May 18, 2021**

**Casa Santa, Trapani Province, Region of Sicily, Italy**



A father, mother, and their 20-year-old son were arrested at home. The carabinieri seized drugs, 3,600 € in cash, 3 Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) and a European goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*, Appendix III in Ukraine).  
Televallò, May 18, 2021.<sup>34</sup>

**June 8, 2021**

**Metropolitan City of Turin, Region of Piedmont, Italy**



The snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*, Appendix III in the United States of America) was lost in the street when it was spotted by a kind soul who took it to the Centro Animali Non Convenzionali shelter. It was probably abandoned. Snapping turtles live in the wild in North America. Centro Animali Non Convenzionali di Torino, June 8, 2021.<sup>35</sup>

**July 9, 2021**

**Sernaglia della Battaglia, Province of Treviso, Region of Veneto, Italy**

In the middle of the afternoon, a woman notices on her terrace a turtle that has nothing to do there. She immediately calls the carabinieri. After some doubts, the turtle is identified as a European pond turtle (*Emys orbicularis*, Appendix III in Ukraine). The preferred hypothesis is that some individuals wanted to get rid of it by throwing it over the wall. The European pond turtle was released in the oasis "Fontane Bianche" in the city. She laid 5 eggs just before.

These very discreet and fearful turtles live in muddy environments. They measure up to 20 cm for a weight between 400 and 800 grams and can live more than 60 years.

TrevisoToday, July 12, 2021.<sup>36</sup>

## RUSSIA

**Mid-August, 2021**

**Federal City of Saint Petersburg, Russia**

Anna Gnetneva is the herpetology expert of the project "Red book - not for sale", which aims to fight against the sale of protected species on the Internet. She spotted a Greek tortoise (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II) on a classified ads website. Following her report, the agents of Rosprirodnadzor (the federal service for the surveillance of natural resources) went to the owners' house. The suspects said that they had bought it 2 weeks before under the name of Hermann's tortoise (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) and realized that they could not fulfil its needs. It must be said that, according to the expertise, the tortoise is a 20-25-year-old female that seems to have been caught only recently. This is not really the ideal age to tame it.



Unlike Hermann's tortoises, Greek tortoises are found in the wild in Russia, particularly in the Krasnodar Krai and Dagestan in the southwest of the country.

Metro, August 17, 2021.<sup>37</sup>



## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

July 16, 2021

Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa



The Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital was involved in the rescue of 10 Southern African pythons (*Python natalensis*, Appendix II) that were held captive under unhealthy conditions. A 25-year-old female (5 meters long) was malnourished and did not survive on its way to the hospital. The remaining 9 snakes all received intensive care until they reached a correct weight and size. Initially, 7 pythons were released and 4 months later, the remaining 2 were healthy enough to be released as well.

Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, July 16, August 24, and December 12, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

### LIBERIA

Beginning of June 2021

Kpan, Margibi County, Liberia

The Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary is taking care of 3 young African rock pythons (*Python sebae*, Appendix II) that were taken from the wild to be sold. They were being kept inside a glass jar that was filled with water. The person who planned to sell them was arrested, prosecuted, and convicted. Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, June 10, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

### NAMIBIA

July 12, 2021

Sangwali, Zambezi Region, Namibia

Simuna Kankona is arrested and 2 python (*Python* spp., Appendix I or II) skins are seized.

At the same time, another arrest was made for the possession of crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) skins.

Namibian Sun, July 12 2021; Republikein, July 23, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

July 26 and October 27, 2021

Kahenge, Kavango West Region, Namibia. Near the border with Angola.

Hamutenya Mutjireni was arrested in possession of 2 python skins (*Python* spp., Appendix I or II). Four months later, he was sentenced to a fine equal to 460 US\$ or 20 months in prison.

Namibian Sun, August 9 and November 4, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



### UGANDA

May 19, 2021

Busia District, Eastern Region, Uganda. Border with Kenya.

The 5-kg and 3-meter-long cobra (family Elapidae) was found inside a bag abandoned by a smuggler at the Sofia Police checkpoint. The bag was taken to the Busia Police station, but when officers from the Uganda Wildlife Authority arrived, they saw that it had escaped.

Daily Monitor, May 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

### ZIMBABWE

May 6, 2021

Mhangura, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe

Chusi Bhunu, age 31, was sentenced to 30 months' imprisonment plus 6 months of probation for keeping and exploiting an African rock python (*Python sebae*, Appendix II) to perform exorcism scenes. The economic value of the python was estimated at 5,000 US\$.

NewZimbabwe.com, May 7, 2021.<sup>6</sup>





**July 13, 2021**  
**Kwekwe, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe**



Tatenda Mutema is facing charges for possession of an African rock python (*Python sebae*, Appendix II) after the 2-meter-long animal was found inside his vehicle. Mutema claims he is not the owner of the vehicle and that he was not aware of the python's presence until the moment he saw it in the back seat. He also denied any attempt to escape and stated that he was there when the rangers removed the snake from the car. He says he was paid by a traditional healer whom he does not know very well to drive his car from Kwekwe to Bulawayo, where a friend was waiting, before returning to Kwekwe. NewZimbabwe.com, July 15, 2021; iHarare News, July 17, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## NORTHERN AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**June 20, 2021**  
**Deer Park, State of New York, United States of America**

An 2.5-metre-long Burmese python (*Python molurus*, Appendix II) was found straying in a resident's driveway. The police took it to the Veterinary Medical Center of Long Island. It is illegal to own Burmese pythons in the State of New York.



News 12, June 20, 2021; New York Post, June 21, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**June 28, 2021**  
**Raleigh, State of North Carolina, United States of America**

75 snakes were seized from the home of Christopher Gliffords, a famous tiktoker. Glifford's collection came to the authorities' attention earlier this month, when one black spitting cobra (*Naja nigricincta*) escaped his house and was not caught until a week later. While it is not illegal to have a venomous reptile in North Carolina, those who own one are required to keep the animal in an enclosure preventing bites and escapes and labeled "Venomous Reptile Inside".



Information about what to do if someone is bitten must be available. As well, the owner must have a recovery plan in case of escape and report a missing reptile immediately to the authorities.

In March, Glifford had already been bitten by a green mamba (*Dendroaspis angusticeps*). Now, he is facing more than 36 misdemeanor charges. His case has created commotion as many lawmakers are now favoring a ban on the keeping of dangerous snakes by individuals. North Carolina State Senator, Jay Chaudhuri, highlighted that "there's no good reason for someone to possess 75 non-native, venomous snakes, and there's no reason for someone to possess more than 20 non-native venomous snakes."

Newsweek, June 29 and July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021; The Charlotte Observer, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021; WCIV ABC News 4, July 12, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

## LATIN AMERICA

### BRAZIL

**May 13, 2021**  
**Vila Velha, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil**

After receiving a tip-off about snakes being held captive, the police found one boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II) and one cascabel rattlesnake (*Crotalus durissus*, Appendix III in Honduras) in a house on the Ilha das Flores neighborhood. The owner did not have any legal authorization and declared he had the 2 snakes as pets. The snakes were sent to the Centro de Triagem de Animais Silvestres (CETAS-IBAMA), before being released into their natural habitat.

Folha Vitória, May 13, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



**July 5, 2021**  
**Aparecida de Goiânia, State of Goiás, Brazil**

A video showed a 2-meter long python (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II) carried by a group of partiers inside a private pool. Fifteen days after, the animal was seized and the owner of the house was indicted for animal mistreatment and trafficking. Initially, the owner tried to explain that a friend had left the python at his house, but the prosecutor quickly dismissed this lie. He was fined 3,700 reais (690.5 US\$).

G1 GO, July 5, 2021.<sup>11</sup>





**August 14, 2021**  
**Juiz de Fora, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil**



In a house in the Marumbi neighborhood, a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II) was seized. While the animal did not present any signs of mistreatment, its owner did not have any documentation to prove its ownership or origin. He argued that the boa was left at his house temporarily by a friend, but then he moved to São Paulo for work and never came back. The 36-year-old man was taken in for questioning, but after paying a fine of 3,000 reais (589.3 US\$) and signing a document assuring he would testify for further investigations if needed, he was released. Estado de Minas, August 15, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

## ECUADOR

**June 7, 2021**  
**Tena, Napo Province, Ecuador**

After being reported on social media, a 13-year-old minor was detained for illegal possession of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II). He would carry the snake around inside a backpack and profit from it by letting tourists take pictures with it. His court hearing at the Children's and Family Court of the Judiciary Council of Tena determined the boy would be released and a new case would be opened to investigate the person who gave the minor the snake. The boa was sent to El Arca Zoo. Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, June 7, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

## ASIA

## CAMBODIA

**May 25, 2021**  
**Kampong Chhnang Province, Cambodia**

In a joint operation between Wildlife Alliance and the provincial Department of Environment, 38 pythons (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II) were released back into their natural habitat. They were previously under rehabilitation at the Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre. Khmer Times, May 27, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

## CHINA

**May 2021**  
**Beijing Autonomous Municipality, China**

A royal python (*Python regius*, Appendix II) that was being kept as a pet was seized. Li Mouxin bought the snake online in August 2020 for 500 yuan (71 US\$). Beijing Daily, May 28, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**Beginning of July 2021**  
**Yantian Port, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**

Twenty python skin erhus (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II) awaiting export were seized at Yantian Port. Chinese Customs, July 10, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

## INDIA

**June 7, 2021**  
**Kandaran, Malda District, State of West Bengal, India**

An Asiatic rock python (*Python molurus molurus*, Appendix I), one monocled cobra (*Naja kaouthia*, Appendix II), and 2 India cobras (*Naja naja*, Appendix II) were seized by the Gazole forest rangers from Mazid Bede, a snake charmer. Bede used to walk around with the snakes and display them for money. The Telegraph, June 8, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

**June 22, 2021**  
**Chinchwad, Pune District, State of Maharashtra, India**

The police seized a brown sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) from Yogesh Mareappa Mhetre (21), who was planning to sell it for 1.5 million rupees (20,676 US\$). He was arrested and the snake was given to Forest Department officials. The Times of India, June 24, 2021; Hindustan Times, June 24, 2021; The Indian Express, June 24, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

**June 24, 2021**  
**Sekhuikala, Balrampur District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

A brown sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) was found inside a car. Sadan Kumar, Govind Nath Pandey, Babar Khan, and Vishal Gupta were planning to sell it. The Times of India, June 25, 2021.<sup>19</sup>

**July 4, 2021**  
**Mehrauli, South Delhi District, Delhi National Capital Territory, India**

A "snake charmer" displaying an Indian spectacled cobra (*Naja naja*, Appendix II) was charged with violating the Wildlife Protection Act and remanded to Tihar Jail. The snake was released in the Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary. The Times of India, July 5, 2021.<sup>20</sup>



**July 8, 2021**

**Jalahalli, Bnagalore Urban District, State of Karnataka, India**

Mujahid Pasha (26) and Salman Khan (23) were arrested for attempting to sell a brown sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) that they had caught near the temples in the hills in Chikkanayakanahalli. The duo initially asked for 3 million rupees (40,495 US\$) to the police officer who posed as a customer, but the deal was set at 2.6 million rupees (35,000 US\$). The police also seized a two-wheeler that belonged to one of the traffickers.

Bangalore Mirror, July 10, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**Night of July 14 to 15, 2021**

**Chandigarh, Chandigarh District, Union Territory of Chandigarh, India**

Ravi Kumar (41) was arrested for selling a brown sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) for 150,000 rupees (2,019 US\$) to 2 decoy customers. The police caught him and seized a cloth bag with the boa inside. He acknowledged that he had bought the snake from a snake charmer in Pathankot (236 km). The snake was turned over to the Forest and Wildlife Department and the police opened a case. Hindustan Times, July 16, 2021; The Indian Express, July 16, 2021; The Times of India, July 16, 2021.<sup>22</sup>



**July 16, 2021**

**Guntur, Guntur District, State of Andhra Pradesh, India**

Vanarche Kondaiah (21), Vanarche Budubuduka (75), Shaik Jilani (26), and Shaik Nagoor Vali (26) were arrested for the possession and attempting to sell 3 brown sand boas (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II). The Times of India, July 18, 2021; Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (India), July 19, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

**July 22, 2021**

**Jalna District, State of Maharashtra, India**

A Mumbai-based NGO spotted a Facebook post where Mohammad Rafique Yakub (47) and Vishal Bhimrao Sardar (25) were advertising a brown sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) for sale. The NGO alerted the Jalna Forest Department and shortly after, both men were arrested and the snake was rescued.

Mid-Day, July 22, 2021.<sup>24</sup>

facebook

**July 27, 2021**

**Lucknow District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

A trafficker is arrested in possession of 4 Indian sand boas (*Gongylophis conicus*, Appendix II), 2 brown sand boas (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) and 2 Indian rat snakes (*Ptyas mucosa*).

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 27, 2021.<sup>25</sup>

**August 4, 2021**

**Isanagar, Lakhimpur Kheri, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Three "business men", Shalu Kashyap, Mukesh Kashyap, and Sandeep Singla, and Afsar, the driver, were taken into custody after the police found a brown sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) in a wooden box inside their SUV. They confessed to have bought the sand boa from a local snake charmer in Kheri for 1 million rupees (13,466 US\$) and were on their way to Mumbai to try to re-sell it for 5 million rupees (67,332 US\$).

The Times of India, August 6, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**August 9, 2021**

**Agra, Agra District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

The Forest Department and the NGO Wildlife SOS rescued 16 Indian cobras (*Naja naja*, Appendix II), 4 oriental rat snakes (*Ptyas mucosa*), and 4 Indian sand boas (*Gongylophis conicus*, Appendix II) that were being mistreated and kept by snake charmers outside 5 temples. They were in a state of starvation and dehydration.

The Times of India, August 11, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**August 11, 2021**

**Siddharthnagar District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India. India-Nepal border.**

The joint SSB/Forest Department patrol intercepted a trafficker attempting to cross into Nepal with 3 Indian cobras (*Naja naja*, Appendix II) in a pouch. Sashastra Seema Bal, August 11, 2021.<sup>28</sup>

**August 13, 2021**

**Hyderabad, Hyderabad District and Nagarjuna Sagar, Nalgonda District, State of Telangana, India**

Rescue of 11 Indian cobras (*Naja naja*, Appendix II) exploited by snake charmers. They were sent to the GHSPCA (Greater Hyderabad Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). Many of them have injuries on the mouth following the extraction of their fangs.

The Times of India, August 14, 2021.<sup>29</sup>



**August 16, 2021**

**Diringapur, Baksa District, State of Assam, India**

Following a tip-off, the 64<sup>th</sup> battalion of the SSB, accompanied by members of the NGO Manas Eco Tourism Society, seized a python (*Python* spp., Appendix I or II) held in the village. Sashastra Seema Bal, August 16, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

**August 17, 2021**

**Narwar, Ujjain District, Madhya Pradesh, India**

Imran Habib, Ramzan Sardar, Subhan Noor Khan, and Ramdin Lakhan had caught 3 sand boas (*Eryx* spp., Appendix II) at a forest and were coming to Ujjain to sell them 22,5 million rupees (302,994 US\$). Inspector Deepika Shinde stopped their car, seized the snakes from the trunk, and arrested all 4 men. The Free Press Journal, August 18, 2021.<sup>31</sup>

**VIET NAM**

**June 27, 2021**

**Cong Hoa, Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam**

A night bus coming from Ha Long bound to Mong Cai (100 km) was searched. The police found 3 net bags weighing 13.5 kg containing cobras (family Elapidae) and oriental rat snakes (*Ptyas mucosa*). The driver confessed to have been hired to transport the snakes for 100,000 dong (4 US\$), he said. Phap Luat Plus, June 29, 2021.<sup>32</sup>

**EUROPE**

**AUSTRIA**

**July 7, 2021**

**Enns, Upper Austria State, Austria**

A 23-year-old firefighter died on his way to the hospital after being bit by a nose-horned viper (*Vipera ammodytes*). He wanted to feed the viper and took it out of its terrarium, neglecting all the safety measures. The man turned around for a moment and the viper bit the back of his hand. The firefighter illegally owned the viper, but he legally owned many other snakes, including 2 Burmese pythons (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II). He took care of snakes for years and even trained firefighters on how to properly handle reptiles. Heute, July 9, 2021.<sup>33</sup>

**SPAIN**

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Manises, Valencia Province, Valencian Community, Spain**

A 41-year-old man published an add selling a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II) on a website. Once the seller was identified, the police asked to see all the legal documents he had pertaining the ownership of the boa, as well as any authorization to commercialize the animal. The owner did not have any of the required documentation, therefore the snake was seized. Deia, July 9, 2021.<sup>34</sup>

**July 22, 2021**

**Lugo, Province of Lugo, Autonomous Community of Galicia, Spain**

Seizure of 23 pythons (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II). The owner did not have any documentation proving the snakes' legal origin, therefore the court fined him 600 € (700 US\$) and revoked his fishing and hunting license for 4 months.

El Progreso, July 22, 2021.<sup>35</sup>



**FRANCE**

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**June 15, 2021**

**Douarnenez and Plonéour-Lanvern, Department of Finistère, France**

After an investigation into 3 suspects for several months by the gendarmerie supported by the OFB, three searches are carried out. The main suspect, Aurélien Petit, lives in Douarnenez. At his home, authorities seize, among other things, about 40 reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II), 13 adults and about 40 juveniles less than 3 weeks old, and about 20 eggs and 2 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II). The eggs were destroyed while the pythons were entrusted to 3 establishments authorized to hold them. A Horsfield's tortoise (*Testudo horsfieldii*, Appendix II), a green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and tarantulas are confiscated from the other 2 suspects, linked with Mr. Petit.

=>



"You live on another planet, Sir", said the President of the Court to the defendant (Mr. Petit), who tried to explain why he had kept about 40 reptiles, mostly reticulated pythons and a few saurian, for several years without a certificate of competence, without any authorization whatsoever, outside of all the applicable regulation.



The Public Prosecutor recalls that the suspect evaluates his financial investment over 20 years at 100,000 € and the value of his stock at 500,000 €.

The President of the Court recalls that clandestine breeding supplies the traffic of non-domestic animals.

The suspect was sentenced to 8 months of suspended imprisonment, to pay the maintenance costs of the animals to the 2 shelters authorized to keep them (13,380 € and 544 €), 850 € to SDIS 29, which transported the seized animals, and 300 € in damages to the association Robin des Bois as well as to the Fondation Brigitte Bardot.

Finally, the suspect is banned from owning animals and exercising any animal-related activities for 5 years. However, he will be able to keep his 2 bulldogs until further notice.

The clandestinity and precariousness of this breeding in an apartment did not allow the suspect to resort to veterinarian services. The animals lived in one of 2 rooms and in the apartment kitchen. The snakes lived in homemade terrariums and were at risk of escaping. The reptiles lacked water to drink and bathe in when they shed their skin. Several had head infections and mouth cankers.

The investigation by the OFB and the gendarmerie brought to light an intra-European network of clandestine breeding farms operating in a closed system with unsecured exchanges and transport.

To paraphrase Rabelais, this trial has shown that passion without conscience is but the ruin of the soul...or ruin at all, because the defendant says he is completely broke.

Le Télégramme, June 15, 2021; Côté Quimper, June 15, 2021; Ouest-France, June 18, 2021; Notes Robin des Bois, January 17, 2022; Terrarium & Vivarium de Kerdanet, January 23, 2022.<sup>36</sup>

#### June 16 and 19, 2021

##### **Voujeaucourt, Mathay and Courcelles-Lès-Montbéliard, Department of Doubs, France**

Two boa constrictor carcasses (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) were found near the Doubs River. In Voujeaucourt, a group of teenagers were bathing in the river when they found one of the snakes. The second carcass was found in Mathay, near a drinking water catchment. Both snakes were more than 2 meters long and were under an advanced decomposition state. Abandonments on the eve of the summer holidays.

L'Est Républicain, June 16, 2021; France Bleu Belfort-Montbéliard, June 17 and 19, 2021; Ouest-France, June 18, 2021.<sup>37</sup>

#### ITALY

#### May 25, 2021

##### **Palermo, Metropolitan City of Palermo, Region of Sicily, Italy**

One kilo of Marijuana, 16 plants, a machete, a crossbow, a katana (type of Japanese sword), 200 €, a weighing scale, a royal python (*Python regius*, Appendix II), and a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) were found in Guillermo Garcia Granado's house, a Cuban national. His sentence was reduced by the court of appeal from 3 years to 2.5 years.

PalermoToday, May 25, 2021.<sup>38</sup>



#### August 5, 2021

##### **Figline and Incisa Valdarno, Metropolitan City of Florence, Tuscany Region, Italy**

A straying boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) in a very poor state was brought to a veterinary clinic, but it died a few days later. The carabinieri were able to track down the "owner", a woman who stated having bought the snake years ago at a fair but had no documentation to prove this transaction.

Valdarno24, August 5, 2021.<sup>39</sup>

#### SWITZERLAND

#### August 5, 2021

##### **Chancy, Geneva County, Switzerland**

Customs agents seized one boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and one "salomon" boa belonging to a 21-year-old French national, and 2 boa constrictors, 2 "crawl cray" boa constrictors, and one royal python (*Python regius*, Appendix II) belonging to a 23-year-old Egyptian national who lives in Geneva. Both men were about to engage in some sort of serpent exchange deal.

The Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office (OSAV, Office fédéral de la sécurité alimentaire et des affaires vétérinaires) demanded for the snakes that belonged to the French national to be placed in a vivarium. The Egyptian national's 3 snakes were sequestered at his home. He claimed to have bought them through classified ads in Switzerland. Tribune de Genève, August 12, 2021.<sup>40</sup>



# GECKOS, CAMELEONS, VARANS, IGUANAS ...



Panther chameleon (*Furcifer pardalis*). Photo Dao Nguyen and James Hardcastle

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**End of May 2021**

**Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

After spending several days caught in a snare, a Nile monitor (*Varanus niloticus*, Appendix II) was amputated of a leg by the veterinarians.

Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, May 30, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



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**June 20, 2021**

**Krugersdorp, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Three flap-necked chameleons (*Chamaeleo dilepis*, Appendix II) were seized and taken to the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital to get treated. They are recovering and soon will be transferred to a private reserve.

Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital, June 20, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

## MADAGASCAR

**May 17, 2021**

**Between Ambaja and Antananarivo, Sofia Region, Madagascar**

A van traveling from Ambaja to Antananarivo (883 km) was searched and 87 panther chameleons (*Furcifer pardalis*, Appendix II) were seized from 3 bags. They were transferred to the Sofia Regional Directorate for the Environment and Sustainable Development (Dredd, Direction Régionale de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable). Each chameleon can be sold 199 to 299 € (233 - 351 US\$) on the local market.

Newsmada, May 19, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



## AMERICA

### BRAZIL

**May 21, 2021**

#### **Brasilia, Federal District, Brazil**

After receiving a complaint, the police seized an iguana (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II) that was being held captive by a woman. When the police questioned her, she said she did not know it was illegal. The iguana was sent to the Centro de Triagem de Animais Silvestres (Cetas). No arrest or fines.

Metrópolis, May 22, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

### COLOMBIA

**Beginning of July 2021**

#### **Department of Quindío, Colombia**

One panther chameleon (*Furcifer pardalis*, Appendix II), a species originally from Africa, that was illegally sold as a pet, was rescued at a police checkpoint while being transported from the department of Tolima to the department of Valle del Cauca (305 km). Since the animal is not native to Colombia and therefore cannot be released into the wild, it was taken to Ukumarí ecopark.

Noticias Caracol, July 6, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

## ASIA

### CAMBODIA

**August 17, 2021**

#### **Balang, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia**



Seizure of 984 presumed dead “lizards” (maybe geckos) packed in ice filled containers inside a Virak Buntham Company truck, coming from Monduliri province and bound to Sihanoukville. No arrests were made.

Khmer Times, August 18, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

## CHINA

**Beginning of June 2021**

#### **Changsha, Changsha Prefecture, Hunan Province, China**



“Ding” was sentenced to one and a half years in prison with 2 years’ probation and a fine of 20,000 yuan (3,140 US\$) for buying 3 reptiles, including a common green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) for 6,000 yuan (900 US\$) and a white-throated monitor (*Varanus albigularis*, Appendix II) for 24,000 yuan (3,600 US\$), via WeChat between 2018 and 2019. He used them to attract customers into his tourist shop.

Sanxiang Metropolis Daily, June 8, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

**June 9, 2021**

#### **Hong Kong International Airport, China**



More than 1,4 tonnes of dried tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) were seized from 59 boxes declared as “pet food” coming from Indonesia. Estimated value: 1.24 million yuan (160.000 US\$). Hong Kong Customs, June 10, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**August 2021**

#### **Gongbei Port of Entry, Zhuhai, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macau.**

Two kg of dried common house geckos (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) are seized in the suitcase of a Chine traveler returning home. The species considered invasive is native to Southern Asia.

Chinese Customs, August 27, 2021.<sup>9</sup>





## INDIA

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021**

**Khanapara, Kamrup Metropolitan District, State of Assam, India**



Seizure of 4 Kuhl's flying geckos (*Gekko kuhli*) inside a bus coming from Jaborat. Rafiq Ali and Samsu Lama were arrested.

The Sentinel, May 5, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

**May 24, 2021**

**Neemba, Jaisalmer District, Etat du Rajasthan, Inde**

Dwarka Ram was arrested and taken into custody for the poaching of 2 Hardwick's spiny-tailed lizards (*Saara hardwickii*, Appendix II).

The times of India, May 26, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**June 2, 2021**

**Alipurduar District, State of West Bengal, India. India-Bhutan border.**

Roadside check by the Forest Department and the paramilitaries of the 34<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the SSB. Three people were arrested while carrying a tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II). It was handed over to Buxa Tiger reserve rangers.

Sashastra Seema Bal, June 2, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**June 12, 2021**

**Baila, Sirmaur District, State of Himachal Pradesh, India**

Four young men were arrested with 2 dead and one live Bengal monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), 2 spears and one axe. The survivor was released into the forest.

The Tribune, June 13, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

**June 14, 2021**

**Bhubaneswar, Khordha District, State of Odisha, India**

Seizure of 5 live Bengal monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I). Two arrests were made.

Odisha TV, June 14, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**June 24, 2021**

**Ira, Dakshin Kannad District, State of Karnataka, India**

Ibrahim and 2 other poachers were caught trying to smuggle sandalwood (*Santalum album*) from a forest reserve. They planned to sell it to Moideen Kuhni. At Kuhni's house, more sandalwood and a dead Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) were seized. Two arrests.

The Times of India, June 25, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**June 25, 2021**

**Nashik, Nashik District, State of Maharashtra, India**



Dharma Pawar was arrested for possession and trafficking of 12 Bengal monitor lizards' (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) hemipenises. He was trying to sell Hatha-Jodis (see "On the Trail" n°17 p. 24, p. 25, n°18 p. 24, n°22 p. 29, n°26 p. 30 and n°28 p.36).

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), June 26, 2021; The Time of India, June 29, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

**June 26, 2021**

**Panitaki, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India. India-Nepal border.**



One tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) was seized and entrusted to the Tukriajhar forest officers. Two people were arrested.

Sashastra Seema Bal, June 26, 2021. Siliguri Times, June 27, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

**June 27, 2021**

**Tinsukia District, State of Assam, India**

One live tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) smuggled from the State of Arunachal Pradesh was seized before being sold by 4 men, who were all arrested.

Northeast Nowm June 28, 2021.<sup>18</sup>



**June 29 and July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Bayad, Sabarkantha District, State of Gujarat, India**

A raid was conducted in Rajkumar Vaghri's house and 3 live Bengal monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), around 2-3 years old, were found inside a plastic box. Vaghri was arrested 2 days later. The consumption of Bengal monitor's meat is considered to give "superhuman strength". It is also reputed to boost virility. The India Express, July 2nd, 2021.<sup>19</sup>

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Jhagrarpar, Dhubri District, State of Assam, India**

One tokay gecko (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) was seized from Abul Kalam Azad. He was arrested. The gecko was handed over to forest officials. Northeast Now, July 6, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

**July 21, 2021**

**Ganesh Gauri, Baksa District, State of Assam, India**

A Bengal monitor lizard held in the village (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) was seized by a joint patrol of the 64th Battalion of the SSB and forest guards, right before the animal was to be cooked. Sashastra Seema Bal, July 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**August 9, 2021**

**Barobisa, Alipurduar District, State of West Bengal, India**

Joint operation by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, the Forest Department and Sashastra Seema Bal to remove 4 tokay geckos (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II) from the hands of 4 traffickers. The lizards and the traffickers were handed over to the care of the Chakchaka forest checkpoint. Sashastra Seema Bal, August 9, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

## PHILIPPINES

**July 5, 2021**

**Nino Aquino International Airport, Manila, National Capital Region, Philippines**

One live leopard gecko (*Goniurosaurus* spp., Appendix II or III) was seized from a package arriving from Thailand. Estimated value: 20,000 Philippine pesos (410 US\$). Inquirer.net, July 12 2021, UNTV, July 12, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

**August 5, 2021**

**Zamboanga, Province of Zamboanga del Sur, Philippines**

After receiving a tip-off, the police raided a couple's house and seized 2 Philippine sailfin lizards (*Hydrosaurus pustulatus*) that were up for sale. They were to be shipped to Malaysia. They say: "The animals belong to a friend."

Philippine News Agency, August 6, 2021; Rappler, August 9, 2021.<sup>24</sup>

## THAILAND

**August 5, 2021**

**Satun Province, Thailand. Border with Malaysia.**

2,000 kg of dried tokay geckos (*Gekko gecko*, Appendix II with reservation from Thailand) were seized on the *K.M.KIYA* Indonesian cargo ship. The geckos were found in 70 boxes, each weighing about 30 kg. It is likely that Thailand was used as a gateway to China. Three crew members were arrested and the ship was seized for the duration of the investigation.

Information Fusion Centre- Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), August, 2021; MGR Online, August 6, 2021; Nation TV, August 7, 2021.<sup>25</sup>

## VIET NAM

**Mid-July 2021**

**Dak Nong Province, Viet Nam**

- Nguyen Thi Hue, aged 49, was fined 725 million dong (31,510 US\$) for buying 6 live Bengal monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I).

- Pham Thi Truong, aged 34, was fined 285 million dong (12,385 US\$) for buying one live and one dead Bengal monitor lizards. VietNamNet, July 16, 2021.<sup>26</sup>



## OCEANIA

### AUSTRALIA

**Week of May 17, 2021**

**Parramatta, State of New South Wales, Australia**

Jien Chen, a 35-year-old aquarium retail business owner and licensed reptile keeper, was sentenced to 3.5 years imprisonment with a non-parole period of 2 years and 3 months for attempting to export to Hong Kong 2 packages containing Australian endemic reptiles, shingleback lizards (*Tiliqua rugosa*), blue-tongued skinks (genus *Tiliqua*), smooth knob-tailed geckos (*Nephurus levis*), and Western pilbara spiny-tailed skinks (*Egernia cygnitos*).

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, May 22 and 24, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**Week of July 19, 2021**

**Sunshine, State of Victoria, Australia**

Sui Pan Wong, aged 37, was sentenced to a 6-month prison term with a 2-year good behavior probation period. He was convicted for trying to smuggle 2 packages containing 2 blue-tongued skinks (genus *Tiliqua*) and a shingleback lizard (*Tiliqua rugosa*) hidden in a rice cooker to Hong Kong in January 2019.

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, July 30, 2021.<sup>28</sup>





# CROCODILES AND ALLIGATORS



American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*). Photo Jonathan Layman

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

#### Beginning of July 2021

##### **Crocodile Creek Crocodile Farm, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

Peter Watson, the owner of Crocodile Creek Breeding Farm near Tongaat, is sounding the alarm. He has noticed an increase in Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix II) thefts. His farm is both a mini-zoo and a point of sale for crocodile skins. There had already been a peak in 2014-2015, when 305 crocodiles vanished over 14 months.

The thieves usually climb fences and kill the animals with machetes. Occasionally they would take them alive. Watson is convinced that one Nile crocodile, seen in mid-March on the N2, escaped after being stolen.

The crocodile parts are usually then sold on the Muti markets in Faraday (Johannesburg) or Durban, for example.

Muti, cf. "On the Trail" n°4 p.51 (lions), n°8 p.61 (pythons), n°11 p.74 (lions) and p.77 (vultures), n°15 p.10, p.18 (tortoises) and p.65 (lions), n°18 p.57 (lions), n°19 p.99 (lions), n°21 p.61 (lions), n°25 p.38 (vultures), n°26 p.101 (lions, tigers, snakes, crocodiles), n°27 p.73 (lion).

The North Coast Courier, March 25, 2021; News24, July 3, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

## KENYA

#### June 13, 2021

##### **Lemek Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**

An imposing Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix II) suffered for several days from a spear stuck in its back. Catching it in a river frequented by hippos seemed difficult. The rangers managed to throw a rope around the spear's end and, by gently pulling, extracted the weapon as the crocodile sank into the river. The prognosis looks favorable.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, June 2021.<sup>2</sup>

## LIBERIA

#### June 22, 2021

##### **Margibi County, Liberia**

Two juvenile African dwarf crocodiles (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, Appendix I) are released. They were seized a few weeks earlier in a bag of rice, just before being sold.

Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, June 22, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

#### August 3, 2021

##### **Kpan, Margibi County, Liberia**

An African dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, Appendix I) rescued from traffic arrives at the Libassa sanctuary. Marks from the rope that tied its legs around its abdomen are visible.

Libassa Wildlife Sanctuary, August 3, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



## NORTHERN AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

June 5, 2021

Central, State of Louisiana, United States of America



Pastor Tony Spell, 46, was already known for not complying with Covid-related health regulations. This time, he attracted attention by killing a young American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) right next to his church and posting photos on Instagram. "We killed this about 1.8-metre gator in the lake a few minutes ago, so we're officially ready for baptisms tomorrow morning. We'll see you here at the lake." When Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries agents showed up an hour later, his smile faded and he said he acted "to protect innocent children and women". Spell is being arraigned on charges of hunting out of season and possessing a carcass. The Advocate, June 11, 2021; WBRZ-TV, June 11, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

## LATIN AMERICA

### BRAZIL

Mid-July 2021

Río Negro, State of Paraná, Brazil

Six caimans (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II), a deer, and a wild boar that were kept in a freezer were seized, as well as 3 rifles, hundreds of ammunitions and 3 knives. Fine of 30,500 reais (5,620 US\$). Portal R7, July 15, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



## ASIA

### BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

July 12, 2021

Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei-Muara District, Brunei Darussalam

Dionysius Wee, 41, owns an entertainment center that offers animal shows. He illegally possessed 2 crocodiles (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II) and was sentenced to a 3,000-dollar (2,230 US\$) fine or 3 months in prison in case of non-payment. Muhammad Syafiq Awang, 29, was sentenced to a 1,500-dollar (1,110 US\$) fine or one month in prison in case of non-payment for making a false statement.

On January 9, 2019, Syafiq and Wee had been arrested in their vehicle at the Sungai Tujoh border crossing (border with Malaysia). They were attempting to smuggle one adult and one juvenile crocodile into Brunei Darussalam. Syafiq claimed he had nothing to declare and Wee presented false certificates for the 2 specimens.

The Star, July 14, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## CHINA

June 24, 2021

Qinzhou, Qinzhou Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Attempted smuggling of 546 crocodile skins (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II). Seizure. Chinese Customs, July 6, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

July 2021

Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China

A 1.2-meter-long, 536-gram Siamese crocodile skin (*Crocodylus siamensis*, Appendix I) is seized in an incoming parcel.

Chinese Customs, July 24, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

July 2021

Jinan, Shandong Province, China

A tray made with wood and crocodile skin (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II), 290 grams, is seized from an incoming package.

Chinese Customs, July 26, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

July 2021

Shantou, Shantou Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure in 2 inbound packages of Siamese crocodile dried meat (*Crocodylus siamensis*, Appendix I) weighing 347.5 grams, among clothes and shoes.

Chinese Customs, August 3, 2021.<sup>11</sup>



## INDIA

**July 1st, 2021**

**Binikei, Angul District, State of Odisha, India**

The carcass of a 4-year-old mugger crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*, Appendix I) was found near the Mahanadi river. Authorities from Satsokia Wildlife Division believe the crocodile was victim of blast poaching.

The New Indian Express, July 6, 2021.<sup>12</sup>



**July 10, 2021**

**Reti Bandar, Thane District, State of Maharashtra, India**



Saklen Sirazuddin Khatib, 28 years old, was arrested for possessing 7 juvenile mugger crocodiles (*Crocodylus palustris*, Appendix I), thanks to a tip-off. He told police that "someone" had asked him to handle their transportation and this "someone" intended to use them for black magic rituals. The specimens' total value is estimated at 286,000 rupees (3,850 US\$). The small crocodiles will be released.

New Delhi Television, July 12, 2021; India Today, July 13, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

## INDONESIA

**August 25, 2021**

**Konawe Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province, Celebes Island, Indonesia**

Five Chinese nationals got off lightly; there was not enough evidence to charge them. These Obsidian Stainless Steel (OSS) nickel smelter employees made soup with a weakened adult crocodile (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II) and posted photos and a video of the culinary preparations. Residents had captured it in a pipe near the smelter. When BKSDA and Ministry of Environment and Forestry officers arrived on the scene, only a few bones remained.

Obsidian Stainless Steel is a subsidiary of China's Xiamen Xiangyu and Jiangsu Delong Nickel Industry groups, specializing in nickel smelting and stainless-steel manufacturing. It has been in operation since February 2020.

South China Morning Post, August 27, 2021; Coco-nuts, August 31, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



## EUROPE

### GERMANY

**May 21, 2021**

**Niederaula, Hesse State, Germany**

Various crocodile leather articles (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II) are seized in a parcel from Viet Nam and bound for Thuringia State : a handbag with a naturalized crocodile head, a key ring with a crocodile paw, a belt and 2 wallets.

German Customs, May 21, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**June 2021**

**Raubling, Bavaria State, Germany**

A man bought a second-hand Porsche Design watch on eBay from the United States of America. The band was made of alligator leather (*Alligatoridae*, Appendix I or II). When he came to pick up his package at the customs office, he had the unpleasant surprise of witnessing a customs officer inspect his purchase. The "Genuine Alligator" inscription on the band aroused suspicion. The buyer didn't have a CITES permit. Once the alligator leather's authenticity was confirmed, he was offered to retrieve the watch without the band. He faces a fine.

German Customs, October 29, 2021.<sup>16</sup>



### ITALY

**May 8, 2021**

**Venice Marco Polo International Airport, Metropolitan City of Venice, Region of Veneto, Italy**

Three crocodile skin handbags (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II) are confiscated from the luggage of a passenger returning from the United States of America.

Customs and Monopolies Agency, May 8, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



**May 13, 2021**

**Milan Malpensa International Airport, Province of Varese, Region of Lombardy, Italy**

It will have go round the world. A handbag made of American alligator leather (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) is seized in a package from Japan and destined to a resident in Milan. In 2020, Japan officially imported 160 American alligator leather items, 875 skins and 7,825 specimens from the United States of America.

Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata, May 13, 2021; VareseNews, May 13, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

**May 25, 2021**

**Livorno, Province of Livorno, Region of Tuscany, Italy**



A Rolls-Royce Phantom from Russia and destined to a company in Rome was a bit special. The seats, armrests, and insides of the doors were covered with crocodile leather (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II). It was not accompanied by a CITES certificate. Authorities proceeded to seize the vehicle and are considering removing the crocodile leather and returning the lightened car to its owner. Gonews.it, May 25, 2021; Il Giorno, May 25, 2021; FormulaPassion.it, May 30, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



**July 10, 2021**

**Venice Marco Polo International Airport, Metropolitan City of Venice, Region of Veneto, Italy**



Customs officers seized a parcel going to the United Kingdom containing 2 pairs of shoes with crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) leather ornaments and another parcel going to Hong Kong containing 2 wallets. None contained a CITES certificate.

AgenPress, July 12, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

**POLAND**

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Korczowa, Subcarpathian Voivodeship, Poland. Border with Ukraine.**

A 44-year-old man returning from Ukraine tried to sneak across the border with a stuffed African dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, Appendix I). Custom officers searched his trunk, and he did not have a CITES permit. The crocodile was seized.

TVN24, June 10, 2021; Channel 24, June 11, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**June 2021**

**Lublin, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland**

A package containing a watch strap made of alligator leather (*Alligator* spp., Appendix I or II) is seized. It was shipped from the Netherlands to a Biała Podlaska county resident (Lublin Voivodeship). National Revenue Administration, July 9, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

**RUSSIA**

**End of June 2021**

**Vityazevo, Krasnodar Krai, Russia**



A crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II) used as a tourist attraction on the beach was confiscated. Authorities spotted photos of it on social media. Its "tamer", a resident of the nearby town Anapa, was fined. He was renting the crocodile. The "owner" will likely be indicted. The crocodile joined the Vityazevo zoo.

KubNews, June 28, 2021.<sup>23</sup>



# Frogs, Toads ...



Strawberry poison frog (*Oophaga pumilio*). Photo greatest\_auk

## AMERICA

### PANAMA

#### End of May 2021

##### **Panamá Oeste and Coclé Provinces, Panama**

Seizure of 343 strawberry poison frogs (*Oophaga pumilio*, Appendix II) caught in the wetlands of the province of Bocas del Toro more than 350 km to the west. Arrest of a foreign national.

Día a Día, May 28, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

### PERU

#### May 13, 2021

##### **Cabanillas Checkpoint, Province of San Román, Department of Puno, Peru**

Seizure of 1,745 titicaca water frogs (*Telmatobius culeus*, Appendix I) hidden in a wooden box divided into 10 compartments, itself covered with a plastic sheeting, in a van of the transport company JATSA that was heading to Lima. The load was declared to contain "trout". The frogs were released into a suitable habitat.

Serfor, May 13, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



## ASIA

### CHINA

#### FAMILY AFFAIRS

##### **April 29 and August 2021**

##### **Nixizhen, Yibin Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**



Arrest of 2 brothers caught in the act of poaching 31 Asiatic toads (*Bufo gargarizans*). They were sentenced 4 months later to 4 months in prison with 6 months of probation and to 1,000 yuan or 155 US\$ each in ecological compensation. The toads were released into the Min River, a tributary of the Yangtze.

The Asiatic toad lives in East Asia, mainly in China, Japan, South Korea but also in Russia, more precisely in the Russian Far East and in the Zabaykalsky Krai. It is very similar to the common toad (*Bufo bufo*) but differs from it in the spines on the dorsal skin tubercles and a black band on each flank. Specimens become sexually mature at around 3 or 4 years.

Cover News, August 23, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

#### May 24-25, 2021

##### **Shuangjing, Liujiadu and Lufeng, Xupu County, Huaihua Prefecture, Hunan Province, China**

Night patrols summary:

- Seizure of 9 tiger frogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*, Appendix II) and about 30 dark-spotted frogs (*Pelophylax nigromaculatus*) poached with electricity.

- Seizure of 5 tiger frogs and about 10 other frogs from a man walking late in the evening in Liujiadu village whose suspicious behavior had attracted the attention of law enforcement.

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- Seizure of 9 tiger frogs and dark-spotted frogs poached with spotlights.
- Seizure of 4 tiger frogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*, Appendix II) and about 10 other frogs illegally taken from the wild.

Four arrests.  
People's Public Security News Agency, June 1, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

#### Beginning of June 2021

##### Leshan, Leshan Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China

Sentence of "Zeng" and Wu" to 6 months in prison with one year of probation for poaching 308 Asiatic toads (*Bufo gargarizans*), 2,000 yuan (313 US\$) in ecological compensation, 2,000 yuan in expert fees for ecological loss assessment, and to make a public apology in local media. They were arrested in August 2020 while trying to sell the toads they had poached the night before. Sichuan Legal Network, June 10, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



#### June 18 and December 2021

##### Jinlongxiang, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China

Arrest of "Zheng" and seizure of 45 Asiatic toads (*Bufo gargarizans*), spotlights and other catching materials. Sentence 6 months later to 3 months in prison with 6 months' probation. The toads were released into the wild. Their hunting is prohibited from March to July in Sichuan. The Beijing News, December 18, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



#### July 30 and December 2021

##### Funan County, Fuyang Prefecture, Anhui Province, China

Arrest of "Zhou", caught poaching black-spotted frogs (*Pelophylax nigromaculatus*) and Asiatic toads (*Bufo gargarizans*). He is sentenced 5 months later to 8 months in prison with one-year probation. Funan Public Network, December 24, 2021.<sup>7</sup>



## FAMILY AFFAIRS

August 9, 2021

##### Luzhou, Luzhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China

Seizure in the basement of a family home of 40 boxes filled with live toads, amounting to 519 kg. Arrest of the father and son. The duo had been trading in dried Asiatic toads (*Bufo gargarizans*) for 2 months. They were selling them for 18 yuan or 2.76 US\$ each. They were either poached wild toads or already dried toads bought from poachers for 14 yuan or 2.15 US\$. The live toads were released. Global Times, August 19, 2021; Science and Humanities, August 19, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

## INDIA

June 28, 2021

##### Patsoi, Imphal West District, State of Manipur, India

Seizure of approximately 4,500 live frogs, mainly of the species Indian skittering frogs (*Euphlyctis cyanophlyctis*) and Indian bullfrogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*, Appendix II) transported in canvas bags, from a van during a roadside check. Arrest of the driver Kennedy Kom and his passenger Leibon Bambam Kom, who presents himself as the owner of the "merchandise". He explained that he had bought the frogs for 100-120 rupees/kg (1.37-1.65 US\$/kg) in Bishnupur district (40 km) and was travelling to Senapati district (110 km) to sell them for 150-280 rupees/kg (2.06-3.85 US\$/kg). The frogs were released into a wetland. The Sentinel, June 29, 2021.<sup>9</sup>



New study shows: EU frogs' legs imports puts a serious risk to frogs in Asia and Eastern Europe

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**Munich/Paris/Brussels, 23 June 2022.**

The new report “Deadly Dish” by the non-profit organisations Pro Wildlife (Germany) and Robin des Bois (France) reveals the extent and negative ecological impact of the EU’s millions of frogs’ legs imports. The EU imports about 4070 tonnes of frogs’ legs per year, equivalent to about 81 to 200 million frogs – the vast majority of which are captured from the wild. This increasingly threatens frog populations in the supplier countries Indonesia, Turkey, and Albania. The EU is by far the world’s largest importer of frogs’ legs, and large-legged species such as the crab-eating frog (*Fejervarya cancrivora*) and the East Asian frog (*Hoplobatrachus rugulosus*) are in particular demand among supposed gourmets in Europe.



Before  
Giant Javan frog  
(*Limnonectes macrodon*)



After  
“*Limnonectes macrodon*”  
“at Picard frozen foods  
supermarket

The ongoing overexploitation of frog stocks for the EU market over decades has had dramatic consequences: “In the 1980s, India and Bangladesh were the first to supply frogs’ legs to Europe, but since the 1990s, Indonesia has taken over as the largest supplier. In the Southeast Asian country, as now also in Turkey and Albania, large frog species are dwindling in the wild, one after the other, causing a fatal domino effect for species conservation,” says Dr Sandra Altherr, co-founder of the Munich-based organisation Pro Wildlife. An effect that not only affects the frogs themselves: “Frogs have a central role in the ecosystem as insect killers – and where frogs disappear, the use of toxic pesticides is increasing. Hence, the frogs’ legs trade has direct consequences not only for the frogs themselves, but for biodiversity and ecosystem health as a whole,” emphasizes Charlotte Nithart, President of the Paris-based organisation Robin des Bois.

An earlier study by Pro Wildlife examined the EU’s frog leg imports for the first time already in 2011. The new report “Deadly Dish”, which has now been published, shows three problems frighteningly clearly:

**1 – The large-scale plundering of frog stocks for the EU market has continued in Indonesia over the last decade.** More than 30 million kg of frogs’ legs were imported by the EU from Indonesia alone in the period 2010-2019. The giant Javan frog (*Limnonectes macrodon*) is labelled on packages even though Indonesia no longer issues an export quota for this species. Consumers are being misled.

**2 – Overexploitation is now driving frog populations in other countries to the brink of extinction:** Field scientists from Turkey warn that native water frogs could be extinct by 2032 if overexploitation of populations in the wild will continue. And in Albania, the EU’s fourth largest supplier of frogs’ legs, the Scutari water frog (*Pelophylax shqipericus*), among others, is now threatened.

**3 – While the USA also imports huge quantities of frogs for consumption, these are mainly frogs raised in farms specifically for the trade. Unlike the US, the EU imports mostly wild-caught frogs – and herewith risks an ecological disaster.** About 74% of EU imports come from Indonesia, 4% from Turkey and 0.7% from Albania, where wild frog populations are increasingly threatened.

The NGOs Pro Wildlife and Robin des Bois are calling on EU member states – in particular Belgium, and France – in cooperation with exporting countries, to ensure the traceability of the frogs’ legs market, to control the information provided to consumers and develop listing proposals of frog species threatened with overexploitation in the appendices of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Further information:

New report “Deadly Dish – role and responsibility of the European Union in the international frogs’ legs trade” (June 2022, pdf, English): <https://robendesbois.org/wp-content/uploads/FROGS-LEGS-report-16-June-2022.pdf>



# INSECTS, ARACHNIDS AND ANNELIDS



Rajah Brooke's birdwing (*Troides brookiana*). Photo CheongWeei Gan

## ASIA

### CHINA

#### Beginning of May 2021

##### Beijing Autonomous Municipality, China

Three parcels from abroad, said to contain 20 "toys" and containing live beetles hidden in plastic boxes, are seized.

Chinese Customs, May 7, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



#### Beginning of May 2021

##### Zhengzhou Xinzheng International Airport, Zhengzhou Prefecture, Henan Province, China

Six test tubes containing 25 live ants including some *Crematogaster scutellaris* are seized from an incoming parcel said to contain "toys".

Chinese Customs, May 10, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

#### Beginning of May 2021

##### Suzhou Prefecture, Jiangsu Province, China

Seizure of 8 live beetles in incoming parcels.

Chinese Customs, May 12, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

#### Beginning of May 2021

##### Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China

Twenty insects including Atlas beetles (*Chalcosoma atlas*), beetles of the genus *Eupatorus*, and longhorn beetles (family Cerambycidae) are seized from an incoming parcel said to contain "toys".

Chinese Customs, May 13, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

#### May 2021

##### Dalian International Airport, Dalian Prefecture, Liaoning Province, China

Nineteen devil's flower mantis (*Idolomantis diabolica*) cocoons, each containing about 100 eggs, are seized from a package from abroad that was said to contain "handmade toys".

Chinese Customs, May 17, 2021.<sup>5</sup>





**May 2021**

**Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

Fifty Malaysian giant ants (*Camponotus gigas*) in an incoming FedEx package. Chinese Customs, May 20, 2021; Southern News Network, May 27, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



**May 2021**

**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of butterflies in a parcel. All we know about them is their overall weight: 700 grams. Chinese Customs, June 3, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

**May 2021**

**Jiangmen, Jiangmen Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

Three beetles (genus *Dynastes*) are seized from an incoming package said to contain a "lunch box". Chinese Customs, May 18, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**May 2021**

**Rongcheng, Weihai Prefecture, Shandong Province, China**

Twenty-two live beetles, *Mesotopus tarandus* and *Megasoma mars*, are seized from an inbound parcel to Shenzhen said to contain "cookies". Chinese Customs, May 22, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

**May 2021**

**Nanchang Changbei International Airport, Nanchang Prefecture, Jiangxi Province, China**



Four live Japanese rhinoceros beetles (*Trypoxylus dichotomu*) are seized in a parcel said to contain "cookies".

Chinese Customs, May 26, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

**May 2021**

**Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of 2 parcels from abroad containing 41 live beetles.

Chinese Customs, May 27, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**May 2021**

**Jiangning District, Jiangsu Province, China**

Six beetles (*Dorcus hopei*), 4 females and 2 males, are seized in an incoming parcel.

Chinese Customs, May 29, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**May 2021**

**Qingdao, Shandong Province, China**

Seizure of 66 test tubes containing 7,000 vinegar flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*), eggs, larvae, and adults from an inbound postal parcel. Chinese Customs, May 31, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

**June 2021**

**Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, China**

Seizure of 119 insects intended for research from an incoming parcel.

Chinese Customs, June 7, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China**



Seizure of 58 test tubes containing about 20 larvae of vinegar flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*) each in an incoming parcel.

Chinese Customs, June 14, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Chongqing Municipality, China**

Seizure of 11 stuffed butterflies packed in an incoming package.

Chinese Customs, June 15, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

**June 2021**

**Dalian, Dalian Prefecture, Liaoning Province, China**



Seizure of 23 live beetles and 21 larvae in 4 parcels from abroad. They are *Allotopus*, *Dynastes* and *Serrognathus titanus* beetles, stag beetles (*Homoderus mellyi*), and rhinoceros beetles (*Megasoma gyas*).

Chinese Customs, June 17, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



**June 2021**

**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of 135 live ants of the genus *Pogonomyrmex*, enclosed in plastic tubes, from an inbound postal package said to contain "toys" (plastic dinosaurs to be assembled).

Chinese Customs, June 21, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

**July 2021**

**Qingdao Liuting International Airport, Shandong Province, China**

Seizure from an outbound package of 704 live ants in plastic bottles and test tubes: some *Pachycondyla*, some *Tetramorium* and a *Camponotus turkestanus*. Ants are also exported.

Chinese Customs, July 12, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



**July 2021**

**Kunming, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**

Seventy live ants (*Manica rubida*) distributed between 70 test tubes are seized from an incoming package.

Chinese Customs, July 22, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

**July 2021**

**Tianjin Autonomous Municipality, China**

Seizure in an incoming parcel of 8 live insects, each slipped in a sample tube: *Megasoma elephas*, *Serrognathus titanus palawanicus*, *Homoderus mellyi*, and *Dorcus miwai*.

Chinese Customs, July 26, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**July 2021**

**Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China**

Two live katydids (family Tettigoniidae) are seized from an incoming package.

Chinese Customs, July 26, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

**July 2021**

**Northern China**

"Li Song" was sentenced to 2 years and one month in prison and fined 10,000 yuan (1,500 US\$) for animals on his online platform "Reptile and Arthropod Family" some animals that were listed under CITES, including a Mexican fireleg tarantula (*Brachypelma boehmei*, Appendix II), a Mexican flameknee tarantula (*Brachypelma auratum*, Appendix II), and Burmese pythons (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II). More than 5,000 animals were seized from his premises. About 100 clients of his were arrested; 49 will be prosecuted. "Song" was the leader of the pet spider market in northern China. His network covered 19 provinces. His profits since 2018 are estimated at nearly one million US\$. He bought juvenile tarantulas for 10 yuan each (1 US\$) and sell them a year later for 10 times that amount. Species Impact Victim Statements (SVIS), July 26, 2021.<sup>23</sup>



**July 8, 2021**

**Gongbei Port of Entry, Zhuhai, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macau.**

100 five-horned rhinoceros beetles (*Eupatorus gracilicornis*) and 10 rhinoceros beetles (genus *Chalcosoma*) were seized from the luggage of a passenger named "Liu".

Chinese Customs, July 27 and 30, 2021.<sup>24</sup>



**July 2021**

**Chongqing Municipality, China**

Seizure of 200 silkworm eggs in a CD box. Each measures between 0.5 and 1 mm.

Chinese Customs, August 2, 2021.<sup>25</sup>

**July 2021**

**Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, China**

Three Hercules beetles (*Dynastes hercules*), one male and 2 females, are seized from an incoming package said to contain "plastic dolls".

Chinese Customs, August 4, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**Beginning of August 2021**

**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**

Thirty red harvester ants (*Pogonomyrmex barbatus*) carefully split in 30 test tubes are seized from a package said to contain "construction toys". Red harvester ants are native to North America and Mexico. In case of bite, their venom can cause severe pain for several hours.

Chinese Customs, August 19, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

**August 2021**

**Gongbei Port of Entry, Zhuhai, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Macau.**

Seizure of 7.8 kg of dried millipedes in the luggage of 2 Chinese citizens and a Macanese citizen trying to enter the country.

Chinese Customs, August 18, 2021.<sup>28</sup>



**August 2021**

**Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China**

Four golden stag beetles (genus *Allotopus*) measuring between 5 and 6 cm long, slipped in test tubes, are seized from an incoming package declared to contain "traditional Japanese pastries".

Chinese Customs, September 10, 2021.<sup>29</sup>



## INDIA

July 2, 2021

Chennai International Airport, State of Tamil Nadu, India



A parcel sent from Poland was checked. Airport customs suspected it contained arthropods or invertebrates. The recipient lives in Aruppukottai (Virudhunagar District, State of Tamil Nadu). Upon opening, detectives discovered a polystyrene box containing 107 plastic tubes, each holding a live spider. The spiders were tarantulas of the genera *Aphonopelma* and *Brachypelma* (Appendix II), found in Northern and Central America. The parcel is said to have been returned to the sender.

India TV, July 2, 2021; The Hindu BusinessLine, July 2, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

## PHILIPPINES

June 30, 2021

Ninoy-Aquino International Airport, Manilla, National Capital Region, Philippines

Seizure in an unclaimed parcel sent from Thailand to Aldwin Capucae in Pasay and said to contain "academic plastic teaching material" of 27 tarantulas, notably of the genus *Ornithoctonus*, 12 spiderlings and 5 millipedes in plastic tubes. Market value estimated at 500,000 pesos (10,460 US\$).

BusinessMirror, July 1, 2021; Philippine News Agency, July 1, 2021.<sup>31</sup>

## EUROPE

### GERMANY

Mid-June 2021

Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Germany

Customs officers intercepted 100 Rajah Brooke birdwings (*Troides brookiana*, Appendix II) from a Neumünster (Schleswig-Holstein State) woman who clearly intended to sell them online. The "goods" came from Thailand, but the butterflies were allegedly poached in Malaysia. German Customs, July 9, 2021.<sup>32</sup>



### POLAND

May 7 and June, 2021

Hrebenne Border Post, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland. Border with Ukraine.



- A bus arriving from Ukraine was inspected. Seizure of 14 kg of live leeches in a passenger's luggage. He explained that he received the leeches in Lviv, Ukraine, and that he was heading for Warsaw. He claimed he thought they were worms to bait fish. He was fined 4,000 zlotys (1,060 US\$).

- Two kg of live leeches were seized in a woman's luggage.

Two species of leeches are listed in CITES appendices: medicinal leeches (*Hirudo medicinalis*, Appendix II) and southern medicinal leeches (*Hirudo verbana*, Appendix II).

National Revenue Administration, May 7 and July 9, 2021.<sup>33</sup>





# MULTI-SPECIES

Events concerning among others elephants, rhinos, felines, bears or pangolins and their by-products are indicated by these pictograms:



Cases concerning exclusively pangolins, felines and elephants, see page 20, elephants, hippos, rhinos, hornbills, and spermwhales (ivories) see page 58, felines, elephants and rhinoceros, see page 74

## WESTERN AFRICA

### BENIN

**June 24, 2021**

#### Benin

Benin's National Assembly unanimously adopted law N°2021-04 "on the protection and regulation of international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora". Provisions apply to the possession, export, re-export, import, introduction from the sea, transport, transit and transshipment of specimens of protected species. This law fills a legal gap, allowing Benin to transpose the CITES Convention in a national law.

La Nation, June 25, 2021 ; Fédération Atlantique des Agences de Presse Africaines, June 26, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

## CENTRAL AFRICA

### CAMEROON

**June 23, 2021**

#### Balessing, West Region, Cameroon

Arrest of 4 traffickers, including a traditional chief and a woman who recently bribed her way out of jail, on the Dschang-Bafoussam national road. They arrived on bikes and were in possession of grain bags containing skins from 3 leopards (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and one crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II). The operation was conducted with the support of the NGO LAGA. A fifth trafficker evaded arrest and is on the run.

EAGLE, June 24, 2021; LAGA, June 2021; Alwihda, July 7, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



## GABON

**August 13, 2021**

#### Port-Gentil, Province, Gabon

#### Ogooué-Maritime

Arrest of trafficker Jean De Dieu Guimeni, alias Henry, a traditional healer. He was apprehended in possession of 2 elephant tusks weighing 0.4 kg, pangolin scales weighing 2 kg, a leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) skin and 12 leopard teeth, a python (*Python* spp., Appendix I or II) head, an elephant tail and a monkey skull.

EAGLE, August 23, 2021; Conservation Justice, August 31, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



© Conservation Justice



## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

July 22, 2021

### Democratic Republic of the Congo

Sometimes one wonders whether governments are taking decisions under the influence of alcohol or an obvious and collective miscalculation. The decree signed on July 24, 2020 by the former Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development and the former Minister of Finance of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and brought to light a year later thanks to Actualité.cd and Environews RDC, deserves to be on the top of the podium in the biodiversity and peace sections.

As if there were not enough weapons, traps, poaching, unrest, racket and cruelty, it is now possible, at least on paper, from east to west of the country (more than 2 millions km<sup>2</sup>), to hunt a gazelle, an elephant, a rhinoceros, an okapi, a lion and 224 other terrestrial, aquatic and even marine species. In this large trophy encyclopedia, manatees, leatherback turtles and humpback whales are mentioned. Hunters from all over the world could afford to kill them for the loss leader price of 670 US\$ all-inclusive, with the permit to export by-products. Flora has not been forgotten. The tax for collecting the bark of *Prunus africana* is set at 3 US\$/kg (*Prunus africana*, see "On the Trail" n°28 p. 34 and n°31 p. 80).

To speak of an outcry would be insufficient. It is a wave of protests that is rising from the towns, the savannahs and the forests. All the NGOs are up in arms. The Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the environment and sustainable development, Eve Bazaiba Masoudi, has taken up the issue. She declared that she was going to analyze this decree objectively and without any pressure. To date (July 2022), the government has apparently remained insensitive to the calls for repeal made by ICCN, CODELT (Conseil pour la Défense Environnementale par la Légalité et la Traçabilité, Council for Environmental Defence through Legality and Traceability), JUREC (Juristes pour l'Environnement au Congo) and CECIC (Center for Citizens Conserving) which, in Uganda, is concerned about the impact of this decree on wildlife and in particular on elephants who travel back and forth between Virunga park and the parks of western Uganda.

Inter-ministerial Decree n°006/CAB/MIN/EDD/2020 and n°CAB/MIN/FINANCES/2020/069 of July 24, 2020 fixing the duty rates, taxes and fees to be collected at the initiative of the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, in terms of fauna and flora ; Actualité.cd, July 22 and 27 and August 23, 2021; Environews RDC, July 23 and 24 and August 24, 2021; Mediacongo.net, August 1, 2021; Agence d'information d'Afrique centrale, August 7, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



## REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

June 23 and 30, September 23, 2021

### Nianga and Ngouhaili, Department of Niari, Republic of the Congo

Arrest of Alexis Manguila in Nyanga and Jean Jacques Balenda in Ngouhaili for the slaughter of elephants and chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) with weapons and munitions of war (PMAK- Kalashnikov Automatic Machine Gun) and for the possession, circulation, and commercialization of their meat. They were detained at the Dolisie prison.

On September 23, Balenda was discovered by PALF lawyers to have been granted a provisional release pending trial.

Projet d'appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune sauvage (PALF), July and September, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

August 12, 2021

### Ignié, Pool Department, Republic of the Congo



An agreement to form a new wildlife park was signed by the Congolese Minister of Forest Economy and the president of the Humanitarian Association of Multiform Actions (Ahdam). The park will cover 400 hectares in a region 45 km north of Brazzaville. Some species within the park include the greater white-nosed monkey (*Cercopithecus nictitans*, Appendix II), the De Brazza's monkey (*Cercopithecus neglectus*, Appendix II), the hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II), the African sharp-nosed crocodile (*Crocodylus cataphractus*, Appendix I), the Nile monitor (*Varanus niloticus*, Appendix II), the African python (*Python sebae*, Appendix II), the dwarf buffalo (*Syncerus caffer nanus*), the duikers (subfamily Cephalophinae), the sitatunga (*Tragelaphus spekii*), the bushpig (*Potamochoerus larvatus*), the African brush-tailed porcupine (*Atherurus africanus*), the greater cane rat (*Thryonomys swinderianus*), and freshwater turtles (Testudinidae, Appendix I or II). As per the agreement, Ahdam will manage the park for 15 years and it will be a place of semi-release for animals rescued from poaching.

Afrik 21, August 17, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



## EASTERN AFRICA

### UGANDA

#### OPERATION FATA POACHER

May-July 2021

**Kampala Metropolitan Area, Murchison Falls, Queen Elizabeth and Kibale Conservation Areas, Central, Northern and Western Regions, Uganda**

Three kg of scales, a smoked pangolin head, 14.2 kg of raw ivory, an elephant penis, 2 parrots (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II), 2 kob (*Kobus kob*) horns, 80 green pigeons (*Treron calvus*), 2 tortoises (order Testudines), 559 kg of wild animals' meat including waterbuck (*Kobus ellipsiprymnus*), African buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*) and duiker (subfamily Cephalophinae), 100 catfish (order Siluriformes), 8 fishing nets, 4 axes, 37 traps, 3 spears, 10 canoes, 17 paddles, 2 motorbikes, 2 daggers, 4 machetes, 6 mobile phones and a computer are seized. The operation was coordinated by the AWF (African Wildlife Foundation) and the UWA (Uganda Wildlife Authority).

African Wildlife Foundation, September 15, 2021.<sup>7</sup>



### TANZANIA

June 4, 2021

**Selous Game Reserve, Lindi Region, Tanzania**

**Tanzania: between better and worse**

The NTAP (National Task Force Anti-Poaching) announces that 11 networks involved in ivory trafficking were dismantled between 2015 and 2020; 1,600 poachers were sentenced during the same period to 10 to 30 years in prison; 2,533 firearms were seized; the elephant population has increased; all these positive results are consolidated by seizures of rhino horns, live pangolins, tortoises and other protected reptiles, and a close, fruitful cooperation between customs, anti-poaching forces and magistrates has been established. Between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021, 302 poaching attempts were thwarted. This is the honor roll.

At the same time, the Selous Wildlife Reserve, a UNESCO world heritage site, is being devastated by a hydroelectric dam across the Rufiji river gorges, by a network of worksite roads, and by a truck traffic facilitating the poaching and export of tusks, teeth, skins and horns. The dam's reservoir will flood 1,350 km<sup>2</sup> of savannah and forest. No impact assessment is available on the management and maintenance of this huge artificial tropical lake or on the fate of the expropriated birds, antelopes, African wild dogs and hippos.



And this is not the only planned disaster that is going to hit Tanzania in the coming years. The East African Crude Oil Pipeline, the Franco-Chinese project (see "On the Trail" n°30 p.153-154), will come down from Uganda with great fanfare, cutting across Tanzania through the Biharamulo reserve (home to elephants, hippos, giraffes and red colobuses) south of Lake Victoria, crossing rivers, displacing oil refugees, breaking through the Wembere steppe, an ecosystem classified as a key biodiversity area, and ending up in the Tanga mangroves where the oil terminal will be built to accommodate 300-meter-long oil tankers bound for China. More than 2,000 km<sup>2</sup> of fertile land, home to rare trees and birds, will be directly destroyed and, even worse, are subject to the immediate risks of work site poaching and, in the long run, accidental, seismic or criminal oil spills.

WWF and CSCO, 2017. Safeguarding People & Nature in the East African Crude Oil (EACOP) Pipeline Project, A preliminary environmental and socio-economic threat analysis, WWF and CSCO Research Paper No. 3, 2017, Kampala, Uganda; Map for Environment, April 8, 2021; Xinhua, June 4, 2021; Daily News, June 9, 2021; The Guardian, June 9, 2021; Mongabay, June 17 and July 26, 2021; Environmental Investigation Agency, June 24 and July 14, 2021; Daily News, July 21, 2021; The East African, August 21, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

May 15-16, 2021

**Beitbridge Port of Entry, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Border with Zimbabwe.**

Seizure of 1,100 emperor scorpions (*Pandinus imperator*, Appendix II), 42 Natal hinge-backed tortoises (*Kinixys natalensis*, Appendix II) and one Nile monitor (*Varanus niloticus*, Appendix II). They were stored in plastic boxes with holes to prevent suffocation. The seizure's overall value is estimated at 810,320 rand or nearly 57,000 US\$.

DefenceWeb, May 19, 2021.<sup>9</sup>



**Beginning of June 2021  
Bisley Valley Nature Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

The patrols and Msunduzi community are seeing an increase in snare poaching. "Quite often, they will set the snares and then they don't return in time to see if the animal has been caught in the snare and the animal is just left to rot." Zebras (genus *Equus*, *Equus zebra hartmannae* and *Equus zebra zebra*, Appendix II, found in South Africa), impalas (*Aepyceros melampus*), and wildebeests (genus *Connochaetes*) die for nothing. East Coast Radio, June 23, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



**NORTHERN AMERICA**

**CANADA**

**May 25 and July 13, 2021  
Beaver Creek, Yukon Territory, Canada.  
Border with the United States of America.**

Alan Jerome Frazier of Lubbock, Texas and another person were attempting to enter the Yukon from Alaska. In the vehicle were 2 tusk sections and 13 ivory rings, 7 whale (Cetacea, Appendix I or II) by-products, a bear (Ursidae, Appendix I or II) skull and paw, 3 bobcat (*Lynx rufus*, Appendix II) skins, a walrus skull (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada) with his tusks, 2 sheep horns (genus *Ovis*), 2 sealskin hats (superfamily Pinnipedia), 8 firearms and 15 magazines. Frazier told Canadian Customs that all of these items were part of his personal effects.



He appeared in court in Beaver Creek on July 13th. He must pay fines of 1,200 dollars (970 US\$) and 8,500 dollars (6,870 US\$) to get his vehicle back. CBC/Radio-Canada, July 15, 2021; Terrace Standard, July 15, 2021.<sup>11</sup>



**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**May 26, 2021  
Highgate, State of Vermont, United States of America**



Vanessa Rondeau, 26, manager of "The Old Cavern", a curiosity cabinet on Duluth Avenue in Montreal, is a specialist in skulls of all species, including the human species. In her store are offered for sale skulls of American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II), bobcat or lynx (*Lynx* spp., Appendix I or II), deer (family Cervidae), fox (family Canidae), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), fisher (*Pekania pennanti*), weasel (genus *Mustela*), hedgehog (family Erinaceidae), cat, mouse, coyote (*Canis latrans*), and a skull said to be human set with pink crystals (a bargain! 40 US\$). It should be noted that the international trade in *Homo sapiens* skulls does not seem to be subject to any particular legal framework and that non-human primate skulls can eventually circulate under the name of human skulls (see "On the Trail" n°7 p.80, n°10 p.72, n°14 p.38, n°27 p.129 and n°31 p.31). When she was arrested in her vehicle at the border crossing of Highgate Springs, Vermont, she was bringing back to Canada a supposed human skull "with mounted butterflies" (species not specified), 18 skulls and 7 legs of crocodiles (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), 6 jaws of sharks possibly in Appendix I or II, 8 horns of African antelope (family Bovidae, 17 species in Appendix I or II), 23 legs of raccoon, a pale-throated 3-toed sloth (*Bradypus tridactylus*), 2 horseshoe crabs (family Limulidae) and 30 sea stars (class Asteroidea).



Ms. Rondeau's movements and transactions had been tracked for 2 years by US Fish and Wildlife. She sold stuffed crows (genus *Corvus*) for 325 US\$, polar bear skulls (*Ursus maritimus*, Appendix II) between 685 and 799 US\$ (including delivery).

All of her shipments to the United States were labeled "art pieces," "cadre," or "gift," whether they were skulls or Hartmann's mountain zebra (*Equus zebra hartmannae*, Appendix II) skins. Between November 2018 and September 2019, she made 18 incursions into the United States, mostly at night between midnight and 2:00 a.m. through the Champlain border crossing, New York State, 65 km from Montreal.

The NGO ATHAR (Antiquities Trafficking and Heritage Anthropology Research) specialized in tracking down antiques illegally offered for sale, takes the opportunity to underline once again that Facebook is in all fields a facilitator of crime.

The installations of Vanessa Rondeau had until then escaped the attention of Canadian authorities and of the public.

US Department of Justice, May 28, 2021 and January 28, 2022; CBC/Radio-Canada, May 29, 2021; National Post, May 31, 2021; Great Lakes Echo, June 7, 2021; Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, June 9, 2021.<sup>12</sup>



July 1, 2021

**State of Nevada, United States of America**

The Governor of the State signed the “Tiger King” law, which, despite opposition from the event industry and zoos, prohibits the importation, possession, sale, transportation, breeding and exhibition of several animal species considered dangerous to public safety and likely to spread disease. Another major objective of the law is to protect animals from commercial abuse and mistreatment. Exemptions are granted to licensed, zoos accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the US Fish and Wildlife, and other State agencies. Elephants, primates (non-human, the law states), bears (Ursidae, Appendix I or II), wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) and hyenas (family Hyaenidae) are covered as well as cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I), clouded leopards (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I), Sunda clouded leopards (*Neofelis diardi*, Appendix I), jaguars (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), leopards (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I), tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), lions (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II), pumas (*Puma concolor*, Appendix I or II), and giant pandas (*Ailuropoda melanoleuca*, Appendix I). The law came into effect on July 1, 2021.

The Nevada Independent, April 5, 2021; PETA, June 4, 2021; Senate Bill No. 344.<sup>13</sup>



August 2021

**Montgomery County, State of Texas, United States of America**

To show his children in vivo what wildlife is, a father caught an American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*, Appendix II) in Lake Conroe and an alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*, Appendix III in the United States of America) in Lake Livingston and placed them in 2 basins in the middle of the garden. To accomplish his educational mission, he got hold of Amazonian freshwater stingrays (family Potamotrygonidae) and make them turn in circles in an aquarium. All these animals are listed in Appendix II or III of CITES. The turtles and stingrays were entrusted to specialized institutions, the alligator to its original, natural environment.

Laredo Morning Times, November 19, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



August 12, 2021

**Troutman, State of North Carolina, United States of America**

A small list of violations found at Zootastic by the USDA.

Three grey wolves (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II) have ear wounds with chronic myasthenia gravis and the accredited veterinarian was not notified.

The enclosure of squirrel monkeys (*Saimiri* spp., Appendix I or II), spider monkeys (*Ateles* spp., Appendix I or II), patas monkeys (*Erythrocebus patas*, Appendix II), red-handed tamarins (*Saguinus midas*, Appendix II) and vervets (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) is covered on the ground with feces, food waste, and rubble.

The enclosure of the lynx (*Lynx* spp., Appendix I or II) is strewn with nailheads due to wear and tear of the boards.

A tiger cub (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) is displayed under sedation.

Fruit given to the monkeys is rotting garbage and other food for other animals is moldy and polluted with mouse droppings.

Caregivers use outdated medication.

Under-qualified employees build and guard enclosures from which animals can escape. A kinkajou (*Potos flavus*, Appendix III in Honduras) was eaten by a lion cub (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II), a maintenance worker was seriously injured by a wildebeest (genus *Connochaetes*).

The wire mesh in the serval enclosure (*Leptailurus serval*, Appendix II) has “wire panel points” sticking into the housing area.

The record of dead animals and causes of death is not complete.

Tiger cubs and prairie dogs (genus *Cynomys*) disappear without death certificates.

Veterinary care is reduced to a minimum, e.g. quarterly analysis of animal excrement and deworming treatments are avoided.

PETA, September 22, 2021.<sup>15</sup>



## LATIN AMERICA

### ARGENTINA

#### February-June 2021

##### Uspallata, Province of Mendoza, Argentina

A moving company's truck is searched. Inside, the officers found boxes containing animal parts. It is heading to the city of Uspallata. The Natural Renewable Resources Agency identified the sender of the shipment and located him in Buenos Aires. A search of the consignee's premises led to the seizure of 4 large calibre weapons, ammunition and 55 stuffed animals, including 2 tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), brown bears (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix I or II), an African lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II), one maned wolf (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*, Appendix II), a blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III, Pakistan and in Nepal), an axis deer (*Axis axis*), a water buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*), a Himalayan tahr (*Hemitragus jemlahicus*), a dall sheep (*Ovis dalli*), wild boars (*Sus scrofa*), a manx Loagthan (genus *Ovis*) and a Texas longhorn (family Bovidae). Other animals of the local fauna, also stuffed, were seized such as pumas (*Puma concolor*, Appendix I), rheas (genre *Rhea*, Appendix I or II), chacoan peccaries (*Catagonus wagneri*, Appendix I), collared peccaries (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II), white-lipped peccaries (*Tayassu pecari*, Appendix II), great horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*, Appenedix II), common caracaras (*Caracara plancus*, Appendix II), Chilean flamingos (*Phoenicopterus chilensis*, Appendix II), and South American grey foxes (*Lycalopex griseus*, Appendix II). Diario UNO, June 23, 2021.<sup>16</sup>



#### Mid-June 2021

##### Maggiolo, Province of Santa Fe, Argentina

One tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), one female lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I) and one capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*) were seized from a farm. Two live blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and 4 skulls, 2 tigers' (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) and 2 lions' (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I), were also found. Additionally, the Public Prosecutor's Office investigates a possible illegal transfer of a bear (Ursidae, Appendix I or II) to a zoo.

Diario UNO Santa Fe, June 15, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



#### Mid-June 2021

##### Vinalito, Jujuy Province, Argentina

Seizure of feline, snake and crocodile' skins, of an Andean hairy armadillo (*Chaetophractus nationi*) armour, and fire weapons. A 28-year-old man was arrested. El Tribuno Jujuy, June 14, 2021.<sup>18</sup>



#### June 30, 2021

##### Tecka, Province of Chubut, Argentina

Over 1,000 kg of guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II) and greater rhea (*Rhea americana*, Appendix II) meat, divided into 40 bags, were seized. Arms and ammunition were also seized. Diario Jornada, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>19</sup>

#### End of July 2021

##### Bermejo, Department of Caucete, San Juan Province, Argentina

Three infraction acts for possession of remains of rhea (*Rhea* spp., Appendix I or II) and 2 boleadoras (hunting tool traditionally used by indigenous groups in Argentina), for possession of 2 dead Patagoinan maras (*Dolichotis patagonum*), and for attempted poaching. The boleadoras were seized. San Juan Government Information Service, June 29, 2021.<sup>20</sup>



#### End of July 2021

##### San José de Jáchal, San Juan Province, Argentina

Five necks, 2 heads, one rib, one loin, and 10 bags full of guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II) meat were seized. Total weight: 51.090 kgs. As well, 7.375 kg of Darwin's rhea (*Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix II) meat, 2 guanaco skins, and 2 Darwin's rhea wings were seized.

San Juan Government Information Service, June 29, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

#### End of July 2021

##### Deapartment of Albardon, San Juan Province, Argentina

Seizure of 2 live great kiskadees (*Pitangus sulphuratus*), 6 dead maras (*Dolichotis patagonum*), a live armadillo (family Dasypodidae), 12 dead rheas (*Rhea* spp., Appendix I or II), 4 metal traps and a net.

San Juan Government Information Service, June 29, 2021.<sup>22</sup>





## BRAZIL

May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

Duque de Caxias, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



At a market, 3 young marmosets (*Mico spp.*, Appendix II), a baby turtle (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II), and an owl (order Strigiformes) were seized. Two arrests were made.

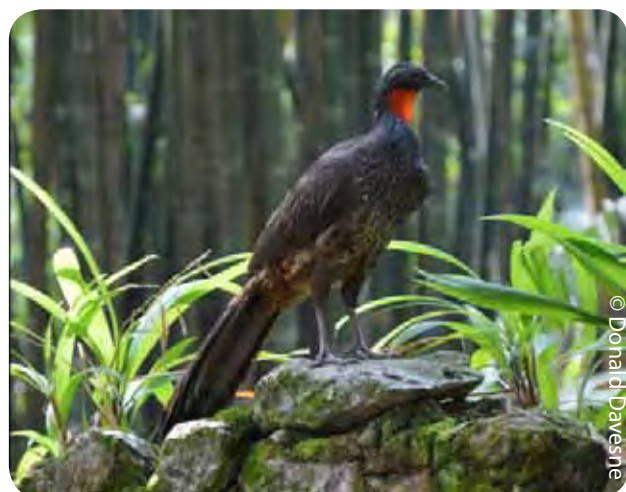
G1 Rio, May 2nd, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

Ipueiras, State of Tocantins, Brazil

A turtle (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II), 5 typical guans (genus *Penelope*), and 150 kg of beef meat were seized from a private property. The duo, who fled when the police arrived, had killed and butchered the animal in a nearby farm.

G1 Tocantins, May 4, 2021.<sup>24</sup>



Rusty-margined guan (*Penelope superciliaris*)

Beginning of May 2021

Cassilândia, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil



Seven macaws (*Ara spp.*, Appendix I or II), 2 parrots (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II), 2 tufted capuchins (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II), and 17 turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II) were seized at the house of a man in his 70's. The man explained that the people of the city entrusted him with the animals and that he takes care of them, a bit like a shelter. However, he has no authorization for this type of activity. He is also suspected of taking advantage of these animals by selling them. He was fined 64,000 reais (12,000 US\$).

Campo Grande News, May 5, 2021.<sup>25</sup>

June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Barueri, State of São Paulo, Brazil



A 22-year-old man was arrested and 2 marmosets (*Callithrix spp.*, Appendix I or II), 7 turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II), a corn snake (*Pantherophis guttatus*), and 22 birds were seized at his home.

R7, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Santo Antônio do Pinhal, State of São Paulo, Brazil



The police received information that a resident was trafficking in wildlife. The officers discover lizards, frogs, snakes ... 72 animals in total, as well as flies and mice to feed them. Two guns, ammunition, and marijuana were seized. The owner of the place, a 36-year-old man, cannot be found. He faces a 24,600 reais (5000 US\$) fine.

G1 Vale do Paraíba e Região, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.<sup>27</sup>



June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Ituiutaba, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

A suspect in a fraud case had his home searched. A jaguar skin (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), 2 pairs of deer antlers, a turtle shell, 3 firearms, dozens of rounds of ammunition, and 21 bladed weapons were confiscated.

O Tempo, June 5, 2021.<sup>28</sup>



June 7, 2021

**Coelho Neto, State of Maranhão, Brazil**



Ieda Bezerra Aquino de Souza was arrested and 4 jandaya conures (*Aratinga jandaya*, Appendix II), 9 snakes - boas constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II), pythons (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II), corn snakes (*Pantherophis guttatus*) -, an iguana (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II), a tegu (*Tupinambis* spp., Appendix II), 7 geckos, a turtle (*Trachemys dorbignii*), and 4 tarantulas (*Dolichothele diamantinensis*) were seized at her home.

G1 Rio, June 7, 2021.<sup>29</sup>

June 14, 2021

**State of Ceará, Brazil**

Following the Seropédica Rehabilitation Center, which was blamed for its failures (see "On the Trail" n°32 p. 236), it is now the Fortaleza Rehabilitation Center's turn to make headlines. It is the only official rehabilitation center in the State of Ceará. According to Marcel Lucena, a veterinary doctor, the Cetas in Fortaleza has been malfunctioning for 5 years, and for the past 2 years it has not been functioning at all. Volunteers have taken the initiative to care for the animals themselves and to free them without following any legal procedures. A lieutenant in charge of 72 towns in the south of the State of Ceará adds that police officers under his command regularly do the same if the birds are healthy. For those that deserve special attention, they send them to the Cetas in Recife, State of Pernambuco, 600 km away. A request has been made to create a new Cetas, but the request is getting nowhere. In 2020, 3,011 animals were seized in the State of Ceará.

Diário do Nordeste, June 22, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**June 18 and December 2021**

**Seropédica, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

Kirill Kravchenko, a Russian national, was caught in a bus bound for Foz do Iguaçu (Paraná) on the BR-116, on the border with Paraguay. 320 live animals, lizards, frogs, spiders and beetles were seized from his luggage. Presenting himself as a biologist, he explained that he wanted to export them to Russia for research purposes. He was sentenced to 11 years in prison.



Kravchenko had already been caught in January 2021 at the São Paulo airport with 294 animals in his luggage, including lizards, tarantulas, frogs, and invertebrates (see "On the Trail" n°32 p. 235). His passport and phone were confiscated. At the age of 36, he is a bigwig in the wildlife trade and has an international reputation. At the time of his new arrest, he had in his possession a cell phone and 6 credit cards. Investigators believe that he received help from abroad, notably from his wife, Ekaterina Burukhine. The police deciphered in his phone messages exchanged with Spanish, German, Czech, Egyptian, South African, Namibian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Australian, New Zealander, Ecuadorian, Argentinean, Panamanian, and Mexican correspondents, all clearly related to wildlife trafficking.

G1 Rio, June 20 2021, G1 São Paulo, December 9, 202; UOL, July 20, 2021.<sup>31</sup>

July 13, 2021

**Santana, State of Amapá, Brésil**

A boat was inspected in the early hours of the day. 1,004 kg of caiman meat (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II), 34 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), and 510 kg of various fish were seized. One arrest was made. The fish was given to charity and the caiman meat is to be processed into animal food or to be destroyed.

G1 Amapá, July 13, 2021.<sup>32</sup>

July 16, 2021

**Itatiaia, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

Two men and 2 women were transporting 96 birds, including 2 owls (*Strigiformes*, Appendix I or II), 12 parrot chicks (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II), 3 green-rumped parrotlet (*Forpus passerinus*, Appendix II), one yellow-faced amazon (*Amazona xanthops*, Appendix II), 47 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), 25 double-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*), 3 tufted capuchins (*Cebus apella*, synonymous with *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II), an Atlantic titi (*Callicebus personatus*, Appendix II), and 190 turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II) in 2 vehicles. All 4 people were arrested.

CNN Brasil, July 17, 2021; Diário do Vale, July 17, 2021.<sup>33</sup>

July 17, 2021

**Ipatinga, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil**

A man's house was searched and the military police found a peach-fronted conure (*Aratinga aurea*, Appendix II), 8 white-eyed conures (*Aratinga leucophthalma*, Appendix II), a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II), and 12 turtles (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II). He was fined 29,737 reais (6,000 US\$). The animals were entrusted to the Centro de Biodiversidade da Usipa (Cebus).

Diário do Aço, July 17, 2021.<sup>34</sup>





**July 19, 2021**

**Macapá, State of Amapá, Brazil**

A street vendor was offering wild meat to people passing by. In his cooler, the military police seized 22 kg of caiman (*Caiman* spp, Appendix I or II), 5 kg of monkey (Appendix I or II), 13 kg of capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), and 28 kg of armadillo (family Dasypodidae).

G1 Amapá, July 19, 2021.<sup>35</sup>

**July 26, 2021**

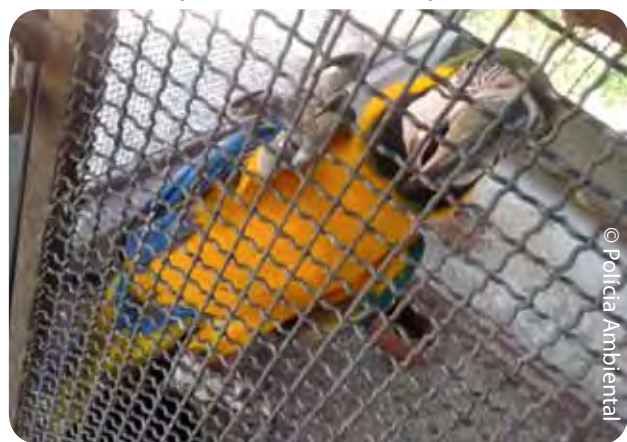
**São Paulo, State of São Paulo, Brazil**

Three men were arrested when transferring in a car some of the 53 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II) and 288 birds they had transported from Bahia, 30 hours away by truck. These included yellow-bellied seedeaters (*Sporophila nigricollis*), white-throated seedeaters (*Sporophila albogularis*), ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*), grey pileated finches (*Coryphospingus pileatus*), rufous-collared sparrows (*Zonotrichia capensis*) saffron-billed sparrows (*Arremon flavirostris*), black-throated saltators (*Saltatricula atricollis*), red-cowled cardinals (*Paroaria dominicana*), campo troupials (*Icterus jamacaii*), and chopi blackbirds (*Gnorimopsar chopi*). Twenty birds and one turtle died during the trip. The men were fined 3.7 million reais (750,000 US\$).

G1 São Paulo, July 27, 2021.<sup>36</sup>

**August 20, 2021**

**Oswaldo Cruz, State of São Paulo, Brazil**



One red-and-green macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II), one blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), and 2 tufted capuchins (*Cebus apella*, synonym of *Sapajus apella*, Appendix II) were sequestered. They were in a cage. They are too habituated to humans to be released. G1 Presidente Prudente, August 21, 2021.<sup>37</sup>

**August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Manacapuru, State of Amazonas, Brazil**

Seizure of 16 kg of giant armadillo (*Priodontes maximus*, Appendix I), 28 kg of tapir (*Tapirus* spp., Appendix I or II), 200 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), 6 pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), a bare-faced curassow (*Crax fasciolata*), and 20 turtles in a market. The offenders fled when the military police arrived at the scene.

Amazonas State Government, August 21, 2021.<sup>38</sup>

**August 30, 2021**

**Itanhaém, State of São Paulo, Brazil**



Investigators traced Facebook postings to a clandestine breeding operation. A python (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II), a turtle (*Chelonoidis carbonarius* or *Chelonoidis denticulatus*, Appendix II), 3 four-toed hedgehogs (*Atelerix albiventris*), a firearm, and 4,500 reais in cash (800 US\$) were seized.

G1 Santos, August 30, 2021.<sup>39</sup>

## COLOMBIA

**Mid-May 2021**

**Cimitarra, Department of Santander, Colombia**

Seizure of 1,120 Meso-American sliders (*Trachemys venusta*) known in Colombia as hicotea, 2 cotton-headed tamarins (*Saguinus oedipus*, Appendix I) and 2 white-faced capuchins (*Cebus capucinus*, Appendix II). The annual seizure review of the environmental authorities records 33,000 wild animals seized during 2020, a 42% increase compared to 2019. Covid-19 has made its presence felt. Due to the logistics breakdown and the shortage of food in the cities, wildlife trafficking has doubled. Forest meat has partially substituted for farmed meat. Meso-American sliders and iguanas are at the top of this sad list. They are followed by parrots, sloths and possums.

Semana, May 12, 2021.<sup>40</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Herveo, Department of Tolima, Colombia**

Four dead orange-winged parrots (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix II) and 102 live turtles (*Trachemys venusta*) were seized in the bag of a passenger of a bus going to Manizales. The value of one orange winged parrot is estimated to be around 80,000 and 200,000 Colombian pesos (20 and 50 US\$).

Caracol Radio, June 7, 2021.<sup>41</sup>



**Mid-June 2021**

**Departments of Valle del Cauca, Risaralda and Caldas, Colombia**

facebook



Fifteen animals were seized thanks to a joint operation by the police and the public prosecutor's office. Among them, rattlesnakes (genus *Crotalus*), boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix I or II), porcupines, and iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II). Seven arrests were made. The deals were made through social media. The criminals posted messages on Facebook and contacted buyers through WhatsApp. Once bought, the animals were shipped in parcels by courier companies or delivered to the buyer by third persons. The gang operated under the guise of fake pet shops.

Semana, June 18, 2021.<sup>42</sup>

**End of June 2021**

**Federal District of Bogota, Department of Cundinamarca, Colombia**

The Colombian Congress approved the Bill 276/205-026/19C, prohibiting the import of hunting trophies. After the presidential signature, the new law will also promote new technologies to tackle illegal trafficking of fauna, flora, and poaching, it will implement georeferencing systems to facilitate the location of illegal trade routes, it will integrate different institutions to develop shared DNA databases, coordinate with social media to shut down groups of illegal trading.

Lastly, the bill also relates to the fate of animals rescued from trafficking. It demands the CAVs (Centro de Atención y Valoración de la Fauna Silvestre) to be open 24 hours, when before it normally closed at nights and on weekends.

Animal Defenders International, June 22, 2021.<sup>43</sup>

**Mid-August 2021**

**Bogota, Colombia**

In the week of August 13, Deal 801, proposed by Andrea Padilla (Green Party) and Cielo Nieves (Democratic Pole), was approved by the Bogotá City Council. The legislation prohibits in Bogotá the commercialization of animals in squares and markets, allows the police to set sanctions on those that do not comply with the new rules, and regulates the reproduction of domestic species. The Secretary of Economic Development has a budget of 300 million Colombian pesos (75,000 US\$) to compensate the 23 vendors who will have to find another job.

El Tiempo, August 12, 2020.<sup>44</sup>

## COSTA RICA

**July 6, 2021**

**Cieneguita, Limón Province, Costa Rica**

Seizure of a scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I) and a paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) in a house. Both animals were turned in to the Ministry of Energy and the Environment. La Nación, July 6, 2021.<sup>45</sup>

## ECUADOR

**Beginning of August 2021**

**Cuenca, Azuay Province, Ecuador**

A white-faced capuchin (*Cebus capucinus*, Appendix II), a black-agouti (*Dasyprocta fuliginosa*), and a parrot (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) were seized from a truck that was transporting wood. They were turned in to the "Orillas del Zamora" Wild Fauna Conservation Center. Crónica, August 11, 2021.<sup>46</sup>

## FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

**End of June 2021**

**Petit-Saut Dam, Territorial Collectivity of French Guiana, France**



Seizure of the cut carcasses of 2 smooth-fronted caimans (*Paleosuchus trigonatus*, Appendix II) and 3 pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) that were found in a cooler during the inspection of 2 individuals returning from their hunting trip. Two guns were also seized.

French Biodiversity Agency, July 2021.<sup>47</sup>

**July 20, 2021**

**Saint-Georges, Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France. Border with Brazil.**

Fish, collared peccary meat (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II), 41 kg of Schneider's smooth-fronted caiman meat (*Paleosuchus trigonatus*, Appendix II), and 16 kg of red howler meat (*Alouatta seniculus*, Appendix II) were seized from a refrigerated truck on the National Road 2. The sale of the last 2 species is prohibited. A fine of 1,000 € (1,180 US\$) was issued.

French Biodiversity Agency, September 2021.<sup>48</sup>





## GUATEMALA

**June 9, 2021**

**Fajjanes, Department of Guatemala, Guatemala**

Three caimans (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II), one crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), one red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*, Appendix II) and one armadillo (family Dasypodidae), all stuffed, were seized, as well as 2 live African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II), 3 tortoise shells, 2 shark jaws, one deer trophy, and 8 deer antlers. José María Peralta Huité, aged 47, was brought before court.

Prensa Libre, June 9, 2021.<sup>49</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Mixco, Department of Guatemala, Guatemala**

A search operation occurred in the Zone 7 in Mixco. A woman was arrested for possession of 2 parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II).

Prensa Libre, June 9, 2021.<sup>50</sup>

## MEXICO

**End of May 2021**

**Zapopan, State of Jalisco, Mexico**

Two tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), one eagle (Accipitridae, Appendix I or II), one crocodile (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), and one turtle were seized from a house, as well as 22 birds, 7 pigs, one pony, 26 sheep, 3 horses, and 4 dogs. In the absence of the legal documents, all animals were seized.

Infobae, May 23, 2021.<sup>51</sup>

**July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021**

**Hermosillo, State of Sonora, Mexico**

Seizure of 56 skulls with horns in a courier company by officers from the National Guard. The packages that were said to contain "ceramics" contained what looked like 2 bighorn sheep skulls with horns, 3 deer skulls with horns, and 51 deer antlers.

Infobae, July 4, 2021.<sup>52</sup>

**July 10, 2021**

**Mexico City, Mexico**

A tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) was found in a car parked in front of Cuauhtémoc City Hall. The police also found 4 turtles in the trunk of the car. On his social media, the driver shows off more animals such as monkeys, tigers, and reptiles. He said he had the license and documents required to sell these exotic animals in Mexico City. He is questioned by police.

Infobae, July 11, 2021.<sup>53</sup>



## PANAMA

**End of June 2021**

**Burunga, Weste Panama Province, Panama**

Two poachers were arrested in Cerro Hormiguero by park rangers. One white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*, *Odocoileus virginianus mayensis*, Appendix III in Guatemala) and one collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II) were found dead in their mess.

Critica.com.pa, June 27, 2021.<sup>54</sup>

## PERU

**May 5, 2021**

**Lima, Lima Province, Department of Lima, Peru**

Fifteen seedeaters (genus *Sporophila*), one orange-winged parrot (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix II), 6 red-fronted conures (*Aratinga wagleri*, Appendix II), 8 red-masked conures (*Aratinga erythrogenys*, Appendix II), one saffron finch (*Sicalis flaveola*), 3 Pacific parrotlets (*Forpus coelestis*, Appendix II), and 2 yellow-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis denticulata*, Appendix II) were seized inside a house.

Serfor, 5 May 2021.<sup>55</sup>

**May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Chaupimarca District, Pasco Province, Pasco Department, Peru**

Five stuffed animals were seized from the "Yaban" hotel: one colpeo fox (*Lycalopex culpaeus*, Appendix II), one Sechuran fox (*Lycalopex sechurae*), one Molina's hog-skunk (*Conepatus chinga*), one puna ibis (*Plegadid ridgwayi*), and one Andean Flicker (*Colaptes rupicola*).

Info región, June 1st, 2021.<sup>56</sup>

**August 17, 2021**

**Calana District, Tacna Province, Department of Tacna, Peru**

In the recreative center Azul Azul, a showcase displayed one boa (*Boa* spp., Appendix I or II), one caiman (*Caiman* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 sea turtles (Appendix I), butterflies and tarantulas. Azul Azul also took pride in the presence of 3 bats, one turtle, one toucan (family Ramphastidae), reptiles, felines, an ostrich (*Rhea* spp., Appendix I or II), and 4 seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II) for sale.

All the animals were handed over to Serfor.

La República, August 18, 2021.<sup>57</sup>





## EASTERN ASIA

### CHINA

**April 26 and May 21, 2021**

**Xintang and Huadu District, Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**



Seizure from a private individual of 4 stuffed hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I) including 2 juveniles hanging on the walls, a fan made of turtle scales, 6 giant clam shells (*Tridacna gigas*, Appendix II), 36 decorative objects made of giant clam shells, a coral branch, 7 elephant tusks and 34 worked ivories and a deer trophy (family Cervidae). "Liang" said that he bought the ivory from a handicraft store run by "Wan". At "Wan"'s home, the police seized a ring, a pipe and 32 ivory chess pieces. The total value is estimated to be more than 7,000 yuan or 1,080 US\$. Chinanews, July 29, 2021.<sup>58</sup>

**Beginning of May 2021**

**Sihe, Dazhou Prefecture, Sichuan Province, China**

Word of a live wildlife sale in a hidden store in the city reached the ears of the police. They intervened on the spot and found masked palm civets (*Paguma larvata*, Appendix III in India), small Indian civets (*Viverricula indica*, Appendix III in India), Oriental turtle doves (*Streptopelia orientalis*), spotted doves (*Spilopelia chinensis*) and Chinese bamboo partridges (*Bambusicola thoracicus*) some of which were covered with open wounds from traps. Others had fractured legs, some were butchered. Two arrests.

Cover News, May 7, 2021.<sup>59</sup>

**May 11, 2021**

**Zhanjiang (formerly Fort Bayard during the French occupation from 1898 to 1945), Zhanjiang Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**



Seizure of 3 pangolins, including one dead, 41 bull frogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*, Appendix II), 163 seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II), 2 leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) and 123 snakes. All the animals were imported to Guangxi from Viet Nam and transported by long-distance bus to Lianjiang and Leizhou. 25 suspects are being questioned by the Public Security Bureau. Yangcheng Evening News, August 4, 2021.<sup>60</sup>



**May 14, 2021**

**Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, China**

It is midnight. Customs officers on patrol in the off-shore construction of the airport extension think they see suspicious movements. Their eyes did not deceive them: in the middle of the dormitory ships, 3 shadows are transferring cargo from a fishing boat to a speedboat. The shadows quickly jump onto the speedboat and lose their pursuers. In the abandoned fishing boat, customs officers discovered 1,310 kg of sea cucumbers, 295 kg of shark fins, 366 kg of swim bladders, 542 kg of swallow's nests, 7.7 kg of American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*, Appendix II), 468 kg of amber stone and thousands of electronic items and luxury food and cosmetic products. The total value of the seizure is estimated at 50 million Hong Kong dollars (6.4 million US\$), making it the largest seizure of the year, ahead of the April 2021 seizure at the same location, estimated at 31 million Hong Kong dollars (4 million US\$) (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.255).

Hong Kong Customs, May 15, 2021 ; South China Morning Post, May 15, 2021 ; ADM Capital Foundation, June 11, 2021.<sup>61</sup>

**May 2021**

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



Seizure of 18 worked ivories, in particular bracelets, and crocodile skin items (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), in particular belts, from incoming passengers' luggage. Total weight: 3.114 kg.

Chinese Customs, May 20, 2021.<sup>62</sup>

**May 18, 2021**

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



Seizure of 150 grams of worked ivory, 1.7 kg of crocodile skin items (Crocodylidae, Appendix I or II), and giant clam shell items (Tridacnidae, Appendix II) from incoming passengers' luggage.

Chinese Customs, May 20, 2021.<sup>63</sup>

**May 19, 2021**

**Suifenhe, Mudanjiang Prefecture, Heilongjiang Province, China. Border with Russia.**



Seizure of 212 Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I) bones and bone fragments and 200 saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II) horns.

Changsheng Legal Consulting, May 20, 2021; Ersanli, May 20, 2021.<sup>64</sup>



**May 21, 2021**

**Changsha Huanghua International Airport, Changsha Prefecture, Hunan Province, China**



Seizure of 18 worked ivories with a total weight of 610 grams, about 20 dried seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II) with a total weight of 60 grams, 90 grams of shark fins and moringa seeds (*Moringa stenopetala*) from the luggage of a passenger from Africa.

Chinese Customs, May 26, 2021; Xinhua, May 26, 2021.<sup>65</sup>

**May 2021**

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



Seizure of 19 items made of ivory, giant clam shell (*Tridacnidae*, Appendix II), black coral (*Antipathes* spp., Appendix II) and bear tooth (*Ursus* spp., Appendix I or II) from incoming passengers' luggage from abroad. Total weight: 621 grams.

Chinese Customs, May 24, 2021.<sup>66</sup>



**May 2021**

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



Seizure from a passenger's luggage of about 100 dried seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II), worked ivories, Mozambique ebony (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*, Appendix II) and red sandalwood (*Pterocarpus santalinus*, Appendix II) jewelry, crocodile skin (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II) and elephant skin fashion accessories.

Xiaoxiang Morning Herald, May 26, 2021; Chinese Customs, May 27, 2021.<sup>67</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**May 2021**

**Ningming County, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam.**



"Wei" was sentenced to 5 years in prison, fined 50,000 yuan (7,730 US\$) and ordered to pay 2.2 million yuan (340,000 US\$) in environmental damages. A few months earlier, "Wei" was caught transporting 14,255 dried seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II) and a tiger skull (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I).

Ningming County Procuratorate, June 3, 2021.<sup>68</sup>



**June, August 1 and September 7, 2021 Jiaojiang District, Taizhou Prefecture and Yiwu, Jinhua Prefecture, Zhejiang Province and Bozhou, Bozhou Prefecture, Anhui Province, China**



Seizure of pangolin scales and Mongolian gazelle horns (*Procapra gutturosa*) in a food supplement store run by Mr. "Wang" and his wife "Liu". They say they bought them from a certain "Wang" in Yiwu. The deciphering of the cell phone and computer shows that "Wang" is a wild animal broker. At the end of 2020, the couple had bought 1 kg of pangolin scales and 19 horns of Mongolian gazelle, whose migrations have been disrupted for several decades by the fenced railroad line linking Ulan Bator to Beijing. "Wang" said he got hold of the wildlife items from a certain "Gao" in Bozhou. According to the first results of the investigation, the network has already earned 3 million yuan or 463,700 US\$ by trafficking in wildlife.

Mongolian gazelle, see "On the Trail" n°5 p.124, n°7 p.99, n°11 p.88, n°23 p.154 and p.155.

Taizhou Evening News, September 15, 2021.<sup>69</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**



Ivory necklaces, bags and belts made of crocodile skin (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II), 2 triton's trumpet shells (*Charonia tritonis*), and other wildlife items are seized from passengers coming from abroad. Total weight: 4.532 kg. Chinese Customs, June 16, 2021.<sup>70</sup>

**Beginning of June 2021**

**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**

Giant clam shells (*Tridacnidae*, Appendix II), crocodile skins (*Crocodylidae*, Appendix I or II), and other wildlife items are seized from passengers coming from abroad. Total weight: 3.536 kg.

Chinese Customs, June 17, 2021.<sup>71</sup>

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Chengdu-Shuangliu International Airport, Sichuan Province, China**



Seizure of worked ivories (600 grams), 14.58 kg of pangolin scales and pangolin scale powder, 1.69 kg of seahorse (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II) powder (169 seahorses based on 10 grams per seahorse), and 1.8 kg of dried sea cucumbers concealed in milk powder cans, potato chip bags, and thermos flasks in a shipment from Frankfurt, Germany.

Chinanews, July 10, 2021.<sup>72</sup>





**July 2, 2021**

**Port of Dalian, Dalian Prefecture, Liaoning Province, China**

Seizure by Customs in a sea container of a worked ivory (88 grams), 202 Go game pieces made with giant clam shell (Tridacnidae, Appendix II) (2,205 grams), 23 fragments of red coral (genus *Corallium*) (6,600 grams), and 259 ancient coins including one dating from the Song Dynasty, all considered cultural relics. It seems that the container was fully loaded with personal effects. Chinese Customs, July 2, 2021.<sup>73</sup>



**July 2021**

**Huanggang Port of Entry, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.**

CCTV footage shows the driver of a truck throwing away bags prior to the check. Customs officials found 510 snakes, 203 turtles, 49 lizards, 4 scorpions, and 36 spiders inside.

Chinese Customs, August 4, 2021.<sup>74</sup>



**July 2021**

**Maoming, Maoming Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of 2 ivory jewels amounting to 6.4 grams and 24 red coral jewels (genus *Corallium*) amounting to 259.4 grams. Chinese Customs, August 9, 2021.<sup>75</sup>



**July 27, 2021**

**Beijing Autonomous Municipality, China**

"Liu" was sentenced to 2.5 years in prison with 3 years of probation, and fined 25,000 yuan (3,870 US\$) for attempting to smuggle 2,679 grams of pangolin scales worth 24,540 US\$ (9,160 US\$/kg), worked ivories worth 6,460 US\$ and weighing 1,083.80 grams, and African lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II) teeth worth 1,070 US\$, into Chinese territory in January 2020 on an Ethiopian Airlines flight from Addis Ababa.

Noting "Liu's" financial difficulties, whose family lives abroad, and his goodwill during the conduct of the investigation, the trial judge requested that a lawyer be appointed to defend him. The concept of "justice for the people" has been fully implemented, according to China Daily.

Beijing Law Network, July 8, 2021; China Daily, September 23, 2021.<sup>76</sup>



**Beginning of August, 2021**

**Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, China**

Sentencing of a Russian national to 10 years and 6 months in prison, to a fine of 200,000 yuan (i.e. 31,000 US\$) and to the seizure of his assets up to 200,000 yuan, and of his 3 accomplices, Chinese nationals, to 7 years and 6 months in prison and to a fine of 400,000 yuan for the attempted smuggling of 406 walrus tusks (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada), 226 narwhal tusks (*Monodon monoceros*, Appendix II), 320 kg of sea cucumbers, 2 elephant tusks; 156 mammoth tusks, 1,276 saiga antelope horns (*Saiga tatarica*, Appendix II), 70 bear (Ursidae, Appendix I or II) teeth and 44 gall bladders, and 4 deer genitalia (see "On the Trail" n°21 p.18 and p.116.) The total value of the seized goods in the truck was estimated at 15 million US\$. Northeast Network, August 11, 2021.<sup>77</sup>



**August 18, 2021**

**Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China**

Fauna and flora trafficking can be regarded as a crime conspiracy in the same way as drug, arms and human trafficking. Elizabeth Quat, a member of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong and representative of the New Territories East, wants ringleaders to be sought and convicted, and for the police and judiciary to do more than just seek, arrest and punish the lower lever members of networks and individual traffickers. The amendment to the Organised and Serious Crimes Ordinance aims to extend investigation methods and sentencing proportionalities to Hong Kong that are already implemented in mainland China.

ADM Capital Foundation, August 18, 2021; France 24 (with AFP), August 18, 2021.<sup>78</sup>



## TAIWAN

May 7, 2021  
Chishang, Taitung County, Taiwan



Tama Talum, 62, is a spokesperson for the Bunun tribe, which claims it has a right to perpetuate its traditional hunting. The Taiwanese government officially recognizes 16 native populations. In 2016, President Tsai Ing-wen solemnly expressed Taiwan's apology to the indigenous peoples "who have suffered centuries of pain and mistreatment." Out of 23 million people, between 500,000 and 600,000 are Austronesian descendants (Austronesia is a region including Madagascar, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Ocean islands).

Talum was sentenced to 3.5 years in prison in 2015 for hunting a Reeves' muntjac (*Muntiacus reevesi*) and a Taiwan serow (*Capricornis swinhoei*) in 2013 with a prohibited firearm, 2 species protected by the regulation. He appealed in 2017 and the Supreme Court, at his lawyer's request, had to rule on the constitutionality of the law imposing restrictions on native populations in the hunt's conduct. The Bunun and other tribes estimate that traditional hunting as practiced is already sufficiently constrained by rituals and taboos and strictly used for the community. This excludes any commercial transactions.

The Court issued an equivocal opinion saying that Aboriginal hunting should be recognized without being detrimental to the protection of the environment and wildlife.

Talum, a retired truck driver, continues to hunt in the woods and spends most of his time growing vegetables and caring for his 99-year-old mother. Channel News Asia (with AFP), May 5, 2021; The New York Times, May 7, 2021.<sup>79</sup>

## SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

### CAMBODIA

January to June 2021

#### Cambodia

The spokesperson for the Ministry of the Environment announces that in the first 6 months of the year, 1,260 rangers in charge of the fight against poaching seized 2,462 chainsaws, 308 bulldozers, 24 tractors, 1,260 m<sup>3</sup> of wood and 348 firearms in national parks. 511 suspects were fined and 515 were brought before the courts. 25,000 traps including electric traps were dismantled.

Khmer Times, August 9, 2021.<sup>80</sup>



January 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021  
Cardamom Protected Forest, Cambodia

An assessment from Wildlife Alliance reported that 17,161 snares and 7,603 meters of net were removed from the Protected Forest, more than last year. Currently, 180 rangers monitor Cardamom Protected Forest.

Khmer Times, September 27, 2021.<sup>81</sup>



August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021  
Sihanoukville, Preah Sihanouk Province, Cambodia

Two markets and 5 street restaurants were searched and over 70 kg of wild meat were seized including monitor lizard, (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II), mongoose, wild boar, deer, and wild fowls' meat. The rangers were able to rescue live wild animals, such as 4 tortoises.

Khmer Times, August 26, 2021.<sup>82</sup>

August 2021

Sorng Rukhavorn Wildlife Sanctuary, Oddar Meanchey Province, Cambodia

There is an ongoing concern over the poaching of wildlife in the Sanctuary since many species, including bantengs, gaurs, roe deer, civets, and wild boar have been found dead or injured in 2021. The head of the Sorng Rukhavorn community forest alerts that over the last few years, more poachers have been using traps instead of firearms. The Phnom Penh Post August 25, 2021.<sup>83</sup>





## INDONESIA

**July 2, 2021**

**Pekanbaru, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia**

A man was caught red-handed selling 5 rhinoceros' hornbill helmets (*Buceros rhinoceros*, Appendix II) and a Sumatran tiger claw (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*, Appendix I). He purchased the helmets on social media for 1.1 million rupees (75 US\$) and planned to resell them for 15 million rupees (1,030 US\$). He was arrested. *Tribun Pekanbaru*, July 20, <sup>2021</sup>; *FLIGHT – Protecting Indonesia's Birds*, July 21, 2021.<sup>84</sup>



## MALAYSIA

**August 6, 2021**

**Rantau Panjang, State of Kelantan, Malaysia. Border with Thailand.**

Coming from the Golok riverbank direction at night, the police spotted several men carrying boxes. They were able to escape to Thailand by boat, but the police found 206 frogs, 50 softshell turtles (family Trionychidae), 24 snakes, 3 parrots (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and an iguana (family Iguanidae) in the abandoned boxes. The estimated value is around 67,600 ringgits (15,950 US\$). *New Straits Times*, August 7, 2021; *Harian Metro*, October 7, 2021.<sup>85</sup>

### OPERATION BERSEPADU KHAZANAH

**August 13, 2021**

**Tabin Forest Reserve, State of Sabah, Malaysia**

Seizure of items made out of deer antlers and tortoise shells. The estimated value is around 690 ringgits (226 US\$).

*New Straits Times*, August 14, 2021.<sup>86</sup>

**August 27, 2021**

**Near Ulu Pinangah Forest Reserve, State of Sabah, Malaysia**

Five suspects, including 2 teenagers, were arrested for alleged poaching. Homemade rifles known as "bakakuk", 17 bullets, other firearms, and a vehicle were seized.

*New Straits Times*, August 28, 2021.<sup>87</sup>

**August 27, 2021**

**Paitan Forest Reserve, State of Sabah, Malaysia**



Fourteen "sulap" are intentionally destroyed on a 14-hectare plot within a reserve that hosts long-nosed monkeys (*Nasalis larvatus*, Appendix I) and bantengs (*Bos javanicus*). The sulap are rustic holiday homes. They belong to people from Kudat, more than 3 hours away by road. The illegal occupants grow cassava, bananas and other fruits around their buildings.

The Sabah Chief Forest Conservator reminds us that it is forbidden to raise livestock, take plants, hunt, cultivate, excavate or search for metals, and engage in any disturbance or appropriation that may cause flooding, river pollution and wildlife habitat destruction in reserves and other protected areas. *New Straits Times*, August 30, 2021.<sup>88</sup>

## THAILAND

**May 9, 2021**

**Ban Huay Dua, Nong Bua Lamphu Province, Thailand**

Raid in 2 market stalls:

-Ms. Benjamat and Mr Pavara were caught selling the carcasses of a 2-kg Bengal monitor (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) and 3 small Indochinese flying squirrels (*Hylopetes phayrei*).

-Ms. Pratana was selling the carcasses of a large Indian civet (*Viverra zibetha*, Appendix III in India), of 2 Bengal monitors, of 2 unidentified wild squirrel species, of 24 Indochinese flying squirrels, and of one spotted linsang (*Prionodon pardicolor*, Appendix I). She said she bought the carcasses from someone in her village and the animals had been poached in Laos.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, May 9, 2021.<sup>89</sup>

**June 8, 2021**

**Doi Pha Mueang Wildlife Sanctuary, Lampang Province, Thailand**

Officers from Operation Center 3 arrested 52-year-old Fang Singha. He had with him the carcasses of a rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*, Appendix II), 3 palm civets (genus *Paradoxurus*), and 2 squirrels (family Sciuridae).

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, June 10, 2021.<sup>90</sup>



**June 9, 2021**

**Ban Mo Sa Wa, Narathiwat Province, Thailand**



Seizure of one leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), one long-tailed macaque (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), one Blyth's hawk-eagle (*Spizaetus alboniger*, Appendix II), 2 Oriental bay owls (*Phodilus badius*, Appendix II), one Wallace's hawk-eagle (*Spizaetus nanus*, Appendix II), one crested hawk-eagle (*Spizaetus cirrhatus*, Appendix II), and one brown wood owl (*Strix leptogrammica*, Appendix II). One suspect, Mr. Abdullah, age 39, was arrested. Total valued estimated at 19,300 baths (615 US\$). Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, June 10, 2021.<sup>91</sup>



**June 24, 2021**

**Erawan National Park, Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand**

Two Burmese poachers were caught entering the national park. Their firearms, ammunition, and equipment were seized. They were arrested. Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, June 24, 2021.<sup>92</sup>

**August 15, 2021**

**Phanom Dong Rak Wildlife Sanctuary, Sisaket Province, Thailand. Border with Cambodia.**

Two slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I), 2 kg total, one Asian palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India), 4.2 kg, 7 Finlayson's squirrels (*Callosciurus finlaysonii*), and 8 smoked Finlayson's squirrels (1.5 kg) were seized from a poacher.

Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, August 15, 2021.<sup>93</sup>



**VIET NAM**

**May 2021**

**Dak R'lap District, Dak Nong Province, Viet Nam**

Nguyen Thi Tri was sentenced to 15 months in prison for the illegal possession of a pangolin, a wild cat (*Felis silvestris*, Appendix II), 2 monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 mouse-deer (family Tragulidae), a weasel (genus *Mustela*), and a rodent (family Spalacidae). Her sentence was upheld on appeal.

ENV, May 31, 2021.<sup>94</sup>



**May 6, 2021**

**Buon Ma Thuot, Dak Lak Province, Viet Nam**

Tran Quang Tung's (28) home was raided and 656 ivory items (rings, bands, necklaces, statues, etc) with a total weight of 3.5 kg, 90 vials containing bear bile, and 16 tiger claws were seized. Tung claimed he bought the pieces through social media and planned to resell them for profit.

Nguoiduatin.vn, May 6, 2021; ENV, May 12, 2021.<sup>95</sup>



**May 10, 2021**

**Hoa Binh, Hoa Binh Province, Viet Nam**

Ten snakes, 8 turtles, 2 masked palm civets (*Paguma larvata*, Appendix III in India) and one hog badger (*Arctonyx collaris*) were seized from a bus that was heading to Hanoi. The hog badger passed away soon after and the 2 masked palm civets had amputation emergency surgery. Only one survived. ENV, May 17, 2021.<sup>96</sup>



**May 24, 2021**

**Lam Dong Province, Viet Nam**

The Lam Dong Court rejected a subject's appeal from a March 2021 sentence declaring 12 months in prison. At his home, the officers had found one live pangolin, 22.6 kg of wildlife meat, and 21.5 kg of monkey feet (see "On the Trail" n°30 p. 170).

ENV, June 4, 2021.<sup>97</sup>





## Beginning of July 2021

### Thanh Hoa District, Long An Province, Viet Nam

Live wild animals are no longer allowed to be sold at the Thanh Hoa farmers' market where otters, ricefield turtles, yellow-headed temple turtles, cobras, snakes, owls, snakes and other animals caught in the Mekong Delta were traded. The closure of the 40 or so stalls dedicated to wildlife is to be strengthened in the long term. It follows press articles and a letter sent to the highest authorities of the province by PanNature on behalf of 14 Vietnamese NGOs. About Thanh Hoa market, see "On the Trail" n°28 p.132.

VietNamNet, February 17, 2020 and July 10, 2021.<sup>98</sup>



Asian openbill (*Anastomus oscitans*)  
for sale on the market.

Live, to be burned alive or already  
dead and plucked

## July 8, 2021

### Bac Son, Lang Son Province, Viet Nam

A woman was sentenced to 12 months in prison. At her home, more than 67 kg of wildlife such as lorises, civets, squirrels, and wild cats for consumption, as well as 3 live leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) were seized in January 2021.

ENV, July 8, 2021.<sup>99</sup>



## August 2021

### Bach Ma National Park, Thua Thien Hue Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of 2 Sunda flying lemurs (*Galeopterus variegatus*), one small Indian civet (*Viverricula indica*, Appendix III in India), 6 primate heads and 3 dismembered and decomposing bodies of primates (Appendix I or II). The park director stated that the 6 heads are likely to be red-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix nemaeus*, Appendix I) one. Six people were arrested.

Tuoi Tre Online, August 20, 2021.<sup>100</sup>

## SOUTHERN ASIA

### BANGLADESH

#### Ashikati Union Parishad and Shah Mahmudpur Union Parishad, Chandpur District, Chittagong Division, Bangladesh

Five monkeys (Primates, Appendix I or II), 2 pythons (*Python* spp., Appendix I or II), and a vulture (*Gyps* spp., Appendix II) were seized from Five Star Children's park and Kritikunj Tia park. They were sent to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Safari park.

Dhaka Tribune, June 16, 2021.<sup>101</sup>

### INDIA

## May 3, 2021

### Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar District, State of Punjab, India

At Gill Farms, owned by Gurvinder Singh Gill, 19 juvenile Alexandrine parakeets (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II), 2 fillets of unspecified wild meat and an account book full about exotic animal sales and poaching acts are seized. The book mentions the sale of 2 eagles (Accipitridae, Appendix I or II) for 125,000 rupees (1,687 US\$), the sale of grey francolins (*Ortygornis pondicerianus*) or "teetar", the poaching of 170 wild boars (*Sus scrofa*) and 60 sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*)... Gill is remanded in custody and later released on bail.

At the time of the seizure, Gill Farms was selling on Facebook, amidst black kites (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II), rose-ringed parakeets (*Psittacula krameri*) for 2,000 rupees (30 US\$) per chick, a blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) and grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix I), all juveniles.

Hindustan Times, June 26, 2021.<sup>102</sup>



## May 18 and 20, 2021

### Pokhran field firing range, Jaisalmer District, State of Rajasthan, India

A chinkara (*Gazella bennettii*, Appendix III in Pakistan) was killed and 2 poachers, Mohan Nath and Puna Nath, were arrested. Two accomplices ran away with the remains of a desert fox (*Vulpes vulpes pusilla*, Appendix III in India).

The Times of India, May 21, 2021.<sup>103</sup>

## May 25, 2021

### Pune, Pune District, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure of 279 African spurred tortoises (*Centrochelys sulcata*, Appendix II), 1,207 iguanas (*Iguana* spp., Appendix II), and 230 Siamese fighting fish (or betta fish, *Betta splendens*) in 6 bags carried by 2 men travelling from Pune to Lonavala by train. Tarun Kumar Mohan (26) and Srinivasan Kamal (20) were taken into custody.

Punekar News, May 26, 2021; The Free Press Journal, May 27, 2021.<sup>104</sup>



**June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021**

**Hasnabad Gram Panchayat, North 24-Parganas District, State of West Bengal, India. India -Bangladesh Border.**



A Bengal slow loris (*Nycticebus bengalensis*, Appendix I), 8 macaws (*Psittacidae*, Appendix I or II), and 3 wild turkeys (*Tragopan satyra*, Appendix III in Bhutan, Nepal, India and China) were seized. The animals were brought from Bangladesh and the smuggling path was interrupted by the logistical effects of Covid.

The Telegraph India, June 4, 2021.<sup>105</sup>

**June 15, 2021**

**Uttam Nagar, West Delhi District, Delhi National Capital Territory, India**



The suburb is affluent and popular among the capital's upper middle class. There, WCCB and Forest Department investigators arrested a person with 20 dried Bengal monitor lizard hemipenises (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), or "hatha jodi," and 4 male golden jackal genitals (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India), or "siyar singhi".

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), June 16, 2021.<sup>106</sup>

**June 28, 2021**

**Barhi, Katni District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India**



Six Bengal monitor lizard skins (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), 24 spotted deer (*Axis axis*) and sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*) antlers, and 2.5 kg of pangolin scales were seized near the Bandhavgarh Tiger reserve (45km from Barhi). An officer posed as a buyer and 2 suspects were arrested in flagrante delicto at the scene.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), June 29, 2021; The Times of India, June 30, 2021.<sup>107</sup>

**June 29, 2021**

**Rewari, Rewari District, State of Haryana, India**

Thirty of Bengal monitor lizard hemipenises (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) and 4 golden jackal genitalia (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India) were seized near Rewari railway station. Parveen Kumar and Mohit were arrested and taken in custody for 14 days. They used to sell the organs on social media between 500 and 2,000 rupees per piece (6,45-25 US\$).

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), June 30, 2021; Hindustan Times, June 30, 2021; New Delhi Times, September 11, 2017.<sup>108</sup>

**July 18, 2021**

**Bokajan, Karbi Anglong District, State of Assam, India**



12.3 kg of pangolin scales and 13 live and 2 dried tokay geckos (*Gekko gekko*, Appendix II) were seized. Two arrests: Khotu Rhako, an Indian Reserve Battalion member, and Ilungheu Kuame, a student.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 19, 2021; Northeast Now, July 19, 2021.<sup>109</sup>



**August 7, 2021**

**Azhagappapuram, Kanyakumari District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



Five statuettes and 17 objects made of elephant ivory, 5 turtle shells, 10 sea shells, one sea fan (order Alcyonacea), one porcupine-quill-made box (*Hystrix indica*), one pair of spotter deer antlers (*Axis axis*), and 2 seahorses (family Syngnathidae) were seized. The sellers, Shankar, aged 30, J. Boris, aged 19, and Samraj, aged 30, were arrested.

The Hindu, August 8, 2021; WCCB, August 10, 2021.<sup>110</sup>



**August 8 and 10, 2021**

**Kanyakumari, Kanyakumari District, and Kotagiri, Nilgiris District, State of Tamil Nadu; Bangalore, Bangalore Urban District, State of Karnataka, India**

Raw tusks, rings, bracelets, necklaces, combs, sticks, dice, carrom board strikers and carved ivories, elephant bones, tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) claws, deer (family Cervidae) skins and antlers, tortoise shells, wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) canines, Indian crested porcupine (*Hystrix indica*) quills, walking sticks and canes made of camel's bones (genus *Camelus*), kangaroo (family Macropodidae) skin, raw coral and coral beads, dried seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II), shark teeth, whale vertebrae, conch shells and various shellfish. This is the haul of this computer engineer obsessed with the macabre. Perhaps there is also a passion for money. Pawan Kumar is part of a network trading wildlife across Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

The banking transactions and digital data collected from Kumar by the WCCB investigators help to see things more clearly. He says he inherited this passion and some of the curiosities from his grandfather who knew the Mysuru royal family.

The Hindu, August 10 and 11, 2021; The Times of India, August 11, 2021; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), August 12, 2021; Bangalore Mirror, August 13, 2021.<sup>111</sup>



"I have a passion for elephant ivory and I feel blessed when I use it."

**August 9, 2021**

**Balrampur District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Poaching had been successful: a Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), 3 wild boars (*Sus scrofa*) - one dead, one wounded, one alive and well - and an Indian crested porcupine (*Hystrix indica*). The return trip was less glorious. An SSB paramilitary patrol arrested the poacher, who handed his catch, 11 spears and 4 nets and his vehicle over to the forest guards.

Sashastra Seema Bal, August 9, 2021.<sup>112</sup>

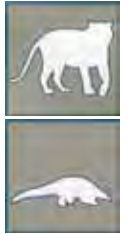


**August 18, 2021**

**Sambalpur, Sambalpur District, State of Odisha, India**

Seizure of 4 leopard claws (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), skin and hair of Asiatic wild dogs (or dhole, *Cuon alpinus*, Appendix II) and "decorative" objects made of pangolin scales. Akash Agrawal was arrested. He was selling each claw for 5,000 rupees or 67 US\$ claiming that it was a tiger claw. Like other traffickers, he bought his "products" from villagers living in and around the Debrigarh wildlife sanctuary.

The New Indian Express, August 20, 2021; Odisha TV, August 21, 2021.<sup>113</sup>



**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**August 24-29, 2021**

**Khawasa, Jhabua District, State of Madhya Pradesh; Pindkapar and Banera, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India**

Balchand Warkhade was arrested in Khawasa, on the Maharashtra border. He was carrying more than 5 kg of tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) bones and herbivore horns. On his indications, officers went to the homes of his accomplices Roshan Uikey and Narpat Kodwate the next day. They arrested them and seized spotted deer (*Axis axis*) antlers, wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) bones, 2 rifles, gunpowder, bullets and knives. The next day, another accomplice, Kailash Bhalavi, was arrested. His nephew Rahul surrendered to police on Sunday the 29th. These arrests led to another seizure of 3.5 kg of tiger bones. The big cat was allegedly killed near Pindkapar.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), August 26, 2021; The Times of India, August 26 and 30, 2021.<sup>114</sup>



**August 25, 2021**

**Nalagarh, Solan District, State of Himachal Pradesh, India**

Vijay and Kaku, living in Preet Nagar in Punjab (200 km away), were arrested. They were in possession of 5 pangolin claws, 6 leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) claws, 12 "hatha jodi" or hemipenises and 11 legs of Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), 2 Alexandrine parakeets (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II), 21 live snakes including Indian cobras (*Naja naja*, Appendix II), checkered keelbacks (*Xenochrophis piscator*, Appendix III in 16 Asian countries), Indian kraits (*Bungarus caeruleus*) and Indian wolf snakes (*Lycodon aulicus*), 2 dead Indian cobras, 24 "siyar singhi" or male golden jackal (*Canis aureus*, Appendix III in India) genitalia, 2 sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*) antlers, and other claws and bones of unidentified species. A rifle, 8 snares and 2 nets were also seized.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), August 26, 2021; The Tribune, August 26, 2021.<sup>115</sup>





**August 27, 28 and 30, 2021**

**Butibori and Pachgaon, Nagpur District, State of Maharashtra, India**

On Friday, a tiger canine was seized while checking the Nagpur-Chandrapur road, following a tip. Vijay Haribhau Wagh, Parasram Nandu Bijwe and Ganesh Devidas Ramteke were arrested. The next day, Deekshanand Dilip Raut, an accomplice, was arrested at his house.

The following Monday, 16 tiger bones were seized including a skull, 3 whiskers, 4 canines, porcupine (family Hystricidae) quills, Indian peafowl feathers (*Pavo cristatus*, Appendix III in Pakistan), neck snares and various weapons. Vijay Laxman Aalam and Ramchandra Nago Aalam were arrested as well as Vasanta Adku Tekam who suffers from paralysis and is under house arrest.

The Live Nagpur, August 28, 2021; The Times of India, August 31, 2021.<sup>116</sup>



## IRAN

**May 2021**

**Tehran Imam Khomeini International Airport, Tehran Province, Iran**

Seizure of 200 snakes, lizards, tortoises, scorpions and tarantulas divided into 13 boxes, in the 3 suitcases of a passenger on a flight from Thailand with a layover in the United Arab Emirates.

Iranian Students' News Agency, May 29, 2021.<sup>117</sup>

## NEPAL

**Night of July 5 to 6, 2021**

**Thamel, Kathmandu District, Bagmati Province, Nepal**

In Kathmandu district, police officers are on the lookout. Illegal activities are on the rise in the Chinese community. When they inspect the Jianghu Khajan hotel, owned for 5 years by Weilang Xi who recently returned to China, they don't let the 4 peaceful "clients" of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor escape. In their room, there are 2 tables used for gambling and 410 dots to play mah-jong, a gambling game. In fact, this is not a hotel, it is a casino. And to add a nice touch to the picture, there are bankcards and banknotes, as well as a tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) skin and teeth and 20 Himalayan musk deer (*Moschus leucogaster*, Appendix I) preputial glands. Ma Jingwing, Niu Yuling, Peng Hui and Zhou Pencheng are taken into custody. Khabarhub, July 6, 2021.<sup>118</sup>

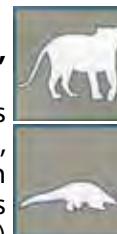


**July 9, 2021**

**Kathmandu, Kathmandu District, Bagmati Province, Nepal**

Thanks to information provided by India's Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), officers from the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) apprehended 2 traffickers with a pangolin (*Manis spp.*, Appendix I) skin with scales and a leopard cub skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I).

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), July 13, 2021.<sup>119</sup>



**July 11, 2021**

**Nepalgunj, Banke District, Lumbini Province, Nepal**

Bhakta Bahadur Pun, 49, Keshab Pun, 41, and Robin Budha, 21, were arrested at 9 p.m. in a hotel in possession of a red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I) skin and bear (*Ursus spp.*, Appendix I or II) bile. The first 2 came from Ghorahi, 150 km away, the 3<sup>rd</sup> from Shantinagar, 130 km away.

The Himalayan Times, July 12, 2021.<sup>120</sup>



## PAKISTAN

**July 25, 2021**

**Karachi, Province of Sindh, Pakistan**

Two pythons (*Pythonidae*, Appendix I or II), a male fishing cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*, Appendix II), a ratel (*Mellivora capensis*, Appendix III in Botswana), a male hyena (family *Hyaenidae*), 2 jackals (genus *Canis*) and 4 porcupines are released into their natural habitats. They were seized in a circus that not only lacked the necessary documents but also organized shows in defiance of Covid-19 restrictions. Dawn, July 27, 2021.<sup>121</sup>





## WESTERN ASIA

### ISRAEL

**July 27, 2021**

#### **Kadita, Northern District, Israel**

About 20 animals (jackals, foxes and hedgehogs) died from pesticide poisoning. A white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I) found nearby is also believed to have fallen in the trap. A farmer is arrested. The majority of raptors that died between 2001 and 2015 in the country were poisoned, according to the Society for the Protection of Nature. "On the Trail" n°25 p.116 reported for example the poisoning of 20 griffon vultures (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II) in May 2019. Middle East Eye, July 27, 2021; The Times of Israel, July 28, 2021.<sup>122</sup>



## NORTHERN EUROPE

### LITHUANIA

**July 20 and 29, 2021**

#### **Raubonys, Panevėžys County, and Druskininkai, Alytus County, Lithuania**

Things are going badly in zoos.

In the north, in Raubonys, a lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II), a puma (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II) and a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) have been transferred to Belgium and Germany. They were housed in particularly unsanitary conditions and without a certificate of origin.

In the south, a puma has just died of mistreatment in the Druskininkai Zoo. Three Hamadryas baboons (*Papio hamadryas*, Appendix II) are awaiting transfer to a safer accommodation. The origin of the 4 animals is unknown.

Environmental Protection Department, July 21 and 30, 2021.<sup>123</sup>



## WESTERN EUROPE

### FRANCE

**May 4, 2021**

#### **Montpellier and Béziers, Department of Hérault, France**



Seizure by customs of 7 Jackson's 3-horned chameleons (*Trioceros jacksonii*, Appendix II) and 12 red-eyed leaf frogs (*Agalychnis callidryas*, Appendix II) at the Montpellier marina. They were transferred to SOS Reptiles which intervenes in the Hérault, Gard and Lozère departments. One chameleon died. It will

be difficult for survivors to be offered for adoption. Foster families must have a certificate of competence. SOS Reptiles lacks financial resources and public aid.

Sos Reptiles, May 4 and 11, 2021; Objectif Gard, July 22, 2021.<sup>124</sup>

**May 18, 2021**

#### **Argentan, Department of Orne, France**

The investigation conducted 4 years ago by the former ONCFS (Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage, National agency for hunting and wildlife), which has since become the OFB (Office Français de la Biodiversité, French Biodiversity Agency), resulted in a case that the prosecutor said was "out of the ordinary." The man held 61 tortoises of protected species and 12 macaws (Psittacidae, Appendix I or II) and cockatoos (Cacatuidae, Appendix I or II) under the cover of the company "Les Mystérieuses Cités Maïa", unknown to veterinary and tax services. Between 2015 and 2018, he is said to have accumulated 177,000 € or 215,000 US\$ of undeclared income. The investigators were set thinking by the repeated offers for the sale of exotic and domestic animals in weekly newspapers in the region. The individual, established in Orne, Normandy, in Le Merlerault, for a few years, wanted later to open a zoo coupled with a pet shop.

He was sentenced to a 6-month suspended prison sentence, to a ban on exercising an activity related to animals for 5 years and to pay 1,500 € in damages to the SPA (Société Protectrice des Animaux) to which 23 dogs and cats were entrusted.

Ouest-France, September 27, 2018; France 3 Normandie, March 30, 2021; Le Réveil normand, May 19, 2021.<sup>125</sup>





## EASTERN EUROPE

### HUNGARY

**June 2021**

#### **Nagykanizsa, Zala County, Hungary**

The taxidermist's scope of expertise was broad. He stuffed everything from moles (genus *Talpa*) to tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I) and leopards (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I). In his house, enthusiasts could pay 100,000 to 1 million forints (340-3,400 US\$) for a white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, Appendix I), a peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I), a saker falcon (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) or a Eurasian eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II). A long-eared owl (*Asio otus*, Appendix II) or a common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II) were traded for 25,000 to 50,000 forints or 85 to 170 US\$. All these birds are prohibited from hunting in Hungary. It is therefore illegal to find them in a taxidermist's shop. On his shelves, one could also buy Eurasian sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*, Appendix II), marsh harriers (*Circus aeruginosus*, Appendix II), common blackbirds (*Turdus merula*, Appendix III in Ukraine), pygmy cormorants (*Microcarbo pygmeus*), grey herons (*Ardea cinerea*), great spotted woodpeckers (*Dendrocopos major*), barn swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) and common moorhens (*Gallinula chloropus*). The stuffer in Nagykanizsa, 75 km from the Austrian border and 20 km from the Croatian border, was in league with the shotgun elite. He cooked up poached brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) trophies from skin to skull which were placed (and seized) in a hunting lodge and a weekend house and were seized.

HVG, June 24 and July 12, 2021.<sup>126</sup>



### RUSSIA

**Beginning of May, 2021**

#### **Vladivostok International Airport, Primorsky Krai, Russia**

A South Korean man returning from his country was caught smuggling about 20 ancient coins considered cultural heritage and potions made from Siberian musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II) and bear bile (Ursidae, Appendix I or II).

OTV-Prim, May 4, 2021.<sup>127</sup>



**End of June 2021**

#### **Gelendzhik, Krasnodar Krai, Russia**

The 2 beach photographers displaying an Asiatic rock python (*Python molurus*, Appendix II) and macaws (*Ara* spp., Appendix I or II) were arrested. The fate of the animals and their origin are unknown. KubNews, June 30, 2021.<sup>128</sup>

**July 5, 2021**

#### **Vityazevo, Krasnodar Krai, Russia**



A photographer was displaying a monkey and a raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) on the beaches and offering tourists photos with the heat-numbered animals for money. They were entrusted to the zoo. Argumenty i Fakty (AIF), July 5, 2021.<sup>129</sup>

**August 2, 2021**

#### **Russia**

Amendments to the hunting law have entered into force after a favorable vote in Russia's lower house. They were proposed by 3 deputies including Vladislav Reznik, a member of the "Mountain Hunters' Club" headed by Eduard Bendersky, a former FSB special forces member known for hunting Putorana snow sheep (*Ovis nivicola borealis*).

Now, under special circumstances motivated by the need for scientific research, endangered species such as Siberian tigers (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I), Amur leopards (*Panthera pardus orientalis*, Appendix I), snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I), Przewalski's horses (*Equus przewalskii*, Appendix I), polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*, Appendix II) and Siberian cranes (*Grus leucogeranus*, Appendix II) can be hunted, whereas previously they could only be caught. Greenpeace Russia is concerned about this legislative change. Among the 13 endangered species listed in the Russian Red Book are Greenland right whales (*Balaena mysticetus*, Appendix I) and gray whales (*Eschrichtius robustus*, Appendix I).

Govorit Moskva, August 1, 2021; The Moscow Times, August 2, 2021.<sup>130</sup>





## OCEANIA

### AUSTRALIA

**End of June 2021**

**Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, Australia**

A great ape hand, orangutan skulls (*Pongo* spp., Appendix I), elephant feet, helmeted hornbill helmets (*Rhinoplax vigil*, Appendix I), bear meat (Ursidae, Appendix I or II), lion heads (*Panthera leo*, Appendix I or II), grey wolf skins (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II), tarantulas, butterflies, stuffed cobras (family Elapidae), there is the whole world in the basement where the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment keeps the seizures of customs and other authorities from the luggage or the hands of tourists who return to the country with prohibited souvenirs. There is even a mandolin with a sounding box made of armadillo armor (order Cingulata). 200 wildlife by-products will be entrusted to the Natural History Museum of Sydney. Some of them will be the subject of genetic or radiological research to determine their origin and the time when they were killed. All of them will be used to inform visitors about this "very evil trade" that Ms. Sussan Ley, Federal Minister for the Environment, denounces.

The Sidney Morning Herald, June 28, 2021; 9News, June 28, 2021.<sup>131</sup>



## VARIOUS MARINE AND FRESHWATER SPECIES

### AFRICA

#### SOUTH AFRICA

**May 13, 2021**

**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

A 49-year-old man is arrested in possession of 450 dried shark fins and abalone, as well as 500,000 rand (35,100 US\$) in cash.

SABC News Western Cape, May 13, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



### AMERICA

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**OPERATION LOW TIDE**

**June 10, 2021**

**Jamaica Bay, New York, State of New York, United States of America**

Following numerous poaching reports in Jamaica Bay, agents of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation launched Operation Low Tide. The travel was not in vain. A patrol spotted 2 individuals carrying lamps, nets and crates containing 22 diamondback terrapins (*Malaclemys terrapin*, Appendix II) and blue crabs (*Callinectes sapidus*), out-of-quota and sometimes undersized. The poachers were arrested, the animals were released.

Jamaica Bay is a 70 km<sup>2</sup> estuary bordered by the Rockaway Peninsula in southeastern New York, and encompasses islands, waterways, meadows, and ponds.

New York Almanack, July 13, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

End of July 2021

Monte Cristi, Monte Cristi Province, Dominican Republic



Two suspects in possession of 2 bags of queen conch (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II) and 3 bags of parrotfish (family Scaridae) are arrested at the top of Caño del Yuti beach. It is prohibited to fish parrotfish year-round and queen conches from July 1 to October 31. For more on parrotfish, see "On the Trail" n°31 p.189 and p. 208. Diaro Libre, July 25, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

### ASIA

#### CHINA

May 13, 2021

Changsha Huanghua International Airport, Changsha Prefecture, Hunan Province, China

Seizure of 650 grams of giant clam shell jewelry (*Tridacnidae*, Appendix II) and 80 grams of dried seahorses seized from the luggage of passengers of an inbound flight.

Chinese Customs, May 17, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

#### OPERATION XUN LEI

June 2, 2021

Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, China

The record has hardly been set when it is already obsolete. This time, the seizure is estimated at 120 million Hong Kong dollars (15.5 million US\$) and it is the largest seizure ever for speedboat smuggling. It would be worth at least twice as much in mainland China.



The suspects managed to escape customs' carefully planned ambush in the Lau Fau Shan area by jumping onto a speedboat. The gang had people on lookout at sea and on land, and also used drones. Customs officials confiscated an abandoned truck and searched 3 warehouses and a home in the Sheung Shui area. Four men aged 35 to 62 were arrested and later released on bail. Among the 2.3 tons of luxury food products were 186 kg of products from endangered species: swim bladders, shark fins, sea cucumbers, abalone and swallow's nests. They were destined for Shekou (Guangdong province).

34 smuggling attempts worth an estimated 420 million Hong Kong dollars were thwarted between January and June 2021.

South China Morning Post, June 9, 2021; Hong Kong Customs, June 10, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

Beginning of July 2021

Fuzhou Changle International Airport, Fuzhou Prefecture, Fujian Province, China

Passengers from abroad had 6 giant clam shell (*Tridacnidae*, Appendix II) items and a bracelet made of tortoise shell (Appendix I) seized from inside their luggage. Total weight: 1.06 kg.

Chinese Customs, July 10, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

July 2021

Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

The boxes from abroad were said to contain 18,575 kg of "rubber granules". In reality, they contained 8,200 kg of dried swim bladders, sea cucumbers and dried scallops also called "conpoy", as well as 4,174 bottles of red wine (Château Mouton Rothschild, Lafitte, Penfolds...). The seizure is estimated at 18 million yuan or 2.8 million US\$.

Chinese Customs, July 19, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

Beginning of August 2021

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

A stony coral (*Scleractinia*, Appendix II) and giant clam shell jewelry (*Tridacnidae*, Appendix II) were seized inside the luggage of passengers coming from abroad. Chinese Customs, August 10, 2021.<sup>8</sup>





## Beginning of August 2021

### Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

A passenger from South-eastern Asia had nothing to declare, but X-rays decided otherwise. Wrapped in clothing were 2 branches of stony coral (Scleractinia, Appendix II) weighing 1.2 kg and 2 horned helmets (*Cassis cornuta*) weighing 2.2 kg. Dayoo, August 10, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

## August 19, 2021

### Off Lantau Island, Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, China

This time, cargo bound for mainland China arrived not on board a speedboat, but rather a fishing boat that failed to lose customs officials. It was boarded off Fan Lau. No board, there were 3 men, aged 45 to 64, who were arrested, 400 live Asian arowanas (*Scleropages formosus*, Appendix I), 100 pockets of water containing live stony coral specimens (Scleractinia, Appendix II) and 1,700 frozen leopard coral groupers (*Plectropomus leopardus*). The seizure was valued at 1.82 million Hong Kong dollars or 234,000 US\$. Leopard coral groupers live in waters off Oceania, East Asia and Southeast Asia. Their flesh is highly regarded in China, and especially in Hong Kong. They have almost disappeared from Hong Kong waters due to overfishing.

Hong Kong Customs, August 20, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



## INDIA

## May 2 and 3, 2021

### Barren Island, Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India

A Burmese boat was fishing off the island. Indian Coast Guard officials tried to contact them to no avail, and the fishers landed on the beach to flee into the forest. Two men were arrested. In their boat were sea cucumbers, a sea turtle skull and conch shells (family Strombidae). The next day, 2 of their accomplices were caught. Others are still being sought.

The Hindu, May 5, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

## July 21, 2021

### Palakkudi, Pudukkottai District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

When S. Vellaisamy, 36 years old, was arrested at the fish landing, he was in possession of 35 seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II) and 8 sea cucumbers that he had just poached. He was also allegedly involved in selling conch shells (family Strombidae). He has been remanded in custody. The Hindu, July 22, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

## August 23, 2021

### Mithapur, Devbhumi Dwarka District, State of Gujarat, India

Conchs (genus *Strombus*) and gorgonians (order Alcyonacea) are caught in the nets of fishermen in the district. Parmar bought and sold them in Mumbai and Nashik in Maharashtra to wholesalers for up to 400 rupees (5.40 US\$) for the largest conches and 700 rupees/kg for the gorgonians. At Parmar's home, 218 kg of conch and 122 gorgonians were seized. The Times of India, August 26, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

## PHILIPPINES

## June 30, 2021

### Lapu-Lapu City, Province of Cebu, Philippines

Seizure from the homes of 2 suspects in the Punta Engaño neighbourhood of 3 stuffed sea turtles (Appendix I), 384 medium-sized and 107 small-sized giant clams (*Tridacna gigas*, Appendix II) or "taklobo", 33 organ pipe coral (*Tubipora musica*, Appendix II) fragments, 42 shark jaws, 3,213 horned helmets (*Cassis cornuta*) or "budyong", 81 triton's shells (genus *Charonia*), and 52 kg of Philippines hooded oysters (*Saccostrea malabonensis*) or "kukung kabayo". The total value is estimated at nearly 13 million pesos or 271,000 US\$. The 2 "collectors" were arrested.

Yahoo Philippines, July 6, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

## EUROPE

## FRANCE

## June 29, 2021

### Marseille, Department of Bouches-du-Rhône, France

The 4 poachers of sea urchins, sea breams, groupers, octopuses and other fish in the Calanques national park were sentenced on March 6, 2020 to pay 385,000 euros (422,100 US\$) in damages, including 350,000 in ecological damages (see "On the Trail" n°28 p.24). This sum was calculated by park experts and took into account both the weight of the poached specimens and the impact of poaching on the ecosystem. The defendants appealed and the Court of Appeal decided to use only the value of the specimens caught for the calculation of the ecological damages. The 4 men will have to pay 52,000 € for this. The damages for harming the park's image and mission were also reduced from 15,000 to 10,000 € (12,000 US\$) and from 20,000 to 10,000 €.

La Provence, June 29, 2021.<sup>15</sup>





"A harree ta fow,  
A toro ta farraro,  
A now ta tararta."

"The palm-tree shall grow  
The coral shall spread  
But man shall cease"

Herman Melville, *Omoo: A Narrative of Adventures in the South Seas*, 1847.

## ASIA

### CHINA

#### Beginning of May 2021

**Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge Border Crossing, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong and Macau.**

Seizure of 255 kg of stony coral pieces (*Scleractinia*, Appendix II) inside a batch of goods bound for Macau. *Southern Metropolis Daily*, October 15, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

#### May 11, 2021

**Maoming, Maoming Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure from 5 parcels of 9 red coral (genus *Corallium*) necklaces. Total weight: 205.3 grams. Chinese Customs, June 9 and 11, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

#### May 12, 2021

**Suzhou, Suzhou Prefecture, Jiangsu Province, China**

Seizure of 3 pieces of red coral (genus *Corallium*) jewelry. Chinese Customs, May 14, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

#### End of May 2021

**Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

Three stony corals (*Scleractinia*, Appendix II) are seized from an incoming passenger's hand luggage. Total weight: 3.8 kg.

One stony coral, weighing one kilo, is seized from another passenger on the same flight.

Chinese Customs, June 10, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

#### May 2021

**Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

24.5 kg of red coral (genus *Corallium*) necklaces were seized from the luggage of a passenger arriving from Africa.

Chinese Customs, May 29, 2021; *Guangzhou Daily*, June 4, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

#### May 2021

**Guiyang Longdongbao International Airport, Guiyang Prefecture, Guizhou Province, China**

Seizure of a red coral necklace in an incoming package (genus *Corallium*), 100 grams. Chinese Customs, May 31, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

#### May 2021

**Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure from 5 passengers' luggage on an incoming flight of 37 pieces of stony coral (*Scleractinia*, Appendix II), weighing about 18 kg.

*Beijing Youth Daily*, June 5, 2021; Chinese Customs, June 5, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

#### End of May 2021

**Jiuzhou, Zhuhai Port, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of a necklace and earrings set made of red coral (genus *Corallium*) from a parcel shipped from abroad said to contain "tea", "stomach medications", and "clothes".

Chinese Customs, June 10, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

#### June 1, 2021

**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**

Six kg of black coral (*Antipatharia*, Appendix II) items were seized inside an incoming parcel said to contain "wooden beads".

*Southern News Network*, June 9, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

#### Beginning of June 2021

**Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**

Six red coral (genus *Corallium*) jewelry pieces in incoming postal parcels are seized. Total weight: 17.9 grams.

Chinese Customs, June 18, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

#### Beginning of July 2021

**Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China**

A red coral (genus *Corallium*) necklace in an incoming package, 23.2 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 10, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

#### July 2021

**Heshan, Jiangmen Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

Four pieces of red coral (genus *Corallium*) jewelry in a package are seized. Total weight: 27.3 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 17, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

#### July 2021

**Jinan, Shandong Province, China**

A red coral (genus *Corallium*) necklace in an incoming postal parcel, 20 grams.

Chinese Customs, July 26, 2021.<sup>13</sup>



July 2021

**Zhanjiang International Airport, Zhanjiang Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure of red coral (genus *Corallium*) jewelry in an incoming parcel. Total weight: 102.2 grams. Chinese Customs, July 27 and 29, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

August 2, 2021

**Man Kam To Control Point, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.**

Twenty stony coral (Scleractinia, Appendix II) items (14.49 kg) were seized in a parcel intended for the export of traditional medicines.

Shenzhen Evening News, August 3, 2021.<sup>15</sup>



Beginning of August 2021

**Guiyang Longdongbao International Airport, Guiyang Prefecture, Guizhou Province, China**

Seizure of 30.37 grams of red coral (genus *Corallium*) jewelry.

Chinese Customs, August 12, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

August 2021

**Changchun, Jilin Province, China**

Red coral (genus *Corallium*) necklaces in an incoming postal parcel. Total weight: 178.9 grams.

Chinese Customs, August 19, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

August 2021

**Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**

Seven red coral statues (genus *Corallium*) in the postal mail. Total weight: 1,040 grams.

Chinese Customs, August 24, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

August 2021

**Kunming, Kunming Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China**

Twenty-one red coral jewelry pieces (genus *Corallium*) in 2 packages going abroad.

Chinese Customs, September 1, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



## INDIA

August 26, 2021

**Vadodara, Vadodara District, State of Gujarat, India**

Narendra Attarwala was arrested for storing corals in his store and selling them illicitly. Seizure of 780 pieces of raw black coral (order *Antipatharia*) and 82 in frames. The investigation has to identify any possible accomplices. It is rumored that holding black coral in one's home or office brings good luck and money.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (India), August 27, 2021; The Times of India, August 30, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

## PHILIPPINES

June 13, 2021

**Port of Hagnaya, San Remigio, Province of Cebu, Philippines**

Seizure of 1,210 live corals, mainly of the genus *Acanthophyllia* (Appendix II), inside 5 boxes said to contain "tropical fish". They had been shipped by boat from Cawayan, Masbate Province. Estimated value: 7.26 million philippino pesos (151,790 US\$). It is planned to put them back in the water.

Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), July 2021; Philippine News Agency, July 17, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

## EUROPE

### ITALY

Beginning of May 2021

**Metropolitan City of Turin, Piedmont Region, Italy**



The Guardia di Finanza raided a store in the south of the city. They seized more than 10,000 coral branches (*Madrepora* spp., Appendix II), red coral jewelry (genus *Corallium*), and precious and semi-precious stones. Estimated value at resale was more than 1.2 million US\$. The investigation has to determine their origin. In the absence of information on the materials used, additional seizure of several thousand pieces of jewelry. The storeowner was questioned.

Cronachedi, May 7, 2021; La Repubblica, May 7, 2021; Torino Oggi, May 7, 2021.<sup>22</sup>



**May 13, 2021**

**Milan Malpensa International Airport, Province of Varese, Region of Lombardy, Italy**

A piece of blue coral (*Heliopora coerulea*, Appendix II) was seized from a package shipped from the United States of America to Bari.

Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata, May 13, 2021; VareseNews, May 13, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

**THE NETHERLANDS**

**Mid-July 2021**

**Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, North Holland Province, The Netherlands**



Fifteen live corals were seized.  
Henriette Bongers (Schipol Cargo Customs), July 16, 2021.<sup>24</sup>

**POLAND**

**June 25, 2021**

**Warsaw Chopin Airport, Masovian Voivodeship, Poland**



Polish Customs had detected the 1.5-ton shipment from Indonesia said to contain “marine animals”. Initial checks revealed anomalies and led to the spectacular seizure of 883 stony corals (*Scleractinia*, Appendix II) divided in 50 boxes. 119 did not survive the long journey. The live corals were entrusted to different aquariums in the country.

National Revenue Administration, June 25, 2021.<sup>25</sup>



Corals genus *Acropora*, Tubuai Islands, Tahiti, French Polynesia. Photo Natomik.



# GIANT CLAMS, TRITONS ...

## ASIA

### CHINA

May 7, 2021

#### Qionghai and Changjiang Li Autonomous County, Hainan Province, China

"Wu", from Fujian province, was visiting Hainan. He did not want to come empty-handed at his friend "Zou"'s house. "Zou" is a 35-year-old blogger living in Changjiang County who specializes in food videos. On April 26, "Wu" purchased a 15 cm triton's trumpet shell (*Charonia tritonis*) from "Fu" for 70 yuan (11 US\$). "Wu" then gave it to his friend "Zou", who hastened to cook it. He posted a video on the Weibo, Douyin and Bilibili platforms. The authorities quickly discovered it and arrested "Wu", "Zou" and "Fu".

Triton's trumpet shells play an important role in coral reef preservation, they eat *Acanthaster planci* starfish, which feed on coral polyps and sterilize reefs. They measure up to 50 cm long. Their shells are used as traditional musical instruments in several countries in Asia and Oceania. Global Times, May 12, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

Beginning of May 2021

#### Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

- Beads made with giant clam shell (*Tridacnidae*, Appendix II) seized in a suitcase.
  - Beads made with giant clam shell hidden in a milk powder can seized in another suitcase.
- Chinese Customs, May 12, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

May 2021

#### Sunan Shuofang International Airport, Wuxi Prefecture, Jiangsu Province, China



Seizure from an incoming passenger's hand luggage of a giant clam shell (*Tridacnidae*, Appendix II), 980 grams.

Chinese Customs, May 21, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

May 2021

#### Jinan, Shandong Province, China



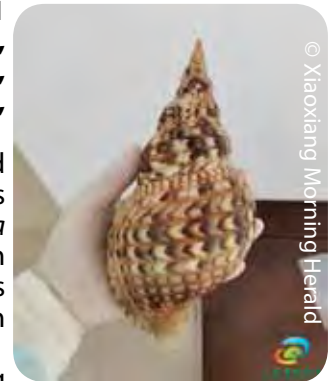
Seizure from an incoming parcel of a horned helmet (*Cassis cornuta*), 2.8 kg.

Chinese Customs, May 27, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

#### Beginning of June 2021 Donghai Island, Zhanjiang Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China

A 21.7-cm-high and 9.2-cm-wide triton's trumpet shell (*Charonia tritonis*) was seized on an incoming vessel. It is believed to have been purchased abroad.

Xiaoxiang Morning Herald, June 16, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



June 2021

#### Xiamen, Fujian Province, China



New seizure of triton's trumpet shells (*Charonia tritonis*). The 3 shells were in a package said to contain "decorative items". The largest one measures 30 cm in height and weighs 540 grams. The total weight is 1.3 kg.

Quanzhou Evening News Agency, June 24, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



June 2021

**Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

Small giant clams (*Tridacna maxima*, Appendix II) and fluted giant clams (*Tridacna squamosa*, Appendix II) are seized from luggage. Chinese Customs, July 2, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

July 2021

**Huangdao Port, Qingdao, Shandong Province, China**

Seizure of 33 triton's trumpet shells (*Charonia tritonis*) hidden in a sea container. Chinese Customs, August 9, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**PHILIPPINES**

End of June 2021

**Sofronio Española, Province of Palawan, Philippines**



Eulogio Josos Togonon, Totong Josos, Nonoy Guliman and Vilmor Pajardo, all residents of Iraray baragay, had it all planned out. If you are going to store 150 tons of giant clam shells (*Tridacna* spp., Appendix II), you might as well do it in a quiet place. King's Paradise Island seemed like the perfect storage location as tourist accommodations had closed in June 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. But authorities, on alert after several significant giant clam shell seizures between February and April 2021 in the Palawan province (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.261), found out what was going on. The seizure was estimated at 250 million pesos (5.23 million US\$ or 35 US\$/kg). Togonon was arrested and his accomplices are being sought. According to the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development spokesperson, residents are encouraged to collect giant clam shells by foreigners claiming to have permits. GMA Network, July 1, 2021; Inquirer.net, July 2, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

**SRI LANKA**

June 15, 2021

**Sri Lanka**

The 20-foot container bound for India was said to contain 20,000 chank shells (*Turbinella pyrum*) over 70 mm in diameter, the legal minimum. It was accompanied by an export permit in due form, and it did in fact contain chank shells. But after opening all the bags, customs officers counted 20,000 undersized shells and 13,680 undeclared shells. Chank shells live in coastal waters around India and Sri Lanka. Their shells are used in Indian Ayurvedic medicine. When reduced to powder, they are believed to help relieve digestive problems and to have strengthening effects. They are also often used to make jewelry and Hindu and Buddhist cult objects such as libation cups or trumpets. Sri Lanka Customs, June 15, 2021.<sup>10</sup>





## EUROPE

### FRANCE

**August 14 to 15, 2021**

**Plogoff, Department of Finistère, France**



The 2 Spanish nationals and their Moldavian accomplice did not stop when the gendarmes wanted to control them. They were eventually caught and arrested. The gendarmes found 200 kg of just-harvested gooseneck barnacles (*Pollicipes pollicipes*) in the trunk of their vehicle. Their estimated value in France is 17,000 € (20,000 US\$ or 100 US\$/kg), and they would be worth at least twice as much in Spain or Portugal. The 3 men were arrested, their vehicle and its cargo seized. Finistère Gendarmerie, August 16, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

### ITALY

**July 19, 2021**

**Polignano a Mare, Metropolitan City of Bari, Region of Apulia, Italy**

Seven kg of date mussels (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II), still alive after being poached by 3 divers, are returned to the water.

BorderLine24 - Il giornale di Bari, July 19, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**July 28, 2021**

**Torre Annunziata, Metropolitan City of Naples, Region of Campania, Italy**

The investigation lasted 3 years. It led to the identification of an organized gang of 21 people. They were involved in the massive poaching of date mussels (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II) and chequered carpet shells (*Ruditapes decussatus*) along the coastline of several towns in the metropolitan city of Naples (6.6 km long) since July 2016. On the day of the intervention of law enforcement, 2,508.9 kg of date mussels and more than 675 kg of carpet shells, as well as several vehicles, diving equipment and cell phones, were seized. The gang's monthly turnover amounted to 100,000 € (119,000 US\$).

Out of the 21 gang members, 7 were remanded in custody, 11 were put under house arrest, 2 have to regularly report to the police station, and the last one is wanted. In addition to poaching and illegal trade charges, the suspects were also charged with inflicting serious damage onto the ecosystem and "destroying the natural beauty" of a protected marine area. chequered carpet shells were contaminated by heavy metals and hydrocarbons and thus unfit for consumption.

TeleCapriNews, July 28, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

**August 17, 2021**

**Porto Torres, Province of Sassari, Autonomous Region of Sardinia, Italy**

Seizure of a 60-cm-long noble pen shell (*Pinna nobilis*) from the luggage of 4 Spanish tourists returning to Barcelona. They said they "picked" it on an Alghero beach 30 km away. Noble pen shell, see "On the Trail" n°18 p.8, n°19 p.7, n°22 p.8 and n°26 p.12.

La Voce d'Italia, August 17, 2021.<sup>14</sup>





*Haliotis rufescens*. Photo Ken-ichi Ueda

*Haliotis* spp.

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**May 7, 2021**

#### **Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

It was barely 7:30 a.m. when the K9 unit was contacted. A Ford Bantam was reportedly transporting abalones in the Marine Drive suburb. The response was not long. The vehicle was intercepted, and the 2 suspects, aged 36 and 40, were arrested. 69 abalones and 2 wetsuits were seized.

SAPS, May 9, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

**May 13 and 14, 2021**

#### **Table Mountain National Park, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Anti-poaching control operations in Table Mountain national park:

- A man in possession of 20 shucked abalones and 4 whole state abalones was arrested.
- 11 bags containing 500 abalones were found.

Independent Online, May 14 and 16, 2021; Algoa FM, May 15, 2021; MENAFN, May 16, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

**May 17 and October 11, 2021**

#### **Philadelphia and Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Joint operation by the Hawks and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE). A truck and a car driving together towards Malmesbury were stopped in a petrol station on Highway 7. An initial inspection revealed dried abalones in the truck. The vehicles were taken to the Philadelphia police station and combed. Inside, there were 70 boxes containing 23,896 abalones and 50,000 rand (3,500 US\$) in cash. The abalones were valued at 9.9 million rand (695,000 US\$). Lawrence Muroma, a 35-year-old Zimbabwean national, and Qing Quan Feng, a 28-year-old Chinese national, were arrested. They were sentenced to one year in prison on October 11.

Between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021, 26 tonnes of abalones were seized and 149 suspects were arrested.

SAPS, May 18 and October 11, 2021; Eyewitness News, May 19, 2021; The Herald, June 3, 2021; SABC News Western Cape, October 12, 2021.<sup>3</sup>





**May 18, 2021**

**St Francis Bay, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

A nighttime shadowing resulted in the arrest of 6 suspects, aged between 26 and 45 years old. They were transporting 3 bags containing 320 abalones. Seizure estimated at 18,000 rand (1,260 US\$). SAPS, May 20, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

**May 20, 2021**

**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Mogamat Amien Fakier, 49, was sentenced to a 50,000-rand (3,500 US\$) fine or 2 years in prison. He had been arrested on August 14, 2017 in the Philippi neighborhood along with one other person who was discharged in the end. They were carrying 483 kg of dried abalone in their truck, estimated at 2.4 million rand (184,200 US\$ or 380 US\$/kg). SAPS, May 23, 2021; Independent Online, May 24, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



**May 25, 2021**

**Kasouga, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

The police officer was off duty, but when he learned that poachers were at work, he did not hesitate. The suspects had not erased their tracks in the sand when they got out of the water and he found them in the bush, around a campfire. Four arrests were made and 68 abalones, shucking utensils, and assault rifle ammunition were confiscated. The abalones were valued at 13,000 rand (910 US\$). SAPS, May 26, 2021.<sup>6</sup>



**June 2, 2021**

**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Bill Ho (52), nicknamed Wong, was arrested on February 13, 2020. He was part of an abalone poaching and smuggling network operating in Gauteng and in the Western Cape. He was sentenced to a 5-year suspended prison term and a 2-year correctional supervision sentence. The abalones, fishing and preparation equipment, and 3 vehicles were confiscated once and for all. SAPS, June 3, 2021.<sup>7</sup>



**June 3, 2021**

**Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

Julian Brown was released on a 100,000 rand (7,230 US\$) bail. He had been sentenced on February 5, 2019 to 18 years in prison for poaching and trafficking abalone, falsifying documents, and driving without a license (see "On the Trail" n°24 p.7). His accomplices, Brandon Turner and Eugene Victor, both sentenced to 15 years in prison, were also released, the first on 10,000 rand (720 US\$) bail, the second on a 1,000 rand bail. The Herald, June 3rd and 4, 2021.<sup>8</sup>



**June 8, 2021**

**Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**



Members of a private anti-poaching company on duty spotted a suspicious car in the Humewood area at 6:50 a.m. It immediately started to speed away. Unable to catch up with it, they called the town's flying squad to the rescue. After a hectic chase, the car was finally stopped while driving the wrong way through the central business district. Six suspects, aged between 21 and 51 years old, were arrested with 1,689 abalones weighing 430 kg valued at 1.4 million rand (101,200 US\$ or 235 US\$/kg). Moses Gqola, Shaakir George, Athenkosi Bidla, Eldrich Aylward, Justin Killian, and Justin Jantjies were released on a bail of 5,000 rand (360 US\$) on June 22<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. SAPS, June 8, 2021; Eyewitness News, June 9, 2021; Algoa FM, June 8, 2021; News24, July 2, 2021.<sup>9</sup>



**June 10, 2021**

**Strand, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

The white Mercedes Benz traveling from Hermanus to Cape Town (170 km) carried 8 bags containing 855 abalones. It was intercepted halfway through the journey in the Lwandle suburb. The 25-year-old driver was arrested and the cargo, estimated at 1.2 million rand (86,760 US\$), was seized. A few days later, he was released on a 5,000 rand bail.

SAPS, June 11, 2021; News24, June 24, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

**June 22 and August 20 2021**

**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Rashidi Ndulite, 45, was arrested when police searched his abalone processing facility in the Edgemead suburb. He did not have time to disappear, nor did he have time to dispose of his equipment and the 4,817 dried abalones. The 245.95 kg of abalones are said to be worth 1.7 million rand (122,900 US\$ or 500 US\$/kg).

Ndulite was sentenced on August 20<sup>th</sup> to 1.5 years in prison for trafficking abalones and one year in prison for illegal immigration. The sentences run concurrently.

SAPS, June 22 and August 23, 2021.<sup>11</sup>



**July 7, 2021**

**St Francis Bay, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

Early in the morning, a resident saw 4 men loading bags into a car at Shark Point. Clearly, these divers did not come to admire the wrecks and the fish. He called a private anti-poaching company. When the team arrived, the 4 men were fishing. Feeling watched, they fled. The police called in reinforcement cornered them on Tarragona Road. Two poachers managed to escape in the bush. The other 2 were taken to the police station and 163 abalones estimated at 28,000 rand (1,950 US\$) and their vehicle were seized.

SAPS, July 7, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**July 7, 2021**

**Off Robben Island, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

The sailing conditions were ideal. Police and DFFE agents patrolled around the historical island, popular with poachers, and carried out random checks. At 2 a.m., a boat attempted to be discreet in vain. Eight suspects were arrested. 920 abalones valued at 345,000 rand (24,000 US\$) and a rubber duck were seized.

SAPS, July 7, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

**July 8, 2021**

**Smitswinkelbaai, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

When policemen saw 2 divers emerging from the rocks and heading towards a car, they did not hesitate to act. Abalone poaching is commonplace here. So they were incredulous not to find anything during the control. The 2 suspects innocently left the place by car. But giving up was not an option, so the policemen put themselves out of sight. A few minutes later, 2 other divers appeared at the same place. This time, they were loaded with bags. The vehicle was no longer there to take them, so they had no chance to escape. Their bags were seized and the two 21 year-old "carriers" were quickly handcuffed.

Independent Online, July 8, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**July 15, 2021**

**Overstrand, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

It was 5:30 a.m. The policemen were carrying out routine controls when a vehicle passed by in a hurry. They recognized the driver, already involved in abalone trafficking, and chased him. The driver and the passenger managed to escape on foot. Inside the vehicle, as expected, there were abalones, more than 7,000 specimens, 36 bags, a cargo worth 1.5 million rand (104,600 US\$).

Overstrand Municipality, July 15, 2021.<sup>15</sup>

**July 15, 2021**

**Gansbaai, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Two suspects, aged 22 and 44, were arrested. Authorities discovered 589 abalones, 205 of which were shucked.

Overstrand Municipality, July 16, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

**July 19, 2021**

**Bell, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

A 31-year-old man was driving from East London to Port Alfred. Unfortunately for him, a police checkpoint was on his route. When officers started to open his trunk, he ran off into the bush. Soon after, he was back to witness the police count all 387 abalones and confiscate his cash before taking him to the police station.

SAPS, July 20, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

**July 19, 2021**

**Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

A man was out of luck. His accomplices managed to elude the police, but he could not get very far from Brighton Beach with his flat tire. His trunk held 120 kg of abalone valued at 432,000 rand (30,000 US\$ or 250 US\$/kg).

SAPS, July 20, 2021.<sup>18</sup>



**July 22, 2021**

**Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

Following a tip, the K9 unit searched a home in the Holland Park area. The trip was not in vain: they found 1,400 kg of shucked abalone, 233.88 kg of dried abalone, 5 freezers, a scale, a telephone, and a 38-year-old suspect. The abalones were handed over to the DFFE. They are estimated to be worth 3.7 million rand (258,000 US\$). SAPS, July 23, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



**July 28, 2021**

**Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

In the suburb of Kinkelbos, a suspect was arrested in a vehicle transporting abalones. The story could have ended there, but police found a link with another seizure 2 weeks earlier in Kensington. One thing led to another and they followed a track to Walmer, another suburb about 50 km away. They showed up in a clandestine abalone processing workshop run by 4 Chinese people, including a woman, who were immediately arrested. 3,200 kg of abalone were seized, the equivalent of 6.1 million rand (418,360 US\$ or 130 US\$/kg). A few more abalone discoveries later, the value of the seizure went up to 24 million rand (more than 1.6 million US\$). SAPS, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021; Independent Online, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>20</sup>



**August 6, 2021**

**Jansenville, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

The drought caused great difficulty in obtaining drinking water. While some people were running out of water, others were going to the water and bringing back abalone. At 5:35 a.m., 2 cars were stopped during a Disaster Management Act Regulations enforcement patrol. They held 39 bags filled with abalone worth 432,000 rand (29,600 US\$), as well as a firearm and ammunition. Two arrests were made. SAPS, August 6, 2021.<sup>21</sup>



**August 12, 2021**

**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Joint operation by the Hawks, the K9 unit, the Crime Intelligence unit, and the DFFE. 22,872 dried abalones (202.95 kg) worth 1.4 million rand (96,000 US\$ or 470 US\$/kg) were seized. Seven people were arrested. SAPS, August 13, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

**August 23, 2021**

**Bloemfontein, Free State Province, South Africa**

The informer was right, there was indeed an abalone drying shop in the Bainsvlei neighbourhood. The search resulted in the seizure of 2,881 dried and fresh abalones, weighing 188 kg, as well as processing equipment. The whole lot was said to be worth 1.3 million rand (89,160 US\$). Three people were arrested.

SAPS, August 24, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

**August 25, 2021**

**Between Caledon and Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Following a tip-off, the Overberg Rural District Flying Squad went searching for a vehicle heading towards Cape Town on the N2 road. It was intercepted and the 29-year-old driver was immobilized after some difficulties. The result: one arrest and 2,929 confiscated abalones.

SAPS, August 25, 2021.<sup>24</sup>

**FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**August 27, 2021**

**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**



Ismael Mohamed (37), Hirsi Mohamed (28) and Nestary Million (25) were arrested on September 17, 2019. Authorities had found the equivalent of 3.6 million rand (235,900 US\$) in fresh and dried abalones, as well as 2 firearms in their sweatshop.

Hirsi Mohamed and Nestary Million were sentenced to 8 years in prison, 4 of which were suspended, for the illegal possession of firearms, 2 years in prison for the possession of ammunition, and a suspended sentence for processing abalone. The sentences run concurrently. Ismael Mohamed was sentenced to a 20,000-rand (1,370 US\$) fine or 2 years in prison for illegally processing abalone.

Julian Jansen, September 25, 2019; News24, August 31, 2021.<sup>25</sup>



## ZIMBABWE

**May 26 and June 14, 2021**

**Beitbridge Border Post, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe. Border with South Africa.**

The truck supposedly carried “noodles” from South Africa to Zambia. At least, that is what the company responsible for the import, based in Matoko (Mashonaland East Province), declared. But Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) officials had information. Underneath the noodles was more than 8.3 million rand (586,800 US\$) worth of dried abalone. Frank Mavakise, a Beitbridge native, and Kasase, a Congolese national, were arrested. They were released on bail for 20,000 Zimbabwean dollars (240 US\$) on June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Following an application by the shipment owners, the High Court ordered ZIMRA officials on July 7th to return the abalones to the suspects and escort them to Chirundu, Zambia. However, there was no documentation to support the legality of the export.

The Herald, May 27, 2021; The Chronicle, June 17, 2021; Centre For Natural Resource Governance, August 19, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**June 2021**

**Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport, Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

This time, 400 kg of dried abalone were shipped to China via a flight to Dubai. According to Farai Maguwu, director of the CFRG (Centre For Natural Resource Governance), Zimbabwe is increasingly becoming a transit route for wildlife and wildlife by-product traffickers. They are taking advantage of the lax security at entry and exit ports and judiciary corruption.

Center For Natural Resource Governance, August 19, 2021.<sup>27</sup>

## OCEANIA

### AUSTRALIA

**July 13 and 15, 2021**

**Narooma and Bega, State of New South Wales, Australia**



- Three fishermen were arrested in the Mimosa Rocks national park with 95 abalones (87 were undersized). They were sentenced to fines totaling 12,000 Australian dollars (9,000 US\$). Their diving equipment was confiscated.

- Two men were also arrested in November 2017 in Mimosa Rocks national park with 262 shucked abalones. One was sentenced to 9 months in prison and fined 6,750 Australian dollars (5,260 US\$) in March (see “On the Trail” n°32 p.268). The other was sentenced to 7 months in prison, to be served by way of intensive correction orders, and 5,500 Australian dollars (4,135 US\$) in fines and judicial costs.

The Beagle, August 11, 2021.<sup>28</sup>



**August 2021**

**Ben Boyd National Park, State of New South Wales, Australia**



Five over-equipped divers caught 8 abalones (6 of which were undersized) around Lennards Island. The DPI-F (Department of Primary Industries - Fisheries) agents did not give them time to find more. The abalones were returned to the water, and the poachers walked away with fines totaling 1,900 dollars (1,400 US\$).

Bega District News, August 27, 2021.<sup>29</sup>





# SEA CUCUMBERS AND SEA URCHINS

*Holothuria fuscogilva*, *Holothuria nobilis* and *Holothuria whitmaei* (teatfish): Appendix II.  
*Isostichopus fuscus*: Appendix III in Ecuador.



Black sea cucumber (*Holothuria leucospilota*). Photo Niki Hubbard

## AFRICA

### MADAGASCAR

**June 8, 2021**

#### **Off Vinanivao, Sava Region, Madagascar**

A boat called the *Ocean Express*, Malaysian flag, was boarded due to illegal fishing suspicions. Ten drums full of fresh sea cucumbers, 2 speedboats, 3 compressor motors, 12 diving tanks, fins and jackets were seized.

Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), June 2021.<sup>1</sup>

## AMERICA

### FRANCE

**May 31, 2021**

#### **Off Sainte-Anne, Territorial Collectivity of Martinique, France**

Two poachers caught poaching white sea urchins (*Tripneustes ventricosus*) were arrested. The 150 specimens were returned to the water. The suspects' dinghy was seized.

Martinique la 1<sup>ère</sup>, June 4, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

## ASIA

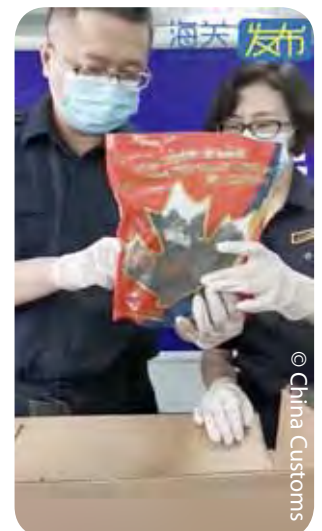
### CHINA

**End of June 2021**

#### **Yantai, Yantai Prefecture, Shandong Province, China**

An inbound package containing 9.08 kg of dried sea cucumbers caught in the Atlantic Ocean is seized.

Chinese Customs, July 7, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



© China Customs



**August 18, 2021**

**Changsha, Changsha Prefecture, Hunan Province, China**

200 grams of dried sea cucumbers and 453.6 grams of American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*, Appendix II) are seized from an inbound package marked "miscellaneous."

Chinese Customs, August 19, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

## INDIA

**June 11, 2021**

**Off Rameswaram, Ramanathapuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

A motor boat loaded with 500 kg of sea cucumbers heading towards Rameswaram was intercepted by the Forest Department. The smuggler was arrested. Asian News International, July 11, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

**June 29, 2021**

**Devipattinam, Ramanathapuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Sea cucumbers and cardamoms were from Kayalpattinam (Thoothukudi district, 180 km away). They were stored on the spot before sailing to Sri Lanka on smuggling boats overnight. However, nothing happened as planned. Well-informed police officers searched everything that morning and confiscated 1.7 million rupees (23,400 US\$) worth of cargo. Police arrested Saddam Hussain from Kayalpattinam and Kasim Mohamed from Kilakarai (30 km away). Exchanges with Sri Lankan nationals were found in their phones. Two accomplices are being sought.

The Hindu, June 29, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

**July 6, 2021**

**Off Mandapam, Ramanathapuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



The Coast Guard was on the lookout for a possible transshipment of sea cucumbers following a tip-off. At 6:30 a.m., they spotted a suspicious boat. Inside, they found 2 men and 110 bags containing 1,200 kg of sea cucumbers. The 2 suspects recognized that their consignment was to cross the international maritime border, entailing entry into Sri Lanka. Officials arrested them and seized their cargo. The New Indian Express, July 7, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

**July 13, 2021**

**Vedalai, Ramanathapuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



Mandapam authorities are once again on the verge of busting a sea cucumber smuggling ring to Sri Lanka. While standing guard on the beach, officers spotted a boat approach the beach and turn around in front of them. After a chase, they stopped the boat near Hare Island. They found 300 kg of sea cucumbers on board. Meerankani and Mohammad Nasir were arrested. They admitted to having disposed of 500 kg of sea cucumbers by throwing them overboard during their escape.

Tamil Guardian, July 17, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**July 20, 2021**

**Devipattinam, Ramanathapuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



Back in Devipattinam, 500 kg of sea cucumbers are confiscated in a clandestine processing workshop at a man named Abdul's home. He is wanted. The Hindu, July 20, 2021; Top Tamil News, July 21, 2021.<sup>9</sup>



**July 22, 2021**

**Pirappanvalasai, Ramanathapuram District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Mandapam forestry services were unable this time to arrest the suspects who disappeared and left behind their belongings. While surveying the area under the full moon's light, they discovered 35 kg of sea cucumbers in a cache and 25 kg on a 2-wheeler. The sea cucumbers were alive. They were returned to the water after being presented to a Rameswaram judge. The Times of India, July 23, 2021.<sup>10</sup>



## INDONESIA

**May 6, 2021**

**Off Natuna Islands, Natuna Regency, Riau Islands Province, Indonesia**



The Indonesian Navy patrol boat *Kapal Pengawas Hiu Macan 01* boards 2 Vietnamese fishing vessels identified by the numbers TG 92536 TS and TV 93020 TS. They make 10 arrests. The 2 vessels used trawling gear to specifically target sea cucumbers, an unprecedented method according to the operations manager.

Pikiran Rakyat Media Network, May 7, 2021; Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), May 2021.<sup>11</sup>

## JAPAN

**July 8, 2021**

**Tomamae, Hokkaidō Prefecture, Japan**

Eleven people, ranging from 19 to 53 years old, were arrested in the early morning. 688.3 kg of sea cucumbers valued at 2.2 million yen or 19,880 US\$ (29 US\$/kg) were seized. The suspects came from Sapporo (190 km away) and Otaru (230 km away) and all knew each other. Some were on the lookout while others carried cargo or dove for the animals from motorized inflatable boats. The media has not ruled out the possibility that Yakuza, "sick of waking up early to go jump in the ocean", recruited them. Yakuza, see "On the Trail" n°32 p.271.

Japan Today (with NHK), July 12, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

## MALAYSIA

**July 5, 2021**

**79 km off Tok Bali, State of Kelantan, Malaysia**

A Maritime Enforcement Agency patrol arrested 5 Vietnamese fishermen, 25 to 38 years old, in the evening. On the boat, 2,000 liters of diesel and 200 kg of sea cucumbers were seized. According to Malayan authorities, sea cucumbers can be sold for up to 1,000 ringgit/kg or 240 US\$/kg in Viet Nam. The Sun Daily, July 6, 2021; Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), July 2021.<sup>13</sup>

## SRI LANKA

**April 1 to June 30, 2021**

**Eastern, North Western and Northern Provinces, Sri Lanka**



While "adhering to Covid-19 protocols", the Sri Lanka Navy arrested 442 people engaged in illegal fishing, particularly of sea cucumbers, over 3 months. The suspects ranged from 16 to 60 years old. Police confiscated 153 boats and fishing equipment. Sri Lanka Navy, July 2, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**April 21 to June 5, 2021**

**Off Walaipadu, Kiranchi, Vettalakeni, Nagarkovil and Point Pedro, Northern Province, Sri Lanka**

The Sri Lanka Navy performed operations to prevent illegal fishing and arrested 45 people between the ages of 23 and 57. They seized 4,040 sea cucumbers in national waters, diving equipment and 14 dinghies. All the suspects reside in the Northern and Northwestern Province.

Daily News, June 9, 2021; Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), June 2021.<sup>15</sup>



**August 4, 2021**  
**Kalpitiya Peninsula, North Western Province, Sri Lanka**



Sixteen bags containing 820 kg of dried sea cucumbers were discovered in 2 dinghies on a beach. Four suspects were arrested, and afterwards 3 others were as well as they waited to transport the bags inland (valued at 16 million rupees, or 80,420 US\$, and 98 US\$/kg).  
Sri Lanka Navy, August 4, 2021.<sup>16</sup>

**August 25, 2021**  
**Mannar, Northern Province, Sri Lanka**



9,170 kg of sea cucumbers are seized in a drying workshop. A Puttalam (North West Province) resident is arrested.  
Sri Lanka Navy, August 27, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

## EUROPE

### ITALY

**Mid-May, 2021**  
**Turin, Metropolitan City of Turin, Region of Piedmont, Italy**

The Guardia di Finanza visited a store in the Porta Palazzo district whose very low prices of "Italian-made" silk and cashmere articles seemed suspicious. Analyses showed that the clothes and accessories are actually made of synthetic materials. They were imported from China through a warehouse in Milan's Chinatown and a store in Agrate Brianza (150 km away). Three people, all of Chinese origin, were charged. Once the fraud was established, agents returned to confiscate 400,000 items. The value of the seizure is estimated at 5 million € (over 6 million US\$). What a surprise to find, in the middle of fake silk scarves, about 100 black sea cucumbers (*Holothuria leucospilota*).

Agenzia giornalistica Opinione, May 20, 2021; Quotidiano Piemontese, May 20, 2021.<sup>18</sup>

### RUSSIA

**April to June 2021**  
**Bezverkhovo, Primorsky Krai, Russia**

A city council member and one of his friends were indicted for repeatedly threatening and eventually beating up the director of an aquaculture company so that he would allow them to catch sea cucumbers on his farm, which is forbidden. By dint of blackmail, they wanted to take 50,000 US\$ worth of sea cucumbers..

Komsomolskaya Pravda, December 1, 2021; Moskovski Komsomolets Vladivostok, December 1, 2021.<sup>19</sup>

### REPEATED OFFENSE

**June 2021**  
**Khasansky District, Primorsky Krai, Russia**

P. and B. were arrested for being in possession of 523 sea cucumbers, valued at 713,000 rubles or 9,600 US\$. P. had already been sentenced to one year in prison for beating a Dalnevostochny Morskoy nature reserve guard who tried to prevent him from poaching birds in March 2017. He had been an army captain at the time and was dismissed from his post.

GTRK Vladivostok, July 13, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

**Mid-July 2021**  
**Ekspeditsii Bay, Khasansky District, Primorsky Krai, Russia**

- 254 Japanese sea cucumbers (*Apostichopus japonicus*) are seized on board a boat. Two suspects, aged 18 and 26, are arrested.

- A few days later, 523 Japanese sea cucumbers are seized. Two suspects are arrested.

The animals were returned to the water.

Newsbox24.tv, July 15, 2021; TASS Russian News Agency, July 15, 2021.<sup>21</sup>



Mid-August, 2021  
Primorsky Krai, Russia. Border with China.



FSB agents found well-hidden sea cucumbers and ginseng (genus *Panax*) in the train's locomotive going to China. As they continued their search, they traced 2 suspects and found more sea cucumbers and ginseng in their vehicles and premises. In total, they seized 78 kg of sea cucumbers and 7 kg of ginseng. They are estimated to be worth 70 million rubles or 955,300 US\$.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, August 16, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

## OCEANIA

### AUSTRALIA

#### OPERATION JAWLINE

May 2021

**Ashmore and Cartier Islands, Northern Territory and Scott and Seringapatam Reefs, State of Western Australia, Australia**

In May, Australian Border Force patrol vessels boarded 19 Indonesian vessels engaged in illegal fishing operations. 860 kg of sea cucumbers, 105 kg of fresh fish, fishing gear, fuel and navigational aid equipment were seized. Three of the vessels were voluntarily sunk after their crew transferred to other vessels. All the other vessels were escorted out of the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone.

Australian Border Force, June 1 and 5, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

## SEAHORSES

*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II

### AFRICA

#### MOZAMBIQUE

June 23, 2021

**Vilankulo, Inhambane Province, Mozambique**

A Chinese national was arrested and 9 kg of dried seahorses were seized. He explained that he had bought them from local fishermen who had poached them in the Bazaruto national park for 30 to 50 meticaïs per kilo, i.e. 0.47 to 0.79 US\$. He intended to sell them in China to followers of traditional Chinese medicine for 1,800 US\$/kg, a nice profit. He faces 12 to 16 years in prison. The pressure on seahorses is intense. Nearly 20 million specimens are reportedly poached each year.

Club of Mozambique, June 23, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

### ASIA

#### CHINA

May 11, 2021

**Fangchenggang, Fangchenggang Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam.**

Routine patrol on a road known to be frequented by smugglers. The police spot a motorised tricycle. They follow it to a village. They check it and discover bags with 6,267 seahorses and 136 dried totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) swim bladders. The seahorses are valued at 940,000 yuan or 145,000 US\$ and the swim bladders at 4.3 million yuan or 663,000 US\$. Arrest of "Lin" and "Liao", they were in charge of bringing the goods from Viet Nam to China.

Species Impact Victim Statements (SVIS), July 29, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



### Beginning of May 2021

**Friendship Pass Border Post, Chongzuo Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam.**

Seahorses and pipefishes are seized from an incoming passenger's luggage. Total weight: 420 grams.

Chinese Customs, May 18, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

### May 18, 2021

**Longbang Port of Entry, Bose Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam.**

Seizure of 10,635 dried seahorses with an estimated value of 1.6 million yuan, or 247,330 US\$, or more than 23 US\$/seahorse. Two arrests were made.

Chinese Customs, June 5, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

### May 2021

**Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

A passenger coming from abroad had 8 dried seahorses seized from his luggage.

Chinese Customs, May 28, 2021.<sup>5</sup>



### June 2, 2021

**Qingdao Liuting International Airport, Shandong Province, China**



Ten dried seahorses are seized from an incoming passenger's luggage. Total weight: 65 grams.

Chinese Customs, June 7, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

### Beginning of June 2021

**Hekou Yao Autonomous County, Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Vietnam.**

Passengers returning from abroad have 8 dried seahorses (40 grams), 16 dried pipefish (70 grams), and 8 dried starfish (300 grams) seized from their luggage.

Chinese Customs, June 11, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

### Beginning of June 2021

**Beijing-Daxing International Airport, China**

Ten dried seahorses are seized from an incoming passenger's luggage. Total weight: 88 grams.

Chinese Customs, June 18, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

### July 5, 2021

**Zhai'an Border Control, Chongzuo Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam.**

A vehicle was seized at 1:40 am. The driver's behavior drew customs officers' attention at the border crossing. They proceeded to search the trunk, even though the driver assured that it contained nothing more than clothes. They discovered 4,062 dried seahorses worth around 600,000 yuan (92,860 US\$). CCTV, July 10, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

### July 26, 2021

**Huadong, Baise Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. Border with Viet Nam.**

10,328 dried seahorses (40 kg) were seized from a bus traveling 980 km from Napo county to Dongguan in Guangdong. Estimated value: 1.5 million yuan or 232,150 US\$ (5,880 US\$/kg).

China.org.cn (with Xinhua), August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021; Jintai.com, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

### August 2021

**Beijing Capital International Airport, China**

Seizure of 50 dried seahorses in an incoming package. Total weight: 71.1 grams.

Chinese Customs, September 1, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

## EUROPE

### POLAND

### May 2021

**Hrebenne, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland**

"Large quantities" of tablets made from seahorse extract were seized from the luggage of Ukrainian travelers.

National Revenue Administration, June 9, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

### June 2021

**Lublin, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland**

1,200 tablets made from seahorse extract were seized from a postal package sent from Ukraine to the Holy Cross Voivodeship.

National Revenue Administration, July 9, 2021.<sup>13</sup>





# MARINE OR FRESHWATER FISH

## INCLUDING SHARKS AND STURGEONS



### NORTHERN AMERICA

#### CANADA

**May 18, 2021**

##### **Province of British Columbia, Canada**

Kiu Yick Company Ltd. was fined 60,000 CAD\$ (48,835 US\$) for trafficking 434 kg of shark fins into Canada from Hong Kong in February 2018. Analyses indicated that more than 65% of the fins were from silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*, Appendix II) and the rest were from blue sharks (*Prionace glauca*) and shortfin mako sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus*, Appendix II), which were legal to import at the time. Thirteen parcels of silky shark fins were seized and the remaining fins were returned to the importer.

Le Léopard, May 19, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



**June 11, 2021**

##### **Beauharnois, Province of Quebec, Canada**

Lake sturgeon fishing in Beauharnois was authorized on June 15 but some fishermen started fishing them earlier. Wildlife protection officers caught them butchering some *Acipenser fulvescens* (Appendix II) and seized 5 kg of fillets that they were going to eat or sell and the fishing gear.

Le Soleil de Châteauguay, July 7, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

**August 31, 2021**

##### **Newmarket, Ontario Province, Canada**

The Court of Justice fined Wang Change, a store manager, and S L Dried Seafood Co. Ltd. 5,000 CAD\$ (4000 US\$) and 60,000 CAD\$ (47,600 US\$). Wang Change and S L Dried Seafood Co. Ltd pleaded guilty for illegally importing 29 silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*, Appendix II) and hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*, Appendix II) fins and 13 bags containing 325 kg of fin cartilages in May 2018. ECCC Wildlife Enforcement Officers seized the shipment, bound to S L Dried Seafood Co. Ltd., in Burnaby, British Columbia.

Cision, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>3</sup>



#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**May 25, 2021**

##### **Cincinnati, State of Ohio, United States of America**

Joseph Schigur, a professional fisherman, and his deckhand illegally caught 96 paddlefish (*Polyodon spathula*, Appendix II) in the Ohio River with gillnets on 3 occasions in late 2015 and early 2016. The fish, which are strictly protected by law, were transported to Schigur's home in English, Indiana, and then cut into small portions known as bullets, which were kept in a freezer and sold in New York using falsified documents. At his home, 635 kg of paddlefish "bullets" and 32 kg of "caviar" were seized, also intended for sale in New York.

Paddlefish, see "On the Trail" n°10 p. 8, n°32 p. 280. US Department of Justice, May 25, 2021.<sup>4</sup>



**May 29, 2021**

**Red Pass, Plaquemines Parish, State of Louisiana, United States of America**

Chandler Cataldie (33), from Alexandria, Louisiana, was cited by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries for violating tuna fishing regulations. He did not have a permit to take recreational fishermen on board. But he had 6 customers on board and 2 yellowfin tunas (*Thunnus albacares*) illegally caught.

KADN-TV, June 2nd, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

**June 8, 2021**

**State of Hawaii, United States of America**

The governor signed a bill prohibiting intentional capture of sharks in waters under the State's jurisdiction, submarine trophy hunting, capture of juveniles for aquariums, and removal of teeth, jaws and other parts from shark carcasses. Forty species are affected. The 2 proponents of the law are pleased.

Representative Nicole Lowen stresses that "sharks are key apex predators who are critical to our oceans health and resiliency". Senator Mike Gabbard reminds that "manō [sharks] are sacred ancestral guardians of many Native Hawaiians." "It is time we afford them the protections they so need and deserve."

Maui Now, June 8, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

**June 14, 2021**

**McClellanville, State of South Carolina, United States of America**



The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources seized over 100 lbs (45 kg) of red snapper (*Lutjanus campechanus*) at a wholesale dock. Red snapper fishing is only legal from July 12<sup>th</sup>.

WCIV ABC News 4, June 22, 2021; NPR, July 18, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

**LATIN AMERICA**

**BRAZIL**

**May 7, 2021**

**Manaus, State of Amazonas, Brazil**

Seizure in 2 vessels

- 500 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II). They were hidden under other fish. Estimated value of 7,500 reais (1,400 US\$). One arrest was made.

- 90 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), 70 kg of capybara (*Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*), and 4 kg of paca (genus *Cuniculus*). Estimated value of 2,200 reais (410 US\$). One arrest was made.

G1 Amazonas, May 7, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**Mid-May 2021**

**Belém, State of Pará, Brazil**



One tonne of arapaima meat (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) was seized from 2 vehicles, where the meat was covered with pieces of plastic canvas. No arrest was made.

G1 Pará, May 15, 2021.<sup>9</sup>

**May 18, 2021**

**Nova Porteirinha, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil**

576 juvenile arapaimas (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) were seized. The owner was fined 14,570 reais (2,770 US\$). The origin of the fish is not specified. Arapaimas are not native to Minas Gerais and cannot be released there.

Estado de Minas, May 18, 2021.<sup>10</sup>





**Beginning of June 2021**  
**Manaus, Amazonas State, Brazil**



Seizure on a vessel of 2.7 tons of arapaima fillets (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II). Estimated value of 114,000 reais or 21,680 US\$. Portal do Holanda, June 6, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**June 13, 2021**  
**Coari, State of Amazonas, Brazil**



During an inspection of *Manoel Monteiro*, with the help of Jade, the sniffer dog, 847 kg of dried arapaima meat (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) distributed in 19 bags were seized in a hidden hold. The boat came from Japurá and its final destination was Manaus (905 km). One person was arrested. G1 Amazonas, June 14, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**OPERATION HORUS**

**August 13, 2021**  
**Manaus, State of Amazonas, Brazil**

During a night search, 2 vessels were seized after the police received tips about an arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) smuggling. The first boat, coming from the town of Maraã, contained 5 tonnes of arapaima, and a gun and ammunition were also seized on board. The second boat, from the city of Tapauá, contained 2 tonnes of arapaima. G1 Amazonas, August 13, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

**ECUADOR**

**Mid-June 2021**  
**Ecuador**

Joel Eduardo Ramirez Espinosa, from FishChoez&Villegas Exportadora, was fined 3,870 US\$ by the Ministry of Fishery for his involvement in the trafficking of 26 tonnes of thresher shark (*Alopias vulpinus*, Appendix II) and silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*, Appendix II) fins seized in April and May of 2020 in a warehouse in Hong Kong (see "On the Trail" n° 29 p.173). The fine only represents 0.3% of the cargo's estimated value of 1.1 million US\$. The investigation is still ongoing. El Universo, June 16, 2021; Infobae, July 30, 2021; Mongabay, November 4, 2021.<sup>14</sup>



**FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)**

**August 2021**  
**Amana Nature Reserve,**  
**Territorial Collectivity**  
**of French Guiana,**  
**France**

Gendarmes from the reserve seized 4 "tapouilles" boats from Suriname, 7 tonnes of fish, and 6 kg of acoupa weakfish swim bladders. French Biodiversity Agency, September 2021.<sup>15</sup>



**MEXICO**

**Beginning of May 2021**  
**State of Baja-California,**  
**Mexico**

224 totoaba swim bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I), i.e. more than 130 kilos, with an estimated value of 10 million US\$ (77,000 US\$/kg) were seized from a house in Balboa Residencial. The Chinese citizen, Ming H., and 2 Mexican men, Luis A. and Alberto O., were arrested. Milenio, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>16</sup>





**End of June 2021**

**Port of Manzanillo, State of Colima, Mexico**

Seizure of 25,460 kg of sharkskin heading to Taiwan. Milenio, June 25, 2021.<sup>17</sup>

## PERU

**July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Zamurilla, Zamurilla Province, Department of Tumbes, Peru**

930 kg of hammer-head shark (*Sphyrna lewini*, Appendix II) meat were seized from 2 refrigerated trucks. The first one contained 285 young sharks (645 kg) and the second 131 ones (285 kg). The trucks and cellphones were also seized.

Specialized Environmental Prosecutor's Office, July 3, 2021.<sup>18</sup>



## VENEZUELA

**August 3, 2021**

**Caracas, Capital District, Venezuela**

Seizure of 860 kg of dried shark fins. Arrest of 3 managers of Distribuidora KRM specialising in the export of seafood products. Moisés Echarr, Luis Capitillo and José Robaina were detained. Two Insopesca inspectors, Francisco Pichardo and Carlos Romero, are involved in the trafficking. Arrest warrants have been issued against them. The fins were on their way to Hong Kong under false names. The crime is qualified by the Caracas Attorney General as attempted smuggling aggravated by the falsification of public documents and criminal conspiracy.

El Universal, August 12, 2021.<sup>19</sup>

## EASTERN ASIA

### CHINA

**May 2021**

**Zhongshan, Zhongshan Prefecture and Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China**

Dismantling of a smuggling network of Asian arowanas (*Scleropages formosus*, Appendix I) operated from Hong Kong. 150 agents were mobilized to carry out 2 simultaneous searches in Zhongshan and Shenzhen. These resulted in the seizure of 1,212 live Asian arowanas and 23 arrests. Shenzhen Customs, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

## FAMILY AFFAIRS

**May 2021**

**Nantong, Nantong Prefecture, Jiangsu Province, China**



Li and his wife had been catching glass eels (family Anguillidae) without a license since February in the Yangtze River near Qidong. On March 6, Li caught a 5- or 6-year-old Chinese sturgeon (*Acipenser sinensis*, Appendix II) in his nets. His customers were aware of the legal risks and none of them purchased the sturgeon. He decided to keep it for his own consumption. On March 9, the police came to his home and found 12.06 kg of sturgeon meat. He was sentenced to one year and 4 months in prison and fined 20,000 yuan or 3,090 US\$.

Ziniu News, June 5, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**May 29, 2021**

**Hong Kong International Airport, China**



More than 3 tonnes of dried shark fins were seized from 2 shipments coming from Mexico. Estimated value: 2.2 million yuan (283,400 US\$ or 95 US\$/kg). Hong Kong Customs, May 29, 2021.<sup>22</sup>

**June 7, 2021**

**Hong Kong Port, China**



Seizure of 3.3 tonnes of dried guitarfish fins (family Rhinobatidae; *Rhynchobatus djiddensis* is in Appendix II) found inside 16 bags from a container arriving from Guinea. The estimated market value of the shipment is about 600,000 US\$ (180 US\$/kg). To thwart the controls, the bags were filled with both protected and non-protected species. Hong Kong Customs, June 8, 2021; South China Morning Post, June 8, 2021.<sup>23</sup>



**June 10, 2021**  
**Off Xiamen, Fujian Province, China**



Xiamen police intercept a fishing boat carrying 1,152.44 kg of seafood products including juvenile scalloped hammerheads (*Sphyrna lewini*, Appendix II). The contraband came from abroad. Three arrests.  
 China Central Television, July 9, 2021; Taihai Net, July 9, 2021.<sup>24</sup>

**June 23, 2021**  
**Hong Kong Port, China**



Bis repetita. Nearly 2.8 tonnes of dried guitarfish fins (family Rhinobatidae; *Rhynchobatus djiddensis* is in Appendix II) and 72 kg of dried shark fins were seized in a container coming from Guinea. Estimated total value: 3.9 million yuan (502,500 US\$).  
 Hong Kong Customs, June 24, 2021.<sup>25</sup>

**July 26, 2021**  
**Hong Kong International Airport, China**



14.4 kg of totoaba swim bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I) were seized in a package coming from Mexico and declared to contain "dried fish fillets". Estimated value: 3.2 million yuan (412,000 US\$ or 28,610 US\$/kg).  
 Hong Kong Customs, July 27, 2021.<sup>26</sup>

**Beginning of August 2021**  
**Mohan Border Post, Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Laos.**

Seizure of 65 swim bladders from an incoming package.  
 Chinese Customs, August 11, 2021.<sup>27</sup>



**August 12, 2021**  
**Hong Kong Port, China**



After Guinea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Nearly 1.1 tonnes of guitarfish fins (family Rhinobatidae; *Rhynchobatus djiddensis* is in Appendix II) and 4 tonnes of shark fins were seized from a container arriving from the DRC. Estimated value: 3.4 million yuan (437,500 US\$).  
 Hong Kong Customs, August 13, 2021.<sup>28</sup>

**August 2021**  
**Nanling County, Wuhu Prefecture, Anhui Province, China**

Qi caught a Chinese sturgeon (*Acipenser sinensis*, Appendix II) in the Yangtze River. He was arrested after posting a photo on social media. The sturgeon is said to have an economic value of 50,000 yuan or 7,700 US\$.  
 Global Times, August 17, 2021.<sup>29</sup>



**August 2021**

**Weihai, Weihai Prefecture, Shandong Province, China**

A batch of foundation containing sturgeon caviar (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II) is seized from an incoming package.

Chinese Customs, August 26, 2021.<sup>30</sup>

**August 2021**

**Shantou, Shantou Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

Seizure in 2 packages from abroad of ornamental fish (4+5).

Chinese Customs, September 9, 2021.<sup>31</sup>

**August 2021**

**Hong Kong–Zhuhai–Macau Bridge, Zhuhai Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong and Macao.**

Seizure in the trailer of a truck said to be empty of 52.6 kg of swim bladders estimated at more than 800,000 yuan or 123,850 US\$ and 2,355 US\$/kg.

Chinese Customs, September 9, 2021.<sup>32</sup>

## SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

### MALAYSIA

**July 3, 2021**

**Off Port Klang, State of Selangor, Malaysia**

The authorities seized 1,349 crates containing frozen eels (genus *Anguilla*, *Anguilla anguilla* is listed under Appendix II) and 951 crates containing ribbon fish (family Trachipteridae), 27,955 kg in total, shipped by sea from Iran. Estimated value: 146,487 ringgits (34,000 US\$). The seafood company responsible for the attempted smuggling case did not have any permits. The ribbon fish are deepwater marine fish. Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), July 2021; New Straits Times, July 7, 2021.<sup>33</sup>

### PHILIPPINES

#### FAMILY AFFAIRS

**August 30, 2021**

**Province of Bataan, Island of Luzon, Philippines**

The authorities arrested Glendo Malara (51) and his son Gilmel (26), as well as Gilbert (42) and Jonathan (30) Malara for using explosives for blast fishing. Five hand-made dynamite bottles, fish, and fishing gear were seized.

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC – IOR), August 2021.<sup>34</sup>

**August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Mactan Island, Cebu Province, Philippines**

Cebu-Subport Customs seized 5 kg of shark teeth inside a package declared to contain “plastic pieces for fashion accessories”.

Bureau of Customs, September 6, 2021.<sup>35</sup>

## SOUTHERN ASIA

### SRI LANKA

**May 17, 2021**

**Beruwala, West Province, Sri Lanka**

The coast guard seized 55 kg of shark fins and arrested 6 fishermen.

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), May 2021.<sup>36</sup>

**August 7, 2021**

**Mutur, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka**

The Navy arrested a 38-year-old man in possession of 7 water gel explosive sticks, 3 non-electric detonators, and 3 safety fuses, all for blast fishing. Sri Lanka Navy, August 8, 2021.<sup>37</sup>



## WESTERN EUROPE

### FRANCE

**June 11, 2021**

**Bordeaux, Department of Gironde, France**

Eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) are definitely bearing the brunt of the adverse effects of human activities. In estuaries, their benthic habitats are polluted by cocaine metabolites, antibiotic residues and pesticides. In their larval stage, they are known as glass eels or elvers and are hunted down by billions by professional fishermen, smugglers and fishmongers, these 3 activities in certain cases being combined and withstanding the first police investigations.

On June 11, 2021, following an investigation launched in January and February of 2017 (see “On the Trail” n°16 p.10), French customs announced that they uncovered an international network that caught and traded a total of 46 tonnes of glass eels. The investigations were carried out jointly by the SEJF (Service d’Enquêtes Judiciaires et des Finances or Judicial Investigation and Finance Department) and the OCLAESF (Office Central de Lutte contre les Atteintes à l’Environnement et à la Santé Publique or Central Office against Attacks towards the Environment and Public Health) under the direction of the Bordeaux JIRS (Jurisdiction Inter-Régionale Spécialisée or Inter-Regional Specialised Jurisdiction). Logistical relays were identified in Romania, Bulgaria and Poland. Nine French fishmongers and middlemen were indicted along with the manager of a Spanish transport company and the alleged ringleader, also of Spanish nationality. The financial transactions were carried out via front companies in Europe, Ireland and Panama and the bribes were paid through contracts on operations between Africa and Asia. The 46 tonnes of glass eels that fell victim to this international financial and logistical traffic represent 138 million specimens on the basis of 3,000 specimens per kg.

France 3 Nouvelle-Aquitaine, June 11, 2021; France Bleu Gironde, June 11, 2021; French Ministry for the Economy and Finance, June 11, 2021.<sup>38</sup>



## REPEATED OFFENSE

June 17, 2021

Lorient, Department of Morbihan, France



A captain of a fishing boat was fined 2,500 € (3,035 US\$) for landing 820 kg of Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) when he had declared 630 kg of catch. In his defense, he explained that on board, the weights are purely indicative. He had already been convicted 5 times for similar offences. He would have since bought a scale.

Le Télégramme, June 17, 2021.<sup>39</sup>

July 26, 2021

Sanary-sur-Mer, Department of Var, France

At 4 a.m., the Gendarmerie Maritime and Maritime Affairs seized 26 bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*), 7 swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) and a one Jerusalem haddock (*Lampris guttatus*) with a total weight of 1,247.2 kg and a total value of approximately 15,000 € (17,809 US\$). The fisherman-poacher, a repeated offender, failed to make the mandatory declarations and markings necessary to ensure the traceability of the catch. The trial has been postponed to January 2023. The NGO Robin des Bois is a civil party. To be continued.

Var-Matin, August 4, 2021 ; France 3 Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, August 5, 2021.<sup>40</sup>

## SOUTHERN EUROPE

### SPAIN

#### OPERATION ASKEA II-LAKE

##### REPEATED OFFENSE

November 2020-May 2021

Spain

Seizure of 320 kg of glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) and 27 suspects are questioned. One of them, already arrested 3 times for similar offenses, was remanded in custody. The interventions were mainly conducted in the autonomous community of Cantabria. The glass eels were released into the Oiartzun river in the Basque Country and in the Ebro Delta Natural Park (Catalonia).

La Voz de Galicia, June 15, 2021.<sup>41</sup>

### ITALY

#### OPERATION NO DRITNETS

March 15-July 15, 2021

Italy



During this extensive operation which involved 200 military personnel, 10 vessels and a coastguard aircraft, 1,419 inspections were carried out, 40 km of nets and more than 11 tonnes of fisheries products were seized. 43 administrative and criminal offences were identified and over 195,115 € (231,953 US\$) in fines were charged. Off the coast of Amantea (Calabria region), 2 manta rays (*Manta spp.*, Appendix II), one weighing 500 kg, were returned to the water.

Sputnik Italia, July 29, 2021.<sup>42</sup>

May 20, 2021

Agropoli, Salerno Province, Region of Campania, Italy



The capture of a shark on the mouth of the Sele river was reported on social media.

When the police arrived at the fish market, they suspect that the shark is on the stall under a false name. Good point! The slices of a so-called smooth-tooth shark (*Mustelus mustelus*) are in fact slices of blue shark (*Prionace glauca*). Genetic analysis confirms this. The owner of the food stall was fined 4,500 € (5,459 US\$) for violating traceability rules.

InfoCilento, May 20, 2021.<sup>43</sup>

May 21, 2021

Milan Malpensa Airport, Varese Province, Lombardy Region, Italy



A Russian citizen was returning from his country with a tasty souvenir worth a few hundred euros. He is living in Italy. He claimed to have "nothing to declare".

Unconvinced, customs officers searched his suitcase and found 3 jars containing 300 grams of sturgeon caviar (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II) from Astrakhan, the "capital of caviar". It is forbidden to bring back more than 125 grams of black caviar as personal effects. The man was fined and left with 175 fewer grams of caviar.

VareseNews, May 21, 2021.<sup>44</sup>

June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Ognina Port, Catania, Metropolitan City of Catania, Region of Sicily, Italy

Coast guards seized 19 bluefin tunas (*Thunnus thynnus*) and one swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*), total weight: 3.45 tonnes.

La Sicilia, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021; Corriere Etneo, June 4, 2021; Consumatore.com, June 6, 2021.<sup>45</sup>

#### OPERATION SISO 4

June 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

Off Lipari, Metropolitan City of Messina, Region of Sicily, Italy



In the middle of the night, seizure of a 2,500-meters long net, swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) and little tunny (*Euthynnus alletteratus*). The captain was fined 4,000 € (4,857 US\$).

Il Giornale di Lipari, June 4, 2021; Sea Shepherd, August 25, 2021.<sup>46</sup>

July 21, 2021

Aci Trezza, Metropolitan City of Catania, Region of Sicily, Italy

Seizure during 2 operations of 2 swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) and 48 kg of undersized fish. The meat was donated to Caritas Diocesana.

Corriere Etneo, July 21, 2021.<sup>47</sup>



## PORTUGAL

### OPERATION LAKE V

#### Beginning of April 2021

#### Montemor-o-Velho, Figueira da Foz et Soure, District of Coimbra, Portugal

Sixty kg of glass eels, 21 nets, 3 boats, 27 cell phones and 9 computers were seized and 6 people were arrested. The 180,000 glass eels (*Anguilla anguilla*, Appendix II) were released in the Mondego estuary. Europol notes that during the Covid pandemic, when air passenger traffic was suspended, smuggling continued using cargo planes, with glass eels in water pockets being mixed in parcels with miscellaneous goods.

Jornal de Notícias, April 14, 2021; Europol, June 4, 2021.<sup>48</sup>

## EASTERN EUROPE

### RUSSIA

#### Beginning of May 2021

#### Podolsk, Moscow Oblast, Russia

Seizure of a warehouse. Seizure of 15 kg of black caviar and 900 kg of fish including sturgeon (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II). Arrest of a woman. She is placed under house arrest.

360, May 5, 2021; The Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, May 5, 2021.<sup>49</sup>

#### Beginning of May 2021

#### Novosibirsk, Novosibirsk Oblast, Russia

Two suspended 5-year prison sentences with 4 years of probation for the illegal possession of a Siberian sturgeon carcass (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II) and 500 grams of Huso sturgeon caviar (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II).

360, May 5, 2021; 4s-Info, May 5, 2021.<sup>50</sup>

#### Mid-May 2021

#### Khanty-Mansiysk, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District, Russia

In July 2020, 2 inhabitants were indicted for poaching 11 fish, including 5 sterlet sturgeons (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II) and one Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II). The damage is estimated at 30,000 rubles or 400 US\$.

Znak, May 19, 2021.<sup>51</sup>

#### May 20, 2021

#### Gornoknyazevsk, Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District, Russia

A man was sentenced to 120 hours of forced labor for poaching a Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II) in February of 2021.

Moskovski Komsomolets Yamal, May 20, 2021.<sup>52</sup>

#### May 29, 2021

#### Omsk, Omsk Oblast, Russia

A 55-year-old man was arrested on the Irtysh River with 59 sterlet sturgeons (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II), one Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II), breams (*Abramis brama*), pikes (*Esox lucius*), and pike-perches (genus *Sander*). The overall value is estimated at 464,000 rubles or 6,250 US\$. The single Siberian sturgeon accounts for a third.

The poacher was sentenced to 2 years and one month of suspended imprisonment with one year of probation, as well as a fine of 436,000 rubles or 5,870 US\$.

Omsk Region Information Agency, May 29, 2021.<sup>54</sup>

#### June 2, 2021

#### Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District, Russia

Ivan Voronov, head of the Kedrovyy rural area, was sentenced to 480 hours of forced labor and to pay 225,000 rubles or over 3,000 US\$ in compensation for damages. His boat and outboard motor were also confiscated. He caught 23 sterlet sturgeons (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II) and 3 Siberian sturgeons (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II) in a branch of the Ob River in May 2020.

Znak, June 2, 2021; Bulletin of the Surgut Region, January 6, 2022; FederalPress, January 10, 2022.<sup>55</sup>

### FAMILY AFFAIRS

#### June 3, 2021

#### Astrakhan, Astrakhan Oblast, Russia

A couple from the Leninskiy district bought sturgeon caviar (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) (854 grams). While the man was in prison for another case, the woman, with his consent, tried to sell it for 25,000 rubles, or 340 US\$ (400 US\$/kg).

She was sentenced to 5 years in prison with a 3-year probation. Her partner will have to stay 7 years and 6 months more in a penal colony.

Astrakhan Oblast Prosecutor's Office, June 3, 2021.<sup>56</sup>

#### June 19, 2021

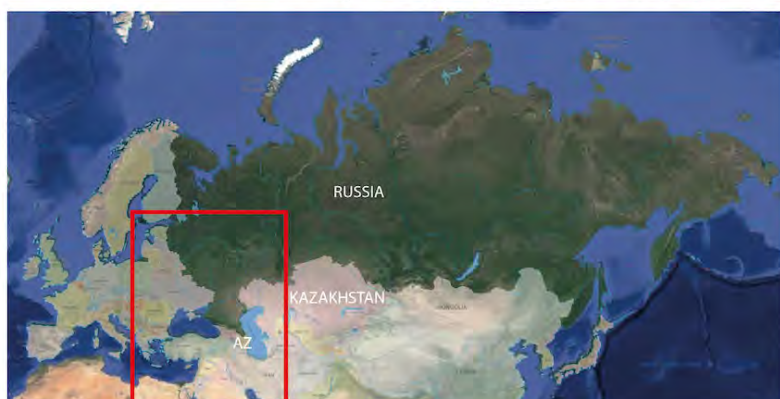
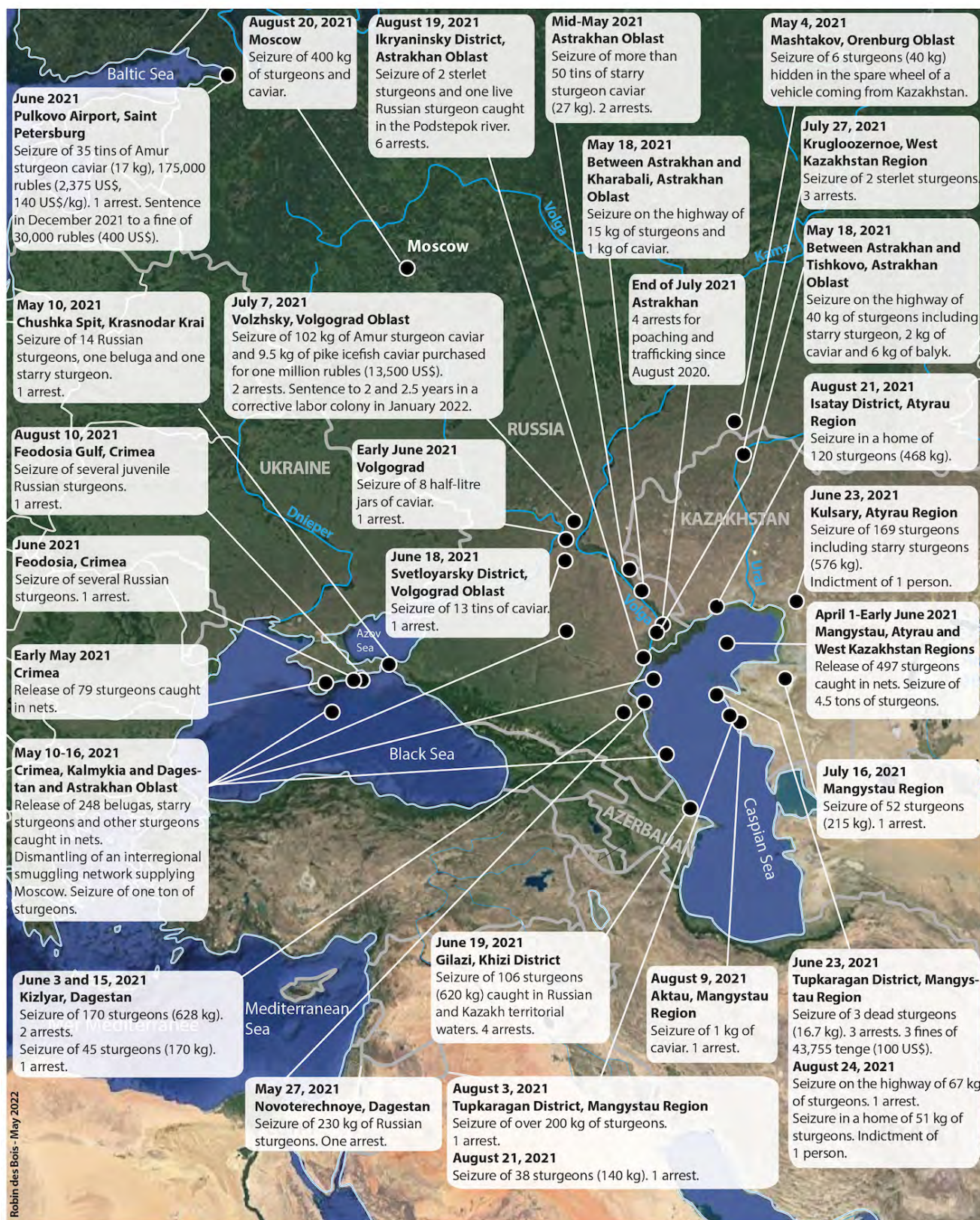
#### Khimki, Moscow Oblast, Russia

A 35-year-old man of the Republic of Dagestan was indicted for trafficking 383 Russian sturgeons (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, Appendix II) or 1.1 tonnes. The man bought them near his home in Kizlyar, Dagestan, and stored them smoked in a van in Khimki (1,500 km), waiting to resell them in and around Moscow. The sturgeons had been poached in the Caspian Sea.

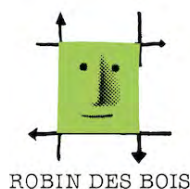
IkraInfo, June 19, 2021.<sup>57</sup>



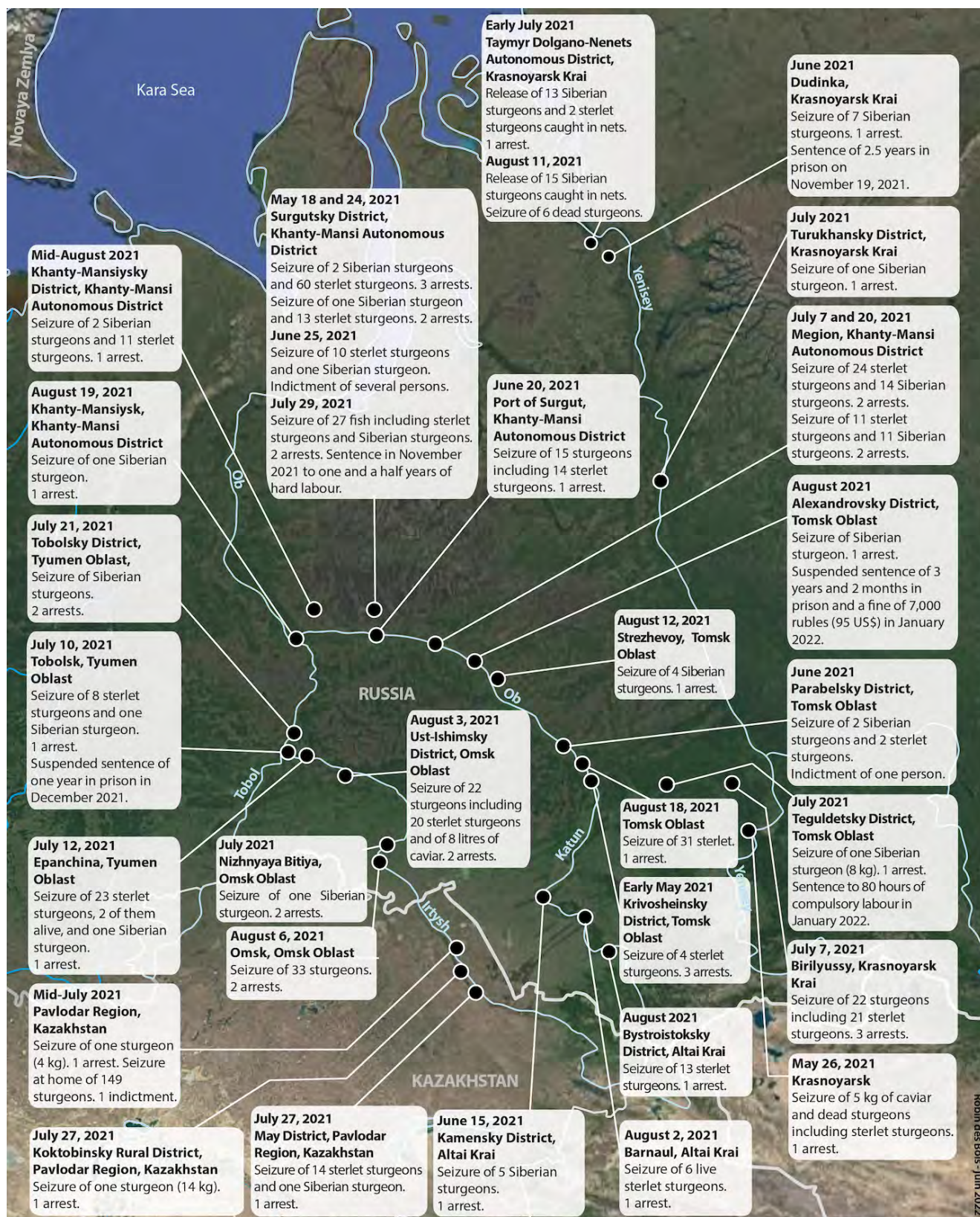




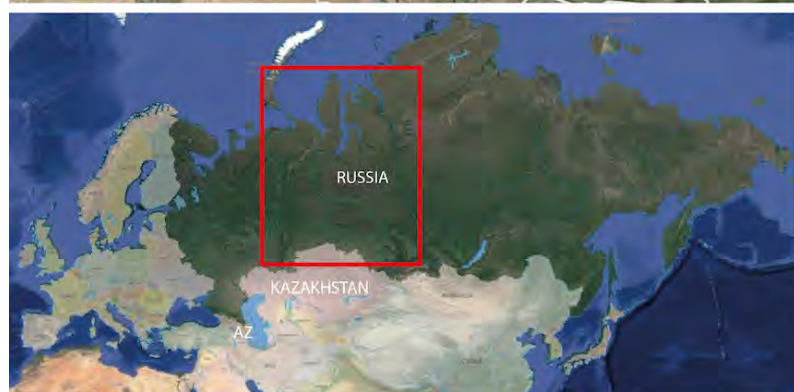
Sturgeon (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II)  
 Starry sturgeon (*Acipenser stellatus*, Appendix II)  
 Russian sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, App. II)  
 Amur sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*, App. II)  
 Beluga (*Huso huso*, Appendix II)  
 Sterlet sturgeon (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II)







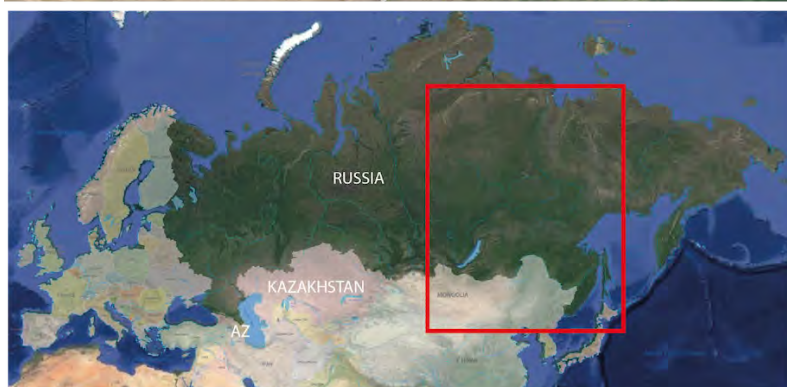
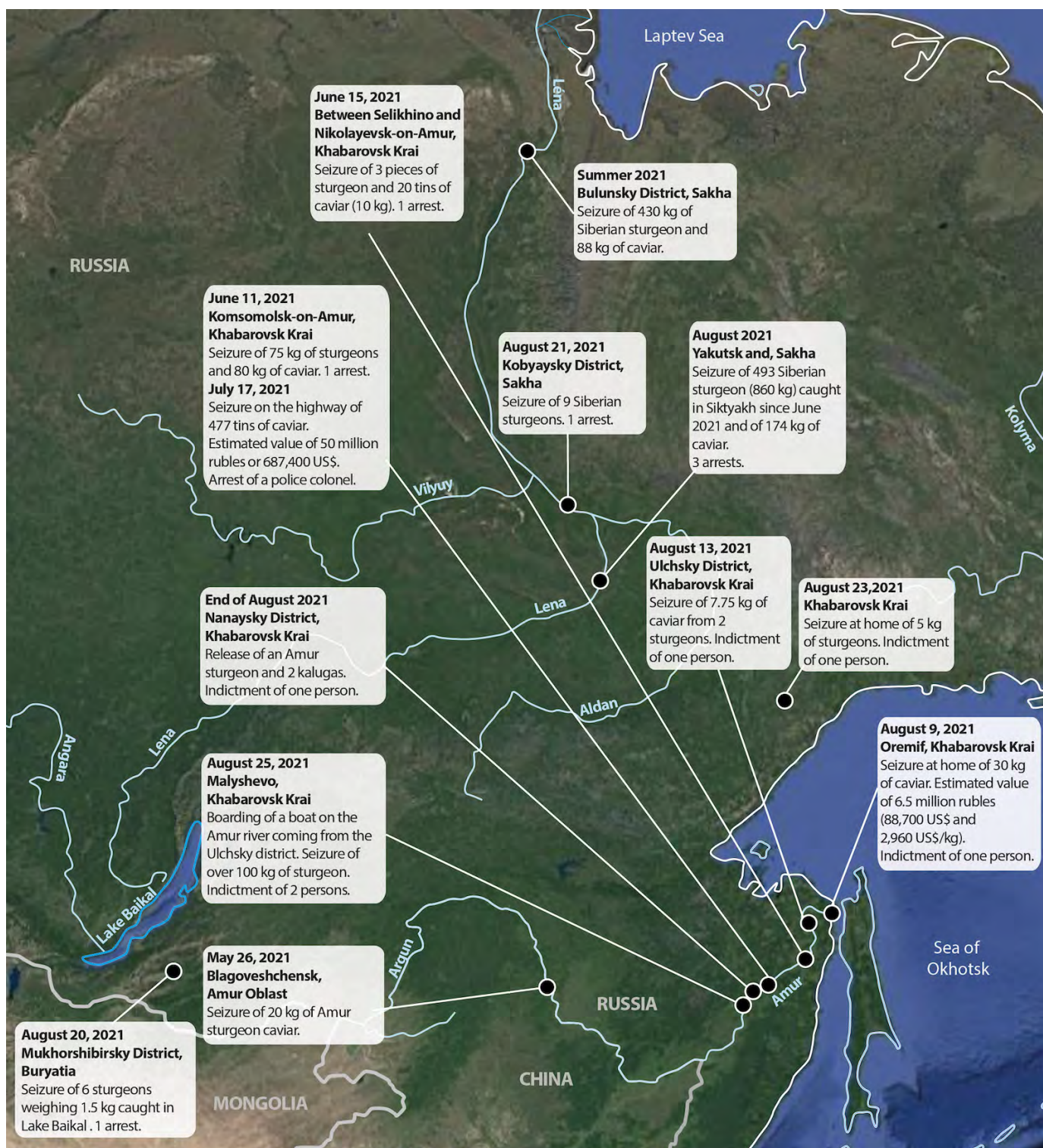
Robin des Bois - Juin 2022



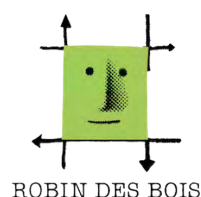
Sturgeon (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II)  
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Russian sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, App. II)  
Amur sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*, App. II)  
Beluga (*Huso huso*, Appendix II)  
Sterlet sturgeon (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II)







Sturgeon (Acipenseridae, Appendix I or II)  
 Starry sturgeon (*Acipenser stellatus*, Appendix II)  
 Russian sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, Appendix II)  
 Amur sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II)  
 Beluga (*Huso huso*, Appendix II)  
 Sterlet (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II)







May 10, 2021  
Chushka Spit, Krasnodar Krai, Russia



May 16, 2021, Republics of Crimea, Kalmykia and Dagestan and Astrakhan Oblast



May 18, 2021, Between Astrakhan and Tishkovo, Astrakhan Oblast, Russia



August 21, 2021  
Isatay District, Atyrau Region, Kazakhstan



Early June 2021  
Volgograd, Volgograd Oblast, Russia



August 21, 2021, Tupkaragan District, Mangystau Region, Kazakhstan



May 18 and 24, 2021  
Surgutsky District, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District, Russia





June 2021  
Parabelsky District, Tomsk Oblast, Russia



July 7, 2021  
Birilyussy, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia



July 7, 2021, Megion, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District, Russia



July 12, 2021  
Epanchina, Tyumen Oblast, Russia



Summer 2021  
Bulunsky District, Republic of Sakha, Russia



August 2, 2021  
Barnaul, Altai Krai, Russia



August 12, 2021  
Strezhevoy, Tomsk Oblast, Russia



August 2021  
Yakutsk, Republic of Sakha, Russia



**June 23, 2021**

**Parabelsky District, Tomsk Oblast, Russia**



In November 2020, the 34-year-old man caught a small Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II) in the Ket River, a tributary of the Ob River. For fish too, valour does not await the passing of years. The poacher was sentenced to 240 hours of forced labor and had to pay 10,000 rubles (130 US\$) in compensation for damages.

GTRK Tomsk, June 23, 2021.<sup>58</sup>

**June 24, 2021**

**Republic of Sakha, Russia**



The inspector was in charge of protecting the Lena Delta nature reserve, one of the largest in Russia (14,330 km<sup>2</sup>). When he arrived in October 2019, believing he was assured of impunity, he preferred to engage in poaching himself. He was surprised with nearly 1,150 fish that he had caught on the Samoylov and Stolb islands: 6 Siberian sturgeons (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II), nelmas (*Stenodus nelma*), taimens (*Hucho taimen*), muksuns (*Coregonus muksun*), broad whitefish (*Coregonus nasus*) and arctic ciscos (*Coregonus autumnalis*).

He received a 3-year suspended prison sentence and was fined 4.5 million rubles or 61,100 US\$.

News.Ykt.Ru, June 24, 2021.<sup>59</sup>

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Kerch and Leninsky District, Republic of Crimea**

**RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN COOPERATION**

A trio was determined to sell one tonne of Russian sturgeons (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, Appendix II) in Moscow before February 23rd. Slava Gavrilenko, a resident of Kerch, organized everything, supported by 2 accomplices from Kurortne and Berdiansk (in Ukraine). The Kurortne resident had both geographical knowledge of the region and the front of a respectable company to cover the smuggling. The sturgeons were caught in the Sea of Azov and hidden in a nearly perfect location. On one side was the Chokrak saltlake, an unpopular nature reserve, and on the other was a road so impassable that no car would venture there. Despite all these precautions, they were reported by residents. At the time of their arrest, 70 Russian sturgeon carcasses were seized.

The Berdiansk resident has now returned to his home. The 2 Crimeans are remanded in custody.

KerchFM, July 9, 2021.<sup>60</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

**Beginning of July 2021**

**Khangalassky District, Republic of Sakha, Russia**

A 38-year-old man was sentenced to 80 hours of forced labor and to pay 960,000 rubles or 13,200 US\$ in damages for catching 6 Siberian sturgeons (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II) in the Lena River in July 2020. He intended to eat them, but he was not quick enough. Previously convicted for smuggling cannabis, he was suspected of do it again. At his home, police discovered both the cannabis and the sturgeons. The conviction for drug trafficking is still pending.

SakhaPress, July 2, 2021.<sup>61</sup>

**July 22, 2021**

**Khabarovsk, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia**



Operation "Putin-Spring 2019", aimed to prevent illegal fishing, took place from May 5th to June 15th, 2019. In this framework, a police inspector was patrolling a section of the Amur River at the Ulchsky district. However, he was more interested in sturgeons than in poachers. Together with some fishermen from Soussanino, he caught Amur sturgeons (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II) and Huso sturgeons (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II), they extracted 30 kg of caviar from them, and packed it into 60 jars. Then, this double game expert also demanded 500,000 rubles (6,875 US\$) from a Bogorodskoye sturgeon poacher in exchange for his silence. He was arrested at the moment he received the bribe. He has just been sentenced to 7 years in prison.

DV Novosti, July 22, 2021.<sup>62</sup>

**End of July 2021**

**Bogorodskoye, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia**



In 2018, a small bunch formed in Nikolayevsk-on-Amur around a common interest: sturgeon caviar (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II). When they were arrested, the 3 suspects had extracted 104 kg of black caviar from sturgeon they caught in the Amur River. One of them was sentenced to 3 and a half years in prison, the other 2 to 3 years in prison.

Moskovski Komsomolets Khabarovsk, July 28, 2021.<sup>63</sup>



## FAMILY AFFAIRS

### Beginning of August 2021

#### Rozdolne District, Republic of Crimea

This time in the Black Sea, another trio went searching for Russian sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, Appendix II) in Crimea. A father, his son, and their friend were arrested in July 2020 and there were jars of caviar in the trunk of their car. Despite an attempt of bribery (50,000 rubles or 680 US\$), police officers went to the home of one of the suspects and found more caviar, frozen sturgeon, fillets, incriminating photos of sturgeon cut up for sale, and seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II). Since 2019, the son, an anti-corruption official, covered up his father's and accomplice's actions and facilitated the sale of the caviar. The investigation is now complete and the 3 men were indicted.

RIA Novosti Crimea, August 2, 2021; Crimea News, August 3, 2021; KerchFM, August 4, 2021.<sup>64</sup>



### Beginning of August 2021

#### Krasnoyarsk, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia

The head and one inspector were sentenced to 5 years and 10 months in prison and a fine of 700,000 rubles (9,500 US\$), and to 5 years in prison and a fine of 500,000 rubles (6,800 US\$). Both were accused of poaching at least 160 sterlet sturgeons (*Acipenser ruthenus*, Appendix II) and one Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baerii*, Appendix II) aboard their official boat on the Yenisei River in the Turukhansky District, as well as processing at least 3 kg of sterlet sturgeon caviar, in 2015-2016.

Kommersant, August 4, 2021; Zapad24, August 5, 2021.<sup>65</sup>



### August 9, 2021

#### Simferopol, Republic of Crimea

A local resident was sentenced to one year of forced labor and a fine of 250,000 rubles (3,400 US\$) for possessing 18 kg of Huso sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) and 35 kg of Huso sturgeon caviar packed in 75 jars. He was arrested on the road between Simferopol and Feodosia.

Crimea News, August 9, 2021.<sup>66</sup>



### August 10, 2021

#### Komsomolsk-on-Amur, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia

A 39-year-old man was sentenced to 3 and a half years in prison, suspended with 3 years on probation. In July 2020, during a search of his home, police seized 116.7 kg of Amur sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II), 127.3 kg of Huso sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) and 750 grams of Amur sturgeon caviar. The damage was estimated at 3.5 million rubles or 47,800 US\$.

DV Novosti, August 10, 2021.<sup>67</sup>



### Mid-August 2021

#### Komsomolsk-on-Amur, Khabarovsk Krai, Russia

Three people were indicted for trafficking Amur sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*, Appendix II) and Huso sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*, Appendix II) caviar. The 2 Komsomolsk-on-Amur residents and the Armenian national had purchased the caviar between June 2019 and November 2020 in Komsomolsk. They shipped 145 liters of it in October 2020 to Krasnodar (more than 9,000 km away, western Russia), but the shipment was seized in Khabarovsk. Later, over 40 additional liters were discovered at their home.

AmurPRESS, August 16, 2021.<sup>68</sup>

### August 19, 2021

#### Kizlyarsky District, Republic of Dagestan, Russia

Six men had caught sturgeons (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) in the Caspian Sea and transported the fish to their homes. The damage was estimated at more than 6.5 million rubles or 88,700 US\$.

They were sentenced to pay back the entire damage and to serve sentences ranging from one year and 8 months in a penal colony to 5.5 years in prison, 2 years of which were suspended.

Lezgi Gazet, August 19, 2021; RIA Dagestan, August 19, 2021.<sup>69</sup>





**August 25, 2021**  
**Astrakhan, Astrakhan Oblast, Russia**



A 28-year-old Narimanov resident was sentenced to a one-year suspended prison term for attempting to sell 1.5 kg of sturgeon caviar (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) for 60,000 rubles or 820 US\$ (550 US\$/kg) in a recreational park parking lot on November 11, 2020. Astrakhan 24, August 25, 2021.<sup>70</sup>

**End of August 2021**  
**Astrakhan, Astrakhan Oblast, Russia**



Two people were sentenced to 6 years and 8 months and 7 years of penal colony for poaching, transporting, and selling sturgeon (*Acipenseridae*, Appendix I or II) and sturgeon byproducts between March and May of 2020. The damage was estimated at 5 million rubles or 68,200 US\$. Punkt-A, August 31, 2021.<sup>71</sup>

## OCEANIA

### NEW ZEALAND

**Beginning of May 2021**  
**Tauranga, Bay of Plenty Region, New Zealand**



The remains of a juvenile great white shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*, Appendix II) lay on the beach. The meat and liver were seized from a private residence. Stuff, May 10, 2021; Department of Conservation, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021; The New Zealand Herald, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>72</sup>

# 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 AND REUNION)

**May 6, 2021**  
**M'Tsangamouji, Department of Mayotte, France**



Four illegal immigrants were sentenced to 15 months in prison and taken to the Majikavo prison for capture, abduction and destruction of a protected species. 47 kg of sea turtle meat had been seized from the trunk of their vehicle and from the back seat. Mayotte la 1<sup>ère</sup>, May 8, 2021; Free Dom, May 9, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

**June 15, 2021**  
**Saint-Denis, Department of Réunion, France**

"Henry", one of the last shell craftsmen on the island, is under investigation after 154 green turtle shells were found in his home without any legal documentation. The stocks could come from the liquidation of Ferme Corail (Compagnie Réunionnaise d'Aquaculture et d'Industrie Littorale). In any case, "Henry" was supposed to keep a register of all incoming raw materials and outgoing processed items, which he has not done. Zinfos974, June 15, 2021.<sup>2</sup>



**August 11 and 13, 2021**

**Petite-Terre Island, Department of Mayotte, France**



There is nothing like a “voulé” between guys, a festive barbecue with sea turtle meat that has quietly laid its eggs on Moya beach before setting off again on its mysterious journeys without getting to know its “tortillons”, the local name for young turtles. In the archipelago of Mayotte, eating turtles is a local tradition with an international extension, since for some time, police and customs have reported trafficking towards the Comoros. Killing a sea turtle makes less noise than killing a pig, but it can still be considered a sport. At least 2 or 3 strong men are needed to stop the turtle, cut the ligaments of the fins, drag it to a quiet corner, turn it over, decapitate it, open it like a tin can and fillet the still warm meat. A good green turtle provides 80 kg of meat. At 50 € for the good pieces, it's worth the trip and the unlikely risk of being caught by a police patrol - especially if, in the moment, they have other problems to deal with - or of being seen by turtle protectors.

However, as unlikely as it is, it happened to 3 men, 2 of whom are French, on the night of August 15. They had 71 kg of meat in their bag, plus a hundred eggs that the turtle, which had just emerged from the Indian Ocean, had not already laid as it was busy digging a nest in the sand. The arrest was eventful. A poacher tried to flee by gaining altitude, but the tree branch he was climbing broke off. He fell directly onto a law enforcement officer, breaking the officer's hand. The next day on the Grande Ile, the criminals told police that they were novices, that the crime was committed by necessity and the meat was intended for personal and family consumption. Yet, the prosecutor did not fall for the deceit. He emphasized the “surgical” precision and skill with which the team butchered the turtle in the dark, without spilling a single grain of sand on the victim's meat. The so-called novices appeared to have quite a hand. At the end of the trial, the 2 criminals responsible for killing and butchering the victim were sentenced to 12 months in prison, and the criminal who claimed to have played a minor role as a transporter was sentenced to 6 months. However, the judges did not release a detention order, and the 3 criminals left free-handed. They were brought back to the Petite Ile accompanied by their supporters on board. On the same boat were the turtle defenders disappointed by the leniency of the judges. They were called wimps and sneered behind their backs by the offenders.

If the prison sentence is up to 12 months, it can be adjusted if “the situation and the personality of the convicted person allow it”. The 3 specialists in ambushing and cutting up endangered specimens and those accustomed to animal cruelty took advantage of this leniency clause.

Therefore, on August 19<sup>th</sup>, the prosecutor's office appealed. Under the same circumstances in May 2021, 2 poachers had been sentenced to 18 months in prison with a detention order.

Le Journal de Mayotte, August 16 and 19, 2021; Linfo.re, August 17, 2021.<sup>3</sup>

## LATIN AMERICA

### COLOMBIA

**May 15, 2021**

**Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina, Colombia**

The Navy seized more than 138 kg of hawksbill turtle heads and meat that were being kept in plastic bags in coolers on a Nicaraguan boat.

El Tiempo, May 18, 2021.<sup>4</sup>

**Beginning of August 2021**

**Department of La Guajira, Colombia**

The Environmental Police seized the meat of 4 green turtles (180 kg).

El Heraldo, August 10, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

### COSTA RICA

**End of May 2021**

**Matina, Limón Province, Costa Rica**

A nest raider was arrested and 65 leatherback turtle eggs were seized. The eggs were placed back in the sand in the hope that they are still viable.

AM Prensa, May 21, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

## FAMILY AFFAIRS

**June 29, 2021**

**Pococí, Limón Province, Costa Rica**

Gabriel Benavides Dávila, Noé Ortega Gutierrez, Samuel Ortega Gutierrez, and Carlos Luis Reyes Sequeira were each sentenced to 2 years in prison for the trafficking of 532 green turtle eggs in July 2017. The 4 men were arrested while in a car inside the Tortuguero national park. La Nación, August 19, 2021.<sup>7</sup>



**End of August 2021**

**Ostional Beach, Guanacaste Province, Costa Rica**



At night, seizure of 699 Kemp's Ridley turtle eggs. Officers returned the eggs to the sand in the hope they would survive.

CRHoy.com, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.<sup>8</sup>



## FRANCE (FRENCH GUIANA)

**July 2021**

### **Territorial Collectivity of Guiana, France**

Agents from the French Guiana Departmental Service and from the Amana Nature reserve seized 5 fishing boats and arrested 3 people suspected of pillaging sea turtle eggs. They have also helped on the rescue of a leatherback turtle and 2 green turtles that were trapped by driftwood and mud masses.

French Biodiversity Agency, July 2021.<sup>9</sup>

## MEXICO

**Beginning of August 2021**

### **Tonalá, State of Chiapas, Mexico**

Carlos Caín N. and Martin N. were detained for looting turtle eggs near Playa del Sol. A nylon sack containing 95 eggs, a machete, a knife and a flash lamp were seized from them.

Aquino Noticias.mx, August 6, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

## PANAMA

**End of July 2021**

### **La Barqueta Beach, Chiriquí Province, Panama**



Refugio de la Vida Silvestre park rangers spotted the poacher by the tire prints near a pillaged Ridley turtle nest. Eggs were found in his vehicle. He was placed under judicial supervision.

Día a Día, July 20, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**Mid-August 2021**

### **Punta Chame, Panamá Oeste Province, Panama**

The Ministry of Environment sentenced a 2,000 US\$ fine each 3 poachers of 229 Ridley turtle eggs seized from a vehicle at a Servicio Nacional Aeronaval check-point on August 14, 2021. The eggs came from the Bahía de Chame Protected Area.

Día a Día, August 18, 2021.<sup>12</sup>

**End of August 2021**

### **Albrook "Marcos A. Gelabert" International Airport, Panama City, Panama Province, Panama**



Customs seized 12 hawksbill turtle shells from a package coming from Bocas del Toro province.

Mi Diario, August 27, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

## EASTERN ASIA

### CHINA

**May 2021**

### **Heshan, Jiangmen Prefecture, Guangdong Province, China**

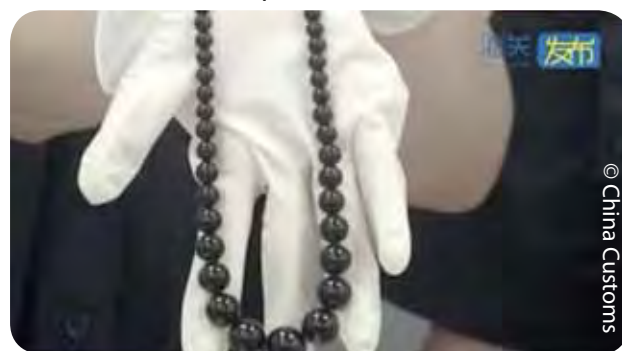
A folding fan (170 grams) made of hawksbill turtle shell was seized in a package said to contain "plates". Chinese Customs, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021; Xiaoxiang Morning Herald, June 3rd, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

**August 2021**

### **Nanning, Nanning Prefecture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China**

A turtle shell necklace was seized in a package from overseas.

Chinese Customs, September 3, 2021.<sup>15</sup>



## SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

### MALAYSIA

**May 26, 2021**

### **Kapas Island, State of Terengganu, Malaysia**

A female green turtle has been poached. Its torturer skinned it, cut its stomach, stole its eggs and dumped it into the sea like litter.

The Vibes (with Bernama), May 26, 2021.<sup>16</sup>



**June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021**

**State of Sabah, Malaysia**

Malson bin Alkusan, a 33-year-old foreigner, was sentenced to one year in prison and 25,000 ringgits (6,050 US\$) in fines for possessing 7 green turtle plastrons and 14 green turtle scales.

Daily Express, June 4, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



**OPERATION KHAZANAH (TURTLE CRIME)**

**July 6 and 22, 2021**

**Omadal Island and Tawau, State of Sabah, Malaysia**

Nasdi Bilnat, an 18-year-old Filipino, was sentenced to 4 years in prison and a fine of 150,000 ringgits (US\$ 31,130) and an additional year in case of non-payment. He had been caught with 2 accomplices who managed to escape in a boat with 12 pieces of turtle plastron, 39 pieces of shells, and 4.8 kg of green turtle fat.

New Straits Times, July 22, 2021; Daily Express, July 23, 2021.<sup>18</sup>



**Beginning of August 2021**

**Kuala Trengganu, State of Terengganu, Malaysia**

Faizol Aznan Muhamad (40) and Mohd Riduan Ismail (32), 2 turtle eggs looters, received death sentences for killing Razak Abdullah (50), another turtle eggs poacher on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016.

Daily Express, August 10, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



**August 15, 2021**

**Off Tiga Island National Park, State of Sabah, Malaysia**



Seizure of a hawksbill turtle in a boat off Pulau Tiga marine park. Arrest of 6 crewmen of Indonesian and Filipino origin, aged between 26 and 52.

News Straits Times, August 16, 2021.<sup>20</sup>

**VIET NAM**

**May 18, 2021**

**Ha Tinh Province, Viet Nam**

A live 30-kg sea turtle was seized from a fisherman offering it for sale. The turtle was later released.

ENV, May 18, 2021.<sup>21</sup>

**June 2021**

**Viet Nam**

Phun Nhut Tac and Tran Minh Lanh were convicted to 10 and 12 years in prison for the poaching and attempt to commercialize 39 hawksbill turtle shells in December 2020 (see "On the Trail" n° 32 p. 208).

VietnamPlus, June 21, 2021; ENV, June 27, 2021.<sup>22</sup>



**OCEANIA**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (GUAM)**

**August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Tamuning, Territory of Guam, United States of America**

The authorities are offering a 1,000 US\$ reward for anyone who can provide information leading to the identification of a man seen poaching a green turtle at the Alupang Beach Park.

The Guam Daily Post, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

**FRANCE (NEW CALEDONIA)**

**June 21, 2021**

**Bourail, South Province, Overseas Collectivity of New Caledonia, France**

A loggerhead turtle was found dead at a beach. The necropsy shows that it was a 30-year-old female turtle with one of its lungs perforated by the arrow of a diver.

SudMag, Jult 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.<sup>24</sup>





"La Vie Parisienne" magazine cover - August 1925

## CENTRAL AFRICA

### GABON

**August 4, 2021**

#### **Territorial waters of Gabon, between Sao Tome and Principe and Gabon**

The 77-meter-long tuna vessel *Pont Saint Louis*, built in 1984 in Bilbao, Spain, is using the whales to fish. Its captain assumes that the whale spotted on surface by the lookout is used as a fish aggregation device for a shoal of tuna. The seine is then deployed around the whale. At the end of the fishing action, the humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*, Appendix I) are released after several hours of stress and injury.

A Sea Shepherd boat acting as coastguard in Gabon filmed the scene. After receiving the alert, Minister of Fisheries decided to ban the practice in the waters under Gabonese jurisdiction.

The *Pont Saint Louis* is owned by Senegalese Tuna SA, a Senegalese-Hispanic company based in Dakar. The vessels are commanded by Spaniards and the majority of the crew are African. Sea Shepherd, August 31, 2021.<sup>1</sup>



*Pont Saint Louis*, Western Africa, August 23, 2018



## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### NAMIBIA

**July to November 2021**

#### Namibia

"On the Trail" (n°14 p.17, n°15 p.10 and n°26 p.17) reported on the cruelty and economic difficulties of the fur industry of Cape fur seals (*Arctocephalus pusillus*, Appendix II). Capture methods have not changed, but economic conditions have worsened. The sale of furs in China has not taken off, nor has the secondary market for genitalia. The industry wants to get a foothold in the fur seal oil market by supplementing the "Namibian Sunshine" with capsules or powders. Industrialists are not out of ideas, as they are now looking at the "huge" penis market.

That's why they are looking to reverse the government's allocated quotas. They want to increase the number of adult males from 3,000 to at least 20,000, and reduce the quota for infants in exchange. "There is simply no market for their skins." Making jackets, vests or coats from them is not profitable.

In the meantime, most of the industry actors prefer to suspend their activities, and fur seal gatherings on the Cape Cross and Atlas Bay beaches should mostly escape the clubs and guns.

New Era, August 16, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

## NORTHERN AMERICA

### CANADA AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**July 20, 2021 and August 6, 2021 and February 11, 2022**

#### Niagara Falls, Province of Ontario, Canada and Stonington, State of Connecticut, United States of America

Mystic Aquarium in Connecticut sees itself as a "scientific aquarium". Its program resembles animal experimentation: neuroimmunological response to environmental stressors, photogrammetry body condition studies, testing of prototype telemetry and imaging devices, physiological response to anthropogenic sound. "On the Trail" n°30 p.197 described the shocking journey Mystic Aquarium intended to undertake inside beluga whales (*Delphinapterus leucas*, Appendix II) dabbling in a tank.

In August 2021, a 6-year-old male beluga died. He had arrived at the Mystic Aquarium in March from the Marineland Zoo in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. He is believed to have died of something resembling gastroenteritis. In August 2022, a female beluga originally captured in the Pacific Ocean, also from Marineland Niagara Falls, died of what appeared to be a stomach ulcer.

Friends of Animals had tried to block the importation from Canada of the marine mammals by taking legal action against the permit granted by NOAA.

In Canada, near Niagara Falls, Marineland is crumbling. Animal Welfare Services, the institutional body in charge of animal welfare, is demanding that the animal park, which opened 60 years ago, improve the system that filters and renews water in the basins. Also, an orca whale (*Orcinus orca*, Appendix II), captured off Iceland in 1979 at 3 years old, was seen floating aimlessly in a small tank all alone. Ontario has banned the captivity of whales and dolphins since 2019, but the law is not retroactive. The only suitable solution for the orca, who lost contact with the sea more than 40 years ago and with a conspecific for 11 years, would be to create a seaside sanctuary dedicated to dolphinarium "retirees" in Port Hilford, Nova Scotia.

For more on experiments about how noises affect minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*, Appendix I) in Norway, see "On the Trail" n°32 p.304. CBC/Radio-Canada, July 19, 2021; blogTO, July 20, 2021; Animal Justice, July 28, 2021; The Globe and Mail (with AP), August 6, 2021; Whale and Dolphin Conservation, August 10, 2021; CP24 (with The Canadian Press), August 11, 2021; The Associated Press, August 25, 2021; Phil Demers, Sept. 9, 2021; Daily Mail, Sept. 12, 2021; CityNews Kitchener (with AP), February 13, 2022.<sup>3</sup>

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**August 11, 2021**

#### Anchorage, State of Alaska, United States of America

Walter Earl, the owner of The Antique Gallery (see "On the Trail" n°29 p. 180), is sentenced to 6 months of house arrest, to pay 185,000 US\$ in fines for trafficking walrus tusks (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada), and to pay 216,054 US\$ in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service for concealing his income from 2013 to 2017. The investigation showed that in 2017, Earl bought and sold walrus skulls with tusks and over 50 walrus tusks. He also used falsified documents.

US Department of Justice, August 11, 2021; The Cordova Times, August 22, 2021.<sup>4</sup>





## LATIN AMERICA

### BELIZE

**July 17, 2021**

#### **Corozal Bay, Corozal District, Belize**

A bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*, Appendix II) found dead in the bay underwent a necropsy. Veterinarians found 6 shotgun pellets in its body. According to their observations, the bullet wound located near his blowhole caused the dolphin to suffocate and die.

Amandala, July 28, 2021.<sup>5</sup>

### COLOMBIA

**June 5 to mid-July, 2021**

#### **Santa Marta, Department of Magdalena, Colombia**

A 3.5-meter-long, 450 kg female North American manatee (*Trichechus manatus*, Appendix I) accidentally got caught in a fisherman's net in Tayrona national park. "Julieta" stayed in a refuge for a month to receive care until she was finally released into the Caribbean Sea near Cienaga (Magdalena department), with the help of a group of fishermen. A week later, her GPS transmitter sent out an alert. "Julieta" was found dead with about 15-centimeter-deep lacerations. Local fishermen attacked her with a stick and a machete. The autopsy also revealed a harpoon wound in the chest. An investigation is underway to find the criminals.

The Animal Reader, July 20, 2021.<sup>6</sup>

### MEXICO

**July 14, 2021**

#### **Mexico City, Mexico**

The government is backing off the mafia of totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I), whose swim bladders smuggled into China sell for between 30,000 and 100,000 US\$/kg. This way, the vaquitas (*Phocoena sinus*, Appendix I), of whom a few individuals survive in the sea of Cortez, are doomed to disappear. Fishing was strictly prohibited in a small area considered to be the vaquitas' preferred habitat (see "On the Trail" n°32 p.301). Faced with the fishermen's rebellion, the government is going to turn the no-fishing area into a fishing area open to a maximum of 60 boats. Beyond that, the Mexican Navy would engage in a naval battle. The vaquitas are caught in nets deployed to catch totoabas (see "On the Trail" n°6 p.6 and n°17 p. 10 and 11, n°22 p.19 and n°27 p.20).

As for them, an academic from Columbia University and a scientist from the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) believe that Mexico's decision does not equate to a death sentence for the vaquita species. According to them, the vaquitas have understood the risks of gillnets and have developed avoidance strategies. The sighting in 2019 of 3 seemingly healthy juvenile vaquitas proves that the reproductive cycle has not been interrupted. Finally, they cite the example of the northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*) who was declared extinct in 1884. A residual population was later discovered on an island off the coast of Mexico and today the northern elephant seal population is estimated to be 300,000.

Three weeks later, the government took a vague sidestep after a wave of protests, the most famous of which came from Leonardo DiCaprio. It was announced that a working group would be set up with 3 NGOs to redefine cooperation in the vaquita protection campaign. One of the topics would be to find new modalities of dialogue with illegal fishermen and to avoid brutal confrontations.

News4Jax (with AP), July 14, 2021; Mexico News Daily, August 9, 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## EASTERN ASIA

### CHINA

**May 19, 2021**

#### **Suzhou, Suzhou Prefecture, Jiangsu Province, China**

Two sperm whale teeth (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) were seized from an incoming package. Chinese Customs, May 25, 2021.<sup>8</sup>

**Beginning of July 2021**

#### **Guangdong, Hubei and Anhui Provinces and Shanghai Autonomous Municipality, China**

China's emblematic porpoise is nicknamed the "laughing angel", "water panda", "water pig" or "Yangtze princess". They are dependent on the Yangtze river and since the 1950s, poaching, pollution, endless boat traffic, hydroelectric dams and sand extraction have brought them to the verge of extinction.

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs says it is "too risky" to rely on the few thousand specimens remaining in very localized pockets to save the species from extinction. Not every threat to the finless black porpoise (*Neophocaena asiaeorientalis*, Appendix I) can be placed "under immediate control," they say. Transitional measures are needed to protect the "laughing angels" from all disasters, including climatic ones. Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, a water park in Zhuhai, Guangdong, has reportedly spent 5 million yuan (774,000 US\$) to build an ideal aquarium, a sort of miniature replica (2,000 m<sup>3</sup>) of the Yangtze river or of the 2 freshwater lakes where "water pandas" survive.

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## SOUTHEASTERN ASIA

### INDONESIA

**August 18, 2021**

**Kelang Island, Molucca Province, Molucca Archipelago, Indonesia**

A dugong (*Dugong dugon*, Appendix I) who washed ashore and never returned to sea was found dead, mutilated and injured. He was allegedly looted by villagers who used his body parts in traditional medicine. The head of the coastal conservation agency explained that no team could be sent to the site to care for the remains due to Covid-19 restrictions. The carcass was burned near the stranding site.

Mongabay, August 20, 2021.<sup>10</sup>

## SOUTHERN ASIA

### BANGLADESH

**June 24, 2021**

**Chilmari Upazila, Kurigram District, Rangpur Division, Bangladesh**

A mobile court sentenced Suzan Chandra Das, a farmer, and Amber Ali to 5,000 takas (59 US\$) each. They were arrested in possession of 2 Ganges River dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*, Appendix I) carcasses, which they said they bought for 10,000 taka (118 US\$) from a fisherman who deployed his nets in the Brahmaputra River. The carcasses were burned.

The Daily Star, June 24, 2021.<sup>11</sup>



Fourteen specimens were captured in conditions shrouded in mystery and transported to Chimelong Ocean Kingdom (8) and Haichang Ocean Park in Shanghai (6). It is not known whether the capture, transfer and quarantine were marred by mortality. According to the management of both parks, the new captives will not be taught to perform. The “Yangtze princesses” will not be exploited, while in the Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, 9 orcas (*Orcinus orca*, Appendix II) captured by Russia in the Okhotsk sea have been subjected to brutal education and to perform shows daily.

Some Chinese scientists express doubts about the ability to trigger a viable reproductive cycle of finless black porpoises in a pond. They state that animals born in captivity cannot be released as they do not know how to be self-reliant and survive. In this regard, it would be important to learn news of Bei Bei, a 4-year-old female finless black porpoise born in captivity and released in July 2020 in the Tian’ezhou nature reserve (Hubei province) (see “On the Trail” n°30 p.198).

Wang Ding, a hydrobiology researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, believes that the species’ future lies in natural environments, unlike the Minister of Agriculture. In the Tian’ezhou nature reserve in the Yangtze river basin, only 5 finless black porpoises existed in 1990, and now there are several dozen. Other specialists and NGOs believe that tireless educational efforts and a 10-year suspension on using nets in the Yangtze river provide hope that wild finless black porpoises have a future.

Species Impact Victim Statements (SVIS), July 8, 2021.<sup>9</sup>



## AMBERGRIS

Ambergris was historically used in perfume for its fixative effect. In the Levant, it was also renowned for its medicinal and aphrodisiac properties. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, at least 18 theories competed to determine the magic substance's exact origin. Researchers, explorers, sailors and naturalists argued about it until the end of the 17th century, some saying it came from underwater mushrooms or trees, sea toad slobber and oceanic bird guano, others saying it came from sulphurous and bituminous springs and many other natural geological sources.

Today there is a boom about ambergris. Several explanations are on the table.

Most of the seizures took place in coastal states. Inactive fishermen during the Covid pandemic reportedly sought to trade blocks of ambergris they recovered in various circumstances throughout their careers. They might have been encouraged to do so by spending time on social media and discovering that fishermen in Yemen or beachcombers in Thailand recently became overnight dollar millionaires or thought they were.

Most of the seizures were made on the roads or at city exits, prompting some observers to say that ambergris is normally trafficked by air and that delivery methods have changed because of Covid. The international market is said to have shrunk and holders reportedly looked for opportunities on the national market.

One of the questioned fishermen said that at least 2 tonnes of ambergris were unloaded in a State on India's west and south coasts (Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu) at the beginning of 2021, and this huge delivery was then distributed among several coastal communities well-versed in various types of trafficking, such as in coral and sea cucumbers.

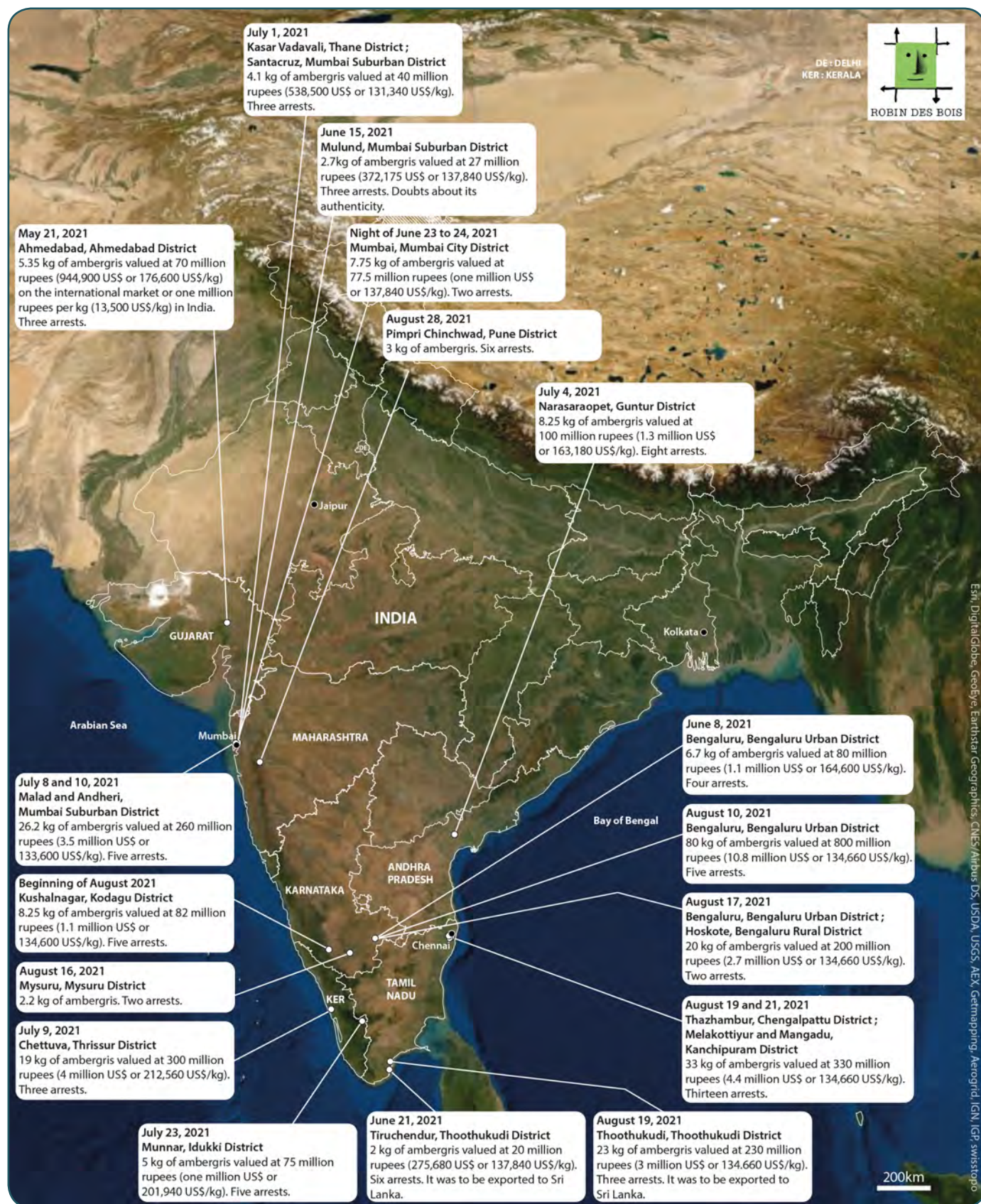
One of the difficulties is verifying the substance's authenticity. The fake goods industry is flourishing in wildlife trafficking and beyond a few basic parameters such as buoyancy, melting at 60°C and white smoke emission at 100°C, no laboratory can certify ambergris in Maharashtra. In other continents, so-called ambergris blocks that were supposed to take their inventors up to the 7th heaven of capitalism have attracted only disillusionment and trouble. A block of ambergris subjected to the flame test caused a fire in a United Kingdom home in 2020. The ambergris was in fact an old World War II grenade washed-up on the beach. Today the most common mistakes are caused by solidified palm oil magmas emitted by tankers after tank washing, which can be elevated to ambergris status thanks to local gullibility and whose main effect is to poison the dogs who sniffed and half ate them.

Brito, C., Jordão, V., & Pierce, G. (2016). Ambergris as an overlooked historical marine resource: Its biology and role as a global economic commodity. *Journal of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom*, 96(3), 585-596. doi:10.1017/S0025315415000910; Hakai Magazine, August 17, 2021.<sup>12</sup>





**256.5 kg of ambergris seized in India between  
May 1 and August 31, 2021 according to official and media sources**





## FAMILY AFFAIRS

May 16, 2021

**Sharda Canal, Sitapur District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India**

Villagers from the hamlets of Dahirapur and Takiya Sultanpur were fishing in the canal when they saw a Ganges river dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*, Appendix I). It was a godsend. The fishermen caught him, butchered him, and left with some meat. A video of their little party circulated on social media and quickly attracted the police's attention. The next morning, the forest services filed a complaint against 12 people. In the following days, Mithun Kumar and his father Prithvi from Dahirapur and a third suspect from Laharpur were arrested. The other 9 are still at large.

The Pioneer, May 19, 2021; Amar Ujala, June 3, 2021.<sup>13</sup>

August 31, 2021

**Hatkhamba, Ratnagiri District, State of Maharashtra, India**

A 38 to 40 cm walrus tusk (*Odobenus rosmarus*, Appendix III in Canada) was seized in a car. Three arrests have been made. No one yet knows how the 3 men got possession of this exotic ivory from the northern hemisphere.

Daijiworld, September 2, 2021; Mid-Day, September 5, 2021.<sup>14</sup>

### NORTHERN EUROPE

#### DENMARK

June 27 to September 22, 2021

**Leynar, Hvannasund and Skálabotnur, Faroe Islands, Denmark**

If there had been quotas, the ferocious Faroese males would have exploded them. On the night of Sunday, September 12, they surrounded Atlantic white-sided dolphins (*Lagenorhynchus acutus*, Appendix II) in the coastal waters and pushed them into the dins of engines, cries and jet-skis in Skálabotnur Bay. In Viking and Japanese memory, 1,428 deaths in one night and the next day is unheard of.

They call this ritual the "grind". They bring dolphins ashore and finish them off with a "blásturkrókur", if they have not already been torn apart by boat propellers. A minority in the archipelago quietly opposed this ritual, but the 2021 grind's brutality fueled public criticism and government disapproval. There were not enough freezers in the archipelago to preserve the mercury-contaminated meat.

Many corpses were buried in holes or sent to incinerators. The Faroe Islands are located north of Scotland, south of Iceland and west of Norway. They are financially, militarily and politically linked to Denmark but claim economic independence based on fishing in the sub-Arctic Sea. Their thriving fishing industry guarantees until now the 53,000 inhabitants of the archipelago (18 islands, 1,400 km<sup>2</sup>) a higher per capita wealth than that of Denmark. The Faroe Islands' influence is considerable. The mackerel trawled in the Faroese EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) arrive frozen in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, and will continue to be delivered to Russia in 2022 by way of derogation from European sanctions. Whatever the Faroese may or may not say, the persistence of the grindadrap (cetacean hunt) is partly due to the desire to eliminate dangerous competitors such as long-finned pilot whales (*Globicephala melas*, Appendix II) and Atlantic white-sided whales, without considering their positive contributions to the North Atlantic's biomass.

Daily Mail, June 29, 2021; Tony Siew, September 1, 2021; The Guardian, September 14 and 17, 2021; The Government of the Faroe Islands, September 16, 2021; OceanCare, December 21, 2021; Arritti No. 2750, June 2-8, 2022.<sup>15</sup>

## ICELAND

June 2021

**Iceland**

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row, the *Hvalur 8* and *Hvalur 9* will not be whaling between June and September in the Icelandic Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

IFAW, June 15, 2021; Fiskistofa; Morgunbladid, May 12, 2022.<sup>16</sup>

### SOUTHERN EUROPE

#### GREECE

July 24, 2021

**Alonissos Island, Region of Thessaly, Greece**

The island's mascot, a Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*, Appendix I), was killed by a harpoon shot at close range. He had been appreciated by the island's 2,700 inhabitants. This wildlife vandalism is attributed to a tourist.

MOm / The Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the Monk seal, July 24, 2021.<sup>17</sup>



## EASTERN EUROPE

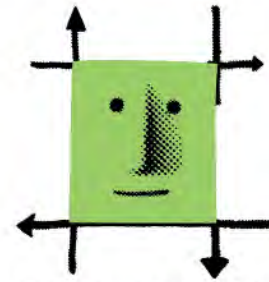
### RUSSIA

**May 4 to 6, 2021**

**Makhachkala, Republic of Dagestan, Russia**

Caspian seals (*Pusa caspica*) are stranded on both sides of the capital city. The bodies of the young are skinned. Hats are made from the skins. This is a fashionable clothing product in Dagestan. The seal population has declined sharply as a result. It went from one million to much less than 100,000 in just a century. Sturgeon poachers are suspected of participating in the killing (see "On the Trail" n°31 p.190, p.212, p.256 and p.301). Spring is also difficult for birds. Near Makhachkala, swans and pelicans were massacred in March.

The Moscow Times (with AFP), May 6, 2021; Caucasian Knot, May 7, 2021.<sup>18</sup>



ROBIN DES BOIS

### FRANCE (NEW CALEDONIA)

**July 30, 2021**

**Bourail, South Province, Overseas Collectivity of New Caledonia, France**

A partially butchered adult female dugong (*Dugong dugon*, Appendix I) is stranded. The body was pierced with saber and buckshot wounds. This is the second time in 2 months that a dugong was poached in the lagoon and that his remains landed on the Bourail beach.

Zone Côtière Ouest, August 2, 2021; Nouvelle-Calédonie la 1<sup>ère</sup>, August 4, 2021.<sup>19</sup>



FONDATION  
FRANZ  
WEBER